

## BEFORE THE QUR'AN: ARABIC'S HISTORY ACROSS GREEK, SOUTH SEMITIC, AND ARAMAIC WRITING TRADITIONS

Event of the long-term project "Corpus Coranicum", member of the Research Centre for Primary Sources of the Ancient World at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Lecture in the series "Languages and Cultures in the Near East and the Silk Road in Late Antiquity" (organized by Turfan and Corpus Coranicum).

**Tuesday, 3 December 2019, 6 p.m.**

Academy Building – Gendarmenmarkt  
Einstein Hall, Jägerstraße 22/23, 10117 Berlin

**Registration until 1.12. at: [www.bbaw.de/anmeldung-cc19](http://www.bbaw.de/anmeldung-cc19)**

This talk will survey the different orthographic traditions used to render the Arabic language before the emergence of a single written standard in early Islamic times. By combining evidence from these sources, we can form a detailed, evidence-based picture of Arabic's phonology, morphology, and dialect geography in pre-Islamic times. Following this, we will attempt to understand the relationship, both diachronically and geographically, of the dialect represented in Qur'anic orthography with these sources.

**Ahmad Al-Jallad** specializes in the early history of Arabic and North Arabian. He has done research on Arabic from the pre-Islamic period based on documentary sources, the Graeco-Arabica (Arabic in Greek transcription from the pre-Islamic period), language classification, North Arabian and Arabic epigraphy, and historical Semitic linguistics. His notable decipherments include a zodiac star calendar used in the Safaitic inscriptions (Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy, 2014), the oldest Arabic poem yet discovered (Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religion, 2015), and the decipherment of the oldest, fully vocalized Arabic text, written in Greek letters (Arabian Epigraphic Notes, 2015). He is the founding director of the Leiden Center for the Study of Ancient Arabia, and has led or been a member of several epigraphic and archaeological projects.



Mamluk and Safaitic inscriptions on a boulder from Jebel Qurma, Jordan (Picture: A. Al-Jallad).

**Welcoming Address**  
**Tonio Sebastian Richter**  
BBAW

**Introduction**  
**Angelika Neuwirth**  
FU Berlin

**Introduction**  
**Michael Marx**  
BBAW

**Lecture**  
**Ahmad Al-Jallad**  
The Ohio State University

**Admission is free.**  
**Registration is requested.**

### Further Information:

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[www.bbaw.de/en/](http://www.bbaw.de/en/)

### Directions:

S-Bahn: Friedrichstraße / U2: Hausvogteiplatz  
or Stadtmittel / U6: Französische  
Straße or Stadtmittel.