**Anglo-Turkish Society hybrid lecture, 3 March 2027, 6.00 pm** (UK time)

Speaker: Dirk-Jan Stoppelenburg

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: 'For God and Empire: Mosques in Ottoman Europe, from Sarajevo to Istanbul'

Mosques have formed part of Europe's built heritage for the past thirteen centuries. Their distribution reflects successive periods of Muslim settlement, from the early Arab presence and the Tatar lands to Ottoman expansion and the communities established through colonial connections and post-war migration.

Drawing on his forthcoming book, *Mosques in Europe: A Journey across Thirteen Centuries, from the Urals to the Atlantic*, Dirk-Jan places the mosques of Ottoman Europe within this longer history. The book combines historical research with mosque profiles from across the continent. It examines individual buildings in their local setting, tracing their foundation and subsequent use through changes of government and population. Architecture is considered alongside the circumstances in which a mosque was commissioned and the community it served.

The talk opens with the book's scope and method, including its geographical definition of Europe and the range of buildings encompassed by the term 'mosque'. Maps outline the six historical periods around which the book is organised.

The principal focus of the illustrated talk is the development of Ottoman mosque architecture in Europe, from the Eski Camii in Edirne through Sinan's imperial commissions to the later influence of European architectural styles. These mosques differed considerably in scale and patronage. Alongside the great foundations of sultans stood mosques commissioned by provincial officials and local benefactors, often forming part of külliye complexes with educational and charitable functions.

The withdrawal of Ottoman rule profoundly altered this landscape. Across the Balkans, mosques were demolished or converted to other uses, while the departure of Muslim populations left many without congregations. Twentieth-century wars brought further destruction. Restoration and reconstruction have recovered part of this heritage, sometimes for surviving Muslim communities and sometimes as historic monuments. The Turkish Republic presents a related history of loss alongside extensive new construction. Historic mosques and tekkes were demolished or repurposed during the early republican period, while the number of newly built mosques increased enormously in subsequent decades. Ottoman architecture remained the principal model for many of these new mosques.

The final part traces the continued development of mosque architecture through the twentieth century and into the present. Bebek illustrates the late Ottoman return to earlier architectural forms, while Şişli marks the resumption of monumental mosque construction under the Republic. The recent and politically charged mosque at Taksim Square, combining the familiar Ottoman composition with Art Deco influences and a distinctive colour palette. The talk concludes with the Sancaklar Mosque, whose design departs radically from established conventions.

Booking essential: https://dirk-jan-stoppelenburg-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk

Contact: contact@angloturkishsociety.org.uk



me speaking with worshippers in the Ulu Camii in Bursa



Dirk-Jan Stoppelenburg (The Hague, 1967) is a Dutch-Swedish independent historian and writer based in Lund, Sweden, and the author of *Mosques in Europe: A Journey across Thirteen Centuries, from the Urals to the Atlantic* (Prokopios, 2027).

He read Middle Eastern studies, including Turkish, at Lund University and has maintained a longstanding interest in Islamic history in general and the Ottoman Empire's place within Europe in particular. Following an international career, he now combines writing and historical research with supervisory board roles. His talk draws on his research and visits to mosques across Europe, including the Balkans and Istanbul.