



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****Ottoman Urban Studies Seminar**

**Chaired by Prof. Ulrike Freitag and Dr. Nora Lafi**  
**Annual Theme 2009 -2010: Post-Ottoman Cities**

**Monday, February 8, 2010, 5 pm**

**French City or Ottoman? The Patrimonial Debate in 19th and early 20th century Algiers****Lecture by Dr Nabila Oulebsir**

In the 1830's, the patrimonial debate in France opposed defenders of the medieval gothic heritage (Viollet-le-Duc) to academics who wished to maintain the tradition of the Greco-Roman, convinced by the fact that Gothic architecture was a "capricious and arbitrary" art (Raoul Rochette). This quarrel of the Gothic has lasted for the major part of the nineteenth century and the return to the Middle-Ages has been materialized by the substitution of the neo-classical by the neo-gothic and the affirmation of a national heritage drawing its references in the French territory and not in Rome. In the colonial context Algiers was the subject of debates of the same kind, with art and ornament used as arguments in the selection of the past to be used as a model for the French colonization: Berber, Roman, Arab or Ottoman? Algiers was quickly transformed into a capital city with a modernity displayed in architectural and urban projects which recalled those conducted in Paris by Haussmann or in Barcelona by Cerdà. The Ottoman architecture was preserved – Dar Khasnadji, Dar es-Souf – only when it reflected a sophistication that could serve the ideology of the colonial administration and the history of taste. It was considered a "spurious eclecticism", while the more elaborated Moorish art of the twelfth century, reflected a "fertile imagination" and a "decorative science" – the neo-Moorish style has characterized the design of the early twentieth century. Finally, the Mediterranean modern architecture became the referent which crossed the patrimonial discourse as well as the architectural and urban design of Algiers.

**Dr Nabila Oulebsir** is since 2000 Assistant Professor at the University of Poitiers (Department of History of Art & Archaeology), where she teaches History of architecture and Architectural Heritage (19th and 20th centuries). She is also Researcher at the Center of Interdisciplinary Research on Germany (CRIA/EHESS, UMR 81318 CNRS, Paris), where she leads a seminar on Frontiers of the Heritage: Works of Art Displaced. In 2008-2009, she has been Getty Scholar at the Getty Research Institute (Los Angeles) and, in 1998-1999, was fellow AKMI (the prior program to EUME) at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. Her last publications include: *Alger. Paysage urbain et architectures* (Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 2003), *Les Usages du patrimoine. Monuments, musées et politique coloniale en Algérie, 1830-1930* (Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'homme, 2004), *L'Orientalisme architectural, entre imaginaires et savoirs* (Éditions Picard/CNRS, 2009).

**Presentation of the Seminar**

What is the historical experience of cities in the former territories of the Ottoman Empire - in the Balkans, Anatolia, 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 such 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. These and other questions will be addressed in this year's Seminar in Ottoman Urban Studies.

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