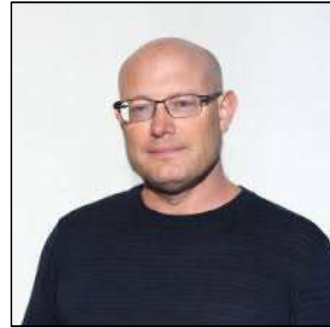


HOW DID NON-MUSLIMS LEARN ARABIC?

Al-Hariri's *Maqamat* (*Impostures*) as a late-antique text



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The *Impostures* (*Maqamat*) of al-Hariri (d. 1122) are a collection of 50 stories in rhymed prose that relate the adventures of an eloquent but corrupt orator. For some seven centuries, it was the most popular work of fiction in Arabic. Modern scholarship has fretted greatly over the origins of the genre to which it belongs. It has also expended a good deal of energy searching for parodic or symbolic meaning in the stories.

This talk proposes instead that al-Hariri's *Maqamat* are a repurposing, or resurfacing, of the Late-Antique genre of holy vitae, particularly in those passages where a disciple seeks a word. Retold in Arabic, with *adab* in place of *logos*, these stories took on new meaning in their new context. In particular, the talk will argue, the *Impostures* preserve a memory of how non-Muslims came to learn Arabic.

When: 2 PM, Friday 7 February

Where: Room 123, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, **Oude Boteringestraat 38**, 9712 GK Groningen

