



26th



The World Award for Book of the
Year of the Islamic Republic of Iran



February 2019



Report On the 26th I.R. Iran World Award for Book of the Year

This year, after the primary selection of more than 2700 books in different fields of Islamic and Iranian Studies, 244 books were assessed, from which 9 books entered the final stage of evaluation.

These evaluated books in the field of Islamic Studies include the following subfields: Acts and Life of the Prophet, Islamic Economics, Theology, Ethics, Translation of Qur'ān, Jurisprudence & Islamic Law, Qur'ānic Sciences, Qur'ānic Studies & Interpretation, Philosophy & Mysticism, Contemporary Islam, History of Islamic Civilization, Shi'ite Studies, Political Sciences in the World of Islam, Women's Rights, the History of Science, Art & Islamic Architecture. The evaluated books in the field of Iranian Studies include the following subfields: Pre-Islamic Iran, Military Sciences, Ancient Iranian Civilization, Handicrafts, Art & Iranian Architecture, Literary Criticism, Persian Language & Literature, Persian Literature & Poetry, Iranian Sociology, Manuscripts Studies, Contemporary History of Iran, History and Thought of the Islamic Revolution Thinkers, and Islamic Sufism.

The evaluated books have been written in English, French, German, Italian, Arabic, Georgian, Chinese, Greek, Turkish, Bengali, and Finnish languages.

The winners are from Germany, Russia, Lebanon, Italy, Ireland, Turkey, and USA.

Alessandra Lazzari

● **Lapis Lazuli Bead Making at Shahr-i Sokhta:** Interpreting Craft Production in the Urban Community of the 3rd Millennium BC

● **Alessandra Lazzari; Massimo Vidale**

● Rome: ISMEO (Italian Institute for Middle and Far East), 2017



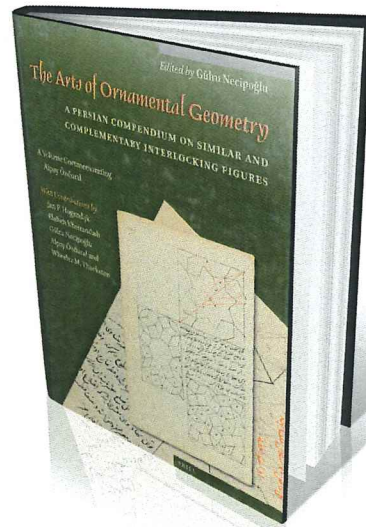
Massimo Vidale

This book releases the obtained results from the excavation of the lapis lazuli workshops found at Shahr-i Sokhta of Iran's Sistan (c. 2500 BCE), 50 years later. A careful reconstruction of the manufacturing sequence of lapis lazuli beads performed in this great Bronze age city, using up to dated scientific methods, can be associated with the parallel production of the flint drill heads used in perforating the beads. The results also question many accepted preconceptions on the ancient system of work in bronze age cities. In fact,

- the craftsmen were professionals with multiple, not just one, occupations who worked at the same time on artificial materials such as lapis lazuli, turquoise, flint, alabaster and copper;
- they camped freely among the ruins of the city, collected their food on the shores of the nearby lakes, and abstained from living in palaces and being in the pay of the elites;
- they were probably independent nomads moving along the Helmand valley for transhumance, and did not have a permanent living in the early urban context;
- they had discovered the technology of corundum-containing abrasives;
- and they worked for the elites that ruled the city, and not for the merchants and rulers of faraway Mesopotamia.

Born in Rome in 1954, **Alessandra Lazzari** is an archeologist of the Ancient Near East. She has been a researcher and a librarian at the Institute of Applied Technologies in Cultural Heritage of the CNR. She has worked on various fields in Italy, Syria, Turkey, Hungary, Turkmenistan, Jordan, Oman, and Iran. She is in charge of computerizing the archaeological data and has devoted special attention to editing the excavation archives of Shahr-i Sokhta (Iranian Sistan). She has also studied copper metallurgy of Saudi Arabia in the second and third millennia BC and is the supervisor of the "Computerized Bibliography of Ancient Metallurgy".

Massimo Vidale is a professor of Near Eastern archaeology and archaeology of handicraft at the University of Padova in Italy. In the first years of his career he embarked on excavation at Shahr-i Sokhta (1976-1977) and since then he remained passionately in love with ancient Iran and its heritage. During the previous years, he has cooperated with several Iranian archeologists and has been working in the *Halil Rud* valley (Jiroft region) and once again in the Iranian Sistan. His main field of research is the ancient structure of specialized handicraft and the relationships of such activities with the political organization of early city-states.



- *The Arts of Ornamental Geometry: A Persian Compendium on Similar and Complementary Interlocking Figures*
- Gülru Necipoğlu
- Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017

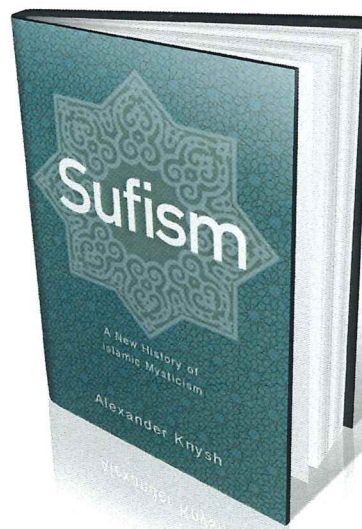
Edited by Gülru Necipoğlu with her preface and opening essay, *The Arts of Ornamental Geometry: A Persian Compendium on Similar and Complementary Interlocking Figures* (A Volume Commemorating Alpay Özdural, *Studies and Sources on Islamic Art and Architecture: Supplements to Muqarnas*, vol. 13, Brill, 2017), this work focuses on a unique medieval document in Persian. It is the only known Islamic primary source (datable to ca. 1300) showing geometrical drawings of ornamental patterns that are accompanied by step-by-step textual instructions in Persian, explaining how to draw those complex figures (*Fī Tadākhul al-ashkāl al-mutashābiha aw al-mutawāfiqa*, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Persan 169, fols. 180r–199v). This book is in congruence with the current interest in Islamic geometrical patterning as an inspiration for tessellation and parametrically derived figures in contemporary art and architecture. Considering the multifaceted relation of this source with historians of art and science, as well as mathematicians, physicists, artists, and architects, it aims at providing easier access to such an important source on practical geometry. The volume contains a transcript of the Persian manuscript, along with its transliteration and translation into English (by Wheeler M. Thackston), and analytical drawings made by the late Alpay Özdural (d. 2003).

Gülru Necipoğlu started teaching at Harvard's History of Art and Architecture Department upon receiving her PhD in 1986. She has been the Professor of Islamic Art in Agha Khan program and the manager of this project at Harvard University since 1993. She is the editor of *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Cultures of the Islamic World*; her books include: *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power* (1991); *The Topkapı Scroll—Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture* (1995); *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (2005); *Histories of Ornament: From Global to Local* (coedited, 2016); *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture* (Wiley-Blackwell, coedited, 2017).

- *Sufism: A New History of Islamic Mysticism*
- **Alexander Knysh**
- Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017

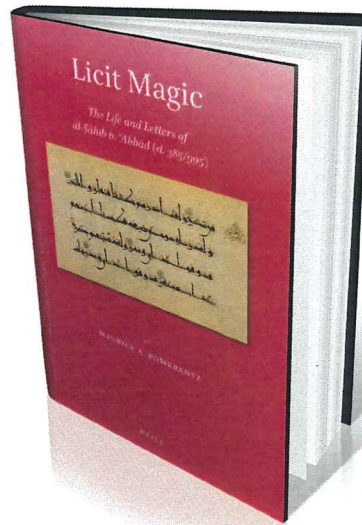
*From Alexander
with best wishes
Tehran, Feb 5
2019*

A. Ruzg



The author explores how Sufism has been viewed by both insiders and outsiders since its inception in the ninth century CE and during the pre-modern and modern periods. He examines the key aspects of Sufism, ranging from definitions and discourses (teachings) to leadership, sects, and biographies. He devotes special attention to Sufi approaches in the Qur'an, and proposes some similarities in using of divine texts in Judaism and Christianity. He shows how Sufism grew from a set of simple moral-ethical teachings into a sophisticated world-orientated tradition, whereas Sufi masters (*shaykhs and pirs*) being powerful players in Muslim public life. Alexander Knysh illustrates how their authority was challenged by those advocating equality of all Muslims before God regardless of their level of spiritual and intellectual attainment. Using concrete examples from Yemen and the North Caucasus, he examines the roots of the ongoing conflict between the Sufis and their fundamentalist critics, the Salafi Muslims³⁴ as a major fact in today's Muslim life. Based on a rich collection of primary and secondary sources, *Sufism* is considered as a comprehensive and compelling account of Islamic tradition from an important viewpoint.

Alexander Knysh is the Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan and the principal researcher of a research project on political Islam/Islamism at St. Petersburg State University, Russia. His academic interests include Sufism, Qur'anic studies, the history of theological, philosophical and jurisprudential thought, and modern Islamic/Islamist movements with a comparative point of view. He has numerous academic publications on these subjects, including ten books. Alexander Knysh serves as the section editor for "Sufism" on the Editorial Board of the *Encyclopedia of Islam, Third Edition* as well as Executive Editor of the *Encyclopedia of Islamic Mysticism* and the *Handbooks of Islamic Mysticism* series associated with it (E.J. Brill, Leiden and Boston).



- *Licit Magic: The Life and Letters of al-Ṣāhib b. Abbād (d. 385/995)*
- **Maurice A. Pomerantz**
- Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017

In this book Maurice A. Pomerantz, explores the biography and literary works of *al-Ṣāhib b. Abbād*, a major tenth-century Muslim politician and intellectual. *Al-Ṣāhib b. Abbād* 's nearly two-decade reign as vizier on behalf of two Buyid amirs was an important period for the flourishing of Arabic literature, *Mu'tazilī* theology and *Shī'ism* in Western Iran. Using Ibn 'Abbād's large collection of monographs (*rasā'il*), Pomerantz explores the role eloquence played in the manner of governing, preserving social relations of elites, and public satisfaction. Examining both the aesthetic and pragmatic aspects of the vizier's letters, Pomerantz's book is the first comprehensive study of this serious correspondence collection during the first four centuries of Muslim rule. Reading the vizier's revised epistles of admiration, flattery, and threats as an example of the state's "prevalent theoretical style," shows that letters affirmed, reinforced, and reproduced hierarchies and privileges. Examining these epistles reveals a complex viewpoint of how the vizier's relation with local elites was intertwined with administrative necessities and obligations, and created bonds by blending sentiments which held the government and society together.

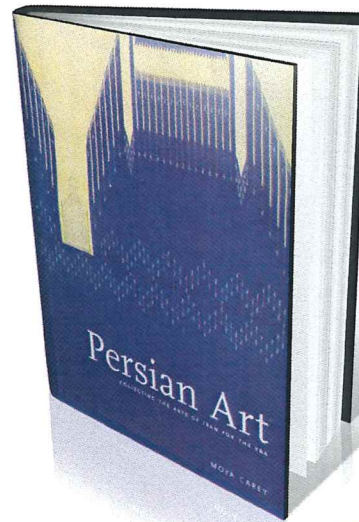
Maurice A. Pomerantz is an Associate Professor of Literature at New York University Abu Dhabi. His research explores the rich heritage of Arabic prose of the pre-modern periods. Pomerantz completed his PhD. at the University of Chicago in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations in 2010. In addition to *Licit Magic*, he has edited *The Heritage of Arabic-Islamic Learning* (Brill: Leiden, 2016) and *In the Presence of Power* (New York: NYU Press, 2017). He is an editorial board member of the *Journal of Arabic Literature* and the *Library Translation Series of Arabic Literature* which is published by New York University.

● *Persian Art: Collecting the Arts of Iran for the V&A*

● **Moya Carey**

● London: V&A Publishing

(Victoria and Albert Museum), 2018

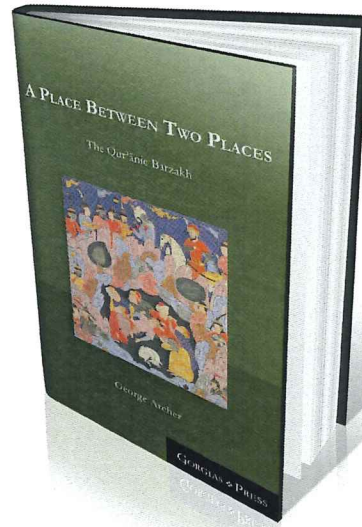


Moya Carey

This book tells the story of the Victoria and Albert Museum's extensive and renowned treasures of Iranian art. These treasures range from archaeological findings to architectural salvage, from domestic furnishings and drinking vessels to design archives. Spanning at least 12 centuries of Iran's sophisticated cultural history, the V&A's Iranian collections are in many different art media such as: ceramics, carpets, textiles, metalwork, glass, stone and woodwork, as well as paintings and works on paper. Most of these works were purchased in the late 19th century, in only a few decades – almost between 1873 and 1893 – during a specific period of political and economic relationships between Victorian Britain and Qajar Iran. This book investigates the mentioned time span through four special case studies and shows how architects, diplomats, art dealers, collectors, artists and commercial designers were engaged in ancient and modern Iran's visual traditions. The results of this exchanges were also determined by the prevailing economic conditions and the political relationship between Iran and Britain which was related to this specific short period of modern history. Altogether, these various endeavours effectively built Iran collections in V&A, and showed an amazing history of Iran's visual heritage.

Moya Carey, the Supervisor of Islamic Collections at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, Ireland, earned her PhD at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Her doctoral dissertation was about the book *Astronomical Map of Stars*, a work by the Iranian astronomer `Abd al-Rahman al-Sufi (d.986). Her publications cover Iran's visual culture in many different art media, particularly carpets, metalwork and written art. She also studies the political history of art-collection in the 19th century Middle East. Between the years 2009 to 2018, she was the Iran Heritage Foundation Supervisor for preserving Iranian treasures at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

- *A Place Between Two Places: The Qurānic Barzakh*
- **George Archer**
- Piscataway, New Jersey: Gorgias Press, 2017



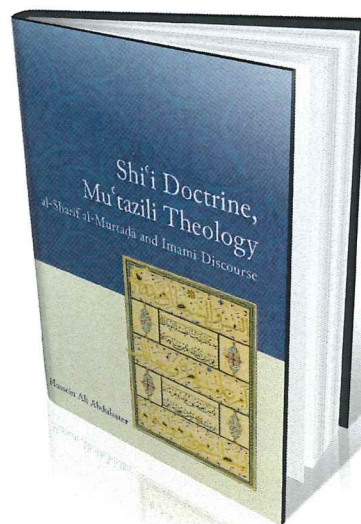
For believers in the resurrection of the body, there arises the question of what happens after death and before the Resurrection Day: an interval between the time of death and the Resurrection day. Most Muslims know this interval as Barzakh. Barzakh is a hallucinatory and frightening time in the grave marked by angelic visitations, reward, and torment. *A Place Between Two* came into being through the study of the oral structure of Qur'an and the investigation of the history of early Islam. In *A Place Between Two Places: The Quranic Barzakh*, George Archer reconstructs the Barzakh's early history and analyzes sixteen Suras of Quran in search of oral orders, sub-textual hints, and convergent coincidences, the early Barzakh against the sacred religions of late antiquity, especially Saint Christ's religion. From here, the Quranic vision of the Barzakh is traced forward through later prophetic biographies, Islamic architecture, and the hadith literature in order to show how the concept of Barzakh was developed based on eschatological claims of the Islamic Middle Ages.

George Archer, the Assistant Professor of Iowa State University, received his PhD from the department of Theology at Georgetown University in 2015. He was then appointed as the assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Iowa State University. He specializes in history of late antiquity Islam, Qur'anic studies, and oral literature of Qur'an. His selected works are as follows: "AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY, HE SAT Down: The Qur'an's Sabbath and The Throne of God", "The Hinterlands of the Qur'an: The Edges of the Eternal and the Temporal in Early Hanbalite Thought with Analogs to Catholic Theology".

● *Shi'i Doctrine, Mu'tazili Theology: al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā and Imami Discourse*

● Hussein Ali Abdulsater

● Edinburgh University Press, 2017



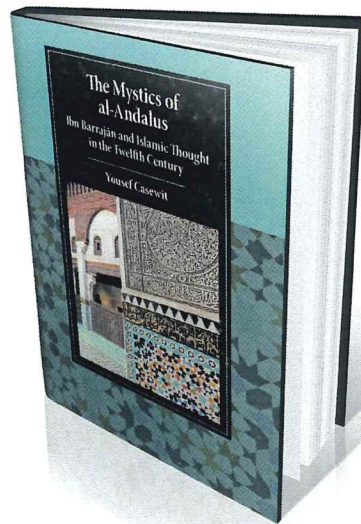
This book examines the critical turn that shaped Imami Shi'ism in the 4th and 5th centuries, especially as is seen in the works of al-Sharīf al-Murtaḍā (d. 436) of Baghdad. The intellectual context of Murtaḍā's theology is also presented against the backdrop of socio-political changes that proved beneficial to Imami Shi'ism, with Murtaḍā's status as a senior political figure positioning him to promote these changes.

Combining philological and intellectual-historical approaches, *Shi'i Doctrine, Mu'tazili Theology* closely examines Murtaḍā's thought accurately and clearly. It also examines the works of 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415) and other researchers to measure the extent of Murtaḍā's debt to Mu'tazila. In order to assess the authenticity and the influence of Murtaḍā's theology whose disciples were the center of Shi'i thought till the time of Allameh al-Ḥillī (d. 726), the notes of his teacher Shaykh al-Mufīd (d. 413) and his student Shaykh al-Ṭūsī (d. 460) are also compared with his own works. Concerning the relationship between Imami scholars and political authorities, Murtaḍā's ideologies were eventually invoked by al-Muḥaqqiq al-Karakī (d. 940) to argue for cooperation with the Safavids in Iran.

Hussein Abdulsater (Ph.D. Religious Studies, Yale 2013) works on Muslim theological discourses and the formation of communal identities and self-consciousness in Islam. The interaction between these discourses and self-consciousness provides the ground against which he analyzes various phenomena, ranging from classic schools to modern Islamic reformism. In particular, he studies how such themes were approached in humanistic disciplines such as historiography and literature, in addition to theology and Qur'anic exegesis.

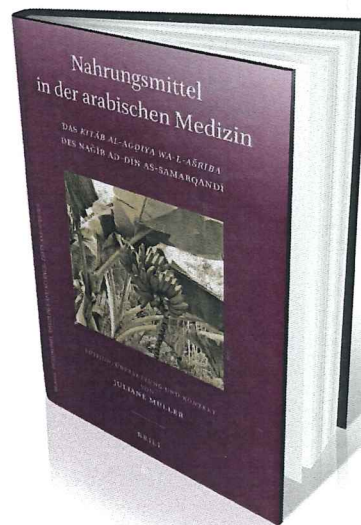
He has published articles on Mu'tazila school, Shi'ism, Qur'anic exegesis, freedom of consciousness in classical Islamic theology, human nature in Islamic theology and the noble human existence in the Qur'ān.

- *The Mystics of al-Andalus: Ibn Barrajān and Islamic Thought in the Twelfth Century*
- Yousef Casewit
- Cambridge University Press, 2017



The twelfth century CE was a turning point for mysticism in the Muslim West. In al-Andalus, the pioneers of this mystical tradition, the Mu'tabirun or 'interpreters', mixed Muslim scriptural sources with Neoplatonic cosmological doctrines. Ibn Barrajān of Seville (d. 536/1141) mostly contributed in shaping this new intellectual approach, and Yousef Casewit's book also focuses on this topic. Ibn Barrajān's extensive account emphasises on the divine names and the Qur'an, the significance of divine signs in the nature, the Arabic bible as a means of interpreting the Qur'an, and the mystical transition from the divine vision to the unseen. Examining works of Ibn Barrajān and his contemporaries, Ibn al-'Arif and Ibn Qasi, as well as the wider socio-political and scientific context in al-Andalus, this book would be beneficial to researchers of the medieval Islamic world and the history of mysticism and Sufism in the Muslim West.

Yousef Casewit is the Chair of Islamic Studies at the University of Chicago. He was formerly a member in Humanities Research Organization at New York University, Abu Dhabi, where he compiled his book, *The Mystics of al-Andalus*. He was the editor of *A Qur'an Commentary by Ibn Barrajān of Seville*. He received his M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. in Islamic Studies in 2014 from Yale University, and his research interests include intellectual history of North Africa and al-Andalus, Muslim perceptions of the Bible, and medieval accounts on ninety-nine names of God. His current research is on a mystical account on the divine names by 'Afif al-Din al-Tilimsani (d. 1291).



● *Nahrungsmittel in der arabischen Medizin: Das Kitāb al-Aiyya wa-l-ašriba des Naīb ad-Dīn as-Samarqandī*

● **Juliane Müller**

● Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2017

Najīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī's (d. 619 A.H. / 1222 C.E.) *Book on Foods and Drinks* (*Kitāb al-Aghdhiya wa-l-ashriba*) is a comprehensive encyclopedia on nutritional medicine containing information on more than 500 different food items, drinks and aromatic substances. With regard to 53 known manuscripts of the work, it is likely that it is among the most widespread pre-modern Arabic books on the science of nutrition.

In *Nahrungsmittel in der arabischen Medizin*, Juliane Müller presents a critical edition of the *Kitāb al-Aghdhiya wa-l-ashriba* by taking into consideration almost all of its known manuscripts, along with a German translation of the text. Chapters on the textual and cultural history of this work compare al-Samarqandī's food encyclopedia to other Arabic texts on nutritional science and discover the sources and reception history of the *Kitāb al-Aghdhiya wa-l-ashriba*. Al-Samarqandī's food encyclopedia can be considered as the last major Arabic monograph on nutrition in the Islamic East.

Juliane Müller is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies of the University of Zurich (Switzerland). She has learned Arabic and Spanish in Montpellier (France), Berlin (Germany) and Damascus (Syria). She was a PhD graduate at *Berlin Graduate School of Muslim Cultures and Societies* and got her PhD in Arabic Studies at Freie Universität Berlin in 2016. Besides *Nahrungsmittel in der arabischen Medizin*, she has published a monograph on Arabic alchemy (2012). Al-Samarqandī has collected and compiled the contents of her encyclopedia from various older Arabic medical texts on food science.

Juliane Müller

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