

# The Bill and Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry Emory University

## 2023-2024 Interdisciplinary Research Seminar (CHIIRS)



### Asian and Middle Eastern Seminar

12pm-2pm • February 16, 2024 • Fox Center

*Moderators: Devin Stewart, Courtney Freer, and Petra Creamer Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies, Emory University*

#### **“God’s favor is a heavenly rain, and God’s saints are like the seas”**

Scott Kugle (MESAS Dept)

*Al-Nur al-Safir*, an Arabic history of trade, travel, and the transfer of Islamic piety in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean in the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century by Abd al-Qadir al-Aydarusi, interweaves secular and sacred worlds, mundane and holy persons, political and religious events. The text allows modern investigators to trace the vast network radiating out from Indian Sufi leader and hadith scholar Ali Muttaqi and to see that Sufism formed an integral part of trade and political patronage in the Red Sea-Indian Ocean basin.

#### **The Importance of Being Abdullah: Feuds, Alliances, and the Qatari Elite in the Early 1950s**

Javier Guirado Alonso (Georgia State University)

Drawing on archival research, this presentation examines the complex interplay of the oil industry, familial feuds, patronage relationships, commercial ties, and foreign diplomacy in the history of modern Qatar. In particular, it focuses on the transfer of power that took place in 1949 when Abdullah Al Thani abdicated in favor of his son Ali. Examination of this critical period suggests that the elite that shaped the political economy of Qatar was formed during the early 1950s.

This seminar will meet on the following dates from **12-2pm** (unless otherwise noted) during the fall and spring semesters: **September 22, October 27, December 1 (4-6pm), January 19, February 16, and March 22**. For more information, please contact Devin Stewart @ [dstewar@emory.edu](mailto:dstewar@emory.edu). We expect participants to have read the papers prior to the seminar. To obtain a copy of each paper, please email [mehtap.ozdemir@emory.edu](mailto:mehtap.ozdemir@emory.edu).

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