

**Jahfar Shareef Pokkanali**  
Curriculum Vitae (June, 2026)  
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Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, University of Bonn,  
Adenauerallee 10, 53113 Bonn  
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## EDUCATION

- 2025 Ph.D. in Orientalische Kunstgeschichte (Asian Art History), University of Bonn, Germany  
Dissertation Title:  
Entangled Interdependencies and Littoral Singularities: Mosque Architecture in Malabar and the Lakshadweep Islands in the Age of Colonial Globalisms in the Indian Ocean (*summa cum laude*)  
(Viva date: 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025)
- 2012 Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), Center for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.  
Thesis Title:  
Performance, Body, and Intersubjectivity: Understanding Theyyam in Malabar
- 2010 MA Sociology, Center for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
- 2008 BA Sociology with subsidiaries of Modern Indian History & Basic Psychological Process, Farook College, University of Calicut, Calicut.
- 2005 Secondary Schooling— Board of Higher Secondary Examination (Government of Kerala, India)— Humanities Stream.

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- 2026- Associate Researcher & Teaching Assistant, Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, University of Bonn, Germany.
- 2019–24 Doctoral Fellow, 'Embodied Dependencies'–Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, University of Bonn
- 2019–23 Teaching Assistant, Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, University of Bonn, Germany
- 2014–16 Archivist and Documenter, Wafa Wandoor, Kerala, India

## RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

### Research Interests:

- Islamic art and material culture in the Indian Ocean littorals, with an emphasis on Southern India
- Sufism and Islamic sensory cultures in the littorals of Southern India
- Architecture of Islamic sites in the Indian Ocean littorals and South India
- Hindu–Muslim relations in Malabar, South India

### Teaching Interests:

- Introductory seminars on Islamic architecture and material culture
- Islamic art and architecture of littoral Muslim communities in the Indian Ocean
- Sufism and Islamic visual and material cultures of Indian Ocean Muslim communities

## PUBLICATIONS

### Peer Reviewed

#### Articles/Book Chapters

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| 2026 | “Untangling Translittorality: Plinths and Pulpits in the Mosques of Malabar and Lakshadweep Islands, South India,” <i>Muqarnas</i> 43 (Forthcoming 2026)   |
| 2023 | “Mediating Śakti: Embodied Dependencies and Senses in Teyyam, Malabar, South India,” in <i>Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms: Artistic Communities and Patronage in Asia</i> , edited by Julia A. B. Hegewald, 195–238. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2023.<br><a href="https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110979855-007">https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110979855-007</a> |
| 2018 | “Sailing Across Duniyav: Sufi Ship-Body Symbolism from the Malabar Coast, South India,” <i>South Asian Studies</i> 36, no. 2 (2018): 125–38. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/02666030.2018.1495872">https://doi.org/10.1080/02666030.2018.1495872</a>   |

#### Short Articles

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|------|--|
| 2024 | “Social Stratification on the Island Communities of Lakshadweep, South India,” <i>Dependent</i> 10, no. 2 (2024): 51–53. |
| 2021 | “Dependency in Caste System,” <i>Dependent</i> 3, no. 1 (2021): 50–51.   |

#### Book Review

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|------|--|
| 2015 | Review of Hilal Ahmed, “Muslim Political Discourse in Postcolonial India: Monuments, Memory, Contestation,” <i>South Asia Research</i> 35 (2015): 257–59.<br><a href="https://doi.org/10.1177/0262728015581290">https://doi.org/10.1177/0262728015581290</a> |
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**FELLOWSHIPS,  
SCHOLARSHIPS,  
GRANTS,  
AND AWARDS**

- 2026 The UC Berkeley South Asia Art & Architecture Dissertation Prize for 2026  
<https://southasia.berkeley.edu/initiatives/artberkeley/saai-awardees>
- 2025 Defended doctoral dissertation with the grade of *summa cum laude* at the University of Bonn, Germany.
- 2019 Doctoral Fellowship, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (Research Area B: Embodied Dependencies), University of Bonn, 2019.
- 2019 Hamad Bin Khalifa Travel Fellowship for The Seas and the Mobility of Islamic Art, Eighth Biennial Hamad Bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar, 2019.
- 2018 Doctoral Scholarship, Bonn International Graduate School of Oriental and Asian Studies (BIGS-OAS), University of Bonn, 2018–2019.
- 2018 PhD Fieldwork Grant, The Barakat Trust, Oxford, UK, 2018.
- 2010 Junior Research Fellowship (JRF), University Grants Commission (UGC), Government of India, 2010–2012.
- 2008 Merit-Cum-Means Scholarship, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, 2008–10.

**CONFERENCE PANELS  
ORGANIZED**

- 2025 "Restoration, Re-assembly, Re-Use: Material Artistic Processes in the (Re)inscription of Power and Identities in South Asian Frontiers" at the 4th European Association for Asian Art and Archaeology (EAAA) Conference, September 8–13, 2025.
- 2021 "Bodies of Dependency" in Embodied Dependencies, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS), University of Bonn/Online, September 22–23, 2021.

**CONFERENCE PAPER  
PRESENTATIONS**

- 2026 "From Books to the Walls of Mosques: Transmedial Use of Textual Fragments in the Islamic Architecture of Colonial Malabar, South India" in *Deutschen Südasientag* organized by Dr. Isabella

- Schwaderer (Universität Erfurt) Dr. Sara Keller (Universität Erfurt) Prof. Dr. Carmen Brandt (Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn) Dr. Johanna Buß (Universität Heidelberg) Dr. Ira Sarma (Universität Leipzig)- in Kooperation mit dem Arbeitskreis Neuzeitliches Südasiens der DGA, June 26–27, 2026.
- 2025 "Inscriptional Adjacency and Religious Authority: Bi-lingual Inscriptions from Dravida-Kerala Mosques" in *Research Dialogues on Kerala: Malayali Worlds in Focus* Workshop organized by the Department of Indology at the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies (AOI), Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, October 31– November 1, 2025.
- 2025 "Early Islamic Funerary Sites Along the Southern Indian Littorals: Materialities, Forms and Ornaments" in *The Materiality of Ziyāra in the Early Islamic World Tombs, Shrines, Practices and Politics (ca. 650-1300 CE)* workshop organized by Gerhard Wolf and Aila Santi, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, 27-29 October 2025.
- 2025 "Towards an Ecocritical Art History of the Littorals: The Herbal Lime Plaster-Based Mural Writings and Images in Drāviḍa-Malabar Mosques, Southwest India," in *Ecological Imaginaries in South Asia's Art History* (Panel organized by Krishna Shekhawat), Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison, October 23, 2025.
- 2025 "Ideo-political Contestations in the Inscriptional Re-assembly: The Minbars of Congregational Mosques in the Port City of Calicut, Southwest India," in *Restoration, Reassembly, Re-Use: Material-Artistic Processes in the (Re)inscription of Power and Identities in South Asian Frontiers*, The Fourth Conference of the European Association for Asian Art and Archaeology, University of Lisbon, Portugal, 8-13 September 2025.
- 2024 "Through the Antechambers and Ambulatories: The Use of Image-Texts and Transmediated Image Cycles in Malabar Mosques, South India," Department of Asian and Islamic Art History (AIK), University of Bonn, April 15, 2024.
- 2023 "Age of Sail in the Indian Ocean: A Case Study on the Mosque of the 'King of Moors in Malabar,' South India," Department of Asian and Islamic Art History (AIK), University of Bonn, November 6, 2023.
- 2022 "Ferocious Petals in Circulation: Agency of Textile Motifs in Littoral Mosques of Malabar, South India," PhD Colloquium, Bonn

- Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS), University of Bonn, July 20, 2022.
- 2021 “The Dance of Subaltern Gods: Caste Ideology and Dependency in the Liminal Structure of 'Theyyams' on the Malabar Coast, South India,” in Embodied Dependencies and Freedoms: Artistic Communities and Patronage in Asia (Virtual Workshop), Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS), University of Bonn, October 14–15, 2021.
- 2019 “Improvisation Through a Culture of Dependency: Islamic Material Culture in the South Indian Littorals,” in Dependency, Inequality and Material Culture Workshop, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS), University of Bonn, February 12–14, 2019.
- 2019 “Articulating Sufi-Interstitiality in the Age of Steam: Muslim Ship Imageries from the Colonial Malabar,” (updated) in Vernacular and Cosmopolitan in South Asian Islam Workshop, University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A., April 5–6, 2019.
- 2019 “Thinking Through Bricolage(s): Problematizing 'Islamic Architecture' in the Littorals of South India,” in Primacy of Form Symposium, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., October 25–26, 2019.
- 2019 “The Arts of Littoral Islam: Through the Porches of Mosques in the Southern Coasts of India,” in The Seas and the Mobility of Islamic Art Symposium, Eighth Biennial Hamad-bin-Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar, November 10–11, 2019 (sponsored by Virginia Commonwealth University and Qatar Foundation).
- 2018 “Articulating Sufi-Interstitiality in the Age of Steam: Muslim Ship Imagery from Colonial Malabar, South India,” in Eurasian Doctoral Colloquium, Gustav Stresemann Institute, Bonn, Germany, October 5–7, 2018.
- 2018 “Towards a Historiography of Islamic Art in the Littorals of South India: Problems and Issues,” Department of Asian and Islamic Art History (AIK), University of Bonn, October 15, 2018.
- 2017 “Sailing Across 'Duniyav': A Ship Painting from an 18th Century Mosque in Malabar, South India,” in Speech and Space: Discursive Environment across non-Arab Islam Symposium, Vanderbilt University, Tennessee, U.S.A., September 7–9, 2017.

- 2017 “Between 'Syncretic' Past and 'Islamic' Present: Muslim Sacred Spaces in Malabar,” Department of Islamic Studies, University of Calicut, Kerala, India, October 28, 2017.
- 2016 “‘Jasad-ul-Muslim' Sailing Across 'Duniyavu': Imagery, Pedagogy and 'Ilm in a Painting from a Mosque in Malabar, Kerala,” in *Ilm: Science, Religion, and Art in Islam Conference*, Centre for Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture (CAMEA), University of Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, July 20–23, 2016.
- 2015 “Muslim Sacred Spatialities in Transition: The Mosques of Kerala,” in *Religion and Social Diversity in South Asia International Conference*, Indian Institute of Advanced Study (IIAS), Shimla, October 12–14, 2015.

**CAMPUS LECTURES**

- 2025 "Exclusion by Inclusion: The ‘Anti-structure’ of Teyyam Performance in North Kerala." Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, University of Bonn. 8 May 2025.
- 2025 "Teyyam Ritual of North Kerala: Interdependencies and Senses." Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, University of Bonn. 9 December 2025.

**TEACHING**

Department of Asian and Islamic Art History, University of Bonn

- 2026 2026/27 WiSe | On Islamic Material Culture in the Indian Ocean Littorals: Mosque Architecture and Tombstones
- 2022-23 2022/23 WiSe | The Architecture of Muslim Sacred Spaces in South and Southeast Asia: An Introduction
- 2022 2022 SoSe | An Introduction to Islamic Art and Material Culture
- 2021-22 2021/22 WiSe | On Muslim Sacred Places: An Introduction to Islamic Architecture
- 2021 2021 SoSe | An Introduction to Islamic Art and Material Culture
- 2020-21 2020/21 WiSe | On Muslim Sacred Places: An Introduction to Islamic Architecture
- 2020 2020 SoSe | An Introduction to Islamic Art and Material Culture
- 2019-20 2019/20 WiSe | On Muslim Sacred Places: An Introduction to Islamic Architecture

**WORKING GROUP  
DURING DOCTORAL  
RESEARCH**

Archaeology of Dependency, Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, University of Bonn

<b>ACADEMIC SERVICE</b>	Reviewer for International Quarterly for Asian Studies Reviewer for Contemporary South Asia
<b>PROFESSIONAL SERVICE</b>	Board Member–European Association for Asian Art and Archaeology (EAAA)
<b>MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS</b>	The Ernst Herzfeld Society for Studies in Islamic Art and Archaeology European Association for Asian Art and Archaeology (EAAA) The Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society (MIAS)
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	Malayalam (Native) Arabic (good working proficiency) Hindi (A2) German (A2)
<b>RESEARCH RELATED TECHNICAL SKILLS</b>	AutoCAD for Architectural Drawing QGIS for Map-making Data Sampling and Analysis in Residue Archaeology
<b>ACADEMIC REFERENCE</b>	<b>Prof. Dr. Julia A.B. Hegewald</b> Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn Institut für Orient- und Asienwissenschaften (IOA) Abteilung für Asiatische und Islamische Kunstgeschichte (AIK) Adenauerallee 10, 53113 Bonn E-Mail: julia.hegewald@uni-bonn.de (Ph.D. Supervisor)



**The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture**

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November 19, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I write to confirm that “Untangling Translitterality: Plinths and Pulpits in the Mosques of Malabar and Lakshadweep Islands, South India,” by Dr. Jahfar Shareef Pokkanali, has been accepted for publication in *Muqarnas: An Annual on Visual, Material, and Architectural Cultures of the Islamic World*. It is currently being prepared for publication in *Muqarnas* 43 (due out in 2026).

Yours sincerely,

Karen A. Leal, PhD

Managing Editor,  
*Muqarnas: An Annual on Visual, Material, and Architectural Cultures of the Islamic World*  
[muqarnas@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:muqarnas@fas.harvard.edu)



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Prof. Dr. Julia A.B. Hegewald  
Professorin für Orientalische  
Kunstgeschichte  
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Bonn, 6. April 2025

**Betreff: Confirmation of teaching at university level**  
**For: Jahfar Shareef Pokkanali**

Dear Sir or Madam,

this is to reconfirm that as a doctoral candidate in my department, Mr. Jahfar Shareef Pokkanali, offered regular teaching for the University of Bonn for 4 consecutive years. Between October 2019 and February 2023, he taught the following seminars for Masters students from the entire Faculty of Humanities.

Causes taught:

2019/20 WiSe | On Muslim Sacred Places: An Introduction to Islamic Architecture  
2020 SoSe | An Introduction to Islamic Art and Material Culture  
2020/21 WiSe | On Muslim Sacred Places: An Introduction to Islamic Architecture  
2021 SoSe | An Introduction to Islamic Art and Material Culture  
2021/22 WiSe | On Muslim Sacred Places: An Introduction to Islamic Architecture  
2022 SoSe | An Introduction to Islamic Art and Material Culture  
2022/23 WiSe | The Architecture of Muslim Sacred Spaces in South and Southeast Asia: An Introduction

Jahfar's classes were always fully booked and the students loved his open and direct way of communicating experiences from fieldwork but also highly theoretical issues. The comments I received from students were throughout positive and we greatly regret that he had to cease teaching for us to concentrate more fully on finalising his PhD and on presenting papers and publishing these.

With kind regards,

Prof. Dr. Julia A. B. Hegewald.