



# Course Description: NISIS Autumn School 2021



Title	Islamic(ate) Classics From Manuscript to the Digital Age
Academic year	2021-2022
EC	3-5
Level	600
Language	English
Keynote Speakers	Beatrice Gründler (Free University Berlin), Brinkley M. Messick (Columbia University), Ahmed El Shamsy (University of Chicago), Peter Verkinderen (Aga Khan University- ISMC Kitab project)
Hosted by	KU Leuven

## Admission requirements

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Registration is open for PhD candidates and advanced MA students. Those whose research is germane to the topic are especially invited to contribute. You can register for the NISIS Autumn School 2021 via [www.nisis.nl](http://www.nisis.nl). The application deadline is **10 September 2021**.

NISIS junior members qualify automatically, but also need to register for participation for the NISIS Autumn School via [www.nisis.nl](http://www.nisis.nl).

In addition to the Autumn School program, NISIS junior members are invited to register for our regular **one-day writing clinic** which will take place during the Autumn School in Leuven on Friday 12 November 2021. You can obtain an additional 1 EC by participating in the writing clinic. In order to register, please send a description of the chapter you want to discuss to [nisis@uu.nl](mailto:nisis@uu.nl) before **10 October 2021**. Please note that the number of available places is limited. You will receive an e-mail to inform you whether you have been



selected for the clinic. If that is the case, you will be asked to send your updated chapter/paper to [nisis@uu.nl](mailto:nisis@uu.nl) around two weeks prior to the Autumn School (deadline 22 October).

The NISIS Autumn School has limited funds available to support young researchers on the basis of priority, relevant research and motivations. Please note that successful applicants must arrange their own visa (if applicable), transport and accommodation.

## Description

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During the Autumn School, keynote lectures will be given by Beatrice Gründler (Free University Berlin), Brinkley M. Messick (Columbia University), Ahmed El Shamsy (University of Chicago), Peter Verkinderen (Aga Khan University London-ISMC Kitab project).

Emad Mohamed (Research Institute of Information & Language Processing, University of Wolverhampton) will be giving a **master class on “Digital Humanities in Arabic and Islamic Studies.”**

For NISIS junior members, we also offer our **one-day writing clinic** which takes place on Friday 12 November. If interested, please get in touch with the NISIS office ([nisis@uu.nl](mailto:nisis@uu.nl)).

## Theme

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Inspired by Ahmed El Shamsy’s recent book, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics: How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 2020), the autumn school will highlight the impact of technological changes on Islamic(ate) primary sources and scholarship not only during the printing age, but up until the current digital era as well. By ‘classics’ we roughly refer to the most significant pre-modern primary sources, which affected and continue to affect Muslim beliefs, religious duties and practices as well as ways of life in different regions.

In the Islamic(ate) learned culture manuscripts remained in normal use for many centuries and even after the invention of modern printing techniques. In recent years, digitization and the application of digital tools have started to exercise a tremendous and ubiquitous impact on the circulation and academic understanding and analysis of these classical sources.

Invited speakers will be asked to reflect on the concept of “Islamic classics,” and how primary texts were produced, shaped, transmitted and transformed throughout Islamic(ate) book history. How did the written culture affect the circulation and interpretation of Islamic(ate) classics through the centuries of Islam? In what ways did the process and implementation of various technologies in the last two centuries transform this written culture in Muslim societies? To what extent did the



physical means of printing and digital tools affect the reception and influence of these primary sources in both the Muslim world and Europe?

## Course objectives

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- 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 presentation, writing and reflection skills.

## Time Table

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The programme booklet will be distributed among the participants before the Autumn School.

## Mode of instruction

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- Lecture
- Workshop
- Presentation
- Paper (optional)

## Course load

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Total course load for the course is 84 + 56 hours.

For 3 EC:

Lectures during the school: 35 hours

Preparation presentation: 27 hours

Preparation literature: 22 hours



For an additional 2 EC:

Paper: 56 hours

## Assessment method

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

- attendance and active participation at the keynote lectures and panel sessions
- presentation in a panel session
- a paper to be handed in after the Autumn School (optional)

## Assignment requirements

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Participants of the Autumn School are required to read a selection of readings that will be prescribed by the keynote speakers.

Participants (PhD candidates and research master students) are required to:

For 3 EC:

- read the prescribed literature in advance, you will be asked to reflect on the literature during the lectures and the workshop
- give a presentation in one of the panel sessions
- act as a discussant during one of the presentations

For an additional 2 EC:

- write a paper after the Autumn School; more details will follow.

## Reading list

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### **Monday 8 November**

Keynote Lecture Ahmed El Shamsy:

El Shamsy, Ahmed. "The Disappearing Books." In: *'Rediscovering the Islamic Classics: How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition'*, 8-30. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020.



El Shamsy, Ahmed. "The Beginnings of Print." In: *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics: How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition*, 63-92. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020.

### **Tuesday 9 November**

Workshop Emad Mohamed:

Mohamed, Emad and Raheem Sarwar. Linguistic Features Evaluation For Hadith Authenticity Through Automatic Machine Learning." 1-18.

Oakes, Michael P. "Chapter 4." In: " *Literary Detective Work on the Computer*", 149-206. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 2014.

Hussein, Khalid Shakir. 'Authorship verification in Arabic using function words: A controversial case study of Imam Ali's book peak of eloquence. *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing* 13, no. 1-2 (2019): 223-248.

Keynote Lecture Beatrice Gruendler:

Gruendler, Beatrice, "Arabic Script." In: " *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an: Volume One A-D*", ed.'Jane Dammen McAuliffe, 135-144. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Gruendler, Beatrice. "Stability and Change in Arabic Script." In: '*The Shape of Script: How and Why Writing Systems Change*, ed. Stephen D. Houston, 93-118. Santa Fe: SAR Press, 2012.

Gruendler, Beatrice, Jan J. van Ginkel, Rima Redwan, Kholoud Khalfallah, Isabel Toral, Johannes Stephan, Matthew L. Keegan, Theodore S. Beers, Mahmoud Kozae and Marwa M. Ahmed. 'An Interim Report on the Editorial and Analytical Work of the AnonymClassic Project.' *medieval worlds* 11 (2020): 241-279.

### **Wednesday 10 November**

Keynote Lecture Peter Verkinderen:

In order to prepare for the lecture by Peter Verkinderen, please take a look at the KITAB website: <https://kitab-project.org>.

Please take a look at these articles in particular:

\* on the OpenITI corpus that forms the basis of the research of the KITAB project:  
- <https://kitab-project.org/docs/openITI#1-what-is-openiti>



- <https://kitab-project.org/docs/openITI#2-structure-and-organization-of-the-openiti-github> -
- <https://kitab-project.org/Al-Maktaba-al-Shāmila-a-short-history/>
- <https://kitab-project.org/Tagging-the-Structure-of-Texts-in-the-OPENITI-Corpus/>

\* on the passim algorithm that is used in the KITAB project to detect text reuse (common passages between two texts):

- <https://kitab-project.org/methods/text-reuse>
- <https://kitab-project.org/A-First-Look-at-KITAB-s-Data/>
- <https://kitab-project.org/Detecting-What-Authors-Took-from-Earlier-Works/> - <https://kitab-project.org/A-Tale-of-3-Versions/>

## Friday 12 November

Keynote Lecture Brinkley Messick:

Messick, Brinkley. "On the Question of Lithography," *Culture & History* 16 (1997): 158-76. In: *'The History of the Book in the Middle East'*, ed. Geoffrey Roper, 299-318. Oxford: Routledge, 2013.

Messick, Brinkley. "Print Culture." In: *'The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society'*, 1-17. Oakland: University of California Press, 1992. California Scholarship Online, 2012.

Messick, Brinkley. "Spiral Texts." In: *'The Calligraphic State: Textual Domination and History in a Muslim Society'*, 231-250. Oakland: University of California Press, 1992.

## Registration

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Registrations must include the following:

- a title and an abstract of 300 words (max.) of your presentation (15 minutes) to be given at the spring school
- a short biography of max. 50 words in the third person

If you are not a member of NISIS, your registration must also include:

- a CV and a short motivation letter (ca. 1 A4)
- a one-page description of your PhD or MA project

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## Website

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