

A Church, A Mosque (Alexandria, 18–20 May 26)

Alexandria, May 18–20, 2026

Pierre-Olivier Védrine

International Conference: A Church, A Mosque. Interdisciplinary Conversations between Architecture and Art History.

Organised by Fatma Keshk, Sabine Frommel, and Thomas Faucher

PROGRAMME

MONDAY, May 18th

Institut français d'Égypte à Alexandrie

Pre-Conference: Opening Keynote

18:00 – 19:30: Inaugural Keynote Lecture

- Mohamed Dessouki: St. Mark's Church in Manshiyya Square.

19:30: Welcome Cocktail Reception.

TUESDAY, May 19th: Full Session (09:00 – 17:00)

Anna Lindh Foundation

Theme: Transfers, Hybridization, and Materiality

09:30 – 10:00: Welcome Remarks & Introduction.

- Josep Ferré, Anna Lindh executive director

- Sabine Frommel, Fatma Keshk and Thomas Faucher

10:00 – 11:30: Session 1 – The Iberian Peninsula & Mediterranean Models

- Felix Arnold: Hybrid architecture on the Iberian Peninsula: Dichotomies between form and space (9th-11th century CE).

- Luis Rueda: Coptic vs. Christian Iberian Woodworking: Two Ways of Assimilating Islamic Arts.

- Carlos Plaza: Cultural Interaction Spaces: Mosque-Churches in the Hispanic Renaissance, from Seville to Mexico.

11:30 – 12:00: Coffee Break.

11:30 – 13:00: Session 2 – Between Rome, Byzantium, and Istanbul

- David Hendrix: The Conversions of Byzantine Churches in Istanbul and Thessaloniki.

- Sabine Frommel: Rome and Istanbul in the 16th Century: The Architectural Treatise as a Vector of Transmission.

13:00 –14:30: Lunch break (for speakers only)

14:30 –16:00: Session 3 –Symbolism, Light, and Imperial Significance

- Eman Shokry Hesham: Red Porphyry: Survival of the Imperial Significance.
- Nader Gharib: Contemporary Natural Lighting Techniques for Symbolic Expression in Religious Architecture.
- Manfred Luchterhandt: Defilers of Islam: Al-Turtusi's Critique of Christian Aesthetics in Early Mosque Architecture and its cultural Background.

16:00 –17:00: Round Table Discussion: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Sacred Space.

19:30: Dinner (speakers only). Greek club in Qaitbay (White and Blue).

WEDNESDAY, May 20th: Morning Sessions & Site Visits

Anna Lindh Foundation

Theme: Memory, Modernity, and Local Identities

09:00 –10:30: Session 4 –19th Century Neoclassicism & Modernity

- Barbara von Orelli: Squaring the Circle. Gottfried Semper's Dresden Synagogue: An Oscillation Between the Forms of the Church, the Mosque, and the Synagogue.
- Mathieu Lours: Neoclassical Churches, Temples, and Synagogues (Mid-18th to Mid-19th Century France).
- Kristina Seiling: Minaret and Church Tower: Hassan Fathy's Mosque in New Gurna and Coptic Sacred Architecture.

10:30 –11:00: Coffee Break.

11:00 –12:30: Session 5 –Plural Memories and Urban Landscapes

- Kathrin Machinek & Mahmoud Said: Alexandria: cathedrals and congregational mosques in a cosmopolitan city.
- Alaa El-Habashi: Sacred Places - Heritage Places: The Evaluation of Authenticity in Selected Churches and Mosques in Egypt.
- Souad Toumi: Goulette: History, Multiple Architecture, and Plural Memory.
- Sabine Frommel, Fatma Keshk: Concluding Remarks and Perspective on Heritage.

13:00 –14:00: Closing Lunch (for speakers only).

Afternoon: Architectural Site Visits (for speakers only)

14:30 –15:15: Abu al-Abbas al-Mursi Mosque

- An exploration of the neo-Islamic style developed by Mario Rossi, illustrating the 20th century dialogue between Mediterranean traditions.

15:30 –16:00: Synagogue of Alexandria

- The Eliyahu Hanavi Synagogue in Alexandria stands as a testament to Egypt's Jewish heritage, renowned for its Italian-built architecture.

16:15 –17:00: St. Catherine's Cathedral

- A landmark of the Latin Catholic community in Alexandria, showcasing European inspired

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sacred architecture.

Reference:

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