

The Europaeum  
99 Banbury Road  
Oxford, UK

31<sup>st</sup> August 2017

## **Europaeum Oxford Research Bursary Report**

I am a candidate in the International History PhD Program at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies-Geneva, working on a dissertation project entitled “Yekkes and Arabs: Encounters Between German-Speaking Jewish Immigrants and Arab Palestinians in British Mandate Palestine, 1920-1948” supervised by Prof. Davide Rodogno. This project aims to explore the experiences of German-speaking Jews who fled to British Mandate Palestine, known as the “Yekkes”, in their encounter with the local Arab inhabitants of British Palestine. Having been granted the Europaeum Oxford Research Bursary, I was able to go on a three-week research stay at the University of Oxford in June 2017 to do further research for my doctoral project.

The Europaeum Research Bursary provided me with the opportunity to conduct integral research in archives and libraries that specialise in the history of the British Mandate in Palestine and in Jewish Studies in Oxford. Among the most useful repositories I have made use of during my stay, were of course the Bodleian Libraries. Future research fellows with the Europaeum should be aware that British libraries usually require a proof of address, something of which many visitors from abroad seem to not be aware. I had access to the collection of the actual Bodleian Library including its electronic resources as well as libraries that are part of the Bodleian Libraries group. Among these affiliated libraries is for instance, the Leopold Muller Memorial Library which contains a vast collection of literature on Hebrew and Jewish Studies. These libraries were extremely helpful for my research because I was able to consult much of the literature on the British administration in Palestine. My project was in need of such vital sources, which one could only access in Geneva through time-consuming inter-library loan orders. However, I would like to recommend the Bodleian Library to research fellows not only for its world class collections, but also because it constitutes an extremely convenient and pleasant place to work – not to mention the impressive architectural surroundings.

In addition to the Bodleian Libraries, I have also consulted material in the libraries of colleges of Oxford University. Research fellows should make sure to check in advance whether

the college library they wish to visit is part of the Bodleian Libraries or an independent library. In such cases, a separate application for admission has to be made. This applied for instance for the library of the St Antony's College which holds a large collection on the Middle East and was particularly useful for my research on the history of the Middle East and the mandates.

Furthermore, I visited the Middle East Centre Archive of St Antony's College (MECA). The archive has a large collection of personal files of British individuals including government officials, missionaries, and private businessmen. The archival material I identified there complemented material I had collected during previous archival research visits to various archives in Germany and Israel. In particular, MECA documents helped me to develop a clearer picture of the views of British officials towards German Jewish immigrants.

Apart from the progress I made in my doctoral research, the Europaeum scholarship provided an opportunity to meet distinguished scholars working on related topics who shared their thoughts on my project and gave me helpful insights regarding literature. Moreover, I was able to attend relevant lectures and conferences during my stay. For instance, I attended an informative roundtable called "1967, Fifty Years On: Reflections on Past and Future in Israel/Palestine" at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies.

Oxford itself is a beautiful city that offers much more than unique research opportunities and world renowned academic facilities. I was lucky to have had the opportunity, albeit briefly, to explore the city during a period of exceptionally nice weather and enjoy the lush university parks and college meadows without the infamous English rain, and even participated in a punting trip, a famous Oxford tradition. Future research fellows should make sure not to miss out on a tour of the stunning Bodleian Library and Radcliffe Camera building, and explore some of the many ancient college sites at Oxford University.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the Europaeum for making this research visit possible. I would also like to thank Dr. Paul Flather, Secretary-General of the Europaeum, who welcomed me in Oxford and kindly assisted me with the organisation of my trip.