



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:

Dr. Nora Lafi  
nora.lafi@rz.hu-berlin.de  
Phone: (+49) (0) 30 80307- 0

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>  
<http://www.eume-berlin.de>  
<http://www.h-net.org/mediter/>

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, April 19, 2010, 5 pm

**Erasure and Distortion: The Ottoman Memory in Contemporary Beirut Art Production****Lecture by Dr Kirsten Scheid**

This talk will present preliminary findings from my research into the intellectual work that was done in the 1920s-40s to show that the nascent Lebanese state was a post-Ottoman society. Given that Art was claimed for modernity as a paradigmatic index, much labor was put by artists and writers into using art to show and make Lebanese society the opposite of (perceived) Ottoman society. Exhibitions, art writing, painted canvasses, and art schools were all part of this process. Work in art is therefore a first-hand source for understanding the epistemes and strategies involved in performing modernity in a metropolitan margin. Yet, the refusal to come to grips with Ottoman-sponsored efflorescence had ironic consequences. The labor that went into de-Ottomanizing Lebanon has put the society into stasis, rendering it, for its inhabitants, the same unchanging, recalcitrant, decadent entity from which art practices were supposed to rescue it. Exploring this phenomenon is a timely intervention in current debates about the role of contemporary Lebanese art and the future of Lebanese society.

**Dr Kirsten Scheid** is a Beirut-based anthropologist and art historian who currently teaches at the American University of Beirut. She gained her doctoral thesis from Princeton University in 2005. Her research focuses on fine art in the Arab world, civilizing discourses, colonial and post-colonial encounters, identity performance, and aesthetics. She is currently fellow of "Europe in the Middle East--The Middle East in Europe" (ZMO EUME 2009/10) and is preparing a manuscript entitled *On Civilized Art in Primitive Places: Modern Art and the Formation of Lebanon*. Her articles have been published in *Museum Anthropology*, *ISIM*, and *IJMES*.

**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.

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