

East Meets West:
Western Psychology in Dialogue with Islamic Mysticism
International Workshop

Orient-Institut Beirut and American University of Beirut, 11-12 July 2016

Vocatus atque non vocatus deus aderit
(Invoked or not invoked, the god will be there)
Delphic Oracle quoted by C. G. Jung

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرُقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَإِنَّمَا تُنَوَّلُ أَقْبَامُ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ
(To God belong the East and the West; wherever you turn, there is the face of God)
Qur'anic verse [2:115] frequently commented on by Muslim mystics

Organisers:

Stefan Leder (Orient-Institut Beirut)

Samir Mahmoud (American University Beirut)

Hans-Peter Pökel (Orient-Institut Beirut)

The American University of Beirut and the Orient-Institut Beirut are organizing an international workshop “East meets West: Western Psychology in Dialogue with Islamic Mysticism” to be held in Beirut from **11 to 12 July 2016 in English**. The objective of the workshop is to start a dialogue and a building of bridges between the Western Psychological tradition and the Islamic mystical tradition. The workshop is intended as a first step in what is hoped to be a series of events centered in the region with a larger conference being planned for the future in the Middle East region (Istanbul or Cairo).

The workshop is in the spirit of ERANOS where specialist in Islam and other traditions met with psychologists like C. G. Jung and others (such as Mircea Eliade) to exchange their comparative research across different traditions and explore topics that were not central to mainstream academia but were, and still are, vital for the spiritual well-being of humanity.

The ability of the ERANOS participants to be at home in both the Western and Non-Western intellectual traditions, their capacity to identify key motifs common between several traditions, and their acute identification of fundamental differences between them permitted the kind of civilizational dialogue wherein agreement and difference were mutually enriching. The untimely death of Jung in 1961 and then Henry Corbin in 1978 regrettably brought to a halt the fruitful ERANOS dialogue between both sides of the Mediterranean. In an age of extremisms, xenophobia, and Islamophobia such a dialogue is both welcome and necessary.

The invited specialists will be asked to address key overarching themes and ideas central to both theoretical research and therapeutic practice over a two day period. Invitees are asked to deeply reflect on the epigraphs at the beginning of this proposal (the Delphic Oracle quoted by Jung and a verse from the Qur'ān) within a critical humanistic framework as well as the implications for theory and therapeutic practice common to East and West. Given the therapeutic dimension in the works of the figures explored, the workshop also has an obvious value for those working in the field of psychology and Muslim therapeutics of the soul.

Although the core of the first workshop (2016) will focus on a possible C.G. Jung-Ibn al-‘Arabī axis of dialogue, papers on other key figures of the Western psychological tradition (such as Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Jacques Lacan, or 19th century Romantics) and the Islamic mystical tradition (such as alchemists, Rūmī, or al-Ghazālī) are most welcome, particularly those that reflect on the interdisciplinary implications of such a dialogue and cross-fertilization for various fields.

Papers should be **30 minutes** in length and will be followed by a **15-minute Q&A session**. There will also be open roundtable sessions where participants will be able to respond to each other at length.

Participants are kindly asked to send a title by December 15th, 2015.

Deadline for the submission of Abstracts & Short Bios: February 29th, 2016

Abstracts and short biographies should be no more than 250 words each.

Please send Titles, Abstracts, and Bios to:

Dr. Hans-Peter Pökel: poekel@orient-institut.org and Dr. Samir Mahmoud:
samir.mahmoud.cantab@gmail.com