

**Collective Action and the Urban Environment: Damascene Poor and Their Influence on the City's Spatial Characteristics in Late Ottoman Times, 1875-1920.**

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Under the working title "Collective Action and the Urban Environment: The Damascene Poor and their Influence on the City's Spatial Characteristics in Late Ottoman Times (1870s-1920s)", my PhD project aims at developing a new approach to the social history of Damascus, adapting the writings of Henry Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, and Michel Foucault.

The study is intended to yield insights into how the city, its society, its places, and its spaces were shaped through various *demands* and *tactics* of the ruled – articulated in the form of popular protests – as much as they were conditioned by the *command* and *strategies* of the ruling, who actively pursued an investment in public space through new institutions, built structures and affirmative rituals. As a thick description of the development of the townspeople's everyday life, the study will investigate how an arguably modern notion of public/private places and space developed, which then became the centre of national and nationalist discourses in the interwar period. For a further grasp on the spatial history of Damascus, the study will map particular events and developments.

The study will employ hitherto neglected local and foreign newspapers and gazettes, as well as consular archives and personal accounts in Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, English, German, and French.

Fields of Interest:

social history, subaltern studies, gender studies, history of/from below, labour history, spatial history, historical anthropology, history and theories of nationalism and modernisation, Ottoman Empire, Asia Minor, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Iraq, Turkey

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***Articles / Conference Papers***

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- 2010 - "The Production of Public Places and Spaces in late Ottoman Damascus: Contesting Public Education". 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the European Association of Urban History, Ghent. 1.-4. September 2010.
- with Carmen Dege, Martin Dege, and Niklas Chimirri. "Widersprechen!" In *Können Marginalisierte (Wi(e)der)Sprechen? Zum Politischen Potenzial der Sozialwissenschaften*. Edited by Martin Dege, Till Grallert, Carmen Dege and Niklas Chimirri. Gießen: PsychoSozial-Verlag, 2010 (in press).
- 2009 - "*Collective Action and the Urban Environment: The Damascene Poor and their Influence on the City's Spatial Characteristics, 1877-1881*". 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Social History Society, Warwick, UK. 3.-5. April 2009.
- 2007 - "*What is a Synagogue? On the conceptualisation of Synagogues as social and political space within the urban framework of a non-Jewish population majority in the Baltic*". Symposium "Non-stop History. An attempt to recall the mass murder of the Jewish people in the Baltic in times of a new anti-Semitism. Kuldīga as an example", Kuldīga, Latvia. 2.-9. September 2007.

### **Edited Volumes**

- 2010 - *Können Marginalisierte (Wi(e)der)Sprechen? Zum Politischen Potenzial der Sozialwissenschaften.* Edited by Martin Dege, Till Grallert, Carmen Dege and Niklas Chimirri. Gießen: PsychoSozial-Verlag, 2010 (in press).

### **Translations**

- 2010 - Andrews, Molly. "Biografie und Geschichte: Dynamiken Individueller und Kollektiver Politischer Erzählungen." In *Können Marginalisierte (Wi(e)der)Sprechen? Zum Politischen Potenzial der Sozialwissenschaften.* Edited by Martin Dege, Till Grallert, Carmen Dege and Niklas Chimirri. Translated by Till Grallert. Gießen: PsychoSozial-Verlag, 2010 (in press).