Young Researchers' Indo-Persian Workshop

Le 24 mai 2023, 10h-17h,
EHESS Marseille Salle A, Campus de la Vieille Charité

Organisation : Lingli Li (EHESS-Georg August Universität),
Raffaello Diani (EHESS) et Victor Baptiste (EPHE)

L'ECOLE DES HAUTES ÉTUDES EN SCIENCES SOCIALES

perso-indica
*An Analytical Survey of Persian Works
on Indian Learned Traditions*

ÉCOLE PRATIQUE des HAUTES ÉTUDES | PSL★

GREi
GROUPE DE RECHERCHES
EN ÉTUDES INDIENNES

Programme de la journée

<u>Séance du matin (président de séance : Satoshi Ogura)</u>
10h, Ouverture :
Accueil des organisateurs
Introduction par M. Fabrizio Speziale (EHESS)

10h30, Victor Baptiste (EPHE) :
Indo-Persian Techniques of Translation: 'Āqil Khān Rāzī's Indian Masnavīs

Raffaello De Leon-Jones Diani (EHESS) :
Religious Translation in the Mughal World

11h30 : Pause

11h45, Lingli Li (EHESS-Georg August Universität) :
The Persian Bṛhatsaṃhitā : a Practical Encyclopedia in the Court of the Delhi Sultanate

12h45 : Pause déjeuner (Buffet)

<u>Séance de l'après-midi</u>
(présidente de séance : Arundhati Viramani)
14h30, Jean Arzoumanov, (Gerda Henkel fellow, CEEMSA project) :
Śuddha Urdu: Tulsiram's project of an un-Persianized Hindu devotional literature

Maximilian Mehner (Philipps University Marburg) :
Rooting the Aḫlāq-i Muḥsinī in Sanskritic traditions: Sāhibrām's 19th century adaptation of the Vīraratnaśekharaśikhā.

15h30 : Pause

15h45, Satoshi Ogura (EHESS) :
Imperial Historiography and the Creation of Persian Scholarship on India: the Ā'īn-i Akbarī

Discours de clôture par les organisateurs
16h30 : Réception et restauration pour les participants

Indo-Persian Techniques of Translation: 'Āqil Khān Rāzī's Indian Masnavīs

Victor Baptiste (EPHE)

It has been established by a number of scholars (such as Amīr Hasan 'Ābidī, Sunil Sharma or Carl Ernst) that translation, rewriting and adaptation (from Sanskrit, or the vernacular languages to Persian and the other way round) played an important role in the cultural shaping of Persianate South Asia. Persian literary translations/adaptations (*tarjuma*) of narrative literature, composed in Neo-Indo-Aryan vernacular languages (be it Avadhī, Braj Bhāṣā or others), thanks to the intricacies of the narration, the details of the cultural context and the literary references scattered in the compositions, allow us to glimpse directly into the multilingual society that was South Asia during the Mughal period. Following the intuitions and scholarly works of a number of researchers (such as Syed Hasan Askari, Thibaut d'Hubert or Francesca Orsini), I would argue that a literary analysis, focused on stylistics, imagery and narratology, of the Persian masnavīs translated or adapted from the vernacular, is the key to understand some of the techniques used by the translators/adapters to please their patrons and address efficiently a Persian-speaking audience. I would like to focus on the work of a 17th century poet, Mīr 'Alī 'Askarī also known as 'Āqil Khān 'Rāzī' (1026?-1108 AH, 1617?-1696 AD), who translated into Persian two Avadhī romances (*premākhyān*): *Madhumālatī* (1545 AD), translated under the title Mihr-u Māh (1654/55 AD) and *Padmāvat* (1540 AD), translated under the title *Sham'-u Parvāna* (1658/59 AD).

I wish to demonstrate that these works are, on many aspects, rewritings of the Hindavī originals, meant to persianize the romances by adapting both the imagery and the style to the canons of classical Persian poetry. The concept of persianization (*tafrīs*) is borrowed from the field of Indo-Persian lexicology that, I would argue, played an important part in the poetic reflection of 'Āqil Khān 'Rāzī', being the core model of the translation technique he developed. Rāzī resorted also to other literary practises, one of which is the 'narrative contraction' (*kōtahī*) or 'summarizing' of the Indian tales, used by many Persian-knowing readers as some Avadhī manuscripts inscribed with Persian 'summarizing' titles (*surkhiyān*) above each stanza testify. As such, my intention is to show that 'Āqil Khān's compositions, being the locus of multiple translation techniques, are not only interesting pieces of 'rewritten' literature but also testimonies of persianate reading practices of vernacular South Asian poetry.

Religious Translation in the Mughal World
Raffaello De Leon-Jones Diani (EHESS)

The Timurid court and more widely affluent members of the elite actively sponsored translations from Sanskrit into Persian. The context and reasons, as well as style and theory of translation are nevertheless not always clear. Focusing on different translations of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, a seminal *yogaśāstra* found in the great Indic epic *Mahābhārata*, the discussion aims at extrapolating strategies of translation that are indicative of the different scopes and criteria of the groups translating these different versions. Focusing on a single chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the third, that presents many concepts that prove challenging for a Persianate and Islamicate translator, we aim at presenting different models of translation adopted by the authors. Further, our presentation aims at presenting some available material present in the histories with regards to translation, translators and the object of such an endeavour.

The Persian *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* : a Practical Encyclopedia in the Court of the Delhi Sultanate

Lingli Li (EHESS-Georg August Universität)

The *Tarjuma-yi Kitāb-i Bārāhī* is the Persian translation of the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, a Sanskrit astrological work written in the 6 th century AD by Varāhmihira (c.505-c.587). It was translated into Persian by 'Abd al-'Azīz Shams-i Tahānisārī (14th century) during the reign of Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (r.1351-138 8) of the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526), being thus one of the few extant Persian translations from the pre-Mughal period and one whose research can offer insights into the exchange of knowledge between the Perso-Islamic and the Sanskritic worlds of the period. This paper aims to contribute to a further understanding of this cultural milieu by elucidating some of the translation methods of culture-bound words in the Persian translation. The study shows that the Muslim rulers of the Delhi Sultanate may consider this Persian translation as a practical encyclopedic manual, thus making the text which is an essentially informative text, to a degree transcend the dichotomous discourses associated with it, such as the issues of the Islamicate or Indic affiliation.

Śuddha Urdu: Tulsiram's project of an un-Persianized Hindu devotional literature

Jean Arzoumanov (Gerda Henkel fellow, CEEMSA project)

In the multilingual and multireligious environment of Mughal North India, Persian-speaking Hindu poets contributed from the 17th century onwards to shape a Persian corpus bridging the Persian poetic tradition and Hindu devotional culture. Drawing on what was recently described by Stefano Pellò as "a Sufi Vedantic declension of bhakti", Hindus composed Persian hagiographic texts on the model of the vernacular "Garlands of saints". After Persian, Urdu also became in the nineteenth century a language of Hindu devotion, but with the rise of communalism the existence of a Persianate Hindu culture quickly became problematic. In this paper, we will present the case of Tulsiram, the author of a popular Urdu *Bhagatmāl*, first published in Lahore in 1854 and republished in Lucknow in 1871. In Tulsiram's work, Urdu hagiographic writing became a tool for expressing a new dogmatic Hindu identity articulated around Brahmanical orthodoxy and bhakti. Tulsiram avowedly distanced himself from the Persian translations of Sanskrit works composed in the past centuries and instead systematically replaced Persian vocabulary and references to Persianate culture with vernacular or Sanskrit terms.

Rooting the *Aḫlāq-i Muḥsinī* in Sanskritic traditions: Sāhibrām's 19th century adaptation of the *Vīraratnaśekharaśikhā*.
Maximilian Mehner (Philipps University Marburg)

The Kashmirian scholar Sāhibrām (d. 1872) translated the Persian work of advice by Ḥusayn Vāʿiẓ Kāšifī (d. 1504–5), *Aḫlāq-i Muḥsinī*, into Sanskrit between 1846 and 1853; he did so under royal patronage of the then heir to the Dogra throne, Ranbir Singh (r. 1856–1885). However, his translation is much longer than the original. While keeping the original structure of 40 chapters, he elaborated the definition of each topic and its anecdotal illustration to reference various Sanskritic discourses, which are identified and further explained in the author's commentary to his own text. The result is a unique encyclopaedic adaptation with political, socio-religious, and philosophical fragments, formally devised for the education of princes. In this paper I will introduce the goals of the ongoing comparative study of the original and its adaptation, show a typical correspondence between the *Aḫlāq-i Muḥsinī* and the *Vīraratnaśekharaśikhā*, and reflect upon Sāhibrām's adaptation process.

Imperial Historiography and the Creation of Persian Scholarship on India: the Āʾīn-i Akbarī
Satoshi Ogura (EHESS)

The *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* of Abū al-Fażl (d. 1602) is a crucial work for understanding the political, economic, and intellectual history of Mughal India, and it exerted a vast influence over later historians and writers in India until the colonial period. Although the Āʾīn-i Akbarī has attracted the attention of many scholars, many features of this text and its overall structure deserve more detailed study. This talk focuses on the recent studies in the *Āʾīn-i Akbarī* chiefly based on the contributions to the proposed volume prepared by Fabrizio Speziale and me that examines the wide-ranging descriptions contained in Abū al-Fażl's monumental work from novel perspectives.

Couverture : Calligraphie d'Abdul Rahīm al-Harāvī, 1606/07, Viriginia Museum of Fine Arts