

## Call for Applications

### Practicing “Blickwechsel”: Entangled Perspectives on Theory, Arts and History in the Field of Arabic Literary Studies

#### AGYA International Bilingual Summer School

American University of Beirut

September 22–24, 2017

as part of the summer school project

“Arabische Philologien im Blickwechsel / نحو دراسات عربية بروى متعددة”

The summer school project “Arabische Philologien im Blickwechsel / نحو دراسات عربية بروى متعددة” has a twofold agenda: to facilitate the systematic exchange of perspectives and experiences between scholars based in the West (Germany in particular) and in the Arab world, and to foster the use of Arabic as an academic language. Addressing young scholars (Phd students, postdocs) in the field of Arabic literary studies based in Germany and other European countries and the Arab world, it provides them the opportunity to present their own research in an international academic context, to discuss current, innovative approaches to Arabic philology, literature and culture, and to practice the respective foreign language (English or Arabic).

The German metaphor “Blickwechsel”, as discussed by Hans Belting (2008), is crucial to both the concept of the summer school project as a whole and the topic of this particular summer school. It comprises a twofold dimension, i.e. the *exchange* of academic knowledge and the *change* of one’s own academic perspective. Such an “entangled perspective” invites to collaborative knowledge production and academic self-reflection.

In accordance to this approach, the thematic focus of this year’s summer school is laid on entanglements, as expressed by the concept “Blickwechsel”. In recent years, a wide range of academic disciplines have tried thoroughly to overcome culturalist, nationalist and hegemonic perspectives and to focus instead on transfer, collaboration and entanglements in history, culture and arts. Approaches that could be discussed during the summer school range from Edward Said’s “contrapuntal reading” of novels from the British empire in order to unveil the neglected colonial other and accentuate implications of colonialism (1993) to Shmuel Eisenstadt’s concept of “multiple modernities” refuting homogenizing and hegemonizing conceptualization of European and Western modernity (2002) to Belting’s “Blickwechsel” which uncovers a historical encounter between Abbasid Baghdad and Renaissance Florence and its lasting effect on Western visual culture (2008). The concept of “entangled history”, in addition, emphasizes the importance of circulation, exchange and flow of knowledge between communities, nations and empires.

The AGYA summer school addresses young scholars (PhD students and postdocs) in the field of Arabic Literary Studies, both classic and modern, in a wide sense (including arts, history, philosophy etc.) to discuss various dimensions of “Blickwechsel” that are part of their research. The “entangled perspective” may refer to a topic, theory or method of their research and may be central for the whole project or only for parts of it; however, it should be central to the scholars’ academic intervention. In the framework of the summer school, each young scholar will have the opportunity to present and discuss intensively his/her project in small working groups. In addition, all participants will discuss in plenary sessions theoretical approaches based on selected Arabic and English texts that will be provided by the organizers beforehand.

Participants will be requested to give a short presentation of (parts of) their current research project (20 min.) in English or Arabic; they are highly encouraged to choose the language they are less familiar with. In addition, they are supposed to prepare the English and Arabic texts distributed beforehand (ca. 40 pages in total) and participate actively in plenary discussions. Good knowledge of Arabic and English is required. Travel and accommodation expenses of invited participants will be fully covered by AGYA. Funding is still subject to final approval.

Please submit, in English or Arabic, an abstract of your research project (3-5 pages, including a passage on entangled perspectives), a short letter of motivation, a short CV and the names of two academic references (one single pdf file) to [arabic-philologies@agya.info](mailto:arabic-philologies@agya.info) by 25 August 2017. Do not hesitate to contact us for general inquiries.

The summer school is organized by AGYA members Bilal Orfali (American University of Beirut) and Barbara Winckler (Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster), in cooperation with Christian Junge (Philipps-Universität Marburg). It is part of the research projects of the Arab German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA).