

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)
announces a Keynote Lecture as part of the workshop on
**'There and Back again': The Complicated Relationship Between
Manuscript and Print in the Islamic Tradition**

by

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**A Family Affair: Printing Families and Textual Authority
in the 20th-century Muridiyya**

Xasida, Wolof for the classical Arabic ode, or *qaṣīda*, are some of the most common forms of reading material in Senegal today. Printed on cheap paper booklets, they are commonly sold in markets and bus stations across the country. How they became so ubiquitous is directly tied to the twentieth-century trajectory of the Muridiyya and its place in the broader history of African-run printing presses in Senegal. This paper recounts the history of early efforts to put *xasida*, especially those of the Muridiyya's founding saint Shaykh Amadu Bamba, into print. Through private papers and oral histories, it tracks the efforts of the Murid leadership, especially the *khalife general* Seriñ Fallou Mbàkke (r. 1945-1968), to assert control over the printing of Bamba's *xasida*, in response to the largely unregulated dissemination of such works by some of the first Senegalese-owned printing presses. Alongside these developments, a market for handwritten copies of Bamba's *xasida* remained active, influencing the aesthetics of printed *xasida* and informing Murid attitudes towards manuscript and print. Such dynamics remain an indelible part of textual culture in Senegal today.

Thursday, 13 June 2019 at 6 pm
Room 0001, CSMC