

Universität
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Empire in Translation

Perso-Arabic Knowledge and
the Making of Early Modern
Ottoman Civilisation

15–17 January 2025
University of Münster

Abstracts & Bios

Cover image: *Enfesü'l-Cevāhir*, translation of *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī* by Mūsā İznikī, Süleymaniye Library, Yozgat, MS no 15, fol. 35v. This manuscript, copied by an unknown scribe prior to 1843 and owned by at least five people, contains Qur'anic verses in Arabic with an interlinear word-for-word translation in the centre and the translation of *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*, accompanied by small headings, in the margins. © Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi

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*Organised by Philip Bockholt and
the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group TRANSLAPT*

The Ottoman polity initially emerged as a peripheral entity in the broader knowledge network of the Islamic world. Following the conquest of Constantinople, however, the rising Empire rapidly became a central hub. Translation activities played a pivotal role in this transformation that was further accelerated in the early sixteenth century by the conquest of Mamluk Syria and Egypt by Sultan Selīm I and the Safavid takeover of Iran with the ensuing influx of Iranian emigres. These events exposed Ottoman elites in Istanbul and across the Empire to Arabic and Persian knowledge on an unprecedented scale. The translation of texts across all genres of Islamic literature and scholarship played a crucial role in the development and acculturation of this emerging Ottoman civilisation. It legitimised the Ottomans' self-image as heralds of a new Islamic "golden age", embodying a symbolic *translatio imperii* of cultural and political leadership within the Islamic world. The early modern Ottoman approach to translation (*terceme*)

differed from a strict literal rendition, instead embracing diverse forms of adaptation, imitation, rewriting, and repurposing. This characteristic suggests that Ottoman translations were more than just a means of conveying knowledge; they were a tool for shaping a distinct literary and scholarly culture. In this framework, the case studies to be discussed focus on early modern translation processes between Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, with particular attention to the study of manuscript copies of these translations. The following research questions are addressed: What underlies Ottoman notions of translation, and what defines their nature and limits compared to other literary practices? Who were the actors involved in translation processes, and what roles did they play? What was the intended and actual readership for the translations, and what was the socio-cultural context of their circulation? In essence, what role did translation play in the transformation of the Empire through the transfer of knowledge?

From Aleppo to Erzurum and Beyond: Transfer and Transformation of Mystical Knowledge through Two Ottoman Turkish Translations from the Eighteenth Century

This paper examines the transfer of knowledge from the Arabic regions of the Ottoman Empire to Anatolia and the making of Ottoman Turkish literature in the early modern period. It focuses on two Ottoman Turkish translations of the Arabic-written treatise *al-Sayr wa-l-Sulūk ilā Malīk al-Mulūk* by the Aleppinian Sufi Qāsim al-Khānī (d. 1697). Besides ‘Abdurrahīm Raḥmī Erzurūmī’s (d. 1818) *Tercüme-i Risāle-i Seyr-i Süllük*, also known as *Refīk-i Ṭarīk*, Khānī’s *Sayr* was incorporated as an anonymous in the probably most popular early modern Ottoman encyclopedic work *Ma’rifetnāme* by İbrāhīm Haḫḫı Erzurūmī (d. 1780). It is striking that neither “translations” show any dependencies, although they were both produced in the region of Erzurum by the middle of the eighteenth century.

The study illuminates the differences and similarities in the transmission of knowledge from a comparative perspective. What features can be identified between a translation labelled as a *tercüme* and an anonymised translation that is not labelled as such? Are there any specific characteristics of a *tercüme* that differ from the “other” literary translation? It can be observed that both translators altered the original at some key points in order to present their own Sufi tradition to their readership. While ‘Abdurrahīm addressed his *Tercüme* to a Naqshbandī circle, İbrāhīm Haḫḫı Erzurūmī wrote his encyclopaedia for a

wide audience. In this manner, both contributed significantly to the intellectual transformation of Islamic mysticism in Ottoman Anatolia, where the teachings and practices of the Naqshbandiyya became widely popular from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. At the same time, both “translations” enriched the Anatolian Naqshbandiyya culture by transferring Khānī’s mystical knowledge, which originated not from a Naqshbandiyya but from a Khalwatiyya-Qādiriyya tradition.

Gülfem Alici holds a Magistra Artium in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Turkology, and Religious Studies from the University of Hamburg, where she received her Phd in Islamic Studies for her dissertation on Ottoman Arab Sufism since the seventeenth century in 2016. From 2017 to 2021, she was a postdoctoral research associate in the BMBF-funded interdisciplinary research group “Religion and Rationality” at the University of Tübingen. She was appointed as Deputy Professor for Turkology at the University of Hamburg and as the head of the *TürkeiEuropaZentrum* from 2021 to 2024. Her research interests include the intellectual history of the Islamic and Ottoman world, manuscript studies, transfer and transformation of knowledge, and Sufism in the past and present. As an affiliated senior researcher at the University of Hamburg she currently prepares her second monograph on the interpretations of the *Fātiḥa* in the Ottoman Empire and beyond. In her further research project on converts in the late Ottoman period, she examines Christian-Muslim, particularly German-Ottoman, relations and entanglements in the long nineteenth century.

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Liberal Adaptation or Literal Rendition? Two Distinct Approaches to Translation in the Case of a Seventeenth-Century Manual of Craftsmanship, the *Majmū‘at al-Şanāyi‘*

The *Majmū‘at al-Şanāyi‘* is a compendium of arts, crafts, and techniques composed in Persian by an unidentified author. The book is provisionally dated to the late sixteenth century and is connected to both Safavid Iran and Mughal India. However, the details of its composition and circulation are yet to be determined. In the late seventeenth century, this book was translated twice into Ottoman Turkish. Surviving in 9 extant manuscripts, the first translation was undertaken at the request of Abdāl Khān (r. ca. 1622–1664), the Kurdish emir of Bidlīs, whereas the second translation, surviving in 13 extant manuscripts, was possibly produced in the Gülşenī circles in which it is known to have circulated.

Both translations were widely diffused in Ottoman lands, from the shores of Lake Van to the Aegean Sea, Egypt, and the Balkans. Composed in different milieus, they also display different attitudes towards translation, one being a literal rendition and the other a liberal adaptation. Can these distinctive approaches be explained by contextual elements? Did the translations serve similar purposes? Based on insights gained from both textual analysis and paratextual examination, I address these and other related questions in a contribution to broader debates on the theory and practice of Ottoman translation.

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 has published book chapters and articles in various journals including *Eurasian Studies*, *Kurdish Studies Journal*, and *Die Welt des Islams*.

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 “Şaraf Khān Bidlīsī’s *Şarafnāma* (c. 1005/1597): Composition, Transmission, and Reception

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Domestication through Translation: Mūsā İznikī's Adaptation of *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed a remarkable process of the domestication of mainstream Islamic culture in the Anatolian context. This was mainly facilitated by the composition of original works in and translations of works into Turkish. The genre of *tafsīr* was not an exception but rather a prominent part of this process. Of the 25 pre-modern Ottoman *tafsīr* translations, *Enfesü'l-Cevāhir* (“The Most Precious Jewels”), Mūsā İznikī's early fifteenth-century translation of *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*, is of particular interest as it was the first and most widespread *tafsīr* translation into Ottoman Turkish. Composed in Bursa, western Anatolia, upon the commission of Timurtaş Paşazāde Umur Beg (d. 1461), a local Ottoman governor, *Enfesü'l-Cevāhir* is one of the earliest known *tafsīr* works in Turkish. Therefore, my paper examines the way religious knowledge was domesticated through İznikī's *Enfesü'l-Cevāhir*. In the first part of the paper, after addressing the issues of authorship and patronage, I deal with the socio-cultural factors that contributed to the selection of *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī* for translation. In the second and main part of the paper, I examine İznikī's strategies for making a scholarly work accessible to a general audience in the Anatolian context. In order to achieve this, I focus on the shifts in linguistic features (syntax and vocabulary), stylistic features (literary devices and tone), and religious references (theological, juridical, and mystical) between the source and the translated texts.

Ahmet Aytepe is a doctoral research associate in the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” at the University of Münster. He is focusing on pre-modern translations of *tafsīr* works into Ottoman Turkish, with the primary goal of examining the interaction of these translations with their socio-cultural and historical contexts, influencing and reflecting the dynamics of Ottoman intellectual life, and revealing the complex interplay of language, identity, and knowledge transfer within the Ottoman Empire. His study focuses primarily on the translations of the *tafsīr* of Abū al-Layth al-Samarqandī (d. 983), a jurist, exegete, and Sufi who had a significant impact on the Ottoman world. Aytepe completed his MA (2018) and PhD (2023) in Islamic studies at İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi, where he also served as a research assistant from 2016 to 2023. As part of the İSAM Late Classical Period Project, he has contributed to the critical edition of Şeyhülislām Ebussuud Efendi's 9-volume *tafsīr*, *Irshād al-‘Aql al-Salīm ilā Mazāyā al-Kitāb al-Karīm*.

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Unveiling Cross-Border Intellectual Dialogues: *Tercüme-i Risāle-i Tekfīr-i Kızılbaş* (“Translation of the Treatise on the Refutation of the Qizilbash”) and Ottoman-Safavid Intellectual Interactions

In a letter addressed to Sultan Selīm, Shah Ismā‘īl adeptly refuted accusations of heresy, attributing them to the fanciful inventions of certain scribes and secretaries. This insightful observation proved prophetic, as a cadre of Iranian scholar-bureaucrats, motivated by anti-Safavid, anti-Qizilbash, and anti-Shi‘i sentiments, wielded substantial influence over Ottoman perceptions of the Eastern “enemy”. Their deep engagement with the Qizilbash/Safavid movement, expertise in coveted fields, and strained relations with the Safavid court bestowed a pivotal role within the Ottoman milieu upon them. These intellectuals introduced a lexicon that profoundly shaped Ottoman discourse.

While early Ottoman writings on the Safavid/Qizilbash threat were mired in ambiguity, émigré authors from Iran elucidated distinctions and levelled specific allegations against the Qizilbash, equipping Ottoman authorities with practical tools. While luminaries like Ḥusayn b. ‘Abdullāh al-Shīrwānī (d. 1540) and Mīrzā Makhdūm (d. 1587) rose to prominence in the Ottoman Empire, many others remained shrouded in obscurity. This article embarks on an in-depth exploration of an overlooked manuscript, *Tercüme-i Risāle-i Tekfīr-i Kızılbaş* (“Translation of the Treatise on the Refutation of the Qizilbash”), presumed to have originated in the mid-sixteenth century. Replete with indictments against the Qizilbash, the manuscript fervently urges Sultan Süleymān to combat the Qizilbash heresy as a means of safeguarding Ottoman stability. Linguistic analysis strongly suggests that the translation was completed by an Azeri-speaking émigré, thus highlighting the intricate web of cross-border intellectual exchanges prevalent during this period. A thorough examination of this anonymous translation promises to shed further light on the multifaceted interplay of cross-border intellectual dynamics.

Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer is an assistant professor of history at New York University, specializing in the early modern Ottoman Empire and its intricate rivalry with the neighbouring Safavid Empire in Iran. Her research and publications delve into the formation of empires in the Middle East, emphasising their intersection with sectarian, geo-political, and fiscal concerns. She particularly focuses on interconfessional and inter-imperial contact zones in Anatolia, Kurdistan, and western Iran.

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What Constitutes a Faithful Translation? A Comparative Study of Two Translations of Mīrkhvānd’s *Rawzat al-Ṣafā* in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Istanbul

Mīrkhvānd’s universal history *Rawzat al-Ṣafā* (“The Garden of Purity”) was written in Persian for the statesman and poet Mīr ‘Alī Shīr Navā’ī in the closing decades of the fifteenth century in Timurid Herat. The work is comprised of six volumes that provide an account of the Islamic world from pre-Islamic times to the rule of Sulṭān-Ḥusayn Bāyqarā. Furthermore, it includes a conclusion (*khātima*) and a seventh volume that was prepared by Mīrkhvānd but completed after his death in 1498 by his grandson Khvāndamīr.

Given there are hundreds of extant manuscript copies of the *Rawzat al-Ṣafā* and the fact it was so well-known within the eastern Islamic world, as evidenced by regular citations among the sources of later historical works, it comes as no surprise that the work was translated into Ottoman Turkish in the decades following its composition. From the sixteenth century, we know of two translations, one that dates to the 1550s and one that dates to the 1580s. The first translation was undertaken by Muṣṭafā b. Ḥasanṣāh for grand vizier Rüstem Paşa, while the second was completed by Meḥmed Kemālī for Cerrāḥ Meḥmed Paşa. Notably, each translation had a distinctly different fate—while the former fell into obscurity, the latter achieved widespread dissemination and even appeared in an early lithographic print edition.

Using manuscripts housed in Istanbul,

Uppsala, and London, I analyse the prefaces and epilogues of both translations, along with their respective chapter structures and specific additions to the primary text. In particular, my paper investigates issues surrounding the faithfulness of an early modern translation, considering that the degree of accuracy vis-à-vis the original differs substantially between the two translators.

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 also lead 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 (sixteenth century) and provided an analysis of Khvāndamīr’s *Ḥabīb al-Siyar* (“Beloved of Careers”) and its readership. A series of research fellowships have taken 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).

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Translating Ibn Khallikān into Turkish: Balancing Literal Rendition and Textual Enrichment in Rodosizāde's Seventeenth- Century Translation of *Wafayāt al-A'yān*

Ibn Khallikān's *Wafayāt al-A'yān wa-Anbā' Abnā' al-Zamān* ("Deaths of Eminent Men and History of the Sons of the Epoch"), an Arabic biographical dictionary compiled in the late thirteenth century in Mamluk Cairo and Damascus, has been translated numerous times in different eras and across various regions of the Islamic world. Among these, the Turkish translation by Meḥmed b. Meḥmed Rodosizāde (d. 1701), completed in 1681 and commissioned by Ottoman grand vizier Merzifonlu Kara Muṣṭafā Paşa, is of particular importance as evidenced by a significant number of extant manuscript copies – indeed 42 manuscripts copies have been identified to date, which reflect its considerable textual availability and position within Ottoman scholarship.

This presentation will examine the sources used by Rodosizāde in his translation of Ibn Khallikān's work, with an emphasis on the sources cited in his preface and epilogue. This study critically investigates how these external sources were employed throughout the translation process and for what purpose. Specifically, the biographies of the four founders of schools of Islamic law (Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik Ibn Anas, al-Shāfi'i, and Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal) serve as case studies for scrutinising Rodosizāde's translation methodology and the extent of additional information he incorporated from sources beyond Ibn Khallikān. Through a detailed analysis of Rodosizāde's integration of supplementary content, this study uncovers potential alterations and adaptations in the translation. Furthermore, this investigation explores how such changes might have been intended to align with the intellectual and cultural expectations of the Ottoman audience.

Hicham Bouhadi has been a research associate in the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group TRANSLAPT and a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the

University of Münster since October 2023. Within TRANSLAPT, he is currently working on his PhD dissertation on biographic and hagiographic works translated from Arabic into Ottoman Turkish. Bouhadi received his master's degree in Islamic studies from the University of al-Qarawiyyin (Morocco) in November 2020. His master's thesis examined Ibn Rushd's critique of the atomistic theory of *kalām*. From May to October 2021, he was a research associate in a project on the reception of the legacy of John Philoponus in the Arabic tradition at Zayed University. He also studied Turkish and Ottoman Turkish at Marmara Üniversitesi in Istanbul.

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Exploring the Early Modern Ottoman Reception of Arabic and Persian Cosmographies

Wonders of creation (*‘Ajā’ib al-Makhlūqāt*) texts present all existence as a reflection of God’s omnipotence and encourage their readers to contemplate the diverse and wondrous aspects of creation. These works typically portray both the celestial and earthly realms as governed by an all-powerful God, while seeking to explain natural phenomena through a blend of imagery derived from diverse scientific, philosophical, and religious traditions. Among the most famous examples of these texts are two cosmographies sharing the same title: *‘Ajā’ib al-Makhlūqāt wa-Gharā’ib al-Mawjūdāt*, written by Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad at-Ṭūsī in the twelfth century and Zakariyyā’ b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Qazwīnī in the thirteenth century. Illustrious copies of these cosmographies, composed in both Arabic and Persian, were translated into Turkish from the fourteenth century onwards, inspiring various Ottoman figures to create similar textual and visual compositions. This paper outlines the Ottoman reception of these Arabic and Persian cosmographies, focusing on questions of authorship, the editorial roles of translators, and dynamics of readership. In so doing, it highlights how Ottoman translations emerged as synthetic texts shaped by various diverse agents and agendas of literary, spiritual, and political circles of the early modern Ottoman world.

Dr Feray Coşkun is an assistant professor at Özyeğin University where she teaches world history and the history of travel and cartography. She obtained her BSc from Middle East Techni-

cal University, Department of History in 2003, her MA in History from Boğaziçi University in 2008, and her PhD from Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Freie Universität Berlin in 2015. In the scope of the ERC Project GHOST (Geographies and Histories of Ottoman Supernatural Tradition) directed by Dr Marinos Sariyannis, she is examining the Ottoman *‘Ajā’ib al-Makhlūqāt* works, a topic on which she has published several articles.

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This paper starts by exploring the role of translation in the formation of the Mamluk-Turkic literary corpus (mid-thirteenth century to 1517), taking stock of some of the translated titles, identifying the various agents involved, looking into the translation process itself, and listing possible rationales left for translation. Next, it compares these preliminary findings to the better-researched Anatolian and Early Ottoman cases, mapping the convergences and divergences in the aforesaid terms. Applying this comparative perspective, this paper aims to bring the pivotal role of translation in the formation of these literary fields into sharper focus. To what extent can one recognise these translations not only as forms of inter-linguistic transfer but also as crucial sites of Turkic social identity-making? This paper argues that translation was a socially constructive process in its own right that allowed the Turkic ethnolect to earn its place as an elite sociolect in a competitive linguistic market and enabled its speakers to become part and parcel of a burgeoning Turkic ecumene.

Kristof D’hulster engages with the socio-political and cultural history of the pre-modern Islamic world, mapping processes of exchange, interaction, and connectivity between the Arabic, Turkic, and Persian regions. After his PhD in Turkic socio- and contact linguistics (KU Leuven, 2010), he worked as a research fellow with ERC projects in Ghent, Birmingham, and Jena, and with the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). Currently, he is based at the University of Bonn as a Humboldt Research Fellow, where he explores the interplay of Turkic language, literature, and ethnicity within the Mamluk Sultanate. He has published two monographs: *Browsing through the Sultan’s Bookshelves. Towards a Reconstruction of the Library of the Mamluk Sultan Qānişawh al-Ghawri* (Bonn University Press, 2021) and *Ottoman Poets, Their Ambitions, Frustrations, and Feuds. The introductions to ‘Āşık*

January 15, 16:30–18:00 | Panel I

January 17, 13:00–13:45

Concluding Remarks

The Role of Translation in the Development of Western Turkic Literacy: The Mamluk Case and the Ottoman Case Compared Empire

Çelebi’s The Poets’ Shrines and Latîfi’s Pointing out the Poets and Bringing to Light the Versifiers Translated and Compared (E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Series/Edinburgh University Press, to appear in 2024).

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Translating for the Empire: Circulation of Epistolary Knowledge across the Islamicate World in the Sixteenth Century

Under Mehmed II, the Ottoman Empire's state-making process underwent key bureaucratic, diplomatic, and institutional developments in which scribal practices played a crucial role. While much has been written about prominent actors like sultans and jurists, the contributions of scribes, particularly through the production of state-related documents, have received less attention. One major innovation during this period was the increased importance of *münşeat* collections – ornamented writings that included personal and official letters as well as state documents. These collections, which circulated widely across the Islamic world, played a vital role in shaping the legal, diplomatic, and bureaucratic functions of the Empire. This paper investigates the vernacularisation of *münşeat* collections from Persian to Ottoman Turkish in the sixteenth century focusing on the translation of Khwāja-yi Jahān's collection by the Ottoman scholar Nev'ī (d. 1599), which is now housed in the British Library, MS Or. 7701. I argue that these translations, alongside the circulation of the original works, were integral to Ottoman state-building as they facilitated knowledge transfer and influenced the legal, diplomatic, and bureaucratic spheres. This paper also explores the scholarly, literary, and pragmatic aspects of the vernacularisation process, contributing to a broader understanding of how knowledge was produced and circulated among the Islamic empires of the time, including the Ottomans, Timurids, Safavids, and Mughals.

By doing so, this paper sheds light on the trans-regional connections that shaped early modern Ottoman history.

Arif Erbil holds a BA in political science and history, and an MA in history from Boğaziçi University, as well as an MA in religious studies from Duke University. He is currently a PhD student in the History Department at Brown University. His previous research focused on the interaction between Mamluk intellectual heritage and the sixteenth-century Ottoman world, with a particular emphasis on juristic language in political thought through translations. His master's thesis explored the Ottoman-Arab encounter following the 1516–1517 Ottoman conquests, focusing on three Ottoman translations of Mamluk politico-juridical treatises. Erbil is interested in the intersection of political and legal thought, the circulation of knowledge in the early modern world, and the role of scribal practices in state and law-making processes. He also explores the intellectual backdrop of governmental authority and its limits, questioning distinctions between pre-modern and modern eras.

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Writing Universal History in Arabic: Muṣṭafā Cenābī's *Aylam al-Zākhir* and the Politics of Scholarly Language in the Ottoman Empire

Muṣṭafā Cenābī's *Aylam al-Zākhir* is an Arabic universal history that was written in the late sixteenth century. At a time when most histories were written in Ottoman Turkish, Cenābī's choice of Arabic constituted a curious matter. Why would Cenābī choose to write his magnum opus in Arabic when most historians were going in the opposite direction? As a matter of fact, Cenābī was later asked to translate his work into Turkish. Most scholars agree that after the age of Süleymān, an imperial consciousness settled in. The Ottoman historians of the sixteenth century were at pains to show the Ottomans as part of a continuum of earlier Islamic dynasties and to legitimise their rule with this continuity. However, they preferred to do that in Turkish. Muṣṭafā Cenābī, on the other hand, seemed to be more concerned with writing this history in Arabic so that natives of the Middle Eastern territories of the Empire could read about the Ottoman's past and be convinced of their status as the legatees of earlier Islamic empires.

This paper analyses Cenābī's work and investigates the reasons why some Ottoman historians chose to write in Arabic at a time when history writing was almost exclusively an Ottoman Turkish enterprise. Often, translations of these works were made, whether by either the authors themselves or someone else, in order to make the work more accessible. Yet, why did these authors not write in Ottoman Turkish in the first place? This paper investigates the politics of language in the Ottoman scholarship of the early modern period.

Vefa Erginbaş is a historian of the Ottoman Empire in the pre-modern period (1300–1800) with a broader interest in the history of the Islamic world. Erginbaş's scholarly contributions grew out of his interest in historical writing, and the intellectual and religious history of the Ottoman Empire. His earlier work dealt with the first Ottoman printer and polymath, I

İbrāhīm Müteferrika (1674–1747), one of the forerunners of the somewhat difficult-to-define Ottoman Enlightenment. Erginbaş's most current interests culminated in a recently published work dealing with the questions of sectarianism in the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period and the phenomenon of ahl-al-baytism, which explores how the broader reverence among the Sunnis extended not only to Prophet Muhammad's immediate family but also to the Twelve Imams of Shiism.

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انزل علي عبد الكتاب ليهدي به اولوالالباب ورجله من وضع البراهين واتي الاسباب
والصلاوة على محمد خير لخلق واكمر لخلق علي ذب الارباب وعليل له واصحابه خيرا لآل وفضل

الأصحاب

اشبه تفسير شريف
 أيام دولت شاه قيرون
 بادشاه عالی تخت
 ارغبرخان عالی
 سرفراز ولان
 هنوز شاه
 عالی شخاف
 شراب موقیچور
 کوجون بدالخال
 روحنی خیره اسکفته
 ایچون جان دنیا دت
 غت هما بون وده سنه و قیغ

و کتاب لطیف
 تخت و حکام سلطنت
 سلطان محمد خان ابن اسحاق
 باشلیق رتبه سنله
 غضنغراغا یازد بروب
 اولما دین حکم کلامه
 ساقه ایلان شستدین
 و بوسا فوخانه دن عالم
 اتمامه اهمامز اولنوب
 باعث وادی اولوق
 مغدود اولان جای یوقلمون
 فلندی غین عشرت و بصر بصر تی قرانه

کتاب الفی الخیر الخیر
 الخیر بن العفور عثمان
 بن جب اسکداری حامله الله
 تعالی و ضلیا علی نبی و علی اله
 اصحاب اجمعین الطیبین الطایرین
 سندا ثنین و ستیز اولن
 المرحوم غازی التار

و طافه سنه روشن یذن خواندن امولدرکه
 موی تنهک روحنه عایقوله شار و شای
 جیشلایله یاد بون لر شخیر تراش
 اواسط شهر جادی اولوق
 المنظره سلک شهر
 سنه ثلک و ستیز
 و الفع من هجره مره

الله بر در شریکی و قطیری بقدر الشرف
 جمله بنی بره و الله دن کل جمله کتاباره و نمان دم حق در در کرجار بیوم آخرتیه
 انسان دم حق در در کرجار الفقیر الحقیق الاعتراف بالذنب و التقصیر محمد ابن مصطفی
 فقیر الله دن جوبها بو حقیقه اوج اخدر ص بر فایتمه او قویان اخری
 و عاتقی خیر اوله

Enfesü'l-Cevâhir, translation of Tafsir al-Samarqandi by Mūsā İznîkî, Topkapı Palace Library, Hırka-i Saadet, 53, colophon page.

The circular colophon indicates that the manuscript was copied by Osmān b. Receb el-Üsküdüri in 1652, with a surrounding note stating that it was commissioned by Gażanfer Ağa, the butler of Mehmed IV (r. 1648–1687). It was not completed until after Gażanfer Ağa's death and the scribe later donated the work to the Topkapı Palace as a gift in honour of the deceased. © Topkapı Palace Library



Ḥadīkatü'l-'Ulyā (qism II), MS Uppsala, University Library,
O Cels. 7, fol. 1v.

Mirkhvānd's universal history *Rawzat al-Safā* ("The Garden of Purity"), written in Persian, was translated into Ottoman Turkish multiple times. This copy is the second volume of the complete set of its earliest known translation by Muṣṭafā b. Ḥaṣanṣāh for the Ottoman grand vizier Rüstem Paşa in the years 1550–1553. © Uppsala universitetsbibliotek

<p>هم ز بنوس لقمه با خود آد و بکیر بر تاج بر سر می نهد عالم را در وی و بر آتش بنست کس را ز حره چون و و آن دگر در رنج و سخت می و آن دگر کرده و مان از فاق و آن دگر خفته بر عهد در و آن دگر بر خاک خور کرده سس می اراد که ایجا از زند سنده کانه دولت شاهی طفل را در مهد کوبا او کند</p>	<p>از تن صابر مکرمان فوت سید میرا زه بر سر می نهد اوست مظاهر جد جودان هست سلطان مسلم سرور آن کی را کبج و نیت می دهد آن کی بر سخت با صد عزت آن کی بویوشیده سبحان آن کی بر سر می کنی او سخ طرفه العین صبا بر هم زند آنکه با مرغ حوا با عی دهند بی بد فرزند پیدا او کند</p>
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Pandnāma-yi 'Aṭṭār, Ankara Millî Kütüphanesi, Yz A 4276, fol. 2r.

These folios contain the title and opening section of the *Pandnāma-yi 'Aṭṭār* ("Aṭṭār's Book of Wise Counsel") praising God and recounting various events of prophetic history. Parts of the manuscript are supplemented with Turkish interlinear glosses (red).

According to the colophon, the copy was completed in 1701 by Seyyid Mehmed el-Ümî. © Ankara Millî Kütüphanesi

Integration or Assimilation: Translations of the *Şafvat al-Şafā* and Its Politics in the Ottoman Empire (1450s–1500s)

This paper examines the translations of *Şafvat al-Şafā* from Persian to Ottoman Turkish in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. *Şafvat al-Şafā* is a hagiography of Shaykh Şafī al-Dīn (d. 1334), who founded the Safavid Sufi order in Ardabil in northwestern Iran in the early fourteenth century. Considered one of the foundational texts of the Safavid order, this voluminous hagiography was written in 1358 by Ibn Bazzāz, a disciple of Şafī al-Dīn's son and successor, Shaykh Şadr al-Dīn (d. 1391). The late fifteenth century was marked by the rise of two major religio-political powers in the Middle East, the Ottomans and the Safavids, against the backdrop of the disintegration of Turcoman dispensations such as the Aqqoyunlus and Karamanids. Not only did Arabic works reach the Ottomans in this period but many Persian manuscripts were also transferred from Iran to Ottoman Anatolia. Within this context, certain sections of the *Şafvat al-Şafā* were translated and copied in the Ottoman Empire, particularly the fourth chapter of this hagiography, under such names as *Maḳālāt-ı Şeyḫ Şafī* and *Terceme-i Menākīb-ı Şeyḫ Şafī*. While, in the Persian copies, there is an apparent emphasis on the sayyid genealogy of the Safavids, Ottoman Turkish copies either do not make explicit statements or do not provide any genealogy at all. Through a comparative reading of the Persian original and earlier Ottoman Turkish translations, such as MS 1381 in Manisa Library dated 1463–1464 and MS Ayasofya 3099 dated 1491, I investigate

how these translations played a role in the formation of a discourse against the Safavids and the alignment of various Sufi orders with the Ottomans.

Ufuk Erol is a postdoctoral researcher at the Leibniz Institute for European History in Mainz. Erol recently received a PhD degree in History from Indiana University Bloomington for a dissertation analysing the development of Qizilbash-Alevism in eastern Anatolia in the context of early modern Ottoman and Safavid history (1500–1700s). Erol examines how Qizilbash-Alevi Sufism gave rise to a reconfiguration of communal identities and religiosities through socio-religious mobilisation and new forms of rituals and narratives. Through archival documents, such as fiscal surveys (*tahrir defterleri*), hagiographical sources, and oral accounts, Erol analyses communal identity formation among Qizilbash communities and the trans-local networks of these communities.

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From Verse to Prose between Turkish and Arabic: Tracing the Translational Journey of *Aḥbāru'l-Yemānī* from *al-Barq al-Yamānī*

This paper examines the seventeenth-century Ottoman statesman and scribe Ḥācı ‘Alī’s *Aḥbāru'l-Yemānī* contrasting it with its source: Quṭb al-Dīn al-Nahrawālī’s (d. 1582) original Arabic work *al-Barq al-Yamānī*. By comparing the original and its translation, the study explores the nuanced differences that reveal complexities within the Ottoman and Islamic scholarly traditions. Employing André Lefevere’s concept of “translations as rewriting”, it investigates how translations are shaped by the realms of patronage and ideology, affecting historical narratives and intellectual discourse. The study focuses, in particular, on Ḥācı ‘Alī’s transformative role as a translator. Quṭb al-Dīn al-Nahrawālī, born in Lahore in 1511–1512, migrated to Mecca and then Egypt, where he interacted with Ottoman elites. His text, *al-Barq al-Yamānī*, written at Sinān Paşa’s request, is a translation of Muṣṭafā Rumūzī Efendi’s Turkish verse into Arabic prose. Ḥācı ‘Alī’s translation into Turkish, commissioned by ʿArḥūncu Aḥmed Paşa, reflects the opulent Ottoman patronage culture. This study examines instances of omission, addition, and modification in the translation, assessing whether these divergences were influenced by the translator’s ideological stance or by his patron’s demands. By analysing excerpts from both texts, the study aims to uncover the dynamics of the translation process, revealing how Ḥācı ‘Alī’s work extends beyond simple linguistic transfer to transform content, tone, and the portrayal of historical events. This comparative analysis intends to enhance our understanding of translation as a dynamic and influential activity in shaping historical and intellectual discourse, providing deeper insights into the translator’s role and the broader impact of translation within the scholarly tradition.

Ayşe Kara is a lecturer in the Department of Eastern Languages and Literatures at Istanbul Medeniyet University. She received her PhD

from the Department of Near and Middle East Studies at SOAS University of London, after completing her BA and MA in Arabic Language and Literature and History at Istanbul University. Her MA thesis focused on Ottoman Yemen and, in particular, on the period of the Qāsimī Imams in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Her PhD thesis, “Familiarity and Alterity: Ottoman Istanbul through the Eyes of Three Moroccan Travellers from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries”, examines three Moroccan travelogues to Ottoman Istanbul over three centuries. She is currently writing a monograph based on her PhD research. She has also done fieldwork in Yemen and Morocco, and her research interests include mobilities, travel narratives, intellectual networks, and the production of knowledge in the early modern Mediterranean and Muslim World.

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Theological Diversity in the Ottoman Empire: Ottoman Translations of *The Sanūsian Creed*

The creedal literature of the Maghribī Ash‘arīte theologian Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī (d. 1490), known as *The Sanūsian Creed* (*al-‘Aqīda al-Sanūsīyya*), was widely read as a textbook of speculative theology (*kalām*) at prestigious educational institutions in pre-modern North Africa and Southeast Asia. *The Sanūsian Creed* elicited a large number of commentaries (*shurūḥ*, sing. *sharḥ*) and supercommentaries (*ḥawāshī*, sing. *ḥāshīya*), which highlight the significance of Sanūsī’s scholarship in early modern and modern Islamic intellectual history. In addition to those commentaries, as some recent studies have suggested, *The Sanūsian Creed* was translated into vernacular languages, including Spanish, Tashelhit, Fulfulde, Malay, and Javanese. In contrast to Sanūsī’s reception in North Africa and Southeast Asia, there has been little research into the Ottoman reception of *The Sanūsian Creed*. Particularly, Ottoman translations (and commentaries/supercommentaries) await serious investigations for a comprehensive understanding of early modern Ottoman intellectual history. This research examines the understudied Ottoman translations, with a particular focus on the following three manuscript texts: the *‘Aqā‘id-i Senūsī Tercemesi* (“A Translation of The Sanūsian Creed”); the *Terceme-i Risālet el-Senūsīyye* (“A Translation of The Sanūsian Creed”); and the *Risāle-i Kelīme-i Tewḥīd* (“A Treatise on the Word of Divine Unity”). By closely analysing these Ottoman

translations as a case study, this paper argues that the theological tradition of the early modern Ottoman world was not necessarily confined to a particular doctrinal school but harmonised multiple theological traditions.

Hiroaki Kawanishi is a PhD candidate in Islamic theology at the Centre for Islamic Theology at the University of Tübingen, Germany. His dissertation, entitled “The Virtues of Divergence: The Formation of Later Ottoman Islamic Thought” looks at the commentaries the seventeenth-century polymath ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (d. 1731) wrote on Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī’s (d. 1490) *kalām*. His PhD project is funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) (2020–2024). Kawanishi’s academic interests lie in *kalām* and Ottoman intellectual history. His latest article, “The Problem of Evil in the Early Modern Ottoman Period: ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī’s Synthetic Metaphysics of Faith and Disbelief” was published in the *Journal of Islamic Ethics* (2024).

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Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
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January 15, 16:30–18:00 | Panel I

***Terceme and Tettebbu'*: Two Terms from the Vocabulary of Sixteenth- Century Ottoman Literary Criticism**

John Dryden (d. 1700), a celebrated English playwright and one of the earliest theoreticians of translation studies, distinguished three types of literary translations in his preface to the English translation of Ovid's *Epistles* published in 1680: 1. word-for-word translations, which he called metaphrase; 2. paraphrase or "translation with latitude"; and 3. imitation. Translation (*terceme*) and imitation (*tettebbu'*), two creative methods of text production, also played a significant role in sixteenth-century Ottoman classical literature. Many texts were translated from Persian and Arabic to Ottoman Turkish and a large number of imitation texts or poetic replies were inspired by famous or well-known works of the classical Persian literary tradition and realised by Ottoman authors. Based on Laṭīfī's (d. 1582) biographical anthology, titled *Tezkiretü'ş-Şu'arā ve Tabşıratü'n-Nuzamā* ("Memoirs of Poets and Records of Versifiers"), one of the most important sources of Ottoman literary criticism and literary theory, this paper maps how the terms *terceme* and *tettebbu'* were used by Laṭīfī and examines whether a clear dividing line can be drawn between the meaning of the two concepts as in Dryden's system.

Benedek Péri is currently Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. He is interested in the history of the three classical Turkic/Turkish literary traditions, their relationship to each other, and their relationship to the Persian system. He has published extensively on classical Turkic/Turkish ghazal poetry with a special focus on the concept of imitation. His latest publications on the topic include "Mīr 'Alīšīr Navāyī and a popular Ottoman imitation network from the 16th century" (2024) and "Mīr 'Alī-šīr Navāyī's poetic replies to ghazals composed by Šayhum Nizām ad-Dīn Ahmad 'Suhaylī'" (2022).

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The Nation in Translation: The Qur'an, Language, Identity, and Community

This talk takes the questions raised at this conference and projects them into the mid-twentieth century, the era of decolonisation and state-building. Drawing on case studies that involve members of Muslim diasporas as well as Muslim-majority societies from around the globe, it examines the ways in which translation – more specifically, the translation of the Qur'an – was used by Muslims to help build, define, or contest newly emerging nation states. In a period of massive transformation, new boundaries were drawn, communities formed, and institutions built. Language and religion were important factors in these dynamics, and Qur'an translation, as a genre that took on specific forms and functions under the reign of European colonial empires, now became a medium through which Muslim stakeholders all over the world became involved in a process of identity formation. Governments from Turkey to Indonesia dabbled in attempts to produce official translations of the Qur'an. Members of Muslim minorities from South Africa to China did the same in order to raise a claim to the national language and connect it to their religion. Others, be it in Java or West Africa, used translation to prevent their marginalised language from becoming invisible. Sometimes, the intersection between translation and identity formation was coincidental, born out of pragmatic choices yet ripe with political meaning, as was the case in Mauritius. The successes and, importantly, failures of these translation projects shed light on the potential and limitations of the endeavour to reconstruct meaning in a particular language and thereby shape the community of its speakers.

Johanna Pink is a professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Freiburg, Germany. She has taught at the Freie Universität Berlin and the University of Tübingen. Her main fields of interest are the transregional history of *tafsir* and Qur'an translations in the modern period. She is the general editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an Online* and the Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded research project *GloQur – The Global Qur'an* which studies the transnational dimensions of Muslim Qur'an translation since the beginning of the twentieth century. Her most recent monograph is entitled *Muslim Qur'anic Interpretation Today: Media, Genealogies and Interpretive Communities* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2019). She recently published the edited volume *Qur'an Translation in Indonesia: Scriptural Politics in a Multilingual State* (London: Routledge, 2023). Having worked extensively and written articles on many aspects of modern Qur'an translation, ranging from the nineteenth-century constructed language Volapük and the Cold War dynamics between the FRG and the GDR to the translation of the Qur'an into Mauritian Kreol, she is currently finalizing a book about the global history of modern Muslim Qur'an translation.

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From the Deccan to Istanbul: *Burhān-i Qāṭiʿ* (1651) and Its (Ottoman-) Turkish Translation *Tibyān-ı Nāfiʿ der Terceme-i Burhān-ı Qāṭiʿ* (1799)

The seventeenth-century Persian dictionary *Burhān-i Qāṭiʿ* (“Conclusive Proof”), penned by Burhān Tabrizī in the Deccan, attained significant acclaim for its exceptional organisation and widespread use, and was praised by those that followed as the “much copied, best arranged, and most generally useful and easily consulted” (Roebuck 1818). Its (Ottoman-)Turkish translation *Tibyān-ı Nāfiʿ der Terceme-i Burhān-ı Qāṭiʿ* (“Gateway to a Useful Explanation of the Translation of the *Burhān-ı Qāṭiʿ*”), by Ahmed ʿĀṣim ʿAntābī (d. 1819), popularly known as Mütercim ʿĀṣim, was first printed in 1779 in Istanbul and reprinted several times between 1835 and 1885. The repeated re-publication of the work in critical editions (2000–2022) attests to the enduring fame of the lexicographical work during both the Ottoman and Republican eras. In my presentation, I scrutinise the nuanced aspects of the translation work rather than giving more attention to a comprehensive examination of the original work *Burhān-i Qāṭiʿ*. Within the analysis of the dictionary, my primary focus is on delineating the intended recipients of the translated work. Additionally, I delve into the intricate ways in which the translator-lexicographer both complicated and enriched the original content, unravelling the transformative nature of these modifications and the principal directions of the additions that underscored the author’s erudition and local knowledge. In doing so, I address pivotal questions, such as: What were the primary objectives motivating the author’s decision to translate, rework, and edit the dictionary? How did the *terceme* adapt to resonate with the Ottoman audience, and how was its approach elucidated by the author and subsequently discussed in scholarly circles? Furthermore, I examine how the translated work exerted its influence to shape the literary and lexicographic Ottoman landscape in the late eighteenth century.

Ani Sargsyan is currently a research associate at the University of Hamburg working on the project “Persian in the Ottoman Empire as Reflected in Selected *farhangs* (Dictionaries) of the 15th–18th Century: A Cultural Trans-Ottoman Configuration”. Her research explores Persian-Turkish (trans-)cultural interrelations, the history of Persian learning, and lexicography in the Ottoman realm. Ani Sargsyan received her PhD degree in 2014 from the Institute of Literature at the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. Her doctoral dissertation focused on the often-overlooked Divan copies (Yerevan, St. Petersburg) of the renowned Ottoman sixteenth-century poet, Bākī. From 2012 to 2018, she held a position as a senior researcher at the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts Matenadaran (Yerevan). Simultaneously, she served as an assistant professor at Yerevan State University from 2014 to 2018. Her academic contributions include the “Textbook of Ottoman Turkish Language” published by Yerevan State University in 2016. Additionally, she served as co-editor for the joint volume titled “Knowledge on the Move in a Trans-Ottoman Perspective”.

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“On the Finest Yellow Paper”: On the Print Editions of the *Pandnāma-yi ‘Aṭṭār* and Its Translations (1800–1900)

The *Pandnāma-yi ‘Aṭṭār* (“‘Aṭṭār’s Book of Wise Counsel”), a pseudo-‘Aṭṭārian work of Persian advice literature, circulated within a vast geographical space between the Balkans and the Indian Subcontinent, serving as a textbook for moral and linguistic instruction throughout the early modern period. Also considered a more accessible introduction to the larger oeuvre of the Persian mystic Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār (d. ca. 1221), the *Pandnāma* was translated and commented upon numerous times between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially within the Ottoman Empire. These works were then employed, sometimes accompanied by the original, in Ottoman educational institutions, ranging from small Medrese contexts to the princely school (*Enderūn*) at the Sublime Porte. After the introduction of the printing press, the *Pandnāma* and a selection of its Ottoman renditions, both translations and commentaries, also made the leap into the print medium, and in a substantial fashion: around 50 lithographic editions were produced between 1800 and 1900 in the Ottoman Empire and Khedival Egypt, some of which included up to 1,500 copies. This marks a significant yet unstudied moment in the *Pandnāma*’s transmission history. The paper focuses on these lithographic editions, shedding light on how print reshaped the transmission and reception of the *Pandnāma*, featuring a comprehensive overview and an in-depth analysis of a subset of these editions. It precisely traces and contextualises the selection of works chosen for print and assesses their content, visual make-up, and

changes made to accommodate the new medium. Ultimately, the aim of this investigation is to qualify the effects of the introduction of printing in Ottoman Istanbul and Cairo in relation to both translations in general and the *Pandnāma* in particular.

Tobias Sick is currently working as a doctoral research associate at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Münster. Within the scope of the DFG Priority Programme 1981: “Transottomanica: Eastern European-Ottoman-Persian Mobility Dynamics”, he began working on his dissertation project preliminarily titled “Internal-Islamic Transfer of Knowledge in the Ottoman Empire: On Translations of Works of Islamic Mysticism within Transregional Sufi Networks in the Anatolian and Arab Provinces”. He received his master’s degree in the field of languages, history, and cultures of the Middle East from the University of Tübingen, during which he studied abroad at Tarbiat Modares University in Tehran and gathered work experience at the German Orient-Institut in Beirut. Having started his dissertation project at Leipzig University in 2020, he was previously a member of the Graduate School, Global and Area Studies, there.

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Jāmi's Forty Hadith Collection and Its Two Ottoman Translations: Between the Arabic Original and Jāmi's Persian Rendering

Motivational hadiths from the Prophet Muḥammad have inspired the compilation of Forty Hadith collections, leading numerous scholars to contribute to this tradition. One of the most famous works is the collection by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmi (d. 1492) titled *Chihil Ḥadīṣ* (“Forty Hadith”), in which he selected forty hadiths in Arabic and translated them into Persian. Since its composition at the end of the fifteenth century, this work has been translated multiple times. Notably, nine Turkish translations – eight into Ottoman Turkish and one into Chaghatay Turkish – were produced over two and a half centuries. All of these translations were penned as *naẓīres* (imitations), where the translators imitated the style of Jāmi. The motivation behind composing the *naẓīres* was to create a new poetic work that mirrored and engaged with the original author's style, often to demonstrate the poet's own skills.

Fuzūlī (d. 1556) and Rihletī (d. before 1603), two literary scholars known for translating *Chihil Ḥadīṣ* into Ottoman Turkish in the sixteenth century, employed different strategies. Although neither translation remains entirely faithful to the original hadiths in Arabic nor to Jāmi's Persian version, Fuzūlī's translation aligns more closely with the hadiths, whereas Rihletī's translation is more influenced by Jāmi's rendering. In this paper, I will analyse the translations by Fuzūlī and Rihletī, focusing on word choice, style, and conveyance of meaning, to explore how their works reflect both the hadiths and Jāmi's rendering, while also identifying the nature of the adaptations. I will also investigate how these translations might have been shaped to meet the expectations of the Ottoman readership and examine their role in the transfer of religious knowledge in pre-modern Anatolia.

Muhammed Sofu has been a research associate in the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group TRANSLAPT and a doctoral candidate

at the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Münster since October 2023. Within TRANSLAPT, he is currently working on his PhD dissertation on hadith works translated from Persian into Ottoman Turkish. After completing his bachelor's degree in Islamic studies at İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi in 2021, he received his master's degree in hadith studies at the same university in 2023. In his master's thesis, he analysed Abū al-Shaykh's (d. 979) work entitled *Dhikr al-Aqrān wa-Riwāyatuhum ‘an Ba‘ḍihim Ba‘ḍā* and examined the notion of mutual narration among contemporaries (*riwāyat al-aqrān*). Sofu's interest in the hadith sciences focuses on the so-called “hidden defects” in hadiths (*‘ilal al-ḥadīth*), their principles (*uṣūl*), and the development of the science of hadith from a historical perspective.

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Narrating the *Sīra* of the Prophet in Context: Persian and Ottoman Translations of *Siyar-i Kāzarūnī*

Saʿīd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Masʿūd al-Kāzarūnī (d. 1357), one of the most eminent scholars of the Fars region in the fourteenth century, was skilled in religious sciences including *fiqh*, *ḥadīth*, *tafsīr*, and *sīra* and travelled to the Mamluk lands in both pilgrimage and pursuit of knowledge. He compiled a book on the *sīra* of the Prophet titled *al-Muntaqā min Siyar* (or *fi mawlid*) *al-Nabī al-Muṣṭafā* and, along with his lectures and preachings, garnered widespread acclaim by reciting *mawlid* texts in Shiraz. His *sīra* book was translated into Persian twice: initially by ʿAbd al-Salām b. ʿAlī al-Abarqūhī, when the author was still alive, and later, by the author’s son ʿAfīf al-Dīn al-Kāzarūnī (d. 1400) just two years after his father’s death. Three centuries later the book was translated into Ottoman Turkish by two different scholars, first by Vaḥyīzāde Meḥmed b. Aḥmed el-İzniḳī (d. 1609–1610) and then by Karaçelebizāde ʿAbdülazīz Efendi (d. 1658). This study aims to investigate the compilation and translation processes of al-Kāzarūnī’s work within its historical context. It also addresses the following questions: Why was the work translated into Persian at a very early stage? Why did both Ottoman translators choose to work from the Persian version of the work rather than the Arabic original? What implications did the decision to use the Persian version over the original language version have for the content of the Ottoman text? Ultimately, the goal of this paper is to draw some conclusions about the transmission of *sīra* knowledge into the Ottoman language and its vernacularisation within that context.

Güllü Yıldız is an associate professor of Islamic history in the Faculty of Theology at Marmara University. She has also studied at Marmara University and received her PhD from there. Her PhD thesis was published with the title *Siyerde Şerh-Haşiye Geleneği: Moğultay b. Kılıç Örneği* (“Commentary Tradition in Historiography of *Sīra*: Mughultāy b. Qilij as an example”, Istanbul: ISAM 2020). She is mainly interested in Islamic historiography, the historiography of *sīra*, commentary tradition, Ottoman *sīra* writings, Ottoman press and publication history, book history, travel literature, Persian hajj travelogues, and Ottoman Shiism, and has published several books and articles on these subjects. Currently, she is working as a postdoctoral researcher in the ONİT project at the Institute for Habsburg and Balkan Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (<https://onit.oeaw.ac.at>) and is about to start a new book project on translations of *sīra* texts from Arabic and Persian into Ottoman Turkish during the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

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Found in Translation: A Case Study of *Terceme* from Arabic into Turkish in Ottoman Damascus

In 1585, during İbrāhīm Paşa’s military campaign against the Druze in Lebanon, İsmā’īl al-Nāblusī authored *Fāḍīhat al-Mulḥidīn wa-Nāṣīhat al-Muwahḥidīn* (“The Disgrace of the Heretics and the Advice of the Monotheists”) in Arabic, rejecting Druze doctrines. Luṭfullāh, the qadi of Nizīb, later translated it into Turkish under the direction of ‘Alī Paşa, the governor of Damascus. In his translation, Luṭfullāh added new passages, including a justification for the translation into Turkish, and omitted references to Üveys Paşa, the previous governor, who was praised in the Arabic version. This paper is structured around four interrelated components:

1. Actors: Examines the roles of governors, translators, and patrons in the translation process, highlighting their motivations and collaborative endeavours;
2. Translation practices: Analyses Luṭfullāh’s methods, comparing the Arabic original with the Turkish version, focusing on how Luṭfullāh handled terminology and expressions, and whether he borrowed, directly translated (calqued), or paraphrased. It also explores how he adapted the sentence structures to align with the conventions of Ottoman Turkish and whether he preserved or modified the original style by incorporating elements of Ottoman prose;
3. Readership and socio-cultural context: Examines the target readership, intellectual circles, and the cultural impact of the translated text within the Ottoman context;

4. Translation and Empire: Discusses the broader religious, legal, and literary implications of the translation and how it may have contributed to knowledge dissemination, intercultural exchange, and intellectual development within the Empire.

Fatih Yücel, a historian specialising in the early modern Ottoman era, is completing his PhD dissertation in Turcology titled “*Ḳāḍī, Defter-dār and Beglerbegi Üveys Pasha (d. 1591): The Life and Career of an Ottoman Bureaucrat during the Reign of Murād III (r. 1574–1595)*” at the University of Vienna. He holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from Galatasaray University and a master’s degree in history from Istanbul Bilgi University. His interdisciplinary approach combines history, linguistics, social studies, and comparative analysis, enriching his understanding and providing nuanced interpretations of historical events and figures.

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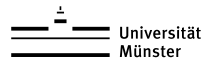
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