

# Zukunft philologie ie Winter School

Report of the Winter School  
**Textual Practices Beyond Europe  
1500—1900**

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American University in Cairo

Forum  
Transregionale  
Studien



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# 1 Introduction

The following essay attempts to outline the basic issues addressed during an international Winter School held between December 6 and 16, 2010 in Cairo on the topic of “Textual Practices Beyond Europe 1500—1900”. The Winter School was conceived by the coordinators of the Berlin-based research project “ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship”, a project associated with the Friedrich Schlegel Graduate School for Literary Studies at the Freie Universität in Berlin and is supported by the Berlin FORUM TRANSREGIONALE STUDIEN. The Winter School was jointly organized with the Department of Arab and Islamic Civilizations of the American University in Cairo (AUC).

Launched in spring 2010, the project ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE aims to foster research in marginalized and displaced textual practices in order to expand the classical humanistic canons by way of a critical recuperation of philology. In order to promote historically conscious philology, the project supports research that addresses intellectual entanglements and interactions beyond national, cultural and regional boundaries. The project’s main areas of focus include the genealogy and transformations of philological practice, philology’s place in the system of knowledge, its relation to science, theology and jurisprudence, philology and the university, and the relation of philology to nation and empire. The project seeks to create a context of intellectual synergy, where scholars from various textual and philological traditions can work together comparatively and develop a common academic language necessary for an engagement in more fundamental political and cultural concerns.

The organizers of the Winter School conceived of the Cairo meeting as the first in a series of scholarly gatherings over the course of four years, each building on the achievement of the previous meeting and engaging in research on the significance, function and practice of philology across varied textual communities and cultural geographies. Moreover, the Winter School proved to be an ideal opportunity to explore the possibilities of communication and exchange across the boundaries of national philologies. In addition to the coordinators of the project, Manan Ahmed and Islam Dayeh (both Freie Universität Berlin), the Winter School was directed by a group of esteemed scholars, which included Muzaffar Alam (South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago), Nelly Hanna (Economic, Social and Cultural History of the Ottoman Arab World 1500—1800, American University in Cairo), Martin Mulrow (Early modern European intellectual history, Erfurt University), Madiha Doss (Linguistics, Cairo University), and Sabine Schülting (English Language and Literature, Freie Universität Berlin). In order to benefit from the host country’s scholarly and intellectual resources, scholars from

Egypt delivered lectures and participated in panel discussions, such as the historian Muhammad Sabri al-Dali (Helwan University/EUME fellow 2007–2008). The Winter School provided the opportunity for 30 doctoral and postdoctoral researchers from diverse philological traditions, including Arabic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish, Sanskrit, Latin, English, and various other textual traditions, to explore aspects of translation, transregionality and intellectual creativity in the early modern period and ways of communication between philologists of different literary traditions as well as between philologists and historians. The discussions were open and productive, and based on on-going research, thus allowing room for intensive debate in a non-competitive and convivial atmosphere. The diversity of the participants, the richness of the themes, the excellent location and the generous cooperation of local Egyptian historians were all conducive to fruitful exchange and promising comparative inquiry.

In addition to the participants' presentations of their current work in smaller groups, thematic working groups and plenary discussions were also held which were attended by a larger number of participants including local Egyptian scholars, which addressed issues of general relevance. These included, for example, the circularity of knowledge in South Asia; the editorial and ideological policies of manuscript editing; the politics of translation in the medieval Muslim world; historical time and the problem of dating manuscripts; the idea of tradition between texts and living practices; reading practices in the Ottoman world; translation as appropriation; philology and race; and the fate of philology in our modern world, among other topics.

As indicated in the title, "Textual Practices Beyond Europe 1500–1900", the Winter School focused on three main elements. Firstly, in the context of the dominance of European philological experience since its crystallization in the nineteenth century, the appreciation and careful study of non-European forms of philology and textual practices have been meagre. What forms of "philology" in non-European contexts existed? How were texts read in their respective contexts? A conscious use of "textual practice" rather than "philology" was made in order to refer to the wide range of production of and engagement with texts, irrespective of content (e.g. historiographical, legal, literary, religious, scientific), thereby embracing texts that are not usually studied under the rubric of philology in western academies. The intention was also to keep the question of textuality open, without necessarily invoking the histories of western instances of textuality implied in the term "philology". Secondly, by exploring the philological and textual practices of non-European geographies, the Winter School also aimed at rethinking the supposed dichotomy between so-called European and non-European modes of knowledge. Thirdly, by concentrating on

textual practices beyond Europe in the period between 1500 and 1900 the goal was also to contribute to the historicization and pluralization of philology, and to reflect on the wider cultural and political context in which texts and the art of reading them emerged.

One of the primary concerns of the Winter School was the task of defining the function and significance of philology itself. This was attempted in the opening session through a discussion of Edward Said's essay "The Return to Philology" and Sheldon Pollock's "Future Philology? The Fate of a Soft Science in a Hard World". The session raised a variety of issues, such as the meaning and function of philology and aspects of its relevance today. What does this new interest in philology entail? Does the call for a "return to philology" simply amount to an attempted resurrection of an acclaimed golden age of philology or does it represent an engagement in the possibility of a more humanistic and pluralistic textual practice for our global world today? Does philology really have the emancipatory power that is claimed for it? The discussion of these two programmatic texts and the questions they triggered set the tone of the Winter School.

As the days passed, the Cairene philological encounter became more and more challenging. Enthusiasm and curiosity is one thing, but a fruitful and constructive conversation between specialists of different literary traditions—and scholarly training—is quite another. What has a Sanskritist, for example, to say to a scholar of English or Latin texts? Does a scholar trained in the German academy work with the same disciplinary history as her colleague who comes from the United States or India? Do these genealogies and trainings breed mutual interest or distrust? Moving from the scholar to the inquiry, how can we engage in a comparative inquiry, while taking into account the particular context(s) of the texts in question, their problematics and the discursive knowledge that they are part of? When is a comparative inquiry a reconstruction of the genealogy of a body of texts and when can literary traditions be said to have parallel, independent development?

The bringing together of philologists and historians of various geographical and linguistic worlds, who all study texts but with different means and to different ends, underscored the ambiguity inherent in the call for a "return to philology". Why is such a "return" necessary, some participants asked, referring to the significant developments in cultural studies, historical anthropology and, above all, the critique of Orientalism? Others, however, argued for the possibility of a more critical and pluralistic philology, conscious of the disciplinary

history of Orientalism, Area Studies and the formation of the European literary canon as well as national canons elsewhere.

Not all these challenges were apparent at the start of the Winter School and naturally not all were resolved by its conclusion, but there were certainly enough readiness and intellectual courage among the participants to address these questions throughout the sessions of the Winter School. Divided into groups consisting of scholars of almost all the philological traditions represented in the Winter School, participants listened, discussed and debated a wide range of contributions presented in their own group. It was a unique experience for everyone. Scholars of Sanskrit found themselves discussing with Persianists their shared history of comparative linguistics. Scholars of Arabic found themselves discussing with scholars of Modern European history the influence of European philhellenism on the editorial choices and philological practices of a generation of Arab philologists in the late 19th and early 20th century. Moreover, a body of theoretical and programmatic texts, provided in the form of a reader, acted as a guide and instigator for lively debate. These encounters—between disciplinarily knowledge and comparative inquiry, between the awareness of the embeddedness of a text in certain regimes of reading and the aspiration to draw parallels and engage structurally and historically with the same regimes of reading—continuously pushed the engagement of the scholar, the text, and the world within.

In light of the thematic connections that link the problematic raised by each contributor, this essay will not treat each contributor individually but rather according to thematic coherence. We propose to look at these problematics in separate sections. It should be noted that this essay naturally reflects the interests of its authors and may therefore fail to do full justice to the variety of opinions and perspectives of all the participants.



*At a copy-shop near the American University in Cairo*

## 2 Alternative Philologies, Alternative Histories

In line with the Winter School's objective of exploring marginalized and non-European forms of textual engagement, several presentations dealt with what one might call "alternative philologies", that is, hitherto unstudied instances of textual practice that present significant historiographical challenges to some of the most pervasive genealogies about philology and its past. Since these challenges also bear upon the universality of the art of philology, they are also suggestive of "alternative histories".

In his lecture **Muzaffar Alam** spoke about a seventeenth-century critical edition of Jalal al-Din Rumi's *Masnavi* which was done by a Mughal official, who claimed to have collected over 80 manuscripts. Alam highlighted the vision and idea behind the philological practice, which resulted in this early edition, and he brought to our attention the Indo-Persianate literary cultures and their close association with the Mughal world, which enabled the sustenance of philology and reveals the mechanics of manuscript circulation and the development of the notion of a canon. Alam, in essence, argued that there existed long and sustained historical roots, practices and networks that enabled philological enquiry in the early modern world.

**Rajeev Kinra** illustrated this issue succinctly by revisiting the claimed origins of comparative Indo-Persian. By convincingly locating the latter's origins in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century world of Indo-Persian interactions, and particularly in the writings of the north Indian intellectual luminary, Sirāj al-Dīn Alī Ārzū (1687–1756), Kinra challenged the normative Orientalist view that locates such origins in the European Academies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and particularly in the works of the great Orientalist William Jones (1746–1794). Ārzū's numerous works of comparative philology were both greatly admired and hotly contested among Indo-Persian literati throughout the eighteenth century, and would have certainly been known to most of William Jones's Persian language tutors, if not directly to Jones himself. Nevertheless, as Kinra maintained, the notion persists that it took Europeans like Jones to come along and "invent" modern new disciplines like comparative linguistics, comparative religions, and the like. Kinra demonstrated that from at least the eleventh century CE, comparative philology constituted one of the key intellectual sites wherein a whole host of concerns central to the maintenance of Indo-Persian literary and linguistic cosmopolitanism was negotiated. Arguing on the basis of documentary evidence and careful historical reconstruction, Kinra offered not only an alternative account of the beginnings of comparative Indo-Persian philology but also an alternative

history of literary creativity in the Indo-Persian world. A comparative analysis of this archive, Kinra concluded, would also help to extricate the Indo-Persian philological tradition from its current state of almost total obscurity and bring it toward a more deserving place in the larger narrative of global intellectual history.

In her presentation “Philology of the Legal Terminology of sixteenth-century Ottoman Slave Manumissions”, **Nur Sobers Khan** examined the neglected philological expertise behind the production and maintenance of Ottoman legal documents. Khan argued that reading legal archives as “texts” and from the perspective of the “philologist” yields numerous insights into the scribal guild and the professional skills required to build up an archive in premodern times. Against the reduction of Ottoman legal archives to a mere source for social history, Khan stressed the intrinsic philological qualities inherent in this documentary edifice that have not yet been given enough attention by both historians and philologists. By combining a philological and socio-linguistic reading of Ottoman slave manumissions, Khan examined how Arabic legal terminology as well as Arabic syntax was employed in slave manumissions as recorded in Ottoman court documents, and how other linguistic aspects of Arabic-language jurisprudence, in contrast to Turkish, were co-opted, adapted and used to legitimate the discourse of slavery in Ottoman Galata in the sixteenth century. Khan identified a strong similarity in the causal structure and terminology of slave manumission documents across the legal cultures of the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Eastern Mediterranean, even when separated by language, leading to the period of the documents at hand, suggesting a much greater level of exchange between languages and cultures on a legal level than had previously been assumed.

In connection to Khan’s revisiting of legal archives as philological practices, **Dahlia Gubara**’s examination of the role of al-Azhar, one of Islam’s most revered institutions of learning, focused, among other things, on a critical historicization of al-Azhar library. Arguing that libraries are spaces where ideas lived and are therefore vectors for the dissemination (oral and textual) of knowledge, Gubara approached the space of the library as an actively constructed archive, with institutional memory and normative purpose, and hence a source in and of itself. She argued that the historicization of this key space in al-Azhar provided for the consideration of ideas themselves as historical subjects: ones that are grounded in the (con)texts within which they are produced, contested, invoked and consumed.

**Vivian Strotmann's** presentation on al-Firuzabadi (1329—1415) and his impact on early modern Islamic culture examined the scholarly profile as well as the influence the famous scholar had on his contemporaries as well as across temporal, geographical and cultural demarcations. By inspecting al-Firuzabadi's travels and the network of scholars that he was part of, Strotmann argued that his textual production and his supporting network reveal a much more diversified picture of the scholar than is suggested by the omnipresent epithet *al-lughawi*, *Sahib al-Qamus and muhit* (The Linguist, the Author of The Encompassing Ocean). Among these issues, she explained, are questions of religious orientation, which are most pronounced in light of the fact that the apparently steadfastly Shafi'i Hadith scholar displayed varying connections to the Maliki and Hanafi schools of law, as well as to Sufism. Furthermore, Strotmann sketched the making of al-Firuzabadi's prestigious lexicon, *The Encompassing Ocean*, and its impact on Arabic lexicography. Paramount among the textual offsprings of *The Encompassing Ocean* is an elaboration and transmutation of al-Firuzabadi's work: Murtada al-Zabidi's *Taj al-'arus* (The Bridal Crown). Designed as a commentary on the Qamus, the *Taj* is widely acknowledged as the last classical Arabic lexicon on the eve of the nineteenth-century nahda.

Similarly, **Islam Dayeh** explored the interplay of rhetoric, logic and biblical interpretation in the exegetical works of the Muslim scholar Burhan al-Din al-Biqai (d. 885AH/1480CE). By tracing the numerous rhetorical and hermeneutical theories that informed al-Biqai's work, Dayeh argued that contrary to first appearances medieval exegesis on scripture (*tafsir*) exhibits a form of secular literary criticism wherein seemingly "modernist" notions such as textual coherence, translatability and reference appear to have been at the centre of the exegetical exercise. Dayeh stressed the importance of studying medieval commentary on its own terms, rather than in relation to the canonical text (i.e. the Qur'an, in this case), as so often is the case with "modernist" commentary. In this perspective, medieval commentary is studied in relation to the hermeneutical approaches and theological and philosophical arguments that shaped the expectations of the interpretative community. Only through a careful examination of the textual practices and the institutional conditions that made a commentary possible can the creativity, literary playfulness and significance of premodern scriptural commentary be properly appreciated.



*Left to right: Muzaffar Alam, Mehmet Karabela, Dahlia Gubara*

### 3 What was philology outside of Europe in the period 1500—1900?

How is the act of “reading carefully”, one famous definition of philology, conditioned and circumscribed by its historical context? In this regard, the Winter School considered a wide range of philological issues from a non-Eurocentric perspective. These included questions of authorship, genre, periodization, readership, interpretative methods, textual transmission, translation, textual integrity, the archive, editorial choices and policies, the philological curriculum, as well as important philological encounters and debates.

In a panel entitled “Philology, Orientalism and the Humanities” participants explored the transformation which non-European philological practices and textual traditions underwent in the modern period. How and why were philological practices sometimes appropriated, other times rejected and often neglected? The discussion considered moments of political tension, vacillating between cooperation and antagonism, prompted by attitudes towards forms of philology perceived and branded variously as “foreign” or “oriental” or “colonial”. Rajeev Kinra discussed the Indo-Persian roots of comparative linguistics. Ananya Vajpeyi looked at writers on the Indian subcontinent (notably, Tagore and Ghandi) and offered a reading of their writings that reclaims them from so-called Hindu-nationalism. Umar Riyad’s contribution dealt with the interesting case of the dismissal of the Dutch orientalist Wensinck from the Egyptian Academy of Language in the 1930s and the controversy that it stirred.

**Amina Elbendary’s** presentation entitled “Late Medieval Historiography and Protest” dealt with developments in historical writing in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of the Arab East, the Mamluk era. Elbendary pointed to the fact that the period witnessed both the rise of professional historians as well as works of a historical nature by more “popular” men. The latter is discernible in the increasing use of the vernacular in written histories and the abundance of biographical information we now have about the men and women of that period compared to any previous period. By looking at the gradual popularization of the genre of history writing, Elbendary focused on the representation of commoners and urban protest in the medieval historiography of Egypt and Syria. Historiography itself became a form of protest, she argued, and it is at this moment that philology became inevitable. By examining the narrative strategies of certain historical writings of the time, such as the Egyptian-Syrian al-Biqā’ī’s *Izhār al-’aṣr* and the Syrian Ahmad b. Tawq’s *al-Ta’līq*, and by comparing them with more “classical” and “orthodox” histories such as al-Maqrīzī’s and Ibn Tūlūn’s, Elbendary discerned a remarkable shift in the function and craft of history writing in the Mamluk period, which shed great light on the lives of medieval Cairo and Damascus.

In one of her presentations, **Nelly Hanna** took up the phenomenon of colloquial writings in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Cairo. She presented examples of well-known scholars who also wrote in colloquial, some even going to the trouble of defending their practice by compiling a lexicon on the colloquial Arabic of the Egyptians. Nelly Hanna also pointed out that although writing in colloquial was not unheard of prior to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was a considerable increase in colloquial writing in this period, which she attributed to several factors, including the mobility of classes and professions made possible by commercial trade and the increase of literate soldiers, in addition to changing literary tastes and an appreciation of the Egyptian colloquial.

**Mehmet Kadri Karabela's** presentation explored the development in argumentation theory in post-classical Islamic intellectual history (1400–1800). The *ādāb al-baḥth*, that is, the rules of investigation, arose in the Islamic world at the end of the seventh/thirteenth century and provided for the first time a complete and systematic argumentation theory which was easy to apply across the disciplines. Although it did not become part of the official madrasa (Islamic colleges) curriculum until the ninth/fifteenth century, treatises on argumentation were flourishing in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. One of the most famous authors of the madrasa tracts of this era was Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī (d. 702/1303), who was well known for his *risāla fī ādāb al-baḥth* (Treatise on the Rules of Investigation). By locating the discipline of *ādāb al-baḥth* in the wider context of post-classical grammar, logic and legal reasoning, Karabela made an important contribution to our understanding of what constituted linguistic and textual study in the Islamic scholastic curriculum in the period in question.

## Canon and Literary Creativity

**Adam Talib** focused particularly on the explosive development of the epigram anthology in the Mamluk and early Ottoman periods (primarily, the thirteenth through the seventeenth century). By studying the epigram not merely as an independent poetic form but as a constituent element of a larger literary genre, epigram collections or anthologies, he sought to revise the conventional narrative of Arabic literary history and to reevaluate the question of literary innovation in the so-called “Age of Decline”. Talib showed that the authors and

audiences of these anthologies were among the most literate and educated members of their societies (they were often religious scholars and chancery officials), but the texts themselves deviated from the pattern of elite court poetry that dominates our modern conception of the classical Arabic poetic tradition. These facts, Talib urged, demand that we reappraise epigram anthologies in order to determine whether a genre of epigram anthology can be said to exist, what were the parameters of their production and consumption, how they communicated with their audiences, how they represented cultural concerns such as luxury, gender, and sexuality, and how they fit into the literary-cultural sphere of the period.

**Elisa Ganser's** presentation entitled "The Practice of Philology between Intellectual and Dramatic Traditions of Medieval India" dealt with a seminar treatise on Sanskrit theatre, the *Nāṭyasāstra* of Bharata, a text commonly dated between the second century BC and the second CE and referred to as an authority by all later writers on the subjects of drama, poetry, dance and music. Through the study of the commentary tradition of this text, and in particular, the *Abhinavabhāratī*, composed in Kashmir in the eleventh century by the philosopher Abhinavagupta, Ganser examined the different attitudes that the various authors display while dealing with the textual sources, and compares them with the redaction of new manuals on dance in the nineteenth century. In doing so, Ganser offered a fresh interpretation of the problematic relationship between the production of technical manuals and dramatic texts on the one hand, and the living artistic practices on the other.

The relation of knowledge and institutions of learning was also addressed by **Dahlia Gubara** who dealt with the scholarly networks of eighteenth-century Ottoman Egypt and the intersection of their ideas in the space of al-Azhar. Her work focuses on the lives of three intimately connected scholars, Muhammad al-Kashnāwī (d. 1741), Muhammad al-Sammān (d. 1775) and Murtadā al-Zabīdī (d. 1791), and is concerned with the reasons for the enforced isolation in the literature. Gubara re-imagined al-Azhar not as a central institution from which Islamic thought and practices were produced and emitted to some margin or another, and certainly not as the modular representative of Arab-Islamic civilization to which all Muslims adapted or from which they diverged, but rather as a living space where various intellectual currents developed and interacted, where numerous modes of behaviour were imposed and contested, where particular subjectivities were formed and resisted. She argued for a provincializing of al-Azhar and re-integration of the African and the Arab worlds into the geographies that might have been imagined by the historical actors themselves.



*Left to right: Dahlia Gubara, Sabina Schülting, Vivian Strotmann, Islam Dayeh*

## 4 Translation: Indo-Persian and Sanskritic Worlds

One key issue which ran throughout the Winter School concerned the theory and scope of translation practices in premodern, non-European contexts. A range of papers dealt with the southern and western Asia perspectives of this issue, and tackled the movement of texts, such as the translation of Bidpai's Sanskrit fables into Persian and Syriac, then into the Arabic *Kalili wa Dimna* in the 8th century.

The work of several participants focused on the Medieval encounter between Indian pandits and Persian intellectuals at the Mughal court and in Kashmir. Anna Martin, Audrey Truschke, Luther Oborck and Anubhuti Maurya's work each aimed to improve our understanding of the translation culture and methods of Indo-Persian literature.

In the Mughal period, fifteenth and sixteenth century, the process of translating Sanskrit classics into Persian was systemized and institutionalized, a process assisted by court-sponsorship during Akbar's reign (1556–1605). A large number of texts from various genres were translated from Sanskrit into Persian, the language of literature and government. In the course of this encounter, unprecedented translation projects came into being, court-sponsored and private, involving Indian and Muslim translators and philologists, who were confronted with numerous linguistics and cultural challenges. **Anna Martin's** project on "the translation methods used in the Indo-Persian translation literature of the Mughal period sixteenth–eighteenth century" also assumes that there was a large number of Hindus who read religious books in Persian, as the knowledge of Sanskrit had been a privilege accorded only to a small number of individuals. Anna Martin's research includes an edition and close examination of Persian translations of the *Bhagavadgita* and manuscripts of the Persian translation of the *Rajatarangini* of Jonaraja, as well as manuscripts of Persian versions of the *Vikramacarita*, which is regarded as one of the most well-known works of ancient Indian narrative literature. By comparing the Sanskrit texts with the Persian translations at her disposal, Martin studied the translation methods and techniques, grammatical and semantic aspects in order to shed light on the methods of exegesis used by Indian Pandits.

**Audrey Truschke's** project "Cosmopolitan Encounters: Sanskrit and Persian at the Mughal court" aims to reconstruct the history of interactions between Sanskrit and Persian literary cultures at the Mughal courts during the years 1570–1650 C.E. Truschke argued that although scholars have thought about Sanskrit and Persian in tandem, they have generally been blinded by their own language barriers and asserted that there was no serious interaction between the two. Her work challenged this uncritical view through a systematic reading of texts that record imperial exchanges between Sanskrit and Persian literary cultures. She focused attention on the presence of Sanskrit pandits in a Persianate world, and showed that the Mughals also participated in the

Sanskrit sphere by bestowing titles on notable Sanskrit figures. Mughal histories (tarikh), Sanskrit hagiographies (carita), and Sanskrit praise poems (prasasti) all record these practices, but the latter two have never been analyzed as social history. Truschke used these works to reconstruct the broad contours of patronage ties and Sanskrit-Mughal cultural relations.

Similarly, **Luther James Obrock** presentation entitled “Placing Sanskrit: History and Translation in fifteenth-sixteenth century Kashmir” investigated the aesthetic encounter between Perso-Islamic and Sanskritic literary forms in late fifteenth and early sixteenth Kashmir, concentrating in particular on the works of Pandit Srivara, a learned Kashmiri Brahmin attached to the court of Zain ul-Abidin and his successors. Srivara’s work engages with both the courtly literature of the pre-Islamic era as well as newly introduced Persian aesthetic forms by translating Jami’s *Yusuf-o-Zuleikha* into Sanskrit. Obrock stressed that not only does Srivara translate a story and works into Sanskrit, he translates a Persian narrative into the aesthetic structures and expectations of a particularly Kashmiri poetic genre which includes such classics from the “Golden Age” of Kashmiri Sanskrit as Abhinanda’s *Kadambarikathasara* and Kalhana’s *Rajatarangini*. Obrock argued that Srivara was actively engaged in a philological project that was both bound to an understanding of Sanskrit (particularly, Kashmiri Sanskrit) literary forms and an appropriation and transformation of Persian forms.

The Mughal court not only produced elegant Persian translations of Sanskrit works, but it also produced influential historical writings such as Abul Fazl’s *Ain i Akbari*, the focus of **Anubhuti Maurya**’s project “State and Society in Kashmir between the sixteenth and nineteenth century”. *Ain i akbari* is the third volume of the *Akbarnama*, which in its totality offers a phenomenal account of the establishment of the Mughal empire in the Indian subcontinent. The primary focus of the text is to chronicle the period of Akbar’s reign (1556–1605). In her study, Maurya moved away from the discourse on the factuality of the narrative. Though the text is beautifully polyphonic and speaks in multiple registers, she argued that primarily, *Ain i Akbari* is an exercise in mapping the empire. In doing so, the text creates its own universe.

The work of these scholars, taken in the light of the argument about Indo-Persianate literary cultures sketched out by Sheldon Pollock and Muzaffar Alam, points towards the need for a renewed investigation into such medieval textual encounters. This will be one key area in which the ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE project will focus energies and a follow-up workshop is planned for 2012.

## 5 Philological Entanglements

The relationship of philology to translation was addressed by several participants as well. **Manan Ahmed** spoke about political languages in the frontier of Sindh during the early thirteenth century. The Persianization of the Muslim polities in northern India is already quite thorough. Ahmed focused on an early text, *Chachnama*, which claimed to be a translation from an earlier Arabic history. This claim led subsequent scholarship to read this text as a history of the 8th century. Ahmed argued against such a reading, and posited that the frontier setting of the text was a more apt analytical framework for our interpretation.

**Rebecca Gould** presented her on-going project of a translation, annotation and critical introduction to Rashīd al-Dīn al-Watwāt's *Magic Gardens on the Nuances of Poetry* (Hadāiq al-sihr fī daqāiq al-shir). Composed in the twelfth century, al-Watwāt's erudition in philosophy as well as other disciplines increased the conceptual scope of rhetoric (balāgha), a sub-field of Arabic-Persian philology. Gould argued that the discipline of rhetoric served a functional parallel to that served by philology in European intellectual history. Gould suggests that Islamic disciplines such as balāgha and adab served as functional equivalents for the kind of intellectual work European philology was able to perform in the hands of Giambattista Vico and Joseph Scaliger.

**Sevda Ayluçtarhan** contextualised the translational efforts of the late Ottoman intellectual and publicist Abdullāh Cevdet (1869—1932). Ayluçtarhan traced his connections to the Egyptian intellectual milieu, which was a relatively free environment for translators who wanted to avoid censorship in Istanbul, so much so that nineteenth-century Egypt was regarded as “the capital of illegitimate Turkish literature”. Cevdet's mastery of various European languages and his eloquent poetic Turkish notwithstanding, he was often accused by his detractors of manipulation and plagiarism of his source-texts. As a fierce opponent of Abdulhamid II, Abdullah Cevdet let his pen transform *Tarih-i Islamiyet* into a political critique of absolutist regimes, although the original actually dealt with historical and religious themes. Cevdet's manipulative translational strategies were so conspicuous that his detractors considered the original Dutch author as “the lesser of two evils”. *Tarih-i Islamiyet* was banned in 1910, two years after its publication. Ayluçtarhan stressed that translation as a mode of cultural interaction is never apolitical and in circumstances such as those of Abdullah Cevdet, the philologist's concern with the politics of translation becomes ever more necessary.

**Burcu Gürsel**'s presentation focused on the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt (1798–1801), and the “Egyptian” schools of translation in Paris in the 1820s–30s. Gürsel examines several translation projects of the period—for example, Constantin-François Volney's works, *Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte; Les ruines; Lecons d'histoire* (1785–95), reveal him as an (anti-war) “ideologue” of the invasion, or Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's theory on the political mediation of the ulama (clerics) in his history of Egypt, *Ajāib al-āthār*. In an intriguing example, Gürsel traced in Rifāa al-Tahtāwī's travelogue on Paris, *Takhlīs al-ibriz*, an anecdotal subtext of violence that potentially justifies Egyptian colonialism, and that emerges against pressure from French and Egyptian authorities in his education as translation.

Continuing on the theme of translation, **Letizia Cerqueglini**'s presentation examined the various Berber translations of the Qur'an. Cerqueglini observed the effect the translation of the Qur'an as a book, with its physical, aesthetic and literary dimensions had on the development of scriptural, textual and philological practice in the Berber-speaking areas (modern Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco). By taking both a diachronic and synchronic approach, her research explored several interrelated issues, including the adoption of an Arabic alphabet for Berber writing; the introduction of the codex; the use of Berber for other literary genres; the emergence of a Berber philology whose primary activity centered around translation, interpretation and transmission of the Qur'an; the subsequent establishment of Berber libraries due to the needs of text preservation.



Luther Obrock

## 6 Transregionality, Transnationalism

Philology has always been a global knowledge practice, albeit no such global account of its history has ever been written. Notwithstanding the Winter School itself being a transregional philological exercise, the issue of transregionalism in the history of philology was addressed in numerous presentations. In particular, these presentations dealt with issues such as the circulation of ideas, traveling literary traditions, textual migrations, acculturation and genealogy.

For example, the panel “Cairo and Delhi: Travel, Trade, Translation and Dialogue from Medieval to the Modern” focused on forms of transregionalism in the Arab and Indian worlds. It began from a brief account of key moments in textual, scholarly and economic transfers between the Arabic and Indic worlds. This included the renaissance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Arab-Hind historiography by scholars like Shibli Numani, Suleiman Nadvi, or the trade relations between Egypt and the Indo-Persian lands. Manan Ahmed talked about Shibli Numani’s account of his travel to Egypt in the late nineteenth-century, while Muzaffar Alam discussed the use of the fifteenth-century Cairine Arabic philologist al-Suyuti’s philological compendium *al-Muzhir* by the Indo-Persian philologist Sirāj al-Dīn Arzū (d. 1756) in his *al-Muthmir*. Rajeev Kinra spoke about the project of William Jones and the earlier scholarship of Arzu on the common roots of Indo-European languages. Moreover, Nelly Hanna spoke about trade relations between the Arab world and India and the cultural bonds that it created. The relations between Egypt and India, though not covered in detail in this gathering, may become a fruitful source of discussion in subsequent meetings.

**Dahlia Gubara** addressed the role of race in the legacy of nineteenth-century philology and its effects on scholarship today. As nineteenth-century philology parceled out the organic civilizations of the world according to languages and scriptures, or lack thereof, African cultures were to be analyzed through the discipline of anthropology. Gubara argued that as a result of the weighty legacy of missionary literatures, the meeting of the connected discourses of Orientalism and Abolitionism produced a repertoire of images pertaining to the constitution of “the Arab” (white, Islamic) and “the African” (black, animist) that continues to shape disciplines. Constrained by these taxonomies, the study of Islam in Africa/African Islam tended to reproduce the dialectic of Islamization (of Africa) and Africanization (of Islam), in which the former provides structure, and the latter, content. The result is the “African Muslim”, unique and peripheral to the trends of the wider umma. Gubara argued fur-

thermore that the Arab and African intelligentsia that emerged from the colonial-capitalist encounter internalized European philological and anthropological tropes about the Orient and Africa.

The literary mechanisms and conceptual processes through which religious and racial difference is constructed and made normative through philology were discussed in several presentations and were the theme of a follow-up workshop in July 2011 in Berlin.

**Umar Ryad's** presentation included a mapping of transnational Islam in interwar Europe. Ryad's project entitled "Salafi (Reformist) networks and their aspiration for Pan-islamism" focuses on the transnational networks of Muslim activists within Europe in the period 1919–1946. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Muslim socio-political and intellectual transnational networks found Europe a suitable ground on which they organized themselves and tried to diffuse reformist ideologies. Ryad's research considers the influence of the European environment on their strategies for establishing a revitalized Islam. While available studies have focused mostly on local Muslim communities in Europe, no attempt has been made to rediscover the history of these networks as based on the personal archives of their actors. Ryad's work is the first to combine these personal archives with the magazines written by the actors of these networks. By exploring a plethora of documentary sources from private collections, including correspondences, diaries, photographs and audio-recordings, as well as magazines and other literary works related to Islamic reformism in the interwar period, Ryad attempts to shed new light on strategies of mobility and networks of East-West Muslim reformists in Europe and how they influenced the dissemination and globalization of knowledge. Much relevant to these issues are their social function in targeting new audiences of readers through these reformist texts, and the consolidation of their imagined intellectual and political power through the dissemination of such texts.



*Left to right: Samah Selim, Georges Khalil, Nelly Hanna, Madiha Doss*



*Left to right: Madiha Doss, Malak Labib, Mehmet Karabela, Islam Dayeh, Martin Mulsow, Vivian Strotmann, Anna Martin, Felix Otter, Elisa Ganser, Elisabetta Benigni*

## 7 Orientalism, Postcolonial Theory and Philology

The role of postcolonial studies in rethinking the place of philology sparked a lively and vigorous debate among the participants across panels and into the coffee and lunch breaks. A group of scholars bemoaned the fact that current scholarship put too much emphasis on cultural studies and post-colonial theory at the expenses of discussions of philological methodologies and textual materials. These trends were the after-effect of the Saidian critique on orientalist philology and tended to drown out needed work on textual scholarship. Conversely, other scholars emphasized the disciplinary history of philology and the centrality of de-centering scholarship and placing a critique of disciplinary practices at the heart of textual criticism.

Centering this debate, the Winter School asked, “What is the relevance of philology for social history?” How to write history in fields of study that have been deeply influenced by “orientalist” scholarship, while at the same time, post-colonial critique can primarily deconstruct, rather than construct new history. Steps were taken to find a path to overcome this difficult and complex legacy. The study of philology, even as it is practiced currently, as a highly specialized and very technical art, is directly connected to concerns of nationalism, identity and politics, and ethnicity, as well as debates surrounding history. The Winter School asked the invited lecturers to speak directly to these concerns—of early-modern entanglements of the colonial and the colonized worlds.

**Sabina Schülting’s** lecture held at the German Archaeological Institute in Cairo entitled: “An Ideal Spy: Henry Blount in the Ottoman Empire (1634—1635)” explored the performative elements in Blount’s travel account. Combining the study of performativity with postcolonial approaches, she posited that English texts written in the context of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter open up spaces both for testing strategies of coming to terms with alterity and for trying out techniques of interaction in intercultural encounters. Such encounters were also highlighted in **Martin Mulsow’s** lecture “Enlightenment from the Margins: Anti-trinitarians and European Perceptions of Islam (seventeenth-eighteenth Century)”. Mulsow reconstructed an exciting history of the contacts between anti-Trinitarian theologians and Muslim theology in the early modern period. By unearthing an unlikely network of sixteenth century scholars, ambassadors and statesmen, Moroccan, Dutch, English and German and plenty others, of various religious and political affiliations, he illustrated how the circulation and translation of certain Muslim anti-Trinitarian polemic was utilized by protestant theologians in their fight against Catholic authorities.

Following these keynote presentations, a number of Winter School participants presented on the interactions between various knowledge systems during the colonial era.

**Malak Labib's** presentation titled "Statistics and the Emergence of New Discursive Practices in Colonial Egypt" dealt with the emergence and development of state statistics and the social sciences in Egypt in the colonial era. Labib asks how and to what extent was the emergence of statistics in Egypt shaped by transfers of knowledge and scholarly techniques from European practices, and how was statistics appropriated in the local context. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, the Egyptian government sent delegates to Europe to participate in a number of international statistical congresses (Brussels in 1853, the Hague in 1869, Saint Petersburg in 1872 and Budapest in 1876). French and Italian experts who were employed by the Egyptian government also played a significant role in the development of objective and rational statistical knowledge for government use. Malak Labib asks to what extent was this objectivity and rationality characteristic of the nascent social science disciplines, shaped by the very administrative categories and the forms of measurement, enumeration and classification that were employed by the colonial state?

**Madiha Doss** presented a lecture entitled "Grammars and Glossaries of 'Vulgar Arabic': C.E. Savary (1750—1788) and the Beginnings of Linguistic Orientalism", in which she examined the function of a group of grammars and glossaries produced by French travelers and tradesmen in the 18th century. Who used these texts and how successful were they at the time? Doss also gave examples of how Arabic syntax was appropriated to and constructed through Latin grammatical structures and terminology, rather than through the Arabic grammatical tradition, a practice that continues to be the general approach to teaching Arabic syntax in Western academies.

**Bodhisattva Kar's** project entitled "Joint Stocks and Language Stocks" about colonial Assam, a frontier province of British India, tries to track the diverse careers of the etymological thought within and beyond the confines of formal philology. Kar argued that places are frequently condemned to dual names in South Asia. Kar's project is concerned with exploring such place name identification practices through which the truth of Assamese history was produced and codified as a territorial attachment in the variegated orientalist discourse. He points out that these textual practices contributed to and were shaped by a new grammatical sensitivity emergent in the subcontinent since the nineteenth century, and operated through a liberal application of conjectural etymology.

**Elisabetta Benigni's** presentation entitled "Reshaping the Idea of Confinement. The Case of Prison Literature and its Role in Premodern and Modern Arabic Societies" stressed the idea of texts as the outcome of a dialectic relationship between the act of creation and the interaction with a social and historical frame. By analyzing patterns of prison literature across time, Benigni outlined how cultural osmosis and translation of imaginative worlds across time characterizes premodern and modern texts.

**Muhammad Sabri al-Dali**, one of several local Egyptian participants, gave a lecture on "The Use of Mystical Texts as a Source for Social and Political History." He focused on one particular text of the famous 16th century Egyptian Jurist and Mystic al-Sha'rani. Contrary to common opinions that view Sufis as apolitical, al-Dali gave examples of how a reading attentive to Sufi semantics and typologies can be of great benefit to the historian.



*Left to right: Felix Otter, Vivian Strotmann, Elisa Ganser, Audrey Truschke, Mehmet Karabela, Anna Martin, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Martin Mulsow (back), Paolo Aranha, Rezwana Alam, Muzaffar Alam, Giovanni Ciotti, Letizia Cerqueglini, Luther Obrock, Anubhuti Maurya, Bodhisattva Kar, Georges Khalil. Front Left to right: Manan Ahmed, Rajeev Kinra.*

## 8 A Return to Philology?

Philology is timely. It is not that sterile or ineffectual form of learning that is irrelevant to life, as comic depictions of weary old philologists impart. Neither should philology be reduced to that notorious orientalist and colonialist past, systematically deconstructed by Edward Said and others, nor should philology be synonymously equated to the antiquarian study of the canons of Western literary culture or any other literary canon. In its global redefinition, philology assumes a role not accorded to it before. It is far more pluralistic and, consequently, humanistic. In the words of Edward Said, philology is both emancipatory and enlightening.

The emancipatory power of philology lies in its potential to recuperate textual practices, and to reconnect texts to site, site to structure, and structure to power. This relationship between a newly reinvigorated philological practice and a crystalline contextual view formed the background to some key presentations at the Winter School.

**Giovanni Ciotti's** presentation entitled "Emic Philology: The Siksā Legacy" consisted of an overview of his investigation of the Siksā-vedānga literature, i. e. the branch of the ancient Indian linguistic speculation which deals with the sounds of Sanskrit, in particular with their classification and the modifications they undergo under specific conditions. Ciotti attempts to trace models developed by authors of the Siksā tradition and to compare these with Classical Tamil grammatical speculations, in order to shed more light on the linguistic contacts between languages spoken in the subcontinent.

**Paolo Aranha** examined the *Breve noticia dos erros que tem os Gentios do Concao*, an unpublished Portuguese description of Hinduism composed by a Jesuit missionary in India at the end of the seventeenth-century and its anti-Jesuitical use in eighteenth-century Europe. While the *Breve noticia* played an important role in the European understanding of the Indian culture during the Enlightenment, Aranha argued that the intellectual and colonial hegemony attained by British orientalism at the end of the eighteenth century marginalized this work as well as Catholic indology at large. The description of the "errors of the Gentiles" became then an indictment against the pagan beliefs that allegedly the Jesuits were tolerating, if not promoting. This hermeneutic twist, Aranha argued, is not surprising, if we consider how contemporary Jesuit works on China and Confucianism were then used by Enlightenment intellectuals in order to relativize Christianity and all religions.

**Felix Otter** investigated the current revival of Vastuvidya, the ancient Indian lore of house construction with the methods of textual scholarship. While focusing on the relevance of the revitalization of a lost tradition for the politics of identity, Otter addressed issues of precolonial textual transmission and the socio-cultural setting in which the primary sources for the lore of Vastuvidya were produced and disseminated. On a methodological level, Otter argued that his findings pose a challenge to the received notions of Western, especially German Indology by demonstrating the limitations of the methods of textual criticism as hitherto employed with the discipline of Sanskrit philology—that it is not sufficient to establish the presumed original of the text, one needs to take into account the social and cultural setting in which a text is produced, utilized and transmitted in order to arrive at any meaningful conclusions.

**Ananya Vajpeyi's** presentation entitled “History of the Sudra in Maharashtra 1650—1950” gave a philological treatment of a small archive of Sanskrit texts, produced mainly in northern India between the mid-sixteenth and the late seventeenth centuries, all of which delineate the ritual duties as well as privileges of the Sudra. The legal digest about the Sudra evidently appeared in response to particular cultural and political conditions that obtained during the height of the Mughal Empire, the rise of the Maratha Empire, and the gradual ascendancy of a variety of non-Hindu, lower caste and outcaste rulers throughout Deccan India. Vajpeyi argued that the Sudra archive is interesting for various reasons, one of which is that it was produced in a limited period of time, and relatively late in the history of the Sanskrit literature on Dharma. Unlike most of the early works on Dharma for this corpus we are able to find historical authors, and to tell where the texts were written. This level of historicity is simply not available for the bulk of the *Dharmasasta* (authoritative legal literature).



*Left to right: Muzaffar Alam, Adam Talib.*

# Conclusions

The Cairo meeting proved extraordinarily effective in bringing students of various textual traditions together from around the world. The meeting of scholars of Arab and Indo-Persian traditions was particularly welcomed by the Egyptian colleagues who lamented the paucity of such encounters today. Indeed, one of the conclusions of the conference is the need to study historical relations and exchange between, for instance, Egypt and India in the early modern world, without reference to Europe or European history, which may seem like an obvious conclusion but is rarely put into practice in the American and European academic worlds.

However, as exciting as this new comparativism in philology is, it also presents a challenge, most particularly, how to bring about an integration of expertise in which philologists from different textual cultures work together to create a common scholarly language and a mutual appreciation of the major textual trends in their respective traditions. This particular concern is crucial and the coordinators of ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE view it as a significant challenge that they plan to deal with in subsequent scholarly meetings, for it is only through a continual integration of expertise that the cultural margins of our world today can be brought to current debate.

As organizers of this Winter School, we are pleased to say that the collaborative spirit of the Winter School did not end in Cairo but continues in the conceptualization of a future philology. On behalf of all participants, we would like to thank Georges Khalil for his inimitable support and dedication, and Thea Schwarz for everything from managing applications to corresponding with participants from all over the world. The Winter School would certainly not have been the same without her efforts. We are also grateful to our Egyptian partners and colleagues: Nelly Hanna, Amina Elbendary and Marwa Sabry, and others, for their cooperation and renowned Egyptian hospitality.

*Manan Ahmed & Islam Dayeh*  
*July 2011*



*Left to right: Islam Dayeh, Paolo Aranha, Anna Martin, Luther Obrock, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Felix Otter, Giovanni Ciotti, Malak Labib, Adam Talib, Elisabetta Benigni, Burcu Gürsel, Vivian Strotmann, Elisa Ganser, Madiha Doss, Ananya Vajpeyi, Muzaffar Alam, Mehmet Karabela, Umar Riyad, Rezwana Alam, Bodhisattva Kar, Audrey Truschke, Dahlia Gubara, Amina Elbendary, Samah Selim, Anubhuti Maurya, Georges Khalil.*

# Participants (in alphabetical order)

**Manan Ahmed** (*Freie Universität, Berlin*),

The Political Languages in the Frontier of Sindh, 1220 CE

**Muzaffar Alam** (*University of Chicago*),

Jalal al-Din Rumi's *Masnavi* and Mughal Philology

**Paolo Aranha** (*European University, Florence*),

Errors of the Gentiles: A Jesuit Description of Hinduism and its Anti-Jesuitical Use in the Eighteenth-century Europe

**Sevda Ayluçtarhan** (*Boğaziçi University, Istanbul*),

Abdullah Cevdet's Translations and His Notion of İctihad as a Form of 'Interference' with Ottoman "Belatedness"

**Elisabetta Benigni** (*Sapienza University of Rome*),

Reshaping the Idea of Confinement. The Case of Prison Literature and its Role in Premodern and Modern Arabic Societies

**Letizia Cerqueglini** (*Perugia/Freie Universität Berlin*),

Philological, Linguistic and Political Meanings of Qur'an Translations in Berberia from Bourghwata Kingdom to Modernity

**Giovanni Ciotti** (*Cambridge University, UK*),

Emic Philology: The Siksā Legacy

**Muhammad Sabri al-Dali** (*University of Halwan, Cairo*),

Mystical Texts as a Source for Social and Political History

**Islam Dayeh** (*Freie Universität, Berlin*),

Rhetoric, Logic and Biblical Interpretation in the Exegetical Works of Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqāī (d. 885 AH/1480 CE)

**Madiha Doss** (*University of Cairo*),

Grammars and Glossaries of "Vulgar Arabic": C. E. Savary (1750—1788) and the Beginnings of Linguistic Orientalism

**Amina Elbendary** (*American University Cairo*),

Late Medieval Arabic Historiography and Protest

**Elisa Ganser** (*Sapienza University of Rome*)

The Practice of Philology between Intellectual and Dramatic Traditions of Medieval India

**Rebecca Gould** (*Columbia University, New York/ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE-Fellow at the Forum Transregionale Studien*),

Translation, Annotation, and Critical Introduction to Rashid al-Din Watwat's *Magic Gardens*: On the Nuances of Poetry

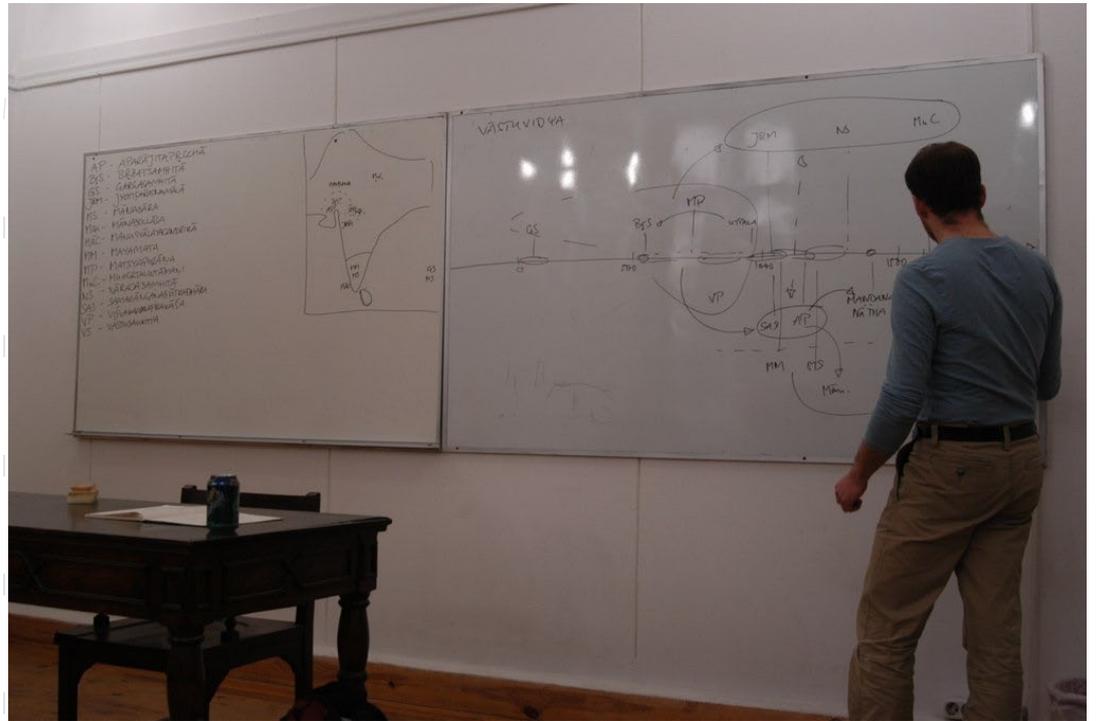
**Dahlia E.M. Gubara** (*Columbia University, New York*),

Trajectories of Learning and the Everyday Life of Ideas: Al-Azhar in the Eighteenth Century

**Burcu Gürsel** (*Istanbul/ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE-Fellow at the Forum Transregionale Studien*),

Invasive Translations: Violence and Mediation of the False-Colonial, France and Ottoman Egypt (1780—1840)

- Nelly Hanna** (*American University in Cairo*),  
Colloquial Writings in 17th and 18th Century Cairo
- Bodhisattva Kar** (*Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta*),  
Joint Stocks and Language Stocks
- Mehmet Kadri Karabela** (*McGill University, Montreal*),  
The Linguistic Turn in Argumentation Theory in Post-Classical Islamic  
Intellectual History (1400—1800)
- Nur Sobers Khan** (*Cambridge University, UK*),  
Philology of the Legal Terminology of 16th-century Ottoman Slave  
Manumissions
- Rajeev Kinra** (*North Western University, Evanston, IL*),  
Indo-Persian Culture of Comparative Philology
- Malak Labib** (*Universite de Provence*),  
Statistics and the Emergence of New Discursive Practices in Colonial Egypt
- Anna Martin** (*Marburg*),  
A Study on the Translation Methods Used in the Indo-Persian Translation  
Literature of the Mughal Period (16th—18th century)
- Anubhuti Maurya** (*New Delhi University*),  
State and Society in Kashmir between the Sixteenth and Nineteenth Centuries
- Martin Mulsow** (*Erfurt University*),  
Enlightenment from the Margins: Antitrinitarians and European Perceptions  
of Islam (17th—18th Century)
- Luther James Obrock** (*University of California, Berkeley*),  
Placing Sanskrit: History and Translation in 15th—16th Century Kashmir
- Felix Otter** (*University of Heidelberg*),  
The Revitalization of Vastuvidya in Post-Colonial India
- Umar Ryad** (*University of Leiden*),  
Mapping Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe: Salafi (Reformist) Networks  
and their Aspiration for Pan-Islamism
- Sabina Schülting** (*Freie Universität, Berlin*),  
An Ideal Spy? Henry Blount in the Ottoman Empire (1634—1635)
- Vivian Strotmann** (*Ruhr-Universität Bochum*),  
An Islamic Scholar at the Turning of the Tide: Al-Firuzabadi (1329—1415) and  
His Impact on Early Modern Islamic Culture
- Adam Talib** (*Oxford University/Münster*),  
Scholars, Poets, and Readers: Poetry Collections and the Canon in the  
Post-Mongol Period
- Audrey A. Truschke** (*Columbia University*),  
Cosmopolitan Encounters: Sanskrit and Persian at the Mughal Court
- Ananya Vajpeyi** (*University of Boston*),  
Politics of Complicity, Poetics of Contempt: A History of the Sudra in  
Maharashtra 1650—1950



*Felix Otter*

# Schedule

**Main Venue: American University in Cairo, Main Campus, Downtown, entrance from El Sheikh Rihan Street**

**Monday, Dec 6**

10.00 - 11.30 **Introduction** (Oriental Hall)  
**Manan Ahmed, Islam Dayeh, Nelly Hanna, Georges Khalil**

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30 **Thematic Discussion: Future and Return to Philology**

Group 1 / Room 127: introduced by **Islam Dayeh** and **Rebecca Gold**

Group 2 / Room 128: introduced by **Manan Ahmed** and **Burcu Gürsel**

Texts for both groups:

Sheldon Pollock: Future Philology? The Fate of a Soft Science in a Hard World

Edward Said: The Return to Philology

Group B / Room 128: **Umar Ryad** (Leiden U): Mapping Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe: Salafi (Reformist) Networks and their Aspiration for Pan-Islamism

Chair: Burcu Gürsel

Manan Ahmed, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Elisabetta Benigni, Burcu Gürsel, Nelly Hanna, Bodhisattva Kar, Anna Martin, Umar Ryad, Nur Sobers Khan, Audrey Truschke

Group C / Room 129: **Rebecca Gould** (Columbia U NY / Berlin): Translation, annotation, and critical introduction to Rashid al-Din Watwat's Magic Gardens: On the Nuances of Poetry

Chair: Ananya Vajpeyi

Muzaffar Alam, Elisa Ganser, Rebecca Gould, Malak Labib, Anubhuti Maurya, Luther Obrock, Sabine Schuelting, Vivian Strotmann, Adam Talib, Ananya Vajpeyi

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

16.30 - 18.00 **Public Lecture** (Oriental Hall)

**Muzaffar Alam**: Jalal al-Din Rumi's Masnavi and Mughal Philology

Introduction: Manan Ahmed

**Tuesday, Dec 7**

10.00 - 11.30 **Project Presentations**

A / Room 127 : **Paolo Aranha** (European U Florence): Errors of the Gentiles: A Jesuit description of Hinduism and its anti-Jesuitical use in the eighteenth-century Europe

Chair: Giovanni Ciotti

Paolo Aranha, Letizia Cerqueglini, Giovanni Ciotti, Islam Dayeh, Amina Elbendary, Dahlia E. M. Gubara, Mehmet Karabela, Rajeev Kinra, Felix Otter

B / Room 128: **Sevda Ayluçtarhan** (Bogazici U Istanbul): Abdullah Cevdet's Translations and His Notion of Ictihad as a Form of "Interference" with Ottoman "Belatedness"

Chair: Umar Ryad

Manan Ahmed, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Elisabetta Benigni, Burcu Gürsel, Nelly Hanna, Bodhisattva Kar, Anna Martin, Umar Ryad, Nur Sobers Khan, Audrey Truschke

C / Room 129: **Ananya Vajpeyi** (U Mass Boston): Politics of Complicity, Poetics of Contempt: A History of the Sudra in Maharashtra 1650-1950

Chair: Elisa Ganser

Muzaffar Alam, Elisa Ganser, Rebecca Gould, Malak Labib, Anubhuti Maurya, Luther Obrock, Sabine Schuelting, Vivian Strotmann, Adam Talib, Ananya Vajpeyi

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30 **Panel Discussion: Philology, Orientalism and the Humanities, Part I** (Oriental Hall)

Chair: **Islam Dayeh** and **Manan Ahmed**

Interventions by: **Rajeev Kinra, Umar Ryad, Ananya Vajpeyi**

This panel will explore some of the transformations which non-European philological practices and textual canons underwent in the modern Period. What are the cultural and political conditions for these transformations? How and why were philological practices beyond Europe sometimes appropriated, other times rejected and often neglected? The discussion will consider moments of political and cultural tension, vacillating between cooperation and antagonism, prompted by attitudes towards forms of philology perceived and branded variously as "foreign" or "oriental" or "colonial".

13.30 - 14.30 LUNCH

14.30 - 16.00 **Thematic Discussion**

Group 1 / Room 127: **Politics of Translation in the Medieval Muslim World**, introduced by **Manan Ahmed**

Texts: Tarek Shamma, *The Arabic Version of Kalila wa Dimna*, The Translator, 15.1, 2009.

Ronald Inden, *From Philologic to Dialogical Texts*, in *Querying the Medieval: Texts and the History of Practices in South Asia*, 2000.

#### Project Presentation

Group 2 / Room 128: **Islam Dayeh**, Rhetoric, Logic and Biblical Interpretation in the Exegetical Works of Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā'ī (d. 885AH/1480CE)

19.00 – 20.30 **Public Lecture** (German Archeological Institute)

**Sabine Schuelting**: *An Ideal Spy? Henry Blount in the Ottoman Empire (1634-1635)*

Introduction: Islam Dayeh

Venue: German Archaeological Institute, 31, Abu el Feda, Zamalek  
In Cooperation with the office of Freie Universität Berlin in Cairo

### Wednesday, Dec 8

10.00 - 11.30 **Guest Lecture** (Oriental Hall)  
**Magdi Guirguis** (Kafrelsheikh University), *Ways of Producing and Reading Legal Documents in the Context of Ottoman Cairo*  
  
Introduction: Georges Khalil

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30 Group 1 / Room 127: **Thematic Discussion** *Measuring Time and the Problem of Dating Texts*, introduced by **Giovanni Ciotti**.  
**Text**: Deshpande [1979] *History, Change and Permanence: A Perspective*, in Gopal Krishna (ed.), *Contribution to South Asian Studies*.

Group 2 / Room 128: **Lecture (in Arabic)**

**Muhammad Sabri ad-Dali** (Associate Professor of History, Helwan University), *An-Nass al-sufi ka masdar lil-tarikh al-ijtima'i wa 's-siyasi* (*Mystical Texts as a Source for Social and Political History*)

Introduction: Islam Dayeh

13.30 - 14.30 LUNCH

14.30 - 16.00 **Project Presentations**

A / Room 127: **Mehmet Kadri Karabela** (McGill U Montreal): The Linguistic Turn in Argumentation Theory in Post-Classical Islamic Intellectual History (1400-1800)

Chair: Letizia Cerqueglini

Paolo Aranha, Letizia Cerqueglini, Giovanni Ciotti, Islam Dayeh, Amina Elbendary, Dahlia E. M. Gubara, Mehmet Karabela, Rajeev Kinra, Martin Mulsow, Felix Otter

B / Room 128: **Elisabetta Benigni** (Sapienza U Rome): Reshaping the idea of confinement. The case of Prison Literature and its role in premodern and modern Arabic societies

Chair: Nur Sobers Khan

Manan Ahmed, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Elisabetta Benigni, Burcu Gürsel, Nelly Hanna, Bodhisattva Kar, Anna Martin, Umar Ryad, Nur Sobers Khan, Audrey Truschke

C / Room 129: **Elisa Ganser** (Sapienza U Rome): The practice of philology between intellectual and dramatic traditions of medieval India

Chair: Rebecca Gould

Muzaffar Alam, Elisa Ganser, Rebecca Gould, Malak Labib, Anubhuti Maurya, Luther Obrock, Sabine Schülting, Vivian Strotmann, Adam Talib, Ananya Vajpeyi



**Thursday , Dec 9**

10.00 - 11.30

**Project Presentations**

A / Room 127: **Letizia Cerqueglini** (Perugia / FU Berlin): Philological, Linguistic and Political Meanings of Qur'an Translations in Berberia from Bourghwata Kingdom to the Modernity

Chair: Felix Otter

Paolo Aranha, Letizia Cerqueglini, Giovanni Ciotti, Islam Dayeh, Amina Elbendary, Mehmet Karabela, Rajeev Kinra, Martin Mulsow, Felix Otter

B / Room 128: **Nur Sobers Khan** (Cambridge U (UK): Philology of the Legal Terminology of 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman Slave Manumissions

Chair: Elisabetta Benigni

Manan Ahmed, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Elisabetta Benigni, Burcu Gürsel, Nelly Hanna, Bodhisattva Kar, Anna Martin, Umar Ryad, Nur Sobers Khan, Audrey Truschke

C / Room 129: **Anubhuti Maurya** (Delhi U): State and Society in Kashmir between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries

Chair: Malak Labib

Muzaffar Alam, Elisa Ganser, Rebecca Gould, Malak Labib, Anubhuti Maurya, Luther Obrock, Sabine Schülting, Vivian Strotmann, Adam Talib, Ananya Vajpeyi

11.30 - 12.00

Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30

**Project Presentations**

A / Room 127: **Giovanni Ciotti** (Cambridge U (UK): Emic Philology: The Siksa Legacy

Chair: Mehmet Karabela

Paolo Aranha, Letizia Cerqueglini, Giovanni Ciotti, Islam Dayeh, Amina Elbendary, Mehmet Karabela, Rajeev Kinra, Martin Mulsow, Felix Otter

B / Room 128: **Audrey A. Truschke** (Columbia U): Cosmopolitan Encounters: Sanskrit and Persian at the Mughal Court

Chair: Anna Martin

Manan Ahmed, Sevda Ayluçtarhan, Elisabetta Benigni, Burcu Gürsel, Nelly Hanna, Bodhisattva Kar, Anna Martin, Umar Ryad, Nur Sobers Khan, Audrey Truschke

C / Room 129: **Vivian Strotmann** (Ruhr U Bochum): An Islamic Scholar at the Turning of the Tide: Al-Firuzabadi (1329-1415) and His Impact on Early Modern Islamic Culture

Chair: Adam Talib

Muzaffar Alam, Elisa Ganser, Rebecca Gould, Malak Labib, Anubhuti Maurya, Luther Obrock, Vivian Strotmann, Adam Talib, Ananya Vajpeyi

13.30 - 14.30 LUNCH

14.30 - 16.00 **Public Lecture** (Oriental Hall)

**Nelly Hanna**: Colloquial Writings in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Cairo

Introduction: Georges Khalil

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

16.30 - 18.00 **Public Panel Discussion** (Oriental Hall)

**Cairo and Delhi: Travel, Trade, Translation and Dialogue from Medieval to the Modern**  
**Manan Ahmad, Muzaffar Alam, Islam Dayeh, Nelly Hanna**

An open discussion will begin from a brief account of key moments in textual, scholarly, and economic transfers between the Arabic and Indic worlds - such as, the renaissance in Arab-o-Hind historiography by scholars like Shibli Numani, Suleiman Nadvi, or the trade relations between Egypt and Indo-Persian Lands. We hope the discussion to encompass various archives, biographies, memoirs and present-day scholarly efforts to retrace these entangled histories.

### Friday, Dec 10

14.00

**Excursion** (voluntary): Walk Through Islamic Cairo

Meeting Point: 14.00 in front of the Flamenco Hotel

### Saturday, Dec 11

Free



*Left to right: Ananya Vajpeyi, Paolo Aranha, Vivian Strotmann, Elisabetta Benigni.*

**Sunday , Dec 12**

- 10.00 - 11.30 **Project Presentations**  
 A / Room 127: **Amina Elbendary** (AUC): Late Medieval Arabic Historiography and Protest  
 Chair: Rajeev Kinra
- B / Room 128: **Burcu Gürsel** (Istanbul / Berlin): Invasive Translations: Violence and Mediation of the False-Colonial, France and Ottoman Egypt (1780-1840)  
 Chair: Audrey Truschke
- C / Room 129: **Malak Labib** (Provence U / Cairo): Statistics and the emergence of new discursive practices in colonial Egypt  
 Chair: Vivian Strotmann
- 11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break
- 12.00 - 13.30 **Lecture** (Oriental Hall)
- Madiha Doss** (Professor of Linguistics, French Dept., Faculty of Arts, Cairo University), Grammars and Glossaries of "Vulgar Arabic": C. E. Savary (1750-1788) and the Beginnings of Linguistic Orientalism  
 Introduction: Nelly Hanna
- 13.30 - 14.30 LUNCH
- 14.30 - 16.00 **Project Presentations**  
 A / Room 127: **Felix Otter** (U Heidelberg): The Revitalisation of Vastuvidya in Post-Colonial India  
 Chair: Amina Elbandary
- B / Room 128: **Bodhisattva Kar** (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta): Joint Stocks and Language Stocks  
 Chair: Sevda Ayluçtarhan

C / Room 129: **Adam Talib** (U Oxford / Münster): Scholars, Poets, and Readers: poetry collections and the canon in the post-Mongol period  
Chair: Luther James Obrock

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

16.30 - 18.00 **Public Lecture** (Oriental Hall)

**Martin Mulsow** (University Erfurt / Gotha): Enlightenment from the Margins: Antitrinitarians and European Perceptions of Islam (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Introduction: Islam Dayeh

### Monday, Dec 13

10.00 - 11.30 **Project Presentations**

A / Room 127: **Dahlia E. M. Gubara** (Columbia U NY): Trajectories of Learning and the Everyday Life of Ideas: Al-Azhar in the Eighteenth Century  
Paolo Aranha

B / Room 128: **Anna Martin** (U Marburg): A Study on the Translation Methods Used in the Indo-Persian Translation Literature of the Mughal Period (16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century)  
Chair: Bodhisattva Kar

C / Room 129: **Luther James Obrock** (UC Berkeley): Placing Sanskrit: History and Translation in 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Century Kashmir  
Chair: Anubhuti Maurya

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30 **Panel Discussion: Philology, Orientalism and the Humanities, Part II** (Oriental Hall)

This panel will follow-up on the exploration of some of the transformations which non-European philological practices and textual canons underwent in the modern Period. What are the cultural and political conditions for these transformations? How and why were philological practices beyond Europe sometimes appropriated, other times rejected and often neglected? The discussion will consider moments of political and cultural tension, vacillating between cooperation and antagonism, prompted by attitudes towards forms of philology perceived and branded variously as “foreign” or “oriental” or “colonial”.

13.30 - 14.30 LUNCH

14.30 - 16.00 **Thematic Discussion**

Group 1 / Room 127: **The Idea of Tradition Between Texts and Living Practices**, introduced by **Elisa Ganser**

**Text:** Introduction by Federico Squarcini to his volume "Boundaries, Dynamics and Construction of Tradition in South Asia"

Group 2 / Room 128: **Introduction to "Constellation Research" (Konstellationsforschung)**, introduced by **Martin Mulsow**

**Text:** Qu'est-ce qu'une constellation philosophique? Propositions pour une analyse des réseaux intellectuels, in: *Annales. Histoire, sciences sociales*, 64, 2009, pp. 81-109.

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

16.30 - 18.00 **Public Lecture** (Oriental Hall)

**Manan Ahmed**, *The Political Languages in the Frontier of Sindh, 1220 CE*

Introduction: Rajeev Kinra

Tuesday , Dec 14

10.00 - 11.30 **Thematic Discussions**

Group 1 / Room 127: Reading Practices in the Ottoman Empire, introduced by **Adam Talib**

**Text:** Johann Strauss: "Who Read What in the Ottoman Empire", Middle Eastern Literatures, 6.1, 2003, pp. 39-76/2.

Group 2 / Room 128: Translation, Interpretation and Appropriation: Many lives of Yogavashista in Mughal India **by Muzaffar Alam**

**Texts:** Pollock, Sheldon, *Introduction*, in: id. (ed.), *Literary Cultures in History. Reconstructions from South Asia*, pp. 1-36.

Pollock, Sheldon, *Sanskrit Literary Culture from the Inside Out*, in: id., *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*, pp. 39-130.

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30 **Thematic Discussion**

Group 1 / Room 127: **The Editorial Policies of Scholarly Editing and Publishing of Arabic Manuscripts**, introduced by **Islam Dayeh**

**Texts:** al-Sayyid, Ridwan, "al-idyuluji wal-ma'rifi fi tahqiqat al-turath al-'arabi wa qira'atihi" [The Ideological and the Intellectual in the Editing and Reading of Arabic literary heritage], in *al-Mustaqbal al-'arabi (Journal)*, 381, 2010.

Carter, M. G., "Arabic Literature", in D.C. Greetham (ed.), *Scholarly Editing. A Guide to Research*, New York 2005, pp. 546-574.

Group 2 / Room 128: **The Circulation of Knowledge in Early Modernity**, introduced by **Rajeev Kinra**

**Texts:** Kapil Raj, *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650-1900*, London 2007, pp.1-26 and pp. 95-138.

Paul Stevens and Rahul Sapra, "Akbar's Dream: Moghul Toleration and English/British Orientalism," *Modern Philology* 104.3, 2007, pp. 379-411.

13.30 - 14.30 LUNCH

**Thematic Discussion**

14.30 - 16.00

Group 1 / Room 127: **Ranajit Guha's 'History at the Limits of World-History'**, introduced by **Ananya Vajpeyi**

**Text:** Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limit of World-History*, New York, pp. 1-6, 48-108.

Group 2 / Room 128: **Fragments of a Global Biography: The Puzzle of the Biography and Network of Zeki Hishmat-Bey Kiram between Berlin, Cairo, and San'aa**, introduced by **Umar Ryad**

**Texts:** Nathalie Clayer and Eric Germain (eds.), *Islam in Interwar Europe*, New York/London 2008, pp. 1-30 , 156-182.

William L. Cleveland, *Islam Against in the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism*, Al Saqi Books, 1985, pp. 90-159.

**Umar Ryad:** *From an Officer in the Ottoman Army to a Muslim Publicist and Armament Agent in Berlin: Zeki Hishmat-Bey Kirâm (1886-1946)*, *Bibliotheca Orientalis (BiOr)*, 2006, 63.3-4, pp. 236-268.

16.00 - 16.30 Coffee Break

**Thematic Discussions**

16.30 - 18.00

Group 1 / Room 127: **Philology and Race**, introduced by **Dahlia Gubara**

**Texts:** Bernard Lewis, *The Crows of the Arabs*, in: *Critical Inquiry*, 12.1, "Race," Writing, and Difference, 1985, pp. 88-97.

Reichmuth, Stefan, *Murtada al-Zabidi (1732-91) and the Africans: Islamic*

*Discourse and Scholarly Networks in the Late Eighteenth Century*, in: Reese, Scott S. (ed.), *The Transmission of Learning in Islamic Africa*, Leiden 2004, pp. 121-153.

Group 2 / Room 128

**Wednesday, Dec 15**

10.00 - 11.30 **Thematic Discussion**

1 / Room 127

2 / Room 128

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30 **Panel Discussion (Oriental Hall)**  
**Crisis of the Classics? What Future of Philology?**

Evening Get together

**Thursday, Dec 16**

**Departure**



*Left to right: Martin Mulsow, Elisa Ganser, Anna Martin, Giovanni Cioti, Felix Otter, Luther Obrock, Sevda Ayluctarhan, Muzaffar Alam, Audrey Truschke, Rezwana Alam, Mehmet Karabela, Paolo Aranha and his mother. Front Left to right: Rajeev Kinra, Letizia Cerqueglini.*

## Contact

Islam Dayeh

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