

Gülen Chair for Intercultural Studies (GCIS)

A short semi-annual Activities Report 2011

This semi-annual report provides details of the Gülen Chair's activities and performance for the 2011-2012 year (situation end August 2011). This short report was written to demonstrate chair's activities in the short term, January 2011-August 2011.

This report is centred on four areas – research activities and topics, PhD students, lecture series and courses and the master prize.

A. Research activities-topics and PhD students

After a meeting with colleagues of IMMRC (Graw, Stallaert, Pang, Leman and Toguslu), it was decided that, in the coming years, the chair will emphasize its researches on three topics and questions:

- Entrepreneurships and immigration (supervision: Pang)
- Muslim self among second generation in Europe (supervision: Graw)
- Living together and coexistence in Europe (supervision: Stallaert)

General supervision: Leman and Toguslu.

B. Courses and Lecture Series

This first year, the Chair will host a distinguished group of scholars for the lecture series and for the course which will be given in the second semester for the next academic year. The title of the course is “Current Issues in Islam”. The theme of the years 2011-12 and 2012-2013 is “Civil Society and Social Cohesion in Europe in Muslim Perspective”.

Current Issues Islam

The course will pay attention to the big challenges with which Islam feels confronted today. A selection of the following topics will be addressed in the 13 guest lectures:

Firstly, there is one introductory lecture, that will be given by *Emilio Platti, Prof.Em., KULeuven (16 February 2012)*, about the Islamic understanding of self and society (with its major philosophical and social currents). Next, there is a series of 11 lectures given by visiting professors. In each lesson, the course hosts a guest speaker, and treats a core part of the Contemporary Issues in Islam. The guest professors will discuss their topic from the Islamic perspective on civil society and social cohesion, as far as possible applied to the European context. A selection of the following topics will be dealt with in these lectures:

Week 1: Islamic self-understanding and Islamic understanding of society (including its main currents) by *Emilio Platti, Prof.Em., KULeuven (16 February 2012)* **Week 2: Euro-Islam and Euro Muslims** by *Brigitte Maréchal; Prof.,UC Louvain. (23 February 2012)* **Week 3: Social work, Poverty, inequality and social safety nets: voluntary welfare associations** by *Jonathan Benthall, Dr., University College London.(1March 2012)* **Week 4: Islam and Shi'ite influences, in Europe and in the World** By *Matthijs van den Bos, Dr., Birkbeck, University of London.(8 March 2012)* **Week 5: Secularism in the Muslim Contexts** *Abdou Filali-Ansary, Dr, Aga Khan University London (15 March 2012)* **Week 6: Radicalization and Muslims: Salafism, Wahhabism in Europe** By *Roel Meijer, Dr.;*

Neijmegen University or Esther Peskes, Prof. , Bonn University (22 March 2012) **Week 7: Islam and Sufism, in Europe and in the World** By Eric Geoffroy; Prof., University of Strasbourg.(29 March 2012) **Week 8: Islamic bourgeoisie and Muslim Entrepreneurships** C. Mazereeuw – van der Duijn Schouten, Dr., University of Tillburg.(19 April 2012) **Week 9: Muslim Self and European Public Sphere** by Nilüfer GÖLE, Prof, EHESS (26 April 2012) **Week 10: Religious Freedom and Islamophobia** by Chris Allen, Dr., London College (3 May 2012) **Week 11: Pluralism and Toleration: Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue** by Emilio Platti, Prof.E., KULeuven.(10 May 2012) **Week 12: Final: Theoretical Debates on European Muslims** Erkan Toguslu, Dr. KULeuven. (24 May 2012)

C. Master Prize

The Chair would like to honour best Master thesis in Leuven University. In order to stimulate academic research on intercultural studies at the K.U. Leuven, the Chair is awarding an annual prize for the best master's thesis on issues related to interculturalism, migration and minorities.

The award consists of a cash prize of €1500 for the winning thesis and the engagement of the Committee to publish the thesis with ACCO. Organizing commission: chair Prof. Bart Pattyn, members: Prof. Helge Daniels, Prof. Maha El Kaisy, Dr. Erkan Toguslu and Prof. Johan Leman.

The aim is to give importance to multicultural research and studies. Multicultural Master Prize will go to students who stimulate new understanding on pluralism, migration, multiculturalism and Muslims in contemporary Europe.

This year's deadline for the submission of theses is **4 November 2011**. The jury will announce the winning thesis on **7 December 2011**. The GCIS "prize for intercultural studies" will be presented to the winner during a reception at Metaforum building where the winner will also present his/her thesis.

Erkan Toguslu and Johan Leman, August 25th, 2011