

in cooperation with



International and interdisciplinary Workshop of the  
Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA)

Organized by:

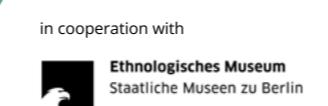
Nadia Bahra, Ikram Hili, Lando Kirchmair, Matthias Pasdzierny

Members of the AGYA Working Group Common Heritage & Common Challenges

In cooperation with:

Zoë Hermann and Albrecht Wiedmann

Ethnologisches Museum Berlin / Humboldt Forum, Germany



# Access to Waxes

Arab Collections of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv:  
Digitization and Online-Publication

2 - 4 December 2021

Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW)  
Ethnologisches Museum, Humboldt Forum



agya.info

Please note that 2G+ rules apply: Proof of vaccination or recovery is required PLUS a negative test.

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## Thursday, 2 December 2021

BBAW, Einstein Hall

18:30 Festive Opening and Reception

## Friday, 3 December 2021

Humboldt Forum Berlin, Schloßplatz, 10178 Berlin, Klangwerkstatt

### Panel 1

#### Sensitive Collections – What Does That Mean?

#### Cultural Studies Views

Chair: Albrecht Wiedmann

Ethnologisches Museum Berlin / Humboldt Forum, Germany

16:00 Anthropology and the Sound of History

Irene Hilden

Centre for Anthropological Research on Museums and Heritage, Berlin, Germany

16:25 Arabic spoken by a Tatar

Methodological questions in dealing with prisoner-of-war recordings

Britta Lange

Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany

16:45 Q&A Session

17:00 Break

17:20 The Colonial Ear

On the Aprioris of Phonographic Recordings from  
German Colonies and their Meaning in a (Post)Colonial Context

Méhéza Kalibani

University of Tübingen, Germany

17:40 Q&A Session

20:00 Dinner



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## Saturday, 4 December 2021

Humboldt Forum Berlin, Schloßplatz, 10178 Berlin, Klangwerkstatt

9:15 Digitization of Wax Cylinders – Demonstration

Albrecht Wiedmann

Ethnologisches Museum Berlin / Humboldt Forum, Germany

### Panel 2

#### The Historical Arabic Collections from Ethnomusicologist's Perspective

Chair: Maurice Mengel

Phonogramm-Archiv, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin / Humboldt Forum, Germany

10:00 From Documentation to Participation: The Promise and Potential  
of the Arabic Recordings in the Phonogramm-Archiv for the Arab Musical Diaspora

Anne Rasmussen

University of Williamsburg, Virginia, USA

10:20 What Does Sensitive Collections Mean to an Ethnomusicologist?  
Response and Discussion

Maurice Mengel and

Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco

Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal

10:45 Q&A Session

11:00 Break

### Panel 3

#### Ethical & Legal Aspects

Chair: AGYA member Lando Kirchmair

Bundeswehr University Munich, Germany / University of Salzburg, Austria

11:15 Intertemporal Justice and the Collections of the Berlin  
Phonogramm-Archiv Arab Collections

Lukas Meyer

University of Graz, Austria

11:40 Copyright and Related Issues – A German View from the Perspective  
of Intellectual Property Law including International Treaties

Christian Czychowski

Nordemann / WIPO, Berlin, Germany

12:05 The Phonogramm-Archiv Collections  
The Legal Framework from Arab Countries' Perspective

Souheir Nadde-Phlix

Intellectual Property Consultant and Specialist, Beirut, Lebanon

12:30 Q&A Session  
with Tobias Schmiegel

Legal Advisor, Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation (SPK), Berlin, Germany

13:00 Lunch break

## Panel 4

### Similar Collections – Similar Questions?

#### Collaboration Perspectives

Chair: AGYA member Matthias Pasdzierny

Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW), Germany

#### 14:30 Historical Recorded Music Preservation in the Arabian Peninsula: Challenges and Rewards

Lisa Urkevich

American University of Kuwait

#### 14:50 Maloof, Macksoud and the MMA: New Access to Harvard's Arab Music Recording Collections

Peter Laurence

Librarian for Recorded Sound and Media, Harvard University, USA

#### 15:10 Traces of the South-Arabian Expedition in the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences

Gerda and Franz Lechleitner (tbc)

Phonogrammarchiv Vienna

#### 15:30 Q&A Session with Till Janczukowicz

IDAGIO, Germany

#### 16:00 Break

#### 16:20 Final Discussion & Outlook

#### 17:00 End of the Workshop



#### Anthropology and the Sound of History

Irene Hilden

CARMAH, Berlin, Germany

The preoccupation with questions of visuality and the colonial gaze in general, and anthropology's visual legacies in particular, is a rich and diverse field of study. The urgency to engage with anthropology's visual archives emerged not least as a response to and in the aftermath of the growing concerns regarding the discipline's knowledge making processes. In contrast, work on acoustic legacies and the relationship between anthropology and phonography does not yet have such longstanding trajectories of critical debate to look back to. Therefore, in the first part of the talk, I will explore which analytical angles, developed in contexts of visual anthropology and its methodologies, may be transferable to acoustic legacies. The presentation will be concentrated on introducing perspectives from visual anthropology to what might be considered an approach of sonic anthropology. However, inquiries into historical sound do not assemble their analytical toolkit exclusively based on approaches to visual legacies. Sound studies share questions and concerns with other domains, but also address very unique analytical problems. The second part of the talk will present positions from the field of sound studies. Drawing on sound scholars like Jonathan Sterne and Nina Sun Eidsheim, I will show how the object of sound and its inquiries relate to concepts of reflexivity, historicity, and positionality.

#### Arabic spoken by a Tatar Methodological questions in dealing with prisoner-of-war recordings

Britta Lange

Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany

On 30th December 1916, the Tatar Nur Muhammed Hisameddin, prisoner of war from the army of the Tsar in Germany, sang a call to prayer in the funnel of a gramophone which was situated in the socalled Halfmoon Camp in Wünsdorf. He did not use his mother tongue, but instead used the Arabic language. At the time, this raised questions for the linguists and the systematics of the Prussian Phonographic Commission; however, it launches timely reflections from the perspective of history and theory of culture: What is the relation between language, culture and religion? What did a call to prayer signify in the war and in the war camp, how could it be recorded for a scientific archive, and what did this mean for the interned persons? How can we listen to the recording today?

#### The Colonial Ear On the Aprioris of Phonographic Recordings from German Colonies and their Meaning in a (Post)Colonial Context

Mèhèza Kalibani,

University of Tübingen, Germany

With the invention of the phonograph in 1877, the sound not only became a museum artifact in the European ethnological context but this invention also offered new opportunities for scholars in their attempt to study the so-called "primitive cultures". In this attempt, European ethnologists claimed that the culture of these so-called "primitive people" were meant to disappear because of their contact with Europe. So, the main purpose of ethnological

museums and sound archives in the early 20th century was to collect as many objects of culture as possible from all over the world, especially from non-European areas. In this logic, the Berlin Phonogramm-Archive worked together with ethnologists, linguists, musicologist, colonial officers etc. to get as many non-European sound recordings as possible. German colonial officers, who were not qualified for ethnomusicological field works, took on the role of ethnologists, collecting objects, making a large number of sound recordings and producing/constructing knowledge on colonized people. This presentation attempts to contextualize these kinds of recordings as "acoustic heritage of German colonialism" and as part of a colonial knowledge production. Basing on a case study and discussing the Aprioris (motivations of recording, relations between recording person and recorded person) which led phonographic recordings in German colonies, the presentation contextualizes these recordings as well as their principles as traces of a "colonial ear", which means a constructed acoustic representation of the "other".

#### From Documentation to Participation: The Promise and Potential of the Arabic Recordings in the Phonogramm-Archiv for the Arab Musical Diaspora

Anne K. Rasmussen

University of Williamsburg, Virginia, USA

This paper addresses the potential social lives of the phonogram for the Arab musical diaspora. To understand the social life of a material object I draw on the work of Eliot Bates who recognizes through his study of musical instruments, the ways in which the study of ethnomusicology intersects "in vital ways with the world of objects." To appreciate the capacity for historical phonograms, whether wax cylinders, 78 rpm records, home-made mix cassette tapes, or a collector's field recordings, to impact myriad nodes in a network involving heritage and affinity musicians and scholars, I trace three examples, all of which intersect with my own research on Arab music and diaspora. The first example traces the trajectory of the Arab "standard" *raqṣ 'arabī*, a stylized dance piece that migrated from one Arab-American era to next, changing performers and recording platforms as required. The second example spotlights the rediscovery and remix of Fatima and other early 78 rpm recordings made by the Arab-American community by Syrian-American spoken word artist, Omar Offendum and his beat-maker, Thanks Joey for their project Little Syria, an exploration through poetry and music of the early Arab immigrant experience. The third example measures the impact of the discovery of a collection of Arab music phonograms on the career of historian Richard Breaux. While none of these examples speak to the specific content of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv they all tell a story of the potential of a carefully curated collection of historic recordings. Finally, to address the stewardship of such collections, I mention the updated approach to the conservatorship of sensitive collections of Native American and other community musics at the Library of Congress, calling upon the voices of colleagues, Nancy Groce, Judith Grey, and John Fenn at the Archive of American Folk Culture.

Reference cited: Bates, Eliot. 2012. "The Social Life of Musical Instruments." Ethnomusicology 56/3: 363-395.

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## **Intertemporal Justice and the Collections of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv Arab Collections**

**Lukas Meyer**

University of Graz, Austria

The colonial and wartime circumstances under which the audio documents were acquired raise questions of who may use them today, who has legitimacy to decide whether to make them publicly accessible, and how they should be made accessible. In my presentation, I will explore these questions by considering different approaches to historical injustice, the normative significance of its consequences, and the restitution of colonial cultural property.

## **Copyright and related issues – A German View from the Perspective of Intellectual Property Law including International Treaties**

**Christian Czychowski**

Nordemann / WIPO, Berlin, Germany

The lecture deals with the legal framework that has to be considered when publishing the historical recordings. In addition to the evaluation of the copyright situation, considerations will also be made as to which legal possibilities exist to make the recordings usable for research with particular regard to their origin.

## **The Phonogramm-Archiv Collections: The Legal Framework from Arab Countries Perspective**

**Souheir Nadde-Phlix**

Intellectual Property Consultant and Specialist, Lebanon

The digitization of the Arab Collections of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archives launched a debate regarding the rights connected to its recordings and their right holders. My presentation discusses the nature and coverage of these rights, and also questions their applicability and validity in concerned Arab countries in light of existing legal framework and "problematic" conditions under which they were obtained.

## **Historical Recorded Music Preservation in the Arabian Peninsula: Challenges and Rewards**

**Lisa Urkevich**

American University of Kuwait

In the 21st century Arabian Peninsula, one must take a variety of perspectives into consideration when discussing the preservation, dissemination, and impact of historical audio documents. There is

the global, academic value system that recognizes the significance of rare primary sources, their closeness to a long-gone culture, their perceived ability to help one relate in a personal way to the past, which hopefully will enable meaningful heritage preservation for the future. Then there is a local perspective regarding the value of the material. How can one apply regional (Islamic) ethics to these old recordings? Can the sources have an impact on communities? Since economic issues have precedence over academic preservation needs, can the material serve as a commodity? These and related questions will be addressed in this paper based on the speaker's experiences with the Kuwait Arabian Heritage Project and Saudi Vision 2030, among other regional undertakings.

## **Maloof, Macksoud and the MMA: New Access to Harvard's Arab Music Recording Collections**

**Peter Laurence**

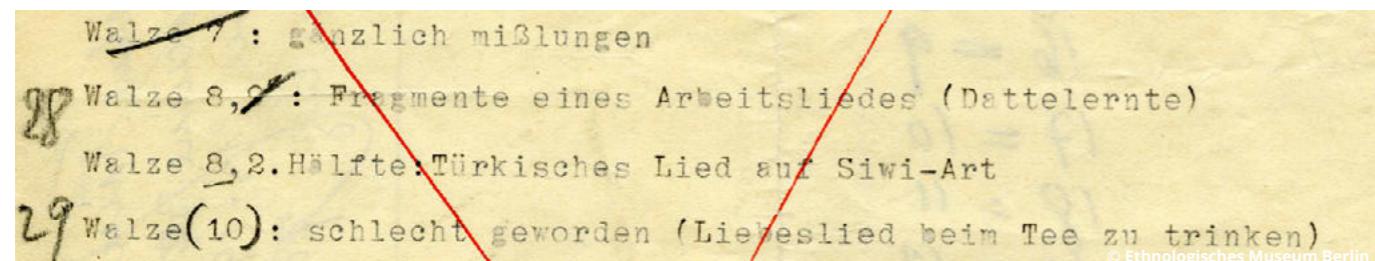
Librarian for Recorded Sound and Media, Harvard University, USA

On January 1, 2022, the U.S. Music Modernization Act (MMA) of 2018 created a true public domain for pre-1923 and published sound recordings for the first time. To celebrate this milestone, the Loeb Music Library at Harvard plans to launch an online collection of early published 78 rpm disc recordings of Arab music from its Archive of World Music. The collection features performers from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, the Maghreb, and the United States recorded by large multinational companies and by smaller independent record labels. We focus special attention on making pre-1923 recordings from the diasporic communities in the United States accessible, which helps to highlight the output of early Arab-American labels like Maloof and Macksoud. It also foregrounds the voices and careers of early performers like Zakiyyah Akub, the first Arab-American woman to record in the U.S. Our project touches on many of the themes raised at this workshop, including digitization workflows carried out by Harvard Library's media preservation unit, a copyright assessment undertaken with the Library's general counsel, the AV platform we will use to make the recordings accessible (with Arabic and English descriptive metadata), and an overview of sources for dating these early recordings.

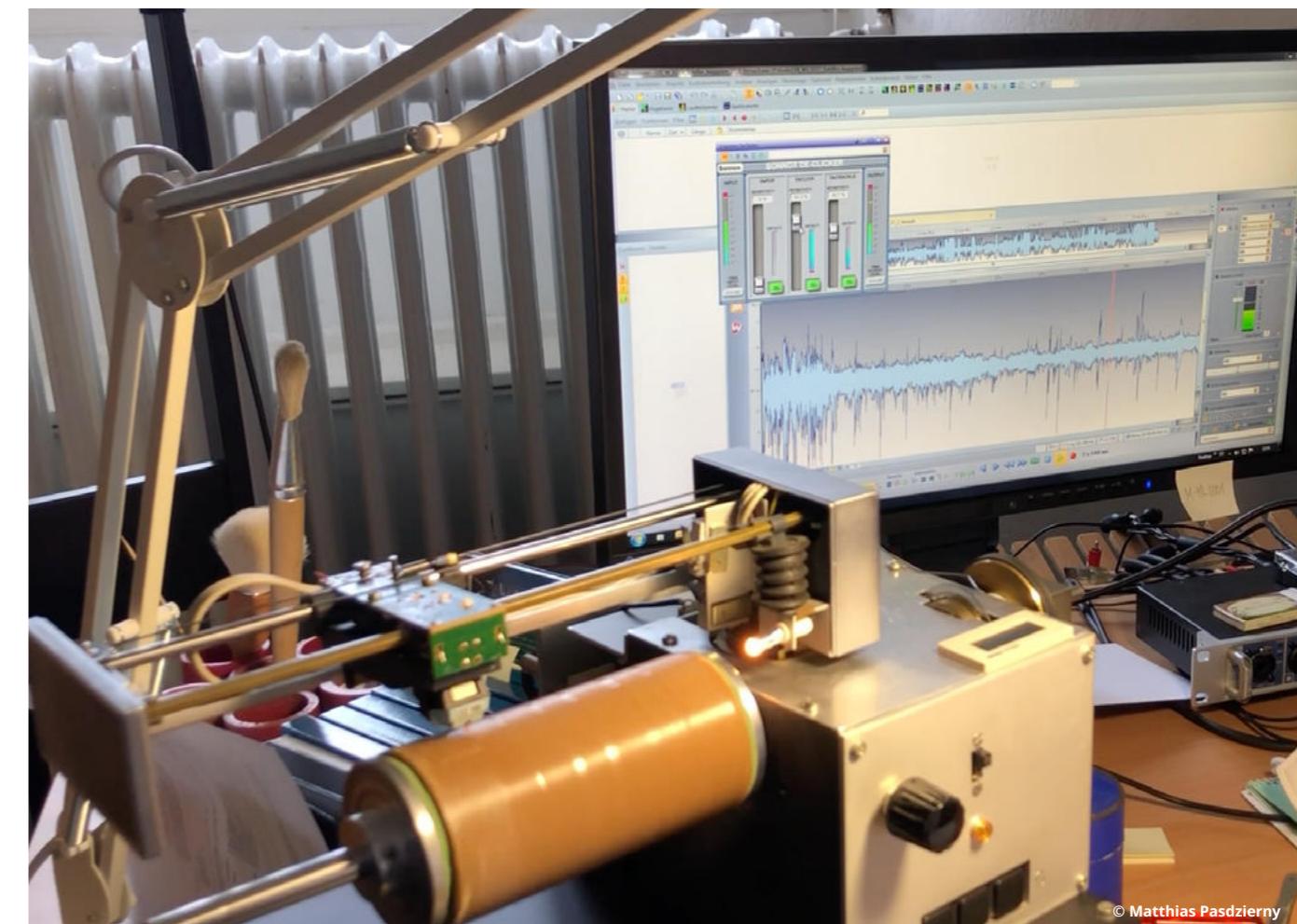
## **Traces of the South-Arabian Expedition in the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences**

**Gerda and Franz Lechleitner (tbc)**

Phonogrammarchiv Vienna



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