

Guest Lecture

Alia Mossallam

(American University in Cairo / EUME Fellow 2017/18)

Chair: **On Barak**

(Tel Aviv University / re:work Fellow 2017/18, HU Berlin)

This is What Socialism Looks Like: Soundscapes of Memory and Archiving Practices of the Aswan High Dam Workers (1960-1970)

Alia Mossallam is currently a EUME-FU Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, where she is working on a book on a popular history of the building of the Aswan High Dam, and starting a new project on the experience of the Egyptian Labour corps in World War I – mainly through songs, theatrics and cultural articulations of their experience on the home and war fronts. She has taught at the American University in Cairo (AUC), the Cairo Institute for Liberal Arts and Sciences (CILAS), and the Freie Universität Berlin (FU).

The Aswan High Dam re-channeled the flow of water and narrative around it. It channeled the progress of history towards post-colonial independence and industry, built a trajectory of knowledge flowing from Ancient Egyptian to Islamic Nile management technologies, and chiseled of Aswan a station of ‘transformation’ of the new Egyptian (wo)man. Official photographic archives of the Dam depict this through vast landscapes churned into construction-sites. “This is Socialism” these pictures announce, “This is modernity”. But the workers who worked on the Dam also have their archives. Visual archives of the Dam that revolve around the images and stories of those who contributed to the Dam, and memories drenched in overwhelming sonic experience. How is their own ideological experience of the Dam articulated through these archives? And how can images and sounds become a vocabulary for experiences that are either invisible to the narrative of the Dam, or threatening to its coherence?



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Gefördert von
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The lecture will be held in English on:

Wednesday, 16 May 2018, 5 pm
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
IGK Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History
Georgenstraße 23, 6th Floor, 10117 Berlin

It will be followed by a small reception.

Please RSVP at your earliest convenience to felicitas.hentschke@asa.hu-berlin.de

For additional information, please refer to <http://rework.hu-berlin.de>



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