



OXFORD
COMPARATIVE
CRITICISM &
TRANSLATION

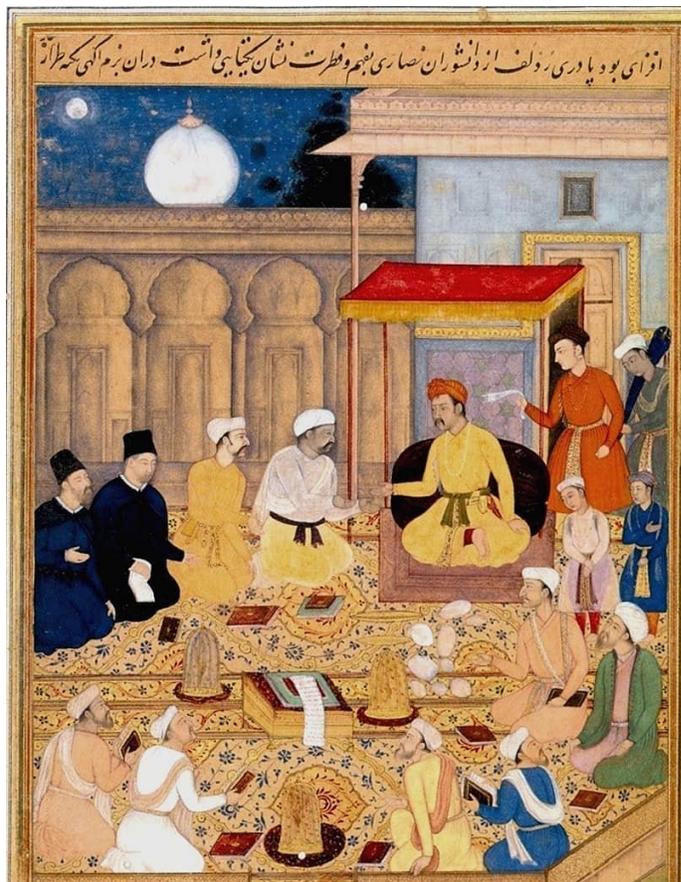


UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

Conference Program

Pre-modern comparative literary practice in the multilingual Islamic world(s)

The virtual conference is co-organized by Huda Fakhreddine (University of Pennsylvania), David Larsen (New York University), and Hany Rashwan (University of Birmingham), with special thanks to Rawad Wehbe (University of Pennsylvania). The conference is hosted by the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation Research Centre (OCCT), University of Oxford, 22-23-24 July 2021.



Mughal emperor Akbar holding a religious assembly at the Ibādat Khāna

Virtual Conference via Zoom

Registration Guidelines:

For the convenience and security of our participants and attendees we will be hosting the conference panels using passcode protected Zoom meetings. We kindly ask you all to register for each individual session prior to the respective dates. Thank you!

Day 1 (Thursday 22 July) [Registration](#)

Day 2 (Friday 23 July) [Registration](#)

Day 3 (Saturday 24 July) [Registration](#)

TIME KEY: 07:00 Pacific US = **10:00 Eastern US** = **15:00 British Summer Time** = 19:30 New Delhi

Thursday 22 July

Zoom Session [Link](#)

Passcode: 610400

10:00-10:10	Welcoming remarks by Matthew Reynolds Introducing conference organizers Introducing keynote speaker	15:00-15:10
10:10-10:40	Keynote address by Fatemeh Keshavarz	15:10-15:40
10:40-12:00	SESSION 1 (3 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: David Larsen	15:40-17:00
12:00-12:20	20-minute recess	17:00-17:20
12:20-14:00	SESSION 2 (4 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: Christopher Livanos (session 5)	17:20-19:00

Friday 23 July

Zoom Session [Link](#)

Passcode: 929001

10:00-11:20	SESSION 3 (3 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: Hany Rashwan	15:00-16:20
11:20-11:30	10-minute recess	16:20-16:30

11:30-12:50	SESSION 4 (3 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: Simon Leese (session 2)	16:30-17:50
12:50-13:00	10-minute recess	17:50-18:00
13:00-14:20	SESSION 5 (3 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: Nasim Basiri (session 4)	18:00-19:20

Saturday 24 July
Zoom Session [Link](#)
Passcode: 518595

10:00-11:20	SESSION 6 (3 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: Huda Fakhreddine	15:00-16:20
11:20-11:30	10-minute recess	16:20-16:30
11:30-12:50	SESSION 7 (3 speakers @ 20 min + 20 min Q&A) Chair: Ali Karjoo-Ravary (session 1)	16:30-17:50
12:50-13:00	Organizers' remarks Introducing closing keynote speaker	17:50-18:00
13:00-13:30	Closing keynote by Michael Cooperson	18:00-18:30
13:30-13:40	Thanks to all Concluding remarks	18:30-18:40

Thursday July 22, 2021

Opening Keynote:

"Multilingual Poetry, the Information Superhighway of the Medieval Muslim World,"

Fatemeh Keshavarz, Maryland University

For far too long literary critical studies have limited themselves to European literatures and sought to fit the rest of the world, or token examples from it, into the resulting generic structures. The result is faulty assumptions such as while Muslim communities produced excellent poetry, they did not have a critical understanding of it. Using classical Persian poetry as an example, this presentation provides a window into the multilingual medieval Muslim societies and the poetry that enriched their communities across multiple geographic expanses. In the process, it highlights the significance of poetry as a traveling web of spiritual, artistic, and intellectual ideas traversing these lands.

Session 1: Multilingual scholars and scholarly practice

* **Multilingual Commentary Literatures of the Islamicate and their Role in Early-Modern Orientalism**, Claire Gallien, Université Montpellier 3, CNRS (claire.gallien@univ-montp3.fr)

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, British orientalists collected a massive amount of manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, and Indic languages, including Sanskrit, to furnish the rapidly expanding collections of the university libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, the British Museum, and their own private libraries. The period also marks the beginning of translations directly in English of the “classical” works of these literatures coming from the East. The Orientalist story goes that by acquiring linguistic skills and with the help of native literati, orientalists were able to satisfy the appetite of a growing number of readers in Britain. Historians of orientalism and of connected history have emphasized the reliance of British and more generally European orientalists on local networks of knowledge thereby undermining the myth of unmediated transfer and transparent rendering of Eastern literary traditions in the English language and literary culture. But insufficient attention has been paid so far on the collection of manuscripts and what they tell us about precisely what were the texts that arrived in Britain and which were selected for edition, translation, and publication and why. Part of my forthcoming book titled *From Corpus to Canon* is an attempt to find answers to these questions. For the purpose of the conference, I would like to focus on a specific set of texts, namely the commentaries of the classics. These commentaries were collected in vast numbers and in the multiple languages of the Islamicate, namely Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish, and yet, because they were not translated, they have been completely ignored by the contemporary literary critique of orientalism. The presentation aims to surveying the multilingual commentary literature (Qur’ān, Islamic sciences, and poetry) of the Islamicate as collected in seventeenth and eighteenth Britain, to commenting on the features of the local (seventeenth-century

Istanbul or Aleppo, eighteenth-century Calcutta or Lucknow) and of the orientalist literary cultures that these commentaries, their productions and collections, indicate, and finally to assessing the role of commentary literatures of the Islamicate in the elaboration of orientalist knowledge, and their concurrent obliteration in the narrative of Orientalism.

*** A Brocade of Many Textures: Literary Trilingualism in 14th Century Anatolia, Iran, and Beyond,** Ali Karjoo-Ravary, Bucknell University (akr011@bucknell.edu)

What does it mean when the literate classes of a society are “at home” in at least three languages? To approach this question, I draw from a close study of the court of a scholar-turned-king in fourteenth century Anatolia, Burhan al-Din of Sivas (d. 1398). Near the end of his life and at the peak of his rule, Burhan al-Din commissioned a Persian history of his reign, composed two Arabic treatises, and authored a divan of poetry in Old Anatolian Turkish (one of the earliest collections of poetry intentionally produced by a king). Together with his courtier, ‘Aziz al-Din al-Astarabadi, who penned the Persian history, the pair implicitly and explicitly articulate how, why, and to what end they employed these three languages in the service of Burhan al-Din’s reign.

Through their works, I argue that they operated with a theory of language and performance that connected the well-trodden themes of Arabic rhetoric, particularly ‘*ijāz*’ and ‘*badī*’, to the very act of transferring meaning across linguistic contexts with the goal of creating an intermixed language. This is particularly the case in Burhan al-Din’s poetry, where the garbing of an untranslated Arabic or Persian *maḍmūn* into a “Turkish image,” his *istiqbāl* of earlier Persian poets, as well as his *talmī*’ between Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, all aim to create a new form aimed at the variegated urban and nomadic social structures of his day. Through these strategies, he wove his presence into a multilingual intertextual umma of scholars and saints, casting himself as a successor to Muhammad, the original bearer of a linguistic miracle that changed a language and united the urban and nomadic.

This model of literary trilingualism offers us a glimpse into the specific roles of each language in relation to one another and the hierarchies that are created through their intermixing. This paper will end by tracing the afterlife of his linguistic strategies in two courts that bear his influence, that of Jahanshah of the Qaraqoyunlu (d. 1467) and Isma‘il I (d. 1524) of the Safavids. Through this, I address the crystallization of a new phase in the history of these three languages that would remain in Iran, eastern Anatolia, and central Asia until the 19th century, as well as restate the need for contextual specificity in our studies of the many multilingualisms of the Islamicate past.

*** Sufi Metaphysics as Literary Theory: Şeyh Gālib’s *Beauty and Love*,** Zeynep Oktay-Uslu, Boğaziçi University (zeynep.oktay@boun.edu.tr)

Eminent Ottoman poet of the 18th century, Şeyh Gālib was the quintessential multilingual Ottoman Sufi. He was the head of the Mawlawī lodge of Galata in Istanbul and the author of works in both Turkish and Arabic. His magnum opus is an allegorical work of narrative

poetry in Turkish, the *maṭnavī* named *Ḥüsn ü 'Aşk* (Beauty and Love). Gālib was deeply influenced by the Indian style in Persian poetry and dedicated long passages in his work to explaining his poetics and criticising his predecessors. In fact, *Ḥüsn ü 'Aşk* can be read as a commentary on language, speech, and literature, in their divine and human aspects. The work narrates the love story of two characters named *Ḥüsn* and *'Aşk*. The three layers of the allegory depict the manifestation of the universe, the Sufi's mystical journey towards God, and the act of writing as expressed by Gālib's composition of *Ḥüsn ü 'Aşk*. The mystical journey of *'Aşk* to unite with his beloved *Ḥüsn* is filled with characters with various conceptual names, the most prominent of whom is *'Aşk*'s spiritual master *Suhan* (Word).

This paper aims to interpret Şeyh Gālib's *Ḥüsn ü 'Aşk* along two major axes: The first is the influence of the thought of Ibn 'Arabī and the doctrine of the Oneness of Being. The second is the influence of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, whom Gālib refers to as the Anatolian Prophet. Gālib's conceptualization of language and literature exemplifies a creative synthesis of these two spheres of influence. Rūmī is identified with *Suhan* in the text as Gālib's own spiritual master, while the *Maṭnavī*, the model for Gālib's artistic creation, is described as the essence of the Qur'an. *Suhan* is also the *barzakh*, the limit between the purely physical and purely intelligible realms, between the beloved and the lover. Gālib's multilingual mystical universe is one where each great piece of literary creation has to define its own theoretical outlook on language and literature. This outlook, which is the key to unlocking the various allegorical layers in the text, demands a dynamic and personal engagement with previous conceptualizations within the multicultural Islamic universe.

Session 2: Translinguistic adaptations of genre and form

****Ibrat for an Islāmi Pablik: The Nineteenth-Century Historical Novel in Urdu***, Maryam Fatima, University of Massachusetts Amherst (maryamfatima@umass.edu)

This paper explores the emergence of the historical novel (*tārikhi nāvil*) in Urdu at the end of the nineteenth century through the figure of Abdul Halim Sharar (1860-1926), arguably the form's pioneer in South Asia. My investigation into the specificities of this form are framed by the broader context of the exigencies of colonial modernity that Urdu litterateurs found themselves navigating, including anxieties about the declining use of Perso-Arabic traditions and languages, the place of Urdu and South Asia in a pan-Islamic ecumene, and the threat of colonial ethno-linguistic policies. Invested in fashioning an Islamic public (*Islāmi pablik*) in the subcontinent, Sharar fashioned his novels about the glories of a putative Islamic past as cautionary historical and religious lessons (*'ibrat*) for the Muslim community (*qaum*). In this paper, I look at how the *tārikhi nāvil* codified, modulated, and departed from historiographical traditions drawn from Islamic scholarship like *sīrah* and *isnād* as it navigated the pressures of adapting to Western indexing and annotational styles. As one of the textual locations of his project of creating an *Islāmi pablik*, I turn to the paratext of his novels to reveal how they functioned as primers on how to read Arabo-Islamic histories, focusing particularly on how footnotes wedged the gap between leisurely reading and complete historical and religious comprehension.

From amongst Sharar's prolific literary oeuvre, I focus on his Andalusian novels as emblematic of this emergent form. My readings of Sharar's literary oeuvre are framed by his non-literary writings, published in his magazine, *Dil Gudāz*. These evince his positionality as an interlocutor across three literary and geo-cultural worlds in Europe, the Arab Middle East, and South Asia. He claimed that his training in Arabic and Persian had allowed him to recast Persian literary style (*fārsi insha pardāzi*) into a modern English sensibility (*jadīd angrezi mazāq*). Deeply offended by the characterization of Muslims in Walter Scott's *Talisman*, Sharar sought to rectify Orientalizing representation of Muslims through his own writing. In this paper, I map the historiographical and literary influences of Sharar's writing across a triangulated space: Jurji Zaidan's historical novels (*riwāyat tārikhiya*) in Arabic, the European histories of Edward Gibbon and the romances of Walter Scott, and the writings of Shibli N'umani in Urdu.

Moving away from colonizer-colonized binaries and focusing more on south-south intellectual exchanges across South Asia and the Middle East, my paper challenges Eurocentric literary histories of modern South Asia that disproportionately favor an ascendant story of the European novel form and eclipse the role of vernacular narrative traditions across a multilingual Persianate and Arabophone sphere.

*** Rethinking the art of composition (*Inshā*) in the Arabic and Persian *Maqāmāt*: Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadhāni and al-Ḥarīrī in dialogue with Ḥamīd al-Dīn Balkhī, Alaaeldin Mahmoud, American University of the Middle East in Kuwait**
(Alaaeldin.Mahmoud@aum.edu.kw)

Since the early days of Islam, *ṣinā'at al-inshā'* ("the art of composition") gained growing prominence and prestige among writers and littérateurs of the day, especially among court scribes, who acted as (literary) writers/administrators in the consecutive Islamic empires and states. To help writers master the art/vocation of *inshā'*, eminent authors as early as Abī al-Yusr Ibrahīm ibn Muḥammad al-Shaybānī (d. 298 AH/910-11 CE) and as late as al-Qalqashandī (d. 821 AH/1418 CE) proffered treatises, monographs, and even encyclopedic works to create comprehensive toolkits, with emphasis on aesthetic and extra-aesthetic elements of composition. This paper poses the question of how the combination of both aesthetic elements (i.e. use of various *badī'* and *bayān* devices) and extra-aesthetic elements (like the quality of paper and pens, bookbinding, the ethical standards and physical appearance of writers) could qualify as an indigenous practice of premodern Arabic multimodal *inshā'*/composition.

Since the fourth century AH/tenth century CE, in practice, the two great initiators of the Arabic *maqāmāt*, Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadhāni (d. 395 AH/1007 CE) and Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516 AH/1122 CE), prescribed certain prerequisites of artful composition of the Arabic *maqāmāt*, specifically in terms of *al-taṣannu'* ("artfulness") in prose/narrative writing using a number of devices like *saj'* and other *balāghah* devices. Rethinking the Arabic *maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhāni and al-Ḥarīrī as multimodal compositions requires a holistic aesthetic approach that incorporates non- or paratextual elements such as calligraphy, illustrations, and illumination, in addition to page layout and glosses with textual strategies. The paper will examine whether the *al-taṣannu'* in the Arabic *maqāmāt* composition is exclusively textual or it infiltrates the visual, non-

or paratextual aspects of composition. Following the migration of the Arabic *maqāmāt* genre to different regions of the Islamic world, *maqāmāt* were assimilated in literary compositions by Islamicate languages like Persian and Hebrew. One significant outcome of such assimilation are the Persian *maqāmāt* of Ḥamīd al-Dīn Balkhī (d. 599 AH/1202-3 CE), known in the literature as *Maqāmāt Ḥamīdī*. Though influenced by the Arabic masters of the *maqāmāt* art, which implies that *al-taṣannuʿ* would be evident in his prose, Ḥamīd al-Dīn Balkhī composed his *maqāmāt* in a way that also endorses using *sabk*, a stylistic theory promoted by the Iranian poet Muḥammad Taqī Bahār in his *Sabkshenāsī, yā tārikh-e taṭavvor-e nasr-e Fārsī* (“*Stylistics or The History of Change in Persian Prose*”). In the light of this theory, Balkhī’s bilingualism will be examined as a literary device related to *al-taṣannuʿ* and *Sabk* as guidelines of multimodal *inshāʿ*/composition in Arabic and Persian prose. With its focus on multimodality in the art of *inshāʿ*/composition of premodern Arabic and Persian *maqāmāt*, along with *al-taṣannuʿ* and *sabk* as relevant composition devices, this paper both challenges the literature that perceives of *al-taṣannuʿ* and similar devices as signals of verbal jugglery and enriches comparative literary scholarship by rethinking the composition of premodern *maqāmāt* in the light of multimodal composition scholarship.

*** Refrains of Comparison: Bringing the Persian *radīf* into Arabic poetry in Eighteenth-century India**, Simon Leese, Utrecht University (s.leese@uu.nl)

The intertwined histories of Arabic and Persian poetics are often framed in terms of influence, borrowing, and parallel development. At the same time, some formal poetic features seem to be uniquely Persianate. One such feature is the *radīf*, a refrain that repeats at the end of each verse in addition to the main rhyme. This paper focuses on two multilingual poets in eighteenth-century India who indeed recognised that the *radīf* was outside the normal bounds of Arabic poetry but incorporated it into their Arabic poetic repertoire all the same. For these two poets, Ghulām ‘Alī “Āzād” al-Bilgrāmī (d. 1200/1786) and his younger contemporary and rival Muḥammad Bāqir “Āgāh” al-Madrāsī (d. 1220/1806), how to define and circumscribe the *radīf* was one point of contention in a wider dispute about multilingual poetics. The back and forth between the two figures deals with broad questions of how to do multilingualism properly as well as a range of minutiae regarding technical matters of rhyme and metre.

Āzād and Āgāh’s discussion of *radīf*, as well as how they actually used it in their Arabic poetry, constitutes a striking example of multilingual traffic the “wrong” way (i.e. from Persian to Arabic). But it also draws attention to their own frames of comparison as multilingual connoisseurs. This paper uses their dispute over *radīf* to examine how they interpreted multilingual poetics by invoking the authority of the relational terms ‘*Arab*, ‘*Ajam*, and ‘*Hind*. These terms not only signify Arabic, Persian, and the languages of India respectively, but past peoples and places associated with those languages. By using these terms to describe multilingual poetics, Āzād and Āgāh made comparisons that centred not on themselves, but on distant and authoritative poetic pasts that were – both grammatically and symbolically – third persons. At the same time, the concern of these Indian poets with “what the Persians do” and “what the Arabs do” is what made their own experiments with the *radīf* in Arabic potentially meaningful in a multilingual culture.

*** Contrasting Masculine and Feminine Poetic Voices in Wine Poetry: Cases from Arabic and Ottoman Poetry**, Orhan Elmaz, University of Saint Andrews (oe2@st-andrews.ac.uk)

Contemplating wine poetry in the Arabic and Ottoman context, one will acknowledge that they seem worlds apart, especially in the case of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, where wine drinking is ever so often found in the context of boasting (*fakhr*) and praising others (*madh*). However, we would not be doing justice to wine in Arabic poetry if we were to restrict its use at its face value meaning, even when strictly focusing on pre-Islamic poetry alone. The description of consuming wine and intoxication beyond excess at various times of the day may ring hollow, however, wine is used in its many different aspects in poetry, which holds true already for the larger body of Arabic poetry.

While Imru' al-Qays (d.544) is describing the chirping of birds in the morning as if drunk on spiced wine and Ṭarafa b. 'Abd's (543-569) expounds on his sheer love of drinking wine and his fear that once he dies all pleasure will come to an end, Fuḏūlī (1483-1556) questions the need for intoxication after all since his heart is already spinning for his beloved. In one of his poems, Bâḳî (1526-1600), the Sultan of Ottoman poets, has documented how Suleiman the Magnificent cut down on wine drinking by burning down wine laden ships (*keṣṭî-i ṣahbâ*) in the Bosphorus, and in another poem, he seems to satirise common metaphors and motifs of love and wine poetry altogether. Still, one of the most beloved images in Ottoman court poetry is that of drinking wine with one's beloved, preferably in a garden, as exemplified in a poem by one of the earliest Turkish poetesses, Mihrî Hatun (1460-1506/1512), that has strong parallels with a short poem by al-A'shâ (570-627). A comparative analysis of a selection of pre-Classical Arabic and Ottoman poetry against the variables of language and culture, time and gender will demonstrate the multifaceted but almost conventionalized use of wine in poetry.

Friday July 23

Session 3: Translation and non-translation in the Islamic world

*** Arabic Texts as Ottoman Literary Phenomena: The multilingual lives of *Sarḥ al- 'uyūn* (Pasturing at the Wellsprings of Knowledge)**, Peter Webb, Leiden University (p.a.webb@hum.leidenuniv.nl)

Ibn Zaydūn's *al-Risalah al-Hazaliyyah* (the Witty Letter) had a lengthy and most itinerant afterlife. Composed in fifth/eleventh-century Andalusia, its text travelled to the East, and in eighth/fourteenth-century Syria, the Sultan of Hama asked the Egyptian litterateur Ibn Nubātah for a detailed commentary. The resultant work, *Sarḥ al- 'uyūn*, (Pasturing at the Wellsprings of Knowledge), garnered even greater fame than the *Letter*, as the proliferation of manuscripts reveals. Over 100 are extant: some brought Ibn Zaydūn's *Letter* back to the West into libraries in Mauritania and Mali, others struck further East into India, but the majority clustered in the North, specifically Istanbul where some 20 copies remain (and another 15 were purchased there by Europeans).

In terms of chronology, *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn*’s manuscripts indicate that the book’s heyday only truly began some two centuries after its author’s death. The overwhelming majority of manuscripts were copied between the tenth/sixteenth and twelfth/eighteenth centuries, and Ottoman-era interest also generated several manuscript translations into Turkish. *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn*’s first Middle-Eastern printing was an Ottoman translation in 1842.

The noticeable concentration of manuscripts in Ottoman Istanbul between c. 1550-1800 suggests that *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn*, though originally an Arabic text from Mamluk-held Hama, is equally (or even more so) an Ottoman literary phenomenon. Both in the original Arabic and in translation, the book enjoyed a copying energy seldom seen for non-religious, non-devotional texts, and this paper will explore the manifestations of Ottoman interest in *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn*.

Starting from the content of *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn*, I will examine how the text’s summaries of pre-Islamic (mostly Arabian) historical figures originally mentioned in Ibn Zaydūn’s *Letter* were particularly valued by Ottoman-era readership as accessible instruction on the essential ‘classics’ of Arabic culture, absorbed by the Ottomans as a means of expressing authentic Muslim belonging beyond the confines of faith and Arab ethnicity. The reception of the text will be further outlined via examination of Ottoman ownership notes on the manuscripts and features of the first Ottoman translation. By investigating the Ottoman-era consumption of *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn*, we can uncover new layers of the processes which kept the dramatis personae of ancient *Arabica* in memory over the centuries after Ibn Zaydūn, and explore the Ottoman’s reproduction of the Arabic ‘classics’ during the period of Ottoman hegemony over most Arabophone lands.

*** Islam in the vernacular: The world(s) of Arabi Malayalam, and multilingual imaginaries in Kerala, South India**, Muneer Aram Kuzhiyan, Aligarh Muslim University, India
(akmuneer@gmail.com)

This paper examines how the hybrid dialect of Arabi Malayalam and its multilingual, polyphonic imaginaries and literary habitus helped forge a vernacular Islamicate culture in the South Indian state of Kerala from the early 17th century onwards. Arabi Malayalam, a variety of Malayalam written in a modified and expanded Arabic script with multilingual lexis (Malayalam, Arabic, Tamil, Persian/Urdu, Sanskrit, etc.), has invariably existed in the popular imaginations of the Mappila Muslims of Kerala as a language with a longstanding history going back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad or, farther back, to the beginnings of Arab contact with littorals of the Indian Ocean, including Malabar. However, the earliest extant work in Arabi Malayalam belongs to the early 17th century (1607). This is called *Muhyiddin Mala* by Qadi Muhammad (d. 1616), a song-poem extolling the virtues of the renowned twelfth century Sufi master Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani (d. 1166). Two things, for my purposes in this paper, are remarkable about *Muhyiddin Mala* (and about Arabi Malayalam in general): its multilinguality and its translocal, transoceanic connections to a larger world astride the Indian Ocean.

The subsequent efflorescence of literary production in Arabi Malayalam in a wide variety of genres, including translations from Arabic and Persian, especially from the mid-eighteenth century on, helped “translate” Islam across Malabar—thereby “vernacularizing” Islam for the local Mappila population (cf. Ricci 2011). As I argue in

this paper, the multilinguality of “local” Arabi Malayalam imbues it with inherent comparative value and invites us to think about the language not in isolation but in relation to, and against, other languages and registers and geographies that surround it (cf. Orsini 2015). This vernacular literary culture offers the work of comparison “a horizon of possibility” in that it helps the field of comparison to reinvent (and recalibrate) itself beyond the inveterate core-periphery dyad by trying to understand literary cultures in terms of “locality” rather than the cosmopolitan or by taking *both* “local” and “cosmopolitan” into equal account (cf. Shankar 2012). In other words, comparative literary practice will benefit immensely from paying attention to the “vernacular sensibilities” that undergird multilingual traditions such as Arabi Malayalam even as it (i.e. comparative literary practice) aspires to a global, transnational paradigm for literary (and cultural) study.

*** Translation as a Poetic Point of Departure: Persianizing the *Rāmāyaṇa* in Early 17th-Century India**, Ayelet Kotler, University of Chicago (ayeletkotler@uchicago.edu)

Prevalent Western notions of translation have taught us that faithfulness to the source text should be the end goal of every translating process, and hence, that taking poetic licenses in the process of translation should be avoided. That is why premodern Persian poetic retellings of Sanskrit literature have long been seen by Western scholars as free, inaccurate translations that do injustice to the source texts. Some scholars have even discussed these works not as translations per se but rather as “Persianizations” – free translations of which the content is loosely adapted into Persian literary culture.

This paper moves away from this approach and posits that the premodern South Asian poets who translated from Sanskrit into Persian should not be considered failures in terms of adhering to these principles of faithfulness, but rather that their merits and faults must be appreciated in their own terms. The notion of “Persianization” is thus reclaimed here not as a derogatory, but to designate a complex process of literary inter-lingual transposition that involved various literary practices, translation being one of them. In this paper I argue that in 16th- and 17th-centuries India the process of translation was, to these Persian poets, a point of departure for an elaborate and creative process that would eventually lead to a fully Persianized text. The Persianization of the source texts was not a compromise meant to cover for their incapability or partial familiarity with the source language, but rather the goal. This approach to poetic translation allowed these poets to demonstrate their poetic skills and originality as well as to pour new content into their poems and thus to cleverly combine various cultural discourses on poetry. The outcome was fresh poetic expression rooted in practices of translation.

Closely reading several episodes from *Maṣnavī-i Rām u Sītā*, an early 17th-century versified Persian translation of the Sanskrit epic *Rāmāyaṇa*, by the poet Masīḥ, this paper aims to unpack his process of poetic translation and to explore the alleged tension between faithfulness and creative poetic expression. Masīḥ’s poem, further examined against other retellings of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in the broader context of premodern Persian translations from Sanskrit, provides an illuminating case study for us to better evaluate what “Persianization” entailed in the Mughal literary milieu, and determine the place of translation within that process.

Session 4: Minorities, shibboleths, and polyglossia

*** Rethinking Queering in the Pre-Modern Persian Poetry: A dialogue between Rūmī and Ḥāfez-e Shīrāzī**, Nasim Basiri, Women, Oregon State University (nasimbasiri@gmail.com)

Third world history, the MENA history in general, pre-modern and modern Iranian history, in particular, has left a little room for women and LGBTQ people in their historical accounts. These identities had also been historically marginalized, excluded, and underrepresented in academic intellectual disciplines such as literature, sociology, and religious studies, to name a few. Resultantly, the history of Persian LGBTQ people has remained orphaned. Recent literary research on pre-modern Persian poetry demonstrates that from the 9th century onwards, which is known as “the dawn of Persian poetry”¹ to the twentieth century, homosexuality has not been overlooked in Persian poetry but also homoeroticism brought into being “almost the only amatory subject of Persian ghazals”.² In recent decades, queer identities in pre-modern Persian poetry have been examined and identified, but highlighting issues around sexuality and gender has been rarely done by scholars of humanities, particularly in Persian poetry.

Through the re-examination and re-reading of two pre-modern Persian poets’ works, Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī (13th century) and Khwāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfez-e Shīrāzī (14th century), as a way of re-examining, deconstructing, and historicizing the historical literary figures with diverse identities, this research intends to save the pre-modern Iranian queer poetry from marginalization through synthesizing pre-modern Persian poetry to comparative literature. Equipped by queer theories, this research paper looks at the homoerotic representations in Ḥāfez and Rūmī in order to explore the world/worlds of non-normative poets and introduces new possibilities of reading queerness in the field of literature. This paper also intends to dismantle and challenge the eurocentric understanding of poetry which traditionally has celebrated only white, cisgender, male, and western poetry.

*** Echoes of Arabic Linguistic Theory, Practice and Muslim Doctrine in Jewish Writings of the Medieval Islamicate World**, Talya Fishman, University of Pennsylvania (tfishman@sas.upenn.edu)

Through an examination of writings by Rabbanite and Qaraite authors in the Islamicate world of the ninth through eleventh centuries, this paper will spotlight three developments in medieval Jewish culture shaped, respectively, by Arabic lexicography, the Muslim doctrine of the Quran’s inimitability, and Arabic theories of literary production. Exploration of these textual moments will offer opportunity to ruminate on elite Jews’ relative willingness or reluctance to acknowledge the impact of the majority society on the ways that they conceived of, and shaped, their own culture.

¹ EIr, “HOMOSEXUALITY iii. IN PERSIAN LITERATURE,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, XII/4, pp. 445-448 and XII/5, pp. 449-454, available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/homosexuality-iii> (accessed on 30 December 2012).

² Ibid.

frowned upon and discouraged by internal and external stakeholders, Kurdish poetry gained more recognition due to its macaronic verses, a form of mixed language composition which provided poets opportunity to compose poems in their mother tongue and normalize Kurdish verses in juxtaposition to their neighboring languages.

In the view of Eurocentric critics, macaronic verses cannot be imagined or justified in any literary body other than as a form of comic or humorous activity. According to *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, “the intention in macaronic is nearly always comical and/or nonsensical.”⁴ In a similar vein, Šime Demo concludes in his article, “Towards A Unified Definition of Macaronics,” that the macaronic verse is structured around humorous, burlesque and satirical content.⁵ However, my reading of three macaronic poetry collections composed by Ahmad-ī Khānī (1651-1707), Nālī (1797-1877) and Mahwī (1830-1909) challenges these views by broadening the definition of macaronic to encompass serious topics addressed by the poets, such as breaking taboos around the Kurdish language, embracing multiculturalism and co-existence, and gaining sophisticated and global readership via the use of literary devices and religious concepts that do not exist in the Kurdish language. This paper explores the degree to which Kurdish macaronic poetry sheds light on the history of multilingualism and its context in Kurdish region, and concludes that Kurdish macaronic verses may represent the initial step toward the emergence of independent Kurdish poetry.

Friday July 23, 2021 (continued)

Session 5: Catachresis and Creative Misreadings

***Reading Christian Heresy into the Qur’ān in the Latin Fathers, The Medieval Translators, and the Modern Academy**, Christopher Livanos, University of Wisconsin in Madison (clivanos@wisc.edu)

The contemporary trend of seeking Christian influence in the Qur’ān originates in Christian heresiological methods that predate Islam. The Western academy’s ongoing failure to reckon adequately with its origin as an instrument of religious polemic continues to hinder understanding of the Qur’ān. Western Qur’ānic scholarship from the earliest days has viewed the Qur’ān as a text that competes with, “engages” with, and to some extent distorts the Bible. This paper applies Harold Bloom’s notion of “the anxiety of influence” not only to Bloom’s own reading of the Qur’ān but to the majority of Western Qur’ānic scholarship. Bloom’s notion of the “strong misreading” is problematic at best as an approach to Qur’ānic scholarship, but Bloom’s theory is useful because the Gnostic controversy that informs his methods likewise laid the groundwork for all subsequent Western engagement with other religions.

The notion of the Qur’ān as a misreading of the Bible predates Bloom by centuries, originating in controversies surrounding the Gnostic writers who preoccupied both Bloom

⁴ J. A. Cuddon, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, (London: Penguin Books 1998), 485.

⁵ Šime Demo, “Towards A Unified Definition of Macaronics.” *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, vol. 63, 2014, pp. 83–106., www.jstor.org/stable/24868899. Accessed 15 Nov. 2020. P. 104.

and the Christian heresiologists tasked with responding to Islam. Peter the Venerable, who commissioned Robert of Ketton to produce the first Latin translation of the Qur'ān, upheld Saint Augustine of Hippo as the model for all Christian apologetics. Unlike the Qur'ān, however, the Gnostic and Manichaean writers refuted by Augustine all explicitly quote the Christian Bible. By failing or refusing to see the Qur'ān's uniqueness, Peter the Venerable set in motion an exegetical machine that continues into our time to search in the Qur'ān for misappropriated Biblical sources. The "Syriac turn" in Qur'ānic scholarship continues the notion of the Qur'ān as dependent on Christian sources. The Bible-centered approach to the Qur'ān has been overemphasized and too often applied in a way that fails to do justice to the originality of the Quran. Whatever the validity of Bloom's projection of the "anxiety of influence" onto all of literature, Bloom did perhaps have a compelling reading of the Gnostic scriptures that inspired his theory. However, Western Qur'ānic studies has long gone astray in assuming that the level of Biblical engagement found in Gnostic texts is likewise present in the Qur'ān. In order to recognize Islam on its own terms, the West must adopt new approaches to the literary and religious significance of the Qur'ān.

***Loanwords from Within: Debating *ta'rib* in the Multilingual Ottoman Environment,**
Colinda Lindermann, Freie Universität Berlin (colinda.lindermann@fu-berlin.de)

Long before European linguists started contemplating processes of language change and the incorporation of foreign words into a language, Arabophone scholarship was doing just that: discussing and drawing the boundaries of language through the concept of *ta'rib* ("Arabicisation"). Present in Arabic linguistics from al-Khalīl (d. c. 170/786) onward, the concept of *ta'rib* was discussed not just to solve the apparent contradiction of the occurrence of loanwords in the Qur'ān and its self-definition as "an Arabic Qur'ān" (e.g., Q 12:2); it was redefined, qualified, expanded, and constantly engaged with—even more so after the appearance of the first monograph devoted to loanwords in Arabic, al-Jawālīqī's (d. 540/1144) *al-Mu'arrab min al-kalām al-a'jamī 'alā ḥurūf al-mu'jam*.

This paper will discuss the application of Arabic loanword theory in the multilingual Islamic world, specifically in the tenth/sixteenth and eleventh/seventeenth-century Ottoman empire, where the interaction of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish was a fact of life and an object of debate and polemic. The category of *ta'rib*, while strictly defined through its tools and terminology (*taṣarruf*, *taghyīr*, *ilhāq*, *ibdāl*, etc.), started spilling over into other grammatical categories: by designating specific usage as *ta'rib al-'amma* ("Arabicisation by the commoners"), language scholars connected *ta'rib* with *tawlīd* ("creation of neologisms"), *laḥn al-'amma* ("speech errors of the commoners"), and *galaṭ-ı meṣhūr* (the Ottoman concept of "widespread error"). Scholars who were proficient in all three languages of the Ottoman Empire, regardless of their provenance, considered themselves experts on the topic and viewed expertise on the topic as a matter of prestige. The debate can be traced from al-Jawālīqī to al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), Kemalpaşazāde (d. 940/1534), al-Munshī (d. 1001/1592), and al-Khafājī (d. 1069/1659), among others. Whereas the theoretical discussion remained based largely on a fixed stock of examples going back to Sībawayhi (d. 180/796), the practical application was expanded and subsumed under the concept of *dakhīl*, words "entering" the language, from the outside as well as from within. This development points to a strong engagement with living language,

more descriptive and analytical than has hitherto been acknowledged. It also shows the socio-cultural relevance of language scholarship in the Ottoman period.

*** Debating *Belagat*: The Poetics of (Af)iliative Translation in late Ottoman Literary Modernity**, Mehtap Ozdemir, University of Massachusetts Amherst (mozdemir@umass.edu)

The conventional narrative of the nineteenth century Ottoman modernization tells a familiar story of non-European mimicry of European imperial powers in many terms: just as European political repertoires were adopted, Eurocentric genres and styles were also transplanted (although not always successfully) into Ottoman Turkish. The emergence of national literature is also based on this translational relationship between Ottoman Turkish and French that perpetuates the narrative of rupture in setting aside the pre-modern from the modern. One such case concerns the subject of *belagat* (poetics) which became the focus of a series of polemical debates in 1880s. The reason for these disputes was the publication of Rezaizade Ekrem's theoretical textbook *Talim-i Edebiyat* (Teaching of Literature, 1882), in which Ekrem emphasized the need for an autonomous Ottoman literature to be established on the basis of "national" poetics. The textbook received immediate backlash from classically trained scholars such as Hacı İbrahim Efendi who criticized its French-oriented theorization and asserted the indispensability of Arabic *belagat* for a viable Ottoman future. Reviving the discussions that transpired in previous decades on linguistic simplification and anti-ghazal stance, this new line of debates is interpreted to deepen the divide between reformists and traditionalists.

Reading these debates with the question of literary knowledge in mind, this paper foregrounds the factor of translation as a precarious wager on the autonomous standing of Ottoman Turkish as a literary language. For it was not only French poetics, but also Arabic *belagat* books that were translated in the nineteenth century. Understanding translation as a temporal act of (af)iliation, the paper then traces two different axes of inquiry: the legacy of *belagat* tradition which persisted not only as a set of poetic norms, but also as an art of self-expression and argumentation and the institutional pressure of modern aesthetic that tried to secure itself in a language of morality to distinguish the learned from the ignorant. At stake for many involved in these debates was to define the contours of literary knowledge and assert their learnedness in argumentation. Eventually what was witnessed was a polyphonic process of judgment on the conditions of the possibility of an autonomous Ottoman literature and the reigning norm was to carry out a properly literary debate. To that end, the paper suggests that even though the overdetermining moral language of modernity foreclosed the perimeter of literary theorization to Hacı İbrahim Efendi's model of learnedness by picturing him as an aging blind man and recognizing Ekrem as a master, the moment of theorization was echoing the language of the presumed past that recalls the bond between *edeb* and *belagat* in the constitution of literary subjectivity.

Saturday July 24, 2021

Session 6: Multilingual lexicology and exegesis

***Mapping ibn ‘Arabī’s Teachings in Premodern Persian Sufi World: ‘Abdul Razzāq Kāshānī’s Lexicons and Their Literary Importance in Formalizing Sufi Terminology,** Leila Chamankhah, University of California, San Diego (l.chamankhah@gmail.com)

The renowned Sufi and commentator, ‘Abdul Razzāq Kāshānī (d. 735 H/ 1335?) played a major role in disseminating the teachings of Ibn ‘Arabī (d. 638 H/1240) in the Ilkhanid (654 H/1256 – 750/1353) Iran. Deploying all the means at hand, and by teaching and training students such as Sharaf al-Dīn Dāwūd Qaysarī (d. 751 H/1350), writing tirelessly on the main elements of *Akbarīan* mysticism, such as *waḥdat al-wujūd*, *wilāya*, and *khatm al-wilāya*, and commenting on *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (the Bezels of Wisdom), Kāshānī proved to be a prolific writer and a true heir to the legacy of his late master. However, the account of his contribution to this tradition, which was quite new in Iranian milieu at that time, will not be complete if we neglect to mention his initiative in systematizing and theorizing Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings through his complex and detailed lexicons, including *Al-Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, *Rashḥ al-Zulāl* and *Laṭā’if al-I’lām*. By lexiconization the challenging language of Ibn ‘Arabī, Kāshānī facilitated a gain in popularity of the former’s teachings, as well as the widespread usage of those teachings among Sufi circles and in the Ilkhanid court. After the completion of his commentaries (*shurūḥ*) on *Manāzil ul-Sāirīn* (the Stations of the Travelers) and *Fuṣūṣ*, as well as *Ta’wīlāt al-Qur’ān Ḥakīm* (The Interpretation of the Qur’ān), Kāshānī wrote the first of his trio, i.e., his *Lexicon of the Sufi Technical Terms*. Following *Al-Iṣṭilāḥāt* came *Rashḥ al-Zulāl* (lit. to Distill the Clear) and *Laṭā’if al-I’lām* (the Intricacies of Knowledge) in order to clarify the complexities of the philosophical language of Ibn ‘Arabī on one hand, and to defend the Sufi path from any exoteric offense on the other.

In this paper, I will first locate Kāshānī’s work in the line of immediate successors of Ibn ‘Arabī and will discuss the importance of his writings in understanding the different aspects of theoretical mysticism. Second, by analyzing the three abovementioned lexicons, I will emphasize the significance of his contribution to this tradition in its relation to the teachings of *al-Shaykh al-Akbar* on one hand and to the sacred Islamic sources (mainly the Qur’ān), on the other.

My study of Kāshānī’s lexicons will discuss the way Ibn ‘Arabī’s terminology has been formulated by an Iranian Sufi and how it impacted the Sufi discourses of premodern era. It also shows the strength and boldness of premodern Sufi literature as opposed to the Eurocentric assumptions and methodologies that claim universality. It challenges any quest for generalization that prevents cultures to speak for themselves by using their own terms and conceptual devices.

*** Religion and Literature in Dialogue: Nāsir-i Khusraw’s Reception of the Quran and Hadith,** Salour Evaz Malayeri, University of St Andrews (salour.e.malayeri@gmail.com)

In the modern and Eurocentric literary criticism, the medieval literature has been often understood under the domination of religion, with no independent voice or politics of its own. Religion, on the other hand, is often regarded as a set of dogmas or statements with no cultural power or aesthetic dimension. However, recent studies on medieval culture

demonstrate that religion and literature were in a diverse and multi-dimensional relationship with each other. In the Islamic context, the case of Persian classical literature represents such a dynamic dialogical relationship between the religious discourse and literary creativity. For the founders of Persian poetry, regardless of their religious attachments, the Quran and Hadith were not only the source of knowledge and wisdom but the ideal model for literary creativity, especially in terms of style, structure, rhetoric, narrative strategies and poetic imageries. On the other hand, Persian writers were nourished from different cultural sources, especially the ancient Persian culture, the Indian literature, and the Greek philosophy. These cultural trends enabled Persian poets to form a creative dialogue between the Quranic and non-Quranic texts while establishing their own worldview.

This paper investigates the role of literature in boosting the cultural productivity and diversity of religious discourse by examining the influence of different aspects of the Quran and Hadith on the *Divan* of Nāsir-i Khusraw (Ca. 1004-1076). Nāsir-i Khusraw was the prominent Ismaili thinker and poet from Khorasan. His religious attachment to the Ismailism, his rejection of the common sense of his time, along with his bold political protest against the Turkic rulers of Khorasan enabled him to see the Quran and Hadith as a new source of writing poetry as well as producing propaganda literature for the Ismaili political establishment in Cairo. I will examine Nāsir-i Khusraw's reception of the Quran and Hadith in three levels: One is his views towards poetry and *hekmat* (wisdom), two is the philosophical concepts in his qasidas, including *jahān* (the material world), *zamān* (time), *nafs* (soul) and *'aql* (intellect), and three is the rhetorical strategies, especially analogy and simile. I will use a comparative method of discourse analysis, based on Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's model, to investigate these three levels of influence. This analysis will compare Nāsir-i Khusraw's poetry with the Quranic text and hadith in two stages: One is comparing the rhetorical strategies, and two is comparing philosophical statements. The chief goal of this paper is to explain how Nāsir-i Khusraw appropriated the Quranic literature and Hadith to legitimise and justify his own alternative discourse. Through using the premises of discourse analysis method, this paper manifests how discursive antagonisms during the medieval period turned the Quran and Hadith into a vibrant and productive discursive realm.

*** Prophethood in Poetic Wisdom: Beginnings, *Adab* and Muhammad Iqbal,**

Abdul Manan Bhat, University of Pennsylvania (bhatab@sas.upenn.edu)

How have Islamicate poets explained the impetus to poetic speech? More broadly, why does the poetic voice emerge, or, as Edward Said asked, "what must one do in order to begin" something literary? The noted Urdu and Persian poet Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938) has been mostly studied as a poet-philosopher, a statesman, an anti-imperialist, but little attention has been paid to theoretical possibilities in his Urdu and Persian poetry, particularly on the question of the poet's impetus to speak. In this paper, I will explore Iqbal's metapoetic notion of *payām* as an entry point into the broader theoretical conversations about poetic speech and wisdom.

This paper will focus on Muhammad Iqbal's polyvalent idea of '*payām*' (tentative translation: message) and its relationship to prophethood. I argue that Iqbal's idea of *payām* is at once the prophetic message (or miracle) as well as the stated *raison d'être* of poetry. For

Iqbal, *payām* is what prophets brought for humanity; but, *payām* is also what is ontologically prior to a poet-self, which is to say, the yearning to deliver a message structures the message itself. The poet, then, is a mediator, not a simple consumer, of ethical messages, and poems mediated tools of shaping emotional and material conduct. Iqbal asserts the poet as a didactic figure, a wise messenger, who both mediates and embodies *payām*. The important sources of Iqbal's *payām* are prophetic figures (and their stories), Moses and Muhammad in particular. How does Iqbal establish these two prophets as sources of *payām* and what does he imagine their *payām* to be?

The stakes of exploring the notion of *payām* are two-fold. One, it pushes against a heavily literary-historical approach to literary theory because Iqbal, a poet on the cusp of 'modernity,' mediates prophetic stories, treats pre-modern Persian poets as his contemporaries, invokes the hadith and the Quran to explain finer points about literary criticism, all in order to argue that the "message" creates poets, not vice versa. Two, *payām* is directly linked to prophetic figures and a broader religious consciousness, inviting us to go beyond "the-use-of religious-themes-in-poetry framework" to establish deep theoretical connections between religion and poetry.

Saturday July 24, 2021 (continued)

Session 7: Textual practices, media, and reception

* **Arabic Prayer, or Persian or both? Abū Ḥanīfa's view and its Legal Reception**, Suheil Laher, Hartford Seminary (slaher@hartsem.edu)

The Arabic Qur'ān is central to Islam. The translation of the Qur'ān is said to have started in the dawn of Islam with Salman (d. 33H / 654CE), an ethnic Persian who had moved to Arabia. As Islam spread beyond Arabia, there was increased attention by multilingual Muslim scholars to translation of the holy book, arguably culminating in Rūmi's (d. 672H / 1273CE) *Maṣnawī*, which he declared to be "the Persian Qur'ān." Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150H / 767CE), eponym of the Ḥanafī Islamic legal school, differed from most legal scholars (*fuqahā'*) by allowing recitation of the Qur'ān in Persian translation in the ritual prayer (*ṣalah*). Subsequently, there occurred theoretical disputes among theologians about whether the term "Qur'ān" refers to the meaning of the text, or both the meaning and the wording, the latter being the majority view. Some later Hanafī sources report that Abu Hanifa later recanted this view. Abū-Zahra and Zadeh have inferred that the permissive view is consistent with Abū Ḥanīfa's milieu, in that the increasing numbers of non-Arab Muslims might have needed temporary accommodations for their performance of the prayers. Zadeh has further opined that the later reports about Abu Hanifa having recanted his view reflect Hanafī discomfort with the said view, amidst the triumph of the notion that the concept of scripture encompasses both form and meaning. I argue that both these explanations are unsatisfactory.

Instead, I argue that the various relevant genres (law, legal theory, legal polemics and history) need to be differentiated, and engaged separately in the context of the functional role of each genre. By so doing, I conclude that Abu Hanifa's view is an example of an important phenomenon in Islamic law: that of a gap between hypotheticals (thought experiments) and actual practice. There is no conclusive evidence that recitation of the

Quran in Persian was a normative practice that was endorsed by Hanafi jurists. Hence, most Muslims, even in non-Arab lands, were multilingual, albeit in a very limited sense. I also examine a related issue, that of supplicating in Persian within the *ṣalah*, and show how the permissibility of this was also sidelined in the Ḥanafī school, apparently due to intellectual vestiges of the Pro-Persian *shu'ūbiyya* movement which had met its demise centuries earlier. My paper thus explores the literary interactions between Arabic and Persian prayers, and provides an example of creative readership between these two cultures.

* **Sheikh Nuruddin's *Koshur* Quran: Trans-linguistic Poetry of a Fourteenth-Century Kashmiri Saint**, Fayaz A. Dar (fayaz.hist@gmail.com) and Zubair Khalid, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (khalidzubair31@gmail.com)

This paper will attempt to analyse aspects of multilingual practices- more specifically the use of Quranic ideas and themes- in the mystical poetry of a fourteenth century Kashmiri saint Sheikh Nuruddin (1378-1440 C.E.) in Kashmiri language. Widely considered one of the most significant figures in the religious and literary history of pre-modern Kashmir and labelled as the 'greatest sage of his time' by the fifteenth century Sanskrit chronicler of Kashmir Jonaraja, Nuruddin has been credited as the founder of an indigenous mystical order locally known as the *Rishi* order. Much before the time of Nuruddin's birth in the latter half of the fourteenth century, a significant Muslim presence on the frontiers of Kashmir was already established. Thus, Kashmir already had personalities such as Bulbul Shah, the earliest Muslim missionary who is said to have travelled from Turkistan and Syed Ali Hamadani, often labelled as *bani-i Islam*, 'the founder of Islam in Kashmir'. However what set Nuruddin apart from these famous figures was the fact that he was born and raised in Kashmir and his poetic verses were said in Kashmiri language itself.

Along with his contemporary female mystic Lal Ded, the verses of Nuruddin form the earliest expositions of Kashmiri language across genres. In his *Shrukhs* composed in Kashmiri language, Nuruddin incorporated Quranic themes- both pre-Islamic and Islamic- as well as direct references to Prophet Muhammad's history in Arabia. Besides references to Quranic stories of historical figures such as Noah, Ibrahim, Pharaoh and Shaddad, Nuruddin's verses also mentioned contemporaries of Prophet Muhammad, his uncle Abu Talib and Abu Jahl. More interestingly, Nuruddin directly incorporated Quranic verses or parts thereof in Arabic language itself into a distinctly Kashmiri genre of *Shruks*, a genre otherwise dominated by the Sanskritic idiom. No wonder his poetry has been described as *Koshur* Quran, i.e. Quran in Kashmiri language. In addition, Nuruddin referred to some prominent Islamicate personalities such as the ninth century Persian mystic Mansur Hallaj and the thirteenth century Persian poet Jallaluddin Rumi. Put together, this formed a significant trans- linguistic and by extension a cross-cultural intervention which significantly impacted the manner in which Kashmiri language came to develop in the pre-modern times.

* **Shaping the Language of Love: The Afterlife of Nizāmi's *Khusrau u Shīrīn* in Persianate India**, Aqsa Ijaz, McGill University (aqsa.ijaz@mcgill.ca)

Nizami Ganjavi's *Khusrau u Shīrīn* is one of the most widely circulated romances in the Persianate world and yet its rich reception in premodern India has been surprisingly ignored by modern scholars. The many translations and retellings of this romance circulated in countless oral and written versions throughout the premodern period and have survived to present day in hundreds of manuscripts, each one differing considerably from the others in language, style and content. In addition to the textual translations available to us in its countless manuscripts in various Indian vernaculars, Nizāmī's *Khusrau u Shīrīn* is most visibly translated in the material cultures of modern-day Punjab and Baluchistan where Nizāmī's two major characters, Shīrīn and Farhād are memorialized in two highly frequented shrines. Why did this particular romance remain in such wide circulation for the next 800 years in South Asia, Central Asia, Iran, Turkey and other parts of the Islamic world after Nizāmī's original composition? What aspects of this romance attracted the North Indian poets who continued to translate and rewrite it throughout the premodern period? And more importantly, what makes Nizāmī's story still relevant for it to exist in the most revered spaces of material culture in the Indian subcontinent?

In this paper, I compare three North Indian versions of *Khusrau u Shīrīn* written in Persian, Urdu and Punjabi with the vibrant expressions of this romance in the material culture and argue that within the larger tradition of translation and retelling, the genre of romance played a vital role in forging what Sheldon Pollock calls, "the distinct vernacular identities" of the Persianate societies. By drawing on the vastly intertextual tradition of these three languages, I employ the Latin concepts of *translatio studii* and *imitatio* in dialogue with various elements of the *balāghah* tradition and demonstrate that the poetics of love and desire in various versions of *Khusrau u Shīrīn* is the quintessential site of meaning-making, which, although local to the Islamicate traditions, has the immense potential of engaging Western medieval classics of the similar sort, especially in the wake of a long scholarly tradition of European exceptionalism vis-à-vis the cultural formation of romantic love.

Closing Keynote:

"Learning Arabic in Pre-Modern Times," Michael Cooperson, UCLA

Premodern Arabic grammar books are clearly too advanced to have been teaching grammars. So how did non-native speakers learn Arabic? On the granular level, I have several passages from early sources that allude to the process. In this connection I will propose that Muqātil's early *tafsīr* may have been a primer for non-native speakers. More broadly, I'm interested in the anxiety that comes with performing in Arabic as an acquired language. This anxiety comes through clearly in al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt*, which is both document of multilingualism (why does everyone need so much help with Arabic?) and an erasure of it (it refers to no language but Arabic). The constant motion of the protagonists and the pursuit of the unattainable Word are transpositions of the pursuit of *al-'arabiyyah*-a privileged speech variety which, as Georgine Ayoub has written, has always existed anywhere but where the learner happens to be. Finally, a number of sources, chief among them al-Ghuzūlī, who describes himself as having a "thick accent" in Arabic, indicate that

udabā' (persons of letters) who spoke the language poorly were nevertheless able to write it well. In fact, the more complex the rules of *inshā'* (formal composition) became, the better one might get at producing it: for second-language learners, a strictly rule-governed act of writing is easier to carry off than unpracticed speech. The paper-bound achievements of Abbasid and Mamluk-period '*ajam*' ("non-normative speakers of Arabic") suggests a reversal of the common claim that premodern literary practice always privileged orality.

Participant and Keynote Speaker Bios

Fatemeh Keshavarz is a Director, School of Languages Literatures and Cultures and Professor. Keshavarz, born and raised in the city of Shiraz, completed her studies in Shiraz University, and the University of London. She taught at Washington University in St. Louis for over twenty years where she chaired the Dept. of Asian and Near Eastern Languages and Literatures from 2004 to 2011. In 2012, Keshavarz joined the University of Maryland as the Roshan Institute Chair in Persian Language and Literature, and Director of the Roshan Institute Center for Persian Studies. Keshavarz is author of award-winning books including *Reading Mystical Lyric: The Case of Jalal al-Din Rumi* (USC Press, 1998), *Recite in the Name of the Red Rose* (USC Press, 2006) and a book of literary analysis and social commentary titled *Jasmine and Stars: Reading more than Lolita in Tehran* (UNC Press, 2007). She has also published other books and numerous journal articles. Keshavarz is a published poet in Persian and English and an activist for peace and justice. She was invited to speak at the UN General Assembly on the significance of cultural education. Her NPR show "The ecstatic faith of Rumi" brought her the Peabody Award in 2008. In the same year, she received the "Herschel Walker Peace and Justice Award."

Claire Gallien is a Senior Lecturer in English Studies at the University of Montpellier 3. She has also had a long-standing engagement with Arabic languages and literatures, focusing now in traditional Islamic sciences in Arabic. Her research interests are anchored in the critical study of orientalist discourse, postcolonial, comparative, and world literatures and theories, as well as in translation studies and decolonial theory and practices. She is currently working on two book projects – a monograph titled *From Corpus to Canon: Eastern Literary Traditions and Orientalist Reconfigurations in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Britain* and a co-edited volume on *Islam and New Directions in World Literature*, contracted with Edinburgh UP. She has published numerous chapters in collective books and articles in international journals including *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, and *Translation Studies*. She was also guest-edited a special issue on Refugee Literature for *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* and on contemporary Anglo-Arab literature for *Commonwealth Essays and Studies*.

Ali Karjoo-Ravary is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Bard Graduate Center and the Josephine H. Detmer and Zareen Taj Mirza Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at Bucknell University. He received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in Religious Studies and is currently working on his book project, *Muhammad's Song: Politics, Performance, and Cosmology in the 14th Century*. His other work looks at visual representation and iconography in medieval Sufism, science fiction and religion, and the interplay between architecture, print culture, and changing notions of religion in the broader Muslim world.

Zeynep Oktay-Uslu studied Comparative Literature in the USA (Dartmouth College) and Classical Turkish Literature at Bogazici University in Turkey. She completed her PhD in Islamic Civilization at Sorbonne University École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris, France. Her dissertation entitled “The Perfect Man in Alevism and Bektashism” was based on the earliest written texts of Alevi-Bektashi literature, dating from the 14th to the 17th century. Between 2014-2016, Zeynep worked as a research fellow on the research project “The Islamisation of Anatolia, c. 1100-1500” based at the University of St. Andrews in the UK. She currently holds the position of assistant professor at the Department of Turkish Language and Literature at Boğaziçi University. Her publications include: *Mesnevî-i Baba Kaygusuz* (Harvard University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures, 2013); (trans.) Henry Corbin, *Birle Bir Olmak: Ibn Arabi Tasavvufunda Yaratici Muhayyile* [L’Imagination créatrice dans le soufisme d’Ibn Arabi] (Pinhan Yayınevi, 2013). Her most recent article entitled “Alevism as Islam: Rethinking Shahab Ahmed’s Conceptualization of Islam Through Alevi Poetry” (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies) aims to locate Alevi poetry in relation to recent theoretical debates about Islam.

Maryam Fatima is a doctoral candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, specializing in South Asian and Middle Eastern literatures. She works across Urdu-Hindi, Arabic, and English. Her dissertation, titled *Partitions and Palimpsests: Transgressions of Form and Territory in Urdu and Arabic Postcolonial Writing*, postulates a new comparative arc for jointly studying literary responses to the simultaneous partitions of Palestine-Israel and India-Pakistan and their subsequent violent legacies of colonial and national border-making, debates about national literatures and languages, ethnic and linguistic minoritization, and displacement and exile. This dissertation has been generously funded by a Mellon Sawyer fellowship as well as the Interdisciplinary Studies Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her work is forthcoming in *Comparative Literature Studies* as well as the interdisciplinary volume, *Decolonial Reconstellations in the Longue Durée* edited by Simon Gikandi, Laura Doyle, and Mwangi wa Gĩthĩnji.

Alaaeldin Mahmoud is an assistant professor of English in the Liberal Arts Department at the American University of the Middle East in Kuwait. He is a former Fulbright visiting Scholar at the Ohio State University. He is an established translator who translated books of travel writing, fiction, and literary studies, notably his translation of *Other Renaissances: A New Approach to World Literature* (Kuwait: National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, ‘ālam al-ma‘rifah Series, 2014). His scholarly interests include the Arab *Nahḍah*, literary translanguagisms, multimodalities and multiliteracies. Selected relevant publications include “The Qur’an and Modern Arabic Literary Criticism: From Taha to Nasr” (Book Review, *Middle Eastern Literatures*, 2018), “Glocalizing the (Arab) *Nahḍah*: An Investigation of the *Nahḍah*’s Literacies and Multimodalities” (*Comparative Literature Studies*, 2019), “Literary Translingual Practices in the Persianate World: Past and Present” (*The Routledge Handbook of Literary Translingualism*, forthcoming). He is also an active member in international organizations like International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA) and Middle East Studies Association (MESA).

Simon Leese is a postdoctoral researcher at Utrecht University on the ERC-funded SENSIS project (The senses of Islam: A cultural history of perception in the Muslim world). He completed

his PhD at SOAS in 2019 with a thesis titled “Longing for Salmá and Hind: (Re)producing Arabic Literature in 18th- and 19th-Century North India.” His research focuses on the connections that poetry has forged between the Middle East and South Asia, and investigated how the meanings of Arabic poetry in India have been inflected by multilingualism and imaginations of geography. His publications include “Translating below the line: Shāh Walī Allāh and the mediation of Arabic knowledge in North India.’ *Translation Studies*. Forthcoming (2021)

Orhan Elmaz is a lecturer at the University of Saint Andrews where he teaches Arabic language, literature, and culture and comparative literature. His research focuses on Arabic linguistics, more specifically the emergence and development of Arabic and the philological and rhetorical exegesis of the Qur’an (and its use and abuse), as well as Digital Humanities, especially corpus and computational linguistics. Recently, he has finished a volume on adaptations of *One Thousand and One Nights*, and his current research is dedicated to a corpus linguistic exploration of Hadith Arabic and transcultural Muslim women’s rights movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Peter Webb is a University Lecturer in Arabic Literature and Culture at Leiden University. His research investigates the evolution of Arab identity and Muslim narratives of pre-Islamic history as developed in pre-modern Middle Eastern writings. Peter is the author of *Imagining the Arabs: Arab Identity and the Rise of Islam* (Edinburgh, 2016), and has edited and translated works for the Library of Arabic Literature, including an edition/translation of *Sarḥ al-‘uyūn* forthcoming in 2021. He is currently the principal investigator of a Veni research grant from the Netherlands Organisation of Scientific Research, “Epic Pasts: Pre-Islam through Muslim Eyes” (2018-2021); publications so far include a study of pre-Islamic outlaw stories, *The Arab Thieves: al-Maqrīzī’s Luṣūṣ al-‘Arab* (Brill, 2019). Prior to his academic career, Peter was a solicitor at Clifford Chance LLP in London.

Muneer Aram Kuzhiyan is Assistant Professor of English at Aligarh Muslim University, India. His primary teaching/research interests lie at the intersection of comparative literature and cultural studies. His PhD work explored devotional performance narratives in the Mappila Muslim literary culture of the Malayalam-speaking south Indian state of Kerala. His key publications include *Poetics of Piety: Genre, Self-Fashioning, and the Mappila Lifescape* (2016). *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Cambridge University Press), pp 1-19; and *Poisoned chalice? English at an Islamic university in Kerala* (2013). *English Today* (Cambridge University Press), 29, pp 15-18. He is a recipient of Fulbright-Nehru Doctoral Research Fellowship (2013-14) at the University of California at Berkeley, and the University Grants Commission Junior Research Fellowship (2012-14) at the English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.

Ayelet Kotler is a PhD candidate in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, projected to graduate in 2023. Her dissertation is tentatively titled *Persianizing Sanskrit Literature: Literary and Poetic Translation in the Early Mughal Period*. She holds a master’s degree in Asian Studies from Tel-Aviv University (2016). In 2019, she won a Semester Grant for Dissertation Research Abroad from the Committee on Southern Asian Studies at the University of Chicago and travelled to India for archival work, and in 2020, she was awarded the South Asia Council’s Graduate Student Best Paper Award by the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) for her conference paper *The Origin of Poetry, Retold: On Translating the Ramayana into*

Persian. Since 2016, she presented my work in multiple international conferences and workshops such as The Annual Conference on South Asia in Madison, WI, The Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting in Denver, CO, The *Mokṣopāya*, the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* and the Afterlives of a Pan-Indian Text Workshop in Toronto, Canada, and The Great Lakes Adiban Society (GLAS) Workshop in Bloomington, IN.

Nasim Basiri is an Iranian poet, Ph.D. scholar and a graduate teaching assistant in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Oregon State University. She is the author of forthcoming papers on “Is It Time For Ijtihad?”, “Reclaiming Identity: Women, Social Exclusion, and Resistance in Bumi Manusia”, co-authored with Muhammad Sofi and “Religious Hypocrisy of Clerics in the Form of Temporary Marriages” which has won the University of North Carolina’s Ferdowsi Tusi award for Persian Literature and Culture in 2020. Nasim Basiri is also the co-founder of the Commission on Transnational Feminisms and Queer Politics at IUAES (International Union of Anthropological and Ethnographical Sciences). Under the IUAES commission's aegis, she organized several events including co-organizing a World Poetry Conference in Bhatinda on the 13th and 14th of October, 2019, and a series of webinars in collaboration with the University of Copenhagen, including “The Marginalization of Third World Feminists in Academia and Politics”, “Transformation of Women’s Lives in Post-Revolutionary Iran” and “Women and Resistance Arts and Literature”. She has worked with several national and international media nationally and globally including Independent where she contributed several opinion pieces on women’s issues in the Middle East and Iran to their Persian edition.

Talya Fishman, an Associate Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania, studies the cultures of medieval and early modern Jews within their broader Christian and Muslim contexts. She has taught at Columbia University, Rice University, Stanford University, the University of California at Berkeley and has lectured at universities in Israel, France, Germany, the Czech Republic and China. Dr. Fishman has been the recipient of fellowships from the ACLS, the NEH, the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the Guggenheim Foundation. Publications that explore Jewish cultural developments within the medieval Islamic world include: "Guarding Oral Transmission: Within and Between Cultures", *Oral Tradition* 25/1 (2010); "Claims About Mishna in the *Epistle* of Sherira Gaon: Islamic Theology and Jewish History", in D. Freidenreich and M. Goldstein, eds., *Border Crossings: Interreligious Interaction and the Exchange of Ideas in the Islamic Middle Ages*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); “The Relative Authorities of Text and Tradition in Medieval Jewish Jurisprudence: Geonic Exceptionalism in its Islamic Context,” in J. Tolan, ed., *Medieval Minorities: Law and Multiconfessional Societies in the Middle Ages*, (Brepols, 2017); “The *Our Talmud* Tradition and the Predilection for Works of Applied Law in Early Sephardic Rabbinic Culture,” in Castaño, Fishman and Kanarfogel, eds., *Regional Identities and Cultures of Medieval Jews*, (Oxford, 2018).

Seerwan Hariry is a bilingual lecturer at Soran University in Iraqi Kurdistan. He has taught Arabic at The University of Texas at Austin where he earned his doctoral degree in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures in 2019 with full scholarship from the Higher Committee for Education Development in Iraq. His thesis focuses on the link between historical trajectories of knowledge construction and trends of nationalism from a literary perspective particularly in Arabo-Kurdish novels. Currently, he is at work on a monograph based on his doctoral thesis. Dr. Hariry’s MA

thesis explored the narrative techniques in Abdulrahman Munif's novels from Salahaddin University in Iraqi Kurdistan. His research interest spans the intersections of language and culture in the context of modern and pre-modern Islamic society with a focus on literary texts produced by Kurdish writers in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey.

Christopher Livanos is Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He is the author of numerous articles on interfaith relations as represented in literatures of the Medieval Mediterranean. He has published *Greek Tradition and Latin Influence in the Work of George Scholarios* (Gorgias Press, 2006) and, with Floris Bernard, *The Poems of John Mauropos and Christopher of Mytilene* (Harvard University Press, 2018). He is currently translating the pre-Islamic Arabic odes in collaboration with Professor Mohammad Salama of San Francisco State University.

Colinda Lindermann (M.A. Classics, Leiden University 2005; M.A. Arabic Studies, Freie Universität Berlin 2016) is a PhD Candidate in the research group "Arabic Philology and Textual Practices in the Early Modern Period (1500-1800)" at Freie Universität Berlin, directed by Prof. Dr. Islam Dayeh. She is currently working as a Research Associate in the DFG project "Orient-Digital" at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Her publications include "A Shared Set of Solecisms: The Mamlūk and Ottoman Reception of al-Ḥarīrī's *Durrat al-ghawwāṣ*." *Philological Encounters* 4,1-2 (2019): 55-79 and "Al-Fīrūzābādī *togatus*: Arabische Wörterbücher in der europäischen Frühmoderne." *Geschichte der Germanistik* 51/52 (2017): 66-74.

Mehtap Ozdemir is a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her dissertation, "In the Name of Literature: Imperial Modernity and The Temporalities of Translation in Ottoman Turkish, 1859-1919" examines the complex relationship between conceptual translation and temporal politics in the imperial context of late Ottoman literary modernity. She has published in *Yeni Türk Edebiyatı Dergisi* and *Self-Translation and Power* (eds. Olga Castro, Sergi Mainer, and Svetlana Skomorokhova) with a forthcoming article in *Critical Global Studies Beyond Eurocentrism* (eds. Simon Gikandi, Laura Doyle, and Mwangi wa Gũthũnji).

Leila Chamankhah is a dual Ph.D. in Islamic studies (with specialization in Shia intellectual history) and political science (with specialization in Iranian studies). Her areas of interest are Islamic studies, Shia intellectual history, Iranian Studies and Middle Eastern politics. She teaches at the University of Dayton, Department of Philosophy, and will join the Department of Literature, University of California, San Diego from Spring 2021. Her first book in English is entitled "The Conceptualization of Guardianship in the Iranian Intellectual History (1800 -1989): Reading Ibn 'Arabi's Theory of Wilāya in the Shī'a World", was published by Palgrave MacMillan in September 2019. She has also published several articles on different aspects of Islamic studies, Iranian studies, and Shī'a intellectual history.

Salour Evaz Malayeri earned his PhD in Modern Languages from the University of St Andrews. His PhD thesis focuses on ideology and resistance in Nāsir-i Khusraw's poetry, in which he uses the method of discourse analysis and the critique of ideology to investigate the relationship between the literary tradition and Ismaili discourse in Nāsir-i Khusraw's *Divan*. Salour is also interested in the history of modern literary criticism in Iran and the dialogue between tradition and

modernity in the early 20th-century Persian poetry. His chapter on the literary views of Mirza Fatali Akhundzādeh (Akhundov) has been published by Ginko Library in ‘Iran’s Constitutional Revolution of 1906: Narratives of Enlightenment’ edited by Ali M Ansari. His second publication on Iranian modern literary criticism and poetry focuses on Mohammad-Taqi Bahar’s literary heritage, which is going to be published by Routledge in an edited volume by Homa Katouzian and Alireza Korangi. He also has a forthcoming chapter on Persian Ghazal poetry during the early Islamic centuries. Salour has been teaching Persian language and literature in the School of Modern Languages, St Andrews University. Currently, he is working on his monograph, ‘Temporality and Endurance: A Study of Ideology and Resistance in the Poems of Nāsir-i Khusraw’ which is based on his doctoral thesis.

Abdul Manan Bhat is a third year PhD student in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where he works on Islamic literature, Sufism and emotions in the twentieth century. More specifically, he focuses on the emotionality of modern Urdu and Persian poetry as it relates to Islamic meaning-making. Upcoming publication: “Rooms are Never Full: Poetry, Spaces and Muslim Self-hoods in South Asia.” Book review of Ali Khan Mahmudabad’s *Poetry of Belonging: Muslim Imaginings of India (1850-1950)* in *Marginalia*, Los Angeles Review of Books.

Suheil Laher holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Arabic and Islamic Studies, and an M.A. in Religious Studies from Boston University. His doctoral dissertation was on *tawātur*, a key term in Islamic epistemology, and comprises a cross-disciplinary, diachronic study of this concept, along with discussion of its role in defining orthodoxy. Suheil serves a Faculty Associate in Qur’ānic Studies at Hartford Seminary (in Connecticut, USA).

Zubair Khalid is a Maulana Azad National Fellow at the Centre for Historical Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. He completed his MA in History from University of Hyderabad. His M.Phil dissertation from Jawaharlal Nehru University was on the Persian textual tradition of pre-modern Kashmir, with a focus on how the tradition sought to represent aspects of kingship and sainthood. He qualified the National Eligibility Test in June 2019 and was selected by the University Grants Commission of India as Maulana Azad National Fellowship in August 2020. His research papers have been selected for presentations at various national conferences including the Indian History Congress. He is currently working on his PhD thesis which focuses on aspects of early-modern Kashmiri state and polity and its various textual and material manifestations under the Kashmiri Sultans i.e. before the Mughal overtake of Kashmir towards the latter half of the sixteenth century. His research interests broadly lie in aspects of pre and early modern Kashmir.

Fayaz A. Dar is presently, Assistant Professor-History, Department of Higher Education, Jammu and Kashmir, India. He studied History in Kashmir, Jawaharlal Nehru University, (JNU), New Delhi and University of Hyderabad (HCU). He has taught History in Central University of Kashmir, Delhi University and Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad. He has earlier published with the Economic and Political Weekly, and many other journals and plate forms. His research primarily focuses on the Rishi-Sufi tradition of Kashmir and various aspects related to it. He got his PhD degree on the theme of exploring Sufi and Rishi milieu of Medieval Kashmir, with interactions into the social and political realms and beyond. His research

specifically focuses on the Rishi movement -an indigenous Sufi Silsila of Kashmir, as well as the founder of this order Shaikh Nooruddin or Nund Rishi. Among his future academic plans, is to teach a full-fledged course on the Sufi-Rishi movement of Kashmir and to bring out a definitive biography of Nund Rishi, the patron saint of Kashmir, mainly for the English knowing world. This forms part of his broader academic interest of exploring and unravelling the Islam story of Kashmir.

Aqsa Ijaz is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Canada. She is a singer, translator, writer, book reviewer, and a literary scholar. Her work has been published in the Dawn News' *Books and Authors* pages, *World Literature Today*, *Marginalia Review of Book*, *The Express Tribune*, and *The Herald*. At McGill, her research focuses on the Persianate romance tradition in premodern North India and engages primarily on the reception of classical Persian romances in Urdu and Punjabi. Formerly, she was the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) Junior Faculty Fellow at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (2015). Currently, she teaches courses on Urdu language and literature at McGill University.

Michael Cooperson is professor of Arabic at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he teaches pre-modern Arabic literature as well as translation from Arabic to English. *The Life of Ibn Hanbal*, his translation of Ibn al-Jawzī's biography of the imam, received the 2016 Sheikh Hamad Prize for Translation and International Understanding. In 2021, his Englishing of the *Maqamat* of al-Hariri under the title *Impostures* won the Sheikh Zayed Award for translation. His research interests include early Abbasid cultural history, Maltese language and culture, and time travel as a literary device.

Conference Organizers

Huda J. Fakhreddine is Associate Professor of Arabic literature at the University of Pennsylvania. She holds a BA and an MA in English literature from the American University of Beirut and a PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations with a focus on Arabic and comparative literature from Indiana University, Bloomington. Her teaching and research interests include: the Arabic *qaṣīda* as a space for negotiating the foreign and the indigenous, and its relationship to other poetic forms such as the free verse poem and the prose poem, translation studies, the politics of translation and its role in creating the image and status of Arabic literature, and especially poetry, in other languages. She is the author of *Metapoesis in the Arabic Tradition* (Brill, 2015) and *The Arabic Prose Poem: Poetic Theory and Practice* (Edinburgh University Press, 2021). Her publications include: "FitzGerald, Rāmī and Umm Kulthūm: The Making of Khayyam in Arabic," *Abḥāth* 60 (2016): 87-110; "Teaching the Abbasid *muḥdathūn* at the Global Turn," *Journal of Medieval World*, 1.3 (2019); and "The Exophonic Arabic Poem: Prose Poets of the Twenty First Century," in a special issue of the *Journal of Arabic literature* on the Cultural Turn in Arabic Studies.

David Larsen is a scholar of classical Arabic poetry, and a Clinical Associate Professor of Liberal Studies at New York University. His Ph.D. in Comparative Literature is from U.C. Berkeley. His translation of the *Names of the Lion* by Ibn Khālawayh (d. 370/980-1) received the

2018 Harold Morton Landon Award from the Academy of American Poets, and his verse translations appear in the literary press at large.

Rawad Z. Wehbe is a PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania. He holds a BA in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures from the University of California, Los Angeles and an MA in Arabic Literature and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. His dissertation research aims to theorize the concept of *khadramah* beyond a historically determined categorization of poets who lived between the Jāhiliyah and the beginning of Islam, and into an affective and emotional condition that transcends literary periodization and tradition. Rawad's academic interests include Arabic poetry and poetics, translation theory and practice, and teaching Arabic as a foreign language. His translations of Arabic poetry and prose have appeared in *Inventory*, *Words Without Borders*, *Doublespeak*, *Two Lines Press*, and *The Paris Review* (forthcoming).

Rawad Z. Wehbe is a PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania. He holds a BA in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures from the University of California, Los Angeles and an MA in Arabic Literature and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. His dissertation research aims to theorize the concept of *khadramah* beyond a historically determined categorization of poets who lived between the Jāhiliyah and the beginning of Islam, and into an affective and emotional condition that transcends literary periodization and tradition. Rawad's academic interests include Arabic poetry and poetics, translation theory and practice, and teaching Arabic as a foreign language. His translations of Arabic poetry and prose have appeared in *Inventory*, *Words Without Borders*, *Doublespeak*, *Two Lines Press*, and *The Paris Review* (forthcoming).

Matthew Reynolds is Professor of English and Comparative Criticism at the University of Oxford, where he chairs the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation Research Centre (OCCT) and leads the Prismatic Translation project. Among his books are *Prismatic Translation* (2019), *Translation: A Very Short Introduction* (2016), *The Poetry of Translation: From Chaucer & Petrarch to Homer & Logue* (2011), *Likenesses: Translation, Illustration, Interpretation* (2013), *The Realms of Verse, 1830-1870: English Poetry in a Time of Nation-Building* (2001), and the novels *Designs for a Happy Home* (2009) and *The World Was All Before Them* (2013).

Hany Rashwan is a scholar of Arabic and comparative literature. He is a Research Fellow of Arabic Poetics at The University of Birmingham. Before joining the GlobalLIT project to lead the Arabic strand, he was an Andrew Mellon Fellow at the American University of Beirut. Dr Rashwan is the recipient of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric (ISHR) Research Fellowship in 2014. He earned his PhD in Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies from SOAS. He defended a thesis on Arabic Jinās, or what can loosely be termed 'wordplay', 'paronomasia', 'pun', examined through a comparative lens with ancient Egyptian literary traditions. His book will be published in early 2022 with *AUC University Press* under the title "Rediscovering the ancient Egyptian Literature through Arabic Poetics." Dr Rashwan is coediting two volumes: 1) 'Post-Eurocentric Poetics: New Approaches from Arabic, Persian and Turkic Literary Theory' Co-editing with Rebecca Ruth Gould (UoB) and Nasrin Askari (UoB), *British Academy: Oxford*

University Press. 2) ‘Arabic Literary Theory between the vocal form and eloquent meaning, Co-editing with Nuha Al-Shaar (AUS), a memorial volume for Prof Stefan Sperl (SOAS), Brill: Islamic History and Civilization Studies and Texts.’ Rashwan articles appeared at *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*; *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*; *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*; *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies: A Journal of Criticism and Theory*; *Al-Abhath-Brill: Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences*; *Oxford Handbook of Hadith Studies*.