

Tales of Wonder
1001 Nights, Shahnamah, Amir Hamza
Winter 2016

Course Code: ISLA 489/681
Hours: WF 11:35 AM-2:25 PM
Classroom: Arts Building Rm. 150
Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University

Instructor: Prof. Pasha M. Khan
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Office: Morrice Hall Rm. 312

Office Hours: MW 4pm-5pm by appointment (please email beforehand)

In this seminar-style course open to undergraduate and graduate students, participants will read, listen to, and view illustrations inspired by three of the most important "romances" of the Islamic world, in translation from Arabic, Persian and Urdu. The 1001 Nights, Shahnamah and Adventures of Amir Hamza delighted a vast audience, but were received by some as preposterous collections of lies, with their heroes reared by oversized birds and desired by fairies. Orientalists reveled in their images of a decadent and lustful East, and deprecated the childishness of the Oriental worldview that these stories supposedly represented. Into the 20th century, reworkings of these stories, whether through Walt Disney, Bollywood, or World War II propagandists, continued to reveal the preoccupations of their interpreters. In our class discussions we will consider questions of Orientalism, nationalism, gender and sexuality, oral performance and storytelling, history, the rational and the marvellous, violence, etc. through secondary readings and analyses of the texts along with sumptuous illustrations, oral performances, and films. Visits to Rare Books and Special Collections and the Islamic Studies Library will give students a chance to meditate upon rare manuscripts and lithographs. **Graduate students and language students**, please see below for information regarding your cases.

Required Texts:

These texts are available at The Word Bookstore (469 Milton Street between Aylmer and Durocher).

Mahdi, Muhsin, ed. *The Arabian Nights*. Trans. Husain Haddawy. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008.

Ferdowsi, Abolqasem. *The Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*. Trans. Dick Davis. New York: Penguin Classics, 2007.

Ghalib Lakhnavi, and Abdullah Bilgrami. *The Adventures of Amir Hamza*. Trans. Musharraf Ali Farooqi. New York: Modern Library, 2012.

All other readings (listed in the class schedule) will be made available to you via myCourses. If you do NOT have access to the myCourses page for this class, please notify me A.S.A.P.!

Note as well that the list of readings is tentative, and texts may be added or subtracted according to the needs of the course as it develops. Please pay attention to announcements in class and to class emails.

Original Texts:

Language learners can use versions of the original texts. The ones that I recommend in each case are listed below (though others can also be used). They are available at the ISL under Reserves (ask at the front desk).

Kitāb Alf lailah wa lailah. Ed. by. Muhsin Mahdī. 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1984. (PJ7711 M33 1984)
Firdausī, Abū al-Qāsim. *Shāhnāmah*. Ed. Djalal Khaleghi-Motlagh, Mahmoud Omidsalar, and Abolfazl Khatibi. 8 vols. New York: Bibliotheca Persica, 1987. (PK6455 A1 1987)
Ġhālīb Lakhnawī, Mirzā Amān Allāh. *Dāstān-i Amīr Hamzah*. Ed. Rifāqat ‘Alī Shāhid. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011. (PK2198 G43 T37 2011)

Graduate Students taking the class under the course number ISLA 681 should note that the requirements for the final paper differ slightly in their case, and that they will be expected to do the readings more comprehensively.

Language Students may take this course to fulfill the Institute of Islamic Studies' advanced language requirements in **Urdu, Persian, or Arabic**, by working with the original source texts (listed above), and closely focusing on Arabic, Persian, or Urdu sources for their final papers. For example, a final research paper on references to the 1001 Nights in modern **Arabic** novels; representations of Sekandar in a variety of **Persian** poems, romances and histories; or the connection between popular romances and modern **Urdu** pulp fiction, would fulfill the language requirements in each case. Students who wish to take the course for this purpose should let the professor know beforehand.

On Technology in Class: Students are discouraged from using mobile phones in class. Fixating on your phone, surreptitious texting and so on will result in a lowered participation mark. Laptops and tablets (iPads, etc.) are allowed in class, but solely for the purpose of referring to the readings for the day. I encourage the use of paper and pen if you need to take notes. The use of laptops and tablets should not interfere with your participation in the class discussion; this will obviously cause your participation mark to take a nosedive. Make eye contact and stay away from email, social media, and so on—stick to the readings.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability, whether physical or mental (anxiety, depression, etc.) please do not hesitate to let me know in person or via email as soon as you can, and we will plan out a course of action. I strongly recommend getting in touch with the Office of Students with Disabilities.

Grading Scheme:

Participation	31%	Attendance and participation in class discussions makes up a significant portion of your grade. Please come to class (on time) and engage in the discussion!
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Because each class is 3 hours in duration, presence in class is very important. It is imperative to have a doctor's note to avoid losing marks due to absence.

Marks will also be given for attending the last class, where you will have the chance to complete the course evaluation. You will need to bring your laptop to class for this, or you may send me a screen shot of the top of the review page. You are welcome to opt out by indicating this decision to me via email.

Class attendance: 8%

Participation: 20%

Film Attendance: 2%

Course Evaluation/Opt-out: 1%

Online Forum	15%	Students should post their brief thoughts on the readings for each class on the myCourses forum. They should be posted by 11:59 PM the Friday night before each class . (However, late posts will be marked as well!) These will form some of the basis of the class discussion. Full marks would be given to an exceptionally well-articulated and insightful comment showing critical meditation on at least two of the days' readings (if there is more than one reading for the day).
Preliminary Research Question	2%	By February 2 at 11:59 PM students must email me a preliminary question that they hope to answer in their research paper. Please do not send attachments. Please read the instructions on submission (found in the Research Paper guidelines on myCourses) and follow them closely.
Proposal	15%	1-3 pages, due February 28 at 11:59 PM . Guidelines with a marking rubric are available on myCourses.
Proposal Workshop	7%	By March 6 at 11:59 PM students should comment substantially on the proposals of 4 of their classmates (assigned by the professor) on Google Docs. If time permits we will discuss the feedback in the subsequent class. See the instructions in the Proposal guidelines on myCourses.

Research Paper	30%	10-12 pages (ISLA 489) or 18-20 pages (ISLA 681), due April 15 at 11:59 PM . Guidelines with a marking rubric are available on myCourses. Because this is due after classes end, McGill treats it as a take-home examination. Don't be alarmed, therefore, if you see ISLA 489 on the central exam schedule—there is no sit-down exam.
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In order to ensure timely grading, assignments handed in late or under an extension will not receive written comments.

Class Schedule:

January 7 1001 NIGHTS: SHAHRAZAD
Representing Shahrazad

Readings:

Arabian Nights. 5-21

Sallis, Eva. "Sheherazade/Shahrazad." *Sheherazade Through the Looking Glass: The Metamorphosis of the Thousand and One Nights*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999. 85-107

Multi-Douglas, Fedwa. "Homosexuality, Heterosexuality, and Shahrazâd." *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*. Ed. Ulrich Marzolph, Richard van Leeuwen, and Hassan Wassouf. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004. 38-42

Sironval, Margaret. "The Image of Sheherazade in French and English Editions of the Thousand and One Nights." *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism Perspectives from East and West*. Ed. Yuriko Yamanaka and Tetsuo Nishio. London: I.B. Tauris, 2006. 219-244

RECOMMENDED: Sallis, Eva. "Reading the Arabian Nights" in *Sheherazade Through the Looking Glass: The Metamorphosis of the Thousand and One Nights*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999. 65-84

January 11 1001 NIGHTS: THE FISHERMAN AND THE JINN
Textual History of the Nights; The Marvellous and Strange

Readings:

Arabian Nights. 36-80

Haddawy, Husain, trans. "Introduction." *The Arabian Nights*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2008. 8-29.

RECOMMENDED: Dobie, Madeleine. "Translation in the Contact Zone: Antoine Galland's *Mille et Une Nuits: Contes Arabes*." *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context Between East and West*. Ed. Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 25-50.

Mahdi, Muhsin. "Chapter 2: Galland's Successors." *The Thousand and One Nights*. Leiden: Brill, 1995. 51-60.

van Leeuwen, Richard. "The Canonization of the Thousand and One Nights in World Literature." *Foundational Texts of World Literature*. Ed. Dominique Jullien. New York: Peter Lang, 2011. 101-118.

Ibn Taymiyyah, Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm. *Ibn Taymiyah's Essay on the Jinn*. Trans. Abu Ameenah Bilaal Philips. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: International Islamic Pub. House, 2007. 17-42.

Mottahedeh, Roy. "'Aja'ib in the Thousand and One Nights." *The Thousand and One Nights in Arabic Literature and Society*. Ed. Richard G Hovannisian, Georges Sabagh, and Giorgio Levi Della Vida Conference. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 29-39.

January 18

1001 NIGHTS: THE PORTER AND THE THREE LADIES
Orientalism

Readings:

Arabian Nights. 80-171

Portion of "The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad" (for comparison) in Burton, Richard Francis. *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night: A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. Burton Club, 190-?. 82-93

BROWSE: Notes to "Story of the Porter and the Ladies of Baghdad" (for browsing) in Edward William Lane. *The Thousand and One Nights: Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. Vol. 1. London: Charles Knight, 1841. 210-249.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979. 3-28.

Lewis, Reina. "Contested Behaviours, Gendered Spaces." *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel, and the Ottoman Harem*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004. 178-205.

Kabbani, Rana. "The Arabian Nights as an Orientalist Text." *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia*. Ed. Ulrich Marzolph, Richard van Leeuwen, and Hassan Wassouf. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004. 25-29.

January 25

1001 NIGHTS: THE HUNCHBACK

History and the Marvellous; Visual Art

Jan. 26: Screening of *The Thief of Bagdad* (location TBA)

Readings:

Arabian Nights. 248-320

Mahdi, Muhsin. "From History to Fiction." *The Thousand and One Nights*. Leiden: Brill, 1995. 164-180.

Bonebakker, Seger Adrianus. "Nihil Obstat in Storytelling?" *The Thousand and One Nights in Arabic Literature and Society*. Ed. Richard G Hovannisian, Georges Sabagh, and Giorgio Levi Della Vida Conference. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 56-77.

Matar, Nabil. "Christians in the Arabian Nights." *The Arabian Nights in Historical Context Between East and West*. Ed. Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. 132-152.

Kobayashi, Kazue. "The Evolution of the Arabian Nights Illustrations: An Art Historical Review." *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism Perspectives from East and West*. Ed. Yuriko Yamanaka and Tetsuo Nishio. London: I.B. Tauris, 2006. 171-193.

Sumi, Akiko Motoyoshi, and Claus Clüver. "Voice, Body, and Gaze: Text and Illustration in the Frame Story of the Thousand and One Nights." *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism Perspectives from East and West*. Ed. Yuriko Yamanaka and Tetsuo Nishio. London: I.B. Tauris, 2006. 194-218.

February 1

1001 NIGHTS: ALADDIN

World Literature; Cinematic Representations

Library Session I (Rare Books & Special Collections)

Readings:

Aladdin. 1-12

Ouyang, Wen-chin. "The Arabian Nights in English and Chinese Translations: Differing Patterns of Cultural Encounter." *Les Mille et une nuits et le récit oriental: en Espagne et en Occident*.

Ed. Aboubakr Chraïbi and Carmen Ramírez. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009. 371-399.

Sugita, Hideaki. "The Arabian Nights in Modern Japan." *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism Perspectives from East and West*. Ed. Yuriko Yamanaka and Tetsuo Nishio. London: I.B. Tauris, 2006. 116-153.

Hensher, Jonathan. "Engraving Difference: The Representation of the Oriental Other in Marillier's Illustrations to the *Mille et Une Nuits* and Other Contes Orientaux in *Le Cabinet Des Féés* (1785-1789)." *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31.3 (2008). 377-391.

Cooperson, Michael. "The Monstrous Births of 'Aladdin.'" *The Arabian Nights Reader*. Ed. Ulrich Marzolph. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006. 265-282.

Nadel, Alan. "A Whole New (Disney) World Order: Aladdin, Atomic Power, and the Muslim East." *Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film*. Ed. Matthew Bernstein and Gaylyn Studlar. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997. 184-203.

Thomas, Rosie. "Thieves of the Orient: The Arabian Nights in the Early Indian Cinema." *Scheherazade's Children Global Encounters with the Arabian Nights*. Ed. Marina Warner and Philip F Kennedy. New York: New York University Press, 2013. 362-393.

February 8

SHAHNAMA: BEGINNINGS

Storytelling and Story-writing

Readings:

Shahnamah. 1-103

Bragg, Melvyn. "Shahnameh of Ferdowsi" MP3. In *Our Time* - BBC Radio 4. 13 December 2012.

Yamamoto, Kumiko. "Naqqâli: Professional Iranian Storytelling." *History of Persian Literature, Volume XVIII : Oral Literature of Iranian Languages, Volume 2 : Kurdish, Pashto, Balochi, Ossetic, Persian and Tajik*. Philip G. Kreyenbroek, Ulrich Marzolph, and Ehsan Yarshater. London: I.B. Tauris, 2010. 240-257.

Marzolph, Ulrich. "Professional Storytelling (naqqâli) in Qâjâr Iran." *Orality and Textuality in the Iranian World: Patterns of Interaction Across the Centuries*. Ed. Julia Rubanovich. Leiden: Brill, 2015. 271-285.

Venetis, Evangelos. "The Shahnama Oral Tradition in Contemporary Iran." *Shahnama Studies II: The Reception of Firdausi's Shahnama*. Ed. C. P Melville and Gabrielle Rachel Van den Berg. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012. 303-308.

February 15

SHAHNAMAH: ROSTAM & SOHRAB, SEYAVASH
Men and Women

Readings:

Shahnamah. 104-109, 131-228

Davidson, Olga M. "The Concept of Premature and Immature Fatherhood in the Story of Rostam and Sohrab." *Comparative Literature and Classical Persian Poetics: Seven Essays*. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda Publishers, 2000. 147-161.

Milani, Farzaneh. "The Mediatorial Guile of the Nanny in Persian Romance." *Iranian Studies* 32.2 (1999). 181-201.

Seyed-Gohrab, Asghar. "Corrections and Elaborations: A One-Night Stand in Narrations of Ferdowsi's Rostam and Sohrāb." *Iranian Studies* 48.3 (2015). 443-461.

Pierce, Laurie. "Serpents and Sorcery: Humanity, Gender, and the Demonic in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh." *Iranian Studies* 48.3 (2015). 367-389.

February 22

SHAHNAMAH: AKVAN DIV, ROSTAM & ESFANDYAR
The Iranian Nation and Its Others

Readings:

Shahnamah. 299-305, 371-440

Amanat, Abbas. "Iranian Identity Boundaries: A Historical Overview." *Iran Facing Others Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective*. Ed. Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdani. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 39-50.

Dick Davis. "Iran and Aniran: The Shaping of a Legend." *Iran Facing Others Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective*. Ed. Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdani. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. 39-50.

Marzolph, Ulrich. "The Persian National Epic in between Tradition and Ideology." *The Kalevala and the World's Traditional Epics*. Ed. Lauri Honko. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2002. 276-293

Sobers-Khan, Nur. "The Shahnameh as Propaganda for World War II." British Library Asian and African Studies blog. 31 May 2013.

February 29

READING WEEK

March 7

SHAHNAMAH: SEKANDAR
History and the Marvellous
Proposal Workshop

Readings:

Shahnamah. 440-528

Khan, Pasha M. "Marvellous Histories: Reading the Shahnamah in India." *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 49.4 (2012). 527-556.

Meisami, Julie Scott. "The Past in Service of the Present: Two Views of History in Medieval Persia." *Poetics Today* 14.2 (1993). 247-275.

Zadeh, Travis. Introduction. *Mapping Frontiers Across Medieval Islam: Geography, Translation, and the 'Abbāsīd Empire*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2011. 1-12.

Casari, Mario. "The King Explorer: A Cosmographic Approach to the Persian Alexander." In *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, ed. by Richard Stoneman, Kyle Erickson, and Ian Richard Netton. Groningen: Barkhuis Publishing, 2012.

March 14

SHAHNAMAH: BAHRAM GUR, NUSHIN-RAVAN, KHUSRAU & SHIRIN
Visual Art and Otherness
Library Session II (Islamic Studies Library)

Readings:

Shahnamah. 600-678, 685-716, 810-831

Grabar, Oleg. "Why Was the Shahnama Illustrated?" *Iranian Studies* 43.1 (2010). 91-96.

Leoni, Francesca. "Picturing Evil: Images of Divs and the Reception of the Shahnama." *Shahnama Studies II: The Reception of Firdausi's Shahnama*. Ed. C. P. Melville and Gabrielle Rachel Van den Berg. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2012. 101-118

Marzolph, Ulrich. "Bahram Gur's Spectacular Marksmanship and the Art of Illustration in Qajar Lithographed Books." *The*

Sultan's Turret: Studies in Persian and Turkish Culture. Ed. Carole Hillenbrand and C. E. Bosworth. Vol. 2. Leiden: Brill, 2000. 331-347.

March 21

AMIR HAMZAH: FROM CTESIPHON TO MAKKA
Telling and Showing Stories

Readings:

Amir Hamzah. 3-87

Khan, Pasha M. "Chapter 3. The Storytelling Craft". 1-30

Pritchett, Frances W. "The Dāstān of Amīr Hamzah in Oral Narration" in *The Romance Tradition in Urdu: Adventures from the Dastan of Amir Hamzah*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. 14-21.

Orsini, Francesca. "Tales Between Two Scripts" in *Print and Pleasure: Popular Literature and Entertaining Fictions in Colonial North India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2009. 106-159.

March 28

AMIR HAMZAH: AMIR AND NAUSHERVAN
Genre and Ideology

Readings:

Amir Hamzah. 88-182

Khan, Pasha M. "Chapter 1. Introduction". 1-30

Cohen, Ralph. "History and Genre." *New Literary History* 17, no. 2 (1986). 203-218.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Epic and Novel." In *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004. 13-40.

RECOMMENDED: Jameson, Fredric. "Magical Narratives" in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1981. 103-136.

April 4

AMIR HAMZAH: AMAR, LANDHOOR, NARANJI-POSH
War and Love

Readings:

Amir Hamzah. 186-266

Petersen, Robert. "The Character of the Kafir: Domains of Evil in the Wayang Golek Menak of Central Java." *Asian Theatre Journal* 11, no. 2 (1994). 267-274.

Eaton, Richard Maxwell. "Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States: Part II." *Frontline*, January 5. 70-77.

Thapar, Romila. *Somanatha: The Many Voices of a History*. London: Verso, 2005. 140-162.

Schofield, Katherine Butler. "If Music Be the Food of Love: Masculinity and Eroticism in the Mughal Mehfil." In *Love in South Asia: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 61-83.

April 11

AMIR HAMZAH: AMIR IN THE LAND OF QAF
Marvels and Anxieties

Readings:

Amir Hamzah. 267-352

Khan, Pasha M. "Chapter 5. Reasoned Wonders". 1-30

Orsini, Francesca. "Chandrakanta and Early Hindi Fiction in Banaras" in *Print and Pleasure: Popular Literature and Entertaining Fictions in Colonial North India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2009. 198-225.

Narayana Rao, Velcheru, David Shulman, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam. *Textures of Time: Writing History in South India*. New York: Other Press, 2003. 209-223.

Faruqi, Shamsur Rahman. "The Dāstān and the Limits of Human Knowledge." Trans. Pasha M. Khan from *Sāhirī, shāhī, sāhib-qirānī: Dāstān-i Amīr Hamzah kā mutāla'ah*. Vol. 1. New Delhi: Qaumī Council barā'e furogh-i Urdū zabān, 1999. 319-332.

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In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. / Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

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