



GOLIUS, JACOBUS

GOLIUS, JACOBUS (latinized form of the Dutch name Jacob Gool), Dutch orientalist (b. The Hague, 1596; d. Leiden, 28 September 1667), who descended from a family of patricians in the city of Leiden. From 1612 onwards he read medicine, mathematics, and astronomy at Leiden University. His interest in the scientific legacy of the ancient Greeks brought him to the study of Arabic. Very soon he extended his studies to other Oriental languages, which eventually included Persian, Turkish, Armenian, and Chinese. When, from 1622-24, he visited Morocco with a Dutch diplomatic mission, he used the occasion to meet with Muslim scholars and collect Arabic manuscripts. In 1625 he succeeded his teacher Thomas Erpenius to the Leiden chair of Arabic and Hebrew. The first few years of his professorship were spent in the Levant. First he worked as a chancellor in the Dutch consulate at Aleppo and then traveled through Syria and Iraq to Constantinople. On his return to Leiden after more than three years, he brought more Oriental manuscripts with him, including a number of Persian texts. Meanwhile, Golius had also been appointed professor of mathematics. In 1633 he founded the first astronomical observatory in Leiden.

Through Golius's work the scope of Persian studies, as they had been pursued by Dutch Arabists since the end of the 16th century, was widened. In the course of the preparation of his famous *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* (Leiden, 1653), which is partly based on Persian and Turkish lexicographical sources, he also assembled dictionaries for Persian and Turkish. Whereas the latter was never printed, the *Dictionarum persico-latinum*, completed in 1643, was



posthumously published by the Cambridge scholar Edmundus Castellus as an appendix to the multilingual dictionary *Lexicon Heptaglotton* (London, 1669).

Golius used to employ informants from the Middle East to copy manuscripts and help him with the interpretation of Oriental texts. One of them was Ḥaqqverdi, who in 1639 visited the court of Schleswig-Holstein as the secretary of an envoy of the Persian king. Shortly after his return to Persia, he went back to Germany, where he assisted Adam Olearius in his translation of Sa'di's *Golestān*. In 1642 and 1643 Ḥaqqverdi worked in Leiden and, among other things, provided practical information concerning the meaning of Persian words which found their place in Golius's dictionary.

The *Golestān* was also a focus of Golius's Persian studies. Two of his students made important contributions to the introduction of Sa'di's prose-work in the West: Levinus Warner (d. 1667) wrote two treatises based on selections from the *Golestān* (1642, 1644), and Georgius Gentius (d. 1678) published the first printed edition, accompanied by a Latin translation (*Rosarium politicum*, Amsterdam, 1651).

Two Arabic texts published by Golius are also relevant to Persian culture: the proverbs attributed to 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb (*Proverbia quaedam Alis*, Leiden, 1629) and Ebn 'Arabšāh's biography of Timur Lang (*'Ajāyeb al-maqdur fī nawā'eb Timur*, tr. as *Vitae & rerum gestarum Timuri*, Leiden, 1636). To comment upon the latter text, he examined Mirkvānd's Persian chronicle *Rawzat al-ṣafā*.

Of the collection of Oriental manuscripts assembled by Golius, only those which were acquired for the Leiden University Library were listed in catalogues by P. Gassendi (Paris, 1630) and by Golius himself (Leiden, 1640). His private collection did not remain in the Netherlands. It was auctioned in 1696 and almost entirely passed into the hands of Bishop Marsh, who left these manuscripts to the Bodleian Library, Oxford.



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