

## Contributors

**Mostafa Abedinifard** is an Assistant Professor of Modern Persian Literature and Culture in the Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia. He earned his PhD in Comparative Literature and holds an MA in English Language and Literature. His research focuses on modern Persian and Iranian literature and culture, with an emphasis on feminist studies, critical masculinities, and humor studies. He has completed the first full translation of *The Pearl Cannon* into English and is currently working to place it with the right publisher.

**Ali Abdeddine** (he/him) earned his PhD in literature with a specialization in Amazigh poetry from the University of Hassan II Casablanca, Morocco, in 2023. His dissertation investigates the impact of Arab hegemony on Amazigh literature in written forms. He has 10 years of experience teaching Arabic (MSA and Darija) and Tashelhit to Arabic Flagship, Project GO, CLS, and Fulbright scholars. Dr. Abdeddine grew up in Douar Anguizem, a small village in the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains in the Essaouira Province.

**Rafeeq Ahamed** (1961–) is a poet whose Malayalam ghazals follow rules of *radif* and *qāfiya* (two formal characteristics of the ghazal in Persian and Urdu) and draw on the Malayalam poetic tradition.

**Afeef Ahmed** is a PhD student in the Department of South Asian Studies at Harvard University. His work primarily focuses on the memories of conquest and militarization of Muslim communities in Early Modern South India. He works with Tamil, Malayalam, Arabic, and Persian manuscripts and archival sources to understand the frontier formation of the region. He completed his undergraduate studies in English from the University of Delhi, New Delhi, and his master's from the Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. He was awarded the Charpak Lab Fellowship at CEIAS-EHESS, Paris in 2022.

**Abdul Jalal Zulqad Ali** (1796–1891) was an Assamese Muslim preacher who composed multiple Islamic manuals, most of which remain unpublished.

**Essafi Moumen Ali** was born in 1949 in Douar Ameln, in the Aït Mazal tribe of the Chtouka Ait Baha region. He grew up in Rabat, where he pursued his education, starting from a Qur’anic school and continuing through higher university studies. He earned a law degree from the Faculty of Law, which enabled him to enroll in the Higher Institute of Judiciary, from which he graduated as a judge. He is currently a lawyer in Casablanca. In addition to his judicial career, Essafi Moumen Ali is considered one of the pioneers of Amazigh prose writing. In 1984, he published the first Amazigh play, *Usan Šmidnin* (The cold days). He later published a long Tamazight prose text in 1993 titled “Tighri n Tabrat” (“Reading the Letter”), followed by *Awareness of Our Amazigh Identity* (1996), *Amazigh Dialogues with the Prime Minister* (1998), and *Ayaras n Wury* (The golden path), published in 2012 in both Tamazight and Arabic, for which he was awarded the Amazigh Culture Prize. He was one of the leaders of AMREC (Moroccan Association for Research and Cultural Exchange) and was a member of IRCAM (Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture).

**Shahabaz Aman** (1969–) is a singer credited for composing the first Malayalam ghazal that was adhered to the rules of *radif*, *qāfiya*, and *takhallus*, so challenging claims that the Malayalam language was inadequate to follow the rules of Urdu ghazal. The piece translated here—“Sajini”—appeared in 2011 in an album of the same name.

**Razieh Araghi** is an Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature and Middle Eastern Studies at Arizona State University. Her research focuses on women translators as marginalized voices of modernity and the circulation of texts from English and French in Turkish and Persian periodicals. She teaches courses on world literature, translation, and cultural studies, with a focus on how texts and visual media shape national and transnational imaginaries.

**Ibrahim Badshah** is a translator, academic, and currently a PhD candidate in the Department of English, University of Houston. Ibrahim's PhD dissertation explores the possibility of an analytical category of "Resistance Translation" through a study of translation practices in the Global South. Ibrahim translates primarily between Arabic, English, and Malayalam, and his publications include novels and short stories by Man Booker International Prize-winning author Jokha Alharthi, the International Prize for Arabic Fiction-winning author Saud Al-Sanousi, and the Hindu Literary Prize-winning author Manoranjan Byapari. He is currently translating a collection of poems in Arabic by Najwan Darwish into Malayalam.

**Bikash K Bhattacharya** is an MPhil student in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom.

**Adeli Block** (she/they) is a PhD candidate in Linguistic Anthropology at the University of Michigan and has lived, studied, and worked in Morocco for over four years. Their research concerns the social consequences of language policy change after Tamazight became an official language in 2011. Adeli graduated from the University of Texas at Austin as an Arabic Flagship Scholar, majoring in Middle Eastern languages and cultures and geography. Adeli grew up in Northern Virginia in the Washington metropolitan area.

**Venu V. Desam** (1959–) wrote the first known ghazals in Malayalam, which were produced in the 1998 album *Pranamam*.

**Tara Dhaliwal** is a PhD candidate in Religious Studies at Brown University. Her work is concentrated on folklore and storytelling in 19th-century Punjab (North Indian subcontinent), with a particular focus on landscapes, non-human animals, and gender. Her research aims to understand how stories help us make sense of the world around us.

**Kristin Dickinson** is an Associate Professor of German Studies at the University of Michigan. Her research on the intersections of German

and (Ottoman) Turkish literature examines the potential of translation, as both a formal and a social medium, to intervene in nationalist ideologies and nationally structured areas of study. Her book, *DisOrientations: German-Turkish Cultural Contact in Translation (1811–1946)*, examines literary translations as a complex mode of cultural, political, and linguistic orientation. Through a unique multilingual archive, it reveals the omnidirectional and transtemporal movements of translations, which harbor the productively disorienting potential to reconfigure the relationships of “original” to “translation,” “past” to “present,” “West” to “East,” and “German” to “Turkish.”

**Sadeq Hedayat** (1903–51) was a pioneering Iranian modernist writer, best known for *The Blind Owl*, a landmark of Persian literature. His work, spanning fiction, folklore studies, and literary translation, introduced new narrative techniques and existential themes into Persian prose. He also translated European literature into Persian, engaging deeply with modernist aesthetics. *The Pearl Cannon*, one of his final and most satirical works, remained unpublished in full until after his death. Hedayat died by suicide in Paris in 1951.

**Ziyana Fazal** is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Northwestern University. Her research examines the multilingual literary contributions of Muslim women in early 20th-century Kerala, focusing on how their engagements with Malayalam, Hindi, Urdu, and Arabic shaped their postcolonial secular identities. Her dissertation explores how these writers challenged the dominance of Arabic in Islamic discourse while foregrounding Islamic reform, piety, and ethical subjectivity within modernist frameworks. Drawing on archival research, literary translation, and oral history, her work investigates the intersections of gender, genre, religiosity, and language in colonial and postcolonial South Asia. Through translating fiction, essays, and autobiographical texts, she traces how Muslim women’s literary practices reimaged both the Indian linguistic nation and the global *ummah*.

**Tyler Fisher** completed his doctorate in Medieval and Modern Languages at the University of Oxford and is now Dean of the

Honors College and Professor of Languages and Literatures at Florida Gulf Coast University. With Haidar Khezri, he has published collaborative translations of Kurdish poetry in *The Bangalore Review* and *Poet Lore*.

**Farzad Kamangar**, a Kurdish school teacher, poet, journalist, and activist, was born in the city of Kamyaran in the Kurdistan Province of western Iran. While imprisoned by the Islamic Republic of Iran for four years, and even after being sentenced to death, Kamangar continued to advocate for human rights, women's rights, and greater cultural and political self-determination for Iran's minority communities via highly poetic letters that he smuggled out of prison, sometimes in fragments. His letters display his dual commitment to beautiful literary expression and to unflinching documentation of human rights abuses in Iranian Kurdistan. After years of imprisonment and torture, Kamangar was executed, at age 35, along with four other political prisoners on May 9, 2010, in Iran's notorious Evin Prison on charges of *moharebeh* (waging war against God) and for undermining national security.

**Forugh Karimi** was born in 1971 in Kabul, Afghanistan. She attended medical school in the capital until 1996, when she was forced to flee the country following the Taliban takeover. Karimi sought refuge in the Netherlands and has made a life for herself there as a psychiatrist, psychotherapist, and acclaimed Dutch-language novelist, publishing three novels in just the last three years. However, her first foray into writing took place in Dari Persian, with the short story "Sepia Veils and White-Flowered Branches," which she published in 1989, at the age of 19, in the popular Persian-Pashto Afghan magazine *Zhwandūn* (meaning "life" in Pashto).

**Haidar Khezri** is Associate Professor of Arabic at the University of Central Florida (UCF). Following his PhD in Comparative Literature at Damascus University, he taught at universities in Iran, Syria, Turkey, and the United States. In 2019, he became UCF's first full-time professor of Arabic, a key role for building the university's capacity to teach Middle Eastern languages and cultures.

**ONV Kurup** (1931–2016) was a poet known particularly for his ghazals, often featuring themes of love. He collaborated extensively with the musician Umbayee (P. A. Ibrahim, 1950–2018), who produced more than 20 albums of ghazals during his lifetime.

**Abu'l Barakat “Munir” Lahori** (1610–44) was a Persian-language poet who was active during the reign of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628–58).

**Anna Learn** is a fourth-year PhD candidate at the University of Washington, Seattle (UW), where she studies Persian, South Asian, and Hispanic literature. Her dissertation examines the concept of Afghan women’s literature and necessarily involves the practice of translation with Persian-language materials. Since 2021, she has worked for the UW Translation Studies Hub as their graduate student assistant. On the side, she writes essays on literary topics for public-facing platforms such as *Full Stop*, *World Literature Today*, and *Electric Literature*, focusing on literature in translation.

**Graham Liddell** completed a PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan in 2023, where he studied contemporary Arab and Afghan narratives of refugeehood. Before graduate school, he worked in Middle East journalism and was based in the West Bank. His translations of Palestinian literature have appeared, or are forthcoming, in *Banipal*, *ArabLit Quarterly*, and *The Stinging Fly*. His journalistic work has been published in *USA Today*, *The Detroit News*, and *Middle East Eye*, among other publications.

**Thankamma Malik** (1917–2001) was a pioneering bilingual writer and translator from Kerala, India, whose literary contributions bridged Malayalam and Hindi traditions. Born into a Christian family, her life took a transformative turn after hearing a speech by Mahatma Gandhi during the Indian freedom movement. Deeply moved, she committed herself to learning Hindi, pursuing formal education at Shradhanand Hindi College in Kottayam and later at Prayag Mahila Vidyapeeth in Allahabad, where she studied under the renowned Hindi poet Mahadevi Varma. Malik’s literary career spanned short

stories, poetry, and translations, many of which appeared in Malayalam periodicals such as *Al-Manar* and *Muslim Review*. Her marriage to Malik Muhammed, editor of the Malayalam monthly *Mithram*, marked another turning point in her life; she then embraced Islam and adopted the name Thankamma Malik. Her writing, shaped by Gandhian ideals and a deep sense of social justice, played a vital role in shaping 20th-century Malayalam literature.

**Koñṇaṇṇavīṭṭil Ibrāhīmkutṭi Musliyār** (1849–1905) was a distinguished Islamic scholar, translator, and polyglot from Malabar, born into the renowned scholarly lineage of the Makhdūms of Ponnani. Immersed in the rich Islamic intellectual traditions from an early age, he received a traditional education encompassing Islamic law, Arabic grammar, poetics, history, astronomy, medicine, mysticism, and occult sciences. His linguistic expertise extended across multiple languages, including Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Syriac, Urdu, and English. A devoted Sufi, Musliyār was initiated by his father into the Qādiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, and Chishtiyya Sufi orders. His scholarly contributions were vast and diverse, spanning translations, original compositions, and commentary literature. He translated numerous Arabic texts and authored works in both Arabic and Arabi-Malayalam, including treatises on medicine and Islamic jurisprudence, as well as hagiographical poetry. Among his most notable works is *Qutbiyyat*, a litany he compiled, blending a premodern Arabic praise poem with supplicatory prose. A significant portion of his literary corpus consists of commentary-translations of Qur’anic chapters and hagiographical poetry from Arabic into Arabi-Malayalam.

**Jimmy Nazarethian** (birth and death unknown) was an Armenian musician who adapted the song “Why Have I Come to America?” by Achilleas Poulos.

**Jaideep Pandey** is a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He works on comparative literary modernities between Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia; translation studies; and languages of longing and desire across Urdu, Hindi, Persian, and Arabic. He also translates from Urdu into English.

**Michael Pifer** is Marie Manoogian Assistant Professor of Armenian Language and Literature in the Department of Middle East Studies at the University of Michigan. He has previously published translations from dialectal and Western Armenian in *Absinthe* and *Dibur*. His research revolves around questions of multilingualism, mixed-script writing, and cultural exchange in the premodern period. In particular, his work focuses on how Armenian literature developed alongside neighboring literary traditions within shared spaces. He is the author of *Kindred Voices: A Literary History of Medieval Anatolia* (Yale University Press, 2021) and a co-editor of *An Armenian Mediterranean: Words and Worlds In Motion* (Pagrave Macmillan, 2018). Currently he is a team member of "Armenia Entangled: Connectivity and Cultural Encounters in Medieval Eurasia," funded by a grant from the European Research Council. This project seeks to establish a framework for studying the Armenian plateau as a space of cultural entanglements from the ninth to the 14th centuries.

**Achilleas Poulos** (1893–1970) was a Greek musician who wrote lyrics in Turkish. His song “Why Have I Come to America?” was adapted by the musician Jimmy Nazarethian.

**Musab Abdul Salam** is a PhD candidate at the Department of Comparative Literature, University of Oregon. His research draws on insights from postcolonial theory, South Asian studies, and the anthropology of religion in the study of the textual cultures of the Malabar Coast.

**Satchidanandan** (1946–) is a poet whose collection of ghazals, *Ghazalukal Geethangal* (2004), attempted to present the Malayalam ghazal as a unique form of its kind, which the author defined as something closer to Azad Ghazal (free ghazal) and Rabindra Sang-eet (the songs by Rabindranath Tagore).

**Sunil Sharma** is Professor of Persianate & Comparative Literature at Boston University. His areas of research are premodern Persian



literature, specifically poetry and court cultures, history of the book, and travel writing. His last monograph, *Mughal Arcadia: Persian Literature in an Indian Court* (Harvard University Press, 2017), is a study of early modern Persianate literary culture and the communities of Iranian émigré poets. He has also published books on the medieval poet Amir Khusraw—*Amir Khusraw: The Poet of Sultans and Sufis* (Oneworld, 2005) and, translated with Paul E. Losensky, *In the Bazaar of Love: The Selected Poetry of Amīr Khusrau* (Penguin, 2011)—and translated women’s travel writings in *Three Centuries of Travel Writing by Muslim Women* (Indiana University Press, 2022).

**Ameen Perumannil Sidhick** is a PhD student in the Department of South Asia Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He works primarily on the social and cultural history of religious communities in Kerala and the Indian Ocean World. His dissertation explores premodern religious encounters, specifically Christian and Muslim social and religious formulations in Malabar and the Indian littoral. Of particular fascination to the scholar is the social and intellectual history of religious vernaculars of Abrahamic religious groups in the region. He completed his undergraduate studies in History at the University of Delhi, New Delhi, and earned his master’s degree from the Centre for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

**Vijay Sursen** (b. unknown–) is a poet who composes ghazals in Malayalam, following both the rules of *radif*, *qāfiya*, and *takhallus* and adhering to the poetic tradition of Malayalam, which blends images from nature and themes of love.

**Sanaullah Makti Thangal** (1847–1912) is an important reformist figure belonging to the Mappila community of Kerala. Thangal resigned from the post of excise inspector in the British administration at the age of 35 to dedicate himself to counter-missionary polemics. Thangal’s work *Kadorakudāram* is considered to be the first work in Malayalam to be published by a Keralite Muslim. He ran a number of newspapers and journals and is widely considered to have played an important role in the emergence of modern reform

movements. Even though Thangal's primary contributions were in the field of missionary polemics, he also worked toward reform within the community. He advocated the learning of modern Malayalam, English, and Hindustani along with Arabic. He also attempted to standardize the Arabi-Malayalam script, although it was not widely accepted within the community. Today, Thangal is claimed by both the traditionalists as well as the reformists, suggesting his crucial place in the modern history of the community. Important works of Thangal include *Kadorakudāram*, *Pārkkalīta Pōrkkalam*, *Tāṇṭān Kaṇṭamāla*, and *Makti Manakleśam*.

**Ihsan Ul-Ihthisam** is a PhD student in the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. His research explores the history of Indian Ocean languages, ideas, and religious thought, with a particular focus on their intersection with Sufi writings and performances in the Muslim vernaculars of pre-modern South and Southeast Asia. He completed his undergraduate studies in History and Geography at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, and earned his master's degree from the Centre for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His dissertation examines premodern lyrical traditions associated with the Sufi saint Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī across the Indian Ocean region. An avid reader and enthusiast of poetry, Ihsan engages deeply with lyrical traditions in Malayalam, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, and Persian.

**Louis Wardini** (1894–d. unknown) migrated from Beirut to New York as a child around 1904 and lived in numerous US cities with Syrian Lebanese communities before moving to Detroit in the late 1920s. In addition to performing in Detroit establishments such as Saint Maron Hall in the 1940s, Wardini also founded Wardatone as a Detroit-based recording label in 1951.