



Museum für  
Islamische Kunst  
Berlin

international  
research &  
cooperation  
2010–2020



Museum für  
Islamische Kunst  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

cover photo:

Samarra wall decoration of a private house, first style.

During Ernst Herzfeld's excavation 1912



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**Museum für** international  
**Islamische Kunst** research &  
**Berlin** cooperation  
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## INTRO

The World Operates Globally	4
Research Institution—for Over a Hundred Years	8
Stronger through Networks	12
Art4All—International Network for Bridging Cultures	14

## CONTEXTS OF CULTURAL HISTORY— FROM KEY OBJECTS TO CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Intro	18
Al-Hira	20
Khurasan—Land of the Rising Sun	21
Qasr al-Mshatta	22
Reconstruction of an Ancient Cultural Landscape in Baluchistan, Pakistan	24
Takht-e Soleyman during the Islamic Era	26
Ctesiphon	29
Knotting Techniques and Materials	30
Remaking of the Seljuqs	31
Areia Antiqua—Ancient Herat	32

## EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE— MUTUAL SUPPORT BETWEEN MUSEUMS

Intro	38
Areia Antiqua—Ancient Herat	39
Cooperation between Sharjah and Berlin	40
SAWA Museum Academy	41
Early Capitals of Islamic Culture	42
Crossroads	46
Museum of the Haram al-Sharif	48
The Provincial Museum Yazd	50
Training of Afghan Restorers in Germany	52
Lost & Found	53
Contextualisation of Cultural Goods	54

## PRESERVING AND ARCHIVING IN TIMES OF WAR— CULTURAL HERITAGE IN SYRIA

Intro	58
Syrian Heritage Archive Project	60
Built Heritage Documentation	61
Post-Conflict Recovery of Urban Cultural Heritage in the Middle East	62
Aleppo Heritage Catalogue	63
Interactive Heritage Map	64



# INTRO

## The World Operates Globally

### Internationality

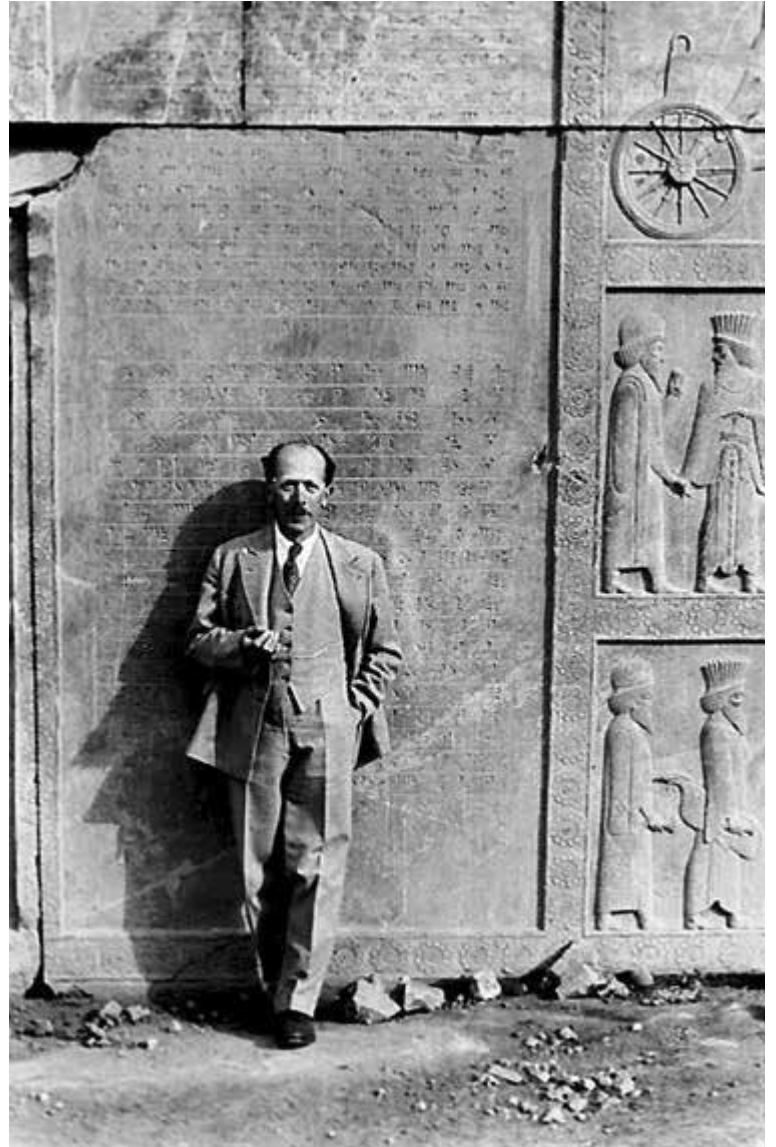
The world operates globally. Human history, cultural knowledge, art and architecture develop in global networks. No object in a museum or in our home is born of itself. Knowledge is globally networked, cultural developments are entangled. This applies not only to objects from the past, but also to the museum history of the 20th century with all its breaks, corners and edges, as well as to our work today. For us, internationality is not an option, not a catchword or a claim, but a lived reality and everyday business for several generations.

### Historical Cooperation

Our founding director Friedrich Sarre was already involved in the establishment of museological presentation of Islamic art in Istanbul in 1914. During the First World War, the now antiquated German-Turkish Monument Protection Command compiled the first register of monuments for Syria and laid the foundations for the Damascus research so strong in Berlin.

Ernst Herzfeld, pioneer of Islamic archaeology, was involved in the drafting of the first Iranian Antiquities Act during his long years in Iran – always in cooperation with the respective colleagues. At the same time, scientific interest, a passion for collecting and European competitive thinking about validity and power led to the accumulation of incredible collections. Most (but not all) of the objects are legally in Berlin with contracts and find sharing.

What was normal at the time, however, has many implications for us today. For our museum this is not direct colonial history, but it is the result of structural global inequality. We are aware of this, it is both a legacy and a mission.



Ernst Herzfeld 1920

## The Museum today

The museum has officially made international cooperation one of its four pillars: in addition to the two classic fields of research and restoration and exhibitions, two areas have been redefined as independent fields of work: Outreach / cultural education on Islam and migration in Germany and international cooperation.

In recent years, the staff has been involved in very different projects in Europe and the Near and Middle East. Whether museum development, capacity building, research, restoration or exhibition, the museum is active in more than a dozen projects on UNESCO World Cultural Sites. We benefit from the commitment of public and private sponsors in Germany: 'structural inequality' also gives us the opportunity to support actors worldwide.

The Middle East is in Europe, Europe has long been in the Middle East. Friendships have been formed through longstanding partnerships. We work on an equal footing and have a common goal: the research, preservation and communication of the region's cultural heritage.



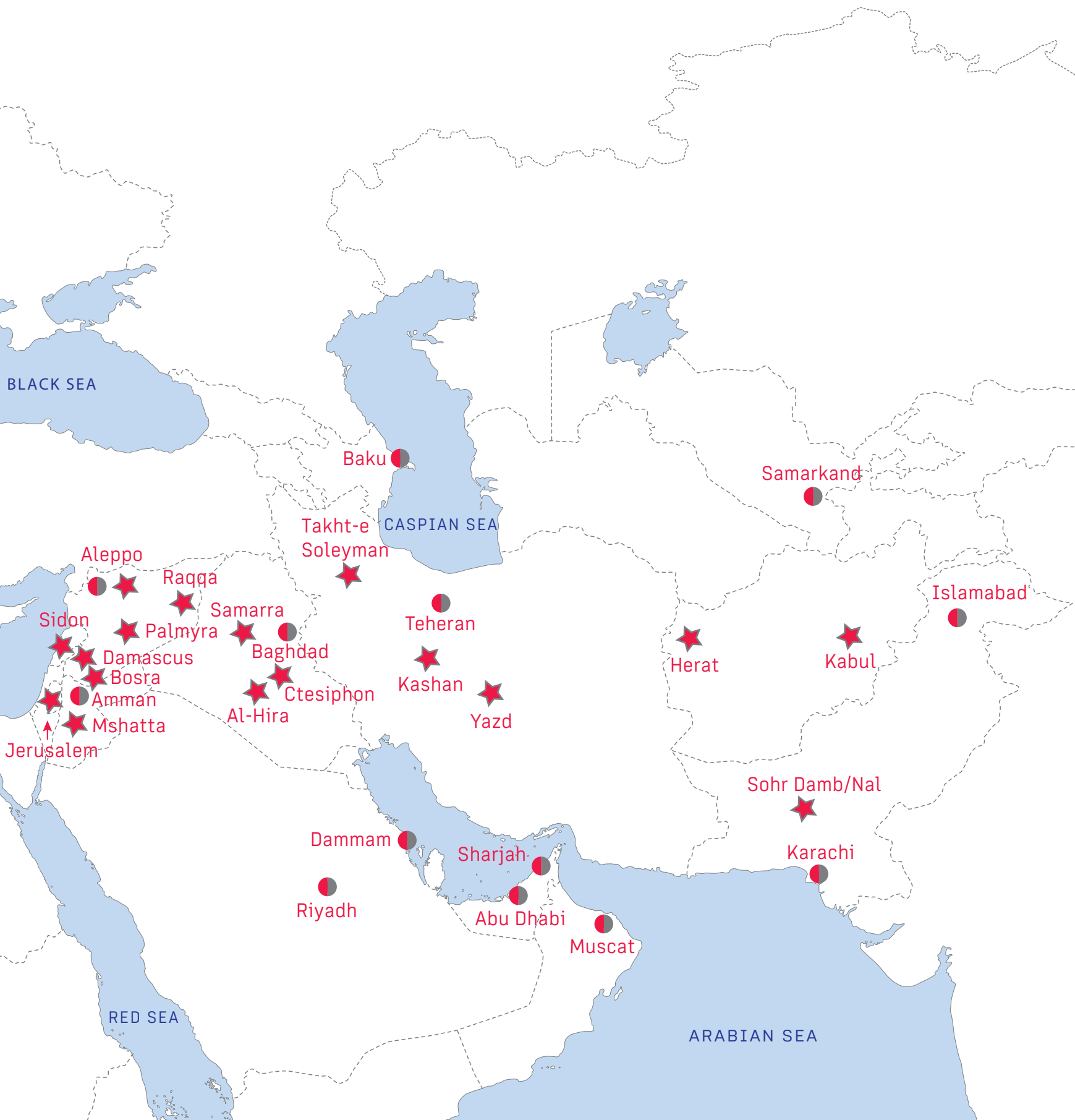
Former German Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier, his Saudi-Arabian counterpart Adel al-Jubair, and the director of the museum Stefan Weber at an exhibition opening in 2016

- Washington D.C.
- New York
- Los Angeles



● Cooperations & Projects ★





# Research Institution— Museum für Islamische Kunst

## Beginnings

Since its foundation in 1904, the Museum für Islamische Kunst [Museum for Islamic Art] in Berlin has embraced scholarly research and supported international cooperations. These efforts have further made their ways into the exhibition spaces and the interpretation of the visual and material culture of the Islamic world. Keen to develop a scientific approach to both the study of and presentation of Islamic art, Friedrich Sarre, the museum's founding director, encouraged serious publications, supported archaeological fieldwork and incorporated a specialist library in the museum in Berlin. A refuge for the preservation, presentation and scholarship, the museum shaped the development of field of Islamic art history.

Today, it continues through research and international cooperations to foster knowledge of visual and material culture from the Islamic world and its dissemination amongst specialists and the general public.

## First Excavation Campaigns: Samarra

A number of recent research projects have built on several historical archaeological investigations and demonstrate the museum's commitment to further developments in the field. Samarra and the Art of the Abbasids, for example, offered new perspectives on

museum's impressive Samarra collection, which results from archaeological excavations led by Ernst Herzfeld in 1911–13 and also 1919–31. The original excavations were part of an international agreement between Sarre and the Ottoman court that granted Herzfeld permission to excavate in Ottoman lands. As part of the agreement, fifty percent of Herzfeld's findings were to be sent to Istanbul and the remaining fifty to Berlin.

## Subsequent Projects

Today, Berlin's collection remains the most important collection of artefacts from Samarra, once the seat of the Abbasid caliphs [836–883] and a vibrant cultural centre in early Islamic history.

Beginning with a conference in 2010, the museum initiated an important review of the Samarra materials. Architectural ornament unearthed during excavations were systematically documented and archived for the first time in 2012 despite their regular presence in surveys of Islamic art history. In 2013, three-dimensional simulations of the archaeological sites were also created. The collective work provides a much needed basis for further scholarly inquiries as well as a fuller range of materials to assist the museum's ability to contextualise the artefacts for the museum's visitors.



Historical research photo of the Mshatta-Façade, 1903

**for Over a Hundred Years**

## Ctesiphon

The research project Ctesiphon [November 2012–2016] similarly reviewed earlier excavation work led by teams from Berlin. As part of an international cooperation between the Museum für Islamische Kunst [led by E. Kühnel], the German Oriental Society and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, two excavations were conducted in 1928/9 and 1931/2 at the site Ctesiphon, an ancient capital city located about 32 km south of Baghdad.

Recent research sought to re-contextualise the archaeological objects in their context and to develop communication strategies to mediate archaeological research to the broader public.

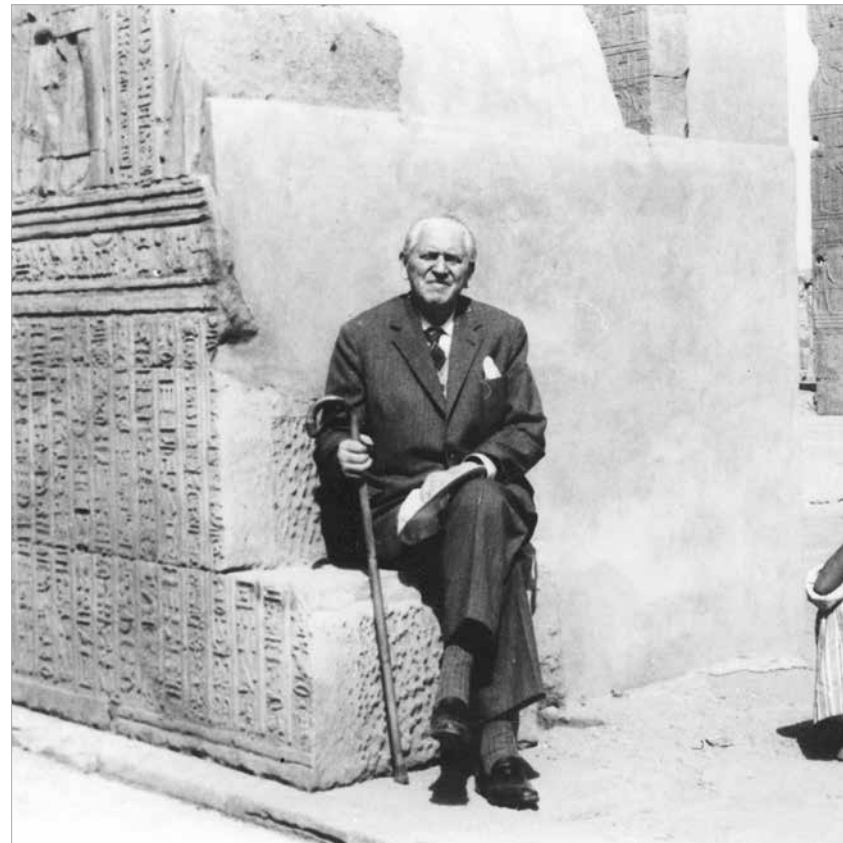
## Syria

Most recently, a number of international cooperations with researchers and institutions in Syria build on a legacy of collaborative efforts in Syria. Beginning around 1930, Ernst Kühnel attempted to establish an archaeological excavation Syria in cooperation with the antiquities collection in Damascus. Thwarted by World War II, the project was later initiated under the German Archaeological Institute and their partners in Cairo.

The German Archaeological Institute additionally supported ongoing excavations in al-Raqqa in the eighties, nineties and the early 2000s. Partnered with museums in Syria, the excavations resulted in four important publications with the fifth still planned. Current projects seek to capture, preserve and communicate elements of this past work and continue to build collective knowledge of Syrian architectural and cultural heritage, which is seriously threatened.

## Looking back, Looking forward

Since its foundation, the Museum für Islamische Kunst reached out to join efforts with partners worldwide. This constant contact and exchange played a huge role in the development of our institution, to take us where we are today. As a living legacy, we aspire to take care of existing networks and continue in establishing new connections, collaborations, and partnerships.



Ernst Kühnel in Kom Ombo 1962



Historical excavation photo from Ctesiphon ca. 1930



# Stronger through Networks

The Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin  
we make a difference  
we are a museum of change  
we work in international partnerships



Convention of the six Alwaleed Academic Centres on 8 May 2016  
at the University of Cambridge, the United Kingdom:

HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of Alwaleed Philanthropies [seated, centre]

Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz [seated, left]

and Professor Yasir Suleiman [seated, right], director [2008–17] of HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge, the United Kingdom.

Standing from left to right:

Dr. Ali Asani, former director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program, at Harvard University, the United States.

Professor Lisa Hajjar, director [2015–16] of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud Centre for American Studies & Research, at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

Dr. Jonathan Brown, director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre for Muslim-Christian Understanding, at Georgetown University, the United States.

Professor Magda Shahin, director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud Centre for American Studies & Research, at the American University in Cairo, Egypt.

Dr. Hugh Goddard, former director of the Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam and the Contemporary World at the University of Edinburgh, the United Kingdom.

# Art4All— International Network for Bridging Cultures

Long Term Cooperation between  
Alwaleed Philanthropies and Berlin  
since 2017

**Country:** Saudi Arabia

**Cooperation:**

Alwaleed Philanthropies: HRH Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal,  
HRH Princess Lamia Bint Majed Saud Al Saud,  
Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz: Prof. Dr. Hermann Parzinger,  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz: Prof. Dr. Michael Eissenhauer,  
Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber

The Museum für Islamische Kunst [Museum for Islamic Art] joined the international Network of the Cultural Program of Alwaleed Philanthropies. Seven global academic centres at the important Universities and the Louvre Museums are next to Berlin part of the network. The focus at museum lies on the power of art to build bridges between East and West, as AP Secretary General Princess Lamia Bint Majed Al Saud announced during her visit in Berlin. Art4All discovers innovative ways of opening our galleries to diverse audiences and reaching out far beyond the museum walls. It aims for tolerant identities in plural societies.

Alwaleed Philanthropies supports and initiates projects around the world, regardless of gender, race or religion. It collaborates with a range of philanthropic, government and educational organisations to combat poverty, empower women and the youth, develop communities, provide disaster relief and create cultural understanding through education. With its partners, it aims to build bridges for a more compassionate, tolerant and accepting world.





HRH Princess Lamia Bint Majed Al Saud joins French President Francois Hollande and Director of the Arts of Islam Department at the Musée du Louvre Ms. Yannick Lintz to hand over the new exhibition to the public in September 2019



HRH Princess Lamia Bint Majed Al Saud visits the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin in June 2018



I

**CONTEXTS OF CULTURAL  
HISTORY—**

**FROM  
KEY OBJECTS TO  
CULTURAL LANDSCAPES**

# Intro

## Research Environment

Research questions can evolve into increasingly complex issues that require diverse research methods and interdisciplinary cooperation of specialists. In today's research environment, this is prerequisite to guarantee the relevance and sustainability of scientific work. International cooperation and interdisciplinary collaboration are therefore central pillars of our research work. We pursue concrete research questions in medium and short-term projects.

## Archaeology

Close collaboration with researchers and institutions in partner countries is the key factor for the success of projects such as Areia Antiqua-Ancient Herat. Until recently, the province of Herat in today's Afghanistan with its sites and monuments was almost unexplored in archaeology. A collaborative project to systematically document and research Herat and its urban structures was carried out in 2004–2012.

A similar methodological approach was carried out in southern Baluchistan in Pakistan between 1996 and 2000: a survey was followed by excavations in Sohr Damb/Nal, one of the main sites for the period from 3500 BC to 2300 BC in the Indo-Iranian borderland.

Another survey project is located in southern central Iraq, in the vicinity of the two modern cities of Najaf and Kufa. Here, the area of the late ancient and early Islamic metropolis of al-Hira is under investigation and excavations are being prepared within the framework of a multidisciplinary research project. The historical urban area is acutely threatened by the growth of the neighbouring large cities and cooperation with local institutions in the erection of archaeological protection zones is part of our work on site. Many of these projects developed in close cooperation with the German Archaeological Institute.

## Mshatta Palace

In many cases, it is the ongoing examination of the objects and history of our collection that provides the impetus for the development of international cooperation projects. The façade of the early Islamic palace of Mshatta – one of the highlights of the Berlin collection – was the focus of a project involving the museum, the TU Berlin and the Jordanian Antiquities Service. Today, the remains of the palace are located right next to Amman airport and are severely damaged. The measures carried out on site included detailed construction documentation, archaeological trial trenches in the interior, a survey of the surrounding area, and securing and restoration work.

## Collections from Excavations

Also, two further archaeological accumulations in the museum's holdings, which originate from historical excavation projects, were the subject of international research cooperation. The project on Ctesiphon examined the communication of archaeological research in the museum on the basis of architectural traditions in the Sassanid and Islamic periods. It was part of the Topoi Cluster of Excellence. In the project on Takht-i Suleiman, young researchers from the HTW Berlin and specialists from museums in Iran worked together.

Another joint research project between three museums and the University of Bamberg with an international team of researchers was Khurasan – Land of Rising Sun. Based on 20,000 sherds in the collection of excavation pottery from Old Samarkand, the project focused on the cultural landscape of Khurasan as the core area for the development of material culture in the Islamic world and its location in collections and museum presentations.





## Carpet Collection

Dragon-Phoenix carpet [Ident. Nr. I. 4]

The museum's internationally outstanding carpet collection is also the focus of international research collaborations. The combination of material-technological and art-historical approaches is characteristic for research projects such as the investigation of knotting techniques and materials used in Persian carpets of the 15th to 17th century or the reconstruction of production processes of Seljuk carpets of the 12th to 13th century.

# Al-Hira

Survey Project and Conference  
Monasteries, Cities, Settlements—  
al-Hira and Early Islamic Urbanism  
in Mesopotamia | 17.–18.12.2018

2015–2019

**Country:** Iraq

**Cooperation:**

German Archaeological Institute (DAI), Technical University of Berlin (TU-Berlin,) and Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage (SBAH)

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Martina Müller-Wiener,  
German Archaeological Institute: Dr. Margarete van Ess

**Funding:**

German Research Foundation [DFG], Foundation Max van Berchem,  
German Archaeological Institute, TU-Berlin, Thyssen-Stiftung



# Khurasan— Land of the Rising Sun

A Historical Landscape as a Core Region in the Formation  
of Material Culture in the Islamic World, and its Place in  
Museums and Collections

2014–2017

**Country:** Afghanistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

**Cooperation:**

Institute of Oriental Studies at the University of Bamberg,  
Linden Museum – State Museum of World Cultures in Stuttgart

**Coordination:**

Institute of Oriental Studies, Islamic Art and Archaeology Department: Prof. Dr. Lorenz Korn;  
Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke and Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber;  
Linden Museum: Prof. Dr. Inés de Castro and Dr. Annette Krämer

**Staff Berlin:**

Dr. habil. Martina Müller-Wiener, Dr. Pierre Siméon

**Funding:**

German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

The Iraqi-German team at work. Survey campaign 2017



# Qasr al-Mshatta

The Early Islamic Desert Palace of Mshatta, Jordan.  
Documentation, Interpretation and Archaeological Research  
2009–2013

**Country:** Jordan

**Cooperation:**

Department of Antiquities in Jordan, Technical University of Berlin (TU-Berlin)

**Coordination:**

TU-Berlin, Department of Construction History and Urban History:

Prof. Dr. Johannes Cramer,

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber

**Staff:**

Prof. Dr. Claus-Peter Haase, Dr. habil. Ute Franke, Dr. Katharina Meinecke

**Funding:**

German Research Foundation Bonn (DFG), German Federal Foreign Office -  
Cultural Preservation Programme



German-Jordanian restoration of Qasr al-Mshatta







# Reconstruction of an Ancient Cultural Landscape in Baluchistan, Pakistan

Surveys and Excavations  
in Sohr Damb/Nal, Pakistan  
1996–2013

**Country:** Pakistan

**Cooperation:**

German Archaeological Institute [DAI], Department of Archaeology and Museums,  
Government of Pakistan

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Staff:**

Stephanie Langer, Stella Bickelmann, Kilian Schmidtnr,  
Michael Schmidtnr, Elisa Cortesi, Andrea Gubisch, Astrid Lange,  
Dr. Thomas Urban, Sebastian Hageneuer, Daniel Lau, Adrian Darr

**Funding:**

German Research Foundation [DFG 2001–2013]



Life and death in a prehistoric village in Baluchistan/Pakistan





# Takht-e Soleyman during the Islamic Era

Architecture and Objects  
since 2017

**Country:** Iran

**Cooperation:**

German Archaeological Institute – Eurasia Department:  
Dr. S. Hansen, Dr. Judith Thomalsky,  
Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg):  
Prof. Dr. Dominik Lengyel, Dr. Catherine Toulouse,  
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

Takht-e Soleyman and the conical  
Zendan-e Soleyman in the background, 2019





Takht-e Soleyman 1970, official visitors with the archaeologists  
Wolfram Kleiss, Dietrich Huff, and others



## Glazed Islamic Pottery from Takht-e Soleyman – Production and Provenance 2016–2019

**Country:** Iran

**Cooperation:**

Free University of Berlin,  
University of Applied Sciences Berlin [HTW],  
Rathgen Research Laboratory

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Staff:**

Katharina Kuntz

**Funding:**

TOPOI Excellence Cluster  
[Research Project C-3-0-3]

From Takht to Berlin -

Ilkhanid pottery fragments and a lustre tile





# Ctesiphon

Mediation of Archaeological Research in the Museum based on  
the Architectural Traditions of the Sasanid and Islamic Periods  
2012–2016

**Country:** Iraq

**Cooperation:**

Free University of Berlin, University of Applied Sciences (HTW),  
Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg), State Museums of Berlin

**Coordination:**

Institute for Museum Research: Prof. Dr. Bernhard Graf,  
HTW: Prof. Matthias Knaut, BTU: Prof. Dr. Dominik Lengyel, Catherine Toulouse,  
Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber, Dr. habil. Ute Franke, Stephanie Fischer

**Staff:**

Lori Steinmüller, Dr. Holger Grönwald, Christine Gerbich, Dr. Youssef El-Khoury, Dr. Jens Kröger

**Funding:**

German Research Foundation (DFG), TOPOI Excellence Cluster [Research Project C-3-6]

Ctesiphon [Iraq], view of Taq-e Kesra [Arch of Khosrow] of the Sasanian palace, ca. 1930



# Knotting Techniques and Materials

Knotting Techniques and Materials  
of Persian Carpets in the 15th to 17th century  
2018–2019

**Country:** Iran

**Cooperation:**

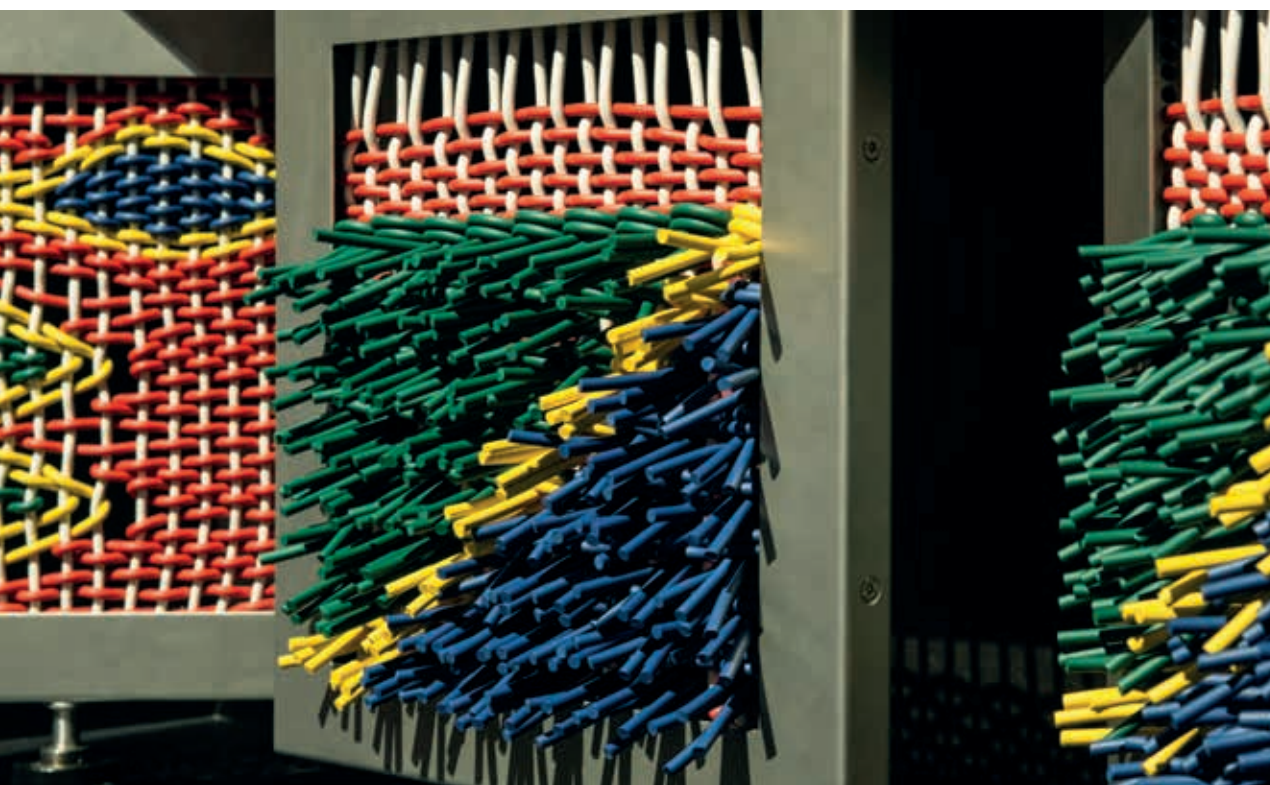
National Museum of Iran, Teheran, Teheran Carpet Museum

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Anna Beselin

**Funding:** Private

Carpet knot hands-on in the Museum für Islamische Kunst



# Remaking of the Seljuqs

Conservation of the Seljuks Carpet Heritage:  
Bridge of Knowledge and Art between Turkey and Germany  
since 2015

**Country:** Turkey

**Cooperation:**

Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, Istanbul,  
Kültürel Mirasın Dostları Derneği – KUMİD, Istanbul,  
Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin,  
The Friends of the Museum for Islamic Art in the Pergamon Museum e.V., Berlin

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Anna Beselin

**Staff:** Anna Beselin, Ali Riza Tuna

**Funding:** private

Detail of a Seldjuk Carpet [Inv. Number 689]  
from the Turk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi



# AREIA ANTIQUA— Ancient Herat

Search for the Roots of the City  
2005–2009 | 2012–2017

**Country:** Afghanistan

**Cooperation:**

German Archaeological Institute (DAI), Ministry of Information and Culture Afghanistan, Afghan Institute of Archaeology, Department of Monuments & Sites in Afghanistan; Délégation Archéologique Française en Afghanistan, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Staff:**

Dr. Thomas Urban, Khair Mohammad Khairzada, Astrid Lange, Stephanie Langer, Najeb Sediqi, Till Ansgar Baumhauer, Ajmal Ayomuddin

**Funding:**

German Federal Foreign Office



Digging up the Past –  
Excavations in Trench 1 on the Herat Citadel





Consolidation of the Herat Citadel  
by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, 2009





Documenting Sites and Monuments in Herat Province, 2005  
Above: Begal, below: Chest-e Sharif

# Documentation of Archaeological Sites and Monuments in the Province of Herat 2004–2006 | 2012–2016

**Country:** Afghanistan

**Cooperation:**

German Archaeological Institute (DAI), Ministry of Information and Culture Afghanistan,  
Afghan Institute of Archaeology, Department of Monuments & Sites in Afghanistan

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Staff:**

Dr. Thomas Urban, Astrid Lange, Stephanie Langer, Khair Mohammad Khairzada,  
Ajmal Ayomuddin, Perry Lange, Najeb Sediqi, Laura Stieglitz

**Funding:**

German Federal Foreign Office



**II**

**EXCHANGE  
OF KNOWLEDGE—**

**MUTUAL SUPPORT  
BETWEEN  
MUSEUMS**

# Intro

## Islamic Arts and Beyond

Museums in the Islamic world, but also specialized museums with a similar orientation everywhere are our immanent partners. For more than a hundred years, we have had good connections to our sibling museums in Istanbul and Cairo and to a museum landscape that is becoming more and more differentiated today.

As one of the founding members of the Museum With No Frontiers [Vienna] we feel at home in the global family of museums of Islamic art, architecture and archaeology – beyond any North-South division.

Together, we developed conditions to take the wishes of each place's inhabitants into account for a participatory audience development. We regard these circumstances to be important, not only in the exhibition but also behind the scenes in the management of the objects. We do not believe that imported, finished and expensively produced museums serve the interests of local societies in the long term. This also applies to the elaborate special exhibitions, such as those in Sharjah and Riyadh, which we were happy to develop together.

## Ways of Museum Cooperation

Our collaborations take on very different forms. Joint international research projects on epochs, techniques or places are almost our daily bread. Capacity building and exchange of experience is important to us, also always in cooperation with local partners. Training of curators and restorers or database development do form part of this. In the case of museum developments such as those in Herat, Yazd or Jerusalem, it was important to know the framework there in the long term.

## Shared Inspiration

Together with partners is therefore our motto. This was the only way to create the internationally awarded museum academy SAWA along with Sharjah Museums Authority, which is the only institution of its kind in the MENA region. It brings together professionals and German students to discuss globally relevant museum issues from different perspectives.



# AREIA ANTIQUA— Ancient Herat

National Museum Herat  
2008–2015

**Country:** Afghanistan

**Cooperation:**

German Archaeological Institute (DAI), University of Applied Sciences (HTW),  
Ministry of Information and Culture Afghanistan, National Museum Kabul,  
National Archives Kabul, Department of Monuments & Sites in Afghanistan

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Staff:**

Carmen Gütschow, Prof. Dr. Claus-Peter Haase, Prof. Ruth Keller, Astrid Lange,  
Dr. habil. Martina Müller-Wiener, Kilian Schmidtner, Homayoun Ahmady

**Funding:**

German Federal Foreign Office

Herat National Museum Team, 2015



# Cooperation between Sharjah and Berlin

Long term Museum Cooperation  
between Sharjah and Berlin  
since 2013

**Country:** United Arab Emirates

**Cooperation:**

Sharjah Museums Authority

**Coordination:**

Sharjah Museums Authority: Manal Ataya,

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz: Prof. Dr. Michael Eissenhauer,

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber



Museum visit of the ruler of Sharjah / UAE,  
Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi 2015

# SAWA

## Museum Academy

Teaching together – Learning together –  
Developing an integrated Curriculum together  
since 2014

**Country:** United Arab Emirates

**Cooperation:**

Sharjah Museums Authority, University of Applied Sciences (HTW),  
Goethe-Institute Gulf Region, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

**Coordination:**

HTW: Prof. Dr. Susan Kamel, Sharjah Museums Authority: Aisha Deemas,  
Goethe-Institute Gulf Region: Farid Majari, Bettina Quabius,  
Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber

**Staff:**

Gundula Avenarius

**Funding:**

Volkswagen Foundation, Sharjah Museums Authority,  
German Federal Foreign Office



SAWA Museum Academy

# Early Capitals of Islamic Culture

Joint Exhibition Project

‘Early Capitals of Islamic Culture – the Art and Culture  
of Umayyad Damascus and Abbasid Baghdad [650–950]’  
in Sharjah’s Museums of Islamic Civilisation  
and in the National Museum, Riyadh, Saudi-Arabia

15.10.2014 –17.1.2015 in Sharjah and  
6.2.–5.5.2016 in Riyadh

**Country:** United Arab Emirates, Saudi-Arabia

**Cooperation:**

Sharjah Museums Authority and the National Museum Riyadh –  
Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber,  
Sharjah Museums Authority: Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis

**Staff:**

Dr. habil. Ute Franke, Dr. Julia Gonnella, Gisela Helmecke, Dr. Youssef el-Khoury,  
Stephanie Fischer

**Funding:**

Sharjah Museums Authority, Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage



Opening of the exhibition 'Early Capitals of Islamic Culture' in Riyadh with German ambassador Boris Ruge and Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud





Exhibition  
'Early Capitals of Islamic Culture'  
in Riyadh 2016



# قصر هندي محلي KHIRBAT AL-WINYA: A LOCAL DESERT CASTLE

يعد القصر من أهم المعالم الأثرية في المنطقة، وهو من نوع القصور التي بنيت في الصحراء لحماية القوافل التجارية. القصر مبني من الطين والحجارة، ويحتوي على عدة غرف ومساحات مفتوحة. القصر هو من أهم المعالم الأثرية في المنطقة، وهو من نوع القصور التي بنيت في الصحراء لحماية القوافل التجارية. القصر مبني من الطين والحجارة، ويحتوي على عدة غرف ومساحات مفتوحة.

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قصر هندي محلي  
KHIRBAT AL-WINYA: A LOCAL DESERT CASTLE

Room	Area	Volume	Weight	Material	Color	Texture	Notes
Room 1	100 sqm	1000 m³	1000 kg	Clay	Red	Smooth	Room 1 is the main hall of the castle.
Room 2	50 sqm	500 m³	500 kg	Clay	Red	Smooth	Room 2 is a smaller room, possibly a bedroom.
Room 3	20 sqm	200 m³	200 kg	Clay	Red	Smooth	Room 3 is a small room, possibly a bathroom.
Room 4	10 sqm	100 m³	100 kg	Clay	Red	Smooth	Room 4 is a very small room, possibly a storage room.
Room 5	5 sqm	50 m³	50 kg	Clay	Red	Smooth	Room 5 is a tiny room, possibly a closet.





# Crossroads

Joint exhibition project

‘Crossroads. Cultural Exchange between the Islamic Civilisation, Europe and Beyond’ in Museum of Islamic Civilisation, Sharjah

15.11.2018 – 27.4.2019 in Sharjah

**Country:** United Arab Emirates

**Cooperation:**

Sharjah Museums Authority

**Coordination:**

Museum for Islamic Art: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber,

Sharjah Museums Authority: Aisha Deemas, Entisar Muean Al-Obaidli

**Staff:**

Dr. Andrea Becker, Stephanie Fischer, Dr. Youssef El Khoury,

Cornelia Weber, Nicoletta Fazio, Dr. Deniz Erduman-Çalış, Nikola Aehle, Stephanie Fischer

**Funding:**

Sharjah Museums Authority

Exhibition graphic





Exhibition 'Crossroads' in Sharjah / UAE 2018









# Museum of the Haram al-Sharif

Safeguarding, Refurbishment and Revitalisation  
of Islamic Museum of the Haram al-Sharif and its Collection,  
Temple Mount, Jerusalem  
since 2012

**Country:** Palestine, Jordan, Israel

**Cooperation:**

Ministry Awqaf Jordan, Jerusalem Islamic Waqf, UNESCO

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber

Al-Haram al-Sharif with the Dome of the Rock

# The Provincial Museum Yazd

Safeguarding Cultural Heritage –  
Fostering Regional Identities

2017–2020

**Country:** Iran

**Cooperation:**

Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany  
in Bonn, Iran Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organisation [ICHHTO],  
State Museums of Berlin

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke, Prof. Dr. Stefan Weber,  
Art and Exhibition Hall: Susanne Annen

**Staff:**

Alexandra Gath, Carmen Gütschow

**Funding:**

Gerda Henkel Foundation

Friday Mosque of Yazd, 14th century,  
in 2018



# Training of Afghan Restorers in Germany

2010–2018

**Country:** Afghanistan

**Cooperation:**

National Museums of Herat and Kabul, University of Applied Sciences (HTW), Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Funding:** Gerda Henkel Foundation



Conservator from Kabul in the HTW laboratory

# Lost & Found

## Prehistoric Pottery Treasures from Baluchistan/Pakistan – Documentation, Restoration and Exhibition of Confiscated Pottery Vessels 2013–2015

**Country:** Pakistan

**Cooperation:**

Sindh Secretariat, Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan,  
National Museum of Pakistan in Karachi, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz

**Coordination:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. habil. Ute Franke

**Funding:**

German Federal Foreign Office

**Staff:**

Elisa Cortesi, Carmen Gütschow





# Contextualisation of Cultural Goods

by using Virtual Reality and Game Technology  
Digitisation and Distribution of the Palace  
Palacio del Partal-Cupola  
since 2013

**Country:** Spain

**Cooperation:**

digiS – Servicestelle Digitalisierung am Zuse Institute Berlin [ZIB],  
University of Applied Sciences [HTW], Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife, Granada

**Coordination:**

HTW: Prof. Thomas Bremer,  
Museum für Islamische Kunst: Dr. Julia Gonnella, Jutta-Maria Schwed  
Patronato de la Alhambra y Generalife: Dr. Jesús Bermúdez López

**Staff:**

Simone Struth

**Funding:**

European Regional Development Fund [ERDF],  
Culture affairs department of the Senate of Berlin

One of the oldest parts of the Alhambra,  
the Palacio del Partal





# III

## **PRESERVING AND ARCHIVING IN TIMES OF WAR—**

## **CULTURAL HERITAGE IN SYRIA**



# Intro

## Museums as Cultural Memory

Museums – often referred to as cultural repositories – are being given a new role in current crises in the Middle East. War in the region with bombardments, positional fighting in old towns, organized large-scale looting and plundering have caused enormous damage.

Again and again, ethnic and religious groups are attacked by the targeted destruction of their material cultural heritage. Cultural cleansing with the destruction of cultural memory has become part of warfare.

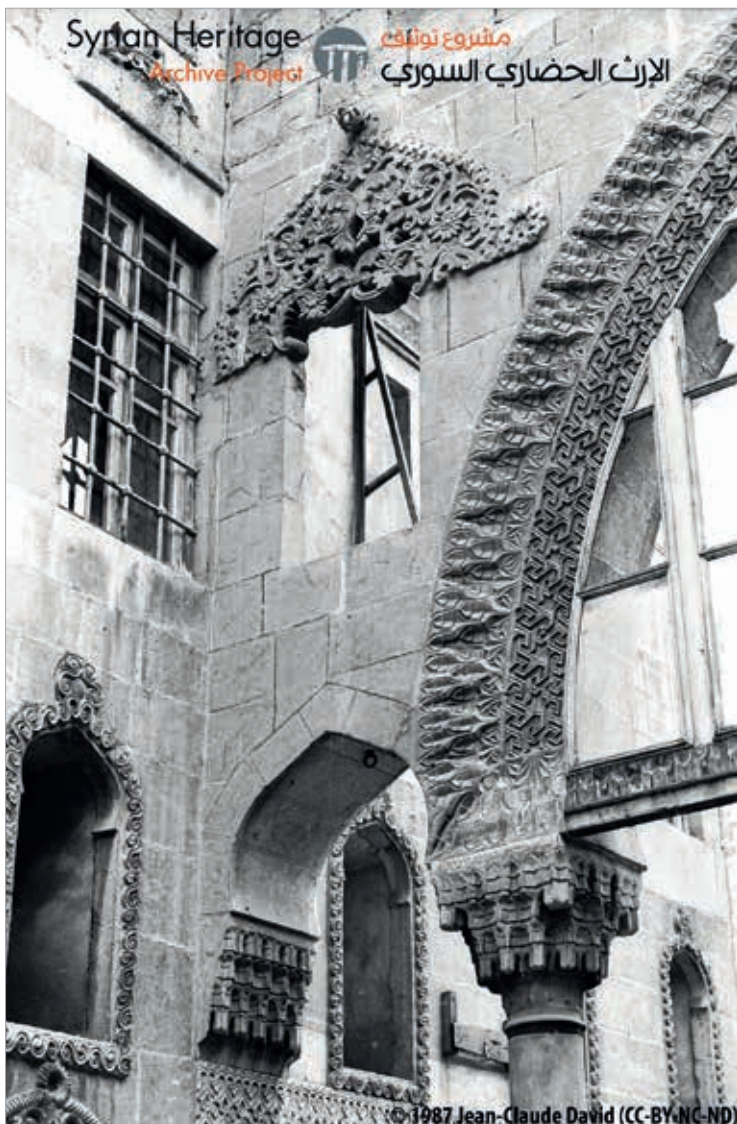
Destruction of archives also means destruction of the future: without documents, social marginalisation becomes easier and reconstruction in accordance with the requirements of historical monuments becomes impossible.

## Archiving Syrian Cultural Heritage

Scientific institutions, some of which have been researching the region for more than 100 years, can become an important asset in the post-conflict process due to their research archives and collegial networks. Photo archives, excavation and research materials, which have been accumulated over decades and are sometimes difficult to access, often provide the only documents today to support collective memories and reconstruction.

In view of the destruction of cultural monuments in Syria, we have accordingly begun in 2013, in cooperation with the German Archaeological Institute, to document this socially exceptionally rich religious, ethnic and linguistic mosaic digitally and geo-referenced. Nine members of the team are Syrian experts who contribute their expertise and have found a home, at least temporarily.

The most important partner and sponsor is the Cultural Preservation Programme of the Federal Foreign Office with the vision of setting the course for tomorrow during wartime conflict already.



Aleppo: A demolished house in al-Judayda quarter

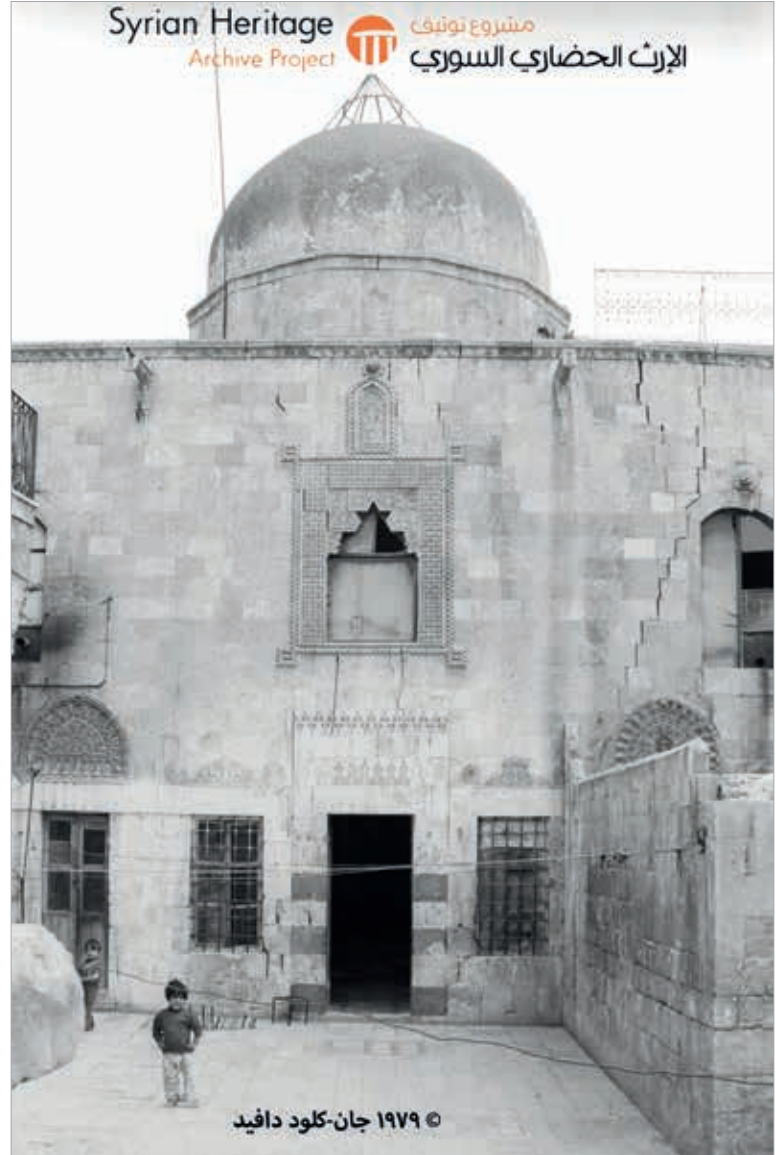


## Focus on Aleppo: City and Society

Our main focus is Aleppo, the oldest city in the world still inhabited today and connected to our museum through the Aleppo Room. As gateway to the Silk Road and architectural pearl of the Mediterranean, the destruction of Aleppo is as if Barcelona or Florence were lying in ruins.

Supported by the Gerda Henkel Foundation, we document destruction, history, architecture and social significance. But how do Syrian and German experts manage to reach the people who often do not care which century their house was built in?

In order to record the value of monuments in society, the museum has set up a community archive project with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to document immaterial cultural heritage. Our holistic approach was awarded at the International Museum & Heritage Awards in London in 2018. 'Impressive and timely, it not only protects the heritage and history of Syria but reminds us of our global responsibility' was the jury's verdict.



Aleppo: A demolished house in Bahsita quarter east of Bab al-Faraj street

# Syrian Heritage Archive Project

Digital Archive of Syrian Cultural  
and Natural Heritage  
since November 2013

**Country:** Syria

**Cooperation:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst, German Archaeological Institute (DAI)

**Coordination:**

Dr. Karin Pütt, Dr. Anne Mollenhauer

**Staff:**

Eva Al-Habib Nmeir, Alaa Haddad, Issam Hajjar, Hiba Bizreh

**Funding:**

German Federal Foreign Office, Gerda Henkel Foundation,  
The Friends of the Museum for Islamic Art in the Pergamon Museum e.V.

# Built Heritage Documentation

Damage mapping—  
Damage Assessment Database

July 2017 – July 2020

**Country:** Syria

**Cooperation:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst, German Archaeological Institute (DAI)

**Coordination:**

Issam Ballouz

**Staff:**

Rami Alafandi, Eva Al-Habib Nmeir, Alaa Haddad

**Funding:**

Gerda Henkel Foundation

Damascus: General view of the Umayyad Mosque  
with its famous three minarets and dome



# Post-Conflict Recovery of Urban Cultural Heritage in the Middle East

The Case of Old Town of Aleppo,  
Damage Mapping and Architectural  
Documentation by Quarters  
since July 2019

**Country:** Syria

**Cooperation:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst, German Archaeological Institute (DAI),  
Faculty of Architecture and Design, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif University in Istanbul,  
Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg),  
Politecnico di Bari - Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Ingegneria Civile e dell'Architettura  
[DICAR] in Bari

**Coordination:**

Dr. Anne Mollenhauer, Dima Dayoub

**Staff:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst: Hiba Bizreh, Alaa Haddad,  
Politecnico di Bari: Giulia Annalinda Neglia,  
Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakif University: Dr. Ruba Kasmó; Thierry Grandin

**Funding:**

German Federal Foreign Office, Gerda Henkel Foundation



# Aleppo Heritage Catalogue

Documentation of the Monuments in Aleppo  
since July 2017

**Country:** Syria

**Cooperation:**

Museum für Islamische Kunst, German Archaeological Institute [DAI],  
Gerda Henkel Foundation

**Coordination:**

Dima Dayoub

**Staff:**

Authors, editors and translators on a freelance basis

**Funding:**

Gerda Henkel Foundation

Aleppo: General view of Souq al-'Abaa'a



# Interactive Heritage Map

Community Archive—  
intangible Heritage of Syria  
since July 2018

**Country:** Syria

**Coordination:**

Rasha Kanjarawi

**Staff:**

Alaa Alkasir, Dima Dayoub, Elisabeth Korinth

**Funding:**

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

above right:  
Southern Syria: Bosra, Theatre in the Citadel, 2nd century  
below right:  
Dome houses in a village in Aleppo's countryside



Aleppo: Citadel, entrance 12th – 16th century







Hama: Norias [water wheels], Kilaniyyat group and an-Nuri Mosque

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