

Call for Papers

International Workshop 'Media Representations of Law and Justice: Middle Eastern Perspectives'

12–13 March 2020
Leipzig, Germany

The Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) in cooperation with the Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Leipzig is pleased to announce the Call for Papers for the international and interdisciplinary Workshop 'Media Representations of Law and Justice: Middle Eastern Perspectives' in Germany at the Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Leipzig, 12–13 March 2020.

Law and/in popular culture has been an emerging field of research (at least) since the 1980s. Its initial prominence was primarily limited to North America – the main hub of popular legal culture which, through various kinds of movies and television shows, impinged on what people generally believe about law and legal institutions. By now, the interrelation of law and popular culture has made its way into European legal academia. In addition, transnational comparative studies on how law and justice are portrayed in movies and fictional television dramas have been conducted, providing additional insight for both scholars of law and media studies.

At the same time, the law and/in popular culture discourse has been largely restricted to Europe and North America. Research usually centers on 'Western' legal culture and its cinematic/televised representations. Oftentimes, non-'Western' legal traditions and systems are only portrayed as supposed counter-examples to the liberal state under the rule of law that is promoted in dominant popular culture.

The AGYA workshop on 'Media Representations of Law and Justice: Middle Eastern Perspectives' moves away from this established regional focus by including Middle Eastern legal regimes and their respective local media depictions. We particularly invite contributions on Arabic-language cinematic and television formats (including those on more recent streaming services and social media sites) screening legal system in either contemporary or historical perspective. We also welcome papers on legal dramas from neighboring countries in the 'Greater Middle East', as well as comparative studies to allow for broader transnational perspectives. By enabling a conversation not only between different regional sites of media production, but also among various disciplines, a range of analytical methods will be tested and employed to analyze the means and ends to which a legal system is portrayed in popular formats.

Topics, themes, and issues to be explored include, but are not confined to the following:

- Cultural representations of domestic legal systems and legal traditions in contemporary courtroom dramas;
- The political framework in which legal dramas are produced and its impact on both content and format;
- Audiences, viewers, and their changing perceptions of the law;
- The impact of satellite TV and online streaming services on legal dramas, their production, and content;
- Plots, characters, and sociopolitical critique in legal dramas.

The workshop is organized by AGYA member Lena-Maria Möller (Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Leipzig/Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law, Hamburg) and AGYA alumna Hanan Badr (Institute for Media and Communication Studies, Freie Universität Berlin). Travel costs and accommodation for confirmed speakers will be covered by AGYA. Funding is still subject to approval.

Those interested in presenting papers are invited to send a tentative title, an abstract of around 300-500 words, and a short biography to Lena-Maria Möller (moeller@mpipriv.de) by **8 January 2020**.

Notifications of acceptance will be announced by 15 January 2020 and draft papers will be due by 15 February 2020. The workshop language will be English. The organizers aim to publish the papers either as an edited volume or as a special issue of an academic journal.

About AGYA

The Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) is based at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) and at the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt. It was established in 2013 and is the first bilateral young academy worldwide. AGYA promotes research cooperation among outstanding early-career researchers from all disciplines who are affiliated with a research institution in Germany or in any Arab country. The academy supports the innovative projects of its members in various fields of research as well as in science policy and education. Currently, 50 members – in equal number Arab and German scholars – realize joint projects and initiatives. AGYA is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and various Arab cooperation partners.

For more information about AGYA and the Institute of Oriental Studies, University of Leipzig please visit:

www.agya.info
www.orient.uni-leipzig.de