



Course description: NISIS Autumn School 2016

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| Theme | Religion and modernity: oppositional pairing? |
| Academic year | 2016-2017 |
| EC | 5 |
| Level | 600 |
| Language | English |
| Keynote speakers | Prof. dr. Frances Flannery Dr. Timothy Fitzgerald Dr. Jeanette Jouili Dr. Adriaan van Klinken Dr. Jens Kreinath Prof. dr. John Voll |
| Hosted by | VU University Amsterdam & University of Amsterdam |

Admission requirements

PhD candidates and research master students active in the field of Islamic Studies may apply for admission and should contact NISIS at nisis@hum.leidenuniv.nl.

[NISIS junior members](#) qualify automatically, but due to the limited number of participants, also need to apply for participation for the NISIS Autumn School via nisis@hum.leidenuniv.nl.

Description

The NISIS Autumn School 2016 will be held at the VU University Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam. The Autumn School 2016 will be organized in collaboration with NOSTER, the Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion. This implies that from the six to be invited keynote speakers three will be invited by NISIS. During the school three workshops will run parallel, of which one each day will be devoted to Islamic Studies.

During each afternoon session, two keynote speakers will reflect on central issues concerning the theme of the school in a public lecture for a wider audience. During the following morning sessions, there will be a workshop in which the two keynote speakers of the previous day, PhD candidates and research master students are invited to participate. Participants of the workshops are required to read a selection of important readings (about 75 pages) that will be prescribed by the keynote speakers. In the afternoon workshops, PhD candidates and research master students will present

their research in relation to the general theme of the Autumn School, the topics brought up and the prescribed readings by the keynote speakers, followed by a general discussion.

Participants (PhD candidates and research master students) are required to:

For 2 EC:

- read the prescribed literature in advance;
- give a presentation in one of the workshops and act as **discussant*** for the presentation of one of the other participants.

For an additional 3 EC:

- write a paper in which own research is related to the theme of the Autumn School (requirements can be found below).

*As a **discussant** during the NISIS Autumn School, you are required to:

- carefully study the readings as prescribed by the keynote speakers in advance;
- prepare questions for discussion in advance in which you relate the topic of the presentation to the prescribed readings;
- actively participate in and contribute to the discussion.

NISIS aims at assigning the participants to the different (thematic/geographical) sessions in accordance with their respective field of study within Islamic Studies.

Theme

Religion continues to play an important role in societies throughout the world, in contrast to what the secularization thesis (Peter Berger, Bryan Wilson) predicted in the 1960s. Scholars working on religious and societal phenomena observe a global increase in the role of religion in contemporary societies – both traditional religions changing shape, as well as the emergence of new religious forms.

These newly emerging roles and functions of religion create all kinds of societal tensions, exposing the interaction between religion and modernity. For instance, public debate looks towards fundamentalist or extremist Muslim religiosity for an explanation of violent events. Events such as the sexual harassment of women on New Year's Eve 2015 in Cologne, the IS attacks in Paris and the airports of Zaventem and Istanbul, and the religiously motivated Orlando nightclub shooting all create social upheaval, and foreground the issue of the compatibility of religion and modernity.

In the public debate on religion and modernity, the position and emancipation of women and members of the LGBTQ community within religious communities are points of debate. Questions are raised with regard to veiling, the firing of homosexual teachers at religious schools, and the funding of religious NGO's which disapprove of homosexuality. These issues illustrate the controversy regarding the compatibility of conservative-religious opinions with a changing society.

Deeper insight into the development of religions in the long term is necessary, in order to understand the tension between religion and changing modern society. Scholarly research and knowledge from the field of religious studies, the field of Islamic studies, and the intersection of both these fields is able to provide insight into the position of religion in the growing diversity of our contemporary societies.

NISIS and NOSTER have invited renowned international scholars in the fields of religious studies and Islamic studies. During three successive afternoon sessions, these scholars will deliver public lectures analysing the seemingly oppositional pairing of religion and modernity from the perspective of their own research. In the workshops during the morning sessions on the following days, these senior scholars will discuss selected readings and the work of current research master and PhD students in the light of the theme of this Autumn School.

Course objectives

- Enlarging and deepening the already existing knowledge of Islam and Muslim societies
- Providing insight and participation in the current academic debate
- Introducing the candidates to an international network of scholars in the field
- Creating an academic community in which research in the field of Islam and Muslim societies can be optimally pursued
- Mediating between a new generation of researchers and innovative disciplinary and interdisciplinary developments, theoretical and methodological initiatives and explorations in the field
- Training presentation, writing and reflection skills.

Timetable

Monday 24 – Thursday 27 October 2016. Please make sure to be informed about programme details and updates via our website: www.nisis.nl.

Mode of instruction

- Lecture
- Workshop
- Research

Course load

Total course load for the course is 56 + 84 hours.

For 2 EC

Lectures during the school: 27 hours

Preparation presentation: 27 hours

Preparation discussant: 2 hours

For an additional 3 EC

Paper: 84 hours

Assessment method

PhD candidates and research master students will be judged on the basis of:

- attendance of the keynote lectures and workshops
- presentation in a workshop **and/or** role as discussant in one of the presentations of the other PhD candidates or research master students
- a paper afterwards (see next section for requirements).

Paper requirements

The objective of the reflexive essay to conclude the Autumn School, is to relate the theme of the Autumn School as presented in the keynote lectures to your own research. To this purpose, you choose at least one keynote lecture and follow these instructions:

A. As a first step, you write a short introductory section. In the first subsection of the introduction you present the objectives, research question and subject matter of you own research in max. 200-400 words. In the next subsection (max. 300-600 words) you explain to what purpose you have selected the articles and keynote lecture(s) from the Autumn School to apply to your own research.

B. The next section of 1500 to 2000 words consists of a few paragraphs in which you answer for each of the articles and key note lecture(s) the following questions:

- Which key theories, concepts and ideas are addressed?
- What are the main questions and problems that are addressed?
- What is the nature and content of the empirical data/sources that are analysed and how is (the analysis) of the data organised?

C. The next section of 1500 to 2000 words is dedicated to a two-step ‘what if’ exercise in creativity:

1. For each of the selected articles and keynote lecture(s) you ask yourself: If you were to apply the approach/ line of argument etc. to your own research, what new questions would you ask of your data, and what kind of data would you have to collect alternatively or additionally? If you were to adopt the approach/focus etc. of the article to develop an argument along similar lines on the basis your own material, what might that argument look like?
2. For each of the possibilities that you can come up with, you reflect on the pro’s and con’s and take stock of and explain which options are interesting and feasible to follow up on.

D. In the concluding section you take stock of how the theme of the Autumn School, most concretely how the articles and key note lecture(s) selected, shed new light on and/or have been helpful for your own research.

In total, the length your essay should be **between 3500 to 5000 words**.

Reading list

John Voll

Assad, Talal. “The idea of an anthropology of Islam.” *Qui Parle* 17, 2 (2009): 1- 30. Accessible via <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20685738>

Voll, John. Unpublished paper. (available for participants via Dropbox)

Timothy Fitzgerald

Fitzgerald, Timothy. “Postcolonial Remains: Critical religion, postcolonial theory, and deconstructing the secular-religious” [DRAFT: NOT TO BE QUOTED OR CITED]

Fitzgerald, Timothy. “The Ideology of Religious Studies Revisited: Abolishing Politics” [DRAFT: NOT TO BE QUOTED OR CITED]

Jens Kreinath

*Asad, Talal. [1986] 2012. “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam.” In: *The Anthropology of Islam Reader*, edited by Jens Kreinath, 93–108. London/New York: Routledge.

*El-Zein, Abdul Hamid. [1977] 2012. “Beyond Ideology and Theology: The Search for the Anthropology of Islam.” In: *The Anthropology of Islam Reader*, edited by Jens Kreinath, 77–92. London/New York: Routledge.

*Geertz, Clifford. [1968] 2012. “Islam Observed: Religious Developments in Morocco and Indonesia.” In: *The Anthropology of Islam Reader*, edited by Jens Kreinath, 65–74. London/New York: Routledge.

Kreinath, Jens. 2012. “Toward the Anthropology of Islam: An Introductory Essay.” In: *The Anthropology of Islam Reader*, edited by Jens Kreinath, 1–42. London/ New York: Routledge.

*Kreinath, Jens. 2014. “Virtual Encounters with Hızır and Other Muslim Saints: Dreaming and Healing at Local Pilgrimage Sites in Hatay, Turkey” *Anthropology of the Contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia* 2 (1): 25–66.

Varisco, Daniel M. [2005] 2012. “Islam Obscured: The Rhetoric of Anthropological Representation.” In: *Anthropology of Islam Reader*, edited by Jens Kreinath, 322–343. London/New York: Routledge.

* Essential readings

Frances Flannery

Flannery, Frances. *Understanding Apocalyptic Terrorism: Countering the radical mindset*. Oxon/ New York: Routledge, 2016. 1-13, 34-56, 84-126, 255-264.

Jeanette Jouili

Keane, Webb. “Religion, Culture and the Colonies.” In *Christian Moderns: Freedom and Fetish in the Mission Encounter*. 83-112. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

Ramadan, Tariq. “Culture and the Arts.” In *Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation*. 183-206. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Adriaan van Klinken

Van Klinken, Adriaan. “God’s World Is Not an Animal Farm – Or Is It? The Catachrestic Translation of Gender Equality in African Pentecostalism.” *Religion and Gender* 3, 2 (2013): 240-258.

Van Klinken, Adriaan. “Gay rights, the devil and the end times: public religion and the enchantment of the homosexuality debate in Zambia.” *Religion* 43,4 (2013): 519-540.

Application

You can apply for participation in the NISIS Autumn School 2016 as soon as a call for application has been opened. This will be announced on the NISIS website (www.nisis.nl). Please note that the number of available places is restricted.

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