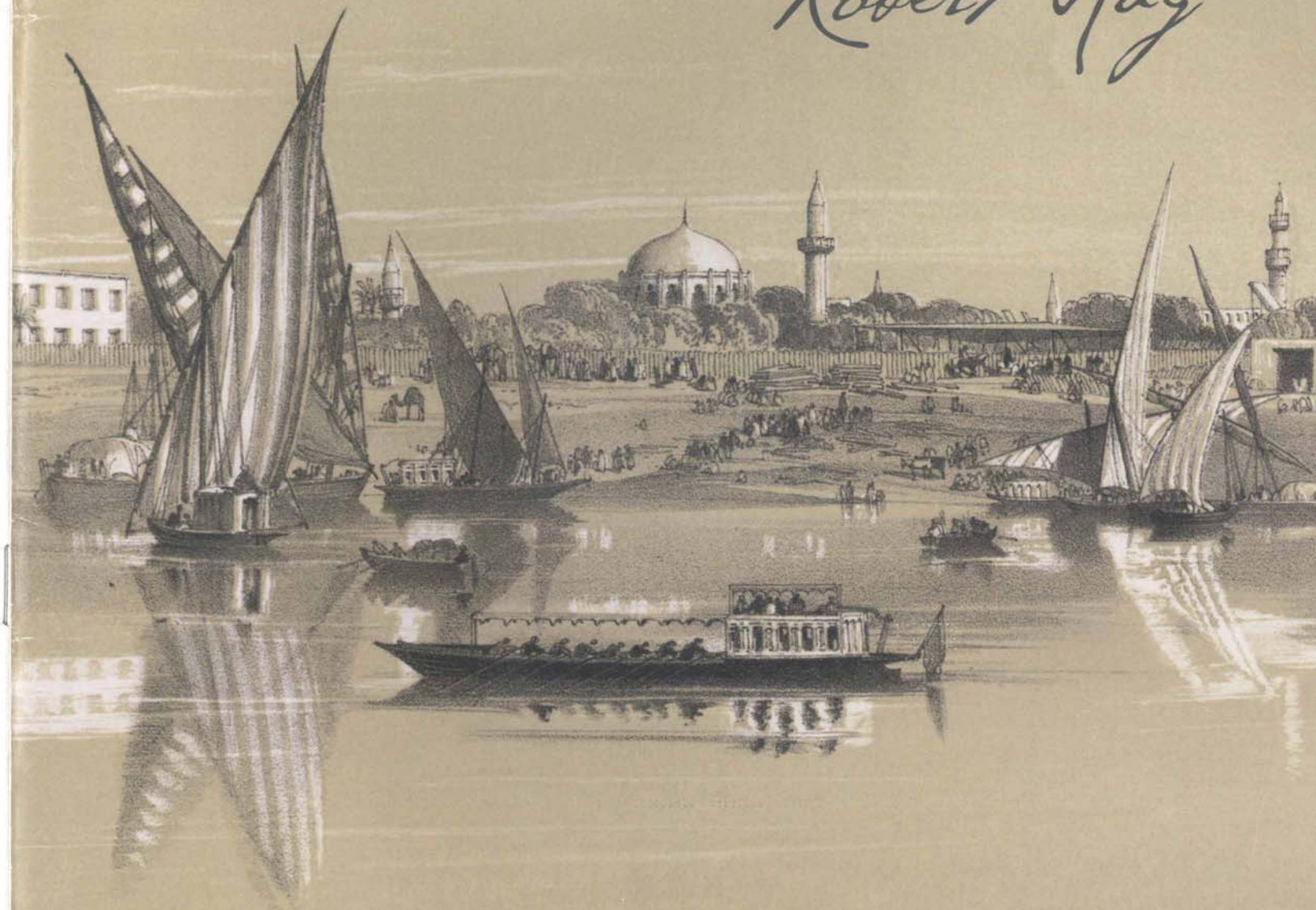


March/April 2003

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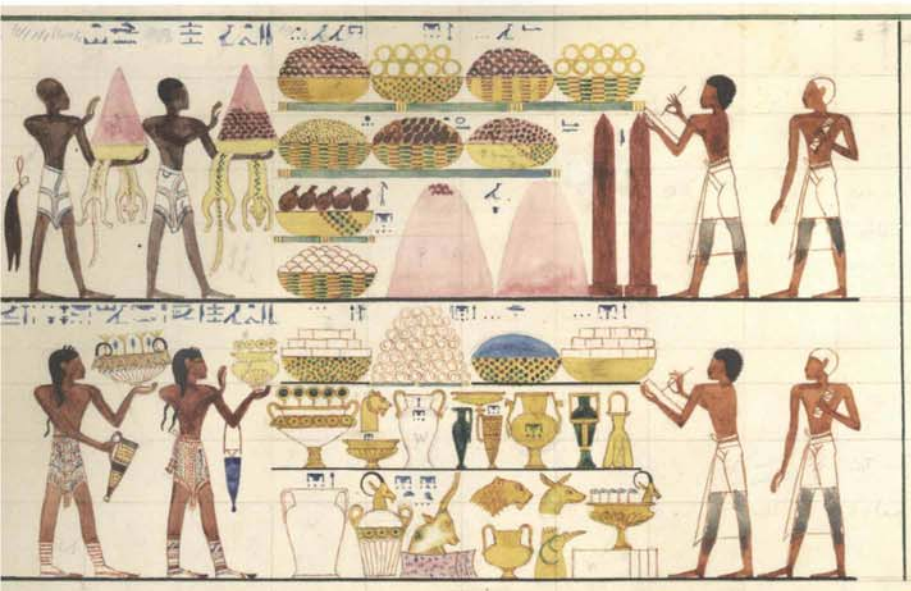
THE LOST PORTFOLIOS OF

Robert Hay



2 The Lost Portfolios of Robert Hay

By Jane Waldron Grutz



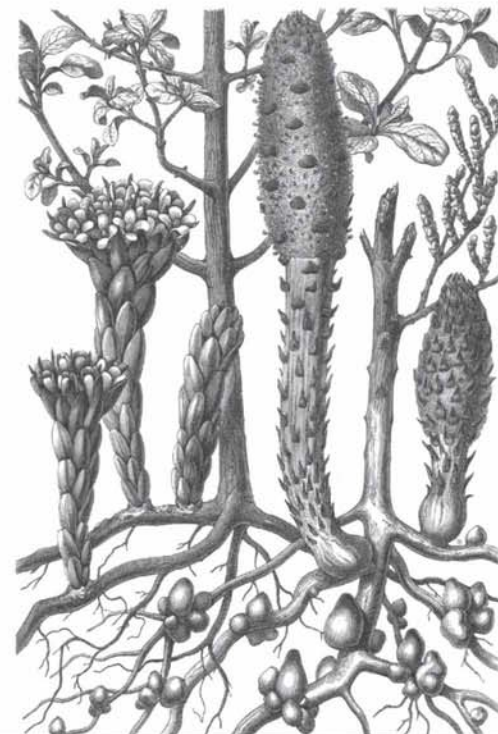
The Treasure of Tarthuth

By Robert W. Lebling

Photographed by Faisal Al-Dossary

In the scrub deserts of Saudi Arabia, after the winter rains, thumb-sized stubs of red begin to poke up through the sands. It's the appearance of *tarthuth*, an asparagus-shaped, parasitic plant once so renowned for its taste and its medicinal value that it was guarded by Maltese crusaders and presented as a gift to the crowned heads of Europe. Today, science may be rediscovering it, and the people of the desert still enjoy digging up a seasonal snack.

"Mr. Hay's portfolio is the most magnificent which has ever been brought from that country," wrote George Hoskins in 1835, the year Hay returned to Scotland following eight years of work in Egypt. "It comprises plans, sections, and detailed drawings, by eminent architects; also delineations of sculpture from the tombs and temples, by himself and able artists, whom he employed, with a complete series of picturesque views, entirely by his own pencil." But few beyond Hay's circle ever saw the works. "I often think of Egypt," wrote Hay later, "but do nothing concerning it." His family passed his little-known collections to the British Library.



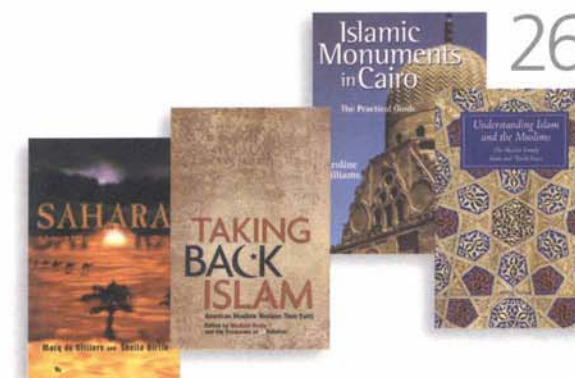
12: ANTON JOSEPH KERNER VON MARILAU AND ADOLF HANSEN, PFLANZENLEBEN, 1913. COURTESY OF KURT STÜBER / WWW.ZUM.DE/STUEBER



18 Tunisia's Center of Ceramics

Written and photographed by Charles O. Cecil

In the city of Nabeul, tile and pottery have been facts of daily life, commerce and craftsmanship since the earliest times. With more than 350 businesses now working harder than ever, the city produces a dazzling range of ceramics, renewing its long reputation as one of the Mediterranean's most energetic centers of this traditional art.



26 Suggestions for Reading

29 Suggestions for Listening

By Chris Nickson



30 Events & Exhibitions

Cover:



"The Landing Place at Boolak" is one of the few works by Hay to be published, appearing in *Illustrations of Cairo* in 1840. The lithograph shows what was then the city's premier river-side port. At center is the mosque of Sinan Pasha, built in 1571; its buttressed stone dome was the city's largest. Today it stands surrounded by an urban neighborhood. Drawing by Robert Hay, copied by Owen Carter and recopied on stone by J.C. Bourne, courtesy of the British Library.

Back Cover:



Patterns dominated by cobalt blues and creamy whites are still popular in Nabeul. The style arrived with Andalusian immigrants in the 15th century. In Nabeul today, exports to Germany, France and Spain account for 60 percent of the ceramics business, while the walk-in trade splits between locals and tourists. Photo by Charles O. Cecil.

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**President and
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Ahmed K. Al-Arnaout

**Director
Public Affairs**
Jamil F. Dandany

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Dick Doughty

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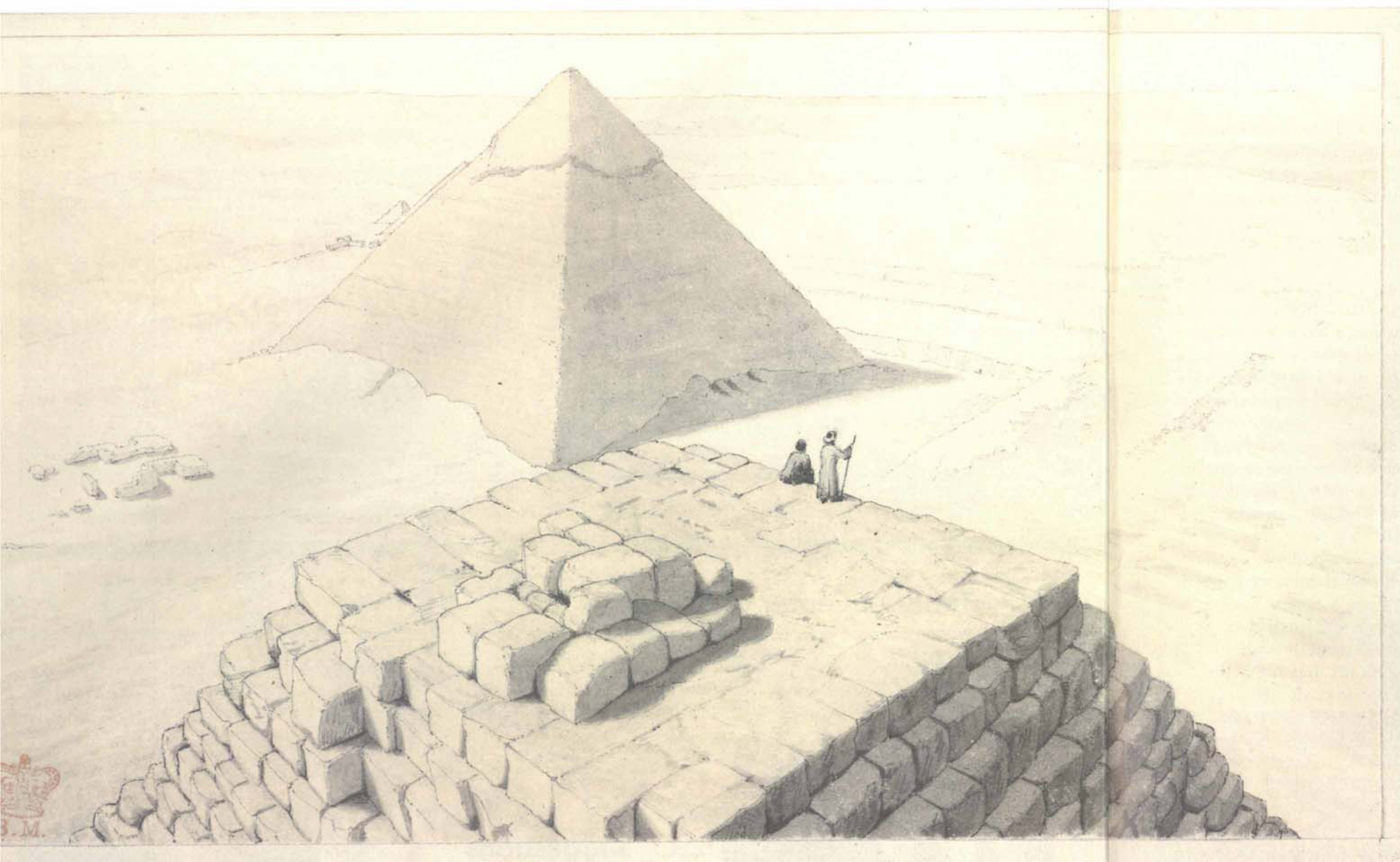
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THE LOST PORTFOLIOS OF

Robert Hay



WRITTEN BY JANE WALDRON GRUTZ
ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF THE BRITISH LIBRARY

In the spring of 1834, Robert Hay sailed away from Egypt for the last time. He had spent more than eight years recording the ancient temples and tombs along the Nile, not merely with sketches and brief descriptions, as earlier travelers had done, but completely, with architectural plans and detailed copies of the murals and inscriptions. It was a vast project, one of the most thorough ever undertaken in Egyptology's early days. A man of some wealth, he had engaged more than half a dozen qualified artists and architects to do the copy work, which he checked closely for accuracy, while he reserved his own talents for the panoramic views. *The results were extraordinary.*

The Hay expedition's renderings of Theban tomb decorations are among the most delightful—and accurate—anywhere. Hay's own panoramic views provide reliable documentation of the small villages that bordered the Nile almost 200 years ago, and his artists' evocative drawings of Islamic monuments, many of them no longer standing, show them as they looked in the 19th century,

not yet hemmed in by the modern buildings of Cairo.

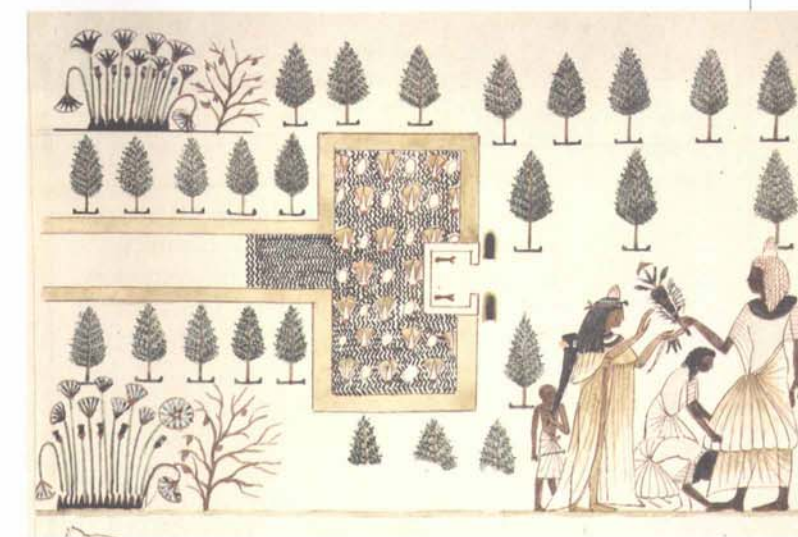
Had Hay's work been published in full it would have, in the words of the eminent scholar Gardner Wilkinson, represented "Egypt itself," and established Hay as one of the foremost scholars studying the land along the Nile. But astonishingly, aside from one book—*Illustrations of Cairo*, published in 1840—none of Hay's work ever saw the light of day.

This view of the top of the Great Pyramid of Cheops is by Edward William Lane, who at age 25 became Hay's assistant in 1826. He went on to become one of the most renowned Egyptologists of the 19th century, author of the classic *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*. Hay's employment made possible Lane's first travels in Egypt. Right: "Nicely Dressed Women in Their Garden, from Tomb 11 at Qurna," was painted by A. Dupuy, who joined Hay's team in 1832. Hay was not always satisfied with Dupuy's accuracy: Alongside this drawing Hay wrote, "These paintings are not to be altogether trusted." Opposite, lower: One of the only known portraits of Robert Hay.

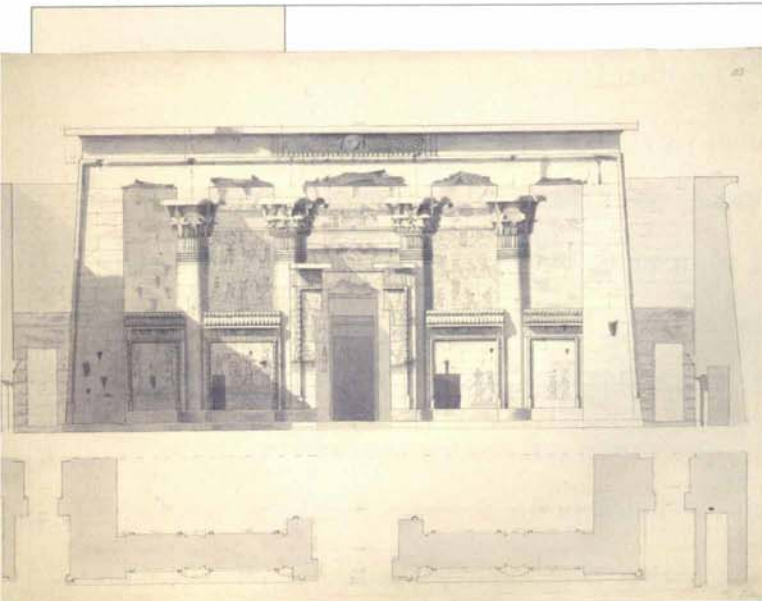
On returning to Scotland early in 1835, Hay seems to have lost the impetus he needed to bring his work to public attention. Indecisive, dispirited by an apparently uninterested public, taken aback by misunderstandings with his artists and overwhelmed by the high costs of publication, Hay gradually put his interest in Egypt aside until, finally, it faded entirely.

It could hardly have been the result he had envisioned when he first arrived in Cairo in 1824. Then only 25, Hay had recently inherited the family estate at Linplum, Scotland and, in keeping with family tradition, had decided to set out on the Grand Tour, accompanied by an artist to record the sites he visited. The artist was Joseph Bonomi, a young sculptor of considerable talent who, after some months' studying in Rome, had found himself deep in debt and was quite ready to accept Hay's offer.

After a few weeks touring Italy, Hay and Bonomi arrived in Malta, where Bonomi introduced Hay to his friend Frederick Catherwood. Catherwood had just returned from



PORTRAIT: R.J.D. HAY / BRITISH LIBRARY



Egypt, where he had produced a portfolio of drawings of the temples along the Nile. Hay was so inspired by them that he immediately decided that he too must see as much of Egypt as possible.

Soon afterward, Hay and Bonomi set out for Cairo.

In 1824 Egypt was in a considerable state of flux. The country had been a medieval backwater of the Ottoman Empire when Napoleon invaded in 1798, but under the Ottoman pasha Muhammad Ali, who ruled from 1806 to 1848, Egypt had begun to modernize. In his effort to industrialize and develop Egypt's mineral resources, Muhammad Ali actively sought the help of westerners. One who was swept up in this effort was James Burton, a young Englishman from a family of successful architects and builders.

Burton had initially worked with a geological survey to search for coal deposits in the Red Sea Hills, but by the time Hay met him he had drifted away to explore the tombs of the West Bank at Thebes. He was often joined there by the young Gardner Wilkinson, whom Burton had

met in Italy before coming to Egypt. Hay had been given letters of introduction to both Burton and Wilkinson, and soon called on Burton.

The meeting seems to have gone well and, with Burton's descriptions of Thebes adding to his enthusiasm, Hay set off with Bonomi for Nubia on Christmas Day 1824. After brief stops at a number of ancient sites, including Beni Hasan, the party reached Abu Simbel on March 18, 1825. It was all Hay and Bonomi could do to even begin to put down what they saw.

From the start Hay insisted on maximal accuracy in his work, and Bonomi, ever ingenious, fashioned a drawing frame for each of them—a device like a large viewfinder, equipped with a sight and a string or wire grid—to help the men draw the temples' interior decorations, then still in brilliant color. The working conditions, however, were less than ideal.

"I am obliged to strip to my drawers and then I am perspiring as much as in a Turkish bath wh is no agreeable thing for drawing," Hay wrote in his journal. He made particular note of the difficulty of working with a hard pencil on damp, soft paper.

The exterior work presented less of a problem. Hay drew a fine view of the head of the northernmost of the four great statues of Ramesses II using a camera lucida, a newly invented device with a prism and lenses that enabled him to view an object simultaneously with the image of it that he was sketching on the drawing paper. "A most correct instrument, but not so great a favorite with me as my eye," wrote Hay, who nevertheless relied on the camera lucida to ensure the accuracy of his work.

In late April Hay and Bonomi left Abu Simbel, stopping to record several Nubian temples before arriving at Kalabsha (Beit al Wali), where Bonomi worked long hours making a number of plaster casts of the reliefs. After another six weeks at Philae they continued north, reaching Thebes in October.

Thebes, like Abu Simbel, was to figure large in Hay's portfolio. During all his stays there, including this first one, he lived in or near the small village of Qurna (Gourna), within easy reach of the Tombs of the Nobles, the Valley of the Kings, the Ramesseum and Medinet Habu, all of which he recorded over many seasons.

Top: For this drawing of the façade of the Old Kingdom temple at Denderah, architect Francis Arundale used pencil and a pink wash. Though Arundale was frequently ill, he produced beautiful drawings, and his indefatigably cheerful letters testified to what Lane called his "amiable disposition." Above left: Charles Laver, also an architect, produced this drawing of the interior of the temple at Kalabsha, built during the reign of Roman Emperor Octavius Augustus at Aswan. Laver worked for Hay until deteriorating health forced him to resign. Opposite: At Medinet Habu, Arundale drew and colored these column capitals and noted their dimensions. Particularly inside the tombs newly opened to outside air, the colors Hay's team recorded faded within a few decades and can no longer be seen; thus these drawings are now sometimes the only documents by which the original colors of the tombs are known.

As antiquaries, Burton, Wilkinson and Hay had much in common. But they had differences too.

Burton was interested in exploring both the Eastern Desert and the tombs of the West Bank. He made copious notes of everything he found. Wilkinson's primary interests were the hieroglyphs and wall decorations that helped him understand the way the ancients lived, the subject of his first and perhaps most famous book, *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (1837). Like Hay, he made faithful copies of the tomb decorations, but Wilkinson always worked alone and couldn't compete with Hay when it came to the sheer volume of work turned out.

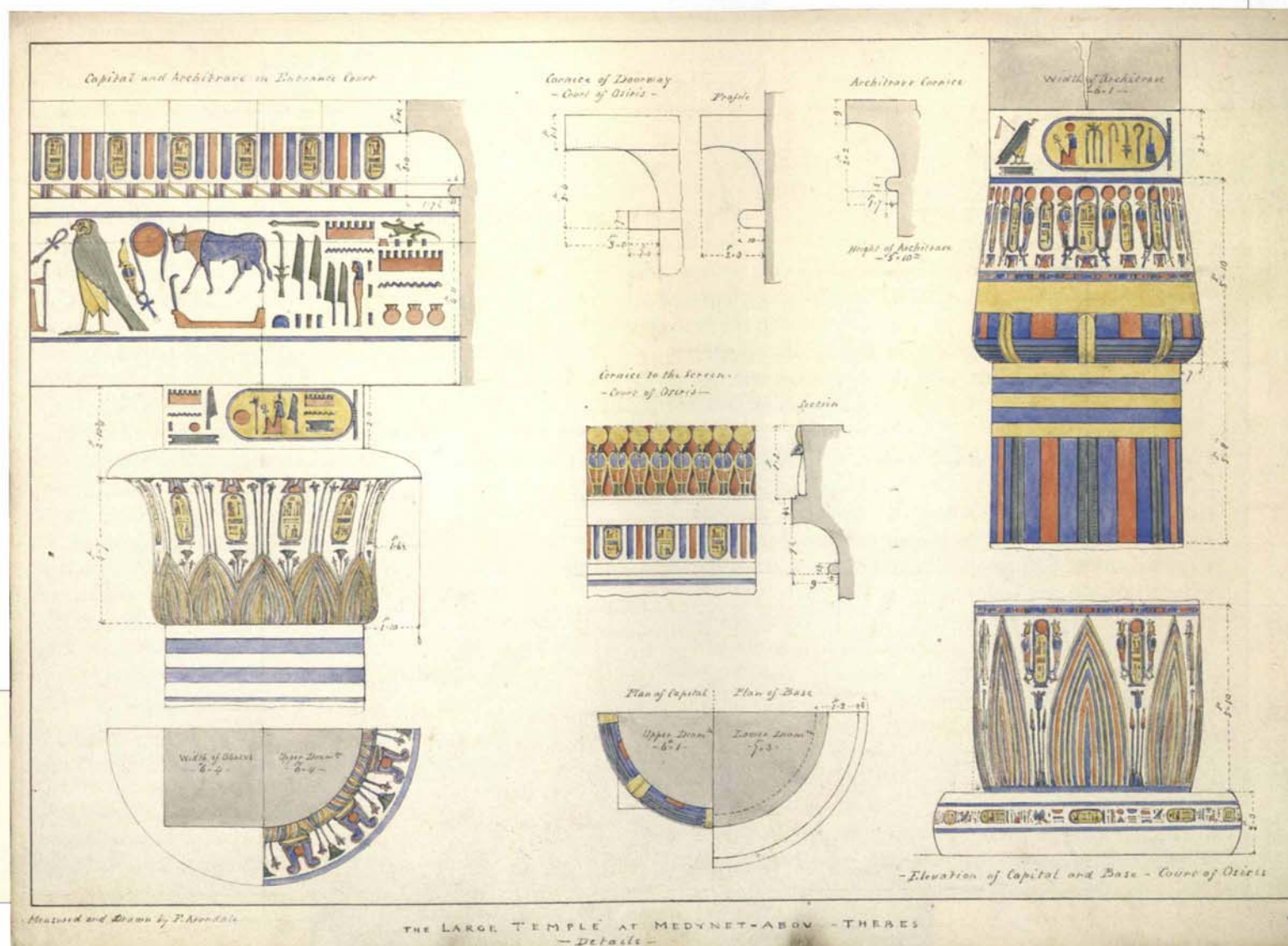
Gardner Wilkinson, WORRIED THAT HAY'S ENTHUSIASM WAS WANING, WROTE TO HIM IN JANUARY 1832: "YOU THINK YOU HAVE GIVEN UP TOO MUCH TIME TO EGYPT —WE PERHAPS ALL HAVE, AS FAR AS THE WORLD IS CONCERNED OR RATHER INTERESTED—BUT YOUR WORK IS INVALUABLE. YOUR COLLECTION OF DRAWINGS...WILL BE EGYPT ITSELF; BUT TO REPAY YOURSELF...YOU MUST PUBLISH THIS COLLECTION. YOUR LABOR WILL THEN NOT BE LOST EITHER TO YOURSELF OR TO THE WORLD —& WHAT ARE A FEW HUNDREDS LAID ASIDE ANNUALLY FOR SO PRAISEWORTHY AN OBJECT... REMEMBER, NO ONE HAS YOUR COLLECTION OR ANYTHING LIKE IT."

planned to enhance his own reputation by producing drawings and casts for himself, in addition to working for Hay. This plan was contrary to the terms of the contract between them, however, and the misunderstanding—sharpened by Bonomi's belief that Hay was paying him an unusually low salary—led to a series of arguments.

Hay and Wilkinson were great friends, however, and shared a tomb dwelling when they were in the area, then the standard housing for villagers and visitors alike.

And so things went: Burton explored the tombs, Wilkinson studied the hieroglyphs, and Hay and Bonomi recorded the antiquities. But tension was in the air.

From the first, it appears, Bonomi



FRANCIS ARUNDALE (1807–1853) was an architect, painter and writer. His book *Illustrations of Jerusalem and Mt. Sinai* (London, 1837) tells of his trip to Palestine with Bonomi and Catherwood in 1833, and is illustrated with 10 of his drawings, made into colored lithographs. His work can also be found in the Searight Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum and in the British Museum's Department of Drawings. Arundale prepared many of the illustrations for Colonel R. W. Vyse's two volumes on his excavations at Giza between 1835 and 1837. He also worked with Bonomi to provide illustrations for a British Museum catalog on Egyptian art that appeared in 1842.

JOSEPH BONOMI (1796–1878) remained in Egypt seven years after leaving Hay. He assisted Burton with his *Excerpta Hieroglyphica* from 1825 to 1828, and also worked with Lane and Wilkinson. In 1839 he prepared the illustrations for Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs*. After serving with Lepsius's 1842–1844 expedition to Egypt, Bonomi returned to England, where he catalogued and illustrated many Egyptian collections, set up the Egyptian Court at the Crystal Palace for the Great Exhibition in 1851 and served as curator of the Sir John Soane Museum in London. His great knowledge and experience of Egypt were highly regarded and he was considered to be the best hieroglyphicist of his day.

JAMES BURTON (1788–1862) was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge and took part in Muhammad Ali's Geographical Survey of Egypt in 1822. He traveled extensively throughout Egypt, often with Wilkinson and occasionally with Hay; in 1825 he sailed up the Nile with Lane. In 1828 he completed *Excerpta Hieroglyphica* and later left behind an immense number of valuable drawings and plans of monuments, most of which are now in the British Museum. A conservator as well as an explorer, Burton is credited (along with Hay) with building dikes in front of the magnificent tomb of Seti I to prevent flooding.

FREDERICK CATHERWOOD (1799–1854) traveled to Egypt in 1823–1824 and again in 1832, when he joined Hay. During his journey to Palestine and Syria with Bonomi and Arundale, he created a grand map of Jerusalem, the standard from 1835 to 1849. The most famous of Catherwood's oriental drawings were published in London in 1836 by T. H. Horne in a two-volume work, *Landscape Illustrations of the Bible*. In later years he became well known for his work with John Lloyd Stephens in uncovering the ancient Mayan civilization.



GEORGE ALEXANDER HOSKINS (1802–1863) traveled throughout Egypt and Ethiopia in 1832 and 1833 and published two books based on his experiences. *Travels in Ethiopia* appeared in 1835 and *Visit to the Great Oasis of the Libyan Desert* in 1837. The latter provides a great many insights about Hay's life in Egypt and his method of working. Both books were illustrated with Hoskins's own drawings as well as drawings by his artist, Luchese Bandoni. In 1863 Hoskins published *A Winter in Upper and Lower Egypt*, based on a second visit to Egypt in 1860 and 1861.

EDWARD WILLIAM LANE (1801–1876) spent much of his adult life in Egypt, immersing himself in Arab culture and eventually compiling his huge *Arabic-English Lexicon*, which is still a standard work today. Among his other works were *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* and his popular translation of *The Thousand and One Nights*. Like Wilkinson and Hay, Lane had difficulty finding a publisher for his first work. In consequence, his *Description of Egypt*, based in part on his travels with Hay, was published for the first time only in 2000. Lane was considered the greatest Arabic scholar in Europe in his day.

JOHN GARDNER WILKINSON (1797–1875) was educated at Harrow and Oxford, and was encouraged by the classicist Sir William Gell to devote his career to the study of Egyptian archaeology. Wilkinson arrived in Egypt in 1821 and spent the next 12 years studying Arabic and Coptic. He traveled extensively throughout Egypt and is thought to have visited and recorded more ancient sites than any other traveler of his time. A prolific writer, he was the author of several books, including *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, originally published in 1837. He was knighted in 1839.

OWEN BROWNE CARTER (1806–1859) and **CHARLES LAVER** were accomplished architects, well qualified to draw the sections and elevations that were such an important part of Hay's work. Their architectural training can also be seen in their sketches of Cairo scenes, including a number of monuments that are no longer extant. Laver's sketches in particular were filled with detail—so much so that Carter, then working on *Illustrations of Cairo*, asked Hay for additional money to prepare Laver's views for lithography. In 1840 Carter published *Views Taken in Cairo in 1830*.

Matters finally came to a head in July 1826 when the frustrated Bonomi told Hay he was leaving. The drama of his announcement was much diminished, only a few days later, by the arrival in Thebes of a young man who would later become one of England's most prominent scholars of Arabic, Edward William Lane.

Hay and Lane had met a few months earlier in Cairo and Lane now agreed to serve as Hay's assistant. It was an arrangement that would benefit both men. Interested in the literature and customs of the country, Lane would be able to visit most of Egypt at Hay's expense. For his part, Hay would gain a surprisingly competent artist: Lane's uncle was the noted painter Thomas Gainsborough, and before arriving in Egypt, Lane had worked as an apprentice to his brother Richard, one of the foremost engravers in England.

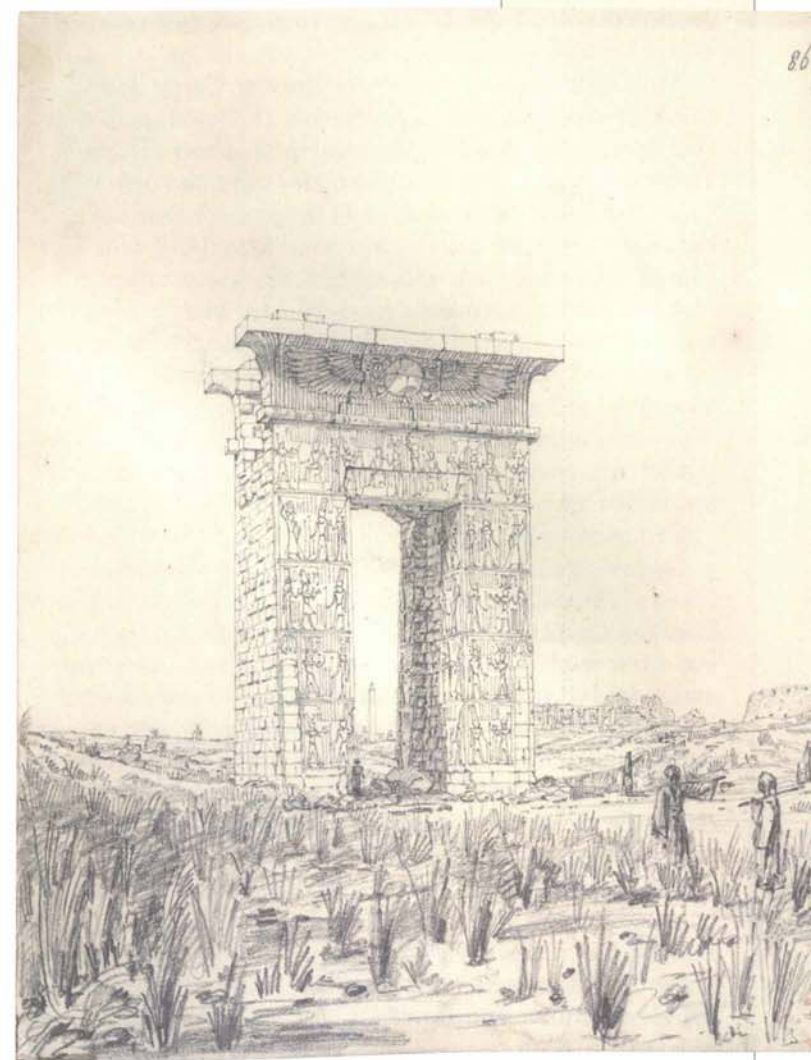
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PARTICULARLY ABOUT MONEY. THE PROBLEMS
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IT CAME TO ENGAGING ARTISTS.

Lane worked with Hay at Thebes from July through October, when he returned to Cairo. In January 1827, Hay arrived in Cairo himself, and over the next few months the two men visited the city's Islamic sites, the Pyramids at Giza, the Step Pyramid at Saqqara and the Faiyum. In September they returned to Abu Simbel, taking with them a "plaster man" named Nasciambene, whose primary task was to cast the great head of Ramesses II that Hay had uncovered on his earlier visit—a head so enormous that the cost of casting, shipping and storing it would ultimately cost Hay very dear.

In February 1828, Hay returned to Scotland to clear up pressing legal and estate matters, and also to raise money for further work at Abu Simbel. Though he approached several influential bodies in Britain, Hay failed to find the funding he wanted.

In that time, he also married—not a Scotswoman but a young Greek woman named Kalitza Psaraki, the daughter of the chief magistrate of Crete, whom he had rescued in Egypt. Like many of her compatriots, Kalitza had been captured by the Turks during the Greek war of independence (1821–1829) and transported to Egypt. Alarmed by their plight, Hay ransomed Kalitza and several other young women, and went on to pay for their education at an English school. The marriage to Kalitza—which apparently took place in Malta en route to Scotland—would be a

"A nicely built stone arch," wrote Hay in his notes for this sketch from Thebes. Opposite: Joseph's Hall in Cairo probably dated from the 14th century, but it was destroyed shortly after Hay produced the drawing that Carter and J.C. Bourne made into this lithograph. The cylindrical tower at far left is part of a system of some 20 semaphore stations that linked Cairo with Alexandria.



happy one: Hay wrote in September 1829, "I should counsel all travellers never to travel with any other companion than a wife...."

Before returning to Egypt, Hay made a side trip to visit Edward Lane in London. Lane had returned to Britain at about the same time as Hay and gradually took on the role of Hay's "man in London," sending supplies and finding replacement artists as needed. It was a job not without its frustrations.

Although Hay was a well-meaning man, he seems to have been unusually lax about sending specific instructions, particularly about money. One small example of this tendency is reflected in a letter from Lane dated "novr. 9th 1832":

My dear Hay,
Why are you not more explicit in your directions?
Why not say that you want watches at about such a price? By 'a good plain silver watch' some men wd. understand one at 6 or 7 guineas; another might think about 10 or 12 gs. I have got them at 7 gs. each....

The problems were multiplied many times over when it came to engaging artists. Nevertheless, after losing the services of at least one potential assistant thanks to Hay's

procrastination, Lane did manage to engage two talented young architects in July of 1829.

After some preparation, Owen Browne Carter and Charles Laver arrived in Egypt early in 1830 and spent their first few months sketching the great monuments of Cairo. Their sketches became the basis of Hay's one and only book.

Hay and Kalitza had arrived in Egypt some time earlier but were content to stay in Cairo until May 1830, when the entire party left for Beni Hasan. Here the group remained for two months copying the extraordinary Middle Kingdom tomb decorations, which had intrigued Hay ever since he saw them on his first trip down the Nile. Another two months were spent at Amarna before the group moved on to Asyut—where they unexpectedly encountered Bonomi. Having finally put his finances in order, Bonomi was on an antiquarian journey of his own in company with two French artists.

Enthusiastic as ever, Bonomi must have presented quite a contrast to Laver and Carter, who were exhausted by the physical demands of working at the sites along the Nile. Hay had little enough to say to Bonomi on this occasion, but a few months later—after both Carter and Laver had announced their decision to leave because of their deteriorating health—Hay offered to reinstate Bonomi at a considerably higher salary than before. Bonomi at first demurred, but, after more persuasion from Hay, he finally agreed to rejoin the group, bringing with him one of his traveling companions, the artist A. Dupuy.

That was in July 1832, some months after Lane had contracted with the architect Francis Arundale to leave his London firm to assist Hay in Egypt. In a letter to Hay, Lane noted that “I have seen his specimens, which are very beautiful. He draws the figures well, as well as picturesque scenery, & topographical plans—& makes very good coloured sketches.” He added that, although Arundale “has occasionally had fainting fits,...his general health is very good.”

In fact, Arundale was consistently ill. Nevertheless, he produced a large number of beautifully drawn plans of the most prominent temples in both Thebes and Nubia, as well as a series of watercolors depicting local scenes. He was also

remarkably cheerful, writing home about the artists' daily processions to the tombs and temples of Thebes, invariably headed by Arundale's dog, Pasha.

In September, Frederick Catherwood, whom Bonomi had introduced to Hay some eight years before, also joined the expedition. Catherwood, now back in Egypt for his second visit, undertook as his principal assignments with Hay to draw plans of Thebes and the Colossi of Memnon, and to excavate the latter, as Bonomi explains in a letter to Hay dated April 13, 1833: “Cath. has made an excavation under both statues and the vocal one is so undermined that unless you have it filled up before the next inundation the statue could certainly move as well as speak....”

One other person joined the group at this time. George Hoskins was not an artist at all, but an antiquary traveling through Egypt on his way to Ethiopia. He and his artist Luchese Bandoni were excellent draftsmen, but Hoskins's real talent was as a writer. His description of a visit with Hay and Catherwood to the Kharga Oasis makes it clear that working with Hay was not everyone's cup of tea:

I remained a fortnight among these ruins, not only working from the rising of the sun until twilight, but often engaged also at night, in copying the hieroglyphical inscriptions along the dark recesses of the temple.... As the rooms were quite dark, it was the same whether we worked there during the night or the day. The night before we left El Kharga, I was there until three in the morning, and Mr. Hay remained in the place until breakfast.

Bonomi, who by this time seems to have become the expedition's second in command, stayed on at Thebes to continue work there with Arundale and Dupuy.

For the first time, Hay had now assembled enough talent to make real progress, and for the next several months the work went ahead at a lively pace. But as Arundale had noted soon after his arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Hay were already weary of Egypt, Kalitza in particular longing to return home to Crete. It was evident to everyone that things were coming to a close.

THE PASHA

Muhammad Ali (ruled 1806–1848) believed in adopting western techniques to modernize Egypt and opened his doors wide to westerners with skills he thought useful. With their help, he created a new infrastructure for Cairo, began a program of industrialization and transformed agriculture with the introduction of cotton, which soon became the country's main crop. But the cost to both ancient and medieval Egypt was high. While Hay was in Egypt, the citadel, including Joseph's Hall (Plate XIX in *Illustrations of Cairo*), was cleared to make room for the Mosque of Muhammad Ali. Between 1820 and 1828, 13 ancient temples were entirely dismantled, their stone either used to build factories



or ending up in lime kilns. And, largely to please Muhammad Ali's European friends, many of Egypt's antiquities were carried away to the Louvre, the British Museum and the Museo Egizio in Turin. Although he was popular with westerners living in Egypt, Muhammad Ali's expansionist

tendencies—which led him to extend his borders to include Sudan, Arabia, Syria and even parts of Greece—resulted in armed conflict with the allied forces of Britain and the Ottomans in the late 1830's. In 1840 he was contained within Egypt and the Sudan and given a monarchy, or “khedivate,” for his successors. He died in 1848, after surrendering his power to his grandson Abbas.

In February 1833 Hoskins left for Ethiopia and in March Hay set out for Nubia, where he remained until May, turning out 105 drawings in 75 days. At times he was joined by Arundale, who during this period alternated between Thebes and Nubia.

Meanwhile, Bonomi, Catherwood and Dupuy, sometimes helped by Arundale, continued to turn out an enormous quantity of work at Thebes. Unquestionably this was the Hay expedition's most productive period, with copies and sketches of most of the tombs and temples in both Thebes and Nubia accruing by the minute. But the end was in sight.

In May Catherwood set out for Cairo, soon to be joined by Bonomi and Arundale. Together the three artists would journey on to Palestine, with Hay and his wife arriving in Cairo just in time to see them off. As the only assistant still with Hay, Dupuy was assigned to make color renderings of Hay's early copies of Beni Hasan, while Hay went back to Thebes to pack up. Dupuy joined him there in January, and in the spring of 1834, some months after their first child was born, Robert and Kalitza Hay began their rather leisurely journey home. Hay left 200 cases of casts at the pier to be shipped as soon as possible.

Hay's journal entry for March 8, 1834, written just before leaving Egypt, is a rather poignant one. Looking back on his years of work, he wrote sadly “of my coming departure, and all that I must leave unfinished.”

Opposite: A copy of a fresco from Tomb 10 at Qurna is unattributed, as is a copy of a painting from the temple complex of Medinet Habu in Thebes, above. All members of Hay's expeditions copied tomb paintings at Aswan, Abu Simbel, Thebes and Beni Hasan. “Sir G. Wilkinson, Mr. Hay, and Mr. Burton...laboriously examined and sketched the figures on the walls by the dim light of wax candles, rather than injure the paintings with the smoke of torches,” wrote Alexander Henry Rhind.

Nevertheless, Hay's collection of drawings and casts was enormous, and when he finally arrived in Scotland in 1835 he seems to have known exactly what use he wanted to make of them: He would make a grand panorama of Thebes, working with Frederick Catherwood. He would place his vast collection of plaster casts in the British Museum. And he would do a book, *Illustrations of Cairo*, the first in a series that would also include architecture and antiquities.

If Hay had been in London, those projects might have moved along as he planned. Instead, he communicated with his artists from Scotland by the same sort of vague and infrequent letters that Lane had found so frustrating. By spring, Catherwood, lacking definite instructions despite his pleas, had veered so widely from the original plan for the panorama that Hay, apparently feeling he was being pushed out of his own project, shelved the whole idea.

The plaster casts presented an even bigger problem. In his letters to Hay, which were every bit as urgent as Catherwood's, Bonomi tells of casting the reproduction of the great head from Abu Simbel which, combining plaster and water, weighed five tons. And the weight was nothing compared to the expense, for Bonomi had had to engage several laborers, and the cost of storage was spiraling upward into enormous figures.

“What will you do with this immense head is the question of every body who sees it and indeed one of some moment as it is time to decide on something,” Bonomi wrote on October 2, 1837.

It would indeed have been to Hay's advantage to deal quickly and efficiently with the British Museum, which wanted the heads for its collection, but he dithered over the terms of payment instead, and the more he procrastinated, the less the museum was interested. In the end, after years of expensive storage, the large heads and two of the other casts went to the British Museum with the single stipulation

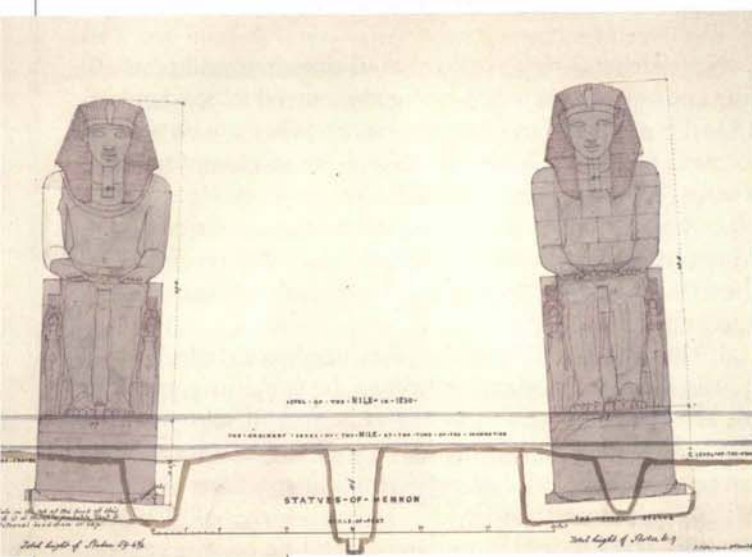


that a present of £100 be given to Bonomi for all the work he had done. Hay received nothing.

The book project followed a similar course. Lane, a disciplined artist and writer, was clearly the man for the job. But Hay wanted to dedicate the book to Lane, so he asked Charles Carter to do the drawings and James Burton, who was even less decisive than Hay, to do the writing. Thanks largely to Lane's prodding, the book was finally published in November 1840, beautifully printed, lavishly bound—and expensive. The public passed it by, and Hay lost almost £2000—the equivalent of £95,000 (\$150,000) today.

Catherwood wrote:

"I heard from Mr Bourne, who did some of my Plates, that you had not paid your expences, this I can easily understand, for Gentlemen Publishers like Gentlemen Farmers seldom make money by their operations. But what I cannot understand is the great amount of your deficit... as I consider your Book one of the very best that has appeared.



I am the more sorry for this result as it evidently will be a bar to your publishing anything else."

And so it was. Thoroughly annoyed over the huge sums he had lost and uncertain why his efforts had failed so miserably, Hay sank into the life of a country gentleman, his interest in Egypt displaced by the time-consuming management of a large estate. From time to time he would write to the faithful Bonomi how much he missed their days in Egypt and lamenting his own lack of discipline:

"I am very ill indeed, as far as regards Egypt—not a drawing has been out of the case since I arrived!—I often think of Egypt but do nothing concerning it."

At first Wilkinson urged him to continue publishing his work, regardless of the cost. Lane too kept after him, but when Bonomi wrote to tell Hay that his membership in the Syro-Egyptian Society was expiring, Hay explained what had happened to him, and why:

...but there is no great wonder, living as I do in the most unhealthsome atmosphere of the Lammermoor Hills!—my head being now only full of Hunting, Fencing, Draining, etc etc. We are all the creatures of habit: and if we happen to fall into bad company, we are too apt to get out of the good track and follow the bad! That is my case; no Egyptians or Syro-Egyptians live about the Lammermoors, so that my spirit is dried up within me!—and I go the way of all flesh, & do just as others do about me!

Hay was hurt when both Wilkinson and Lane published their own works to great acclaim, and as a result seems to have grown closer to Burton, who, like himself, published only one book, which he was able to complete only with

"What will you do with this immense head IS THE QUESTION OF EVERY BODY WHO SEES IT," BONOMI WROTE TO HAY, "AND INDEED ONE OF SOME MOMENT AS IT IS TIME TO DECIDE ON SOMETHING."

considerable help from Bonomi and which contained no text whatsoever. It was *Excerpta Hieroglyphica*, with 61 plates, published in Cairo in four parts between 1825 and 1829.

When Burton died in 1862, Hay paid out of his own pocket a large debt that his old friend had owed to Bonomi

Above left: One of four scale drawings of the Colossi of Memnon at Thebes, drawn by Frederick Catherwood, shows the statues as they may have appeared originally, along with the bases of the monuments that he excavated, the waterline of the annual Nile flood in 1833, and ground level. Left: Hay's sketch of the Colossi. Opposite: In 2001, the British Library donated this panorama of Qurna to serve as the centerpiece of an exhibit dedicated to the legacy of that town. The original drawing is some three meters long. Since then, Hay's own legacy has received increased expert and popular attention.



for some 30 years. Hay was thoughtful of his tenants and involved in his community, and he was much lamented when, nine months after Burton, he died of pneumonia on November 4, 1863.

But Hay's legacy was not what he might have wished. The great head from Abu Simbel, which was far too large to exhibit successfully, was cut up—"not judiciously"—and stored in pieces in the British Museum, along with most of the casts that the Museum had acquired in 1840.

The antiquities Hay had collected while in Egypt fared somewhat better. After his death, the British Museum purchased 529 items from his estate for £1000. The remaining objects in Hay's collection were placed on public display and then sold to a Boston banker and collector whose son later bequeathed them to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, where they formed the basis of that museum's Egyptological collection.

The drawings remained for some time in the Hay estate, but eventually went to the British Library (then part of the British Museum), where they are now housed in 49 portfolios.

Until the 1980's, this huge legacy of drawings had been seen only by interested archeologists and Egyptologists. But Hay's work has since appeared in several popular books, and in recent years an altogether different audience is beginning to see Hay's drawings in Qurna.

In 2001 archeologist Caroline Simpson asked Dr. Michelle Brown, curator of manuscripts at the British Library, whether the library could contribute a work by Hay to an exhibition recreating the history of the people of Qurna. The library responded by donating what now serves as the exhibition's centerpiece: full-size reproductions of two of Hay's largest panoramas, each extending over seven folio pages and some three meters (10') in length.

The panoramas open a window on the daily life of 19th-century Qurna, showing the tomb dwellings of the Qurnawi people, the Theban hills, ruins of tombs and temples, and the villagers going about their daily tasks. They are not finished drawings—they were to have been completed

after Hay's return to Scotland—but even in their rough state, they evoke the very essence of life in a small Egyptian village some 170 years ago. In their wealth of detail, their accurate portrayal of the buildings of the time and especially in their lively depiction of the villagers, Hay's drawings are, as Gardner Wilkinson observed so long ago, the closest thing there was to "Egypt itself." ●



Jane Waldron Grutz, a former staff writer for Saudi Aramco, is now based in Houston and London, but spends much of her time working on archeological digs in the Middle East. She wishes to express her gratitude to Selwyn Tillet, whose 1984 biography of Robert Hay, *Egypt Itself*, is the source of many of the quotations that appear in this article.

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The stems of tarthuth can be eaten raw. They have a pleasant, crisp texture and an apple-like, mouth-freshening astringency.

The Treasure of Tarthuth

Written by ROBERT W. LEBLING

Photographed by FAISAL AL-DOSSARY

It is early spring in the Dahna, Saudi Arabia's northeastern sand desert. The winter rains have been over for several weeks, leaving a legacy of green foliage that spots the dunes and valleys—scattered *arta* shrubs, patches of grasses, low saltbushes. The clumps of vegetation provide forage for the occasional flocks of sheep and goats and for small herds of camels.

Where there is livestock, there is always a person to tend the animals, keep them safe and prevent them from straying. On the slope of a dune, a Saudi youth named Ahmad settles down beside a stand of bushes and trains his eye on his father's camels, about 100 meters off, grazing on the spring bounty. He is particularly watchful of the young ones. It has been a long morning, and he now waits for the return of his brother's white pickup truck.

Suddenly a rare flash of dark red color catches his eye. Down under the saltbushes to his left, he spies three little dark red club-like shapes poking up from the sand. *Tarthuth!* Ahmad is hungry and thirsty, and nature has furnished him with one of its tastiest snacks. Taking his pocketknife, he digs into the sand at the base of one of the stalks and cuts it off at the root. The pungent smell brings a smile to his face. Ahmad cuts away the reddish skin—tightly covered with tiny button flowers—and exposes the succulent white flesh beneath. He slices off a wet piece and pops it into his mouth. It's sweet and juicy, refreshing, like ripe fruit. He chews contentedly.

Ahmad is lucky: Tarthuth emerges from the sands only for a brief period each year, following the rains of winter. After he has finished his snack, he cuts off the remaining red clubs to take back to his family.

The people of the desert have been harvesting tarthuth like this for thousands of years. It has pleased the palates of passing Bedouins and their camels, filled grocers' baskets in local markets and served as survival food in times of dire famine. It is traditionally known for a wide range of medicinal

properties as well—properties now being studied seriously by researchers in the Middle East.

Tarthuth today is barely known outside the region, though it was once harvested around the Mediterranean and was bestowed as a special gift on European royalty in the 16th century. In those days it was known to Arabs and Europeans alike as a wonder drug—a heritage largely forgotten in the rush of modern medicine. But things may be changing. Now, as pharmaceutical companies and medical researchers take a closer look at traditional remedies derived from plants and herbs, tarthuth may once again have an opportunity to rise to prominence.

Tarthuth (pronounced tar-thooth) is the popular Arabic name for the parasitic plant *Cynomorium coccineum*.

Medieval Europeans called it *fungus melitensis*—"Maltese mushroom" or "Malta fungus," names by which it is still known today. Sometimes it's called "desert thumb" or "red thumb." The plant is found growing—usually ignored nowadays—in a wide swath that extends from southern Portugal and Spain across the Mediterranean region, including North Africa. Tarthuth even pokes above the remote sands of the Sahara: Botanists have identified it as far south as the central Hoggar range of



To botanists, tarthuth is *Cynomorium coccineum*, a succulent, parasitic, fungus-like red herb that spends most of the year underground, feeding on host roots and blossoming only briefly. Opposite: To Arab physicians of the Middle Ages, tarthuth was a remedy for itching and bleeding, an antidote to poisons and an aphrodisiac. This illustration from a 15th-century manuscript shows Ibn Sina (Avicenna, seated) visiting a pharmacy.



BIBLIOTECA UNIVERSITARIA, BOLOGNA / SCALA / ART RESOURCE; OPPOSITE, LOWER: DAN NICKRENT



open air. The plant has no green color because it's a parasite and thus needs no chlorophyll to feed itself.

The leafless red stems or spikes, fully grown, range in height from about 15 to 30 centimeters (6–12"). The spikes have tiny scarlet flowers so small that they can hardly be seen individually. Tightly packed and scale-like, they look somewhat like coarse fur. Pollinated by flies attracted by the plant's sweetish, somewhat cabbage-like aroma, the flowers eventually wither and the spike turns black.

When the January and February rains are good, the young fleshy stems of tarthuth can be

"sweet tasting and edible raw, with a pleasant crisp, succulent texture," reports botanist and former Aramco professional James P. Mandaville in his *Flora of Eastern Saudi Arabia*. The flesh is apple-like, with an astringent quality that freshens the mouth. Just picked, tarthuth can be very sweet; left to sit for a few days, it can be somewhat bitter on first taste, but stays tartly refreshing. The Bedouins clean the just-picked spikes, peel off the outer skin and eat the flavorful white interior. The mature, blackened spikes are sometimes ground and made into a sweetened infusion used hot or cold to treat colic and stomach ulcers.

Botanist James Duke cites tarthuth's traditional use as a medicinal tea in Qatar. Botanist Loutfi Boulous says North African medical tradition regards the entire plant as an "aphrodisiac, spermatopoietic, tonic, [and] astringent." In traditional medicine, it is mixed with butter and consumed to treat obstructions of the bile duct. Maltese mushroom has a close relative in the East Asia, *C. songaricum* or *suo yang*, whose brownish spikes have long been regarded as an effective medicinal agent in Chinese medicine, used to treat kidney problems, intestinal ailments and impotence. Recent studies in China show that *Cynomorium*, like green tea, has "very strong antioxidant effects."

As recently as the 1920's, villagers from the Saudi coastal oasis of Qatif would head into the desert in early spring and return with their donkeys loaded with sacks of tarthuth for

Opposite: In medieval Malta, tarthuth grew most abundantly on what is today still called Fungus Rock, its harvests guarded by Knights Hospitaller under the command of the grand master of the order. In 1565, the most famous master, Jean de la Vallette (below), had a battle wound dressed with tarthuth; his injury healed successfully. Fungus Rock is still off limits today: It is a closed nature reserve, and the Maltese government lists tarthuth among its endangered species.

sale in the local *suqs*, or markets, Mandaville notes. The plants are still a popular treat for Bedouins and other desert travelers, according to Saudi Aramco wellsite inspector and desert expert Geraiyan M. Al-Hajri. He says tarthuth can be found in springtime in the *suqs* of al-Hasa in the kingdom's Eastern Province. In the Maghrib, Arab North Africa, the dried and pulverized plant is used as a spice or condiment with meat dishes.

The red pigment in the plants provides another benefit: It has been used as an effective fabric dye by the women of at least one Arabian tribe, the Manasir, many of whom now live in the United Arab Emirates. The dye produces a rich, colorfast crimson hue known as *dami* or "blood-red."

Maltese mushroom's use as both foodstuff and medicine goes back thousands of years. The ancient Hebrews ate the spikes in times of famine: In the Book of Job (30:4), starving Israelites consume a plant called "juniper root"—and modern botanists say this is *C. coccineum* rather than the inedible root of the juniper bush. (The use of Maltese mushroom as a famine food was most recently reported in the Canary Islands in the 19th century.)

Arab physicians of the Middle Ages considered tarthuth "the treasure of drugs" because it had a wealth of traditional therapeutic uses, particularly as a remedy for blood disorders, digestive ailments and reproductive problems, including impotence and infertility.

The great early philosopher of the Arabs, the polymath Al-Kindi (800–870), compiled a medical formulary, or *aqrabadhin*, that mentions tarthuth as the main ingredient of a salve used to relieve acute itching caused by foreign matter under the skin. Al-Razi (865–925), known to Europeans as Rhazes and one of the most influential of all Islamic physicians, prescribed tarthuth as a remedy for hemorrhoids as well as for nasal and uterine bleeding.

The medicinal uses of tarthuth are also cited by Ibn Masawayh (777–857), a Persian Christian who directed a hospital and served as personal physician to four caliphs at Baghdad, and by Maimonides, the celebrated 12th-century



Hispanic Jewish doctor and philosopher who was court physician to Saladin in Egypt. Ninth-century Chaldean scholar Ibn Wahshiya, best known for his work *Nabataean Agriculture*, wrote a toxicological treatise called the *Book on Poisons* which includes tarthuth as a key ingredient in several antidotes.

Knowledge of the medicinal value of tarthuth was eventually passed to the Europeans—and here the plant's history takes an unusual turn. In the 16th century, the "treasure of drugs" became the closely guarded treasure of the Knights Hospitaller in Malta.

The Hospitallers, or Knights Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem, were a fighting order formed at Jerusalem during the First Crusade, some four centuries earlier. They had a dual military and medical mission, and operated a 1000-bed hospital in Jerusalem, providing care for the sick and injured. It was there, in Palestine, that Hospitaller physicians first learned of tarthuth from their Muslim counterparts and began using the plant in their treatments.

When the Muslims recaptured Palestine from the Crusaders, the Knights Hospitaller moved their headquarters to the island of Rhodes and eventually to Malta, the strategically vital island group south of Sicily, where they were pleased to find tarthuth growing on a tiny islet.

Off the west coast of Gozo, the smaller of the two main Maltese islands, there is an irregular block of limestone rising from the sea, some 180 meters long and about 60 meters high (600 by 200') with a flattish, sloping top and sheer cliffs on all sides. Today this islet is called Fungus Rock. It is also known to the Maltese as *Gebla tal-General*, General's Rock, after a Hospitaller naval squadron commander credited with discovering it. Here, on the tabletop islet, *C. coccineum*, Maltese mushroom, grew in abundance.

On orders from their grand master, the knights quickly took control of Fungus Rock, placed guards on the mainland and barred access to any but their own. They hacked all ledges from the sides of the islet to keep people from climbing the cliffs. Trespassers who tried anyway were imprisoned and made galley slaves. Thieves who managed to steal Maltese mushroom were reportedly put to death. The only way to reach the island's top was by a primitive and precarious "cable car" rigged on ropes and pulleys and connected to poles on the mainland. A version of that cable car, a wooden box, survived into the early 19th century, and English traveler Claudius Shaw made the dangerous crossing in 1815:

The Knights Hospitaller were crusaders who where they learned about tarthuth from their

established a hospital in Jerusalem, Muslim counterparts.

CENTER: MALTA STUDY CENTER; HILL MONASTIC MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY; LOWER: L. WATSON AND M. J. DALLWITZ, THE FAMILIES OF FLOWERING PLANTS; OPPOSITE: RENZO DE GABRIELE

Saudi scientists have found that tarthuth have found it lowers blood pressure in dogs:

It is not a very pleasant sensation to be suspended some hundred feet above the water, and if there is any wind, the movement of the box is anything but agreeable, and all that can be obtained are a few pieces of fungus. I was well pleased to be back again, and made a determination never to risk my precious carcass in that conveyance again.

Maltese mushroom was under the personal control of the Hospitaller grand master. His knights harvested the precious plant each year and stored it in a watchtower on the mainland. This structure, Dwejra Tower, was built in 1651 to guard Fungus Rock and protect the island of Gozo from pirate raids. Once harvested, the Maltese mushroom spikes were dried, pulverized and preserved in various liquids. Hospitaller doctors used it to cure dysentery and ulcers, to stop hemorrhages and prevent infection. The plant was a favored treatment for apoplexy and venereal disease, and was used as a contraceptive, as a toothpaste and as a dye to color textiles. It was also prescribed in Malta to treat high blood pressure, vomiting and irregular menstrual periods. Precious as it was, the grand master sent it as an appropriate special present to the kings, queens and nobility of European countries.

In 1565, the most famous of the Hospitallers' grand masters, Jean de la Vallette—eponym of Malta's present-day capital, Valetta—was wounded by a grenade blast during a siege by Ottoman Turkish forces. Historians say his wound was dressed with Maltese mushroom, and that the grand master recovered and returned to battle.

The Knights Hospitaller held Malta until 1798, when they surrendered to Napoleon and lost their last territorial base in the Mediterranean. Their military role had come to an end, though they survive today as the Knights of Malta, an international non-governmental medical-service organization recognized by the United Nations. As the order lost its military mission, so did the Maltese mushroom fade from therapeutic use in Europe. By the 1800's, the old herbal remedies of the Middle East—plant extracts known as galenicals—were largely eclipsed in the West by new, mineral-based "drug" treatments.

Today Maltese mushroom survives atop Fungus Rock, drawing its nourishment from

the roots of tamarisk or sea lavender. The Maltese call it *gherq is-sinjur*, which may derive from the Arabic *'irq al-sinja*, "bayonet root." A species of reptile found nowhere else—the Fungus Rock wall lizard, *Podarcis filfolensis generalensis*—seems to have a special affinity for the plant and can often be found climbing the succulent red spikes. But biologists say it is attracted not by the sweet juice but by the flies that help pollinate the plants. (Lizards in Saudi Arabia seem similarly drawn to tarthuth.)

In recent decades, Maltese mushroom has been found growing elsewhere in Malta, but it has been declared an endangered species throughout the island group and is legally protected. Since 1992, Fungus Rock itself has been designated as a nature reserve, and the curious and adventurous are prohibited from intruding on the craggy rock—just as they were back in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Sir David Attenborough, the well-known British filmmaker and author who wrote *The Private Life of Plants*, finds Maltese mushroom a fascinating plant parasite, but he is skeptical about its medicinal value. He suggests that apothecaries may have inferred the plant's therapeutic properties from its appearance, applying the "doctrine of the signatures," a belief going back to the ancient Greeks that a plant's external appearance indicated what its effects might be. Thus, for example, a plant with kidney-shaped



increases fertility in rats, and other researchers It may yet prove to be medical "buried treasure."

leaves was good for breaking up kidney stones, and tarthuth was presumed to cure blood diseases because of its dark red, blood-like color. But Attenborough's suggestion does not explain the range of medical uses found for the plant that had no connection with its appearance—such as its role as a treatment for ulcers and other gastrointestinal ailments—and it underestimates the Knights of Malta, who were not practitioners of magic and whose doctors employed the latest clinical and therapeutic practices, including those of Arab and Islamic medicine.

The Arabs and other Muslims of the Middle Ages were the most sophisticated medical practitioners of their time and well acquainted with experimental methods. Clinical and therapeutic works written in Arabic and translated into Latin found their way into Europe's best medical schools. The massive and authoritative *Canon of Medicine* by Ibn Sina (Avicenna) was translated in the 12th century and served as the standard textbook for medical training in European universities even well into the 18th century. Given their medical expertise, the Arabs may well have been correct in calling *Cynomorium coccineum* "the treasure of drugs."

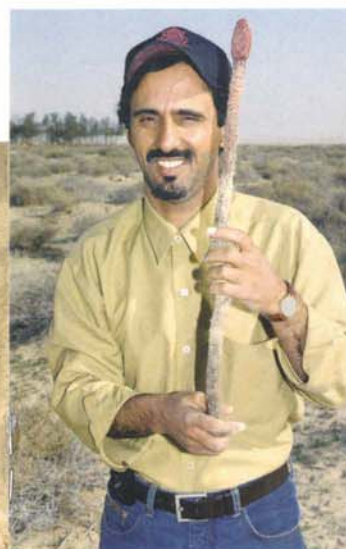
With the growing popularity of alternative and holistic medicine in recent decades—a trend now taken seriously by pharmaceutical companies and government health institutes—researchers have been exploring the claims of traditional therapies and herbal medicines, looking for new, scientifically supported treatments and applications.

"Interest in medicinal plants as a re-emerging health aid has been fueled by the rising costs of prescription drugs in the maintenance of personal health and well-being, and the bioprospecting of new plant-derived drugs," report Lucy Hoareau and Edgar J. DaSilva of UNESCO's Division of Life Sciences.

"Developed countries, in recent times, are turning to the use of traditional medicinal systems that involve the use of herbal drugs and remedies," they note in the *Electronic Journal of Biotechnology* (1999). "About 1400

herbal preparations are used widely, according to a recent survey in Member States of the European Union."

In the desert near his home in 'Ain Dar, in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, Geraiyan Al-Hajri, head of Saudi Aramco's Wellsites Inspection Unit, shows how to dig for tarthuth. Stems of tarthuth can also be found for sale in many markets throughout the Arabian Gulf region during the late winter and early spring.



So it is not surprising to learn that scientists have been testing the properties of tarthuth. In 1978, researchers reported in an Iranian medical journal that *Cynomorium coccineum* harvested in Iran was "found to possess significant blood pressure lowering activity" when tested on dogs. The strong hypotensive effect occurred chiefly in tests involving the fresh juice of the plant, or juice dissolved in water. Dried, powdered tarthuth was also tested but without so significant an effect. The researchers suspected the fresh samples enjoyed a "special molecular arrangement" that caused the reduction in blood pressure. This study suggests that the traditional belief in tarthuth's value as a remedy for blood ailments warrants further investigation.

Saudi researchers have also worked on some of the plant's reputed health properties. Based on their initial findings, the traditional claims that Maltese mushroom improves fertility and reproductive vigor may have a basis in truth as well. Three recent studies at King Saud University found that extracts of *Cynomorium coccineum*, administered orally, had significant positive effects on the reproductive development and fertility levels of male and female rats. The results were published in the international journals *Phytotherapy Research* (1999 and 2000) and *Ethnopharmacology* (2001).

Genetic studies of tarthuth, focusing on its ribosomal DNA and RNA, have been undertaken recently at Southern Illinois University, though this research appears unrelated to any medicinal properties.

Modern scientific studies of this strange parasitic plant are clearly in their early stages. But they seem to be worth pursuing. Ethnopharmacology—the study of traditional plant and herbal remedies—is a burgeoning field with great social and commercial promise, and further research may indeed show there is much more to Maltese mushroom than a delightful desert treat. ☼



Robert W. Lebling lives in Dhahran, where he is supervisor of electronic publishing for Saudi Aramco. A student of anthropology and natural history, he has compiled an online handbook of Arabian medicinal herbs (www.geocities.com/eyeclaudius.geo/) and is

currently collaborating on a book about natural remedies of Saudi Arabia.

Faisal Al-Dossary is a staff photographer with Saudi Aramco in Dhahran.



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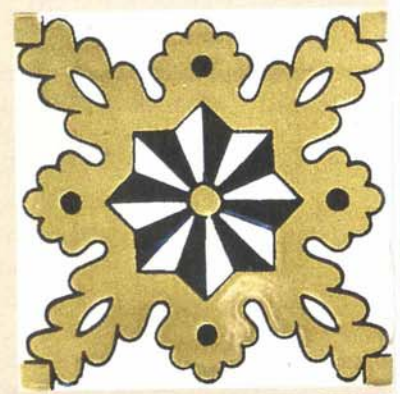
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Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World*:

Lake Lanhardt: S/O 87 Arab roots of European medicine: M/J 97



TUNISIA'S CENTER
OF CERAMICS



WRITTEN AND
PHOTOGRAPHED
BY
CHARLES O.
CECIL



IN NABEUL, EVEN THE BUTCHER SHOPS ARE DECORATED WITH MULTICOLORED TILES. A HUGE OVERSIZED, COLORFULLY GLAZED JAR RISES IN THE CENTER OF THE CITY'S MAIN TRAFFIC CIRCLE, MAKING IT CLEAR THAT NABEUL IS ALL ABOUT POTTERY. WALK THE STREETS AND YOU'LL THINK YOU'VE STUMBLED INTO AN OUTLET MALL DEVOTED TO POTTERY AND CERAMICS.



As in much of the Mediterranean, the ceramic arts in Tunisia are old traditions. The people of this part of North Africa have always been active in commerce and it was only natural that in Nabeul, a port city, the trade in goods would bring with it an exchange of cultural ideas and values. Berber, Egyptian, Punic, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Andalusian, Ottoman and European influences have all passed through Nabeul over the centuries, each offering another rich vein of inspiration.

Even within the kaleidoscope of Mediterranean cultures, Tunisia has a complex heritage when it comes to ceramics. Tunis's Qallaline quarter, the island of Jerba, the towns of Moknine and Sejenane and the ninth-century Aglabite site at Raqqada, near Kairouan, have all been centers of distinctive ceramics. Moknine, for example, was famed for the unglazed jars that were essential for cooling water before the days of refrigeration. The Berber women of Sejenane produced a unique line of figurines, including dolls, birds and camels, as well as pots, goblets and small jugs, all with designs in red, ochre and black on tan or buff surfaces. Jerba is the country's oldest pottery center.

When the Romans defeated the Punic inhabitants of the site of today's Nabeul in 148 BC—two years before the fall of Carthage—the town was already a center of pottery craftsmanship and used the potter's

wheel, which the Phoenicians had carried to North Africa toward the end of the second millennium BC. A century after its destruction by the Roman sword, Julius Caesar authorized the creation of a new town on the site, named Colonia Julia Neapolis ("New City"). The town was rebuilt, granted autonomy by Caesar Augustus and subsequently flourished before virtually disappearing toward the end of the sixth century. But its nearby clay deposits were far from exhausted.

A thousand years were to pass before Nabeul's rebirth in the 15th or 16th century, depending on which Tunisian authority you accept. Potters from Jerba, attracted by the accessibility of high-quality surface clay deposits, settled near the ruins of Neapolis. Linguistic terms of Jerban origin, still used in Nabeul today, attest to these Jerban roots, notes Tunisian art historian Naceur Baklouti, an important contributor to *Couleurs de Tunisie: 25 Siècles de Céramique*. (This book, published in 1994 by the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris and now apparently out of print, is the best modern reference work on Tunisia's long ceramic history.) A century later, Andalusian emigrants brought new techniques for the application of enamel that were first adopted by the potters of Qallaline and, by the 17th century, by those of Nabeul as well. During this time, Nabeul's pottery was utilitarian, created to satisfy local domestic needs. It was not decorative work aimed at display or collection.

In 1898, early in the period of French colonial rule that began in 1881 and ended with Tunisian independence in 1956, two French artists arrived in Nabeul. Named Louis and Lucienne Tissier, they gave a new creative impetus to Nabeul's artistic traditions. The Tissiers focused their efforts on the production of wall tiles and panels, turning for inspiration to the complex geometric and floral patterns in deep-hued enamels that characterized the Tunis-based Qallaline style of the 17th century.

At the same time, Tunisian demand for utilitarian ceramic objects was declining due to the increased availability of cheap, European, mass-produced alternatives. A number of Tunisian potters, some of whom later became internationally known, turned to the Tissiers for employment, driven by the desire to go beyond quotidian production and resurrect the artistic qualities of centuries past.

In 1908, another French-owned workshop called Qallaline opened, similarly dedicated to artistic production—objects intended for display rather than use—followed in 1918 by the workshop De Verclos. Subsequently, Tunisian families such as Kharraz, Kedidi and Ben Sedrine also opened workshops. Their work, and that of other Tunisian artists

such as the twin brothers Abdelkader and Mohamed Abderrazaq, went on to win international awards in Europe. Tunisian tiles were soon much sought after in Algeria, Libya and Egypt, and were exported to the United States in the late 1920's to decorate a number of California mansions.

But these artistic efforts were short-lived. In the years before World War II, "the high price of enamel, and of labor, and consequently the scarcity of buyers of high quality tiles or beautiful pottery made by hand by talented craftsmen accelerated the decline of this important art form," wrote Alain and Dalila Loviconi in their 1994 survey, *Les Faïences de Tunisie: Qallaline et Nabeul*. As these workshops closed, modest production to meet utilitarian needs continued, bolstered, after the war, by the proximity of the town of Hammamet to the south, which became a popular vacation spot for European writers, artists and the well-to-do.

By the 1970's, when Tunisia began to target the European package-tour market, both visitors and pottery sales were rising. With the construction of large beach hotels, Nabeul became a tourist destination in its own right, and the pottery industry began to flourish yet again.



POTTERY WAS OLD BUSINESS IN NABEUL WHEN THE ROMANS CONQUERED IT IN 148 BC, AND LATER ARTISTIC REVIVALS IN THE 15TH CENTURY AND AGAIN IN THE 19TH CENTURY BROUGHT ANDALUSIAN AND EUROPEAN INFLUENCES, RESPECTIVELY.

A butcher shop and an ice cream stand in Nabeul, opposite, both show the popular combination of pictorial panels, often with floral designs, framed by repetitive geometric patterns. Above and below: Most of the city's artisans work in small shops, and their handmade wares are a small but attractive niche in Nabeul's ceramics market: Four-fifths of the city's ceramics are molded, fired and glazed in mass-production factories. Hand-decorated work sells better in the tourist-oriented and export markets.





IN THE 15TH CENTURY, THE ANDALUSIAN EMIGRANT SIDI KACEM EL-JELLIZI INTRODUCED CUERDA SECA (LITERALLY, "DRY STRING"), A TECHNIQUE FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF MULTICOLORED ENAMEL TILES THAT USES FINE LINES DRAWN WITH A MIXTURE OF OIL OR WAX AND MANGANESE TO ISOLATE AREAS OF COLOR FROM EACH OTHER.

Having visited Nabeul frequently in the 1980's, I recently had an opportunity to return, and I found that the town remains the center of most of Tunisia's current production of pottery and ceramics, with more than 350 factories and workshops. Ceramics is the largest employment sector—though embroidery, lace and perfume production are not far behind, and the tourism industry is a leader too. Use of the potter's wheel for commercial production remains almost exclusively man's work, though more women are now employed to decorate items by hand than when I visited 15 years ago.

Today's ceramics fall into four main categories: plates and pottery items for sale to tourists; utilitarian tableware and enameled flowerpots for the domestic Tunisian market; decorative tiles for the construction industry; and undecorated terracotta items such as flowerpots, water jugs and covers for indoor and outdoor lights.

In its neat, clean appearance, the town gives off an energetic aura of success. Only an hour east of Tunis and 10 minutes from Hammamet, Nabeul today benefits from a nearly constant

stream of European visitors searching for souvenirs and gifts. Americans come, but in smaller numbers; Algerian tourists come too, mostly in August, and they are renowned in Nabeul for their large purchases.

Today's market is highly competitive. Anthropologist Sophie Ferchiou, who studies the social practices of traditional industries, summed it up succinctly: "Artistic skill is being sacrificed for the benefit of profits gained through mass production." Much of today's production is now mechanized. Large ceramics firms such as Kedidi and Kharraz serve the local construction industry, responding to Tunisian tastes for tiles to decorate residences and public buildings. Factories—no longer just small workshops—produce pallet-loads of tableware for Tunisian

homes, some of it meeting uniquely regional needs, such as the conical *tebsi* used for couscous presentation.

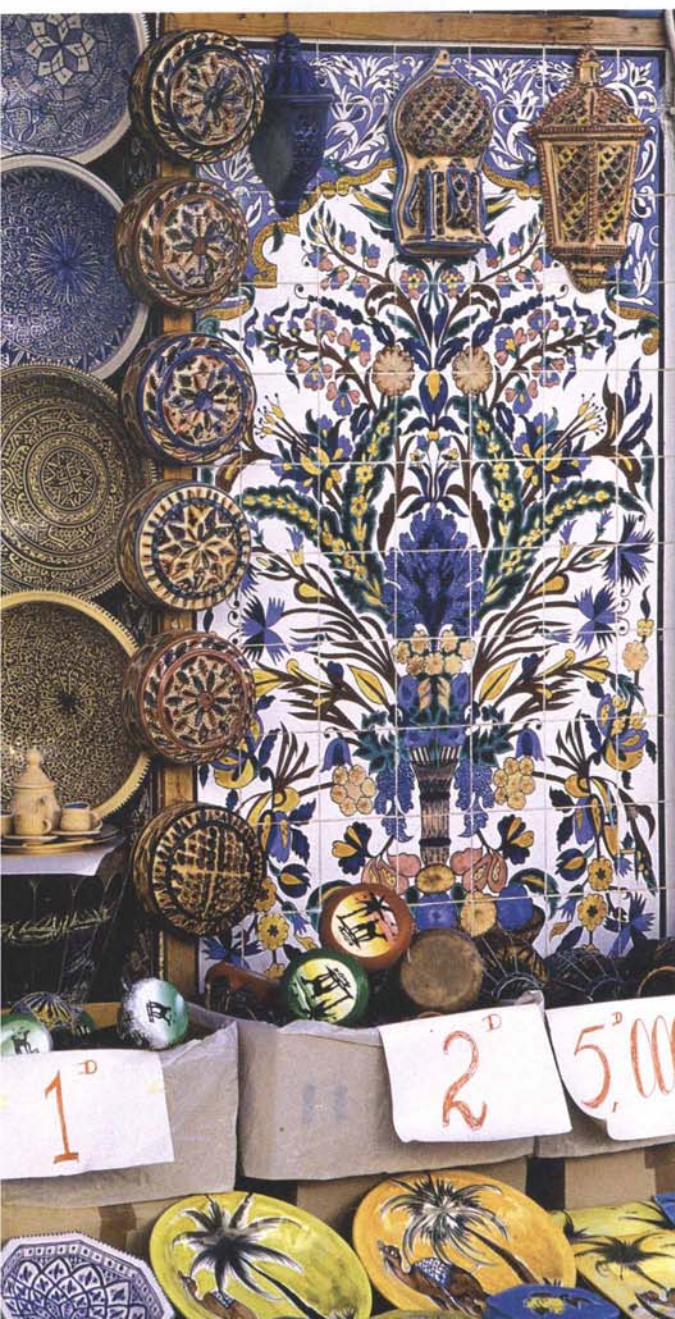
When I found a small producer, Lotfi Zine, painting English-language labels on several dozen one-liter jugs made to hold Tunisian olive oil, I asked him if such mass-produced tourist items represented the future of Nabeul's industry. He shrugged in a "business is business" kind of way, but then showed me a set of dinner plates with fruit and vegetable designs, each one of which was hand-painted, marked for export to an outlet in Seattle. "Pottery has been good business in Nabeul for centuries," he said. "Why should it be any different in the 21st?" As proof of his optimism, he pointed out that he had recently been able to buy his present shop after having rented a workshop for a decade.

Exports, mainly to Germany, France and Spain, today account for some 60 percent of the city's pottery business. A few producers deal worldwide via the Internet, and China is being developed as a market by others, observes businesswoman Latifa Ladjili, whose husband is president of the Nabeul Regional Chamber of Potters. Plates decorated with traditional or contemporary designs are one of the most common export items today. The designs may be geometric or calligraphic, or show human figures, birds, fish, fruit, flowers or other motifs. Blue-and-white is the most common modern coloration, supplemented often by black and green, with many variations and other polychrome com-

Opposite: A room in the city of Sidi bou Said uses four types of tiles from Nabeul while a wall panel, right, shows a symmetrical floral vase surrounded by arabesques and border tiles—a variation on tree-of-life motifs that appear regularly over centuries of ceramic and carpet patterns from Turkey to Mesopotamia, Persia and China.



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binations. In addition to decorative and utilitarian plates, other common glazed items are candlesticks, flowerpots, bowls and vases. Fountains are also popular items for Tunisian homeowners.

Naceur Baklouti, writing in *Couleurs de Tunisie*, illustrated the strength of the tradition by the story of what happened when municipal authorities, citing environmental and health concerns, forced producers in the center of Nabeul to move to a new industrial quarter on the outskirts in the early 1990's. "We noted, not without some surprise, the potters' attachment to their traditional practices in their newly constructed workshops, notably in the design and construction of the kilns. They built kilns almost identical to those in the ancient *jraibiya* quarter." While many producers still use olive wood, the traditional fuel, to fire large vases, jars and flowerpots without enameled designs, manufacturers of decorated pieces are mostly converting to gas and electric kilns, whose temperature controls guarantee a uniform product.

Tiles are still important, and the majority made in Nabeul are for the domestic market, where doors and windows are often lined with a border of tiles. Park and garden benches are often covered with tiles; decorative tile bands around the fronts of houses are common, and gardens, rooftop

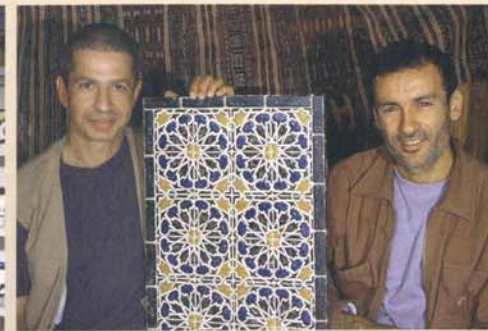
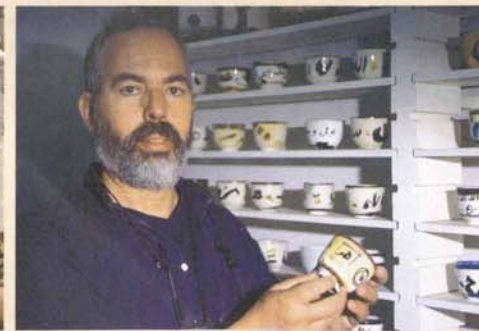
terraces and balconies sometimes display decorative panels of 20 to 80 individual tiles. Additionally, Tunisians often use tiles indoors the way westerners use wallpaper. Nizar ben Hedi Chargui, a sales representative for the Kharraz firm, says that even though hand-painted tiles are four times as costly as machine-produced ones, they still represent 20 percent of his firm's tile production. Tiles are exported too, but in Europe they face stiff competition from Spanish and Italian producers.

Both Andalusian and Ottoman influences stimulated Tunisian tastes for tiles in home decoration. It is to the Andalusian refugees, whose emigration began in the 13th century, that we trace the rich cobalt blues and the geometric and star designs that distinguish the ceramics of the Hafsid period (1229–1574). Over the next four centuries, Tunisian ceramic art repeatedly benefited from infusions of Andalusian designs and techniques. (That many Andalusians also settled in Fez, Morocco, accounts for similarities between Tunisian and Moroccan ceramic arts, noted Abdelaziz Daoulati, former director of the Tunisian Institut National du Patrimoine.)

In the 15th century, the Andalusian ceramic artist Sidi Kacem El-Jellizi introduced *cuerda seca* (literally, "dry string"), a technique for the manufacture of multicolored enamel tiles that uses fine lines drawn with a mixture of oil or wax and manganese to isolate areas of color from each other. The mixture is consumed in firing and leaves a dark "dry line" between adjacent colors in the final product.

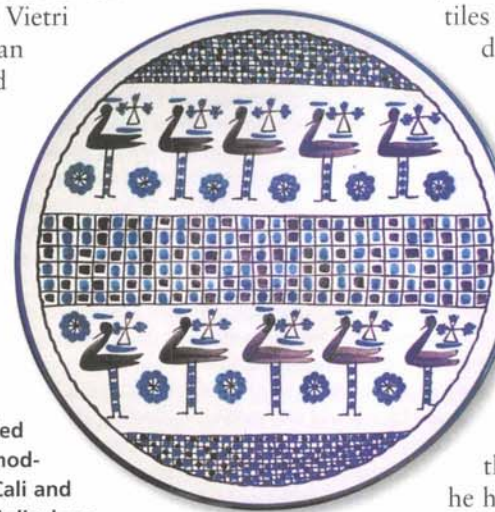
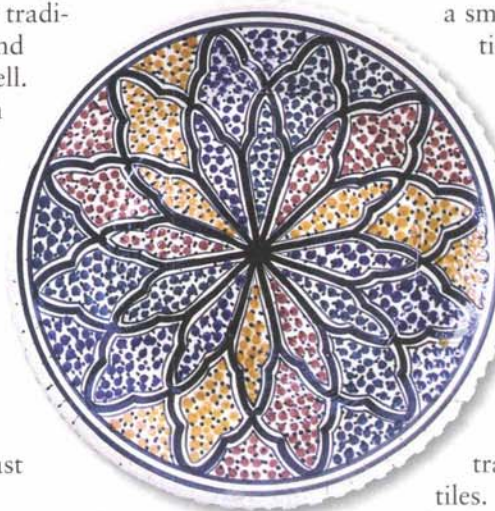
The last great Andalusian infusion occurred immediately after the final expulsion of Muslims from Spain in 1609, when more than 80,000 settled in Tunisia. The Kharraz family claims to have come at this time, bringing their knowledge of artistic ceramics with them. At that time, Ottoman tastes were coming into vogue as Tunisia reoriented itself eastward following the Turkish victory over the Hafsid in 1574.

Today, Tunisia's freshest, most creative artistic impulses are in Tunis. There, artists like Khaled Ben Slimane are nourished by



their multiple heritage of ceramic traditions. Born in Nabeul in 1951, Ben Slimane is internationally recognized for his creations, which draw not only on Andalusian themes, but also on the Berber tradition of Sejenane and that of Jerba as well. Following study in Tunisia, Spain and Japan, Ben Slimane in 1990 became the first Arab to be invited to join the Academie Internationale de la Céramique, headquartered in Geneva. In May last year he won the International Grand Prize for Ceramics given by Vietri Sul Mare, the Italian ceramic center, and his works are in many museums, including the British Museum.

Top, from left: Latifa Ladjili stands with export-ready amphorae from her family business; Khaled Ben Slimane shows modern teacups; Patrick Cali and Mohamed Messaoudi display a sample of a new, resin-based process that promises to offer an antique-tile look at a fraction of the cost. Above: A traditional design, top, and one by Lotfi Zine based on a ninth-century design from Raqqa. Opposite: One of the city's many tourist-oriented ceramics shops.



Somewhere between Nabeul's industry and Tunis's individualism is the work of artist, entrepreneur, collector and antiques restorer Mohamed Messaoudi. He showed me a small part of his collection of tiles, including early examples of *cuerda seca*. Messaoudi and artist-engineer Patrick Cali have developed a resin-based process to produce lightweight panels that replicate the appearance of worn, traditional antique tiles. Although they are easily distinguished from real tiles up close, from a distance they appear weathered and aged—faux antiques. Messaoudi plans to go commercial with the process to serve those who prefer the appearance of aged tiles but can't afford them. It will also, he hopes, stimulate a renewed interest in the history of Tunisian tile craft.

Other efforts to ensure growth and creativity include the Centre National de Céramique in Tunis. Under the direction of Faouzi Chtioui, artists work here independently and in informal

collaboration. Fees are modest and the only admission test is a love of ceramics. Chtioui is always available to advise; Khaled Ben Slimane is one of the instructors. In Nabeul, there is Le Centre des Traditions et des Métiers d'Art ("Traditions, Arts and Crafts Center"), a crafts "village" with vendor outlets open to visitors.

Today's ceramic industry and ceramic arts seem as vibrant and varied as the designs that the artists and factories are producing, and all is founded on a heritage of more than a millennium's duration. Nabeul's place in Mediterranean cultural history is already assured; through the increase in awards, tourism and the continued local demand for decorative and daily items, the future of the town's ceramic traditions seems assured as well.



Charles O. Cecil lived in Tunisia while directing the Arabic Language Field School for the US Department of State. He later served as deputy chief of mission in Côte d'Ivoire and as ambassador to Niger. He retired in 2001 to devote himself full-time to photography and writing, and lives in Alexandria, Virginia, where he can be reached at cecilimages@cox.net.

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

Jerba: J/A 94
Andalusian emigrants to Tunisia: J/A 91

www.kedidi.com.tn
www.tunisiancommunity.org

SuggestionsforReading

COMPILED BY KYLE PAKKA, DICK DOUGHTY AND ROBERT ARNDT

Readers of *Saudi Aramco World* who want to range more widely or delve more deeply 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 nonetheless encourage varied and omnivorous reading as a sure, if winding, 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*.

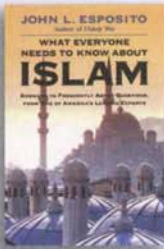
Building-Blocks of Understanding



Taking Back Islam: American Muslims Reclaim Their Faith. Michael Wolfe, ed., with the Producers of Beliefnet. 2002, Rodale, 1-57954-655-2, \$21.95 hb. This is one of the most compelling and valuable of the many books that have come from the events of September 11, 2001. Wolfe was the first American Muslim to report on network news live from his own pilgrimage to Makkah, and he has produced a PBS biography of the Prophet Muhammad. He and his colleagues have compiled a literary salon devoted to fleshing out the democratic-pluralist tradition in Islam. In his introduction, Wolfe writes that, after 9/11, “privately, in our mosques and in our homes—away from the judging ears of the world—we began talking to each other with an honesty born of urgency.... We not only talked about what had gone wrong, but about how things ought to be.... *Taking Back Islam* records the latest chapter in a centuries-long conversation that non-Muslims may never have heard.” It’s time to listen in.



Understanding Islam and the Muslims. T.J. Winter and John A. Williams. 2002, Fons Vitae, 1-887752-47-1, \$7.95 pb. This is an expanded version of one of the most popular introductions to basic Islamic precepts. Sticking with the handy “FAQ” format, the new chapters include “The Muslim Family” and “Islam and World Peace.” Additionally, it is illustrated with more than 90 photographs. Now more than ever, it is one of the best books for use in a short workshop or class setting, as it can be read easily in a couple of hours by a reader unfamiliar with Islam.



What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam. John L. Esposito. 2002, Oxford University Press, 0-19-515713-3, \$17.95 hb. Also using an “FAQ” format but styled to resemble a blunt-speaking, freewheeling dialogue at a town meeting in Anywhere, USA, one of the world’s leading educators about Islam and editor of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* responds with insight and wisdom to nearly 100 popular questions non-Muslims ask (or are reluctant to ask) about Islam. At no point does he shy, and while some of the questions are based on uncomfortable anti-Muslim prejudices, Esposito uses his responses to patiently sort fact from myth and distinguish between the expressions of religion according to the Qur’an and the expressions of diverse cultures in the Islamic world. This is a highly intelligent book for a college-level class or a multi-session book-group study.

Among Muslims: Everyday Life on the Frontiers of Pakistan. Kathleen Jamie. 2002, Seal Press, 1-58005-086-7, \$14.95, C\$24.95 pb; **Among Muslims: Meetings at the Frontiers of Pakistan.** Kathleen Jamie. 2002, Sort Of Books, 0-9535227-7-6, £6.99 pb. A well-known Scottish poet, Jamie traveled through northern Pakistan in 1991, and found that being a woman alone was more an advantage than a hindrance. Sympathetic, non-judgmental and willing to accept even when she could not understand, Jamie wrote of her experiences in spare, water-clear prose in *The Golden Peak* (1992). Ten years later, married with two children, living an entirely different life in a rural Scottish town, she came upon 10 Pakistani men sitting on the pavement outside the Co-op, reading the Qur’an. “We are on a peace-march,” they explained, and Jamie found the tables turned: The obligations of hospitality, of protection of the travelers from their own innocence, of humane and personal contact, were now upon her and her family, as they had previously been on her hosts in the Northern Areas. The meeting inspired her to return to Pakistan, to Gilgit, to see again the people who had befriended her. This book is a re-publication of *The Golden Peak* with the addition of 50 pages of prologue and epilogue, and it is warm, eloquent and more topical than ever.

Cradle and Crucible: History and Faith in the Middle East. National Geographic Society; Daniel Schorr, introduction; David Fromkin, Zahi Hawass, Yossi Klein Halevi, Sandra Mackey, Charles M. Sennott, Milton Viorst and Andrew Wheatcroft, contributors. 2002, National Geographic Society, 0-7922-6915-2, \$30 hb. This five-chapter history of the Middle East ranges from prehistory to the clichéd “Century of Strife, 1920–2002”; additionally, it devotes a chapter to each of the three major faiths and illustrates it all with characteristically beautiful historical and contemporary photography. While it will prove one-stop shopping for many a student report, it is not an entirely well-thought-out endeavor: Daniel Schorr begins his introduction expressing frank curiosity that he was selected for his task—perhaps for his nearly 87 years of age, he guesses diplomatically, or perhaps it was for his status as a wise and dispassionate observer-at-large, the last of the generation of Edward R. Murrow. To the serious reader, though, the book has a generic tone which dulls the impact of the otherwise insightful individual writers, all of whom are better read in the context of their own more detailed works—unless your school report is due on Thursday.

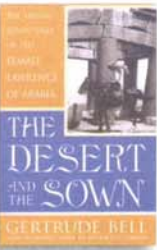
Crescent. Diana Abu-Jaber. 2003, Norton, 0-393-05747-X, \$24.95 hb. The author, a teacher at Portland State University, follows her first novel, *Arabian Jazz* (nominated for the PEN/Hemingway Prize), with this flavorful account of Sirine, an Iraqi-American chef at a Lebanese restaurant in Los Angeles. Unmarried and approaching 40, guarded by a doting uncle devoted to traditional storytelling and by a matchmaking boss, Sirine finds herself falling for a handsome Arabic-literature professor. Their courtship rekindles unresolved issues involving the death of her parents and her cultural identity, all played out against the fragrant and noisy backdrop of Nadia’s Café, the second home of the local Arab-American community. Poignant and filled with vividly drawn characters, Abu-Jaber’s novel is a lush and sensual Middle Eastern feast, both for the senses and for the heart.

Delights from the Garden of Eden: A Cookbook and a History of the Iraqi Cuisine. Nawal Nasrallah. 2003, 1st Books Library, 1-4033-4793-X, \$41.95 pb. www.iraqicookbook.com The author of this labor of love grew up in Iraq, taught English and American literature at the universities of Mosul and Baghdad and now lives in the United States. She begins the book with a tender thought for Iraqi mothers who “must find it hard these days to put food on the table.” But she has faith that, “innovative as they are, they will nonetheless come up with a treat to cheer up their families, simple yet delicious.”

Nasrallah explains that Iraqi cuisine has a distinctive character due to the interaction of many different cultures there over a very long history. She traces its roots to the ancient Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians in the land that was also home to Noah and to Abraham. Her reference to the Garden of Eden in the title is not mere evocativeness: She traces it to the Sumerian land of “Edin”—one of a number of illuminating etymologies she points out. Nasrallah reminds us that “the first documented ‘cookbook’ in human history was written in Akkadian on clay tablets, in the land of Babylon, about 3700 years ago.” Much later, in the medieval period, Baghdad under the caliphs became a renowned center of gastronomy, and again under the Ottomans the Iraqis participated in yet another outstanding cuisine.

The 650 pages of this work contain more than 400 recipes reflecting these historic connections and all the glories of contemporary Middle Eastern cooking: breads, soups, appetizers, stews, rice dishes, meat, fish, pastries, desserts of all kinds and beverages. Menus are suggested for every occasion. Interspersed are anecdotes, commentary, table etiquette, memories and substantial history. This book is not just an introduction, but a thorough overview of a diverse, delicious and enduring cuisine.

—ALICE ARNDT



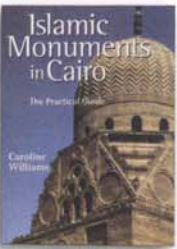
The Desert and the Sown: The Syrian Adventures of the Female Lawrence of Arabia. Gertrude Bell; Rosemary O'Brien, introduction. 2001, Cooper Square Press, 0-8154-1135-9, \$19.95 pb.

Ignore the absurd subtitle: This is a facsimile reprint of Bell’s own account of her journey across the Syrian desert from Jericho to Antioch in 1905, adorned with a brief but useful introduction. Long before she became embroiled in espionage during World War I, before her service as Oriental Secretary to Sir Percy Cox in Iraq, Bell sought adventures and accomplishments abroad that would bring her recognition at home, where the doors of fame and advancement were still closed to women. To that end, she recorded all she saw with pen and camera. This volume is in the familiar style of 19th-century travel literature: episodic adventures with local characters interspersed with discussions of history and politics as seen from the prevailing perspective of imperial Britain. But Bell’s knack for recording conversations, her vivid descriptions and her breathless, purple-adventure prose make for spirited reading, and she was one of the best-informed and most insightful Britons when Britain, for better or worse, was shaping the Middle East. One admires her zeal and daring while at the same time deploring her world view. Nevertheless, Bell captures, in words and in evocative black-and-white photographs, a region in flux and on the verge of momentous change.

In the Empire of Genghis Khan: An Amazing Odyssey Through the Lands of the Most Feared Conquerors in History. Stanley Stewart. 2002, Lyons Press, 1-58574-703-3, \$22.95 hb.

Stewart’s travelogue reads like the tales one would hear if an Irish storyteller traveled through a Hieronymus Bosch painting. This is a modern picaresque, told with affection and verve, through the heart of the former Mongol Empire. Following in the footsteps of William of Rubruck, whose Asian journey predated Marco Polo’s by 20 years, Stewart sets out from Istanbul, crosses southern Russia and what is now Kazakhstan and reaches the former Mongol capital of Karakorum. The journey, difficult for the author, is pure pleasure for the reader as Stewart wends his way through the Dickensian shambles of post-Soviet Russia and its former republics. He crosses the Black Sea on a tramp freighter, rides a thousand miles on horseback across the steppes, meets an eagle hunter and a shaman, attends a riotous Mongol wedding and looks for the grave of Genghis Khan. Stewart’s own misadventures are peppered with passages from William of Rubruck’s

account, revealing how little has changed in 800 years and reminding the reader that, in a reversal of history, the story of the Mongol Empire has been told us mostly by the vanquished, not the victor. Never condescending or ethnocentric, Stewart’s tale is vivid, evocative and compelling.



Islamic Monuments in Cairo: The Practical Guide. Caroline Williams. 2002 (5th ed.), American University in Cairo Press, 977-424-695-0, \$22.50 pb. Entranced by the Pyramids at Giza and other nearby Pharaonic sites, visitors to Cairo often overlook an equally glorious heritage: the Islamic monuments of the medieval city. Spared the devastation of war and invasion that Baghdad and Damascus suffered, Cairo has an unrivaled Islamic architectural legacy. From the ninth-century Mosque of ‘Amr, the first on the

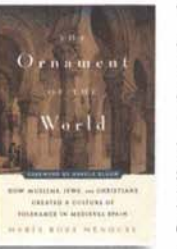
African continent, to 19th-century Ottoman palaces, no other city in the Islamic world can trace its historical and architectural development with such clarity. The city is especially rich in Mamluk-era buildings: mosques, *madrasas*, mausoleums, private homes, *sabil-kutabs* (public water fountains with attached Qur’anic schools), hospitals, fortifications and caravansaries or *wikalas*. And unlike the pyramids, the medieval Islamic city of Cairo is very much a living neighborhood, the monuments interlaced with vegetable and spice markets, tea-houses, shops and modern dwellings. Such a labyrinth requires a guide, and in this popular book, now in its fifth edition, Islamic scholar Williams conducts visitors to more than 200 monuments. Her readable text encompasses not only the architecture but also the stories behind the stones. With maps, illustrations and a glossary, this is an indispensable book for anyone looking to experience the heart and soul of Cairo.



Just Like a River. Muhammad Kamil al-Khatib; Michelle Hartman and Maher Barakat, trs. 2003, Interlink, 1-56656-475-1, \$12.95, C\$20.50 pb.

The first novel by this prominent Syrian intellectual to be translated into English, *Just Like a River* explores the lives of a disparate group of people in Syria in the early 1980’s. Universal themes of generational and gender struggle play out against the socio-realist backdrop of a Syrian population coming to grips with economic and political anxieties. Al-Khatib weaves his tale from the voices of an older Syrian army officer, a female university student, a British orientalist and a disillusioned activist, creating a vivid tapestry of life in Syria 20 years ago that, in its treatment of such themes as urban immigration, is still current today.

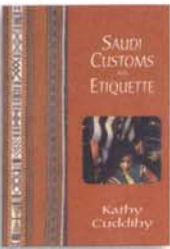
The Mulberry Empire. Philip Henscher. 2002, Knopf, 0-375-41488-6, \$26, C\$40 hb. In 1839, 50,000 British troops entered Afghanistan, determined to replace Amir Dost Muhammad Khan with a ruler more to Britain’s liking. Three years later, a single British horseman rode out of Afghanistan. All the rest—all—were dead, and Dost Muhammad ruled again in Kabul. That is the history; what of the personalities? This slow-moving, inexorably building novel moves from London to Calcutta to St. Petersburg to Kabul, telling of the people, the passions and the pride responsible for one of the most fascinating, exciting and instructive episodes of the Great Game. Rich, colorful and intelligent, Henscher’s fiction is a great read—and a timely warning.



The Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Christians and Jews Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain. Maria Rosa Menocal; Harold Bloom, forward. 2002, Little, Brown and Company, 0-316-56688-8, \$27.95 hb.

Once upon a time, from the early eighth century to the year Columbus set sail for the Americas, there grew in southern Spain a culture that brought out the best in Muslims, Christians and Jews. Its achievements in agriculture, mathematics, medicine, architecture, literature, music and philosophy blossomed from this unprecedented cultural and religious cross-pollination and became the seeds of the European Renaissance. Menocal, a scholar of Iberian languages at Yale University, is a storyteller-historian, a troubador-in-the-library who has

looked long and thought hard about the human interactions of this distant, easily romanticized era. Her tale is a reminder that, however sincere or successful, today's efforts at multiculturalism are hesitant and narrow-gauge compared to the 700-year *convivencia* that, even today, can dazzle, humble and instruct us.



integration into Saudi society does not come easily. I can only stress that knowing and understanding the Saudi people is a rewarding experience and worth the effort required." She has written a valuable tool to help others do just this.

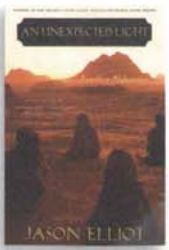


turn to how the places of the Sahara have shaped the human lives in and around it, and how humans in turn have left their marks upon it. The writing is lively and full of an enthusiastic, intelligent sense of wonder, premised throughout on a solid understanding of the varieties of "outsider" and "insider" viewpoints that together inform a deeper sense of the world's largest desert.

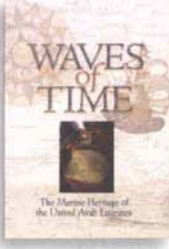
Short Arabic Plays: An Anthology. Salma Khadra Jayyusi, ed. 2003, Interlink, 1-56656-469-7, \$25, C\$38.95 pb. Unlike the millennial poetic traditions of Arab lands, drama is a latecomer to the scene, only emerging as a literary genre in the 20th century. This anthology brings together 20 short works by 16 Arab playwrights from a variety of countries. The plays themselves span the artistic spectrum from traditional dramas to monodramas—plays with one actor, often portraying multiple characters—to experimental works of surrealism and absurdism. Short plays lend themselves well to comedy and many of the works use the sharp barbs of satire, parody and irony to skewer contemporary social and political themes. This is a fine introduction to a robust but often overlooked current in Arabic literature.



with tragic consequences; and throughout, her mother and sisters help Maalek learn to cope. The characters are fully drawn, and Clinton's writing is sincere and skillful enough that the ironies of her plot buttress a sense of authenticity. The result is a surprisingly sensitive story with an ending as untidy as life itself.



returned to the country and witnessed the conflict between the Taliban and the government, traveling widely in the hinterland. Elliot's unflinching prose, by turns sympathetic, outraged and mournful, never ceases to evoke wonder and awe for the harsh beauties of the land and the spirit of a people struggling for survival and dignity.



activity stretching back to the third millennium BC—including ancient pearls, shell necklaces and carved pendants depicting early sailing craft—the Emirates have long drawn their commercial wealth from the sea. One chapter is devoted to Ahmed ibn Majjid, a legendary navigator and poet active in the late 15th century. His summary of his own *Book of Profitable Things Concerning the First Principles and Rules of Navigation* (AD 1490), known as the *Fawa'id*, also serves as an apt description of *Waves of Time*: "I have summarized this section about the sea and the other ten sections so that a man can progress without finding the book and its teaching too long and so that it is not too heavy for the reader and the writer."



On September 12, 2001, the author dashed off an anguished e-mail on Afghanistan to close friends who in turn passed it along to others. In days, Ansary's words had reached millions of people and landed him on television as a commentator on Islam and East-West relations. The current volume is an intimate memoir of the author's childhood in Afghanistan and his later immigration to the United States, where he became a successful educational writer, and an account of his trip through the Muslim world after the Iranian Revolution. Told in a graceful and warm conversational tone, Ansary's insightful and honest account illustrates the difficulties and the joys of a bicultural heritage: He is the son of a Pashtun Afghan father and a Finnish-American mother. His musings on Islam—in terms of both his personal and family history and his observations of the Muslim world—offer a glimpse into the spiritual trajectory of an individual and a faith.

The fictional oil-rich kingdom of Barqais is the setting for this, the author's first novel to be translated into English. Relationships are at the heart of the story: the relationships between husband and wife, between Europe and the Arab world and between aspiration and reality. A young couple, Ihsan and Nadia, join the ranks of the poor, dispossessed and opportunistic flocking to Barqais in search of a better life. As Nadia struggles to achieve a measure of independence, Ihsan competes with his famous revolutionary brother, Jalal, for the respect of their friends and family. The upheavals in their personal alliances are mirrored by the turmoil of petroleum politics in their adopted homeland. The author provides a fresh and earnest perspective on the lives, loves and conflicts of young Arabs struggling to succeed in a land at once familiar and strange.

SuggestionsforListening

COMPILED BY CHRIS NICKSON



Thanks to EMI Arabia's ambition to bring 20th-century classical Arab music to the western market, here are starters for a serious library. The "Arabian Masters" volumes are double-CD compilations, four disks in all, with selections from a dozen artists altogether, many of whom are also represented at greater length on the individual artist CDs. However, be warned: The sleeve notes are perfunctory, there are no recording details, and the recordings themselves have sketchy moments. Hopefully future additions to this important series will show improvements. (At press time, this collection is not yet available through US distributors.)



Oum Kalsoum (1904–1975, Egypt) was the daughter of an imam (prayer leader) at a mosque in the Nile Delta. She first came to fame in the mid-1920's. The 13 selections make it easy to appreciate her legendary status.



Fairouz (1935–, Lebanon) established a reputation in the 1950's, but rose to become "The Voice of Beirut" in the 1970's when she refused to flee the city during its civil war. Modern arrangements and innovative melodic ideas frame the passionate, richly emotional voice that made her the most popular Arab female singer since Oum Kalsoum.



Abdel Halim Hafez (1929–1977, Egypt) was called "The Dusky Nightingale" for his combination of easy, boyish innocence and his ability to embody the popular aspirations of anti-colonialism and Arab nationalism. Here he connects charismatically with his audience.



Mohamed Abdel Wahab (1911–1991, Egypt) is widely regarded as the greatest Arab composer, famed for innovating both within the traditions and assimilating western elements like rock rhythms and electric guitar.



Farid El Atrache (1917–1975, Egypt), "The Crooner," was raised all over the Middle East and acted in more than 30 movies. His compositions have been covered and adapted more than those of almost any other Arab singer, though his lushly romantic style has passed out of fashion.



Kazem El Saher (1961–, Iraq) is the youngest artist in EMI Arabia's collection—he made a brief US tour in March—and *La Ya Sadiki*, composed in 1989, is a song of grand scale and ambition that moved him from pop icon to serious artist and composer.



Warda (1940–, Egypt) has been a favorite since 1960, selling more than 20 million albums. She has enjoyed careers both in classical and popular song, and this selection shows more of the latter than the former.



Masters of Persian Music. 2002, World Village Recorded live, this is Persian classical music at its finest. Master vocalist Mohammad Reza Shajarian is joined by Hossein Alizadeh on the lute-like *tar*, Kayhan Kalhor on *kamancheh*, a type of fiddle, and Shajarian's son on additional vocals and *tombak* drum. There's an elegant, fluid beauty here, warmed by Shajarian's often transcendent voice. From first note to last, this is a beautiful introduction to the style, and the extensive liner notes help the newcomer understand the history, instruments and musicians.



Toirés. 2002, Backroom Beat Aimed more at the head than the feet, this is a Maghrebi ambient album. Toirés was formed by French producer Florian Seriat, whose clients include singer Natacha Atlas. *Sanāti* is their second outing, a richly stitched, thoroughly modern patchwork of samples and instruments, programmed beats and Moroccan rhythms. While it has a few flat spots, it's frequently majestic.



Souad Massi. Island France The essence of this recording is in two tracks: "Bladi" and "Tant Pis Pour Moi." In them, 30-year-old Massi lets her light shine, with strong echoes of Tracy Chapman in her velvety expression of life's tough moments backed by gently moody, understated arrangements. From Algeria, now living in France, she glows in the spare frame of 'ud and percussion, but she seems out of place on a few slicker, pop-oriented tracks.



The Rough Guide to Raï. Various artists. 2002, World Music Network This collection is more of a crowd-pleaser than a definitive history. Focusing on the 1980's, when producer Rachid Ahmed's pop-raï revolution of drum machines and western instruments gave the underground style mass appeal, this compilation contains nods to the past with tracks from 1960's icon Bellemou Messaoud and the legendary Cheikha Remitti. Highlights include a version of the classic "Shab El Baroud," lauding the guerrillas of the Algerian revolution, from Cheba Zahouania, a woman equally adept in traditional and modern raï, and an emotional performance by a young, pre-superstar Khaled. The compilation proves again that raï is some of the funkiest music on the planet.



Mohamed Mounir. 2002, Mondo Melodia Nubian-born Mounir is a singer with a silky voice and the compositional skills to transform traditional melodies into gorgeous, layered arrangements. Sometimes he goes too far and it gets saccharine, but when he reins himself in, as on "Salatullah Ya Mawlay," he places himself firmly in the lineage of great vocalists like Mohamed Abdel Wahab and offers us a melodic treat of an album. Watch for the German version of "Madad," where an acoustic arrangement meets an oompah band: In an alternate-universe kind of way, it works.



Nass Marrakech. 2002, World Village This will delight fans of trance/dance styles. "Bouderbala" is a Moroccan *gnaoua* term related to the mixing of colors, an apt title for an album that spreads *gnaoua*'s wings to include Cuban piano and flute, Brazilian and Senegalese percussion, and instruments from Bulgarian village bands that insinuate themselves discreetly into the deep Arab soul of the collaboration.

COMPILED BY KYLE PAKKA

Carpets of Andalusia displays almost two dozen Spanish carpets, among the oldest preserved examples from the Islamic world. Woven in Spain during a time of great political transition, the 15th- and 16th-century carpets reflect a unique blend of Muslim, Christian, Jewish and Iberian traditions.

Working under Christian rule, Muslim weavers incorporated both Islamic and Christian motifs into their carpet designs: complex surface decoration, interlaced geometric strap-work, stylized Arabic script and floral forms appear side-by-side with Christian figurative forms such as heraldic emblems and coats of arms. The brilliant colors attest to the skill of Jewish dyers. Further influences include Roman pavements, indigenous Iberian motifs and designs found in European Gothic silks. The carpets share a unique structural feature known as the "Spanish knot," created by wrapping wool around a single warp instead of a pair of warps as in all other carpet traditions. In the Spanish knot, each knot is wrapped around alternate warps in successive rows, allowing the weaver to create a relatively lightweight carpet with complex designs while using a minimum of raw materials. Exhibition sponsored in part by Saudi Aramco. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, March 8 through August 10.

Runner, Spain, 15th century. Elaborately interlaced star patterns, which may derive from Turkish prototypes, share a heritage apparent in other arts of Spain and North Africa. Such typically Islamic patterns often appear on furnishings used in Christian churches; this rug is said to have come from the Convent of Santa Ursula at Guadalajara. 112 x 38.5 centimeters (44 x 15").

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. Royal Academy of Arts, **London**, March 15 through June 8; Rietberg Museum, **Zurich**, June 28 through October 20.

Eternal Egypt: 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 in carved ivory to the colossal granite statue of Seti II. **Minneapolis Institute of Arts**, through March 16; Field Museum, **Chicago**, April 25 through August 10.

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. Sites and dates include: **Miami**, March 17 and 18; **Huntsville, Alabama**, March 25 and 26; **Saginaw, Michigan**, March 29; **Anne Arundel, Maryland**, April 1; **Fayetteville, North Carolina**, April 3; **Exeter, New Hampshire**, April 5; **Houston**, April 5; **San Jose, California**, April 9; **Ann Arbor, Michigan**, April 25 and 26; **Pensacola, Florida**, June 5 and 6; **Jackson, Mississippi**, June 9 and 10; **Iowa City, Iowa**, June 18 and 19; **Roanoke, Virginia**, June 25; **Boston**, July 7 and 8; **Davis, California**, August 18 and 19; **Austin**, October 3 and 4. Information: awair@igc.org and www.awaironline.org.

Shirin Neshat presents five acclaimed video environments accompanied by a series of related photographs exploring issues of the artist's native Iran. **Miami Art Museum**, March 20 through June 1.

Mapping the Treasures of Arabia examines the changing face and varying knowledge of the Arabian Peninsula through maps, photographs and engravings. The exhibition comprises maps of the Arabian Peninsula; views of Makkah and Medina and the

Haji; and images of life in the desert. The maps range from some of the earliest woodcuts from the late 15th century to lithographs produced at the end of the 19th century. Eighteenth- and 19th-century engravings of the Grand Mosque in Makkah, Madinah, the Haji and desert landscapes are shown alongside contemporary photographs by Faruk Aksoy and Peter Sanders. Sponsorship: Saudi Aramco. Brunei Gallery, SOAS, **London**, through March 21.

Aladdin's Cave features hidden finds from the Petrie Museum and includes ivory sculpture, papyrus and paper manuscripts from the first century of Islam, Mamluk metalwork and Fatimid rock crystal. **British Museum, London**, through March 23.

Contemporary Iranian Cinema presents a series of free films in Farsi with English subtitles. March 23: "The Circle," Mohammad Shirvani, and "The Wind Will Carry Us," Abbas Kiarostami. April 6: "The Apple," Samira Makhmalbaf. April 13: "Under the Skin of the City," Rakhshan Bani-Etemad. 8:00 p.m., Griffith Theater or Richard White Auditorium, Duke University, **Durham, North Carolina**.

Journey into the Past: Ancient Mediterranean Art in Context is the most ambitious display of the museum's ancient art collection in its history, exhibiting sculpture, pottery, glass and metalwork from Egypt, the Near East, Greece and Rome. **Auckland Art Museum, Chapel Hill, North Carolina**, through March 23.

Mamluk Rugs of Egypt: Jewels of the Textile Museum's Collections displays one of the most significant groups of classical carpets: those woven for the Mamluk rulers of Egypt. Dating from the late 15th century, the rugs form a cohesive design group showing exuberant play with geometric shapes and stylized forms. Sponsored in part by Saudi Aramco. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, March 28 through September 7.

Bali: A Window to Twentieth Century Indonesian Art challenges conventional perceptions of Bali and provides historical and cultural perspectives that contribute to Indonesia's identity. **Wollongong [N.S.W.] City Gallery, Australia**, March 29 through May 25.

The Art of African Women: Empowering Traditions features more than 75 photographs by internationally acclaimed photojournalist Margaret Courtney-Clarke, taken over the course of her 20-year quest to document artistic traditions in North, West and South Africa. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, **New York**, through March 30.

The Eye of the Traveler: David Roberts' Egypt and the Holy Land displays 20 prints from the famous

collaboration between Roberts and master lithographer Louis Haghe. **Minneapolis Institute of Arts**, through March 30.

The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt displays coffins, masks, jewelry, papyri, sarcophagi and sculpture from Cairo's Egyptian Museum. An IMAX film, *Mysteries of Egypt*, and a planetarium program, *Stars of the Pharaohs*, are shown in conjunction with the exhibit. Museum of Science, **Boston**, through March 30; Kimbell Art Museum, **Fort Worth**, May 4 through September 14.

11'09 is a documentary film composed of eleven 11-minute segments in response to the September 11 attacks, made by filmmakers from around the world, including Youssef-Chahine (Egypt) and Samira Makhmalbaf (Iran). **Perth [Australia]** International Arts Festival, March 31 through April 6.

War in Islamic Painting reflects the central role played by war and warriors in the historical and epic literature of Turkey, Iran and India. On display are manuscript illustrations and single-page paintings, including scenes from the Persian national epic, the *Shahnamah*. **British Museum, London**, through March.

The Nance Collection of some 2500 artifacts from Saudi Arabia and the Middle East, including metalwork, clothing, jewelry and textiles, has been donated to the Archives and Museum of Central Missouri State University in **Warrensburg**. The museum will create a permanent rotating display of objects from the collection, beginning with one of the few original Bedouin tents on view in the United States, April through June.

Our Man in Persia focuses on explorer extraordinaire and historian of Iran Sir Percy Sykes and displays a substantial number of Persian tiles and other objects acquired by Sykes on his journeys. **British Museum, London**, April through October.

Noble Steeds: Horses in Islamic Art celebrates the bond between chevalier and horse through displays of equine equipment and works of art from throughout the ages. Islamic Arts Museum, **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**, opens April 2.

Purists at the Hindu Court explores the connections between Muslim and Hindu court traditions through 18 paintings of hunting scenes, garden parties and historical events. Dating from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the works reveal a time when "artists at the Hindu courts appropriated Mughal subject matter and style, and show how they ultimately manipulated them to make them their own." Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through April 6.

Egypt Reborn: Art for Eternity marks the completion of the reinstallation of the Egyptian collection when 557 objects go on display in seven newly designed galleries. These items, some not on view since the early 20th

century, date from the Predynastic Period (4400 BC) to the Eighteenth-Dynasty reign of Amenhotep III (1353 BC) and include the exquisite chlorite-stone head of a Middle Kingdom princess, an early classic stone deity from 2650 BC and the completely reassembled tomb of a major Twelfth-Dynasty official. **Brooklyn Museum of Art**, opens April 12.

Jefferson's America and Napoleon's France: The Arts of the Republic and the Empire contrasts the opulence of the Bonapartes with the simplicity of Jefferson. Included in the exhibit are antiquities collected during Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. **New Orleans Museum of Art**, April 12 through August 31.

The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353 focuses on the period of Ilkhanid rule when contact with Far Eastern art of the Yuan period transformed local artistic traditions, especially the arts of the book. Some 200 objects are on display, including illustrated manuscripts, the decorative arts and architectural decoration. Catalog. **Los Angeles County Museum of Art**, April 13 through July 27.

Abdallah Benanteur, the Painter of Poets presents a selection of paintings by this giant of modern Algerian art, but focuses primarily on his engravings, drawings, watercolors and etchings, many of which were created to illustrate published editions of modern and ancient verse. Institut du Monde Arabe, **Paris**, through April 13.

Up the Nile: Egypt in 19th-Century Photographs showcases approximately 45 photographs of Egypt and includes some of the earliest camera images of the country's dramatic landscapes, inhabitants and imposing monuments. **Minneapolis Institute of Arts**, through April 13.

The Abdi Years: Twenty Years of Design follows the unusual career of the Algerian designer and teacher Abdi, who lives and works in Paris, and explores the unique formal design language that he has created out of the two cultures whose product he is. The exhibition presents furniture and other Abdi-designed objects, but also attempts to transcend mere appearances to explore the essence of Abdi's multiple, cross-fertilized artistic expressions. Institut du Monde Arabe, **Paris**, through April 13.

Photographic Explorations: A Century of Images in Archaeology and Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania Museum provides a visual journey through the archeological and ethnographic landscape covered by the museum's 110 years of research around the world. More than 60 black-and-white photographs offer a kaleidoscopic view of nearly 400 field projects, including expeditions to Memphis, Ur and Gordion. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, through April 15.

"The Poem of the Creation," written down in Babylon near the end of the

second millennium BC, will be retold on April 14 by Muriel Bloch as part of the activities surrounding the opening of the new Mesopotamian Galleries. Other events include a presentation by a curator and an architect on the new Code of Hammurabi Room (April 16); a discussion of a single object, "Head of a Babylonian King" (April 18); lectures on "Sumerian Chronicles" by Gerald Cooper of the University of Baltimore (April 23, 25 and 28); and a reading of "Ninurta the Proud," a Mesopotamian mythological poem translated by Samuel Noah Kramer and Jean Bottéro (April 28). Musée du Louvre, **Paris**.

Tenth International Conference on Oriental Carpets features exhibitions, scholarly presentations, and a carpet fair showcasing the wares of more than 70 international dealers, auction houses and booksellers. Information: www.icoc-orientalrugs.org. **Washington, D.C.**, April 17-21.

The Path of Beauty and Happiness features objects—including a decorative carpet from Makkah—related to the quest for personal happiness within Islam. Wereldmuseum, **Rotterdam**, April 19 through September 5, 2004.

An Englishman's Travels in Egypt: Edward Lane in Cairo (1825-35) features diaries and sketches from Lane's travels in Egypt and the full set of Turkish clothing that he wore during his two extensive visits to Cairo between 1825 and 1835. Lane, translator of *The Thousand and One Nights* and author of an *Arabic-English Lexicon*, recorded contemporary life in Cairo and many of the ancient sites of Egypt. Ashmolean Museum, **Oxford**, April 23 through July 20.

Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection explores the influence of the Ottoman sultans on 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 Khalili Collection of Islamic Art. Catalog. **Oklahoma City Art Museum**, through April 27; Frist Center for the Visual Arts, **Nashville, Tennessee**, May 16 through August 10; Museum of Arts and Sciences, **Macon, Georgia**, August 30 through November 9.

Magical Gems From Egypt. Precious and semiprecious stones engraved with images and inscriptions were often used as amulets in Roman Egypt, especially in the second century. The exhibition includes some 150 stones. Catalog, in German, €19. Kestner Museum, **Hannover, Germany**, through April 27.

Tutankhamun's Wardrobe exhibits 25 replicas of the boy-king's garments. Medelhavsmuseet, **Stockholm**, through April 27.

Agra: The Quintessential Mughal City is the topic of a lecture by Stuart Cary Welch, former curator of Islamic and later Indian art. Advance registration (\$15) required. Information: 617-495-4544. Fogg Art Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, April 30.

Prachi Dalal performs and discusses the North Indian classical dance style *kathak*, a blend of Islamic and Hindu styles that combines narrative, music and movement. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, May 3, 11:45 a.m.

Ramesses I: Science and the Search for the Lost Pharaoh sifts the scientific and archeological evidence in a quest to discover whether a male mummy acquired by the museum in 1999 is that of Ramesses I. This show marks the mummy's only exhibition in the United States; it will be returned to Egypt with appropriate fanfare. Carlos Museum, **Atlanta**, May 3 through September 14.

Fabulous Floral Fabrics juxtaposes objects as diverse as an American quilt and a *suzani* (an embroidered cover) from Uzbekistan. The textiles come from three continents—Europe, Asia and America—and span more than three centuries. Denver Art Museum, through May 4.

Prehistoric Arts of the Eastern Mediterranean presents sculpture and vases from the Cycladic and other early Mediterranean cultures. What little we know about these societies comes in large part from the art they left behind. This exhibition explores not only the stylistic relationships among these pieces, but also what the objects can tell us about the people who created and used them. Though the objects were made in different areas of the eastern Mediterranean from about 6500 to 1650 BC, they show similar styles and ideas, particularly in the abstract treatment of the human form. Getty Museum, **Los Angeles**, through May 4.

Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium BC from the Mediterranean to the Indus explores the emergence of the world's first city-states in Syria and Mesopotamia and relates these developments to artistic and cultural connections stretching from the eastern Aegean to the Indus Valley and Central Asia. The works of art, many brought together for the first time, include nearly 400 examples of sculpture, jewelry, seals, relief carvings, metalwork and cuneiform tablets, and illustrate the splendor of the most famous sites of the ancient world, including the Royal Graves of Ur, the palace and temples of Mari, the citadel of Troy and the great cities of the Indus Valley civilization. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, May 8 through August 17.

Baghdad: Before the Bombs Begin to Fall shows photographs by Associated Press photographer Amr Nabil of daily life among the diverse ethnic communities of the Iraqi capital in September 2002. Sony Gallery for Photography, American University in **Cairo**, through May 8.

Women's Voices honors women from the Middle East, Afghanistan, Algeria and Andalusia through dance, spoken word and video. Performers include Cheika Remitti—known as the "Grandmother of Algerian Rai"—choreographer Margo Abdo O'Dell and dancer Elena Lentini. Info:

Events&Exhibitions

Continued from previous page

www.thereye.org. Red Eye Theater, Minneapolis, May 8–11.

Renoir and Algeria is the first exhibition devoted to the Algerian subjects of Pierre Auguste Renoir. On display are roughly 12 portraits, landscapes and genre scenes inspired by the artist's two trips to Algeria in 1881 and 1882. Catalog \$45/\$30. Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts, through May 11.

The Blue Head of Tutankhamun is the subject of a single-object curator's talk at the Musée du Louvre, Paris, May 15.

Sheherazade: Risking the Passage is an exhibition of work by contemporary Muslim women artists born or raised in Muslim communities. El Colegio Gallery, Minneapolis, through May 15.

Zaha Hadid surveys the Baghdad-born, London-based architect's built works and other projects through pictures, drawings, plans, sketches, photos and models. Throughout her career, Hadid has expressed a visionary aesthetic that encompasses all fields of design, ranging from urban to interior decoration and product and furniture design. Aside from recent and current projects, the exhibition features a special room designed by Hadid for the museum. Catalog. MAK, Vienna, May 15 through August 17.

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. Palazzo Bricherasio, Torino, Italy, through May 18.

Image and Empire: Picturing India during the Colonial Era examines the arts produced in and about India during the period of European colonization from the 17th to the early 20th century. On display are works ranging from paintings and luxury objects to documentary drawings and historical photographs. Sackler Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, through May 25.

The Pharaohs illustrates the multifaceted role of the Egyptian sovereign

and sheds light on life at court in ancient Egypt. On display are 140 items from the Cairo Museum, including an 18th-Dynasty quartz statue of Akhenaton. Palazzo Grassi, Venice, through May 25.

Silver Speaks: Jewelry from the Middle East reveals the myriad roles ornamentation plays in Middle Eastern women's lives, from asserting personal identity and proclaiming status to warding off misfortune and providing financial security. Bracelets, anklets, finger and toe rings, headdresses and hair ornaments, cosmetic cases, earrings, necklaces, buckles, belts, chains, charms and amulets from

that use them. Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., through June 8.

Intimate Worlds: Indian Paintings from the Alvin O. Bellak Collection presents approximately 90 Indian miniature paintings from the Philadelphia Museum of Art dating from between 1375 and 1890 and including both religious and secular subjects. Complementing the exhibit is **Conversations with Traditions:** Nilima Sheikh/Shahzia Sikander, an exploration of the work of two contemporary artists, Indian-born Sheikh and Pakistani native Sikander, who use the tradition of miniature painting as the basis for portrayals of complex contemporary

cultures through approximately 180 objects that illustrate the most important phases of its development. Antikenmuseum, Basel, Switzerland, through June 29.

Shawabtis: Pharaonic Workers for Eternity illustrates the diversity and evolution of *shawabtis*, the statuettes of assistants who serve the deceased in the afterworld. Musée du Louvre, Paris, through June 30.

Courtly Arts of the Indian Subcontinent are displayed in an installation depicting the maharajah's library. Royal portraits from the 18th and 19th century and 22 miniature paintings are

Journeys & Destinations: African Artists on the Move features artists from the significant and long-standing diaspora in Europe and America. Their art, their life experiences and their place in the global art world are shaped by their journeys, which are rarely simple stories of migration, but rather complexes of multiple moves, degrees of homecoming and fluctuating affinities to place and space. Their lives and their ductile identities force us to re-examine the borders, both actual and imagined, between Africa and the rest of the



world. In some instances, the experience of diaspora and the artist's sense of destination are manifest in the artworks themselves, through imagery and narrative or through choice of media and working method. This exhibition strives to highlight the complexities and richness in the lives of Africa's contemporary artists and emphasize the importance of their participation in a larger transnational moment characterized by relocation and longing for home. National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C., through November 30.

Ali Omar Hermes, b. Libya, "Contradictions of Joy," 1993, acrylic and ink on paper.

Oman, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Kurdistan will be on display, along with selected costumes from the region. Catalog. Funded in part by Saudi Aramco. Bead Museum, Washington, D.C., through May 31.

The Fabric of Moroccan Life presents 67 objects, including rugs, textiles and jewelry. National Museum of African Art, Washington, D.C., June 6 through September 21.

Windows on the Cultural Heritage of Yemen is a two-day symposium sponsored by the Yemeni Embassy, the American Institute for Yemeni Studies and others to introduce the country and its culture to the US public. Experts in Yemeni architecture, archeology, crafts, restoration, history and music from different parts of the world will discuss the cultural landscape of Yemen. Admission is free but reservations are required. Information: 610-896-5412, fax 610-896-9049, or aiy@aivs.org. Meyer Auditorium, Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C., June 6–7.

Hold It! Textiles as Containers celebrates the utilitarian aspect of textiles. The objects in the exhibition, such as the Iranian *mafrash*, demonstrate the artistic nature of textile containers and shed light on the various cultures

issues. Seattle Art Museum, June 12 through September 8.

Eighth Annual Dearborn [Michigan] Arab Festival, June 13–15.

Arms and Armor for the Permanent Collection: Acquisitions Since 1991 celebrates more than a decade of acquisitions, including examples of Islamic arms. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, through June 29.

In the Fullness of Time: Masterpieces of Egyptian Art from American Collections displays 48 objects on loan from some of the most distinguished Egyptian collections in the United States, including examples of painting, relief, sculpture and the personal arts ranging from the Predynastic era to the Roman period. Lectures and a film series are also scheduled. **Journey to the Afterlife:** Cartonnage Mummy Case of Pa-di-mut features a mummy case from the 22nd Dynasty (945–730 BC) and related Egyptian funerary objects such as necklaces, amulets, an alabaster vase and papyrus sandals. Catalog. Boise [Idaho] Art Museum, through June 29.

7000 Years of Persian Art: Treasures From the Iranian National Museum in Tehran provides a panoramic overview of one of the world's great

on display, along with ivory figures, an embroidered tent hanging and a marble table inlaid with semiprecious stones, all in the Mughal style. Newark [New Jersey] Museum, through June.

The Art of Resist Dyeing showcases approximately 25 objects that demonstrate various methods of resist dyeing that can be used to decorate textiles. The technique is used around the world and encompasses a variety of processes in which areas of cloth or individual yarns are protected from dye penetration by wax, paste, thread or other substance. Examples are drawn from the museum's collection and include items from Uzbekistan. Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., July 5 through January 5.

Individual and Society in Ancient Egypt draws upon recent work in the Old Kingdom cemetery at Abydos to consider how individuals manipulated the representation of identity and concludes with a display of two volumes from the deluxe edition of the early 19th-century *Description de l'Égypte*. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Ann Arbor, through August 9.

Auto Focus: Raghubir Singh's Way Into India presents 50 photographs by Singh (1942–1999) that document the Indian landscape, viewed from, framed by

or reflected in the mirrors of the quintessentially Indian Ambassador car, whose silhouette has remained unchanged since Indian independence in 1949. Sackler Gallery, Washington, D.C., through August 10.

Tutankhamun: Wonderful Things From the Pharaoh's Tomb displays more than 90 reproductions of items from the treasure trove of the boy-king, including his mummy and state chariot. Ft. Myers [Florida] Historical Museum, through August 15.

Love and Yearning: Mystical and Moral Themes in Persian Painting displays some 25 illustrated manuscripts, detached paintings and textiles dating from the 15th to the 17th century that reveal the wealth of pictorial possibilities that lyrical poetry offered painters. Since the late 14th century, lyrical poetry such as the *Khamisa (Quintet)* by Nizami, the *Bustan (Orchard)* and *Gulistan (Rosegarden)* by Sa'di, or the *Divan (Collected Works)* of Hafiz has been one of the principal sources of inspiration for painters and calligraphers throughout the Persian world. The exhibition will highlight some of the central mystical and moral themes in Persian poetry and painting and explore the relationship of text and image in these works. Freer Gallery, Washington, D.C., August 30 through February 22.

Cerámica y Cultura: The Story of Spanish and Mexican Mayólica explores the rich interplay of history and culture between the Iberian Peninsula and the Americas through the growth and trade of tin-glazed ceramics that originated with Islamic artifacts from the Middle East. Under the Moors in Iberia, this style of ceramics was known as *mayólica*; as trade with the New World expanded, it evolved to become Mexican *talavera*. Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico, through September 7.

Cinemayaat: The Arab Film Festival screens approximately 25 independently produced feature films, short films and documentaries that explore the complex social, political and personal issues confronting contemporary Arabs. Information: www.aff.org. Films are shown in San Francisco, Berkeley and San Jose, California, September 26–29 and October 3–5.

From the Heart of Persia displays photographs taken by Sir Percy Sykes and his cousin Gilbert over the course of 25 years, capturing the architecture, landscapes and people of Iran in the early 20th century. British Museum, London, through September.

"Bridging East & West: Saudi Aramco World, 1949–Present" is a traveling exhibit of 90 photographs from the magazine's first 55 years, 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 e-mail Dick.Doughty@AramcoServices.com

Crossing the Channel: French and British Painting in the Age of Romanticism features some 80 paintings and 35 works on paper by artists such as Constable, Gericault and the noted orientalist Eugène Delacroix. Catalog. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, October 7 through January 4.

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 27th Dynasty (525–402 BC). The exhibit's highlights are eight papyri written in Aramaic, part of a family archive belonging to Ananiah, a Jewish temple official, and 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. Carlos Museum, Atlanta, October 18 through January 4.

The Forgotten Debt of the Western World is a symposium devoted to exploring the impact of Islamic science, medicine, mathematics and trade on the West. National Archeological Museum of Madrid, October 21–23.

The Hidden Treasures of the Egyptian Museum marks the great museum's centenary celebration. On display will be nearly 150 artifacts brought up from the basement and not seen in public for many years, including gold amulets and jewelry from the tomb of Tutankhamun. Egyptian Museum, Cairo, through December.

Ancient Egypt is an elaborate re-creation of the interior of an Egyptian temple complex, including the actual mummy of Padihersef, a 26th-Dynasty Theban stonecutter, along with his decorated coffins, plus tools, baskets and other objects from everyday Egyptian life. Smith Art Museum, Springfield, Massachusetts, through January 6.

A Woman's Treasure: Bedouin Jewelry of the Arabian Peninsula features more than 100 pieces, including jewelry,

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well as four historical collections from the 1930's and 1950's in Saudi Arabia. When you visit the PADIA for the first time, please read the Terms of Use and register. You can then use the order form on the site to order images, which are available electronically only as 3072 x 2068 RGB files. Upon approval of your order, you will be linked to your pictures. The PADIA is an educational and informational service of Aramco Services Company, and no fees are charged for the licensing of photographs for approved uses.



headdresses, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, coffee urns, incense burners and other artifacts in gold, silver and brass. The craftsmanship and design of the pieces reflect a variety of cultural references, both social and religious, and reveal the significant roles played by jewelry in the lives of nomadic women of the Peninsula—as dowry, talisman and endowment. The exhibit is drawn mainly from the collections of Francis Meade and Gabrielle Liese. Bead Museum, Glendale, Arizona, through February.

Demonstrations of Ancient Egyptian Craftwork and Technology is part of a newly established exhibition featuring live demonstrations—using replica tools from the Predynastic and Dynastic periods—of drilling holes in stone vessels and beads and cutting reliefs in soft and igneous stones. Pharaonic Village, Cairo, permanent.

Arts of the Islamic World Gallery presents objects reflecting both the secular and religious life of the Islamic world in a variety of media. The gallery also serves as the orientation center for tours to **Shangri La**, philanthropist Doris Duke's oceanfront estate, built near Diamond Head between 1936 and 1939 and incorporating elements of traditional Islamic architecture in its design and décor. Honolulu Academy of Arts, permanent.

The Saudi Aramco Exhibit 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, permanent.

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

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