



The Department of Arabic & Near Eastern Languages

cordially invites you to attend the defense of the PhD dissertation titled:

THE SYMBOLIC FUNCTION OF ANGELS IN THE QUR'ĀN AND SUFI LITERATURE

by
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Wednesday April 28th, 2021 at 6:00pm

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/96919346885?pwd=ZDF0V0o2MzgyMEZicnMvVmNOdXNDdz09>

Meeting ID: 969 1934 6885, Passcode: 862594

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Abstract :

This dissertation is a literary study tracing the roles and functions of angels as characters in the Quranic text and Sufi literature of the first six centuries of Islam. From the mythopoeic process related to angels in the Quranic text, listing their roles and functions, this dissertation follows their evolution in the *tafsīr* genre, more specifically the Sufi commentary subgenre. Two additional angelic functions thus appear, which are also found in Sufi *mi'rāj* narratives, such as that of Abū Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī (d. 261/874-5 or 234/848-9) and Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Arabī (d. 645/1248), as well as in the Meccan Openings (*al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*) by Ibn 'Arabī. Angels as characters seem thus to embody a specific multi-layered symbolic function in Sufi texts, whereby they become multivalent characters, signs to readers on a spiritual journey.