**WORKSHOP**

**Port Cities in the Levant:**

**Comparing Trajectories between Nation and Globalization**

Background

Cities are expected to become the main human habitat and the main destination of both domestic and international migration. Cities therefore receive a significantly increased attention, politically as well as research wise. The Rockefeller Foundation sponsors the 100Resilient cities project. Cities make an entire section of the UNs new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and research on the role of cities in an increasingly globalized world make an entire cottage industry. The project takes its point of departure in this field of study and focuses on the port cities that were once upon a time port cities in the Ottoman Empire, specifically in the eastern Mediterranean, like Alexandria, Smyrna and Salonica. They were cities of empires and characterized by being hubs in integrated imperial economies and profoundly cosmopolitan. A tremendous process of ethnic, religious and linguistic homogenization marked these cities during major parts of the 20th century. Philip Mansel (2010) has famously characterized the Levant as simultaneously an area, a dialogue, and a quest and it is remarkable to witness how Mediterranean cities now connect in fora such as Medcities (http://www.medcities.org/) and how cities like Alexandria and Izmir increasingly reach out to the world. Hence, both the dialogue and the quest are alive but the dynamics of the area are not widely known or understood.

Purpose

The purpose of the project and the related workshop is to examine the intriguing proposition that the cities in the context of globalization are becoming cosmopolitan again (argued by for instance historian Philip Mansel in Levant: Splendour and catastrophe on the Mediterranean, 2010). In other words, workshop participants will analyse and discuss the likely futures of the major present day Levantine port cities, including Alexandria, Beirut and Izmir.

Stakeholders

The workshop will be of interest to academics with expertise in very different fields of study and municipality civil servants who work in the area of strategic city planning such as İZKA in Izmir and other relevant agencies preparing strategic development plans and/or tasked with attracting Foreign Direct Investments to the cities.

Contents

The contents of the project will be an international workshop at Yaşar University, scheduled for 29 June 2018. The venue will be Yaşar University Selçuk Yaşar Campus, the Senate Room. The workshop is organized by the Center for Mediterranean Studies.

The research agenda of the Center for Mediterranean Studies will in the future include the role of the Mediterranean cities in a globalized world and a region that is being thoroughly reconfigured. The workshop will thus contribute to research within this new cluster of research, aiming at producing academic studies that also contribute to practical knowledge.

Expected results

The expected results of the project are twofold: the creation of a network of experts and the publication of the papers presented at the workshop in either a special issue of a relevant journal or an edited book.