

Ian B. Straughn received his Ph.D. degree in anthropology from the University of Chicago where he specialized in the archaeology of the Islamic world. His archaeological work on the transformation of the early Islamic period landscape has included research in Syria, Armenia, Jordan and Egypt. His research has paid particular attention to the role of material culture in the formation of Muslim societies and the development of heritage practices and discourses in, and about how religious traditions shape and are shaped by the lived landscape the Middle East. One of the major themes of his publications has been to explore the ways in which Islam is shaped not only by a textual tradition, but through the lived practices of Muslims with the material world. More recently, he has begun to work with Arabic manuscripts from a private library in Timbuktu, Mali, as part of a larger interest in the ways that vernacular forms of heritage have shaped Muslim engagements with the past. Straughn served as Joukowsky Family Librarian for Middle East Studies, and adjunct assistant professor of anthropology at Brown University, Providence, RI. Currently, he is an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at University of California, Irvine, CA.