



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.

The Chapter Clinic is meant for NISIS members. Please note that there are only six slots available; slots will be allocated on the basis of factors such as need and available expertise.

NISIS members may apply online via www.nisis.nl until 17 September 2020, 9.00 hours CET. With your application we ask you to submit the chapter/paper you'd like to discuss. You'll receive an e-mail to inform you whether you're placed in the clinic. If that is the case, please send your revised chapter/paper (if applicable) to nisis@uu.nl before Friday 25 September 2020, 9.00 AM (CET).

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 on 8 October 2020 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).

On Friday 9 October 2020, NISIS is organizing a chapter clinic led by Prof. Gabrielle van den Berg, Prof. Dick Douwes, and Prof. Christian Lange. Together with the other participants, you will discuss a chapter of your master thesis or dissertation, or another dissertation-related paper you are working on. This chapter clinic will give you the opportunity to receive in-depth feedback from senior researchers other than your PhD supervisor(s), as well as from master/PhD peers.

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 'shrineescape', 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 Iṣḥāq 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 (3 EC)

- Attendance and active participation during online meeting
- Preparing a reaction sheet before the Autumn School
- Writing a reflection paper

Chapter Clinic (2 EC)

- Actively participate in the chapter clinic
- Present your chapter/paper (<5 min.)
- Read and provide feedback on the other chapters

Assessment method

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

- Attendance and active participation at the keynote lectures and discussions
- Presentation
- Paper

Assignment requirements

To be determined in consultation with NISIS and the convenors.

Reading list

DeWeese, Devin. "Sacred History for a Central Asian Town: Saints, Shrines, and Legends of Origin in Histories of Sayrām, 18th-19th Centuries." *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 89-90 (2000): 245-295.



- Gross, Jo-Ann. "The Biographical Tradition of Muḥammad Bashārā: Sanctification and Legitimation in Tajikistan." In *Sufism in Central Asia: New Perspectives on Sufi Traditions, 15th-21st Centuries*, edited by Devin DeWeese and Jo-Ann Gross, 299-332. Leiden: Brill, 2018.
- Rehman, Uzma. "Who is in? Who is out? Social vs political space in the Sufi shrines of Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai and Syed Pir Waris Shah in Sindh and Punjab, Pakistan." In *Islam, Sufism and Everyday Politics of Belonging in South Asia*, edited by Deepra Dandekar and Torsten Tschacher, 139-155. London and New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Werbner, Pnina and Helene Basu. "The Embodiment of Charisma." In *Embodying Charisma: Modernity, locality and the performance of emotion in Sufi cults*, edited by Pnina Werbner and Helene Basu, 3-27. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.
- Zaman, Muhammad Qasim. "The Contested Terrain of Sufism." In *Islam in Pakistan: A History, 195-225*. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018.

Optional:

Green, Nile. "Emerging Approaches to the Sufi Traditions of South Asia: Between Texts, Territories and the Transcendent." *South Asia Research* 24, no.2 (2004): 123-148.

Application

Please apply for the Autumn School via [nisis.nl](https://www.nisis.nl). NISIS junior members qualify automatically for participation in the NISIS Autumn School. Registration is open for all.

The Chapter Clinic is meant for NISIS members. Please note that there are only six slots available; slots will be allocated on the basis of factors such as need and available expertise.

NISIS members may apply online via www.nisis.nl until 17 September 2020, 9.00 hours CET.

Website

www.nisis.nl