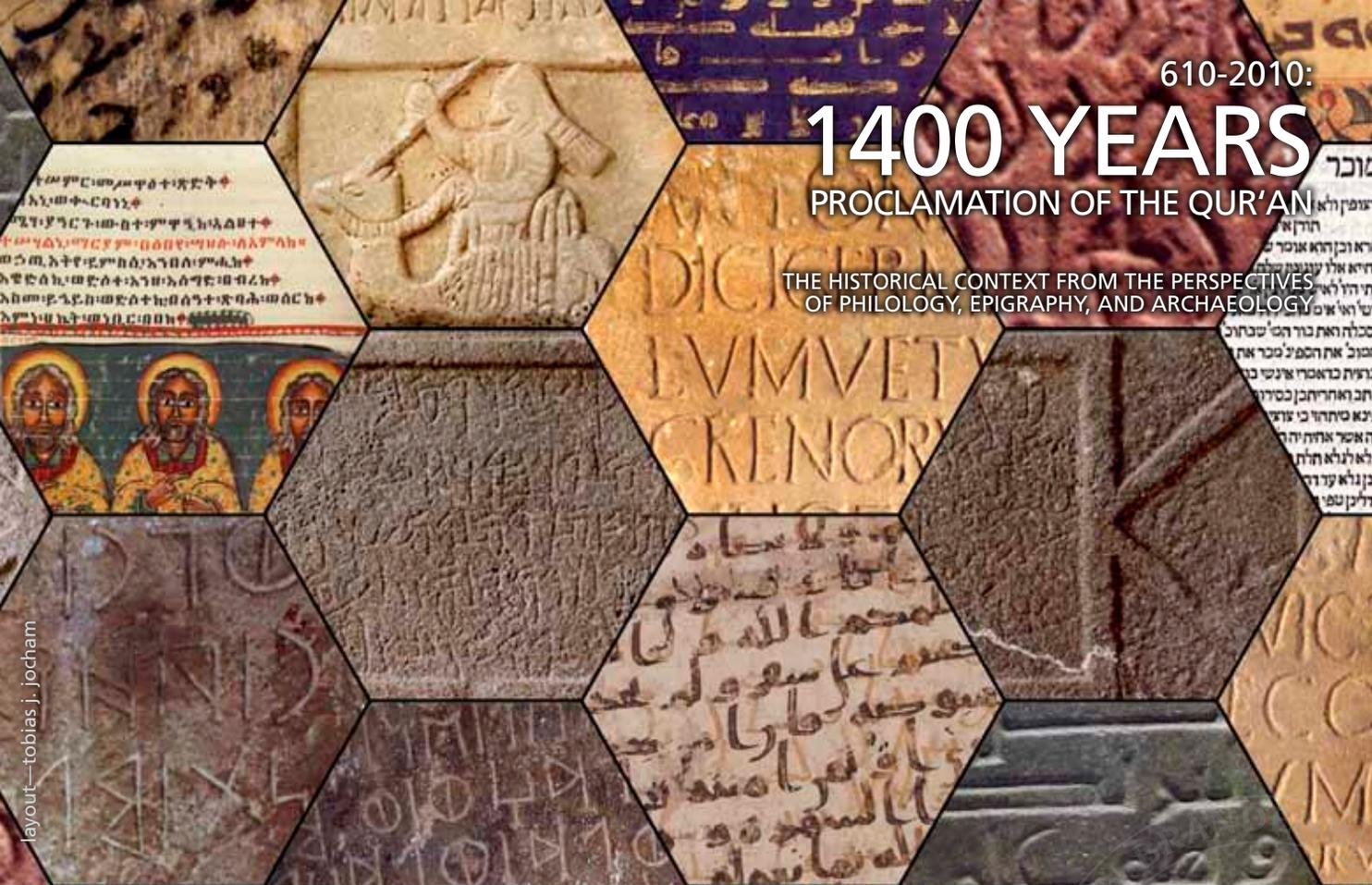


610-2010:

1400 YEARS

PROCLAMATION OF THE QUR'AN

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF PHILOLOGY, EPIGRAPHY, AND ARCHAEOLOGY



layout—tobias j. jocham

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Free Entry. No Registration required.

CONFERENCE

Tuesday, 30th November 2010

Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities
Akademiegebäude am Gendarmenmarkt
Einstein-Saal (5th floor), Jägerstraße 22/23, 10117 Berlin



Freie Universität  Berlin

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AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN

According to Islamic tradition a prophet, Muhammad, appeared in the Arabian town of Mekka in the year 610. For a period of little more than 20 years Muhammad proclaimed poetical texts, 'suras', that he had received as revelations, and through his preaching set up a community. These 'suras', which were later codified to form the Qur'an, have lived on as the very heart of Islamic self-expression. But what do we know about the context of the Qur'an, the Arabian Peninsula, on the eve of the emergence of Islam? Islamic tradition tends to view the pre-Islamic period of Arabian history as a "time of ignorance" ('asr al-jāhiliya), a label that has severely handicapped research on the history of Arabia before Islam. Western research has tended to view the Qur'an as a mere compilation, a text simply grafted on Jewish and Christian traditions. In order to take seriously the desideratum of reading the Qur'an as a message addressed to a Late Antique audience, one has to read the text against its historical and cultural background. Such an attempt to reconnect the text to its first listeners is made in the Corpus Coranicum project of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

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The conference assembles specialists from the fields of philology, archaeology, and epigraphy in order to discuss the following questions: What kind of evidence concerning the Qur'an's historical context can be gleaned from these disciplines? What are the scholarly instruments to determine and to narrate the history of the period immediately before Islam? Is archaeological evidence compatible with historical knowledge derived from Nabatean and South Arabian stone inscriptions? How are descriptions of pre-Islamic Arabia in Arabic sources of the 8th and 9th centuries to be evaluated? In 2011 the research cooperation "CORANICA: Du contexte au texte", sponsored by the German DFG and the French ANR, between the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres will start its work on the relationship between philology and material evidence for the environment of the text of the Qur'an.

09.30	.....	Introduction Michael Marx Berlin
10.00	.....	The Late Antique Qur'an Angelika Neuwirth Berlin
10.30	.....	Arabia in Late Antiquity Robert Hoyland Oxford
11.00	.....	Discussion
Coffee break		
12.00	.....	The Linguistic Situation in the Pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula According to Epigraphical Evidence Christian Robin Paris/Aix-en-Provence
12.30	.....	Pre-Islamic Arabia: its Cultural, Economic, and Religious Landscape According to Archaeological Evidence Ricardo Eichmann Berlin
13.00	.....	Discussion
Lunch break		
14.30	.....	Zur Geschichte der Kaaba Barbara Finster Bamberg
15.00	.....	The Religious Map of Pre-Islamic Arabia According to Arabic Sources from Islamic Times Tilman Seidensticker Jena
15.30	.....	Ibn al-Kalbi on Paganism and Christianity in Pre-Islamic Arabia Ernst Axel Knauf Bern
16.00	.....	Final Discussion