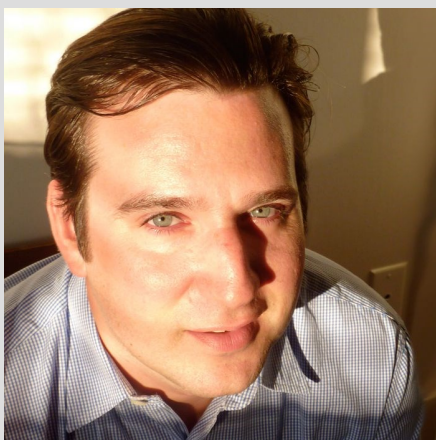


DMES Public Talks: City Chauvinism and Eroto-panegyrics: the profane poetics of post-Mongol Shiraz

For more than eight centuries, Shiraz has been synonymous with fine Persian poetry. Dubbed the Abode of Knowledge and the Tower of Saints, Shiraz has often been read through a reductive pietistic lens by those who posit a Sufistic underpinning for its poetics, and who ignore (or actively seek to erase) the profane dimensions of the city's vibrant literary culture. In the immediate post-Mongol period, panegyric odes written in praise of Shiraz and its rulers formed the backbone of the lyric poetry produced in the city, and served as vehicles for a chauvinistic Shirazi propaganda that targeted other major centres of Persian literary activity in the region, primarily Tabriz, Baghdad, and Isfahan. In their praise poetry infused with the homonormative aesthetics of the Persian *ghazal*, Hafiz and his contemporaries presented Shiraz not only as paradise on earth, but as an irresistible, all-captivating beloved. These post-Mongol poets promoted the idea of the cultural superiority of Shiraz through their insistent claim that the poetry produced within its urban fabric forms *the* standard that all Persian poets must strive for, whether they be players within the same literary network spanning Iran and Iraq, or poets active far beyond the old borders of the Ilkhanid realm.



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