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Editorial

Juliette Honvault

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Le cheval dans la péninsule Arabique

Editorial

Juliette Honvault



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Editorial

Juliette Honvault

- 1 This 8th issue of *Arabian Humanities* appears in a critical and turbulent context. The war in Yemen has entered its second year, opposing on the one hand the government forces recognized by the international community and backed by an “Arab coalition” and, on the other, Houthi “rebel” forces supported by former President ‘Alī ‘Abdallāh Ṣāliḥ. With strikes from above by the Saudi-led “coalition”, civilians find themselves caught up in chaos, epidemics, lack of water, food and care. The international community is displaying a shocking indifference, while the Yemenis are counting their dead: nearly 10,000 in the early summer. Those who have been found shelter elsewhere are tortured by helplessness, as, tragically, the situation grows worse day after day.
- 2 The ostracization of the Shiites – among which the Zaydis – has also reached Qatar, accused of complacency regarding the Iranian regime and Islamic “terrorism”. The Arabian Peninsula seems to be descending into madness, as King Salmān and his son Muḥammad b. Salmān, the Minister of Defense, reaffirm their leadership in Saudi Arabia as well as in the region. Is the appointment of Muḥammad b. Salmān as crown prince in June of this year, in itself a veritable revolution in the order of succession established since the founding of the kingdom, foreboding of the future of the region, built on destructive divides?
- 3 Keeping hope alive is essential. Destruction and death must be met with not only with life, but also that which nourishes it. *Arabian Humanities*, in its own small way, carries on. The theme of this 8th issue may bring a measure of comfort by summoning a symbol of nobility and freedom, the horse. As to the journal itself, it is witnessing a change in its leadership team. Michel Mouton, Director of CEFAS and director of publications since September 2013, served his term in a difficult context, that of CEFAS’s exile: first to Jeddah, then to Kuwait, where the Center has been gradually breaking new ground since September 2015. We would like to extend our thanks for his warm support for researchers and the attention he has given *Arabian Humanities* despite the upheavals. As for me, I am also leaving my position as editor-in-chief to, confidently, pass this adventure on to Laurent Bonnefoy. I know that, five years after the launch of *Arabian*

Humanities, he will be able to strengthen the momentum of the journal, and to continue to shine a light for research, reflection, words and life on the Arabian Peninsula.