Saudi Aramco World

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Art Rocks in Saudi Arabia

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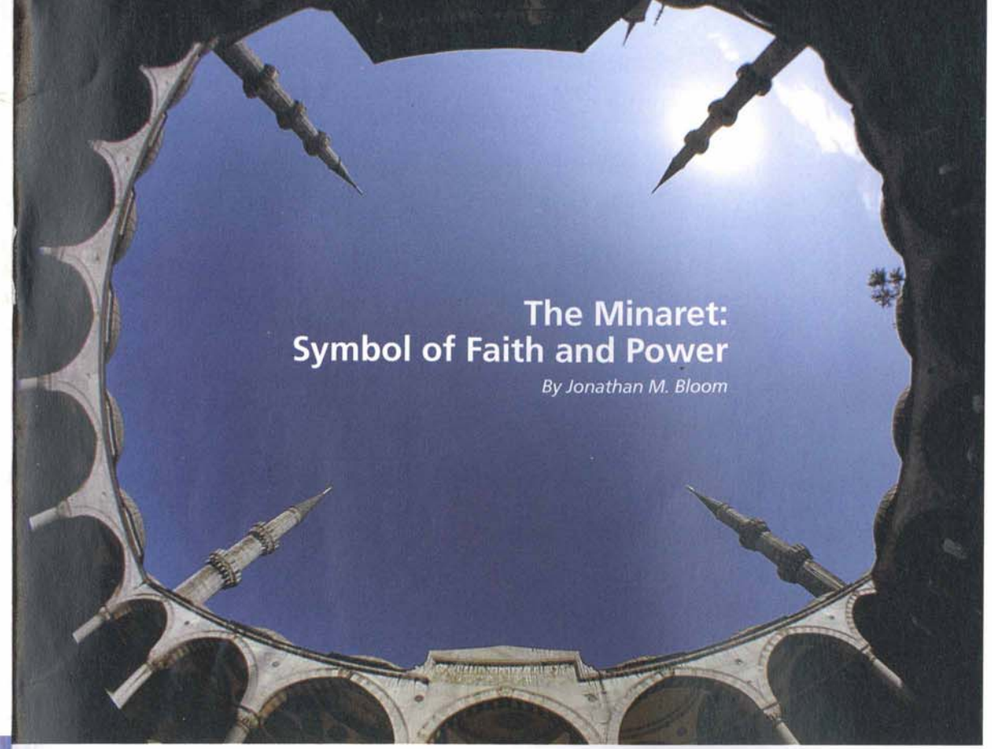

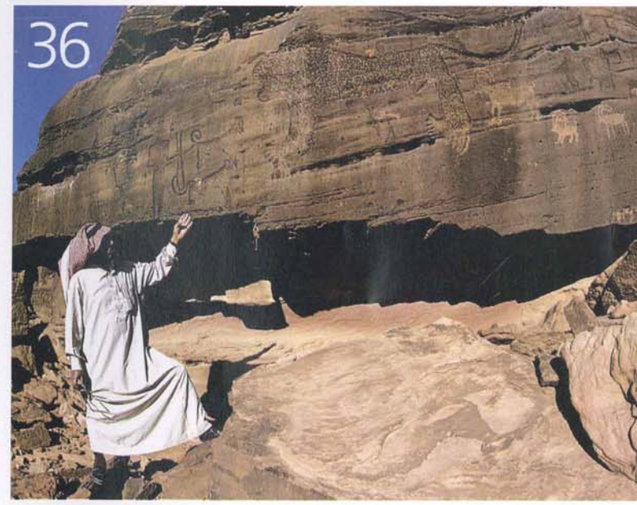

26: TOR EIGELAND

Cover:

At Shuwaymas, carved-out human footprints, serpentine squiggles and inscrutable designs mingle with depictions of animals and the humans who thrived in the Arabian Peninsula during its transition from post-Ice Age savanna to today's deserts. "We kept coming back to reflect on the stories the petroglyphs tell," says Mahboub Habbas al-Rasheedi, who first saw the site in March 2001. "Somehow we are connected to them." Photo by Lars Bjurström.

Back Cover:

İsmail Yılmaz of Erzurum Atlıspor gallops downfield on Dadas II in the national *cirit* championships in Erzurum, Turkey. The horse's name is a historic one that recalls the chivalric ideals of the centuries when Seljuqs and Ottomans ruled Anatolia. Photo by Thorne Anderson.

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

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In the spring of the year 1539, a tall black man lay mortally wounded by Zuni arrows in the village of Hawikuh, in what is today northwestern New Mexico. If he prayed in his last breaths, he surely addressed God as "Allah." How did a Muslim come to visit—and die in—New Mexico in the early 16th century? I had never come across such a figure during my university history studies in the United States, nor had I read of him in French history books at the lycée in Casablanca, Morocco, where I grew up. I heard of him only quite recently, by accident.

My father lived in Morocco for more than 50 years until his death in 1994. He left to me and my brothers a restored pasha's residence in the old city of Azemmour, near the Atlantic coast. While sorting through his personal papers, I came upon a small sketch in a leather-bound guest book. It portrayed a handsome young man with full lips and high cheekbones. A solitary feather adorned a head of tight curls. The drawing bore the signature of John Houser of El Paso, Texas.

Intrigued, I called the artist on my return to the United States. He explained that his drawing was the likeness of a 16th-century North African slave called "Esteban" or "Estebanico" by his Spanish masters, a man better known in his native Morocco as "al-Zemmouri" ("the man from Azemmour"). He was, in fact, one of the first natives of the Old World to explore the American Southwest.

In 1993, Houser had been a guest in my father's home while he worked at the nearby studio of noted Zemmouri sculptor Abderrahmane Rahoule. Over a period of three weeks, using a Moroccan model, Houser created a clay bust of the "black Arab, and...native of Azamor" whom we know today thanks to the lengthy, detailed memoir of conquistador Cabeza de Vaca, which carries the title *La relación y comentarios del governador Alvar nuñez cabeça de vaca, de lo acaescido en las dos jornadas que hizo a las Indias (The Account and Commentaries of Governor Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, of What Occurred on the Two Journeys That He Made to the Indies)*.

Al-Zemmouri's town derives its name from a Berber word for "wild olive tree." Today, the reflection of the town's

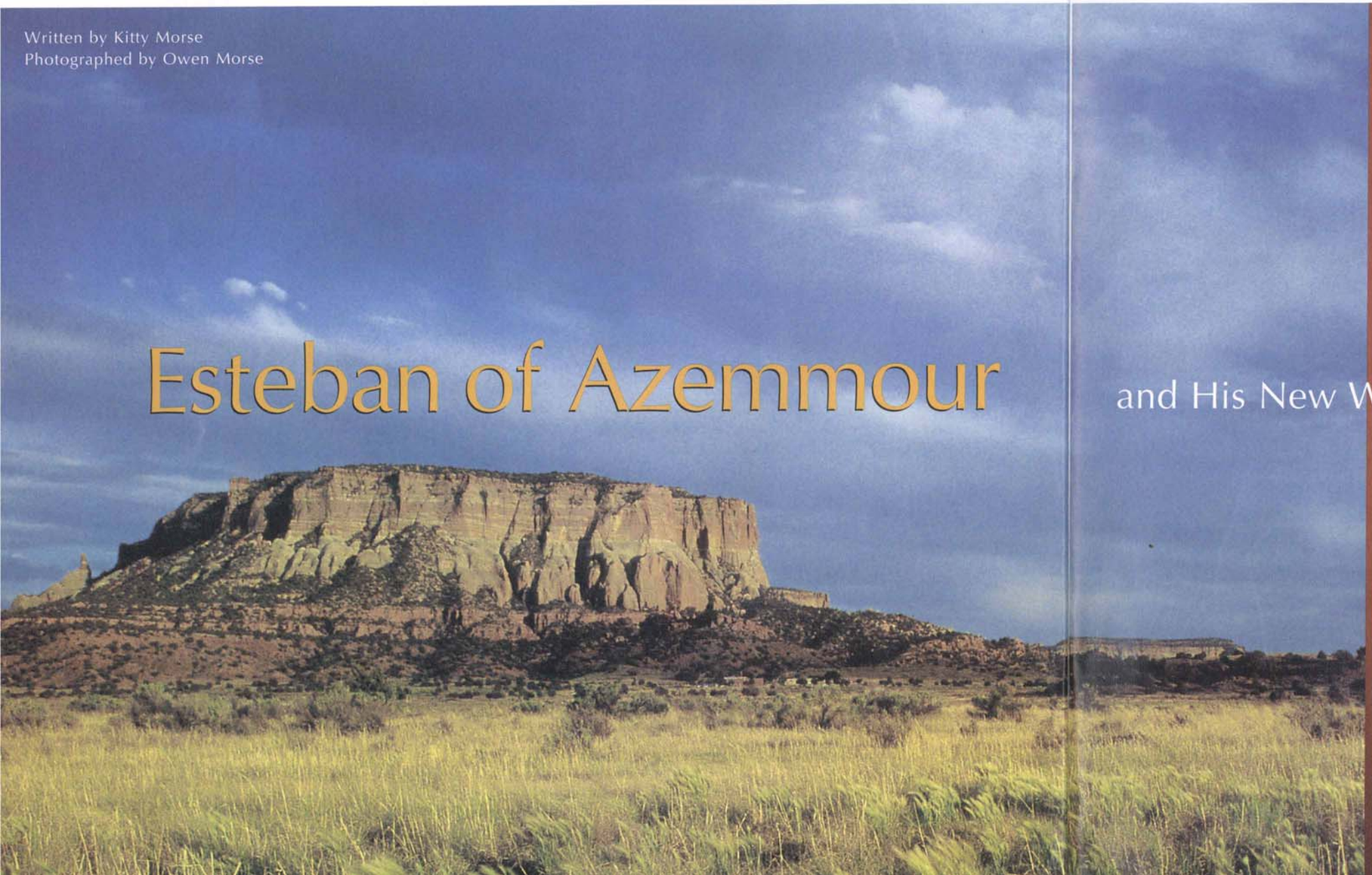
BUST: COURTESY OF NICK HOUSER

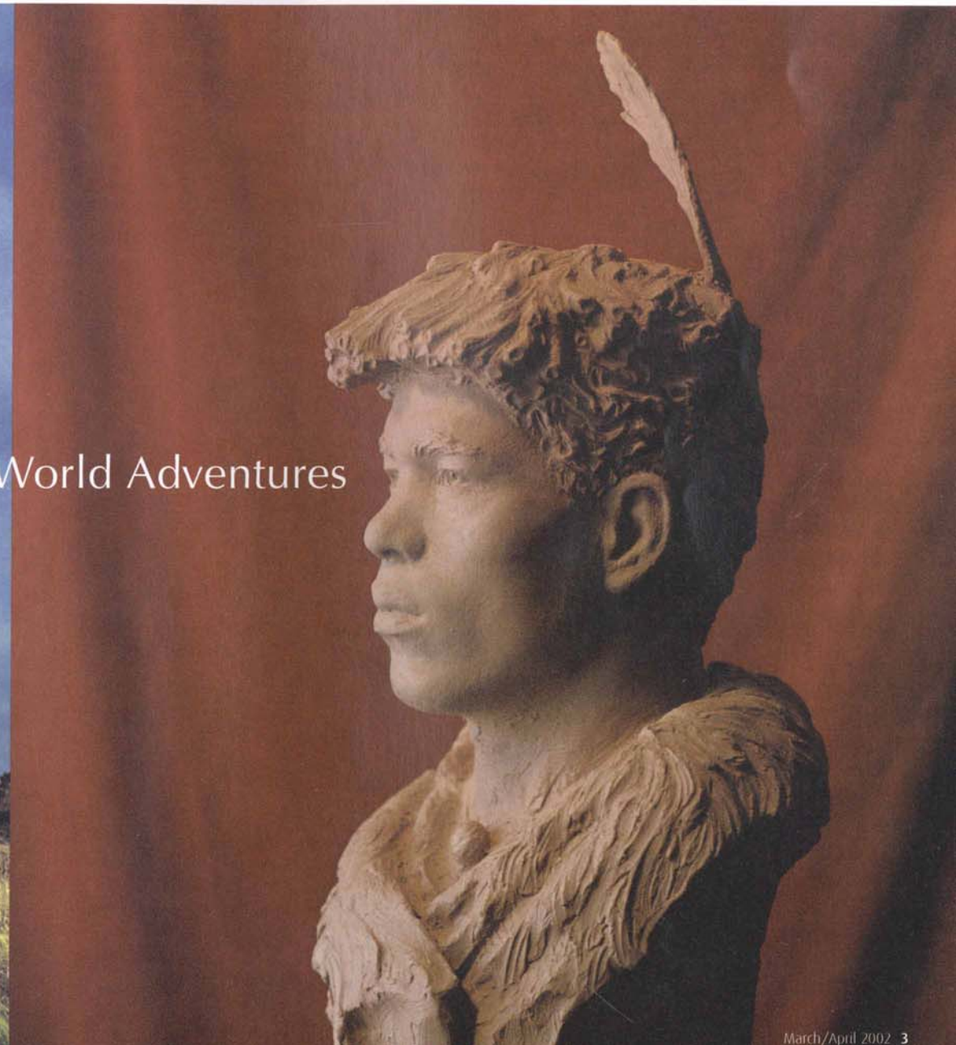
Below: **No contemporary likenesses of Esteban are known, but the age and features of the Moroccan model who sat for this modern clay bust fit the surviving written descriptions.** Below left: **Corn Mountain stands near Hawikuh, where Esteban died after 12 years of wandering in what are now northern Mexico and the southwestern United States.** Left: **A city gate in Azemmour, Morocco. The Portuguese installed a portcullis here during their 30-year occupation of the city in the 16th century.**

Written by Kitty Morse
Photographed by Owen Morse

Esteban of Azemmour

and His New World Adventures





massive white ramparts in the Oum er Rbia River is one of Morocco's more picturesque landmarks. The walls surround the labyrinthine *madinah*, or old city center, as well as the 500-year-old ruins of a Portuguese garrison, established there during a 30-year occupation. Portuguese cornices, decorated in the ornate Manueline style, still frame the majestic windows of their 16th-century military headquarters.

Long before the Portuguese occupation, however, Phoenicians and, later, Romans traveled down the Atlantic coast to trade with the indigenous Berbers of Azemmour. By the 12th century, the town had become a center of Islamic culture; philosophers like Moulay Bouchaib Erredad attracted disciples there from across the Arab world. One of them, Lallah Aicha Bahria, undertook the long journey from her native Baghdad to visit Erredad, but she died on the northern bank of the river, just a stone's throw away from her long-awaited meeting with her mentor and lifelong correspondent. The town erected a monument to her at the river's mouth and to this day women from around the country visit the site to seek guidance in resolving affairs of the heart.

Three centuries after Lallah Bahria's death, the Republic of Azemmour was composed of a patchwork of tribes and shaykhdoms. At the time of al-Zemmouri's birth, around 1500, skirmishes between local Berbers and Portuguese invaders were on the rise. In 1508, the king of Portugal exacted an annual tribute in kind from the town: 10,000 *achabel*, a species of shad prized as much for its delicious flavor as for its oil, which the Portuguese burned in their lamps.

In 1513, Shaykh Moulay Zeyyam defiantly withheld the tribute. Portugal responded with a flotilla of 400 ships bearing 8000 men and 2500 horses. On August 27, during a fierce battle that lasted more than four hours, the Portuguese set fire to barges on the river and delivered a crushing military blow to the Zemmouris. Their dominance restored, the Portuguese regained access to the *achabel*—and also to wheat, wool and horses, which they traded for gold and slaves in sub-Saharan outposts.

As a young man, al-Zemmouri may have heard rumors and stories of adventure from Portuguese sailors. There was no shortage of adventure to be had: Prior to his circumnavigation of the globe, Ferdinand Magellan was among those who spent time in Azemmour, and in fact was severely wounded in a battle with Berbers.

In 1521, drought and famine ravaged the Maghrib. Shad, once so plentiful, virtually disappeared from the shrinking Oum er Rbia. The fertile Doukkala plains surrounding Azemmour became parched and barren. Many starving Zemmouris were captured by Portuguese and sold into slavery; others sold themselves to the Portuguese in exchange for food. The exact circumstances of al-Zemmouri's enslavement remain a mystery. We do know that a Spanish aristocrat of modest means, Andres de Dorantes, looking for a personal servant, purchased him in a slave market of Castile.

In 1527, Dorantes's royal connections won him a commission and orders to join the expeditionary force of Pámfilo de Narváez, a one-eyed, red-haired veteran of the conquests of Cuba and New Spain (now Mexico) who was already infamous for his cruelty toward the people of the Americas. Esteban, as he was now known, accompanied Dorantes. King Charles V of Spain granted him the authority to settle all of La Florida, a territory that stretched from the southern tip of the Florida peninsula westward to the "Rio de las Palmas," today's Soto de la Marina River in the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico.

The route of the Narváez expedition remains subject to debate. Cabeza de Vaca, the group's treasurer, did not write his *Relación* until 12 years afterward, and it includes great miscalculations of distances and dates, and confused chronology.

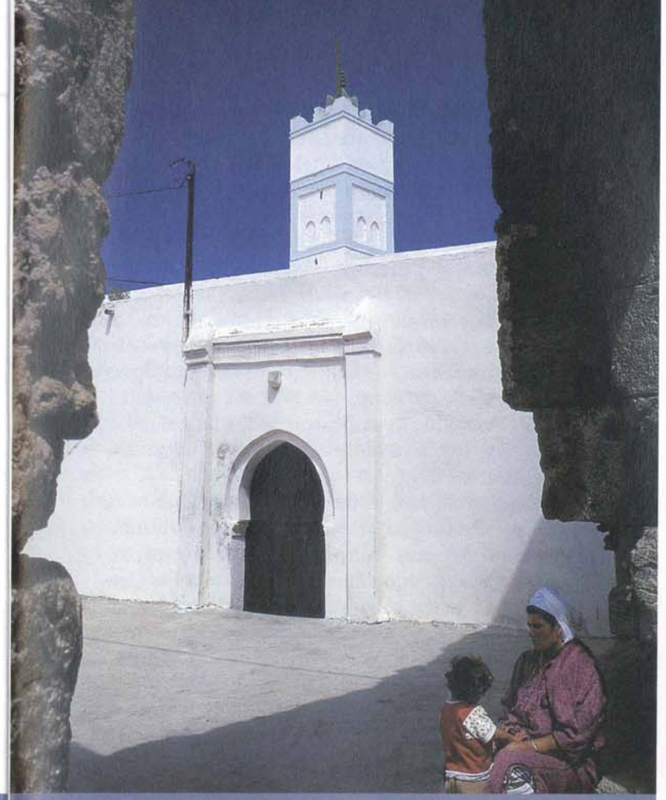
The expedition's departure from Spain, however, is well documented. On June 17, 1527, Narváez and his crew of 600 set sail in five caravels from San Lucar de Barrameda in Andalusia. It would become, according to translators Martin A. Favata and José B. Fernández, "one of the most disastrous enterprises in the annals of Spanish history."

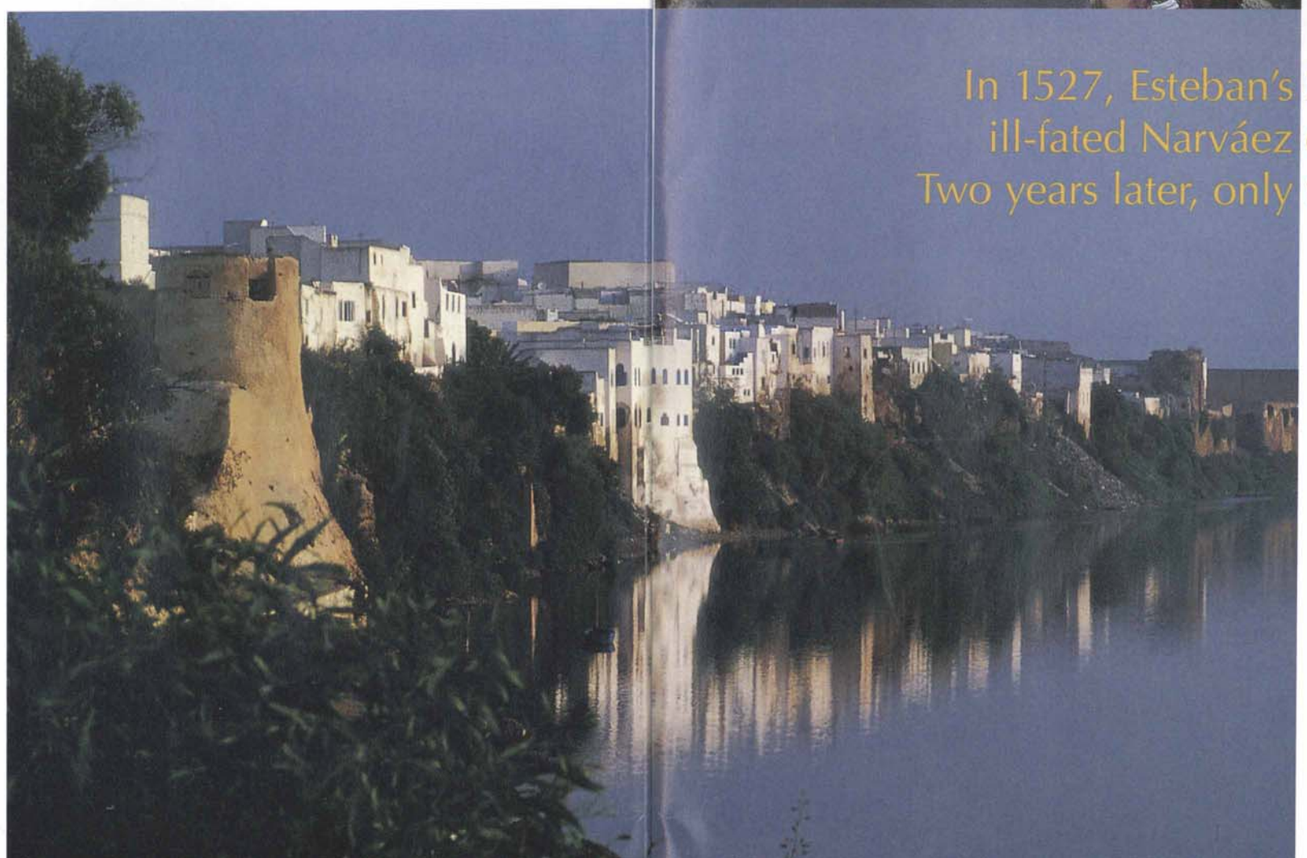
The Atlantic crossing proved so arduous that 140 men jumped ship upon reaching the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. Soon afterward, 60 people and 20 horses perished in a hurricane off the coast of Trinidad. The Spaniards finally dropped anchor off the La Florida coast on April 12, 1528, somewhere near today's Old Tampa Bay (or perhaps Sarasota Bay). Narváez took formal possession of La Florida on May 1 of that year.

He then decided to send his ships and 100 of his men ahead to their final destination, Pánuco, on Mexico's Gulf Coast, while he led the rest of his force there overland—a journey whose length he apparently underestimated.

Narváez, Esteban and the rest of the expedition headed north to the province of Apalachee, near the present city of Tallahassee, where, according to captured Timicuan Indians, there were great quantities of gold. Instead, the Spaniards found 15 huts and a few meager plots of maize. Narváez was bitterly disappointed.

The ensuing weeks were fraught with fever, drownings and Indian attacks. To ward off starvation, some of the men resorted to eating their horses. Only the threat of mutiny persuaded Narváez to abandon the march on August 4. He gave orders to return to the coast. There, he and his men built five small boats. "And we agreed that we would make nails, saws, axes and other necessary tools out of our stirrups, spurs, crossbows and other iron items we had, since we had such a great need for this," noted Cabeza de Vaca. They used horsehair to fashion riggings and rope, and sewed their shirts together for sails. They "skinned the legs of the horses in one piece and cured the hides to make skins for carrying water."





In 1527, Esteban's Spanish master joined the ill-fated Narváez expedition, numbering 600 men. Two years later, only four were still alive.

By the time they set sail, they had lost more than 40 more of their number to illness and starvation, not counting those killed by Indians. Only one horse remained. Esteban, his master Dorantes, Castillo and a crew of 45 left the "Bay of Horses"—possibly in today's Apalachee Bay—on September 22. "So great was our hardship," wrote Cabeza de Vaca, who took the helm of another of the boats, "that...it forced us...to go out into such rough seas without having anyone with us who knew the art of navigation."

The water bags made of hide rotted within a few days, and the men who attempted to drink seawater died in agony. The meager rations of raw corn were soon depleted. Yet

Above: **The long-quiet Portuguese garrison in Azemmour.** Left: **The Oum er Rbia River has blessed Azemmour with both beauty and an abundant fishing economy. It was during a famine, however, that al-Zemmouri became a slave—either by capture or because, in desperation, he sold himself to live.** Opposite, top: **The text on the city seal: "Azemmour, protected by God."**

Esteban and his companions clung to life. At the mercy of capricious winds, they drifted westward along the Gulf Coast, coming ashore periodically to forage for food and replenish their water supply. In this manner, they covered more than 1500 kilometers (930 mi) in just over 40 days.

At the mouth of the Mississippi, strong currents pushed two of the boats, including the one piloted by Narváez, out to sea. They were never seen again. Relief came to the others on November 6, when, according to Cabeza de Vaca, "a great wave took us and cast the boat out of the water as far as a horseshoe can be tossed. The boat ran aground with such force that it revived the men on it, who were almost dead." They were on the island of Malhado near modern-day Galveston Island, Texas.

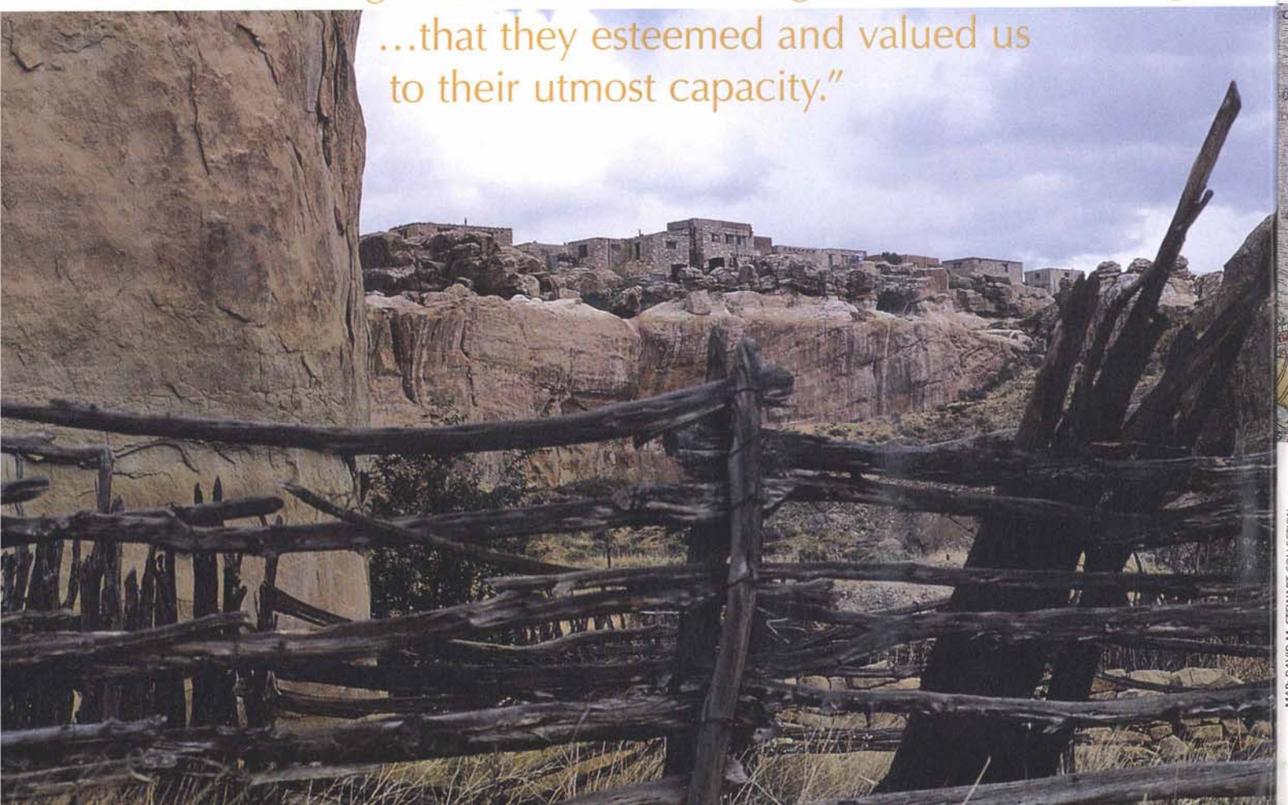
The Indians inhabiting the island, while friendly at first, quickly turned against the expedition. Fifteen of the survivors —including Cabeza de Vaca, Castillo, Dorantes and Esteban—were enslaved and dispersed among several local tribes—an ironic twist for the already enslaved Zemmouri.

The Indians, in awe of their prisoners' mental and physical fortitude, ordered them to act as medicine men during an epidemic of dysentery. Cabeza de Vaca relates that "they wanted to make us physicians, without testing or asking for any degrees, because they cure illnesses by blowing on the sick person and cast out the illness with their breath and their hands. So they told us to be useful and do the same. We laughed at the idea, saying they were mocking us and that we did not know how to heal. They in turn deprived us of our food until we did as they ordered."

Castillo was the first to try his hand at healing, and—doubtless to his own surprise—he was successful. As word spread, he enlisted the aid of Dorantes and Cabeza de Vaca. Esteban, too, soon became a healer, ministering to increasing numbers of patients. Cabeza de Vaca wrote, "Our fame spread throughout the area, and all the Indians who heard about it came looking for us so that we could cure them and bless their children.... People came from many places seeking us, saying that we were truly children of the sun. Up to this time Dorantes and the black man had not performed any healings, but we all became healers because so many people insisted. They believed that none of them would die as long as we were there."

Nonetheless, the "children of the sun" still hoped to reach Pánuco. On September 15, 1534, when their captors were busy harvesting prickly-pear fruit, they made an escape, and were taken in by another tribe that had heard of their abilities. The four began performing minor surgical procedures, using European techniques of the day: On one occasion they opened a man's chest to remove an arrowhead. "The entire village came to see [the arrowhead] and they sent it further

Forced to work as healers by their captors, the survivors met with astonishing success. Their cures "gave us such standing ...that they esteemed and valued us to their utmost capacity."



MAP: DAVID M. STEWART COLLECTION

Above: **This woodcut map, dated 1550, realistically traces the shapes of the Gulf of Mexico and peninsular Florida; however, it vastly underestimates the size of the present territory of northern Mexico and the southwestern United States.** Left: **Acoma Pueblo, built on a fortress-like mesa not far from Zuni territory, repelled the Spanish until the year after Esteban's death. Like the Zuni settlements, it lay in the region the Spanish called Cibola, rumored to be of fabulous wealth.** Above right: **The dragon has been a symbol of Azemmour since the Middle Ages.**

inland so that the people could see it. Because of this cure, they made many dances and festivities as is their custom...and this cure gave us such standing throughout the land that they esteemed and valued us to their utmost capacity."

The Spaniards thought it wise to appoint Esteban as intermediary between themselves and any natives they might encounter in their wanderings, for only he had learned six of the local dialects. Cabeza de Vaca explained another reason as well: "We enjoyed a great deal of authority and dignity among [the Indians], and to maintain this we spoke very little to them. The black man always spoke to them, ascertaining which way to go and...all the other things we wanted to know."

Esteban's abilities, and the position of the four men as wanderers in a new world where their very survival was in question, made his status that of companion rather than slave. And none of the four men could have imagined how their understanding of native medicine was to change their status, and their standard of living, among all the other tribes they would encounter.

As their medical miracles multiplied, so did the gifts. The four were held in such awe that they could lay claim to anyone or acquire possession of anything. Yet they sought no riches. "After we had entered their homes," writes Cabeza de Vaca, "they offered us everything they had.... We would give all these things to their leaders for them to distribute."

Medicine men from the Arbadaos tribe, who made their home on the banks of the Concho River near present-day Big Spring, Texas presented Esteban and the others with two sacred gourds and an engraved copper rattle. These objects greatly added to their credibility as shamans. "From here on we began to carry the gourds with us, and added to our authority with this bit of ceremony, which is very important to them." For the Indians, hollow gourds with pebbles in them were "a sign of great solemnity, since they bring them out only for dances and for healing ceremonies, and no one else dares touch them....

They say that those gourds have powers and that they came from heaven, because there are none in that land.... They are washed down by the rivers during the floods."

Around Christmas 1536, the four healers and the legions of Indian followers they had acquired reached the Pueblo de los Corazones ("Village of Hearts"), today the town of Ures, 160 kilometers (100 mi) from the Gulf of California, in the state of Sonora, Mexico. "At this time," Cabeza de Vaca writes, "Castillo saw a buckle from a sword belt around an Indian's neck, with a horseshoe nail sewn to it.... We asked the Indians what it was. They replied it had come from heaven. We questioned them further, asking who had brought it from there. They told us that some bearded men like us, with horses, lances and swords, [had done so]."

Cabeza de Vaca, Dorantes, Castillo, and probably Esteban as well, desperately wanted to make contact with their countrymen, the first they had heard of in more than eight years. De Vaca's Indian companions, however, were reluctant to search for them. They knew of Spanish plunder, slave raids and brutal killings, and that local Indians did not plant crops for fear of attracting the attention of the avaricious Spaniards. De Vaca writes: "When I saw [the Indians'] unwillingness,... I took the black man and eleven Indians and, following the trail of the Christians...caught up with four...on horseback, who were quite perturbed to see me so strangely dressed and in the company of Indians. They looked at me for a long time, so astonished that they were not able to speak or ask questions. I told them to take me to their captain.... After I spoke to him, he told me that he had quite a problem because he had not been able to capture Indians for many days...[so] he and his men were beginning to suffer want and hunger.... He wanted me to ask [the Indians] to bring us food, although this was not necessary since they always took care to bring us everything they could."

The fact that their countrymen were taking slaves, and indeed demanded that de Vaca turn his Indian followers over to them, caused Cabeza de Vaca, Castillo and Dorantes great distress, and made the long-hoped-for reunion only bittersweet. "They said that they were lords of that land, and that the Indians should obey and serve them, but the Indians believed very little or nothing of what they were saying," especially that there was some kind of bond between

the slave-raiders and the "children of the sun." "Speaking among themselves, [the Indians] said instead that the Christians [the Spaniards] were lying, because we [the children of the sun] had come from the East and they [the Spaniards] had come from the West; that we healed the sick and they killed the healthy; that we were naked and barefoot, and they were dressed and on horseback, with lances; that we coveted nothing but instead gave away everything that was given to us and kept none of it, while the sole purpose of the others was to steal everything they found, never giving anything to anybody."

Cabeza de Vaca could not hide his dismay at the other Spaniards' cruelty and greed, and in fact in his *Relación* he would urge more humane policies on the Spanish crown. Years later, as governor and captain-general of the South American province of Rio de la Plata, de Vaca would initiate a number of progressive reforms in Indian affairs.

Under Spanish escort, the four reached San Miguel de Culiacán, 150 kilometers (90 mi) away, where they met with the mayor, Captain Melchior Diaz. He seemed to lend a more receptive ear to their pleas of leniency towards the Indians. Diaz instructed the Indians that if they professed a belief in God, they would be left in peace. (His promises were broken before the four Narváez survivors had reached Mexico City.)

Above: **Today Hawikuh is a ruin, without signs of its former fortifications.** Opposite: **Sculptor John Houser and Nick Houser with the bronze bust of Esteban, whom the brothers want to see honored as part of the city of El Paso's "Twelve Travelers" project.**

On July 24 in Mexico City, Antonio de Mendoza, the viceroy of New Spain, greeted the four with fanfare, but their return to the Spanish fold was not without difficulty. For almost nine years, they had gone naked and lived off the land like the Indians. They found it hard to adapt to contemporary Spanish life.

For his part, Esteban became a well-known figure on the streets of Mexico City, and he enjoyed relative freedom. However, his linguistic abilities soon caught the viceroy's attention. He acquired Esteban from Dorantes, and appointed the Moroccan interpreter and scout for the expedition of the French-born Franciscan Fray Marcos de Niza, who was being sent north to investigate rumors of great wealth beyond the northern border of New Spain.

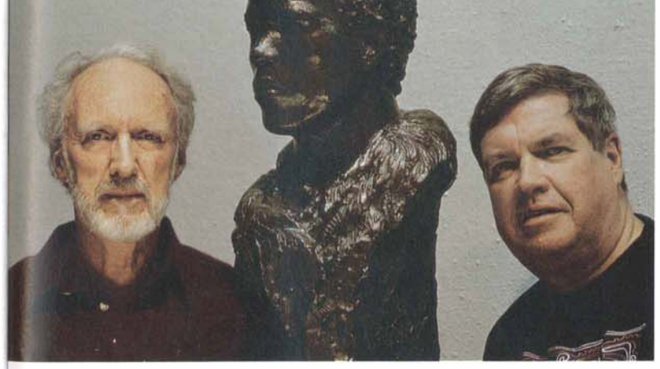
Hernando de Alarcón, a contemporary of Esteban's who would later investigate his death, describes the dashing Moroccan's departure from Mexico City on March 7, 1539 with an entourage of women, Indians and several Spanish friars, including Fray Marcos, the titular head of the expedition. Esteban was wearing "certain things which did ring, ...bels and feathers on his armes and legs," and he was flanked by a pair of what were probably Spanish greyhounds. The animals must have been a comforting presence to Esteban, since this breed of gazehound is descended from the North African saluki, a dog believed by Moroccans to possess *baraka*, or a blessing.

The Moroccan and the friar did not see eye-to-eye. Pedro de Castañeda, a soldier who accompanied Coronado on a subsequent northward expedition, gives us this explanation: "The Negro did not get on well with the friars, because he took the women that were given him and collected turquoises.... Besides, the Indians in those places through which they traveled got along better with the Negro, because they had seen him before."

Esteban traveled some distance ahead of the main body of the expedition. Near their destination, in spite of strict orders to await Fray Marcos, he pressed onward to the village of Hawikuh, 20 kilometers (12 mi) southwest of today's Zuni Pueblo. He apparently expected the Zunis to greet him with the same fanfare he had experienced when visiting other tribes. He was, it turned out, overconfident.

He sent messengers ahead to the fortified village bearing his gourd rattle adorned with a white and a red feather. But the village chief reacted with scorn, either because the decorated gourd came from a hostile tribe, or because Esteban had unknowingly disrupted a sacred ceremony. According to Nick Houser, an anthropologist and project historian for the Twelve Travelers Memorial of the Southwest, "al-Zemmouri was probably just in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Esteban may have expected to be greeted as an important healer; the Zunis may have thought he was a spy for the Spanish.



The chief denied Esteban and his entourage entry to the pueblo, and ordered them confined outside the village. For three days, they were denied food and water while the council of elders debated. Some suspected Esteban of being a Spanish spy. Others thought it unreasonable that the white-skinned Spaniards would send a black man as a herald to their pueblo, as the Moroccan had claimed.

According to a secondhand account in Fray Marcos de Niza's *Relación*, which is taken from testimony of surviving Indian members of Esteban's party, "in a great rage [the chief] threw the mace to the ground and said: 'I know these people; these bells are not of the same style as ours; tell them to go away at once, because otherwise there will not be one of them left alive.'" Unfortunately, as they were virtually imprisoned, leaving "at once" was not possible. Desperately thirsty, Esteban attempted to reach water at a nearby river, and was immediately shot down by Zuni bowmen. According to Alarcón, the chief appropriated Esteban's precious belongings, including "four green dishes which he had gotten, together with that dogge, and other things of a blacke man."

Learning of the massacre at Hawikuh, Fray Marcos retreated to Mexico City, where his account of the journey referred to the village and others around it—which he had not laid eyes on—as "The Seven Cities of Cibola," and described them as immensely rich. Scholars disagree on the reason for his mendacity; perhaps it was simply a desire to have something positive to report to the viceroy. The result, in any case, was Francisco Vásquez de Coronado's expedition of 1540 to conquer what by then were believed to be cities of gold.

Five hundred years later, a centenarian Zuni oral historian told the following story in the 1992 television documentary *Surviving Columbus: The Story of the Pueblo People*, produced by the Institute of American Indian Arts for PBS:

The people who lived at the steaming springs had a giant who led them, who walked ahead of them as their guide. And the people from Hanihipinnkya had the twin war gods as their leaders. The Sun Father knew that the giant could not be killed, so that when they brought the weapons to the twin war gods they pierced them with arrows, but the giant wouldn't die.... Sun Father said: 'His heart is in the gourd rattle. The gourd is his heart, and if you destroy it you will kill him, and your way will be cleared.' The younger war god stepped forward from the fighting and shot the gourd rattle. The giant fell and all of his people ran away.

Could this legend be a reference to Esteban?

Four hundred fifty years after his death at Hawikuh, Esteban returned to the American Southwest in the form of John Houser's clay bust. After plaster impressions, waxing and investing, a bronze replica was finally cast, and it is currently on display at the XII Travelers Gallery in El Paso. Nick Houser hopes that a two-meter (12') statue of Esteban al-Zemmouri will be unveiled soon as one of the 12 such statues commissioned by the city of El Paso to commemorate the most important explorers of the American Southwest.

Kitty Morse (www.kittymorse.com) was born in Casablanca. She is the author of nine cookbooks, most recently *The Scent of Orange Blossoms* (co-authored with Danielle Mamane, Ten Speed Press, 2001). For assistance during her research she thanks archeologist Aboulkacem Chebri, historian Guy Martinet and Nick Houser. **Owen Morse** is a free-lance food and travel photographer whose work has frequently illustrated his wife's books.

BROTHERS OF THE JAVELIN

A TRADITIONAL TURKISH SPORT COMES BACK

WRITTEN BY LOUIS WERNER
PHOTOGRAPHED BY THORNE ANDERSON

"*Cirit* brings peace where it once brought war. It binds players, horses and javelins into a harmonious whole. **It belongs to all the Turkish cultures** —Seljuq, Ottoman, Republican— **that make us who we are.**"

—Nihat Gezder

For the city Turks of Istanbul and Izmir, the windswept reaches of eastern Anatolia are the land of the *dadas*, a regional word of compliment and respect that means "brother" and carries chivalric connotations. There, the Byzantine frontier fortress of Theodosiopolis became, in 1048, one of the first Seljuq conquests on this rolling, broken plateau. Today, as modern Erzurum, 725 kilometers (450 mi) east of Ankara, the city is still a repository of the old Seljuq values of honor, fierce competition and, of course, horsemanship.

Dadas II, however, is no "brother knight"; he's not even a human: He's a one-eyed white stallion, and his rider, İsmail Yılmaz, carries on tradition as a player of *cirit* (pronounced "ji*reet*"), a javelin-throwing sport played on horseback since Ottoman times. Dadas II and Yılmaz have reached the 2001 national *cirit* championships in Erzurum; their seven-man team, called Erzurum Atlıspor, is set to compete against two other local teams and a visiting delegation from Manisa, a city in western Turkey. At stake are the bragging rights as the best of this year's Turkish equestrians—and a small trophy.

Cirit means "javelin" in Turkish, and as a game it has metamorphosed over the past several centuries from a martial drill into a full-blown spectator sport. Its avid core of present-day aficionados is centered in Erzurum, where the sport has its own stadium, and a new rule book is evolving in response to feedback from fans and players. While the game needs no introduction in eastern Anatolia, where 15 out of the 20 teams in the National Cirit Federation are based, the challenge now, in the mind of federation president Nihat Gezder, is to introduce *cirit* as a televised sport to the nation. Later, if Istanbul is chosen for the summer Olympics in 2012, he hopes it can be presented to a worldwide audience as an exhibition sport.

As a former basketball player, Gezder appreciates any game whose outcome can hang in the balance until the final moments of play, and his tweaking of the rules has this end in mind. He already presents well-attended demonstration matches in Turkey's bigger cities each summer, every year drawing more fan interest. "By the time Istanbul plays host to the Mediterranean Games in 2005," he boasts, "every Turk will know *cirit* as well as they know football."

Cirit certainly has all the makings of a popular spectator sport: speed, skill, pageantry, high scores and danger. Its roots go back to the off-season practice of the Ottoman cavalrymen known as *sipahis*, who were, as Jason Goodwin wrote in *Lords of the Horizons*, "if not the first centaurs to bear arms since the days of myth, then men at any rate hard to tell apart from their horses."

A modern *cirit* field is nothing like the real Ottoman battlegrounds outside city or fortress walls, where the spear-, bow-, and sword-armed *sipahis*, said to number 150,000 at the height of their power in the 18th century, faced musket-bearing Europeans. The Turks derided the musketeers as "mounted apothecaries" for their reliance on powder horns, bullet pouches and loops of fuse; in turn, Pietro della Valle, an Italian traveler in Istanbul in the year 1615, records that the English ambassador "laughed at the old style of weapons being carried" by the Ottoman soldiers he watched passing by. "But...," della Valle reports, "I said that they were not to be despised because of this, for it was with just these weapons, rather than arquebuses and guns, that they had taken from the rest of us [Europeans] the strongholds of Rhodes, Agrigento, Chios, and many other famous fortresses."

Longer and narrower than an American football field, a *cirit* field measures 132 by 40 meters (144x40 yd). There are three "end zones" at each end of the field, each about six meters (20') deep: a team's waiting area, a neutral zone and the opposing team's throwing area. A modern *cirit* javelin is a meter-long, rubber-tipped stick of turned beechwood that somewhat resembles a pool cue—not nearly as lethal as the barbed steel Ottoman version that today is displayed in Istanbul's Military Museum.

The game begins with a rider cantering his horse toward the other team's end zone, entering the throwing area and launching his *cirit* across the neutral zone at any one of the other team's seven players. The defending players use their own *cirit*s to deflect the incoming one—most often successfully—whereupon any one of them can spur his mount at the attacking player, who must simultaneously wheel his horse around to gallop back upfield.

This element of surprise and the fast-charging chase is the heart of the game's excitement. The pursuer tries

Left: **Nihat Gezder, president of the National Cirit Federation, makes a point about the game's modern rule book, a work in progress.** Below left: **A mural of a *cirit* match adorns the single café in the village of Dereboğazi, home to one of this year's top teams.** Below: **In Erzurum, passersby read the sports pages in a park during the three-day national *cirit* championships.** Lower: **The rubber tip on a modern 110-centimeter (43") *cirit* means the game—played without helmets or padding—may not be deadly but can still be dangerous.**

Previous spread: **If a player deflects an opponent's opening throw, he may pursue the attacker either to throw a retaliatory *cirit* or to catch up with him and "spare his life."** Top: **Today the Turkish army maintains some of the ceremonies of the famed and feared Ottoman *sipahis*.** Above: **A decorated plate shows a cavalry maneuver.**

to launch his own *cirit* at the retreating player, who must either evade the toss with a deft shift in his saddle, or reach out and catch the *cirit* in midair, or be hit. But the pursuer has another option as well: Instead of throwing, the pursuer may, if his horse has a good start, try to outride the other, drawing abreast of him and shouting "*Bağişliyorum!*" ("I spare your life!") —a gesture that echoes the chivalry, real and imagined, of long-ago battles.

Indeed, the game of *cirit* echoes all the tactics and conventions of a cavalry battle: quick retreats, evasive maneuvering in the saddle, challenges to single combat, defiance of an opponent's weapon and a regard for the well-being of one's horse before one's own. (Tellingly, the veterinarian on hand for the match is one of Erzurum's best; his counterpart for human injuries is a mere medical intern.)

Flag-waving referees posted at the center line and at each end of the field award both positive and negative points: positive points for hitting an opposing player, outriding him or catching an incoming *cirit*; negative points for infractions that might endanger the horse, such as riding out of bounds or intentionally striking a horse, or for falling off, throwing from inside the neutral zone or throwing from closer than five meters (16') during pursuit.

Dadas II and İsmail Yılmaz are in good company. His best teammates come from two *cirit* dynasties in the outlying farming village of Çiftlik. Teammate Erdinç İncesu, mounted on Sokollu (named for Sultan Selim II's grand vizier Sokollu Mehmet Pasha), and his brothers Muhittin (on Uçan Tay, "Flying Colt") and Dinar (on Aslan, "Lion") are coached by their elder sibling Recep, as well as their father, Hanfi, a 75-year-old white-bearded patriarch. Speaking with a chuckle from behind his dark-tinted glasses, Hanfi says, "I may not ride fast anymore, but I can still get to town in a hurry when I want to."

Yılmaz and the İncesu clan are joined on the team by the Dedeoğlu family players Necmi and Metin, and their coach and older brother İrfan, who is also the mayor of Çiftlik. Like the senior İncesu, 65-year-old Heve Dedeoğlu maintains he can still play a competitive game.

Speaking in the warmth of his family home's tea room on a rainy October night before the three-day tournament, İrfan Dedeoğlu is calm. "*Cirit* is not dangerous for the players, and it is not dangerous for the horses, if they are well trained. I'm more afraid of getting injured in a football match." His brother Recep chimes in. "We care for our horses the way a football-club coach cares for his players. It's all psychological."

Çiftlik takes pride in its claim to raise the finest players and horses in the sport. A rival team in the tournament in fact calls itself Çiftlikspor, even though none of its players come from the village, apparently in the hope that the name will bring them luck or prestige. Ask anyone in Erzurum who breeds the finest *cirit* horses, and they are sure to mention Çiftlik's native sons Salusarlı Hafız, Haydarlı Evni and Otuzlu Dede. And who are the most famous players of years gone by? Konglu Fariz, Pezkerekli Mehmet and Dursun Dedeoğlu, grandfather of Necmi and Metin—all from Çiftlik.

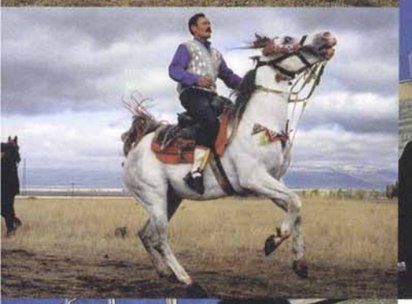
In the past, some top *cirit* players from the inner circles of the Ottoman court were immortalized in verse. Vaşid Mahdumi was a musician, composer and sporting favorite of the early 18th-century Sultan Ahmet III. Court poet Sayyid Vehbi wrote this about him:

His game was sometimes polo,
sometimes *cirit*,
And his songs and music in our
ears would meet.
Neither Persian nor Indian, Uzbek
nor Turk
Could overshadow him in verse
or sport.

The great 17th-century satirist Ömer Efendi, whose *nom de plume* was Nefi, hailed from near Erzurum, and was presumably able to recognize a good game of *cirit* when he saw one. In one of his biting portraits-in-verse of royal hangers-on, collected under the title "Arrows of Fate," he had this to say about a hapless player:

He can't play *cirit* but thinks
himself a player even so,
You're not called a
gardener for watching
the garden grow.

We know that Nefi was strangled by one of the many who had found themselves at the pointed end of his wit. Was his executioner perhaps also a *cirit* player?



Above: **Erzurum Atlıspor takes the field before a match in the 2001 national championships in its home city.** At left, from top: **Hakan Çavuşoğlu, a star thrower for Dereboğazi, grew up herding, and lunchtime can bring an impromptu *cirit* practice, even on foot. A rider from the western city of Manisa warms up his horse outside Erzurum before heading into town for a match; later, his teammates press numbers onto their vests.** Opposite: **A referee hands out *cirits*.**

FAR LEFT, THIRD FROM TOP: KAEL ALFORD

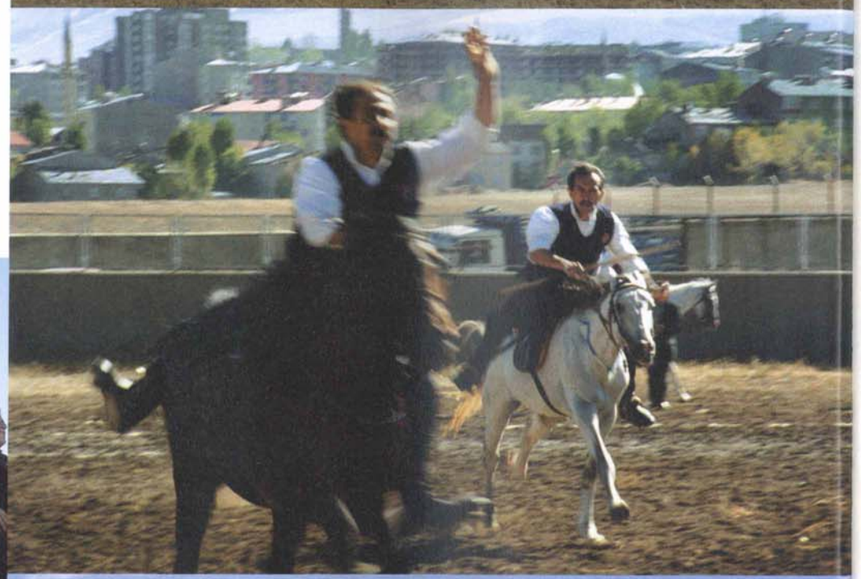
Snow comes early to Erzurum. The treeless mountains are like a white wreath around the apartment-block city and its historic Seljuq and Ilkhanid monuments, the famous Double Minaret Medrese and the Yakutiye Medrese. The ski resort at Palandöken looms above the last tier of seats in Erzurum's *cirit* stadium, where the first day of the tournament has dawned clear and cold. The field is in bad shape, with standing water and mud flats from end to end. But the players prefer this to hardpacked earth: Less strain on their horses' tendons, they say, and the full oval horseshoes hold firm in muck of any depth.

Erzurum Atlıspor will ride first against the team from Manisa, a town near Izmir where the game has been transplanted—apparently with some success, since Manisa comes into the tournament with the best record of the four teams present. The team is cocky for another reason, even if their horses are tired from the 30-hour trip. Some of the players, including the thickly mustachioed Hüdaverdi Baysal, who at 61 years is the tournament's oldest, fancy themselves stars of the silver screen as well as the *cirit* field: They appeared in the "Young Indiana Jones" television series as a band of desert horsemen.

They dress smartly, too, in red-and-white striped jerseys, and they braid

their horses' tails in elegant double-tufted knots, and they check girths and bits one last time. The white horses on the Çiftlikspor team all have bright henna on their tails, making gleams of dark red under the sun. The Erzurum players, for their part, comb out their horses' tails to full fluff—a curiously dandyish look for such a muddy field.

This attention to horse tails is part of tradition, too. Ever since the Turks lived on the Central Asian steppe, at a horseman's funeral his horse's tail was cut off and draped beside the body. In Ottoman times, horse-tail insignia preceded the commanding pasha at the annual departure for the summer campaign. The Italian della Valle described the cavalry setting out to fight the Persians on May 21, 1615: "They were thousands," he wrote, "all under six single cornets, and they were recognized by the pennants on their lances." Horse tails tacked to upheld lances led the procession, "carried in this manner," he continued, "because once when a soldier lost the standard in battle he cut



Above: **Fans react to a rider's fall.** Right, from top: **Manisa launches a challenge at Erzurum. A Çiftlik rider outruns his pursuer. A deft, deep duck to the far side of his galloping horse saves a rider from a direct hit.** Opposite: **A henna-dyed tail leaves a fiery train behind a Çiftlik horse and rider. A Manisa rider gets medical attention after a fall.**

OPPOSITE, TOP AND CENTER: KAEL ALFORD

the tail off a horse and tied it to the top of a lance, and in memory of this they have been used ever since."

Erdinç İncesu eyes the Manisa team with trepidation. "I couldn't sleep last night, from nerves," he says. "Not because I am nervous but because I don't trust my horse. He almost bucked me off after yesterday's workout. And I'm not nervous about Manisa's riders either, only about their horses. Are they better than ours? I wish we could see their game videos."

Even so, the *cirit* teams certainly have nothing of the fearsome aspect of the *sipahi*s, who were mustered from their land grants in the Anatolian and Balkan hinterlands for summer campaigns. "A very bizarre sight" della Valle found them, "both for their garb, which as a rule is very tucked up, and for the many diverse skins of wild animals with which they go adorned, slung across them in the manner of Hercules and the other ancient heroes."

Most feared by opponents were the so-called "*sipahi*s of the Porte," a standing force of professional horsemen, the mounted equivalent of the Janissaries, quartered and trained in Istanbul. One company was composed solely of left-handed riders, so they could ride at the Sultan's right and present arms as a mirror image of the right-handed *sipahi*s who rode on his left.

The *cirit* tournament begins with introductions and handshakes at center field and a parade by each team with its flags. Then a wild blast of military music, played on *duval* (hand drum) and *zurna* (double-reeded horn), comes over the loudspeakers. "Music always accompanied battle," says historian Özbey Güven of Gazi University in Ankara, who has written the definitive book on the traditional sports of the Ottoman Empire. "If horses could be taught not to fear martial music, they could be taught to fear nothing."

The music is followed by the amplified words of the popular Erzurum poet Sadi Akatay: "Napoleon said," one verse proclaims, "'In Egypt I fought against Turkish horses, not against the Turks.'" Erzurum Atlıspor's horses, adorned with blue-beaded collars hung with wooden pendants in the shape of the Turkish star and crescent, seem to acknowledge the praise, pawing the ground and tossing their heads.

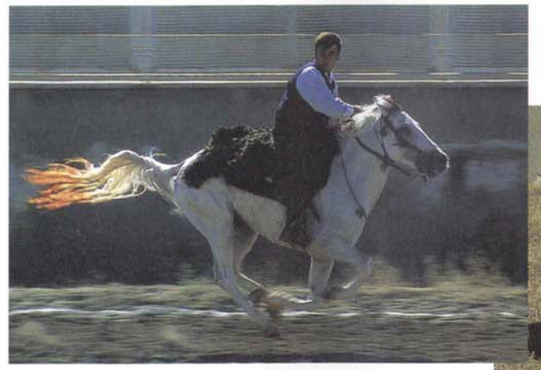
The game begins with deliberately staged sallies, as the riders test the field and their horses. Most pursuing riders hold their fire during the chase-back, opting to play it safer by taking their turn in the throwing zone and tossing from a standing position. If a *cirit* is thrown during the pursuit and misses, the rider must retreat, scoreless, and also forfeits the chance to force negative points on whomever in turn might pursue him back up the field. In any case, a few "*cirit* boys," much like the ballboys on a wet day at Wimbledon, stay busy running across the field to retrieve errant throws.

The game heats up just at the end of the first of the two 45-minute periods. When a rider enters the throwing zone, he is challenged by the feints and false pursuits of players on the other side. This keeps the throwing player off balance, unsure from which side of the line his pursuer will emerge. But such tactics can backfire, for if two such feinting players enter the neutral zone together, before the opposing player has thrown, their team is penalized two points.

The chase-backs become more competitive too as time goes on. Cries of "*Haydi!*" ("Come on!") and "*At! At!*" ("Throw! Throw!") come from fans and players alike. Several riders take falls, one for a second time, a double humiliation for which he is penalized double points. By the time the half ends, it is clear that Manisa is ahead, even if the score is not posted as play unfolds.

As Erdinç had said before the game, "Either we will be beaten by seven players, or by one horse." That these are special horses, unaccustomed to common field work, is obvious. Almost all appear to have some thoroughbred blood in them, some having come straight from the racetrack. English and Polish bloodlines are most often cited by their owners, although the Arabian's distinctively concave face is apparent too. None display the stocky features of the Kazakh drayhorse, the everyday cart-puller of Anatolian villages.

Whether these are the same horses della Valle described is unclear. "For staying power, for excellence in toil and for usefulness in war and on journeys," he wrote, "I regard their horses as better than ours." But the trappings in Erzurum are certainly different from those of the 17th century. No more are the horses "caparisoned with cloth of gold almost down to the ground" and mounted with saddles set with rubies, pearls and sequins.



CIRIT HAS ALL THE MAKINGS OF A POPULAR SPECTATOR SPORT: SPEED, SKILL, PAGEANTRY, HIGH SCORES AND DANGER.

In fact, the tack on the *cirit* horses has the patched-together look of the battle campaigns of yesteryear, as every extra bit of cash goes instead to their feeding, transport and veterinary care. Stringy and worn goat-hair underblankets, rusty stirrups doubling as spurs, and old saddle leathers in terrible need of restitching are the order of the day. But the skill that both horse and rider display is never shabby.

The secret of throwing a *cirit* far and true is, the players say, all in the spin. Just before launching it, a rider licks his fingers for a better grip, then with a straight-elbowed heave somewhere between sidearm and underhand, and using his horse's forward momentum in his favor at the point the front feet hit the earth, he lets it fly. Given the prohibition on throwing from within five meters (16'), most retreating riders are able to shift their seats in time to avoid an incoming toss. That is a good thing, for—rubber-tipped or not—a *cirit* is still a flying javelin.

Seventy-five-year-old Bakır Bayraktutan rides up and down the sidelines during the game, schooling his horse even though his team, Dadas Atlı, has been knocked out of the championships. "We are getting ready for next year, and I will play until I die," he promises. His 50 years of experience in this game are certainly something the younger players need to reckon with.

At the players' reception the night before, federation president Gezder speaks eloquently of the game's lineage and legacy. "*Cirit* brings peace where it once brought war. It binds players, horses and javelins into a harmonious whole. It belongs to all the cultures—Seljuq, Ottoman and Republican—that make us who we are." Notwithstanding these professions of good faith, Gezder also announces that any team's challenge to the official scoring must be preceded by the posting of a substantial bond.

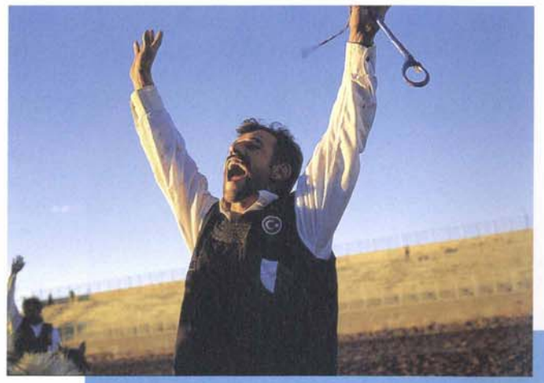
Manisa holds on, even after Erzurum Atlıspor improves its game in the second half, and Manisa wins the match by a single point. Coaches of both teams note deficiencies to be made up the next day. Yaşar Kaya of Manisa plans to change two horses which seem sluggish. Hanfi İncesu comments from the stands that only Uçan Tay, his son's horse, tried his best. "The others did not run well," he complains, "and our team deserved to lose."

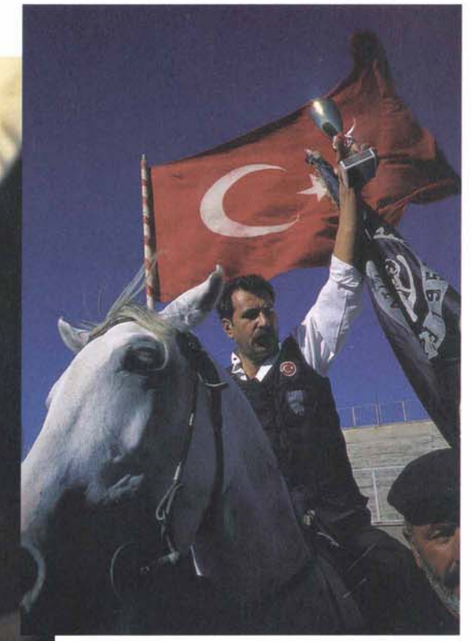
The day's following match between Çiftlikspor and Dereboğazı Atlı turns into a desultory affair, as the already muddy field has now been trampled into a veritable bog. The hapless villagers from Dereboğazı manage a final score of zero, and they lose by 14 points. No one seems to care, and the stadium quickly empties in the fading light.

The games on the tournament's second and third days end with even wider margins: Erzurum wins by 20 points, and Manisa loses to Çiftlikspor 17 to 11. The horses tire by the minute, and the coaches raise their eyebrows higher and higher over missed calls and what they see as mis-awarded points. The fans, natural partisans of their local teams, add their rising voice to the mix, and it's not long before the whole place echoes the typical mood of a heated football match.

The last game dissolves into a small-time sports riot. Some fans try to climb the fence separating them from the field; one team trots off in disgust before the results are final; the announcer's voice over the loudspeaker grows tinnier with excitement. Federation president Gezder seems chagrined, but the video crew from Turkish Radio and Television takes it all in stride. They have seen Turkey's powerhouse football finals, and this scene, they assure Gezder, is far more polite. If anything, it proves that *cirit* can arouse modern passions—and that's pretty good for a traditional sport.

If not quite the hero of the tournament, the horse Uçan Tay certainly walks away with his share of honors. By coach Recep İncesu's reckoning, he scored more than half of his team's points. A short walk is all that separates the white stallion from his box stall and a bucket of sweet feed back in nearby Çiftlik. Uçan Tay will spend much of the rest of Erzurum's snowy winter warmly stabled beside the İncesu family home, where the same gateway leads to both the family's front door and the horse's wood-beamed stall. The gold victor's trophy, by all rights, should be displayed on his stable wall. ⊕





Above: **His team victorious by 20 points, Hüsamettin Korkmaz of Erzurum Atlıspor reacts to the outcome of the championships.** Right: **In the spirit of the medieval *dadas*, or "knightly brothers," each *cirit* match ends with ritual handshakes.** Far right: **Astride Uçan Tay ("Flying Colt")—the horse who scored more than half his team's points—Muhittin İncesu raises the victory cup for Erzurum.**

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Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World*:

History of the Turks: M/A 94
Seljuq Turks: J/A 98

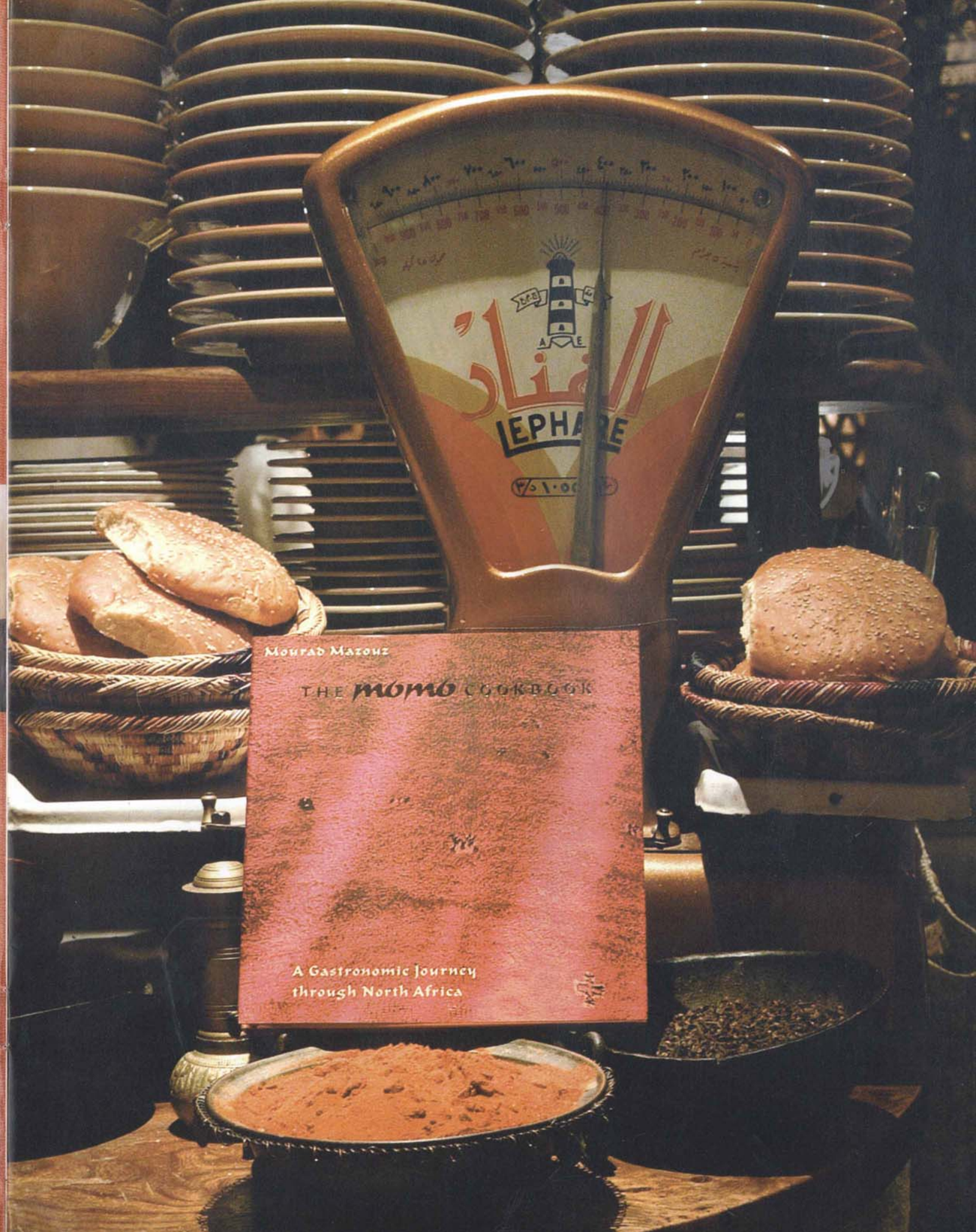
MOMO

Beyond Couscous

It's lunch hour at Momo Restaurant Familial. Some waiters deliver small plates of stuffed olives; others trickle rosewater over the hands of guests about to tuck into steaming mounds of carefully spiced meats and vegetables. The throbbing bass of *rai* music downshifts to classical vocals, and then picks back up again. Wafts of sandalwood incense mingle with the scent of fresh mint.

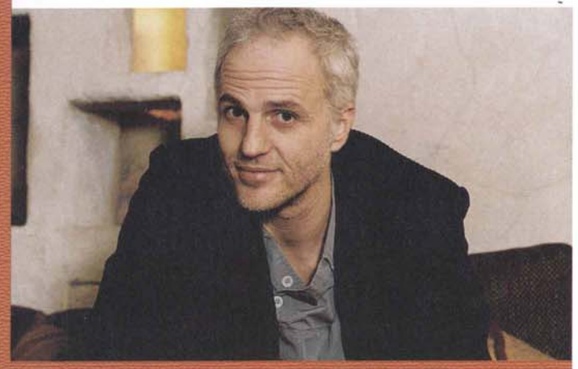
Written by SYLVIA SMITH

Photographed by RENA PEARL



This atmospheric hideaway, in a cul-de-sac off Regent Street in central London, has for nearly five years been attracting an eclectic cross-section of the hip, the famous and the gastronomically discerning. Its creator, Algerian-born Mourad Mazouz, goes by "Momo," and he has by all accounts pulled off a restaurateur's Triple Crown: He has combined the traditional, the trendy and the tasty, and has single-handedly propelled North African cuisine into the realm of London chic. At the same time, he has opened ears as much as mouths with newly marketed personal music mixes. Perhaps most refreshing of all, he has persuaded even the most proper in this city that you don't have to sit bolt upright to enjoy a meal.

"It's not straight North African cuisine," says culinary publisher and food writer Anne Dolamore. "He's



"I must be crazy," says Mourad Mazouz, a.k.a. Momo. "I work non-stop, more than 14 hours a day. But it's fun."

given it the right modern twist and produced a phenomenon others are keen to copy. He's opened up Moorish food to people who hadn't tasted it before."

London restaurant critic Rory Ross gives Momo credit for leading "people who eat out to a greater awareness of the food of the region. Momo's put his food philosophy in a fashionable and trendy setting so that it has become influential. And his personality combines with the atmosphere, ambience and the music to create a unique restaurant."

That personality comes out in a gracious, energetic understatement of demeanor, behind which lies no small entrepreneurial ambition. "Most of all, I hope they enjoy the traditional North African hospitality," he explains as he moves to greet a regular. "We want our guests to leave feeling on top of the world. It's important to offer each one of them something individual."

That approach seems to work. First-time visitors to Momo's are taken step-by-step through a fairly complex menu. "The food is good," agrees diner Malcom Beeton, who had heard about the restaurant from a friend. He has chosen tagine—a slow-cooked lamb stew—with apricots, "although I wouldn't have known what to choose without Mohammed here recommending." Mohammed Essedine Nasri is the high-energy maître d'hôtel from Tunisia. He has worked with Momo from day one.

"Whatever a client comes in for, they always leave with more than they expected," says Nasri. That might be a house recipe hastily scribbled on a scrap of paper, an extra starter "on the house," or simply a genuine smile and personal attention. Although not all of Momo's staff are Arab, the restaurant runs on the easygoing, helpful attitude so common throughout the Middle East and North Africa. In this respect, Momo has kept the place true to his own Algerian roots and to his parents, Berbers from the Kabyle region, who instilled in him "a tremendous respect for humanity," he says.

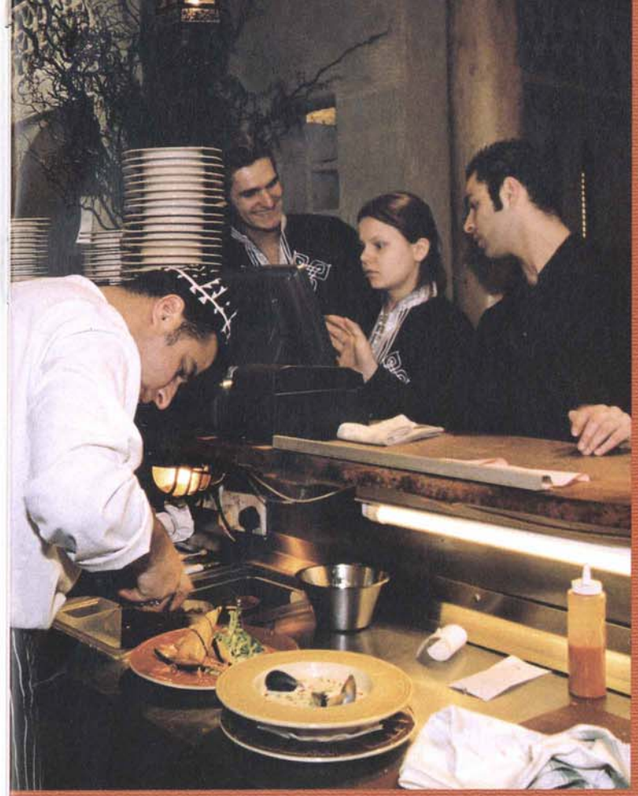
"WE WANT OUR GUESTS TO LEAVE FEELING ON TOP OF THE WORLD. IT'S IMPORTANT TO OFFER EACH ONE OF THEM SOMETHING INDIVIDUAL."

His first North African restaurant was in Paris. He called it "404," after the Peugeot sedan that is ubiquitous in Algeria, and—like the car—it still runs well, he says. Then came Momo Restaurant Familial in London in 1997. More recently, he has opened "Mô's," a *suq*-cum-café adjoining the restaurant that serves snacks and strong coffee, and where anything and everything in sight is for sale: the plates, the tea set, the coffee service, the chairs, the inlaid backgammon boards and the Momo-compiled CDs that play on the house sound system.

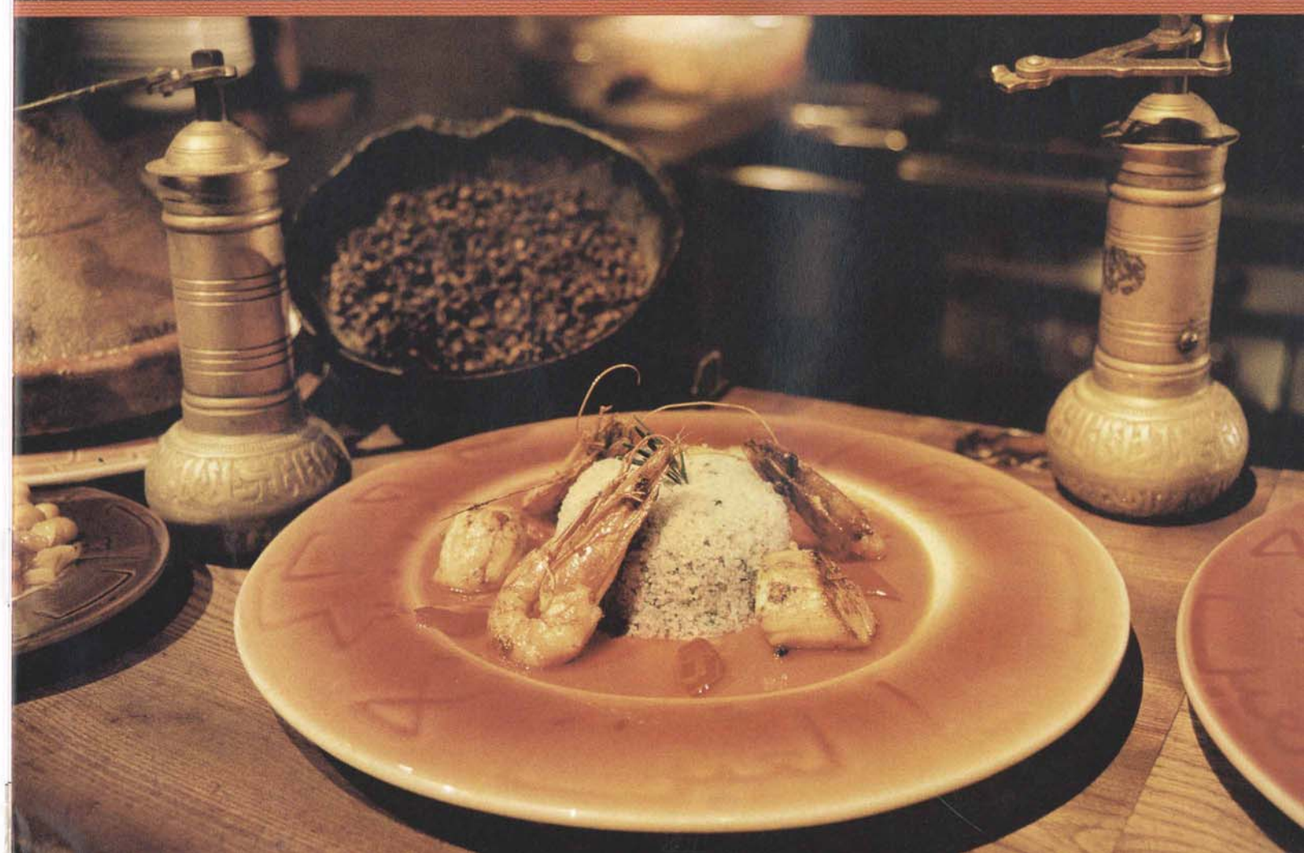
In 2000, Momo published *The Momo Cookbook: A Gastronomic Journey through North Africa*. The beautifully illustrated coffee-table book covers all the countries of the Maghrib, and there are sections on the history of specific foods of ordinary people. "As readers cook the dishes, I want them to understand more about the places where I grew up," he says. "It's not all about recipes."

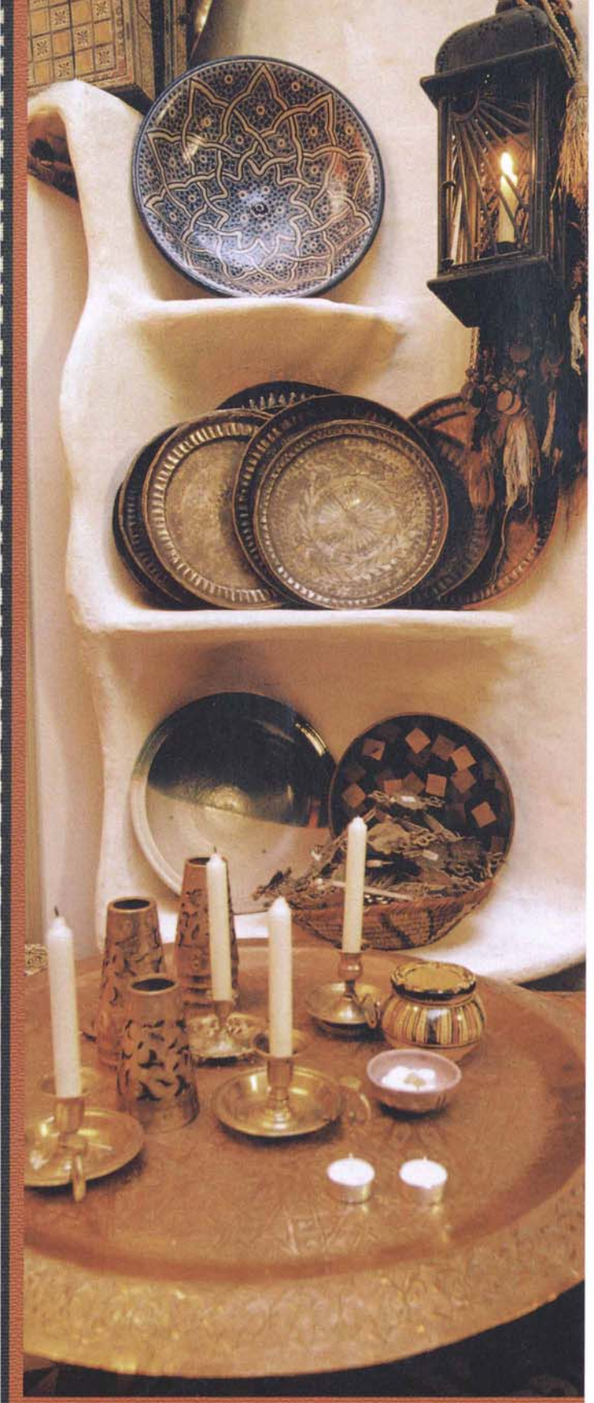
"Mô's is the embodiment of North African cool," claims one young guest, drawing on a *nargilah* (waterpipe) and emitting a blast of apple-scented smoke. "The man's tuned into what London listens to and then is always one step ahead of the game."

Hearing this, Momo laughs. "I must be crazy. I work non-stop, more than 14 hours a day. But it's fun. The music just grew out of the need to create a special atmosphere."



Clockwise from top left: **Chef Amid sprinkles spices onto slices of marinated tuna, served with grilled eggplant and other vegetables. In the main dining room, everything is either from North Africa or made in North African style, from the chair cushions to the *mashrabiyyah* windows. Waiters bring food—after guiding diners through what is, for many, an unfamiliar menu. Breaded scallops and prawns in a red-pepper coulis surround a couscous mold.**





The tearoom, Mō's, adjoins the restaurant. Momo chose the furnishings and periodically restocks the abundant arts and crafts during his travels in North Africa and Europe. For a price, customers can take home anything from the tea service to furniture to a CD of Momo's music mixes.

So far he has produced two compilation CDs, each blending classical Arab music with the likes of Algerian rock-fusionist Rachid Taha. Called simply "Arabesque 1" and "Arabesque 2," their appeal lies in the way the mix draws you in, and for first-time listeners it's one of the best introductions to *rai* on the market. In the works are two more compilations: "Africanesque" and "Indianesque."

There is also Sketch, a huge, new dining/entertainment concept on nearby Conduit Street that Momo has a bit of

"TOO MUCH PLANNING IS BORING. IF YOU WANT A PLACE TO HAVE SOUL AND BE SPONTANEOUS, YOU JUST CAN'T FORCE IT ALONG ACCORDING TO A TIMETABLE."

trouble describing. When he does, he sounds more like a conceptual artist than an entrepreneur with investors to convince. "It won't be like anything you've ever seen before," he says vaguely. "When other people say they're doing something new, it looks old to me. This will be a combination of the ways in which all of us live."

Scheduled to open in May, Sketch is clearly his most ambitious venture so far. He could lose his shirt if it fails, but he seems unconcerned. "Too much planning is boring. If you want a place to have soul and be spontaneous, you just can't force it along according to a timetable."

Varying a formula—even a successful one—instead of repeating it is just one of the ways Momo has kept ahead of the game. He's rejected lucrative offers to open a chain of Momo restaurants throughout the Middle East. "I've kept my *kasbah* way of doing business. I like to get personally involved in everything. I'm hands-on." Today, ensuring the business runs smoothly means doing what needs to be done, even if that's sweeping the floor or washing dishes. He says this "keeps him more grounded." The result is a very personal and cared-for Maghrib-style oasis in the metropolis, and a refreshing new perspective for Londoners on the North African way of doing business—and, of course, the North African way of eating.

Sylvia Smith is a broadcast journalist who travels frequently to Africa and the Middle East to pursue her interest in Islamic cultures.

Rena Pearl (www.renapearl-photography.co.uk/) is a free-lance photographer in London and an associate member of the British Institute of Professional Photography.

Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World:*

Music from North Africa: N/D 01
Couscous: N/D 98

The Momo Cookbook: *A Gastronomic Journey Through North Africa.* Mourad Mazouz. 2000, Simon & Schuster, 0-74320-510-3, £25/$35 hb.

The Minaret

Symbol of Faith and Power

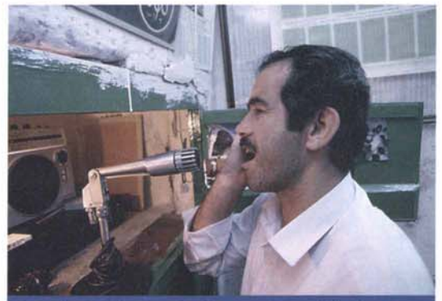
WRITTEN BY JONATHAN M. BLOOM

Among the most distinctive sights in any Islamic city are the minarets, tall slender towers attached to the city's mosques from which muezzins call the faithful to prayer five times a day. Indeed, the minaret—along with the dome—is one of the most characteristic forms of Islamic architecture, and the sound of the *adhan*, the call to prayer, is as typical of Cairo or Istanbul or Riyadh as the sound of bells is of Rome. In West and East alike, minarets have become such a distinctive symbol of Islam that political cartoonists use them as shorthand to indicate a Middle Eastern or Islamic setting, and authors and publishers use the word similarly to refer to the Muslim world or Islam itself.

Bishop Kenneth Cragg, for example, titled his classic study of Muslim-Christian relations *The Call of the Minaret*; the American Friends of the Middle East published the "Minaret" series of pamphlets in the 1950's; and there are periodicals named *Minaret* or *The Minaret* or *Manara* (the Arabic term) published in the United States, Pakistan, Sweden and several Arab countries—as well as a Web portal of the same name.

Despite the recent proliferation of skyscrapers and television towers, soaring minarets still give a distinctively "Islamic" look to the skylines of cities from Morocco to Malaysia. And though tape recordings may have replaced and loudspeakers amplified many "live" muezzins, minarets remain essential elements in mosque design the world over, and architects are repeatedly challenged to reinterpret this traditional form in new and distinctive ways.

In recent years, as Muslims have established communities and built houses of worship in European and American cities, minarets have come to mingle with the traditional verticals of western cityscapes, often with surprising results. In Oxford, England, the university town whose "dreaming spires" were commemorated by the poet Matthew Arnold in the 19th century, a furor erupted in the summer of 2000 when the Egyptian architect Abdel Wahed El-Wakil proposed to erect a 10-story minaret on the playing fields of historic Magdalen College as part of a new Islamic center. In Frederick, Maryland, whose church spires, as Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, gave the town "a poetical look...as if seers and dreamers might live there," the local Muslim community was recently denied a construction permit to build a mosque, although Frederick's "clustered spires" had long been obscured by blocky, angular office buildings.



In today's cities, muezzins need amplification.

Once, a muezzin could rely on the strength of his lungs to lift the call to prayer above the clamor of a traditional city's activities, but today's muezzin cannot be heard without amplification above the modern city's incessant traffic and industrial noise. And outside the Muslim world, municipal noise restrictions often limit the volume at which Muslims can call the faithful to prayer, thus obviating the need for a muezzin's tower—and giving rise to imaginative substitutes: In some British cities with large Muslim populations, enterprising Muslims have brought the *adhan* into the electronic age by "beeping" the daily prayer times on an Internet website and broadcasting a text alert to Muslim subscribers' mobile phones.

Whether or not minarets are actually used to call the faithful to prayer, they remain potent symbols of Islam, and have sometimes been targeted accordingly. During the horrendous civil war in Kosovo, for example, Serbian forces regularly placed explosives inside minarets, not only destroying the towers but ensuring that they would collapse onto and damage the adjacent mosques. By this destruction, the Serbs hoped to erase what they saw as signs of centuries of Ottoman oppression.

Such clashes between competing visual cultures are unfortunately not only recent news, although modern weapons and explosives tend to make the results more dramatic. After the Ottoman sultan Fatih Mehmet conquered the Byzantine capital of Constantinople in May 1453, one of his first acts was to order a wooden minaret added to the 900-year-old church of Hagia Sophia to signal its conversion into a mosque. The temporary wooden minaret was soon rebuilt in stone and three others added for good measure. As Mehmet and his successors built other mosques in their new capital, Istanbul's skyline came to be punctuated by dozens of slender, arrow-like minarets that gave the Ottoman capital a distinctive aspect and signaled to all that it was no longer the capital of Christian Byzantium but the new capital of an Islamic empire **(opposite page, top)**.

Meanwhile, at the western end of the Mediterranean, as Christians wrested the Iberian Peninsula back from Muslims in the late Middle Ages, the victors transformed the great stone or brick minarets of Andalusian congregational mosques into church belltowers. The magnificent 10th-century minaret in Córdoba, once the pride of the Muslims' city, was encased in more stonework to give it a "Christian" look, and topped with a belfry and a set of bells. Tourists can still climb the remains of the old minaret, intact inside the belltower. Similarly, the celebrated 12th-century tower of the Almohad congregational mosque of Seville was given an elaborate belfry between 1558 and 1568 by the Andalusian architect Hernán Ruiz the Younger. Where once the minaret had been crowned with four large gilded bronze balls, Ruiz crowned the new belfry with a revolving human figure—an allegory of Faith—that serves as a weathervane and gives the building its popular name, "La Giralda" **(Photo 1, page 30)**.

From the perspective of the history of architecture, these episodes can be seen as rounds in an ancient game of architectural "tit for tat." Some 500 years earlier, Christians in ninth-century Córdoba had accused the Muslims of pulling down the "pinnacles"—that is, the belltowers—of their churches and "extoll[ing] their prophet" from their "towers and foggy heights." The Córdoban theologian Eulogius histrionically recounted how his grandfather had had to clap his hands over his ears to shield himself from the muezzin's cry.

Previous spread: **The Qutb Minar, Quwwat al-Islam Mosque, Delhi. The vegetal design** below **is carved on the base of the minaret. The muezzin,** inset, **works in Cairo.**

PREVIOUS SPREAD, MAIN: SHELDAN COLLINS / CORBIS; BORDER: CORBIS; MUEZZIN: JOHN FEENEY. THIS PAGE: BOJAN BRECELJ / CORBIS

TOP: TOR EIGELAND; LOWER: AGA KHAN AWARDS FOR ARCHITECTURE

Constantinople's Hagia Sophia, the Church of Holy Wisdom, was converted into a mosque immediately after the Ottoman conquest of the city in 1453. One of the four minarets at left was thus the first erected in the city. The six more slender minarets of the Sultan Ahmet Mosque were built in the early 17th century.

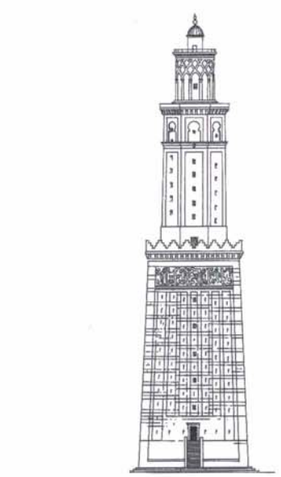
But it is not only Christians who have objected to minarets: At certain times and places some Muslims believed—and some still believe—that minarets have no place in the design of mosques. In many parts of the Muslim world—Malaysia, Kashmir and East Africa, for example—tower minarets were virtually unknown before modern times. In the 20th century, however, the expansion of visual communication and travel has homogenized regional architectural styles into an international "Islamic" norm of domes and soaring towers. Nevertheless, one expert, Dr. Mohamad Tajuddin bin Mohamad Rasdi of the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, recently stated that modern architects and their clients who build monumental mosques with fancy minarets, domes and *muqarnas* ignore the teachings of the Prophet.

Contemporary architects reinterpret traditional forms: Sherefudin's White Mosque in Visoko, Bosnia-Herzegovina won an Aga Khan Award in 1983. It is now destroyed.

Other Muslims may differ with Dr. Rasdi's interpretation of Islamic tradition, but there can be no doubt that while the beautiful *adhan* clearly dates back to the time of the Prophet, the minaret is certainly a later invention. When Islam was revealed in the early seventh century, Jews called the faithful to prayer with the *shofar* (ram's horn) and Christians used a bell or a wooden gong or clacker. Indeed, the sound of a bell wafting in the breeze from a distant monastery is a frequent image in pre-Islamic and early Islamic poetry. In this context, we can well understand how 'Abd Allah ibn Zayd, one of the Prophet's companions, dreamt that he saw someone calling the Muslims to prayer from the roof of the mosque. After he told the Prophet about his dream, Muhammad recognized it as a vision from God and instructed Bilal, an Abyssinian freedman and early convert to Islam, "Rise, Bilal, and summon all to prayer!" Bilal, who was known for his beautiful voice, did so, thereby becoming the first muezzin. (The word *muezzin* comes from the Arabic *mu'adh-dhin*, or "one who gives the *adhan*.")

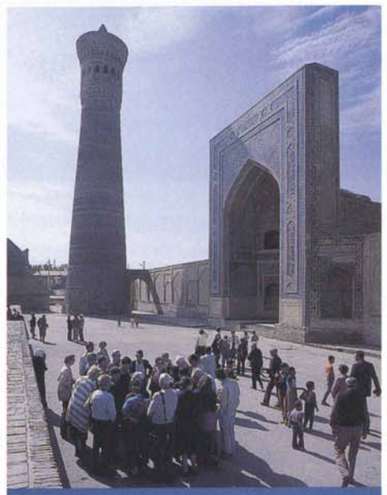
According to Islamic tradition, Bilal and his successors normally gave the call to prayer from a high or public place, such as the doorway or roof of a

(1) The Giralda, Seville

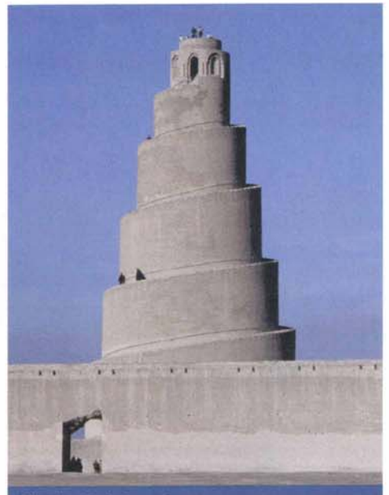


(2) The Pharos, Alexandria

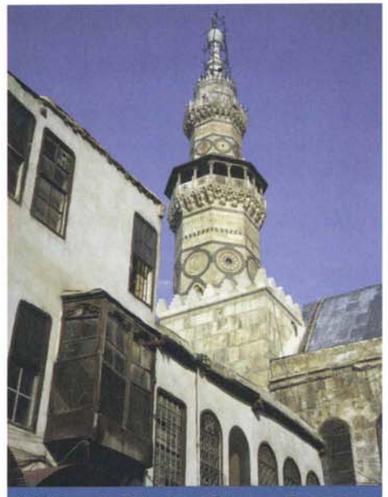
(3) The Minaret of 'Ali, Isfahan



(4) The Kalayan minaret, Bukhara



(5) The Malwiya, Samarra



(6) Minaret of the Great Mosque, Damascus

(1) PAUL LUNDE; (2) FROM HERMANN THIERSCH, *PHAROS: ANTIKE ISLAM UND OCCIDENT: EIN BEITRAG ZUR ARTCHITEKURGESCHICHTE*, LEIPZIG AND BERLIN, TUEBNER, 1909; (3) SEF / ART RESOURCE; (4) TOR EIGELAND; (5) CHARLES LENARS / CORBIS; (6) MICHAEL NICHOLSON / CORBIS

ERICH LESSING / KUNSTHISTORICHES MUSEUM, VIENNA / ART RESOURCE

mosque, an elevated neighboring structure or even the city wall, but never from a tall tower. Indeed, it is said that 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's cousin, son-in-law and fourth caliph, ordered a tall *mi'dhana* (a place from which the call to prayer was given) torn down, because its height enabled the muezzin to see into the homes around the mosque. The call to prayer, 'Ali believed, should not be given from any place higher than the roof of the mosque. It is for this same reason that, in later years, blind men have often been selected and trained as muezzins, for they are unable to inadvertently violate the privacy of other people's homes.

Since tower minarets were unknown in Muhammad's lifetime and for many decades after his death, how then did the tower come to be so identified as the preeminent architectural symbol of Islam? And why do minarets take such different shapes—ranging from the tall, pencil-slim towers of Ottoman mosques through the multistoried towers of Egypt to the square shafts of North Africa and Spain—while such other features of the mosque as *minbar*s (pulpits) and *mihrab*s (the wall niche marking the direction of Makkah) are remarkably consistent in form?

In trying to understand how the tower got its special meaning in Islamic societies, scholars have attempted—with mixed success—to trace minarets back to various traditions of tower building in the pre-Islamic cultures of Eurasia. Over a century ago, for example, A. J. Butler, the British historian of Roman Egypt, speculated that the multistoried form of the typical Cairene minaret of the Mamluk period might have been derived from the Pharos (lighthouse) of Alexandria, one of the wonders of the ancient world, which—although long destroyed—is known from descriptions by ancient writers to have been square in the lower part of its shaft, octagonal in the middle and cylindrical at the top **(Photo 2)**. Butler's contemporary, the German architectural historian Hermann Thiersch, elaborated this theory by publishing a detailed study of the history of the Pharos. He showed that the ancient tower had stood well into Islamic times and could have inspired Mamluk builders in Egypt.

Even Thiersch acknowledged, however, that the answer was not quite that simple. Not all minarets had three different cross-sections like the Egyptian ones—some had entirely square shafts and some had cylindrical ones. He therefore suggested that square minarets, such as those found in Syria, North Africa and Spain, were derived from church towers. His church-tower theory was strengthened by the survival of the Arabic term *sawma'a*, used in medieval North Africa and Spain to refer to minarets. Derived from the Arabic word once used to describe the cell of a Christian monk, *sawma'a* is the source of the obsolete Spanish word, *zoma*, or "tower."

But this theory still left cylindrical towers unexplained. Thiersch believed that cylindrical minarets, like those common in Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia **(Photos 3, 4)**, derived from Roman and Byzantine monumental victory columns—an explanation that supported his view that minarets were erected principally as symbols of Islam's triumph over other religions. But while it was relatively easy to see how square church towers in Syria might have led to square minarets in Syria, Thiersch was unable to explain how—or why—something like Trajan's Column in Rome could have inspired Central Asian builders to erect cylindrical brick minarets!

Another group of European scholars sought the minaret's origins in the ancient nomadic cultures of Central Asia and India. The Austrian art-historian Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941), for example, compared the round brick minarets of Iran and Central Asia to round campaniles in Italy and early medieval round towers in Ireland, and hypothesized that all these towers derived from a common source in the folk arts of the steppe nomads of Asia, who had migrated to western Europe in the early Middle Ages. Ernst Diez (1878–1961), his fellow Austrian and a historian of Islamic art, interpreted minarets similarly as vestiges of the ancient Indo-Aryan practice of erecting wooden posts to represent deities.

In some respects Diez was following in the footsteps of the 19th-century British architectural historian James Fergusson, who believed that the minarets of Indian Islamic architecture were adaptations of Buddhist and Jaina towers or pillars of victory. According to Fergusson, minarets had in turn inspired the Chinese to build pagodas—except for spiral pagodas, which he thought had been inspired by ziggurats, the stepped towers that the Sumerians and Babylonians had erected in Mesopotamia from the third millennium BC!

Still other experts thought that minarets were themselves direct descendants of the Mesopotamian ziggurats. Many have remarked on the supposed resemblance of the Malwiya **(Photo 5)**, the 50-meter (162') spiral tower erected at Samarra, Iraq in the middle of the ninth century, to a ziggurat. However, though there is a centuries-old tradition of representing the Tower of Babel, the most famous ziggurat of all, as a spiral tower, in fact, modern archeologists have determined that only a few ziggurats—such as the one at Khorsabad and perhaps another at Babylon—actually did spiral, and those were square, not round, spirals. The vast majority of ziggurats were actually square stepped towers, with separate flights of stairs at right angles to their sides, so whatever inspired the Malwiya, it was not a ziggurat of the usual type.

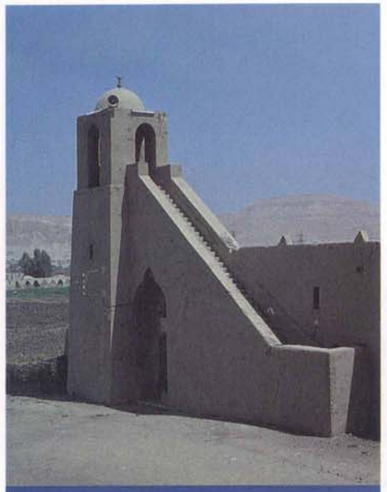
> Tower minarets were unknown in the Prophet Muhammad's time. Scholars have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to trace the minaret to pre-Islamic tower traditions throughout Eurasia.

Indeed, Muslims commonly associated ziggurats in general, and the Tower of Babel in particular, with idol-worship. Commentators on Sura 16 of the Qur'an ("The Bee"), for example, understand verse 26, which says that God "struck at the foundation of their building, and then the roof fell down upon them, from above them," as a reference to the immense tower that Nimrud built at Babel in order to ascend to heaven. It is therefore most unlikely that pious Muslims would have considered a ziggurat to be an appropriate model for any addition to an Islamic religious building. Clearly, the tower must have had other associations for Muslims, and any explanation of the origins and meaning of the minaret must begin by searching for those associations.

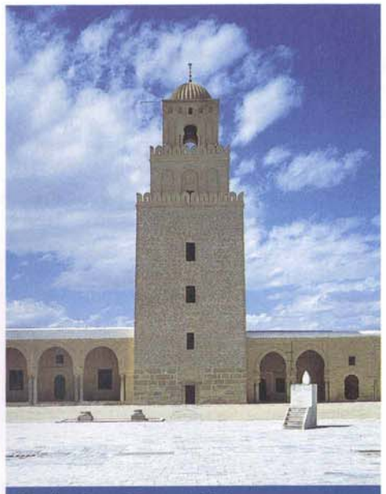
The first mosque to have had towers is the Great Mosque of Damascus, erected early in the eighth century, which had relatively short, square towers—some of them are still visible today—at its four corners. These structures, however, were left over from the building's earlier incarnation as the enclosure surrounding the Roman temple to Jupiter that once stood on the site **(Photo 6)**. Historians do not know what purpose, if any, the Roman towers may have served in Umayyad times, although it is quite possible that muezzins would have climbed them to give the call to prayer from their tops. Many centuries later, two of these short towers were surmounted by taller towers in the Mamluk style and a new third tower was built on the north side of the mosque.

The first mosque to have had purpose-built towers was the Mosque of the Prophet at Madinah, which was extensively remodeled by

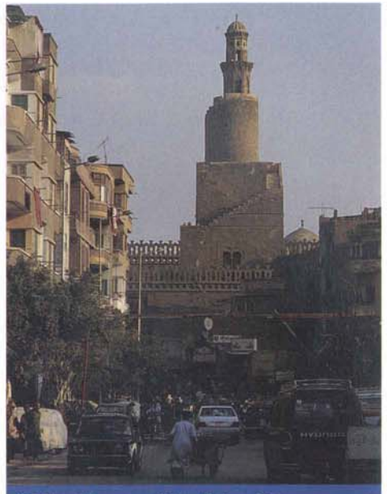
As depicted by Pieter Bruegel in 1563, the Tower of Babel would have been some 300 meters tall.



(7) Fathy's staircase minaret, New Gourna



(8) The Great Mosque, Kairouan



(9) The Mosque of Ibn Tulun, Cairo

the Umayyad caliph al-Walid in the early eighth century, at just the same time that he was having the Mosque of Damascus rebuilt. Unlike the Damascus mosque, nothing survives of the Umayyad mosque at Madinah, but according to historical accounts, it too had a tower in each of its four corners. However, the Madinah towers were slender and tall, measuring nearly fifty cubits (something like 25 meters or 82') high. The historical sources call those towers either *manar* or *manara*, but do not reveal the purpose they were expected to serve.

At approximately the same time, the Umayyad caliphs ordered similar tall, slender towers erected in the corners of the Great Mosque in Makkah (also repeatedly repaired and restored in later times), but no other mosques had towers at this time. One must imagine that in both cases the towers were erected not for the call to prayer—which was given from all mosques—but to mark and proclaim the particular sanctity of the sites they adorned.

> The first mosque built with tower minarets was the eighth-century reconstruction of the Mosque of the Prophet at Madinah by the Umayyad caliph al-Walid.

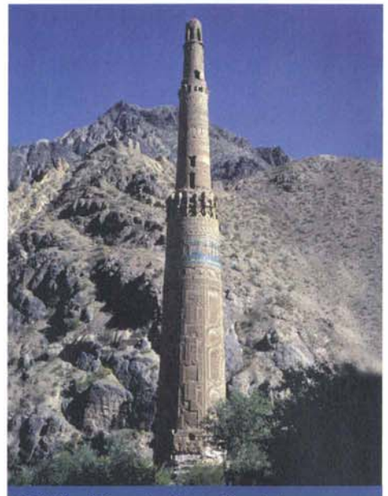
In contrast, some early mosques—though certainly not all—are known to have had structures on their roofs used to shelter the muezzin when he gave the call to prayer. These small structures, normally called "sentry-box" or "staircase" minarets, were reached by a staircase outside the mosque, and they resemble a small version of the *minbar*, or pulpit, normally found within congregational mosques. The earliest surviving example is at the Great Mosque of Bosra in Syria, where a narrow external flight of steps leads to the mosque's roof. This staircase can be identified with a fragmentary inscription (now in Istanbul) which refers to the construction of a *mi'dhana* in the year 720 or 721.

Muslims have continued to build staircase minarets over the centuries in several areas, especially in remote areas of Upper Egypt, East Africa, Anatolia and along the Gulf coast of Iran. The Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy, for example, included one in the mosque he designed along traditional lines for the village of New Gourna near Luxor **(Photo 7).**

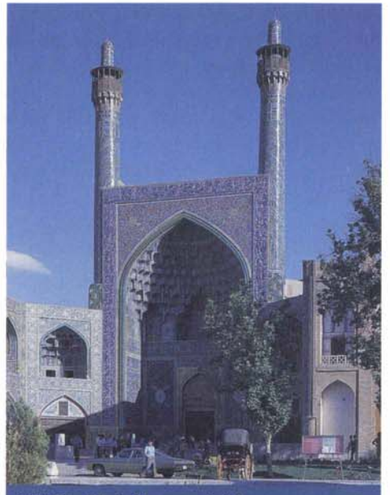
Early Muslims had a number of different terms for "a tower attached to a mosque from which the call to prayer is given." The most common word, *manara*, and its relatives *manar* and *minar* describe neither the tower's supposed function nor its form. *Manara*, from which the English word *minaret* ultimately derives, is a "place or thing that gives light"; *manar* is specifically a "marker" or "sign." *Sawma'a*, as we have seen, was used in North Africa and Spain. *Mi'dhana*, "the place of the *adhan*," is the most accurate term, but it didn't refer specifically to a tower and wasn't all that common. Of course, all of these terms eventually became synonymous, but originally each had limited geographical currency or referred to different types of towers. Thus, a square tower in Spain or North Africa was called a *sawma'a*, while a cylindrical tower in Iran was a *manar*.

It was only in the ninth century, when the Abbasid caliphs ruled from the shores of the Atlantic to the deserts of Central Asia, that towers began to be consistently attached to mosques. Whereas the holy shrines at Makkah and Madinah had multiple towers set at the outer corners of the sanctuaries, Abbasid mosques were normally built with only one tower, located on the wall of the mosque opposite the *mihrab*—the niche in the Makkah-facing wall that marks the direction of prayer. Perhaps the most famous example of an Abbasid tower is the great Malwiya at Samarra, but there is also a much smaller tower of the same shape attached to the nearby mosque of Abu Dulaf.

(10) The Tower of Mas'ud III, Ghazni



(11) The Minaret of Jam, Firuzkuh



(12) The Shah Mosque, Isfahan

(7) WILLIAM ROCKETT; (8) ERICH LESSING / ART RESOURCE; (9) DICK DOUGHTY
(10) PAUL ALMASY / CORBIS; (11) ROLAND MICHAUD / RAPHO; (12) SEF / ART RESOURCE

The historical sources do not exactly explain why Muslims started attaching a single tower to their mosques at this time, but evidence suggests that the single tower signaled the growing importance of the congregational mosque as a religious institution and as the center of the *'ulama*, the class of religious scholars that was crystallizing at this time. Whereas in early Islamic times great height had been an attribute associated with royal power in the palaces that towered over neighboring houses and mosques, by the ninth century height came to be associated with religious power instead. Abbasid palaces might be immense but they remained relatively close to the ground, while mosques—or at least the towers attached to them—had an exclusive claim to height. Thus, the minaret served the purpose indicated by its most popular name: it was introduced primarily as a marker or indicator of the presence of Islam, not specifically as a place to give the call to prayer.

Though Mesopotamian builders erected helicoidal spiral towers like the Malwiya, their model was not normally imitated elsewhere in the Abbasid Empire. Instead, builders in each province followed models in their own architectural traditions. At Kairouan in Tunisia, for example, where the Great Mosque was erected in the mid-ninth century by the Aghlabid governors for the Abbasids, a multistoried tower was built of small stones laid like bricks **(Photo 8)**. The massive square shaft has slightly sloping walls that give the building a sense of great solidity—a design based not on an Abbasid model but on a Roman lighthouse which once stood nearby on the Mediterranean coast.

Only in Egypt was the Mesopotamian type of spiral tower copied, namely at the mosque erected by Ahmad ibn Tulun, the semi-independent Abbasid governor of the province in the late ninth century. The present stone tower **(Photo 9)**, with its spiral top, is a later replacement of the original brick one, which was also spiral in shape. Contemporary sources tell us, however, that the call to prayer was normally given not from the tower but from the top of a multistoried fountain-house in the mosque's courtyard, while the tower was used for other purposes.

An account that shows that Egyptians didn't consider the tower an integral part of the mosque comes from Nasir-i Khusraw, a Persian visitor to Egypt in the mid-11th century. He reported that the descendants of Ibn Tulun had sold the mosque to the caliph for 30,000 gold coins. When the descendants then tried to tear down the tower, the caliph demanded to know what they were doing, since he had just bought the mosque from them. They replied that, although they had sold him the mosque, the price did not include the tower; in the end, the caliph had to pay another 5000 dinars for it. Though the story bears a certain resemblance to a popular Jeha folktale, it does reveal that mosque and tower were still considered separate structures in the 11th century.

Elsewhere, the tower was becoming an essential architectural feature of the mosque. Over 60 towers dating from between the early 11th century and the mid-13th still stand in Iran, the Central Asian republics and Afghanistan, either attached to mosques or isolated. Generally these are smooth cylinders of brick with an internal spiral stairway leading to a balcony supported by a deep *muqarnas* cornice. The exterior is usually covered with broad bands of geometric patterns separated by narrow bands and inscriptions. Sometimes the towers stand on low bases, and sometimes the shafts are decorated with lobes, flanges or decorative arcades. A fine example is the Tower of Mas'ud III, built in the early 12th century at Ghazni in today's Afghanistan **(Photo 10)**. Only the lower 20-meter (64') section remains, but it is magnificent: Its plan is an eight-pointed star, and seven bands of ornamental brickwork, terra-cotta panels and stucco decorate the shaft, including an inscription band giving its patron's name and titles. The tower's upper section fell to an earthquake only in 1902, after eight centuries; it remains a mystery how medieval builders ensured that such tall and slender structures stood for so long in some of the world's most

active earthquake zones. It is thought that wooden beams inside the brickwork may have provided some of the necessary tensile strength.

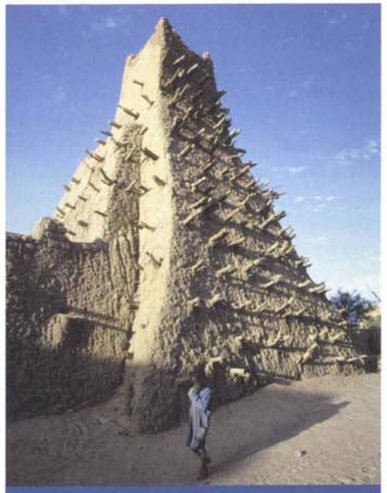
The special taste for towers in this period, when the Seljuq Turks were the dominant political force in this region, can be ascribed to the widespread recognition of the form as an appropriate symbol of Islam triumphant. For patrons with limited resources, towers were far less expensive to build than entire mosques, yet they were gratifyingly visible. Some towers that appear independent today were once attached to mosques built of sun-dried brick that have now disappeared, but other towers were conceived to be independent of any adjacent structure, and served as landmarks or beacons to guide caravans across the landscape, or to signify the presence of Islam. The most impressive of this latter type is undoubtedly the minaret of Jam **(Photo 11)**, located in a remote Afghan valley. Scholars only reached the site, once known as Firuzkuh and serving as the capital of the Ghurid dynasty, in 1957, and the discovery of its enormous three-tiered brick minaret caused a great sensation. Standing about 65 meters (213') tall, it is decorated with a variety of geometric patterns in brick and stucco.

The builders of the Qutb Minar, which was begun in 1199 as the minaret of the Quwwat al-Islam ("Might of Islam") Mosque in Delhi—the first great Muslim construction in northern India—were undoubtedly inspired in part by the minaret of Jam. Standing 72.5 meters (238') tall, the Qutb Minar **(page 27)** took decades to complete and was a potent symbol of the Muslim conquest of northern India. A century later, one of the Khalji sultans attempted to build a minaret nearby twice its size and height, but the project barely got off the ground, and only the enormous base remains as a testament to its builder's overweening ambition.

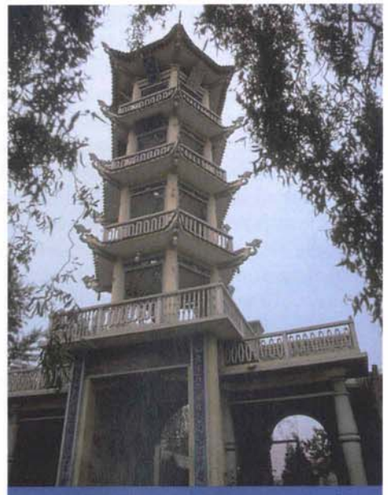
At the same time that builders were erecting taller and taller minarets, they also realized that towers could be used effectively in pairs to decorate portals and arches. This idea spread quickly from Iran both west to Anatolia and east to Afghanistan and India. Indeed, pairs of minarets flanking a portal became standard in 14th-century Iranian architecture **(Photo 12)** and remained so throughout the following centuries, while a single minaret became the exception. The mosque at the Mongol capital of Sultaniyya in northwest Iran had four minarets, two flanking the portal and two flanking the principal facade, and the sultan's tomb there was crowned by eight towers. The Taj Mahal at Agra is enclosed by four elegant minarets of white marble.

In Anatolia, which was opened to Muslim settlement after the battle of Malazgirt in 1071, the first minarets followed the Iranian model, having slender cylindrical brick shafts, sometimes decorated with glazed tiles, a circular balcony and a conical roof. The Ottomans, who expanded from northwest Anatolia into eastern Europe, further developed this type in stone, and the presence of multiple minarets came to indicate that a mosque had been founded by a sultan. The Üç Şerefeli ("Three-Balcony") Mosque in Edirne, built for Sultan Murat II in 1438, is the first Ottoman mosque to have had not only multiple minarets but also multiple balconies on a single minaret. Each of its four stone towers has a differently decorated shaft; that at the northwest corner rises to 67 meters (220') and has three balconies, giving the building its popular name.

(13) Sinan's Selimiye Mosque, Edirne



(14) The Sankore Mosque, Timbuktu

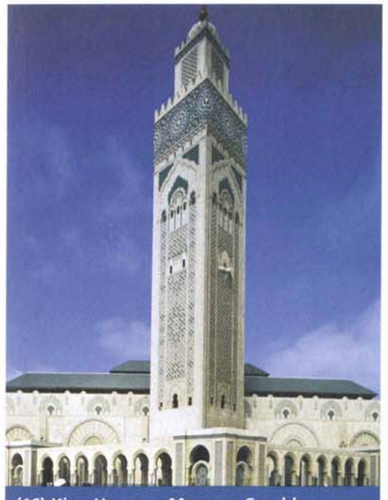


(15) The Linxia Mosque, Gansu Province, China

The varied minarets of early Ottoman mosques gave way to soberer and plainer types, particularly under the masterful hand of Sinan, the greatest Ottoman architect. Sinan's mosque for Süleyman the Magnificent in Istanbul (1550–1556) has two pairs of minarets framing the courtyard: The taller two measure 76 meters (250') and have three balconies each. Sinan's mosque for Sultan Selim in Edirne **(Photo 13)** has four identical minarets framing the dome; each stands over 70 meters (230') tall and has three balconies reached by three *nested* helical staircases.

This series climaxed in the early 17th century with the Sultan Ahmet Mosque (the "Blue Mosque") in Istanbul, where six minarets—a pair with two balconies and a quartet with three balconies—frame the mosque and courtyard. Tour guides often say that the sultan provoked the ire of the theologians by surpassing the number of minarets at the sanctuary in Makkah, but this story, like many associated with minarets, is pure fancy: The mosque at Makkah had already had seven minarets for several centuries when the Sultan Ahmet Mosque was built. The engineering mastery of Ottoman architects should not be underestimated: Even the devastating earthquake of August 1999 failed to damage the great Ottoman minarets, although many lesser modern structures were toppled or rendered unsafe.

Seventeenth-century European travelers to the Ottoman Empire record that teams of muezzins gave the call to prayer antiphonally from the several balconies of minarets, but the increasing height and multiplication of minarets in Ottoman times cannot be explained by piety alone. For architects, the minarets served to frame the domed masses of the mosque; for patrons they remained a powerful symbol of Islam—and the Ottoman sultanate—triumphant. Ottoman minarets consequently became a familiar sight as Ottoman domination extended around the Mediterranean basin into Syria, Arabia, Egypt, North Africa, Greece and the Balkans. The traditional square minaret continued to hold its own in Morocco, where the Ottomans never ruled.



(16) King Hassan II Mosque, Casablanca

Beyond the traditional lands of Islam in the Mediterranean basin and West Asia, minarets had a varied history. For example, in West Africa, minarets were often mud towers with slightly sloping sides and wooden projections like beam-ends **(Photo 14)**, while along the East African coast, the staircase minaret was most common. In China, minarets were unusual. The cylindrical form of the 36-meter (120') minaret at Guanzhou (Canton) shows that it was modeled on an Iranian type, but elsewhere in China the traditional forms of portals and pagodas were adapted for use as minarets **(Photo 15)**. In Java, the square minaret at Kudus is one of the oldest Muslim buildings in the region. Dating from the 16th century, the brick tower differs in both material and style from the traditional timber and fiber mosques, and it shows many formal and functional similarities to indigenous Hindu gatehouses.

Mosque builders in recent decades have generally tried to reconcile local minaret traditions with the pressures of international architectural modernism, with varying degrees of success. The Islamic Center Mosque (1957) in Washington, D.C., for example, has a Mamluk-revival stone minaret built on a steel frame. In contrast, the architect of the Sherefudin Mosque (1980; **page 29**) in Visoko, Bosnia-Herzegovina, brilliantly exploited the full potential of modernism in his cylindrical white minaret with a balcony detailed with green industrial tubing. The four slender, pointed, futuristic minarets of Islamabad's King Faysal Mosque (1986) anchor the building firmly to the ground. And the minaret of the King Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca is a tribute to 20th-century engineering **(Photo 16)**: Its 200-meter (650') minaret has a pierced, square shaft enclosing a high-speed elevator. Decorated with a broad band of colored tilework and a crenelated top, it is a modernizing reinterpretation of the great towers of the Almohad period, such as the Kutubiyya in Marrakech and the Giralda in Seville. From its summit, a powerful laser beam indicates the direction of Makkah.

> Minarets remain essential elements in mosque design the world over, and architects are repeatedly challenged to reinterpret this traditional form in new and distinctive ways.

The minaret, we see, is at once less and more than it appeared at first sight. Although often and commonly used as a place from which to give the call to prayer, it wasn't invented for that purpose at all. Today, as cities become noisier and more crowded, the minaret faces an uncertain future as the place from which a muezzin can be heard. Nevertheless, minarets continue—and will continue—to be built, and to serve as silent but visually powerful symbols of the worldwide presence of Islam.

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Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World:*

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Jeha stories: M/J 71, S/O 97
Faysal Mosque: J/F 92

Written by **Peter Harrigan**
Photographed by **Lars Bjurström**

Art Rocks in Saudi Arabia

"Jubbah is one of the most curious places in the world, and to my mind one of the most beautiful," wrote Lady Anne Blunt. The granddaughter of Lord Byron had arrived in January 1879 with her husband, Wilfrid, at the oasis two-thirds of the way across the Nafud desert. En route to the city of Hail to see, and perhaps buy, some of the famous horses of Ibn Rashid, then ruler in Najd, they were among the first travelers from the West to set foot in Jubbah.

Although not geologists, they recognized that the plain, more than 16 kilometers long and five kilometers wide (10 x 3 mi)—"a great bare space fringed by an ocean of sand" and overlooked by a sandstone massif"—was the site of a former lake. Among the rocks, Wilfrid found inscriptions. They had been on the lookout for traces of ancient writing, but had "hitherto found nothing except some doubtful scratches, and a few of those simple designs one finds everywhere on the sandstone, representing camels and gazelles."

Near Bir Hima, in Saudi Arabia's southern Najran region, a parade of piebald long-horned cattle, ibex, ostrich and camel-riders marches above the surrounding plains. The frieze shows a variety of styles, suggesting it was carved by several artisans at widely differing times.

When it came to rock art, 19th-century westerners were interested mainly in writing: Anything else they found unworthy of attention. But attitudes have changed. Today, rock art is recognized as sophisticated, complex and esthetically interesting evidence of how early humans socialized their landscapes. Pictures carved or pecked into rock speak to us all, however faintly or incomprehensibly, across great divides of time, and appeal powerfully to our imaginations. According to Paul Bahn, a leading scholar of prehistoric art, it "gives humankind its true dimension" by showing that even from the earliest times, "human activities hold meanings other than those of a purely utilitarian kind."

The "simple designs" that the Blunts saw can still be seen today: a veritable gallery of rock art that survives in the stark mountain area west of what is now a small modern town. The parade of images and elaborate symbols, left there by successive prehistoric nomadic and settled groups, leads up to more recent written inscriptions that lie on the horizon of history.

Nearly a century after the Blunts' visit, scholars began to grasp the importance of these pictures. The first state-sponsored archeological and paleo-environmental surveys of Jubbah and other sites were conducted by Saudi Arabia's Department of Antiquities in 1976 and 1977. These located and recorded thousands of images and inscriptions, and they proved that the Jubbah site did indeed lie on an ancient lakebed stretching eastward from the sandstone mountain called Jabal Um Sanaman, "Two Camel-Hump Mountain."

And now, 25 years after the surveys, Jubbah is the centerpiece of some 2000 known rock-art sites across Saudi Arabia. Both within the country and internationally, with interest sparked by new finds and increasingly accurate dating methods, their significance is finally emerging.

Although rock art has been found in just about every nation, Saudi Arabia's extensive heritage has remained virtually unknown. For example, the 1998 *Cambridge Illustrated History of Prehistoric Art* does not mention Saudi Arabia, and its map of prehistoric rock-art sites shows the whole of the Arabian Peninsula as a blank.

This shows how much there is yet to learn, says Robert Bednarik, founder and current president of the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations (IFRAO). "Saudi Arabia is one of the four richest regions in the world for rock art, along with South Africa, Australia and India. It possesses a major concentration of sites—yet, until now, this has not been realized internationally."

Petroglyphs, Pictographs and Rock Art

A petroglyph is inscribed into the natural surface of the rock with a chisel, pointed hammer or other tool. A pictograph is drawn or painted on the natural surface of the rock. "Rock art" is a general term for any intentional human markings on rock, including pictographs and petroglyphs, in any combination. Strictly speaking, in Saudi Arabia all known rock art is petroglyphs; however, today most professionals find the term "rock art" the most useful in their rapidly developing field.

Rock art shows that, even from the earliest times, **human activities hold meaning beyond the purely utilitarian.**

Bednarik paid his first visit to Saudi Arabia in November, including a visit to a major new discovery in a remote area of Saudi Arabia that until now was thought to be devoid of rock art. The site, called Shuwaymas after the nearest village, "stands ready to surpass...any other rock-art site on the Arabian Peninsula," he says.

In contrast to Jubbah, Shuwaymas is surrounded by black volcanic lava, not sand, in one of the dry valley systems in the south of Hail province. Professor Saad Abdul Aziz al-Rashid, Deputy Minister for Antiquities and Museums, calls it "a unique and very important find," and points out that it can tell us much about the early domestication of animals. "As well as rock art, there are also numerous ancient stone 'kites,' mounds, tails and enclosures in the area," says al-Rashid.

The discovery came in March 2001, when a Bedouin told Mahboub Habbas al-Rasheedi, a teacher in the nearby town, about rock images he had spotted while grazing his camels. After days scouring the crumbling sides of valleys up to 65 kilometers (40 mi) distant from the school, al-Rasheedi stumbled into a proliferation of rock art tableaux, including an unusually detailed carving nearly two meters (6') from head to tail that has been dubbed "the lion of Shuwaymas."

Further explorations by al-Rasheedi and his brother Saad yielded fresh discoveries incised and pecked into the rock: images of cheetah, hyenas, dogs, long- and short-horned cattle, oryx, ibex, horses, mules, camels and ostrich; human figures; geometric shapes, serpentine squiggles, inscrutable symbols, carved-out footprints and, perhaps, hoofprints.

Top: **Mamduah Ibrahim al-Rasheedi stands before a few of the scores of petroglyphs at Shuwaymas whose discovery he reported to national antiquities authorities.** Right: **Like those at many sites, the petroglyphs at Shuwaymas were made by pecking, chiseling or scraping the rock, or by some combination of those methods. It appears that none of the images was painted, since no traces of pigments have been found.** Opposite: **The so-called "Lion of Shuwaymas," the site's largest petroglyph, testifies to a past climate very different from Saudi Arabia's present one.**

"We kept coming back to reflect on the place, on what these pictures mean and the stories they tell. Somehow we are connected to them," says Mahboub al-Rasheedi. The brothers took their local school superintendent, Mamduah Ibrahim al-Rasheedi, to the site. "As soon as I returned home," says Mamduah, "I clambered up a nearby hill where my cell phone can work, and I called the provincial director of antiquities in Hail to report that we had found something."

"The Shuwaymas area is densely peppered with rock art, and it likely had a very heavy and significant concentration of Neolithic people," says Bednarik, whose more than 650 publications in more than 50 professional journals make him one of the most extensively published archeological authors. "Clearly a great deal of labor has been invested here. It reminds me of Egyptian material and also Saharan rock art. There are lots of questions here that, if answered, could well change opinions and attitudes. This is the beginning of a major research opportunity."

Jubbah, 25 years ago, was just as little known as Shuwaymas is now. But now we are aware that Arabia has not always been desert, and indeed that the region has undergone considerable climatic changes. The sequence of strata in the lakebed at Jubbah is similar to those in locations in the Rub' al-Khali (the Empty Quarter) and the al-Jafr Basin in Jordan, as well as long-dry African lake basins in the Sahara. All of this region underwent successive moist and arid periods, and during the Neolithic Wet Phase (9000–6000 years ago), savanna grasslands supported cattle.

Archeologists have found evidence of four major periods of settlement at Jubbah stretching back through the Middle Paleolithic period, 80,000 to 25,000 years ago. They also found Neolithic sites and evidence of early trade: finely retouched arrowheads, blades and awls manufactured from stone that had been carried in from sources up to 145 kilometers (90 mi) away.

The panoply of rock art around Jubbah's Jabal Um Sanaman covers some 39 square kilometers (15 sq mi), and it presents a rich, often perplexing gallery, including panels depicting early domesticated dogs and long-horned cattle, and others that suggest a transition from hunter-gatherer to agricultural communities. The abundant images of camels raise the intriguing possibility that the camel was first domesticated in northern Arabia, not southern, as is usually believed. Among the hundreds of thousands of

The Challenge of Dating **Rock Art**

Rock art, unlike the archeology or epigraphy of more recent eras, offers virtually no pottery shards, burial places, monuments or even legends to help determine how old it is. Specialists must extract that information from the rocks themselves.

Much of Saudi Arabia's rock art is on sandstone. Over long stretches of time, the surface of the stone is covered with a wind-smoothed accretion of manganese and iron salts, a patina sometimes called "desert varnish" that can help determine the relative chronology of rock art in places where successive cultures have cut images onto the same rock panel: The darker images are older than the lighter ones.

Another method relies on linking the art with environmental sequences, the "paleo-ecological record." Here, findings are tied to known climatic periods when the creatures depicted in the rock art might have lived there: Hippos, for example, need lakes and rivers; when was the climate wet enough for lakes and rivers to exist? This method, however, is rather imprecise and not always unambiguous. For example, depictions of cattle might have been made in any of several periods, over many millennia, when the climate was wet enough to grow enough grass to support large ruminants.

Occasionally, there are links to the archeological record—to shards or bones or tools whose age can be more or less precisely determined. This linkage requires careful excavation, however, and it is a time- and resource-consuming activity that often produces scant results.

In his study of the photographs, tracings and sketches from the Philby-Ryckmans-Lippen expedition, Emmanuel Anati proposed a chronology of Arabian rock art based on visual style, rather as art historians do with paintings today. He divided the art into periods ranging from the Islamic back through the literate, pastoral and hunting periods, back to early hunters more than 8000 years ago. He then distinguished 35 distinct "styles," defining traits of human figures such as "oval-headed people" and "long-haired people," and placed them into his periods. "Each style has its own figurative repertoire, its own approach to scenes and compositions," he argued, adding that "in many cases, stylistic differences may represent the presence of different cultural groups."

Majeed Khan considers Anati's classifications and dating of dubious value. "We have no idea on what his dating is based. Neither does he make any attempt to correlate his dating with the archeology of the region."

Robert Bednarik has carved out his international reputation with a more precise approach. During his own research in Saudi Arabia, he used two methods. First, he took samples of the sandstone patina for radiocarbon analysis, in case the mineral accretion contained trapped organic matter such as wind-blown microorganisms and pollen, or algae formed in wetter climatic periods. "The difficulty," says Bednarik, "is to relate the result to the age of the rock art. Obviously it becomes much easier if the art was painted with organic pigments, which often survive in cave art, but there are no known examples of that here as yet."

The second dating technique involves tracking micro-erosion, and it was this that Bednarik employed for the first time anywhere in the Middle East at both Shuwaymas and Jubbah. When the artist scours and pecks the rock using stone and antler tools, Bednarik explains, sharp-edged rock particles such as quartz are freshly exposed to the elements and to erosion. "Ideally we need large grain sizes for this to work," he says, so sandstone is not the best material. Nonetheless, Bednarik did find "some particles with decent grain-size." Then, using optical instruments, he calculated a curve that represents the degree of erosion of the particles over time. To do this, however, requires a comparable geological sample exposed from a nearby site that displays other work, such as inscriptions, that can be reliably assigned an age on epigraphic or other grounds. Variables in the process include climatic changes and other micro-environmental factors such as wind exposure.

The micro-erosion method has also been used recently at other sites to date finds of tools used in rock-art production. Since petroglyph hammers are frequently made of quartz, their fractured edges—or the edges of tiny spalls detached during their use—"certainly lend themselves to micro-erosion analysis," says Bednarik, if the tools have remained on the surface, exposed to weathering. Results of his findings in Saudi Arabia will be published in *Atlal: The Journal of Saudi Arabian Archaeology* later this year.

Most specialists accept that all dating techniques have both merits and flaws. "The future of prehistoric-art studies," says Paul Bahn, "depends heavily on the judicious balancing of the one [technique] with the other, while avoiding a blind faith in the infallibility of any."

Near the broad flat floor of the volcanic valley from which the Shuwaymas site rises, a pair of deeply pecked ibex shows careful craftsmanship.

camel figures carved in rocks throughout the Arabian Peninsula, the ones at Jubbah are believed to be the oldest: At approximately 4000 years old, they date back to the beginning of the Bronze Age.

Among the most recent markings in the chronology of Jubbah's early civilizations are 3000-year-old inscriptions in Thamudic, the oldest known script of the Arabian Peninsula. Majeed Khan, the leading authority on the rock art of Arabia and the Middle East, is currently an advisor to the national Antiquities Department; he has spent 27 years studying rock art and inscriptions. The Thamudic script, he says, "evolved independently within the Peninsula from an earlier rock-art system of communication, an embryonic form of writing employing elaborate signs and symbols as ideograms."

Along with Khan, archeologist Juris Zarins worked on the early surveys in the mid-1970's, before joining the faculty of Southwest Missouri State University. Over the past two decades, he has taken many SMSU students to Saudi Arabia, and he was chief archeologist of the 1992 Transarabia Expedition, which made the headline-grabbing discovery of what they believed was the ancient city of Ubar.

"Pound for pound and piece for piece, in terms of rock art concentration and importance, Jubbah is the number-one or number-two site in the whole of the Middle East," Zarins says. "It rivals anything in North Africa. With the art going back at least to the Pottery Neolithic period 7000 to 9000 years ago, and with paleo-environment and geology showing traces of human activity extending into the Middle Paleolithic period, it's a treasure trove for answering questions about the Middle East."

If so, then why has Saudi Arabia so long remained a blank spot on the international rock-art map? One reason, contends Zarins, has to do with an ancient bias: "Throughout the world, scholarship has always slighted deserts. Even the ancients despised the desert people. This has carried over into the modern world, since history is written by settled, civilized peoples."

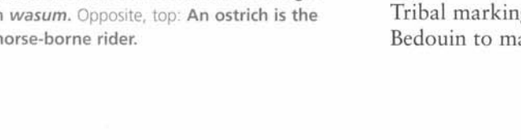
What makes the oversight more curious still is that there has been activity between the time of the Blunts' visit and the modern Saudi studies. In 1972, a four-volume work, *Rock-Art in Central Arabia*, was published by Emmanuel Anati. Although he never visited the country, he worked from a huge corpus of photographs, tracings and sketches acquired from the explorer, mapmaker and writer on Arabia Harry St. John Philby. In the winter of 1952, Philby had set off on a three-month field survey of rock art and inscriptions in the south of the country. Accompanying him were a renowned Belgian scholar of Semitic studies, Monseigneur Gonzague Ryckmans, pre-Islamic historian Jacques Ryckmans and a photographer of rock art and epigraphy, Count Philippe Lippens. The expedition returned to Riyadh with records of 13,000 previously unknown petroglyphs. "Sad to say," wrote Elizabeth Monroe, Philby's biographer, in 1973, "only a fraction of this major addition to the world's knowledge of Arabia has so far been published." (The originals are today at St. Antony's College, Oxford.) So rich was one of the sites west of the ancient wells of Bir Hima that one of the expedition members was able to copy 250 images without moving from his seat.

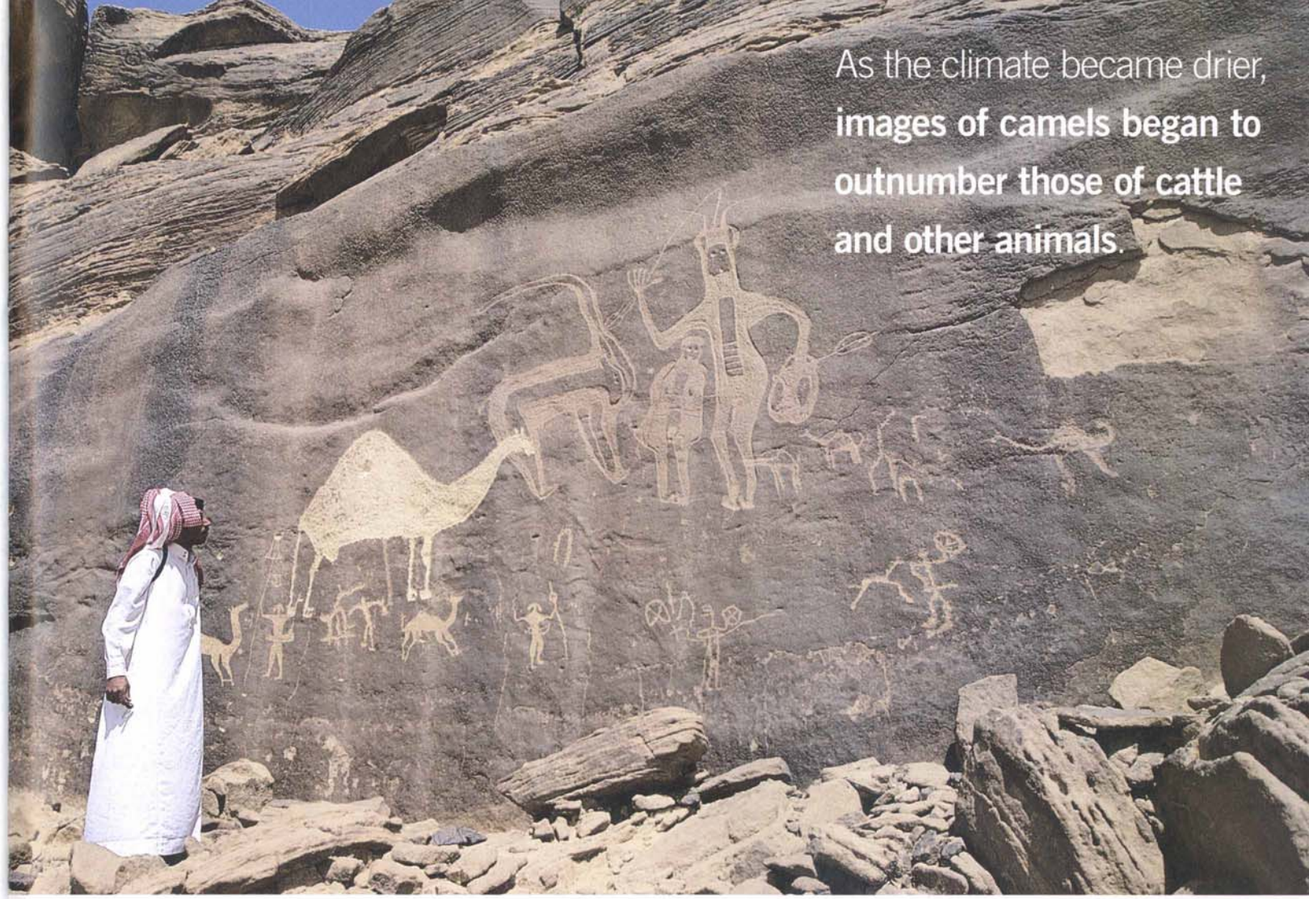
"Look carefully at the black rock," says Naif al-Ateek, the curator of the rock-art site at Jubbah and a descendant of the town *amir* who welcomed the Blunts. "If you concentrate, you'll see a faint carving lying behind the clear and lighter top one." Even with such a lead—for without it only the superficial images would register—intently staring at the blackened rock surface is an exercise akin to picking out a modern three-dimensional picture that appears buried within an inscrutable, computer-generated pattern. Yet al-Ateek is right: If one adjusts one's eye, focusing and refocusing slowly, another image appears in the background, a work executed perhaps millennia before the more apparent images.

"The darker ones are the oldest," he explains, showing a life-sized figure, depicted with a characteristic oval head, holding a curved, boomerang-like throwing stick and followed by a short-horned bovine. "Now let me show you our prize figure, an ancient ruler." Finely incised in the dark patina of desert varnish is a life-sized male human figure with a crown-like headdress. Nearby is the curved horn of an ibex reaching and arching to its back, its face complete with a small beard.

Later, after a day spent scrambling over rock surfaces, al-Ateek serves coffee in the same smoke-blackened parlor that the Blunts sat in. He has built up a small museum that includes several rock-art fragments found in the sands and brought in by Bedouin over the years.

"We are proud of our mountain and the heritage it contains," says Bandar al-Amar, who has opened Jubbah's own Internet café, runs computer courses and created an Arabic-language website for the town (jubbah.netfirms.com). "Twenty years ago our parents pressed to have a tarred road brought across the dunes to Jubbah from Hail," he says. "The authorities suggested that we move to Hail and resettle in the modern town. The answer was 'Okay, so long as you move our mountain with us.' This here is all part of our deep past, even though its history is difficult to understand."





Just three years ago, a rock with one of Arabia's most intriguing petroglyphs *was* moved: A helicopter hoisted it from its site 160 kilometers (100 mi) north of Najran and lowered it onto a flatbed trailer, and it was later craned onto the marble floor of Riyadh's National Museum. The rough, pyramid-shaped sandstone rock, 1.3 meters (4') tall, shows arms and hands waving on one side and another hand, apparently with a broken arm, on the other. The motif is ubiquitous in rock art throughout the world.

The Department of Antiquities and Museums is also quartered at the National Museum. In his office, surrounded by journals, surveys, publications and rock-art conference proceedings, Majeed Khan explains why he prefers not to interpret the meaning of the waving hands, let alone any other rock art images.

"The biggest challenge with rock art is chronology and dating. Once we tried to interpret the art, but with our modern minds interpretation is entirely hypothetical. So now we concentrate on dating, chronology and the technical aspects." He adds one exception, unique to Saudi Arabia: Tribal markings called *wasum* are still used today by Bedouin to mark territorial and animal possessions. They

Above: **Above the plain near Bir Hima, the camel on this panel is a recent addition to an otherwise curious frieze: An oryx faces one of the most naturalistic human figures found in Saudi rock art; he wields a spear and holds what may be a shield, wears feathered headgear and shows what may be tattoos on his abdomen. A smaller figure—a child?—appears under his arm.** Right: **Marks, known as *wasum*, like this one branded onto a camel's leg, are tribal symbols of ownership. Scholars are finding more and more links between rock-art designs and the nearly 4000 known *wasum*.** Opposite, top: **An ostrich is the prey for a lance-wielding, horse-borne rider.**

For conservation reasons, several rock-art sites in the Jubbah region are fenced off. The Great Nafud desert stretches away behind them.

Conserving a Heritage

Faced with thousands of sites to survey, research and preserve, Saad Abdul Aziz al-Rashid, Deputy Minister for Antiquities and Museums, has about him an air of excitement modified by a touch of frustration. His staff of 320, he says, is being stretched thin by the fast-growing field.

"It is difficult to keep up with it all. We need people to protect the sites, resources for preservation work, experts to survey, research and interpret. We also need to educate the public, since there is abuse of sites, with defacing and damage to rock art. All the while there are new sites discovered, which further stretch our professional staff and our resources."

The biggest threat to rock art is, not surprisingly, from modern humans. Many of the human and animal figures in better-known, unprotected areas are pockmarked by bullets; local Bedouin complain that hunters have used the images for target practice. Marginally more respectably, if only because it is in keeping with ancient tradition, shepherds of recent centuries have used metal instruments to carve their new images alongside or even on top of ancient panels. Passing travelers often engage in "pot-picking," or the illegal removal of artifacts from areas of rock art—the very lithic remains that might yet help date the art. So it is that irreversible damage often results more from ignorance than malice.

Regardless of intent, however, Saudi law now protects designated sites unequivocally: Disturbing a rock-art site is illegal, punishable by a jail sentences and stiff fines. The laws are often enforced by local guards.

Still, with more interest and respect for the heritage of rock art, the largest problem faced by rock-art site managers around the world is unintentional damage caused by the sheer volume of otherwise well-intentioned visitors. Even touching rock art can accelerate its deterioration, and repeated touching by many hands can have a rapid cumulative effect.

Moving rocks to facilitate visitor access—for sites are often located up steep valleys—can put the integrity of a site at risk. Local development associated with farming, new settlements and road construction can also lead to losses. Natural deterioration also plays its constant role, with erosion caused by extreme temperatures, blowing sand and dust, occasional earth tremors and rainwater all taking their inexorable toll. On the softer sandstone surfaces, this erosion can range up to 50 millimeters (2") every millennium; on granite the surface retreat is often as little as .05 millimeter (.002") in the same period.

"With tourism now opening up in Saudi Arabia, we have the added challenge of making the sites accessible to the public, providing information, and guarding against degradation and abuse," says al-Rashid.

provide a modern link with much older rock art. Khan's *Wasum: The Tribal Symbols of Saudi Arabia* was published by the Ministry of Education in 2000.

In the museum gallery, Khan demonstrates further the pitfalls of interpretation. "You might say this is a territorial marker," he says as he and a group of schoolchildren ponder the rock with the waving hands. "That child might say it's a keep-out sign, for the broken arm on the rear face shows the consequence of intrusion. I might suggest that it reveals supplication to some deity. You could speculate these incised images from handprints daubed onto the rock are mere doodles by a person with time—and paint—on his hands: Art for art's sake!

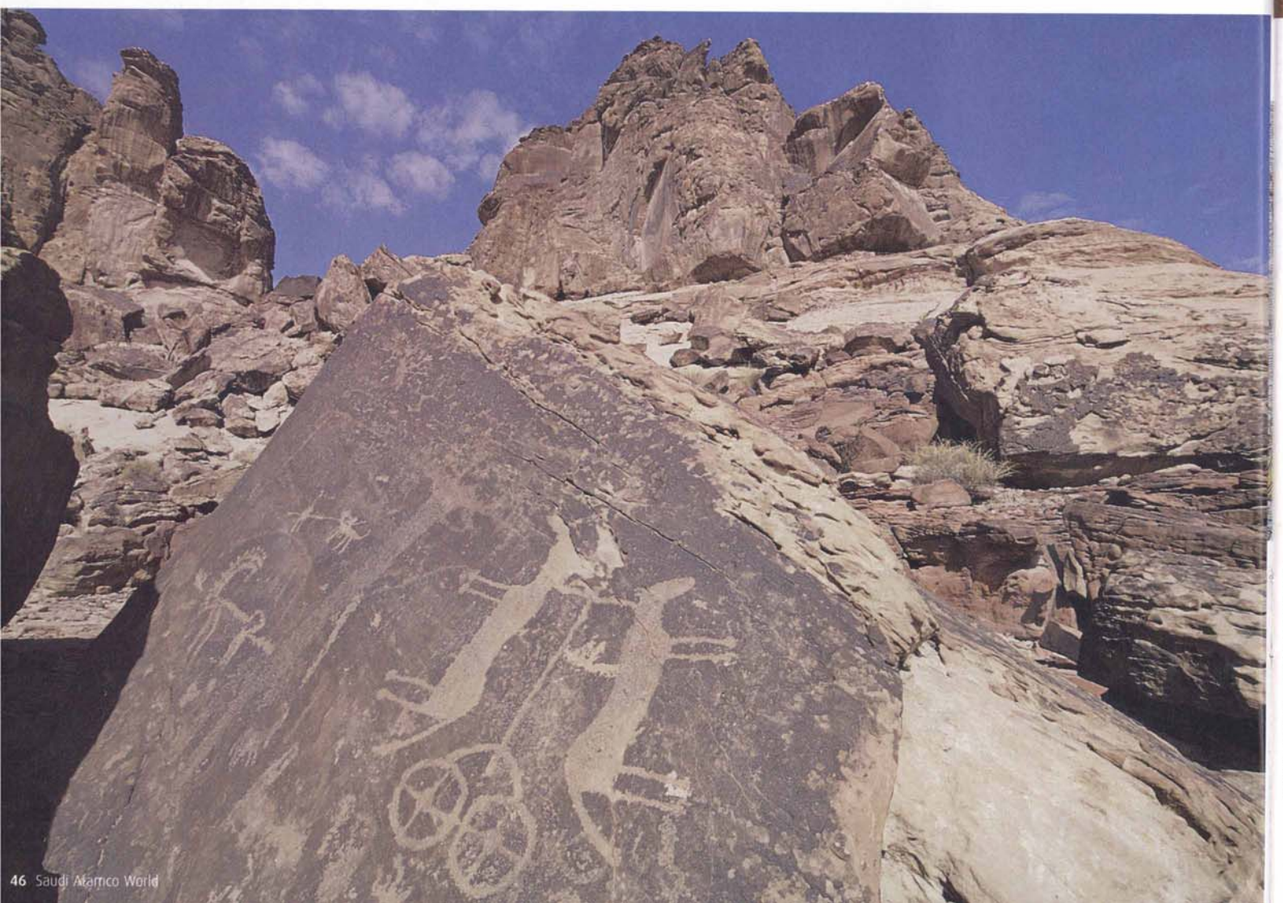
"With such a diversity of ideas, how can we interpret the meaning of people's thoughts thousands of years ago?" asks Khan. "One thing is clear to me though: These images were symbolic, communicating meaning which the artist and the ancient people of the time could understand."

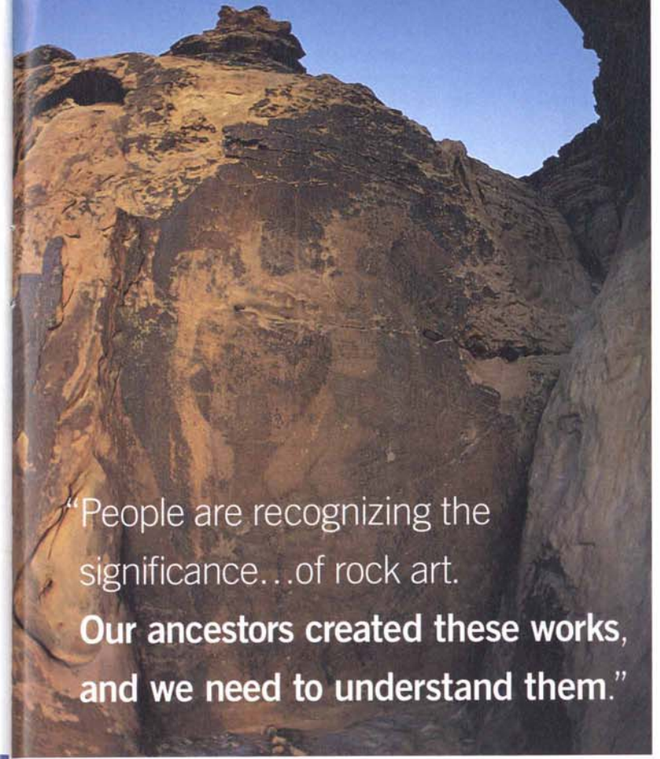
Khan's words echo those of Paul Bahn. In most rock art, argues Bahn, "individual artistic inspiration was related to some more widespread system of thought and had messages to convey: signatures, ownership, warnings, exhortations, demarcations, commemorations, narratives, myths and metaphors."

Among the younger Saudi scholars devoted to rock art is Abdulraheem Hobrom, one of the first to undertake postgraduate studies in the subject at Riyadh's King Sa'ud University. He sees a wide-open field, and attitudes changing in ways that will favor further study. "Islam encourages us to explore and discover the world. People are recognizing the significance of the shared legacy and heritage of rock art. Our ancestors created these works, and we need to understand them," he says.

More publications, increased survey activities and a documentary film in progress, intended for broadcast in Europe, all show the growing interest in Saudi rock art, says Daifallah al-Talhi, director general of the Antiquities Research and Survey Center. "We display rock art in our provincial museums, our mobile exhibition on education in history includes it and we will soon launch a website for the National Museum which will feature petroglyphs," he says. Provincial representatives of the Ministry of Education discuss the country's rock-art heritage in presentations to schools throughout Saudi Arabia's 13 provinces.

This heightened interest, naturally, is leading to another prospect—more discoveries. Saad al-Rashid is a busy man these days, one who often returns to his office at the National Museum in the evenings to work past midnight. He talks of prospects for new studies to address the questions that multiply with the discoveries. "To what extent are the *wasum* of today inherited by tribes, and were there tribes that no longer exist? When were the animals domesticated in Arabia? There are so many facets to examine—and of course always the scientific challenge of accurate absolute dating."





His enthusiasm is echoed by Bednarik. "Saudi Arabia is taking on a pioneer role. This could lead to better things in terms of rock-art studies in other Arab countries, and opting for a scientific approach rather than one of interpretation makes eminent sense. It's also appropriate, as the Arabs were at the forefront of scientific tradition and innovation in the past."

In the middle of the broad, flat, sandy valley of the Shuwaymas site, a small campfire flickers under a canopy of stars in a crystalline sky. Sharing its warmth, sipping coffee and tea, are two Bedouin who live in tents a few kilometers away and who are now officially charged with guarding the site. Also sitting at the fire are Mamduah Ibrahim al-Rasheedi, the school superintendant who called in the find, his teacher colleagues and Saad Rowaisan, the visiting provincial director of antiquities from Hail. They muse over how this once-populated site has been virtually unknown for nearly the full duration of recorded history, and they speculate what their find will bring to this remote area: survey teams, archeologists, students, international specialists, film crews and curious visitors with four-wheel drives and GPS navigation units. Al-Rasheedi already plans a visit for his schoolchildren. There will, of course, be more.

As the coffee-maker tends the embers, talk turns to the people who left their mark on the rocks. "Our children will ask, 'Who were the people who left all this? How did they live, how did they cut the pictures and symbols in the stone?'" says Ruwaisan. "'What were the dogs used for, and why did the cows, lions and cheetahs disappear?'"

Later, after a simple meal, the conversation dies, marking the time for reflective silence interspersed with poetry recitations. The small cloaked gathering draws closer to the fire and listens to verses from an eighth-century *qasidah* by Jarir ibn 'Atiya that opens in the traditional way, with an image of a deserted campsite. Like the art flickering faintly on the rocks, it seems to speak from a distant past.

O, how strange are the deserted campsites and their long-gone inhabitants!
And how strangely time changes all!
The camel of youth walks slowly now;
Its once quick pace is gone; it is bored with traveling.

Peter Harrigan (harrigan@zajil.net) works with Saudi Arabian Airlines in Jiddah, where he is also a contributing editor and columnist for *Diwaniya*, the weekly cultural supplement of the *Saudi Gazette*. He has enjoyed close encounters with rock art in numerous journeys in the Arabian Peninsula over the past two decades.

Lars Bjurström (larsbjurstrom@hotmail.com) has lived for four years in Riyadh, where he practices dentistry and pursues his love of wildlife and exploration photography. "The difficulty with photographing petroglyphs is to make them stand out," he says. "To get the right light meant I had to get to the right petroglyph at the right time of day, and that meant getting up with the sun and chasing it around the sites. Getting to their locations just to photograph them is hard enough, so the fact of their creation is all the more astounding."

OPPOSITE AND RIGHT, LOWER: PETER HARRIGAN

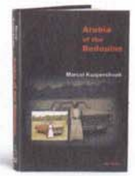
Above: **Locally called "The King," this large, heavily eroded human figure, seen in profile, has muscular arms, fingers on each hand, a blank face, a short skirt and a headdress that may be made of ostrich feathers. Experts believe it probably dates from the Neolithic period, making it between 6000 and 9000 years old.** Opposite: **One of the most unusual petroglyphs at Jubbah is this horse-drawn chariot, shown in an unusual vertical perspective. It is probably 2000 to 2500 years old. Jubbah's greatest value is that it contains petroglyphs from most major phases of habitation: Middle Paleolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Thamudic and Arabic.**

Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World*:

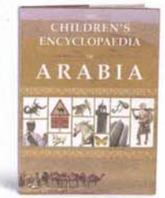
Lady Anne Blunt: M/J 80
Archeological survey: M/A 80
Stone "kites": M/J 00
Lakes of the Rub' al-Khali: M/J 89
National Museum: S/O 99
Tourism in Saudi Arabia: M/A 01

SuggestionsforReading

Readers of *Saudi Aramco World* who want to explore further than a bimonthly magazine can do will find interesting material, most of it recently published, in this list. Without endorsing the views of any of the authors, the editors encourage omnivorous reading as a path to greater understanding. The books listed here are available in libraries, from bookstores—we urge our readers to patronize independent bookstores—or from their respective publishers; 10-digit International Standard Book Numbers (ISBN) are given to facilitate ordering. Please do not order books from *Saudi Aramco World*.

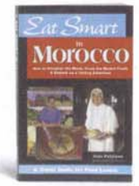


Arabia of the Bedouins. Marcel Kurpershoek; Paul Vincent, tr. 2001, Saqi Books, 0-86356-809-2, £19.95 hb. 2002, Palgrave, 0-86356-809-2, $29.95 hb. (Abridgement of **Diep in Arabië** and **De laatste bedoeïen**, 1992 and 1996, J.M. Meulenhoff)
The author, a Dutch diplomat, turned his posting in Saudi Arabia into an opportunity to explore the oral literature of some of the most remote Bedouin tribes, and the story of his five-month journey in pursuit of the literature—after three years of familiarization—makes it a doubly valuable read. Among the poets he encounters, al-Dindan emerges as "an old, poor, illiterate and unruly" link between pre-Islamic oral traditions and the present; his poetry "offers contemporary proof of the authenticity of the great pre-Islamic tradition." With him and others, the author runs errands, helps fix trucks, waits about in offices and tents and records tales of intertribal rivalry—literary and otherwise—with the result that what could have been a narrowly focused academic book is instead of interest to anyone curious about rural life in Saudi Arabia.



The Children's Encyclopaedia of Arabia. Mary Beardwood. 2001, Stacey International, 1-900988-33-X, $29.95, hb
This vividly illustrated volume by a teacher with nearly a quarter-century of experience on the Arabian Peninsula is a delight for children and young adults to peruse alone or with parents. The history, culture, plants and animals of the region are brought to life in a pleasing format certain to engross young readers, and perhaps deliver a surprise or two to adults who thought they knew it all.

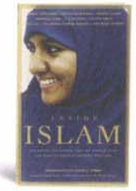
The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam, Revised Edition. Cyril Glassé; introduction, Huston Smith. 2001, Stacey International, 1-900988-06-2, £45, hb. **New Encyclopedia of Islam.** Cyril Glassé. 2001 (rev. ed.), Altamira, 0-7591-0189-2, $89.95, hb
This single-volume reference work on Islam, in a newly revised edition, is a vigorous and exhaustive compendium not only of the religion, but also of the cultures associated with and inspired by it. A graduate of Columbia University and a lecturer on comparative religion, Glassé, in 1200 entries, unfolds Islam's remarkable depth and breadth as a religion and as a force in philosophy, science and the arts. Erudite and thoroughly engaging, the author's style is captivating to scholars and casual readers alike.



Eat Smart in Morocco: How to Decipher the Menu, Know the Market Foods & Embark on a Tasting Adventure. Joan Peterson. 2002, Gingko Press (Box 5346, Madison, Wisconsin 53705), 0-9641168-6-3, $12.95 pb
Berbers, Arabs, Andalusi Arabs and Jews, Europeans and the New World all contributed to making Moroccan cuisine one of the most interesting and exciting of the Middle East, and the visitor who is timid about what he eats in that country will miss some wonderful revelations. This information-packed guide begins with a brief history of the country that includes each group's culinary contributions, then tours Morocco's regions and their specialties, and continues with recipes, US mail-order sources for Moroccan ingredients, helpful phrases for use in restaurants and markets, a listing of menu items—with pronunciation guide and designations such as "national favorite" or "regional classic"—to make ordering easier, and a glossary of ingredients, utensils and cooking methods. This is not primarily a cookbook, but it is an indispensable resource; don't leave home without it.

The Fayoum: History and Guide. R. Neil Hewison. 2001 (3rd ed.), American University in Cairo Press, 977-424-671-3, $14.95 pb
Fifty miles southwest of Cairo, the Fayoum is a large, fertile area rich in history and natural beauty. Sometimes referred to as an oasis, it is actually an irrigated depression, and is scattered with temples, pyramids—including the Maydum, or Collapsed Pyramid—towns from the Middle Kingdom and Ptolemaic Period, and churches, monasteries and mosques from more recent eras. Other sites of interest include the salt lake of Birkat Qarun and other watercourses which attract varied bird life, including spoonbills and flamingoes. Hewison outlines the long history of the region, describes its agricultural and rural life, and takes the reader on an enjoyable tour of an area that deserves a place on any visitor's itinerary.

Ibn Saud: King by Conquest. Nestor Sander. 2002, Hats Off (610 E. Delano St., Suite 104, Tucson AZ 85705), 1-58736-017-9, $62.50, hb
This biography of the founder of the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is by a former employee of the Arabian American Oil Company. The author met Ibn Saud ('Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud) on the occasion of the king's visit to the oil camp in 1939 and began a 60-year quest to research the monarch's life and times, hoping to resolve contradictions—as to both fact and motivation—that he found in other biographies. The result is a straightforward account of the king's life, the people surrounding him and the early days of the kingdom. With color photographs by the author, maps, notes on the Al Sa'ud family and other key players in the story, and an extensive annotated bibliography.

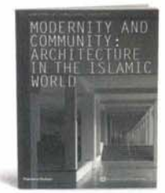


Inside Islam: The Faith, the People, and the Conflicts of the World's Fastest-Growing Religion. John Miller and Aaron Kenedi, eds.; introduction, Akbar S. Ahmed. 2002, Marlowe & Company, 1-56924-568-1, $15.95, pb
A collection of well-known and thoughtful writers—some admired in the Middle East, some not—contribute essays on Islam and its interactions with the West. They include Karen Armstrong, Huston Smith, Thomas Cleary, Michael Wolfe, Geneive Abdo and Fareed Zakaria as well as V. S. Naipaul and Bernard Lewis, and thus present a diverse picture. Four essays deal with the faith, six with the people in different parts of the Islamic world, and four more with "contemporary issues that concern people looking at Islam." This is a valuable contribution to understanding, and to averting "the clash of civilizations" in favor of dialogue.

Inside the Seraglio: Private Lives of the Sultans in Istanbul. John Freely. 2000, Penguin Books, 0-14-027056-6, £8.99/$15, pb
In this "family biography of the Osmanlı dynasty, …the thirty-six sultans who in turn ruled the Ottoman Empire through twenty-one generations," Freely—who has written more than 20 books since *Strolling Through Istanbul*, still one of the best guides to the city—tells the story of the rulers, their women and children and the others who surrounded them in the "Gate of Felicity," the Inner Court of Topkapı Palace in Constantinople. He draws on a remarkably wide array of European and some Ottoman sources and weaves them into a freely flowing, informal account, intimate, detailed and illuminating.

In the Shade of the Tree: A Photographic Odyssey Through the Muslim World. Peter Sanders. 2002, Starlatch Press, 1-929694-14-8, $35 hb. 2002, Mountain of Light, 1-900675-41-2, £25 hb
This is a personal collection, a retrospective of Sanders' more than 30 years of travel in Muslim countries as an editorial and commercial photographer. It is a book by a master craftsman and artist who is himself a Muslim, and who continually strives to convey the inner beauty of the subject rather than promote any distinct photographic style. To this end, his captions are intimate and brief, and they play off quotations from scholars and poets. His compositions favor simplicity and elegant light. His people reflect a generosity of spirit, even an innocence, that Sanders himself no doubt elicited through his own rapport with them, and which he then captured in all its sincerity. There are grand images and disarmingly simple ones, such as a smiling Turkman woman holding an apple that, Sanders notes, became part of his own breakfast that morning. The result is a quiet book that, true to its title, is a moment of shade in our often over-lit culture.

Islam Today: A Short Introduction to the Muslim World. Akbar S. Ahmed. 1999 (rev. ed.), I. B. Tauris, 1-86064-257-8, $19.95 pb
Non-Muslims can learn to appreciate the beauty, depth and variety of Islamic cultures and societies only by returning to their religious sources, Akbar Ahmed believes. A former Pakistani provincial governor and diplomat, Ahmed teaches at American University in Washington, D.C. His *Islam Today* thus begins with the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an's "five pillars," which govern the beliefs and behavior of Muslims everywhere. The book goes on to show how the great Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal empires deeply marked their respective successor states in Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and India, and explores how the Muslim minorities in the West struggle to maintain their identities and ideals in uncomprehending or hostile environments. Concise, demythologizing and very useful.



Modernity and Community: Architecture in the Islamic World. Kenneth Frampton, ed.; foreword, Charles Correa; essay, David Robson. 2001, Thames & Hudson, 0-500-28330-3, $24.95 pb
This is a compilation of the nine winning projects in the eighth cycle of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, founded in 1977 to promote thoughtful interpretations of Islamic-world traditions amid the stylistic pressures of international modernism. Since then, the AKAA has become the preeminent institution in which questions about the relationship of architecture to poor and working-class communities are raised and, in building, explored. The eighth-cycle projects are largely in this vein: reconstructions in Iran; an orphanage in Jordan; a self-help program in a Moroccan village; the "Barefoot Architect" school in Tilonia, India. All show that the AKAA is arguably the most socially meaningful program in architecture today.

North Africa Travel. Barnaby Rogerson, ed. 2001, Sickle Moon, 1-900209-19-5, £10, pb
Contemporary writers examine a variety of topics in this accessible collection of background reading designed for travelers. Covering Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Libya, the topics include the Gnaoua music of Morocco, art-deco architecture in Tunis and slave-trade routes across the Sahara. Maps, illustrations, news updates and a notice-board for travelers to the region round out this rather esoteric gathering.

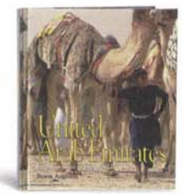
Only In London. Hanan al-Shaykh. 2001, Pantheon, 0-375-42133-5, $23 hb. (Orig. **Innaha Landan Ya 'Azizi**)
In this, her fourth novel, acclaimed Lebanese author al-Shaykh (Women of Sand and Myrrh; Beirut Blues), takes the reader on a bumpy, joyous ride through Arab London. Four characters from across the Arab world—Lamis, an Iraqi divorcée; Nicholas, a Sotheby's authority on Islamic daggers; Amira, a Moroccan posing as an Arab princess; and Samir, a would-be smuggler of monkeys from Lebanon—are brought together on a turbulent flight from Dubai. Once in London, the unlikely foursome pursues happiness and love while struggling with issues of exile and assimilation. Arab expatriate London is vividly brought to life as East and West collide and blend in a sprightly novel that is by turns comic and poignant.

Paper Before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World. Jonathan M. Bloom. 2001, Yale University Press, 0-300-08955-4, $45, hb
In the centuries before Gutenberg, Muslims carried the technology of papermaking and the use of paper from China across the Islamic world to Europe. In this beautifully produced and very readable book the author describes paper's transformation of literature, science and the arts in both Muslim and European lands and, in addition, underlines the enormous influence of Islamic civilization on western culture. Bloom examines the relationship between paper and printing and how it shaped not only the development of numerous disciplines—writing, book-making, mathematics, music, art, architecture and others—but also the interactions between widely separated peoples, demonstrating that paper entirely transformed the passing of knowledge and served as a bridge between cultures. More than 100 well-researched illustrations complement the text, and Diane Gottardi designed the whole.

The Scent of Orange Blossoms: Sephardic Cuisine from Morocco. Kitty Morse and Danielle Mamane. 2002, Ten Speed Press, 1-58008-269-6, $24.95 hb
The authors of this richly illustrated cookbook have collaborated to preserve a treasure: the culinary traditions of Morocco's dwindling Sephardic community. Kitty Morse, born in Casablanca and now living in America, and Danielle Mamane, a native and resident of Fez, both have ancestors who fled to Morocco from the Spanish Inquisition. Mamane continues to cook the dishes she inherited, using no recipes but judging quantities by eye and combining ingredients as her mother and grandmothers did. Morse, the author of eight cookbooks, half of them dealing with Morocco or North Africa, took on the challenge of setting down recipes for these dishes and adapting them to American tastes and available ingredients. The result is a seductive collection of surprisingly easy recipes for flavorful and healthy dishes from every part of the menu. Try couscous with onion-and-raisin confit, meatballs with Swiss chard and artichoke hearts, lentil and garbanzo-bean soup, and a savory wedding flan made, unexpectedly, with chicken livers. Nothing here is too exotic; for those who wish to explore Moroccan cooking from scratch there are basic recipes for preserved lemons and kumquats, almond paste, stocks, breads and the famous Moroccan spice blend *ras el hanout*. Family memories and photos add depth to the text.

—ALICE ARNDT

Walking in Jordan: Walks, Treks, Caves, Climbs, Canyons. Di Taylor and Tony Howard; foreword, Queen Noor of Jordan. 2002, Interlink, 1-56656-379-8, $18.95, pb
The authors, 30-year veterans of hiking in Jordan, have produced the first guidebook devoted to trekking the Hashemite kingdom. More than 100 routes are described, from the mountains of Moa and Mujib, to Wadi Rum and Petra, along ancient caravan routes, olive groves, canyons and nature reserves such as Dana—even spelunking in the caves of Zubia. Detailed information is provided on transportation, accommodations, difficulty ratings, access, and flora and fauna, including birding. Abundant maps and color photographs, along with numerous quotes from Arabic literature, the Qur'an and travelers ancient and recent, make this book essential not only for intrepid walkers, but also for anyone interested in the magnificent landscapes of Jordan.

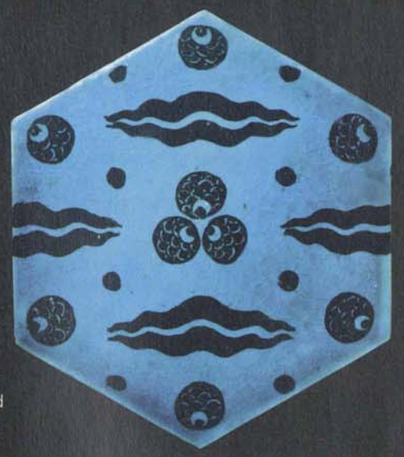


United Arab Emirates. Byron Augustin. Enchantment of the World series. 2002, Children's Press, 0-516-20473-4, $34, hb
This is the author's third contribution to this globe-spanning text series aimed at readers aged nine through 12. A professor of geography, Augustin communicates his personal enthusiasm for his subject in the logically organized text and abundant photographs that show people, history, industry, land and wildlife, government and religion. This is a good book with which to introduce an unfamiliar country to young readers.

COMPILED BY KYLE PAKKA, ROBERT ARNDT AND DICK DOUGHTY

Events&Exhibitions

The **Los Angeles County Museum of Art** has recently acquired the Madina Collection of Islamic Art, more than 750 works gathered over the course of 40 years by Dr. Maan Madina, professor emeritus in the department of Middle Eastern and Asian languages and cultures at Columbia University. The collection spans from the seventh to the 19th century, and focuses on decorative arts, architectural decoration and calligraphy, especially from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Spain and North Africa. Among the holdings are more than 250 brilliantly glazed ceramics and tiles, more than 50 specimens of calligraphy, 65 textiles and 50 glass objects. Included in the collection are examples of architectural decoration produced in the 15th century for the Timurid dynasty, early Islamic glass, pottery and textiles, and works of art in metal, wood, glass and stone. The acquisition effectively doubles the size of LACMA's Islamic holdings. A number of the newly acquired works are now on display in LACMA's Islamic art galleries on the third floor of the Ahmanson Building. **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art.



MADINA COLLECTION, GIFT OF CAMILLA CHANDLER FROST

The Ottoman tiger-stripe and leopard-spot design, called *çintemani*, appears on this Syrian tile from about 1600.

<< March

The Complete Satyajit Ray: Cinema from the Inner Eye is a film retrospective at the Freer Gallery of Art in **Washington, D.C.** Ray is regarded as the creator of the art-film genre in India and received an Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement in 1992, the year of his death. All films are in Bengali with English subtitles.
March 15: *Distant Thunder*
March 17: *Days and Nights in the Forest*
March 24: *The Kingdom of Diamonds*
April 5: *Company Limited*
April 7: *Two Daughters*
April 12: *The Middleman*
April 21: *The Lonely Wife*
April 28: *The Stranger*

The Glory of Ancient Egypt's Civilization displays more than 123 objects selected from the inexhaustible collection of the Egyptian Museum of Cairo and the Luxor Museum. **Hiroshima** Prefectural Museum, March 16 through April 21; Ishikawa Prefectural Museum, **Kanazawa**, April 27 through May 26; Tohoku Historical Museum, **Sendai**, (tentative) June 8 through July 14.

Teaching About the Arab World and Islam is the theme of teacher workshops co-sponsored by the Middle East Policy Council in Washington, D.C. and conducted by Arab World and Islamic Resources and School Services (AWAIR) of Berkeley, California. The program is fully funded and workshops can be requested by any school, district office of education or university. Scheduled sites and dates include: **Flint, Michigan**, March 16; **Rockville, Maryland,** March 22–23; **Jordan, Utah**, April 13; **Berkeley, California**, April 9 and 11; **Folsom, California**, May 7; **Asilomar, California**, September 27 and 29; **San Francisco**, October 5; **San Antonio, Texas**, November 8–9; **Phoenix**, November 14 and 17; **Atlanta**, November 25. Information: 202-296-6767 or 510-704-0517; awair@igc.apc.org.

Gold of the Pharaohs celebrates the reopening of the galleries of the Egyptian and Oriental Collection. Apart from early dynastic jewelry, the exhibition focuses on golden bangles and rings that once adorned the queens of the Middle Kingdom, and hairbands, pectorals, bracelets and jewelry made of semi-precious stones. In addition, the exhibition includes funerary statues and funerary offerings from tombs. Kunsthistorisches Museum, **Vienna**, through March 17.

Masterworks from the Age of the Pyramids showcases extraordinary objects that epitomize the lasting achievements of Egypt's Old Kingdom, including monumental royal sculpture, stone vessels, jewelry, tools and weapons. **Cincinnati** Art Museum, March 17 through June 9.

Current Archeological Research. The lectures in this series, which runs through June, concern discoveries and scholarship in the Middle East and West Asia. Each is presented at noon by a speaker intimately involved in the work under discussion.
- March 18: "Yemen in Prehistory and the South Arabian Period: Excavations at Qana," Frank Braemer and Michel Mouton
- April 5: "The Dawn of Sumer: German Archeological Research at Uruk," Hans Nissen
- June 7: "Bahrain and the Land of Dilmun: New Excavations at Qalat al-Bahrain," Pierre Lombard

Information: +33-1-4020-8498 or brisset@louvre.fr. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**.

Oasis: the Photographs of Lehnert and Landrock features 36 black-and-white photographs from the early 20th century of the daily life and landscapes of Algerian and Tunisian oases. The prints on display were made from the original glass plates, found in 1982 by Dr. Edouard Lambelet, Landrock's grandson-in-law and present owner of the legendary Lehnert and Landrock bookstore in Cairo. Sony Gallery, American University in **Cairo**, March 18 through April 11.

Through Afghan Eyes: A Culture in Conflict, 1987 to 1992 is an exhibition of videos and photographs made by Afghans documenting the last days of the Soviet invasion, the resulting civil war and the post-Cold War era. The works provide intimate views of average people carrying out their daily lives against the backdrop of war. Asia Society, **New York**, March 19 through September 15.

Agatha Christie and the East: Criminology and Archeology traces those two strands in the life of the "Queen of Crime," displaying diaries; hitherto unpublished photographs of Christie and her husband, archeologist Max Mallowan; more than 200 artifacts from his excavations in Iraq and Syria; and a compartment from the Orient Express. The exhibition emphasizes Christie's participation in the digs as restorer and photographer. British Museum, **London**, through March 24.

Recent Work of 12 Arab Artists: The Egee Art Gallery Selection offers a survey of some of the foremost Arab artists at work in the world today, whose paintings and ceramics reflect the intercultural climate from which they draw their inspiration. A diverse array of styles, techniques and topics informs the works: Calligraphy influences some of the artists while others are inspired by political events; some defy attribution to a specific cultural heritage. The artists are Mohammed Bennani (Morocco), Jamal Abdulrahim (Bahrain), Rachid Diab (Sudan), Ali Omar Ermes (Libya), Maysaloun Faraj (Iraq), Abdelkrim Kebir (Algeria), Rachid Koraichi (Algeria), Sami Mohamad (Kuwait), Khairat Al Saleh (Syria), Laila Shawa (Palestine), Awad Al Shimy (Egypt), Faisal Samra (Saudi Arabia) and Dia Azzawi (Iraq). Nearly 50 works are exhibited, all on loan from the Egee Art Gallery in London. Catalogue. Wereldmuseum, **Rotterdam**, through March 24.

Under Foreign Influence: Textiles from Europe and Asia. Since ancient times, Europe has been prone to the influence of textile materials, techniques and motifs from the Near and Far East, such as silk imported from China, the complex early medieval woven fabrics from Syria, or the carpets and rugs from the Middle East. The exhibition presents European pieces, from the Middle Ages to the present, that document the interest in the "exotic" and the impact of Asian and Middle Eastern models. MAK Museum, **Vienna**, through March 24.

Egypt: Gift of the Nile highlights the religion, funerary practices, education and family life of ancient Egypt. **Windsor [Ontario]** Community Museum, through March 27.

William Morris: Myth, Object and Animal showcases glass artist William Morris's ability as an *animalier*: an artist whose renderings of animals display a special sensitivity and an eye for scientific accuracy. Morris evokes ancient myths and motifs by referring to such artifacts as the 3000-year-old ceramic mastodons and bulls unearthed from the Amlash graves of Iran, Egyptian canopic jars and Nubian giraffes. Mint Museum, **Charlotte, North Carolina**, through March 31.

<< April

Afghanistan is a solo exhibition of photos by Edward Grazda taken during the 1980's Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and more recently in 1992 and 1997. The photographs, taken in tea-houses and hotel rooms and on journeys with resistance fighters, form not only a photographic diary, but a powerful social and cultural document. Sepia International, **New York**, April 6 through May 25.

Ancient Egypt marks the reopening of the Anniston Museum of Natural History's exhibit of Ptolemaic-era Egyptian mummies in a new hall that explores the plants and animals associated with mummification. **Anniston, Alabama**, opens April 6.

Outer and Inner Space: A Video Exhibition in Three Parts is a showing of recent work by three artists, including Shirin Neshat from Iran, whose entry "Rapture" uses lush black-and-white projections on opposite walls to explore the strict separation of men and women in some Islamic countries. A selection of earlier videos by the artist treats the themes of gender roles, cultural identity and spatial divides. **Virginia** Museum of Fine Arts, **Richmond**, April 6 through June 2.

The Golden Mummy: The Return to Life. Three ancient Egyptian individuals "return to life" after restoration of their mummies or portraits. Egyptian Museum of **Barcelona, Spain**, through April 7.

Looking at Contemporary Arab Art: The Kinda Foundation Collection presents a large and extremely diverse group of works that reflects both the artistic vitality of the Arab world and the open eye and mind of the collector, Adel Mandil. (His foundation is named after the tribe of Imru al-Qays, the great pre-Islamic Arabian poet.) Every school and tendency that has affected 20th-century Arab art is represented, and every country from Morocco to Iraq. The exhibition testifies to the productivity of the artists' dialogues with Arab history and the Arab future, and those between the Arab world and the West. Institut du Monde Arabe, **Paris**, through April 7.

The Arab Novel: Visions of Social Reality is a symposium sponsored by the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. Prominent Arab novelists, literary critics, and scholars from the Arab world, Europe and the United States will present papers and discuss topics related to culture, politics, history and the tradition of Arab literature. Information: www.ccasonline.org. **Washington, D.C.**, April 12 through 14.

The Eternal Image: Egyptian Art from the British Museum is the first loan ever of some 150 pieces that span 3000 years of Egyptian history, from a tiny royal portrait of carved ivory to the colossal granite statue of Seti II. Included also are wooden sculptures and papyrus paintings, neither of which survived the passage of years in great numbers. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, **Kansas City, Missouri**, April 12 through July 7; The Fine Arts Museums of **San Francisco**, from August 10.

Tutankhamun and the Treasures of the Pharaohs offers a replica of the funeral chamber and its treasures. British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, **Bristol, England**, through April 13; Historic Dockyard, **Portsmouth**, April 19 through May 26.

Beauty of Ancient Egypt examines traditional ways of portraying beauty through statues, engravings, jewelry and cosmetics implements gathered from the Roemer Pelizaeus Museum in Hildesheim, Germany. The exhibit travels in Japan for one year; dates are tentative. National Museum of Art, **Osaka**, Japan, through April 14; **Kohriyama**, April 24 through May 13; **Sapporo**, July; **Tokyo**, July through August.

Ballad Beyond Places: An Exhibition of Ceramics and Prints presents works by London-based Iraqi artist Khulood Da'ami, including pieces that integrate quotations from the Qur'an and Arabic poetry as an exploration of form and shape in their own right. Kufa Gallery, **London W2**, April 18–27.

Ameen Rihani: Bridging East and West is an international symposium co-sponsored by the Ameen Rihani Institute and the American University Center for Global Peace. Rihani (1876–1940) was a leading Lebanese writer, poet, teacher, nationalist and lecturer. He wrote on social reform, politics, Pan-Arabism, East-West cohesion and philosophy. In 1919, he was asked to represent Arab interests at the Hague Peace Conference and in 1921 served as the only Middle Eastern member of the Reduction of Armaments Conference in Washington, D.C. The symposium will address many of the themes to which Rihani dedicated his life, and features some of the world's leading writers on the Middle East. Information: www.AmeenRihani.org. American University, **Washington, D.C.**, April 19–20.

Marcel Khalifa, one of the world's leading Arab musicians, performs Lebanese music with a five-member ensemble. **Cleveland** Museum of Art, April 19.

Ra: The Eclipse of the Sun is a world dance event presented by Sahra and the Ya Amar! Dance Company and featuring the music of Solace. Curtis Theater, **Brea, California**, April 20 at 7:30 p.m. and April 21 at 3:00 p.m.

The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt displays coffins, masks, jewelry, papyri, sarcophagi and sculpture drawn from Cairo's Egyptian Museum. National Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**, April 21 through August 11.

Tutankhamun: "Wonderful Things" From the Pharaoh's Tomb exhibits 90 museum-quality reproductions of the boy-king's treasure, including the throne, funerary mask and mummy case. Crown Center, **Kansas City, Missouri**, through April 21.

Nomads Between the Nile and the Red Sea presents the everyday life of the Abada tribes in southern Egypt and northern Sudan. Photographs, objects of everyday use and drawings by Abada schoolchildren reveal a nomadic culture in the course of change. Wereldmuseum, **Rotterdam**, April 24 through March 9, 2003.

Egypt, Between the Sun and the Crescent Moon presents 80 textiles from across 15 centuries of history. The works reflect the relation among the Nile, the Egyptian people and their beliefs. Girona Art Museum, **Terrassa, Spain**, through April 28.

People of 1000 Gods: The Hittites brings together approximately 170 objects from the archeological museums of Anatolia. Stone reliefs, clay tablets and seals, bronze statuettes, ceramics, gold work and a model of Hattusa, the Hittites' 13th-century-BC capital, shed light on a culture that rivaled ancient Egypt and Babylon. Bundeskunsthalle, **Bonn**, through April 28.

Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection explores the influence of the Ottoman sultans over affairs of state and religion with displays of calligraphy, Qur'anic and other manuscripts, arms and armor, metalwork, ceramics, textiles and scientific instruments from the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art. Catalogue. **Milwaukee** Art Museum, through April 28; **North Carolina** Museum of Art, **Raleigh**, May 18 through July 28; Museum of Art, Brigham Young University, **Provo, Utah**, from August 17.

<< May

The Spiritual Edifices of Islam features a collection of 33 large graphite drawings by Arab-American artist Wahbi Al-Hariri-Rifai (1914–1994) depicting some of the world's historically significant mosques, and providing a glimpse of part of Islam's spiritual landscape. The artist traveled to nearly 20 countries to execute the drawings. An 18-piece retrospective of Al-Hariri-Rifai's earlier watercolors and pastels is also included. Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, **Kuala Lumpur**, May 3 through July 3.

Armenia: Hidden Treasures From the Mountains reveals the wealth of the prehistoric tribes of pastoralists who lived south of the Caucasus 3500 years ago. More than 80 archeological finds, including wagon ornaments, weapons, jewelry and a wooden wagon from the 15th century BC are on display. Rijksmuseum, **Amsterdam**, through May 5.

Cavafy's World features manuscripts, contemporary art and archeological objects that reflect the world of the premier modern poet of the Greek language who, through birth, verse and Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, is identified as that city's expatriate *par excellence*. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, **Ann Arbor, Michigan**, through May 5.

Courtly Radiance: Metalwork from Islamic India displays some 25 objects of daily and ceremonial use fashioned from silver, bronze, copper and other metals during the 16th and 17th centuries. Highlights include a monumental metal fountain of the late 17th century, a rare Mughal vase with superb tracery work, examples of the celebrated *bidri* inlay tradition and a richly embellished writing box. Both Mughal and Deccan metalwork traditions are represented, revealing a rich variety of technical and decorative effects that reflect their inspirations from within India as well as from the greater Islamic world. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through May 5.

Visual Poetry: Paintings and Drawings from Iran and India highlights the work of artists who, beginning in the late 15th century, created independent drawings and paintings that no longer corresponded to a specific text. Freed from the stricture of the written word, these works focused primarily on figural themes and explored the formal potentials of line and color in a new manner. The images were often combined with the finest examples of calligraphy in lavishly prepared albums called *muraqqa*. Some 30 works are on display, including several by Riza Abbasi, the most celebrated painter of this genre, and by other notable artists active in 16th- and 17th-century Iran and India. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through May 5.

Along the Silk Road: Rugs and Textiles from Syria to China features rugs, dowry textiles and silk robes from China, Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The exhibition is part of a collaborative public-education project exploring cultural interaction across Eurasia, which includes lectures, seminars, a virtual art exhibit, education courses, photographic exhibits and a concert series. Henry Art Museum, **Seattle**, through May 12.

Jewish Life in Ancient Egypt reveals the daily life of a multicultural community on Elephantine Island (in present-day Aswan) during Persian rule in the fifth century BC. The exhibit's highlights are eight papyri written in Aramaic, part of a family archive belonging to Ananiah, a Jewish temple official, his wife, Tamut, and their children. The papyri illustrate their life from their marriage in 447 BC to the final payment on their daughter's wedding gift in 402 BC. Other objects in the exhibition include life-size statues, reliefs, bronze statuettes, silver vessels and gold jewelry. **Brooklyn** Museum of Art, through May 12.

The Spirit of Islam: Experiencing Islam Through Calligraphy introduces visitors to the esthetics, spirituality and educational principles of the Muslim world through the time-honored art of calligraphy. The exhibition includes a gallery, a prayer space and a *madrassa*, or school. Objects that include calligraphy as integral or decorative elements are on display, including a 14th-century glass mosque lamp, an 11th-century ceramic bowl from Samarkand and pages from the famous "Blue Qur'an" from North Africa. Educational programs, music and dance performances will also be offered. Museum of Anthropology at the University of **British Columbia, Vancouver,** through May 12.

Akhnaten, an opera by Phillip Glass, makes its Australian debut. "Akhnaten, Gandhi and Einstein are three men who revolutionized the thoughts and events of their times through the power of an inner vision: Einstein, the man of science; Gandhi, the man of politics; and Akhnaten, the man of religion. Akhnaten was a modern man on an ancient throne," Glass explains. Glass's libretto is drawn from texts written in Akhnaten's own time. State Opera's Opera Studio, **Netley, SA, Australia**, May 16–18, 23–25.

Historical Reconstructions is a Historical Society conference that will examine how elites, social groups and individuals have tried to reconstitute and strengthen their societies after social upheaval or defeat in war, including political, military, economic, social, institutional and intellectual aspects of reconstruction. It will include a roundtable discussion (May 18) on "Reconstructions, Restorations, and the Writing of Histories of the Ancient Near East." Crowne Plaza Ravinia, **Atlanta, Georgia**, May 16–18.

Continued from previous page

The Pyramid: House for Eternity uses more than 150 artifacts, including specially fabricated models, to present the architectural history and religious significance of Egypt's 16 most important pyramids—and the story of their discovery and the responses they evoked among Europeans. Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, **Hamburg,** May 17 through August 11.

Hatshepsut: Queen of Egypt, the only female pharaoh, was one of the most significant figures of Egypt's 3000-year history: Following her husband's death, she displaced her minor stepson to rule for 20 years; she built the temple at Deir el-Bahri. The exhibition focuses on Hatshepsut's political influence but, in displaying artifacts from the Berlin Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection, also reveals the high standard of Egyptian art in her time. Historisches Museum der Pfalz, **Speyer, Germany,** May 18 through October 27.

Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur presents 150 extraordinary objects revealing traditions of royal life and death, excavated in the 1920's by Sir Leonard Woolley. They include the famous "Ram in the Thicket"—a statuette of a goat nibbling the leaves of a tree—jewelry, a comb, a wooden lyre decorated with a gold-and-lapis bull's head, games, furniture, seals and vessels of gold, silver and alabaster, many found in the intact tomb of a woman—a queen or high priestess—named Puabi who died between 2600 and 2500 BC, a high point of Sumerian culture. Catalogue $50/$35. Fogg Art Museum, **Boston,** May 18 through September 1.

Wit and Wine: A New Look at Ancient Iranian Ceramics from the Sackler Foundation presents a selection of whimsical jugs, jars, beakers and vessels from ancient Iran, many of which feature animal motifs. McClung Museum, **Knoxville, Tennessee,** through May 19.

Discovering Egypt examines the lives, beliefs and possessions of the people of ancient Egypt. Items in the exhibit include a painted mummy coffin, gravestones and paintings of ancient sites made by the excavators themselves. **St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England,** May 25 through October 20.

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From Far-Off Lands: Art Along the Silk Route displays sculptures and murals dating from the fifth to the 11th century and found in caves near Kucha and Turfan. MAK Museum, **Vienna,** through May 26.

Petra: A City Forgotten and Rediscovered presents findings from the University of Helsinki's excavations on the Mount of Aaron. More than 100 objects from Petra and environs are on display, most of them dating from 100 to 500 AD, with an emphasis on the early Christian era when the city was an important trade center in the Byzantine Empire. Amos Anderson Art Museum, **Helsinki,** through May 26.

Earthen Architecture: Constructive Cultures and Sustainable Development is the theme of six separate, intensive courses in project design and building and conservation techniques, many of which are drawn from traditional methods of the Middle East. Course lengths vary from four days to four weeks, and all instruction is in French. Information: www.craterre.archi.fr. CRATerre-EAG, **Grenoble, France.** Courses May 27–31.

June >>

The Holy Cow and Other Animals: A Selection of Indian Paintings from the Art Institute of Chicago. In Indian art, the rulers of both the heavens and the earth have long been associated with animals. The creatures of nature protect, serve, challenge (and provide sport for) their celestial "human" companions, and for earthly kings. Historical rulers have chosen animals to represent them as symbols of their power, and have revered them as objects of intellectual curiosity and mythological import. Exotic animals from the outermost reaches of an empire demonstrated its vast extent; emperors and rajas alike commissioned paintings that recorded their battles, processions and hunts. Acceding to the demands of a noble or royal patron, artists made renderings of nature's beasts that reflect their curious "otherness" with precise attention to the details of animal physiology, enhanced by the vision, expression and expertise of the artist himself. The collection ranges from the 12th through the 20th century and numbers more than 200 pieces, most dating from the 16th to the 19th century and comprising works from the Mughal period and Rajput schools. Catalogue. Art Institute of **Chicago,** through June 1.

Out of this World: Textiles from the Spirit Realm features 17 prayer rugs from Persia, Turkey and the Caucasus Mountain region of Russia and Azerbaijan, as well as other textiles—from Indonesia, India, Afghanistan, Mexico, Bolivia, China, Tibet, the Philippines and Nigeria—believed to be invested with powerful and protective properties. Textile Museum of Canada, **Toronto,** through June 2.

Armageddon / Megiddo / Tell el-Mutesellim: A Biblical Town Between War and Peace describes daily life and religious observance in an ancient military and commercial center. In reconstructions of a private home and a temple are displayed objects of daily use—vessels, ivory carvings, amulets, cosmetics containers—and statues of gods and goddesses, ceremonial vessels and votive graffiti. A reconstruction of an Egyptian war chariot reminds visitors of the most famous documented battle to have taken place here, that of Pharaoh Thutmose III against the Canaanites in 1456 BC. Helms-Museum, **Hamburg,** through June 2.

Herzfeld in Samarra displays notebooks, sketchbooks, travel journals, watercolors and ink drawings, site maps, architectural plans and photographs—most focusing on Samarra, the temporary capital of the Abbasid caliphs (836–892)—of Ernst Emile Herzfeld, one of the most prominent archeologists and scholars of Islamic art in the first half of the 20th century. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York,** June 5 through January 5.

Kenro Izu: Sacred Sites Along the Silk Road displays approximately 27 large-format platinum prints of sacred sites in western China, Ladakh and Tibet. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.,** June 9 through January 5.

The Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen examines the early history of the ancient Arabian kingdom of Saba through rarely seen paintings, drawings, clothing, jewelry, funerary busts, religious iconography and architecture. British Museum, **London,** June 9 through October 13.

Pharaoh's Harvest: Plants from Ancient and Modern Egypt features photographs of plants as depicted in tombs and monuments and as they appear today.

Interior of the tomb of Sennedjem

Pharaoh's Artists: Deir el-Madinah and the Valley of the Kings uses 300 objects from the museum's collection to present the private, daily and imaginative lives of the artists, craftsmen and workers who lived at Deir el-Madinah in the New Kingdom period and worked to create the royal tombs of the Valley of the Kings. The ruins and objects from this simple worker's village offer a unique glimpse into the lives of ordinary ancient Egyptians. On display are ostraca (shards) bearing sketches of tomb paintings, domestic furniture from homes and a life-size copy of the burial vault of Sennedjem. Inscriptions on papyri and ostraca reveal the day-to-day work of the village's inhabitants, testify to popular piety, and give accounts of team organization and labor conflicts. Also on display are examples of tools, old photographs and a short film of the excavations at the village, made by the French Institute of Eastern Archeology. In conjunction with the exhibition, there will be an international colloquium on "Life in Egypt in the Time of the New Kingdom Pharaohs," May 3–4. Musée du Louvre, **Paris,** April 19 through July 15.

MUSÉE DU LOUVRE

McClung Museum, **Knoxville, Tennessee,** June 10 through August 18.

The Adventures of Hamza (the *Hamzanama*) is a fantastic traditional adventure story based very loosely on the travels of Hamza, an uncle of the Prophet Muhammad, who traveled the world spreading Islam. The narrative tells of his encounters with giants, demons and dragons; of abductions, chases and escapes; of those who believed and those who resisted the truth. The tale was told in coffeehouses from Iran to northern India and was also a favorite story for illustration. The greatest manuscript of the *Hamzanama* was made for the 16th-century Mughal emperor Akbar, and originally included 1400 oversize illustrations, of which only a fraction survive. Sixty of them are presented, alongside new translations of the related text passages, in this exhibition, the first to examine narrative aspects of the text in such depth. A catalog, and additional works displayed, explores the pivotal role of this manuscript in the development of Mughal painting. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.,** June 26 through September 29.

Secrets of Silk traces the life cycle of the silkworm and examines how generations of weavers and embroiderers have exploited silk's unique properties to create splendid textiles. Items on display include a 16th-century Ottoman cope, a sarong from the Malaysian court, an Afghan turban, a Turkmen *kapunuk* (a textile "welcome," hung around doors) and elegant Persian silks. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.,** June 28 through January 5.

The Jeweled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals shows some 300 pieces dating from the mid-16th to the early 18th century from the al-Sabah Collection of Kuwait. In addition to earrings, pendants and bracelets, the show also features a superb collection of daggers with jewel-encrusted scabbards and hilts (including the famous Ruby Dagger), as well as jeweled boxes, cups and gaming pieces. **Houston** Museum of Fine Arts, June 30 through October 27.

July >>

Egypt by Touch is a hands-on exhibit that allows visitors to touch replicas of Egyptian artifacts, particularly appropriate for the vision-impaired. Centennial Bakery Museum, **Hurstville, NSW, Australia,** July 2 through September 19.

Glory and Prosperity: Metalwork of the Islamic World showcases the range of Islamic metalwork with works from the sixth through the 19th century, many never before displayed. "Glory and prosperity" are usually the first in a series of good wishes often inscribed on medieval Islamic metalwork, and are also characteristics of a civilization that could afford to lavish precious materials and high levels of workmanship on vessels and utensils for use in daily life. Sackler Museum, **Boston,** through July 21.

Discovery and Myth: The Burial Chamber of Tutankhamun tells the story of the tomb's discovery and presents a full-scale replica of the tomb with its artifacts and wall paintings. The exhibition also examines the "Tutmania" of the 1970's and 80's. Museum Schloss Hohentübingen, **Tübingen, Germany,** through July 31.

Modern Mongolia: Reclaiming Genghis Khan challenges the traditional view of the great conqueror by inviting the visitor to see Mongolia through the eyes of his modern descendants. Three life-size dioramas of *gers* (the Mongolian word for "yurt") feature many of the exhibition's 192 costumes and artifacts shown in America for the first time. Rare archival photographs reconstruct 20th-century nomadic life, and four films made especially for the exhibition provide historical background and help illuminate Genghis Khan's relationship to contemporary Mongolians' democratic ideals. University of **Pennsylvania** Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia,** through July.

Traders to Tartary uses maps, artifacts, life-size dioramas and a recreated Bukhara market stall to trace the paths of the traders who traveled back and forth from Germany and Poland to the Caspian Sea from the Middle Ages to the 19th century, exchanging European woolens, amber and silver for Central Asian silks, furs, horses, carpets and gems. Yeshiva University Museum, **New York,** through July.

Later >>

Best of British Islam brings together 160 of Britain's finest artists, writers, intellectuals, performers and musicians who have made their mark on British society and helped to enhance Muslim-western dialogue and understanding. The festival includes lectures, workshops, art exhibitions, theatrical performances, jazz, Rumi poetry readings, comedy and film screenings—all on a variety of themes. Information: www.arrum.co.uk. **London,** through August 31.

A Passage to India is the new annual exhibition at the World Awareness Children's Museum. Children's art, interactive installations and activities such as role-playing, music and storytelling are used to raise awareness of the traditions and customs of India, Nepal and Bangladesh. **Glens Falls, New York,** through August.

Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets presents approximately 40 works dating from the 14th through the 19th centuries in the context of their history and relationship to a centuries-old weaving tradition. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.,** through February 2003.

Land of the Pharaohs displays predynastic pottery, *ushabti* figures, bronze figurines, jewelry, amulets and an extremely rare jackal head of the god Anubis, made of cartonnage—waste papyrus or linen soaked in plaster and painted; this item was most likely part of a ritual costume worn by an Egyptian priest while performing mummification rituals. Royal Pump Room Museum, **Harrogate, North Yorkshire, England,** through February 23, 2003.

Qurna Discovery: Life on the Theban Hills 1826 is a unique record of the village of Qurna (Gourna) and of the Theban necropolis that has long supported the village economy. The exhibition includes copies of two 360-degree panoramic drawings, showing tombs, tomb dwellings and the richness of Qurnawi life, that were made by Scottish artist and explorer Robert Hay in 1826. Hay lived and worked in Qurna for extended periods; his many drawings, paintings, plans, notebooks and diaries, unpublished, are now in the British Library. The panorama copies, a gift of the British Museum, are housed in the old Omda (Mayor's) House, which has been renovated by local craftsmen using traditional materials and techniques. **Qurna, Egypt,** permanent.

The Touma Near Eastern Collection is a lavish assembly of antiquities, ceramics, manuscripts, icons, architectural tiles, edged weapons, firearms, brass and copper vessels, furniture and prayer rugs donated to the Huntington Museum of Art by Drs. Joseph and Omayma Touma. **Huntington, West Virginia,** permanent.

Saudi Bedouin Jewelry displays more than 100 pieces, donated by Lewis Hatch and Marie Kukuk, that have doubled the museum's collection. Information: 816-697-2526. Nance Museum, **Lone Jack, Missouri,** permanent.

Traditional Iran displays ethnographic portraits, street scenes and cartoons of daily life along with textiles, brassware, wooden figures and replicas of monuments, from the collection of the Nance Museum. Central **Missouri** State University Museum, **Warrensburg,** permanent.

The Saudi Aramco Exhibit, newly renovated, relates the heritage of Arab-Islamic scientists and scholars of the past to the technology of today's petroleum exploration, production and transportation, set against the background of the natural history of Saudi Arabia. **Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.**

Information is correct at press time, but please reconfirm dates and times before traveling. Most institutions listed have further information available on the World Wide Web. Readers are welcome to submit information for possible inclusion in this listing.

"Bridging East and West: *Saudi Aramco World*, 1949–Present" (formerly "50 Years of *Aramco World*") is a traveling exhibit of 90 photographs from the magazine's first half-century, selected for their artistic and educational qualities. The images show a changing view of the Middle East, and captions link photographs to historical patterns of communication about the region. The exhibit is available for temporary display in schools, universities and special events. For details, please write to Dick Doughty, Assistant Editor, *Saudi Aramco World*, Box 2106, Houston, Texas, 77252, USA.

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