



"Ruling the Waves": Transnational Radio Broadcasting in the Middle East and the Mediterranean between Production and Reception, 1920–1970

International Conference
Rome, 22 – 24 June 2022



Fig.: Radio artists, Palestine Broadcasting Service, Jerusalem, between 1936 and 1946, G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 20540-4730.

For much of the 20th century, radio connected people across the globe. Radio acted as a means of propaganda, a vehicle of dissidence, and a medium of popular culture. Yet, compared to other mediums and genres of communication such as the press, cinema, and TV, the history of radio has received little attention. This conference re-examines the history and experiences of transnational radio broadcasting by analyzing its production, reception, and impact in the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean regions between the early 1920s and 1970.

Conference venues

Deutsches Historisches Institut in Rom
Istituto Storico Germanico di Roma
Via Aurelia Antica, 391
I-00165 Roma
www.dhi-roma.it

Accademia di Danimarca
Via Omero, 18
I-00197 Roma
<http://www.acdan.it>

Villa Mondragone
University of Rome "Tor Vergata"
Via Frascati, 51
I-00078 Monte Porzio Catone
<https://www.villamondragone.it/>

Conference organised by Enrico Acciai, Bianca Gaudenzi, Arturo Marzano, Pelle Valentin Olsen, Jacopo Pili, Maria Chiara Rioli, Peter Wien, and kindly funded by the German Historical Institute in Rome, University of Rome Tor Vergata, the Danish Academy, the Carlsberg Foundation, the Academic Research Institute in Iraq (TARII), the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC), Ithaca, and the Danish Institute in Damascus.

Wednesday, 22 June, 9.30 am – 18.30 pm
German Historical Institute

09.30 Registration

10.00 Martin Baumeister | Director, DHI Rome
Lutz Klinkhammer | Deputy Director, DHI Rome
[Welcome](#)

10.30 Peter Wien
[Opening Remarks](#)

I - (Inter)war Frequencies

Chair: Bianca Gaudenzi

11.00 Simon Potter
[Infrastructures of Empire: Britain and Transnational Broadcasting in the Mediterranean and Middle East in the 1920s and 1930s](#)

Sahar Bostock
[Palestinian Listeners Speaking Back to the Radio, 1936–1948](#)

Sara Farhan
[Broadcasting Contagion: Censorship, Transmission, and the Radio in Wartime Iraq, 1941](#)

13.00 Lunch (for speakers & chairs)

II - Broadcasting Popular Culture

Chair: Pelle Valentin Olsen

14.30 Emily Mellen
[The Arab Music of Radio Bari](#)

Janina S. Santer
['Is the radio dangerous?' Censorship and Popular Culture in Lebanon \(1940s–1950s\)](#)

Diana Abbani
[al-Idhā'a \[the radio\], Shaping an Audience and Remapping Beirut's Musical Scene \(1940s–1950s\)](#)

16.30 Break

17.00 *Keynote*
Ziad Fahmy
[Egyptian Radio: Transitioning from Commercial Stations to a State Broadcasting Monopoly, 1928–1934](#)

introduced by Peter Wien

20.00 Dinner (for speakers & chairs)

Thursday, 23 June, 9.30 am – 16.30 pm
Danish Academy

III - Decolonizing Radio

Chair: Arturo Marzano

09.30 Caroline Kahlenberg
[The Man of the \(Hebrew\) Hour: Palestinian Knowledge Production and Anti-Colonial Radio in the Mid-Twentieth Century](#)

Maria Hadjiathanasiou
['Militant patriots' or 'a bunch of gangsters': The Greek Cypriot anti-colonial Revolt through the Radio \(1954–1959\)](#)

Arthur Asseraf
[Liquid Fears: State Broadcasting and Unruly Listeners in Algeria in the Twentieth Century](#)

11.30 Break

IV - Increasing the Wavelength: International Broadcasting

Chair: Maria Chiara Rioli

12.00 Vincent Kuitenbrouwer
[Orientalism on Air: The early years of the Arabic service of Radio Netherlands Wereldomroep \(1945–1949\)](#)

Andrea Stanton
[International Regionalism: The United Nations Radio's Middle East Service, 1947–1973](#)

13.30 Lunch (for speakers & chairs)

V - Middle East Calling

Chair: Jacopo Pili

15.00 Nicholas Glastonbury
['Kolkhozniks of meadow and earth': Kurdish Folklore, Musical Nationalism, and the Political Aesthetics of Radio Yerevan](#)

Siavush Randjbar-Daemi
[Rebel Airwaves: The Radio Opposition to the Shah of Iran in Europe and the Middle East, 1950s–1970s](#)

16.30 Free time to walk around city centre

19.00 Dinner (for speakers & chairs)

Friday, 24 June, 9.00 am – 16.00 pm
Villa Mondragone, University of Rome "Tor Vergata"

09.00 Transport from hotel

10.00 Giovan Battista Fidanza (President, Villa Mondragone,
Rome Tor Vergata)
Lucia Ceci (Director, Dept of History, Humanities & Society,
Rome Tor Vergata)
[Welcome](#)

VI - Transmitting the Global Cold War

Chair: Enrico Acciai

10.30 Robert Elliott
[Propaganda, Patronage, and Polarization: The Communist Party of Turkey's Bizim Radyo, 1958–1963](#)

Sarah Lemmen
[Talking to the Enemy. Spanish National Radio Broadcasting across the Iron Curtain](#)

Anandita Bajpai
['Tuning in' to the Cold War: Radio Berlin International and its 'Objects of Love' in India](#)

12.30 Break

13.00 [Final remarks](#)

14.30 Lunch in Castel Gandolfo (for speakers & chairs)

16.00 Free afternoon: possibility to tour the lake
(and make your way back to Rome independently by train),
or take the bus back to Rome