



SUMMER SCHOOL

Sources and methods for a study of the mission phenomenon in the Middle East from the end of the 19th century to the present day

Organizing committee: Philippe Bourmaud (University Lyon III, LAHRHA), Séverine Gabry-Thienpont (CREM-LESC), Marie Levant (LabEx EHNE, Sorbonne University), Norig Neveu (CNRS, IREMAM), Karène Sanchez Summerer (University of Leiden)

The MisSMO programme analyses the Christian missions in terms of the social and cultural evolutions that have passed through the Middle East since the end of the 19th century.¹ One of the aims of this programme consists in renewing our approach to the *fait missionnaire* combining both historical and ethnological methods, so as to analyse concurrently both the definitions and the modes of missionary activity, and their reception locally as well as their actual deployment. Such an undertaking implies the mobilisation of original sources in the different languages, but also innovative methods (oral surveys, sound recordings, photographic archives, video recordings, etc.)

In order to raise the awareness and guide doctoral students in the use of these methods and encourage them to use a pluri-disciplinary approach, a summer school has been organized for 2019 by the coordinating team of MisSMO in collaboration with international specialists of the *fait missionnaire*.

This summer school will be in **two parts: a Roman session**, centred on the question of written sources, the issues of their conservation and study, then a **session in Cairo** to allow participants to work on the tools used in ethnological investigation.

Session 1: 3-7 June 2019, *Writing a history of the Eastern missions using the Roman archives. Centralisation, classification, conservation?* - Rome, EFR.

Principal referees: M. Levant, K. Sanchez Summerer

Session 2: 8-12 September 2019, *Ethnographies, scientific reporting and studies of missionary sources: towards a plurality of methods* – Cairo, IFAO.

Principal referees: S. Gabry-Thienpont, N. Neveu

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¹ <https://missmo.hypotheses.org>

Session 1
Writing a history of the Eastern missions using the Roman archives.
Centralisation, classification, conservation?

3-7 June 2019, École française de Rome

This first session aims to give the doctoral students an awareness of how missionary history is produced. In a comparative approach with the Protestant missions and local archives, it will highlight the history of the Catholic missions in the East using the Roman archives, as well as considering the logic behind the classification, centralisation and conservation currently used for writing this history. This first session of the summer school will be devoted more particularly to the period from the end of the 19th century (starting with the signature of the papal encyclical *Orientalium Dignitas* in 1894) to our time, clarifying the context of the creation in 1917 of two institutions concerned with Eastern Christianity: the Congregation for the Oriental Churches and the Pontifical Oriental Institute.

This Roman session has multiple objectives. From an epistemological point of view, they will question chiefly:

- the **classification** of the archives, as well as issues of deterioration/conservation in changing political contexts, considerably affected by conflicts throughout the 20th century
- the **conservation** of the archival collections of certain Churches and congregations in the Middle East – indeed, many researchers are solicited to take part in the cataloguing and conservation of the collections
- the **context of the production** of the written sources (Catholic intransigence in the 19th century, Roman centralisation, policies of Christian re-conquest between the wars, the *aggiornamento* of Vatican II, etc.).

These working tracks will address the theoretical and historiographical debates which are an integral part of the renewal of studies of the missions in the Middle East. We will pay particular attention to geographical elements in order to:

1. Understand and query the complementarity Rome/Middle East and the relevant networks (linked to institutions, training courses, etc.)
2. Highlight the heterogeneity of the agents on the spot, their profiles and their evolution throughout the 20th century (Uniatism, the appearance of local congregations, the arabization of priests, etc.)
3. Rethink the impact of nationalisations after the 1950s and that of the development of different policies experienced by the congregations and the Churches in the Middle East according to the context, colonial or that of independent states
4. Investigate the evolution of the different forms of missionary activity and the reconfiguring of the role of the congregations in the Middle East after Vatican II

The workshops will be based on case studies (communities and archives), which will for example consider the network of old seminarians from Saint Anne (White Fathers, Jerusalem). Other networks will also be considered as, for example, those, more diplomatic, of eminent religious dignitaries, or local priests, from the Custody of the Holy Land to the secret archives of the Vatican. It will put into perspective the Roman sources with the sources kept only in the local

mission institutes. Through these case studies, the “silences” of missionary archives will also be considered.

The workshops and training sessions will be organised around the study of different types of archive:

- the archives of the religious congregations and orders;
- the archives of the dicasteries;
- the archives of the academic institutions concerned with the East (POI, COC)
- the visual archives of the different missionary orders, congregations and institutions

This first session will offer students a series of workshops with Italian, Lebanese and Palestinian historians and archivists, as well as visits to various archives. Lectures will be prolonged by discussion sessions, and linked to workshops around the research of the students taking part in the session.

Session 2
**Ethnographies, scientific reporting and missionary sources in Cairo: towards
a plurality of methods**

8-12 September 2019, French Institute for Oriental Archaeology (Cairo)

The plurality of Middle-Eastern Christianity and the multiple forms of inter-religious contact are complicated themes and notions for the social sciences. This is due firstly to the fact that the studies of Eastern Christianity, both from a historical and ethnographical point of view, were for a long time the preserve of the clergy, including the missionaries. Then, the classification suggested during the colonial period, establishing the existence of ethno-confessional membership, biased the approach by creating partitions at the community level. Since the 1990s, a turning point has been reached and studies of sainthood, miracles and the various forms of piety have renewed the approach by the social sciences to the *fait religieux* using methods that were a crossover between history and anthropology, pointing out the links between denominations within pious practices.

In these respects, the missionary presence in the Middle East from the modern period to our time testifies to the history of the *fait religieux*, and the different ways it has been thought about. This special presence also means one has to consider the missionaries as agents, active or passive, of the evolution of the *fait religieux* in the Middle East, whether Christian or Moslem. Sometimes promoters of inter-religious activity, sometimes converts, sometimes teachers and often archivists, the different roles – social, medical, intellectual and of course religious – played by the missionaries until the present day can be reviewed using the methods offered by anthropology and ethnography, and this will be one of the aims of this second session of the summer school.

In order to grasp the complexity of the mission's place in the region, the team of coordinators of the MisSMO proposes to punctuate this doctoral school using a dual approach:

1. Initiation into the methods of investigation within missionary circles, their action and their role (an ethnographical approach and scientific reporting, both internally and within the milieus covered by missionary activity in Cairo);
2. Work within the missionary archives (reflexions around bibliographical and archival choices, expert missionary work, the field of expertise covered, etc.).

These four days will be overseen by anthropologists, historians and specialists of the region, as well as by researchers specialised in scientific reporting. The sessions will alternate between lectures, workshops on sound and image recording, editing, and epistemological reflexion on the use of the new tools available to academics.

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Subjects: anthropology – history – religious sciences

Selection procedure

This summer school is primarily for PhD candidates and post-docs working on the Christian missions in the Middle East and more largely, for specialists of Oriental Churches. The debates, the contributions and the visits to archives will be in French and in English. Notice that Italian could be used during some visits in Roma. An understanding of local Arabic dialect and/or classical Arabic is also expected.

To apply, candidates must send the selection committee:

- a letter outlining motivation (2 pages maximum)
- a CV/résumé (2 pages maximum)
- A summary of their research project (2 pages maximum)
- A recommendation letter from their thesis supervisor

Successful applicants are committed to attending the whole of both sessions. Their expenses (food, accommodation, transport) will be taken care of, so they also are committed to respecting the start and end dates of the sessions.

Applications must be sent before midnight (CET) on 20 January 2019 to the following address:

missmo.ed2019@gmail.com

CALENDAR

Candidates will receive an answer by mid-February

1st session: 3-7 June 2019, École française de Rome (EFR), Rome, Italy

2nd session: 8-12 September 2019, French Institute for Oriental Archaeology (IFAO), Cairo, Egypt

