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Analysis of three Islamic art historians' explanations of the characteristics and formation of Islamic art: Implication for model development

Bajouda, Hamza Abdulrahman, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1993

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ANALYSIS OF THREE ISLAMIC ART HISTORIANS' EXPLANATIONS
OF THE CHARACTERISTICS AND FORMATION OF ISLAMIC ART:
IMPLICATION FOR MODEL DEVELOPMENT

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Hamza Bajouda

***

The Ohio State University
1993

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CHAPTER I
BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY
OF SAUDI ARABIAN EDUCATION

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established in 1932 by the late King Abdulaziz (known in the West as Ibn Saud). It occupies four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula, which is equal to approximately 895,000 square miles. Saudi Arabia is about one-third of the size of the United States (Oliver, 1987, p. 1). Five basic administrative provinces constitute the country. They are as follows:
1. The central province is Najd. Its capital is Riyadh, which is also the national capital.
2. The western province is Hejaz and its capital is Jeddah. The two Islamic holy cities of Makkah and Medina are located in this region.
3. The eastern province is Al-Hasa and its capital is Dammam.
4. The southern province is Asir and its capital is Abha.
5. The northern province with its capital, Tabuk

Saudi Arabia's climate is generally hot and dry, with the exception of the coasts and the mountains, which are more cool and humid than the interior. The last census,
taken in 1974, shows that Saudi Arabia's population is approximately 7 million. However, it is at present estimated to be approximately 9.97 to 10 million.

The constitution of Saudi Arabia is the Quran and the Sunnah (the prophet Muhammad's words and deeds), which comprise the Sharia (the Islamic legal system). Taking the Sharia as a way of life means that there is no separation between spiritual and materialistic aspects of life and no separation between the mosque and the state. This joint relationship of religion and life does not seem strange in Islamic societies. This is simply because Islam itself is not a religion in terms that Westerners understand; it is rather a way of life. In his book, Treasures of Islam, Bamborough describes the concept of Islam as follows:

Islam, however, is not simply a religion, it is a way of life, a curious mixture of religion, philosophy, social order and politics all rolled into one. The Koran dictates how men should live their lives, and outlines a series of laws controlling what they may and may not do. (pp. 12-13)

Considering this description of Islam as proposed by Bamborough, one certainly would expect that a great deal of influence of Islamic tradition has contributed to the shaping of the educational policy in the country. By looking at the curriculum guidelines of secondary education, we find some clues about the purpose of education. A general outlook about education in Saudi Arabia is given below.
Introduction

The history of education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia can be traced back to the first quarter of this century. This does not necessarily mean that there was no education in the Arabian Peninsula before this date, or in other words, before the establishment of Saudi Arabia itself in 1932. History tells us that a number of educational institutes did exist and to only mention a few, one would not do them justice. In addition, the two holy mosques in Makkah and Medina have played an essential role in educating a countless number of Muslim students and scholars.

Nonetheless, general and formal education, which demand a well-organized system of supervision and financing, did not exist until the establishment of the Directorate of Education in 1925. This was reformed some 28 years later to become the Ministry of Education in 1953, followed by the founding of the General Presidency of Girls Education in 1960. It is believed that these governmental agencies have given impetus to the fast expansion and diffusion of elementary, intermediate, and secondary education. In 1975, the Ministry of Higher Education was established to guide and supervise the implementation and diffusion of higher education. Since the founding of these agencies, free education has been
provided to all citizens, from kindergarten to higher education. Moreover, scholarships are given to Saudi students to study abroad for degrees in fields that are not available in the country.

Educational Objectives

In order to understand the philosophy of education in Saudi Arabia, one needs to look at the policy adapted by curriculum developers and its relationship to Islamic tradition, values, and beliefs. The purpose of education, as proposed by Saudi Arabian policymakers in 1974 (code No. 28) is as follows:

1) to understand Islam properly and thoroughly, 2) to implant and spread the Islamic faith, 3) to equip the student with Islamic teachings and values, 4) to furnish him with various knowledge and skills, 5) to develop in him a constructive disposition, 6) to develop the society economically, socially, and culturally, and 7) to prepare the individual to be a useful member in the development of his society. (p. 7)

It is apparent that the aim of education is congruent with what the country announced as general policy, based on the Quran and the Sunnah. Education thus draws its value and legitimacy from Islamic teaching and its concept of life and the universe. What does the Holy Quran and the prophet's tradition tell us about the significance of acquiring knowledge and the place of knowledgeable men and women in the society? They are explicit in encouraging
the believers to seek knowledge by reading. In fact, the
first verse of the Quran says:

Read in the name of the Lord and cherisher, who
created--created the man out of a (mere) congealed
blood. Read and the Lord is the most Bountiful, who
taught (the use) of the pen--taught man that which he
knew not. (Quran, 96:1-5)

The prophet Muhammad is reported to have said that seeking
knowledge is an obligation of each Muslim man or woman. The
prophet has stated that "the honour of a learned man
over a sincere worshiper is like the virtue of the moon
above all stars." It is obvious, then, that the place of
knowledge and education in Islamic tradition is very
sacred and connected with the divine order.

In this light, art education in Saudi Arabia must
function congruently with the announced general policy for
education. Its purpose and orientation must spring from
within, from what is really meaningful and appreciative to
the people of that particular culture and from the need of
that society.

In the educational policy code No. 18, we find the
following statement as one of the basic principles of the
policy: "The complete attachment to the Islamic nation's
history and civilization, with getting benefit from our
ancestors' manner of life as a light of guidance in the
present and future should be promoted" (p. 6). This
emphasis on preserving traditional culture and promoting
Islamic history and civilization may be inspired by the changing nature of the society in Saudi Arabia. For instance, the issue of modernization, city planning and expansion, and the decline of production and use of local crafts have had great impetus in promoting the effort to conserve cultural heritage. This conservation and promotion manifested itself mainly in nontraditional settings. The art and cultural festival, sponsored by the National Guard and the General Presidency for Youth Welfare (GPYW), is one example. Another example is the beautification projects of cities and international airports.

Nonetheless, art education, in its formal setting in general education, did not respond positively to the issue of cultural and artistic heritage. Nor do social studies provide or emphasize the role of Islamic civilization to the youngster. It seems that much of what is taught in history and geography courses deals with the political side of Islamic history, leaving no room for the cultural or humane side of that history.

Islamic Art and Art Education

As one can see from the previous paragraphs, studies in Islamic art have mainly focused on historical context. Countless numbers of research projects, studies,
investigations, and results of excavation have been conducted and published. Nonetheless, the implications of these studies of Islamic art have scarcely found a place in the educational setting. The explanation for this absence in art education may lie in the status of art education itself in questions such as: Can something be learned from art education through means other than or with studio activities? What is the relationship of art education to cultural heritage, art in society, art history, critical discourse, and overall visual environment? Although these issues have been dealt with to various degrees in the United States, little has been done in the Middle East, and more specifically in Saudi Arabia, resulting in the absence of art history, art criticism, and art appreciation. Although there is a general awareness of the importance of introducing students to their past and present artistic heritage (as mentioned in the Introduction), the role of art in society is still in the objective designation stage. In other words, it has not yet been included in school. In this researcher's opinion, it will not put into practice until serious study and reform of art education is undertaken.

Problem Background

Islamic art has not been fully understood by art teachers in Saudi Arabia. They limit its teaching, if
any, to primarily imitation of distorted, unsystematic
decoration or patterns. Even at the college level, the
studies in the area of Islamic art is focused on the
process of making studio products, thus acquiring the
technicalities of material manipulation and tools usage.
Sometimes an elective course is offered in a
chronological survey of art history. It should be
mentioned here that according to the art education
department at Umm Al-Qura University, four goals have been
designated as its program's main objectives. The most
pertinent one to this study is the transmission of Islamic
artistic heritage and developing "distinguishable artistic
identity by fostering a personal development through art"
(Al-Ghamedy, 1986, p. 9). Al-Ghamedy remarks, however,
that "the content of the curriculum employed to accomplish
those goals is far from being effective" (p. 10). In
attempting to explain and/or interpret this misunderstand-
ing, one would examine the shortcoming of art teachers'
preparation and the theory and/or the orientation that
resulted in such an insufficient preparation.

In his investigation of art teachers' preparation and
curriculum implementation, Al-Ghamedy (1986) points out
the weakness and shortcomings of art teachers' preparation
programs. He states that there has been much concentra-
tion in studio courses with limited content, as compared
to theoretical and well developed courses. His
interpretation of the cause of such an unbalanced program has been related to three factors:

1. The absence of research on societal, cultural, or economical factors prior to designing curriculum for art teachers.

2. The lack of reference materials and substance of course content.

3. The conflict between what has been announced as goals and aims of the program and what is being practiced. (pp. 9-10)

According to Al-Ghamedy, these were considered as serious problems by almost 70 percent of his survey informants. Although Al-Ghamedy may have been aware of the issue of theory and orientation in relation to practice, he did not explicitly address it or deem it as a major cause to the chaos of art education. This issue is deemed very important by this researcher.

Most of the department faculty, as indicated in Al-Ghamedy’s study, believe by far that studio practice is not the appropriate method for teaching. Sixty percent of art education department faculty members (at Umm Al-Qura University) agree that art teachers are not prepared to teach or to introduce art history and art appreciation to their students. They also agree that more focus on nonstudio courses is needed to improve the preparation of future art teachers (p. 117).

To explain the art faculty's attitude toward teaching art, one needs to consider their background and education. It is obvious that the influence of Lowenfeld and Dewey
manifested itself—the creative self-expression theory of Lowenfeld and art as experience theory of Dewey can be clearly seen as a predominant factor in art education in the Middle East. This researcher is aware that there is nothing wrong in borrowing concepts and theories from other cultures, as long as certain modifications are made prior to their implementation. Nevertheless, it is not conceivable that an idea, theory, or approach is taken for granted to be valid, legitimate, or unquestionable, without even considering or examining its outcome. Having submitted to the total legitimacy and validity of the previously-mentioned theories, art education is taught as studio practice. Why, then, would one expect art teachers to incorporate the history of Islamic and/or modern art, traditional art, or art appreciation, when they were told it is forbidden to demonstrate adult art or impose themselves on the youngsters? Such action would spoil the children's creativity, would inhibit them, and would also lessen the process of experiencing the creation of art.

Art Education Guidelines

When the art education guidelines were issued by the Ministry of Education, Division of Art Education, in 1971, they outlined a number of goals to be stressed by art teachers, but teachers themselves found that the
guidelines were difficult to understand. Therefore, they tended to ignore these guidelines and their annual follow-up reports. Their responses to the questions that were imposed on them regarding the art guidelines and the annual reports were that they were too vague, ambiguous and too general (Al-Ghamedy, 1986, p. 104). Hence, one senses a contradiction between the teachers' training and preparation and the policy adapted by the guideline developers. While the guidelines emphasize a multicultural approach to art education in which Islamic art, traditional, and modern Western art are incorporated, the teachers themselves have had little to offer to their students. For instance, the art education guidelines initiated in 1971 describe and outline the goals and objectives of art education. Under the general objectives, twelve goals are stated and deemed appropriate for art teachers to emphasize in their classrooms. Of the twelve there are four goals that deal with 1) Islamic art, 2) modern art, 3) traditional local art, and 4) art in society. The first goal is to understand and appreciate the importance of Islamic art, its artistic achievement, technical solution, unity and integrity, and its influence on subsequent civilizations' art. It is also strongly recommended that art teachers introduce Islamic art to their students and reinforce learning by using visual aids to facilitate the appreciation of the artistic merit of
this art. The third goal of art education, as stated in the guidelines, is to introduce a wide variety of modern art from different cultures, with emphasis on its creative and abstract nature. It was stated that art teachers should introduce modern art to their students, using available reproductions and visual aids. The fourth and fifth objectives are to emphasize the incorporation of study about traditional art and the value of art in general. Art appreciation and understanding the role of art is also stressed by the guidelines.

Once again, the guidelines use terms such as "understanding," "appreciation," "awareness," and so forth. However, art teachers are prepared to teach art as studio production in their schools. Moreover, it is deemed inappropriate to impose images of adult art on the pupils.

**Summary**

As a result of the theories and orientations adapted in Saudi Arabia for art education, art teachers' preparation programs were designed to meet the scope of these adapted theories. Consequently, the programs are deemed insufficient and lacking in depth.

The state of art education in general education has also been affected by the poorly-prepared art teachers, resulting in three major shortcomings. First is the trivialization of art in education. Art is regarded as an
extra curricular activity, which hampers the art teachers' image, respect, and role. It was reported by Al-Ghamedy (1986) that art education is considered less in terms of importance than other subject areas by principals and other teachers. Therefore, sometimes art teachers are assigned other jobs, such as helping other "real" teachers in developing illustrations and visual aids for their lesson plans. The second shortcoming is that art education was subjected to an immediate budget cutback, and financial support. An example of this is the elimination of art education from traditional secondary schools throughout the country in 1974, which was considered an effort to tighten the budget and reduce the course load of the students. Art education is now back in comprehensive secondary schools as an elective course. The third shortcoming is the elimination of evaluation and grading of art education results. Art education is regarded as a frill, extra curricular, and leisure time activity, with no need whatsoever to evaluate the teaching of art or student achievement in art, since it is believed that only those who are gifted and talented can excel in art.

Having reviewed the essence and background of the problem of this study, it seems justified that other means for teaching art education should be considered and promoted. Taking Islamic art as case in point, this study should provide alternative approaches to introducing
Islamic art as artistic heritage. Islamic art is a very rich, creative, and original art. Therefore, it is not conceivable that by imitating or copying Islamic patterns, students would automatically grasp its meaning and language. A more thorough study of Islamic art should be provided if awareness of this magnificent art is to be fostered.

Purpose of the Study

It was previously mentioned in the Problem Background (see pp. 7-14) that teaching Islamic art, both in art teacher programs and in general education, is limited to and relied heavily upon studio practice. However, even the studio center approach would be much better if it extended exploration beyond merely manipulating art materials or imitating examples of art forms or exemplars. This means that future art teachers are deprived from the opportunity of being acquainted with other aspects of Islamic art, such as its formation and development, its unity and variety, its concepts of beauty and creativity, etc. Consequently, it seems meaningless to ask art teachers to stress the study of Islamic art in their classes while they are themselves not fully equipped with knowledge and true understanding of the essence of Islamic art.
As discussed previously in the Introduction, the educational policy in Saudi Arabia stresses the learning and understanding of the Islamic civilization and its legacy. As it appears from the Problem Background of this study, no serious study has been conducted to find alternative approaches to teaching Islamic art with emphasis on understanding, appreciating, and awareness of its unique character.

On the other hand, we find in Islamic tradition a great admiration and respect for knowledgeable men or scholars. They should be the authorities in their fields of specialization from which knowledge should be obtained. The Holy Quran tells us that we should ask those learned persons if we do not know. This concept also has roots in Western tradition. Bruner (1960) states that ideas for curriculum should be obtained from the best minds in each and every field of study. He goes on to say that "only by the use of our best minds in devising curricula will we bring the fruits of scholarship and wisdom to the student just beginning his studies" (p. 3). This claim may be true not only in relation to curriculum content and development, but also in any field of study, of which Islamic art is no exception.

In this light, the main objective of this study is to analyze and interpret the work of three great art historians and philosophers specializing in Islamic art in order
to gain perspective and comprehensive understanding of key concepts in relation to this art. The scholars' explanation of Islamic art creation, analysis of its characteristics, and interpretation of its formation will later be used to generate alternative approaches to teaching Islamic art. In addition to creating Islamic art, there is a tremendous need to also understand its meaning and aesthetic merit, as well as the cultural, social, political, and economic circumstances in which it evolved.

To achieve this study's objectives, the following steps will be undertaken:
1. An examination and analysis of the writings of three eminent scholars in Islamic art will be conducted.
2. Various issues having to do with Islamic art as presented by the scholars will be compared and contrasted.
3. An alternative approach(es) that deals with Islamic art as it is elaborated upon by these experts will be suggested and/or generated. Through this alternative method, it will be argued that the study of Islamic art, as artistic heritage, is more than producing art forms.

Significance of the Study

Although several doctoral dissertations have been written having to do with art education in Saudi Arabia,
none of them have dealt specifically with Islamic art, its place in our schools, and the way it should be taught by art teachers. The significance of this study stems from its pioneering effort in coping with the problem of art education being trivialized in the country, the problem of art, the way it is being taught, and the way it should be taught. Taking Islamic art as a case in point will show how art could be taught and learned in a meaningful and intelligible way.

In this study, a model of curriculum for teaching Islamic art will be developed. This model will depend on the scholarly explanation of the nature, scope, meaning, and the cultural and social context of Islamic art.

This study will also have, as one of its goals, the introduction of alternatives to teaching art in education. It seeks, therefore, to broaden students' awareness of the value, purpose, and merit of art in society.

Furthermore, the study will argue that art education is valuable, indispensible, and a necessary subject in the school system, which is worth teaching, since it insures the transmission of artistic heritage. This means that Islamic art in its various forms--be it architecture, minor art, painting, arabesque, or calligraphy of both past and present--should be introduced to the youngsters. This will help develop art appreciation through understanding the arts' role in human development.
Generating and/or suggesting alternatives may contribute in the future to enhance the quality of teaching Islamic art, which has long been limited to studio activity. Knowledge attainment through discussion of art works will be stressed.

Research Questions

It was indicated in the Problem Background that a major shortcoming in the teaching of Islamic art in art education classes in Saudi Arabia has to do with the general assumption that the only appropriate way of experiencing art is through creating it. Consequently, teaching Islamic art is limited to studio practice of a very narrow and superficial sort. Fundamental questions and issues pertaining to the process by which Islamic art was created, its meaning, nature, dynamics, aesthetic tradition, and sources of creativity are left untouched and unanswered. New trends in art education, however, emphasize that learning about art could be obtained through approaches and means other than studio practice. Incorporating the historical, productive, aesthetic, critical, and cultural domains in teaching about art is greatly recommended.

New trends in art education, however, emphasize that learning about art could be obtained through studio experience as well as other means. For example,
advocates of the eclectic approach (Efland, Chapman, Feldman, McFee, and others) think that different views of teaching art can be combined together to create a representative art curriculum. The advocates of the discipline-based approach think that learning about art in general education (from K-12) should utilize domains such as art history, aesthetics, and art criticism to heighten the students' awareness of art in social and cultural context. Art then, according to the views already mentioned, uses means such as creating art, talking about art, writing about art and so forth. With this in mind and with an eye to formulating materials which might be used to address approaches to art education in Saudi Arabia other than the traditional studies approach, an attempt will be made in the dissertation to study some of the broader historical issues as they relate to Islamic art. Specifically, two areas of inquiry will be addressed through an examination of the thought and writing of three key figures in the historical study of Islamic art—Oleg Grabar, K. A. C. Creswell, and Richard Ettinghausen—as they relate to these issues. It should be noted that these research questions were primarily inspired by my reading in the literature of Islamic art. It owes much in its formulation to Grabar, Allen, Ettinghausen, and others. These are the following:
1. What do Islamic art historians do when they analyze the history of Islamic art?
2. What method of inquiry do they use for their analysis?
3. How do they treat the concept of the formation of Islamic art?
4. How do they discuss the work of Islamic artists in architecture, painting, and the minor arts?

Method and Procedure

In order to collect the data needed for this study so that appropriate answers to research questions could be provided, a descriptive historical analysis method is implied. Historical method has generally been recognized in educational research as a useful tool that "involves systematic, objective data collection and analysis and the confirmation or disconfirmation of hypotheses" (Gay, 1987, p. 179).

Historical research will enable me to examine, describe, and analyze selected literature in the history of Islamic art (an instrument will be developed to guide the description and analysis as they pertain to research questions). This study, therefore, consists of two phases, each of which is dependent upon the other. The first phase has to do with the description analysis of the writings of three Islamic art historians--namely, Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar, and K. A. C. Creswell. The
selection of these art historians was based on their prolific contribution to the study of Islamic art and their outstanding scholarship (criteria for the selection will be provided in a subsequent chapter).

The second part will be devoted to finding an appropriate approach to teaching Islamic art in which the content will be drawn from the findings of the first stage—the experts' explanation of the formation, dynamic, process of creation, aesthetic tradition, etc., of Islamic art and decoration.

The criteria used for selecting historians of Islamic art are based on the following:

1. Their sophisticated treatment of the complex phenomenon of Islamic art;
2. The authenticity and independence of their views;
3. Their outstanding and recognized scholarship;
4. Their prolific contribution to the field of the history of Islamic art.

The second part of the dissertation will be devoted to the implications of these scholars' work for alternative approaches to Islamic art in which the learning content and activities will be drawn from the outcome of the findings. This involves learning the three art historians' method of inquiry about issues of philosophical, cultural, and social nature and relevancy (see
research questions). To achieve the goal of this study, the following procedures will be undertaken:

**Phase One**

A selection of three prominent Islamic art historians.

1. A survey of their writings, which implies identification of their key pieces that pertain to the objectives of this study and the stated research questions.

2. Description and analysis of representative writings for the sake of addressing the issue identified in the research questions.

3. Comparative analysis of their similarities and differences in issues such as the formation of Islamic art, its essence and character, and its concepts of creativity and beauty.

4. Comparison and contrasting the scholars' points of view regarding various issues having to do with Islamic art as presented in the literature. This may include an examination of their methods and approaches relating to the identification, relationship, and explanation or interpretation of Islamic monuments and artworks.

**Phase Two**

This phase will be devoted to generating alternative approaches to teaching Islamic art based on the three
art historians' assumptions and conceptions of the issues raised in this study (see research questions).

The following steps will be undertaken:

1. Learning each scholar's method of inquiry about Islamic art, e.g., how do they describe, interpret, and evaluate works of Islamic art?

2. How do they deal with issues such as the formation of Islamic art, its dynamics, nature, character, and process of creation?

3. How using their points of view, even though they differ, helps students recognize and understand the complexity and diversity associated with Islamic art and its characteristics.

4. Generating an alternative approach(es) to teaching Islamic art as elaborated upon by the scholars.

Limitation of the Study

The following are the limitations of this inquiry:

1. This inquiry is limited to the analysis and description of three representative Islamic art historians' writings about the formation, dynamics, process of creation, and concepts of creativity of Islamic art.

2. This study is also limited to providing suggestions of alternative approaches or methods that illustrate the possibility and necessity of utilizing the scholars' explanation and interpretation of Islamic art.
3. This study is limited to the classical moment of the history of Islamic art.

4. It is beyond the scope of this study to use or implement any instructional materials in an actual educational setting.

Definition of Terms

Some terms will be used frequently in this study. Therefore, they shall be defined so that the reader will have a clear understanding of their meaning.

The classical moment. The classical moment, or early period of the history of Islamic art, is a term often used by historians to mean the era from the 7th-11th centuries A.D.

Islamic art. "By general and tacit consensus the expression the 'Arts of Islam,' or 'Islamic art,' refers to all the arts of the Muslim peoples, whether those arts be religious or nonreligious" (Burckhardt). This definition is obviously pertinent to Islamic art in general, but not to specific regions or eras.

"The word Islamic as applied to art refers to those people who have lived under rulers who profess the faith of Islam or in cultures and societies strongly influenced by modes of life and thought characteristic of Islam" (Ettinghausen, Grabar).
Anyone who visits an ancient Islamic building, or a museum exhibition of Islamic art, or who takes a university course in the subject, readily observes the unified decorative schemes, the interest in geometry, paucity of figural imagery, and extensive use of color that characterize the family of artistic tradition we call Islamic art (Allen, 1988).

Decorative art. The term decorative art may imply, at least, to the Western sense, a minor art. However, decorative art is the core of Islamic art. It is sometimes called Arabesque which appears in architecture, metal work, wood carving, etc. Three elements may be used in decorating art objects: the vegetal, geometrical, and zoomorphic. Styles of decoration range from natural abstract to high abstraction.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The field of Islamic art may seem strange or exotic to some of the readers of this document. They may not be familiar with the historical process through which the field of Islamic art history has passed. Therefore, the main stages of development, the scholars whose effort and dedication have shaped the boundaries of the field, and the obstacles and difficulties that hindered this development and effort should be fully discussed and clarified.

It should be made clear from the outset that the literature written and published about the study of Islamic art is rather limited. Few articles dealing thoroughly with the subject have been found to be of scholarly significance. For this particular reason and many others, it was necessary to devote part of this literature review to the question of how the discipline of Islamic art came into being, who the pioneers of the field were and why. In addition, the approaches and methods of investigation that were sought, developed, and used will be elaborated upon. By so doing, it is assumed
that a general, yet necessary, understanding of the historical development of the field will be gained.

This historical account may also shed some light on the ramification of the development of the field including the contribution of scholars from different countries and the role of private and governmental agencies in preserving and studying Islamic art objects.

The second part of this review will be devoted to a critical elaboration on the research that focuses on Islamic art from educational perspectives. That is to say, the research aimed at inculcating historical or aesthetic study to strengthen the stand of art education in Islamic countries will be included in this portion.

Early Initiatives in the Study of Islamic Art

It seems that besides the work of great Muslim historians such as Massawdi, Maqrizi, Yaqubi, and others, the East did, in fact, little to unfold the philosophy, history, and cultural significance of Islamic art compared to what the West did. That is not to say that the West succeeded in doing so, but a great contribution was made. One might wonder why the West began this pioneering job and how the interest in studying the art of other remote cultures was developed. Several factors--political, cultural, and geographical--have contributed to this situation.
While Europe was awakening in every aspect of its life and the industrial revolution was underway, the Islamic world under the leadership of the Ottomans was in a state of deep sleep. Backwardness spread and was noticeable in everything, including scientific research. On the other hand, Europe achieved great success in scientific research, as well as in the humanities. Later, parts of the Islamic world was colonized by Europe and great cultural centers such as Cairo, Damascus, and Baghdad were put under the supervision of alien power. This situation created a new reality which facilitated the acquisition of a great number of artifacts, manuscripts, and occasionally a part of a monument of Islamic architecture. It is understandable, then, how these art objects and literary sources became available to a wider range of audience and researchers in Europe. Furthermore, excavation of archeological sites was possible and sometimes funded by the authority in charge.

There is another cultural explanation for the interest of the West in Islamic art which could be regarded as purely aesthetic. Among several interpretations, the one introduced by Ettinghausen seems to be the most plausible to this researcher. To Ettinghausen, the interest in and appreciation of Islamic art, as well as other cultures' arts, flourished due to the ideal of the Romantic movement of the nineteenth century which was
fascinated by and admired the exotic and beautiful decoration of Islamic art and architecture. In this respect he states:

One wonders, of course, what caused this new appreciation of Muslim art. There is little doubt that it was due to the Romantic movement with its enthusiasm for early and distant civilizations. The period which admired the noble Greek and pious medieval Knight, which relished Greek and Gothic revivals, was naturally drawn to an art that had produced a structure like Alhambra, a place gilded by the spirits like a dream and filled with harmony. (p. 23)

While this was the attitude of the West toward the study of Islamic art, little attention was paid by Muslim scholars to the study of Islamic art as a discipline in its own right, especially in its early stage. On the other hand, the West was fascinated with Muslim art objects. Whether in the form of small utilitarian objects or great architectural monuments, the Europeans were frequently amazed by the novelty, beauty, and level of complexity that the Muslim artists brought to their work. In his famous article, "Islamic Art and Archeology," Ettinghausen (1951) stated that "indeed, as soon as Islamic art became known in the West it was greatly appreciated and those objects which reached Europe and later America, were often given a place of honor" (p. 17). It is not uncommon, then, to find a great deal of published research about Islamic art in European languages including English, French, German, and Spanish. The reason behind this astonishing corpus of research may be
twofold: 1) the great interest in and eagerness to study these art objects, as mentioned earlier, and 2) the availability of art objects in both private and nonprivate collections.

Although the interest in Islamic art ignited an early desire to collect artifacts belonging to the Islamic world such as coins, miniatures, textiles, rugs, metalwork, woodwork, etc., serious and scholarly studies concerning Islamic art did not take place until the nineteenth century. At that time, some of these studies had shortcomings and were erroneous to the point that they are today no longer considered scholarly in nature. Even though there is no fixed date as to when exactly scholarly interest in studying Islamic art first developed, several authors suggest that the last quarter of the eighteenth century witnessed a growing desire in collecting data about Islamic art. Since then, different approaches, methods, and concepts pertaining to the study of Islamic art have emerged, been developed, and used.

Two articles discuss the historical development of the study of Islamic art in depth. The first one is "Islamic Art and Archeology" by the late Richard Ettinghausen (1943), and the second is "Islamic Art and Archeology: The State of Art" by Oleg Grabar (1976). In the first article, Ettinghausen critically examines early initiatives in studying Islamic art, in which he sheds
some light on the pioneering job of early travelers and orientalists. He states that a point was reached in the beginning of the eighteenth century where scholarly interest in Muslim archeology began. He refers to a collection of Kufic coins dating back to the eighth and eleventh centuries as being the first "Muslim antiquities to enter Europe." These coins, in fact, generated several serious studies in numismatics and a large amount of literature was written about them. One of the first significant publications on Muslim numismatics was the monograph by George Jacob Kehr in 1724. Ettinghausen relates the importance of this book to its "correct reading of inscription and full comments" (p. 21). By the end of the eighteenth century, numerous publications about Islamic art, such as catalogues of coin collections, became available in various parts of Europe. Examples of these are collections in the Museum Culficum Borgianum in Rome, The Museo Naniano in Padua, and the Royal Library in Gohinen. Numismatics, then, was the first branch of Muslim archeology to be explored. Other branches such as painting, architecture, and the minor arts were attracting attention and soon became subjects for investigation.

It is safe to say that the early initiatives in the study of the history of Islamic art concentrated on archeological findings through the study of fields such as
epigraphy, paleography, numismatics, and so forth. Later on, attention was shifted to the study of artistic aspects of Islamic art as well. Style, technique, and iconography were the main elements by which an interpretation was given to the material that was discovered (p. 30). For example, Friedrich Sarre is a prolific scholar who surveyed a large number of Islamic architectural monuments, paintings, and works of the minor arts in approximately 200 books and articles from 1896 on. Through his efforts, an entire group of Islamic art objects were aligned with their historical and geographical place.

Combining the method of historical investigation with style analysis was a more advanced step in the history of the study of Islamic art. The first eminent scholar to combine these two methods was Ernest Herzfeld, whose publications range from 1907 to 1948. In the twentieth century there has been a move toward specialization which manifests itself in the study of a certain region, dynasty, or a single media. In spite of the method of investigation, the depth and breadth of the scholar is another factor that is of great importance to the study of Islamic art. Knowledge of the Islamic culture, its pattern of behavior, language, and tradition is essential. The effort of conservation and maintaining of Islamic art accounts for yet another factor in the development of the field. For example, without the help of Khedive Muhammad
Tawfiq, who established "Comité de Conservation des Moutments de l'art Arab" under the supervision of the ministry of Awqaf, many Islamic monuments and objects would have been lost or destroyed.

An initiative was also made in another branch of knowledge, with the establishment of societies and associations resulting in a number of journals appearing in print. Ars Islamicus, a journal which was published beginning in 1934 by Michigan University, is a good example of a quality publication about Islamic art. It appears to this researcher that despite the claims that the field is in its infancy, a great deal of effort has been made to understand the essence of Islamic art.

Approaches to the Study of Islamic Art

The gradual development of interest in studying Islamic art was discussed previously. Fertile ground was found in the West for planting the early seeds of the discipline. However, a more systematic analysis of the approaches which were sought, developed, and used to study Islamic art is provided by Grabar in his article, "Islamic Art and Archeology: The State of the Arts." According to Grabar, the development of the study of Islamic art has adopted four historical points of view. He further indicates that each point of view has had its impact on the development of the field, and has been
characterized by significant value as well as limitations. These four points of view, according to Grabar, may be joined under two fundamental approaches: 1) antiquarian-scholarly, and 2) synthetic or "problem oriented."

Two groups of scholars have adopted the first method: collectors and philologists. Although it is not clearly known which group started this approach, it is believed that it was the first to be established in the nineteenth century. Some of the pioneers of this approach were Lanci, Reinand, Coste, Dieulafoy, and Khanikoff. At an early time these scholars began studying ruined or standing monuments throughout the Islamic world or noticing Islamic art objects in collections. The first monumental endeavor of this tradition consisted of the pertinent volumes of Description de Egypt, published between 1809 and 1828 and produced as a result of the scientific research carried out during Napoleon's expedition to Egypt. It is believed that this immense work forms the basis of knowledge about Islamic archeology. Its nine volumes of text, ten volumes of plates, and an atlas cover the full range of Egypt's Islamic culture including architecture, coins, tools, illustrations of daily life, and copies of inscription.

According to Grabar, this first point of view possesses strengths and weaknesses. Its strengths are "a) its detached disciplinary rigor, b) its amazing spread
of coverage, and c) its requirement of knowledge of languages, both oriental and Western." Its weaknesses are its very detachment which makes its research not acceptable to a wide audience but to those who have a certain linguistic and intellectual background, its aloofness of the living culture of the Muslim world, and its lack of involvement of Muslim scholars in its early stage.

Grabar calls the second approach to the study of Islamic art local. It is related to the growth of new artificial nations throughout the Islamic world. This situation leads to the development of an interest in local initiatives with the cooperation of leading universities of the Western world, which have provided funding and technical assistance in the excavation of some sites. At times, administrators, architects, or other professionals are involved in conducting research in Islamic art and archaeology. An example of this approach can be seen in the cooperation of General de Beylie, who assisted in making possible the first excavation of an Islamic site in Algeria. Another example is the British sponsorship of the Archeological Survey of India or "Mubarak Pasha reporting on every street of Cairo with Magrizi description at hand" (p. 3). Grabar describes this as "a tradition which can be dully descriptive as annual reports of local department of antiquities or as ridiculously nationalist parochial as some earlier work in Turkey and
more recently in Central Asia" (p.3). He also points out the strengths of this tradition which can be summarized as follows: 1) the ability to examine thoroughly any local area, 2) the capability to conserve heritage in institutions such as museums, 3) the ability to gain support of the local government for conserving the national heritage, and 4) the involvement of Muslim scholars in the study of the arts of the Muslim world. The weaknesses of this tradition can be summarized as follows: 1) the job of discovering, maintaining, and publishing has always been beyond the financial, technical, or intellectual capability of many countries; and 2) "political realities" which cover variables such as national or "linguistic antagonisms." For example, books and knowledge rarely travel from Syria to Iraq or from Iran to Afghanistan or from Iran to what was Soviet Central Asia.

According to Grabar, the third approach to the study of Islamic art is called art historical or archeological. "Its central premise is that the Islamic component in the development of the discipline is secondary to its utilization of theories and principles valid for any art or excavation" (p. 5). For example, Grabar suggests that Meyer Shapiro tried to understand Islamic architecture as forms or as a component of a larger global system of interpreting visually-conceived characteristics. Stchoukine or S. C. Welch, on the other hand, thinks that
the "problems of Persian painting are not different, at least from an intellectual point of view, from those involved in identifying a Rembrandt drawing" (p. 5). From a stylistic perspective, this tradition profits from knowledge of formal analysis of the arts other than those of Islam. The advantages of the third approach are as follows: 1) it takes away the exoticism adherent to the first two points of view, 2) it introduces a global system of inquiry, and 3) it provides accessibility to the Muslim world to all those who are interested in studying archaeology or the arts.

The fourth approach which has had a great influence on the study of Islamic art, according to Grabar, is the Islamicist approach. The tradition of Islamicists involves the search for evidence and truth through the study of art objects and monuments which contain epigraphically significant information. It is also true that Islamicists saw in the visual heritage of the past an accurate, real, and precise document that could be used in interpreting a phenomenon. Therefore, this tradition realizes that epigraphy and numismatics are a potential field of activity for writing there was combined with an archaeological or artistic context.

According to Grabar, these four means of approaching Islamic art have been the basic component of substantial scholarship developed in the past 100 to 120 years. They
have had a tremendous influence on most of the work that has been conducted in the past and present. These four views have been either supplemented or even replaced by two unique approaches of studying the field of the visual world.

The first approach might be called the monographic approach, in which inquiry begins with a single art object or architectural monument and then extends from "its description into as many questions as possible" (p. 8). Grabar suggests that the effectiveness of this approach relies on two factors, the "quality and breadth of knowledge of the investigator." Grabar further states that it is an approach which is particularly characteristic of the art historian as a humanist, for its ultimate objective is the understanding of one single already-existing entity. At its extreme, it is applicable to the archaeologist who seeks to understand one particular site, but its greatest exponents have been the connoisseurs who date and identify the making of a work of art and iconographers who explain its subject matter (pp. 8-9).

The second approach is called synthetics or problem-oriented. Unlike the previous approach which begins from studying a single object and then expands, this approach begins with a broad issue or questions. For example, what was the architecture of a region or of a time, or what clothes were worn in the fourteenth century?
The Problem of Methodology

The study of Islamic art, as a field of specialization under the general rubric of art history, is still in its infancy (Grabar, 1983, p. 1). This claim may explain the tremendous need for more exploration of various concepts, hypotheses, and assertions regarding the formation of Islamic art. Fortunately, more serious studies are being done with consideration to the fundamental questions that have yet to be answered, such as the evolution of Islamic art, its nature, and character. However, according to the scholars, the study of Islamic art has always run the risk of a major problem. This is the methodology used to investigate the evolution, dynamics, and process of artistic development of a rich and continuous culture of more than a thousand years, spreading as far as Spain and Indonesia, is still undeveloped.

Some scholars agree (Grabar, 1972, 1983, 1987; Al-Faruqi & Al-Faruqi, 1982) that the problem of method used has been very significant. The phenomenon of Islamic art is very complex and would not be fully understood using a single method. According to Al-Faruqi (1982), two methods have been frequently and sometimes heavily employed by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. To study Islamic art from an historical perspective, either
chronological or territorial arrangement of data have been used, or in some cases, both methods were used. The chronological method is preferred and used extensively by Muslim authors when data is organized according to an era's main achievements.

The territorial method of arranging information has been of interest to non-Muslim authors who organize their materials according to various regions. According to Al-Faruqi, both methods have their disadvantages and shortcomings. Moreover, when they are combined, the deficiency of both methods is compounded. The solution lies, according to Al-Faruqi, in the phenomenological method: "Phenomenological method requires that the observer let the phenomena speak for themselves, rather then force them into predetermined ideational framework" (p. xii). If Al-Faruqi's position regarding the problem of methodology corresponds with any other assumption, it is that of Grabar in his remarkable article, "Reflection on the Study of Islamic Art." Grabar makes it clear from the outset that the field is still young. His analysis of this topic concerns how to approach it. His analysis, as we shall see in the following paragraph, calls for more dependable methods for interpreting Islamic art and its phenomena. Grabar argues that in the past, and more specifically, three decades ago, the study of Islamic art was rather simple. Three conventional methods were used:
archaeological excavation, the collection of art objects, and orientalism or traveling. Although studies using these methods paved the way for subsequent and new questions and investigations, the phenomenon of Islamic art and its formation requires more advanced methods of interpretation.

Grabar (1983) states,

Instead of adapting traditional methodologies to Islamic art, we could test a new system of analysis through a sign system. We might thereby accelerate awareness and understanding of Islamic monuments by using forms more accessible to the contemporary world than those that require an endless study of languages and catalogs. (p. 4).

Here, Grabar raises a fundamental question regarding which method and material would be useful in finding answers to new issues, such as "how did housing develop," "how did ceramic techniques spread," or "how did construction devices develop." These are but a few of the many questions that are being raised and have yet to be fully addressed. Grabar proposed three sources from which new avenues could be opened for more exploration of Islamic art: (1) inscriptions found on monument art, (2) writing, or literary sources, and (3) the works of art themselves. However, he did not claim that these sources have not been used, but that using new methods for interpretation, such as the phenomenological, might be fruitful.

1) In regard to inscriptions, Grabar states:
An obvious example can be found among the tomb inscriptions in Egypt; they could provide the basis for social and ideological history of Muslim Egypt and a better understanding of its monuments. (p. 14)

2) Using written sources is of great importance, as Grabar indicates, in that some hints or clues may suggest, explain, or lead to a broader understanding of a certain technique, its development, or creation. Examples of this are Muruj al-Dhahab, the Mugaddimah, and Kitab al-Muwashat.

3) The third source is the thorough analysis of works of art pertinent to a certain period. Six directories for analysis are suggested by Grabar:

1. Total clarity versus total incoherence
2. One subject versus uncertainty of subject
3. Simplicity of composition versus complexity of composition
4. Traditional versus invented motifs
5. Precise versus imprecise outline of motifs
6. High versus low quality design

Providing answers about the style or technique of specific periods or areas is the major objective of this approach, which tends to aim at existing documents in the quest of such an answer. Again, to Grabar, the major weakness of this approach may be found in the bias, susceptibility, and superficiality that is not controllable. He further remarks that "the best" scholarship tends to mix the two approaches for a better fruit.
The Achievements of the Study of Islamic Art

From the outset, Grabar has introduced a criterion by which one can evaluate the achievements of the field. He points out three elements as necessary components of any field of endeavor: 1) adequacy, 2) accessibility, and 3) theoretical framework.

Adequacy

Grabar has defined adequacy as the availability of sufficient information published in a satisfying manner about a monument which was acquired through "direct contact." Taking architecture as a case in point, according to Grabar, an example of adequacy would be the study of architecture in Spain, North Africa, Egypt (until 1350), Anatolia, Azerbayian, and Soviet Central Asia. The monuments of the early period of Islamic architecture in Palestine, Syria, and Iraq are also available in adequate number. Information about Islamic architecture in Iran and Afghanistan is so scarce that a course of study would be difficult to prepare on those regions. The case for painting in general is not satisfactory. For Iran, Stchoukine's survey is good, although the reproduction plates are not. The situation for the minor arts is better than that for paintings. Inlaid metalwork, for example, from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is adequately available. The efforts of D. S. Rice is
noticeable in this regard. Glass and ivories are available through the effort of Lamm and Kuhnel. The situation is different for rugs, carpets, and other textiles because these crafts are surveyed in great detail.

Although what is available varies from one medium to another, it is believed that the information available in print or in archives is tremendous and should be accessible to the public. Part of the problem of the field lies in the unknown or unused materials in museums' archives around the world. That, of course, leads us to another problem, which is accessibility.

**Accessability**

Grabar identifies accessibility as one of the problems that hinders the development of the field. What he means by accessibility is that a great deal of information is, in fact, available about Islamic art. For example, most of the results of excavations are either published or available in their original form. However, for the student of Islamic art or even the scholar, it is not always easy to find the necessary data in sufficient quantity or quality. The problem is not that severe for those who can travel in the Islamic countries. As Grabar states, "most monuments of architecture can be visited and most museum collections are open" (p. 14). It may be a problem when one needs assistance in understanding a
monument or an object, because for most museums such information is not always available.

Accessibility also has another form, as Grabar points out. Many books about Islamic art have been written in various languages, but students sometimes do not find these books translated in their native language or a language they can understand. It has been estimated that works about Islamic art are available in 25 different languages. Of course, no scholar or student can be acquainted with all these languages. Sometimes, this particular problem deprives researchers of important information necessary for their studies. The solution lies in the translation of major and significant works to live languages which should be available to all students of Islamic art.

Theoretical Framework

Grabar begins this part of his essay by questioning whether hypotheses exist about Islamic art that can help in understanding the artistic process. To him, the Muslim attitude toward images is an area that has been elaborated upon more than any other area. Second, to study the attitude of Muslims toward images comes the problem of arabesque, which was studied from both technical and aesthetic points of view.

However, a systematic and well-developed theory has not yet been introduced to interpret the essence and
philosophy of Islamic art in general. Even calligraphy, which is regarded as the peak of visual expression in the Islamic world, has not been adequately studied and explored.

Grabar also remarks,

But in a broader sense, what has not yet been achieved is a proper explanation of the epistemological significance of the visual arts in an understanding of the culture and a system of qualitative evaluation of individual monuments. (p. 19)

Grabar hopes that the field can develop a number of hypotheses that are "generally accepted about a tradition's character." He also speculates about the sources from which such hypotheses should stem. Three sources have been identified: 1) the field itself, 2) other theories already established, and 3) the Muslim world itself, which could attempt to explain its culture in a manner similar to scholars in China attempting to understand their own culture. Scholars found themselves in disagreement regarding this matter, resulting in four different views.

First, some scholars think that the field is still too young to advance such theoretical framework. Others think that the solution lies in a complete understanding of the essence of Western art before attempting to understand Muslim art. A third opinion regards the theoretical considerations as a secondary issue in terms of importance that should be taken as personal preference.
The fourth opinion disagrees with the previous views. It sees the potential of a well-developed theoretical framework within a field that is still in its infancy because it is not yet overwhelmed with established views and opinions.

The Study of Islamic Art from an Educational Perspective

Although this study has no direct antecedents in its subject matter or methodology, there are a number of studies that have been conducted on similar subjects. Studies dealing with Islamic art can be found in an exclusively historical context or related somewhat to art in education. It should be noted that the studies dealing with Islamic art from historical and cultural perspectives outnumber the studies related to art education (Ettinghausen, 1974, 1987, 1985; Grabar, 1954, 1959, 1987, 1983; Creswell, 1932, 1940, 1946; Bloom, 1980; Bahnassi, 1979; Aga-Oglu, 1954; El-Said & Parman, 1976; Al-Tabba, 1982). This researcher is more interested in those studies dealing with Islamic art from educational perspectives. Therefore, the following literature is related to art education in general.

Dosqui (1977) wrote a master's thesis about the vegetal decoration of Mamluk ceramics in Egypt and its potential as a source for enriching the aesthetic
experience of art teachers. This study focuses on the importance of ceramics design in the Mamluk era, its elements, and foundation. Dosqui has undertaken a brief analysis of the source from which the Mamluk decoration on ceramics came. Moreover, Dosqui sheds some light on the characteristics of Mamluk ceramics, the various kinds, and the method of production. Three eminent ceramists of that period were chosen for analysis of their work, similarities and differences, and the artistic merit in their work. The findings of this study are as follows:

1. There is evidence that the expressive decorative style was widespread in Mamluk ceramics work.
2. The style that has vegetal decoration on sgraffito ceramics is an innovation of the Mamluk era because there was no indication of it in previous ceramics production.
3. The study of artistic heritage is an important source from which college students' experience could be enriched.

Dosqui suggests developing a program that helps preservice teachers appreciate Mamluk ceramics, its method of production, technique, innovativeness, and style. This would be achieved, Dosqui explains, through regular visits to museums of Islamic art, displaying examples of Mamluk ceramics, and utilization of vegetal design. However, Dosqui's study focuses only on the study of Mamluk
ceramics and its decoration—it did not deal comprehensively with the phenomena of Islamic art. Islamic art encompasses many forms of art, in different eras and regions and it should be introduced to the student of art as a whole.

In an unpublished doctoral dissertation, Shaban (1978), an Egyptian art educator, addresses the topic of Islamic design, the method of printmaking in Egypt, and its implication for the preparation of art teachers. The lack of understanding of the process of printmaking and the usage of unsystematic patterns by art teachers encouraged Shaban to conduct this study. She believes that by studying Islamic decoration, its element, composition, and method as applied to textiles, she may enhance students' awareness of design problems and solutions in Islamic art.

Shaban followed several steps in the process of conducting her study. First, she identified various decorative units and their vegetal, geometric, or zoomorphic elements. Second, she identified the method of distribution, repetition, and the overall concept that characterized the design. Finally, she designed an experimental unit of instruction for college students to test how beneficial her research findings were in practice.
The fruitfulness of this study stems from its pioneering effort in explaining the aesthetic tradition behind the production of Islamic decoration and patterns, the usage of various elements of decoration, the abstract nature of Islamic art design, and the artistic solution of arranging and managing the space. In addition, its educational application for improving the teaching of printmaking at the college level adds to its significance. Nevertheless, this study, as well as the preceding one, focuses on the possibility of improving studio practice through the utilization of artistic heritage. It did not discuss the potential of using other means to educate about the nature and scope of Islamic patterns.

In her doctoral dissertation, *The Fundamentals of Miniature Design in the Arab School and Its Effect on the Teaching of Design Course for Art Teachers*, Al-Sajeni (1978) addresses the issue of using artistic heritage in art education. Her main objective was to study the fundamentals of miniature design in the Arab tradition. Through a systematic analysis of miniatures, she asserts, the concept of aesthetic dimension of artistic heritage will be revealed and can be further employed in teaching design. The study seems to be unfocused and unnarowed, due to the various topics it addresses--each topic could be a study of its own. The dissertation consists of eighteen chapters, dealing with the design of miniatures
and a number of other related and unrelated subjects. However, this study shares some similarities with the preceding ones. Its ultimate aim was to introduce art teachers to their cultural heritage and suggest multiple alternatives that the study of artistic heritage would provide.

Thoria (1978) conducted a study of the classification of zoomorphic elements in Egyptian Islamic art, from the early Islamic conquest until the end of the Fatimid era, and their application in art education. This study, like the previous ones, makes its focal point the decorative elements of Islamic art. Therefore, it undertakes an historical analysis of zoomorphic decoration throughout the period from the seventh to the eleventh centuries.

The four studies reviewed so far share a common ground among them, which manifests itself in the researchers' ultimate objectives. It is apparent that the predominant concern is to teach studio courses or to enhance art teachers' studio skill, be it in design, ceramics, or printmaking. The focus, therefore, was not on how incorporating artistic heritage within art curriculum would be beneficial in the way the youngsters perceive art and appreciate its value and role in society.

This study differs from the preceding studies in that it focuses on developing a model of curriculum which will help art teachers to see how multiple dimensions of
Islamic art could be emphasized. The method used in conducting this inquiry is also different. It allows for an in-depth examination of scholarly contributions in Islamic art and uses their expertise as a guidance in teaching Islamic art.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

As mentioned in Chapter I, the problem of this study was to find alternative approaches to teaching Islamic art history. This chapter, therefore, will focus on the research methodology and procedure used in this study. It will also provide sections related to the selection of representative art historians and their works.

The procedures employed in this study are as follows:
1. The selection of primary representatives of Islamic art historians. K. A. C. Creswell, R. Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar were selected for examination.
2. The development of an instrument to be used as a guide in the analysis of the historians' works.
3. A comprehensive analysis of each historian's writing.
4. A comparative analysis of each historian's views with emphasis on respective similarities and differences and interpretation of key concepts having to do with the formation, evolution, and development of Islamic art.
5. Implication for alternative approaches for teaching Islamic art history, including content and activity which are to be drawn from the results of the findings.

Criteria for the Selection of Art Historians

The selection of Islamic art historians involved the following considerations:

1. Their prolific and major contributions to the field of Islamic art and architecture
2. Their sophisticated treatment of the complexity of Islamic art in general and its philosophy in particular
3. The originality and independence of their views
4. The availability and accessibility of their works to the researcher, including the availability of their writings in sufficient quantity and in languages accessible to the researcher

In the following pages a brief biography of each scholar will be presented, the purpose of which is to justify the selection of the three most suitable Islamic art historians for this study.

K. A. C. Creswell

Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell was born in London on September 13, 1879. He obtained his formal education by attending Westminster School, and later, the City and Guilds Technical College. In this institution, Creswell
mastered draftsmanship which assisted him in plan drawings of Muslim monuments. His interest in the East was fostered by his reading of famous fairy tales such as "The Thousand and One Nights." George Rawlinson's *Seven Oriental Monarchies* was the second work that enriched Creswell's experience and strengthened his desire to study Muslim culture.

When Creswell was 31 years old, he began the study of Muslim art. As a result, he established an extensive private library on the subject. Creswell was anxious to travel to the East to seek his interest. However, the lack of sufficient funds prevented him from doing so. Then a series of historical events occurred that changed Creswell's life. On November 1, 1916, he was sent to Egypt to serve as a second lieutenant. Shortly after that he was assigned the position of staff captain to Major General Sir Geoffrey Salmond and later on, to Major General Sir Sefton Banker.

When Creswell published *A Brief Chronology of the Muhammadan Monuments of Egypt* in June 1919, it gave him some recognition in scholarly circles. Therefore, when a vacancy for a position of Inspector of Monuments occurred in the O.E.T.A. of Syria (Occupied Enemy Territory Administration), Creswell was appointed to the position within a team of two French and two British members. He then moved to Aleppo on August 4, 1919. In Aleppo he made
a photographic inventory of fifty-nine Muslim buildings and drew plans of about fifteen of them. An extensive survey of eastern Syria was undertaken shortly afterward.

As a result of the change in the political climate in the region and conflict of interest between the British and the French, the British forces had to withdraw from north Syria in November 1919. Creswell was transferred to Amman, and later to O.E.T.A. in Haifa. There he teamed up with the archaeologist E. J. H. MacKay to do more effective work. They divided the area from Jaffa to Jerusalem to be surveyed individually. Creswell took the responsibility of the northern area.

The next major work Creswell thought of was writing a history of Muslim architecture in Egypt. However, a project as large and significant as this one required additional support, both financially and morally. His first thought was to approach the British Embassy for help. However, a friend suggested to him that King Fouad of Egypt might be interested in the project. A detailed proposal for the study was prepared and presented to His Majesty, and the King agreed to support the project.

Creswell needed his private library to start this project, so he planned to bring it to Egypt. After a series of difficult obstacles due to World War I, Creswell went to London where he gathered his library and headed back to Egypt. In October 1920 he arrived at Alexandria
port with twenty-two cases containing his entire library. The next step was to find a comfortable place for himself and his books. In Sharia Hasan al-Akbar Creswell found a large and airy apartment in a newly-constructed building which he moved into and this remained his home for the next thirty-six years.

Having settled down, Creswell started working on his project. He devoted the period from October to June to working on his "history," which involved activities such as measuring, photographing, and drawing the plans of monuments. He went to London from July to September to collect data for his second large project, *A Bibliography of the Architecture, Arts, and Crafts of Islam*. The year 1932 witnessed the publication of the first volume of Creswell's *Early Muslim Architecture*, which covered the period of the Umayyads, up to 750 A.D. The second volume appeared in 1940 and covered the Early Abbasids, the Umayyads of Cordova, the Aghlabids, Tulunids, and Samanids. In 1952 *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt, I. Ikhshids and Fatimids* was published by the Oxford University Press. The second part of this work was published in 1959. In 1961 his gigantic work, *A Bibliography of the Architecture, Arts, and Crafts of Islam* was published by the American University.
International Recognition

Professor Creswell's work on the history of Muslim architecture was widely recognized by both government and private agencies. The Egyptian government recognized Creswell's endeavor by appointing him a professor of Muslim art and architecture at Fouad I University in 1931. He was made the Commander of the Order of Ismail and he received the Syrian Order of Merit (First Class).

In 1946 he received a Doctorate of Literature from Oxford University. In 1947 he was chosen to be a fellow of the British Academy. During the same year Professor Creswell was invited by Princeton University to act as the head of the department on Near Eastern art and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Literature. In 1948 he was given the Sir Percy Sykes Memorial Medal from the Royal Central Asian Society and became an honorary member of several societies. In 1955 in recognition of his major achievement, he was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Her Majesty, the Queen. In 1959 he was awarded the Triennial Gold Medal by the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain.

Major Publications


Richard Ettinghausen

Richard Ettinghausen was born in Germany in 1906. He began his work in the field of Islamic art by studying the Arabic language. Throughout his professional life he contributed greatly to the advancement of the field. His work was described by his colleague, Oleg Grabar, as both revolutionary and genuine in nature. Ettinghausen was famous for his keen observation and awareness of subtle differences of Islamic art objects in their style, technique, and motif. During the years he spent studying art objects, Ettinghausen's experience was enriched to the degree that he became one of the world's experts in Islamic art. It is this aspect of his scholarship that enabled him to supervise and create many Islamic art
collections, galleries, or museums. He was also well known for his vast knowledge of both historical and cultural aspects of Islamic art. His article on Fatimid painting, published in 1942, best illustrates this fact.

During the course of his career, Ettinghausen occupied many important positions. He was a professor of Islamic art at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University until 1979. He was also the chairman of the Islamic Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He edited *Ars Islamica* and *Ars Orientalis*. Ettinghausen participated in arranging exhibitions for Islamic art in Freer Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Ettinghausen also assisted and advised many institutes in their collections of Islamic art objects. An example of this would be the creation of the Institute for Islamic Art at the L. A. Mayer Memorial Foundation. This collection of fine Islamic art in particular was the fruit of his expertise and tireless effort.

Ettinghausen contributed to the study of Islamic art by advancing new approaches and methods of inquiry. Using a combination of iconographic, epigraphic, and stylistic analysis, he uncovered the social history of the Muslim world through the study of art objects. Grabar best described Ettinghausen's scholarship when he stated:

> With studies ranging from Spanish ceramics to Indian painting and from Sasanian metalwork to the seventeenth century, Ettinghausen is the most brilliant representative of a scholarship which was so steeped
in the knowledge of objects and techniques and which, thanks to him, became so aware of cultural subtleties that it was able to move securely from era to era and century to century. Whether in our age of nationalism and of technical and archaeological specialization such depth will still be possible remains to be seen. (pp. 12-13)

Ettinghausen was apprised by a number of his students and colleagues for his kindness, wittiness, and humanity. This aspect of his character enabled him to earn the friendship, sincerity, and loyalty of many students and colleagues all over the world.

Publications

Throughout his productive life, Ettinghausen was known to be a prolific scholar. He wrote in almost every aspect of Islamic art. At the time of his death, he left numerous widely-recognized and breathtaking books and articles, some of which are listed below:


Oleg Grabar

Oleg Grabar is one of the most influential scholars in Islamic art, not only through his own work, but also through the work of his countless students around the world who were inspired by him. Born in Strasbourg, France in 1929, Oleg Grabar came to America for a higher education. In 1950 he received his B.A. from Harvard University, his M.A. in 1953, and a Ph.D. in 1955 from Princeton University in Oriental languages and literatures and history of art. In 1954 he began teaching in the Department of History of Art at Michigan University. He became a professor in 1965, and in 1968 he accepted a position as post-professor of Islamic art. In 1980 Grabar was named the Aga Khan Professor of Islamic Art. Through his long professional career, Grabar has written about 128 books and articles in Islamic art and architecture. He also supervised more than 50 doctoral dissertations in seven universities. Grabar has received many honorary awards and has been selected as a member of many international academies and organizations, including the American Philosophical Society, the German Archaeological Institute, and the British Academy. Some of his notable books and articles are as follows:


Instrumentation

The second part of this chapter on methodology is concerned with the design of an instrument that will help the researcher in his analysis of the historians' writings. The kinds of questions/issues with which it will deal are as follows:

I. What do historians of Islamic art in question do when they treat the issue of the formation of Islamic art?

A. How do they interpret the formative evolution and process of creation of Islamic art?

1. To what factor (or factors) do they attribute its creation, and on what grounds do they base their interpretation?

2. What are their points of view regarding the concept of absolute and relative time of its
creation, as well as the characteristics of Islamic art?

B. What sorts of evidence do they have for their interpretation?
   1. What is their method of conducting research?
   2. What are the sources that they use to deal with historical events?

II. What do Islamic art historians do when they discuss works of Islamic art?

A. How do they analyze, interpret, and evaluate works of Islamic art?
   1. What mode(s) of historical inquiry do they utilize (e.g., intrinsic, extrinsic, or integrative)?
   2. What critical approach do they employ when talking about a work of Islamic art?

III. What alternatives would this study generate for teaching Islamic art?

A. Could a model be developed based on the views of Islamic art scholars regarding the phenomenon of Islamic art?
   1. Can the views presented by the historians of Islamic art help in providing options for selecting content and developing methods for teaching Islamic art?
CHAPTER IV
PART A
ANALYSIS OF THE WRITINGS
OF K. A. C. CRESWELL

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the writings of three Islamic art historians which were selected for this purpose (see Chapter III for criteria). The problem and background of this study was articulated in Chapter I, in which the issue of teaching Islamic art history in Saudi Arabian public schools was highlighted. The traditional method used by art teachers in the public schools focuses on the technicalities of designing decorations and uses Islamic art examples in this studio context.

One may assume that there are other ways that Islamic art examples may be studied in the public school. I propose that art history be inculcated or integrated in the studio curriculum. The question is, "How might public school students study art history?" In this chapter an exam and analysis of critical writings of Islamic art scholars will be conducted. From this
analysis it may become apparent that the art history method of inquiry can serve as a means to improve or strengthen the way Islamic art is studied by students.

The three art historians who were selected (K. A. C. Creswell, Richard Ettinghausen, and Oleg Grabar) meet the criteria set forth by this researcher (see Chapter III for criteria). Since these scholars have written about various topics relating to Islamic art, writings which pertain to our purpose will be selected for analysis. This necessitates sorting out the most useful books and articles that can assist the researcher in answering this study’s research questions.

Three broad topics will be emphasized as they relate to this study: 1) philosophical consideration having to do with the nature of Islamic art, its formation, its development, and its characteristics; 2) artistic and aesthetic consideration which involves stylistic analysis, analysis of interpretive and evaluative statements about Islamic artwork; and 3) methodological considerations having to do with historical method of inquiry used by the three art historians.

The selection of representative writings from each historian will be based on the following:

1. Writings which have to do with the formation of Islamic art and its classical moment and development.
2. Writings which relate to aesthetic and artistic aspects of Islamic art.

3. Writings which contain each historian's point of view regarding the best method of inquiry for Islamic art.

After reviewing available published materials concerning Islamic art by the three art historians, priority was given to recent publications with emphasis on those relating to the questions posed by this study. Although each scholar has written extensively about Islamic art, each of them has become famous for his contribution to a certain era, region, or medium. For example, Creswell has contributed greatly to the study of Islamic architecture in general, and the early period of architecture in particular. Grabar has written on the subject of the formation of Islamic art and his book's title testifies to that. Ettinghausen, on the other hand, has written about almost everything, but his writings on the philosophy of Islamic art could not be ignored. Therefore, there will be some emphasis on each scholar's area of interest as it relates to this study.

Each art historian's representative writings will be analyzed in the following categories using the system that this researcher has developed (see Chapter III for instrument):

1. Their concepts of how, when, and where Islamic art was formed and flourished.
2. Their points of view regarding the characteristics, style, and technique of Islamic art.
3. Their concepts of the way Islamic art should be approached and the most suitable method for it.

Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell is a well-known scholar and historian of Islamic art and architecture. His contribution to the study of Muslim architecture is so extensive that he could safely be considered one of the leading authorities on it.

As a young boy, Creswell dreamed of the east with its mysterious lifestyle and culture. At that early age reading oriental fairy tales such as "One Thousand and One Nights" strengthened his desire to learn more about the east and perhaps left a serious impression on his memory. This was proven to be true when, as a young man, he started studying Muslim art. He also created a private library on the subject which assisted him in his endeavor.

Creswell's work on Muslim architecture, such as Early Muslim Architecture and The Muslim Architecture of Egypt, is considered by some scholars as the basis of this field of inquiry. Creswell spent two-thirds of his active life studying Islamic architecture and his scholarship was characterized by faithful dedication and a long-term endeavor. He spent twenty years working on his History of Early Muslim Architecture, which consists of two large volumes, the second of which is divided into two parts.
Creswell's scholarship was also characterized by a precise description of monuments and vast knowledge and utilization of medieval sources. In addition, he was talented and skillful in both plane drawing and photography, which assisted him in his career. The amount and quality of plans, maps, and photographs testifies to this fact.

The Genesis of Islamic Art and Architecture

The issue of the formation of Islamic art is very significant for anyone who is concerned with the cultural aspects of Islamic civilization. For the student in public schooling, learning about the philosophical domain of this great art is essential. From here stems the importance of analyzing each art historian regarding the genesis of Islamic art.

Although Creswell did not deal directly with the issue of the formation of Islamic art in general, he discussed in detail the evolution of Muslim architecture in *Early Muslim Architecture*. He begins his analysis with the period preceding the rise of Islam, with the city of Makkah in particular. The reason for choosing Makkah was to find evidence of the type and style of architecture that had existed at that time. Since there are no actual remains of that period allowing for physical examination, Creswell's only option was to rely on the description of medieval historians. Their reports of cities, towns, and
monuments became an indispensable source in unfolding what had taken place in the early days of Islam.

The method that Creswell used to analyze the evolution of architecture is chronological in nature. Starting with religious architecture in Makkah and taking the "kaba" as a case in point, he reached the conclusion that the "kaba" was not an example of mosque construction. According to Creswell (using the accounts of Azraqi and Ibn Hisham) the "kaba" is described as a cubic building, oblong in shape and having the following measurements: 32 cubits northeast, 22 cubits northwest, 31 cubits southwest, and 20 cubits southeast.

The "kaba" was later rebuilt fourteen years before Higira, or migration to Madina (608 A.D.). The new "kaba" was described as a cubic building whose walls consisted of courses of stone and wood, equaling 31 courses altogether. There are different interpretations concerning how it was built and where the style and technique came from. However, Creswell suggests it came from Abyssinia, because a similar style of architecture exists there. Creswell came to the conclusion that no great architectural achievements actually existed in Makkah before Islam. Other scholars such as King (1990) and Grabar (1990) may not agree with Creswell. They base their disagreement on the following considerations:
1) Creswell's knowledge of Arabia was limited, especially pertaining to pre-Islamic architecture. For example, he had never been to Arabia and had not visited the sites of significant value to his investigations, such as Ma'rib, Mada'in Salih, and the town of Ukhdud.

2) His "ideological prejudices, as in the avoidance of historical or cultural contexts."

Since the situation was not in favor of the faithful at Makkah, and pagan Arabs tried to annihilate them and prevent them from practicing their religion with its full rituals, they had to migrate to Madina. This was the first step in fully establishing the religion and its material culture. As we know, the Muslims at Makkah during this period were not allowed to practice one of Islam's most important pillars, which is five daily prayers or "salat."

Although a Muslim can pray anywhere when it is prayer time, in the Muslim community prayer is usually performed collectively. A mosque is a necessity, therefore, and thus stems its importance. Several mosques existed in Madina, but the largest and most significant is the Prophet Mosque. Creswell emphasizes this fact:

I therefore, propose first to describe, naturally from literary sources, the first monument in Islam—the house which Muhammad built on his arrival at Madina, of which the courtyard eventually became the first mosque.
This mosque introduced the simplest form of religious buildings in Islam. It was simple not only in its plan and design, but also in the materials that were used to erect it. The mosque of Madina was described by Creswell, who used the account of Ibn Said:

It consists of an enclosure of mud brick about 100 cubits (56 yards) square, with walls 7 cubits high and portico on the north side made of palm trunks used as columns to support a roof of palm leaves and mud. Against the outer side of the east wall were built small huts (hujra) for the prophet’s wives [which] all opened into the courtyard. (p. 4) (see Figure 1)

Architectural monuments exist on the northern side of Arabia, such as Mada’in Salih, and in the south in Yemen, such as the Dama of Marib and others, are but examples of high quality architecture. New archeological discoveries in Arabia such as the Village of Fow and more recently, the city of Abar, may change Creswell’s theory of the nonexistence of significant architecture in the Arabian Peninsula.

Later development of the mosque includes two types. The first one, according to Creswell, took place in newly-founded towns, such as Kufa, Basra in Iraq, or Fustat in Egypt. The second type occurred in preexisting cities or towns, such as Damascus or Jerusalem in Syria. The former type developed gradually, from simple to complex; the latter type developed from complex structures to very sophisticated ones. In the case of newly-founded towns, the mosque’s plan and structure resembled that of the
Figure 1. Madinah. Prophet's mosque, reconstructed plan.

Prophet's Mosque in Madina. In this respect Creswell states:

It was small and primitive and measured only 50 by 30 cubits, say 29 by 17 meters (95 by 56 ft.). It had two doors on every side except on the gibla side. The roof was very low and there was no interior court. The floor was not paved, but simply strewn with pebbles. (p. 8)

In regard to the situation in Syria he states:

In Syria at this time we do not hear of any building activity, no doubt owing to the fact that in most towns the Muslims had either divided or taken complete possession of the principal church. In Mesopotamia, however, conditions were different, for two new towns, Basra and Kufa, had been founded, and it is here apparently that Muslim architecture really began to make progress under Ziyad Ibn Abihi who was appointed Governor of Basra in 665. (p. 9)

Creswell, therefore, speaks of mosques that resulted from the transformation of preexisting buildings and others which were established, as simple as they might be, and passed through a series of developmental stages. Each phase enlarged their size and enhanced their quality. This leads us to the mosques' furnishings, as well as the origin of some elements.

As discussed earlier, Creswell investigated the development of Islamic architecture and touched on one of the major arts of Islam. Architecture, in fact, possesses many accessories or furnishings and art forms such as woodwork, metalwork, ceramics, etc. Thus, one could easily study the development and evolution of Islamic art by focusing only on Islamic architecture.
I will further elaborate on the mosque's development and its furnishings to show how Creswell tackled the question of the formation of Islamic art by dealing with architecture. Furthermore, he talked about the origin of some styles, techniques, and ideas.

The Development and Evolution of Mosques and Their Furnishings

During the period called "primitive caliphate" by some authors which includes the four orthodox caliphs (632) and the reign of Mu'awiya (680), mosques seemed to be very simple in form, plan, and decoration. The first construction of Kufa mosque, for example (built in 637 by Sa'd and rebuilt in 670 by Ziyad), was similar in plan to the Medina mosque, with the exception of three additional porticos added on three other sides of the former mosque and an increase in the number of entrances. The original construction of Kufa mosque by Sa'd, according to Creswell (1989), measured 103.6 m. per side. The rebuilding of Kufa mosque later on by Ziyad measured almost the same. At the time of Ziyad, however, new materials of construction were used, such as drum columns that were described to be as high as 15 m. to make the mosque one of the first buildings of that time in terms of height.
A model of the first generation of mosques is found in Egypt. The Mosque of Amr, according to Creswell who used the description of Abu Sa'id Sulaf al-Himyari, was built at Fustat in 640-41. The measurement of the mosque is approximately 29 x 17 meters, with two doors existing on each side, with the exception of the qibla wall. "The roof was very low and there was no interior court." The floor was not paved, but simply strewn with pebbles (p. 8). A mosque in Jerusalem is described as having the capacity to hold 3,000 men, comprised of three aisled porticos. Creswell remarks,

It was like a basilica, of which the side aisles were 30 feet wide and 50 feet high and the central aisle half as wide again and twice as high, which certainly implies clerestory lighting. There were 162 columns of the Corinthian order, set in four rows, of which the southern were bonded into the outer wall, whereas the northern formed the facade on the court. (p. 8)

The first generation of mosques as architectural forms imitated as closely as possible the prototype of the Medina mosque. There was no mihrab, nor was there a minaret, and the construction material was simple and primitive. The early generation of mosques, however, were later rebuilt and enlarged. Greater attention was paid to the construction of the mosque, some stemming from religious motivation, while others were merely political. Creswell dwells on the political reasons that affected the shape and material of the mosque:

Ziyad, who was well acquainted with the turbulent spirit of the cities of 'Iraq, thoroughly realized
the political importance of the mosque, that dominating position in which was concentrated at that time the political and social life of the Arab Empire. At the same time he felt that the masjids of the tribes were a danger to him, hence his anxiety to embellish and enlarge the Great Mosque, so that by its splendour and proportions it would eclipse the tribal masjids and attract all to it. (p. 9)

Therefore, the previously-mentioned mosques of Medina, Kufa, Basra, and Fustat were reconstructed, enlarged, and enhanced. Upon the request of Ziyad Ibn Abihi, the Kufa mosque was rebuilt by consulting skillful architects and craftsmen. Creswell uses the Tabari account of the event, saying that a man who had participated in the building of Khusrau suggested that a magnificent mosque could be erected by using columns from Jable Ahwaz. The mosque was built with sides (side porticos and back porticos). The result was, according to Creswell, who used Ibn Jubayr's description as he saw it in 1184:

A vast mosque, the qibla side has five aisles, whereas the rest have two only; the aisles are supported by columns like masts, composed of hard blocks of stone superimposed piece by piece, bedded on lead, and not surmounted by arches; extremely high, they go up to the ceiling of the mosque. I have nowhere seen a mosque of which the columns are so long or the ceiling so elevated. (p. 9)

The mosque of Amr in Fustat was also demolished and rebuilt, after people complained that it was too small. Caliph Mu'awiya ordered Maslama, the governor of Egypt at that time, to enlarge the mosque. The importance of this reconstruction is the introduction of the first form of minaret. Creswell quotes Maqrizi: "The khalif Mu'awiya
ordered Maslama to build 'sawami' [plural of sawma'a] to call for prayer."

**High Caliphate Period**

During the high caliphate period, construction of the mosque became more sophisticated and more advanced techniques and methods of building were used. Whether it was a new building such as the Dome of the Rock mosque, Damascus Great Mosque, or reconstruction of old sanctuaries such as the Aqsa or Medina mosques, very magnificent material and craftsmanship were employed for their construction. The reason for this may be the wealth of the empire and the desire to make religious buildings as beautiful and magnificent as the Christian churches which existed in Syria and Palestine at that time. This is manifested in the Muqaddasi explanation of the reason for building the Dome of the Rock mosque by Abd al-Malik in 691-692. Creswell (1989) quotes Muqaddasi, who tells what his uncle told him:

> Syria had long been occupied by the Christians and that it was full of beautiful churches still belonging to them, so enchantingly fair and so renowned for their splendour, such as the church of the Holy Sepulchre and the churches of Lydda and Edessa, ... And in like manner the Khalif 'Abd al-Malik, noting the greatness of the Church of Holy Sepulchre and its magnificence, was moved lest it should dazzle the minds of the Muslims, and hence erected above the Rock the dome which is now to be seen there. (p. 20)

Although Islamic architecture had achieved splendid quality during the High Caliphate period, be it in the
form of religious or secular buildings, examples of this era is sufficient to differentiate it from previous and later periods. The congregational mosques erected under the Umayyad caliphs, and later under the Abbasid, were characterized by their huge size, probably because the mosques were used for religious and political purposes.

The mosques show great and magnificent structure, decoration, and use of valuable material, which indicates the state of security, prosperity and economic wealth of the Islamic empire. Examples of this are the mosques built in al-Walid’s reign, such as Damascus Mosque, Medina Mosque (rebuilt), and Jerusalem Mosque. Many new functional parts such as the mihrab, the dome, and minaret were either introduced for the first time, or developed in a remarkable way. An example of this is the introduction of concave mihrab by Caliph al-Walid in the Medina Mosque. Creswell refers to the account of Ibn Duqmaq and Maqrizi ("the latter quoting Waqidi, who died in 823"), stating that Umar Ibn Abd al-‘Aziz was the first person to make a mihrab in the form of a niche. The second example of mihrab in Islam was erected in the rebuilt mosque of Amr in Fustat.

The mosques of the early Islamic period were either square or rectangular, although an exception to this generalization can be found in the Dome of the Rock. The Damascus Great Mosque is one example of the
rectangular-shaped sanctuary. The High Caliphate period, however, produced or added to this development a great deal. Mosques of this period were decorated by mosaic ornaments, as in the case of Damascus Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Marble columns and dado were used, as in the case of Medina, Kairoun, and Gordova mosques. Luster tiles and stucco decoration were also used. An example of the mihrab is Kairoun Mosque, where luster tiles can be found. Stucco was also used in Iraq's mosques, such as Samarra Great Mosque. This technique can also be found in Ibn Tulun Mosque at Cairo and Nayecen Mosque.

Another innovation worth mentioning, besides the mihrab and regular minaret, is the introduction of the spiral minaret (Malwiya) outside the mosque. This innovation was transformed to Egypt, as were other concepts and techniques moved from Iraq to other regions. Similar spiral minarets can be seen in Ibn Tulun Mosque. This minaret is believed to be inspired by that of Samarra Mosque.

The construction methods and materials of mosques varied from one province to another, depending on the availability and suitability of the materials. In Syria, Palestine, and North Africa up to Spain, pre-used stone, marble, and marble columns were utilized in the construction of mosques. Skillful craftsmen and workers were employed. The rebuilding of Medina Mosque by
al-Walid is a case in point. Decoration materials such as mosaic, luster tiles, carved wood, marble window grills, dado, gilded teak, etc., were used extensively to enhance the mosques. Stucco was very common in Iraq and Iran, which was sometimes enhanced by glazed bricks that were blue in color.

The Furnishings of the Mosque

Outer Structure of the Mosque

The minaret. Starting from the outside of the mosque and working our way in, we first notice the minaret as the highest place in the mosque. The origin of minaret or "midhanah" (a place from which the call for prayer is done) is rather obscure. At the time of the prophet, Muhammad, the call for prayer in Medina was conducted from the roof of the mosque. The purpose of this was to transmit the call for prayer to as vast an area as possible, and every faithful male adult who heard the call had to attend the collective prayer in the mosque.

It is obvious then that the origin of minaret was connected with and motivated by its function. The word "minaret," however, has no direct meaning to the Adhan (call for prayer) itself. Gottheil (1904) attempts to explain the meaning of the word. He states that "the word can have meant originally 'an object that gives light'." The minaret, however, acquired its name from the
light which was held by the Muazzin as he announced the time for prayer (p. 132). An appropriate name might be the midhanah.

Nonetheless, Creswell (1989) says that "Maqrizi mentioned that the first form of minaret was originated in the reign of Mu'awiya, who ordered the governor of Egypt, Maslama, to build four Sawami for the call for prayer. Four sawami were then erected in Amr mosque in Fustat, one in each corner" (p. 15). These are believed to be the first form of the minaret.

Beyond the history of the origin and development of the minaret, the iconographic significance stems from the relationship of its structure, function, and the sound of the Muazzin. Being the highest place in the mosque, the minaret acquired a slender and graceful shape. As "adhan," or the call for prayer, was announced from the minaret five times daily, the sound of the Muazzin reached the faithful, who felt the beauty of the sound and repeated what the Muazzin said. "The act of repeating the 'adhan' is a virtuous deed by which the Muslim is rewarded, as said the prophet."

**Dome.** The second external feature of the mosque is the dome. Since it is not a part of the act of worship or connected with a certain function, the dome seems to be of minor liturgical significance. According to Zaki (1978), however, the earliest dome, found in Kairoun Mosque as
well as others, had two functions: to define the qibla externally, and to light it internally (p. 34). These two functions might be significant from an aesthetic point of view. Zaki, however, elaborates on the iconographic importance of the dome. He claims that two major symbolic meanings were attributed to the dome in the later stages of its development. The first was a sacred attribution, when the dome was used to cover the mortuary chamber where the founder's body rested. The dome was later transformed from this purpose to a fundamental purpose, and grew in size to cover the whole sanctuary area around the qibla. The second symbolic significance ascribed to the dome is a cosmic one, in that it represents the vault of heaven in the same manner a garden symbolizes paradise (p. 34). The dome found in the Dome of the Rock Mosque best illustrates this point.

**Interior Furnishings of the Mosque**

**The minbar.** Unlike the minaret, the mihrab, and the dome, which were innovations that appeared in different stages of mosque development, the minbar has existed in the mosque since the time of the prophet, Muhammad. Nonetheless, in the community mosques, which are smaller than the Friday masjid, the minbar is an unnecessary item. The reason for this stems from the function and symbolic meaning of the minbar itself.
First, the minbar is needed only when a sermon is to be delivered. Such a function is ascribed to the Friday prayer, which contains a sermon. At the time of the prophet in Medina, two occasions were reported to necessitate the existence of the minbar. One was Friday sermon and the other was a necessary or urgent message or instruction to the Umma.

The nature of the sermon, however, be it for Friday prayer or otherwise, seemed to be of political importance. Since the prophet himself was the leader of the "Umma" nation, his caliph followers were political leaders. According to Zaki, the position of imam as a religious rank was not known until the Abbasid period.

Thus, the minbar was of high value to the Umma because it symbolized the power and authority of the head of the state. It is understandable why the fullest attention was given to its decoration and materials. Richly carved wood, sometimes enhanced by incrustation of nacre or ivory was very common. Marble was used frequently, with the exception of mosques in Iran, where it was only used occasionally.

Zaki (1978) states that "the minbar has become an architecture in its own right, with folding doors admitting to a stairway crowned with a canopy or a bulbous cupola and topped with a crescent finial" (p. 37).
Mhirab. In the architecture of the mosque, the earliest reference to the mhirab was found in the rebuilt mosque of Medina. According to Creswell, al-Walid sent eight skillful Coptic and Greek craftsmen to Medina to participate in the construction of the mosque. It was there that the first concave mhirab was erected.

The significance of the mhirab, however, stems from its function as a directional device. Its purpose is to refer to the qibla in Makkah. The mhirab thus symbolizes the connection of the imam and the worshippers behind him to the qibla or kaba in Makkah.

The Concept of Absolute and Relative Time
of the Formation of Islamic Art

One of the issues this study is concerned with is the concept of absolute and relative time of the formation of Islamic art. In order to be clear to the reader, it is necessary to explain what is meant by this concept. According to Grabar (1987), absolute time is defined as the period or duration, be it centuries, decades, or years, after which a movement of art, style, or trend exists. He further explains that "it is a time that, generally can be defined quite precisely through particularly important monuments" (p. 6). Relative time, however, could be identified by cultural acceptance and transformation by changes, be it political or cultural,
which can be exactly dated. An example was given by
Grabar to illustrate this concept, which has to do with
both absolute and relative time. He states,

In absolute time the new Gothic spirit is a phenome-
non of the third quarter of the twelfth century when
Abbot Suger, for example, started rebuilding St.
Denims, but relative time of the Gothic is just as
clearly the thirteenth century, when practically the
whole of Western Europe became affected by the new
aesthetic and intellectual system. (p. 6)

Although Creswell did not deal directly and expli-
citly with the concept of absolute and relative time of
the formation of Islamic art, one can infer this from his
analysis of Islamic architecture. By using the definition
set forth by Grabar, I shall try to demonstrate what
Creswell has to say about the formation of Islamic art.

In his *Early Muslim Architecture*, Creswell arranged
the data in chronological order, starting from what he
calls primitive Islam. He did not consider the architec-
ture that preceded the rise of Islam of any significant
relationship to Islamic architecture, such as Mada'in
Salih in northern Arabia or the Dame of Marib in the
south. An appropriate absolute time, according to
Creswell, would be the Muslim army's series of conquests
to new land in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. That era marks the
turning point when Islamic culture started to dominate,
flourish, and expand the whole area. Therefore, the
period of early Muslim architecture may be considered
absolute time, because of the events that occurred and
shaped the culture at that time. When taking architecture as a case in point, this includes all types of art that is associated with it. The fine wood carving in Miharab cannot be separated, or the marble grill that gives gleams of light and beauty to the mosque windows, or yet the complex mosaic work or lusterware ceramic. These forms of art started to carry the new spirit of Islam through which it expresses faithfully the universal value of its message.

Relative time may be marked by the spread and diffusion of the aesthetic tradition that became noticeable throughout the Islamic empire. The sense of unity and homogeneity had become one of the major characteristics adherent to Islamic art. Nonetheless, since most historians categorize the history of Islamic art according to one way or another, the most common methods are chronological, regional, or phenomenological. Creswell appears to have preferred both the chronological and regional methods. Relative time of the formation of Islamic art, according to Creswell, can be identified by the spread and wide acceptance of certain techniques, concepts, or innovations. For instance, the spread of hypostyle mosque, lusterware ceramic, the inculcation of Arabic calligraphy, and overall, the bond of obvious unity of Islamic art. This sense of unity reflects the change and transformation of the social and cultural system.
From these examples, one can clearly realize and identify both absolute and relative times of the formation of Islamic art. Figure 2 sums up the concept of absolute and relative time, according to Creswell.

The Characteristics of Islamic Art

From critically reading and analyzing the work of Creswell, e.g., The Early Muslim Architecture (1932-40), The Muslim Architecture of Egypt (1952-59), Problems in Islamic Architecture (1953), The Lawfulness of Painting in Islam (1940), and countless other articles on the subject, one can reach a conclusion regarding Creswell's position on the characteristics of Islamic art.

The first major characteristic of Islamic art, as can be deduced from Creswell's writings, is the influence of religious teaching on Islamic art. According to Creswell, Islamic art had been created and developed as a result of major religion, social, and cultural changes. The message of Islam created the need for a new form of religious architecture that began as a simple and primitive structure and developed into a complex and sophisticated structure. Creswell discussed these simple structures, which existed in various parts of the Muslim land, and which were the basic hypostyle design upon which mosque architecture developed.
Figure 2. Summary of the concept of absolute and relative time, according to Creswell.
These mosques, whether in Madina, Fustat, Kufa, or Basra, share the basic plan of square (see Figures 3, 4, and 5) or rectangular shape, qibla portico, mihrab niche, minbar, and sometimes two other porticos smaller than the qibla one, with an open courtyard in the middle.

Wherever Muslims go, the first building to be established is the mosque, then Dar Al-Imara. Creswell devoted a great deal of effort to studying these types of buildings. Furthermore, as the mosques and Dar Al-Imara became more sophisticated in design, material, and craftsmanship, more analysis has been done on their plans, structures, and decorations, as well as their furnishings. For example, the Dome of the Rock consumed a great deal of Creswell's effort. Another aspect of this characteristic is the minimal existence of animate beings, especially in religious buildings such as mosques. Creswell argued against the concept of absolute prohibition of painting humans, stating that the first generation of Muslims were more tolerant toward images or pictures of animate beings. He gave two examples. When Saad Ibn Abi Wagass conquered al-Madian, Saad gave thanks in prayer with his troops in the iwan, which was full of human paintings. The other example was that of Omer Ibn Abd Aziz, who was famous for his adherence and observation of Islamic teachings. He was not bothered by a statue resembling the head of a rooster. Although many scholars disagree with Creswell's
Figure 3. Madinah. Prophet's house, reconstructed plan (after Sauvaget).

Figure 4. Madinah. Reconstruction of the Umayyad Mosque, 705-15. A. Minbar; B. Tomb; C. Boundary of Mosque of Muhammad; D. Imam's door; E. Door Omer's family; F. Gabriel's door; G. Women's door; H. North; K. Door of Mercy; L. Receiving door (after Sauvaget).

Figure 5. Kufah. Reconstruction of mosque, late 7th century (after Creswell).

assumption that prohibition is the common practice with some exceptions, Creswell believes that the essence of the prohibition of animate beings is as follows:

1. Inherent temperamental dislike of Semitic races for representational art
2. Influence of Jewish converts to Islam, and
3. Fear of magic. (p. 166)

The second characteristic of Islamic art is the common sense of unity and homogeneity that manifested itself throughout the Muslim world. Creswell draws our attention to techniques, styles, and ideas that can be seen in different parts of the Islamic empire. Since examples for this sense of unity are innumerable, a few will be selected from Creswell's writings. According to Creswell, styles and techniques travel from one region to another. An example can be seen in Samarra, in which there are three types of stucco ornamental styles (A, B, C). Although this stucco decoration was originally found in Samarra, it was also found in Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo, Egypt. The stucco decoration in Ibn Tulun appeared to be more complex and sophisticated than those found in Samarra. However, they share the same characteristics and one can clearly see this similarity. In this regard, Creswell states:

The soffits of arches are decorated with bands of ornament, of which ten fairly well-preserved strips exist on the outer arches of the south-west riwaq, and a few others elsewhere. All these bands consist of a very broad central strip enclosed between narrow borders (260, 261, 262). The main strip, in every case, consists of a geometrical framework, the
interstices of which are filled with various elements belonging to style B of Samarra, which suffices to prove that this dates from the foundation of the mosque. (pp. 398-399)

Creswell also gives another example of the sense of unity when he points out the Masjid-I Tarikh at Balkh. What is interesting about this mosque is the remarkable resemblance of its decoration to that of the Samarra style. In this regard, Creswell states:

The outstanding feature of the stuccowork in the mosque is the use of deep shadow carving technique. This immediately links it with Samarra stucco style A and B, and suggests that the mosque may be evidence of the spread of these styles eastwards from Iraq during Abbasid times. That this spread did indeed take place is proved by individual features of the stucco ornaments, which have their closest comparisons in Sasanian or Abbasid Iraq or in decoration derived from the latter. Thus the vine-scrolls of the spandrels are comparable with those at Kish, or others in western Iran (Na'in, Yazd and Buzan, the geometric grid designs of the soffits, girths and plinths with those of Qasr al-Hair ash-Sharqi, Siraf, Hira, Samarra, Na'in and the mosque of Ibn Tulun, the repetitive friezes of the impost blocks with those of Ibn Tulun and border designs from Samarra, and the palmette friezes of the capitals with friezes from Samarra and other capitals of Abbasid date found in Mesopotamia. (p. 349)

From the examples given above, it suffices to say that the two major characteristics of Islamic art, the influence of religious teaching and the sense of unity, are predominate and self-evident in Islamic art. Creswell emphasizes these characteristics in his writings.
The Method of Creswell

One of the objectives of this study is to learn about each scholar's method of conducting research in the field of Islamic art. How did they gather their information? What were their sources of information? How did they process their data, and how did they make use of other fields of inquiry to support their findings and vindicate their conclusions?

Before attempting to dwell on Creswell's method, some light should be shed on the historical methods of inquiry as highlighted by Kleinbauer (1987). Kleinbauer states that the method of inquiry about works of art consists of two basic modes: 1) intrinsic perspectives, under which comes connoisseurship, syntactical analysis, formal analysis, documentary studies, and iconography and iconology; and 2) extrinsic perspectives, which cover the relationship between art history and psychology, the role of art history in relation to society and culture, and the relationship of art history to the history of ideas. In modern art history the two modes of inquiry may be combined together to create a more comprehensive approach to artworks.

Kleinbauer explains the role and need for each mode of historical inquiry. Figure 6 shows the property and function of each mode.
The focus of intrinsic mode

- Connoisseurship
  1 - materials, techniques, authorship, physical condition, authenticity, dating and provenance
- Style
  2 - Visual language of works of art
- Iconography
  3 - Subject matter or themes of works of art; function and purpose of works of art

The focus of extrinsic mode

- Artist
  Artistic biography
  Time and space
- Nature of creative process
  Psychoanalysis, Gestalt and Jungin psychology
- Environmental factors
  Political, economic, scientific, religious, social, philosophical, cultural and intellectual
- The history of ideas

Integrative mode of historical inquiry utilizing the properties of both intrinsic and extrinsic modes.

Figure 6. Properties of intrinsic, extrinsic, and integrative modes of historical inquiry.

Having discussed the approaches of historical investigation as presented by Kleinbauer, the next section will answer the question, to what extent did Creswell use these approaches when he dealt with Islamic architecture?

Before attempting to write a historical account of Islamic art, Creswell established a chronology of architectural monuments. Identifying the time and place of each monument seemed a must to precisely relate it in the scheme of history. Creswell also took photographs and drew plans of each standing monument he encountered. This task was not easy and took Creswell years to survey Islamic architecture in Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, and Iraq. However, writing a history of Islamic architecture was a necessity for his enormous pioneering project. Therefore, Creswell developed a keen sense of connoisseurship, which enabled him to precisely identify materials, techniques, physical conditions, authorship, and authenticity of a monument, as well as the region to which it belonged. The style of a monument and its visual language, including the selection of decorative elements, color, line, space, and suitable furnishings, including glasswork, woodwork, metalwork, etc., was in the core of Creswell’s analysis of any given monument.

In addition, Creswell never neglected the function of a monument or the purpose for which it was created, be it religious, political, military, and so on. In other
words, he dwells on the intrinsic mode of inquiry about the work of art. However, any given work of art may not be fully understood by examining only its intrinsic features. The extrinsic mode might help in discerning other factors that are essential to our understanding of works of art.

Creswell enlightens readers with a reference to medieval texts or accounts of contemporary historians or about monuments or travelers. These accounts strengthen his position or argument regarding the social, economic, religious, political, and cultural climate in which a certain monument is erected. Without this information, our knowledge would have never been accurate. Sometimes a statement written by a patron or an architect of a monument is of great value to an art historian’s interpretation. Thus, Creswell pays close attention to such statements whenever he attempts to interpret or analyze a building. Furthermore, the artist’s biography is one means of information about works of art which can be obtained. Creswell is concerned about this means and often utilized it carefully and critically. Epigraphical information is also a significant source of historical research, and Creswell makes use of epigraphy to support his claims.

An example of Creswell’s analysis of a particular monument will show how he uses both intrinsic and
extrinsic modes. The monument chosen is the famous Dome of the Rock mosque.

Creswell starts his analysis by giving background information, including a description of the monument itself and the motivation behind erecting it. He states that the circumstances for building the Dome of the Rock was a combination of psychological, political, and religious factors. He cites the account of two famous contemporary historians, Yaqubi (874) and Mugaddasi (985), who gave two different explanations for the reason behind building the monument. It can be clearly seen how Creswell utilizes the intrinsic mode manifested in his thorough description, which includes the site of the monument and its importance, its dimensions and measurements, materials, method of construction, and style. The extrinsic mode is embodied in his reference to literary sources, which results in considering the political climate of the era, the psychological situation of the beholder, and the religious situation. Moreover, looking at the chapter he devotes to the Dome of the Rock, it is clear that he was committed to finding out and describing the monument as it was at the time of Abd Al-Malik, which is 72H (691-2).

This commitment requires a great knowledge about the time in which it was built. Philology and epigraphy play a greater role. By interpreting statements by scholars
from the same era and studying information inscribed on
the monument itself, valuable information is known and
understood. In addition, he takes the reader on an
exciting journey throughout the historical building,
describing in great detail each and every element within.
For instance, this is how he describes the outer walls:

They are built of stone in courses about 70cm (27.5
inches) high. The seven tall, narrow, recessed
panels on each face were found to be covered by
semicircular arches, although subsequently disguised
in 1552 by coating of faience and given a slightly
pointed outline. (p. 22)

He goes on to describe yet another element of the build­
ing, the windows. He asserts that none of the original
windows exist; however, the windows that remain date back
to Sultan Sulayman (1552). He describes the windows as
follows:

These have double grilles: an outer set forming part
of the faience facing and therefore dating to Sultan
Sulayman's work of 1552, and an extremely beautiful
inner set, also due to him. Some however, are later
replacements. (p. 24)

He goes on to say, "The original window, probably of
pierced marble like those at Damascus, must therefore have
been 15cm thick, at least round the edge, but not neces­
sarily all over" (p. 24). Besides these two elements
already discussed, Creswell talks about the parapet, the
doorways, the interior, including the octagonal
arcade, the inner circle under the dome, the roof, the
drum, the wooden dome, and the decoration. All receive
equal attention and full analysis. Most of these
descriptions and analyses of artistic elements fall into the intrinsic mode. As for extrinsic mode, Creswell questions and analyzes other factors. The architect of this magnificent monument, who was he? Creswell states that the name of the architect is not known. As to the date of erecting the monument, Creswell believes it is 72H (691-2). How did he come to this conclusion? He says, "In the mosaics at the summit of the inner and outer faces of the intermediate octagon is a Quranic inscription in gold on a blue background, which also contains the date of the building 72H (691-2)" (p. 36).

Creswell then discusses the architectural origins of Dome of the Rock in general, and each element in particular. For example, he talks about the plan and its antecedents or similar architecture. The wooden dome also receives a full analysis as to its origin in which he states that several examples can be found in history of similar wooden domes. Other features, such as the decoration and mosaic, were elaborated upon.

Conclusion

In this portion of the analysis of Creswell's work the concepts of absolute and relative time were discussed. His position on this issue was highlighted. The characteristics of Islamic art was also discussed, relating to Creswell's work. In addition, several
important characteristics were described and analyzed. The third issue, which maintains a close relationship with this study, was the method of inquiry that Creswell adapted. Here, both modes of historical inquiry, e.g., the intrinsic and extrinsic, were identified in Creswell's work. How he made use of them was also elaborated upon. Finally, an example was chosen to show Creswell's method of describing, interpreting, and analyzing works of Islamic art.

To conclude Part A of this chapter, an attempt will be made to focus on the critical approach of Creswell when he talks about Islamic artwork. Since Creswell, as we have seen, concentrated on Islamic architecture, our example will be restricted to architecture and its furnishings.

There are a few questions which should be asked before proceeding with our analysis. How does Creswell critically discuss Islamic artwork? What are the steps, if any, that he took or undertook when analyzing Islamic artwork? To what extent did Creswell use other disciplines' approach(es) to interpret Islamic artwork? What questions would he ask and how would he attempt to answer them?

**Description**

When discussing an architectural monument, be it religious or secular, Creswell usually begins with the
initial step of describing it. His first step of description is twofold. First, he would ask about how it was discovered or rediscovered, especially if it was missing or lost. He describes how it was found, who found it, and its condition at the time of its discovery. This information seems to be very important in terms of the accuracy of placing the monument in the scheme of history. Sometimes the description includes the author who mentioned the monument in his/her writing, or the traveler who first saw it in his journey and referred to it.

Physical Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of the Monument

Having described the date and circumstances of the discovery of a monument, Creswell moves forward to a detailed physical description, which usually leads to further analysis and interpretation, which, in turn, focuses on the following:

1. The outside appearance, which includes:
   a. The main facade of the building with its style, decoration, and measurements
   b. The other entrances, if any, their significance and functions
   c. The overall character, size, and material of which the building is made

2. The inside appearance, which includes:
a. The plan of the building from inside, the number of rooms and their importance, and the facilities or supporting rooms
b. The system of water supply and sewage, gardening, and so forth
c. The decoration of the building, including permanent painting, fresco, friezes, woodwork, marble, and glasswork, mosaic and ceramic work, and metalwork

3. The cultural significance of the building, which includes:
   a. The purpose and function of the building
   b. The place of the building in stylistic and historical context
   c. The inspiration of the building's style and its furnishings, the issue of religious matters, and the nationality of the artist or architect
   d. The architectural origin of the building, its antecedent and resemblance

The following examples clearly show Creswell's steps of describing, analyzing, and interpreting.

Qusayr Amera

One example of late Umayyad secular architecture is Qusayr Amera (see Figures 7 and 8), a little desert palace, approximately fifty miles east of Amman Jordan. In approaching this monument, Creswell's first step is to give a little background information concerning the date
Figure 7. Qusayr Amera plan. Scale 1:200.

Figure 8. Qusayr Amera: View from the northwest.

of discovering the building, which happened to be during the period between June 1898 and July 1900, the person who discovered the building, which turned out to be Alois Musil, and how he came to find out about the building. Creswell traces back how Alois Musil's attention was directed toward this monument. He points out that Musil mentioned that Qusayr Amera was referred to in some travel literature as follows:

1. In the second half of the seventeenth century, Hajji Muhammd mentions it as Emri.
2. At approximately the same period, Hajji Khalifa refers to Qusayr Amera.
3. Seetzen and Burckhardt heard of and visited the building.

The outside appearance of the building. Unlike monuments like Khirbat Al-Mafijar, whose main facade was elaborated upon, no detailed description was given for the outside facade of Qusayr Amera. However, Creswell believes it corresponded exactly with the interior. Perhaps in the case of Qusayr Amera, the building's main facade was demolished, leaving one to depend on various descriptions of the building's plan for reconstruction of its main facade. Creswell presents three drawings that show what the main facade and the other side looked like. In this respect, Creswell states that the exterior corresponded exactly with the interior and no attempt has
been made to conceal the extrados of vaults by raising the exterior walls or otherwise (p. 391).

**Overall description of the building.** Creswell describes Qusayr Amera as a medium-sized building which consists of two major components: 1) an audience hall of rectangular shape, measuring approximately 8 1/2 feet x 7 1/2 feet, with two smaller rooms serving as utility rooms, and 2) a bath comprised of three small rooms. Creswell then gives a more detailed description of the building, focusing on each element as follows:

One enters by a doorway, M, in the centre of the north facade of the main building. The first thing to strike one is the curious vaulting system, the nearly square interior being divided by two transverse arches into three bays of almost equal width, on which rest three tunnel-vaults. These three vaults are pierced on each side by a row of four holes irregularly spaced, which have been formed during the construction by inserting clay pipes about 10-12 cm. in diameter. The transverse arches spring from four low pilasters (above the present ground level), and are chiefly remarkable in that they are slightly pointed—one of the earliest examples of this feature in Muslim architecture. (p. 391)

**Material and technique of the building.** The material that was used to erect Qusayr Amera, according to Creswell, was "hard reddish limestone," which must have been gathered from nearby hills. Mortar is also used to hold the stone, especially in places like the domes. Stones of large size (about 40 cm. in height) are used in places such as the main facade, but the average stone size is 32.33 cm. The stones are not cut, but "shaped by
hammer." As Creswell indicated, they are nearly rectangular in shape and often almost square. Creswell points out that "the innumerable irregularities are compensated for by chips of stone and liberal amount of mortar." He indicates that the same technique is still in existence in his lifetime, in native building in Cairo.

Basalt has been brought from al-Uwaynid, approximately 12km. to the east, and used in certain places such as lintel and doorway jambs.

Coating with plaster and mortar was apparently used generously. An indication of this can be seen in the wall of one of the chambers when the wall was pitted by holes, the purpose of which was for the coating of plaster or mortar.

**Technique and architectural origin.** It seems that the technique for planning and erecting the building was driven from its purpose and function. It was intended for relaxation, pleasure, and quiet time away from the pressures of daily life. Creswell describes the building as a bathhouse. He reaches this conclusion by comparing it with two similar structures at Abda and Ruhayba. He further states:

The annexe on the east side of the main hall, A, was a bathhouse. The first room, D, with its two benches, and an outlet for the water but no pipes, must have served as the apodyterium, the second room, E, with its water pipes and hypocausts under the floor, was the tepidarium, and the domed chamber next to the furnace, the calidarium. (p. 395)
Two distinguishing features have been identified in Qusayr Amera. The first one is the vaulting system, and the second one is the pointed arch.

The vaulting system. Creswell elaborates on this system of vaulting, which he considers the most remarkable feature of Qusayr Amera. He goes on to say that in this system, the roof is carried on certain points distance apart, the wall between these points, however, plays the role of "a curtain wall." As a result of this technique, sufficient "lateral lighting becomes difficult."

Creswell attributes the formation of the vaulting system to the nature of the area in which it was invented. In the area of Hauran, the natural topography of the region consists of black basalt, with the exception of the far southern side, where limestone can be found. The availability of this material necessitated the invention of a new technique with which it could be perfectly utilized. Creswell further states that "the arch, the sole means of covering wide spaces, became the principal element of construction and a series of parallel arches supporting ceiling slats served to cover most of the halls" (p. 445) (see Figure 9).

Creswell then uses Butler's five categories for the architecture of this region:
Figure 9. Roofing system used in the Hauran.

1. Prehistoric
2. Nabataean
3. Roman
4. Christian
5. Muhammadan

He also gives the names of several buildings that used the vaulting system in the Hauran region which were examined and published by the Princeton Expedition, some of which follow:

- Um Al-Jimal, Church of Julianos
- Qasr Al-Baiq, near the western border of Hauran
- Al-Majdal, a small house with this system of vaulting on the ground floor
- Zora (or Ezra), Church of St. George dated 410 of the Era of Bystreet (A.D. 515)
- Qusayr Al-Hallabat, fortress, room next entrance. This example is especially important, for it is only a stone's throw from the mosque described below and about three miles from Hammam as-Sarakh.

The architectural origin of the pointed arch. The second distinctive feature of Causer Amera is the pointed arch. What is the pointed arch? Who developed it? Where was it originated? As usual, Creswell starts with a definition of the pointed arch. He states:

The pointed arches are arches in which the two halves are struck from different centers. The less the separation of these two centers, the less the
acuteness of the arch, all traces of a point vanish­ing when these two centers become one (the semicircu­lar arch). (p. 441)

Creswell then raises the question, "What is the origin of the pointed arch?" He reaches the conclusion that the pointed arch is of Eastern origin. He asserts that this type of arch had not been seen in European architecture until the beginning of the twelfth century. Creswell quoted Herzfeld, who strongly believes that the pointed arch is an Islamic innovation and has no antece­dent in pre-Islamic architecture.

Moreover, Creswell gives fourteen examples of architectural monuments which used the technique of the pointed arch, of which seven occurred in Syria. This supports the claim that the pointed arch is purely Syrian.

So far, Creswell's description, analysis, and interpretation of the structure, plan, style, origin, character, material, and technique of Qusayr Amera has been discussed. However, the building contains other forms of art, or to be exact, artworks. The fresco paintings and mosaics decoration are two works of art of splendid quality found in Qusayr Amera. The following will look at how Creswell talked about these two forms of artistic expression.

The painting of Qusayr Amera. From the outset, Creswell points out the fact that the paintings in Qusayr
Amera are fresco and not tempera. He uses the claim of the Austrian chemists, Pollak and Wenzel, to confirm this.

**Artistic analysis.** Having identified the technique of these paintings, Creswell moved forward to analyze the combination of colors or hues that were used. According to Creswell, these were limited to the following: blue, deep brown, light brown, dull yellow, and bluish-green. He further analyzes the chemistry of each color, which are as follows:

- **Bright blue** - Natural ultramarine
- **Deep brown** - A red, apparently produced from oxide of iron, overlaid with a thin coat of ultramarine
- **Light yellow** - Ahrceous composition containing iron
- **Dull yellow** - The same mixed with chalk
- **Bluish-green** - Yellow which has received a light coating of ultramarine

Before going deeper into his analysis, Creswell gives us a word of caution. He says that the fresco paintings of Qusayr Amera have been either "too faded" or "too blackened by smoke to give a useful result if photographed" (p. 396).

Creswell, therefore, relies completely on the drawings of these paintings, which were done by Mielich. In comparing these drawings with the original paintings in the rooms of the bath, Creswell believes that they could
only be regarded as "travesties of the original." However, Creswell arranges these paintings according to their places in the following order: alcove, wall, soffits of arches, vaults.

The painting of the alcove (description and analysis). Creswell, first of all, draws the conclusion that this alcove must have been the throne recess. From the position of the place stems the importance and elements of the painting there. Creswell describes this painting as follows:

At the back of the alcove was a throned monarch with a nimbus under a baldachin, resting on two spirally decorated columns, on the arched front edge of which was painted a kufic inscription in white on blue background, invoking a blessing on some person whose name no longer remains. (p. 396)

In addition, Creswell mentions that there are a number of half-nude women in the panels that are created by the round arches which divide the tunnel-vault system.

The walls. Although Creswell describes a number of paintings, some of them capturing hunting scenes and others showing athletic practice, the painting which Creswell calls The Defeated Enemies of Islam is the major one in this section. Its significance stems from the valuable information it provides for the date of the building. There was dispute among the learned about the exact date of erecting Qusayr Amera, as Creswell mentions. According to Creswell, Karabacek interpreted the epigraphy
on the painting and reached the conclusion that the building was built by the "Abbasid Prince Ahmad, in the ninth century." However, this conclusion was not acceptable to Van Berchem, who believes that the Syrian desert was the preferred habitat for several Umayyad khalifs. Moreover, it is well known that the Abbasids chose Mesopotamia as their home. Therefore, in light of these historical factors, this building cannot possibly be Abbasid. However, the painting, The Defeated Enemies of Islam, shows six figures, four of which were identified as:

1. Kaisar (the Byzantine Emperor)
2. Rodorik (the Visigothic King of Spain)
3. Chosroes (the Emperor of Persia)
4. Negus (the King of Abyssinia)

Creswell argues that Noldeke and Becker agree that Kaisar, Chosroes, and Najash are well-known figures, but Rodorik, who was killed in the battle of the Guadaute in A.D. 712, was known to few scholars. Therefore, Noldeke and Becker believe that the building was erected between A.D. 712 to A.D. 750, the date the Umayyad dynasty came to an end. Creswell states that Van Berchem attempted to fix the building, Qusayr Amera, to a more precise date. Van Berchem's method of deductive reasoning led him to claim that the arrangement of the persons in the foreground of the painting are due to their position as "sovereigns of
great empires." However, those in the background are merely the "rulers of simple kingdoms." In addition to the four rulers identified above, two more needed to be identified. These two might be, according to Van Berchem, the Emperor of China and the Turkish Kings or the Hindu King Dahir. Since these six rulers were defeated, or in other words, the Umayyad obtained total control over the territory held by them, the painting is assumed to be made to commemorate the occasion. Furthermore, since this victory was completed in the reign of al-Walid I, Van Berchem reaches the conclusion that Qusayr Amera was built in al-Walid's time.

Inspiration of the painting of Qusayr Amera. Having described and analyzed the fresco paintings of Qusayr Amera, Creswell interprets their inspiration. He firmly believes that the essence, style, and technique of these paintings are derived from the Hellenistic art of Syria. He supports his claim by citing other authorities such as Brunnow, Strzyyowski, Van Berchem, and Herzfeld, who all, in one way or another, thought of these paintings as a direct influence of "syro-Hellenistic tradition." However, scholars do not deny other sources of influence, such as the Persians. Although the Sasanian impact is not predominate, it can be clearly seen in the painting, The Defeated Enemies of Islam. The subject matter of this painting might have been borrowed from a Sasanian model,
such as that of the *Kings of the Earth*, which pays homage to Chosroes.

Creswell uses Herzfeld's account, who states that the tradition of the *Kings of the Earth* was known to the Sasanians. The Umayyads, being the victorious rulers, must have borrowed this tradition, having the *Kings of the Earth* do homage to them.

Creswell refers to a statement by Grabar to this effect:

An attempt to adapt the Sasanian artistic theme of the *Kings of the Earth* gathered to pay homage to their overlord, to the concept of the *Family of Kings*. This latter concept was altered so as to imply that the Umayyad dynasty was the descendant and heir of the dynasties it had defeated. (p. 408)

*The floor mosaic of Qusayr Amera.* Having discussed the fresco paintings of Qusayr Amera as elaborated upon by Creswell, another form of artwork that is found in the building will be touched upon. In Qusayr Amera, a remarkable mosaic work of fine quality exists. In his analysis of this work, Creswell starts by identifying the material that was used in this splendid work. He asserts that the mosaic are made of natural stone, with the exception of a small portion of glass mosaic. He also identifies the predominate colors, which are as follows: yellow, white, red-brown, and black. The floor mosaic is described by Creswell as a fine work of art from both design and technical points of view.
The patterns of the mosaic of Ousayr Amera. Two types of patterns have been identified by Creswell, representational and abstract geometrical. The representational pattern consists of flower and vine scrolls. The abstract geometrical is made of interlacing shapes of circles, squares, elongated, and hexagons. Creswell has stated that the representational pattern of vegetal elements, e.g., lotus flower, vine scrolls, etc., brought nothing new; however, the geometrical pattern carries the spirit of Islamic pattern.

The most interesting element of the geometrical patterns, as Creswell points out, is interlacing fields. He states:

It is composed of two superimposed networks of identical shapes. Each forms an independent unit and is developed as follows: Tangent circles of equally large size are outlines with bands (five mosaic stands thick) and interlocked by means of an overlapping small circle; at the points of intersection the bands are interlacing. This device inevitably produces a kind of secondary form, for the bands—instead of describing a circle—are now closing round the space between the circles, thus describing an annular form with four concave quarter circles. (p. 417)

Stylistical analysis. The stylistic characteristics which are shared by both patterns are identified by Creswell as follows: 1) linear geometry, 2) the role of the secondary form, and 3) the termination of the infinite design.
He further explains in detail these three characteristics. In linear geometry, the line is the predominate element in which the emphasis is not on the geometric field, but rather on the outline of these fields and their linear enhancement. An example of their feature is given by Creswell in room C of Qusayr Amera, in which:

The circular and square fields are small and tend to be more a kind of nucleus round which the design proper is developed in abundant looping and twisting; in addition to that they are filled with unobtrusive diapers and circles, which assimilate them to their interlacing surrounding. The line clearly dominates. (p. 419)

As a result of linear geometry, a second form is created by inserting glass mosaic which, in fact, have no relation with the basic geometric figure.

In spite of the fact that geometrical patterns can be expanded in each direction, in the floor mosaic of Qusayr Amera, this possibility was not utilized. The pattern was cut in the borders in an attempt to have "a definite point in the rhythm of the design" (p. 419).

Creswell also remarks that although the defined pattern is a good solution, it is not free from some difficulties. For instance, it is not easy to adjust the defined pattern to a given place or space.

Finally, Creswell attempts to reconfirm the dating of Qusayr Amera by analyzing its floor mosaic. He has stated that since the painting of the six kings was used to ratify or prove historical fact regarding the date of the
building, the floor mosaic can help in achieving the same result. Creswell, therefore, is looking at the style of those mosaics to find out "whether their style confirms or opposes the accepted dating (p. 419). Two reasons led Creswell to confirm the dating of Qusayr Amera to al-Walid I:

1) The rhythm of interlacing patterns in Qusayr Amera is, according to Creswell, different from the usual interlacing bands. The regular one goes in the following rhythm: 0-0-0-0. The new interlacing of Qusayr Amera is as follows: 0-00--0-00--, which indicates that change somehow has been made and appears in other buildings of al-Walid I’s reign, such as Khirbat al-Minya.

2) Creswell noticed the gradual domination of the nonrepresentational patterns, which is something new. Abstract geometry took the place of representational form.

In this respect, Creswell states:

The style of Qusayr Amera’s floors reveals nothing that would contradict the dating to al-Walid I; on the contrary it illustrates very well the aesthetic attitude of Syrian artists circa eighty years after the Muslim conquest of Syria. (p. 423)

By taking Qusayr Amera as an example, thus far, the historical method of inquiry that Creswell adapted has been examined. His way of conducting detailed description, analysis, and interpretation of Islamic architecture
has been elaborated upon for the purpose of showing how he utilized all means to arrive at a full understanding of this great art.

We have seen how Creswell begins from the outside of a given monument, describing its plan, facade, decoration, size, location, date of its discovery, and so forth. Moving from the outside appearance of a building, he likewise takes his readers on an intellectual journey of every single item of the interior. Detailed description is provided of the inside, accompanied by analysis and interpretation of every single element. Method of construction, material, techniques, and decoration element are all of great concern to him. He does not neglect other cultural or religious factors when he discusses Islamic architecture.

For example, issues of philosophical ground, such as the issue of painting in Islam, is included in his discussion of Islamic architecture. Finally, his method would provide an excellent model for art teachers who would like to expand the horizon of their students to more enlightenment and awareness of the significance of their own cultural heritage.
PART B
ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WRITINGS
OF RICHARD ETTINGHAUSEN

Introduction

The writing and ideas of the late Richard Ettlinghausen will be analyzed in this section. His point of view regarding the issues raised by this study will be discussed and compared with the two other selected art historians. It is not necessary, therefore, to review the formula and issues presented by this researcher in Part A (pp. 68-69). The same formula will be applied to each scholar. However, since each scholar is famous in a specific area of Islamic art, special emphasis will be dedicated to each scholar's particular area of interest.

Before attempting to analyze Ettinghausen’s writings, some light should be shed on the scope of his scholarship. Unlike Creswell, who spent much energy inquiring about the architecture of Islam which resulted in a great work of the history of Muslim architecture, Ettlinghausen wrote about almost every aspect of Islamic art. This diversity of knowledge about various issues, topics, and concepts of Islamic art enabled Ettinghausen to be one of the world’s authorities on the subject of Islamic art and architecture.
In 1962, Ettinghausen wrote a book which explores the various aspects of Arab paintings and their concepts, philosophy, themes, and artistic elements. He also dealt with the nature of Islamic art, in which he discussed the aesthetics of Islamic art as it is manifested in Al-Ghazzali's theory on beauty. The character and scope of painting and decorative arts was also of great concern to him. He wrote an article on this subject in which he emphasized the uniqueness of Islamic art as presented in its special language and meanings. Ettinghausen not only tackled the question of the philosophy of Islamic art, but also dealt with several factors affecting the creation of Islamic art, be it cultural, technical, or political. For instance, his series of articles on the nature of Islamic art testifies to the depth of his knowledge. Articles on the interaction and integration in Islamic art, originality and conformity in Islamic art, and early realism in Islamic art are but examples of Ettinghausen's great contribution to the study of Islamic art.

The following section will discuss and analyze Ettinghausen's writings. It will focus on the problem of definition and the nature of Islamic art as elaborated upon by Ettinghausen.
The Problem of Defining Islamic Art

The problem of defining the nature of Islamic art shares some similarities with that of defining the nature of art itself. With little analogy one can see the difficulty involved in defining art and the problem associated with it. In Western tradition the issue of defining the nature of art has been troublesome since the time of Plato. Each theory of aesthetics claims that it has the right definition of what art is, as well as the necessary and sufficient properties of art. Although these theories may be valid, there is no single one that is agreed upon as "being the right one." Art has been defined as an imitation of nature and should be judged accordingly.

Art is also defined as the expression of one's feeling and emotion, without which there could be no art. Bell and Fry, on the other hand, would not agree with such a definition. They consider formal elements as the real properties of art. In this respect, Weitz states that according to the formalism theory "anything which is art is an instance of significant form; and anything which is not art has no such form" (p. 28). It is unnecessary to mention the points of view of the Intuitionist, the Organicist, and the Voluntarist, since it is clear that all attempts to define the nature of art have shortcomings
and cannot be agreed upon as being definitive or conclusive. The same can be said about the problem of defining Islamic art. All interpretations usually begin with precautions and should be regarded as inconclusive and subjective in nature (Ettinghausen, 1944; Grabar, 1987).

In defining the nature of Islamic art, however, we encounter yet another problem. First, Islamic art spans a long interval of history that is characterized by a continuous artistic tradition of more than a thousand years. Second, Islamic art can be found in a vast area, ranging from Cordoba in Spain to Samarkand in Central Asia. Within this time and space many styles, techniques, and schools were originated, but they all share a remarkable sense of unity. Third, unlike art of Western culture, which has been studied for centuries and whose nature and character have been elaborated upon by a countless number of scholars, the study of Islamic art is considered to be in its childhood (Grabar, 1983; Ettinghausen, 1985). In this respect, Grabar states:

In order to define the ways in which Islamic art was formed, it is first necessary to identify the subject, forms, and attitudes that developed over a vast area after 634, the year in which the conquest began to extend beyond Arabia itself. (p. 19) Thus, the question has recently been raised about the genesis, nature, and character of Islamic art. Finally, the method used by historians was not helpful, in most cases, in studying the phenomenon of the character of
Islamic art. Islamic art historians recognize these difficulties and claim that their work could be enhanced and refined by further discoveries and/or new hypotheses.

Many questions are often asked about Islamic art. "What makes Islamic art Islamic?" is a question concerning its characteristics and properties. "Is it an art of culture or an art of faith?" What is "the absolute and relative time of its very existence"? These and other questions have been raised by scholars in the field of the history of Islamic art, yet one should not hope for conclusive or definitive answers, at least not at this point in time. This does not mean, however, that discussion of these questions is not available.

Superficial definitions of Islamic art can be found in many books and catalogs written on the subject. A paragraph or more is usually provided at the beginning of the text telling the reader what is meant by the term "Islamic Art." Most books that have been written about Islamic art, however, do not go on to interpret and define the nature of Islamic art, its creativity, or character. Moreover, they do not, in most cases, consider the social, cultural, political, and economic conditions in which Islamic art evolved and flourished as a means in understanding it.

Fortunately, a lucid and intellectual discussion and debate are being held by key historians and philosophers
who specialize in the field of Islamic art. Discussion regarding the nature of Islamic art, its language and meaning, its character and spirituality, and its style and schools is presently available by outstanding scholars such as Nasr (1987), Grabar (1973, 1978, 1987), Ettinghausen (1944, 1985), Burchardt (1976), Allen (1987), and others. Each of these scholars, according to his own point of view, contributes to our understanding of Islamic art.

Still, the fundamental question that has yet to be answered is, what is so different about Islamic art that makes it what it is? Although a number of scholars in the field of Islamic study have tackled this question, the following discussion will be limited to the ideas developed by an eminent and prolific scholar, namely Richard Ettinghausen.

The problems related to the definition of Islamic art will be dealt with in relation to the discussion advanced by the late Richard Ettinghausen will be considered in relation to religious beliefs and their effect on art, as well as the influence of political, cultural, social, and natural circumstances on Islamic art.

The concepts developed by Ettinghausen generate frequently asked questions in the literature. What do we mean by the term "Islamic art"? When did it emerge? What is the character of Islamic art? Where did it exist and
how? Is it a cultural phenomenon or a religious one? Although Ettinghausen himself does not claim to find a definitive answer to these questions, his contribution will pave the road and open the door for more intellectual discussion and analysis.

The Nature of Islamic Art

Ettinghausen deals with the problem of defining the nature and character of "Islamic" art. He did not, however, undertake an explicit analysis of the term "Islamic art" and its implication as did Grabar in his book, The Formation of Islamic Art. Nonetheless, Ettinghausen elucidates on cultural, religious, economic, and political factors that could help in understanding Islamic art and then goes on to define it. In his article, "The Character of Islamic Art," Ettinghausen identifies four basic concepts that he suggests as fundamental to understanding the attitude of Muslims toward art:

1. Fear of the forthcoming Day of Judgment
2. Submission to the all-powerful Allah
3. Basic importance of the Quran as the Arabic manifestation of the heavenly book
4. Human aspect of Muhammad

These notions, as Ettinghausen suggests, "were of paramount importance, not only for the development of Islam as a religion, but also of Islamic art." Ettinghausen thus
copes with the question of why? Why was Islamic art formed in such a distinctive way? Although it took much of its principles from previous traditions, why did it soon develop a remarkable uniqueness of its own? To answer these questions, Ettinghausen turned to culture as it was once prevailed as a necessary requirement for the deep understanding of the nature of Islamic art. In this respect, the late Mehamet Aga-Oglu (1949) suggests that in order for one to understand the Islamic civilization, one must understand the state of the medieval oriental world. He states, "without knowledge of that world in its entirety, it is impossible to comprehend manifold factors operative in the formation of Islamic art" (p. 176).

The Concept of the Day of Judgment

One of the aspects of Islamic art is its utilization of cheap materials such as stucco, lusterware, copper, etc., in its aesthetic expression. Muslim artists used to substitute gold or silver when making kitchenware or daily-used objects, because of religious prohibition from using them for such a purpose. The reason or motivation behind this, as Ettinghausen suggests, is the fear of the Day of Judgment. What this means is that every person will be called upon at the end of time and held accountable for what he has done in his life in terms of good or bad deeds, after which he will either go to hell’s fire or paradise.
The concept of the fear of the Day of Judgment has controlled the attitudes of Muslim artists, because that which is forbidden by the religion's teaching and for which the artist could be held accountable rarely takes place. For instance, as mentioned above, Islam prohibits eating in and/or drinking from gold or silver plates, glass, or ewer, as well as men from wearing silk or gold. Therefore, these teachings are to be observed and no execution of such metal is to be allowed. Ettinghausen points out another aspect of this idea by stating, "in view of the pending hour of reckoning, moral deeds seemed to be better than earthly goods with which to embellish life" (p. 255). Therefore, substitutes of these luxurious and forbidden materials were invented in the "form of a luster film to be applied on pottery." Instead of using precious materials or metals, the inlaying of a thin wire of silver and/or gold on brass or bronze works served the same purpose.

**The Human Aspect of Muhammad**

The second concept affecting Islamic art, or to be more precise, the iconography of Islam, according to Ettinghausen, is the human aspect of Muhammad. What does this mean? It means that because Muhammad disclaimed any miracles similar to those performed by Moses or Jesus, his image and personality have not been taken as subject matter for art. It is rare to find paintings or
sculptures sanctifying the life of Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his family in the same way as Christian art has with images of Christ. In this regard, Ettinghausen argues that "if one considers the representation of the life and especially the passion of Christ, of the Holy Family, and of the Saints, within the iconographic repertory of the Roman Catholic or the Greek Orthodox church, one realizes how the lack of representation of the founder of Islam drove the Muslim artists in entirely different directions" (p. 256). These directions proved to give Islamic art its zesty flavor and peculiarity. In Islamic art, representation and imitation are substituted with innovative and abstract presentation of ideas and concepts.

The Submission to All-Powerful Allah

Submission to Allah (God) is an essential concept in Islam. Men and women alike "as believers" are expected to behave in their lives according to what they have been told by "God" through His messenger, Muhammad. Thus, since artistic activities are no exception, all commands of Allah (as the creator of all that is) are to be observed and followed. An example of this is the prohibition of figural representation or animate beings. This interdiction is believed to have a noticeable effect on Muslim art, according to Ettinghausen. As a result of this prohibition, the creativity of Muslim artists has
been driven in an entirely different way. In this respect, Landan (1955) remarks,

The Muslim artist begins with abstract art more than twelve hundred years ago and remains faithful to it. Abstract art was and is, for him, not an escape but an acknowledgement of his unquestioning submission to God. (p. 13)

The statement cited above may illustrate the point that religious teaching has in fact affected not only art, but also the behavioral pattern of the Muslim society.

**Basic Importance of the Quran as the Arabic Manifestation of the Heavenly Book**

This notion is in itself connected with the three other concepts, because the previously-mentioned ideas should be known through the divine revelation. A crucial question was raised by Ettinghausen: "there remains the question of whether there is a manifestation of art which was not born out of a prohibition" (p. 263). The answer to this question lies in Arabic calligraphy, which Ettinghausen believes to be a truly Islamic art. Its significance lies in its nature as a vehicle in writing the Quran, or the word of God, "an Arabic version of the heavenly book, which was thought to be immanent in God and, therefore, uncreated and eternal" (p. 263).

Arabic calligraphy thus provides an acceptable and undisputable form of art. It is used on religious monuments such as mosques and on secular monuments such as palaces. Passages from the Quran is used even to decorate
the Mihrab and is deemed appropriate for this sacred part of the mosque. Thus far, Ettinghausen has demonstrated the influence of "Islam" as a social institution in shaping the character of Islamic art. This has helped in defining it in a more appropriate manner within the boundary of the four concepts: fear of the forthcoming Day of Judgment, submission to the all-powerful Allah, the basic importance of the Koran as the Arabic manifestation of the heavenly book, and the human aspect of Muhammad.

Nonetheless, Ettinghausen did not forget other aspects or factors that play a greater role in the formation of Islamic art. He believes that political, social, natural, and cultural factors have considerable responsibility in the nature of change which, in turn, create two elements distinguishable in Islamic art. These are its striking unity and variety. As we can see, the difficulty of defining the art of each region of the Islamic world was that there was a transformation of artistic styles and technique of execution from one province to another. This transmission of styles and technique made Islamic art unified in such a remarkable way that to differentiate an object of metal work made in Iraq from that executed in Syria and/or Egypt was a difficult matter. This feeling of common ground was felt strongly, not only across regions, but across periods as well. An example of this is Ibn Tulun's mosque in Cairo.
built in 876-79, which borrowed most of its structural elements and decorations from a mosque in Iraqi architecture, or to be more precise, from its capital at that time, Samarra.

In interpreting the phenomenon of the unity and variety of Islamic art, five factors were identified by Ettinghausen as the immediate cause for such elements: 1) political factors, including the rise and fall of dynasties, patronage of the ruling elements, and change of ideas and concepts from other advanced states; 2) trade movement also includes transformation of style, technique, and idea with goods shipped to other parts of the empire; 3) migration of skilled workers and craftsmen from one region to another, which helped in transformation of artistic style and secrets of the work; 4) historical events such as war or invasion which accounts for not only stealing concepts and secrets, but also the skillful artists; and 5) natural disaster such as drought and flood which drove some native people from their natural habitat. An example of this is the movement of a whole ethnic group of seminomads, Turkomans, by "natural misfortune such as drought." These people had a distinct style of carpet weaving which was noticeable in more than one place.
The Characteristics of Islamic Art

Introduction

In the previous discussion, Ettinghausen elaborates on some concepts having to do with the nature of Islamic teaching and its relationship with art. These teachings are believed to have much influence on Muslim life and attitude toward the very notion of existence and its ultimate purpose.

However, in this section dealing with the characteristics of Islamic art, Ettinghausen becomes very specific about the factors that he believed to be the decisive ones making Islamic art what it is. He dwelled on the Sufi tradition as a means to reconstruct what might possibly be the aesthetic experience of Islamic art.

By critically examining the series of articles that the late Richard Ettinghausen wrote under the general rubric of the nature of Islamic art, one can come to a better grasp of his point of view regarding the distinctive characteristics of Islamic art. Articles such as al-Ghazzali on Beauty, Decorative Arts and Painting: Their Character and Scope, The Interaction and Integration of Islamic Art, and The Originality and Conformity in Islamic Art may reveal the extent to which Ettinghausen has undertaken to illuminate the essence of Islamic art.
From the outset, Ettinghausen did not reject, dismiss, or rule out the possibility of some ideas regarding the true characteristics of Islamic art which have been introduced, discussed, or debated among scholarly circles. On the contrary, he presents these ideas, discusses their potential, and then goes on to what he thinks, from his point of view, a more convincing argument concerning the nature of art. He poses two questions which ignite the discussion around the already-accepted theories of the source of ingenuity of Islamic art.

These two questions came after some elaboration on the achievement of Islamic art in different periods and regions. The first one is, "What is it that makes the floral, geometric, or epigraphic decorations so noteworthy and appealingly different and indeed memorable?" and the second question is, "What makes them Islamic?" (p. 278).

Ettinghausen begins with the latter issue of "What makes Islamic art Islamic?" He confined his discussion to three factors which might be possible and are often argued about by scholars in the field. The first factor is the rarity of animate beings which many scholars designate as one of the major characteristics of Islamic art. Islam prohibits making images of humans or animals and they believe that is what makes it different, without digging into the issues of the lawfulness of prohibition of the painting of human figures in Islam. Ettinghausen seems to
be convinced that it is out of the question. Human and animal figures are found in many instances in Islamic art. In fact, some fresco paintings of human and animal figures were found in early monuments such as Qusayr Amra of the Umayyad period. It is only in religious places such as the mosque that the rarity of images occur.

Could it be then the inculcation of Arabic lettering in decoration? Although Ettinghausen gives credit that Arabic calligraphy contributes some special flavor to Islamic decorations, it is not the real factor that makes them Islamic. His point of view is that the content of these writings fall into three categories:

1. Some of these inscriptions are "repeated stereotyped words of good wishes" (p. 279)
2. Some are "simulated writings" which hold no meaning and perhaps are not meant to be read
3. Some represent either secular proverbs or often "dedicatory eulogies to please royal or princely patrons" (p. 279)

Therefore, and for these persuasive reasons, Ettinghausen seems hesitant to believe that Arabic lettering is what makes Islamic art Islamic.

The third factor that Ettinghausen touches upon is the symbolism in Islamic art. Does it exist, and if so, to what extent does it affect the nature of Islamic art? Here again, Ettinghausen discusses the issues of
symbolism, shedding some light on the ideas and opinions advanced by scholars such as Sir Thomas Arnold. Arnold wrote an article entitled "Symbolism and Islam," in which he reaches a conclusion that "Islam did not develop a symbolic language. Likewise, Professor Rudi Paret, who wrote a book entitled *Symbolik de Islam* (1958), reaches the same opinion as that of the previous author. Having examined these eminent scholars' arguments, Ettinghausen thinks that symbolism has some implication, but not enough to be the decisive factor in giving Islamic art its distinctive feature. In this respect, he states:

The conclusion is that, though at times symbolism existed, like the inscription it did not continue for long to express its message. The message becomes almost immediately purely "decorative" and, therefore, devoid of a directly understandable meaning. (p. 282)

Having elaborated on these three factors which are often attributed to the essence of Islamic art, Ettinghausen introduces his point of view regarding the overriding factor to which the true nature of the character of Islamic art should be attributed. This factor is the artistic elements which manifest themselves in the works of Islamic art. To this effect he says,

This leaves only one aspect for consideration: the general harmony, balance of parts, and perfection of the whole composition. This is, indeed, ubiquitously found and should, therefore, be regarded as the most important Islamic element. (p. 284)

But this aspect of artistic elements could only be dedicated by viewer reactions to works of art.
Ettinghausen was questioning whether there is, indeed, evidence about the aesthetic experience of Muslim viewers. He admits that it is hard to find such evidence. However, some indication is found in the writings of scholars such as al-Ghazzali, Jalal al-Din Rumi, Qadi Ahmad, and others. The aesthetic experience of the "element of inner harmony," as Ettinghausen would call it, could be divided into several levels.

The first level, which is also the lowest according to the metaphysician, is the "aesthetic appeal." It is the aesthetic appeal that causes the works of art to be commissioned, done in the first place, and to be saleable. In this respect, Ettinghausen quoted Jalal al-Din Rumi, who says, "Everything that is made beautiful and fair and lovely is made for the eye of him that sees" (pp. 285-286). He also mentions that al-Ghazzali has a similar saying: "Everything the perception of which gives pleasure and satisfaction is loved by the one who perceives it" (p. 286).

On the second level, the aesthetic experience of Islamic artworks is more profound and goes beyond the superficial appeal of beautiful objects. As Ettinghausen indicates, "it aims at satisfying a psychological need", which calls for cultivating human sensitiveness and enriching one's aesthetic judgment.
Works of art here serve as a means to relieve and relax the viewers from the ugliness, hideous conglomera-
tion, and untutored choices of commonplace people. In this respect, Ettinghausen states:

On the second level the design satisfies a psycho-
logical need. It caters to human sensitiveness which is bewildered by the surrounding untamed, dangerous, and often phantasmagoric landscape, and displeased by equally unappealing web of crooked and winding streets in villages and towns. The answer is a formal linear harmony which is rectilinear in the case of architecture and gardens. (p. 286)

The third level calls for a different and new approach of experiencing art. It could be called the "moral approach." The previous two levels of reaction to beauty and harmony may be enough for common people. However, the people with "reflective and religious nature" seek "inner satisfaction" by contemplating on works of art in an intellectual manner.

The purity and harmony of a work of art, be it a painting, a design, or calligraphy, is thought of as a reflection of the purity of its creator's heart. It also communicates more profoundly to men of piety and righteousness.

Ettinghausen categorizes this attitude and reaction to works of art under the metaphysical approach, which is deemed the highest method of contemplating works of art. He bases his opinion on the authority of two medieval scholars. Qadi Ahmad, of the seventeenth century, states that "writing was not the invention of letters and dots,
but fundamentals of purity and virtue." Al-Ghazzali, of the twelfth century, emphasizes this concept by saying that "the beautiful painting of a painter or the building of an architect reveals the inner beauty of these men" (p. 287).

Ettinghausen concludes that what gives Islamic art its unique characteristics is its ability to uplift the human spirit and to better weather it through the roughness and hardships of life. It speaks its own language, despite the fact that it is rooted in many different artistic traditions.

The Method of Ettinghausen

In Part A of this chapter, the researcher has clearly indicated that one of this dissertation's objectives is to find out the historical method of each scholar in question (see p. 38). In this section, therefore, the method utilized by Ettinghausen will be discussed. For instance, in what respect is Ettinghausen's method similar or different from that of Creswell's? In which media, style, region, or school of Islamic art does Ettinghausen explicitly demonstrate his preferred method of analyzing Islamic artworks? What kind of questions would he raise and how would he tend to find answers for them?

Furthermore, what modes of the historical approaches does Ettinghausen feel comfortable emphasizing, and to
what extent does he integrate the intrinsic and extrinsic perspectives? These questions and others should be answered when we look between the lines for examples of Ettinghausen's method.

In addition, the historical method of inquiry, which was highlighted by Kleinbauer (see Figure 6, p. 99), will be used as a guideline in the analysis of Ettinghausen's method. For example, did he prefer the intrinsic mode of inquiry or the extrinsic, or both? What are the steps, if any, that he takes when talking about Islamic art in general, and Islamic artworks in particular?

From the outset, it should be noted that unlike Creswell, Ettinghausen has written about architecture, painting, metalwork, glasswork, bookbinding, textiles, ceramics, and the theory of aesthetics in the Islamic world. His scholarship's scope is so wide that one can find examples of his method in almost every media through which Islamic art expresses itself. By looking at his collection of articles that he has written over the years, one can clearly see that they are divided into five major categories:

1. On the nature of Islamic art which covers topics such as:
   a. The theory/theories of aesthetics as perceived by theologians of the medieval period
   b. The character scope of decorative art and painting
c. Style and techniques of certain periods of Islamic art
d. The issue of originality and conformity in Islamic art
e. The issue of interaction and integration in Islamic art

2. Islamic themes in Islamic art which covers issues such as:
   a. Themes relating to religious construction
   b. Themes relating to Persian miniatures of the fourteenth century; their character and scope
   c. Topics about symbolism as manifested in Hilal in Islamic art
   d. Topics relating to iconography and its historical development as manifested in the prayer rug

3. The interpretation of key pieces which covers issues such as:
   a. Topics discussing the Persian treasure
   b. Issues relating to patronage and style of Islamic bronze
   c. Interpretation of a single Islamic artwork, the Wade Cup in the Cleveland Museum of Art
   d. Analysis of some Islamic art masterpieces

4. In search of lost meaning or function which covers topics relating to the interpretation of the following:
a. Iconography of some media such as lusterware and ceramic plates
b. Entertainment seen in Islamic art
c. A reconstruction of painting in the Fatima period
d. The style of luster painting in Mesopotamia

5. Regional aspect of Islamic art such as:
   a. Discussion of Islamic art at exhibitions
   b. Discussion of traditionalism in Iranian art
c. Elaboration on some aspects of Mongol miniatures
d. Analysis of some Turkish influence on silverware of the Seljug period of Iran

Under these topics, countless articles have been written by Ettinghausen, and each could be considered as a masterpiece by itself. However, before attempting to dwell on Ettinghausen's method, let us turn back to see what Kleinbauer has to say about the task that is expected from art historians and how they would go about accomplishing it?

Kleinbauer (1987) states:

The tasks confronting art historians are exacting, for these scholars are dealing with the art object as a historical document that demands understanding through analysis and interpretation. They perform their task through verbal discourse or writing, of which a multiplicity of genres flourish in our day. (p. 209)

He goes on to say that this variety of approaches constitutes the essence of modern art history. Basically,
however, there are two modes of inquiry—the intrinsic and the extrinsic (p. 209).

The intrinsic mode, as illuminated by Kleinbauer, calls for factors adherent to the work of art itself, such as:

1. Connoisseurship, under which come the issues of:
   a. Material and techniques
   b. Problems of authorship
   c. Physical condition
   d. Authenticity, dating, and provenance

2. Style, under which come the issues of:
   a. The art object's visual language, consisting of a vocabulary of formal qualities or motifs
   b. Structural syntax governing their relationship

3. Iconography, under which come the issues of:
   a. Subject matter or themes of the artwork
   b. The function or purpose for which the artwork was made

The extrinsic mode calls for examining factors out of the realm of artworks, however necessary to understand it.

In the extrinsic mode, the art historian, according to Kleinbauer, is more concerned with issues such as:

1. Artistic biography, psychoanalysis, and Gestalt and Jungian psychology

2. Patronage and other political, economic, scientific, religious, social, philosophical, cultural, and
intellectual determinants, as well as the history of idea

Having reviewed the property of both intrinsic and extrinsic modes of inquiry, as articulated by Kleinbauer, let us now see the extent to which they are applicable to Ettinghausen's method.

In his article, "al-Ghazzali on Beauty," Ettinghausen attempts to understand and explain the variables that affect in one way or another the creation of Islamic artworks. He indicates "that there is a Persian theory of beauty that goes deeper than any mere appreciation of the exquisite" (p. 160). Here we can clearly see how Ettinghausen tries to implement the extrinsic mode, which calls for the examination of surrounding circumstances and conditions responsible for driving the creative power of artists in certain directions. In his search, Ettinghausen examines the famous book of al-Ghazzali, Alchemy of Happiness, in which al-Ghazzali expresses his theory of beauty. This theory is based on the level of perfection of an art object and the inner vision of the beholder, which would lead to the ultimate love and appreciation of God, the creator of all there is.

It is difficult to understand the essence of Islamic art without looking at the developmental stages of the idea behind its creativity. Here again, Ettinghausen directs the reader's attention to some extrinsic factors
affecting Islamic art, and that is the aesthetic experience of both the artist, "the creator," and the audience. It appears as though al-Ghazzali believes that the aim or objective of art is to transcend the human spirit to recognize, love, and appreciate God, a different set of values that might not be of concern to other artists. This crucial point must be understood in order to fully grasp the essence of Islamic art. In this respect, Ettinghausen remarks,

Hence we have here a profound religious approach to art, which contrasts strongly with the usual stress placed by Western scholars on the secular and decorative character of Muslim art. (p. 164)

In another article, entitled "Decorative Arts and Painting," Ettinghausen tries to interpret the extrinsic factor behind the preference of the selection of certain artistic elements such as the "star configurations" (see Figure 10) in design in Egypt, North Africa, and Spain, and the preference of "free-flowing of arabesques" in Iran or India.

Ettinghausen attributes this preference of one design configuration over another to the aesthetic and may be the cognitive orientation of two Muslim sects. The so-called "orthodox Islam" appeared to have preferred

A straight, more rigid and calculated style, while the mystic Muslim adopted an abstract, undulating approach which, nevertheless, seems in its orderly manner to represent the rationalization of an ineffable inner experience. (p. 276)
Figure 10. Star configurations in pair of doors. Egypt, Mamluk period, late 13th or early 14th century.

Thus, by emphasizing the use of extrinsic mode of inquiry concerning artworks, Ettinghausen shows the need to seek an explanation of why and how a certain idea, design, style, or technique was adopted and flourished. If such an explanation is impossible to obtain from the work of art itself, the realm outside the work of art could be of significant value. Such an interpretation would stress the concept that works of art are not in isolation from their surrounding world and are not created in a vacuum, but rather are merely a reflection of an interactive process involving cultural, economic, social, religious, and scientific conditions.

In another article, entitled "The Immanent Features of Persian Art," Ettinghausen indicates that the objective of art, according to the Persian tradition, differs from other cultures. Persian artists sought a different objective in their creative pursuit. The concept of art for art's sake, which exists in Western tradition, has no counterpart in Persian tradition.

The artist or artisan is committed to beautifying objects in various form, be it metalwork, woodwork, ceramics, etc. Again, extrinsic mode of inquiry is being implied and there is an emphasis to seek an explanation by examining the history of the idea behind what we see in artworks.
So far we have seen how Ettinghausen utilizes the extrinsic mode of inquiry when he talks about Islamic art. It seems that extrinsic factors are necessary to understand and interpret works of art in general. Islamic art is no exception. However, intrinsic factors are of equal importance for analyzing works of art. In the following examples, we shall see how Ettinghausen skillfully uses the intrinsic mode of dealing with Islamic art.

In his article, "The Evergreen Tradition of Moslem Art" (1963), Ettinghausen discusses the Persian miniature, not only as a form of book illustration, but also as small, unique paintings of their own right. He begins by giving a detailed description of the size, date, school, style, material, and technique of these tiny paintings. This information is very important in that it gives a better outlook about an artwork that is usually available in books of art history. Knowing this initial information of size and dimension may lead to a more appreciative attitude toward the artist, who has achieved a superb control of space manipulation and design.

In the same article, Ettinghausen demonstrates a keen sense of connoisseurship in that he identifies the following information of each piece as an initial step of his discussion of artworks:
- The provenance in which the artwork is created or belongs
- The school or style to which the artwork belongs
- The theme or subject matter of the artwork
- The date the artwork was created
- The source of the artwork, be it a book or museum

This initial exercise enables the audience or readers to get a general idea about the artwork under discussion. For instance, in Figure 11, which represents an illustration in a book, Ettinghausen identifies the region in which this picture was created as Syria; the date, which he believes to be the fourteenth century; the subject matter, which is a design for an automation; and the source of this picture, which turns out to be a book called *Treatis on Mechanics*. Likewise, in Figure 12, the same basic information is given. However, a second step of analysis is undertaken in which the element of design is touched upon. The colors of these miniature paintings are discussed, in which their appropriateness and harmony with the subject matter is analyzed, as well as the management of space in relation to the theme, the selection of two dimensions, and the romantic and imaginary scene of the East. He also distinguishes from a stylistic point of view these miniatures, which were produced in Persia, from those of Indian or Turkish origin. In this respect, Ettinghausen states:

The usual image of a Persian miniature is that of a colorful two-dimensionally composed scene of gaily-dressed figures, all of whom perform daring feats or live as great lovers in a Never-Never land. (p. 29)
Figure 11. Two oxen. Page from "A Bestiary," Manafi al-Hayawan (Advantages Derived from Animals).

Figure 12. Design for an automation, page from "A Treatise on Mechanics," 1315.

However, exceptions to this generalization is found in many miniatures. For example, this feature is changed with the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century, and elements from a Far Eastern artistic tradition can be clearly seen in Persian art since then.

The use of intrinsic mode is clearly indicated in the examples given above. However, in his analysis of Figure 13, Ettinghausen shows more profound interest in intrinsic value. He talks about the subject matter of the painting, the skillful arrangement of figures and element in such small space, the colors and their richness and intensity, the composition, and so forth. To this effect, Ettinghausen has described Figure 13:

The carefully balanced composition which is here used for the two opposing heroes and their armies, continues to be the standard form of organizing the figures. Without ever becoming too obvious, it assures a pleasing effect to the painting. Such a composition scheme is therefore still to be found in a mid-fifteenth-century miniature which shows the legendary space fight of one of the ancient Persian kings. (Figure 14) (p. 56)

Thus far, we have seen how Ettinghausen masterfully utilizes both intrinsic and extrinsic modes of inquiry when approaching Islamic art. Whether it is a painting, an architectural monument, a piece of ceramic, a prayer rug, glasswork, or textile, Ettinghausen not only discusses simple intrinsic information such as the date, size, school, or style and the name of the artist or artisan, but also goes deeper to origin of idea,
Figure 13. Combat between the kings Ardrashir and Ardawan, page from the "Demotte" Shah-nama, ca. 1330-50.

Figure 14. King Kai Ka'as attempting to conquer Hearen, page from the Shah-nama (The Book of King).

development of the style and technique, the artistic or cultural climate of the period, and so forth. These factors are necessary requirements to understand and explain any given work of art and particularly Islamic art.

In the following pages, Ettinghausen's method of discussing a single medium through which Islamic art expresses itself will be further elaborated upon.

**Ettinghausen's Method of Inquiry Concerning Islamic Painting**

In this section, the focus will be on the analysis of Ettinghausen's method of inquiry concerning Islamic artwork in regard to a single medium through which the universal value of Islamic civilization is expressed. It may come to mind that such a medium could be Arabic calligraphy, arabesque, architecture, or any other decorative art with which the term Islamic is associated. Nonetheless, painting was chosen, whether in the form of miniatures, mosaic, or wall fresco. The reason behind this selection is that Arab-Islamic painting has been given as much attention as other art of the Islamic world. Also, Ettinghausen has written generously on the subject of Arab painting and his method of tackling painting could offer a great deal of benefits. His famous book, *Arab Painting*, and other numerous articles on the subject could easily assist in our pursuit.
The first step in his study of painting of the Islamic world was to establish a chronological order of the development of Islamic painting. He divided this development into five phases as follows:

1. Early phase of pictorial art (includes paintings from 691-750 A.D.) and encompasses these issues:
   a. The proclamation of universal power by the caliphate
   b. Painting related to court life
   c. Painting related to everyday life
2. The second phase includes the period from the twelfth century to the thirteenth century and encompasses issues related to:
   a. The evolution of the art of the book
   b. The manifestation of the "princely" style in the Persian manner
   c. The influence of Byzantine style on Islamic painting
   d. The contribution of the Arab-Muslim
3. The third stage is concerned with the highest level of achievement in Islamic painting (1250-1390 A.D.) and encompasses:
   a. Turkish influence and contribution
4. The fourth stage spans the ninth century to the fourteenth century and encompasses the flowering of the spiritual aspect of Islamic painting and is manifested in:
   a. Quran illumination
5. The fifth phase (the period after the fifteenth century and on) encompasses:
   a. The decline of Arab-Islamic painting

   Having organized his material in this chronological fashion,
Ettinghausen turns back to describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate these paintings. Before attempting to dwell on the pictorial heritage of the Islamic world, Ettinghausen gives a brief, yet precise, introduction of how Islam once became a universal power controlling much of what was then known as the old world. Such an introduction necessitates touching upon political, cultural, social, and economical background. He further emphasizes that "it is against this background, here briefly sketched, the pictorial records of this civilization should be understood" (p. 19).

Analysis of Painting

   The painting of Arab-Islamic civilization could be identified by two basic forms:
1. Decorative painting, which is meant to enhance the appearance of a building, a monument, or an object, and
2. Illustrative painting, whose original purpose was to explain, illuminate, or give direction

The former type could also be divided, according to Ettinghausen, into two basic categories--secular and
religious paintings. The latter is also divided as follows:
- scientific illustration
- poetic illustration
- political illustration
(See Figure 15 for more information.)

Having identified the major trends in Islamic painting, three examples of these trends will satisfy the need to demonstrate Ettinghausen's method of analysis.

Decorative painting from the Dome of the Rock, Damascus' great mosque. The wall mosaic painting in the Dome of the Rock Mosque is still intact. However, mosaic wall painting of Damascus' great mosque is partly preserved.

In his discussion of the two major types of painting, Ettinghausen cleverly employs and fully utilizes both intrinsic and extrinsic modes. His discussion consists of the following:
1. descriptive statement
2. analytical statement
3. interpretive statement
4. evaluative statement

Ettinghausen begins his discussion of painting by giving a detailed description of the date in which the works of art were rendered, the patronage, if any, the
### Decorative Painting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secular Building</th>
<th>Religious Building</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mosaic painting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Fresco painting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic vegetal forms</td>
<td>Animate figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees, leaves, fruits</td>
<td>Hunting scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acanthus flowers</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Illustrative Painting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific illustration</th>
<th>Poetic illustration</th>
<th>Political glorification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Medicine</td>
<td>Love and romantic stories</td>
<td>Hunting scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koran illuminations</td>
<td>War and fighting scene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Royal scene

**Figure 15.** Classifications of Islamic paintings.

**Note.** From *Arab Painting* by R. Ettinghausen, 1962, Cleveland, OH: The World Publishing Company.
material that was used, the subject matter, and the style
or trend. In this respect he states,

The earliest pictorial representations created in the
Islamic civilization are still extensively preserved
on the inside walls of the Dome of the Rock in
Jerusalem, the first major construction, built in 691
by order of the Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705).

He goes on to say,

The glass mosaics covering the spandrels and soffits
of the ambulatories and the drum of the dome show a
great variety of vegetal motifs. There are realistic­
tically rendered trees and leaves with fruits; then,
much more widely used, formal vegetal arrangements in
which vases and cornucopiae also occur. (p. 20) (see
Figure 16)

Ettinghausen then analyzes these designs from an
artistic point of view. He discusses the vegetal motifs,
their composition, balance, harmony, color line, and their
origin, which he thinks was derived from the late
Byzantines and Sassanian Iran. He remarks, "another
characteristic feature of this ensemble is the rich use of
jewelry designs made of mother-of-pearl and semiprecious
stones and applied to the vegetal motifs."

In his interpretation of the mosaic paintings,
Ettinghausen says,

They were, however, much more than mere decoration.
They had to satisfy the religious and aesthetic
demands of the caliph and appeal to the Arabs and
newly converted worshippers. The use of purely
vegetal forms to the exclusion of animated figures
shows the conformity, even in this early sacred
building, the newly emerging, artistically restric­
tive attitude of Islam. But the elaborate tree and
floral arrangements must have had a positive value so
as to gratify the senses of the many Arabs who had
only recently emerged from the deserts. (p. 20)
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Ettinghausen also interprets the perfusion in the use of lavish jewelry decoration, especially around the sacred rock. The ruler tried to show the domination of the newly-proclaimed power on one hand, and the disappearance of the previous superpower of Byzantine and Iran on the other hand. Another purpose of these mosaics, according to Ettinghausen, was to compete with churches of splendid beauty. Ettinghausen then tends to evaluate these mosaic paintings by stating, "there is no doubt that these mosaics are a major artistic achievement and their effect is also sumptuously impressive" (p. 20).

In his analysis of mosaic painting in Damascus' mosque, the same could be said in the basic elements of these paintings with the exception of new features of "architectural representations" (p. 22). These architectural elements were divided by Ettinghausen into three types:

1. palace pavilions
2. private buildings
3. open-roofed gateway

Having identified and described the inculcation of these architectural representations in the composition of the painting, Ettinghausen asserts that the only difference in these paintings is the absence of Persian influence.
The analysis of these mosaics falls in the same method as that of the Dome of the Rock Mosque. However, in the search of hidden meaning in these architectural configurations (see Figure 17), a new point of view was presented. This view led to a different interpretation. Ettinghausen sites the explanation of the famous geographer, al-Maqdisi, who described the meaning of these mosaics: "There is hardly a tree or notable town that has not been pictured on these walls." Ettinghausen then comments on this interpretation, stating, "Al-Maqdisi seems to have regarded these representations as comprising a picture of the world shown in the two aspects of architecture and nature" (p. 28). He goes on to say,

There is yet another aspect that distinguishes these scenes from similar architectural vistas in Christian mosaics and manuscripts. In those, Jerusalem and many other towns and cities are shown with crenelated walls, high towers, and strong gates; indeed, this is their foremost aspect. This defensive element is missing in Damascus. Everything is open and peaceful. By choosing the "idyllic" iconography instead of the "realistic" symbol, as church art had done, a new and challenging message was proclaimed: the Arab empire has conquered the whole world and now with the teaching of Islam the Golden Age, the paradise on earth, has arrived. One can hardly imagine a more impressive manifestation of the universal power of the new state than we find offered in these mosaics of the capital's main mosque. (p. 28)

The secular painting of the court can be found in Qusayr Amra, Qusar al-Hayar, al-Gharbit, and Khirbat al-Mafjar, of the Umayyad period. As in his analysis of the previous paintings, Ettinghausen begins by identifying the material and technique used, which he says is fresco
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painting. These paintings have a variety of subject matter, ranging from hunting scenes, wrestling matches, athletic exercises, and nude women. Unlike the subject matter of paintings in religious settings, the theme of paintings in secular buildings are full of human and animal figures. The style of these paintings show strong Roman or Byzantine influence (see Figures 18 and 19). The date of these paintings is also identified as 730. Ettinghausen remarks that the themes of these fresco paintings correspond with the purpose or function of the monuments in which they were found. Being both houses and recreational palaces, it is understandable why such subject matter existed. In regard to the painting of the nude women in both the halls of Qsayr Amra, Ettinghausen attributes its character to the place in which it exists, for women in Islamic culture appeared fully clothed in public. However, in baths and private places, especially of the aristocratic class, some types of figural representation of erotic scenes can possibly be found. His interpretation of the style and shape of the nude figure is that while there is obvious influence of Byzantine style, the bulky figure has to do with the idea of beauty in Arab culture.

Referring to the Arab concept of ideal female beauty, Ettinghausen argues the case that it has some relationship with the acceptance of such a figure as that of the
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bath house of Qusayr Amra. By examining the Arabic
amatory preludes and the ancient Arabic odes, one can see
how the ideal proportion of a beautiful female was
described. In this respect, Ettinghausen states,

In these love lyrics one reads that the ideal Arab
woman must be so stout that she nearly falls asleep,
that she must be clumsy when rising and lose her
breath when moving quickly; that her breasts should
be full and rounded, her waist slender and graceful,
her belly lean, her hips sloping and her buttocks so
fleshy as to impede her passage through a door. Her
legs are said to be like columns of alabaster and
marble, her neck like that of a gazelle, while her
arms are described as well-rounded, with soft
delicate elbows, full wrists, and long fingers. Her
face with its white cheeks must not be haggard, her
eyes are those of a gazelle with the white and black
of eyeball clearly marked. . . . This ideal of beauty
was not only that of the Bedouin poets. It had the
same appeal at the court. (p. 32)

Thus far, we have seen how Ettinghausen dwells on all
sources that can assist him in making the connection of a
few clues in order to find logical explanation and
convincing interpretation. Although there are other
examples of fresco painting in Qusar al-Hayr, al Gharbi,
and Khirbat al-Mfjer in which Ettinghausen accentuates the
roles of an art historian and the method of historical
inquiry, other examples of different types of painting is
presented below.

Our third example of painting analysis as it pertains
to Ettinghausen's method is miniature painting, which can
be found in many books representing different orienta-
tions. Some of them are purely illustrative of scientific
nature, while other illuminating stories carry wisdom or
philosophy, and some glorify the ruler and his court attendance. Having explained the source of origin of this tradition, be it Sassanian, Far Eastern, or Byzantine, Ettinghausen elaborates on the general tolerant attitude toward painting animate figures. This permissible behavior, from Ettinghausen’s point of view, is the most significant factor that allows for the acceptance and as a result, the flourishing of this art. He asserts,

But before foreign models could be accepted to such a degree there had to exist an intellectual attitude within the Arab mind that allowed for much broader use of miniature painting. (p. 81)

He then poses the following question: "What could have brought about this new readiness for figural illustrations?" (p. 81).

Here, Ettinghausen indeed touches on an intrinsic factor that helps explain some aesthetic phenomenon in regard to miniatures in particular, and to painting in general. He readily admits that a simple and straight answer to this question is not easy to find. It could be the influence of a powerful figure such as the Abbasid Caliph an-Nasir (1180-1225), or later, the King of Mosul, Bader ad-din Lulu (1218-1259). Another possible cause is the flowering of the aristocratic merchant class whose support and patronage of fine products is noticeable.

Having explained the possible reason behind the diffusion and acceptance of figural art, Ettinghausen discusses some of these miniature paintings. Figures 20
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and 21 show two paintings of common subject matter, farm life and activities, and a scene of court, entitled The Poisoned Favorite at King's Pavilion. Both these miniature paintings are from the Book of Antidotes (Kitab ad-Diryag).

As in his analysis of other paintings, the first step Ettinghausen takes is to describe the painting in full detail. He identifies the approximate date of production, which is around 1199 (595 A.H.), and the region in which it was rendered, which is probably northern Iraq. He also identifies the subject matter as the physician, Andromakhos, watches agricultural activities. One additional piece of information given here is the size of this painting, which is 140 x 210 mm.

In his examination of the picture, Ettinghausen does the following exercise:

1. Description of what is in the picture.

The picture illustrates a story of the physician, Andromakhos, who used to come to the fields to supervise his peasants while his servant brought them food. One day a decomposed snake was found in the sealed jug containing a beverage which afterward served as a cure for a leper. (p. 83)

2. Analysis of the composition.

The illustration depicts a scene in the fields in which, however, the main figures of the story, the physician and the servant carrying the all-important food, jug, and tray, occur only in the background, in the upper left corner, while the tillers, also referred to in the text, occupy the corresponding section on the right. The larger part of the painting is thus devoted to various agricultural activities not mentioned by the author. They appear
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in the natural progression of farm work. After the tillers comes the harvester, who cuts a plant with a sickle, then a man with a threshing device pulled by two bullocks, after him two peasants, who winnow and sift grain, and finally, a small donkey which brings or takes away another load. (p. 83)

3. Interpretative statement.

Only the round discs behind the heads, which in this period are often used to stress the significance of this part of the body (even birds), are a direct continuation of a Byzantine iconographic feature, although the connotation of saintliness has not been taken over. But even this motif has changed: around some of the haloes are colored and floriated edges, an indication that a further development has taken place. (pp. 83-84)

4. Finally, have described, analyzed, and interpreted this tiny painting, a last step must be taken—that of evaluating the painting. In this respect, Ettinghausen says that all these scenes are based on acute observation, and careful attention has been given to such details as the movements characteristic of various types of work, the tools used, and the different garments (p. 83). He goes on to say,

Only in two aspects does the miniature show decided limitations, at least from the modern point of view. There is little understanding of space. Some realization of it is apparent in the threshing scene, and winnower stands behind the sifter; otherwise each figure is placed by itself in the picture plane. Moreover, as Bishr Fares, the discoverer of the manuscript, has pointed out, the spatial relationship of the two superimposed registers is still the same as in Assyrian reliefs. Secondly, the figures are merely given in an additive fashion, one action taking place next to the other without any connection between them. Apart from the dovetailing of the figures in the composition and the progression in the work and its common rhythm, there is no interrelationship between the figures. This inclination of stringing together isolated elements (a tendency
sometimes called "atomistic") is, moreover, stressed by placing a plant or other dividing motifs to separate the groups. The colors also, with their somewhat spotty handling, contribute to the impression of discontinuity. These stylistic features make the miniature look rather like a figural sampler of agrarian themes. But far more important than these compositional limitations is the extension of the iconography. We must assume that the artist worked in an urban center; still he reveals a marked interest in agrarian activities, indeed, so much that he went beyond the illustrative necessities. This novel concern with peasant work is, however, to be found also elsewhere in contemporary Iraqi art, as it occurs in the inlaid scenes of metalwork and pottery. (p. 84)

Conclusion

This section analyzed selected writings of Richard Ettinghausen. The purpose of doing so is stated at the beginning of this chapter. The analysis focused on three components. First, Ettinghausen's ideas of the genesis, evolution, and development of Islamic art. Second, the nature and characteristics of Islamic art, in which he touches upon different factors that highlight the true nature of Islamic art. The third component is the method that Ettinghausen uses in the analysis of Islamic artwork. The implication of historical modes of inquiry as manifested in the utilization of intrinsic and extrinsic perspectives was fully discussed. Finally, his analysis of a single medium, painting, was explored.
PART C
ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WRITINGS
OF OLEG GRABAR

Introduction

Of the three scholars selected for this study, Oleg Grabar is the only one still living. He continues to be active in writing and publishing books and articles on Islamic art. His involvement in seminars, conventions, and even archeological excavations adds to his accumulated knowledge and awareness of key issues, theories, and hypotheses regarding Islamic art. Therefore, it is assumed that Grabar could add to the knowledge and understanding of Islamic art, benefiting from newly-discovered sites in the Arabian Peninsula and other parts of the Islamic world.

This new information, as it arises, may change and challenge old theories and hypotheses that have been generally accepted in the past. Unlike Creswell and Ettinghausen, whose writings have been critically examined, challenged, or appraised, Grabar's writings have not been critically reviewed or elaborated upon. That, of course, does not mean that his contribution is not of great importance. To this researcher, his writings might be of more value to this study, simply because of its freshness, up-to-dateness, and diversity.
Grabar's writings will be reviewed and analyzed according to the method set forth by this researcher and to answer the questions generated by that study. Therefore, only representative writings which pertain to the purpose of this study will be analyzed.

The Problem of the Term "Islamic Art"

What does the term "Islamic art" mean? What does it imply? What does "Islamic" mean when it is used as an adjective modifying the noun "art"? Does "Islamic" equal or compare to Christian in "Christian art" or Buddhist in "Buddhist art"? With this chain of questions, Grabar begins a linguistic and conceptual analysis of the term.

Grabar suggests that when the word "Islamic" is used as an adjective modifying the noun "art," it does not indicate a religious meaning. Thus, it is in no way comparable to "Christian" or "Buddhist" in Christian art or Buddhist art. The reason for this is, while there is no dispute that both Christian and Buddhist arts have a religious theme and symbols as their focal point, Islamic art, with the exception of a few rare examples of religious themes such as Meraj Nama and Siyer-i Nebi, depicted religious themes or personality. Furthermore, Islamic art did not propagate religious beliefs or teaching. Sir Thomas Arnold (1928) seems to agree with this idea when he says:
For the three great missionary religions of the world--Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam--each is striving for the mastery of the world and endeavoring to win the allegiance of men by various devices of propaganda. Islam alone has refused to call in the aid of pictorial art as handmaid to religion. (p. 4)

In addition, Grabar claims that Islamic art was produced and used by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. In this respect, he states that "Islamic does not refer to the art of any particular religion, for a vast proportion of the monuments have little, if anything, to do with the faith of Islam" (p. 1). He goes on to say that "works of art demonstrably made by and for non-Muslims can appropriately be studied as works of Islamic art" (p. 1). Therefore, Grabar points out that the term "Islamic art" has a cultural implication, without denying the influence of religion, and could be equal in meaning and comparable to "Gothic art" or "Baroque art."

The Genesis of Islamic Art

Another problem associated with defining Islamic art is its genesis. When in history was something emerged as a distinctive entity called Islamic art? What was the psychological motivation, attitude toward the art, and the mind of the beholder or the creator that contributed to its very existence? Although these three preconditions are necessary requirements to fully grasp the nature of change of an artistic tradition, the concept of absolute and relative time is our concern. Here Grabar dwells on
the concept of absolute and relative time in relation to the birth of Islamic art with its distinguishable character. He states that while identifying the absolute time of the evolution of Islamic art is possible, the relative time is more difficult to identify and varies from one region to another. What he means by absolute time is the precise moment fixed in history by an event(s), be it political or cultural, that marks the condition for the rise of a new civilization. In this case, the absolute time of the genesis of Islamic art could be marked by a series of events beginning from the year 622, the "Hijera" of the prophet from Makkah to Medina. This was a political event, after which an Islamic state was founded. Grabar, however, maintains:

Since almost all the preserved or known monuments of Islamic art are found outside of the precise geographical region in which Islam first appeared, a more appropriate absolute date may be that of the conquest of a given region by Islam. (p. 7)

The events which took place between 634 (when the first Syrian towns were taken over by Muslims) to 751 (with the conquest of Tashkent in Central Asia) are and could be considered as examples of the absolute time of the creation and expansion of Islamic art.

The concept of relative time, on the other hand, pertains to the moment Islamic art was formed. It is concerned with questions of the classical stage of Islamic art. Because relative time of the formation of Islamic
art varies from one region to another, four characteristics of the classical phase were suggested by Grabar as preconditions to its formation: 1) wide cultural acceptance of certain forms as identifying the culture's functional and aesthetic needs, 2) repetition of standardized forms and designs, 3) quality of execution of various levels of artistic production, and 4) clarity definition of visible form.

The Characteristics of Islamic Art

In his article, "What Makes Islamic Art Islamic?", Grabar questions the fact that there should be some elements, at least from a stylistic point of view, that distinguish Islamic art from that of other cultures. His question, What makes Islamic art Islamic?, is strongly related to the problem of defining Islamic art based on its necessary and sufficient properties.

Grabar seems to see three characteristics as necessary properties that make Islamic art distinctive among other arts. These characteristics, which are a common ground among a large amount of works of Islamic art, are as follows: 1) its social meaning, having to do with its aesthetics and functional aspects, 2) its abstract ornament, having to do with the formal elements and mystical attribution, and 3) its tension between unity and plurality.
The first characteristic has to do with the social function of art in Islamic society. It is suggested by Grabar that Islamic art has a very deep connection with daily life and could be regarded as a cultural statement testifying to its functional and social attribute. Its existence, not only in architecture, but also in all objects of daily use, makes it available to all people. Beauty is to be seen everywhere; in the mosque, palaces, metal works, ceramics, textiles, etc. In this respect Grabar states:

Yet it is not only the architecture that we see an art at the service of a society. Practically all other artistic activities were similarly directed to making daily, public or private life more attractive and more exciting. New or rediscovered techniques revolutionized the art of the potter and of the metal worker and transformed the humblest object into a potential of art. (p. 2)

Abstract ornament is the second distinguishable property of Islamic art. The whole sum of abstract ornaments in geometric, vegetal, or zoomorphic forms have more purpose than merely the decoration of empty space or beautification of surfaces. Taking geometrical patterns as an example, it is believed by many scholars that Muslim artists had acquired a very sophisticated understanding of the element of composition such as rotation, symmetry, translation balance and so forth (mathematical operation to calculate the space and distribute the elements). In interpreting this geometry, some suggest that it is an expression of the presence of the divine or God in all
that is created by humans. In this regard, Grabar states:

The very notion of using geometry for such a purpose would be a deeply Islamic semiotic creation, which just as in writing used arbitrary but modular signs to express its deepest meanings rather than ideographic borrowings from the perceived world of nature. (p. 2)

The third characteristic by which Islamic art can be defined is its striking unity and variety, which can be seen across regions and periods. Islamic art had maintained a unique way of presenting a new realm which could be understood by itself and for itself. The Muslim artist was very selective in choosing the elements of his expression. He did not choose the human as the central issue for his art, nor did he represent nature as it appears. Rather, his art was for him a distinct realm that could not be anything but itself. In this respect, Grabar states:

But a more important point is that, whatever the reasons, Islamic art did manage to evolve a type of visual tension which is quite different from the man-centeredness of Western art or the natural complexities of Chinese art. (p. 3)

The Historical Process of the Manmade Setting

Dealing with the historical processes that outline the classical phase of the history of Islamic art involves the absolute and relative time of its formation. How did it evolve? What were the conditions, be it political, cultural, social, and/or economical, associated with its
existence and development in such a distinctive way? As mentioned earlier, absolute time is defined by Grabar (1987) as a series of political and cultural events that took place between 622 and 743-945 A.D.

The rise of Islam itself, however, has been considered as the first major political, cultural, and social event. Other Islamic art historians such as Ettinghausen (1944, 1984), Aga-Oglu (1954), Allen (1987), and Al-Faruqi (1987) accept this event as the beginning of a series of dramatic historical processes which characterize the early moment of Islamic civilization.

It is assumed that some psychological, philosophical, and epistemological changes occurred in the minds of the early Muslims. These changes prepared them when they inherited previous civilizations as their own and modified them gradually according to their value system. This could not have happened had these changes not taken place.

Values of Islam Versus Previous Values

The Arab of pre-Islam (Jahiliyah) or ignorance implies "the period in which Arabia had dispensation, no inspired prophet, and no reveled book" (Hitti, 1946). History tells us that these people were disunited and ignorant, and had very prevalent social diseases. Usury, drinking or alcohol abuse, gambling, discrimination on the basis of color, race, or sex, and the inequality of wealth distribution were common practice. In such a society the
essence of civilization was not to be found. To illustrate this point, let us now turn back to one of the witnesses (contemporary) of that time and feel the major change in character and attitude that Islam brought about in the minds and hearts of the early Muslims.

In the biography of Ibn Hisham, entitled *The Life of Muhammad (A Translation of Ishaq's)*, the story of the first migration to Abyssinia reports that a group of believers sought refuge in the land belonging to the Negus (King of Abyssinia), after life became unbearable for them in Makkah. These believers were subjected to torture and harassment in Makkah because they professed Islam. They were under such harsh conditions that they were instructed by the prophet to immigrate to Abyssinia, which was famous for its just and kind king. Having immigrated to Abyssinia, the believers were very comfortable and free. Quraysh, the tribe of immigrants, was angered by the defiance and escape of the believers, so they tried to get them back. To accomplish this, Quraysh sent two wise and persuasive men, Abuallah Ibn Abu Rabia and Amr Ibn al-As, to the Negus to claim the refugees. The two men took gifts to the Negus and his generals. Since leather work was especially prized in Abyssinia, most of the gifts were from this craft.

The story continues that upon arriving in Abyssinia, the two ambassadors of Quraysh gave the gifts to the
generals of the Negus. They asked the generals to support their claim to the refugees from their tribe and to also persuade the Negus to surrender them without hearing their version of the situation. While in the presence of the Negus, the two men told him that some foolish fellows from their people had taken refuge in the king's land: "They have forsaken our religion and did not accept yours, but have brought in an invented religion which neither we nor you know nothing about" (p. 151).

Being just, the Negus summoned the refugees to hear their side of the story. The refugees discussed the matter amongst themselves and they decided to tell the Negus what they had been told and learned from the prophet. When Ja'far Ibn Abu Talib, the spokesman of the refugees, was asked about the Quraysh ambassador's claims, he answered:

O King, we were an uncivilized people, worshipping idols, eating corpses, committing abominations, breaking natural ties, treating guests badly, and our strong devoured our weak. Thus we were until God sent us an apostle whose lineage, truth, trustworthiness, and clemency we know. He summoned us to acknowledge God's unity and to worship him and to renounce the stones and images which we and our fathers formerly worshipped. He commanded us to speak the truth, be faithful to our engagements, mindful of the ties of kinship and kindly hospitality, and to refrain from crimes and bloodshed. He forbade us to commit abominations and to speak lies, and to devour the property of orphans, to vilify chaste women. He commanded us to worship God alone and not to associate anything with Him, and he gave us orders about prayer, almsgiving, and fasting (enumerating the commands of Islam). We confessed his truth and believed in him, and we followed him in what he had brought from God, and we worshipped God
alone without associating aught with Him. We treated as forbidden what he forbade, and as lawful what he declared lawful. Thereupon our people attacked us, treated us harshly and seduced us from our faith to try to make us go back to the worship of idols instead of the worship of God, and to regard as lawful the evil deeds we once committed. So when they got the better of us, treated us unjustly and circumscribed our lives, and came between us and our religion, we came to your country, having chosen you above all others. Here we have been happy in your protection, and we hope that we shall not be treated unjustly while we are with you, O King. (pp. 151-152)

Having heard their point of view, the just king decided not to surrender the refugees and let them be free in his land as long as they wished. If this story has anything to tell us, however, it is the change the people experienced in the early Islamic period, for uncivilized people are not expected to admire, take over, and make use of other civilizations' achievements. Unlike the Mongols' invasion of Baghdad, which was catastrophic in nature, the Muslim conquest of the Byzantine and Sassanian empires was rarely destructive, a fact that many historians admit.

Having examined the psychological change that was fostered by Islam as a religion, faith, and social institution, attention in the following pages will be focused on the major historical processes that comprise the classical period of Islamic art.

The Land of Early Islam

In order to comprehend the classical phase of the Islamic civilization, one needs to bear in mind the
conditions, be it political, cultural, social, or economical, in which early Islamic art evolved and flourished. Without understanding the world and culture preceding the Islamic civilization, one cannot reach a precise, absolute, or relative time of its existence. It is, therefore, essential to examine the nature of the cultural and artistic tradition in the land conquered by Islam.

Before the Islamic conquest, there were two powerful, rich, and rival empires coexisting in the old world. These empires controlled much of the old world and had some allies such as the Nestorians and the Ghassanid. They developed a very sophisticated material culture and the basic infrastructure for settled societies. From the year 634 onward, this reality was about to change. Within a few decades, the Arab Muslim armies took over North Africa (Maghrib) up to Spain, the Fertile Crescent which includes Syria, Palestine, and the upper part of Iraq and Iran; in other words, from Iberia to Indus (see Figure 22-23 for more detail). The land conquered by Islam now possessed its indigenous artistic tradition and modes or patterns of artistic behavior. Grabar (1987) elaborates on the land of early Islam. In regard to the conquering of North Africa to Spain, he states that the total land was taken over between 669-710. Egypt was the first region to fall into the hands of Muslims, shortly after conquering Syria. In 669, however, the celebrated Uqbah
Figure 22. The expansion of Islam during the four orthodox caliphs period.

Figure 23. Muslim lands of the time of Harun al-Rashid, 786-809.

Ibn Nafi conquered what is now Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. About four decades later, the equally celebrated Tariq Ibn Ziyed took over Spain and became the first governor of Spain. Nevertheless, Grabar claims that there is no physical evidence nor is there textual information to support the assumption of having advanced architecture in Spain in that early time.

A more appropriate date for the relative time of the formation of Islamic art in Spain may coincide with the establishment of an autonomous Umayyad caliphate in 756. For instance, the construction of the first part of the Mosque of Gormoba (785-86) marks the first building of significant value in Spain. Grabar, however, states that the living artistic tradition which existed in Spain at the time of the Muslim conquest was so poor to the point that it did not impress the Muslims there as did the art and architecture in Syria and Palestine. He further states that although the art of North Africa is important, it is characterized by its reflective value, which means that much of the artistic vocabulary of the arts and architecture were borrowed from other provinces. "Maghrib" and Spain reflected the style which existed in Syria and Palestine.

The situation is different for Egypt because information about its art is available and rich. For example, our knowledge of Fustat is sufficient enough to affirm
superior achievement in art and architecture. The first influence of style and technique executed in Iraq can be clearly seen in the art and architecture in Egypt, e.g., the Mosque of Ibn Tulun and lusterware in ceramics. Grabar suggests that the reason for the high accomplishment of art in Egypt was a direct result of stability as a source of labor and manpower, as well as Hellenistic influence.

Unlike North Africa and Spain, the Fertile Crescent is believed to be where the real historical processes of the early moment of Islamic art occurred. The Fertile Crescent includes Syria, Palestine, and middle and upper Mesopotamia. In Syria and Palestine the high Mediterranean culture of the Byzantine empire manifested itself in rich architectural tradition, where churches and temples and other secular buildings of fine and magnificent quality were found.

The conquest of Syria from south to north was completed between 633-640. This very rich province was a very strategic location which was used as a base for further conquest. Coinciding with the conquest of Syria, the Muslim armies went to Iraq and Persia. Between 634-652 the whole area of Iraq and Persia was occupied. Iraq, in fact, was an equally important province where cultural and intellectual centers existed in Kufu and Basra.
Interaction and Integration of the Islamic Empire

Having dwelt briefly on the expansion of Islam during the classical stage, the cultural, social, and economical interaction that occurred simultaneously with the conquest will be elaborated upon. The land that was once occupied by the Byzantine and Sassanian empires was transformed to one huge, mighty, and united empire under the rule of the Umayyed caliphate and later under the Abbasid and their allies, of course, or representatives.

The process of Islamization or Arabization as a means of unifying the different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups comprising the Islamic society was rapidly taking place. The process of Islamization was also accelerated as a result of the following factors. First, the people living in Syria, Palestine, and Iraq may have experienced some oppression and injustice by their Byzantine and Sassanian masters. This is manifested in heavy taxation on certain social classes in Syria, but not on the privileged families who were exempted from taxes (Hitti, p. 242). In the Islamic empire taxes were to be collected from all the dhimmis. As soon a dhimmi professed Islam, however, the taxation was automatically dropped. Second, most of the population of these provinces were from a Semitic origin, which means that they considered the Arab rulers more or less from their own kinship. Third, other religious groups, such as Coptic inhabitants who had
Christian faith, had been bitterly persecuted by the Byzantine. Finally, the conquest itself was not destructive and did not force the indigent population to leave. In this regard Hitti (1946) states,

The welcome on the part of Aramaean peasants was no less cordial than that tendered by Syrian peasants, and much the same reasons. The Semitic Iraqis looked upon the Iranian masters as aliens and felt closer kinship with the newcomers. As Christians they had not been especially favored by the followers of Zoroaster. (pp. 155-58)

In another incident, the people of Hims, a Syrian town, are reported to have expressed their joy and satisfaction toward the new rulers: "We like your rule and justice far better than the state of oppression and tyranny under which we have been living" (p. 153) (meaning the Byzantine state).

Therefore, the factors mentioned so far helped the Islamic state unite the people of as vast a land as Iberia on one edge and Indus on the other, as well as diverse cultural and ethnic groups. In a few decades much of the population converted to Islam and the process of Islamic civilization was a clear reality.

In his book, History of the Arabs, Hitti (1965) states that the expansion of the Islamic empire and the elevation of the level of civilized life necessitated the creation of an international relationship with overseas nations. Commerce was one means of strengthening this relationship. During the reign of the second Abbasid
caliph, Muslim merchants went east to China and exported goods and crafts of fine quality. This included glass, metal work, fabrics, etc. This great prosperity in commerce must have been backed up with fine industrial and agricultural production (pp. 421-23).

From this example, the arts must have had great support from the merchant class who, through their commerce, must have become very wealthy. Besides the minor arts, monuments of high value and characteristic could be found during the Abbasid era. In city planning, the cities of Samarra and Baghdad are examples, as well as Samarra Mosque and Ibn Tulun Mosque.

Social and Cultural Change

As a result of the wealth or economic prosperity and the political stability and security, the Islamic empire experienced some changes in its social structure. It is believed that these changes reached their peak during the period of the "High Caliphate," 692-945 A.D. The rise of new social classes, such as the ruling elements and their allies, were considered as upper social classes that inherited the high culture of the Mediterranean and created new patrons for the arts and architecture. Another social class that must have played an essential role in patronizing the arts was the middle class, consisting of merchant families and craftsmanship families.
Nevertheless, some historians such as Hodgeson (1974) and Grabar and Ettinghausen (1987) suggest that the social classes which strongly affected the state of art did not appear until the "caliphate state was a well established agrarian-based empire" (p. 232). Hodgeson (1974) calls the period from 692 until the second quarter of the tenth century the "High Caliphate." This term is meant to differentiate the High Caliphate from the previous stage of the caliphate, beginning from Abu-Bakr to Muawiyah. It also distinguishes it from the later stage of the Abbasid caliphate after 955, which Hodgeson describes as "a form carrying a figurehead, and was at best local power with special prestige" (p. 233) (see Figure 24-25).

Some political and intellectual centers flourished before the "High Caliphate" period, such as Kufu and Basra in Iraq and Fustat in Egypt. The physical evidence or remains related to Islamic art and architecture, however, suggest that many great works of art sponsored by strong patrons began to flourish within the period from 690 onward. If we look, for example, at the arts and architecture associated with the "High Caliphate" era, we find that architecture of significant value appeared within the Umayyad period. The upper class patrons spent generously, not only on religious monuments, but also on secular monuments as well. An example of this is the construction of the Dome of the Rock, completed in 691-692, Great
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**Figure 24.** Comparative Periodization of the Caliphate to 1258.

692–744  The Marwâni Umayyads: The empire continues to expand till about 740, and internal peace is broken only by Khârijî revolts (increasingly extensive) and occasional scares raised by Shi'îs ('Alid partisans); the administration is consolidated and regularised; a 'pious opposition' to Umayyad rule, of many shades of opinion, centres at Medina and is increasingly inclined to support the 'Alid claims raised at Kufah; specific events are:

692–703 'Abd-al-Malik undisputed caliph, Arabises the administration (696, Arabic coinage); Ḥajjâ b. Yûsuf at Wâṣîl (694–714), as his lieutenant in the former Sasanian provinces, bloodily suppresses dissenting Arab movements, encourages economic development

703–715 Walîd I, caliph, conquest of Spain and Sind, and first conquest of Transoxania. Succeeded by Sulaymân (715–717), who fails to take Constantinople (717) and permits the 'southern' Arabs (Kalb and allies) to triumph over the 'northern' Arabs (Qays and allies, among them Ḥajjâ's men), intensifying feuds among the Arab soldiery

717–720 'Umar II b. 'Abd-al-'Azîz, caliph, whose piety, of the new Medina type, conciliates even Shi'îs and Khârijîs; he encourages admission to the ruling class by conversion, and attempts an 'Islamic' solution to the problem of taxation on converts' land. Succeeded by Yazîd II, 720–724

724–743 Hishâm, last great Syrian Umayyad caliph, organizes the administration for efficiency; Transoxania is subdued, but the Shi'îs become restless in the Iraq, the Khârijîs everywhere, (Zayd, an 'Alid, revolts at Kufah, 743). Succeeded by Walîd II, 743–744. John of Damascus (d. c. 760), major Greek Christian theologian, associated with the Umayyad court

744–750 The third fitnah civil wars: a dissident Umayyad force led by Marwân II, destroys Syrian Umayyad power and suppresses three other rebellions representing groups of the 'pious opposition' till it is overthrown by a fourth, the 'Abbâsî, which reunites the empire

For comparison in eastern Europe:

717–741 Leo the Isaurian reorganizes the Byzantine empire to resist the Arabs

For comparison in western Europe:

714–741 Charles Martel restores strength to Frankish kingdom and defeats an Arab force in northern Gaul

Figure 25. Chronology of the Marwani Umayyads, 692–750.

Mosque of Damascus (706), Qasr al-Hayr-East (early eighth century), Khirbat al-Mafjar and Mashatta (eighth century). These monuments from the Umayyad period can easily show the wealth of materials used in construction, e.g., marble and mosaics. They also demonstrate the techniques and style, which combined both Hellenistic and Sassanian traditions, along with great success of selectivity and the taste of the patrons, who must have achieved high aesthetic judgment toward art. In the Abbasid period a great commercial prosperity was achieved with the East, especially China, that necessitated a strong and fine mass-production of metal work, glass work, textiles, ceramics, etc.

To sum up this section, the historical processes of the early moment of Islamic civilization are political, cultural, social, religious, and economic in nature. Without understanding these integrative and interactive factors, one could not reach a precise reason as to what caused the art of Islam to be formed in such a distinctive way.

The Method of Oleg Grabar

Having examined Grabar's critical writings regarding key issues having to do with the formation and development of Islamic art and its characteristics and scope, the following pages will be devoted to analyzing his method of
conducting historical inquiry. This analysis will be divided into two sections. The first section covers his employment and utilization of art history and method of analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic factors as they pertain to Islamic artworks. What questions would he ask about the date of creation of a given work, be it architectural, monument, or a ceramic piece. How would he verify that date? What evidence does he provide to establish the true authorship? Does he analyze works of art? How does he start, e.g., using intrinsic mode and extrinsic mode? What does he say about style, school, or regional differences, the history of the idea, the cultural, religious, social, scientific, political, and economical factors that have to do with the creativity of Islamic art? How does he differ from the previous scholars and how do they correspond?

The second section will be exclusively devoted to the analysis of Grabar's method of discussing Islamic art as it is manifested in a single medium. As previously mentioned, this researcher's guideline for analysis is W. Eugene Kleinbauer's method of historical inquiry about works of art.

It might be useful, therefore, to remind the readers of the property of the two modes or perspectives of inquiring about works of art as illuminated by the art historian, Kleinbauer. First, the intrinsic mode has to
do with information related to the artwork itself. Under this category comes the problem of identifying the date in which the artwork was rendered, the size, the medium, the technique, subject matter or theme, formal analysis, and syntactical analysis. Secondly, the extrinsic perspective has to do with the problem of the history of the idea, the artwork in relation to culture and society, patronage, and its relationship to psychological, social, philosophical, and intellectual factors.

In an article entitled "An Art of the Object" (1967), Grabar tries to explain the phenomenon of Islamic art, in its cultural context. He aspires to provide an informative, persuasive, and plausible interpretation of the creative process that led to an "evergreen art." However, before proceeding with such a task, he introduces some basic considerations regarding the nature of Islamic art. The first observation is that Islamic art can be best seen in its natural setting rather than an artificial one, and in a group or a series of objects rather than a single object. In this regard he states, "They are in fact to be seen as ethnographic documents closely tied to life, even a reconstructed life, and more meaningful in a large number than as a single creation" (p. 39). The second observation is that the creativity of Islamic art is derived from its social and collective function. The third observation is that unlike other cultures' art,
Islamic art was not dependent on nature or physical experience for immediate inspiration and selection of its vocabulary. This is, indeed, manifested in the following:

1. Mythical animals are more frequently used than real ones.
2. Geometrical configuration and writing is often used or preferred over landscapes.
3. Vegetal motifs do not represent nature.
4. Shadows are not used in painting.
5. Humans, if used in composition, are of a different shape and proportion.

He further emphasizes these remarks by stating,

It is as though an entire visual creation were set in imaginary terms, that is to say, in terms which are willful inventions of man, possibly artificial and conventional reflections of cultural or broadly human archetypes. (p. 39)

After introducing these remarks, Grabar identifies four "historical and cultural explanations" of the uniqueness of Islamic art's creativity. This creativity's purpose is to make the humblest object a potential work of art that is praised and enjoyed by a wide spectrum of audience. These explanations are as follows:

1. Islamic explanation
2. Princely explanation
3. Urban-populist explanation
4. Psychological and aesthetic explanation
Each one of these explanations carries some perspective merits of its own.

The Islamic explanation has to do with an interpretation of the source of creativity as it appears from the article of faith that asserts the unity of God—God is the Creator and absolute truth, and the physical world is merely an illusion, because nothing is everlasting but God. And since God is the ultimate Creator, the artist must not strive to compete in imitating the world that He has created and its living things. Creativity, then, is driven in a totally different direction, which is of struggling to have an invented world of art that resembles nothing but itself, on one hand, and that which glorifies, metaphorically, the universal wisdom of the divine, on the other hand. This religious explanation is held by many scholars in the field of Islamic study, especially those Muslim scholars or those converted to Islam, among those the Iranian architect, Nader Ardalan and the Swiss convert to Islam, Titus Burckhardt. Grabar further elaborates on the religious explanation:

The artist can either compose totally arbitrary designs which mask the physical reality of an object or a building or else suggest a variety of metaphors for the divine. Geometrical variations, for instance, in which the same motif appears in several different garbs, can be seen as a metaphor for the infinite expressions of the same God, as occurs in the traditional litany of the names of God. The dissolution of spatial relations so typical of early ornament or of late miniatures would be a way of showing the impermanence of physical impressions. And, at times, as in the frozen, contemplative
personages gazing at a fish pond on 13th-century ceramics, we may encounter very specific metaphors for complicated mystical imagery, as may also be the case in some miniatures. Whatever variations occur, an "Islamic" explanation would be that a system of beliefs so intimately tied to the regulation of daily life permeated the ethos of patrons and artists to the extent that they instinctively sought to express the unreality of the tangible, if not at times the awesome permanence of God through the transitory nothingness of man and nature. (p. )

Under the category of princely explanation, the art and creative activity come under the sponsorship of the high class of aristocrats. The caliph in the beginning of Islamic civilization, sultans in other periods, and military elites almost all the time were the source of continuous support of the art.

The art in this case falls in its secular aspect where religious rules and regulations are not closely observed. However, it is not only this liberalism in artistic expression that is the main trait of the princely explanation proposed here, but rather, the trend that is created and continues to manifest itself in creating the illusion of princely refinement. Bronze, in this case, is given the illusion of silver; ceramic, the appearance of metal; and mud bricks, the colorfulness of rugs. This attitude is carried through, even when no direct princely patronage is involved.

The third explanation concentrates on the middle class as the basic provider and cultivating power of the distinguished feature of Islamic art. Grabar calls this
the "urban-populist" interpretation. In this situation, the Middle Eastern cities, whether old ones that had been taken over by a new power, or newly established ones, were the centers for the flourish of classical Islamic culture. Of all the aspects of the process of Islamization, be it administrative, economic, or legalistic, there was an awareness of being divergent from and more superior than past and present surrounding cultures. Therefore, the Islamic culture strives to keep up this difference. However, in the world of visual form, the matter is too complicated by the absence of two elements:
1. The absence of an official doctrine for the art in Islamic culture
2. The lack of artistic tradition of Arabia, the cradle of the faith

The solution to the problem of "creating visual expression" necessitated a twofold process. First, inventing new forms, which were manifested in calligraphy, and second, getting rid of "older forms," which were closely related to symbols of foreign cultures. Eventually the aesthetic taste of the middle class, which flourished in cultural centers like Baghdad and Cairo, was dominant and generally accepted.

The fourth and last explanation is called "private" by Grabar, because it is rooted in private aesthetic enjoyment and psychological motivation for looking at
artwork. This interpretation has as its aim the analysis of the role of personal, aesthetic, and psychological effect that works of Islamic art bestowed on the viewers. Furthermore, the reaction and interaction with an artwork, be it an architectural monument or small object, led to the preservation and continuation of the tradition. Grabar attributes this privacy of aesthetic enjoyment to the possibility of two factors. First, it could be related to the faith, which required no mediator between man and God. The second possibility is that this privacy of aesthetic enjoyment was caused by "a much more complex cultural decision to limit the available means and functions of visual expression, thereby compelling the elaboration of forms for private, individualized experience" (p. 43).

Having dwelled on four different explanations of the processes by which the creativity of Islamic art is accomplished, Grabar concludes with the following statement:

Between these explanations -- and there may be others -- it is difficult to choose. Some may be more typical of a given time, area, or social setting than others. Altogether they illustrate the esthetic wealth of Islamic art, but more significantly, they raise fundamental questions about the nature of visual understanding and pleasure, as well as about the process by which artistic creativity is achieved. (p. 43)

Therefore, in his four types of explanations of the nature of artistic creativity of Islamic culture, Grabar
indeed magnificently portrayed the utilization of the extrinsic mode of inquiry when discussing Islamic artworks.

He did not look for evidence in or related to the art object itself, but rather, tried to analyze and interpret evidence related to the process by which Islamic art had driven its ambition and achieved its creativity. He touches upon religious, secular, economic, social, and aesthetic factors that may help in explaining why and how Islamic art became what it is with very distinguishable traits.

In his article, "Umayyad Palace and Abbasid Revolution," Grabar argued that in studying Islamic history, many political and cultural accounts have depended on the available written sources. Archeological documents, which are much more accurate and informative, have not been fully utilized in reconstructing the social physical setting of certain artistic movements of cultural occurrences.

Grabar asserts that with the exception of Sauvaget's investigations, many of the historical monuments have not been used as historical documents by historians who handle early Islamic era. Therefore, he is, in fact, in support of using the artifacts, whether as small as a piece of ceramic or as gigantic as an architectural monument, as documents whose careful examination might
lead to the vindication of hypotheses built exclusively on literary source.

Thus, it is apparent and even fascinating that Grabar tried to emphasize the important role of extrinsic evaluation of works of art. Such a usage may improve, clarify, or change information readily accepted as valid and true.

In his analysis of decorative artwork of the Abbasid period, Grabar took the minbar of the Great Mosque of Kairouan as a case in point of wood carving (see Figure 26). He begins by describing the shape of the minbar as a simple form, "only two triangular side walls framing the stairs and platform on top" (p. 105).

However, the purpose of the two side walls of the minbar is completely overshadowed by the delicacy and complexity of the thirteen vertical rows of rectangular panels. These panels display wealthy and diversified design patterns. Grabar traces these designs back to the Umayyad work. The geometrical design is related to the work on the Great Mosque of Damascus, but the floral composition is thought of to resemble those in Mushtta.

Grabar tends to identify the date or period in which the artwork is rendered, the province to which it belongs, the style, technique, subject matter, function, or purpose, and the patron or artist, if any, when he discusses Islamic artwork. This information is very
Figure 26. Kairouan, Great Mosque, details of geometric and vegetal panels from the minbar.

significant as an initial exercise that would facilitate
more thorough analysis. In regard to wood carving, for
instance, he states,

Carvings, especially in wood, form a natural link
with architectural decoration, made for specific
purposes, such as furniture or doors—all objects to
be viewed at close range—they were executed on a
smaller scale in a more delicate manner, and they
encompass a wider repertory of designs. A major work
of this period is the minbar in the Great Mosque of
Kairouan, the oldest surviving pulpit. (p. 105)

He goes on to describe the design of this wood carving:

All concern for natural growth and botanical veracity
has disappeared, to be replaced by emphasis on
abstract floral fantasies. Trees, leaves, and fruits
of diverse species are shown on the same plant;
branches twist in odd, even geometric shapes or have
been left out altogether; and familiar forms turn
unexpectedly into others. (pp. 107-108)

Concerning pottery, Grabar (1987) states that some
techniques were developed and flourished in the near
eastern part of the Islamic world. Techniques such as
lusterware, which gives the appearance and feeling of
metal, was one of the innovations of the Samarra period.
Another technique was simulating porcelains by producing
white color glaze. The technique involved adding tin to
the lead glaze in order to produce the white color. In
the lusterware technique, the ceramic objects not only
were in close resemblance to metalwork’s affect, but also
in shape, size, and decoration. Here Grabar clearly
dwells on the intrinsic mode of inquiry as he analyzes
these ceramic objects. He also mentions that lusterware
ceramic was an affordable substitution for precious metal,
such as silver and gold, and it had a wide acceptance not only in Samarra, where it first originated, but outside Iraq in cities such as Susa (Iran) and Fustat (Egypt).

Another artistic aspect of ceramic manifested itself in two further developments of decoration. The first one, as Grabar indicates, is the usage of the blue color of floral and geometric patterns, as well as Kufic inscriptions on white background. This was a skillful enterprise by Muslim artists who not only took advantage of the advancement made by their far eastern colleagues, but also contributed to this accomplishment. The second is shown in the ability of creating "free and easily composed designs that stand out on uncluttered surfaces, unaffected by the horror vacui of so many earlier and later systems of decoration" (p. 114; see Figure 27).

Grabar further stresses the intrinsic mode by analyzing the design patterns of ceramic, their themes or subject matter, development of techniques, and usage of material in chronological order. He says metallic lusterware was used in a different manner beginning from 850, not as a whole cover of the object's surface, but rather in a selective way in order to create patterns. The basic elements in such patterns were floral designs in red and gold and sometimes an accent of yellow and purple tones were added (see Figure 28). Grabar states that a new development occurred a decade later where a new image
Figure 27. Inscribed blue and white tin-glazed dish, Iraq, ninth century. Detroit Institute of Arts.

Figure 28. Polychrome luster-painted dish with palmetto design, Iraq, ninth century. Paris, Louvre.

of pairs of wings appeared as a substitution for floral design (see Figure 29). Animals in a "highly stylized form" appeared in ceramic at a later date (see Figure 30). The common colors tended to be, as Grabar suggests, "brownish luster combined with yellowish, golden and greenish tones" (p. 114).

Grabar further emphasizes,

About 875 designs began to be restricted to single tones—yellowish and greenish—and, perhaps on the inspiration of coloured glass mosaics and opus sectile, lustre was used mostly for silhouettes of animals set against backgrounds of heavy dots or tiny chevrons, the whole still quite often framed by a festooned edge. The animals were reduced to their most basic shapes and always rendered in an absolutely flat style. The pervading incorporeity was sometimes even further stressed by incongruous patterns of inscription panels on the animals' bodies. Eventually the pottery came also to include human figures, rather awkwardly drawn, though they have the appeal of the primitive. The heaviness of the design is counteracted by an undecorated white area that usually follows the outline of the figure, the so-called "contour line." This device, which had already been used in prehistoric pottery, now again served the purpose of effectively separating the main motif from the all-over background patterning. (p. 115)

These examples of Grabar's analysis may suffice in giving us an idea about the degree to which he emphasizes the use of the two modes of intrinsic and extrinsic analysis. Nevertheless, a further step must be taken in an attempt to focus more fully on Grabar's analysis of a single medium. In the following, such an attempt will be carried out.
Figure 29. Polychrome luster-painted dish with winged palmettos, Iraq, ninth century. New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 30. Monochrome animal design on luster-painted ceramic dish, Iraq, late ninth/early tenth century. Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum.

Grabar's Method in Regard to a Single Artwork

In this part, a single medium through which Islamic art expresses its philosophy and creativity will be focused upon. The decorative art of Islam encompasses a wide variety of mediums such as metalwork, ivory, glass, ceramic, textile, and mosaic. However, this researcher chooses to concentrate on ceramic as a case in point of the genuine Islamic artwork. Ceramic seems to be one of the most significant aspects of art that illustrates the level of maturity that the creativity of the Muslim artist has accomplished. It is also diversified in its techniques, themes, and representation in different forms, including architecture.

In this section the focus will not only be on intrinsic and extrinsic analysis and evaluation, but also on descriptive, analytical, interpretative, and evaluative statements made by the expert art historian. It has to do with the following questions: What do Islamic art historians do when they talk about works of art? In Grabar’s case, what does he do? Does he describe the work of art? What does he include in his description? What is the purpose of his description? Where does this description lead to? Does he relate his description to his analysis? What does he say when he analyzes works of art? What does he include in his analysis? How does his analysis help in interpreting artwork? From where does he
draw his interpretation? On what basis does he judge or evaluate Islamic artwork? These questions and perhaps others will be the basis for the following discussion.

In his article, "Notes on the Decorative Composition of a Bowl from Northeastern Iran" (1976), Grabar clearly mentions some conditions that are required to understand ceramic as artwork in its own right. He states,

Yet, if we are to consider and understand some, if not all, the ceramic series of the Muslim Middle Ages as works of art to which the culture gave more than utilitarian function, we should be able to present some hypothesis about the ways in which their decoration was organized, and about the esthetic or iconographic meanings to be attributed to such themes as can be identified. (p. 92)

Here Grabar pinpoints that in order to fully grasp an artwork, its symbols, and philosophy, one must explore some broader cultural perspectives. Taking some ceramic objects of the new collection of the Metropolitan Museum as examples, Grabar begins by giving a full description.

Description of Shape, Size, Measurement, and Technique

Grabar's description involves the shape of the object, whether it is flat or deep, circular or oval, which, in this case, is a deep bowl. He then goes on to describe its size and measurements. The size of this piece of ceramic is large and measures 12 cm. in height, 35 cm. in diameter at the top, with a base diameter of 14.5 cm. (see Figure 31 and 32). Grabar adds,

The object is complete for the most part, and it is only in such places where the fragments were put
Figure 31. Bowl, painted and glazed earthenware, Persian, from Nishapur, ninth-tenth century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Note. From "Notes on the Decorative Composition of a Bowl from Northeastern Iran" by O. Grabar in Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pp. 91-98) by R. Ettinghausen (Ed.), 1976, New York: Kevorkian Foundation.

Figure 32. Bowl, painted and glazed earthenware, Persian, from Nishapur, ninth-tenth century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Note. From "Notes on the Decorative Composition of a Bowl from Northeastern Iran" by O. Grabar in Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pp. 91-98) by R. Ettinghausen (Ed.), 1976, New York: Kevorkian Foundation.
together that there are traces of modern additions, but these do not affect the character of the decoration in any significant way. (p. 92)

Grabar also describes the techniques used in this ceramic object: "The technique of the object—design in brownish pigment painted over a yellow slip and under transparent glaze—is fairly typical of ceramic techniques of northeastern Iran" (p. 92). Grabar also introduces an analytical statement: "Although it is not possible for the time being to prove that this particular object was actually made in Nishapur, such an origin is likely enough, as we shall see later on" (p. 92).

**Description of Decorations**

Grabar makes it clear from the outset that one of the distinctive features of Islamic ceramic objects is that they are always decorated. He describes the decoration of Figure 31 and 32 as follows:

1. The outside "groups of three vertical strokes divide the side of the bowl into five compartments, each compartment being then occupied by a roughly elliptical shape filled in desultory fashion with oblique strokes suggesting a sort of hatching."

2. The inside decoration is said to be more significant than the outside. The design consists of a narrow border of simple festoon and "a unified composition set against a neutral background and framed in a single continuous circular edge." Grabar goes on to say,
The composition of our object is also different from a third major type of composition found on early Islamic ceramic from all major areas, the single subject—an animal, a human figure, a scene, writing—set on a variety of backgrounds, from simply monochrome ones to a cluttering of themes from many origins as in a celebrated Nishapur group. (p. 94)

Analysis of Ceramic Decorations

Grabar refers to the ceramic bowl shown in Figure 31 and 32 and argues that its decoration composition is not "extraordinary," however different from other compositions. He also states,

It is also different from designs which forcefully separate a wide ring-like border from a central medallion, as occur on many objects from northeastern Iran and from Egypt, for instance on a well-known bowl in the Metropolitan Museum. (p. 94; see Figure 33)

In regard to the formal elements in the ceramic bowl shown in Figure 34, Grabar divides these elements into six categories. First, he begins by analyzing the lines, identifying their thickness, crispness, position, and function to the whole design composition. He says that "these are of two kinds, a thick line that is always drawn directly on the neutral background and a thinner line generally used as a border or as an edge for some other unit" (p. 94).

The second component in the composition is an approximately circular shape. Grabar analyzes this when he says, "While one may imagine that the latter is a simplification of a natural subject like birds in flight,
Figure 33. Deep bowl, painted and glazed earthenware, Persian, from Nishapur, tenth century. Freer Gallery of Art.

Note. From "Notes on the Decorative Composition of a Bowl from Northeastern Iran" by O. Grabar in Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pp. 91-98) by R. Ettinghausen (Ed.), 1976, New York: Kevorkian Foundation.
Figure 34. Bowl, painted and glazed earthenware, Persian, from Nishapur, tenth century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Note. From "Notes on the Decorative Composition of a Bowl from Northeastern Iran" by O. Grabar in Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pp. 91-98) by R. Ettinghausen (Ed.), 1976, New York: Kevorkian Foundation.
it is perhaps more accurate to interpret the whole motif as the breakdown into smaller units of a vegetal rinceau."
He continues to say, "This seems all the more likely since in three or four places on the bowl itself the circular units still seem to grow from each other."

The third element is called a "peacock’s eye." It is formed in circular shape with a darker point inside of the circle. It rarely, however, occurs in the center of a circle, according to Grabar. He adds, "On the Metropolitan object the peacock’s eye is always set in a field of stippling" (p. 94).

The fourth element is a group of six birds that are created as a result of the contour of other elements. Grabar states in his analysis,

They, referring to the bird’s shape, are clearly recognizable as birds and, while their outlines are very much alike, it should be noted that the two birds which are on either side of the main axis of the bowl have only four projecting prongs symbolizing both wings and tail, while the other four have five. (p. 94)

The fifth is a vegetal motif created by a stem finished with three leaves. Grabar states,

There are six units consisting of a stem crossed by two hatches and two or three small nodes or knobs; this stem divides itself into three parts, and each part ends with a sharply pointed chevron made of unusually thick lines; there are some variants in the number of hatches and nodes. While here again we are dealing with a much schematized and simplified motif, there is little doubt that it has a vegetal origin and that it derives from a rather common theme of a stem ending with three leaves, buds, or flowers. (p. 95)
The last element in the bowl decoration is an Arabic calligraphy written in Kufic style which runs around the bowl edge. It appears to be a thicker line or font than the rest of the line elements in the decoration. In regard to this element, Grabar mentions that this combination of Arabic calligraphy, which is repeated twice, is not clear whether it is a "shorthand version" of barakah or a "simplification of barakah Li-Sahibihi" (p. 95).

These six elements of ceramic decoration mentioned and analyzed so far are fairly common in Islamic ceramic and they occur either individually or in a combination of two or more.

**Interpretation of Ceramic Work**

Interpretation of a given artwork may mean that the critic or art historian attempts to find evidence in or out of the work of art that help in explaining some variables or factors adherent to it. For instance, the selection of subject matter and its relationship to the period in which the artwork is produced and its cultural setting. It boils down to finding the answer to the question of why did the artist use this technique, subject matter, color combination, design, or arrangement of composition? In his discussion of the ceramic bowl from the Metropolitan Museum, Grabar introduces several informative interpretations.
Having analyzed the brush strokes on the exterior of the ceramic bowl (Figure 32), Grabar says that the lack of attention given to the outside decoration of the bowl could be interpreted in two ways:

1. It could be that the ceramicists of the medieval period gave little significance to the exterior of their ceramic work, or
2. It could also be marks that hold some important value that is related to the interior.

Another interpretative statement about the decoration of the ceramic bowl (Figure 34) was introduced by Grabar:

We can thus interpret the composition of our object as consisting of a central unit which generates a counter-clockwise whirl movement based on six vector-like--i.e., provided with a direction--units; these, however, contain in themselves or are set against an opposite, secondary clockwise movement. At the same time to the predominant circular pattern there corresponds a horizontal axis emphasized by the writing and by minor modifications in the detail of both the clockwise or counter-clockwise directed elements. (p. 96)

This represents examples of interpretative statements concerning some elements of ceramic work.

**Evaluation**

The previous exercise of describing, analyzing, and interpreting works of art should eventually lead to forming an evaluative statement that reveals where the work of art stands and what its merit, value, or shortcomings are. Although these steps mentioned above are not necessarily conducted in this sequential arrangement,
evaluation usually comes last. Such evaluative statements are found in Grabar's discussion of the Iranian ceramic bowl hosted in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Grabar's first evaluative statement was given to the design of the ceramic bowl of the Metropolitan Museum (Figures 31 and 32), where he judged the composition as not "unique," but "distinguishable" from other compositions. It was also not "extraordinary," compared to the design of another bowl found in the Freer Gallery (Figure 33).

Grabar analyzes the celebrated ceramic bowl of the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 34) and evaluates the design of this piece:

None of the six "phonetic" elements found on the Metropolitan Museum bowl is original, and numerous parallels can be found for any one of them on a large number of objects from northeastern Iran and from Iraq; some of them are even found in Egypt. It would be interesting to trace the growth and development of each of these features and to investigate whether they are of local origins or brought in from the West together with the luster technique which was imitated. But this is not our concern here and the only point of significance is that the specific combination of these themes which occurs here is not very common. It is known mostly on a small group of sherds and on one complete object found in or near Nishapur, of which, to my knowledge, only two have been published so far. Although it may be possible to reconstruct the exact compositional pattern found on the objects from which fragments only remain, the newly acquired Metropolitan bowl is only one of two in which this pattern is preserved in its entirety, and it is far more elaborate than the one published in 1937. This is especially so when one considers that element which gives to the object its greatest originality, the composition of its decoration. (p. 95)
Grabar also evaluates other elements in the design composition of the Metropolitan bowl. He refers to a central medallion (Figures 33 and 34) and states:

Not one of the various aspects of this compositional pattern is unique in the bowl in the Metropolitan Museum, and one can easily find parallels to a relationship between central medallions with clear axes or with circular movement and clockwise (or even more rarely counter-clockwise) borders, or to axially composed objects, or else to whirls generated from a center. (p. 96)

Grabar also says despite the shortcoming of this bowl, it could be used as an excellent example of the degree of sophistication to which the painters of Islamic pottery have acquired in exacting decorative composition inside a circle. Grabar concludes that "the predominance of abstract axes and movements over specific motifs" are major features of early Islamic decorative art.

**CONCLUSION**

Throughout this chapter, the writings of three eminent Islamic art historians have been analyzed. The purpose and objectives were identified in Chapters I-III. The three Islamic art historians in question are K.A.C. Creswell, Richard Ettinghausen, and Oleg Grabar. The analysis of their work was confined to the following:

1. Their points of view regarding the issue of the formation of Islamic art, the concept of absolute and relative time, of its creation, and its development.
2. Their points of view concerning the issue of the nature and characteristics of Islamic art.

3. The method of each scholar in conducting historical investigation.

4. The method of each scholar in dealing with Islamic artwork, including an elaboration of their steps of describing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating Islamic art.
CHAPTER V

THE FINDINGS OF THE ANALYSIS OF THE WRITINGS OF

K. A. C. CRESWELL, RICHARD ETTINGHAUSEN,

AND OLEG GRABAR AND MODEL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The problem of this study is related to the shortcoming of the teaching of Islamic art as artistic heritage in Saudi Arabia. This problem is rooted, in part, in the adaptation of theories, in the practical sense of the term, that were not suitable and therefore guided the practice of art education in a totally unfavorable way. As a result, many things have been affected, starting from the art teacher preparation program to the teaching of art in general education and the position of art itself in public schooling. For Islamic art, in particular, the situation is even worse. On one hand, great emphasis is placed in the educational guideline on inculcating Islamic art in the art curricula, but on the other hand, little has actually been done in reality.

This study, therefore, raises several questions and concerns, such as how should Islamic art be approached? By what means? Toward what end? There may be several
possible solutions to this problem. By studying the way the experts in the field have dealt with Islamic art, the fruit of their scholarship can be grasped and utilized. Thus, one of the major concerns of this study was to obtain knowledge about the method of Islamic art historians in coping with different issues, concepts, and domains of Islamic art. It boils down to the following series of question:

1. What do the Islamic art historians in question do when they deal with the issue of the formation of Islamic art?

2. What do the Islamic art historians do when they discuss works of Islamic art?

3. What alternatives would this study generate for teaching Islamic art?

These questions have been outlined in detail in Chapter III, and, so far, questions one and two have been dealt with, in which the researcher has attempted to find answers for them. However, question three will be the basis for this chapter. For the time being, however, the findings of the review of literature and the analysis will be reported.

Finding of the Review of Literature

The review of related literature was divided into two parts. The first part was meant to cope with the
question, how did the study of Islamic art come into being? What were the motives behind its genesis and development? What were the approaches to the study of Islamic art? The second part was concerned with studies that attempted to utilize and inculcate Islamic art in art education curriculum.

It was found that although the formation of Islamic art took place in the Islamic world, its study, as a discipline in its own right, was born and developed out of it. The motivation and reason behind that was found to be twofold. First, there was the imperial domination, which enabled the West to acquire a great deal of raw material for research which consisted of artifacts and manuscripts. Second, there was the growth of the romantic movement, which was eager for the study of exotic cultures of other nations.

Another finding was related to the approaches that have been developed, refined, and used to study Islamic art. It was found that four major approaches have been developed as follows:

1. Antiquarian scholarly
2. Local approach
3. Art historical and/or archeological approach
4. Islamicist approach

Each method or approach was preferred and adapted by a group of scholars. For example, the antiquarian approach
was preferred by collectors and philologists, whereas the second approach was favored by local scholars, due to the division of the Islamic world into smaller countries. Two more approaches have been identified to supplement or replace the first four methods. These are, 1) the monographic approach, and 2) the synthetics or problem-oriented. The monographic method has its focal point on a single art object. The synthetics begins with a broader question or issue and then narrows it down.

It was also found, as in any other field of inquiry, that the methodology of Islamic art has some problems. These problems relate to the huge and complex amount of material culture that needed to be investigated. No single method is sufficient to study the art of Islam. The phenomenological method is suggested as one solution of the problem of methodology.

Another finding is related to the achievement of the study of Islamic art. The accomplishment of Islamic art is judged by three elements: its adequacy, accessibility, and theoretical framework. The field of Islamic art is adequate because sufficient information is available about its different aspects. Unlike the problem of adequacy, the problem of accessibility is still hindering the study of Islamic art. Like any other field of inquiry, language, distance, and governmental regulation may prevent researchers from gaining easy access to information and
data. Fortunately, many books are being translated from one language to another, and monuments and artifacts are available in many museums. Theoretical framework is one potential area of Islamic art that has not been fully explored, though different views have been introduced regarding how it could be formulated. Three sources have been suggested by Grabar: 1) the field itself, 2) other theories already established, and 3) the Muslim world itself.

The second part of the review of literature was devoted to the studies that attempted to inculcate Islamic art in art education. Three doctoral dissertations and one master's thesis were reviewed. The findings were as follows:

1. These documents share common ground among themselves in that they are concerned with improving artistic skills through teaching studio courses. Their objectives were to enhance studio practice and activities, and no indication about art appreciation, art history, or art criticism was found.

2. They provided rich information about different forms of Islamic art.

3. They could add to the Arabic language library which suffers from the lack of material regarding Islamic art.
The Findings of the Analysis of the Writings of K. A. C. Creswell, Richard Ettinghausen, and Oleg Grabar

In regard to the questions raised by this study which were the basis for the analysis of the three Islamic art historians' writings, the findings will be checked against these research questions. The first research question was what these scholars have to say about the formation of Islamic art. It seems that there is a general consent among these scholars on how Islamic art was formed, and what the circumstances were that played a vital role in driving and fostering its creation.

According to Creswell, the first form of architecture that was innovated to serve a particular need was the mosque. While he sees the plan and structure of the mosque as a unique form, he believes that the period before the great conquest witnessed little, if any, significant architectural forms. This view may not be shared with other scholars, including the two other scholars in this study. On one hand, an advanced type of architecture was found in Arabia, dating from the period before the rise of Islam, and on the other hand, new excavations and discoveries revealed that a form of civilized life existed in some parts of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, Creswell's interpretation of the
formulation of Islamic art is that it took place after the conquest of Syria, Egypt, and Iraq.

At its beginning, Islamic art borrowed a lot of its artistic vocabulary from previous artistic traditions, such as Sasanian and Byzantine, with some modification. Still, Creswell was not fully convinced that during a later period it became so independent that it resembled nothing but itself. This view is incongruent with the views expressed by both Ettinghausen and Grabar. However, Grabar devotes a great deal of effort to explain when precisely in history a new artistic tradition emerged and claimed to be unique and different from other traditions. This led to the concept of absolute and relative in the creation of this great art. In this respect, there has been no major disagreement among the three scholars regarding the exact moment when Islamic art bloomed. In the analysis of Creswell's contribution, it became apparent that he has not dealt with this issue directly. Nonetheless, his point of view can be inferred from his chronological discussion of the development of Islamic architecture. Likewise, Ettinghausen discussed the evaluation and development of Islamic art. His point of view corresponds with that of the previous authors.

All three scholars developed a keen connoisseurship, capable of identifying Islamic artworks, their approximate time or date, region, style, school, and patron or author,
if any. It was also found that though they differ in their approach or method of inquiry, they usually utilize multiple methods to get more information and knowledge about the subject they deal with, be it a piece of art, or a philosophical issue. For instance, Creswell is famous for his long-range, time-consuming projects, while the two other scholars concentrate on short-range inquiries and use social science methodology more often.

The second question which was asked by this study was, "what do Islamic art historians do when they discuss works of Islamic art?" This question leads to the methods used or employed by these art historians when they discuss Islamic artwork.

The finding is that all three art historians do use both intrinsic and extrinsic mode of inquiry when they discuss or analyze works of Islamic art. However, each of them is interested in a particular form of art and, therefore, excels in it. For example, Creswell did a great job describing in full detail, analyzing, and interpreting Islamic architectural monuments of an early period. Grabar did magnificent work discussing Islamic miniatures and ceramic work, while Ettinghausen's discussion of Islamic textile and carpet is of great significance. Their methods, which they skillfully demonstrate through their studies of Islamic art, are
useful tools that could be studied, internalized, and used in a professional manner of teaching art.

It was also found that the three art historians whose writings were analyzed approach Islamic art from different perspectives. They studied Islamic art objects from an artistic perspective, an intellectual perspective, a cultural and social perspective, a religious perspective, and a political perspective. They also studied the aesthetic tradition on which Islamic art bases its value and by which it should be judged and valued. They studied the attitude of Muslims toward art in general, and painting in particular, which results in formulating a general outlook on the theory of aesthetic as recognized from the writings and thought of medieval scholars such as al-Ghazzali, Jalal al-Din Al-Romi, and others. Moreover, recognizing the social and cultural functions of Islamic art was one of the fruits of this investigation that might be beneficial in broadening the understanding of the significance of art in social, cultural, and anthropological settings.

Model Development for Teaching Islamic Art History

Thus far, we have seen the wealth of information and knowledge that the three Islamic art historians introduced through their analysis of Islamic art. It becomes apparent, therefore, by looking at these art historians’
approaches and methods as examples, that a lot can be taught and learned about this art, above and beyond what is being taught at the present time in our schools in Saudi Arabia. A quick look at what is being taught may reveal that with such a slim approach, both in objectives and methodology, producing a "visually literate" citizen, let alone knowledgeable individuals of art and its positive contribution to human development, is a far-reaching aim.

Furthermore, this researcher has mentioned in his analysis of the theories that influenced the practice of art education in Saudi Arabia, that they draw their legitimacy from two aesthetic orientations. The first is the mimetic theory, and the second is the expressive orientation. Though these theories may be accepted from an intellectual point of view and are constantly contributing to the teaching of art, they may be biased toward their premises and, therefore, have shortcomings. The person who adapts these theories misses the potential of other orientations that may touch on other sides of human experience. For example, in the case of art education in Saudi Arabia, objective and pragmatic orientations are left out or totally ignored. According to Efland (1988), the pragmatic theory of art seeks as its objective "improving society by means of art," while the priority of the objective view is obtaining knowledge and regards
"aesthetic values for their intrinsic values." Therefore, instructional material is organized to encourage inquiry by processes utilized by artists, art historians, and critics. Without access to the inquiry method, students miss a great deal of knowledge about various concepts, issues, and theories of art. They have been deprived from thinking of solutions to problems as they relate to their society, and how they can, through the study of art, participate in solving these problems. Moreover, limited knowledge of the historical, aesthetic, and pedagogical values embodied in traditional architecture, as an example, may be responsible for the loss and destruction of many valuable and historically-significant monuments. If art education in Saudi Arabia stopped relying on one limited approach, the answer may lie in adapting an eclectic mode that takes advantage of the fruit of various views of art.

The same problem appears in the study of Islamic art. For example, the study of the contribution of Islamic art historians reveals that, although these historians agree on major points of Islamic art, they have independent views of some concepts, having to do with the aesthetic orientation of Islamic art. For instance, the issue of the aesthetic theory that drove the creation of Islamic art in a certain direction is not agreed upon. To what extent did religious teaching influence the art of Islam?
Why did Islamic artists prefer to use certain materials over others? How did the beholders perceive art? What was their role in the development of specific schools or styles of Islamic art? Was there a theorist or philosopher whose view influenced the art? For Grabar, four explanations appear to be plausible:

1. Islamic explanation
2. Princely explanation
3. Urban-populist explanation
4. Psychological and aesthetic explanation

In his four explanations, Grabar argues that different factors have affected the creativity of Islamic art. Some have to do with beliefs held by Muslims toward God, the Ultimate Creator. Others have to do with patronage, whether in the form of royalty or common beholders. The last one has to do with private aesthetic enjoyment and its psychological effect on the viewers (see Chapter Four, pp. 206-211, for a more detailed explanation).

Ettinghausen, on the other hand, relates the creativity of Islamic art and its peculiarity to the existence of the theory of beauty held by al-Ghazzali and other medieval Islamic philosophers. This theory of beauty explains how the artist perceives the outerworld and how he who has inner vision produces works of art that is also recognized by those who have purity of heart. He claims that this theory may have had a great effect on both the
creation and perception of art. Ettinghausen identifies the source of influence of Islamic art in the following four components:

1. Fear of the forthcoming Day of Judgment
2. Submission to the all-powerful Allah
3. Basic importance of the Quran as the Arabic manifestation of the heavenly book
4. The human aspect of Muhammad (see pp. 132-138)

Creswell, on the other hand, claims that Islamic art is only an extension of previous artistic traditions of the Byzantine and Sasanian. This is manifested in his attempts to relate almost all Islamic monuments to their origins or antecedents.

The views expressed by these art historians are also shared by other scholars of the field of Islamic art. The following table illustrates the views and interest of some Islamic art historians (see Table 1).

Having recognized the differing views regarding art and the disadvantage of relating one view, which would produce bias in the direction of that particular view, and having realized that such bias and nonrepresentativeness do exist in art curriculum in Saudi Arabia, an eclectic model of curriculum may be a possible solution. In the following pages, an argument in favor of the eclectic model will be presented.
Table 1

Scholars Presented on the Basis of Their Orientation and Field of Specialization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholar's Interest and Method</th>
<th>Scholar's Interest and Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>K. A. C. Creswell</strong></td>
<td><strong>R. Ettinghausen</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interest:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Historical study and archeological investigation of early Islamic architecture</td>
<td>* Philosophical and aesthetics of Islamic art, including architecture, painting, calligraphy, Arabesque, metal, glass, and wood works, textiles, and theory of beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Method:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Description, analysis, and interpretation of early Islamic monuments using historical methodology which requires intrinsic and extrinsic modes of inquiry about Islamic architecture</td>
<td>* Analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of Islamic art using methodology of art history, intrinsic and extrinsic modes of inquiry are applied, and social sciences methodology. Wide range of scholarly writing about different subjects related to Islamic art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aesthetic Orientation of Islamic Art:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aesthetic Orientation of Islamic Art:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Imitation of previous prototype, concepts, and artistic tradition as source of inspiration. Religious or cultural influence is limited.</td>
<td>* Theory of beauty that emphasizes two types of aesthetic enjoyment: normal, which is perceived by the outer senses, and spiritual, which is acquired by inner vision. The emphasis of the instrumental value of art, artworks play an important part as social and cultural statements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholar’s Interest and Method</td>
<td>Scholar’s Interest and Method</td>
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<td>-------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O. Grabar</strong>&lt;br&gt;Interest:</td>
<td>I. El-Said, A. Parman, K. Critchlow&lt;br&gt;Interest:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Critical and historical study and archeological investigation. Critical interpretation of the formation of Islamic art</td>
<td>* Cosmological and philosophical analysis of Islamic geometric concepts and Islamic patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method:</td>
<td>Method:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Critical analysis and interpretation of the phenomenon of Islamic art using a combination of phenomenological and historical methodology to formulate a theory about the genesis and development of Islamic art. Wide range of historical study regarding Islamic art and architecture in general.</td>
<td>* Focus on the mathematical operation and sacred aspects of Islamic ornaments. The formal elements are stressed by the authors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic Orientation of Islamic Art:</td>
<td>Method:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Art should not resemble or attempt to imitate the creations of God, the Ultimate Creator, but rather should create its own world of artistic expression.</td>
<td>* Analytical and cosmological approach to understanding the concept of geometrical patterns of Islamic art. Analysis and interpretation of the principles of design and the artistic elements in Islamic patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Art is seen as an instrument through which societies express their cultural values.</td>
<td>Aesthetic Orientation of Islamic Art:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Islamic art is valued by its formal elements as seen in its geometrical patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>* Creativity is manifested in abstract expression of the universe.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholar’s Interest and Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T. Burkhardt, S. H. Nasr, N. Ardalan, L. Bakhtiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Philosophical study of the spirituality of Islamic art, including architecture, painting, decoration, calligraphy, and the minor arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Analysis and interpretation of the spiritual aspects of Islamic art using the analytical philosophical method to arrive at the essence of the language, meaning, and mystical aspects of Islamic art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic Orientation of Islamic Art:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* True art should get one closer to God, the Absolute Creator and sustainer of the world. Artistic creativity is viewed in terms of discovering the truth and producing art that is far away from the optical illusion of the seen world.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Amongst many models and approaches available to art in education, the eclectic approach has been favored by many key art educators such as Barkan (1966), Chapman (1978), Efland (1970, 1977), McFee (1977), and Feldman (1970). These scholars argue that since art is a complex concept and no one interpretation of art is agreed upon as being the right one, the eclectic approach becomes a possible solution for the problem of teaching art. Their point of view in regard to the eclectic approach may differ somewhat from one another, yet they all agree that a combination of different views may be the answer for well-grounded art curriculum.

One, then, may wonder why eclectic curriculum is favored over other approaches. What are the characteristics, features, and logical rationale upon which the eclectic approach is based?

In the following pages an attempt to argue the case of eclectic curriculum will be undertaken. The point of view of the eclectic approach's advocates such as Efland, Chapman, Feldman, and Elkind will be replicated to support my argument in favor of the eclectic view.

In his curriculum inquiry in art education models approach, Efland introduces four models for art education. These models utilize theories of aesthetics as the basis for their conceptual framework. Each of these theories was then aligned with a prevalent educational view to
originate a model for art education that is congruent with its basic premise.

The mimetic theory was aligned with the behavior modification view, while the pragmatic aesthetic theory was linked with the social interaction view. Likewise, the expressive theory was aligned with the person-centered view, and the objective aesthetic theory was linked with the information processing model. These models were identified as possible approaches to art education.

Each model approach has a distinctive way of coping with questions concerning the content of curriculum (what to teach), the method (how to teach), and the goal (why the subject should be taught). For example, unlike the behavior modification model which advocates that learning occurs by imitation, the person-centered model focuses on individuals to fulfill themselves and discover their "potentialities" through art. Likewise, the two other models advocate different views of art curriculum, its content, goal, and method (see Figure 35).

Although each model may be adapted to construct valid art curriculum and instruction, each alone runs the risk of being biased, not representative of the true state of art, and limited in providing alternatives. Efland cautions that because no single model is "the right one," since there is "no true theory of art," these models "are not options that can be selected or discarded" (p. 61).
Figure 35. Chart summarizing Efland's models.

All the models can be combined, however, to provide an eclectic view of curriculum that is supported by the value claim of the four previously-mentioned models.

Eclectic Curriculum and Controlling Bias

Efland argues that while it is difficult to control the problem of bias when a single model is implemented in teaching art, controlling bias is one of the features that characterize the eclectic approach.

Bias is unavoidable when one viewpoint of art is adapted and propagated as the "right one." Efland argues that taking the individual learner as a starting point would possibly result in bias toward the person-centered model, but if the needs of society were selected as a departure point, the bias would probably be in the direction of the social interaction model. He then suggests that by recognizing the presence of bias, it is possible to control it.

Controlling bias, from Efland’s point of view, is possible only by devising an eclectic curriculum policy, "one that consciously attempts to be representative of all alternative viewpoints" (p. 59).

Efland then discusses the problem of "contradiction" and "inconsistency" in eclectic curriculum. He argues that a "noneclectic" curriculum can only be constructed if theory designates one "viewpoint" as being true, "a
situation which does not exist in the arts." The realm of art, however, as Efland points out, is not united or logical in the first place. "Throughout the ages we find numerous instances when differing groups of artists were in pursuit of rival conceptions of aesthetic value" (p. 52).

Besides the problem of contradiction and inconsistency facing the eclectic view, there is yet another problem concerning the eclectic approach. This concerns the "juxtapositions of rival values." What is meant by rival values in art is the concepts regarding art which embrace the viewpoint of one theory of aesthetics. That is to say, if art, according to the expressive theory, means one thing, but in the objective aesthetics art is viewed differently, these rival views may cause "confusion in the minds of students."

Efland argues, however, that the confusion and misunderstanding caused by such rival concepts regarding art could be resolved if the purpose of putting "rival concepts" together was to illuminate the notion that art possesses "varied meanings and values." Only then would introducing such rival ideas have a valid educational objective.

Another dilemma challenging eclectic curriculum is moving from theories to practice. Efland suggests that when moving to practice, the contradictory contents of the
four aesthetic theories ("which are neither true nor false") could be combined, based on their values. Values such as "imitation, self-expression, formal order, and social problem-solving" could be put together without major difficulty.

Efland further suggests that if objectives that serve the values of the four aesthetic orientations are stated clearly, there will be no difficulty in accomplishing them in classroom practice. The following examples are given by Efland to illustrate this point:

Values of imitation are represented by objectives stated as skills; e.g., skills of representation, perspective, figure drawing etc. They could also be stated as perceptual discriminations made among artistic stimuli, as between works executed in differing styles.

Values of formal order (objective aesthetics) would be served by the attainment of design concepts (elements and principles of design) as represented in studio practice and by their critical apprehension (formal analysis) in works of art.

Values of expressive aesthetics would be served by the attainment of objectives stated in terms of the individual's personal fulfillment or improved self concept and the like.

Values of pragmatic aesthetics would be served by objectives stated as problems (of a social character) to be solved. (pp. 64-65)

Representativeness

Another characteristic of the eclectic approach is its ability to be representative in its content selection.
This makes it possible to demonstrate the value and knowledge claimed by different "aesthetic traditions."

Efland suggests that representativeness should be viewed as a "guiding principle in eclectic curriculum." Three distinctive attributes are designated by Efland as necessary characteristics of eclectic curriculum. These are as follows:
1. Content selection should be made among rival aesthetic orientations,
2. Content selection should be proportional in its representation, and
3. Study approaches should also be representative.

Another feature of the eclectic approach lies in the many reasons justifying the place and necessity of art in school curriculum. While it is possible for the art teacher who utilizes one viewpoint of art to argue that art should be taught because it achieves the goal of that view, four reasons justify the teaching of art in an eclectic curriculum. It can be said that art helps to stimulate imagination, while the lesson employs self-expression as a value of art.

In this respect, Efland states that "the four models suggest in general form outlines of arguments connecting values and goals with content and activities and as such they illustrate the prescriptive use of justifications in curriculum planning" (p. 72).
Eclectic Curriculum and Young Children

Although Elkind's (1983) research focuses on child study, he introduces a good point of view in favor of the eclectic approach. His concern involves the mechanism and nature of the learner, especially young children. How do they learn? Which way works best? Which method is proven to be more effective and fruitful than others? These questions and others concern Elkind, especially when it comes to educating young children.

In regard to young children, an argument was developed by Elkind in which he asserts that young children have the tendency to learn in different ways. No single method is workable in all educational situations. Recognizing this, learning is presumed to come about as a result of using different approaches such as modeling, feeling, and thinking, and by using reward and punishment (p. 7).

Elkind further explains that the reason behind different approaches is that what is to be learned may dictate the mode of learning suitable for achieving the desired result. In this respect he states:

. . . even within the domain of social learning there are many quite different sorts of knowledge that have to be acquired, and the kind of content will determine which mode of learning is most appropriately applied. (p. 7)
Hence, Elkind is, in a sense, arguing that the eclectic approach may be the answer when it comes to teaching young children, since no single approach—be it problem solving, behavior modification, or person-centered—may be appropriate all the time or in relation to all content and concepts.

Another prolific scholar in art education who advocates eclecticism in constructing an art program is Chapman (1978). In her book, *Approaches to Art in Education*, she states two reasons which motivated her to develop such a comprehensive art program. One is that art should be considered as a basic subject within the general school curriculum. To achieve this, an art program that is congruent with general education objectives should be developed and should base its decisions on persuasive philosophical argument. The second reason is that art education must cultivate a deeper understanding of the significance of art in children's lives.

In her argument regarding the eclectic approach, Chapman asserts that no single model can sufficiently introduce the children to the "diversity inherent in art." An art program, therefore, according to Chapman, should be eclectic in nature and should be derived from major trends of "artistic thought and practice in Western culture as well as cross-cultural insight drawn from anthropology" (p. v).
Chapman argues that since the functions of general education are to a) encourage personal fulfillment, b) transmit cultural heritage, and c) develop social consciousness in youth, art education can also help in achieving these purposes by devising an eclectic curriculum. The following purposes are identified by Chapman as congruent with the objectives of general education and accomplished through art education: a) encourages personal fulfillment through art experience, b) transmits an appreciation of artistic heritage, and c) develops an awareness of the role of art in society. It is apparent that Chapman is concerned with a well-rounded education through art that is not limited to one aesthetic orientation, but covers a wide range of interesting and educational artistic and aesthetic experience. Similar curriculum orientation is adapted by Efland (1970, 1977), in which students, their culture, and society are considered as integral components of the purpose of art education.

Along these same lines, Feldman (1970) is concerned with art education, not only for the few gifted and talented children, but also for the masses of students. He argues that it is not only by teaching the techniques and skills of making fine objects that art education reaches its aim, but also by cultivating in the students the "creative potentials as intelligent viewers,
perceptive critics, and sensitive interpreters of the arts," which Feldman believes is left untouched (p. v).

Feldman suggests that an eclectic view of art education is inescapable in order to achieve the goal of overall educated and sensitive students. Feldman's advocacy for eclecticism stems from his assumption that artists, art critics, art historians, and aestheticians have to be modeled, an assimilated view that was first expressed by Barkan (1966) and shared by numerous art educators, e.g., Clark and Zimmerman (1978, 1981), DiBlasio (1985), Greer (1984), Lanier (1974), and Smith, (1971).

In his book, Becoming Human Through Art, Feldman clearly suggests that the four viewpoints of mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective aesthetics should constitute a representative and balanced art curriculum. For example, part three of his book deals with expressive aesthetics, "The Creativity of Children," in which he examines the psychological theories in relation to children's creativity. The cognitive, developmental, psychoanalytical, and Gestalt theories were discussed as well. Part four, however, deals with the objective aesthetic view, in which formal elements and principles of design were the major concern. Thus Feldman is, in a sense, advocating a so-called "planned eclecticism."
Having argued the case for the usefulness and advantages provided by the eclectic view of curriculum planning, my model will be built on the same basis and principle, which is similar in the existence of different views of the nature of Islamic art as expressed by the Islamic art historians in the field. These views seem to carry some of the intrinsic value of aesthetics orientations already known and established, such as the mimic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective. The view of Islamic art scholars and experts will be aligned with the views of educational theories such as behavior, modification, social interaction, person-centered, and information processing. This model owes much of its structure and idea to the formula prescribed by Efland in his Curriculum Inquiry in Art Education: A Model Approach. It is the hope of this researcher that this model will help art teachers in Saudi Arabia discover the potential of alternative approaches to achieve the objectives which were stated in the curriculum guideline.

For instance, one of the major objectives of art education is stated in the guideline: "art should equip the student with Islamic values." This objective can only be accomplished by recognizing the role of art as a means of transmitting cultural and artistic heritage of society. In the following pages the views expressed by the art historians which are, in fact, congruent with the general
aesthetics orientations, will be stated as the nature of Islamic art. Then a suitable educational theory will be aligned with these views, in which the content, goal, teaching method, learning task, and method of evaluation will be established.

1. The Behavior Modification Model of Art Education

The nature of Islamic art. The value of Islamic art is viewed by its ability to imitate previous artistic traditions and assimilate their general artistic vocabulary as an initial step of creation. Creswell and other scholars look at its value from this perspective. They, therefore, judge Islamic artworks by comparing them with either existing or prior prototypes.

The nature of education. Learning in the behaviorist orientation, which is consistent with the view expressed above, occurs as a result of imitating certain behavior. Teaching art in the Islamic tradition is based on the imitation of a model of high artistic quality. In workshops, the student of an artisan is assigned a specific task, which is often that of literally imitating an example of simple form and quality. As the student progresses and demonstrates the ability of mastering that skill, he will then be given a more complex task. Once the second step of the artistic process is also accomplished, a more difficult step is added. After a number of years, if the student shows satisfactory progress, his
master may acknowledge his achievement and accept him as a member in the guild. The method of learning by imitation not only occurs in producing artifacts, but is used also in the production of calligraphy and painting.

**Content.** The objective in the case of imitation orientation should be directed toward modifying certain behavior and cultivating and encouraging the mastering of certain skills. The pattern of the modified behavior should move in steps, from simple to complex. It should include activities such as copying from examples, drawing plan and contour, and instruction in the use of the media and tools. Procedure and instruction, which is given by the teacher, is to be followed by the student.

**Goals.** The goal is determined by the social context. For example, in teaching Islamic art, the aim could be the improvement of the skill of students in drawing Islamic patterns and designing geometrical and floral configurations.

**Teaching methods.** The methods of teaching should shape the behaviors that are to be obtained by the student. The teacher serves as an example to the student. The exemplars of artworks that are displayed for imitation should help the learner change his/her behavior and sharpen his/her skill to produce artwork as closely as possible to the model provided.
Evaluation of instruction. For accurate measurement of the amount of positive change in the desired behavior of the student, the student's ability in art should be known before any instructional material is provided. Therefore, a suitable method of observation helpful toward this purpose should be used.

2. The Social Interaction Model of Art Education

The view expressed by Grabar about the instrumental value of Islamic art is consistent with the pragmatic orientation of art. He stresses that Islamic art serves, to a large extent, cultural and social, as well as utilitarian functions, and that works of Islamic art are best seen in their cultural and natural environment, and as a group rather than a single object, and that Islamic artists succeeded in making potential work of the humblist material. This leads to views similar to that of pragmatic aesthetics. By linking the view expressed by Grabar with social interaction educational orientation, a view that regards knowledge for its instrumental value "as a means for social and personal adaptation to one's environment" (p. 37), the result is an emphasis on the instrumental value of Islamic art. The content, goals, teaching methods, and evaluation of learning of this view are identified below.

Content. The objectives in this approach are designed to be met through a problem-solving situation.
The artistic process and products are deemed as resources for coping with the problem to be solved. Thus, the content is confronted in a situation that is close to lifelike rather than a rigid, abstract concept and information that should be learned in progressive fashion. Only knowledge that has close relevancy is included and it must be in the context of a problem-solving situation.

Goals. Goals should be established as a result of student-teacher interaction. Neither participant comes to the classroom setting with agreed-upon goals, but these become visible as discussion and negotiation take place to find areas of common interest for both parties.

Teaching methods. In the case of the social interaction approach, the teacher provides a suitable problem for the student to solve. The teacher's role, therefore, is a "resource person" whose rich experiences in art make him/her more competent to assist the student. The teacher should not suggest how the problem can best be solved, which may indicate a "ready-made" solution, but rather have the student realize the benefit of the teacher's greater experience. In case of a possible dispute over the suitability of the objectives, the matter should not be resolved by an imposing solution from the teacher. The teacher, instead, should be impartial, leaving room for the student to try to provide the solution.
Evaluation of learning. Unlike other approaches, evaluation in this case emerges through the experience of finding a suitable artistic problem and attempting to solve it. The process and products of the educational operation should be evaluated. Evaluation would also include an instrument to determine the extent to which the educational setting was appropriate for the student.

3. The Person-Centered Model of Art Education

The view expressed by Ettinghausen and other scholars of Islamic art, that Islamic art possesses a powerful expressive quality, has some logical ground and is shared by a wide range of art historians. Through the study of painting and the decorative art of Islamic civilization, Ettinghausen comes to a conclusion. This conclusion is based on al-Ghazali’s explanation that Islamic art is nothing but a reflection of the inner feeling and emotion of its maker. These feelings and emotions are communicable to those who have the same quality of inner vision. Thus, the more the perceiver’s inner feeling is transparent, the more he perceives the inner quality of works of art. This view is, in part, consistent with the expression of aesthetic orientation. By linking this view with the person-centered view of education, we would have a representative approach of the expressive orientation. As Grabar remarks, the zoomorphic images in Islamic art often appear in exaggerated form, and images of humans, birds,
or animals may have expressive quality in close resemblance of the expressionist school of the nineteenth century. This may lead to the notion that the value claim by the expressive aesthetic and the value claim by person-centered education are applicable to Islamic art, since Islamic art also claims that the aesthetic experience occurs when the artist expresses his/her feeling and emotion, which represents the inner harmony of the artist and that this state of inner balance is perceived by those who possess the same state of mind. The following are prescriptions of this model.

**Content.** The learners here are a decisive factor in the whole educational operation and the content stems from them, but is not imposed on them. Through self-expression, the subject matter comes to the surface. Thus, one's own experiences will determine the degree to which the subject matter differs from one student to another.

**Goals.** The aim here is to encourage self-growth of the student. Self-expression should foster personal fulfillment, emotional adjustment, and so forth.

**Teaching methods.** The role of the teacher is to facilitate and encourage personal self-expression. Absolute wrong or right judgement is discouraged, since such a thing does not exist in personal self-expression.
A healthy and less threatening environment, therefore, is a must.

Evaluation of learning. Evaluation is left for the student, since the student is, in fact, his own teacher. The degree to which the student benefits from the educational experience is determined by his/her satisfaction of self-fulfillment in artistic expression. The aim of instruction is considered accomplished only if the student finds himself/herself more enriched by the artistic experiences he/she has gone through.

4. Information Processing Model and Islamic Art

This model is based on a combination of objective aesthetic, cognitive psychology, and information processing models of education. The objective aesthetic asserts that art is determined by its equation of "formal structural attributes, their organic integrity and cohesiveness" (p. 50). A similar view of the aesthetic of Islamic art was expressed by a number of art historians, including El-Said, Parman, Critchlow, and Grabar. This view regards the formal attributes of Islamic art as the true value of its creativity, that all interpretations of extrinsic value mean nothing to the true state of affairs of Islamic art, and that what we can see in the works of Islamic art is what counts.

By using the same formula introduced by Efland, the view described above can be connected with cognitive
psychology and information processing model of education to help introduce concept and knowledge about Islamic art. Below is a prescription in the information processing model.

**Content.** The content should emphasize the concept to be obtained. An example of this could be about the main concepts that are used to describe "the body of knowledge known as art." Concepts such as media, subject matter, theme, formal elements, creativity, function, school, and style could be included.

**Goals.** Goals are to be announced in the form of concept acquisition by means of inquiry that demonstrate "a disciplined character." They could also be identified in terms of attainment of cognitive structure, or even as modification in pre-existing cognitive structure for allowing new knowledge to be stored for future use.

**Teaching methods.** Teaching methods should enable students to inquire, discover, and experiment with the realm of art. They should also allow for concept obtainment by helping students to "1) form generalizations about their experience, and 2) by providing a situation that would enable them to hypothesize about unknowns, and by testing such hypotheses" (p. 56).

**Evaluation of learning.** Evaluation should be conducted to assess two elements. The first element is the quality of the investigative processes utilized by the
students in order to unveil new information. The second element is to assess the degree to which the designated or desired concepts are actually achieved.

Having discussed in detail the theoretical model, which is built on the foundation of the eclectic approach to curriculum design, different views expressed by Islamic art historians with similar aesthetics orientations and their educational counterparts were aligned to formulate a representative and comprehensive approach to studying Islamic art.

The problem of studying Islamic art in particular, and art in education in general in Saudi Arabia, has suffered from relying on one aesthetic orientation as valid and true. The case is not so in reality, where different views of art may be accepted as valid and representative, though they have contradictory concepts. Therefore, for broadening the base to include more concepts, information, and knowledge, the eclectic approach seems a must. Figures 36 and 37 illustrate and outline the premise of the theoretical model.

Recommendation For Further Study

The purpose of this study was to find an alternative approach to teaching Islamic art through the analysis of the writings of three eminent and prolific Islamic art historians and the adoption of their methods and ideas.
Theoretical model for teaching Islamic art through art education curriculum

- "Eclectic Aesthetics: Varied Approaches to Educational Practice" (Efland's Model, 1983)
- Views of varied Islamic art historians aligned with similar existing aesthetic and educational views

Goals
- "To achieve a comprehensive understanding of art in personal and social life, and to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the cultural importance of art."
- Reintroducing the study of Islamic art in a more meaningful way that treats Islamic art as cultural and artistic heritage of the people
- Understanding Islamic art in its broad philosophical, cultural, social, and artistic context
- Developing students' artistic skill through studying Islamic design
- Recognizing the practical and economical values of Islamic handicraft objects

Sources of Content
- Skills of studio
- Problem of society
- Personal resources
- Concept and values
- Historical study about the development and formation of Islamic art and its function in society and its relation with contemporary ones
- Critical study focusing on issues related to Islamic artworks through analyzing variable and written statements
- Practical studio study focusing on skill building of various dimensions

Figure 36. A theoretical model for teaching Islamic art through art education curriculum.
This page contains a table with three columns labeled "TEACHING METHODS," "LEARNING TASKS," and "EVALUATION." Under "TEACHING METHODS," there are points such as:

- "Demonstration, negotiation, nurturance, organization of instructional resources."
- Teaching the student the techniques, tools, and media used by Islamic artist and artisan
- Teaching the student the different styles and schools of Islamic art through the ages and across regions
- Introducing the student to masterpieces of Islamic art in which they will describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate these art objects
- Teaching the student the value of the objects of Islamic art and the need to preserve them

Under "LEARNING TASKS," there are points such as:

- "Matching-modeling, problem identification, imaginative-recombination, disciplined inquiry"
- Discussing different issues or concepts as they relate to Islamic art, including the creativity of Islamic art, the unity of Islamic art, the originality and conformity of Islamic art
- Emphasizing the role and function of Islamic art in culture and society
- Learning how the Islamic patterns operate with special emphasis on comparing and contrasting different types of patterns and philosophical orientation
- Making Islamic art objects by using modern techniques, tools, and media

Under "EVALUATION," there are points such as:

- "Eclectic approaches to evaluation."
- The evaluation task will be shared by the individuals involved in the educational setting, including the teacher and students
- It will try to answer the following questions:
  - Does the student improve his/her skill of making art, using material and tools from one degree to another in upward movement?
  - Does the student improve his/her ability to recognize and solve the problems he/she faces during the educational operation, whether technique or theoretical?
  - Does the student become aware of the significance of art in society?
  - Does the practice of making and talking about Islamic art lead the student to appreciate this art?
Figure 37. Summary of the theoretical model.
Results from this inquiry indicate that it is possible to improve the quality of teaching Islamic art in particular, and art education in general, if the base of art education is broadened to include alternative ideas and concepts of curriculum. However, there are several problems that need to be addressed in order to advance art education in the country. Therefore, the study of the following topics is recommended:

1. An experimental study that compares the current traditional practice of art education with a new comprehensive approach that stresses multiple views of art education.

2. A study of philosophical nature that investigates the place of art in Muslim society.

Such research will help in identifying more fully the overall deficiency and shortcomings of the current practice of art education and the role of art in traditional Muslim society.

Conclusion

The argument of this researcher in favor of eclectic curriculum is based on the strength of the premise of this approach. In order to make a persuasive argument, the conceptual framework and characteristics of the eclectic view were analyzed, using the reasons provided by scholars who advocate the eclectic approach, which also led to their conclusions in regard to eclectic curriculum.
First, the eclectic approach to art education was seen as a possible solution to the complexity and multiple interpretations of the state of art. Since no single interpretation of the true state of affairs of art is "agreed upon" as being the right one, no one view can be adapted and be representative. This idea is backed up by Chapman (1979), who argues that in a pluralistic society, restricting the experience of art to one view such as "formalist-subjectivist" is not possible. She suggests that other "views (but not all or any) must be represented as well" (p. 36).

The eclectic view is also thought of as a means to control the bias of each approach or aesthetic orientation to art. Efland argues that bias is unavoidable when a viewpoint is implemented. For instance, making the individual learner the centered point of the curriculum would probably result in a bias toward the person-centered model. If the subject was the departure point of the approach, however, bias would lay toward the subject-centered model or information processing model. Controlling bias, then, necessitates "planned eclecticism."

Efland also argues against the belief that contradiction and inconsistency would be major obstacles in the eclectic approach. He states that using one aesthetic orientation is possible if one view of art is "agreed upon" as the right one. Since this is not the case,
however, the eclectic approach is the answer. The problem of contradiction and inconsistency, then, can be stated as a problem if the realm of art itself is built in a logical way. According to Efland, rival concepts of aesthetic value have been pursued by different groups throughout the ages.

Another characteristic of the eclectic approach is in relation to young children and the mechanism of their learning behavior. Elkind argues that because young children learn in different ways and by different methods and means, it is an invalid concept to restrict oneself to one approach. The knowledge that must be achieved and the kind of content may determine or dictate the mode of learning and the appropriate approach.

Chapman argues that because we have multiple objectives for education, the concept of "planned eclectic" curriculum would be helpful in achieving these objectives. Art education could serve as a means to fulfill oneself through art, appreciate and transmit artistic heritage, and heighten the awareness of art in society, which are congruent with the objectives of general education. Eclectic curriculum, then, is a possible approach to achieve these purposes.

Having argued the case for the usefulness and advantages provided by the eclectic view of curriculum planning, my model will be built on the same basis and
principle, which is similar in the existence of different views of the nature of Islamic art as expressed by the Islamic art historians in the field. These views seem to carry some of the intrinsic value of aesthetics orientations already known and established, such as the mimic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective. The view of Islamic art scholars and experts will be aligned with the views of educational theories such as behavior, modification, social interaction, person-centered, and information processing. This model owes much of its structure and idea to the formula prescribed by Efland in his *Curriculum Inquiry in Art Education: A Model Approach*. It is the hope of this researcher that this model will help art teachers in Saudi Arabia discover the potential of alternative approaches to achieve the objectives which were stated in the curriculum guideline.

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