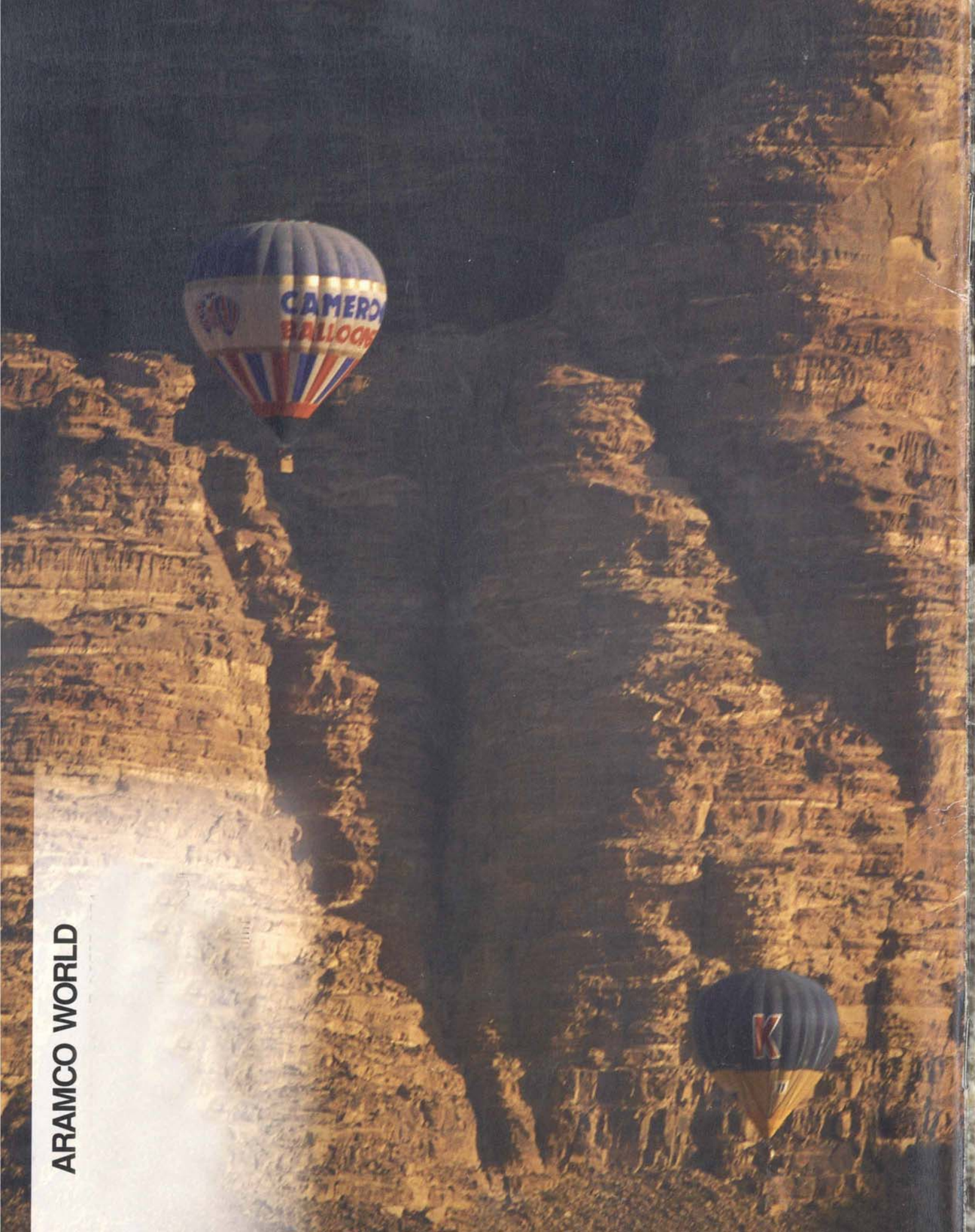

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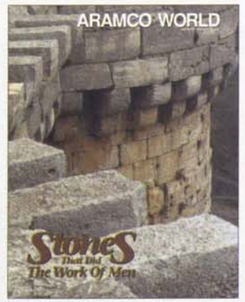

Front Cover: Grim, gray stone, handcarved and hardly mellowed by time, built the battlements and towers of the Krak des Chevaliers, the "most wholly admirable castle in all the world." Machicolations, which allowed defenders to drop stones or pour hot oil or water on attacking troops, remind romantics of the crusader castles' deadly—and finally futile—purpose. Photograph: William Tracy. Back cover: Hot air balloons float past the cliffs of Jordan's Wadi Rum. Photograph: Bill Lyons

◄ The Khalidi Library enshrines centuries of devotion and study.

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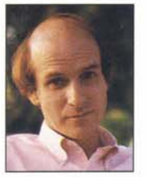
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The Khalidi Library: A HIDDEN TREASURE

WRITTEN BY JOCELYN M. AJAMI

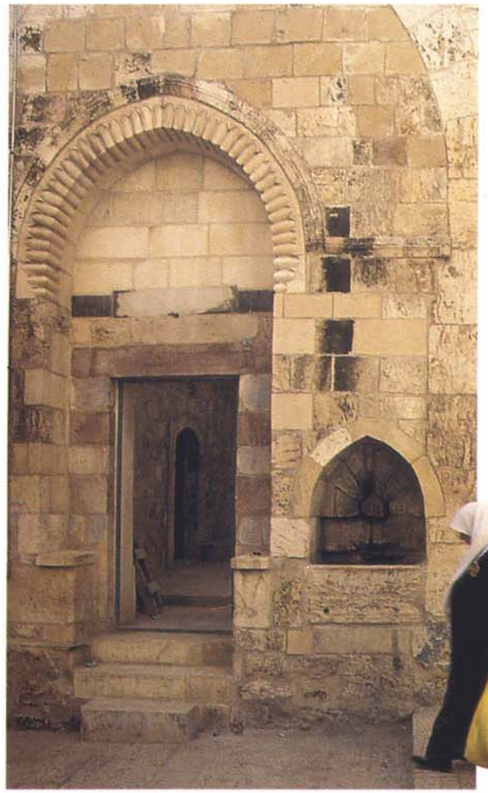
PHOTOGRAPHED BY DICK DOUGHTY

In the heart of Jerusalem's Old City, a stone's throw from the Western Wall and the Dome of the Rock, stands the Khalidi Library. Located on Tariq Bab al-Silsilah, or Chain Gate Street, the library might go totally unnoticed by a passerby, but it is the largest and finest private Palestinian library, and one of the largest private collections of Islamic manuscripts in the Arab world.

At left, a manuscript copied 563 years ago is displayed in a room where hundreds of the Khalidi Library's treasures are stored—some in acid free boxes—until restoration of the building is complete. At right, glosses on glosses in a legal text.

Housed in a 13th-century Mamluk building that recalls Jerusalem's medieval grandeur, the Khalidi family collections were officially organized into a library in 1900 under the terms of a private family trust, or *waqf thurri*, established by Hajj Raghib al-Khalidi, a Palestinian judge who lived from 1866 to 1952. The library contains some 1200 precious manuscripts: 18 in Persian, 36 in Turkish, the rest in Arabic; a catalogue, due to appear next year, is being prepared by Dr. Lawrence I. Conrad of the Wellcome Institute in London. The library also contains well over 5000 printed volumes not yet catalogued, and countless documents and letters. In all, its holdings reveal the concerns and interests of educated Palestinians during the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, and shed light on the intellectual heritage of Palestinians in Jerusalem from medieval times to the present.

Known by its abbreviated Arabic name, al-Khalidiyyah, the Khalidi Library is housed in the *turbah*, or burial site, of Amir Husam al-Din Barkah Khan and his two sons. Husam al-Din, who diedin



The Khalidi Library satisfies two thirsts, thanks to the public drinking fountain next to its front door.

1246, was a military chieftain of Khwarizmian origin whose soldiery operated in Syria and Palestine in the 1230's and 1240's. His daughter was married to the formidable Mamluk sultan Baybars (1260-1277), who relentlessly fought the crusaders; Husam al-Din's two sons, Badr al-Din and Husam al-Din Kara, were both military commanders under Baybars. It was most likely Badr al-Din who built the *turbah*. Although neither Husam al-Din nor his sons died in Jerusalem, their remains were brought there for burial because of Jerusalem's importance as the third holy city of Islam.

The tomb inscriptions in the courtyard of the *turbah* and on the facade of the library building are the most reliable sources for dating the site. The courtyard inscriptions place Husam al-Din Barkah Khan's death at AH 644, or AD 1240, documenting an initial stage of construction between 1265 and 1280. Another inscription on the street facade dates restoration work to 1390.

Architectural features also signpost the library's medieval history. A beautiful Romanesque door, now a window in the north facade of the reading room, typifies an early Mamluk phase, while the grilled window overlooking Chain Gate Street attests to a later period. Subsequent phases of construction or restoration are Ottoman in character and bring us up to the construction by the Khalidis of a family mosque in 1876, in what is presently the library's reading room.

Although the architectural features of the library summarize much of Jerusalem's history, it is its intellectual structure that comprises the real treasure. The Khalidi Library is an indigenous collection, built by Palestinians. It views history from the inside out: people looking at themselves and the world from a very specific place and period. Protected by the *waqf thurri*, it has survived intact as part of Jerusalem's history and—with the loss of so many public and private Palestinian libraries since 1948, and in light of the alleged paucity of intellectual material from Palestinian sources—it is significant evidence of the initiative and scholarship of generations of Palestinians.

The *waqf thurri*, functioning in much the same way as Western foundations do, protected the library's income and property in perpetuity, ensuring the survival and maintenance of the collection and the building. Luckily, the Khalidi family had always upheld a tradition of preserving the core of the collection. This was true of Sun`Allah al-Khalidi, who held the position of Chief Secretary to the Religious Court of Jerusalem for 40 years, and died in 1726. He secured the various family collections, which were then consolidated in the late 19th century. But it was Khadijah al-Khalidi, great-grandmother of the family's present-day senior member, who endowed with her own money the *waqf* that her son Raghib established, and who persuaded other family members to contribute to it and to its future.

Consequently, the collections have preserved what is in effect a single voice: the voice of Palestinians. The great Western collections of Middle Eastern material all necessarily reflect the viewpoints and biases of the Western scholars who built them; the Eastern collections of Cairo, Damascus or Istanbul represent the merging of many histories, often distorted to fulfill imperial or national agendas. The Khalidi collection, uniquely, reveals its own vision, one that has neither been dissipated nor interpreted.

The library's treasure is distinguished by its medieval manuscripts. According to Conrad, who has been examining the manuscripts for seven years (and whose expertise was indispensable to this article), the collection spans a very broad spectrum of subjects, with religious law at its center. Other fields include medicine, history, geography, astronomy, Qur'anic exegesis, rhetoric, logic, philosophy and poetry.

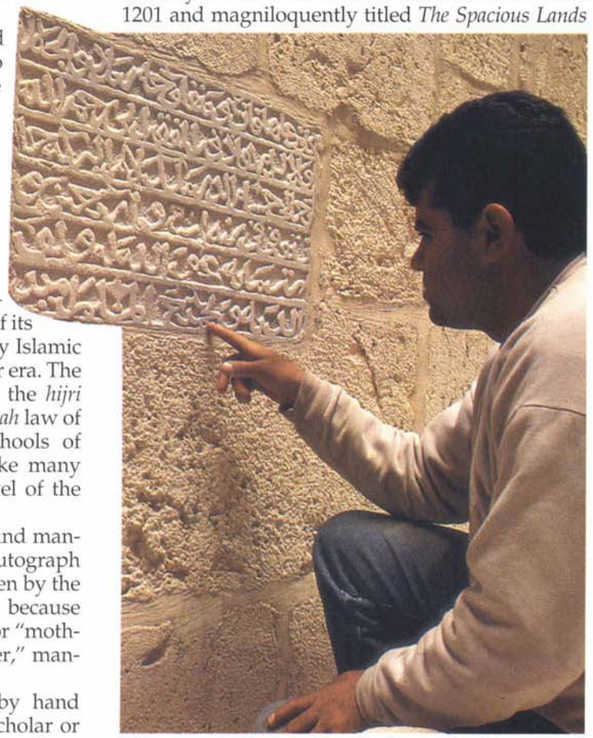
The Khalidi Library's oldest manuscript, judging by the style and structure of its archaic script, is a unique volume on early Islamic history dating from the 10th century of our era. The oldest dated manuscript, inscribed with the *hijri* year 418, is an 11th-century work on *shari`ah* law of the Maliki school, one of the four schools of thought in Islamic law. This volume, like many others, indicates the high intellectual level of the Jerusalem collectors.

Even more precious than its one-of-a-kind manuscripts are the Khalidi Library's many autograph works. These are volumes that were written by the hand of the author and not by a copyist; because they are executed in the "hand of origin" or "mother script," they are called *umm*, or "mother," manuscripts in Arabic.

Before printing, books were copied by hand either by professional scribes or by the scholar or student studying them. Yet something was all too often lost in transcription: Spelling errors were made, earlier misreadings of the original were perpetuated, "improvements" might be added or deletions made by an overconfident copyist, earlier scholars' comments might be incorporated as part of the text, and all these errors accumulated and compounded themselves as copies were made of copies. Even without error, something of the author's spirit was lost, if only by the distancing of each successive transcription from the original. That is why such *umm* manuscripts are particularly valuable: They provide a direct, unrefracted and undimmed insight into the mind and the time of the author. To read through such a volume is to possess the experience of the moment.

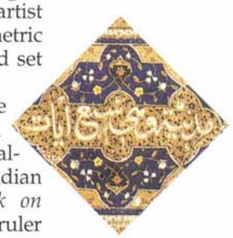
Another category of Khalidi Library treasures is its collection of *makrumahs*, or presentation copies, some of which were originally made for royal libraries. These works are characterized by the craftsmanship involved in their production and the beauty of their decoration. They often feature intricate headings, gilded medallions, multicolored inks, and plenty of space between lines to emphasize the importance and beauty of each passage.

One very richly decorated *makrumah* is a panegyric to Saladin (Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub), hero of the crusades, who became a standard of chivalry even to his Christian adversaries. Dated 1201 and magniloquently titled *The Spacious Lands*

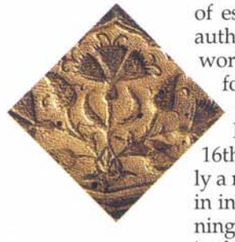


The building that houses the library was erected over the burial site of three 13th-century military commanders. A workman in the library examines one of the commemorative tablets that mark the graves.

of Commendations and the Garden of the Glorious and Praiseworthy Deeds Among the Merits of the Victorious King, the volume was presented to Saladin as a gift. This *makrumah* is also an *umm*, created by an artist who gilded the volume with floral and geometric motives, intricately rendered a horoscope and set down Saladin's family tree.



Another *makrumah*, translated through the Pahlavi and Syriac languages into Arabic, is a copy from the library of the Zengid ruler Nur al-Din Arslan Shah (1193-1211), written by the Indian physician Canakya. Titled *Canakya's Book on Poisons and Antidotes*, it was presented to the ruler as a warning and as a "recipe" book intended to protect him from assassination. One anecdote in it tells of a beautiful young maiden who was fed slowly increasing amounts of a poison that her system could resist but would retain, until she became so saturated with the deadly substance that any contact with her would be fatal. She was then presented to the king as a gift....



Among the disorder of repair in the library's building, the library's sign awaits restoration.

The Khalidi Library also contains several so-called "fair drafts"—drafts in the hand of the author which include commentaries, corrections and second thoughts that reveal the workings of his mind. In one case, there is a *majmu'ah*, or group of essays, in various stages of completion, by an author identified as Abd al-Kafi al-Subki, who worked between 1340 and 1348. The texts were found by one of his students, who bound the papers together after his death.

Probably the most beautiful manuscript is a 16th-century Ottoman copy of the Qur'an, certainly a museum piece. It is a very large volume bound in incised leather and green silk. Particularly stunning are its colorful gilded *hizbs*: medallions placed in the margins of the pages to separate the sections of the Qur'an for recitation.

The library collection also contains additional materials such as *ijazahs*, or licences—diploma-like documents that disclose some of the pedagogical practices of past times. The *ijazah* certifies that the person named in it has the authority to transmit a particular teaching because of his link to a specific scholar. If, for instance, Ahmad of Damascus studied with a teacher of renown, he would return home with a document attesting that he had done so, and that he had the right and the qualifications to transmit the matter he had learned. Like the diplomas and transcripts of the present day, the *ijazah* system, though sometimes corrupted, was designed to protect the continuity and legitimacy of scholarship.

An interesting feature of the Khalidi collection is that it includes an element of pluralism that shows the wide-ranging interests of the collectors. Though the Khalidis, as adherents of the Shafi'i and Hanafi schools of Islamic law, represented the legal and religious mainstream in Jerusalem, they nevertheless collected the work of a Hanbali scholar, who belonged to a distinct minority. According to Conrad, there are other cases of thoughtful eclecticism within the manuscript collection.

In keeping with the great reverence for the written word that pervades the Muslim world, the Khalidi collectors never discarded damaged books or fragments of manuscripts. Instead, they stored them, and the attic of the library's reading room was full of boxes of detached or damaged pages. Documents and letters, however, were kept in linen bags that resemble pillow cases, a practice that was usual in many parts of the Arab world, and can still be encountered today.

Other practices were documented in the margins and blank pages of bound volumes, on which owners sometimes jotted down their experiences, ruminations or notes. One reader, for instance, wrote down a complete inventory of materials for building a house—with exact details, including the cost of labor and of the materials. Thanks to him, centuries later, we become privy to a slice of life in Jerusalem in the year 1785.

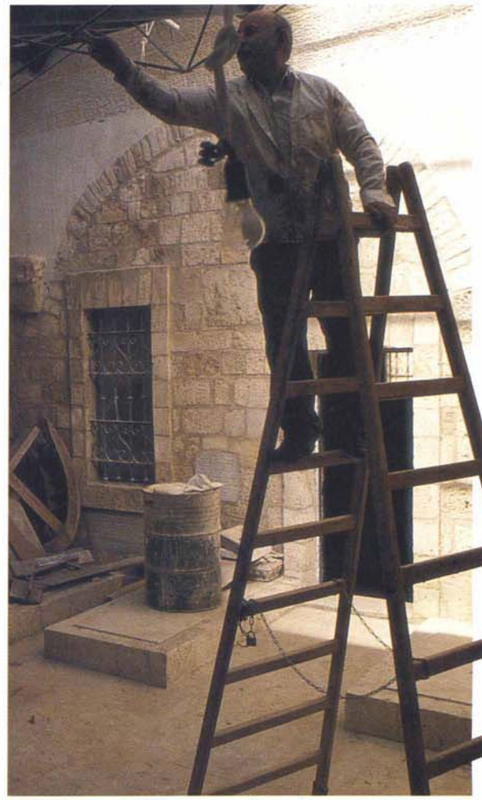
In another note, a member of the Khalidi family explained his wish to acquire a particular scholarly work: a commentary on the traditions of the Prophet. He describes his journey to Alexandria to have the copy made; it comprises five volumes and over 5000 pages. He then recounts how one of the volumes was tragically lost at sea during his trip home to Palestine, and he ponders how he is to replace the missing volume. Although we do not learn from this account whether or not its writer ever returned to Alexandria, the underlying message of the tale is clear: To the writer and others like

him, it was worth spending vast effort and expense "just for a book."

This valuation is rooted deep in Islamic culture. Most importantly, there is the Qur'an itself, the word of God in the form of a book, the central miracle of Islam. And, as Islam expanded beyond the Arabian Peninsula (See *Aramco World*, November-December 1991), books became the carriers of a unifying cultural consciousness. Not only did they transmit the teachings of the faith itself, but they recorded the accomplishments of the now far-flung Muslim community and sustained the essence of a way of life. On a more local scale, the same is certainly true of the Khalidi Library.

Thus, as little-known as the library is to outsiders, it is a living landmark to Palestinians—as I discovered when I tried to find it.

Equipped with no address, no telephone number and absolutely no sense of direction, I ventured into the Old City's intricate maze. Assuming, out of ignorance, that the library would be difficult to find, I asked several shopkeepers to direct me. Each knew exactly where it was; each pointed me unerringly toward Chain Gate Street. One kind man, sensing my total disorientation and my



inability to follow a straight line, finally escorted me to one of the Khalidi family homes, where the manuscripts were being stored temporarily until renovations to the library's building, now in progress, were complete.

The Khalidi family name is one to conjure with. Not only is it synonymous with scholarship and pedigree, it is also a source of collective pride and part of the fiber of Jerusalem and its history. The Khalidis are among the city's oldest families: They have been in continuous residence since Jerusalem was recaptured by Saladin in 1187. But their presence there goes back further. On his latest visit to the library,this year, Conrad identified a manuscript authored by Muhammad Abdul Rahman ibn Abdul Aziz, a Khalidi resident of Jerusalem. The manuscript, transcribed by a copyist, is dated AH 608, or AD 1208, but Conrad notes that its author seems "totally innocent of any knowledge of the Crusades"—from which he concludes that the original manuscript predates the crusades.

A sloping glass roof now being installed will make the library's courtyard a more useful space.

Given Jerusalem's great religious significance, it is not surprising that its Mamluk rulers in Cairo helped legitimize their power by selecting local scholars of repute for the position of *qadi al qudat*, or chief justice. Thus during the Mamluk period, at least three members of the Khalidi family were chosen for that post and took up their residence in Cairo as chief justice of the realm. For most of the Ottoman period, too, Khalidi scholars served in the judiciary, but in the decades preceding World War I they also served as administrators, diplomats and members of parliament. Many of their accomplishments are reflected in the library's holdings.

One of these parliamentarian-scholars, Yusuf Diya Pasha al-Khalidi (1842-1906) was president of the municipal council of Jerusalem and a member for Jerusalem of the first, short-lived Ottoman parliament of 1876. From 1877 to 1878, he was vice-consul at the Russian Black Sea port of Poti, and later governor of a Kurdish province. In his spare time in this letter capacity he wrote the first Kurdish-Arabic dictionary.

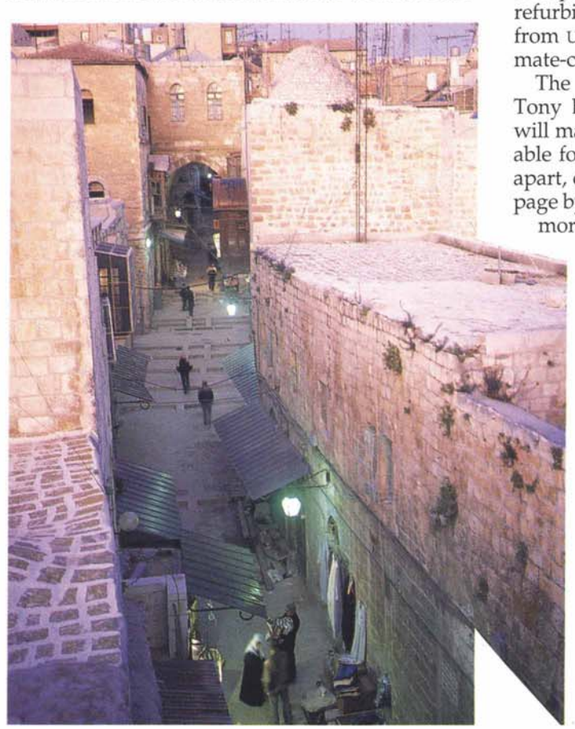
Shortly after the turn of the century, Ruhi Khalidi (1864-1913) also served as a member of parliament for Jerusalem, and as consul-general in Bordeaux. He lectured at the Sorbonne and wrote a book on Victor Hugo—recently reprinted with an introduction that identifies it as the first work in Arabic on comparative literature. The Khalidiyyah contains the correspondence, private papers and the unpublished works of Yusuf Diya, Ruhi and other Khalidis who distinguished themselves under Ottoman rule.

The library's printed works, like its manuscripts, cover a broad range of subjects, with religious law and history most strongly represented. The vast majority of these works were published before 1900, and many are first editions. The collection also demonstrates its builders' keen interest in the various intellectual trends of the day, including the work of European orientalists of the 19th century. There are also chemistry texts, archeological surveys and sheets of maps of Palestine.

The family tradition of scholarship in the context of Palestine continues today, and it continues to be

bound up with the library and the city. The family's senior member, Professor Walid Khalidi, was born in Jerusalem and educated at Oxford. He has taught at Oxford, the American University of Beirut, and Harvard, and is now a senior fellow at Harvard's Center for Middle East Studies. A leading Palestinian intellectual reputed for his knowledge of Palestinian affairs, he served as senior member of the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to the 1992 peace talks. His most recent book is the 700-page volume *All That Remains*, which painfully and painstakingly documents the disappearance of 416 Palestinian villages during the 1948 war.

Professor Rashid Khalidi, Walid's younger cousin, was born in New York and teaches modern Middle East history at the University of Chicago, where he also directs the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. As a historian and scholar with an independent voice, he gained access to PLO chairman Yassir Arafat's archives while researching material for his book *Under Siege: PLO Decisionmaking During the 1982 War*. He is a member of the Palestinian Advisory Committee to the peace talks. Like Walid, he is an American citizen, but his roots in Jerusalem go very deep. It is Rashid who is working on the private papers of the Khalidi Library.



Early risers are already shopping in Chain Gate Street, right, as dawn rises over the Khalidi Library. Opposite, window-barred daylight brightens an already illuminated 17th-century Ottoman copy of the Qur'an.

Today in the final stages of renovation, the library remains basically unchanged, comprising the reading room, the refurbished attic where the manuscripts will be shelved, the courtyard—now covered by a sloping glass roof—and a vaulted chamber across the courtyard. Architects Rabih al-Masri and Jamal al-Araj are responsible for the design and execution of the renovation—but it could not have taken place without the unrelenting diligence of Haifa Khalidi, a young woman deputizing for her brother Kamel, a petroleum engineer resident in Amman, as the current *mutawalli*, or guardian, of the Khalidi family *waqf*.

The library is maintained by grants, family donations and private contributions. The Friends of The Khalidi Library, a non-profit organization registered in Massachusetts, acts as a conduit for this support. The government of the Netherlands has generously sponsored the conservation of the manuscripts, the cataloguing of the collection and the refurbishing of the Library itself; a smaller grant from UNESCO contributed to the installation of climate-control devices to combat humidity.

The monumental task of conservation, led by Tony Bish of the Wellcome Institute in London, will make the library's manuscript treasures available for research. Each manuscript must be taken apart, examined, cleaned of surface debris, treated page by page and then rebound. To date, 350 of the more badly damaged manuscripts have been stored in tailor-made acid-free boxes designed to protect them from insects, dust and the effects of light. The time-consuming task will not be completed until after 1995.

There are now plans to restore a neighboring Mamluk building, with a beautiful dome, as an annex to the Khalidi Library. This structure would house all the printed materials. Its 10 rooms could also allow display of some of the manuscripts and documents, and could accommodate visiting scholars. Thus the library will continue to provide future generations with an incomparable literary and historical resource.

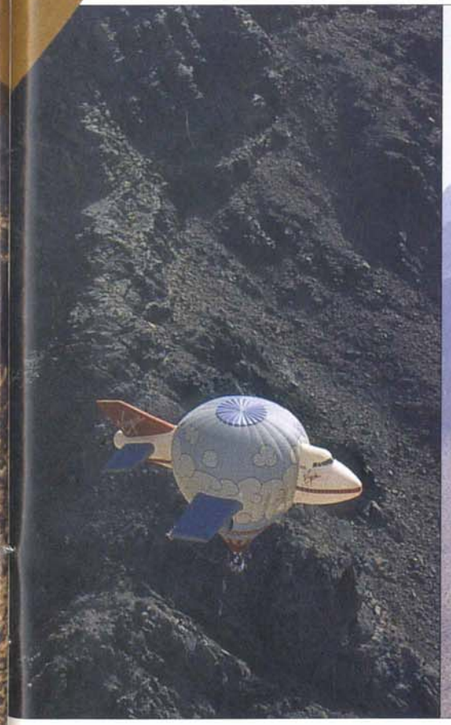
The Khalidi family's eponym is said to be the brilliant seventh-century military commander Khalid ibn al-Walid, victor over the Byzantine forces, whose courage and clever military tactics earned him the title "the Unsheathed Sword of God" (See *Aramco World*, November-December 1991). If true, the association seems to miss the point. The Khalidi legacy, as evidenced by the library, lies not with the sword but with the pen.

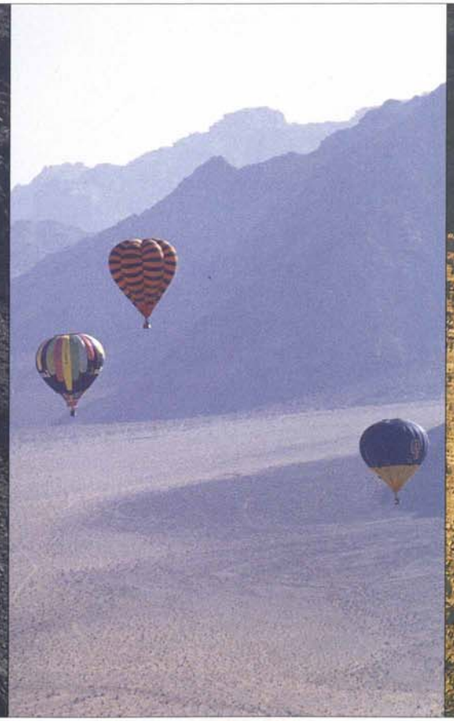
Jocelyn M. Ajami is a painter and independent producer in Boston. Her video "Jihad," on the Qur'anic meaning of the term, was published by Carousel Film and Video in New York.

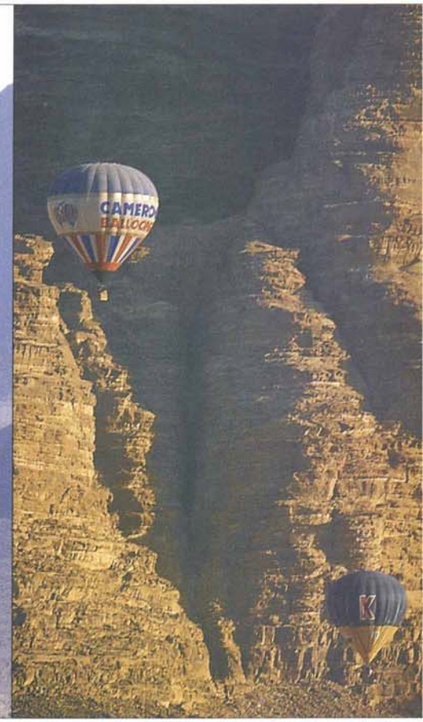
Lifting Off From Wadi Rum

The powerful fan blows a gale of air and the bright nylon begins to billow. Minutes later, propane burners roar out a furnace-blast of heat—enough to warm an entire house in half a minute—and the flaccid, earthbound

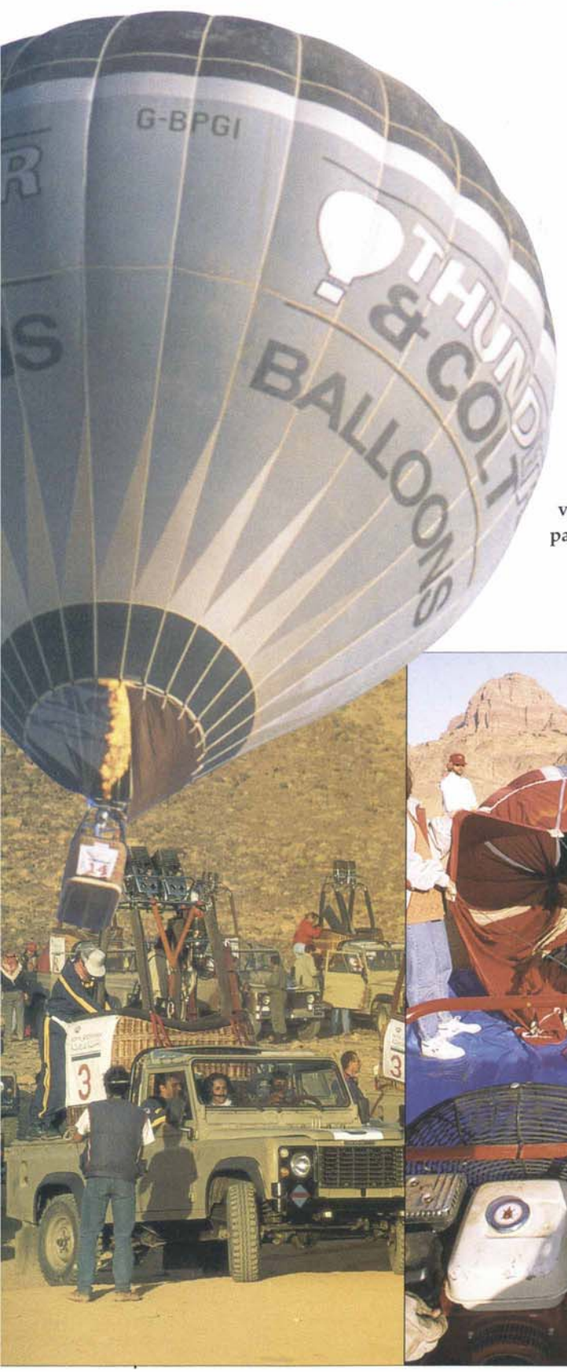
Wadi Rum, a starkly beautiful valley in the southern Jordanian desert, served as a dramatic backdrop for an international hot-air balloon meet.







WRITTEN BY KIRK T. ALBRECHT
PHOTOGRAPHED BY BILL LYONS



Balloonists from 15 countries gather in the valley and prepare their colorful craft for flight.

shape fills out, slowly sheds the shackles of gravity, and pulls itself upright, pointing skyward with increasing eagerness. Soon after, the teardrop of colored nylon, harnessed to a wicker basket, soars silently upward, propelled by a silent principle of physics and carried on the whims of the winds.

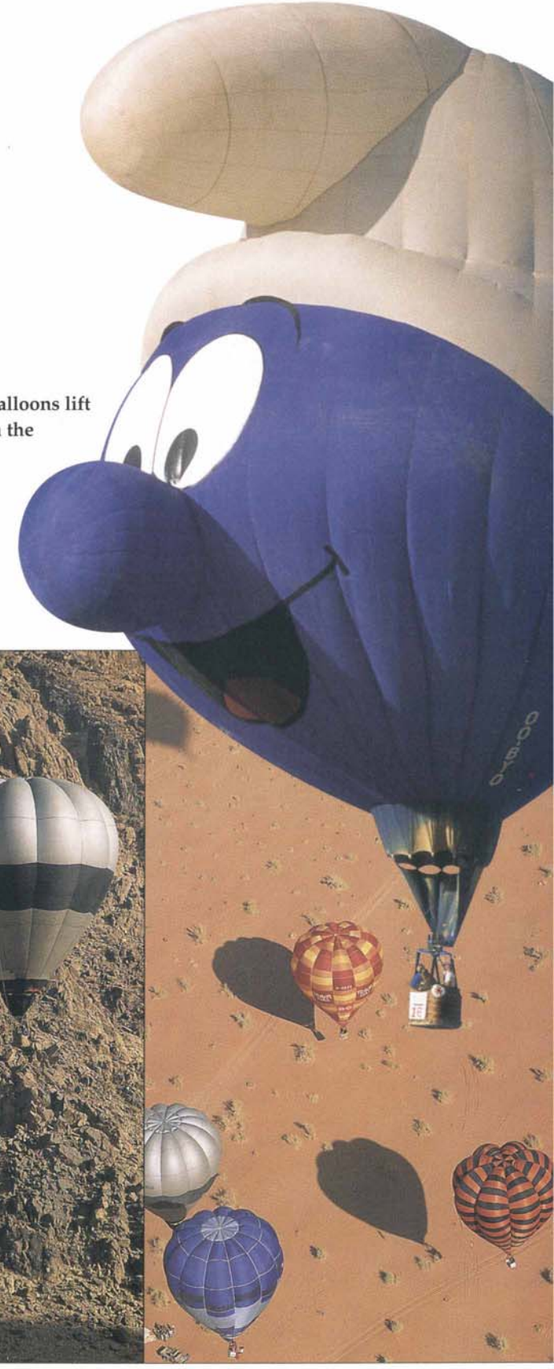
Hot-air ballooning, now an international sport, has found a dramatic site for meets in the Middle East: Jordan's ruggedly beautiful Wadi Rum. Floating dots of color set against rugged red hills and an azure sky, some 50 "Montgolfières," as they were originally called, from 15 nations recently filled the horizon over that breathtaking landscape.

Ballooning has been around for 209 years, and now commands growing popularity both as a sport and as a marketing tool in Europe and the United States. It is not a sport for shallow pockets, however: A good-sized craft with elaborate markings will cost upward of $75,000. Thus many balloons carry advertising for sponsors ranging from car makers to—appropriately—propane gas bottlers; others are owned by corporations and flown by the companies' enthusiastic executives. Virgin Atlantic Airlines' Richard Branson had three 747-shaped balloons entered in the competition at Wadi Rum, and Malcolm Forbes flew a bright yellow Sphinx in Egypt almost 10 years ago (See *Aramco World*, July-August 1984).

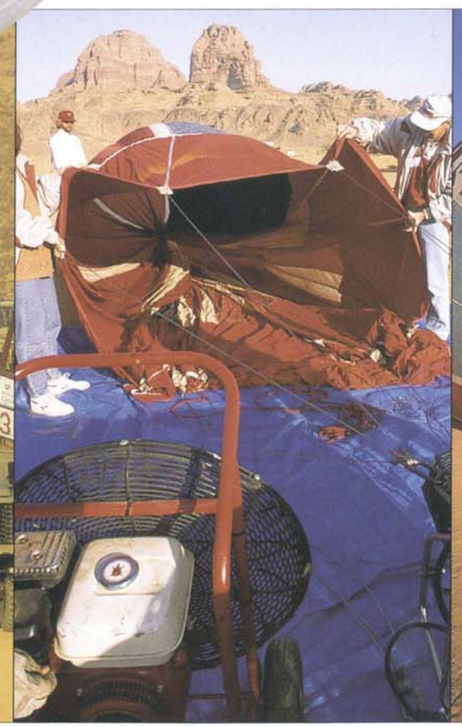
Other balloons at Wadi Rum had the shapes of castles, rolled-up newspapers and Smurf heads as well as the traditional teardrop: Whimsy—or advertisement—has free rein in that regard, since odd shapes are not a disadvantage in balloon racing. Once airborne, the balloons fly with, not through, the wind. Nonetheless, a good balloonist knows how to utilize the varying air temperatures and currents at different altitudes to direct his balloon to the desired target.

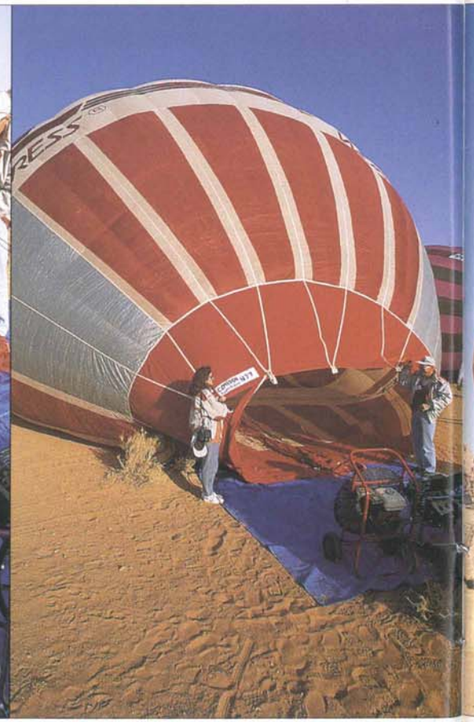
The meet in Wadi Rum consisted of three stages, one flown each day. Each stage was a different sort of race, testing differing elements of a balloonist's abilities. Competing were some of the best balloon pilots in the world, who reveled in the rugged beauty of the wadi even while they dealt with the challenges of navigation through its rocky crags and swirling winds. "There is no other place on earth to fly like this," said one.

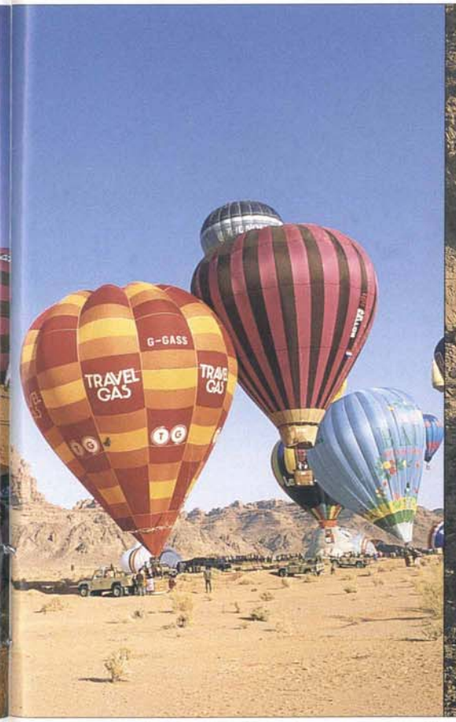
Kirk T. Albrecht is a free-lance writer based in Amman who specializes in the Arab world.

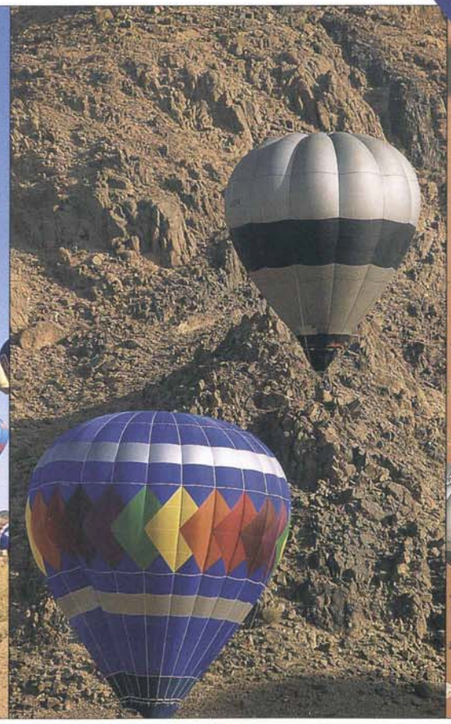


The hot-air balloons lift off, taking on the challenge of capricious winds and perilous cliffs.









WITH TROWEL AND PEN

WRITTEN BY JAY PRIDMORE PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM

The discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb on November 4, 1922 was a dazzling event—the most spectacular discovery in Egyptology—but for the participants it was quickly shadowed by disagreement and misfortune. After finding the site he had sought for years, excavator Howard Carter, long known as a difficult man, grew more obstreperous still, quarreling first with his benefactor and co-excavator Lord Carnarvon, then with local authorities. The press, predictably, delighted in these troubles, and later, when Carnarvon died unexpectedly, newspapers worldwide published sensational reports that the tomb was cursed (See *Aramco World*, September-October 1988).

Amid these difficulties, Carter called on the eminent American Egyptologist James Henry Breasted to help him through his ordeal. As a scholar, Breasted was asked to examine a critical detail, the ancient seals on the tomb's main door. As a conciliator, he mediated Carter's altercations with the Egyptian authorities. And though neither scholarship nor conciliation won the day at King Tut's tomb, Breasted's reputation as an intriguing, even towering, figure remained intact throughout the controversy.

In Cairo in 1920, Breasted bought this statue dating from about 2500 BC of a servant slaughtering a cow. On the same trip, he acquired the Milbank Papyrus, opposite, a "Book of the Dead" scroll intended to serve the deceased as a guide to the afterworld.

Indeed, the diminutive professor remained in the public eye for most of his life—a commentary both on Breasted himself and on the audience he addressed. His field was scholarly, but his message had unmistakable impact beyond the academy: He insisted that "civilization" did not begin with the Greeks—as schoolchildren then were commonly taught—but went back to the Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Babylonians. The public, to its credit, paid attention. Breasted was lionized as a scholar and popularizer and, toward the end of his career, even appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine.

As America's first professional Egyptologist, Breasted was more than merely accessible: He was outgoing and enterprising. He not only mastered ancient languages, he brought the past alive in popular books, lectures and even an early film. He touched on palace intrigue in ancient Egypt, and referred to disinterred mummies as his "friends." Perhaps most important, he cultivated the interest of businessman and philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Among many other projects, Rockefeller supported and later endowed the Oriental Institute that Breasted founded at the University of Chicago as a center for archeology and research on the "ancient Near East."

Breasted spent much of his productive career behind a desk. Yet he also cultivated a sense of discovery and excitement. He wrote of his quest for the "New Past," which would reveal to a wide audience not just the riches of extinct cultures, but evidence of their humanity as well. "He who really discerns it," Breasted once said, "has begun to read the glorious Odyssey of human kind, disclosing to us man pushing out upon the oceans of time to make conquest of treasures unspeakable, of worlds surpassing all his dreams—the supreme adventure of the ages."

"It seems surprising that Breasted became a public figure in his lifetime," says John Larson, archivist of The Oriental Institute. "To compare him to present-day scholars, I think you could cite [astronomer] Carl Sagan or [Civil War historian] Shelby Foote," with their popular books and television appearances. Breasted's exploits—excavations he organized and oversaw from Luxor to Persepolis—were routinely covered by the press, but his scholarly approach to science was unaffected by publicity.

Fame and power were not, in the beginning, part of Breasted's life plan. He was born in 1865 to a modest family in Rockford, Illinois, a town connected to the rest of the world by a minor river. His father, physically unfit for service in the Civil War, poured most of his energy into his modest hardware business.

The one passionate influence on Breasted's life was his Aunt Theodocia, a childless woman who "identified herself with many worthy causes," according to James's son Charles Breasted, author of the only full-length biography of the archeologist, *Pioneer to the Past*, published in 1945. There's no evidence that Theodocia burned fire and brimstone into James. But after beginning an ambivalent career as a pharmacist, he did choose to enter the ministry. At the age of 22, he traveled to the big city and entered Chicago Theological Seminary.

Breasted distinguished himself at seminary, excelling particularly in the study of Hebrew. He was so successful at it that he came to the attention of the esteemed Hebraist William Rainey Harper, then a professor at Yale. At Harper's coaxing, Breasted decided to pursue not the ministry, but scholarship.

The way Breasted told his bewildered mother of this decision is worth repeating. He stood before her, according to Charles Breasted, and read a passage from the King James version of the Bible. He paused, then read his own translation of the verse from the original Hebrew. The two were markedly dissimilar. To Breasted, if not to his mother, the conclusion was obvious: "I could never be satisfied to preach on the basis of texts I know to be full of mistranslation."

At Yale in 1891, Breasted was much aware of his deficiencies among better prepared classmates. Because of that, he immersed himself in the one world he felt equipped to master: ancient texts of the Near East. His social contacts were infrequent. On one occasion, he wrote home that he had met a young woman at a party in an artist's studio and was somewhat smitten. But Aunt Theodocia, who was helping finance his year at Yale, wrote back sternly, "You are an idealist. When will you get down to solid rock?"

In fact he had been excavating deeply in the rocky history of the ancient Middle East, learning not only Hebrew but other languages that preceded it—those of Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia. Later, he wrote that these studies showed him "man's primitive advance from physical evolution to an evolution of his soul, a social and spiritual development...." In plainer terms, Breasted was intrigued by the way the history of human morality could be traced through the oldest written records known.

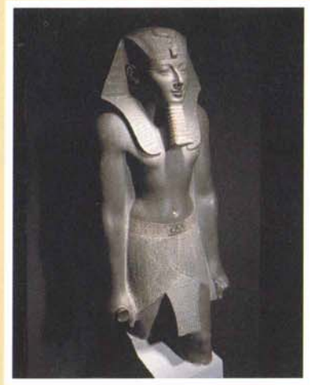
One day on the Yale campus, Professor Harper

The American Egyptologist poses at Sakkara in 1935.

buttonholed Breasted to discuss the student's future. Breasted said noncommittally that he was considering a doctorate in Egyptology. Harper, preparing to leave Yale to become the first president of the University of Chicago (with its initial bequest from John D. Rockefeller), seized Breasted's lapels. Breasted should go to Berlin and earn a Ph.D. in Egyptology there, he insisted. If he did, Harper would create America's first professorship in that field, and give it to Breasted when he returned to Chicago.

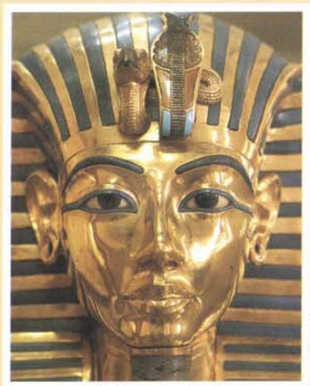
So off Breasted went, with a promise of future employment, and little else, in his pocket. Berlin was at that time a place of martinets and angry mobs, but Breasted immersed himself, once again, in his studies. He mastered ancient Egyptian, Coptic, Hebrew and Arabic, as well as German. He also mastered his own sense of inadequacy. "Now I can read pages [of hieroglyphics] in a day ... now the reins are in my hand," he wrote home triumphantly. In 1894, after writing his dissertation in Latin, he ran a gauntlet of rigorous examinations to achieve, finally, the right to be addressed as "Herr Doktor." His appointment to Chicago soon followed.

The versatile pharaoh Thutmose III, whose gray schist statue resides at the Luxor Museum, was profiled in Breasted's *History of Egypt*.



JOHN G. ROSS

Shortly after his graduation, Breasted married Frances Hart, another American studying in Berlin. Their honeymoon trip, not unexpectedly, was to Egypt, where the Breasteds witnessed the varied styles of life of Egyptologists in the field. They were heartened by their meeting with Archibald Sayce of Oxford, who lived comfortably on a finely appointed *dahabiyah*, or river barge, in Cairo. As the Breasteds drank tea with him, they discussed archeology and local politics, and gossiped amiably about mutual acquaintances. Egyptology, it seemed, could lead to a good life.



PETER KEEN

Breasted's expertise played a role in the recovery of Tutankhamen's treasures, including the solid gold funerary mask at right. Opposite, center: Breasted bought the prism of Sennacherib in Baghdad and displayed it in his office.

Less encouraging was a visit to Sir William Flinders Petrie, also an Englishman, whose reputation as a scholar was unexcelled but whose personal habits were less than exemplary. The Breasteds called on Petrie at his excavation at Nagada, near Luxor. Their host's tattered clothes were indescribable, at least to Frances Breasted, and his cuisine was execrable. It was said that Petrie tested aging tins of food by throwing them against the wall. If a can exploded on impact, its contents were deemed to be unfit.

Also on this trip, Breasted began a lifelong effort to build a collection of antiquities for the University of Chicago. In Cairo and other cities, he combed the streets for shops that might contain something of value. Ancient stone knives, statuettes and other authentic pieces could be found in boxes of otherwise worthless junk. Sometimes these excursions produced ordinary finds at low prices; at other times they could be as productive—and as exhilarating—as opening a tomb.

A typical story of Breasted's collecting exploits occurred during a later visit to Cairo. It involved a dealer named "Tano," who coaxed Breasted from his own shop to another one down the street. Breasted resisted, but finally followed. He was then shown an almost pristine "Book of the Dead," a scroll prepared to accompany the deceased into the afterworld. Breasted knew the price would be high, so he pretended to be uninterested and left the dusty shop. Urgently, he cabled Chicago for funds. Two days later he purchased the scroll for $2500—just as two other collectors were passing through Cairo.

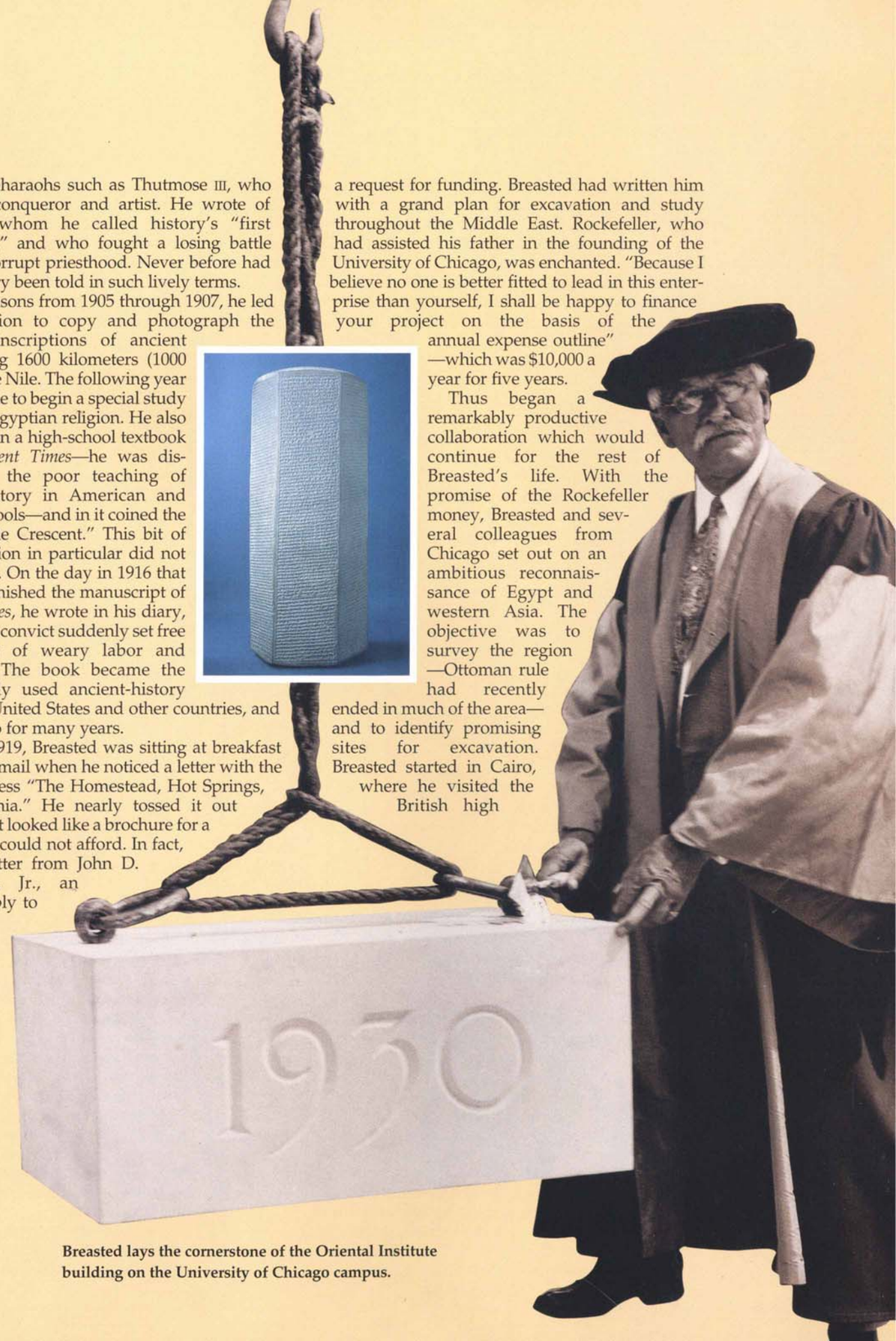
In the summer of 1895 Breasted returned with his bride to the University of Chicago and, as "Assistant in Egyptology," was assigned a small office in Cobb Hall. His only equipment consisted of two or three hundred photographs. He had no books, no students, no colleagues anywhere in the United States, and so small a salary that he had to lecture around the country to make ends meet. Things looked so bleak that he was tempted to accept one of the positions that had been offered him in Berlin and Vienna.

Instead, he spent the next several years establishing his field in America. In 1900 he undertook to copy all the Egyptian inscriptions in the leading museums of Europe, and included them in the five volumes of English translation he published in 1906 as *Ancient Records of Egypt*. His *History of Egypt* was published by Scribners in 1905, and was popular enough to be reissued several times. In it, he described pharaohs such as Thutmose III, who was both conqueror and artist. He wrote of Ikhnaton, whom he called history's "first monotheist," and who fought a losing battle against a corrupt priesthood. Never before had Egypt's story been told in such lively terms.

In the seasons from 1905 through 1907, he led an expedition to copy and photograph the Egyptian inscriptions of ancient Nubia along 1600 kilometers (1000 miles) of the Nile. The following year he was home to begin a special study of ancient Egyptian religion. He also embarked on a high-school textbook called *Ancient Times*—he was dismayed by the poor teaching of ancient history in American and English schools—and in it coined the term "Fertile Crescent." This bit of popularization in particular did not come easily. On the day in 1916 that he finally finished the manuscript of *Ancient Times*, he wrote in his diary, "I feel like a convict suddenly set free after years of weary labor and bondage." The book became the most widely used ancient-history text in the United States and other countries, and remained so for many years.

In May 1919, Breasted was sitting at breakfast reading his mail when he noticed a letter with the return address "The Homestead, Hot Springs, West Virginia." He nearly tossed it out unopened: It looked like a brochure for a vacation he could not afford. In fact, it was a letter from John D. Rockefeller, Jr., an overdue reply to a request for funding. Breasted had written him with a grand plan for excavation and study throughout the Middle East. Rockefeller, who had assisted his father in the founding of the University of Chicago, was enchanted. "Because I believe no one is better fitted to lead in this enterprise than yourself, I shall be happy to finance your project on the basis of the annual expense outline" —which was $10,000 a year for five years.

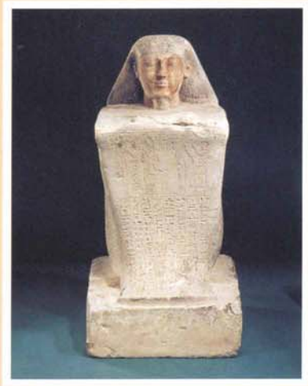
Thus began a remarkably productive collaboration which would continue for the rest of Breasted's life. With the promise of the Rockefeller money, Breasted and several colleagues from Chicago set out on an ambitious reconnaissance of Egypt and western Asia. The objective was to survey the region —Ottoman rule had recently ended in much of the area— and to identify promising sites for excavation. Breasted started in Cairo, where he visited the British high



Breasted lays the cornerstone of the Oriental Institute building on the University of Chicago campus.

commissioner, Lord Allenby. Allenby arranged for Breasted to journey through Babylonia, in Iraq. Getting there, however, would entail a detour—to Basra by sea, via Bombay—to avoid the fighting that continued in Trans-Jordan.

After weeks at sea, the Breasted party was met by a British staff car, and then embarked on the new Basra-Baghdad railroad line. They visited Sumerian sites and examined ruins dating to 3000 BC. They spent a week at ancient Babylon, finding it as German excavators had abandoned it during the war. In Baghdad, Breasted made an important acquisition: a six-sided clay prism inscribed with the text of the Royal Annals of Sennacherib, a terra-cotta piece with beautifully impressed columns of cuneiform.



The statue at right, acquired by Breasted in Cairo in 1919, dates from 600 BC and portrays an Egyptian man named Bes.

The party traveled on to the land of the ancient Assyrians, around Nineveh, where they saw lines of ancient walls, grain fields and plateaus where great palaces had once stood. "The journey had been one continuous demonstration of the economic and historical geography of the early East," Breasted wrote, "and I had learned more in these four hours than I had gained at home from the most intensive study...." They went to Khorsabad, seat of Assyrian king Sargon II. Little was left of the ancient capital except the city gates, which remained unexcavated.

Also purchased on that Cairo buying trip: a relief from about 1280 BC of Seti I and his son Ramses II among their priests.

The Breasted group then passed beyond the limits of British control, and pressed on through the Syrian Desert toward Aleppo, near the Mediterranean. This territory was hostile to Europeans at that moment, but the Chicagoans were fortunate: They had a series of escorts through the new Arab state, due in part to the blessing of King Faysal in Damascus. They were escorted from khan to khan by bands of riflemen on horseback. On several occasions the Breasted party passed camps of Bedouins, whose hospitality of coffee and cigarettes they were glad to accept. "We Arabs all love Americans," one of them told Breasted; it was the English and the French who had worn out their welcome in Syria. In fact, the archeologist sharply sensed coming political change in this area, and Allenby later asked Breasted to travel home via London to report the details first-hand to Lord Curzon, the British minister of foreign affairs.

Despite political vagaries, Breasted was successful over the next few years in organizing many teams of archeologists at important sites throughout the Middle East, and in publishing series of volumes on their work. The projects were funded by Rockefeller, and Breasted took extreme care to maintain the philanthropist's interest. The archeologist made extravagant preparations, for example, to welcome the Rockefellers at the opening of Tutankhamun's sarcophagus in 1923. Although the Rockefellers bowed out at the last moment, Breasted later described the event to them in a letter. He wrote in one passage about the discovery that a portion of the crypt had been assembled wrongly by ancient workmen. "Even the most learned philologist would find it difficult to reconstruct the exchange of amenities which [must have] passed between the chief engineer and the chief cabinet-maker," Breasted wrote.

The Rockefeller-Breasted collaboration suffered a major disappointment in the failure of a Cairo Museum project, for which Rockefeller had pledged $10 million. As Rockefeller's representative, Breasted had planned the building down to its architectural details. But King Fu'ad I of Egypt, wary of yet another Western power intervening in his country's affairs, vetoed construction.

Apparently unfazed, Breasted and Rockefeller proceeded to other projects. "Breasted was the kind of visionary who kept reframing and reshaping his objectives in order to have a successful outcome," says art historian Jeffrey Abt, who is working on a new biography of Breasted. Rockefeller put a smaller sum toward a Palestine Museum, though this project was sidetracked until after Breasted's death. Most significantly, the funds not spent on the Cairo Museum eventually went to a project far closer to the professor's heart, the Oriental Institute itself. Rockefeller, who had previously financed Breasted's operations on a year-by-year basis, endowed the Institute with seven million dollars.

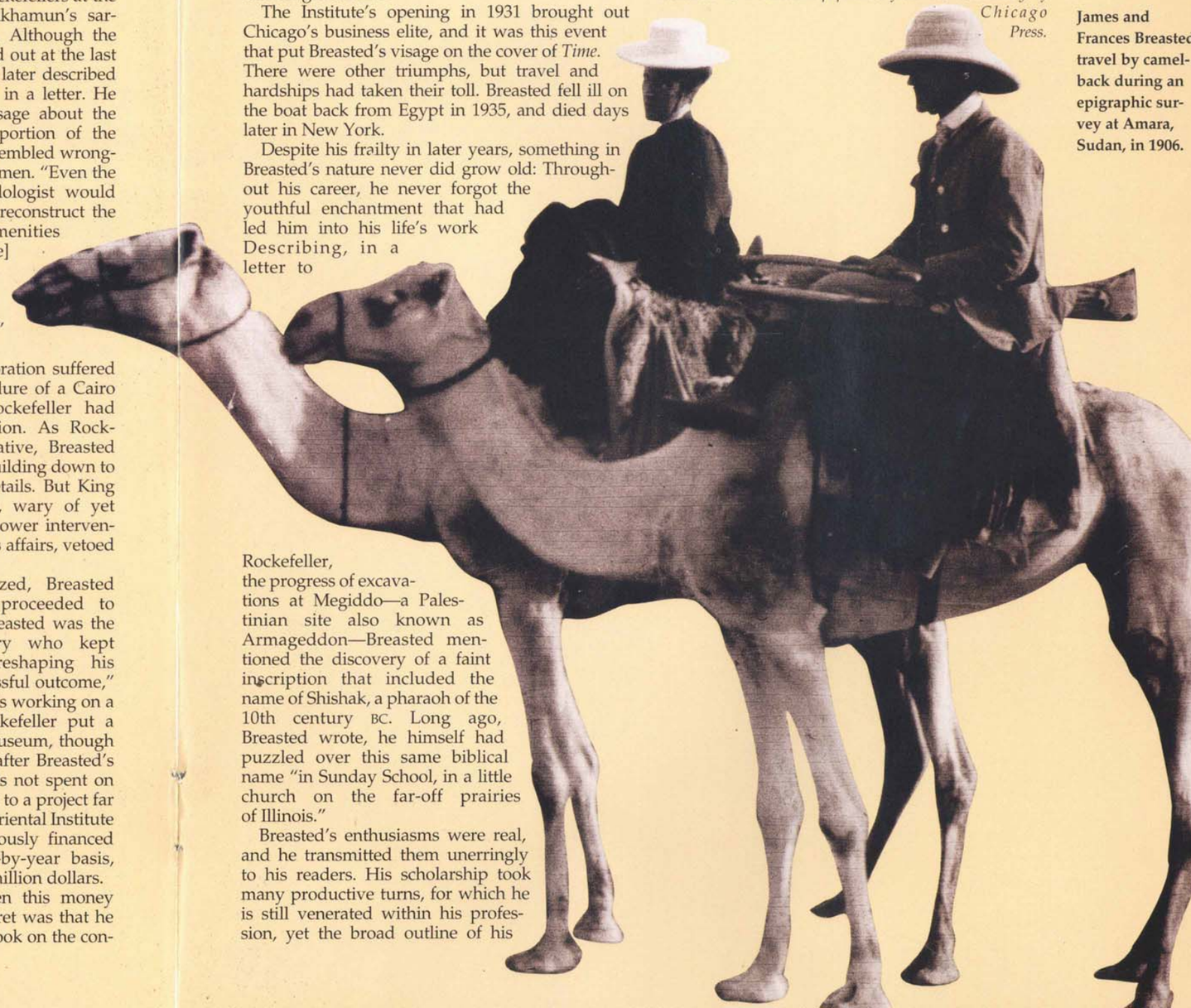
Breasted's son writes that when this money came in 1928, his father's only regret was that he was not 20 years younger. But he took on the construction of a large research facility and exhibit halls, and the hiring of more archeologists to excavate more sites. Before the roof of the new Institute building was completed, cranes lowered the monumental relief of an Assyrian bull into one of the halls. It came from the Khorsabad gate that Breasted had first noted 10 years earlier. Today it is but one of the treasures of this small but stunning museum.

The Institute's opening in 1931 brought out Chicago's business elite, and it was this event that put Breasted's visage on the cover of *Time*. There were other triumphs, but travel and hardships had taken their toll. Breasted fell ill on the boat back from Egypt in 1935, and died days later in New York.

Despite his frailty in later years, something in Breasted's nature never did grow old: Throughout his career, he never forgot the youthful enchantment that had led him into his life's work Describing, in a letter to Rockefeller, the progress of excavations at Megiddo—a Palestinian site also known as Armageddon—Breasted mentioned the discovery of a faint inscription that included the name of Shishak, a pharaoh of the 10th century BC. Long ago, Breasted wrote, he himself had puzzled over this same biblical name "in Sunday School, in a little church on the far-off prairies of Illinois."

Breasted's enthusiasms were real, and he transmitted them unerringly to his readers. His scholarship took many productive turns, for which he is still venerated within his profession, yet the broad outline of his career made him a truly public figure. In one lifetime, he lifted the veils from several thousand years of history, and told its story in ways that intrigued the entire world.

Jay Pridmore writes a museums column in The Chicago Tribune. *His most recent book is* Chicago Architecture and Design, *published by Abrams. Breasted's biography is available as a Phoenix paperback from the University of Chicago Press.*



James and Frances Breasted travel by camelback during an epigraphic survey at Amara, Sudan, in 1906.

Stones That Did The Work Of Men

Say "crusader," and "castle" follows on the tongue like a reflex. The two words sound right together, and with reason.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY WILLIAM TRACY

For nearly two centuries—from 1096 until 1291—successive waves of European Christians struggled to gain and maintain control of Jerusalem and the rest of what they called the Holy Land—some 650 kilometers (400 miles) of coastal plain and mountain spine at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. The motives which compelled the nobles, knights and, eventually, tens of thousands of peasants to make the arduous journey to the Holy Land often went beyond religion. And few of those who set out on their crusades gave any thought to the fact that the Muslims they would face in battle—like the local Christians, who had not suffered under the status quo—also called Jerusalem holy.

From the beginning, the invaders were vastly outnumbered, although the first wave, driven by its passion, managed to take Jerusalem (See *Aramco World*, May-June 1970). In the years that followed, however, there never seemed to be enough knights or foot soldiers to protect the coastal cities and the countryside from the unending series of counterattacks from the Muslim hinterland. For all the 200 years they held on, the crusaders looked to the West for reinforcements.

In the meantime, they built castles. Even today, 700 years after the last boatload of retreating crusaders set sail for Europe, crusader fortresses stand forlorn guard beside harbor entrances and atop windswept ridges in the region of Jerusalem, in southern Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, and on the island of Cyprus. Historian Robin Fedden, co-author of *Crusader Castles*, wrote, "The desperate shortage of manpower encouraged every device by which stones might do the work of men." In the beginning castles were a defensive refuge, "strong points from which control could be resumed over the surrounding country when the invader had retired. Castles were the key to the land."

For a while, the strategy worked, as two examples from the life of the great Muslim general Salah al-Din bear witness. On one occasion, Saladin, as he is called in the West, rode out to inspect the defenses of a mighty crusader castle, the Krak des Chevaliers, before attacking it.

The Krak des Chevaliers, or Castle of the Knights, was owned and manned by knights of the military-monastic Order of Hospitalers. It dominated a strategic pass between the Mediterranean and the inland cities of Homs and Hama, on the Orontes River. Called Hisn al-Akrad, or Fortress of the Kurds, by the Arabs, it was built on the foundations of an earlier Muslim castle. Perched on a windswept mountain spur which drops away abruptly on three sides, the Krak was by far the strongest of the crusader castles. T.E. Lawrence called it "perhaps the most wholly admirable castle in the world." Saladin examined the defenses on the vulnerable southern side, where the Krak faced a relatively flat plateau.

The Muslims' general inspected the triangular outer bulwarks, its outer ditch and the stone wall with round towers pierced by loopholes and surmounted by overhanging machicolation. Inside the wall, he knew, was a deep, water-filled moat. Beyond it he could see the mighty sloping talus of carefully fitted stones—25 meters (80 feet) thick at the base—referred to by the Arabs as "The Mountain." Lastly, he contemplated the castle's massive rounded keep, which towered over the entire mass and was linked to two equally impressive towers. Then, deciding that a general could find a better use for his army than committing it to a siege of indeterminate length and uncertain outcome, Saladin withdrew.

On the other hand, when Saladin was able to lure the crusaders out of their near-invulnerable castle shells to face him head-on, his forces had them vastly outmanned. This happened in 1187, at Hattin near the Sea of Galilee. There, on a parched plain, when Saladin cut the crusaders off from any source of drinking water, he outfoxed them as well. The defeat which the crusaders suffered was irreversible, and crucial. Building on it, Saladin went on to liberate Jerusalem itself just five months later.

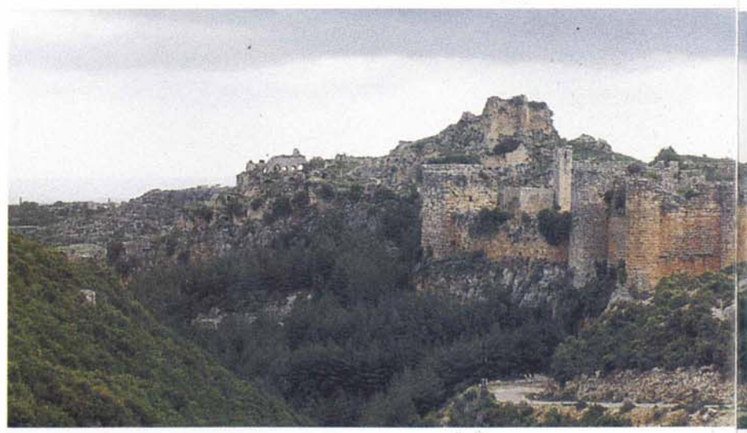
Margat, the largest crusader castle (previous spread), was also the last one in western Syria to fall to the Muslims. Below: Steep slopes on three sides left attackers only the heavily defended southern approach to the Krak des Chevaliers.

Saone or Saladin Castle, viewed from the southeast (bottom), reveals an early design, with square towers and few loopholes. Its deep moat, hewn from solid rock, is an engineering wonder.

My own first visit to the Krak des Chevaliers was with a busload of high-school classmates from Beirut's American Community School in 1954. We were the only visitors on a breezy spring day. Imagine how we boys explored the narrowest, darkest passageways and scrambled to the highest parapets to impress the girls. A dozen Errol Flynns swashbuckled atop the battlements; a dozen princesses leaned from tower windows; cameras clicked; chaperons held their collective breath. Our teenage spirits soared like the falcons that hovered on unseen currents overhead.

Last spring, nearly 40 years after that first visit, I journeyed again to that enchanted castle with my wife. In the cool dimness of the vaulted entry we met a mixed cluster of Syrians and foreigners who made a point of greeting us. "G'dye," said a tall Australian in walking shorts. Yes, he was Australian, he explained, but originally from these very parts; now, he was a proper foreign tourist, exploring the castle that, as a boy, he had seen only from afar. On their tour of the Krak, he, his Syrian-born wife and their two thoroughly Australian children were being accompanied and feted by the aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews of any Syrian's extended family.

More than 50 meters (55 yards) and two sharp



THE FALL OF AL-MARQAB

An important source for the biography of the Mamluk sultan al-Malik al-Mansur Qala'un, and for his role in combating the crusader invasions, is the anonymous work *Tashrif al-Ayyam wa l-`Usur bi-Sirat al-Sultan al-Malik al-Mansur (Honoring the Years and the Days of the Life of Sultan al-Malik al-Mansur)*, of which there is a manuscript in the collection of the Caetani Foundation for Muslim Studies in Rome. It includes an account, abbreviated here, of the siege of Margat Castle—known to the Muslims as al-Marqab—that differs in its details from the version passed on by Christian sources.

This is a great and mighty castle, which had long been a challenge to our lord the Sultan al-Malik al-Mansur—God grant him victory. He studied every means of securing it for Islam and supported every plan or method for conquering it and overcoming it.... The Franks believed that it was unassailable by any combination of force and cunning, and that no one was clever enough to get the better of it. So they went on with their haughty ways, broke their oaths, and ... committed every possible crime and perfidy, rapine and robbery. But our lord the Sultan al-Mansur lay in wait for them like a man-eating lion....

He brought siege-engines from Damascus without anyone knowing where they ... were destined for; armies were mobilized from the various countries in uncountable number, with their stores, equipment and commanders.... The Sultan had sent for a great arsenal from Egypt, with great bundles of arrows and other arms, and issues of arrows were made to the amirs and troops to carry with them and use when given the word; iron implements and flame-throwing tubes were procured, such as exist only in the royal magazines and arsenals.... A number of experts on the art of siege and the techniques of blockade were also enlisted. The catapults of the neighbouring forts were requisitioned and mobilized.... Catapults and fighting gear were carried on men's shoulders. Eventually, our lord the Sultan left his camp at `Uyun al-Qasab and by forced marches arrived to besiege al-Marqab on Wednesday April 17, 1285.

Immediately the catapults were brought up, ... and the fort was surrounded by a murderous circle of weapons.... [There were] three of the great 'Frankish' type [of catapult], three 'qarabughas' and four 'devils'.... These began a formidable, murdurous assault with stones, while excavations were started on each side to undermine the walls. The 'Frankish' catapults broke up those of the enemy, ... but the Franks repaired their catapults, aimed them at the Muslims and smashed some of theirs, killing some of the Muslims who operated them. It is incontestable that the fortunes of war ebb and flow and that not everyone can save his skin.

When the Sultan's tunnel under the wall was finished the wood was put into it and set on fire on Wednesday May 25; the fire reached midtunnel under the tower at the angle of the bastion and the Muslims moved in to attack the walls themselves, but after violent fighting the attacking force proved insufficiently powerful to scale the wall. At sunset [however] the tower collapsed [due to the undermining], which in the opinion of our army increased the difficulty of gaining a foothold in the fortress. Thus the night passed in great confusion, for the use of catapults was made impossible by what had happened, and everything that could be done with mines had been done. Now God alone could exterminate the enemy.

On the following Friday God made the Franks think that the tunnels under the entire wall were all equally far advanced, that they ... were undermining the walls themselves. In fact the tunnels, travelling in conduits under the moats, had reached [only] as far as the towers, but the Franks were unaware of this. When they did discover it they lost their courage and presence of mind and gave themselves up for lost.... [The Sultan] agreed to grant them pardon and amnesty, and they, in the faith that our Sultan's word was worth more than any oaths, sent their leaders to the tent of victory and asked only for their lives and nothing more.... Safe-conducts were issued for them and they ... surrendered the fort in its entirety at the eighth hour of Friday May 25 [sic]....

The Muslims went up [to take possession of the fort] and from the heights of the citadel the call to prayer resounded with praise and thanks to God....

At the Krak des Chevaliers, a cylindrical tower meets the sloping talus in a complex curving fold. No two stones meet at this join, however. Instead, individual blocks—no two alike—were carved to bridge the transition without giving attackers a foothold.

turns up the inclined, cobbled passage, we walked through a second gate and emerged into a sunny courtyard. A covey of girls from a school in a nearby village whispered and giggled under the watchful eyes of nuns. On the next level, the smell of shish kebab grilling over charcoal drifted from a small room, where a cook from a nearby village had been installed by the Department of Antiquities to prepare a simple menu for visiting tour groups. Next door, in a sunny hall with an expansive view down over the castle's outer wall into the valley, a group of spry retirees from England awaited lunch amid the echoes of a dozen conversations.

The still-modest stream of visitors drawn to the Krak des Chevaliers from abroad has not discouraged casual visits from the villagers whose houses cling to the steep slope below its eastern walls. On a paved terrace at the top of a flight of stairs we met two local women in colorful scarves and long embroidered skirts. They chatted together and with us as their dexterous fingers cut stalks of fennel and sprigs of mint from the moist cracks between the stones of a shaded wall. As we climbed higher in the castle, we found quiet nooks and private vistas in plenty in this "most wholly admirable castle in all the world." Author Peter Theroux has called the Krak "the perfect storybook castle that you have always known existed somewhere."

From the top of the keep the views to the four points of the compass are stupendous. Eastward, the low green hills stretch like moorlands toward the distant desert's edge. South, beyond the castle moat and outer wall, a few new houses of concrete block and stucco have crept close to the edge of the castle's outer ditch and an ancient graveyard. Thin cypress trees in their yards grow bent by the constant wind, and beyond them, in May, the distant peaks of Lebanon are still crowned with snow.

To the west, the hills roll toward the Mediterranean, clumps of oaks nestled in their folds, gray-green olive groves in terraced rows upon their slopes. Dwarfed by distance, Lego-like villages are scattered in the valleys and up the hillsides. Some are punctuated by a slender minaret, others by the open bell tower of a church. North, across the deep break of a stream-cut valley, the mountain range continues. Late-season thunderheads pile high above its ominous dark ridge. Farther north, the crusaders built other castles to guard the mountain's westward flank. Their distant outlines are too far away to be seen, even from the top of the crusader keep, but in the following days we would visit two. Margat, on a triangular hilltop, dominates the coastal plain north of Tartus; Saone, inland east of Latakia, perches on a desolate ridge where two rocky gorges meet as they cut toward the sea.

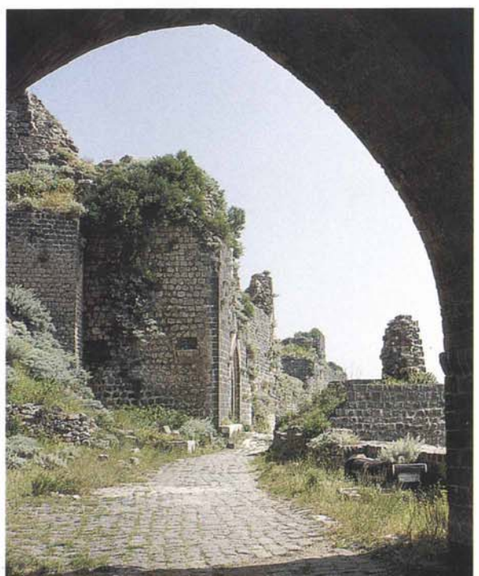
Although the crusader castles were originally conceived and built to serve as defensive retreats, as time passed modifications in their design allowed the knights within to use them as bases for offensive sorties. As siege operations improved in efficiency and the numbers of defenders continued to dwindle, the stones were assembled in ever more imaginative ways. As Robin Fedden wrote, it was as though the crusaders "produced in the very business of living, like coral, cell on cell of stone."

For the besieging Muslim forces, famine could be an important ally, although without careful preparation the besiegers were equally susceptible to hunger. The attackers also called on engineering and ingenuity to help them accomplish their task, assembling or building an impressive range of specialized weapons and war engines based on two principal strategies. Simply put, these were assault—scaling the walls—or battery: forcing a way in.

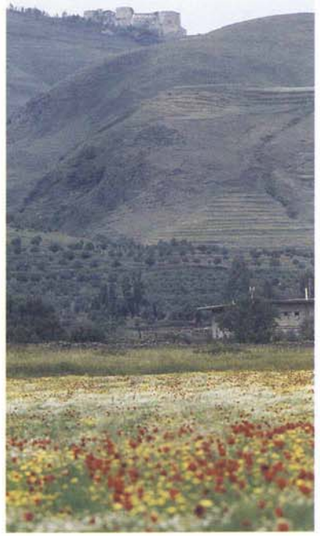
Saone, in the north of Syria, is one of the many crusader castles which fell to Salah al-Din after the battle of Hattin. In 1188 Saladin's army brought up before Saone six massive, catapult-like war engines called mangonels. They were able to hurl stone balls weighing up to 270 kilos (600 pounds) against its walls. When the castle finally fell, it had been in crusader hands for almost a century, and it was never recaptured. Today, as an example of how history is often written by the victors, Saone is identified on Syrian tourist maps by its subsequent Muslim name, Saladin Castle. A small minaret stands among several other ruined structures inside the walls.

Saladin Castle is representative of early castle design. All but three of its towers have a square ground plan, rather than a more defensible round one, and they protrude very little beyond the walls, a fact which limits their usefulness for flanking fire. Also, the towers, walls and even parapets are very sparsely provided with loopholes. Nonetheless, Saladin Castle remains an impressive fortress with a number of remarkable features. Its narrow main

This carved rock needle at Saone, left standing when the moat was hewn from the mountain rock, supported a narrow wooden bridge that led to one of the castle's two entrances.



A massive keep is all that remains of Safita Castle, far left, perched amid modern buildings on a hilltop between the Krak and the sea. At left, a bent entrance at Margat: Passing through the outer wall and turning right, one sees a second gate in an inner wall ahead.



The Krak, left, viewed from the east, withstood at least 12 Muslim sieges. Facing page: Saone's immense moat lies invisible below these walls and battlements, seen from the plateau on the eastern side.

gate, situated on the sheltered side of a large rectangular-plan tower, is a very early example of a bent entrance. Water is stored in two rock-carved subterranean tanks, the largest of which is spanned by a stone barrel vault more than 30 meters long and 15 meters high (100 by 50 feet).

But the most unusual feature of Saladin Castle is its moat, a little-known monument which deserves a place on any list of historic engineering wonders. The fortress is a long, narrow triangle atop a rocky ridge; on the side where it touches the mountain the crusaders hewed a deep channel, 18 meters (60 feet) wide and nearly 140 meters (450 feet) long. The sheer rock-cut walls of this ditch rise 27 meters (90 feet) before touching the base of castle, and the castle's battlements tower higher still. To create the moat, which Robin Fedden calls "heroic, triumphantly ambitious," workers carved out an estimated 170,000 tons of solid rock. And that rock was put to good use, for the moat doubled as a quarry, its stones making up the castle's walls and towers.

More extraordinary still, a rock needle thrusts up out of the bottom of the cleft like an Egyptian obelisk. The monolith is a part of the mountain itself, left in place by the carvers. Once a narrow wooden bridge balanced atop this slender shaft of solid stone, spanning the gap from a postern in the castle walls to an exposed plateau, where in times of peace villagers tilled their fields in the shadow of the castle. Without the bridge, no one—friend or foe—could cross the hand-hewn chasm.

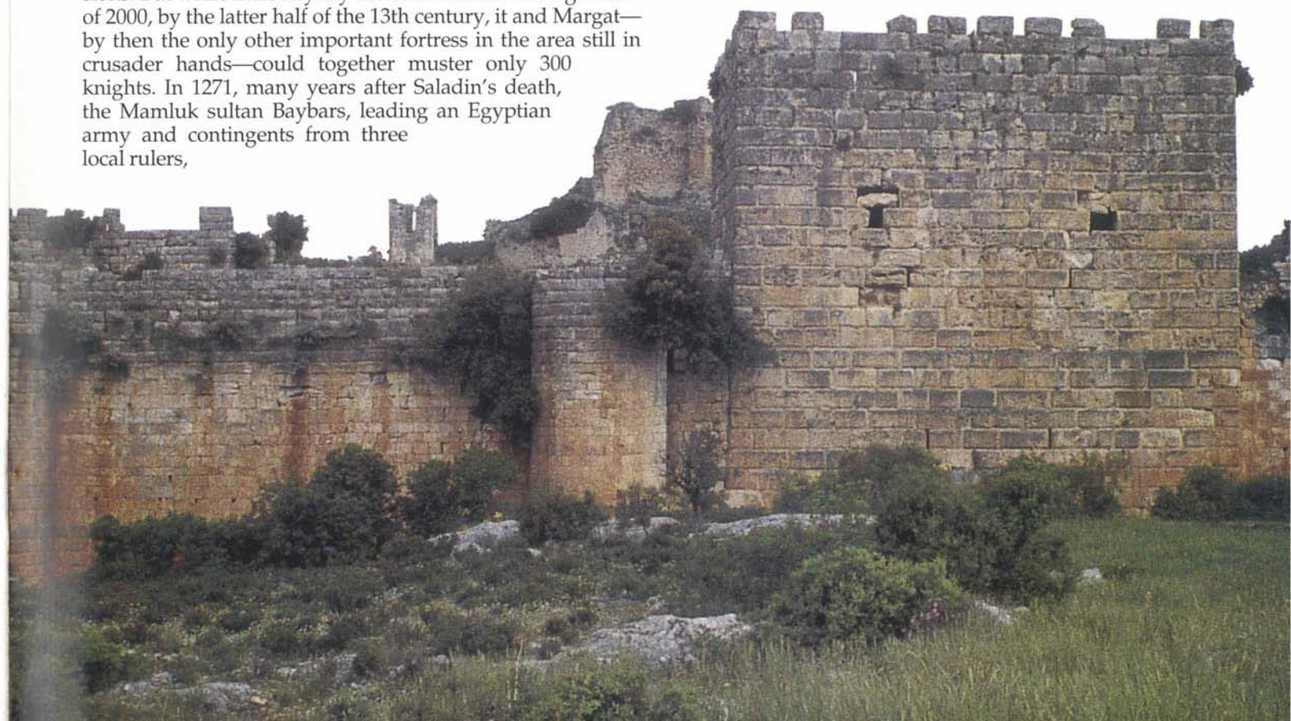
Mining—tunneling—was another technique attackers used to break through a castle's walls. It wouldn't have helped at Saladin Castle, built on solid rock, but it was put to dramatic use when the Muslims besieged Margat a century later in 1285. Margat, with its concentric fortifications of black stone, was the largest of all the crusader castles. Its vast cellars were habitually stocked with enough provisions to last a thousand men over a siege of five years. When the great war engines that Sultan Qala'un had brought up in the final siege were destroyed by the defenders, he sent sappers below ground to completely undermine the foundations of the circular tower-keep. But when the work was done, the sultan was reluctant to destroy such magnificent defensive work, so he invited a delegation of defenders to inspect the extent of the mines. Recognizing that they were defeated, the knights surrendered the castle and withdrew, under a promise of safe conduct, to the port of Acre, far to the south.

The mighty Krak had fallen only a few years before. The crusaders had held the Castle of the Knights for a century and a half, withstanding enemy sieges on no less than 12 occasions. But while in its heyday the Krak maintained a garrison of 2000, by the latter half of the 13th century, it and Margat—by then the only other important fortress in the area still in crusader hands—could together muster only 300 knights. In 1271, many years after Saladin's death, the Mamluk sultan Baybars, leading an Egyptian army and contingents from three local rulers, laid the last and final siege. After nearly a month of attacks the Krak's fourth, seemingly impregnable, inner line of defense was still holding. The stones still did their job, making up for the lack of defenders inside.

Then a letter arrived from the crusader commander at the port of Tripoli, in today's Lebanon, advising that there was no hope of raising reinforcements; the knights, he wrote, should negotiate a surrender. Defeated by their meager numbers, they did so, abandoning the castle to the Muslims under an offer of safe conduct to the coast. Only after the knights had reached Tripoli did they discover that the letter was a forgery. Trickery had breached the stones which force had failed to topple in 160 years. The castle remained intact.

At the Krak, at Margat, at Saladin Castle, more than seven centuries later, the bravest of the stones still stand, square-cut, sun-scorched, still fit together with the fineness of a blade. Probing roots pry other blocks fractionally apart, one season at a time. Where stones have fallen, wild flowers and thistles grow among them. In succeeding years the visitors who pass this way leave as little trace as wavelets lapping against a shore. Among the ancient stones the wind whispers of dedication, ingenuity, determination, boldness, futility and honor. The breezes speak of the warriors who fought both behind these mighty walls and before them: on both sides, noble spirits. Now only the stones remain.

William Tracy, for many years assistant editor of Aramco World, *is editor of corporate publications for Aramco Services Company.*



TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

A brief glossary of siege and sortie in the time of the crusades.

Battlement: *A parapet, with* ***crenelation****, atop a fortress wall, from which defenders could fire down on attacking troops.*

Bent entrance: *An entrance passage into a castle that makes an abrupt turn. The turn inhibited the use of a battering ram, confused and slowed down the attackers and might make them vulnerable to missiles or fluids from* ***machicolations*** *overhead. The long entry passage in the Krak had three such turns.*

Cisterns: *Rainwater from paved roofs and courtyards was channeled into underground cisterns, some hewn from solid rock. A large water supply was essential for withstanding an extended siege, and cisterns were valuable even if a castle had its own well or spring.*

Communications: *Castles were often built on ridge lines within sight of each other so that* ***signal fires*** *could be used at night to pass on an alarm. Both the Arab armies and the crusaders also used* ***carrier pigeons****.*

Concentric fortifications: *Whenever the site permitted, castles had two lines of defense, the inner wall on higher ground being always taller than the outer wall. Towers and* ***loopholes*** *were arranged so that those in the inner wall were never directly behind or above similar features in the outer wall, doubling their effectiveness.*

Crenelation: *In battlements, which alternate open and solid spaces, the notches are* ***crenels*** *and the solid intervals merlons.* ***Merlons*** *were sometimes furnished with loopholes.*

Embrasure: *An opening in a wall, such as a loophole or a crenel; especially an opening whose sides flare outward, providing defenders shooting through the opening with both the widest possible field of fire and the maximum protection against incoming missiles.*

Keep: *Usually the highest and innermost tower, often built to overlook and thus strengthen the most vulnerable sector of the castle's defenses. It was also the point from which the commander might direct the defense.*

Loopholes: *In later castles, walls and towers were pierced at every level by loopholes or slits through which arrows or other missiles could be fired. The slits were often widened at the bottom into a stirrup shape to broaden their fields of fire, and set so that none was directly above another.*

Machicolation: *An opening between the corbel stones of a projecting roof through which missiles or hot fluids, like molten lead, could be discharged on assailants below. From the French* mache-col, *or "neck-crusher." A* ***box machicoulis*** *added the further protection of a projecting, vertical parapet above the openings between the corbels.*

Moat: *A deep, wide trench, often filled with water, that served as a barrier around a fortified castle.*

Parapet: *A low wall or breastwork that protected the edge of a platform or the walk along the top of a larger wall.*

Postern: *A small gate at the side or back of a castle, usually in a concealed spot, such as a recess in the angle of a square tower. The postern, also called* ***sally port****, permitted small offensive sorties and allowed messengers to come and go inconspicuously.*

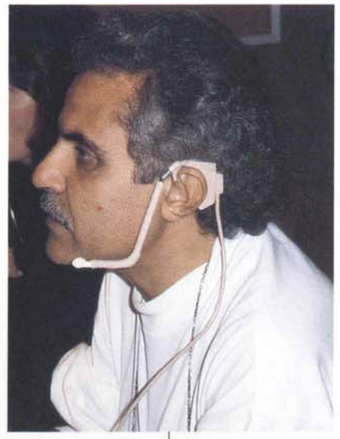
Portcullis: *A heavy grating hung above a fortified gateway; it could be lowered, sliding in stone grooves, to block the entry.*

Stores: *Vast, cool underground chambers were stocked with enough dried or preserved food to see a large garrison through a lengthy siege. The defense strategy might include equipping a castle with a windmill, granaries, oil presses and dovecotes.*

Talus: *The much thickened lower portion of a castle's curtain wall, designed to prevent attackers from getting too close to the base of the wall, or directly beneath towers and battlements, where they might be hidden from the line of fire. The talus gives the lower half or third of the walls a distinct outward slope.*

Towers: *Set at intervals in both outer and inner walls, towers were strongpoints from which fire could be concentrated. In early fortresses they were placed at corners or turns in the wall; later structures had more towers, spaced more frequently and protruding from the castle walls to permit flanking fire along them. Square towers gave way to cylindrical ones, again improving the field of fire and making the tower less susceptible to battering or undermining. There are also a few examples of towers with horseshoe-shaped plans, combining the best features of square and round towers.*

Lightning in a Bottle



Few ever make it to the top as a television director in Hollywood; for a foreigner to succeed in this most American of industries is even more remarkable. But one of the most sought-after directors in Hollywood today is Cairo-born Asaad Kelada. Since 1976, he has directed more than 250 program episodes for three major American networks.

Kelada directed such comedy successes as "The Facts of Life," "Who's the Boss?" and "WKRP in Cincinnati." His latest series, "George," starring ex-heavyweight boxing champion George Foreman, debuted on ABC this month.

It's a long way from the Nile to the Hollywood Hills, and the journey hasn't always been smooth.

Kelada studied drama at the American University in Cairo, and earned a master's in directing at Yale University's drama school. He taught college drama and directed at San Diego's Old Globe Theater and other playhouses.

In 1971, having made his mark in academic theater, Kelada took the leap into television. His reputation gave him entrée to MTM Studios in Hollywood, where he spent five seasons studying on the set of the popular sitcom "Rhoda." This was not a formal apprenticeship; he still had to earn a living outside, teaching and directing theater. "I was simply allowed to sit [at MTM] and watch the directors' techniques," he says. "It was very frustrating, because I wanted to apply what I'd been learning."

When he finally got an opportunity to direct, Kelada was almost overwhelmed by the challenge. "I had spent five seasons preparing for this break, and now my future hung on one week's work."

He smiles wryly, "A door closes much more quickly than it opens, they say."

Kelada observes, "Because I was different—Egyptian—I was under far more scrutiny; producers had to take a risk to give the outsider a chance."

In 1981, he directed his first hit, "The Facts of Life," about four girls at boarding school. His next success was "Who's the Boss?" starring Tony Danza. Five years later, Kelada walked away from "Who's the Boss?" at the height of its popularity, in search of a new challenge.

"It was a difficult decision," he said. "It was like leaving my family. The actors had created a kind of shorthand, so they were able to read each other and respond to nuances the viewer is oblivious to. It's this ephemeral chemistry that makes a show, and creating it is like trying to catch lightning in a bottle."

After leaving "Who's the Boss?", Kelada freelanced for "Married People," "Frannie's Turn" and "The New WKRP in Cincinnati."

Soft-spoken, almost meditative, Kelada has a reputation for bringing out the best in actors. "This is a personality business. One must find a way to work with super egos and have them interact," he says. Another professional challenge is making careful choices: "The balance is between success and artistic integrity. I want to do work I can be proud of."

Kelada's roots are still firmly planted in Egypt, where he visits family each year. And that brings with it an added pressure. "I want always to present the best impression, because I represent a lot of people—my people." 🌐

Pat McDonnell Twair is a free-lance writer based in Los Angeles who specializes in Arab-American topics.

WRITTEN BY PAT MCDONNELL TWAIR
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SAMIR TWAIR

A Turk at Versailles

To the French, it was the arrival of beings from another world.

WRITTEN BY PAUL LUNDE

When the first Ottoman ambassador to France, Mehmet Effendi, arrived in Paris in March of 1721, citizens poured into the streets to watch the stately passage of the envoy and his colorful entourage. The event was described by the official French gazette, *Le Nouveau Mercure:*

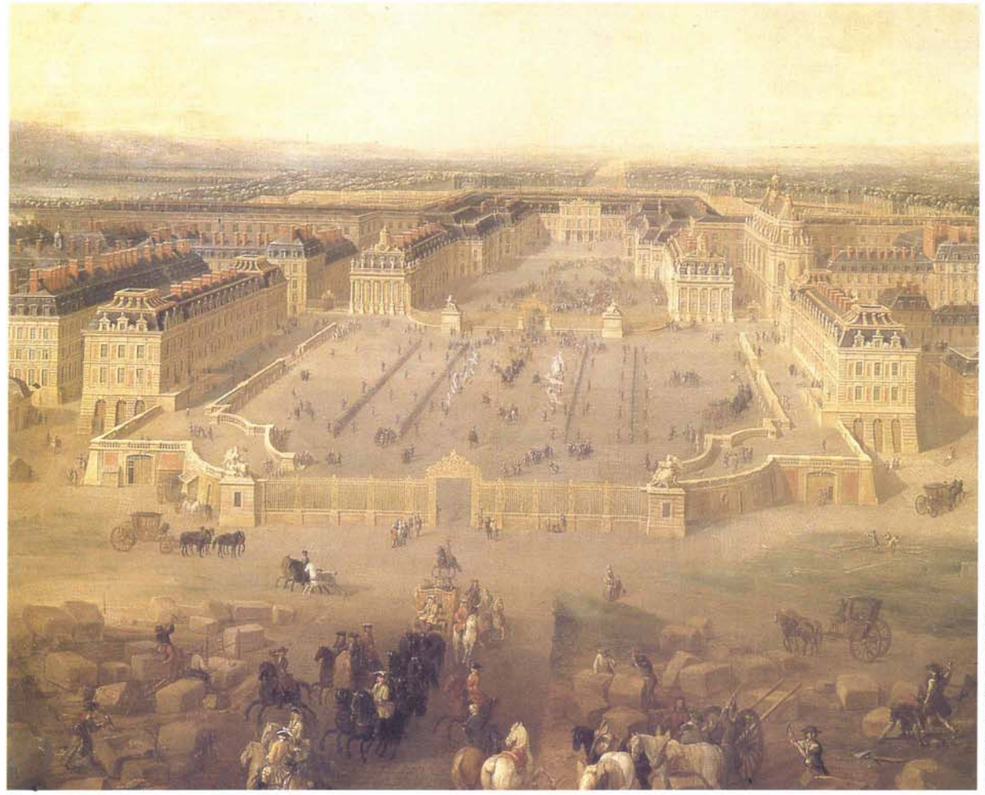
"Forty Turks [appeared,] dressed in different colors, 16 carrying pikes with horse-tails tied to the ends, the others with muskets over their shoulders. Twenty other Turks, mounted on horseback, followed, one carrying a turban, another a vase, a third a pipe and so on. A similar number were on foot.... The ambassador was on horseback, dressed in a simple green robe and a fur coat of the same color."

The ambassador and his suite, which included his son Sa'id, made their way from the suburb of Saint-Antoine to the rue de Tournon, where they were to lodge. The streets were lined with French troops, all issued new uniforms for the occasion.

The official account gives little hint of the excitement Mehmet's arrival had aroused in Parisians of all ages and classes. "Although the streets of Paris are wide enough to allow six carriages to pass abreast," Mehmet later wrote, "in some places there were so many people that it was difficult for even three horsemen to make their way through the crowd."

"The houses of Paris are four or five stories high and the windows look out on the street. These were all filled with men, women and children who, never having seen a Turk, wished to know what manner of men we were. The king himself, his uncle and tutor the duc d'Orléans, all the people of the court and the great lords had taken houses to watch my entry. Although I ... could not bring an equipage worthy of such an occasion, by the help of God we were nevertheless assured that no one in Paris had ever seen so superb an entry as ours."

The idea of an Ottoman embassy to Paris was first suggested by the grand vizier Ibrahim Pasha to the French ambassador in Constantinople, the Marquis de Bonnac. Bonnac was so incredulous that he did not even bother to relay the conversa-



REUNION DES MUSEES NATIONAUX

Jean-Baptiste Martin painted this view of Versailles in 1722, the year after the palace and its grounds so impressed Mehmet Effendi; the ambassador is shown opposite in a contemporary French engraving.

tion to the French minister of foreign affairs, Guillaume Dubois.

Bonnac's incredulity was understandable: Although many European nations had had ambassadors resident in Constantinople for years, the Ottomans had always considered it beneath their dignity to send their own ambassadors abroad. When important issues required an Ottoman representative, a very low-echelon envoy had always been sent.

The most recent Ottoman mission to France, to Louis XIV in 1669, had been a disaster. The envoy, Süleyman Ağa, had claimed the status of ambassador and demanded, violating court protocol, that the king rise to take the sultan's letter. Louis did so with good humor, but when the document was examined, it was found that Süleyman was not an ambassador at all, but a humble envoy. The French were furious; Süleyman was discredited and even satirized by Molière in one of the scenes of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*.

LEWANDOWSKI/R.M.N.

Mehmet Effendi and his suite arrive at the Tuileries in this detail from Charles Parrocel's painting.

So it is not surprising that Bonnac did not take Ibrahim Pasha's words seriously. Then, early in 1720, he learned to his horror that the sultan was proceeding, and hurriedly wrote to Paris for instructions. In August, he learned that the man finally selected for the post was Mehmet Effendi.

Mehmet's full title was Yirmisekiz Çelebi Mehmet Effendi. His father had held a high military post and he himself had been educated in the palace school. He belonged to the 28th corps of Janissaries—"Yirmisekiz" means "twenty-eight"—and had risen through the ranks to become inspector of the arsenal. He had attended the peace negotiations at Passarowitz in 1718, when a treaty had finally been negotiated with the Austro-Hungarian empire. Not only was he skilled in diplomacy and military affairs, but he was also a poet, writing under the pen name "Faizi."

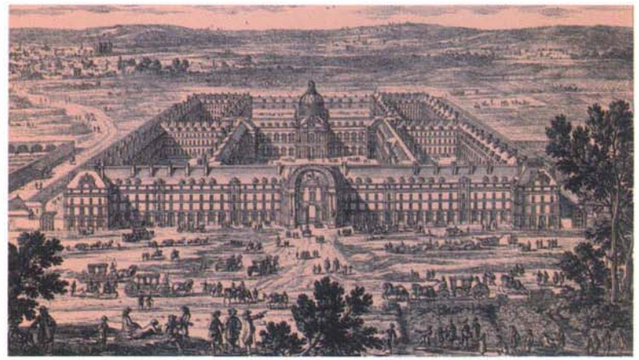
Ibrahim Pasha told Bonnac that the embassy's purpose was to negotiate the release of Turkish prisoners of war in French hands, in exchange for granting the French crown permission to repair the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. But Bonnac suspected that the real aim of the mission was to gather information about the political situation in France and above all about John Law's financial scheme.

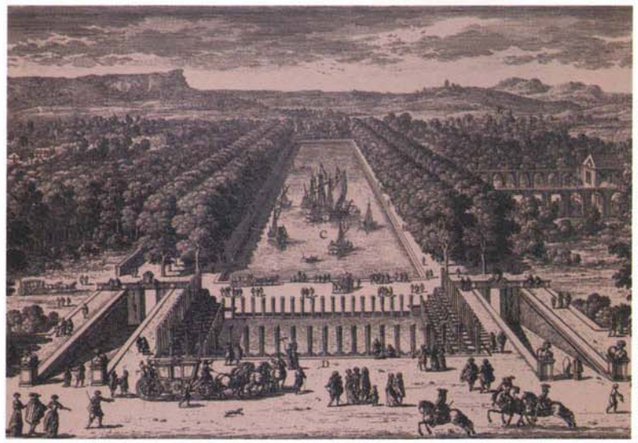
John Law was a Scottish banker brought to France by Philippe II, the duc d'Orléans, in a last-ditch attempt to save the French economy, which lay in shambles. Named comptroller general, Law established a central bank, issued paper money—for the first time—and shares in the French East India Company and in his famous Compagnie d'Occident (Company of the West), which he created to develop the lower Mississippi Valley. Speculation fever ensued, and suddenly the economy was booming. The very population of Paris increased by 300,000 in less than three years, as people flocked to the capital with dreams of overnight wealth. Many succeeded; many more were ruined. News of all this had reached the Ottoman court, perpetually short of money like the French, and Bonnac thought Mehmet's real purpose was to discover Law's secret.

Whether or not Bonnac's suspicion was justified, there was a less ephemeral reason for the embassy. Mehmet had specific instructions from the sultan "to make a deep study of French civilization and the system of education and report on those aspects that might be of use." To comply, Mehmet wrote a detailed account of his trip to France, known by its abbreviated title, *The Relation*—one of the very few surviving descriptions of European society seen through Muslim eyes before the present century.

The Ottoman Turks took Constantinople from the Byzantines in 1453, launching their attacks from the Balkans. They made use of the most modern armanents in their siege of the city; Western observers were very impressed with their cannon and mortars. For a hundred years after this victory the Ottoman empire expanded relentlessly, east and west, reaching from the walls of Vienna to the Indian Ocean.

Intelligent European observers had nothing but praise for the Ottoman system of government and the efficiency of its army, contrasting both with the lamentable state of the European powers. European writers of the 16th century warned that unless the Christian powers united and put an end to the dynastic quarrels that stood in the way of unity, Europe would be unable to resist the might of the expanding Ottoman empire. Some noted that the success of the Ottoman system lay in the fact that it was a meritocracy: Any man, of whatever national origin, could rise as far as his talents would take him. There was no hereditary aristocracy: high positions were granted at the sultan's discretion. The great unifying principles behind the empire were only adherence to Islam and loyalty to the sultan.





BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATACANA/CICOGNARA (2)

By the early 18th century, however, the system that had so impressed Europeans 200 years before no longer looked so formidable. The Turks had lost ground in Europe. The territorial concessions of the treaty of Passarowitz were a case in point, and many Ottoman provinces were either in revolt or rendered only nominal allegiance to the sultan.

The great discoveries of the European Renaissance had been virtually ignored in Constantinople and, by the end of the 16th century, the Turks found themselves unable to oppose the new European maritime powers like England, France and Holland. Intellectually, the Ottomans had turned in upon themselves. Accustomed to rule, they had little curiosity and less knowledge about what went on beyond their borders.

Intelligent Turks, however, could no longer deny that something was seriously wrong. By 1720, a series of military and diplomatic defeats had made it obvious they were losing ground to the West. Mehmet's trip to Paris was a first tentative attempt to gain first-hand knowledge of a major European power, and perhaps find explations of its success.

Despite France's technological lead over the Ottoman empire in the early 18th century, the two societies were in many respects comparable. Both countries were overwhelmingly agricultural, and most people still lived on the land. The major non-agricultural industry in both lands was textiles. Trades were organized into guilds in both societies. In both, religion played an important role in the state, and both recognized the authority of a single ruler—although the ways in which this authority was delegated were very different.

Engraver Gabriel Perelle and his sons produced several albums showing the buildings and gardens of Paris in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. These views of the Invalides (upper) and the canal of Fontainebleau are from a collection called *Les Délices de Paris et ses Environs.*

Regency Paris and the Constantinople of Ahmet III—whose reign is called "The Tulip Era"—in many ways delighted in the same things. Both cities shared a passion for flowers, gardens and fountains, public spectacles, fireworks, ceremonies and architecture.

Mehmet Effendi spoke no French at the time of his embassy, but rarely found himself unable to understand what he saw in France, and at no time appeared at a cultural disadvantage, even when witnessing things as alien to Turkish tradition as theatrical performances.

Some things, though, were depressingly

familiar. Travel was difficult, the roads appalling. The French winter was bitter. And when Mehmet arrived in Toulon after 45 days at sea, he discovered that southern France was being ravaged by the plague. Mehmet described the novel European method of containing it:

"When a contagious disease breaks out in France, they isolate those coming from abroad, and if communication with them is unavoidable, it must be done without physical contact. Now at the time I arrived in France, God willed that the city of Marseilles should be infected with a cruel plague.... Fearing contagion, the authorities would not allow free access to foreigners until they had spent 20, 30 or even 40 days in quarantine."

French authorities arranged for Mehmet and his suite to travel by sea to the town of Sète, 240 kilometers (150 miles) away, there to pass the quarantine.

Mehmet's party numbered 80. His miniature court included a chief administrative officer or kâhya, an imam to lead prayers, a treasurer, a keeper of the seal, a master of the wardrobe, a master of ceremony, a maître d'hôtel or head steward, a chief translator, a doctor, a number of valets, a cook and his assistants, a coffee-maker and a water-carrier.

Every day the party consumed some 36 chickens, eight dozen eggs, six sheep, a whole heifer, eight pigeons, one quintal of rice, 40 pounds of sugar, 10 pounds of chickpeas, 12 pounds of butter, three pounds of candles, 10 pounds of tapers, 10 pounds of cheese from the Auvergne, three pounds of Roquefort, a dozen oranges, a dozen lemons, 26 pounds of salt and 100 pounds of bread. Since the quarantine lasted 40 days, the expense was prodigious.

The actual quarantine site was Maguelone—now joined to the mainland, but then a small, uninhabited island. In his *Relation*, Mehmet makes no complaint about what must have been an extremely irksome and cold isolation. "I found," he says, "that the best thing to do was to kiss the hem of the robe of patience."

At last the 40 days were up. Since bad weather had made the roads virtually impassable, they proceeded north by boat on the Canal du Midi, completed some 40 years before. One of the great engineering feats of the 17th century, this canal joins the Mediterranean to the Atlantic by way of the Garonne River. Some 239 kilometers (149 miles) long, the canal in Mehmet's time featured 100 locks, 38 bridges and four aqueducts, and at one point even pierced a mountain.

LAUROS-GIRAUDON/ART RESOURCE

Louis XV, shown here in court dress painted by Hyacinthe Rigaud, was just 11 years old when the Ottoman embassy arrived in Paris.

Fascinated by his first glimpse of French technology, Mehmet asked for detailed plans of the entire canal and posed innumerable questions. He describes the canal in detail, including the hydraulic principles involved, and calls it one of the wonders of the world.

During his first days on the waterway, Mehmet became aware in turn of the insatiable curiosity of the French people. "The French were so eager to see me that ... they came four or five leagues to see me pass. They pushed one another so much, seeking to get in front of the crowd, that they sometimes fell in the water. At one place, named Mirepoix, there was such a crowd on the banks that a soldier, trying to clear a way, had to bayonet a man. The victim's brother then threw himself forward, crying out, and the same soldier bayonetted *him*. He died of his wounds that night."

Another first impression was of the relative freedom of French women: "In France, men have great respect for women. The greatest lords are incredibly courteous even to women of the lowest station. The result is that women do as they like and go wherever they wish."

In about a week, they reached Bordeaux. Outside the city walls, Mehmet and Sa'id switched from boat to horse-drawn carriage to make a state entry into Bordeaux.

"Of all the cities I saw in France, there is none which can be compared with Bordeaux. Its buildings are very beautiful, its situation charming, its appearance agreeable.... The Garonne is so wide by the city that it resembles the port of Constantinople and as the Atlantic is only 20 leagues away, ships of 40 cannon can come there to anchor. When I was there, five or six ocean-going ships were moored.... In summer, there are as many as 2000 sail in the harbor. As this city does so much trade, there is a large merchant community and most of the inhabitants are very rich."

After three days in Bordeaux, they continued on by river to Blaye, where they met the horses and carriages sent to convey them to Paris. At first, Mehmet was glad to leave the cramped river boats and climb into the saddle, but he soon regretted the switch. The roads were seas of mud, accommodation at local inns was exiguous, and the weather bitingly cold.

As he drew closer to Paris, Mehmet saw more and more fine palaces and chateaux. He found it difficult to describe them, so foreign were they to Turkish taste. The facades were often adorned with sculpture and, since Islamic teachings forbade the depiction of the human or animal form, the whole concept was alien.

MUSEE DE LA MARINE/R.M.N.

Mehmet and his suite finally reached the gates of Paris on March 8, 1721. They lodged in Saint-Antoine for a week while preparations were made for their official entry into the city. Then, on March 16, Mehmet donned his ceremonial turban and an ermine coat and the procession set off with great pomp through the crowded streets of Paris.

Once the party had settled in at its new residence, visitors began to pour in, mostly to watch the Turks eat. Throughout their stay in France, Mehmet and his suite followed Islamic dietary laws and prepared their own food. This fascinated the French. Although it was Lent and his fasting French visitors could not partake of the meals, Mehmet found they were quite content to stand and stare.

There was no concept of privacy in 18th-century France and, as Mehmet pointed out with astonishment, even the king's meals were taken publicly. Anyone, he wrote, was free to wander into the palace and watch the king eat—not only that, but people could also watch the monarch get out of bed in the morning! This seemed particularly odd to Mehmet, for the Turkish sultan was a remote figure who rarely appeared in public and was protected by elaborate ceremonial from contact even with visiting dignitaries.

Nowadays there seems nothing very extraordinary about the daily life of Mehmet and his entourage, but in 1720 such simple things as differences in cuisine, sitting on the floor and eating with the right hand from a common dish, or shunning wine and spirits seemed strange and outlandish. A high-ranking French foreign ministry official named Le Dran wrote a long memoir on the daily life of the Turkish embassy, and particularly noted their eating habits:

"They make many different kinds of stews and even more kinds of flaky pastry.... They never eat roast meat, except for brochettes of lamb. They eat a lot of rice and in almost all their dishes they put spices and saffron in addition to honey and butter. They eat a wide variety of salads made of different kinds of greens. Only one dish at a time is placed on the table; it is then replaced by another and so on, up to the number of 40 or 50 in the same meal. This is not the case with the salads, which are served at the beginning and remain on the table till the end."

Le Dran told how each meal ended with washing one's hands and anointing them with scent, and how each guest was given

At Bordeaux, Mehmet first experienced the phenomenon of tides. "With my own eyes I saw the water level of the river rise and fall by a foot," he wrote. "It is a marvel that must be seen to be believed."

coffee in a small cup without a saucer. No detail was too trivial, for it was all new.

The simplicity of Mehmet's meals astounded his hosts. Although the French court under the regent was less formal than during the reign of Louis XIV, no Frenchman of Mehmet's rank would have been content with a meal of only 40 or 50 dishes. Here is a typical menu, served in 1718 by the Duchesse de Berry at the Luxembourg Palace: First Course, 31 different soups, 60 entrees, 132 hors d'oeuvres; Second and Third Courses, 132 different hot meat dishes, 60 cold meats, 72 side dishes. The meal ended with fruit: 100 baskets of fresh, 94 of dried, 50 of glacé, and 106 bowls of compote.

A week after his arrival, Mehmet was received by Louis XV at the Tuileries Palace. The crowd in the throne room was great and Mehmet had trouble passing through it. Tiers of benches had been erected on either side for the ladies of the court, whose dresses sparkled with precious stones.

The Turkish visitors at meals were an endless source of fascination for the French. "The table is a large flat brass tray, tinned inside and out and painted," one observed. "The ambassador is served by some 20 servants."

Louis, who had just celebrated his 11th birthday, rose as Mehmet approached with the sultan's letter. Mehmet said: "Here is the magnificent Imperial letter of His Majesty, the Very Generous, Very Great and Very Powerful Emperor of the Faith, my Benefactor, my Lord and my Master, Sultan Ahmet Khan, son of Sultan Mehmet Khan." He then handed the letter to the foreign minister.

"I then added," says Mehmet, "that I had been sent as ambassador in order to reaffirm the close and ancient friendship between the two empires and to declare the benevolence, love, esteem and consideration the Sultan bears to the very magnificent emperor of France."

A suitable reply was made on behalf of the king, who Mehmet says was too shy to reply himself, but whose "beauty was unequalled and whose clothes covered with gold and diamonds shot rays of light into the assembled company." The audience was over. Mehmet withdrew and returned to his lodgings in the rue de Tournon.

The next day he sent the king the presents he had brought—a fine horse from the isle of Lesbos with royal harness and saddle-cloth embroidered with gold and colored flowers; a gold-embroidered quiver of arrows and a little bow; nine pieces of Greek cloth of gold; three pieces of cloth from India; and nine bottles of balm from the holy city of Makkah.

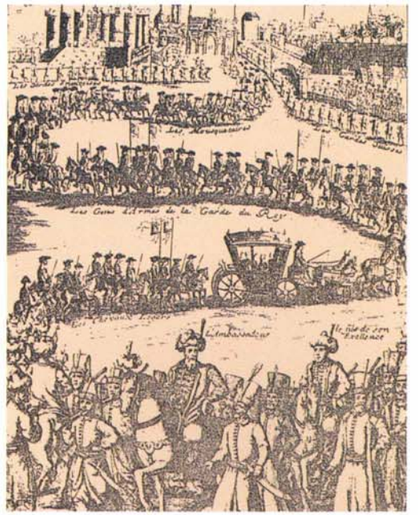
The following day, he paid an official visit to the regent, the duc d'Orléans, at the Palais-Royal; the day after, he met with Dubois, the foreign minister, who was also archbishop of Cambrai and after the regent the most powerful man—and one of the richest and most reviled—in France. The memoirist Louis de Rouvroy, duc de Saint-Simon, also met Mehmet Effendi, and liked him: "He was above average in height, heavy, and about 60 years old. His face was handsome and majestic, his attitude fierce, his gaze proud and piercing. He entered a room as if he were the master of the world. He was polite, but more than that had a kind of grandeur, taking the first place in any gathering as if by right. He well knew how to amuse the ladies, with no sign of embarrassment and an air of being entirely at his ease."

The ambassador's days were full. He attended a hunt, with falcons and other birds of prey, at which the king was present. A drive in the Cours la Reine was arranged so that Louis could meet Mehmet informally, for the child-king was very curious about his guest. "As no one in Paris had ever seen Turks or Turkish dress, we were much admired and the more we were talked of to the king, the more eager he became to see us." Such meetings, not provided for in court protocol, had to be contrived as accidents.

With state visits behind them, Mehmet and Sa'id, who was taking French lessons and a course in woodworking, were free to explore Paris. All their excursions, however, were still state occasions and they were constantly surrounded by a crowd.

Mehmet was very impressed with the Hôtel des Invalides, where 3000 disabled and retired soldiers were cared for. Five or six soldiers slept to a ward, and each ward had a number of permanent attendants and nurses. Everything was scrupulously clean. Mehmet admired the ranks of glass bottles and the mortars for grinding medicines in the pharmacy; he inspected the ovens and the kitchens and watched the soldiers take a meal.

Soon after Mehmet's visit to Les Invalides, the maréchal de Villeroi invited him to dine at the palace. Before dinner, he asked if Mehmet would like to see the king. "We found the king in the same ceremonial room where I had presented the Imperial letter at my audience. He was walking with some young noblemen. As soon as he saw me with the maréchal, he turned towards us and I approached him. We chatted in a friendly fashion. He was charmed to be able to examine our garments one after the other."



Mehmet then toured the royal apartments, and the maréchal explained the paintings and a series of Gobelin tapestries portraying the life of Louis XIV. He was shown the king's bed and the desk where he studied. Then he was taken to the treasury, where he saw all the crown jewels on display. The king was present, and the maréchal, indicating the jewels, asked him to whom they belonged. "To me, who else?" replied Louis. To which the maréchal gravely replied, "They do not belong to you, Sire, they belong to the Crown."

When Mehmet's love of gardens became known, he was taken to Saint-Cloud, the chateau of the Princess Palatine, mother of the duc d'Orléans, and Mehmet was very impressed with the fountains there. He then traveled to Versailles, stopping on the way for lunch at the Château de Meudon, which then looked out over all of Paris.

Versailles and its gardens made a profound impression on Mehmet, as they did on all visitors. He describes fountain after fountain, but finally gives up and says: "I swear that it is absolutely impossible to give a description which gives a proper idea of all this; it can only be comprehended by seeing it." Mehmet loved the Grand Trianon and the zoo, in particular the concealed jets of water, which could be triggered to douse the crowd as they stared at the animals in their cages. "I could not resist playing this joke on those of my entourage who were not in on the secret.... It was the funniest thing in the world."

Mehmet concludes by telling the sultan that everything they had heard about Versailles was true; it was the most splendid palace in Europe. He was quite impressed by the fabulous stables, built by Mansart entirely of cut stone with vaults and arcades. "Surprised to see such magnificence bestowed on stables, ... I was told it was done so that it could be said that the stables of the emperor of France were more magnificent than the palace of the emperor of Germany."

Three days later, Mehmet returned to Paris. He visited the Jardin du Roi—now the Jardin des Plantes—one of the principal botanical gardens in Europe, with a number of attached scientific institutes. One of the first he toured was devoted to anatomy. "They showed me a dissected elephant which they had hung by chains in such a way that it seemed to be standing. As the flesh had been removed, they had joined the various members to each other with wire, so that they could be seen very distinctly. They had done the same thing with other animals.... They have even carried exactitude further, for in order to represent flesh, veins and nerves, they have formed the members of wax, and used colors to indicate the veins and nerves. The physicians show these models to their students during lessons."

Mehmet then came to the garden of medicinal plants: "They have applied themselves so assiduously to collecting simples men-

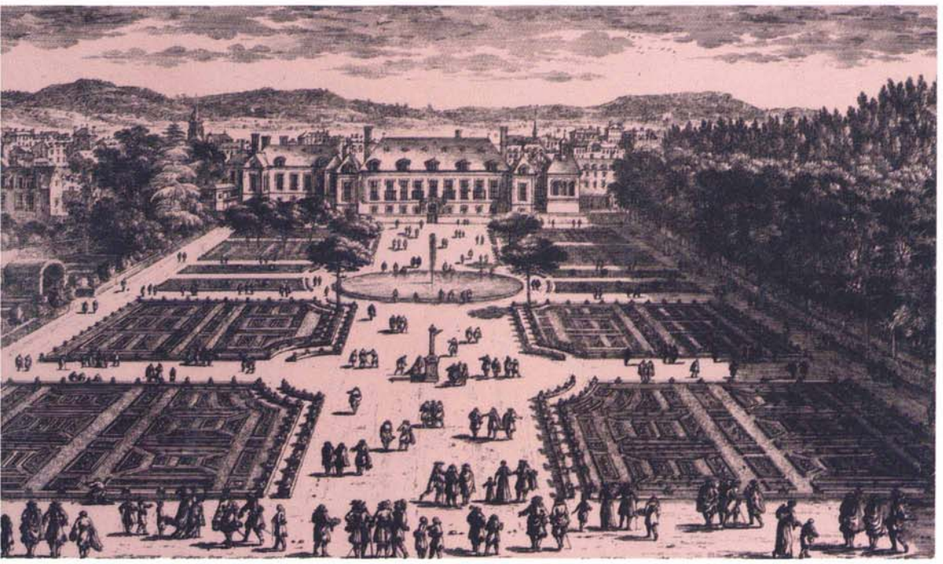
Preceded by musketeers, the royal guard and light cavalry troops, the Ottoman embassy winds its way toward the Porte St. Antoine and Paris. Mehmet and his son Sa'id are mounted in the foreground of this contemporary French engraving.

Mehmet Effendi presents his credentials to King Louis XV at Versailles. French Minister of Foreign Affairs Guillaume Dubois may be shown at left.

tioned in medical books, that they have even brought those that grow in Persia and in the land of the Uzbeks and transplanted them to France. And how many trees, flowers and herbs from China and above all from the New World there were!"

The more Mehmet discovered, the more he realized he had only seen a fraction of what Paris had to offer. Like any modern tourist who suddenly finds his holiday drawing to a close, Mehmet began frantically visiting sights he had missed.

He had been very interested in the tapestries the French hung on the walls of their chateaux, so the next place he visited was Les Gobelins, where they were woven. "As they had been told I was coming, they had hung the walls with completed tapestries. There must have been at least a hundred of them, for the workshops are huge. To see them and to put the finger of admiration in one's mouth were one and the same thing. The flowers are worked with such art that you cannot tell them from the real thing."



BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATICANA/CICOGNARA

In the Jardin des Plantes Médicinales, Mehmet "saw plants unknown in Turkey, so extraordinary that it is impossible to describe them."

On July 18th, Mehmet visited the Royal Library—one of Europe's finest—and was surprised to see Turkish and Arabic manuscripts in the collection, including a number of fine copies of the Qur'an. He was also shown illuminated Christian manuscripts and early printed books. As he left, he was given the complete works of Aristotle in a printed edition of the old Latin translation, which he had admired.

The examination of printed books in the Royal Library may have led to Mehmet's and his son Sa'id's interest in printing. They visited the national printing works and were extremely interested in the process. Although small Armenian and Hebrew presses existed in Constantinople, these were devoted to printing limited editions of liturgical works. It was through the efforts of Mehmet and Sa'id, once they had returned to Constantinople, that this crucial Renaissance discovery made its first significant appearance in Islamic lands (See *Aramco World*, March-April 1981). They were able to convince Ibrahim Pasha of the utility of printing secular works, including translations from European languages. Although the press they founded in 1727 operated for just two decades, it marked an important stage in the modernization of the Ottoman empire—and one of the books printed was Mehmet's account of his embassy.

Almost equally important was Mehmet's visit to the Paris Observatory, where he viewed a fine collection of experimental machines and astronomical instruments. Mehmet saw sophisticated pumps, machines for lifting heavy weights, and concave mirrors which focused the sun's heat to ignite wood and melt lead. "Burning mirrors," as they were called, had been described by Arab writers as early as the ninth century, but by Mehmet's time all memory of them had faded.

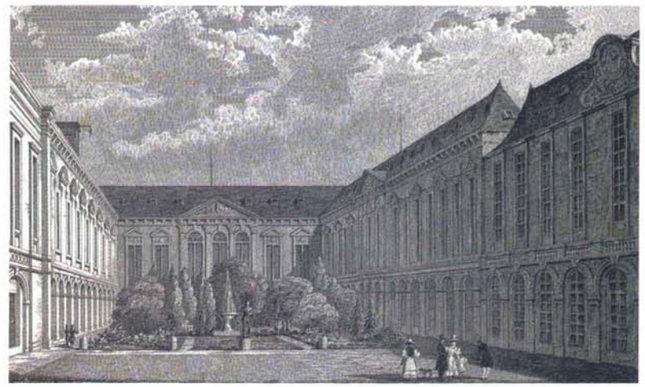
At the observatory, founded by Louis XIV in 1667, astronomer Jean Dominique Cassini had used a large reflecting telescope to carry out systematic mapping of the surface of the moon. Mehmet himself was allowed use of a telescope to observe the moon and some of the planets. More astonishing than the moon's pitted surface were the five known satellites of Saturn, four of them discovered by Cassini between 1671 and 1684. "I also looked at Saturn," Mehmet said. "Around this planet are five stars which continually circle it. They were unknown to the ancients, and it is only by means of the telescope that they have been discovered."

Mehmet, realizing the importance of what he had seen, asked Cassini's son Jacques, who had taken over the Observatory on his father's death in 1712, for Cassini *pere*'s corrections to Ptolemy's tables of star positions. These were as yet unpublished, but the younger Cassini kindly supplied them in manuscript.

Mehmet and his party left Paris on July 25, just after the end of the Ramadan fast. They spent three days at Chantilly as guests of the duc de Bourbon, and on August 3, 1721 set out for southern France. This time the weather was fine, and they all reached Sète a month later.

During their months in Paris, the plague had ravaged the south; Mehmet was appalled to learn as they passed through Toulon that the population there had been reduced from 38,000 to 6000. He was also angered to discover, on reaching Sète, that the Muslim prisoners of war whose release he had been tirelessly negotiating in Paris were nowhere to be seen. He had been betrayed by Dubois.

They set sail for Constantinople on September 7, arriving home a month later. Mehmet finished the account of his embassy at sea, and on arrival he was ordered by the grand vizier to prepare an abridgement of it for the court. This he did, meanwhile working on a fuller version for the sultan.



Aristotle, whose complete works were presented to Mehmet when he visited the Bibliothèque Royale (left), had been just as important to the development of philosophy in Islamic lands as in medieval Europe.

So-called Turkish cafés, shown here in an early-19th-century engraving, left, were one of the fashionable reflections of Mehmet Effendi's visit to Paris.

The reverberations of Mehmet's visit to France continued for years after his return. In 1722, Ibrahim Pasha sent another emissary to Paris to procure some of the Western marvels Mehmet had spoken of so enthusiastically. He wanted telescopes, "burning mirrors," microscopes, tapestries, a wax anatomical model of a man's head, ten pocket watches, fabrics from Carcassonne, and above all a large selection of prints and plans of gardens, chateaux and towns. A thousand of these last were sent to Constantinople. He also ordered some parrots, of the kind Mehmet saw in the zoo at Chantilly. And lastly, flowers: jonquils, hyacinths, anemones and double ranunculus, which Mehmet had admired in Bordeaux.

Mehmet's trip even affected court ceremonial; some of the ceremonies Mehmet described in Paris were instituted in 1722 when the Persian ambassador came to Constantinople. More lasting was the influence of French garden design. Mehmet had been very impressed with the canals he had seen in the gardens of Fontainebleau and Versailles, and one was soon dug in the gardens of one of the sultan's villas at Kağithane.

This brief *occidentaliste* period came to an end with the revolution of 1730, when the sultan was deposed. Mehmet was sent to govern Cyprus—a sort of exile—and died there in 1732. His son Sa'id had a brilliant career, becoming ambassador to Sweden.

Mehmet's visit had a more durable effect on France, however, whose taste for exotic things has never entirely died, although it has taken many different forms, from *turqueries* to *chinoiserie*. More important, the ambassador's personality confirmed a concept dear to the age of Voltaire and Rousseau: that beneath local variations of religion and custom the rational man from any culture was essentially the same. Men were united by their capacity for reason, which transcended national and religious boundaries.

Mehmet, representing a culture as different as could be from the France of the Enlightenment, had been found to be intelligent, courteous and dignified and to share most of the interests of an educated Frenchman. This perception of the "other" as a person basically no different from oneself was reassuring to men of that reasonable age.

Historian Paul Lunde, a frequent contributor to Aramco World, *makes his home in Seville.*

Louvre's Richelieu Wing. Islamic artifacts and Middle Eastern antiquities feature prominently in this new museum wing. Areas of focus include Mesopotamia, Anatolia, ancient Iran and the Levant. Musée du Louvre, **Paris,** from November 18, 1993, indefinitely.

Teaching About the Arab World and Islam is the theme of teacher workshops cosponsored by the Middle East Policy Council of Washington, D.C., and conducted by AWAIR, Arab World And Islamic Resources and School Services in Berkeley, California. Confirmed sites and dates include: Georgia Southwestern College, **Americus,** November 19; Kenmoor Middle School, **Landover, Maryland**, December 2; **Philadelphia** Art Museum, February 5; Indiana State University, **Bloomington,** February 9; California State University/Butte County Office of Education, **Chico**, February 23; **Arcadia [California]** Unified School District, March 19. For details, call (202) 296-6767 or (510) 704-0517.

Current Archeology of the Ancient World. A series of talks on current research and discoveries. Among upcoming topics: Ancient Egypt Documentation Center in Cairo, November 19; Latest Work at Mari (Syria), January 7, 1994; Eastern Andalusia: Landscapes and Settlements of the 11th-15th Centuries, February 18; Egyptian Collections of the Hermitage Museum, March 7; Excavations at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, March 11; History of Assur, March 18; Temple of el-Qal'ah (Egypt), March 25. Musée du Louvre, **Paris.**

From Khorsabad to Paris: *The Discovery of the Assyrians.* This display of Assyrian antiquities and memorabilia marks the 150th anniversary of the first archeological excavations in Mesopotamia. Musée du Louvre, **Paris,** November 20, 1993 through February 14, 1994.

The Musical World of Islam. This festival, with concerts at various New York City locations, gives Americans a broader view of Islam's many different musical traditions. Partial schedule: Persian Traditional Music Ensemble With Mojaba Khoshzamir (Persia), November 20; Simon Shaheen with the Near Eastern Music Ensemble and Others, December 4; Gnawa and Berber Music With Hassan Hakmoun (Morocco), January 15, 1994; Cinucen Tanrıkorur (Turkey), January 22; Ali Jihad Racy and Mansour Ajami (Lebanon), February 25; Hamza El Din (Sudan), March 4; and Alem Kassimov Trio (Azerbaijan), March 11. World Music Institute, **New York.** For information, call (212) 545-7536.

Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art. Artists from 12 countries and Hong Kong are featured in the first major exhibition to link the contemporary art of Australia, Asia and the Pacific. Queensland Art Gallery, **South Brisbane, Australia,** through December 5, 1993.

Asafo! African Flags of the Fante. This exhibition features 100 brightly colored flags of the Asafo soldiers of Ghana's Fante people, dating back to 1850. Fante culture reveals Islamic influences. Corcoran Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.,** through December 15, 1993.

A Day in the Life of the Early Pioneers. Soak Hoover's photos and diary entries capture the flavor of Aramco's start-up years in Saudi Arabia, supplemented by camp and office re-creations and Charles Homewood's old motion-picture footage. Community Heritage Gallery, **Dhahran, Saudi Arabia,** through December 30, 1993.

The Egyptian Mummy: *Unwrapping the Mystery.* The wrapped mummy of a commoner named Ankh-hap is the centerpiece of this exploration of ancient Egyptian funerary practices. Featured are transparencies from a CT (computed tomography) scan of the mummy. **Houston** Museum of Natural Science, through December 31, 1993.

Ancient Egypt: *A Moment of Eternity.* Some 400 objects are featured in what has been called the most important exhibition of ancient Egyptian art to be held in Scandinavia. **Tampere [Finland]** Art Museum, through January 2, 1994.

Brooklyn Museum's Egyptian Reinstallation. One of the world's great collections of ancient Egyptian art returns to public view with the reopening of the museum's renovated West Wing. The permanent exhibition has two parts: a chronological tour of more than 300 of the best artworks, and an imaginative presentation of some 200 artifacts entitled *Temples, Tombs and the Egyptian Universe*, exploring the influence of religion on art. In the first section, a separate Amarna Gallery houses art treasures from the reign of Ikhnaton, known as the world's first monotheistic ruler. The thematic section features richly decorated sarcophagi, mummy cases, and a wrapped 2600-year-old human mummy — the first ever on permanent display at the museum. Some 100 of the museum's best pieces from the Predynastic through Pre-Amarna Periods, as well as Roman-Period and Coptic art, are also on exhibit. A concert of Egyptian classical and folk music will supplement the reinstallation. Brooklyn [New York] Museum, December 3, 1993.

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

Art of the Persian Courts: *Selections From the Art and History Trust Collection.* Hellenistic, Arab, Mongol and Indian influences, among others, can be detected in this dazzling display of 125 Persian paintings and other art. Menil Collection, **Houston,** through January 2, 1994.

The Divine Word of Islam. Bound manuscripts of the Qur'an, books of prayer, folios and a ceramic tombstone are the key elements of this exhibition. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, **Washington, D.C.,** through January 2, 1994.

The Ancient Silk Road is the theme of the 39th annual Washington Antiques Show. On display will be carpets, silver, porcelain, and other artifacts traded on the old merchants' route across Asia. **Washington, D.C.,** January 5 through 9, 1994. For information call (202) 333-7310.

Yemen: *A Culture of Builders.* This photographic exhibition takes an artistic look at Yemeni architecture. Field Museum, **Chicago,** through January 7, 1994.

Scrolls From the Dead Sea: *The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Scholarship.* Twelve fragmentary scrolls and various related artifacts from Qumran tell the story of the scrolls' discovery and the controversy over their translation. New York Public Library, **New York,** through January 8, 1994; M.H. de Young Memorial Museum, **San Francisco,** February 26 through May 8, 1994.

Haathi: *Indian Elephant in Miniature Art.* The seventh annual exhibition of Indian miniatures—an art introduced to India from Persia in the 16th century—highlights the elephant. Commonwealth Institute, **London,** through January 16, 1994.

Egyptomania: *The Influence of Egyptian Art From 1750 to 1930.* Some 300 works from the Louvre and other French museums illustrate the fascination of Western artists with ancient Egyptian themes. Musée du Louvre, **Paris,** January 21 through April 18, 1994.

Indian Miniatures spanning five centuries cover horticulture, the palace, religion and portraiture. **Brooklyn [New York]** Museum, February 4 through May 1, 1994.

The Crisp Appeal of Metal. This display looks at the arts and crafts of metalwork in the Turko-Indo-Iranian world from ancient times onward. Harvard University's Arthur M. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts,** February 19 through July 3, 1994.

From Hannibal to St. Augustine: *Ancient Art of North Africa From the Musée du Louvre.* Marble sculptures, mosaics, jewelry, and other artworks illustrate North African history from the Punic settlements of the third century BC through the early Christian period. Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum, **Atlanta,** February 21 through May 29, 1994.

Photographs by Wilfred Thesiger: *A "Most Cherished Possession."* The museum that holds 25,000 photographs by the great explorer and writer honors him with an exhibition of some of his best photos from Arabia, Iraq and other countries. Oxford University's Pitt Rivers Museum, **Oxford, England,** through February 27, 1994.

The Galleries of Ancient Art: *Egypt, Greece, Rome.* Important Egyptian pieces unseen by the public for 50 years are highlighted in the reinstallation of Chicago's only comprehensive, permanent display of ancient Mediterranean art. Art Institute of **Chicago,** from April 16, 1994, indefinitely.

Falcons and Flowers: *Safavid Persian Textile Arts.* Four extraordinary Safavid velvets from Denmark's Rosenborg Palace are displayed in the United States for the first time, with other striking 17th-century Persian textiles and carpets. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.,** through May 1, 1994.

Before Persepolis: *Anshan in Highland Iran* details excavations at the Elamite capital's site from 1971-78. University [of Pennsylvania] Museum of Archeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia,** through August 31, 1994.

Kurdish Tribal Rugs of the Senneh Tradition focuses on the most refined of the Kurds' carpet-making traditions. **Cincinnati [Ohio]** Art Museum, through December 31, 1994.

The Saudi 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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