


# Dr. Ahmad Rafiq Eltahan

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Independent Scholar | PhD in Arabic Literary Criticism

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Languages: Arabic (native), English (C1), Spanish (basic), learning French & Persian

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## Biography

- PhD in Classical Arabic Literature, specializing in the period from pre-Islamic to around 1500 AD.
  - Extensive experience in Arabic literary manuscripts, including official appointments as a researcher at the Egyptian National Library and as a principal researcher for the Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language.
  - Published several peer-reviewed books and articles in Arabic, notably a semantic reanalysis of *Ṣaʿīla* as a cultural and rhetorical construct.
  - Broad teaching background, including advanced online instruction for non-native speakers, and currently managing a dedicated platform for academic supervision in Classical Arabic literature at the university level.
  - Research interests extend to philosophical ethics, particularly in my postdoctoral work on “Path Ethics” (*Naẓariyyat al-Masār*), alongside contributions to major lexicographical and manuscript projects in the Arab world.
  - Interdisciplinary approach integrates linguistic precision, historical depth, and philosophical inquiry.
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## EDUCATION

### PhD

PhD in Ancient Arabic Literature and Criticism – Cairo University, 2023

Thesis: “Multiple Narratives in the Poetry of the Vagabonds: A Study in Light of the Theory of *Nazm*”  
| Grade: First Class Honors

### MA

MA in Arabic Manuscript Studies – Cairo University, 2015

## BA

BA in Arabic Language and Literature – Tanta University, 2006

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### ACADEMIC POSITIONS & EXPERIENCE

1. **(Official) Researcher**, Lexicographic Researcher, and Editor for the Historical Dictionary of Arabic, Union of Arab Scientific Linguistic Academies (Cairo–Sharjah), 2023–2025
2. **(Official) Manuscript Researcher**, National Library, Egyptian Ministry of Culture, 2016–2022
3. **Independent Researcher**, *Present*
4. **Founder and Academic Director: SGALM** – Seminar for Graduate Arabic Literature and Manuscripts ([sgalm.org](http://sgalm.org))
5. Cairo, Egypt (Remote / Global) | 2025 – Present
6. An independent academic institute offering specialized seminars and mentorship in Arabic literary criticism, classical rhetoric, and manuscript studies at the graduate level. Responsibilities include:
  - **Designing and teaching graduate-level syllabi in Arabic literature**, lexicography, and manuscript editing.
  - **Providing one-on-one supervision and feedback** on MA/PhD research plans.
  - **Organizing workshops on Arabic philology, structural criticism**, and Qur'anic stylistics.
  - **Maintaining a high-level academic platform that bridges scholarly expertise with international students and researchers.**
7. **(Online Literature Courses) Designed and taught advanced online courses in Classical Arabic poetry (in English)**, primarily aimed at university-level students. Courses integrated philological analysis, historical context, and rhetorical criticism into a unified methodology, fostering critical engagement with pre-Islamic and early Islamic texts.
8. **Freelance Online Instructor**, StudioArabiya Institute, 2019–2023
9. **Delivered university- and high-school-level Arabic instruction to international students (Malaysia, USA, Canada, UK)**, with an emphasis on Modern Standard Arabic for academic purposes. Developed customized curricula to meet linguistic and cultural

learning objectives, employing communicative and proficiency-based methods supported by interactive digital platforms (Zoom, Google Classroom).  
Taught Arabic to American, British, and Canadian students through communicative, proficiency-based methods focused on both Modern Standard Arabic. Developed course syllabi tailored to undergraduate learners' linguistic and cultural needs, integrating digital platforms (Zoom, Google Classroom) for interactive and immersive learning.

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### **Peer-Reviewed Publications (Local & International – In Arabic & English)**

#### **(Selected from 10 Research Papers)**

- Philosophy and Literature:
  - Article in Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies – **(JAIS), Oslo, Norway**  
**“Greek Sophistic Epistemology in Early Arabic Literature”, under Press.**
- Literature Research:
  - **New York Public Library Collection (NYPL) Research Collections: Critical Edition of**  
**Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī’s “Jalwat al-Mudhākara fī Khalwat**  
**al-Muḥāḍara”**

Published under my name as editor. Currently held by the **New York Public Library** (NYPL Research Collections, Call Number: *pb99100301143506421*).

Cairo: Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq al-Qawmīyah, Central Administration for Scholarly Centers, Center for Heritage Editions, 2015.

- **Paper: *Al-Shanfarā’s Poetics of Poverty***, Hermes Journal, April 2023
- **Book: “Ṣu’laka as a Literary Theme and Ġāra as a Shared Concept: Across Diverse Epistemological and Interpretive Models”**, General Egyptian Book Organization, Cairo, 2025
- Cultural Articles:
  - **Article: “A Critical Reading of al-Ṭughrā’ī’s Lāmiyyah: On the Philosophical “Theme” and the Unity of the Literary “Subject”**, New Culture Magazine, Egypt, 2024
  - **Article: “How Does the Culture of Our Arabic Academic Research Appear Through the Philosophy of Science?”** Fikr Magazine, Riyadh, 2025

For more publications, please visit:

- [Google Scholar](#)
- [ORCID](#)

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## Academic Work in Scholarly Editing of Arabic Heritage Texts

- *Jalwat al-Mudhākara* by al-Ṣafadī — Two editions, Egyptian National Library
- *Al-Muntaqā min al-Mujārāt* — Published 2018, pending 2nd edition, Egyptian National Library
- *Jawāhir al-Kalām* by al-Zarʿī — Upcoming

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Qurʾanic rhetoric and semantics
- Pre-Islamic poetry and cultural anthropology
- Classical Arabic Literature spanning from the pre-Islamic era (c. 500 AD) to the early Ottoman period (c. 1500 AD).
- The impact of Greek philosophical translations on the thematic and rhetorical structures of early Arabic prose, especially in figures like al-Thaʿālibī.
- Arabic manuscript studies and text criticism
- Philosophical ethics and moral agency (Path Theory)

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## SKILLS

- Teaching: Rhetoric, Arabic grammar, Qurʾanic interpretation, literary criticism
- Technology: WordPress, HTML/CSS, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom
- Other Certificates: Digital Transformation (2023), TEFL (2014, Score: 597), ICDL (2020)

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## PERSONAL INTERESTS

- Comparative mythology and theology
- Classical music.
- Hiking, desert travel, and language exchange online.

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## Courses Designed and Taught (Syllabi)

All seminars are part of the academic offerings of the SGALM – Seminar for Graduate Arabic Literature and Manuscripts <https://sgalm.org/>

- ♦ **Workshop on Arabic Manuscript Editing: Theory and Practice**

Covers historical foundations of Arabic manuscripts, bibliographies, biographical dictionaries, lexica, textual corruption, and editing techniques. Includes hands-on editing of folios from different historical periods.

♦ **Advanced Seminar in Arabic Lexicography**

A comparative study of classical Arabic dictionaries and lexicographical schools. Includes practical training in analyzing and editing lexical entries from *Tahdhīb al-Lughah*, *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, *Tāj al-‘Arūs*, and *‘Ayn*.

♦ **Pre-Islamic Arabic Literature: Linguistic and Cultural Anthropology**

A critical study of early Arabic poetry and myth to reframe “Jāhilī” literature based on objective, text-based analysis rooted in lexicon and rhetorical structure.

♦ **Theory of Arabic Rhetoric and Semantics: From Ibn al-Mu‘tazz to ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī**

Analyzes the development of rhetorical thought with focus on *naẓm* theory. Includes applied research writing on Qur’anic verses using semantic analysis.

♦ **Seminar on the Philosophical Structure of Arabic Maqāmāt**

A critical and rhetorical reading of al-Hamadhānī’s *Maqāmāt*. Explores ethical and philosophical dimensions through philological, syntactic, and thematic analysis. Includes original oral performance by participants.

♦ **Readings in the Classics of Arabic Poetry (‘Uyūn al-Shi‘r al-‘Arabī)**

Close reading of selected masterpieces including *Lāmiyyat al-Shanfarā*, *Sīniyyat al-Buḥturī*, and *Lāmiyyat al-Ṭughrā’ī*, focusing on language, metaphor, and rhetorical construction. Final exercise: composing Arabic literary prose with rhetorical elegance.

**Supervision and Academic Coaching**

Non-formal guidance for MA and PhD students in research methodology, linguistic precision, manuscript work, and critical argumentation. “*Share your Research Proposal, and I will teach you how to revise it—not revise it for you.*”

*All courses are designed for postgraduate-level students or equivalent advanced researchers in Arabic language, literature, rhetoric, and manuscript studies.*