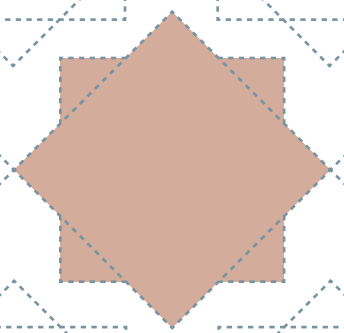
EXPERTISE AND ARCHITECTURE IN THE MODERN ISLAMIC WORLD



A CRITICAL ANTHOLOGY

EDITED BY PETER H. CHRISTENSEN

Expertise and Architecture in the Modern Islamic World

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Introduction

Peter H. Christensen

Islamic Architecture after 1800

Paradigmatic turns in the study of culture are a constant, and the field of Islamic architecture is no exception. A panorama of literature and conferences on the topic from the last decade suggests that we have been in a turn toward historiography and that this period of self-reflection is gradually ending. This historiographic turn has grown in steady proportion to a cross-cultural turn, the latter of which continues to grow. Such turns proffer the double-edged spectre of elemental change to the way in which history is written and the more fleeting trends of fashion.

Yet despite the paradigmatic shifts, some structural concepts persist, and the notion that the intrinsic meaning of architecture in the Islamic world decreased with the advent of European imperialism and colonialism lingers in much of the literature today, even when this notion has been challenged by several scholars, such as Esra Akcan, Sibel Bozdoğan, Zeynep Çelik, and Yasser Elsheshtawy, among others.[1] The imperial and colonial eras were not mere harbingers of erosion, ridding the arts of Islam of their supposed purity and clarity, but were also times of immense synthesis, with the roles of actors in the construction of the built environment, both internal and external to the religious sphere of Islam, changing in dynamic ways. This volume shines a spotlight on these dynamics through new research, bringing historiographic critique together with primary research.

It is easy to understand why the cross-cultural literature has tacitly favoured the periods prior to European imperialism. An environment devoid of vastly imbalanced external political pressure, the erosion of state sovereignty, and couched within the distance of pre-modern space carries with it 'pure' forms of interactional dynamics, equanimity, affinity, and agency as opposed to the sealed and sullying processes of hegemony, subjugation, and force. This edited collection asserts that this contrast of context, and the periodization which results from it, is artificial and neglects the continuous nature of time and the constancy of change; and it serves to remind us how important the inclusion of the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries is to the study of Islamic architecture in its broadest sense.

The chapters in this volume, organized around the specific leitmotif of expertise, demonstrate the thematic importance and specific utility of expertise in the processes that have shaped the construction and form of architecture in the Islamic world from *c.*1800, where many traditional histories of Islamic architecture end, to the present. The embedded nature of expertise in all issues related to the creation of architecture is salient, too, because it

allows the scholarship built around the topic to eschew present and future turns and instead to give expertise the inherent role it deserves as an important lens of analysis in the field.

Architecture, Transmutation, Technicalism

Nasser Rabbat has described the erosion of the arts of Islam as an acceptance of 'incongruity' between Islamic architecture and modernism hinged around a moment when modernism eclipsed Islamic architecture and 'took its place'. 'Consequently,' he argues, 'the architecture built under colonialism and after independence was not considered "Islamic"; it was seen as either modern or culturally hybrid. Studying it was thus the domain of the modernist or the area specialist.'[2]

Modernists and area specialists have typically had few instances to come together at the same table and this is why looking to global history, and particularly its early seminal texts, is useful. Marshall Hodgson's historical portrayal of this Modernist shift centres on the concept of transmutation, which has a number of morphological implications for the study of architecture. Hodgson introduces the concept of transmutation in his exegesis on the 'Generation of 1789', where he defines the ways in which specific economic, social, and intellectual transformations in the Occident fractured the Afro-Eurasian ecumenical world and subsequently facilitated a European hegemony in the nineteenth century.[3] He supplants heroic and local accounts of early modern and Enlightenment era transformation by placing a unique European metamorphosis into a global historical framework that focuses on process rather than product, and mechanics rather than a preordained notion of progress.

As actors, not victors, nineteenth-century Occidentals shifted their allegiances from 'custom and continuity' to 'calculation and innovation', in ways which were more tactical than strategic. Having supposedly manifested its 'greatest' florescence prior to Europe's, Islamic culture had already established institutions of 'independent calculation' and 'personal initiative' and had tactically acclimated its cultural production to accommodate religion. The transmutation, as such, was less a transformation of life than of what Hodgson terms 'technicalism',[4] broadly defined as the primacy of specialized technical considerations over all others. It was this transformation, not religion or culture per se, which facilitated ascendancy and European hegemony, with unique and discrete effects:[5]

> In that special form [of technicalism] […] the shift went to unprecedented lengths, so that the results set new conditions for all historical life. It was not that the human mind as such was suddenly emancipated, as if by some mutation, and could therefore begin freely to explore all calculable possibilities where, before, new paths could be opened only by chance and despite the weight of customary bias. Rather, concrete new sorts of opportunity for social investment, hitherto impractical even for the most emancipated mind, became practicable, attracting even minds that still, by and large, resisted any deviation from intellectual habit. And then the resistance was gradually reduced.[6]

The transmutation and this gradual reduction of resistance to change were global and dependent on the world at large for their actualization. Technicalism trumped the boundaries and challenges posed by artificial limits like state borders, language barriers, and 'hard to exploit markets' because that was its modus operandi.[7] Within the Islamic world, the transmutation and its technicalist grasp introduced specific conflicts and anxieties, including a conflict with agrarian societal organization, which caused significant moral and psychological duress. Yet the transmutation was normalized by the second half of the nineteenth century, partly because technicalism was embraced by Islamic culture and partly because much of the Islamic world came to be ruled by Occidental states that gave it no clear alternative.

The new imperative of technicalism subjected virtually the entire Islamic world to both political and psychological pressures that altered the economies and nature of expertise in that world.[8] In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, such transformations are more widely described under the rubric of 'globalization', a system where access to expertise is open to so many and so readily that its structure merely mimics capitalist culture writ large with its tendencies toward designification, mimesis, kitsch, and ubiquity.[9] The short-lived but rich Critical Regionalism movement, and to a lesser degree postmodernism, wrestled with these phenomena and yet the void in the literature concerning expertise is plainly evident.

Architecture and Expertise

Although 'expert' and 'expertise' are commonly used to describe the processes of architectural production, both terms are markedly devoid of a critical perspective. Defined as comprehensive and authoritative knowledge of, or skill in, a particular area, the notion of expertise is clearly tethered to the entanglement of power and knowledge at the core of postcolonial studies. Yet, its inherent association with applied 'real-world' design matters has exempted it from the scrutiny directed toward other economies of knowledge in the last three decades.

Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament*, for example, is commonly understood as a document that simultaneously constructed knowledge and represented – and in turn perhaps even dominated – much of the non-Western world.[10] But what of the technical expertise of the chromolithographers who made possible the tome's impressive colour reproductions and dispersal to a wide audience? Are they implicated in the process of British hegemony, or does the nature of their technical expertise (as well as their technicalism) make them innocent? Is the question one of innocence in the first place?

One way to think through these questions is to examine the ways in which adjacent fields are rethinking the very rudiments of what constitutes expertise. Thinkers from other humanistic fields have suggested a new sociological paradigm of 'interactional' expertise that generates knowledge through transactional and multilateral engagement.[11]

The flagship example of 'interactional' expertise involves the use of language. Collins and Evans explain:

> […] in France everyone can speak French, 'even the little children', and it is not thought of as an expertise. On the other hand, in Britain a person who is fluent in French is thought of as an expert and can, for example, command a salary as a translator or teacher. It's the opposite way round in France, where it is speaking English that counts as the useful expertise. In a purely relational theory, the expertise involved in speaking French and English is no more nor less than that attributed to speakers of the languages in their respective countries. In a realist/substantive analysis, on the other hand, the degree of expertise in speaking a language remains the same in whichever country the language is spoken.[12]

The fissure this example poses between the 'relational' model and the 'realist/substantive' model could just as easily be seen in the technical skills that aggregate to form Hodgson's notion of technicalism. Like commanding a salary in Britain for expertise in French, commanding a currency of power for expertise in railway engineering, irrigation technology or building construction in places from which those particular forms of expertise did not originate is only expertise when the skill is juxtaposed with the place where it is both not intrinsic and being deployed. If the assumption that a juxtaposition must be made is dropped, the realist model will emancipate us from the notion that the economy of expertise is, in the positivist sense, a system with intrinsic value.

Others have theorized expertise as a system of knowledge management, contending that 'expert' knowledge has no single source (such as a monolithic 'West').[13] Particular to this theorem are the productive aspects that come from the limitations of human cognition. Hinds and Pfeffer note:

> One set of limitations on sharing expertise is cognitive, that is, the way experts store and process information may make it difficult for them to share that expertise with others regardless of whether or not they are motivated to do so. The cognitive limitations faced by experts come partly from the way that they mentally represent the task. As expertise increases, mental representations become more abstract and simplified.[14]

In this model, the ability to represent one's expertise, be it that of an artisan in a guild or of a university graduate, is inversely proportional to the depth of that expertise. 'Western' experts who are contracted to apply their expertise abroad are, by their very selection, top-notch experts and thus, according to the knowledge management model, the least able to transfer their expertise as their knowledge is the most internalized. But as we know, in the Islamic world and elsewhere, the transfer of expertise and technology occurred, often with spectacular effects that went well beyond contract work. The knowledge management model insists that this only occurs when a management system is in place, one in which

experts act both as experts – whether as stonemasons or hydroengineers – and also as managers who iteratively communicate and 'represent' their expertise to others in order to execute a project with the optimal balance of context and innovation.

The questions that the new forms of 'interactional' and knowledge-management expertise pose for the study of the Islamic world's architecture are wide-ranging. How, for example, were the dynamics of competition between associations of craftsmen in medieval and early modern Islamic cities reconfigured after 1800, and how were the key urban spaces where information was exchanged – the storehouse, the market, and the university – reshaped or transmuted in the process? With the Islamic world's rapidly increasing contact with Europe, and also with Africa, East Asia, and later North America, how did conceptions of expertise shift in light of the crafts and skills of previously unknown populations? To what extent has technology (perceived as originating outside the Islamic world) from the nineteenth century to the present reinforced the stereotype of an expert 'West', and to what extent has such technology facilitated new forms of autonomous creative production in the Islamic world? What are the promises and the pitfalls of the contemporary free market economy's ability to import foreign expertise to develop local built environments?

Modern Heuristics

As much as the nature of expertise in architecture transformed through the erosion of guilds and empires, the transformation did not have a one-to-one relationship with state sovereignty. The German–Ottoman relationship, which blossomed around the midpoint of this volume's chronological scope and existed within the ambiguous context that comes with a semi-colonial condition, is a useful heuristic for understanding the full range of transmutations that followed the relatively static pre-nineteenth-century model of expertise.

While we can see a clear Ottoman desire for German technological and economic expertise in the construction of their railways (constructed between 1868 and 1919), there are also thousands of construction sites, large and small, where German plans were executed through the expertise of Ottoman labourers and craftsmen, under varying degrees of German supervision – providing an exemplar of what Faroqhi describes as an informal system of artisanal 'input' in the wake of the traditional guild system's demise.[15]

The very ambiguity of the input between Germans and Ottomans is splendidly evident in a single artefact: the German Fountain, centrally located in Istanbul's historic Hippodrome. This German Fountain (*Alman Çeşmesi*) is the most potent symbol of the German–Ottoman partnership, and its provenance clearly illustrates the process of transmutation. In 1898, Kaiser Wilhelm summoned the architect Max Spitta and apparently quickly sketched a fountain to be given as a memento to the Sultan, asking Spitta to develop and execute the fountain.

Apparently, Wilhelm had been intrigued by the fountain's double function in Islamic society as both a benevolent civic provision and a facilitator of the customs of worship. At

some point thereafter, the emperor and Spitta enlisted the service of the former Ottoman ambassador to Berlin and then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Tevfik Pasha, who, equipped with perfect German, relayed Spitta's plans for the fountain to the sultan through verbal descriptions of its form, an iteration of interactional expertise.

Spitta's designs went through several trials before Wilhelm found them satisfactory. The first design was a covered octagonal pavilion constructed of medium-sized ashlar, with stout Byzantine-style columns of black marble and thickly framed, rounded arches. Beneath a decorative band, two faces depict the *Bundesadler*, the symbol of imperial Germany in the form of an eagle, and a third depicts the *tuğra*, the sultan's imperial emblem. Upon close inspection, one notices a large pencilled 'X' drawn across the centre of the fountain's image [Figure 0.1]. The intersection of the 'X' appears virtually on top of the central *Bundesadler*. This mark, most certainly made by the emperor, indicates a rejection of Spitta's scheme and, perhaps,

Figure 0.1: *Max Spitta, design for a fountain in Constantinople, elevation, iteration 1, 1899*. Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität Berlin.

of the figurative *Bundesadler* in particular. Does this indicate Kaiser Wilhelm's cognizance of the supposed prohibition of figural motifs in Islamic art? Wilhelm was, as we know from his diaries and numerous other accounts, an amateur student of the Orient and Islam and their customs. Regardless, the *Bundesadler*, which now emerges as the locus of visible versus invisible extraterritorial ambition, would not appear in subsequent iterations. Spitta went through four more iterations of the design before completing the fifth and final rendition.

Up close, the fountain bears even more symbols and inscriptions. These include two epistolary works, one in German and one in Ottoman Turkish. The Ottoman text is an eight-couplet poem with epigraphy by Hattat İzzet Efendi (1841–1903), reproduced by the Berlin mosaic artist August Oetken (1868–1951) as a band undulating over the eight archways within the interior of the dome.[16] The text, presumably edited with Abdülhamid's blessing, is a typical hagiographic epigram, identifying Wilhelm as a 'well-informed' and 'able' soldier, a 'compassionate' visitor to the Holy Land, a ruler 'honoured with respect of Islam', and the builder of the fountain. The word used for 'fountain', *selsebil*, actually refers to a mythical fountain in paradise providing sweet water.

While German archives reveal certain tensions in the morphology of Spitta's design, Ottoman records speak to tensions around the fountain's siting. In the summer of 1899, the General Protocols Office reported that the Sultan, upon hearing of the Kaiser's intention to give the fountain as a gift, noted that the suburb of Nişantaşı would be an ideal location.[17] With a great deal of polite flourishes, an official named Tahsin reported Wilhelm's apparent objection to siting the fountain in the suburbs, preferring instead to situate it in a place where the Kaiser's 'obedience' to the Porte would be seen by more people.[18] And so it was resolved to site the fountain in its ultimate, extremely prominent location. Tacitly, this shows the sultan's expertise in handling the Kaiser's unwanted demands, and it also implicates him as the expert on the fountain's proper siting. Viewed from an alternate direction, it may show, instead, that Wilhelm, with his rudimentary knowledge of the Orient, was able to 'play' the sultan.

After being inaugurated in January 1901, the fountain provided a stream of headaches for its beneficiaries. Within weeks, vandals had stripped the fountain of all of its faucets and a number of its most precious mosaic stones.[19] To make matters worse, the vandalism forced a protracted debate between the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Works, and the Grand Vizier himself over who, precisely, was the expert responsible for the fountain's well-being.[20] The debate essentially hinged on whether the fountain was considered primarily a diplomatic symbol or a waterwork.

The onus for the fountain's upkeep ultimately fell upon the Ministry of the Interior, indicating that its delegation as a diplomatic symbol trumped that of a fountain.[21] It also indicates that the authorities were loath to call upon Spitta himself for the replacement parts for fear of embarrassment over their custodial neglect. When the faucets were again stolen, within three weeks, it became clear that the reason was not a perceived value of German faucets as manufactured objects but rather a general public disregard for the fountain's status as a site for ablutions.[22] The Minister of the Interior was both baffled and irritated by

the recurring faucet disappearances and, after replacing them a second time and building a wrought iron fence around the structure to the tune of 140,300 piasters, he delegated the fountain's security to the Constantinople police sergeant Arif, who appointed full-time guards for its protection.[23] Expertise, as became clear in the case of this small monument, required the collective insight and talents of the kaiser, the sultan, a diplomat, an architect, a poet, an epigrapher, a mosaicist, and two policemen, a multi-level and multi-national admixture that became more the norm than the exception in the modern period.

A more widely known project, Hassan Fathy's New Gourna Village in Upper Egypt, offers insight into how expertise factors into the canon of the modern architecture of the Islamic world, to the extent such a canon exists. In 1945, Fathy was enlisted by the Egyptian government to author and execute a master plan for the inhabitants of the village community of Old Gourna. Effectively, the Egyptian government was seeking to use planning and architecture as a means of terminating the villagers' longstanding livelihood of looting antiquities from nearby pharaonic tombs, in turn 'civilizing' the population and settling them in established communities that emphasized mainstream economics and civic values.

Fathy, born into an upper-class family of Ottoman Turkish origin, trained at King Fuad University in Cairo and quickly gained a reputation as a skilled planner and architect who distinguished himself from his Western colleagues, many of whom were receiving major commissions for the construction of new towns and cities in the post-World War II order.[24] Fathy's plan for New Gourna comprised a close adherence to the Nubian mud brick tradition, classical pharaonic architectural elements including freestanding vaults and arches, and a spatial ethos that upheld the Islamic tradition of a clear delineation between public and private spheres through the design of courtyards, privacy planes, and a constellation of prominent public facilities including a central square, a khan, a mosque, a theatre, and town hall, among others [Figure 0.2]. New Gourna was partially realized but left incomplete in 1952 due to an array of bureaucratic hurdles, disagreements with villagers, and financial problems.[25] Nevertheless, the project was extoled by numerous Western critics and visitors, many citing the ways in which Fathy applied a modernist design sensibility in conjunction with a sensitivity to the climate, materiality, and anthropology of those for whom he was designing. It was for many a harbinger of the so-called Critical Regionalism movement, whose promise lay in its ability to reconcile certain 'universal' humanistic aspects of modernism with local cultures and contexts. In fact, just such a sentiment remains the main lens through which a number of institutions have viewed Fathy's project and his life work more generally. Among them is the World Monuments Fund, which said the following of the project in a 2011 Executive Report concerning the conservation of the project:

> At New Gourna, Fathy pedestaled his vision of vernacular building traditions and promoted precise forms and materials he had seen and utilized in rural Egypt. Intended as a model public housing project and perhaps the codification of a national style, the mud brick, domed dwellings gained international attention and are today considered early experiments with appropriate technology and sustainable architectural systems.[26]

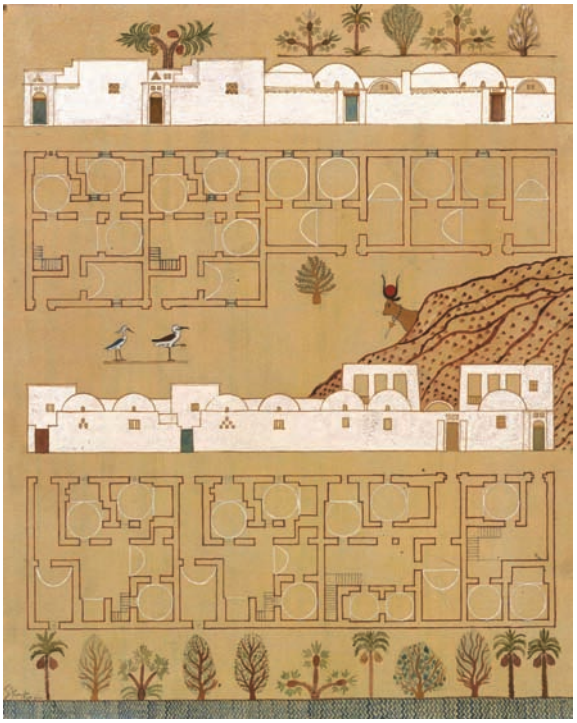

Figure 0.2: *Hassan Fathy, representational scheme of New Gourna, 1945*. Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva, Switzerland.

As Hana Taragan has shown, however, Fathy's utopian vision for New Gourna was far from successful, certainly programmatically but perhaps also conceptually. For starters, the villagers did not wish to give up the lucrative looting practices on which generations rested, and they were provided with few economic alternatives by the Egyptian government.[27] Architecturally too some issues proved problematic: the Egyptian writer and journalist Fathi Ghanim highlighted the confusion and scepticism surrounding Fathy's extensive use of the dome in his 1959 novela entitled *al-Jabal* in which the narrator and his wife echo the villagers' befuddlement over the use of the dome as a sort of cellular unit because they understood domes in Nubian architecture to be synonymous primarily with tombs and tombs alone.[28]

The most intractable aspect of Fathy's project at New Gourna, however, is neither political nor architectural but rather centred in the philosophical strictures through which Fathy himself asserted and projected expertise. Fathy's position as an educated, upper-class Egyptian who was well connected with the government afforded him a rarely duplicated authorial and representative platform to describe what it meant to be both modern, particularly in terms of welfare and comfort, and Egyptian. What complicates

this platform is that Fathy's philosophical rhetoric, most notably in his 1969 treatise *Architecture for the Poor*, a book that details Fathy's thinking in New Gourna, is essentially philanthropic rather than ideological. He commonly describes the New Gourna villagers in ambivalent terms like 'poor', 'ignorant', 'shrewd', 'loyal', 'genial', and 'simple' that make it at once difficult to dispute his design expertise but also challenging to understand the motives for which he deploys it. Taragan has gone so far as to suggest that the New Gourna project was a vehicle for Fathy to propel his ego and his career at the expense of what was best for the villagers.[29]

But when one returns to the question of expertise, one must reckon with a more ambiguous reality, one Taragan overlooks despite the rich excerpts explicitly addressing the topic in *Architecture for the Poor*. Early on his exegesis, Fathy describes expertise in unequivocal terms:

> The modern advance in technology which has given us new materials and methods in building has also necessitated the intrusion of the professional architect, a specialist who has been taught the science of working in these materials. The architect with his expertise has taken all the pleasure of house building away from his client, who is unable to catch up with the rapidly advancing techniques. Now, instead of the unhurried, appreciative discussions with the craftsmen as the house is being built, the owner has the opportunity to exercise his choice over marks on a plan in the architect's office. He doesn't understand the idiom of architectural drawing nor the architect's jargon, so the architect despises him and browbeats him or else deceives him into accepting what the architect wants by adding specious trees and motorcars.[30]

Architectural expertise qua architectural expertise is for Fathy the imprimatur of systemic oppression on which knowledge is weaponized to disempower the poor and conform them to a way of life that they may not need, want, or know how to perform. Indeed, expertise is an explicitly socio-economic topic, as he exclaims shortly thereafter:

> And the architect? If he has no time to spend in individual consultation, if he is not offered enough money to make the job worth his while, then the job is not for him. Let him go and hawk his expertise to people who will pay for it, and leave the poor to design their own houses. To take the other alternative, to design one house and multiply it by a thousand, as a road engineer designs a section of road and unreels it for any number of miles, is to betray his profession, to sacrifice the artistic nature of house to money, and to abandon his own integrity.[31]

Remarkably, what Fathy suggests in his disavowal of architectural expertise is the promotion of the architect to embody and exercise alternative forms of expertise, that of the anthropologist or the sociologist, in inherently imbuing them with the ability to

evaluate and diagnose what is or is not suitable (be it motorcars or mud brick) for their clients.

It is not until later in his text that Fathy contends with the intricacies of expertise as it relates to the governmental network with which he himself was so entangled.

> There is in every village a traditional and very reasonable tendency to look upon 'the government' as a kind of heathen god, to be feared, propitiated, prayed to, and from which unexpected blessings may descend, but it seldom occurs to the villager that the government is something you may cooperate with, something with which you may even conclude a reasonable agreement on tackling a problem […] The cost of everything – architects, engineers, machines, masons and clerks – had to come out of that [government] money. If the villagers availed themselves of our expertise, then they could have good houses very cheaply, but only if they contributed the unskilled labor and much of the transport themselves for nothing.[32]

So while Fathy reminds us that architectural expertise is a loaded socio-economic mechanism that can be used for control and subjugation, he nevertheless also suggests that the poor might consider swallowing a certain amount of pride when it comes to accepting such expertise for the financial stakes and potential gains, which for New Gourna were enormous. Herein Fathy weaves an unusual and interrelated web of expertise contingent on the relations between a primary triad of actors: the government, the architect, and the common man. In so doing, Fathy suggests that expertise is a sort of bartering economy in the modern era, one in which the advantages of what are often Western notions of welfare and comfort are weighed against individual sovereignty and integrity. The biggest ramifications of such a triangulation are indeed those of the architect: the architect's expertise as a designer is ostensibly 'devalued' in direct proportion to his ability to act as anthropologist and sociologist.

Fathy's tactical argument that the expertise of the architect is largely embedded in anthropology would seem to foreshadow the intellectual landscape today. Anthropology today may indeed be the great bastion of expertise discourse when it comes to architecture, which is perhaps why architectural historians have to a large degree overlooked what it is saying. One of the very best examples of such work is Trevor Marchand's work on the masonry traditions of Djenné [Figure 0.3].

Marchand's study rests on the author's extensive fieldwork in Mali, where he lived and worked alongside mud brick masons as they built a large residential vacation complex for a Dutch client. Located on the Bani River in Mali, Djenné has been a lively settlement for more than two millennia, situated at the crossroads of numerous historical trade and pilgrimage routes extending across Africa to both its east and west and north and south. Djenné is particularly renowned for its mud brick architecture, which are most commonly associated with the large central mosque and the residences of important merchant-traders. The masons hesitantly take Marchand on as an apprentice on the project and from there the reader follows him on his journey to become a skilled craftsman. Marchand's insights

Figure 0.3: *View of a mason at work in Djenné*. Trevor H. J. Marchand.

into the masons' lives reveal, among other things, a string of dualities. These include the tension between their relatively low economic status and a certain working-class valour that is bestowed upon them within the community and the non-verbal yet profoundly coded means of communicating both knowledge and logistics at the building site.

The second point is particularly important to the theme of expertise, which is for all intents and purposes the central theme to Marchand's study. Early in his apprenticeship, Marchand makes the following observation:

> Not surprisingly, much work-related communication between craftspeople is nonverbal, commonly relying on an intercourse of gesturing and deictic pointing, as well as other sources of visual, auditory, and somatic information exchanged between acting bodies. Daily immersion in this environment heightened my attentiveness to a multitude of stimuli that impact the making of both builders and buildings.[33]

Such observations of the non-verbal communication of expertise typify the knowledge management theory of expertise, where knowledge, and eventually the mastery of it in the

form of expertise, is performed not in the traditional teacher-student condition but rather in a nexus of collaborative work that renders it difficult to articulate in more conventional forms of transmission. Relational theory is also at play, primarily as the result of the slow but steady changes in traditional masonry in Djenné that began with French colonialism and continue with globalization. The organic crenellations of the buildings grow sharper and geometric when the masons began to use French spades made of metal. The shape of the bricks themselves changed from cylindrical to rectangular, streamlining the facades and creating sharper edges. And, as is plainly evident, in Marchand's own construction site, the sheer scale of the buildings began to grow as UNESCO and foreign tourists and investors turned their attention to the ostensibly separate but intrinsically intertwined missions of preserving and developing the city.

Marchand makes plain the ways in which masonry expertise in Djenné is tied not only to a knowledge management model but to a distinct social and cultural status that carries with it its own political economy:

> A Mason's knowledge is embodied in his activities and is therefore conceived as interiorized and individually possessed. Like the secret knowledge of *bey-bibi* and *bey-koray*, trade knowledge should be carefully managed and selectively revealed. It is coveted as a precious resource that differentiates craftspeople from others, and its accumulation in the form of skilled practice and secret incantations promotes a public recognition of expertise and status.[34]

From the Gardens of Istanbul to the Suburbs of Stockholm

This volume is arranged in rough chronological order and opens with '"I don't want orange trees, I want something that others don't have": Ottoman Head-Gardeners after Mahmud II' by Deniz Türker. Türker's study of the Bavarian gardener Christian Sester and his design for the groves at Çırağan Palace demonstrate how Ottoman Tanzimat reforms, long associated with modernization based on European models, impacted the highly symbolic, yet sorely understudied, culture around gardening. Sester's position as the inaugural 'Head-Gardener', it turns out, was actually a role shaped largely from a desire to extend the pre-Tanzimat tradition of foreign horticultural expertise. The significant change in the Ottoman imperial relationship to gardening was, Türker demonstrates, more a cross-cultural conjugation of Sester's training in post-Enlightenment principles than a simple desire on behalf of the Ottomans to Europeanize.

In 'A Nineteenth-Century Architectural Archive: Syed Ahmad Khan's *Āṣār-us-Ṣanādīd*' Mrinalini Rajagopalan explores how the establishment of British colonialism in the nineteenth-century India cannot be separated from European projects that surveyed and classified the objects, peoples, and practices of the subcontinent. She demonstrates how Indian and European curiosity about architectural monuments took on a special significance at this time as historic buildings were seen as purveyors of 'factual' historical information.

This chapter, rooted in the *Āṣār-us-Ṣanādīd* (Traces of Noblemen, first ed. 1847), a 600-page comprehensive survey of Delhi's monuments written in Urdu by the Indian intellectual Syed Ahmad Khan, examines the visual, chronological, and comparative methodologies used in the *Āṣār-us-Ṣanādīd* and argues that Syed Ahmad created a thoroughly modern archive of Delhi's historic architecture and shaped the idea of the monument itself.

In her chapter 'The Balyan Family and the *Linguistic Culture* of a Parisian Education' Alyson Wharton documents the education of two Armenian–Ottoman architects in Paris in the middle of the nineteenth century. Following Nigoğos and Serkis Balyan to the Collège Sainte-Barbe, the Ecole Centrale, and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, it traces aspects of the education they were exposed to. The chapter then moves on to investigate where the impact of this education can be seen in specific architectural works. Showing how these architects manipulated their Parisian education to express an Ottoman renaissance, the chapter stresses how these Ottoman subjects were not creating imitative works but were creative actors in their own right, 'linguistically' engaging in an original way with what they had learnt, and refashioning it in a pragmatic way to their Istanbul setting.

Eva-Maria Troelenberg's 'Drawing Knowledge, (Re-)Constructing History: Pascal Coste in Egypt' explores the nature of expertise in Pascal Coste's work for Muhammad Ali, Khedive of Egypt and Sudan, through the medium of the drawing. This chapter revisits Coste's work as an engineer and as an historian of architecture and highlights drawing as a medium that articulated cross-cultural knowledge both tied to and divergent from conventional notions of expertise as they were formed in Europe. Troelenberg's careful assessment of Coste's portfolio provides a fresh perspective on the role of the Muslim Middle East and related notions of tradition within the narrative formulated in France of a larger modern Mediterranean.

Jessica Gerschultz's 'A Bourguibist Mural in the New Monastir? Zoubeïr Turki's Play on Knowledge, Power, and Audience Perception' tackles the issue of expertise through a close examination of *La Procession des Mourabtines*, a mural by Zoubeïr Turki, a prominent artist of the École de Tunis. Gerschultz places us in the lobby of the Hôtel Ribat in Monastir, the site of the mural, a single vantage point from which we observe how the complex issues of iconography, patronage, and position in Monastir's postcolonial architectural landscape unfold and elucidate the contentious and hierarchical relationships of power underwriting the art and tourism industries during the decade of Tunisian socialism. The artist's dual reference to Tunisia's Islamic history and Habib Bourguiba's burgeoning cult of personality testify to his engagement with claims to religious expertise in a contested political economy.

A trio of articles, focusing on Israel, Iran, and Kuwait, brings us to the 1970s and 1980s, two decades that witnessed nation building as much as they did the commodification and redefinition of expertise on a truly international scale. Dan Handel and Alona Nitzan-Shiftan's 'Industrial Complexes, Foreign Expertise, and the Imagining of a New Levant' explores the linguistic codification of expertise in the loaded geographical term 'Levant'. Handel and Nitzan-Shiftan show how, while still in circulation well after World War II, the term came to acquire an anachronistic and derogatory aura as the Middle East was realigned with the interests of new world powers, geared toward the potential of oil fields in the Persian Gulf.

The capacity of 'Levant' to act as a meaningful term received a surprising reinforcement from Israeli industrialist Stef Wertheimer, who advanced a series of experimental industrial complexes, known as the Tefen Model, which were facilitated by the work of American organizations, planning, and architecture experts and the legacy of the Marshall Plan. While the Tefen model began as a contained regional project, focusing on the contested Israeli Galilee region, it gradually scaled up its regionalist argument, anchored in both the proto-neoliberalism of its founder and the knowledge of the experts he employed, to redefine a *New Levant* according to the terms of free economy and, possibly, to galvanize an industrial-based form of neo-imperialism in the Cold War period.

Tracing the surprising aftermath of the September 1962 earthquake in the Qazvin region of Iran, Neta Feniger and Rachel Kallus detail the story of a group of Israeli experts sent to assist Iranian relief efforts. A small project, the reconstruction of one village, led to a larger project initiated by the United Nations, in which a team of experts from Israel were sent to survey and plan the region devastated by the quake. Israeli assistance to Iran was also intended to reinforce bilateral relations between the countries. The disaster offered an opportunity for demonstrating Israeli expertise in a range of fields including architecture, and to consolidate Israel's international image as an agent for development. This chapter examines transnational exchange via professional expertise, using the participation of Israeli architects in the rebuilding of Qazvin as a case study, to demonstrate that architects were agents of Israel's diplomatic goals. The architects had professional objectives, namely the creation of a modern plan for the region and its villages. At the same time, these objectives were intertwined with the Shah of Iran's national modernization plan, and with Israel's desire to become Iran's ally in this drive for change and modernization, in the hope of promoting a different Middle East.

Addressing the issue of the Iron Curtain from a different purview, Łukasz Stanek takes us to Kuwait in his chapter 'Mobilities of Architecture in the Global Cold War: From Socialist Poland to Kuwait and Back' to explore the little-known economies of expertise surrounding a circle of architects from socialist countries who worked in that country. Stanek demonstrates how transfers between Eastern Europe and the Gulf expedited a shift in transnational architectural culture, with architects from socialist countries learning in Kuwait at least as much as they brought with them. During their work in the Gulf, they responded to the disenchantment with post-oil urbanization in the region, expressed by the widespread turn toward images, ways of use, and patterns of mobility associated with 'traditional' urbanism and reinforced by postmodernism as the new mainstream in architectural discourse and practice. Yet rather than considering this shift as an architectural 'mediation' between 'global' technology and 'local' culture, Stanek shows how it was facilitated by re-contextualized expert systems, such as construction technologies and computer-aided design (CAD) software, but also by the specific portable 'profile' of experts from socialist countries.

The final chapter, 'Form Follows Faith: Swedish Architects, Expertise, and New Religious Spaces in the Stockholm Suburbs', examines the contemporary role played by architects in Western and Northern Europe as they design mosques and other religious buildings in staunchly secular contexts. Jennifer Mack's particular case study of the northern suburbs

of Stockholm is fascinating, posing, and tentatively answering, a number of important questions: What happens when clients request Islamic ornament or completely separate internal spaces for men and women, moves which are anathema to Swedish convention? How has bureaucratic expertise in these projects become an asset that trumps the design knowledge, which a more seasoned mosque architect – either from abroad or from within the community – might bring? Why does the city's bureaucracy seek to restrain the formal and social aspirations of those who wish to invest in what is nonetheless an expensive icon of a 'New Swedish' architecture?

Taken together, these chapters address how the processes of empire building, modernization, statecraft, and diplomacy – some of the most common themes of architecture in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries – have been contingent on a web of expertise defined by a rich and varied array of authors and contexts. These studies demonstrate that while European and later North American agents and paradigms of expertise left a strong, often forceful, imprint on the architecture of the Islamic world, a number of dynamic forces internal to Islamic tradition, from the practices of gardening to mosque design, from the mural to the master plan, consistently inflected these imprints, turning our attention away from a sweeping obsession with agency toward the vicissitudes of historical and cultural context.

Notes

1 See, for example, Esra Akcan, *Architecture in Translation: Germany, Turkey, and the Modern House* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012); Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002); Zeynep Çelik, *Empire, Architecture, and the City: French-Ottoman Encounters, 1830–1914* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008); Yasser Elsheshtawy, *The Evolving Arab City: Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development* (London: Routledge, 2011).

2 Nasser Rabbat, 'What Is Islamic Art Anyway?', *Journal of Art Historiography* 6 (June 2012): 3, http://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/rabbat1.pdf.

3 Hodgson, *Venture of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 177.

4 Ibid.

5 See Ziya Gokalp's distinction between culture (*hars*) and civilization (*medeniyet*), which are indebted to the thinking of Émile Durkheim. Niyazi Berkes, trans., *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization: Selected Essays* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959).

6 Ibid., 182–83.

7 Ibid., 201.

8 See, for example, Arnold Pacey's comparison of the British and American 'railroad empires' with those of India, Turkey, and Japan in *Technology in World Civilization* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 131–67.

9 Perceptions of these effects were also important in galvanizing the critical regionalist movement, which paid considerable attention to the effects of globalization on the Islamic

world. See Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis, *Critical Regionalism: Architecture and Identity in a Globalised World* (London: Prestel, 2003).

10 Carol Hrvol Flores, *Owen Jones: Design, Ornament, Architecture & Theory in an Age of Transition* (New York: Rizzoli, 2006).

11 Harry Collins and Robert Evans, *Rethinking Expertise* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 77–90; primarily a sociological study.

12 Ibid., 3.

13 Mark Ackerman, Volkmar Pipek, and Volker Wulf, eds, *Sharing Expertise: Beyond Knowledge Management* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 77–158; a business and management study.

14 Pamela J. Hinds and Jeffrey Pfeffer, 'Why Organizations Don't "Know What They Know": Cognitive and Motivational Factors Affecting the Transfer of Expertise', in *Sharing Expertise*, eds Ackerman, Pipek, and Wulf, 5.

15 Suraiya Faroqhi, *Artisans of Empire: Crafts and Craftspeople Under the Ottomans* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 186–207.

16 Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (BOA), Y.PRK.MF 4 40; Y.PRK.HR 27 32.

17 BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA 35 39.

18 Ibid.

19 BOA, ZB 379 59.

20 BOA, DH.MKT 2391 44.

21 BOA, ZB 45 95.

22 BOA, ZB 55 62; ZB 374 112.

23 BOA, ZB 379 59; DH.MKT 2520 41.

24 See 'Fathy, Hassan 1900–1989', in *Encyclopedia of 20th-Century Architecture Volume 1 A–F* , ed. R. Stephen Sennott (New York and London: Taylor & Francis, 2004), 838–41.

25 Hana Taragan, 'Architecture in Fact and Fiction: The Case of the New Gourna Village in Upper Egypt', *Muqarnas: An Annual on the Visual Culture of the Islamic World* 16 (1999): 169–78.

26 World Monuments Fund, 'New Gourna Villages: Conservation and Community', (report issued March 2011), accessed October 15, 2017, https://www.wmf.org/sites/default/files/article/pdfs/New%20Gourna%20Report%20Final%2015%20Meg.pdf.

27 Taragan, 'Architecture in Fact and Fiction', 169.

28 Fathi Ghanim, *al-Jabal* (The Mountain) (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1965); first published in serial form in the weekly *Ruz-al-Yusuf* in 1958, then as a book in 1959.

29 Taragan, 'Architecture in Fact and Fiction', 175.

30 Hassan Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor: An Experiment in Rural Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 14. The book was originally published in Cairo in 1969 as *Gourna: A Tale of Two Villages*; see also *Construire avec le people: histoire d'un village d'Égypte, Gourna* (Paris: Sindbad, 1970).

31 Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor*, 16.

32 Ibid., 66.

33 Trevor H.J. Marchand, *The Masons of Djenné* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 9.

34 Ibid., 97.