

Sea-border and Airspace Formation

in the Middle East
and North Africa,
1880s-1950s

16-17 Oct. 2025

University of Neuchâtel
Espace Tilo-Frey 1
2000 Neuchâtel
Room RS.38



DAY 1

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2025

8:45 a.m. - WELCOME

9:00 a.m. - INTRODUCTION

- Jordi Tejel (University of Neuchâtel)

9:15 a.m. - PANEL 1

Chair : Alexander Balistreri,
University of Hamburg

- Eyüp Özveren
(Middle East Technical University, Ankara)
"Travel Experience of a Family of No Significance: The Land-versus-Sea Perspective at Work in the Trans- and Post-Ottoman Space"
- İlkay Yılmaz
(The Free University of Berlin)
"Ports, Borders, and Empire: Territorialization and Surveillance in Late Ottoman Maritime Spaces"
- Carl-José Abi Hanna
(University of Neuchâtel)
"Between Touristic Leisure and Pilgrimage: How Maritime Mobilities Transformed Interwar Beirut"

11:00 a.m. - Coffee break

11:15 a.m. - PANEL 2

Chair : Falestin Naïli,
University of Basel

- Malte Fuhrmann
(Berlin)
"Disconnecting Southeast Europe and West Asia: On Shifts in Transcontinental Mobility from the Late to Post-Ottoman Era"
- Anna Sophia Messner (Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf)
"Visual Encounters with Infrastructures of Transit. The Camp du Grand Arénas in Marseille in the Context of Jewish Migration Processes from North Africa to Israel"

12:45 p.m. - Lunch

2:00 p.m. - PANEL 3

Chair : Aline Schläpfer,
University of Geneva

- Jordi Tejel
(University of Neuchâtel)
"Between Competition and Cooperation: British and French Imperial Air Routes in the Interwar Middle East"
- Nelida Fuccaro
(New York University Abu Dhabi)
"Above the Clouds: Air Power, Empire, and Oil's Speed Revolutions in and around the Persian Gulf"
- Laith Shakir (New York University)
"The Development of Aerial Archaeology and Military Surveillance in Iraq, 1914-1939"

3:45 p.m. - Coffee break

4:15 p.m. - Keynote

Reforming the British Empire: Space, Place and Mobilities of People, Capital and Ideas in the Global Restructuring of the British Empire

Alan Lester (University of Sussex)
Moderator: Sara de Athouguia Filipe
(University of Neuchâtel and nccr – on the move)

Venue: University of Neuchâtel,
Espace Tilo-Frey 1, Room R.O.12

Youtube Livestream:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/KxpSEhtQuOc>

7:00 p.m. - Dinner

DAY 2
FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2025

9:30 a.m. - PANEL 4

Chair : Jordi Tejel,
University of Neuchâtel

- **Nadya Sbaiti** (Georgetown University Qatar)
"From Mustaf to Sa'ih: Border-Making and the Arab Leisure Traveler"
- **Luc Chantre** (University of Rennes 2)
"Franco-British Management of the Hajj in Africa and the Middle East: Towards an Integrated Organization of Mobilities, 1930s-1950s"
- **David Motzafi-Haller** (University of Neuchâtel)
"Palestine Airways Versus Mise Airworks: sub-Imperial Aviation Companies' Division of the Middle East's Skiesm 1932-1940"

11:15 a.m. - Coffee break

11:45 a.m. - Final discussion

12:30 p.m. - Lunch



SEA-BORDER AND AIRSPACE FORMATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, 1880S-1950s

October 16-17, 2025
University of Neuchâtel

This conference critically examines the complex interplay of state- and empire-making, technological advancements, and shifting mobilities in delineating sea-borders and airspaces across the Middle East and North Africa.

It probes the historical processes that reshaped regional sovereignty and imperial control during the late Ottoman and European mandatory periods, offering new perspectives on the formation of aerial and maritime territoriality.

For more information, please contact

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Fondation **Pierre du Bois**
pour l'histoire du temps présent