

Sea-Border and Air-Space Formation in the Interwar Middle East: A Trans-Imperial Perspective

Guest Lecture by

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Contemporary developments in the Middle East have certainly renewed scholars' interest in the study of the formation of states, borders, and subsequent mobility regimes in this region after WWI. Notwithstanding, extant literature reproduces two major pitfalls. Firstly, present studies tend to make overland borders their main unit of observation, thereby neglecting sea borders and airspace in their analyses. Secondly, this scholarship replicates the traps of "methodological nationalism" in that most studies focus on one particular state and/or border zone, while keeping the nation-state as the main political framework of reference. While land borders are central in the establishment of new international boundaries that delimited the new states born out the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, it is necessary to consider sea borders and air space, too, in order to better understand how territoriality existed, indeed, in different combinations across the Mandate territories. In that regard, the expansion of seaports, airports and aerodromes across the Middle East which were nevertheless integrated into larger British and French imperial corridors and circuits offers an original standpoint to reassess Franco-British imperial relations in the interwar years as well as to suggest a better understanding of how imperialism was enacted and transformed over time and space.

21 November 2024

16.30-18.00

Institut für Orientalistik

Spitalgasse 2, Hof 4.1.

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Seminarraum Turcica

Online participation link:

<https://univienne.zoom.us/j/61684093009?pwd=iicByA9pkIqRaGE74jwTqOgHxSdkhB.1>