What does it mean to speak of Islam today as a “global” religion? In what sense are the world’s 1.8 billion Muslims part of a single community? What are the networks and ideas that link Muslims in the modern and contemporary world across national, regional, and cultural boundaries? To what extent did the global mobility revolution that began in the mid-nineteenth century create a more connected, unified Muslim community?

In this workshop, we - an anthropologist and a historian who work on Muslim mobilities between Russian and Central Asian lands and the Middle East - will lead an interdisciplinary discussion about the historical and contemporary meanings and manifestations of “global Islam.” Bringing together doctoral students, postdocs, visiting scholars, and senior researchers of the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, we will explore in particular the hajj as global Muslim network and an imagined manifestation of "Muslim connectedness" across world regions. We are interested in how these ideas travel and have been mobilized for reasons of local, transnational, and other forms of identity politics (Muslim and non-Muslim) in the past and present. We will explore various manifestations of "Muslim connectedness and difference" through time and space. We will also discuss Western academic epistemologies that have constructed ideas about the Muslim world and about its global dimension.

Readings


