

AGA KHAN PROGRAM
AT THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY OF ART
AND ARCHITECTURE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

AKPIA Harvard Librarians



Sharon Smith

Since joining the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University in August 2003, Sharon has been responsible for researching, establishing authority records, and cataloguing the approximately 100,000 slides that constitute the program's collection to date, encompassing all aspects of Islamic art and architecture. A primary goal of her project is the digitization of the collection, with the incorporation of all images and data into Harvard University Libraries' public catalog of visual materials, VIA (available at <http://lib.harvard.edu/>). Over the course the project, Sharon's work has covered a vast amount of material; for example, Islamic architecture in Alexandria, Umayyad Qusur, and the Dome of the Rock, as well as portable objects from throughout the Muslim world, and various illuminated manuscripts, most notably the Tahmasp Shahnama. In addition to her catalog work, Sharon helps faculty, students, visiting scholars, and anyone else seeking information in her field of study. During the past year, in collaboration with Jeff Spurr, she edited and revised the Harvard College Library's Islamic Classification System (<http://hcl.harvard.edu/libraries/finearts/islamicclass/index.html>).

Sharon has her BA and MA in Art History, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Graduate Program for History and Theory of Art and Architecture at Binghamton University. In addition, she has attended institutes in Florence, Italy, and Monterey, California. Following a brief (re)visit to some Florentine archives earlier this year, Sharon is continuing to work on her dissertation entitled, *Planned Grandeur: A Comparative Study of Urban Expansion in Early Modern Italy and Mamluk Egypt*, in which she explores a similar trajectory in cultural milieus through an examination of the conscious redefinition of urban space during the late fifteenth century.

At Binghamton University, Sharon developed and taught courses in Persian art and architecture; Istanbul before and after the Ottoman conquest; Byzantium and the Mediterranean world; and Islamic painting. Additionally, she has guest lectured on these, and other topics in Middle Eastern art and architecture, at several universities and colleges.

For the post-9/11 initiative on Arab Culture and Civilization, sponsored by the National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (NITLE) with funds from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Sharon served as content consultant and contributor for Arab art and architecture (see <http://arabworld.nitle.org>).

This fall, Sharon will present, "A Passage to India: Urban Change in Alexandria and Cairo in the 15th and 19th Centuries," co-authored with Cristina Pallini, PhD, Politecnico di Milano, at *The 12th International Conference of the International Planning History Society (IPHS): Cross national transfer of planning ideas and local identity*, in New Delhi, India.

Sharon is available in the Documentation Center of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, Fine Arts Library, Harvard University.

email: smith25@fas.harvard.edu

tel: 617-495-3372