

'Encyclopaedias in Islamicate Central Asia in the 16th and 17th Centuries

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Encyclopaedias - understood as structured compendia of authoritatively sourced information compiled for didactic purposes - were a literary staple of the pre-modern Persianate cosmopolis since at least the appearance of Najīb Hamadānī's *'Ajā'ib al-Makhlūqāt* in the last quarter of the twelfth century, with their production stretching all the way from Turkey to India. In Central Asia, the two royal houses claiming khanship over most of the region between 1500-1756, the Abū'l-Khayrids and the Ashtarkhanids, patronised this literary genre, and four distinct encyclopaedic works were penned under their rule. My talk seeks to contextualise this production both with respect to Persianate encyclopaedias as a whole and within the social and cultural setting of post-Timurid Central Asia.

Bio

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