Sufi Manuscripts Cultures, 1200-1800. First Workshop, St Andrews, 8-9 October 2021.

**What is a Sufi Manuscript?**

**Boris Liebrenz (Leipzig)**

Manuscript notes open up unparalleled access to the world of books, allowing us to answer in sometimes astounding detail the basic question of who read what. And yet, provided with a vast corpus of such notes and searching for the histories of Sufi manuscripts, what is it actually that we should be looking for? This talk intends to highlight some unexpected textual connections to approach the entangled questions of what constitutes Sufi literature, Sufi reading, and Sufi manuscripts.

**The Mevlevis Through Their Manuscripts, 1268–ca 1400**

**Cailah Jackson (OXCIS, Oxford)**

The Mevlevi Sufis were one of the most important and prominent socio-religious groups to emerge in late medieval Anatolia, following the devastating Mongol conquests of the 1240s. Scholars researching the early Mevlevis have long benefited from the existence of several contemporary primary sources, such as the accounts of Faridun Sipahsalar and Shams al-Din Aflaki and the personal letters of the Mevlevi patron saint and author of the Masnavi, Jalal alDin Rumi (d. 1273). However, there is still much to learn about their earliest days, particularly where manuscript culture is concerned. In connection to this topic, this presentation will give a broad overview of an important group of primary sources, namely, dated or dateable ‘Mevlevi’ manuscripts. This corpus includes copies of works by Rumi and his son Sultan Valad, and various additional texts copied by those who self-identified as Mevlevi disciples by, for example, the use of the nisba ‘al-Mawlawi’. The presentation will suggest some ways in which this material can tell us more about early Mevlevi intellectual interests, the identity of disciples who were scribes and manuscript owners, and the geographical spread of the Sufi group in Anatolia and beyond.

**Sufi Light in Turkish and Persian Archives-Case Study: Illuminated Mevlevi Manuscripts from Turkey and Persia**

**Prof. Dr. Zeynep Aygen (Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul, Turkey)**

The first meaning of illumination is lighting, radiance or gleam while the art of illuminating a manuscript is rather in the lines of illustration, decoration or ornamentation in English language. However it is an interesting linguistic coincidence as in many aspects of Sufism light is a celestial symbol the believers on the world. The origin of this symbolism originates from the Light Verse of the Holy Quran and is reflected in prayer rugs, manuscripts, miniatures and illuminated texts all over the Islamic world. However the Sufi culture took this symbolism one step further and used light as the main theme of several illuminated and non- illuminated manuscripts. a who were especially specialized in creating illuminated manuscripts.

Mevlevi culture being the bond between Turkish and Persian Sufism , a line from Balkh Afghanistan to Konya in Anatolia led to the production of Mevlevi manuscripts using Persian and Turkish together. There are also texts produced in double versions, one copy being produced in Persia and the other in Anatolia. In spite of this most research in Western sphere on Mevlevi and other Sufi manuscripts is based on a comparison between Indian and Persian documents. This research is based on a comparison of illuminated Mevlevi Manuscripts from Turkey and Persia including a discussion of the reflections of Sufi illumination symbolism on miniature and script.

**Non-conventional Sufi manuscripts culture: Ottoman futuwwa manuscripts and their transmission from Anatolia to the Balkans and beyond**

**Ines Aščerić-Todd (Edinburgh)**

Although always maintaining a strong link with Sufism, futuwwa represents the more popular strand of its religiosity, and futuwwa manuscripts belong to the more popular variety of its textual culture. Whether longer, more ‘classical’ futuwwa treatises, short craft manuals, excerpts from guild statutes, or şeceres outlining spiritual and ancestral chains of authority, by and large these manuscripts are simple, modest pieces, hardly ever containing any embellishments, let alone luxury ones. Is this because of the more popular nature of these manuscripts, indicating less sophisticated circles in which they were produced and likewise a less refined readership? Or was it because many of them were envisaged as practical documents intended for everyday use?

This paper examines a number of futuwwa manuscripts of different types from Turkey and Bosnia, the latter constituting an Ottoman European province with a strong and enduring futuwwa tradition. In doing so, it attempts to answer some of the following questions: which futuwwa works were copied and widely spread across the Ottoman realm? Who were the copyists and where were these copies produced? What do they tell us about the futuwwa manuscripts network and its membership? Although some manuscripts were produced in Sufi lodges, their intended readership would have been wider and – as their contents intertwined with practical aspects of the crafts – much more diverse than the narrow circle of the lodge. Does this overlap between Sufis and craftsmen indicate an important wider social and cultural role of Sufis and Sufi lodges in those areas? What other social classes were involved in this network and what does this tell us about the latter’s influence in society? Finally, how and why did some of these manuscripts end up in European collections beyond the Balkans?

**Attributions of Authorship, Remembering and Forgetting in Sufi Manuscripts: A Case Study**

**Derin Terzioğlu (Boğaziçi University)**

In the early modern Ottoman world, it was not uncommon for texts to be inadvertently or deliberately misattributed to better known authors, but the patterns of remembering and forgetting in different genres and contexts remain to be closely examined. It is as a modest contribution to this endeavor that this paper examines the afterlife of a compilation of letters written by İbrahim el-Kırimi (d. 1593), a Halveti sheikh of Crimean origin, to Murad III (r. 1574-1595). Reportedly, the letters in question lay unbound in a chest in the Imperial Treasury until they were copied, rearranged and bound to be deposited in the newly constructed library of Mahmud I (r. 1730-1754) upon the latter’s orders. In the resulting codex, however, the letters were attributed to the Celveti master Aziz Mahmud Hüdayi (d. 1628) under the title Tezakir-i Mahmud, and became famous as such. It was, interestingly, especially in the nineteenth century that the letters attracted the attention of admirers of Hüdayi, who made new copies of the compilation and often enough gifted these copies to the central Hüdayi lodge in Üsküdar. Helpfully for us, some of the copyists and readers also recorded in the marginalia what they found worthy of interest in this collection of letters written in and for a rather different context.

**Pragmatics of Sufi biographical manuscripts in Central Asia, 16th to 19th centuries**

**Florian Schwarz (Vienna)**

Why do Sufis write and rewrite biographical (hagiographical) texts? Who copies and uses them? How are they presented? How may changing contexts and practices of reception have affected the “meaning” of such texts? Starting from these basic questions, the paper will discuss textual, paratextual and codicological evidence for the production and reception of Sufi biographical manuscripts and set this evidence in a wider context of book culture in early modern Central Asia

**The Role of Persian in Early Bektashi and Abdāl Poetry: The Case of Kaygusuz Abdal**

**Zeynep Oktay Uslu**

Kaygusuz Abdal (fl. second half of the fourteenth- first half of the fifteenth century) was the most prolific representative of the dervish group named the *Abdāl*s of *Rūm* as well as the founder of the literary tradition given the name “Alevi-Bektashi Literature.” This article aims to analyze Kaygusuz Abdal’s literary output in Persian, all of which is in manuscript form (unedited), according to its doctrinal content, while also aiming to understand the historical context of his Persian output. Kaygusuz Abdal’s use of Persian points to the role of Persian as *lingua franca* in late 14th century Anatolia and displays how this role relates to the dervish milieu. Like his other works, the Persian sections of Kaygusuz Abdal’s *Dil-güşā* and the Persian poems in his *Dīvān* illustrate a cultural context of restricted literacy, where oral tradition continues to play a major role in the literary sphere. A closer look at the doctrinal content of this Persian output draws attention to Kaygusuz Abdal’s focus on the pre-eternal time of oneness which he equates with the Pre-eternal Pact, as well as his unique criticism of ascetics.

Keywords: Kaygusuz Abdal, *Abdāl*s of *Rūm*, Persian, Oral Tradition, Bektashism, Alevi

**Manuscript Cultures in Alevi Villages in Anatolia**

**Janina Karolewski**

The paper will give an overview of manuscript cultures in Alevi villages in Anatolia, based on the current state of research. The focus of this overview will be on questions about who owned manuscripts, who was literate, how books were used or how the written word was handled. In addition, there will be questions about which texts were written and copied or which texts were also disseminated in other contexts. The speaker will also briefly present her own methodological approach to researching Alevi manuscript cultures, which she used to work on Eastern Anatolian villages (ca. 19th to 20th century).

**Notes on a Central Asian Kubrawi manuscript of the 15th c.**

**Bruno De Nicola (Goldsmiths, University of London / Austrian Academy of Sciences)**

The origin of the Kubrawi Sufi order is rooted in the teachings of the Khwarezmian Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 1221), whose followers propagated his ideas from Central Asia into the western parts of the Islamic world during the Mongol empire. However, the history of this Sufi order is not unidirectional and during the 14th century, there was a “re-foundation” of the order in Central Asia brought from the west by ‘Alī Hamadānī (d. 1385), who also promoted the expansion of the order into Kashmir and northern India. In this period and during the 15th century, the order became especially prominent in the region of Badakhshan, with important communities settling in different towns in the area. It is assumed that the order lived through some agitated years marked by the assassination of the leader Isḥāq al-Khuttalānī (d. 1423) by emissaries of the Timurid ruler Shāhrukh (d. 1448) and the subsequent schism in the order between the Nūrbakhshiyya and the Dhahabiyya in the 1460s. Nonetheless, the history of the Badakhshani branch of the Kubrawiya in the 15th century is poorly known and sources are limited for the period. In this context, the survival of a manuscript (Petermann I 426 – SBB, Berlin) copied in the late 1430s in the area of Badakhshan offers a rare opportunity to shed some light onto the history of the period. The present paper will analyse aspects of the production of this codex and provide an overview of the works copied in the manuscripts before sharing some notes on the potential implications that the study of this manuscript may have for the understanding of this little known period in the history of Central Asia.

**Court and khanqah in a Mamluk manual of political advice: al-Kashghari’s *Taj al-Sa‘ada***

**Andrew Peacock (St Andrews)**

The widespread interest in Sufism among political elites of the Mamluk period has often been noted, but relatively little work has considered the role of courtly patronage in Sufi textual and manuscript production. In this paper I discuss a work hitherto neglected by scholarship, ‘Alim b. Muhammad al-Kashghari’s *Taj al-Sa‘ada wa ‘Unwan al-Siyada*. Dedicated to the Mamluk sultan Sha’ban and surviving in an apparently unique presentation copy, the manuscript was both composed and copied in the Khanqah al-Rukniyya in Cairo, of which al-Kashghari was shaykh. The paper discusses this nexus between political patronage and khanqah as place of manuscript production as illustrated by this text, and its broader implications for our understanding of the development of Sufi manuscript culture.

**Dreams of a Saffarid King: Exploring Sufi connections**

**Marc Czarnuszewicz (St Andrews)**

The Edward Browne collection at the University of Cambridge contains a previously unstudied manuscript of the *Tuhfat al-Mulūk fī Taʿbīr al-Ruʾyā*, older than any other known copies of this text and in excellent condition. Previous studies of this Arabic work have attributed its authorship to Abū Aḥmad Khalāf b. Ahmād al-Sijistānī (d. 1009 CE), the last ruler of the ‘Second Line’ of the Saffarids of Sistan, a dynasty with close associations with popular *ayyār* movements. In light of the Browne manuscript, this paper will reassess this attribution and explore the text’s relationship with dream interpretation practices among popular religious and Sufi movements in Eastern Iran in the 11th and 12th centuries

**The world beyond the paper in the Late Herat School of painting**

**Tawfiq Da'adli**

In this paper, I would like to explore the world beyond the page. This world is not actually represented, as a page can obviously hold only what is represented on it. Nonetheless, painters had the ability to hint at such a world. In some paintings from the late Herat school of painting, this world can be reached only after stepping into the painting and progressing inside the frame till a point that serves as a gate to another dimension. It is somehow similar to the effects moviemakers use when they want to transfer a protagonist to another dimension. In those paintings, the move is to a destination beyond imagination's reach. However, the world beyond the page can also be in front of it, the world in which the observer dwells. In those paintings, central figures direct there gaze toward us, the observers. Those figures seem to be "breaking" the surface and stepping out into another dimension. The painters of those paintings managed to create an illusion of a three-dimensional world where that which is painted on the paper's surface can "continue" beyond it, either into our world or into a mysterious other world.

**The Mysticism of Chinese Paper: A Pair of ʿAṭṭār Manuscripts produced for Shāhrukh**

**Ilse Sturkenboom (Munich)**

In 1438, two massive volumes of, allegedly, eleven poems by the mystical author Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār were completed and dedicated to the treasury of the Timurid ruler Shāhrukh. Being the largest collection of ʿAṭṭār’s works known in manuscripts, these volumes present themselves as a true scholarly project aiming to bring all of ʿAṭṭār’s poems together and they thus bear witness of the interest that must have existed in this author at Shāhrukh’s court in Herat. The most remarkable aspect of this pair of manuscripts is that all of its 926 folios consist of so-called Chinese paper. These were long and brightly coloured sheets of ca. 120 x 55 cm that were imprinted with gold designs of landscapes, vines and flowering trees with birds perching in them. In Ming China, these sheets were used as frontispieces to handscrolls. Once exported to the Timurid Empire, the same kind of sheets were cut up and written upon in manuscript production. The ʿAṭṭār volumes are among the first to employ this special kind of luxurious Chinese paper that was doubtlessly selected to reflect the manuscripts’ courtly nature. Yet, also the distinctly mystical character of the volumes appears to have been a reason for the Chinese papers’ use. This talk will attempt to demonstrate how the content of the mystical poems reflects in the colours and designs of the papers selected for them. Furthermore, it will be suggested that the Chinese or ‘Oriental’ aesthetics of the paper were linked with the spiritual world.

**An Introduction to the Unpublished Works of the Sufi Chishtī Master ʿUbayd Allāh Multānī (d. 1305/1888)**

**Muhammad Tousseef**

Abstract: ʿUbayd Allāh Multānī was an eminent Sufi master of the Chishtiyya order Sufi in South Asia. He is supposed to have written nearly a hundred books, both in prose and poetry, in several different languages such as Arabic, Persian, Hindi and local language Saraiki. A most influential figure in 19th century Punjab but almost unknown to the historians of Islam in the Subcontinent, ʿUbayd Allāh wrote treatises covering a wide range of topics, including Sufism, interpretation and explanation of Quran, gnosis (maʿrifa), jurisprudence (fiqh), mystical love, hagiography, moral advising and admonition, etc. Many of them have been lost, unfortunately, whereas less than a dozen has been published in lithograph form. In this paper, I shall introduce to the unpublished works of Multānī found by Muḥammad ʿĀdil, a relative of him and a cousin of the recent sajjāda-nashīn (leader of the Sufi community) Pīr ʿAbd al-ʿAlī. To this end, I will make a classification of thirty-seven manuscripts according to seven categories. Except for one autograph manuscript (the Sharḥ-i mufaṣṣal on which I will return), the others have been copied by anonymous scribes.

**The Kubrawiyya and the Legitimation of Royal Power on Early Islamic Java: The Ruler as Sufi Saint**

**Alexander Wain (St Andrews)**

This paper explores how, over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, literati associated with the early Islamic kingdoms of north and central Java crafted a series of court chronicles in which dynastic legitimacy was established by association with the Kubrawiyya tariqa (Sufi order). Interweaving historical fact with hagiographical tradition, these literati fashioned imagined pedagogic and/or familial associations between their royal patrons and a semimythical figure variously named Najm al-Din al-Kubra, Tajmuddin al-Kubra, Jumadil Kubra, Jumadil Kabir, or Zainal Kubra. Depicted as an early (if not the earliest) Muslim practitioner on the island, this figure took many forms; the court chronicle of Banten situates him within a silsila that, designed to establish the politico-religious authority of the sultanate’s ounder, clearly identifies Najm al-Din al-Kubra as the eponymous founder of the Kubrawiyya. While the complexity of local hagiographical traditions renders generalisation difficult, plausibly this identification extends across Java’s early Muslim chronicles, suggesting a widespread tradition in which association with the Kubrawiyya and its founder justified royal power. This paper unpicks the rationale underlying that function. During Java’s Hindu-Buddhist period, we argue, royal authority was predicated on a ruler’s ability to embody and project divine power; the seventeenth-century Suluk Garwa Kencana a statement o Mataram’s political philosophy when read within the above context, suggests early Javanese Muslim intellectuals utilized Kubrawiyya depictions of the ruler as a Sufi saint, whose existence expressed a divine macrocosmic-microcosmic parallelism, to perpetuate traditional power structures into the Islamic period. This ultimately facilitated the conversion o the island’s political elite.