

Noah Gardiner is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of South Carolina. Gardiner studies Islamic thought and culture with particular research interests in Sufism, esotericism and the occult sciences, manuscript culture, and the Arabic-speaking Mediterranean of the 12th-15th centuries C.E. Much of his present research concerns the spread and development of the “science of letters and names” (*ilm al-huruf wa-al-asma*), a body of mystico-magical thought on the relationship between divine speech and manifest reality that, with various caveats, can usefully be described as an Islamic Kabbalah. Broadly speaking, and with regard to both premodern and modern Islamic contexts, he is interested in the ways that ideas and practices move from the fringes to the mainstream (and sometimes back again), and in Muslim thinkers’ various strategies for assimilating or excluding “foreign” discourses. Even more broadly, he is interested in the role of “the book” in religion—as material artifact, transcendent text, and everything in-between.