

The past several decades have seen an unprecedented revival in the study of manuscripts in Oriental languages like Arabic, Persian, or Turkish. With the steady progress of cataloging and digitising collections in Europe and the Middle East, manuscript copies of works which had been previously either unknown or inaccessible to scholars have come to light. As a result, the processes of textual transmission in extant copies and variants found therein now challenge our understanding of the production, circulation and reception of texts, and furthermore, the transfer of knowledge as a whole. This has significantly changed our view of authorship and copying practices in the "manuscript age," which in the Middle East only ended during the nineteenth century with the broader availability of the printing press.

Taking up recent approaches in the fields of Iranian studies, history, and manuscript philology, the conference endeavours to study the ways in which authors and scribes produced, copied and interpreted texts according to certain cultural contexts, political necessities and/or professional choices in the Persianate world from the eleventh to nineteenth centuries. These processes of adaptation took many different forms, most of which remain unexplored, and comprised minor corrections and amendments as well as full-fledged reworkings of a text and modifications to its core ideological components. Such alterations impacted the text as a whole, which leads us to question the legitimacy of a strict separation between "authors" and "copyists." Subject to changing approaches, reappropriations and shifts in focus, texts were manipulated and transformed by new actors in various ways such as the translation of a work, the production of appendices for specific chapters, or the cutting and copying of particular sections presented as stand-alone publications.

Within this framework of dynamic and collective authorship, ideological variants stand out as cultural and historical phenomena particularly worthy of inquiry. Under this label, the conference intends to discuss any deliberate changes in content made by individuals intervening at different stages in the processes of textual production and transmission. First among these actors was the author, who occasionally amended his own text in order to present it to a new patron. The question of patronage was also the main reason behind changes made by copyists, who may have been wary of the reception of their work in a changing environment. Finally, readers could also intervene and strike out words or add notes in the margins. At the center of this set of intertwined processes lies the paramount relationship between text and context and the constant reinvention of content in order to serve the needs and sensibilities of the intended or actual readership. The study of this relationship allows invaluable insights into the cultural and political history of the Persianate world during the manuscript age.

To sum up, the conference aims at discussing the following research questions: What are ideological variants and how did these originate? What was the agency of the author or copyist in creating them and what scope did they have? What do variants tell us about the fundamental nature of texts and textual transmission in premodern times? The speakers will address these questions in a wide array of case studies, including historiographical and literary texts produced in various parts of the Persianate world.

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Authorship and Textual Transmission in the Manuscript Age

Contextualizing Ideological Variants
in Persian Texts from the 11th to 19th
Centuries

Leipzig, 01–02 October 2021

An international conference at
Leipzig University (online)

organized by

Philip Bockholt (Leipzig University) and
Sacha Alsancakli (Sorbonne Nouvelle/
CeRMI)

Friday, 01 October 2021

- 09:30 Philip Bockholt (Leipzig) & Sacha Alsancakli (Paris)**
Welcome and introduction
- Session 1: Mongol Period**
- 09:45 Bruno De Nicola (London/Vienna)**
Local Rulers and Textual Transmission in Mongol Anatolia: the Case of the Chobanids of Kastamonu (r. 1211–1308)
- 10:25 Nadja Danilenko (Hamburg)**
Same Same But Different. Translating al-Iṣṭakhrī's *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik (Book of Routes and Realms)* in the 13th c.
- 11:05 Coffee break**
- Session 2: Safavid Period**
- 11:20 Philip Bockholt (Leipzig)**
One Text in Many Versions: On the Persian World History *Ḥabīb al-siyar (Beloved of Careers)* and its Textual Transmission in the Manuscript Age
- 12:00 Florian Schwarz (Vienna)**
Narrative and Authorship in 16th c. Persian Historiography: Qazvīnī's *Lubb al-tavārikh (Essence of Histories)* and Sa'dallāh's *Zubdat al-tavārikh (Cream of Histories)*

- 12:40 Lunch break**
- 14:00 Benedek Péri (Budapest)**
The Ottomanization of a Safavid Text: Muḥammed Fuḏūlī's *Beng-ü bāde (The Debate of Weed and Wine)*
- 14:40 Sacha Alsancakli (Paris)**
Historiography and Dynastic Legitimacy in the Kurdish Emirate of Ardalān: A Study of Pro-Safavid Modifications in a Manuscript of the *Sharafnāma (Book of Honor)* by Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī
- 15:20 Concluding remarks of the first day**

Saturday, 02 October 2021

- Session 3: Ottomans – Safavids – Central Asia**
- 09:00 Maria Szuppe (Paris)**
Authors vs. Readers: a Study of the Criteria of Composition and Textual Adaptation in Bio-Historical Collections of Modern Central Asia (16th–18th c.)
- 09:40 Francis Richard (Paris)**
Variants in Prefaces and the Different Phases of a Book's Diffusion: Some Examples from the Persian Manuscript Tradition

- 10:20 Coffee break**
- 10:35 Theodore S. Beers (Berlin)**
A Safavid Text Adapted for Ottoman Sensibilities: The Istanbul Manuscript of the *Tuḥfa-yi Sāmī (Sām's Gift)*
- 11:15 Ferenc P. Csirkés (Istanbul)**
Porous Literary Identities between Safavid Iran and the Ottoman Empire: ṣādiqī Beg's *Majma' al-khavāṣṣ (Concourse of Nobilities)*
- 11:55 Coffee break**
- 12:10 Christopher Markiewicz (Birmingham)**
The Forgotten Chronicles: Persian Histories at the Ottoman Court in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century
- 12:50 Concluding remarks of the second day**

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