



Islam Past & Present Workshop Series

**Stanford Archaeology Center
Tuesday, October 27, 2009
2:30pm - Seminar Room**

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“The Habous and the Olive Tree: Cultivating Heritage in Islamic Endowments”

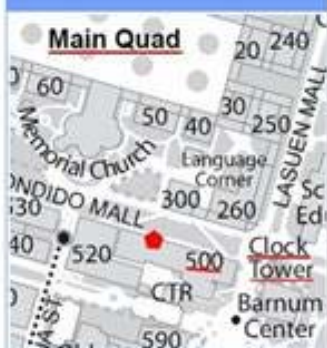
In this paper I engage with the theme of the Islam Past and Present workshop for Fall quarter, which questions how we can access specifically Islamic practices of ‘heritage.’ The point is to open up and contour heritage research to contextually appropriate lines of inquiry, since the concept of heritage, and the great majority of heritage scholarship, are founded within a narrowly prescribed view of how the past works in the present. To this end I introduce a study on the olive tree as a form of material heritage and, gathering around these trees, the property relations of *habous* and *waqf* that seek to resolve what I call the ‘historic anxiety’ of such forms of enduring property. Known as the ‘dead hand’ within Islamic juristic thought, *habous* and *waqf* rendered property inalienable, set aside for future generations’ use and the enjoyment of its earnings. Olive trees and their endowments provide particularly relevant markers for the mobilization of heritage in broader social transformations wrought by changing governance structures in North Africa under colonialism, state-building, and modernization schemes. I situate my study in the Medjerda valley region of northern Tunisia, as part of a larger argument about the overlapping property rights and regimes of ownership at stake within the archaeological site of Dougga.

If you have any questions regarding our events, please contact:

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Location:

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Terman Labs



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