Into the Digital Islamic Future

An Experts Workshop

◈◇◈◇◈◇◈◇◈◇◈

September 29 – 30, 2022
The University of Maryland, College Park

Conveners:

OPEN ISLAMICATE TEXTS INITIATIVE

SHARIAsource
at HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

Generous funding provided by:

Mellon Foundation

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND 18 56
COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES

Workshop Background

This workshop is a part of the *Open Islamicate Texts Initiative Arabic OCR Catalyst Project (OpenITI AOCP)*—a two-year project generously funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (full details on this project can be found here).

OpenITI AOCP is led by Matthew Thomas Miller (Roshan Institute for Persian Studies at UMD), Maxim Romanov (Universität Hamburg), Sarah Bowen Savant (Aga Khan University), David Smith (Northeastern University), and Raffaele Viglianti (Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities at UMD). SHARIAsource, a project of the Program in Islamic Law (PIL) at Harvard Law School (both led by Intisar Rabb), provided the financial support for the initial technical infrastructure (i.e., CorpusBuilder 1.0) upon which this project will build in the development of eScriptorium and they also play a leading role in the technical development portion of OpenITI AOCP. We are proud to be co-convening this workshop with them.

This workshop will bring together leading scholars of Arabic, Persian, and Islamic Studies to learn about the latest advancements in Islamicate digital humanities and to begin to plan for the next phases of its development. We will learn from each other's projects as we discuss key overlapping areas of interest for the construction of digital infrastructure for the study of the premodern Islamicate cultures.

We will also be soliciting your expertise to help us plan for our move into digital scholarly publications and the improvement of the OpenITI digital corpus, which we plan to massively expand in the coming years with our soon-to-be-released (publicly) digital text production pipeline, eScriptorium (co-produced by the large international team highlighted on the site's landing page). These goals will be made possible by two grants that we are pleased to announce we were awarded over the summer: a $1.75 million grant from The Mellon Foundation and a $600,000 grant from the National Science Foundation.

Workshop Participants

Ahmed El Shamsy, Professor of Islamic Thought, University of Chicago

Ahmet T. Karamustafa, Professor of History, University of Maryland, College Park

Alexander Jabbari, Assistant Professor of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

A. Sean Pue, Associate Professor of Hindi Language & South Asian Literature and Culture, Michigan State University
Project Affiliation: Jugaad CoLab

Antoine Borrut, Associate Professor of History & Classics, University of Maryland, College Park

Arezou Azad, Senior Research Fellow, Oriental Institute, University of Oxford; Programme Director, Invisible East
Project Affiliation: Invisible East

Austin O'Malley, Roshan Institute Assistant Professor of Persian and Iranian Studies, University of Arizona

Carl Ernst, William R. Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Islamic Studies, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Project Affiliation: Perso-Indica

Chander Shekhar, Professor of Persian, University of Delhi

Fatemeh Keshavarz, Roshan Chair in Persian Studies & Professor of Persian Language and Literature, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies, University of Maryland, College Park

Intisar Rabb, Professor of History & Law, Harvard Law School; Director, Program in Islamic law, Harvard University
Project Affiliation: SHARIAsource

Jonathan Parkes Allen, Mellon Humanities Postdoctoral Fellow, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies, University of Maryland, College Park
Project Affiliation: OpenITI

Lorenz Nigst, Research Associate, Corpus Management, KITAB Project, Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations
Project Affiliation: KITAB; OpenITI

Marina Rustow, Khedouri A. Zilkha Professor of Jewish Civilization in the Near East, Princeton University; Director, Princeton Geniza Lab
Project Affiliation: Princeton Geniza Project

Marjan Moosavi, Roshan Lecturer in Persian Studies, University of Maryland, College Park; Founder and Principal Investigator, Digital Guide to Theatre of the Middle East (DGToME)
Project Affiliation: DGToME

Mathew Barber, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, KITAB Project, Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations
Project Affiliation: KITAB, OpenITI

Matt Melvin-Koushki, Associate Professor & Peter and Bonnie McCausland Fellow of History, University of South Carolina

Matthew Thomas Miller, Assistant Professor of Persian Literature and Digital Humanities, Roshan Institute for Persian Studies, University of Maryland, College Park; Director, Roshan Initiative in Persian Digital Humanities
Project Affiliation: OpenITI

Mohammad Tavakoli-Targhi, Professor of Historical Studies, History, and Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto; Director, Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Institute of Iranian Studies
Project Affiliation: Iranian Women Poets, Iranian Cinema (*Encyclopaedia Iranica*)

Paul Losensky, Professor of Comparative Literature & Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University Bloomington

Rachel Schine, Assistant Professor of Arabic, University of Maryland, College Park

Sabine Schmidtke, Professor of Islamic Intellectual History, Institute for Advanced Study
Project Affiliation: Zaydi Manuscript Tradition Project

Sarah Bowen Savant, Professor of History, Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilizations; Principal Investigator, KITAB Project
Project Affiliation: KITAB

Theodore Beers, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Seminar für Semitistik und Arabistik, Freie Universität Berlin
Project Affiliation: Kalīla and Dimna – AnonymClassic

Yusuf Celik, Postdoctoral Fellow, Program in Islamic Law, Harvard University
Project Affiliation: SHARIAsource

Schedule

Pre-workshop Event (Optional)
Wednesday, September 28th, 2022

7:30-10:00 pm: Welcome dinner and drinks ([The Hall CP](#) located behind The Hotel) for those who arrive early enough (and aren't too jetlagged to attend)

Workshop Day #1: The Islamicate Digital Humanities Now
Thursday, September 29th, 2022

7:30-8:30am: Breakfast at *Bagels N Grinds* located at The Hotel (not a group event—please just grab breakfast at your leisure)

8:40-9:00am: Walk with Jonathan Allen to McKeldin library for workshop day #1

9:00-9:15 am: Opening remarks by Dr. Fatemeh Keshavarz, Former Director of the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and Director of Roshan Institute for Persian Studies

9:15-9:45 am: Workshop participant introductions

9:45-10:00 am: Overview of workshop goals (Matthew Miller)

10:00-11:00 am: What have we done and what are we going to do? An Overview of OpenITI AOCP Phase I + Bridge + Phase II + KITAB Project (Sarah Bowen Savant & Matthew Miller)

11:00-11:20 am: Break

11:20-11:40 am: *SHARIAsource* (Intisar Rabb)

11:40-12:00 noon: *Princeton Geniza Project* (Marina Rustow)

12:00-12:20 pm: *Zaydi Manuscript Tradition Project & Correspondences Project* (Sabine Schmidtke)

12:20-12:40 pm: *Omar ibn Said and Other Enslaved Muslim Writers* (Carl Ernst)

12:40-1:00 pm: *Invisible East* (Arezou Azad)

1:00-2:15 pm: Lunch (catered on McKeldin Portico)

2:15-3:15 pm: Let's get to work! eScriptorium OCR workshop
We will walk you through the process of uploading and OCRing your own texts as a group and then have you break into small groups to work with and export preloaded versions.

3:15-3:30 pm: Break

3:30-4:00 pm: Debrief on eScriptorium
Time for questions, feedback, troubleshooting, etc.

4:00-4:20 pm: *Iranian Women Poets, Iranian Cinema* (Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi)

4:20-4:40 pm: *Kalīla and Dimna – AnonymClassic* (Theo Beers)

4:40-5:00 pm: *Jugaad CoLab* (A. Sean Pue)

5:00-6:00 pm: Break

6:00 pm: Dinner ([Busboys and Poets Hyattsville](#))

Workshop Day #2: Towards a Digital Islamicate Future
Friday, September 30th, 2022

7:30-8:30 am: Breakfast at *Bagels N Grinds* located at The Hotel (not a group event—please just grab breakfast at your leisure)

8:40-9:00 am: Walk with Jonathan Allen to McKeldin Library for workshop day #2

9:00-11:30 am: Debrief on eScriptorium
Time for questions, feedback, troubleshooting, etc.

11:30-11:45 am: Break

11:45-12:30 pm: Breakout session #1 (choose one)

Sessions based on case studies: DH and Teaching (Sarah Savant), research outcomes (Mathew Barber), multi-text (Jonathan Allen), sustainability/collaboration (Matthew Miller), and corpus expansion (Lorenz Nigst)

12:15-1:30 pm: Lunch (catered on McKeldin portico)

1:30am-2:30 pm: Breakout session #2 (choose a different one)
Sessions based on case studies: DH and Teaching (Sarah Savant), research outcomes (Mathew Barber), multi-text (Jonathan Allen), sustainability/collaboration (Matthew Miller), and corpus expansion (Lorenz Nigst)

2:30-3:15 pm: Breakout session leaders present synthesis
Breakout session leaders will review salient points in short 10-minute presentations and whole group have opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback, and discuss remaining issues

3:15-3:30 pm: Break

3:30-5:00 pm: Open forum for discussion
Discussion starter questions: What have you not seen or discussed in the last two days that is needed for the digital future of Islamicate Studies? Which areas discussed over the past two days are the highest priority? How can we strategically plan to build better partnerships and collaboration—how can we work together to build a better digital future for Islamicate studies?

5:00-6:00 pm: Break

6:00pm: Dinner ([Pennyroyal Station](#))