Please find attached a list of letters of support from various researchers and institutions participating in COST. These letters attest to the benefits for the heritage of their region, the significance it has had for their professional careers and the creation of synergies between different countries of the European Union

Mina Moraitou, Curator, Benaki Mueum
Marina Vicelja, Director of the Center for Iconographic Studies, University of Rijeka
Ferecn Tóth, Institute of History, Academy of Sciences
Emir Filipovic, University of Sarajevo
Houssem Eddine Chachia, University of Tunis
Elisabeth Dryson, University of Cambridge
Fatih Parlak, Capadoccia University

BENAKI MUSEUM

Back in January 2023, the Benaki Museum collaborated with **IS-LE Cost Action** in organising the 'Negotiating Islamic Legacies in Europe: Concepts, Heritages, and Comparative Approaches' symposium, which took place at one of our venues, the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art. During this time, the project also conducted several recordings at the Museum and around Athens to gather material for various documentaries and for a MOOC course on Islamic heritage in Europe.

In our opinion, this project's work has been outstanding as a catalyst that has contributed to the dissemination of Islamic heritage in Europe by connecting efforts and work carried out in different regions of the continent. Through the project, a pan-European network of researchers has been created, offering transnational support for discussions and the appreciation of European heritage, allowing for the first time across Europe the recognition of Islamic heritage's importance.

Therefore, all of us at the Benaki Museum and the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art support the application submitted by the **CA18129 IS-LE Islamic Legacy project: Narratives East, West, South, North of the Mediterranean (1350-1750)** for the Europa Nostra - European Heritage Award.

Mina Moraitou
Curator,
Benaki Museum of Islamic Art

CENTAR ZA IKONOGRAFSKE STUDIJE | CENTER FOR ICONOGRAPHIC STUDIES

FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET - SVEUČILIŠTE U RIJECI
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To Whom It May Concern

Rijeka, 4 November 2024

Letter of support for COST Action „Islamic Legacy"

As a director of the Center for Iconographic Studies at the University of Rijeka (Croatia), I would like to express my support for the candidacy of the COST Action "Islamic Legacy" for the Europa Nostra award.

It is thanks to this initiative that an international dialogue has been made possible on an extremely important issue for the history of Europe - the relations between Muslims and Christians and their visualization in art. The Center acted as a partner to the COST team in organizing the Ikon conference "Iconography and Religious Otherness" in Rijeka in 2021 which involved the participation of researchers from a range of nationalities, particularly from the regions that have been less extensively studied. In addition, the program welcomed researchers at all stages of their careers, from the youngest to the most senior. This was done with the objective of generating new research questions that would contribute to the advancement of scholarly knowledge and understanding of the aforementioned issues. At the conference, a variety of perspectives on the subject were presented, from both Christian and Islamic viewpoints, thereby offering a comprehensive representation of the subject matter. This approach has facilitated comprehension and, consequently, the conservation of European and North African heritage. Furthermore, it has encouraged the acquisition of knowledge about the past through dialogue and scientific investigation.

For all the above reasons I sign this document, giving my support to the candidature: *IS-LE CA18129 IS-LE Islamic Legacy: Narratives East, West, South, North of the Mediterranean* (1350-1750) presented by Antonio Urquízar, Borja Franco and Elena Paulino.

Respectfully,

Prof Marina Vicelja-Matijasic
Director of CIS

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To whom it may concern.

Dear Sir or Madam,

I would like to wholeheartedly support the application submitted by the CA18129 IS-LE Islamic Legacy project: *Narratives East, West, South, North of the Mediterranean (1350-1750)* for the Europa Nostra - European Heritage Award. I have collaborated closely with IS-LE COST Action since it first conference, which was organized in Budapest in 2019 until the end of the project in September 2023. Particularly, the experience of taking part in the writing of the project's final book has been a very enriching experience thanks to its collaborative approach which is not very common in the fields of humanities and heritage.

I would like to highlight that, in my view, this project has played an exceptional role in promoting a new understanding of Islamic heritage across Europe. By recognizing and incorporating Islamic heritage on a continental scale, this project has advanced a new perspective previously unseen in European heritage initiatives that has changed the way we view the remnants and monuments of Islamic origin in Europe.

Budapest, 2nd November 2024

Tóth Ferenc

Prof. Ferenc Tóth

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Sarajevo, 4 November 2024

Within the COST Action 18129, "Islamic Legacy: Narratives East, West, South, North of the Mediterranean (1350-1750)", several academic events took place at the University of Sarajevo from which both the institution and the broader community benefited greatly. All of these activities had a positive impact on the academic life of the city and its university, additionally contributing to the awareness of the general public about Islamic heritage in Bosnia, allowing it to be contextualized within a broader European legacy of Islam. First of all, in September 2021 a workshop titled "A thesaurus under discussion" was organized and held at the University of Sarajevo's Faculty of Philosophy during which aspects of terminology and vocabulary were discussed along with other topics pertaining to the ethno-religious diversity of the pre-modern Mediterranean and the border relations between the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires. This was an opportunity for members of the COST Action to also be involved in the recording of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) allowing some truly important sites of architectural, artistic, material and spiritual Islamic legacy of Sarajevo and Mostar to reach a wider audience. The materials recorded in Bosnia and Herzegovina certainly helped the MOOC in achieving long-term educational results. Moreover, in June 2023 a conference about the "The migration of objects between Islam and Christianity in the medieval and early modern Mediterranean" was held at the University of Sarajevo, allowing the institution once again to be a setting for fruitful discussions and debates about the interactions between Christianity and Islam through history and the impact of the heritage of Islam in the Mediterranean. It can be said that the COST Action had a profoundly positive effect on the spreading of knowledge and understanding about various aspects of Islamic legacy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

prof. dr. Emir O. Filipović
Associate Professor of Medieval History

Tunis, 10.28.2024

Letter on the Importance of the Training school on "Late Medieval and Early Modern Migration Routes and Identity Spaces in the Mediterranean, Tunis, June 15-17, 2022"

The training school held at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Tunis (University of Tunis) in June 15-17, 2022, was a remarkable academic event that gathered over 15 professors and doctoral and postdoctoral students from prominent American and European universities. Titled "*Late Medieval and Early Modern Migration Routes and Identity Spaces in the Mediterranean*", this training school was part of the larger program, *CA18129 - Islamic Legacy: Narratives East, West, South, North of the Mediterranean (1350-1750) (ISLE)*.

This training school provided a unique opportunity for researchers from different fields and geographic contexts to engage in dialogue and share insights within a southern region of the Mediterranean. Such an environment was instrumental in challenging preconceived ideas and fostering a richer understanding of the region. It enabled participants to explore the complex historical narratives of migration, identity, and cultural exchange from a perspective that extended beyond traditional Western academic spaces. This, in turn, played a crucial role in reinforcing the importance of cross-cultural and interdisciplinary academic collaboration.

Additionally, this training school encouraged connections between the visiting researchers and Tunisian scholars. These interactions took place not only within the university setting but also during visits to key cultural and academic sites such as the National Library of Tunisia, the historic city of Testour, and various locations throughout Tunis. These experiences allowed participants to deepen their understanding of local perspectives, historical contexts, and sources, providing them with a more nuanced view of the Mediterranean's shared and diverse heritage.

In addition, during the workshop, videos were recorded to document Tunisia's rich Mediterranean heritage. These videos helped showcase the unique cultural landscape of Tunisia and share it with audiences beyond its borders, fostering greater understanding and appreciation for the region's historical and cultural contributions.

For me, co-organizing this training school and the accompanying program was an enriching professional experience. It allowed me to gain new insights, expand my network with colleagues from beyond Tunisia, and foster collaborative ties that have since enhanced my research and academic journey.

Sincerely,

Houssem Eddine Chachia
Assistant professor in Early Modern History, University of Tunis



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1November 2024

Europa Nostra Heritage Awards

To whom it may concern:

Letter of support for the application for a Europa Nostra Heritage Award relating to COST Action 18129 IS-LE Project

I am writing to give my most enthusiastic support for the application for a Europa Nostra Heritage Award relating to the COST ACTION 18129 research project 'Islamic Legacy: Narratives East, West, South, North of the Mediterranean (1350 – 1750). This was a project organized with immaculate efficiency and effectiveness over a period of over four years that brought together a very wide range of researchers from countries across Europe and its near neighbour countries. It aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of relations between Christianity and Islam in Europe from the late medieval era up to modernity and to align different disciplines of academic research in the field.

I had the privilege of participating in the project as a researcher and collaborated with colleagues in the organization of an online conference hosted by Cambridge University in October 2020 that addressed the contemporary legacy of Islamic civilization in different European countries and challenged the perception of European identity as exclusively Christian. COST generously contributed to the publication of a volume of essays, *Europe's Islamic Legacy: 1900 to the Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2023), that explored the enduring legacy of the medieval and early modern Islamic presence in several European nations that manifests itself in life today. The Principal Investigators Professors Antonio Urquízar Herrera and Borja Franco Llopis assisted at every stage of the organization of the conference and publication of the essays and gave expert advice.

In my opinion this research project is a major contribution to the history of Islam in Europe, which has sought to broaden cultural and religious understanding. It was a model in itself for that cultural enlightenment in the collaboration of so many scholars from diverse countries and faiths who came together in harmony, as such scholars had in medieval times, to share ideas that reinforced the idea of a European identity shared between Christians and Muslims alike. The project created a body of academic research of the highest quality that will pave the way for the enhancement of interfaith, intercultural dialogue in the future. In this context, I give my wholehearted support to the application for a Europa Nostra heritage award.

Elizabeth Drayson

Testimony of Dr. Fatih Parlak regarding the COST Action IS-LE Training School

Attending the training school on Islamic Heritage in Europe has been a transformative experience in my academic career, broadening my understanding of the complex and multifaceted ways in which Islamic heritage has been perceived, preserved, and debated across Europe. The school's core approach, transcending traditional regional narratives and fostering a comparative, pan-European perspective, has significantly enriched my research and opened new avenues for exploration.

The training school's emphasis on interdisciplinary dialogue was particularly enlightening. Engaging with scholars from diverse fields such as art history, philosophy, history of science, and anthropology provided me with a richer and more nuanced understanding of the subject matter. The opportunity to exchange ideas and perspectives with both junior and senior scholars created a stimulating and collaborative learning environment, which has been instrumental in shaping my own research approach.

The training school's focus on transcending the traditional focus on Spain as the primary site of Islamic heritage in Europe was particularly enriching. The inclusion of regions such as the Balkans and Greece has broadened my understanding of the geographical and cultural diversity of Islamic heritage in Europe. This comparative approach has encouraged me to rethink conventional narratives and to explore new connections and perspectives.

In addition to the academic benefits, the training school also provided a valuable opportunity to network with other PhD candidates and established scholars working in the field. The connections I have made during the training school have been invaluable, providing me with opportunities for collaboration, exchange of ideas, and access to a wider academic community.

My connection with IS-LE continued after the training school. I participated in conferences and workshops organized by the Action. I even organized a workshop in September 2021 in Sarajevo. The knowledge, skills, and connections I have acquired through this experience and continued engagement with the IS-LE network will undoubtedly be invaluable as I continue to contribute to this important field of study.

Best Regards,
Dr. Fatih Parlak,
Cappadocia University.

