



Course Description: NISIS Autumn School 2020



Title	Shrine Cultures in the Islamicate World
Academic year	2020-2021
EC	3-5
Level	600
Language	English
Speakers	A keynote by Prof. Jo-Ann Gross (New York University), and presentation by Habeeb ur Rhaman (Aga Khan University London) and Ruben Elsinga (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
Hosted by	Leiden University, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Admission requirements

NISIS junior members qualify automatically for participation in the NISIS Autumn School. Registration is open for all.

Please note that participants from outside the Netherlands who are not a member of NISIS are kindly asked to pay a fee of 50 euros per ECTS if they wish to receive ECTS for their participation.

Description

Participants of the Autumn School are required to read a selection of important readings that will be prescribed by the keynote speakers. Additionally, Research Master Students and PhD



candidates are invited to prepare at least five questions about the literature and send them to nisis@uu.nl, before 5 October 2020, 9.00 hours (CET).

Theme

The theme of the Autumn School is “Shrine Cultures in the Islamic World”.

Across the Islamic world, Sufi shrines form focal points in the landscape, both in urban and in rural areas. Many shrines are bustling places of pilgrimage with a strong emotive power and a profound commemorative role. Shrines often represent religious or moral values and relate in different ways to public and personal memories, which are preserved and produced in a wide array of materials and ritual practices. As such, shrines inform directly or indirectly a great variety of academic research into Muslim societies.

In this Autumn School, Professor Jo-Ann Gross (University of New York), will give the first key-lecture, in which she will explore the multi-dimensional development of traditions regarding Sufi saints, in connection to the transformation of saints’ burial places (real or imagined) into shrines. She will introduce and discuss the term ‘shrinescape’, to refer an acknowledged, sacralized landscape comprising the natural and built environment associated with a holy figure. In her lecture, she will employ a case study of Khoja Ishāq Khuttalānī (d. 826/1423), the disciple of the renowned Kubravī Sufi shaykh, Mīr Sayyid ‘Alī Hamadānī, and the *pīr* of Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 1392/1464), founder of the Nūrbakhshiya. Jo-Ann Gross did extensive fieldwork in Central Asia and published widely on the topic of Sufi shaykhs and shrine tradition in past and present Central Asian society.

The second presentation will be by Habeeb ur Rhaman (Aga Khan University London) and Ruben Elsinga (Erasmus University Rotterdam), who will present daily life and experiences at the Rehmania darbar, a large shrine in the city of Haripur in Pakistan, where Habeeb became the *pir* recently. Ruben has been following him in this journey and his pilgrimage to major shrines the Pakistani Punjab. They will touch on different themes such as the process of leadership succession, the life of a *pir* before and after (succession), the politics around the institute, as well as spirituality and civility. Around the Punjabi shrines pilgrimage material, they will reflect on the personal significance of the pilgrimage before, during and after for Habeeb, the life and dynamics at these shrines.



Course objectives

- Enlarging and deepening the already existing knowledge of Islam and Muslim societies
- Providing insight and participation in the current academic debate
- Introducing the candidates to an international network of scholars in the field
- Creating an academic community in which research in the field of Islam and Muslim societies can be optimally pursued
- Mediating between a new generation of researchers and innovative disciplinary and interdisciplinary developments, theoretical and methodological initiatives and explorations in the field
- Training writing and reflection skills.

Time Table

The NISIS Autumn School will take place on October 8th and 9th, 2020. On Thursday the 8th of October, there will be two sessions on the topic of Islamic(ate) shrine culture from two different perspectives. On Friday the 9th of October, Research Master students and PhD candidates will present draft chapters of their dissertations and receive feedback from peers and senior scholars in the Chapter Clinic (please note that only six participants can participate in the Chapter Clinic).

Please make sure to be informed about program details and updates via our website: www.nisis.nl.

Mode of instruction

- Lectures
- Panel discussion
- Presentation

Course load

Autumn School

- Attendance and active participation during online meeting
- Preparing questions about assigned readings
- Joining the discussion

No rights can be derived from this course description. Information may be subject to change.



Assessment method

PhD candidates and research master students will be judged on the basis of:

- Attendance and active participation at the keynote lectures and workshops

Assignment requirements

T.b.a.

Reading list

T.b.a.

Application

Please apply via [nisis.nl](https://www.nisis.nl).

Website

www.nisis.nl