

BENJAMIN GATLING
CURRICULUM VITAE
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PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2020-** **Associate Professor**
George Mason University, Department of English
- 2015-2020** **Assistant Professor**
George Mason University, Department of English
- 2012-2014** **Lecturing Fellow**
Assistant Director of Writing in the Disciplines (2013-2014)
Duke University, Thompson Writing Program

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. The Ohio State University**
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, 2012

Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization: Folklore
- M.A. The Ohio State University**
Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, 2008
- B.A. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**
International Studies and Russian Language and Literature, 2003

PUBLICATIONS

- Books:**
- In progress** *Afghan Stories of War, Migration, and Home*
- In progress** *Telling Migrant Stories*, edited collection (under consideration, University of Illinois Press)
- 2018** *Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan* (Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World, University of Wisconsin Press)
- Special Journal Issue:**
- Forthcoming** with Sarah M. Gordon, "Creating from the Margins: Precarity and the Study of Folklore." Special issue, *Journal of Folklore Research*.
- Refereed Journal Articles:**
- Forthcoming** "How can you trust a country?: Precarity, Personal Narrative, and Occupational Folklore among Afghan Refugees in the U.S.," In "Creating from the Margins: Precarity and the Study of Folklore," eds. Sarah M. Gordon and Benjamin Gatling, Special issue, *Journal of Folklore Research*.

- Forthcoming** "Afghan Refugees' Iconic Narratives," *Narrative Culture*.
- 2020** "There Isn't Belief, Just Believing: Rethinking Belief as a Keyword of Folklore Studies," *Journal of American Folklore* 133(529), 307-328.
- 2019** "Sufis, Shrines, and the State in Tajikistan," in "Forum: Sacred Geographies in the Eurasian Space," eds. Jesko Schmoller and Lili Di Puppò, *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics* 13(2), 155-161.
- 2019** "Islam and Cultural Heritage on Tajik Television," *Central Asian Affairs* 6(2-3), 113-132.
- 2016** "Historical Narrative, Intertextuality, and Cultural Continuity in Post-Soviet Tajikistan," *Journal of Folklore Research* 53(1), 41-65.
- 2013** "The Guide after Rumi: tradition and its foil in Tajik Sufism," *Nova Religio* 17(1), 1-23.
- 2013** with Manzura Juraeva, "Traditsiya, stigma i inklyuziya: preodolenie prepyatstviy k polucheniyu obrazovaniya v Tadzhhikistane," *Journal of Social Policy Studies*, 11(4), 457-470.
- 2010** "Negotiations in Performance," *Folklore Forum* 40(1).
- Book Chapters:**
- Forthcoming** "Presence in Absence: Sufi Groups and Expressive Piety in Tajikistan," In *Sufism After the USSR*, eds. Igor Pankov and Sergei Abashin, Leiden: Brill.
- Forthcoming** "The Authority of Sainly Narrative: Stories about Abuhanifa in Tajikistan." In *Authority in Islam: Muslim Eurasia*, eds. Ron Sela and Devin DeWeese, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- 2021** "Central Asia as Story." In *Central Asia: Contexts for Understanding*, ed. David W. Montgomery, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- 2015** "Abdulhaï Mujaxarfi and the Contemporary Reception of Tajik Oral Poetry." In *Iranian Languages and Literatures of Central Asia: From the 18th Century to the Present*, eds. Matteo De Chiara and Evelin Grassi, Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iranienne (Cahiers de Studia Iranica, 57), 207-231.
- 2013** with Manzura Juraeva, "Tradition, Stigma, and Inclusion: overcoming obstacles to educational access in Tajikistan." In *Learning to See Invisible Children: inclusion of children with disabilities in Central Asia*, eds. Martyn Rouse and Kate Lapham, Budapest: Central European University Press, 21-34.
- Book Reviews:**
- 2015** "Folktales and Storytellers of Iran: Culture, Ethos and Identity," *Fabula* 56(1-2), 139-142.
- 2010** "Everyday Life in Central Asia Past and Present," *Cultural Analysis* 9.

- 2009 “Down a Narrow Road: Identity and Masculinity in a Uyghur Community in Xinjiang China,” *Journal of Folklore Research Reviews* (September).

Manuscripts in Preparation:

“Religion and Folklore in Central Asia,” In *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Folklore*, eds. Leonard Primiano and Marion Bowman, New York: Routledge.

FELLOWSHIPS

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- 2020 **Summer Stipend**, National Endowment for the Humanities
- 2019 **Faculty Research and Development Award**, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, George Mason University
- 2017 **Faculty Research and Development Award**, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, George Mason University, declined
- 2014 **Research Grant**, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University
- 2014 **Short-Term Travel Grant**, International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX)
- 2011-2012 **Presidential Fellowship**, The Ohio State University
- 2010-2011 **Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Award**
- 2010-2011 **Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Fellowship**, International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX), declined
- 2010-2011 **Advanced Research Fellowship**, U.S. Department of State, Title VIII Program for Research and Training on Eastern Europe and Eurasia, administered by the American Councils for International Education, declined
- 2010-2011 **Research Grant**, Mershon Center for International Security Studies, The Ohio State University
- 2007-2008 **Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship** for Persian, The Ohio State University
- 2006-2007 **University Fellowship**, The Ohio State University

AWARDS

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- 2014 **Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World Selection**, University of Wisconsin Press, University of Illinois Press, University Press of Mississippi, and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funded initiative for exemplary first books in folklore studies
- 2014 **Thomas Robbins Award for Excellence in the Study of New Religions**, Second Place, Association for the Academic Study of New Religions
- 2012 **Don Yoder Prize in Folk Belief and Religious Folklife**, American Folklore Society
- 2009 **Dan Crowley Memorial Prize**, American Folklore Society

2008 **Honorable Mention Best Paper**, American Institute for Afghanistan Studies

2008 **Patrick B. Mullen Prize**, The Ohio State University

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

-
- 2020 “Saints and Stories in Tajikistan,” invited lecture, Department of Modern and Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures, University of Kentucky, March 3.
- 2017 “Heritage or Zombies: Saints and anti-Saints on Tajik Television,” invited workshop participant, *Islam and Media in Central Asia*, George Washington University, October 2.
- 2017 “Learning to be Sufi in Tajikistan,” invited workshop participant, *Islamic Education in Central Asia*, George Washington University, April 10.
- 2017 “The Authority of Sainly Narrative: Stories about Abu Hanifa in Tajikistan,” invited workshop participant, *Authority in Islam: Dialectics of Fragmentation & Plurality in Muslim Eurasia*, Indiana University, March 24-25.
- 2014 “Abdulhaï Mujaxarfī and the Afterlives of Pre-Soviet Tajik Literature,” invited workshop participant, *Interrogating Change: Central Asia Between Timelessness and Mutability*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, October 17
- 2014 “Post-Soviet Tajik Hagiography in Performance and Print,” invited workshop participant, *Genres of the Imaginaire: How Creativity Mediates Islam with Local Vernaculars*, Vanderbilt University, February 13-15
- 2012 “Mavlavi Jununi and new Sufi poetics in Tajikistan,” invited participant in symposium on contemporary Persian verbal culture, St. John’s College, University of Oxford, April 14-15
- 2012 “Reading Poetry: Sufi textualities in post-Soviet Tajikistan,” invited lecture Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, March 19

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

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- 2021 “Entangled Heritage: Tourism, Vernacular Religion, and Wedding Rituals in Hisor, Tajikistan,” paper to be presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 13-16 (postponed from October 2020 due to COVID)
- 2019 “Afghan Refugees’ Double Precarity,” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 16-19
- 2019 “Sufis, Shrines, and the State in Tajikistan,” paper presented at Central Eurasian Studies Society annual meeting, October 10-13
- 2018 “Author Meets Critics: Expressions of Sufi Culture in Tajikistan,” panelist presentation and response at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 17-21

- 2018** Panel discussant, “Exploring Self, Homeland, and Nation through the Medium of Art and Language,” Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention, May 3-5
- 2017** “War Stories: Afghan Memories of Migration and Home,” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 18-21
- 2016** “Abu Hanifa in Tajikistan: Contrasting Visions of the Islamic Future,” paper presented at Central Eurasian Studies Society annual meeting, November 3-6
- 2016** Panel organizer, “Islam and the Tajik State,” Central Eurasian Studies Society annual meeting, November 3-6
- 2016** “The Politics of Sainly Narrative: Stories about Abu Hanifa in Central Asia” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 19-22
- 2016** Panel organizer, “Narrative and Agency in Muslim Traditions,” American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 19-22
- 2015** “The Poetics and Performance of Reading or How to Read Religious Literature in Central Asia,” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 14-17
- 2014** “Narrative Nostalgia, Folkloristics, and Post-Socialist Studies,” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, November 5-8
- 2014** Panel organizer, “Tajik Literature in Transmission and Social Life,” International Society for Iranian Studies biennial conference, August 1-5
- 2013** “Adapting to the State in Tajikistan: Muslims and the ‘political’ since 2010,” paper presented at Central Eurasian Studies Society annual meeting, October 3-6
- 2013** Invited workshop participant, “Image as Animation: Mysticism, Magic, and Poetry in Byzantine Christian and Islamic Religious Experience,” Stanford University, May 10
- 2013** Panel organizer, “Post-Soviet History, Memory, and Identity: Perspectives from the Baltic, Caucasus, and Central Asia,” Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention, April 18-20
- 2013** “Islamic devotion beyond ‘the hidden veil’: Soviet memories and post-Soviet identities in Tajik Sufism,” paper presented at Association for the Study of Nationalities Convention, April 18-20
- 2012** “Historical narrative and re-imagining the Islamic past in Tajikistan,” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 24-27
- 2012** “Folk Hagiography and Islamic Revivalism in Tajikistan,” invited participant, Tales of Trickery and Endurance: Gender, Performance, and Politics in the Islamic World and Beyond, The Mershon Center for International Security Studies, The Ohio State University, May 18-19

- 2011 “Tradition in Tajik Sufi Ritual Performance,” paper presented at American Folklore Society annual meeting, October 12-15
- 2011 Panelist in “Islamic literature in Central Asia” roundtable at Central Eurasian Studies Society annual meeting, September 15-18
- 2011 “The Guide after Rumi: Discourses of Tradition in Tajik Sufism,” paper presented at Central Eurasian Studies Society annual meeting, September 15-18
- 2010 “Traditionalized Poetry,” paper presented at ACES annual conference, March 6
- 2009 “Negotiations in Performance,” paper presented at Public/Private: Graduate Folklore Conference, Indiana University, March 28

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

-
- 2015- **George Mason University**, Department of English
- Advanced Introduction to Folklore and Folklife
 - Folklore History and Theory
 - The Ethnography of Communication
 - Folklore in the Middle East and Central Asia
 - Folklore and the Supernatural
 - Personal Experience Narrative
 - Writing Ethnography
 - Introduction to Folklore and Folklife
 - Advanced Composition
 - Contemporary Central Asia (Honors College)
- 2012-2014 **Duke University**, Thompson Writing Program
- Writing about Belief: narratives of religious experience and the supernatural
 - Introduction to Critical Reading and Writing—Workshop Leader
 - Debating Islam: intra-Muslim debates and U.S. public discourse on Islam (taught in both Thompson Writing Program and Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies)
- 2008-2010 **The Ohio State University**, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures
- Persian Folklore and Mythology
 - Persian Culture
 - Introduction to Islam
 - Islam in the United States

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

-
- Associate Editor, *Journal of American Folklore*, 2020-
 Editor, Advisory Board Member, and American Folklore Society Representative, H-Folk on H-Net, 2013-2020
- Book Reviews Editor, *Journal of American Folklore*, 2015-2020
- Reviewer, U.S. Department of Education, Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program, 2017, 2018, 2020
- Proposal Reviewer, American Folklore Society Annual Meeting, 2019
- Central Eurasian Studies Society Book Award Committee, 2018

Manuscript Reviewer, University of Wisconsin Press, *Journal of Folklore Research*, *Western Folklore*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Contemporary Legend*, *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*, and *Cultural Analysis*

UNIVERSITY/DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Interim Director, Interdisciplinary Studies (MAIS), 2020-
Concentration Head, MAIS in Individualized Studies, 2020-
Director, Folklore Program, 2019-
Folklore and Mythology Minor Coordinator, 2017-
Salary Committee, Department of English, 2021-
Concentration Head, MAIS in Folklore Studies, 2017-2021
Institute of Respect Leadership Development Program, CHSS, 2020
MAIS Director Reappointment Committee, 2020
Adjunct Committee, Department of English, 2019-2020
Chair, Folklore and Narrative Search Committee, 2018-2019
Associate Director, Folklore Program, 2017-2019
Undergraduate Committee, Department of English, 2017-2019
Folklore and Public Humanities Search Committee, 2017-2018
Advisory Committee to Chair, Department of English, 2015-2017, 2021-
Interdisciplinary Discussion Course Coordinator, Duke FOCUS Program, 2014
Deliberations Editorial Board, Thompson Writing Program, 2014
Assessment Committee, Thompson Writing Program, 2013-2014
MOOC Assessment Committee, Thompson Writing Program, 2013
Course Curriculum Committee, Thompson Writing Program, 2012-2014
WID Gallery Consultant, Thompson Writing Program, 2012-2013
Critical Ink Conference Committee, Thompson Writing Program, 2012-2013

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Folklore Society
Central Eurasian Studies Society

LANGUAGES

Persian - Oral fluency and advanced reading and writing skills
Russian - Conversational proficiency and basic reading and writing skills
Uzbek - Conversational proficiency and basic reading and writing skills
German - Reading knowledge