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Ibn al-Qaysarānī's Liminal Ifranjiyyāt: Crossing the Territorial Borders, (Un)Crossing the Cultural Orders

Lecture by Nizar F. Hermes
(Associate Prof., UVA)



Medieval Arabic sources relate that Levantine poet Ibn al-Qaysarānī (d. 1154) traveled to the Frankish principality of Antioch (1098–1268) nearly a decade before his death. Whilst these sources did not reveal much, if any at all, about the purpose of the journey, one should indulge the audience by proposing a secret diplomatic—or possibly spying—mission. In my talk, I will introduce Ibn al-Qaysarānī and explore his *Ifranjiyyāt* (Poems on the Franks), the fascinating corpus of poems he composed about the Franks/Crusaders he encountered during his mysterious journey to the Principality of Antioch. Especially if read against Edward Said's *Orientalism*, the *Ifranjiyyāt's* ultimate historical and cultural value, I argue, lies not only in how these alterist poems capture the poet's complex depiction of the Franks, but also, and most importantly, in how they poetically document the array of medieval Muslim responses to the Crusades.

About the Lecturer

Nizar F. Hermes is an Associate Professor at the Department of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies, the University of Virginia. In addition to journal articles and book chapters, he is the author of *The [European] Other in Medieval Arabic Literature and Culture, Ninth-Twelfth Century AD* (2012), co-editor of *The City in Arabic Literature: Classical and Modern Perspectives* (2018), and is currently working on *Of Lost Cities and the Arabic Poetic Imagination in the Premodern and Precolonial Maghrib: 9th-19th Centuries AD*.

November 10, 2022 @ 7:00 PM

Link: <https://carleton-ca.zoom.us/j/95683920681>

Meeting ID: 956 8392 0681

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