HISTORY OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE 121k
ISLAMIC ORNAMENT AND THE AESTHETICS OF ABSTRACTION
Professor Gulru Necipoğlu (Wednesdays 3-5)

Requirements:
Book report, class discussion, paper presentation and final paper (15 pages)

Reserve Readings:
All required readings are on reserve at the Fine Arts Library.

Contact Information:
Office hours and weekly sign-up sheet will be posted at Sackler Museum, Room 413
Phone: 617-495-2355
Email: gnecipog@fas.harvard.edu

Syllabus

(Week 1, Jan. 27)
INTRODUCTION

(Week 2, Feb. 3):
APPLIED ISLAMIC ORNAMENT: THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT AND
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Gulru Necipoğlu, “Ornamentalism and Orientalism: The Nineteenth and Early-
Twentieth-Century European Literature,” in idem, The Topkapi Scroll – Geometry

Stephen Vernoit, “Islamic Art and Architecture: An Overview of Scholarship and
Collecting,” in idem, Discovering Islamic Art: Scholars, Collectors and
Collections (2000), 1-61.

Anette Hagedorn, “The Development of Islamic Art History in Germany in the Late
Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” in ibid, 117-27.

BOOK REPORT:

OPTIONAL:
(Week 3, Feb. 10)

**ISLAMIC ORNAMENT, AMATEURS, AND MODERNIST ABSTRATION**


Rémi Labrusse, “Islamophilia? Europe in the Conquest of the Arts of Islam,” (Xerox) [http://www.artsetsocieties.org/a/a-labrusse.html](http://www.artsetsocieties.org/a/a-labrusse.html)


**BOOK REPORT:**

**OPTIONAL:**


(Week 4, Feb. 17):  

**VEGETAL ARABESQUES**


**BOOK REPORT:**

OPTIONAL:
Margaret Olin, *Forms of Representation in Alois Riegl’s Art Theory* (1992)

(Week 5, Feb. 24):

**GEOMETRIC ORNAMENT**

Gulru Necipoğlu, “The Scroll Tradition,” “Recent Studies on Geometric Ornament,”
  “Geometry and the Contribution of the Mathematical Sciences,” “Geometry and
  Aesthetic Theory,” in idem, *The Topkapi Scroll – Geometry and Ornament in

BOOK REPORT:

OPTIONAL:
Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, with foreword by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Sense of
Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (1973)
Prince of Wales’s Institute of Architecture, “Visual Islamic & Traditional Arts: Degree
Show 1995”.

Week 6, Mar. 3:

**NEO-ORIENTALISM: FESTIVAL OF ISLAM AND COSMOPHILIA**

Gulru Necipoğlu, “Recent Studies on Geometric Ornament,” in idem, *The Topkapi Scroll
Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, “Ornament and Islamic Art,” in idem., *Cosmophilia:
Anneka Lenssen, “Muslims to take Over Institute for Contemporary Art? The 1976
  World of Islam Festival,” *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, 42, 1-2

BOOK REVIEW:
Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom, *Cosmophilia: Islamic Art in the David Collection,

OPTIONAL:
Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam; Language and Meaning* (1976)

Week 7, Mar. 10:
**PURS DECORS? MEANINGS, CONTEXTS AND REGIMES OF VISUALITY**


**BOOK REVIEW:**


**OPTIONAL:**


**SPRING BREAK**

Week 8, Mar. 24:
**ISLAMIC ABSTRACTION, MODERNIST AESTHETICS, AND THE CONTEMPORARY RETURN OF ORNAMENT**


**BOOK REPORT:**

Ariane Grigoteit, Antje Korsmeier, Dagrun Hintze, *Blind Date Istanbul*, exh. cat. (Sabanci Museum and Deutsche Bank, 2007)

**BOOK REPORT:**

Week 9, Mar. 31: STUDENT PRESENTATION
Week 10, Apr. 7: STUDENT PRESENTATION
Week 11, Apr. 14: STUDENT PRESENTATION
Week 12, Apr. 21: STUDENT PRESENTATION
Week 13, Apr. 28: No Class (GN lecture at Stanford)