ARAMCO WORLD

ARAMCO WORLD
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

TURNS 50

K S A 100 YEARS

30: MUSÉE DU LOUVRE / MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

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Published Bimonthly Vol. 50, No. 6

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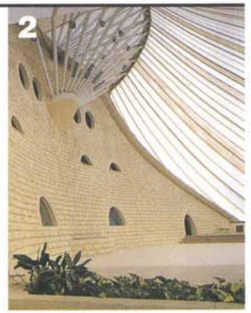

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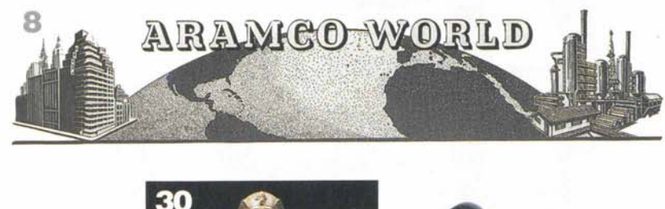
By William Tracy
Once a company newsletter that included news from "the field," then an internal magazine meant to increase employee understanding of an unfamiliar land and culture, *Aramco World* is now a bimonthly window on the Arab and Muslim worlds, a magazine read and referred to in classrooms, libraries and homes in 130 countries. *Aramco World* has its own history, one that colorfully reflects the constancies and changes in relations among the cultures of East and West.



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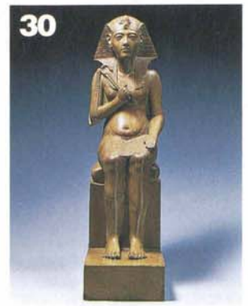
By Barbara Ross
More than three millennia ago, the language of international diplomacy was Akkadian, a Babylonian tongue written in cuneiform script, and long-distance couriers circulated inscribed tablets among kings and chieftains. A remarkable collection of surviving tablets is made up of letters received by Egypt's iconoclastic pharaoh Akhenaten, who moved his capital from Thebes to Amarna.



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By Judith Gabriel
The Vikings' network of arduous riverine trade routes connected settlements from Scandinavia and the Baltic right across European Russia to the Muslim Abbasid and Samanid Empires. Silver was the goal of commerce and the fuel that powered the Viking expansion of the ninth and 10th centuries. The only records of this little-known cultural synapse were penned by Arabs, and among them, the meticulous account of Ibn Fadlan is peerless.

43 **EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS**

COVER:
The ornate domed ceiling of the 10-century maqsura *of the Great Mosque at Cordoba—the area reserved for the caliph and other nobles—symbolizes the spiritual and material treasures with which Arab and Muslim cultures have enriched the world for more than 14 centuries. For a small fraction of that time—50 years, with this issue —*Aramco World *has tried to make those riches more accessible to its readers, in the belief that cross-cultural understanding is a goal worth pursuing. Photo by Tor Eigeland.*

OPPOSITE:
A Viking burial hoard excavated in Norway is one of more than a thousand throughout Scandinavia that have yielded Arab coins and jewelry of Arab and Byzantine origin. Photo by Eirik Irgens Johnsen/ University Museum of Cultural Heritage, University of Oslo.

BACK COVER:
The royal correspondence of the pharaoh Akhenaten, iconoclast and monotheist, sheds an intimate light on his brief and unusual reign. Photo courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

PUBLISHER
Aramco Services Company
9009 West Loop South
Houston, Texas 77096
USA

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ISSN
1044-1891

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DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
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PRINTED IN THE USA
Wetmore & Company

ADDRESS EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
The Editor, Aramco World
Post Office Box 2106
Houston, Texas 77252-2106

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Saudi Aramco, the oil company born as a bold international enterprise more than half a century ago, distributes Aramco World *to increase cross-cultural understanding. The magazine's goal is to broaden knowledge of the culture of the Arab and Muslim worlds and the history, geography and economy of Saudi Arabia.* Aramco World *is distributed without charge, upon request, to a limited number of interested readers.*

A venue for diplomatic functions, lectures and small conferences, or for wedding receptions and other community events, the Tuwaiq Palace is a curvilinear building that surrounds lush gardens, set on the edge of a barren limestone plateau northwest of Riyadh's city center. The building includes 30 guest rooms, and the complex curves of the five Fiberglas tents that extend from its walls shelter banquet and reception halls, lounges, a restaurant and a café.

A *Counterpoint* OF CLOTH AND STONE

Written by Arthur Clark

Photographs courtesy of the Aga Khan Awards for Architecture

Its graceful lines and daring counterpoint of tents and stone draw an "ahhh" of wonder from almost every visitor. From atop its serpentine wall at the edge of Wadi Hanifa, on Riyadh's northwestern city limits, one can study both the tapestry of Saudi Arabia's capital and the desert from which it sprang. Nestled inside are banqueting rooms, exhibition halls, guest quarters, swimming pools and a bowling alley, and a gem-like interior oasis.

Tuwaiq Palace, host to commoners and kings, princes, prime ministers, astronauts and artists, recently gained world recognition as a winner of the 1998 Aga Khan Award for Architecture. The triennial prize, announced in Granada, Spain, "recognizes examples of architectural excellence throughout the Muslim world in contemporary design, social housing, community improvement and development, restoration, reuse and area conservation [and] environment and landscape design."

Standing on a plateau above a lightly watered valley in the capital's new Diplomatic Quarter (See *Aramco World*, September/October 1988), Tuwaiq Palace takes its name from the 800-kilometer-long (495-mi) Central Arabian escarpment that runs 50 kilometers (30 miles) west of Riyadh. A center for festivals, meetings and official and social gatherings for the community at large, the palace covers 24,000 square meters (258,000 sq ft) and cost $31.2 million to build.

The building was among seven winners—three projects from India and one each from Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Pakistan and Malaysia—selected from some 425 entries for the 1998 Aga Khan Award. The prize was established by the Aga Khan in 1977 to enhance the perception of Islamic culture as expressed through architecture. Worth a total of $500,000, it is the richest and one of the most prestigious architectural awards in the world. (See *Aramco World*, November/December 1987, November/December 1989.)

Tuwaiq Palace earned high marks from the prize jury for its blend of traditional and ultra-modern elements, and for fitting handsomely into its environment. The building "makes reference to two local archetypes—the fortress and the tent—and incorporates the natural phenomenon of oasis," the jury said. "A unified whole is achieved by the consistent use of materials and by subtle control of the large building mass.... This reinterpretation is a daring confrontation between tradition, landscape and high technology.

"From a distance, Tuwaiq Palace appears to be a fort surrounded by an encampment, enriched by tents, walls, oases, and walkways and ever-changing vistas."

"We decided we would turn the building into a wall and the wall into a building," says Basem S. Al-Shihabi, a principal of Omrania Architects, Planners and Engineers. The technique of "making a garden and hiding it" lets the building's exterior blend naturally with the surrounding plateau while offering greenness, coolness and water in the enclosed area. ***Right and opposite:*** *Inside, curving forms reinforce the visual themes first stated by the exterior.*

The structure is the product of an alliance among Omrania Architects, Planners and Engineers of Riyadh, Atelier Frei Otto of Germany and the structural engineering firm Büro Happold of Great Britain. Frei Otto, a pioneer in the use of tensile structures in architecture, and Omrania had each submitted independent plans in a competition sponsored by the Riyadh Development Authority in 1980. The RDA, which is responsible for the development of the Diplomatic Quarter as part and parcel of the capital, boldly asked Omrania and Frei Otto to present a unified design with Büro Happold.

"We'd worked with others in the past, but this was the first time that we had been forced into a marriage," recalls Basem S. Al-Shihabi, a Jiddah-born architect. He and Nabil Fanous are principals of Omrania. "There were certain things in each design that made sense, but none came up to the client's expectations. We were told to form a team and submit a joint proposal that we believed met the needs of the project."

After more than a year of intensive discussions and planning in Riyadh, Britain and Germany, the team presented a scheme "completely different" from those that Omrania and Frei Otto had previously submitted, Al-Shihabi says. Omrania's plan had envisioned a terraced structure rising from and blending into the rugged wadi, or valley, while Frei Otto's had called for stone domes overarched by a soaring shade structure. The new design linked the diverse themes, enhancing both.

"Tuwaiq Place is unique, definitely," says Abdulrahman M. Al-Sari, Director of Urban and Cultural Development at the RDA. "It's one of the examples that we use to show how to build a building that belongs to the place and the space it's erected in. It belongs to Riyadh, to the wadi, to *that* particular location."

"It's not possible to imagine this building in New York, Tokyo or even Jiddah. It supports the Riyadh Development Authority's philosophy of contemporary local architecture."

That RDA philosophy was summed up in the project's terms of reference, which provided a general outline of what the authority expected from local and international consultants in their submissions.

"We don't do design," Al-Sari says of the RDA. "Our terms of reference guide the consultants to fulfill our requirements in terms of space, aims, hopes and vision. We give consultants the most freedom we can, at the same time telling them our vision so they can respond to it."

That has certainly proved a winning formula for the RDA, whose commissions have garnered a total of four Aga Khan Awards since 1989. Three were for projects at the Diplomatic Quarter, and one was for the redevelopment of Riyadh's old city center and the Imam Turki ibn 'Abd Allah Mosque there. (See *Aramco World*, January/February 1999.)

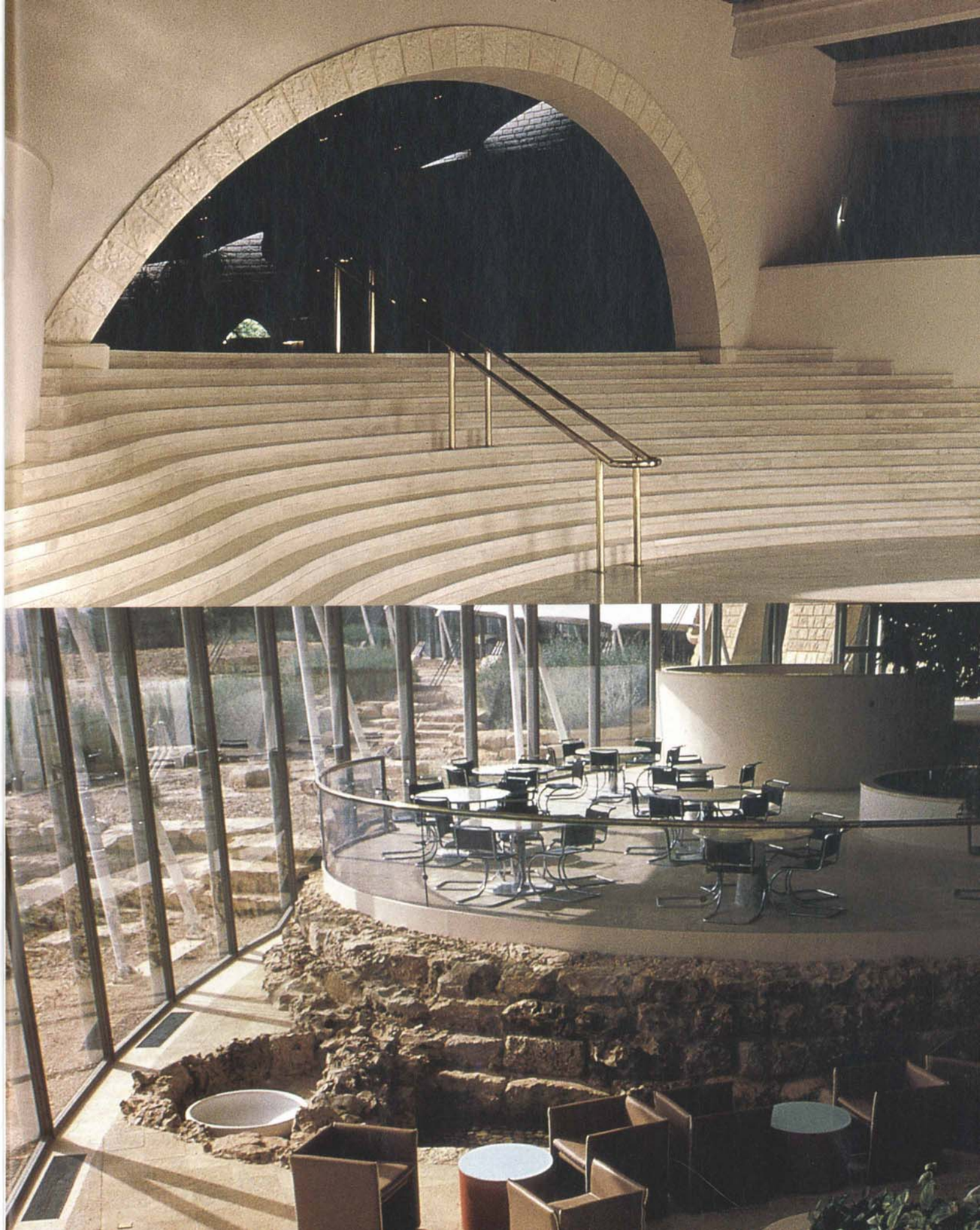
Al-Sari points out two key criteria laid down for Tuwaiq Palace: that architects respect the natural setting on the wadi edge and that they honor its desert location by planting no lush greenery within 100 meters of the structure. The two points proved a steep challenge for designers. The RDA also asked architects to avoid clichés from the past. "Any form of revival style or copying traditional patterns and details in old or new material, thus creating a false 'neo-Orientalism,' will not be acceptable," it stated.

The Diplomatic Quarter lies on a protruding ridge of barren limestone that contrasts sharply with the greenery and palm trees in the wadi below. The envisaged building—called the Diplomatic Club in the initial planning stages—would stand less than 100 meters from the wadi edge, ruling out lush exterior plantings.

"How could we do a club without a garden?" asks Al-Shihabi. "The answer was to make a garden—and hide it."

That kind of legerdemain required a wall, of course. "We finally decided we would turn the building into a wall and the wall into a building," says Al-Shihabi. "The building and the wall would become one." Indeed, the wall became habitable. Up to 12 meters (39') high and from seven to 13 meters (22–43') wide, it easily accommodates, for example, four suites and 30 guest rooms in its thickness—each with a spectacular view of the wadi from its windows or its private terrace.

Then planners took the idea one step further by extending three flowing tents from the exterior of the building. The strikingly white, cable-tensioned structures of Teflon-coated Fiberglas cloth met the space requirements for banqueting, dining and reception halls, as well as the sports hall. They are supported at their tops by radial cables attached to the walls at fan-shaped steel anchors, and on the ground by inclined masts hinged to anchor blocks. At their outer edges, the cloth meets not the ground but vertical glass walls. One of the tents has three



TOP LEFT: HISHAM SHAMA; PREVIOUS SPREAD: MOHAMMED AKRAM / AGA KHAN AWARDS FOR ARCHITECTURE (MAIN PHOTO); OMRANIA AND ASSOCIATES (INSET)

ABOVE: OMRANIA AND ASSOCIATES; TOP RIGHT: HISHAM SHAMA

interior levels, making it even more versatile.

"The tents are functional and contemporary, not just a copy of something historical," says Al-Sari. Moreover, their Teflon coating means they stay relatively free of dust and dirt, thus preserving their whiteness. Lighted from the inside at night, the glowing, translucent tents are visible from a long distance.

Inside, the palace features two more tents, these covered with small blue ceramic tiles arranged in a fish-scale pattern. They face the gardens and also feature skylights, throwing patterns of sun and shadow onto the internal walls. A smaller, central tent celebrates the lush, green oasis hidden in the heart of the palace; it is clad in rich-hued, handmade ceramic tiles reflecting garden scenes.

The tent-and-wall theme of the building is an exceptional union of two forms of shelter—usually mutually exclusive—that represent two sides of Saudi Arabia's heritage: The tents reflect the kingdom's mobile, desert-based Bedouin culture; the walls represent its settled oases and cities. The wide walls themselves are topped by walkways running 800 meters (2600') around the perimeter of the facility, offering an inspiring view by day or night.

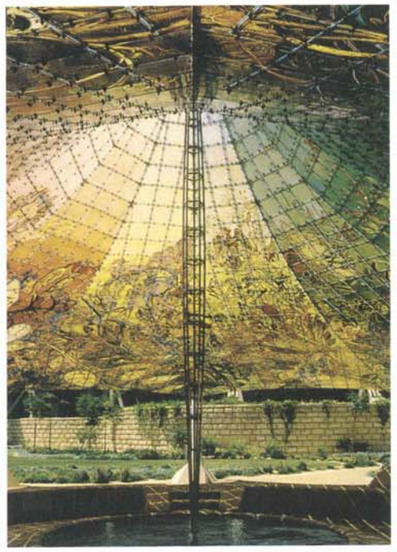
Paradoxically, the very contrast of the tents and walls provides a "fusing element" that unifies the structure as a whole, says Al-Shihabi. "The solid wall of rough stone and the smooth textile of the tent were the things that really brought it together."

The design team delivered its plan within a year of linking up under the auspices of the RDA, and the structure was completed late in 1984. Omrania was responsible for the overall architecture of the project, while Frei Otto was the lightweight-structure expert.

The palace was put to use late in 1985. "The building is for the whole city," says Al-Sari, and hosts roughly 80 events a year. These range from exhibitions about Arabic calligraphy and traditional mud buildings, for instance, to lectures, seminars and even weddings. The facility is managed by the RDA, but the organization would one day like to turn it over to a company to be run commercially, Al-Sari adds. "It would create a lot of business," he says, pointing to its beautifully sited guest quarters and its wealth of facilities. "We hope it will happen, and that it will be fully used."

The building is set in a total land area of 75,000 square meters (807,000 sq ft). That provides plenty of space to view it advantageously from the rest of the Diplomatic Quarter, home to embassies and residents, diplomats and non-diplomats alike.

Despite initial misgivings about Omrania's "forced marriage" with Frei Otto, Al-Shihabi now agrees the experiment in architecture was a huge success. "We felt that the wall was a natural outgrowth of the plateau and that the tents draped over this wall took advantage of the views offered both internally and externally. For that site, it worked very well," he says. He credits the RDA with the "courage and foresight" to set out carefully conceived guidelines at the start and hold the design team to its standards.



Those guidelines kept the facility true to its culture and purpose, and also helped win the Aga Khan Award, he says.

The overall aim of the award, the Aga Khan told guests and prizewinners at the Alhambra Palace, is to honor progressive building styles and to reignite the architectural energy that once led the way in meeting man's need for shelter and beauty. "The decision to create the award stemmed from a sense that Islamic societies had lost some of their extraordinary inheritance in the domain of human creativity, in which they once set standards for the rest of the world," he said. "The overarching goal of the award is to stimulate the reawakening of that inheritance, and nurture its continuing evolution in contemporary terms."

With its walls of yellow Riyadh limestone and its taut, luminous, curving tents, Tuwaiq Palace achieves that goal. "The good thing is that you feel it's really contemporary but still close to the heart of Riyadh," says Al-Sari. "It's close to the hearts of the people."

Arthur Clark, a Saudi Aramco staff writer based in Dhahran, wrote about the city of Riyadh in the January/ February 1999 issue of Aramco World, *and helped report Arab states' humanitarian aid to Kosovo in the March/April issue.*

A full description and photographs of Tuwaiq Palace and the other 1998 Aga Khan Award winners appear in the book *Legacies for the Future: Contemporary Architecture in Islamic Societies* (Cynthia C. Davidson, ed.; London, Thames and Hudson, 1998; 0-500-34171-0 [hb], 0-500-28087-8 [pb]).

Tuwaiq Palace is "one of the examples we use to show how to build a building that belongs to the place and the space it's erected in," says Abdulrahman M. Al-Sari, Director of Urban and Cultural Development at the Riyadh Development Authority, which commissioned and guided the project. "It belongs to Riyadh, to the wadi, to that *particular location." **Left:** Rising over a shaded pool, the tent at the heart of the palace's courtyard garden features hand-made glass tiles that reflect garden scenes. **Opposite:** Natural light diffuses coolly through the interior.*

Volume 1, No. 1

November 1, 1949

FELLOW EMPLOYEES

For a long time we have wanted a publication for and about the men and women of Aramco's New York and San Francisco offices. This is our first, modest effort in that direction.

Aramco operates over vast distances, making more difficult a proper exchange of news, ideas and information. In the United States we have offices in cities separated by the breadth of the continent. Our oil operations are in far away Saudi Arabia. There are affiliates in dozens of cities throughout the world. We wish to break down walls of isolation so that our people here in America will be helped to see beyond their immediate surroundings, know more of what is going on in other departments and in other centers of company activity.

We hope this publication will enable us to get better acquainted with ourselves.

Cordially,

H. F. Moore

NAME CONTEST

This publication needs a name. There are 50 bright, new silver dollars for the one who produces the right idea. A contest to select a name will close one month from today. It is open to all employees and their families. The judging will be by a representative committee.

The name should be short. It ought to be descriptive. It would be nice if it were tied into some phase of what we do or where or who we are. We have thought of "Double A", from the company insignia, but somehow that doesn't strike us as quite good enough.

Write your choice of a name on plain paper with your own name and department clearly indicated, and address the envelope to "Contest Manager, Double A." Drop the contribution in the "out" box and the Mail Room will send it on.

Also if you wish to write in any reaction—questions, kicks or comments — send us a note addressed to "Editor, Double A," and follow the same procedure. We guarantee it will be read. If signed, we will acknowledge it. If suggestions are practicable, we'll adopt them.

OIL PRODUCTION

Dhahran reports an average oil production, during September, of 412,223 barrels per day, with the refinery averaging 121,915 barrels for the same period. Saudi Arabia is now the 5th ranking oil-producing country of the world.

BOWLING

Aramco bowlers got off to a flying start a few weeks ago with over a hundred fellows and girls heaving big wooden balls at little wooden sticks. About $200 is available for individual prizes or an after-season shindig, in addition to the team trophy won last year by Producing.

The Bowling Committee is headed by Personnel's Drew Herbert, Treasury's Ray Cox is V. P., and Comptroller's John Bowler (aptly enough) is Secretary-Treasurer. General Services' Genevieve Deas and P and T's Dick Gollan complete the Committee which has arranged for Tuesday and Wednesday after-work competition.

The girl captains are: Ginny Zinns for General Services; Faith Ludlow for Comptrollers; Julia Kober for Law, Aviation and Government Relations; Betty Calvert for P and T; Helen Bard for Mngt's; Marilyn Freund for Personnel No. 1; Marge Bergman for Personnel No. 2; and Connie Bridgeman for Personnel No. 3.

The fellows have Chet Kemp to captain Producings; J. Geideman for Purchasing, Aviation and Management; Don Padgett for General Services, J. Bowler for Comptrollers; Drew Herbert for Personnel No. 1; George Shaughness for Personnel No. 2; T. Gitchell for Personnel No. 3 and Milt Williams for Personnel No. 4.

Team standings will be announced next month.

ARAMCO WORLD TURNS 50

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM TRACY

This November, the company dedicated to trade in "black gold" from Saudi Arabia marks the golden anniversary of its own issue-by-issue storehouse of information, *Aramco World*. During the last 50 years, *Aramco World* has become a kind of informational magazine of our intercultural world, both in the traditional publishing sense and in the information-age sense of its Arabic root *makhzan* (right).

When *Aramco World* published its first issue in November 1949, it was an unnamed, four-page newsletter issued by the New York office of Aramco to help the company's roughly 1000 employees "get better acquainted." Aramco's global reach was, at the time, a matter of enormous effort and pride, and the nameplate artwork adopted within a year showed graphically what "*World*" meant in the company: A crescent slice of the globe arced, rainbow-like, across the top of the page; on the left appeared the United States and a drawing of the company's Park Avenue skyscraper headquarters, while on the right were Saudi Arabia and a drawing of an oil-processing plant. The two symbols were less than 20 centimeters (8") apart in print, but they represented what were then two very different worlds that knew little about each other's differences—or similarities.

magazine \ mag • ə • zēn′ \ *n* -s [fr. Middle French, fr. Old Provençal, fr. Arabic *makhāzin*, pl. of *makhzan*, storehouse, fr. *khazana*, to store up] **1a:** a place where goods or supplies are stored: warehouse. [...] **4a**(1)**:** a periodical that usu. contains a miscellaneous collection of articles, stories, poems, and pictures and is directed at the general reading public.

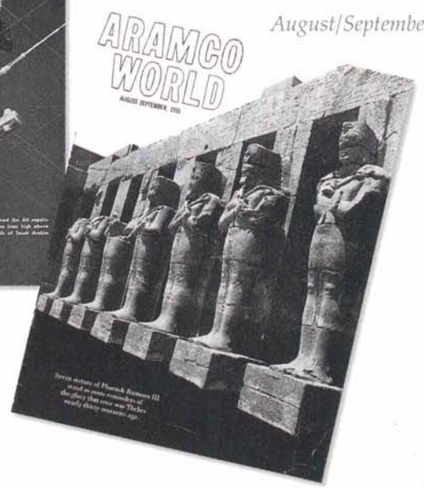
Aramco \ a • ram′ • ko \ [acronym for Arabian American Oil Company] **1:** the corporation formed in 1944 by American petroleum companies to operate the oil concession in Saudi Arabia granted by King 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud in 1933. **2:** Predecessor of Saudi Aramco, the national oil corporation of Saudi Arabia, which took over Aramco's responsibilities in 1988. **3:** Publisher since November 1949 of *Aramco World* magazine.

In the postwar years the company's activities in Saudi Arabia were booming: Production was 40 times its wartime low. Aramco's management recognized that if it were to continue to develop the Saudi concession, which was proving to be priceless in economic and strategic terms, it would have to work to bridge the natural but enormous cultural gaps between its expatriate, largely American, workers and their Saudi counterparts and hosts. In doing so, the company's new vice-president of public relations, Harold Thompson, was fortunate to be able to work with James Terry Duce and Thomas Barger, two executives who, although the term was not yet coined, were men of great cultural sensitivity. Their preference for cooperation and their deep respect for Saudi Arabia's heritage marked Aramco's philosophical break with an era of one-sided resource exploitation in the Middle East.

December 1952

September 1950

August/September 1955



Aramco World marked its shift from newsletter to magazine with its first full-page photographic cover in December 1952. A cover story on Egyptian monuments typified early stories on archeology, art and natural history, still among the magazine's most popular subjects.

Duce came to his job with first-hand experience of US oil businesses in South America. He rose to become Aramco's vice president for government relations, an extremely sensitive liaison post between the business of the company and the government of the country. Barger was a geologist who had learned Arabic from Bedouins during long field surveys in the 1930's. He became Aramco's president, CEO and board chairman before he retired in 1969. Both men impressed upon others in the company the significance of cross-cultural education for Arabia-bound American employees and their families.

But there were few ready sources of information with which to carry out this task, and so the company developed its own. They included a series of handbooks, and to supplement them there was the new company magazine.

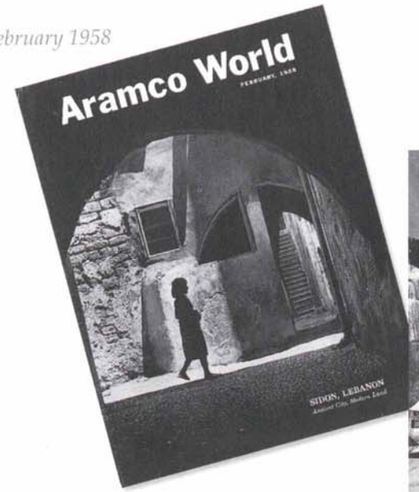
Soon after its launch, *Aramco World* began to carry brief news items from Saudi Arabia on a page called "Reports from the Field." The reporter was a young Harvard graduate named Joe Alex Morris, Jr., who in 1968 would appear on the cover of the magazine as Middle East bureau chief for *The Los Angeles Times*. (He would be killed 11 years later while covering the Iranian revolution.)

In 1952 Aramco moved its corporate headquarters to Dhahran, and in December the newsletter took on the look and feel of a real magazine. For the first time, the editor, Thomas J. Gartland, was listed on the masthead; over the decade, the names of Howard Biers, Leonard Turk and Brainerd S. Bates would appear there, too, and the latter two had life-long associations with the magazine.

Though much of *Aramco World*'s material remained internal to the New York office—new faces, service awards, bowling and softball leagues, blood drives—the reports from Saudi Arabia were exciting as the company prospered and expanded rapidly, and the expatriate work force grew. Employees read about the construction of the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line (Tapline) from the Eastern Province to the Mediterranean Sea, and the enormous project to build the port of Dammam and the railroad between Dammam and Riyadh. To the Americans of Aramco, it was as if a new frontier were opening: Seemingly unlimited resources were being discovered in an unknown land. Following so closely the horror of two World Wars, the boom was exhilarating, easily understood as a sign of a brighter future. At Aramco's Long Island training center, throughout the 1950's, wave after wave of new hires undertook a six-week course in Arabic and local customs and then boarded one of the company's DC-4's—later DC-6B's—dubbed *The Flying Camel* and *The Flying Gazelle*.

Yet nobody at the time was thinking in terms of "cultural diversity." The Cold War dominated US foreign affairs, and even the term "Third World" was new, as dozens of independent nation-states emerged from

February 1958



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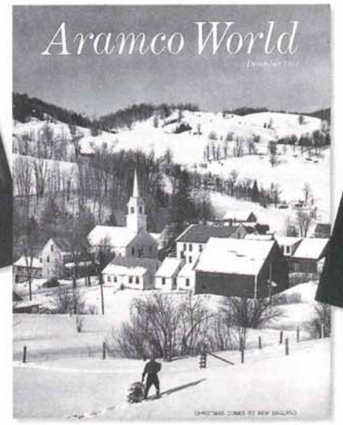

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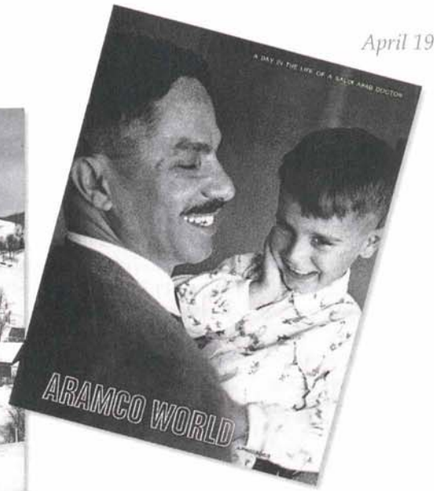


This striking black and white cover from Sidon, Lebanon was made for the magazine by Khalil Abou El-Nasr, a "regular" free-lance photographer, while December 1959's "Christmas in New England" image was licensed from a US stock agency. In April 1963, Aramco chief photographer Burnett Moody published an intimate essay, "A Day in the Life of a Saudi Arab Doctor," creating a uniquely Middle Eastern variation on an approach first popularized in Life *magazine.*

crumbling colonial empires. In retrospect, it is remarkable that the foundation of *Aramco World*'s intercultural approach was so soundly laid so early on. Then, as today, the magazine's message was that people are not all the same, but that their differences are of mutual interest; their societies and cultures are often historically interdependent in surprising ways; and that seeking to understand one another is an intrinsically enlightening process whose fruits are material, political and cultural.

As *Aramco World* turned increasingly toward intercultural bridge-building, it was not long before the editors began to hear from others in the Americas and Europe who were likewise eager to cross those spans to the Middle East. They included businessmen as well as journalists, clergy, teachers and students, all eager to explore far-away lands, now newly newsworthy, that most knew only from museums, Bibles or schoolbook histories. Among articles about the company and its oil-related activities, the magazine published features on the origins of the alphabet and Arabic numerals; the history of stars, navigation and sailing ships; pearl diving, coffee growing and brocade weaving; dates, figs, sherbets and honey-flavored sweets; salukis, cats and camels; medicine and desert flowers; lamps, toys, soap-making and the arts of calligraphy and ceramic tiles.

The magazine's message was not that people are all the same, but that their differences are of mutual interest and their societies interdependent; and that seeking understanding is an intrinsically enlightening process.

Many of these articles were illustrated with photos and drawings obtained from New York agencies. But with the help of company photographers such as Robert Yarnell Ritchie, Thomas F. Walters, Khalil Abou El-Nasr and V. K. Antony, the drama of oil exploration and the search for cultural links began to come back to readers in the form of striking black-and-white images made on location for *Aramco World*. Design was by Graham Associates in New York; Ray and Roy Graham had known James Terry Duce from his service in Washington, D.C. with the Petroleum Administration for War. The Grahams also produced other publications and films for Aramco, and in 1952 they opened the Middle East Export Press, Inc. (MEEPI) in Beirut, Lebanon, to serve American businesses in the region.

It was around this time I first encountered *Aramco World*. I had just graduated from university, and my father worked for Aramco in Ras Tanura, a refinery town and port that was already one of the world's largest crude-exporting terminals. Like most of his colleagues, he was a product of the oilfields of his native downstate Illinois, and he and my mother saw themselves as 20th-century pioneers. (See *Aramco World*, July/August 1968.)

One day an *Aramco World* writer—I do not remember his name—came to our home on the Arabian Gulf to interview my mother for an article called "A Day in the Life of an Aramco Housewife," which was published in February 1958. To me, our visitor represented something new and exciting: the all-American, down-home, idealistic integrity of the *Saturday Evening Post* and the drama of *Life* combined with subject matter that spoke to my world. I decided then and there that I would aspire to someday write for *Aramco World*, that I would have something to say there. It was seven years before my first article appeared —and 35 years until this present one, with dozens in between.

In the 1960's, at the urging of Jack Butler, general manager of public relations in Dhahran, Aramco decided to move *Aramco World*'s editorial offices closer to the areas covered in the magazine. Beirut seemed ideal: Two Aramco subsidiaries, Tapline and Aramco Overseas Company (AOC), maintained offices there, and the city was emerging as a hub, a headquarters city for American corporations doing business in the Middle East. It hosted a lively overseas press corps, and the company had had good experiences with the Grahams' MEEPI, where *Aramco World* would be printed.

The move required a new editor. At New York's Columbia University, Aramco found Paul F. Hoye as he was completing a Ford Foundation Fellowship in advanced international reporting, with a focus on Middle East studies. Hoye had begun his career as a reporter on the *Providence* [Rhode Island] *Journal*, and Aramco thought that his popular, newsman's style, regional knowledge and exceptional personal energy would give *Aramco World* the new direction the company sought. Hoye and his family set up house in Beirut in January 1964, and he would edit the magazine until his death in 1986. The magazine's days as a house organ were over, and *Aramco World* became largely what it is today: an educational magazine aimed at a general readership. It was probably the most significant editorial decision the company made.

It was also a decision with an important invisible addendum—one that proved essential to the magazine's future success. If *Aramco World* was to be sponsored by the company yet aimed at readers outside the company, then the company's public reputation would, to some degree, be riding on the magazine. If the magazine demonstrated poor production quality, if it focused too exclusively on company matters, if it were unprofessionally run, those flaws would reflect on Aramco. Above all, if it were anything less than accurate about the region and the cultures that it covered, it might be seen as pandering or propagandistic. So it was decided that all of *Aramco World*'s articles would be reviewed in Saudi Arabia by Aramco's Saudi experts, some of great reputation, before publication. That requirement grated on Paul Hoye's newspaperman's instincts, but he eventually recognized that the magazine and the company each benefited from the vetting. Today, knowledgeable readers in Dhahran still review the magazine's texts, and their background and expertise lend the magazine an authority that is an important part of its value to its readers.

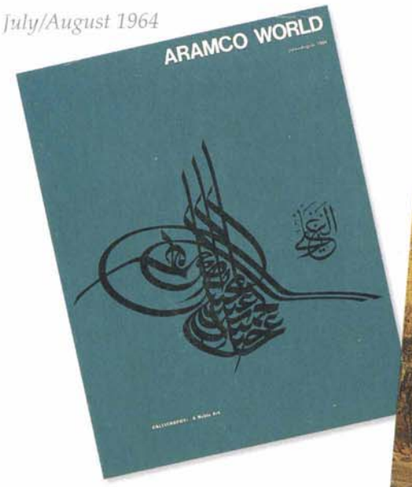
The first Beirut issue, July/August 1964, arrived with a splash: It was the first to be printed in two colors, and was designed by Donald Thompson of MEEPI, who later joined Aramco's public relations staff. It demonstrated Hoye's bright, enthusiastic style and Beirut's sophistication. From this first issue, a frequent visitor to *Aramco World*'s office, located in the same building as the two Aramco subsidiaries, was Shafiq Kombargi of AOC's management. He provided connections, guidance and administrative support then and for the following 35 years, until his retirement last January.

Lebanon provided the magazine a host of contributors—journalists, academics, established authors and bright green freelancers—all eager to make a living and to have a chance to write from a point of view that was unique for an English-language publication: *Aramco World* took the Middle East, Arab culture and Islam as its points of departure, as distinct from the "outsider" viewpoint that characterizes foreign news and feature writing.

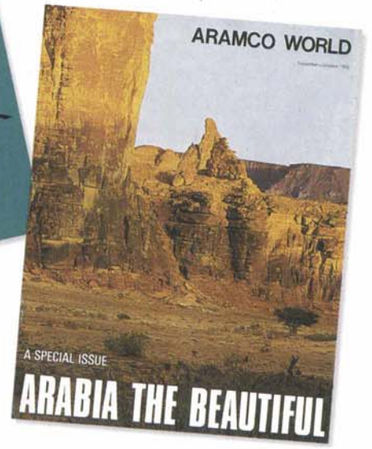
I was teaching English at Beirut's International College when the magazine came to the city, and after contributing an article and photographs to the second "Lebanon issue," I began to mingle and work more with the members of Hoye's loose stable of "regulars." In 1967, when assistant editor Jan van Os returned to practice journalism

There was a host of contributors eager to take the Middle East, Arab culture and Islam as points of departure, as distinct from the "outsider" viewpoint that characterizes foreign reporting and feature writing.

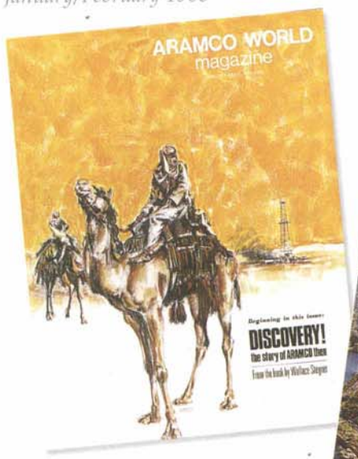
July/August 1964



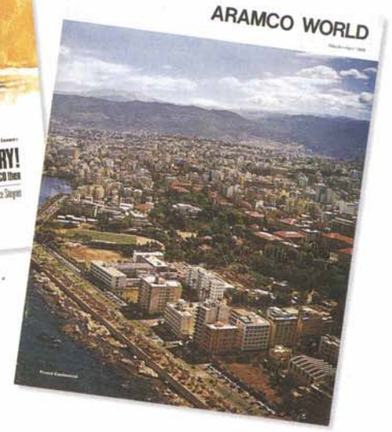
September/October 1965



January/February 1968

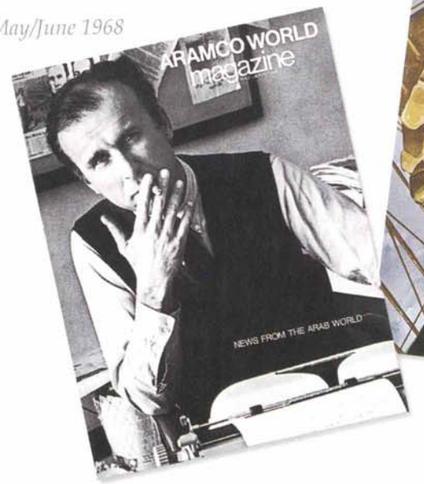


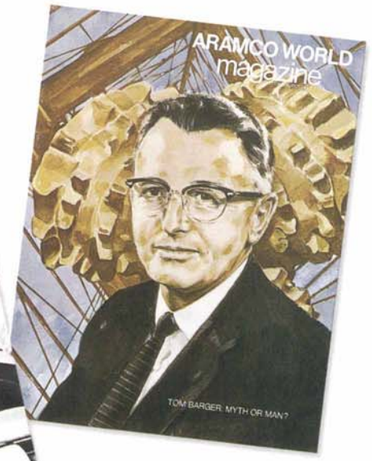
March/April 1966



The first issue of Aramco World *published from Beirut appeared in July/August 1964, and the first four-color issue, filled with photography by Moody, appeared just over a year later, bearing a title intended to catch the attention of American readers.* Aramco World *published Wallace Stegner's novel-like company history "Discovery!" in 14 parts, all illustrated by Donald Thompson. In March/April 1966, Beirut was in its heyday as the capital city whose allure grew with the regional economic boom.*

May/June 1968

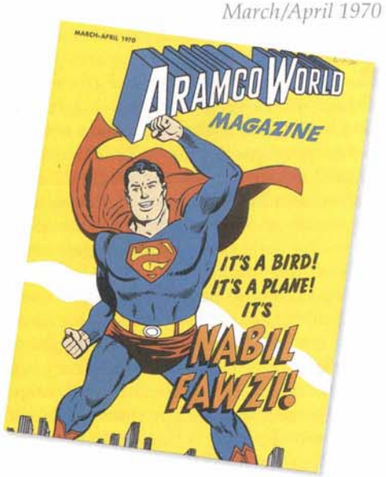




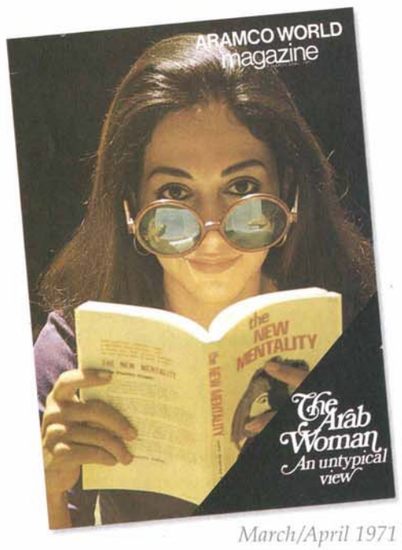
September/October 1969

Joe Alex Morris, Jr., once Aramco World*'s first reporter from Saudi Arabia, was in later times photographed in the Beirut bureau of the* Los Angeles Times *for a cover story. Aramco board chairman Tom Barger had learned Arabic in the desert, working as an exploration geologist in the 1930's. He helped set a tone of cooperation and deep respect for Saudi Arabia's heritage that set Aramco apart from other western companies in an era when one-sided resource exploitation was common.*

March/April 1970



The Arabic adaptation of the comic-book hero Superman landed on Aramco World*'s cover at the beginning of what would later be remembered as "the boom years." The changing roles of women were the subject of a* Life*-sized issue, photographed almost entirely by Katrina Thomas.*



March/April 1971

in his native Holland, Hoye asked if I would like to replace him. It was 10 years since the writer had come to our Ras Tanura home, and I was ecstatic.

Other "regular contributors" from 1964 to 1975 included Daniel da Cruz, a former Marine whose no-nonsense prose delighted ex-newsman Hoye; Burnett Moody, Aramco's globetrotting chief photographer; and United Press International correspondent John Lawton, who later authored several of the magazine's most peripatetic issues, on the Silk Roads and on Muslim communities in China and the USSR. Historian Paul Lunde had, like me, grown up in Saudi Arabia, and was so brimming with ideas that he irritated Hoye by writing at two and three times his assigned length, but his skill at ferreting out little-known aspects of Islamic heritage endeared him no less. Brainerd Bates, who had moved to Dhahran, sent short, pithy pieces, often with a personal flavor. Associated Press writer Elias Antar, today still with the agency in London, was there, as was Joseph Fitchett, now political correspondent of the *International Herald Tribune* in Paris; so was Rami Khouri, who is today an internationally respected commentator in Amman.

Another young writer, Robert Arndt, was the third generation of his family to live and work in Turkey. He submitted his first article from there in 1973, and became a regular. I remember Hoye's frustration editing him, because his articles were so tightly written that changing a phrase on one page could cause paragraphs two pages on to totter. He soon joined Aramco's public-relations staff in Dhahran, and in 1977 traded seats with me to serve for three years as assistant editor. Martin Love succeeded him in that post.

There were photographers, too: Norwegian-born, Mexico-educated Tor Eigeland, who also shot for *National Geographic* and other major magazines; Nik Wheeler, a dashing Englishman now based in Hollywood; and Lebanese-American Robert Azzi, who began every out-of-country assignment with a last-minute, the-taxi's-honking search for his passport, which he never put in the same place twice. John Feeney was a New Zealand-born Canadian filmmaker based in Cairo, where he still resides. New Yorker Katrina Thomas excelled at photographing people, especially women and children, who were more elusive for male photographers. Shaikh Muhammad Amin, a Pakistan-born member of Aramco's public-relations staff in Dhahran, was the one the magazine relied on to photograph in Makkah and Madinah, in company facilities and many other places besides.

For articles that could not be photographed, the magazine turned to artists: Penny Williams-Yaqub sketched and painted light-heartedly, yet with a keen eye for gesture and detail. From his studio near London, Michael Grimsdale rendered historical paintings, and Netherlands-based Norman MacDonald washed watercolors over confident field sketches as a "location artist."

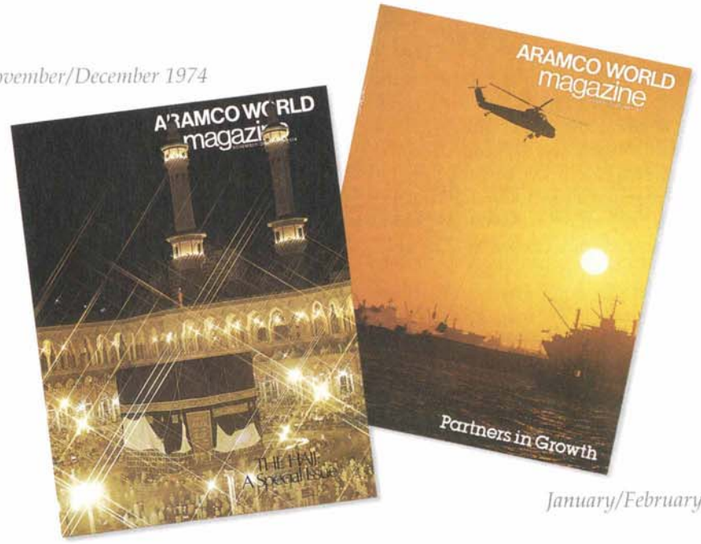
The first four-color cover of *Aramco World* appeared in November/December 1964; I was proud to be assigned to photograph its first four-color feature, on Arab East Jerusalem, in March/April 1965—after which Don Thompson, the designer, told me crisply to buy a new camera: "You need to sharpen your focus!" The first all-color issue was September/October 1965, "Arabia the Beautiful," devoted almost entirely to a journey by Hoye and Moody to the spectacular landscapes and rock-cut Nabataean tombs of Madain Salih in northwestern Saudi Arabia. From then on, black-and-white photography grew increasingly rare in the magazine.

Hoye's style was as bold and ebullient as the boom-times themselves. He liked to draw readers' attentions to single topics, to which he would devote entire issues of *Aramco World*, mixing reportage, interviews and historical perspectives with photographs, illustrations, maps, archival prints and paintings. It was as though he were editor of the news, features, commentary, business, sports, food and entertainment sections of a newspaper all rolled into one bimonthly magazine, and the changes afoot in the Arab world were big enough to warrant such treatment. He surveyed industrial development by sending more than a dozen photographers to as many countries, yet also published "Scenic Arabia," entirely written and photographed by Eigeland. "Arabs in America" was the first of three special issues focusing on the contributions of Arab immigrants to the United States, and for it he produced sketches and photos of Arab-Americans in each of the 50 states. *Aramco World*'s special issue on the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Makkah, had photographs by Amin and articles by Lunde and Ismail Nawwab, a Makkan scholar who had studied at the University of Edinburgh and taught at Kuala Lumpur, along with a personal account by American Muslim Michael Jansen, who made the Hajj with her husband and small daughter. Hoye's enthusiasm came out again in 1971's "The Arab Woman" and 1972's "Sports in the Arab World," *Life*-sized issues that looked spectacular but stymied the growing number of readers who bound their *Aramco World* issues for their personal libraries.

But not long after that Lebanon's civil war began, and that changed everything in "the Paris of the Middle East." By the end of 1975, it became clear that *Aramco World* could no longer be published and distributed from there. In the fall of that year, Hoye went to the Netherlands to set up operations in The Hague, where AOC's European offices were located. The network of writers and artists established in Beirut served the magazine well, thanks in part to improvements in international communications, and over the next few years *Aramco World* was designed and printed by a number of firms in both Holland and across the Channel in England.

Hoye continued to love single-topic issues and special sections: John Sabini, an Aramco writer who had retired to England, helped prepare an issue on London's 1976 "World of Islam Festival"; Tor Eigeland, then living in Spain, wrote and photographed "Islam in Al-Andalus" and, with Lawton, covered the long-haul trucking trade between Europe and the Arab world in an issue titled "Truckers East." "Muslims in Europe" portrayed the trials and triumphs of Turkish and North African immigrants in France, Holland and Germany; "Arab Aid" showed how the oil-producing nations of the Arabian Gulf region were

November/December 1974

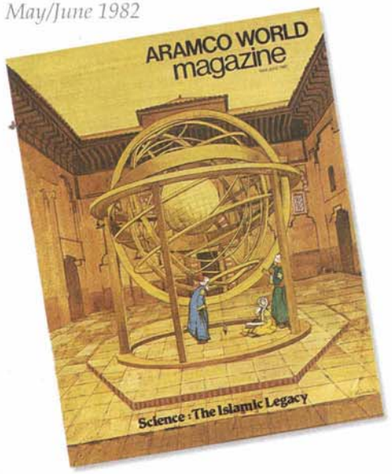


January/February 1977

By the end of 1975, Aramco World *could no longer be published from Beirut, and operations were moved to the Netherlands.*

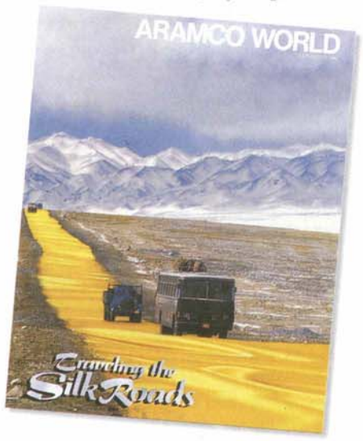
Single-topic issues gave Aramco World *the room to explore a chosen subject in a breadth unavailable to most commercial magazines. Above, a special issue helped readers understand the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Makkah; another explored the rapidly expanding economic ties between Saudi Arabia and the United States. The three issues below, all single-topic publications, remain among* Aramco World*'s most frequently requested back issues.*

May/June 1982



September/October 1986

July/August 1988

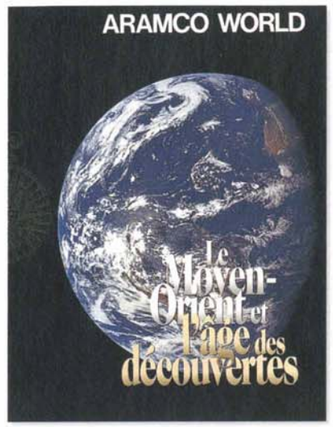


devoting large percentages of their national incomes to development projects throughout Asia and Africa. From Cairo, a young journalist on a fellowship at the American University, Arthur Clark, began sending in material in 1977, and kept doing so as he moved on to Iowa and Ireland. Aramco hired him to write in Dhahran, where he produced much of a special section on solar energy. He has continued ever since to turn in charming, carefully crafted articles on a remarkably wide range of topics.

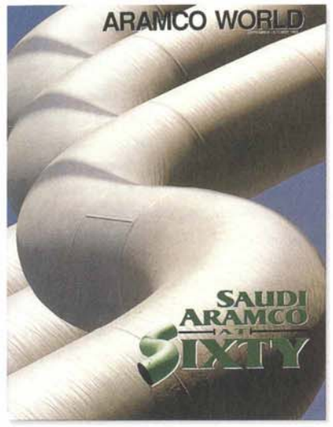
Although the company received its share of attention in the magazine's pages, it was by then a well-established tradition that *Aramco World* wrote about the oil industry or Aramco itself only when the story was of interest to its general readership—as in the early 1980's when Aramco completed the Master Gas System, the nationwide effort that allowed Saudi Arabia to finally exploit its vast natural gas resources. The 50th anniversary of the search for Saudi Arabian oil also earned a special issue in May/June 1984 because, as Hoye explained, "We are also celebrating another story: how the sons and grandsons of a developing society came to operate and manage the largest oil producing company in history."

Saudi Arabia and the Arab world were changing, and so was the rest of the world. China opened its doors, and a special issue, "Muslims in China," appeared in March/April 1985, the result of a trip of more than 5000 kilometers (3000 mi) inside China by Lawton, his Turkish-speaking wife and Wheeler.

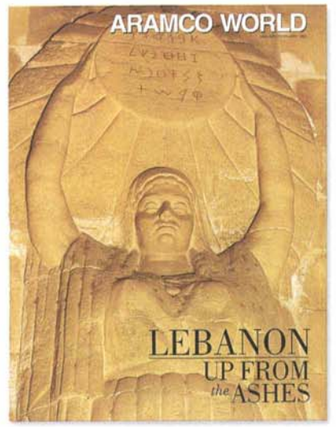
May/June 1992



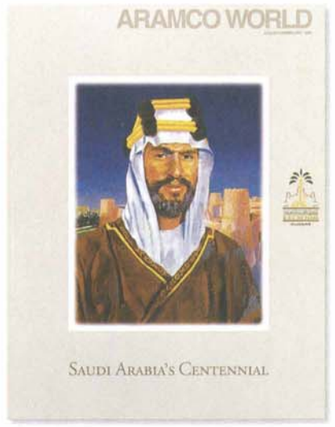
September/October 1993



January/February 1994



January/February 1999



Historian Paul Lunde's "The Middle East and the Age of Discovery" was translated into French, German and Spanish for distribution at a world's fair; other issues of the magazine have been distributed variously in Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese and Korean during the 1990's. Aramco World's cover story on the company's 60th anniversary reflected on the broad changes that Aramco and Saudi Aramco had seen—and helped bring about—in Saudi Arabia. Lebanon's gradual recovery from civil war inspired a hopeful cover at the beginning of 1994. The largest special issue of Aramco World, commemorating the centennial of the beginning of Saudi Arabia's unification, ran 116 pages and featured cover art—a portrait of the young King 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud—by veteran illustrator Norman MacDonald.

Aramco World *was no longer alone as an intercultural voice; yet its point of view was still unique, neither entirely American nor entirely Arab.*

I last met with my friend Paul Hoye in the spring of 1986. I was freelancing and teaching in Santa Barbara, California when he dropped in for a night. He talked enthusiastically about a printing press he had just visited in Los Angeles, and asked me to fly to Vancouver in May to cover the Saudi and other Middle Eastern pavilions at Expo '86. It was a great assignment—I worked with my Beirut friend Wheeler and photographed Princess Diana when she visited the Saudi pavilion—but before the article ran in the July/August issue I learned that Hoye had multiple melanoma and only weeks to live.

He spent most of that time at his desk in the Netherlands, editing the last of his sweeping special issues, "The Arab Immigrants," pegged to the centennial of the Statue of Liberty. As it went to press, Hoye died at age 59. Ismail Nawwab, by then Aramco's general manager of public affairs, wrote of Hoye that he had brought to the magazine "a deep and heartfelt determination to light a candle of understanding that would help to illumine the world of the Arabs and Islam for the eyes of the English-speaking West." Nawwab's tribute, printed on the last page of Hoye's last issue, concluded, "Paul Hoye's life is now extinguished. The beautiful candle that he lit still burns."

Old-timers Lawton, Lunde and others kept the magazine going for a few months until Aramco tapped Robert Arndt to succeed Hoye. But the magazine's days in the Netherlands were numbered: The advent of the fax machine made it possible to send layouts across the ocean. Transatlantic shipping costs had increased while *Aramco World*'s US circulation had grown, and Aramco decided to return the magazine to the United States and base it with another subsidiary, Aramco Services Company, in Houston, Texas. There, old Beirut hand Shafiq Kombargi was director of public affairs.

The January/February 1987 issue was the first with Arndt's name on the masthead as editor. By May/June, the magazine was being printed in the United States, although it continued to be designed until 1994 by Peter Keenan in London. Arndt's experience in Turkey was reflected in a spring cover story on the book collections of Istanbul's Topkapı Palace. More special issues appeared on cultural subjects, reflecting Arndt's orientation: Saudi Arabian traditional arts; "Flavors of the Middle East," devoted to cuisine; and, continuing the magazine's far-flung coverage, "Traveling the Silk Roads" in July/August 1988, which drew on extensive contributions from Lawton, Lunde, Eigeland and Wheeler. The cover was another production milestone: It showed a bus driving across the Asian steppe atop a highway that had been electronically "paved" with a bolt of shimmering yellow silk.

In 1988, a royal decree established the Saudi Arabian Oil Company to take over the responsibilities of Aramco, whose assets the Saudi government had gradually purchased from the company's shareholders. The acronym *Aramco* no longer fit, of course, but it was too familiar—and embodied too good a reputation—to drop, so the new company was given the parenthetical name "Saudi Aramco." Over the years, Saudi employees had assumed virtually all the company's managerial positions and most supervisory jobs, and the expatriate work force had been declining from its peak numbers of the 1970's and 1980's.

At the same time, interest in the countries of the Middle East had increased in the West. In the United States this was evidenced by the flourishing of language, culture and history courses and degrees at universities throughout the country. As an intercultural resource, *Aramco World* was no longer alone. Yet its point of view was still unique, neither American nor Arab, and there was still ample work to be done as Saudi Aramco's operations became increasingly global, and the degree of public understanding that would constitute a favorable business climate, although greater than in the past, was still lacking in many respects.

The early 1990's brought several one-subject issues of note: "Muslims in the USSR," (January/February 1990), took advantage of *glasnost'* to look at the six Islamic republics of the southern USSR shortly before the latter's breakup the next year. "Islam's Path East" (November/December 1991) traced the spread of Islam from its Arabian heartland to the East Indies and the Orient; "The Middle East and the Age of Discovery" (May/June 1992) was written entirely by Paul Lunde, pegged to the quincentenary of Columbus's landfall in today's Dominican Republic. That issue explored the "intellectual spark ...kindled in the East" that underpinned the voyages of Portugal's and Spain's westbound adventurers.

In Houston, several assistant editors moved through between 1988 and 1994: George Smalley's stint ended with his move to public relations for a new Saudi Aramco–Texaco joint venture, while David Kaiser and Robert Lebling both left the masthead to join Saudi Aramco's public relations staff in Dhahran. Even I held the post for a few months, for the second time in my life—a brief reprise of my days in Beirut and Hague.

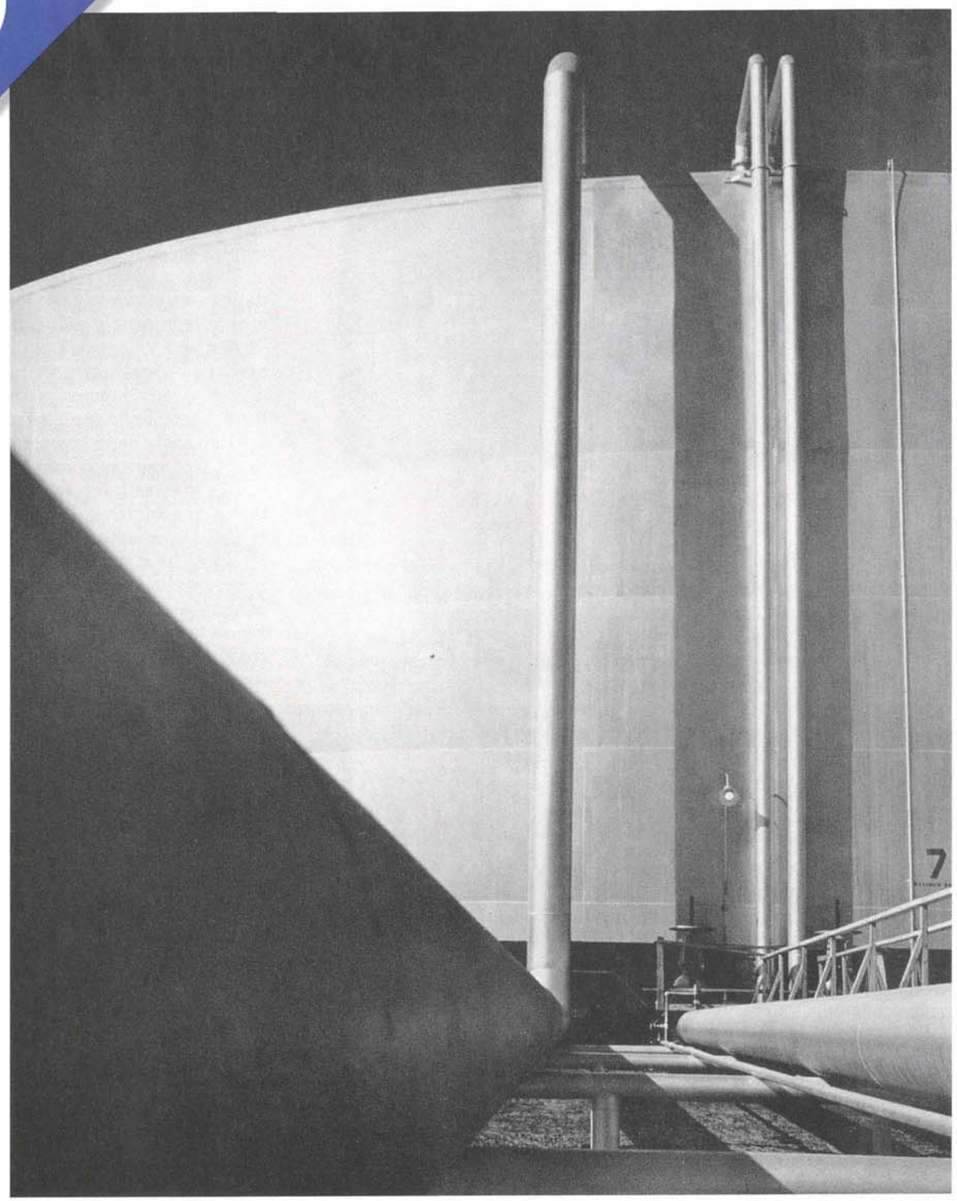
Dick Doughty's byline first appeared in the magazine over his coverage of a thundering off-road rally across the Egyptian desert in 1989. He was based in Cairo, ironically on a six-month internship named for the late Joe Alex Morris, Jr., who had served Aramco, and later the *Los Angeles Times*, from Beirut. Four years later, his master's degree in hand, Doughty headed back to the Middle East, where he and a Palestinian social worker wrote and photographed *Gaza: Legacy of Occupation*, a book on daily life in the Gaza Strip. In 1994, he brought a fresh and professional photographic eye to the assistant editor's post.

That same year, *Aramco World* brought its design and printing services to Houston, where it is now produced by Herring Design and Wetmore and Company. It is perhaps a final irony that although the magazine was a more apparently international operation in the 1960's and 1970's, it is today really more global than ever, as its list of contributors is ever more far-flung, thanks to e-mail, fax and courier services that allow material to be sent easily to Houston from almost anywhere.

Throughout the past decade, Arndt has recognized that *Aramco World* is frequently used by researchers and educators, and so annual indexes of contents and contributors, compiled cumulatively every five years, have become standard. "Events & Exhibitions," the magazine's only regular "department," offers a list of such presentations and displays at museums around the world. "Suggestions for Reading" is also annual, featuring brief reviews of noteworthy books of interest to *Aramco World* readers. For the future, construction is under way on a website, at www.aramcoworld.com, that promises to open to more readers than ever before what *Aramco World* has presented for the past 50 years—a *makhzan*, a storehouse of knowledge, ever fuller.

On its golden anniversary, *Aramco World*'s still shares its stores, and stories, with its 180,000 subscribers around the world every two months—and I'm happy that you have picked up this issue to share them too.

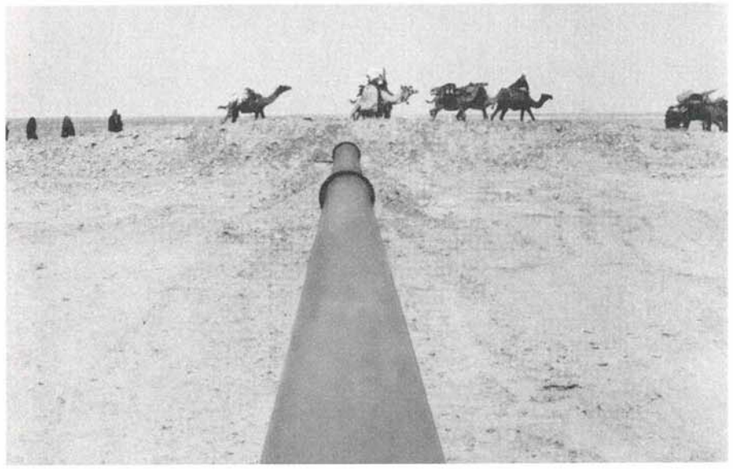
In 1967 William Tracy was Aramco World*'s assistant editor in Beirut. He has written 48 articles for* Aramco World *since 1964, almost half of them illustrated with his own photographs. He now edits* Al-Ayyam Al-Jamilah, *or* Pleasant Days, *a magazine for Aramco's and Saudi Aramco's retired employees—a group he plans to join next summer.*



"Designs in Oil," April 1953 — *Photographer unknown*

"The pipeline cuts an interesting angle as it runs up to the gleaming oil tank and then neatly scales it. The location is an Aramco tank farm."

The article featured six photographic interpretations of oil-related structures: "Twentieth-century industry has introduced a new art form in Saudi Arabia. Today, arabesques with their traditional floral and geometric patterns are sharing the spotlight with bizarre shapes.... The average oilman, accustomed to working with the fantastic shapes of the machinery he uses, probably sees no more art in them than the average New Yorker perceives in his city's skyline. Nevertheless, in oil operations there exists an unconscious and uncontrived art."



April 1952 — *Photographer unknown*

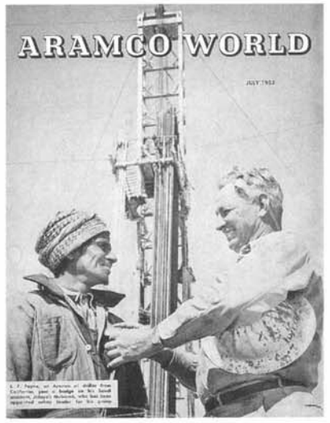
"Always on the move are the nomadic Bedouins. Here is one of their caravans crossing the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line via a conveniently graded sand ramp."

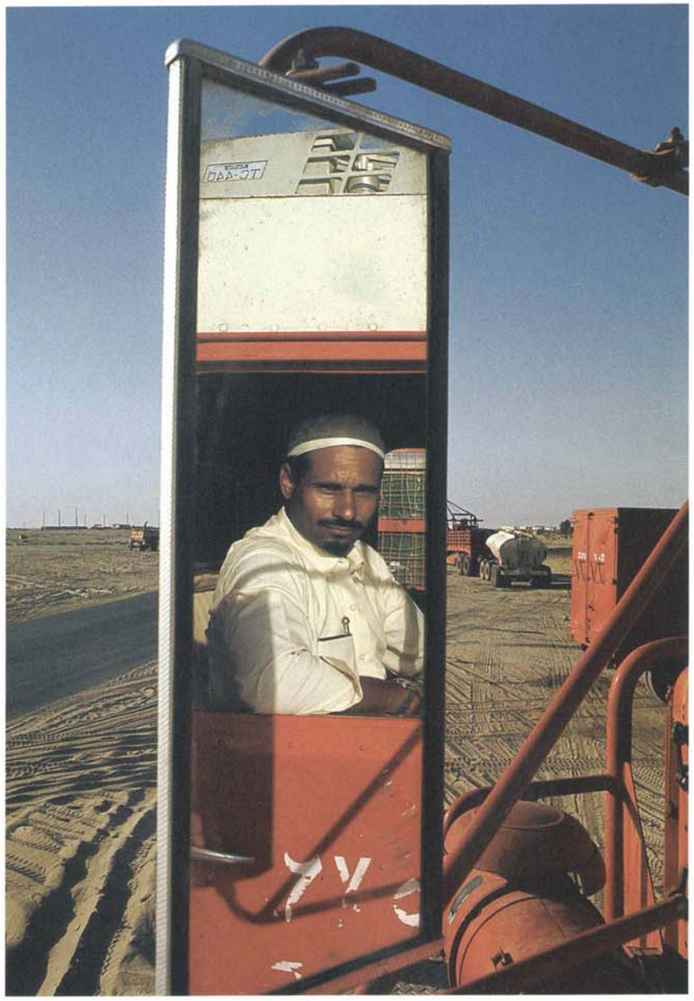
Completed in 1950, the Trans-Arabian Pipe Line, called Tapline, crossed 1729 kilometers (1067 mi) of desert to link the new oilfields of Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province with the Mediterranean. It remained fully in use until the early 1970's, when the development of ultra-large tankers made ocean shipment of oil, even around the Arabian Peninsula, a more economical alternative.

Grading sand ramps over pipelines, like building piers, or drilling water wells for the Bedouins' flocks, was among the ancillary activities Aramco undertook from the company's earliest days to make its presence in Saudi Arabia welcome to ordinary Saudi citizens.

"Safety Comes First in Saudi Arabia," July 1953 — *Probably T.F. Walters*

This cover image may seem condescending to present-day sensibilities, but it illuminates both the cooperative spirit that Saudis and Americans brought to the early years of Aramco's venture, and the cultural differences they faced. The supervisor is from California, the locus of the post-World War II "American dream"; transplanted to Saudi Arabia, he and his colleagues contributed to the vast changes that took place in the kingdom. The Saudi driller, identified as Jidayah Mubarak, is receiving a company safety award. It is quite possible that Mubarak's children were the first of his family to attend formal schools, for in 1952 Aramco began to build schools, operated by the Saudi government, for the children of its Saudi employees. Those children may today be managing Saudi Aramco departments or working in any of thousands of business and cultural enterprises.





"Convoy to Nowhere," May/June 1969 — *Tor Eigeland*

Maintaining exploration teams in the deep desert was a logistical challenge that Aramco met with motor convoys. From Dhahran to the Rub' al-Khali exploration camp was an eight-day trip by Kenworth truck, at an average speed of 37 kilometers (23 mi) an hour. The convoy consisted of nine tractor-trailers, each fueled with 2000 liters (530 gal) of diesel, and four Dodge Power Wagons. One trailer carried a bulldozer, whose exclusive role it was to extract other vehicles from "sticky patches." One of the Power Wagons carried several live sheep, which were butchered and eaten along the way.

Author Daniel da Cruz wrote: "Anyone can steer a truck down an asphalted highway, but it is a different matter to navigate among the dunes, without map or compass, landmark or guidepost, and hit the next rendezvous unfailingly.... Among the Bedouins, this type of desert detection is often the margin between life and death.... As we rolled out of the dunes onto the flat brown plain, our pace grew hotter, along with the rays of the sun.... Suwayyan Mas'ud, inured to Saudi Arabian summers, ...didn't bother to turn on the air conditioner, nor did I want to appear effete by suggesting it. And so, until shortly before the sun set at five o'clock, I had seven idle hours to regret my timidity and to catalog the joys of desert travel: skin that shrivels to that of an exhumed mummy in the baking seat, eyeballs that ache and twitch from the blazing glare, lungs that rasp with dust so fine and penetrating that it seeps even into bottles with tops tightly screwed down, cracked lips, thirst that clutches at the throat five minutes after it has been slaked,... ear drums ringing from the howl of the diesel engine, a brain that as the day went on slowly emptied itself of all but the numbed perception of animal discomfort."

"Jounieh: Jewel of Lebanon" March/April 1968 — *Tor Eigeland*

"Along the new expressway cars sweep down in a graceful curve onto the narrow strip of coast between the mountain and the sea. To the left a small, picturesque town of stone houses, arched windows and red tile roofs straggles off along a curving beach. To the right, nearly 2,000 feet above the town and the bay, soars the precipitous wall, ...a half bowl of rugged cliffs and forested mountains clutching the shimmering bay like the prongs of a Tiffany setting." The view from Jounieh's cable car included a Roman and a modern bridge and, to the south, all of Beirut, then "the Paris of the Middle East." The spell cast by that city on Aramco World's *staff long outlasted the magazine's 10 years there.*

"Istanbul: Queen of Cities," January/February 1970 — *Tor Eigeland*

A hand-knotted portrait of John F. Kennedy in a Covered Bazaar carpet shop is frankly tourist fodder, but in the pages of Aramco World *it does double duty. On one level, this is simply a photograph about the tourist industry in Turkey; on another, it presents the magazine's readers with something familiar within the unfamiliar: "See,* they *remember* JFK *just as we do." Connections as simple as this can sometimes open a door to greater understanding.*

"The Hajj: A Special Issue"
November/December 1974 *S. M. Amin*

For this 44-page theme issue, the editorial introduction stated: "For nearly 14 centuries the Hajj has been one of the most impressive religious gatherings in the world, yet to this day few Westerners have more than a vague appreciation of the importance of the Hajj to the Muslim world and virtually no understanding of its rituals.... Muslim writers, while faithful to the spirit of Islam, sometimes overlooked Western insistence on facts, figures and explanation; and Western writers, while faithful to the spirit of objective observation, usually failed to grasp Islam's deeper meanings. For this issue on the Hajj, therefore, the editors chose and assigned several contributors whose religious, cultural, national and professional backgrounds tended to overcome the limitations that have so often affected other efforts to explain Islam to the West. Ismail Ibrahim Nawwab is a Saudi born in Makkah, who earned his degrees and later lectured at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. Paul Lunde is an American who grew up in Saudi Arabia, spent three years at the London School of Oriental and African Studies and has since specialized in Islamic studies. Shaikh Muhammad Amin is a Pakistani Muslim who has made the Hajj as both pilgrim and photographer. Above all, there is Michael Elin Jansen, a woman, an American brought up in an Episcopalian family who, after years of study and contemplation, adopted Islam."

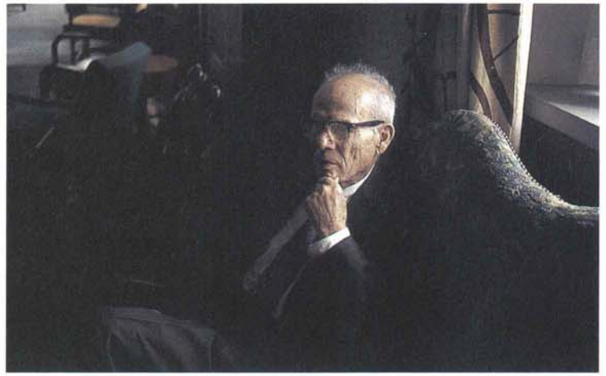
"The Not-So-Empty Quarter," January/February 1975 *Tor Eigeland*

This issue, "Scenic Arabia," covered all of Saudi Arabia, and was written and photographed exclusively by Eigeland. Here, he photographed lines of camels belonging to the al-Murrah Bedouins, moving north to a region of recent rains near the Kuwait border. This and other photographs from Eigeland's once-in-a-lifetime assignment are still popular images in Aramco World*'s archive.*

"It had been four years since my last visit. I was standing in the domestic wing of Dhahran's handsome airport when the airline representative walked over and explained apologetically that there would be an hour's delay. I decided to cross to the international wing to wait in the coffee shop there. Without thinking, I placed my camera bag on the floor and strolled over to the international terminal. Half an hour later, I returned.... Suddenly what I had done struck me.... In any other airport in the world, I wouldn't have let that bag out of my sight for a second. I decided then and there that the articles I had come back to write must reflect the special affection I have for Saudi Arabia. Although it can be a difficult and frustrating place to photograph...there is much more to be said. It seemed important to point out that Saudi Arabia is a country of warm, generous human beings who, under the leadership of the House of Sa'ud, have managed to build in severe natural conditions a prosperous society."

Eigeland, a native of Norway, was educated in Mexico and came to Beirut in his 20's because he "thought there would be lots of action there, workwise." He found it, landing assignments not only from Aramco World *but also from* Time, Fortune, Newsweek *and* National Geographic. *"*Aramco World *was great in that [editor] Paul Hoye gave me the time I needed."*

"A Talk with Philip Hitti" July/August 1971 *Elizabeth Starkey*



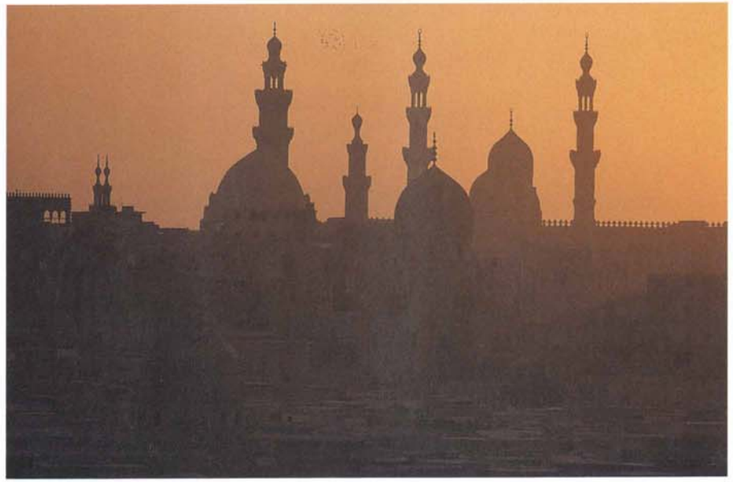
Author of the landmark 1937 History of the Arabs, *Hitti is also widely recognized as "the father of Middle East studies" in the United States. He spent 20 years working to persuade Princeton University to open a program in Arab studies, and his eventual success paved the way for colleges and universities across the country to follow suit. He characterized his struggle: "'Teach Arabic? Why should we teach Arabic? Harvard doesn't teach Arabic. Yale doesn't. Why should we?' 'Because,' I said, 'there are 500 million Muslims and 100 million of them speak Arabic. We have to deal with them and understand them.'"*

"A Greening in the Arab East," November/December 1972 *Nik Wheeler*

Ripening grain stripes the floor of Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Despite the rapid industrialization of the Middle East, in 1970 agriculture occupied nearly two-thirds of the region's work force. As governments looked at population projections and the limited available agricultural land—only about 20 percent of the Middle East is arable—they teamed up with international experts to introduce new strains and new crops to meet new demands, in the spirit of the "green revolution" then occurring throughout the world. Joseph Fitchett, now the Pulitzer-nominated political correspondent of the International Herald Tribune, *reported that durum wheats were introduced; corn yields were raised by 70 percent with hybrid strains; ancient millet and sorghum varieties were revived; and new strains of rice, adapted to the region, came into use.*

"Foundations: A Decade of Development," November/December 1982 *S. M. Amin*

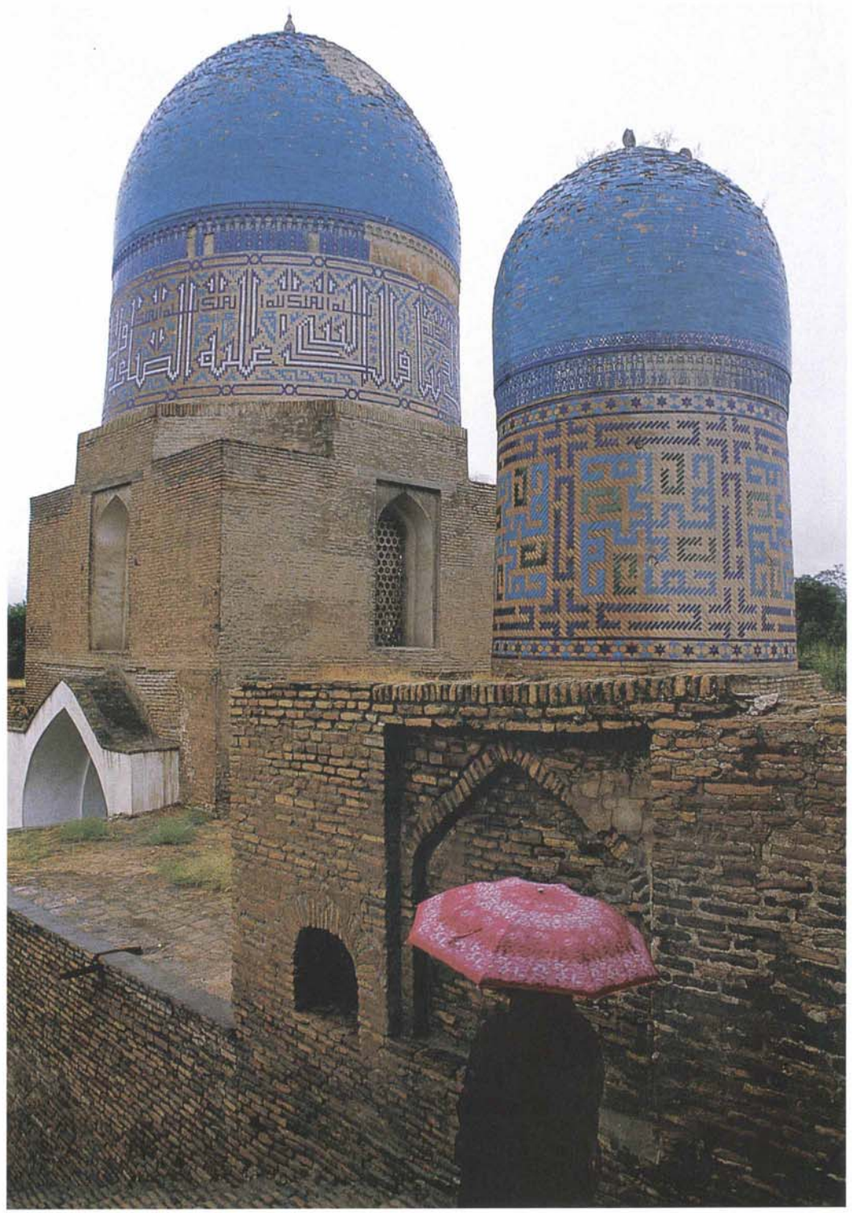
The Qurayyah seawater injection plant was part of the conservative, long-term underpinning of Saudi Arabia's "don't-waste-a-minute," large-scale industrial drive toward economic diversification in the 1970's and early 1980's. Seawater injection maximized the amount of oil that could be recovered over the decades-long lifetime of the fields where it was applied; it also conserved the kingdom's precious groundwater resources. The push to establish a broader-based economy involved—among much else—the construction in only a few years of the industrial cities of Jubail and Yanbu' on the coasts of Saudi Arabia, each city home to multiple major industries and each a project comparable in scope to the construction of the Panama Canal. "No one article, or even a series of articles, can really capture the scope and magnitude of such unprecedented change; it defies both pen and camera," wrote the editors. But in this single-subject issue, they did their best.



"The Minarets of Cairo," November/December 1985 *John Feeney*

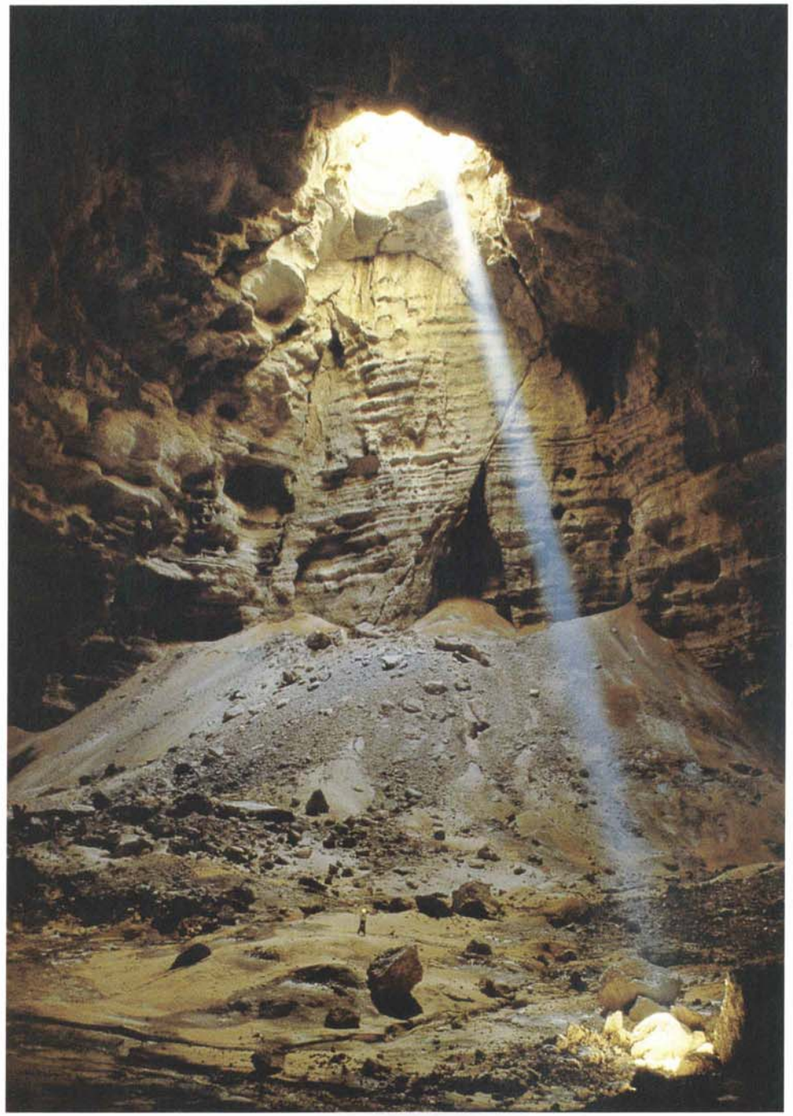
*Blending reverence and craftsmanship, unknown masons through the centuries have fashioned one of the world's most beautiful skylines in "*madinat al-alf midhana*," or "the city of a thousand minarets." Author and photographer John Feeney wrote, "The minaret was built higher than the surrounding buildings [so the] voice of the muezzin could float out over the rooftops.... It begins, often, with a deep-throated call from the al-Hakim mosque. Then it is joined by a high falsetto from nearby Quluan's and is followed by a distant echo floating down from the heights of the Citadel. Rising and falling, the chant grows quickly in volume until a whole chorus envelops the city."*

Feeney, a New Zealand-born Canadian filmmaker, had already lived in Cairo for more than two decades in 1985, giving both the city he had adopted and the many articles he wrote and photographed for Aramco World *the most minute and loving attention.*



"Traveling the Silk Roads: The Golden Road," July/August 1988 *Tor Eigeland*

For a special issue on the Silk Roads, long segments of which had been inaccessible to travelers for most of this century, Aramco World *availed itself of the advent of* glasnost' *in the Soviet Union and sent a writer and photographers on two journeys, over a period of four years, that covered the route almost entirely, from Istanbul to Beijing. In Samarkand (now in Uzbekistan), rain greeted Eigeland and writer John Lawton. "But even leaden skies failed to dim the luster of the thousands of blue-glazed tiles with which Tamerlane, lord of Asia from the Great Wall to the Urals, covered his capital," Lawton wrote.*



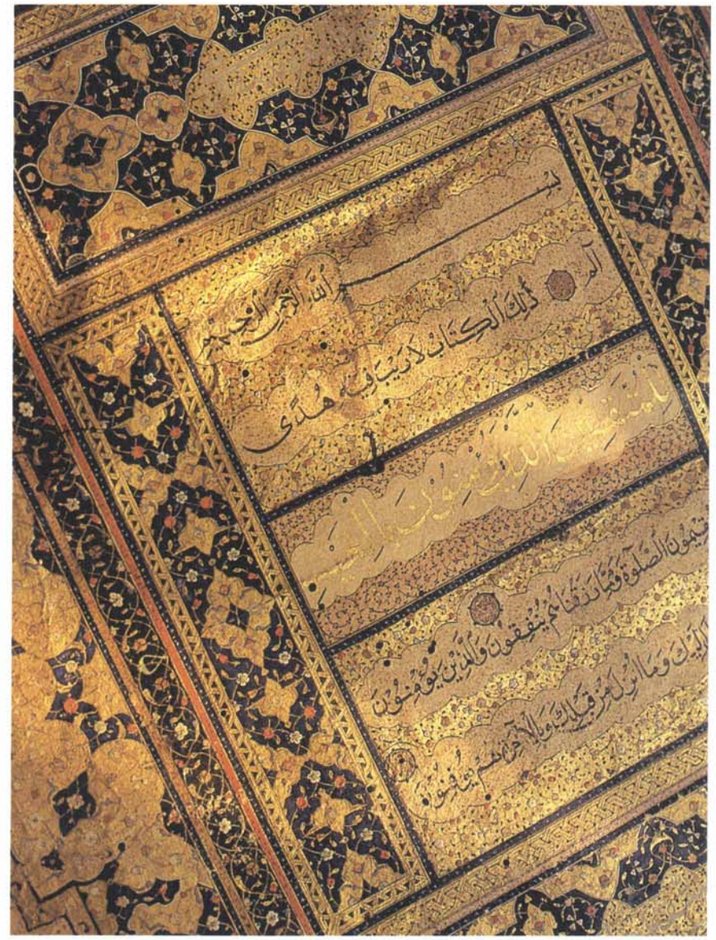
"Meeting Place of the Spirits," September/October 1990 — *Don Davison, Jr.*

The title of the article—one of the natural-history stories that have been a hallmark of Aramco World*'s coverage since its earliest issues—is a translation of* majlis al-jinn*, the name given to a stadium-sized cave discovered in northeastern Oman by the photographer and author. At that time, it was the largest known subterranean chamber on the Arabian Peninsula and the second-largest in the world, formed in the limestone of the Dammam formation during a pluvial period 40 to 50 million years ago. Of the longest free-fall cave drop in the Arabian Peninsula, Davison wrote: "As I began rappelling downward toward the black silence of the cavern, the glare and hot wind on the plateau were immediately forgotten. The bright orange rappelling rope, hanging free in space, disappeared toward the dim floor.... Five awe-filled minutes after leaving the surface, I landed.... I unclipped the rope feeling somewhat disoriented; ...my sense of scale could not immediately accommodate such huge distances being under a roof." Davison was a hydrogeologist in the Ministry of Water Resources in Muscat. Several years after publishing this article, he went missing while on a climbing expedition in Chile, and is presumed to have perished.*

"A Hidden Treasure" November/December 1993 — *Dick Doughty*

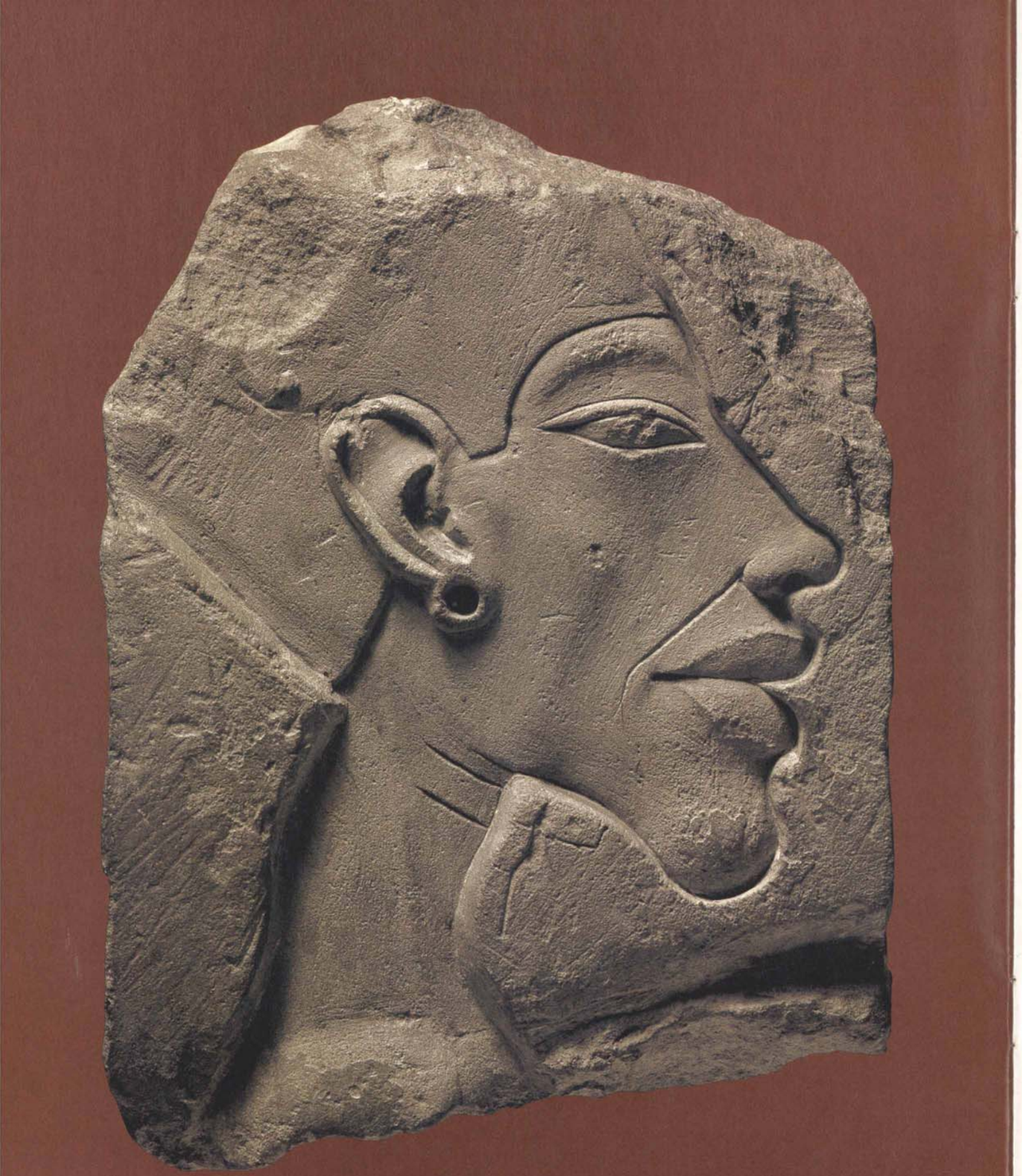
Sunlight re-gilds a 17th-century Ottoman copy of the Qur'an, one of the treasures of the Khalidi Library in Jerusalem. The Khalidi family has furnished Jerusalem with learned scholars, jurists, administrators and diplomats since before 1187, and has accumulated one of the largest and finest private collections of Islamic manuscripts in the Arab world.

Dick Doughty, who joined Aramco World *as assistant editor in 1994, photographed in the Khalidi Library specifically for the magazine, but* Aramco World *has, since its earliest issues, presented readers examples of a broad range of Islamic arts, often using images lent by museums, libraries, archives and private collections around the world.*



"A Heritage Without Boundaries," May/June 1996 — *David H. Wells*

Composer, conductor, impresario, aficionado of intercultural jam sessions and virtuoso performer on both the Western violin and the Arab 'ud*, Simon Shaheen embodies a uniquely modern confluence of East and West, past and present. He came to New York in 1980, after broad training in both Arab and Western classical music while growing up in his native Galilee, and he has remained in the city since, gathering acclaim from critics across the musical spectrum. Wells photographed him as Shaheen conducted at the two-day Mahrajan Al-Fan (Festival of Art) in New York, a celebration of Arab-rooted traditional arts that Shaheen helped to realize.*



BOTTOM AND OPPOSITE: ÄGYPTISCHES MUSEUM, BERLIN; TOP: BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON

Correspondence in Clay

Among some 380 Amarna Letters known to exist is this one from a king of Mitanni—now northern Syria—a long-time ally of Egypt. ***Below:*** *In addition to its legacy of letters, the Amarna Period left an artistic legacy as well: a radical departure from 1500 years of iconographic idealism in favor of naturalism, exemplified in this relief of Nefertiti and Akhenaten holding three of their daughters under the life-giving rays of the sun-god Aten.* ***Opposite:*** *A profile of Akhenaten demonstrates the exaggerated realism of the early Amarna Period.*

Written by Barbara Ross

Photographs courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

"I am going to have a house-warming," read the invitation. "Come yourself to eat and drink with me. Twenty-five women and 25 men shall be in attendance." The party favor promised was "10 wooden chariots and 10 teams of horses"—a lavish gift by ordinary standards, but this invitation was from royalty. It was sent some 3500 years ago by Kadasman-Enlil, king of Babylonia, to Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV), pharaoh of Egypt. The message was inscribed on a pillow-shaped clay tablet, small enough to be carried easily in one hand or slipped into a satchel.

The letter was one of hundreds uncovered in the late 1800's, when a peasant woman rummaging through the ruins of Akhetaten, an ancient city near modern-day Tell El-Amarna, came across a cache of small clay tablets covered with unfamiliar script. She took several to a merchant, who immediately purchased them. Word of the tablets spread quickly, and in a short time the site was buzzing with local residents, each hoping to find something of marketable value. The hoard was excavated, and most pieces were sold to the highest bidders. Today there are about 380 significant texts scattered among private collectors, antique dealers and museums, mostly in Egypt and Europe, and collectively these clay-tablet texts are known as the Amarna Letters.

The letters, which cover approximately three decades, hold a particular fascination because their place in Egyptian history is unique. They begin late in the reign of Amenhotep III and end during the first year of the reign of Tutankhamen; in between they cover the entire 17-year reign of Akhenaten, whose rule between 1353 and 1336 BC was perhaps the most dynamic and far-reaching in its effects of any reign in any of the 30 or so Egyptian dynasties that ruled over the course of 3000 years. Often referred to as the "heretic king," Akhenaten was the first Egyptian king to worship a single deity. (See Aramco World, September/October 1994.) He forbade the worship of multiple gods, and he directed an entire society to worship one supreme being represented by the sun, which he referred to as "Aten." With his wife, Nefertiti, and their young daughters, the royal family moved from Thebes, the capital of Egypt, to a palatial city he had built along the east bank of the Nile some 300 kilometers (185 mi) to the north. He named his city Akhetaten ("Horizon of Aten"), and today it is known as Amarna.

Politically, Egypt was at its zenith, the most powerful kingdom the world had known, dominating the lesser empires of Babylonia, Assyria, Khatti, Mitanni and Alashiya (Cyprus), and the provinces of Syria, Palestine, Canaan and Kush. The Amarna Letters were diplomatic correspondence between the pharaoh and the rulers of these lands, or the vassals who governed towns and cities under Egyptian control.

Each letter observed a protocol, and in doing so it eloquently expressed the relationship of the sender with the Egyptian court—generally, in fact, with the pharaoh himself. John Huehnergard, professor of Near Eastern language and civilization at Harvard University, explains that the language of brotherhood and love so common in the letters "is meant sincerely, because it was also code for diplo-

Maya, seated at right next to his wife Meryt, was a high official during the three reigns that followed Akhenaten's. This funerary depiction, sculpted several decades after the close of the Amarna Period, shows traces of Amarna-inspired naturalism dominated by the cool, traditional monumentality to which post-Amarna art returned. Akhenaten's successors returned the capital to Thebes and attempted to erase his religious legacy.

matic relations. 'Brothers' were allies, and to 'love' one's brother was to be in a treaty relationship with the other king."

After a flurry of courteous salutations, most letters included a plea for money, gifts or military troops. This is a typical introduction: "Say to Nimmureya [Akhenaten], the king of Egypt, my brother, my son-in-law, whom I love and who loves me: Thus Tushratta, the king of Mitanni, your father-in-law, who loves you, your brother. For me all goes well. For you may all go well. For your household, for your wives, for your sons, for your magnates, for your chariots, for your horses, for your warriors, for your country and whatever else belongs to you, may all go very, very well."

The meat of the letter would quickly follow. In this case, Tushratta announced that he was sending one of his mistresses as a gift to the pharaoh. "She has become very mature, and she has been fashioned according to my brother's [Akhenaten's] desire. And, furthermore, my brother will note that the greeting gift that I shall present is greater than any before."

The letters were dispatched by messengers who were members of each monarch's council. When these emissaries were required to travel through unwelcoming territories, where they risked thieves, thugs and political enemies, their job was difficult—but so it might be once they arrived, too: Occasionally a messenger from abroad would be held by the pharaoh himself. In another letter, Tushratta complains of this problem:

"Previously, my father would send a messenger to you, and you would not detain him for long. You quickly sent him off, and you would also send here to my father a beautiful greeting-gift. But now when I sent a messenger to you, you have detained him for six years, and you have sent me as my greeting-gift, the only thing in six years, 30 minas of gold that looked like silver."

This testy passage is startling considering that Akhenaten was the richest and most powerful man in the world, for it implies that the Mitanni king was offended by a gift of what he suspected was counterfeit or debased gold. However, Tushratta and his father had maintained an unusually close relationship with Akhenaten's father and grandfather. The Mitanni, in western Mesopotamia, were among Egypt's most important allies, and several princesses had been sent as brides to marry Akhenaten and his father, Amenhotep III. A kinship evolved between the rulers that elevated Tushratta above the role of a mere ally, and the terms of endearment in the letters to him were probably more than matters of protocol.

The written word of the time was cuneiform, a type of writing that had spread from Mesopotamia beginning in the third millennium BC, and was used to write several languages at different times and places. The Amarna Letters are mostly written in Old Babylonian, itself a dialect of Akkadian, a spoken and written language that developed in the city of Akkad, now in Iraq. At the time the letters were written, Old Babylonian had become infused with West Semitic and Egyptian words, and it had become the common regional language that unified international relations and trade, a *lingua franca*.

Because written tablets often carried political and commercial communications, their production was important business, and from the evidence in scenes etched on tomb walls, the scribes who wrote them enjoyed high status. Each country outside Assyria and Babylon, where Akkadian was the first language, had to maintain a staff of trusted, educated people who could interpret and write in Akkadian. For example, when the Egyptian king dictated a letter, his scribe probably wrote on papyrus. The scribe would then hand his text to a translator, who would inscribe it into clay in Akkadian. The tablet would then be dispatched by royal courier. If it was addressed, for example, to the Hittite king, the courier would have to gain admittance to that king's palace and hand the tablets to the Hittite king's interpreter, who would in turn translate the message into Hittite for presentation to his king.

This was an era in which diplomacy was often urgent, for throughout the Amarna period many of Egypt's vassals were at war with each other. Some letters discredited the sender's enemy in terse terms, as in this letter from Rib-Hadda, king of Byblos:

"Who is 'Abdi-Asirta, the servant and dog, that they mention his name in the presence of the king, my lord? Just let there be one man whose heart is one with my heart, and I would drive 'Abdi-Asirta from the land of Amurru."

In the same letter, Rib-Hadda eloquently pleaded for help: "Since he has attacked me three times this year, and for two years I have been repeatedly robbed of my grain, we have no grain to eat. What can I say to my peasantry? Their sons, their daughters, the furnishings of their houses are gone, since they have been sold in the land of Yarimuta for provisions to keep us alive. May the king, my lord, heed the words of his loyal servant and may he send grain in ships in order to keep his servant and his city alive."

In another letter, Rib-Hadda thanked the pharaoh for requesting help for him: "Moreover, it was a gracious deed of the king, my lord, that the king wrote to the king of Beirut, to the king of Sidon, and to the king of Tyre, saying, 'Rib-Hadda will be writing to you for an auxiliary force, and all of you are to go.' This pleased me, and so I sent my messenger, but they have not come, they have not sent the messengers to greet us."

Apparently, the troops never arrived. Although Rib-Hadda was a close ally and had dispatched numerous letters petitioning for help, Akhenaten did not go any further to assure his protection. As a result, Byblos was sacked, and the king was taken prisoner and put to death.

Scholars of the Amarna tablets wonder why Akhenaten did not respond more effectively to Rib-Hadda, but it was almost certainly a political calculation. "The Egyptian king had to balance his troop commitments," says Huehnergard. "He had troops deployed in the south [Nubia], west [Libya], and in garrisons in his Syro-Palestinian territories. To go to the aid of Rib-Hadda would have required a much larger force with the sole purpose of maintaining the status quo balance of minor powers in the region. The king opted instead to let the expansion of Amurru run its course, to poor Rib-Hadda's detriment."

In a tumultuous political sea, what remained fixed throughout Akhenaten's reign was his ardent adoration of Aten. Amarna was built with roofless courtyards, temples, and shrines to facilitate worship directly toward the sun—although shade was provided for the royal family. An Assyrian king protested to the pharaoh on behalf of his emissaries:

"Why are my messengers kept standing in the open sun? They will die in the open sun. If it does the king good to stand in the open sun, then let the king stand there and die in the open sun. Then will there be profit for the king! But really, why should [my messengers] die in the open sun?"

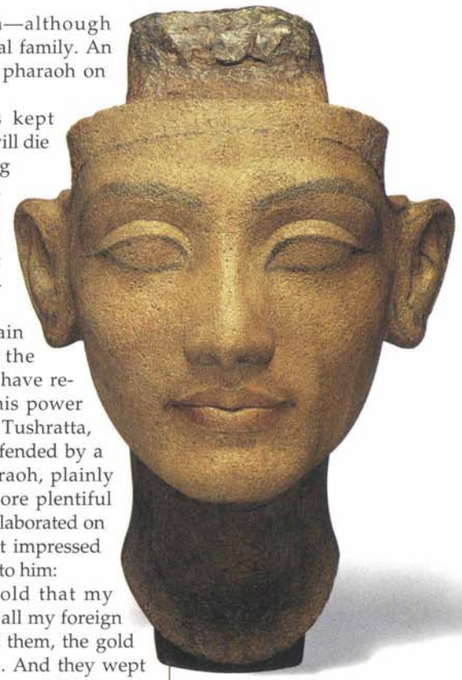
Although many letters contain similarly heated protests of the pharaoh's ways, he appears to have remained largely unmoved, for his power dwarfed that of other empires. Tushratta, the king of Mitanni who was offended by a questionable gift from the pharaoh, plainly conceded, "In Egypt, gold is more plentiful than dirt." In the same letter, he elaborated on why he and his friends were not impressed with the gift of gold recently sent to him:

"And with regard to the gold that my brother sent. I gathered together all my foreign guests. My brother, before all of them, the gold that he sent has been cut open.... And they wept very much saying, 'Are all of these gold? They do not look like gold.'"

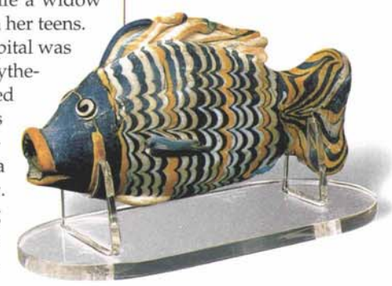
Akhenaten may have incurred the ire of his vassals abroad, much as other great powers have throughout history, but there is evidence that he was a devoted husband and father. He and Nefertiti had at least six daughters, and reliefs found on shrines, temple walls, and burial sites show hints of intimacy and domestic contentment that are unique in pharaonic art. In one painting, the king and queen are seated under a sun-disc whose rays end in tiny hands, which symbolize the life-giving force of the sun. Their three eldest daughters, Meritaten, Meketaten, and Ankhesenpaaten, are often depicted in scenes that display an unusual degree of affection between them and their father.

Akhenaten died after 17 years of reign and was succeeded by Smenkhare, who had married Meritaten. Smenkhare ruled for four years, and was himself succeeded by Tutankhamen, who may have been either Akhenaten's younger brother, or Akhenaten's son by a minor queen. The nine-year-old pharaoh married Akhenaten's youngest daughter, Ankhesenpaaten, and ruled until his untimely death nine years later. This left his wife a widow while she was still, presumably, only in her teens.

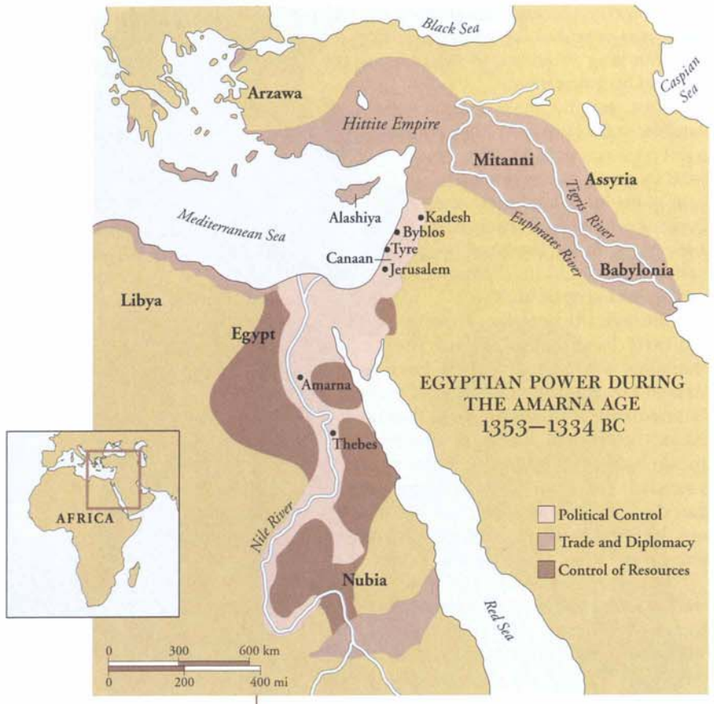
During Tutankhamen's reign the capital was moved back to Thebes, and the old polytheism was reinstated. It is widely believed that the young king Tutankhamen was manipulated by older, craftier advisors who saw a return to past ways as a means of restoring their own power. One of the closest advisors to the king was a nobleman named Ay, who had been a faithful follower of Akhenaten.

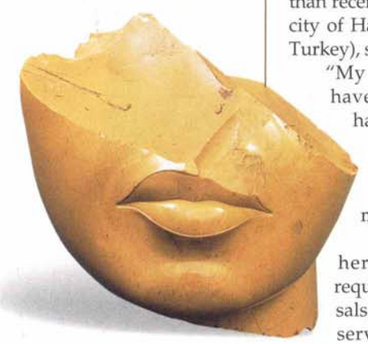


When finished, this serenely smiling bust of Nefertiti would have been polished, and the tenon would have anchored a separate headdress. ***Below:*** *Polychrome glass was a specialty among Amarna craftsmen, and this fish vessel vividly depicts a* Tilapia *species common in the Nile.*



TOP: ÄGYPTISCHES MUSEUM, BERLIN; BOTTOM: BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON. OPPOSITE: RIJKSMUSEUM VAN OUDHEDEN, LEIDEN





Below: The yellow, semi-precious stone and high polish of this fragment suggest royalty, but it is not certain whom it represents.
***Opposite:** A sculptor's model depicting, as many scholars believe, Akhenaten and Nefertiti is among the artistic testimonies to what may have been the queen's virtual co-regency with her husband.*

But after the political climate changed following Akahenaten's death, he had became sympathetic to the Theban priests who still prayed to the ancient Egyptian pantheon. In the absence of a male heir to Tutankhamen's throne, Ay became the designated candidate—but the prerequisite of his ascent was marriage to Tutankhamen's young widow, who was at least 30 years his junior.

To take Ay as her husband would have been ignominious for Ankhesenpaaten, and her desperate search for a suitor who might supplant him bespeaks a feisty and determined temperament. She scoured her own realm unsuccessfully and finally resorted to an unprecedented search beyond Egypt. That step produced one of the most famous and touching letters of the Amarna Period, authored by the distressed young woman. One of the only ones known to have been dispatched from Egypt rather than received there, it was discovered in the ancient city of Hattusas (modern-day Boğazköy in central Turkey), seat of the Hittite king Suppiluliumash.

"My husband has died," she wrote, "and I have no son. They say about you that you have many sons. You might give me one of your sons, and he might become my husband. I would not want to take one of my servants. I am loath to make him my husband."

It was earth-shattering for a woman of her stature, queen of a great empire, to request such a thing from one of Egypt's vassals, but the reference to her betrothed as a servant gave proof of her distaste for Ay. King Suppiluliumash must have been stunned; yet he quickly took advantage of the opportunity and dispatched one of his princes. But the young man was murdered on his way to Egypt, and so Ankhesenpaaten did in fact marry Ay.

Ay reigned for four or five years, and he is believed to have continued the Theban building projects at Karnak and Medinet Habu. Ankhesenpaaten fades from the record, but a blue glass ring, inscribed with both her name and Ay's, was found in the ruins at Amarna. Ay was succeeded by Horemheb, who detested Akhenaten's monotheism and dispatched men to obliterate everything Akhenaten had created. What survives today of Akhenaten's legacy is but a small part of what once existed, and Horemheb's destruction is part of the reason that the reign of Akhenaten sank into obscurity until its rediscovery in the early 19th century. As for the Amarna Letters, although the form of communication doubtless continued, there have been no corresponding caches of correspondence found in Thebes, and thus the record ends approximately a year after the capital was moved back there from Amarna, during the reign of Tutankhamen.

The legacy of the Amarna Period is great. While some scholars credit Akhenaten with the inspiration for monotheism, more agree that his patronage of artistic realism left an even clearer legacy. In the vaulted halls of the Cairo Museum, silhouette statues of the "heretic king" are distinctly unlike those of prior pharaohs, who appear with broad shoulders, perfectly shaped features and robust physiques. Akhenaten chose a different iconography: he was depicted with narrow shoulders, a bulbous belly and swollen breasts. Whether or not this interpretation was Akhenaten's own choice, or merely the artists' realistic representation of the king's physique, has puzzled scholars ever since Amarna was uncovered.

Yet beyond scholarly questions, what makes the Amarna period riveting is the poignancy of the letters and the personal faces they present. Through them, we can clearly envision the indignant Assyrian king fuming over the treatment of his emissaries, the ill-fated Rib-Hadda pleading for relief, and the desperate royal widow embracing a lesser humiliation to avoid a greater one. The Amarna Letters are our only intimate glimpses into lives lived in a world so distant from our own in time, yet so similar in its humanity.

Free-lance writer Barbara Ross travels frequently to the Middle East and writes often on Egypt. She lives in Boston.

TRANSLATIONS ARE FROM: *The Amarna Letters*, trans. and ed. by William L. Moran (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992, ISBN 0801842514).

For information about the traveling exhibit Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and Tutankhamen, *see page 44.*

What makes the Amarna Period riveting
is the poignancy of the letters
and the personal faces they present.

Among the Norse Tribes

THE REMARKABLE ACCOUNT OF IBN FADLAN

WRITTEN BY JUDITH GABRIEL

PHOTOGRAPHED BY EIRIK IRGENS JOHNSEN
MUSEUM OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

"I have never seen more perfect physical specimens: tall as date palms, blond and ruddy."

More than a millennium ago, as fleets of Viking raiders were striking fear into the hearts of coast- and river-dwellers throughout western Europe, other Norsemen of more mercantile inclination were making their way east. With no less boldness and stamina, bearing luxurious furs and enticing nodules of amber, they penetrated the vast steppes of what is today Ukraine, Belarus and Russia and entered Central Asia. There they met Muslim traders who paid for Norse wares with silver coins, which the Vikings themselves did not mint, and which they coveted.

Their routes were various, and by the ninth and 10th centuries, a regular trade network had grown up. Some Norsemen traveled overland and by river, while others sailed over both the Black and Caspian Seas, joined caravans and rode camelback as far as Baghdad, which was then under Abbasid rule and populated by nearly a million souls. There, the Scandinavian traders found an emporium beyond their wildest dreams, for their fjord-rimmed homelands had only recently seen the emergence of a few rudimentary towns.

To the Arabs of Baghdad, the presence of the Norsemen probably did not come as much of a surprise, for the Arabs were long accustomed to meeting people from different cultures and civilizations. They were also keen and literate observers. Abbasid historians and caliphal envoys put to paper eyewitness accounts of the roving Scandinavians, leaving a historical legacy that is shedding new light both on Viking history and on a little-known chapter of early Islamic history.

From the time of the first Viking attacks on England in the late eighth century, the 300-year epoch known as the Viking Age found the Scandinavians venturing farther afield than any other Europeans. They colonized nearly the entire North Atlantic, even establishing a short-lived settlement in North America about the turn of the millennium. It was largely the Vikings from Norway and Denmark who made these western voyages, but waves of so-called "Eastern Vikings," predominantly Swedes, headed southeast to establish trading centers at Kiev and Novgorod, where the elite among them became princes and rulers. It was in these lands that they were observed by several Muslim historians.

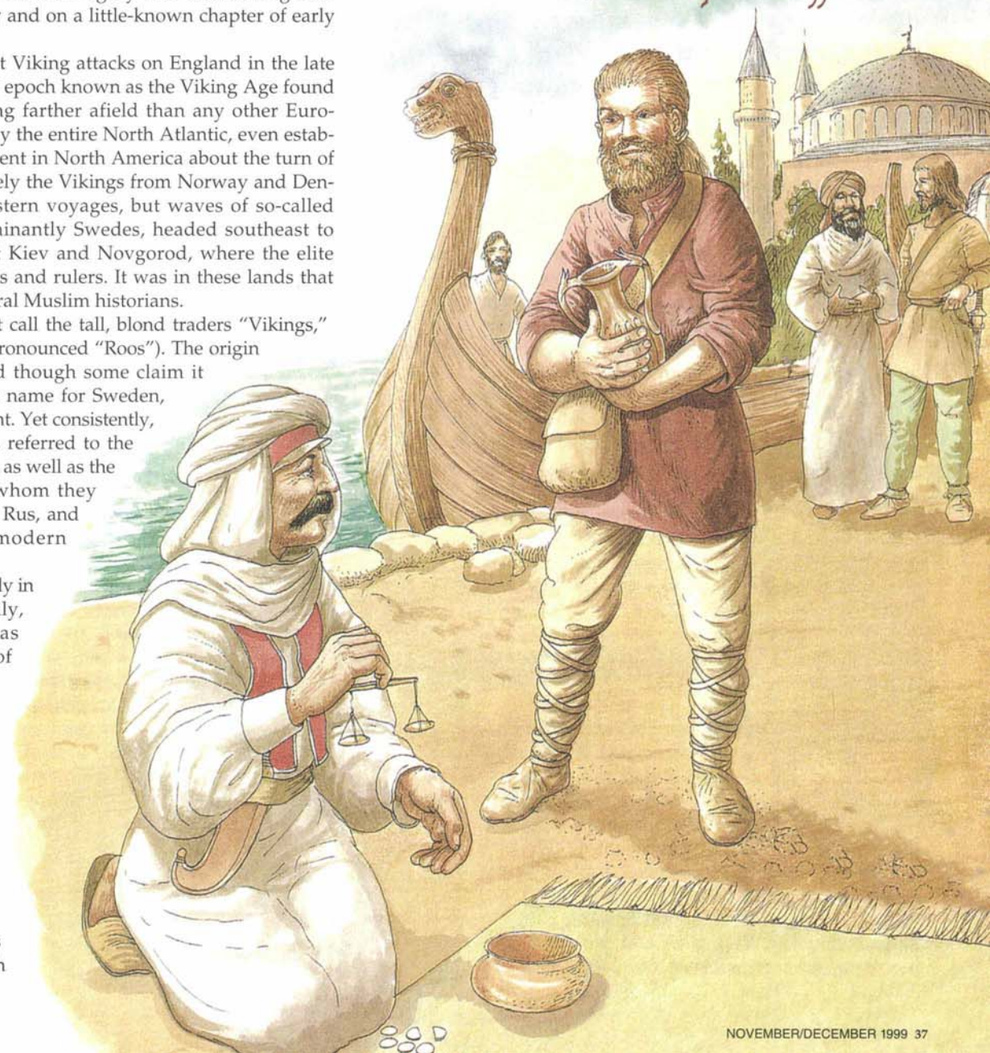
The Arab writers did not call the tall, blond traders "Vikings," but by the ethnonym *Rus* (pronounced "Roos"). The origin of this term is obscure, and though some claim it stems from the West Finnic name for Sweden, *Ruotsi*, there is little agreement. Yet consistently, Byzantine and Arab writers referred to the Swedish traders and settlers, as well as the local populations among whom they settled and intermarried, as Rus, and this is the source of the modern name of Russia.

This name was applied only in the East. In France and Sicily, the Vikings were known as Normans. An elite guard of the Byzantine emperors, composed of eastern Scandinavians, was known as Varangians, but that term never came into widespread use outside the region. In al-Andalus, or Islamic Spain, they were known as *al-majus*, or "fire-worshipers," a pejorative reference to their paganism.

Besides the Scandinavians themselves, only the British

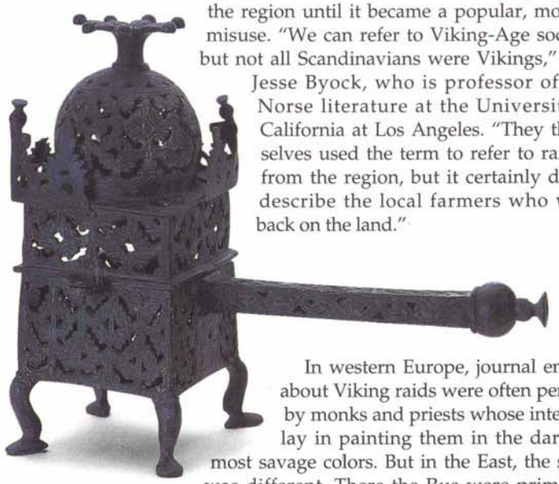
*It was in pursuit of silver that Scandinavians traded and settled east and south across European Russia to the Islamic lands around the Caspian, and onward to the cities of Constantinople, Baghdad and Isfahan, where they traded for the Abbasid and Samanid silver dirhams that "fueled the Viking Age." Hundreds of thousands of silver coins—Arab, Byzantine, European, and Rus—have been found in Scandinavian settlement sites and along trade routes. These relics, **opposite**, are from a 10th-century burial hoard recovered near Oslo, Norway. Cut and broken dirhams show that the Vikings' interest was the coins' silver content: Silver objects were often cut into "hacksilver" or melted down to make simple armbands that were easy to carry and could also be cut up as needed.*

In western Europe, journal entries about Viking raids were often penned by monks and priests whose interests lay in painting them in the darkest, most savage colors. But in the East, the story was different.



THE LANDS OF THE RUS DURING THE 10TH CENTURY

called the marauders "Vikings," and this word may come from *vik*, or bay, and *Viken*, as Oslo Fjord was called, from which the earliest Viking ships emerged. Other authorities maintain that the name came from the Old Norse term *i viking*, which is the equivalent of "a-raiding," as in "they went a-raiding down the Atlantic coast." But "Viking" was never a blanket term for the whole people of the region until it became a popular, modern misuse. "We can refer to Viking-Age society, but not all Scandinavians were Vikings," says Jesse Byock, who is professor of Old Norse literature at the University of California at Los Angeles. "They themselves used the term to refer to raiders from the region, but it certainly didn't describe the local farmers who were back on the land."



In western Europe, journal entries about Viking raids were often penned by monks and priests whose interests lay in painting them in the darkest, most savage colors. But in the East, the story was different. There the Rus were primarily explorers, colonizers and tradesmen, and although they were well-armed, Muslim accounts describe them as merchant-warriors whose primary business was trade. The Rus were after the Abbasid-issued dirhams flooding the region, and though at times, in the more remote regions, they procured these by exacting tribute, they largely traded with Muslims who had themselves ventured north and west to find opportunities for commerce.

We would in fact know little about these Rus, these Norsemen in the East, were it not for Muslim chroniclers. Ibn Fadlan, whose ninth-century *Risala (Letter)* is the richest account of all, kept a journal that details his encounters with the Rus along the Volga, as well as with many other peoples. A century later, al-Tartushi, a merchant from Córdoba, described a Danish market town, passing down to us a rare glimpse of the Norsemen in their domestic setting. Other accounts, such as al-Mas'udi's *Meadows of Gold*, written in 943, and al-Mukaddasi's *The Best Organization of Knowledge of the Regions*, composed after 985, were briefer in their mentions of the Rus, but collectively they were all trailblazers in what was then the flourishing field of Islamic geography, a response to the thirst for knowledge about the vast Islamic world and the regions beyond it.

Unlike Europeans, Arab chroniclers bore no grudge against the Rus, and thus the Arab reports are more detached and, in the eyes of many scholars today, more credible. Most experts acknowledge that the Vikings were, in general, victims of a medieval "bad press," for the military excursions of Charlemagne and other Europeans of the time were no less ruthless than theirs. Yet the Norsemen had only a runic alphabet, suited for no more than inscribing grave-stones and place-markers, and were hardly in a position to set the record straight themselves. Their oral sagas of heroes and gods would not be written down until the 12th century.

This bronze brazier was crafted in the ninth century in Baghdad, and Vikings carried it to Sweden, probably along the Volga River trade route that linked the Abbasid capital to Scandinavia. ***Opposite:*** *"The Gokstad ship" was built in Norway between 895 and 900 and unearthed from a burial mound in 1880, the first intact Viking vessel to be found. Like most Viking ships, it is open-decked and shell-built, its overlapping strakes riveted together before the internal crossbeams were added. In similar, smaller boats, Viking traders navigated complex rivers in European Russia, often portaging between waterways.*

LANSMUSEET GÄVLEBORG

Many of the Muslim accounts have been translated into European languages over the past two centuries, and they are proving valuable in interpreting archeological evidence that continues to emerge. Hundreds of Viking Age graves and buried hoards, it turns out, contain caches of still-gleaming Arab dirhams, "the coin that helped fuel the Viking Age," according to Thomas S. Noonan of the University of Minnesota. Noonan is one of the world's leading experts on medieval Scandinavian ties with the Muslim world, and a specialist in Viking numismatic history.

It was largely the dirham that had lured the Scandinavians eastward in the first place, says Noonan. Silver had become their favored medium of exchange, but with no indigenous sources of the precious metal in the northern forests, they went in pursuit of it far and wide. Arab merchants had started circulating silver coins in the Volga region in the late eighth century, and Scandinavian traders, intent on finding the source of the lucre, set a course across the Baltic in their shallow-draft longboats.

In Russia, they braved the uncharted river systems, portaging from one tributary to another, shooting rapids and fending off hostile nomads until they reached the first eastern trade centers, those of the Turkic Khazars. The Khazars had become the dominant power in the Caucasian steppe by the middle of the seventh century, and they played a major role in trade between the region and the Islamic world for the next 300 years. Here, in the network of trading stations along the mighty rivers, the Swedes would have carried on active commerce with Arabs, Persians and Greeks. From there, some of the Scandinavians sailed down to the Black Sea, toward the regions they called "Sarkland," a name that may refer either to the lands of the Saracens (today Azerbaijan and northern Iran); to the Khazar fortress of Sarkel, at the mouth of the Don on the Black Sea coast; or to *serk*, the Norse word for silk, which was widely traded in the region at the time.

The earliest reference by Muslim writers to the roving Norsemen was made at the beginning of the ninth century by Ibn Khurradadhbih, a Khurasani bon-vivant who headed Caliph al-Mu'tamid's postal and intelligence-gathering service. In 844 he wrote about the travels of the *saqalibah*, a term generally used for fair-haired, ruddy-complexioned Europeans. They came in their boats, he wrote, "bringing beaver-skins, and skins of black foxes, and swords, from the furthest part of the Slav lands down to the Black Sea." Rus traders, he wrote, transported their wares by camel from Jurjan, a town at the southeastern end of the Caspian Sea, to Baghdad, where *saqalibah* servants, who had learned Arabic, acted as interpreters.

Baghdad, then a circular city about 19 kilometers (12 mi) in diameter, was lavishly embellished with parks, marble palaces, gardens, promenades and finely built mosques. The Arabian Gulf trader, geographer and encyclopedist Yakut al-Rumi describes how both sides of the river were fronted by the palaces, kiosks, gardens and parks of the nobles, with marble steps leading down to the water's edge, where thousands of gondolas festooned with little flags sailed by.

This was a far cry from the settlements occupied by the Rus. Astronomer and geographer Ibn Rustah, writing between 903 and 913, noted that "they have no villages, no cultivated fields." Ibn Rustah described the Rus as sporting excellent swords, and wearing baggy trousers that were tight below the knee—a style which reflected the Eastern influence in their wardrobes. They were, in his estimation, heroic men who displayed great loyalty to each other. But their primary interest in the region was acquisitive: "Their only occupation is trading in sable and squirrel and other kinds of skins, which they sell to those who will buy from them," he observed. "In payment, they take coins, which they keep in their belts."

The Vikings paid little attention to the face value of the coins; rather, they used an Arab system of weights to measure the silver on portable balance scales. When it suited them, the coins were hewn into smaller pieces, melted down into ingots or fashioned into arm-rings for subsequent "hack-silver" transactions. The amount of Islamic silver reaching the region increased dramatically in the 10th century, when vast silver deposits were discovered in the Hindu Kush. This enabled the Khurasan-based Samanid dynasty to mint large numbers of coins and to become, numismatic evidence shows, the main supplier of dirhams.

The Arabs, for their part, were eager to have caps and coats made of black fox, the most valued of all the furs, according to al-Mas'udi. Al-Mukaddasi noted that from the Rus one could obtain furs of sable, Siberian squirrel, ermine, marten, weasel, mink, fox and colored hare.

Other wares traded by the Rus, as inventoried by several Muslim observers, included wax and birch bark, fish teeth, honey, goat skins and horse hides, falcons, acorns, hazelnuts, cattle, swords and armor. Amber, the reddish-gold fossilized tree resin found along the Baltic shoreline, was highly prized in the East and became a mainstay of Scandinavian trade. Also valued in the East were the slaves that the Rus captured from among the Eastern European peoples—Slavs, from which English has derived the word *slave*. According to the itinerant geographer Ibn Hawkal, writing in 977, the Rus slave trade ran "from Spain to Egypt."

But the most important eyewitness account of the Rus is that of Ahmed ibn Fadlan, a writer about whom little is known, but whose *Risala* has been translated into several languages. Key segments of it are universally cited in modern books about Vikings. It was his account that inspired author Michael Crichton's 1976 novel *Eaters of the Dead*, the basis of this year's film *The Thirteenth Warrior* by Touchstone/Disney.

"Ibn Fadlan was unique of all the sources," says Noonan. "He was there, and you can trace his exact path. He describes how the caravans traveled, how they would cross a river. He tells you about the flora and fauna along the way. He shows us exactly how the trade functions. There is nothing else like it."

Ibn Fadlan was a *faqih*, an expert in Islamic jurisprudence, who served as secretary of a delegation sent by Caliph al-Muqtadir in 921 to the king of the Bulgars, who had requested help building a fort and a mosque, as well as personal instruction in the teachings of Islam. The Bulgars were a Turkic-speaking branch of the people whom the Khazars had split in the seventh century. One group migrated west, where they assimilated with Slavs and founded what became modern Bulgaria, west

IBN FADLAN'S MANUSCRIPT

A Saga All Its Own

Although fragments of the *Risala* were included in the *Mu'jam al-Buldan*, the geographical dictionary completed by Yaqut in Baghdad in 1228, it was not until the 19th century that Europeans could read about Ibn Fadlan's journey in their own languages. Scandinavian scholars knew of the *Letter* by 1814, and a German translation of excerpts that appeared in Yaqut's dictionary, under the heading "Rus," was made in 1823; that was translated into Norwegian in 1896, and into English in 1923.

However, the first known complete version of the *Risala* was a manuscript, probably dating from the 11th century, discovered in Meshed, Iran by Ahmed Zeki Velidi Togan (1890-1970), a Bashkir Turkish scholar. Proficient in several languages, he had studied medieval history in Vienna, and his dissertation covered Ibn Fadlan's journey to the Northern Bulgars, Turks and Khazars. He taught at the universities of Bonn and Göttingen, and directed the Islamic Institute at Istanbul University. His German translation of the manuscript, titled *Ibn Fadlan's Reisebericht*, was published in Leipzig in 1939.

In addition to translating the 11th-century manuscript, he included excerpts from a 16th-century Persian geographer, Amin Razi, who may have worked from an even older *Risala* manuscript, and in keeping with good scholarly practice, presented segments from both versions when they varied significantly.

Other translations soon appeared: Russian in the same year, 1939; English 10 years later, when Robert P. Blake and Richard N. Frye published the *Risala* segments not included in Yaqut in the journal *Byzantina Metabyzantina*; and French (in Algiers) in 1958, by Marius Canard.

For this article, I have used the translation in H. M. Smyser's 1965 article "Ibn Fadlan's Account of the Rus with Some Commentary and Some Allusions to *Beowulf*," published in *Franciplegius Medieval and Linguistic Studies*, a journal from New York University Press. Smyser's translation used both Zeki Velidi's and Canard's work.

In 1976, novelist Michael Crichton brought together the spirit of the *Beowulf* saga and the account of the Baghdad *faqih* in *Eaters of the Dead: The Manuscript of Ibn Fadlan, Relating His Experiences With the Northmen in A.D. 922*. While Crichton relied on *Risala* translations in some parts of his work, it was heavily fictionalized, and he frustrated and annoyed many by his use of pseudo-academic research notes that obscured the extensive liberties he had taken with the original account. Worse, Crichton poisoned the well, intellectually speaking, by listing as a major source, in extensive, mostly spurious, endnotes, a "Per Fraus-Dolus, professor emeritus of comparative literature at the University of Oslo, Norway." Since then, the University of Oslo has had the unhappy task of pointing out to two decades of researchers that, although Per is a common Scandinavian name, it is also used to mean "by" in English, and that "Fraus-Dolus" is Latin for "fraud."

In 1988, a 176-page reconstruction of Ibn Fadlan's account, with bibliographical references, was published by Tihama in Jiddah under the title *Mughamarat Safir 'Arabi fi Iskaninafiya Mundhu 1000 'Am*. To date, no complete translation of the Risala is available in English.

of the Black Sea; the others turned north toward the middle Volga region, where they continued to chafe under the rule of the Khazars, whose domination of the north Caucasus and Caspian region marked the northern limits of Abbasid power. In seeking assistance from Baghdad, the king of the Bulgars was seeking an alliance against the Khazars.

Presumably in order to avoid Khazar lands, the caliph's delegation took a lengthy and circuitous route to the Bulgar capital, passing east of the Caspian Sea. Once there, it was Ibn Fadlan who gave religious instruction to the Bulgar king, so impressing him that the king gave him the *kunya*, or nickname, "al-Siddiq," "the truthful"—the same *kunya* that had once been earned by Abu Bakr, the first caliph of Islam.

All told, the delegation covered some 4000 kilometers (2500 mi). In his *Risala*, Ibn Fadlan described the numerous peoples he encountered, and roughly one-fifth of his account is devoted to the Rus. "I have never seen more perfect physical specimens, tall as date palms, blond and ruddy," he wrote. "Each man has an axe, a sword, and a knife and keeps each by him at all times." The men, he observed, were tattooed with dark-green figures "from fingernails to neck."

Viking arts of jewelry and bodily ornamentation were well-developed, and Ibn Fadlan described the Rus women as wearing neck rings of gold and silver, "one for each 10,000 dirhams which her husband is worth; some women have many. Their most prized ornaments are green glass beads of clay, which are found on the ships. They trade beads among themselves and pay a dirham for a bead. They string them as necklaces...." They also wore festoons of colored beads, large oval brooches from which dangled such items as knives, keys and combs, and what Ibn Fadlan described as "breast-boxes made out of gold, silver and wood."

He had harsh words, however, for Rus hygiene: "They are the filthiest of God's creatures," he observed, and although he acknowledged that they washed their hands, faces and heads every day, he was appalled that they did so "in the dirtiest and filthiest fashion possible" in a communal basin of water, an ancient Germanic custom that caused understandable revulsion in a Muslim who typically performed ablutions only in poured or running water. (In the same year, Ibn Rustah, however, commended the Rus he observed as being "clean in their dress and kind to their slaves.")

Their contact with Islam led some among the Rus to embrace the religion, though Ibn Fadlan astutely noted that old habits still had their pull: "They are very fond of pork and many of them who have assumed the path of Islam miss it very much." The Rus had also relished *nabith*, a fermented drink Ibn Fadlan often mentioned as part of their daily fare.

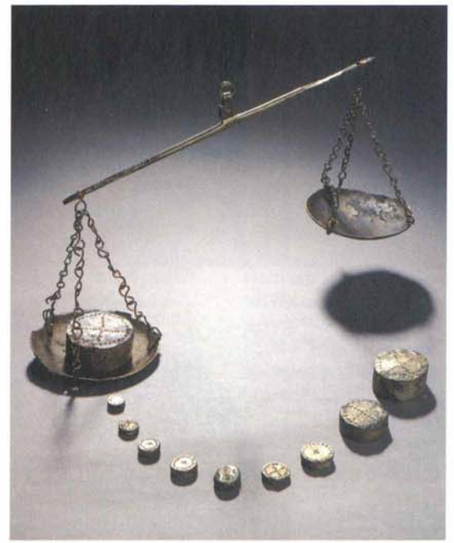
Yet most of the Rus continued to observe their own religious practices, which included the offering of sacrifices. Ibn Rustah makes mention of a professional priesthood of Rus shamans (whom he calls *attibah*) who enjoyed very high status, and who had the power to select as a sacrifice to their gods whichever men, women or cattle they fancied.

Witnessing a band of Rus merchants celebrating the safe completion of a Volga voyage in 922, Ibn Fadlan described how they prayed to their gods and offered sacrifices to wooden figures stuck into the ground, and they begged their deities to send merchants with plentiful silver coins to buy what they had to sell.

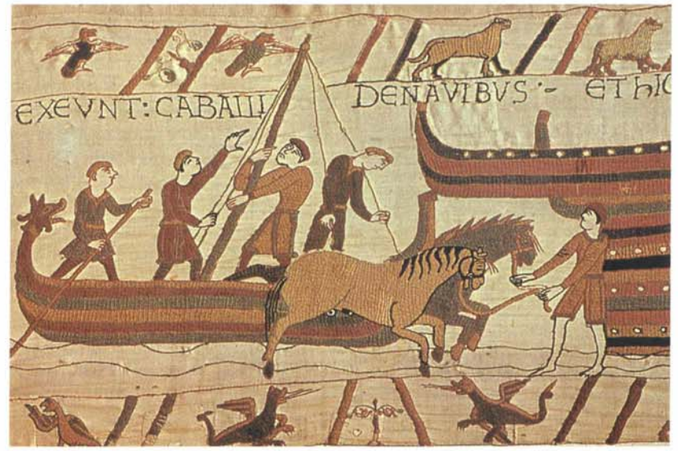
He also witnessed, along the Volga, the dramatic funeral of a chieftain who was cremated with his ship. His oft-quoted description of this rite is one of the most remarkable documents of the Viking Age, filled as it is with grim details of the dead leader laid out in his boat amid a treasury of expensive items, rich foods and strong drink, as well as a dog, horses, oxen, and poultry, and accompanied by the body of a slave girl who had volunteered for the honor of being slain and burned with her master.

Beyond this, Ibn Fadlan was privy to scenes of drunkenness and lewd behavior that were clearly shocking to a pious, erudite scholar from Baghdad. But he was no moralizer: After making note of the conduct, he moved on in his narrative without condescension.

Other Muslim writers found some Rus traits praiseworthy, particularly their prowess in battle. The philosopher and historian Miskawayh described them as men with "vast frames and great courage" who carried an impressive arsenal of weapons, including swords, spears, shields, daggers, axes and hammers. He noted that their swords "are in great demand to this day for their sharpness and excellence."



While the usual relationship of the Rus with Baghdad, Khazaria and other Muslim lands was one of peaceable trade, this was not always so. Along the shores of the Caspian Sea, Rus tribes turned their prized weapons against Muslims twice in the 10th century, once attacking Abaskun on the eastern Caspian in 910, and then penetrating the oil country around Baku in 912, taking rich spoils and killing thousands. Of this latter campaign, al-Mas'udi wrote that when the people of the Khazar state heard of this, about 150,000 of them were joined by Christians from the town of Itil, and this joint force marched to the Volga, where the Rus fleet had returned, and decimated it. The few Rus who escaped were later finished off by Bulgars and others.



BOTTOM: ERICH LESSING / ART RESOURCE

Ibn Hawkal tells how in 943 another large Rus armada reached the prosperous trading town of Bardha'a on the Caspian's south shore, where the Rus slaughtered 5000 inhabitants. But their occupation of the town broke down within months, apparently as the result of a dysentery epidemic induced among them by a secret "cup of death" offered to them by the women of the city.

Other than Ibn Fadlan, few if any Muslims from the Middle East or Central Asia made the trek to the Norsemen's distant homelands. However, Muslims in al-Andalus, in the southern two-thirds of the Iberian Peninsula, could travel to Scandinavia relatively easily by sea, and several appear to have done just that, probably to trade. In the mid-10th century, a Córdoban merchant named al-Tartushi visited the Danish market town of Hedeby. He was none too impressed, for although, at 24 hectares (60 acres) in area, Hedeby was the largest Scandinavian town of the time, al-Tartushi found it a far cry from the elegance, organization and comfort of Córdoba. Hedeby was noisy and filthy, he wrote, with the pagan inhabitants hanging animal sacrifices on poles in front of their houses. The people of Hedeby subsisted chiefly on fish, "for there was so much of it." He noted that Norse women enjoyed the right to divorce: "They part with their husbands whenever they like." Men and women alike, he found, used "an artificial make-up for the eyes; when they use it their beauty never fades, but increases."

But such scant contact did not do much to help bridge vast cultural gaps. Toledo jurist Sa'id reasoned that the pagan Norsemen were affected by their wintry origins: "Because the sun does not shed its rays directly over their heads, their climate is cold and the atmosphere cloudy. Consequently their temperaments have become cold and their humors rude, while their bodies have grown large, their complexions light and their hair long."

From the early years of the Viking Age, the Arabs of al-Andalus had referred to the Scandinavians as *al-majus*, a word which meant "fire-worshiping pagans" and was usually directed at Zoroastrians. That these two groups were lumped into the same term leads some modern scholars to speculate on early contacts among Norse traders and Zoroastrians in Persia and Mesopotamia.

Andalusia was not spared the Viking attacks that the rest of Europe had experienced. Historian Ahmad al-Ya'qubi, writing in 843–844, tells of the attack on Ishbiliyya (Seville) by "the Majus who are called Rus." Ibn Qutiya, a 10th-century Córdoban historian, wrote that the attackers were probably Danish pirates who had sailed up the Guadalquivir River. They were repelled by the Andalusian forces, who used catapults to hurl flaming balls of naphtha that sank 30 ships. Amir 'Abd al-Rahman II then managed to arrange a truce. The following year, legend has it, he dispatched as envoy to the king of *al-majus* a handsome poet, Yahya ibn Hakam al-Bakri, known as al-Ghazal ("the gazelle") for

Top: This portable bronze balance scale and set of lead-alloy weights were found in a grave in Norway. By the ninth and tenth centuries, Norse traders in the East had largely adopted Arab standards of weight measurement.
Above: The Bayeux Tapestry chronicles events leading up to the Norman conquest of England in 1066, the culmination of a struggle among three rulers who each had Viking ancestry. This part of the tapestry shows the landing of Norman cavalry on the English coast at Pevensey, with a helpful Latin caption.

The Viking Age did not survive the dwindling of the stream of silver dirhams in the late 10th century, as the Samanid state collapsed, its silver mines near exhaustion.

the grace of his appearance and his verse, who carried a gift for the king and his wife, Queen Noud. The voyage supposedly took al-Ghazal either to Ireland or Denmark, where he wrote that the queen "stays the sun of beauty from darkening." In fact, al-Ghazal's mission was not to the Norsemen at all, but to the Byzantine emperor, and the survival of the legend to this day indicates how large the Vikings loomed in the popular imagination of the time.

Despite the truce, the Danes returned to attack Spain again in 859 under the command of Hastein and Bjorn Ironsides, two of the most famous Viking leaders. But their 62 dragon ships were no match for the Umayyad forces. After the rout, the survivors slipped through the Straits of Gibraltar to raid along the Moroccan coast, which prompted another Muslim observer to record that "al-Majus—may God curse them!—invaded the little Moroccan state of Nakur and pillaged it. They took into captivity all the inhabitants with the exception of those who saved their lives by flight." The marauding fleet then went on to harry the south of France and Italy, where they sacked the town of Luna on the northwest coast, believing it to be Rome. Some Arab sources say they reached Greece and even Egypt. When they returned to the Iberian coast two years after their first attack, they were defeated again, and Vikings never returned to the Mediterranean.

So it was also in the East. The Viking Age, so dependent on Arab silver, did not survive the dwindling of the stream of dirhams in the late 10th century as the Samanid state collapsed, its silver mines near exhaustion. Noonan points out that the silver coins were increasingly debased as time went on: "A silver content of approximately 90 percent in the year 1000 had declined to a silver content of about five percent half a century later. Understandably, Rus merchants no longer wanted such coins."

The silver-seeking Rus retreated west. Those who had not fully established their lives among the local populations of Russia sailed home, where their crystallizing nations became today's Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

A millennium later, scholars would turn to Ibn Fadlan, al-Tartushi, al-Mas'udi and the other Arab writers to trace their sojourns and to seek out in burial hoards and mounds the dirhams the Norsemen had carried home. According to Noonan, some 100,000 dirham coins, most deposited between the years 900 and 1030, have been unearthed to date in Sweden alone, and there are more than a thousand recorded individual hoards of five or more coins recorded throughout Scandinavia, the Baltic countries and Russia. In addition to inscriptions, the Muslim coins bear the year and place of minting—vital details for modern numismatists and archeologists. One excellent find in Uppland, Sweden contained a mixture of coins minted in Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Isfahan and Tashkent.

Soon more of this knowledge will be widely available. Noonan's catalogue of dirham hoards from throughout western Eurasia will be published by the Numismatics Institute of the University of Stockholm. His first book on the subject, a collection of articles titled *The Islamic World, Russia and the Vikings, 750-900: The Numismatic Evidence*, was published by Ashgate in 1998 (ISBN 0-86078-657-9).

Similarly, in Norway, former University of Tehran archeologist and numismatist Houshang Khazaei has completed an English-language catalogue of Kufic silver coins found in Norway, many of which are currently on display at the University Museum of Cultural Heritage in Oslo. "We are beginning to see new interest in this subject," says Khazaei, whose work will soon be published.

Other relics of Viking-Arab trade have been found in Scandinavia as well: fine beads of rock crystal or carnelian, Persian glass, silks, vessels and ornaments. In addition, the trade with Arabs left its mark on Nordic languages, with cognate words such as *kaffe, arsenal, kattun* (cotton), *alkove, sofa* and *kalfatre* (asphalt, used for boat caulking). One historian even suggests that the inspiration for the sails of Viking ships came from the Arab dhows that the Norse traders first observed on the Black Sea.

But the greatest debt Scandinavians owe the Muslims lies in the time-worn pages of the manuscripts. There, long-silent voices rise to help historians, archeologists and linguists clarify a much-maligned past. Haakon Stang, in his 1996 University of Oslo dissertation *The Naming of Russia*, thanked the Arabs who "on their way, let us hear and see and sense what once happened—and was past, otherwise irretrievably lost."

A masterpiece of early Viking art, this carved stempost was found at the burial site of the "Oseberg ship," a warship built in 820 and used in the interment of a queen. The elaborate, arabesque-like carving on the head of the "dragon" actually represents the attenuated and intertwined bodies of animals. The vertical orientation of this stempost, instead of the low, raking stems used earlier, signals changes in Norse shipbuilding techniques about this time that accompanied the adoption of sailpower instead of oars.

Judith Gabriel is a Norwegian-American journalist who writes about the Middle East as well as Scandinavia. She is a contributing editor of both the Los Angeles quarterly Al Jadid *and the New York weekly* Norway Times.

Events & Exhibitions

In 1928, C. Leonard Woolley's discovery of 16 "royal" tombs in the ancient Mesopotamian city-state of Ur, traditional birthplace of the patriarch Abraham, yielded some of the finest examples of early artisanship, dating to between 2600 and 2500 BC. One of the richest tombs was that of Puabi, a woman believed to have been a queen or priestess, who was buried with a gold diadem, large gold earrings, an elaborate headdress of gold "leaves" and a cape of several hundred carnelian, gold and lapis-lazuli beads. Also found, in her tomb and others, were lyres decorated with gold, lapis lazuli and carved bone plaques; ornate weapons and tools; cylinder seals, drinking "sets" of silver and gold, and vessels of imported alabaster. The most elaborate objects, like the lyre decoration at right, used multiple materials with supreme skill, and their qualities of both craftsmanship and esthetics make them remarkably attractive to modern eyes. In the 1930's, the treasures were divided among the government of Iraq, the British Museum and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, and **Treasures From the Royal Tombs of Ur** is a compact traveling exhibition of 150 of the best objects from the latter's collection. Catalogue, $50 hb, $35 pb. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through January 17.

The Egyptian Temple: *Rites and Architecture.* This 2½-hour workshop focuses on Madinat Habu to explore how ancient architects solved construction problems. Information: www.louvre.fr. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, November 15 and December 15.

Oil Patch Dreams: *Images of the Petroleum Industry in American Art.* Sixty works by such notable artists as Norman Rockwell, Andy Warhol and Thomas Hart Benton capture the impact of oil on the 20th century. **Wichita Falls [Texas]** Museum and Art Center, through November 16.

"Only the Best": *Masterpieces of the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon* demonstrates the extraordinary range and quality of the collection assembled in the first half of this century by oil magnate Gulbenkian, including spectacular Islamic ceramics and glass, Egyptian sculpture, Armenian illuminated manuscripts and Persian and Turkish textiles. Catalogue. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, November 16 through February 27.

Imaging the Word: *New Selections of Calligraphy From the Islamic World* includes works on paper that date from the ninth to the 20th century, shown with inscribed textiles, coins, architectural fragments and other objects to highlight the spiritual and esthetic dimension of the art of writing. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, November 17 through May 7.

Akhenaten, an opera by Philip Glass, is named for the Egyptian pharaoh who reigned from 1353 to 1336 BC. Selections will be performed at the **Virginia** Museum of Fine Arts, **Richmond**, 7:00 p.m. November 18.

The Mosque: *A Workshop* uses a model, slides and a tour of the Islamic collection to teach about Islamic architecture. Information: www.louvre.fr. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, November 20 and December 15.

Antoin Sevruguin and the Persian Image offers an important pictorial record of the social history and visual culture of Iran, displaying 50 photographs grouped in themes: everyday life, ethnography, the court, antiquities, Western fantasy, religious architecture, and women. Sevruguin, one of the great 19th-century photographers and a visual interpreter between East and West, ran a successful commercial studio in Tehran from the late 1850's until 1934. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, November 21 through May 28.

Constructing Identities: *Recent Work by Jananne al-Ani* addresses the issue of Orientalism, in particular the representation of women, through two pairs of large-format photographs, five transparencies and a slide show. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, November 21 through February 28.

Indian Paintings from the Marshall Collection emphasizes Mughal miniatures but also includes examples of all the painting styles of the small Rajput kingdoms. Mughal ateliers drew inventively on Persian, earlier Indian and European traditions, and later artists combined Mughal styles with the flat, intensely colored shapes of Indian folk painting. University of **California/Berkeley** Art Museum, through November 28.

Splendors of Ancient Egypt: *Egyptian Art from the Collection of the Pelizaeus-Museum* is a significant exhibition of more than 200 pieces dating from the Old Kingdom to the seventh century AD, including mummy cases and a five-meter scroll containing texts from the Book of the Dead. Catalogue $15. **Virginia** Museum of Fine Arts, **Richmond**, through November 28.

Tulip, Rose and Parrot: *Fauna and Flora in Islamic Art* is a 2½-hour workshop which explores the different types of decoration used by the Ottoman, Mughal and Safavid Empires. Information: Service Culturel, 75058 Paris Cedex 01; or www.louvre.fr. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, December 1.

The Epic of Gilgamesh is a two-hour workshop of storytelling and acting for children aged six to eight. It is one of 35 children's workshops this season, of which eight concern the arts of Egypt, the Middle East and Islam. Information: see above. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, 2:15 p.m. December 5.

Photographing History: *Fred J. Maroon and the Nixon Years, 1970–1974.* Arab-American photographer Maroon had extraordinary access to the White House during what became extremely interesting years. National Museum of American History, **Washington, D.C.**, through December 5.

The Three Graces: *Music, Painting and Poetry in the Art of India.* Paintings from various courts throughout India dating from the 16th to the 19th century depict personifications of various *ragas* (musical modes), musical themes and social situations, and serve as an introduction to the heritage and importance of music in South Asia. **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art, through December 6.

Music of the Arabian Nights features virtuoso and composer Simon Shaheen and the Near Eastern Musical Ensemble in a program designed to introduce classical and contemporary Arab music to Western ears. Information: 888-262-0033; www.clemusart.com. **Cleveland** Museum of Art, 7:30 p.m., December 10.

Miniature Paintings from India is a display of 50 16th- to 18th-century Mughal works from the museum's collection, with emphasis on those produced during the reign of Akbar in the 16th century and others produced for the Dutch market in the 17th century. Information: www.rijksmuseum.nl. Rijksmuseum, **Amsterdam**, December 10 through April 11.

Cultural Portraits of India features 70 photographs made in the course of a decade by Lindsay Hebberd, producer of educational photographic exhibits. Book of the same title, $75. Information: 626-449-2742; www.pacasiamuseum.org. Pacific Asia Museum, **Pasadena, California**, December 15 through April 16.

Current Archeological Research. The lectures in this series, which runs through June 2000, concern discoveries and scholarship in the Middle East and western Asia. Each is presented at noon by a speaker intimately involved in the work under discussion. Tebtynis, December 16; Gaza, December 17; Hierakonpolis, January 27; Bactria, January 28; Ugarit, February 11 and 18; Coptic sites, February 17; Alassa, Cyprus, February 25; Tanis, March 2; Arslantepe, March 10; Tell Shuera, May 3; Tashkent, May 5; Temple of Merenptah, May 11; Ja'lan, Oman, May 12; Kech Makran, Pakistan, June 28. Information: 33-1-4020-5317; www.louvre.fr. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**.

Women of the Nile presents the lives of ancient Egyptian women according to the themes of home life, the temple, the palace and the afterlife with displays and objects, on loan from the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, that include depictions of women, household items and images of deities. Catalogue. Stedman Art Gallery of Rutgers University, **Camden, New Jersey**, through December 18.

India: *A Celebration of Independence, 1947-1997* is a collection of 240 esthetically and culturally significant photographs that document India's half-century of independence through the eyes of leading Indian and Western photographers. **Chicago** Cultural Center, through December 30.

Clay Seals and Papyri is a special exhibition of seal impressions attached to papyrus documents. The impressions, exhibited with photographic enlargements, are revealed as tiny works of art. Catalogue. Another exhibition, **Christian Papyri**, includes parchment and papyrus manuscripts from Egypt of the third to 10th century, including legal and liturgical documents, amulets and religious texts. Jewelry and textiles with religious designs are also on display. Catalogue. Both at the Austrian National Library Papyrus Museum, **Vienna**, through December 31.

A Dream of Eternity: *Egyptian Antiquities from the Gustave Schlumberger Collection* introduces the rites and beliefs of ancient Egypt through sculpture, wood and stone statuettes, amulets, *ushabtis*, funeral jewelry, and vases, glasses and liturgical objects. Musée Archéologique, **Strasbourg**, through December 31.

Live Like the Banyan Tree: *Images of the Indian American Experience* features still photography by David Wells and a documentary film by Uma Magal as it explores the ways that coming to America has affected the lives and outlooks of Asian Indian immigrants of various religions. Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, **Philadelphia**, through December 31.

(continued from previous page)

The Golden Age of Chinese Archaeology: *Celebrated Discoveries from The People's Republic of China* focuses on discoveries made over the last 20 years, and includes some 200 objects in widely diverse media dating from Neolithic times to 960 of our era. 500-page catalog. National Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**, through January 2; Museum of Fine Arts, **Houston**, February 13 through May 7.

Letters in Gold: *Ottoman Calligraphy from the Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul* draws upon one of Turkey's leading private collections to display 70 exceptional examples of Ottoman-era calligraphy from the pens of such masters as Şeyh Hamdullah, Ahmed Karahısarı, Hafiz Osman and Sami Efendi. The exhibition opens with information on the practical requirements of calligraphy—preparation of the paper, design of the page, manufacture of inks and paints—then presents examples of different calligraphic objects: copies of the Qur'an, albums, display pages, and *firmans*. Catalogue. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, through January 2; Musée du Louvre, **Paris** (titled "Ottoman Calligraphies"), March 17 through May 29.

A Grand Legacy: *Arts of the Ottoman Empire* complements the "Letters in Gold" exhibition (above) with Ottoman paintings, ceramics, textiles and metalwork that express the ambition, grandeur and complexity of the empire. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, through January 2.

The Nature of Islamic Ornament, Part IV: *Figural Representation* uses some 25 objects in various media from the museum's collections to examine the incorrect perception that figural representation was never permitted in Islamic art. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through January 2.

Egyptian Art in the Age of the Pyramids. This large exhibition spans the third through the sixth dynasties, and is the first to focus on the art of the Old Kingdom (2650–2150 BC), the first truly great era of Egyptian art. More than 250 works, ranging from portraits, luxury vessels, reliefs and unpainted limestone heads to furniture, monumental sculpture and tools, have been assembled from more than 30 museums in the US and 10 other countries. Catalogue. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through January 9.

Ikat: *Splendid Silks From Central Asia* features decorative hangings and articles of clothing produced by an intricate process of repeatedly binding and dying weft threads before they are stretched on the loom for weaving. Produced primarily in Samarkand and Bukhara, lustrous ikat fabrics were traded throughout Asia in the 19th century; 30 to 40 examples from the Goldman Collection are on display. Award-winning catalogue. Art Institute of **Chicago**, through January 9.

Cracking Codes: *The Rosetta Stone and Decipherment* marks the bicentenary of the discovery of the famous fragment of black basalt with an updated, multi-section exhibit covering the variety of the world's writing systems and accounts of other, more recent, decipherments, as well as the history of the stone itself and a guide to reading hieroglyphs. Information: www.british-museum.ac.uk. British Museum, **London**, through January 16.

Searching for Ancient Egypt: *Art, Architecture and Artifacts From the University of Pennsylvania Museum* displays 130 highlights of the University's century-old archeology program. They date from 5000 BC to AD 500, and trace the cultural development of the Nile Valley. **Birmingham [Alabama]** Museum of Art, through January 16.

Farouk Hosny/Adam Henein: *Contemporary Egyptian Artists and Heirs to an Ancient Tradition* features 34 abstract paintings by Hosny and 50 sculptures by Henein, who are among the country's most prominent contemporary artists who draw Egypt's rich past and vibrant present as well as their own creative vision. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through January 23.

Secret Gardens: *Paisley and Kashmir Shawls* traces the history of the paisley motif from 17th-century Indian stonework to 20th-century European shawls. Museum of Fine Arts, **Boston**, through January 23.

Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art: *Beyond the Future* exhibits work by 75 artists from 20 countries and regions in media including photography, video, CD-ROM, Internet, painting, sculpture, textiles and ceramics, installation and performance. Catalogue. Information: www.apt3.net. Queensland Art Gallery, **South Brisbane, Australia**, through January 26.

Adobe Dome Building Workshop will allow participants to help build a hemispherical domed roof without forms, using Nubian techniques revived this century by the late architect Hassan Fathy. Instruction in both English and Spanish. Information: 915-229-3199; www.brooksdata.net/personal/adobesim. **Presidio, Texas**, January 28-30.

Life and Ceremony in Urban Algeria focuses on three key celebrations in Algerian life: birth, circumcision and marriage. Each of these occasions is marked by the preparation, exchange and display of costume, jewelry, domestic utensils and furnishings, processes that establish family wealth and prestige, and mark individuals' transition from one stage of life to another. Embroidery, metalwork, ceramics, chests and tables, costumes and gold and silver jewelry are on display as part of the museum's Ethnography Showcase. British Museum, **London**, through January 30.

Matisse in Morocco substantiates the painter's statement that "revelation came to me in the East." During his two journeys to Morocco in 1912 and 1913, Matisse discovered the plasticity of Arab and Islamic architecture and acquired a new understanding of light and its intensity that informed all his subsequent work. Institut du Monde Arabe, **Paris**, through January 30.

Paper: *Trivia and Treasure* focuses on the 1900-year history of paper and how it has influenced life and design through the ages. The papermaking process began its westward spread from China when the Arabs captured Chinese papermakers near Samarkand in the early eighth century; today paper is one of the most ubiquitous materials in the world. Goldstein Gallery, University of **Minnesota, St. Paul**, January 30 through April 8.

The head of a lioness, in silver with inlaid eyes, is one of the **Treasures From the Royal Tombs of Ur**, at the Sackler Gallery, Washington, D.C., through January 17.

Scythian Gold From the Steppes of Ukraine presents 165 of the finest gold objects from Scythian graves and burial mounds, many in the "animal style" associated with the Central Asian steppes, and many excavated since 1975 and thus never before exhibited in the United States. The Scythians were a nomadic people who originated in Central Asia in the early first millennium BC and flourished in what is now Ukraine from the fifth to the third century BC through trade with the Greek cities of the Black Sea coast. Their arms, horse trappings and other artifacts show Near Eastern and Greek influence, and the recently excavated items are causing a reevaluation of the interrelationships among the Aegean world, the Near East, and Central Asia as far east as Mongolia. **San Antonio [Texas] Museum of Art**, through January 30; The Walters Gallery, **Baltimore, Maryland**, March 5 through May 28.

Pharaohs of the Sun: *Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and Tutankhamen* focuses on the cultural flowering of the Amarna period—a brief two decades in the mid-14th century BC—that centered on the revolutionary pharaoh Akhenaten, Egypt's first monotheistic king. His capital, Amarna, was a city of 20,000 to 30,000 people; with his wife, Nefertiti, he engineered a wholesale reorganization of Egyptian religion, art and politics. The exhibition presents more than 300 objects from 37 museums and private lenders. Information: www.mfa.org. Museum of Fine Arts, **Boston**, through February 6; **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art, March 19 through June 4.

World 2000: *Teaching World History and Geography* is a conference sponsored by five Texas universities, designed to offer strategies to help secondary-school and college teachers build more comprehensive curricula —while avoiding "factual overload"—through well-designed thematic and regional approaches. Information: 512-475-7202; fax 512-475-7222; www.dla.utexas.edu/world2000. Hyatt Regency on Town Lake, **Austin, Texas**, February 11-12.

The Enlightened Eye: *Gifts from John Goelet* includes Islamic artworks among his donations to the Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, February 12 through May 7.

Ancient Faces: *Mummy Portraits from Roman Egypt*. During the first to third century in Egypt, painted panel portraits—so-called "Fayum portraits"—were often placed on the heads of mummies. Their direct, full gaze, realism and strong presence bring the inhabitants of Roman Egypt before us with compelling immediacy. Some 70 portraits, along with mummy coverings, masks, jewelry, funerary stelae and related works, are on display. Catalogue. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, February 15 through May 7.

Porcelain Stories: *From China to Europe* explores the history of porcelain from its origins in China to its travels along the Silk Roads and other trade routes to the European discovery—by dint of great effort, trauma and drama—of the secrets of its production. **Seattle** Art Museum, February 17 through May 7.

Flowers of Silk and Gold: *Four Centuries of Ottoman Embroidery* offers a unique window onto urban Ottoman society, for embroideries played a role in most aspects of domestic and public life. A woman's trousseau was begun when she was born, and as soon as she could hold a needle she joined in embroidering napkins, towels, wrapping cloths, quilt covers, coverings for walls, floors and furniture, sashes, scarves and other items of clothing, which were used throughout her life. Men and women also embroidered commercial items, men specializing in heavier materials and producing tents, boots, saddles, quivers and cuirasses. Presented in their historical context, the more than 50 textiles displayed reveal changing social and economic aspects of Ottoman culture. The exhibition also marks the museum's 75th anniversary. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, February 18 through July 30.

Henning Larsen: *The Architect's Studio*. One of the most important architects of his generation, Dane Henning Larsen's works include the Foreign Ministry building in Riyadh. The exhibition focuses on his formal concepts and his working processes. Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, **Humlebæk, Denmark**, through February 27.

The Topkapı Palace: *Jewels and Treasures of the Sultans* features more than 200 artifacts and works of art from Topkapı Palace in Istanbul, for 400 years not only the residence of the rulers of the Ottoman Empire, but also the center of the empire's dynastic power, its military administration and its religious leadership. Corcoran Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**, March 1 through June 23.

Exotica 2000: *The Age of Portuguese Discoveries: Exotic Worlds and their Impact* brings the age of discovery to life, displaying 200 objects from Austrian, Portuguese and Spanish collections that once found their places in the "chambers of wonders" of European merchant houses and rulers. Ostrich eggs, *cocos-de-mer*, narwhale horns and similar oddities, often in precious settings, were collected along with exotica made of mother-of-pearl, ivory, and jade as objects of astonishment. Kunsthistorisches Museum, **Vienna**, March 4 through May.

Recent Acquisitions: *Asian* is one of a year-long, multi-gallery series of exhibitions showcasing recent acquisitions and revealing a glimpse of the collecting practices of an important teaching and research museum. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**. Opens March 11.

Faces of Morocco is the result of Gérard Rondeau's assignment to photograph "personalities of Moroccan culture": writers, painters, historians, sculptors, musicians, architects, actors and film-makers. Musée Eugène Delacroix, **Paris**, December through March 15.

Understanding and Teaching About Islam is a pair of teachers' institutes covering Islamic faith, practice, history, art and culture. Instructors are university professors from the US and elsewhere. Format involves lectures, group study and individual study. There is no tuition charge. Application deadline is March 15. Information: 505-685-4584; www.daralislam.org. Dar al Islam, **Abiquiu, New Mexico**, July 9-22 and July 30-August 12.

Bead Expo 2000: *Sacred and Secular Uses of Beads* is a symposium that investigates the use and influence of beads in culture, art and history, over some 40,000 years of human creativity. Workshops and research sessions and a new designer showcase are other features of the biennial expo. Information: 800-732-6881; www.beadexpo.com. Sweeney Convention Center and La Fonda Hotel, **Santa Fe, New Mexico**, March 22–27.

Exploring Muslim Cultures is a series of exhibits, university courses, forums, lectures and teacher workshops aimed at helping non-Muslims learn about the diversity of the Islamic world and its interactions, past and present, with the West. Exhibits focus on Moroccan textiles; a history of incense; world mosque architecture; Persian painting and more. More than a dozen forums cover cuisine, film, music, health care, history, geography and other contemporary issues. All events are free. Information: 773-325-7863; www.depaul.edu/~islam. De Paul University, **Chicago**, March 31 through July 15.

The Empire of Time: *Myths and Creations* draws from the museum's own collections to explore the legends of time, from primordial chaos to the great creation myths of antiquity and their evolution in eastern and western imagery, drawing connections among different early civilizations and with our own era as well. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, through July 10.

A Seal Upon Thy Heart: *Glyptic Art of the Ancient Near East* features a selection of cylinder seals from ancient Mesopotamia, which had practical functions but were also an exquisite art form. They depicted mythological, decorative or animal scenes, and now provide modern scholars with information on the lives and beliefs of their users. Carlos Museum, Emory University, **Atlanta**, through Fall 2000.

Nuzi and the Hurrians: *Fragments From a Forgotten Past* opens a window on the little-known world of the Hurrians, displaying objects excavated at Nuzi, now Yorghan Tepe, in northeastern Iraq. Nuzi was only a provincial agricultural town, but yielded finds—including nearly 5000 cuneiform tablets—that illuminate everyday life in the 14th century BC. Very early glass, pottery and figurines, jewelry, tools and weapons are among the 150 objects on display. So are texts of depositions taken in a lurid case of malfeasance brought against a town mayor. Harvard Semitic Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, through April 2001.

Mysteries of the Mummies: *Rotating Preview* will present at least one important artifact—a coffin, a mummy, canopic jars, and so on—every six months as the museum cleans and conserves items in its recent acquisition of ancient Egyptian artifacts. Carlos Museum, **Atlanta**, through summer 2001.

The Saudi Aramco Exhibit, which relates the heritage of Arab-Islamic scientists and scholars of the past to the technology of today's petroleum exploration, production and transportation, has been extensively renovated and will be reopened in 2000. **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.

ARAMCO WORLD (ISSN 1044-1891) is published bimonthly by Aramco Services Company, 9009 West Loop South, Houston, Texas 77096-1799.

 Volume 50, Number 6. Periodicals postage paid at Houston, Texas and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
Aramco World,
Box 469008,
Escondido, CA 92046.

"HASSAN FATHY BRIEF"

Many readers have asked us about the gouache paintings by Hassan Fathy reproduced in the July/August 1999 issue of *Aramco World*. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, in Geneva, owns reproduction rights in those images, but the beautiful paintings themselves are in the Rare Books and Special Collections branch of the library of the American University in Cairo. Indeed, Fathy's heirs gave AUC a comprehensive collection of his writings, drawings and photographs, documenting his 65 years of architectural work, to ensure that these materials would remain in Egypt and remain accessible to architects, scholars and researchers. Parts of the AUC Hassan Fathy Archive, which is still being catalogued and conserved, will be formally opened on March 23, 2000 as one highlight of a commemoration of the centennial of Fathy's birth.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION
(USPS FORM 3526)

1. Publication Title: Aramco World. **2.** Publication Number: 1044-1891. **3.** Filing Date: 9/28/99. **4.** Issue Frequency: Bimonthly. **5.** Number of Issues Published Annually: 6. **6.** Annual Subscription Price: Free. **7.** Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: Aramco Services Co., 9009 West Loop South, Houston (Harris Country), Texas 77096-1799. **8.** Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters: Same as item 7. **9.** Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher: Same as item 7; Editor: Robert Arndt, address same as item 7; Managing Editor: None. **10.** Owner: Aramco Services Co., 9009 West Loop South, Houston, Texas 77096-1799. 100 percent of the stock of Aramco Services Co. is owned by Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco), Box 5000, Dhahran 31311, Saudi Arabia. **11.** Known Bondholders: None. **12.** Tax Status: Not applicable. **13.** Publication Title: Aramco World. **14.** Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: July/August 1999. **15.** Extent and Nature of Circulation: Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months: **A.** Net Press Run: 176,413; **B1.** Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions: 172,110; **B2.** 0; **B3.** 0; **B4.** 0; **C.** 172,110; **D1.** 0; **D2.** 0; **D3.** 0; **E.** 0; **F.** 0; **G.** 172,100; **H.** Copies Not Distributed: 4,303; **I.** Total: 176,413; **J.** 100%. **15.** Extent and Nature of Circulation: Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date: **A.** Net Press Run: 184,211; **B1.** Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions: 175,822; **B2.** 0; **B3.** 0; **B4.** 0; **C.** 175,822; **D1.** 0; **D2.** 0; **D3.** 0; **E.** 0; **F.** 0; **G.** 175,822; **H.** Copies Not Distributed: 8,389; **I.** Total: 184,211; **J.** 100%. **16.** Publication of Statement of Ownership: November/December 1999. **17.** Signature and Title: /s/ Robert Arndt, Editor. Date: 9/28/99.
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