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The Islamic Bookbinding Tradition. A Book Archaeological Study

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Catharina Helena (Karin) Scheper was born in the Noordoostpolder in 1970. She attended secondary school in Emmeloord which she finished in 1988. Her education was continued in Amsterdam, where she first studied history of art at the Vrije Universiteit, though she switched to Conservation in 1991. During the four year training programme at *Opleiding Restauratoren*, Karin was trained as a Book and Paper conservator. When the programme allowed she worked at *Lingbeek & van Daalen*, a paper conservation studio, in order to build up hands-on experience, and over two summers she participated in a conservation project of the family archive of Victor de Stuers at *De Wiersse*, in Ruurlo, the Netherlands. After graduation in 1995 she started her working career at the Municipal Archives in Amsterdam. Two years later the opportunity arose to specialise further in book conservation, at the private workshop *Mooie Boeken*. In 2000 she was asked to consider the setting up of the conservation workshop at the University Library Leiden. It was in Leiden, with its unique and internationally well-known Oriental collections that her interest in Islamic book structures was raised.

Next to the bench work and the additional tasks a conservator must see to, Karin always felt that teaching was an important aspect of the profession. For twelve years she was one of the two teachers of the two year evening course for book conservators. Wineke Meeuws mentored her through the first course and was her co-teacher for six years; the venue for this course changed from the Amsterdam Municipal Archives to the ICN (the Dutch Institute for Cultural Heritage) to the National Archives in the Hague. In addition, Karin was a guest lecturer for the Book and Paper conservation program at the ICN, and now that the programme is transferred to the University of Amsterdam she is a guest lecturer still. She also contributes to courses at Leiden University: to Book and Digital Media studies, as well as to the course 'From Manuscript to Modern Media' at the School of Middle Eastern Studies.

Karin presented her first public lecture on the topic of Islamic manuscripts at a conference on the conservation of Middle Eastern manuscripts in 2007, which she considers to be the starting point of her specialisation. Other conferences and papers followed, and Karin partook in the European project Comparative Oriental Manuscript Studies and became a co-opted Board member for The Islamic Manuscript Association. She has given workshops – often in collaboration with her colleague Paul Hepworth – at the International Islamic University of Malaysia, in Cambridge, Cairo, Doha and Beirut. She finally started the in-depth examination of the Leiden Islamic manuscripts and officially registered as an external PhD student, at the research institute Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society, in March 2011.