The *Citrāvalī* (1613 CE) by Usmān is a Sufi text written in Avadhī that belongs to the literary genre of the Indian Sūfī *premākhyān*s or versified romances. Following the footsteps of his predecessors, Usmān develops in his *Citrāvalī* an allegorical tale of mystical love whose protagonists are a Rajput prince, Sujān, and a princess from a distant land, Citrāvalī. The relation between the two lovers and the efforts to reunite express the human-divine relationship that is at the core of the Sufi ontology and soterioly. Therefore, the Sufi Indian poets represent in their narratives the Sufi seeker as a prince who, led by the pain of separation (*viraha*) from his beloved, disguises himself as a yogi and undertakes a physical as well as spiritual journey in order to reach to her. On the basis of this motif, these authors portray the female protagonists of their poems as reflections of the divine beauty and light, towards which the hero is attracted immediately after their first encounter that represents the trigger of the whole story. For the articulation of this theme, Usmān selects a particular typology of first meeting, that is the vision of the beloved’s portrait (*citra*-*darśana*). This choice turns out to be strategic if we analyse it in connection with the selection of the particular heroine model, the artist woman (*citriṇī* *nāyikā*), from the large branch of Indian aesthetics that classify women into traditional categories. In addition to that, the motif of the picture and, in a broader sense, of art constitute the basic element on which is constructed the entire narration from the very beginning as a metaphor of the story of the creation in relation to its Creator. Therefore, for the workshop I propose a reading of few emblematic and suggestive stanzas of the poem selected from:

* The *Īśvarastuti-khaṇḍa* (Section of the praise to God), the prologue of the poem in form of a hymn to God whom Usmān refers to as the Painter or Artist for antonomasia (*citera*) and articulates some of the highest philosophical concepts of the Chisthi Sufi doctrine that recalls themes from the Vedantic metaphysics (Varmā, 1912: 1, 2, 3);
* The *Citra*-*darśana*-*khaṇḍa* (Section of the vision of the portrait), where the poet narrates the specific dynamic of encounter that happen through the picture. In this section, Prince Sujān finds himself waking up in the picture gallery of Citrāvalī, where he has been unknowingly left by the deities who came to attend the princess’ birth anniversary (Varmā, 1912: 82-6).

Varmā, Jaganmohan, ed., 1912, *Citrāvalī*, *Usmān kavi* *kṛt*, Kāśī: Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā.