

AET1

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB

Wednesday 01 Jun, 09.00am-12.00pm

Paper MES20

Themes in the Anthropology of Islam

Answer **three** questions. All questions carry **equal** marks.

The **word limit** for each question is **1500** words.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

Student declaration form

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Answers may be written by hand in **black ink** or typed.

If written by hand, upload your answers as a scan or image file.

If typed, upload them in a document, such as a Word document or PDF.

Files should be saved as MES20_[your number].

Write your number **not** your name as well as the paper code (MES20) on each page of your submission.

Upload a completed student declaration form as a separate file.

RESOURCES PERMITTED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

Your exam answers must be entirely your own new and original work, with any quotations clearly marked as such. You may use your own notes and any primary or secondary sources in preparing your answers if you wish to do so. You must not copy text from your own supervision essays.

Answer **three** of the following questions.

1. What were the main claims of the “Writing against Culture” movement, and what alternatives did they propose? Illustrate each of these alternative proposals using works studied on the course.
2. Either: Explain what Edward Said meant when he described “the Orient” as an “imaginative geography”, and illustrate and evaluate at least one alternative geographical model that has been proposed for thinking about the Middle East.

Or: How has the Gulf featured in Muslim identities beyond the region, and what might explain this? Discuss using at least two case studies.

3. How have anthropologists analysed the relationship between Islam and modernity in the Middle East? Discuss using at least two ethnographic case studies.
4. How have anthropologists sought to account for the appeal of popular Islamic preachers in south-east Asia and the Middle East the late twentieth- or early twenty-first centuries? Discuss using at least two case studies.
5. Either: Explain and evaluate Clifford Geertz and Talal Asad’s approaches to the anthropology of Islam.

Or: Compare and contrast attempts to embody divine will within at least two Islamic piety movements.

6. Ethnographies of pious self-discipline are “unable to confront the ways in which Muslims are called upon to face, explain and contend with inconsistencies and complexities in their attempts to

live virtuous lives” (Magnus Marsden, *Living Islam*). Discuss using at least two case studies.

7. What complexities have been revealed by ethnographic approaches to Islamic medical ethics?
8. In what ways and contexts has Islam been construed as Europe’s “other”?

END OF PAPER