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### **Abstract: “Grammars of Globality”**

For this paper, I would like to examine a manuscript folio (Shiraz, 1341 CE), held in the David Collection of the Royal Library of Copenhagen, to show how it utilizes a number of “grammars” that could speak globally to global audiences. The folio contains a story from the *Shahnameh* (w. 1010), the famous “Book of Kings” that recorded a world-history of kingship. For centuries, this poem afforded the Persianate empires of Eurasia (including the Mongols, Timurids, Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals) a vocabulary by which they could articulate their legitimacy; by patronizing copies of the poem and commissioning “sequels” that wrote their dynastic history into it, these empires declared themselves the worthy successors of its legendary kings. The story in the story, so to speak, taps into discourses still deeper and more widespread: the figure depicted in this folio is Alexander, confronting the hordes of Gog and Magog. Adapted, translated, and circulated across the continent, the Alexander Romance provided another semiotic universe through which readers could understand and appreciate this artifact, conjuring images not only of universal kingship but of the world itself, a geographical orientation reproduced in the ubiquitous T-O *mappa mundi*. This moment in Alexander’s journey also furnishes the text with a temporal orientation, that of sacred history and the End of Days: as a demi-prophet in the Qur’an who walls out the biblical nations of Gog and Magog (al-Kahf 83–102, Ezekiel 38–39), the scene depicted on this folio would have resonated with a wide array of readers. I argue, then, that this artifact enunciates a vast network of interlinked historical, geographical, and eschatological discourses that would be legible and meaningful to readers from London to Karakorum; in so doing, it itself becomes a “global” object, and a window into how we might envision a “global” Middle Ages.

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