

Fine and Applied Arts / Collecting

One endeavour of the 19th century was the study of the past. The scope of interest extended to all aspects of civilization, and included art and architecture. Within the wider spectrum of the history of art, Islamic art tended to be placed somewhere between late antiquity and the medieval period, or often it was studied using an ethnographic approach. Colonialism and the presence of Europeans in the Middle East encouraged studies in Islamic art and, as the scholarly discipline evolved, it prompted both an interest in the private collecting of works of art and the enrichment of public and private collections. These were opened up to visitors in the latter part of the century. Orientalism, exoticism, and a penchant for the variety seen in ornamental designs on works of art, were determining factors in the early stages of the historiography of Islamic art and collecting.



Working Number:	SP 019
Name:	Textiles
Holding Museum:	Lázaro Galdiano Museum
Date:	Early 16th century; 1915–1930 (Lázaro Galdiano collection)
Materials:	Silk; lampas weave
Curator Justification:	Islamic art exhibitions gave new light to artworks and increased interest among collectors. One of the most important Spanish art collectors was Lázaro Galdiano. He had an interest in the Spanish Muslim period and bought a number of pieces from this period for his collection.



Working Number:	UK 066
Name:	Astrolabe
Holding Museum:	The British Museum
Date:	1236; acquisition date: 1855
Materials:	-
Curator Justification:	This astrolabe, which was made by 'Abd al-Karim al-Misri in 1236, was acquired by the British Museum in 1855.



Working Number:	GR 050
Name:	Les amis de l'art society, by the Greek cartoonist Kem
Holding Museum:	Benaki Museum
Date:	1920s
Materials:	Paper, ink
Curator Justification:	The cartoon shows the art collectors of Alexandria: on the left is Antonis Benakis holding a paintbrush; Konstantinos Synadinos washes the floor; Christophoros Nomikos hangs a ceramic dish on the wall; and Baron de Menasque, standing on a ladder, paints the ceiling.



Working Number:	AT 127
Name:	Turkish jugs
Holding Museum:	MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art
Date:	3rd quarter of the 19th century
Materials:	Stoneware, glazed; illustration from a book

Curator Justification: These jugs were bought by the Österreichisches Museum für Angewandte Kunst at the World Trade Fair in Vienna in 1873.



Working Number: UA 062

Name: Cairo, from the Gate of Citizenib, looking towards the Desert of Suez

Holding Museum:

Date: Sharjah Art Museum / Sharjah Museums Department

Materials: Published 1849

Curator Justification: Lithograph

The presence of Europeans in the Middle East prompted the study of Islamic architecture as sites were recorded in paintings, or later, with the use of photography.



Working Number: SP 072

Name: View of Zaytuna Mosque, Tunis

Holding Museum: National Archaeological Museum

Date: 1850–1892

Materials: Albumen paper; albumen print

Curator Justification: This is one of the 389 photographs taken by the Tunisian Antiquities Service. The photos were initially exhibited at the European Historic Exhibition held in Madrid in 1892, and when the exhibition ended the photographs were donated to the National Museum of Archaeology in Madrid.
