

NWO Funding for Research on Muslims in Europe

NATHAL M. DESSING

An ISIM research proposal on "Individualization, Fragmentation of Authority, and New Organizational Forms among Muslims in Europe" has been selected for funding by the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO, Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research). The research programme aims to advance our understanding of Muslim religiosity in Europe, focusing on individualization, fragmentation of authority, and belonging. These complementary and partially conflicting phenomena have attracted great scholarly attention as determining factors of religion today, but have never been systematically studied for Muslims in Europe.

The ISIM research programme consists of three component projects, each of which focuses on a new organizational and participatory form among Muslims in Europe today: institutions of Islamic higher education, Muslim student associations, and Muslim women's organizations. These three settings constitute important discussion fora in the migration setting where the identity of Islam and the nature of being a Muslim are explored in new ways. These sites are thus exemplars of religious renewal. The research will be carried out in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and France.

The research project on Muslim women's organizations will be conducted by Dr Nathal Dessing (ISIM), the main applicant and coordinator of the programme. The projects on Islamic higher education and on Muslim student associa-

tions will be carried out by Ph.D. candidates. The ISIM invites applications for the two Ph.D. posts in this research programme (see advertisement on this page). The team further consists of Dr Nico Landman (Utrecht University) and Dr Thijl Sunier (University of Amsterdam): they are co-applicants, academic advisors, and supervisors of the two Ph.D. projects. Prof. Martin van Bruinessen, ISIM Chair at Utrecht University and Prof. Annelies Moors, ISIM Chair at the University of Amsterdam will act as promoters of the Ph.D. candidates.

The funding from NWO for this research programme totals € 450,000 over four years. The funding is awarded within the framework of the NWO thematic programme titled "The Future of the Religious Past: Elements and Forms for the 21st Century". This aims to encourage research on manifestations of religious life today. It directs attention to the renewed participation in traditional religion as well as to the advent of new forms of fragmented religion and personal spirituality. Some thirteen research projects have so far been funded within this thematic programme, on subjects ranging from conversion careers in Pentecostalism to the renewed interest in Marian pilgrimage and from discourses on ecology and genetics to the advent of new spiritual music.

ISIM PH.D. FELLOWSHIPS

The International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) invites applications for two Ph.D. posts within the research programme on "Individualization, Fragmentation of Authority, and New Organizational Forms among Muslims in Europe". This programme is funded by the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO, Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research). One Ph.D. candidate will study the relation between individualization, fragmentation of authority, and the wish to belong in institutions of Islamic higher education in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and France. The other Ph.D. candidate will study the same phenomena in Muslim student associations in the same countries.

Successful applicants become junior members of staff of the ISIM for a period of four years. They receive a salary of approximately € 1,000 per month after tax, and pay no university fees. They are provided with office space, a personal computer, and telephone on the premises of the ISIM in Leiden. Financial support for approved fieldwork is available.

Applicants for both Ph.D. posts should have:

- an M.A. degree or equivalent in Islamic studies, cultural anthropology, or religious studies;
- demonstrable experience in conducting research among Muslims in Europe;
- excellent command of the relevant languages.

Applications should include:

- A letter of application
- A curriculum vitae
- A copy of the MA thesis and/or copies of other written work
- Authenticated copies of all relevant degree and other certificates
- A certificate of English language proficiency (for non-native speakers)
- A photocopy of the pages of the applicant's passport showing identity details and expiry date
- Letters of two academic referees

There will be one application procedure for both posts. Candidates are asked to indicate in their application in which post they are interested.

Applicants should send all material to:

Dr. Nathal M. Dessing
ISIM
P.O. Box 11089
2301 EB Leiden
The Netherlands

The deadline for applications is 1 October 2005.

For further information, please contact Nathal Dessing at n.m.dessing@isim.nl

ISIM EVENTS

2–3 September 2005

Workshop
(In)Visible Histories:
The Politics of Placing the Past
Venue: Room Heren 17, Oost-Indisch Huis, University of Amsterdam
Organisers: ISIM, ASSR & IIAS
Convenor: Vazira Zamindar

29–30 September 2005

Conference
Modern Islamic Intellectual History in Comparative Perspective
Venue: Leiden University, The Netherlands
Convenor: Abdulkader Tayob

30 September–1 October 2005

Workshop
Religious Authority in Islam in Western Europe
Venue: Leiden University, The Netherlands
Convenors: Frank Peter & Elena Arigita

8–14 December 2005

Training workshop
Social Change and Identity in Muslim Societies
Venue: Beirut, Lebanon
Organizers: ISIM, SEPHIS & OIB

December 2005

ISIM Annual Lecture 2005
by Mahmood Mamdani
(Date to be announced)

22–26 March 2006

Workshop
Public debates about Islam in Europe: Why and How 'Immigrants' became 'Muslims'
ISIM-supported workshop at the Seventh Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting
Venue: Florence and Montecatini Terme, Italy
Convenors: Stefano Allievi and Martin van Bruinessen

For more information on these and other events please consult the ISIM website or contact the ISIM secretariat at:
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