

EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE EAST; THE MIDDLE EAST IN EUROPE

INTERNATIONAL SUMMER ACADEMY FOR DOCTORAL AND POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

Within the framework of the research program 'Europe in the Middle East; the Middle East in Europe' the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin in cooperation with the Anis Makdisi Program in Literature of the American University in Beirut invite applications for an international Summer Academy on the theme:

TRAVELLING TRADITIONS: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON NEAR EASTERN LITERATURES

The Summer Academy is scheduled for 2 to 13 October, 2006 at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon and will be chaired by Professor Friederike Pannewick (Oslo University) and Dr Samah Selim (Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin). It will be organized in cooperation with the Anis Makdisi Program in Literature of the AUB, the Orient Institute in Beirut and the Heinrich Böll Foundation Middle East Office.

24 young scholars will be given the opportunity to present and discuss their current research, while a group of leading scholars from the field of Comparative Literature and Near Eastern Literatures will act as tutors. The Summer Academy will focus on comparativist approaches to the study of literature in and across the Middle East and Europe, from early modernity onwards, through the prism of three main and interrelated issues.

The first section will explore modern canon formation in the literary traditions of the Middle East, and its relation to a hegemonic European system of national philology. Scholars are encouraged to explore the internal power of tradition-building and its relation to the politics of historical memory and nation-building. As such, this section will emphasize the diversity of textual and critical traditions, and their anarchic potential in a modern field of national literatures intersected by strict notions of autonomous cultural identities. These questions aim to foster comparative perspectives on conceptualizations of literary 'renaissance' in and beyond Arab, Persian or Turkish traditions, while broadening and problematizing the term itself as part of a wider comparative inquiry into Anglo-European intellectual history and cultural studies.

The second section will examine the formative role of translation and popular traditions in national literary histories. Here, scholars are encouraged to investigate the links between literary canons, translation and popular genres and to re-think established binaries – such as originality and imitation; 'high' and 'low' cultural forms - that shape the study of literature at large. This section also takes account of the fact that genres are themselves intrinsically porous. Scholars will be encouraged to explore and question the formal boundaries between what are usually considered distinct genres, like fiction, drama and prose poetry, as well the mobility of literary genres across related cultural media, such as film and theatrical performance.

The third section focuses on the links between canon-formation and historical transformations in literary criticism and theory. Comparative histories of literary criticism would be of particular

interest. How does literary theory travel across cultural, linguistic and discursive borders? Such movements into new locations are often distorted and impeded because they necessarily involve processes of representation and institutionalization different from those at the place of origin. The complex north/south itineraries of postmodernism and postcolonialism, as well as Marxist and feminist theory are of particular interest in this context.

The Summer Academy is supported within the overall framework of the research program 'Europe in the Middle East; the Middle East in Europe' (funded by the German Fritz Thyssen Foundation), which focuses on the diverse processes of transfer, exchange, and interaction between Europe and the Middle East.

CONDITIONS OF APPLICATION

Participants receive a stipend covering travel and accommodation expenses. The program addresses doctoral and postdoctoral researchers in Comparative Literature, Middle Eastern and other Philologies, and historians, anthropologists, and sociologists with an interest in literary studies and in opening up Comparative Studies beyond the limitations of national or regional perspectives. The researchers' work should be clearly relevant to the theme(s) of the Summer Academy. The working language is English. The application, consisting of a curriculum vitae, a five-page outline of the project the applicant is currently working on, with a brief summary thereof, and two names of referees (university faculty members) should be submitted and received, in English, by **April 21, 2006** to:

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For further information on the program 'Europe in the Middle East; the Middle East in Europe' and a more comprehensive description of 'Travelling Traditions: Comparative Perspectives on Near Eastern Literatures', please visit: <http://www.wiko-berlin.de/kolleg/projekte/AKMI/?hpl=2>