



Working Field Culture, Education & Science | DAFG Jour Fixe #13

DAFG Jour Fixe: Contemporary Urban Issues in Middle Eastern Mega-Cities

Urban Peripheries and Social Contrasts in Tunis

with

Dr. Nora Lafi (Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient & FU Berlin)

Tuesday, 21 November 2017, at 6:30 pm

DAFG Office, Friedrichstr. 185 (Kontorhaus Mitte), 10117 Berlin

Language: English

Urban space has become the main site of production, not only of economic relations but of human livelihoods, creating globalized metropolises characterized by enormous density. As the emergent epicenter of modern life and society, cities and their sprawling dynamics deserve and require particular attention.

While this phenomenon has a global dimension, mega-cities of the MENA region such as Cairo, Beirut or Tunis are as concerned as other urbanities with a plethora of issues caused by different factors: Through rising population numbers, congestion, noise, pollution, transportation, uneven development, crime and density, etc., cities and their inhabitants are pushed to their limits in regards to infrastructure, space or overall capacity. As a particular manifestation of urbanization, informal settlements and social contrasts have become a manifestation of contemporary urbanization, creating urban peripheries characterized by even greater density, poverty but also certain revitalizing dynamics.

Within our DAFG Jour Fixe-series – a platform for dialogue which is primarily addressing English-speaking students and young professionals interested in the exchange between Germany and the Arab world—we will focus on opportunities, issues and challenges of contemporary urbanities of the Middle East. The 13th edition of our Jour Fixe on 21 November 2017 will deal in particular with peripheries within urban metropolises shaped by marginalization and impoverishment. Dr. Nora Lafi (Zentrum Moderner Orient & FU Berlin) has researched this field thoroughly from a contemporary and historical perspective and will reflect on those places under scrutiny with a particular focus on dynamics in „The Kherba“ („the destroyed place“), the old city centre of Tunis, and also on the growing social and spatial divide at the scale of the metropolitan areas in the MENA region.



Dr. Nora Lafi is a Senior Research Fellow with the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin. She also teaches at Freie Universität Berlin (History Dpt, Islamwissenschaft Dpt and Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies). Her research focuses on the cities of the Middle East and North-Africa and particularly on issues of governance and civil society. Among her recent publications: *Understanding the City through its Margins* (Co-ed., Routledge, 2017); *Urban Violence in the Middle East* (Co-ed., Berghahn, 2015); *Building and Deconstructing Authenticity in Aleppo: Heritage between Conservation, Transformation, Destruction and Reinvention* (in Bernhardt et al., Berlin, 2017); *The Arab Spring in Global Perspective: Social Movements, Changing Contexts and Political Transitions in the Arab World* (in Berger and Nehring eds, The History of Social Movements, NY, Palgrave, 2017)"

We look forward to your participation. If you wish to attend, **please register until 20 November 2017** via our website or with Jan-Philipp Zychla, Project Coordinator (jan-philipp.zychla@dafg.eu).



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