

## **RETHINKING ANTHROPOLOGY IN LIGHT OF ‘MUSLIM WORLDS’**

1<sup>st</sup> EASA Muslim Worlds Network Workshop

**7-8th September 2023 • Istanbul  
Swedish Research Institute**



# **RETHINKING ANTHROPOLOGY IN LIGHT OF ‘MUSLIM WORLDS’**

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**Convened by**

Fabio Vicini (University of Verona), Lili Di Puppo (University of Rijeka), Stefan Williamson-Fa (Lund University)

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This workshop marks the launch of the newly established Muslim Worlds European Association of Social Anthropologists’ Network. The main topic of discussion will be how to think about some of the latest debates in anthropology (the ontological turn, the ethical turn, and the material turn) considering the ethnography of Muslim Worlds. Key among the themes to be addressed are the validity and limits of binaries such as secularism and religion, transcendence and immanence, reason, and faith, and how the different modes of knowledge disclosed by Muslim ontologies and epistemologies can contribute to the anthropological enterprise tout court.

The following are some of the questions we hope to think through together:

- What other modes of experiencing and knowing the world have been disclosed during your ethnographic encounters (for instance: experiential knowledge, meditative reflection, revelation through dreaming or visions, theological demonstration, etc.)? To what extent and how did these modes challenge (or had the potential to challenge) your methodological and/or theoretical approach?
- What type of limits and/or potentialities have these modes of experiencing and knowing revealed? For instance, have you felt the secular conditioning of the discipline to be a limit when you wrote about those encounters? Did these modes of experiencing and knowing encourage you to explore new ways of conducting research, thinking, and/or writing?
- How did the encounter with other modes of experiencing and knowing the world resound, challenge, or unsettle your usual way of viewing the world as a trained anthropologist, or simply as someone in search of knowledge? Did this encounter invite you to rethink how “knowing” is usually understood in anthropology and beyond?
- Did this same encounter with other forms of knowledge lead you to reimagine what fieldwork is? How have you approached your interlocutors’ modes of experiencing and viewing the world? Have you been inspired to follow their spiritual, “vertical” journeys? What has been your own journey during fieldwork and after it?
- What forms of “being” have you encountered during your fieldwork (in the form of your interlocutors, invisible realms, the divine, God, transcendence, your own self, etc.)? Relatedly, did your fieldwork experience reveal other dimensions of your own being?

## **THURSDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**8:00 Breakfast**

**9:00 - 9:30 Welcome remarks** (Fabio Vicini, Lili Di Puppo, Stefan Williamson-Fa)

**9:30 - 11:00 Presentations**

Joud Alkorani (Radboud University)

Amin El-Yousfi (University of Cambridge)

Lili Di Puppo (University of Rijeka)

**11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break**

**11:30 - 13:00 Presentations**

Ismail Fajrie Alatas (New York University)

Maria Louw (Aarhus University)

Fabio Vicini (University of Verona)

**13:00 - 14:30 Lunch Break** (with coffee and sweets)

**15:30 - 17:30 Public Opening of Network (Hybrid)**

Presenting the Muslim Worlds Network (Lili Di Puppo & Fabio Vicini)

Intervention by Joel Robbins (University of Cambridge) – online

**19:30 - Dinner**

## **FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**8:00 Breakfast**

**9:00 - 10:30 Presentations**

Ashraf Hoque (University College London)

Caroline Tee (Chester University)

Annika Schmeding (Harvard University)

**10:30 - 11:00 Coffee Break**

**11:00 - 12:30 Presentations**

Jesko Schmoller (Humboldt University)

Müge Akpinar (Free University Berlin)

Stefan Williamson-Fa (Lund University)

**12:30 - 14:00 Lunch Break** (with coffee and sweets)

**14:00 - 15:30**

Roundtable discussion with all invited speakers

Concluding remarks and discussion of future plans for the network

**16:00 - 20:00**

**Walking tour of historic neighbourhoods of Istanbul**

## **ABOUT • MUSLIM WORLDS NETWORK (MWN)**

<https://www.easaonline.org/networks/mwn/>

## **SWEDISH RESEARCH INSTITUTE IN ISTANBUL**

### **Finding the Institute**

If you have made it to Taksim, you can take the metro one station to Şişhane (M2, direction Yenikapı). The Swedish Research Institute is located inside the premises of Swedish Consulate General, next to the uppermost Metro station exit. If you prefer to walk from Taksim to the institute, you simply follow İstiklal, a walk of 15–20 minutes. Or you can take the nostalgic tramway to Tünel, using your İstanbul Kart. From Tünel Meydan or Richmond Hotel you have to walk only around 50–100 meters until you see the white, gothic-style gate of the Swedish Consulate General, located on İstiklal Caddesi 247.

### **Accessing the Institute**

The SRII is located within the compound of the Swedish Consulate General and underlies its security regulations. Access to the compound is only granted to people who are expected or have registered with the secretary in before.

Daytime visitors are given a badge by the guards at the entrance in exchange for their passport or ID. This badge should be carried visibly whenever outdoors within the compound and handed back to the guard upon leaving, when they will get their passport or ID back.

Guests accommodated at the institute only need to show their ID or passport once and in return they will receive two items from the guard:

1. The key to their guest room in the Annex or Dragoman house.
2. A key card that gives them access, at all times of the day, to the office spaces and library in the Dragoman house. This key card should be carried visibly whenever they are on the compound.

The main building within the compound is the Palais de Suède or Consulate general. The institute's library, office spaces and auditorium are located in the Dragoman house to the left of it, down the slope to the garden. Most of the guest rooms are located in the Annex building next to it, which is built on a slope, meaning that they may be located below as well as above the floor where one enters from the garden.

Since the SRII shares the compound with the Consulate General, its guests are politely reminded to stay within the boundaries of the Annex and Dragoman house and not stray off to the consulate building and its garden.