

Dr Gëzim Alpion

Lecturer in Sociology

University of Birmingham, UK

BA (University of Cairo), PhD (University of Durham)

www.sociology.bham.ac.uk

E-mail: g.i.alpion@bham.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 3241 Fax: +44 (0)121 414 6061

A Brief Biography

Born in Albania and educated at the Universities of Tirana, Cairo and Durham, Gëzim Alpion is Lecturer in Sociology and Media Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK. Prior to joining the Department of Sociology at Birmingham in 2002, he lectured at the University of Huddersfield, Sheffield Hallam University, and Newman University College.

Gëzim convenes the first year course 'Introduction to Media, Culture and Society' and two third year courses: 'Film, Culture and Society', and 'Sociology of Success and Fame'. He teaches on these three modules and on the Masters Programmes in Media Studies. He is Director of Research Postgraduate Studies.

Gëzim is a Member of the British Sociological Association (BSA) and Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Research in Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Birmingham since 2000. He has been invited to give talks and lectures at several British universities as well as in the USA, China, Canada, India, South Africa, Germany, Italy, Russia, Macedonia, Kosova and Albania.

His research addresses the sociology of the media, fame, religion, nationality and authorship. He is particularly interested in religious celebrities, political correctness, brain drain, the notion of 'Britishness', and the representation of the 'other' in the British and European media, concentrating especially on media stereotyping of South, Central and East Europeans in the wake of the collapse of Communism. His current research develops the idea of 'fame capital' as a variable in an intranational and international context.

Gëzim's books include *Mother Teresa: Saint or Celebrity?* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007; New Delhi: Routledge India, 2008) and *Encounters with Civilizations: From Alexander the Great to Mother Teresa* (Meteor Books, 2008; Chapel Hill, NC, USA: Globic Press, 2009), and *Foreigner Complex* (Birmingham: UBCPS, 2002). His *Mother Teresa* book was published in Italian by Salerno Editrice in Rome in 2008. He has contributed articles and reviews to a number of peer-reviewed journals: *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* (Routledge, Australia), *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans* (Routledge, UK), *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (Blackwell, UK), *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations Journal* (Routledge, UK), *Scope* (Online journal of the Institute of Film & Television Studies, University of Nottingham, UK), *The Review of Communication* (Routledge, USA), *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (USA), and *Albanian Journal of Politics* (Globic Press, USA).

Gëzim is also a political and culture analyst, journalist and playwright. His features have appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Birmingham Post* and *The Middle East Times*. In his hard-hitting tragedy *Vouchers* (UBCPS, 2001), he tackles the emotive issue of refugees and asylum seekers in Britain. Directed by Duška Radosavljević, *Vouchers* premiered at the Festival of Contemporary European Plays in Huddersfield, UK, in March 2002. Sponsored by Arts Council England, and

directed by Marcus Fernando, Gëzim's controversial play *If Only the Dead Could Listen* (Globic Press, 2008) was first performed by Dreamscape Theatre Company in February 2006 at the *mac* Theatre in Birmingham, UK. Funded by *r:evolve*, a Consortium of the Arena Theatre, *mac* and Black Country Touring, the same play was staged for 'Evolved - the *r:evolve* Festival', at Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton and the *mac* in Birmingham in April 2008.

Gëzim has been interviewed by the *BBC* World Service (London, Birmingham, and Stoke & Staffordshire), *ITV* (Jonathan Dimbleby Programme, London), *Voice of America* (VOA, Washington D.C.), *Vatican Radio* (Rome), *Showtime's Penn & Teller Show* (Los Angeles), *Radio France Internationale* (RFI, Paris), *Deutsche Welle* (DW-radio, Bonn), *Indian State Television Network* (*Doordarshan* – Kolkata), *Top-Channel* (Tirana) and numerous news services, TV channels and radio stations in the USA, the UK, and the Balkans (Albania, Kosova, Macedonia and Serbia).

These are some of the newspapers, magazines and journals that have profiled, interviewed and quoted Gëzim: UK: *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, *Scotland on Sunday*, *The Birmingham Post*, *Birmingham Mail*, *Sunday Mercury*, *Asian Times*; India: *The Times of India*, *The Hindustan Times*, *The Siasat Daily* (Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh), *The Herald*, (Calcutta); Japan: *Japan Herald*; Australia: *The Sydney Morning Herald*; France: *Libération* (Paris); Italy: *Corriere della Sera* (Milan); Hungary: *Új Ember -Katolikus Hetilap*, *Minorities Studies and Reviews*; Malta: *It Torċa* (Valletta); Slovakia: *Pravda* (Bratislava); Chile: *El Mercurio* (Santiago); Canada: *Toronto Telegraph*; USA: *Christianity Today Magazine* (Illinois), *Abilene Reporternews* (Texas), *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* (Northwest Arkansas Edition), *Winston-Salem Journal* (Northwest North Carolina), *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte NC), *The Baptist Bulletin* (Schaumburg, IL), *Traverse City Record-Eagle* (Northern Michigan), *Star Tribune* (Minneapolis – St. Paul, Minnesota), *The New York Sun*, and *New Jersey Telegraph*.

Dr Al pion lives in Birmingham with his wife and two children.