

MUBIT Inter-University Doctoral Coordination in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Basel/Zurich  
&  
Middle Eastern Studies  
The Graduate School of Social Sciences (G3S)  
University of Basel

## Call for Applications

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual MUBIT Doctoral Workshop in Late- and Post-Ottoman Studies in Basel

# A Modern World in Flux

Studying Migration, Refugees, and Settlement Regimes from  
the Middle East and Beyond

May 29-30, 2015



Guest Lecturer:

Assoc. Prof. Dr.

**Isa Blumi**

(Georgia State University, Atlanta)

Organized and hosted by

Prof. Dr. Maurus Reinkowski

Dr. Selen Etingü

Alp Yenen, M.A.

## **A Modern World in Flux: Studying Migration, Refugees, and Settlement Regimes from the Middle East and Beyond**

This two-day seminar will take an inter-disciplinary approach to discussing, theorizing and historicizing the impact of large-scale, modern human migrations as a result of war and economic development. Drawing on a wide range of scholarship in anthropology, sociology and history, this seminar will apply new methods of analyzing these movements of immigrants and refugees. The same methods will also be used to examine the actions of those governments seeking to settle such people who directly affected the global transformations of the past two centuries (1800-2015). These two days will be broken up into at least four separate sections, with a survey of the larger issues addressed within the different disciplines. In each of the sections, different sources will be used to initiate discussion among the participants.

### **‘Push & pull’ Factors behind Human Migrations in the Modern World**

This section will address some of the causes for why people in large numbers leave their homelands for new destinations. Among other issues, the discussion will address the phenomenon of ‘ethnic cleansing’ as a tool of state-building in the Mediterranean world since the 19th century, the political economy of labor regimes that transform the exploitative nature of the global economy by increasing the reliance on migrant labor, and the contextualization of these two dynamics within the contours of modernity.

### **The Refugee as an Agent of the Modern World**

This section theorizes, as well as analyzes, the refugee as a subject of inquiry. Drawing on cases throughout much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the seminar’s participants will engage in cutting-edge scholarship on this theme in order to arrive at an appreciation of the multiplicity of ways of studying the refugee.

### **Settlement Regimes**

This section explores how international organizations/corporations and modern institutions linked to the state act as administrators of human settlement. The idea that new forms of governance are necessary as a result of migrations of large numbers of people gives rise to a series of issues related to the study of migration that is often ignored when studied in different contexts. ‘Borderlands’, ‘ethnic-nationalism’, and ‘governmentality’, for example, will be explored through the prism of efforts to settle migrants (refugees, laborers and immigrants) whose presence transforms the modern state.

### **Diaspora Studies**

This section explores research on diasporas-as-historical-force in order to highlight the disciplinary range available to researchers when exploring how migrant constituencies begin to establish strong links with the (often imagined/mythical) ‘homeland’.

## Guest Lecturer: Isa Blumi

Isa Blumi is one of the most prolific and out-of-the-box thinking scholars of modern history and politics of the Balkans and the Middle East. He studied at the New School for Social Research in New York, Sanaa University in Yemen, University of Ankara, Sorbonne in Paris, and Universitaire de Nancy II. He received his PhD from New York University in a joint program in the History and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies departments. His teachers and mentors include some of the most prominent scholars of social theory and history such as Zachary Lockman, Frederick Cooper, Talal Asad, Eric Hobsbawm, and Charles Tilly. He did extensive archival research in UK, USA, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, Greece, Albania, Kosovo, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, and Yemen. In his research, Dr. Blumi deals with the political and social history of late and post-Ottoman Albania and Yemen in particular, but addresses also broader questions of (post-) modernity, transformation processes, and human agency in Balkan, Middle East, and global history. In overcoming modernist, nationalist, and colonialist presumptions, Blumi delivers critical arguments, theoretical discussions, cross-regional comparisons, and alternative perspectives in understanding the world and its agents. His numerous publications include monographs such as *Rethinking the Late Ottoman Empire: A Comparative Social and Political History of Albania and Yemen, 1878-1918* (2003, republished with Gomidas Press in 2010), *Chaos in Yemen: Societal Collapse and the New Authoritarianism* (Routledge, 2010), *Foundations of Modernity: Human Agency and the Imperial State* (Routledge, 2011), *Reinstating the Ottomans: Alternative Balkan Modernities, 1800-1912* (Palgrave, 2011), and the edited volume *War & Nationalism: The Balkan Wars, 1912-1913, and their Sociopolitical Implications* (co-edited with M. Hakan Yavuz, Univ. Utah Press, 2013). In recent years Blumi has been conducting research on Muslim immigrants in different and distant parts of the globe. By illuminating complexities and diversities of different Muslim and Ottoman itinerant communities in an entangled modern world of networks, narratives, and change, Blumi is not only exploring theoretical conceptualization of social organization and identity work of Ottoman itineraries, but also challenges Eurocentric epistemologies in global history from a post-colonial perspective. The first major output of this new research project is his last monograph *Ottoman Refugees, 1878-1939: Migration in a Post-Imperial World* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015). Currently, Dr. Blumi is an Associate Professor of History and Middle East Studies at Georgia State University, USA.

## Organization

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual MUBIT Doctoral Workshop in Late- and Post-Ottoman Studies in Basel, *A Modern World in Flux: Studying Migration, Refugees, and Settlement Regimes from the Middle East and Beyond*, is a two-day intensive seminar (May 29-30, 2015) organized by Prof. Dr. Maurus Reinkowski, Dr. Selen Etingü, and Alp Yenen, M.A. at the Middle Eastern Studies of Department of Social Sciences at the University of Basel.

The objective of the workshop is for participants to acquire advanced insight into the study of migration, refugees, and settlement regimes in and from the Global South in a historical-comparative and social-theoretical manner.

The doctoral workshop is funded by MUBIT Inter-University Doctoral Coordination in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Basel/Zurich and is a part of the curriculum of the Graduate School of Social Sciences (GSS), University of Basel. For reports on former MUBIT Doctoral Workshops in Late- and Post-Ottoman Studies in Basel, please see:

2013: *Turkish Nationalism: Approaching Ottoman and Islamic Legacies beyond Ethnicity, Secularism, and Westernism*, with Prof. Dr. Erik J. Zürcher (University of Leiden) and Prof. Dr. M. Hakan Yavuz (University of Utah), report written by Alexander E. Balistreri (Princeton University): <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=H-Turk&month=1310&week=d&msg=QNJ9%2BG13sCevwyrQQMkKXQ>

2014: *Arab Nationalism: From Ottoman Empire to Colonial Mandates*, with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hasan Kayali and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Michael Provence (University of California, San Diego), report written by Nova Robinson (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey): <https://networks.h-net.org/node/11419/discussions/46669/workshop-report-‘‘arab-nationalism-ottoman-empire-colonial-mandates’’>

Unfortunately, the organizers cannot assume any travel and accommodation costs. However, a limited number of cheaper accommodation options will be available, which include staying with local undergraduate and graduate students. Please contact Dr. Selen Etingü for information and questions regarding organizational matters at: [g.etingue@unibas.ch](mailto:g.etingue@unibas.ch).

## Application Procedure

PhD students who wish to attend the workshop are asked to write an email to Dr. Selen Etingü ([g.etingue@unibas.ch](mailto:g.etingue@unibas.ch)), with a biographical abstract explaining their research interests and academic background (max. 400 words, in 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, in English). *The deadline for the application is March 15, 2015.* Applicants will receive an answer regarding their participation on April 1.

## Requirements for Successful Participation

Participants are entitled to 3 ECTS points for successful participation. Participants will receive a list of required and recommended readings from the guest lecturers by April 1, 2015. Successful participation at the workshop is subject to the mandatory completion of the required readings in advance and active participation in the workshop discussions.

## Contact

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