

# **SPACES & VISIONS**

1<sup>st</sup> Biennial Symposium of the Historians of Islamic Art Association (HIAA)

## **ABSTRACTS**

The University of Pennsylvania

October 16-18, 2008

## Introduction

This symposium is intended as the inauguration of a biennial cycle of meetings within the field in order to reflect its growth, to support its expanding methodological, regional, and temporal scope, and to give the Historians of Islamic Art Association (HIAA) greater visibility internationally as the leading organization for historians of Islamic art, architecture and archaeology.

The symposium takes place over a three-day period, with each of the three days focused on a different zone of interest. The first day, "Out of Late Antiquity," takes up the field's formative emphasis on early Islamic art, a field remade in recent years through continued archaeological investigations and critically informed readings of the historical sources. The second day, "'Unity and Variety' Once More: Time, Place, Material," examines the field's definitive shift since the late 1970s to regional, dynastic, and media-based inquiries. The third day, "Confronting Modernity," addresses the extension of the field into the modern and contemporary periods, and emerging debates about their study.

The program for each day consists of three separate elements: a keynote address, three sessions of papers, and a specialized workshop. The three keynote addresses will be supported by three scholarly sessions, each comprised of four papers. Session organizers have been asked to develop a theme appropriate for the day for their session, and invite speaker or call for papers. They were free to invite a co-organizer. They have also been encouraged to recruit one of their four papers from abroad, preferably from scholars residing in countries of the Islamic world. The workshops, each led by an expert or team of experts, are meant to familiarize colleagues with new directions or findings in specific sub-fields that may not be familiar or easily accessible.

The program was designed and developed by Renata Holod (HIAA President 2008-2009) with Stefano Carboni (HIAA President 2007-2008), and HIAA executive members Kishwar Rizvi, M. Shreve Simpson, F. Barry Flood, Maryam Ekhtiyar, and Emine Fetvacı. Early support for the organization of the symposium came from the History of Art Department at the University of Pennsylvania (David Brownlee and Holly Pittman, Chairs), and Her Highness Hussah Sabah Salem al-Sabah, Director General, Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, Kuwait. Other centers at the University of Pennsylvania: Center for Ancient Studies (Robert Ousterhout, Director), Middle East Center (Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, Director), South Asia Center (Kathleen Hall, Director) responded enthusiastically to our proposal, as did the Program for Cinema Studies (Karen Beckman, Director), the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (Roger Allen, Chair), the Department of Religious Studies (Jamal Elias, Chair), the Department of Women's Studies (Rita Barnard, Director) and the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation (Frank Matero, Director). Foundations have been most generous in supporting our initiative: Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Gerda Henkel Stiftung, Iranian Heritage Foundation, and the Turkish Cultural Foundation. The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, Harvard University has offered support for programming while Ann Matter, Associate Dean for Humanities, School of Arts and Sciences made it possible for us to apply successfully to the Mellon Cross-Cultural Conference and Publication Fund. Finally, we would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of Elizabeth Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar, and Jere Bacharach as well as an anonymous donor.

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## Keynote Address

**Alan Walmsley, University of Copenhagen**

### *Archaeology, materiality, and meaning in things: Formative processes in the first Islamic centuries*

Archaeology in the last thirty years has inundated Islamic studies with huge amounts of raw data, but only sporadic analysis and even less explanation. This situation has both clarified and complicated matters enormously. The problem is not only with the volume of data, but also the very nature of that material: what questions can be asked of it, its uses in formulating cultural history, the intellectual obfuscation that often haunts archaeological analysis, and how such approaches and results relate to Islamic art. Adding to the confusion is the blatant unreliability of earlier archaeological work in the Middle East. Hence the archaeology of Islam has struggled to free itself from a sadly tainted chapter in the history of the discipline, while seeking connectivity to contemporary trends in approaching the history of art.

With the above in mind, this paper sets out to evaluate new understandings derived from recent archaeology in the Middle East, especially that undertaken in Bilād al-Shām. The abandonment of conventional art historical approaches have encouraged the adoption of more contemporary methodologies that are more compatible with the new types of data produced by archaeological research. In turn, these developments have influence the nature of archaeological investigation at Islamic-period sites. To some, this advance has created a certain intellectual distancing between archaeology and art history, but that perceived disparity is considerably more apparent than real. Modern intellectual discourse permits a multiplicity of approaches to achieve a common objective, in this case a deeper, more encompassing, and more meaningful understanding of the formation and development of Islamic society and culture. Not only are fresh perspectives brought to bear on long-standing issues, but completely new questions have been formulated, and are currently being addressed, on matters such as the development of economic systems, material culture as an agent of social change, dietary practices, religious interaction, and environmental change. From these perspectives, a clear argument can be made for general compatibility of contemporary practice in archaeology and art history. Hence, there is a great deal of common ground between the two disciplines if archaeologists and art historians emphasize that which is shared.

**Alan Walmsley** is an archaeologist whose research focus is the East Mediterranean during the first millennium AD, with a particular emphasis upon social and economic conditions in Syria-Palestine. He began his career in New Zealand (MA Hons. University of Auckland), and received his PhD in 1988 from the University of Sydney where his research focused upon the urban history of early Islamic Syria-Palestine. He is currently Associate Professor of Islamic Archaeology and Art at the University of Copenhagen. He has worked in the Middle East for over 30 years, directing four field projects including the Danish-Jordanian Islamic Jarash Project. Walmsley has organized many conferences and workshops, presented papers at numerous meetings, lectured widely, and published some 80 titles including four books.

## Session 1.1 The Relationship of Archaeology and Art at the Beginning of Islam

*Session Leader:* Alastair Northedge, Université de Paris

Much of the new data on the material culture of Islam in its early period comes from archaeological sources, and is much wider than the narrow traditional canon established by K. A. C. Creswell. One consequence is a greater awareness of non-Muslim peoples, when the Muslim population was still small, but also the need to identify Muslim populations outside the great architecture. Another consequence is the much wider range of activities that can be detected and which bear on Art and Architecture, such as construction for sporting, military or even industrial purposes. A third is the greater contextualization of significant developments, such as the origins of Islamic ceramics. At the same time, an effort needs to be made to understand the different momentums of archaeology and art history, their different directions.

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**Yumna Masarwa**, Paris

*Early Islamic Military Architecture: The Umayyad Ribats of Palestine*

The Islamic conquest of the Levant itself during the 40's of the 7th century was the foundation stone for the establishment of the Islamic frontier defense system. During this conquest, the inexperience of the Muslims in seafaring made it necessary to develop a military defense system in the coastal cities of Palestine in order to protect the coastline against the Byzantines, who hoped to have a chance to regain it. Consequently, a new type of military architecture was introduced in this region, and that of the *ribatat*. The development of the Islamic military defense system in the coastal cities of Palestine went through three stages, which depended on the progress of the Islamic conquest of *al-Sham* (633-648), as well as on the Byzantine attacks on these cities. The first stage took place in the time of Umar b. al-Khattab (634-644), the second stage happened in the reign of Uthman b. Affan (644-656), and the third stage occurred in the Umayyad period (661-750), during which an organized *ribat* defense system was born on the Palestinian coast. By using literary sources and archaeological evidence, this paper discusses the major efforts undertaken by the Muslim caliphs during these three stages to defend the Palestinian coastline.

**Yumna Masarwa** received her BA in Archaeology at Ben-Gurion University in Israel, where she worked as an archaeologist for 5 years at the Israeli Antiquities Authority. In 2006, she received her Ph.D. in Islamic Art and Archaeology from Princeton University. Her dissertation, entitled *From a Word of God to Archaeological Monuments: a Historical-Archaeological Study of the Umayyad Ribats of Palestine*, studies the 8th-century coastal *ribats* of Palestine from a historical, philological, archaeological and architectural point of view. It argues that the phenomenon of the *ribats* in the Islamic world started in the eastern Mediterranean (Palestine) and not in the west (Tunisia) as believed until now. Masarwa is currently conducting research in Paris as an associate member at the CNRS Islam Médiéval, and will start teaching at INALCO (Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales) as well as at the CIEE (Center of International Educational Exchange) in Paris during the academic year 2008-2009.

**Eva R. Hoffman**, Tufts University

*The Samarra Dancers: Evidence for the Definition of an Abbasid Style*

Since the publication of the corpus of Samarra wall paintings by Ernst Herzfeld in 1927, the Samarra Dancers have arguably become the most familiar, iconic works of Abbasid painting. The images of the Dancers have been used to support the claim of a new Abbasid dynastic style that broke with the western dominated Graeco-Roman visual tradition of their Umayyad predecessors and reoriented their Abbasid identity toward the traditions of the East, most directly the Persian, Sasanian heritage.

While definitive conclusions regarding the Samarra wall paintings ultimately must await the full study of all of the extant fragments, I contend that following the publication of Herzfeld's corpus of paintings, the repeated reproduction and analysis of Herzfeld's colored drawings of the Dancers in the art historical scholarship have promoted the definition of an eastern orientation for Abbasid painting. I will argue that by analyzing the painting fragments and photographs alongside the drawings it is possible to reassess the style of Abbasid painting and tell a different story. The Abbasids did not turn their backs on Umayyad visual traditions. A careful examination of the evidence will point to more fluid boundaries and a plurality of continuities with pre-Islamic and Umayyad art, both east and west. The dismantling of the dominance of an eastern trajectory in defining Abbasid art will, furthermore, destabilize altogether the east-west binary through which the relationship between Umayyad and Abbasid art has been framed.

**Eva R. Hoffman** is Associate Professor of Art History at Tufts University, where she teaches courses including Islamic art, the art of the medieval Mediterranean world, Iconoclasm and Iconophobia, and Orientalism and the visual arts. She also serves as the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Art History and the Director of Middle Eastern Studies. She has written on portable objects, Christian-Islamic exchange, and the early-illustrated Arabic book. Her current research focuses on visual and cultural exchange in the Mediterranean. She recently edited the anthology, *Late Antique and Medieval Art of the Mediterranean World*, Blackwell Press, 2007, and is writing a book, *Remapping Boundaries of Art and Culture in the Medieval Mediterranean World*. She served as President of HIAA from 2002-05.

**Ian Straughn**, Brown University

*Common Ground: Landscape emplacement and the art and archaeology of early Islamic Bilād al-Shām*

When early Muslims began to organize a new society in the territories of the former Byzantine and Sasanian empires one of the major challenges that they faced was not from the armies or conquered peoples themselves but from the landscape. Indeed, al-Muqadassi notes that in the building of the great Mosque of Damascus al-Walid's was fundamentally an effort to divert the attention of Muslims from the attractive places still inhabited by the indigenous communities with which the new *umma* was to contend. Under the predominating division of labor between an art historical focus on the imperial aesthetics of architecture and the archaeological concern with questions of urban planning and the model for the Islamic city, the question of landscape, its transformation, and the theologico-political matrix of its production – particularly in the region of Bilād al-Shām in the earliest Islamic period – has lacked a coherent theoretical and methodological synthesis. This paper seeks to provide the conceptual

and empirical underpinnings for synthesizing an approach to early Islamic landscape production by drawing on the growing body of literature within archaeology, human geography and anthropology that treats the landscape within the frame of Heideggerian considerations of dwelling. With the landscape so positioned as the object of study a new common ground can emerge between the archaeological record, the historical record and the art object that situates material culture more generally as key to understanding the practices of dwelling and how they are negotiated within a context of cultural contact. The site of Qinnasrin/Chalcis in northern Syria serves to demonstrate how material processes of landscape production variously employed strategies of appropriation, abrogation and accommodation within an emplaced narrative of past and present.

**Ian Straughn's** research and teaching interests focus on the emerging study of the archaeology of the Muslim World. This work was first developed while a graduate student in Anthropology at the University of Chicago and has continued as a member of the Joukowsky Institute at Brown University faculty. More specifically his work has concentrated on understanding how Muslim societies have been shaped by the landscapes which they have constructed and conceived by their relationship to the material world. A major aspect of his research has consisted of developing a methodology for bringing the archaeological and textual records into a productive dialogue about past societies. Additionally, Straughn's work has sought to understand the relationship of materiality to religious experience and the place of archaeology in the study of religion.

**Mattia Guidetti**, "Ca' Foscari" University, Venice  
*The Early Islam in Front of the Byzantine Churches*

New discoveries and reinterpretations of existing material allow the scholars to build up a more accurate description of the early Islamic society, in which, at least in the areas formerly belonging to the Byzantine empire, Christians were the majority population.

My paper will discuss the role of the Byzantine cathedrals in the Syrian and northern Mesopotamian conquered cities during the early Islamic period. The vague idea of the partition of their spaces with the Muslim believers, as it appears repeatedly in the manuals of Islamic art, has prevented deeper studies about their fate. For the most part, the urban Byzantine churches were in use up to the 9th-10th centuries. Partition seems unlikely because it is not supported by any decisive evidence, either archaeological or literary. This common opinion, therefore, needs to be completely reconsidered. The continued existence of churches after the 7th-century conquest, is not only important for the eastern Christianity, but could shed light on the processes of formation of Islamic art. Including the newly founded churches, as well as those built before the conquest but still in use after it, in the "discourse" on Islamic art would be the second required step in understanding and appreciating of their contemporary value.

In challenging the idea of a "partition" of the churches, the paper will show that there was a precise strategy toward the extant Christian cathedrals. The most new Muslim places of worship, in fact, were built beside or in front of the main churches, sometimes by confiscating part of their land property but always preserving their place of worship. Although it is possible that in southern Bilad al-Sham the pattern was slightly different (cf. Borsa, Jarash and Palmyra), the case of the destruction of St John's church of Damascus was an exception. Lastly, the role that these churches and, in particular, their

architectural elements, played in the construction of the early Islamic visual culture will be considered. A new formulation of the "reuse" will be suggested: the early Islamic period, in fact, exhibits a different attitude compared to the better known and debated medieval practice to which it has been assimilated.

The paper will demonstrate that the study of the Christian places of worship located within the caliphate belongs entirely to the study of Islamic civilization. The urban Byzantine churches, the real, living and "physical" cultural traces of Byzantium, were the obligatory mirror the new mosques were facing.

**Mattia Guidetti** obtained his PhD at "Ca' Foscari" University, in Venice in 2006. His dissertation analyzed patterns of continuity and change in art and urbanism between the world of Late Antiquity and Early Islam in the greater Syria area with a special emphasis on the Christian Arab population. A parallel research has been conducted on the city of Edessa/al-Ruha/Urfa.

He was an Aga Khan fellow at Harvard University (2007 -2008), and currently holds a J. P. Getty post-doctoral fellowship (2008-9). His publications include: "Churches and Mosques in the cities of Bilad al-Sham: coexistence and transformation of the urban fabric," in N. Rabbat, ed., *Early Islamic Urbanism* (Boston: Brill, forthcoming); "Problemi di ermeneutica nell'iconografia umayyade: Qusayr 'Amra e Khirbat al-Mafgar," (with G. Macchiarella), in A. Calzona, ed., *Scritti in onore del prof. Quintavalle* (Milano: Electa, 2007): 53-64; "L'antico in due edifici siriani medievali. La formazione dell'arte musulmana e il suo rapporto con l'antico: la Siria del XII secolo," in C.A. Quintavalle, ed., *Atti del VII Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Parma 21-25 settembre 2004* (Milano: Electa, 2007): 381-9.



## ***Session 1.2 Fatimid Art***

*Session Leader:* Jonathan M. Bloom, Boston College/Virginia Commonwealth University

The art and architecture of the Fatimid period in North Africa and Egypt (909-1171) comprises a diverse corpus of material in media ranging from urban planning and monumental architecture to carved ivory and rock crystal. Combined with an extraordinarily rich array of textual sources relating to the arts of the court and urban life, the material culture of this period gives an unusually complete picture of medieval Islamic art from the period before the Mongol invasions. To what extent is this dynastic art? To what extent is it a regional one? How does it change over the two and a half centuries of Fatimid rule? To what extent can one use the arts of the Fatimid period to generalize about other times and places?

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**Alison L. Gascoigne**, University of Southampton  
*Archaeology of the Fatimid Period in Egypt*

Egypt has been subject to much less archaeological research on its Islamic remains than, for example, Syria, with scholarly attention focused on the undoubtedly important excavations in Fustat over the last half century. With the growth of Islamic archaeology as a discipline, however, recent and ongoing survey and excavation has taken place at a number of other sites both inside and outside the capital. This paper aims to provide a brief overview of recent results relating to the period of Fatimid rule in Egypt, primarily at the three important urban sites of Tinnis, on the north coast, Aswan, at the southern border, and Old Cairo.

Fatimid Tinnis was an important port and centre of industry. The town was intermittently fortified, and apparently had an uneasy relationship with the Fatimid authorities in Cairo, before being depopulated and abandoned as a result of Crusader raids by 1169, according to the description of William of Tyre. Prior to this abandonment, however, archaeological evidence indicates a flourishing trade with Iran and China, and ongoing construction work and investment in infrastructure.

In the south of Egypt, Aswan marked the frontier with Nubia, and was the administrative centre and garrison town of Upper Egypt until the later part of the eleventh century, when it was replaced in this role by Qus. Recent and ongoing salvage work by the Swiss Archaeological Institute Syene Project, under the direction of Wolfgang Müller, has uncovered much information on the development of medieval Aswan. Although work on this is still at an early stage, I will present evidence for expansion of occupation to the north from around the ninth century through the Fatimid period.

Finally, I will touch upon some of the evidence recorded during archaeological monitoring of the Old Cairo Groundwater Lowering Project, directed by Peter Sheehan for the American Research Centre, for developments in the area of the Roman fort of Babylon relating to the Fatimid period.

**Alison L. Gascoigne** held a British Academy post-doctoral fellowship at Cambridge University, before

being appointed as Lecturer in Medieval Archaeology at the University of Southampton in 2007. Her principal research interests are the archaeology of provincial urbanism in the medieval Islamic world; and the analysis of archaeological ceramics.

**Nicholas Warner**, Independent Scholar, Cairo

*Fatimid Cairo: a Reappraisal of Form and Content*

This presentation will commence with a survey of extant Fatimid architecture in and around Cairo. The basis of the discussion will be the author's own map of the city and other cartographic sources, together with archival and current photographic documentation. This will be followed by an analysis, within the broader context of the city of al-Qahira and its satellite settlements, of a number of interesting remains that have come to light in the past decade. Finally, an attempt will be made to see how such fragmentary new data, as well as re-interpreted older data, further our understanding of the physical character of the Fatimid city.

**Nicholas Warner** is an architect trained at Cambridge University (UK), who has lived in Egypt since 1993. His primary research interest remains the Islamic Architecture of Cairo, but he has also participated in or directed a variety of projects related to the documentation, preservation, and presentation of historic structures and archaeological material throughout the country. These include projects in Quseir, Saqqara, Dakhla Oasis, Luxor, Sohag, Aswan and Cairo, where he worked for a number of years on the renovation of the Gayer-Anderson Museum. His recent books include *The Monuments of Historic Cairo: a map and descriptive catalogue* (American University in Cairo Press 2005) and *The True Description of Cairo: a sixteenth-century Venetian view* (Oxford University Press 2006).

**Mina Moraitou**, Benaki Museum, Athens

*Fatimid Woodwork*

On display at the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art are a number of woodcarvings which demonstrate the evolution and diversity of Islamic ornament from the 8th to the 19th century. The whole collection comprises about six hundred works of art in wood, mainly architectural elements such as doors, beams, inset panels of various sizes with vegetal, figural or epigraphical decoration, sections of furniture and wooden latticed windows (*mashrabiyya*). An important subsection is dated to the Fatimid period, a creative period in the history of Islamic art characterized by rich iconography and a varied ornamental vocabulary.

This paper examines two groups of woodcarvings which were acquired by Anthony Benakis from Egypt in 1948. The first group is a set of four decorative panels probably from a door and the other group consists of 26 panels of various sizes and a pair of shutters. This material is primarily unpublished. The first group, datable to the 11th century, is finely carved and decorated with real and fantastic animals as well as pairs of birds set within cartouches with leaf motifs. The second group is subdivided into two further groups according to the coloring of the surface. The motifs depict a variety of animals, birds, floral and geometric elements all carved in a similar manner and although rather

simplified and flat they fit within the Fatimid aesthetics. The discussion analyses these motifs and places them within the standard Fatimid iconography through the examination of Islamic and Coptic woodcarvings and especially compared to panels from the church of Sitt Barbara and the church of Abu Saifain in Cairo. During this period there is a marked connection between Islamic and Coptic woodwork. For the purposes of this analysis this connection is particularly useful since there is no known provenance for the Benaki groups and since the woodwork from Coptic churches may possibly be dated by tracing the history of the buildings.

**Mina Moraitou** received her Masters in Archaeology (subject Islamic art and archaeology) from the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London) in 1996 and her Postgraduate diploma with distinction in the history of Asian arts in 1992. She returned to Greece and has been working at the Benaki Museum, first in the Documentation and Systems department and after 1996 in the Islamic art department. Her interests lie in the art of the Arab world and especially Egypt. She has extensively contributed in exhibition catalogues, has published articles and worked for the creation of the Museum of Islamic Art which opened in 2004.

**Vivian B. Mann**, Jewish Theological Seminary  
*Fatimid Manuscripts in Hebrew and Arabic*

During the medieval period, most of the world's Jewish population lived in Muslim lands, rather than in countries governed by Christians. The consistency by which Islamic law treated *dhimmis* contributed to the continuity of Jewish life under Muslim rule from antiquity to the mid-twentieth century. Further, the lack of restrictive guilds like those in Europe resulted in a high level of cooperation between Jews and Muslims within trades and professions. One example is described in a *responsum* of Maimonides (1138-1204) that discusses the business arrangements between a Jew and a Muslim, a silversmith and a glassmaker, who were partners in one Cairene atelier. Although the issue before Maimonides was the distribution of monies collected by the Muslim partner on the Jewish Sabbath, the importance of the text for art history is the partnership between Muslim and Jewish artists.

This paper will examine the shared decorative motifs and compositions of Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts created during the Fatimid period. In the light of texts like that of Maimonides, these commonalities suggest that Jews and Muslims shared ateliers or, at the very least, had knowledge of each other's workshop practices. The Muslim and Jewish use of shared motifs and compositions continued in Spain during the High Middle Ages.

**Vivian B. Mann** is Director of the Masters Program in Jewish Art at the Graduate School of the Jewish Theological Seminary. For many years, she was the Morris and Eva Feld Chair in Judaica at the Jewish Museum, New York. Mann is the author of numerous articles on medieval art and Jewish art. Her latest book, *Art and Ceremony in Jewish Life. Essays in Jewish Art History* was published in 2005. She has been the recipient of a Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship for Museum Professionals, and two Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, among other awards. In 1996, she was a Fellow at The Institute for Advanced Studies of The Hebrew University, and in 1999, she received the Jewish Cultural Achievement Award in Jewish Thought from the National Foundation for Jewish Culture.

**Session 1.3 Messianism, Kingship and Sacred Cities in the Islamic World***Session Leader:* Heather Ecker, Detroit Institute of Art

The extraordinary number of cities in the Islamic World that are (or have been) considered sacred inspire this session. Cities sacred to Muslims are found in the Middle East, in North Africa, in the Indian Sub-continent, and arguably, in Europe. These cities attract pilgrims and prestige as the sites of ancient enclosures, as the sites of burial places of saints, as sites of learning, and as sites of caliphal authority. This session will enquire how such cities have supported, and in turn, been transformed by rulers who engaged with messianic ideas and propaganda as a form of legitimation. Such messianic ideas include mahdism (the expectation of an extraordinary figure in the world who will promote an age of justice, of righteousness, of equality and of peace), and imamism (the expectation in the reappearance of the occluded imam as the rightful temporal and spiritual leader of the umma). Messianic rulers have cast themselves as saviours of the people and protectors of the faith, claiming publicly corporal and spiritual lineages that lend them both political rights and spiritual stature. Messianic ideas stretch and compress time in various ways, paralleling the demolitions and constructions that messianic rulers have overseen in various cities, giving form to their mystique and sources of legitimation.

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:***Sussan Babaie**, Visiting Scholar at the Getty Research Institute*Friday Prayer and Millenarian Promises on the Shores of the Caspian Sea*

The founding of a major congregational mosque has traditionally been a royal prerogative, if not actually an obligation, especially when a new dynasty rises to power. Astonishingly, however, the empire of the Safavids (1501-1722) awaited an entire century before any dynastic sponsorship of new congregational mosques had materialized. In contrast to the thin output of the first Safavid century, the opening years of the second witnessed a simultaneous and coordinated building campaign that included congregational mosques along with the planning of new cities. The largest among them, begun in 1519/91 on the orders of Shah Abbas the Great, was devoted to the making of Isfahan as the new capital. The other major projects were focused on the urban overhaul of Kerman and Mashhad and, significantly, on the founding of the two brand new cities of Farahabad and, its royal satellite, Ashraf in Mazandaran. Of all these monumental urban projects, only two received a congregational mosque of royal patronage and scale: Isfahan and Farahabad. This remarkable divergence from the practices of the past and especially of those of the contemporary Ottoman and Mughal cities, where emphasis was on building major new mosques, remains largely unexplained. This paper tries to understand the cultural and political spectrum behind the coincidence, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, of the construction of the first (and last) two congregational mosques by the Safavid dynasty and the surge in building new cities. The relationship between theological debates over the permissibility of Friday prayer during the absence of the Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam in Imami Shi'i creed of the Safavids, and the development of Farahabad (and Ashraf) in Mazandaran anchor this study's mapping of kingship as the extraordinary fulfillment at the end of the first millennium in Islamic history of the messianic promises of Twelver Shi'ism.

**Sussan Babaie** is an independent scholar. Her book, *Isfahan and Its Palaces: Statecraft, Shi'ism and the Architecture of Conviviality in Early Modern Iran*, has just been published by the University of Edinburgh Press. Currently, she is a Visiting Scholar at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, where she is working on the houses of Isfahan as documents of spatial identities; the houses represent metropolitan networks of competition and cooperation within Isfahan that share links within the trans-regional spheres of commerce and diplomacy. Babaie's most recent article, "Visual Vestiges of Travel: Persian Windows on European Weaknesses," is being published by the *Journal of Early Modern History*. Babaie has taught at New York University, Smith College, and the University of Michigan.

**Christiane J. Gruber**, Indiana University, Bloomington

*Return, Retribution, and Reward: Messianism as Municipal Matter in Post-Revolutionary Iran*

In 2003, after he was elected Mayor of Tehran, Iranian President Mahmud Ahmedinejad suggested that the body parts of anonymous (*gom-nam*) martyrs from the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) be scattered and buried in all major city squares of Tehran. Although his plan was not approved, it revealed an explicitly sacralizing approach to Iran's capital city. It also disclosed the belief—traceable in a number of Islamic cities throughout the centuries—that urban space can be fashioned as a dramatic field for the deployment of religious values and for the transformation of daily movements into consecrated visitations to deceased saints, martyrs, and other champions of the Islamic faith. Moreover, the President's proposal showed how, in the case of post-revolutionary Iran, the formal vocabulary of city planning could be exploited in an attempt to help expedite and implement a new age of peace and justice as consecrated by the vestigia (*asar*) of martyrs.

This paper seeks to explore how messianic concepts have affected the urban form and visual language of Tehran from the time of the Islamic Revolution (1979) until today. Particular interest will be paid to the practice of renaming streets and squares to reflect messianic values. It also will focus on the activities of the city's mural arts program, which promotes Khomeini as a semi-divine hero steering the *umma* towards ultimate salvation, the rewards of self-sacrifice in the realm of the (Shi'i) eschaton, and the promise of retribution in the afterlife through the metaphor of the liberation of Jerusalem, itself the location for the Day of Judgment and the raising of the Scales of Justice. These many urban forms and visual materials serve to underscore how the Tehran municipality, governmental agencies, and para-statal organizations have all contributed to the particular visual culture and urban shape of modern Tehran. More importantly, they also provide valuable evidence for the urbanization of messianism, thereby compelling the development of new theoretical models for the scholarly study of Islamic cities.

**Christiane Gruber** (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 2005) is Assistant Professor of Islamic Art at Indiana University, Bloomington. Her primary field of research is Islamic painting, in particular illustrated books of the Prophet Muhammad's ascension and depictions of the Prophet Muhammad. She is the author of *The Timurid Book of Ascension (Mi'rajnama): A Study of Text and Image in a Pan-Asian Context* (Valencia, Spain: Patrimonio Ediciones in collaboration with the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Forthcoming, Fall 2008). Her catalogue of the Islamic calligraphies in the Library of Congress went active online in 2006 (at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/intldl/apochtml/apochome.html>).

Her research on post-revolutionary art in Iran is ongoing. She has published several articles on related

topics, including: “Jerusalem in the Visual Propaganda of Post-Revolutionary Iran,” in *Jerusalem: Idea and Reality*, eds. Suleiman Mourad and Tamar Mayer (London: Routledge, 2008); and “The Writing is on the Wall: Post-Revolutionary Murals in Tehran,” *Persica* (Forthcoming, Fall 2008).

***Workshop I On Qur'ans and Codicology***

**François Déroche**, École pratique des hautes études, Paris

The workshop will explore the contributions of codicology for art historians working on Arabic manuscripts. Materials from the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology will serve as a basis for the presentation.

**François Déroche**, PhD in History, Paris-Sorbonne (1987). Member of the École Normale Supérieure in Paris (1973-1978), Researcher at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (1978-1983), Researcher at the French Institute in Istanbul (1983-1987), Professor at the École pratique des hautes études, teaching History and codicology of the handwritten Arabic book (1990 to present). Publications include the catalogue of the Qur'an manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale (1983 and 1985), *The Abbasid tradition, Qur'ans from the 8th to 10th centuries* [Khalili collection] (1992), *Islamic codicology, An Introduction to the study of manuscripts in Arabic script* (2005).

## Keynote Address

**Gülru Necipoğlu, Harvard University**

### *Reflections on the Birth and Growth of the Field called Islamic Art*

The designated topic of the day, ““Unity & Variety”” Once More: Time, Place, Material,” encompasses a huge arena of inquiry sandwiched between Late Antiquity and Modernity. In this keynote lecture I hope to fulfill my appointed assignment to revisit once more the familiar trope of “unity and variety” by reflecting on the birth and growth of the field called Islamic art. The lecture seeks to examine the shift in the field, since the 1970s, from a predominant focus on the early period of Islamic art and architecture in the “central zone” of the Fertile Crescent to a broader chronological and geographical scope. This shift has contributed to a change of emphasis from artistic unity to variety, accompanied by an increasing prominence of dynastic, regional, and media-based inquiries that constitute the subject of today’s panels and workshop. My aim is to address the unresolved methodological tensions arising from the expanded scope of the field, along with concomitant anxieties over the fragmentation of its traditional “universalism.” The first half of the lecture outlines the premises of still prevalent approaches we have inherited from the construction of the field during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century, a field rooted in the entangled legacies of orientalism, nationalism, and dilletantism. In the second half of the lecture, I will review the reflections of several scholars since the 1950s on the state and future of the field before turning to my own reflections on challenges posed by its expanding horizons.

**Gülru Necipoğlu** is the Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art at Harvard University and the Editor of *Muqarnas* and its *Supplements*. She edited with Sibel Bozdoğan, *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), *Historiography and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the “Lands of Rum,”* with a preface, titled “Entangled Discourses: Scrutinizing Orientalist and Nationalist Legacies in the Architectural Historiography of the ‘Lands of Rum’.” She recently wrote the opening essay of *Purs Décors?: Arts de l’islam*, ed. R. Labrusse (2008): “L’idée de décor dans les régimes de visualité islamiques.” Her books include: *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power* (1991), *The Topkapı Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture* (1995), *The Age of Sinan* (2005). Her *Topkapı Scroll* won the Albert Hourani and Spiro Kostoff Book Awards. *The Age of Sinan* was awarded the Fuat Köprülü Book Prize. Gülru is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the International Palladio Center in Vicenza.



## Session 2.1 Women and Patronage

*Session Leader:* D. Fairchild Ruggles, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Although the patronage of architecture and the visual arts by women has been a rich topic of exploration in the field of art history and gender studies in general, until recently very few scholars had explored the role of women in Islamic art. Those studies that do exist show that women, both freeborn and slave, could amass fortunes and play a key role in the transfer of property, the construction of family identity and genealogy, and the public display of piety through their activities and endowed foundations. Although they did not appear prominently in chronicles and histories, women were important patrons of Islamic art and especially the built environment. One can hardly imagine Istanbul without the mosque, tomb, and bath complexes commissioned by Ottoman women, or Cairo without the tombs and pious foundations of Fatimid and Ayyubid women.

The study of women relies on a different methodology than that for men. Although women of the Prophet's family and in ruling houses appear in biographies and court chronicles, to find middle and lower class women, one must plumb court cases, dowry records, waqfiyyas, and commercial contracts and correspondence, often seeking moments when women stepped out of normative anonymity and asserted their legal or economic rights. Thus the study of women has benefited from – and contributed to – the methods of “microhistory” with its emphasis on individuals rather than broad currents. Moreover, with our emphasis on material culture and the built monument, art historians (and historians engaged in art history) have made important contributions to the study of women and Islamic culture in general, exploring the operative boundaries of private and public space and the exercise of political power through urban investment.

A critical work in the study of women in Islam was Leila Ahmed's *Women and Gender in Islam* (1992) because it introduced the issue to a wide reading public. In art history, Esin Atil's special issue of *Asian Art* (1993) was directed toward a general museum audience, but it was written by scholars and inspired others to pursue similar questions. In the past few years alone, many new works – several by HIAA members -- have appeared on the theme of female patronage in Islam. The session will adopt a specifically visual and historical point of view and will present new research on female architectural spaces, female patronage of public building, and the methodology of such studies.

### *Speakers Abstracts and Biographies:*

**D. Fairchild Ruggles** is Professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, with additional appointments to Art History, Architecture, and Gender & Women's Studies. She taught previously at Cornell, Binghamton University, and Harvard. Her first book, *Gardens, Landscape, and Vision in the Palaces of Islamic Spain* (2000), won the Eleanor Tufts Award from the American Society for Hispanic Art Historical Studies. Her most recent book is *Islamic Gardens and Landscapes* (2008). Her edited books and journals include *Women, Patronage and Self-Representation in Islamic Societies* (2000), *Cultural Heritage and Human Rights* (2007) with Helaine Silverman, *Landscape and Vision* (2007) with Dianne Harris, and *Intangible Heritage Embodied* (forthcoming in 2009).

*(The following two speakers are presenting companion papers dealing with the patronage of Fatimid women.)*

**Simonetta Calderini**, Roehampton University

*The epigraphic evidence of Durzan's architectural patronage*

Notwithstanding minor variations in attribution, literary sources provide an impressive list of the buildings which, over two decades, resulted from Durzan's patronage. On the other hand, the (so far) unique epigraphic evidence of her sponsoring activities is limited, mainly due to its fragmentary nature. Despite this limitation, the brief text of the inscription reveals the emphasis placed upon Durzan's role as Queen Mother and its purpose of advertising not only her status but the legitimacy of her son as imam-caliph.

**Simonetta Calderini** is Senior Lecturer in Islamic Studies at Roehampton University London. She is the co-author of *Women and the Fatimids in the World of Islam*, Edinburgh University Press, 2007 and has published in the fields of Women and Islam, Islam and Human Rights and *tafsir*.

**Delia Cortese**, Middlesex University

*Patronising or patronized? Interpreting Female Architectural Patronage during the reign of al-'Aziz*

This paper aims to discuss whether or not Fatimid royal women were directly in control of the financing, commissioning, even 'design' of the buildings and architectural works ascribed to their names. In view of the overall lack of overt references to this in literary sources of the time, an answer to the above question is proposed by examining the building activities of the Fatimid royal women in the context of the political and economic climates that prevailed in Cairo (and neighboring areas) at the time of their engagement in architectural patronage. In particular contextualized analysis will focus on the first and most prolific of the Fatimid patronesses, Durzan, the wife of the imam-caliph al-Mu'izz (r. 341-365/953-975) and mother of the imam-caliph al-'Aziz (r. 365-386/975-996). Her sponsoring activities, which mostly took place after her husband's death, are linked to the "construction" of her status as Queen Mother, which made her the most important female figure of power in the Fatimid court at that time.

**Delia Cortese** is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at Middlesex University London. She is the co-author of *Women and the Fatimids in the World of Islam*, Edinburgh University Press, 2007 and has published articles and monographs in the fields of Islamic Studies ranging from codicology to eschatology.

**Lucienne Thys-Şenocak**, Koç University

*In Search of a Valide's Voice: The Official Correspondence of the Ottoman Queen Mother Hadice Turhan Sultan*

Hadice Turhan Sultan entered the Ottoman harem in 1640 as a concubine of Sultan Ibrahim. She had been captured in a Tartar slave raid when she was approximately twelve years old and rose through the harem ranks at the Topkapı Palace to become the mother of Sultan Mehmed IV. With Sultan Ibrahim's death in 1648 Hadice Turhan, now in her early twenties, became the queen mother, or *valide*, and exercised a considerable amount of influence on the political and cultural agendas of the Ottoman empire throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century. To better understand this period of Ottoman history, and the different roles that Turhan Sultan and other royal women played within this era, a wide range of archival and material sources must be investigated. Architectural structures commissioned by imperial mothers, wives and daughters, along with their locations and the content of their epigraphic programs, all shed light on the patron's intentions and choices concerning the representation of power and the different ways it was negotiated at this time.

Ample archival documents from both Ottoman and European chroniclers record many aspects of Hadice Turhan's life, from her early struggle with her mother-in-law for supremacy in the harem, to her patronage of fortifications in the Dardanelles and the large architectural project she undertook in the capital: the Yeni Valide Mosque complex of Eminönü. Among the archival documents which can also be used to enrich our understanding of Hadice Turhan and her role within the Ottoman sultanate is a collection of correspondence between the valide and various palace officials, including the Grand Vezir and the Admiral of the Mediterranean fleet. This presentation examines the content and form of several examples of Turhan Sultan's correspondence and suggests how these official letters, all undated, can be used to better understand the historical context of the era in which they were produced. It brings together and compares Turhan Sultan's correspondence, its content and form, with examples of correspondence produced by other royal Ottoman women from the early modern era, such as Hürrem, Safiye, and Nurbanu Sultan. Finally it suggests how contemporary methodologies that are used to elucidate the varied discourses employed by early modern European women, especially their use of the epistolary genre, may help us to listen more carefully, and to read more closely, the voices and the writings of royal Ottoman women.

**Lucienne Thys-Şenocak** (PhD, 1994 from the History of Art Department, University of Pennsylvania) has been teaching in Istanbul at Koç University since 1994, first in the Dept. of History, and since 2007 in the recently established Archaeology and History of Art department. She is also the coordinator of the Graduate Program in Anatolian Civilizations and Cultural Heritage Management at the same university and teaches courses on site management, museum studies, visual culture, the history of art, and Ottoman architectural history. Her recent book, *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan* (Ashgate, 2006) is an examination of various aspects of the architectural patronage undertaken in Istanbul and in the Gallipoli region of Turkey by the mother of an Ottoman sultan who lived in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Thys-Şenocak has been responsible, since 1997, for a major architectural survey and documentation of Ottoman fortresses in the Dardanelles region of Turkey and has been directing, since 2005, a restoration project in the Gallipoli Peninsula Park of the Ottoman fortress of Seddülbahir.

**Afshan Bokhari**, Suffolk University

*Jahan Ara Begum's 'Gendered' Loci of Memory and Legacy: Begum Dalani, Ajmer (1638), Chahar Burj, Lahore (1646) and Agra Masjid (1648)*

The paper considers Jahan Ara Begum's mediation of authority and gendering of space through her patronage of sacred and secular sites in the imperially-significant cities of Ajmer, Agra and Lahore in seventeenth century Mughal India. The overall objective in each commission is on the politicization of space for legacy-building purposes that conform to Mughal ideology and political statecraft, however, the details and function of the works project and to some extent impose the princess' distinct personal and spiritual proclivities throughout the socio-political milieu. Though Jahan Ara's commissions deliberately use modified Shahjahani idioms that enlist and index the structures within the rubric of imperially-sponsored works, the intimate and nuanced women's spaces 'speak' less of imperial ideology and more of the princess' inner-workings and personal passions. Each work is located in proximity and in contrast to the grandiose and 'male-centered' projects of the emperor Shah Jahan and participates in a diametrically opposed gender-based dialectic. The ritual and social functions at these sites 'en-gender', inform and memorialize Jahan Ara Begum's spiritual memory and sustain her legacy.

**Afshan Bokhari** is an Assistant Professor of Art History at Suffolk University. Her teaching experience includes Dartmouth and Wellesley Colleges. She has served as an adjunct curator for two award-winning Rajput and Mughal painting exhibitions at Wellesley College. Her publications are included in *MARG*, *Oxford Encyclopedia: History of Women* and *Encyclopedia of Love in World Religions*. She recently completed her dissertation on Jahan Ara Begum's Patronage and Piety under the advisement of Dr. Ebba Koch at the Institute of Art History (University of Vienna) and Dr. Sunil Sharma at Boston University. Currently, she is modifying her dissertation for publication by Routledge in '09-'10.

## **Session 2.2 Pushing the Boundaries of the Iranian World: Theme; Medium; Dynasty(ies); Place**

*Session Leader:* Linda Komaroff, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

The art and architecture of the Iranian world in the Islamic period encompasses an enormously diverse body of material with expansive and often elastic temporal and spatial boundaries. This panel will take some of the by now traditional ways in which we look at and classify Islamic/Iranian art, whether stylistic, thematic, iconographic, dynastic, geographic or medium-based but will offer new perspectives. The boundaries to be pushed may be literal or figurative or both.

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**M. Shreve Simpson**, Independent Scholar, Baltimore

*Notions of Narrativity in Persian Imagery or Giving the Freer Beaker a Narrative Turn*

The past 25 years has witnessed a dramatic increase in scholarship on literary and visual narrative and the expansion of an entire academic field (narratology) with its attendant journals, symposia, Wikipedia entry and so forth. While the varied concepts and theories developed out of this so-called narrativist turn have attracted considerable attention within the history of art in general, less notice seems to have been taken within the history of Islamic art in particular. This paper returns to some studies of Persian images published in the early 1980s (that is, coinciding with the formation of NAHIA/HIAA) and reconsiders their assumptions, approaches and conclusions in light of current notions about the nature, function and meaning of narrative representation.

**M. Shreve Simpson** is an independent scholar whose research and publications focus on the arts of the Islamic book in general and Persian illustrated manuscripts in particular. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, she held positions at the National Gallery of Art, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts; Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery; and the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, she has received research fellowships and awards from the Getty Trust, National Gallery of Art, National Endowment for the Humanities and Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; taught at the University of Maryland, College Park; University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Maryland Institute College of Art; and the University of Pennsylvania; and served as a consultant to the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

**Yuka Kadoi**, Art Institute of Chicago

*Blue in Medieval Iranian Textiles: The Cycle of Chinoiserie*

This paper is concerned with the notion of blue in Iranian textiles in the context of Sino-Iranian artistic relations in medieval times, particularly at the time of the Mongol domination in West Asia. Rich color schemes were developed in Iranian textiles throughout the ages, but this particular color – blue – is one of the keys to understanding the long-standing pattern of artistic exchanges between East and West. By

looking at the use of blue in Ilkhanid textiles and related examples, this paper intends to provide a deeper understanding of the cycle of *chinoiserie* in medieval Iranian art and material culture.

**Yuka Kadoi** received a PhD in History of Art from the University of Edinburgh in 2005. She has been researching the art, architecture and material culture of the eastern Islamic world in the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries with special reference to East-West artistic and cultural relations in Mongol Eurasia. Her recent publications include: 'Çintamani: notes on the formation of the Turco-Iranian style', *Persica* 21 (2007); *Islamic Chinoiserie: The Art of Mongol Iran* (Edinburgh, 2009).

**Sheila Blair**, Boston College

*Dynasties in Iranian Art: the Case of the Ilkhans*

Iranian art, like its history, is traditionally divided by dynasty. This is the case not only with the pre-Islamic period, but also in Islamic times. Such groupings reflect—and often serve to reinforce—the country's strong tradition of monarchy and nationalism. Even the Mongols—usually seen as invaders who ravaged the country until they too were ultimately co-opted into Persian court culture and transformed into sultans—have been slotted into this model. This paper examines how looking at one such Turco-Mongolian dynasty—the Ilkhans, who ruled from 1258 to the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century—from a different perspective can shed light on the study of Iranian art, history and culture.

**Sheila Blair** shares both the Norma Jean Calderwood Professorship of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College and the Hamid bin Khalifa Endowed Chair of Islamic Art at Virginia Commonwealth University with her husband and colleague Jonathan Bloom. She is the author of a dozen books and hundreds of articles on many aspects of Islamic art, ranging from surveys to monographs on Ilkhanid manuscripts and buildings. Her current projects, with her husband, include editing the three-volume *Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture*, due out from Oxford University Press in 2009, and organizing an exhibition of Islamic art from the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago for 2011.

**Tim Williams**, University College London

*Merv: The Organization of Space in the Early Islamic City*

The Place: the city is comprised of historically produced spaces—spaces which are shaped by, and in turn shape, power, economy, culture, and society. Discourse in urban planning and architecture increasingly focuses on people interacting with space, people navigating, forming, shaping and re-shaping social dialogues within urban landscapes. Archaeology, and specifically the study of the pre-industrial city, can draw upon these developing concepts of contested space, movement, memorialization, community, inclusion and exclusion, to construct narratives of the historic city. Such concepts, supported by quantitative approaches, can enable us to develop our understanding of specific monuments and forms within the urban landscape, creating broader dialogues of social discourse and ideology. The early Islamic city of Sultan Kala at Merv offers a case study in urban planning, neighborhoods and urban life.

**Tim Williams** is a Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, where he has directed the Ancient Merv Project since 2001. Previously he was Head of Archaeology Commissions at English Heritage and a Senior Archaeologists with the Department of Urban Archaeology of the Museum of London. He has excavated and published extensively on Roman and early Islamic urbanism in the UK, the Middle East (especially Beirut) and Central Asia.

### **Session 2.3 Unity in Diversity? Circulation, Stasis and the Canon**

*Session Leader:* Barry Flood, Institute of Fine Arts/New York University

Among the many recent developments in the field that have helped redefine and refine the problematic notion of 'Islamic' art is a burgeoning interest in the nature of art produced in regions formerly considered marginal to the canon. Despite its undoubted innovations, much of this work assumes a rather static relationship between region and style, or subsumes regional and stylistic variety into a unity implied by dynastic labels. In addition, the majority of this research has been concerned with the relationship between Islam and its non-Muslim 'others'. With few exceptions (the recent interest in Fatimid-'Abbasid rivalry, for example) there have been far fewer attempts to analyze or deconstruct the nature of the Muslim self and its relevance to the history of material culture.

These phenomena reflect the instrumentality of fixed or static categories of analysis to the construction of a canon. By contrast, this session seeks to examine aspects of circulation and mobility, their relevance to the material culture of the Islamic world, and implications for its study. The mobility in question might entail shifting patterns of self-identification (conversion between different faiths or modes of Islamic belief, for example), the circulation of artistic forms and concepts as a result of mercantile exchange or pilgrimage, or the 'translation' of formal concepts between different media.

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**Lawrence Nees**, University of Delaware

*Decorated Verse 'Markers' in Early Qur'an Manuscripts and their Transregional Connections*

The first centuries of the history of the Qur'an are difficult to assess. Many fragments of manuscripts likely pre-date the earliest firmly dated example (873 C.E.), but the divergences among them in format, script, arrangement of texts, and decoration remain highly problematic. Are some of these divergences the product of different regional traditions, or of chronological development, or of patronage?

Perhaps it would be helpful to use a wider net than has heretofore been cast. Little has been found that compares well with early Qur'an manuscripts in part because most of the early manuscripts considered for comparison have been Syriac, Coptic and Greek, of which few survive. Latin manuscripts are far more numerous but have not been adequately considered. In this short paper I would like to compare the extraordinarily varied decorated verse-markers in the Sana'a and some closely related early Qur'an manuscripts to material (especially quire marks) in early Latin manuscripts, where it is clear that the comparanda all date from the seventh and earlier eighth century, providing some support for the notion of an early, Umayyad, dating for some of the extant Qur'an manuscripts. It may well be that the Latin books are survivors of decorative patterns and types more widely current across the Mediterranean world in the late antique and early medieval and early Islamic periods, but even if this were the case, they deserve study for the light they may shed on the earliest Qur'an manuscripts.



Similarities need not necessarily betoken direct contact, but could reflect shared responses to common stimuli, nor should even constellations of similar features necessarily imply near chronological proximity. However, the possibility of direct contacts between early Islamic and Latin manuscripts should not be excluded, and as examples of likely transregional contacts two Christian manuscripts in the library of St. Catherine's monastery at Mt. Sinai, one in Latin and another in Arabic, will be considered. These manuscripts suggest a shared tradition or even contact both within and beyond the borders of the Islamic territories.

**Lawrence Nees** (Ph.D. Harvard University, 1977) is Professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Delaware, where he has taught since 1978. Nees is a specialist in medieval art, especially in the earlier medieval period, ca. 500-1000, including Insular, Frankish and Byzantine, and most recently also Islamic materials. He has published two monographs (on Frankish subjects), an annotated bibliography volume on Byzantine and western medieval art, a general volume (*Early Medieval Art*, 2002, in the Oxford History of Art series), and edited a collection of studies (*Early-Medieval Art*, 1998, published by the Medieval Academy of America), and is completing a volume on the beginnings of manuscript illumination. He is currently co-editor of *Studies in Iconography* and Vice-President of the International Center of Medieval Art.

**Elizabeth Lambourn**, De Montfort University & School of Oriental and African Studies  
*Travelling with Style: Merchants, Craftsmen and the Transmission of 'Islamic' Material Culture in the Western Indian Ocean*

The traditional canon of "Islamic art" has been overly dependent on the fruit of courtly patronage for its constituent elements and, within this, the great land-centered courts of the Central Islamic Lands have been dominant. This paper is interested in using the new perspective of Indian Ocean Studies to examine another level or degree of agency in the creation of material culture, namely the role of merchants and craftsmen as cultural vectors in the western Indian Ocean.

It is only relatively recently that the Indian Ocean has fully entered academic research and discourse as a new viewpoint from which to look at many previously "peripheral" areas. The idea of the Indian Ocean has been especially important in bringing together the maritime eastern periphery of the "Central Islamic Lands", in a formation that usefully challenges many established ideas and static categories. This study of this sea-centered space challenges traditional ideas of territorial frontier, polity and sovereignty, and opens new perspectives on the creation and maintenance of Islamic and other identities. In terms of material culture, this viewpoint foregrounds mercantile and seafaring communities as consumers and as vectors of cultural transmission together with their seaborne networks of circulation and transmission.

The perspective from the Indian Ocean is interesting because it encourages us to look at areas where the creation and consumption of material culture by Muslim communities operated outside - or at least very far away from Islamic court structures. How then were concepts and models of Islamic material culture carried to, and materialized in, this new context? In spite of a large literature on cultural transmission theory, the mechanics of material culture transmission is still poorly understood. My paper will develop the idea of "cultural load" as a way of evaluating a particular individual's awareness and knowledge of material culture and to model cultural transmission around the Indian Ocean.

**Elizabeth Lambourn** is a historian of the material culture of Islamic South and Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean world. A Senior Research Fellow at De Montfort University (Leicester, UK) and a Research Associate of the Centre of South East Asian Studies (SOAS) she is currently working on a book about the socio-economic and cultural history of Middle Eastern diasporas in the western Indian Ocean (working title *Coastal Perspectives & Mercantile Cultures: India, Persia and Arabia 500-1500 CE*). Recent publications include: "Tombstones, texts and typologies – seeing sources for the early history of Islam in Southeast Asia", *JESHO* (2008) and "India from Aden – *Khutba* and Muslim Urban Networks in Late Thirteenth-Century India", in K. Hall (ed.) *Secondary Cities and Urban Networking in the Indian Ocean Realm* (Lexington Books, 2008). "A self-conscious architecture – Micro-Architecture and the Imagination of Islamic Modes of Decoration in South Asia", is due out in *Muqarnas* XXVII.

**Emine Fetvacı**, Boston University

*'Ottoman' Art at the Service of 'Ottoman' Identity*

The study of Islamic art of the early modern era is comfortably nestled in dynastic labels such as "Ottoman," "Safavid," "Uzbek" or "Mughal." Yet we as art historians rarely pay attention to how the patrons and practitioners from these neatly defined empires viewed themselves or conceived of the visual languages that were in use around them. The Ottoman court of the late sixteenth century provides an excellent case through which to study such dynamics. By concentrating on the patronage of individuals such as the chief black eunuch Mehmed Agha (d. 1590) and the chief white eunuch Gazanfer Agha (d. 1603), I propose to demonstrate first of all how these outsiders (one Ethiopian, one Venetian by birth) made use of art and architecture to present themselves as "Ottomans," and secondly, what "Ottoman" art meant to them. It is fascinating to see that the Venetian-born Gazanfer Agha chooses to model his self-image on that of the Timurid courtier Ali Shir Nevai, while Mehmed Agha's most notable manuscript commission the *Surname-i Humayun* relates to urban festivals and their documentation in contemporary Venice. The two assimilated Ottomans were instrumental in the development of an Ottoman visual idiom for illustrated manuscripts—they were guiding the formation of the canon. This seemingly static canon, in other words, was very much formed by individuals with shifted identities, and in dialogue with art forms and cultural concepts from contexts as varied as Venice and Herat. These observations suggest that not only do our definitions of "Ottoman" art need to be re-thought, but that by extension our understanding of Islamic art and its canon would benefit from a re-examination as well.

**Emine Fetvacı**, an assistant professor at the Art History Department in Boston University, received her Ph.D. in the History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University in 2005. She has taught at the Rhode Island School of Design and Rice University, and was a Humanities Post-Doctoral Fellow at Stanford University in 2006-2007. She is currently working on her book project, *Collaborative Constructs: Creating Selves and Making History at the Ottoman Court*.

## *Workshop II*   **On Reading Urban Fabric**

**Attilio Petruccioli**, Bari Polytechnic

**Giulia Annalinda Neglia**, Bari Polytechnic

**Claudio Rubini**, Bari Polytechnic

The method of investigation on architectures, urban fabrics and the landscape developed by the School of Saverio Muratori was designed for architects, people who not only analyze the built reality as architectural historians, but who transform reality as designers. The Modern Movement created a rupture between the past and the present, denying History an active role in the conception of architecture, and reducing the project of design to individual invention grounded in self-referential principles of the architect. Our School invokes Muratori's principles, and intends to restore the active and central role of History, in whose examples are collected the principles and rules of any project. In other words, it is from the built reality that surrounds us that the principles for the physical transformation of the same reality can be derived. Probing into every detail of this reality and processing stages, therefore, becomes vital. A project is designed almost like the "objective" product of the last phase of the historical process in the present. The analysis of reality proceeds from the present backwards, and is a reconstruction of all phases up to the farthest back in time. The process of analysis uses a concept of "type," which can be defined as "the organic sum of elements in a given time and in a limited area." It follows, then, that the "type" - far from being an abstract form - is actually a typological process. For the reconstruction of phases and sequences of transformation in an urban fabric, this method identifies from one time to the next typical behaviors of buildings and building tissues through the signs that are present in the plan of a city.

The workshop will present the general principles of this typological analysis, and then proceed to explain its details thorough the presentation of two case studies:

**Giulia Annalinda Neglia**, Bari Polytechnic

*Interpretation of the urban fabric of Jerusalem, Aleppo and Hama at the dawn of Islam*

In contexts where it is not possible to excavate, a useful methodological tool for the interpretation of formative processes in the urban fabric is a morphological reading of the building structure. This paper proposes to present the results of such a reading when applied to the case studies of the urban fabric of Jerusalem, Aleppo and Hama, and it clarifies the processes of urban transformation of these cities in the early centuries of Islamic conquest, between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. From the reconstruction of this process it emerges that the complex, stratified, and apparently chaotic form of the urban fabric of the early medieval Jerusalem, Aleppo and Hama derives from the sum of various urban plans of Hellenistic and Roman origin, superimposed one over the other. In particular, the urban structure of the pre-Islamic Jerusalem derives from three Roman extensions of the city, oriented in three different ways. The first one follows the traces of the Hellenistic city layout and lies south of the area of the Pompey's camp (founded in 63 BC) and west of the Haram al-Sharif area; the second one derives from the layout of the camp of the Tenth Roman Legion, and corresponds to the area of the present-day Armenian Quarter; while the third one corresponds to the layout of the Roman forum of Aelia Capitolina (135 AD). The urban structure of the pre-Islamic Aleppo also derives from three Roman extensions of the city,

oriented in three different ways. The first one followed the direction of the Hellenistic city, adding new blocks to the east of the former settlement; the second one derived from the need to build new routes connecting Aleppo to the others urban centers of Roman Syria (Antioch, Chalcis, Cyrrus) and was shifted 18° with regards to the first one; the third one derived from the land division of the valley of the Quweiq River and followed its main direction. The urban structure of pre-Islamic Hama derived, in a first phase of development, from a Roman urban addition of new blocks to the north of the Hellenistic settlement and from the construction of a colonnaded street connecting the Greek and the Roman town; the direction of the extension of the colonnaded street - and of the urban fabric along it – was shifted in a second phase, to connect it to an older polarity in the urban fabric; the construction of the Roman camp and public buildings deeply influenced the structure of the urban fabric around them and represented a further phase of urban development of the pre-Islamic city.

**Claudio Rubini**, Bari Polytechnic

*Interpretation of the medieval urban fabric through morphological behaviors: the cases of Kashan and Bukhara*

Through the application of the typological process methodology it is possible to probe into the pattern of the building fabric of Indian and Central Asian cities, i.e., their “typological behaviors” or typical behaviors of the building tissues detectable in the urban fabric through particular forms. These typical behaviors can give us indications of the development of the medieval city.

The most common behaviors are related to the formation of roads and of the building tissue along them, i.e., the different stages of formation of the medieval urban fabric. It is possible to classify the hierarchy of routes into the urban fabric through the identification of matrix routes (existing both in spontaneous and planned forms in a territory before any construction takes place), planned building routes (that follow the matrix routes), connecting routes (linking the first two categories), and restructuring routes (intervening in mature tissues as conjunctions of new urban poles). Because of the non-dissociable link between routes and tissue, the corresponding categories of routes and tissue can be given the same name. In the Islamic city the matrix route is often associated with the linear *suq*.

Other common behaviors are related to the detection of gates, even if demolished and obliterated, because of the marks left by transverse and radial routes meeting there; converging roads always indicate a forced point of passage or constriction. Curves in the urban fabric, besides deviating to avoid obstacles, either form junctions where vehicular traffic is necessary to rectify sharp differences in ground level, or else arrange lots in areas on an incline parallel to the contours of the land. Not all curvilinear marks refer to deviations and obstacles: previous large open space or courtyards in the interiors of special buildings no longer serving their original public function are rapidly metabolized by the inhabitants. (A society will defend a public space only if the site continues to be symbolic or retains a special function, although it can be different from the original one.) Often a new tissue forms on one or several diagonal routes that fill in the available open space.

This paper proposes to present the results of such a reading when applied to the case studies of the urban fabric of Kashan and Bukhara, and it clarifies the processes of urban transformation of these cities in medieval times.

**Attilio Petruccioli** is Dean and Professor of the Faculty of Architecture, Polytechnic of Bari. He was Aga Khan Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology 1994-98, and Director of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and MIT 1994-1998. He has been editor-in-chief of *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research* since 1983. Author and editor of more than 30 volumes, his latest works are *Fathpur Sikri. La capitale dell'Impero moghul. La meraviglia di Akbar*, Electa, Milan, 2007, and *After Amnesia. Learning from the Islamic Mediterranean Urban Fabric*, ICAR, Bari, 2007. He is active as a consultant of Landscape and Urban Design in the Islamic countries.

**Giulia Annalinda Neglia**, PhD in Architectural Design for Mediterranean Countries. Since 2003 she has been teaching urban history and morphology at the Faculty of Architecture, Polytechnic of Bari, where she has been tutor for final studios in architectural and urban design focused on Islamic countries. She has held scholarships and grants for research and publication from DAAD, Max van Berchem Foundation, and AKPIA/MIT.

**Claudio Rubini** is Assistant Researcher at the Faculty of Architecture, Polytechnic of Bari. Since 2002 he has been involved in research on Islamic architecture, dealing with urban morphology of Central Asian cities and Islamic gardens. He leads fieldwork and tutoring for the Bachelor's Final Thesis on traditional architecture of Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and India. Currently, he directs a study on hydraulic architecture in north-western India, and has prepared exhibitions in India, Italy, and Saudi Arabia on this topic.

## Keynote Address

### Glenn Lowry, The Museum of Modern Art

#### *Oil and Sugar: Contemporary Art and Islamic Culture*

When Oleg Grabar wrote *The Formation of Islamic Art* in 1973 he asked several questions about when and how Islamic art came into being, and underscored the complexity of using a term, Islamic, to describe an art that could have at once social, religious, and cultural implications. Thirty-five years later the problems posed by Grabar remain especially germane when discussing contemporary art from regions that are predominantly Muslim. What, if anything, makes this art contemporary, or Islamic, or both? How are contemporary artistic practices related in countries as diverse as Algeria, Egypt, Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan to name but six? How do artists from these countries see their work, and how is their work perceived throughout the region and beyond? Are there useful frames of reference—global, diasporic, postcolonial, transnational, for instance--to help understand this work? Who defines what constitutes contemporary art from countries that are predominantly Muslim—scholars, critics, artists, the market? These are among the questions that this talk will endeavor to address by focusing on the work of a number of artists such as Lida Abdul, Kader Attia, Ghada Amer, Shadi Ghadirian, and Nezaket Ekici, among others.

**Glenn D. Lowry** became the sixth director of The Museum of Modern Art in 1995. He leads a staff of some 800 people and directs an active program of exhibitions, acquisitions, and publications. His major initiatives in the past ten years include guiding MoMA's \$900 million capital campaign for the renovation, expansion, and endowment of the Museum, reinvigorating MoMA's contemporary art program, and challenging conventional thinking about modern art.

A strong advocate of contemporary art, Mr. Lowry, along with Alanna Heiss, director of P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, conceived and initiated the merger of their two organizations, which was announced in February 1999. He has lectured and written extensively in support of contemporary art and artists and the role of museums in society, among other topics.

Mr. Lowry is a board member of the Comité International de L'ICOM pour les Musées et les Collections d'Art Moderne (CIMAM) and Vice Chairman of the Association of Art Museum Directors (AAMD). He is a member of the Williams College Board of Trustees and serves on the advisory council of the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University. He is also a Steering Committee Member for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. In 2004, the French government honored Mr. Lowry with the title of Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Born in 1954 in New York City and raised in Williamstown, Massachusetts, Mr. Lowry received a B.A. degree (1976) magna cum laude from Williams College, Williamstown, and M.A. (1978) and Ph.D. (1982) degrees in history of art from Harvard University. He is married to the former Susan Chambers, and they have three children.

### **Session 3.1 Museums, Exhibitions, and Collections in Historical Perspective**

*Session Leaders:* Massumeh Farhat, Freer/Sackler Galleries and David J. Roxburgh, Harvard University

The various roles played by museums and the temporary exhibition in fashioning the field of Islamic art have emerged as a topic of interest in recent years and continue to be an area of growing scholarly research. Studies have focused on the history of collecting and museum formation; the dynamics between institutions, curators, collectors, dealers, scholars, and the market; the practices of installation and how they advance overt and covert narratives; and the study of the museum collection/exhibition through the frameworks of modernity and post-modernity. Recent years have witnessed the reinstallation of key collections in Europe and America—opportunities to meditate on the history of the field and its orthodoxies—; exhibitions staged with an explicitly historiographic emphasis (the key current example being *Purs Decors?* at the Musée du Louvre); and the emergence of new public museums and collections, principally in Turkey and the Gulf States. Of equal importance is the exponential growth of art fairs and biennials which present the work of contemporary artists. Museums east and west have now turned to the collection and exhibition of contemporary art. Paper presenters—art historians, curators, and artists—for the session are invited to consider these broad topics and the intersections between them. In what ways have fresh perspectives and new practices engendered critical assessments of the field as it is construed?

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**Hussah Sabah Salem al-Sabah**, Director-General, Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, Kuwait  
*From Private to Public: The Metamorphosis of the al-Sabah Collection*

Historically, the two major forms of art collections have been the religious and the princely, often in combination with one another. The al-Sabah Collection represents a third and less common form of art collecting . . . collecting for the purposes of preserving an artistic record of the past and creating an instrument to promote cultural awareness – both for those whose history is reflected in the collection and for those with little or no knowledge of the Islamic world.

The story of the al-Sabah Collection starts in the 1960s, when Nasser Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah was studying in Jerusalem. While in that historic and ancient city, he discovered an appreciation for the artistic achievements of artists and craftsmen from early Islamic dynasties. That appreciation sparked curiosity, curiosity sparked a quest for knowledge and, ultimately, as he learned more about the subject, appreciation gave way to passion.

In 1975, Nasser had his first encounter with an art object from his own culture; an enameled glass bottle on a shelf in a London art gallery was the first item to catch his eye and he purchased it on the spot. This action ultimately launched the al-Sabah Collection of art from the Islamic world. It was at this time, I embraced his quest to preserve what Nasser describes as "these thrilling remains of the past."

We both felt that it was our obligation to collect whatever we can find of our culture. The challenges were to get dispersed pieces of art under one roof, to share what can reasonably be considered reflections of the people living and working in the Islamic world from the 7th century to the 18th century, to enlighten the public to the beauty of the Islamic culture, and to enable it to be appreciated by future generations.

Meeting these challenges required changes at all levels, not just relocation. The metamorphosis of the al-Sabah Collection from private to public, like most worthwhile endeavors, hasn't always been smooth but ultimately it has been successful.

**Hussah Sabah al-Salem al-Sabah** is the director general of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah (DAI) and, with Sheikh Nasser Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah, co-founder of the al-Sabah Collection. DAI is a cultural organization inspired by the collection of Islamic art which today includes more than 30,000 objects of art created in countries from Spain to China, from the 1st - 14th century AH/ 7th - 19th century AD.

While the art remains the cornerstone of the DAI, under the guardianship of Sheikha Hussah, the organization has grown into a dynamic entity promoting arts, culture and education. Her passion is for art, but most important, for the ability of art to communicate and share cultural experiences. She is clearly driven by the ability of art to open people's minds as well as their eyes to the differences in cultures, allowing each to more fully appreciate the other.

**Anneka Lenssen**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*Pseudo-fragments of Heritage: Michael Rakowitz's "The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist"*

"The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist" (2007) by American artist Michael Rakowitz takes as its subject the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the "disappearing" of thousands of national artifacts from the Iraq Museum. The central component of his intricate installation is a series of reconstructions of the missing items rebuilt to specification by Rakowitz and a team of assistants using empirical databases maintained by Interpol and the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. However, rather than substitutes for loss, the new artifacts evoke instead the diffusion of historical memory signified by the looting process. They have been crafted from scraps of the commercial present such as brightly colored packaging from Middle Eastern food items, Arabic-language newspapers, and other bits of ethnic foreignness gleaned from shops in the United States. In my paper, I first detail meaning-making interrelationships between these installed objects, a custom-built display table, hand-drawn cartoons providing a history of modern archeology in Iraq, copious wall texts, and a funky cover band soundtrack. I pay particular attention to the ways the artist represents dating and provenance, whether ancient, Islamic, Iraqi, or American; the narrative that emerges from these overlapping markers of identity challenges the assumedly stable value of heritage. The second half of my paper contextualizes "The Invisible Enemy Should Not Exist" in terms of Rakowitz's strategies of rehabilitated value. With its frank interrogation of our assumed obligation to act as stewards of global treasure, the piece challenges us to consider the contemporary art fair juggernaut – a market system in which Rakowitz is consciously implicated – in conjunction with our own art historical field and its system of privileging objects. If the looting in Baghdad was motivated by the promise of profits on the international antiquities market, for whom are these pseudo-fragments of history mobilized by the settings for their



display, namely Lombard-Freid Projects (the artist's New York gallery) and the Sharjah and Istanbul Biennials?

**Anneka Lenssen** is a PhD student at M.I.T. in the History, Theory, and Criticism of Architecture and Art program and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, where she studies modern and contemporary art from the Arab world. Her dissertation will be a historical and theoretical study of the painters and filmmakers based in Damascus in the sixties and seventies and their work within transnational intellectual and artistic movements.

**Monia Abdallah**, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris

*Twenty-Five Years into the John Addis Islamic Gallery of the British Museum: On Introducing Contemporary Works into a Collection of Historical Islamic Art*

In this presentation, the complex conditions that identify a particular kind of art as “contemporary Islamic” will be examined. I will focus on what is defined as “Contemporary Islamic Art,” bearing in mind that this label remains fluid and shares the semantic definition associated with other labels such as “Contemporary Art from the Islamic world” or “Modern Islamic Art.” These artistic creations are either considered as pertaining to the “domain of art,” and are then presented within temporary art exhibitions, as well as being sold through prestigious auction houses; or, considered as an extension of the “arts of Islam,” they are then often presented in the permanent collections of some museums. I argue that the British Museum’s gallery devoted to the “Arts of Islam” embodies the complexity of this artistic field.

Indeed, since the mid-1980s, the British Museum has collected works of contemporary artists from the Middle East, which can be found today in its “Arts of Islam” gallery under a section titled “The Contemporary World.” In this presentation, I analyze the British Museum’s interpretation of those contemporary works that are part of its Middle East collection. I will then show the intricate links and the ambiguities underlying this interpretation and will relate them to certain identity discourses. These identity discourses attempt to establish the existence of a “Contemporary Islamic Art” which is supposed to be the Symbol of a “renaissance” of “The Islamic Civilization.”

**Monia Abdallah** is a PhD candidate in Art History at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. She is affiliated to the Centre d’Études de l’Histoire et Théorie and Theory of Art (CEHTA). She holds a M.A. degree in Art History from the University of Québec in Montreal (UQAM), Canada. She is currently writing her doctoral dissertation on the cultural construction of the concept of ‘Contemporary Islamic Art’ in the last thirty years. She recently presented her work at the Musée du Quai Branly (Paris) in an International Symposium on “Art History and Anthropology” (June 2007) and more recently at the Courtauld Institute of Art (London) for the Conference “Framing the Other: Thirty Years After Orientalism” (April 2008).

**Jananne al-Ani, artist***Contemporary Art: An Artist's Perspective*

There has been a growing interest from many western cultural institutions in recent years in contemporary art practice from the Middle East with a small but nevertheless significant number of events being realized from Catherine David's ongoing *Contemporary Arab Representations* project to the recent publication of *In The Arab World Now* a major survey of young and mid career artists, innovative curators and independent arts institutions published by Galerie Enrico Navarra in collaboration with Jérôme Sans. Equally significantly, there has been a sharp increase in the value of art work from the region with record prices reached at recent auctions and a proliferation of high profile developments by major museums including the Guggenheim and the Louvre.

How might artists negotiate this complex terrain while maintaining integrity and independence when the wider political landscape is so fraught? Does the recent upsurge in the global art market and the explosion of international biennales offer artists ever increasing critical exposure and financial benefits or do they risk compromising their work by participating in a carnival of curatorial adventures in order to benefit from exposure on a larger stage?

**Jananne Al-Ani** studied Fine Art at the Byam Shaw School of Art and graduated with an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art in 1997. She is currently AHRC Creative and Performing Arts Fellow at the London College of Communication developing a new body of work, *The Aesthetics of Disappearance: A Land Without People*.

Exhibiting widely in Britain and abroad, Al-Ani has had solo shows at Art Now, Tate Britain, London (2005) and the Norwich Gallery (2004). Recent group exhibitions include *The Screen-Eye or the New Image: 100 videos to rethink the world*, Casino Luxembourg (2007); *Without Boundary: Seventeen Ways of Looking*, MoMA, New York and *Why Pictures Now: Film, Photography, Video* at the Museum of Modern Art, Vienna (2006).

Al-Ani has co-curated exhibitions including *Veil* at The New Art Gallery Walsall touring to the Bluecoat Arts Centre and Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool; Modern Art Oxford and Kulturhuset Stockholm (2003/4). Her works can be found in public collections including the Tate Gallery and the Imperial War Museum, London; the Pompidou Centre, Paris; the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC and Darat al Funun, Amman.

## Session 3.2 On Conservation and Cultural Policies

*Session Leader:* Farrokh Derakhshani, Aga Khan Award

This session will explore the history and current practices of conservation and restoration in the Islamic world. Case studies are invited to gauge the ways in which specialists, governmental bodies and international organizations contribute to the making of “historic” built environments, and to the creation of local and/ or national identities.

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**Stefano Bianca**, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zurich

*Reconciling Conservation and Development – The Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme*

When it comes to historic cities, the conservation methods used for landmark monuments and archaeological sites must be modified and complemented by developmental procedures that are compatible with the morphology, the scale and the living "content" of a given architectural shell. Important as they may be, historic urban features cannot be frozen, but must adapt to new social needs without betraying their *genius loci*.

In their heydays, historic cities have never been "historic", but lively and continuously evolving urban entities. After being exposed to the acceleration of a new type of technology-driven, material development, they have, however, been faced with abrupt pressures of change and have been unable to continue "soft" transformation. The alternative inflicted to them was either wholesale demolition or rampant decay and progressive asphyxiation. No wonder, then, that the massive impact of modern development concepts has called for its antidote – an equally single-minded and potentially sterile conservation approach. Both are, in a way, two faces of the same coin and equally unviable, as none of them is able to engage with historic cities as living systems that are capable of internal renewal.

Based on the current Cairo activities of the "Historic Cities Programme", the lecture will explain how the projects have managed to overcome this deadlock situation by conceiving urban conservation and rehabilitation projects around culturally relevant, socially meaningful and economically sound development strategies that, rather than stifling local resources and potentials, can incite and support the internal forces of local communities. The result is an integrated cultural development approach that combines conservation of monuments with adaptive re-use, housing and infrastructure improvement, landscaping and enhancement of public open spaces, targeted socio-economic development initiatives, local capacity building and empowerment of existing or newly created local institutions.

**Stefano Bianca** is an architect and architectural historian trained at the ETH in Zurich (master's degree in 1966 and Ph.D. in 1972). His cultural interest in the Islamic World motivated him to become a specialist in urban conservation of historic Islamic cities. Since 1975, he has directed field projects in places such as Fes, Aleppo, Baghdad, Cairo, Zanzibar, Samarkand, Mostar and the Karakoram valleys. Some of these projects were conceived and implemented on behalf of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, where he served as the first Director of the Historic Cities Programme (1992-2006). During his tenure, he was responsible for both conceptual programme strategy and project implementation. He has

published, in German and in English, several books on architecture, cities and gardens and environmental issues, among them "Urban Form in the Arab World – Past and Present" (London/New York 2000).

**James L. Wescoat Jr.**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*Conserving Indo-Islamic Waterworks and Gardens: The Intersection of Cultural, Environmental, and Social Policy*

The waterworks of Islamic gardens range from individual fountains to the dams, canals, and reservoirs that supplied them—as well as an array of large-scale urban, industrial, and agricultural water uses across South Asia. Landscape historians have long recognized these connections, but have given limited attention to their intersection with inherently related fields of cultural, environmental, and socioeconomic policy.

At the present time, India and Pakistan are both revising their national cultural policies. These processes are briefly introduced insofar as they may bear upon landscape heritage conservation. Cultural policies have historically had limited connection with environmental and socio-economic policy at any scale -- national, regional, or local. Arguably, these patterns of policy fragmentation have aggravated the scope and progress of landscape heritage conservation, which intersects with each policy sector but does not fit squarely within any one of them.

This paper examines these challenges using a three-fold model of Indo-Islamic garden waterworks conservation, which encompasses: 1) waterworks conservation; 2) water resources conservation; and 3) what we call the conservation of water experience. We demonstrate these fields of conservation inquiry through the example of the jointly Rajput, Sultanate, and Mughal water systems of Nagaur, Rajasthan. Synthesis of these three fields of should occur in the practice of conservation design. It should also occur in conservation policy. However, each field of water-related conservation is currently connected tenuously with different subsectors of cultural, environmental, and social policy. Moreover, cultural policies vary at each level of social organization and administration (e.g., district, culture area, state, and nation state). We demonstrate the magnitude and complexity of policy fragmentation by extending the example of Nagaur to an array of recent Indo-Islamic garden conservation projects in different regions of South Asia.

The paper concludes by asking whether and how integrated approaches to conservation design can contribute to more integrative approaches in policy design; or alternatively, how more comprehensive approaches to cultural policy design might help guide landscape conservation practice in South Asia.

**James L. Wescoat Jr.** is a professor in the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at MIT where he teaches courses on Indo-Islamic landscape history, heritage, and design. He previously taught at the University of Chicago, University of Colorado-Boulder, and the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research focuses on water in environmental design in South Asia and the US. In South Asia, he co-directed the Smithsonian Institution's Mughal Garden Project in Lahore with colleagues in the Pakistan Department of Archaeology and the University of Engineering and Technology-Lahore. Over the past decade he has worked on research and conservation projects involving historical water systems in Agra, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, India.

Recent publications include *Water for Life: Water Management and Environmental Policy* (Cambridge, 2003) with geographer Gilbert F. White; and an edited volume on *Political Economies of Landscape Change: Places of Integrative Power* (Springer, 2007).

**Muhammad al-Asad**, Center for the Study of the Built Environment, Amman  
*Relevance and Marginalization: The Architectural Historian and the "Real World"*

As with other academic disciplines from the humanities and the social sciences, architectural history has been shying away from non-academic audiences. This is evident in various phenomena defining the field such as the predominance of narrowly-specialized publications and their increased dependence on impenetrable, jargon-filled writings. Such developments are gaining momentum even though there is considerable interest among wider audiences in further understanding the history of the built environment in the Islamic world (and elsewhere) on both the individual and collective levels and for a variety of reasons that relate to intellectual, aesthetic, religious, ethnic, nationalistic, or economic factors.

Among other things, this disconnect is resulting in a knowledge vacuum, one that often is filled from outside the field by those whose command of the history of the built environment in the Islamic world may be sketchy and in some cases even flawed at the most rudimentary levels. Meanwhile, as the field of architectural history is becoming more insular in its outlook, it is undergoing a process of fragmentation into various directions or schools adhering to different methodological or theoretical frameworks that generally are defining their relation to each other in a mutually exclusive, rather than complimentary, manner. All this considerably undermines the relevance of the field to its non-academic audiences.

This paper provides a preliminary exploration of these observations, and looks into possibilities for integrating the field more effectively within a wider cultural discourse.

**Mohammad al-Asad** is a Jordanian architect and architectural historian. He is the founder and chairman of the Center for the Study of the Built Environment in Amman. Dr. al-Asad studied architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and history of architecture at Harvard University, before taking post-doctoral research positions at Harvard and at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. He has taught at the University of Jordan, Princeton University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; he was also adjunct professor at Carleton University in Ottawa. Dr. al-Asad has published in both Arabic and English on the architecture of the Islamic world. He is the author of *Old Houses of Jordan: Amman 1920-1950* (1997) and *New Architecture in the Middle East* (forthcoming), and co-author (with Ghazi Bisheh and Fawzi Zayadine) of *The Umayyads: The Rise of Islamic Art* (2000). He is the editor (with Majd Musa) of *Architectural Journalism and Criticism: Global Perspectives* (2007) and *Exploring the Built Environment* (2007). He served as project reviewer for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture during the 1989, 1995, 1998, 2004 and 2007 cycles.

**Hassan Radoine**, University of Sharjah  
*Exploring History, Sustaining Heritage*

The European nineteenth and early twentieth-century urban literature and perception of the old European cities have had tremendous impact on the representation of the city as 'historic' versus 'modern.' With the challenge of contemporary urbanization, the 'historic city' has been discarded as a suitable model for modern planning. It has been viewed as a sum of isolated monuments merely worthy of conservation.

In this paper, the definition of the 'historic city', within the North African and European contexts, shall shed light on the origin of the French invented *médina*. The *madina* (the city) was marginalized as *médina* (the confined entity) to give place to a new Colonial Urbanism. This action emanated from a well-established European school and theory of planning, not merely for military and political reasons, as claimed by the post-colonialist literature.

For example, the image of 'randomness' and 'unplanned city' was not limited only to the *madina*, but was first used to describe old European cities since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Although the *madina* and the European 'historic city' might have different cultural backgrounds, there is a connection between the ideologies and practices of 'urbanism' in both. Accordingly, the history of the *madina* is not fully explored as a dynamic process of transmission of urban synergies, but rather is framed in a new invented term: 'heritage site.' This categorization has included the *madina*, a living city, in the realm of an archeological conservation, and has hindered its sustainability and development. As Boyer put it: "to historicize is to estrange, to make different, to continually widen between then and now, between an authentic and a simulated experience."

This paper will explore these arguments, and present their impact on the case of conservation and development of the *madina* of Fez. Instead of exploring the dynamic history of the city in order to revive its cultural and functional parts within an intrinsic whole, the conservation policy pursued the application of a Rehabilitation Plan: a tool of modern planning. A review of Fez' Rehabilitation Plan will show that the archeological and historical landscapes of the *madina* cannot be dissociated from that of its contemporary images.

**Hassan Radoine** is currently the Chairman of Architectural Engineering Department at the College of Engineering, University of Sharjah. He holds a PhD in Architecture, University of Pennsylvania, was US Fulbright scholar (2001-2006); MS. in Architecture/Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania (2003); M.Phil in Islamic Architecture, the Prince of Wales Institute of Architecture (1997); and a Diploma of Architect-Planner, *École Nationale d'Architecture*, Rabat (1993). Since 1993, he has been one of the key players in the preservation program of Fez (ADER-Fes), and held the position of Director of Community Development Unit for the Fez medina (World Bank and the Moroccan Government). He organized several international conferences such as the last IFIAD 2008 (International Forum on Islamic Architecture and Design) at University of Sharjah. Radoine has been an active member-founder or member in several national and International NGOs. Currently, he is the honorary secretary of Sharjah Cultural Heritage Society and Deputy-Coordinator of the ATHAR-Program of ICCROM at UAE.

### **Session 3.3 How to Study Contemporary Islamic Art and Architecture**

*Session Leader:* Nasser Rabbat, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Where do contemporary Islamic art and architecture stand in the world today? This too general and consciously polemical question is not new, although recent events have lent it an unprecedented critical urgency. The answers at hand vary widely. Some commentators see in the globalizing trends and the accelerating mobility of artists and ideas beneficial vehicles for increased exposure of the contemporary Islamic art and architecture. Others point to the Eurocentric pedigree of contemporary art and architecture and its most entrenched biases, such as artistic hierarchy and cultural segregation, as formidable impediments to a true integration of the contemporary Islamic art and architecture in the international scene. Still others consider the question itself too redundant since they do not think that we can define a contemporary Islamic art and architecture that is not already intermeshed with the global so as to obviate any claim of a definable and separate identity. The papers in this panel will address these and other similar issues through examination of specific case studies

*Speakers' Abstracts and Biographies:*

**Nebahat Avcioğlu**, Columbia University Institute for Scholars, Paris

*The 'Glocal' in Contemporary Turkish Architecture: The Case of Han Tümertekin*

This paper addresses the problematic denomination of contemporary Islamic architecture with reference to the word 'contemporary' rather than 'Islamic'. What can contemporary mean in an Islamic context? Could it simply mean the art and architecture of the Muslim world today? But the heterogeneity implied in 'today' is far too vague to be helpful. Within the Western context the word 'postmodern' – first used in architecture and which later signaled the end of great narratives (Lyotard) – is considered to be one of the critical paradigms of the contemporary. In political and cultural terms postmodernism is interpreted as a direct corollary to the process of globalisation with its capitalistic commodification and relativist secularization of cultures. The slogan 'think global, act local' has become the motto of both marketing directors and cultural critics. The 'glocal' thus is the unlikely synthesis of the efficient and the authentic, the common and the specific, the There and the Here, the Them and the Us, etc. This paper is concerned with the ways in which architects from the Muslim world face this challenge in their creative projects and participate in a new global order. In the postmodern paradigm the debate surrounding the local shifted dramatically from its role as a collective marker (national or Islamic) to that of 'managing' globalism. The question is then, how does globalization shape the views and tastes of individuals involved in negotiating the local. In the architecture of Han Tümertekin, winner of the 2004 Aga Khan Award, the 'glocal' is interpreted as a regime of specificities, and a stylistic apparatus. The paper will analyze the ways in which Tümertekin's architecture uses the local for aligning new design ideas and new forms of subjectivity. His buildings are for what he calls the 'contemporary nomad'. He arrives at this conclusion by contrasting the local not with some abstract notion of 'global' but with a critical re-reading of the 'native'. Opening up onto a wider debate, the paper will examine how such thinking has produced, in its secular ways, culturally specific meanings in contemporary Turkish architecture.

**Nebahat Avcioglu** wrote her Ph.D. in the Department of History of Art at Cambridge University. Following her doctorate she has held several Post-Doctoral Research Fellowships, and taught at Cambridge University, the University of Manchester and at MIT. In 2003 she spent a sabbatical leave in Paris at the Columbia University Institute for Scholars. Since then she is based at the same Institute. She is the author of several articles dealing with issues of architecture and cultural discourse, dissemination and transformation of forms, the history of cross-cultural exchanges and urbanism from the early eighteenth century to the present. Her recent publications include: "Identity-as-form: the Mosque in the West," *Cultural Analysis*, vol. 6, February 2008 <http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~caforum/>; "Istanbul: the palimpsest city in search of its *architext*," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, vol.53, 2008. Her book, *Turkish architecture in Europe, 1737-1876: Politics and Visual Narratives of the Other*, will soon be out with Ashgate Publishers.

**Kishwar Rizvi**, Yale University  
*Dubai, Anyplace*

Anonymity defines the city of Dubai, whether viewed in its emergent skyline of stylish high-rises, or etched on the faces of the hundreds of thousands of migrant workers that build them. The city/state is evolving from a dusty port of call on the Persian Gulf into a cosmopolitan city with aspirations of becoming a permanent destination on the itinerary of international tourists. Yet the definition of the tourist is itself changing to define a hybrid person with multiple agendas inscribed into her visit: sightseer, shopper, merchant, voyeur, educator, student of architecture – some and sometimes all at the same time. The complexity of this figure is reflected in the multiplicity of Dubai's architectural imprint: shanties, villas, skyscrapers, malls, wildlife reserves, expatriate enclaves – familiar components of a large city in any part of the world. The buildings commissioned by the Emirate range from post-modern pastiches of 'authentic' Gulf architecture to replicas of buildings from neighboring countries, such as Egypt or Iran. The most intriguing designs, however, are those that refer not to any national or ethnic style, but to the history of modern architecture itself. This brief essay contemplates the multiple 'views' that define Dubai at the turn of the millennium, by subverting the idea of an 'anyplace' by looking at the particularities of geography and history that define an often-neglected aspect of the city's identity.

**Kishwar Rizvi** is Assistant Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture at Yale University. Her research is on representations of religious and imperial authority in the art and architecture of Safavid Iran. She has also written on issues of gender, nationalism and religious identity in the contemporary art and architecture of Iran and Pakistan. She is the co-editor of *Modernism and the Middle East: Architecture and politics in the twentieth century* (Washington University Press, 2008).



**Ijlal Muzaffar**, Independent Scholar

*Concrete Alibis: Modern Architects, Planners and the Quest for Self-Propelled Modernism in Karachi, 1953 – 1963*

This paper looks at a series of refugee housing schemes designed in Karachi between 1953 and 1963, the period of the onset of authoritarian and military rule in Pakistan during the Cold War. The projects were supported by US foreign aid organizations and carried out under the direction of prominent figures of the modernist movement like Michel Ecochard, Charles Abrams, Otto Koenigsberger, and Constantine Doxiadis. Despite their differences, these projects declared a common goal of providing environments for a "self-propelled" and "culturally specific" process of modernization. The paper argues that this emphasis provided a critical alibi for the US support of the authoritarian governments during this period. The emphasis on giving expression to culturally specific and locally embedded forces of modernization cast the governments as custodians of a historical process that was in danger of being corrupted by communist influences and organized political parties. With this argument, the paper seeks to situate what can be called the "cultural turn" in postwar modern architecture within the political context of the Cold War and its associated Third World development discourse. In examining these projects, the paper outlines how particular notions of cultural identity and self-propelled process of modernization framed by modern architects and planners in the development arena continue to provide critical alibis for new modes of socio-economic intervention and governance in the contemporary global arena.

**Ijlal Muzaffar** has recently completed his dissertation, "The Periphery Within: Modern Architecture and the Making of the Third World", in the History, Theory, Criticism of Architecture and Art program at MIT. His research deals with the role played by modern architects and planners in shaping the idea of Third World "development" as a new mode of socio-economic intervention. He received the Graham Foundation's Carter Manny Trustees' Merit Award in 2005 for this research. He received an M.Arch from Princeton University, a BA in Architecture from Arizona State University, and a B.Sc. in Mathematics and Physics from the University of Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Sarah Rogers**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

*Marketing Art History: The Case of Contemporary Islamic Art*

In 1989, Contemporary Art from the Islamic World opened at the Barbican Center in London. Although not the first of its kind, the exhibition marked a new interest in the field that developed rapidly after 9-11 in the United States and Europe. Such curatorial interests include *Revealing Truths: Muslim Women Artists* (2003), *Veiling, Representation, and Contemporary Art* (2003), *Harem Fantasies and New Scheherazades* (2003), *Without Boundary: 17 Ways of Looking* (2006), and *Word into Art* (2006). Despite sharing the terms contemporary, Islamic, and art, each of these projects define their subject differently. For some, contemporary Islamic art references the artists' individual identity, whether it is cultural, religious, or based on country of origin. For others, it is a formal thematic that unites a body of work—often in spite of artistic identity. As such, these exhibitions deploy different art historical models for organizing artistic production. Accompanying these shows is a growing body of scholarly interest in the topic matched by an expanding international market as demonstrated through the recent Sotheby's and Christie's auctions. Such efforts further organize contemporary Islamic art within a regional and

global canon, thereby assigning aesthetic and market value. This paper proposes to consider the ways in which a network of curatorial, scholarly, and commercial projects both reference and define this burgeoning field. In doing so, we can begin to critically understand the value of the terminology Contemporary Islamic Art for both art history and the market.

**Sarah Rogers** is a Ph.D. Candidate in the History, Theory, and Criticism section of the Department of Architecture at M.I.T. where she is writing her dissertation, *Postwar Art and the Historical Roots of Beirut's Cosmopolitanism*.

### ***Workshop III Iranian Cinema in Context***

**Hamid Dabashi**, Columbia University

This workshop will introduce and explores manners of incorporating aspects of cinema (and video installations) as a form of visual art in contemporary Muslim world. The interface among cinema, video installations, painting, photography, and graphic art require a renewed conversation with the underlying aesthetic and political sensibilities that inform much of the contemporary art scene in the Muslim world

**Hamid Dabashi** (dual Ph.D. in Sociology of Culture and Islamic Studies, University of Pennsylvania), is the Hagop Kevorkian Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia University in New York. He has also taught and delivered lectures in many North American, European, Arab and Iranian universities.

Among his best-known books are his *Authority in Islam; Theology of Discontent; Truth and Narrative; Close Up: Iranian Cinema, Past, Present, Future; Staging a Revolution: The Art of Persuasion in the Islamic Republic of Iran; Masters and Masterpieces of Iranian Cinema; Iran: A People Interrupted*; and an edited volume, *Dreams of a Nation: On Palestinian Cinema*.

His most recent work includes an Introduction to the Random House Modern Library edition of *The Adventures of Amir Hamza* as well as a book, *Makhmalbaf at Large: The Making of a Rebel Filmmaker* (I. B. Tauris, 2007). His forthcoming book is *Islamic Liberation Theology: Resisting the Empire* (Routledge, 2008).