17-18 November 2021













Under the patronage of HH Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Sharjah and the President of the University of Sharjah

Sharjah International Foundation for the History of Arab and Muslim Sciences (SIFHAMS)

under its annual International Scientific Forum

and

Regional Office for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Arab States (ICCROM-SHARJAH)

under its biennial programme the "Arab Forum for Cultural Heritage"

are organizing a two-day international forum entitled:

Rethinking the *Future* of Islamic Arts and Heritage













Forum Agenda

First day: 17 November 2021

University of Sharjah

Time	Session Title	
15:00 – 15:15	Opening Ceremony: - Speech by H.E the Chancellor of the Universit Prof Hamid M.K. Al Naimiy - Speech by ICCROM's Director General, Dr. We his representative	
15:15 – 16:30	Panel 1, Day 1: - Islam and Converging Cultures: The Case of Architecture - Strategy for Preservation and Development	Ahmad Paul Keeler
	of Islamic Arts and Heritage	Dr. Amir Pašić
	- Discussion	Moderator: Prof Mesut Idriz
16:30 – 16:45	Group Photo	
16:45 – 17:15	Coffee Break	
17:15 – 18:30	Panel 2, Day 1: - The Islamic World as a Space for the Dissemination of Forms and Knowledge: Some Examples in the Field of Architecture	Prof Antonio Almagro
	- The Future of Culture and Arts in the UAE	Mr. Rashad Bukhash
	- Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization: A Platform for Interfaith Dialogue	Ms. Aisha Deemas
	- Discussion	Moderator: Arch. Peter Jackson
19:30 – 21:00	Visit to the Islamic Museum in Sharjah and the E Life Falls from the Sky: Water, Islam and Art`an	1 / 1:



Second day: 18 November 2021

EXPO Dubai - UN Pavilion

Time	Session Title	
15:00 – 15:05 15:05 – 15:15	Welcome note by the UN Resident Coordinator for the UAE Opening Speech by Ministry of Culture and Youth	Dr. Dena Assaf
15:15 – 16:45	Panel 1, Day 2: - Museum With No Frontiers - Islamic Art and Heritage Platform - Questioning the Exceptionalism of	Dr. Eva Schubert
	'Islamic Art': Learning from the Arts of Mosul	Dr Ruba Kanaan
	- The Role of Museums in Preserving Heritage "Case Study of Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo"	Dr. Alaa Eldin Mahmoud
	- Discussion	Moderator: Dr. Zaki Aslan
16:45 – 17:15	- Discussion Coffee Break	
16:45 – 17:15 17:15 – 18:30	2.0000000.	
	Coffee Break Panel 2, Day 2:	Dr. Zaki Aslan
	Coffee Break Panel 2, Day 2: - The Silk Roads and Islamic Material Culture - Islamic Archeaology and Heritage:	Dr. Zaki Aslan Prof Julian Henderson Dr. Jose C. Carvajal
	Coffee Break Panel 2, Day 2: - The Silk Roads and Islamic Material Culture - Islamic Archeaology and Heritage: One of the Salient Ways of Being Human	Dr. Zaki Aslan Prof Julian Henderson Dr. Jose C. Carvajal Lopez Moderator:



Background:

Islamic art spans some fourteen centuries, covering many geographies and varied cultures of Islamic societies. It encompasses rich artistic legacies ranging from architecture to calligraphy and from paintings to textiles. Islamic art has been developed throughout history from various sources, and in turn it influenced many others. Despite increased scholarly attention, there are many questions about the Islamic art and heritage and its position within the wider human context.

The forum will celebrate the International Day of Islamic Art on the 18th of November, proclaimed by UNESCO in 2019 with an aim to raise awareness of Islamic arts and their contribution to the world civilizations. Since its proclamation, the International Day of Islamic Art has inspired various scholarly activities and communal events.

The main goals and objectives of the Forum:

This Forum aims to provide a venue for multi-disciplinary discussions on Islamic artistic and architectural legacies in the present and future. The Forum will bring together prominent speakers, consisting of academics and practitioners, to explore the role of Islamic artistic legacy in bridging times and geographies, converging cultures, and promoting inter-cultural dialogue.

Participants in the Forum will present various case studies from various Islamic contexts, highlighting how Islamic arts evolved to define various cultures and how these cultural legacies define the present and future. Theoretical and practical perspectives will include exploration of the diverse nature of Islamic arts and heritage with highlights on inter-disciplinary boundaries. Additionally, the Forum will explore case studies on the preservation and presentation of Islamic heritage.

The Forum specifically aims to:

- 1- Initiate inter-disciplinary conversations on the notion and shaping of various Islamic artistic and architectural legacies
- 2- Explore the bridging, dialogue-promoting, and unifying role of Islamic arts and heritage in inter-ethnic and inter-religious contexts.
- 3- Investigate the presentation of Islamic arts in exhibitions and museums and the role of museums in building communal awareness in Islamic artistic legacies.

The Forum themes:

The key themes of the Forum shed light on the role of Islamic arts and heritage in:

Bridging times and geographies

- How can we define Islamic art and heritage? what do we value as Islamic art? and what factors play a role in the making of Islamic heritages?
- What is unique about Islamic art?
- How the Islamic arts/architecture in different timeframes and spaces borrowed from the existing built and natural environments?
- How these borrowings contributed in the shaping of Islamic arts/architecture?
- How did the Islamic arts/architecture inspire artistic creativities throughout history? What are the reflections in contemporary world?
- Are the Islamic arts and artistic traditions timeless?

Converging cultures

- What is the role of Islamic arts and heritage in bridging the gap and convergingcultures?
- How was this manifested then and now?
- What is the Islamic Art's influence across the world's major cities?
- What aspects of the Islamic arts/architecture creates a source of inspiration for contemporary artistic reativity?
- How the various forms of cultural interpretations influenced the evolution and diversification of arts/architecture over the wider Islamic world?

· Promoting inter-cultural dialogue

- How Islamic arts and heritage contributes in promoting inter-cultural dialogue? what are the potentialities?
- What is the role of state and non-state actors in advocating and promoting the inter-cultural dialogue via Islamic arts and heritage?
- What are the potentialities of Islamic heritage in ethnic/religiously conflicted zones to create an inter-communal nexus of unification?

Target Audience:

The Forum is aimed at all intellectuals with an interest in Islamic arts and heritage.
These include, but not limited to:

- International and regional academics and researchers
- Heritage officials/professionals in the region and beyond
- Professionals from museums and art galleries in the region and beyond
- Cultural Heritage NGOs in the region and beyond
- Media professional and journalists
- Art and heritage elites (architects, archaeologists, conservators, curators, artists, etc.)

Expected Outcomes:

The intended outcome of the Forum is the establishment of a solid foundation for an interdisciplinary dialogue and discussion on the Islamic arts and heritage. The outcomes will specifically include:

- Contribution to the scholarly field of Islamic arts and heritage through the publication and dissemination of the Forum proceedings.
- Recommendations to follow-up the Forum objectives.

The main results and summaries will be posted on ICCROM-Sharjah and SIFHAMS-UoS websites and a specific web-page for the Forum.



The Forum Structure:

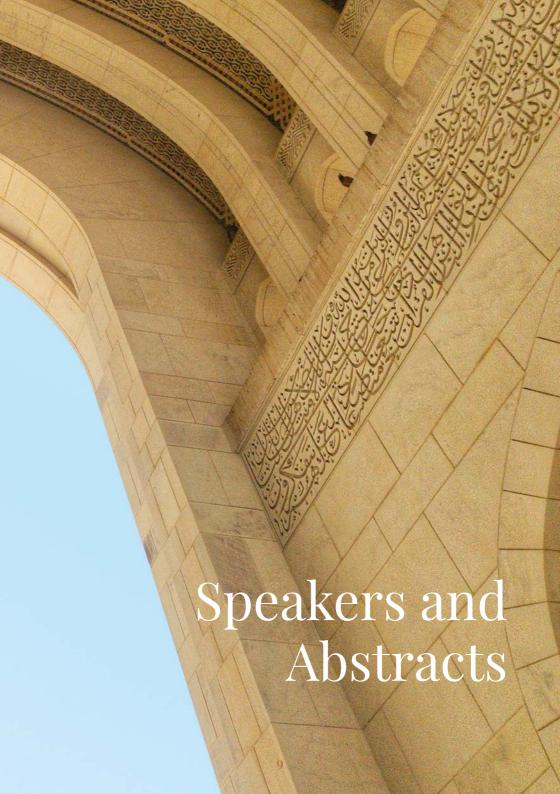
The Forum will be hybrid, employing online-digital and physical sessions. Online sessions will be open to local and international attendees, consisting of academics, researchers, practitioners, intellectuals, and students.

The Forum will be held over two days. There will be two panel presentations/discussions each day, with 30 minutes break between the two sessions.

Each panel will be comprised of 2-3 panellists and a moderator. The time allocated for each speaker/ presentation is 20 minutes, followed by 15 minutes Q&A session.

Conference Languages:

English, Arabic





Ahmed Paul Keeler

Ahmed Keeler is a Visiting Fellow at the Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge, and was Distinguished Fellow at The Faculty of Leadership and Management, Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia in 2016. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the University of Bolton in 2016. He has spent his working life since the Festival in establishing and engaging with projects that explore and present Islamic culture as a holistic environmental manifestation. At a time of growing instability, he is now lecturing and participating in seminars encouraging us to judge the success of human culture through the criteria of Mizan, which is at the heart of the Islamic unfolding.

Presentation Title: Islam & Converging Cultures: The Case of Architecture

Abstract:

One of the best ways of studying the convergence of cultures is through architecture. In this paper focus will be on the impact convergence had on the design of mosques and palaces. Islam enjoyed an incredibly rich engagement with other cultures in its formation as a civilization. The rapid early conquests resulted in the Muslims ruling an empire which stretched from Spain to the Indus and the borders of China. The entire Persian Empire and the richest provinces of Byzantium were absorbed into Dar Al-Islam. A profound convergence took place, and Islamic architecture was born. The further spread of Islam through trade, deep into Africa and by sea to the Malay world brought into play a further series of convergences. The manner of these engagements ensured that the local character of the cultures was not destroyed but transformed, becoming part of the diversity within the unity that Islam provided.

The paper will then examine the relationship between Islam and the West. There was not one but three quite different Wests that were encountered. The first was Christian Europe, and in this engagement the Europeans were the recipients of knowledge, skills and technologies which enabled them to build their cathedrals, and much else besides. Then came the conquerors, newly rapped in the civilization of Rome, and intent upon creating their world empires; they brought with them classical architecture, which was considered by Europeans to be the universal form to be adopted by all cultures. The impact on the traditional forms will be then examined. Finally, Modern Architecture emerged and was once again promoted by the West as the universal system for all humanity. How Muslim patrons, scholars and architects have responded and are responding to this challenge, will be explored.



Amir Pasic

Professor Dr. Amir Pašić, the leading expert of Bosnia and Hercegovina in the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO 2015-2021. He has been professor of architecture (1999), urban planning (2000), and theory and history of architecture and historic preservation (2009). Currently, he is affiliated with the University of Sarajevo. Also, he was lecturing at more than 35 universities worldwide. He was the Head of Architectural department in the OIC Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), Istanbul (1993-2018), and Commissioner at the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2016-2021). He won the 1986 Aga Khan Award for Architecture for the restoration of the Old Town of Mostar, and he was coordinating for ten years activities on rehabilitation of the same town after its total destruction in the 1992-95 war. He is the author or co-author of 23 books and 72 articles, and also the author of the Nomination dossier for the WH property "Old Town of Mostar" (2005).

Presentation Title: Strategy for Preservation and Development of Islamic Arts and Heritage

Abstract:

We need strong commitment to use all efforts to reinforce a joint action on the preservation and future development, both tangible and intangible. We share awareness and great concern about the current situation of the cultural heritage in the Muslim world where there are a lot of aggression and destruction facts against heritage including monuments and sites, especially those are in conflict zones, and the importance of needs to overcome many challenges according to a concrete plan of actions (planning, maintenance, preservation, promotion of Islamic arts and heritage) as well as to ensure political, legal and institutional capacity in coordination with all stakeholders. The goal of this strategy is to initiate development processes through good planning and implementation using rich natural resources, and human-built cultural and historical heritage established through many millennia represents the basis of future development. The education systems at all levels must introduced knowledge and awareness in the curricula; as well as providing training and research programs, including Master and Doctorate Programs in the area of safeguarding and protecting the cultural heritage with support of digital technology. The preservation of cultural heritage in the Islamic world should not be limited to Islamic heritage only, but must also include all cultural heritage that exists, taking into account the rich cultures and multi-ethnic background. To preserve and develop cultural heritage it is necessary to develop a comprehensive management system in order to ensure the long-term safeguarding of properties.



Antonio Almagro Gorbea

Antonio Almagro is an architect, PhD and a research professor specialized in Islamic architecture at the Granada School of Arab Studies, of the Spanish Council for Scientific Research (CSIC), recently retired. He has developed his professional activity in the General Direction of Fine Arts, in the Institute of Cultural Heritage of Spain and in the aforementioned School. He has been, for many years, Delegate of Spain in the General Assemblies and Member of the ICCROM Council; consultant for UNESCO in photogrammetry and in the valuation and restoration of various monuments and complexes, developing a great deal of international activity in this area. It is worth highlighting his work on Islamic architecture, both in Spain and in other countries of the Mediterranean area.

Presentation Title: The Islamic World as a Space for the Dissemination of Forms and Knowledge: Some Examples in the Field of Architecture

Abstract:

From the eighth century onward, the Islamic world extended from the Atlantic to the Indus River covering a wide range of territories and nations that soon became interrelated. Despite the early fragmentation of this political unity, the commercial and cultural relationships that had been established remained very active due to two unquestionable facts: a shared language and a shared religion, both of which were deeply intertwined. The presence of certain forms and especially very unique construction techniques in very distant places within the vast territories through which Islam spread in its first centuries of existence show the undoubted role it played in the dissemination of knowledge and aesthetic concepts, which although taken from other preceding civilizations, became a substantial part of Islamic culture. The analysis of some of these cases that appear in Al-Andalus, the western end of the medieval Islamic world, undoubtedly coming from the other end of that world, serves as a clear confirmation of these processes.



Rashad M. Bukhash

Rashad Bukhash is the Chairman of the Architectural Heritage Society. He has an experience of 30 years in the fields of planning, directing, managing, supervising of modern architectural projects, conservation of historic buildings, museum designing and management, and landscaping projects. With his background in both architecture and conservation of historic buildings, he supervised the conservation of more than 215 historic buildings in Dubai and the Emirates. He won many prizes such as the best employee of

Presentation Title: The Future of Culture and Arts in the UAE

Abstract:

Culture and arts have historical origins dating back thousands of years in the Emirates, and through this intervention the speaker will mention the historical origins of culture and arts in the UAE, an analysis of the current reality, and the future of culture, heritage and arts in the country.



Aisha Deemas

Aisha holds an MBA and a bachelor's degree in International Studies from the American University of Sharjah. She joined the Sharjah Museums Authority in 2006 and has been Curator at the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization since its opening in 2008 and until June 2012. Her work involved caring for the collections at the museum, organizing exhibitions and events, developing national and international collaborations, as well as the overall management and day to day running of the museum in general. Aisha is currently Director of Executive Affairs at the Sharjah Museums Authority. She participates in long-range planning and overall management of the services provided to all the museums under SMA management.

Presentation Title: Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization: A Platform for Interfaith Dialogue

Abstract:

The Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization is in fact the first, and only, museum of its kind in the world to present Islamic Civilization in an interdisciplinary and holistic approach. The museum's permanent displays, programming and temporary exhibitions all have an overarching aim to open up channels of intercultural, interfaith and intergenerational dialogue in a manner that fosters and supports knowledge sharing in society. This presentation will give a brief overview of the museum's approach through examples of such programming and exhibitions.



Eva Shubert

Eva Shubert is a founder, mastermind and chairperson of Museum with No Frontiers (MWNF). She looks back on an experience of almost 30 years (1993 – 2021) in raising awareness about Islamic art and heritage through research, documentation and innovative methods of presentation. Between 1993 and 1995 she set up her first Mediterranean network and participated in the preparation of the Barcelona Declaration (1995). Eva Schubert's education as actress and stage director (1978-80) set the basis for what became the guiding principle for her professional career: The curtain has to go up. After the overwhelming success of one of the first international fine art exhibition projects, a Spanish Austrian cooperation on the occasion of the 1992 Expo in Sevilla, she developed the concept for a new exhibition format, the so-called 'Exhibition Trail'. After a successful pilot project set up in the Austrian region of Tyrol (1994-1996), concept and method were transferred to the Mediterranean region with the 'Islamic Art in the Mediterranean' Exhibition Trails. Eva Schubert, who deeply believes in multilateral values, was born in Vienna and lives in Rome.

Presentation Title: Museum With No Frontiers - Islamic Art and Heritage Platform

Abstract:

During the last two decades the impact of 9/11 on world policy, namely also in the field of culture, on the one hand, and the constantly increasing presence of the Gulf countries as a highly dynamic driving force in the Arab World, on the other hand, speeded up a process that was of great benefit for Islamic arts and heritage. The fact that the United Arab Emirates and, in particular, Sharjah are the initiators and the protagonists of this important Conference, witnesses the relevance of these developments. The challenge of Rethinking the Future of Islamic Arts and Heritage can be approached from many different perspectives.

Based on the experience of MWNF, the presentation will focus on three priorities:

- 1) Access to relevant information about the artistic legacy of Islam.
- 2) A cultural tourism offer based on Islamic art and heritage.
- 3) Cooperation between institutions from different Arab/Islamic countries and regions through the realisation of joint exhibition projects.



Ruba Khaled Kana'an

Professor Kana'an is a historian of Islamic art and Architecture at the University of Toronto. Her primary research focuses on the Intersections between art, artists, art production, and law in historical and contemporary contexts. She uses field-based, archival, and textual research in her work. She has conducted research in Jordan, Palestine, Turkey, Yemen, Oman, East Africa, Egypt and Syria. Her architectural research explores how the understanding of the architecture of Muslim societies is transformed and, at times, enhanced by examining juridical and theological textual sources in a variety of languages including Arabic, Ottoman Turkish, and Persian. She is currently researching and writing a book on the function and symbolism of the architecture of Friday mosques. Her professional experience spans the worlds of academia, architectural practice, museums, and community-based art education. Between 2011 and 2017 she was a founding member of the Leadership Team at Aga Khan Museum in Toronto (AKM) and headed its Education and Scholarly Programs.

Presentation Title: Questioning the Exceptionalism of 'Islamic Art': Learning from the Arts of Mosul

Abstract:

Between 2014 and 2017, the so-called 'Islamic State' ISIL/DAESH occupied and devastated the historic city of Mosul. The destruction is reflected in both the devastation and dispersal of many if its diverse communities as well as the deliberate destruction of its urban fabric and architectural monuments. While there are currently concerted and quite admirable efforts to restore Mosul's heritage as exemplified by the various projects under the umbrella of the UNESCO's Revive the Spirit of Mosul initiative and Iraq's ongoing effort to include the Old City of Mosul in the World Heritage List, the questions of how Mosul and its heritage are represented in world museums remain unanswered. This contribution to the Rethinking the Future of Islamic Art and Heritage explores how the current representation of Mosul's art and architecture reflects a broader question about 'Islamic art' and offers an opportunity to rethink how it can be redefined. The paper explores the art and architecture of Mosul during the 12th and 13th centuries as a case study of the rich and diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and religious beliefs that are reflected the city's visual and material culture. It demonstrates how the colonial classification systems that were predominantly based on an 'Orientalist' imaginaire of the exceptionalism of Islam and Muslims continue to underpin various structures of representation especially in museums.



Alaa Eldin Mahmoud

Dr. Alaa Eldin Mahmoud is a Deputy of museum of Islamic art in Cairo for archaeological and researchers Affairs, and a chief researcher at the Museum. Supervisor of Scientific Research administration, Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, and Head of Glass Department, Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (2011-2021), he participated in reviewing the scientific material of the Museum of Islamic Art's catalogue. He has a PhD in Islamic Archaeology, with specialization in Islamic Arts, Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University. Participating in international conferences, forums and exhibitions in Islamic arts field, he published and prepared many scientific research projects in the field of Islamic heritage and arts.

Presentation Title: The Role of Museums in Preserving Heritage "Case Study of Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo"

Abstract:

Museums are among the institutions whose most prominent role is the preservation of human heritage, or in other words, the preservation and interpretation of the physical manifestations of the humanity. According to the great importance of museums; various countries around the world have taken an interest in their establishment, and the interest in studying museum science has spread. The Museum of Islamic Art is one of the centers of cultural and artistic radiation of the Islamic heritage, not only in Egypt but throughout the world, due to the large number of art pieces it contains, which are more than one hundred thousand pieces, that are characterized by the wideness of the area in which they were made in various countries belonging to the Islamic civilization, extending from India in the east to Morocco and Andalusia in the west, in addition to the expansion of the time period attributed to it, which extends from the first century of Hijra until the thirteenth century of Hijra.

The Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo faced a great challenge after the explosion occurred in January 24, 2014. Lovers of arts did not hesitate to support this museum, so many parties, including the United Arab of Emirates in addition to UNESCO, in cooperation with Italy, rushed to rehabilitate the Museum of Islamic Art, beside other institutions and organizations. This marked the rebirth of the museum at all levels, and a new approach to developing the museum and its work system so that it truly became a beacon for heritage preservation and knowledge dissemination.



Julian Henderson

Prof. Julian Henderson has been a full Professor in archaeological Science at the University of Nottingham since 1999. He was recently Li Dak Sum Chair professor in Silk Road studies at University of Nottingham, Ningbo China and is currently visiting Professor there and at Northwest University (Xi'an). He has held other visiting appointments in Oxford and Melbourne Universities. He has been Head of the department of archaeology and Head of the School of Humanities in Nottingham University. He directed the Raqqa ancient industry project. Currently directs the Silk Road project and co-directs the interdisciplinary tri-campus Silk Road network.

Presentation Title: The Silk Roads and Islamic Material Culture

Abstract:

The silk roads were a complex network of contacts connecting western Asia to Africa and east Asia. During the 'Abbasid caliphate, and later, interactions across the Eurasian silk roads connected western Asia to the Tang Dynasty in east Asia. This talk will consider what role the study of material culture plays in mapping interactions across the Eurasian silk roads as an enriching research area with much potential. By investigating Islamic glass and ceramics found on the silk roads scientifically it becomes possible to establish provenances for them (Henderson et al. 2020). This, in turn, can help trigger ideas about social, including religious, contexts and acculturation: humans and things moved together (Henderson in press). Case studies will be presented here in order to illustrate these issues and concepts.



José C. Carvajal López

Dr José C. Carvajal López is a lecturer of Historical Archaeology at the University of Leicester (UK) since 2018. He did his undergraduate degree and PhD in the University of Granada (Spain). He then held a Marie Curie Intra European Fellowship in the University of Sheffield (UK), and became lecturer of Islamic Archaeology in UCL Qatar. His specialist field as an archaeologist is pottery and material culture in general, primarily in Iberia, but he also has experience in landscape and architectural archaeology. He focuses on the archaeological study of the Islamic culture, mainly in the process of Islamization and in interactions of Islam with other cultures. He searches for approaches that combine anthropological theory on material culture and analyses with scientific techniques.

Presentation Title: Islamic Archaeology and Heritage: One of the Salient Ways of Being Human

Abstract:

This presentation will consider the future of Islamic heritage from the point of view of an archaeologist that focuses on everyday culture. From this perspective it will look at the history of the discipline of Islamic archaeology and its engagement with objects, buildings and places for peoples of all social classes, and will make suggestions about the future of the discipline based on trends developed in the last years. Islamic archaeology is a fascinating field of study where ground-breaking debates are deemed to take place. Two in particular will be discussed: first, the encounter between a 'de-Islamised' archaeology, which in many Islamic countries is still very much geared to the pre-Islamic past, and Islamic heritage, which for many citizens of Islamic countries 'reduced' to folklore and popular culture. The second debate that will be highlighted is the unique contribution that Islamic archaeologists can make to overcome Orientalist perspectives and underline the universal value of Islamic history. After all, in the words of Winfred Cantwell-Smith, "for fourteenth centuries the Islamic has been one of the salient ways of being human".



