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ABOUT AGYA

The Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA) is based at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) and at the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT) in Egypt. It was established in 2013 as the first bilateral young academy worldwide.

AGYA promotes sustainable research cooperation between outstanding Arab and German scholars from all disciplines. The academy offers its members the unique opportunity to develop and implement their ideas and visions through research projects and joint initiatives at the interface of science and society. AGYA members share an inter- and transdisciplinary approach to scientific enquiry, with the intention of seeking solutions to societal challenges. Together, they realise innovative research on topics such as Arab and German Education; Common Heritage and Common Challenges; Dynamics of Transformation; Energy, Water and Environment; Health and Society; and Innovation.

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AGYA International Workshop

Beyond Eurocentrism and Arabocentrism: Race, Ethnicity, and Knowledge Production in the Arabo-Islamic 'Golden Age'

12 – 13 September 2025, Aberdeen

Co-organised by ERC-SIQILLIYA
Università degli Studi di Padova

Hosted by the School of Divinity, History, Philosophy
and Art History, University of Aberdeen

AGYA Organisers

Hany Rashwan,
*United Arab Emirates University,
UAE*

Florian Zemmin,
Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

Co-Organisers

Nicola Carpentieri,
*Università degli Studi di Padova,
Italy*

Nile Green,
*University of California,
Los Angeles, USA*

Jakub Zbrzeźny,
University of Aberdeen, UK

Cooperation Partner

Interdisciplinary Institute of the
University of Aberdeen
(Social Inclusion & Cultural
Diversity)



Friday, 12 September

09:00 Welcome & Introductory Greetings

Hany Rashwan

AGYA Member, United Arab Emirates University, UAE

Nicola Carpentieri

Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy

Nile Green

University of California, Los Angeles, USA

Jakub Zbrzeźny

University of Aberdeen, UK

09:20 Opening Address

Joachim Schaper

Professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages, University of Aberdeen, UK

Session 1: Beyond Arabic

09:30 Beyond Arabic:

Multilingual Poetics in Premodern Islamic Worlds

Hany Rashwan

UAE University, UAE

10:00 Poetic Form as a Site of Multilingual Innovation:

Turkic, Arabic, and Persian Legacies in Ottoman Soundscapes

Orhan Elmaz

University of St Andrews, UK

**10:30 Did Schools of 'Balāgha' Historically Develop
Along Ethnic and Geographic Lines?**

Shuaib Ally

University of Tübingen, Germany

11:00 Coffee Break

Session 2: Andalusí and Sicilian Perspectives

11:30 'Maghrib' and 'Ghurba':

Reflections on Displacement in Andalusí and Sicilian Arabic Poetry

Nicola Carpentieri

Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy

**12:00 Exploring Muslim Sicily:
Towards a New Approach**

Nuha Alshaar

AGYA Alumna, The American University of Sharjah, UAE

**12:30 Translating Wisdom out of al-Andalus:
Dissimilarities of Significance in the Iberian Translations of
"Kalīla and Dimna"**

Rachel Scott

Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

13:00 Lunch Break

Session 3: Arabic Judaism and Christianity

14:30 "The Arabized Jews" – Revisited

Ross Brann

Cornell University, USA

**15:00 Arabic Thought, Syriac Culture:
The Challenges of Editing and Translating Ps.-Aristotle's
"Epistle on the Craft"**

Salam Rassi

University of Edinburgh, UK

15:30 Thematizing Separateness – Or not

Hilary Kilpatrick

Independent Scholar, Switzerland

16:00 Coffee Break

Session 4: Between Adab and Ādāb

16:30 **Adab and 'Aql in Practice:**
The Pedagogical Vision of the Hadith Scholar Ibn al-Sunnī (d. 974 CE)

Sebastian Günther
University of Göttingen, Germany

17:00 **The Multilingual Ottoman Ocean of Ziya Pasha's "Harabat"**

C. Ceyhan Arslan
Koç University, Turkey

17:30 **Between Private and Public:**
An Epistemology of 'Kitmān' in Early Islamic 'Risālah'

Xena Amro
Northwestern University, USA

Saturday, 13 September

Session 5: Across the National Border

09:20 **Rejecting the Persianate Past:**
A Pioneering (Arabocentric?) Urdu History of the Indian Ocean

Nile Green
University of California, Los Angeles, USA

09:50 **Nahda-izing India:**
the Urdu-Hindi Debate and its Arabic Alternative, c. 1860s–1947

Roy Bar Sadeh
University of Manchester, UK

10:20 **Who Owns the Past? Notes on Kurdish Surnames and Geographic Origins in Arabic-Islamic Intellectual Heritage**

Seerwan Hariry
Georgetown University in Qatar, Qatar

10:50 **Coffee Break**

Session 6: Theoretical Approaches

11:20 **Beyond Eurocentrism and Arabocentrism within Jewish Social and Intellectual History**

Yossef (Yossi) Schwartz
Tel Aviv University, Israel

11:50 **The Myth of Seventy Sects:**
De-essentializing Islam and the Dividing of Early Muslim Trends of Reasoning into 'Firaq' and 'Madhāhib'

Najib George Awad
Bonn University, Germany

12:20 **God's Other Book:**
The Qur'ān between History and Ideology

Mohammad Salama
George Mason University, USA

12:50 **Lunch Break**

Session 7: Unseen Roots

13:50 **The Long Journey of "The Awakening of Life":**
Time, Geography, Religions, and Languages

Emilio Gonzalez-Ferrin
University of Seville, Spain

14:20 **The Manichaean, the Ismā'īlī and the Scott:**
"Bilawhar wa-Būdhāsaf" from "Kitāb al-Budd" to "Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'"

Kirill Dmitriev
AGYA Alumnus, University of St Andrews, UK

14:50 **Coffee Break**

Session 8: Beyond the Golden Age – Contemporary Issues

15:10 **Moral Panics About Academic Decolonisation
in the British News Media**

Leon Moosavi

University of Liverpool, UK

15:40 **Arabic Large Language Models:
The Afterlife of Colonialism?**

Jakub Zbrzeźny

University of Aberdeen (UoA), UK

Ahmad Hroub

External UoA Research Collaborator, Palestine

in collaboration with

Ehud Reiter (UoA), Wei Zhao (UoA), and Theeb Alqahtani (UoA)

16:10 **Ghosts of Coloniality:
Unpacking Eurocentrism in Scientific Historiography and
Museums**

Sabreen Syeed

University of Liverpool, UK

16:40 **Coffee Break**

**Session 9: Beyond the World: the Otherworldly
Cosmogony and Mysticism of Letters in the Dār al-Islām:
A Comparative Analysis of Early ‘Ilm al-Ḥurūf and the
“Sefer Yetzirah”**

Nadir Boudjellal

*Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales: Centre d'Etudes
et de Recherche Moyen-Orient, Méditerranée, Inalco/Cermom, France*

17:30 **Rūmī, Music, and the Transmission of Knowledge
in the Sufi/Mystic Culture**

Mahdieh Vali-Zadeh

University of Toronto, Canada, & Louis Yahya, Musician, Canada

Conclusions

18:00 **Final Remarks**

Nile Green

Professor of World History, University of California, Los Angeles

18:10 **Farewell**

Hany Rashwan

AGYA Member, United Arab Emirates University, UAE

Nicola Carpentieri

Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy

Nile Green

University of California, Los Angeles, USA

Jakub Zbrzeźny

University of Aberdeen, UK