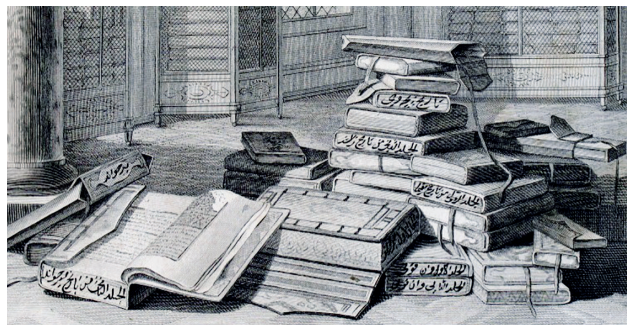


## ABOUT

The Bibliotheca Arabica project is shedding new light on the history of Arabic literatures – defined in the broadest sense, to include belles lettres, scientific works, religious texts, and other written materials – focusing especially on the Mamluk and Ottoman periods from 1150 to 1850.



Since print was not widely available before the 19th century, manuscripts were the main medium for producing, transmitting, and making use of texts. While most histories of Arabic literature are based on the limited number of works that have been edited, we focus instead on manuscripts and manuscript data for the period post-12th century.

In addition to bringing to light many neglected and unknown works and genres, we aim to build a differentiated mapping of literature: What works were produced, transmitted, and used? When, where, and by whom? By asking these questions, we align texts within their social and political contexts, taking into account diachronic perspectives and synchronic expansion. Drawing from this research, the project is publishing a book series and offers online reference works for the study of Arabic literature.

## CONTACT

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Picture Credits:

MS Millet Kitaphanesi, Ali Emiri Efendi, Tarih, nr. 772, fol. 418v.; Mouradgea D'Ohsson: Tableau Général de l'Empire Othoman (1824, Paris), Pl.33 + 39. [Foto credit: Anke Scharrahs]; MS Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 2583, fol. 6v, 8v, 11v, 18v.

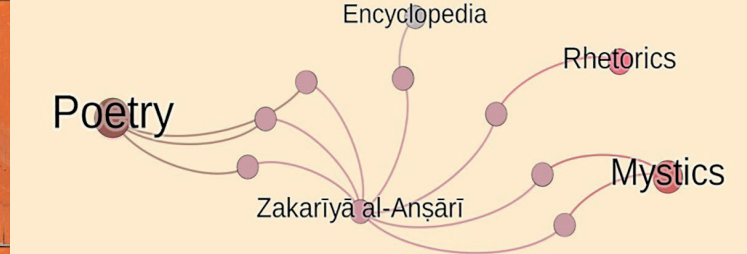
This research project has been produced in the context of the joint research funding of the German Federal Government and Federal States in the Academies' Programme. The Academies' Programme is coordinated by the Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities. This research project is co-financed by the Saxon State government out of the State budget approved by the Saxon State Parliament.



# Bibliotheca Arabica

## Towards a New History of Arabic Literature



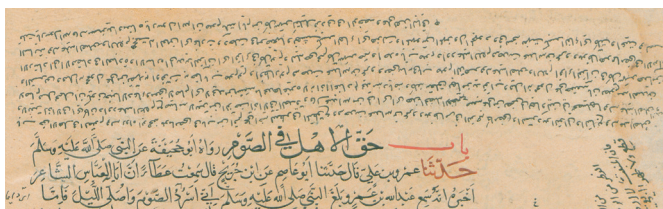


## MACRO PERSPECTIVE

»What was produced, transmitted, and read?  
How, when, and where? Why?« Focus: Texts

- Studying the production, transmission, and use of literature from a transregional, long-term perspective
- Producing a geo-temporal mapping of genres, works, text types, and authors, from West Africa to India
- Highlighting neglected genres and critically assess a literary canon
- Considering the question of how literary production, transmission, and usage change in times of crisis and political shifts

In the margins of this manuscript of al-Bukhārī's *Sahih*, a commentary by the 14th-century Iranian scholar 'Afif al-Kāzarūnī has partly survived. The commentary, not yet edited and preserved in only a few, mainly fragmentary manuscripts in the world, provides insight into local Ḥadīth scholarship in 14th- and 15th-century Shiraz.



al-Bukhārī, al-Jāmi' al-Sahih, B.or.227, copy dated 800/1398, f. 161v  
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## DIGITAL RESEARCH PLATFORM

We create a research environment focused on two main objectives:

- Providing a comprehensive bio-bibliographical reference work for manuscripts and manuscript notes
- Developing tools for the exploration and visualisation of social and historical contexts of the manuscripts—their production, transmission, collection, and reception

The platform integrates information from three different kinds of sources into publicly accessible portals:

- Manuscript catalogues (print & online)
- Manuscript notes
- Biographical & bibliographical reference works, as well as Linked Open Data

### Innovative technological approach

Integrating catalogue data with a flexible schema beyond a meta-catalogue, accompanied by authority control

- Providing evidence (i.e., provenance) for every fact
- Establishing graphing technology: uncovering networks and historical trends within highly interlinked data

## MICRO PERSPECTIVE

»Who read what, when, and where?«  
Focus: Agents

- Systematic collection of the traces left in manuscripts by readers, copyists, owners, patrons, and endowers
- Identification of the networks and paths of transmission, from the single book through whole collections and library landscapes
- Exploration of the role of social, religious, and sectarian affiliations in the collection and dissemination of literature
- Building digital tools/methodologies for the reconstruction of libraries and “reading biographies”

Taqīal-Dīn b. Ma'rif was one of the most innovative minds of the 16th century. A renowned engineer, astronomer, and mathematician, he was the driving force behind the construction of an observatory in the Ottoman capital of Constantinople. Identifying the books that he and scholars like him owned and read is one of the primary objectives of this project.



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