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CONGRESS

Middle East and Muslim Worlds
Studies

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Panel 15

The Other in the Holy Land (Terra Sancta)?

This workshop aims to investigate the traces of «Christians'» keen interest in (re)settlement in late Ottoman Palestine from the second half of the 19th century. We know that the modernizations suggested with the Tanzimat contributed, paradoxically, to the installation of new churches and schools, as well as the opening of consulates by European countries, all interested in the weakening of the Ottoman Empire. Recent historiography has indeed shown how much this creeping colonization anticipated the actual colonization of the mandate. From this period onwards, we thus notice constructions linked to the new Western Christian presence - churches, schools and hospices -, which materialized and embodied the project.

From the point of view of the current situation, we will observe the recent Palestinian heritage, and firstly the schools, as tangible catalysts of a project for cultural, economic and political colonization in a political and inter-faith space during a process of identity construction: the school as a place where, in its relations with the Ottoman authority, the Arab nation, the neighboring states, the Zionist entity then the Hebrew state, and finally the colonial powers, with their power games, its relationship with the Other is constantly redefined.

If a history of education has already been written (curriculum, clientele, textbooks, pedagogy), as well as political history and a history of interfaith relations in Palestine (19th-20th centuries), we will focus on the way these school buildings, built mainly by missionary congregations, could become the object of heritage policies.

We will try to unravel the narrative concerning the sites of this cultural presence, both tangible and intangible. As an observatory of the evolution of both inter-faith and political relations, this heritage sees in the paths of the congregations who had opened a whole network of establishments (schools of the Brothers, the Sisters of the Rosary and the seminary of the Latin Patriarchate of Beit Jala) and in their legacy today on both sides of the Wall, one of the sources for the narrative of the contemporary history of Palestine.

Person in charge : Bocquet Jérôme (CITERES EMAM UMR 7324 CNRS & Université de Tours)

Discussant : Carabelli Romeo (CITERES EMAM UMR 7324 CNRS & Université de Tours)

Program

Bandini Catérina (EHESS, Centre Maurice Halbwachs UMR 8097, Centre de recherche français de Jérusalem)

Christians in Palestine and Palestinian Christians: a colonial relationship through the prism of cultural and educational institutes (20th and 21st centuries)

Schools of missionary origin have played - and continue to play - a major role in the education and socialization of the Christian community in Palestine. Nevertheless, local Christian institutes (schools,

universities, cultural centers, seminaries) were established from the 1970s onwards, particularly during the Oslo period (1993-2000). There are several reasons for this. On the one hand, there was the need, especially for the Palestinian Protestants, to train an indigenous clergy: this was the aim of the Bethlehem Bible College, engaged since its foundation (1979) in the promotion of anti-Zionist Palestinian evangelism. On the other hand, some institutes, like the Dar al-Kalima campus in Bethlehem (2003), are in line with the peace agreements that encouraged a national construction effort through the creation of an independent Palestinian education system. These places became privileged centers for the spread of the ideas of Palestinian liberation theology, which had an ambivalent relationship with the Western Christian community: a call for solidarity, but also a denunciation of the collusion of some Churches with Zionist ideology and the State of Israel.

Bocquet Jérôme (CITERES EMAM UMR 7324 CNRS & University of Tours)

The missionary, political and patrimonial logic of a European presence (Beit Jala, Beit Hanina), new objects of study for historians (school of the Rosary Sisters, Latin seminary)?

The aim is to understand the steps in the installation of the congregation of the Holy Rosary Sisters in Palestine after 1884, following the French Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition. The order has always been presented, from its foundation to the present day, as «Arab sisters for the Arab World» whose mother-house and main school in Beit Hanina, to the north of Jerusalem, were governed by various factors still visible today, in the age of the intifada or the Palestinian Authority. They opened houses that answered not only spatial and pastoral logic but also political logic.

Another aim is to understand the map and the chronology of their settlements in Ottoman Palestine, then later in the Arab world, in Syria and Lebanon first of all, then Egypt in 1991, to observe missionary, political and heritage logics at work (houses in Jerusalem and on the road to Ramallah to welcome pilgrims, work at the patriarchate, connections with the European consulates, national movement, approaches to Zionism).

The study will also offer us comparative perspectives on the Latin schools in Palestine (schools of the Rosary Sisters and St. Joseph, Latin seminary).

Carabelli Romeo et Pinna Raimondo (CITERES EMAM UMR 7324 CNRS & University of Tours)

The installation of the Christian Brothers in Ottoman Palestine

Our contribution presents the actual installation process of the Christian Brothers in lands that have sometimes been called Holy. They were invited to create their educational establishments in Palestine from the 1870s onwards. In the cases of Jerusalem and Jaffa - their first two schools - they took over those that already existed and were run by Franciscans, while in Haifa they answered a request from the Carmelites. From 1889 onwards, the Brothers tried to settle in Bethlehem, not to build a school but to create a site suitable for spiritual exercises. In this case, Franciscans were opposed to the creation of a school, which was finally opened only in 1909 and with extreme difficulty. The installation phases followed rather varied processes according to whether the Brothers were taking over an existing school or whether they were starting a completely new one. The acquisition of land, the modification of existing buildings and the construction of new ones to accommodate the Brothers illustrate the relations with the Ottoman authorities but also with the inhabitants and other religious institutions.

Our idea is to use the methodologies of prosopography and microhistory and to apply them to these buildings. We are just beginning our work which is being severely restricted by the limitations on travel, especially about the historical archive of the Christian Brothers in Rome.

Sanchez Summerer Karène (Leiden University, NWO CrossRoads)

Cultural diplomacy and arabisation of the French Catholic missionary congregations' heritage in Palestine (1908-1968)

In the multicultural landscape of Ottoman Palestine, the authorities favored the development of several French educational congregations, which arrived as early as 1848 and which were still prosperous after

the Young Turk revolution of 1908. The British Mandate authorities left the Christian communities out of their proto-national program and communitarian policy, while the rivalries between European countries included a cultural component, placing missionary schools more or less at the center of their measures. Benchmark sites of the religious, nationalist and anti-Zionist manifestations of Nabi Musa, of the fighting in the Spring of 1948 and the reception of Palestinian refugees, a spearhead the Arabization of education after 1948 and especially 1955, these schools belonged to the different Arab spaces in Jerusalem. This contribution will examine the reasons, contexts and modalities of their registration and gradual adoption as part of local heritage, from the Young Turk Revolution to the aftermath of the Six-Day War.

Dominique Trimbur (Centre de Recherche français à Jérusalem)

Notre-Dame de France in Jerusalem: installation of a religious community and appropriation of land in Ottoman Palestine

We'll observe the conditions in which the French Assumptionists settled in Jerusalem in the last decades of the 19th century, with the gradual construction of Notre-Dame de France. It is a large building still visible today, destined to realize their vocation: to house a study center for future Assumptionists and a hospice for the many pilgrims that the congregation took to the Holy Land. A material appropriation, the heart of a «French quarter» of Jerusalem partly realized, it is also a question of a mental appropriation, Catholic and French, of an idealized Palestine.