



“Mosques, power and politics”
Copenhagen, Denmark
22-24 January 2020
Venue:
University of Copenhagen,
South Campus, Room 27.0.09,
Njalsgade 136, 2300 Copenhagen, Denmark

Workshop theme

For this workshop we address the changing politics of mosque building, the different kinds of conflict surrounding the building of a mosque and the symbolic appropriation of territory by the mosque. The building of a mosque can be seen as a social transformative interaction and accounts for the many stakeholders involved in the construction of mosques (e.g., Muslim organizations, international donors, local politicians, anti-Islam groups and other critics). As such, the mosques and the politics of construction can be seen as microcosms of the discourse on Muslims in a country.

Concerns with security, extremism and visibility of Muslim institutions in the Nordic and Western European countries are causing “existential” difficulties for mosques. The state criticizes mosques and change the politics of religion with reference to incidents in mosques as in Denmark in 2016-18. This seminar will examine the power strategies used by national and local politicians, examining national legislation and municipal planning on mosques, and will investigate a number of concrete cases of contested mosque building. The operable questions are what are the political power dynamics at play in mosque building? Do the mosques challenge the existing models of state-religion-relations? How may mosques present and organize themselves to defuse these tensions of power?

Read more on: <https://mosques.ku.dk/nordic-mosques/>

Workshop Programme

Abstracts will be circulated well before the workshop and will be available online.

Wednesday, 22nd January, 2020

15:00 – 16:00 Afternoon coffee, tea and refreshments

16:00 – 16:30 Welcome and introduction

16:30 – 18:30 Paper Session 1:
Lene Kühle, University of Aarhus:
Struggling for the right kind of Mosque: Internal conflicts associated with building of mosques in Denmark
Helle Lykke Nielsen, University of Southern Denmark:
Invisible mosques in Scandinavia's urban landscape
Brian Arly Jacobsen, University of Copenhagen:
The mosque that never was

19:00 Dinner at Cafe Alma

Thursday, 23rd January, 2020

9:00 – 10:00 “Mid-term status, Danish Mosques – Significance, Use and Influence”
Brian Arly Jacobsen and Niels Valdemar Vinding

10:00-10:20 Coffee break

10:20 – 12:00 Paper Session Two:
Heiko Henkel, University of Copenhagen: *Minority Ethics: The political mosque and the unequal affordances of national citizenship*
Kirstine Sinclair, University of Southern Denmark:
We can't control people
Pernille Friis Jensen, University of Copenhagen:
Mosques, Women and Citizenship
Chair: Brian Arly Jacobsen

12.00 – 13:00 Lunch

13:00 – 14:00 Key Note 1: **Peter Beyer**, University of Ottawa
Organized Religion in a Post-Westphalian World: Mosques, Churches, Temples, and Others

14:00 – 14:30 Key note discussion, designated discussant

14:30 – 15:00 Coffee break

15:00 – 17:00 Paper Session Three:

Egdunas Raci, Vytautas Magnus University:

Mosque (re)building the Lithuanian way: the case of the Vilnius mosque

Teemu Pauha & Tuomas Martikainen, University of Helsinki:

The Rise and Fall of the Helsinki Grand Mosque Project

Mohammad Ahsan Qureshi, University of Tampere:

Okay, but would it complement the Helsinki Skyline? – A debate on the ‘Character’ of the

proposed Grand Helsinki Mosque

Renat Bekkin, Södertörn University:

Muslims against mosques - case studies of Moscow and St. Petersburg

18:00 – 22:00 Dinner

Friday 24th January, 2020

9:00 – 10:30

Session Four:

Mansour Ali, Cardiff University:

Mosque Typology and Imam Training in a British Context

Malik Larsen, University of Aarhus:

How little adaptation are mosques able to get away with?

10:30 – 11:30

Key Note 2: **Garbi Schmidt**, University of Roskilde:

The Mosque and the Ghetto and Spaces of Exclusion

11:30 – 12:00 Key Note discussion, designated discussant:

12:00 – 12:30 Conclusions and a few words on the future

13:00

Lunch

Participants

Practical

If there are any practical concerns, such as dining or dietary requirements that haven't been addressed, please contact Niels Valdemar Vinding, lbg993@hum.ku.dk, or XX, at Hotel xx, who will help.

Proceedings and publication outcome

Based on workshop contributions, we will be collecting papers for a special issues of a leading research journal as well as an edited volume tentatively entitled “Nordic Mosques in Context.”

Travel

All travel arrangements should be made at this point.

With incoming flights to Kastrup Airport are recommended

Arrival and check-in

People with incoming flights are arriving on the xx and xx January. People coming by train, mainly from Denmark, are arriving early afternoon. Check in opens at xx PM and check out is before noon.

The Website of the hotel is xx, and here on google maps: xx

Expenses

The project covers reasonable expenses from transport. Hotel and meals are already booked. Please contact Niels Valdemar Vinding, lvm993@hum.ku.dk, if you have expenses.

Workshop series

This is the first in a series of three workshops on *Nordic Mosques in Context – On the institutional embeddedness of Islam in the Nordic countries* sponsored by a NOS-HS Workshop Grant. The second is on "Mosques, power and politics," in Copenhagen, Denmark, in January 2020, and the third is on "Mosques, communities and finance," in Oslo, Norway, August 2020. The purpose of the workshops is to investigate the dimensions of institutional embeddedness of Islam in the Nordic countries as mosques seek to be responsive institutions for the needs of Muslims, challenged by economic, legal and political alternatives. We are considering mosques as the focal point of Islam in economic, legal and political terms, the primary objective of this research project is to study the institutional strategies of mosques and Muslims in embedding Islam in the Nordic wider societies. The key here is to see to what extent mosques are responsive institutions for the needs of Muslim in soliciting the wider public, or if Muslims go beyond the mosque in the pursuit of other more apt forms of institutionalised religious life such as invoking Islamic economic, legal and political responses. We argue that the entire future of mosques depends on whether they can give and refine responsive and meaningful answers and make them coherent with the economic, legal and politics questions that Muslims seek the answers to. As such, this may result in the secularisation of mosques as they negotiate and find their place in society. Will these new or re-interpreted institutional expressions clash with the general public, will they fail Muslims or will they be viable alternatives for embedding Islam in the Nordic countries?

A call for the workshop ",," in August 2020, in Oslo, Norway, will be circulated in February, 2020.

On behalf of the conveners

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Torkel Brekke, Research Professor, Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway

Göran Larsson, Professor in Religious Studies, Göteborg University, Sweden

Niels Valdemar Vinding, post.doc., Islamic Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

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NOS-HS The joint committee for Nordic research councils in the humanities and social sciences

