The End of Syria’s Multiculturalism?

A Panel with Activists and Scholars from Minority Backgrounds

Ethnic and religious groups lived in the Levant for centuries, but the civil war in Syria was devastating consequences for these communities. A multicultural society is disappearing and new lines of division are being drawn in the region, forcing populations into exile, displacement, dispossession and trauma. Three young Syrian men from minority communities will discuss the power dynamics in Syria after 2011 and the issues of identity and dominance in the region.

Harout Ekmanian is a journalist, trained as a lawyer in Aleppo. He was a fellow at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights of Columbia University in 2015. He has worked in media and development in the Republic of Armenia in various capacities at the Civilitas Foundation and Hetq Online. His pieces featured in Voice of America, Tagesspiegel, O Globo, Near East Quarterly and others.

Nicholas Al-Jeloo lectures at the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, specializing in Syriac Studies. He completed his doctoral dissertation at the University of Sydney in 2013, focusing on the socio-cultural history and heritage of ethnic Assyrians in Iran.

Dlshad Othman is a Kurdish-Syrian activist and IT engineer who provides Syrians with digital security resources and assistance so that they can utilize online communications and advocacy freely and securely in spite of increased online government repression in the form of censorship, sophisticated cyber-attacks, and intense surveillance.

Prof. Christa Salamandra (Lehman and GC, CUNY) will be the discussant.

Photo by Scout Tufankjian
Fr. Housig pointing to the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste painting in the Forty Martyrs Armenian Cathedral of Aleppo