



Liana SAIF

I am currently a post-doctoral fellow at the Warburg Institute and Université catholique de Louvain for the ERC project "The origin and early development of philosophy in tenth-century al-Andalus: the impact of ill-defined materials and channels of transmission". My objective is to provide an in-depth analysis of the understudied *Kitāb al-Nukhab* attributed to Jābir ibn Ḥayyān, and to gauge its influence in al-Andalus. I will produce a critical edition and translation into English of the text. Before that, I was British Academy postdoctoral fellow at The Oriental Institute in the University of Oxford, conducting a project entitled, "Magic in Medieval Islam". My first monograph, *The Arabic Influences on Early Modern Occult Philosophy* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2015.

From *Kitāb al-Nukhab* to the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*: Medieval Magical Theory from "East" to "West"

Abstract:

For this presentation, I will introduce the text *Kitāb al-Nukhab* (*The Compendium*), concerned with magic theory. It is attributed to the natural philosopher and alchemist Jābir ibn Ḥayyān (d. 815), but as research has shown, this is not possible due to chronological discrepancies. This text is the product of the Eastern regions of Islamic civilisation (Syria, Iraq, Persia); however, it was most influential on another more famous magic text, *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (*The Goal of the Sage*), known also by its Latin name, the *Picatrix*. It was composed in the 10th century by Maslama al-Qurṭubī, an occultist from al-Andalus, Muslim Spain. Although the subject of both books is the same, their epistemological frameworks are different: the Jābirian text grounds its theory on Aristotelian natural philosophy, whereas the *Picatrix* relies on Neoplatonic ideas with mystical and esoteric objectives. In my presentation I will unpack this in order to see how the same ideas are appropriated and changed when they move from one context to another.