23rd Annual Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Graduate Students’ Association’s Symposium

Commentary and Interpretation of Studies in the Near and Middle East

March 4th, 2019

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Symposium Team Statement

It is our pleasure to present the 23rd Annual Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations Graduate Students’ Association’s Symposium. The Graduate Students’ symposium has proved an invaluable outlet for students to present original research across a breadth of fields in a professional, academic forum since 1997. This year, the symposium is entitled “Commentary and Interpretation of Studies in the Near and Middle East” and seeks to expound on existing materials, both physical and literary.

Sincerely,
NMCGSA
2018-2019

NMCGSA Executive Committee

Rand Saleh al-Jumaily - President
Morgyn Babins - Vice-president
Reagan Patrick - Treasurer
Gabriela Lichtblau - Secretary
9:00 am - Opening Remarks

9:20 am - Panel I: PHILOLOGY AND MATERIAL CULTURE

10:20 am - Q&A session

10:35 am - Panel II: POLITICS OF INCLUSION

11:55 am - Q&A session

11:50 am - Break (15 minutes)

12:05 pm - Panel III: ART AND THE NATION

1:05 pm - Q&A session

1:20 pm - Panel IV: CHURCH AND TRADITION

2:20 pm - Q&A session

2:35 pm - Break (10 minutes)

2:45 pm - Panel V: INTERPRETATION OF SACRED TEXTS

4:05 pm - Q&A session

4:30 pm - Closing Remarks

5:00 pm - Reception dinner (4 Bancroft Ave. second floor, Conference room)
As the 20th century approached, no lexicon of the Ancient Egyptian language of sufficient scale to be broadly useful had yet been published. Only a few dictionaries, those of E. A. W. Budge and H. Brugsch being preeminent, were available to Egyptologists. The task of ascertaining lexical meanings was gargantuan and necessarily rendered the pace of both education and scholarship extremely slow by contrast to their colleagues studying Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. The Berlin Wörterbuch project was undertaken in 1897 to correct this imbalance, largely under the leadership of Dr. Adolf Erman. The compilation of the dictionary was a massive undertaking executed by many scholars over nearly three decades—the first fascicle being published only in 1926 and the final in 1931. The references, or Belegstellen, were published over the two decades that followed, being finally completed in 1953. The importance of this product for Egyptology can hardly be overestimated and even today it remains the foremost dictionary of the Ancient Egyptian language. This paper considers the history and methodology of the Wörterbuch Project and considers how it has shaped lexical study in Egyptology since its completion. Critical issues with the Wörterbuch, such as its methodology and its style of publication are discussed with due consideration of the limitations imposed on the project by the time, political situation, and available technology.

Biography
Jordan Furutani is a first year PhD student at the University of Toronto in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations. His research is focused on Egyptian literature and linguistics. He is also interested in both textual and literary criticism of the Hebrew Bible.

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Craft production has long been a focus of archaeological interest in the Ancient Near East and the reconstruction of pre-industrial production sequences has received much scholarly attention. In recent years, an emerging interest in textiles has broadened the scope of craft production studies significantly. Although textiles rarely survive, ongoing excavations at the site of Tell Ta’yinat (Turkey) have yielded a rich assemblage of well-preserved textile production tools dating to the 12th -10th centuries BCE. While this evidence demonstrates the advent of new textile technologies in the Northern Levant during the Early Iron Age, a critical appraisal raises the questions as to the validity of standard reconstructions of textile production sequences. This paper considers common approaches used to establish textile production sequences from archaeological data to demonstrate how low-level theory practices (i.e. how data are constructed and published) conceal significant behavioural data. Specifically, the construal of discrete textile tools, from across a site, as equivalent to complexes of static artifact attributes, on a single object, presents an epistemological dilemma for the reconstruction of sequential behavior. The impact of this dilemma is made apparent when exploring questions such as how to differentiate evidence for distinct textile traditions that were practiced at the same time and place in ancient times? In this regard, current approaches to textile production sequences obscure the kinds of variability that archaeological studies aim to identify. I hope to highlight the need to develop methods of analysis specifically aimed at establishing empirical associations among textile production activities.

Biography
David Lumb is a PhD candidate in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto. He completed his M.A. in Near Eastern Archaeology at the University of Toronto in 2007. His dissertation research focuses on the archaeological evidence for the production and use of textiles at Tell Ta’yinat, Turkey, during the Early Iron Age.

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This paper is an experimental exercise that thinks through the materiality of an ancient Syrian glass flask held in the ancient collection of the Royal Ontario Museum, to find the lingering presence of its maker. Taking its material affordances and historical context into consideration, it discusses the unique chemical and physical properties of glass, before concentrating on a theorization of the flask qua flask. Drawing together the writings of Georg Theiner and Chris Drain; Andy Clark; Martin Heidegger and Susan Sontag; and relying heavily on the historical and archeological research of Robert Brill and Julian Henderson, this paper presents the flask not as a simple museum artefact, but as a container that ultimately keeps an imprint of the person who made it. It offers a historical discussion of the development of glass blowing in the Middle East and also takes into consideration recent developments in the field of cognitive archeology. By narrowing focus here on the specific materiality of one particular glass vessel, this paper employs a “bio-philotechnological” approach, taking this artefact as a thing-in-and-of-itself, a functional container that inevitably, through its making, evidences the essence of its maker and their material explorations. This is an admittedly poetic, experimental offering, that proposes to link the mediums of glass blowing and photography and reclams this seemingly orphaned museum piece, to theorize what makes this thing the thing that it is.

Biography
Rhiannon Vogl is a PhD Candidate in the History of Art Department at the University of Toronto. From 2008-2018, she was a curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, where she curated over twenty exhibitions. Her research at the University of Toronto examines art writing and publishing in Canada in the postmodern period. Her writing appears in numerous National Gallery of Canada publications as well as Art & Place: Site-specific Art of the Americas (Phaidon); James Kirkpatrick: Secret Base by the Lake (University of Western); Blackflash; Herd Magazine; Border Crossings and Canadian Art.

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Islamization within the Chagatai Khanate had reached its zenith during the 14th century as Tughluq-Temur Khan (1329-1362 CE) had begun his reign. After his death, the Chagataiyid civil war, lasting 23 years, saw its conclusion with the emergence of the Timurid Empire in Mawarannahr while the Khanate had been forced to retreat to Moghulistan. During the reigns of Khizr-Khwaja Khan (1329-1399 CE) and Ways Khan (1418-1429 CE) the pace of conversion to Islam amongst the Chagataiyids had increased in an area where it had struggled to do so before. One of the only sources that writes about this process of conversion, as well as the primary actors who were responsible for this, is the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* written by Muhammad Haydar Dughlat also known as Mirza Haydar. As the only one of two sources that has been written by a Chagataiyid, the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* continually references these three Khans as central figures in the process of conversion to Islam and continually highlights their Islamic credentials and their piety. This is a topic which has, sadly, not been fairly dealt with. This presentation will examine specific accounts of their religious devotion and how Mirza Haydar presented this information. I will also discuss certain episodes that the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* touches upon, primarily referring to the conflict between Islamization and being Mongol and between the Chinggisid Töra, Yasa, and Shari‘a.

**Biography**

Saif Beg is a first-year student at the Faculty of Information where he is pursuing a Master of Information in Library and Information Science. His focus is in Collection Development with concentration on Central Asian monographs found in North American academic and public libraries. Prior to beginning his academic career in the University of Toronto, he was pursuing his PhD in History at the University of St. Andrews where he completed a year of his studies before taking a break. He has received his Master of Arts in history from the School of Oriental and African Studies.

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In Karachi, Pakistan, a multitude of languages, religions, and cultures constantly compete with each other to announce themselves in public. Different groups use different methods – sights, sounds, presence, absence – to announce their right to the public sphere. This paper looks at how the Shiʿa become a dominating force through their annual procession, when this minority community becomes hyper-visible for a limited period of time. I examine the aesthetic imperatives of this procession, analyzing how the sights and sounds mark public space, while the immensity of the procession both demonstrates and challenges power, creating an inverted hegemony. As the immense procession moves through Karachi, the looming, black flags can be seen marking the route. The entire city is brought to a standstill: traffic routes are altered, neighborhoods blockaded, cell service suspended, and the entire city seems to be draped in black. The procession can be seen and heard through the acts and objects within it: shabīh (symbolic objects), ʿalams (standards), and other articles are punctuated with bloody mātam (self-flagellation with knives) performed on the streets, alongside groups of men reciting nauḥas (dirges). This paper addresses how the Shiʿa of Karachi physically and symbolically carve out a public space amid volatile conditions, and how the need to become visible and distinguish themselves from the 'Other,' is ultimately entangled with public acts of religious devotion.

**Biography**
Fizza Joffrey is a second year Master’s student at the Department of Religion at the University of Toronto. She is trained in political science and journalism. Her research sits at the intersection of religion, culture and politics, with a particular focus on contemporary South Asia.

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Mehran Haghirian  
*Barriers and Pathways for Cooperation Between Iran and the Arab States of the Persian Gulf*  
11:15 am

Owing to the abundance of mutual concerns, shared historic, religious, and cultural ties, as well as the importance and tradition of trade, Iran and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf are presented with a myriad of opportunities to realize a cooperative future that ensures the peace and security of the region and inhibits the escalation of contentions to perpetual conflicts. The Persian Gulf nations are not united in their policy vis-à-vis Iran, and there exist multiple paths for constructive cooperation between Iran and member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that can reshape the current contentious relations and overcome the costly status quo and zero-sum political frictions of today. However, ushering in a new era of peace will not be possible if the sources of past and current tensions are not identified and rectified. If earnest measures are not implemented by Iran and the GCC countries to resolve the disputes, the current situation will result in a perilous political environment that can exacerbate hostilities to unprecedented levels. As an alternative to the current destructive approaches undertaken by regional powers, this paper proposes the establishment of a security and cooperation forum in tandem with the identified areas for bilateral cooperation based on conflict resolution mechanism to inhibit the escalation of conflicts and engage in constructive dialogue to guarantee the stability and prosperity of the Persian Gulf region.

**Biography**

Mehran Haghirian is a PhD student at Qatar University’s Gulf Studies program and a Graduate Research Assistant at the Ibn Khaldon Center for Humanities and Social Sciences in Doha, Qatar. He is a graduate of American University’s School of International Service in Washington, DC, with a master’s degree in International Affairs and a research focus on Iran and the Persian Gulf region. His master’s thesis was published in May 2017 and it explores the possibilities for “Effectuating A Cooperative Future between Iran and the Arab States of the Persian Gulf.”

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Abdulla Majeed  
*The Afterlife of Saddam Hussein in Jordan: Imagery, Symbolism, and Production of Publics*

12:05 pm

Following the invasion and occupation of Iraq in 2003, images of Saddam Hussein, the president of Iraq (1976-2003), proliferated in Jordan and were widely produced and publicly circulated across different mediums, not by Iraqis in Jordan, but rather by Jordanian citizens. This paper interrogates the afterlife of the cult-figure of Saddam Hussein as it is (re)produced and consumed in Jordan’s capital, Amman, and situates it within three critical events: the state-manufactured cult-personality regime around the figure of Saddam Hussein in Iraq during and after the Iran-Iraq War (1988), the international broadcasting of the fall of Saddam Hussein’s statue in Al-Firdaws Square on April 9th 2003, and the execution of Saddam Hussein on December 30th 2006 and the footage of the event leaked afterwards. Based on ethnographic research conducted in Amman between May and August 2017, and June and July 2018, I argue that the differential production, circulation, and consumption of these images in the larger Ammani public sphere, works as an experimentation not only with the “limits of public display,” but also with the limits of critique. I also propose the circulation and consumption of Saddam Hussein’s image in Jordan functions as a site of mobilization through which “radical critique” that employs the past in pointing out both the failure(s) of an unrealized present and the aspirations for a utopian future may be forged.

**Biography**

Abdulla Majeed is PhD student in sociocultural anthropology at the University of Toronto. He has been conducting ethnographic research since 2016, working primarily with Iraqi exiles in Jordan. His most recent research culminated in his MA dissertation, *Unsettling the Homeland: Fragments of Home and Homeland among Iraqi Exiles in Amman, Jordan*. He has presented papers at national and international conferences such as MESA (Middle East Studies Association) and AAA (American Anthropological Association), and published articles in both Jadaliyya and Al-Akhbar Newspaper. His most recent PhD project interrogates questions of temporality in the (re)making of national consciousness in exile.

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Laura Tibi  
*Re-membering the Nation: Palestinian Art after 1948* 

12:25 pm

However revolutionary Arab artists may be in concept and in aspiration, a spirit of tradition hangs on to them which they cannot, will not, shake off. However much they may subscribe to 'cosmopolitanism' in modern art, they will not give up the notion that their identity can only be shaped by rooting themselves in a tradition of their own.

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra

Jabra’s statement holds true to generations of Palestinian artists, whose works have been intimately connected to the traditions of their land. But I would add to Jabra’s remark the malleability of tradition. Palestinian traditions have been shaped in various ways in order to adapt to disparate colonial processes. Despite the erasure of tangible evidence of Palestinian existence, traditions continue to persist and evolve through memory. Memory therefore becomes a valuable historical resource for remembering and re-membering the nation. Memory is both concrete, as in the case of Jabra’s notion of tradition, and ephemeral, as in the malleability of this very tradition. I would like to temper this reading by considering the way in which memory imag(in)es the nation as a natural phenomenon while simultaneously participating in its modern construction. Bearing this in mind, I will explore how memory has been used in the formation of a national Palestinian art. I will focus on the art produced in the first three decades of Israeli colonialism, during which three national symbols of a collective Palestinian identity emerged: The farmer, the refugee, and the freedom fighter. I argue that the images of these subjects bring together different temporalities of Palestinian tradition in order to represent a modern Palestinian nation. The farmer gestures towards an idealized pre-colonial past, the refugee towards the current realities of Palestinian lives, and the freedom fighter towards an end to occupation. Just as the images of the farmer, refugee, and freedom fighter occupy different temporalities, so too do the memories of Palestinians.

**Biography**

Laura Tibi is an Art History Master’s student at the University of Toronto, with a background in architecture and visual studies. Her research focuses on the modern historiographies of Arab art and architecture, art education in refugee camps, and decolonial strategies of art.

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Leila Moslemi

Queen Farah Pahlavi’s Western Art Collection and its Impact on Contemporary Persian Visual Art from 1940s to 1970

12:45 pm

The purpose of the paper is to examine the impact of the Western art collection purchased by Queen Farah Pahlavi (born Farah Diba) within historical, social, and political contexts. This will be framed within the geographical boundary of Iran. It is the impact of Western art styles on the artistic content and context of Iranian artists during the 1940s to 1970s. Western art entered Iran largely as a result of Farah Pahlavi’s influence. I argue that the purchase of the Western art collection by Farah Pahlavi is as the result of the international relations in a particular time in the history of Iran. There are more than 150 works of American and European art that Farah Pahlavi purchased. This body of work includes artists such as Pablo Picasso, Claude Monet, George Grosze, Andy Warhol, Jackson Pollock, and Roy Lichtenstein. Through her support of the first cultural centres and museums in Tehran and other Iranian cities, Pahlavi contributed to artistic movement by founding a contemporary art museum in Tehran. Most of the Pop arts excluding nude and homoerotic paintings were displayed in 2005 almost after twenty years. Also, I had a chance to interview two great painters from pre-Iranian revolution Gholam Hossein Nami and Aydin Aghdashloo, for the better understanding of the artistic condition under the patronage of Farah Pahlavi. Today’s Iranian youth seek the celebration of the collection. Their concern is to visit a collection that is internationally important. This collection is attached to the history of a nation and to the broader view to the internationals as well, and it has to be studied.

Biography
Leila Moslemi obtained her master’s degree in Art History and curatorial practice from York University in 2015. She studied Museum Studies from The Cultural Heritage Institute of Tehran, Iran and worked at the Royal Ontario Museum and Aga Khan Museum. Her areas of work at the ROM involve the Educational and the West Asia Department. Her efforts towards familiarizing the Iranian community with the ROM, led her to be one of the pioneers in the Iranian Heritage Day event at the Royal Ontario Museum. She worked at Sheikh Faisal museum in Qatar from September 2015 to 2017 as an assistant curator and Educator. She is currently a master’s student at the Department of Near Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto.

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Luis Dizon

Arianism and Mu’tazilism: Parallels between the Early Christological Debates and the Medieval Islamic Debate on the Nature of God
1:20 pm

During the ninth century C.E., a major theological controversy arose in Islam over the nature of God as it related to God’s attributes, which focused primarily on the question of whether God’s attributes, especially his speech, eternal. This debate lead to polemics and inquisitions among different Muslim theological factions over whether or not the Qur’an was eternally pre-existent. Interestingly, many of these theological debates have parallels in similar debates that took place among Christians over the nature of Christ in the fourth century C.E. Those familiar with church history are aware that during that century, the Arian controversy raged throughout Christendom as various groups debated over how to understand the person of Christ and whether he is to be seen as a creature of God or as being of the same substance as God. Many of the arguments and concepts that were put forward during the Arian controversy closely mirrored similar arguments and concepts that would arise five centuries later in the Islamic context. This essay aims to look at the debates regarding the nature of God during the Islamic middle ages (8th to 13th centuries C.E.), as they were participated in by the Mu’tazilis and Ash’aris. We will look at the arguments and issues that were raised during the debate. Also, we will look at parallels with early Christian controversies regarding Christology, showing how similar theological issues arose in both traditions, and were resolved in surprisingly similar ways.

Biography
J. Luis Dizon is a first year Ph.D student at the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, studying comparative Abrahamic religions. He previously did a Bachelor of Arts in the same program, and a Master of Theological Studies at Wycliffe College. He has participated in numerous interfaith dialogues between Christians and Muslims, both in and out of academia. His research interests include anything pertaining to theology, comparative religions, and Middle Eastern history.

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Recent ecumenical endeavors between the Roman Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East have sparked a lively debate among scholars about the lack of an institution narrative in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari. Some have argued that the seventh-century catholicos Isho’yahb III may provide one avenue of explaining this lack, due to his liturgical reforms for which the sources remember him. However, the search for an institution narrative in the Anaphora of Addai and Mari is the search for a presumed eucharistic theology which neither Isho’yahb nor the Church of the East held, that is, a theology of transubstantiation which requires the words of consecration for the bread and wine to become the Body and Blood of Christ. Rather, East Syrian eucharistic theology, informed by their Christology, argued against a theology of real presence in order to guard against claims that God suffered and died. As one East Syrian liturgical commentator explains, the distinction of the human and divine natures of Christ precludes the idea that the bread and wine ever cease to be and become the Body and Blood of Christ precisely because neither the human nor the divine qnōmā and nature in Christ cease to be and become one or the other. Rather, just as the natures of Christ are united within a ‘parsopic’ union, so also the elements and the Body and Blood of Christ are united in a mysterious union during the anaphora.

Biography
Justin Arnwine is a second-year PhD student at the Centre for Medieval Studies. After prior work in the study of religions, specifically in Syriac Christianity, Justin writes on the cultural and intellectual history of the Middle East in Late Antiquity with a recent interest in the intersection between religion and medicine in the Church of the East. He also hopes to incorporate his previous work in the digital humanities into his current projects in Syriac studies.

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Reagan Patrick

*The Search for Cain’s Land: Syriac’s Role in Shaping Islamic Tradition and the Appropriation of Sacred Space*

2:00 pm

During the late Middle Ages and into the Renaissance period, the idea that Paradise was a physical location was so prevalent that many explorers would make grandiose claims of having discovered biblical lands. There was, however, a dichotomy that existed between the explorers of the West and of the East. In 1534, Jacques Cartier described the bleak landscape of Quebec as “the land God gave to Cain.” Cain’s land – or the biblical Nodh, traditionally relegated as the place of banishment for the world’s first murderer – held a more favourable reputation in certain eastern traditions due to an apocryphal affiliation with Adam. This legendary association with Adam has hitherto been attributed to al-Tabarî’s *The History of Prophets and Kings* which describes Adam and his descendants as living on Mount Nūdh. However, an earlier Syriac work, *The Chronicle of Zuqnīn* also describes Nodh as the homeland of Adam - the “head and chief of all the families of the world.” This positive portrayal in a lesser known Syriac text was likely the origin of a subsequent Islamic tradition, a tradition which ultimately led to the creation of a multifaith site of worship known as Sri Pada, or Adam’s Peak. To this day, Adam’s Peak in Sri Lanka is recognized as a UNESCO world heritage site, visited annually by Muslim and Christian pilgrims who are determined to visit the footprint Adam left upon Mount Nūdh.

**Biography**

Reagan Patrick completed her BA in Classical Studies at Queen’s University with an emphasis on Late Antique Christianity. During her undergraduate years she also had a strong focus on languages which included Latin, Ancient Greek, and Modern Arabic. Leaving the realm of Classics, she would continue her pursuit of Semitic languages at the University of Toronto by earning an MA in Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations. She is presently in the third year of her PhD within the same department. Her current research is on the transmission of Josephus’ works into Syriac apocryphal texts and the localization of biblical geographies.

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Cale Staley

Subtely Slandering Saul: Veiled Critiques of Saul’s Kingship in 1 Samuel 9-10

2:45 pm

Scholars who have observed anti-Saul polemics in the book of Samuel tend to view 1 Samuel 9-10 as being positive or neutral towards Saul’s kingship. This paper focuses on two veiled critiques of Saul’s kingship in 1 Samuel 9-10 that scholars have missed: the use of the root גֶּה as a description of Saul’s stature and Saul’s inability to locate and control his father’s donkeys. On the surface, the use of גֶּה portrays Saul as a traditional Near Eastern king, and thus fit for kingship. However, the authors of the text use the root גֶּה to place Saul in an intertextual relationship with Eliab, son of Jesse, in 1 Sam 16:6-7, Goliath in 17:4, and with the idea of David’s diminutive stature in Israelite collective memory. The semantic range and use of גֶּה in the rest of the Saul narrative cast a negative light on the would-be king. The emphasis on donkeys in the text can be seen as part of a long-standing Near Eastern association between donkeys and royalty that includes Judah’s kingship in Gen 49:11 and the burial of Jehoiakim in Jer. 22:18. Failure to locate and control his father’s donkeys points to Saul’s inability to lead his people. Through both synchronic and diachronic readings of 1 Samuel 9-10 this paper seeks to demonstrate how these two veiled critiques operated within and entered the text.

Biography
Cale is currently a 4th year PhD student in the department of Near Eastern Studies at Cornell University focusing on Hebrew Bible and Archaeology. His main research interests are on portrayals of Arameans in the Hebrew Bible and how they changed over the course of the Hebrew Bible’s composition and their place in the broader Ancient Near East. He is also interested in the use of digital technologies to better understand the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern texts. Currently, he is actively involved with the excavation project at Tel Abel Beth Maaca, and has excavated at Tel Azekah in the past.

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Katie Maguire
Astrological Influences on the Qumran Sapiential Tradition
3:05 pm

[Consider the mystery that] is to be and grasp the birth-times of salvation and know who will inherit glory and [oil]. (4Q417 frag. 1 I 10-11.)

With the discovery of previously unknown sapiential materials at Qumran, scholarly conventions on ‘wisdom literature’ ruptured, prompting a serious revision of the utility of the genre as a heuristic. Commentators have long since argued that the Qumranic sapiential texts represent, at minimum, a development within the genre in the late Second Temple period, insofar as they combine elements of so-called ‘biblical’ wisdom with apocalypticism. This point is easily observed in texts such as 4QInstruction and 4QMysteries, which dispense practical advice to their addressees, albeit interspersed with eschatological expectations. Curiously, both 4QInstruction and 4QMysteries also employ astrological terminology (ברז, בתי מולדת) with some frequency in connection to predeterminism, as it is marked by the רז הנהיה. In the cited passage from 4QInstruction above, the מולדת seem to feature as an aspect of revealed knowledge which distinguishes the elect for a futural reward. Most commentators have taken these forms as a reference to genethliological horoscopes, most often translating them as ‘birth times’. This paper proposes to examine passages of 4QInstruction (1Q26, 4Q415-418, 4Q423) and 4QMysteries (4Q299-300) which employ astrological terminology. Using text- and literary-critical methodology, it hopes to ascertain the relevance of astrology (and astral science more generally) in the text’s imagination and presentation of the order of the natural world. While previous scholarship has identified the influence of apocalyptic worldviews on sapiential traditions of the late Second Temple period, this study seeks to likewise consider the extent of influence of scientific/magical discourses on this development. It will tentatively argue against previous commentators, that mantic wisdom had some influence on the Qumranic sapiential tradition and is marked by recurrent references to astrological concepts. Renewed attention to traces of astral science within the Qumranic sapiential tradition, stands to yield new insights into the ongoing transformation of not only of ‘wisdom literature’ as a genre in the Second Temple period, but also more generally into the epistemologies which underlay it, namely what wisdom consists of and how we can come to know it.

Biography
Katie Maguire is a second-year PhD student at the Department for the Study of Religion, affiliated with the Department for Jewish Studies. Her primary research interests are time and theodicy in the Second Temple Period, and most recently ancient astral science. Her recent work has focused on both apotropaic prayers and schematic calendar texts from Qumran. More broadly, she is also interested in Hebrew philology, comparative Semitics and reception-history.

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The Modern Islamic Reform aimed at a reconciliation of Islam and modernity while trying to firmly remain within the limits of authenticity. The movement began in the late 19th century with Syed Ahmad Khan (d. 1898) in India, and Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905) in Egypt. It was already in decline by the early 20th century. Later, the movement found, in Fazlur Rahman (d. 1988), an ardent ideologue of the Modern Islamic Reform, whose work on the Qur’anic interpretation is still regarded as one of the most important. His hermeneutics of “Double Movement” endeavors to suggest a method of textual study in which the first movement is toward the Qur’an, which enables the exegete to distinguish between the transient historical form and the everlasting content, between the historicized legal provision and its enduring spirit. In the second movement, back to the contemporary world, this core value (and not the linguistic or legal form of the injunction) is treated as the true intention of the text, and applied to the contemporary problems accordingly. The paper describes and analyzes Rahman’s “Double Movement” method, and investigates its sources, reception, and significance. The paper will show that unlike the broad acceptance of similar methodologies in the field of Biblical studies, Rahman’s “Double Movement” theory did not get a wide approval, because of its inadequate grounding in theory, insufficient instances of its illustrative applications in Rahman’s work, and its inability to help revive and advance the ailing project of Modern Islamic Reform.

Biography
Nadir Ansari has an MA (Humanities) from York University, and studies modern Tafsīr (exegesis of the Qur’an), with special reference to South Asia. He is currently a PhD Candidate in Qur’anic and Tafsīr Studies at the department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto.

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The Jewish legal system and Islamic legal system both provide extensive details on what is forbidden and permitted in the consumption of food and drink. These legal systems overlap in interesting ways, especially when they exist side-by-side as they have for centuries in Morocco. By exploring the writings of Moroccan Rabbis, I hope to uncover some of the more interesting overlaps and incongruencies in the two Moroccan religious groups, especially in regard to alcohol consumption. The writing of Yaaqov Moshe Toledano (1880-1960) provides some interesting insights into this topic. His complex mix of historical, mythological, and legal content is a pool of information which provides some of the most unique perspectives on Moroccan Jewish history. One of the most striking passages from his writings pertains to consumption of alcohol, how excessive inebriation prohibited Jews from bearing witness in a Jewish court (Bet Din), and how this prohibition may trace roots back to the earliest era of the almost two thousand years of Moroccan Jewish history (Toledano 1911: 15). Across other Rabbinic texts, legal rulings pertaining to grape based alcohols made by Muslim Moroccans yield other interesting legal implication for various Moroccan Rabbis (Messas 1968: 219). The historicity of this Rabbinic material, the relationship between these rulings and Islamic law, and the societal and cultural outcomes of the rulings all contribute to the rich tapestry of cultural commentary which can be found in these Moroccan Rabbinic texts.

Biography
Chaim Grafstein is a 2nd Year PhD student in the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, part of the collaborative program with the Anne Tannenbaum Centre for Jewish Studies, and the Naim S. Mahlab Scholar of Jewish-Muslim Relations. His research centers on Moroccan Rabbinic writing in the 20th Century, especially the work of the Yosef Messas. He hopes to continue developing the field of Sephardic studies, with a particular emphasis on the Rabbinic legal tradition in Morocco.

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Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations
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The Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations is concerned with the interdisciplinary study of the civilizations and cultures of the Near and Middle East from Neolithic times until the present, including their archaeology, history, mythology, religion and thought, art and architecture, as well as languages and literatures (Akkadian, Babylonian, Sumerian, Aramaic, Syriac, ancient Egyptian, Hebrew, Arabic, Persian and Turkish). Our programs provide undergraduate and graduate students with a unique opportunity to study non-Western complex societies and civilizations.

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