

Symposium and Exhibition Imaging a 'Middle East'

Orientalism – and its images – are far from dead. Despite Edward Said's forceful critique of Orientalism as a regime of representation that dominates and structures an ambiguous 'East', its discourse persists. Representations, in the form of paintings, drawings, photography, films, and maps, have been powerful means by which the 'Middle East' has been pictured in the last two centuries, and, as such, have animated imperialist projects, fueled Orientalist and self-Orientalist fantasies, and upheld reductive and essentialized understandings of the region and its people. Since September 2001, Orientalist imagery has undergone a political and social intensification, which is now compounded by the 'refugee crisis.' This intensification has been made apparent in discourses that easily interchange the 'immigrant' for the 'refugee' and 'Muslim' in Europe and the US, but also in tropes of Arab, Muslim or Oriental otherness used by political actors in the region itself.

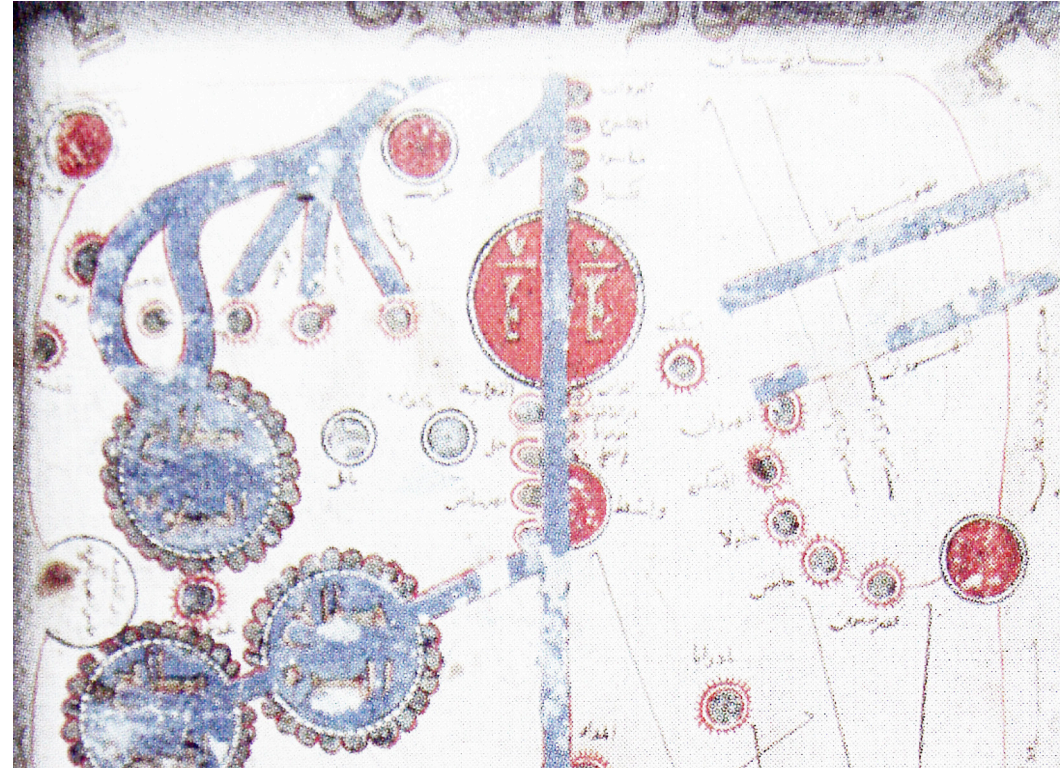
This symposium examines the continued seductiveness that Orientalism seems to hold over the production of images of the contemporary 'Middle East', both inside and outside of the region. How are (self) Orientalized images and imaginaries translated into perceptions of authenticity and identity? How do such images figure into the policies and politics in the ongoing 'global war on terror'? How do modes of contemporary image-making engage with, resist, or respond to tropes of Orientalism in the current political moment?

The symposium features a talk and parallel exhibit by Tintinologist Nadim Damluji on early-to-mid 20th century Arab comic strips, which examine the genealogy of Orientalist image-making from the cartoon to cartography in the present moment.

Please note that the exhibition will take place at Bulbul Berlin, Görlitzerstraße 38, 10997 Berlin.

An ICI Event organized by Saima Akhtar, Walid El-Houri, and Banu Karaca in cooperation with Europe in the Middle East – the Middle East in Europe (EUME), a programme at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

Symposium and Exhibition
6 – 7 July 2017, ICI Berlin, in English



Imaging a 'Middle East'

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EUME 
Europe in the Middle East
The Middle East in Europe
Forum
Transregionale
Studien

ici KULTURLABOR
BERLIN INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL INQUIRY

Programme

THURSDAY, 6 JULY 2017

11:00 Welcome and Introduction

11:30 – 13:30 **Panel I: MAPPING AND GEOGRAPHIES OF HERITAGE**

Geographies of Orientalism

Mariam Banahi (ANTHROPOLOGIST, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY)

Syrian Heritage Archive Project (SHAP): Archives as a Basis for Post-War Masterplan

Zoya Masoud (ARCHITECT AND URBAN PLANNER, TU BERLIN)

Empty Spaces: Photographic Mapping and the Construct of 'Heritage' in the Middle East

Mirjam Brusius (ART HISTORY/PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)

Until the River Winds Ninety Degrees West

Nadine Hattom (VISUAL ARTIST, BERLIN)

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 15:45 **Panel II: (RE)MAKING AND PICTURING THE URBAN**

Of the West but Not On It? Beirut and the Real

Katarzyna Puzon (SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGIST, HU BERLIN)

Suspended Geographies: The Creation of Orientalist Hotelier Space in Qatar

Mohamad Khalil Harb (MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, HARVARD UNIVERSITY)

Oil Lamps and Drilling Towers: Imaging the Arab Gulf Cities During the Age of (Post)Oil

Laura Hindelang (GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MUSLIM CULTURES AND SOCIETIES, FU BERLIN)

15:45 – 16:00 Coffee break

16:00 – 18:00 **Panel III: FICTIONALIZING PASTS, IMAGING FUTURES**

Science Fiction in the Orient: Contesting Legacies to Imagine the Future

Shilpa Jindia (INDEPENDENT RESEARCHER, CONSULTANT, AND WRITER, WASHINGTON, D.C.)

Rachel Dedman (INDEPENDENT CURATOR AND WRITER, BEIRUT)

New EastEnders - The Prequel

Anahita Razmi (VISUAL ARTIST, BERLIN)

Fiction in Documentary Photography and Its 'Making of Iran'

Catherine Bublatzky (PHOTOGRAPHER AND ANTHROPOLOGIST, HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY)

Techno-Utopian Fantasies and Digital Nation States: Transfiguring Realities of the Middle East

Heba Y. Amin (VISUAL ARTIST AND RESEARCHER, BARD COLLEGE BERLIN/FU BERLIN)

18:00 – 19:30 Coffee break

19:30 **Keynote**

Translation as Trojan Horse/Translation as Conversation

Nadim Damluji (INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR, NEW YORK)

Welcoming remarks: Georges Khalil

Introduction: Saima Akhtar

FRIDAY, 7 JULY 2017

13:00 – 14:30 **Panel IV: SUBVERSION AND RESISTANCE**

An Uncivil Resistance: Images of Egyptian Workers (WWI) Leading up to 1919 Revolution

Alia Mossallam (ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT FELLOW, EUME/FU BERLIN)

Resisting Orientalism at the Cinema in Egypt

Ifdal Elsaket (HISTORY/ARABIC STUDIES, NETHERLANDS-FLEMISH INSTITUTE IN CAIRO)

On the Changing Economy of Resistance Images

Mary Jirmanus Saba (GEOGRAPHER AND FILMMAKER, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT)

14:30 – 15:00 Coffee break

15:00 – 16:30 **Panel V: VISUALIZING THE 'WAR ON TERROR'**

Victim, Terrorist or Romantic Revolutionary? Decolonizing Visuality in Palestine and Beyond

Hannan Toukan (MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES, BROWN UNIVERSITY)

The Clash of Digitalizations: The Devolution of Arab Men from Humans to Digital Fodder

Saud Al-Zaid (ISLAMIC THOUGHT/ARAB STUDIES, FU BERLIN)

When Images Collide: Workings of Sexuality in the Kurdish Conflict

Hilal Alkan (EUME FELLOW, FORUM TRANSREGIONALE STUDIEN)

16:30 Closing remarks

21:00 **Exhibition Opening at Bulbul Berlin, Görlitzerstraße 38**

Arab Comics: 90 Years of Visual Culture

Nadim Damluji (INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR, NEW YORK)