Many Muslims across Eurasia, as elsewhere, engage with religious, political, and ethical injunctions against certain practices that are often tacitly embraced even as they are explicitly disavowed. This lecture traces one form of such engagement, the phenomenon of being drunk (or “mast” in Tajik), across a handful of communities and contexts in post-Soviet Central Asia as a way of rethinking ambivalent orientations towards excess and their implications for current anthropological scholarship on Islam. The concept of “mast,” as encountered during long-term ethnographic field research with shaykhs at a regionally famous shrine near Tajikistan’s Afghan border, provides a window onto notions of authority—political, religious, and otherwise—and their creative appropriations in broader Persianate settings.

FRIDAY
February 16, 2018
3:30 - 5:00 PM
Conference Room, Bldg. 50, Rm. 51A