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ON SOME "OTHERING" TERMS: THE HORROR VACUI, THE MODERN USE OF ARABESQUE ETC. AND THE ALLEGATION OF AESTHETICS AS CONTENT - EVADING RATHER THAN ADDRESSING MEANING IN THE USE OF DESIGN IN ISLAMIC ART - PART I

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"HORROR VACUI", ARABESK" VE DİĞERLERİ: ÖTEKİLEŞTİREN BİR GRUP TERİM ÜZERİNDEN İSLAM SANATINDA ANLAMI ARAŞTIRMAKTAN KAÇINMAK.

BİRİNCİ BÖLÜM

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tmpduggan@yahoo.com, 0000-0003-3042-7489 This paper is dedicated to Paul Crossley (1945-2019) whose study trips of joyful enthusiasm for medieval ecclesiastical architecture were unforgettable windows into the Christian medieval mind, vocation, religion and church, and to, J. J. G. Alexander (b. 1935) who when asked to give a course in Insular art to a single undergraduate student in 1978-79, said if two others could be found he would, and whose seminars addressed matters of interlace and form and influence.

Abstract

This article is divided into two parts. It concerns some confusions and misapprehensions consequent upon the use of some newly devised and older European terms that have been applied to describe the use of designs in Islamic art, othering terms, that unfortunately if not always deliberately, mislead. The use of these terms has resulted in the widespread misreading of the intent and content of design on works of Islamic art that carry what is termed, "decoration," "ornament," "abstract design". This article questions the idea that Islamic designs developed due to iconophobia; or from an alleged fear of open spaces, a rare medical condition termed *kenophobia*, or, from any supposed fear of leaving empty spaces on a work, termed by orientalists, art historians and others from the late 19th c. onwards in respect to works of Islamic art, "*horror vacui*". A term dismissive of any content to the designs employed, indicating these designs were employed just to fill otherwise empty space and is a term that continues in use in this context today, amongst a group of related terms repeatedly employed, resulting in the illusion of truth purveyed through their repeated use in the art historical and related literature, and the consequent deliberate(?) denial of content-meaning in the use of Islamic design.

Keywords: Othering discourse, Islamic Art, *horror vacui*, *horror infiniti*, Aesthetic, Orientalism, Abstract design, terminology.

Özet

İki bölüm olarak tasarlanan bu makale İslam sanatında kullanılan bir grup bezeme üslubunu adlandırmak için kullanılan Batı kökenli terimlerin yarattığı karmaşa ve yanlış değerlendirmeleri konu edinmektedir. Bazıları yakın zamanda önerilmiş bazıları ise uzun süredir kullanılan bu terimler ne yazık ki İslam sanatını ötekileştirme yönünde, bilinçli olmasa da, yanlış yönlendirmelere yol açmaktadır. "Bezeme", "süsleme" ve "soyut tasarımlar" olarak verilen bu terimler İslam sanatı bezeme sanatı örneklerinin niyet ve kapsamına dair yanlış okumalara neden olmuştur. Makale İslam sanatında tasarımların temelinde figürlü süslemeden kaçınan "ikonofobi" ya da açık alan korkusu olarak tanımlanan "*kenofobi*" olduğu önerisini sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. İslam sanatında eser bezenirken kullanılan ve yüzeyde hiç boş alan kalmayacak şekilde oluşturulan tasarım üslubu bu nedenle 19 yüzyıldan başlayarak sanat tarihçileri tarafından "*horror vacui*" boşluk korkusu olarak tanımlanmıştır. Herhangi bir şekilde bir bağlamla ilişkilendirilmeyen bu tanımlama, ki günümüzde de hala kullanılmaktadır, benzer başka terminoloji ile birlikte tekrarlanarak İslam sanatının yaratısal anlamda bir bağlamı/anlamı olmadığı, şekillerin basit bir tekrarı ile oluşturulduğu algısını yaratmakta, sanat tarihi ve tarih alanında eserleri anlamlandırma çabalarının (bilinçli ya da bilinçsiz olarak) önünü kesmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ötekileştirme, İslam Sanatı, *horror vacui*, *horror infiniti*, Estetik, oryantalizm, soyut tasarım, terminoloji.

On Some "Othering" Terms

It may seem an arrogant and disrespectful idea propounded by some Western and Western trained academics to suggest that people would spend their lifetimes designing, and very many others copying these designs over the course of more than 1300 years onto a whole range of surfaces and materials, in a variety of ways, from weaving and embroidering, in carpets and kilims, to painting, leather and metal working, wood, ivory, stucco and stone-carving, pottery and tile-making - and yet, it is said - these designs themselves conveyed no meaning for their designers, nor for the other members of Muslim populations, but these designs were for a whole variety of suggested reasons to be regarded simply as space filling ornament[1], void of content, empty of meaning.

Yet it is the case for example, that the Aboriginal art of the native Australian, the traditional designs and patterns employed in the representation of song-lines, dream-time, *Jukurrpa* or *Tingari*, are now recognised[2] as being bearers of meaning, not simply space filling patterns. This perspective concerning the designs employed in Islamic art forms a part of some Western Orientalist's noteworthy discourse concerning the "othering" of Islam and its works, that continues its influence today in parts of the academic world, in publications and on the internet, maintaining the use of outdated, disparaging and derogatory terms such as *horror vacui*, a practice of mis-representation which has served to obscure, redirect and impede the study and understanding by both Muslims and non-Muslims into the 21st century, concerning the representational[3] content of the designs employed, and amongst other dismissive terminology[4] needs decommissioning

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[1] James Trilling provided the following definition of the distinction between ornament and decoration: "*Ornament is decoration in which the visual pleasure of form significantly outweighs the communicative value of content. Ornament can and does have representational, narrative, and symbolic content, but visual pleasure must be paramount. If, in effect, one cannot enjoy it without knowing the story - it is probably not ornament*." Trilling 2003, 23. In 1915 Claude Fayette Bragdon wrote: "*Ornament is the outgrowth of no practical necessity, but of a striving towards beauty. Our zeal for efficiency has resulted in a corresponding aesthetic infertility*." Bragdon 1915, 9.

[2] For example, "*Most, if not all, animals depicted by Australian Aboriginal artists are ancestral beings. Some are depicted largely in the form of patterns, which encode complex "information" regarding the animal, its story and benefits, the environment, and the cycles of the seasons. Other animals are depicted more "realistically" but have significant patterns within their bodies.*" Werness 2006, 2. See also Clare Lapraik Guest, *The Understanding of Ornament in the Italian Renaissance*, Brill, Leiden, 2015, where Renaissance ornament is understood from the sources as a fundamental, not an accessory element in art. For some further examples seen Mathias Agbo, Jr.: https://commonedge.org/african-architecture-ornaments-crime-prejudice/

[3] Represent/representation/representational, used here in the sense of to place a likeness of before mind or senses. SOD[3] s.v. "Represent," Late Middle English from Old French *représenter* or Latin, *repræsentare* 2. To bring clearly and distinctly to the mind, esp. by description or by an act of imagination Late ME. 4. To show, exhibit, or display to the eye; to make visible or manifest. Now rare, Late ME. b. To exhibit by means of painting, sculpture, etc. To portray, depict, deliniate, Late Middle English. c. Of pictures, etc.: To exhibit by artificial resemblance or deliniation. Late ME. viz. SOD[3] s.v. "Representation," Late ME from Latin *repræsentationem*. 2. An image, likeness, or reproduction in some manner of a thing. Late ME. b. A material image or figure; in later use esp. a drawing or painting (of a person or thing) 1477. c. The action or fact of exhibiting in some visible image or form 1483.

[4] There is an extensive post-colonial literature on this subject, as pointed out by Mary Piercey in 2007, "*Responding to a heightened awareness toward the (mis)representation of other cultures by the West, art historians, anthropologists and museum curators are beginning to present the Inuit point of view in their analysis of Inuit art in a concerted effort to avoid imposing Western assumptions about the nature of art onto the work of Inuit artists (Bagg 2002, 184).*" (Piercey 2007, 30), while the problem remains into the foreseeable future, a dismissive terminology embodied in the corpus of scholarly texts and remaining in use, that needs to be decomissioned to enable the understanding in its context of the work itself.

as loaded terms. The understanding of meaning or content represented through the use of design, both collectively and in particular cases has disproportionately suffered; distinct from other art historical pursuits such as: typologies of style and forms, the study of material culture as material evidence of technological developments, of the particular techniques and of the forms of geometry that were employed, of cultural influences, together with establishing the date and place or region of the origin of works of Islamic art and the compilation and explication of inscriptions, all of which have seen substantial progress over the past century.

This alleged practice by craftsmen in the Muslim world over the past 1300 years of applying meaningless if beautifully executed filling designs to the otherwise empty surfaces of an object or structure, through the use of repeated motifs in repeat designs, designs that have been termed "abstract," "ornament," or, "decoration," is said to have been due to a number of factors. One of these suggested factors is that the designs stemming from Late Antiquity, that were reworked, and those designs to be devised and employed in Medieval Islamic art, were developed in consequence of the forbidding of the depiction of people and creatures, particularly on religious structures. This was given as the reason in European sources from the 16th c. onwards in explaining the development of the Islamic *Arabesque*[5]. These designs termed by Catholics from the 14th c. onwards, *Arabesco*, *Rabbesco*, *Arrabbesco, Arabesque-Moresque, Rabesco*, etc., doubtless, as initially expressed, meaning related to the Almighty, The Lord, *Rabb*; with the Arabic article, *Ar-Rabb*+esco, or, without, *Rabb*+esco, with the Romance suffix meaning, *in the manner of*, added to the Arabic word. However, in the context of Medieval Catholic Christian states, in part defined at that time through the context of Reconquista and Crusade, the idea of the reuse, and also the making by Christian artist-craftsmen of the infidel's designs for Catholic Christian churchmen, noblemen and lords, the word itself needed to be redefined, stripped as an Islamic term of its

[5] The term 'arabesk' was brought into English from the 1610's, from 16th c. French, from the Italian Arabesco-Rabbesco, meaning in fact "in the manner of the Lord", but which it European literature came to mean: "*Moorish or Arabic ornamental design*," "*Arabe'sk [so called from the Arabs, who used this kind of Ornaments, their Religion forbidding them to make any Images or Figures of Men or Animals* (sic.)*] a Term apply'd to such Painting, Ornaments of Freezes, &c. which consisted wholly of imaginary Foliages, Plants, Stalks, etc. without any human figures.*" Bailey 1730, npn. s.v. "Arabe'sk." "*Arabeschi ornamenti bizzarri e immaginarj in pittura, in scultura, e anche in architettura per decorare muri, pilastri, fregj, porte, volte ec. Il nome d'Arabesco viene dagli Arabi, I quali non potendo per la loro religione impiegar immagini di uomini nè di bestie, fecero uso di fiori, di fogliami, e di frutti per adornare gli edificj ; introdussero questo loro gusto nella Spagna, da dove si diffuse per tutta I'Europa, e fu chiamato arabesco o moresco."* Milizia 1797, 45 (Arabesque. bizarre ornaments and imaginary, in painting, in sculpture, and also in architecture employed to decorate walls, pillars, friezes, doors, vaults etc. The name *Arabesco* comes from the Arabs, who, being unable for their religion to employ images of men or beasts, made use of flowers, leaves, and fruits to adorn their buildings; they introduced this taste in Spain, from where it spread throughout Europe, and was called *arabesque* or *Moorish*.); "*Arabesco, all'araba, e al modo arabo, arabigo. Arabico, o arabesco, arabigo*." Franciosini 1794, 67. See also: Chambers 1738 npn. s.v. ARA; Lacombe 1768, 21. For further on this, see Duggan 2019a.

religious content indicating its belonging to the infidel Other, reminding of *Ar-Rabb*. So these designs employed on Islamic textiles, some wrapped around the bones of Christian saints and providing linings to reliquaries[6], others understood as relics[7], as altar cloths and for ecclesiastical vestments[8], as on metalware and ceramics, designs which were imitated by western craftsmen and artists from the Medieval period down to the present day, were not to be termed, *made in the manner of the Lord*, the term was voided of its explicit religious content and consequent relationship to infidelity in both Church and Christian eyes. The word was consequently understood to mean, *in the Arab manner*, possibly therefore in the Christian Arab manner, no longer directly associated with *ar-Rabb*, The Lord, Allah. Arabesco became the acceptable form, read by the European for at least half a millennia as meaning Arab ethnic-national art, hence: Arabesque=Arabian art, rather than being *the art acceptable* to *ar-Rabb*, The Lord, Allah, that is, Islamic art.

The idea that the forbidding of the production of figurative works compelled the development of Islamic design continues to be restated, for example by Gérard Degeorge and Yves Porter in 2002, "*The misgivings of the Muslim world in respect of figurative art are well known. Especially obvious in the realm of religious architecture, this 'iconophobia' furthered the development of abstract design.*"[9] As likewise by Dominique Clévenot and Gérard Degeorge in 2000, "*Since human representation is forbidden in Islamic religious monuments, design & ornamentation reach unparalleled heights in Islamic tiles, mosaics, stucco, brickwork, & ceramics, enhanced by brilliant color.*"[10] As was earlier expressed in 1992 by Annemarie Schimmel and Barbara Rivolta, *In a culture where representation was banned* (sic. it was not) *and art had to concentrate upon decoration,…*"[11] and in the same

[6] As employed to wrap the bones of San Millán (Saint Aemilian 472- 573, feast 12th Nov.) in San Millán de la Cogolla, Castile-La Rioja, of 1067; as also in the reliquary of San Pelayo and San Juan Bautista in Oviedo- Asturias of 1090; and the Shroud of St. Josse, used to wrap the bones of Saint Josse when they were reburied in 1134 in the abbey of St. Josse-sur-Mer, near Caen, and in the 13th c. reliquary of Saint Librada (d. 139, feast July 20), Cathedral de Santa María de Sigüenza, Castile-La Mancha; and as found in the Prague Castle graves of the Bohemian kings from 1085, and a textile bag for a reliquary of Saint Bartholomew, probably woven Almeria, first half of the 13th c. today Cleveland Museum of Art, https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1931.462.c# and a 13th c. Seljuk silk, preserved as a relic cover in the shrine of Saint Apollinaris, in the church of Saint Servatius in Sieburg (Germany).

[7] Such as that termed the *Head Shroud of Christ* said to have been discovered in Antioch by the Papal Legate, Adhémar de Monteuil, Bishop Le Puy, brought to the Cistercian Abbey church of Cadouin-Périgord, but with the name of the Fatimid Caliph Al-Mustaʿlī (1094-1101); as also the *Veil of St Anne* in the Cathedral of Apt in Vaucluse with the names of the Fatimid Caliph Al-Mustaʿlī and his vizir al-Afdal Shāhanshāh of 1096/1097 with roundels including crowned Jinn (so-called harpies/chimeras) and interlacing on the *tiraz*.

[8] Used to form vestments, as those found in the tomb of St. Bernard Calvo (feast 25th Oct.), Cistercian, Bishop of Vich, Catalonia (1180–1243).

[9] Degeorge-Porter 2002, 28.

[10] Clévenot – Degeorge 2000, inside front cover flap, npn.

[11] Schimmel-Rivolta 1992, 11. The statement is itself a long repeated inaccurate generalisation, op. cit. fn. 5, as also for example, Lane-Poole 1874, 1, "*That images of living things were forbidden by the religion of El-Islam is beyond controversy.*", yet figural art including the depiction of prophets was not banned, for some examples see: Elias 2012, passim, and at times, figural images were struck on the coinage and on medallions by Caliphs and others. There are the recorded depictions of Abraham and that of the Virgin Mary and Child, painted on columns in the Ka'ba, the latter was protected by the Prophet himself, his actions forming *sunna*, indicating that there was no issue with images *per se*, with painted religious subjects in the very centre of the world of Islam in the 1st /7th c. The problem with the representation of the Prophet Abraham was his depiction with divining arrows, themselves explicitly forbidden (Qur'ān 5:3 and 5:90), resulting in its destruction. The painted depiction of the Virgin Mary and Christ Child was destroyed in the fire of 683 (On this see for example, Peters 1998, 48.) and it was not replaced. Prior to which, a precedent sanctioned by the Prophet himself, it had remained in place for 56 lunar years, and is recorded in *ahādīth* e.g.: "*A Ghassan woman joined the pilgrimage of the Arabs and when she saw the picture of Mary in the Ka'ba*

year by Linda Komaroff: *"Another important feature of Islamic art is the tendency to cover surfaces with all over patterns composed of geometrical or vegetal elements. This abstract ornament may have come to be highly developed and in continuous use because of the absence of figural imagery, at least within a religious setting.*[12] Likewise, Hans van Lemmen in 2013 wrote, *Since Islamic tradition frowns on representational art,*[13] abstract decorative forms were developed; while Alexander Knysh in 2016, saw so-called "*iconophobia*," the objection to figural images, as itself leading to the development of design, to the widespread use of the so-called Arabesque, through this restriction placed upon *artistic expression*, and indicating the craftsmen and designers of the Islamic world felt themselves to be restricted in matters of *artistic expression.*[14] This, as distinct from finding the most appropriate forms

said, "My father and my mother be your ransom! You are surely an Arab woman!" The Messenger of God ordered all the pictures to be erased except those of Jesus and Mary." In the first three centuries of Islam numerous figural designs largely of: rams, dancing ladies, fierce warriors, rabbits, lions and trees, are found on Muslim grave shrouds, "*In the first two centuries after the initial conquests, Islam had a limited influence on the history of textiles. The late antique style of pictorial representation remained for a long while undisturbed by Islamic iconoclasm. In the late fourth century, an industry in Coptic shrouds began to develop in response to a ban on mummification by Theodosius I.* ***These pre-Islamic styles continued to flourish for three centuries after the death of Muhammad, with the rise of Islam causing no perceptible change***." Halevi, 2011, 88, 91-92, Figs. 3.2, 3.3. There are also examples recorded of figural decoration on and inside mosques, such as the Grand Mosque at Bukhara in the 8th c. which had wooden doors with figures of Pagan deities carved on them, only the heads on these figures were defaced, (Fairchild Ruggles 2011, 149-150). As also for example a 9th c. Zaidī manual of *hisba,* from Tabaristan describes figures depicted inside a mosque as being "repulsive," and thereby indicating their possible presence (Serjeant 1953, 15-16). On one of the five minarets at the Prophet's Mosque in Medinah-al-Nebi in 1853 Burton noted: "*The Munar bab el Salam stands by the gate of that name: it is a tall handsome tower surmounted by a large bull or cow, of brass gilt or burnished*." Burton 1855, 11, 99. In the 13th c. the Shāfi Sheik, Jālāl ad-Dīn Rumī (1207-73), not only had portrait painters as his murids, but also wrote concerning the painted depiction of a figure on a wall, a mosque lamp and a tree that these depictions were not without benefit: "***Anyone can paint a picture on a wall****. It has a head but no intellect, an eye, but no sight; a hand but no generosity; a breast but no illuminated heart; a drawn sword, but no cutting edge. In a prayer niche you can find the painting of a lamp. But when night comes, it gives no light. They paint a tree on the wall, but if you shake it, no fruit will fall to the ground.* ***Even so, that picture on the wall is not completely without benefit***." (Chittick 1983, 129-130). And, as noted below, Muhyīd-Dīn ibn Arabī, advised a painter in Konya in 1210, in respect to the defect in his painting of a quail, and in respect to the method necessary in obtaining a proper artistic imagination which the painter lacked. Naturalistic representation, figural art was practiced together with the production of statues and statuettes, some of which were edible, sold in markets at festivals, others of pottery, stone and cast in metal, etc. Figural art was not banned, of the jurists, some were opposed, and some were not, and figural depiction-representation has been practiced by Muslims in both two and three dimensions for the past more than 1300 years. It was of course in response to 13th c. textiles worn with painted figural representation that the diploma for a *muhtasib* under Sultan Salah al-Din was instructed to forbid the wearing of such dress (Ghabin 2009, 173). In respect to this matter, Yusuf al-Qaradawi writes: "***As for figures drawn or printed on wood, paper, cloth, rugs and carpets, walls, and the like, there is no sound, explicit, and straightforward text to prove that they are forbidden****. True, there are sound ahādīth which merely indicate the Prophet's dislike of such types of pictures because they are reminiscent of those who live in luxury and love things of inferior value*." al-Qaradawi 2013, 116-117. Although Titus Burckhardt stated, "***The prohibition of images in Islam applies, strictly speaking, only to the image of the Divinity****; it stands, therefore, in the perspective of the decalogue, or more exactly of Abrahamic monotheism, which Islam sees itself as renewing*." (Burckhardt 1976, 27), there are of course numerous images representing the Divinity in Islamic art, in both two and in three dimensions, painted and sculptural forms representing the Divinity, not simply and only those images that record in calligraphic and in sculptural form the Divine Name, Allah, or another of the Divine Names, or the letter *Wav* mirrored, etc.

[12] Komaroff 1992, 4. Contra Komaroff, Schimmel-Rivolta, et al., there are of course numerous images, reminders, to be found in and on most mosques as elsewhere, the fact that they are not read by many today as being images and statues, such as the crescent moon, some of quite considerable size, is quite simply beside the point.

[13] Lemmen 2013, 45, "*Since Islamic tradition frowns on representational art, Muslims often celebrate beauty through abstract decorative forms applied to all kinds of medium, not just tiles but also stucco work, pottery, textiles, metalwork and woodwork*."

[14] This same idea has also been applied to Islamic calligraphy, including John C. Hobart in 2011, "*In the traditions of Islam, the rejection of physical representations is nearly absolute* (sic.)*, which leads to Muslim artisan's brilliant abilities to make wonderously beautiful the very words and letters of the Arabic language*.", (Hobart 2011, 26), as though a master calligrapher was an "*artisan*," and that there is some fixed amount of beauty that only if it cannot find expression in figural depiction (depictions of creatures), then finds its expression in design, or in calligraphy,

for what they needed to express by means of art. One reads, *Nevertheless, after the ban had become part of the religious dogma, it inevitably restricted artistic expression. The vast majority of Muslim artists was* (sic.) *reluctant to openly violate the ban, either out of personal piety or out of fear of public backlash.*[15] This opinion is one grounded in modernity, but, of this *reluctance*, and alleged *fear of public backlash* upon *artists*, evidence is lacking in the Medieval historical sources, while there seems to be no evidence to suggest designers and craftsmen in the Caliph's, the Emir's or the Sultan-Caliph's or Sultan's *tirazhane, nakkaşhane, kārakhānā* workshops, members of the *ahl al-sanā'i*, and families of craftsmen[16], had the slightest conception that they were working under conditions of so-called, *restricted artistic expression.* This is simply a modern presumption projected onto the past without solid foundation in the Medieval sources.

It was and it remains the case that at particular times and places figural images in two and three dimensions made by Muslims were subsequently defaced or destroyed by other Muslims, of an undoubted vigour but perhaps of somewhat limited vision[17] *wa-llāhu alam,* but these outbreaks of "iconoclasm" have been the case in all three monotheistic religions, not least in consequence of the Protestant Reformation[18], and figural images in both two and three dimensions, edible and otherwise have continued to be produced by Muslims in the Islamic world down to the present day. Undoubtedly 18th c. "Enlightenment" ideas of *freedom of expression*, of artistic liberty, and *freedom of speech*, current in the period when this notion that the variety of Islamic design occurred as a response to limitations placed on figural art was already firmly established as the European norm in the understanding of Islamic design,[19] and which was passed on to the Republic of the United States of America in the 18th c.[20], and

as though calligraphy, like design, was to be understood as being some supposed compensation for this alleged deprivation of figural representation. Through homocentricity, the prioritising of the physical representation of human beings in the Greco-Roman and Christian traditions as being the summit of art, there is the unfortunate Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment conditioned misunderstanding of the place and function of the art of design within a theocentric perspective. "***The horror vacui, which is considered a formative principle in so much of Islamic decoration****, seems to have contributed to the invention of these forms that, in the course of time, developed into the innumerable varieties of floriated and foliated Kufi, to which the plaited was very soon added*." Schimmel 1984, 9. "*The Moslem, forbidden by has law to decorate his Mosque with statuary and pictures, supplied their place with quotations from the Koran, and inscriptions, "plastic metaphysics," of marvellous perplexity. His alphabet lent itself to the purpose, and hence probably arose that almost inconceivable variety of lace-like fretwork, of incrustions, of Arabesques, and of geometric flowers, in which his eye delights to lose itself.*" Burton 1855, 1, 138. Likewise suggesting the forms of the script inspired the forms of decoration.

[15] Knysh 2016, 311.

[16] Such as for example those of the family of *minā'i* and lustre ceramic workers of the Abū Ṭāher family of potters at Kashan in the 12th to 14th c., and Ibrahim ibn Mawaliya al-Mawsili and the so-called Mosul school of brass workers and engravers in the 13th-14th c.

[17] Fairchild Ruggles 2011, 55-57.

[18] See for example: Duffy 1992, Freedburg 1986.

[19] Vincenzo Abbondanza wrote it was the silk arabesques that defined Damascus cloth in the 16th c.: "*Erinomata per I suoi Drappi di Arabesco in seta, che per questo motivo hanno poi tutti di qualfivoglia paese reso il nome di Damasco, perchè oltre l'arte di ben lavorarli in essa furono inventati.*" Abbondanza 1786, 110. etc.); "*the Moors, Arabs, and other Mahometans, use these kinds of ornaments, their religion forbidding them to make any images, or figures of men, or other animals— Editor."* Golbery 1808, 236.

[20] Eg. "*Arabesque, or, Arabesk, something done after the manner of the Arabians (from, ARABEsco. Arabicum opus.). Arabesque, Grotesque, and Moresque, are terms applied to such paintings, ornaments of freezes, &c. wherein there are no human or animal figures but which consist wholly of imaginary foliages, plants, stalks, &c. The words take their rise from hence, that the Moors, Arabs, and other Mahometans, use these kinds of ornaments; their religion forbidding them to make any images or figures of men or other animals* (sic.)." published in Philadelphia, Encyclopaedia 1798, 148.

which remains largely in place today, was an entirely strange and unreasonable notion to pre-Modern Islamic thought and practice. Unreasonable, not only because large quantities of figural art, in carpets and miniatures, on ceramics and both figural reliefs and sculptures, including figural automata, were produced in the Islamic world; but primarily because designers and craftsmen were concerned with the means of expressing in a variety of forms what is stated in the Qur'ān *Ash-Shuraa* 42:11: simply that, "*Nothing is like unto Him*." If nothing is like unto Him, there is no possibility of representing the Almighty in human form, and, in consequence it can be understood that the use of Islamic design can be read as reminding in some way of this theocentric meaning, rather than trying to find a way of representing through the form of a creature, that creature's own Creator.

It was doubtless the case that European Enlightenment so-called *freedom of expression* was foreign to the families of craftsman and master designers and calligraphers, who were skilled as being trained within a tradition which defined what was to be represented by means of the art of design within the particular religious and cultural context. The forms of expression and the materials employed varied over time and from place to place, and as a consequence of patronage, of reformulations in visual terms of reminders of belief and the requirements of the market-place, but not the intent in respect to the subject to be represented through the widespread use of Islamic designs, and the content within its context was itself entire, if at times reworked, it was complete, recognised, accepted and understood, in so far as such is humanly possible. As a slave-servant, the designer-master craftsman-calligrapher was understood to be the human agent through acquisition, to be an instrument of the Creator, of the Almighty and, consequently, 18th c. European Enlightenment, so-called *freedom of expression*, like the associated idea of personal liberty seems in this context to be both beside the point, irrelevant, and a contradiction of belief, being outside the context of the religion, and today, unfortunately, is an expectation that has retrospectively been repeatedly applied to quite different times, contexts and cultures. Expression through design was related to the religion and to a theocentric view of life as indicated by the original meaning conveyed by the term *arabesque*. It was not until modernity that for some art became a matter of the free expression of the individual's psychology. This was a matter largely uninteresting and irrelevant to the theocentric view in the Medieval and Early Modern periods - except perhaps to medical practitioners of the ability of Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariyyā al-Rāzī d. 925, and Abū Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn Abd Allāh ibn Sīnā' (Avicenna) d. 1037 and those concerned with the therapeutic functions of works of art in the Medieval period bathhouse as is noted in Part II.

The suggestion has been repeatedly made that *iconophobia* furthered the development of "decoration" – "abstract design," with the complexity of Islamic decoration-abstract designs being seen as providing some sort of compensation for the so-called ban on figural images, a ban said to form part of *religious dogma*. The understanding being that, deprived by *iconophobia* of figural art, which surviving evidence shows was not in fact the case, so-called *decoration,* or, *abstract design* developed; but that this "decoration" could not itself be understood as being a bearer of meaning, a representational art. However, firstly, as noted

above[21], there was no ban on figural images, with very many produced at, and for, courts from the Umayyads to the Ottomans, and with figures and creatures woven in textiles, including carpets, carved in stone and stucco, painted in manuscripts, depicted on pottery, as on bath-house walls, visible to those who bathed, etc. What there was however was a complete ban on idols and idolatry. And, secondly, there is simply no necessary contradiction between so-called *abstract design*, and representation through designs[22]. It is the case that representation through the depiction of abstract signs, including numbers and letters, which are themselves abstract designs, has been common practice throughout recorded history and which remains the case for modern signage. Consequently it does seem rather more sensible to think that in many cases the absence of images in human form, not least those of the Almighty and the Christian's third person of the Trinity, Jesus, Son of God, the Muslim Prophet, Isa, and the wider use of "abstract design," was quite simply, in fact, more a matter of substituting the representation through 'abstract design' of "substance," rather than depicting forms, together with reminders-indications as to the permeability of the world of temporal forms to the spirit, - that is, of representing content through design, as best representing from an Islamic perspective, reminders and indications of the nature of The Reality.

This, rather than being satisfied in a religious setting with the representation of the temporal human form, when the depiction of that human form, or a part thereof, is said to represent the Almighty. As for example when the disembodied Dextera Dei-Hand of God is shown, as in Jewish art in the Dura-Europos synagogue; in Christianity, as in miniatures in the Syriac c. 585 Rabbula Gospels, as in the Transfiguration scene in the 6th c. mosaic in Sant'Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna; in a miniature of the handing down of the Law to Moses, in the 10th c. Leo Bible; in wall paintings of the 11th c. Catalonian Church of Sant Climent de Taüll; the representation of the Dextera Dei in the crypt of the 12th c. panteón de los Reyes de San Isidoro de León, León, etc. as representing the Almighty. The problem to those worshipping The Formless, as stated in Qur'ān *Ash-Shuraa*, 42:11, "*Nothing is like unto Him*.", being the idolatry of forms, as the Prophet İbrahim/Abraham stated, "*unto his father and his folk: What are these images unto which ye pay devotion?*" Qur'ān *Al-Anbya* 21:52.

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[21] Op. cit. fn. 12.

[22] *"By seeking to avoid realistic representations of the world around us, which Islamic doctrine forbids* (sic.), *abstract art becomes especially suited to symbolize the quranic world view. By this means, in the case of Islam, abstract art approaches the true reality - the sacred dimension of the spirit- more closely than could any representational artwork."* Martin 1996, 143; *"The characteristics of Islamic art are: abstract designs, a wealth of rich decoration, and a tendency to avoid human or animal shapes. This may be summarized in one single and all-embracing expression: the language of Islamic art. Many of the details may or may not be immediately linked with the ideological foundations of the culture, or cultures, of Islamic peoples, through the religion. It is a double connection: Islam has determined the appearance of certain features, such as abstract design, and in their turn many of the features of art serve as unobtrusive and often hazy propaganda for the basic values of the Islamic way of life."* Piotrovskij 2001, 6; "*The identity of motifs and themes through all the arts and all the media is evidence that what counted was solely the abstract design, the pure form imprinted on the material, whatever it might be. Thanks to that identity of artistic intention, the pure form of the polygons, spirals, calligraphy or decorative motifs tended to be something apart from the particular medium on which it left its mark and whose spaces it filled with its own vitality, something to be conceived in and of and for itself as an abstract entity, as Idea.* (as in the Platonic-Neo-Platonic sense)" Papadopoulo 1979, 187; reprinted, Aziz 2004, 187.

Horror Vacui – Design Conditioned by a Fear of Empty Space

Another factor for the use in Islamic art of designs, which forms the main subject of this article, has been repeatedly stated over the last century to have been a consequence of the Muslim designer-craftsman's alleged *fear of empty space*, or, the supposed fear of leaving any empty area or space unfilled by "ornament". That is, the use of designs *conditioned by a fear of empty space*[23], as indicated for example by Marshall G. S. Hodgson in his, *The Venture of Islam*, II, (1975, 2009), cited by Alexander Knysh 2016: *The artists' second strategy in responding to the religious restrictions imposed on their creative work by the religious dogma was to use abstract design patterns that, in the West, have come to be known as "arabesque." The arabesque is a stylised interlacing of leaves and stems, which create intricate networks of abstract forms. Once transposed onto a surface – be it parchment, paper, book-cover, pottery, carpet or wall – such abstract forms multiply themselves infinitely* (sic.)*, becoming "an unending continuous pattern."*[24] *Vegetal design patterns are often intricately interwoven with geometrical figures: circles, triangles, squares, and other polygons. These intertwined figures constitute a complete and uninterrupted surface with no empty spaces. This is why the arabesque is described, in Western academic literature, as an art of "total space decoration"*[25] *conditioned by a fear of empty space*.[26] As by Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovskiĭ in 2001, *Gradually, the aspect that became characteristic for Islam - that all the empty spaces should be filled in - became compulsory*.[27]

Yet, as one might reasonably expect, this is not always the case, not least because the areas that carry designs are often defined to form decorated fields within borders, while other areas of a building or on an object remain in contrast plain, without design, while other objects entirely lack these designs and others are quite covered in designs. Why then, when sections, areas, fields, and bands of a structure or object carry no decoration, while others are and were entirely without decoration, is "horror vacui," the fear of leaving undecorated empty space, the appropriate term employed to describe the reason for the use of design in Islamic art? Further, the idea that, *such abstract forms multiply themselves infinitely*, is of course a much repeated non-sense. The area that carries the design is defined, bordered, limited, finite. To state that *such abstract forms multiply themselves infinitely* is quite simply disrespectful hocus pocus. The infinite in Islam belongs to the Almighty, while it is an observable fact that *such abstract forms* cannot *multiply themselves infinitely* - they are evidently not self-replicating abstract forms. In this context of a supposed Muslim fear of empty space, it is perhaps worth noting that the idea that the empty space in a design or painting left room for the Devil-demons and therefore required its filling to prevent the Devil or demons from

[23] Knysh 2016, 311.
[24] Citing, Ettinghausen et al., *Islamic Art and Architecture 650-1250*, 2003, 66.
[25] Citing, Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, Vol. 2, (1975), 2009, 510 (The Visual Arts in An Islamic Setting).
[26] Citing, Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, Vol. 2, (1975), 2009, 510 (The Visual Arts in An Islamic Setting).
[27] Piotrovskij 2001, 41.

inhabiting the empty spaces of a work, was, in fact a Medieval Christian tradition[28], it was not an Islamic one.

This alleged Muslim fear of empty space, said to be the driving force in the use of design in Islamic art over many centuries, has been termed by western orientalists, as by numbers of western trained art historians, as by others over the past century, a *horror vacui*,[29] a Medieval Latin term, meaning "fear of the void," "fear of emptiness," thereby through the use of this term dismissing the possibility of content conveyed by the designs employed, design is to be read as meaningless filling ornament. Yet, wherever in this world the believer is, there too is the Face of the Almighty. The Qur'ān *sūrat l-baqarah* 2:115, clearly states there is no space, no emptiness, no void or desolation on earth that is truly void, empty[30], *Unto Allah belong the East and the West, and whithersoever ye turn, there is Allah's Countenance. Lo! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.* And the Qur'ān, *Qaf* 50:16 states: *We created man - We know what his soul whispers to him: We are closer to him than his jugular vein*. As Jālāl ad-Dīn Rumī stated in the 13th c., *God is neither present nor absent, For God is the Creator of both*.[31] And so, one may wonder, given the understood presence and proximity of the Almighty, where exactly is there evidence to show Muslim designer-craftsman over the past 1400 years, from Canton to Cordoba, Demak to Delhi, Damascus to Dar el Selaam, Kandarhar to Kazan, and Tashkent to Timbuktu, were driven in their work by a supposed primal fear of empty space, *horror vacui*, leading them to employ the designs they employed in the way they did? However, the term "*horror vacui*" has been employed for more than a century to account for the use of repeat patterns-designs in so-called

[28] Matthew 12:43-45, "*When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation*." It was of course in empty space that the desert fathers encountered both God and the Devil's demons and Bede and others record the demons inhabited the air, then regarded as empty space, see for examples, Discenza, 2017, 23 ff.; likewise in respect to Christian art, "*By focusing on the characteristics of horror vacui, that is fear or dislike of leaving empty spaces in an artistic composition, I will try to shed new light on the multiple 'faces of evil."* Hellmans 2011, 232, in, *Demons and the Devil in Ancient and Medieval Christianity*. Thomas B. de Mayo, relates: *"Most accounts from the Early Middle Ages take this literally: a demon, with its body of air, physically entered the orifices of the human body and inhabited its empty spaces and flesh." For example, Gregory the Great's tale of a nun who swallows a demon along with some cabbage when she forgets to cross herself before eating,*" de Mayo 2007, 154. James A. Schinneller writes, "*A horror vacui reigns, always a symptom of artistic decline. The term 'horror vacui' indicates an overemphasis on applied decoration with chaos resulting because all surfaces scream for attention. To the Roman such a visual display undoubtedly signified the richness and grandeur of his civilization; however, centuries later, man employed such a discordant design approach for a different purpose. Medieval man viewed simplicity or unoccupied space as a horrible vacuum which permitted occupancy by the devil, and if all such empty spaces were filled with a maximum of details, evil forces were denied shelter.*" Schinneller 1969, 79. Likewise, the reason for the use of spatially neutral background gold-leaf backgrounds to Gothic and Early Renaissance paintings and in miniatures seems to have been, not only to reflect spiritual glory of the transcendental light (Pacht 1994, 15), but, to remove the threat understood as presented by empty space surrounding the depictions of holy figures.

[29] "*It is almost as though the Moslems feared empty space, replacing the Greek* (sic.) *horror infiniti with a horror vacui.*" Maor 2013, 163.

[30] The Qur'an mentions an empty (emptied) earth only once, that is on the Day of Judgement, *Al-Inshiqaq*, 84:4, "*And* (the earth) *hath cast out all that was in her, and is empty*."

[31] Arberry 1977, 357.

"ornament" in Islamic art, by Orientalists and academics in their works, providing through the repetition of this term the illusion of truth[32].

The Latin term *horror vacui* was taken from the Catholic medieval philosophers who coined it afresh in the 13th c.,[33] but they employed it in a quite different context. It was then used to describe in translation into Latin Aristotle's position regarding the reality or otherwise of the void, from Averroes' Arabic commentary on *De caelo*[34], summarised in the 13th c. Latin Catholic West into the principle that *Nature abhors a vacuum*[35]. As a term taken from the Medieval Latin translations via Arabic of Aristotle's ancient Greek employed in his c. 350 B.C. philosophical refutation of the "atomist" Leucippus's position that there were empty spaces in nature, a required void space to allow atoms the possibility of movement, Aristotle's was a restatement of Parmenides of Elea's c. 485 B.C., position, outlined in surviving parts of his poem conventionally titled "On Nature," more than a millennia before the recitation of Islam began. In consequence, the term 'horror vacui' can be understood at best as being a somewhat inappropriate, irrelevant and misleading choice made more than a century ago of a Latin term to apply, in the attempt to describe the reason for the use of designs in Islamic art.

The term 'horror vacui' as employed by Alois Riegl (1858-1905) in 1893[36], was to describe humanity's alleged perpetual horror of emptiness, and that it was from this alleged primal horror vacui, an alleged anthropological fear of empty space, that the human urge to fill space, areas otherwise void with design-pattern was said to have originated.[37] The sheer oddness of Alois Riegl's late 19th c. idea, his hypothesis as to the origin of the use of pattern-design by humans is evident perhaps, when one thinks of the vast empty regions that ancient humans, evidently not suffering at the time from *kenophobia*, traversed by land and sea to populate the planet, combined with the unproven proposition that marks forming patterns themselves carried no meaning but were simply filling ornament. This most peculiar late 19th c. European theory concerning the origins of 'decoration' has had great influence, resulting in the frequent use of the term *horror vacui* to describe the use of design in Islamic and other largely non-western, but at times some western arts, but is a term[38] which, given its only recent use in this context, beginning a little more than a century ago, was chosen as a term

[32] The illusion of truth is traditionally described as the increase in the perceived validity of statements when they are repeated, Hasher-Goldstein-Toppino, 1977.
[33] It was in the 13th c. "*when expressions such as natura abhorret vacuum, horror vacui, and fuga vacui began to appear*." Grant 1981, 67. However, although there is no instance of this term in ancient Latin texts employed to describe the use of design, it was used for example by Galen, Gal. Nat. Fac. 2.1. It was also interestingly employed to indicate "*explanandum*," in the sense of, "*that which needs to be explained*.", Berryman 2009, 166, fn. 31.
[34] Abu Nasr Al-Farabi (827–950 A.D.) was perhaps the first to have undertaken recorded experiments concerning the existence or otherwise of the vacuum in nature.
[35] Hence, *natura non facit vacuum*; *natura vacuum abhorret,* etc.
[36] A term earlier employed by Adolf Boetticher, e.g. Boetticher 1880, 295, "*Der horrorvacui der alten Künstler, das ängstliche Vermeiden unausgefüllter Lücken in der Composition, das Gefühl für ein überall gleichmäßiges, wohlabgewogenes Verhältniß zwischen Fläche und Ornament, Hintergrund und figürlicher Maffe, das Alles ist längst entschwunden.*" - The horrorvacui of the old artists, the fearful avoidance of empty gaps in the composition, the feeling for an even, well-balanced relationship between surface and ornament, background and figurative form, all of this has long since vanished.
[37] Woodfield 2013, 120.
[38] Tr. *boşluk korkusu*, Fr. *horreur de vide*.

defining the art of the "Other," a way of defining the inconsequential outsider in an age of European imperialism, and which has been repeatedly employed over the past century and on into the present day, but which is a pejorative othering term, as Laura Marks noted in 2014, *The term 'horror vacui' has been used in an Orientalist and even racist way to characterize methods of filling negative space.*[39] A term that does not address the origin, meaning, or permit the possibility of other reasons for the use of design, nor of particular reasons for the use of particular designs. It implicitly defines the work of design as comprising meaningless filling pattern-decoration, said to be primitive, barbarian, uncivilised, and it is unfortunately the case that implicitly, through terminological association, there is the connection through the use of this term "horror vacui," with so-called, primitive art[40], so-called, barbarian art[41], Ancient Greek art,[42] Etruscan art[43], Roman art,[44] Jewish Art of the Second Temple Period (516 B.C. - 70 A.D.)[45], Coptic art[46], Chinese art[47],

[39] Marks 2014, 241.

[40] Stites 1940, 65, "*In practically all neolithic carving of a ceremonial nature the entire surface is filled, as though primitve man had a horror vacui-a fear of empty space in which the evil spirits might lurk.*" Brown 1928, 244, "*The designer here seems to have had the feeling that his objects should be so placed as to fill up the space available without leaving empty spots…but the draughtsmanship does certainly seem to prefigure that curious horror vacui so characteristic of Roman and Early Christian relief compositions.*" Perrot-Chipiez-Gonino 1894, 313, "*So too we must allow for the horror vacui which, ever present with the primitive artists of every country, prompted them to fill in every available space.*"; Schliemann 1885, 100, "*Here, as in all the vases with geometrical decoration, we observe the horror vacui of the primitive artist*."

[41] Seltman 1933, 202, "*and the barbarian's natural horror vacui caused him to fill all the availing space with strange ornaments of local significance, like the solar wheel, the Celtic boar, or the god Ogmios.*" Focillon 1963, 50, "*Such work exemplifies the same conception of luxuriant, or rather of tight-packed, composition, the so-called horror vacui, as the decorative art of the barbarians*."

[42] Schuchardt 1891, 133, "*Genuine Dipylon painting also had the horror vacui, but where in our vase the empty space happens to be artificially filled up, as above the back of the horse, it has been done with Mycenæan ornaments*." Smith 1896, 3, "*Similarly, again, in E 11* (kylix) *we have a survival of the horror vacui. Pamphaios has been brought up to a tradition of filling in the field around his figures: here it is effected by the introduction of a medly of letters which spread all over the ground and make no connected sense*." Walters 1905, 210; likewise Walters 1922, 207; Walters 1972, 207, "*this horror vacui, or dread of leaving a vacant space, was characteristic of Greek artists at all periods";* Richter 1920, 52, "*horror vacui, as it is technically called, is, of course, a direct inheritance of the geometric age.*" Giesecke 2007, Ch. 2, fn. 81, 82. A term also often employed in reference to Proto-Corinthian and Corinthian orientalising vase painting, Herford 1919, 52-53, "*He had greatly reduced the field of ornament-a trait due to the long obsession of primitive artists by the horror vacui.*" Nagy 2014, 1018, "*The carefully rendered scenes are clearly based on the repertoire of Corinthian vase painting. Lions, panthers, fantastic animals and a few human figures overlap one another and are intertwined with decorative elements, mainly palmettes, creating a sense of horror vacui, a familiar quality of much of the vase painting of this period*." However there are indications that at times in Geometric art the so called filling ornament served other functions, including indicating different settings, and of rosettes indicating actual flowers, Ahlberg-Cornell 1971, 152, 199.

[43] Tuck 2014, 44, "*The entire field is crowded showing Etruscan horror vacui still at work*."

[44] Beckmann 2011, *"Marcus* (Aurelius)*'s artists were apparently afflicted by an acute horror vacui. ... not of a desire to express the genuine historical appearance of the Danube frontier under Marcus Aurelius, but rather to create what the artist considered a visually unified scene."*

[45] Haklili 1988, 401, "*At the same time Jewish art withstood foreign influences by evolving strictly aniconic features; it is characterised together with the other arts of the period by highly skilled indigenous stonework,* ***by the predominant Oriental elements of endless patterns, by the element of horror vacui,*** *by plasticity of carving and by symmetrical stylization*."

[46] Hillenbrand 2009, 89, "*There is simply too much to be taken in at first or even second glance. One detail after another, important or trivial, clamours for attention. It is indeed a classic case of the celebrated Islamic horror vacui.*"; Boston 1976, 207, "*The busy pattern of the dark wooden nails, however, is more typical of the decorative horror vacui of the Coptic artisan*." Meyer-Riefstahl 1915, 308, "*The costume of the rider, who wears a halo, is the same as on the earlier tapestries; and the composition shows the horrorvacui characteristic of all barbaric art, little scattered motives being introduced to cover the ground wherever the main motive leaves an empty space.*"

[47] In reference to a carved stone pedestal of 524 A.D., Bushell 1914, 35, "*the intervals are filled in with conventional birds and flowers, the lotus predominating, emphasizing the horror vacui of the primitive artist*."

Scandinavian art[48], Insular art[49], Early Medieval art[50], and Islamic art; but also, over the last century this term has been employed to describe the characteristic Outsider artwork of the mentally unstable, schizophrenic inmates of psychiatric hospitals, the art of the deranged - the association of *horror vacui* with the deranged was stated by the psychiatrist Dr. Eric Cunningham Dax (1908-2008)[51]; while the anthropologist Victor Barnouw (1915-1989) wrote: *Perhaps in cultures having horror vacui tendencies in art there may be common features in the upbringing of children which tend toward a schizoid adult personality*.[52] Further, since an arbiter of fashion in modern interior design, Mario Praz (1886-1982), as a member of the perhaps unsurprising 1930's swing in reaction to the Victorian fashion for rich decoration (William Morris, Augustus Pugin, etc.) and for display through "cluttered" interiors, - and a man who articulated[53] the fashion-led swing away from the so-called *horror vacui* of filled Victorian interior spaces towards *amor vacui*, or, *vacui amor*, that is, love of the void-vacant-empty interior, what in the 18th c. was termed, *A dry jejune style, one destitute of Ornament, Spirit, etc.*[54], to a style from the 1930's onwards termed modernist minimalism. While today, in a book entitled, with perhaps no small degree of hubris, *Universal Principles of Design, Revised and Updated: 125 Ways to Enhance Usability, Influence Perception,*

[48] Strzygowski 1928, 151, On the decoration of the Oseburg ship, "*The ornament on the trough is a good example of "horror vacui."... the angles at the base are rounded ; on the top is a cable border; in the field are numerous figures of animals regularly disposed so as to fill the space in the manner of flat ornament*."

[49] Ramirez 2015, 148, "*Instead, abstract shapes and geometric designs cover all the vellum* (of a 'carpet page'), *in a form of 'horror vacui' that was common to Anglo-Saxon jewellery, whereby no part of the surface was left undecorated*." Deshman-Cohen 2010, 31, "*Now a horror vacui rules*.", idem. 32, "*combined with a barbaric horror vacui (figs. 62, 63)*."; Alexander 1978, 49, "*with a typical Insular horror vacui,…*" Laing 1977, 120, "*A study of the high crosses of the tenth and eleventh centuries suggests that a horror vacui was also characteristic of Celtic art. But this is a characteristic that it shared with the art of other peoples of the barbarian north.*" Temple 1976, 97, "*the whole, a crowded and compartmented composition recalling 8th-century Insular manuscripts in its 'horror vacui', is surrounded by a 'Winchester' frame with foliated corner bosses…*"

[50] Kitzinger 1983, 88 "*There is nothing of the horror vacui, that fear of emptiness, which made Carolingian artists fill every inch of a miniature or book-cover with figures or ornament*,"

[51] "*The painting of the patients with paranoid psychoses have been widely studied, particularly by the French and German ...the paintings of children with brain injuries resemble schizophrenic art products with perseveration, 'horror vacui',*" Dax 1953, 42; idem. also 38; Arnheim 1977, 116, indicated the schizophrenic filling of all the areas with shapes until there was no void areas may have been from horror vacui, a fear of empty space, as earlier noted in *Bildnerei der Geisteskranken Artistry of the Mentally Ill* (1922) by the German psychiatrist and art historian Hans Prinzhorn 1886-1933. The term horror vacui was employed to describe the work of Richard Dadd and so-called outsider art/Art Brut, Sarnoff 2004, III. 222, "*This painting (Fairy Feller's Master-Stroke, 1855) displays the need, sometimes called horror vacui, to fill all the space on the canvas. This is characteristic of schizophrenic art.*" See also the Chapter 9.1 titled, "Pattern as Pathology," Shaw 2019, 270-273. The connection between horror vacui and the human mind is found for example in Christian Johann Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), "*The horror vacui which is ascribed to nature is much more a native property of the human mind.*" Stigand, 1880, 372. Nordau 1884, 37, "*Man spricht vom horrorvacui der Natur. Ganz so groß ist der horrorvacui des menschlichen Denkens*." - "One speaks of the horrorvacui of nature. The horrorvacui of human thought is just as great." Nordau 1887, 45, "*We say the Nature abhors a vacuuam; human processes of thought have the same horrorvacui. That which thinks in man, is his I, his Ego; it is the foundation, the necessary presupposition of the act of thinking; without the Ego, no thought, no conception, not even sensibility - the idea of non-existence is conceived by the Ego, but while it is trying to represent the idea of absolute non-existence to itself, it has at the same time the full consciousness of its own existence, and this coincident impression prevents completely any real, distinct conception of the actuality of non-existence*."

[52] Barnouw 1963, 338. It can be noted that measured levels of schizophrenia are in fact lower in developing countries than in developed countries, and higher amongst migrants and the homeless, see Bhugra 2005.

[53] Praz (1933) 1970, drew a parallel between the maniac visions of detail in the pre-Raphaelites and in Flaubert. His emphasis on the absence of ornament was preceeded by the Austrian architect, Adolf Franz Karl Viktor Maria Loos (1870-1933), who wrote against ornament in a lecture of 1910 entitled 'Ornament and Crime', stating, "*I have made the following discovery and I pass it on to the world: The evolution of culture is synonymous with the removal of ornament from utilitarian objects…We have outgrown ornament*." Loos 1930, 20; "*Freedom from ornament is spiritual bliss*." idem. 24, Loos also associating ornament with criminality and tattoos.

[54] Bailey 1730, npn. s.v. "*Style*." *One sparse, meagre, barren, suitable to the expression of grief.*

Increase Appeal, Make Better Design Decisions, one reads: *Consider horror vacui in the design of commercial displays and advertising. To promote associations of high value, favor minimalism for affluent and well educated audiences, and horror vacui for poorer and less educated audiences, and visa versa*.[55]

However, there has simply been no evidence presented over the course of more than a century by western orientalists, art historians and others, by those who employ this term, to show that any fear of empty space - a rare psychological condition termed since 1878 *kenophobia*[56], - a fear of void space, "*horror vacui*," - was in any way the driving force in the making and in the use of the designs realised and employed by Muslim designers and craftsmen in embellishing a work. The designs employed were understood at the time they were employed to be the visible expression of the acquisition *iktisāb* of design and skill in the making of them by the designer-craftsman from its Originator, The Creator[57].

Not one single reference from any contemporary Muslim medieval source relates this allegedly most powerful force, the fear of empty space in the artistic-creative process, not one single citation to any contemporary written record of the fear of leaving undecorated surfaces on a work has been found recorded in medieval Muslim texts concerning or referring to the arts and to works of craftsmanship[58] to confirm the relevance, the appropriateness, the accuracy, or even the existence at that time of the idea that this term, repeatedly employed by western orientalists, by art historians and others for a century and still today, is said to describe. Yet, this term has been so frequently employed in Orientalist and other discourse on Islamic art[59] that it is usually considered an objective fact, repeated in text after published text as is noted below, and in consequence, *othering* through the illusion of truth. The use of this decontextualized philosophical and medical term taken from Ancient Greek into Latin, re-employed in the late 19th c. in the context of the quite particular use made of design in Islamic art[60], was and it remains after the passage of more than a century of repeated use, still

[55] Lidwell – Holden – Butler, 2010, 129.

[56] The term which carries the meaning of an abnormal fear of empty spaces, was first coined and employed as such by the French psychiatrist, Henri Legrand du Saulle (1830-1886) in 1878. (Gk. kenon, meaning void, τὸ κενούμενον as employed by Erasistratus probably meaning what is today termed the vacuum)

[57] For example in the *Būstān* of Saʾdí Shírāzí, of 1257 this relationship of acquisition *iktisāb* is clearly stated: "*How well said the apprentice of the embroidery-weaver, When he pourtrayed 'Anka, and elephant and giraffe:-"From my hand, there came not a form, The plan of which, the Teacher from above pourtrayed not.*" Clarke 1879, 276-277. That is, the Almighty (the Teacher from above) was the real designer whose design the master craftsman copied. As likewise Jālāl ad-Dīn Rumī, expressed this same sense and understanding of this relationship, writing: "*We are the pen in that master's hand; We ourselves do not know where we are going*." Schimmel 1990, 86. The same is recorded of the Medieval Christian artist craftsman, as by Theophilus, Roger of Helmarshausen, author of *De diversis artibus* - On Diverse Arts, who opens his work: "*I Theophilus, a humble priest, servant of the servants of God*", and continues "*Through the spirit of wisdom you know that all created things proceed from God, and that without Him nothing exists…And lest perchance you have misgivings, I will clearly demonstrate that whatever you can learn, understand or devise is ministered to you by the grace of the seven-fold spirit.*" (Holt 1957, 7), that is the design was understood as being from the Divine and which was realised in temporal form by the human designer-craftsman.

[58] See for a collection of examples, Fairchild Ruggles 2011.

[59] As for example Alami 2001, 164, where it is described as the first principle of Islamic design, *"The first is the so-called principle of horror vacui."*

[60] For example: "***The result is that the ornamented surface is entirely covered, and nothing is seen of the ground. This is the 'horror vacui' of ornamentation***. *It follows that the design of the positive ornament is affected merely by means of a few negative lines, especially spirals, which pass through the leafage. The artisan in executing the design draws or carves or paints not so much the ornament itself, as the ground. The opposite extreme is found e.g. in the ornamentation of the buildings of Nur al-Dīn Mahmud: here the leaf plays a quite secondary part, the pattern*

consisting of stalks ingeniously and elegantly intertwined. The positive ornament is equally balanced, or even dominated by the ornamented ground. All the other principles of form and composition are preserved." s.v. "Arabesque" EI[1] 1913, 364. "***The designer of this charming decoration has the horror vacui of primitive art.***" Riefstahl-Parish-Watson 1922, 131. Herzfeld in describing the so-called "bevelled style," designs at Abbasid Sāmarrāʾ, "***der horror vacui in der Ornamentik ist***." Herzfeld 1923, 5-6. "***Here, as everywhere, the "horror vacui" which has so often been quoted as a characteristic feature of Muslim decoration is in evidence.***" Bolus 1932, 159. "*Nothing comparable with the stately development of Gothic is found in the architectural history of Islam. ... The 'horror vacui' is overdone*." "*Here, as everywhere, the "horror vacui" which has so often been quoted as a characteristic feature of Muslim decoration is in evidence.*" Art Institute 1932, 5. "*It was adaptable to almost every material, and with its capacity for spiraling with infinite variations well satisfied* ***the Moslem's strong impulse to cover surfaces. For a horror vacui possessed him***." Gardner 1936, 255. "*the Muslim artist,* ***who always had a horror vacui****, tried to fill the interspaces with different motifs.*" Marzouk 1943, 165. "*Departure from lifelikeness was the device that the Islamic artist used to avoid the presumption of "creating" living beings. ... Decoration largely took the place of representation. A horror vacui caused every available space on wall, manuscript, or vase and platter to be covered with luxuriant, laboriously interlaced ornaments, in which end merges into beginning,* ***fragments of Scripture into lineaments without rational meaning*** (sic.)." Grunebaum 1950, 26, reprinted unchanged in Grunebaum 1961, 21, Grunebaum 2013. "*Fittingly to round off the composition, and* ***in deference to the compelling horror vacui felt by Islamic craftsmen,***" Rice 1955, 10; "***Another bird fitted in, it seems, in deference to the obligatory horror vacui of the Muslim craftsmen,***". Shafei 1957, 11, "Horror Vacui" is a term sometimes used to describe the extravagance of the decorative schemes covering large areas of objects of art, and in many cases leaving very little plain surfaces." Rice 1957, 295; "***The "horror vacui," the completely filled surfaces, is present almost everywhere in Moslem art.***" Lillys 1958, 17, "*Its decorative function was taken over by ornament: geometrical, vegetal patterns derived from Arabic scripts and carried out in stucco, faience, repoussé or engraved metal-work; thus ornament covers the whole exterior and interior as if its creators, as someone has aptly put it,* ***were pursued by an inescapable horror vacui***." Meyers 1959, 17, s.v. "Islam", 106; "*In a general sense, it may be noted that, in ceramics as well as in metalwork, many different compositions were used, from the simple black figure on a white ground* ***to a design that takes over completely the whole surface of the plate and illustrates the horror vacui that is generally supposed to characterize Islamic art***."; idem. 106*, "****The Islamic "horror vacui" is a result of a conscious desire to fill entire surfaces, the essential aesthetic principle derived from art which has conditioned the development of Islamic art.****"* Grabar 1959, 16. "*This ornamental aspect is further emphasized by the spirals which occupy every empty space between the figures; while* ***this feature attests to the horror vacui characteristic of this art****, it also gives the paintings a vibrant quality.*" Ettinghausen 1962, 182. John D. Hoag, writes on Khirbet al-Mafjar, "The entrance porch can be restored with fair accuracy from the remnants of its stucco and stone ornaments (Plate 19). A very complex system of borrowing and adaption had clearly been going on, ***accompanied by a well developed horror vacui and an interest in flat surface patterns in shallow relief which did not interfere with the massive simple form of the gate***." Hoag 1963, 14-15; "The covering of engraved ornament, most of which is absurdly irrelevant, unless there be some illegible symbolic intent, ***witnesses the beginning of the horror vacui of Islamic art, that sees the undecorated surface as an opportunity wasted***." Pope-Ackerman 1964, II, 769; "*Physical form has been constricted into a vehicle for the expression of something other than itself.* ***First, each object or wall is totally covered; no part is left without ornament. This is the celebrated horror vacui by which Islamic decoration has been so often defined***." Volov 1966, 107, "It has often been remarked that these amazing products of the Samanid world **derive from aesthetics that are foreign to Islamic art. In place of the totally covered surface or so-called horror vacui we find a refreshing and remarkable appreciation of the empty space**." Grabar 1973 187; "*In Arabic manuscripts there is, generally speaking,* ***no horror of the void except in the frontispieces.***" "***Horror vacui, the terror of voids, is one of the salient characteristics of Islamic art***." Hess 1975, 71. Hill-Golvin 1976, 64, *Intersecting trilobed and stalactite* (sic. *muqarnas*) *vaults are common in Persia around 1100 and related forms abound in Egypt at the same time. In such structural complexities,* ***space is fragmented as surely as in the celebrated horror vacui of much Islamic decoration.***" Goldin 1976, 48, "*Indeed, the regularized, allover density of Islamic decorated surfaces has often been noted.* ***It is usually "explained" by scholars as a quasi-genetic characteristic of the Oriental mind, a native horror vacui, or primitive dislike for unmodulated surfaces.*** *No artist is likely to agree*." Papadopoulo 1979, 108; "***the horror vacui*** *which characterises the ornament of Samarra and which* ***later became an abiding hallmark of Islamic art.***" Bakırer (1976) 2000, "***boşluk kalmadan***," 87, idem. 206, 240. David Shapiro repeats the association of Primitive art with the horror vacui, "***Typical of primitive art are the horror vacui****, the too sharp perspective and the result, which is at once curiously child-like, yet sophisticated.*" Shapiro 1978, 28. Welch-Cachia-Watt 1979, 282, "*So it is not merely that the artist avoided representation for fear of idolatry. It is that he was consciously or unconsciously delineating a wholly different notion of the divine authority within the natural order. The horror vacui, too, in Muslim art, would seem to belong with the same logic. Spaces must be filled with mosaic, or pattern, or design, lest vacancy should accentuate a private feature or suggest a hiatus in the unfailing writ of the divine will, where nothing is left to chance or unrelated or troubled, as one Indian writer puts it, by 'the coarse and unkempt facts of man'.*" Hillenbrand 1981, 76. "*As is the case with most of the other parts of this* (Seljuk) *mihrab* ***the dominant artistic convention here is horror vacui.***" Janabi 1982, 174; "***The horror vacui, which is considered a formative principle in so much of Islamic decoration****, seems to have contributed to the invention of these forms that, in the course of time, developed into the innumerable varieties of floriated and foliated Kufi, to which the plaited was very soon added*." Schimmel 1984, 9. Ettinghausen-Grabar 1987, 114; idem. 196, in reference to Egyptian 10th c. cut-glass decorated tumblers

in written, verbal and mental circulation today. It is a most misleading and dismissive term, a wittingly or unwittingly employed terminological pejorative,[61] used repeatedly in the description of Islamic art in publications into the 21st century[62]. Its use implies the denial of

"***revealing a decided sense of horror vacui***." republished unchanged in 1994 reprint. Kuban 1986, 57, "*The great portals of Seljuk Anatolia:… This kind of decoration is a good example of the Islamic - in this case Turkish - taste of the so-called horror vacui (fear of emptiness)*." Tō Sugimura 1986, 104, "*Although this decorative tendency of the artists in the Islamic world is called horror vacui, it is of fundamental importance to their aesthetic in which the world is beautified by adding numerous filling motifs and multiple colors*." Ettinghausen-Grabar 1987, 114, in reference to Iraqi 9th c. blue and white tin glazed pottery "*First, the Near East potters were quite suddenly able to execute 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***." Khan 1988, 11, "***In the art of ornamentation, Muslim craftsmen were always ruled by the celebrated 'horror vacui."***" William Dalrymple wrote of the 1271 Seljuk Gök Medrese in Sivas, "*Struggling out of two dimensions into three, the tendrils would suddenly erupt into high relief; jungles of acanthus and vine swirled, thrashed and clung.* ***The sculptor was driven by the same decorative urge and horror vacui that motivated Anglo-Saxon artists, but here it produced sculpture at once more violent and barbaric than any Celtic decorative work.***" Dalrymple 1989; 91. "*Most of the design elements of Islamic ornament are based on plant motifs, which are sometimes intermingled with symbolic geometric figures and with human and animal shapes. But the natural forms often become so stylized that they are lost in the purely decorative tracery of the tendrils, leaves, and stalks. These Arabesques form a pattern that will cover an entire surface, be it that of a small utensil or the wall of a building. (****This horror vacui is similar to tendencies in barbarian art, although other aspects of Islamic design distinguish it from the abstract barbarian patterns***." s.v. "Islamic Art," Gardner's 1991, 305. Jerrilynn D. Dodds writes of Al-Hakim II's qibla wall of the Great Mosque of Cordoba, *"****The inscriptions weave a path through the densely composed jungle of vegetal and geometric forms of the mosaic, adding to their cacophony and horror vacui;*** *at times their status as writing is obscured by their integration into the overall abstract schema."* Dodds 1992, 22. Basil William Robinson, Studies in Persian Art, "*This comes out particularly in the weak drawing,* ***the cluttered surfaces almost amounting to a horror vacui****, and in certain recurring motifs, such as that of a vase of flowers, which are not found in authenticated Persian miniatures that surely give the game away.*" Robinson 1993, I., 76. Describing the repetitive poetic pattern of the *radīf* J. C. Bürgel relates, "*Such structural tightness, in which we have discerned a manifestation of mightiness, has a certain affinity to* ***the horror vacui in Islamic ornament and miniature***." "***and thus ministers to the celebrated Islamic horror vacui***." Allen 1995, 175. "***with its motifs of symmetrical foliage, frames the mihrab of Cordoba, creating a vibrancy which expresses the horror vacui of lslamic art***." Stierlin 1996, 76, "*in the Umayyad palace of Mshatta. The sculptors imitated ancient techniques and motifs, while demonstrating a horror vacui (aversion to empty space) which became a leitmotif of Islamic Art*."; idem. 100, "***These surfaces are completely covered with luxuriant monochrome ornamentation which betrays a "dread of emptiness" (horror vacui) common in Islamic art.***"; idem. 105, "***This urge of the Islamic artist to fill any void has often been termed 'horror vacui', the fear of empty space.***" Baer 1998, 4, ***This urge of the Islamic artist to fill any void has often been termed 'horror vacui', the fear of empty space***.; idem. 126, "*Intimately linked with these principles is the so-called 'horror vacui' in Islamic art. The tendency to embellish a given surface with ornaments that completely eliminate the background is realised for the first time in Samarra (see above , Chapter 1), and cannot be traced to either late antique or Near Eastern traditions*." Bürgel 1999, 72. Eva Baer 1998, 126, *"Intimately linked with these principles is the so-called 'horror vacui' in Islamic art. The tendency to embellish a given surface with ornaments that completely eliminate the background is realised for the first time in Samarra."*. Raby-Johns 1999, 304, "*when seen from far below - at such a distance that one's peripheral vision would naturally take in several panels at a time – their overwhelming message, expressed with truly Islamic horror vacui, is of surpassing fertility*."; idem. 306, "*the taste for horror vacui of which Mshatta and Khirbat al-Mafjar are the foremost Umayyad examples. The effect is virtually to render architecture organic*." Milanesi 1999, 30, "***The arabesque, a typically oriental element permits decoration without representation, thus satisfying the horror vacui of Islamic art***."

[61] Pejorative, as in the sense as employed by Johan Huizinga to describe Burgundo-French art of the Late Middle Ages, "*The form develops at the expense of the idea, the ornament grows rank, hiding all the lines and surfaces.* ***A horror vacui reigns, always a symptom of artistic decline***." Huizinga 1924, 227-228, that in part resembles Robert Hillenbrand's later remarks concerning the Mshattā facade decoration and the horror vacui, Hillenbrand 1981, 76. Likewise in respect to Kashan ceramics, Ettinghausen 1956, "*They also achieved a happy balance between emptiness and too dense design, thus avoiding the all too frequent crowdedness brought about by the horror vacui (4, 6).*" Art 2011, "***The early Muslim Arabs' proclivity for the arabesque - the abstract, and highly stylised infinite pattern is engendered, Dimand insist*****(ed),** ***by a kind of psychological aberration or complex known as "horror vacui" - i.e. phobia for empty space. As the result of their prolongued exposure to the vast and desolate environment of the desert, the Arabs developed this extreme fear and abhorence for empty space***." Seems quite extraordinary pejorative nonsense.

[62] "***The term horror vacui ("fear of emptiness") can be used to describe much nonrepresentational Islamic art***." Grabar 2000, 37; in the same volume Natascha Kubisch writes describing the carved marble panels in the reception hall of Medina-al-Zahra of 936-1010: "***These panels also demonstrate that horror vacui-"fear of emptiness"- often typical of Islamic art.***" Kubisch 2000, 233; "***Horror vacui reigns. The trivial motif of a vine leaf, so well integrated***

into the design of the columns, is here inflated to an absurd degree.*"* Hillenbrand 2001, I, 150, regarding the carved decoration of the Mshatta façade: "*It was conceived separately from the architecture and was used to obscure rather than to emphasise or mesh with the structure.* ***It therefore led naturally to the horror vacui which characterises the ornament of Sāmarrā' and which later became an abiding hallmark of Islamic art.***"; Alami 2001, 164, "*of its characteristics,* ***Islamic decoration is characterized by a few principles of design, to which according to the linguistic model, all the visible units of design (or motifs) are subordinated. The first is the so-called principle of horror vacui***." Hillenbrand 2001, II, 79, regarding the 10th c. stucco work of the Friday mosque at Nā'īn, Iran; "***In the ornament itself, however, there are two operational principles – the absolute requirement to fill an empty space, the true horror vacui****, and the union of the individual elements without any clear separation. One may question which is the cause and which the effect, the principle of design or the two principles of ornament. They are interdependent*." Cited in, Bloom 2002, 17, "*the true horror vacui, and the union of the individual elements without any clear separation. One may question which is the cause and which the effect, the principle of design or the two principles of ornament. They are interdependent*."; and idem., 11, "*It is in carpets that, as pointed out by Ettinghausen,* ***the superimposition of various ornamental systems leads to the complete filling of the given space, an extreme submission to the law of horror vacui*** *or 'mightiness'*." Leaman 2004, 67, "Many have commented on what is taken to be a horror vacui in Islamic ornamentation, a dislike of the empty, and this accounts for the ways in which space is filled up so comprehensively in Islamic art." Borges 2004, "*reflecting the Islamic tendency to cover all surfaces with complex ornaments (Horror Vacui),*" Hillenbrand 2005, 72; "The Mamluk attitude of urban horror vacui was in full accord with the expectations of the moral monitors of the time." Hofmann 2007, 205, "***Finally, the diacritical signs of Arabic script are so detached that they can respond to the horror vacui of Islamic art****. In short, Arabic is a supremely decorative medium*." Behrens-Abouseif 2007, 21; "*Indeed,* ***a characteristic feature of Islamic ornament is horror vacui****, the tendency to fill any empty space on a given surface. The ornamentation is neither essential to the underlying structure of an object or building, nor a necessary part of its serviceability, and this independence from the underlying body meant that ornament was widely applicable and easily transferable from one medium or technique to another*." Cragg 2008, 148, "***For Muslim art had an instinctive horror vacui, a dislike of empty space****, whether walls or tiles, the flanks of pulpits or the shapes of vases or the covers of books*." Sheila R. Canby, while describing the horror vacui in Islamic art as a myth, then qualifies this "myth" as "*an exaggeration and overgeneralization*," "***One of the common myths about Islamic art is that it is characterized by a horror vacui or fear of emptiness, leading to an unwillingness to leave any surface blank or undecorated****. Although this is an exaggeration and overgeneralization, the surfaces of many Islamic objects are substantially covered in ornament, often small-scale and combining several types of decoration.*" Canby 2008, 6. Bloom-Blair 2009, I., 71; "*The richness and variability of geometric patterns in Islamic art stem from subdivisions and linear extensions of the geometric network as well as from the continuous interlocking and overlapping of forms that bring about new sub-units and ...* ***Closely linked with these principles is horror vacui, described more positively by Gombrich as amor infiniti****. Manifest already in the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock, it remained a dominant feature of Islamic art for centuries*." Bloom-Blair 2009, I., 78; "*Even the perception that Islamic art is essentially ornamental is wide of the mark,* ***though no-one could deny the strength of the so-called horror vacui-the desire to leave no space void****...*" Bloom–Blair 2009, III, 239. "*And this particular, latest, development* (style C, the bevelled style at Sāmarrā' in the 9th c.)*, was explained as filling two requirements:* ***a new taste for what has been called horror vacui, repugnance of empty spaces or total coverage of space to be decorated***," Grabar 2009, 248. "The term horror vacui, in Latin, literally, fear of empty space or fear of emptiness has become a cliché to describe a design aesthetic in kinds of Islamic art that densely patterns or adds ornament to space, appearing to condense it." Minnissale 2009, 31; *"The plant curls and loops were stylized and became almost geometric shapes quite remote from nature and endlessly repeated.* ***For the artists of the Islamic world had developed a horror of emptiness, horror vacui, and filled the whole surface that needed decorating***." Clemente-Ruiz 2010, 185, "***For the artists of the Islamic world had developed a horror of emptiness, horror vacui, and filled the whole surface that needed decorating. Every square centimetre was covered in endlessly connecting and combining motifs.***" Vukosavović 2010, 27, "***Decorations and script fill all empty spaces, demonstrating the common artistic rule in Islamic art of horror vacui (fear of empty spaces).****"* Alami 2013, 94, "*The first is the principle* ***known in visual art as horror vacui, or the fear of empty spaces. According to this principle, which is the most widespread cliché about the art of the Islamic world, all objects or walls must be entirely covered with decoration****…Whatever our preferred interpretations might be,* ***the principle of horror vacui seems to predominate in non-narrative-based decoration*** *but is absent from figural (narrative-based) representations*." Lemmen 2013, 45, Islamic designs, "*The taste for closely patterned and intricately embellished wall surfaces in the shape of geometrically interlocked tiles and ornate plasterwork is a tendency in the history of design known as horror vacui or fear of empty space.*" Knysh 2016, 323, "Vegetal design patterns are often intricately interwoven with geometrical figures, circle, triangles, squares and other polygons. These intertwined figures constitute a complete and uninterrupted surface with no empty spaces. This is why the arabesque is described, in Western academic literature, as an art of "***total space decoration" conditioned by the "fear of empty space*.**" Finbar B. Flood and Gülrü Necipoğlu describe the horror vacui in Islamic art as: "*a peculiar cliché*," "***Among the more peculiar clichés of Islamic art, for example, is the idea of the horror vacui, the idea that artists in the Islamic World had an instinctive horror of empty space, owing to which they packed as much ornament onto the surface of artifacts and buildings as possible.***" Flood – Necipoğlu 2017, 26; and they suggest the influence of the art theorist Wilhelm Worringer at the start of the 20th c. concerning the superstitious primitive fear, "*an immense spiritual dread of space*" and of abstraction as being the suppression of the representation of space, upon Richard Ettinghausen's influential 1979 paper (Flood - Necipoğlu 2017, 43, fn. 78). "*Art history is filled*

any specific relevance or meaningful content in the use of Medieval Islamic designs, ignoring the content, context and significance of these designs by characterising them as various types of filling ornament, designed and employed to simply fill, to cover over, what would otherwise be empty areas.

with examples of horror vacui from arabesque decoration of early Islamic art…" https://www.huntingtonarts.org/horror-vacui-fear-of-the-empty/ "***This feeling of meticulously filling empty spaces also permeates Arabesque Islamic art from ancient times to the present***." Wikipedia @ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horror_vacui "***Moving east, this feeling of meticulously filling empty spaces permeates Arabesque Islamic art from ancient times to the present***." 2019, StateMaster - Encyclopedia: Horror vacui @ www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/Horror-vacui

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