

Training School Islamic Heritage in Europe (Granada/Cordoba, 14–16 Jan 20)

Granada and Cordoba, Spain, Jan 14–16, 2020

Deadline: Sep 20, 2019

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Over the past decades, there has been a growing interest among scholars in analysing how the Islamic heritage in Europe has been perceived, described, preserved, erased, negotiated or transformed in different areas of Europe, from medieval to modern times. However, those debates seldom crossed the borders of regional approaches. The aim of this training school is to discuss those issues from different and complementary perspectives, including art history, but also philosophy, history of science or anthropology, and to question the traditional regional narrative through a comparative examination of Islamic monuments in a wider Mediterranean perspective. It will also include a critical discussion of different scholarly backgrounds across Europe, including (but not limited to) the historiography of the different geo-cultural spaces and their strategies of making of their past. It intends to transcend the historiographical essentialization of Spain as “the place” of the Islamic past in Europe and to include other regions, as the Balkans or Greece. It will discuss how the European imaginary has dealt (and is still dealing) with having an Islamic past and how it has conditioned various historiographical debates regarding where those regions fit in Europe.

Field visits and on-site discussions in Granada, Córdoba and Madinat-al-Zahra will be complemented with conferences and debate sessions, focused on the students’ personal research. The overarching goal is to create a space of debate and exchange among young and established scholars, as well as to promote a network of scholars of Islamic European Heritage that will bring new perspectives into the field. Students will be asked to prepare one small introduction to a specific monument that will be discussed on those visits, and to make a brief presentation of their own case studies, with a specific focus on problems of research and methodologies, in one of the three panels specified below.

The training school is part of the COST-Action “Islamic Legacy: East, West, North South of the Mediterranean (1350-1750).

Main objectives of the activity:

- a) To use the discussion about Islamic Heritage in Iberia to bring up a debate with a Pan-European perspective.
- b) To compare artistic and social trends between the different territories.
- c) To develop a student network on Islamic European Heritage.
- d) To promote a dialogue between junior and senior scholars.

Structure of the Training School:

This activity will be developed in 2 different spaces: Classroom (a) and the Islamic sites (b).

a. Classroom Activities:

Students will be split into 3 different panels, related to their research topic. These panels will be chaired by a Senior Scholar who will choose 2-3 papers related to the methodology of the selected subject, to be discussed by the students. He/she will introduce the session with a short talk (20-30 minutes) to create a methodological framework. Each student will also present, briefly, the relation between his/her research with the arguments exposed in the papers. Each session will have an approximated duration of 2 hours.

Panel 1: Islamic architecture in Europe.

Chair: Elias Kolovos (Greece).

"The world rejoices in a new popular faith: the cult of heritage" (David Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, 1998). However, can this be true in the case of the Islamic heritage in Europe? This panel aims to launch a debate about the Islamic heritage in Europe, discussing around the terms "dissonant heritage" (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1995), or "negotiated heritage" (Macdonald 2009) or "mnemonic intrusions". The scope of this panel includes Iberian Peninsula and Italy, but seeks to go beyond them, pointing out attention toward the Balkans or Greece as emblematic areas for European heritage monuments.

Panel 2: Islamic material culture in Europe.

Chair: Antonio Urquizar (Spain).

This panel intends to foster the methodological exchange among PhD candidates working on topics related to the reception of Islamic material culture in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe. It will discuss the circulation of Islamic objects in Christian Europe, production of Islamic objects in Europe, Islamic objects as trophies, Islamic objects and luxury in the European courts, changes of use in the religious context, hybrid material culture, Christian material culture of Islamic tradition, Islamic material culture and the European idea of Art, representations of Islamic objects in Europe, narratives on Islamic objects in Europe.

Panel 3: The image of Islam in the Visual culture.

Chair: Valentina Živković (Serbia).

The panel will launch a discussion of two basic ways of showing Islam as otherness in visual arts. One form is common and simple: to analyze the explicit use of symbols of Muslims. The second type refers to the non-explicit display that needs to be interpreted from the point of view of iconology (both concepts were explored in *Changing the Enemy, Visualizing the Other: Contacts between Muslims and Christians in the Early Modern Mediterranean Art*, ed. G. Capriotti and B. Franco, *Il Capitale culturale Supplementi* 6, 2017). This shrouded meaning given to pictorial narratives and sacred images was often followed by the formation of mental images in literary and religious narratives. The aim of this panel is to identify to the challenges of researching these topics, as well as to create a methodological framework for this research in a broader background of cultural history.

b. Visit to Islamic sites:

These activities will be supervised by the invited scholars. The coordinators of the Training School will select several Islamic monuments in Granada and Córdoba to be presented by the students. Each student will explain one of these selected monuments, trying to find connections with the methodological problems of his/her own research.

Proposed visits: Alhambra (Granada), Casa de los Tiros (Granada), Royal Chapel (Granada), Albaicín Quarter (Granada), Madrasa (Granada), Mosque of Cordoba, and Madinat-al-Zahra (Córdoba).

Proposed Scholars to supervise these activities: María Marcos, Elena Paulino, Borja Franco, Elena Díez Jorge, and Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza

Finally, Prof. Peter Burke will deliver a keynote lecture on Hybridity, Islam and Early Modern Europe. The lecture will also be open to the students of the University of Granada.

Grants for students

A call for applications will be open from July 15th to September 20th. The COST Action will offer 15 Grants between 300 to 900 € to cover the travel expenses and accommodation. The amount will be adapted to the country of origin of the students.

Evaluation criteria

- Cover letter, with a short introduction of their own research specifying the panel to which the student aims to contribute (up to 1000 words): 5 points
- CV: 3 points.
- ITC Student: up to 1 point.
- Gender balance: up to 1 point.

Applicants are kindly requested to send their applications to bfranco@geo.uned.es and epaulino@geo.uned.es

Dates: January 14-16, 2020.

Place: Granada and Córdoba (Spain).

Scientific coordinators: Elena Paulino, Borja Franco, Antonio Urquizar and Elena Díez Jorge.

Host institution: University of Granada.

Partners: UNED.

Departamento de Historia del Arte de la Universidad de Granada

Máster Universitario Oficial en Tutela del Patrimonio Histórico-Artístico. El legado de al-Ándalus.

CSIC. Unidad Asociada I+D+i UGR al CSIC. "Patrimonio Cultural árabe e islámico".

Scholars involved: Peter Burke, Elias Kolovos, Valentina Živković, María Marcos, Elena Paulino, Borja Franco, Antonio Urquizar, Elena Díez Jorge, and Juan Carlos Ruiz Souza.

Number of students: 15 (Students from the Balkans and ITC Countries are specially encouraged to apply).

Participants: MA Students, Ph.D. Candidates and Early Stage Scholars (up to 3 years after the PhD).

Reference:

CFP: Training School Islamic Heritage in Europe (Granada/Cordoba, 14-16 Jan 20). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 14, 2019 (accessed Apr 16, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/21362>>.