

Program in Near & Middle Eastern Studies / the Graduate School of Social Sciences (G3S)
University of Basel

Swiss National Science Foundation Research Project “Futures Interrupted”

Call for Applications

13th Annual MUBIT Doctoral Workshop in Late and Post-Ottoman Studies in Basel

10 - 11 October 2025

Writing contemporary Algeria into the history of the Middle East, Africa and the World

with

Prof. Dr. Malika Rahal

Director of the *Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent*, Paris



Photo by Malika Rahal, Algiers, 2023

.Organized and hosted by
Prof. Dr. Falestin Naïli

About

The Annual MUBIT Doctoral Workshop in Late- and Post-Ottoman Studies is a **two-day workshop in Basel, Switzerland**, designed for international doctoral students conducting research on the Near and Middle East. The workshop consists of a two-day, intensive program in which select students work closely with invited experts. Successful completion of the workshop can entitle students to 3 ECTS credits.

This year, we are thrilled to host **Prof. Dr. Malika Rahal** of the *Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent* (IHTP), Paris, to lead our 13th annual workshop on the topic of **“Writing contemporary Algeria into the history of the Middle East, Africa and the World.”** For more information on the content of the workshop, see below. The 2025 workshop will be held **in person** between **Friday, 10 October (13:30 p.m.)** and **Saturday, 11 October (14:30 p.m.)** at the **University of Basel**.

Application

Currently enrolled Ph.D. students who wish to attend the workshop should write an email to Falestin Naili (falestin.naili@unibas.ch) with a **short text** summarizing their academic background and explaining how this workshop fits in to their research interests (max. 400 words, in third-person singular, in English). Applicants should also provide a **CV** (PDF, in English). Up to 15 applicants will be selected for participation in the workshop, based on relevance of their research project and a demonstrated ability to contribute constructively to the discussions.

The deadline for applications is 25 August 2025. Applicants will receive an answer regarding their participation by 10 September 2025, at the latest. The workshop is **free of charge**. All participants will have lunch and dinner together as part of the programme. Applicants based outside of Switzerland can also apply for some financial support for travel costs (maximum 200 CHF). We will provide successful applicants with information about accommodation options in Basel.

Requirements for Successful Participation

Participants are entitled to 3 ECTS points for successful participation. Participants will receive by mid-September a list of readings to be completed prior to the workshop. Successful participation at the workshop is subject to the mandatory completion of the required readings in advance and active participation in the workshop discussions.

Writing contemporary Algeria into the history of the Middle East, Africa and the World

Course Description

Algeria is the largest country in Africa and the central country of the Maghrib. Its history is better known through its 132-year colonial period (1830-1962), during which it was occupied and became a French settler colony. Independence was gained at the price of an eight year-long war (1954-1962), a war well known thanks to a number of world-famous cultural productions (Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* in 1965 or Youcef Chahine's *Jamila the Algerian*, 1958 for example), and by its vibrant spokespersons (such as Frantz Fanon).

However, beyond the complex questions of settler-colonialism and revolution, the contemporary history of Algeria allows to dive into questions as complex as Arab socialism, Islamism and civil violence, during the « Black Decade » of the 1990s. As such, it is a stimulating entry point into the histories of the Middle East and Africa from the 19th to the 21st centuries.

This workshop aims to open alleyways into this rich history by comparing Algeria's colonial experience with that of its neighbours. It will also consider the model of independent state created in the country after 1962 and the link between socialism and development in the 1960s and 1970s, in connection with Arab socialism developed in countries such as Syria or Iraq. Finally, the workshop aims to raise several questions pertaining to what happens after socialism, the emergence of new political demands (cultural, religious, regional...) and the development of civil violence in the 1990s. While exploring these aspects, participants will be invited to think about the specificities of present time history and about the role of public historians, both in societies of the Global North and the Global South.

Workshop sessions:

1. Occupation, colonization and resistance.
2. Revolution and Independence.
3. Arab socialism.
4. Post socialism.



Photo by Bouchra Bendris

Prof. Dr. Malika Rahal

Malika Rahal is a Franco-Algerian-American historian (PhD 2007, habilitation 2022) who specializes in the contemporary history of North African and, more specifically, Algeria. She works as a senior historian in France, at the *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS) and she is the director of the *Institut d'histoire du temps présent* (CNRS-University Paris 8).

She is the author of several books concerning the history of nationalism and colonization in Algeria. [*Ali Boumendjel. Une affaire française, une histoire algérienne*](#) (La Découverte, 2010 and 2022) is the biography of an Algerian activist and lawyer killed by the French paratroopers during the Battle of Algiers (1957). In [*L'UDMA et les Udmistes. Contribution à l'histoire du nationalisme algérien*](#) (Barkzakh, 2017), she advances our understanding of Ferhat Abbas' political party, the one that did not win independence. In 2022, for the 60th anniversary of Algerian Independence, she published [*Algérie 1962. Une histoire populaire*](#) (La Découverte). Recently, she published a more personal and autobiographical book, in which she also discusses problems and methods of practicing “present time history”, the history of a period of time the witnesses of which are still alive as well as oral history (*Mille histoires diraient la mienne. L'historienne, les témoins et leurs récits*, Éditions de l'EHESS, 2025).

She is currently working with historian Fabrice Riceputi on project [*Mille autres*](#), focusing on forced disappearance as a weapon of colonial violence. She is also involved in [*Gazahistoire. Inventaire d'un patrimoine bombardé*](#), a project aiming to document the destruction by the Israeli army of heritage sites in the Gaza strip since 2023.

Further Information

For more information on the MUBIT program, including reports on previous workshops, please visit:

<https://nahoststudien.philhist.unibas.ch/en/phd/mubit/>

For more information on the program in Near and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Basel, please visit:

<https://nahoststudien.philhist.unibas.ch/en/>

Previous MUBIT Workshops

2013: Turkish Nationalism: Approaching Ottoman and Islamic Legacies beyond Ethnicity, Secularism, and Westernism, with Prof. Erik J. Zürcher and Prof. M. Hakan Yavuz.

2014: Arab Nationalism: From Ottoman Empire to Colonial Mandates, with Prof. Hasan Kayali and Prof. Dr. Michael Provence.

2015: A Modern World in Flux. Studying Migration, Refugees, and Settlement Regimes from the Middle East and Beyond, with Prof. Isa Blumi.

2016: The Main Intellectual Currents in the Late Ottoman Empire, with Prof. Dr. Hani Olu.

2017: From Unionism to Kemalism: Social and Political Transformation of Turkey, with Prof. Asım Karaman and Prof. Ahmet Kaya.

2018: Digital Media, Islam, and Politics in the Middle East, with Prof. Dr. Mervat Hatem.

2019: Values and Status Negotiation: Media in the Middle East and North Africa, with Dr. Roxane Farmanfarmaian.

2020: Arab Marxism: The Global History of Revolutionary Movements in the Middle East in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries, with PD Dr. Manfred Sing and Miriam Younes.

2021: Contemporary Turkish Politics, with Dr. Berk Esen.

2022: Palestine Versus the Palestinians? Writing Palestinians into History, with Prof. Beshara Doumani.

2023: States and Statelessness in the Post-Ottoman Middle East, with Prof. Laura Robson.

2024: The Ottoman Governance of Diversity, with Dr. habil. Nora Lafi

Contact

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MUBIT Organizer, 2025

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