Workshop

Middle Eastern Christians and Europe

Diasporas – Relations – Entangled Histories

18-19 February 2016
Center for the Study of Eastern Christianity
University of Salzburg, Austria
Day 1: Thursday, 18 February

9:00 – 9:20: Welcome and Overview by Andreas Schmoller and Dietmar W. Winkler

9:20 – 10:00: Keynote-Speech

*Europe and the Protection of Middle Eastern Christians: a long History*

Bernard Heyberger, EHESS Paris, France

10:00 – 10:30: Discussion

10:30 – 11:00: Coffee break

11:00 – 12:30: Panel 1: The Complexity of Diaspora Identities

Chair: Helga Embacher

*Experiences of (in)visibility and (im)mobility among Iraqi Christians in Denmark*

Lise Paulsen Galal and Sara Lei Sparre, University of Roskilde, Denmark

*Narratives of Identity, Home and Belonging of Middle Eastern Christians in the UK*

Fiona McCallum, University of St Andrews, Scotland

*Keeping feet in both: continuum of identities, inculturation and pastoral care of Copts in the European diaspora*

Markos el Makari, Monastery of Saint Macarius the Great, Egypt/ Monastery of Bose, Italy

12:30 – 13:30: Lunch (buffet at the venue)

13:30 – 15:00: Panel 2: Diaspora Churches

Chair: Aho Shemunkasho

*The role of the Syriac Orthodox Church and religion in Assyrian/Syriac life in Sweden*

Marta Wozniak-Bobinska, University of Lodz, Poland

*The Arabic Churches in London*

Suha Shakkour, University of Derby, England

*Of safe havens and sinking ships: Oral Histories about the Church in the Diaspora among Middle Eastern Christians in Austria*

Andreas Schmoller, University of Salzburg, Austria

15:00 – 15:30: Coffee Break

15:30 – 17:00: Panel 3: Research and Projects related to contemporary Issues

Chair: Dietmar W. Winkler

*Safeguarding the Cross: Emergence of Christian Militia in Iraq and Syria*

Abdulmesih Bar Abraham, Mor Afrem Stiftung, Germany
Day 2, Friday, 19 February

9:00 – 11:00: Panel 4: Entangled Histories – Missions, Education and Humanitarian Aid
Chair: Andreas Schmoller

European Educational Backgrounds of Armenian Officials in the Ottoman Empire
Abdulhamit Kırmızı, Istanbul Şehir Universit, Turkey

Hopeful but helpless: the unexpected contribution of German missionaries to Christian migration from the Holy Land during the late 19th century
Gil Gordon, Jerusalem, Israel

Engaging Europe in the Arab World: European missionaries and humanitarianism in the Middle East (1850-1970)
Karène Sanchez Summerer, Leiden University, The Netherlands

Maria Småberg, Lund University, Sweden

11:00 – 11:30: Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00: Panel 5: Open Space – Entangled Histories II
Chair: Joachim Jakob

The Middle East and Europe Combined: Cathedrals, Mosques, The Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa Mosque – Demands for reciprocity, for the sharing of religious sites, and for the reversing of history
Amikam Nachmani, Bar Ilan University, Israel

Constructing the ‘intra-communal out-group’: the Greek religious imperialism and the Arab Orthodox ‘quantité négligeable’
Konstantinos Papastathis, Université du Luxembourg

The perception of the Aramaic genocide according to the German diplomatic sources from 1915 to 1917
Dominik Giesen, University of Konstanz, Germany

13:00 – 13:30: Discussion of Workshop key themes
13:30: Lunch
Middle Eastern Christian communities have built considerable diasporas in Europe in the past decades and due to recent events in the Middle East, the number of Christians leaving their traditional homeland has risen again. In their countries of residence, they are challenged by integration into European society and the quest to survive as a group with a defined cultural and religious heritage. Historical narratives about Europe and its Christiananness often frame identity discourses of these communities. In the past, Middle Eastern Christians have been accused of being a fifth column of the West on the one hand and idealized as being the surviving roots of original Christianity on the other hand. Today the symbolization of Middle Eastern Christians has taken new dimensions, if we consider Islamic State fighters who execute Coptic Christians in Libya to deliver a message to the Christian West, or European right-wing parties who use the persecution of Christians in Muslim countries as evidence in political discourses about Islam “as a general threat to Europe”.

Middle Eastern Christians exist in both forms as heterogeneous globally spread communities and as an imagined symbolic community constructed through projections and discourses. The workshop attempts to explore these two realities by bringing together historical and current perspectives on Middle Eastern Christians in order to define their place and role in Europe.

The workshop Middle Eastern Christians and Europe: Diasporas – Relations – Entangled Histories provides a forum for researchers from disciplines across the humanities, social sciences and theology to meet and discuss completed, ongoing or planned research related to Middle Eastern Christians in the European context.

Practical Details
The workshop is reserved for internal discussions amongst conference participants only. The publication of an edited volume based on the presented papers is planned for 2017.

Workshop organizer
Dr. Andreas Schmoller, Postdoctoral researcher at the Center for the Study of Eastern Christianity (ZECO - Zentrum zur Erforschung des Christlichen Ostens)
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Venue
Theologische Fakultät / Faculty of Theology
Department for Biblical Studies and Church History
Universitätsplatz 1, Room HS 103 (3rd floor)
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Fundings by
University of Salzburg
Österreichische Forschungsgemeinschaft