



DEPARTMENT FOR
THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS



REL SEMINAR SERIES

SACRED SOUND AND SCRIPT: ARABIC LANGUAGE PRACTICE AMONG CAPE TOWN MUSLIMS

This presentation (based on her Master's thesis) explores how Muslim Arabic learners in Cape Town engage with Arabic not as a communicative tool, but as a sacred, embodied experience rooted in Islamic onto-epistemologies—frameworks where knowledge and being are intertwined through spiritual and aesthetic traditions. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork, it highlights two key practices: Quranic recitation, experienced as a somatic and affective connection to the divine, and Arabic calligraphy, approached as a devotional, ethical-aesthetic act. The study challenges secular models of language learning by showing how Arabic functions as a site of spiritual presence and religious subjectivity, contributing to the growing field of the sociolinguistics of Islam.



03 SEPTEMBER 2025

13H00 - 14H00

REL SEMINAR ROOM

LS 5.67

PRESENTED BY:

FATIMA SADAN

Fatima Sadan completed her Master's in Linguistics at the University of Cape Town. Her research explores language, spirituality, and embodiment. Her most recent work examines Arabic as sacred language practice among Muslim learners in Cape Town.



FATIMA SADAN
MASTERS GRADUATE



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