



DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application, which conforms to a past set of grant guidelines. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the application guidelines for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Research Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Khataynameh ("Book of China") Translation Project

Institution: Benedictine University

Project Director: Kaveh Hemmat

Grant Program: Scholarly Editions and Translations Program

Khataynameh ("Book of China") Translation Project

Significance and Impact

China figures as the main example of a great, foreign kingdom in many works of Persian and Turkic literature, and is often invoked metaphorically in Persian literature to signify beauty and craftsmanship. Yet there is very little scholarship on how the premodern Islamic world viewed East Asia. The *Khataynameh* ("Book of China"; the toponym Khatay, corresponding to the English Cathay, is also often written as Khitay) is among the last major texts of the premodern Silk Road that remains inaccessible to English-speaking readers. A description of the Chinese state and society written in 1516, in Persian, for the Ottoman court, by 'Ali Akbar Khatayi, a merchant and professional cultural broker who had visited Beijing around 1506, the *Khataynameh* was the longest work on China in any west-Eurasian language before the Spanish established sustained maritime contact generations later. During the 15th and 16th centuries, often described as ages of exploration, European empires led to a profusion of new books that described distant lands from the water's edge, through the networked geography of port cities. But these centuries also saw intense overland trade and communication across Asia. The *Khataynameh* offers a view from the civically-entangled space of China's Inner Asian frontier. Comprising twenty-one chapters on topics ranging from geography, religion, the imperial bureaucracy, and the military, to festivals, prisons, agriculture, and the arts and sciences, and punctuated by citations of Sufi poetry serving as an extra layer of commentary, the book offers a fully-digested description of China in the mid-Ming period. This is no mere travelogue, but a polemical text with a civic vision that the author and his informants derived from their interactions with the Ming state.

Like his Venetian predecessor, Marco Polo, Khatayi conveyed the full scale of the Chinese state's power and wealth—something which other medieval Muslim authors, who served their own imperial courts, may have hesitated to do. But while Polo, like most travelers, expressed little in the way of a political vision, Khatayi sought to describe China, from the palace down to the markets and farms, as a political system. In so doing, he portrayed the most powerful empire on earth as a constitutional regime: a centralized bureaucratic state whose laws were inviolable even by the emperors who, he claimed, could be peacefully deposed by legal means for failure to perform their duties. Of course the Ming Code had no such mechanism to depose emperors, and the Chinese state was not a formally constitutional system. But neither was this notion of a constitutional regime a familiar figure in Islamic political thought. Where, then, did it come from? It appears that Khatayi, or his informants, in effect invented this concept of constitutionalism to make sense of the dominance of Confucian civil officials in the Ming court.

Close attention to Khatayi's language suggests that he understood Chinese politics through the lens of civic lore about Mongol political culture. Mongol aristocrats were seen as having the power to depose their khans for violating customary law, especially for failing to convene deliberative assemblies. Khatayi recognized the real power that civil officials had gained within the Ming political system, especially after the Tumu incident of 1449, and interpreted it through this frame of Mongol law. Khatayi depicts the Chinese state as a massive bureaucracy, a view derived from his and other merchants' and Chinese Muslims' experience of interaction with agents of the state in the frontier regions. He thus imagined the Chinese state as giving bureaucratic form to core principles of Mongol political culture, also drawing on Persian concepts of bureaucratic absolutism—as he asserts that the fiscal centralization of the state grants the civil officials what was, in effect, a monopoly on military power. We may be tempted to think of Khatayi's constitutionalist interpretation of the Ming system as a kind of freak accident—the fortuitous result of compounded misunderstandings. But an examination of other Persian and Arabic accounts of East Asia shows that East Asia was an important site of political imagination that sometimes verged on utopian speculation. As a uniquely systematic and ambitious Islamicate description of China, the *Khataynameh* demonstrates that speculation about the nature of Chinese governance was a subspecies of Islamic political thought. What remains poorly-understood is the Chinese context that produced this work.

The *Khataynameh* is thus not only an outstanding specimen of early modern travel literature. It offers a rare window into the political views of merchants and other semi-elite figures, who are typically invisible to traditional political history, but whose movement and communication were the very substance of early modern globalization. And whereas Marco Polo only had the ear of Rusticello, Khatayi composed his work for the Ottoman court at a pivotal moment in their rise to the status of a major Mediterranean power. The book was translated twice into Ottoman Turkish, the more prevalent translation bearing the title *Qanun'name-ye Çin ve Hitay*, meaning “Lawbook of China and Cathay.” It shaped later Ottoman historical and geographical knowledge, and appears to have featured in political controversies over the degree of the sultan’s authority to revise the *qanun*, or dynastic constitution. Khatayi’s work anticipates both the form and content of Spanish and other European works on China that appeared in the late 16th century; his depiction of limitations on imperial power anticipates views expressed by Voltaire.

Making available such an important and relatively unexamined text promises to generate not only new scholarship, but genuinely new approaches to global history, East Asian and Islamic world history, the history of the Silk Road, and the study of Islamic literary and art history. The *Khataynameh* stands at the intersection of multiple disciplinary fissures. By far the most overlooked period in the study of the overland Silk Road is the early modern period (characteristically treated as an age of *maritime* discovery). It has been noted that political theory in general is grounded in early modernity, its modern classics authored by the likes of Hobbes and Locke. Given its reception as a “Lawbook,” the *Khataynameh* can certainly be considered a work of political theory, and a characteristically early modern one at that. But political theory and Silk Road studies (or if one prefers, the study of trans-Eurasian cultural contact) are disciplinary ships passing in the dark.

Furthermore, it has been observed that, in the study of Islamic history, individuals’ political commitments tend to be described only in terms of factional and personal alliances—their interests—and rarely in terms of their public convictions—ideology. Persian and Turkic literatures were replete with references to China as a symbol of beauty and artifice, and the *Khataynameh*’s descriptions of festivals and court ceremonial, and its awareness of this aestheticizing lens through which China was represented, speaks to the political content of these tropes in other textual settings. With its many, sometimes lengthy citations of gnostic poetry—often the bane of translators of geographies and similar works—that Khatayi uses to express some of his most ideologically-charged claims, the *Khataynameh* is also an important source for the reception history of Sufi poetry by authors such as Attar, who Khatayi cites extensively.

In spite of the difficulties posed by the multiple contexts of the work, because it has been known to scholarship since the nineteenth century, it has been the subject of devoted attention by a few scholars. The first academic articles on the text include an 1888 essay by H. L. Fleischer and later essays by Paul Kahle (1933, 1956). Lin Yih-min translated the Persian text into modern Turkish for his dissertation at Istanbul University, published in Taipei as *Ali Ekber'in Hitayname* (1967), which includes extensive commentary with reference to Chinese sources and an analytical essay. Aly Mazahéri produced a similar translation in French in a volume entitled *La Route de la soie* (1983), with a shorter analytical essay and annotations relying primarily on Persian sources. A Persian critical edition was produced by Iraj Afshar (1993). In addition to entries in reference works by Ralph Kauz and Fuat Sezgin and an essay focused on the book in *The Silk Road Journal*, by Ralph Kauz, Baki Tezcan discussed the role of the book in Ottoman debates on the role of constitutional law and the authority of the sultans, and Ildico Beller-Hann, John Curry, and Pınar Emiralioğlu have studied its significance as an Ottoman geographical work. Kaveh Hemmat made the book the focus of his dissertation, “A Chinese System for an Ottoman State” (2014), and two scholarly articles including “Citations of ‘Attar and the Kanz al-Haqayeq” (2018), a study of how Khatayi used citations of gnostic poetry to articulate a theory of collective sovereignty. One major goal of this translation project is to interpret and explain the work across all of its geographical contexts together, especially the East Asian context which has been the subject of very little focused study based on Chinese primary sources.

There is a large body of work on interaction between East Asia and the Islamic world, which, apart from the notable exceptions, has not made use of the *Khataynameh*, but speaks to the growing interest in

this field. This includes work by art historians such as Yuka Kadoi (2009) and Ladan Akbarnia (2007), political and cultural history including Francesco Calzolaio's work on representations of East Asia in Persian literature (2019), John Chaffee's *The Muslim Merchants of Premodern China* (2018), Michal Biran's work on the Qara Khitai empire (2005), Hyunhee Park's *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds* (2012), and of course a body of work on the Mongol empire far too large to enumerate. What much of the work in this field has in common—outstanding exceptions including Kauz and Park's work, as well as earlier work by Morris Rossabi (1968, 1998), Joseph Fletcher (1968), and Paul Pelliot (1948)—is that, as a rule, they stop at the Yuan-Ming transition. This is the moment in the mid-14th century when the Mongol Yuan dynasty in China fell, and the unifying structure of the Mongol empire largely disappears as a motive or organizing principle for historical inquiry. Even as stereotypes of the Mongols as “greedy barbarians” have given way to more nuanced historiography more cognizant of their cultural agency and political legacy, non-state actors tend not to figure into the broad narratives of 15th- and 16th-century Central Asian history.

Whereas the Mongol empire's system of relay stations were a state-provided infrastructure for diplomacy across the eastern hemisphere, and the early Ming state engaged in an assertive program of diplomacy including the expeditions of the Muslim eunuch Zheng He in command of massive “treasure ships,” by the turn of the 16th century, Ming interactions with Central Asia were increasingly commercial in nature, as merchants played a growing role in mediating Ming diplomatic relations with the Islamic world. The Islamic world's zones of contact more generally tend to be imperial in nature—Muslims and non-Muslims interacted within the Ottoman and Mughal empires. Mid-15th and early 16th-century Chinese-Islamic contact was, on the other hand, heavily trans-imperial in nature, and the *Khataynameh*, and this period of Silk Road history more generally, require a different paradigm, into which an effective annotated translation of the *Khataynameh* can serve as a bridge.

An annotated English translation of the *Khataynameh* would become the standard reference for researchers able to read English, and would even be an excellent resource for undergraduate students of global history or the Silk Road, including students in introductory or survey courses on Middle Eastern, East Asian, and world history. (Kaveh Hemmat has used portions of his translation in such survey courses since 2016.) Khatayi's prose is relatively simple and easy to understand in translation; the verse citations are more complicated, but hardly intractable. The principal barrier to using the text in a wide range of survey courses is the need for annotations to explain the significance of references to legendary figures of Islamic history or circumstances or events in China, such as the Tumu incident—in effect, it poses many of the same difficulties to scholars that it poses to undergraduates.

History of the Project and Productivity

Both Kaveh Hemmat and Ralph Kauz have been working independently on research projects involving the *Khataynameh* for more than ten years, and have made use of the text in scholarly publications including Ralph Kauz's monograph, *Politik und Handel zwischen Ming und Timuriden: China, Iran und Zentralasien im Spätmittelalter*, Kaveh Hemmat's dissertation, “A Chinese System for an Ottoman State: Bureaucracy and the Millennium in Khatayi's *Book of China*,” and scholarly articles including “Citations of Attar and the Kanz al-Haqayeq in Khatayi's *Book of China*” (2018) and “Korea and the Ming Tribute System in Khatayi's *Book of China*” (2018). Hyunhee Park has published the first and only academic monograph comparing the geographical knowledge of East Asia and the Islamic world in the medieval period: *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds: Cross-Cultural Exchange in Pre-Modern Asia* (2012). Paul Buell has published extensively on Central Asia using Chinese and Turkic sources. These previous publications and their authors' expertise will be part of the basis for the annotations and prefatory material. Additional time to work on the project afforded by the grant will allow for a deeper understanding of the Chinese context, in particular, where many problems remain unresolved, especially related to the local context of Khatayi's encounters with Chinese.

Both Kaveh Hemmat and Ralph Kauz have been translating the text; Kaveh Hemmat has translated roughly one third of the text, including Persian verse citations. Ralph Kauz has been producing a detailed critical translation and also obtained a typed copy of an English translation produced in Bonn in 1935, which was never published. These translations will be compared, and additional text translated and compared to the Ottoman translations, for the final edition produced by the project.

In the course of their research, Ralph Kauz and Kaveh Hemmat have secured copies of all manuscripts necessary for a critical annotated English translation based on the Persian text and Ottoman translations. These include all of the Persian manuscripts and seven of the 11 known Ottoman manuscripts from libraries including the Süleymaniye library in Istanbul, Dresdener Bibliothek, Berlin Bibliothek, the Bibliothèque nationale française in Paris, and Leiden University. Members of the team also have copies of Iraj Afshar's critical edition, which makes use of the Cairo and Süleymaniye Persian manuscripts. It remains only for these to be distributed among project members.

While none of these manuscripts is under copyright, and there will be no need to reproduce images of the manuscripts, we have requested permission from the Süleymaniye library and inquired about permission from the Cairo Dar El-Kotob library to produce a translation based on the relevant manuscripts. The Leiden University collections are Open Access and since no images will be needed, there should be no question of copyright there, however the project will also request permission from Leiden University.

The final product of the project, a single volume entitled, *The Khataynameh*, translated by Kaveh Hemmat, Ralph Kauz, and John Curry, with Introduction and Annotations by Kaveh Hemmat, Ralph Kauz, Hyunhee Park, and Paul Buell, will be completed by the end of the project in September, 2023.

Collaborators

Project Director

Kaveh Hemmat, PhD, Assistant Professor, Professional Faculty, Department of History, Philosophy, and Theology, Benedictine University, Lisle, Illinois.

Kaveh Hemmat is an expert on medieval and early modern interaction between East Asia and the Islamic world, and the representation of East Asian states and societies in Islamic culture. He completed his dissertation and three scholarly articles focused on the *Khataynameh*, as well as other projects related to the depiction of East Asia in Persian literature, including translation of the *Epic of Kush (Kushnameh)*, a Persian epic poem over 10,000 lines in length, under contract with UC Press, and a book chapter and conference papers on the representation of Korea and Spain in this epic. His book manuscript in progress, *The Hundred Kings of Samargand: Silk Road Civic Lore and the Ottoman Book of China*, traces the development of utopian and historical speculation about East Asian statecraft in the context of political and material interaction from the 10th century to the 16th century. He has pioneered an approach that recognizes the importance of citations of Sufi poetry and other rhetorical devices to the polemical character of the *Khataynameh*, whose reception as a “law-book” by Ottoman intellectuals was left unexplained in earlier scholarship. He is fluent in modern and classical Persian and has reading knowledge of French, Arabic, Ottoman, Mandarin Chinese, and Russian.

He will be co-author of the translation and introductory material, and will work part-time throughout the project, roughly 20 hours per week from January-May 2022 and full time from May-August 2022, and 20 hours per week from January through May 2023 and full time from May through August 2023.

Collaborators

Hyunhee Park, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of History, John Jay College of Criminal Justice (City University of New York), New York, New York.

Hyunhee Park has pioneered the comparative study of East Asian and Islamic geographical knowledge, and is an expert on exchanges of culture and technology between East Asia and the Islamic world. Her first book, *Mapping the Chinese and Islamic Worlds: Cross-Cultural Exchange in Pre-Modern Asia* (2012), is the first ever comparative monograph on East Asian and Islamic geographical knowledge. Her second book, on the history of soju, a Korean distilled liquor, and exchanges of distillation technology on the Silk Road, is forthcoming. As a scholar with expertise in both Classical Chinese and Arabic, fluency in Korean and Japanese, advanced knowledge of Hebrew, and familiarity with both premodern East Asian and Islamic culture, she brings critical expertise to the study the Chinese context of the *Khataynameh* using gazetteers and other Chinese sources.

She will be co-author of the introduction and annotations and work part-time throughout the project, 20 hours per week from January through August 2022, and 20 hours per week from January through August 2023.

John Curry, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, Nevada.

John Curry is an expert on both Ottoman geography and Ottoman Sufism, and collaborated in translating the *Cihân-nümâ* (“Cosmographia”), the universal geographical compendium of the Ottoman scholar and polymath, Kâtib Çelebi, later edited and made into the first printed book by Ottoman Muslims in the empire in 1732. He has published several books and multiple articles and chapters about Islamic mysticism, geographical literature, and the impacts of pandemics on the Muslim world. He has a strong working knowledge of Arabic, Ottoman and modern Turkish, and can also work with German and French scholarly work. Among his publications is an article focusing on on Kâtib Çelebi’s engagement with the *Khataynameh*: “An Ottoman Geographer Engages the Early Modern World: Katip Celebi’s Vision of East Asia and the Pacific in the Cihannuma” in the *Journal of Ottoman Studies* (2012) As a scholar of both Ottoman geography and the history of Sufism, he is uniquely qualified to study and translate the Ottoman translations of the *Khataynameh*, in which the citations of Sufi poetry were an important site of contest for differing uses or interpretations of the text.

He will credited as translator of the Ottoman text and work for 20 hours per week during the summer of 2022 (June to September), with finishing work to be completed in the summer of 2023 as needed.

Paul Buell, PhD, Instructor, University of North Georgia.

Paul Buell is an expert in the history of cultural exchange in the Mongol empire, with an extensive record of publications on an array of topics. His skill in Classical Chinese and Turkic languages and expertise in using gazetteers, histories, and other texts as sources for the study of material and cultural history will be critical to studying the context of the *Khataynameh*. His expertise on the Mongol period will be especially valuable, as the Mongol empire is a kind of “elephant in the room” for Khatayi: a massively important, inescapable part of the historical background against which he wrote, he yet makes no mention of Genghis Khan or the Mongol conquest of China.

He will provide consultation for up to 200 hours per academic year.

Other Collaborator Mentioned in this Application (for whom funds are not requested)

Ralph Kauz, PhD, Professor, Abteilung für Sinologie, Institut für Orient- und Asienwissenschaften, Universität Bonn, Bonn, Germany.

Ralph Kauz is a leading expert on political and economic interaction between East Asia and the Islamic world in the medieval and early modern periods, with the rare combination of expertise in Classical Chinese and Persian. He has been translating and working with the *Khataynameh* for more than a decade. His monograph, *Politik und Handel zwischen Ming und Timuriden: China, Iran und Zentralasien im Spätmittelalter* (2005), on diplomatic, political, and commercial interaction between Ming China and the Timurid empire in Central Asia, is the only academic monograph on connections between East Asia and the Islamic world in the 15th and 16th centuries using Persian as well as Chinese sources.

He will be a co-author of the translation along with Kaveh Hemmat and equally responsible for translating the Persian text, and co-author of the introduction. He has agreed to forego financial compensation.

David M Robinson, PhD, Robert H.N. Ho Professor in Asian Studies and Professor of History, Colgate University, Hamilton, New York.

David Robinson is an expert in Ming social and political history, the court culture of Ming dynasty, and has published multiple monographs on early modern Chinese military history, the history of northeast Asia (especially Koryŏ-Chosŏn history), and the Mongol empire and its Eurasian successor states, as well as numerous scholarly articles on these topics. With his expertise in local history, the interaction of Ming court, military, and nearby regions, and the Zhengde reign (1505-1521), his advice will be invaluable to the project.

He will assist the project in an advisory capacity, on a voluntary basis.

Methods and Execution

The Author and the Work

The translated volume will include a substantial introductory chapter devoted mainly to an analysis of the context and certain aspects of the content. Though attribution of the text is unproblematic, we know very little about the author: he identifies himself as Sayyid ‘Ali Akbar Khatayi, and while a later Ottoman reference work identifies him as a merchant, he is otherwise unattested in Ottoman sources, and our information about him derives entirely from the text itself. This includes his itinerary, as well as linguistic evidence that he was from Central Asia. It has been noted that ‘Ali Akbar is a common name among Muslim Chinese due to its ease of pronunciation, however his use of Chinese terms and his omission of certain information, such as the examination system, suggests he was not highly educated in Chinese. His Persian prose, citations of verse, and a few verses of his own composition are consistent with the modest level of education a (not exceptionally) successful merchant would have received. Our picture of his life and personality is very sparse, but consistent.

Codicology

The translation’s approach to textual criticism will strike a balance between identifying the intended original form and meaning of the text and noting important ambiguities and divergences in the manuscript record. The English translation will record significant discrepancies—those in which all variants could not be accommodated by a single English translation, or where highly significant ambiguities are introduced or resolved. There are a number of cases where, between the two main variants of the Persian text or the Ottoman translations, brief passages are revised in a way that adds information (which can be evidence of

readers' knowledge of East Asia), or offers evidence for how readers debated or thought about a particular subject. Regarding the resolution of ambiguities, one example is in chapter 2, "On their Various Religions," where a certain passage can be read as, "the infidels of the East are greatly desirous of Islam. They say that the *qanun* (law and system) of China is the way and law of the Buddha..." or "the infidels of the East are greatly desirous of Islam and the *qanun* of China. They say of the way and law of the Buddha that..." Afshar's critical edition preferred the second reading, and while both Ottoman translations used the first reading, there are possible ideological motives for their doing so, and it is useful for the English translation to *also* note the ambiguity in the Persian text.

For the Persian text, the main variants are represented by the Cairo manuscript (the primary text used in Iraj Afshar's critical edition) and three manuscripts in the Süleymaniye collection (also used by Afshar). The Leiden manuscript, which can be considered part of the Süleymaniye group, will be used here because it was not used in Afshar's edition. The bifurcation between the Cairo and other variants of the Persian text consists of many significant omissions and amendments which include brief remarks on the Great Wall, Chinese lifeways, the addition of a chapter heading for a section on the Shaolin monastery, and differences in the language used to describe the firearms and other equipment of Chinese soldiers. While it is likely that many of these discrepancies represent amendments, some of this material likely represents original content, and even added material is useful for understanding the book's reception.

The Ottoman manuscripts are among the most important evidence for the text's reception history and will be used to establish the relationship between particular contents in the two main variants of the Persian and Ottoman texts, and help distinguish amendments from omissions. The manuscripts of the Ottoman translation represent two separate translations of the text. Ayasofya 3188 is the unicum of one translation, in which the poetry is also translated. This appears to follow the Süleymaniye manuscript group, although more careful examination of the Ottoman manuscripts is needed to verify or nuance this assessment. This more common translation, represented in over a dozen manuscripts, more closely follows the Süleymaniye group in some passages places. Of the manuscripts of the more common translation, Veliyeddin Efendi 1963 includes a separate text, the *Asafname* (which will not be translated) and substantial marginalia in addition to the Ottoman translator's preface. This manuscript together with Leiden University Or. 12.365 and Ayasofya 3188 will be used as representative samples to annotate the translated text by noting major omissions or additions, with other Süleymaniye manuscripts including a printed edition being used to resolve paleographic difficulties.

There are thus four principle moments of interest in the manuscript history, two of which can be dated precisely: 1. the composition of the original Persian text in 1516 (according to colophons in the Persian manuscripts), 2. the bifurcation between the Süleymaniye and Cairo Persian texts, 3. the first translation into Ottoman (ca. 1580), and 4. the second translation into Ottoman (date unknown). This picture will become more precise as research progresses; preliminary study of the Ottoman manuscripts already demonstrates that Ottoman readers had outside knowledge of their subject matter as demonstrated by Hemmat, "Korea and the Ming Tribute System" (2018).

Translation Methodology

The more intractable problems of translating the *Khataynameh* arise from the fact that it is itself a work of cultural translation, an attempt to explain one political universe using the terms of another, written by an author who demonstrates an impressive understanding of both, but who, at the end of the day was a merchant, not a scholar and not a native expert in either Chinese or Islamic intellectual traditions. The finer art of translating such a text lies in conveying the specific character of its imprecisions and misprisions. It is in this capacity as a translation that many readers will be studying it: not only as a narrative source for circumstances on the Chinese-Inner Asian frontier, or as an example of Ottoman political writing, but as a Central Asian merchant's attempt to communicate his own (un-erudite and probably non-native) understanding of the Chinese state and society to his Ottoman audience.

To give an example of one of the text's productive imprecisions, Khatayi attributes great importance to China's *qanun*. In the Ottoman context, this term was coming to be used in the narrow sense of codified law, including the collected decrees of Mehmed II and his successors, which functioned as a kind of dynastic constitution—whence Suleyman I's epithet, “the Lawgiver.” However, the term still held a range of other meanings including customary law and even, simply, tradition. It is clear that the importance Khatayi gave to this *qanun*, whatever exactly he understood it to be, was shaped by an awareness of the Great Ming Code and its place in the Chinese political order. It would certainly *not* be appropriate to translate all uses of *qanun* into language that more exactly corresponds to his Chinese signifieds, such as “Great Ming Code” or “tradition” or even, simply, as “law”—as for example, he states that excessive drinking is not in their *qanun*, clearly intending the term more in the sense of social mores than codified law or even tradition; and it is not clear he knew the “Great Ming Code” by name. This collapsing of a wide range of social and political functions into a single concept, signified by a term, *qanun*, that functioned in Ottoman historical and political writing as a universal, comparative category for the distinct sets of customs and regulations that produced the world's diverse political cultures, was critical to the book's meaning as a work of political theory. (It may, even, not have been lost on some readers that *qanun* was an Arabic transcription of the Greek *kanon*, a term widely used especially in the empire's European provinces.) The task of translating (or strategically leaving untranslated) terms such as *qanun* requires great sensitivity to the contexts in which the book was read.

For the same reason, annotations explaining the Chinese context will also be essential for scholarly readers. Just as knowledge of the Ottoman rhetorical environment is necessary for understanding the content of the book, understanding it as a translation of one political universe into the terms of another requires that readers be aware of the *relevant* features of the Chinese context within which it was generated. Most readers will be ill-served by reading the *Khataynameh* alongside general histories of Ming China. While histories of the Ming period tend, understandably, to focus on elite culture and emphasize the rich intellectual and commercial life of the Jiangnan region in the southeast, the *Khataynameh* was informed more by the culture of the western frontiers and the Capital Region, and sub-elite populations there. The most relevant Chinese context for Khatayi's account of Confucius (whom he calls “Bujin Gozin,” a usage attested among Muslim Chinese), is not only the text of the *Analects* or the discourse of iconic Ming intellectuals such as Wang Yangming, but also what the merely-literate subjects of the Ming—one can almost literally say, “the average man on the street”—would have understood about Confucius. Effectively framing and annotating the text will thus depend on investigation of Ming-era sources, such as gazetteers (records of local history) of the region from the Gansu corridor to Beijing.

One feature of the text that will challenge most readers is Khatayi's use of Persianate and Islamic cultural references—specifically, references to mythic or sacred history—to convey what are sometimes highly specific messages. For example, figures such as Solomon, Jamshid, Shaddad, Kaykhosrow, Alexander of Macedon, and Cain are invoked both diegetically (e.g. the claim that China was founded by descendants of Cain who traveled east) and non-diegetically (as in the case of citations of poetry telling stories of legendary figures as a kind of commentary on the content of the description). For non-diegetic as well as diegetic content, the primary significance of references to figures such as Cain is more associative than literal or historical. And, the precise meaning of scriptural or mythic references is often specific to the 16th century Ottoman political context. Annotations will thus be an essential and effective supplement to the text, making its meaning accessible even to many specialist readers.

Given that most of the text consists of relatively simple prose, the most common direct challenges of translation are philological rather than stylistic, including accurate translation of language describing the physical environment and other tangible content, toponyms, and Chinese terms such as military ranks. Of course, Chinese toponyms and other terms appear as transcription of pronunciations encountered by the author, so the English text will be a transliteration of Khatayi's spelling, with the original Chinese terms provided in the footnotes.

The *Khataynameh*'s Persian prose not only simple, but often stylistically awkward. The stylistic challenges of translating the *Khataynameh* are thus quite different from those posed by works of literature, or highly erudite, polished texts, or those that employ a specialized technical vocabulary. Its citations of gnostic or Sufi poetry do pose some challenges of this type; these verse citations will be translated into blank verse, with the primary aim of conveying the exact meaning, but using word choice to reproduce the lyricity of the original where doing so does not compromise semantic accuracy. The principle challenge posed by the awkwardness of the original Persian is determining to what degree it should be reproduced in the English. One of Khatayi's stylistic quirks, the overuse of helping verbs (e.g. "building doors and building walls" instead of "building doors and walls") may be evidence of his greater comfort with Turkish or spoken Chinese than with Persian, which makes less repetitive use of helping verbs. This is a feature of the text that may be useful to preserve in the translation, even if it results in less elegant English prose.

The *Khataynameh* is a liminal, boundary-crossing text in several respects—not only because it mediates between two distinct political worlds but because the author was un-erudite and even awkward in the language he was writing in. And yet, he was confident enough as a writer to insert some of his own poetry into his prose, and his work did reach the Ottoman court, and he seems to have been well-informed about the broader Ottoman political and rhetorical situation, if not about the nuances of court intrigue. Given that the text addresses deep and perennial political questions and is written in simple language without relying heavily on technical terms, an effectively annotated translation will make it a highly versatile resource for scholars and students.

Work Plan

October 1 2021 – March 31 2022

- Establishment of the bibliographic and manuscript scope of the project
- Virtual meeting **all project members** by November 2021 to establish best practices and editorial standards.
- **Kaveh Hemmat** (with the assistance of **Ralph Kauz**) works part time to produce a preliminary translation based on Afshar's critical edition, and using the English typescript and other translations.
- By January 2021, at least 50% of the text will be complete, including the preface, chapters 1-5, part of chapter 6, and chapter 7 (these chapters and sections together make up more than 50% of the text by page count—i.e. more than 75 pages)
- Beginning January 2022, **Hyunhee Park** and **Paul Buell** will work part time researching the context of the book to provide information for the annotations and introductory chapter.
- Workflows for translators (K Hemmat, R Kauz) and researchers (H Park, P Buell) members will be established for evaluation and continuing enhancement.

April 1 2022 – September 30 2022

- Additional chapters of the Persian text will be provided to **Paul Buell** and **Hyunhee Park** as they are completed.
- By June 2022, **Kaveh Hemmat** (with assistance of **Ralph Kauz**) will have completed:
 - a full English translation of the Persian text of roughly 150 pages
 - annotations based on Persian sources and research on the Ottoman context
- June – September 2022, **John Curry** will work part-time to:
 - translate the Ottoman translator's preface and marginalia in Veliyeddin Efendi 1963
 - compare English translation with Ottoman manuscripts, completing roughly 60% of the text
- Project members will meet every two weeks via videoconference during this period to discuss progress on the text and any problems.
- By the end of the summer, **all project members** will meet to:

- Assess known discrepancies between the two Ottoman translations and the Persian manuscripts and review which ones should be noted in the final version.
- Reevaluate workflows, editorial standards, and annotation style.
- Make preliminary plans for the Introduction of the final volume.

October 1 2022 – March 31 2023

- **Kaveh Hemmat** (with the assistance of **Ralph Kauz**) will:
 - Work part time to expand annotations.
 - Begin work on the Introduction.
 - Work on acquiring image rights and preparing maps for the final publication
- **Paul Buell** will continue research using Chinese, Turkic, and other sources to improve annotations and address questions relevant to the Introduction.
- **Hyunhee Park** will continue research using Chinese, Arabic, and other sources to improve annotations and address questions relevant to the Introduction, and begin writing relevant sections of the Introduction.

April 1 2023 – September 30 2023

- By June 2023, **John Curry** will have completed comparison of Ottoman manuscripts with the Persian text.
- With the contents of representative Persian and Ottoman manuscripts compared more thoroughly, we will develop a clearer understanding of the manuscript history of the text, and identify major patterns in how Ottoman translators and readers engaged with different parts of the book.
- Between June 2023 and August 2023, **all project members** will share completed sections of the Introduction, approximately 8000 words each devoted to the following areas:
 - Representations of East Asian in Islamicate Culture (**Kaveh Hemmat** and **Hyunhee Park**, with assistance from **Ralph Kauz**).
 - Chinese and Central Asian context, frontier, and route to capital (**Hyunhee Park** and **Paul Buell**, with assistance from **Ralph Kauz** and **David Robinson**).
 - Ottoman political context (**Kaveh Hemmat**, with assistance from **John Curry** and **Ralph Kauz**).
 - Global context (**Kaveh Hemmat** and **Hyunhee Park** with assistance from **David Robinson** and other project members as needed).
- Between August and September 30 2023, the Introduction and annotated English translation will be finalized.
- Further images desired for the final volume will be identified, and **Kaveh Hemmat** will research acquiring rights to the images
- **Kaveh Hemmat**, with assistance from other project members, will promote the final volume to publishers, identify possible reviewers, and work on publicity

Final Product and Dissemination

The goal of the project will be to produce an annotated translation with a substantial introduction, roughly 200 pages in length including all notes and appendices. A printed or compact online book will be the ideal format in which to circulate the text, since the *Khataynameh* was itself a book of modest size,

sometimes included in codices with other related works such as the *Asafname*, a brief work on statecraft. The text will be annotated with footnotes for comments relating to codicology, translation or interpretation of terms & phrases, and other issues specific to any small passage in the text, and a brief “Chapter Commentary” section at the end of each chapter for observations about the content of the chapter as a whole. The type of images and maps that will be included will depend greatly on the outcome of the project’s research efforts. For example, comparing Khatayi’s account of Ming frontier fortifications and military colonies may yield interesting correspondences with Ming literature, which maps may be needed to illustrate; images of tamped earth walls and other fortifications may also be desirable. His brief notices on popular culture in chapter 11 and on surgery in chapter 12 may warrant inclusion of illustrations. It is anticipated

The introduction, expected to be roughly 40,000 words in length, will summarize the relevant historical—especially political and cultural—context of the book. This context can be divided into four main categories:

* **Representations of East Asia in Islamicate Culture.** This section will identify the principal tropes common in representations of East Asia in Islamicate literary traditions, and major literary and visual references to China, including the figure of China in epic literature, and Mongol- and Timurid-era engagement with Chinese visual culture. Other topics of interest include geographical knowledge and representations of Chinese religion in Arabic and Persian historical works.

* **The Chinese Frontier and Route to the Capital.** This section will include discussion of border fortifications near the Gansu corridor (which Khatayi understood in terms of the Chinese concept of the Great Wall) and the tribute missions, through which merchants traveled across the Gansu Corridor from Central Asia to Beijing, and the infrastructure for hosting and monitoring foreign “ambassadors” (who were in fact often merchants), such as the relay stations along major roads and the Siyiguan, a facility for lodging ambassadors, and the translation bureau in Beijing. One of the principal goals of the research for this translation will be to either authenticate Khatayi’s claims or connect them to specific Chinese contexts.

* **The Ottoman Empire.** The principle goal of this section is to explain the context for the book’s reception as a “Lawbook”—what concepts of law and custom did such a description entail, and what were the political stakes? This section will describe the principal relevant features of the Ottoman context in which Khatayi was writing, including its relations with the Safavids and communication with Central Asia. Of central concern here are conflicts over fiscal centralization and bureaucratization, the role of dynastic law (*qanun*), and the identity of the empire—whether the Ottoman polity was to remain a frontier or ghazi state focused primarily on conquest of Christian territory, or a successor to the Roman Empire that would attempt to assert centralized control over all former Roman territory, including Europe, Africa, and much of the Middle East. The later evolution of these debates in the late 16th and early 17th century will also be addressed.

* **Global Context.** This section places the *Khataynameh* as a work of cultural translation and an element of East Asian-Islamic world interaction in a much wider context, from the Mongol Empire and the Yuan-Ming transition to Columbus and early modern globalization. A key factor of this context is the parallel development of increasingly centralized, bureaucratic states—both absolutist or “gunpowder” empires and smaller regional states. The *Khataynameh* offers important evidence for how this process took place. The book will be compared briefly to works on China produced in Portuguese and Spanish in the late 16th century, as well as—more briefly—later European ideas on China by authors such as Matteo Ricci and Voltaire (who shared Khatayi’s view of the Chinese state as a limited despotism).

Table of Contents for Proposed Book:

Introduction

Text of the *Khataynameh*

[Preface of Persian text]

1. Routes to China

2. Their various religions

3. Cities and forts; postal stations
 4. Armies
 5. Treasuries
 6. The imperial palace and court; the thousands of girls and eunuchs serving there...
 7. Prisons; the architects of their law; the emperor's annual attendance at executions
 8. Their annual great festival
 9. The twelve provinces of China
 10. Parties and gardens
 11. public districts and drought and the special responsibility of brothels during drought; their beautiful women
 12. Amazing and unique arts, cures, ball-playing, and masquerades; astronomy
 13. The Legislator of China
 14. Government offices and schools
 15. People who come from the west
 16. The Mongols who come to trade; Tibetans and their mastiffs; people who come from eastern India
 17. Agriculture; fire-fighting; their "charcoal" [i.e. the use of coal as fuel]
 18. Their great temple (*ka'beh*) and their pilgrims' flying
 19. Gold and silver money and paper money
 20. Their respect for their *qanun* and principles
 21. Galleries of beauty [probably referring to temples] and the abundance of clothing and their arts of paper-cutting
- [Conclusion]

Appendices

* Ottoman Translator's Preface

* [Other material obtained from Chinese sources may be added.]

Notes

(b)(4) has expressed interest in the annotated translation with prefatory material, as described here; a letter from (b)(4) describing (b)(4) interest in the project is included as a supporting document. Comparable (b)(4) titles would cost (b)(4) in hard cover, and around (b)(4) in paperback and electronic format. It will be a priority of the project to secure a publishing agreement, from (b)(4) or elsewhere, that will make the book available in less expensive paperback and electronic formats. The project website will be used to post additional information and links to resources of use to educators and scholars making use of the book.