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**Cairo *samâ‘khāna*: design and cultural relevance**  
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***Abstract***

The *samâ‘khāna* of Cairo, within the historical arc of the *Mawlawī* brotherhood, was one of the last built and represents its final evolution. Its configuration is generated by the symbology of the ceremony and involves actors and spectators, as essential elements of the same architectural design.

The evident structural interaction of form and function assimilates Cairo's *samâ‘khāna* to today's codified principles of design. The building is itself a virtual expression of the rite.

The *samâ‘*, organically reflected in the figuration of the building, conveys the thoughts and teachings of Ğalāl al-Dīn Rūmī that spiritually unites religions and cultures. The ceremony, in its performance, recalls ancient knowledge which, albeit as a mystical intuition, is reflected in evidence revealed over time by science. From the symbolism of the centre which is the origin of the circle to its circular path “without beginning or end”, the *samâ‘* visualizes the process that leads from knowledge to consciousness: the final aim of every culture through religion, science and art. It is a process that has always been evident in the history of Human Cultural Identity. Cultures can change over time, but this only affects appearances, not those identity contents that are ingrained in the Human being.

In present-day globalization, which relativizes every attention to the constant individual present, Rūmī's message is an appeal, for Religions to recover religious Unity, Science its identifying purpose and Art its expression, of which *samâ‘* is an emblematic example.

***Keywords:*** Cairo, *Samâ‘khāna*, Design, Culture.