

## Authority and Identity in Medieval Islamic Historiography

Intriguing dreams, improbable myths, fanciful genealogies, and suspect etymologies. These were all key elements of the historical texts composed by scholars and bureaucrats on the peripheries of Islamic empires between the tenth and fifteenth centuries. But how are historians to interpret such narratives? And what can these more literary histories tell us about the people who wrote them and the times in which they lived? In this book, Mimi Hanaoka offers an innovative, interdisciplinary method of approaching these sorts of local histories from the Persianate world. By paying attention to the purpose and intention behind a text's creation, her book highlights the preoccupation with authority to rule and legitimacy within disparate regional, provincial, ethnic, sectarian, ideological, and professional communities. By reading these texts in such a way, Hanaoka transforms the literary patterns of these fantastic histories into rich sources of information about identity, rhetoric, authority, legitimacy, and centre–periphery relations.

**Mimi Hanaoka** is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Richmond, where she is a scholar of history and religion. Her publications include scholarly journal articles on Persian and Islamic history and historiography. Her work as a social and cultural historian focuses on Iran and the Persianate world from the tenth to fifteenth centuries, concentrating on issues of authority and identity. In the field of global history, she concentrates on interactions between the Middle East and East Asia, focusing on the history of Iran–Japan relations.

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# Authority and Identity in Medieval Islamic Historiography

*Persian Histories from the Peripheries*

MIMI HANAOKA  
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*For my parents,*  
Shoichiro Hanaoka (1945–2014) and  
Iola Price Hanaoka (1942–2014)

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## Preface

The primary sources used in this study are written in Arabic, Persian, and are often bilingual to varying degrees. I follow the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES) transliteration system for Arabic transliterations, and consequently I do not indicate the final *tā' marbuṭa*, nor do I distinguish between the *alif mamdūda* and *alif maqṣūra*. For Persian terms, I use a modified IJMES transliteration system. In bilingual Arabic-Persian sources, I generally prioritize the Arabic transliteration. Due to the bilingual nature of the texts and the accompanying challenges in transliteration, I hope I will be forgiven for any inconsistencies and preferences.

Place names appear without transliteration (e.g., Tabaristan, Bukhara, Qum). When technical terms and place names used in English are part of a proper noun, such as the title of a work (e.g., *Tārīkh-i Ṭabaristān*), I include diacritical marks. Therefore, the title of the work *Tārīkh-i Bukhārā* includes diacritical marks, as does historical personage al-Bukhārī, but Bukhara as a place does not. Proper names of people and the names by which they are known, including titles, are supplied with diacritical marks (e.g., Fāṭima, Fāṭima al-Ma'ṣūma, Muḥammad).

Commonly used technical terms appear without transliteration. With the exception of Imam, Shi'a, Shi'i, Shi'ism, Sunni, and Sunnism, the terms are italicized (e.g., *Ahl al-Bayt*, *Allah*, *amir*, *Baraka*, *dinar*, *fatwa*, *fiqh*, *fuqaha*, *hadith*, *imam*, *isnad*, *madrassa*, *Mahdi*, *matn*, *muhaddith*, *qadi*, *sayyid*, *sharif*, *shaykh*, *Shu'ubiya*, *sunna*, *Sura*, *ulama*, *umma*, *waqf*, *wazir*). I have referenced the IJMES Word List for guidance on which terms and names are Anglicized.

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I do not transliterate technical terms and titles that are commonly used in English, including Anglicized terms of Arabic origin (e.g., Abbasid, Alawi, ‘Alid, Ash‘ari, bazaar, Buyids, caliph, Daylami, Fatimid, Ghaznavid, Ghurid, Hanafi, Imam, Isma‘ili, Jahiliya, Mamluk, Qur’an, Safavid, Saffarid, Sasanian, Seljuq, shah, Sufi, sultan, Tahirid, Talibi, Umayyad, vizier, Zaydi, Ziyarid).

I have included diacritical marks on less commonly used technical terms (e.g., *abdāl*, *akhbār*, *awliyā’*, *awqāf*, *a’yān*, *dā’ī*, *faḍā’il*, *ghulām*, *ijāza*, *khavar*, *khāngāh*, *khawārij*, *maḍhāhib*, *madhhab*, *mashhad*, *mawlā*, *mihna*, *mazār*, *mi’rāj*, *rāwī*, *riwāyah*, *Rūm*, *ṣaḥāba*, *Ṣaḥīḥayn*, *ṭabaqāt*, *tābi‘ūn*, *tafsīr*, *tariqa*, *‘umarā’*, *ziyārat*).

For proper names, I retain the definite article “al-” at the beginning of a name only at the first mention of the proper name but exclude the definite article on subsequent mentions of the proper name (e.g., the name is rendered as al-Qummī on first mention and then subsequently as Qummī). I do not consider the “al-” for bibliographic purposes (e.g., Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Qummī appears al-Qummī, Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad, under “Q”).

I generally give the Common Era (CE) dates for events. Whenever relevant, I also give the *hijrī* dates in the form of *hijrī*/CE dates (e.g., 613/1217, third/ninth century). When there are disagreements or disputes about dates, I attempt to note the range of possible dates and generally follow the dates used in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition.

For the Qur’an, I principally reference the English translation by Ahmed Ali, final revised edition (Princeton University Press, 2001).



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## Journal and Reference Works Abbreviations

BSOAS	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
EI2	<i>Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition</i>
EI3	<i>Encyclopedia of Islam, Third Edition</i>
EIr	<i>Encyclopedia Iranica</i>
EQ	<i>Encyclopaedia of the Quran</i>
IJMES	<i>International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JSAI	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>