Call for Presentations: Shared Society in the Post-Ottoman World

International Workshop | 19–21 July 2027 | The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

Convened by the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute and the Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg, as part of the research project *Shared Citizenship in Deeply Divided Societies* (funded by the Volkswagen Foundation), in collaboration with the Frieze Center for Shared Society at the University of Haifa.

Workshop Theme

How can people who do not share a national, ethnic, or religious identity nevertheless live, work, and participate in society together? This question is particularly pressing in deeply divided societies, where enduring inequalities, competing national projects, and histories of conflict shape the possibilities of political belonging and everyday cooperation. Efforts to address these divisions have been articulated through concepts such as *shared society (McCartney, 2021; Kuttner & Eiran, 2021)*, Shared-fate Citizenship (Williams, 2005) and deep diversity (Taylor, 1997; Mizrachi, 2024) depolarization *shared citizenship*, and have taken different institutional, political, and social forms across Israel, Cyprus, Turkey, the Balkans, and the wider post-Ottoman world.

This international workshop seeks to bring these conversations into dialogue through a comparative and interdisciplinary examination of shared society initiatives, majority–minority relations, and practices of cooperation across communal boundaries. Rather than approaching shared society exclusively through the established frameworks of peacebuilding, reconciliation, or coexistence, we are particularly interested in the political, economic, spatial, and material conditions under which groups with different collective identities come to share institutions, resources, infrastructures, and forms of social and political life.

The post-Ottoman world provides a particularly productive setting for this inquiry. While the societies of this region have followed distinct trajectories of state formation, nation-building, and political conflict, they also share historical legacies of imperial governance, colonial rule, population movements, contested sovereignty, and the institutionalisation of majority–minority relations *(Anscombe, 2014)*. Examining these societies alongside one another offers an opportunity to explore both the possibilities and the limits of shared society under different political and institutional conditions.

We invite contributions that investigate how shared society is imagined, negotiated, institutionalised, contested, or practised, including forms of collaboration between actors, communities, institutions, or sectors that would not ordinarily be expected to cooperate. We

are interested not only in explicitly designated shared society initiatives, but also in less visible or unintended forms of interdependence and cooperation that emerge through everyday economic activity, public institutions, urban life, and shared infrastructures. Contributions may examine both the achievements and the contradictions of such arrangements, including the ways in which cooperation can coexist with, reproduce, or challenge structural inequalities and political hierarchies.

Suggested Themes

We welcome theoretical, empirical, historical, and comparative contributions addressing, but not limited to, the following themes:

- **Political and institutional arrangements:** Citizenship regimes, political representation, party politics, minority participation in state institutions, and legal or constitutional frameworks shaping shared political membership.
- **Political contestation:** Conflicts over shared society and shared citizenship initiatives, competing understandings of equality and belonging, and the political mobilisation of support for or opposition to such projects.
- **Economic relations and interdependence:** Labour markets, occupational segmentation, economic cooperation, land and property relations, public investment, municipal budgets, and informal economies.
- **Spatial and urban relations:** Segregation and desegregation, mixed cities and neighbourhoods, urban planning, mobility, access to public space, and the spatial organisation of majority–minority relations.
- **Material conditions and infrastructures:** Housing, transport, healthcare, education, utilities, and the built environment as sites through which inclusion, exclusion, interdependence, and cooperation are produced.
- **Civil society and collective action:** Shared society initiatives, minority rights organisations, social movements, professional and religious associations, cross-community networks, and the relationship between stated objectives and actual outcomes.
- **Cultural and discursive dimensions:** Language policies, media, collective memory, commemoration, and the concepts and narratives through which majority–minority relations and shared belonging are understood and contested.

- **Comparative and transregional perspectives:** Comparisons between Israel, Cyprus, Turkey, the Balkans, and other post-Ottoman contexts, as well as comparisons with deeply divided societies beyond the region.

- **Theoretical and conceptual perspectives:** How different actors understand, envision, and promote shared society. What are the moral and political principles underlying these understandings and their relationship to other frameworks such as shared-fate citizenship, deep diversity, multiculturalism, and coexistence. How do these ideas translate into concrete political and social practices?

We particularly encourage contributions that move beyond normative assessments of coexistence to investigate the concrete practices, institutions, conflicts, and asymmetries through which shared social and political life is constituted.

Participation and Publication

The workshop welcomes scholars from political science, sociology, geography, anthropology, history, economics, urban planning, and related disciplines. We particularly encourage submissions from early-career researchers.

The workshop is conceived as the first stage of a collaborative publication project. We invite original, unpublished contributions developed specifically for presentation and discussion at the workshop. Following the event, a selection of participants will be invited to develop their presentations into chapters for a proposed edited volume. The volume's thematic structure and the timeline for chapter submissions will be discussed collectively during the workshop.

Submission Guidelines

Please submit an **abstract of up to 300 words**, outlining the central research question, approach, and proposed contribution of your presentation, together with a short biographical note.

Submission deadline: 3 January 2027
Notification of acceptance: 1 February 2027
Workshop dates: 19–21 July 2027
Venue: The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, Jerusalem
Submission address: alizag@vanleer.org.il

The working language of the workshop will be English.

מכון ון ליר בירושלים
THE VAN LEER JERUSALEM INSTITUTE
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מוקד פְּרִיז לחברה משותפת
Frieze Center for Shared Society
مركز فريز للمجتمع التشاركي
UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA אוניברסיטת חיפה

Limited funding for travel and accommodation will be available upon request and according to need. Applicants wishing to be considered for financial assistance are encouraged to indicate this in their submission.

We look forward to receiving contributions that advance a comparative understanding of the possibilities, practices, and limits of shared society in the post-Ottoman world and beyond.

VolkswagenStiftung

References

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Mizrachi, N. (2024). *Beyond suspicion: The moral clash between rootedness and progressive liberalism*. University of California Press.

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Williams, M. S. (2003). Citizenship as identity, citizenship as shared fate, and the functions of multicultural education. In K. McDonough & W. Feinberg (Eds.), *Citizenship and education in liberal-democratic societies: Teaching for cosmopolitan values and collective identities*, Oxford University Press, pp. 208–247.