



CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ISLAM

LECTURE SERIES

YOU ARE KINDLY INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC LECTURES ON "CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ISLAM". DURING THIS LECTURE SERIES NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL GUESTS WILL BE SHARING THEIR INSIGHTS ON CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF POLITICAL ISLAM AND THE MANY FORMS OF ISLAMIST ACTIVISM IN EUROPE AND THE ARAB WORLD IN AN INTERDISCIPLINARY MANNER.

27.10.2016

MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD IN EUROPE. AN EXPERIENCED AND LIVED IDEOLOGY

Lecture: **Brigitte Maréchal** (CISMOC - UCL)
Discussant: **Iman Lechkar** (IMMRC
KULeuven)

Since the 1960s against the backdrop of conflicts with political regimes, specifically in Egypt, Syria and Iraq., the Brotherhood is slowly but steadily integrating in Europe, as they established a network of religious, social and political organizations. It mostly expanded in European cities with a strong Muslim presence, first in Germany but later also in France and Britain. In Belgium too, the Brotherhood has left its mark on the religious experience of many Muslims. Adopting an anthropological perspective,

this lecture will give us insight in the ideological aspect of the European Muslim Brotherhood. It is based on a profound fieldwork, that did not solely focus on the leaders of the movement, but engaged in the heterogeneous dynamics that make up the movement, with particular attention to the lived experiences and values of its members. From an analysis of the contemporary re-appropriation of the brotherhood's legacy by European Muslims, it takes stock of what constitutes the strength and weakness of the Muslim Brotherhood in terms of spiritual and intellectual resources. As the historical contribution of the brothers remains a major mobilizing reference for many European Muslims today.

BRIGITTE MARECHAL obtained her Ph.D. in Sociology in 2006 (Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium) and is now professor at UCL, where she teaches, among others courses, the sociology of religion and the

socio-anthropology of contemporary Islam. Brigitte Marechal is now director of CISMOC (Centre Interdisciplinaire d'Etudes de l'Islam dans le Monde Contemporain) and has published extensively on issues related to European Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood in different journals and wrote a book on 'The Muslim Brotherhood in Europe. Roots and Discourses'.

IMAN LECHKAR has a PhD in sociocultural anthropology and is a postdoctoral research fellow at IMMRC- KULeuven and Lecturer at the department of social work at the University College Brussels (Odisee). Her doctoral dissertation researches conversion and religious practices in a Belgian context. Her teaching and research engage with questions of multiculturalism, secularism, conversion, religious practice, religious identities/authorities, citizenship, subjectivity, agency and the significance of media in self-fashioning processes.

10.11.2016

'SALAFISM' IN THE NETHERLANDS - ACCOMMODATION, DA`WA AND STRUGGLE

Lecture: **Martijn de Koning** (Rabot
Universiteit Nijmegen)
Discussant: **Nadia Fadil** (IMMRC -
KULeuven)

The global Islamic Salafi movement has slowly but surely established itself in the Netherlands over the last 30 years. One of the features of Salafi religiosity is the often very strict interpretation of particular Islamic traditions, one which is sometimes regarded by other Muslims, and non-Muslims, as anti-Western and at odds with European secular freedoms. During the last ten years the Salafi movement also has become the main



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target of the counter-radicalization policies of the Dutch state. What are the latest developments among Dutch Salafi networks in particular against the background of the issue of Dutch fighters in Syria?

Combining an ethics of duty and an ethics of pragmatism, results in a type of religiosity based upon the idea of struggle that provides people with strong incentives to continuously reflect upon and improve themselves as part of their moral ambition. But how do these Dutch Salafi Muslim youth then practice a morally strict version of Islam that is rejected and considered suspect by many other Dutch Muslims as well as wider Christian-secular society?

MARTIJN DE KONING studied anthropology at the VU University and defended there his PhD on religious identities among young Moroccan-Dutch youth. After his PhD he worked on the Salafism as Transnational Movement project at the Radboud University Nijmegen and ISIM in Leiden. Currently he teaches at the department of Islam studies at the Radboud University Nijmegen and is a postdoc at the

Department of Cultural Anthropology of the University of Amsterdam. He maintains his own weblog: www.religionresearch.org

NADIA FADIL studied a sociology and anthropology at the Catholic University of Leuven, where she also obtained her PhD in sociology. She is currently affiliated to the research line Theory, Culture & Religion as a postdoctoral fellow of the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO Vlaanderen). Her research interest are situated at the intersection of religion, subjectivity, secular and liberal governmentality and multiculturalism, with Islam in Europe as specific empirical focus.

01.12.2016

**WAHHABISM AND SAUDI ARABIA -
CONTROLLING GLOBAL JIHADISM?**

Lecture: **Paul Aarts** (Universiteit Amsterdam)
Discussant: **Fabio Merone** (Menarg, UGent)

In recent times there is much talk about the Saudi 'export of Wahhabism', and some even allege that Saudi Arabia is at least partly to be held responsible for Jihadist extremism, including the Islamic State's brutalities. The Islamic State, and other violent Salafi groups like al-Qaeda, are however much less 'neo-Wahhabi' or 'Wahhabi 3.0' than a typical illustration of the sorcerer's apprentice phenomenon. The eighteenth-century mutual aid pact between Ibn Saud and Muhammad Ibn Ab al-Wahhab holds good to this day. The establishment Wahhabi clerics guarantee the political legitimacy of the House of Saud. In its turn the royal family largely refrains from interference with the ultra-puritanical (and anti-Shiite) Sunni foundations of the Kingdom insisted on by the conservative clergy. This relationship has not been without frictions however. When did these happen and what were the consequences? How does the religious field look like these days? Do the Saudis really control global Jihadism or is Saudi Wahhabism profoundly quietist?

PAUL AARTS has been a senior lecturer in International Relations at the Department of Political Science at the University of Amsterdam). He mainly worked in the field of Middle East politics. He developed the 'Zeytun Academic Exchange' program with academic institutes in several Middle Eastern countries. He mainly writes on the Gulf countries, Saudi Arabia in particular. His latest publication is Saudi Arabia. A Kingdom in Peril (Hurst 2016), co-authored by Carolien Roelants. This title is also available in Dutch and Arabic (and soon in Persian).

FABIO MERONE is a PhD candidate at the Middle East and North Africa Research Group, Ghent University. Based in Tunisia for over 12 years, he's doing research on the evolution of Islamism in Tunisian democratic transition. Fabio Merone has published in several academic international journals including among others "Democratization", "Middle East Policy", "British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies", "Middle East Law and Governance" and "Journal of Political Ideologies".



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15.12.2016

'ISLAMISM' & ISLAMIST ALTERITY - UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL ISLAM

Lecture: **Francois Burgat** (Iremam - CRNS)
Discussant: **Sami Zemni** (Menarg, UGent)

Since the 2000's a resurgence of a certain "political Islam" crystallizes mistrust. Numerous encounters with actors of this movement in different countries, show that their motivations are mostly secular and political rather than religious. In his Forthcoming book "Understanding Political Islam: a research trajectory on Islamist alterity, 1973-2016.", Francois Burgat traces the human and scientific path that led him to express a very strong conviction today. He namely considers the actual tensions in the relation between the Western and the

Muslim world have a political rather than an ideological origin. The selfishness from which they are the product is primarily 'ours' and not only, as too often a comfortable laziness makes us think, that of the "other," which never ceases to "decolonize" from us: the Muslim. "

FRANÇOIS BURGAT is a political scientist and arabist, fiercely engaged in the academic and public debates in France and beyond concerning Islamism. He published numerous compelling books on political islam in the Arab World. Including: The Islamic Movement in North Africa (1997), Face to Face with Political Islam (2002), Islamism in the shadow of al-Qaeda (2005). He is presently responsible for the research program "When Authoritarianism Fails in the Arab World" at the Institute for Research on the Arab and Muslim world (IREMAM), where he is director.

SAMI ZEMNI is professor in political and social sciences at the Conflict Research Group a multidisciplinary research unit at Ghent University. He coordinates and leads the Middle East and North Africa Research Group. His area of expertise is politics within the Middle East and North Africa region, with special reference to political Islam. He focuses on processes of neoliberalisation, globalization and political change in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt.

PRACTICAL INFO

The public lectures will take place in **Film Plateau, Paddenhoek 3 , 9000 Gent.**

The lectures start at 20:00 and finish around 21:45 and are free of charges.

No registration is required.

For more information or to be kept updated for upcoming events, please contact menarg@ugent.be.

The lecture series on "Contemporary Political Islam" is organized by the Middle East and North Africa Research group (MENARG) of the University of Ghent in collaboration with Victoria Deluxe, Motief v zw and MO* magazine. With the support of the Baillet Latour Fund

