



Europa im Nahen Osten  
Der Nahe Osten in Europa

**Venue:**

Conference Hall  
Zentrum Moderner Orient  
Kirchweg 33

14129 Berlin-Nikolassee

Participants are asked to register at the following address:

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The seminar is part of the activities of the Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO) and of 'Cities Compared: Cosmopolitanism in the Mediterranean and Adjacent Regions', a research field within 'Europe in the Middle East - The Middle East in Europe' (EUME), a research program of the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

For more information please visit:  
<http://www.zmo.de>  
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Fritz Thyssen Stiftung  
FÜR WISSENSCHAFTSFÖRDERUNG

**Invitation ZMO-EUME-Colloquium****Urban Studies Seminar**

**Chaired by Prof. Ulrike Freitag and Dr. Nora Lafi**  
**Annual Theme 2010 -2011: Urban Violence**

**Monday, January 10th, 2011, 5 pm**

**Rebels and Their Rivals in a Syrian Town****Lecture by Michael Provence**

In 1925 Musa Ibn Shadi Makhul (Naddaf) shot and killed a rival village youth in Saydnaya in the Syrian-Lebanese mountains. A village feud between the two leading families, had begun during the course of the great War when Musa's father Shadi had been killed and left in his fields north of the village probably about 1917.

The revenge killing of Ilyas Ahmar in April 1925 and the escalation of the feud between the two families, both Christian, preceded the outbreak of the Great Syrian Revolution in July of the same year. The feud intensified in the following months and the Naddaf's joined the revolt as the region surrounding Saydnaya fell under rebel control and French forces withdrew to Damascus and Rayaq.

After the reassertion of mandatory control in 1927, Ahmar family members sought revenge against the Naddaf family. In 1930, an attorney for the Ahmar family, filed a request for amnesty for the Ahmars still in prison. The attorney, Elias Namour, stated that during the revolt Saydnaya had been isolated from government control. He claimed that during this time members of the Naddaf family, taking advantage of the disorder, and in league with the insurgents, killed a member of the Ahmar family.

The feud is interesting for the way it can illuminate local politics, and the way local political and economic struggles were readily harnessed to Ottoman and French imperial politics, shifting state policies, and various understandings of nationalism and sectarianism. It is further interesting how the Ahmar family manipulated French colonial pretensions as "Protector of the Oriental Christians," to effectively defeat and banish the village rivals.

**Michael Provence** is Associate Professor, Department of History, University of California, San Diego. In 2010-2011 he is an Alexander von Humboldt Senior Research Fellow at the Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin. He earned a PhD in Modern Middle Eastern History from the University of Chicago under the direction of Rashid Khalidi in 2001. He has lived and studied in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Turkey. He is the author of the book, *The Great Syrian Revolt*, and several articles on the late Ottoman and colonial Middle East of the early 20th century. Provence is a frequent public lecturer and media commentator on Middle Eastern history and politics.

**Presentation of the Seminar**

What is the experience of cities in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire - in Asia, Europe and adjacent regions, the Middle East, and North Africa - in dealing with the impact of global changes and the transformation from Empire to nation States? How did people of different cultural, social and religious backgrounds live together? How are examples of conviviality, conflict, migration, and urban regimes of governance and stratification conceptualized? And how have urban traditions been reinterpreted, and what bearing does this have on modern conceptions of civil society, multicultural societies, migration, or cosmopolitanism? This year's Seminar will focus on questions of Urban Violence.

This seminar is supported with funds of the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung.