



# Textual Transmission in the Islamic Manuscript Age

On the Variance, Reception, and Usage of Arabic  
and Persian Works from the Middle East to the  
Indian Subcontinent

*Abstracts & Bios*

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## Conference

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*Organised by Philip Bockholt & Yui Kanda*

The transmission processes of handwritten texts that confront today's researchers into the Islamic world before the widespread introduction of printing in the 19th century take different forms and can include both minor "corrections" and additions as well as complete revisions of a text with changes to its central statements. The aim of the international cooperation between scholars in Germany and Japan is to make existing approaches and findings relating to the creation, transmission, and reception of texts from the Middle Eastern subjects of Arabic Studies, Islamic Studies, and Iranian Studies, which are strongly represented in both countries, internationally fruitful and visible. The objective is to shed light on how historiographical, religious, scientific, legal, or literary works in Arabic and Persian were copied, handed down, received, deliberately altered, and made newly usable in the region ranging from the Near East to the Indian subcontinent throughout the extended early modern period.

The case studies to be discussed include texts from various regions of the Near and Middle East, the majority of which were written or handed down between c. 1300 and 1800. The focus is on authors, copyists, and later recipients who composed, copied, interpreted, and used texts in new contexts, modifying them according to changing socio-cultural contexts, (religious) political necessities, or individual preferences. The following questions are addressed: (1) What type of narrative or motif in literary and historiographical works is selectively transmitted from one context to another? (2) What changes in content can be demonstrated here, and to what factors can they be attributed? (3) Which actors were involved and how? (4) How did the transmission of knowledge take shape with regard to phenomena such as collected manuscripts (*majmū'a*) with partial sections from works or abridged versions (*mukhtaṣar*)? (5) What does this say about the contemporaneous understanding of texts and knowledge?

## Questions of Authorship and Readership in a 17th-Century Indo-Persian Scientific *Majmū‘a*

Today, Andrew Cogan is mostly remembered as a side actor in the construction of Fort St. George, the first English fortress in India. Little is otherwise known of Cogan’s activities in the country where he stayed from 1615 to 1630 and returned to as a senior officer in the East India Company (EIC) from 1638 to 1643. Unlike many of his successors in service of the EIC, nothing seems to indicate that Cogan was particularly interested in the history and literature of the people he encountered, nor was he otherwise known as a collector or even an occasional buyer of manuscripts.

Yet, in the year 1640, he apparently requested that a man named Shāh Ṣafī – who is, unlike his contemporary Safavid namesake, even more unfamiliar to us than Cogan – produce a *majmū‘a* manuscript including twelve texts, most of which are also little-known or otherwise entirely unknown to us. Currently located in Utrecht University Library, with the call number MS 1 F 14, this particular *majmū‘a* is a “multiple-text manuscript”, meaning that all the works included therein were copied by Shāh Ṣafī as part of a single, coherent project thematically focused on the scientific disciplines of alchemy, medicine, and physics.

In this presentation, I introduce this *majmū‘a* and its constitutive elements and focus on the following questions: What was the nature of the Andrew Cogan-Shāh Ṣafī project? Who chose the texts to be included, and for what purpose? Did the primarily practical nature of the manuscript, i.e., a handbook for learning various manual,

spiritual, and technical skills, have particular implications in terms of textual composition and transmission? Finally, can we consider this *majmū‘a* to be, in effect, an original work by Shāh Ṣafī, related to but distinct from its constitutive elements?

**Sacha Alsancakli** is a postdoctoral research associate at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Münster, working within the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group “Inner-Islamic Transfer of Knowledge within Arabic-Persian-Ottoman Translation Processes in the Eastern Mediterranean (1400–1750)”, TRANSLAPT. He received a PhD in Oriental Languages and Civilisations from Sorbonne Nouvelle University, Paris, in 2018, with a doctoral dissertation on “Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī’s *Sharafnāma* (c. 1005/1597): Composition, transmission, and reception of a chronicle of Kurdish dynasties between Safavids and Ottomans”. As a cultural historian of the early modern Turco-Iranian world, he researches historiography and the history of the book through the actors and processes involved in the production and circulation of manuscript texts. He has worked as a lecturer at Sorbonne Nouvelle University (2019–21) and at the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (since 2021), and he has published book chapters and articles in journals such as *Eurasian Studies*, *Kurdish Studies Journal*, and *Die Welt des Islams*.

Sacha Alsancakli  
sacha.alsancakli@uni-muenster.de

Universität Münster  
Münster, Germany

## Ibn Khallikān's *Wafayāt al-A'yān* in Persian: On Translation Processes in Late 15th-Century Gujarat

Ibn Khallikān's biographical dictionary, *Wafayāt al-A'yān wa-Anbā' Abnā' al-Zamān* ("Obituaries of Celebrities and News about Contemporaries"), penned in Mamluk Cairo and Damascus during the latter half of the 13th century, encompasses biographies of approximately 850 individuals, spanning from the advent of Islam to the author's own period. The enduring reverence for this work across various Islamic regions is evidenced by its frequent citations in subsequent texts and the considerable number of extant manuscripts. Further attesting to its significance, *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, originally composed in Arabic, was later translated into Persian and Ottoman Turkish.

This presentation focuses on the earliest of two known pre-modern Persian translations, *Manẓar al-Insān fī Tarjamat Wafayāt al-A'yān*, executed by Yūsuf b. Aḥmad al-Shujā' al-Sanjārī (or al-Sijzī) for the Sultan of Gujarat, Maḥmūd Shāh Begāfāh (or Begfā), in 895/1490. By situating this translation within the broader context of translation endeavours at the Gujarat court – such as Abū Bakr b. Muhammad Bharojī's rendition of Ibn al-Jazarī's prayer book, *al-Ḥiṣn al-Ḥaṣīn*, known as *Faṭḥ-i Mubīn* – the presentation examines the motivations and methodologies of Yūsuf b. Aḥmad's translation project. An examination of the preface, structure, and selected entries of the Persian version of Ibn Khallikān's text will be undertaken to elucidate these questions.

In addition, the study focuses on the extant manuscript corpus, comprised of seven manuscripts, five of which have been accessible for consultation. This analysis will explore the manuscript production, circulation, and readership patterns in subsequent periods. By examining these facets, the presentation aims to illuminate the intellectual and socio-cultural milieu of pre-modern Islamic Gujarat and the mechanisms of knowledge transmission through translations from the Islamic west to the Islamic east.

**Philip Bockholt** is Junior Professor for the History of the Turco-Persian world at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Münster (since 2022). From 2022 to 2028, he will head the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group, "Inner-Islamic Knowledge Transfer in Arabic-Persian-Ottoman Translation Processes in the Eastern Mediterranean (1400–1750)". He was formerly a research associate at the Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Leipzig and received his PhD in Islamic Studies from Freie Universität Berlin in 2018. His PhD dissertation examined the historiography in Iran in the early Safavid period (16th century) and provided an analysis of Khvāndamīr's *Ḥabīb al-Siyar (Beloved of Careers)* and its readership. A series of research fellowships took him to Istanbul, Jerusalem, Madrid, Paris, Saint Petersburg, and Tokyo. His recent monograph publications include *Weltgeschichtsschreibung zwischen Schia und Sunna* (Brill, 2021), *Ein Bestseller der islamischen Vormoderne* (VÖAW, 2022), and *Authorship and Textual Transmission in the Manuscript Age* (Cahiers de Studia Iranica, co-edited with Sacha Alsancakli).

**Philip Bockholt**

[philip.bockholt@uni-muenster.de](mailto:philip.bockholt@uni-muenster.de)

**Universität Münster**  
Münster, Germany

## The Circulation and Reception of al-Baghawī's Hadith Collection *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunna* and its Commentary Tradition

Why were some works popular in certain regions at certain times? How can we possibly measure such popularity of works in the past? What particular needs did they respond to in certain political, social, and cultural contexts? This presentation focuses on al-Baghawī's (d. 516/1122) post-canonical "digest" hadith collection *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunna* and its commentary tradition. With the hadith collection compiled in Saljuq Khurasan, its commentary tradition enfolded in the Mongol and post-Mongol realm, more modestly in Mamluk Syria and Egypt, and in the Ottoman Empire; an adapted version became popular in the East, above all in India. This presentation will, first, briefly map the regional and temporal production of both the works and the manuscripts. The second, main part will concentrate on the transmission and use of these texts as seen through a variety of paratextual features, such as *samā'āt*, *riwāyāt*, and collation marks for the transmission, and commentary glosses for the study of the hadith collection. With these observations at hand, the presentation will end by suggesting why al-Baghawī's *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunna* and some of its commentaries were popular in certain historical contexts.

**Stefanie Brinkmann** is a research fellow within the *Bibliotheca Arabica* project at the Saxon Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Leipzig (since 2018). She obtained her PhD in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Göttingen with minors in Iranian and Romance Studies.

At Leipzig University, she has been a research associate and fellow with a number of DFG projects dedicated to Islamic manuscripts. After a deputy professorship in Freiburg im Breisgau (2011–12), she was a deputy professor at Hamburg University (2014–18), where she also acted as principal investigator of a DFG project at the Center for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (2015–18). Her main research interests are manuscript studies, hadith, material culture (especially the history of food and drink), and classical Arabic poetry. Among her recent publications is the edited volume *Hadith Commentary. Continuity and Change* (with Joel Blecher, 2023, including a chapter on the genre of *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*), and the article "From Iran to Kawkabān: The Transfer of Sunnī Texts to Zaydī Yemen – a Case Study on Glaser 30", in *Yemeni Manuscripts in Peril*, ed. S. Schmidtke and H. Ansari, 2022. She is currently editing a volume on marginal commentaries in Arabic manuscripts, and a study on the commentary tradition of al-Baghawī's *Maṣābīḥ al-Sunna*.

**Stefanie Brinkmann**  
brinkmann@saw-leipzig.de

Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften  
zu Leipzig  
Leipzig, Germany

## Transmission of a Literary Contest in Different Textual Contexts: Questions of Reception

In my contribution, I present the example of a literary text and its appearance in different contexts in order to answer the question of the effect this has on the reception of the text. My example is a literary contest between a candleholder and a hanging lamp that was written in the 14th century by a Yemeni scholar. During that period, such literary contests seem to have become very popular and one research question relates to the question of whether this can be classified as a literary genre and, if so, what would its defining characteristics be. The author of this specific literary work is a well-known author of historiographical and linguistic works. However, it seems he never published his literary production in its own right. Nonetheless, some of his literary pieces, such as his literary contest between a candleholder and a hanging lamp, were transmitted by other authors in their literary anthologies. These authors had their own plans and transmitted the literary contest taken here as an example in different contexts. In this specific example, the text itself is not much affected. We trace the astonishingly minor variances. However, I would like to argue that the anthological context of the literary contest not only influences our reading of the text but also its contemporary reception.

**Syrinx von Hees** has been Professor of Arabic Literature at the University of Münster since 2014. Her main research interests are Mamluk literature and Arabic rhetoric, social and cultural history, historical anthropology, the history of old age, history of the natural sciences and encyclopaedias. She is co-conducting a DFG long-term project editing the complete works of the major Arab littérateur Ibn Nubātah al-Miṣrī (1287–1366) and is a member of the EXC Religion and Politics, researching transformations of the Burda, the best-known praise poem on the prophet, and their political implications. She worked at the German Orient-Institute in Beirut

in Lebanon for over six years and undertook her own DFG project on the history of old age during the Mamluk period in affiliation with the University of Bonn having received, from there, her PhD on the world view expressed in the 13th-century encyclopaedia of natural history by Zakariyyā' al-Qazwīnī.

Syrinx von Hees  
syrinx.hees@uni-muenster.de

Universität Münster  
Münster, Germany

## Making Tax-Exempted Land Out of Kharājī Land: Central Asian Ḥanafīs to Legitimize Rulers' Policies in Persian Legal Works

This study delves into a legal phenomenon observed among Central Asian Ḥanafīs during the period of the Jānid/Astrakhānid dynasty (17th–18th cc.), whereby they crafted legal opinions to justify the transformation of land subject to *kharāj* tax into tax-exempted property. The procedures for creating tax-exempted property emerged as early as the second half of the 16th century and are primarily documented in the Shari'a court records of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. By examining these legal procedures and their justifications, I propose the hypothesis that these opinions were not derived directly from the conventional teachings of the Ḥanafite school. Rather, they were formulated by the local 'ulamās of the time, who skilfully combined novel interpretations with the established teachings of the school and articulated them not in Arabic, the traditional language of Islamic jurisprudence, but in Persian legal works and regional Shari'a court documents.

The procedures for transforming land into tax-exempted property can be outlined as follows: First, a ruler would sell state-owned land (*mamlaka*) to an individual for a certain amount of money or a copy of the Qur'ān, thereby converting the land's legal status to privately owned land subject to *kharāj* tax (*milk-i kharājī*). Subsequently, the purchaser would return two-thirds of the acquired land to the ruler, resulting in one-third being designated as tax-exempt (*milk-i ḥurr-i khālīs*), while the remaining two-thirds reverted to state ownership (*mamlaka*).

Confronted with the need to legitimize these procedures, which were apparently introduced by local rulers to facilitate the granting of state land with the privilege of tax exemptions to leading military and religious figures which, in turn, was inconsistent with standard Ḥanafite doctrines, contemporary Ḥanafīs in the region had recourse to a specific legal opinion, allegedly attributed to a Persian legal work that asserted the owner of *kharāj* land could render one-third of it tax-exempt by surrendering two-thirds to the state treasury (*bayt al-māl*).

**Ken'ichi Isogai** is a professor in the Department of West-Asian History at the Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University. He specialises in the history of Central Asia from the early 16th to the early 20th centuries, focusing primarily on the Shari'a court documents produced in the region. Among his publications are Ken'ichi Isogai et. al. (eds.), *Shari'a and the Russian Empire* (Rinsen-Shoten, 2014, original title: *Shari'a to Rosia Teikoku*), Masumi Isogai and Ken'ichi Isogai (eds.), *Imperial Russia and Muslim Laws* (Showado, 2022, original title: *Teikoku Rosia to Musurimu no Hou*), both in Japanese. One of his recent articles is related to the Central Asian madrasa curriculum reconstructed on the basis of the Bukharan *waqf* deed of the late 16th century, published in *Comparative Study of the Waqf from the East: Dynamism of Norm and Practices in Religious and Familial Donations* edited by T. Miura (The Toyo Bunko, 2018). He is currently leading a research project on the family history of Central Eurasia in the early modern and modern periods.

Ken'ichi Isogai  
isogai.kenichi.3r@kyoto-u.ac.jp

Kyoto University  
Kyoto, Japan



## Was there Another Version of Ibn Kathīr’s History?

**A**l-*Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya*, the universal history authored by Syrian historian and traditionalist ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā‘īl b. ‘Umar Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), was popular and served as a primary source for the histories of Ibn Ḥijjī (d. 816/1413), Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (d. 851/1448), and al-‘Aynī (d. 855/1451). Nevertheless, the edited text of *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya*, which is primarily based on Middle Eastern manuscripts, lacks the expected level of detail. Many quotations attributed to Ibn Kathīr by al-‘Aynī and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba do not appear in *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya*. Some studies suggest that al-‘Aynī may have mistaken the history of al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333) for that of Ibn Kathīr. However, this does not hold true for cases after the death of al-Nuwayrī. It is unlikely that Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba, a Syrian acquaintance with Ibn Kathīr’s history, confused it with someone else’s work. This paper compares the edited text of *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya* with Ibn Kathīr’s quotations in the histories of Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba and al-‘Aynī. Moreover, it examines manuscripts of *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya* now kept in Europe, which have received little attention to date, in order to determine whether there was a version of Ibn Kathīr’s history that differed from the edited text of *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya*.

(eds.), *Studies on the History and Culture of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2021), and “A Collection of Histories of the Mamluk Sultanate’s Syrian Borderlands: Some Notes on MS Ahmet III 3057 (TSMK, Istanbul)” (in: Frédéric Bauden (ed.), *The Mamluk Sultanate and Its Periphery* (Louvain et al.: Peeters, 2023).

**Takao Ito** (PhD, University of Munich) is Associate Professor in the Graduate School of Humanities at Kobe University, Japan. His research focuses on the social and cultural history of the premodern Mashriq (eastern Arab world), particularly Mamluk and early Ottoman Egypt and Syria, and post-classical Arabic historiography. Among his publications are “The Last Mamluk Princess, Her Endowment, and Her Family History” (*Orient* 54, 2019), “Writing the Biography of Ibn Khaldūn” (in Maribel Fierro & Mayte Penelas (eds.), *The Maghrib in the Mashriq*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), “Careers and Activities of Mamluk Traders: Preliminary Prosopographical Research” (in Stephan Conermann & Toru Miura

**Takao Ito**  
takaoito@lit.kobe-u.ac.jp

**Kobe University, Kobe**  
Kobe, Japan

## Disseminating *Adab* and Mystical Thought Through Epic Imitation: Nizāmi's *Makhzan al-Asrār* and Its *Naẓīras*

The discussion regarding the reception of literary works in the Persian pre-modern period is often accompanied by the accusation of epigonism towards the authors, as scholars are confronted with a multitude of literary imitations (*naẓīra*) and responses (*javāb*). But can we really speak of imitation here or is there a deeper dynamic behind it? This question will be investigated by looking at the didactic epic *Makhzan al-Asrār* (“Treasury of Secrets”), which was written by the Persian poet Nizāmi (535–605/1141–1209) in the 12th century. The epic was completed in 561/1166 and is the first epic of his pentalogy, the so-called *Khamsa* or *Panj ganj* (“Five Treasures”). *Makhzan al-Asrār* continues the tradition of moral and didactic poetry in the succession of Sanā’i (d. 525/1131). The work conveys moral principles wrapped up in twenty stories that reflect the concerns and discourses of its time. It was not only well received by Nizāmi’s own contemporaries, but throughout the centuries, his *Khamsa* was imitated many times across the Persianate world, from Iran to Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent, a practice known as *khamsa-nivīsi*. Since each pentalogy was composed in a different century in a different geographical region, the authors had to change the Nizāmian model to adapt it to new moral concepts and beliefs, making it more relevant to a new generation of audiences. In the case of *Makhzan al-Asrār*, the question arises as to how the didactic character of the work was maintained

and reformed, which new moral concepts were introduced and which were omitted. The paper aims to challenge the accusation of epigonism and to show that literary imitation played a crucial role in the preservation of the Persian literary tradition.

**Christine Kämpfer** is Assistant Professor of Iranian Studies at the University of Bamberg (Germany). She obtained her MA in Iranian Studies from the University of Marburg (2013) and her PhD from the University of Bamberg (2022). Her primary research area is pre-modern epic poetry with a dissertation entitled *Khvājū Kirmānīs Epos Humāy-u Humāyūn: Die Neuerfindung der persischen Romanze im 14. Jahrhundert* [“Khvājū Kirmānī’s Epic *Humāy-u Humāyūn*: Re-Inventing the Persian Romance in the 14th Century”]. Excerpts of her research have been published in the collected volumes *Schaffen und Nachahmen: Kreative Prozesse im Mittelalter* (ed. Volker Leppin, Berlin: De Gruyter 2021) and *Selected Studies on Genre in Middle Eastern Literatures: From Epics to Novels* (ed. Hülya Çelik and Petr Kučera, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2023). From 2017 to 2021, she also made contributions as a research associate to a project focusing on Qajar travelogue literature. Excerpts from this project have been published in the collected volume *On the Way to the ‘(Un)Known’? The Ottoman Empire in Travelogues (c. 1450–1900)* (ed. Doris Gruber and Arno Strohmeier, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022). A reading edition of the travelogue written by the German botanist Carl Haussknecht, recounting his travels to Qajar Persia during the 1860s, was recently published by BUP.

**Christine Kämpfer**  
christine.kaempfer@uni-bamberg.de

**Otto-Friedrich-Universität Bamberg**  
Bamberg, Germany

## “May the World Be Slave to King Kaykā’ūs”: The Reception History of Qānī’ī Ṭūsī’s *Kalīla and Dimna*

In recent years, a significant body of literature has emerged on the diffusion and reception of various versions of *Kalīla and Dimna*, a collection of didactic animal fables that gained wide circulation in the Middle East and beyond following the production of the Arabic prose version by Ibn al-Muqaffa’ in the eighth century. However, research on the Persian versions of *Kalīla and Dimna*, particularly the one versified by Qānī’ī Ṭūsī around 1260 for the Seljuq ruler of Rūm, Kaykā’ūs II (r. 643–60/1246–62), remains underdeveloped as there are relatively few surviving manuscripts. This version has been receiving scholarly attention since the 1880s, not only because it includes the legend of Burzūya’s voyage to India but also due to the author’s reference to his now-lost eulogy, *Saljūqnāma*. Despite this interest, the historical context in which Qānī’ī’s *Kalīla and Dimna* was composed and received remains insufficiently elucidated. To address this gap, this study investigates the contents and illustrations of all four known manuscripts of Qānī’ī’s *Kalīla and Dimna*, including a dated example with provenance information recently identified by the current author. First, this presentation identifies possible sources of Qānī’ī’s work. It then examines the eulogies to the Seljuq rulers of Rūm inserted at the beginning and between each episode of *Kalīla and Dimna* and their relation to the remaining texts. Finally, it proposes the potential audiences of this lesser-known version of *Kalīla and Dimna* in the Ottoman context, specifically focusing on 15th-century Istanbul and 19th-century Baghdad. By so doing, it seeks to explain the reasons behind the low survival rate of this particular version of *Kalīla and Dimna*.

**Yui Kanda** is an Assistant Professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Her research focuses on Islamic art from the early modern Persianate world, including

ceramics, metalwork, and manuscripts, and involves examining primary sources in Persian and Arabic. She primarily investigates the creators, patrons, and audiences of the poetic and religious texts inscribed on these artworks, their purposes and functions, and the material culture associated with Twelver Shī’ism. She received her MPhil in Islamic Art and Archaeology from the University of Oxford in 2015 and her PhD in the History of Art from the University of Tokyo in 2021. Her recent publications include “‘If I Circumambulate around Him, I Will Be Burnt’: A Brass Candlestick Endowed to the Mausoleum of Imam Musa al-Kazim, Kazimayn” in *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* (2023) and “Iranian Blue-and-White Ceramic Vessels and Tombstones Inscribed with Persian Verses, c. 1450–1725”, in *The Routledge Companion to Global Renaissance Art* (2024). One of her ongoing research projects explores the pious endowments of Arabic and Persian manuscripts and artworks by Shāh ‘Abbās (r. 996–1038/1588–1629) and the preservation practices for these works in Iranian and Iraqi shrines.

**Yui Kanda**  
kanda@aa.tufs.ac.jp

**ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies**  
Tokyo, Japan

## Comparing Manuscripts of a Popular Romance: The Persian Classic Version of the *Ḥamzanāma*

The *Ḥamzanāma* manuscripts have not attracted much scholarly attention, although the work was arguably the most read or listened-to romance in the Muslim world. Exceptionally, art historians have worked on the splendid Mughal manuscripts with gorgeous miniatures. However, the Persian classic version, the oldest form of the work with roughly 70 chapters, has been ignored since Van Ronkel's pioneer book of 1895 and She'ar's edition of 1968. As pointed out by Van Ronkel, this version was, significantly, translated into Malay and Javanese languages. This presentation compares various manuscripts of this version and explores how the text changed over time or in different situations.

One early modern source claimed that the Arabic original was translated into Persian under the Samanid dynasty, i.e., in the 9th or 10th century. The oldest manuscript is preserved in the Berlin library and contains pre-Mughal miniatures, probably from 15th-century West India. She'ar edited the romance in this manuscript, which contains 69 chapters. According to him, some parts included older expressions from the 10th or 11th century and others used later expressions from the 12th or 13th century. Interestingly, the texts of this classic version vary extensively among the manuscripts. This presentation compares texts of the classic version in Berlin, Cambridge (1628), Islamabad (1768–69), London (1774), Tehran (18c), Munich (no date), and Oxford (no date) manuscripts, as well as Bombay lithograph (1894–1895), in order to explain how the romance was transmitted

through the manuscripts and then discusses what these differences mean in the Islamic manuscript tradition.

**Nobuaki Kondo** is a professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. He is a specialist in the early modern history of Iran and Persianate societies, working on various documents and manuscripts. His books including *Persian Documents: Social History of Iran and Turan in 15th–19th Centuries* (Routledge Curzon), *Mapping Safavid Iran* (ILCAA, 2015), *Islamic Law and Society in Iran: A Social History of Qajar Tehran* (Routledge, 2017), and *Dastur al-Moluk: A Complete Edition of the Manual of Safavid Administration* (ILCAA, 2018). One of his recent articles related to manuscripts of a Safavid *siyāq* manual published in *Knowledge and Power in Muslim Societies* edited by S. Rizvi and K. Morimoto (Gerlach Press, 2023). His current project concerns the manuscripts of the Amīr Ḥamza romance from Iran and India.

**Nobuaki Kondo**

n-kondo@aa.tufs.ac.jp

ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Tokyo, Japan

## The Reception and Abridgement of Ibn ‘Asākir’s (d. 1176) *History of Damascus* in the Ayyubid and Mamluk Period

Ibn ‘Asākir’s 12th-century “History of Damascus” (*Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*), an enormous biographical dictionary of c. 10,000 personalities who lived in or passed through Damascus and Syria and framed by an account of the merits (*faḍā’il*) of the region and the topography of the city, has a multi-faceted reception history. Hearing certificates (*samā’āt*) show that a broad spectrum of Damascene society attended public readings of the work, the text served both as a model and a source for authors of local biographical dictionaries and topographical surveys, authors of chronicles and biographical dictionaries regularly cited information from it, and several scholars composed complete or partial abridgements (*mukhtaṣar*) of the massive work. This paper focuses on three such abridgements from the Ayyubid and Mamluk period: a *mukhtaṣar* by the historian and hadith scholar Abū Shāma (d. 1267) (manuscripts in Paris and Berlin), a complete *mukhtaṣar* by the bureaucrat and “serial abridger” Ibn Manẓūr (d. 1311) (edited, 29 volumes), and a partial abridgement by the biographer and jurist Ibn Qāḍī Shuhba (d. 1448) (manuscripts in Gotha and Berlin). The paper explores the motivations and working methods of these authors.

Despite the ubiquity of *mukhtaṣars* and the fact that the practice boomed in the Mamluk period, such texts have been mostly neglected in modern scholarship, having been perceived as unoriginal. This article argues that *mukhtaṣars* are, first, worth investigating as one of the many “compilatory” genres (such as encyclopaedias, dictionaries, commentaries, and anthologies) that flourished in the Ayyubid and Mamluk period and are thus part of the “post-classical” drive to engage with, organise, and synthesise existing knowledge. Secondly, a comparison of the abridgements with the original text reveals that abridging was not a slavish endeavour. Abridgers not only omitted whatever they deemed unimportant but also made changes and additions

and sometimes explained their approach in a preface, turning their abridgements into subtle commentaries on key texts by earlier authorities.

**Paula Manstetten** is Junior Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at the University of Bonn (since April 2023). Previously, she has been a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Chair of Early Modern History at Bamberg University (2018–2023). She completed her PhD at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, in late 2018 with a thesis on Ibn ‘Asākir’s *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*. Her research focuses on the pre-modern Arabic biographical and historiographical tradition as well as the history of Islamic education and hadith transmission. She has also conducted research on Arab Christians who worked as language teachers, translators, and librarians in early modern Europe (c. 1700). She is currently working on a new project on hagiographical biographies (*manāqib*) of Sufis, jurists, caliphs, and other important Muslim figures.

**Paula Manstetten**

[paula.manstetten@uni-bonn.de](mailto:paula.manstetten@uni-bonn.de)

**Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn**  
Bonn, Germany



Qīṣṣa-yi Amīr Ḥamza, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Ms. or. 4181, fol. 56r

This folio, depicting a battle scene between Ḥamza (d. 3/625), the paternal uncle of the Prophet Muḥammad, and his enemies, belongs to one of the earliest surviving manuscripts of the *Ḥamzanāma*, a widely read romance featuring this figure. The manuscript is attributed to 15th century Gujarat based on its illustrations. © Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin



*Kalīla va Dimna* by Qānī'ī Tūsi, MS Mumbai, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), 51.34, fol. 121r

This folio, illustrating a lion caught in a net, is from the only surviving illustrated manuscript of Qānī'ī Tūsi's version of *Kalīla va Dimna*, transcribed in Istanbul in 900/1495. Qānī'ī created a versified Persian adaptation of *Kalīla va Dimna* around 1260 for the Seljuq ruler of Rūm, Kaykā'ūs II (r. 643–60/1246–62). The circulation of this particular version appears to have been confined to the Ottoman domain.

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*Manẓar al-Insān fī Tarjamat Wafayāt al-A'yān* by Yūsuf b. Aḥmad al-Sanjārī,  
MS London, British Library, Add. 16714, binding.

One of the two Persian translations of Ibn al-Khallikān's *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, originally written in Arabic, is found in the MS London, British Library, Add. 16714. This copy was produced in the year 1012/1603, approximately one hundred years after Yūsuf b. Aḥmad al-Sanjārī completed the translation. *Manẓar al-Insān fī Tarjamat Wafayāt al-A'yān*, for Sultan Mahmūd Shāh Begarhā (or Begfā) in Gujarat. It was probably produced for Sultan Muḥammad Qulī Qutub Shāh, whose seal is found on a folio 1r. © Philip Bockholt



توپال این بوزن سیم لاجوردی چهار دانگ جزوی یک روزه باب  
دنبال سیرت سوزی کنند و یک روز با سرکه آنکوردی یک روز بونام سوزم آنک  
خلوقی نیکو سیم سوزم تا در پنج بوزن یک کباب سوزد و در این زمان  
و اگر باشد کباب بر کینو بر داند نیکو آید هر چهارم رنگ آنرا در کینو  
نسنکرف شش جزو سیم سوزم یک روز و فقط قطار نیمه و نیکو آید هر  
رنگ سبزی لطیف سیم سوزم یک روز و با سبزه و گندم سوزم آنک فراموش  
رنگار ترسیابی مینمایم و سیم سوزم بوزن یک کباب سوزد و در این زمان  
کند و کباب سوزد هر کجا که نسیم رنگ از روی لیموی روی بر وجه یک روز  
دو جزو سیم که نسیم نیکو آید **فصل دوم** در رنگ کردن بلور فکد حق  
در بلور و این هم نویسم و نیکو بود بلور را نیکو سبزی نیندود دره  
درم دو درم برنج نسیم برای آب کف نیکو و یک کدر از بوجاریت نیندود باب  
نیکو نیندود و یک کباب یک درم و نسیم سوزم و یک روز اول نسیم در آن  
که تمام نسیم و نسیم رنگ نیکو آید رنگ سبزه در وجه که درم و نسیم  
سیاه نسیم نیکو درم برنج نسیم درم بر یک طار بلور نیکو بود رنگ  
زرد بر ضد درم آبی نسیم نسیم درم تو سبزه یک درم در نسیم یک درم روی

۲  
آهن  
خلوق  
انار در نیکو

**تلقطاص کباب**  
نویس از نسیم  
نسیم نسیم  
نسیم  
نسیم

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The *Majmū‘at al-Şanāyī‘*, or ‘Compendium of Arts and Crafts’, is a Persian manual of craftsmanship produced at the turn of the 17th century. It is included here in a *majmū‘a* manuscript formerly part of the library of Tipu Sultan (r. 1197–1213/1782–99) of Mysore, South India, and then looted by the British. © Bodleian Library, Oxford

## From *Aḥsan al-Kibār* to *Lavāmi‘ al-Anvār*: Reworking a *Faḍā‘il* Work on the Twelve Imams for Shāh Ṭahmāsp

The long reign of the second Safavid ruler, Shāh Ṭahmāsp, (r. 930–84/1524–76) is known as a transition period in the history of the Safavid Empire, from Shi‘i extremism to moderate Twelver Shi‘ism. ‘Alī b. Ḥasan Zavvārī (fl. 1554–5) was one of the most celebrated Shi‘i scholars of the period, known for translating and recreating earlier religious texts like the commentary of the Qur‘ān, Shi‘i invocations and the *faḍā‘il* works (collections of traditions of virtues) on the Twelve Imams. Despite his close relationship with the ruler and his various writings, researchers have paid less attention to Zavvārī’s scholarly activities. Among Zavvārī’s writings at the request of Ṭahmāsp, this study focuses on *Lavāmi‘ al-Anvār ilā Ma‘rifat al-A‘imma al-Aṭḥār*, a Persian *faḍā‘il* work, to understand how he explained Twelver Shi‘ism to the ruler. *Lavāmi‘ al-Anvār* was completed in 1543 as a rework of another voluminous Persian *faḍā‘il* work written in the mid-14th century, *Aḥsan al-Kibār fī Ma‘rifat al-A‘imma al-Aṭḥār*. As a preliminary study, my presentation clarifies the structures and characteristics of these two works and examines how Zavvārī adapted the previous text.

*Aḥsan al-Kibār* was favoured by the Safavids, and Ṭahmāsp held its manuscript with beautiful miniature paintings. The author, Muḥammad b. Abī Zayd Varāmīnī (fl. 1342–3), was a Shi‘i scholar, who propagated the virtues of ‘Alī at the Ilkhanid court and the Twelver Shi‘ism in Firūzān of Iṣfahān. Along with showing the virtues of the Twelve Imams, Varāmīnī included a

sharp criticism of Sunnism in the work. However, Zavvārī sometimes omitted such criticism and seemed to have simply focused on the lives and virtues of each Imam. Based on the fact that Zavvārī calls Ṭahmāsp “the deputy of the Mahdī (*nā‘ib-i mahdī*),” he tried to promote the moderate understanding of the Imams while approving Ṭahmāsp’s messianic sovereignty.

**Ryo Mizukami** is a research fellow with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. He received his PhD in Asian History from the University of Tokyo in 2023. In his PhD dissertation, he examined the Sunni-Shi‘i relationship in the spread of imamophilia (the veneration of the Twelve Shi‘i Imams) by focusing on the *faḍā‘il* works on the Imams written by the Iraqi Shi‘i scholars in the 12–14th centuries. He is the author of “Writing the Imam’s Virtues under the Interconfessional Policy of al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh: Ibn al-Bīṭriq al-Ḥillī and His *Faḍā‘il* Works,” in *Knowledge and Power in Muslim Societies: Approaches in Intellectual History* (ed. K. Morimoto and S. Rizvi), Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2023, pp. 193–220 and “Interconfessional Dialogue on *Faḍā‘il* of the Twelve Imams: Rethinking the Confessional Boundary between Sunnism and Shi‘ism in Medieval and Early Modern Islam,” *Orient: Journal of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan* 58, 2023, pp. 171–186. He is also a co-translator of a Japanese edition of Abu al-Qāsim Qāshānī’s *Tārīkh-i Ūl-jāyṭū* (Nagoyadaigaku-Shuppankai, 2022).

**Ryo Mizukami**  
rymizukami0712@gmail.com

ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies  
Tokyo, Japan

## An Eventful Life of a Sayyid/Sharīf Genealogy: From *al-Aṣīlī* to *Ghāyat al-Ikhtiṣār*

This presentation discusses two cases of the utilisation and modification of a historical text, a compendium of Sayyid/Sharīf genealogy entitled *al-Aṣīlī*. *Al-Aṣīlī* was composed by Ibn al-Ṭīqṭaqā in the late 13th century in Ilkhanid Iraq. One significant intent behind its composition was the affirmation of the bond between the ‘Alids affiliated with the Twelver Shi‘ī community in Iraq and the family of the work’s dedicatee, Aṣīl al-Dīn, son of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī. In the early 16th century, *al-Aṣīlī* was copied by Tāj al-Dīn Ibn Zuhra. This marked the beginning of the transmission and use of *al-Aṣīlī* as a repository of family genealogy within the Banū Zuhra, a notable Ḥusaynid family in Syria known for its Twelver Shi‘ī tradition. Members from different branches of the family augmented the family genealogy in their exemplars as they created copies of the work over generations. Even an independent work focusing on the genealogy of the Banū Zuhra was derived from *al-Aṣīlī*. *Al-Aṣīlī* experienced another fundamental metamorphosis in the late 19th century. *Ghāyat al-Ikhtiṣār*, attributed to Tāj al-Dīn Ibn Zuhra and published in 1892 is the result of a shoddy and selective reorganization of the materials found in a version of *al-Aṣīlī* that descended from Tāj al-Dīn’s copy. The pro-Rifā‘ī and anti-Qādirī stance that runs through the work indicates that *Ghāyat al-Ikhtiṣār* was concocted under the sponsorship of Abū l-Hudā al-Ṣayyādī, a famous religious advisor to Abdūlhamid II and the leader of the Rifā‘ī network that he himself had turned into a politico-religious faction. Was there anything special about *al-Aṣīlī* that caused this eventful life or was it merely because it was conveniently available to the relevant actors that the work was used for their respective purposes? My attempt to understand the two cases will begin with this question.

**Kazuo Morimoto** is Professor of Islamic and Iranian History at the Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, University of Tokyo. Morimoto works mainly on topics that contribute to what he calls sayyido-sharifology, research on the roles and positions of the putative kinfolk of the Prophet Muḥammad (or the ‘Alids) in Muslim societies both past and present. While he advocates for sayyido-sharifology as an area of research, Morimoto works on genealogical literature and *faḍā’il* literature on Sayyids and Sharīfs. His forthcoming articles include “A Compendium of Sayyid/Sharīf Genealogy in Diagrammatic Format from the Late Tenth Century,” Markus Friedrich and Jörg B. Quenzer (eds.), *Genealogical Manuscripts in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Berlin: De Gruyter; “Ibn ‘Inaba’s Oeuvre,” in Laura Bottini and Cristiana Baldazzi (eds.), *Il mondo musulmano: Religione, storia, letteratura. Studi in memoria di Biancamaria Scarcia Amoretti*, Rome: Istituto per l’Oriente C.A. Nallino; and “An *Ijāza* for Examining Genealogies of Sayyids and Sharīfs from Fifteenth-Century Najaf,” Shahrām Yūsufīfar, Gūdarz Rashtiyānī, Rasūl Ja‘fariyān (eds.), *Jashn-nāma-’i Duktur Maṣṣūr Ṣīfat-gul*, Tehran: Mu’arrikh. Morimoto is also interested in the history of Twelver Shi‘ism, Shi‘ī-Sunni relationships and interactions, and Persianate studies.

**Kazuo Morimoto**  
morikazu@ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp

The University of Tokyo  
Tokyo, Japan

## The Reception of Mamluk Manuscripts in the Ottoman Period: The Scattered Selimiye Collection of *ʿIqd al-Jumān*

This study is an example of how Mamluk manuscripts were transported, received, and circulated in the Ottoman period. It focuses on the manuscript copies of the chronicle *ʿIqd al-Jumān* by Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī (1361–1451). Numerous volumes of the chronicle were transported to the Ottoman palace libraries following Selīm I’s conquest of Egypt in 1517. From the end of the 17th century, *ʿIqd al-Jumān* began attracting Ottoman courtiers’ attention, and additional copies of the manuscript, together with its translations into Ottoman Turkish, were made. In the era of Aḥmed III (r. 1115–43/1703–30), Grand Vizier Nevşehirli Damad İbrāhīm Paşa is known to have organized a translation project for this chronicle. The eight volumes of manuscripts preserved in the Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi (TIEM) depict the treatment of the manuscripts of *ʿIqd al-Jumān* during this translation project. According to a colophon attached to the TIEM manuscripts, these manuscripts had been originally preserved as a part of a thirty-plus volume collection in the Selimiye library established by Selīm II (r. 974–82/1566–74) in Edirne. They were then transported to Istanbul for utilization in the translation project. Although the Selimiye collection has been scattered among several libraries in Istanbul, it can be restored by identifying the *tūghrā* of Selīm II on the front page of each manuscript. A close comparison of the text of the Selimiye collection and those of the additional copies in the Ottoman Period shows that the Ottoman copies may have been

made at the Edirne court prior to the reign of Aḥmed III.

**Nobutaka Nakamachi** (PhD, University of Tokyo) is a professor in the Faculty of Letters at Konan University. He started studying diplomatic history in the early Mamluk Period at the University of Tokyo. After studying at Cairo University as a scholarship student of the Heiwa Nakajima Foundation, he continued the historiographical study of the chronicles of al-ʿAynī and completed his PhD at the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology at the University of Tokyo in 2007. His publications include “The rank and the status of military refugees in the army of the Mamluk Sultanate: Reconsideration of the *wāfidiyah*,” (*Mamluk Studies Review* 10/1, 2006), “Life in the margins: Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-ʿAynī, a non-elite intellectual in the Mamluk Period,” (*Orient* 48, 2013), and “A historiographical analysis of the four chronicles attributed to Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī,” (in S. Conermann and Toru Miura (eds.), *Studies on the History and Culture of the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)*, Bonn University Press, 2021).

**Nobutaka Nakamachi**  
abu7anan@konan-u.ac.jp

**Konan University**  
Kobe, Japan

## The Persian *Śalihotra*: The Transformation and Adaptation of a Sanskrit Text in Persian Treatises on Horses

During the period of Islamic rule on the Indian subcontinent, many texts from Indian languages – mostly Sanskrit – were translated into Persian. Among these texts, we find a substantial number of equine treatises. They usually refer to the *Śalihotra*, written in Sanskrit, a legendary equine treatise that has not survived as a clearly attributable text. Instead, there are several treatises in Sanskrit on horses, some of which are referred to as *Śalihotra*. The *Śalihotra* translations usually consist of a part dealing with omens and prognostics and a veterinary part. The translations have been done under different rulers and in geographically different regions.

The earliest of these translations – the *Tarjuma-yi Sālōtar* – was completed in Gulbarga in 810/1407–8, during the Bahmanī dynasty. The many copies of this translation feature a wide range of differences and variations. We can distinguish between a long and a short version, however, there are many variations in the copies in each of these broad categories. Presumably, elements of other horse treatises were successively incorporated into the original version of the translation. Since horse treatises were also a prominent genre in Arabic and Persian, texts written in these two languages are likely sources for the additions. My talk introduces the *Śalihotra* translations with a particular focus on the variations in the text. I also attempt to identify the sources for the later additions to the original translation.

of Oriental and Asian Studies at the University. Since 2018, she has been the director of the Institute of Iranian Studies at the University of Göttingen. In 2024, she was appointed a member of the Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Lower Saxony. In her research, Eva Orthmann's special interests include subjects related to the Mughal Empire, the occult sciences, especially astrology, and Indo-Persian transfers of knowledge and culture.

**Eva Orthmann** is Professor of Iranian Studies at the University of Göttingen. She obtained her MA degree in Islamic and Iranian Studies at the University of Tübingen in 1995, followed by a PhD in 2000 at the University of Halle-Wittenberg. Afterwards, she worked as an assistant professor in Zurich and spent two years as a research fellow at Yale. In 2007, Orthmann was appointed Professor of Islamic Studies in Bonn where she also served as director of the Institute

Eva Orthmann  
eva.orthmann@uni-goettingen.de

Georg-August-Universität Göttingen  
Göttingen, Germany

## The Dedication of a Universal History to Various Patrons: A Case Study of the Ilkhanid Historian Shabānkāraʿī

**M**uḥammad b. ʿAlī Shabānkāraʿī's *Majmaʿ al-Ansāb* is a Persian universal history work initially dedicated to the Ilkhanid vizier Ghiyās al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 1336), son of Rashīd al-Dīn Faẓlallāh (d. 718/1318) in 733/1332–3. Previous studies have noted the survival of this historical work in three recensions, each dedicated to different patrons, including Chubanid Pīr Ḥusayn. However, the absence of rigorous codicological and philological examinations, other than Aubin's article ("Un chroniqueur méconnu, Šabānkāraʿī," *Studia Iranica* 10 (1982), pp. 213–224, leaves the rationale behind Shabānkāraʿī's repeated modifications and dedications unclear. Within the realm of the Ilkhanid historiographical studies, Rashīd al-Dīn's Persian universal history work, *Jāmiʿ al-Tawārīkh*, composed in 1307, has garnered significant admiration and scholarly attention, whereas other Persian universal history works, such as the *Majmaʿ al-Ansāb*, have been comparatively neglected. The oversight is evident in Melville's recent Persian historiographical article ("Persian Sources," in Biran & Kim (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Mongol Empire*, vol. II, Cambridge, 2023, pp. 19–20). Through my comprehensive survey of Islamic manuscripts of universal history works worldwide, it has been revealed that there exist twenty-five manuscripts of the *Majmaʿ al-Ansāb*, a number exceeding the sixteen manuscripts documented in Bregel's bibliography of Persian literature (*Persidskaia Literatura*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1972, pp. 334–337). This paper endeavours to

elucidate Shabānkāraʿī's rationale for modifying and dedicating his universal history work by examining almost all extant manuscripts and comparing the various recensions, thereby shedding light on its significance within Persian historiographical studies.

**Osamu Otsuka**, born in 1980, graduated from the Faculty of Letters at the University of Tokyo in 2003 and completed the doctoral program in the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology at the University of Tokyo in 2012. After working as an assistant professor at the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology of the University of Tokyo and assistant professor at the Faculty of Letters of Toyo University, he assumed his current position of associate professor at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of the University of Tokyo in October 2018. His publications include *The Transformation of the General Histories in Persianate Societies*, Nagoya: The University of Nagoya Press, 2017 (in Japanese); "Qāshānī, the First World Historian: Research on His Uninvestigated Persian General History, *Zubdat al-Tawārīkh*," *Studia Iranica* 47/1 (2018), pp. 119–149; "The Hazaraspid Dynasty's Legendary Kayanid Ancestry: The Flowering of Persian Literature under the Patronage of Local Rulers in the Late Il-khanid Period," *Journal of Persianate Studies*, 12, 2019, pp. 181–205.

**Osamu Otsuka**

osamuotsuka@ask.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp

The University of Tokyo  
Tokyo, Japan

## Histories of Medina Transcending Regions, Time Periods, and Languages: A Preliminary Study on *Jadhb al-Qulūb ilā Diyār al-Maḥbūb* by ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Dihlavī (d. 1052/1642)

Recent years have witnessed a growing scholarly interest in transregional cultural exchanges between South Asia and the Red Sea region, particularly from the 15th century onwards. For instance, detailed studies have been published on the relevance of Arabic narrative sources of Ottoman Mecca for the history of South Asia or the transregional cultural integration of the Western Indian Ocean through the Arabic language. Nevertheless, while researchers working on the history of South Asia have started paying attention to the role of the Arabic language in the context of transoceanic connections, there has been little research on the reception of late medieval Arabic histories of the Red Sea region in pre-modern South Asia.

Attempting to fill this gap, this paper focuses on *Jadhb al-Qulūb ilā Diyār al-Maḥbūb*, a history of Medina primarily written in Persian by the famous South Asian hadith scholar and Sufi ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Dihlavī (d. 1052/1642) based on the late medieval Arabic histories of Medina by the Egyptian scholar al-Samhūdī (d. 911/1506). Despite the significance of al-Dihlavī in the intellectual history of South Asia, his work on the history of Medina has not yet been thoroughly explored. Addressing this issue, this paper first introduces these two historians and their histories of Medina. It then examines how al-Dihlavī reworked al-Samhūdī’s text through the omission, addition, and reorganisation of content. It also investigates how al-Dihlavī presented *Jadhb al-Qulūb* as a complex mixture of Persian and Arabic texts, analysing his strategies for using these two languages. Thus, it sheds light on the complex nature of the transregional cultural exchanges, providing an example of how a historian adapted his work from histories written in a different region, time period, and language.

**Kaori Otsuya** is a project assistant professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign

Studies. During her doctoral studies at the University of Liège, she focused on the activities of the religious elite and historiographical practices in the late medieval Hijaz. Since completing her PhD last year, she has been preparing her dissertation on the late medieval historiography of Mecca and Medina for publication. Currently, she is working on a new project about (1) the circulation and reception of Arabic manuscripts on the history of Mecca and Medina, especially in the early modern Persianate world and the Ottoman Empire, (2) translations of local histories of the Hijaz into Persian and Ottoman Turkish, and (3) historiographical practices in the Ottoman Hijaz. Her publications include “Mālikī Imams of the Sacred Mosque and Pilgrims from Takrūr.” *Chroniques du manuscrit au Yémen* 25 (2018): 53-72; “Marriages of Meccan Scholarly Families in 650–850/1252–1446.” *Orient: Journal of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan* 54 (2019): 105-125; and “Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Farḥūn’s History of Medina.” *Proceedings of the Sixth Conference of School of Mamluk Studies*. Leiden: Brill, forthcoming.

**Kaori Otsuya**  
otsuya@aa.tufs.ac.jp

ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies  
Tokyo, Japan

## A Book of 30,000 Biographies: Computational Analysis of Sources of *The History of Islam of al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348)*

Biographical collections often draw from earlier sources, yet the full scope of this process is not well understood without modern text analysis techniques. One such technique, text reuse detection, has been instrumental in uncovering connections within the Arabic literary tradition. The ERC-funded KITAB project (2018–2023), under the leadership of Professor Sarah Savant, working together with David Smith, adapted the text reuse software “passim” for analysing the OpenITI corpus, the largest collection of classical Arabic texts. This adaptation has enabled the examination of citation practices across a vast network of texts, facilitating detailed studies of legal, exegetical, biographical, and historical texts. However, this approach has limitations when earlier borrowings do not fit conventional citation patterns. In the EIS1600 project, we complement “passim” with methods designed to explore biographical records, such as analysing overlapping vocabulary. This allows for the identification of biographies of the same individuals even with minimal text reuse. Together, these methods offer complementary insight into biographical collections. For instance, while text reuse detection helps pinpoint sources an author may have used, overlapping vocabulary analysis broadens our understanding of which biographical details were valued enough to be preserved over time. My presentation examines how al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347) integrated earlier sources into his *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*, the most comprehensive biographical collection to date.

(The *Taʾrīkh Madīnat Dimashq* by Ibn ʿAsākir is the longest biographical collection, nearly 2.5 times the length of al-Dhahabī’s *Taʾrīkh al-Islām* but it comprises “only” about 9,600 biographies compared to approximately 30,000 in the *Taʾrīkh al-Islām*.)

**Maxim Romanov’s** research focuses on the social history of the premodern Islamic world, the history of the Arabic written tradition, and computational methods and approaches relevant to Islamicate studies. He held a joint position as a senior research fellow at the KITAB Project (AKU-ISMC, London) and as a university assistant for digital humanities (University of Vienna). Since 2021, at the University of Hamburg, he is leading a research project titled “The Evolution of Islamic Societies (c. 600–1600 CE): Algorithmic Analysis into Social History”, which is funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) within the framework of the Emmy Noether Program.

**Maxim Romanov**

[maxim.romanov@uni-hamburg.de](mailto:maxim.romanov@uni-hamburg.de)

**Universität Hamburg**  
Hamburg, Germany



As is known, the Arabic text known under the title “Bilahwar and Būdhasaf (or Yūdhasaf)” goes back to a version of the Buddha legend that reached Iraq as early as the 8th century. This version was probably introduced by new Muslim converts from Central Asia of Buddhist or Manichean background, many of whom moved to Basra and then to Baghdad. These early Muslim Arabic versions, which are attested in late manuscripts and lithographs, as well as in indirect transmission (mainly attested in the Shii context), have been studied by Daniel Gimaret and Friedrich Hommel. However, there are also numerous Christian Arabic versions (many of which are illustrated) that circulated widely in the Middle East but are much less well-known today. This paper presents the complex textual history of the text and its many adaptations in Arabic, with a special focus on the manuscript evidence (texts and images). It also explores the social and ideological factors that contributed to the many changes this text underwent in its translinguistic and transreligious journey across boundaries.

**Isabel Toral** studied history and Arabic studies in Tübingen (PhD 1997), Habilitation 2008 (FU Berlin). Between 1997 and 2018 she held numerous research positions in Freiburg, Berlin, London, Göttingen and Mainz. Since 2018, she has been a senior researcher and lecturer (since 2020 professor) for Arabic studies (FU Berlin) and deputy PI of the project *Anonym-Classic* (2018–2023) and its sibling project *ALC: Arabic Literature Cosmopolitan* (2020–2027), which is the first-ever comprehensive study of the fable-book *Kalila and Dimna* with a special focus on the Arabic manuscript corpus and its mouvance. Her main publishing and research fields are Iraq in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, urban history, al-Andalus, translation in the pre-modern Islamicate world, anthologies, and *adab* in Classical Islam. Her main book publications

September 6, 10:00–10:30 | Panel III

## The Muslim and Christian Arabic Versions of the Buddha Legend and its Trans-Religious Reception History

are *al-Hira. Eine arabische Kulturmetropole im spätantiken Kontext* (Brill 2014) and *Baghdad: From its Beginnings to the 14th Century* (ed. together with Jens Scheiner, Brill 2022).

Isabel Toral  
isabel.toral-niehoff@fu-berlin.de

Freie Universität Berlin  
Berlin, Germany

## Stability and Change in the Transmission of Arabic Mawlid Texts: The Case of *Mawlid al-‘Arūs*

The planned contribution scrutinises textual transmission in the case of Arabic *mawlid* texts. *Mawlid* texts are compositions in *saj‘*, prose, and poetry which narrate the birth and early life of the prophet Muḥammad. They are performed by a specialist reader (*qāri‘*) as an act to commemorate and venerate the Prophet. Though most *mawlid* texts have an individual author, *mawlid* texts reveal a tendency to be fluid and seem to have been subject to change over the centuries. For my presentation, I chose one *mawlid* text as a case study: *Mawlid al-‘Arūs* (“The Birth of the Bride/Groom”). This *mawlid* text was among the most popular and is still performed today. *Mawlid al-‘Arūs* is generally attributed to the Baghdadi Hanbali scholar Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200). If this attribution – which at the current stage of research can neither be falsified nor corroborated – is correct, it would make *Mawlid al-‘Arūs* one of the earliest texts of the *mawlid* genre.

A comparison of ten available versions of *Mawlid al-‘Arūs* reveals that the text has stable as well as fluid parts. What is the relation between these? Are certain parts more stable than others? Where do the greatest changes occur? And can we detect a kind of pattern for this? Ultimately, we need to ask about the factors that caused the variances in the transmission of *Mawlid al-‘Arūs*. Addressing these questions involves exploring the social environment of the texts. The presentation, therefore, also highlights the people who professionally dealt with *mawlid* texts, i.e., the copyists and users, in this case, the specialist readers and their audiences.

**Ines Weinrich** is an Arabic and Islamic studies scholar and ethnomusicologist. She earned a PhD in Arabic Studies from the University of Bamberg and has worked in Bamberg, Beirut, Heidelberg, and Münster. Her research interests include Arabic poetry and music, the appropriation of ancient Greek musical philosophy by Arab-Muslim authors, sonic dimensions of Muslim ritual, and the veneration of the prophet Muḥammad. She has conducted fieldwork on Muslim chanting (*inshād*) in Syria and Lebanon (2009–13) and led a project on performative elements in Arabic *mawlid* texts, 1200s to 1700s (2018–21, DFG). Currently, she is the Principal Investigator in the AHRC-DFG project “Hindu-Muslim-Jewish Origin Legends in Circulation between the Malabar Coast and the Mediterranean, 1400s–1800s” at the University of Münster.

**Ines Weinrich**

[ines.weinrich@uni-muenster.de](mailto:ines.weinrich@uni-muenster.de)

Universität Münster  
Münster, Germany

## Evolving Iranian Identity in the Periphery: A Study of Ardalān Historiography

Since the Safavid dynasty unified the Iranian plateau in the early 16th century, Iran's political and territorial integrity has largely persisted to the present day, despite various dynastic and regime changes. One contributing factor to contemporary Iran's relatively stable national unity, despite its multi-ethnic composition, is the prolonged formation of its political entity. This study aims to explore this process from a peripheral perspective. The present-day Kordestān Province in western Iran was, until the mid-19th century, governed by a Kurdish ruling family known as the Ardalān. The Ardalān rulers became vassals of the Safavid Dynasty (1501–1722) around the mid-16th century and generally accepted the rule of the Safavids and their successor Iranian dynasties, with a few exceptions. Some 16th-century historical materials mentioning the Ardalān family suggest no discernible "Iranian character" in their ancestry, which was linked to the Abbasid or Marwanid dynasties (750–1258 and 990–1085 respectively). However, by the late 18th century, when Iran was plunged into chaos following the collapse of the Safavid Dynasty, the Ardalān rulers appeared to have developed an increasing awareness of being part of Iran, even aspiring to rule over it. This shift in perception is reflected in a series of local histories written by intellectuals in service to the Ardalān family during the Qajar period (1796–1925). These local histories often trace the Ardalān lineage to the ancient Sasanian dynasty (226–651), indicating a growing sense of Iranian identity. This presentation compares 16th-century historical sources on the Ardalān family with those from the 19th century to elucidate how the concept of Iranian identity was embraced within the Ardalān Emirate during the Qajar period.

**Akihiko Yamaguchi** is a professor of Middle Eastern history at Sophia University in Tokyo. He obtained his PhD in history from the École

Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. His research focuses primarily on the history of Iran and the Ottoman Empire from the 16th to early 20th centuries, with special attention to minorities and peripheries. He is particularly interested in the relations between the Kurdish regions and the central government during this period. His main publications include: "Urban-rural Relations in Early Eighteenth-Century Iran – A Case Study of Settlement Patterns in the Province of Hamadan," in N. Kondo (ed.), *Persian Documents: Social History of Iran and Turan in the Fifteenth-Nineteenth Centuries*, London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003; "Shah Tahmasp's Kurdish Policy," *Studia Iranica*, 41 (2012); "The Safavid Legacy as Viewed from the Periphery: The Formation of Iran and the Political Integration of a Kurdish Emirate," in N. Kondo (ed.), *Mapping Safavid Iran*, Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2015; "Iranian Kurds (Akrād-e Irān)" and the Safavid "Forced" Migration Policy," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 93 (2017); "The Kurdish Frontier under the Safavids," in R. Matthee (ed.), *The Safavid World*; "Mediating between the Royal Court and the Periphery: The Zangana Family's Brokerage in Safavid Iran (1501–1722)," *Iran*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/05786967.2023.2170814>.

**Akihiko Yamaguchi**  
yamaguci@sophia.ac.jp

**Sophia University**  
Tokyo, Japan

## A Few Questions on the “Older Preface” to the *Shāhnāma* of Firdawsī (In Memory of the Late Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila)

This talk addresses several questions on the “Older Preface” that is found attached to some manuscripts of the *Shāhnāma* (the Book of Persian Kings) of Firdawsī (completed in ca 1010). This “Older Preface” is generally assumed to have been lifted from the lost *Prose Shāhnāma* (completed in 957) which was compiled by Abū Manṣūr al-Ma‘marī at the behest of the Samanid Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Razzāq, the one-time governor of Ṭūs. Furthermore, it was thought to have been Firdawsī’s main, if not exclusive, source. Abū Manṣūr al-Ma‘marī gathered together book owners and ordered them to compile a book. The “Older Preface” gives the names of four such book owners, three of which are also mentioned in the *Shāhnāma*. While this has been adduced by many scholars as evidence of Firdawsī’s reliance on the *Prose Shāhnāma*, a few others have cast doubt on its credibility. The late Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila has, for example, suggested that these names may have been taken from the *Shāhnāma* to make the Preface more authoritative (*Khwadāy-nāmag: The Middle Persian Book of Kings*, Leiden: Brill, 2018). Taking up where he left off, we re-examine the three names given in the *Shāhnāma* in light of Abū Manṣūr al-Tha‘ālibī’s *Ghurur akhbār mulūk al-Furs wa-si-yarihīm* (“The Illustrious Accounts of the Kings of Persia and their Chronology”), the first part of a world history written in Arabic, which is also assumed to have built on the *Prose Shāhnāma*. This comparison between the two texts from a fresh perspective will shed new light on the

nature of the “Older Preface”, and ultimately the old question of Firdawsī’s sources.

**Kumiko Yamamoto** is a fellow of the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. She received a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, taught at the University of Tokyo, Japan and was a fellow at the Institute of Iranian Studies, University of Göttingen, Germany. Her research focuses on Persian epics and Persian popular romances in light of *naqqāli* or professional storytelling tradition in Iran. She is the author of the *Oral Background of Persian Epics: Storytelling and Poetry* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), which has been translated into Persian. She has also contributed to the *Oral Literature of Iranian Languages: A Companion Volume II to A History of Persian Literature* (eds. P. G. Kreyenbroek and U. Marzolph, London: I. B. Tauris, 2010), *Shahname Studies III* (eds. C. Melville and G. van den Berg, Leiden: Brill, 2018), *Oral Narration in Iranian Cultures* (eds. M. Nourzaei, C. Jahani and A. Korn, Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2022), and the *Encyclopaedia Iranica (naqqāli)*.

**Kumiko Yamamoto**

[kumiko\\_yamamoto@aa.tufs.ac.jp](mailto:kumiko_yamamoto@aa.tufs.ac.jp)

ILCAA, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies  
Tokyo, Japan



## Organisers

**Jun.-Prof. Dr. Philip Bockholt**

Universität Münster

Institut für Arabistik und Islamwissenschaft

[philip.bockholt@uni-muenster.de](mailto:philip.bockholt@uni-muenster.de)

[uni.ms/translapt](http://uni.ms/translapt)



**Asst. Prof. Dr. Yui Kanda**

Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of  
Asia and Africa (ILCAA)

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

[kanda@aa.tufs.ac.jp](mailto:kanda@aa.tufs.ac.jp)



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