

Bodies Matter: Death and Shiite Muslim Migrants

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Call for Papers

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United Kingdom

Subject Fields:

Anthropology, Area Studies, Islamic History / Studies

Call for papers

Bodies Matter

Death and Shiite Muslim Migrants

Deadline: March 25th, 2019

Conveners

Emel Akçalı (Swansea University, U.K.)

Pedram Khosronejad (Oklahoma State University, U.S.A.)

This is a call for a one-day brainstorming meeting regarding Death and Shiite Muslim Migrants which will be held in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Swansea University, in the United Kingdom from July 8-13, 2019 (the precise day will be announced later).

The aim of this international and interdisciplinary meeting is to bring together scholars of different fields in social and human sciences (anthropology, sociology, religion, politics, international law, international relations, refugee studies), NGOs and GOs, policymakers, journalists, and religious leaders to discuss how Shiite Muslim migrants (including refugees and asylum-seekers) deal with the phenomenon of death and its related matters once they are no longer in their mother country, and how the host countries, their governments and institutions, and consequently local communities respond to this.

The main aim of this gathering is to ascertain who is who in the field of research and encourage participants to collaborate in an international research project within a new research network.

Based on information from the Missing Migrants Project (<https://missingmigrants.iom.int>), since 2014, more than 4,000 fatalities have been recorded annually on migratory routes worldwide and this is why death and dying in the context of migration will become a key issue for the specialists of the field.

Since the past two centuries, Shiite Muslims of different countries, for different reasons, and at different points in time have migrated to other continents and countries. Therefore, Shiite migrants, their religion, related ceremonies and traditions have been brought into close proximity with others, in most cases, Western Christian host countries.

By studying the beliefs, customs and practical actions surrounding the death of Shiite Muslim migrants, we can gain access to deeply held values and also to the assumptions, worldviews and reactions of the host countries. Dying as a Shiite migrant in a Western country should be considered a particularly intense experience, and certainly people are challenged and forced to deal with legal, political, and socio-cultural problems, which may not be compatible with their original needs and values.

In this international program, we are interested in exploring and discussing legal, religious, political, socio-cultural and economic aspects of the death and dying of Shiite migrants and also the institutionalization of Shiite Islam in this regard among Western societies. Even though our focus will be on Shiite Muslims migrants in the United Kingdom, European countries, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, other researchers working on the same topics but in a non-western context and also those who are working on other Muslim groups are welcome to submit their proposals.

Following this general framework, some of our main sub-topics of interest will be:

- Death at the borders
- Death on the high seas
- Death in refugee camps and detention facilities
- Death during deportation or forced return to the homeland
- Burial rituals and ceremonies as sign and expression of identity
- Treatment of corpses
- Legal death organizations, cemeteries and burial plots
- Tombstones and funerary epitaphs

You are invited to send the title and abstract of your paper (500 words) including your official affiliation and e-mail address by March 25th, 2019 to (pedram.khosronejad@okstate.edu). Draft papers must be pre-circulated to participants by May 10th, 2019.

All participants will be responsible for their travel, accommodation and related costs.

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