

CLASSICAL TRANSLATION  
CONTEMPORARIES  
LITERARY CULTURES  
AND DIGITAL HUMANISMS



جائزة الشيخ زايد للكتاب  
Sheikh Zayed Book Award  
الكتاب والعلوم 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



UNIVERSITÀ DI NAPOLI  
L'ORIENTALE



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA



Università  
Ca' Foscari  
Venezia



esmi  
Centro Studi sui  
Mondi Islamici

The Sheikh Zayed Book Award at the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi and the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre, in collaboration with Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, and Università di Napoli L'Orientale, presents:


THE SHEIKH ZAYED BOOK AWARD ITALIAN TOUR  
IN CELEBRATION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY

## Authenticity, Authority, and Mediation: From Classical Translation to Contemporary Literary Cultures and Digital Humanisms

Bologna–Venice–Naples  
11–15 May 2026



Conference website



**Monday 11 May**

Alma Mater Studiorum  
Università di Bologna

**AUTHENTICITY, AUTHORITY,  
AND THE LIFE OF TEXTS**

Aula Poeti and Sala Boschereccia  
at Palazzo Hercolani

9.00–9.30 INSTITUTIONAL WELCOME

**Simona Tondelli**, Deputy Rector, Alma  
Mater Studiorum–Università di Bologna

**Paola Scrolavezza**, Head of the  
Department of Modern Languages,  
Literatures and Cultures

9.30–10.00 OPENING ADDRESS

CELEBRATING THE SZBA

**H. E. Ali Bin Tamim**, Chairman of the Abu  
Dhabi Arabic Language Centre and Secretary-  
General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award

*Two Decades of Excellence: Celebrating  
the 20th Anniversary of the Sheikh Zayed  
Book Award*

10.00–11.00 KEYNOTE LECTURE

**Muhsin J. al-Musawi**, Columbia University  
and SZBA laureate

*Poetic Desire and Literary Thievery:  
Dynamics of Epistemic Transformation  
in Arabic Literary Theory*

Discussant: **Chiara Fontana**, Alma Mater  
Studiorum – Università di Bologna

11.00–11.15 COFFEE AND TEA BREAK

- 11.15–12.30 PANEL: WHO SPEAKS FOR TRADITION? LANGUAGE, AUTHORITY, AND THE POWER TO CANONISE
- 11.15–11.35 **Caterina Mauri**, Alma Mater Studiorum–Università di Bologna  
*Tradition and Common Ground: A Pragmatic Perspective*
- 11.35–11.55 **Reem Bassiouney**, American University in Cairo, SZBA laureate  
*Arabic and Identity in a Colonial and Postcolonial Context*
- 11.55–12.15 **Chokri al-Saadi**, University of Tunis, SZBA laureate  
*Translation as Domestication*
- Moderator: **Ines Peta**, Alma Mater Studiorum–Università di Bologna
- 12.30–13.30 LUNCH
- 13.30–14.30 Book Presentation  
**Marco Di Branco**, Sapienza Università di Roma, SZBA laureate  
*Orosius Arabicus: An Islamo-Christian work*
- Discussant: **Gabriele Ferrario**, Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna
- 14.30–15.30 KEYNOTE LECTURE  
**Bilal Orfali**, American University in Beirut, SZBA chair  
*The Art of Enumeration in Pre-modern Arabic Literature*
- Discussant: **Davide Bertagnolli**, Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna
- 15.30–17.30 GUIDED VISIT TO THE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF PALAZZO POGGI AND BOLOGNA'S HISTORIC CENTRE

## Tuesday 12 May

Alma Mater Studiorum  
Università di Bologna

### Palazzo Poggi

9.30–10.15 INSTITUTIONAL MEETINGS

With **Simona Tondelli**, Deputy Rector and **Paola Scrolavezza**, Head of the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures

### Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna (BUB)

10.15–11.00 VISIT TO THE BIBLIOTECA

UNIVERSITARIA DI BOLOGNA (BUB): LOOKING FOR MANUSCRIPTS AND ANCIENT TREASURES  
With **Maria Pia Torricelli**, Managing Coordinator of BUB, **Giovanna Flamma**, Codicologist at BUB, **Marco Demichelis**, Ambassador of the *Parkour!* project, and **Giuliana Benvenuti**, Rector's Delegate for Cultural Heritage

11.00–11.15 COFFEE AND TEA BREAK

### Sala Rossa at Centro internazionale di Studi umanistici "Umberto Eco"

11.30–12.30 ROUNDTABLE: THE LIMITS OF INTERPRETATION: ECO, TRANSLATION, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MEDIATION

With **H.E. Ali Bin Tamim**, **Muhsin al-Musawi**, **Bilal Orfali**, **Reem Bassiouney**, **Marco Di Branco**, **Chokri al-Saadi**, and **Caterina Mauri**

Moderator: **Cristina Demaria**, Alma Mater Studiorum – Università di Bologna

### Atrio Manfredi at Accademia delle Scienze

12.45 LUNCH

## Wednesday 13 May

Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

### MEDIATION, INSTITUTIONS, AND LITERARY CIRCULATION

Aula Baratto

9.00–9.15 INSTITUTIONAL WELCOME

With the University Rector **Tiziana Lippiello**

9.15–10.30 PANEL: LITERATURE AND MEDIATION.  
THE AWARD AS A CULTURAL ACTOR

9.15–9.35 **H. E. Ali Bin Tamim**, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre and Secretary-General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award

*Two Decades of Excellence: Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award*

9.35–9.55 **Bilal Orfali**, American University in Beirut, SZBA chair  
*Translation and Literary Value: Prizes, Canon, and Authority*

9.55–10.15 **Muhsin J. al-Musawi**, Columbia University, SZBA laureate  
*Literary Mediation and the Global Reception of Arabic Literature*

Moderator: **Antonella Ghersetti**, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

10.30–10.45 COFFEE AND TEA BREAK

10.45–12.30 ROUNDTABLE:

TRANSLATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS

With **Reem Bassiouney** (American University in Cairo, SZBA laureate), **Chokri al-Saadi** (University of Tunis, SZBA laureate), **Marco Di Branco** (Sapienza Università di Roma, SZBA laureate)

Moderator: **Simone Sibilio**, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia

13.00–14.00 LUNCH

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CLASSICAL TRANSLATION  
TO CONTEMPORARY  
LITERARY CULTURES  
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HUMANISMS

## Thursday 14 May

Università di Napoli L'Orientale

### CULTURAL MEMORY, TRANSLATION, AND THE ETHICS OF TRANSMISSION

#### Palazzo Du Mesnil

10.00 – 10.30 INSTITUTIONAL WELCOME

**Roberto Tottoli**, Rector, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

**Roberta Giunta**, Head of Department of Asian, African and Mediterranean Studies

**Alfredo Guardiano**, Fondazione Premio Napoli

10.30–13.00 PANEL: Translation, Circulation, and the Ethics of Literary Value

10.30–11.15 **H. E. Ali Bin Tamim**, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre and Secretary-General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award

*Two Decades of Excellence: Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award*

11.15–11.45 COFFEE AND TEA BREAK

11.45–12.15 **Muhsin J. al-Musawi**, Columbia University, SZBA laureate

*The Medieval Islamic Republic of Letters*

12.15–12.45 **Bilal Orfali**, American University in Beirut, SZBA chair

*Mediating Arabic Texts: Anthologists, Philologists, and Editors*

Moderators: **Monica Ruocco** and **Oriana Capezio**, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

13.00–14.00 LUNCH

14.00–14.45 KEYNOTE LECTURE

**Chokri al-Saadi**, University of Tunis, SZBA laureate

*Translation as Domestication*

Discussant: **Maria Avino**, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

15.00–15.45 KEYNOTE LECTURE

**Marco Di Branco**, Sapienza Università di Roma, SZBA laureate

*Greek and Roman History in the Arabic Historical Sources*

Discussant: **Roberta Denaro**, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

16.00–16.45 BOOK PRESENTATION

**Reem Bassiouney**, American University in Cairo, SZBA laureate

*Al-Halwani: The Fatimid Trilogy. Drawing on History, Culture, and Food to Forge a Historical Identity*

Moderator: **Monica Ruocco**, Università di Napoli L'Orientale

17.00–18.00 Musical Performance by **Marzouk Mejri** (Oud and Vocals)

### **Featuring**

**H.E. Ali Bin Tamim**

*Secretary-General of the Sheikh Zayed Book Award*

**Muhsin al-Musawi**

*Columbia University*

**Bilal Orfali**

*American University in Beirut*

**Reem Bassiouney**

*American University in Cairo*

**Chokri al-Saadi**

*University of Tunis*

**Marco Di Branco**

*Sapienza University of Rome*

### **Scientific and Organising Committee**

**Chiara Fontana** (Coordinator)

*Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna*

**Monica Ruocco**

*Università di Napoli L'Orientale*

**Oriana Capezio**

*Università di Napoli L'Orientale*

**Simone Sibilio**

*Università Ca' Foscari Venezia*

### **Local Organisational Units**

*Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna*

**Paola Scrolavezza, Roberto Vecchi, Chiara Fontana.**

With the collaboration of **Ines Peta** and the Arabic Chair  
at the Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures

*Ca' Foscari Università di Venezia*

**Simone Sibilio, Antonella Ghersetti, Andrea Facchin**

*Università di Napoli L'Orientale*

**Monica Ruocco, Oriana Capezio**



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Sezione Tematica Officine Grafico-Editoriali – Il Torcoliere



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