

MPhil Proposal:

Module title: Anthropology of Islam in Contemporary Europe

Term taught: LT

Description of the module in a few sentences:

This module takes an anthropological approach to the study of Islam and Muslims in contemporary Europe. It entails five seminars: Methodology, Constructing Identity, Structuring Community, Culture and Society, and Political Engagement. Discussions will employ a series of case studies from the reading list to explore empirical accounts and theoretical questions.

Background:

Lived Islam in Europe is dynamic, varied and complex. This MPhil module will explore some key areas of academic and wider interest in the subject area, including transnationalism, youth, gender, authority, education, religion-state relations, and Islam in the public sphere. Drawing on a number of excellent case studies, it seeks to tackle the subject in depth and breadth.

Name of seminar coordinator: Chris Moses

Teaching provision: 5 x 1.5 hour classes

Students will be set readings in advance of each class. There will be a degree of flexibility regarding which specific areas they would like to focus upon within a seminar topic. Before meeting, students will send an A4 page offering a critical analysis of the readings to the coordinator. In classes, students will take turns to present readings and lead group discussion.

Module aims: This module primarily aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of Muslims and Islam in Europe from a social science perspective through reading, analysing and discussing texts, and writing a substantial essay on this subject.

The module also seeks to be open towards cross-disciplinary understanding and comparison, through approaching its subject through categories canonical to anthropology and religious studies. Further, the module aims to provincialise certain ideological, academic, and common sense imaginations of Europe in relation to Islam, side-stepping insufficient approaches that tend to focus on northwestern European countries (e.g., the UK, France, Germany and the Netherlands) and, insofar as the literature allows, acknowledge both Muslim-majority contexts (e.g., Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, Turkey) and understudied Muslim-minority contexts (e.g., Bulgaria, Switzerland, Georgia).

Learning outcomes:

Students will:

- read and analyse a series of texts exploring a series of issues of academic and wider interest pertaining to Islam and Muslims in Europe.
- develop their presentational skills in a seminar setting.
- develop their academic writing skills.

- explore the diversity and complexity of Muslim experiences in Europe.
- analyse the contested nature of particular concepts within their field of study.
- evaluate the application of particular theoretical concepts to their field of study.
- evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of anthropological approaches to their object of study.
- consider the wider significance of the understanding they have gained from the course for related areas in the fields of anthropology and religious studies.
- develop an understanding of the role of research for their object of study.

Prerequisites: N/A

Senior Seminar: Compulsory attendance at the appropriate Senior Seminar.

Seminar topics

1. Methodology

- Example topics: terminological debates, academic reflexivity

2. Constructing Identity

- Example topics: practice, ethnicity, transnationalism, inter-religious relations

3. Structuring Community

- Example topics: authority, institutions, education, rituals

4. Culture and Society

- Example topics: gender, youth, dress

5. Political Engagement

- Example topics: state-religion relations, secular liberalism, public sphere

Introductory Reading List

Stefano Allievi (ed.), *Mosques of Europe. Why a solution has become a problem.* London: Alliance Publishing Trust, 2010.

Nezar AlSayyad and Manuel Castells (eds.), *Muslim Europe or Euro-Islam: politics, culture, and citizenship in the age of globalization.* Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books; Berkeley: Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of California at Berkeley, 2002.

Talal Asad, 'The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam', *Qui Parle*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2009), pp. 1-30.

John R. Bowen, *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves: Islam, the State, and Public Space.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

Tone Bringa, *Being Muslim the Bosnian way: identity and community in a central Bosnian village.* Princeton, N.J.; Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995.

Martin van Bruinessen and Stefano Allievi (eds.), *Producing Islamic Knowledge:*

- Transmission and Dissemination in Western Europe*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2011.
- Nathal M. Dessing, *Rituals of birth, circumcision, marriage, and death among Muslims in the Netherlands*. Leuven: Peeters, 2001.
- Gerlachus Duijzings, *Religion and the Politics of Identity in Kosovo*. London: Hurst, 2000.
- El-Zein, Abdul Hamid, 'Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search for the Anthropology of Islam', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 6 (1977): 227-254.
- Katherine Pratt Ewing, *Stolen honor: stigmatizing Muslim men in Berlin*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008.
- Nadia Fadil, 'Managing affects and sensibilities: The case of not-handshaking and not-fasting', *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* (2009) 17, 4 439–454.
- Kristen Ghodsee, *Muslim lives in Eastern Europe: gender, ethnicity, and the transformation of Islam in postsocialist Bulgaria*. Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Jack Goody, *Islam in Europe*. Cambridge: Polity, 2004.
- Patrick Haenni, *L'islam de marché: l'autre révolution conservatrice*, Paris: Seuil, 2005.
- H.A. Hellyer, *Muslims of Europe: The 'Other' Europeans*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.
- Nilüfer Göle, *Musulmans au quotidien. Une enquête européenne sur les controverses autour de l'islam*. Paris: La Découverte, 2015.
- Nilüfer Göle, *Interpénétrations. L'Islam et l'Europe*. Paris: Galaade Editions, 2005.
- Katarzyna Gorak-Sosnowska (ed.), *Muslims in Poland and Eastern Europe. Widening the European Discourse on Islam*. Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2011.
- Shireen T. Hunter, *Islam, Europe's Second Religion: The New Social, Cultural, and Political Landscape*. Westport, Conn.; London: Praeger, 2002.
- Shireen T. Hunter, *Islam in Russia: The Politics of Identity and Security*. New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004.
- Christine M Jacobsen, *Islamic traditions and Muslim youth in Norway*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011.
- Gilles Kepel, *Les banlieues de l'islam: Naissance d'une religion en France*. Paris: Seuil, 1987.

Matthias Kortmann, Kerstin Rosenow-Williams (eds.), *Islamic Organizations in Europe and the USA: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Brigitte Maréchal, *The Muslim brothers in Europe: roots and discourse*. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008.

Tuomas Martikainen, 'The Governance of Islam in Finland', *Temenos*, Vol. 43 No. 2 (2007), 243–65.

Mathijs Pelkmans, *Defending the Border: Identity, religion, and modernity in the Republic of Georgia*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006.

T. Thao Pham, *Moroccan Immigrant Women in Spain: Honor and Marriage*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014.

Samuli Schielke, 'Second thoughts about the anthropology of Islam, or how to make sense of grand schemes in everyday life,' Working Papers No. 2, 2010, Zentrum Moderner Orient (2010).

https://www.zmo.de/publikationen/workingpapers/schielke_2010.pdf

Emma Tarlo, *Visibly Muslim: fashion, politics, faith*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2010.

Erkan Toguslu (ed.), *Everyday Life Practices of Muslims in Europe: Consumption and Aesthetics*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015.

Pnina Werbner, *Imagined diasporas among Manchester Muslims: the public performance of Pakistani transnational identity politics*. Oxford: James Currey, 2002.

Jenny White, *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.

Description of assessment:

Coursework essay of 5000 words. Students may wish to select an essay from the list below, in consultation with the seminar coordinator. Alternatively, they may wish to formulate their own title, subject to the approval of the seminar coordinator and the Degree Committee.

Example Questions:

1. Does it make sense to speak of 'European Islam'?
2. What is Muslim identity?
3. What structures Muslim 'community'?
4. Among European Muslims, what is the significance of national context for any of the following? (i) Gender; (ii) Youth; (iii) Dress.
5. What, if anything, is unique about the political engagement of European Muslims?

6. 'Muslims are present in Europe and yet absent from it.' (Talal Asad) Discuss.
7. '... it seems obvious that there is hardly anything except Islam that could constitute a common denominator for Eastern and Western European Muslims.' (Katarzyna Górak-Sosnowska) Discuss.
8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of 'Muslim' as an analytical lens?
9. Can the anthropological study of Islam in Europe generate any theological insight?
10. What is at stake in the academic study of European Muslims?