Annual Meeting
Program Book & Annual Report

International Qur'anic Studies Association

November 17–20, 2023 • San Antonio, TX
ما أهمية الجمعية الدولية للدراسات القرآنية؟

ما يحدث الآن أن كثيرًا من الأسئلة طُرحت، ومناهج عملية أُستحدثت، وتخصصات ومجالات متعددة بالأبعاد باتت متاحة للباحثين.

(د. وداد القاضي، جامعة شيكاغو)

القرآن كتاب مقدس مهم ومصدر إلهام لعقيدة الملايين من الناس. من المهم جداً أن نحاول أن ندرس هذا الكتاب وتاريخه للإستفادة منه، لكل من المجتمعات الإسلامية والمجتمعات الأخرى.

(د. سيدني جريفيث، الجامعة الأمريكية الكاثوليكية)

أعتقد أن هذه محاولة من باحثي القرآن للعمل مع باحثي الكتاب المقدس وتبادل المناهج والأدوات، ولإتباعات على مناهج تفسيرية وتأويلية قيمة في دراسات الكتاب المقدس وإن أمكن تطبيق هذه المناهج على دراسة القرآن. هذا تحديداً مثير جداً لإهتمامي.

(د. رضا أصلان، جامعة كاليفورنيا – ريفسارد)

أنا مهتم بدراسة القرآن لأنني قد كشفت في بداية مسيرتي المهنية أن مخطوطات القرآن تم نسبيها لفترة طويلة. من ذلك الوقت أخذت بالتبخر عميقاً في دراسة القرآن وكيفية دمجه في التراث الإسلامي.

(د. فرانسوا ديروش، المدرسة التطبيقية للدراسات العليا باريس)

يهمني عمل باحثي القرن الوسطى عندما نصدرون ويحاولون الإجابة على أسئلة صعبة من وجهات نظر مختلفة. بنفس الوقت أستمتع مشاهدة باحثين معاصرين يواجهون تحديات مماثلة في وقتنا الحاضر من أن أجل إيجاد وإبتكار حلول جديدة.

(د. أندرو ريبين، جامعة فيكتوريا، كولومبيا كندا)
International Qur’anic Studies Association
الجمعية الدولية للدراسات القرآنية

2023 Annual Meeting Program

2023 Annual Report

November 17–20, 2023 • San Antonio, Texas
Welcome Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2023 Annual Meeting of the International Qur'anic Studies Association (IQSA). IQSA is dedicated to fostering Qur'anic scholarship through:

- Assisting scholars of the Qur'an to form contacts and develop fruitful professional and personal relationships.
- Sponsoring rigorous academic scholarship on the Qur'an through its lectures, journal articles, book reviews, monograph series, and online resources.
- Building bridges between scholars around the world.

Conscious of the importance of interdisciplinary conversations, IQSA continues to meet alongside SBL at its North American Annual Meetings in addition to its biennial International Meetings. For more details on all of our programs, publications, and member benefits please visit www.iqsaweb.org. Please download the “AAR & SBL 2023 Annual Meeting” app on your mobile device.

In this program book you will find a complete listing of IQSA events during the 2023 Annual Meeting. You will also find information on our Call for Papers for those who would intend to participate in our 2024 conference, hosted by the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, and announcements about contributing to IQSA’s journal (JIQSA), book series, and online book review service (RQR).

As a learned society, IQSA is shaped by the contributions and insights of its members. We are eager to draw together a diverse community of students and scholars of the Qur’an and look forward to working together to promote the field of Qur’anic studies.

Finally, I am looking forward to a productive and exciting program, with many more conferences to come. I am also very excited about the launch of our new website this year, which will enable IQSA to reach a broader audience and share the knowledge and scholarship of its members with more people than ever. We also hope to bring more content to our website, increase engagement, and ultimately add value to everyone’s memberships.

Welcome to IQSA 2023!

Hythem Sidky
Executive Director, International Qur’anic Studies Association
Acknowledgment

The International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA) was first formed in 2012 through a generous grant by the Henry Luce Foundation and in consultation with the Society of Biblical Literature. IQSA was incorporated in 2014 and granted nonprofit status in 2015. We recognize the Windsor Foundation, DeGruyter Press, IQSA members and sponsors for their generous support.

IQSA members include students and scholars of the Qur’an and related fields from universities and institutions around the world. IQSA facilitates communication among its members, organizes regular world class conferences, sponsors a diverse range of publications, and advocates for the field of Qur’anic Studies in higher education and in the public sphere.

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Aerial view of San Antonio, Texas at night © Aneese stock.adobe.com
IQSA Events 2023

All times listed in the program book are Central Standard Time (CST UTC-6).

P17-105

**Qur’anic Studies: Methodology and Hermeneutics (IQSA)**

Friday, November 17, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk

Theme: **Qur’anic Inimitability (ijaz) and Coherence**

Yousef Wahb, University of Chicago Divinity School

*Early ijaz al-Qur’an Debates: The Transition from Kalām to Balāgha in the Ninth and Tenth Century* (20 min)

Murtaza Shakir, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, Mumbai

*The Doctrine of Ijaz al-Qur’an (Inimitability of the Qur’an), as Explained in the Majālis of the Fatimī Dā’ī al-Mu’ayyad al-Shirāzī* (20 min)

Romain Louge, Université Catholique de Lyon

*A Reading of Some Qur’anic Passages with the Help of an Arabic kalām in al-Qāsim al Rassi* (20 min)

P17-207

**Linguistic, Literary, and Thematic Perspectives on the Qur’anic Corpus (IQSA)**

Friday, November 17, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk

Theme: **Law and Society in the Medinan Qur’an**

Saqib Hussain, Loyola Marymount University

*The Hypocrites and the Jews of Medina* (25 min)

Nora K. Schmid, University of Hamburg/University of Oxford

*The Story of the Slander (hadith al-ifk): Legal Storytelling in the Qur’an and the Sīra* (25 min)

Thomas Hoffmann, University of Copenhagen

*The Qur’an’s Complex Carceral Whole* (25 min)

P17-301a

**The Qur’an and Late Antiquity (IQSA)**

Friday, November 17, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk

Irem Kurt, Universitä Osnabrück

*The Dichotomy of Food Purity: The Qur’anic Terms khabīth and ṭayyīb in the Context of the Urgemeinde of the Qur’an* (30 min)

Hannelies Koloska, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

*Tasting and Seeing the Divine: The Qur’anic Engagement with Late Antique Sensory Piety* (30 min)

Emran El-Badawi, University of Houston

*Q 113–114 and the Amulet of Alexandra: An Exploration* (30 min)

Chris Mezger, Yale University and Hannah Stork, Yale University

*The Precanonical Transmission of the Quran(s): Andreas Kaplony and Quranic Intertextuality* (30 min)

P17-401

**International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA)**

Friday, November 17, 7:00 PM–8:00 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk

Karen Bauer, The Institute of Ismaili Studies, London

*Qur'anic law from Mecca to Medina* (25 min)

Holger Zellentin, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

*Biblical Law in the Medinan Surahs* (25 min)

Discussion (25 min)
IQSA
Friday, 8:00 PM–9:00 PM
Marriott Riverwalk-River Terrace
Theme: IQSA General Reception
IQSA members and affiliates are invited to attend its Annual General Reception following the Presidential Address. Heavy hors d’ouvres and beverages will be provided, in addition to a special presentation by IQSA’s publishing partner, De Gruyter.

P18-129
Linguistic, Literary, and Thematic Perspectives on the Qur’anic Corpus (IQSA)
Saturday, November 18, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Discursive Tools within the Qur’anic Corpus
Abdulla Galadari, Khalifa University of Science & Technology
Clear or Veiled? A Linguistic Attempt to Solve a Qur’anic Paradox (25 min)
Valerie Gonzalez, SOAS, University of London
Understanding Quranic Eschatology through a Peircean Semiotic Reading of the Concepts of Mithal and Isharat (25 min)
Avigail Noy, The University of Texas at Austin
Mathal in the Qur’an and in Poetry: Insights from the Literary Critics (25 min)
Johanne Louise Christiansen, University of Southern Denmark
“We Have Made the Qur’an Easy to Remember, but Are There Any That Are Reminded?” (Q al-Qamar/54:17, 22, 32, 40): The Memory Challenge of Qur’anic Education (25 min)
Masoud Ariankhoo, Harvard University
The Misguiding God: Intratextual Analysis of Ightwā’ as a Gateway to Qur’anic Satanology (25 min)
Discussion (25 min)

P18-245
The Societal Qur’an (IQSA)
Joint Session With: The Societal Qur’an (IQSA), International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA)
Saturday, November 18, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Sura Studies and The Societal Qur’an
Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau, University of Strasbourg (France)
Proto-juz’ Amma Practice: First Centuries Debates about Short Suras Recitation (30 min)
Zakir Demir, Siirt University
The Structure of Sūrah al-Kawthar and Critique of the Claim to be an Independent Miracle (30 min)
Ashher Masood, Yale University
Al-Kawthar and Abraham (30 min)
Adam Flowers, University of Chicago
The Qur’ān as a Tool of Rebellion and Counter-Rebellion in the Early Islamicate World (30 min)
Zeinab Vessal, Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley
Rayat-E-Nasr Ayat: The Quranic Verses in a Safavid Victory Banner (30 min)
Shawkat Toorawa, Yale University, Presiding

P18-335
Qur’anic Studies: Methodology and Hermeneutics (IQSA)
Saturday, November 18, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Quranic Visions of Warfare, Death, and Hell
Mohammad Hassan Khalil, Michigan State University
The Peculiar “Kill Yourselves” Command (Qur’an 2:54) and Al-Maturidi’s Conception of Qur’anic Consistency (20 min)
Javad T. Hashmi, Harvard University
Jihād Until No Fitna: The Pious Manipulation and Theological Militarization of the Qur’ān by the Medieval Exegetes of Islam (20 min)
Andrew O’Connor, St Norbert College
Conversations around the (Hell)fire: Dialogue of the Dead and Damned in the Qur’ān (20 min)
The Qur'an and Late Antiquity (IQSA)
Sunday, November 19, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
Juan Cole, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
The “Seven Sleepers” Tale in Sūrat al-Kahf as an Allegory for the Sasanian Conquest (30 min)
Raymond K. Farrin, American University of Kuwait
Astronomical Events of 607 and 614 CE and the Early Meccan Qur’an (30 min)
Mohsen Goudarzi, Harvard University
Twilight of the Cults: Ancient Worship, Its Discontents, and Religious Polemic in the Qur’anic Milieu (30 min)
Paul Neuenkirchen, University of Bern
Remembrance of God, Prayer, and Constancy as Ways of Fighting Demons Between the Qur’an and Late Antique Ascetic Writings (30 min)
Daniel Bannoura, University of Notre Dame
Iltifāt in the Qur’ān: An examination based on Late Antique literary practices (30 min)

IQSA General Business Meeting
Sunday, November 19, 11:30 AM–1:00 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
All IQSA Members are welcome to attend.

The Societal Qur’an (IQSA)
Sunday, November 19, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: The Societal Qur’an
Lauren Osborne, Whitman College, Presiding
Johanna Pink, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
Beauty and Piety: Framing and Unframing the Qur’an as World Literature in Twentieth-Century Europe (30 min)
Mykhaylo Yakubovych, Freiburg University
A State-Supported Hermeneutics? The Theology of Translations of the Qur’an by the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs (30 min)
Riccardo Amerigo Vigliermo, Unimore, FSCIRE
The “Corano di Maometto”, a Qur’ānic Partial Traduction in Italian Language from the “Biblioteca Universale” Sonzogno (30 min)
Tehseen Thaver, Princeton University
Exegetical Space and the Shaping of Shi‘ī Identity: Shaykh Abu al-Futuh al-Razi’s Persian Qur’an Commentary (30 min)
Francesca Badini, FSCIRE (Palermo)
The Qur’ān as an Instrument of Education: The Legacy of Hasan al-Bannā in Muhammad al-Ġazālī (30 min)

The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition (IQSA)
Monday, November 20, 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition
Shari Lowin, Stonehill College, Presiding
Rachel Claire Dryden, University of Southern Denmark
Q 2:26 “God Is Not Ashamed to Strike a Mathal,” (inna allāhā la yastaḥfī ya‘driba mathalan): Amthāl as an Educational Norm in the Qur’ān? (30 min)
Stephen Burge, Institute of Ismaili Studies
“Cry ‘Havoc!’ and Let Slip the Dogs of War”: Angelic Armies and Martial Language in the Biblical Tradition and the Qur’ān (30 min)
Gabriel Said Reynolds, Notre Dame
Christianity as a Conversation Partner of the Qur’ān (30 min)
Asad Uz Zaman, Ohio State University

The Qur’anic Rejection of an Enochian Etiology of Evil: A Look at Q18:50–51 and Q2:28–39 (30 min)

P20-240

The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition (IQSA)

Monday, November 20, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk

Theme: The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition 2

Shari Lowin, Stonehill College, Presiding
David Penchansky, University of Saint Thomas (Saint Paul, MN)

A Brief Rumor Narrative in Surat-al-Nur and Related Biblical Passages (30 min)
Heydar Davoudi, Northwestern University
Mushite and Aaronite Priesthoods in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an (30 min)
Shari L. Lowin, Stonehill College
“Say: Whosoever Is an Enemy to Gabriel”: Q 2:97 and the Destruction of the Temple (30 min)
Shlomo Zuckier, Institute for Advanced Study and David Gyllenhaal, Institute for Advanced Study

The Puns of Sin: Q2:58-59 in Light of Muqātil b. Sulaymān’s Tafsīr and Its Use of Hebrew Scripture (30 min)

Tugrul Kurt, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
The Identification of Christians in the Qur’an: Christian Groups in the Exegesis of Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān (d.150/767) and Ibn Jarir al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) (30 min)

P20-342

The Qur’an: Manuscripts and Textual Criticism (IQSA)

Monday, November 20, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM
Room: Salon A - Marriott Riverwalk

Abdallah A Elkhateb, Qatar University

A Verse Count Analysis Of MSS Marcel 5, Arabe 335, Leiden Or. 14.545 A and Other MSS Some of the Oldest Qur’ān Fragments in Western Libraries (30 min)

Marijn van Putten, Leiden University

The Scribal Appendices of Three Mamluk Mushafs and the Crystallization of the al-Dūrī/al-Sūsī Divide (30 min)
Hythem Sidky, International Qur’ānic Studies Association

Making the Case for Qur’ānic Case: Evidence for the Existence of an Early Qur’ānic Literary Register (30 min)
Discussion (30 min)
Abstracts and Biographies

P17-105

Qur’anic Studies: Methodology and Hermeneutics (IQSA)
Friday, November 17, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Qur’anic Inimitability (i’jaz) and Coherence

Khalil Andani, Augustana College, Presiding
See biography, page 28.

Yousef Wahb, University of Chicago Divinity School
Early i’jaz al-Qur’an Debates: The Transition from Kalam to Balaghah in the Ninth and Tenth Century (20 min)

Yousef Wahb, University of Chicago, Divinity School
Yousef Aly Wahb is Yaqeen Institute’s Qur’anic Studies Department Research Director, an Islamic Law Instructor at the University of Windsor’s Faculty of Law, LexisNexis Canada Author, and holds a Masters of Law LL.M from the University of Windsor and a Bachelor in Islamic Studies from Al-Azhar University. Wahb is currently completing his second Masters at the University of Chicago Divinity School.

Early i’jaz al-Qur’an Debates: The Transition from Kalam to Balaghah in the Ninth and Tenth Century

In the prologue of his gloss on al-Taftazani’s Mukhtassar in rhetoric balaghah, al-Dasuqi (d. 1230/1815) opined that kalam is not the primary field establishing the inimitability of the Qur’an (i’jaz al-Qur’an). Commenting on al-Taftazani’s assertion that i’jaz al-Qur’an is a fruit of the study of balagha, al-Dasuqi entertains but ultimately rejects the possibility for kalam to be another source for such fruit, remarking that kalam “only aggregately” discusses i’jaz al-Qur’an and does so “by way of conformism and compliance”. Al-Dasuqi’s contention reflects centuries of polemics identifying why the linguistic purity of the Qur’an overpowered the Arabs despite being masters of eloquence, concomitant to developing theological and rhetorical theories of discourse.

Unveiling the objectives of al-Dasuqi’s disciplinary positioning of i’jaz necessitates rewinding more than ten centuries prior to his time to identify when and how kalam was first involved in proving i’jaz al-Qur’an. As implied in the Qur’an, i’jaz can be acknowledged by merely hearing its speech: “and if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah. Then deliver him to his place of safety.” The aesthetics and rhetoric of the text have not been a focus of Qur’anic studies in Western scholarship. Instead, the issue of i’jaz is merely treated as part of the historical perspective of Islamic theology or in the dialectical experience of the Muslim community. Early Muslim theologians formed different theories to conceptualize the miraculous nature of the Qur’an. Some sought to distinguish the Qur’an’s eloquence from that of poetry, while others grappled with the subjectivity of tasting the rhetorical flair. The formidable task of comprehensively understanding Qur’anic literary aesthetics provoked others to consider whether God incapacitated the pre-Islam Arabs, who otherwise had wonderous literary skills, from emulating the Qur’an. Focusing on early competing theological and rhetorical engagement with i’jaz, this paper seeks to: I) trace the 9th-10th century definitional development of the terms inimitability (i’jaz) and incapacity (’ajz), in relation to the keywords of sign (ayah), miracle (mu’jizah), challenge (tahaddi), and counter-response (mu’aradah), and II) lay out the theological framework triggering the Mu’tazili doctrine of sarfah which obfuscated these terms’ connotations and, consequently, the disciplinary locus of i’jaz al-Qur’an discourse.

Murtaza Shakir, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, Mumbai
The Doctrine of i’jaz al-Qur’an (Inimitability of the Qur’an), as Explained in the Majalis of the Fatimi Da’i al-Mu’ayyad al-Shirazi (20 min)

Murtaza Shakir, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah
Murtaza Shakir was born and raised in Mumbai, India. He holds an M.A. in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, Surat, a B.A. in Arabic Language and Literature from Al-Azhar University, Cairo and a second M.A. in Islamic Studies from Columbia University, New York. He has been a lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies for eleven years in Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah.
He specializes in Fatimi-Isma‘ili studies and is currently working on a number of academic projects in that field. He has presented his research papers in numerous international conferences, the most recent being his paper on the history of the shrine of Sayyida Nafisa in Cairo, presented at the International Medieval Congress at Leeds.

The Doctrine of iṣṭiṣlaḥ ṣaḥḥah al-Majalis (Inimitability of the Qur’an), as Explained in the Majalis of the Fatimi Da‘i al-Mu‘ayyad al-Shirazi

The majalis (sermons) of the Fatimi Da‘i, al-Mu‘ayyad al-Shirazi, held in the 11th century CE/5th century AH, hold a significant place in representing the theological concepts validated by the Fatimi imam-caliphs, who ruled in North Africa and parts of the Arab world for nearly two centuries. One of those fundamental theological concepts explained by al-Da‘i al-Mu‘ayyad is the notion of iṣṭiṣlaḥ ṣaḥḥah (inimitability of the Qur’an), a doctrine that has been one of the primary areas of debate in Islamic theological discussions since that period up until modern times, especially in the genre of literature associated with “signs of prophethood”. The numerous works produced from the ninth to the early eleventh centuries suggest that the contemporary academia of Imamate, and on the other side when juxtaposed with other contemporary interpretations, provided a framework to understand the distinctive characteristic of the Fatimi-Isma‘ili discourse in this context. In elucidating the concept of iṣṭiṣlaḥ ṣaḥḥah, the majalis of al-Da‘i al-Mu‘ayyad, in the paradigm of Fatimi-Isma‘ili traditions illustrate a variety of intricate themes that embody a certain characteristic of mutually harmonizing religious belief with rationality, without compromising its foundational principles.

Romain Louge, Université Catholique de Lyon
A Reading of Some Qur’anic Passages with the Help of an Arabic kalam in al-Qasim al Rassi (20 min)

Romain Louge, Université Catholique de Lyon
Fr. Romain Louge is a priest of the archdiocese of Marseille in France. He currently is the parish priest of Saint Eugene d’Endoume Parish. He holds a master’s degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies from the Pontifical Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI) in Rome. He’s currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Catholic University of Lyon, preparing a dissertation in Catholic theology on the birth of Arabic Christian theology and its link to Islamic theology. His main research areas are the Bible and Qur’an, Christian and Islamic kalam as well as research on a new way to live interreligious dialogue between Christians and Muslims.

A Reading of Some Qur’anic Passages with the Help of an Arabic kalam in al-Qasim al Rassi

The new religious paradigm that appears in the 7th century is the source of a lot of change in the Middle East. Islam and its great and rapid expansion offer a new way of political, social, cultural, linguistic life. The shift from the different languages as Greek, Syriac and others to Arabic marks the opening of new cultural exchanges and specially in the theological milieu. Indeed, Christians in the area are soon changing their liturgy into Arabic and to write about their faith in Arabic. The first Christian theological writing in Arabic is found in a manuscript from the 8th century from mount Sinai. The text holds an apologetical goal while being written in an Islamic way. The core of the presentation of the unknown author is to defend the Christian faith at this time where Islam is gaining power and space throughout the world. The two main topics developed are the identity of God and the unity in the Trinity and the identity of Jesus and Christology. The methodology used by the author is simple: he develops analogy and scriptural proof to demonstrate the accuracy of Christian theology. The response to these first steps into Christian theology in Arabic is interesting specially in the opus of al-Qasim al-Rassi (785–860) in his radd ‘ala al-Nasara. He uses the same methodology the author used in the treaty of Christian theology: he uses analogy and the quotation of scriptures either biblical or from the Qur’an and then shifts to negative theology and opens a door after him to a new relationship between Muslim scholars and Christian scriptures.
The goal of this presentation is to present this new method to do theology, presenting it as an Arabic *kalam*, and then focus on the opus of al-Qasim al-Rassi and see how this Arabic *kalam* with the help of the Bible and reason is a source of hermeneutic of some Qur’anic passages.

**P17-207**

**Linguistic, Literary, and Thematic Perspectives on the Qur’anic Corpus (IQSA)**

Friday, November 17, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk

Theme: *Law and Society in the Medinan Qur’an*

Mohsen Goudarzi, Harvard University, Presiding
Saqib Hussain, Loyola Marymount University

*The Jews and the munafiqun in the Medinan Qur’an* (25 min)

**Saqib Hussain, Loyola Marymount University**

Saqib Hussain is Assistant Professor at Loyola Marymount University. He teaches courses on the Qur’an, early Islam, and comparative theology. His primary research interests include the Qur’an and the biblical tradition, surah structure, and Qur’anic Law. He holds a D.Phil. from the University of Oxford.

*The Jews and the munafiqun in the Medinan Qur’an*

The past two decades have witnessed an exponential growth in interest in the audience to whom Muhammad proclaimed the Qur’an, and whose various reactions to the revelation are recorded in the scripture, including the pagan opponents to Muhammad in Mecca, the Jews in Medina, and the types of Christians with whom the Qur’anic community may have been familiar. The identity and beliefs of these various communities have all been productively revisited, and the Qur’an has come into ever sharper focus the better we have been able to understand them. One major component of the Qur’an’s Medinan audience, however, has received virtually no attention: the *munafiqun*. Commonly translated as “the Hypocrites,” the *munafiqun* professed belief in Muhammad’s message, yet were not fully committed to his cause, harbored misgivings about his revelation, and liaised with the community’s enemies. Despite their evident political and theological significance, there has been no in-depth study of this group. My paper will examine one specific question in relation to this group: Are the Hypocrites entirely distinct from the Jews of Medina, or do they at least partially overlap?

This question is particularly relevant for understanding the passage Q al-Baqara 2:8–20, which will be the primary focus of this study. Several phrases in the passage overlap with the Qur’an’s polemic elsewhere against the Hypocrites: these people say they believe in God but they do not really believe (v. 8; cf. Q al-Tawbah 9:45), they attempt to deceive the believers with their show of faith (v. 9; cf. Q al-Munafiqun 63:1), and they mock and belittle the believers (v. 13; cf. Q 63:7–8). On the other hand, there are also indications that the passage is addressing Medinan Jews, rather than hypocrites, such as the accusation that they spread discord (*fasad*) in the land (vv. 11–12; cf. Q al-Nisa’ 5:64) and that they are two-faced, telling the believers that they too believe, while scornfully rejecting the believers in private (v. 14); both accusations occur later in the surah with respect to the Jews (vv. 60 and 76 respectively). This unclarity in the identity of the polemical target in the Q 2:8–20 passage is reflected in the exegetical tradition, with the Qur’an commentators split over whether these verses refer to Jews or Hypocrites. I will argue that the Qur’an here purposefully conflates the two groups to indicate a connection in its theological taxonomy between the two. After analyzing the Q 2 passage, I will then examine several other passages in the Qur’an which attest to this connection either explicitly or implicitly (e.g., Q 5:52, 47:16, 59:11).

Nora K. Schmid, University of Hamburg/University of Oxford

*The Story of the Slander (hadith al-ifk): Legal Storytelling in the Qur’an and the Sirah* (25 min)

**Nora K. Schmid, University of Oxford**

See biography, page 53.

*The Story of the Slander (hadith al-ifk): Legal Storytelling in the Qur’an and the Sirah*

Legal stories play an important role in the “nomian world” (Fraade 2005) of early Islam. In the world of nomos, law and legal narrative are intertwined. This paper takes the incident of the slander alluded to in Q al-Nur 24:11–18 as a point of departure to examine strategies of legal storytelling in the Qur’an, the *Sirah*, and in Hadith. The slanderous allegations to which Q al-Nur 24:11–18 refer are traditionally linked to the story of the trial and exoneration of Muhammad’s wife ‘A’ishah, who is said to have faced allegations of adultery after a raid against the *Banu Mustaliq* when she was inadvertently left behind by her kin.
The hadith al-ifk (“Story/Incident of the Slander”) has received some scholarly attention—it has, for example, been studied in the framework of ‘A’ishah’s biography (Abbott 1942, 27–38), in light of communal debate and memory (Spellberg 1994, 61–99), and with a focus on ‘A’ishah’s linguistic performance, which engages gender and authority (Walker/Sells 1999). However, the role the story and its literary strategies played in shaping legal discourse has not so far been examined. In the Qur’an, the incident of the slander is evoked in abstract terms and embedded within regulations pertaining to adultery at the opening of Q al-Nur 24, including the punishment of adulterers, among others. The ensuing narrative of the slander hedges this legal discourse by warning those who cast aspersion on the chastity of innocents, a danger explicitly regulated in vv. 4–10. In the Sira and Hadith, the story of the slander is narrated in detail as the story of a legal trial. The emphasis on ‘A’ishah’s weeping ties the story to gendered practices of mourning, which are also reflected in pre-Islamic elegiac poetry: a woman’s copious tears here function as a signifier for a yet unanswerwed call for vengeance and restoration of justice addressed primarily to male kin. ‘A’ishah furthermore declines to defend herself in her own words and instead refers to the trials “Joseph’s father” underwent (Q Yusuf 12:18). This Qur’anic reference connects ‘A’ishah’s experience during her trial to the salvation historical experience of Jacob who suffered through and patiently bore the betrayal of his closest kin, his own sons. I argue that storytelling reinforces legal discourse on slander in the Qur’an, the Sirah, and in Hadith by providing an ethical and affective framing.

Thomas Hoffmann, University of Copenhagen

The Qur’an’s Complex Carceral Whole

Prisons, prisoners, imprisonment, and captivity is a crucial and harsh subject in several scriptures closely related to Qur’an, first and foremost the biblical scriptures. In many biblical texts, this subject — concurrent with notions of bondage and freedom, crime and punishment, suffering and liberation — constitutes an important narrative, metaphorical, and homiletic feature. The captivity, bondage of Israel in Egypt and its liberating exodus is central for Judaism. The role of imprisonment for Jesus and Paul is central to Christian theology and imagery. Prisons and imprisonment are ‘good to think with’, as the late Claude Lévi-Strauss put it. It is indeed hard to overestimate the complex and defining role of captivity and imprisonment for the social and mental history, theology, and culture of these religions. Fortunately, the field of pre-modern carceral studies has developed considerably in recent years. Regarding early Islam, the most significant studies seem to devote themselves to post-Qur’anic traditions and practices as attested in hadith, sirah, fiqh, administrative records, and archaeological findings (Schneider 1995, Anthony 2009, Sijpesteijn 2018, Tillier 2008, Gould 2012). In Qur’anic studies, the subject of the prison and imprisonment in the Qur’an has, however, only been noticed in passing. Hence, a focused study of its wider semantic, thematic and literary configurations in the Qur’an is a desideratum. The lack of monographies and the relatively brief entries in Encyclopaedia of Islam/the Qur’an on “Sidjn” and “Prisoners” attest to this state of affairs. In this paper, I attempt to outline the different semantic, grammatical and rhetorical valorizations and functions of relevant roots (especially s-j-n, ‘s-r, h-s-r, but also roots like gh-l-l, s-j-r, s-f-d, n-k-l, q-r-n, w-q-f, z-b-n) and their implementations in lemmata directly or indirectly connected to what could be called the Qur’an’s complex carceral whole. This complex carceral whole exhibits an ambivalent attitude to incarceration. On the one hand, the carceral is associated with humiliation, weakness, suffering, injustice, even Hell; on the other, with triumph, strength, truth, just punishment and release. Carceral themes and motifs are related to both God and Pharaoh, to both prophets and unbelievers, to past, present and future (eschatological) narratives. Furthermore, the complex carceral whole seems to be rooted in deeply embodied and spatial language associated with physical force, bodily strength but also confinement, binding and cramped space. Finally, I will attempt to show how the theme of the carceral is central to late antique notions of slavery, empire, pact and obligation and ultimately the notion of islam.

Thomas Hoffmann, University of Copenhagen

The Qur’an’s Complex Carceral Whole (25 min)

Thomas Hoffmann, University of Copenhagen

Thomas Hoffmann is Professor (with special responsibilities) in Qur’anic Studies at the Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen. M.A. in Comparative Religion and Ph.D. on the dissertation The Poetic Qur’an: Studies on Qur’anic Poeticity (Harrassowitz Verlag 2007). Most recent publication in English: “The Appealing Qur’an: On the Rhetorical Strategy of Vocatives and Interpellation in the Qur’an,” JQS 22.1, 2020. Currently, he is Principal Investigator for the Danish Research Fund project “Ambiguity and Precision in the Qur’an.”
Karen Bauer, The Institute of Isma’ili Studies, London

Qur’anic Law from Mecca to Medina (25 min)

Karen Bauer, The Institute of Isma’ili Studies, London

Karen Bauer (Ph.D., Princeton) is a Senior Research Associate in the Qur’anic Studies Unit of the Institute of Isma’ili Studies. Her work focuses on the Qur’an and its reception history, women and gender in Islamic thought, and the history of emotions in Islam, beginning with the Qur’an. Her publications include Patronage as Piety: Women, Households and the Hereafter in the Qur’an (with Feras Hamza, 2023); An Anthology of Qur’anic Commentaries, Vol. II: On Women (with Feras Hamza, 2021); Gender Hierarchy in the Qur’an: Medieval Interpretations, Modern Responses (Cambridge, 2015); Aims, Methods and Contexts of Qur’anic Exegesis (ed., Oxford, 2013), and a number of articles.

Qur’anic Law from Mecca to Medina

This paper examines the nature of commands in the Qur’an and the question of whether there is continuity between Meccan and Medinan commands. Scholars have long posited that there is a substantial change between Meccan and Medinan content in the Qur’an, with the most obvious example being the call to active militancy in Medinan surahs. Scholars such as Fred Donner, David Marshall, Nicolai Sinai, and others all argue for an “activist” trend in Medinan surahs; scholars such as Mark Durie and Walid Saleh take this argument further to claim that the theology of the Qur’an changed substantially to a theology of violence or warfare in the Medinan period. Durie and Saleh have both used language implying that the religion itself changed in Medina. None of these scholars have delved into the implications of the Qur’an’s focus on communal propriety and the household sphere. This paper focuses on the specific terminology as well as the content of verses on modesty, sexual propriety, and slander, which shows substantial agreement between Meccan and Medinan content, although the form and level of detail varies. Therefore, while a Meccan story might allude to the moral dangers of slander in one brief verse, Medinan surahs spell out those dangers at great length, and prescribes punishment for infractions. The examples given in this paper show not only that there is continuity between Meccan and Medinan surahs, but also that rulings on the household sphere and personal propriety are important in the Qur’an’s overall moral trajectory, its theology, and its law. These examples also call into question what counts as law in the Qur’an.

There has been a quiet disagreement about the very nature of Qur’anic law. Joseph Lowry posits that it involves repeatable actions and not mental dispositions, while Johanne Christiansen and Nora Schmid have both called such assertions into question. The paper suggests that what might broadly be characterized as Qur’anic law operates in different ways: some verses enforce boundaries that must not be crossed (for instance, slander or improper treatment of the wife in marriage or divorce), and others outline minimal limits of action that must be taken and which may lead to ever-increasing states of purity.

Holger Zellentin, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

Biblical Law in the Medinan Surahs (25 min)

Holger Zellentin, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

Holger Zellentin (Ph.D. Princeton, 2007) teaches religion at the University of Tübingen, with a focus on Talmudic and Qur’anic studies. He combines literary, legal and historical approaches in order to understand shared and diverging patterns within Jewish, Christian and early Islamic cultural traditions. His most recent monograph is Law Beyond Israel: From the Bible to the Qur’an (OUP 2022). He has received funding from the European Research Council, the British Academy, and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK), and has been awarded a Philip Leverhulme Prize (2014) as well as an ERC Consolidator Grant, The Qur’an as a Source for Late Antiquity (2020–2025). He currently serves as the chair of the board of the International Qur’anic Studies Association, and has previously served on the steering committee of the British Association for Jewish Studies.

Biblical Law in the Medinan Surahs

What is Qur’anic law? The most robust definition is offered by Lowry (2017), who defines as legal any of the Qur’an’s commandments to “engage in specific, repeatable physical (i.e., not purely mental) conduct.” Yet this definition has rightfully been questioned by Christiansen (2021) and Schmid (2021), both of whom show that even the most nuanced distinction between the physical and the purely mental can be collapsed. In effect, I hold that any attempt categorically to distinguish between the Qur’an’s physical and mental commandments is necessarily secondary to the kerygmatic imperatives of the text itself.
Such attempts to define “law” obviously become relevant in the translation of the divine message into societal practice, as has been attempted in traditional Islamic legal discourse, yet they do not do justice to the historical-critical academic analysis of the text’s initial promulgation. A more fruitful academic approach to Qur’anic law must jettison later constructs in favor of the text’s own conceptual framework. In this sense, I argue that the notion of “biblical law” is indeed operational in the Qur’an, as can be illustrated by focusing on both its “legal narratives” and its “legal clusters.” The Qur’an’s “legal narratives,” typically spread out throughout the Meccan and Medinan surahs, establish the provenance, application, and historical development of God’s law. They pertain to 1) pre-Israelite law, 2) the tablets as source of law, 3) figures enforcing the law and 4) figures abrogating and confirming the law. The Qur’an’s “legal clusters” are those agglomerations of verses, mainly in Medinan surahs, in which it instructs its audience on how to fulfil specific legal obligations, which can be subdivided into four subsets according to their presentation in the text itself. These are 1) foundational law clusters, 2) dietary law clusters, 3) sexual law clusters and 4) atonement and punishment clusters. The Qur’anic legal narratives thus sanction its specific legal prescriptions, which in turn translate the narratives into action. Both the narratives and the laws that the Qur’an relates to the Bible, finally, are indeed deeply rooted in, yet at no point fully commensurate with, legal material found in the Hebrew Bible, in the New Testament, and in these Scriptures’ late antique Jewish and Christian interpretations. By following the Qur’an’s internal organization of its legal narratives and legal clusters, I propose a historical categorization that illustrates a pivot towards both biblical and traditional Arabian law and towards biblical legal narratives in the Medinan surahs, thereby offering a more pragmatic approach to defining Qur’anic law.

Irem Kurt, Universität Osnabrück

Irem Kurt is a research associate at the Institute for Islamic Theology at the Universität Osnabrück. She holds a M.A. in Islamic Law and Islamic Theology and a B.A. in Islamic Theology from Marmara University in Istanbul, Turkey. Her research focuses on food purity in Islam, current Fatwa Discourse and Women in Islamic Law.

The Dichotomy of Food Purity: The Qur’anic Terms khabith and tayyib in the Context of the Urgemeinde of the Qur’an

In Islamic legal literature, several criteria are used to determine whether a food is halal or haram (not permissible). These criteria include the origin of the food (e.g., whether it comes from an animal that was slaughtered in a specific way), the presence of prohibited ingredients (e.g., alcohol), and how the food was prepared. The terms khabith and tayyib are used to define purity and impurity concerning food. Khabith refers to dirt and ritual impurity, while tayyib refers to clean and desirable things. While the term khabith serves as textual evidence for the substantial purity of food, the term tayyib seems never to be technically a decisive factor for prohibition or permission. However, these terms are not limited to material things and also implicate immaterial attributes such as morality, good and evil. For example, in the Qur’an, the term khabith describes immorality, hypocrisy, and disbelief and is often associated with the devil. In contrast, the term tayyib describes good human attributes, blessings from God, and desirable things. The early Muslim exegesis reveals that the term khabith was understood as legal impurity of food. In legal discussion, however, the term khabith develops into an indicator of substantively unpermissible food — animals evoking disgust. On the other side, the term tayyib describes things that humankind desires. But according to early tafsir literature, the term was never a condition or additional attribute of permissibility. Instead, it represented the status quo — the desirability of food — before prohibition. The use of these terms in the context of its Urgemeinde, that is, the question of how the first recipients of the Qur’an understood and thus adopted or transformed these terms from the Qur’an, requires a critical examination of Jewish, Christian, and Jewish-Christian sources. As a dynamic communication process, the Qur’an adopts certain concepts, including ethical concepts, of its time of revelation and processes them.
The question of the immediate canonical, but particularly non-canonical, i.e., apocryphal and pseudopigraphical Jewish or Christian sources, therefore, constitutes an essential point concerning the interpretation of the Qur'an. The study may explore how these different dietary practices and food choices helped shape the religions’ social boundaries and identities. It may also consider how food was used to define and maintain group boundaries and how it contributed to the creation of social, cultural, and religious distinctions between different communities.

Hannelies Koloska, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Tasting and Seeing the Divine: The Qur’anic Engagement with Late Antique Sensory Piety (30 min)**

Hannelies Koloska is senior lecturer at the Department of Comparative Religion at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and principal investigator of the ERC research project VISIONIS – “Visuality in the Qur’an and Early Islam”. Her work focuses on historical and literary studies on the Qur'an, Islamic exegesis, gender related studies in classical Islamic literature and visual and material culture studies.

**Tasting and Seeing the Divine – The Qur’anic Engagement with Late Antique Sensory Piety**

Hearing, seeing, taste, touch, and smell — in the Qur’an, the domain of sensation is broad. The senses serve as an essential instrument of human experience, as a source of knowledge, and as a prerequisite for, as well as an impediment to, spiritual insight. The senses of hearing and seeing, while prone to causing deception, play a major role as a means of perception and as a vehicle for faith. Smell and taste are the paramount tools of discernment of matters in the afterlife. The sense of touch is depicted as the most carnal of the senses: it is viscerally immediate and inherently dangerous and deceptive. Comprehensive scholarly reappraisal of the Qur’anic deployment of and recurrence to sense perception in their literary, historical, and theological contexts is still outstanding. Attention has been mainly drawn to the sense of hearing as the primary mode of sensory perception in and of the Qur’an (Kermani; Graham 2006) and a few other studies were published regarding vision and taste (Rippin 2000; Koloska 2016; Hoffmann 2019).

The lack of a wider range of sensory studies in Qur’anic Studies is even more surprising considering the wide range of studies that focus on the importance of sense perception in late antique religious practices and theological debates. Lange’s article on Qur’anic anosmia gives a first smell of the unexploited treasures of the Qur’an’s active participation in the ‘age of sensory piety’ (Lange 2022). This paper will give an overview over the Qur’anic tension that is observable throughout the text between, on the one hand, verses that support a fully embodied or sentient engagement with this world and the next, to the point of enabling a sensory experience of the next world in this life already, and on the other hand, verses that restrain and discipline the senses in this world and the next, to the point of denying the possibility of sensing the beyond while still alive, or the need to sense the beyond as a confirmatory miracle. It will thereby discuss how the Qur’anic text adopts and negates late antique understandings of the senses and their use, using as case studies the request for an observable miracle by Abraham (Q al-Baqarah 2:260) and the demand for tasting the divine by Jesus’ disciples (Q al-Ma’ida 5:112-115).

Emran El-Badawi, University of Houston

**Q 113–114 and the Amulet of Alexandra: An Exploration (30 min)**

**Q 113-114 and the Amulet of Alexandra—An Exploration**

Islamic tradition hints that the final two surahs of the Qur’anic corpus—Q al-Falaq 113:1–5 and Q al-Nas 114:1–5—may be of unique provenance. It is reported that the Qur’anic codex of the companion ‘Abdallah b. Mas’ud excluded these surahs, doubting their authenticity. The surahs stand out from a literary perspective as well, given their common formulaic invocation “say!” (qul) for the purpose of warding off evil.
Medieval exegetes (tafsir) weave several anecdotes from the life of Muhammad around these short surahs; while modern scholarship has progressed little further than recognizing distinct qualities of these short texts. The content and style of Q 113-114 are entirely different than the rest of the Qur’an, and belong to a category of short amulets protecting the owner from magic spells and demonic beings. The amulet under consideration here comes from the 4th century CE, and belonged to a young woman called Alexandra, who evidently came from Beirut. The Greek text of the amulet demonstrates that the young woman was in danger from all manner of assault by demons. Alexandra may have been possessed and undergone exorcism. The late antique context of the amulet divulges the state of constant fear under which people lived, especially young women. This is the same context which produced the cult of the Christian martyrs, including women who chose death to suffering rape at the hands of Roman soldiers. Moreover, this context demonstrates that public life had become perilous with renewed Roman-Persian hostilities and militarization, the patrolling of the Near East and Eastern Mediterranean by imperial armies, and the destabilization of trade and marketplace life. The protective invocations employed in the amulet of Alexandra bear a number of resemblances with Q 113 – 114. These literary qualities are examined in this paper, and yield helpful hints about what the final two Qur’anic surahs may have originally been, and the context in which they appeared. Borrowing insights from modern studies (Silke Trzcionka, Christopher Faraone, and others) and late antique literature—notably John Chrysostom (d. 407)—concerning magic in late antique Syria, my tentative conclusion is that they were protective amulets to be worn or pronounced over those suffering from demon possession and magical spells, perhaps during the widespread turmoil in Arabia during the late 6th and early 7th century CE.

Chris Mezger, Yale University

Chris Mezger is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University whose work focuses on language contact and the social history of the Near East, especially Iraq, in Late Antiquity and the early Islamic period. His dissertation is about language contact between Aramaic and Arabic after the Islamic conquests, and the effects of Arabization on dwindling Aramaic-speaking communities across the Near East up to ca. 1000 CE.

Hannah Stork, Yale University

Hannah Stork is a Ph.D. student in Religious Studies at Yale University. Hannah studies the interactions between various Near Eastern Christian populations and the first Muslim communities in Late Antiquity, focusing on the assorted processes of identity construction at work in those interactions. She is especially interested in the place of language and the role of multilingualism and language contact in the development of philosophies of language and the conception of holy languages in interreligious, multicultural contexts.

The Precanonical Transmission of the Qur’an(s): Andreas Kaplony and Qur’anic Intertextuality

This paper investigates the distribution of Qur’anic intertextual references to the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and other Jewish and Christian texts of Late Antiquity, as collected by Gabriel Reynolds in The Qur’an and the Bible. By comparing this distribution of references to the division of surahs proposed by Andreas Kaplony in 2018 based on shared and almost mutually exclusive terminology for God, heaven, and hell, I show that the intertextual references turn out to be strongly skewed toward one particular group, i.e., the one featuring the alternative name for God rabb al-‘alamin. This is especially true if considering only references to the Bible (HB/NT) itself — more than 80% are in the rabb al-‘alamin group, which only constitutes about half of the Qur’an. Building on Kaplony’s proposal that the Qur’an’s surahs are of ‘diverse provenance,’ these results suggest that the transmission of the rabb al-‘alamin surahs was correlated with people already familiar with biblical texts — most likely Jews, Christians, or other ‘peoples of the Book.’ In combination with Hannah Stork’s discovery that the same surahs also contain a large majority of the Qur’an’s loanwords, our results imply that more diverse and cosmopolitan social groups with looser social networks may have been behind the transmission of the rabb al-‘alamin surahs.

Chris Mezger, Yale University & Hannah Stork, Yale University

The Precanonical Transmission of the Qur’an(s): Andreas Kaplony and Qur’anic Intertextuality (30 min)
We explore the ramifications for future research in this vein, including the possibility of a period before the standardization of the Qur’an which featured multiple versions of the Qur’an in circulation.

P17-401

International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA)
Friday, November 17, 7:00 PM–8:00 PM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Presidential Address

Fred Donner, University of Chicago, President
Fred Donner is a distinguished historian and scholar renowned for his contributions to the field of early Islamic history. Donner earned his Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago. Over the course of his career, he has held numerous prestigious positions in academia, including professorships at the University of Chicago and the University of Chicago Divinity School. One of his most notable works, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (2010), challenges traditional narratives about the early Islamic period. In this groundbreaking book, Donner argues for a more inclusive and diverse view of the early Islamic community, highlighting the social and religious dynamics that shaped the religion’s foundational years.

“A Historian’s View of Qur’anic Studies”
Karen Bauer, Institute of Isma’ili Studies, Responding

See biography, page 12.

IQSA’s General Reception will follow the Presidential Address, featuring a special presentation by De Gruyter Publishers. Details to come.

P18-129

Linguistic, Literary, and Thematic Perspectives on the Qur’anic Corpus (IQSA)
Saturday, November 18, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Discursive Tools within the Qur’anic Corpus

Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau, University of Strasbourg, Presiding
Abdulla Galadari, Khalifa University of Science & Technology

Clear or Veiled? A Linguistic Attempt to Solve a Qur’anic Paradox (25 min)

Abdulla Galadari, Khalifa University of Science & Technology
Abdulla Galadari is an Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at Khalifa University. His field is in Qur’anic hermeneutics and the Qur’an’s possible engagement with Near Eastern traditions in Late Antiquity including biblical and rabbinic literature. He uses a multidisciplinary approach towards the Qur’an, such as using cognitive science of religion and philology. He is the author of *Qur’anic Hermeneutics: Between Science, History, and the Bible* (2018), *Metaphors of Death and Resurrection in the Qur’an: An Intertextual Approach with Biblical and Rabbinic Literature* (2021), and *The Spiritual Meanings of the Hajj Rituals: A Philological Approach* (2021).

Clear or Veiled? A Linguistic Attempt to Solve a Qur’anic Paradox
What the Qur’an means by “mubin” (clear) has fascinated many Qur’anic scholars, such as Claude Gilliot, Pierre Larcher, and Stefan Wild, especially in the Qur’anic self-reference as being in clear Arabic, “bi-lisan ‘arabi mubin” (i.e., *Q al-Shu'ara’ 26:195*). Angelika Neuwirth also highlights the problem of an unanswered contradiction within the Qur’an in her reading of *Q Al ‘Imran 3:7* that states that there are “mutashabihat” (usually understood as ambiguous) verses in the Qur’an, while other parts of the Qur’an suggest that it is “mubin” (clear). She rhetorically asks that if the Qur’an self-proclaims to be “mubin” (clear), “why should there be ambiguous verses.” This ambiguity of what the Qur’an means by “mubin” has sparked a scholarly debate not only to define or redefine its meaning, but also what the Qur’an means by “arabi,” if it is the Arabic language, and if so which specific dialect or even dialects of Arabic.
The Qur’an explicitly highlights the key to its own understanding is linguistic, emphasizing its language as the key to unlocking its code (e.g., Q Yusuf 12:2). Nonetheless, the Qur’an provides us with an enigma: while on one hand, it is in a language that is “‘arabi” and “mubin” (assumed to mean clear Arabic) (i.e., Q 26:195), it still challenged its own audience to grasp its meaning, stating that God places veils (akinnah) in people’s hearts so that they would not comprehend it (e.g., Q al-Isra’ 17:46). So, is the Qur’an in clear Arabic, or is it veiled and, by definition, obscured and unclear? A possible solution to this apparent paradox is recognizing the linguistic dichotomy between a word (the signifier) and its meaning (the signified), as emphasized by Ferdinand de Saussure. While a word (the signifier) can be very clear, its meaning (the signified) can be unclear. In other words, the language of the Qur’an, which is made of signifiers, is clear, including the disjointed letters (muqatta‘at). For example, “alif-lam-mim” is clear. The “alif” is clearly “alif”. However, what it is signifying (i.e., the signified) may be unclear. Thus, the language of the Qur’an, which is made up of signifiers is clear (mubin), but what it means when using such clear (mubin) signifiers is perhaps unclear or veiled (makanun). As such, the Qur’an’s self-referentiality is not necessarily a paradox, but is nuanced in its use of language with its signs and symbols recognizing the dichotomy between the signifier and the signified.

Valerie Gonzalez, SOAS, University of London
Understanding Qur’anic Eschatology through a Peircean Semiotic Reading of the Concepts of Mithal and Isharat (25 min)

Valerie Gonzalez is Research Associate at SOAS, University of London. She is a specialist of Islamic art history, aesthetics and visual culture. She obtained a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies, University of Provence Aix-Marseille, and a Master of Fine Arts in painting, School of Fine Arts, Marseille-Luminy. Her research addresses conceptual issues and creative processes in Islamic artistic practices past and present. Her 5 books include: Aesthetic Hybridity in Mughal Painting, 1526–1658 (Ashgate 2015); Le piège de Salomon, La pensée de l’art dans le Coran (Albin Michel, 2002), and Beauty and Islam, Aesthetics of Islamic Art and Architecture (IBTauris, 2001).

Understanding Qur’anic Eschatology through a Peircean Semiotic Reading of the Concepts of Mithal and Isharat

This paper proposes a reflection on the nature of the eschatological account in the Qur’an. Following the Qur’anic wording, this account inscribes the ontological relationship between this world and the next in the former’s phenomenality, even though the latter’s true constitution will reveal itself at the The Hour’s advent. This consubstantiality told in words raises the ontotheological question of the Qur’anic cosmogonic articulation between the seen and the unseen beyond the appearances of rhetoric. Is the Qur’anic description of the hereafter a symbolic construct, a mythology or an allegory conveying an unfathomable abstraction, or the direct presentation of a sacred supranatural reality phenomenologically as graspable as the text tells us? While the studies do not provide clear explanations of this problematic, a prominent scholarly current seems to favor the symbolic interpretation or, at least, gives the impression to do so by consistently using in the analyses a critical apparatus filled with symbolizing concepts such as the metaphor, the parable and the binary of the apparent and hidden meaning. A priori supporting this current, the extensive presence of these concepts in the Qur’anic text in effect only complicates the problem. However, in accordance with the conceptual differentiation between expression and meaning, what may appear symbolic at the wording’s rhetorical level, may not necessarily signify symbolically at the semantic level. This differentiation is, in my view, not properly heeded. I will therefore demonstrate that the mechanisms of symbolic meaning in the Qur’an ought to be reconsidered with the aid of an updated methodology specifically attending to phenomena of language such as metaphor theory, phenomenology of expression and semiotics. The semiotic examination of the terminology of mithal and isharat associated with the notions of exemplarity, model, likeness and sign will serve this demonstration, with the aid of the famed semiotician Charles S. Pierce’s model of the icon-symbol-index triad.
Avigail Noy, The University of Texas at Austin
Mathal in the Qur’an and in Poetry: Insights from the Literary Critics (25 min)

Avigail Noy is a scholar of classical Arabic literature and Islamic civilization. She specializes in Arabic poetics and literary theory, the Arabic linguistic tradition, Qur’anic hermeneutics, and adab. She has published articles on early Islamic conceptions of metaphorical language and on the legacy of the influential linguist, ‘Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani. Her current book project explores the development of Arabic poetics in the thirteenth century.

Mathal in the Qur’an and in Poetry: Insights from the Literary Critics

Mathal (literally: similitude) is one of the best-known features in the Qur’an. It includes different phenomena in English ranging from “extended explicit comparisons [...] [to] example stories, parables [...] and allegories” (Zahniser 2004). Poets, too, had a habit of striking parables (amthal) in their verse, a fact that did not go unnoticed by the medieval Arabic literary critics. The critics dealt with this topic under several headings, most notably tamthil (literally, adducing a mathal), but also mumathalah, tadhyl, and takhyil. The critics’ illustrative examples always include Qur’anic verses. In this paper I explore to what extent the critics’ insights can reveal something about the structure of the mathal within the larger discourse and about the aim of inserting it, both in poetry and in the Qur’an. In doing so I ask the following two questions: (1) Is there a “prototype” mathal that the critics associate with the Qur’an, and if so, what was its nature? Preliminary research points to the extended explicit comparison but also to parables. I will take into account the Qur’an’s own statements about mathal. (2) Can the poetic examples that the critics adduce tell us something about the structure (or grammar) of mathal in the Qur’an, i.e., its placement within the larger surah or subsection within the surah? In poetry the mathal (or at least one type of mathal) must appear at the end of a line, after the poet has already established his so-called lesson or moral. The biggest challenge to this study is the varying meanings of mathal and tamthil in the sources, even within those by terminologically minded scholars such as ‘Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani (5th/11th c.).

Johanne Louise Christiansen, University of Southern Denmark
“We Have Made the Qur’an Easy to Remember, but Are There Any That Are Reminded?” (Q al-Qamar/54:17, 22, 32, 40): The Memory Challenge of Qur’anic Education (25 min)

Johanne Louise Christiansen (Ph.D. 2016, Aarhus University) is Associate Professor at the Department of the Study of Religion, University of Southern Denmark. Her research focuses on the application of theoretical perspectives from other research fields, such as the study of religion, to the Qur’an. Christiansen is currently the PI of the research project Education between the Qur’an and the Bible, which is funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark from 2022 – 2024. Among Christiansen’s recent works is the book The Exceptional Qur’an: Flexible and Exceptive Rhetoric in Islam’s Holy Book (Gorgias Press, 2021).

“We Have Made the Qur’an Easy to Remember, but Are There Any That Are Reminded?” (Q al-Qamar/54:17, 22, 32, 40): The Memory Challenge of Qur’anic Education

Memorizing Qur’anic passages is presumably one of the earliest, religious practices of what became the Islamic community. In addition to being a fundamental tool for oral transmission and an act of devotion, memorization is also embedded in the Qur’an itself through various mnemonic-technical devices, e.g., rhyme structures. While the Arabic root dh-k-r may sometimes refer to such memorization (Stewart 2000, 44), the Qur’anic text is also called dhikr or “remembrance” (e.g., Q 38:8) and throughout, humans are constantly reminded of their religious obligation, “to remember” (e.g., Q 2:221; 28:43). In turn, forgetfulness remains a major concern in the Qur’anic worldview, a concern that was initiated by the first human, Adam: “Formerly We made a covenant with Adam, but he forgot (fa-nasiya) and We found in him no constancy (lahu ‘azman)” (Q Ta-Ha 20:115).
Based on the insights from memory studies and Harvey Whitehouse’s theory on modes of religiosity (2002), this paper will explore the challenge of memory in the Qur’an and how it affects a Qur’anic ideal of education, that is, the ability to identify and remember knowledge or something that should have been learned. The paper will take an analytical point of departure in surah al-Qamar (Q 54), arguing it to be a primary example of the educational project that is the Qur’an. This aspect of the surah seems to be somewhat overlooked, focus having mainly been on whether the first verse should be seen as a reference to Muhammad’s miraculous act of splitting the moon (al-Tabari 2001, vol. 22:103–112). Although the surah evokes repetition, the use of punishment stories, and several unforgettable refrains (all educational strategies of the Qur’an; Christiansen 2019), surah al-Qamar represents a case, in which the Qur’anic teacher appears to be rather weary or frustrated with his pupils: “We have made the Qur’an easy to remember (wa-la-qad yassarna l-qur’ana li-l-dhikri) — but are there any that are reminded (fa-hal min muddakirin)?”

Masoud Ariankhou, Harvard University

The Misguiding God: Intratextual Analysis of ighwa’ as a Gateway to Qur’anic Satanology (25 min)

Masoud Ariankhou, Harvard University

Masoud Ariankhou is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. He holds an A.M. and an M.T.S. in Islamic Studies from Harvard University and an M.A. in History from Stony Brook University. His research follows the figure of the Devil in the formative period of Islamic thought, with a focus on Qur’anic exegeses (tafsir), collections of prophetic accounts (hadith), and the Sufi literature in Arabic and Persian.

The Misguiding God: Intratextual Analysis of ighwa’ as a Gateway to Qur’anic Satanology

Two atypical verses in the Qur’an (Q al-A’raf 7:16) and (Q al-Hijr 15:39), have not yet received proper attention in the field of Qur’anic studies. In these verses, Iblis (Satan) accuses God of misguiding him (ighwa’); and takes this as an excuse to mislead the children of Adam in turn. While these are the only two instances in the Qur’an in which God is directly accused of a wrong, it is remarkable that the Qur’an offers no rebuttal of the Satan’s reproach. Unlike other passages in the Qur’an, God engages in a direct conversation with the Devil. Yet, after Iblis voices his accusation, he is neither refuted by God nor identified as a liar.

This paper discusses these unusual passages in light of one perennial theoretical challenge posed to exegetes in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: How could Satan, created initially as a revered agent of God, turn into His archenemy following the creation of Adam? By examining the Qur’anic occurrences of all derivatives of the mentioned term’s root i.e. gh-w-y, the meaning of the studied verses will be examined against the backdrop of Qur’anic discourse. Also, by researching early Arabic and Qur’anic dictionaries, potential historical evolutions of the term’s meaning will be addressed. This inquiry will be complemented by exploring the commentaries offered on these two verses in the genre of tafsir i.e. Qur’anic exegesis in the formative period of Islamic thought. In modern Arabic dictionaries, the term ighwa’ is understood in two ways: firstly, as “misguiding,” and secondly, as “seducing” or “luring.” Yet, the understanding of this notion has evolved over time. By determining the semantic value of ighwa’ in the Qur’an, I seek to assess the theological implications of these Qur’anic passages. Ultimately, I argue that these verses shed light on the nature of Iblis’s project, which began from the creation of Adam until Judgement Day. Taking revenge for his banishment from heaven following the prostration incident, it may be that Iblis’s claims can be understood as mimicking the divine decree in an altogether demonic reversion of values.

P18-245

The Societal Qur’an (IQSA)
Saturday, November 18, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk
Theme: Sura Studies and The Societal Qur’an
Nevin Reda, University of Toronto, Presiding
Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau, University of Strasbourg, France

Proto-juz’ `Amma Practice: First Centuries Debates about Short Surahs Recitation (30 min)

Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau, University of Strasbourg, France

See biography, page 52.
Proto-juz’ ‘Amma Practice: First Centuries Debates about Short Surahs Recitation

Nowadays, the juz’ ‘Amma — the last thirtieth of the Qur’anic canonical corpus — is among the most popular parts of the Qur’an in terms of recitational education. In this paper, I will try to trace some information about the “proto-juz’ ‘Amma recitation practice” back into the first centuries of Islam, by exploring the “Excellence of the Qur’an” literature (Fadā’il al-Qur’ān), early hadith collections and other early materials (such as the Musatta‘). These early sources mention the division of the Qur’ān into units of recitation such as ḥizb (pl. aḥzāb), and juz’ (pl. ajza‘), a practice also attested by codicology (Déroche 2003, “Manuscripts of the Qur’ān”, Encyclopaedia of the Qur’ān). But these sources also focus on specific surahs; some surahs from the last juz’ received particular attention, especially Q 87 (al-ʿAṭā‘, “The Most High”), Q 99 (al-Zalzalah, “The Earthquake”), Q 109 (al-Kāfirūn, “Those Who Reject Faith”, Q 112 (al-Iḥlās, “The Purity” or “The Perfection”), Q 113 (al-Falaq, “The Dawn”) and Q 114 (al-Nās, “Mankind”). This paper then addresses more specifically what concerns the quantity of text to be recited. Traditions value recurrent everyday recitation while other express a concern about what is the maximum quantity of Qur’ān recitation one can perform within a single day, or about the practice of “gathering” recitation (such as: to read ten surahs within one rak‘ah, to read the whole Qur’ān in one night, etc.).

These aspects may be correlated to the issue of the value of the recitation of certain verses (for example, the idea that who has recited Q 112 has recited one third of the Qur’ān, etc.). A close analysis of the traditions reveals a tension—and a debate—between the desire to render Qur’ānic recitation more accessible and the importance in keeping all the parts of the Qur’ān as equally being an authoritative divine message. Is this debate parallel to the one about reciting the Qur’ān with tones (cf. Melchert, “The Controversy Over Reciting The Qur’ān With Tones (al-Qira‘ah bi l-Asāl), JIQSA 2019)? How much does it relate to the tendency of developing traditions that support the idea that the recitation of specific surahs brings hasanat, etc.? (cf. Afsaruddin, “In Praise of the Word of God: Reflections of Early Religious and Social Concerns in the Fadā’il al-Qur’ān Genre”, Journal of Qur’anic Studies 2002). This paper will try to assess whether, maybe in a parallel way to today’s usages of the juz’ ‘Amma, the specific usages of certain short surahs from the end of the mushaf, as expressed in 2nd/8th and 3rd/9th c. sources, relate to practical objectives in terms of promoting Qur’ānic recitation.

Ashher Masood, Yale University
Al-Kawthar and Abraham (30 min)

Ashher Masood is a PhD student in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University. He holds an M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Chicago and an M.S. in Biological Sciences from New York University. His research is focused on the early history of the Qur’an, early-Islamic history, and non-Muslims under early Muslim rule.

Al-Kawthar and Abraham

Q al-Kawthar 108 is one of the most enigmatic chapters of the Qur’an. Abdel Haleem translates it: (1) We have truly given abundance (al-kawthar) to you [Prophet], (2) so pray to your Lord and make your sacrifice to Him alone, (3) it is the one who hates you who has been cut off (al-abtar). The common understanding is that the addressee is the Prophet, and that he is given al-kawthar (Q 108:1), variously interpreted as: abundant good; a river in paradise the vessels of which are as numerous as the stars; a vast following; a pool; prophethood; the Qur’an. The “one who hates” is identified with several figures, the foremost being the Prophet’s Meccan opponent al-As ibn Wa’il, and al-abtar, translated by Abdel Haleem as “cut off,” is regarded in the exegetical material as: one who dies behind leaving no male offspring; one cut off from others; one who has no good in him; one who is despised. In this paper I offer a new interpretation of Q 108. I take the addressee here to be both the Prophet and Abraham, a paramount figure in the Qur’an. I interpret al-kawthar as the vast progeny promised to Abraham in Genesis. I take Q 108:2 to refer to the sacrifice of Abraham’s son. The hater/enemy in Q 108:3 I take to be an amalgam of figures found in the Book of Jubilees, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Midrash, and the Babylonian Talmud, all of whom either instigate the test of sacrifice against Abraham or actively try to dissuade him from following God’s command. In this reading, the Prophet acts as the mouth-piece of the Divine, relaying to his audience a conversation between God and the well-known patriarch Abraham; in the process, the Prophet is Abrahamized. I conclude by offering suggestions about other chapters in which we might read a second addressee besides the Prophet, such as Q al-Duha 93 and Q al-Sharh 94.

Adam Flowers, University of Chicago
The Qur’an as a Tool of Rebellion and Counter-Rebellion in the Early Islamicate World (30 min)
Adam Flowers, University of Chicago

Adam Flowers is a scholar of the text, history, and interpretation of the Qur’an. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago’s Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, where he is currently a postdoctoral fellow. His research and teaching interests include: literary approaches to the Qur’an, the Qur’an’s use by early Muslims, Arabic papyrology and paleography, and literary theory.

The Qur’an as a Tool of Rebellion and Counter-Rebellion in the Early Islamicate World

From the time of its revelation, the Qur’an has played a central role in Islamicate history and thought. While traditionally examined as a religious text, the Qur’an served a variety of social and political functions in Islamicate society, particularly in the early period. These functions are no more apparent than in the Qur’an’s appropriation by a multitude of rebellions from the 7th–9th centuries CE. This paper will interrogate the Qur’an as an essential socio-political tool for rebellion and counter-rebellion in the early Islamicate world. It will begin with a brief overview of rebellion theory, arguing for an expansive definition of rebellion rooted in Robert K. Merton’s deviance typology. The paper will then turn to four case-studies of the Qur’an’s role in early Islamicate rebellions, organized chronologically: the Prophet Muhammad’s rebellion against Mecca, the Battle of Siffin, the Abbasid revolution, and, finally, the mihnah. The first case-study, the Prophet Muhammad’s rebellion against Mecca, will examine the very process of revelation as a rebellious act and the evolution of the Qur’an’s apocalyptic message as corresponding to the evolving socio-political needs of the expanding rebellion. The second case-study, the Battle of Siffin, will approach the Qur’an as an object, as opposed to a text, and examine the physical act of impaling the Qur’an on a spear during the arbitration process as a tool for quelling violent rebellion. The third case-study, the Abbasid revolution, will consider how the Qur’an’s nascent interpretative tradition was mobilized as a tool for the legitimation of rebellion by non-Arab revolutionaries. Finally, the fourth case-study, the mihnah, will argue that the Qur’an was employed by the Abbasid political establishment as a counter-rebellion tactic against the rising socio-political authority of the ‘ulama’. The primary aim of this paper is to contribute to the expansion of the study of the Qur’an in the early Islamicate period beyond its current focus on the Qur’an as literature or as a source for the religious history of the nascent Muslim community to include a consideration of its myriad social and political functions in the evolving early Islamicate world.

Zeinab Vessal, Graduate Theological Union (GTU)

Zeinab Vessal is a Ph.D. student in Art and Religion Program at Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. Her primary field of research is Islamic material culture and Shi’i iconography, paintings, emblematic, and ritualistic objects in early modern to modern Iran. Her second concentration as a professional Islamic calligrapher is studying Persian and Arabic manuscript traditions. She also looks at the Shi’i visual culture of post-revolutionary Iran.

Rayat-E-Nasr Ayat: The Qur’anic Verses in a Safavid Victory Banner

This study investigates a Qur’anic banner, Rayat-e-Nasr Ayat, and its history and function as a Shi’i emblem in Safavid paintings from the 16th to the 18th centuries. Rayat-e-Nasr Ayat, known as the “victory banner,” is inscribed with victory verses from the Qur’an. Safavids politically added Shi’i holy names to those banners as a supplication or invocation to distinguish their kingdom, combining their religious slogan and a Shi’i emblem. This iconic banner helped the establishment of their religious advocacy, as it is significantly reflected in Safavid paintings. These icons were utilized as a dual-functional banner for political and military purposes from early modern until modern Iran. The theological and historical analysis considers the Qur’anic impacts on Shi’i religious icons like the Rayat-e-Nasr Ayat was toward a discussion of Shi’i belief in seeking protection and assistance from Rayat-e-Nasr Ayat in war and religious processions. I argue that the victory banner probably originated from Muslim belief in the victory verses and their contribution to the Prophet’s victorious battle of Mecca in pre-Safavid times. Furthermore, this study explains how Shi’i valued those banners as a divine emblem by connecting the victory banner of the Prophet to the “Hadith Al-rayah” (the narration of banner) and the Prophet’s famous banner career, ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib at the battle of the Trench. Muslim painters have often faced inevitable restrictions due to Shi’i-Sunni ideological complexities. Intrinsically, as the Shi’i Safavid was emerging in the majority-Sunni society of the time, their cautionary reflection may have led them to create artistic materials while being mindful of their bilateral theological thoughts.

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The depiction of such iconic manuscripts during the Safavid era demonstrates unified yet flexible artistic expressions to embrace Shi‘i theological approaches based on Shi‘i identity and iconography. Rayat-e-Nasr Ayat seem created to mold the Shi‘i devotional art. At the same time, anxieties about potentially offending religious sensibilities limited figurative possibilities in decorating those banners, similar to Islamic iconoclasm. Even a minor provocation in pictorial banners could inhibit the Shi‘i’s ideal messages from the code. Therefore, at the beginning of the Safavid era, they inscribed their emblem to deliver their message as sharply as possible. Later, when Safavid thoroughly established their Shi‘i kingdom, victory banners gradually started to contain the famous pictorial motif of “Lion and Sun” with the same symbolic meaning of victory in Shi‘i society, which ultimately survived as a military banner until the Qajar period.

The Peculiar “Kill Yourselves” Command (Q al-Baqara 2:54) and Al-Maturidi’s Conception of Qur‘anic Consistency

In multiple places in the Qur’an, we encounter the story of Moses in Sinai returning to his fellow Israelites after having received from God the “tablets” (al-alwah). He returns with anger, however, as he learns that many of his fellow Israelites have taken to worshiping a golden calf. Moses condemns the practice, and in just one version of the story, in Q al-Baqara 2:54, he issues a peculiar command: “So repent to your creator and kill yourselves” (fa-tubu ila bari’ikum fa-qtulu anfusakum). This Mosaic directive appears at first blush to parallel the biblical version of the story, specifically Exodus 32:27, where Moses commands the Levites to kill many of their fellow Israelites. Although the details are disputed, this general conception of a large-scale execution was adopted by many Muslim exegetes. This interpretation is congruous with certain controversial hadith but stands in stark contrast to various Qur‘anic directives pertaining to Muḥammad’s community. The latter include the prohibition, “Do not kill yourselves” (wa-la taqtulu anfusakum) (Q al-Nisa’ 4:29). Numerous exegetes explain Q 2:54 by invoking abrogation (naskh): the Mosaic law (shar‘) was somewhat different from the final law revealed to Muḥammad. But not every exegete took the Mosaic command in Q 2:54 to be confirmation of the biblically supported notion of mass execution, preferring instead to emphasize the coherence and consistency of the Qur‘anic message. A minority of influential rationalist (mutakallim), Sufi, and modernist exegetes imagined alternative “killings,” for instance, a “killing” of the ego or a “mortification.” These exegetes include, among others, al-Qadi ʿAbd al-Jabbar (d. 415/1025), ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Kashani (d. 736/1335), and Muhammad Asad (d. 1992). I will argue that the most compelling and coherent dissenting view among prominent premodern exegetes is that presented by the influential Hanafi theologian, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333/944) of Samarqand. Invoking other Qur‘anic versions of the same Mosaic narrative, al-Maturidi challenges the prevailing reading of the “kill yourselves” command on the grounds that, contrary to the biblical version, the Qur’an presents the command as having been issued after the guilty ones repented and reverted to the unadulterated worship of God.
Furthermore, al-Maturidi demonstrates problems with the abrogation claim and, through linguistic and thematic analyses of certain key Qur’anic terms and notions appearing elsewhere (including Q 2:84, 4:66, and 9:111), presents compelling hermeneutic reassessments of the “kill yourselves” command. Finally, al-Maturidi shows how even a literal reading of the command need not suggest consummated killings.

Javad T. Hashmi, Harvard University

Jihad Until No Fitna: The Pious Manipulation and Theological Militarization of the Qur’an by the Medieval Exegetes of Islam (20 min)

Javad T. Hashmi, Harvard University

Dr. Javad T. Hashmi is a Ph.D. candidate in the Study of Religion (Islamic Studies) at Harvard University, former Fellow of Medical Ethics at Harvard Medical School, and practicing emergency physician. In addition to his medical training, Dr. Hashmi has obtained bachelors and masters degrees in Arabic & Islamic Studies from UC Berkeley and Harvard University, respectively. Dr. Hashmi is currently completing his doctoral dissertation on the topic of jihad in the Qur’an. His research interests include Qur’anic Studies, Islamic intellectual history (with a focus on Islamic modernism), and the intersection between religion and violence.

Jihad Until No Fitna: The Pious Manipulation and Theological Militarization of the Qur’an by the Medieval Exegetes of Islam

It is commonly held that the medieval Muslim exegetes used the doctrine of naskh (abrogation) and other such exegetical tools in order to deal with contradictory Qur’anic verses on the subject of war and peace. According to the traditional portrayal, the exegete looks to the chronological ordering of the Qur’anic passages in order to determine which verse was revealed earlier and is thus abrogated and which verse was revealed later and is thus operative. The information utilized to construct this chronology is said to include reports transmitted from the Companions. As such, the interpretative process is portrayed as fairly neutral in that the exegete looks to chronology in order to establish legal or theological doctrine therefrom. However, in this article, I will flip this schema on its head and argue that the medieval exegetes actually start with their theological and legal doctrine, which in turn is used to inform them of which verse should be declared earlier and which later.

In the case of jihad, the exegetes are committed to the theological doctrine of salvific exclusivity; connected to this is the legal model of perpetual imperial warfare against unbelievers. These ideas are generated not from the Qur’an but are instead read into it, thereby necessitating heavy-handed exegetical tools, including abrogation but also interpolation, substitution, superimposition, atomization, and recasting. In this way, the medieval exegetes were able to piously manipulate and theologically militarize the Qur’an.

Andrew O’Connor, St. Norbert College (WI)

Conversations around the (Hell)fire: Dialogue of the Dead and Damned in the Qur’an (20 min)

Andrew O’Connor, St. Norbert College

Andrew J. O’Connor is Assistant Professor of Theology & Religious Studies at St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin (USA). He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Notre Dame, a M.A. from the University of Chicago, and a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. His publications include “Imminent Eschatology and Rhetoric in the Qur'an” in Qur'anic Studies: Between History, Theology, and Exegesis (ed. Mehdi Azaiez and Mokdad Arfa-Mensia, 2023) and “Obeying God and His Messenger: Medinan Prophetology in the Meccan Qur'an?” in Unlocking the Medinan Qur'an (ed. Nicolai Sinai, 2022). He is currently preparing a monograph on the Qur’an’s prophetology.

Conversations around the (Hell)fire: Dialogue of the Dead and Damned in the Qur’an

Several passages of the Qur’an depict conversations among the dead; nameless individuals who find themselves in the afterlife, discussing, lamenting, or protesting their placement in the beyond. In other words, the Qur’an presents parables in which the blessed and the damned converse amongst each other or even speak across the divide to those on the other side. In Q al-Saffat 37: 50–59, a resident of paradise recounts that he once had a friend (qarin) who doubted the resurrection. He then manages to peer into the pit of hell to see his unfortunate friend and lambasts him for nearly ruining him with his doubt (v. 56). Q Sad 38:59–64 depicts an argument within a group of the deceased rushing into hell, debating who deserved the worst punishment and expressing shock at the absence of some of their acquaintances whom they held in derision (who are presumably in paradise).
The “Seven Sleepers” Tale in Q al-Kahf 18 as an Allegory for the Sasanian Conquest

In the Qur’an, the story of the Seven Sleepers is retold, set in Petra (al-Raqim) rather than in Ephesus. This narrative likely originated in the middle of the second decade of the seventh century, in Mecca. But what was happening in Petra at that time that evoked this Christian folk tale of pious youth driven to hide in a cave? Theophanes the Confessor wrote that in early 614, “The Persians took the Jordan, Palestine and the Holy City by force of arms.” This sequence implies that the cities of Bostra and Petra, due south of Damascus, fell to the Sasanians before Jerusalem. In this era, the contemporary Antonios of Choziba says that Bedouin had looted monasteries such as St. Sabas, and it appears that lawlessness prevailed 614–616. He added that the monks at Choziba in Palestine fled to “Arabia” and its monasteries or to caves where they hid. According to the carbonized Petra Papyri, surviving sixth-century correspondence found in the annex of a church, in the sixth century the city notables there were Arabophone Christians who used Greek for their correspondence. They took pride in their relationship to Constantinople. In the mid-to-late-fifth century, a Chalcedonian monastic community at Jebel Harun, five kilometers outside the Petra, erected a large church and chapel, which serviced pilgrims. The mount was locally believed to be where Moses struck a rock and water flowed out (Exodus 17:6), and where Aaron died (Numbers 33:29). Petra’s three major churches, however, appear to have stopped functioning sometime in the early seventh century and the city’s waterworks ceased being kept up. It is possible that the turmoil of the Sasanian conquest and the departure of the Roman troops garrisoning the Transjordan allowed Bedouins to steal the valuables in the churches, making congregations fearful of gathering. Perhaps the local population did not so much lose interest in maintaining the city’s infrastructure as lose the political control necessary to do so. That the tale of the seven sleepers is set in Petra in this period suggests that it is intended to restore the spirits of the Christians in Palaestina Tertia and to impress upon them that while they may suffer indignities at the hands of those who reject the Bible and its God, in the end biblical monotheism will win out. It is, in other words, a way of conveying by narrative means the sentiments voiced at the beginning of Q al-Rum 30, about the ultimate triumph of Roman Christianity over Sasanian Zoroastrianism and its pagan allies.

The Qur’an and Late Antiquity (IQSA)
Sunday, November 19, 9:00 AM–11:30 AM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk

Adam Flowers, University of Chicago, Presiding
Juan Cole, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
The “Seven Sleepers” Tale in Q al-Kahf 18 as an Allegory for the Sasanian Conquest (30 min)

Juan Cole, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
Juan Cole is the Richard P. Mitchell Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan and directs the Arab and Muslim American Studies Program in the Department of American Culture there. He has written about the whole span of Islamic history from its beginnings right up to the present. His recent publications include “The Qur’an on Doing Good to Enemies,” in Peace Movements in Islam, ed. by Juan Cole. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2021), 23–46 and Muhammad: Prophet of Peace amid the Clash of Empires (New York: Nation Books, 2018).
Unlike the jeremiads voiced by contemporaneous figures such as Antiochus Monachus, the Qur’an contains no suggestion that the Christians’ faithlessness caused the Iranian conquest. They are depicted as noble and faithful in the face of pagan depredations. Read as an allegory of the victory of Heraclius, Q al-Kahf 18 has implications both for Qur’anic apocalypticism and for the Prophet’s mission to neighboring Christians.

Raymond K. Farrin, American University of Kuwait

Astronomical Events of 607 and 614 CE and the Early Meccan Qur’an (30 min)

Raymond K. Farrin, American University of Kuwait

Raymond K. Farrin is currently Professor of Arabic at the American University of Kuwait. He studied Arabic in Cairo for two years and received a Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies from the University of California, Berkeley in 2006. His publications include Abundance from the Desert: Classical Arabic Poetry (Syracuse UP, 2011), Thawra min al-badiya: al-shi’r al-‘arabi al-qadim [translation of Abundance from the Desert] (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 2013), and Structure and Qur’anic Interpretation: A Study of Symmetry and Coherence in Islam’s Holy Text (Ashland: White Cloud, 2014), as well as numerous articles on classical Arabic poetry and the Qur’an.

Astronomical Events of 607 and 614 CE and the Early Meccan Qur’an

This paper examines two astronomical happenings of Late Antiquity in connection to the early Meccan Qur’an. It suggests that they indeed bear a relation to the scripture, the first in contributing to an atmosphere of eschatological expectation that likely served as background to the earliest revelations, and the second in providing a clear sign that the Final Hour was nigh. The first cosmic event of significance was the passage of Halley’s comet in March–April 607. This was the second closest approach to Earth in recorded history, and it likely produced widespread anxiety and dread. It will be remembered that pagan philosophers since Aristotle modeled a stable and ordered universe, with no mixing between sublunary and celestial spheres. Their conception would strain, it seems, to account for a large blaze with a tail, dramatically close to Earth, traveling across the sky for over five weeks.

The same comet was described, for example, after its 218 CE passage by the Roman historian Don Cassius as “a very fearful star.” Monotheists, on the other hand, who believed that the cosmos had a fixed duration, likely interpreted the phenomenon as presaging the eschaton (cf. Matt. 24:29: “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken”). In this context, one may note that comets were frequently viewed by premodern Christians as heralds of Judgment Day. Combined with the political upheaval then being witnessed in the Near East, that is, the press of Sasanian forces into Byzantium and the very real threat to Jerusalem, the striking celestial phenomenon probably raised apocalyptic expectations. It would thus seem apropos to recall Halley’s 607 appearance when considering the Qur’an’s early eschatological surahs. The second event of significance is the partial lunar eclipse of 1 January 614. This event was centered globally over Libya and very high in the sky; at 77 degrees of elevation. The partial eclipse lasted roughly from midnight until 3:00 am. Unless clouds blocked the view, it probably was visible over the mountains surrounding Mecca. Moreover, the time corresponds roughly with that of vigils (cf. Q al-Muzammil 73:1–4). The paper argues that this may well be the splitting of the moon alluded to in Q al-Qamar 54:1. One may consider too that the Unbelievers speak of “continuous sorcery” in Q 54:2, unlike other references to sorcery in the Qur’an. In sum, the paper argues that recalling two contemporary astronomical events helps us to understand better the scripture’s context and its early apocalyptic message.

Mohsen Goudarzi, Harvard University

Twilight of the Cults: Ancient Worship, Its Discontents, and Religious Polemic in the Qur’anic Milieu (30 min)

Mohsen Goudarzi, Harvard University

See biography, page 52.
Twilight of the Cults: Ancient Worship, Its Discontents, and Religious Polemic in the Qur’anic Milieu

The rise of Christianity profoundly transformed patterns of religious devotion in the Near East. Many ancient temples and sanctuaries were destroyed or abandoned, their festivals were discontinued, their sacrifices and libations stopped, and their oracles were no more. For most Christians, collective worship became a matter of reading scripture and offering the spiritual sacrifice of the Eucharist, while martyria and saint shrines took the place of pagan sanctuaries. Similarly, the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple ended the ancient Israelite cult and its daily sacrifices and made Jewish communal worship a matter of reading scripture and praying in synagogues. Some historians have thus viewed Late Antiquity as an era that witnessed “the end of sacrifice” and the diffusion of scriptural and spiritual paradigms of worship in the Near East. Despite this broad trend, the Qur’an provides evidence for the endurance of cultic worship in the Hijaz, in particular, at the Meccan sanctuary. The Ka’ba had its festivals (Q al-Baqara 2:158) and worshippers who observed its sanctity (Q al-Ma’ida 5:1–2, 95), resided by it (Q al-Haj 22:25), turned around it (Q 2:125, 22:29), and prayed and sacrificed animals by it (2:196, 14:37, 22:28). How did Jews and Christians of the Qur’anic milieu view the Meccan sanctuary and its cultic rituals? It is often assumed that during the prophetic era, the People of the Book did not take issue with the Meccan sanctuary. However, I have argued that some Christians or/and Jews viewed the Ka’ba as an inherently pagan shrine or at least made this accusation in their polemic against the Believers (Goudarzi 2023). This accusation makes sense of the term hanif, which some Christians or/and Jews seem to have used in the sense of “pagan worshiper” and applied to the Believers on account of their adherence to the Meccan cult. Consonant with its endorsement of this cult, the Qur’an embraced the label hanif but countered its pagan associations by asserting that Abraham himself had built the Meccan sanctuary and instituted its rituals (Q 2:125–8, 22:26–29). He was therefore the prototypical hanif, but he worshiped the One God alone and therefore “was not a polytheist,” as the Qur’an repeatedly emphasizes (Q 2:135, 3:95, etc.). In this talk, I provide further evidence of polemic against the Meccan cult by re-reading aspects of the Qur’anic discourse with the People of the Book in surahs 2, 3, and 5.

Paul Neuenkirchen, University of Bern
Remembrance of God, Prayer, and Constancy as Ways of Fighting Demons Between the Qur’an and Late Antique Ascetic Writings (30 min)

Paul Neuenkirchen, University of Bern

Paul Neuenkirchen is currently a post-doctoral fellow in the “Interactive Histories, Co-Produced Communities: Judaism, Christianity, Islam” joint research project between the University of Bern and the Institute of Advanced Study, Princeton. He specializes in the history of the Qur’anic text and the beginnings of Islam. His Ph.D., which he defended in 2019 at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes (Paris), examined the Qur’an’s eschatological discourse in light of Syriac homilies. Currently, his work focuses on a comparative study between Late Antique asceticism and the Qur’an. His most recent publication is “Late Antique Syriac Homilies and the Qur’an. A Comparison of Content and Context”, MIDEO 37 (2022).

Remembrance of God, Prayer, and Constancy as Ways of Fighting Demons Between the Qur’an and Late Antique Ascetic Writings

One of the defining characteristics of the religious landscape of Arabia and its neighboring lands on the eve of the advent of Islam is the development and spread of asceticism. From the 3rd–4th century C.E., ideals of bettering the self with the accomplishment of certain “exercises” or through rigorous “training” (askesis, in Greek) became increasingly popular among Christians. Important corpora of late antique ascetic writings, from Egypt and Syria-Palestine to Eastern Arabia, have reached us and offer us a fascinating window into the practices and beliefs of the men and women struggling to fight against passions and desires to get closer to God. These texts are also very promising for our understanding of concepts and ideas expressed throughout the Qur’an which are indeed intimately linked to fundamental ascetic practices and beliefs of late antique Christian ascetics. Although the Swedish scholar Tor Andrae had pointed to this connection in his Der Ursprung des Islams und das Christentum (1923–1926), surprisingly very little scholarly interest has been devoted to the “ascetic background” of the Qur’an since then. With the present paper, I will bridge that century old gap by focusing on three ascetic concepts that pervade both late antique Christian ascetic texts and the Qur’an. These are remembrance of God (as well as its ubiquitous corollary: fear of God), prayer, and constancy.
Daniel Bannoura is a Ph.D. candidate in Qur’anic studies at the University of Notre Dame. He received a bachelor’s degree in Physics from the University of Florida, a Master’s degree in Theology from London School of Theology, and a Master’s degree in Islamic Studies from the University of Chicago. His publications include an article on “Islam and astronomy”, a critical edition of the seventh century Al-‘izah fi nashid al-‘adhra’, “The Qur’an and the Gospel of Mark” published at the Encyclopedia of the Qur’an, and forthcoming articles “On the Redaction of Q 38”, and “The Recension of Ephrem’s Descriptions of Paradise in the Qur’an”.

Iltifat in the Qur’an: An examination based on Late Antique literary practices

Classical Muslim scholars, such as al-Zamakhshari (d. 1143), Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), al-Zarkashi (d. 1392), and al-Suyuti (d. 1505), have analyzed iltifat (or “enallage”) in the Qur’an in terms of rhetoric and eloquence, or balagha. Accordingly, they constructed an extensive typology of Qur’anic iltifat that explained iltifat as a signifier for the inimitability of the Qur’an. This paradigm was challenged by Theodor Nöldeke who briefly reflected on Qur’anic changes in the grammatical person and concluded, that “die grammatischen Personen wechseln im Koran zuweilen in ungewöhnlicher und nicht schöner Weise” (Nöldeke, Neue Beiträge). In response to Nöldeke’s crass conclusion, scholars like M. A. S. Abdel-Haleem, “Grammatical Shift”). More recently, Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann understood Qur’anic iltifat as a byproduct of the redaction of the Qur’an and, specifically, the splicing of the pericopes of suras (Pohlmann, Die Entstehung). On the other hand, Reyhan Durmaz explained the sudden grammatical shifts as a product of storytelling discernable in the Qur’an, namely “that God as the narrator was sometimes conflated with Muhammad as the narrator from the perspective of the audiences of Muhammad” (Durmaz, Stories Between Christianity and Islam, 35). This study goes beyond the traditional rhetorical analysis of iltifat and starts its analysis by reflecting on grammatical shifts found in biblical material and, more significantly, Syriac literature from Late Antiquity. By situating the Qur’anic text in its religious and literary milieu, the analysis seeks to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon of iltifat, its provenance and function in Late Antiquity, especially through paying close attention to the “oral residue” that can be detected in Late Antique literature, and how such residue can inform our understanding of the existence of iltifat in such literature. Once the literary setting has been established, the study examines a number of surahs in order to draw some conclusions about the occurrence of iltifat in the Qur’an. Primary attention will be given to examining how sudden grammatical shifts, accompanied by other textual markers such as changes in rhyme or themes, can shed some light on the process of redacting certain independent passages into complete surahs.
The Imam as Speaking Qur’an in Isma’ili Muslim Exegesis and Practice

The earliest Isma’ili texts present a dual conception of Revelatory Scripture: the Speaking Scripture (kitab Allah natiq) and the Silent Scripture (kitab Allah samit). In Imami Shi’i belief common to Isma’ili and Twelver Shi’a, the Imam as the divinely ordained successor of the Prophet Muhammad is regarded as the authoritative interpreter of the Qur’an and the Prophetic Sunnah. He is sometimes referred to as the “Speaking Qur’an” or the “Speaking Scripture” whereas the Qur’an as a recited or compiled text (mushaf) is called the “silent Scripture”. This even includes an exegesis of the famous verse Q al-Baqara 2:2 Alif Lam Mim, dhalika l-kitab la rayba fihi; Isma’ili thinkers argued that “dhalika l-kitab” cannot possibly refer to the Qur’an and must refer to a more remote “kitab” — namely the Imam. Second, Isma’ili thinkers argued that the Qur’an must always be accompanied by an authoritative interpreter who clarifies what its verses actually mean in the face of widespread disagreement (ikhtilaf) among Muslims about the correct interpretation of various verses. The argument is that the Qur’an does not interpret itself and does not suffice as a hujja (proof) unless its meaning is expounded by an infallible interpreter — namely the Prophet in his own time and the Imams thereafter. The Imam’s interpretation of the Qur’an and Sunna, expressed often as “ta’wil” also has revelatory status as divinely-inspired teaching akin to the Prophetic Sunnah.

Thirdly, the Isma’ili Imams practically exercise the role of being the Speaking Qur’an or Speaking Scripture by continuously reinterpreting and sometimes modifying specific legal rulings and ritual practices according to differing circumstances. This practically means that the Imam’s legal and theological authority can supersede Qur’anic rulings that were intended to serve prior eras but are no longer applicable in future periods. For this reason, at the practical level, the firmans and guidance of the Isma’ili Imamate serves as the primary reference point for Isma’ili Muslims to seek legal and spiritual guidance in religious matters.

Syed A.H. Zaidi, Fordham University
The Brethren of Purity’s Intertextual Approach to the Qur’an (20 min)

Syed A.H. Zaidi holds a Ph.D. in Islamic Civilizations from Emory University, a MA from the George Washington University, and a BA from Hobart College. He is currently a Lecturer at Fordham University’s Theology Department. Syed works on the Brethren of Purity and early Islamic Philosophy.

The Brethren of Purity’s Intertextual Approach to the Qur’an

The Brethren of Purity (Ikhwan al-Safa’) were a ninth-tenth century secret Shi’i philosophical movement from Basra. They have a unique intertextual approach to interpreting the Qur’an for their own philosophical worldview which sets the stage for how later Muslim mystics like Ibn ‘Arabi (d. 1240) will interpret the Qur’an. They do not see the Qur’an as a text that comments on esoteric, philosophic, or theurgic ideas and practices.
Instead, they see the Qur'an and philosophical texts (and practices) as direct reflections of each other. The Brethren saw Hermes (as Idris), Pythagoras, Socrates, Plotinus, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad as all prophets of God. Therefore, they saw their texts as divine works. I argue that the Brethren of Purity's mysticism is drawn from the Qur'an, along with Greek works. They justify using these non-Qur'anic sources by stating that these are sacred books. Therefore, it was easy for them to interpret intertextually the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad: “heaven (which they interpret as the Universal Soul) is in the sky and hell is on the earth” as heaven being the Qur'anic Divine Pen. They believed that the Unwritten Tablet was the Neoplatonic Universal Intellect (possessor of the Qur'anic Divine Forms). The Brethren of Purity are Hermetic mystics who seek spiritual intercession from secondary powers (such as the Shi'i Imams, angels, and stars) and use prayers from the Qur'an (combined with magic and theurgy) to unite with the Universal Soul. They state that angels and good fiery spirits called jinn live in the realm of the Universal Soul and are “specifically chosen for their knowledge of the intellectual sciences, philosophical and lordly opinions, and definitive proofs.” The good jinn listen to Qur'anic injunctions to “follow [divine] commands and prohibitions.” The Brethren state that human beings must seek the help of the angels and jinn, and not simply expect them to help them without a call. Virtually every paragraph of the treatises of the Brethren begin with the following phrase “Know Oh Brother, may God provide you and us with a spirit from Him.” The Brethren’s invocation for a helper spirit from God is reminiscent of how the servant would call for help from God in the Qur’an. But also similar to how Socrates begins the Timaeus. The Brethren literally ask God for a spirit come down to earth, and teach them how to understand all fifty-one sciences they wrote on correctly.

Stephen Cúrto, Union County College, NJ

The Qur’an and Vedas as Ginanic Motifs: Theological Implications and Exegetical Interrelationships (20 min)

Stephen Cúrto, Union County College

Stephen Cúrto graduated from Rutgers University with a master’s degree in Religious Studies, with an emphasis in Islamic studies. He is currently pursuing an M.Phil. in Arabic and Qur’anic studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Stephen has served as an adjunct at Rutgers University and Union County College, where he is currently a professor of Arabic in the department of Modern Languages.

Professor Cúrto specializes in the study of tafsir (Qur’anic exegesis) and subaltern voices in the Islamic exegetical tradition.

The Qur’an and Vedas as Ginanic Motifs: Theological Implications and Exegetical Interrelationships

As the eminent and pioneering scholar of ginānic studies Gulshan Khakee noted, the gināns at times invoke the Qur’an and the Vedas as witnesses in attestation to their own authority. Proceeding from this situatedness in Satpanthi discourse, the gināns often articulate multiple interrelated references to both the Qur’an, and the Vedas, especially to the Athar Veda. This invocation of Athar Veda can be inclusive of multiple realities; at times alternatively functioning as a reference to the Atharvavedah, at times to the Qur’an itself, and at times potentially even to the words of the pirs. These ginanic typologies are likewise frequently presented in concert with a discussion of the spiritual authority of the Imam, and the pirs. Such allusions, and the larger narrative in which they are to be situated, are highly rhetorically and theologically significant, highlighting not only what comprises ginanic paradigms of the ontology of ‘scripture’ and its proper interpretation, but the modality of that interpretive paradigm within the very nature of divine guidance itself. This facet of the gināns is properly grounded not only within the Satpanthi Isma’ili tradition, but the larger Shi’i and Isma’ili Shi’i philosophical tradition as a whole. The ginanic conception of the relationship between the satgur and the Qur’an, (and by extension Vedic literature) exemplifies the Shi’i understanding of al-kitab al-samit and al-kitab al-nātiq, as well as the complementary duality of tanzil and ta’wil. The gināns present the Imam and the pirs as the proper conduit for any interface by the faithful with scriptural discourse. It is through the teaching of the Isma’ili Imams, mediated through the pirs, and by extension, the gināns themselves, that scriptural and theological truth is to be obtained. The presentation within the gināns of the Qur’an vis à vis the Vedas is often one of ‘type and anti-type’ and throughout various gināns this relationship can vary between one of attestation, exemplification, abrogation, or fulfillment. This has significant reverberations through the entire approach the gināns outline for exegetical methodology, and scriptural authority. Further, the gināns, as expressing the divine instruction of the Imam (al-kitab al-nātiq), mediated through the agency of the pirs, can function as not only a commentarial tradition upon what is al-kitab al-samit (i.e., the Qur’an and Vedas), but are therefore a form of śruti śastra themselves.
The Societal Qur’an (IQSA)

Sunday, November 19, 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk

Theme: The Societal Qur’an

Lauren Osborne, Whitman College, Presiding
Johanna Pink, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

Beauty and Piety: Framing and Unframing the Qur’an as World Literature in Twentieth-Century Europe (30 min)

Johanna Pink, University of Freiburg

Johanna Pink is professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Freiburg, Germany. She taught at Freie Universität Berlin and the University of Tübingen. Her main fields of interest are the transregional history of *tafsir* in the modern period and Qur’an translations, with a particular focus on transregional dynamics. She is the Principal Investigator of the research project “GloQur – The Global Qur’an” and general editor of the Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an Online. Her most recent monograph is entitled “Muslim Qur’anic Interpretation Today” (Equinox, 2019). She is currently preparing a global history of modern Muslim Qur’an translation.

**Beauty and Piety: Framing and Unframing the Qur’an as World Literature in Twentieth-Century Europe**

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the Qur’an was increasingly framed in a novel way: as part of humanity’s literary heritage, or “world literature.” Qur’an translations became part of the portfolio of publishers such as Penguin in Britain (N.J. Dawood), Reclam in Germany (Max Henning), and Gallimard in France (Denise Masson, as part of the Bibliothèque de la Pléiade). That portfolio purported to represent the peak literary products of the world’s “cultures.” The Qur’an was advertised to a mass market alongside the Bhagavad Gita, the Arabian Nights, and the Dream of the Red Chamber. As a consequence, it was framed as an impactful work of literature, rather than a religious scripture that would provide insight into Islam. This brought forth a number of different but distinctive approaches. One approach to positioning the Qur’an as world literature was a focus on “authorship,” which led to an attempt to imagine Muhammad’s emotions and motives in the most intense way possible, interpreting the Qur’an as an expression of his angst, his passions, and his triumphs (Henning).

Another approach was the presentation of the text in terms of its aesthetic value, without regard for either the canonical order or chronology, to convince readers of its literary merits (Dawood). A third approach was the attempt to enhance intercultural understanding by emphasizing the common human experience and themes that may be identified in different religious scriptures (Masson). From the history of the translations by Dawood, Henning and Masson, all of which enjoyed considerable success, we can see that the presentation of the Qur’an as a de-sacralized part of the world’s literary heritage was increasingly challenged from the 1980s onwards, and this was clearly related to demographic changes in Western European societies. A growing number of Muslims were living in Britain, France, and Germany, and there was a demand for Qur’an translations which was not met by monolingual editions that framed the Qur’an as one of the more exotic components of world literature. In the 1980s, a Lebanese publisher printed a bilingual French-Arabic edition of Masson’s translation that was lent authority by the supposed editorial work of a Sunni sheikh, Sobhi Saleh. In 1990, Penguin published a new bilingual English-Arabic edition of Dawood’s translation in the canonical order of surahs. And in the 1990s, two different Turkish publishers started to distribute German-Arabic revised editions of the Henning translation. As this paper will show, the framing of Qur’an translations as works of literature and the subsequent shift towards observant Muslim audiences tells us much about the position of the Qur’an in Western European societies throughout the twentieth century, and the paper will take a close look at the features and mechanisms that contributed to either framing. The questions raised in this paper are of equal relevance to Qur’anic studies and might invite reflections on the framings of the Qur’an that inform research in this field.

Mykhaylo Yakubovych, Freiburg University, Germany

*State-Supported Hermeneutics? The Theology of Translations of the Qur’an by the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs (30 min)*

Mykhaylo Yakubovych, University of Freiburg

Mykhaylo Yakubovych (Ph.D. 2011) is currently involved in the ERC research project “The Global Qur’an” at the University of Freiburg (Freiburg, Germany). Primarily, he is interested in research on the Qur’an translations produced by the international institutions at Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, specially focusing on Central Asian and Eastern European languages.
Furthermore, he has conducted several academic projects on the Islamic manuscript heritage, starting from the post-classical intellectual history of the Crimean Khanate (Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, USA) and finishing with 16th–17th century Qur'anic interpretations among Lithuanian Tatars (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland). He is author of the book “The Kingdom and the Qur’an: Translating the Holy Book of Islam in Saudi Arabia” (forthcoming).

A State-Supported Hermeneutics? The Theology of Translations of the Qur’an by the Turkish Presidency of Religious Affairs

><261x594>261x594>Riccardo Amerigo Vigliermo is a Ph.D. student at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE), and an affiliated researcher Fondazione per gli Studi Religiosi (FSCIRE). He graduated in Arabic, Persian language and Islamic studies from University of Naples “L’Orientale”, and he also studied ML and NLP particularly related to Arabic and Persian language. Currently he is a Phd student in Digital Humanities at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE) with a project entitled “Digital Maktaba: Cataloguing texts in non-Latin alphabets. New approaches between Digital Humanities and AI”. Currently involved as a linguistic and Digital Humanities expert collaborating with the IT experts in the Digital Maktaba Project part of the ITSERR project with the goal of enhancing the European Research Infrastructure RESILIENCE in response to the demands of the scientific community in Religious Studies.

The “Corano di Maometto”, a Qur’anic Partial Traduction in Italian Language from the “Biblioteca Universale” Sonzogno

Studies on the translation of Islam’s holy text have collected and analyzed translations tracing a historical path of the translation of the Qur’an from Arabic into Italian. Among all the numerous translations usually listed, there is one that seems to have been only marginally considered. A small partial version of the Qur’an was published in a small volume as part of the Biblioteca Universale series published by the Milanese publishing house Sonzogno between 1873 and 1932. The small volume, published around 1912 and anonymous in both preface and translation, is a selection of verses from all the surahs of the Qur’an. Those series like the Biblioteca del popolo (handbooks), the Biblioteca Classica Economica (literature), the Biblioteca Romantica (literature), and the Biblioteca Universale (literature) in particular, were part of a publishing trend of “popularization” of the classics where texts once selected, abridged, or cut were adapted to the uses and consumption of the target audience.
The small Qur'an volume similarly to other versions (1882, 1912, 1913, 1914) claims to be the first translation from Arabic into Italian and knowing that only the last of these (Fracassi, 1914) is a true translation from Arabic, it might indeed seem that the translation of the Qur'an published by Sonzogno could be the first of the 20th century. In this presentation, a comparison of the contemporary translations is proposed showing in general that there was no translation from the Arabic text but only a paraphrase of Panzeri’s version (1882), republished in 1912 by Bruciati in Milan, which in turn is not taken from the original text but from Savary’s French one (and, perhaps also for this reason, is anonymous). Some verses seem to be taken instead from Branchi’s version (1913). In support of this thesis are the deviations and translation errors that remain in the Sonzogno version, testifying to an operation of paraphrasing existing material already translated without an in-depth knowledge of the Arabic language and text. From the comparison it appears that the two French versions by Savary and Kasimirski, mediated by the Italian versions of Panzeri and Branchi to a lesser extent, constitute the “selection” in the Sonzogno Qur’an both in terms of preface and translation, titles, and the few notes present, which seem likely to be related in the beginning to Marracci’s Alcoraní. This version, although partial, had the merit of bringing the sacred text of Islam to the knowledge of many Italians, something not taken for granted in early 20th century Italy. A more recondite and unintended merit is that of condensing a sort of history of previous translations of the Qur’an into a few pages. However, the “choice not to choose” translation has inevitably reported a “colonial” or “orientalistic” view so to say of the Qur’anic message, which considers Islam as an unaccepted and little studied religion.

Tehseen Thaver, Princeton University

**Exegetical Space and the Shaping of Shi’i Identity: Shaykh Abu al-Futuh al-Razi’s Persian Qur’an Commentary**


**Exegetical Space and the Shaping of Shi’i Identity: Shaykh Abu al-Futuh al-Razi’s Persian Qur’an Commentary**

The central conceptual theme pursued in this paper relates to the intersection and interaction of textual traditions such as Qur’an commentaries, ritual performances like oral sermons, and the articulation and formation of religious identity in medieval Islam. I explore this theme through a careful reading of the first Persian Qur’an commentary in the Imami Shi’i tradition, that of the renowned twelfth century scholar, Abul Futuh al-Razi (d.1144CE) titled *The Cool Breeze of Paradise and Breath for the Soul (Rawd al-Jinan wa Ruh al-Jinan fi tafsir al-Qur’an)*, and composed during the reign of the Seljuq dynasty (roughly between 1050–1225CE). While focusing on Razi’s Qur’an commentary, I explore and highlight some of the ways in which discursive practices like the composition and oral performance of Qur’an commentaries anticipated and generated particular forms of pre-modern publics. More specifically, I will try to highlight ways in which the employment of narrative techniques as part of exegetical performances helped curate particular understandings and imaginaries of the public in this moment. The dramatic literary style, informal Persian idiom, and colorful narrative and poetic content of the *tafsir*, I argue, are telling signs of the kinds of listeners that the *tafsir* both addressed and sought to cultivate. The main contribution of this paper lies therefore in elevating our understanding of the mutually reinforcing dynamic between text and ritual in the curation of premodern Muslim publics. Namely, through a close reading of Razi’s exegesis I show the interaction of Qur’an exegesis, Shi’i rituals of remembrance, and the cultivation of distinct sensorial reactions and capacities — an important medium for the narration, transmission, and indeed determination of religious identities. I argue that al-Razi’s Qur’an commentary represents a crucial site for tracking the emergence of a distinct public since it conjoins Qur’anic hermeneutics as an exercise in textual interpretation and oral ritual telling. This commentary thus captures the relocation of the Qur’an from Arabic to Persian on the one hand, and from written text to public oral sermon on the other.
Further, it marks the movement of the “place of exegesis,” from madrasa or the Islamic seminary to the mosque, from the scholar’s podium to the preacher’s pulpit.

Francesca Badini, FSCIRE (Palermo)

The Qur’an as an Instrument of Education: The Legacy of Hasan al-Banna in Muhammad al-Ghazali (30 min)

Francesca Badini, FSCIRE (Palermo)

Francesca Badini (Ph.D. Candidate) started the postgraduate specialization period at the “Giuseppe Alberigo” European School for Advanced Religious Studies of the Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose (Library and Research Centre for Islamic History and Doctrines “Giorgio La Pira”, Palermo) in October 2019. Her research project concerns the Contemporary Qur’anic Studies with a particular focus on tafsir al-mawdu’i written by Muhammad al-Ghazali (1917–1996) and on his conceptions of anti-imperialism and education.

The Qur’an as an Instrument of Education: The Legacy of Hasan al-Banna in Muhammad al-Ghazali

The speech aims to analyze Mudhakkirah fi al-ta’lim al-dini (A Memorandum on Religious Education, 1929) — one of the earliest pamphlets that al-Banna wrote in collaboration with two other exponents of the Movement, (Ahmad Muhammad al-Sukkari and Hamid ‘Abduh ‘Askariyyah) — which has been analyzed mainly in Johannes J. G. Jansen (1992) and Brynjar Lia (2015); and the sermons that Muhammad al-Ghazali recited at the Mosque ‘Amr Ibn al-’As in 1973 and which are now published in two volumes entitled: Khutab al-shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali fi shu’un al-din wa-l-hayat (Sermons Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali in the affairs of religion and life, 1988). The aim is to show how Hasan al-Banna and later Muhammad al-Ghazali placed the Qur’anic text at the center of their educational activity and in what modalities (pamphlet, khutab and tafsir) they reworked and proposed the Qur’an to the Egyptian society.
The Qur'an frequently states that God communicates his message through *amthal*, often translated as “parables.” It defends this (e.g., Q al-Baqara 2:26), and “seems to indicate deliberate intent about its use of them” (Afsar 2005, 485). Given that *amthal* are referred to without any explanation as to what they are, it is likely they were part of the qur'anic milieu before the revelation of the Qur'an. They would therefore have been familiar to at least part of the Qur'an’s audience, even if many of them failed or refused to understand them, as the Qur’an often laments (Q 2:26; Q al-Nahl 16:75; Q al-Isra’ 17:89; Q al-Kahf 18:54; Q al-Rum 30:58; Q al-Zumar 39:29; cf. Q al-‘Ankabut 29:43; 30:28). Despite this, the most comprehensive study of Qur’anic *amthal* is now nearly 60 years old (Lohman 1966). More recent contributions to their study have focussed on particular aspects (Al-Ali 2003; Afsar 2005), or mention them because they overlap with other areas of study (Stewart 2022). This appears to be partly due to the fact that Arabic *mathal* (pl. *amthal*), has a wide range of meanings. In addition to “parable,” in the Qur'an, it also refers to proverbs (e.g., Q 18:64; Q al-Qasas 28:25; Q al-‘Araf 7:175; 29:41); similitudes (e.g., Q al-Jumu’ah 62:5), and exemplums (e.g., Q Yā Sin 36:13-32; Q al-Tahrir 66:11-12; Stewart 2022, 13; Al-Ali 2003, 81). Qur’anic *amthal* are also diverse, ranging from a single sentence that compares two things, to complete narratives (Afsar 2005, 483), making them difficult to define. The result of this is that there is still no consensus as to what constitutes a parable in the Qur’an, and thus no overarching study of them as a linguistic feature intrinsic to the Qur'an’s pedagogical goal. This paper will identify, categorize, and analyze *amthal* in the Qur’an, and compare their didactic use to that of parables in the three gospels in which they appear, especially those which are similar in content. It will seek to understand *amthal* against their late antique background, while also aiming to uncover how the Qur’an may use this genre in innovative ways.

Stephen Burge, Institute of Isma‘ili Studies

“Cry ‘Havoc!’ and Let Slip the Dogs of War”: Angelic Armies and Martial Language in the Biblical Tradition and the Qur’an (30 min)

Stephen Burge is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Isma‘ili Studies in London, where he works in the Qur’anic Studies Unit. Burge’s areas of interest include: ritual, the study of *tafsir* works, the hadith literature, angelology in the Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions, and interactions between the Bible and the Qur’an. His publications include *Angels in Islam*: Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti’s al-Haba’ik fi akhbar al-mala‘ik, *The Prophet Muhammad: Islam and the Divine Message*, and the edited volumes *The Meaning of the Word: Lexicology and Qur’anic Exegesis*, and (with Asma Hilali), *The Making of Religious Texts in Islam*.
Angelic warriors are defenders of persecuted Jews during the Maccabean revolt (3Macc 6:16-19, 4Macc 4:8-11), an angel helps Kenaz in his attack on the Amorites in Pseudo-Philo (27:10-11), 3Enoch describes the heavenly court as an army ready for battle (3En. 18:1, 35:1-5), and in the Testament of Adam the angelic order of dominions is tasked with determining the outcome of wars (TAdam 4:6-7). The association of angels with cavalry detachments is seen particularly strongly in Hekhalot Rabbati (15:8-16:2), with the angelic hosts sharpening their swords and preparing their horses for battle. By comparing the Qur'anic and biblical/post-biblical texts about angels and war, a deeper understanding of the symbolism of angelic armies in the Qur'an can be gained. This paper will throw light on how the Qur'an's audience understood the role of angels in defending the community and the way in which this is manifested in the Qur'an, the hadith and the sirah literature.

Gabriel Said Reynolds, University of Notre Dame

Christianity as a Conversation Partner of the Qur'an

Gabriel Said Reynolds, Notre Dame

Gabriel Said Reynolds is Crowley Professor of Islamic Studies and Theology at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of The Qur'an and the Bible: Text and Commentary (Yale 2018) and Allah: God in the Qur'an (Yale 2020). He also hosts a YouTube channel entitled “Exploring the Qur'an and the Bible.”

Christianity as a Conversation Partner of the Qur'an

In his study of a pre-Islamic Ancient South Arabian inscription Ahmad Al-Jallad (“A Pre-Islamic Basmalah,” JSAA) suggests that the Qur'anic basmalah might be a sort of response to the Christian trinitarian formula (from Matthew 28), “In the name of the father, the son and the holy spirit.” While this particular proposal may be difficult to prove definitively, Al-Jallad’s suggestion may be taken as a possible lens through which to view other elements of the Qur'an. If Al-Jallad is correct about the basmalah, then the Qur'an is not imitating a Christian formula but responding to it. I would like to ask more broadly if the Qur'an — even in those passages that do not explicitly address Jesus, Christians, or Christianity — might be developing its own theological formulas in response to Christian ideas. In part this paper is a response to a certain hermeneutic of attentiveness to the author’s real or imagined conversation partners (something applied to the Qur'an already by Angelika Neuwirth in her Islam and Late Antiquity; 2019).

Previous studies identified Qur’anic passages that allude to an underlying Enochian subtext suggesting the Qur’an’s audience was familiar with the myth of fallen angels found in the Book of the Watchers, one of five compositions that comprise the Book of Enoch. Informed by previous investigations, this paper proposes a stronger claim. My thesis is that members of the Qur’an’s audience were not only familiar with the myth of fallen angels, but throughout the Qur’an, Muhammad is at pains to deny this heavenly rebellion ever took place. His rejection of the myth is programmatic to the extent that it revises strands of biblical salvation history where Enochian lore plays an important role. Given the requisite biblical background information, this hypothesis is substantiated via an intertextual analysis of Q al-Kahf 18:50–51 and Q al-Baqarah 2:28–39. A prominent motif reappearing throughout the Hebrew Bible is that of a divine council of “sons of God” that both witness God’s creation and maintain the administration of it. An exegetical expansion of Genesis 6:1–4 in the Book of the Watchers presents these divine beings as fallen angels. The idea of a divine council of sons of God is rejected in Q 18:51 by evoking Job 38:7 when stating that the devil and his progeny never witnessed “the creation of the heavens and the earth.” The subsequent claim in the verse, that God would never take demons as helpers seems less trivial and more profound if read in light of an Enochian framework. The devil and his minions are demons, as the embodiment of evil obviously God would never accept him and his progeny as witnesses to the creation. By evoking Job 38:7 however, these verses further clarify that they were not sons of God either. But why suggest that demons could even be considered sons of God in the first place? By denying the existence of a divine council at the beginning of creation the verses preclude evil entering into the world through the work of the sons of God who would become fallen angels. In other words, demons do not originate from the actions of fallen angels. The Qur’an rejects an Enochian etiology of evil. If my interpretation of Q 18:50–51 seems far-fetched, it is nevertheless corroborated by Q 2:28–39. Others have noticed that the angelic protest in Q 2:30 has a close parallel to 1 Enoch 9:4.

In fact the Qur’anic author purposefully moved the scene of the angel’s cry for justice due to the spilling of blood just before Noah’s flood in 1 Enoch to the initiation of the cosmic battle between humanity and Satan at Adam’s creation in Q 2 in order to weaken the soteriological implications that the Book of the Watchers would later impress upon early Christianity. Time permitting, I will briefly discuss how Enochic lore may inform other teachings of the Qur’an regarding angels and jinn and end by mentioning some verses/passages that could be read as presenting potential counter-examples to my thesis.

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The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition (IQSA)

Monday, November 20, 1:00 PM–3:30 PM

Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk

Theme: The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition 2

Holger Zellentin, University of Tübingen, Presiding

David Penchansky, University of Saint Thomas (Saint Paul, MN)

A Brief Rumor Narrative in Q al-Nur 24 and Related Biblical Passages (30 min)

David Penchansky, University of Saint Thomas

Dr. David Penchansky is Professor Emeritus from the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he taught for 29 years. His Ph.D. is in Hebrew Bible from Vanderbilt University, 1988. Most recently he authored Understanding Wisdom Literature: Conflict and Dissonance in the Hebrew Text, 2012, Solomon and the Ant: the Qur’an and the Bible in Conversation, 2021, “Hosea” for The Jerome Biblical Commentary for the 21st Century (2022). This past decade he has shifted his focus to the Qur’an. Solomon and the Ant represents his first effort. He continues to teach in community venues and for the University of St Thomas.

A Brief Rumor Narrative in Q al-Nur 24 and Related Biblical Passages

Q al-Nur 24:1-10 requires four witnesses to establish guilt in the case of adultery. The brief narrative that follows (Q 24:11-20) illustrates the consequences when one ignores this requirement. The passage reports a slander that has spread throughout the community, although no witnesses were called. Most notable is the ambiguity as to the expected audience and the paucity of details concerning the incident. Who was slandered? What was the slander? Who spread the rumor? Judgment or forgiveness for the perpetrators?
Ancient commentaries associate this ‘damaging rumor story’ in Q al-Nur 24 with a larger narrative in which some individuals accuse Aisha, the Prophet’s favored wife, of immodest behavior. I found many areas of biblical comparison. First, it bears resemblance to instances where women are accused of sexual immorality. Such would include Tamar, Gomer, Susanna. Further, biblical legal material lays out procedures for adjudicating accusations of sexual transgression. In Numbers 5, the notorious ‘Sotah’ passage, the jealous husband required no witnesses at all. If one links this Aisha backstory to A al-Nur 24, this more detailed narrative resembles an account in Numbers 12:1, where Miriam and Aaron complain against Moses’ new wife. In both the Bible and the Qur’an, a charismatic leader weds a younger woman and receives criticism or dishonor as a result. Accusations of immorality are fraught in ancient and modern societies, reflecting deeply held attitudes towards gender. A thesis along these lines will emerge from a comparison between these passages.

Heydar Davoudi, Northwestern University
*Mushite and Aaronite Priesthoods in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an* (30 min)

Heydar Davoudi, Northwestern University
Heydar Davoudi is a neuroscience postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern University and he received his Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University. Besides doing research on memory and cognition, he studies the intertextuality of the Qur’an and the Bible, the confluence of these scriptures with Near Eastern history, and the hermeneutics of the Qur’an. Davoudi is the founder and president of Northwestern University Shia Muslim Association (SMA).

*Mushite and Aaronite Priesthoods in the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an*
Examining the family relationship between Moses and Aaron and the importance of their descendants is essential for a better understanding of the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an and their intertextuality. A few modern scholars of the Hebrew Bible have brought to the surface the existence and importance of the Mushite priesthood in conjunction with the Aaronite priesthood during the biblical pre-monarchic and monarchic periods. In this paper, through a critical re-reading of the Hebrew Bible and a comparative study of the Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an, I first propose that the biblical-qur’anic Moses and Aaron are half-brothers with a matrilineal kinship.

In the Hebrew Bible, although the two figures are called brothers, Moses, on one occasion, refers to Uzziel as the paternal uncle of Aaron (Lev 10:4) and not his own paternal uncle. Miriam is also called Aaron’s sister (Exod 15:20). Noteworthily, in the Qur’anic verse Q Taha 20:94, Aaron calls Moses the “son of the mother” (*ibn umm*), although they are called brothers elsewhere in the Qur’an. Based on these and other evidence, I suggest that while Miriam and Aaron are Jochebed’s children from her first marriage with Amram, Moses is the firstborn son from her second marriage with an unnamed Levite man. Secondly, through a comparative approach, I demonstrate that the text of the Qur’an in Q al-Baqarah 2:248 equally emphasizes both Mushite and Aaronite lineages (*al musa wa-al harun*). This only saintly-priestly reference to them occurs in the context of the late biblical pre-monarchic period, within the story of the return of the Ark of Covenant as the sign of Saul’s kingship. I discuss that although hadith literature is mainly silent about *al musa*, the exegetes of the Qur’an have usually defined them as Moses himself, his followers, the Hebrew prophets, or his immediate family and not his descendants. Finally, I re-emphasize the existence of the Mushite and Aaronite schools of biblical writers and how their potential rivalry may have influenced the writing and canonizing of their ancestral stories. I also investigate the extent of knowledge about the Mushite and Aaronite priesthood in the sixth-century Judeo-Christian sources in the world of Late Antiquity. This study may shed light on the depth of scriptural intertextuality of the Bible and the Qur’an and the characteristics of the Qur’anic discourse with the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitab*) on this subject.

Shari L. Lowin, Stonehill College
“Say: Whosoever Is an Enemy to Gabriel”: Q al-Baqara 2:97 and the Destruction of the Temple (30 min)

Shari Lowin, Stonehill College
*See biography, page 51.*

“Say: Whosoever Is an Enemy to Gabriel”: Q al-Baqara 2:97 and the Destruction of the Temple
When it comes to the Jews in the Qur’an, one particularly challenging genre of verses consists of divine declarations said to have been revealed in response to blasphemous statements made by the Jews of Medina. Such is the case with Q al-Baqarah 2:97-98. “Say,” the Qur’an commands Muhammad, “Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel, it is he who brought it down to your heart with God’s permission, confirming what was sent before it and as a guidance and good news for the believers.
Whosoever is an enemy to God and His angels and His messengers, and Gabriel and Michael—God is an enemy to those who do not believe.” Although the Qur’an does not identify the people who consider the angel Gabriel an enemy, Islamic exegesis identifies the speakers as Jews. What’s more, it records the conversation between the Jews and Muhammad—a conversation not in the Qur’an—which sparked the revelation of these verses. For example, al-Wahidi (d. 1075) and Ibn Kathir (d. 1373) report that a group of Medinan Jews, attempting to assess whether Muhammad was in fact a prophet as he claimed, asked him the name of the angel who brought him God’s revelations. Upon hearing that it was Gabriel, the Jews replied, “He is the one who brings war and violence. He is our enemy. If you had said Michael, who brings down rain and mercy, we would have followed you.” God then sent down Q 2:97-98, declaring that those who make an enemy of Gabriel make an enemy of God as well. The few scholars who have written about Q 2:97-98 appear to have accepted the Islamic exegetical claim that the verses reflect actual contemporaneous Jewish enmity for Gabriel. However, no evidence of any such Gabriel-focused Jewish antagonism exists. While Gabriel is considered an avenging angel (e.g., b. Sanhedrin 95b), the Jews are never the target of his avenging. Instead, in the rabbinic sources (e.g., b. Yoma 21b) Gabriel appears as the destroyer of Israel’s enemies, or as a defender of Israel. This paper will attempt to show that Q 2:97-98 is not an accurate report on Jewish attitudes toward Gabriel but is instead a Qur’anic polemicization of a rabbinic teaching, one related to the destruction of the Temple. While the rabbis insisted that despite the destruction and the extended exile, God abandoned neither the Jews nor their covenant with Him, the Qur’an uses the Jews’ words against them to reject and deride this claim. In misunderstanding the Jewish teaching with which the Qur’anic verses here are engaging, scholars have misunderstood both the Medinan Jewish community of 7th century Arabia and the purpose these verses serve in the context of Muhammad’s relationship with them.

Shlomo Zuckier, Institute for Advanced Study
Shlomo Zuckier is a scholar of Ancient Judaism and Talmudic literature. He is currently a Research Associate at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ, studying intersections between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam in Late Antiquity. Shlomo completed his Ph.D. at Yale in 2020, and his book Theologies of Sacrifice and Atonement in Ancient Judaism will be published with Cambridge University Press.

David Gyllenhaal, Institute for Advanced Study
David Gyllenhaal is a cultural historian of the Eastern Mediterranean in the fourth to eighth centuries, completing his Ph.D. in History at Princeton University in 2022. He is currently a research associate on the project “Interactive Histories, Co-Produced Communities: Judaism, Christianity, Islam.” His research on the project focuses on the Islamic theology of disaster and mass death, and how it was established in conscious contradistinction to Jewish and Christian theologies of disaster.

This paper offers a new reading of Q al-Baqara 2:58-59 and its puns by way of Muqatil b. Sulayman’s tafsir and its use of Hebrew Scripture. The scholarly study of the Qur’an in its late antique context is now marked by deep ambivalence towards medieval Arabic tafsir, or Qur’anic exegesis. Most scholars agree that the earliest datable examples of the tafsir corpus postdate the composition of the Qur’an by a century or more. This has led some to largely reject the usefulness of tafsir as a source of evidence for reconstructing the context and meaning of Qur’anic passages in their original milieu. This paper takes a different approach, using the testimony of the tafsir corpus on a single mysterious passage to reconstruct not only a plausible meaning in its original Qur’anic milieu, but also shed light on the exegetical intimacies of Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the first hijri centuries. That passage is found in ayas fifty-eight and fifty-nine of Q al-Baqara 2. These verses contain a peculiar pericope about God punishing the Children of Israel because they substituted one word, which God had commanded them to say, with another.
The word which God commanded them to say, *hitta*, does not represent an Arabic word, but it makes little sense in context. The word which they substituted is never specified. Later Arabic exegetes were thus puzzled by the passage and proposed many different solutions. The paper provides a granular analysis of a single tantalizing thread within this history of interpretation: some exegetes glossed the meaning of this passage with reference to a perfidious pun on the words for “sin” and “grain” that works in Hebrew and Syriac, but not in Arabic. The analysis will be anchored in a close reading of Muqatil b. Sulayman’s *tafsir* on the relevant passage, with an eye to the allusions he makes to the Hebrew Bible and how this informs his reading of the Israelites’ sin. Our approach to this passage reconstructs Muqatil’s reading of the passage in the Qur’an, the circumstances of the Israelites’ sin, the relevant pun, and the theological assumptions associated with that reading. The paper’s conclusion thus proposes an elegant reading of the Qur’anic passage in its original milieu as a polemical interlinguistic pun. But perhaps just as interesting, it reconstructs a milieu in the early genesis of the *tafsir* corpus when the exegetical intimacies of Jews, Christians, and Muslims made such a reading possible.

Tugrul Kurt, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

The Identification of Christians in the Qur’an: Christian Groups in the Exegesis of Muqatil ibn Sulayman (d. 150/767) and Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310/923)

(30 min)

Tugrul Kurt Ph.D., Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Tugrul Kurt is a research associate at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin’s Institute of Islamic Theology. He holds a Ph.D. from Frankfurt Goethe University, an M.A. in the History of Religions and Islamic Theology and a B.A. in Islamic Theology from Marmara University in Istanbul, Turkey. His research focuses on the Jewish and Christian impacts on Qur’an and *tafsir* (*isra‘iliyyat*-narrations), the intertextuality and the interdependency of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim history and culture.

The Identification of Christians in the Qur’an-Christian Groups in the Exegesis of Muqatil ibn Sulayman (d. 150/767) and Ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 310/923)

The study of Qur’anic exegesis systematically deals with the understanding of the Qur’an. It interprets the Qur’an and works out the text hermeneutically. Depending on the systematic approach, exegesis can pursue different goals.

One of these goals is to present the historical context to overcome the temporal distance that readers of the Qur’an have, which allows the exegete to recognize the Qur’anic message and, among other things, reinterpret it for their own time. Exegetical activity can also represent a reconstruction of the revelation event. In this context, especially exegetical traditions play a role. Early exegesis relies on exegetical traditions that provide insight into the meaning of Qur’anic revelation. Exegetical traditions include information on the occasion of revelation (*sabab al-nuzul*), interpretations of specific individuals to a Qur’anic passage, reactions of the first listeners, their worldview, religious convictions, practices, and environment of the Qur’an and the *Umwelt* of the first recipients. Therefore, the transmitted material is not uniform in type. In addition to their interpretations of the companions of the Prophet or scholars of the next generation, some traditions contain information on the occasion of the revelation of certain Qur’anic passages or surahs. Another category of traditions is those that contain biblical information. Muslim commentators have relied on the *isra‘iliyyat* material, which deals with the shared history of Jews and Christians, to understand Qur’anic content. This paper discusses the Christian influence in Muslim *tafsir* literature, focusing on the various terminologies used to refer to Christians. While the clarification of terminologies of Christian groups does not provide sufficient insight into possible Christian sources of Muslim exegetes, it offers a general overview of their usage. This understanding is essential to comprehend the perception and knowledge of Muslim exegetes regarding Oriental Christians and their classification referring to Christian groups. First, the article presents the terms used in exegetical works for Christian groups, followed by specific group designations by Muqatil ibn Sulayman and Ibn Jarir al-Tabari to gain an overview of the terminologies used. Muqatil ibn Sulayman’s and al-Tabari’s commentaries show that they were aware of the heterogeneity of various Christian groups, with the Syrian Christians forming the main axis of the groups he mentions. However, their explanations of Syrian Christian groups do not match what we know about them, and the sources they used to classify Christian groups are unclear. Moreover, Muqatil’s and al-Tabari’s interest in providing information about Christian groups is likely to place theological criticisms of Christianity in the Qur’an in their proper context rather than to give an authentic perspective on Christianity.
The Qur’an: Manuscripts and Textual Criticism (IQSA)
Monday, November 20, 4:00 PM–6:30 PM
Room: Salon A – Marriott Riverwalk
Marijn van Putten, Leiden University, Presiding
Abdallah A Elkhatab, Qatar University

A Verse Count Analysis OF MSS Marcel 5, Arabe 335, Leiden Or. 14.545 A and Other MSS Some of the Oldest Qur’an Fragments in Western Libraries (30 min)

Abdallah El Khatib, Qatar University
Abdallah El Khatib is professor of Qur’anic Studies at Qatar University since 2017. He holds a Ph.D in Qur’anic Studies from The University of Manchester. He taught at many universities since 1991 until now such as: Manchester Metropolitan University in UK, Beirut Islamic University in Lebanon, Al Albayt University in Jordan, University of Sharjah in UAE, and Northern Border University in KSA. He has taken many leading positions like dean of the college of Sharia and Islamic Studies at University of Sharjah in UAE, and editor in chief of many Islamic journals such as Journal of College of Sharia and Islamic Studies, Qatar University. His main research focuses on Qur’an translations into English, Philosophical exegesis, Qur’anic manuscripts especially early mushafs, and Muslim minorities in South America.

A Verse Count Analysis OF MSS Marcel 5, Arabe 335, Leiden Or. 14.545 A and Other MSS Some of the Oldest Qur’an Fragments in Western Libraries
This paper provides a verse count analysis of MSS Marcel 5 and the other related MSS. Furthermore, the article provides a brief history of Marcel collection in the Russian National Library which is a priceless collection and includes very old Qur’anic parchments. This manuscript has been subjected to radio-carbon dating (14C dating) and was dated to an early period in Islamic history, as is shown by its paleographical and codicological features. Because of its dating, it has received considerable attention from scholars. This study confirms the manuscript’s direct relationship with MSS Paris, BnF Arabe 335, St. Petersburg, National Library, Marcel 3, Leiden Or. 14.545 a & other MSS in USA libraries such as Chicago, Oriental Institute. A verse count analysis was carried out in search of its origin. There is evidence that the manuscript journeyed from al-Fustat in Egypt to Paris, before finally settling in St. Petersburg in Russia and other parts of the world.

However, for several reasons, it was difficult to determine the exact origin of the manuscript.

Marijn van Putten, Leiden University

The Scribal Appendices of Three Mamluk mushafs and the Crystallization of the al-Duri/al-Susi Divide (30 min)

Marijn van Putten, Leiden University
Marijn van Putten’s research focuses on the linguistics, transmission, and history of the Qur’anic text and the Qur’anic reading traditions. Besides this, he also researches the linguistic history of Arabic and Berber. He is currently the PI of the ERC Consolidator Grant project: Qurcan — The Canonization of the Qur’anic Reading Traditions.

The Scribal Appendices of Three Mamluk mushafs and the Crystallization of the al-Duri/al-Susi Divide
Mamluk manuscripts frequently show developed orthographic devices to represent the specific details of tajwid, qira’ah, and (occasionally) rasm. Generally these manuscripts and their orthographic devices need to be analyzed by what we know of these sciences, as they lack explicit explanation as to what these signs mean. Rarely though, manuscripts include an appendix that explicitly explains the orthographic devices used, the readings that are intended to be represented and the sources that have been used. This paper examines three such Mamluk mushafs (dated 734/1334, 830/1427 879/1474-75) and that contain extensive scribal appendices. These give invaluable insight into the scribal practices of the mamluk period and the position of the various canonical reading traditions at the time. It will be shown that Abu Amr’s reading clearly had become the dominant reading tradition in this period, and that it is around this time that the schematized distinction between his two canonical transmitters, al-Duri and al-Susi came to be crystallized into the form that they are recited today.

Hythem Sidky, International Qur’anic Studies Association

The Curious Case of Hafs b. Sulayman al-Asadi (d. 180/796) (30 min)

Hythem Sidky, International Qur’anic Studies Association
Hythem Sidky, IQSA

Hythem Sidky is the Executive Director of the International Qur’anic Studies Association. His research combines expertise in the sciences with a specialization in Qur’anic manuscripts and reading traditions. Sidky brings together traditional philology and mathematical analysis to study the dynamics and evolution of the Qur’an in early Islam. He has worked on the stemmatics of Qur’anic manuscripts, reconstruction of regional oral traditions, and applications of stylometry to the Qur’an.

The Curious Case of Hafs b. Sulayman al-Asadi (d. 180/796)

The transmission (riwayah) of Hafs b. Sulayman al-Asadi (d. 180/796) on the authority of ‘Asim b. Abi al-Najud (d. 127/745) is by far the most popular Qur’anic reading tradition (qira’ah) in the world today. As is the case with all ten canonical qira’ah, the Hafs reading tradition has been meticulously documented through a complex network of isnad-backed recitations back to Hafs and ultimately to his teacher, ‘Asim. In his study of the transmission of the reading traditions, Shady Nasser argues that the extremely technical and time-consuming nature of Qur’an transmission, unlike hadith, made it nearly impossible to fabricate isnads.

This certitude, however, does not extend to the isnads connecting the eponymous readers back to the Companions. Nasser characterizes them as “mythical ancestry,” and an attempt by later Muslim scholars to legitimize the eponymous readings by connecting them back to the Companions and Prophet. The aim of this paper is to explore the role of Qur’an isnads in the pre-canonical period through a close examination of the transmission of Hafs < ‘Asim. It is purported that Hafs’s teacher’s teacher is Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami (d. 74/693). A comparison of Hafs’s reading against independent reports of al-Sulami’s reveals glaring discrepancies. Using reports attributed to ‘Asim as a backdrop, I argue that this inconsistency is evidence that the eponymous readers may have already had isnads for their readings, as opposed to them being later fabrications. However, rather than functioning as certificates of verbatim transmission back to the Prophet, they imbued a reader with legitimacy through the authority of their teachers. What remains impervious to historical analysis is the exact source and selection process underlying the specific wordings chosen by the early readers.

Discussion (30 min)
Executive Summary

It is with great pleasure that the International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA) holds its 2023 annual meeting. This year’s conference hosts multiple sessions with dozens of presenters and discussants coming from across the globe. The following report by the executive director summarizes the progress of IQSA throughout 2023 as well as forthcoming plans.

Governance
The board held its spring 2023 Annual Meeting virtually. The executive director reported to council IQSA’s financial, operational, and administrative activity. The board discussed updates within the standing committees and remains committed to convening the next Annual Meeting in London, England hosted by the Institute of Ismaili Studies in the Summer of 2024.

Membership & Benefits
Paid memberships are now at 365 and holding stable. Past and future IQSA members are kindly instructed to continue paying their annual membership dues until further notice. IQSA currently has seven lifetime members, and three institutional members.

Donations & Sponsorships
IQSA has been receiving installments from the Windsor Foundation periodically, totaling $10K. We are immensely grateful to the foundation for their longtime support and look forward to continued future partnership. Nonetheless, the general climate of uncertainty makes your donations and service necessary during times of need. We thank members and partners for years of generous giving—thank you. IQSA is an independent tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. This means that our world class programming and publishing is only possible through your generosity and participation. Senior colleagues, professionals, and partner organizations are especially encouraged to give generously. You may feel inclined to sponsor a particular cause—such as publications, annual or international meetings, general or graduate receptions, and so on. If you believe in fostering Qur’anic scholarship, building bridges, and using scholarship as a means for peace and mutual understanding—please give. Please make your tax-deductible donation at members.iqsaweb.org/donate.

Online Discussion Group
Join the IQSA Google group to share ideas, discuss, and collaborate with other scholars and members of IQSA. Join by visiting https://groups.google.com/g/ IQSAdiscussion.
The Nominating Committee oversees all nominations and suggests suitable candidates for most IQSA leadership positions, through a process of consultation and discussion with the Board of Directors. The Board, with discretionary powers for emendations and suggestions, approves a ranked list and reaches out to the nominees. During 2023, the nominating committee consisted of five members: Karen Bauer and Johanna Pink, who were also members of the Board, Stephen Burge, Nevin Reda, and Nora K. Schmid.

This year, the Nominating Committee had to fill several important positions beginning in 2024, partially by reappointment, and partially by appointing new candidates.

Several nominations related to the Nominating Committee itself: The term of the Committee has been changed by the Board of Directors to four years instead of three years (non-renewable). Two members of the Nominating Committee who were affected by this change and whose term would have ended in December 2023, Johanna Pink and Karen Bauer, both agreed to serve on the Committee for an additional year, until December 2024. Additionally, Johanne Christiansen and Thomas Hoffmann were appointed as new members starting in 2024. They will replace Stephen Burge and Nora K. Schmid, whose terms end in 2023, after four years of service on the Committee.

The Nominating Committee also nominated two new members for the Board of Directors, to replace Karen Bauer and Johanna Pink, whose terms end in 2023. In addition, a third member needed to be nominated following a decision by the Board to increase the number of members on the Board by one. The Nominating Committee appointed Mohsen Goudarzi, Nevin Reda, and Nora K. Schmid. Since the latter two were serving on the Nominating Committee, they recused themselves from any discussions and decisions pertaining to their own roles.

The Nominating Committee furthermore nominated Emran El-Badawi to replace Michael Pregill in 2024 as a member of the Programming Committee.

The Nominating Committee sought to balance different requirements in the candidates that were nominated. Besides scholars’ contributions to the field of Qur’anic Studies and their academic profile, commitment to IQSA and active membership were important criteria in the Committee’s discussions. Members of the Nominating Committee were committed to establishing and upholding, in standing committees, as much as possible, balance in terms of gender, religious orientation, and geographic representation.

My position as chair of the Committee will end in December 2023 and Karen Bauer, who is currently serving on the Nominating Committee, will replace me as chair. It has been a great pleasure and an honor to serve IQSA in this position. I would like to thank my colleagues on the Nominating Committee for their work during this past year, and all the former and new members on IQSA’s standing committees for their service for IQSA.

Nora K. Schmid
Chair of the Nominating Committee
IQSA Programming Committee

IQSA’s Programming Committee (PC) is responsible for the academic content of the Annual Meeting and reports to the Board of Directors. It approves new program units, oversees the operation of existing ones, and shapes future meetings in the light of its evaluation of past ones. The current shape of IQSA’s program units is as follows:

1. Linguistic, Literary, and Thematic Perspectives on the Qur’anic Corpus (LLTP)
   Chairs: Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau and Mohsen Goudarzi

2. The Qur’an: Manuscripts and Textual Criticism (QMTC)
   Chairs: Marijn van Putten and R. Michael McCoy

3. The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition (QBT)
   Chairs: Nora K. Schmid and Holger Zellentin

4. Qur’anic Studies: Methodology and Hermeneutics. (QSMH)
   Chairs: Khalil Andani and Celene Ibrahim

5. Surah Studies (SS)
   Chairs: Nevin Reda and Shawkat Toorawa

6. The Qur’an and Late Antiquity (QLA)
   Chairs: Johanne Louise Christiansen and Valentina Grasso

7. The Societal Qur’an (SQ)
   Chairs: Johanna Pink and Lauren Osborne

The Programming Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank these chairs for their hard work on behalf of IQSA. Some of these co-chairs are completing their terms at the end of 2023, and the PC will seek replacements shortly.

The call for papers for IQSA’s 2023 meeting was published in January, and later in the spring a total of 79 submissions had been received and reviewed by the session chairs. At our 2023 Annual Meeting, IQSA’s seven programming units will hold a total of 12 sessions. A Presidential Address, followed by a reception, has also been timetabled for the evening of Friday, November 17th, and a Graduate School luncheon will take place on Saturday, November 18th at 11:00 am. With the help of SBL’s programming team, the Programming Committee has made it a priority to ensure that IQSA sessions are held at the same venue, as far as possible.

The Programming Committee would also like to express gratitude to everyone (co-chairs, the SBL programming committee, and IQSA’s wider membership) who made this Annual Meeting in San Antonio possible.

Andrew O’Connor
Chair, IQSA Programming Committee
IQSA Publications & Research Committee

First convened in December 2013, the IQSA Publications and Research Committee (PRC) is tasked with supervising the various branches of the IQSA publishing division. These include the Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association (JIQSA), the book review service known as Review of Qur’anic Research (RQR), and the IQSA monograph series known as IQSA Studies in the Qur’an (ISIQ). As of January 1, 2023 IQSA has partnered with De Gruyter for all of its publications. RQR continues to publish reviews digitally as soon as they are available, and is also included in the final print version of JIQSA. In addition, individual JIQSA articles are now regularly available (digitally) ahead of print, and select JIQSA articles are open access.

JIQSA. IQSA has released seven volumes to date of its flagship annual publication, the Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association, edited by Sean Anthony and associate editor Saqib Hussain. JIQSA 8 will be released in late 2023, although some articles to be published in this volume are currently accessible via early access on the journal website. Submissions are currently invited for volume 9 (2024). JIQSA has historically had a fast turnaround time between submission and publication, so it has become a popular venue for young as well as accomplished scholars. We also offer open access, advanced digital publishing for select articles. Please contact Profs. Sean Anthony (anthony.288@osu.edu), Saqib Hussain (saqib.hussain@lmu.edu), or Gabriel Said Reynolds (reynolds@nd.edu) for more information. See also https://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/jiqsa/html.

RQR. Edited by Shari Lowin, the Review of Qur’anic Research continues to publish its popular book reviews. As of late 2023, RQR has merged with JIQSA, though it retains its editorial independence. Forthcoming RQR reviews will be published in the print version of the JIQSA volumes. However, in keeping with RQR’s original independent status, reviews will be made available online as soon as they are ready. Digital access to RQR, both current and archived issues, is through the De Gruyter website, or through your institution, if subscribed. You can also be counted among the honored RQR reviewers by contacting Professor Lowin through the IQSA website/RQR (RQR especially welcomes female reviewers and will happily receive suggestions of works by female scholars to be reviewed).

ISIQ. Two volumes appeared in 2023: The Living Qur’ān by Ali Hussain (ISIQ 3); and Qur’anic Studies: Between History, Theology, and Exegesis, a collection of essays in English, French, and Arabic edited by Mehdi Azaeiz and Mokdad Arfa Monsia (ISIQ 4). In January 2023, Karen Bauer, Joseph Lowry, and Shawkat Toorawa, succeeded David Powers as series editors. They sent out two full manuscripts and one proposal for external review and await referee reports. In addition, they have commissioned one monograph. Please direct all inquiries and proposals to Acquisitions Editor Torsten Wollina at (torsten.wollina@degruyter.co). For further information see: https://www.degruyter.com/serial/isiq-b/html.

We strongly encourage all IQSA members and friends to submit requests for subscription to JIQSA (via De Gruyter) to their institutional libraries.

Gabriel Said Reynolds
Chair, Publications & Research Committee
IQSAweb.org

IQSAweb.org has *all* the information necessary for you to benefit from IQSA and for you to get involved. On this site, visitors can familiarize themselves with IQSA’s governance, resources, and programs, as well as learn about its policies, vision, and history.

**Online Discussion Group:**
Join the IQSA Google Discussion Group to share ideas, discuss, and collaborate with other scholars and members of IQSA. Join by logging in to Google Groups and searching “International Qur’anic Studies Association.” Then click “Apply to Join Group”!

**Weekly Blog Updates:**
The IQSA blog has attracted widespread international interest and participation of scholars, students, and the general public. The blog includes weekly updates about IQSA, information on its academic meetings (North American and International), schedules for other conferences and colloquia taking place around the world, and various stories and reports on new research. IQSA strongly encourages all those working on new and exciting Qur’anic Studies projects to contribute to the IQSA blog.

**Become a Member of IQSA:**
Become a member of IQSA, join from the IQSA website, located under “Membership & Governance.” Be sure to follow IQSAweb.org for updates about this and other matters. Through the website, members will receive access to our publications, including:

- Review of Qur’anic Research
- Membership Directory
- Bilingual English-Arabic *Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association*

If you are interested in getting involved, writing for the IQSA blog, or have advertising or other inquiries, please write to contactus@iqsaweb.org. Do not forget to find IQSA on Facebook and Twitter!

**Donate:**
Support IQSA’s work by making a tax-deductible contribution. Donate online at members.iqsaweb.org/donate or e-mail us at contactus@iqsaweb.org.

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**Advertise with Us**

IQSA is the first and only learned society of its kind devoted to the critical investigation of the Qur’an, encompassing a broad community of scholars, students, publishers, and members of the public. IQSA encourages advertising partnerships and opportunities in the following capacities:

1. **Advertise in the Annual Meeting Program Book** — Every year the International Qur’anic Studies Association holds an Annual Meeting in conjunction with the Society of Biblical Literature/American Academy of Religion, attracting a wide audience in the scholarly community from across the nation. The accompanying Program Book published by IQSA is read by hundreds at the Annual Meeting and thousands around the world, providing a critical platform for relevant businesses market their publications and services. Email contactus@iqsaweb.org to reserve an advertising space today!

2. **Advertise in Print** — IQSA provides advertising space in three of its flagship publications: the *Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association (JIQSA)*, the monthly *Review of Qur’anic Research*, and the forthcoming monograph series *IQSA Studies in the Qur’an (ISIQ)*. Email contactus@iqsaweb.org for details.

3. **Advertise Online** — While IQSA does not currently hold a physical headquarters, its website serves as the central meeting point and face of the organization visited by hundreds of members and non-members every day. Email contactus@iqsaweb.org to inquire about advertising with us online via www.iqsaweb.org.

4. **Send an Email to IQSA Members** — IQSA will send emails on behalf of publishers and other advertisers of interest to our members. The publisher/advertiser is responsible for composing the email. Please contact the Executive Office at contactus@iqsaweb.org for more information.
IQSA Mission and Strategic Vision

Mission Statement:
Foster Qur’anic Scholarship

Strategic Vision Statement:
The International Qur’anic Studies Association is the first learned society devoted to the study of the Qur’an from a variety of academic disciplines. The Association was founded to meet the following needs:

- Regular meetings for scholars of the Qur’an
- Cutting edge, intellectually rigorous, academic research on the Qur’an
- A bridge between different global communities of Qur’anic scholarship
- Regular and meaningful academic interchange between scholars of the Bible and scholars of the Qur’an
- Involvement of Islamic scholarly institutions and faith communities

The Association offers its members opportunities for mutual support, intellectual growth, and professional development through the following:

- Advancing academic study of the Qur’an, its context, its relationship to other scriptural traditions, and its literary and cultural influence
- Collaborating with educational institutions and other appropriate organizations to support Qur’anic scholarship and teaching
- Developing resources for diverse audiences, including students, faith communities, and the general public
- Facilitating broad and open discussion from a variety of academic perspectives
- Organizing congresses for scholarly exchange
- Publishing Qur’anic scholarship
- Encouraging and facilitating digital technology in the discipline
- Promoting cooperation across global boundaries

Core Values:
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Collegiality
- Critical Inquiry
- Inclusivity
- Openness to Change
- Professionalism
- Respect for Diversity
- Scholarly Integrity
- Tolerance
Announcing IQSA Meetings 2024

The International Qur’anic Studies Association is delighted to announce its Annual Meeting for 2024. This meeting will be hosted by the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, England from July 15–20, 2024.

Registration and other details are forthcoming — so be sure to pencil us in! We look forward to this meeting of international scholars.
Call For Papers

Journal of the International Qur'anic Studies Association

The Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association is a peer-reviewed annual journal. It cultivates Qur’anic Studies as a growing field with a distinctive identity and focus, while acknowledging relevant linkages to the study of the Bible as well as the Islamic tradition. The journal facilitates crucial conversations about the state of the field in Qur’anic Studies and connects diverse scholarly communities from around the world.

Website: http://www.degruyter.com/journal/key/jiqsa/html

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Electronic Institution ........................................ $102.00
Print + Electronic Institution ........................... $123.00

Call for Papers

We invite submission of original, quality research articles for consideration for publication in JIQSA. Methodologies of particular interest to the journal include historical-critical, contextual-comparative, and literary approaches to the Qur’an. We especially welcome articles that explore the Qur’an in the context of Arabia and the broader late ancient world; its connections to various literary precursors, especially the scriptural and parascriptural traditions of older religious communities; the historical reception of the Qur’an in the West; the hermeneutics and methodology of Qur’anic exegesis and translation (traditional and modern); the transmission and evolution of the textus receptus; manuscripts and material culture; and the application of various literary and philological modes of investigation into Qur’anic style, compositional structure, and rhetoric.

Submissions should be uploaded electronically in .doc, .docx, or .rtf formats, to https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jiqsa. Please ensure that the documents you upload are anonymized for peer review. As a rule of thumb, articles should be between 10k and 15k words including footnotes and bibliography. Shorter or longer articles may be accepted for review at the discretion of the editors. Authors are encouraged to conform their submission to our current JIQSA Style Sheet.

Editorial

Executive Editor JIQSA
Sean W. Anthony, The Ohio State University, USA

Executive Editor Review of Qur’anic Research
Shari Lowin, Stonehill College, USA

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Gabriel Said Reynolds, University of Notre Dame, USA
Nicolai Sinai, University of Oxford, UK
Shawkat Toorawa, Yale University, USA
The *Review of Qur’anic Research (RQR)* is an online companion to the *International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA)*. IQSA is committed to the advancement and dissemination of high quality scholarship on the Qur’an and to the facilitation of deeper understandings of the Qur’an through scholarly collaboration. *RQR* is an online resource that features reviews of cutting-edge scholarship in the field of Qur’anic Studies and allied fields.

**Reviewers:** Our editorial board solicits reviews from appropriate academic reviewers for each volume reviewed. *RQR* editors request that reviewers write their review in a timely manner (usually 90 days) and in accordance with best scholarly practices. Authors who wish to submit their own reviews for consideration are considered on a case by case basis.

**Submissions:** While *RQR* acts mainly as a clearinghouse for the review of new scholarly publications (monographs, translations, edited texts, reference works, etc.), published works of cultural and religious significance that fall outside the traditional domain of academic publication may also be reviewed. Publishers and authors who wish to submit their publications for review in *RQR* should contact the *RQR* editor Shari Lowin (Stonehill College) at rqr@iqsaweb.org.

**Editor:** Shari Lowin is Professor of Religious Studies and Program Director of Middle Eastern Studies at Stonehill College, Massachusetts. In 2002, Lowin completed her Ph.D in Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at University of Chicago. Her research centers on the interplay between Judaism and Islam in the early and early medieval Islamic periods, c. 800–1200 CE, focusing mainly on the development of Jewish and Muslim exegetical narratives. Of her most recent publications is *Arabic and Hebrew Love Poems of al-Andalus* (Routledge, 2013), which examines Arabic and Hebrew eros poetry (`ishq/shirat ḥesheq poems) of religious scholars in 10th–13th century Muslim Spain. Other works include comparative studies of Judaism and Islam focused on the narratives of Abraham and on accounts of enemies of God in the midrash aggadah and in the ḥadīth, including a monograph entitled *The Making of a Forefather: Abraham in Islamic and Jewish Exegetical Narratives* (Brill, 2006).

All inquiries can be directed to the *RQR* editor, Shari Lowin (Stonehill College) at slowin@stonehill.edu.
People

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fred Donner, University of Chicago, President
See biography, page 16.

Karen Bauer, Institute of Ismaili Studies
See biography, page 12.

Johanne Christiansen, University of Southern Denmark
See biography, page 18.

Alba Fedeli, University of Hamburg
Alba Fedeli is a notable scholar and linguist recognized for her pioneering work in the study of early Islamic manuscripts. Born in Italy, she completed her studies at the University of Milan and the University of Birmingham, where she pursued her passion for Arabic and Islamic studies. Fedeli gained widespread acclaim for her groundbreaking research on the Sanaa Palimpsest, one of the world’s oldest Quranic manuscripts, in which she meticulously deciphered and documented the hidden, erased texts beneath the visible script. Her exceptional contributions to Islamic manuscript studies have not only expanded our understanding of early Islamic history and religious texts but have also earned her recognition as a trailblazer in the field of Quranic scholarship.

Shari Lowin, Stonehill College
Shari L. Lowin is Professor of Islamic and Jewish Studies in the Religious Studies Department of Stonehill College. Her research centers on the interplay between Islamic and Jewish texts in the early and early medieval Islamic periods, focusing mainly on exegetical narratives. She is the author of The Making of a Forefather: Abraham in Islamic and Jewish Exegetical Narratives as well as Arabic and Hebrew Love Poems of al-Andalus, a study of these exegetical narratives in the desire poetry of Spain. Her current project reexamines the Qur’anic verses attributed to the Jews in light of the midrash and piyyut. She is the editor of the Review of Qur’anic Research.

Johanna Pink, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (Germany)
See biography, page 30.

Holger Zellentin, University of Cambridge, Chair
See biography, page 12.

Suleman Dost, University of Toronto, Secretary
Dr. Suleyman Dost is an Assistant Professor of Late Antiquity and Early Islam at the University of Toronto. He received his PhD from the University of Chicago in 2017. Dr. Dost’s research and teaching interests include history of late antique Arabia and Ethiopia, pre-Islamic Arabian epigraphy and Qur’anic Studies. He is currently completing a book manuscript on the historical, religious and linguistic context of the Qur’an’s origins through a study of pre-Islamic inscriptions from the Arabian peninsula.

Executive Office

Hythem Sidky, IQSA – Executive Director and Treasurer
See biography, page 41.

Lien Iffah Naf’atu Fina, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Lien Iffah Naf’atu Fina is a lecturer at the Department of Qur’anic Studies, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She obtained a Master's degree from the Hartford Seminary, where she wrote a thesis on al-Baqillani’s manuscript on miracles and magic.

Anne Marie Mclean – Executive Assistant
Anne Marie McLean is the Executive Assistant for the International Qur’anic Studies Association. She studied Religious Studies and Political Science at Emory & Henry College and received a Masters of Theological Studies at Emory University. She completed her second Masters of Library and Information Studies through the University of Alabama and works professionally as a Reference Librarian & Outreach Coordinator.

Emran El-Badawi, University of Houston - Advisor
See biography, page 14.
Programming Committee

Andrew O’Connor, St. Norbert, Chair
See biography, page 23.

Halla Attallah, Georgetown University
Halla Attallah is a graduate student at Georgetown University. She successfully defended her dissertation “Gender and (In)fertility in the Qur’an’s Annunciation Type-Sцenes” in March 2023. Attallah’s research brings a literary perspective to the Qur’an, examining the way in which it engages with storytelling. Her work draws on literary, gender, disability and masculinity critical theories for a deeper understanding of how the Qur’an used physical experiences to help further it’s theological teachings.

Lien Iffah Naf’atu Fina, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
See biography, page 51.

Thomas Hoffmann, University of Copenhagen
See biography, page 11.

Michael Pregill, University of California, Los Angeles
Michael E. Pregill’s areas of specialization are the Qur’an and its interpretation; Islamic origins; Muslim-Jewish relations; and the reception of biblical, Jewish, and Christian traditions in the Qur’an and Islam. He is co-chair of the IQSA Qur’an and Late Antiquity program unit. His monograph The Golden Calf between Bible and Qur’an: Scripture, Polemic, and Exegesis from Late Antiquity to Islam was published by Oxford University Press in 2020.

Gabriel Said Reynolds, University of Notre Dame
See biography, page 35.

Programming Unit Chairs

Linguistic, Literary, and Thematic Perspectives on the Qur’anic Corpus

Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau, University of Strasbourg, France
Anne-Sylvie Boisliveau (Ph.D.) is Assistant Professor in History of Medieval Islam at the Faculty of History of the University of Strasbourg (France). Her first book (Le Coran par lui-même. Vocabulaire et argumentation du discours coranique autoréférentiel, 2014) deals with synchronic self-referential discourse in the Qur’an.

Mohsen Goudarzi, Harvard Divinity School
Mohsen Goudarzi joined the Harvard Divinity School faculty in July 2021, having taught previously at the University of Minnesota (Twin Cities). Goudarzi’s research focuses on the intellectual and social aspects of Islam’s emergence, in particular the Qur’an’s relationship to Late Antique literature as well as its textual history. He is also interested in various fields of Islamic learning, especially the sciences of exegesis (tafsīr), theology (kalām), and law (fiqh). Currently, he is working on a book project that proposes a new reading of major elements of the qu’ranic worldview, including the Qur’an’s conception of scriptural and prophetic history. Goudarzi received a certificate from the University of Minnesota’s Center for Educational Innovation for his dedication to student learning. He had also received a certificate of distinction in teaching three times from the Office of Undergraduate Education while a teaching fellow at Harvard.

The Qur’an: Manuscripts and Textual Criticism

R. Michael McCoy III, Independent Scholar
After doctoral study in Oxford, R. Michael McCoy III went on to a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Notre Dame where he prepared his dissertation for publication with Brill. During that time he also worked for the Qur’ān Gateway project on Qur’ān manuscript research. He has published in the areas of Christian Arabic manuscripts and Tafsir studies, including his most recent contribution Interpreting the Qur’an with the Bible (Tafsir al-Qur’an bi-l-kitab) Reading the Arabic Bible in the Tafsirs of Ibn Barragān and al-Bīqā’ī (https://brill.com/view/title/56568).

Marijn van Putten, Independent Scholar
See biography, page 40.

The Qur’an and the Biblical Tradition

Holger Zellentin, University of Cambridge
See biography, page 12.
Nora K. Schmid, University of Oxford
Nora K. Schmid is Departmental Lecturer in Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford (Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies). She has studied Arabic and French languages and literatures at Freie Universität Berlin and at the INALCO in Paris. She has previously held research positions in the Corpus Coranicum project (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2007–2012) and in the Collaborative Research Center 980 “Episteme in Motion: Transfer of Knowledge from the Ancient World to the Early Modern Period” (Freie Universität Berlin, 2012-2018). In 2016, she was a Global Humanities Junior Fellow at Harvard University. She has been a postdoctoral researcher in the project “Qur’anic Commentary: An Integrative Paradigm” (QuCIP) since 2019. In 2022/23, she was Acting Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Hamburg. Nora K. Schmid’s research interests include the Qur’an, premodern Islamic religious and intellectual culture and history (e.g., asceticism), premodern Arabic literature (notably poetry and sermons), the intellectual and literary traditions of pre-Islamic Arabia, and Islamic law.

Qur’anic Studies: Methodology and Hermeneutics
Celene Ibrahim, Groton School
Celene Ibrahim is author of Women and Gender in the Qur'an (2020) and editor of One Nation, Indivisible: Seeking Liberty and Justice from the Pulpit to the Streets (2019). Her next book, Islam and Monotheism, is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press. Ibrahim teaches in the Religious Studies and Philosophy Department at Groton School and is an affiliated faculty member at the Boston Islamic Seminary. She holds a Ph.D. from Brandeis University, an M.Div. from Harvard University, and a bachelor’s degree from Princeton University.

Khalil Andani, Augustana College (USA)
See biography, page 28.

The Qur’an and Late Antiquity
Michael E. Pregill, University of California, Los Angeles
See biography, page 52.

Johanne Louise Christiansen, University of Southern Denmark, Presiding
See biography, page 18.

Sura Studies
Nevin Reda, University of Toronto
Nevin Reda is Associate Professor of Muslim Studies at Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Her research interests include the poetics and hermeneutics of Qur’anic narrative structure, Hebrew Bible and Qur’an, spiritually integrative approaches to the Qur’an, Islamic feminist hermeneutics and Islamic ethical-legal theory. Her publications include The al-Baqara Crescendo: Understanding the Qur’an’s Style, Narrative, Structure and Running Themes (2017) and a co-edited volume, Islamic Interpretive Tradition and Gender Justice: Processes ofCanonization, Subversion, and Change (2020).

Shawkat M. Toorawa, Yale University
Shawkat M. Toorawa is Professor of Arabic and Chair, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, Yale University. His rhythmic, rhyming translation of Q Luqman/31 is forthcoming in His Pen and Ink Are a Powerful Mirror: Andalusi, Judaeo-Arabic, and Other Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Ross Bram, ed. Adam Bursi, S.J. Pearce and Hamza Zafer (Brill, 2020).

The Societal Qur’an
Johanna Pink, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (Germany)
See biography, page 30.

Lauren Osborne, Whitman College
Lauren E. Osborne is Associate Professor of Religion at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington. She holds a Ph.D. and A.M. from the University of Chicago, and bachelor’s degrees in Religious Studies and Music Performance from Lawrence University. Her area of research is the recitation of the Qur’an.

Publications and Research Committee
Gabriel Said Reynolds, University of Notre Dame – Chair
See biography, page 35.

Ahmad al-Jallad, The Ohio State University
Ahmad Al-Jallad holds a Ph.D. from Harvard University in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Ahmad Al-Jallad is a philologist, epigraphist, and historian of language. His work focuses on the languages and writing systems of pre-Islamic Arabia and the ancient Near East.
Sean Anthony, The Ohio State University
Sean W. Anthony is a historian of early Islamic history and Arabic literature. After receiving his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 2009, Anthony taught at the University of Oregon (Eugene) and the Ohio State University, where he is currently professor of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures.

Karen Bauer, Institute of Ismaili Studies
See biography, page 12.

Carol Bakhos
Carol Bakhos is Associate Professor of Late Antique Judaism at the University of California, Los Angeles. Since 2012 she has served as Chair of the Study of Religion program and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion at UCLA. Her most recent monograph, *The Family of Abraham: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Interpretations* (Harvard University Press, 2014), was translated into Turkish (2015). Her other monographs and edited works include: *Ishmael on the Border: Rabbinic Portrayals of the First Arab* (SUNY, 2006), winner of a Koret Foundation Award, *Judaism in its Hellenistic Context* (Brill, 2004), *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash* (Brill, 2006), the co-edited work, *The Talmud in its Iranian Context* (Mohr Siebeck, 2010), and most recently the co-edited volume, *Islam and Its Past* (Oxford University, 2017).

Majid Daneshgar, University of Otago
Majid Daneshgar studied religion with a particular reference to the connection between Islamic intellectual and exegetical progress over the course of history. He is also interested in Malay-Indonesian Islamic literature and exegetical works for which he has published co-edited volumes with Peter Riddell, Andrew Rippin and Walid Saleh. He published his monograph on *Tantawi Jawhari and the Qur’an Tafsir and Social Concerns in the Twentieth Century* in 2017. He is a junior fellow at Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, University of Freiburg, where he works on the history of textual censorship in Islamic exegetical works in Persian, Arabic and Malay. He also worked as Assistant Professor and Lecturer of Islamic Studies in Malaysia and New Zealand, respectively. He was nominated for the Most Inclusive Teacher Award at the University of Otago, New Zealand in 2015. Majid also received the Auckland Library Heritage Trust Scholarship in 2017 by which he could compile the Catalogue of the Middle Eastern and Islamic Materials in New Zealand.

Vanessa De Gifis, Wayne State University
Vanessa De Gifis is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies and Chair of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, USA. De Gifis received her PhD from the University of Chicago in 2008 and is the author of *Shaping a Qur’anic Worldview: Scriptural Hermeneutics and the Rhetoric of Moral Reform in the Caliphate of al-Ma’mun* (2014). She was co-editor of the first two volumes of IQSA’s flagship *Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association* and continues to serve on its editorial board.

Reuven Firestone, Hebrew Union College
Reuven Firestone is Professor of Medieval Judaism and Islam at Hebrew Union College, Los Angeles, Senior Fellow of the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at the University of Southern California, and founder of the Center for Muslim-Jewish Engagement in Los Angeles. Author of seven books and over one hundred scholarly articles on the Qur’an and the Bible, Judaism, Islam, their relationship with one another and with Christianity, and phenomenology of religion, his books include *An Introduction to Islam for Jews; Children of Abraham: An Introduction to Judaism for Muslims; Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam; Who are the Real Chosen People: The Meaning of “Chosenness” in Judaism, Christianity and Islam; and Holy War in Judaism: the Fall and Rise of a Controversial Idea*. He received rabbinical ordination from Hebrew Union College and the Ph.D. in Arabic and Islamic Studies from New York University.

Marianna Klar, SOAS, University of London
Marianna Klar (DPhil, Oxford, 2002) is Postdoctoral Researcher at Oxford University, Senior Research Associate at Pembroke College, Oxford, and Research Associate at the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS, University of London. Her most recent publications focus on the Qur’an’s structure, its narratives, and its literary context. She has also worked extensively on tales of the prophets within the medieval Islamic historiographical tradition and on Qur’anic exegesis. Her monograph on *al-Tha’labi’s Tales of the Prophets* was published in 2009. An edited volume, *Structural Dividers in the Qur’an*, was published in 2020.
Joseph Lowry, University of Pennsylvania
Joseph E. Lowry is a specialist in Islamic law, Arabic literature, and classical Islamic thought. He is the author, among other works, of Early Islamic Legal Theory: the Risala of Muhammad Ibn Idris al-Shafi‘i (E. J. Brill, 2007) and the editor (with D. Stewart and S. Toorawa) of Law and Education in Medieval Islam: Studies in Memory of George Makdisi (Gibb Memorial Trust, 2005) and (with D. Stewart) of Essays in Arabic Literary Biography II: 1350 – 1850 (Harrasowitz, 2009). He has edited and translated al-Shafi‘i’s Epistle on Legal Theory for the Library of Arabic Literature (NYU Press, 2013) and is a member of the editorial boards of the Library of Arabic Literature and of the journals Islamic Law and Society (Br ill) and Abbasid Studies (Brill). Before completing his PhD, he was an attorney in private practice.

Shari Lowin, Stonehill College
See biography, page 51.

Shady Hekmat Nasser, Harvard University
Shady Nasser is Assistant Professor of Classical Arabic and Qur’anic Studies at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. He works on the reception history of the Qur’an, its transmission amongst the early Muslim communities, early Arabic poetry, and grammar. He is author of The Transmission of the Variant Readings of the Qur’an and The Problem of Tawātur and the Emergence of Shawādhdh.

Johanna Pink, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg (Germany)
See biography, page 30.

Lifetime Members
Reza Aslan, University of California, Riverside
Reza Aslan is a religions scholar and writer whose books include New York Times bestseller Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth, international bestseller No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam, and God: A Human History. He was an Executive Producer for ABC’s Of Kings and Prophets, a Consulting Producer for HBO’s The Leftovers, and host and executive producer for Rough Draft with Reza Aslan and CNN’s Believer. He teaches creative writing at UC Riverside.

Abdullah Galadri, Khalifa University
See biography, page 16.

Jane McAuliffe, Library of Congress
Jane McAuliffe is the inaugural Director of National and International Outreach, a new division of the Library of Congress. She is also the immediate past President of Bryn Mawr College and former Dean of Arts and Sciences at Georgetown University. McAuliffe is general Editor of the six-volume Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, the first major reference work for the Qur’an in Western languages. Other books include The Norton Anthology of World Religions: Islam, The Cambridge Companion to the Qur’an, With Reverence for the Word, Abbasid Authority Affirmed, Qur’anic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis, and the recently published The Qur’an: A Norton Critical Edition. She is past President of the American Academy of Religion and a member of the American Philosophical Society, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Sharif Randhawa, Bayyinah Institute
Sharif Randhawa completed his Bachelor’s degree in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from the University of Washington in 2018 and is currently applying for graduate school. His interests include the composition of the Quran as well as its relationship with Late Antique Biblical tradition. He has served as a researcher on these aspects of the Quran for Bayyinah Institute, and is the author, with Nouman Ali Khan, of Divine Speech: Exploring the Quran as Literature. He is also affiliated with the Centre for the Advanced Study of the Quran and its Interpretation (CASQI).
Farid Esack, University of Johannesburg
Farid Esack is a South African scholar of Islam and public intellectual who completed the Darsi Nizami in traditional madrasahs in Karachi, Pakistan, and his Ph.D. at the University of Birmingham, UK. Since 2000, Esack has been teaching at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), where he is Professor in the Study of Islam and head of its Department of Religion Studies. In addition to serving as a Commissioner for Gender Equality in the first South African democratic government (appointed by President Mandela) and heading a number of leading national and international not-for-profit entities, he has taught religion, Islamic Studies, and Qur’anic Studies in South Africa (University of Western Cape, Cape Town and UJ), Europe (Universities of Amsterdam and Hamburg), the United States (College of William and Mary, Union Theological Seminary, Xavier University, and Harvard Divinity School) and in Asia (International Islamic University of Islamabad and Gaja Mada University in Yogjakarta).

Daniel Brubaker, Qur’an Gateway
Alan Brubaker did his doctoral work at Rice University on physical corrections in early Qur’an manuscripts. Today he continues this research independently, traveling to study manuscripts, and delivering public lectures and conference papers. He is the author of Corrections in Early Qur’an Manuscripts: Twenty Examples, has contributed to several edited volumes, and has two additional monographs forthcoming. He co-founded Qur’an Gateway and is working on further tools and material to serve the scholarly community focused on early Islam. He has taught university courses in Arabic, world religions, and Qur’an; he also teaches biblical Hebrew weekly at his home.

Ghazala Anwar, Independent Scholar
Ghazala Anwar is an independent scholar of Islamic and Qur’anic Studies whose research focus in recent years has been on the lived practice of Sufism, the historical critical study of the Qur’an, and articulating a Muslim theology of animal rights.
IQSA Professional Conduct Policy

Adopted December 21, 2018

Members of the International Qur’anic Studies Association constitute a global network of scholars and educators committed to advancing academic study of the Qur’an, its context, its relationship to other scriptural traditions, and its literary and cultural influence. One of IQSA’s core tenets is a “mutual understanding through scholarship” accomplished via a diverse governing body and members.

To best promote this mutual understanding through scholarship and open inquiry, expectations of professional conduct are required of all parties to ensure an environment built upon courtesy and respect. These expectations include, but are not limited to:

I. Professional Integrity and Respect
IQSA insists on mutual accountability of its members to one another and the organization’s stated mission in addition to a professional obligation to treat others with honesty, dignity, and integrity. As members of a professional guild, participants are responsible for abiding by the specific standards set out by IQSA policies and adhere to all applicable laws concerning educational policy, employment, and workplace behavior.

II. Diversity and Inclusion
IQSA is enriched by its diverse and inclusive community of both scholars who represent different cultures, social locations, experiences, and perspectives in addition to the methodological range of inquiries it fosters. IQSA is committed to challenging practices that have intentionally or unintentionally excluded underrepresented scholars and scholarly perspectives.

III. Free Inquiry
IQSA seeks to foster qur’anic scholarship through the promotion of mutual understanding, insisting upon unhampered critical investigation and discussion of ideas, interpretations, and arguments. Its members are encouraged to consider traditional and innovative models through active listening, candid examination of contested ideas, and civil debate.

IQSA will not tolerate the following at any of its sanctioned activities or on any of its affiliated digital platforms:

i. The exploitation of power and/or status

ii. Discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic group, citizenship, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, creed, age, marital/family status, or any other characteristic protected by law

iii. Harassment of a person or group of persons on the basis of personal characteristics with the effect or purpose of creating a hostile or intimidating environment, offending or demeaning those persons, or limiting participation in a professional program, group, or activity

iv. Sexual harassment including unwelcome advances, requests for favors or rewards, and other unsought physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature

Possible violations of the IQSA Professional Conduct Policy at an IQSA sanctioned event or platform should promptly be reported to the IQSA Executive Director to initiate an investigation of the complaint. Retaliation against any such reporting individual will not be tolerated. Anyone who is found to have engaged in a violation of the IQSA Professional Conduct Policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to, reprimand and/or termination of the individual’s membership and participation in IQSA sponsored platforms or events.

Individuals who are publicly sanctioned for sexual assault or harassment by an institution, including by a university or corporation, may be barred from participating in IQSA-sanctioned events for the duration of the institution’s sanction. Appeals may be requested in the case of advance registration for the Annual and International Meetings; on-site registration for such individuals will not be permitted.
The International Qur’anic Studies Association (IQSA) is the first learned society dedicated to the study of the Qur’an. IQSA publishes research findings in the book series *IQSA Studies in the Qur’an* (ISIQ) and the *Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association* (JIQSA).

In addition, the *Review of Qur’anic Research* (RQR) features reviews of cutting-edge scholarship in the field of Qur’anic studies and allied fields. Starting in 2023, both will be published by De Gruyter.

**IQSA STUDIES IN THE QUR’AN**

*Editorial Board: Karen Bauer, Joseph Lowry, Shawkat Toorawa*

*IQSA Studies in the Qur’an* publishes peer-reviewed scholarly monographs devoted to aspects of Qur’anic Studies, especially analyses of the Qur’an as a text of Late Antiquity and aids to Qur’anic Studies, as well as republications and English translations of important works.

**JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL QUR’ANIC STUDIES ASSOCIATION**

*Editor-in-Chief: Sean W. Anthony*

The *Journal of the International Qur’anic Studies Association* is a peer-reviewed annual journal. It cultivates Qur’anic Studies as a growing field with a distinctive identity and focus and connects diverse scholarly communities from around the world. It encompasses the *Review of Qur’anic Research*, which is also published independently online.