

In premodern Islamic societies, poetry was one of the central literary forms for transmitting and disseminating knowledge. Thousands of copies of famous poems in Arabic that served or were used to impart knowledge can be found in libraries around the world. Only a few of these poems have been studied in detail; many more are completely unknown to us today. In this conference, we aim to explore the diverse strategies used to produce, convey, and disseminate knowledge through poetry.

We will discuss the following topics and questions:

**Knowledge transmission:** What kinds of knowledge are transmitted in poetic form, and what strategies do authors use to structure and convey this knowledge?

**Bodies of knowledge:** How, if at all, does the knowledge to be conveyed change through its transformation into poetry? What is the relationship between the transformation of prose into poetry and the body of knowledge?

**Authors and contexts:** Who writes these poems, for whom are they intended, and in what contexts are they written, read, recited, or commented upon?

**Formal and stylistic aspects:** How are these poems structured, what meters, stylistic devices, and sonic elements are used? What is the role of performance and reception? How do emotions relate to the rationality of knowledge?

**Function and purpose:** What are the functions of these poems? How do we know that their purpose is to impart knowledge, and what other purposes might they serve?

**Theoretical reflection:** What ideas about the function and effect of poetry in the transmission of knowledge can be derived from the texts themselves or from accompanying sources?

## VENUE

Universität Münster  
Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies  
2nd floor, RS 225  
Schlaunstraße 2  
48143 Münster

## ORGANIZATION

Natalie Kraneiß  
n.kraneiss@uni-muenster.de  
+49 251 83-24913

Prof. Dr. Syrinx von Hees  
syrinx.hees@uni-muenster.de

[www.uni-muenster.de/ArabistikIslam](http://www.uni-muenster.de/ArabistikIslam)

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

# POETRY AND KNOWLEDGE

## The Production and Transmission of Knowledge in Arabic Verse (1100–1800)

NOVEMBER 20–22, 2025

Funded by

**ALEA**

DFG-Langfristvorhaben zur  
„Edition des Gesamtwerkes von  
Ibn Nubāṭah al-Miṣri“



Religion und Politik  
EXZELLENZCLUSTER | UNIVERSITÄT MÜNSTER

living.knowledge



Institut für Arabistik und  
Islamwissenschaft

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

### 14:30 CONFERENCE OPENING

Syrinx von Hees, Director of the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Münster, and Natalie Kraneiß

#### PANEL 1

CHAIR: SYRINX VON HEES

14:45–15:20 Betty Rosen (London): *Versifying (‘ilm) al-badī’*: Al-Suyūṭī’s *‘Uqūd al-jumān*

15:20–15:55 Enes F. Ömeroğlu (Istanbul): Islamic Legal Theory and Poetic Reconfiguration: A Study on al-Suyūṭī’s *al-Kawkab al-Sāṭi’*

15:55–16:25 COFFEE & TEA BREAK

#### PANEL 2

CHAIR: NORBERT OBERAUER

16:25–17:00 Andreas Knöll (Münster): Techniques of *Jadal* as Techniques of Poetry

17:00–17:35 Serkan Ince (Tübingen): Poetry as Argument: The Kalāmī Method in al-Nābulusī’s *al-‘Iqd al-naẓīm*

17:35–18:00 BREAK

### KEYNOTE

18:00 Stefan Reichmuth (Bochum): Arabic Didactic Poetry between Knowledge Transmission and Socio-Cultural Initiation

19:00 RECEPTION

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2025

#### PANEL 3

CHAIR: ASMAA ESSAKOUTI

09:30–10:05 Claire Gallien (Cambridge): The Epistemic Function of Literature in the Genre of *Tartīb al-‘Ulūm*

10:05–10:40 Nefeli Papoutsakis (Münster): ‘Alī an-Naḥlah’s (fl. late 10th/16th cent.) encyclopaedic *zajal*: Didactic poetry in an early-Ottoman Arabic shadow play

10:40–11:10 COFFEE & TEA BREAK

#### PANEL 4

CHAIR: JENS FISCHER

11:10–11:45 Montse Díaz Fajardo (Barcelona): Ibn al-Ḥayyāt’s “Lāmiyya on the Warrior Saturn”

11:45–12:20 Isabel Toral (Berlin): Edible Eloquence: Gastronomic Poetry and Culinary Knowledge in Ibn Sayyār al-Warrāq’s *Kitāb al-Ṭabīkh* (10th century CE)

12:20–12:55 Leonie Böttiger (Berlin): Rhyming Recipes: Poetic Transmissions of Practical Knowledge

12:55–14:30 LUNCH BREAK

#### PANEL 5

CHAIR: MARCO SCHÖLLER

14:30–15:05 Rabia Egici (Istanbul): Abū al-Ḥasan al-Shushtarī’s *al-Qaṣīda al-Nūniyya*: A Poetic Rendering of the Concept of *Tahqiq*

15:05–15:40 Navid Chizari (Istanbul): Theological Unity through Poetry: *al-Qaṣīda al-Nūniyya* by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī

15:40–16:10 COFFEE & TEA BREAK

#### PANEL 6

CHAIR: KRISTOF D’HULSTER

16:10–16:45 Tobias Sick (Münster): “So That They Need Neither Skilled Swimmers nor Shell Divers to Reach its Pearls”: Tracing Knowledge Transfer in a Didactic Arabic Verse Translation

16:45–17:20 Dahir Lawan Mu’az (Kano): From Cairo to Sokoto: Abdullahi Dan Fodio’s Didactic Renditions of al-Suyuti’s *al-Itqān* and *al-Nuqāya* in 19th-Century West Africa

17:20–17:55 Natalie Kraneiß (Münster): *Versifying a Scholarly Discourse, Seeking the Love of the Ahl al-Bayt*: A Poem on ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166) from the 18th-Century Maghrib

20:00 CONFERENCE DINNER (PRESENTERS)

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2025

#### PANEL 7

CHAIR: NAZLI VATANSEVER

09:30–10:05 Tuba Nur Saraçoğlu (Mardin): From *Riwāya* to Poetry: How Has *Sīra* Narration Changed? The Case of al-‘Irāqī’s *Alfiyya*

10:05–10:40 Sahal Varwani (Berkeley): With Rhyme and Reason: Imām ‘Umar al-Kharbūṭī’s Logical, Rhetorical, and Dialectical Reading of Imām al-Būṣīrī’s *Burdah*

10:40–11:00 COFFEE & TEA BREAK

#### PANEL 8

CHAIR: PHILIP BOCKHOLT

11:00–11:35 Nadine El-Hussein (Berlin): Political Poetry in al-Andalus and the Maghreb during the Almohad Period

11:35–12:10 Paula Manstetten (Bonn): From Biographical Dictionary to Didactic Poem in the Mamluk period: Al-Ṣafadī’s (d. 1363) *Urjūza* on the Rulers and Governors of Damascus

12:10–12:30 COFFEE & TEA BREAK

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

12:30–12:50 Maysoon Shibi (Berlin)

12:50–13:10 Syrinx von Hees (Münster)

13:15 FAREWELL & LUNCH (PRESENTERS)