

Nordic PhD workshop for Middle Eastern Studies

Organized by the Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies

London, Monday 13 August – Friday 17 August 2018



NSMES

Nordic Society for
Middle Eastern Studies

The Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies (NSMES) is holding an international PhD workshop aimed primarily at students from the Nordic countries at the Aga Khan University-Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations in London. The theme of the workshop is “Continuity and change in broader Middle Eastern contexts: conceptualizations of history and tradition” but papers on other topics will also be accepted. This is the fourth PhD workshop in a successful series arranged by the NSMES. Previous workshops have brought together senior scholars and PhD students for a week of discussions and networking that has proven crucial for the students in their future research.

The NSMES invites papers founded on empirical data that address how history and tradition are conceptualized and utilized for various purposes in diverse contexts, or deal with PhD students’ research in some other fashion.

Although our conceptualizations of the past are continuously changing, the workshop will focus on themes related to the past that are generally seen as unchanging. In the contemporary era, our attitude toward the past is often ambivalent. We have a notion of continuity with the past, constructed memories of a shared history, simultaneously as change, progress and innovation are ever present. This workshop will focus on notions of continuity and change related to the terms “history” and “tradition”. The terms can be used and abused in order to appropriate specific worldviews and ideologies, and may impact how people understand their religious belonging. “History” and “tradition” can legitimate political actions or form the foundation for ideological motives. A specific history or tradition may justify the composition of an in-group and normative ideals on how to treat a constructed “other” which may result in dialogue or conflict. Concerning broader Middle Eastern contexts such issues are worth further investigation.

Each accepted student will submit a written paper before the start of the workshop, and he or she will make a short presentation at the workshop. A participating student will be responsible for discussing the paper. Senior scholars are invited to give presentations on relevant on-going research, and they will be present during student presentations to discuss and chair sessions at the workshop. The material presented by senior scholars and PhD students may be historical or contemporary, and may, for example, analyze ideologies, old and new media, novels, art, music, sport and film as well as notions among individuals or communities.

To apply to the workshop, please send an abstract of around 500 words to Susanne Olsson susanne.olsson@rel.su.se. Deadline June 1, 2018. Please add a letter of recommendation from your supervisor. The number of participants is limited to 18.

The workshop is supported by the Nordic Society for Middle Eastern Studies and the Aga Khan University-Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations. The NSMES is applying for funding to support participants’ travel and accommodation. Accepted students will be informed of details concerning financial support later.

Information about the workshop will be updated at
<https://www.facebook.com/NordicSocietyForMiddleEasternStudies>