Press Release: 2026 Riwaq Book Prize

Berlin/Beirut, October 28, 2026

First Riwaq Book Prize for Excellence in Research Awarded to Yvonne Albers, Raed Alsamhouri, and Nora K. Schmid

The Divan – Das Arabische Kulturhaus in Berlin and the Orient-Institut Beirut (OIB) of the Max Weber Foundation presented the Riwaq Prize for Science and Culture for the first time on Friday, October 16, 2026. The award ceremony took place as part of the Divan's 4th Arab Book Fair in Berlin. The award recognized three outstanding monographs in the humanities from the fields of Arabic studies, Islamic studies, and Middle Eastern studies, published in Arabic, German, and English.

During the ceremony, H.E. Abdullah bin Ibrahim Al-Hamar (Ambassador of the State of Qatar and Chair of the Divan's Advisory Board), Prof. Dr. Jens Hanssen (Director of the OIB), and H.E. Clemens Hach (Deputy Director General for the Middle East and North Africa, Federal Foreign Office) welcomed the attendees before representatives of the three juries introduced the award winners and their works.

Prof. Dr. Amal Mohammed Al Malki (Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar), Chair of the Jury for Arabic-Language Monographs, presented Raed Alsamhouri's monograph ابن تيمية التاريخي والمُستعاد: مقاربة تاريخية تحليلية في موقف ابن تيمية من المختلِف الديني (*Ibn Taymiyyah: The Historical and Reclaimed Figure: A Historical-Analytical Approach to Ibn Taymiyyah's Position on Religious Diversity*), published in 2024 by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies. The jury for English-language monographs, represented by Prof. Dr. Islam Dayeh (Ghent University), honored Nora K. Schmid's monograph *The Ascetic Qur'an and its Kharijite Readers*, published by Brill in 2026. In closing, Prof. Dr. Gudrun Krämer (Freie Universität Berlin), speaking on behalf of the jury for German-language monographs, delivered a laudatio in honor of Yvonne Albers' monograph *Beirut und die Zeitschrift Mawaqif. Eine arabische Intellektuellengeschichte, 1968–1994* (*Beirut and the Journal Mawaqif. A History of Arab Intellectuals, 1968–1994*), published in 2023 by Brill/Fink. The juries commended the award-winning monographs for their contribution to research in their respective disciplines, their innovative research approaches, the current relevance of the research questions, and their engaging scholarly prose. The award ceremony was followed by a discussion with the three award recipients, moderated by Prof. Dr. Gudrun Krämer, in which common and distinct methodological approaches, as well as the significance of the works for a broader public, were discussed.

About the Riwaq Book Prize

The Riwaq Prize for Science and Culture is awarded jointly by Divan – das Arabische Kulturhaus in Berlin and the Orient-Institut Beirut. Every two years, the prize honors outstanding monographs that contribute to the advancement of their discipline through original research, alternating between the humanities and the social sciences. The next call for submissions in 2028 will focus on monographs in the social sciences.

For more information, visit https://riwaqbookprize.com/