

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Arts and Archaeology of Funerary Cultures in Islam

16th Colloquium of the Ernst Herzfeld-Gesellschaft | Ernst Herzfeld Society Rome, Sapienza University, July 2-4, 2020

In cultures of Islam, like those of other religions which believe in life in the hereafter, death is not the end but a transition into something to come. The significance of visual and material culture relating to the dead is clear from the wide spread of monumental mausolea that shelter and mark the grave, remember the buried, and invite visitors. It is reflected in various other arts, in social practices of visiting burial places, and in literature such as pilgrimage guides. Research has shown that since the early Islamic period, despite religious disapproval of ostentatious grave marking, burial monuments for specific persons were a part of funerary culture as well as the use of inscribed tombstones.

While art historical and archaeological research on various civilizations has dealt with funerary culture in a wider sense, this is less the case in Islamic art and archaeology. Although a significant amount of scholarship has been produced, a comprehensive image of visual and material aspects of funerary cultures is lacking, and some aspects have been overshadowing others. One focus has been on the form, function, and epigraphy of funerary architecture, such as mausolea, tomb towers, their relation to other buildings, and commemorative mosques. Graves with tombstones and cemeteries, which constitute the majority of burials, have been less systematically studied; even lesser the various media and artefacts which furnish them, such as cenotaphs, railings, textiles, and other. Semantics of form have rarely been dealt with. The evidence gained from archaeology, such as types of tombs, the placement of corpses, their clothing, the use of epigraphy, often has remained discrete, disconnected from wider discussions and interpretations of visual and material culture. Among the reasons behind this fragmented perspective are the diversity and geographical spread of evidence and the variety and range of disciplines and methods involved. They include field archaeology, archaeometric analysis of human remains, art historical study and discussion of architecture and artefacts, epigraphy, anthropology, historical and religious studies based on texts.

The 16th Colloquium of the Ernst Herzfeld Society aims to bring together these diverse perspectives on visual and material aspects of death and the hereafter in Islamic cultures. It discusses Islamic funerary cultures through art history and archaeology as well as related disciplines and subfields. It invites individual papers and pre-arranged panels on all aspects and subjects that relate to this theme. Papers on other themes are welcome in open panels.

The Ernst Herzfeld Gesellschaft zur Erforschung der islamischen Kunst und Archäologie | Ernst Herzfeld Society for Studies in Islamic Art and Archaeology and the Department of Sciences of Antiquity, Sapienza University of Rome, Italy are delighted to invite you to participate in the Colloquium to be held in Rome, July 2–4, 2020.

Schedule – The Colloquium is planned to start with a keynote lecture on the evening of Thursday, July 2, 2020. The Colloquium continues with sessions on Friday and Saturday, July 3–4. A meeting of graduate students is scheduled for Thursday, July 2, for which a separate call will be circulated. The annual general assembly of the Ernst Herzfeld Society will be held on Friday or Saturday afternoon. A detailed schedule will follow in due course.

Application – Please submit your panel or paper proposal for the Colloquium **by March 1, 2020** to Prof. Michelina Di Cesare: *melina.dicesare@uniroma1.it*

All proposals will undergo a peer review selection process. Acceptance will be notified in the first week of April 2020.

The preferred colloquium language is English, while Italian and German are possible. Each presentation is limited to 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of discussion (or 30 minutes of discussion per panel).

- Pre-arranged panels: will preferably include three presentations. Please submit a title and an abstract of no more than 500 words presenting the topic and the aim of the panel, as well as a provisional list of speakers.

- Individual papers: will be presented in open panels. Please submit a title and an abstract of no more than 300 words.

If you want to submit a paper proposal for the graduate meeting (separate call), please send your title and abstract to Sarah Johnson: *sarah.cresap.johnson@gmail.com*

Registration and participation in the colloquium are free for members of the Society. Other speakers and participants are asked to join the Society by paying the annual membership fee. Speakers and participants will organise their own travel and accommodation. A list of hotels located in the vicinity of the Colloquium venues will be circulated in due course.