



CONFÉRENCE UNIVERSITAIRE  
DE SUISSE OCCIDENTALE

**GENDER STUDIES  
DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

# CULTURE RELIGION & GENDER

**04-05|12|2014**

MODULE  
UNIVERSITE DE NEUCHÂTEL



## CULTURE, RELIGION & GENDER

Governments, right-wing politicians, and some feminists have recently alleged a clash between accomplished "European gender equality" and "backwardness or patriarchy" provoked by immigrants, or ethnic or religious minorities. Unequal gender relations among migrant or minority groups are identified as the core problem of diversified societies. This binary construction between "us" (Western advocates of freedom and equality) and "them" (ethnic or religious minority others as opponents to women's rights) has put some feminists at the forefront of debates postulating an insurmountable tension between feminist values and multicultural ideas.

Such representations are one fundamental element of current efforts in various European countries to abandon multiculturalism as a policy goal, and they serve to introduce neo-assimilationist policies demanding individual integration efforts and an embrace of "national values", i.e. gender equality. In the face of the power developed by these dichotomous figures, a vivid debate has evolved within academia, and feminist scholars have voiced critical responses. These scholars have demonstrated that the debates are characterized by oversimplified and essentialized conceptions of culture and religion: Such conceptions disguise non-cultural/religious and structural factors of gendered violence and inequalities, mask internal heterogeneity and dynamics as well as women's agency, and define migrant women or women from ethnic or religious minorities by a group-culture-based determinism." The proposed module will critically scrutinize these ideas and concepts and present theoretical alternatives to the discussion about culture, religion and gender.

### HEIKE DROTBOHM

Heike Drotbohm is Associate Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at University of Freiburg in Germany. She works on the intersection between transnational migration, kinship, law and gender with a regional focus on creole societies along the Atlantic rim.  
[www.ethno.uni-freiburg.de/mitarbeiter/wissmit/drotbohm](http://www.ethno.uni-freiburg.de/mitarbeiter/wissmit/drotbohm)

### ELEONORE KOFMAN

Eleonore Kofman is Professor of Gender, Migration and Citizenship and co-director of the Social Policy Research Centre at Middlesex University. She has published extensively on gendered aspects of family migration in Europe, skilled migration and on integration discourses and policies. She is completing a co-authored book on *Gendered Migrations and Social Reproduction*, Palgrave.

[www.mdx.ac.uk/aboutus/staffdirectory/Eleonore\\_Kofman.aspx](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/aboutus/staffdirectory/Eleonore_Kofman.aspx)

## ASSIGNMENTS

1

Attending graduate students will hand in an abstract of 300 words (in French or English) on their research or the question they would like to be discussed in relation to the theme of the module. On this basis essays/papers that will be discussed in the module will be selected.

The abstract should be sent in pdf format to [marion.schulze-at-unine.ch](mailto:marion.schulze-at-unine.ch)

Deadline: August 31st, 2014

Selected essays (3 pages)/papers have to be sent in pdf format to [marion.schulze-at-unine.ch](mailto:marion.schulze-at-unine.ch)

Deadline: October 31st, 2014

2

Attending graduate students will also be required to read four texts in preparation for the workshop on the question of culture, religion, and gender. These texts have been selected by the invited specialists.

[1] Bilge, Sirma. 2010. "Beyond Subordination vs. Resistance: An Intersectional Approach to the Agency of Veiled Muslim Women". *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 31(1), 9-28.

[2] Ryan, Louise and Elena Vacchelli. 2013. "Introduction: Gender, Religion and Migration". *Religion and Gender* 3(1), 1-5

[3] Korteweg, Anna C. and Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos. 2013. "Gender, Religion, and Ethnicity: Intersections and Boundaries in Immigrant Integration Policy Debates". *Social Politics* 20(1), 109-136.

[4] Schrover, Marlou & Deirdre Moloney. 2013. "Making a difference". In: Schrover, Marlou & Deirdre Moloney (eds.): *Gender, Migration and Categorisation-Making Distinctions between Migrants in Western Countries, 1945-2010*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 7-54.

## LANGUAGES OF THE MODULE

English, Français

## ORGANISATION

CUSO Gender Studies Doctoral Program and the University of Neuchâtel

Janine Dahinden, Professor for transnational studies, University of Neuchâtel  
Marion Schulze, Senior Lecturer in Gender Studies, University of Neuchâtel

[gender.cuso.ch](http://gender.cuso.ch)

## PROGRAM

### DECEMBER 4, 2014

This day of the module will consist in – discussing texts on this topic chosen by Sirma Bilge and Eleonore Kofman and will be concluded with public lectures by our invited specialists.

Venue: MAPS, Conference Room

10.00–10.10 Opening of the module and welcome address by Janine Dahinden

10.10–10.30 Short self-presentations by Sirma Bilge, Eleonore Kofman, and graduate students

10.30–12.30 Text discussion

12.30–14.00 Lunch Break

14.00–15.00 Text discussion

15.00–15.30 Coffee Break

15.30–16.30 Text discussion

16.30–18.00 Dinner Break

Venue: FLSH R.N.02

### 18.15–20.00 PUBLIC CONFERENCE

*Heike Drotbohm*

Gender, Family, and Migration Law. A transnational Perspective

*Eleonore Kofman*

Gender, ethnicity and the politicising of religion.

### DECEMBER 5, 2014

This day will center around the discussion of the graduate students' work.

Venue: MAPS, Conference room

10.00–12.00 Paper discussion

12.00–14.00 Lunch Break

14.00–16.00 Paper discussion