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The Urban Fabric of Cairo: *Khayamiya* and the *Suradeq*

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Biography

Dr Sam Bowker is a Lecturer in Art History and Visual Culture for Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, Australia. He is the curator of the groundbreaking survey exhibition ‘*Khayamiya: Khedival to Contemporary – the Egyptian Tentmakers from 1890 to 2010*’. He is currently writing the first academic book on this subject, to be published as *Khayamiya: The Art of the Egyptian Tentmakers*. He previously worked for the National Portrait Gallery and the National Library of Australia, and lectured in Art Theory and Design for the Australian National University.

Dedication

This article is dedicated to Jenny Bowker (*Umm al-Khayamiya*) and the tentmakers of Cairo, to acknowledge your tireless work to bring *khayamiya* to the world beyond Egypt. Thank you Patricia Blessing and Pamela Karimi for your generous invitation to submit an article based on my recent exhibition and ongoing research into the history of *khayamiya*. Thank you also to the contributors of reference photographs for sharing your rare images through the *IJIA*, and to the universities that have supported my work.

Abstract

Khayamiya, or Egyptian tentmaker appliqué, is a distinctly Egyptian architectural lexicon that has been ignored by most architects. The vibrant ornamental qualities of this art form are slowly gaining recognition by designers from other fields, such as fashion, interior design, visual art and textile crafts, but it remains inexplicable that such an intensely visual aspect of Egyptian vernacular culture is not highly regarded, or even widely considered, as a national design icon of Egypt. This article will present an overview of *khayamiya* as a distinctly Egyptian architectural textile. The *suradeq*, or *khayamiya* pavilion / street tent, is the exemplar par excellence of this rich and complex art form. Recent developments in technology and reorientations towards international audiences have changed the work of the tentmakers of Cairo, veering away from architecture, towards contemporary art. These changes both threaten and encourage the survival of *khayamiya* as an important Egyptian living heritage. There is a great deal yet to be contributed to contemporary Islamic architecture and design by those can reassess the endangered art of *khayamiya* within its original architectural context: the *suradeq*.

Keywords: *khayamiya*, *suradeq*, tent, Egyptian appliqué, pavilion, Cairo

< Figure 1 here >

The Urban Fabric of Cairo: *Khayamiya* and the *Suradeq*

‘When you see a *suradeq* for the first time, it tends to take your breath away’.¹

Khayamiya,² or Egyptian tentmaker appliqué, has been a flamboyant, vibrant and distinctive presence in the streets of Cairo for at least 150 years [Figure 1, Figure 2]. The Arabic word for ‘tent’ is *khayyam*, so the word ‘*khayamiya*’ applies to the distinctive needle-turn appliqué technique, as well as the textiles themselves. The people (primarily men) who make appliquéd tents are thus known as *khayamin*, or tentmakers. The form of *khayamiya* of greatest significance for architecture is the vast ‘street tent’ known as *suradeq*. These are composed of several modular panels known as *siwan*, approximately 3m x 5m in scale.³ Dozens of *siwan* are assembled into great walls of colour across Egypt, where they herald celebratory and ritual spaces in public places. Though *khayamiya* was originally considered in architectural terms, it is increasingly regarded internationally as a highly skilled textile craft, to be carefully displayed in art galleries rather than scaffolded along dusty streets. Amongst Egyptians, however, such aesthetic regard for *khayamiya* is surprisingly rare. It is a vital aspect of Cairo’s urban visual cultures, but almost never discussed as a subject of its own merits.⁴

This article will present an overview of *khayamiya* when considered as a distinctly Egyptian architectural textile. It aims to expand John Feeney’s eloquent article by surveying the changing contexts that have influenced *khayamiya* from the end of the Ottoman Empire through to the present day. For the purposes of this article, the *suradeq* (*khayamiya* pavilion) remains the exemplar par excellence of this rich and complex heritage in Egypt. However, developments in technology and new international audiences have changed the work of the tentmakers of Cairo, veering away from architecture, towards contemporary art. These changes both threaten and encourage the survival of this important living heritage.

Though this article primarily discusses *khayamiya* in Cairo, these distinctive appliquéd textiles can be found across Egypt, and are even in use as an exported architectural product in Ethiopia, Sudan, Jordan, Tunisia, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Iran.⁵ Moroccan decorated tents are culturally and visually distinct from Egyptian *khayamiya*, as Moroccan tents conventionally consist of long textile screens composed of elegant arches framing dark niches, beneath a relatively simple border pattern. Equally distinctive indigenous Uzbek, Kurdish, Iranian, Tibetan, Pakistani and Indian variations of vibrantly appliquéd tents also exist, and are widely used in diverse ceremonial contexts comparable to the Egyptian *suradeq*.⁶ These decorated tents bear a range of similarities to the Egyptian *khayamiya*, and pose several substantial topics for further research in their own right. Such research would be readily assisted by their comparatively well-established presence in major textile collections worldwide, including photographic documentation. However, the comparative analysis between Egyptian *khayamiya* and alternative forms of ornamented tent is beyond the intended scope of this article. Instead, this account seeks to establish the social context of the

khayamiya suradeq as a noteworthy vernacular ephemeral architectural practice within Egypt.

< Figure 2 here >

Publishing *Khayamiya*: A Brief Literature Overview

Until recently, *khayamiya* has evaded academic attention. Perhaps because they are ‘urban’ rather than ‘nomadic’, Peter Alford Andrews’ extensive publications on the tents of the Middle East do not examine *khayamiya* structures specifically.⁷ This text, however, remains the best monographic study of older forms of the Islamic tent (such as from the Fatimid, Timurid or Mughal periods). Surviving specimens of such early tents are almost unknown, and understood primarily through illustrated manuscript records. Heba Barakat’s *Beyond Boundaries*, an exhibition catalogue for the Museum of Islamic Art in Malaysia, features the best currently published case study into a specific *khayamiya* tent (a *fustat* or single-poled circular tent, attributed to a wedding ceremony on account of its calligraphic inscription).⁸ Caroline Stone’s account of the material and social history of the decorated tent in the Middle East is also a good introductory reference for appreciating the context of Egyptian *khayamiya*, as it summarizes the extensive scholarship of Nurhan Atasoy’s survey of the heritage and design of imperial Ottoman tents, and describes noteworthy pre-Ottoman tents.⁹

Published Arabic references to *khayamiya* are rare. Perhaps the most accessible is Ashraf Abdul-Yazid’s article with its noteworthy reference to the research of Ismat Ahmad Awad, who collected tentmaker terminology for very specific aspects of their design.¹⁰ Sadly, the descriptions for each term’s meaning are unclear from Abdul-Yazid’s text in English, and Awad’s original publication in Arabic has not been located. Likewise, Soraya M. Abdel Rasoul was cited by a journalist for the Los Angeles Times in 1978 as the “only recent scholar of tentmaking”, but her 1977 PhD thesis has not been published.¹¹

Popular news articles, such as those seen in Egyptian and international media (including the *New York Times*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Huffington Post*) are also useful to gauge increasing public interest and glimpse recent changes in the Street of the Tentmakers in Cairo and the art of *khayamiya*.¹² *Suradeq* are very rarely described as specific subjects in popular media, although they are seen frequently within Egyptian cinema from the Nasser period as conventional backgrounds for wedding scenes.

The Origin of Egyptian *Khayamiya*

Cairo’s modern name derives from al-Qahira, ‘the Victorious’, but the preceding town of al-Fustat was literally ‘The Great Tent’. This was anecdotally named for a large tent left behind by ‘Amr ibn al-’As in 641, after he discovered a dove had made a nest upon his roof, which

he took as a positive omen for his military campaign.¹³ A community subsequently became established around this ‘temporary’ structure, slowly developing into one of the world’s largest cities. This symbolic narrative can also be interpreted as a transformation of both the tent and governing force from a mobile army to a permanent structure/state.

Whether the dove’s chosen tent was decorated is a matter for conjecture. The persistence of the tent as an important architectural textile in Islamic communities reflects their nomadic cultural context. Islamic tents have a long history of decoration, including interior and exterior ornament, regardless of whether the tent is woven from goat hair or cotton and related fabrics. Evidence for the design and continuity of such tent patterns survive through illustrated manuscript records and paintings rather than extant tents.¹⁴ Nurhan Atasoy makes a case for the recognition of well-maintained tents as relatively durable ‘buildings’, but old examples are cumbersome and far more likely to be recycled for their components than preserved in their entirety. This is especially the case for early trellis tents from the Mongol, Ilkhanid, Timurid, Safavid, Mamluk and Fatimid contexts.

The most obvious precedents for Egyptian *khayamiya* are the decorated tents of the Ottoman Empire, which ruled Egypt from the sixteenth century. These tents were, and remain, some of the most elaborate forms of movable tensile architecture within the history of Islamic design. Examples and fragments of spectacular Ottoman tents, adorned with copious and intricate appliqué, survive as war ‘trophy’ in European military museums and in the diverse collections of Istanbul’s Topkapı Palace.¹⁵ Whilst on campaigns, such resplendent ephemeral edifices (accurately likened to ‘travelling palaces’) provided material evidence for the economic power of the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶ These huge and beautiful textile structures were all the more symbolically emphatic when they were used to lay siege to fortified cities, where they juxtaposed starvation with luxury consumption. They also facilitated displays of hierarchy, provided venues for international relations, and provided very comfortable travelling accommodation for military leaders.

Many of the Ottoman decorated tents held in European collections were captured in the aftermath of the Siege of Vienna in 1683. The wane of the Ottoman military expansion, which followed this event, also marked a gradual decline in the need for such elaborate tents. Nurhan Atasoy’s encyclopaedic research into the tents of the Ottoman Empire recounts archival sources that chart a deterioration of the working and housing conditions for the tentmakers of Constantinople from the early nineteenth century onwards.¹⁷ No evidence for a direct link has been established between the tentmakers of Constantinople and the tentmakers of Cairo, such as records of migrating families or any reciprocal training of professional craftsmen.¹⁸ However, by the mid-nineteenth century, few decorated appliqué tents were still being made in Turkey. From the 1860s, physical specimens and photographic records of *khayamiya* start to appear in Cairo.¹⁹ It seems that as demand and conditions for tentmakers in Turkey deteriorated, a new market was found in Egypt.

< **Figure 3 here** >

It is difficult to establish a typology for Egyptian *khayamiya* preceding the 1850s. Nurhan Atasoy's scholarship accounts for the description of distinctly 'Egyptian' styles of appliquéd tents from as early as 1567, but no extant examples or unambiguous images of such 'Egyptian' tents survive.²⁰ It is not yet clear what visually defined such pre-nineteenth-century *khayamiya* as Egyptian. Heba Barakat also argues for the distinction between Ottoman and Egyptian designs for decorated appliquéd tents, primarily on the basis of localized visual elements. Barakat does not specify these in detail, but localized floral forms (the lotus versus the tulip or hyacinth, for example) and the extent of very fine embroidered embellishments (more typical of Ottoman tents) are clear distinctions between nineteenth-century Khedival *khayamiya* and older Ottoman precursors. For example, [Figure 3] is a detail from a rare German stereograph that displays the dramatic and ornate *khayamiya* of these elaborate tents. Such festival pavilions are the clearest manifestation of links between Egyptian *khayamiya* and Ottoman decorated tents, given conspicuous similarities in their scale, ornamental patterns, appliquéd cotton on canvas components, their tensile rope-and-pole armature,²¹ and their sociocultural function.

The Napoleonic campaign to Egypt of 1798–1801 prompted the publication of the *Description de l'Égypte*, which includes visual references to decorated Ottoman tents in Egyptian contexts. These are sometimes described closely as carefully illustrated case studies but more often appear as incidental details that provide scale to monumental ruins.²² References to Egyptian tents in traveller's literature are frustratingly sparse. For example, Edward William Lane's 'Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians' mentioned the use of large tents at *mawlids* in Egypt, but unfortunately did not describe the appearance of those tents in sufficient detail to draw comparisons between Ottoman tents or known examples of *khayamiya* from the latter half of the nineteenth century.²³ Additionally, his depiction of an Egyptian 'wedding pavilion' more closely resembles a silk baldachin or 'walking canopy' carried by four attendants, physically more similar to a *mahmal* than a *suradeq*.²⁴ Johann L. Burckhardt's early nineteenth-century travel accounts first published in 1819, 1822 and 1829 do not describe any tents encountered in Egypt, nor does his *Arabic Proverbs* (1830) make any direct reference to *khayamiya* or *suradeq*.

< Figure 4 here >

***Khayamiya* and *Suradeq* in Nineteenth-Century Egypt**

Orientalist painters surprisingly rarely depicted *khayamiya* as a subject or incidental detail, but Reginald Barratt's 1907 watercolour [Figure 4] is an exception. This is one of the most useful references to nineteenth-century *suradeq*, assembled en masse in their full glory at one of the many *mawlids* that were defined partly by the use of such tents.²⁵ Postcards of similar scenes usually depict only the external structure of the *suradeq*, for the photographers were working in the bright desert light that contrasted with the cool and shadowed interiors.

The ornament and use of *khayamiya* structures from the late nineteenth century has been associated with the so-called Mamluk Revival.²⁶ This Egyptian design movement is

noteworthy in architecture from this period, where it has been linked to a nationalistic agenda driven by a desire to define Egyptian architecture in opposition to competing European influences.²⁷ In *khayamiya* from the Khedival period, such Mamluk Revival elements include the use of Egyptian vernacular motifs, bold colours and the use of calligraphic inserts that do not appear in earlier Ottoman tents. Though these features are shared to a variable extent in Mamluk and Mamluk Revival architecture, it is debatable whether this link has simply been noted by recent observers or whether it was chosen by tentmakers working in the latter half of the nineteenth century.²⁸

Single-masted *khayamiya* camping tents, sometimes called *fustat*, were infrequently collected by wealthy tourists and subsequently preserved in private collections beyond Egypt.²⁹ Only one specimen of the much larger nineteenth-century *suradeq* is known to exist today. This is the ‘Tent Room’ of Doddington Hall in Lincolnshire (UK) [Figure 5]. This was probably manufactured in the 1870s, and bears floriated ornamental patterns in common with the similarly dated (1879) but smaller Khedival *khayamiya* tent in the Semitic Museum of Harvard University.³⁰ The myth of the nesting dove may have been referenced by the Egyptian tentmakers responsible for the *khayamiya* tent at Doddington Hall, in the form of the unique depiction of birds on either side of the entrance.

< **Figure 5 here** >

After using this remarkable *suradeq* as a forum for entertaining guests on the lawns of Doddington Hall, likely in much the same manner as his parents when they originally acquired it in Cairo, Viscount Harry Crookshank gifted the tent to Colonel Charles Jarvis. James and Claire Birch subsequently inherited this unique tent and commissioned a sensitive restoration by female tentmakers in Gujarat in the 2000s.³¹ This singular *suradeq* is now carefully installed as a spectacular interior display within their historic home. It is highly worth visiting this exceptional structure in order to appreciate the subtleties of textile architecture, for the fragrance, acoustic properties and eloquent surface textures do not translate into photographs. It also provides a very rare opportunity to review, at first hand, the situation of Khedival *khayamiya* between distinctly Ottoman and contemporary Egyptian forms.

Although it appears that John Feeney was the first to use the word ‘*khayamiya*’ in an English-language article in 1986, the first descriptions of *khayamiya* appear in the accounts of artists and other tourists visiting Egypt after the 1860s. Of these traveller’s documents, the remarks of Douglas Sladen are of greatest interest, as he notes (with the candour of an unabashed Orientalist) what he finds most striking about this Egyptian art form. In 1911–12, Sladen describes the Egyptian use of *khayamiya* as an architectural textile:

[...] in enormous quantities for decorating the insides of the canvas pavilions, which they erect on any provocation, sometimes in the street for a wedding, or the return of a pilgrim from Mecca; sometimes in a regular encampment for an occasion like the birthday of the Prophet; and which they use a great deal in mosques. The tent-makers affect texts from the Koran [*sic*], and arabesques in

brilliant colours, the red-white-and-blue [...] being the favourite combination. These, even when they are new, do not look more than pleasantly garish. But when they are faded by fifty years of use – being dyed with good vegetable colours – their effect is adorable.³²

Sladen also described the use of *khayamiya* within a somewhat more permanent structure designed for touristic inhabitants:³³

Everyone who sees this hotel, called the Karun, is delighted with it. [...] The [upstairs] hotel is built of canvas – the gay awnings of the Arab tentmaker. It stands on a stretch of gravel, with patches of gay flowers at its edges, and a thick fringe of reeds twelve feet high all round; and sometimes in winter it must be all upstairs, for the basement [ground floor], built of more substantial materials, is probably under water in flood-time.

The sleeping arrangements of this hotel are very pleasant for those in need of a thorough change after the artificialities of Cairo; the bedrooms are two huts and as many reed-thatched sleeping-tents as happened to be required. As the dining-rooms and drawing-rooms are also canvas, one combines the pleasures of camping out with the comforts of a fair hotel.³⁴

Sladen's account describes the use of 'immense quantities' of *khayamiya* (which he calls 'superb awnings') in what is now the Old Cataract Hotel at Aswan,³⁵ presumably in an identical manner to the awnings once used along the terrace of the original Shepheard's Hotel.³⁶ He also describes the use of individual *khayamiya* panels as features in mosques (known as *menbar sentara* by tentmakers today) and as suspended decorative ceilings in older Cairo homes.³⁷ The photograph by Lehnert and Landrock [Figure 6] also features large *khayamiya* awnings interacting with a permanent building as a form of veranda. *Khayamiya* providing atmospheric spaces, colourful and shaded, can be seen in the shadows of many 'local cafes' in Cairo through photographs from the early twentieth century. Like the contemporary *suradeq*, these extensions 'grow' like organic improvisations, borrowing pavements and suspension fixtures such as trees and street lights.

< **Figure 6 here** >

Vast *suradeq* pavilions were an important part of the public spectacle of the Egyptian khedives and subsequent royal family, and were used to festoon streets for special occasions. As Yunan Labib Rizk noted in his account of the young King Farouk's coronation travels in February 1937:

In Minia Al-Qamh, the Abaza family had solicited palace authorities to permit the royal train to stop briefly in their village so that the king could partake in refreshments offered in a large, magnificently ornamented tent they had erected in the train station. The municipality, railway authority and other government agencies in Zaqaziq festooned their city with a variety of decorative displays. 'Of particular note are those that were created by the eminent Abdel-Rahman

Radwan Bek on his cotton ginnery, his school and his other properties facing the train station,' Al-Ahram added.³⁸

Riad Shehata's photograph of the previous Egyptian monarch, King Fu'ad I, attending the 1927 opening of the Misr Cotton Spinning and Weaving Company in El-Mahalla El-Kubra [Figure 7], provides a clear demonstration of the visual intensity of the *khayamiya suradeq* as a mobile platform for visiting dignitaries, not unlike the Ottoman military function of decorative tents. Given this prestigious context, the juxtaposition of very similar *khayamiya* in dusty streets appears to be historically incongruous, but it is consistent with the social function of *khayamiya* as a decorative backdrop – a suspended textile to define claimed spaces within public places.

< **Figure 7 here** >

Traveller's Tents and Tourists

The use of hand-appliquéd *khayamiya* tents for groups of travellers has been recorded in numerous photographs from the early twentieth century, with a noteworthy collection of glass slides in the Library of Congress. These include records of the American colony in Jerusalem, who travelled with a series of impressive *khayamiya* walls and tents in the early 1940s, as well as images incorrectly attributed as a 'Jewish Tabernacle Tent' that was more likely a Thomas Cook dining area. Some records exist of *khayamiya* tents specifically made for European travellers and archaeologists, such as Max von Oppenheim's 1893 tent used at the Tell Halaf expedition in 1929.³⁹

Mary Roberts Rinehart describes the use of single-masted tents 'ten feet high':

Three large circular tents were our shelters, erected umbrella-fashion on great central poles, each pole carried in two sections; the tops were extended by ropes fastened to stakes driven into the sand, and the side walls were then hung from the tops.⁴⁰

Rinehart acclaims her dining tent as 'green, yellow, red and blue [...] no ordinary tent, but one of the finest specimens of the tent-maker's art [...] in strong and primitive colours, a gorgeous thing'.⁴¹ This was further decorated with Pharaonic motifs, typical of touristic *khayamiya*, 'all sewed with millions of stitches to make our tent a gorgeous thing, and to bring into the desert the colour it so badly lacks'. In 1914, C.N. and A.M. Williamson also referred to an 'open-fronted awninged luncheon-tent [...] lined with Egyptian appliqué-work in many colours, the porchlike roof extension supported by poles'.⁴² This description is consistent with the *suradeq* depicted in Barratt's painting of 1907. The use of hand-appliquéd *khayamiya* tents as travelling tourist accommodation is now very rare, but according to the 'macfoto' blog of Will and Deni McIntyre, at least one antique specimen was employed by Fergany El-Komaty in this manner during the 1990s, accompanied by more recently-made replicas.

One could argue that tourism was a contrary pressure upon the status of *suradeq* as the most typical manifestation of *khayamiya* in Cairo. From the 1890s, but particularly from the 1920s, tourists frequently acquired souvenirs of *khayamiya* in the form of wall hangings, not ‘hanging walls’. Designed with visual references to ancient Pharaonic cultures, these touristic *khayamiya* were more carefully crafted so they could be closely considered as intimate artworks, rather than walls from a distance. Most significantly, such souvenirs were smaller, faster to make, and provided a better profit per item for the individual tentmaker. Heba Barakat’s comments on the disbanding of *khayamiya* guilds through taxation reforms in the 1890s also imply an imperative towards independent manufacturing of souvenirs, rather than workshop factories for *suradeq*.⁴³ Through the production of touristic *khayamiya*, tentmakers could generate a more regular and autonomous income, as opposed to irregular payments for long-term team projects.

On the basis of tourist demand alone, the entrepreneurial direction of the tentmakers slowly moved away from the original concept of *khayamiya* as an architectural textile. Tentmakers continued to work within the authentic principles, materials and techniques of their highly skilled profession, but towards the production of radically revised objects. The labour distribution that favoured souvenirs over large structures held substantial implications for the tentmaker economy when ‘imitation *khayamiya*’ was invented.

< Figure 8 here >

Imitation *khayamiya*

Imitation *khayamiya* was invented by one of the tentmaker families in the early 1980s, and is now sold along the Tentmakers Street. This development was an almost inevitably modern approach to the production of the time-consuming colourful appliqués that are essential to the function of the *suradeq*. It consists of a silk-screened mass-printed synthetic blend fabric, resembling (from a distance) the elaborate cotton appliqué that defines *khayamiya*. It is most ‘convincing’ when it is sewn, by machine, to the canvas backing that is also used for authentic *khayamiya*, although it can also be suspended as a semi-transparent textile, more reminiscent of stained glass than fabric [as in Figure 8]. One of the earliest collected samples of imitation *khayamiya* is held in the British Museum.⁴⁴ This fragment from the early 1990s displays crude errors in colour registration associated with hand-made silk-screen printing. Today, this process has been automated, so *khayamiya* ‘fabrics’ are manufactured by large machines in Egyptian factories. Since the mid-1990s, a glossier plastic-lined synthetic *khayamiya* has become increasingly common as an architectural textile.

‘Imitation *khayamiya*’ is cheap, bright, light, versatile and permanently changed the work of the Cairo tentmakers. From the perspective of most Egyptians, ‘imitation *khayamiya*’ made this art form more accessible, so full-scale *suradeq* were easier and faster to set up, as well as less expensive and time-consuming to make – and perhaps less prestigious as a result. From a

structural perspective, imitation *khayamiya* lacks the acoustic, structural, material endurance and tactile appeal of authentic *khayamiya*. Most significantly, it lacks all the value afforded to handcrafted materials and labour. This issue appears more relevant from the perspective of international visitors, rather than Egyptian audiences, for whom the brighter colours are more desirable.

Due to this highly competitive design alternative to hand-made *khayamiya*, many tentmakers abandoned their lifelong and skilled profession, taking up work as road labourers and taxi drivers. The few remaining tentmakers now focus on the creation of appliquéd textiles for interior display, continuing the design reform that emerged within the touristic *khayamiya*. Strange as it might sound, tents are no longer the primary product of the tentmakers of Cairo. According to interviews with the author in September 2013, most tentmaker businesses currently could not produce a completely new hand-appliquéd *suradeq* if requested – they simply do not have enough skilled tentmakers left.

< **Figure 9 here** >

The process of creating authentic hand-made *khayamiya* has not changed for a very long time. Designs are drawn upon folded paper, punched (pierced with the sewing needle), and unfolded over the canvas backing that will become the exterior of the tent wall. Perforated marks are traced using powdered pigments through the punched paper. Each piece of appliquéd cotton is quickly cut, then folded to the intended shape and separately sewn by hand to the canvas, using a process that quilters identify as ‘needle-turn appliquéd’. *Khayamiya* sewing is performed at virtuoso speed while seated cross-legged against a wall, using a cushion as a backrest, for many hours at a time. The only tools used are a large pair of sharp scissors, a needle, and a thimble. A photograph attributed to the Zangaki Brothers depicting tentmakers from the 1870s depicts no changes in this manual technique, although sewing machines are now used to join large tent walls together.⁴⁵

The Contemporary *Suradeq*

Most *khayamiya* tents were, and still are, made for Egyptian consumption, even if purchased for use within the tourist economy. Regardless of whether imitation fabric is simply draped across a fence, or a complete *suradeq* is erected in the street, Egyptians need *khayamiya* to provide vivid backdrops to ceremonial and celebratory events.

The physical purpose of the *suradeq* is the provision of shade, a degree of acoustic privacy, and the all-embracing theatrical spectacle of intense colour and ornamental pattern. Whether hand-appliquéd or imitation-printed, *khayamiya* have provided stages and backdrops for celebrations across Egypt for at least 200 years. The same *suradeq* can be used for any number of distinct events; their purpose readily changes, but the textile canopy and basic structure does not. These include weddings, births, funerals, *mawlid* festivals, Ramadan feasts as well as political rallies, examinations, graduations, music concerts or dance performances, and parties.

< Figure 10 here >

In 1986, John Feeney noted social changes that have contributed to the decline of the *suradeq* in Egyptian culture. Amongst these, he noted the construction of the Aswan High Dam for the cessation of annual Nile flood-related festivals in villages across Egypt, and the now well-established preference for wealthier families to host weddings in high-end hotels rather than opulently adorned street tents. The declining favour for the *suradeq* noted by Feeney can be read as part of the broader re-evaluation of Egyptian festive heritage as studied by Samuli Schielke. His remarks about the changing social value of the *mawlid* festivals relate equally to the changing status of *khayamiya* within Egypt:

The distinction through criticism of festive traditions [...] [by the professional class] became the normal point of view concerning religion and society to the degree that its novelty and innovativeness have become invisible.⁴⁶

This ‘invisibility’ is genuine when considering the sociology of *suradeq* in contemporary Egypt and the gap in academic literature on this subject, but it stands at odds with what Robert Nelson calls ‘the social presence of architecture’. *Suradeq* possess a tremendous ‘social presence’, enabled by their Tardis-like sudden appearances in unexpected locations, fascinating interior complexity and a slightly otherworldly juxtaposition of colour and texture to their urban surroundings of grey concrete, red brick and the ubiquitous pale dust of Egypt. Nelson’s remarks on modernist Australian instances of such amenable architecture are remarkably apt to the Egyptian architectural context of the *khayamiya suradeq*:

I think of this conviviality as the social presence of architecture. The architecture not only communicates its joy in occupying space by flamboyant ornament, but makes a concerted gesture to pedestrians that proposes some form of reciprocation.

[Buildings with social presence] look as if they want to be on the street – not as if they want to withdraw from the concourse or launch into space – and they also seem to signal that people could come together in front of or inside the building.⁴⁷

Egyptian *suradeq* are well designed to adapt to improvised public spaces. Armatures of long timber scaffolds, sometimes in bamboo, are erected to provide a sparse framework, assisted by the incorporation of urban fixtures such as street lighting and permanent walls. *Suradeq* customarily appear suddenly near mosques, in parkland, over pavements or car parks, vacant blocks and in narrow alleys between buildings. The spaces within most *suradeq* are simply large open-plan rooms, subsequently articulated to suit their assigned purpose by the positioning of chairs.

This can be seen in [Figure 11], where a contemporary *suradeq* hosts an event between two apartment buildings in Alexandria, Egypt. Chang Yeon Cho’s photograph captures the *suradeq*’s role as a transformative nocturnal spectacle, emphasizing a juxtaposition of light, colour, pattern, textile and ceremony in an appropriated public space. The photographer, who

is also an architect, was struck by the juxtaposition between concrete and ephemeral structures.

< **Figure 11 here** >

Suradeq are owned and hired to clients through teams of men known as *farrasheen*. These are ‘tent managers’, not tentmakers. The *farrash* responsible for a *suradeq* can be identified by prominent appliqué in yellow writing – usually a name and phone number – on green patches. The placement of an owner’s marks is usually considered within the basic composition of any *khayamiya siwan*, both hand-made and imitation. Watching them quickly raise a *suradeq* is a performance in itself, as they swiftly climb rudimentary scaffolding to tighten joins, drape large *khayamiya* walls, and dexterously bind *siwan* (panels) to each other with rope and leather loops. Their work can be dangerous, given the heights required to raise a large *suradeq*. John Feeney noted a legendary tent, still recalled by some tentmakers today, that ‘was called “the slayer” because of its size and because one or two men were invariably killed in its pitching’.⁴⁸

Farrash duties include the delivery, installation and removal of the *suradeq* to the client’s brief. This normally includes the interior layout, traditionally featuring rows of carved Egyptian gold-coated chairs in designs derivative of French Empire furniture (known locally as Louis Farouk), as well as carpets, cooling fans and electric lighting which can vary from the brightly coloured vernacular glass and tin Ramadan lamps (*fanouz*), strings of small coloured bulbs, chandeliers or incandescent tubes, depending on the event and the client’s budget.

It is worth mentioning that the responsibility of manufacturing the Egyptian *mahmal* and *kiswa*, both important textiles associated with the beginning of the Hajj and the shrouding of the Ka’ba in Mecca, features prominently (and with pride) in the oral history of the tentmakers of Cairo. Since there were skilled professional embroiderers in Cairo, it seems unlikely that the famous black and gold calligraphic embroidery of the *kiswa* of Mecca was made by tentmakers who specialize in appliqué, but a *khayamiya kiswa* in the broader sense of a ceremonial shroud for covering a grave or mausoleum appears consistent with their recollection. (This stance is also supported by photographs of shrouded graves in Egypt from the early twentieth century, in which the iconic *aruza* border is visible on the textiles). The tent-like camel-borne *mahmal* appears to have been a collaborative construction between many skilled textile artisans, so it is feasible that the tentmakers once played a significant role in this discontinued annual ceremony.

Designs and Ornament

The designs used in *khayamiya* for *suradeq* structures are conceived on a different scale to the *khayamiya* now sold for interior display, but retain many of their basic visual elements. As Feeney noted:

Within each tent panel there must be a vein to hold it together. Supports are made at the base of the pattern, and each panel must possess an outer chain surrounding the edge of the whole design.⁴⁹

As a result, like most Islamic architectural ornaments, *suradeq* feature coherent tessellated patterns. These vary from elaborate geometric variations on grids and circles (as in Figures 6, 7 and 8) adapted from inlaid stonework in historic mosques. The basic structure of mosque and residential doors from a variety of historic periods can also be traced in early *khayamiya* – no small coincidence considering that individual panels were suspended as doors in private residences according to photographic postcards from the early twentieth century. Although it is possible that Cairene carpet designs may have inspired some *khayamiya* patterns (and vice versa), as John Taylor proposed on his *Rugtracker* blog in May 2013, there is currently no direct evidence from the living tentmakers to support this hypothesis.

Variations of complex architectural ornaments derived from the Mamluk and Fatimid periods are popular sources of contemporary and nineteenth-century *khayamiya* designs, since these primary references are well represented in Cairo and directly accessible to the tentmakers. These idioms are most evident as components of grid-like formats (such as Figure 1), but perhaps the most widely seen *khayamiya* composition is an expanded framed central medallion with arabesque foliations. These interlacing forms in twentieth-century *khayamiya* are often capped with Egyptian lotus flowers derived from Pharaonic visual culture [Figure 12]. These rectangular compositions can be interpreted as a gradual simplification from sixteenth-century Ottoman tent designs, mediated by the bold graphic designs of Khedival *khayamiya*. Imitation *khayamiya* originally derived its patterns from pre-existing designs widely seen in hand-made *khayamiya*, but now features prints without comparable hand-made equivalents. Colour variations within an otherwise identical design are seen in both hand-made and imitation *khayamiya*.

< **Figure 12 here** >

Perhaps the most striking change in the ornament of the *khayamiya* is the loss of calligraphic content on a monumental scale after the early twentieth century. The reason for this transition is unclear, but *khayamiya* tents depicted or preserved from before the 1920s typically feature extensive calligraphic content. Consistent with architectural calligraphic friezes, tent texts usually appeared as a single line near the top of the tent wall, just under the interlaced trefoil border pattern known by the living tentmakers as the '*aruza*' ('bride' in English). They were usually written in white script (often *thuluth*) on a blue or red background. Their content was sometimes from the Qur'an, and usually reminiscent of Sufi poetry. Most records are fragmentary, but longer texts reveal diverse intentions, occasionally descriptive of the tent's owner or location. To date, only the text in the Khedival *khayamiya* tent of the Semitic Museum of Harvard University has been attributed to an author – the thirteenth-century Baha' al-Din Zuhayr. Unusually for a nineteenth-century specimen, the *suradeq* of Doddington Hall features no calligraphy. Today, calligraphic *khayamiya* remain a very important genre of the contemporary art form for interior display, but such literary designs are rarely seen on *khayamiya* of an architectural scale.

The undulating ‘*aruza*’ border was once an important motif in Khedival *khayamiya*. For this reason, it is now one of the defining features of the Khedival *khayamiya* genre. It was consistently located as a running pattern along the top of any panel (*siwan*), irrespective of the use of the panel as a wall, *suradeq* or singular hanging (*menbar setara*). It was named by association with another aspect of Egyptian vernacular heritage: the sugar dolls or ‘brides’ (*‘aruza*) adorned with paper frills and sold for children near Ramadan. Feeney remarked upon the coincidence of sugar dolls and *suradeq* without realizing this association was more intrinsic to the actual design of *khayamiya* from the Khedival period:

Several weeks before traditional holidays, small street stalls made out of *suradeq* material appear at long-established sites throughout the city selling little sugar dolls, as gaily decorated as the tents themselves.⁵⁰

Beyond the Egyptian local context of flamboyantly decorated sugar dolls, the ‘*aruza*’ pattern is also reminiscent of the use of semi-ornamental merlons and crenellations in Islamic fortifications, mosques and palaces from across the Maghreb, Middle East and the Indian subcontinent. It is also a familiar pattern in the brass metalwork known as ‘Cairoware’, and might be analogous to other manifestations in Islamic art, including ceramics and woodwork.

Feeney’s research also identified other Egyptian tentmaker terms for the structure and components of the *suradeq*, including:

The *belma* is the wall or side of the tent; the *saket* the slope that goes up to the tent’s peak; the *saqfis* the tent’s ceiling and, if there is to be a canopied entrance, this is called the *sahabia*.⁵¹

Some of these resemble words used by the Ottoman tentmakers as presented by Nurhan Atasoy and specific forms of Persian tents described by Peter Alford Andrews. This occupation-specific linguistic affinity may provide speculative evidence for a historic relationship between the Egyptian and other tentmaker communities.

Egyptian Challenges and International Responses

The response to the reduction of Egyptian patronage of the tentmakers of Cairo has been the reinforced importance of international audiences as a viable and discerning market for *khayamiya*. Tourists and, recently, international quilt-makers have become a sustaining influence for this endangered art form. However, the potential for tourists to sustain *khayamiya* in its architectural manifestation – the *suradeq* – is limited, unless tour managers are willing to invest in handcrafted forms of these marvellous structures for entertainment purposes.

The major challenge facing *khayamiya* is that it is not widely perceived as an art form in Egypt. For example, *khayamiya* patterns have never been adapted for use on Egyptian currency or philately, nor are they widely associated with tourism advertising (despite *khayamiya* being frequently encountered in tourist restaurants and recreational facilities).

This perception also means the tentmakers bear a social status more akin to manual labourers than artists. This undeserved stigma is problematic for the recruitment and retention of young tentmakers, especially given the long apprenticeships required to become a master of this profession. Robert Bowker demonstrated problematic engagements with the tourist economy and Egyptian government intervention through a case study of the Street of the Tentmakers as a marginalized professional community.⁵² Like any other occupation, if the tentmakers are to survive as a self-sustaining community of artisans, they cannot rely on any form of Egyptian government assistance.

From a design perspective, ‘imitation *khayamiya*’ fabrics have separated the popular and architectural value of these colourful patterned textiles from their remarkable cultural and material heritage. Hand-appliquéd old *suradeq* are sometimes found in use as torn, faded and dusty tarpaulins surrounding construction and demolition sites in Cairo.⁵³ The two forms of *khayamiya* are so synonymous that damaged sections on original hand-appliquéd *suradeq* can be seen patched with pieces of ‘imitation *khayamiya*’ fabric.

Strangely, there are no examples of *khayamiya*, old or new, represented in any museum or gallery collection in Egypt. From a curatorial perspective, *suradeq* are formidably large installations to acquire, conserve and store, let alone display in their true context as architectural structures. However, a single hand-appliquéd *suradeq*, commissioned as a contemporary artwork, would be a spectacular addition to any international visual arts biennale, and bring new meaning to the concept of an ‘Egyptian Pavilion’. Likewise, the acquisition of a representative collection of historic *khayamiya siwan* (like the fine specimens in the British Museum) would prompt greater critical esteem of this art form within and beyond Egypt.

Hassan Fathy did not make noteworthy references to *khayamiya* or *suradeq* in his internationally influential publications on Egyptian sustainable architecture. Though these are significant structures in vernacular Egyptian culture, they probably were not sufficiently durable as permanent residential architecture to hold his interest – nor were they widely affordable before ‘imitation *khayamiya*’ was invented. This seems to be a strange oversight, for the incorporation of aesthetic, functional and cultural elements of the *suradeq* might sustain new directions in architectural forms beyond Egypt.

For example, Simon Schleicher considered the relevance of *suradeq* as a positive design contribution to a reinvention of indigenous shading systems for private structures and communal spaces such as streets or courtyards. His robotic and digital enhancements to vernacular ‘toldo’ textiles are well situated to develop new directions for *khayamiya* in an international architectural context for the twenty-first century.⁵⁴

International interest in *khayamiya* is currently manifested across several independent activities. The examples described below are collectively loosely termed ‘The Khayamiya Project’ by their participants, who interact with each other towards a mutual interest in sustaining and documenting the endangered art of *khayamiya*. Collectively, these projects demonstrate a systematic drive by international supporters to revitalize not the art of

khayamiya, but the *perception* of *khayamiya* as a vital aspect of Egyptian cultural heritage. This is meeting with considerable success on several levels, especially amongst American quilters, but several challenges remain. For example, the emerging recognition of *khayamiya* within the broader context of Islamic art can be demonstrated through John Gillow's depiction of Khedival and touristic forms of *khayamiya*, which also describes contemporary screen-printed variations.⁵⁵ This author has also recently submitted an article introducing *khayamiya* to the influential textile journal *Hali*, partly in response to the circulation of erroneous myths by textile collectors who encounter these objects.

Since 2009, the voluntary curatorship of Australian master quilt-maker Jenny Bowker (known by some tentmakers as *Umm al-Khayamiya*, 'Mother of the Tentmakers') and the subsequent patronage of the American Quilt Society have been crucial to raising the international profile of *khayamiya* as an endangered form of Egyptian living heritage. By drawing on the same supporting audience of quilters and primarily western craft specialists, the Australian filmmaker Kim Beamish is currently producing a feature-length documentary into the contested situation of *khayamiya* in Egypt, to be called 'The Tentmakers of Chareh el-Khiamiah'.

Published academic investigations into *khayamiya* began with Blaire Gagnon's work that drew upon the field research of Betty Wass in the late 1970s.⁵⁶ Since then, Charles Sturt University has supported the development of the international touring exhibition 'Khayamiya: Khedival to Contemporary' (curated by the author of this article, catalogue forthcoming), which is the first survey of the work of the Egyptian tentmakers between 1890 and 2010. This exhibition is currently scheduled to tour annually after 2014. The first substantial book on the history of Khayamiya is currently being prepared under the working title 'Khayamiya: Art of the Egyptian Tentmakers'.

Moreover, in late 2013 James Piscatori commissioned the first systematic oral history survey of the tentmakers of Cairo in collaboration with Dina Shehayeb, and also appointed Massimiliano Fusari as photographer-in-residence to create new visual records of this unique community. The results of these dual investigations were presented at Durham University (UK) in 2014, accompanying an exhibition of contemporary *khayamiya*, and several interviews were translated and published online. This study presents a more ethnographic account of the *khayamiya*, as opposed to the material heritage emphasis seen in the 'Khedival to Contemporary' exhibition.

In 1986, Feeney mentioned that a very large tent was in the process of being prepared for export to Iraq.⁵⁷ Coincidentally, a comparable tent is currently being appliquéd by hand in Cairo for the King of Jordan, and a private commission for tentmakers to design and create a dome-like *khayamiya* interior structure for a Saudi Arabian palace has recently been completed. Such large commissions are rare but optimistic reminders of the potential for *khayamiya* to return to its historic role as ephemeral architecture on a grand scale. The rapid innovation and diversification of *khayamiya* designs created as smaller-scale artworks may yet give rise to the creation of visually unprecedented *suradeq*, should the right patrons emerge.

Conclusion

Khayamiya structures are important manifestations of Egyptian vernacular architecture. They are driven by the changing technologies of production and their social functions, rather than the aesthetic or ‘Orientalist’ tastes of non-Egyptian audiences. Though *khayamiya* has evolved into a form of contemporary Egyptian art, reconsidering its architectural origins may provide a vital opportunity to resuscitate the waning tentmaker community in Cairo. This may provide a pathway towards the institutional recognition of *khayamiya* by museums, art galleries and design communities within Egypt and internationally, for such esteem will raise the appeal of participation in this skilled profession for young Egyptians.

The vibrant ornamental qualities of *khayamiya* are gaining recognition by designers from other fields, such as fashion, interior design, visual art and textile crafts. However, it remains inexplicable that such an intensely visual aspect of Egyptian vernacular culture is not highly regarded, or even widely considered, as a national icon of Egypt. There is a great deal yet to be contributed to contemporary Islamic architecture and design by those who can reassess the endangered art of *khayamiya* within its original architectural context: the *suradeq*, or *khayamiya* tent pavilion.

Both iconic and ignored, the *suradeq* is the majestic, adaptable and ephemeral venue for all manner of Egyptian celebrations. As the greatest manifestation of the endangered Egyptian art of *khayamiya*, it is time the *suradeq* was celebrated for what it is: a magnificent contribution to Islamic movable architecture.

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Detail from an anonymous German stereograph.

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Painting by Reginald Barrett, *The Fair, Moolid el Ahmadee, Cairo, 1906*. Published in D.S. Margoliouth, *Cairo, Jerusalem and Damascus* (Chatto & Windus, London, 1907), 174.

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Figure 12: A hand-appliquéd khayamiya siwan (panel) from a twentieth-century suradeq, five metres high by three metres wide, in the Bowker Collection.

¹ John Feeney, ‘Tentmakers of Cairo’, *Saudi Aramco World* (1986): 16–25 of the November/December print edition, also online, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/198606/tentmakers.of.cairo.htm>. Feeney’s article appears to draw extensively on the 1978 article by Don A Sanche, cited below.

² The spelling of ‘*khayamiya*’ is usually phonetic in English, and perhaps due to a lack of authoritative literature on this subject, it varies widely. A more accurate transliteration from the Arabic (خيامية) might be ‘*khayamiyya*’. However, since the ‘yy’ does not have an English precedent, an alternative spelling has been selected. The British Museum, at the time of writing, uses a slightly different spelling: *khiyamiya*.

³ During an interview with the author in 2013, the tentmaker Ekramy Fattoh stated that the *siwan* used to make *suradeq* were standardized at 2.75 metres by 5.5 metres. Square *siwan* are still occasionally made by hand in Cairo for urban use.

⁴ Perhaps the closest analogy to the popular contemporary appreciation of *khayamiya* in Egypt may be drawn within a western context to the use of tinsel during the Christmas season. Like imitation *khayamiya*, tinsel is another urban textile, primarily seen as an inexpensive synthetic decoration for special occasions, with some degree of cultural specificity. Both may be seen within their respective cultural contexts as little more than a splash of seasonal colour to juxtapose the festive from the mundane – nothing you would expect to see examined in a peer-reviewed article.

⁵ For a concise broad overview of tent cultures across the Middle East, refer to Caroline Stone, ‘Movable Palaces’, *Saudi Aramco World*, April 2010, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/201004/movable.palaces.htm>. The use of decorated tents imported from Egypt for Ethiopian and Sudanese events was reported by Richard Pankhurst in ‘The Tents of the Ethiopian Court’, *Azania* 18.1 (1993). Several photographs from Jordan of Egyptian tents being used as dining rooms by Thomas Cook Tours can be located in the collection of the US Library of Congress. Regarding Persian tents, see Bernard O’Kane, ‘From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design’, *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993): 249–68.

⁶ Ornamented tents from the Indian tradition also feature a long-standing use of printed calico fabrics such as *kalamkari*, which is only a recent development in Egyptian *khayamiya*. The term *qanat* appears to be more closely linked to individual tent panels from an Indian context, for in Egypt such panels are called *siwan* by the tentmakers.

⁷ Peter Alford Andrews, *Felt Tents and Pavilions: the Nomadic Tradition and its Interaction with Princely Heritage*, *Köln Ethnologische Mitteilungen* (London: Melisende, 1997); Peter Alford Andrews, *Nomad Tent Types in the Middle East* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1999).

⁸ Heba Barakat, *Beyond Boundaries: Tents of the Islamic World* (Kuala Lumpur: The Islamic Art Museum Malaysia, 2003).

⁹ Nurhan Atasoy, *Otağ-ı Hümayun: The Ottoman Imperial Tent Complex* (Istanbul: Aygaz, 2000).

¹⁰ A. Abdul-Yazid, ‘Khayamiya: The Texture of Life and Death’, *Al-Arabi Magazine* 7 (2003): 538, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://3arabimag.com/SubjectArticle.asp?ID=11447>.

¹¹ Don A Sanche, 'Tent-Making Craft Falling by Wayside', *The Tuscaloosa News* (various reprints), Wednesday 18 October 1978, p.33 Accessed 29 March 2014

¹² Hossein Al-Sayyed, 'The Egyptian Art of Tent-Making', *Ahram Online*, Tuesday 24 July 2012, accessed 25 January 2014;

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/32/99/48580/Folk/Special-Files/The-Egyptian-art-of-tentmaking.aspx>

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David Wroe, 'Not far from Cairo's madding crowds', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 March 2008, accessed 25 January 2014. <http://www.smh.com.au/news/africa/not-far-from-cairos-madding-crowds/2008/02/28/1203788502558.html>

Magda Abu-Fadil, 'Cairo's Khayamiya not yet history – but for how long?', *Huffington Post* 25 August 2013, accessed 25 January 2014; http://www.huffingtonpost.com/magda-abufadil/cairos-khayamiya-not-yet_b_3812956.html

¹³ Nevine Al-Aref, 'Endangered Past', *Al-Ahram Weekly* 1108 (25–31 July 2012), accessed 25 January 2014. <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1108/eg7.htm>

¹⁴ Tents can also be noted in archaeological surveys as regions of displaced stones or 'tent rings', such as in the excavation of the Batn al-Ghoul Ottoman army camp in Jordan.

¹⁵ Atasoy, *Otağ-ı Hümayun*.

¹⁶ Stone, 'Movable Palaces'.

¹⁷ There is still a 'Street of the Tentmakers' in both Istanbul (*Çadırcılar Caddesi*) and Cairo (*Sharia Khayamiya*), but the Turkish street is no longer associated with manufacture and retail of tents, unlike Cairo's equivalent.

¹⁸ The oral history of the Egyptian tentmakers does not record an association with Turkish tentmakers, but the extent of their testimony is limited to three or four generations, which does not quite reach the 1850s. More information was recorded in late 2013 through an extensive oral history survey of the tentmakers, led by Professor Jim Piscatori of Durham University. Transcriptions from this fieldwork will be published in 2014 at <http://www.cairotentmakers.com/>.

¹⁹ The earliest known depiction of *khayamiya* in an Egyptian context is a photograph by Emile Berchard, circa 1860. This depicts a gathering of *ulema* seated under a *khayamiya* described by contemporary tentmakers as 'Menbar Setara', or a mosque panel. A copy of this print is held in the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles (Catalogue 2008.R.3), accessed 25 January 2014, http://www.getty.edu/research/scholars/research_projects/orientalist_photography/enlarge_docteur_en_religion.html.

²⁰ Atasoy, *Otağ-ı Hümayun*, 2000: 46.

²¹ Rope-and-pole armatures are more typically ‘Ottoman’ rather than Egyptian, in the context of *khayamiya*. Egyptian *suradeq* favour structural scaffolding over tensile ropes, resulting in a more rectangular structure.

²² *Description de l’Égypte*, ed. Gilles Néret, (London: Taschen, 2007), 193, 344, 381, 736.

²³ Edward William Lane, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians written in Egypt during the years 1833, 1834 and 1835* (London: John Murray, 1860).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

²⁵ Sometimes *khayamiya* tents in *mawlids* are called *siwan* by observers, but tentmakers today insist that this term describes specific panels of *khayamiya* appliqué. The *mawlid* tent as a whole is still a *suradeq*.

²⁶ This direct attribution was made in the auction catalogue accompanying the sale of a Khedival *khayamiya* tent by Christies on 18 October 2001, which was ultimately purchased by the Islamic Art Museum of Malaysia. Link to record here (accessed 25 January 2014): <http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/lot/an-egyptian-cotton-applique-lined-circa-1900-3049384-details.aspx?from=searchresults&pos=4&intObjectID=3049384&sid=e882c835-3a10-41a2-8dd6-8620c9182ddf&page=1>.

²⁷ For more information about the ‘Mamluk Revival’ as an architectural movement in Egypt, consult Laila Kamal Marei’s thesis ‘Revival of Mamluk Architecture in the 19th & 20th centuries’ (American University in Cairo 2013) accessed 25 January 2014, <https://dar.aucegypt.edu/handle/10526/3318>; and also Paula Sanders, *Creating Medieval Cairo: Empire, Religion and Architectural Preservation in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008).

²⁸ Examining and situating the manifestations of a ‘Mamluk Revival’ *zeitgeist* in Khedival *khayamiya* is a project for future research.

²⁹ Such *khayamiya* tents can now be seen as far afield as Malaysia and Alaska. According to newspaper records from 1899, a wedding in the regional Australian town of Bendigo was held in a ‘pretty Egyptian tent’. See ‘Marriage of Isabelle Milne Garlick to John D. King Scott, ceremony held at “Banool”, Yarra Glen’, *Bendigo Advertiser*, Wednesday 20 December 1899, 2, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89472657>.

³⁰ Christopher Reed, ‘Love Nest’, *Harvard Magazine*, July–August 2009, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://harvardmagazine.com/2009/07/love-nest>.

³¹ At that time they were residing in India, and believed their unrestored tent was of Indian origin. This was a logical assumption since at that stage almost nothing had been published to identify their tent as Egyptian. Comparably appliquéed tents are a recurring feature at festivals in India, and the female Gujarati tentmakers made no comments about the tent of Doddington Hall being distinct from the tents they normally made. It is unlikely that the Gujarati tentmakers had encountered Egyptian *khayamiya* previously.

³² Douglas Sladen, *Oriental Cairo: City of 1001 Nights* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1912), 143–44, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/9189>.

³³ Photographs depicting the exterior of this structure survive, resembling the ‘Wedding Tent’ in Figure 2.

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- ³⁴ Douglas Sladen, *Queer Things about Egypt* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1911), 239–40, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://scholarship.rice.edu/jsp/xml/1911/9298/1015/SlaQuee.tei-timea.html>.
- ³⁵ Sladen, *Oriental Cairo*, 143–44.
- ³⁶ One of the best records of these ‘superb awnings’ is Bob Landry’s photograph for *Time Life* magazine in 1942, captioned ‘Egyptian magician doing table tricks on terrace of Shepherd’s Hotel, Cairo’, Getty Images 50483194, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://www.gettyimages.com.au/detail/news-photo/egyptian-magician-doing-table-tricks-on-terrace-of-news-photo/50483194>.
- ³⁷ Douglas Sladen, *Egypt and the English* (London: Hurst and Blackett: 1908), accessed 25 January 2014, <http://archive.org/details/egyptandenglish00sladgoog>.
- ³⁸ Yunan Labib Rizk, ‘The Making of a King’, *Al-Ahram Weekly*, 29 September–5 October 2005: 762, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/762/chrncls.htm>.
- ³⁹ Gabriela Teichmann and Gisela Vögler, eds., *Faszination Orient: Max von Oppenheim* (Ostfildern: DuMont Reiseverlag, 2003), 38–39.
- ⁴⁰ Mary R. Rinehart, *Nomad’s Land* (New York: Doran, 1926), 31.
- ⁴¹ Rinehart, *Nomad’s Land*, 21 and 32.
- ⁴² C.N. Williamson and A.M. Williamson, *It Happened in Egypt* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co, 1914).
- ⁴³ Barakat, *Beyond Boundaries*, 189–90.
- ⁴⁴ This 210cm x 135cm fabric is catalogued as Af1991, 11.9. The record description states that it is a ‘piece of factory-made, multicoloured, printed textile decorated with a variety of arabesque motifs’, collected by Dr B. John Mack and Christopher J Spring in Cairo in 1991.
- ⁴⁵ A copy of this photograph can be seen in the Manchester Museum, identified as MM: AUA.939.7, accessed 25 January 2014, <http://ancientworldsmanchester.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/carpet-makers.jpg>.
- ⁴⁶ Samuli Schielke, ‘On snacks and saints: when discourses of rationality and order enter the Egyptian mawlid’, *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 135 (July–September, 2006): 117–40. See also Samuli Schielke, ‘Mawlids and Modernists: Dangers of Fun’, *ISIM Review* 17, Spring (2006): 6–7.
- ⁴⁷ Robert Nelson, ‘Modern Australian buildings are unfriendly – and here’s why’, *The Conversation*, 12 November 2013, accessed 25 January 2014, <https://theconversation.com/modern-australian-buildings-are-unfriendly-and-heres-why-19432>.
- ⁴⁸ Feeney, ‘Tentmakers of Cairo’.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² Robert Bowker, *Egypt and the Politics of Change in the Arab Middle East* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2010), 153–55.
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