



South Asia Seminar,
St. Antony's College,
University of Oxford



Tuesday, 28th April

Fellows' Dining Room, Hilda Besse Building,
St Antony's College,
2.00-3.30pm

Prashant Keshavmurthy
(McGill University)



**Translating Rāma as a
Proto-Muhammadan Prophet:
Mullāh Masih's Masnavi-ye Rām va Sitā**

This lecture aims to finesse understanding of pre-colonial Islamic-Persian literary translations of Indic language texts on Hindu themes by considering Mullāh Masih's famous early seventeenth century *Masnavi-ye Rām va Sitā*, a Persian translation of Vālmiki's (circa 2nd century BCE) Sanskrit epic *Rāmāyana*. It opens by remarking on a shift in the study of the relations between poetics and politics of Persian translations of Indic texts. Then, purporting to finesse understanding of this relation, it takes issue with prior studies of this poem before answering the following questions these studies fail to pose: how does the Ibn Arabi-derived prophetological metaphysics of the prefatory chapters relate to the poetics of emotion in the main body of his tale? And: what does this relation let us infer of Masih's Sufi theology of translation?

Week 1

All are welcome

Convenor & Chair: Dr Faisal Devji
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