

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

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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?

Organisers

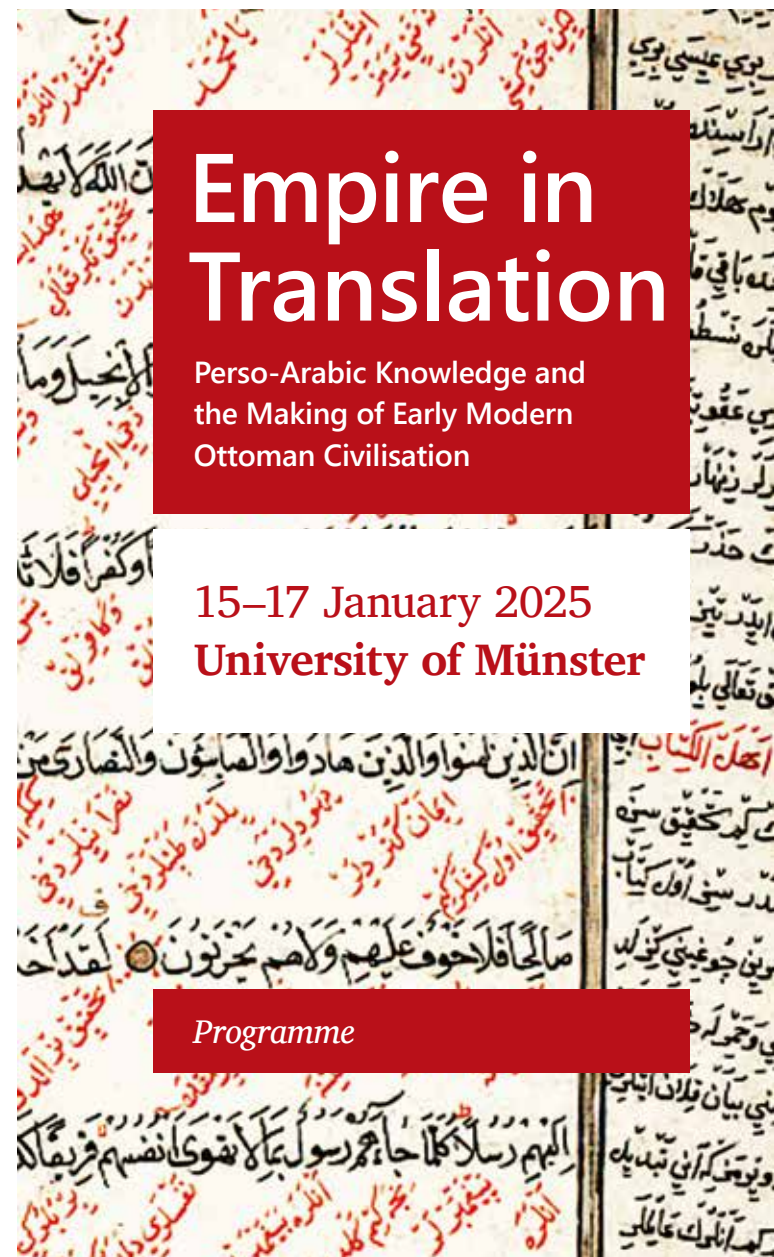
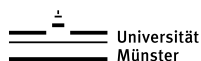
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Venue

Universität Münster
Heereman'scher Hof
Königstraße 47
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Sponsors



Cover: © Cover image: Erfestsu'l-Cevahir, translation of Tafsir al-Samarqandi by Müsâ İznîki © Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi
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Wednesday, 15 January

14.30

Welcoming Address & Introduction

Syrinx von Hees (Director of the Institute of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Münster)

Philip Bockholt (Münster)

15.00

Keynote lecture

Johanna Pink (Freiburg): The Nation in Translation: The Qur'an, Language, Identity, and Community

16:00 Coffee break

16:30 / Chair: **Sacha Alsancakli**

Panel I: Conceptual and Terminological Reflections

Kristof D'hulster (Bonn): The Role of Translation in the Development of Western Turkic Literacy: The Mamluk Case and the Ottoman Case Compared

Benedek Péri (Budapest): *Terceme* and *Tetebbu'*: Two Terms from the Vocabulary of Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Literary Criticism

Philip Bockholt (Münster): What Constitutes a Faithful Translation? A Comparative Study of Two Translations of Mirkhvānd's *Rawzat al-Ṣafā* in Mid-Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Istanbul

18:00 Reception

Thursday, 16 January

09:00 / Chair: **Syrinx von Hees**

Panel II: Cosmography and Craftsmanship

Feray Coşkun (Istanbul): Exploring the Early Modern Ottoman Reception of Arabic and Persian Cosmographies

Sacha Alsancakli (Münster): Liberal Adaptation or Literal Rendition? Two Distinct Approaches to Translation in the Case of a Seventeenth-Century Manual of Craftsmanship, the *Majmū'at al-Ṣanāyi'*

10:00 Coffee break

10:30 / Chair: **Asmaa Essakouti**

Panel III: Sufism and Ethics

Tobias Sick (Münster): "On the Finest Yellow Paper": On the Print Editions of the *Pandnāma-yi 'Aṭṭār* and Its Translations (1800–1900)

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

11:30 Coffee break

12:00 / Chair: **Hülya Çelik**

Panel IV: Epistolography and Lexicography

Arif Erbil (Providence, RI): Translating for the Empire: Circulation of Epistolary Knowledge across the Islamicate World in the Sixteenth Century

Ani Sargsyan (Hamburg): From the Deccan to Istanbul: *Burhān-i Qāṭi'* (1651) and Its (Ottoman-)Turkish Translation *Tibyān-ı Nāfi'* der *Terceme-i Burhān-ı Qāṭi'* (1799)

13:00 Lunch

14:00 / Chair: **Johanna Pink**

Panel V: Tafsīr and Kalām

Ahmet Aytepe (Münster): Domestication through Translation: Mūsā İznīkī's Adaptation of *Tafsīr al-Samarqandī*

Hiroaki Kawanishi (Tübingen): Theological Diversity in the Ottoman Empire: Ottoman Translations of *The Sanūsian Creed*

15:00 Coffee break

15:30 / Chair: **Marco Schöller**

Panel VI: Ḥadīth and Sīra

Muhammed Sofu (Münster): Jāmī's Forty Hadith Collection and Its Two Ottoman Translations: Between the Arabic Original and Jāmī's Persian Rendering

Güllü Yıldız (Istanbul): Narrating the *Sīra* of the Prophet in Context: Persian and Ottoman Translations of *Siyar-i Kāzarūnī*

19:00 Dinner

For more information on the speakers, please see the abstracts & bios brochure.

Friday, 17 January

09:00 / Chair: **Jelena Radovanović**

Panel VII: Biography and Hagiography

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

Ufuk Erol (Mainz): Integration or Assimilation: Translations of the *Ṣafvat al-Ṣafā* and Its Politics in the Ottoman Empire (1450s–1500s)

10:00 Coffee break

10:30 / Chair: **Kristof D'hulster**

Panel VIII: Heresiography

Ayşe Baltacıoğlu-Brammer (New York City): Unveiling Cross-Border Intellectual Dialogues: *Tercüme-i Risāle-i Tekfūr-i Kızılbaş* ("Translation of the Treatise on the Refutation of the Qizilbash") and Ottoman-Safavid Intellectual Interactions

Fatih Yücel (Vienna): Found in Translation: A Case Study of *Terceme* from Arabic into Turkish in Ottoman Damascus

11:30 Coffee break

12:00 / Chair: **Sacha Alsancakli**

Panel IX: History

Vefa Erginbaş (Providence, RI): Writing Universal History in Arabic: Muṣṭafā Cenābī's *Aylam al-Zākhir* and the Politics of Scholarly Language in the Ottoman Empire

Ayşe Kara (Istanbul): From Verse to Prose between Turkish and Arabic: Tracing the Translational Journey of *Aḥbārū'l-Yemānī* from *al-Barq al-Yamānī*

13:00

Kristof D'hulster (Bonn): Concluding remarks

13:45 Lunch

15:00 City tour

19:00 Dinner