

Zukunftsphilologie

Forum
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FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL
GRADUIERTENSCHULE
für literaturwissenschaftliche Studien

Lecture cum Seminar

Thursday, June 14, 2012, 4 – 7 pm

Freie Universität Berlin, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, Room J 24/122d

Umar Ryad

(Leiden University)

A Salafi Student of Orientalist Philology in Nazi Germany: Taqi al-Din al-Hilali and His Academic Experience in Germany 1930-1940

Chair: Islam Dayeh

(Zukunftsphilologie / Freie Universität Berlin)

Abstract

The encounter between Arab (and Muslim) intellectuals and western Orientalists is a fascinating chapter in the history of both traditions. More specifically, the experience of Arab students who read oriental studies under the supervision of western Orientalists in the first half of the twentieth century shows that this encounter was not an ahistorical phenomenon and not without mutual experiences. The study of the interaction of those Arab students as part of the structure of western orientalism is useful to understand what Edward Said had called “overlapping experience” (Said 1994: xxii-xxiii). The turn of the twentieth century witnessed a remarkable shift in the collaboration between Orientalists and Arab intellectuals who were involved in Orientalist research projects in Europe. Against this background, we shall focus on the figure of the Moroccan prominent Salafi scholar Taqī al-Dīn al-Hilālī (1894-1987) and his cross-national and cross-cultural role in Nazi Germany during the Second World War, a period German Social Nationalism was a model for many Arab Christian and Muslim nationalists. The study of Hilālī’s German period presents a unique figure between two different worlds, e.g. being a subject under National-Socialism while being strongly engaged in propagating anti-colonial ideas and Salafi populism in the Muslim world. Although Hilali took part in various activities in Nazi Germany, we concentrate on his position in the Oriental Seminar at Bonn University and his

cooperation with German orientalists, especially Paul Kahle (1875-1964), in producing new editions of Arabic classical works, such as *Tayf al-Khayal* (by Ibn Danyal al-Mawsili) and *al-Futuwwa* (by Ibn al-'Mi'mar al-Baghdadi). It argues that the interaction between Orientalists and Arab intellectuals was not confined to students who became later well-known for their modernist, secularist and sometimes liberal affiliations, but was also extended to include students who later developed reformist and traditionalist viewpoints of Islam. Hilali's role herein shows that while European scholars traveled to the Near East and taught in Arab/Muslim universities, the coming of those students to study their own culture in the West shows the significance of the meeting of "foreign knowledge" and "self-knowledge" (Malti-Douglas 1985-1986: 36-55) in the history of ideas.

Background Reading

- Wokoeck, Ursula: *German Orientalism: The Study of the Middle East and Islam 1800-1945* (Routledge, 2009), Chapter 8 "The Primacy of the Political Factors 1933-1945", pp. 185-209.

Umar Ryad is currently Assistant Professor of the Study of Islam in the Modern World at the University of Leiden. He studied at the Faculty of Languages and Translation, Al-Azhar University in Cairo (1998, BA Islamic Studies in English), after which he moved to the University of Leiden where he earned his MA (2001) and PhD (2006) degrees. His current research includes the dynamics of networks of Islamic reformist movements, Muslim-Christian interreligious polemic, the history of Christian missions in the modern Muslim World, and transnational Islam in interwar Europe. He is the author of *Islamic Reformism and Christianity. A Critical Reading of the Works of Muhammad Rashid Rida and his Associates (1898-1935)*, Leiden 2008.

Lecture-cum-Seminar

The Lecture-cum-Seminar series is a central element of the scholarly program of the Zukunftsphilologie project. It is conceived as a working seminar of 3 to 5 hours. The lecture (ca. 45-60 minutes) is meant to introduce the audience to the research problem and provide the general analytical and theoretical framework for the topic. This is followed by a practical seminar, wherein the speaker demonstrates his or her case by reference to texts in the original language and in English translation. It is hoped that this Lecture-cum-Seminar series, a combination of theory and a direct engagement with texts, will enable scholars to examine the comparative aspect of the problematic without neglect of the local and singular nature of the texts examined.

Zukunftsphilologie: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship

The project Zukunftsphilologie endeavours to promote and emphasize primary textual scholarship beyond the classical humanistic canon. In an age of advanced communication, intellectual specialization, and unprecedented migration of knowledge and people, the discipline of philology assumes new relevance. Zukunftsphilologie aspires to support research in neglected varieties of philology with the explicit aim to integrate texts and scholarly traditions from Asia, Africa, the Middle East as well as from Europe itself.

Zukunftsphilologie

Zukunftsphilologie refers to the polemic between the classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz and Friedrich Nietzsche around the method and meaning of classical studies. As a project it sees itself as part of a growing trend towards a more global intellectual history. It is inspired in particular by the work of Edward Said and Sheldon Pollock.

In order to promote historically-conscious philology, Zukunftsphilologie will foster research in the following areas: genealogies and transformations of philological practice, philology's place in the system of knowledge (e.g. its relation to science, theology and jurisprudence), and philology and the university. Furthermore, Zukunftsphilologie aims to support critical reviews of historical and philological practice. In revisiting important „philological wars“, the goal is not to merely evaluate the argumentative worth of these debates, but to reflect on the wider cultural and political context in which these „philological wars“ emerged and how they have shaped our knowledge of the past.

The project Zukunftsphilologie is co-directed by Angelika Neuwirth, Manan Ahmed and Islam Dayeh (all Freie Universität Berlin) and is associated with and located at the Friedrich Schlegel Graduate School of Literary Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Zukunftsphilologie is a project at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

Information

www.zukunftsphilologie.de

www.forum-transregionale-studien.de

www.fsgs.fu-berlin.de/fsgs/kooperationen/Zukunftsphilologie

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