

**Conference Report:
Interdisciplinary Sources & Methods
for the Study of Pre-Archival Societies:
The Case of Baghdad
(Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales
and Institute for Advanced Study,
Paris, 7–8 June 2022)¹**

Report by the Conference Organizers:

NASSIMA NEGGAZ

New College of Florida, Whitman College

VANESSA VAN RENTERGHEM

*Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco)
and Centre d'Études et de Recherche Moyen-Orient, Méditerranée (Cermom)*

This two-day international workshop, titled “Interdisciplinary Sources & Methods for the Study of Pre-Archival Societies: The Case of Baghdad,” brought together both junior and senior scholars working on medieval Baghdad from various disciplines.² While these researchers have access to a rich array of sources, they face the challenge of a limited quantity of preserved archives—defined here as “documentary records preserved in their

1. This conference report is dedicated to the memory of Françoise Micheau, French specialist on Abbasid Baghdad, who abruptly passed away in July 2024. Her presentation at the Paris workshop was her last participation in an international conference. She was a tireless researcher and played an important role as a Professor of Islamic history at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.

2. The workshop benefited from the support of the FIAS fellowship program and that of the Labex RFIEA+, as well as from Inalco and Cermom funding. The FIAS fellowship program is co-funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 945408. This event was also supported by the Labex RFIEA+, funded by the “Investissements d’avenir” program (ANR-11-LABX-0027-01).

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original archival context.”³ The workshop aimed to evaluate current historical knowledge of medieval Baghdad and identify underexplored areas, using this collective endeavor to address broader methodological challenges in writing the history of societies with a long tradition of archiving,⁴ albeit with scarce surviving collections of administrative or private records. This symposium was unique in its emphasis on methodological approaches to Baghdad’s history in the *longue durée*, from the foundation of the city to the Ilkhanid period.

Topics and Research Fields

The workshop brought together fifteen participants from seven countries (see the program at the end of this report), who delivered sixteen papers and one two-voice final lecture. The addressed topics exemplify the rich thematic span of scholarship on Baghdad to today: from urban history and topography (Northedge, Verkinderen) to political and administrative history (Heidemann, Micheau, van Berkel, Rébillard), and from economic questions (Kennedy, van Berkel) to social history (Hoorelbeke, Neggaz, Van Renterghem). Many papers gave insights into Baghdad’s intellectual life and milieu, with a focus on intellectual history (Gareil, Micheau, Osti, Tillier). Some papers discussed topics that are new to the field, like sanitary studies (Biran), while others focused on methodological issues (Jelinowski, Verkinderen). The Paris workshop attempted to cover the whole medieval period, from the foundation of Baghdad to Ilkhanid rule. As is to be expected, the first Abbasid centuries (from the second half of the second/eighth to the first half of the fourth/tenth century) were dealt with in detail (Northedge, van Berkel, Kennedy, Hoorelbeke, Tillier, Rébillard, Micheau, Osti). The Buyid and Seljuq periods were also examined (Gareil, Neggaz, Van Renterghem) and two papers were devoted to the Ilkhanid period (Biran, Jelinowski). Some participants chose a long-term approach, covering the whole medieval period; such approaches were based on specific corpora (Heidemann on numismatics) or a particular methodology (Verkinderen on canal reconstruction).

Sources, Methodologies, and Scales of Analysis

Research on medieval Baghdad is mainly based on textual sources due to the scarcity of material artifacts and archaeological studies; narrative texts, which are primarily non-documentary, serve as the principal source of information. The participants used a range of medieval narrative texts, including literary *adab* works (Hoorelbeke, Rébillard, van Berkel), geographical treatises and *riḥla* (Gareil), poetry (Neggaz), biographical collections

3. K. Hirschler, “From Archive to Archival Practices: Rethinking the Preservation of Mamluk Administrative Documents,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 136, no. 1 (2021): 1–28, at 3.

4. On this topic, see T. El-Leithy, “Living Documents, Dying Archives: Towards a Historical Anthropology of Medieval Arabic Archives,” *al-Qanṭara* 32, no. 2 (2011): 389–434; P. M. Sijpesteijn, “The Archival Mind in Early Islamic Egypt: Two Arabic Papyri,” in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World*, ed. P. M. Sijpesteijn, 163–86 (Leiden: Brill, 2007); K. Hirschler, “From Archive to Archival Practices”; and M. Rustow, *The Lost Archive: Traces of a Caliphate in a Cairo Synagogue* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020).

and *rijāl* books (Hoorelbeke, Neggaz, Osti, Van Renterghem), as well as historiographical works that are mainly chronicles (Osti, van Berkel, Jelinowski, Kennedy, Micheau, Tillier). Additionally, non-historiographical texts, such as administrative handbooks, were also employed for historical analysis (van Berkel). Research on medieval Baghdad draws from texts in various languages, including Arabic, Persian, Syriac, and other locally used languages; for instance, Biran incorporated Armenian and Georgian sources. While research typically involves multiple sources across these categories, some scholars focused predominantly on a single text (Hoorelbeke on the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, Jelinowski on ‘Aṭā Malik Juvaynī’s *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*, and Tillier on the *Akhbār al-quḍāt* of Wakī’).

Several participants made use of material corpora, including numismatics collections (Heidemann), aerial photographs, satellite imagery, maps and topographic data (Verkinderen, Northedge), as well as wider archaeological surveys and reports (Northedge, Kennedy). These material corpora, with a few exceptions like some coins, do not originate from Baghdad itself but from surrounding areas, such as archaeological sites in Samarra and al-Raqqā, surveys of the Diyāla and Euphrates areas, topographical studies in Khuzistan, and coin collections from Iraq and the Jazīra. For this reason, they are employed cautiously for comparative analysis.

Textual collections were analyzed using a range of methods, from qualitative readings to various quantitative methods such as prosopography, lexicometry, and statistical analysis. The Paris workshop also showcased varied scales of analysis, spanning broad, trans-regional studies (Biran, Kennedy) and detailed microhistories (Neggaz, Van Renterghem).

Panels and Papers

The conference’s first day took place at the Inalco. Following opening remarks by Nassima Neggaz and Vanessa Van Renterghem, the first panel focused on the “Historical Topography of a City with No Remnants,” highlighting the challenges of studying Abbasid Baghdad, given the scarcity of surviving physical remains apart from a few late Abbasid structures (sixth/twelfth to seventh/thirteenth centuries). To advance our understanding of the city’s layout, structure, and architecture, researchers are exploring new methodologies. Alastair Northedge, an expert on Samarra known for his work combining archaeological and textual evidence, proposed the comparison of the architecture of Samarra and al-Raqqā with that of Baghdad. This approach is justified because constructions in these three cities utilized similar building materials (fired brick and mud brick) and were built in roughly the same period. He also emphasized the fact that some underused modern resources, such as aerial photographs from the early twentieth century and CORONA satellite imagery from the 1960s, could help identify and locate key features of medieval Baghdad, such as city walls and canals. In a 2013 PhD thesis, published as a book,⁵ Peter Verkinderen examined the waterways of southern Iraq and Khuzistan by integrating a variety of sources, including maps, aerial photographs, satellite imagery, archaeological surveys, and medieval texts. At the Paris conference, he explained how he reconstructed the network of ancient and

5. P. Verkinderen, *Waterways of Iraq and Iran in the Early Islamic Period: Changing Rivers and Landscapes of the Mesopotamian Plain* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015).

medieval watercourses in the region and discussed the methodological challenges involved in such work. Although his doctoral research did not specifically address Baghdad, his presentation highlighted how landscape analysis could be applied to reconstruct the canal system of medieval Baghdad. This network was a critical element of the city's urban layout, not only supplying water and facilitating the movement of goods, but also defining the boundaries of neighborhoods.

The second panel on "Archives and Numismatics" continued with the examination of the contribution of non-narrative sources. Maaïke van Berkel addressed the issue of the "lost archives" of the Abbasid caliphate. She highlighted that, despite the near absence of primary documents from the Abbasid period in Baghdad, the administration generated extensive written records, which were maintained and copied in various registers. Using the reign of Caliph al-Muqtadir (r. 295–320/908–932) as a case study, van Berkel demonstrated how literary sources can be utilized to reconstruct the intricate operations of the Abbasid administration, even in the absence of its original physical archives.⁶ Stefan Heidemann examined numismatic sources from the perspective of urban and administrative structures. By comparing the mint names on coins struck in various cities throughout the Abbasid empire, especially Iraq and the Jazīra, Heidemann explained that the named locations refer to provinces, cities and parts of them, often adding administrative specifications (*madīna*, *ma'dīn*, etc.) or urban honorifics. No coin from the Abbasid period bore the name "Baghdad"; instead, coins indicated "Madīnat al-Salām" as origin. He argued that what historians refer to today as "Baghdad" was viewed in medieval times as an agglomeration of distinct cities or *amṣār* (plural of *miṣr*), in the legal sense, rather than a single unified entity. Heidemann proposed that scholars should clearly differentiate between the palace city Madīnat al-Salām (commonly known as the "Round City") and the other urban precincts of Baghdad. He also advocated for the use of numismatic evidence as a valuable indicator of administrative practices, suggesting that these should be contrasted with legal interpretations, such as those regarding the concept of a "city."

The remaining panels primarily focused on the analysis of textual sources. The third panel, titled "Neighborhoods and Urban Identities," employed micro-history to explore social dynamics within specific districts of the city. Nassima Neggaz examined when and how the neighborhood of al-Karkh in Baghdad became a stronghold of Imāmī-Shī'ism.⁷ Contrary to secondary scholarship, which has tended to equate the rise of confessional violence from the Buyid period onward with a new geographical distribution of religious communities in different areas across Baghdad, Neggaz demonstrated that al-Karkh began attracting Imāmīs from the early Abbasid period. By analyzing Shī'ī *rijāl* works, she traced the migration of Imāmī scholars to Baghdad and revealed their deliberate choice to settle in al-Karkh. She argued that it was al-Karkh, rather than Baghdad as a whole, that emerged as the center of the Imāmī *wikāla* (network of the Imām's deputies) by the late third/

6. As investigated in M. van Berkel, "Reconstructing Archival Practices in Abbasid Baghdad," *Journal of Abbasid Studies* 1 (2014): 7–22.

7. See N. Neggaz, "Al-Karkh: the Development of an Imāmī-Shī'ī Stronghold in Early Abbasid and Būyid Baghdad (132–447/750–1055)," *Studia Islamica* 114 (2019): 265–315.

ninth century, the hub of the Imāmī *ḥawza* (seminary) and the rationalist theological school that flourished under the Būyids (333–447/945–1055). Neggaz utilized chronicles and poetry to illustrate how al-Karkh evolved into a focal point for a popular Imāmī-Shīʿa movement, which significantly influenced the social and political landscape of the Abbasid capital. Vanessa Van Renterghem’s paper also delved into microhistory and neighborhoods, providing fresh insights into Baghdad’s social history through the lens of local identities. She revealed a distinct vocabulary used for different neighborhoods, demonstrating how terms like *maḥall* apply specifically to the city’s western side, indicating a connection between local spaces and urban terminology. Van Renterghem argued that while attachments to places are inherently subjective, they can be reconstructed through a detailed analysis of literary sources. This approach is crucial not only for understanding local identities within Baghdad but also for grasping the broader implications of the city’s spatial divisions on social and urban life. Such locally forged identities become particularly evident during significant events, including festivals, social gatherings, funeral processions, and riots, which contribute to an understanding of the social dynamics of the city.

The fourth panel explored the burgeoning field of the digital humanities. Over the past decade, advances in digital methods and tools have facilitated computational analysis of extensive corpora. Notable projects have been established to support large-scale scientific examination of textual materials. Among these, [the KITAB project](#), led by Sarah Bowen Savant at Aga Khan University in London, stands out in the field of Islamic history. This project aims to develop methods and technologies to investigate text reuse, authorship, and intellectual networks within the premodern Arabic textual tradition and has already produced significant results. As a member of the core team of this project, Peter Verkinderen presented a second paper on the possible uses of digital methods and text corpora, focusing on the text reuse detection method used by the KITAB project and the [corpus](#) developed by [the Open Islamicate Texts Initiative \(OpenITI\)](#) led by Sarah Savant, Maxim Romanov (University of Hamburg) and Matthew Miller (University of Maryland). Verkinderen compared this OpenITI corpus, the largest available collection of computer-actionable premodern Islamicate texts, with Ibn al-Nadīm’s famous catalog of books. He found that both the *Fihrist* and the OpenITI corpus only partially represent the Islamic literary tradition of the first four centuries: about 80% of books by authors who died before 400/1000 in the OpenITI corpus are not listed in the *Fihrist*, while over 95% of *Fihrist* entries are missing from the OpenITI corpus. In his study of the work of ‘Aṭā Malik Juvaynī (d. 681/1283), administrator of the Ilkhans in Baghdad, Jan Jelinowski employed new digital tools, such as lexicometry, to analyze the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* as both an archive, in the sense of a composite assemblage of Mongol and Islamic reports, and a historical narrative. Using quantitative methods like [the Stylo\(\) package in R](#) to compare the text’s vocabulary, Jelinowski identified stylistic differences, particularly in the section on Ismaili history as compared to other segments. Building on previous research with Simon Berger, Jelinowski demonstrated that lexicometry could trace Mongol vocabulary in the text, suggesting that the *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā* reflects a Mongol discourse using Persian sources, rather than the other way around.

On the second day, the conference took place at the Hôtel de Lauzun, a historic 17th-century building that houses the Institute of Advanced Study on the Île Saint Louis in Paris. The fifth panel examined “Economic, Demographic, and Sanitary Questions” through the use of narrative sources. Hugh Kennedy’s presentation focused on Baghdad’s food supply during the early Abbasid period (145/762 to ca. 339/950). He noted that estimates of Baghdad’s population range from a quarter to half a million or more, making food supply in Baghdad the largest commercial activity in western Eurasia at the time. Compared to food supply in Rome or Constantinople, Baghdad’s system was less centralized; there was no *dīwān* responsible for it, but the Abbasid state indirectly influenced supply through salary payments, which created economic demand. Kennedy pointed out that while extensive sources exist for Rome, records of Baghdad’s food supply only emerged during the fourth/tenth century, when famine struck, as documented by Miskawayh. Kennedy, along with Maaïke van Berkel, also provided further insights into food supply and sustainability in the closing lecture. Michal Biran introduced the relatively new, especially for Islamic studies, field of sanitary history into the context of medieval Baghdad. She addressed the topic of the Black Death, critically examining the claim put forward in a recent article by Monica Green and Nahyan Fancy that the Mongol conquest of Baghdad in 656/1258 was facilitated by a local plague epidemic.⁸ This article combined genetic data on the plague pathogen with translated literary sources, concluding that the plague was a major factor in the collapse of Muslim resistance. Biran challenged this view through a philological analysis of historiographical sources in Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Armenian, and Georgian, arguing that rather than the so-called plague, medieval historians alluded to a series of regular epidemics exacerbated by the siege. She demonstrated that pestilence was already present in Baghdad prior to the Mongol invasion, due to malnutrition, population density, as well as the migrations of people from the Sawād region. Biran’s study highlighted the importance of integrating textual analysis with scientific methods, emphasizing that while new methodologies offer valuable insights, they should complement rather than replace traditional philological approaches. The findings are detailed in an article published in *Medical History*, co-authored by Biran, Jonathan Brack, and Reuven Amitai.⁹

Panel six was dedicated to “The City and Its Social Imaginary.” The papers highlighted two prominent figures in Baghdadi life, the poet and the thief. Eugénie Rébillard focused on criminal figures in early Abbasid Baghdad by analyzing a range of literary and normative sources. She examined the history and social perceptions of crime, revealing that collective crimes, such as gang-related activities, were more frequently reported than individual crimes, particularly if the latter did not involve the political or military elite. Rébillard also noted that certain offenses, like house attacks (*kabsāt*), are disproportionately represented in historical records, while others, such as rape and sexual assault, are seldom mentioned and often only briefly when they are. Mathias Hoorelbeke examined Baghdad’s role as a central hub for poets from the city’s founding until the end of Hārūn al-Rashīd’s reign

8. N. Fancy and M. H. Green, “Plague and the Fall of Baghdad (1258),” *Medical History* 65, no. 2 (2021): 157–77.

9. J. Brack, M. Biran, and R. Amitai, “Plague and the Mongol Conquest of Baghdad (1258)? A Reevaluation of the Sources,” *Medical History*, published online (8 April 2024): 1–19.

(193/809). By conducting a quantitative and statistical analysis of data from Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī's *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, Hoorelbeke tracked fifty-nine poets and singers, finding that thirty-one of them visited Baghdad. This highlighted the city's pivotal role in elevating poets, as their works were often set to music in the capital. Hoorelbeke demonstrated that Baghdad emerged as the dominant center for poetic training and recognition, surpassing other Iraqi centers like Basra and Kufa. The city's prominence in poetry was due to the convergence of symbolic and financial endorsement from the Abbasid court, solidifying Baghdad's status as what he calls the "qibla of poets."

Panel seven continued exploring Baghdad's centrality, with Rémy Gareil focusing on its symbolic significance as both center of an empire and of the world. He showed that a universality trope appears extensively in historical, geographical, and literary sources, especially during the Buyid period. By examining references to this theme in third/ninth- and fourth/tenth-century texts, including the lesser-known version of Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī's (fl. 290/903) *Kitāb al-Buldān*, Gareil argued that this universality trope was closely tied to Baghdad's cultural and political history. It functioned as a tool for legitimizing Buyid rule and was used by writers to enhance the city's reputation and address the empire's divisions through symbols of unity and global significance. Françoise Micheau's presentation explored life in Baghdad during the period when Samarra became the Abbasid capital, a period often called the "Samarra interlude." She examined the role of the *ṣāhib al-shurṭa* (police chief), whose responsibilities expanded significantly to include tax collection and maintaining order across the city and the Sawād, effectively placing Baghdad under Samarra's control. The topographical changes that took place in Baghdad during that period, together with this transformation of the function of the city, led Micheau to question the very concept of "interlude." She also compared the scholarly communities of both cities, noting that while scientists like the Banū Mūsā and Ḥunayn b. Ishāq thrived in Samarra, religious scholars remained in Baghdad, fostering a distinct scholarly identity focused on traditional knowledge. This divergence, she argued, was a consequence of both the *miḥna* and the Abbasid court's relocation to Samarra, where scientists could find patronage.

Panel eight approached the relationship between political periodization and intellectual life through two case studies. Mathieu Tillier analyzed the *Akḥbār al-quḍāt* by the Baghdadi scholar Wakīʿ (d. 306/918), noting that the work gives minimal attention to Baghdad and uses the city as a counter-model for judicial administration. Tillier argued that Wakīʿ, a traditionist strongly opposed to the *miḥna* and what he perceived as the corruption of scholars and jurists in Baghdad, reinterpreted the history of judges through this critical period. Tillier thus highlighted the importance of the *miḥna* as a fundamental event polarizing later historiography. His study has already been published in *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wuṣṭā*.¹⁰ Letizia Osti, in connection with her recent book on al-Ṣūlī (d. 335/947),¹¹ examined the

10. M. Tillier, "Muḥammad b. Khalaf Wakīʿ (m. 306/918), ou le désamour de Bagdad," *Al-ʿUṣūr al-Wuṣṭā* 32 (2024): 1–21.

11. L. Osti, *History and Memory in the Abbasid Caliphate: Writing the Past in Medieval Arabic Literature* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022).

interplay between literary and political networks in fourth/tenth-century Baghdad, using this author as a focal point. A scholar, poet, courtier, historian of the caliphate, and disciple of Wakiʿ, al-Ṣūlī's work provides insights into the material means of text dissemination in medieval Baghdad and beyond. Osti analyzed passages where al-Ṣūlī refers to his use of personal notebooks (*daftar*, pl. *dafātir*) for recording auditions, poetry, and drafts of future works. She placed these within the context of a hotly debated matter in al-Ṣūlī's time, the superiority of orality over writing as means of transmission of knowledge.

The final panel concluded with a general discussion, moderated by Neggaz and Van Renterghem, exploring the future of research for medieval Baghdad, as well as avenues for further collaborations between researchers internationally.

The conference concluded with a public lecture by Hugh Kennedy and Maaïke van Berkel, which explored the crucial role of food and water in early Abbasid Baghdad. Using archaeological evidence, Kennedy demonstrated Baghdad's dependence on cereal supplies from the surrounding area: the rich lands of the Sawād, but also the Jazīra, from which grain was transported via the Euphrates River and a sophisticated network of canals. The larger context in which Baghdad's economy is to be understood thus encompasses all those regions with which the city was trading grains and goods. The Abbasid administration seems not to have directly organized the supply, which was structured by the strong demand of the inhabitants of Baghdad. This system eventually collapsed in the fourth/tenth century, leading to what Kennedy described as a "zombie-capital." Van Berkel followed with an analysis of water supply in Baghdad, stemming from her leadership of the Dutch research program [Source of Life: Water Management in the Premodern Middle East \(7th–15th c.\)](#). The program investigates water management in medieval cities (Basra, Baghdad, Mosul, Cairo, Damascus). Van Berkel examined the city's water canals, which supplied much of West Baghdad by channeling water from the Euphrates to the Tigris, while the Nahrawān Canal served East Baghdad. After the initial construction or restoration of these canals, the Abbasid state's role in water supply was minimal. Water distribution was managed through a mix of collective and private means, including water carriers. Van Berkel argued that water management offers crucial insights into urban organization.

Overall, the Paris workshop provided a platform for scholars and researchers to explore the state of the field and to discuss the methodological difficulties they face in a context where textual information can rarely be related to material artifacts. The panels covered various areas of medieval Baghdad studies, including social history, sanitary issues, political and economic history, topography, literature, and crime. The workshop explored both innovative and traditional methods for studying the city's history. Discussions highlighted the integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches, including digital humanities tools, to better analyze historical texts. The event prompted a reevaluation of established analytical frameworks, advocating for new perspectives, such as trans-regional and microhistorical approaches, and for a reflection on periodization. Emerging research areas, including environmental and health history, Baghdadi Shīʿism, and social history, were emphasized, with a strong call for more collective and comparative research efforts. The rich and insightful discussions sparked by the Paris workshop will be the focus of a more detailed forthcoming article to be published in the *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* (REMMM).

June 2022 Workshop Program

**Interdisciplinary Sources & Methods for the Study of Pre-Archival Societies:
The Case of Baghdad**

General Introduction – Nassima Neggaz, Vanessa Van Renterghem

Panel Session 1 – Historical Topography of a City with No Remnants

- Alastair Northedge: “What Archaeological Evidence Can Teach Us about the Urban Plan of Early Abbasid Baghdad”
- Peter Verkinderen: “Reconstructing Historical Watercourses in Iraq: Combining Data Types”

Panel Session 2 – Archives and Numismatics: Administrative Documents within and beyond Narrative Sources

- Maaïke Van Berkel: “Reconstructing the Archives of Baghdad”
- Stefan Heidemann: “Cities as Agglomerations – Baghdad, al-Raqqa, and other places”

Panel Session 3 – Neighborhoods and Urban Identities

- Nassima Neggaz: “Documenting the Incubation of the Imāmī Movement in Karkh Baghdad: From Poetry to Shī‘ī *Rijāl* Works”
- Vanessa Van Renterghem: “The Districts of Baghdad: Distinct Entities?”

Panel Session 4 – Digital Humanities and New Research Perspectives

- Peter Verkinderen: “Leveraging Digital Text Corpora: Search and Text Reuse Analysis”
- Jan Jelinowski: “Historical Writing and Social Structures in the Hulegüid Period: Proposition for a New Reading of ‘Aṭā Malik Juvaynī’s *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā*”

Panel Session 5 – Economic, Demographic, and Sanitary Questions: Interrogating the Narrative Sources

- Hugh Kennedy: “The Food Supply of Baghdad in the Early Abbasid period (762–c.950)”
- Michal Biran: “Did the Black Death Hurt Baghdad in 1258? Multi-lingual Sources for the Study of Ilkhanid Baghdad (1258–1335)”

Panel Session 6 – From Poets to Thugs: The City and Its Social Imaginary

- Mathias Hoorelbeke: “Baghdad and the Circulation of Poets at the Start of the Abbasid Period according to the Book of Songs”
- Eugénie Rébillard: “Exceptional or Exemplary? Narratives on Thievery and Thieves in Baghdad (IX–XI Centuries)”

Panel Session 7 – Knowledge and Power: Baghdad, a Universal Center?

- Françoise Micheau: “Baghdad at the Time of Sāmarrā’: Some Questions”
- Rémy Gareil: “Baghdad, Universal Center of Knowledge”

Panel Session 8 – Writing in Baghdad, Writing about Baghdad: Two Case Studies and Their Horizons

- Mathieu Tillier: “Muhammad b. Khalaf Wakī’, Historian of Baghdad”
- Laetizia Osti: “Looking Things Up and Writing Things Down: Networks and Notebooks in Tenth-Century Baghdad”

General Conclusion – Nassima Neggaz, Vanessa Van Renterghem

Public Conference (Hugh Kennedy and Maaïke van Berkel): “Sources of Life: Food and Water for the Inhabitants of Abbasid Baghdad”