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## Propositions

- Unlike English freemasons who practised freemasonry as colonial vanguard by founding mainly military lodges and excluding thereby indigenous people, freemasonry in Ottoman Syria was used by the Ottomans themselves in order to find common grounds overweighting religious and political differences. (Cf: Jessica Harland Jacob, *Builders of Empire*, p. 21 – 99)
- Ottoman freemasonry was not dominantly a movement of and for (nationalist) intellectuals as researchers like Thomas Philipp in his review of Ilham Khuri-Makdisi (Philipp, Review of Khuri-Makdisi, Ilham, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860-1914*. H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews. November, 2010), Lisa Lital Levy (Levy, *Jewish Writers in the Arab East: Literature, History, and the Politics of Enlightenment*, p. 123-125) or Shmuel Moreh (Moreh, *Modern Arabic Poetry, 1800 - 1970*, p. 97) suggest.
- Ottoman freemasons practised 'lodge-hopping' in order to widen the masonic network while clearly contravening masonic regulations. (Cf. Sommer, *Unity is Strength*, p. 175-176, 206)
- Contrary to Paul Dumont's belief that lodges fiercely competed against each other, collaboration was the normal state (Cf. Dumont, 'Freemasonry in Turkey: A by-product of European penetration' in *European Review* 13/3 (2005), p. 481-493, Sommer, p. 28, 99, 178, 185, 206).
- While men use freemasonry for networking and business contacts, female freemasons have fewer advantages business-wise like that.
- Unlike cases of earlier revolutions and uprisings, Arab freemasons in the Middle East did not contribute to the 'Arab Spring'. Instead Gene Sharp served as the ideological guide for actions. (Cf: Sharp, *From Dictatorship to Democracy*).
- As Stefan-Ludwig Hofmann clearly has shown, freemasonry has the potential to serve as vanguard for other clubs / associations / communities of civil interest groups. (Throughout his book *Politics of Sociability: Freemasonry and German Civil Society 1840-1918*). Hence developed democratic countries do not need freemasonry anymore as its rituals and traditions are too antiquated to attract the sort of young people relevant for societies' change.
- Masonic lodges maintaining their traditions have always provoked contra and para-masonic movements. (Cf. Hanke, *Mops und Maurer*)
- The Israeli state is only the enemy easiest manifested, but it is the Israeli Bedouins themselves and their own way of living that forestalls

positive changes: Israeli Bedouins need to rethink their traditions in order to be able to live them.

- Male circumcision should be legally permitted in Europe only if the concerned person himself agrees to the procedure (from the age of 16 or 18).