



CAS^{LMU} RESEARCH FOCUS
TEXTUAL PRACTICES



Workshop, CAS LMU Munich, 22 and 23 October 2021 (online)

Colour in Islam: Understanding Textual and Visual Historiographies of Colour in Inter-Disciplinary Perspective

Organized by Dr Teresa Bernheimer (Gerda-Henkel-Fellow, Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, LMU Munich) and Prof Eva-Maria Troelenberg (Chair for Modern and Contemporary Art History, Utrecht University)

How we understand and use colour says a great deal about our view and experience of the world. What is the colour of the sky? Do certain colours connote abundance? Can the description of colour be objective? How do language and vision relate in this process? Colours can be a feature of an object, an abstract idea, expression of an emotion, political symbol, practical signal, or indeed a material, a product or even a status symbol: In the study of Islam, there have been few explorations of this hugely fascinating subject. Even the rapidly growing and specializing field of Islamic art history has only recently started to look systematically into the issue of colour.

Bringing together textual and visual approaches from Islamic Studies, Art History and neighboring disciplines, this workshop aims to explore colour as a 'blindspot' in the modern academic historiography of Islamic arts and cultures: How have text-based Islamic studies on the one hand and object-based Islamic art history on the other hand framed the subject of colour, from the rise of these disciplines up to present? Our aim is to re-visit the historiographies of these two closely intertwined, yet often conflicting disciplines through the lense of colour. How does scholarly attention to colour (or the lack thereof) relate to the placement of Islamicate cultures within larger historical or geographical classifications such as the 'Late Antique', the "Modern", the 'Mediterranean' or the 'Middle East'? What are the practical and epistemic implications of conveying colour? How have the colours of Islam been

represented through the visual practices of art history? How have they been translated into the languages of modern scholarship? What is the place of colour in scholarly narratives about the arts and cultures of Islam? Are there particular culturalist tropes related to particular colours or colouristic principles, and where do they stem from? These and other related questions will enhance our understanding of the historical role of colour in Islam.

We invite applications from junior and senior scholars from across the disciplines, to contribute to the critical debate on the merits, challenges and blindspots of modern historiographies on colour at the intersection of Islamic studies, history, art history, and related disciplines.

The workshop “Colour in Islam: Understanding Textual and Visual Historiographies of Colour in Inter-Disciplinary Perspective” is part of a larger inter-disciplinary project on *Colour in Islam* envisaged by Dr Teresa Bernheimer (Gerda-Henkel-Fellow, Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, LMU Munich) and Prof Eva-Maria Troelenberg (Chair for Modern and Contemporary Art History, Utrecht University). The workshop will take place under the aegis of CAS Munich on October 22 and 23, 2021.

Please send a short abstract to julia.schreiner@cas.lmu.de by April 16, 2021.