

Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila

* 26.2.1963 † 18.12.2023



Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila passed away due to a sudden illness on 18 December 2023 in Edinburgh. Hämeen-Anttila is remembered as a prolific scholar, translator and author who wrote numerous books and articles. He served as Professor of Arabic Language and Islamic Studies at the University of Helsinki 2000–2016 and held a similar chair at the University of Edinburgh 2016–2023.

Hämeen-Anttila studied Classical Arabic, Akkadian, other Semitic languages and Persian, among other things, at the University of Helsinki. He wrote his master's thesis in Assyriology and also began writing his doctoral thesis in this subject. However, Hämeen-Anttila ended up changing the topic of his doctoral thesis and eventually focused on Classical Arabic philological tradition. The thesis was entitled *Lexical ibdāl, Part I: Introduction: Source studies: With a reconstruction of Abu Turāb's K. al-I'tiqāb* (Finnish Oriental Society, 1993).

Following his doctoral thesis, Hämeen-Anttila published several English articles in quick succession and edited Arabic texts. He was appointed Professor of Arabic Language and Islamic Studies at the University of Helsinki in 2000.

Hämeen-Anttila also translated a large number of Classical Arabic and Persian texts into Finnish. His translations include the *Quran* and poetry by Rumi and Hafez. He wrote many Finnish works popularizing academic research, including *Islamin käsikirja* (Otava, 2004) and *Mare nostrum: länsimaisen kulttuurin juurilla* (Otava, 2006).

Hämeen-Anttila's main contributions to international research are his monographs: *Maqama: A History of a Genre* (Harrassowitz, 2002), *The Last Pagans of Iraq: Ibn Wahshīyya and His Nabatean Agriculture* (Brill, 2006), *Khwadāynāmag: The Middle Persian Book of Kings* (Brill, 2018), and *Portrait of an Eighth-Century Gentleman: Khālid ibn Safwān in History and Literature* (Brill, 2020). These books and numerous articles demonstrate Hämeen-Anttila's extensive academic expertise. They also display his interest in finding and using sources that other scholars may have overlooked.

The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters invited Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila to become its member in 2005.

In the 2010s, Hämeen-Anttila began looking for academic posts outside Finland. He was appointed Professor of Arabic

and Islamic Culture at the University of Edinburgh in 2016. While in Edinburgh, he gathered a new group of students around him who were interested in Islam and Classical Arabic and Persian literature.

Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila's passing was sudden and unexpected. He is missed by his family, friends, colleagues and students in Finland, Scotland and around the world.

Ilkka Lindstedt