

Materials from the margins: A Seljuk horizon and pre-Mongol 'globalism'

Abstract: In a celebrated work published in 1989, the historian Janet Abu-Lughod argued the need to recognize a fourteenth-century world system enabled by the Mongol conquests, which integrated regions from Anatolia to China into a unified imperial formation. Seldom acknowledged, however, is the fact that the roots of this Mongol 'global' moment may have lain in artistic developments *within* the Islamic world in the century preceding the Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258.

The period between roughly 1150 and 1250 was one of extraordinarily artistic dynamism in the central Islamic lands, witnessing major developments in the arts of the book, ceramics, and metalwork. It was, in addition, one of maximum receptivity to cultural forms and practices developed in the Islamic world on the part of non-Muslim elites ruling outside the Islamic world across a swath of territory from Sicily and the Caucasus to Tibet. This lecture will discuss a range of materials from regions that lay on the peripheries of the Islamic world, suggesting that their dissemination and transregional reception constituted a cultural horizon associated with the rule of the Seljuq Turks (r. 1037-1194).

About the speaker: Finbarr Barry Flood is director of *Silsila*: Center for Material Histories and William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of the Humanities at the Institute of Fine Arts and Department of Art History, New York University. Among his recent publications are articles on Picasso, abstraction and the historiography of Islamic art in *RES* (67/8, 2017), marble, mosques and modernism in *West 86th* (23/2, 2016), iconoclasm and Islamic State (Daesh) in *Religion and Society: Advances in Research* (7, 2016), and the ingestion of images and words in the edited volume *Sensational Religion* (Yale, 2014). His books include *The Great Mosque of Damascus: Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture* (2000), *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu-Muslim" Encounter*, (2009), awarded the 2011 Ananda K. Coomaraswamy Prize of the Association for Asian Studies, and the 2-volume *Blackwell Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture* (2017), co-edited with Professor Gülru Necipoğlu of Harvard University. He is currently completing a book project, provisionally entitled *Islam and Image: Beyond Aniconism and Iconoclasm*, which will form the basis of the 2019 Slade Lectures at the University of Oxford.