

# IISS 8 INTERNATIONAL ILEM SUMMER SCHOOL

## RETHINKING ARTS AND AESTHETICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD CONCEPTS / THEORIES / PRACTICES



24-30 JULY 2023

 ISTANBUL

## Program & Proposals

**ilem**  
Academic Studies Association

  
REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE MINISTRY  
OF CULTURE AND TOURISM  
PRESIDENCY FOR TURKS ABROAD  
AND RELATED COMMUNITIES

  
FATİH  
SULTAN  
MEHMET  
VAKIF ÜNİVERSİTESİ

  
TURKISH  
AIRLINES

 ILM

  
IRCICA

  
ORANJE  
INSTITUUT

  
ICYF

# IISS 8 INTERNATIONAL ILEM SUMMER SCHOOL

The ILEM International Summer School aims to serve as a forum for discussion of major issues concerning the Islamic world by bringing together academics, researchers and artists from diverse backgrounds. The broader theme of the 8th edition of the summer school will be Rethinking Art and Aesthetics in the Islamic World: Concepts, Theories, and Practices. The summer school will explore Islamic arts, which are usually analyzed in connection with the notions of "tradition" or "mystical experience" in contemporary intellectual and artistic circles, from theoretical, conceptual, and socio-political perspectives, and open up for discussion the "axial shifts" or even the absence of axis, observable on both ontological and epistemological planes. The purpose here is to shed light on what is beyond the conditional and prejudiced forms of artistic expression. This can be expressed as an attempt to study the possibility of producing aesthetic formulas as the golden middle to save the beautiful from the vortex of two extreme poles of "acculturation" and "cultural schizophrenia."

This is also an attempt to build an aesthetic bridge between the distant past and the future by considering cultural differences as richness. Indeed, the successful result of this attempt is directly proportional to the level of awareness about the recent past and present. Is the juxtaposition of the terms "Islam" and "art" fully comprehended and theoretically justified? How are the aesthetic values and the understanding of beauty, which are intended to be passed on from the past to the future, reflected in various arts today? From which perspective is the notion of universality addressed, if addressed at all, in the art events that directly or indirectly deal with Islamic aesthetics?

Researchers around the world will share their ideas and great intellectual experience during this annual event, which will be held on 24 – 30 July 2023, in Istanbul. IISS would like to thank supporters; Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif University, Turkish Airlines, Istanbul Research Centre for Islamic Culture and Arts (IRCICA), ORANJE Institute, ILM, Association and Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), who collectively have worked to organize the program.

## **ILEM – ACADEMIC STUDIES ASSOCIATION**

Academic Studies Association was founded in 2002 with a view to train and support academics, scientists and intellectuals who are expected to suggest encompassing solutions for those problems that have been taking place over two centuries. Studies within ILEM are planned with a comparative and multi-dimensional interdisciplinary approach to assist the training of sapient and sagacious scholars who understand zeitgeist and main dynamics of their own civilization. With this regard, one of the main objectives of ILEM is conducting scientific research to suggest solutions for the questions of humanity by laying a ground for training scientists who preserve our tradition of science. ILEM hopes its scientific studies to inspire varied groups in Turkey and abroad.

## **YTB - Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities**

Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) YTB is established as a public institution under the Prime Ministry. After its establishment, Türkiye's relations with its citizens living in different parts of the world, as well as with kin communities with whom Turkish people share a common cultural and historic heritage, have been firmly restructured on a more institutional foundation. Of its various responsibilities, the Presidency's coordination responsibilities include defining strategies to meet the needs of related communities and Turkish citizens living abroad, and implementing steps in accordance with the planned strategies.

## **FSM – Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University**

Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University (FSMVU) is a newly established higher education institute whose goal is to be at the forefront of Turkish higher education and research. FSMVU emerged from the historical waqf tradition which played an influential role in the scientific, civic, and cultural life throughout Ottoman history. Being privileged to have its origins in the centuries old civic and academic heritage, FSMVU strives to carry on this tradition by combining traditional education with contemporary knowledge. FSMVU is located in the historical peninsula of Istanbul, which lies at the heart of the city where culture, history and art are parts of the fabric of everyday life. Our location lends a unique quality to our academic vision. FSMVU hosts all members of the higher education community, from faculty members and researchers, to graduate and undergraduate students.

## **THY – Turkish Airlines**

Established by the Turkish government, Turkish Airlines serves as a premier international carrier, connecting people across the globe. It has succeeded in becoming a symbol of excellence and Turkish hospitality. Renowned for its exceptional service and quality, Turkish Airlines has received numerous accolades. It carries the prestigious 5-star global airline award given by the American aviation rating agency AviRate since 2018.

Consistently recognized for its excellence, Turkish Airlines was named Europe's best airline for six consecutive years in the Skytrax awards of 2016. It has also achieved high rankings in various other categories. As a member of Star Alliance, Turkish Airlines operates flights to 335 cities and 340 airports in 127 countries, including 53 domestic destinations and an extensive international network.

## **IRCICA: Istanbul Research Centre for Islamic Culture and Arts**

IRCICA, an OIC cultural center founded in 1979, conducts research, publishing, and training on Islamic civilization and Muslim cultures. It fosters collaboration among cultural institutions, scholars, and art circles worldwide to promote accurate portrayals of Islam and strengthen cultural exchanges. With a focus on preserving cultural heritage, IRCICA engages in various fields such as history, science, archaeology, architecture, fine arts, and traditional crafts. By enhancing understanding and building harmonious relationships among Muslim communities and beyond, IRCICA plays a vital role in showcasing the richness of Islamic culture to the world.

## **ICYF - Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum**

Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF) is an international organization that unites leading youth organizations from the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), as well as international youth organizations within the OIC region and significant Muslim minorities worldwide. Established in 2004, ICYF aims to address social, economic, moral, and cultural challenges faced by youth in the OIC region. Their objectives include promoting exchange and understanding among young people, increasing youth participation in society, fostering solidarity and cooperation, and engaging in international dialogue. ICYF envisions empowered youth driving sustainable development based on Islamic values of cooperation, excellence, and unity. Through various programs and projects, ICYF focuses on capacity-building, civic engagement, holistic education, and addressing critical issues faced by youth, while upholding integrity, innovation, excellence, and diversity.

## **ILM International Scholars Association**

ILM Association, established in 2017 by Muslim academics in Europe, focuses on developing morally upright and equipped individuals who meet the needs of their host countries. Prioritizing quality over quantity, it serves as a supportive platform for educational, instructional, and research activities.

With a mission to generate ideas, contribute to the scientific community, and find solutions to contemporary issues, ILM Association organizes diverse events. Collaborating with universities, institutes, and foundations, it shares outcomes with decision-makers and the public.

Embracing a vision of pioneering education, knowledge dissemination, and promoting universal values, ILM Association aims to guide humanity towards intellectual advancement, cultural preservation, and representation of Muslims in their respective countries.

## **ORANJE**

Since the 1990s, Muslim academics have led the way in Islamic theology education in Europe, establishing an academic platform for the Muslim community. In 2018, ORANJE Institute was founded to preserve and share this invaluable knowledge. Guided by transparency and consultation, the institute cultivates an independent consciousness in Islamic theology education. It nurtures students who embrace civilizational values, respect diversity, and make meaningful contributions to society. Through diverse educational programs, scientific exploration, and cultural initiatives, ORANJE prepares students to become lifelong learners, independent thinkers, and responsible individuals. Driven by universal values, ORANJE promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, student-faculty exchanges, and research addressing global challenges.

# IISS 8 INTERNATIONAL ILEM SUMMER SCHOOL

## PROGRAM

### ◆ 23 July 2023

Arrivals

### ◆ 24 July 2023 Monday

 **FSMV University, Ayasofya**

17:00-17:30 Register and Cocktail

17:30-18:00 Opening Speeches

18:00-19:20 ICYF Panel

**Enriching the Contemporary Worldview: Muslim Youth and  
the Aesthetic Foundations of Islamic Intellectual Heritage**

Moderator: Dr. Ahmet Körođlu

Panelists:

**Dr. Alidost Ertuđrul** “Islamic Architecture and Aesthetics”

**Dr. Samir Mahmoud** “Approaching Islamic Aesthetics: Some Methodological Issues”

**Dr. Wasamon Sanasen** “The Compromise between Religious Concept and Regional  
Factor in Islamic Art”

 20:00-22:00 Dinner

## ◆ 25 July 2023 Tuesday

### ILEM

09:30 - 11:30

#### Workshop I: Theoretical Framework of Islamic Aesthetics

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Moderator: Dr. Ramazan Turgut

Panelists:

**Seyyed Abbas Haghayeghi:** The Useless Definition of “Traditional Art”

**Müberra Kandemir:** Donning a Beautiful Dress: The Relation Between al-Ihsân and al-Muhsîn in Ibn Arabî Thought

**Loubna el-Liazidi:** That Thing We Call Beauty: Islamic Mystical Aesthetics from an Object-Oriented Ontological Perspective

**Abdullah Awad:** Islam, Adorno, and Aesthetic Theory

09:30 - 11:30

#### Workshop II: Perception of Value in Islamic Aesthetics

◆ ILEM Conference Hall

Moderator: Dr. Emin Lelic

Panelists:

**Melike Sıla Acar Kaya:** Embodying Ramadan: Islamic Aesthetics, Spirituality and the Production of Space in Ramadan Studios of Turkish Televisions

**Odil Ernazarov:** The Educational Value of Introducing the Epigraphic Writings in the Islamic Monuments to the Young Generation: the Example of the City of Tashkent

**Chokchai Wongtanee:** Al-Qur’an from the Sultanate of the Ottoman Empire: An Aesthetic Tool for Reconciliation, Uplifting Nationality (Ummah) and the Spirit of Siamese-Patani Muslims

 11:30 - 12:00

Coffee Break

12:00 - 13:20

#### IISS Talks I: Towards a Modern Islamic Aesthetics: Problems and Possibilities

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Dr. Oliver Leaman

 13:20 - 14:30

Lunch

14:30 - 16:00

Lecture 1/1: Ibn al-Haytham’s Aesthetics: What can we learn from Ibn al-Haytham about the nature of beauty and its aesthetic criteria?

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Dr. Samir Mahmoud

 16:00 - 16:20

Coffee Break

16:20 - 17:50

Lecture 1/2: Healing Spaces: Hammams, Wellbeing & the Soul

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Dr. Samir Mahmoud

## ◆ 26 July 2023 Wednesday

### ILEM

09:30 - 11:00 **Lecture 2/1: Divine Logocentrism as the Founding Concept of Islamic Visual Expression**

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall  
Dr. Valerie Gonzalez

 11:00 - 11:20

**Coffee Break**

11:20 - 12:50

**Lecture 2/2: Ornament: The Ergon of Islamic Art**

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall  
Dr. Valerie Gonzalez

 12:50 - 14:00

**Lunch**

FREE TIME

## ◆ 27 July 2023 Thursday

### ILEM

09:30 - 11:30 **Workshop III: Poetry, Music, and the Arts of the Book**

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Moderator: **Esra Çiftçi**

**Sümeyye Cinisli:** Between Two Patrons: Ahmed Pasha's Qasidas Written for Mehmed II and Sheikh Vefâ

**Mehmet Salih Babacan:** Music the Common Way to Chant Allah

**Adnan Fallahi:** Cultural Roots of Jurisprudential Disputes Over Art: Music and Zi al-Ajam (the Ajam Costume)

**Tayebeh Beheshti:** Layout Design in the Manuscript of Baysunghur Shahnameh Reserverd in the Golestan Palace Museum of Iran

09:30 - 11:30

**Workshop IV: Sacred Geometry and Architecture**

◆ ILEM Conference Hall

Moderator: **Ömer Faruk Yeni**

Panelists:

**Katya Nosyreva:** Lines of Transmission: Abu'l-Wafa' al-Buzjani's Text and the Contemporary Study of Islamic Geometric Patterns

**Isha Suhail:** Reviving the Chromatic Legacy: Exploring the Colors of Kashi Kari in Architecture of Pakistan

**Yasemin Sönmez:** Transformation of Space with Calligraphy: The Example of Hagia Sophia Mosque

**Shunhua Jin:** Two Chinese Scrolls of Mecca on the Pattern of Ka'ba in Pilgrimage Art



- ☪ 11:30 - 12:00 **Coffee Break**  
12:00-13:20 **IISS Talks II: The non-Textual Study of Islamic Manuscripts: A Case Study**  
**Mr. Paul Hepworth**  
♦ ILEM Terrace Hall
- ☪ 13:20 - 14:30 **Lunch**  
14:30 - 16:00 **Lecture 1/3: The Image in Islam: Ibn Arabi's View on the relation of**  
**Worship, the Image, & the Imagination with particular reference to Images**  
**of God.**  
♦ ILEM Terrace Hall  
**Dr. Samir Mahmoud**
- ☪ 16:00 - 16:20 **Coffee Break**  
16:20 - 17:50 **Lecture 1/4: Non-Figurative Art (Geometric and Vegetal), Imaginal Space**  
**&Universality: Islam's Primordality**  
♦ ILEM Terrace Hall  
**Dr. Samir Mahmoud**

## ♦ 28 July 2023 Friday

### ☪ ILEM

- 09:30 - 11:00 **Lecture 2/3: Deconstructing the Established Findings on Umayyad Art,**  
**Re-thinking It with New Aesthetic Concepts**  
♦ ILEM Terrace Hall  
**Dr. Valerie Gonzalez**
- ☪ 11:00 - 11:20 **Coffee Break**  
11:20 - 12:50 **Lecture 2/4: 'A Double Phenomenological-Semiotic Reading of the Mihrab'**  
♦ ILEM Terrace Hall  
**Dr. Valerie Gonzalez**
- ☪ 12:50 - 14:00 **Lunch**  
14:00 - 16:00 **Workshop V: Islamic Art and Social Memory**  
♦ ILEM Terrace Hall  
**Moderator: Yahya Nurgat**  
**Panelists:**  
**Sevda Moghaddami: Content Analysis of Illustration of Mawlanas Marvels**  
**in Ottoman Miniature (Case Study: Illustrated Editions of Sawaqib al-**  
**Manaqib Auliya Allah)**  
**Nourelhoda Hussein: God Created Every Craftsman and His Craft:**  
**Spirituality, Morality and Social Arrangement of Traditional Craftsmanship**  
**in Egypt (from the 16th to 19th century)**  
**Syed Tahseen Raza: Arts and Aesthetics in the Muslim World: Non-Arab**  
**Innovation Cases from India and China**  
**Adilia Iulgusheva: Islamic Art and Muslims: the Levels of Engagement**

14:00 - 16:00

### **Workshop VI: Islamic Arts in the Digital Age**

◆ ILEM Conference Hall

Moderator: **Dr. Hesna Haral**

Panelists:

**Meysam Yazdi:** The Soft Power of Contemporary Islamic Art in Nation and Muslim Branding

**Nezih Enes Evren:** An Inquiry into the Mathematical Construction Background of Islamic Arts

**Musab Iqbal:** Poetic Thinking: Resistance to Technologization of Being

🕒 16:00-16:20

**Coffee Break**

16:20-18:00

### **IISS Talks III: Between Production And Reception:**

**The Arts And Aesthetics Of The Hajj In The Ottoman World Of The 11th/17th Century**

◆ ILEM Conference Hall

**Dr. Yahya Nurgat**

## **◆ 29 July 2023 Saturday**

### **📅 ILEM**

09:30 - 11:30

### **Workshop VII: Knowledge Transmission and Cultural Diplomacy**

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Moderator: **Ayaz Asad**

Panelists:

**Wasamon Sanasen:** Applying Islamic Art with Art of Other Cultures: A Case Study of Islamic Motif in Northeastern Thailand Woven Fabric “Lekanis” Brand

**Yasmine Elargui:** Exploring Islamic Aesthetics as an Alternative Way to Knowledge: Principles, Contributions, Applications, and Limitations

**Bouchra Chougrani:** The Travelogue and Foreign View on the Artistic Productions of Muslim Women

**Zineb Bougrine, Asmaa Mehdioui, and Ala Mula Al Dwailah:** Culture and Communication (Presentation by ICESCO)

🕒 11:30 – 12:00

**Coffee Break**

12:00 - 13:30

**Closing Session**

🕒 13:30 - 14:30

**Lunch**

**FREE TIME**

## **◆ 30 July 2023 Sunday**

**Departures**

## YAHYA NURGAT

Yahya Nurgat is a historian focusing on the early modern Ottoman world. His research interests include the history of Ottoman Islam, pilgrimage, and sacred space, as well Islamic law and manuscript cultures. He holds a PhD from the University of Cambridge and is a research fellow at Sabancı University, Istanbul. His current project explores a diverse set of questions surrounding restorations of the Ka'ba in the early modern Ottoman world.

## SAMIR MAHMOUD

Samir Mahmoud serves as the Academic Director at Usul Academy and is currently a Lecturer at the Cambridge Muslim College on the BA in Islamic Studies and the Diploma in Islamic Psychology. Recently he was Assistant Professor at the Lebanese American University. He has a BA (Hons) in Anthropology & Politics with a focus on multicultural theory and comparative religion, and an MA in Architectural History, Theory & Urban Design with a focus on the traditional townscape from the University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia. He also holds an MPhil in Theology & Religious Studies with a focus on comparative philosophy and aesthetics. He completed a PhD in Islamic Studies from the University of Cambridge.

## VALERIE GONZALEZ

Valérie Gonzalez is a Research Associate at SOAS, University of London, specializing in the history of Islamic art and civilization. With a Ph.D. in Human Sciences from the University de Provence Aix-Marseille, her research focuses on the history of enameled metalwork in Islamic Spain and North Africa. She has received numerous awards and fellowships, including a fellowship at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence and a visiting scholar position at the Getty Research Institute. Valérie is proficient in French, English, Spanish, Italian, and Arabic.

## OLIVER LEAMAN

Oliver Leaman is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Kentucky. He is the author and editor of books on Islamic, Jewish and Asian philosophy and culture, and his most recent books are *Controversies in Contemporary Islam*, Routledge, 2013, the second edition of his *Biographical Encyclopedia of Islamic Philosophy*, published by Bloomsbury in 2015, *The Qur'an: Philosophical Perspectives*, also Bloomsbury and the *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Ritual and Practice*, 2022, which he edited. He has edited for Routledge *The Qur'an: An Encyclopedia*, 2006, *Ninian Smart's World Philosophies*, 2008, and co-written *Islam: the Key Concepts*, with Kecia Ali, 2008. He is the author of *Islamic Aesthetics*, Notre Dame University Press, 2004. He is the author of *Key Concepts in Eastern Philosophy*, 1999 and *Eastern Philosophy: Key Readings*, 2000. He is on the editorial board of the Islamic Studies section of *Oxford Bibliographies Online* and the editor of the *Islamic Philosophy Series*, Routledge.

## NEJAT ÇUHADAROĞLU

Nejat Çuhadarođlu, CEO of Çuhadarođlu Group, is an artist and collector. He has a passion for painting, sculpture, and model-making, particularly focusing on creating dioramas depicting historical events and battles. His expertise also extends to the restoration and reproduction of historical objects and clothing. Nejat Çuhadarođlu established the Hisart Living History and Diorama Museum which is the world's first and only diorama museum, showcasing his extensive collection of models and antique pieces. His ultimate goal is to promote the museum as a world-renowned brand and provide it with a deserving venue.

## MAHMUT EROL KILIÇ

He graduated from Istanbul University, Faculty of Political Sciences in 1985. Alongside his formal education, he studied various subjects related to Islamic studies and spirituality. He later worked as a publishing house director before pursuing an academic career. He completed his Master's thesis on Hermes and Hermetic Thought and his doctoral thesis on Existence and Levels in Ibn Arabi, which was considered the first thesis in the newly established Department of Sufism in Turkish universities.

## PAUL HEPWORTH

Paul Hepworth is an independent conservator of Islamic manuscripts and textiles in Istanbul, Türkiye. After completing his conservation training and obtaining a degree in Art History at the Conservation Center of the Fine Arts Institute of New York University, he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study Islamic manuscripts. He then worked as a conservator for several years at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, with a particular focus on its Islamic manuscript collection. After returning to Istanbul, he has been involved in a number of conservation projects and educational efforts in Türkiye and throughout the Islamic world. He is a co-author of a curriculum for the training of Islamic manuscript conservators and of a terminology database for the description of Islamic manuscripts. Most recently, he established the manuscript conservation laboratory at the Rare Books Library of Istanbul University and worked with private collectors.

◆ **25 July 2023 Tuesday**

 **ILEM**

### Workshop I

09:30 - 11:30

**Theoretical Framework of Islamic Aesthetics**

◆ **ILEM Terrace Hall**

Moderator:

**Dr. Ramazan Turgut**

Panelists:

**Seyyed Abbas Haghayeghi:** The Useless Definition of “Traditional Art”

**Müberra Kandemir:** Donning a Beautiful Dress: The Relation Between al-Ihsân and al-Muhsîn in Ibn Arabî Thought

**Loubna el-Liazidi:** That Thing We Call Beauty: Islamic Mystical Aesthetics from an Object-Oriented Ontological Perspective

**Abdullah Awad:** Islam, Adorno, and Aesthetic Theory

## The Useless Definition of "Traditional Art"

Seyyed Abbas Haghayeghi

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**Keywords:** Frithjof Schuon, Art Definition, Art Theory, Traditional Art, Traditionalism.

In this paper, I will try to define the concept of "Traditional Art" by reviewing the ideas of Frithjof Schuon (a prominent Traditionalist) and presenting a definition of this concept in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. Then I will show that this definition will not have any benefit that definitions of art usually have. In fact, the Traditionalist's claims about Traditional art (whether Islamic, Christian, Eastern, etc.) do not have a specific function in identifying, interpreting, or creating artwork. One of the preoccupations of art philosophers in contemporary western philosophy has been to define art. In this regard, various theories have been proposed, some of which reconstruct classic theories and others newly emerged. Theories such as mimetic theory, representation, expression, form, and institutional theory are among the proposed theories for defining art in recent decades. However, the question of whether it is even possible to provide a definition of art or not, and the overall philosophical value of defining art, has always been a subject of debate and dispute. Nevertheless, it seems desirable if a generally accepted definition of art can be reached. Perhaps the most important benefit of defining art is that we can distinguish it from non-art, and this is an important issue for various reasons.

In addition to distinguishing art from non-art, having a definition of art has other benefits. In the face of an artwork, we will ask ourselves questions such as: what are the interpretations and symbolisms of this work? What are its aesthetic characteristics? What would be the process for creating something like this? So, if something is not an artistic work, there will be no need to examine, interpret, and understand its aesthetic and artistic features. On the contrary, if something is considered an artwork according to the criteria of a specific theory, it will require special interpretation and attention, and an artist can create a work that is considered a work of art according to that theory by recreating the process of creating the original work.

Therefore, having a good and comprehensive theory can have useful functions. This is particularly important for Islamic art (or other religious arts, or more generally, Eastern or Traditional arts) as well. However, despite the broad literature on the definition of art, no precise and serious efforts have been made regarding the concepts like Islamic art. Nevertheless, the efforts of a group of contemporary thinkers known as Traditionalists have led to concepts such as Traditional art, Eastern art, Islamic art, and art of other religions and traditions being specifically addressed by art researchers. Figures such as Ren'e Gu'enen, Frithjof Schuon, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who are considered prominent figures in the Traditionalist movement, have specifically addressed issues related to Traditional art in their works.

Of course, the main problem with the claims of Traditionalists is their lack of clarity and numerous ambiguities, which have led to serious disagreements among supporters and opponents of Traditional art. However, if we can reach a clear definition of the concept of "Traditional art" by reviewing their opinions (i.e., finding the necessary and sufficient conditions for an object to be classified under the category of Traditional art), it will have several important benefits. First, we can determine whether an artwork is considered Traditional or not. Second, we can interpret the symbols and details of that work of art. Finally, this will provide artists with the possibility of recreating a similar work like that.

One of the Traditionalists who has explicitly presented definitions of Traditional art is Schuon. By examining his theories, we come to his perspective on the theory of Traditional art:

Work of art X is considered a work of "Traditional art" if and only if:

1. It has a symbolic expression of intellectual realities
2. It is functional and useful (not just for pleasure and beauty)
3. Its form, style, materials, and symbolism conformed with the rules of traditional art.

These three conditions are necessary (and together sufficient) for a work of art to be considered Traditional art.

I claim that such a definition will have none of the benefits we mentioned and will therefore be useless. That is, it cannot be used to determine whether a work of art is Traditional or not, nor can it provide a criterion for interpreting it, or determine the process for creating Traditional art. Because according to the opinion of Traditionalists based on Islamic mysticism; for a work of art to be able to express a symbolic representation of intellectual realities, the artist must observe intellectual realities in the higher worlds through a mystical experience and then express them symbolically. Such a process is an internal and individual matter. The nature of mystical experiences is not provable.

Therefore, even if a work of art is truly the result of an artist's mystical experience, there is no way to prove this process. So, practically we cannot determine that work X is the result of an artist's mystical experience and work Y does not have this feature, unless someone is a mystic and can give such a diagnosis. In this case, his testimony is only reliable for himself and his disciples and cannot be used as a criterion for identifying works of art.



This problem also exists regarding the third condition, namely, conformity of form, style, material, and symbolism with the rules of Traditional art. This is because Traditionalists' definition of "rules" of Traditional art is not clear at all. Again, if the rules of Traditional art are divine and metaphysical, only a mystic can have access to them. The functionality of artwork will also not help to identify traditional art.

On the other hand, these conditions cannot be recommended as a model for creating new Traditional artworks for anyone. The reason is that even if a successful artist can mystically create a work of art, he still cannot prove to anyone that the work was created from a mystical experience and that the symbolic expression of intellectual realities that he has observed. Furthermore, a work of art in the Traditional definition is not necessarily a new creation, but rather an imitation of what truly exists in the world of meaning (the first condition).

Thus, it seems that efforts to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for describing a work of art under the concept of Traditional art will not be useful. The only conceivable benefit of talking about the spiritual path of Traditional artists is the same benefit of talking about the spiritual path of mystics. Throughout history, mystics have tried to say that there is a better path to reach the truth besides this apparent path, and it is worth trying at least. The efforts to introduce Traditional art will have only this benefit, which is to say that there is another way to create a work of art that has a path to truth and will probably have a better impact on audiences, and that is the spiritual path of the artist and audience. Moreover, there is no benefit to the claims of Traditionalists regarding the definition of Traditional art.

## Donning a Beautiful Dress: The relation between al-Ihsân and al-Muhsîn in Ibn Arabî Thought

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**Keywords:** Islamic Thought, Tasawwuf, Aesthetics, Beautiful, al-Ihsan, al-Muhsîn, Ibn 'Arabî.

This study aims to explore the concepts of al-ihsan and al-muhsîn within the context of the question, "What does the link established by Ibn 'Arabî between al-Ihsan and al-muhsîn imply for Islamic art?". In light of this question, the author will look into what it means to practice beauty in Ibn 'Arabî thought and raise the question of what possibilities this may open in terms of Islamic art thought. As such, the study examines the potential perspectives in the thought of Ibn 'Arabî regarding the methodology of Islamic art.

al-Ihsan can be translated as "to do what is beautiful" or "to make beautiful," and the word al-muhsîn is "the one who does what is beautiful." We argue that to comprehend the connection with these concepts in the framework of Ibn 'Arabî writings, one needs to focus on two main issues: firstly, the relation between the divine names or most beautiful names and human beings, and secondly, human practice ('amal). We will take into consideration the phrase "donning beautiful clothes" to evaluate the links between divine names and human beings.

Ibn 'Arabî mentions "donning beautiful (al-husn) clothes" while talking about the courtesy (adab) of Friday prayer in Futūhat al-Makkiyya. In another context, he uses the expression "donning beautiful clothes" in salah. According to Ibn 'Arabî, clothes is a word that we can relate to most beautiful names (asma' al-husna) in terms of both covering the body and the clothing of Allah's servant. Al-Ihsan and al-muhsîn, derived from the root h-s-n, are linked to one's practice, namely worship ('ibadat). Therefore, the question is how a person can practice beauty. It is not only related to salah but also to the entire ilm al-hal. Indeed, Ibn 'Arabî, in Futūhat, gives wide coverage to the meanings of salah, zakah, fasting, and Hajj and draws attention to the fact that the whole issue is about the practice itself.

According to Ibn 'Arabi's definition, divine names are relationships and dependencies (nisab, idafat). Therefore, the link between divine names and human beings becomes apparent and concrete regarding the types of relationships. Just as there is no single relationship that can be defined, each of them cannot be reduced to a single definition. However, in Ibn 'Arabī, there is a foundation on which we can base the concept of relationship (nisab) itself. Human beings' practices also vary and are graded according to the type of relationship they have with divine names. Through the relationship between divine names and human practice, we aim to examine the notion of practicing beauty (al-husn).

We shall attempt to examine the subject under three headings:

(i) Through the phrase "donning beautiful clothes," we will deal with the topic of divine names, or most beautiful names, which constitute the basis of Ibn Arabi's thought on the relationship between God and the world or human beings. In this part, we are asking the question, "What, exactly, does it mean to dress beautifully for prayer?" To answer this question, we must first define adornment (ziyna) and clothing (libas), as well as their relationship to divine names. Also, we must comprehend the concepts of worship (ibadat), servanthood ('ubudiyya), and servitude ('ubuda) concerning al-husn, al-Ihsan, and al-muhsin.

(ii) We will consider the concept of al-Ihsan in the hadith of Gabriel in terms of practice, that is, worship, which is related to donning beautiful clothes. In this well-known hadith, when asked about al-Ihsan, the Prophet announced: "It is that you worship Allah as if you see Him. And even though you do not see Him, He sees you". We will attempt to explain that Ibn 'Arabī applied two related interpretations to the hadith, as follows: (i) In terms of the meanings that the word "as-if" in the hadith implies. (ii) in terms of the levels of the verb "to see".

(iii) We will attempt to clarify the relationship between al-Ihsan and al-Muhsin as it pertains to the divine names presented in the first part via Quranic verses as references.

In the conclusion part, we will try to pose the research questions by relating them to Islamic art thought, considering the conceptual structure we've created around the notions of beautiful clothing, al-ihsan, and al-muhsin.

## That Thing We Call Beauty: Islamic Mystical Aesthetics from an Object-Oriented Ontological Perspective

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**Keywords:** Aesthetics, Object-Oriented Ontology, Islam, Mysticism, Beauty, Philosophy.

“So the two of them ate of it, and their shameful parts revealed to them, and they took to stitching upon themselves leaves of the Garden. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, and so he erred” (Holy Qur’an, 20, 121)<sup>1</sup>

“I was a hidden treasure. I wished to be made known, and thus I called creation into being in order to be known. (A Qudsi hadith)

Despite the consensual denial in the scholarship on the absence of a comparable philosophical discipline like that of western aesthetics in the Muslim and Arab worlds, aesthetics—as an intellectual or spiritual quest for the meaning of beauty—is an intrinsic part of both registers. This article seeks an ally into object-oriented ontology (Triple O) in re-reading some instances of beauty in the Islamic culture. These instances are randomly chosen from the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic philosophy. However, using Triple O as a methodological crutch is no coincidence here, since I am targeting some of its theoretical instruments that I deem suitable to approach elusive subjects such as Islamic art or beauty in Islam. Some of these theoretical apparatuses is object withdrawal, aesthetics as first philosophy, the concept of allusion to refer to the tension between an object and its qualities, to mention only a few. Triple O, whose star has risen and shined lately into the sky of continental philosophy, is a sub-branch of speculative realism that stresses the impossibility of direct access to reality. Reality can neither be reduced to its constituents (undermining) nor to its effects (overmining). Such elusive regard of reality reminds one of the evasiveness of mysticism as a phenomenological sensual experience of the divine cable of apprehending a form of knowledge that is inaccessible to the mind. Harman Graham, the American philosopher who baptized Triple O, justifies this elusiveness with the fact that philosophy has always been the love of wisdom and not its claim. The seeker seeks without any definite assurance of being able to quench their thirst at the end.

A lot of symmetries can be drawn between Triple O and the Islamic mystical discourse in the ways they approach aesthetics, metaphysics and epistemology. Speaking of symmetry, one can make good use of this linguistic opportunity and refer to symmetry as beauty in Elaine Scarry's treatise where the latter can also be observed in loyal mentorship relationships in both philosophy and mysticism. Firstly, object-oriented philosophy's immense interest in non-human agency and inanimate objects would find an equal counterpart in the Islamic philosophy's interest in inanimate objects contrary to mainstream western philosophy. When contemplating the name of the Holy Quran's chapters or surahs, we notice the abundance of inanimate objects in the titles. Moreover, Harman's ontology and the Islamic mystical discourse have a common interest in metaphors and non-literal linguistic statements. For Harman, the opposite of the adjective 'beautiful' is 'literal' rather than 'ugly'.

In the parable, the expulsion of Adam and Eve is an undermining of sorts; a downgrade of the former ethereal being that is the 'Perfect Wo/Man' to their physical components or their bare bodies. A downgrade that leaves human beings reliant on their physical senses on an everyday basis to comprehend the world around them. Acting against a phenomenological background despite not adhering to all its reasoning, the sensual human perception as a primary epistemological tool, has a special place in Triple O's argumentation. The disclosure of concealed essences or its attempt, a characteristic often associated with mystical traditions, is a recurrent theme within the framework of Triple O.

Quoting Alfred Whitehead, who is more or less an important philosopher in the internal discussions of Object-Oriented Philosophy, beauty is "a harmony of patterned contrasts". In the mystical camp, contrasts are of no less importance. Clarification is only attainable through perusing opposites in the Sufi path. The frequently quoted Sufi, Al Kharraz, is stating that he knew God "through the fact that he brings opposite together".

## Islam, Adorno, and Aesthetic Theory

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**Keywords:** Islamic aesthetics; Muslim intellectuals; Theodor Adorno; Aesthetic Theory; Postcolonial studies.

In this paper, I present the work of Theodor Adorno in relation to Islam, arguing that his aesthetic theory, especially as it developed in response to the critique of reification, offers a unique and underexplored opening for apprehending modes of knowledge production beyond Europe. Adorno's aesthetic theory, in other words, provides a vantage from which to recognize rationality's limitations; it poses a methodological challenge to thinking beyond the western philosophical tradition while also allowing for a mimetic opening. Rather than construe this line of inquiry exclusively as a metacritique, Adorno took recourse to elements of a tradition with which he was identified in the interwar era, namely Jewish mysticism, through the work of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem. These sources are theological in nature, not having an explicit part to play in the genesis of German Idealism, even if they end up taking materialism as their core concern. Their theological origin has been normalized in the reception of critical theory within the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Regardless of Adorno's entrenchment within a western philosophical tradition, he thus provides an aesthetic theory which may be meaningfully explored in the midst of other theologies - in this case, Islam. I argue that aesthetic theory may be uniquely situated to illuminate elements of Islam that have been, because of colonial modernity, repressed by the politics of identity. As I conceive of Islam, moreover, beyond the specificity of individual belief, I write with a view to how it may be a resource not for a set of sequestered beliefs or as an inaccessible Other, but rather for a social theory which tackles what has been at the heart of the Frankfurt School from its inception: the narrowing effects of instrumental reason and the logic of domination on the interpretation of society.

Taking aesthetics seriously is neither relegated to the interpretation of artworks nor merely reflective, operating as a metacritique of modern society. The movement through Adorno's aesthetic theory opens up ways of understanding specific practices, such as prayer and supplication, without the dominance of a rational principle. I argue that, because of its restlessness and negativity, Adorno's aesthetic theory does not provide a positive proposition to be deliberated in a vacuum. It rather opens up a space for thinking about the concreteness of form, as well as the sedimentation of content, beyond the socio-historical particularity of Europe. How do we understand aesthetic theory not only in its capacity to multiply modes of interpretation, but also with respect to practices which take critical recourse to Islamic metaphysical frameworks?

I do not pose the Frankfurt School as a substitute to the varied projects which derive critique from within the Islamic tradition. Such projects abound, yet some of them are routed through the problematics posed by the Frankfurt School, at least implicitly. Comparable figures in this tradition include the contemporary Moroccan philosopher Abdurrahman Taha, whose critique of Kant is uncannily similar to Adorno's and whose ethical paradigm has seen comparison with the Frankfurt School. My contention is that a serious engagement with Adorno aids rather than elides those efforts. This is so because the conditions to which critical theory is directed - that is, the administered society - are orienting the epistemology of Islamic societies through the confluence of global capitalism and neocolonial intervention. Adorno's insights may also be relevant for scholars who aim to derive out of their context not a compartmentalized indigeneity but rather an Islamic universalism.

This paper argues that it is possible to take recourse to Islamic intellectuals in reinterpreting the relevance of aesthetic theory. Hamid Dabashi's recent work moves in that direction, placing non-western figures currently on the margins of western academia, such as the Muslim intellectual Jalal Al-e Ahmad, "next to leading American intellectuals like James Baldwin or German Jewish intellectuals like Hannah Arendt, Theodor Adorno, and Walter Benjamin." Dabashi does so specifically by looking at the literary and aesthetic forms of their output. The history of slavery has rendered a parallel development. Jesse McCarthey, for instance, begins his book on the history of black aesthetics as a form of resistance by quoting a powerful passage from Adorno's work on form. Adorno writes: "Art is not a matter of pointing up alternatives but rather resisting, solely through artistic form, the course of the world, which continues to hold a pistol to the heads of human beings."

The comparison between Adorno and Islamic intellectuals points beyond mere coincidence. The western tradition, however self-enclosed in the myth of modernity, is entwined intimately with the Islamic tradition. This is evident in the intellectual history of modern philosophy's development out of the translation and interpretation of Muslim philosophers in the medieval period, as well as in the debates among rationalist philosophers in the eleventh century which anticipated some of the scientific, medical, and programmatic elements we associate with the Enlightenment. Attending to such intellectual entwinement is not to ignore the ways in which modernity has isolated, reified and entwined philosophy with power and subjugation. It is rather to suggest that, if thought can be attendant to its own formation, as Adorno insists it must, then its formation may illuminate theology beyond the strictures of contemporary binaries.

These issues were not lost on Edward Said, who developed out of Adorno's thought a relationship between aesthetic style and critique in the midst of colonial exploitation and neo-colonial forms of knowledge production. So much so that Said, who was born into a Christian Protestant household in Muslim-majority Palestine, was able to articulate, in an interview with the daily Israeli newspaper Haaretz, that his recourse to Adorno makes him the last Jewish intellectual. This has rendered similar moves in Christian theology; the Anglican interest expressed by the former archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams in how Shari'a may be incorporated into British law, for example, open up spaces for thinking about social theory and critique beyond the prevailing accounts of reified individual freedom and conservative theology.

I argue that while critics of the Frankfurt School, including Dabashi, often take recourse to Said in asking why the school was silent on questions of race and empire, they do so without a spirited engagement with the depths of Adorno's aesthetic theory. My contention is that Adorno provides a way for thinking about critical theory beyond Europe in innovative ways. To elaborate, I contrast his aesthetic theory with the contemporary deployment of Adorno for thinking about the Frankfurt School and Islam. A host of western and Islamic scholars cultivate well-intentioned orientations on the matter but often side-step Adorno's critique of reification. Adorno's aesthetic theory in turn, provides a litmus test for gauging how the injurious effects of modernity may be veiled as colonial and neo-colonial forces continue to transform both western and Islamic societies.



◆ **25 July 2023 Tuesday**

 **ILEM**

## Workshop II

09:30 - 11:30

**Perception of Value in Islamic Aesthetics**

◆ **ILEM Conference Hall**

Moderator:

**Dr. Emin Lelic**

Panelists:

**Melike Sıla Acar Kaya:** Embodying Ramadan: Islamic Aesthetics, Spirituality and the Production of Space in Ramadan Studios of Turkish Televisions

**Odil Ernazarov:** The Educational Value of Introducing the Epigraphic Writings in the Islamic Monuments to the Young Generation: the Example of the City of Tashkent

**Chokchai Wongtanee:** Al-Qur'an from the Sultanate of the Ottoman Empire: An Aesthetic Tool for Reconciliation, Uplifting Nationality (Ummah) and the Spirit of Siamese-Patani Muslims

## Embodying Ramadan: Islamic Aesthetics, Spirituality and the Production of Space in Ramadan Studios of Turkish Televisions

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**Keywords:** Islamic Arts, Spirituality, Ramadan, The Production of Space, Aesthetics, TV studios.

Cherishing the spirit of Ramadan, Turkish televisions have been hosting sahur and iftar programs for decades that start on the first night of the holy month and last until the end, on the day of Arafa. Those programs take place in special-design TV Studios named Ramadan Studios. In this study, I focus on Ramadan studios as where one may observe the relation of spaces, discourses, symbols, aesthetics, spirituality, and belief. Evaluating Ramadan Studios between 2020 to 2023 in this study, I attempt to understand how Ramadan is embodied. Since I argue that embodiment is spatial, I bring up a not-very complicated question: How the space in Ramadan Studios is produced and reflected then on the screen related to Islamic aesthetics, symbols, discourses, and spatial elements? A renowned French philosopher and sociologist Lefebvre (1991) states "Space is never empty, it always embodies a meaning." He considers the nature of space based on the dynamic and trialectical process within its "perceived, conceived, lived" spaces. Likewise, I emphasize the space produced in Ramadan studios and reflected on the screen in one dimension has dimensions of perceived, conceived, and lived. In this investigation, I put forward that studios are necessarily related to the way how Ramadan was perceived and lived.

Not only physically but also virtually and socially, studios are constructed by norms, aesthetic tastes, religious orientations, and social approaches. In search of comprehending studios, I conduct methods of semiotics. This method facilitates research on digitally connected cultural environments. Semiotics, on the other hand, enables spirituality and aesthetics to be understood through symbols & discourses and to be interpreted depending on cultural codes, due to the signifier and signified mechanism. Several studies by qualitative methods on the relationship between religion and media in Turkey were published (Çamdereli, 2018; Çelebi, 2018; Çelikkaya, 2010; Nazlı, 2019; Turan, 2007; Ülger, 2007; Yazıcı, 2015). However, fewer studies focuses on Ramadan programs (Gönül, 2019; Özay, 2019). Examining Ramadan studios in terms of spirituality, art, and aesthetics, therefore, fills a gap in the written literature.

I evaluate the programs separately as iftar and sahur, in this regard, I argue that the spirituality of the sahur programs is shaped according to a full person who will fast while iftar programs are formed as a waiting place for those who have performed fasting. Being aware of the variety of studios and programs, I select specific TV channels, and archived their Ramadan studios' designs and broadcast streaming, by doing so, I reviewed studios and programs under three sub-headings: Spaces, Signs, and Practises.

Typically, studios' spatial setup stands out through decoration elements with Islamic connotations, such as arches, domes, and geometrical ornaments. Some studios appear on transparent platforms at the corners of specific mosques and masjids. Mysticism draws attention in some studios where the light&shadow effect is designed. In some of the programs, an outdoor effect is created in the interior, while in others the opposite is the case, the interior looks like an exterior with various coating and decoration works. Deciphering the semiotic meaning in Ramadan studios, signs can be both exterior and interior elements such as calligraphical works, lecterns, oil lamps, or imitations of religious figures. I consider those objects and works connected to Islamic spirituality, as stated by Nasr (1987) that the origin of Islamic art is in the essence of Islam, in its spirituality. I argue that those works and objects produced as an output of spirituality are also used for cherishing spirituality therein, and vice versa.

Even though some typical rituals, each studio creates its content, approach, and method in different tones of religion. Rituals and performances may seem varying yet resemble in broadcast streaming which generally includes religious conversations, inviting guests, Q&A sessions, and prayer ceremonies. Some studios focus more on religious conversation and emphasize guests. So much so that it becomes possible to see one person on different channels on various days of Ramadan. On the other hand, some programs offer video shooting from the holy lands of Makkah and Madinah carrying documentary content to screen. When considered from this point of, some programs bear resemblance to a reality show or a morning show through their methods and broadcast streaming. In conclusion, Turkish TV channels broadcast sahur and iftar programs in the holy month of Ramadan. To revive the month, TV programs take place in specific studios designed through decoration elements, Islamic artworks, geometrical or arabesque ornaments, and more. In these studios, it is possible to observe the relation of spaces, discourses, symbols, aesthetics, spirituality, and belief. This study focuses on specific TV channels between the years of 2020 to 2023, their studios' designs, and broadcast streaming under subheadings of spaces, signs, and practices. Eventually, it shows that studios embody Ramadan by putting an authentic interpretation fostered by Islamic aesthetics and spirituality through perceived, conceived, and lived aspects of the production of space.

## The Educational Value of Introducing the Epigraphic Writings in the Islamic Monuments to the Young Generation: the Example of the City of Tashkent

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**Keywords:** Tashkent, Mingurik, Zainiddin Muhammad Vasifi, calligraphers, ISESCO, Hazrat Imam, Minor mosque, Almazor.

More than four thousand material and spiritual monuments in the territory of Uzbekistan are included in the UNESCO list as unique examples of world heritage. From the earliest patterns of stone inscriptions, various types of epigraphic writings created by the thinking of our ancestors, examples of folk oral creativity, thousands of manuscripts kept in the treasury of local and world libraries today are the great spiritual wealth of the Muslim-Turkish peoples.

It is clear that Uzbekistan is the leading country in Central Asia in terms of quantity and uniqueness of epigraphic monuments, most of them have not been studied before. For hundreds of years, many experts have been trying to study these epigraphic writings. Scientific debates about the correct interpretation of ancient monograms and other texts written by skilled craftsmen continue today. For many years, a group of scientists from Uzbekistan carefully studied the records of these unique monuments and compiled the first results of their research into a multi-volume publication entitled "The epigraphic writings on the Monuments of Uzbekistan".

In these studies, several unique examples of written inscriptions in the architectural monuments of Tashkent city were studied. Tashkent is one of the historical cities of Uzbekistan, which celebrated its 2200th anniversary in 2009. Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, the largest industrial, scientific and cultural center of Central Asia, occupies an area of more than 360 km<sup>2</sup>. Human development of the Tashkent region began in the Stone Age. In the 3rd century BC, another culture came from the lower basin of the Syrdarya in the Tashkent oasis, which made it possible for the traditions of urban culture to emerge, with the skill of building houses from raw bricks and thatch.

After the spread of Islam to the region, monuments in the Islamic spirit were built in Tashkent. Unfortunately, the architectural monuments built during this period, even those erected in the 9th-10th centuries after that, have not been preserved. However, it is precisely these glazed pottery vessels made in the 9th-10th centuries that testify to the high skill and artistic taste of the craftsmen, as well as the widespread use of the Arabic language in the urban environment.

Among the epigraphic writings, the number of such wise sayings describing generosity and knowledge attracted attention: "Generosity is the virtue of those who follow guidance", "Greed is a sign of poverty", "He who talks a lot makes many mistakes", "The nobility of wealth is crossing the sea of desires".

Not many ancient architectural monuments have been preserved in the city of Tashkent. There are several reasons for this. First of all, natural disasters (earthquakes, floods) damaged buildings. In addition, many monuments related to religious belief were destroyed under the influence of the ideological situation during the Soviet period, that is, the politics of atheism. However, experts report that at the beginning of 1868, more than 250 mosques and approximately 100 madrassas were operating in Tashkent.

The Mingurik monument with Islamic inscriptions is one of the historical monuments in Tashkent dating back to the 14th century. A fragment of architectural decoration from the middle of the 14th century was identified in it. In the architectural decoration plate decorating the mosque's mihrab, the Qur'anic Surah "Al-Fatiha" reads: "Walaz-zolliyn. Amen, Sadaqallah (ul-azim)", only a few last words have been preserved.

In the period after the 14th century, calligraphy and one of its most complex types - architectural epigraphy - developed more intensively in Tashkent. Historian and writer Zainiddin Muhammad Vasifi (1485-1547), who moved from Herat to Tashkent in 1513, mentioned the names of a number of calligraphers in his work. In particular, he mentioned the names of Jalaluddin Yusuf Shoshi, Maulana Obidi Shoshi, Muhammad Husayn Tabi'i and other calligraphers.

In terms of the uniqueness of the coins minted in ancient Tashkent, samples of crafts, epigraphic writings on the surface of historical buildings, experts note that Shash school of calligraphy was formed.

In the period of independence, inscriptions in many monuments of Tashkent were restored and new ones are being built. In particular, UNESCO declared Tashkent the "Capital of Islamic Culture" in 2007 for its role in preserving and further enriching the Islamic heritage and monuments of Uzbekistan, which led to an increase in the number of Islamic monuments in the city. Among them, the architectural complex of Hazrat Imam, which was restored and perfectly repaired in 2007, and the Minor mosque take a special place.

Thus, in this research project, the epigraphic writings sealed in the architectural monuments of only five districts of Almazor, Uchtepa, Shaykhantahur, Chilanzor and Yunusabad districts of the city were included. There are a total of 7 architectural complexes in the city (architectural complexes of Hazrat Imam, Maulana Haroboti or Harobot Eshan, Khoja Chupan ota, Sheikh Zayniddin Baba, Tashkent Registan, Suzuk ota, Kokh ota), 5 madrasas (Barak Khan, Muyi Mubarak, Abulqasim Eshan, Khoja Ahror Vali, Kokaldosh madrasas), 1 khanaqah (Yunus Khan khanaqah), 10 mosques (Namazgah, Hastimam - Hazrat Imam, Imam al-Tirmizi, Ismatullah Haji or Ismatullah Sheikh, Sharafbay, Okhunguzar, Nowza, Khoja Ahror Vali, Zangi ata, Minor mosques), 7 mausoleums (Mausoleums of Abu Bakr Muhammad al-Qaffal al-Shashi or Hazrat Imam, Ibrahim ota, Muin Halfa Baba, Sheikh Khavandi Tahir, Kaldirgachbi, Yunus Khan, Khoja Alambardar), a total of 30 architectural monument epigraphic writings were studied.

Reviving them today through the research of the epigraphic writings on the monuments helps first of all, to introduce them to the younger generation and to form their correct interpretations. In addition, the information contained in the project will be a useful resource for people interested in the history of Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, in different periods.

## **Al-Qur'an from the Sultanate of the Ottoman Empire: An Aesthetic Tool for Reconciliation, Uplifting nationality (Ummah) and the Spirit of Siamese-Patani Muslims**

**Chokchai Wongtanee**

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**Keywords:** The Ottoman Empire, Siam, Patani, Aesthetic, Islāmic Aesthetic, Ilmu Al-Jamaal, Ummah, Turjuman al-Mustafid bi al-Jawi.

Siam changed its name to Thailand in 1939. From research since 2017, a large amount of important historical evidence, demonstrating relationships with the Ottoman Empire found in the form of official archives and kept at the National Archives, Bangkok. More than 75 titles are related to the Ottoman Empire and Turkey. Out of these 75 titles, there are 6 titles containing content related to the concept of "Aesthetics" in both Western and Islāmic and pagan perspectives. This paper has the main objectives as follows: (1) To study the meaning of the term "Aesthetics" in Europe, and in the Siamese/Thai perspective and context, according to the concept of Ilmu Jamaal in Islāmic worldview and Malay Muslim worldview. (2) To study the consequence after receiving Al-Qur'an from the Ottoman's sultan as a tool for building relations, uplifting and strengthening national unity (ummah) and spiritual refining of Thai Muslims and Malays. (3) To analyze the artistic patterns that appear in the Tafsir of the Qur'an "Turjuman al-Mustafid bi al-Jawi" or "Tafsir al-Baidhawi Melayu". This study basically used synthetic analysis of the historical evidence contained in the archives entitled "The Kaek, (Muslim/Guest) requested for the chests of Mahamad books (al-Qur'an) at the tax office, without paying tax".

Finding/Results: 1) The study of the meaning of the term "Aesthetics" (Aesthetics) in the Western worldview found that the meaning of the word "Aesthetics" is derived from the ancient Greek word "Aisthesis", which means feeling or perception. The term aesthetics is rather an ancient concept that can be traced back to the time of the Athenian philosopher Plato. 2) The meaning of the word "Aesthetics" in Islāmic worldview or "Islāmic aesthetics" is widely related to thoughts, feelings, intellectual use, artistic creation and the search for a meaning that does not go against Islāmic principles, including the consequence of perception, expression, and experience related to beauty, happiness and connecting the creation with God in Islām. 3) The meaning of the word "Aesthetics" or Ilmu Al-Jamaal is a subject about beauty, harmony, decency, accuracy and goodness. The general term "Al-Jamaal" has a broad meaning that conveys the essence of beauty.

From an Islāmic perspective, "Al-Jamaal" means "beauty" in Arabic. 4) The meaning of the word "Aesthetics" in Malay Muslim Worldview. Estetik or (الجماليات) in Malay language means beauty. Aesthetics in Malay perception is not just a matter of beauty or an appreciation for beauty and art. Indeed, there is also a connotation related to the value of the product or product of art produced in various aspects. 5) The result of receiving the Tafsir Al-Qur'an bestowed by the Ottoman Empire "Turjuman al-Mustafid bi al-Jawi" by Al-Baidhawi as a tool for building relations and enhancing nationhood (ummah) and spiritual purification of Siamese-Thai and Malay Muslims was found that receiving the Tafsir resulted in the elite government officials and rulers of Siam, most of whom were Thai Buddhists, acquainted with Muslims and their way of life. 6) The artistic pattern that appears on the book cover of the Tafsir was coated cardboard with hard green material. The contents and patterns on the inner cover are handwritten in Khat (Arabic script), and in the main text Tafsir is the type of font used by Arabic printing houses in the 1870s.

This study is expected to generate new knowledge both in the field of Islāmic aesthetic knowledge and to gain an initial understanding of Ilmu Al-Jamaal (العلم الجمال), which will create and develop Islāmic aesthetics concepts/theories: an Alternative Way to Knowledge, both in Thai and Patani-Malay society where no one has ever studied and researched before. This will lead to raising awareness of the history of the Siam-Patani relationship with the Ottoman Empire, creating a society with aesthetics from accessing the Al-Qur'an as a medium to strengthen their relationships, elevating the knowledge and spirit of being human with faith and Ummah even in different regions on the other side of the world.

With the belief in Islām constantly emphasizing that this world is a temporary state, whether it's family, descendants, property, precious objects, happiness, suffering and aesthetics. They are not permanent in this world. We find that the principles of aesthetics from the Islāmic perspective are aiming towards the goal of having aesthetics that are permanent, enduring, incorruptible and permanent conditions that human beings have never seen before in this world, but believe and recognize that permanent and infinite aesthetics can only exist in the next world. Aesthetics are for those who are patient, loyal, humble and persevere towards good and success. As the verse in the Quran says, "Allāh will admit those who believe and work righteous deeds to gardens beneath which rivers flow: they shall be adorned therein with bracelets of gold and pearls; and their garments there will be of silk. Be guided (in this life) to the purest of speeches; they have been guided to the Path of Him Who is worthy of (all) praise. al-Qur'an. (Al-Hajj 22: 23-24). "Wallahu A'lam" (Allāh alone knows best)



◆ 27 July 2023 Thursday

ILEM

### Workshop III

09:30 - 11:30

Poetry, Music, and the Arts of the Book

◆ ILEM Terrace Hall

Moderator:

Esra Çiftçi

Panelists:

**Sümeyye Cinisli:** Between Two Patrons: Ahmed Pasha's Qasidas Written for Mehmed II and Sheikh Vefâ

**Mehmet Salih Babacan:** Music the Common Way to Chant Allah

**Adnan Fallahi:** Cultural Roots of Jurisprudential Disputes Over Art: Music and Zi al-Ajam (the Ajam Costume)

**Tayebeh Beheshti:** Layout Design in the Manuscript of Baysunghur Shahnameh Reserverd in the Golestan Palace Museum of Iran

## Between Two Patrons: Ahmed Pasha's Qasidas Written for Mehmed II and Sheikh Vefâ

Sümeyye Cinisli

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**Keywords:** Qasida, Patronage, Ahmed Pasha, Sheikh Vefâ, Mehmed II.

Qasidas reflect the relationship between the hâmi and mahmî on the fictional plane. They are generally written to praise the memdûh but the definition of the memdûh brings changes to the genre. If they are written for praising the greatness of God, they are called tawheed; if they are written for praising the prophet, they are called na't. Besides, the memdûh can be four caliphs, Shiite imams, or awliyas etc. So, although the gain out of a qasida is not just material, they were mostly remembered with their material benefits because they are generally known as the poems which were written for the political hâmi such as the sultan or another high stateman. This also brings the idea that qasidas were written for gaining money and prestige and carries along with the criticism that they are the productions of adulations and corrupt manners (İnalçık, 2003, p. 17) since they praise the hâmi even if they deserve it or not, to gain money out of the praise.

Given this brief background, I support the idea that qasidas should be examined by taking into consideration their sociological and aesthetic aspects. As Michael Glünz shows clearly, qasidas are signifiers of the power relations (a ruler, a walî, the power of God etc.) but they are also signifiers of a literary tradition (Glünz, 2013, p. 566 - 567). In this article, I aim to examine two qasidas of Ahmed Pasha (d. 1496-97) who is accepted as the first successful qasida poet of the Ottoman period. One of these qasidas (named as the Sun qasida) was written for Mehmed II who conquered Constantinople and changed the intellectual aspects of the Ottoman empire. This qasida exemplifies the sociological and aesthetic power of qasidas elegantly and it also shows how the support and appreciation of the sultan influenced art. The other qasida that I will examine is the one written for Sheikh Vefâ who was the famous sheikh of the Zaynî tariqa in 15th century Istanbul. The qasida written for Şeyh Vefâ signifies the intimate relationship between the dervish and the sheikh and underlines the differences of expectations from the two different memdûhs.

The qasida genre is not only suitable for reflecting the aesthetic characteristics of classical poetry, but also provides a basis for the fictional representation of patronage relations in the society in which it was written. In these qasidas, one can find profound expressions of patronage, which is ordinarily defined as the hierarchical relationship between the patron and the patron. In the poems written by people like Ahmed Pasha, who belonged to different circles in society, it is seen that there is not only a patron, but also a social and cultural environment that surrounds the patron. Although it was Mehmed II who provided Ahmed Pasha's material sustenance and gave him the profession and positions, he held, Ahmed Pasha (and many other poets like him) also presented ode to their sheikhs, who were considered their spiritual patrons, even though they did not expect any income.

Moreover, the fact that Ahmed Pasha, in his qasida to Sheikh Vefâ, emphasizes not Sheikh Vefâ's person but his dervishes and glorifies Sheikh Vefâ for the greatness of his dervishes (or vice versa) can be taken as an indication that Ahmed Pasha also took into account the context in which he wrote the qasida: Mehmet II is represented by the "sun" in accordance with the cosmic understanding of sovereignty, while Sheikh Vefâ is represented by the dervishes of his dervish lodge. Although different from the traditional Arabic odes presented to Mehmed II as a requirement of the understanding of cosmic sovereignty, it is a narrative in its own right, in which the sun is represented in many different ways and a hierarchy is established between the sultan and the sun.

Sheikh Vefâ's qasida has a very simple, low-artistic expression. From this point of view, although the qasida presented to Mehmed II seems to be more elaborate, the distance between the poet and the memduh increases due to the similes and other arts. The more Mehmed II is likened to different things in the representation of the sun, the further away from reality he becomes. The ode to Sheikh Vefâ, on the other hand, is simpler and therefore contains less art. However, this simplicity reduces the distance between the poet and the memduh. As a matter of fact, in the qasida, Ahmed Pasha does not demand that Sheikh Vefâ or his dervishes look at him or give him the nazar but continues to praise his sheikh in a calm manner. In the qasida presented to Mehmed II, on the other hand, the distance between the descriptions in the first part is so great that towards the end of the qasida, Ahmed has to address his patron directly and state his request explicitly in order to close this distance.

In conclusion, I aim to analyze how qasidas reflect the dynamics of patronage relations by comparing the two powerful social circles of Istanbul in the 15th century. I will analyze the qasidas through close reading and will try to contextualize these poems in the political and intellectual context of the period in which they were written. Overall, I claim that these analyses will open new perspectives for the researchers who are interested in the relationship between the hamîs and mahmîs.

## Music: The Common Way to Chant Allah

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**Keywords:** Sacred Music, Maqam, Meshk, Recitation, Sufism, House of Wisdom, Ottoman Art.

Art has been the most effective way of expressing human emotions. This action, which reflects his soul, has been the reflection of many spiritual experiences and feelings. The feelings he felt in the face of the events and beings he observed in the universe motivated him to share these feelings. Music is also an original and aesthetic way of expression. Although the belief system is different, there is a call against the divine being in every belief system. This address has developed over time within the framework of various forms and rules. This activity formed the basis for the development of music. For example, The Prophet's ordering the Quran to be recited with beautiful recitation, encouraging various entertainment and musical activities in many social events, and most importantly expressing that wisdom is the lost property of Muslims encouraged Muslims to follow the beautiful and aesthetic. This search has created various productions in music and has been ingeniously performed by Sufis.

Although they moved away from Islam due to their corruption, Christianity and Judaism preserved their traditions of remembering and glorifying God. This activity has been institutionalized in them in various ways. So much so that the church has shaped musical activity in Europe for many centuries. Many musical forms have been produced directly for use in church liturgy. These forms are performed in the form of supplication to God and the chanting of the sacred text. Although it varies according to different cultural backgrounds and aesthetic tastes, it basically presents a similar structure. This situation can also be observed in Judaism. Music plays an active role in worship in synagogues. Special works are performed for certain days and events. When the rites and worships of these three religions are observed, it will be seen that they are similar in various aspects.

Since its emergence, Muslims, who have been neighbors with many cultures and civilizations, have also examined these artistic activities around them and made new productions. In this tradition they invented, it was theoretically based on a scientific basis. Basically, the values taught by revelation and the morality shaped by the lifestyle taught by the Prophet were the founding elements of art. All kinds of philosophical values produced on scientific grounds were evaluated and criticized. One of the most successful examples of this confrontation is "House of Wisdom". This structure, which was established during the Abbasid period, translated many scientific studies, especially the ancient Greek knowledge, and brought them to the Islamic world. There were also works written on music among the works such as translation, copyright and commentary made in many fields. With the transfer of these works to the Islamic world, many theoretical studies on music began. These studies, which started with the mathematical foundations of music, began to investigate its relationship with cosmology, its relationship with human nature and temperament, its therapeutic properties, and many aspects. Music was included in the "quadrivium" in the medieval education curriculum. These four fields, consisting of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, were considered within the seven free arts. With the transfer of the works in this field to the Islamic world, music and all the fields that it is related to have developed. All these works were trying to make sense of the nature and function of art. Music became an integral part of worship and rituals systematically, especially by the Sufis. Music has become the way for Muslims to express themselves in almost every field, starting from the adhan, which is read five times a day, to the many layers of meaning to the Mevlevi rite. This form of expression coincided with the artistic activities of Christian and Jewish communities with some features. When we examine the art life in Ottoman society, we see that the maqam-based music activity is the founding element. Maqams have been preferred in various times and situations due to their unique emotional intensity. The use of certain maqams by Christians in various rites has also been observed in Jews. Although there are many fundamental differences in the theoretical, technical characteristics, forms, and style of music, especially in the definition of maqam, and on taste, the common ground on which they are based is remarkable.

These communities, which were in contact with Muslims in cities such as Istanbul where there is intense cultural interaction, were in art activities. An example of this exchange is the "Mafrim" hymns. This form, which belongs to the expeditionary Jews who escaped from the "Reconquista" movement in Spain and took refuge in the Ottoman lands, emerged in Edirne in the 17th century. This form has emerged because of the effort to perform Jewish hymns in the style of Turkish music. This form, which was created by being influenced by the Mevlevi, is performed with the use of various maqams such as Hijaz, Rast, Suzinak etc. In these interactions in the music world, the "Mevlevihanes" functioned as fine arts centers. In the "Meshk" system, where there was no official diploma system, graduates were accepted with the approval of an artisan master and the work he produced. The Mevlevi were also an authority accepted by all segments of society, especially in music. Greek, Jewish, Armenian, Assyrian and many communities encountered the Mevlevi in their musical activities.

This multicultural rich artistic life observed in many Ottoman cities, especially Istanbul, which was the capital of the Caliphate for many years, also gives many ideas about the culture of living together. The fact that these communities, which are subject to different beliefs and laws, have managed to live together for centuries draws attention to the founding feature of art in social life. An example of this situation is the tanbur teacher of Sultan Selim III, "Tanburi Izzak Fresco Romano". This person, who was a householder in the synagogues, also gave music lessons in the palace, in the "Enderun". This example, which can be seen rarely in history, shows how art constitutes a ground both based on belief and in social life. Another reflection of this situation is that many non-Muslim temples and cemeteries in the city have been carried with their original characteristics until today. The concept of "Meshk", taken from calligraphy, has also been used in music education. "Meshk" sequences show the teachers and art genealogy of a musician. It is seen that people from different faiths and social classes take place many times in these sequences.

In the face of many problems we face in today's world, such as the nation-state mentality, the problem of social cohesion, the hatred towards refugees, the disappearance of identities in the process of globalization, many political and economic debates are held. When the effect and potential of art on people and society are examined, it will be seen that new solutions and alternatives can be produced. When the effect of music on personality training, treatment of mental illnesses, rituals, social activities, education and how it has shaped social life throughout history is examined, it will contribute to the solution of many problems today.

## Cultural roots of jurisprudential disputes over art: Music and Zi al-Ajam (the Ajam costume)

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**Keywords:** Music, Zi Al-Ajam (Non-Arabic Costume), Culture, Jurisprudence, The Abbasid Era.

Cultural roots of jurisprudential disputes over art: Music and Zi al-Ajam (the Ajam costume)

### 1. Introduction and the research structure

If art is one of the most notable means of expressing human feelings, liking and ideals in the history of civilization, then music is definitely one of the most excellent, prominent and general types of art. Therefore, the discussion of art in Islamic civilization and tradition without mentioning music is an incomplete discussion. But since Islamic jurisprudence is one of the most important dimensions of Islamic civilization - and according to writers such as Muhammed Abed al-Jabri, Islamic civilization can be called the civilization of jurisprudence - any discussion about the role and impact of art - in general - and specially music in Islamic civilization, it is not possible without referring to the jurisprudential aspects of this issue.

In this research, we try to examine the problematic of music in Islamic jurisprudence from a new perspective and reread it in the context of the cultural, linguistic and racial conflicts of the Islamic society in the Abbasid era.

### 2. The research questions

Is the conflict of Muslim jurists over the music just a direct result of sacred texts? Are cultural and social backgrounds also involved in this conflict? Is there a connection between the views of the jurists about the Ajam (non - Arabic) costume and the jurisprudential rule of music or not?

### 3. The context and justification of the research

Since al-Shafi'i is the only jurist of the era of compilation of Muslim heritage, who left a voluminous jurisprudential work, we first refer to al-Shafi'i's al-Um to examine the views of jurists about music. Re-reading al-Shafi'i's view on music shows that he examined music from the perspective of social and moral customs and not from the perspective of jurisprudence. Therefore, for al-Shafi'i, music is a moral and customary issue and not a jurisprudential one. Then we examine the opinion of jurists of other Sunni schools about music.

This review shows that there are two general views on the jurisprudential rule of music: the view of the Iraqi jurists, the view of the Hijazi jurists. Therefore, the difference of jurists about music can be analyzed based on the difference between two geographical regions: Iraqi jurists were very sensitive to music and generally considered it al-haram (forbidden); On the other hand, the majority of Hijazi jurists considered music (singing and playing) al-halal (permissible); and moreover some of the most famous Hijazi jurists and Hadith scholars were musicians.

Indeed this geographical difference is basically caused by the difference in the cultural situation of Iraq and Hijaz in the Abbasid era, because the climatic differences alone cannot be considered as a reason for the fatwas of the jurists. In the continuation of this research, to explain this cultural difference, we refer to a common concept in the jurisprudential literature of the Abbasid era: Zi al-Ajam. Zi al-Ajam means costumes, manners, culture, habits, rituals and languages that are not of Arabic origin. The majority of Sunni jurists have considered it forbidden to follow Zi al-Ajam (non-Arabic costume). They have established a principle called "negation of similarity to al-Ajm" or "opposition to Zi al-Ajm" and have explained many rulings based on this principle. In this research, we show that instead of referring to the texts of the Qur'an and Hadith, the differences of the jurists about music can be explained in a more precise way through this principle. In fact, jurisprudential rule about music and engaging in music, is one of the many cases that fall under the principle of "Opposition to Zi al-Ajm". In this way, it is clear that cultural and social conflicts in the first Islamic societies have caused various insights and understandings of categories such as art and especially music. Although these various understandings were gradually explained only with jurisprudential tools and methods, the examination of the origins and contexts of concepts such as Zi al-Ajam (non-Arabic costume) shows that cultural and social categories such as art in early Islam era should be paying attention in the light of those cultural and social conflicts.

#### 4. The research aims

We prove several points in this research:

- 1) In the some oldest Muslim jurisprudential texts, there is no mention of the Qur'anic verses or Hadiths indicating the jurisprudential impermissibility of music, but rather the discussion of music has been examined only from a cultural and customary point of view.
- 2) The difference in the opinion of the jurists about the jurisprudential rule of music can be explained by considering the different cultural contexts of the two regions of Iraq and Hijaz.
- 3) One of the most important reasons for forbidding music in Islamic jurisprudence is placing music as one of the examples of Zi al-Ajam (non-Arabic costume). Therefore, according to the principle of opposition to Zi al-Ajam, opposing music and prohibiting it, is justified.
- 4) Rejecting the "opposition to Zi al-Ajm" principle or understanding this principle in a different way from the orthodox understanding, will also change the jurisprudential rule of music. As the rereading of this rule can create fundamental changes in many other categories related to art and culture from a jurisprudential point of view.



## Layout Design in the Manuscript of Baysunghur Shahnameh Reserverd in the Golestan Palace Museum of Iran

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**Keywords:** Baysunghuri Shahnameh, Layout System, Geometric Methods, Text Pages, Illuminations, Illustrations.

Some contemporary research indicates that the page layout design of Persian manuscripts is based on the principle of successively dividing the page into equal parts. However, there are many Persian manuscripts whose page layout systems do not meet the requirements of this method. One of these manuscripts, whose layout system design challenges the mentioned theory, is the manuscript of Baysunghuri Shahnameh, which is now preserved in the Golestan Palace Museum of Iran. This manuscript, which was ordered by Prince Bysunghur Mirza (802-837 AH /1400-1434 AD) on Jamadi al-Awal in 833/143 and copied by Maulana Jafar Tabrizi (died in 860-862/1456-1458), includes 346 pages, 12 independent illuminations and 22 paintings. In the upcoming research, it has been tried to recover the layout system of different components of this manuscript based on quantitative methods. So, in the first step, 18 pages of text pages, were selected randomly. As this exquisite version of shahnameh, despite its counterparts has retained its original shape and dimensions, is a suitable case for this research. In the next step, for each of these pages, the eight dimensions of page length, page width, text box length, text box width, top margin length, bottom margin length, outer margin width, and inner margin width, were measured in millimeters and recorded in a table. Then, using these numbers, the limits of changes, average, range, variance and standard deviation were calculated using statistical methods and the result was recorded again in the same table for each of the mentioned lists. Using the length and width of a page, the length and width of the text box, and the distance between the frames of the text box and the edges of the paper, the location of the text box was determined on a page. As the width of the inner margin was equal to half the width of the outer margin, which was equal to  $\frac{1}{5}$  page width, and the length of the bottom margin was equal to  $\frac{1}{8}$  bifolio length, it can be assumed that in the first step, the width of the two-page spread is divided into 10 equal parts, then  $\frac{1}{10}$  of it was allocated to the inner margins in the middle and the same amount was also separated from both sides to draw the outer frames of the template.

Also, as the average bottom margin, which means the distance from the lower edge of the paper to the text box, was equal to  $\frac{1}{8}$  of the page length, it can be suggested that the bottom margin was drawn based on the dividing the rectangle of bifolio into four equal parts and the reverse method. However, as the length of the top margin had no reasonable relation to the length of the page itself, and instead, the length-to-width ratio of the text box is  $\frac{3}{2}$ , it can be assumed that the designer, using geometric methods, has separated a line segment equal to  $\frac{3}{2}$  of the text box width on the corresponding guide lines to obtain the length of the text box. In other pages, i.e. illuminated pages and illustrated ones, two different systems seem to govern their layout: those that follow the system that governs text pages, and those that are designed based on their own unique internal features. In order to study the system governing the page layout of the illuminations of this version, first of all the six parameters of the frame length, frame width, inner margin, outer margin, top margin and bottom margin in all independent illuminations of this version were measured and recorded in another table. This table shows that some parameters of all the illuminations of this manuscript, except for the Shamsa, follow their counterparts in the layout system of regular pages. Therefore, it can be claimed that their layout system was obviously designed under the influence of this system in text pages. This property was observed in 19 of the 22 images of this version as well. Since in 15 of the 22 illustrations of this manuscript, the text and the image came together, while in the other illustrations, the entire space of the frame belongs to the image, these images were examined in the form of two different subgroups: those illustrations that include parts of the literary text, and those that do not have any text in their framework. According to this author's observations, there is no doubt that the placement of the frame in the 15 images of the Baysunghuri Shahnameh, which include parts of the literary text, has imitated the layout system of the text box. This implicitly shows the precedence and priority of calligraphy over painting in the layout system of Persian manuscripts. In three paintings of the second group, the image frames were designed under the influence of the layout system of the text pages as well. However, in other three illustrated pages, whose layout system seems to have been designed independently from this system in the text pages, the existence of some kind of correlation in the geometric methods used in the design of this system guarantees its connection to the layout system of the text pages. Thus, all the components of the manuscript of Baysunghuri Shahnameh are arranged according to a common layout system, which has helped to maintain the visual unity of this version. It is worth mentioning that the permitted deviation in this study was considered 2%, which has been allowed by Déroche for the difference in distance in rigorously calculated ratios.

◆ 27 July 2023 Thursday

ILEM

#### Workshop IV

09:30 - 11:30 Sacred Geometry and Architecture

◆ ILEM Conference Hall

Moderator:  
Ömer Faruk Yeni

Panelists:  
Katya Nosyreva: Lines of Transmission: Abu'l-Wafa' al-Buzjani's Text and the Contemporary Study of Islamic Geometric Patterns

Isha Suhail: Reviving the Chromatic Legacy: Exploring the Colors of Kashi Kari in Architecture of Pakistan

Yasemin Sönmez: Transformation of Space with Calligraphy: The Example of Hagia Sophia Mosque

Shunhua Jin: Two Chinese Scrolls of Mecca on the Pattern of Ka'ba in Pilgrimage Art

## Lines of Transmission: Abu'l-Wafa' al-Buzjani 's Text and the Contemporary Study of Islamic Geometric Patterns

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**Keywords:** Geometry, Pattern, Tradition, Digram, Aesthetics.

This presentation is intended to redefine some of the terms used in the contemporary teaching practice of Islamic geometric patterns, in light of extant historical documents dealing with practical methods of geometric construction. The study is a response to an unprecedented number of amateur and professional artists and architects, as well as professional mathematicians, drawing Islamic geometric patterns in various media, as well as a proliferation of published books in this field. Through bringing medieval manuals on the craft of practical geometry into the discussion, it hopes to deepen and refine the ways we conceive of and talk about the practice of 'traditional' Islamic geometric construction and ornamental pattern-making.

There is currently something of a global phenomenon of interest in Islamic geometric design, which can in part be attributed to the work of the London-based Prince's Foundation School of Traditional Arts, which between the 1990s and 2010s introduced the study of Islamic geometric patterns to English-speaking audiences, under the rubric of 'sacred geometry'. Generations of artists and tutors educated at the Prince's School have in turn established their own schools and organisations, attracting Muslim and non-Muslim students from across the world and engaging in practical aspects of drawing ornamental geometric patterns in the classroom environment or on site visits. The recent pandemic and lockdowns saw a further flourishing of online classes and workshops, including numerous social media groups and channels dedicated to the exploration and drawing of Islamic geometric designs. The participants primarily engage in analogue and digital geometrical analysis of historical architectural examples spanning a diverse chronological and geographical range. The works produced by hand often include pencil and watercolour compositions on paper and are frequently studied in isolation from the architectural context in which these patterns are historically found. During these practice-based workshops participants often describe the process of drawing geometric patterns as a contemplative, meditative, or even therapeutic experience, comparing the ubiquitous Islamic star- and polygon compositions to 'mandalas' of the Hindu and Buddhist visual traditions.

As a former student and current visiting tutor at the PFSTA, the presenter has witnessed first hand the principles underlying their teaching of Islamic geometric patterns, by hand, with an emphasis on the traditional tools of compass and straight-edge. The Prince's School also emphasises the symbolic significance of this discipline, connecting it to universal principles found in patterns in nature and visual arts and architecture of various traditions, often referring to it as 'traditional' geometry. In attempting to define her own artistic, craft, and teaching practice, however, the presenter turned her attention to the extant historical texts and documents from the Islamic world dealing with practical and ornamental geometry in order to place the discipline of drawing geometry on paper within a larger tradition of recording architectural knowledge through diagrams and text. The document entitled *Kitāb fī mā yaḥtaj ilayh al-ṣāni' min al-a'māl al-handasiyya* (A Book on Those Geometric Constructions Which Are Necessary for a Craftsman), written by the 10th century mathematician and astronomer Abu'l-Wafa' al-Buzjani, has occupied a special place within this study, as it is the only known geometric work from the medieval Islamic world specifically addressing craftsmen and their needs.

The illustrated presentation will look at a selection of primary and secondary sources with a particular focus on diagrams, instruments, and materials, and their relationship to the accompanying text and marginal commentaries. Re-enacting some of the diagrams with the tools Abu'l-Wafa' describes in his introduction and close reading of the relevant passages the study will aim to establish a teaching methodology based on scant but fascinating glimpses into historical workshop practices and will ask whether these insights have anything to offer to modern day artisans and craftsmen working with Islamic ornamental patterns. The presentation will further aim to highlight the innate appeal of geometric diagrams and their capacity for non-verbal communication and artistic interpretation and will question whether the twentieth-century concept of 'sacred geometry' is an appropriate way of referring to the work of the craftsmen that this work aims itself at.

The selected chapters from al-Buzjani's work will be brought into dialogue with other relevant historical texts, in Persian and Arabic, on arithmetic, surveying, astronomy, and practical geometry. The study will include comparative references to an idiosyncratic work referred to as the Anonymous Persian Compendium and entitled *Fi tadākhul al-ashkāl al-mutashābiha aw al-mutawāfiqa* (On Similar and Complementary Interlocking Figures) appended to the Persian translation of al-Buzjani's text. The use of several constructions from al-Buzjani's practical geometry in the Anonymous Compendium demonstrates a link between the two manuals, and its significance also lies in the link between the type of practical constructive geometry discussed by al-Buzjani and the later tradition of drawings which appear in textless architectural scrolls like the Topkapi, Tashkent, and Mirza Akbar scrolls. The context of the Islamic practical manuals on geometry and architectural scrolls can offer a stimulating context and compelling visual aesthetic for the study of Islamic ornamental patterns in contemporary educational settings and can be broadened by linking their geometric language with the historical development of the mathematical sciences, the discipline in which Islamic architectural practice was embedded. Textual and graphic inscriptions in Abu'l-Wafa' al-Buzjani's work point to the exchange between theory and practice. The close relationship between theory and practice can also be gleaned from various contemporaneous encyclopaedic classifications of knowledge, in which the applied sciences are placed alongside their theoretical counterparts. The term 'sacred geometry' is absent in these documents but we have references to such terms as 'geometrical constructions', 'practical geometry', 'sensible geometry', 'intelligible geometry', which allow us to make tentative connections to the symbolic and metaphysical perceptions and interpretations of geometry and ornamental patterns among medieval practitioners. The diverse documents on practical geometry and accompanying diagrams, together with other treatises on ratio and proportion written by medieval Islamic authors, point to a wider cultural phenomenon where the use of the geometric aesthetic in visual arts and mathematical sciences overlap. Through diagrammatic thinking and a continued creative, phenomenological teaching approach, this study will both suggest a lineage of visual repertoire for contemporary artists drawing Islamic geometric patterns based not only on historical architectural monuments but also the evidence of the textual tradition, and will invite contemporary students to make nuanced connections to Islamic aesthetic philosophy, cosmology, and metaphysics.

## Reviving the Chromatic Legacy: Exploring the Colors of Kashi Kari in Architecture of Pakistan

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**Keywords:** Kashi Kari, Wazir Khan Mosque, Picture Wall Lahore Fort, Color in Architecture, Genius Loci.

Color is a powerful mediator in communicating the language of cultures, moods, ideas, behaviors, rituals and beliefs of societies within certain period. At some point, in all over the world, architects, designers and artists return to nature to translate customs. Be it according to climate or geographical materials of certain area, color over surfaces of architecture shapes the visuals that stimulate a conversation. Thus, bridging the gap of time within historic and present structures, this magnificent element keeps the bond and story of certain age intact. The structures that went through the test of time store and reflect identity through works, concepts and techniques by crafters.

Kashi Kari is the magnificent art of hand painting ceramics, which is still seen in many parts of Muslim majority states. It goes many centuries back, from Central Asia to South Asia it developed into forms over varied items using different techniques over time. The craft flourished over different times and became one of the prominent features in Mughal Architecture. This research revisits the phenomenon of Kashi Kari and offers a compelling perspective on the utilization of colors in miniature artwork on glazed tiles. Various elements such as figures, floral patterns, birds, animals, and other natural motifs adorning structural surfaces are explored, symbolizing the interconnectedness between humans and nature. The research also implies the effect of vernacular character of spaces over human's ideology through Genius Loci – spirit of the place by Norberg-Schulz, 1979. Through the analysis of case studies, the study underscores the significance of Pakistan's handicraft heritage and proposes its integration within contemporary architecture. In contemplating the fading essence inherent in vernacular heritage, the research raises the query of whether future cities should embrace this traditional technique as a hybrid practice or solely rely on modern methodologies.

A centuries-old craft referred as mosaic art, glazed tiles or blue pottery with specific decorative patterns in Muslim world depending on the region and use. Kashi means 'tile' in Persian and Kari means 'work'. In history, the works of Kashi Kari can be identified through civilizations connecting directly to water source like Nile, Euphrates, Tigris and Indus. Water and clay, being readily available was a brilliant and easier way to create decorative crafts. The recorded exploration of this craft goes more than 2,000 years back, with the extraction of oldest pieces from Mohenjo-Daro, Indus civilization such as earthen toys and vessels. Later, Mughals glorified it in their architecture while using the patterned glazed tiles in palaces, tombs, forts and mosques. Since this art form doesn't involve human pictorial representations, it became synonymous with Islamic art over time.

Kashi Kari is mostly applied on items like pottery, vases, lampshades, pitchers, and earthenware etc. Colors like purple, brown, white, mustard and turquoise were generally used over ceramics containing intricate details of flowers, geometric patterns and, calligraphy etc. Rich blue and green hues are created using chemicals as cobalt oxide and copper oxide. The craftsman for this particular craft is known as Kashigar, demonstrating command over it as an expert. The families consisting of ancestral craftsmen also hold this title of Kashigar. The glazed tile, also known as Kashi tiles, comes majorly with two types in Pakistan; blue and white type of tiles and the other one is Murdasang; the brown tile work with different glaze

The natural materials that can overcome environmental challenge their best; earth, fire, water and air are the main sources behind this process. The technique involves the ware which is molded using terracotta clay and covered with white slip (astar) after drying. By dabbing graphite over a perforated paper, certain pattern is traced and outlined and colors from chemicals are then filled inside the extracted lines. The surface after painting is covered by glossy glazed and kept in wood-fired kiln with temperature of 900C. Around 8-10 Karkhanas (workshops) of Kashigars are functioning in Punjab and Sindh. Like all things come down to an end or lose their essence over time, the patrons of Kashi Kari are limited today. Now it depends on offspring who take this work forward as most of the youth is unaware of this craft. However, due to limited resources and fewer wages interested ones also back out seeing the situation.

The ornamentation and decoration through tiles over the walls dates back to around 400 BC in Egypt. Rulers, especially of Muslim world, could be seen fond of intricate or miniature paintings over architecture. Ishtar Gate in Iraq denotes the oldest remaining for Kashi Kari work. Moreover, in Pakistan many architectural examples with pure Kashi Kari works are found. For instance; Tomb of Shah Yousaf Gardezi and Shah Rukne Alam in Multan, Bibi Jawindi in Uch, Tomb of LAI Shahbaz Qalandar in Sehwan, Shah Jahan Mosque in Tatta, and in Lahore Masjid Wazir Khan is the prominent example for Kashi Kari. Lahore, being the biggest cultural capital of Pakistan, has transformed by many nations over time. Most of the heritage it prevails today is from Mughal times. Diverse colorful patterns in the form of motifs, frescoes, mosaic and glazed tiles, and paintings depicting powerful stories behind can be investigated over architectural heritage.



Diverse theories over representation of colors in architecture have risen by various architects throughout time with the criticisms over whitescapes and chromophobia going against polychromes. However, down the line the connection with nature and natural elements has surfaced the discussion. Architects and interior designers have been using multiple mediums via sketches or paintings to establish contrasts and balance, including Natural Color System NCS launched in 1960s by scientists. Under this framework, architectural skin is analyzed taking cases of Picture Wall Lahore Fort and Wazir Khan Mosque, Lahore.

The Walls of Lahore Fort (1556-1707) encircles royal structures and formal gardens within 19.5 hectares of land, which is one of the UNESCO World Heritage sites. As an open-air gallery, one of the largest murals, Picture Wall embeds mosaic patterned Kashi Tiles, brickwork and carvings (Munabbatkari) and terracotta filigree (Jali work), painted lime plaster and marble work (KHAN, 2017). The structure of wall is designed with recession of panels, which further embrace carvings while narrating past royal stories and reflect spiritual connection.

Likewise, surrounded by thick urban fabric of The Walled City, Lahore, Masjid Wazir Khan (1634-1641) is located around 260 meters from Delhi Gate. The fine exemplary composition of Mughal architecture can be observed having design elements of harmony, symmetry, contrast, balance and focal point. Overlapping both art and religion, the building has distinctive features and decorative elements of exterior surface chiefly contain murals of glazed ceramic tiles – Kashi Kari. Whereas the interior surfaces reflect semi-dry form of fresco paintings over lime plaster – Naqqashi.

The research implies the effect of vernacular character of spaces over human's ideology through Genius Loci – concept of Phenomenology by Norberg-Schulz, 1979. It highlights the tension between old and new, industrialization and modernization and sustainability of cultural identity. The 'Spirit of the Place' reflects combination of natural and built environments that helps people identifying their values and connection. This concerns the revival of lost tradition, be it in the form of structural typology or an art feature over that structure, which keeps the memory of that atmosphere. The pure traditional earthenware form of kashi kari is treasured by many but is dying gradually due to inadequate resources and attention towards modernity. The significance legacy must be revived in all local practices by introducing color palettes of traditional Kashi Kari, collaborate with Kashigars and integrating them into contemporary designs of art and architecture. Debates over sustainable solutions in the era of climate changes have a chance to be resolved while keeping the aesthetics of the place intact by observing historic practices.

## Transformation of space with calligraphy: The example of Hagia Sophia Mosque

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**Keywords:** Space, Islamic Calligraphy, Hagia Sophia, Architecture.

In this study, the physical and semantic effects of the calligraphy on the space will be examined through the example of the Hagia Sophia mosque. This building, which houses important symbols and heritage, is a crucial location/place to survey the relationship between calligraphy and space. The starting point of this research was the view of the Hagia Sophia without calligraphy plates after it was converted from a mosque to a museum. In this text, firstly, we will explore the concept of space through the lens of Hagia Sophia. Afterward, we will handle the restoration of Hagia Sophia in the 19th century and explain its current appearance historically. In the following chapters, we will focus on calligraphy and its semantic dimension and interpret in detail the effects of these works on Hagia Sophia.

Hagia Sophia, the fact that the place was a temple in its origin, the rumors about priest tombs and temples buried underneath, and its name connected to many legends also point to the spiritual importance of the structure in the Byzantine period. These rumors, which continued to increase in Ottoman Period, were reinforced by the accumulation of Islamic land. In addition to being the symbol of the conquest of Istanbul, which was heralded by the Prophet, Hagia Sophia carries with it a 600-year history including being a place of conversation with historical religion figures, dhikr, and lesson rings. Thus, we can say that the place was enriched by another Abrahamic religion, its followers, and the culture they brought with them, apart from the original Byzantine/Christian symbolism.

To understand the works of calligraphy added to the mosque in the 19th century, it is necessary to first examine the changes made in the large-scale restoration project of the time and the method of the architect behind it. As it is known, maintenance and repair works were carried out regularly in Hagia Sophia throughout the centuries, but the difference in the project conducted during the reign of Sultan Abdulmecid was the radical transformation of the interior and exterior of the place. The Sultan, who has been closely interested in the mosque since he ascended the throne, commissioned the architect Gaspare Fossati for the great restoration made between 1847-1851.

One of these major changes, and perhaps the most striking, is the placement of eight large round plates around the central nave and the addition of inscriptions to the dome. Due to the obsolescence of the six rectangular plates by calligrapher Teknecizade Ibrahim Efendi, which existed before the new plates, the need to renew these inscriptions, too, arose with the repair of the mosque. The man responsible for the new inscriptions was Mustafa İzzet Efendi, the second imam and calligraphy teacher of the Sultan, who was one of the most significant/famous calligraphers of the time. While a part of the 35th verse of the Surah Nur is written on the dome, the names of God Allah (ism-i celal), Prophet Mohammed (ism-i nebi), Rashidun Caliphs (cehâr-i yar-i guzin) and Hassan-Hussain (Hasaneyn) are written on the plates.

Calligraphy plays an important role in temple architecture. Of course, there is no such thing as the obligation of having calligraphy in places of worship such as mosques or masjids. Mihrab, dome, or pulpit should be sufficient to indicate the function of the building. However, when we place the text on these important elements of the structure, it results in a totally different impression as opposed to an empty space. Although the use of writing in Islamic countries can be seen in different aspects according to their particular cultures and understanding, it is possible to say that writing stands out from other ornaments and is an essential part of religious architecture.

To say that the primary purpose of calligraphy, namely the inscriptions, in architectural structures is ornamentation would be to focus solely on its physical reflection. In Islamic architecture and especially in mosques, the function of writing in the space is to point to Allah and His words, as well as to decorate it. In addition, we could say that it aims to emphasize the meaning of the mosque's key elements and allow the contemplation of the knowledge of the other world and truth by keeping in mind/the dhikr of the owner of the universe, his prophet, and caliphs. At the same time, since the Qur'an itself is a "blessed" book, it is thought that one can bless and glorify the place by using its verses and mentioning the names of the Messenger of Allah and the elders of the Ahl as-Sunnah.

The inscription, which contains different symbols and movements, creates a contradiction (necessarily) in the space. The writing, which displays a different image from the objects in the environment, attracts the gaze. If we refer to the semantic dimension of the transformation of the space, writing is the most effective medium that makes Hagia Sophia a mosque. In fact, we see that these works have transformed the ancient temple, which is the symbol of the Christian world, into a temple belonging to the Islamicate. In the great dome, a Qur'anic inscription using a gold-like mosaic was engraved in the place of the Pantocrator Jesus mosaic. A dome could be understood as a symbol of the sky (heaven), which in turn indicates the Owner of the earth and the sky, while its light indicates the beams and glitters filtering through the windows. With the dome writing, the space and the calligraphy plates become whole and become inseparable. These plates were tailored to there and do not belong anywhere else. Therefore, these calligraphy works belong to the building itself and are almost an architectural element. For this reason, according to a Muslim viewer, when the plates are removed, the Hagia Sophia Mosque loses its grandeur compared to its former appearance. Hagia Sophia without calligraphy will cease to be a place that belongs to us and will turn into a temple of strangers. Therefore, inscriptions, beyond communication, message, and ornament, contain a strong symbolism, reminding us of Allah and His Supreme Word. The existence of the names apart from the Qur'anic verses in the space emphasizes Islam's continuity as a trust of the Ahl as-Sunnah understanding. As a matter of fact, the basis of the religion of Islam is prophecy, caliphate (imamate), and trusteeship (velayat).

Places are important means for people. Just as special days and hours are different in terms of degree, their effects on people in their spaces are different. Some places expand the mind of a person like the sky, while others can open a curtain to another realm in terms of memory and symbols. The main purpose of the temples is to unite the contemplative person with the vision of the beyond with God, whose awe is beyond time and space, and to accompany the search for the beyond-sublime meaning. The dome, depth, pulpit, and mihrab in Islamic architecture also support the symbols of the beyond with verses and present them to the audience. Knowing and understanding the symbolic elements inscribed there will support one's contemplation in that space. The meanings created by the combination of written lines and architectural elements lead the viewer's transformation towards placelessness and timelessness, that is, unity.

## Two Chinese Scrolls of Mecca on the Pattern of Ka'ba in Pilgrimage Art

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**Keywords:** Ka'ba, Dome, Circle, Pattern, Pilgrimage art.

The Ka'ba of Mecca, the pilgrimage site that holds immense significance for Muslims worldwide, requires every believer to embark on this sacred journey at least once in their lifetime. This pivotal religious pilgrimage, which has persisted for countless centuries, has left an indelible mark on history, generating an abundance of related materials. The richness of the Hajj art section of the Khalili Collections in London is reflected in the attention that Hajj art has received in recent years, not only from exhibitions but also from new publications. However, the Chinese Muslim manuscripts among them are relatively little studied. It is fascinating to see that Muslim art in the frontier regions, such as China, Indonesia, and Mali in Africa, retains its visual structure of embodied religious texts in the process of acculturation.

In this essay, I examine two Chinese Muslim Hajj scrolls, nowadays collected in the Khalili Collections (MSS1126) (MSS1288), for analysing the pattern of the Ka'ba from the perspective of material culture. The first part of the article provides an explanation of the concept of "pattern" within the context of material culture studies. The second part presents the case studies, drawing connections to other contemporary Ottoman Hajj images to analyze the origins of the structural elements found in these images. The third part delves into an exploration of the underlying structural reasons for these patterns, focusing on Islamic cosmology, particularly sacred geography, and the ritual of circumambulation around the Ka'ba. The final section incorporates a contemporary artwork that reflects the patterns of the Ka'ba, providing insights into their contemporary significance.

This essay applies the approach of material cultural study, which examines the patterns of thought and behavior within a given social context by studying objects. Furthermore, material culture also delves into "speculation" in its study, which pertains to the minds of the perceivers. Speculation goes beyond empirical evidence and provides an interpretive insight. Within the scope of this article, the notion of "pattern" is not limited to a static formal structure within images but encompasses a dynamic and fluid framework that interacts with human behaviors. By embracing this perspective, we can develop a further comprehension of the representation of the Ka'ba, not only in the scrolls of Chinese Muslims but as a prevalent pattern in premodern Islamic society.

Two patterns are discussed based on these two scrolls, one is “the Ka’ba with a dome”, the other is “the Ka’ba with a circle”. This first pattern is corresponding with the domed mosques in Ottoman empire. It further explores the historical context of the dome’s significance in Ottoman architecture and its association with the Ka’ba. Ottoman scholars compared the Süleymaniye Mosque, known for its dome, to the Ka’ba, emphasizing the architectural similarities and the symbolism associated with the dome.

The second pattern is compared to two notable books emerged as the most transcribed Pilgrimage images: *Futū al-aramayn* (The Revelation of the Holy City) and *Dal il al-khayrāt* (The Road to Happiness). The depiction of al-Masjid al-arām in Ottoman pilgrimage manuscripts feature the square and circle motif, highlighting the division between the interior and exterior of the Ka’ba and its sacredness. These contemporary examples of Mecca imagery indicate that the particular depiction of the Ka’ba by Chinese Muslims, characterized by a square exterior surrounded by circles assembled in Arabic words, is derived from a larger pattern of images where the Ka’ba holds a central visual position. This pattern is not just static, but is associated with the rituals of the Muslim pilgrimage. I explain these two patterns from two perspectives: the cosmological pattern of Ka’ba and the circumambulation around Ka’ba. First, this conception of Mecca-centered geography has its origins in Qur’an (2:144) the circle and the square hold paramount significance in Islamic cosmology. Celestial bodies as well as the Earth are depicted as concentric circles, while in sacred geography, the Ka’ba is positioned at the center, encircled by concentric circles.

Second, circumambulation in Semitic tradition possesses a lengthy history: circling the “House of God” is circling the Axis Mundi. Circling the Ka’ba (in Arabic “awāf”) is a compulsory ritual, repeatedly performed during the Hajj, which directs the way Muslims circumambulate the Ka’ba seven times in a counter-clockwise direction. In the mystical experience of circumambulating the House as described by Ibn al-Arabī, several images often used in Islamic mysticism emerge, such as light, veil and moon. The light of Allah illuminates the person who circumambulates the celestial room; his heart reaches the Sublime, the veil of Allah is lifted, and the truth comes out. In another word, the circumambulation of the Ka’ba in its core is a mystical ritual directed towards the communication with the Divine.

The interplay between the Ka’ba and the circle continues to manifest in contemporary imagery. In 2011, Ahmed Mater produced a photogravure etching titled “Magnetism,” which powerfully expresses and reinterprets the traditional iconography of awāf. The artwork employs a square magnet as the material for creating the photographic effect, with iron filings attracted to its magnetic field. Overall, based on the representation of Ka’ba in pilgrimage and sacred geography manuscript, and the Ottoman’s view of the Süleymaniye mosque’s dome, I suggest that there is a specific pattern shared between rituals and buildings that provide the context for these embodied experiences. The set of structure is a mental habit or visual memory shared the same pattern in different materials and is more specific than cultural context. And it is this set of structure that enables the association between the Ka’ba and the dome, the Ka’ba and the circle.

◆ **28 July 2023 Friday**

 **ILEM**

### Workshop V

14:00 - 16:00

**Islamic Art and Social Memory**

◆ **ILEM Terrace Hall**

Moderator:  
**Yahya Nurgat**

Panelists:

**Sevda Moghaddami:** Content Analysis of Illustration of Mawlana's Marvels in Ottoman Miniature (Case Study: Illustrated Editions of Sawaqib al-Manaqib Auliya Allah)

**Nourelhoda Hussein:** God Created Every Craftsman and His Craft: Spirituality, Morality and Social Arrangement of Traditional Craftsmanship in Egypt (from the 16th to 19th century)

**Syed Tahseen Raza:** Arts and Aesthetics in the Muslim World: Non-Arab Innovation Cases from India and China

**Adilia Iulgusheva:** Islamic Art and Muslims: the Levels of Engagement

## Content Analysis of Illustration of Mawlana's Marvels in Ottoman Miniature (Case Study: Illustrated Editions of Sawaqib al-Manaqib Auliya Allah)

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**Keywords:** Marvels, Mawlana(rumi), Sawaqib al-Manaqib, Ottoman Miniature, Sufism.

Among the valuable works that have presented the life history of Sufis independently are Manaqibs, which often describe the life and marvels of one or more Sufis. The Manaqib studied in this research is Sawaqib al-Manaqib Auliya Allah, written by Abdul Wahab bin Jalaluddin Muhammad Hamdani in 1540 AD. Sawaqib al-Manaqib Auliya Allah, authored by Hamdani, although written by a Persian-speaking author and in Persian, has been neglected in Iranian Mawlawi literature, and this neglect has had negative and irreparable effects on painting and miniature so that this edition has never been illustrated in Iran, but at the same time it was written, almost three years after Hamdani's compilation, was translated into Turkish by the Turkish authors of Asia Minor. Among these authors, we can mention Darvish Khalil Qonavi and Darvish Mahmoud (Qonavi Masnavi Reciter) and after the translation, they illustrated the edition in the Ottoman school of Baghdad, and now two comprehensive illustrated versions of this edition are available. Hamadani's Sawaqib is about the marvels of Rumi and his disciples and children. This article tries to answer the following two questions:

1. What kind of marvels are the marvels mentioned in the miniatures?
2. To what extent do the original text of the story in Sawaqib al-Manaqib and its illustration match each other and which part of the story is illustrated?

In this study, the descriptive-analytical method was used, and the information was collected by the library method and some pictures were purchased and collected by the author from the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul. From the total number of illustrations in the two illustrated editions, a total of 16 illustrations depict Rumi's marvels according to the original text in Sawaqib. The rest of the illustrations are related to the marvels of other disciples of Rumi or they are not included in the category of marvels, and for this reason we have omitted to mention them in this article. In order to investigate marvels and recognize them, first of all, one should get acquainted with the word "marvel" and its classification in the eyes of the Auliya (saints). A marvel is an action performed by saints, prophets, and righteous and chosen people of God, and this action is extraordinary and contrary to the actions of ordinary people.



The majority of mystics and scholars agree on the authorization of marvels to appear by the saints and the righteous, and most of them agree that there is no difference between a miracle and a marvel, except that a miracle is special for prophets and is based on claims and invitations, while a marvel is for saints and righteous people and it is not based on invitation, but it is presented by them voluntarily or involuntarily and it is a witness to their truth. According to Sufism, the saints also have authority and power like Allah, and according to this power, they can control the inside of disciples and in external affairs, and marvels and wonder works come from them. Therefore, there is no doubt about the proof of the existence of marvels in the saints and righteous of God, so that Mawlana himself also states that the occurrence of miracles and marvels is outside of the cause and effect relationship and believes that miracles and marvels occur as a result of divine authorization. Now, by accepting that the existence of marvels in the saints and chosen servants of God has been proven, in this section, we can classify the types of marvels:

1. Knowledge of the unseen
2. Seizing souls
3. Seizing the four forces and elements of nature
4. Being Mustajab-ud-dawat (whose prayers are accepted)
5. Seizing objects
6. Creating objects from the unseen or unexpected positions
7. Spiritual communication with animals and inanimate objects
8. Obedience of animals and inanimate objects to a person
9. Talking with animals and trees
10. Being helped by animals in times of emergency
11. Being familiar with predatory and deadly animals

Sawaqib al-Manaqib has two illustrated versions, one dated 1590 with 29 illustrations, which is now kept in the Morgan Museum in New York under the number M.466, and the second illustrated version dated 1599 with 22 illustrations, which is kept in the Topkapi Museum of Istanbul under the number Revan.1479 TSMK. Both illustrated versions are depicted in the Ottoman school of painting. The majority of mystics and scholars agree on the authorization of marvels to appear by Auliya (saints) and the righteous. Based on the investigations, 8 illustrations from the Morgan Museum version and 8 illustrations from the Topkapi Museum version are directly related to Rumi's marvels. In this regard, this article is trying to study these 16 illustrations with a descriptive-analytical approach and examine their correspondence with the text of stories and the type of Rumi's marvels and how they were depicted. From each version, 8 illustrations are directly related to Rumi's marvels, and the other illustrations are either related to the marvels of Rumi's children or disciples, or are not included in the classification of marvels. Out of these 16 illustrations, two stories are illustrated in both versions (the story of Rumi and the water demon and the story of the cow bowing to Rumi). By examining other illustrations and matching them with the classification of types of marvels, we can conclude that the marvel "Knowledge of the Unseen" is the most repeated among the illustrations and its different types are repeated 7 times in the illustrations of two versions (dominance over the interior and thought was depicted 4 times, and addressing missing people and dominating over dreams and future news were depicted once each). The next most frequent marvel in the illustrations is the obedience of animals to Rumi and talking to them, each of which is repeated 6 and 5 times, respectively. The results show that in all cases, there is complete harmony and correspondence between the illustration and the main text of the story, and on the other hand, the type of marvel in the illustration can be matched with the types of classified marvels, so that sometimes in one story we encounter several miracles at the same time. In this regard, the illustrators have always tried to depict the climax of the story, which is the emergence of a marvel. The most repeated types of marvels in the illustrations are Rumi's "knowledge of the unseen" and "talking with animals" and "being Mustajab-ud-dawat (whose prayers are accepted)" and his "Tayy al-Ar (folding up of the earth)".

## **'God created every craftsman and his craft': Spirituality, Morality and Social Arrangement of Traditional Craftsmanship in Egypt (from the 16th to 19th century)**

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**Keywords:** Traditional Craftsmanship, Spirituality, Morality, Social arrangement, Egypt, Religion.

Exploring craftsmanship in the Islamic tradition might offer a significant, yet overlooked, gateway to the understanding of its Art. In fact, the process behind making art, i.e., its craft, and its entire field of relations and conditions deserve as much attention and study as the product itself. Studying the notion of traditional craftsmanship might not only reveal the skills, knowledge, and materials used, but, even more importantly, the entire field of relations that make practice possible. According to Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), the craft is the product of a physical and perceptible action based on thoughts and sciences perceived by the soul, repeated until it becomes a rooted quality, a habit. Such a complex process involving the soul, mind, and body requires a religious and social field of relations and arrangements through which this habit develops. Through adopting the anthropologist Talal Asad's framework, this paper conceptualises craftsmanship as a tradition, that 'seek to instruct practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history', in order to investigate 'the historical conditions that enable the production and maintenance of specific discursive traditions'. Asad declares the necessity of certain conceptual and institutional conditions in which these traditions are to be convincing and influential. In order to examine those conditions, this paper will focus on analysing craftsmanship ceremonies, as an expression of the religious and cultural systems within which they occur, in relation to anthropological theories and concepts.

The study relies on four different references between the 16th and 19th centuries in Egyptian history which describe guild ceremonies. The first reference is a manuscript, written by an unknown author, titled 'al-dhakhir waltuhaf fi beer al sana' wa al-hiraf'. The manuscript is believed to be written between the 16th and 17th centuries as a commentary on a preaching poem of the guilds. The manuscript gives a description of the conditions and principles of craftsmanship in Egypt at that period. Although there is no precise information about the author or the context of the manuscript, it still provides valuable insights into the religious significance of the social organisation and practice of craftsmanship in the Islamic tradition including details of their ceremonial traditions and rituals. The second reference is the chronicle of the 18th-century renowned Egyptian historian named Al-Jabarti (1753-1825). Al-Jabarti documented a speech given by a distinguished scholar during an ijaza ceremony of a craft that he attended himself. During this speech, the historian discussed a comprehensive code of ethics that governed the craft and encompassed the rituals the craftsman must follow during his practice.

The third reference is an administrative manual of the Egyptian author Ali Pasha Mubarak (1823-1893) in the 19th century. In his writings, he portrayed detailed instructions on the social organisations, ceremonies, and rituals of the crafts that were present in Egypt before and during his time. It also encompassed moral and social principles that governed the conduct of craftsmen and their interactions with customers, fellow craftsmen, and society at large. Finally, this paper employs the travel diary of Edward William Lane (1801-1876) documenting what he witnessed in Egypt during the 19th century. In his diary, he described various aspects of the Egyptian social life. One of the events he witnessed and described was the ceremony of a family member, a son, being admitted as a member of a craftsmanship/trade organisation. He described the social hierarchy of the group as well as the religious and social rituals during the ceremony.

Upon analyzing the ceremonies in relation to Anthropological theories and concepts, this paper suggests that Divine legitimation and Cultivation of the Muslim self constituted the conceptual conditions, while Social order and the practice of Extending the chain of initiation are among the institutional conditions that regulated the practice. The centrality of religion, through religious rituals, speeches as well as religious affiliations of the members who are in power, shaped the inner concepts that governed the ceremonies. Religion, according to anthropologists, provided the authority needed to carry on operational activities and legitimized the actions or decisions taken during the ceremony. Thus, divine legitimation of the ceremonies declared the centrality of religion in the social sphere, signifying its special significance in society. Moreover, the cognitive role of the ceremonies cultivated the morality of society dictating the way it should function. Humility, piety, self-consciousness, and respect are among the significant virtues that have been promoted and practiced within the ceremony. Thereby depicting craftsmanship as a devotional relation rather than just a creative expression or for mere economic benefits.

As for the institutional conditions, social order was manifested through mutual trust and respect of the elderly who were entrusted with the responsibility of determining the community's best interest. Such trust was maintained through the religiosity and piety of the people in power. They carried the responsibility of maintaining justice, cohesion and solving any disputes. The publicity of the event, as well, offered shared responsibility and collective testimony and support for the new roles. Operational conditions such as exchange and reciprocity aided in intensifying the solidarity and respect among the members. Moreover, the notion of a chain of initiation played a pivotal role in the formation, preservation, and regeneration of the collective, as well as the individual identity of craftsmanship. The appeal to religious figures in the initiation ceremonies proclaimed the convergence of the religious and social spheres, creating a sense of responsibility and religious motivation.

Finally, it might be argued that religion was not only the spine of the ceremony, but it also offered legitimation to craft and members, maintained order, constructed the moral framework, and regenerated the identity with its extended history for the individual and the community as a whole. As mentioned in a Prophetic narration: 'God created every craftsman and his craft.' That is, God, Glory be to Him, is the Creator of the act and the doer, and of the doer's ability and power by which the craft is made. In the light of this narration, it might be argued that the Muslim community constructed a social order, rituals, and ceremonies that provided the essential conceptual and institutional conditions of their craftsmanship, declaring the centrality of God even in human creativity and its implications, including any craftsmanship that would not contradict God's Attributes in His creation.

## Arts and Aesthetics in the Muslim World: Non-Arab Innovation Cases from India and China

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**Keywords:** Islamic arts and aesthetics, Mosque, Contested religious structure, cultural nationalism, Acculturation.

Arts and Aesthetics throughout history has played a critically significant role in the establishment, consolidation, promotion and sustenance of civilization. What constitutes the authentic, what lies in the realm of the 'acceptable', what may be tolerated and what could not be acceptable in any form, from the point of view of the broader ethico-religious and socio-political paradigm, have been essentially contested issues.

Islam as a religion emerged in the Arab world but it soon spread to different parts of the world. The religion, with its emphasis on being a religion for all in terms of the belief in the essential unity of mankind and monotheism, ideally and logically too, did not have any region-specific requirement, though was popularly constructed in the broader world imagination as a religion with the socio-cultural and aesthetic sensibilities of the Arab region. How this contestation has manifested itself in different parts of the world, is a very interesting case. From Spain, to China, to the Nordic world and India, the study of the interaction between the existing socio-cultural and aesthetic sensibilities and the impact of the incoming Islamic Ideology provides a very important site to explore both ontologically and epistemologically, the novel innovation which was forged to save the beautiful from the opposite extremes of 'acculturation' and 'cultural schizophrenia'.

Islam spread to different parts of the world. In India, Islam came through the traders and merchants who came to the subcontinent as early as the 7th century. However, the extension of the formal Islamic empire happened during Delhi sultanate when Muslim rulers formally established their rule over India. Art, architecture and value system played a very important role in the spread of Islam in India. While the earlier Muslim rulers and the Sufi mystics played a very important role in the propagation of Islam, the period of Mughal empire saw significant contribution to art and architecture, culture and politics. Many innovations took place in arts, aesthetics and architecture. Iconic structures like the Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar etc were built during those times which still adorns India and are seen as a part of the rich inclusive cultural heritage of India.

In China, Islam came during the time of Tang dynasty which was roughly around 618-907 as a result of the interaction with the Arab and Persian traders. But it was under the rule of the Mongols that Islam began to have widespread reach as a result of the growing trade relations between the Middle east and China. There are many remnants of those time, in the form of structures and the places of worship.

However, of late, there has been growing tension against Islamic architecture and evident marker of identity in these part of the world. The interaction provided harmonious innovation on multiple fronts but that gave way to either acculturation or cultural schizophrenia.

This paper will be an attempt to explore this with the study of the innovation which occurred in India and China in terms of the arts and architecture in these countries as a result of the Islamic interaction. For example, the way the construction of Mosques i.e., the place of worship in Islam, manifested a harmonious amalgam of the existing architectural style and the incoming one, resulting in the construction of innovatively new architecture of worship. Similarly in terms of arts, like painting and calligraphy similar innovations were incorporated. However, slowly and gradually, that paved way to hostility and revulsion for the innovative changes. This paper will theoretically analyse these innovation in arts, aesthetics and architecture in China and India, along with highlighting the impact this has on the politics and culture of the wider Islamic world. The current contestations which the world witnesses, manifested in events like the destruction of mosques in India (Demolition of Babri Mosque) or the conversion of architectural style of mosque in China to align with its nationalistic style, rise of religious extremism and its depiction even in the domain of arts and aesthetics, alongwith its historical roots, will also be deciphered in this paper. For example, as a result of Chinese 'Sinicization' project, whereby the Chinese state aims to orient things according to Chinese majoritarian cultural sensibilities, reports claim hundreds of mosques have been either been raised to the ground or their distinct markers have been obliterated. It is said that distinct Islamic markers with which Muslims identify themselves like the domes, minarets etc., are deliberately removed because they symbolise overtly foreign religious influence. It is done to sinicize historically Muslim ethnic groups and to make them more traditionally Chinese. According to Strategic Policy Institute of Australia (ASPI) which used satellite imagery and on the ground reporting to map the destruction of cultural and religious sites in the north-western region, as against the claim of the existence of around 24,000 mosques in Xinjiang, the findings revealed the existence of fewer than 1500 mosques only. Since 2017, around 30% of mosques had allegedly been demolished and another 30% were damaged in one way or the other. Similarly in India, a number of religious structures of Muslims have been in constant threat of being destroyed or wiped out on one pretext or the other. Not only the religious structures of Muslim but any cultural heritage which belonged during the time of the Muslim rule in India is looked with disdain.

The reason for this will be explored in this paper which will follow historical analytical method.

## Islamic Art and Muslims: the levels of engagement

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**Keywords:** Islamic Art Perception, Islamic Art And Muslims, Levels Of Engagement With Islamic Art.

In order to understand how a person belonging to the Islamic discursive tradition (Talal Asad's concept) perceives the objects of Islamic art today, a survey was conducted in which participants were asked open-ended questions. 58 people took part in the survey, majority of them are Muslims residing in/originated from Muslim countries and those with significant portion of Muslim population, including Albania, Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Syria, Turkey; the countries of the post-Soviet space, such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan; Russian Federation, including Bashkortostan, Dagestan, Tatarstan; some of respondents grew up or currently reside in other countries, such as Germany, Malaysia, Spain, Turkey, UK and Ukraine.

An interdisciplinary approach was applied in this research. Primarily we used the methodological tools developed in cultural studies, art history, anthropology and psychology. Several images of Islamic art, including fragments of architectural structures and interior items were sent to survey participants. They were asked to respond to the following questions:

- What do you think and feel when you look at these images?
- What do they tell you?
- Do you see yourself reflected in them, and them reflected in you?
- What do they say about your identity?

The respondents replied in Arabic, English, Russian and Turkish, and in written and through audio messages.

Our main goal was to identify and define what can be revealed and discovered from the process of the interaction of a person with Islamic art objects. We were interested in what directions each person's narrative would lead, while he or she is putting into words all the images and associations that fill his/her consciousness and is trying to convey feelings and emotions that overwhelm him or her while looking at the images.

A qualitative analysis of the data made it possible to conclude that when a person interacts with art and perceives its visual forms, processes are activated in the inner world that actualize deep meanings inherent in him or her and bring certain ideas and images to the surface of his consciousness. Based on the findings of the survey, the following four levels were identified on which a (Muslim) person interacts with (Islamic) art.

#### 1. Individual level

At this level, we witnessed a person's conversation with himself/herself, which brings us closer to understanding the inner world of a person, his/her spiritual searches and aspirations, hopes and regrets. In his/her answer to the questions of the survey, a person pours out his personal inner experiences of varying intensity, we learn about his/her thoughts and emotions and discover how self-awareness and self-determination occur in each specific case. Resonating with an external object (images of art objects), something that is of particular importance for a person comes to the fore, whether at the present moment, or on an ongoing basis. In the course of voicing out his impressions or writing answers, individual characteristics of a person, as well as his/her unique preferences, become apparent. Interaction with objects of art helps a person to better understand himself or herself, to define his/her ideals, and probably to find answers to his or her own questions or to start asking new ones.

Thus, in the answers of respondents, we can see a reflection of their inner world, and when the hidden in the subconscious finds a way to the consciousness of a person, we can understand how s/he sees and recognizes himself or herself in the art objects, which can also reflect his or her spiritual and moral qualities. The thoughts in reference to the identity (both religious and ethnic) also find their expressions, thereby connecting this level to the others.

#### 2. Community level

At this level, the sense of communion is actualized, the belonging to certain ethnic and religious group is revealed. Here association and affiliation occur - the person thinks in the categories like "others are like me", "I am the same as them". Being a Muslim, s/he finds himself/herself in fraternal bonds with his/her co-religionists, regardless of national and ethnic belonging. At the same time, we notice the expression of belonging to a certain nation or ethnic group. In general, these layers overlap with each other, so they are not easily distinguished and discerned. The analysis of the responses shows that the identity of a person is constructed by both individual and collective identities.



### 3. Ingroup-outgroup level

This level echoes the previous one due to the reference to identity, but here the sense of self comes to the fore in comparison with others, thus belonging to a certain group is emphasized in contrast to others, a person feels himself different from the representatives of the outgroup. In the responses, we witness an attitude towards the history, we see both admiration for the past, and sadness from the fact that "the golden era" and the lost splendor cannot be returned. At the same time, there is an understanding of the importance of relationship with the others and establishing dialogue and coexistence with others based on historical experience (al-Andalus, Ottoman Empire).

### 4. A man and the Transcendent

Islamic art is inseparable from religion, it bears the imprint of Islamic ideals and reflects its tenets and predispositions, Islam is its foundation and guides its content and essence. Interaction with Islamic art produces a strong influence on a person because it is the background against which communication with the Transcendent takes place. So, for example, objects (mosques, praying rugs, manuscripts) are associated with the performance of Islamic rituals. In their answers, the respondents indicate the features inherent in Islamic art, such as abstractness, geometricity, rationality. The beauty inherent in the objects of Islamic art points to paradise and serves as a reminder of a different reality, symbolically denoting objects of a different being. The engagement with Islamic art helps to go beyond the level of everyday life, of the usual, mundane and earthly matters, it helps a person to have a glance into another dimension. The rhythms of the ornaments fascinate a person's imagination, symbolizing infinity, and the abstraction serves as a reminder of *taw īd*, unity of God. Reflecting on the images a person finds himself or herself closer to understanding the images of otherworldly reality, which lies beyond the limits of his or her knowledge.

◆ **28 July 2023 Friday**

 **ILEM**

## Workshop VI

14:00 - 16:00

**Islamic Arts in the Digital Age**

◆ **ILEM Conference Hall**

Moderator:

**Dr. Hesna Haral**

Panelists:

**Meysam Yazdi:** The Soft Power of Contemporary Islamic Art in Nation and Muslim Branding

**Nezih Enes Evren:**

An Inquiry into the Mathematical Construction Background of Islamic Arts

**Musab Iqbal:** Poetic Thinking: Resistance to Technologization of Being

## The Soft Power of Contemporary Islamic Art in Nation and Muslim Branding

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**Keywords:** Islamic Art, Contemporary Art, Soft Power, Nation Branding, Cultural Diplomacy, Muslim Ummah.

### Introduction

Contemporary Islamic art has emerged as a powerful tool for empowering and branding nations softly, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and creativity rooted in the Islamic world heritage. This study aims to explore the main policies, themes, events, and organizations involved in promoting contemporary Islamic art as a shared issue among the Muslim Ummah. Furthermore, it investigates the image that contemporary Islamic art has cast for Muslims as an Ummah and a Grand-Nation in the world, in the context of soft power and nation branding as features of modern geopolitics.

Soft Power and nation branding are features of modern geopolitics, as countries and communities strive to create a positive image and reputation on the global stage. The process involves the promotion of a nations culture, values, and achievements through managing, presenting and casting a positive image, narrative and assumption by talented and great artists in mega and grand cultural events (such as biennials, festivals and awards/prizes), centers and organizations, in order to attract tourists, investors, and international partners. One of the most ways to achieve this is through the promotion of contemporary art, which as it has become the main trend in the world of artistic creations and creative industries.

## **The Main Issues**

This research tries to understand the main policies of key stakeholders in the Middle East and Western Asian countries in the field of Contemporary Islamic Art; namely Türkiye, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, with a glance at other active countries in the region. It investigates this issue through the behaviors visible in foundations, museums, events, auctions and art fairs, and finally artists that the countries apply to improve their soft power and nation brand through this form of culture. In other words, we ask what the main policies of Middle Eastern or West Asian countries are in the development and application of Contemporary art? What themes in what mega or major events comprise the contemporary Islamic art as shared issues among the Muslim Ummah in order to share, negotiate and resolve Muslim issues and develop this contemporary cultural heritage? What organizations are active? And overall, what image does the contemporary Islamic art cast for Muslims as an Ummah and a Grand-Nation in the world?

Major issues in contemporary Islamic art makes it distinct from modern Islamic art. In the various forms of conceptual and abstract contemporary art of the region, in the mediums of installations, performance art, video art, painting, and other formats, global issues such as identity crisis, environmental concerns such as climate change, cultural disorientation, injustice, and gender issues are common themes among contemporary artists. These issues indicate and index nations as progressive and human nations making them key players in the world contemporary art ecosystem.

## **Why the Muslim Ummah needs Nation Branding**

There are 3 main reasons for the necessity of Muslim Nation branding:

The first reason is because the problems they face are the same: parity and the need to differentiate in the face of increasing competition... Second, countries must change if they are to survive in a changing world, because relying on past reputation doesn't always ensure success in the future... Third, brands are strategic assets in their own right, and can bring both power and financial rewards. They can help countries by replacing the "push" factor with the "pull" factor. Strong brands differentiate and attract people to them, rather than having to chase after them. Islamic countries need talent and expertise in order to move forward, as well as retain the best and brightest people of their own nations. Finally, countries need to manage perceptions and control their image in order to manage particular issues of national concern. This has specific relevance to Muslim countries, where differentiation is lacking, images are very unclear, and the country-of-origin factor can often be detrimental to exports and domestic sales.

## **Methodology**

This research applies a mixed methodology for the discussion and analysis of it inquires. It integrates methods of analysis rooted in Joseph Nye's concept of Soft Power specifically justified by Alexander L. Vuving's method discussed in his papers "How Soft Power Works" (2009) and "The Logic of Attraction: Outline of a Theory of Soft Power" (2019). Nation branding is another key concept applied as a tool for the analysis of the data in this paper. After a glimpse at the fundamentals of this key term from Keith Dinnie's book "Nation Branding Concepts, Issues, Practice" (2008). We also review and apply the methodology developed by Simon Anholt's nation branding index (NBI) hexagon and accordingly the annual Brand Finance's Global Soft Power Index (GSPI). These are comprehensive ranking tool that measures a nation's soft power and brand in a global perspective.

## **A Discursive Typology of Middle Eastern Art**

Nation branding and soft power are discursive concepts and before investigating the acts and events of contemporary Islamic art in Middle East we need to map the formation and transformation of modern and contemporary Islamic art in the region. Contemporary and "Modern Islamic art is studied not as an "artistic style" but as a "cultural discourse" that changes in social and political contexts. The six cultural discourses that have shaped modern Islamic arts are Orientalism, Nationalism, Returnism, Fundamentalism, Globalism, and Middle Easternism. These common structures lead to common experiences in different countries. These paradigms have experienced historical sequences but are still current and we are now facing a complex situation with a multi-paradigm that make contemporary art in Islamic countries.

## **Nation Branding and Contemporary Islamic Art**

Several Western Asian countries have successfully leveraged contemporary Islamic art for nation branding purposes; for instance, Qatar and United Arab Emirates have invested heavily in the development of art and cultural institutions, such as the Islamic Art Museum of Qatar, and also Louvre and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. These museums showcase a diverse range of contemporary Islamic art, positioning Qatar and UAE as global hubs for art and culture.

Similarly, countries like Türkiye, Iran, and Saudi Arabia have also embraced contemporary Islamic art as a means of promoting their national identity and cultural heritage. Art fairs, exhibitions, and biennales featuring contemporary Islamic art have become increasingly popular, attracting international attention and fostering cultural exchange. We will investigate the foundations of the region in charge of promoting contemporary art as general and Islamic art or Arabic, or nationalistic art as their specific mission in the following parts of the paper. Afterwards contemporary art museums, events of Contemporary Islamic Art (biennials, festivals, prizes), art auctions and fairs, and finally some branded Muslim artists are discussed from the perspective of nation branding and soft power.

## **Conclusion**

As this research shows, contemporary Islamic art is a powerful tool for nation branding, allowing countries to showcase their rich cultural heritage and creativity on the global stage. By promoting contemporary Islamic art, nations can challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about Islam and its followers, fostering greater understanding and appreciation for the diverse and vibrant culture of the Islamic world. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the role of contemporary Islamic art in nation branding will only continue to grow in importance, shaping global perceptions and fostering cultural exchange for years to come.

Muslim nations must hold mega art events in the region, supporting young artists to create innovative arts inspired by Islam from their local and shared values. Touring the selected works and presenting them in famous world museums through intelligent curatorship, telling stories and casting images about shared rituals and values of Muslims enhances the soft power of the Islamic World and the branding of Muslims as unified respected Ummah.

## An Inquiry into the Mathematical Construction Background of Islamic Arts

Nezih Enes Evren

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**Keywords:** Islamic Calligraphy, Microtonal Modal Music, Mereology, Point, Line, Word, Phrase, Pitch, Melody, Maqam.

Considering the historical, geographical, social, cultural, and theoretical frameworks, delineating the categories of "Islamic Aesthetics" or "Islamic Arts" has great difficulties, regardless of debates about whether an object is a piece of art or craft. Within existing paradigms, some traditional disciplines (such as; architecture/landscape/tile-making/ woodworks, literature/poetry/prose/ rhetoric, illumination/miniature/marbling/book-binding, calligraphy, and music) may perhaps be categorized as "Islamic" by sleight of hand. On the other hand; considering contemporary branches (such as cinema, theater, photography, graphics, novels, dance/performance, etc., in addition to architecture, music, and literature) it is significantly difficult to answer the question of what is required for a work to be labeled "Islamic". Whether the author of the piece is Muslim, the audience of the piece is Muslim, the geography where the piece was produced is under the rule of Muslims, the majority of Muslims live in the geography where the artist lives, whether the piece was produced in a discipline that was historically created and performed by Muslims, whether the subject or function(?) of the work is Islamic. Although the subject can be deepened by multiplying these questions, it is only intended to emphasize the ambiguity of the aforementioned "Islamic" categories. Furthermore, it is acceptable in many respects to state that "Islamic" calligraphy (husn al khatt, husniyat, hereinafter referred to as Islamic calligraphy) is the dominant representative of the "Islamic Aesthetics" or/and "Islamic Arts" categories. For this reason, in the evaluations to be made in this research, Islamic calligraphy will be taken as the point of bearing.

In this study, first of all, the geometric construction ground of the Islamic calligraphy will be tried to be revealed. In this context, point (nuqta, nokta, hereinafter referred to as nuqta), the definition of the nuqta, the formation of the nuqta as a unit of measurement, the nuqta and line (khatt, hat, hereinafter referred to as khatt) relationship, is planned to be examined. Whether the nuqta is the basis of the geometric construction or just the measure unit will be discussed. Furthermore, whether the nuqta is the antecedent (or a priori) to the khatt would be questioned. Mereological research is aimed at the relationship between wholes (khatt), their parts (nuqta), and the conditions of their persistence in terms of geometric construction. This investigation can also be a basis for discussions related to the construction in a juxtaposition connection in the space.

Secondly, to be able to determine the relation between wholes and their parts, another investigation will be implemented on the written word (taking into consideration as a whole in this case) and its letters (as the part) in Islamic calligraphy. As it is clearly known in Arabic script; initial, medial, and final forms of the letters differ. For Islamic calligraphy as an art, a word can be written in various forms by using various types of letters, according to the artistic preference of the calligrapher. Therefore, a calligrapher could select a "Kha خ" letter as a part of a word from a broad-spectrum catalog. For most of the letters and words, this can be seen in the masterpieces of great masters. In this study, letter formations will also be tried to be demonstrated through selected examples in both aspects: Due to the alignment in a word, and artistic preferences.

In the third stage, the relation between wholes and their parts will be examined in the written phrase. This can be considered an Islamic calligraphy piece: The phrase (taking into consideration as a whole in this case) and its words (as the part) on a designed composition. In order to explain this relationship, some example masterpieces from master calligraphers of history will be selected, and the relationship between the phrase and the word will be discussed.

At the end of the study, this mereological research will be projected to the arithmetical construction by using another traditional art discipline: Microtonal modal music. The field of aesthetics, especially the discipline of music, constitutes an enormous broad framework that cannot be encompassed in a snap. However, this part of the study aims to narrow the research by considering that a certain maqam music formed in a geography that has also produced Islamic calligraphy works in a similar tradition will be considered. If an artist had given pieces both in the field of music and calligraphy, his/her works could also be taken as an example in order to open the gate between geometric scale to arithmetic scale for this study here. With this thought, in order to narrow the musical framework, the theoretical framework in maqam music formed and performed in an art environment where Islamic calligraphy is performed will be considered. A musical sentence (a melody) will be evaluated as a whole (similar to khatt of calligraphy). The main ground that determines the identity of a musical sentence is the mode (maqam, makam, destgah, motive, hereinafter referred to as maqam) according to the traditional perspective. Since a maqam is a combination of pitches and course (i.e. sequencing of melodic flow), the unit cell for the melody is considered as pitches (similar to nuqta of calligraphy). Here, the relationship between wholes (melody), their parts (pitches), and the conditions of their persistence in terms of arithmetic construction. This investigation can also be a basis for discussions related to the construction in time by succession relation.

In summary, in this study, two different essential art disciplines that develop in the same building environment will be considered. Islamic calligraphy -thanks to the Quran, an inscribed tradition- where the traces of its tradition are easier to follow compared to other branches of art will be revealed as the key. The geometric construction ground of Islamic calligraphy will be analyzed and projected to this maqam music, and clues will be found regarding the arithmetic construction ground. Although it is not possible to go into the details of the mereology debates, which constitute a wide field of ontology and metaphysics, in this study, the main aim is to question a new explanation and expression ground for traditional art disciplines with the help of a multi-disciplinary wholistic approach.

## Poetic Thinking: Resistance to Technologization of Being

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**Keywords:** Poetic Thinking; Poetic Mode of Existence; Mystical Poetry; Iqbal; Rumi; Technological Entrapment; Digital World; Digital Being.

One of the key questions of ontology is the question of existence. What kind of being exist or why does a particular kind of being exist and not the other? The question of being is central to the metaphysical question as well. The attempt to even think about this question is a realization of its truth and meaning but the remoteness from this question displaces the being and undermines its significance 'in the world'. With the colonization of digital technology, the question of being is an absurd question at the same time begs the question of what kind of 'being' exists digitally or can exist in the digital world. Modern technology has the capacity to entrap and machinate. It is not the man conquering the 'digital' but rather colonized and consumed by the 'digital'. While being perpetually present digitally is spectacularly absent everywhere. This digital availability makes his presence-ness impossible. The technological mode of thinking makes our present absence and our necessary absence constantly present. This also renders our thought to operate algorithmically where it cannot reinvent or creatively re-enact its being. This kind of modern technology conceals the truth from us. It conceals the nature of our being and it conceals our presence-ness. In a very heideggerean sense, it is in the 'gestell' that technology uses humans as standing reserves. By this logic, the digital also uses humans as a standing reserve of data through which it harnesses its own life and future. The technological mode does not allow.

In this paper, I am proposing a poetic mode against the technological mode of being. I will be proposing how Islamic Art and in particular mystical poetry is not just a genre of literature or art but a mode of thinking and mode of being. I will be particularly looking into the poetic work of Muhammad Iqbal and his reading of Rumi in drawing some reflection on poetic mode against machination.



The central question for the great poet of Urdu and Persian, Muhammad Iqbal, is the discovery and emancipation of Self which he calls Khudi. Iqbal responded to the political question concerning colonized countries in general and colonized Muslim mind in particular. Iqbal did not directly respond to the question of technology in his philosophical work or poetical oeuvre, but one finds that liberation from colonization of mind, soul, language and body is essential in Iqbal's development of Khudi. Iqbal's Persian and Urdu poetic along with his prose is a direct attack on secularism and a modern sense of progress compounded with the machination of everyday life. Iqbal in his poetics interchangeably uses modernity and secularism with the church which opens the question of whether he sees secularism as an extension of Christianity (and European-ism) or entrapment of Christianity by the machinery of modern progress. In a Persian couplet, Iqbal sees hope in going 800 years back in the 'tavern of Rumi' as the custodians of haram (Kaaba, symbolic and ideological Muslim central leadership) are intoxicated and lost in the hallway of the Church. One can see that here the church is not just church is a symbol he is using for European modernity. Iqbal does not use the word technology in his poetry but invokes 'machine' and warns his audience of the machine. The usage of machine in Iqbal's work is ambivalent and intricate. He sees machines as technology or technological en-framing very European. Machine is antagonistic in Iqbal's view to spiritual development and triumph of Muslim (or Muslim world) In my presentation I would like to explore how Iqbal understands technology semantically and poetically and how the emancipation which is also de-colonization of soul and body is a question concerning technology in Iqbal as he highlights in one of his greatest poems 'Lenin (before God)' that Hai Dil Ke Liye Mout Machinon Ki Hukumat / Ehsas-e-Marawwat Ko Kuchal Dete Hain Aalaat ( The sovereign rule of machine is the ultimate death of soul/spirituality // all sense of human kindness is crushed by the technological instruments/ gadgets) Here the keyword 'ehsas e marawwat' and 'aalat' is key to understanding the technological question in Iqbal.

Through this, we will be looking into the main theme which concerns us about 'digital' and how a poetic being is possible in the digital world. The digital makes us lonely but never leaves us alone. It constricts the space of reflection and any deep experience of time. Time then just flows horizontally while in a poetic mode, it is possible to experience different dimensions of time.

Ishq Ki Taqweem Mein Asar-E-Rawan Ke Sawa  
Aur Zamane Bhi Hain Jin Ka Nahin Koi Naam

[In the chronicle of Love there are times other than the past, the present and the future;  
Times for which no names have yet been coined. - Iqbal]

In this presentation, I will also be drawing from the work of the German thinker Martin Heidegger and his influential essay on technology. Heidegger's understanding of technology and its particular nature of entrapment will be developed through the reading of Iqbal's poetic understanding. If the technology acts as machination and entrapment then it hides the truth from us. The possibility to look for any truth is closed on us and the digital presence remains the ephemeral truth as French philosopher Baudrillard highlights that in the age of simulacra and simulation, we come out of history to be entrapped by simulacra. While on the contrary, the poetic being allows the truth to be revealed through its form. This could be extended to other art forms but in poetry, this revelatory power reaches its peak. The mystical poetry of Islamic tradition is the best example of this unconcealment but this unconcealment is of higher reality through our own being.

◆ **29 July 2023 Saturday**

 **ILEM**

### **Workshop VII**

09:30 - 11:30

**Knowledge Transmission and Cultural Diplomacy**

◆ **ILEM Terrace Hall**

Moderator:

**Ayaz Asad**

Panelists:

**Wasamon Sanasen:** Applying Islamic Art with Art of Other Cultures: A Case Study of Islamic Motif in Northeastern Thailand Woven Fabric “Lekanis” Brand

**Yasmine Elargui:** Exploring Islamic Aesthetics as an Alternative Way to Knowledge: Principles, Contributions, Applications, and Limitations

**Bouchra Chougrani:** The Travelogue and Foreign View on the Artistic Productions of Muslim Women

**Zineb Bougrine, Asmaa Mehdioui, and Ala Mula Al Dwailah:** Culture and Communication (Presentation by ICESCO)

## **Applying Islamic Art with Art of Other Cultures: A Case Study of Islamic Motif in Northeastern Thailand Woven Fabric "Lekanis" Brand**

**Wasamon Sanasen**

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**Keywords:** Islamic Art, Geometric Pattern, Woven Fabric, Northeastern Thailand, Muslim.

This research aims to study applying motif of Islamic art with motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric illustrating on woven fabric Lekanis brand which debuted in Thailand on August 2022. Lekanis fabric is by product from "Isan Woven Fabric: From Local Culture to Commercial Value-added in Muslim Market" project sponsored by Thai Media Fund. The fabric is admirable for its perfect combination of motifs from art of two cultures, Islam and Northeastern Thailand. Lekanis also demonstrates the shared aesthetics between Islamic art and Northeastern Thai art. This new discovery can significantly further creativity of artists, designers and those who are working in related fields as well as expand marketing opportunities for textile business sectors. Integrating motif of Islamic art with motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric thus worth studying and hence this research was conducted.

This paper is a qualitative research. Objectives of the research are:

- 1.To study idea of applying Islamic art motif with motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric.
- 2.To study selected motifs of Islamic art and methods of applying those motifs with Northeastern Thailand woven fabric.
- 3.To explore benefits of applying Islamic art motif with motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric.
- 4.To affirm universal value of Islamic art and potential of Islamic art in applying with art of other cultures.

The study was conducted by the following methods:

1. Study papers relating to woven fabric of the Northeastern Thais, Islamic art and the project which is the origin of idea of applying Islamic motif in Northeastern Thailand woven fabric.
2. Gather data by participating in the project. Interview the project's team, experts and Lekanis's target groups as well as observe, take note and take photos.
3. Analyze all data to answer objectives of the research.
4. Refine analysis into result of the research then make a conclusion.
5. Publicize the research in form of academic paper.

Results of this research are as follows:

#### 1. The Idea of Applying Islamic Art Motif with Motif of Northeastern Thailand Woven Fabric

Mrs. Suwaibah Prapertchob, a Muslim scholar who lives in Northeastern Thailand, realized that Muslims have long been living in Northeastern Thailand but they are very small number and their existence is almost unknown. Thus, interaction between people in Northeastern Thailand and Muslims in that region is limited. Muslims in Northeastern Thailand started to admire local woven fabric. Yet Muslim attires making from local woven fabric remain very few which contrasts to high demand of Muslim market.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Suwaibah discovered that Northeastern Thailand woven fabric bears common features with Islamic art. Hence she saw opportunity in introducing the local woven fabric to Muslims, both domestic and international markets. She initiated idea of adding value to the local woven fabric by means of integrating Islamic art with motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric. These new motifs will high possibly attract Muslim customers which will become a large market in the next few centuries. The motifs will also meet the taste of non-Muslim target groups, as well as those who love woven fabric and Islamic art.

Hence Mrs. Suwaibah launched "Isan Woven Fabric: From Local Culture to Commercial Value-added in Muslim Market" project. The project was supported by Thai Media Fund and successfully ended in August 2022 with debuting Lekanis-the new style of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric inspiring from Islamic art.

#### 2. The Selected Motifs of Islamic Art and Methods of Applying The Motifs with Northeastern Thailand Woven Fabric

The weavers selected motifs from Islamic art which shared same feature with motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric to express unity of the two different cultures. Among the selected Islamic motifs, geometric pattern is the most preferred since geometric pattern's angular shape, composition, abstractness, symmetry and orderliness harmonize with those of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric.

Many motifs of Lekanis were inspired from Islamic architectural decoration (i.e. muqarnas, tileworks, brickworks) or particular motifs (i.e. endless knot motif on minaret of Şehzade Mosque in Turkey, floor tiles of Amman Boutique Hotel in Thailand). There are some motifs of Islamic art which are so similar to motifs of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric that it can be combined together harmoniously with only little adjustment. These are Makjab motif which its character can be compared with brickworks of the Seljuks, and Dok Kethawa motif which can be considered as Islamic floral motif.

As for the fabric's border motifs, they were adapted from border motifs of Islamic illuminated book since they shared the same shape and function. Note that all motifs of Lekanis were designed to bear no strong sense of "Islamicness" in order to make the fabric universal to all users.

### 3. The Benefits of Applying Islamic Art Motif with Motif of Northeastern Thailand Woven Fabric

#### 3.1 Benefits in Social Aspect

The perfect combination between Islamic art motifs and motifs of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric led to comprehension and impression between Muslim and non-Muslim people. Weavers, who are usually Buddhists, knew Muslims more through learning about Islamic art, their inspiration for designing motifs. Similarly, Muslims had learned way of life and idea of beauty of Northeastern Thai people via this woven fabric. This understanding between people from two different cultures resulted in living together in the same society peacefully.

#### 3.2 Benefits in Cultural Aspect

Applying Islamic art motifs with motifs of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric is another way to preserve art and culture of Northeastern Thailand which has a very long history. Although motifs of the woven fabric slightly changed due to influence of Islamic art motif, the fabric's production process and features remain the same as in the past. The unification between Islamic art motif and Northeastern Thailand woven fabric's motif is certainly a beautiful cultural product of the shared aesthetics between two different cultures.

#### 3.3 Benefits in Art and Design Aspect

The discovery of common features between Islamic art motif and motif of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric introduces new artistic inspiration to art and design circles. This discovery and case study of Lekanis will inspire many artists and designers to create new designs by applying Islamic art with their works.

#### 3.4 Benefits in Economics Aspect

Applying Islamic art motifs with motifs of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric resulted in new style of woven fabric which adds value to the fabric and adds more market opportunities for weaver communities in Northeastern Thailand. Penetrating Muslim markets, especially international markets, will bring high income to the weaver communities and thereby led to economic stability of the communities.

### Conclusion

Islamic art has universal value of beauty and potential in applying with art of other cultures certainly. Integrating Islamic art with art of other cultures provide not only beautiful cultural product but also new artistic inspiration and benefit in various aspects, as evident in the success of Islamic motifs of Northeastern Thailand woven fabric Lekanis brand.

## Exploring Islamic Aesthetics as an Alternative Way to Knowledge: Principles, Contributions, Applications, and Limitations

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**Keywords:** Islamic Aesthetics, Principles, Beauty, Interconnectedness, Balance, Harmony, Proportion, Intentionality, Symbolism.

Islamic aesthetics is a discipline that explores the principles and nature of beauty in Islamic art and culture. It has been traditionally used as a means to knowledge and spiritual enlightenment, with the aim of deepening one's understanding of the divine and the cosmos. In recent times, Islamic aesthetics has emerged as an alternative way to knowledge, offering a fresh perspective on issues related to identity, creativity, and human experience. This paper explores the concept of Islamic aesthetics as an alternative way to knowledge, and investigates the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of Islamic aesthetics?
2. How does it contribute to knowledge?
3. How can Islamic aesthetics be applied as an alternative way to knowledge in contemporary society?
4. What are the benefits and limitations of Islamic aesthetics as an alternative way to knowledge?

### Nature of Islamic Aesthetics

Islamic aesthetics is grounded in the Islamic worldview, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things and the importance of balance and harmony. According to Islamic aesthetics, beauty is not merely a visual or superficial phenomenon but is inherent in the structure of the universe and the nature of existence. Islamic aesthetics places great emphasis on the use of proportion, harmony, and balance in Islamic art and architecture. These principles are derived from Islamic metaphysics, which holds that the cosmos is a reflection of the divine and that everything in the universe is interconnected.

Islamic aesthetics also emphasizes the importance of intentionality in art and creativity. In Islamic thought, intentionality is considered a key factor in determining the value and impact of artistic expression. Islamic aesthetics also places great importance on the use of symbolism in art and the idea that art can convey deeper meanings and insights into the human experience.

## **Contribution to Knowledge**

Islamic aesthetics contributes to knowledge by offering a unique perspective on the nature of beauty and its role in human experience. It provides a framework for understanding the significance of art and creativity in Islamic culture and how they can be used as a means of spiritual expression and communication. Islamic aesthetics also emphasizes the importance of intentionality and symbolism in art and how these factors contribute to the creation of meaning and deeper understanding.

Furthermore, Islamic aesthetics contributes to knowledge by offering insights into the nature of the universe and the interconnectedness of all things. The principles of proportion, harmony, and balance in Islamic art and architecture are based on the idea that the universe is an integrated and interconnected whole. By exploring these principles, Islamic aesthetics can offer insights into the nature of the cosmos and the relationship between humanity and the divine.

## **Application of Islamic Aesthetics in Contemporary Society**

Islamic aesthetics can be applied as an alternative way to knowledge in contemporary society through its integration into various fields such as architecture, design, and the arts. One example of this is the use of Islamic geometric patterns in architectural design. Islamic geometric patterns have been used for centuries in Islamic architecture and are based on principles of symmetry, proportion, and repetition. Contemporary architects and designers have utilized these principles to create innovative and aesthetically pleasing designs that also convey deeper meanings and symbolism.

Another example of the application of Islamic aesthetics in contemporary society is the exploration of Sufi concepts through visual arts. Sufism is a mystical branch of Islam that emphasizes the importance of spiritual experience and connection with the divine. Contemporary artists have utilized Sufi concepts and symbolism in their work to explore themes such as inner peace, harmony, and the human experience.

Islamic calligraphy is also an example of the application of Islamic aesthetics in contemporary society. Calligraphy has been an important art form in Islamic culture for centuries and is based on principles of balance, proportion, and symbolism. Contemporary artists have utilized calligraphy as a means of spiritual expression and communication, creating works that convey deeper meanings and insights into the human experience.

## **Benefits and Limitations of Islamic Aesthetics as an Alternative Way to Knowledge**

The benefits of Islamic aesthetics as an alternative way to knowledge include its ability to offer a holistic and integrated view of the world is one of the main benefits of Islamic aesthetics. Islamic aesthetics emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things, and sees beauty not only in objects and forms but also in relationships and processes. This holistic view of the world can help individuals develop a deeper appreciation for the complexity and diversity of the natural world, and cultivate a sense of humility and respect towards all living beings.

Furthermore, Islamic aesthetics provides a means for individuals to connect with their spirituality and cultivate a sense of inner peace and harmony. Islamic art and culture often express spiritual themes and concepts, such as the oneness of God, the importance of compassion and justice, and the impermanence of material existence. Engaging with Islamic aesthetics can therefore be a transformative experience, helping individuals to develop a more profound understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

Another benefit of Islamic aesthetics is its potential to inspire creativity and innovation. Islamic art and culture have a rich history of innovation and experimentation, and have produced some of the most striking and original works of art and architecture in human history. By exploring the principles and practices of Islamic aesthetics, individuals can tap into this creative legacy and develop new and exciting forms of expression.

However, there are also some limitations to Islamic aesthetics as an alternative way to knowledge. One potential limitation is its potential to be misused for political or ideological purposes. Islamic aesthetics has often been co-opted by political and religious leaders to promote their agendas and justify their actions, sometimes leading to the suppression of dissenting voices and the perpetuation of social inequalities. Therefore, it is important to approach Islamic aesthetics with a critical and reflective mindset, and to be aware of the potential for misuse.

Another limitation of Islamic aesthetics is its limited accessibility to those who lack a background in Islamic art and culture. Islamic aesthetics is a complex and multifaceted discipline that requires a deep understanding of Islamic history, culture, and philosophy. Therefore, it may be difficult for individuals who lack this background to fully appreciate and engage with Islamic aesthetics. Furthermore, the exclusivity of Islamic aesthetics may reinforce social and cultural hierarchies, and exclude marginalized voices and perspectives.

In conclusion, Islamic aesthetics offers a unique and valuable perspective on the nature of beauty and the human experience, providing an alternative way to knowledge that complements traditional academic disciplines. Its application in contemporary society has the potential to enrich our understanding of complex issues related to identity, creativity, and spirituality. However, to fully realize its potential, Islamic aesthetics needs to be approached with a critical and reflective mindset, and its limitations must be acknowledged and addressed.



## The Travelogue and Foreign View on The Artistic Productions Of Muslim Women

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**Keywords:** Travelogue, Art, Women, Muslim, Maghreb, Tradition, Modernity.

Islamic art in the Maghreb has fascinated Western travelers who have painted through travelogues the beauty and grandeur of religious buildings built in a refined style and a surprising delicacy that combines tradition and modernity. These buildings with their bewitching architecture are combined with picturesque and exotic spaces that vibrate with colors and translate in their symbolism the supremacy of the Muslim religion.

Since the interest of Western civilizations for the Maghreb, the Muslim religion is the element that has aroused the most curiosity. In this sense, missionaries and travelers were sent to bring back geographical, historical, cultural and religious data to facilitate the domination of the Maghreb countries. The documents made in this reason, especially between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, currently serve as important documentation to learn about the social life of the Maghreb in previous centuries and allow to understand the evolution of thought and arts.

The travelogue made by these travelers is an art that gathers all the sciences and all the discourses, literary or not literary (among others the geographical, historical, political, sociological, anthropological discourses...). Therefore, the travelogue is an important documentation of the life and the cultural and religious practices of men in a precise geographical area.

In this study, we will focus on travelogues written by Western women in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries who traveled to the Maghreb to discover its culture and religion. These women were able to access the Harem, to rub shoulders directly with Maghrebi women and to report in their writings the practices of these Muslim women artists.

These women are described as active in the social and artistic life of the Maghreb since they participate in the construction of houses, in tapestry, in storytelling and in reciting poems. They also mastered the refined art of the table which consists in presenting various dishes that fascinate foreign travelers. Muslim women's clothing is also considered an art object because of its refined weaving, bright and symbolic colors. According to these travelers, these varied artistic practices have their origin in both the cultural identity and religious values of Muslim women in the Maghreb.

These aspects will be the subject of our study, which will explore three travel narratives written by European women travelers in the Maghreb. The first travelogue is entitled *In "Dans l'ombre chaude de l'islam"* and is written by Isabelle Eberhardt. She travels in North Africa and settles in Algeria after her conversion to Islam. She chose the travelogue to describe the picturesque space of her adventures, singing of the beauty of nature and its importance for artistic creation among the Bedouin tribes of Algeria. In her story, she describes the life of a woman who converted to Islam by reporting the daily life of nomadic women who weave tents and carpets, build their houses, create their pottery and sing the beauty of the desert. Writing the journey is also an art that takes up through the ticket of literary aesthetics the picturesque spectacles of nature through a multitude of colors that combine between warm colors, bright in life, and pale and cold colors in order to trace the beauty of Islam. The values of Islam are also at the heart of the meditations of the writer and who considers it as a source of inspiration for the writing of his journey. Islam according to Eberhardt influences the daily life of women and their creativity. Thus, its values and traditions are concretized in the artistic manifestations of the Maghrebi women described by the writer.

This vision is also expressed by Aline Réveillaud Lens in the travelogue entitled *"Harem outr'ouvert"* where she discovers the artistic practices of Muslim women at the beginning of the twentieth century and describes their specificities, their traditional clothes that they confiscate with delicacy and that fascinate the French traveler.

In the XXI century the travelogue *"De Tangier à Marrakech"* Christine Dupont Nangle describes the modern Moroccan women who still draw from tradition and the Muslim religion to make their artistic reactions. The writer, marked by the artistic experience of Delacroix and Matisse in Morocco, paints Moroccan women, cities and mosques to show the inspiration of the Muslim religion on the daily life of Moroccans. This novel is accompanied by illustrations painted by the writer of Moroccan women in order to translate her perception of the modern woman and to reveal to the reader this arrangement between tradition and modernity in the light of Islam.

## **Issue**

Traveling women writers try to paint the Muslim tradition and the traces of Islamic art by analyzing the different forms of artistic representations of Islam. They also focus on the artistic creation of Muslim women, showing their social importance. Thus, we will analyze this perception of Islamic art through this foreign look carried by women travelers in the XX and XXI century.

## **Methodology**

In order to analyze the representations of Islamic art and the foreign view on the creations of the Muslim woman in the travel narrative. We will use two approaches that relate to the field of comparative literature.

The first approach is imagology. This discipline of comparative literature studies the foreigner as a fundamental theme of a work, it examines the images of the other as indications of a notable evolution of the cultural life of a country, by studying the history of ideas. The imagology leads an interdisciplinary study, and puts the field of the literature in relation with other fields of the knowledge, where also elaborate representations of the foreigner according to degrees of inferiority, equivalence or superiority between a looking culture and a looked culture.

We will also call upon a geopoetic approach that will allow us to study the junction between man and the world. In order to detect the relationship that the artistic creations maintain with the religious feeling. It will allow us to analyze the Muslim aesthetics of which the various artistic creations reported by the travelogues.

## **Plan of the presentation**

We will study how the travelogue paints the life of Muslim women in the Maghreb. In doing so, we will explain how Maghrebi Muslim women artists are represented by foreign travelers. We will look at the influence of Muslim values on artistic creation by relating the inspiration of the geographical space and the picturesque landscape.

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