

About the Sponsors



The Yarshater Center

THE YARSHATER CENTER for the Study of Iranian Literary Traditions, established in 2023, is conceived as a leading research hub for the publication and dissemination of ancient Iranian literary traditions worldwide. Its research endeavors encompass the creation of an *Encyclopedia of Ancient Iran*; the establishment of the *Iranian Library*, conceived as a bilingual repository of Iranian literary traditions that shall, in standardized form, introduce canonical Old and Middle Iranian as well as early new Persian texts to a learned and informed audience; and the continuation of *A History of Persian Literature*. Through the active dissemination of its research ventures and publications, the Yarshater Center seeks to impact the study of the Iranian world by setting new standards of excellence.

UCLA Iranian Studies

THE PROGRAM OF IRANIAN STUDIES AT UCLA, established in 1963, is the largest and most comprehensive doctoral program of its kind in the Americas. It covers the entire spectrum of Iranian studies across disciplines, linguistic boundaries, and periods. Among its distinctive strengths is the focus on Old and Middle Iranian philology, ancient Iranian history and religions, archaeology, and the study of classical Persian literature. In addition, courses in Judeo-Persian literature are regularly read in the program. The program commands several hundred enrollments annually, and is bolstered by numerous endowed chairs and programs that sustain wide-ranging course offerings primarily grounded in the pre-modern Iranian world.



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Yarshater Center
for the Study of Iranian Literary Traditions

Iranian Studies



Queen Nushabe recognizes Alexander from his portrait, 1490s CE (private collection)

Nezāmi and the Iranian World

November 21–22, 2024

UCLA
Royce 306

A symposium and workshop convened
by **Domenico Ingenito** (University of
California, Los Angeles)

Co-sponsored by



Pourdavoud Institute
for the Study of the Iranian World

With additional support by

College I Humanities

CMRS Center for Early Global Studies

Nezāmi and the Iranian World

A Symposium and a Workshop • Royce 306

NEZĀMI AND THE IRANIAN WORLD is a two-day conference (November 21–22, 2024) that brings together specialists of Persian literature, junior faculty, and graduate students to facilitate in-depth conversations on Nezāmi in a stimulating intellectual environment at UCLA.



Nezāmi Ganjavi's five romances in verse, collectively known as the *Quintet* (*Khamsa*), are regarded as the most precious examples of medieval Iran's literary refinement. Drawing upon a vast repertoire of didactic, romantic, epic, folkloric, philosophical, and scientific materials that circulated in ancient and medieval Iran, and Central and West Asia, Nezāmi's stylistically impeccable narrative poems constitute a masterpiece of world literature. Like all classics, Nezāmi's *Khamsa* challenges every generation of scholars to re-read its fictional worlds through new critical lenses and in connection with emerging theoretical paradigms.

In the interest of promoting cross-generational and interdisciplinary conversations, "Nezāmi and the Iranian World" approaches the study of Nezāmi's poetry through close readings and critical analyses that, while building on previous scholarship, shall also highlight aspects of the *Khamsa* little explored heretofore. By studying Nezāmi "against the grain" of previous interpretations, invited speakers shall explore the complex thematic, aesthetic, and ethical ambivalence of Nezāmi's poetry as a powerful source of literary creativity that defies generic conventions, as well as fixed hermeneutical categories.

On the first day of the conference, "Rediscovering a Persian Treasury of Global Literature," invited speakers will deliver lectures that offer insights on the most recent developments in current approaches to the study of Nezāmi's poetry. On the second day, a workshop, entitled "Recrafting Nezāmi Studies between the Real and the Imaginary," will offer UCLA graduate students the opportunity to discuss new trajectories in the field of Persian literary studies in unison with Nezāmi specialists.

The two-day conference "Nezāmi and the Iranian World" is organized under the auspices of the **Yarshater Center for the Study of Iranian Literary Traditions** and the **UCLA Program of Iranian Studies**, in partnership with the **Pourdavoud Institute for the Study of the Iranian World**, and convened by Domenico Ingenito. We also would like to acknowledge the co-sponsorship of the **CMRS Center for Early Global Studies**.

Above: Extract from *Khamsa* (*Quintet*) of Nezāmi

SYMPOSIUM: REDISCOVERING A PERSIAN TREASURY OF GLOBAL LITERATURE

- 8:30 am **Morning Refreshments**
- 9:00 am **Introductions**
- 9:30 am **Morning Session:** Domenico Ingenito, *Chair*
- Leili Anvar** (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, Paris)
Layli and Majnun and the *Divān*
- 15-minute break*
- Paul Losensky** (Indiana University)
Tents, Fortresses, and Caves: Literary Architectures in Nezāmi's *Eskandarnāma*
- 11:45 am **Round Table and Questions & Answers**
- 12:15 pm **Lunch Break**
- 2:15 pm **Afternoon Session:** Allison Kanner-Botan, *Chair*
- Alexandra Hoffmann** (University of British Columbia)
Masculinities in *Layli and Majnun*
- 15-minute break*
- Jane Mikkelson** (Yale University)
The Reality Shimmer: Hearing Voices in Nezāmi's *Layli and Majnun*
- 4:30 pm **Round Table and Questions & Answers**
- 6:00 pm **Private Dinner for Speakers**

WORKSHOP: RECRAFTING NEZĀMI STUDIES BETWEEN THE REAL AND THE IMAGINARY

- 8:30 am **Morning Refreshments**
- 9:00 am **Morning Session:** Paul Losensky, *Chair*
- Sahba Shayani** (University of California, Los Angeles)
Shirin: From Ferdowsi to Nezāmi
- 30-minute Round Table*
- Domenico Ingenito** (University of California, Los Angeles)
"As Fast as the Intellect": Nezāmi's Me'raj Narratives, Architectural Wonders, and Poetic Inspiration
- 30-minute Round Table*
- Ashkaan Kashani** (University of California, Los Angeles)
Emergence of the New: Negation and Transformation in the *Haft Paykar*
- 30-minute Round Table*
- 12:00 pm **Lunch Break**
- 2:00 pm **Afternoon Session:** Jane Mikkelson, *Chair*
- Allison Kanner-Botan** (University of California, Los Angeles)
Fiction and Ethics: Nezāmi's Responses to Ferdowsi
- 30-minute Round Table*
- Charlotte Howley** (University of California, Los Angeles)
Sacred Geometry and Celestial Domes: The Architectural Dimension of Nezāmi's *Haft Paykar* in Its Historical Context
- 30-minute Round Table*
- Azeem Malik** (University of California, Los Angeles)
Yusuf and Zoleykhā between the White Dome and the Seventh Heaven: Reading Jāmi alongside Nezāmi's *Seven Figures*
- 30-minute Round Table*
- 5:30 pm **Reception**