

Transcript

00:00:00

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to welcome you to the first of our Tuesday Seminar series in the.

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East centre.

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And tonight it is a double pleasure because the event that we are organising, we are proud to be organising with our colleagues of the European studies centres.

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South, SE Europe at Oxford programme.

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As joint hosts with the Middle East Centre for tonight's book launch, where we can celebrate the publication of the Oxford Handbook of Religion.

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I am Eugene Rogan and I am the wrong man for this job.

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We had been counting on my our colleague Laura Vignon taking the chair because the subject is 1 so close to his own heart and to his research, but he is unwell and he's asked me to stand on his behalf.

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And I do so with a heavy heart because I would so prefer to be in the audience, hearing Laure share with us his views on this important new book, which contributes to a series of works that Oxford has been bringing out.

00:01:06

That really stands as.

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Bringing the leading scholars on issues of key interest to researchers to address in an enduring fashion.

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A subject that we know will have long standing interest and the question of religion in Turkey is, of course one such topic.

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We are lucky to have with us tonight.

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Four of the.

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Well, two of the editors and two contributors, and I will introduce them in that order. First thing you have Caroline T, who is professor of Anthropology at Islam at the.

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Of Chester.

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Her work engages ethnographic approaches to the.

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In.

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Islam has lived in the contemporary world.

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Focusing on the intersection between religion and institutions of modernity, such as modern science and political secularism.

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She's the author of the Gulen movement in Turkey, the politics of Islam and Modernity published by IB Tourists in London in 2016 and is currently principal investigator on a three-year research project entitled Muslims The Secular.

00:02:13

And existential risk.

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Caroline, welcome. I'm also pleased to welcome Fabio Vicini, Co editor with Caroline, who is associate professor of anthropology at the University of Edinburgh in Italy and founder and convener of the Muslim World's network of the European.

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An association of social anthropologists located at the cutting edge of interdisciplinary inquiry in anthropology, Islamic studies and social theory, his research has investigated how in the last 100 years.

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Muslims have been rethinking the Islamic traditions through the conceptual apparatus of modernity, while continuing to rely on long standing Islamic debates of the self-discipline, connectivity and transcendence.

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His most recent solo authored book is Reading Islam, Life and Politics at Brotherhood in Modern Turkey, which Brill was proudly published in 2020. He's recently Co edited a special edition of Haunted Journal of ethnographic theory.

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Dedicated to divine presence in Islam with nearly people.

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Fabulous pleasure to have you with us.

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Thank you. Thank you.

00:03:26

And then about the contributors, it's a pleasure to have Doctor Seth Hatch, Seth Nicole, she's associate professor at the University College London's Institute for Global Prosperity, just for the.

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Of the institute, you have to work.

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Formerly, she was the Abdullah Mubarak, a Sabah Fellow of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies at Pembroke College, University of Cambridge, and Gibbs travelling fellow at Newnan.

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Currently, she's the principal investigator of European Research Council starting grant for project.

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Imaginative landscapes of Islamist politics against the Balkan. I'm sorry. Across the Balkans to Bengal complex.

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Doctor Sally Kolu has, it must be sheiko is it said it's saddled.

00:04:10

Cyclical.

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Has two books and has edited several special issues and leading journals and is currently serving as the reviews editor for the Journal of Middle East Women's Studies and the Co editor in Chief of Contemporary Islam.

00:04:27

Our 4th and final speaker. Oh, at least one difficulty with this. Welcome to the.

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Is Stefan Williamson far, a research associate at the centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge. His research is out at the intersection of Islam and the census, particularly sound and taste.

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Across Turkey, the Caucasus, Iran and.

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He completed his PhD in social anthropology at University College London in 2019 and has held research positions at the University of Birmingham at London and in the University of Oxford. Stephan's first major ethnographic project explored the role of sound.

00:05:07

In Philtre shade youth Muslims devotional practise in everyday life in Turkey and the Caucasus.

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His findings have been featured in leading academic journals, including cultural anthropology.

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And the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies.

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His forthcoming monograph Sonic Relations we published in 2026 with Indiana University Press.

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Currently at the centre of Islamic Studies, Stephane.

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'S food encounters a project.

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Examining changing Muslim food ways in the UK and Spain.

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This was search explorers responses to food insecurity and environmental challenges while investigating food as a medium for fall St, Interfaith and intercultural relations.

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Now I don't know about you, dear audience, but I read through the expertise of our 4 speakers tonight. The one thing that strikes me is I am desperately curious to know how for such diverse Stalinists have approached religion in Turkey.

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Let's find out. May I invite 2 the podium? Caroline tea and with a warm welcome.

00:06:17

Thank you very much.

00:06:19

For that very warm introduction to the four of us, thank you all for coming. It's lovely to see such a full audience this evening.

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And thank you for being willing as a river for standing in for Professor Mignon tonight, who was the instigator of this event? Lauren contributed characteristically excellent

chapter to the Handbook entitled Religion and Literature in Ottoman and Republican Turkey, which I highly recommend.

00:06:46

He also generously then invites us to launch the handbook at Saint Anthony's College.

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We miss him here this evening and I know we all wish him a very speedy and recovery and return to work.

00:06:57

So the idea for the hammock of religion in Turkey was born just over four years ago, in the early months of the COVID-19.

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It was perhaps a reflection of the isolation we all felt in lockdown, that the idea of a large collaborative project bringing together.

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And.

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From across the international spectrum of Turkish studies appeal.

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It was also perhaps a reflection of the slight madness that affected many of us at that time that we thought proposing A34 volume chapter chapter volume was a sensible idea.

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But there was clearly a gap in the literature on religion in Turkey that could be usefully filled by a large scope.

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Not only would this make the richness and complexities of Turkish religion more visible and accessible to a wide audience and be immensely useful for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, but it would also bring together both junior and senior.

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Colleagues working on religion in Turkey and facilitate cross pollination of knowledge amongst us and a useful awareness of the current parameters of the field.

00:08:04

When we were planning this launch event, Ronan suggested it would be of interest to the audience to hear something about the highs and lows of putting the handbook together over the course of the past four.

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And to share in some of the things that went wrong are some of the things that obviously went right 'cause we've seen it through sets, that's a completion.

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I'm afraid to disappoint you. All. This has been a strangely straightforward project and there are no hair raising anecdotes or missus benchion to amuse you with this evening.

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Much of this I attribute to the Co editorial team Savio Chini, who's here this evening from Italy. We're delighted to have him here. And Philip dorrell.

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So Fabio, like me and anthropologist of Islam and Turkey, came on board very early on thankfully and was followed by Phil. Once we realised that we needed somebody outside of anthropology with expertise on Turkish theology and also with expertise on the non-muslim religions.

00:09:00

So yeah, so was the ideal fit for both of these areas. But being based in South Carolina, in the states, you couldn't travel to be with us this evening unfortunately. But it is really important that we stress has played a very key part in bringing the project to its completion.

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And the integration of the five chapter section on religious minorities as well as the two sections on Turkish theology is thanks to him and his expertise in those areas.

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So the overarching goal of the handbook is to address 2 core insectual problems that we identified in the study of religion in Turkey. The first of these concerns the dominance of secularism as a field of study, often at the expense of Turkish religion.

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And the second concerns the relative absence of Turkish theology in the academic study of Turkish Islam.

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I'm going to hand over to Savio to say something about these two themes before I return to take us through the.

00:09:57

Contents a little bit.

00:10:02

OK. Good evening everyone. First of all, I would like to join the counties corners and thanking Professor New York Professor Bogan. I'm also Jenny Williams for inviting us and making this event possible.

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In.

00:10:16

As the title line was saying for sure, one of the main motives behind the idea of collecting the chapters composing this and look is that the study of religion in Turkey has long been a neglected topic in academic.

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Today, this might seem ironic given the association between advanced policies and Islam in Turkey, the speech in the news in the last two decades.

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This is how things were until the late 90s, nineteen 90s.

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The situation was very much related in Turkey's history of synchronizations. Since the foundation of the Republic in 1923.

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The strict constitutional I see implemented by the founders of modern Turkey is unique in the Muslim context.

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This policy caused the Tempor disappearance of religion from the public's fear and made Islam possible to survive on the underground, at least for the first 3 decades of the Republic.

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It also had a long lasting effect on Turkish elites and has on Turkish academia.

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Accordingly, in the scholarship on Turkey about did the 1980s, there was almost no mention of Islam whatsoever.

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If Islam was ever named, it was seen as.

00:11:27

Relic.

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The past it was deemed to disappear soon from the far right after the society.

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This useful remind we what at the time was a particularly vocal perspective in social political status modernization theories.

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In the 1960s, others like Daniel, Mermaid and Ben Abuse sanctioned that different from other Muslim countries. Turkey was deemed to follow in the footsteps of the West and advance Islam would disappear from society.

00:11:58

Not accidentally this year is reflected the views of Turkish Sakwa elites who saw Islam as a network as opposed to the optimum airport.

00:12:08

In this is used work reflection of the same intellectual year. That was the Nice secularist elites, influenced by positives used on human cultures and societies.

00:12:21

Things change only the 1990s. Following the political opening to a religion that took place after the 1980 military coup and with the government led by to put us.

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A turning point for religion in Turkey mentioned most of the chapters of the handbook.

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In those years, it's called us like Sheriff Martin, start to open a door for the study of he's not in Turkey.

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Something unthinkable and also highly undesirable. Only few years before.

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It is in the footsteps of these early works that, ahem, would aim to follow, bringing together the best scholars who have been working on religion in Turkey in the last 20 years.

00:13:01

But this secular effect is also related to the other main point Caroline, as raised before, that is the relative absence of Turkish theology in the academic study of Turkish Islam.

00:13:13

As a Republican, Turkey made a turn away from its optimum past. It also did from its Muslim Middle Eastern neighbours, seeking to emulate the industrial, political and societal modernity of Western Europe.

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Authorities impose a stated off late under they could be the legacy of Turkish republicanism and the culture of disconnection from neighbouring Arab Muslim societies still.

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For various reasons then, the study of modern Islamic theology in Turkey remains relatively marginalised in the wider field of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies.

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One significant part of the problem is language.

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Rarely do scholars working in or on Turkey and proficiency in Arabic.

00:14:01

And the same is true in reverse, meaning that the exchange of expertise on Islam in the Middle East region rarely crosses borders between the Arab nations and Turkey.

00:14:11

2nd the optimal logical and intellectual traditions have already been considered at the level of classical Islam literature in Arabic.

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The same is even true for more reciprocal.

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AI also particularly affected by the Turkish modernization project, a topic that is addressed the member.

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Accordingly, one of the core affirmation of the end work was to make the study of Turkish Islam theology accessible to a broader non country specialist audience. We aim to do this with two section of this volume and target indicated to the talk.

00:14:49

But then we now need to throwback to paradine to illustrate this and the other sections that make up the body.

00:14:56

I.

00:15:01

OK, so I'm going to take you through essentially the same concepts.

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I've hopefully all aware that the handbook is is largely published now online. It's available website.

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You can see it's not arranged yet into sections.

00:15:20

Which it will be once it's finished and the hard copy is.

00:15:22

Sometime later this year.

00:15:24

So for the purposes of what I'm going to do now, I'm going to switch to APF.

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But do you please visit the?

00:15:29

It's available within config.

00:15:30

Flyers there out of the hall.

00:15:35

So the table of contents first thing to say is that the chapters highlights are in red are currently full to download.

00:15:43

For a period of about two months, and that's an introductory taster, LEP has kindly offered to get the volume off the ground, so those ones are currently available. If you don't have an ou P subscription, although probably most of you.

00:15:58

I'm pleased to say that the contributors to the volume who number, I think approximately.

00:16:03

To 45 people.

00:16:05

Are comprised of. I can tell you. Actually it's 2422 people, 42 people, 22 men and 20 women have contributed to the to the volumes. That's quite an equal balance of gender contribution.

00:16:18

The handbooks divided into 8 sections, each comprising between 4:00 and 5:00 chapters. We begin in part one with a treatment of religion in the transition from Ottoman to Republican eras, exploring normative state level discourses of the early 20th century.

00:16:34

As well as historical studies of all ideas and Kurds, one of the groundbreaking chapters in this section I'd like to draw your attention to is by Martin van Bruneson.

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In which he explores the presence of Kurdish madrassas alongside official Ottoman madrassas and traces their fortunes over the course of the 20th century. This focus on Kurdish religious institutions is significant in a subfield of Kurdish studies which is primarily concerned with questions of ethnic identity and resistance to the Turkish state.

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And in which Islam is rarely mentioned. This is in spite of the richness of the Kurdish religious landscape and its contribution to Islamic intellectual trajectories in Turkey.

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We then have the first of two sections in focusing on Turkish theology, and this first one addresses theological trends in Turkey over the course of the 20th century, including Sufism, Islamism, and Neo Spiritualism.

00:17:28

The section begins with Philip Doyle's very accessible survey of the work of the two most influential Republican era theologians, Hussein Attai and Becky Atopolo, and the influence on them of the Ottoman theologian Ismael Hucker is nearly.

00:17:44

The third section looks at different expressions of Islam, both Sunni and Shi, in the Republic using the rural urban distinction as a comparative paradigm of analysis, and we'll hear more from Fabio and Stefan Tuva. Contributors to this section.

00:18:00

In due course, as this panel goes on.

00:18:04

Turns to minority religious groups in Turkey, and this section is a key contribution of the handbook Christine Robbins chapter on the Yazidis is the first to analyse this understudied community and contextualise it uniquely in its Turk context.

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The chapters on three different Christian Orthodox groups, as well as Judaism in Turkey augment our understanding of their 20th century histories, but also importantly, give voice to the experience that the experiences of those communities in the present day.

00:18:34

These communities have been seriously under studied throughout the 20th century, and I'm pleased to say that each chapter has been written by a young female scholar and benefits from a really exciting original research.

00:18:48

Section 5. Religion, art and culture.

00:18:52

Is dedicated to express to analysing the intersections between religion and literature, architecture, music and TV in film.

00:19:02

The chapter on.

00:19:02

The Hagia Sophia by Becerra Pencheva, a field leading leading experts on Byzantine architecture, is particularly noteworthy and makes accessible to the general reader.

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The building's complex interplay between Byzantine aesthetics and religious ritual experience. Pencheva introduces the so-called aesthetics of the sea, which are invoked by the Hagia Sophia's marble interior and floor, much of which has been hidden from view with its conversion to a mosque first in 1453 and again in 20.

00:19:34

Section 6 addresses Islam, our religion and politics, and tackles controversies and contestations around religion in the AKP era, picking up again on Alivi and Kurdish experiences.

00:19:47

The historical and ritual dimensions of allivism are introduced by Anina Karoloski and Benjamin Venick in the first section, the historical section.

00:19:55

But here in this part, Jeremy Walton and to check the attempts of different algorithms to achieve official recognition by the modern Turkish nation state, showing how this quest has been complicated by internal diversity amongst alivi's civil society organisations and their differing views of the legitimacy of the dialects, the director of religious affairs.

00:20:17

Section 7 looks at some recent developments in Turkish religion and society, including the experiences of Muslim women sent out to civic or group is with US and her co-author Nair Vai, Kutu Krish. Explore the emergence of a new type of Muslim womanhood which is desirous of attentive, consumerist and entrepreneurial lifestyles.

00:20:37

Join US Live's chapter in in the same section on LGBTQ communities shows how a history of what he tells mutual exclusion between LGBT groups and the state has given way under the AP to more aggressively homophobic state policies that are consciously inscribed for the first time with a religious rationale.

00:20:57

And the concluding section returns to theological themes.

00:21:01

There is a block of this chapter is dedicated to Islamic feminism, focusing on the exceptional case of a Sufi sheikha and Pierre Hecker presents an emergent topic in circus studies. The rising numbers of atheists or what are known as religious nuns in Turkey in the last decade and 1/2.

00:21:18

His chapter examines theological discourse on non religion, which is offered by popular theologians, addressing matters of individualised religiosity and the crisis of organised religion that has been engendered by the dominance of the AKP over the last 20 or so years.

00:21:35

So that's a quick skim through the confidence. I'll leave you to have a look again online for more detail and directly to those free to download charges if they're of interest to you, but that's all we want to say by way of.

00:21:46

Introduction. Thank you. Thank you so much, Caroline, and thank you very much.

00:21:51

Very good to get.

00:21:52

The editors perspective the challenges of trying to bring together what is such an impressive monument to the scholarship of this area and really opens up.

00:22:02

Avenues that I don't think any of us might have gone to on our own. It's where having a collaboration between a group of editors and the brainstorming that enables will allow you to come up with again the broad matrix it would take to do justice.

00:22:17

To religion in Turkey, but of course it still asks the question, why would people get involved in a multi article project like this? Since we have two contributors here who are drawn into the matrix, I wonder if we might just ask Sebastian.

00:22:31

Sure.

00:22:32

How is that?

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Came to write for this project.

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I actually when I saw the question you guys emailed, I was like, OK, am I the right person to start the conversation with? Because so by the time Fabio reached out to me to join this fab, I didn't know how fabulous it will end up becoming.

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Of course. Thank you for your trust.

00:22:52

My initial so that was couple of months into my five year project and I was terrified.

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To start something so massive, right? It's a project 11 countries.

00:23:03

And then and then my initial response was like, oh, I won't have time to do anything in Fabio responded. Sakura. Did you see the deadline? We have quite a bit of time actually and then that calmed me down and and I'll just I have to say.

00:23:18

When you're being invited to a project like this, one of the things you pay attention to are the the people who are putting it together. So both Carolina and Fabio are very well respected scholars who did amazing job in reaching out.

00:23:34

Who?

00:23:35

A very kind of exclusive groups. They're very liberal, right? Villains are very liberal, but they're also when people like billions have been studied for decades, over a decade, actually, so many books, so many publications written on them.

00:23:49

But every time you read one of these articles, you realise they could.

00:23:55

Go like the scholars couldn't couldn't really integrate into the group, so you would kind of question their ethnographic skills, their kind of ability to communicate the way they might be building barriers with the secular stone except with the two word published by these amazing scholars I was.

00:24:13

Honestly, genuinely impressed by their work and their ability to advance the the overall anthropology of Islam by using these communities. So I trusted that and I'm so happy.

00:24:25

Because in.

00:24:25

End so for those who are working on.

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In Turkey.

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You could you could realise everyone's there, that's.

00:24:32

I.

00:24:32

Saying to Caroline like when I saw some of them, some of the names you couldn't see, right? Some of them weren't published, so we couldn't see them on the board here.

00:24:39

No, everyone's name's wrong.

00:24:40

Yeah, everyone is here. OK, then then, then you have seen the full picture. Everyone who are very important figures who worked on Islam in Turkey. They are here. So we are which means the following, which means for an author like contributor like Me which mean it means that this book.

00:24:41

Yeah.

00:24:58

Will be read for several years.

00:25:00

To come and and the other thing. So she was highlighting how the diversity was addressed. But one of the things you didn't mention actually, which was visible to me, you guys were including all these like native scholars, like scholars who grew up in Turkey, who became experts of Turkey, who obtained.

00:25:21

So it's kind of when you you put together a collection like that, it's inherently decolonial. So that was one of the strengths I was seeing in the end, which I didn't see at the beginning. I just trusted the two.

00:25:36

Dollars and I'm solely deforming this, I guess so.

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Should say that the blood. Thank you.

00:25:40

Thank you so much.

00:25:41

Touch on them and and Stefan, really the same question to you, which is how was it that you came to?

00:25:46

Drawn into the project.

00:25:48

Yeah, I mean I I guess it's similar in the sense that when when Fabio approached me.

00:25:55

I trusted him.

00:25:56

And I think maybe we've got where?

00:25:59

Bias panel here in the sense that we're all anthropologists, but as Caroline, Caroline just showed, you know, there's a whole range of of different disciplines there. But I think maybe my anthropological biases meant that when I heard Fabio and Caroline were doing this, I thought, well, this isn't just going to be like an encyclopaedia of religion in Turkey. This is going to be.

00:26:23

And I think that's kind of what what attracted me, although I think in the end my chapter maybe because of the lack of of other scholars working with the Community I work with.

00:26:34

Pushed me to do something which was maybe a bit more encyclopaedic, in the sense that I tried to layout, you know, the history of of one specific community and and the details of that. But I think you know what we see here and from the chapters that I have read.

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You see that it's, you know you. You get these deep insights into into Turkey, into religion in Turkey, but there's also.

00:26:59

Elements there which are kind of pushing kind of debate within discipline disciplines and and really making us think about stuff which is relevant to to people beyond Turkey. I think you know, important debate. It's about religion, about Islam.

00:27:16

About.

00:27:17

All sorts of other themes that that come up. So I think I mean that's I knew they they would do something that I would like to read myself so and invite me. I thought that's OK.

00:27:27

That was company you wanted to be in. I get it. Well, looking at the table of contents, it really does seem to capture the kind of state of the practise as it is at this stage of the 21st century. And with an ongoing relevance, that means that deep into the 21st century it will be a book of reference.

00:27:29

Yeah.

00:27:47

But what's fun is that you guys have worked very closely together. You do have a good sense of each other's contributions. And yet, as I understand, you still come.

00:27:55

With questions.

00:27:56

Each other. So in this next stage of our presentation tonight, I'd like to give you.

00:28:01

That chance.

00:28:03

To put to one another the questions that you bring to the table as you come to the publication date, I should note publication date was yesterday.

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No, no.

00:28:15

Am I right?

00:28:15

We we don't, we don't have a a hard publication date. So everything is pretty much online already. We're just waiting for actually the editors chapters because they were the last to come in which I believe.

00:28:20

Yeah.

00:28:25

Naturally, yeah, I think.

00:28:26

And and.

00:28:28

Orchard University Press is more forceful than you are.

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Yesterday, his publication day. I think so so.

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I think.

00:28:36

They didn't tell us.

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The editors are always the last.

00:28:41

OK, congratulations.

00:28:42

As you as you launch the book with congratulations, maybe now is the moment where you can put the embarrassing questions to each other that you didn't.

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Ask before.

00:28:52

Where would you like to start your life? Yeah.

00:28:53

So so we have, we have some questions, we thought what would be good use of time which might give you a kind of a flavour of the depth of the volume without taking hours and hours and also without risking superficiality was for the four of us to read each other's chapters again.

00:29:09

And to to frame each other with a critical question that could just tease a little bit of commentary out of each.

00:29:13

Us on our own chapters, some of it.

00:29:15

COVID. So we've done that and we haven't planned an audit touring, but.

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Let's start from.

00:29:23

Why don't you?

00:29:24

Start, have you? I will start. OK. I will start with my question for Stefan.

00:29:27

And if you'd ask in a loud voice, whoever who can hear, let's see.

00:29:28

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Thank you.

00:29:31

You.

00:29:32

I have a problem with my voice.

00:29:34

OK. Stefan, in your chapter you masterly introduce the reader to relatively unknown and understudied religious group in Turkey, which is the Shia community.

00:29:47

And you do so through a particular lens. What you call the significance of sound.

00:29:53

In the chapter you describe how a sound allows for the definition of the space of Shia Islam in the public sphere and emergence of a transnational Turkish Azerbaijan community.

00:30:06

Actually, this point reminded me of another chapter of the handbook in which Timur Harmon, a geographer, illustrates how the reopening of some sophisticated in Turkey in the last decades has been accompanied by the emergence of new narratives that allow Muslims to reconnect with their Islamic past.

00:30:25

Your chapter you point out that sound makes something similar for sure communities.

00:30:31

Where you also claim the sounds a specific kind of materiality, different from others, like for example, the Lodge Hammond talks about. So here's my question. Can you say something more about the specific materiality of sound?

00:30:47

That you discussed in your chapter.

00:30:50

OK.

00:30:50

So maybe just to start by saying what my chapter is about is so as I mentioned my the chapter.

00:31:02

Because the chapter's about 12 are Shi Muslims in Turkey, and usually when I tell people that I'm working on 12 bashes and in Turkey they assume that I'm working with alavis.

00:31:14

And there's many allevi who are not happy with that, that conflation. And there's many Shi in Turkey who are not happy with that either.

00:31:24

So the community I worked with my PhD research and and in the years following that.

00:31:31

12 Ashi Muslims they live primarily in.

00:31:35

Close to the border with Armenia.

00:31:38

In the provinces of cars and Erdal, where they make up a sizeable percentage of the of the community of the population there. So even though they are relatively unknown within Turkey, I mean.

00:31:53

In Turkish, they're known as jafferries. If they're known at all.

00:31:59

Within those provinces, they are they are very present and I guess one thing that I do in this in this chapter is really try.

00:32:06

Of just lay out like explain a bit. You know who this community is.

00:32:13

What kind of issues that have been important to them over the last 100 years?

00:32:18

And how they relate to other groups and how they organise amongst themselves.

00:32:23

So that takes up the bulk of the chaps. And then I kind of go into my real passion and interest, which is sound and thinking about the senses.

00:32:33

And I think for for 12 Ashi Muslims, I mean, if those of you who are familiar with 12, Ashish.

00:32:42

Will know that devotion to the family of the Prophet, the Ethi Bait his 12 imams is incredibly important.

00:32:51

And there's a lot of.

00:32:54

World practise and devotional practises which which kind of centre around.

00:33:01

Figures these early Islamic figures.

00:33:04

And what I found in my research was that, you know, at the centre of all these rituals and practises was sound practises of of of reciting poetry of lament, but also of praise.

00:33:21

And that's something that that I've been particularly interested in and I talk about in the in the chapter.

00:33:28

I think what's also interesting is how how sound is a way of or has become a way of kind of marking the presence of this community, both within the eastern provinces in cars and Erda, marking the presence in the public space so.

00:33:47

Since the 90s, early 90s, there's been a kind of a movement or a move.

00:33:57

Of community rituals from.

00:33:59

Kind of hidden kind of public private spaces. You know, people would meet in the early Republican period people would meet.

00:34:08

In their homes and and and hide and and have their rituals in private.

00:34:14

To the 90s when when people started coming out into the streets and and performing their rituals in public, and there you see sound really playing an important role and and in these rituals in these kind of public processions that you see now in the eastern provinces, but also in Istanbul.

00:34:33

Ankara places where people have Shia have migrated to sound and the amplification of sound is a way of kind of saying, you know, we are here and and making themselves heard. And I think the difference is.

00:34:49

That maybe to these I haven't read the chapter you're mentioning, but in the difference between the kind of.

00:34:57

Sound and and and places or objects.

00:35:03

Or shrines is that you know?

00:35:07

Sound takes up space in a different way, or it can kind of resonate and move in ways which which.

00:35:16

Things other things can't, and I think.

00:35:19

What you see is that that there's a real desire to to kind of make, make noise and be heard. And that's something that I kind of look at here. And so I guess that kind of movement, the way that sound moves is quite particular.

00:35:35

And again, I I talk about the the role of the importance of the circulation of devotional media, so recordings and how recordings, travel, audio recordings between these communities in Turkey and also other communities.

00:35:51

Ce azaria.

00:35:53

Speaking communities in the caucuses and Iran.

00:35:56

So sound travels in kind of different directions and through that movement kind of community can.

00:36:05

Kind of.

00:36:06

Make itself be heard and and and mark its presence, but also kind of expand its its boundaries beyond its kind of local contents. So as these recordings travel, you have the creation.

00:36:22

Of formation of, of transnational communities.

00:36:29

Would.

00:36:30

You.

00:36:33

Want to ask your.

00:36:33

Question.

00:36:36

I just have to.

00:36:40

There.

00:36:40

My memory is not.

00:36:41

Good.

00:36:42

So.

00:36:42

I have your question here with me.

00:36:46

We exchange a questions. No secret bank.

00:36:47

Yeah.

00:36:49

So I mean, I think what what self touches chapter really does so well is really challenging.

00:36:59

The assumptions about the lives of of Muslim women.

00:37:03

Both kind of these popular ideas of of like of of what Muslim?

00:37:10

Women should be doing.

00:37:13

And and also these kind of academic.

00:37:19

Discussions around kind of gender and Islam, which have been kind of focused on on particular forms and practises.

00:37:27

Especially kind of ideas of piety.

00:37:31

Yeah.

00:37:32

And I think what what I found really interesting was the way that you kind of emphasised the kind of multiplicity and complexity of Muslim women's self making practises.

00:37:45

And you, the chapter really provides a nuanced perspective of the desires and aspirations of women of Muslim women in Turkey through an ethnographic focus on on kind of two realms of leisure, physical activity and fashion.

00:38:06

And.

00:38:07

I think.

00:38:11

You kind of. Yeah, you. You push the reader to to kind of move away from from kind of obsessing about piety and Islam and to think about how kind of these multiple things can exist at the same time.

00:38:27

None have these different desires.

00:38:30

Exists.

00:38:32

And I think.

00:38:35

That leads me to think that, you know, even though you you really kind of push us to think about the multiplicity in people's lives.

00:38:46

I'm also kind of left wondering about when or how these different kind of aspects come together at times, so you know this, this kind of life of.

00:39:00

Or the the role of.

00:39:03

Or the desire for kind of to participate in kind of these leisurely activities and and to be kind of a pious Muslim are shown to be quite separate. But are there no instances when these come together?

00:39:18

Yeah.

00:39:18

Thank you.

00:39:19

So all again like I think I'll follow your lead and start with you know saying what the chapter was about, so.

00:39:26

Is.

00:39:26

Co-author chapter our co-author did with.

00:39:29

To Kurdish, who was based at most universities sociology department, and she recently had a baby. So.

00:39:35

Congratulations to her and there was no way she could fly, obviously, and travel here. So she is. Her book is going to be out soon. She specialised on Muslim fashionistas. Right, the kind of.

00:39:51

Figures who are kind of being followed by other Muslim women for their fashion sense of fashion.

00:39:57

Friends and I, I kind of contributed the part on so we we both worked on leisure. We put this together focusing on Muslim hood and gender and leisure, right, the kind of and how can we kind of bring this together. And my angle is based on my ethnographic field work conducted really long time ago over 10 years ago.

00:40:19

In women on the gyms in Turkey, in Istanbul specifically, right. So women on the gyms or where, you know, women go to workout and.

00:40:29

Like you might have this expected.

00:40:31

For me to do.

00:40:34

I was expecting to see mostly hijabi women hatscut wearing women and when I go to women on the gyms, which wasn't the case, which has given me a very interesting perspective to think about these kind of issues related to public sexuality and piety, et cetera, et cetera.

00:40:51

And then.

00:40:53

And then I ended up writing quite extensively on specific dd's distinctions right on, you know, where does piety begin?

00:41:02

Why does it end?

00:41:05

And all these complexities. So one more thing before you know I start fully answering your question. I think I'm kind of creating doing the framework here.

00:41:14

Is one of the things that was happening when I was writing up my book. Was this entire debate on everyday Islam right? Kind of those you know, in this room might be very familiar with this debate. So I'm not going to kind of get into any of the details, but all these things about, oh, is there too much Islam in anthropology of Islam, that kind of some.

00:41:35

Question I was followed by so many publications. Some of you guys are part of already.

00:41:41

Umm, you know, like kind of when when the Muslims stop being Muslim and and and how complex this is now?

00:41:49

So I want to start with, I think saying that there's a challenge and epistemological and theoretical challenge in studying Muslim cells that we have a preoccupation as kind of scholars who were trained in in the western part of the world in the kind.

00:42:02

Europe and North America.

00:42:04

And when we hear someone who happened to be Muslim, we expect Islam.

00:42:08

1st right, kind of, there's this this kind of preoccupation that's shaping our expectations. And I notice because I've been presenting on these topics for almost 15 years now and these are the first questions I get. How many hijabis were there like? How do I define veil? I think that was after a presentation I did.

00:42:27

On women's gaze across each other's bodies in changing rooms. So how women are, you know, checking all these norms, beauty standards by staying at each other's bodies?

00:42:39

Changing room. Why they change bras, in other words, and then the first question I get was how do you define the veil?

00:42:47

But why do I like?

00:42:49

So so we have this preoccupation. So I think that is even more like that, that that this is that it's the logical challenge becomes even makes our job as scholars working on Islam and Turkey.

00:43:03

Even more challenging, because we have two main problems I'm very simplifying here. I have only 10 minutes left.

00:43:12

Two main problems. 1 is this kind of very ongoing.

00:43:16

Like political debates on, you know, looking at Turkey and seeing Islam versus religious versus secular, like Islam versus?

00:43:24

Four, yeah, OK, 4 minutes is up, I think.

00:43:27

He's 15.

00:43:28

Finish your main.

00:43:28

Minutes. OK. All right. And the second is the kind of.

00:43:35

Like we are not very familiar with Turkish Islam, this kind of multiplicities existing in Turkey about you know when people drink every other day, go only to Friday prayers and stop drinking during Ramadan to be a good Muslim. So why do we put this in terms of piety this.

00:43:52

Questions. So I think going to these leisure areas is giving us the ability to look at self making that is not pie self making. So I think I want to preserve this and just because I seem to have eaten up all my time.

00:44:07

I want to say one more important point that when you are studying, it makes sense. If you are studying piety, you go to where?

00:44:15

You go to a mosque in Cairo, but have you ever been in Cairo? Piety is palpable there. It's it's there. And then in most then you can see you can really focus on piety. Then I think what we.

00:44:27

To.

00:44:28

As ethnographer is, as colours is to go to different spaces just so that we could capture these kind of multiplicity so.

00:44:36

Still thinking about the next prayer time on their exercise?

00:44:40

But their full self, just as we are more academically inclined or intellectual cells when we are here, they are more leisurely, they are more having fun, they are having more swear words in the in the gym. So that's I think a good map up. Thank you.

00:44:57

We will come to the time.

00:44:59

You leave. Would it be?

00:44:59

6.

00:44:59

Better if went to.

00:45:00

And we thought it actually will have time for questions in the audience. I really want, I think your questions to each other have a lot to contribute towards standing in the book. So why don't we finish?

00:45:09

This part.

00:45:09

OK. All right. OK.

00:45:12

Now it's my turn to ask the questions.

00:45:14

Good.

00:45:18

I read a paper co-authored with Caroline and Kimberly. Oh, Kim. Sorry. I first heard Kimberly's chapter. That's all Kim Charlies, and it's a very interesting song. I'm guessing you're going to summarise it at the beginning of your answer, but it's basically focusing on.

00:45:39

Of how and why ambiguity characterises the Gulenist group, his met movement he used very consciously this term and its leader fetalakulan, particularly in the their their engagement with the good Muslim paradigm.

00:45:54

Time under various political contexts, including neoliberalism, including this so, given that Islamic tradition. So I'm very kind of attack, like inspired by the ambiguity angle given that Islamic traditions have historically embraced theological.

00:46:12

And interpretive ambiguity, so I don't know how many scholars of Islam and in terms of theology, are present here. But ambiguity is something that's embraced as almost like a virtue for hundreds of years, right. And we see this still in Sufi toad and some.

00:46:28

Oceans of legal plural.

00:46:29

And it's been a driving force, a kind of ambiguity was always kind of something people want. Like, scholars need to keep themselves in, right, rather than find a certainty. So I wonder whether and how the particulars of your research and your research.

00:46:48

And the movements ambiguous position is like and and particularly by particularities. I mean, these kind of is it is ambiguity and liability for them. Is it something they're?

00:47:01

Indifferent about do they not care about their ambiguous status and how they look ambiguous by the outside world? It's like how can conscious is this how invested is this? Or is this some somewhat an authentic expression of Islam's inherent capacity?

00:47:18

To encompass multiple meanings and interpretations. So what's the kind of? I think I'm interested in the theological and functional operations of that. Thank you.

00:47:27

Thank you. That's great question.

00:47:30

So the chapter that that Kim Shively and I wrote, like I said, touched touched on addresses the problem of ambiguity in terms of the way the Hizmet movement, which is inspired by Fethullah Gulen.

00:47:43

The way that it's received ambiguously outside of itself, so.

00:47:48

Lots of people know about the hismet movement, particularly since 2016, when the failed coup was attributed to the leadership of said to Loki land, still technically unproven but very much assumed.

00:47:59

During the four 2016.

00:48:01

People internationally had an awareness of who who was and what the movement was that he inspired. But you would find different versions of the movement circulating. So there's a particular kind of.

00:48:17

Of self-image that some people who follow Gulen.

00:48:21

Thank you. Len. Presented to a Western audience that was very keen to consume a narrative of a modern, progressive, inclusive, tolerant, peaceable Islam. All of these things we argue fit into the good Muslim paradigm that Mahmoud Mandan.

00:48:38

Introduced to us a few years ago, and we argue that the gulag movement is a really good example of how good Islam good Muslims appeal to certain elements Western audiences and can be consumed in that way. What's interesting about Hizmet is that is that they know that that works.

00:48:53

So a lot of their promotional activities, I'm talking really more about Pre 2016. Things have changed quite a lot since then.

00:49:00

Were addressed at filling that that that hunger for a version of Islam that fitted with a a sort of western liberal democracy, if you like.

00:49:10

We also talk a bit about the way that that good Muslim image was constructed within Turkey too. According to the chemicalist paradigms of what Islam could be and what it couldn't be. So again, in even in Turkey there's an understanding of how far Islam can go before it becomes dangerous, and then it becomes bad Islam.

00:49:28

Sarah Touch's question is is interesting because it's asking about the question of ambiguity from the inside of the movement.

00:49:35

Actually isn't something we get chance to address in the chapter. I think it's beyond the the scope of the chapter, but believe me, this is true. Coincidentally, it is a question I've been working on in a different article. This wasn't a.

00:49:47

Up.

00:49:49

Because I think it is a really important question to grapple with.

00:49:53

And the thing I think is curious is the perspectives and experiences of people who were the very, very committed core followers of Gulen, who I did feel with up until the coup attempt in 2016.

00:50:08

And their understanding of how controversial the movement was, you know, their understanding of how it meant different things to different people. It was always in the press, in Turkey in 2013/14/15, accused of all sorts of different things, rightly and wrongly.

00:50:22

And the the the people I encountered in my ethnography had no interest or no connection to these events at all. They had nothing to say about them, no comment to make, and for some interpreters and.

00:50:37

Commentators that comes off as suspicious, and that's the sort of evidence that there's, you know, a conspiracy. They're saying they don't know anything about it. They're saying they don't. They don't care about it. They must do. Surely they do. The whole country knows about it.

00:50:50

Like judgement, for what it's worth is that they did know they weren't being blindfolded, they weren't being brainwashed. They knew of these contradictions and.

00:51:05

These difficulties in the outside life of the movement, but that they were absorbed in a particular project of.

00:51:15

Personal piety that there was no space in their lived experience.

00:51:20

To engage with the discourses coming from outside.

00:51:24

And I think the way that we can understand this is by comparing the the lives, the daily lives, the daily habits, the daily interactions of a core group of his metaphiliates in Turkey with that of a more typical monastery. MMM. And I think there's a degree of monasticism that.

00:51:41

Characterise their ways of living, which explains how they were able to retreat from the world outside but also embrace its highly a communal ethic, their commitment to the cause, the central cause was absolute.

00:51:56

Their commitment to one another's.

00:51:57

Was relatively.

00:51:58

And that's what the news received.

00:52:00

Affected in in traditional monastic practise in in Christian traditions, I'm.

00:52:04

About here.

00:52:06

So I think I think that's a that's one explanation. I also think Sarah touches observation and another article of hers outside the handbook about the the inability of the Gulen affiliates to entertain the idea that the Turkish state might be malevolent towards them on account of their experience of white privilege in the Turkish context is really, really compelling as well. I think that comes.

00:52:27

The.

00:52:27

Well, thank you so much.

00:52:28

You're so kind.

00:52:30

That wasn't it.

00:52:31

Do you have 10 more minutes, Caroline?

00:52:32

You think that's yeah.

00:52:33

Oh.

00:52:36

Question.

00:52:40

Month based on my math.

00:52:46

So Fabio has a wonderful chapter in the section looking at the the Sunni Shia.

00:52:53

Experiences of Islam in Turkey. I think it's Section 3 and your chapter discusses the transformations of sushi orders in the Republican era.

00:53:02

And it showed her traditional Sufi esoteric beliefs and practises have given way to a communal focus on morality. And you describe this as, quote, the Moralisation of Islam, under the aegis of the newborn modern nation states UN quote. And you argue that the gem arts have facilitated.

00:53:19

The engagement of Muslims with modern society, primarily by supporting an Islamic ethical ideal that's embodied by the community itself and its disciplines of practise.

00:53:29

So can you say something more, please, about the marginalisation of the esoteric Sufi quest for union with God and annihilation of the self that this transformation entails? And particularly I'm talking about whether you consider it.

00:53:44

To amount to a secularisation of the Sufi tradition in Turkey and or a full departure from this.

00:53:49

Yeah. Thank you, Carolyn, a lot for your very good questions.

00:53:54

It's a very good question. It's also very theoretical 1, so I don't want to bore all the people here that state until now too much. But then we try to address it in the best of my capacity in this 4 minutes, not 14 and.

00:54:07

Anyways, I'm kidding. I'm kidding. So in some in the chapter I I I try to explain.

00:54:14

In how basically Islamic communities, Muslim communities in Turkey in the last 5050 years or so turned into Jamaat, which is a particular kind of social organisation.

00:54:29

And.

00:54:31

So I pick up examples from my own ethnography, and also from other works on Nachi Manis and some support.

00:54:37

So in somewhat, I argue what I am trying to the point I am trying to make. When I talk about this moralization of Islam, something also discussed in my in my book is that basically simplify the big things. I argue that with the introduction of mass education in the country after 1920.

00:54:56

New generations of modern, educated Muslims appeared.

00:54:59

Who aspired to get middle class occupations in our modern minds modernise in Turkey?

00:55:05

And under these circumstances, the old methods of the Sophia lodges, based on the esoteric Sufi quest for the unity of God, were no longer particularly attractive for these Muslims, or at least for the majority of them.

00:55:19

This of course doesn't mean that such a quest completely disappeared.

00:55:24

It didn't for.

00:55:24

Neither the action band is nor even for the most you know, reformist oriented streams of Islam like the Gulen community or the **** movement.

00:55:33

Yet I think we can fairly say that within all these communities, the search for Union with God remained more as a sort of of an ideal. An ideal is only ancillary to the other, more vital urgent, you know, goal of finding ways.

00:55:50

To cultivate a Muslim pious life while at the same time engaging in secularised modernising society.

00:55:59

It is a disjuncture that Demerolization of Islam comes onto the stage, I think.

00:56:05

Because in Republican Turkey, Muslims had to progressively move their piousness inwards.

00:56:12

Making Islam the internal core of the ethics of engagement as Muslims in other society.

00:56:19

The Jamaat facilitated this process by investing in the field of education, the assuring Muslims that they could pursue a modern life, get educated, find a job and so on, while also keeping up with the pious life as far as the internalised such an Islamic ethics.

00:56:37

So coming to the second part of your question, can this be read as a form of secularisation?

00:56:43

This is a tricky point because like with modernization, we have to understand what we mean by civilization first of.

00:56:51

However, if you follow for example talassad in seeing synchronisation as the reclusion of religion to the private sphere of the individual, there certainly are some parallels with the process of internalisation of an Islamic ethic of engagement. There's been favoured by the jemas in Turkey.

00:57:08

Yet at the same time, it may be, paradoxically, we might speculate on the fact that this internalisation process is what has allowed Islam to re emerge with varence in the public life in Turkey in the last 20 years.

00:57:22

Thought under new forms, but I think I will leave it into this. I hope you guys somehow responded to the.

00:57:30

OK.

00:57:31

Thank you I.

00:57:32

We're, we've.

00:57:33

We're done that.

00:57:36

Well, Fabio, Caroline, Stefan, Stefan, this book, it was Friday, actually that OUP declared it as public so.

00:57:48

None.

00:57:49

So I will just say that.

00:57:51

Sending that little fellow out into the world.

00:57:55

Which is an exciting new phase in the life of this project, which you probably question would ever come to fruition.

00:58:01

But now that it has so, we have to record our debt to you and all your contributors for putting down the marker that you have for all of us will want to come to a reliable reference to address the whole host of issues associated with.

00:58:16

With religion in Turkey, so for that and for tonight's amazing points, could I please ask you all to join me in a.

00:58:22

Warm thank you, Sir.