

Dynamics of Transmission: Families, Authority and Knowledge in the Early Modern Middle East (15th-17th centuries)



7-9 March 2018

Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, Maison de la Recherche
4, rue des Irlandais, 75005 Paris. Salle Athéna.

List of participants

- Sacha ALSANCAKLI *PhD candidate, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3 / Mondes iranien et indien*
- Sandra AUBE *CNRS, Mondes iranien et indien, Paris*
- Christopher D. BAHL *PhD candidate, School of Oriental and African Studies, London*
- Nourane BEN AZZOUNA *Université de Strasbourg*
- Michele BERNARDINI *Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"*
- Malika DEKKICHE *Universiteit Antwerpen*
- Albrecht FUESS *Philipps-Universität Marburg*
- Emmanuel GIRAUDET *CNRS, Mondes iranien et indien, Paris*
- Bernard HEYBERGER *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales / Centre d'études en sciences sociales du religieux, Paris*
- Asma HILALI *Université de Lille*
- Astrid MEIER *Orient Institut Beirut*
- Nicolas MICHEL *Aix-Marseille Université / Institut Français d'archéologie orientale, Le Caire*
- Colin P. MITCHELL *Dalhousie University, Halifax*
- Anthony T. QUICKEL *PhD candidate, Philipps-Universität Marburg / Aix-Marseille Université*
- Francis RICHARD *Bibliothèque Universitaire des Langues et Civilisations, Paris / Mondes iranien et indien*
- Adam SABRA *University of California, Santa Barbara*
- Jacqueline SUBLET *CNRS, Institut des Recherches sur l'Histoire des Textes, Paris*
- Maria SZUPPE *CNRS, Mondes iranien et indien, Paris*
- Alberto TIBURCIO *Philipps-Universität Marburg*
- Nicolas VATIN *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales/Centre d'Études Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centreasiatiques, Paris*
- Christoph WERNER *Philipps-Universität Marburg*

Program



Wednesday – March 7, 2018

09:30 Opening session

09:45 Keynote Lecture

Jacqueline Sublet (CNRS, IRHT) and **Asma Hilali** (Université de Lille)

La transmission des textes en islam dans le Moyen Orient pré-ottoman : Concepts et dérives

10:45 Coffee break

1- Learned Communities and Book Transmission

Discussant: **Nicolas Vatin** (EHESS)

11:15 **Christopher D. Bahl** (SOAS)

Sharing Practices of Manuscript Transmission: A Transoceanic Community Reading Arabic Grammar Works

11:45 **Anthony T. Quickel** (Philipps-Universität Marburg/Aix-Marseille Université)

Book Ownership, Intellectual History, and the Transmission of Knowledge in Early Ottoman Egypt: A State of the Art

12:15 Discussion

12:30 lunch

2- Family Histories

Discussant: **Asma Hilali** (Université de Lille)

14:00 **Adam Sabra** (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Hagiography and Family History in Ottoman Cairo

14:30 **Nicolas Michel** (Aix-Marseille Université/IFAO, Cairo)

Families of Cairene Civil Servants, from Mamluk to Ottoman Times (15th-16th c.)

15:00 **Astrid Meier** (Orient Institut Beirut)

Family Connectivities: Mobility, Stability and Continuity in Ottoman Syria and Beyond

15:30 Discussion

15:45 Coffee/tea

Thursday – March 8, 2018

3- Dynasties and Networks of Power

Discussant: **Bernard Heyberger** (EHESS)

09:30 **Albrecht Fuess** (Philipps-Universität Marburg)

Şihr and Muşāhara in Mamluk Royal Relations. Transmitting Power and Enlarging Networks through In-law Ties in Pre-Modern Egypt

10:00 **Sacha Alsancakli** (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle / Mondes iranien et indien)

Tribal Warriors, Sassanid Kings and Abbasid Caliphs: Questions of Origins and Dynastic Culture in 16th and 17th -Century Kurdistan

10:30 Discussion

10:45 Coffee break

11:15 **Michele Bernardini** (Università degli Studi di Napoli (“L’Orientale”))
L’indulgence paternelle de Tamerlan

11:45 **Malika Dekkiche** (Universiteit Antwerpen)

“In the Name of my Father”: Timurid and Turkmen Parallel Diplomacy with the Mamluks in the 15th Century

12:15 Discussion

12:30 lunch

4- Strategies of Transmission of Knowledge and Skills

Discussant: **Nourane Ben Azzouna** (Université de Strasbourg)

14:00 **Sandra Aube** (CNRS, Mondes iranien et indien)

Tracing a Family of Woodworkers: The Lineage of Ostād Aḥmad Najjār b. Hoseyn in Māzanderān (Iran, second half of 15th century)

14:30 **Francis Richard** (BULAC / Mondes iranien et indien)

Formation des calligraphes à la fin du XIV^e et au début du XV^e siècle : transmission d’un savoir dans le monde iranien

15:00 **Daniel Zakrzewski** (Philipps-Universität Marburg)

Intersecting Networks of Transmission. Sufis and Calligraphers in 15th - and 16th -Century Tabriz

15:30 Discussion

15:45 Coffee/tea

Friday – March 9, 2018

5- Building Family and Social Networks in Religious Contexts

Discussant: **Nicolas Michel** (Aix-Marseille Université/IFAO)

09:30 **Alberto Tiburcio** (Philipps-Universität Marburg)

A Network Theory for Polemics and Conversion

10:00 **Christoph Werner** (Philipps-Universität Marburg)

Sayyid Families of Mashhad and the Guardianship of the Shrine of Imam Reżā

10:30 Discussion

10:45 Coffee break

11:15 **Maria Szuppe** (CNRS, Mondes iranien et indien)

Sufi Connections and Timurid Legitimacy in Safavid Herat: Issues of the “Family Memoirs” of the Kh^wājas of Barnābād

11:45 **Colin P. Mitchell** (Dalhousie University, Halifax)

Understanding Sufi Siblings in 17th -c. Mughal South Asia

12:15 Discussion

12:30 **Closing remarks**

13:00 Reception lunch

Abstracts



Keynote lecture:

Jacqueline Sublet and Asma Hilali

La transmission des textes en islam dans le Moyen Orient pré-ottoman : Concepts et dérives

Les quinze premiers siècles de l'islam voient la transmission des textes évoluer du cercle savant à la *madrasa*. Parallèlement à cet essor, la pensée théorique autour de la transmission aboutit à l'établissement de l'autorité des recueils dits authentiques (*ṣaḥīḥ*) et à la rédaction de traités encyclopédiques. L'évolution est perceptible dans le contenu et la composition des documents. Elle se manifeste également à travers la progression de la pensée théorique qui, à partir du X^e siècle, établit les lois de la transmission. La doctrine de l'authenticité du hadith est alors au centre de la pensée théorique et sera instituée en garantie de l'orthodoxie.

Les intervenantes dialoguent autour d'aspects complémentaires de l'histoire de la transmission. J. Sublet traite des dérives de la transmission avec les méthodes utilisées pour respecter le texte transmis ou rendre valables les chaînes et les séances de transmission. A. Hilali met en lumière les concepts-clés de la pensée théorique qui structurent la transmission. Sources et concepts sont ainsi présentés à l'épreuve de l'histoire.

Jacqueline Sublet is Senior Research Fellow (Emeritus) at the CNRS, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (IRHT, Paris). She is the author of *Le voile du nom. Essai sur le nom propre arabe* (Paris: PUF, 1991). Among her recent publications are: *La famille en islam*, in co-authorship with Hocine Benkheira, Avner Giladi, Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen (Paris: Les Indes Savantes, 2013), and *L'animal en islam*, in co-authorship with Hocine Benkheira and Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2005).

Asma Hilali (PhD, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris) is Associate Professor of Islamology at the Université de Lille. Her research experience includes collaborations with several research centers in Europe and the Middle East. She authored several publications on transmission of religious texts in the Islamic world, including: *The Sanaa palimpsest. The transmission of the Qur'an in the first centuries A.H.* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

Sacha Alsancakli

Tribal Warriors, Sassanid Kings and Abbasid Caliphs: Questions of Origins and Dynastic Culture in 16th and 17th-Century Kurdistan

The question of origins has always been a focal point in the legitimizing discourses of the ruling dynasties in the Islamic world, and Kurdish dynasties of the 16th and 17th centuries do not depart from this rule. Our main source for the study of the discourses of these dynasties on their own origins is the *Sharafnāma* of Sharaf Khān Bidlīsī (c. 1597-98), where discussion of the different ruling houses almost invariably starts with a mention of their (supposed) origins, often including the author's own appreciation of the authenticity of their claims.

Unsurprisingly, Arabic origins, and more specifically Abbasid descent, was the most common type of postulated lineage. This was especially true for the Sunni Kurdish houses allied to the Ottoman Empire, while Iranian Kurdish dynasties usually favoured some form of alternative, sometimes pre-Islamic, lineage. However, these boundaries were not impermeable, and Sharaf Khān himself suggests, for example, a Sassanid origin for his own Diyādīnid dynasty of Bidlīs. Furthermore, these claims were also subject to change. Thus, by the time of Sharaf Khān's grandson Abdal Khān b. Ziyā' al-Din Khān, half a century later, the Diyādīnids of Bidlīs were seen as descendants of 'Abbās, a fact recorded by Evliyā Çelebi in his *Seyāhatnāme*.

The origin stories given by Sharaf Khān are often detailed, creating connections and hinting at relationships between the Kurdish dynasties themselves, through the intervention of common ancestors, generally brothers, allowing for an explanation to the parallel development of "cousin" dynasties. Such connections could also be established with non-Kurdish houses, as demonstrated by the link postulated between the Kurdish Diyādīnids and the rulers of Gīlān and Shīrwān.

In this paper, I will try to integrate all these dimensions into a detailed picture of the origin stories of the various Kurdish dynasties, as given by Sharaf Khān in the *Sharafnāma*, supplemented by a number of other sources. With this material in mind, I will then discuss the contrasting dynastic cultures of the different Kurdish ruling houses, and the influence on these cultures of the socio-political environments in which these houses evolved.

Sandra Aube

Tracing a Family of Woodworkers: The Lineage of Ostād Aḥmad Najjār b. Ḥoseyn in Māzanderān (Iran, second half of 15th c.)

An important amount of 15th-century tomb-towers have been preserved in the Māzanderān region (Iran). Their specific typology exemplifies a regional network of craftsmen, transmitting architectural models and traditions all around the region.

Interestingly, these funerary monuments were often associated with wooden doors or/and cenotaphs: a material that was rarely preserved in other Iranian regions. Their inscriptions give around fifty signatures of craftsmen, mostly woodworkers (Pers. *najjār*, sing.). Such a corpus is unusual, since signatures of craftsmen are very limited in Medieval Iranian architecture and the woodworkers' corporation is particularly little known. Families of woodworkers are even identified through these signatures.

This paper attempts to reconstruct a lineage of woodworkers over several generations: the work of Ostād Aḥmad Najjār b. Hoseyn and his sons, originating from Sāri and active in the region between ca. 1460 and 1500. Their working evidences lead to explore the transfer of decorative patterns and the transmission of skills within a family network. They witness also craftsmen networks and teamwork organizations. Thus, 15th-century woodworks contribute to illustrate the strength of artistic regional traditions among Māzanderāni workshops.

Christopher D. Bahl

Sharing Practices of Manuscript Transmission: A Transoceanic Community Reading Arabic Grammar Works

Apart from Persianate flows, Arabic Islamicate texts circulated prominently across the Western Indian Ocean during the early modern period. Narrative sources show that this was enabled by more and more people who travelled for learned pursuits between the Red Sea region, Iran and the subcontinent. Most significantly, manuscript collections from Istanbul, to Cairo, Hyderabad and Bijapur provide a view on historical practices in these transoceanic connections of circulating Arabic Islamicate texts. An analysis of their paratextual profiles can show how these texts travelled among reading communities.

The following paper will study forms of textual appropriation and perusal among Arabic textual communities by focusing on one particular case study. At the beginning of the 15th century the Egyptian scholar Muḥammad Abū Bakr al-Damāmīnī (d. 828/1424) travelled from Egypt via the Hijaz to Yemen and across Gujarat to the Deccan to seek patronage from various sultans in exchange for the composition of commentaries on Arabic grammar works. Transcriptions of his grammar books continued to circulate in the subcontinent and across the Red Sea region well into the 17th century. I will argue that during the early modern period scholarly communities on the eastern and western shores of the Sea developed similar paratextual strategies to engage with Arabic grammar books and transmit them. Notes on later manuscript transcriptions show how readers re-appropriated his texts to make them suit their academic aspirations. This enhanced the texts' social and cultural mobility and enabled their growing circulation and enactment among learned communities beyond the courtly realm in the subcontinent and across the wider Western Indian Ocean.

Michele Bernardini

L'indulgence paternelle de Tamerlan

La communication est consacrée aux relations entre Tamerlan et les membres de sa famille. La famille joue un rôle très important dans l'activité du souverain d'Asie centrale qui adopta une politique de « deux poids et deux mesures » envers les composants du cercle plus restreint de sa cour, c'est-à-dire sa famille. Ceci comporta une stratégie « familiale » qui eut un poids non secondaire dans ses décisions politiques. En partant de l'exemple bien connu de la révolte de Mirānshāh (m. 1408), la communication examinera différents exemples de « pardon » impérial en soulignant les difficultés internes dans la famille timouride et leurs répercussions historiques dans les choix politiques de Tamerlan.

Malika Dekkiche

"In the Name of my Father": Timurid and Turkmen Parallel Diplomacy with the Mamluks in the 15th Century

When it comes to the study of rulers' self-perception and ambitions, "diplomacy" or diplomatic relationships represents quite a fertile field of inquiry. Like today, the right to exchange messengers was not "free." If rulers were in practice free to dispatch diplomatic missions to foreign rulers, those were not always received, or if they were, they were so differently depending on the status (low or high) of the ruler that initiated the contact. While most participants were official rulers, it seems that in the 15th century, members of their family (sons and grand-sons) also took part in the diplomatic games. This is particularly the case of the Timurid and Turkmen (Qarā Qoyunlu) dynasties in their contacts with the Mamluk Sultanate. Throughout this paper, I intend to present an original set of correspondences exchanged between the Mamluks and the Timurids Muḥammad Jūkī and 'Alā' al-Dalwah (son and grand-son of Shāh Rukh), as well as with the Qara Qoyunlu Pīr Būdāq (son of Jahānshāh). While those contacts were taking place in the name of their father, a close reading of the documents and their context show stronger ambitions from those sons that aimed at international recognition and support.

Albrecht Fuess

Ṣihr and Muṣāhara in Mamluk Royal Relations. Transmitting Power and Enlarging Networks Through In-law Ties in Pre-Modern Egypt

According to Islamic Law marriage creates a legal contract which legally bounds the bride and the groom together. It even creates a larger network in the wider families of the two partners involved. The in-law relationship (Arab. *Ṣihr* and *Muṣāhara*)

provides therefore a vital element to explain the functioning of Early Modern Middle Eastern Societies. However, while we know the theoretical framework of *ṣihr* we lack information about how it was actually molded into Pre-modern family structures. This paper will seek to present a larger picture of in-law relationships in Mamluk Egypt in order to synthesize the findings with case studies on royal marriage and divorce relations at the Mamluk court.

Astrid Meier

Family Connectivities: Mobility, Stability and Continuity in Ottoman Syria and Beyond

My contribution aims at discussing notions of family and transmission through an analysis of the trajectories of individuals, households and kinship groups in a translocal perspective. It is based on several case studies of different backgrounds with a focus on Ottoman Damascus.

I am particularly interested in exploring the various patterns of transmission of genealogical and other family-related types of knowledge for cases not characterized by an often assumed stability of place which translates in research strategies often in the concentration on one locality. Instead, I focus on mobility and various forms of movements in the transmission processes that form social groups such as families in a long-term perspective (“continuity”).

Nicolas Michel

Families of Cairene Civil Servants, from Mamluk to Ottoman Times (15th-16th C.)

This paper focuses on the impact of the Ottoman conquest (1517) on civil servants, a professional group that had never gained first rank in Mamluk Egypt until then. While prominent families of civil servants in Circassian Mamluk Egypt have been thoroughly studied through chronicles and biographical dictionaries, their fate after the Ottoman conquest remains mostly obscure. However, scattered information from Islamic Court registers can shed some light on the matter. Members of a few families of Mamluk civil servants are attested till late 16th c., with or without positions in an administration that had been deeply reshaped. Their social identity and weight as they are expressed in the registers suggest that they identified themselves with other elite groups from the *Ancien régime* more than with their Ottoman colleagues. Their fate illustrates how a major political event could affect the contents and ways of transmission within a highly skilled and cultured professional group.

Colin P. Mitchell

Understanding Sufi Siblings in 17th-c. Mughal South Asia

This paper is interested in examining the issue of family dynamics in the early modern period through the specific lens of a famous sibling relationship: the Mughal ruler Shāhjahān’s children, prince Dārā Shikoh (d. 1659) and princess Jahān-ārā Begum (d. 1681). Hitherto, scholars have been attracted to studying these individuals strictly on their own basis as royal family members who were invested heavily into Sufism. Dārā Shikoh, who penned several treatises and hagiographies for Qadiri and Chishtiyya saints, is most famous for his *Mingling of the Two Oceans (Majma‘ al-bahrain)*, which contemplated the intertextual, spiritual dynamics between Hinduism and Sufi Islam. His older sister, Jahān-ārā Begum, was a formal Qadiri disciple, who became devoted to particularly to Mullā Shāh Badakhshi in Kashmir; she wrote two major works, the *Mu’nis al-arvāh*, a hagiography of the Chishtiyya shaikhs, and the *Risālah-i Sahabiyya*, which describes both her introduction and dedication to the miracle-wielding Mullā Shāh. Of course, Dārā Shikoh himself would become embroiled in the Succession War from 1658-1660 and eventually be imprisoned and executed by his brother Aurgangzib.

What is arguably less discussed and of particular interest for this workshop is their relationship as brother and sister against the backdrop of Sufism in early modern South Asia. Jahān-ārā Begum and Dārā Shikoh, until 1635, had been formally and very publically attached to the Sufi Qadiri shaikh, Mir Miyān, of Lahore. This particular saint, on account of his early associations with various Sikh gurus during the 16th century, as well as his laying of the foundation stone for the Golden Temple, became extremely popular among Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus. When he died in 1635, as a sibling pair they swore oaths of loyalty (*ba’ya*) to Mir Miyān’s successor, Mullā Shāh Bakhshi at some time around 1639-40. This paper will analyze the writings of both Dārā Shikoh and Jahān-ārā Begum to explore the possibility that they viewed their relationship with language, tropes, and notions which were other than royal brother and royal sister. We know that Mir Miyān, their spiritual *murshid*, also had a sister – Bibi Jamāl Khātun – who had been not only a Qadiri Sufi but also her brother’s disciple (*murid*). Is it possible that the Mughal prince and princess conceived of their own relationship in terms other than familial and royal? In addition to exploring contemporary accounts, this paper hopes to use this topic to explore Sufi theoretical literature on gender relations and how this conceivably assists our understanding of how and why Dārā Shikoh and Jahān-ārā Begum understood each other in such atypical ways. Also worth noting are the implications of this paper for understanding the increasingly shared ontologies and terminologies shared by royal families and Sufi *ṭariqas* in the late medieval period (*shāh*, *dargāh*, *khuddām*, *khil‘a-khirqā*).

Anthony T. Quickel

Book Ownership, Intellectual History, and the Transmission of Knowledge in Early Ottoman Egypt: A State of the Art

While the economic and political history of early Ottoman Egypt is a growing and burgeoning field of study, the history of book production, ownership, and distribution remains an undeveloped field. Similarly, studies on knowledge transmission and the intellectual history of the period are also only beginning to develop. Recent work has shown the possibility for continued scholarship in exploring the nature of these important areas, yet the inroads made until now have yet to be fully advanced. Important in understanding this issue is the nature of the sources and methods available to historians such as court records, chronicles, necrologies, and archival holdings. This paper will explore this issue and discuss the current State of the Art. Further, it will also ask questions for further inquiry and explore both the ways in which sources may be exploited as well as possible methods for doing so.

Francis Richard

Formation des calligraphes à la fin du XIV^e et au début du XV^e siècle : transmission d'un savoir dans le monde iranien

Plusieurs textes comme le fameux *Tuḥfat al-muḥibbīn* de Sirāj Šīrāzī, qui date de 1454, nous font entrevoir comment sont formés les calligraphes, quelles connaissances scientifiques sont requises pour maîtriser cet art. Le poème de *Mihr-u Muštarī* avait montré, vers 1375, comment cet apprentissage faisait partie de l'éducation aristocratique. Il semblerait que cette période soit aussi celle où commencent à se constituer les lignées de calligraphes, vecteurs essentiels de transmission. Ces différentes indications permettent peut-être de distinguer un peu mieux ce qui fait que, grâce à leur formation très spécifique, les calligraphes ont pu jouir d'un prestige croissant durant le XV^e et le XVI^e siècles.

Adam Sabra

Hagiography and Family History in Ottoman Cairo

This paper will address the development of a tradition of family hagiography in Ottoman Cairo in the 16th and 17th centuries. Focusing on an elite lineage of religious scholars, al-Sada al-Bakriya, it examines the growth of a tradition of hagiography which designated ancestors as saintly figures whose authority could be inherited by their descendants. The paper will address the motives for the composition of these works, and the changing face of sanctity as the lineage developed and its relationship to the Ottoman state changed. Some of the questions to be posed include: 1) does the

representation of sanctity change from one generation to another and why? 2) What evidence do we find of internal conflicts over succession and how are these conflicts resolved? 3) What are the religious foundations of family succession?

Maria Szuppe

Sufi Connections and Timurid Legitimacy in Safavid Herat: Issues of the "Family Memoirs" of the Kh^wājas of Barnābād

From the 15th century onwards, Amir Timur (Tamerlane) remained the major legitimating figure in the Turko-Iranian cultural space, especially in Eastern Iran, Central Asia and Mughal India. Building on earlier research on the representation of Timur in the Safavid court historiography, this paper focuses on the strategies of constructing social and political legitimacy by families of provincial notables of Safavid Iran.

The family memoirs (*Tazkera*) of the Kh^wājas of Barnābād (fl. end 15th to 18th c.), a family of provincial administrators from Herat, narrate the biographies of prominent family members, and include a series of copies of documents (*waqf* endowments, court orders, appointments, etc.). Additionally, a careful reading of the text enables us to put together the story of the origins and the rise to prominence of the Barnābādis in close relation to their guardianship of a local shrine (*mazār*) of an originally obscure Sufi figure who lived in the early 15th century.

The paper proposes to analyse the elements of this family narrative concerning the figure of their ancestor and brings to light a series of indications suggesting that their original legitimizing link goes back to the Timurid period. It seems that the original set of social-political and spiritual references for the Barnābādis is to be associated both with the close spiritual entourage of Amir Timur and with the most influential Sheykh of Jām, and especially with the figure of the famous Sheykh Zeyn al-Din Tāybādi (d. 791/1389).

Alberto Tiburcio

A Network Theory for Polemics and Conversion

The paper hereby proposed seeks to provide a theoretical closure to my investigation into the dynamics of transmission of interreligious polemics within the framework of family-like structures. Throughout it, I propose to understand the figure of the convert in interreligious polemics, not only through the lenses of an authority figure capable of shifting alliances and using the knowledge of his previous religion as a tool of argumentation for the defense of his new faith, but also in terms that go beyond the

content of the texts themselves. If we think of the transmission of religious knowledge through the lenses of network theory, whereby authority is transmitted through lineage-lines or through membership in a selected group of initiated individuals, then for a convert to become a religious authority in his new faith he needs to be able to transgress not only the boundaries of faith but also the boundaries that divide the layperson (broadly defined) and the initiated. For this reason, I propose to examine the networks behind the transmission of religious polemics in the Safavid period through a networking paradigm that amalgamates the knowledge network of the Church with that of the *hawzah*.

Christoph Werner

Sayyid Families of Mashhad and the Guardianship of the Shrine of Imam Reza

With the rise in importance of the shrine complex around the tomb of the Eighth Shiite Imam and the establishment of substantial endowments to support it, the question of guardianship over the mausoleum became more pronounced from the 15th century onwards. Several families of Sayyid descent in the region of Khorasan took up functions at the sanctuary of Mashhad and thus created lineages of guardians and administrators there. The present contribution assesses the development of these families and asks how these families were able to transmit their authority under changing political, economic and confessional conditions and in how far they were able to transmit not only administrative careers and positions, but also wider concepts of cultural and religious heritage. Central to our discussion will be the family of Mirzā Ulugh Raḡavi who had a very close relationship with Safavid rulers and managed to maintain their presence and authority in various functions and positions up to the 19th century. We will look at biographical works on these families, as far as they are available, and trace their presence in other contexts, i.e. scholarly, poetical, artistic.

Daniel Zakrzewski

Intersecting Networks of Transmission. Sufis and Calligraphers in 15th- and 16th-Century Tabriz

My paper explores the intersecting networks of Sufis and calligraphers in 9th/15th- and 10th/16th-century Tabriz. The city went through alternating phases of relative stability and tremendous turmoil during this period with significant changes in the overall political-religious landscape. While three dynasties – the Qarā Qoyunlu, the Āq Qoyunlu and the Safavids – succeeded each other as lords of Tabriz, two others – the Timurids and the Ottomans – repeatedly managed to occupy it.

Three main questions will guide the discussion. First, what kinds of authority and knowledge were transmitted within and through these networks? Second, which

institutional settings sustained the processes of transmission and which roles did families play in these settings and processes? Third, to what extent were the relevant networks specific to the local environment of Tabriz and its hinterland and how were they related to similar networks in other geographical spaces?

All in all the paper tries to tackle a fourth and overarching question: In what ways did Sufis and calligraphers of 9th/15th- and 10th/16th-century Tabriz contribute to shaping the early modern Middle East in general and early modern Iran in particular.

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- Contact: sandra.aube.lorain@gmail.com
 - Research blog: www.dyntran.hypotheses.org

- Convenors: Maria Szuppe, Christoph Werner, Albrecht Fuess and Nicolas Michel
- Organizing team in Paris:
Sandra Aube, Sacha Alsancakli and Emmanuel Giraudet
CNRS, [Mondes iranien et indien](http://Mondes.iranien.et.indien) 27 rue Paul-Bert, F-94204 Ivry-sur-Seine.
with the cooperation of Anthony T. Quickel (in Cairo, IFAO) and Alberto Tiburcio (in Marburg, Philipps-Universität)