



ZMO-EUME-Colloquium

Twice a month,
Mondays 17:00-19:00

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 Zentrum Moderner Orient
(ZMO) and 'Europe in the Middle
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For more information please visit

www.zmo.de
www.eume-berlin.de
www.forum-transregionale-studien.de
www.h-net.msu.edu/~mediter

Urban Studies Seminar 2011 - 2012

Chaired by Prof. Ulrike Freitag and Dr. Nora Lafi

**Annual theme: Urban Sociability and Urban
Movements (Middle East, North Africa, Iran, Turkey)**

Monday, June 4th, 2012, 5 pm - 6.30 pm

The Role of Urbanity in City-based Social Movements

Lecture by Margit Mayer

The presentation deals with the question to what extent "the urban" or "urbanity" matters in mobilization processes that are based in cities. Are social movements urban because they take place in cities and/or relate to urban issues? Does it matter whether they raise only urban (local) issues or thematize urban problems within a larger social context and thereby politicize them? Or does "the urban" as such, under contemporary conditions, manifest a strategically important position which gives urban movements a larger than local-particular relevance?

It addresses these questions by reviewing recent theoretical contributions that explore the role of the urban in the context of current social struggles and social change, in order to identify criteria that might be helpful for assessing current movements within as well as over cities. Opposite poles in these debates are marked by David Harvey and Andy Merrifield. While the former argues that contemporary 'Right to the City' movements are central for social transformation, the latter questions city-focused demands as unsuitable for the upcoming struggles. A look at the Occupy movements and the sense of urbanity implied by them harnesses insights from the tensions in this debate.

Margit Mayer teaches comparative and North American politics at the Freie Universität Berlin. Her research focuses on urban and social politics and social movements.

She co-edited *Urban Movements in a Globalising World*, (2000) *Cities for People not for Profit* (2012) and *Neoliberal Urbanism and Its Contestations* (2012).