

# Mehdi Azaiez

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR – ISLAMIC STUDIES

FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES – KU LEUVEN  
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## EDUCATION

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- Postdoc**      **Laboratoire d'Excellence, University of Paris IV Sorbonne**  
2014      Co-director of The Qur'an Seminar (The Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar Grant)
- Postdoc**      **University of Notre Dame, Indiana, U.S.A**  
2013      Co-director of The Qur'an Seminar (The Mellon Foundation Sawyer Seminar Grant)  
Advanced Textual Reading Groups: Syriac, Classical Ethiopic, Biblical Hebrew.
- Ph.D.**      **University of Aix-Marseilles, Aix-en-Provence**  
2012      Major field:    The Qur'an and Early Muslim Exegesis (Claude Gilliot)  
Minor fields:    Early Muslim Historiography (Jacqueline Chabbi)  
Early Islam and Late Antiquity (Gabriel Said Reynolds)  
Arabic Language and Arabic linguistics (Pierre Larcher)  
Doctoral Dissertation:  
*Polemics in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Counter-Discourse and Riposte*  
(High Distinction)
- M.A.**      **University of Aix-Marseilles, Aix-en-Provence**  
2008      Major:          The Qur'an and Early Muslim Exegesis (Claude Gilliot)  
Minors:          The Hebrew Bible and Biblical Hebrew (Paul Cassuto)  
Early Islamic Epigraphy (Frédéric Imbert)  
Modern Arabic Literature (Richard Jacquemond)  
Master's Thesis:  
*An Introduction to Counter-Discourse in the Qur'anic Text*  
(High Distinction)
- M.A.**      **Institute of Political Science, Aix-en-Provence**  
2003      Major:          Interculturalism and Diversity Management (Bruno Etienne)  
Minor:          Sociology and Anthropology of Religion (Raphaël Draï)  
Master's Thesis:  
*Intercultural Formations in France: History, Methodologies and Perspectives*

## PUBLICATIONS

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### BOOKS

***Le contre-discours coranique***

Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, coll. Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des islamischen Orients, 2015

***Le Coran, Nouvelles approches***

Ed. Mehdi Azaiez, Collab. Sabrina Mervin, Paris, CNRS Editions, 2013

In progress

***The Qurʾān Seminar Commentary: a Collaborative Study of 50 Qurʾānic Passages***

Co-editor and contributor with G.S. Reynolds, T. Tesei and H.M Zafer, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2017

ARTICLES

***Les contre-discours eschatologiques dans le Coran et le traité du Sanhédrin***

Eds. François Déroche, Christian Robin, Michel Zink, *Les origines du Coran. Le Coran des origines*, Paris, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2015, p. 111-128.

***Le contre-discours coranique et la construction d'une figure de l'opposant***

Ed. Rippin A. & Tottoli R., *Books and Written culture of the Islamic world. Studies to Claude Gilliot on the occasion of his 75th birthday*, Brill, 2015, p. 132-143.

***Le contre-discours coranique : approches d'un corpus***

*Le Coran, Nouvelles approches*, Ed. Mehdi Azaiez, Collab. Sabrina Mervin, Paris, National Center for Scientific Research Editions (CNRS), 2013, p. 257-290.

***Muhammad, une relation coranique***

*Religions & Histoire*, 2011, p. 48-53.

***Les thèses consacrées au Coran en France depuis les années soixante-dix. Une note bibliographique***

*Arabica*, 56, 2009, p. 107-111.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA ENTRIES

***Hypocrites, Bahārā, Kalam***

*Routledge Dictionary of Ancient Mediterranean Religions*, 2015

REVIEWS

M.M. Bravmann M.M., *The spiritual background of early Islam : studies in ancient Arab concepts by M.M. Bravmann ; with and introduction by Andrew Rippin*, Leiden ; Boston, Brill, ("Brill classics in Islam ; vol. 4"), 2009, XV+336 p. *Bulletin Critique Annales Islamologiques*, 29 (2015).

Rosalind Gwynne Ward, *Logic, Rhetoric, and Legal Reasoning in the Qurʾān, God's arguments*, New York, Routledge/Curzon, 2004, XV+251 p. *Bulletin Critique Annales Islamologiques*, 26 (2010), p. 19-20.

Michel Cuypers, *Le Festin, Une lecture de la sourate al-Mâʾida*, Paris, Lethielleux (Rhétorique sémitique ; 4), 2007, IV+453 p. *EHESS/IISMM*, online since 07/31/2009.

Yehuda D. Nevo, Judith Koren, *Crossroads to Islam. The Origins of the Arab Religion and the Arab State*, Amherst, New-York, Prometheus Books, 2003, 462 p. *Bulletin Critique des Annales Islamologiques*, 24 (2008), p. 101-103.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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Faculty of Theology, University of KU Leuven (2014-15)

i. Introduction to the Qurʾān

This course is an introduction which explore Qurʾānic structure, History, Exegesis and cultural influence

**ii. Introduction to the History of Islamic Theology**

This course deals with the origins and the early development of *ʿIlm al Kalām*, forms, concepts and content introducing to medieval and modern theological debates in muslim

**iii. Introduction to the Hadith**

This course will introduce to the hadith tradition, its origin, its criticism, its collection, its functions and the controversies about its usage and authenticity.

**iv. Islamic Ethics**

This course will be an introduction to the Islamic Ethics, its language concepts and its relation with legal reasoning.

**v. Islamic Law**

This course will discuss some fundamental aspects of the judiciary, legal reasoning and authority but also the formation and evolution of legal schools.

**vi. Christianity and Islam**

Seminar on Christianity's encounter with Islam and how various historical contexts have affected Christian understanding of Muslims and Islam.

**Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame (2012-13)**

**i. Islam and Christian Theology**

Seminar on Christianity's encounter with Islam and how various historical contexts have affected Christian understanding of Muslims and Islam.

**ii. Advanced Arabic Reading**

Qur'ānic and Classical texts reading for PhD students in Islamic Studies.

**iii. The Islamic Challenge to Christian Theology (Teaching Assistant)**

Lecture on Islam and a survey of major aspects of the Muslim faith.

**Institute for Clinical Social Workers, Marseille (2006–12)**

**i. Anthropology of Religion**

Lecture course on notions, theories, and methodologies in the anthropology of religion.

**ii. The Concept of Laïcité**

Lecture course on French secularism (History, Legal dispositions, Evolutions)

**Institute for Theology and Religions Studies, Marseille (2003–06)**

**i. How to Read the Qur'ān**

Lecture course on Qur'ān: History, Themes, Structure, Exegesis, Practices

**ii. Biblical Figures in the Qur'ān**

Lecture course of narratology and inter-textuality in the Qur'ān.

**iii. Introduction to Islam**

Lecture course on Islam and a survey of major themes in Muslim Civilisation from Pre-Islamic Arabia to Modernity.

**iv. Introduction to Monotheism**

Seminar on the textual sources and methodologies in the study of monotheism in Western Religions

**ACTIVITIES**

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2012-13      **Co-Director:** The Mellon-Saywer Grant Qur'ān Seminar  
Collaborative academic project with 28 Scholars from North America and Europe  
[www.quranseminar.nd.edu](http://www.quranseminar.nd.edu)

2012      **Founding Member:** International Qur'ānic Studies Association (Learned Society)  
الجمعية الدولية للدراسات القرآنية  
<http://iqsaweb.wordpress.com/people/>

- 2009 **Conference Co-Director:** “Les études coraniques aujourd’hui. Méthodes, Enjeux, Débats”, International Colloquium on Qur’ānic Studies, EHESS, Paris, 2009.  
<http://www.mehdi-azaiez.org/Les-etudes-coraniques-aujourd-hui>
- 2008 **Creator and Administrator:** Academic Website - “Qur’an and Early Islam”  
 1000 pages, 250 visitors per day  
<http://www.mehdi-azaiez.org>

## ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

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- 2015 **Reading the Qur’ān Today** (Inaugural Lecture, April 21)  
 Faculty of Theology, KU Leuven  
 Online : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pu2XLUfhqiY>
- 2014 **Qur’ān Seminar** (co-direction of the panel with Tommaso Tesei)  
 International Quranic Studies Association (IQSA)/SBL, San Diego
- 2014 **Qur’ānic counter-discourse and its theological implication**  
 Zentrum für Islamische Theologie (ZITH), University of Tübingen
- 2013 **Unity and Fragmentation in the Standard Text of the Qur’ān: The Prophet as First Addressee and Dialogic Argumentation**  
 The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London
- 2013 **The Eschatological Counter-Discourse in the Qur’ān**  
 The Qur’ān’s reformation of Judaism and Christianity, University of Nottingham
- 2012 **Counter-Discourse: a new approach to Polemic as a Qur’ānic genre**  
 Qur’ānic Studies Today, University of Chicago, Chicago
- 2011 **The Qur’ānic Formula: “wa-yaqūlūna . . . fa-qul”**  
 Aux Origines du Coran, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, Paris
- 2010 **Argumentation and Qur’ānic temporality**  
 World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies, Barcelona
- 2009 **Le contre-discours coranique : approches d’un corpus**  
 Les Études Coraniques Contemporaines, École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris

## SEMINARS/COURSE (Paris)

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- 2014/5 ICP/ELCOA - Course: **Histoire de la langue arabe (VII<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup>)**
- EPHE - seminar of Muriel Debié: **Les études coraniques contemporaines**
- CNRS - seminar UMR Orient-Méditerranée: **Le contre-discours coranique**
- INALCO - seminar of Viviane Comerro: **Le contre-discours coranique**

## MEDIA APPEARANCES

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- 2014 Interview for « Culture d’Islam » (French radio) by Abdelwahab Meddeb titled « Séminaire coranique 1 »  
<http://www.franceculture.fr/emission-cultures-d-islam-le-seminaire-coranique-1-2014-02-28>

## LANGUAGES

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**Advanced Classical:** Arabic (Advanced)  
**Advanced Modern:** French (Native); English (Advanced); Tunisian (Fluent)  
**Reading Knowledge:** Syriac; Biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew; Classical Ethiopic

## REFERENCES

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**Prof. Claude Gilliot**

Arabic and Islamic Studies  
Department of Research and Studies of Arabic  
and Muslim world, France  
*Claude.Gilliot@univ-provence.fr*

**Prof. Gabriel Said Reynolds**

Tisch Family Associate Professor of Islamic Studies  
and Theology  
Department of Theology, University of Notre  
Dame, USA  
*574 631 5138 // reynolds@nd.edu*

**Prof. Andrew Rippin**

Islamic History & Qur'ān Exegesis  
Department of History, University of Victoria,  
Canada  
*250 721 7382 // arippin@uwic.ca*

**Prof. Shawkat Toorawa**

Arabic Literature & Islamic Studies  
Department of Near Eastern Studies, Cornell  
University, USA  
*607.255.1330 // smtoorawa@gmail.com*