

The Hidden Hand: Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Architectural History

NASSER RABBAT

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

It is difficult to overstate the tremendous impact of Edward Said's *Orientalism* on the various fields of the humanities in Western academia.¹ Said's wide-ranging, profound, and multidisciplinary critique of the ways in which the triumphant culture of our times, the Western one from the Enlightenment to the present, has encountered, codified, and represented the culture of its most immediate other, the Islamic Orient, opened the door for all repressed cultures to question their received representation and to deconstruct the discourse that produced it over time.² This has led to the revolution in the humanities that we identify today as postcolonial criticism, a revolution that was a long time coming, but *Orientalism*, and the charismatic personality of its author, provided the catalyst around which its diverse strands finally coalesced.³

Even today, forty years after the book's publication, and despite sustained denunciation from detractors on the right and left alike, Said's fundamental critique of the political and ideological frames of knowledge in general, and knowledge about Islam in particular, still reverberates across academia worldwide. Entire domains of inquiry into the cultural production of both the colonizing and colonized worlds, as well as all marginalized minority groups and their sometimes amiable but mostly confrontational interaction, have found their ways into curricula and university programs in the West and in the postcolonial world.⁴ They have all benefited from the trail blazed by Said's *Orientalism* and his subsequent elaborations on the intersection between empire (as both locus of

power and representation) and culture and the role of intellectuals in our extremely divided yet thoroughly interconnected world.⁵ In fact, as Anne Wagner, the prominent historian of nineteenth-century art, told me thirty years ago, scholars in the humanities cannot avoid the "post-Saidian" epistemological milieu in which they have to labor regardless of their specific fields of study or their views of Said's criticism.

Architectural history—and architectural practice to a lesser extent—has felt the impact of Said's *Orientalism* as well, even though Said himself, a relentless literary and political critic who was also an accomplished pianist and a classical music and opera reviewer, had very little to say about architecture. Occasionally, he would mention a particular building in passing as a backdrop to his narrative in one of the essays or journalistic reviews that he regularly published in the Egyptian *Al-Abram Weekly* newspaper. But he otherwise never turned his sharp eyes and scathing wit directly to architecture, even though he was aware and appreciative of art and architectural criticism. He did, however, engage in extended debates over theoretical and historiographical issues that pertained to art and architecture, as I witnessed in 1985 when a group of graduate students of which I was a part organized a conference at MIT on the postmodern condition and invited Said and Fredric Jameson, along with several leading art and architectural theorists and critics, for two days of exhilarating intellectual one-upmanship.

Unsurprisingly, the clearest influence that Said's *Orientalism* has had within architectural history is on the so-called non-Western subfields (a category that reeks of imperialist superiority), especially the study of Islamic architecture and modern architecture outside the West.⁶ But it has also affected the study of global architecture, a label and an approach that owe much to the rigorous criticism and expansive perspective that Said and other like-minded historians and critics enabled.⁷

Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 77, no. 4 (December 2018), 388–396, ISSN 0037-9808, electronic ISSN 2150-5926. © 2018 by the Society of Architectural Historians. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press's Reprints and Permissions web page, <http://www.ucpress.edu/journals.php?p=reprints>, or via email: jpermissions@ucpress.edu. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1525/jsah.2018.77.4.388>.

Before Said, architectural history subscribed too uncritically to the canonical view of architecture as a culturally stratified domain, with the architecture of the West, from its presumed classical origins to its glorious culmination in modern times, constituting the historical core of the field, while other architectural traditions, if acknowledged at all, were relegated to marginal places in its ordered hierarchy.⁸ This was best exemplified by the famous “Tree of Architecture” of the two Banister Fletchers (father and son), which appeared as frontispiece in all seventeen editions of their influential book *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method for the Student, Craftsman, and Amateur*, published between 1896 and 1954. This unabashed yet fanciful Eurocentric diagram reserved the living trunk and the upper, healthy branches of the tree to an uninterrupted succession of Western styles from ancient Greece to modern America (dubbed historical styles) and demoted the architecture of all other cultures (labeled nonhistorical styles) to dead-end branches functioning primarily as stylistic curiosities.⁹

Said and Global Architecture

Things slowly began to change in 1985 with the publication of Spiro Kostof's *A History of Architecture*, one of the earliest works to respond to Said's criticism, albeit indirectly and without ever mentioning *Orientalism*.¹⁰ The influence, moreover, is apparent in the structure of the book rather than in its narrative or arguments, which remained wedded to the center/periphery model of analysis. Kostof not only included periods and examples of non-Western architectural traditions, a practice going back to James Fergusson and Banister Fletcher, but also, for the first time in an English-language architectural survey, presented a select few of these in comparative pairings with their chronological equivalents in the Western historical sequence. He did this exclusively between the two sides of the Mediterranean: the Christian and the Islamic, with Cairo and Florence paired together in the late Middle Ages and Istanbul and Venice in the Renaissance.¹¹ But as architectural historian Panayiota Pyla has noted, Kostof's pairings were neither historically nor culturally symmetrical. In both examples, he could not shed his reliance on Western architecture as the “yardstick” against which the architecture of the Islamic other is measured, nor could he contextualize the Islamic examples in their own settings (his favorite phenomenological term) as he so impeccably did for the Western ones.¹²

The centrality of Western architecture in Kostof's understanding of architectural history was even more pronounced in his short sections on those architectural traditions—such as those of India, China, and Nepal—that did not interact with the West before the colonial period. There, his review differed little from his predecessors' except in the important distinction of his using a phenomenological language that

overtly romanticized and somewhat dehistoricized architecture, as opposed to the formalist and stylistic language of his precursors, which was used to enforce a hierarchical structure of architectural traditions.¹³ Thus, it is possible that Kostof's atypical treatment of Islamic architecture as the privileged counterpart to premodern Western architecture was not the result of a conscious critical rethinking of architectural history's biased formation. It may in fact have been related to his familiarity with the Ottoman tradition owing to his having been raised in Istanbul. But it also could have been a subconscious reaction to Said's pointed criticism of the West's long-held derogatory attitudes toward anything Islamic, of which Kostof must have been aware and which had been intensifying in the time in which he and Said were writing—as they are again today.

The methodological corrective in surveying global architecture guardedly explored by Kostof went through several stages of inconclusive refinement in the subsequent three decades, with new editions and revisions of the standard surveys in the field as well as new surveys of what began to be named “world architecture.” Thus, for instance, Fletcher's seventeenth edition of 1961 had replaced the binary division of historical and nonhistorical styles of earlier editions with another dyad that, although less overtly offensive, still endowed only Western architecture with historical evolution (“Ancient Architecture and Western Succession”) while gathering all non-Western traditions under the über-geographical and loaded label “East,” regardless of their actual location on the world map vis-à-vis Europe.¹⁴ The nineteenth edition of 1987 (notice the date), however, finally softened the hard-edged dual opposition by breaking the content into seven sections, arranged chronologically, mixing geographic pairing (Europe and the Mediterranean to the Renaissance, Islam, and early Russia) with chronological periodization (colonial and postcolonial periods outside Europe, twentieth century) in a clear attempt to transcend the exclusionary Western succession of earlier editions and to historicize other hitherto neglected traditions.¹⁵

The twentieth, or centennial, edition of 1996, edited by the noted architectural historian and commentator Dan Cruickshank, with almost twenty consultant editors and contributors, further revamped the structure and tone of the book in ways that hinted at a direct reaction to the kind of criticism initiated by Said's *Orientalism*, although that book remained unacknowledged in the bibliography.¹⁶ This was most evident in a new section of six chapters covering the architecture of Islam from its pre-Islamic roots in Hellenistic and Persian architecture through the Gunpowder Empires of the Mughals, Safavids, and Ottomans. The last chapter in this section, however, strangely reverted to two idiomatic conceptions about Islamic architecture: the one resurrecting the quality of timelessness, focusing on vernacular architecture;

the other imbued with fantasy and otherworldliness as it projects Islamic garden traditions through the prism of a paradisiacal vision that is supposed to have animated all garden design over fourteen centuries in diverse ecologies from the desert to the rain forest.¹⁷ These two tropes had long been espoused by many Orientalist historians as essential components of the canned definition of Islamic architecture as both artisanally oriented and spiritually motivated.¹⁸ The reiteration of these notions in this section ignored the many recent critical works on both subjects that challenged their validity or representativeness and questioned the motivations of those who insisted on using them. It also unveiled the residual stratum in some of the new writing in this authoritative book, one unable to disentangle itself from the Eurocentric roots of its dichotomous structure and its concomitant differential projections of historical versus changeless styles.

A break from the historical, even chronological, Eurocentrism of the survey mode was needed if the field was to become truly global. This kind of approach was finally undertaken by Francis Ching, Mark Jarzombek, and Vikramaditya Prakash in their *A Global History of Architecture* (first edition 2006 and now in its third edition).¹⁹ As the insertion of the refurbished term *global* in the title implies, the book tries to transcend the Western bias of earlier world architectural surveys by using an inclusive global perspective. This is buttressed by a neutral chronological periodization and a vast time span to tell the history of world architecture from as far back as archaeological records allow. The authors clearly seek to avoid the shortcomings of their predecessors, devising a new approach that treats all architectural traditions equally by framing them in a comparative chronological structure that depends solely on numerical time frames. And notwithstanding the huge imbalance inherent in the quality and quantity of architectural data available for the various cultures and time frames covered, the authors try hard to treat all places and periods with the same level of analysis without constantly referring to a model or a core index in the form of Western architectural succession.²⁰

Here too, however, we can surmise the influence of Said's critique, which may have been due more to the authors' general agreement with the postcolonial understanding of historiography than to their conscious reading of his books. They do not mention Said or his work, or even the term *Orientalism*, at all in their text, but their dismissal of the usual European cultural frame of reference and their total dependence on a chronological one betray a tacit recognition of the inevitable pitfalls of any culturally self-centered perspective in the study of other cultures. Posthumously, Said's criticism of Eurocentric nonchalance has been vindicated, even if only tacitly and without direct reference. Leveling the playing field in assessing the architectural achievements of all historical cultures, however, seems to have been the authors' goal for

A Global History of Architecture, a goal that has been reinforced by Jarzombek's pursuit of the deepest, and implicitly most common, roots of human acts of building in his *Architecture of First Societies: A Global Perspective* (2013), the sequel to his jointly authored global history book.²¹

Said and Islamic Architectural History

If Said's influence is at best hidden or implied in global architectural surveys published after the intellectual splash that *Orientalism* caused, it is more explicit, sometimes begrudgingly so, in recent studies of Islamic architecture.²² Translated into the major Islamic languages shortly after its initial publication in English, Said's book quickly became a best seller of sorts, providing students of Islamic cultural production with the critical lever they had long needed in their painful, and often unsuccessful, efforts to be admitted into their specific humanities fields as full participants rather than as area studies specialists. Historians of Islamic architecture faced the same challenge.²³ Their own domain had been seen at best as a self-contained area of study that was religiously and culturally essentialist or environmentally deterministic, and at worst as derivative, passé, ornamentalist, ahistorical, and lacking in tectonic rationality.²⁴ These dismissive notions reflected the enduring influence of two manifestly interdependent scholarly traditions: authoritative Eurocentric art and architectural historiography on one hand, and on the other, the study of Islam in the West that we came to call "Orientalism," with its various peregrinations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Such negative views were not applied only to Islamic art and architecture. Until at least the 1970s, the same kind of disdainful attitudes framed the scope and methods of the study of all non-Western artistic and architectural subdisciplines and assigned them their prescribed slots in the chronologically, geographically, and ideologically historical and artistic Eurocentric hierarchy.²⁵

Said insisted on the discursive heritage of representation of all things Islamic, a heritage that was enthralled with and in the service of imperialism during the colonial period, which ranged variably between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries. Indeed, the first students of Islamic architecture were all Europeans who, from as early as the 1820s, traveled to the "Orient" in the wake of the first European military interventions in search of adventure, employment, and the thrill of fantasy associated with those mysterious lands. Like other Orientalists in various fields of inquiry, they became engaged in a vast enterprise of collecting, processing, and interpreting bits of information on all aspects of history, culture, and society in the "Orient." They visited "Oriental" cities and sites—primarily in Spain, western Turkey, the Holy Land, Egypt, and India—where they measured and recorded buildings and ruins and illustrated them. They then produced

impressive catalogues of singular monuments, series of buildings, and architectural and ornamental details that introduced to Europe a rich Islamic architectural heritage that was previously almost totally unknown.²⁶

These trailblazers were followed by several generations of architects, draftsmen, and archaeologists who expanded the scope of this surveying and classification in time and space. The architects and draftsmen went after the little-known monuments in hitherto unexplored regions that were slowly opening up to Western influence and dominance. They covered Anatolia, Persia, India, Morocco, and Arabia, and eventually penetrated the faraway reaches of the Islamic world in places such as Central Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.²⁷ By the middle of the twentieth century, the terrain had been mostly mapped out. With the nagging exception of Southeast Asia, most major buildings in the Islamic world had been measured, recorded, and classified into types and styles following

a rather rigid dynastic periodization that is still more or less with us today.

Despite their erudite and prodigious output, these Western students of Islamic architecture were neither equipped to convey nor interested in communicating the substantial intracultural variety and purposeful continuity within Islamic architecture or its conscious intercultural interactions, past and present.²⁸ Instead, they set the stage for a self-contained architectural discourse, charting the history of Islamic architecture as an endogenous and seemingly insular tradition that began with the building of the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina around 620 CE and inexplicably fizzled out with the dawn of the colonial age.²⁹ Their end dates varied between the Taj Mahal in Agra, India (1632–48) and the Blue Mosque (Sultan Ahmet Mosque) in Istanbul (1609–16) (Figures 1 and 2). But these historians never crossed into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. That is, their history avoided confronting the



Figure 1 Ustad Ahmad Lahauri, Taj Mahal, Agra, 1632–48, view from the south (photo by Jim Wescoat).



Figure 2 Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, Sultan Ahmet Mosque, also known as the Blue Mosque, Istanbul, 1609–16, exterior view from the north (photo by Walter Denny, courtesy of Aga Khan Documentation Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

Figure 3 Hassan Fathy, Dar al-Islam Islamic Education Center, Abiquiu, New Mexico, 1980–86, exterior panoramic view of the southeast corner (photo by Michael Toler, courtesy of Aga Khan Documentation Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology).



problem of Islamic architecture's encounter with modernity and its theoretical and historiographic implications.

The practice of disciplinary cultural demarcation, which depended more on ideological postures than on historical facts or scholarly reflections, survived far longer than did its biased and compromised source, the bluntly Eurocentric civilizational stratification of the triumphant colonial age.³⁰ It promoted, and even demanded, comprehensive studies of architecture confined within clearly proscribed and exclusive time, space, and culture. It even affected the writing of many postindependence architectural historians in the sometimes incongruously formed nations of the colonized world. In their zeal to purge their emerging national identities from any potentially damning colonial or foreign influence, these scholars adopted the culturally separate line of development that the model promulgated, so as to reconstruct a “pure” and “authentic” cultural and architectural heritage.³¹ As succinctly noted by Frantz Fanon many years ago, and rearticulated by Edward Said in *Orientalism* and his later *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), the nationalists' heartfelt resistance to a hegemonic intellectual construct did not prevent them from falling into the trap of its conceptual and interpretive biases. They ended up constructing and categorizing the history of “their” architecture, and of “their” culture in general, from an exclusive and ultimately narrowly defined national, religious, or cultural perspective.³² The examples of this inclination are numerous, but the most glaring and unmistakably affected histories can be seen in the various surveys of Central Asian architecture written during the Soviet period, which emphasized ethnic particularity over cultural identity, and in the studies of Iranian and Turkish architecture produced until very recently in Iran and Turkey, which sought in the distant past cultural roots that defined each nation independent of its extensive Islamic identity.³³

The study of Islamic architecture underwent a certain renaissance in the past few decades, owing in no small measure to the “Said effect.” This coincided with and provided intellectual prestige and rhetorical ammunition to two instrumental and ultimately interrelated phenomena, one architectural and the other, unsurprisingly, financial. The first was the onset of the age of postmodernism in architecture in the 1970s and

1980s, with its renewed if lighthearted approach to history as inspiration and its not-so-masked stress on identity politics as a formally expressive architectural tool.³⁴ Both orientations resonated with the mounting pressure in the Islamic world for culturally and historically inspired architecture, a direction that started to express itself around the same time and for reasons that stemmed primarily from disappointment with the often half-baked, top-down, and ultimately miscarried modernist experiments conducted throughout the 1950s and 1960s in the newly independent countries.³⁵ Thus, the 1980s became the decade of readily identifiable, Islamicized postmodern architecture that fulfilled a real hunger for cultural (and religious, which would eventually supplant the cultural with the rise of Islamism) self-expression.³⁶ There were the posttraditionalists who, like the celebrated Egyptian visionary architect Hassan Fathy (1900–1989) before them, looked for inspiration in vernacular architecture (Figure 3).³⁷ There were also the free, and often arbitrary, *mélanges* of diverse historical forms and patterns from a wide range of Islamic styles, which borrowed from postmodern architecture its idioms and validation (Figure 4).³⁸ This trend culminated in grand structures by large international firms, which reinterpreted visual symbols and historical motifs and used them mostly as surface articulation or footprint patterns in otherwise ultrasleek, contemporary designs.³⁹ A small publishing industry thrived on the growing demand for easily accessible, nonscholarly primers on Islamic architecture, producing numerous books on Islamic typologies, patterns, and monumental landmarks, several of which were reissues of famous nineteenth-century European graphic compendia.⁴⁰

The second phenomenon to propel the new interest in Islamic architecture was the forceful entry of new, mostly Arab Islamic wealth into the international scene following the sharp rise in oil prices in the mid-1970s. Premier Western cultural institutions, already experienced in cultivating patronage, managed to become the privileged recipients of generous sponsorship from wealthy Muslim rulers and business tycoons, who were becoming increasingly eager to counter the Western heritage of negativity toward Islam by presenting a civilized and artistically sophisticated image of Islamic cultures in academia, museums, and media. As a consequence, Islamic



Figure 4 Basil Al Bayati, Edinburgh Central Mosque, Edinburgh, 1998, view from the east (photo by Rachid Idir Aadnani Photography, tizi.org).

art collections were expanded and housed in newly designed sections in top Western museums, even as new museums for Islamic art opened in the Islamic world.⁴¹ New academic chairs for the study of Islamic art and architecture were endowed in the 1980s and 1990s at several top-tier American and European universities, almost quadrupling the number of positions devoted to the field. And although this drive started slightly before Said's *Orientalism* was published, the ideas and language that his book conveyed soon permeated not only the narratives developed around the revived interest in Islamic art and architecture but also the critical stance that a new generation of postcolonial scholars took against the perceived opportunism, naïveté, and even hypocrisy of that same drive.

The first effort to package Islam as a rich culture and artistic/architectural tradition was the World of Islam Festival, an unprecedented megacultural event whose origins date to 1973. This event aimed to do no less than “present one civilization—in all its depth and variety—to another.”⁴² A trust that gathered governments and leading British and international educational and cultural institutions sponsored the festival, which opened in 1976 and included exhibitions, lectures, symposia, books, films, and musical and theatrical performances. One of the exhibitions at the Hayward Gallery in London creatively displayed the “architecture of Islam” by projecting images of hundreds of buildings and their details in a specially constructed cube-shaped theater. This architecture was further explored in several festival-related publications produced over the next decade that covered subjects ranging from the “Islamic city” to the minutest details of architectural decoration.⁴³ Mixing the inherited romanticism of the Orientalist tradition with new and wide-ranging sympathetic scholarship, the World of Islam Festival's publications represented a middle ground between the colonial scholarship of curiosity and acquisition, tinged with the sense of superiority of yesteryear, and the veritable revolution in thinking that came after Said's

Orientalism, even if that work's influence remained unacknowledged in several cases.

A parallel development to the World of Islam Festival was the founding of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1977, followed almost immediately by the establishment of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture (AKPIA) at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1978. Operating independently of one another but having similar aspirations, the two programs had a direct impact on the appreciation and study of Islamic architecture. Through an elaborate process of selection, evaluation, and publication of hundreds of nominated projects from around the Islamic world and beyond over the past forty years, the Aga Khan Award has succeeded in turning a relatively neglected domain of practice into an unavoidably acknowledged contributor to the maturity and diversity of contemporary architecture. Coming on the scene both at the tail end of the postmodern moment and at the time of an intensifying turn toward Islamism, the award initially focused on historical continuity, vernacular revival, and critical regionalism.⁴⁴ Over time, however, its direction has been adjusted to respond to mounting environmental, social, and global challenges to architecture and development. Incorporating various technologically and environmentally driven, adaptive reuse, and conservation concerns within its core historicist and regionalist criteria, the Aga Khan Award has enlarged its purview in a rather conciliatory manner to encompass contemporary design, social housing, community improvement, historic preservation, and landscape design.

The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, on the other hand, is an academic initiative dedicated to teaching and researching Islamic art and architecture, urbanism, landscape, and conservation. Given the program's mission of promoting and increasing the teaching of Islamic architecture, the decision to locate AKPIA in the architecture departments

of two of the most prestigious institutions of architectural education in the world was a novel and intellectually challenging one.⁴⁵ The program's implicit aim was to bridge the pedagogical gap between the discipline of architecture and Islamic architecture, which was a clear manifestation of the binary structure of architectural knowledge rooted in the legacy of Orientalism.⁴⁶

That Edward Said's *Orientalism* still figures heavily in the academic offerings at AKPIA and other graduate programs devoted to the study of Islamic art and architecture is not only a manifestation of the book's enduring intellectual relevance and critical rigor. Alas, it is also a sign of the canonical rigidity and cultural complicity of architectural history's dominant discourse, which still treats architectural experiences outside its own traditional geopolitical and historical domain with suspicion or contempt, especially when these other experiences are motivated by a sense of resistance to that same discourse and its exclusivity.⁴⁷ For their part, Islamic architectural scholars of the last two generations have rejected the notions of uniformity, introversion, and cultural and religious determinism that long dominated their field and have extended their domain of inquiry into hitherto neglected periods, areas, and points of contact with other cultures.⁴⁸ The cumulative effect of these inquiries has been to set Islamic architecture well on its way to finally devising its own historical and methodological contours, which, when academic Orientalism is truly overcome, will undoubtedly enrich the broader field of architectural history and finally bring Islamic architecture into its fold.⁴⁹

Notes

1. Two books inspired by Said that have aimed to debunk other Western-aggrandizing historical constructs are Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, vol. 1, *The Fabrication of Ancient Greece 1785–1985* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1987); and Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
2. As Malise Ruthven, an author specializing in writing about Islam, said dismissively in his obituary of Edward Said, "Whatever its flaws, however, *Orientalism* appeared at an opportune time, enabling upwardly mobile academics from non-western countries (many of whom came from families who had benefited from colonialism) to take advantage of the mood of political correctness it helped to engender by associating themselves with 'narratives of oppression,' creating successful careers out of transmitting, interpreting and debating representations of the non-western 'other.'" Malise Ruthven, "Edward Said: Controversial Literary Critic and Bold Advocate of the Palestinian Cause in America," *Guardian*, 26 Sept. 2003. For a sustained critique of this kind of accusation, see Mohammad R. Salama, *Islam, Orientalism and Intellectual History: Modernity and the Politics of Exclusion since Ibn Khaldun* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 189–213.
3. The literature on this topic is vast. See, for example, Gyan Prakash, "Orientalism Now," *History and Theory* 34, no. 3 (Oct. 1995), 199–212; Aijaz Ahmad, "Between Orientalism and Historicism," in *Orientalism: A Reader*, ed. A. L. Macfie (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2000), 285–97; Zachary Lockman, "Said's *Orientalism*: A Book and Its Aftermath," in *Contending Visions*

- of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 182–214.
4. See, for example, María Rosa Menocal, *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 1–25; Albert Hourani, "Islam and the Philosophers of History," in *Islam in European Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Nancy Bisaha, *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 13–42.
 5. For Said's elaboration on his critique, see his essays "Orientalism Reconsidered," *Race & Class* 27, no. 2 (Autumn 1985), 1–15; "Intellectuals in the Post-colonial World," *Salmagundi* 70–71 (Spring–Summer 1986), 44–64; and "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors," *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1989), 205–25.
 6. An excellent example is Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London: Routledge, 1996). See also John Sweetman, *The Oriental Obsession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 112–59; Holly Edwards, "A Million and One Nights: Orientalism in America, 1870–1930," in *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America, 1870–1930*, ed. Holly Edwards (Williamstown, Mass.: Clark Art Institute, 2000), 11–57; Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 1–15.
 7. For discussions on the meaning of "global" in architecture, see Mark Jarzombek and Alfred B. Hwangbo, "Global in a Not-So-Global World," *Journal of Architectural Education* 64, no. 2 (2011), 59–65; Mark Jarzombek, "Art History and Architecture's Aporia," in *Globalization and Art*, ed. James Elkins, Alice S. Kim, and Shivka Valiavicharska (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010), 188–94. For a discussion with an emphasis on an Islamic site, see Kishwar Rizvi, "Dubai, Anyplace: Histories of Architecture in the Contemporary Middle East," in *A Companion to Islamic Art*, ed. Gülru Necipoğlu and Finbarr B. Flood (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley, 2017), 2:1245–66. A more general reflection is Vikramaditya Prakash, "The 'Islamic' from a Global Historiographical Perspective," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 6, no. 1 (Mar. 2017), 17–24.
 8. Garth Fowden picks up on the same point by asserting that "there are roads out of antiquity that do not lead to the Renaissance." Garth Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 9. Fowden offers a historical reconceptualization of the "antiquity to Islam continuum" that challenges previous frameworks.
 9. For a discussion of Fletcher's tree, see Gülsüm Baydar, "Toward Postcolonial Openings: Rereading Sir Banister Fletcher's 'History of Architecture,'" *Assemblage* 35 (Apr. 1998), 6–17.
 10. Spiro Kostof, *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 3–19.
 11. *Ibid.*, 363–401, 453–83.
 12. Panayiota Pyla, "Historicizing Pedagogy: A Critique of Kostof's 'A History of Architecture,'" *Journal of Architectural Education* 52, no. 4 (May 1999), 216–25.
 13. *Ibid.*, 221–22.
 14. Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 17th rev. ed., rev. by R. A. Cordingley (London: Athlone Press, 1961).
 15. Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 19th rev. ed., rev. by John Musgrove (Oxford: Architectural Press, 1987).
 16. Sir Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 20th rev. ed., rev. by Dan Cruickshank (Oxford: Architectural Press, 1996).
 17. For current scholarship on the Islamic garden, see Susan Johnson-Roeher, "Centering the Chārbāgh: The Mughal Garden as Design Module for the Jaipur City Plan," *JSAH* 72, no. 1 (Mar. 2013), 28–47; D. Fairchild Ruggles, "The Garden as Paradise: The Historical Beginnings of Paradise Iconography," in *Islamic Gardens and Landscapes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 89–102; James L. Wescoat Jr., "The Changing Cultural Space

of Mughal Gardens,” in *A Companion to Asian Art and Architecture*, ed. Rebecca M. Brown and Deborah Hutton (London: John Wiley, 2011), 201–30.

18. See Nasser Rabbat, “The Pedigreed Domain of Architecture: A View from the Cultural Margin,” *Perspecta* 44 (2011), 6–11; Anthony D. King, “Internationalism, Imperialism, Postcolonialism, Globalization: Frameworks for Vernacular Architecture,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 13, no. 2 (2006/7), 64–75; Dennis Alan Mann, “Between Traditionalism and Modernism: Approaches to a Vernacular Architecture,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 39, no. 2 (Winter 1985), 10–16.

19. For an explanation of the method and structure of the book, see Francis D. K. Ching, Mark Jarzombek, and Vikramaditya Prakash, *A Global History of Architecture*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley, 2011), xi–xv.

20. A cautionary plea against the indiscriminate use of the term *global* for pre-modern periods appears in Bonnie Cheng, “A Camel’s Pace: A Cautionary Global,” in “A World within Worlds? Reassessing the ‘Global Turn’ in Medieval Art,” ed. Christina Normore, special issue, *Medieval Globe* 3, no. 2 (2017), 11–34.

21. Mark Jarzombek, *Architecture of First Societies: A Global Perspective* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley, 2013), ix–xiv.

22. The shift of focus instigated by *Orientalism* made itself felt in assessments of the field written by its doyens in the 1980s and 1990s. See, for example, Oleg Grabar, “Reflections on the Study of Islamic Art,” *Muqarnas* 1 (1983), 1–14; Jean-Charles Depaule, “Improbables détachements: L’architecture et les arts dans la culture islamique,” *Cahiers du Musée National d’Art Moderne* 39 (Spring 1992), 26–41; Robert Hillenbrand, “Studying Islamic Architecture: Challenges and Perspectives,” *Architectural History* 46 (2003), 1–18.

23. Sibel Bozdoğan and Gülru Necipoğlu, “Entangled Discourses: Scrutinizing Orientalist and Nationalist Legacies in the Architectural Historiography of the ‘Lands of Rum,’” in “History and Ideology: Architectural Heritage of the ‘Lands of Rum,’” special issue, *Muqarnas* 24 (2007), 1–6; Gülru Necipoğlu, “The Concept of Islamic Art: Inherited Discourses and New Approaches,” *Journal of Art Historiography* 6 (2012), 1–26.

24. For a discussion of the characterization of Islamic architecture in the nineteenth century, see Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1995), 61–71. See also the essays in Remi Labrusse, ed., *Purs decors? Arts de l’Islam regards du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 2007), which take a more positive view of the influence of Islamic architecture on Western architectural thinking in the nineteenth century, a phenomenon that Labrusse identifies as “Islamophilia.”

25. See the discussion in Zeynep Çelik, “Colonialism, Orientalism, and the Canon,” *Art Bulletin* 78, no. 2 (June 1996), 202–5. For one specific aspect, see Nasser Rabbat, “Writing the History of Islamic Architecture of Cairo,” *Design Book Review* 31 (Winter 1994), 48–51. On the case of Byzantine art, see Anthony Cutler, “The Pathos of Distance: Byzantium in the Gaze of Renaissance Europe and Modern Scholarship,” in *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450–1650*, ed. Claire Farago (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), 23–45; Robert S. Nelson, “Living on the Byzantine Borders of Western Art,” *Gesta* 35, no. 1 (1996), 3–11; Robert S. Nelson, “The Map of Art History,” *Art Bulletin* 79, no. 1 (1997), 28–40. On antiquity, see Annabel Jane Wharton, *Refiguring the Post Classical City: Dura Europos, Jerash, Jerusalem, and Ravenna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1–14.

26. Some of the most influential publications from this time are Owen Jones and Jules Goury, *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra from Drawings taken on the Spot in 1834 and 1837*, 2 vols. (London: Owen Jones, 1852); David Roberts, *The Holy Land: Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt and Nubia*, 3 vols. (London: F. G. Moon, 1842); Pascal-Xavier Coste, *Architecture arabie, ou Monuments du Kaire mesurés et dessinés de 1818 à 1826* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1839); Émile Prisse d’Avennes, *L’art arabe d’après les monuments du Kaire depuis le VI^e siècle jusqu’à la fin du XVIII^e* (Paris: A. Morel, 1877).

27. Some of the most influential studies of this period are K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture: Umayyads, Early ‘Abbsids and Tulunids*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932); Ernst Diez, *Islamische Baukunst in Churûsân* (Hagen: Folkwang-verlag, 1923); Albert Gabriel, *Monuments turcs d’Anatolie*, 2 vols. (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1931); Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture: With Drawings, Photographs, Maps*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Bombay: Taraporevala Sons, 1944); Georges Marçais, *L’architecture musulmane d’Occident: Tunisie, Algérie, Maroc, Espagne et Sicile* (Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques, 1954); Galina Pugachenkova, *Chefs-d’oeuvre d’architecture de l’Asie Centrale, XIV^e–XV^e siècle* (Paris: UNESCO, 1981).

28. J. M. Rogers, “Architectural History as Literature: Creswell’s Reading and Methods,” *Muqarnas* 8 (1991), 45–54.

29. This historical limitation still governs most of the surveys of Islamic architecture currently used in classrooms in the United States, such as Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994); and John D. Hoag, *Islamic Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977). Both of these works stop at the end of the Great Mughal period in the early eighteenth century. Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom’s *The Art and Architecture of Islam, 1250–1800* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994) includes a chapter on the relationship between Europe and Islamic architecture in the nineteenth century, but the survey effectively stops in the eighteenth century. Finbarr Flood has called this phenomenon “art history *interruptus*.” See Finbarr Barry Flood, “From the Prophet to Postmodernism? New World Orders and the End of Islamic Art,” in *Making Art History: A Changing Discipline and Its Institutions*, ed. Elizabeth C. Mansfield (London: Routledge, 2007), 33.

30. Flood, “From the Prophet to Postmodernism?,” 31–53. A sweeping Arabic critique asserts that the art historical bias obtains as well in the pre-Islamic period. See Shakir Lou’aybi, *Al-fann al-Islami wa-l Masibiyya al-‘Arabiyya, dawr al-Masibiyyin al-‘Arab fi takwin al-fann al-Islami* (Beirut: Riad al-Rayyes Books, 2001), 9–41, and esp. 63–71.

31. Among those in the Arab world who obsessed about the authenticity of culture were the romantic pan-Arabists and Baathists of the 1950s and 1960s. They saw a continuous genealogy in the arts of the various pre-Islamic cultures of the “Arabs,” leading to the Islamic art of the Umayyads with its pronounced Arabic character, and somehow bypassing the encounter with classicism during the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods. See ‘Afif al-Bahnasi, *Al-fann al-Islami* (Damascus: Dar Talas, 1986), 38–40; and a more elaborate discussion in ‘Afif al-Bahnasi, *Al-Sham: Lamabat Athariyya wa-faniyya* (Baghdad: Dar al-Rashid, 1980), 10–37. It is also possible that the model appeared inadvertently in some Arabic studies simply because authors were borrowing from European sources. This seems to be the case in Tharwat Ukashah, *Al-taswir al-Islami: Al-dini wa-al-‘Arabi* (Beirut: Al-Mu’assasa al-Arabiyya lil-Dirasat wa-al-Nashr, 1977). See my critique in Nasser Rabbat, *Al-mudun al-mayyita: Durus min madhib wa-ru’an li-mustaqbaliba* (Damascus: Al-Aws, 2010), 81–93.

32. Fanon has insightfully analyzed the cleansing of national culture of all possible Western and colonial contamination and the paradoxical psychological and epistemological consequences of that cleansing. See Frantz Fanon, “On National Culture,” in *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 167–99. See also Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993). For a discussion of the relationship between culture and ideology, see Clifford Geertz, “Ideology as a Cultural System,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 193–229. For brief analyses of the role of culture in architecture, see Gülsüm Baydar, “The Cultural Burden of Architecture,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 4 (May 2004), 19–27; Samer Akkach, “The Burden of Difference: Rethinking the Role of Culture in Architectural Education,” *Architectural Theory Review* 5, no. 1 (Apr. 2000), 61–64.

33. Iranian examples include Mohssen Foroughi, *Masterpieces of Iranian Architecture* (Tehran: Society of Iranian Architects, 1980); Nader Ardalan and Laleh

- Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973); Abbas Daneshvari, *Medieval Tomb Towers of Iran: An Iconographic Study* (Lexington, Ky.: Mazda, 1986). Turkish examples include Celâl Esad Arseven, *L'art turc: Depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours* (Istanbul: Devlet Basimevi, 1939); Behçet Ünsal, *Turkish Islamic Architecture in Seljuk and Ottoman Times, 1071–1923* (London: A. Tiranti, 1959); Oktay Aslanapa, *Turkish Art and Architecture* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971); Ekrem Akurgal, ed., *The Art and Architecture of Turkey* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980).
34. The two classic studies on the cultural contours and economic underpinnings of postmodernism are Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review* 146 (July–Aug.), 59–92, reprinted in *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991), 1–55; and David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 1990), esp. 3–112. For a theorization of the relationship between the postcolonial and the postmodern, see Homi K. Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern: The Question of Agency," in *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 171–97.
35. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi, "Introduction: Modern Architecture and the Middle East: The Burden of Representation," in *Modernism and the Middle East: Architecture and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Sandy Isenstadt and Kishwar Rizvi (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 3–37.
36. For a succinct review of these developments in the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean, see Mohammad Al-Asad, *Contemporary Architecture and Urbanism in the Middle East* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012).
37. Nezar AlSayyad, "From Modernism to Globalization: The Middle East in Context," in Isenstadt and Rizvi, *Modernism and the Middle East*, 255–66.
38. Khaled Adham, "Rediscovering the Island: Doha's Urbanity from Pearls to Spectacle," in *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development*, ed. Yasser Elsheshtawy (London: Routledge, 2008), 218–57; Nasser Rabbat, "Cities of Incense and Myrrh: Fantasy and Capitalism in the Arabian Gulf," in *A History of Architecture and Trade*, ed. Patrick Haughey (London: Routledge, 2018), 62–79.
39. Hassan-Uddin Khan, "Identity, Globalization, and the Contemporary Islamic City," in *The City in the Islamic World*, ed. Renata Holod, Attilio Petruccioli, and André Raymond (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 1035–62; Gwendolyn Wright, "Global Ambition and Local Knowledge," in Isenstadt and Rizvi, *Modernism and the Middle East*, 221–54.
40. Examples include Émile Prisse d'Avennes, *Arab Art*, ed. Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom (Cologne: Taschen, 2010), a reprint of Prisse d'Avennes's 1869 to 1877 survey *L'art arabe*; and David Roberts, *Jerusalem and the Holy Land Rediscovered: The Prints of David Roberts (1796–1864)*, ed. W. D. Davies, Eric M. Meyers, and Sarah Walker Schroth (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997).
41. Benoît Junod, Georges Khalil, Stefan Weber, and Gerhard Wolf, eds., *Islamic Art and the Museum* (London: Saqi Books, 2012), 11–53, 225–326; Finbarr Barry Flood, "Between Cult and Culture: Bamiyan, Islamic Iconoclasm, and the Museum," *Art Bulletin* 84, no. 4 (Dec. 2002), 641–59; Nasser Rabbat, "What's in a Name? The New 'Islamic Art' Galleries at the Met," *Artforum* 50, no. 8 (Jan. 2012), 75–78.
42. John Sabini, "The World of Islam: Its Festival," *Aramco World* 27, no. 3 (May/June 1976), 2–4, 7, <http://archive.aramcoworld.com/issue/197603/the.world.of.islam-its.festival.htm> (accessed 12 June 2018).
43. The relevant titles include R. B. Serjeant, ed., *The Islamic City: Selected Papers from the Colloquium Held at the Middle East Center, Faculty of Oriental Studies, Cambridge, UK, from 19 to 23 July 1976* (Paris: UNESCO, 1980); Issam al-Said, *Geometric Concepts in Islamic Art* (London: Scorpion/World of Islam Festival Trust, 1988); Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam: Language and Meaning* (London: World of Islam Festival, 1976).
44. Sibel Bozdoğan, "The Aga Khan Award for Architecture: A Philosophy of Reconciliation," *Journal of Architectural Education* 45, no. 3 (May 1992), 182–88; William Curtis, "Towards an Authentic Regionalism," *Mimar* 19 (1986), 24–31.
45. See the critiques by Sibel Bozdoğan, "Architectural History in Professional Education: Reflections on Postcolonial Challenges to the Modern Survey," *Journal of Architectural Education* 52, no. 4 (May 1999), 207–15; and Nasser Rabbat, "'Islamic Architecture' and the Profession," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 3, no. 1 (Mar. 2014), 37–40.
46. Sibel Bozdoğan, "The Predicament of Modernism in Turkish Architectural Culture," in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, ed. Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 133–56; Armando Salvatore, "Beyond Orientalism? Max Weber and the Displacement of 'Essentialism' in the Study of Islam," *Arabica* 43 (1996), 457–85.
47. Zeynep Çelik, "Speaking Back to Orientalist Discourse," in *Orientalism's Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography*, ed. Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002), 19–41. For two attempts to chart a few directions for the field, see Nasser Rabbat, "Islamic Architecture as a Field of Historical Inquiry," in "Islam + Architecture," special issue, *Architectural Design* 74, no. 6 (2004), 18–23; and Necipoğlu, "The Concept of Islamic Art."
48. The list is becoming quite long. For a selection of the variety of approaches and areas, see R. A. Jairazbhoy, "The Taj Mahal in the Context of East and West: Study in the Comparative Method," *Journal of the Warburg Courtauld Institute* 24 (1961), 59–88; Patrick Connor, *Oriental Architecture in the West* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979); Gülru Necipoğlu, "Suleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of Power in the Context of Ottoman–Hapsburg–Papal Rivalry," *Art Bulletin* 71, no. 3 (Sept. 1989), 401–27; Cynthia Robinson, "Mudéjar Revisited: A Prolegomena to the Reconstruction of Perception, Devotion and Experience at the Mudéjar Convent of Clarisas, Tordesillas, Spain (14th Century A.D.)," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 43 (Spring 2003), 51–77; Finbarr B. Flood, "Pillars, Palimpsests, and Princely Practices: Translating the Past in Sultanate Delhi," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 43 (Spring 2003), 95–116; Michael W. Mesiter, "Crossing Lines: Architecture in Early Islamic South Asia," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 43 (Spring 2003), 117–30.
49. Gülru Necipoğlu and Finbarr B. Flood, "Frameworks of Islamic Art and Architectural History: Concepts, Approaches, and Historiographies," in Necipoğlu and Flood, *A Companion to Islamic Art*, 1:2–56. See also the various essays in the two volumes of Necipoğlu and Flood's *A Companion to Islamic Art*.