

## The Supernatural, Healing and Mental Health in Contemporary Middle East

Beseeking, creating channels to communicate with or attempting to manipulate the Supernatural to heal mental and physical sickness, avert calamities, ensure success, gain love, solve difficulties or learn the hidden cause of various troubles has always been a traditional part of Middle Eastern religious and socio-cultural traditions. Various divinatory and healing practices, and associated beliefs often have a long history, their roots reaching back through centuries. Their exact form, interpretation and evaluation, however, was (and is) constantly changing, reflecting transformations in the social environment. The aim of the workshop will be to examine the ways by which notions of communication between the human and the Supernatural spheres and related healing/divinatory practices form an integral part of lived religion and religio-ritual life in today's Middle East.

The event is hosted by the Elite Master's Programme "Cultural Studies of the Middle East". It is organized by visiting professor Dr. Eszter Spät.



Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg  
Institut für Orientalistik  
Schillerplatz 17  
96047 Bamberg, Germany  
[www.uni-bamberg.de/ma-mideast](http://www.uni-bamberg.de/ma-mideast)



Master's Programme  
**Cultural Studies of the Middle East**  
**Kulturwissenschaften des Vorderen Orients**  
Bamberg • Erlangen/Nuremberg

[www.elitenetzwerk.bayern.de](http://www.elitenetzwerk.bayern.de)

Participating Institutions:



Universität Bamberg



Photo: E. Spät

Workshop

07-08 July 2023

## The Supernatural, Healing and Mental Health in Contemporary Middle East

Institute of Oriental Studies

Schillerplatz 17/Room 00.13

## Friday, 07 July

13:00 - Registration and get-together at the  
14:00 Institute of Oriental Studies

Welcome address

14:15 Chair: Christoph Herzog  
(Bamberg)

Janina Karolewski (Hamburg)  
In Search of Healing: Places,  
Persons, and Practices in the Area  
of Malatya

Gökçen Beyinli (Hamburg)  
Interviews with the Saint Eyüp  
Sultan: A Female Psychic Medium  
Challenges Disenchantment,  
Superstition and the State in  
Turkish Modernity

Müge Akpınar (Berlin)  
Purity, Authenticity, and Healing:  
An Ethnographic Account of  
Islamic Medicine in Contemporary  
Turkey

16:30 Coffee Break

## Friday, 07 July

17:00 - Chair: Patrick Franke (Bamberg)  
19:15

Eszter Spät (Bamberg)  
Healing and Divination Through  
the "Book" in Yezidi Oral  
Tradition in Northern Iraq

Antonella Brita (Florence)  
Manuscripts as Therapeutic  
agents in the traditional Christian  
societies of North Ethiopia

Çiçek Ilengiz (Berlin)  
Healing by the Magical  
Landscape: The Sacred Place of  
Yeşil Evliya

20:00 Dinner at the "Kachelofen"

## Saturday, 08 July

09:30 Chair: Christine Kämpfer  
(Bamberg)

Edith Szanto (Alabama)  
Healing Hearts and Minds:  
Visiting the Shi'i Spiritual  
Doctor Abu Ahmad in Sayyida  
Zaynab

Robert Langer (Munich)  
Healing Thyself Through Self-  
Flagellation? – Bodily Practices  
of Shiite Youth During Ashura  
Rituals in Germany

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Chair: Schayan Gharevi  
(Bamberg)

Gebhard Fartacek (Vienna)  
The Transmigration of Souls as  
an Ethnographic Phenomenon  
among the Druze: "Speaking"  
children and the construction of  
personal and collective identities  
beyond geopolitical boundaries

Jens Kreinath (Wichita)  
Religious Infrastructures of  
Dreaming and Healing at Shared  
Sacred Sites in Hatay, Turkey

Conclusion

13:30 Lunch at the "Salino"