



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



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, February 7th, 2011, 5 pm**

**Fluid Identities and Violent Alliances:  
Workers, Weavers, and Futuwwat of al-  
Mahalla al-Kubra, Egypt, 1927-1954**

**Lecture by Prof. Hanan Hammad**

The conflict between rising national capitalists and foreign domination during the interwar period in Egypt spawned the Misr Spinning and Weaving Company in al-Mahalla al-Kubra, a town in the middle of the Nile Delta, in 1927. This development set in motion unsettling transformations in the town's social and economic life. Among these were the immigration into the town of thousands of peasants hired to work in the mill and a host of new social and economic tensions between Mahallawiyya, or the people of al-Mahalla, and the peasant-workers who were called Shirka-wiyya, or people of the company. The Company workers were also divided among themselves based on gender, geographical origins, and their positions inside the factory. Workers from the same villages clustered in shared rooms in the slums of al-Mahalla and turned into 'usba, violently competing and fighting bands.

In this lecture, Hanan Hammad traces the communal divisions and the roles played by fighting bands of workers and their leaders, Futuwwat to examine how such groups helped workers to adapt to urban industrial life while distracting them from "working class solidarity." It will be shown how and why these fighting groups sometimes cooperated with one another against the Company during strikes. The broad research question addressed here is to what extent modern industrialization changed local communal identities into a "modern class-gender identity" and what extent modern social types of organization replaced communal networks.

**Hanan Hammad** is assistant professor of history at Texas Christian University. In 2010-2011 she is the EUME fellow at ZMO. She earned her Ph.D in History at the University of Texas at Austin in 2009. Currently, she is working on a book manuscript tentatively entitled "Mechanizing People: Industrialization, Sexuality, Gender, and Social Transformation in Modern Egypt". Her publications include "Between Egyptian 'national purity' and 'Local Flexibility': Prostitution in al-Mahalla al-Kubra in the first half of the 20th century" in Journal of Social History and "From Condemnation to Fascination: and the Iranian Revolution and Khomeini in the Egyptian Press" in Radical History Review.

**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 from the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung.