

JOINT LECTURE SERIES

Hubs, networks and trajectories

RA 12 5 P AR M 21 CC720 BYBLOS (DJEBAIL) FO 26 A-M 10 8 34

Resurrecting the Past: Archaeology and the Coloniality of Knowledge in the French Mandate for Syria and Lebanon

Sarah Griswold
(Oklahoma State University)
Speaker

Ceren Abi
(Middle East Studies Association)
Discussant

Byblos, Lebanon. 1934 (image from IFPO)

May 7 2026, 18:00
(Turkey time)

To attend:
<https://bit.ly/4cDmy3U>



AMERICAN RESEARCH
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PERA MÜZESİ

<https://zoom.us/j/96280734298?pwd=mZtbPZeJapqzJhx1WERTnKQs0czUbG.1#success>

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How did heritage science abet the mandate regimes that took shape from 1918? This talk examines how the French mandate in Syria and Lebanon used archaeology, preservation, and museums to produce political authority after the First World War. It argues that heritage was not a secondary cultural project but a central technology of rule. In cities such as Beirut, Damascus, and Aleppo, scholars, officials, and local actors contested who had the right to interpret the past, control excavated objects and define historical value. Situating the mandate within wider intellectual and political phenomena of the era, the talk explores how the French mandate became a hub of innovation, rivalry, and exchange that created colonialist knowledge while also imperiling it.

Sarah Griswold is currently Associate Professor of History at Oklahoma State University and Associate Director of OSU's Center for the Humanities. As of August 2026, she will be Associate Professor of History at the College of the Holy Cross. She is a historian of modern France, heritage, and knowledge production. Her recent book, *Resurrecting the Past: France's Forgotten Heritage Mandate* (Cornell University Press, 2025), examines archaeology, preservation, and colonial governance in mandate Syria and Lebanon.

Second lecture of the Joint Lecture Series: "Hubs, networks and trajectories. The making of Global Cooperation in the Humanities in Istanbul and Beyond"

In cooperation with the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI) Istanbul, the Institut français d'études anatoliennes (IFEA), the Netherlands Institute in Turkey (NIT), the Orient-Institut Istanbul, the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul (SRII) and Pera Müzesi.