

International Round-Table Conference “The Qur’an in its Milieu of Origin. Possibilities of the Historical Reconstruction of the Qur’anic Revelation”, 08-10 November 2019, Münster, Germany

Conference schedule

Different ways of the interpretation of the Qur’an, often utmost diverse, have existed side by side ever since the emergence of the Muslim community. With the beginning of the modern age, Islamic scholars advocated to rethink traditional ways of interpretation by means of the adaptation of a 'critical' exegesis in order to understand the Qur'anic message within modern circumstances. Important thinkers, such as Fazlur Rahman (1911-1988), developed distinct theories of hermeneutical interpretation of the revelation, to reconcile tradition, e.g. Qur'anic norms, with the values of modernity. As a reaction to a widespread literal interpretation of the Qur’an, being more focused on the wording than locating the Qur’an in its historical context, an increasing number of contemporary scholars of the Qur’an argue for a contextualizing interpretation, placing the holy text in its milieu of origin. In doing so, scholars attempt to situate the Qur’an in the historical context of 7th century Arabia. For this purpose, a variety of methodological tools is at hand, such as the 'historical-critical interpretation,' developed by Christian theologians. It is today adapted and applied successfully to the field of Qur'anic Studies. At the same time, the historical context is reconstructed based on traditional Islamic sources by many scholars.

The second conference of the project „Round-Table Qur’anic Studies – traditional and modern approaches to the Qur’an in dialogue“ is particularly dedicated to the context of the Qur'an in its milieu of origin. The project was launched in 2018, aiming to establish a research platform for an academic exchange between representatives of the different inner Islamic schools of interpretation.

The aim of the conference in 2019 is to establish a vivid international discourse as well as to create an academic network in which open discussions will be able to develop or to improve scholarly methods for the contextual interpretation of the Qur’an. Considering the methods alluded to above, several critical questions arise that are to be discussed during the conference.

Fr, 08. NOV. Greetings and Keynote; Session I

16:30-17:00	Arrival and Coffee
17:00	Greetings and Introductory Remarks Mouhanad Khorchide (Director of the Centre for Islamic Theology)
17:15	Keynote Aziz al-Azmeh (Central European University, Budapest): <i>The Qur’an in its Milieu of Origin</i>
17:45-18:00	<i>Discussion</i>

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18:00	Session I: The Historical Reconstruction of the Qur'an in Modernity
18:00-18:30	Mehmet Pacacı (University of Ankara/ University of Ibn Haldun): <i>Historical Setting vs. Modern Reading of the Qur'an</i>
18:30-19:00	Oliver Leaman (University of Kentucky): <i>How Useful is History in Understanding the Qur'an?</i>
19:00-19:30	<i>Discussion: Expectations and Perspectives</i> Chair : Kamil Öktem
20:00	<i>Dinner at the Center for Islamic Theology</i>
Sa, 09. NOV.	Round-Table Sessions
09:00	Session II: Pre-Islamic Sources and Intertexts I
09:00-09:20	Heidar Eyvazi (University of Religions and Denominations (URD), Qom): <i>From Akkadian - Aramaic Texts to the Qur'an</i>
09:20-09:40	Emran El-Badawi (University of Houston): <i>The Decline of the Church and the Condemnation of the Priesthood in the Qur'an, a Model to Put the Text in its Historical Context</i>
09:40-10:00	Mehdi Azaiez (Catholic University of Leuven): <i>New Insights on Quranic First Addressee</i>
10:00-10:30	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Raid al-Daghistani
10:30-11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00	Session III: Pre-Islamic Sources and Intertexts II
11:00-11:20	Mahmood Makvand (Kharazmi University, Tehran): <i>The Application of Intertextual Reading in Reconstructing the Historical Context of the Qur'an</i>
11:20-11:40	Sahiron Syamsuddin (Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta): <i>The Story of Noah in the Bible and the Qur'an: In Search for its Original Meaning and its Contemporary Significance</i>
11:40-12:10	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Dirk Hartwig
12:10-13:10	<i>Lunch break</i>
13:10	Session IV: Pre-Islamic Society and Historical Reconstruction
13:10-13:30	Munirul Ikhwan (Kalijaga State Islamic University (UIN), Yogyakarta): <i>Islamic Monotheism and the Emerging Public Sphere in Late Antique Arabia</i>
13:30-13:50	Zahra Mohagheghian (University of Tehran): <i>The Daughters of Allah: Possibilities of the Historical Reconstruction in the Qur'anic Revelation</i>
13:50-14:10	Mohammed Ali Tabatabaei (University of Tehran): <i>Who, When and Where Composed the Quran? The Historical Implications of the Cosmological Themes of the Quran"</i>
14:10-14:40	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i>

	Chair: Stephan Kokew
14:40-15:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:00	Session V: Pre-Islamic Poetry and Early Islamic Sources
15:00-15:20	Aida Gasimova (Baku State University): <i>Occult Lore in pre- and Early Islamic Texts</i>
15:20-15:40	Johanna Pink (University of Freiburg): <i>Historicity, Heritage and Piety. The Contemporary Exegetical Genre of „Tafsir in the Order of Revelation“</i>
15:40-16:00	Akif Koc (Ankara University): <i>Tabari's (d. 310/923) Appreciation of Farra's (d.207/822) Grammatical Preferences</i>
16:00-16:30	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Yassine Yahyaoui
16:30-17:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
17:00	Session VI: Chronology
17:00-17:20	Karim Elsaïad (Cairo University): <i>"History of Revelation and Revelation of History The Phenomenological Deconstruction of Historicism in Qur'an Interpretation"</i>
17:20-17:40	Muammar Zain Qadafy (University of Freiburg): <i>"Different Chronology, Different Story? Evaluating Traditional Narratives of Qur'anic Revelation"</i>
17:40-18:00	Irma Makharadze (Tbilisi Institute of Asia and Africa): <i>The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus – Common Motif of Christianity and Islam</i>
18:00-18:30	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Recep Aktas
18:30	<i>Dinner</i>
Su, 10. NOV.	Round-Table Sessions
09:00	Session VII: Bridge-Building
09:00-09:20	Natana de Long-Bas (Boston College): <i>"From 'Sources and Origins' to 'Conversation Partners': Reframing the Historical Construction of the Qur'an"</i>
09:20-10:00	Joseph Lumbard (Hamad bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar): <i>Reconsidering Izutsu's "Philosophical Semantics" of the Quran</i>
10:00-10:30	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Dina El Omari
10:30-11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00	Session VIII: Linguistic structures I
11:00-11:20	Georges Archer (Iowa State University): <i>Squaring the Circle: The Historical Values and Problems of Qur'ānic Ring Structures</i>
11:20-11:40	Ghasem Darzi (Shahid Beheshti University, Iran): <i>The Language of the Qur'ān's Approach to Gender discourses; Toward Historical Reconstruction of Qur'ān's context</i>
11:40-12:10	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i>

	Chair: Magda Al Sibai
12:10-13:10	<i>Lunch break</i>
13:10	Session IX: Linguistic Structures II
13:10-13:30	Mohammed Hamza (University of Sousse): <i>The Historical Order of the Qur'an Between the Context of Revelation and the Requirements of Understanding</i>
13:30-13:50	Morteza Arab (University of Tehran): <i>Discourse Analysis as a Context Discovery Tool</i>
13:50-14:10	Narjes Tavakoli Mohammadi (University of Tehran): <i>"The Function of Discourse Analysis in Historical-Contextual Interpretation of the Qur'an"</i>
14:10-14:40	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Nabila Chababi
14:40-15:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
15:00	Session X: Themes and history
15:00-15:20	Abraham Silo Wilar (ICRS Yogyakarta): <i>"A Preliminary Research on Truth in Interpreting the Qur'an: A Case of Qs.33:40"</i>
15:20-15:40	Ahmad Mughzi Abdillah (Ankara University): <i>Cultural Anthropological Reading of Abū Al-Su'ūd's Tafsīr (Discussion On Qur'anic Verses that Refer to Violence)</i>
15:40-16:00	Nazim Ben Ibrahim (University of Mannouba): <i>The Historical Reading of Verses of Violence</i>
16:00-16:30	<i>Roundtable Discussion</i> Chair: Catharina Rachik
16:30-17:30	Final hosted discussion Development of a New Canon of Methods? Host: Mouhanad Khorchide <i>Resumée/Dismissal</i>

Conference venue

Johanniter Gästehaus,
Weißenburgstr. 60 - 64
48151 Münster, Germany

Conference coordination

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