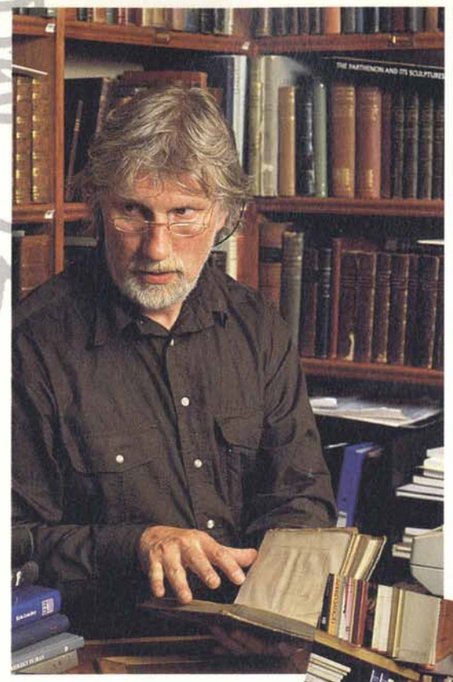
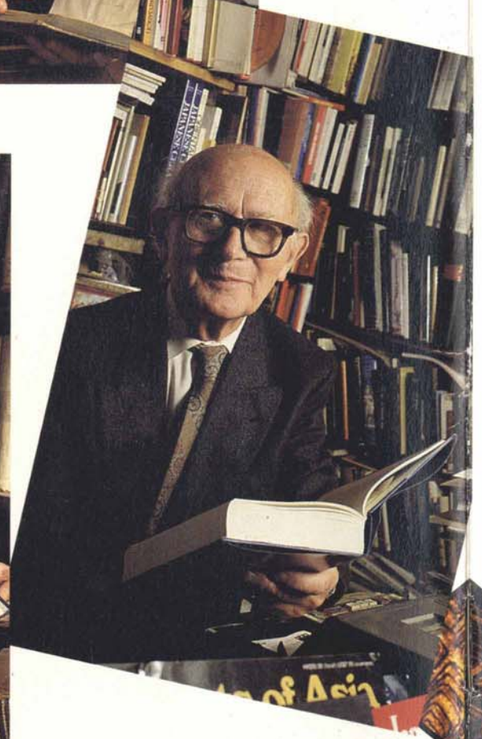
ARAMCO WORLD

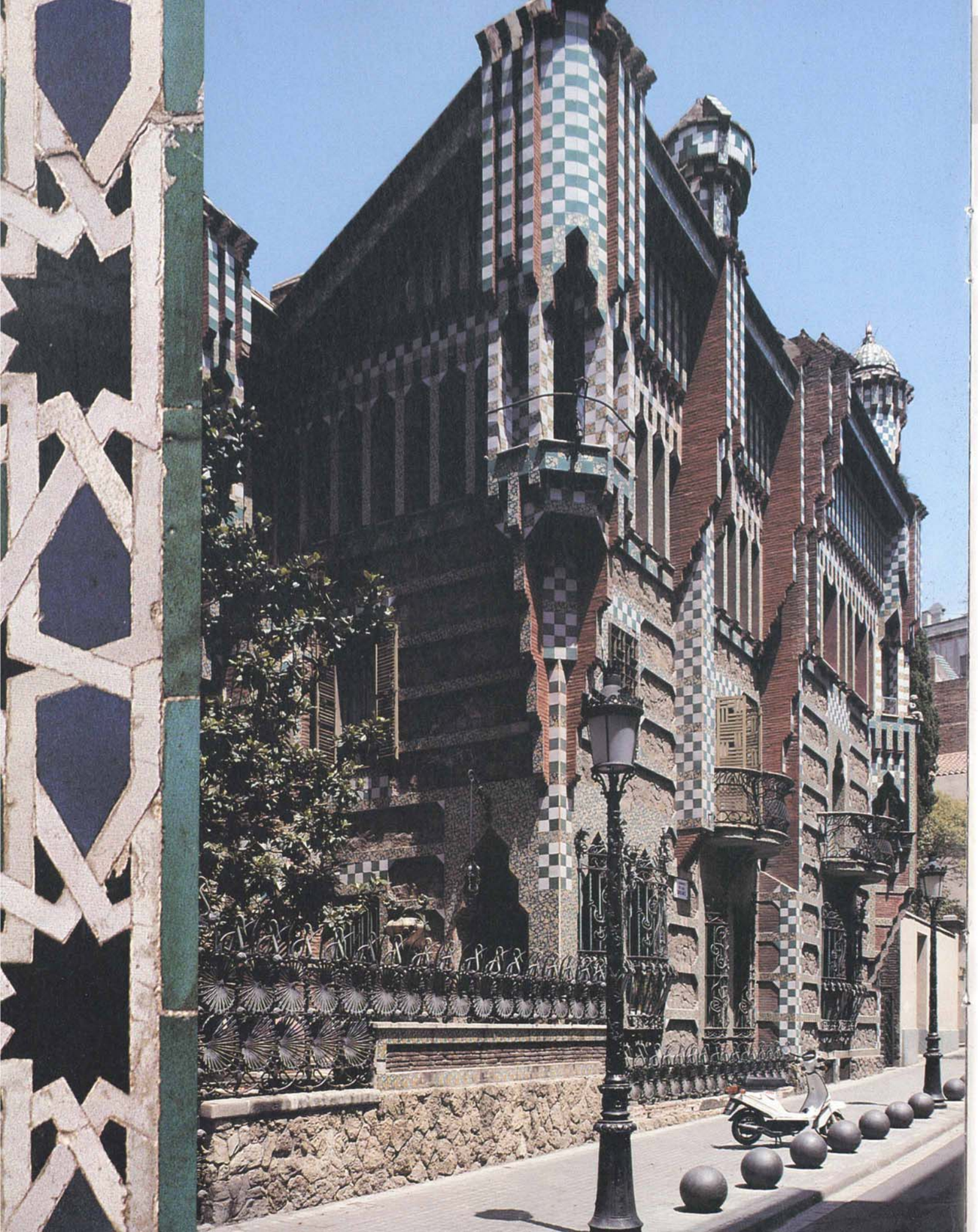




ARAMCO WORLD

MARCH-APRIL 1992

RAMADAN'S LANTERNS



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Cover: A striking example of a Cairo Ramadan lantern, crafted from strips of tin and pieces of hand-colored glass. For centuries, Egypt's capital was known for its spectacular use of lanterns. Today, Cairo's children carry on an age-old Ramadan tradition, swinging their lanterns and singing for treats. Photograph: John Feeney.
Back cover: Dubai's Jabal 'Ali Port, which with Port Rashid set a cargo record in 1991. Photograph: Joseph Brignolo.

◀ The Moorish-style Casa Vincens in Barcelona, with its tiled facade, and a detail from the Alhambra.

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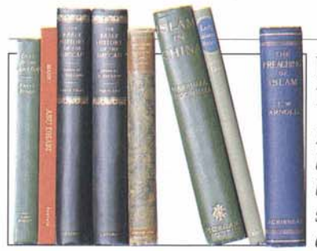


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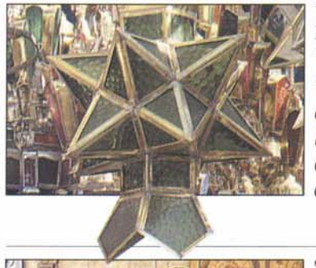

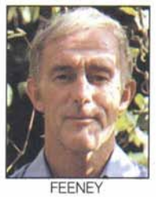
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LONDON'S Oriental BOOKSHOPS

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR CLARK
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ARTHUR CLARK AND JONATHAN S. WEAVER/INSIGHT

ROMILLY LOCKYER/THE IMAGE BANK

Harry St. John Philby, who explored Arabia through the first half of this century and wrote extensively about it, was once a regular patron here. Until recently, Freya Stark and Wilfred Thesiger, also celebrated writer-travelers of the Middle East, stopped by to chat.

And almost next door, though in an earlier era, Sir Richard Burton, the Victorian adventurer and translator of *The Thousand and One Nights*, was a frequent visitor.

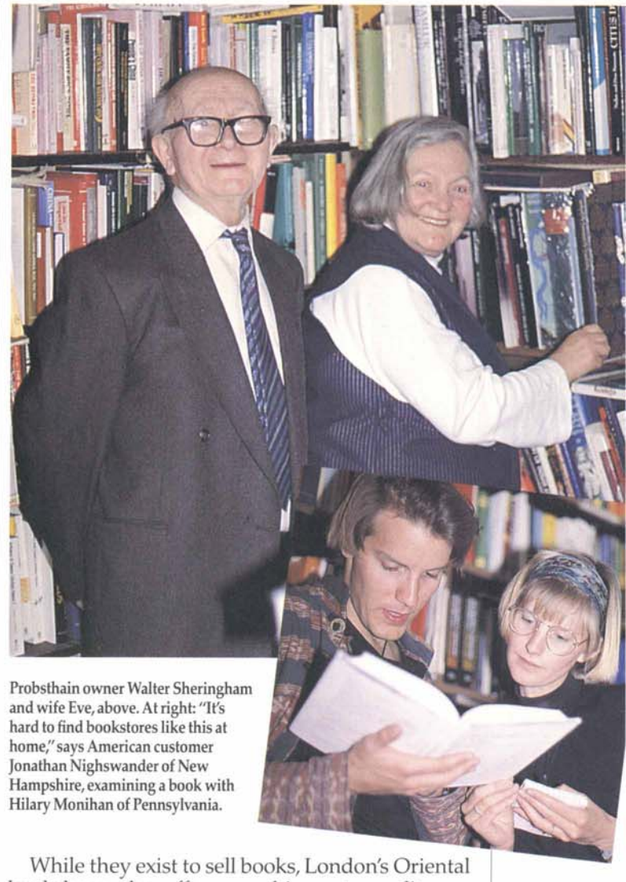
Both places are London bookshops. Both hold dazzling stocks of works related to the Middle East among their many titles. The two establishments – Arthur Probsthain, opposite the British Museum on Great Russell Street, and Bernard Quaritch Ltd., located today on Golden Square, not far off busy Regent Street – have been in the trade for a combined total of 235 years.

London has blossomed of late with booksellers dealing with "the East," or "the Orient," a region that spans, at its broadest, lands from North Africa to the Arabian Peninsula and from Turkey and India to China. Some of these bookshops – they are among more than 500 in the city – deal exclusively or in part with the Middle East. Newest on the scene: shops owned by Arabs and Muslims anxious to reach readers in Britain and around the world.

In fact, London may be the world's premier marketplace for books about the Middle East, particularly antiquarian titles, and the city's love affair with such works dates back at least five centuries. Indeed, the first dated book printed in England – at Westminster in 1477 – was a translation of a work in Arabic by an Egyptian-Syrian prince, Mubashir ibn Fatik. As capital of a nation whose far-flung empire once stretched east to India and beyond, and as home to travelers, soldiers and scholars who were also ardent writers, London took naturally to Oriental bookselling.

Easily accessible by mail, by fax or – most pleasantly – in person, the city's Oriental bookshops offer a wealth of titles in a host of categories. Prices range from £4 for an inexpensive translation of the Qur'an to upward of £30,000 for the 37-volume second edition of *Description de l'Egypte*, published in Paris in 1825.

Lately, general economic recession has taken some of the bloom off a market that saw prices soar 1000 percent or more for some books during the 1980's. But it's still not a "buyer's market" in the classical sense, and prices for many older volumes have stabilized – but not dropped.



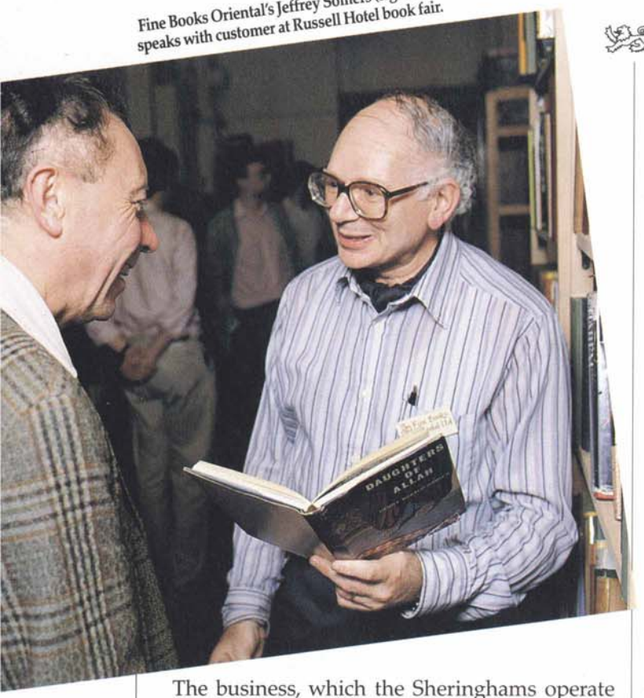
Probsthain owner Walter Sheringham and wife Eve, above. At right: "It's hard to find bookstores like this at home," says American customer Jonathan Nighswander of New Hampshire, examining a book with Hilary Monihan of Pennsylvania.

While they exist to sell books, London's Oriental bookshops also offer something extra: a literary ambience that's hard to top.

"Many well-known authors have been in touch with us and come in," recounts Walter Sheringham, 84-year-old owner of Arthur Probsthain. Adds Sheringham's wife Eve: "Whenever Philby was around he came in, we looked at books and chatted. And Freya Stark, too. What was remarkable about Thesiger and also Philby is that you would never think they were explorers. They looked like City gentlemen, really."

Writers of the current generation also stop by: Last summer, BBC television correspondent John Simpson dropped in at Probsthain "to talk and look for material" just prior to release of his book on the Gulf conflict, *From the House of War*, says Walter Sheringham.

DAVID BERRY



Fine Books Oriental's Jeffrey Somers (right) speaks with customer at Russell Hotel book fair.

The business, which the Sheringhams operate with their two children, was established in 1902 by Walter Sheringham's uncle, Arthur Probsthain. It's been on Great Russell Street since 1905. In 1926, the year Sheringham joined the bookshop, a London journal reported that visitors to Probsthain would "receive a pleasant welcome and also obtain advice on anything they wish to know on the East." That promise still holds true.

Sheringham reckons he stocks some 150,000 books – probably the largest number of Oriental titles under one roof in London. The shop specializes in new and secondhand books – it also published books under its own imprint until this decade – but also carries some antiquarian titles dating roughly from the 19th century and earlier. Like most of London's Oriental bookshops, it regularly sends out lists of titles it has to offer. Amazingly, the inventory isn't computerized; it's all in Sheringham's head. "If people ask for special books, we can often acquire them upstairs," says Sheringham. He disappears up the staircase, flashlight in hand, and is back in a wink with two requested 17th-century volumes and a handwritten 19th-century Qur'an.

Just a stone's throw from Arthur Probsthain on Great Russell Street are two more bookshops with a variety of volumes on the Middle East.

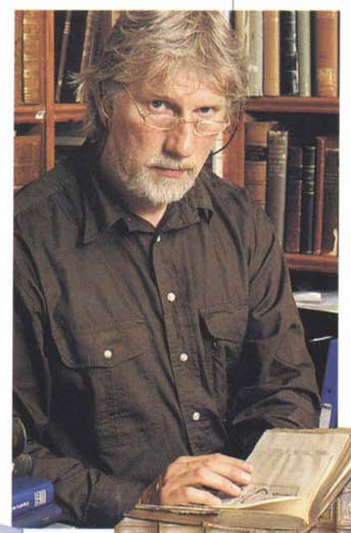
Fine Books Oriental, owned by Jeffrey Somers, stocks chiefly antiquarian and out-of-print books on the Middle and Far East. Somers's affection for the Orient developed through music, especially that of English composer Gustav Holst. "Everybody knows Holst's *Planets* suite, but many people don't go much further than that," says Somers. "Yet he was particularly interested in the Middle East and India. That led to something called the *Oriental Suite*, which meant the Middle East." Somers pursued Holst's musical ideas and took a shine to the music of the dervishes, a field in which he is now a specialist.

Great Russell Street is a prime location for an Oriental bookseller, says Somers. "To some extent this is the center of Orientalism in England. Not only is London University's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) very close, but the British Library is housed in the British Museum and, until recently, the Department of Oriental Manuscripts was on Store Street, quite near here."

Scholars and institutional buyers frequently visit his shop, Somers says. In 1990, he sold a £30,000 collection of books on ancient Egypt to a Japanese university. But not all of his patrons are academics. "We have people going on a holiday to Turkey who want a good guide book, and some of the good guide books are out of print. Indeed, we have a little saying here: 'All of the best books are out of print.'"

Booksellers can turn up unexpected prizes. Not long ago, Somers discovered a photograph of Harry Philby, seated in a tent with King 'Abdullah of Transjordan, tucked away in a copy of Philby's book *The Empty Quarter*. The picture, never published, was snapped up by another Oriental bookdealer.

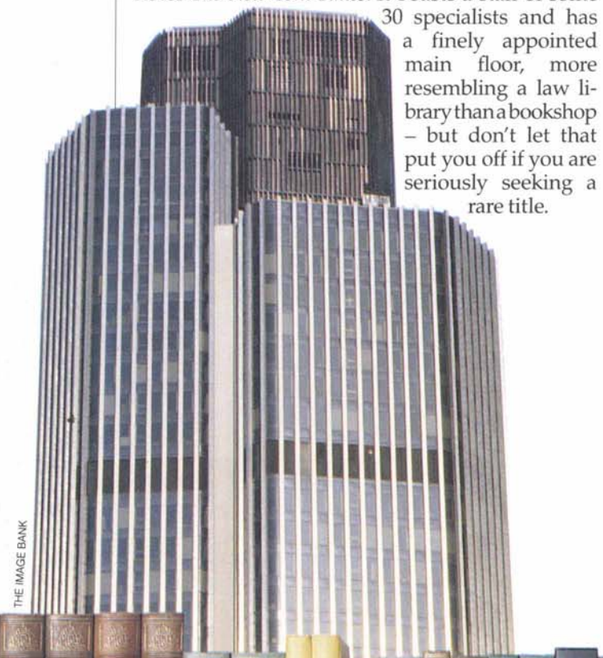
The Museum Bookshop, also located on Great Russell Street, opened in 1979 and caters primarily to museologists and conservators. The shop's stock focuses on Jordan, Palestine and Egypt. Buyers generally are specialists in "the digging-up trade" and the "putting-together trade," says co-owner Ashley Jones, and include King Sa'ud University in Riyadh. Kuwait, before the Gulf war, was a prime customer.



Ashley Jones of the Museum Book Shop.

Quaritch's Robert Jones (right) with a customer at the Park Lane Hotel book fair.

Bernard Quaritch, a German-born bookseller, opened the original shop bearing his name on Great Russell Street in 1847. Sir Richard Burton, a friend of Quaritch's, was a regular visitor to the premises. Today the business, on Lower John Street in Golden Square, is "billed quite simply as the oldest and largest antiquarian bookseller in the world," notes *The New York Times*. It boasts a staff of some 30 specialists and has a finely appointed main floor, more resembling a law library than a bookshop – but don't let that put you off if you are seriously seeking a rare title.



THE IMAGE BANK

Quaritch's Near and Middle East Department is directed by Dr. Robert Jones, a SOAS graduate, and traces its roots back to the 19th century, when Quaritch was also a book publisher. Among its imprints: The first edition of the Edward Fitzgerald translation of the classic Persian lyric poem, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*.

The Quaritch forte is early editions of books and important manuscripts and maps. What kind of book would you find there that relates to Islamic Spain, for example? "That might be a translation done by Gerard of Cremona," says Jones, referring to the Italian scholar who resided in 12th-century Spain and was the first to translate *The Canon* of Avicenna from Arabic into Latin.

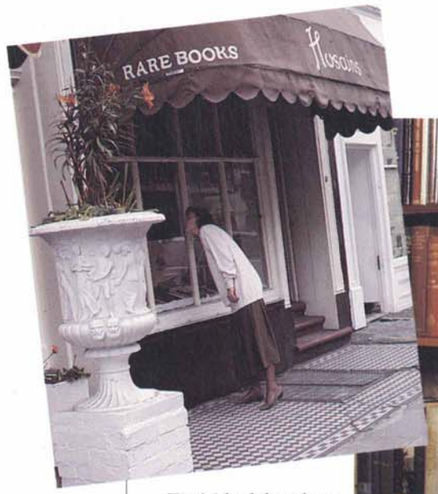
Titles in a catalogue issued in 1990 included a 16-book set of Philby's published books, priced at $10,500. The collection sold "the moment the catalogue came out," Jones says. The catalogue itself was a very pretty piece of work, with Arabic headlines and a detailed description of each book, along with reproductions of many of their illustrations.

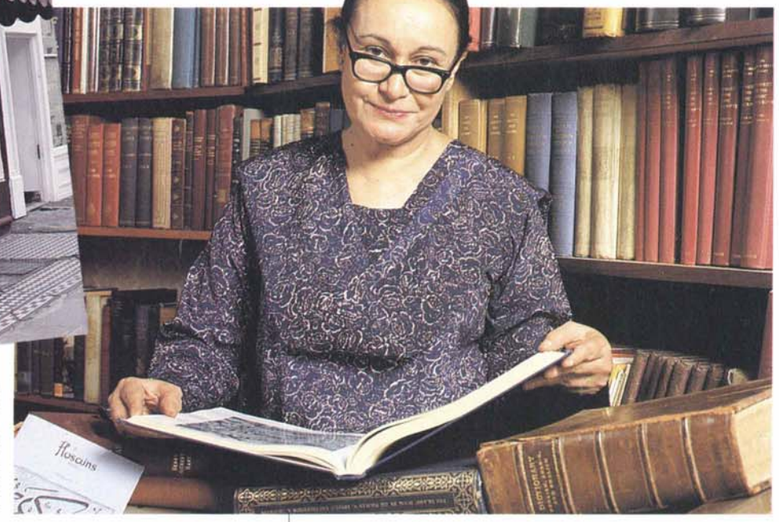
Jones ventures out frequently on bookselling sorties to the Arabian Gulf area, an aspect of the business he says is unique to Bernard Quaritch. And he has come away with respect for what he has found. On a recent visit to Saudi Arabia, "I sat in a *majlis* [gathering] outdoors and everybody was absolutely fascinated by the idea of the recovery of heritage and finding documents and books relating to the past." The company's carefully researched catalogues are designed to show clients how special a rare book can be.

"Books can be more than just reading matter," says Jones. "Books are symbols of where we are, and I've sold books in Latin in Arabia. Now, [the buyers] are not going to sit down and study Latin and read the book. But as collectors, they're going to have it in their library because it represents a relationship between Europe and the Arab world at a particular moment in time – perhaps the 16th century or the 18th century."

Bernard Quaritch Ltd., established in 1847, can be found at 5-8 Lower John Street on Golden Square.

DAVID BERRY





Hosain's bookshop, above, is located at 25 Connaught Street. Yasmin Hosain, right, who owns the shop with her husband, displays some of its antiquarian books.

Putting that relationship on the library shelf has become more and more expensive through the 1980's and into the 1990's, as demand has grown for scarce material. That's the case with antiquarian books, as well as many early- to mid-20th-century classics on the Middle East, which generally had limited press runs.

H.R.P. Dickson's *The Arab of the Desert*, about Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, is one example. Demand for the book, published in 1949, was so high between 1982 and 1986 "we just couldn't keep it in stock," says Yasmin Hosain, who with her husband, Shahid, opened Hosain's Bookshop on Connaught Street, near Marble Arch, in 1979. "There was a time when *The Arab of the Desert* could be bought for £25. Then suddenly the price was above £150. Now you can't find it for £250."

"A lot of people from the [Arabian] Gulf were visiting" London in the mid-1980's "and there was a sudden awareness of the national heritage in Muslim countries," says Hosain, who emigrated with her husband from Pakistan. "It has been the Middle Eastern clients and customers who created this demand, resulting in a steep rise in prices" through most of the 1980's.

As an example, she cites the auction of an American expatriate's collection of antiquarian titles by Sotheby's in London in late 1989. The collection of the late Henry M. Blackmer, a Denver native with a huge library that included many rare books about Turkey, brought bids that were "absolutely incredible," Hosain says. "Books whose prices were estimated at £200 to £300 went for £2000 or £3000."

"The Turkish government, fortunately, bought a large number of these books," she says, and its interest resulted in some sky-high bidding. "This happened in the mid-1980's to books on Saudi Arabia, books on Kuwait, on the Gulf, Oman and Yemen," she adds.

Hosain's Bookshop, which deals mainly in antiquarian, rare and out-of-print titles, is an example of a relatively new phenomenon in London: Muslim- and Arab-owned Oriental bookstores. Often the shops are located in areas of the capital with large Arab and Muslim communities. "A lot of visitors from the Islamic countries tend to live in this area," Hosain explains. "We thought we would be more accessible to them, particularly to people who were just passing by."

Among the rarest books to be found in the shop last summer were some very early editions of the Qur'an, including the first printing of the Qur'an translated into English – Andre du Ryer's 1649 *Alcoran of Mahomet*. The book carried a price tag of £625. An even rarer printing of the Qur'an at Hosain's Bookshop was Abraham Hinckelmann's 1694 edition, in Arabic. That work, which was long thought to be the first printing of the Qur'an in Arabic, recently turned out to be the second, causing something of a stir in the antiquarian book industry: A single Arabic copy of the Qur'an printed in Venice in 1538 was discovered in a monastery library there in 1987, according to Robert Jones of Bernard Quaritch. The discovery "was shattering, ... like finding a lost Shakespeare folio," he says.

Well-known Arab-owned bookshops in London include Al-Saqi Books in the Bayswater area, Al-Hoda Books on Charing Cross Road and Al-Kashkool in Knightsbridge.

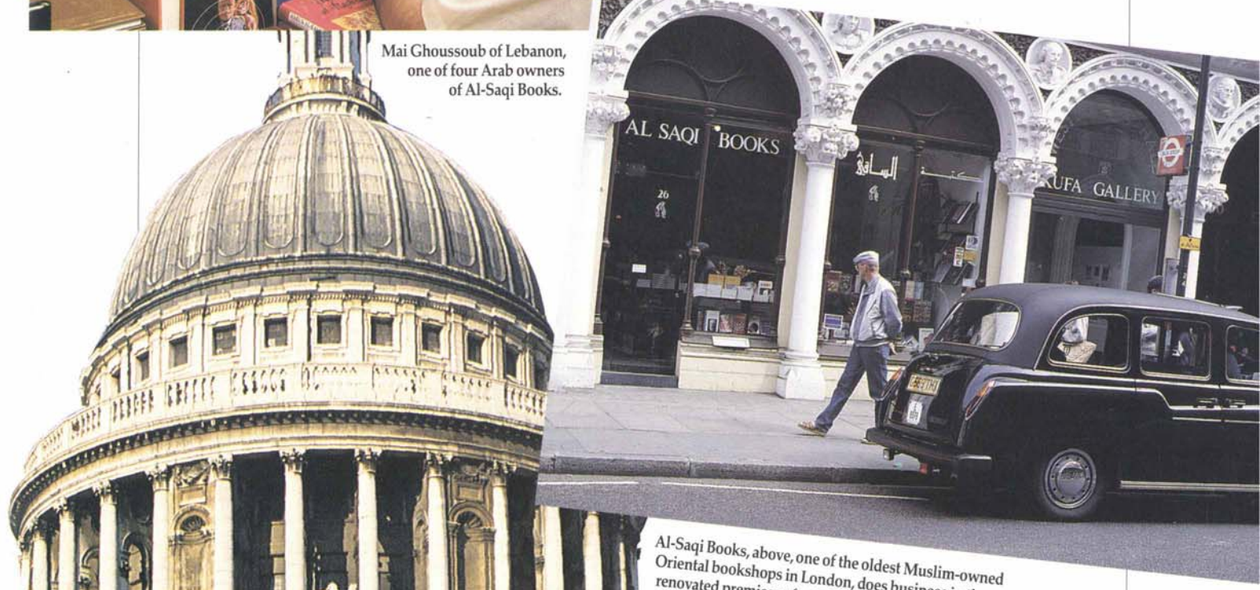
Al-Saqi, in Westbourne Grove, operates separate bookselling and publishing businesses. Set up in 1979, the company was the brainchild of four Arabs, including two Lebanese, who had fled the civil war in their homeland, and Kanan Makiya, an Iraqi expatriate architect and the pseudonymous author of the bestseller *Republic of Fear*. Al-Saqi quickly found itself serving as a key connection with Lebanon, which had been a main international supplier of Arabic-language books. "We started receiving orders from universities all over. In a way, we almost had to become the link with Lebanon," says partner Mai Ghoussoub. The firm opened an office in Beirut, and then expanded to acquire material from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and North Africa.

The shop moved into English titles in the mid-1980's when customers began asking for English-language bestsellers on the Arab world. Today, it stocks about 15,000 titles in Arabic and about half that number in English. It offers new books and reprints of bestselling volumes, along with some antiquarian titles.

Al-Saqi, which means "cupbearer," has turned into a main source of books for London-based diplomats anxious to keep their home governments informed about developments in the Arab world. "Whenever there is a bestseller or a book that is a bit controversial about the Arabs, they want it for their diplomatic valise and immediately we have to provide 15 or 20 copies," says Ghoussoub. The shop also serves as a window on the Arab world for British audiences, providing a variety of books on political developments.

Al-Saqi has also been a press office for and about Arab writers. When Egypt's Naguib Mahfouz won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, "we became more like an information center than a bookshop," notes Ghoussoub.

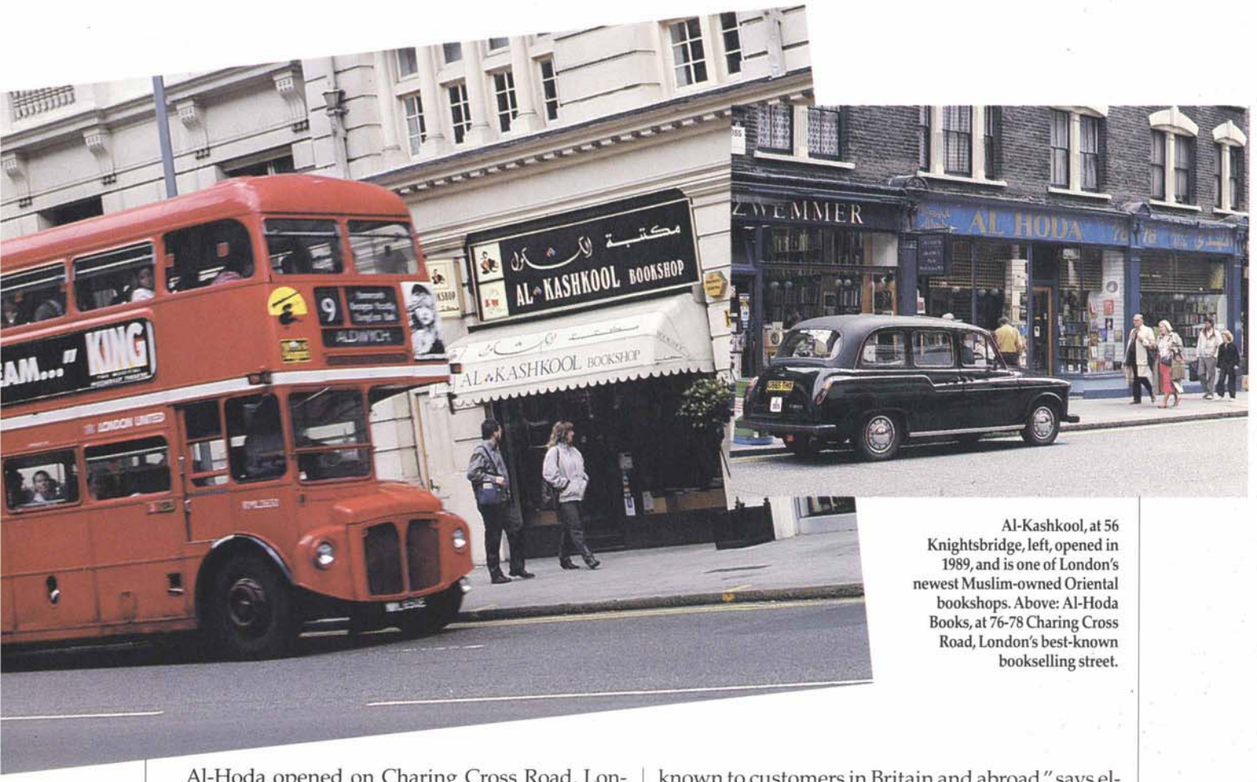
Mai Ghoussoub of Lebanon, one of four Arab owners of Al-Saqi Books.



Al-Saqi Books, above, one of the oldest Muslim-owned Oriental bookshops in London, does business in the renovated premises of a 19th-century dance hall.

MILES CLARK/SUSAN GRIGGS AGENCY

DAVID BERRY



Al-Kashkool, at 56 Knightsbridge, left, opened in 1989, and is one of London's newest Muslim-owned Oriental bookshops. Above: Al-Hoda Books, at 76-78 Charing Cross Road, London's best-known bookselling street.

Al-Hoda opened on Charing Cross Road, London's busiest and best-known bookshop street, in 1983. Its objective was similar to Al-Saqi's: to try to fill the literary void created by the crisis in Lebanon. "A large Muslim community lives here, in particular in Greater London," says shop director Dr. Jassem Hussein, a Gulf Arab educated in Britain. "We decided to try to provide not only educational and religious books, but everything related to the Orient, while offering services to people in the Orient, too."

Al-Hoda ("right guidance" in Arabic) quickly found the demand for English-language books greater than for those in Arabic. Today, up to 80 percent of the 20,000 books in the shop are in English. Al-Hoda carries mainly new books, with a small number of antiquarian titles. It has a good Farsi-language section.

Al-Kashkool, in Knightsbridge, was established early in 1989 by two Lebanese journalists and Damascus-born writer-publisher Riad el-Rayyes. The shop's name translates as "the album," and its location, just down the street from Harrod's, has proved a boon for business.

After initially relying on passersby in a district where vacationing Arabs often stay, the store has developed a loyal clientele and "become very well known to customers in Britain and abroad," says el-Rayyes. He says patronage breaks into clear "summer-winter" cycles: Westerners buy most of the books in the winter and Arabs buy in the summer, when they're in London seeking refuge from the Middle Eastern heat.

Al-Kashkool stocks some 13,000 volumes, roughly 60 percent in Arabic and 40 percent in English. They include new books, out-of-print and antiquarian titles, and reprints. Among the shop's English titles are many books by and about women in the Middle East. Books in the Arabic section deal mainly with politics and religion.

John Randall, a native Briton who owns John Randall (Books) in the Pimlico area, sees the heightened local interest in books on the Middle East as dating back to the Festival of Islam in London in 1976 (See *Aramco World*, May-June 1976). His shop has a 30,000-book stock devoted to all of Asia, but emphasizing Islamic, Chinese and Indian art. Randall carries mainly antiquarian and out-of-print titles, with a few new books.

Randall's own interest in Asia and Islam dates from the early 1970's, when he lived with a Muslim family in Indonesia and traveled in Southeast Asia. He later earned a degree at SOAS and went to work at the British Library, in the Indonesian section.

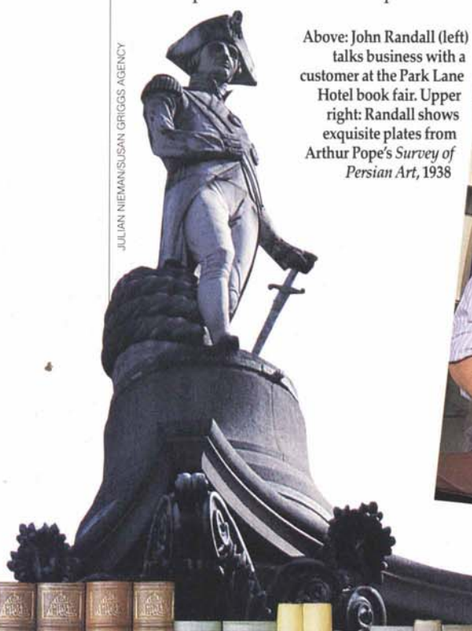
John Randall (Books) also stocks titles dealing with early Western travel in the Middle East and early accounts of local tribes. Among the most popular books are those by Philby. "I make sure I have something by Philby in stock all the time, but inevitably when people ring they want one of the books that's the most difficult to get. A lot of the best books, the rarest books, never appear on the shelf in the shop because when I get them I've got several customers who've already asked for them," says Randall.

Randall's rule of thumb for antiquarian and rare bookshops: "Books that are most saleable you never have in stock, because whenever you get them in, they're sold. By definition, a bookshop only has in stock the books that nobody wants."

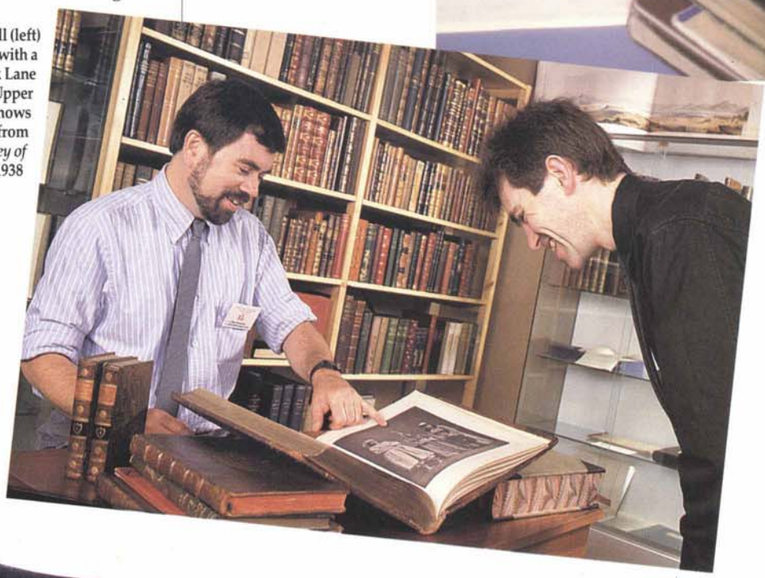
Over the last few years, Randall says he's seen the economics of bookselling change dramatically from the days when he combed shops outside London for bargains. "Everything comes to London today," he says. "Ten years ago, there were good antiquarian bookshops all over the country. Now there are very few. It's sad for the English book collector because everything goes straight to the top end of the market … and they have much less chance of finding books and building up collections at price levels they can afford."

David Loman, a bookseller who runs one of London's oldest mail-order establishments from his home on Suffolk Road, lays the blame for that development at the doorsteps of London's big auction houses. Loman, who set up his business in 1970, has approximately 6000 antiquarian and out-of-print titles, more than half of which are devoted to the Middle East. Like most mail-order dealers, he meets customers by appointment only.

Among his choicest titles on a recent visit: the second edition of the *Description de l'Egypte*, detailing research carried out during Napoleon's 1798-99 expedition to Egypt. Loman was able to acquire 11 folio volumes of plates at auction and 24 of its 26 volumes of text from a dealer in Paris. Such a set was auctioned for £30,800 at Christie's in 1990. The bookdealer claims hard work, not luck, is required for success today in bookselling. "I don't believe in luck," he says. "To be a success … you've got to go around to a lot of bookshops; you've got to go to auction houses; and you've got to keep at it all the time."



JULIAN NIEMAN/SUSAN GRIGGS AGENCY



Above: John Randall (left) talks business with a customer at the Park Lane Hotel book fair. Upper right: Randall shows exquisite plates from Arthur Pope's *Survey of Persian Art*, 1938

DAVID BERRY

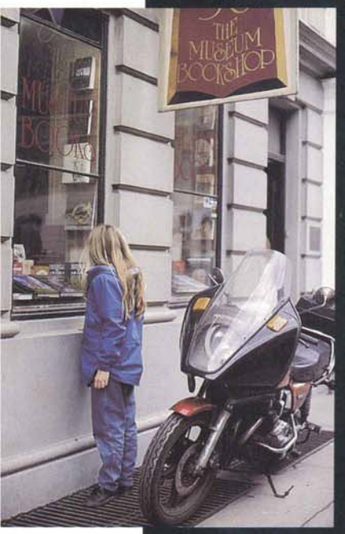
Collecting in LONDON

Are you planning a trip to London to collect books on the Middle East? Or do you want to fill gaps in a library you've already built?

Then "contact as many bookdealers and shop around as much as possible," says David Loman, who has run his mail-order book business in London for more than 20 years. "Then you'll get a wide spread of prices, a wide spread of [book] conditions and a good idea of whether the chap [selling the books] knows what he's doing or not."

It pays to investigate, says Loman: "There can be variations in prices that are quite wide."

Books on travel in the Middle East are extremely popular – and high-priced. "If you wanted to build up a collection of the major travelers in the Arab world – Doughty, Philby, Burckhardt – that's going to prove very expensive if you want the original editions," says the bookseller. "If you want them in good condition, you've got to pay top prices for all of them,... and that's becoming more and more expensive, because of the lack of good copies coming on the market."



But while prices for such books may have skyrocketed over the last 20 years, Loman doesn't recommend buying rare books solely to turn a profit. "If people want to invest in books because they'll fetch higher prices in the future, it's up to them, but I don't advise it unless they're genuinely interested in the subject matter," he says.

Budding collectors "without a tremendous amount of money to spend...should just concentrate on the 20th-century books, because anything earlier is going to cost them a lot," says Jane DeYong of Snowden Smith Books. "The main point when you're starting is to always buy books in very good condition – with their dust jackets. And always go for the first editions."

Counsels Ashley Jones of the Museum Bookshop: "Pick a very narrow [subject] area. Otherwise collecting is very diffuse and you go off in all sorts of directions."

DeYong agrees. "Say, for example, you're somebody who's been posted to Yemen for three years. Obviously, you would start collecting books on Yemen and then you can branch out from there." The collector should also consider purchasing Royal Geographical Society journals with articles on his subject. "Some of these articles are fascinating," says DeYong, noting that some of Harry St. John Philby's earliest work was published by the RGS.

If you're planning to travel to London to buy books – or just to look – then June is probably the best time to go. It's the month for two major book exhibitions: the Antiquarian Book Fair, sponsored by the Antiquarian Booksellers Association (June 23-25 this year), and the major event of the year mounted by the Provincial Booksellers' Fair Association. The two fairs, held respectively at the Park Lane Hotel on Piccadilly and the Russell Hotel in Bloomsbury, bring together hundreds of bookdealers selling thousands of antiquarian and secondhand books. Nonetheless, there will be plenty of stock left in the bookshops, as well.

Here are the addresses of the booksellers cited in this article:

ARTHUR PROBSTHAIN 1
41 Great Russell Street WC1B 3PH

FINE BOOKS ORIENTAL 2
46 Great Russell Street WC1B 3PA

THE MUSEUM BOOKSHOP 3
36 Great Russell Street WC1B 3PP

BERNARD QUARITCH LTD 4
5-8 Lower John Street Golden Square W1R 4AU

HOSAIN'S BOOKSHOP 5
25 Connaught Street W2 2AY

AL-SAQI BOOKS 6
26 Westbourne Grove W2 5RH

AL-HODA BOOKS 7
76-78 Charing Cross Road WC2H OBB

AL-KASHKOOL 8
56 Knightsbridge SW1X 7NJ

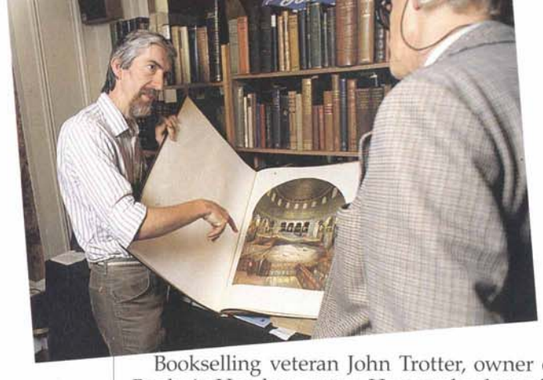
JOHN RANDALL (BOOKS) 9
47 Moreton Street SW1V 2NY

DAVID LOMAN LTD 10
12 Suffolk Road SW13 9NB

J.T. BOOKS 11
13 Sentinel Square Brent Street Hendon NW4

OXUS BOOKS 12
121 Astonville Street SW18 5AQ

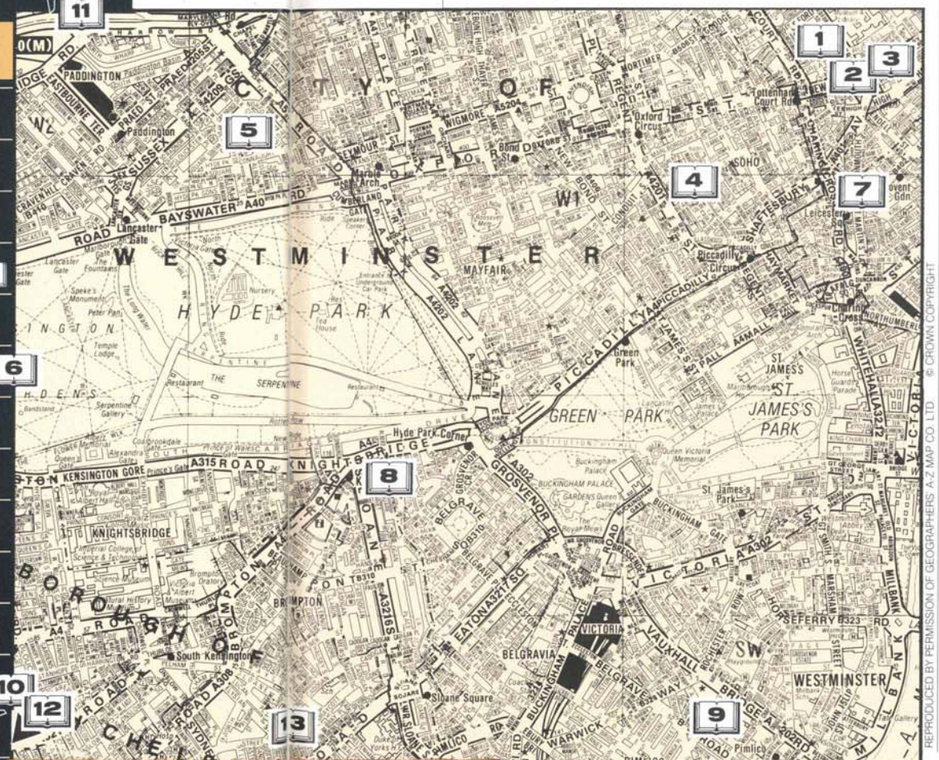
SNOWDEN SMITH BOOKS 13
41 Godfrey Street SW3 3SX



John Trotter of J.T. Books (left) discusses a volume with a customer at the Russell Hotel book fair. On previous page: customer window-shopping at the Museum Book Shop, opposite the British Museum.

Bookselling veteran John Trotter, owner of J.T. Books in Hendon, agrees. He says the days of making finds of rare books in odd places are over. "Things have got very mundane over the last five to six years. Certainly the times of going into old bookstores and picking up things for 50 pence and selling them for £500, that's all fiction."

Mainly a mail-order dealer, Trotter opened his business in 1973 when his own book collection "overtook the house," he says. "Most people collect and collect and collect until they can't collect any more. Then if they can, they go into business." In 1990, Trotter moved his operation out of his home and into new quarters.



Trotter's stock covers the Near East, Middle East and ancient history, and he carries antiquarian titles. About 3000 to 4000 of his books deal with the Middle East. Among recent good customers: the library of The American University in Cairo.

Some of his most interesting "books" aren't books at all but souvenir albums with pressed flowers from Palestine, produced around the turn of the century. The albums come in two sizes, retailing for £15-£20 and £50-£75. Their covers are made of distinctive red olive wood carved by Palestinian craftsmen.

Despite the naysayers, some romance still remains in the search for books, contends J.M.S. Slater of Oxus Books. Finding valuable books is sometimes a "matter of getting down on one's hands and knees to look on the bottom shelf where no one's been for years," she says. "I like the personal touch,... dealing with individuals and going out into the field to look for books." Oxus Books is a mail-order concern on Astonville Street which stocks among its titles rare, out-of-print and used books on the Middle East.

Jane DeYong of Snowden Smith Books, a mail-order establishment in Chelsea.

Echoing Slater's words, Jane DeYong, co-owner of Snowden Smith Books in Chelsea, recounts the time she got a call from "a man who worked at one of the British embassies in the Middle East." He had with him "a book he'd found on the rubbish tip outside the embassy." The volume, published by the Foreign Office in 1918, had maps and "presumably advice for the military types going to Arabia.... My eyes lit upon it and I saw it was something of great value for me."

DeYong finally traded five books from her catalogue for the slim volume, and then promptly sold the book for a handsome profit, she says. Snowden Smith, exclusively a mail-order business, was established in 1974, and carries books about travel, anthropology and ethnology, especially related to the Middle East.

So, no matter what your fancy when it comes to books on the Middle East, London may well be your best book-buying or just-browsing bet. Its well-stocked and well-run Oriental bookshops, of course, are the reason why.

Arthur Clark, a staff writer for Saudi Aramco, buys and browses in London on his vacations.

DAVID BERRY

TAKING THE LONG VIEW

LANDSAT/EOSAT

Tracking down Dr. Farouk El-Baz is almost as difficult as finding water in the desert – which happens to be one of his specialties. Internationally known for his pioneering use of space photography to unlock the secrets of arid terrain and locate groundwater resources, the 53-year-old Egyptian-born geologist is as likely to be exploring Egypt's Western Desert or trekking through northwestern China as he is teaching graduate students at Boston University.

Now director of the university's Center for Remote Sensing, El-Baz first gained recognition in the late 1960's when he worked on the Apollo space program – an unexpected opportunity for a young Ph.D. from the Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy who had originally planned a more earthbound career. From 1967 to 1973, he supervised lunar science planning and operations; working with the US space agency NASA, El-Baz developed a training program for the Apollo astronauts, instructed them in lunar observation and photography, and headed the committee that selected their landing sites.

"The Apollo days were very exciting to me," El-Baz affirms. "I don't know if it was more the scientific work, or the things I did on behalf of Arab culture, such as teaching the astronauts some Arabic, and naming features on the moon."

As a member of the International Astronomical Union's Task Group for Lunar Nomenclature, El-Baz proposed commemorating eminent Arab scientists of the past, such as astronomer Ibn Yunus and mathematician al-Khwarizmi, by naming lunar features after them. At least 36 were so honored.

Always eager for new challenges, El-Baz established the Center for Earth and Planetary Studies at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., in 1973. During his ten years as the center's director, research projects applying aerospace technology and satellite photography to desert environments led to the discovery of natural gas in Jordan and groundwater in Somalia and in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and Western Desert.

After four years in the private sector, El-Baz founded the Center for Remote Sensing, and since then, his expertise has involved him and his team of scientists in a variety of projects. Remote sensing, a science greatly advanced by space exploration, is the acquisition of information or images from a distance – probing the surface of the Earth with radar waves to find old river beds, for example, or measuring ocean temperatures by satellite to aid forecasting.

The center's scientists have studied wall paintings in the tomb of Queen Nefertari at Luxor, and conducted a nondestructive investigation of the second boat pit of the pharaoh Khufu (Cheops) at Giza. The latter project was "researched and planned as if it were a mission to the moon – but instead of going up, we were going down," El-Baz says.

El-Baz, science advisor to various Arab heads of state, recently directed an assessment of post-war environmental damage to the Gulf region for the Third World Academy of Sciences. He also finds himself being called upon more frequently as the need for new groundwater sources becomes increasingly urgent in the Middle East. "I am from the Arab world," El-Baz explains. "I know the people, I know their problems and I can be of great help. Geology has given me a wonderful life, and this is one way for me to give something back."

Piney Kesting is a Boston-based free-lance writer who specializes in Middle Eastern affairs.

WRITTEN BY PINEY KESTING
PHOTOGRAPHED BY WEBB CHAPPELL

RAMADAN'S LANTERNS

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY
JOHN FEENEY

Blessed is He who made constellations in the skies and placed therein a lamp and a moon giving light; and it is He who made the night and day to follow each other: For such as have the will to celebrate His praises or to show their gratitude.

The Qur'an, Chapter XXV (Al-Furqan, The Criterion), Verses 61-62

A colorful selection of Ramadan lanterns hangs in a Cairo shop.

No one knows for certain when the use of children's Ramadan lanterns began, but it is a very old Egyptian tradition. Indeed, lanterns and lamps of various kinds, of many hues and degrees of brightness, and even both real and imaginary, have always been special to Egypt. For centuries before the coming of electricity, Cairo itself was noted for its spectacular use of lanterns to illuminate the city, especially during the holy month of Ramadan.

Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim lunar year, is a time of fasting, blessings and prayers. It also commemorates the revelation of the first verses of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad.

As a way of giving thanks to God during this holy month, and as a way of unifying the worldwide community of believers, Muslims – with special exceptions for the sick, nursing mothers, pregnant women and travelers – spend the daylight hours fasting. The hours of the night, until dawn, are marked by prayers, ceremonial meals and celebration of the day's spiritual victory over human desires. After sunset, streets and squares all over the Muslim world are thronged with people out buying food after the long day's fast, or visiting friends, or preparing for *sahur*, the last meal of the night, which will be taken before dawn. It is then that young Cairenes, allowed to stay up late because of Ramadan, traditionally gather in groups of three or four to go out among the crowds, swinging their glowing lanterns and chanting their ancient song of Ramadan – just as children in other lands go caroling – hoping to receive in return a few nuts or sweets for their vocal efforts.

Passed on by children from generation to generation, the traditional song, in colloquial Egyptian Arabic, accompanies the swinging of the lanterns in the little ones' hands. It goes like this:

Wahawi, ya wahawi
iyyahah
You have gone, O Sha'ban,
You have come, O Ramadan,
iyyahah
The daughter of the Sultan
is wearing her caftan,
iyyahah
For God the forgiver
Give us this season's gift.

Some believe that the children's lantern song comes all the way from Pharaonic times, like the ancient Egyptian song called *O-Faleh* in the Pharaonic tongue and *al-Bahr Sa'id* in Arabic (meaning "The River Has Risen"). In the days before the Aswan Dam was built, that song was sung by groups out in small boats on the night the Nile reached the peak of its annual flood. Certainly, the lantern song is very old, and very Egyptian.

Top: One of many small shops in Cairo festooned with myriads of Ramadan lanterns. Left: Egyptian children carry their lanterns, hopeful that an evening of 'swinging and singing' will bring them sweet rewards.

The opening lines – "Wahawi ya, wahawi iyyahah" – have no known meaning. "You have gone, O Sha'ban" refers to the month that comes before Ramadan in the Muslims' lunar *hijri* calendar, and "the daughter of the Sultan is wearing her caftan" means she is dressed in the garment worn when going out, maybe to the mosque. "Give us this season's gift" refers to the small presents children receive from family and friends at the time of the *'Id* or holiday that follows the month of fasting.

In the days leading up to Ramadan, children become more insistent about having a lantern; many can hardly wait to start swinging and singing – for what child, from its earliest years, is not attracted by a glowing, magical lantern? Yet Cairo children may be the most "lantern-struck" of all: Recent research by Dr. Marsin Mahdi of Harvard University indicates that Scheherezade's 'Alaa' al-Din (Aladdin) of the magic lamp may well have been a Cairo boy.

One week before Ramadan begins, part of Ahmad Maher Street, for most of the year a humble thoroughfare in the old medieval quarter of Cairo, is transformed. Usually home to tinsmiths, marble-cutters and makers of mousetraps, for one glorious month it becomes "The Street of the Lanterns."

To get there, you turn off Port Said Street in front of the Museum of Islamic Art, into Ahmad Maher Street, pass the central police headquarters and walk for 10 minutes or so toward the great 11th-century city gate, Bab Zuwaylah – a stone's throw from the famous Tentmaker's Bazaar (See *Aramco World*, November-December 1986).

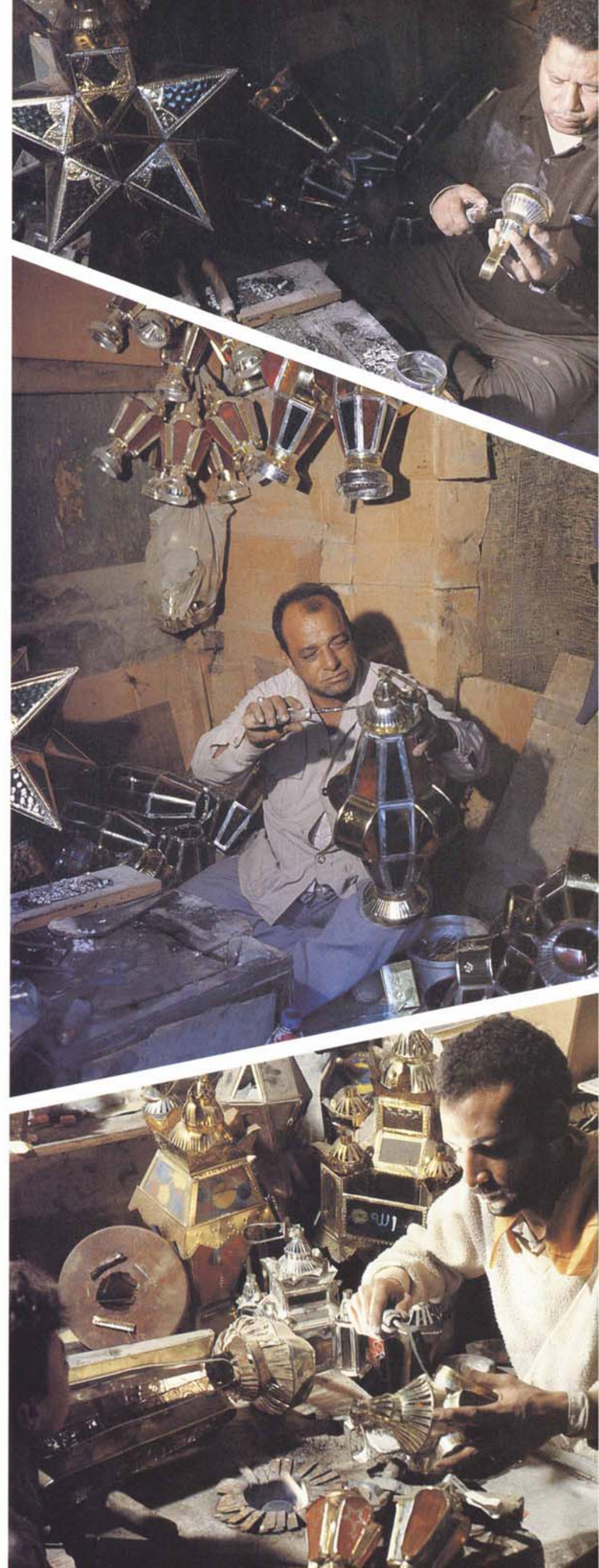
Just outside the massive medieval gate, you will find the facades of dozens of small shops festooned with thousands upon thousands of Ramadan lanterns, small, medium and big ones, suspended from crossbars or strung up on poles, waiting to delight the hearts of young Muslim Cairenes.

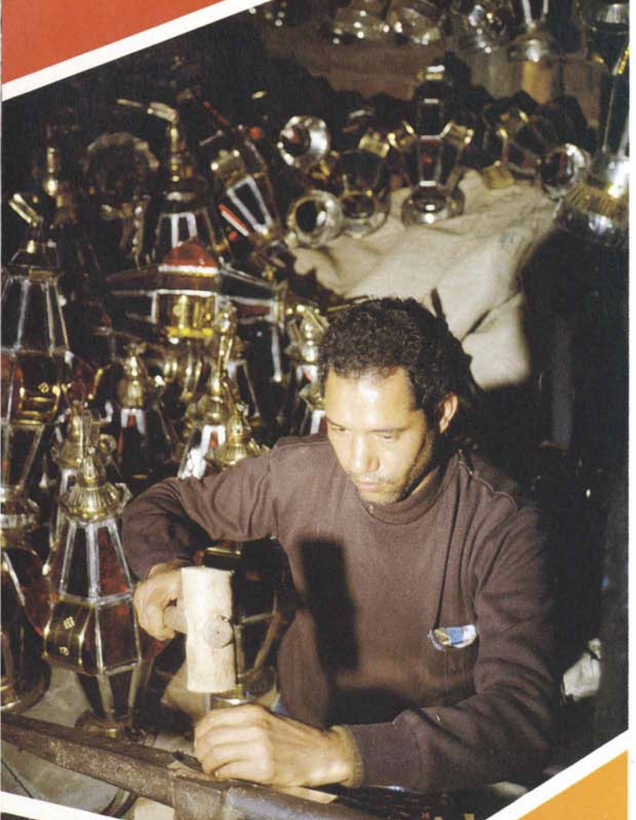
The lantern-makers themselves are very humble people, often working in small rooms, in corners, in alcoves or simply under corrugated iron shelters. The work of producing the tens of thousands of lanterns required to meet demand during the season usually begins about nine months before Ramadan. Sometimes entire families spend their lives, from generation to generation, working in the various aspects of the lantern business – like Said Hanefy Diab, Salama Hanefy Diab and Sayed Hanefy Diab, shown on these pages.

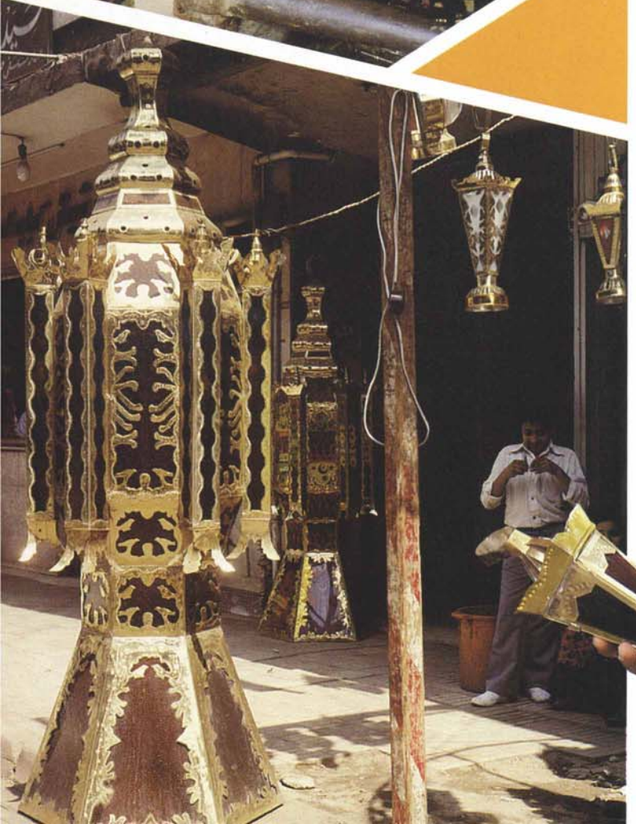
Mahmoud el Said, now 25 years old, has been making lanterns since he was 10. In his small dark room within the shadow of Bab Zuwaylah, he sits cross-legged day after day in front of a constantly burning blue flame with Wagih, his 15-year old assistant, at his side.

All day long Mahmoud wields his soldering iron like a medieval magician's wand, back and forth, deftly creating lantern after lantern. Each fragile lantern-frame is made from thin strips of tin usually cut from old tin cans.

Upper photos: Members of the Diab family at work on Ramadan lanterns. The Diabs, and other families, spend their whole lives in the lantern business. Mahmoud el Said, 25, at right, has been making lanterns since he was 10.







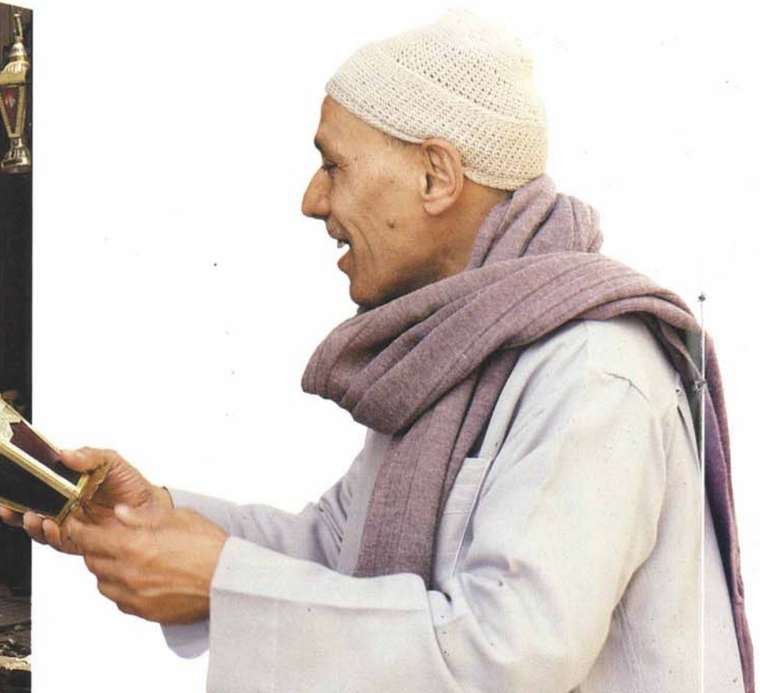
Pieces of hand-colored glass are then inserted into the frame and finally, when a lighted candle is placed inside, the lantern glows with translucent beauty – at least for the few weeks of Ramadan, for they are not meant to last longer.

Each day, in every shop and workshop, dozens of lamps of different designs are made and then carefully stored away in wooden crates, or strung from floor to ceiling, in readiness for the season. Most of them are no more than about 25 centimeters (10 inches) high, but others can be enormous constructions as much as 150 centimeters tall (almost five feet), like Mahmoud's "Bride of the Nile," destined to shine in a five-star hotel.

Only the lantern-makers know all the designs, manufacturing secrets and, above all, the names of their magical lanterns. New designs are sometimes created to commemorate special events: A special lantern named "Farouk," after the late Egyptian king, was created many years ago when he was a boy. One of Mahmoud's smallest is called *Musa*, or "Moses"; a much bigger one is *Shaqqat Battikhah Kabirah* ("A Big Piece of Watermelon"), bigger still is *Najmat al-Bahr* ("The Star of the Sea"), which waits in his shop to glow in the night and gladden the heart of some child, once the holy month arrives.

A Diab family lantern-maker, left, hammers out strips of brass to be used in a series of lanterns. Lower left: a very large lantern on display, of the kind used in hotels, department stores or very grand houses.

Below, a potential customer inspects the finished product at a shop on Cairo's 'Street of the Lanterns' during Ramadan.



These odd and endearing names you will never know unless you ask; they are a part of childhood fantasy, echoes of the magical lanterns in the children's own stories, like the tale about the old man who polished his lantern until the good 'Afrakush appeared.

Until the end of the last century, there were very practical uses for lamps and lanterns in Cairo, often prescribed by laws going back, some say, to the very first Pharaonic towns, or *niwit*s.

A *niwit* was usually created by laying out a single main street running due north and south and then a single cross-street, from east to west, all set within a circle of protecting walls. Al-Qahira (Cairo) itself, the original private palace-city of the founding Fatimid rulers of Egypt, was laid out in this way: a single street surrounded by a ring of protecting walls. To this day, the old north-south main street still exists, twisting and turning through the medieval city, just as it has for a thousand years.

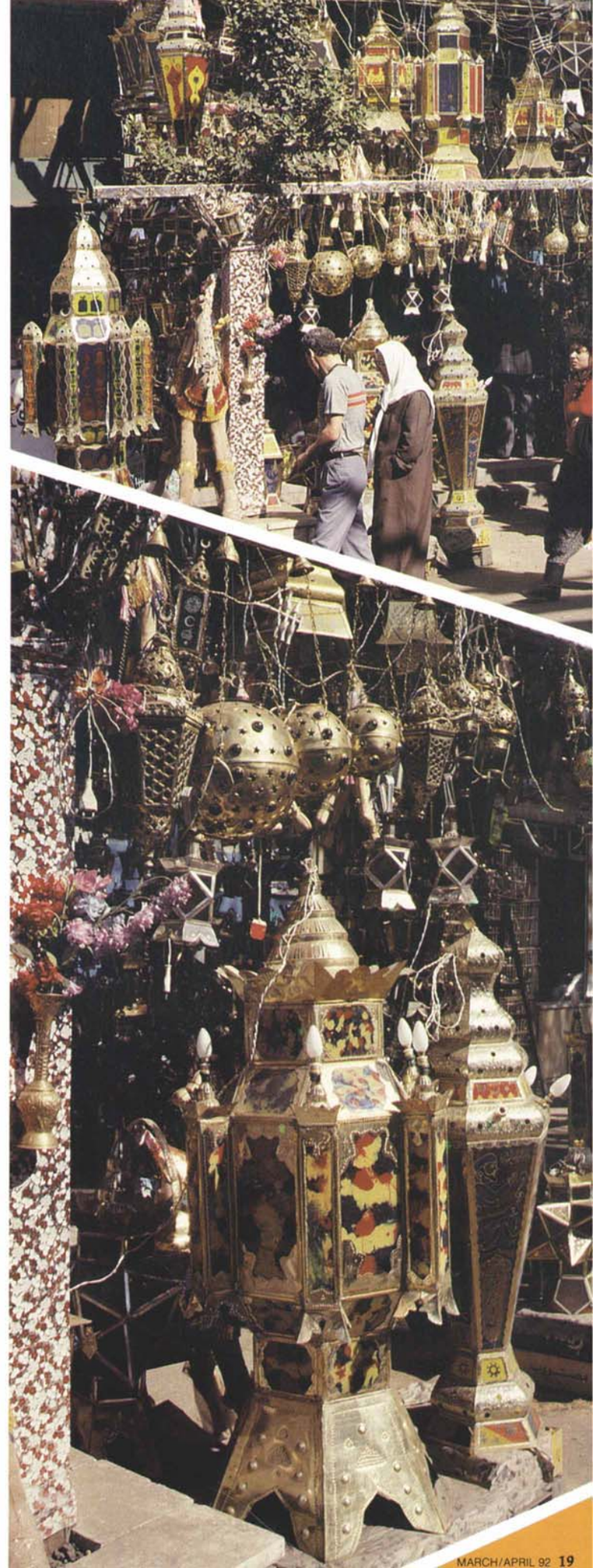
The *Qasabah*, the city center or Main Street, of al-Qahira came to be known as al-Tariq al-Sultani, or the Sultan's Way. The street led, as it still does, from the main entrance gates on the northern side, right across the city to the opposite southern entrance of Bab Zuwaylah – where most of the lantern-makers are found.

Al-Tariq al-Sultani later became known as al-Shari' al-Sultani, and remained the main street of the city. Over the centuries, individual houses and *harah*s, or multi-family compounds of homes, were built in the area. These settlements were joined to al-Shari' al-Sultani by small side streets, each with its own protecting gate, and some of these ancient stone-arched gateways still exist on the Qasabah.

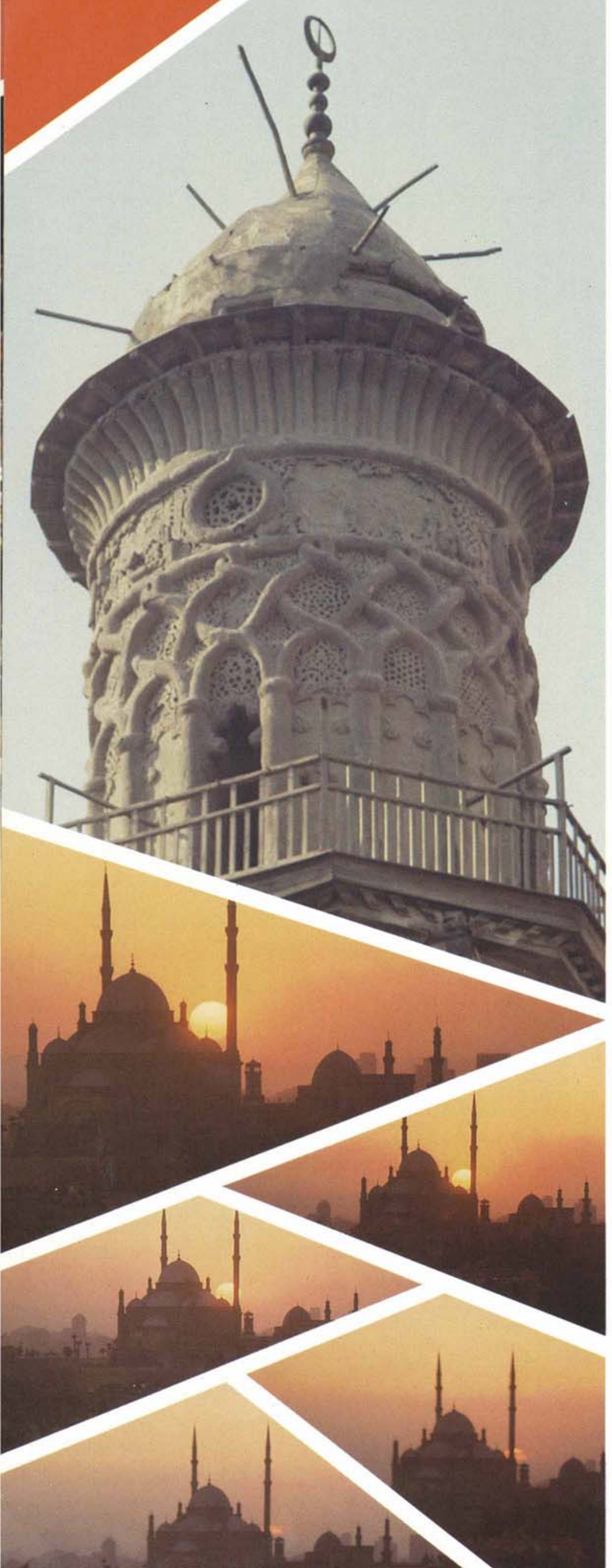
Security along the Main Street was the responsibility of the wali, or governor, of the city and his *shurtah* (police). There were actually three walis: one for Misr, the Arabic name for Egypt, which was probably used to refer to the old parts of the city built before Fatimid Cairo; one for al-Qahira, the Fatimid palace-city; and a special wali for the all-important Citadel, the city within the city, founded by Saladin in 1176, that overlooks Cairo. The famous ninth-century mosque of Ibn Tulun, built in the open desert in the days before "Cairo" was ever thought of, became the dividing line between Misr and al-Qahira, and indeed, between Upper and Lower Egypt: Everything south of Ibn Tulun became known as Upper Egypt and everything north of it became Lower Egypt.

Each harah settlement came under a *shaykh al-harah*, a kind of mayor responsible not only for security and religious matters but also for closing the harah gate at sunset, opening it again at dawn and lighting the lantern which, by law, was required to hang over each harah gate. Likewise, each big house in the harah was required to burn a lantern at night above its entrance and each harah resident had to carry a *fanus*, a folding lantern something like a small concertina, while out walking at night.

Upper right: Ramadan lanterns for sale at a Cairo shop. At right, another shop displays lanterns of varying sizes, colors and shapes.



A lantern shop on Ahmad Maher Street displays its kaleidoscopic wares.



A special *suq*, or bazaar, near the old Fatimid mosque of al-Aqmar, supplied the vast quantities of tapers, candles and oil required for the thousands of lanterns used to illuminate gateways, house entrances, and other outdoor sites, and the greater thousands of lamps that lit interiors throughout the city: shops, houses and the immense brass chandeliers in hundreds of city mosques. In many of these palatial mosques there were thousands of softly burning, decorated glass-and-enamel lamps, created by master craftsmen, for which 14th- and 15th-century Cairo became famous.

European travelers arriving in Cairo were always amazed at the sight of so many lamps: "No king in all of Christendom could pay out of his revenue for all the oil which in this city is burned in the lamps," one wrote.

The "noble month" of Ramadan produced the most spectacular nightly illuminations of the year. As the sun went down and the minarets and domes were silhouetted against the sky, a new magic possessed the city as thousands of lanterns were hoisted up to the tops of the minarets. "We were struck," a visitor reported, "by the sight of towers sparkling with light, each of them lit with numerous lamps at three levels."

Indeed, many visitors thought Cairo more alluring and splendid after nightfall than by day:

> *The multitude of lamps burning in the towers made the city seem in flame.... From the topmost pinnacle of each minaret of all the mosques rods were thrust out and from these hung lamps, cunningly devised with a cover on top lest the wind should put out the light.... High above every mosque as many as twenty, forty, even sixty lamps were burning....*

The European travelers, writing home so enthusiastically about the illuminations they saw in Cairo, were for the most part unaware that the lanterns they saw hanging from the minarets held a special meaning for all the Muslim inhabitants of the city, a metaphorical meaning conveyed in this moving verse of the Qur'an's 24th *surah*, or chapter, called Nur – The Light:

> *God is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp: The lamp enclosed in glass: The glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon light! God doth guide who He will to His light: God doth set parables for men: And God doth know all things.*

Also unknown to most Europeans was the fact that the lanterns, hoisted to the tops of the minarets at sunset, signalled to Muslim Cairenes that the last rays of the sun had just disappeared below the horizon, thus releasing them from their daylight fast and allowing them to participate in the fast-breaking meal.

Top left: The minaret of the hospital, madrasa and mausoleum of Sultan al-Mansur Qala'un, built in the 13th century, still bears the protruding wooden rods at its peak from which Ramadan lanterns were once hung. Left: Sunset – here seen against the Cairo Citadel – marks the end of the fasting hours of the month of Ramadan.

The Ramadan lanterns continued to burn in the night sky, carefully calculated to last until "the *raf'* of the lanterns." The word *raf'*, in Arabic, means removal or lifting, and "the removal of the lanterns," after *sahur*, the last meal before daybreak, signaled *imsak*, or the end of the night's feasting and the resumption of the Ramadan fast. In the course of a thousand years, some things in Cairo have not changed. Though the glowing mosque lanterns of Ramadan have been replaced by greenish fluorescent tubes which are no longer raised and lowered, the old term *raf'* still persists – though if you ask why, or what it means, hardly anyone knows.

Today, the firing of a cannon from the heights of the Citadel – heard instantaneously throughout the country on radio and television – is the signal releasing Muslims from their fast at the very moment of sunset, and reimposing the fast at the moment of daybreak. The boom of the cannon is still called *midfa' al-raf'*, an old Cairene term meaning literally "the cannon of the removal," an echo of "the *raf'* of the lanterns" in centuries past. In Egypt, the past is always present.

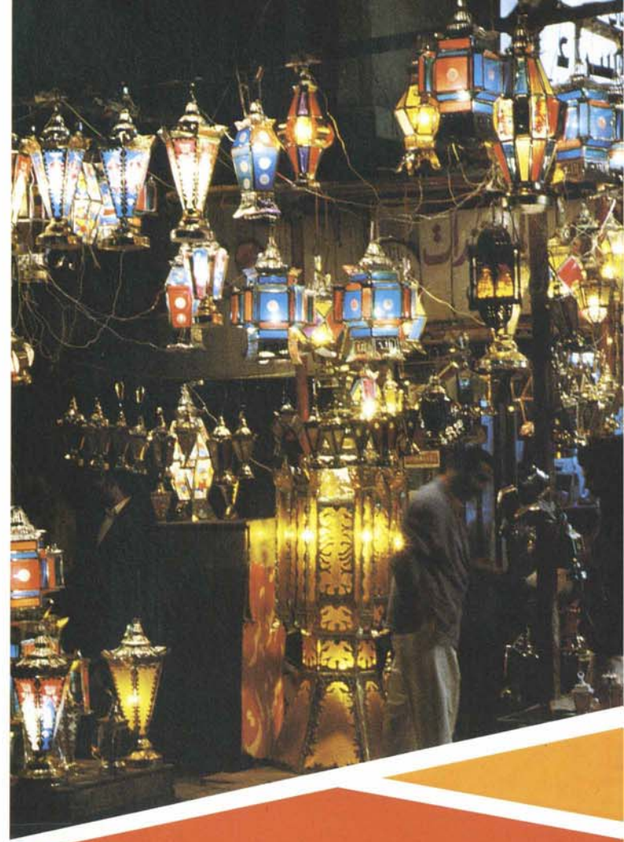
As for the Ramadan traditions of times gone by, there are still signs for all to see: From the tops of some medieval minarets protrude a few wooden rods – some intact, some broken – once used to hold glittering arrays of Ramadan lanterns. On some minarets can be found gaunt wooden frames and pulleys, developed in later centuries for easier hoisting and lowering of the lanterns.

In today's season of Ramadan, for the very young and for the crowds thronging the shops in the Street of the Lanterns at Bab Zuwaylah and throughout the city, it is still business as usual. The little ones' lantern-swinging and singing may be hampered these days – perhaps made a bit more precarious – by the constant streams of fast, noisy traffic and the press of people in a city whose population is now some 13 million. But children never forget, and in the safety of the humblest and the grandest homes in Cairo, the little ones continue to swing their lanterns and beg for an 'Id gift from anyone who will listen to their ancient song:

Wahawi ya wahawi
iyyahah
Ruht ya Sha'ban
Gayt ya Ramadan
iyyahah
Bint is-Sultan
Labsah al-guftan
iyyahah
Yallah al-Gaffar
Idduna al-idiyah
Yallah al-Gaffar

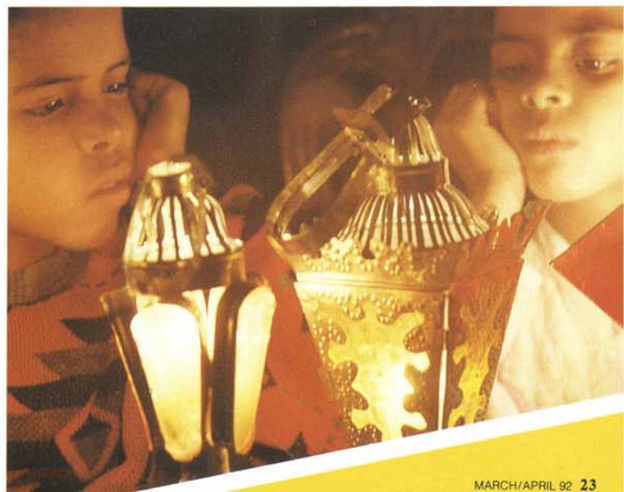
Filmmaker John Feeney, who has lived in Cairo for a quarter century, is a long-time contributor to Aramco World. *He wishes to thank Laila Ibrahim, renowned authority on Mamluk Egypt, for her help with this article.*

Upper right: A Ramadan lantern shop becomes a magical place after dark. Right: Cairo children's faces illuminated by their lanterns.



There was once a very old and very poor man who found a very old lantern. He cleaned and polished the lantern and suddenly, to his amazement, the good spirit *'Afrakush* appeared from nowhere and made the old man happy.

Traditional Egyptian folk tale



the tiles of IBERIA

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED
BY TOR EIGELAND

As the taxi neared the entrance of the new Hotel Husa Sevilla, the gentle splashing of water in the hotel's traditional Andalusian tile fountain drew my eyes and ears irresistibly. The sight and sound of the running water seemed to relieve the heat and brightness that vibrated from the stark exterior of the building.

Once inside the hotel lobby, I saw Alhambra-inspired Spanish tiles everywhere: along the reception desk, on the lobby walls, in the café – even the ceilings were covered. Intricate patterns of brown, blue, red, white and green blended to create a harmonious whole.

Later, walking out of the hotel, I glanced across the street at an old red-brick building. The horseshoe-arched, Moorish-style windows were surrounded by traditional tiles.

A little farther down the street, at a tree-shaded bus stop, people were sitting on the low wall of the neighboring building, fanning themselves and waiting for their buses. They were sitting on tiles: Embedded by the hundreds atop and on the sides of the brick wall, they depicted scenes of daily life in the Seville that existed a century or more ago.

Armored with fragmented tiles, a dragon-fountain (left) in Gaudí's Parque Güell in Barcelona shows the architect's interest in advancing flat tilework into the third dimension. Flower-patterned tile (above) is among those he used earlier on the Casa Vicens. The joys of the open road are as fresh today as when they were painted on this tile-panel advertisement (right) almost 70 years old.

Later in the day, on Sierpes Street, I passed a life-sized automobile advertisement – on tiles. Painted by a Señor Pinto in 1924, this ceramic billboard depicted a magnificent black convertible rolling down a scenic country road. "Studebaker – Automoviles de 6 Cilindros," the headline read.

Tiles were starting to appear wherever I looked. I was definitely becoming tile-struck – just as all of Spain has been for the past 900 years.

Tiles – or *azulejos* – are found everywhere in both Spain and Portugal. They are as much a part of life in the Iberian Peninsula as fresh bread, olives, sunshine or the strumming of a guitar.

The word azulejo comes from the coloquial Arabic *al-zulaij*, meaning faience or ornamental tile. Decorative tiles were first made in Mesopotamia, and luster-painted tiles have been produced in the Persian city of Kashan since the ninth century at least. Used primarily to decorate the walls of mosques, by the 13th and 14th centuries Kashan tiles were known for their excellent workmanship and intricate design. They were not only square or rectangular, but were also made in interlocking polygonal shapes whose individual pieces were part of a grander design – foreshadowing the artistic excellence exemplified at the Alhambra, whose interiors were created in the time of Yusuf I in the first half of the 14th century.

Tile art spread and moved west through the Muslim countries. Floor tiles began appearing in Tunisia and on walls in Seville as early as the end of the 11th and the beginning of the 12th centuries.

Spanish tile eventually became far superior to its eastern predecessors. One reason, according to some experts, may have been the flood of artisans into Muslim Spain, or al-Andalus, as a result of Genghis Khan's invasion of the Tigris-Euphrates Valley in the 13th century. Spain was also a cultural crossroads where crafts that had come from the East via Egypt met and were enriched by the late Roman and Visigothic as well as other Mediterranean decorative traditions.

Tiles grew in popularity, in part because they replaced marble of different colors, which was expensive and very hard to come by. Artisans had perfected techniques for making tiles in a great variety of colors, offering an easier and cheaper way to beautify a house or mosque or palace. The raw materials, too, were widely and readily available.

The purity of tile colors and their smooth, brilliant surfaces were appealing but also eminently practical: Good tiles afford excellent protection for walls or floors, they last forever, and are easy to clean. In al-Andalus, they were essential to the widespread private and public toilet and bathing facilities that so starkly distinguished Muslim Spain from contemporary Christian-controlled areas of the peninsula.

Fierce rivalry among the great Andalusian cities of Seville, Granada and Cordoba spurred the wealthy and their artisans to new heights. The ornate tile designs of intertwined floral, foliate and geometric figures – known

as arabesque – became ever more complex and sophisticated, perhaps reaching their ultimate expression at Granada's Alhambra Palace.

Tile art had progressed considerably from its humble origins. When the Mesopotamians first used glazes, it was a construction material, to make mud walls water-resistant, rather than as a decoration. But glaze also allowed the introduction of color, and surfaces of decorated arabesque panels and painstakingly drawn bands of complicated calligraphy became an indispensable element of Islamic architecture.

Tiles were often made to fit a specific wall or floor, designed in place and then sent to a workshop, the clay slabs usually covered by a fine layer of liquid clay called slip, on which drawings were made.

The methods of making tiles were basically similar in Mesopotamia and Andalusia. Refinements came in later stages, when special colors and a metallic sheen were produced. This is where the potters of al-Andalus surpassed their eastern predecessors.

Here is how traditional Moorish tiles were crafted in Spain – and the methods are essentially the same today.

The slabs themselves were made from high-quality white clay, ground to a fine powder, sieved, mixed with water and then trodden like grapes until properly wedged. To remove excess moisture, the clay was clapped onto an absorbent plaster wall. When partially dry, it was molded in wooden boxes and cut into rectangular sizes, then fired in what are still known as Moorish, or Arab, kilns.

These brick kilns still exist in the Valencia region, in the ancient ceramics centers of Manises and Paterna, as well as in Andalusia. They are not, of course, the very ones used in Islamic times, since the bricks eventually crack with repeated use and the structure must be rebuilt. But it is rebuilt in the same manner as before, and often on the same site.

The kilns consist of a larger lower chamber called the *caldera*, and an upper chamber called the *laboratorio*. They are connected by holes in the floor of the upper chamber that allow heat to pass.

The clay slabs were placed on a platform at the rear of the lower chamber. A fire burning wood and, in the olive-growing regions in the south, leftover olive skins and pits (*orujo*) provided the intense heat required to fire the clay. The resulting absorbent, porous slab was called biscuit (*bizcocho*) and was now ready to be painted.

Especially in the Paterna and Manises region, this work was traditionally – and is still – done only by women. In Andalusia and Portugal, men today sometimes prepare the clay biscuit.

Occasionally the painting of the tiles is done with the tip of a mule's tail, and women I spoke to said there is no better brush. Copper, manganese, platinum and cobalt oxides and alkaline silicates are mixed with water to produce the paint itself.

Designs in the early days were all arabesque – floral and geometric patterns. When animals were drawn, it was always in a highly stylized manner in deference to Islamic tradition. Later, under Christian influence, human figures as well as animals were drawn realistically.

Next, the tiles were dipped in glazing fluid containing lead and tin oxides – originally a lead-sulfite paste – dissolved in water. The competition in tile production in al-Andalus was so intense that Moorish craftsmen, in order to obtain maximum brilliance and transparency effects, had lead shipped from Venice and tin from England, since these were considered the very best.

The tiles were then fired again in the laboratorio, or upper chamber, where the temperature was lower and no flames could reach them. During this process, the glaze and pigment fused into hard glass, with a high degree of brilliance and smoothness.

Through continual experimentation, another method of tile decoration was developed by the Mudéjars, those Muslims living under Christian rule in Spain, as Christian rulers sought to create a lifestyle as magnificent as that of their Muslim predecessors.

The *cuerda seca*, or "dry line," technique involved drawing the principal motif of the decoration, or a grid, along with the connecting links to adjacent pieces, on a fired tile using an oily ink mixed with manganese oxide to give it a dark color. Then, before the second firing, the artisan would flow on water-based oxides for different colors. The glaze would fill in the areas between the oily lines, but would not cross them. The cuerda seca tile would be as splendid as those made the traditional way, with the added benefit that the design stood out in relief, with the separating lines unglazed.

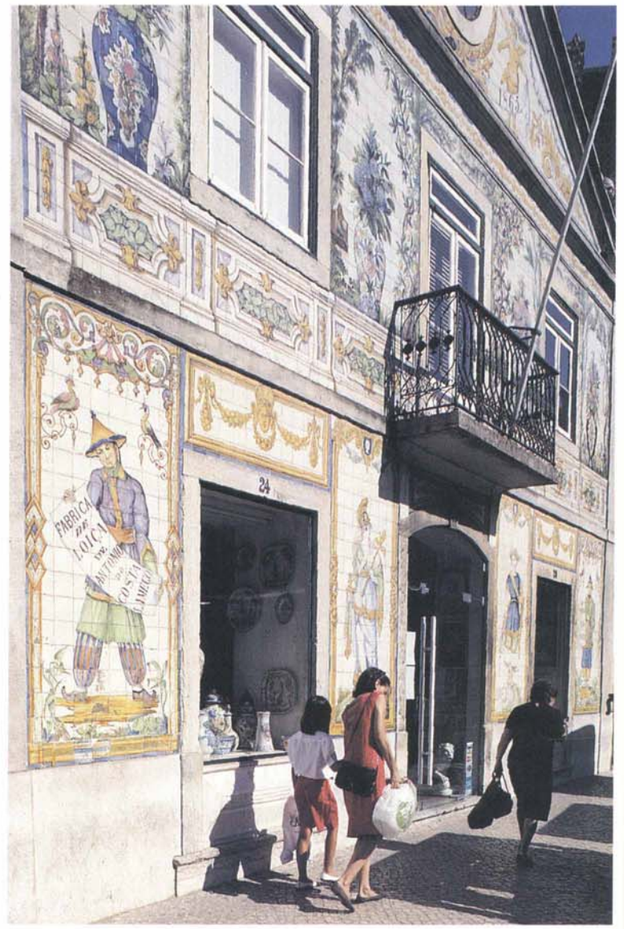
Many of the older tile-painting methods, including cuerda seca, are still in use today. But because traditional tile-making is labor-intensive and therefore costly, it is being replaced to a large extent by factory production. However, most serious tile-making companies maintain a handcrafted line of tiles to supply connoisseurs, and though a factory may acquire two or three gas- or electrically-fired kilns, it often retains at least one fired by wood. The gas kilns make everything too smooth, too perfect, and the tiles lose their individuality, experts say.

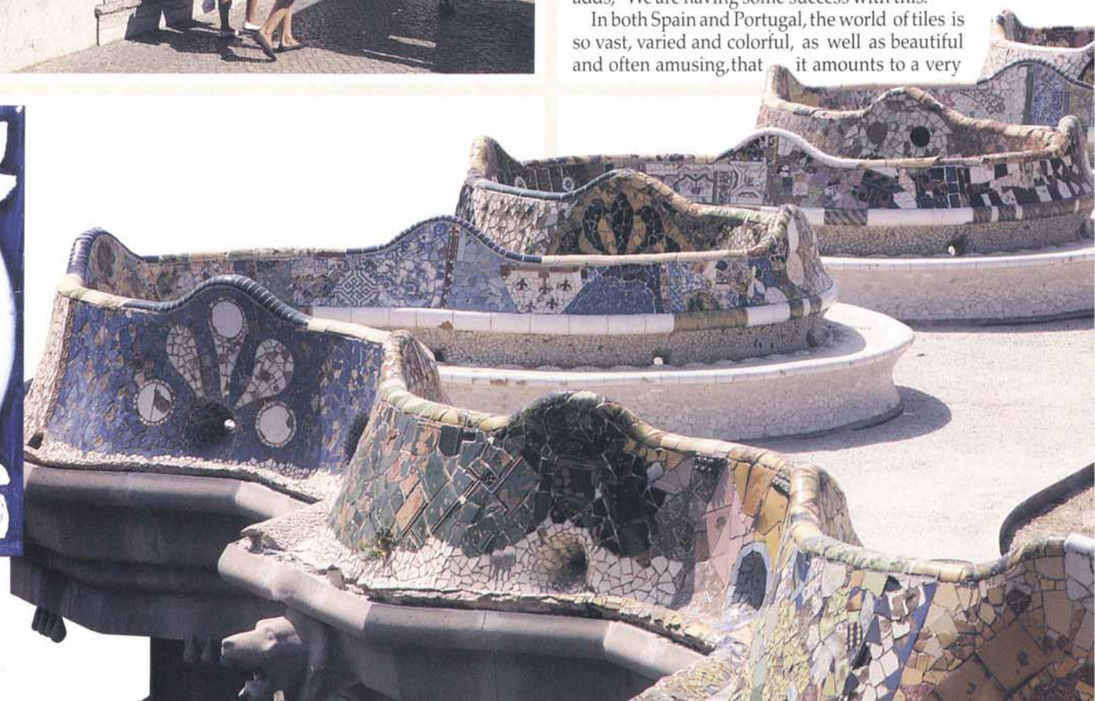
"And," adds Mark Verderi of Seville's famous Mensaque tile makers, "it is partly the black smoke of the wood-fired kiln that reacts with the chemicals on the tile and give them a certain color and their lovely personality."

Mensaque, which exports all over the world, has encountered a small problem with its Japanese customers – perhaps an indicator of how the rest of the world is going.

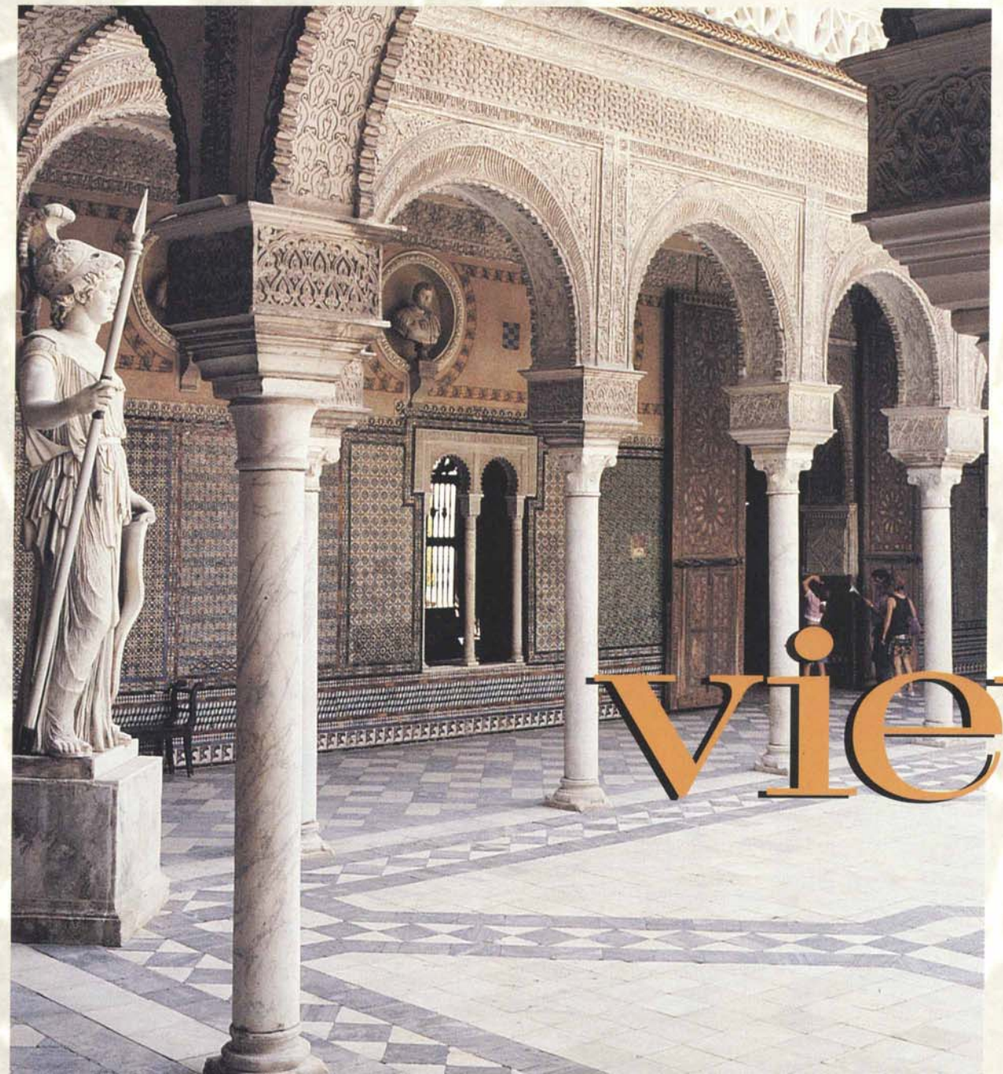
"The Japanese, who are extremely interested in everything that is European, old and famous, have a problem with our hand-made tiles," says Verderi. "They say they are not all exactly the same, that our tiles are uneven. They want them perfect, completely perfect. And we are trying to educate them to the fact that this unevenness is precisely what is so lovely about the good tiles. They are basically the same, but not completely identical." He adds, "We are having some success with this."

In both Spain and Portugal, the world of tiles is so vast, varied and colorful, as well as beautiful and often amusing, that it amounts to a very





Tiles designed about 1950 by Salvador Dalí (below, far left) share showroom space with reproductions of 12th- and 13th-century tiles called *socarrats* (above left) at the Neri tile factory in Valencia. The balletic bull (below right) is part of a series produced by the Mensaque manufactory in Seville. Tiles cover almost every surface of the Viuva Lamego shopfront in Lisbon (right) and the curvilinear ramparts and seats of the Parque Güell (below, far right).



A 15th-century duke of Alcalá built the Casa de Pilatos in Seville (left and upper left) and enriched it with large areas of patterned tilework. Picture panels (above) were most popular in Portugal; this example from about 1670 is in the Palace of the Marquises of Fronteira in Lisbon. Tiles from La Cartuja monastery (opposite) and in the Viuva Lamego shop in Lisbon (right, below) represent past and present aspects of tiles' Iberian heyday.

a tile viewers Guide

For tile aficionados who have only enough time or money to visit one region of Spain, Andalusia is the indisputable choice. The Alhambra in Granada is the most important single site, but if your itinerary can include only one city, it would have to be Seville. The 16th-century Casa de Pilatos, built jointly by Muslim and Christian architects, has more colorful tiles per square meter than almost anywhere in Spain. Built as a replica of Pontius Pilate's house in Jerusalem, it has the great advantage of not being overcrowded with tourists and is redolent of jasmine in summer.

The Parque María Luísa, built for the great Ibero-American Exhibition of 1929-30, has a profusion of tiles, including tile paintings of important events from Spanish history.

The Alcázar, a palace built in Moorish style in Seville by Peter the Cruel of Castile (1334-69), has some of the most magnificent tile work in Spain.

At La Cartuja monastery, within the precincts of EXPO '92, 400 years of tile art are displayed on the walls, from 15th-century tiles to ones crafted by Pickman in the 19th century. Many are being painstakingly restored, chipped glazes and obscured patterns reconstructed.

Catalonia has striking examples of the imaginative use of tiles by the most famous of all Spanish architects, Antonio Gaudí, and modernist architects like Lluis Domenech i Muntaner. La Casa Amtller and La Casa Battló, both on Barcelona's Paseo de Gracia, are prime examples. Gaudí's Parque Güell is also impressive, and La Casa Vicens on Las Carolinas Street, one of Gaudí's first projects, finished in 1885, blends a liberated Mudéjar style with modernism.

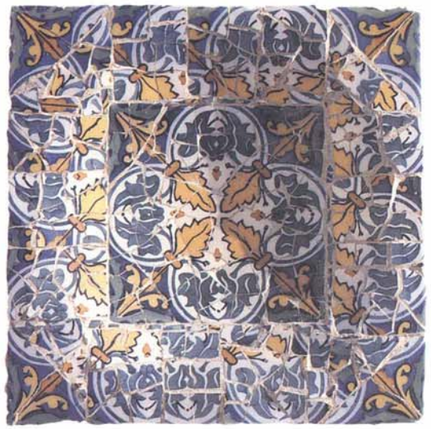
In Valencia, there is tile work worth seeing at the 16th-century former seminary called the Colegio del Patriarca, at the old railway station café, and last but not least, at the Neri factory shop at Poeta Querol Street No. 1. Neri is said to be one of the two or three best tile shops in the world, and just about every style ever made is sold here, from copies of 12th-century tiles to modern ones by Catalonia's famous Javier Mariscal.

In Lisbon, a comparable shop called Viuva Lamego is located at Largo do Intendente Street No. 25, in a building whose entire façade is covered with tiles. Without question it is one of the most colorful shops anywhere, and every sort of tile made in Portugal is represented here – most made by the firm's own artisans. The manager, Leite da Silva, will happily tell a visitor all there is to know about Portuguese tiles, and more.

The Museu da Cidade, or Municipal Museum, of Lisbon has a rich collection of tiles ranging from classical to modern, and the Royal Palace of Sintra and the Quinta da Bacalhoa contain prime examples of classical tiles.

The Palace of the Marquises of Fronteira on the outskirts of Lisbon is a charmingly run-down and somewhat abandoned-looking structure, with tiles covering just about every bit of space that is not actually garden. On the Terrace of the Chapel, there is an azulejo wall covering, created about 1670, representing the liberal arts. Panels with an Oriental flavor cover the lower part.

Finally, Lisbon's Avenida Infante Santo has an enormous tile mural by Sa Nogueira and another by Maria Keil, both completed in 1959. These are among the most large-scale works ever done in tile in Portugal.



A tile panel in Seville's Plaza de España (left) shows the Spanish monarchs receiving Christopher Columbus in Barcelona on his return from the New World. A pastoral scene and a musical one adorn tiles by Ceramica Lusitania of Lisbon (above left) and by Dalí (above right). Antonio Gaudí's affection for tile surfaces shows in a fragmented *cuerda seca* tile panel in the Parque Güell (above, far left) and in the reptilian roof tiles and tile-faced organic shapes (lower right) of Casa Battló.

rich, yet largely undiscovered, national resource. Though Iberian tiles are exported by the millions to beautify American bathrooms, to cover Arab walls, or to line Italian swimming pools, the exports cannot convey the magic and beauty of the world of tiles that exists in Spain and Portugal.

Walk down a street in Granada or Lisbon, and you will see them on every corner, in every side street, in every café and bar – outside and inside churches, or as street signs. Many are funny, depicting scenes from daily life: farming, cooking, fishing, hunting, folk dance, flowers, rabbits and cows. Tile "paintings" are also everywhere – mostly of historical monuments or events, but also of highly idealized landscapes.

An old Spanish proverb, perhaps dating back to Muslim times, says that "a poor man lives in a house without azulejos." Today, even the poorest Spaniard or Portuguese will have tiles somewhere in his house.

Still towering above the rest of Spain and Portugal is Granada's Alhambra, the symbol of perfection in tessellation. Simple or intricate, its patterns are endlessly copied or used for inspiration, and are still the most popular of all. Lately there has been a resurgence in demand for these classical patterns, whether hand-made or churned out of a factory.

In the Alhambra's Hall of the Ambassadors, a large reception room of exceptional beauty, one is unlikely to notice at first glance that every arch or doorway employs different patterns of interlaced azulejos. One would think that this variety could not work esthetically, yet the total effect is one of perfect harmony.

In Portugal, the earliest tiles were imported from Seville and the Valencia region of Spain. At the end of the 15th century, tiles made by Muslims were used to good effect in the cathedral of Coimbra and in the Royal Palace of Sintra, where they can still be seen.

Production of tiles in Portugal dates to the second half of the 16th century. The Portuguese style soon took a different tack from that of Spain. Large tiled panels began to be used both inside and outside buildings and palaces. The scenes generally illustrated religious history or depicted life in the countryside. The techniques were undoubtedly of Muslim origin, but their use developed into something quite different.

Sometimes even quite humble homes were covered with tiles on the outside. Eduardo Leite da Silva, manager of Viuva Lamego, Portugal's finest tile factory, says the reason for this was simple: "It was actually cheaper to cover a house with tile than to paint it – since, of course, good tile lasts practically forever."

Perhaps even more than in Spain, the presence of tiles in Portugal is striking, and the tradition of using large tile panels is still strong. Lisbon's streets have huge, modern tile mosaics, and the walls of the Lisbon subway stations are covered with patterns of tiles done by some of the country's foremost artists. In addition to the serious themes of the large tile panels, Portuguese cities and towns feature "azulejos populares" – tiles with a lighthearted, more humorous content that have the advantage of being both attractive and cheap.

Tor Eigeland, a Norwegian freelance photographer now based in London, lived in Spain for more than 20 years.

Jabal 'Ali

DUBAI'S GATEWAY TO THE

WRITTEN BY LARRY LUXNER
PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOSEPH BRIGNOLO AND LARRY LUXNER

Many years ago, when port official Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem's grandfather was a pearl diver, the people of Dubai knew nothing about containerized shipping or free zones. But they did know about international trade.

"We are merchants, and we've been trading since the days of our ancestors," Sulayem says. "Our country was on the maritime Silk Route to China, and we moved goods to and from Africa. Our forefathers used to dive for pearls for three months during the summer and then take them to India to sell. But then the Japanese discovered cultured pearls, the maharajahs were forced out of power in India, and that industry was destroyed."

After that, says Sulayem, "the trade and the port became our business."

Sulayem is today president of both the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone Authority and the Dubai Ports Authority. His spacious office is decorated with large potted plants, black ergonomic chairs and a framed letter of congratulations for making the dean's list at Temple University.

As the up-and-coming young executive will attest, trade is still very much Dubai's business. In 1990, re-exporting activities by this member of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) amounted to 18.5 percent of Dubai's total $11.3 billion in non-oil trade. Of the $2.1 billion in re-exports, Iran – right across the Arabian Gulf from Dubai – was the amirate's best client, accounting for $527 million. Other big customers were Saudi Arabia ($161.7 million in 1990), Qatar ($145 million), Germany ($133.7 million) and Singapore ($120.5 million).

Before the Gulf War, in fact, Dubai officials were urging Kuwaiti and Saudi businessmen to transfer funds here, promising that their investments would be safe from the impending hostilities. Once the war was over, Dubai's businessmen quickly took another tack – emphasizing how close the commercial capital of the United Arab Emirates was to Kuwait, making it the logical place from which to direct massive reconstruction efforts.

It appears that Dubai and the 10,000-hectare (25,000-acre) Jabal 'Ali Free Zone have benefitted from both arguments.

"Even during the war, with Dubai being only 1000 kilometers [600 miles] from the front line, there were investors moving in, including those from Kuwait and Bahrain, as well as Europeans," says Patrick McDonald, deputy chief executive of the Dubai Commerce and Tourism Promotion Board.

McDonald said that most of the nearly 160 Kuwaiti-owned companies in Dubai came as a direct consequence of the Gulf conflict, but that some 120 of them have since decided to maintain a local presence. Many are based in Jabal 'Ali, which was built between 1976 and 1979 at a cost of about some $2.5 billion.

Says Sulayem, "We are talking with major companies that want to use our port as a staging area to repair refineries and other infrastructure. Jabal 'Ali is probably the only place that could play a role in the reconstruction of Kuwait, because it's vast, quick and ready for equipment to be shipped as needed."

On a typical day, dockworkers can be seen loading and unloading cargo at the Free Zone's sprawling port, reached from Dubai Municipality via a 28-kilometer (17-mile), four-lane highway, presently being upgraded to eight lanes at a cost of about $165 million.

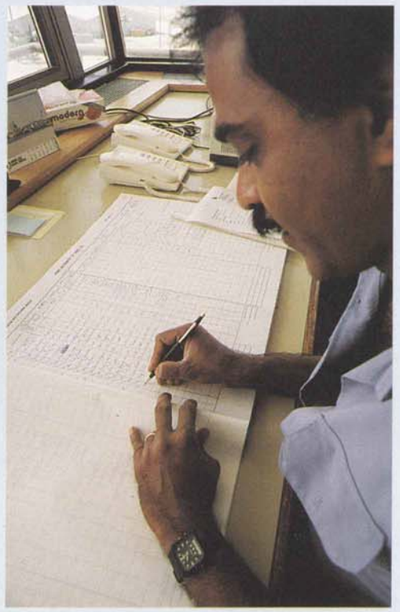
The dock itself boasts 67 berths, more than 15 kilometers (nine miles) of quay, and a modern container terminal operated by Sea-Land Service Corporation. Companies can also import and export goods through Port Rashid, some 35 kilometers (22 miles) away, or at one of the ports in Sharjah, another amirate up the coast (See page 36).

From the balcony of the "control tower," Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem (top) watches ship movements in Jabal 'Ali port. Port tug *Namer* (upper right) moves British tanker *Tonbridge* through the port to her loading station. Hawsers hold tanker *Abu Amira* (above) in a waiting berth while another small tanker loads at the Jabal 'Ali tank farm.

WORLD

At the end of 1991, the Dubai Ports Authority (DPA) – whose writ includes both the Port of Jabal 'Ali and Port Rashid – celebrated handling a record 1,200,000 cargo containers in one year. The DPA now ranks as the busiest port in the Middle East, and among the top 20 in the world in container throughput.

Sulayem said the DPA has signed an agreement with Kuwait Petroleum Company to rent 750,000 square meters (8,000,000 square feet) of land for office and warehouse space.



Arrivals and sailings are carefully logged (left) in the harbormaster's office in the Jabal 'Ali "control tower" (top).

And recently, the director-general of Kuwait's Customs Department, Ibrahim al-Ghanem, announced that most of his country's imports would be transshipped at Jabal 'Ali Port until Kuwait's own ports had been fully restored. Large ships would unload consignments at Jabal 'Ali for transshipment on smaller vessels of up to 20,000 tons to Shu'aybah Port, south of Kuwait City.

Last spring, Union Carbide Chemicals and Plastics Company announced it would construct a latex manufacturing plant in the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone, capable of making 10,000 tons a year of latex polymers for use in paints, coatings and adhesives, which will be exported throughout the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries as well as to Iran, Yemen, Jordan, Egypt, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Also, Danish industrial pump manufacturer Grundfos said it would open a 2000-square-meter (21,500-square-foot) factory in the zone to produce water pumps for distribution throughout the Middle East. And International Bechtel Inc. has already established a procurement office at Jabal 'Ali to supply materials needed to reconstruct Kuwait's devastated oil facilities.

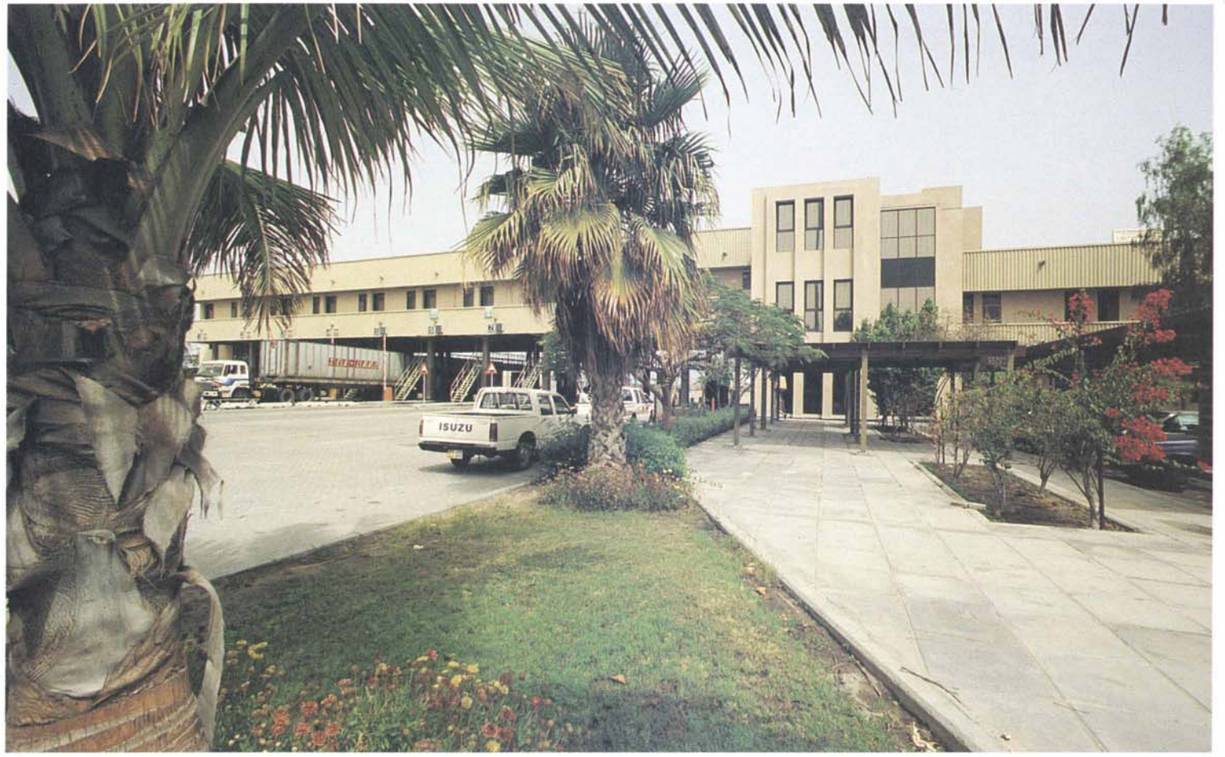
Meanwhile, electronics distributor Aiwa Gulf Company will double its Jabal 'Ali warehouse space to 6000 square meters (65,000 square feet), and French Gulf Air Conditioning, maker of Airwell air conditioners, plans to triple the size of its production plant in Jabal 'Ali during 1992. And last November, the Mitropa Institute, a Vienna-based consulting firm specializing in projects in the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe, chose Jabal 'Ali as the site of its new regional office in the Middle East.

Among the many advantages offered by Jabal 'Ali to companies considering basing themselves there are various forms of exemption from taxes and duties, and laws permitting investors to repatriate both their profits and their capital. All told, more than 350 companies – 80 of them arriving in 1991 alone – operate in the zone; together, they represent more than $600 million in investment. About a quarter of the companies are headquartered in India. Another 25 percent are companies based in the six GCC countries – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE – and the rest are from the United States, Western Europe and the Far East, Sulayem says.

Among the American firms are Johnson & Johnson, Union Carbide, Cleveland Bridge & Engineering and air conditioner manufacturer York International.

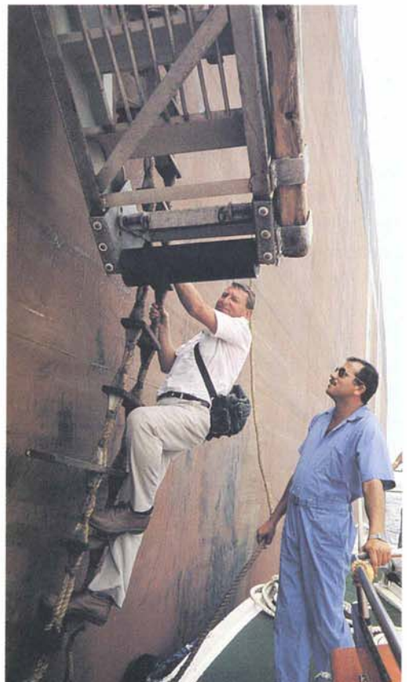
One man who knows about investing here is Jaguish N. Patel, finance manager of TG Industries, which makes some 150 leather jackets a day for export to Germany, France and Spain.

"About 90 percent of our 120 employees are Pakistani," Patel says. "We provide food and accommodations. Our factory employs professional people. If they make one mistake, we have to start over."



Offices of the Dubai Ports Authority.

A firm based in Port Khalid, in Sharjah, refitted a former Saudi Aramco jack-up drilling platform to serve in Angola as an offshore hotel for oil workers.



A Port Authority pilot sets out to climb the sheer side of the supertanker he will bring into port.

The freighter *Iran Ehsan* unloads at Port Khalid.

GROWING IMPORTANCE

An aging oil rig that for years drilled wells into the seabed of the Arabian Gulf has found new life as a 167-bed floating hotel for oil workers in the West African nation of Angola.

Lamprell Jumairah, a shipping firm based at Port Khalid in Sharjah, one of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), won the $18-million contract last year to refit the 60-by-60-meter (200-by-200-foot) Saudi Aramco Mobile Drilling Platform 2 and hook it up at its new location more than 10,500 kilometers (6500 miles) away.

"This is our sixth oil-rig conversion," said Steven D. Lamprell, one of the company's two partners. "We have become specialists in converting ex-oil rigs into accommodation jack-ups, but this is the first time we've competed in the international market against Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States."

Oil-rig conversions are only the latest wrinkle at Port Khalid, Sharjah's main ocean terminal and one of the fastest-growing ports on the Arabian Gulf.

The Sharjah Ports Authority, which runs Port Khalid, Khor Fakkan and Hamriya ports, handled more than 245,000 twenty-foot equivalents (TEU's) in 1990 – up from 162,000 TEU's in 1990. That puts Port Khalid and its two sister ports among the ranks of other large shipping terminals in the UAE, such as Jabal 'Ali and Port Rashid, both in Dubai, and Port Fujairah, in the amirate of the same name.

"We're a smaller port but, as a result, we can offer customers a little more flexibility," said Simon Keen, marketing manager of the Sharjah Department of Ports and Customs.

Keen, whose agency describes Port Khalid's Sharjah Container Terminal as "unquestionably one of the Middle East's finest deepwater box-handling facilities," said the terminal opened its first two berths in 1976. The port gradually grew to its current size: 12 berths, plus an oil jetty and one kilometer (3300 feet) of lay-up wharf.

Today, he said, Port Khalid handles more than 2,000,000 metric tons of general cargo a year and has 633 employees, most of them from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Keen himself is British, and the port's specially trained security force is entirely Gurkha Nepalese.

"Some of our largest imports are frozen fruit, meats and chilled fruit," he said. "We're the largest importer of fruit in the Emirates, and we were the first to develop berth-side cold storage."

A leisurely stroll around Port Khalid recently revealed a wide range of vessels, from an Iranian ship discharging fresh fruit, to an Argentine Navy destroyer about to return home after completing its Arabian Gulf tour of duty, to an Iranian passenger ferry. Sharjah's proximity to Bandar Abbas, across the Arabian Gulf, persuaded Iran's national shipping line to begin offering regular passenger ferry service between the two ports.

The amirate's enviable location has also led to creation of a free-trade zone at Port Khalid, within whose boundaries companies may import raw materials and assemble or process them into manufactured goods without paying any customs duties. Firms already renting space in the zone include NCR Corporation and a number of local companies.

One of the most unusual things about the United Arab Emirates is that each amirate has its own transport system. Nine seaports and five international airports may seem lavish for a nation of only 1,900,000 people, but Keen says there's a reason for it.

"This is a federation made up of obviously separate states," he said. "In the 1970's, every amirate desperately needed ports for its own modernization programs. Once the infrastructure was built, they found they could be useful sources of income as international transshipment points."

In addition to Port Khalid, Sharjah – headquarters of the Arab Maritime Transport Academy – operates Khor Fakkan, a two-berth terminal on the Gulf of Oman, as well as the port of Hamriya, 20 kilometers (12 miles) up the road from Port Khalid.

Part of Khor Fakkan's appeal is its position on the Indian Ocean, rather than the Arabian Gulf, which allows shipping lines to cut transit times, reduce fuel consumption and save on insurance by avoiding the Strait of Hormuz altogether.

Back on the Arabian Gulf coast, Hamriya, built in the mid-1980's, features a $180-million liquified petroleum gas (LPG) plant for refining propane and butane for export to Japan, and an offshore crude-oil loading facility that can accommodate tankers of up to 80,000 deadweight tons.

Petroleum condensate is, in fact, the main source of income for Sharjah's estimated 300,000 people. Production from the onshore Sajaa Field alone comes to 45,000 barrels a day. In addition, the Amoco Sharjah Oil Company, a Sharjah-US joint venture, sells 7,000,000 cubic meters (250,000,000 cubic feet) per day of natural gas to the federally-owned Emirates General Petroleum Corporation.

Signs of the times in the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone: International and regional firms point the way to their manufacturing, storage and distribution facilities; modern control and communications equipment guides ships safely in and out of port.

An Emirates Airlines Airbus (below) is serviced at Dubai International Airport (above), which doubled its freight capacity last year.

THE AIR-CARGO CONNECTION

The amirate of Dubai has opened a $75-million air-cargo complex that doubles the capacity of Dubai International Airport, already one of the world's busiest transshipment centers.

The new 26,000-square-meter (280,000-square-foot) operations building, inaugurated last July, comes in response to a booming air-sea freight business unexpectedly augmented by the postwar reconstruction of Kuwait, which lies only 90 minutes away by air.

"We import a lot of goods and re-export 70 percent of them," says Ahmed Sa'eed al-Maktoum, president of both the Dubai Department of Civil Aviation and Emirates Airlines, the facility's biggest potential customer. "That business will be booming."

Willie Fromm is the cargo manager of Lufthansa German Airlines, the second-largest cargo-handler at the airport after Emirates Airlines.

Now that Kuwait has opened its borders for business, Fromm says, most air shipments of fruit, vegetables, medicines and other perishable goods are being flown there via Dubai.

"In a very short time, everything will be back to normal, and all the airlines are hoping they can participate," he says.

Though many of the 53 airlines that served Dubai before the war canceled flights altogether when hostilities began, or rerouted them through nearby Karachi, all have returned since the war – joined by three new ones – and Dubai International's 1991 volume figure of 140,283 metric tons make it the number one air transshipment center in the Middle East. In November, the airport handled its heaviest single item of air freight ever: a 50-ton ship's gear wheel delivered by a chartered Antonov-124.

Al-Maktoum, in his office overlooking the airport's comfortable arrivals terminal, says the new cargo building, built by San Francisco-based Bechtel Corporation, will be able to handle 300,000 tons of air freight a year.

"We have been planning this project for three years," he says, adding that – because of its position at the midpoint of major air routes between Europe and the Far East – Dubai has become the second-busiest sea-air transit point in the world, after Washington state's Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. That enviable location also recently persuaded Federal Express Corporation to designate Dubai International as the hub for its new Express Freighter service, launched in January. Dubai already serves as the courier service's regional headquarters, covering 22 countries from Egypt to Sri Lanka.

Dubai International's new warehouse is to feature separate sections for shipments of various sizes, as well as special storage areas for exceptional cargoes like radioactive materials or live animals.

The complex will be able to accommodate four Boeing 747's or two 747's and three narrow-bodied freighters. It also features an 8500-square-meter (91,500-square-foot) agents' free zone for incoming sea shipments.

Emirates Airlines, flag carrier of the United Arab Emirates, transports everything from locally produced strawberries, bound for European supermarket shelves, to German cars ordered by Gulf residents. The airline claims it can have a planeload of cargo on its way to Europe just five hours after that cargo's arrival by ship in Dubai's Port Rashid.

After Emirates and Lufthansa, according to Dubai government statistics, the airport's biggest cargo handlers are Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific, Luxembourg's Cargolux and Pakistan International Airlines.

Roque Monteiro, cargo manager for British Airways, says the majority of air cargo business consists of textiles, electronics and other sea-air freight.

Cargoes typically are shipped to the United Arab Emirates from the Far East, and are destined for ultimate markets in the United States and Western Europe. Another important source of cargo is finished garments manufactured by expatriate workers in the nearby Jabal 'Ali Free Zone, which employs some 12,000 people.

Patel, who's been at Jabal 'Ali since February of last year, says the plant's raw materials – like its employees – come from Pakistan, and that his is one of 10 garment manufacturing plants that enjoy tax-free operations in the zone.

Yoshio Kubo, managing director of Sony Gulf, says his company's sprawling Jabal 'Ali operation supplies televisions to clients all over the globe. In fact, he says, "during the World Cup [soccer tournament], Eastern Europeans desperately wanted color TV's. So thousands of TV sets were exported from Japan to Dubai, and sent by jet from Dubai to Moscow.

"At the same time," Kubo adds, "we sell from this warehouse to Iran. That's our biggest market."

Indeed, Iran's Kish Island is emerging as a major customer of the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone. Located right across the Gulf, the 90-square-kilometer (35-square-mile) island is becoming a magnet for Iranians eager to buy electronic and consumer goods made in Japan and South Korea. "Most of the goods in Kish come from the Free Zone," says Sulayem, adding that "Iran used to be our number-one re-export market before the war. Now they're coming back."

Specialized container-handling equipment (below) and modern service vessels (above) made it possible for 1,200,000 freight containers to pass through the DPA's ports in 1991.

Less than an hour's drive from Jabal 'Ali is Dubai International Airport, which opened a $75 million air-cargo complex last July that effectively doubled the airport's cargo capacity to 250,000 metric tons a year (See page 38). Much of that cargo will be destined for Kuwait, in addition to seasonal apparel and other high-value goods produced at Jabal 'Ali for export to Western Europe and the United States.

Lawrence Mills, president and chief executive of Dubai's promotion board, calls Dubai a "sensible place" from which to rebuild Kuwait, adding that other locations along the Arabian Gulf "don't have the same level of facilities we have." His office has collected its arguments in a special report called "The Case for Dubai as a Logistics Base For All Matters Connected With the Reconstruction of Kuwait," which is selling well to interested businessmen at 300 dirhams ($83) a copy.

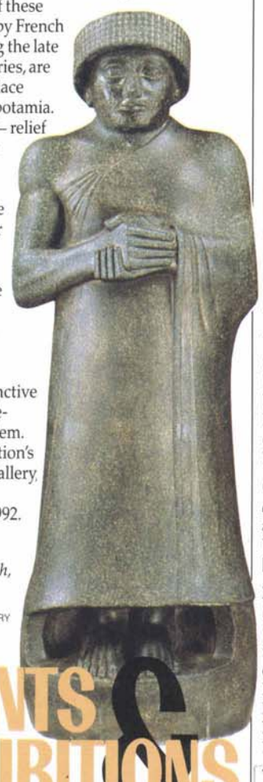
"Jabal 'Ali is very much geared to providing a hub for the work and goods needed for Kuwait's reconstruction," Mills says. "It's nothing more than an expansion of our normal business. A number of companies in Europe and the US, though they'd like to be involved, aren't sure how to go about it or where to do it from."

Over the next 15 years, Mills predicts, reconstruction costs in Kuwait and other nearby countries will run into the hundreds of billions of dollars, and he hopes that Dubai and the Jabal 'Ali Free Zone will benefit from a portion of that business.

If they do, as Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem can attest, it will be the continuation of a millennial tradition of merchant activity that still joins nations and cultures with ties of trade.

Larry Luxner, who recently visited the United Arab Emirates, writes regularly for Aramco World *from his base in San Juan, Puerto Rico.*

When Kingship Descended From Heaven: *Masterpieces of Mesopotamian Art From the Louvre*. Some of the world's most celebrated artworks, created between 3500 and 2000 BC in Sumer and Akkad, kingdoms in southern Mesopotamia, are presented in this loan exhibition from the Paris museum's unrivaled collections of Mesopotamian art. The 32 works explore the relationship between kingship and society, both human and divine, as expressed through representations of the ruler and through his material possessions. Most of these artifacts, recovered by French archeologists during the late 19th and 20th centuries, are from temple and palace complexes in Mesopotamia. Many of the objects – relief sculptures, cylinder seals, metalwork, sculptures in the round – were temple offerings made by or on behalf of Sumerian and Akkadian kings. The exhibition includes some of the world's oldest examples of royal inscriptions, employing the distinctive cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, writing system. Smithsonian Institution's Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through August 9, 1992.



Gudea, ruler of Lagash, Iraq, ca.2120 BC

ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

Through the Collector's Eye: *Oriental Carpets From New England Private Collections*. Anatolian, Baluch, Caucasian, Persian, Turkoman and Chinese weavings from the 18th to 20th centuries are displayed in this exhibition, organized by the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, on the esthetic and historical importance of carpet weaving and carpet collecting in New England in the 19th and 20th centuries. The Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, March 20 through May 3, 1992.

Miniatures From the Courts of the Ottomans and Their Contemporaries explores differences in styles and subject matter of paintings from the courts of the Ottoman Turkish sultans, the Persian Safavid shahs and the Moghul emperors of India. Harvard University's Arthur M. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts,** March 21 through May 17, 1992.

The Here and the Hereafter: *Images of Paradise in Islamic Art* includes more than 50 artworks demonstrating the cultural importance of the rich Islamic vision of the afterlife. Also featured are panels of gold-leaf inscriptions executed by American calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya. University Art Museum, **Berkeley, California**, through March 29, 1992; Museum of Fine Arts, **Springfield, Massachusetts**, April 24 through June 28, 1992.

Encountering the New World, 1493-1800: *Rare Prints, Maps, and Illustrated Books From the John Carter Brown Library*. This Quincentennial exhibition documents how European artists and mapmakers translated into visual form what they found – or thought they found – in the Americas. **Tennessee** State Museum's Polk Cultural Center, **Nashville**, April 12 through May 31, 1992; Natural History Museum of **Los Angeles** County, June 28 through October 25, 1992.

Fabled Cloths of Minangkabau. An extensive exhibit of textiles, jewelry and accessories from the Minangkabau culture of Sumatra, Indonesia. The magnificent weavings symbolize aspects of the social code that governs behavior among this Muslim people. **Bellevue [Washington]** Art Museum, through April 12, 1992; Utah Museum of Fine Arts, **Salt Lake City**, May 10 through June 21, 1992.

Islamic Art and Patronage: *Selections From Kuwait*. More than 100 masterworks of Islamic art of the 8th to 18th centuries – ceramics, glass, metalwork, stonework, wood, illuminated manuscripts, textiles, and rugs – drawn from one of the world's foremost private collections. **St. Louis [Missouri]** Museum of Art, through April 12, 1992.

The Afghan Folio. Photographer Luke Powell's striking images of Afghanistan, displayed as dye-transfer prints. Paul Mellon Art Center, Choate Rosemary Hall, **Wallingford, Connecticut**, April 20 through May 25, 1992; Traveling Exhibits Gallery, **Louisburg [North Carolina]** College, September 7 through October 23, 1992.

Sir John Gardner Wilkinson: *Pioneer Egyptologist*. The first British Egyptologist, Wilkinson has been largely forgotten by the 20th century. This exhibition features over 1000 Egyptian antiquities acquired in his travels and excavations. Harrow School's Old Speech Room Gallery, **London**, through April 26, 1992.

Gold of Africa: *Jewelry and Ornaments From Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Senegal*. More than 150 spectacular objects are evidence of highly developed skills and tastes in the West Africa of the 19th and 20th centuries. **Indianapolis [Indiana]** Museum of Art, through May 3, 1992.

First Encounters: *Spanish Exploration in the Caribbean and the United States, 1492-1570*. Her *hidalgo* warrior class was one of the forces behind Spain's efforts to explore the New World; important elements of culture and technology used were of Arab origin. **Cincinnati [Ohio]** Museum of Natural History, through May 7, 1992; Science Museum of Minnesota, **St. Paul,** May through September 1992; Historical Museum of Southern Florida, **Miami,** September 1992 through January 1993.

The Art of Painting a Story: *Narrative Images From Iran*. The Persian tradition of embellishing stories in literary texts with paintings began during the late 13th century, if not earlier. This exhibition features 28 paintings. Smithsonian Institution's Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through May 10, 1992.

Cristoforo Colombo: *Ships and the Sea*. In Columbus's hometown, an exposition focuses on the development of navigation from the 15th century to the present day. **Genoa, Italy**, May 15 through August 15, 1992.

Precisely to the Point: *Daggers and Drawings From India and Persia*. In traditional India and Persia, art patrons treasured the artistic qualities of their knives as much as those of their pictures. This exhibition brings together five royal daggers and some 30 drawings ranging in subject from portraits to natural history studies. Harvard University's Arthur M. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, May 30 through July 26, 1992.

Discovering America. This Quincentennial exhibit highlights many "discoverers" of America, from the Paleo-Indians who crossed the Bering Strait to the ancient Phoenicians to the British. Jamestown Settlement, near **Williamsburg, Virginia**, June 1992 through March 1993.

Current Archeology in the Ancient World. A series of lectures on current research and discoveries. Upcoming Middle Eastern and Islamic topics include urbanization at Arslantepe-Malatya (Turkey), new Hittite discoveries at Hattusa, research in Urartu. Musée du Louvre, **Paris,** through June 26, 1992.

A World of Foreign Lands. Old maps, charts, letters and books show Europe's expanding view of the world and changing perceptions of foreign places in medieval and early modern times. The exhibit honors the Columbus Quincentennial. The Walters Art Gallery, **Baltimore, Maryland,** July 7 through October 4, 1992.

In the Language of Stitches: *Folk Embroideries of India and Pakistan*. The embroidery styles of communities in northwest India and Pakistan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries constitute "written" records of these largely non-literate peoples. The Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, through July 27, 1992.

Textiles From Egypt, Syria and Spain: *Seventh Through 15th Centuries*. Fifty pieces from the Arab Mediterranean have been selected from the museum's own celebrated collection of Islamic textiles. The period covered extends from the beginning of Islam to the fall of the last Muslim state in Spain. **Cleveland [Ohio]** Museum of Art, until November 1, 1992.

Gulf Arab States: *Beyond Camels, Oil and the Sand Dunes*. This year-long traveling exhibit on life in the Gulf Arab states features items from the Nance Museum, embassies, and other collections. The exhibit, at a different California library each month, is sponsored by the Placentia Library. The schedule: January, **Santa Maria** Public Library; February, **Fresno** County Free Library; March, **Oakland** Public Library; April, **Monterey** County Library; May, **Oxnard** Public Library; June, **Coronado** Public Library; July, **Kern** County Library; and August, **Santa Clara** City Library.

Sifting the Sands of Time: *The Oriental Institute and the Ancient Near East*. This special exhibition traces the history of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute in ancient Near Eastern research and scholarship. Oriental Institute Museum, **Chicago**, through December 31, 1992.

Vanished Kingdoms of the Nile: *The Rediscovery of Ancient Nubia* offers an overview of the flourishing culture of the Nubians in Sudan and southern Egypt, through objects excavated by The Oriental Institute and recovered as part of an international rescue effort before construction of the Aswan High Dam some 30 years ago submerged the ancient homelands of the Nubians. Oriental Institute Museum, **Chicago**, through December 31, 1992.

Seeds of Change. This major Quincentennial exhibition tells the history of five "seeds" – sugar, corn, the potato, disease and the horse – that indelibly changed both the New World and the Old. The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, **Washington, D.C.**, through April 1, 1993.

Turkish Traditional Art Today. This display of contemporary Turkish folk art, 10 years in the gathering, emphasizes the religious and social environments that nurture the folk art. Museum of International Folk Art, **Santa Fe, New Mexico**, through June 30, 1993.

Temples, Tells and Tombs. Early civilizations of Egypt, Rome, Mesopotamia, Syria and Greece are brought to life in a major exhibition featuring dramatic re-creations of the past. **Milwaukee [Wisconsin]** Public Museum, through September 30, 1993.

Stepping Into Ancient Egypt: *The House of the Artist Pashed*. An exhibition on everyday life in Pharaonic Egypt, geared especially toward children and located in the Junior Gallery. **Newark [New Jersey]** Museum, until June 1994.

The Aramco Exhibit. Centered on the Arab-Islamic technical heritage, this permanent interactive, "learn-by-doing" scientific exhibit relates the historical background to today's petroleum exploration, production and transportation. **Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.**

Information is correct at press time, but please reconfirm dates and times before traveling. Readers are welcome to submit information for possible inclusion in this listing.

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