Conference Report

The Pillars of Rule
The Writ of Dynasties and Nation-States in the Middle East and South Asia

University of Zurich
Institute of Asian and African Studies
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Convenors: Daniele Cantini, Bettina Dennerlein, Thiruni Kelegama,
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Max Weber famously argued that states lay claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence over certain circumscribed territories. However, historical and anthropological research has challenged his ideal-typical vision by showing how the idea of the unitary state is a fiction that can only be produced through the action of interrelated but partly autonomous agents. States, and the various institutions that constitute them, face the strategic task of identifying and domesticating the social networks that are necessary for them to secure control over particular territories and their populations. Local strongmen and notables can in turn use their own local influence in order to gain recognition from higher-level, more powerful, state institutions.

The conference *The Pillars of Rule: The Writ of Dynasties and Nation-States in the Middle East and South Asia* held at the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies at the University of Zurich between January 31 and February 1, 2019, brought together anthropologists, historians, philologists, political scientists and sociologists, who convened to explore the ways in which dynastic power and/or the rule of the state is asserted, negotiated and contested across

both the Middle East and South Asia.[1] The convened scholars are working in/on different countries in the Middle East and South Asia, and are based in Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Germany, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Organised in six thematic panels, which sought to achieve a disciplinary and geographical balance, the conference investigated how state and dynastic power are asserted and transformed in various ways across history and geography. The first panel, "the kingmakers", offered four interventions, two coming from experts on the Middle East and two from South Asia, two working with historical materials and two working on contemporary issues. Jo Van Steenbergen (Ghent University) presented a sophisticated analysis of how Ibn Khaldoun and others tried to make sense of the messiness of power structures during what came to be known as the "Mamluk" period in Egypt, between the 13th and the 16th centuries. He showed how, in a period in which the settling of dynasties around former Mamluks, as in case of the Qalawunids, was shaken, "Mamlukisation" as Van Steenbergen put it, was an attempt

among others by historiographers and bureaucrats to construct a narrative inscribing rule into a stable political framework, the Sultanate of Cairo, and a God-given order, the one inaugurated in the 13th century by the establishment of the "reign of the Turks *(dawlat al-Atrāk)*." Stefan Leder (Halle University) offered a theoretical reflection on concepts of governance, moral politics and assertions of normativity in early Islamic history, based on analysis of Arabic and Persian texts from the 8th century onwards. According to Leder, in Islamic contexts, a "functional bi-structuring" characterises premodern depictions of the polity, of good rule and of the way it should rely on the religious sphere, as references to the divine order could always serve as a legitimate tool for criticizing rulers. Turning to South Asia, Milinda Banerjee (Munich University) insisted on the necessity of considering the importance of monarchy in the modern era despite its apparent anachronism, adopting global intellectual history to situate India within trajectories of royal nationhood. From early attempts to emulate the German and Japanese as a way to unify India, to formulate Hindu and Muslims concepts of sovereignty, or to present Asian monarchies as those in South-Asia or in the Middle-East emancipatory counter-models to Western rule, Banerjee showed how royalty was instrumental for shaping the political imaginaries of Indian nationalism. Eventually, he insisted on the vivacity of this discourse, by reminding the audience that until today lower caste and 'tribal' groups sometimes claim regal and divine status to support their demands to participate to the sovereign rule. Finally, Uwe Skoda (Aarhus University) spoke about princely politics and rituals in two neighbouring kingdoms – former princely states and now (sub)districts – of Odisha, in eastern India, and traced back, building on long-term anthropological field research, transformations of royal dynasties with a special focus on the period after the merger of these states with the Indian Union around independence. He argued that, despite similar histori-

cal paths and their geographical proximity, the two case studies present very different political trajectories; one royal family embarked on a successful career-path as "princely politicians", while their kingly neighbours, barred from competing to parliament because their constituency was reserved for Scheduled Tribes (ST), had to stay out of the electoral contest in it and tried to influence its politics by putting a stronger emphasis on the ritual realm and the continuity of a sacrificial polity around the king.

The second panel focused more precisely on genealogies and dynasticism. Arild Ruud and Kenneth Bo Nielsen (both Oslo University) presented a reflection on their ethnographic studies on the power of dynasties in West Bengal and Bangladesh. They argued that political dynasties last because they embody networks of trust which go beyond mere power heritance for one family. Nevertheless, the personal ability to gather funding and to gain public support is crucial for potential heirs to prevail over rivals. Ruud and Bo Nielsen illustrated their point through the analysis of two political campaigns of descendants of political dynasties. In the same line, Lucia Michelutti (University College London) explored the making of a political dynasty in action in a district in western Uttar Pradesh, North India. The founder of the dynasty is a woman *dabang,* a "self-made violent political entrepreneur" who achieves (rather than inherits) power through criminal activities. But once power is reached, in order to settle a family rule, there is a shift from an autonomous toward a paternalistic model of power, in which authority derives from an elder, and this transformation is not always devoid of frustrations for the potential heirs. Bettina Dennerlein (Zurich University) presented an analysis of Morocco's monarchy, which emerged as the sole legitimate representative of the will of the nation after the colonial period, mainly due to the engagement of former King Mohammed V for the country's independence and the subsequent struggles to marginalise the role of the nationalist movement in this pro-

cess. Around the narrative of a "revolution of the king and of the people," monarchy is maintained by resorting to nationalistic themes combined with principles of genealogical legitimacy, thereby legitimizing the politics of reform since 1999 by providing rule with a sense of national continuity. Political authority, embodied by the king and transmitted genealogically from father to son, continued thus to naturalise relations of power, configuring them at the same time as essentially hierarchical, unmediated, and male.

The third panel, which closed the first day of the conference, was devoted to supernatural powers. To continue the discussion initiated by Dennerlein, Hassan Rachik (Hassan II University) reflected upon the relation between monarchy, sacrality and citizenship in Morocco, looking in particular to the reference to the sacred adopted by the monarchy to legitimise its rule. While political critiques from opponents to the monarchy abound, scarce are critiques that address his religious legitimacy, which the king can always use unpredictably to impose his will on politics. As Rachik said, "ambiguity [between the political and the religious roles of the king] does not consist here in an intellectual incapacity to give clear meaning, it is a means at the service of a political action." In 2011, however, slogans appeared such as "enough of sacrality, more freedom *(barka men l-muqaddassāt, zīdūnā f l-hurriyyāt)*" or "neither subjection nor sacrality *(lā raʿāya lā qadāsa)*." As a result, the 2011 Constitution stipulated a more clear-cut distinction of the political and the religious realm. An ethnographic analysis of different ceremonials, such as the kissing of the royal hand, shows however that older understandings of sacrality are still effective, and that in this regard the present moment remains ambivalent. Zakaria Rhani (Mohammed V University) explored saints' shrines in Morocco to investigate the "matrix" formed by the intersections of therapy, religion and politics – and the multiple tensions and conflicts between the actors involved in it – notably the saints, spirits and kings. Through her presentation, she

demonstrated how the matrix is an expression of the political history and imaginary of the country as well as its contemporary articulations at both local and national levels. Stories of conflicts between saints and kings, which Rhani collected around Sufi shrines, find echo in the self-presentation of the former leader of the Islamist party al-ʿAdl w-al-Iḥsān, who claimed a saintly status and descent from the family of the Prophet to criticize king Hassan II. Thus, beside the nationalist narrative highlighted by Dennerlein, alternative narratives persist which give pre-eminence to esoteric might. Lastly, Sidharthan Maunaguru (National University of Singapore) offered a comparative study on Hindu Temples between Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom. While temples in the UK, created by the Tamil diaspora in the last thirty years, became not only places for religious worship but also hubs for political activism and financial support to the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the temples in the North and East of Sri Lanka carved out and maintained for themselves a space outside the Tamil nationalistic and ethnic-identity politics, even during the height of the conflict. In the UK diaspora, Hindu deities also become "refugees," according to Maunaguru's interlocutors, and are thus weakened by the precarious status of temples and the absence of mythical stories on which to reassert their divine powers, allowing the LTTE to enter into the deities' premises to impose their rule. Maunaguru, however, also described alternative venues of power for gods, either by refusing to find a place according to their worshippers, as in the case of a Siva statue which went from place to place settling nowhere definitely, or by serving as intermediaries to cults to gods in Sri Lanka, reinstating through this way their former anchorage in mythical geographies.

The fourth panel presented perspectives on powers lived in the margins, understood in broad terms. Thomas Hüsken (Bayreuth University) presented some of the results of his ongoing ethnographic research on tribes and "political orders in

the making" in Eastern Libya after the collapse of Muʿammar Ghaddafi's rule. The dissolution of the post-colonial order led to the fragmentation of state structures, to more heterogeneity in politics, and to the emergence of non-state power groups which gained relevance on the complex political stage. Many of these processes happen across state borders and are thus transnational realities that challenge state conceptions of sovereignty, territoriality and citizenship. Aymon Kreil (Ghent University) presented his ongoing research on how the Egyptian revolution and the events that followed are lived from the margins. His ethnography leads us to a slightly peripheral neighbourhood in central Cairo, from where people try to make sense of and react to the impossibility of speaking about politics. His research focuses on a workshop's master who appears to be circulating between varied realms in which to assert his authority with more or less success as the coordinates of power were themselves shaken by the struggles at the national level. Finally, Marine Poirer (CEDEJ) presented the case of formerly powerful political actors who are relegated in exile due to the revolution and the ongoing war in Yemen and became "stateless statemen". Her interviews with exiled political leaders in Cairo allow her to analyse the restructuration of political allegiances and the transnational mobilization dynamics of a group broken and split by the revolution and war, which is still struggling to continue to exist politically and socially despite relegation due to distance and the relative exhaustion of former patronage networks.

The fifth panel moved back the analysis to more central actors, dealing with elections and electoral bargains. Nicolas Martin (Zurich University) offered an ethnographic perspective on land grabs in Punjab, focusing in particular on processes of appropriation of common lands in rural areas, land that in theory should be available for rent to the highest bidder and of which a third is reserved for members of the Scheduled Castes. This land however, mostly through electoral politics, ends up being distributed through patronage networks, thereby dispossessing opponents to the ruling party and Dalits, and questioning "political society" (Partha Chatterjee) as an alternative for the poor to the encroachment of capitalism. Mohamed Fahmy Menza (American University in Cairo) presented an analysis of the elections that took place in Egypt in the last years, from the most eventful in the revolutionary years (2011-2013) to a return to a more "stable" mode of voting after 2014, particularly for the parliamentary elections in 2015 and the presidential elections in 2018. His analysis points to the implications of these elections in regard of the agency of Egyptian citizens, as, and of the significance of the electoral process as a whole for current authorities as it became a charade of political support rather than an actual (or even a quasi) competitive arena due to the increasing encroachment of the security apparatuses upon the polity. Bart Klem (Melbourne University) presented an on-going book project on sovereign power, peace interventions and post-war transition in Sri Lanka. With annihilation of the de facto state experiment of the LTTE in 2009, Tamil politics lost a sovereign referent. This shift also marked the demise of a coercively singular Tamil nationalism and the radical opening up of the Tamil political arena, with resulting contentions over the inheritance of the Tamil cause, mobilisation over intra-Tamil divides and the paradox of having to compete for leading Sri Lankan provincial institutions whose foundations are deemed by these very same political actors as tainted by illegitimacy. Finally, Amr Hamzawy (Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin) presented the conditions of law-making amidst the authoritarian upsurge of post-2013 Egypt from the vantage point of a former Egyptian Parliament Member. In order to deconstruct, if not ridicule, the democratically inspired definition of justice and law-making which was dominant in 2011 and 2012, the military-backed government pushed forward a populist understanding of justice as the elimination of state enemies and of the rule of law

as a procedural matter which only the judiciary is allowed to address. On the other hand, Islamist as well as liberal opponents of the government have sought to combat the official populism with a populism in reverse which either defines justice and the rule of law as primarily related to religion or insists on their victimhood.

The sixth and last panel dealt with the relationship of knowledge production and the state, arguing that this relationship was radically altered in the past decades. Mohammed Bamyeh (Pittsburgh University) discussed the broader context for analysing the social and political role of intellectuals across the Arab region: how do the dialectics of modern processes and traditional structures of knowledge affect the relation of intellectuals to the societies in which they lives? To do this, he presented some results of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences statistical researches on knowledge production in Arab countries, run in 2015 and again in 2017, showing where knowledge is produced and circulated, which themes are discussed, and the main challenges for research in the region. Nida Kirmani (Lahore University of Management Sciences) presented a postcolonial and self-reflexive analysis on the conditions of producing knowledge on gender as a female researcher operating across different borders (East/West, India/Pakistan) and endorsing different positionalities. According to her, critical postcolonial theory offers relatively little reflection about the relationship between the research process, knowledge production and power. Her paper discussed the politics of knowledge production, the nature of positionality amidst shifting locations, the binary between 'the field' and 'home', and the intellectual value of maintaining a sense of critical discomfort and self-reflexivity as a researcher in the context of rising xenophobia and nationalism globally and in South Asia in particular. Finally, Daniele Cantini (Zurich University) presented some results of his ongoing researches on the institutional conditions of producing knowledge in Egypt since the inception of the modern university. The ongoing repression of intellectual activities is analysed against the backdrop of past struggles and controversies, from the beginning of modern higher education in Egypt to the early '70s. Moving away from a reproduction of a discourse of crisis and of the impossibility of conducting research, this paper discussed the role of universities, understood as fundamental institutions in the contemporary world, in (re)producing knowledge and the conditions for producing it, as well as notions of what appropriate and permissible research is. In particular, Cantini offered a critical analysis of privatization policies since the 1990s and the changing conditions of research training, particularly at the doctoral level, and its impact in the ongoing co-production of discourses of crisis and dependency.

The papers presented during the conference analysed the formation of rule in different contexts and understandings, from key moments of political transition such as during and after independence struggles, national referendums, or when new monarchs claim their new crown, to attempts at extending their rule in more gradual ways, by for example seeking to undermine the power of local clientelist networks structured around powerful landed groups, or around powerful religious or knowledge producing institutions.

Comparative research is of course always fraught with difficulties, especially when it relies on a dialogue between specialists of regions with such a long-recorded history of dynastic power, proto-bureaucracies and state institutions. Each set of specialists needs to learn a huge quantity of background information to be able to situate the others' works, and to unlearn certain research assumptions which became implicit in the study of its area. Nevertheless, despite its challenges, a dialogue paying attention to the empirical subtleties of the history and society of these two regions also allows an in-depth reflection on the conditions of power that too overtly theory-focused approaches or the modelling of political structures can only difficultly provide.

In this international conference, participants interrogated the social and poli-

tical implications of the shifting balances of power across both the Middle East and South Asia. We believe that the focus on these two regions has been particularly fruitful because both have witnessed the rise of empires and of patterns of decentralized rule, both regions subsequently underwent processes of colonization followed by nation state formation, and most recently both regions have undergone processes of structural adjustment that have diminished the reach of the nation state. Thus, opening a dialogue over power broking across history in these two geographical areas offered new insights into the dynamics of power structures, that is, on the very making of rule.

Daniele Cantini & Aymon Kreil

Tagungsbericht

Komplexität abbilden – Medien, Wissenschaft und die Darstellung von Islam & Nahem Osten

14. Februar 2019 – Asien-Orient-Institut, Universität Zürich

Ausgangslage und Tagungsablauf

Sowohl die (Islam-)Wissenschaft als auch die Medien haben die Aufgabe, die Komplexität der Themengebiete Islam und Naher Osten zu erfassen und im öffentlichen Diskurs zu thematisieren. Die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Medien und Wissenschaften gestaltet sich jedoch oft schwierig.

Auf der Tagung diskutierten Wissenschaftler*innen und Medienvertreter*innen, wie der Austausch zwischen Medien und Wissenschaft anders gestaltet werden könnte. In Diskussionen, Vorträgen und Workshops mit mehr als 120 Teilnehmenden wurden dabei nicht nur Probleme der Berichterstattung identifiziert, sondern auch mögliche Lösungsansätz erarbeitet.

Konzipiert und organisiert wurde die Tagung von mehreren Nachwuchswissenschaftler*innen aus der Islamwissenschaft, der Kommunikationswissenschaft und der Sozialanthropologie der Universität Zürich, der ZHAW und der Universität Bern sowie von einem Journalisten. Unterstützt wurde die Tagung durch die SGMOIK und SGKMZ.

Die Tagung war in drei Teile gegliedert. Zunächst beleuchteten Monika Bolliger (bis Sommer 2018 NZZ-Nahostkorrespondentin) und Nina Fargahi (ehemals NZZ-Nachrichtenredaktion, heute Chef-redaktorin des Medien-Magazins EDITO) die Medienperspektive; im zweiten Block stellte Daniel Gerlach (Orientalist, Nahost-experte und Herausgeber des Magazins ZENITH in Berlin) in seiner Keynote die Frage, welche Art von Nahostexpert*innen zielführend ist, und an der anschliessenden Panel-Diskussion erörterten Wissenschaftler*innen die Zusammenarbeit von Medien und Wissenschaft. Im dritten Block wurden in vier Workshops einzelne Aspekte der Berichterstattung (Zugang und Recherche; Islamismus; Macht der Sprache; Islam in der Schweiz) gemeinsam behandelt. Abgeschlossen wurde die Veranstaltung mit einer öffentlichen Podiumsdiskussion. Unter der Leitung von Amira Hafner-Al Jabaji (SRF) diskutierten Christoph Keller (SRF2 Kultur), Katia Murmann (Blick-Gruppe), Armina Omerika (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), Reinhard Schulze (Universität Bern) und Stefan Weidner (Islamwissenschaftler und Autor) zusammen mit dem Publikum über Probleme und mögliche Lösungen.

Diskussionen und Ergebnisse

Drei Punkte haben sich im Verlauf der Veranstaltung als zentral erwiesen:
1) Wie kann die Zusammenarbeit

zwischen Medien und Wissenschaft organisiert werden? Auf der anderen Seite ist die Medienarbeit an den Universitäten weitgehend ein Fremdkörper. Insgesamt erscheint eine stärkere Strukturierung der Zusammenarbeit notwendig; Schnittstellenfunktionen könnten hier Institutionen wie die SGMOIK oder das FINO der Universität Bern übernehmen.

2) Welche Komplexität wird gefordert? Herauskristallisiert haben sich zwei Komplexitätsebenen: Die Darstellung von Konzepten, z.B. «dem» Islam; und die Darstellung von Menschen. Wenn Gesellschaften oder Einzelpersonen auf ihre religiöse Zugehörigkeit reduziert werden, primär als Muslim*innen gesehen und darüber definiert werden, kann auch der differenzierteste Umgang mit dem Islam nichts an dieser Reduktion ändern. Komplexität kann darüber hinaus auch heissen, dass nicht abschliessende, gar normative Antworten und Kommentare geliefert werden, sondern dass auch Debatten innerhalb der entsprechenden Glaubensgemeinschaften oder Gesellschaften abgebildet werden.

3) Wissenschaft und Medien sind nicht nur voneinander getrennte Felder, sondern Teil gemeinsamer gesellschaftlicher Entwicklungen. Es wäre wünschenswert, wenn die Wissenschaft ihre Erkenntnisse aktiv in die Medien tragen würde. Dadurch könnten diese Erkenntnisse in die Beschäftigung mit dem Islam integriert werden, statt dass man sie in die Feuilletons verbannt.

Fazit und Ausblick

Aus Sicht der Veranstalter*innen und auch aufgrund zahlreicher Rückmeldungen kann für diese Tagung ein äusserst positives Fazit gezogen werden. Wissenschaftler*innen und Medienvertreter*innen wurden in Dialog gebracht, von beiden Seiten besteht grosses Interesse am Austausch und an einer gemeinsamen Verbesserung der Zusammenarbeit. Unterstrichen wurde dieser Eindruck durch die disziplinäre Vielfalt der Referierenden sowie engagierte und durchaus kontroverse Diskussionen mit dem Publikum. Teilweise wurden auch konkrete Lösungen vorgestellt (etwa: mehr Diversität in der Aufstellung journalistischer Outlets, d.h. gezielte Anstellung muslimischer Journalist*innen; Fokus auf Hintergrundberichte anstelle von Krisen; Möglichkeit, zu stereotypen Narrativen Gegen-Narrative anzubieten). Auf Seiten der Wissenschaft ist eine aktivere Presse- und Medienarbeit gefordert, bei der spannende Ergebnisse nicht nur intern diskutiert, sondern auch aktiv an den Journalismus herangetragen und für diesen alltagssprachlich aufbereitet werden. Beide Seiten sind also gefordert, aktiv an einer Veränderung der Berichterstattung über Islam und Nahen Osten mitzuwirken.

Emanuel Schäublin

Tagungsbericht

The Near Eastern Saddle Period: The Formation of Modern Concepts in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian

International Conference, University of Bern, June 12–14, 2019

Ziel der Konferenz war die stärkere Vernetzung sowie theoretisch-methodische Weiterentwicklung des jungen Forschungsfeldes nahöstlicher Begriffsgeschichte. Dieses Ziel darf angesichts der intensiven Diskussionen unter den rund 40 Teilnehmenden, darunter 18 aktive Beitragende, deren Papers aus rund 50 eingereichten Abstracts ausgewählt wurden, als erreicht gelten.

Die für den Titel der Konferenz bei Koselleck entlehnte *saddle period* (*Sattelzeit*) diente dabei primär der Sichtbarmachung des speziellen Interesses an modernen Konzepten sowie der Integration verschiedener Einzelstudien in einem gemeinsamen Rahmen. Als Metapher markierte die *saddle period* somit vorwiegend ein Erkenntnisinteresse. Als heuristisches Instrument konfigurierte sie bestimmte Leitfragen, wurde aber auch fruchtbar kritisch reflektiert hinsichtlich der Möglichkeiten und Grenzen ihrer Übertragbarkeit auf nahöstliche Begriffsgeschichte.

Eine grundlegend kritische Reflexion der Anwendung von Begriffsgeschichte koselleckscher Prägung auf aussereuropäische Forschungsfelder stand im Zentrum der Keynote von Margrit Pernau (Berlin) mit dem Titel „Koselleck trave-

ling. How do we translate the history of concepts?", welche die Konferenz am Abend des 12. 6. eröffnete.

Der Tag des 13. 6. war mit 4 Panels der gefüllteste und intensivste der drei Konferenztage. Nach einführenden Überlegungen des Konferenzorganisators, Florian Zemmin, zur nahöstlichen Begriffsgeschichte und zur Sattelzeit hörten und diskutierten die Anwesenden je sechs Papers zur arabischen und zur (osmanisch-) türkischen Begriffsgeschichte.

Im ersten Panel zur *Nahḍa* kamen dabei ein historischer, ein literaturwissenschaftlicher und ein politikwissenschaftlicher Zugang ins Gespräch: Jens-Peter Hanssen (Toronto) präsentierte seine Arbeit zu *Nafir Suriyya (1860-61): Towards a conceptual history of the Nahda*; Stephan Guth (Oslo) sprach zu *Introducing a new literary sensibility: Khalīl al-Khūrī reads Lamartine* und Wael Abu-ʿUksa (Jerusalem) präsentierte eine *Diachronic perspective on the concept of tamaddun*.

Das zweite „arabische" Panel widmete sich der Formierung des modernen Subjekts unter verschiedenen Aspekten: Bildung, Politik und Philosophie: Susanna Ferguson (Columbia University) präsentierte ihre Arbeit zu *Tracing tarbiya: edu-*

cating children across the nineteenth century Divide; der Vortrag von Nina Studer (Bern) war zu *Voicing dissent: women and the anti-mandate protests of 1925 and 1926 in Syria and Lebanon* und jener von Sevinç Yasargil (Bern) zu *The concept of freedom in ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Badawī's existentialist philosophy*.

Das erste Panel des Nachmittags war der modernen osmanischen sozio-politischen Ordnung gewidmet und umfasste die folgenden drei Beiträge: Daniel Kolland (Berlin) präsentierte *Ottoman concepts of global modernity: the global temporality of the Ottoman revolution*; Nikos Sigalas (Kreta) und Markus Dressler (Leipzig) analysierten aus merklich unterschiedlicher, aber komplementärer Perspektive den Begriffswandel von *millet* in ihren Vorträgen zu *How millet became the nation* und *From "religious community" to "nation": the transformation of the term millet in the Ottoman Saddle Period*.

Das zweite (osmanisch-)türkische Panel war *Science and the social* gewidmet und umfasste ebenfalls drei Beiträge: Alp Eren Topal (Oslo) präsentierte sein zusammen mit Einar Wigen (Oslo) verfasstes Paper *From Galenic humors to modern biology: transformation of Ottoman political metaphors*; Erdal Kaynar (Strasbourg) sprach zu *Conceptualising the social in the late Ottoman Empire* und Kenan Tekin (Yalova) behandelte *Transformations in the concept of science during the Ottoman Saddle Period*.

Das erste Panel des 14. 6. zu *Classical concepts and novel ideas* stellte die Frage nach Kontinuitäten und Brüchen in der Formation moderner Konzepte, die in fast allen Beiträgen thematisiert wurde, besonders in den Vordergrund. Neben dem Beitrag von Soumaya Louhichi-Güzel (Frankfurt) zu *Khilāfa: an evolving concept of political authority in Sunni thought* waren zwei Beiträge zum Persischen vertreten: Ata Anzali (Middlebury) sprach zu *Continuity and change: the case of ʿirfan in modern Persian literature* und Christopher Pooya Razavian (Birmingham) präsentierte seine Arbeit zu *Social justice in Āʾīn-i Islām*.

Das letzte Panel zu *Despotism and humanity* bestand aufgrund der kurzfristigen Absage einer Teilnehmerin aus nur zwei Beiträgen: Ingrid Eskild (Oslo) sprach zu *The Revival of the term istibdād: diagnostics of a society between the old world and the new* und Ömer Faruk Köksal (Paris/Heidelberg) zu *Uses of counter-concepts in the late Ottoman period: the case of humanity, 1908-1914*.

Ein Fazit in der Abschlussdiskussion war, dass die Metapher der *Sattelzeit* in der Tat vorrangig der Integration verschiedener Einzelprojekte unter einem gemeinsamen Erkenntnisinteresse dienen kann. Für einzelne Forschungsprojekte bedürfen spezifische Aspekte der Sattelzeit hingegen jeweils der Spezifizierung um handhabbar und fruchtbar zu sein bzw. können andere, konkretere Konzepte zielführender sein. In letzterem Fall provoziert das Deutungsangebot der Sattelzeit aber, auch wegen ihrer teils problematischen Grundannahmen, in fruchtbarer Weise die Reflexion und Erläuterung alternativer Deutungsangebote und theoretischer Prämissen.

Die Tatsache, dass bei der Berner Konferenz derlei theoretisch-methodische Fragen in so konstruktivem Rahmen von Beitragenden mit verschiedenen Hintergründen behandelt werden konnten und sicherlich weiteren Austausch nach sich ziehen werden, war auch der grosszügigen Unterstützung der Veranstaltung durch verschiedene Institutionen zu verdanken, die neben Anreise- und Übernachtungskosten der aktiven Teilnehmenden auch die Verpflegung übernahmen. Namentlich zu danken ist: dem Schweizer Nationalfonds; der MVUB der Universität Bern; der Burgergemeinde Bern; dem Institut für Islamwissenschaft und Neuere Orientalische Philologie der Universität Bern, welches die Veranstaltung auch organisierte; dem Center for Global Studies der Universität Bern; dem Center for the Study of Language and Society der Universität Bern und, nicht zuletzt, dem SNF-Forschungsprojekt *The Roots of Citizenship?*, das von Henning Sievert geleitet wird.

Florian Zemmin