The Contested City: Jerusalem 1917-2017

A Full Day Conference organised by
Middle East Institute (MEI) Transystemic Law Research Cluster
Conference Statement

This workshop is devoted to the historical, legal, and political aspects of the Jerusalem Question from the Ottoman period to the present. The years 1917-2017 have been chosen as the timeframe as these span two controversial moments in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict: the year of the famous Balfour Declaration promising the Jewish people a national home in Palestine, and President Trump’s decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Jerusalem is not only a symbol of the long-running Israel-Palestine conflict, however, it is also a living city, where peoples of all faiths have lived, prayed, and worked. In this workshop historians, political scientists, and legal scholars from all sides of the dispute, gather to discuss the different stages of Jerusalem’s history with panels devoted to Ottoman Jerusalem, Jerusalem in 1948, modern Jerusalem, the Holy Places, and the city’s cultural heritage.
Conference Schedule

Thursday, July 4, 2019

8.30am REGISTRATION

9.00am INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Bilahari Kausikan
Chairman, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore

Victor Kattan
Senior Research Fellow, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore

9.20am KEYNOTE LECTURE

Michael Dumper
Professor in Middle East Politics, University of Exeter, UK

10.00am BREAK

10.30am PANEL DISCUSSION ONE: OTTOMAN JERUSALEM

Chairperson
Serkan Yolocan
Research Fellow, Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore

Panellists
Holy Land or Palestine? The Establishment of the Italian Consulate in Jerusalem
Roberto Mazza
Lecturer, Department of History, University of Limerick, Ireland.

The De-Municipalization of Urban Governance and of the Post-Ottoman Political Sphere in Jerusalem
Falistin Naïlii
Institut français du Proche-Orient (Ifpo), Amman, Jordan.

12.00pm PANEL DISCUSSION TWO: JERUSALEM IN 1948

Chairperson
Gretchen Head
Assistant Professor, Humanities, Yale-NUS College

Panellists
“Corpus separandum”: The United Nations Plan for the Internationalization of Jerusalem
Elad Ben Dror
Head of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Dividing Jerusalem: The Fate of the Jerusalemites in 1948
Issam Nassar
Professor, Department of History, Illinois State University, USA

1.30pm LUNCH
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2.30pm  PANEL DISCUSSION THREE: MODERN JERUSALEM

Chairperson
Michelle Teo
Deputy Director, Middle East Institute,
National University of Singapore

Panelists
Social Changes in Jerusalem 1949 – 1967
Menachem Klein
Department of Political Science, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

Nur Arafeh
Rhodes Scholar, Oxford University, UK

4.00pm  BREAK

4.30pm  PANEL DISCUSSION FOUR: THE HOLY PLACES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Chairperson
Naoko Shimazu
Professor of Humanities (History), Yale-NUS College

Panelists
Russian Jerusalem: Construction, Deconstruction, Reconstruction
Elena Astafieva
Senior Researcher at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CERCEC, CNRS-EHESS -PSL, Paris)

The Vatican and Jerusalem: Another Turning Point?
Silvio Ferrari
Professor of Law and Religion, University of Milan.

Jordan’s Custodianship of the Muslim Holy Shrines in Jerusalem
Victor Kattan
Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore

France and Jerusalem: A Special Relationship
Dominique Trimbur
Senior Program Associate, Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, and Associate Researcher, Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalem, Paris

6.30pm  CLOSING REMARKS & END OF CONFERENCE