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Gulshan Dietl is a Professor at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has served as the Chairperson, Centre for West Asian and African Studies and Director, the Gulf Studies Programme at her University. Her areas of teaching, research and research guidance are domestic developments, foreign policies and security issues in the Gulf and West Asia. She has been a Fulbright

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Michaela Hoffmann-Ruf studied Languages and Civilizations of the Islamic Middle East and Cultural Anthropology in Tübingen. From 2004 to 2007, she worked as a research assistant in the interdisciplinary project “Oasis Settlements of Oman” (University of Tübingen) and wrote her doctoral thesis on “Sheikh Muġsin ibn ZahrĀn al-ĶAbrĶ. Tribal power in Oman in the 19th century.” From 2007 to 2010, she was Lecturer at the Oriental Institute of the University of Tübingen. At present she is working on the edition of the German Orientalist Gildemeister’s (1812–1890) letters to his family (a DFG-funded project) at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn. In parallel to her academic activities, since 1996 she has worked as a museum docent in the Department of Art and History of the Islamic Orient at the Linden-Museum Stuttgart (State Museum of Ethnology).

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Beatrice Nicolini (Ph.D. in History of Africa, Siena University 1995) graduated in International Relations and Comparative Government, Harvard University, USA, and in Political Science, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy. She teaches History and Institutions of Africa in the Faculty of Political Science and in the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan, Italy. She is a Member of the Ph.D. School in Politics and Institutions, Faculty of Political Science, Catholic University. She focused her research on the history of the Indian Ocean, combining fieldwork (South Central Asia, the Persian/Arab Gulf, Oman, India, Tanzania-Zanzibar, Mozambique) and archival research carried out in both Western and Afro-Asian countries. She attended numerous international conferences and workshops as the only invited Italian expert. Among her 98 publications (2004) is *Makran, Oman and Zanzibar: Three-Terminal Cultural Corridor in the Western Indian Ocean (1799–1856)*, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers. (2006). Editor of *Studies in Magic, Witchcraft, War and Peace in Africa: 19th and 20th century*, New York: Mellen Press. (2009). The Myth of the Sultans in the Western Indian Ocean during the 19th century: A New Hypothesis. *African & Asian Studies*, 8 (3), 239–287. (2010). The Indian Ocean: A Cultural Bow. *Crissma Working Papers*, 19, 46–67; (2011) *The First Sultan of Zanzibar. Scrambling for Power and Trade in the Nineteenth Century Indian Ocean*. Princeton: M. Wiener.

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Among the monographs he has published are *Gott, Geld und Staat: Aufstieg und Niedergang der Islamischen Investmentgesellschaften in Ägypten im Spannungsfeld von Ökonomie, Politik und Religion*. Hamburg/Münster: LIT, 1994; *Islamische Wirtschafts- und Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen in Ägypten zwischen Markt und Moral*. Hamburg, Münster: LIT, 1997; and *Wirtschaft, Politik und Raum. Territoriale und regionale Prozesse in der westlichen Sahara*. Berlin: Hans Schiler (2012). Steffen Wippel is (co-)editor of several publications, a series of working papers and a book series on Middle Eastern economics.

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