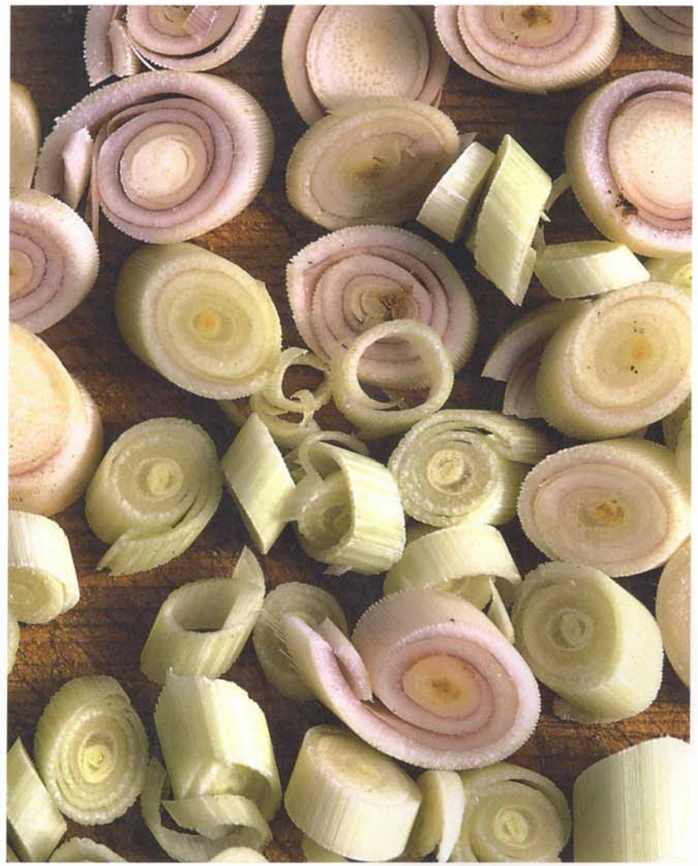

Saudi Aramco World

September/October 2003

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HISTORY'S CURVE

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Cover:

Keeping alive in sport what was once a high martial art, International Horse Archery Festival competitor Dave Beshey wields a modern fiberglass version of the bow that won and defended lands throughout the Middle East and Asia. Only today's most dedicated enthusiasts use traditional composite bows of wood, horn and sinew, whose delicate, demanding craftsmanship pushes the cost to more than 10 times that of fiberglass. Photo by David H. Wells.

Back Cover:

From Kuching to Penang, start your day with *laksa*, the "national breakfast of Malaysia," in which these artful slices of lemongrass might join rice or egg noodles, dried-prawn paste, shrimp, chicken, coriander sprouts, ginger, slivers of omelet or a hard-boiled quail's egg and more than a few chiles in a rich, coconut-milk broth. Photo by Eric Hansen.

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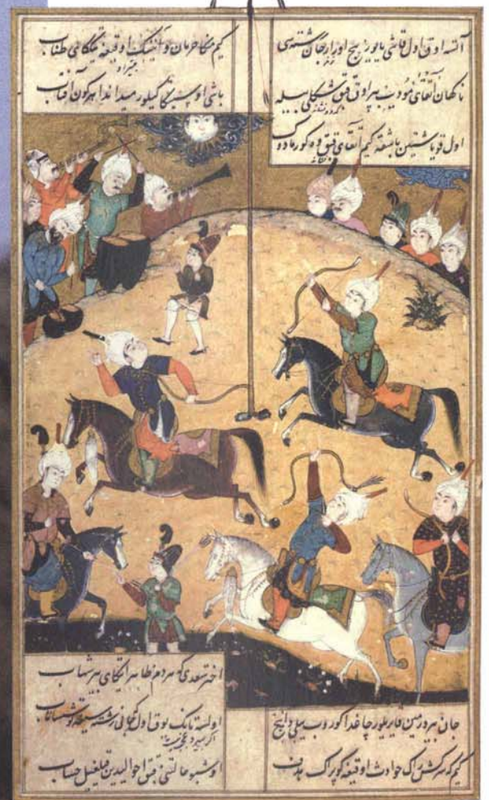
HISTORY'S CURVE

Written by Lee Lawrence
Photographed by David H. Wells

An unfinished bow rests in the grip of a vise in a workshop near the small town of Grand Rapids, Ohio. On a nearby work table is a litter of sanding blocks, large-toothed metal combs, wads of steel wool, rolls of masking tape, wrenches, chisels and files. From a pipe overhead hangs a stalactite of orange-tipped clamps. In the center of the chaos sits Bubba, a longhaired gray cat with a body as massive as his appetite for attention.

It is here, under Bubba's watchful eye, that Lukas Novotny is crafting what he hopes will be a bow "in which superlative performance is combined with an unsurpassed grace and beauty ... lightness and hardiness"—the dream of modern bowyers. Trained as a glass artisan in the former Czechoslovakia, Novotny emigrated to the United States in 1982; jars of colorful pieces of glass crowd the shelves behind him. Among them, though, are the materials of his present career: a curl of buffalo horn protruding from a top shelf, a slim quiver bristling with arrows standing nearby and, directly in front of the shelves, racks full of row upon row of bows. A slim 32 to 76 millimeters wide (1¼ to 3") but ranging up to 132 centimeters long (52"), they extend as gracefully as a ballerina's arms.

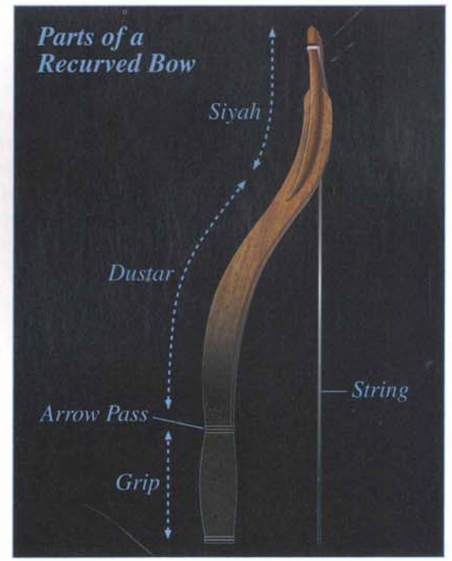
These are Novotny's reconstructions of Asian composite recurved bows, so named because they are composed of several materials and because, when strung, the curve of the limbs reverses at the tips. Elegant and light, they are masterpieces of engineering, contemporary products of an ancient craft that has, time and again, changed the course of history.



In a modern archery contest like the 16th-century one depicted in an Ottoman miniature from the *Divan* of Ali Sir Neva'i at left, a mounted archer, opposite, **takes aim with his recurved bow during September's International Horse Archery Festival (IHAF) in Fort Dodge, Iowa. While Ottoman cavalry archers targeted a gourd on top of a pole, today's sport shooters use bull's-eye patterns set at various distances. It was Ottoman bowyers whose technology gave Sultan Selim III a recurved composite bow in 1798 with which the sultan himself shot an arrow 888.80 meters (963 yds), a distance record that modern composite bows have yet to approach.**

Like most great inventions, the composite recurved bow was the culmination of a long technological evolution. Humans had been hunting and warring with simple wooden bows for more than 30,000 years when, about the third millennium BC, bowyers from Mesopotamia to Japan independently began experimenting with ways to enhance their bows' springing action by introducing other materials: They applied horn to the side of the bow facing the archer, the side in compression when the bow is drawn, and they applied animal sinew to the outward side, which is in tension. In the process, they reduced the wooden element of the bow to a slim core whose sole role was to keep the sinew and the horn aligned.

The next development was the discovery that, by training the tips of the bow's limbs to curve forward, in the opposite direction of the draw—the "recurve" of the recurved design—both the power and the accuracy of the bow could be increased still more, though at the cost of making it harder to draw. And over the life of the bow, as it gradually lost its spring action, the bowyers found that reheating its limbs



Bowyer Lukas Novotny demonstrates the C-shape of the unstrung recurved bow, which, when strung, takes on its characteristically serpentine, tips-forward shape.

and gently restoring its original curve also restored its original power.

Asia's long-standing preference for the bow over the sword, mace and other weapons favored by Europeans up through the 15th century is credited with helping shape and reshape the political boundaries of the Old World. In 546 BC, Persian archers overcame Lydian mounted lancers and, in battles against Babylonians, Egyptians and Greeks, they often prevailed over the opposition's infantry. Much later, in a famous conflict between the Roman army and the Parthians in 64 BC, it was what military historian E. G. Heath called "the never-failing quiver" that thwarted the eastward advance of the Roman Empire. It was not that the Romans ignored archery—they simply considered it of secondary importance and thus failed to perfect archery equipment or tactics. The Byzantines, on the other hand, valued archery, and this had something to do with the fact that Byzantium outlived the Roman Empire by about 1000 years. When its fall began with the battle of Malazgirt in 1071, it was to the Seljuk Turks, who were true masters of the bow.

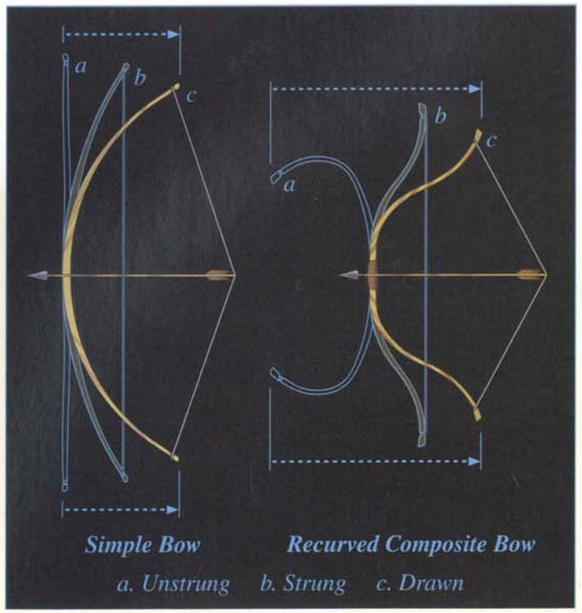
Every historical work on archery speaks of the legendary Persian archer said to have shot an arrow through a five-centimeter (2") thickness of brass, and of Ottoman Sultan Selim III who, in 1788, personally set a still unsurpassed distance record of 888.80 meters, or 963 yards—farther than the best modern bow can shoot. In literature, the bow became associated with great heroes as a virtual extension of their bodies—an idea that is not in fact farfetched, since the archer, in drawing the bow, transfers energy from his body into the body of the bow, where it is stored until he releases it to the arrow. Rustem, the hero of Firdawsi's 11th-century Persian epic the *Shahnama (Book of Kings)*, thus literally uses his final breath to shoot his enemy through the heart.

In Islam, too, the bow holds a special place. It is the weapon the Archangel Gabriel handed down to Adam, the one God commanded the Prophet Muhammad to use. Some 40 *hadith* ("traditions," or recorded sayings and stories about the Prophet) focus on archery as a way to strengthen both body and soul, and while some hadith encourage metaphorical interpretations, others led to the establishment of archery instruction as fundamental to physical fitness. In 1835 the Ottoman ruler Mahmud II had both aspects in mind when he commanded his courtier Kani to set down in writing all available information about archery. He was doing this, he announced, "so that under my royal patronage novices may acquire complete knowledge of the *sunna* [the example] of the Prophet, and by diligence come to possess the degrees of both worlds."

Bow Facts and Types

Simple bows ("self-bows") are what most people think of when they think of bows. Some 30,000 to 40,000 years ago, humans took a strip of wood and tied its ends together with a taut string to create the first weapon that could store energy. The premise is simple: The archer pulls back on the string, drawing the bow to a smaller radius curve. When the archer lets go of the string, the energy stored in the bow transfers to the arrow, casting it faster and farther than the archer's hand could throw it.

Longbows are made of one or more pieces of wood—typically yew, osage or black walnut—and they are as tall or taller than the archer. The strongest are powerful enough to shoot an arrow through a plate of armor at 365 meters (400 yds), though their more typical range is about half that. To shoot a longbow with accuracy requires great skill and strength. Easy to reload, the longbow was reputedly Robin Hood's weapon as he roamed Sherwood Forest in the 1200's, and it later dominated the battlefields of northern Europe from 1300 to 1500, credited among other things with assuring victory to the British against the French in 1346 at the Battle of Crécy and again in 1415 at Agincourt. The disadvantage of a longbow is that its size requires that the archer be on foot: It is almost impossible to shoot a longbow while riding a horse.



Composite bows are typically made of wood, horn and shredded animal sinew. They can pack the same power as a longbow but in a smaller, lighter form usable by a mounted archer.

Recurved composite bows are the most powerful, compact design known. The recurve refers to the tips that curve forward, in the direction of the shot. Each variation of the recurved composite design—Persian, Turkish, Indian or Mongol—excels in a particular area: The Persian bow, for example, trades distance for power; the Turkish bow sacrifices accuracy for distance. Some recurved composite bows use other materials: The Chinese bow, for example, is made with a bamboo core covered with strips of young bamboo on the back (in place of sinew) and dried, year-old bamboo on the belly.

Crossbows are mounted in a metal frame equipped with a crank, which gives the archer a mechanical advantage in drawing the bow. Though it shoots with great power and accuracy, its long "reloading time" made it more useful in sieges than in battles. Crossbows were developed and used in Europe in the 11th to 15th century, and Europeans also deployed them in the Middle East during the Crusades.

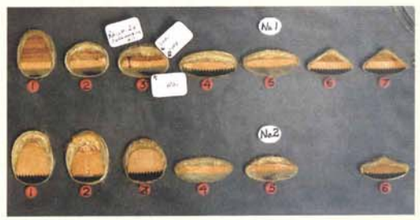
Two hadith specifically mention the Arab bow, commonly interpreted as referring to a composite bow—though some scholars believe that the earliest Muslim warriors from the Arabian Peninsula used simple bows until they gained the know-how to construct composites from conquered lands such as Syria. Indeed, a bow considered to have belonged to Muhammad, now in Istanbul's Topkapı Museum, is made of bamboo. Nevertheless, by the time the hadith were codified in the eighth century, the bow used by Muslims had long been the composite bow, in which the wood was said to correspond to bone, the horn to flesh, the sinews to arteries and the glue to blood.

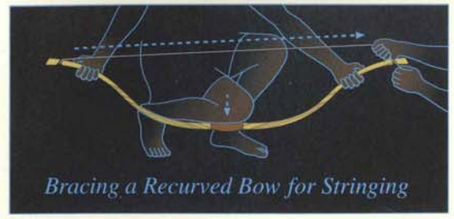
Just as each of these tissues plays a different role in the workings of the body, each of the bow's elements has a similarly specific function. "The sinew takes the tension," Novotny explains. "The horn on the belly takes the compression, and in the middle, the wood takes the shear stress. It's a simple premise, but if you don't get the details right," he warns, "you'll have problems." After all, when drawn, the bending portions of the bow bear some 175 kilograms of pressure per square centimeter (2400 lb/sq in). If the belly cannot stand the compression, it buckles, and if the back of the bow cannot bear the stretch, it pulls apart. "At first," Novotny confesses, "most of the bows I made broke."

Early bowyers no doubt experienced similar failures in the development of recurved composite designs, but thanks to trade in peacetime and the capture of weapons in wartime, technology was rapidly diffused as bowyers over wide areas influenced each other. "The cultural exchange was incredible," Novotny says with enthusiasm. "We have an idea of what a typical bow

1. Shown unstrung, this modern composite bow uses sheep horn covered with rawhide. 2. Detail of the grip of a replica of a Turkish composite bow. 3.–5. Details of 19th-century Turkish composite bows made of wood, horn and sinew covered with leather and painted.

Below left: **Cross-sections of composite Turkish bows show the layering of materials.** Below right: **An illustration based on an Assyrian relief shows one method of stringing a recurved bow, a task that usually requires two people in the field, or a specially designed form in the workshop.**





PHOTOS 1 – 5: GRAYSON ARCHERY COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI; ILLUSTRATIONS, RIGHT, OPPOSITE AND PREVIOUS SPREAD: TOM MCNEFF; MINIATURE, PREVIOUS SPREAD: BRITISH LIBRARY OR5346 f15r

from each culture looked like, but at the same time, there could be any variation in between."

While Persians, Parthians, Turks, Mongols, Mughals and others all had highly developed traditions, most archers today consider Turkish bows of the late 1700's and 1800's to be the high-water mark of the Asian composite bow. After that time, firearms began to dominate the battlefield, fewer and fewer people had time for archery as sport, and the bowyer's art declined. "There were probably a few people alive who knew how to make composite bows until World War II," Novotny speculates. "But unfortunately, nobody in Turkey today, at least to my knowledge, knows how to build them. It took only one generation to lose the knowledge entirely."

In Fort Dodge, a young archer draws his bow while sitting on a "steel horse" that simulates the challenge of shooting from the saddle for novices. The 14th-century author of *Essential Archery for Beginners* wrote of young Mamluk archers, "As regards the qualities of the novice, ... the foundations upon which they all rest are humility, hearing attentively and obeying that which is pleasing to God Almighty and His Messenger."

The desire to recover and rediscover that knowledge has turned into an all-consuming passion for Novotny, who over the last decade gradually gave up glass to dedicate himself full-time to researching and making bows professionally. He began by reading a book on North American bows and, being an avid horseman himself, tried his hand at making the short horn-and-sinew bows that Plains Indian tribes used for hunting buffalo. "But always in the back of my mind," he says, "was the history I grew up with in Czechoslovakia—of Turks invading Europe and besieging Vienna."

He said as much to bow expert Tim Baker, whom he met by chance in California in 1992, a time Baker remembers as "the zenith of the reconstruction of Asian composite bows." Their aficionados, he adds, laughing, were "one of the smallest minority groups in the universe."

What the group lacked in numbers, it more than made up for in dedication, as Novotny discovered when Baker put him in touch with Jeff Schmidt, a physicist at the University of Wisconsin. For two years, Schmidt too had been researching Asian composite bows, and he was well known in archery circles for his extensive library of books in English, Russian and Persian and his files bulging with thousands of photocopied papers. But more than that, Novotny says, "he had all the technical know-how."

Like Novotny, Schmidt had started out reading books, scouring bibliographies and tracking down every piece of writing he thought might contain useful information. One discovery was a book published in London in 1970, *Saracen Archery: An English Version and Exposition of a Mameluke Work on Archery*, in which authors J. D. Latham and W. F. Paterson explicate a 14th-century Arabic treatise in verse titled *Kitab Ghunyat at-Tullab fi Ma'rifat Ramy al-Nushshab*, loosely translated as *Essential Archery for Beginners*. The text had been written at a time when the Mamluks had convincingly demonstrated the prowess of their archers by repelling the Mongol assault on Egypt and Syria in 1260. It provided basic data on bow construction, supplemented with information gleaned from other early texts and with observations derived from the author's own experimentation.

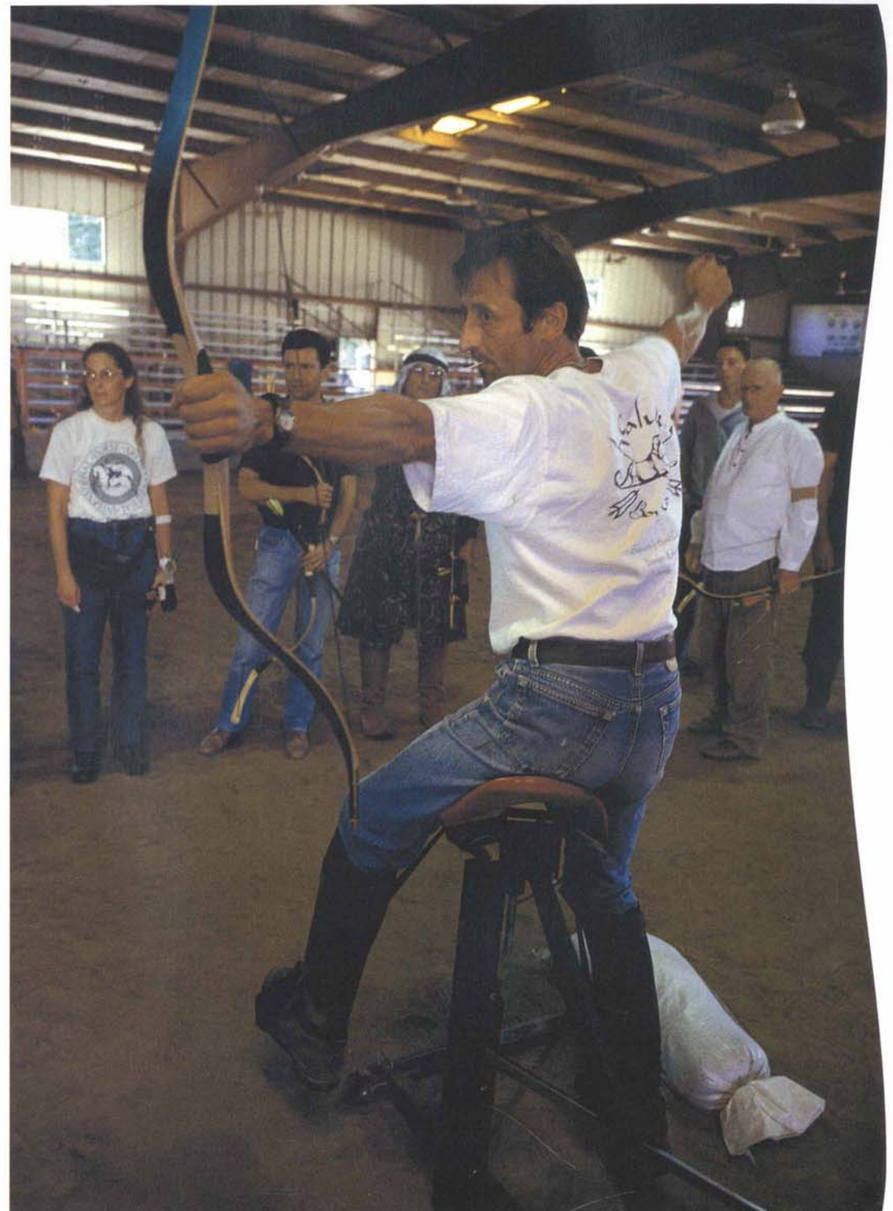
Saracen Archery showed that the wooden core of the composite bow was made of five elements: the handle in the center, two limbs (*dustar*s) on either side and the curved tips (*siyah*s) that are either attached to or made as part of the *dustar*s. In either case, the tips do not flex; they taper sharply to the nocks, where the string is attached. In many bows, the siyah simply extends the curve of the dustar, but early bowyers introduced the famous recurve that gave the bows their familiar, wave-like shape, their greater capacity for tension and their greater power. These were the bows that Novotny wanted to build.

To make the core, Novotny selects pieces of American hard rock maple, the closest match he can find locally for the fine-grained maple favored by Turkish bowyers. Like them, he carves the handle into a gently rounded form, oval in cross-section, that fits comfortably in the hand, the fingers curling around the swell and back toward the palm. To provide a firm grip, however, the handle must not be so small that the fingers reach around to the palm—that would create, in effect, a bearing in which the bow could swivel.

Most bows made with dustars and siyahs as single elements are Turkish. To make them, Novotny cuts 76-centimeter (30") sections of wood and soaks them in cold water for three days. Then he steams the two pieces into curves of some 60 degrees. For bows in which the dustars and siyahs are separate elements, typically known as Persian five-element bows, he steams the dustars into a gentle curve and finds branches growing at the desired angle for the siyahs. To assemble the parts, he tapers both ends of the handle and, if needed, the ends of the siyahs. He then cuts V-shaped splices into the dustars and, after brushing on glue, fits the pieces snugly to form a strong, undetectable joint.

Next comes the horn; Novotny uses water-buffalo horn. He prepares it by shaving off the surface ridges, cutting it roughly to size, then steaming and flattening it. He can now shave the horn until he has twin strips of uniform thickness the width of the wood core. He glues the horn strips onto the bow's belly so they meet in the center of the handle. Then he winds a rope around the bow using a traditional tool called, in Turkish, a *tepelik*. Unlike modern clamps, the *tepelik* creates an even pressure along the curve, squeezing out excess glue. The bow is now left to dry for several weeks with its ends tied to maintain a soft curve.

The sinew requires even longer preparation. Novotny buys whole tendons from a slaughterhouse and here departs from tradition in that he uses acetone to degrease them instead of the highly carcinogenic naphtha that was used in the past. But he does so only because both are equally effective. "If



At an IHAF workshop, Novotny demonstrates shooting positions: *Essential Archery for Beginners* described 10 primary and seven secondary ones. The Mamluk treatise also had this to say to teachers: "As to a master's duties, he should ... labor to the end that [his pupils] may strive to learn and ever reverence the place dedicated to archery." Top: **A thumb ring, believed to have been developed in China and Central Asia by 200 BC, allows an archer a stronger draw.**

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1. Water-buffalo horns await shaving, cutting, steaming and gluing to a wooden core in Novotny's Ohio workshop. 2. Building blocks of a Turkish-style composite bow: two strips of horn, two *dustar* limbs, two *siyahs* (attached), a grip and two bundles of sinew; the finished bow at the top shows the final unstrung shape. 3. After gluing horn to the inside of the core, Novotny lays down sinew on the outside of the *dustar*. 4. He combs the sinew, which will then dry for weeks, pulling the tips of the bow ever closer together. When the bow is curved back, the sinew will be stretched, giving the bow far more power than if it were made only of wood. 5. After a year of seasoning, Novotny uses molded forms called *tepeliks* to pull the bow into stringing position.

the glue joint has a speck of grease on it," Novotny explains, "it'll fail, because grease and glue do not mix, and there will be a speck where there is no glue." In highly stressed bows, an unglued speck is enough to introduce a fatal weakness.

Once the sinew is dry, Novotny breaks it up with his fingers and combs through it with a metal brush. The sinew is now a mass of long, thick fibers, which he dips in hot hide glue before laying them on the bow. "I use five different lengths of sinew," he explains. "Through the bending portion, you always use the long fibers; the shorter pieces are for building up around the handle area and along the sides, and they get overlapped and staggered like bricks."

He applies the sinew in two or three courses, each containing three to four layers. After the first course, he lets the bow dry a couple of weeks to allow the sinew to shrink. As the fibers shorten, they force the limbs to curve in on themselves, a process Novotny encourages by tying a string between the siyahs and twisting it as the sinew contracts. This is the beginning of a process that ultimately gives the bow its strength: It is tantamount to instilling the memory of a particular curve into the fibers of the horn, sinew and wood so that, when Novotny later bends the bow in the opposite direction to string it, every cell of the bow will want to spring back. The tension increases when Novotny pulls the bow into full draw, so that upon release the bow's fibers snap back, unleashing an explosion of energy.

But before that happens, there is still much to do. Novotny applies a second course of sinew, after which he again dries the bow, this time in a heat box. When the limbs are malleable, he reflexes them even more sharply, tying the *siyah*s so close together they almost touch. After laying the final course of sinew, he follows the same procedure, this time crossing the limbs all the way over the center until the bow looks like a pretzel. "Then you leave it in that form for about a year, minimum. You see," he explains, "hide glue only reaches its full strength after 10 years."

Novotny draws one of his Turkish-style composite replicas that take some 18 months to produce. "The difference between shooting a composite bow and a fiberglass one is like going to a dinner party and using silverware instead of plastic. It's more supple and sweeter to shoot."

By now the bow has been curved so much that the two pieces of horn on its belly no longer meet in the center of the handle. Novotny cuts a sliver of hardwood or bone—"can't use ivory any more"—and inserts it in the tiny gap. Finally, he covers the sinew side with strips of white birch bark that have been soaked for a year in seawater. Sometimes he uses leather instead, and often he paints on it a decoration appropriate to the type of bow he has made. Jeff Schmidt, on his bows, took this a step further, learning Persian in order to select appropriate verses of poetry to decorate his bows.

From the time Novotny cuts the wood to the day he declares a bow complete, a year and a half has usually elapsed, some of it spent testing the bow, adjusting it, and testing it again. He is often seen astride his horse, bow in hand, and at least twice a day he steps outside his studio to shoot arrows into stacked bales of cornhusks. The setting in rural Ohio is so bucolic, and Novotny's gestures so assured, that every step looks self-evident, straightforward, easy. Yet nothing could be more deceptive. With no master bowyer to guide them, archers today have had to learn from bows in museums and from old texts, neither of which tell a complete story.

A composite bow can only reveal its full range of secrets if you take it apart, and for the best bows, invariably in museums and private historical collections, this is clearly not an option. Neither is stringing old bows and testing them, since there is no way to assess whether or not they could now withstand the tension. While damaged bows can be taken apart without as many qualms, they yield information only about the final product, and thus there is little to help understand the process. As for the texts, they focus mostly on shooting techniques, and the chapters on construction often prove to be mixed blessings: In some cases, the author was not a bowyer himself and thus did not always understand what the bowyers were telling him. In other cases, the author assumed knowledge that has long disappeared. And like any skilled craftsmen, Novotny points out, bowyers guarded their secrets.

With no master bowyer to guide them, archers today have had to learn from bows in museums and from old texts, neither of which tell a complete story.

For example, for all its precise pointers on assemblage and materials, *Saracen Archery* does not provide exact dimensions for bows. Its units of measurement are not standardized, and many of the proportions are expressed in terms of a man's anatomy, yet there is no telling just what size that man is.

When Jeff Schmidt, who stands nearly two meters tall (6' 6"), built a bow using measurements based on his own body, it had a "preposterous" draw of 90 kilograms (200 lb): It was impossible to draw. This is because doubling the thickness of the bow increases its stiffness by a factor of eight.

Undeterred, Schmidt kept searching. He found in the second edition of Paul Ernest Klopsteg's self-published 1947 book *Turkish Archery and the Composite Bow* not only the findings Kani compiled for Mahmud II, but also the results of Klopsteg's 15 years of experimentation, which yielded dimensions that "actually worked." Then Schmidt heard about a bowyer named John McPherson, a Kansan who was making highly recurved Native American bows of horn and sinew. Schmidt spent a summer with McPherson learning the ways horn and sinew behave. By trial and error, Schmidt refined his bows' proportions and determined which materials worked best: The Achilles tendons from cattle, he discovered, provided the best sinew, and water buffalo provided the best horn—even though some texts recommended goat and antelope.

It was just about this time, in the fall of 1992, that Novotny showed up on his doorstep with "some really good North American Indian bows," says Schmidt, who confesses he was "shocked and disappointed because mine were so crude by comparison."

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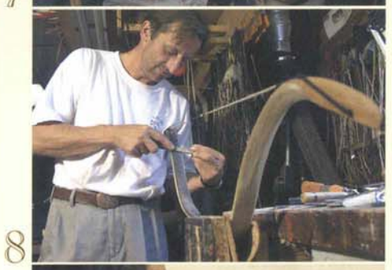

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6. He then repeatedly tightens the molds—only an inch or so every two or three hours—after heating the bow to "teach" it proper "tiller," or curvature. 7. The first draws are gentle tests. 8. Rasping away horn can relieve stiff spots and balance the draw. 9. Like other neo-traditional bowyers, Novotny uses decorative patterns from antique bows.

In this painting from the Persian *Shahnama* (*Book of Kings*) dated 1480, the mythical Iranian king Kay Ka'us holds a recurved bow and an arrow. Opposite: **"You always release the arrow at the top of the gallop, meaning that all four hooves are off the ground at that moment," says Novotny, shown here loosing an arrow during IHAF competition. "That is when you are most still and an accurate shot is most possible. But it takes much practice to stand a chance of hitting the target, and years to become really good."**

the molecular weight of the fish-bladder glue was high and it was therefore difficult for it to penetrate into horn." The solution was to dilute the stronger fish glue with the weaker but more penetrating hide glue.

Now they faced another conundrum: How thick should the glue line be? Too thin and the seal might not hold. Too thick and the seal might rupture. Enter Wayne Alex, an Alaskan bowyer who knew a collector who had X-rayed bows and reported that the wood and horn bore minute longitudinal grooves. As Novotny subsequently discovered, this grooving is sometimes light, just enough to roughen the surfaces. But on shorter bows that are more highly stressed, the grooving runs deeper, increasing the contact surface for the glue by some 40 percent.

Schmidt set about constructing scrapers of a type Novotny still uses. Some have short, triangular teeth, with which he roughens up the wood and horn. Others have longer teeth, five to eight per centimeter, with which Novotny scores the horn and wood. It is this "hand control," he says, that Schmidt most admires in Novotny's work. "Lukas," he says, "is by a long shot the most technically skilled when it comes to fabrication."

Today, Novotny also stands out as one of the rare few to remain dedicated to uncovering the secrets of the earliest composite bowyers. While Baker, Schmidt and others have since turned to other pursuits, Novotny has imparted what he knows to engineer Tony Horvat, with whom he established Saluki Bows. To support his passion for traditional bows, he makes and sells less labor-intensive bows of fiberglass and other modern materials. And he continues to research. About four years ago, after examining the cross-section of a bow in a German museum, Novotny changed the shape of his composite bows' cores from flat to rounded, and he built up the sinew at the ends. More recently, he tracked down a copy of an out-of-print Turkish book on archery whose author recently died but whose papers and source materials Novotny believes might be available through his daughter.

> The question was how best to glue the horn to the wood. Fish-bladder glue is stronger than hide glue, but according to some texts, Turkish bowyers favored glue made from the roof of the sturgeon's mouth, not its bladder.

He also remains committed to replicating as exactly as possible the materials Persian and Turkish bowyers used. He puzzles over recurring references in texts to the use of neck sinew: Nobody here has been able to make it work. "A truck driver from Florida read an article about me and called to tell me his grandfather taught him to make bows in the 1920's in Istanbul. He kept mentioning sinew from the neck. Is it faulty memory?" Novotny wonders. "Or is there really some way to use this sinew?" And just as he hunted down a supply of suitable water-buffalo horn in Thailand three years ago, he wants one day to find the exact kind of maple described by Kani and others.

Baker, however, considers such concern over materials "mythologized." Materials, he maintains, "only account for 10 percent of the bow's success"—the rest is design. But while Novotny agrees that design is paramount, he remains curious and respectful of the centuries of experience that went into determining just the best time to cut the sapling and even on which side of a hill to grow it. "I have made some very strong bows," Novotny says, "but I still think I can make them perform much better if I really attain the right materials."

Until then, the quest for the modern equivalent of the recurved composite bows that shaped centuries of history continues, "as much a frustration as a passion."

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www.atarn.org

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Granada's New Convivencia

By the look, by the sounds, by the smells, it might have been a market street in Fez or Marrakech or some other North African city. But I was in Europe—more specifically in a narrow, sloping lane called La Caldería Nueva in the Albaicín quarter of Granada.

Written and photographed by Tor Eigeland

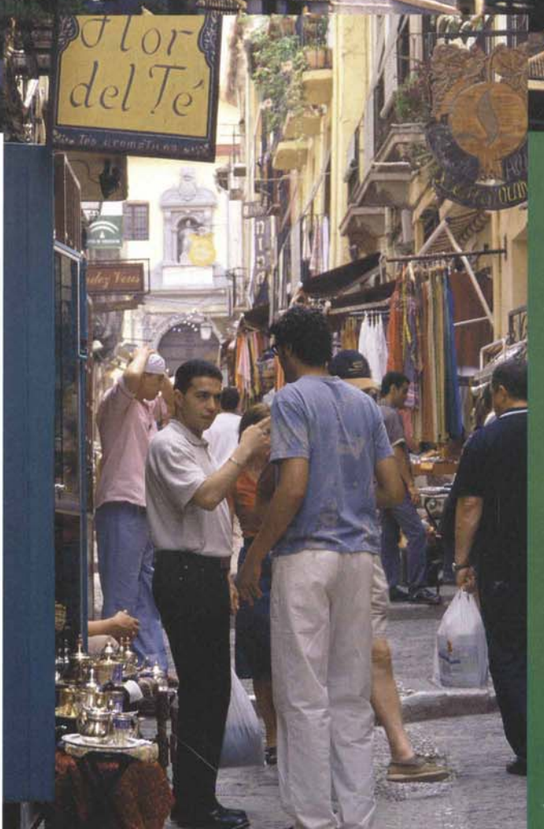
Inside the shops and spilling out onto the street was a multicolored profusion of North African goods: scarves, leather footstools, sandals and slippers, drums, spices, water pipes, incense and a cornucopia of sweets. Teahouses were serving juices, tea and coffee. A Moroccan restaurant—one of the best I've ever come across—was there, its name, Arrayanes, a reference to a patio with a lovely reflecting pool in the nearby Alhambra, the citadel symbolizing Granada's rich Arab cultural heritage.

As in Fez, the shopkeepers in La Caldería Nueva were predominantly Arabs, and their customers mostly tourists from all over the world. Arabic and Spanish phrases and some English ones mingled with Arab music and news bulletins from radios. The atmosphere was gentle, not pushy. The old street was impeccably clean.

I have been visiting Granada for more than 40 years and La Caldería Nueva used to be a smelly no-go zone of often unsavory activity. The change is remarkable.

Sidi Karim Viudes, a Spanish Muslim, has closely watched the rebirth of the area. Indeed, he recently played an important role in the process as the architect responsible for the interior decoration of the new Granada Mosque—the first mosque to be built in the

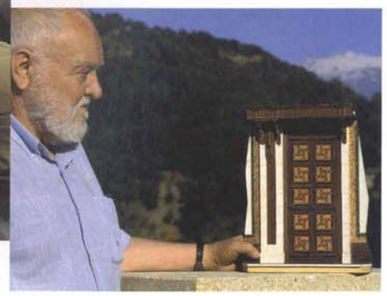
The new Granada Mosque—the first built in the city in half a millennium—stands high up in the city's old Arab Albaicín quarter. Its modest three-story minaret, square, white and tile-roofed, barely pierces the skyline between a church and a convent, just left of center in this photograph taken from the Alhambra, the citadel-turned-palace that is Granada's best-known landmark. Right: **An influx of teashops, restaurants and clothing and souvenir stores increasingly enlivens the "Moroccan" section of the Albaicín quarter.**



city in half a millennium. "It is amazing how, without a plan of any kind, this dangerous little slum has been totally transformed," Viudes says. "Everyone who lived in the better homes around here used to have to walk around La Caldería Nueva." The change began around 1983, he explains, when a woman named Antonia Muñoz Flores dared to open a teashop there. The busy proprietor is known as Leyla, the name she took when she embraced Islam in the mid-1980's. She called her shop Al-Sirat, the Arabic word for "the path"—often used in the spiritual sense—and it continues to flourish today.

"Everyone asked why she did it here, but she just insisted that this was what she wanted to do," notes Viudes, adding that creating a successful teashop normally "just doesn't happen in a city like Granada, traditionally a very coffee- and alcohol-oriented place." Other developments followed rapidly: "The area got cleaned up, and this little *suq* and everything else grew up around the teashop and spread out. Nobody in the city government could understand it. There was no plan. It just happened."

The mosque's white walls and Andalusian style blend perfectly with the architecture of the Albaicín, as does the garden in front, which faces toward the Alhambra.



Above: **Malik Abderrahman Ruíz, head of the foundation that operates the mosque, welcomes guests to ceremonies inaugurating the Granada Mosque on July 10.** Above right: **Prince Khalid ibn Sultan Al-Qasimi speaks to a reporter on behalf of his father, Shaykh Sultan ibn Muhammad Al-Qasimi, governor of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, and the major patron of the mosque.** Right: **Architect Sidi Karim Viudes displays a model of the mosque's interior wall panel.** Opposite: **The new mosque blends with its neighborhood.**

La Caldería Nueva is the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the renaissance of al-Andalus in Granada. Originally the Arabic name for the Iberian Peninsula as a whole, *al-Andalus* later came to mean the southern areas under Muslim control. The autonomous region officially called Andalusia today comprises the southernmost 17 percent of Spain.

A nutshell of history is in order here. In July 710, a Berber commander and his 400 men came ashore on a beach at Tarifa in southern Spain, seizing territory held by the Visigoths. This opened the way for a much larger force of Arabs and Berbers to cross the next year and marked the beginning of almost 800 years of Muslim rule. The first three centuries are epitomized by Córdoba: By the 10th century, under the Umayyad caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III, Córdoba boasted streetlights, palaces, 800 public baths, libraries with hundreds of thousands of volumes, and flourishing arts and sciences. It was the most advanced city in Europe.

In the 11th century, however, fractious relations among provincial Muslim kingdoms began to weaken the caliphate. Faced by Christian forces—sometimes expediently allied with Muslim factions—al-Andalus shrank over the next two centuries until all that remained under Arab rule was the Kingdom of Granada. At its peak in the 14th and 15th centuries, Granada extended 180 kilometers (110 mi) from east to west and 75 kilometers (47 mi) from the Mediterranean to its inland frontier.

Sparing no superlatives, Arab historian Ibn al-Khatib, secretary to ruler Yusuf I (1335–1354), wrote, "Granada is today the foremost of maritime cities, splendid capital of the kingdom, a thriving market place for traders, the birthplace of sailors, an inn for travelers of all nations, a perpetual bed of flowers, a garden laden with fruit, the delight of children, a public treasury, a city famous for its fields and fortifications, a vast sea of wheat and vegetables in perfection, and an inexhaustible source of silk and sugar.... Its surroundings abound in gold, silver, lead, iron, pearls and sapphires."

He went on to comment on the tastes of the women of Granada: "Among the adornments favored by the princesses and highborn of Granada, special mention should be made

of girdles, sashes, garters and coifs worked with silver and gold and brilliant with jewels."

Heir to the Córdoba-based caliphate, the little kingdom reached heights of sophistication unmatched in Europe. First among its treasures was the Alhambra, the towering fortress-turned-palace, a jewel in a city described by an Arab visitor as "a silver vase filled with emeralds."

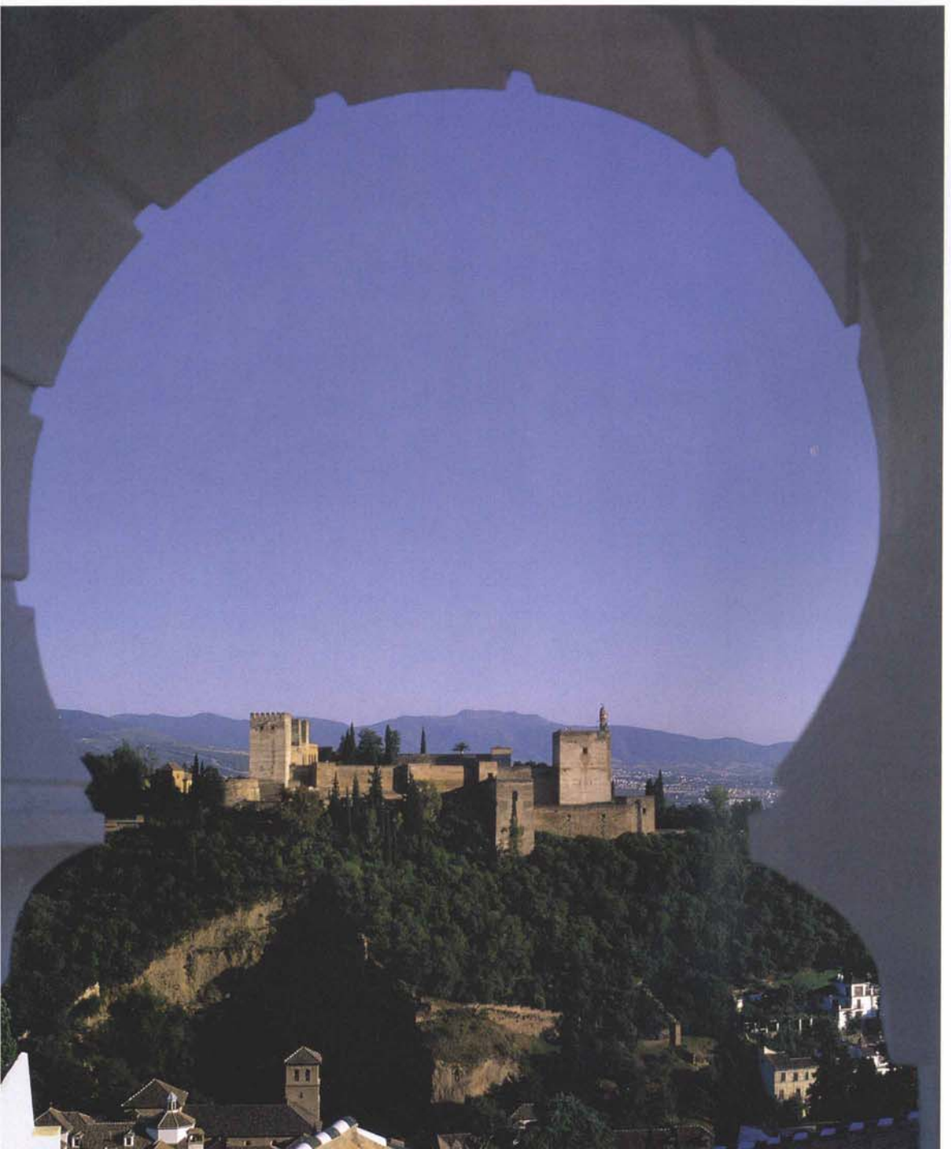
Granada and the Alhambra surrendered to the combined kingdoms of Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492, ending the era of Muslim rule in al-Andalus. Although the Muslims were expelled to North Africa or forced to convert, the city never lost its Arab flavor. How could it vanish entirely, with the magnificent Alhambra visible from almost everywhere in the city?

Even so, when I first knew Granada in the 1960's, there was neither a Muslim nor an Arab to be found anywhere in what was then a rather conservative, bourgeois city. Now, there may be as many as 15,000 Muslim inhabitants, counting the foreign permanent residents, and 3000 Arab students, mostly from Morocco and elsewhere in North Africa.

There is also a community of around 400 to 500 Spanish converts to Islam, whose collective history started in London. There, on November 20, 1975, three Spanish youths were welcomed into Islam by Shaykh Abdalqadir al-Sufi. "These were the first Spaniards to enter into Islam since the times of al-Andalus 500 years ago," says a text by the Islamic Community in Spain.

After an initial move to Córdoba, the converts made Granada their center on the invitation of the city's mayor. "They see Granada as the capital of Islam in Europe," says Ibrahim Perez Tello, a member of the Muslim community.

This past July, another first-in-500-years event took place in the city: the inauguration of the bright, airy and elegant Granada Mosque. Situated in the city's most scenic location atop the Albaicín quarter, the mosque nestles next to the Mirador San Nicolás, the lookout point reputed to have the best view of the Alhambra. I had the honor of taking the first photos of the Alhambra from this location, from the minaret of the mosque.

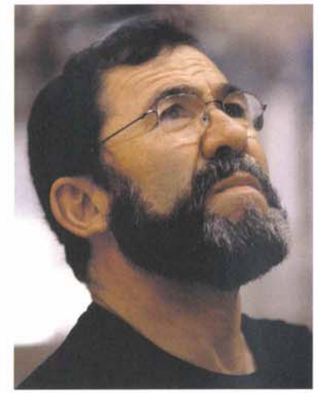


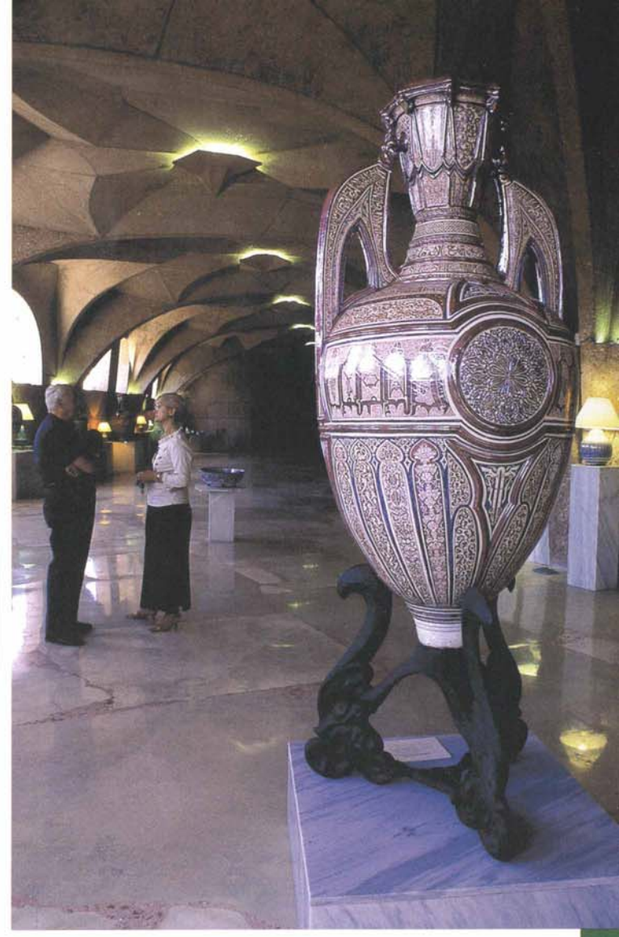
The mosque's white walls and Andalusian style blend perfectly with the architecture of the Albaicín. Architect Sidi Karim Viudes showed me some of the details. "The *azulejos*—the tiles—consist of about a million little pieces, every one cut by hand, all mounted right here," he explains. Crafted in the style of old Granada, the tiles display a precision that is almost supernatural. Moroccan artisans from Fez labored for seven years handcrafting the *azulejos*, which were then mounted in Granada.

On July 10 a festive international crowd of dignitaries and visitors braved scorching heat to attend the opening of the mosque. To repeated cries of "Allahu Akbar!" (God is Great), Shaykh Sultan ibn Muhammad Al-Qasimi, the governor of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates and the primary patron of the project, drew a red curtain to display a gray stone plaque dedicating the *Mezquita de Granada*.

That the tented garden where the ceremony took place looked straight out at the Alhambra escaped no one's attention. As al-Andalus represented a culture that peaked in Granada, best remembered for its *convivencia*, the coexistence and mutual tolerance and respect of its mixed population of Muslims, Christians and Jews, so does the new mosque represent the reestablishment of multicultural institutions in Granada, and a revival of its diversely rooted arts.

Miguel Ruíz Jiménez—short but powerfully built, bearded and with intense eyes—is a leading representative of this art explosion. When I walked into his Pabellón de las Artes (Pavilion of the Arts) just outside the city, I did a doubletake. His wife, Ana, slid open a door and showed me an enormous, brightly lit gallery dedicated to Granada's artistic past. It looked big enough to hold the work of a generation of craftsmen, but Ana pointed out, "Here, there's only Miguel! He does the architecture, the sculptures, the design, the preparation of paints, the clay and the stoneware."





"Everything here is made in the original way—right down to the Arab wood kiln. The methods weren't known and I had to experiment my way from beginning to end."

The gallery is an immense homage to the large-scale lusterware (*loza dorada*) produced by the potters and workshops of 14th- and 15th-century Granada. Jiménez has probably created more urns, vases, pots and plates in his career than any master potter in the time of al-Andalus. Standing up to two meters (6') tall, many of his vases are exact copies of the finest known ceramics of the period; others are original creations in the same style.

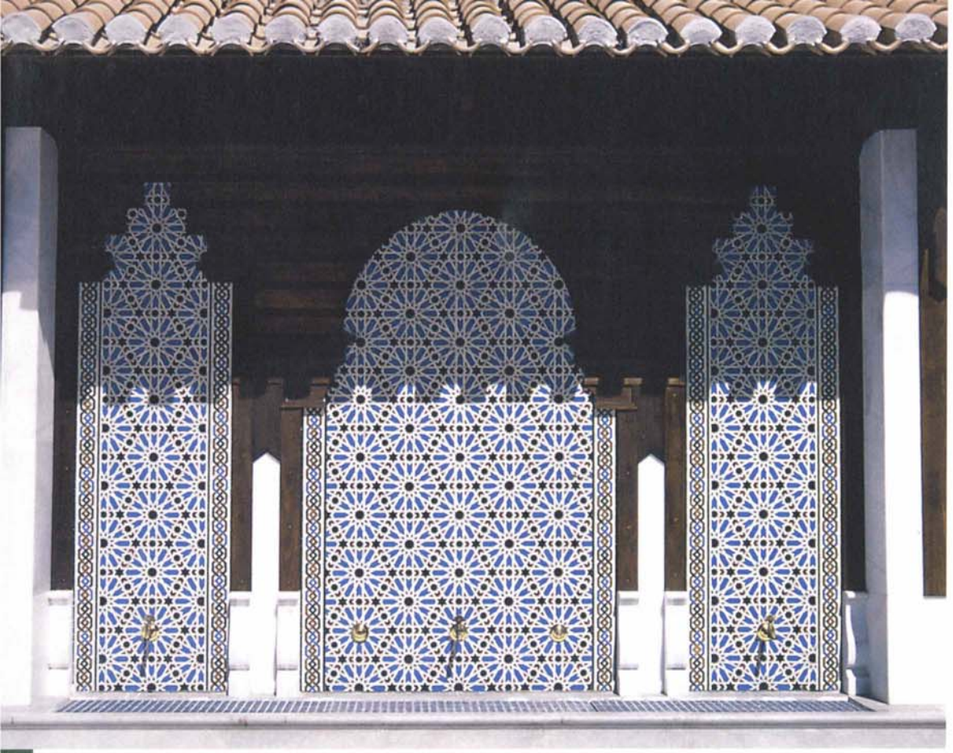
"Everything here is made in the original way—right down to the Arab wood kiln," explains Jiménez. "The methods weren't known and I had to experiment my way from beginning to end."

Jiménez is a one-man institution, but Granada is attracting other, much larger ones as well. Though certainly not a newcomer to the city, the School of Arab Studies operates in a 14th-century building in the Albaicín quarter. The institution was founded in 1932 in association with the University of Madrid, and it grants degrees up to the Ph.D. More mundane is a business that exports *halal*-slaughtered chickens to Muslim countries.

Equally practical and totally 21st-century is EAMS—the EuroArab Management School. Located smack in the center of Granada, across the street from the city's venerable cathedral, the school's fine old building features a patio, a tinkling fountain and plants. It's peaceful, beautiful and altogether Andalusian. Belying first appearances, though, several floors of the school are filled with computers, and conference rooms rise above the patio. On the top floor, I met Robert Lanquar, an EAMS senior fellow in tourism and management and one of the school's officials.

"Our motto," he says forcefully, "is bridging cultures. More specifically, we are bridging cultures for business. It starts from land development and crop development and goes

This page: **Miguel Ruíz Jiménez offers homage to Granada's artistic heritage through works like this huge lusterware vase, a copy of 14th- and 15th-century masterpieces.** Opposite: **A minaret window frames the Alhambra, offering a brand new perspective on Granada's Andalusian heritage.**



As al-Andalus represented a culture that peaked in Granada, best remembered for the mutual tolerance of Muslims, Christians and Jews, so does the new mosque represent the reestablishment of multicultural institutions and diversely rooted arts in Granada.

into tourism. Tourism management is very important. We are training the trainers; there is a great shortage of them."

The European Commission and the Arab League started EAMS in 1995 to provide management education and research, as well as training and consulting services, to develop business between Arab and European companies. Spain offered EAMS official accreditation and a home in Granada.

"We are a node in a network of universities and leading business schools in Europe, North Africa and the Arab world," explains Lanquar. "This is really part of a Granadan and Andalusian renaissance," he adds, noting that Granada is starting to serve once again as a hub of knowledge and cultural exchange. "The dream of al-Andalus is that we are living among three cultures: Muslim, Christian and Jewish."

In the same old neighborhood, Ibrahim Perez Tello proudly showed me the Euro-Arab Foundation of Higher Studies, another organization dedicated to promoting dialogue and cooperation between Europe and the Arab world. In the same old, palatial building is the HispaMaroc Association, a Moroccan student establishment associated with the Chamber of Commerce in Madrid. The association aims to improve relations between Spain and Morocco and to help companies that want to invest on either side of the Mediterranean. It focuses on specific problems like reducing bureaucracy and overcoming language problems.

EFE, the official Spanish government news agency, in 1995 opened an Arabic-language service center in Granada. It sends information from Spain, Latin America and Europe to the Arab world, explains Marcos García Rey, a Spanish Arabic-speaker in charge of the operation. "We publish a lot about the relations between Spain and Morocco, Spain and Algeria, and there is the news of the Arab communities in Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, Mexico and so on," he says. "As you know, there are large Arab communities all over Latin America.

"All Arab papers carry stories about Spanish soccer. And there are news and stories about al-Andalus. When the idea of the EFE Arabic service germinated, we thought it would benefit our relations with the Arab world and that Granada would be a good home for it."

Among all the institutions that contribute to the new *convivencia*, the one led by the efficient and intense Jerónimo Páez Lopez has done more than any other to promote awareness of the history and legacy of al-Andalus in Spain and abroad. It's called Fundación El Legado Andalusí—the Andalusian Legacy Foundation—and is funded by the Ministry of Culture of the regional government of Andalusia.

"Our fundamental vision was to provide a wide distribution of information, to reach the largest possible number of people, not only university-educated people but people in general, so they will realize that they are the heirs of the Spanish-Muslim past," says Páez, a busy lawyer in private life. "We especially wanted to make it known in the schools, to young people, to get them to absorb this culture as their own."

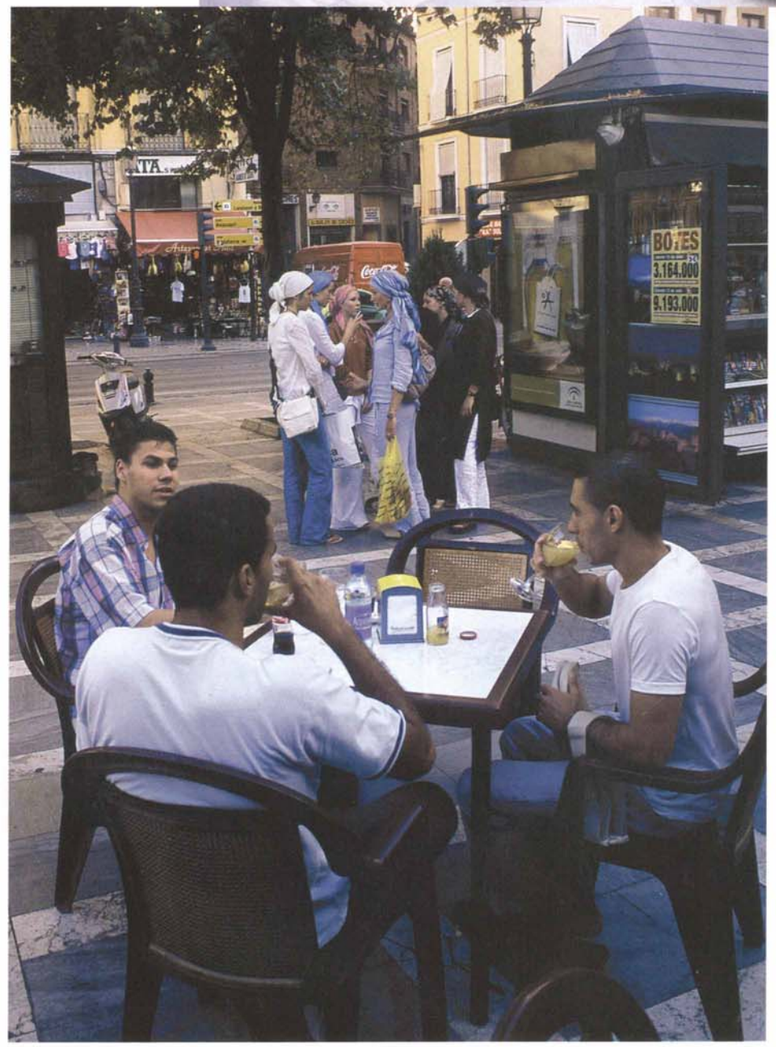
To promote the legacy of al-Andalus, the foundation has designated seven "routes" to Granada, itineraries that connect sites of historical and cultural significance. These include the Almoravid Route, the Almohad Route, the Umayyad Itinerary and the Route of the Caliphate. The last runs 180 kilometers (110 mi) from Córdoba to Granada.

"The intention of these cultural itineraries is to spread knowledge of the history of al-Andalus, its common history with the North African Arab world," Paez explains. "We weren't trying to magnify the history of al-Andalus or create a myth of al-Andalus. We thought that there is an important Arab legacy in Spain, and above all in Andalusia, and that this legacy could become a point of cultural contact with the other shore—meaning North Africa, and specifically Morocco. Through the better understanding, the change of perception, that could result, we would be able to establish much more positive relations with the other side."

El Legado Andalusí stresses this joint Islamic-European legacy. "The legacy of al-Andalus isn't just an Islamic legacy," says Paez. "It was definitely European as well. Here was a Spanish Muslim country. We didn't want this fact to be something foreign. We wanted people to accept it as their own. Spanish history was wrongly based only on the fact that we had defeated the Arabs in 1492, ignoring the fact that the Arabs formed our culture for eight centuries."

El Legado Andalusí has published more than 40 illustrated heritage books in different languages and half a dozen guidebooks to its "routes." It also produces a glossy magazine called *El Legado Andalusí* and has mounted exhibits that have drawn international notice.

Its "routes" are proving popular, and its educational efforts effective. More than one person told me that the colorfully marked itineraries just wouldn't have worked a few years back because most people would have had no idea



Right: **Students take advantage of fine summer weather to gather in the Plaza Nueva, at the foot of the Albaicín quarter.** Above: **The Arabic news center of EFE, Spain's government news agency, is a nexus for information flowing to and from Arab communities worldwide.** Top right: **The EuroArab Management School builds business links between cultures.** Opposite: **Artisans in Fez worked for seven years to handcraft the *azulejos*, or tiles, consisting of some one million small pieces, that were mounted in the mosque in Granada. The intricate, repeating geometric patterns they form—known as *zillij* in Morocco—are a hallmark of Islamic art.**

Moclín, founded in the 13th century at the time of the birth of the Kingdom of Granada, lies on the Route of the Caliphate. This view looks south through olive-clad hills toward the Sierra Nevada —still snowcapped in June—some 50 kilometers (30 mi) away.

Moclín was built around the time of the birth of the Kingdom of Granada in the 13th century. The fortress, called Hisn al-Muklin (Fortress of the Pupils), was built to guard the road from Alcalá la Real to Granada. If you stay up on this hill long enough, you will feel that history and sense the essence of al-Andalus. The experience of peace and beauty is hard to express, but it is one that is being recaptured in Granada in the new *convivencia*, exemplified by the new mosque atop the Albaicín.

what they were about. But during the spring vacation season this year, some 300,000 people traveled the Route of the Caliphate—by car or bicycle, on foot and even on horseback.

My favorite spot in all of Andalusia is along the Caliphate Route. It's a *mirador*, or scenic overlook, atop a hill near a village called Moclín in the Montes de Granada. From there I can look down on the gleaming whitewashed town that climbs up a hillside toward three sets of medieval walls, a church and an Arab fortress. I'm alone with nature, rocks, almond trees and hills and valleys of pale green olive trees that roll like centuries into the distance of medieval Andalusia.

Norwegian-born **Tor Eigeland** is a longtime contributor to *Saudi Aramco World*. He first saw Spain as a 16-year-old sailor en route to Shanghai, and later lived there for 19 years. For the last decade, he's made his home in southwestern France, just north of the Spanish border.

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

Alhambra: S/O 92
Arab Communities in Latin America: J/A 01, M/A 00, N/D 00, N/D 95
Córdoba: M/A 99
Fundación El Legado Andalusí: M/A 99
Granada: M/A 99
Muslim Spain: J/F 93, S/O 89, M/J 82, S/O 76
Tiles: M/A 92
Zillij: M/J 01

Upper text: "In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to God, The Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds; Most Gracious, Most Merciful; Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship; And Thy aid do we seek. Show us the straight way; The way of those on whom Thou has bestowed Thy Grace; those whose [portion] Is not wrath; And who go not astray."

The Qur'an, Chapter 1
"Fatiha" ("Opening Chapter")

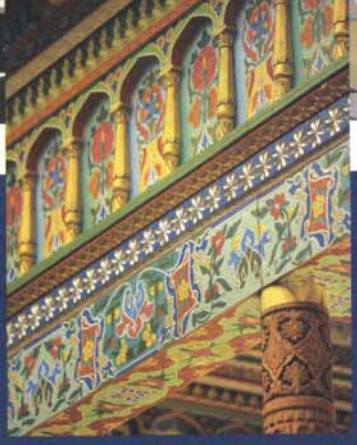
Islam: FAQs

Written by John L. Esposito

A special pull-out section from *Saudi Aramco World*, September/October 2003

Why do we need to know about Islam?

- Islam is the second largest religion in the world, after Christianity, and will soon be the second largest in America.
- Muslims are, and will increasingly be, our neighbors, our colleagues and our fellow citizens.
- Our ignorance about Islam distorts our view of one-fifth of the world's population and causes us to misinterpret important events and phenomena in the US and abroad.
- Peace and safety cannot be achieved in ignorance, but can be promoted through knowledge and the understanding that grows from knowledge.



Are all Muslims the same?

There is one divinely revealed and mandated Islam, but there are many human *interpretations* of Islam. There are Sunni and Shii Muslims, representing 85 percent and 15 percent of the world's Muslims, respectively. Within these two major branches are diverse schools of theology and law; in addition, Islam has a rich mystical tradition. The basic unity of Islamic belief and practice expresses itself in diverse ways within many different cultures around the world.

What do Muslims believe?

Like Jews and Christians, Muslims are monotheists. They believe in one God, the creator, sustainer, ruler and judge of the universe. Muslims believe in prophets—not just the Prophet Muhammad, but also the prophets of the Hebrew Bible, including Abraham and Moses, and of the New Testament, Jesus and John the Baptist. They also believe in angels, heaven, hell and the Day of Judgment. Islam teaches that God's revelation was received in the Torah, the New Testament and the Qur'an. Thus, Muslims view Jews and Christians as "people of the book," communities of believers who received revelations through prophets from God in the form of scriptures or revealed books.

As Christians view their revelation as both fulfilling and completing the revelation of the Old Testament, Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad received his revelations from God, through the angel Gabriel, to correct human error that had made its way into the scriptures and belief systems of Judaism and Christianity. Therefore, Muslims believe, Islam is not a new religion with a new scripture; rather, Islam is the oldest religion, because it represents the original as well as the final revelation of the God of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

How is Islam similar to Christianity and Judaism?

Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in contrast to Hinduism and Buddhism, are all monotheistic faiths that worship the God of Adam, Abraham and Moses—creator, sustainer and lord of the universe. All stress moral responsibility and accountability, Judgment Day and eternal reward and punishment.

All three faiths emphasize their special covenant with God, Judaism through Moses, Christianity through Jesus and Islam through Muhammad. Christianity accepts God's covenant with and revelation to the Jews but traditionally has seen itself as superseding Judaism with the coming of Jesus. So, too, Islam and Muslims recognize Judaism and Christianity, their Biblical prophets (among them Adam, Abraham, Moses and Jesus) and their revelations (the Torah and New Testament).

Peace is central to all three faiths, which use similar greetings: *shalom aleichem* in Judaism, *pax vobiscum* in Christianity and *salaam alaikum* in Islam. All three phrases mean "peace be with you." Yet leaders of each religion—Joshua and King David, Constantine and Richard the Lion-Hearted, Muhammad and Saladin—have engaged in holy wars to spread or defend their beliefs.

Where do most Muslims live?

Muslims are the majority in 56 countries worldwide, including Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, Iraq and Nigeria. In addition, significant Muslim populations can be found in India, China, the Central Asian republics and Russia, as well as Europe and America, where Islam is the second- and third-largest religion, respectively. The majority of Muslims are *not* Arab—in fact, only 20 percent of the world's 1.2 billion Muslims originate from Arab countries. The largest Muslim populations are in Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and India.





Who are the Muslims in America?

Although estimates vary considerably, it is safe to say that there are at least six million Muslims in America today, making Islam the third-largest religion in the country, after Christianity and Judaism. Muslims have been present in America since the time of Columbus. Moriscos (Spanish Muslims forced to hide their faith) migrated to both Spanish and Portuguese settlements in America. In addition, between 14 and 20 percent of the African slaves brought to America from the 16th to the 19th century were Muslim, although they were forced to convert to Christianity. Other Muslims, particularly Indians and Arabs, also immigrated as free persons during this period and were able to maintain their spiritual, cultural and social identity.

The numbers of Muslims in America increased in the late 19th century with the arrival of significant numbers of immigrants from Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Many settled in the Midwest and Canada, found blue-collar jobs and assimilated into American society. After World War II, significant numbers of immigrants from Palestine and elites from the Middle East and South Asia came to America. In recent decades, many students from the Muslim world have come to study, and many well-educated professionals and intellectuals have come from South and Southeast Asia as well as from the Middle East for political and economic reasons. Many Muslim immigrants have worked hard to sustain their Islamic identity and pass it down to their children, and to establish institutions and community structures—including mosques, Islamic centers, Islamic schools, Islamic publication organizations, interest-free financial institutions and charitable organizations—to support these goals.

About two-thirds of America's Muslims today are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. The other third is made up of African-American and other converts to Islam. The largest Muslim communities in the United States are in Boston, New York, Detroit, Dearborn, Toledo, Chicago, Houston and Los Angeles/Orange County.

What role does Muhammad play in Muslim life?

During his lifetime and since, Muhammad has been the model for Muslims to follow as they strive to do God's will. In contrast to what is often a spiritualized Christian view of Jesus, Muslims look upon and love Muhammad as an entirely human figure—but one who had great spiritual as well as political insight and was guided by God. In turn, they look to his example for guidance in all aspects of life: how to treat friends as well as enemies, what to eat and drink, when to wash or pray, how to divide an inheritance, how to make love and war. Muslims' observations or remembrances of what the Prophet said and did were passed on orally and in writing. These detailed records of Muhammad's actions, interactions, judgments, decisions and *dicta* provide guidance for Muslims as to what is required to follow the word of God.

As Christians view their revelation as both fulfilling and completing the revelation of the Old Testament, Muslims believe the Prophet Muhammad received his revelations to correct human error that had made its way into the scriptures and belief systems of Judaism and Christianity.

What is Islamic law?

The word *islam* means "surrender [to the will of God]," and the will of God is articulated in Islamic law, whose purpose is to regulate two types of interactions: those between human beings and God—that is, worship—and those among human beings—that is, social transactions. Throughout history, Islamic law has remained central to Muslim identity and practice, for it constitutes the ideal social blueprint for the believer and provides a common code of behavior for all Muslim societies.

In addition to the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* (example) of Muhammad, Sunni Muslims recognize two other official sources to guide the development of Islamic law: comparative analogical reasoning (*qiyas*) and consensus (*'ijma*). Shii Muslims accept the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as their own collections of the traditions of Ali and other imams.

The Qur'anic texts provide moral directives, laying out what Muslims should aspire to as individuals and achieve as a community. The *Sunnah* of Muhammad, recorded in hundreds of thousands of individual narratives describing the Prophet's private and public life and his individual and communal activities, illustrates Islamic faith in practice, and supplements and explains Qur'anic principles. *Qiyas* is used to determine parallels between similar situations or principles when no clear guidance is found in the Qur'an or *Sunnah*. The fourth source of law, *'ijma*, or consensus, originated from Muhammad's reported saying, "My nation will never agree on an error." This came to mean that consensus among religious scholars could determine the permissibility of an action.

Differences exist between the major Islamic schools of law that reflect the different geographical, social, historical and cultural contexts in which the various jurists were writing. In the modern world, Islamic law faces the challenge of distinguishing the divine prescriptions and eternal principles of the Qur'an from regulations arising from human interpretations in response to specific historical situations.

Is there a difference between Muslims and Black Muslims?

African-American Islam emerged in the early 20th century when a number of black Americans converted to Islam, the religion they believed was part of their original African identity. They rejected Christianity as the religion of white supremacy and oppression; by contrast, Islam offered a brotherhood of believers, the *ummah*, which transcended race and ethnicity.

In the early 1930's, Wallace D. Fard Muhammad drew on the Qur'an and the Bible to preach a message of black liberation in the ghettos of Chicago. He taught withdrawal from white society, rejected the domination of "blue-eyed devils" and emphasized the "religion of the Black Man" and the "Nation of Islam."

Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934. Elijah Muhammad took over and built the Nation of Islam into an effective national movement whose members became known as "Black Muslims." He denounced white society's political and economic oppression of blacks and the resulting self-hatred, poverty and dependency. By the 1970's the Nation of Islam had more than 100,000 members.

A number of basic beliefs of the Black Muslim movement differed significantly from mainstream Islam. Elijah Muhammad announced that Wallace D. Fard *was* God and that Elijah Muhammad, not the Prophet Muhammad, was the last messenger of God. The Nation taught black supremacy and black separatism, not Islam's brotherhood of all believers; in addition, the Nation did not follow the Five Pillars of Islam or major Muslim rituals.

A key individual who rose through the ranks of the Nation of Islam to national prominence was Malcolm X, who accepted the teaching of the Nation of Islam while in prison. Drawn by Elijah Muhammad's black nationalism, denunciation of white racism and promotion of self-help, Malcolm Little became Malcolm X: ex-smoker, ex-drinker, ex-Christian and ex-slave. A gifted, charismatic speaker, he was the most visible and prominent spokesperson for Elijah Muhammad for some years.

In 1964 Malcolm X undertook the pilgrimage to Makkah. He was deeply affected by what he experienced there—the equality of all believers regardless of race, tribe or nation. Malcolm returned from the pilgrimage as El Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, a Muslim rather than a Black Muslim, and changed his position on black nationalism. On February 21, 1965 he was assassinated; two members of the Nation of Islam were convicted of the murder.

Besides Malcolm X, Wallace D. Muhammad, son of Elijah Muhammad, and his brother Akbar Muhammad, a distinguished scholar of Islam who had studied in Egypt and Scotland, questioned and challenged some of their father's teachings and strategy. Both sons were excommunicated. Yet, toward the end of his life, Elijah Muhammad also made the pilgrimage to Makkah and also began to modify some of his teachings. By the time he died in 1975, Elijah Muhammad and the Nation were publicly acknowledged for their constructive contributions to America's inner-city communities.

When Wallace D. Muhammad succeeded his father, he implemented reforms to conform to the teachings of orthodox Sunni Islam. He too made the pilgrimage to Makkah and encouraged his followers to study Arabic in order to better understand Islam. The Nation observed the Five Pillars of Islam in unity with the worldwide Islamic community to which it now belonged. Black separatist doctrines were dropped and the Nation began to participate in the American political process. In the 1980's, Wallace changed his own name to Warith Deen Muhammad and that of the Nation of Islam to the American Muslim Mission, integrating it with the American Muslim community as well as with American society as a whole and the global Islamic community.

While a majority followed Warith Deen Muhammad, media coverage of the Black Muslim movement often focused on the minority led by Louis Farrakhan, who bitterly rejected the changes instituted by both Malcolm X and Warith Deen Muhammad, maintaining that only he and his followers had remained faithful to the original message and mission of Elijah Muhammad. Farrakhan retained the leadership of the Nation of Islam, as well as its black-nationalist and separatist doctrines. In recent years, however, he has moved closer to orthodox Islam.





Are Sufis Muslims?

Yes. Sufis belong to the mystical tradition of Islam known as Sufism. The name is derived from the Arabic word *suf*, meaning "wool," in reference to the coarse woolen garments worn by the first Sufis. Like mystical movements in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism, the Sufi path seeks to discipline the mind and body in order to experience directly the presence of God. Sufism is unlike Christian mysticism in that Sufis view their struggle to find God as one which takes place in the world, as opposed to the Christian monastic tradition of withdrawing from the world in order to find God.

Sufis set as their highest priority the individual spiritual effort of self-sacrifice and discipline in a struggle within oneself against greed, laziness and ego. This struggle is carried out by devoting oneself completely to fulfilling God's will, studying and meditating on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, performing religious duties, focusing on the centrality of God and the Last Judgment, denying material desires that could distract one from God and carrying out good works.

Sufism began as a seventh-century reform movement in response to the growing materialism and wealth of Muslim society that accompanied the expansion and growing power of the Islamic empire. By following the example of Muhammad in working tirelessly in the world to create the ideal Islamic society, Sufis have often played an important role in the political life of Muslims. For example, in the 18th and 19th centuries, Sufi brotherhoods led Islamic revivalist movements in Sudan, Nigeria and Libya that regenerated society, created Islamic states and fought off colonial powers. The Sufi orders also played an important role in the spread of Islam through missionary work.

Sufism remains a strong spiritual presence and force in Muslim societies today.

Why does Islam separate men and women?

Many, though not all, Muslim societies practice some gender segregation, the separation of men and women in public spaces. Thus, in many mosques men and women have separate areas for prayer or are separated by a screen or curtain, and unmarried men do not mix with unmarried women except in very specific contexts, such as a meeting between two potential spouses that occurs in the presence of a chaperone.

The practice of separation has both religious and cultural origins. Muhammad's wives were told to keep themselves apart from society. In the Qur'an (Chapter 33 Verses 32–33) we see, "O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the other women. If you fear God, do not be complaisant in speech so that one in whose heart is a sickness may covet you, but speak honorably. Stay quietly in your homes and do not display your finery as the pagans of old did." Verse 53 tells Muslim men, "And when you ask (his wives) for anything you want, ask them from before a screen. That makes for greater purity for your hearts and for theirs."

The practice of segregation is also tied to the concept of women as a source of sexual temptation for men. Social interaction between unrelated men and women is regarded as potentially leading to immoral sexual activity. Because modesty and chastity are prized virtues in Islam, some Muslims therefore believe that unrelated men and women should have no contact with each other.

Opinions today vary about the necessity of separation of the sexes. Many Muslims continue to hold fast to the belief that women are the culture-bearers of Islam, as well as the source of male honor, but they also believe that the requirements of modesty can be met through appropriate dress and the limitation of interaction with unrelated males.

Why don't Muslims practice separation of church and state?

While Christians believe in rendering unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God, Muslims believe that their primary act of faith is to strive to implement God's will in both their private and public lives, calling all to worship God, promoting what is good and prohibiting what is evil. In their view, religion cannot be separated from social and political life because religion informs every action that a person takes.

The Qur'an proclaims that, like Jews and Christians before them, Muslims have been called into a covenant relationship with God, making them a community of believers who must serve as an example to other nations (Chapter 2 Verse 143) by creating a moral social order. The Qur'an states, "You are the best community evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (3:110).

In the ideal Islamic state, the political authority carries out the divine message. Such a state is a nomocracy, a community governed by God's law, and not a theocracy or autocracy that gives power to the clergy or ruler. It should provide security and order so that Muslims can carry out their religious duties. Legal processes in a truly Islamic state implement rules and judgments from the *Shariah*, rather than creating new legislation.

Does the Qur'an condone terrorism?

The Qur'an does not advocate or condone terrorism. Islam, like all world religions, neither supports nor requires the illegitimate use of violence or acts of terrorism. Islam does permit, and at times requires, Muslims to defend themselves, their families, their religion and their community from aggression.

The earliest Qur'anic verses dealing with the right to engage in a defensive *jihad*, or struggle, were revealed shortly after the emigration of Muhammad and his followers to Madinah in flight from their persecution in Makkah. At a time when they were forced to fight for their lives, Muhammad is told: "Leave is given to those who fight because they were wronged—surely God is able to help them—who were expelled from their homes wrongfully for saying, 'Our Lord is God'" (Chapter 22 Verse 39). The defensive nature of *jihad* is clearly emphasized in 2:190: "And fight in the way of God with those who fight you, but aggress not: God loves not the aggressors."

The Qur'an also provided detailed guidelines and regulations regarding the conduct of wars: who is to fight and who is exempted (48:17, 9:91), when hostilities must cease (2:192) and how prisoners should be treated (47:4). Most important, passages such as Chapter 2 Verse 294 emphasized that the response to violence and aggression must be proportionate.

However, Qur'anic verses also underscore that peace, not violence and warfare, is the norm. Permission to fight the enemy is balanced by a strong mandate for making peace: "If your enemy inclines toward peace, then you too should seek peace and put your trust in God" (8:61), and "Had God wished, He would have made them dominate you, and so, if they leave you alone and do not fight you and offer you peace, then God allows you no way against them" (4:90). From the earliest times, it is forbidden in Islam to kill noncombatants.

But what of those verses, sometimes referred to as the "sword verses," that call for killing unbelievers, such as "When the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush" (9:5)? This is one of a number of Qur'anic verses that are selectively cited to demonstrate the supposedly violent nature of Islam and its scripture. In fact, however, the passage above is followed and qualified by, "But if they repent and fulfill their devotional obligations and pay the *zakat*, then let them go their way, for God is forgiving and kind" (9:5). The same is true of another often quoted verse: "Fight those who believe not in God nor in the Last Day, Nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Apostle, Nor hold the religion of truth (even if they are) of the People of the Book," which is often cited without the line that follows, "until they pay the tax with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued" (9:29).

Is Islam compatible with democracy?

In pre-modern times all the world's religions supported monarchies and feudal societies and then moved to accommodate modern forms of democracy. Similarly, Muslims today are debating the relationship of Islam to democracy. While most wish for greater political participation, government accountability, freedoms and human rights, there are many different ways to achieve these goals.

There are various reactions to democratization in the Muslim world. Some argue that Islam has its own mechanisms and institutions that do not include democracy. Others believe that democracy can only be fully realized if Muslim societies restrict religion to private life.

Still others contend that Islam is fully capable of accommodating and supporting democracy. They argue that traditional Islamic concepts like consultation (*shura*) between ruler and ruled, community consensus (*'ijma*), public interest (*maslaha*) and interpretation (*ijtihad*) can support parliamentary forms of government.

Many believe that, just as the modern democracies of America and Europe accommodate diverse relationships with religion, Muslims too can develop their own varieties of democratic states that are responsive to indigenous values.

What does Islam say about poverty and social justice?

The social order prescribed by the Qur'an and Sunnah emphasizes the themes of social justice, the responsibility of all Muslims—particularly the wealthy—to care for the less fortunate and oppressed, and the right and responsibility of the Muslim community to defend itself from aggression. Women, orphans and the poor enjoy special protection in the Qur'an. Redistribution of wealth is prescribed through the requirement that Muslims pay *zakat*, or alms tax, of 2½ percent of their total wealth. Usury, defined as the collection of interest in any amount, is forbidden because it serves as a means of exploiting the poor. False contracts were also denounced. The new social order called for by the Qur'an derived from the principle that the purpose of all actions was to fulfill God's will, rather than to follow one's own desires or those of the tribe.

Why do Muslims say they are descended from Abraham?

Both the Qur'an and the Old Testament tell the story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar. While some Jews and Christians are descended from Abraham and his wife Sarah through their son Isaac, certain Arab Muslims trace their lineage back to Ismail, Abraham's first-born son by his Egyptian servant, Hagar. In a religious rather than genealogical sense, Muslims thus see themselves, as well as Jews and Christians, as "children of Abraham."

How did Islam originate?

Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam originated in the Middle East, where monotheism had flourished for many centuries. In the sixth century of our era, Makkah was emerging as a new commercial center with massive new wealth but also with a growing division between rich and poor that challenged the traditional system of Arab tribal values and social security. This was the time and the social environment in which the Prophet Muhammad received his divine revelation and called all to return to the worship of the one God and to a socially just society. Muhammad is thus not considered the founder of a new religion but rather a religious reformer.

The revelations Muhammad received emphasized social justice, corrected distortions of God's revelations in Judaism and Christianity, and warned that many had strayed. The revelations called on all to return to what the Qur'an refers to as the "straight path" of Islam, the path of God, which was being revealed one final time through Muhammad, the last or "seal" of the prophets.

How do Muslims pray?

Five times each day, hundreds of millions of Muslims face Makkah to pray—at daybreak, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset and evening. These five obligatory prayers are performed in Arabic, regardless of the native tongue of the worshiper. Each part of the prayer has its function within this daily ritual; the whole is designed to combine meditation, devotion, moral elevation and physical exercise. Prayers can be performed individually or in congregation.

Preparing to pray, Muslims perform a ritual ablution, or cleansing, to ensure that they are in a state of spiritual and physical purity. First, they cleanse their minds and hearts of worldly thoughts and concerns, concentrating on God and the blessings he has given them; second, they wash hands, face and feet and their arms up to the elbow, and then say, "I bear witness that there is no god but God; He has no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger." This purification process is as spiritual as it is physical, as can be seen in the fact that the worshiper is permitted to use sand symbolically if water is not available. The objective is to enter the presence of God with a clean mind and body.

Worshipers begin by raising their hands and proclaiming God's greatness ("Allahu akbar!"—"God is most great!"); then, folding their hands over stomach or chest and standing upright, they recite what has been described as the essential message of the Qur'an, the opening discourse of Chapter 1 Verses 1 through 7, which is translated on page 21.

After reciting another, individually chosen, verse from the Qur'an, Muslims bow and proclaim "Glory to God in the Highest" three times; returning to the upright position, they say, "God hears the one who praises Him," and "Our Lord, all praise belongs to you!"

The next phase of worship is commonly called "prostration" in English, although it does not involve lying down at full length. Muslims first repeat "Allahu akbar!" Then they fall to their knees, placing their hands flat on the ground and bringing their foreheads down between their hands to touch the ground. While in this position, Muslims recite three times: "Glory to the Lord Most High!" After this, they stand up and repeat the entire cycle of prayer.

Prayer also includes sitting on the heels and reciting a formula known as "the witnessing," because it contains the declaration of Muslim faith: "There is no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God." The witnessing is followed by asking God's blessings for the first and last of God's prophets, Abraham and Muhammad.

Prayer ends with an invocation of peace. Worshipers turn their heads right and left and say, "May the peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you." Although these words are addressed to their fellow believers sitting beside them, Muslims also believe that they are addressing their own guardian angels, who remain over their shoulders as they pray. After completing the obligatory prayers, Muslims can privately petition God regarding their individual needs.

Are Women Second-Class Citizens in Islam?

The status of women in Muslim countries has long been looked to as evidence of "Islam's" oppression of women in matters ranging from the freedom to dress as they please to legal rights in divorce. The true picture of women in Islam is far more complex.

The Qur'an declares that men and women are equal in the eyes of God; man and woman were created to be equal parts of a pair (Chapter 41 Verse 49). The Qur'an describes the relationship between men and women as one of "love and mercy" (30:21), so that men and women are to serve as "members of one another (3:195), as "protectors, one of another" (9:71). They are to be like each other's garment (2:187).

Men and women are equally responsible for adhering to the Five Pillars of Islam. Chapter 9 Verses 71–72 states, "The Believers, men and women, are protectors of one another; they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil; they observe regular prayers, pay *zakat* and obey God and His Messenger. On them will God pour His mercy: for God is exalted in Power, Wise. God has promised to Believers, men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein." This verse draws added significance from the fact that it was the last Qur'an verse to be revealed that addressed relations between men and women. Some scholars argue, on the basis of both content and chronology, that this verse outlines the ideal vision of that relationship in Islam—one of equality and mutuality.

Women have been assigned second-class status in Muslim society based upon a misinterpretation of the Qur'an's Chapter 4 Verse 34, which says "Men are the guardians of women, (on the basis) that God has granted some of them merits greater than others and (on the basis) that they spend of their property (for the support of women)." However, contemporary scholars have noted that the "guardianship" referred to in this verse is based upon men's socioeconomic responsibilities for women. It does not say women are incapable of managing their own affairs, controlling themselves or being leaders, nor does it say that all men are superior to, preferred to or better than all women.

Another justification of second-class status for women may have been derived from the Qur'anic stipulation (2:282) that two female witnesses are equal to one male witness. If one female witness errs, the other can remind her of the truth. Over time, this was interpreted by male scholars to mean that a woman's testimony should always be given half the weight of a man's. Contemporary scholars point out that the verse specifies witnessing in cases of a written transaction, contract or court case. At the time the Qur'an was revealed, most women were not active in business and finance, and a woman's expertise in these fields was likely to have been less than a man's.

Another area in which gender discrimination has been apparent historically is in the matter of divorce. The Qur'an, however, guarantees women equality with respect to the right of divorce. The Qur'an also restricts the practice of polygamy. Chapter 4 Verse 3 commands, "Then marry such of the women as appeal to you, two, three or four; but if you fear that you cannot be equitable, then only one." A corollary verse, 4:129, states, "You will never be able to treat wives equitably, even if you are bent on doing that." Contemporary interpreters have argued that these two verses together prohibit polygamy and that the true Qur'anic ideal is monogamy.

The 20th century has brought numerous significant reforms for women's rights in both the public and the private spheres. In the overwhelming majority of Muslim countries, women have the right to public education, including at the college level. In many countries, they also have the right to work outside the home, vote and hold public office. Particularly notable in recent years have been the reforms in marriage and divorce laws.

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PAGE 21, MAIN PHOTO: CHESTER BEATTY LIBRARY. PORTRAITS AND INSETS, FROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT, AND BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT, BY PAGE NUMBER: THORNE ANDERSON: 21J, 22I, 22K, 23P, 24C, 24N, 25B, 25E, 28C, 28F, 28H, 28K; KEVIN BUBRISKI: 21A, 21B, 22J, 22M (INSET), 22P, 23C, 23E, 23G, 23I, 23L, 23M, 23N, 24A, 24E, 24I, 24J, 25C, 25G, 25O, 26F, 26H, 26J, 26K, 26N, 26O, 28I, 28M, 28O; KATHLEEN BURKE: 23J, 28J; KRISTIE BURNS: 24M (INSET); JIM CALLAWAY: 25N, 26D; FAITH CATHCART: 23A; LORRAINE CHITTOCK: 22D, 22E, 24L, 25H, 26B, 27H, 28E; ART CLARK: 22F; DICK DOUGHTY: 21I, 22B, 25J, 27O; TOR EIGELAND: 21F, 23B; JOHN FEENEY: 25M, 26E; STEPHEN GRAHAM: 27M (INSET); ERIC HAASE: 22N, 23D, 25D, 27G; NAOMI HARRIS: 21H, 22C, 23K, 26P; HERRING DESIGN: 26G; LARRY LUXNER: 25L, 27F, 27N; SAMIA EL-MOSLIMANY: 22H, 22O, 23H, 24D (INSET), 24F, 24H, 26C, 26L, 27D, 27K, 28B, 28D (INSET), 28G, 28Q; NI'MAH ISMAIL NAWWAB: 27L; RENA PEARL: 28L; SCOTT PENDLETON: 24O; ILENE PERLMAN: 23O (INSET), 25A, 26I; SUSANA RAAB: 21C, 27J; JANICE RUBIN: 21D, 21G; PETER SANDERS: 23F (INSET), 24K, 25P (INSET), 26M; LOREN SANTOW: 22A, 27B, 28P; STEVE SHELTON: 22L, 25I; JAN SONNENMAIR: 25K, 28A; KIRK SPEER: 22G (INSET), 24B; KATRINA THOMAS: 21E, 24G, 27A, 27E, 27I, 28N; DAVID H. WELLS: 25F (INSET), 26A, 27C.

World Atlas

For a rising star in the Arab-Euro pop scene, Natacha Atlas has an unexpected accent: It's British. But Atlas has confounded expectations all her life. Born in Belgium to a father with roots in Egypt and Morocco, she was raised in her mother's England. "In the early part of my life, it was a bit confusing," she recalls. "What's my identity? But as I got older, I realized there'd always be these two identities living within me."

In music as in life, she's nimbly crossed back and forth between the eastern and western shores of her identity, pulling in fans from Cairo to California. This summer she widened her audience in the US and Canada by headlining the 10-city, eclectic world-music "Vive La World!" tour.

Written by
CHRIS NICKSON

Photographed by
ANNU P. MATTHEW

On July 16, Atlas led "Vive La World!" into Robert F. Kennedy Stadium in Washington, D.C., her ninth stop on her first solo North American tour.

Since her 1995 solo debut *Diaspora*, where she mixed synthesized Arab strings with club beats, she's traveled a peripatetic path across six more solo albums. Now, as she digs deeper into her roots in Egyptian music, she continues to layer it with influences from trance, soul and dancehall reggae "to make westerners more sympathetic to my culture—and when I say 'my culture,' I mean the Arab-Egyptian side of my culture," she says.

This puts her, says Alecia Cohen, publisher of *Global Rhythm* magazine, among the few artists able to "bridge a unique gap in the music market to engage adult world-music fans and young hipsters who prefer fusion."

By her own admission, Atlas's career began as "an accident of fate." In 1990, she returned to England after visiting her father's family in Egypt and got together with some old music friends she had known when she was the first Arab female rock singer in Northampton.

"I wanted to do something that involved my Mediterranean roots. We compromised by doing something that was a little Balearic and Andalusian. Arab was a little too strange for them," she recalls. "Timbal," the song that resulted from that compromise, became a hit in UK dance clubs. It wound up on Nation Records, where Atlas was introduced to a pair of emerging acts, Invaders of the Heart, led by bassist Jah Wobble, and Transglobal Underground, a group pioneering in the dance–world-music mix they were calling "ethno-techno."

She sang with both of them while also pursuing her own career. After three albums with Jah Wobble, she became a member of Transglobal Underground in 1995. At the same time, her solo work was beginning to blossom with the record *Halim* (1997) and then *Gedida* (1999), with its hit single in French, "Mon Amie La Rose." That same year she decided to leave Transglobal Underground and become an entirely solo performer. To effect a complete break, she moved to Cairo, where her albums had sold reasonably well and her musical peers, she says, "know me, and they're very respectful, which always surprises me."

Although she thought she'd just record one more disc and then return to England, she ended up staying two years, falling in love with the city and taking an apartment in a building where the doorman fussed over her.

"Because I spoke a bit of Arabic, and look half-Arabic, he used to always call me 'the daughter of my country.' He saw me as connected to Egypt, if not Egyptian."

Ayeshteni, the record that resulted from her Egyptian immersion, was saturated in the sound of Cairo's *sha'bi* street music and the spirits of Atlas's vocal idols: Um Kulthum, Fayrouz and Abdul Halim Hafez. Surprisingly to many listeners—but in her characteristically eclectic style—the disc contained a version of the Screamin' Jay Hawkins R&B classic "I Put a Spell on You," rearranged with Arab strings and percussion, offering an approach to fusion from the western direction. She included it, she says, because "westerners can immediately identify with that, because it's in a language they understand, which is important. Otherwise it's, 'What's she singing about?' It can help to get it to more people."

Her 2003 disc, *Something Dangerous*, is even more ambitious. Produced back in London, it is a mix 'n' match of Middle Eastern sounds, programmed beats, strings, dancehall, hip-hop, R&B and vocals not only from herself but also from Princess Julianna and Sinead O'Connor. It was "made for the western market," she admits, a brash, extroverted outing right down to its cover of James Brown's "Man's World."

It's the antithesis of her small, quiet, un-hyped *Foretold in the Language of Dreams*, which Atlas sneaked out in 2002 as a labor of love. She says she was inspired by Peter Brook's film *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, about the life of mystic G. I. Gurdjieff.

"It's probably the easiest album I've ever made in my life, and I also think it's one of the best pieces of work I've done," she says. "It's a concept album and its function is to calm the mind and bring you down to earth when you're becoming a neurotic mess—which can happen often in the music business!" Satisfying as that was, it seems like a sidetrack in a career that's seen her steadily rise to become an important figure in world music, a respected headlining act in Europe, the Middle East and North America. She's been named a United Nations Cultural Ambassador, a title that has led to a few speaking engagements as well as musical performances. And Hollywood is taking notice of her: She sang on the soundtracks of *The Truth about Charlie* and *The Hulk*.

Atlas is currently preparing to return to Cairo, "probably for six months," to write and record another album. It's now the place, she says, where she finds an equilibrium between the two sides of her head. "The more I've acquired of my roots, the more I've been able to pull those things into what I'm doing. I've learned so much from going back to Egypt."

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

Fayrouz: J/F 82, J/A 72
New Pop Fusion: M/A 01
Pop Music in the Arab World: M/A 00
Um Kulthum: M/A 00

DISCOGRAPHY

SOLO
Something Dangerous (2003)
Foretold in the Language of Dreams (2002)
Ayeshteni (2001)
The Remix Collection (2000)
Gedida (1999)
Halim (1997)
Diaspora (1995)

WITH TRANSGLOBAL UNDERGROUND
Rejoice, Rejoice (1998)
Psychic Karaoke (1997)
Interplanetary Meltdown (1995)
International Times (1994)
Dream of 100 Nations (1993)

WITH JAH WOBBLE'S INVADERS OF THE HEART
Heaven and Earth (1995)
Take Me to God (1994)
Rising above Bedlam (1991)

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After three albums with Jah Wobble, Atlas became a member of Transglobal Underground.
As a solo artist, her 2003 *Ayeshteni* disc is saturated in Cairo's *sha'bi* street music and
the spirits of Atlas's vocal idols: Um Kulthum, Fayrouz and Abdul Halim Hafez.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC HANSEN

THE Nonya CUISINE OF MALAYSIA

FRAGRANT FEASTS WHERE THE TRADE WINDS MEET

Early one morning in 1976, I was seated at an open-air food stall in Kuching, the riverside capital city of Sarawak, East Malaysia, with breakfast on my mind. Unfamiliar with the local breakfast food, I ordered what everyone else was eating: a steaming bowl of noodles in a brownish broth with boiled shrimp and a few bits of shredded chicken on top. It looked unremarkable. But the flavors that soon exploded in my mouth, making my eyes water and my nose run, were unlike anything I had ever tasted. My face flushed and my heart pounded as wave upon wave of impossibly hot, rich, fragrant spices and complex aromas mingled in my mouth. Perspiration ran down my neck, and when the bowl in front of me was empty, I sat back on my stool, took a deep breath and asked myself out loud, "What...was...*that*?"

"*Laksa*," replied a stranger sitting across from me.

He went back to reading his morning paper. Glancing around at the people seated at the nearby tables, I realized that I was taking part in a local eating tradition that was as well developed and well patronized as the *café-croissant* breakfast culture of Parisian cafés. When I got up to pay the bill, I also realized that eating laksa can be a

Diners at an open-air eatery in Sarawak, East Malaysia, enjoy their meals of steaming *laksa lemak*. Opposite: These basic ingredients, pounded into a paste in a mortar, combine with others to make a *rempah*, or spice mixture, that determines the unique flavor of laksa and other nonya dishes.

messy affair: The ends of the noodles tend to flick bits of the brown, oily soup onto one's clothing, and my shirt front clearly displayed what I had eaten for breakfast.

For many Malaysians, the only proper way to get the day going is with a bowl of laksa. This fiery, chile-infused coconut-milk broth with egg or rice noodles is prepared with *belachan* (a pungent dried-prawn paste), shrimp, lemongrass, shredded chicken, fresh coriander sprouts, a few slivers of omelet or a hard-boiled quail's egg, and sliced wild-ginger buds. Laksa is served with a side dish of chile paste called *sambal oelek* and a slice of fragrant musk lime, or *limau kesturi*. The lime is squeezed over the laksa and some or all of the chile paste is added to the broth, according to one's tolerance for hot spices. Laksa is eaten with chopsticks and a large spoon; the first searing, fragrant mouthful is guaranteed to clear your mind and sharply focus your culinary thoughts.

Malaysians love to discuss the subtle variations of this dish, but all agree that the best are served not in restaurants or homes but in open-air coffee houses or by street-side food vendors who operate from wheeled carts. Laksa is difficult for the home cook, for there is a long list of hard-to-find ingredients, and to do the job properly one must carefully grind the spices by hand in a very specific order, preferably with a granite mortar and pestle called a *batu lesong*. In addition, the recipe doesn't lend itself to making small quantities: To get the seasonings properly balanced, you need to make a lot of laksa. Ambiance and socializing are also important parts of the laksa-eating experience, so most diners prefer to patronize the bustling coffee houses.

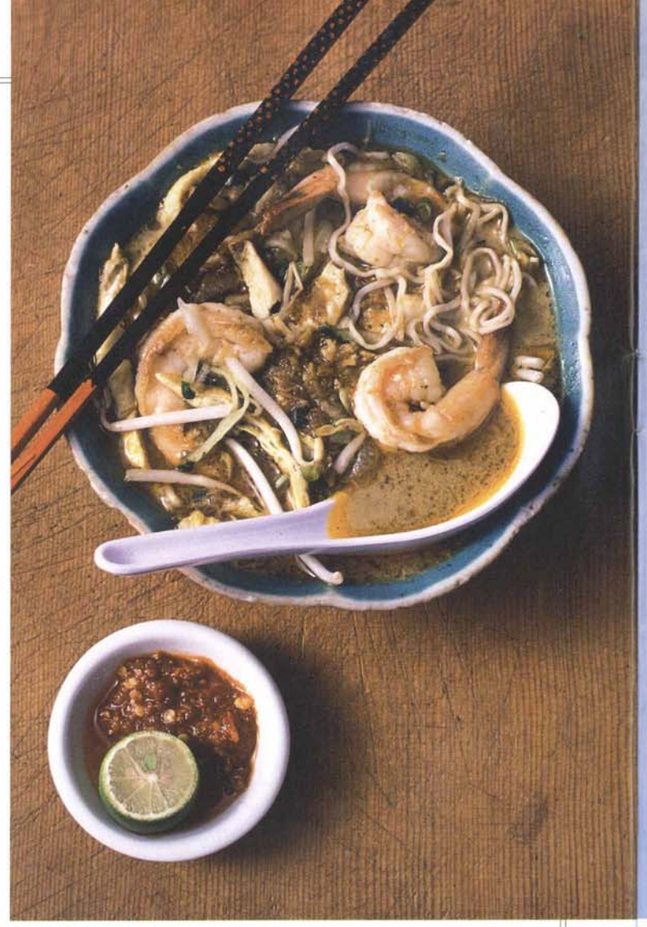
Above right and opposite: **Laksa lemak (coconut-milk laksa), which originated in Malacca, and asam laksa (slightly sour, tamarind-based laksa), found in Penang, dazzle both the eyes and the taste buds.** Below: **This nonya classic is known as "top hats" because of the shape of the pastry shells.**

KUIH PIE TEE

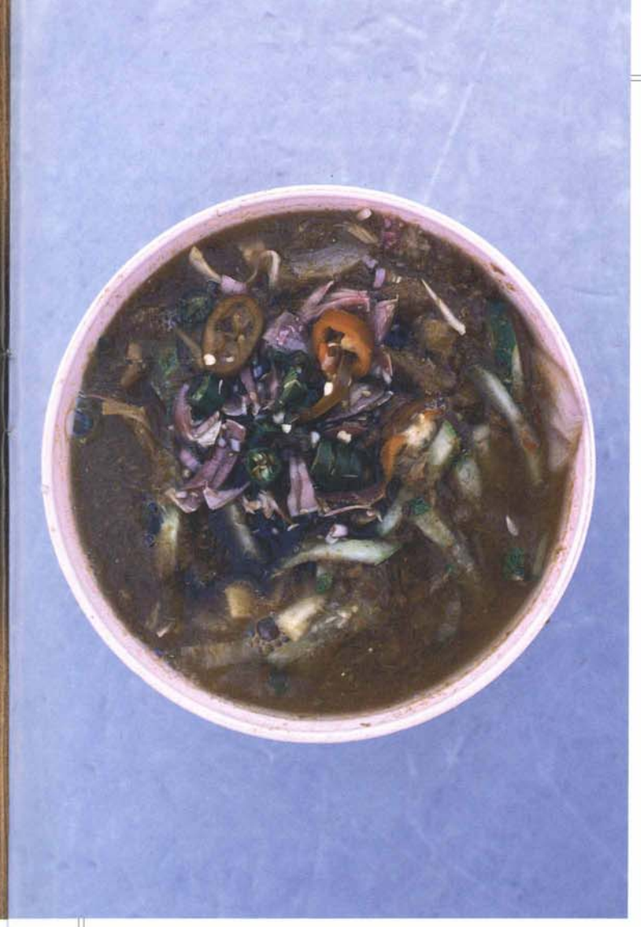
Despite many years of eating laksa, I only recently got around to thinking about the origins and culinary history of this unusual dish. It is a commonly held belief that laksa takes its name from one of its most important ingredients—the pungent, mint-like laksa leaf, from the herb *Polygonum hydropiper*, variously called "marsh pepper," "knotweed" or "Vietnamese coriander" in English.

According to Alan Davidson's authoritative *Oxford Companion to Food*, the word *laksa* comes from *lakhsha*, the Persian word for "noodle." Prominent food scholars speculate that Persian merchants introduced noodle-making to China during the Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 220). Davidson also points out that Arab traders or Indian Muslims brought pasta noodles to Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula, possibly as early as the 13th century.

No one is quite certain when laksa as we know it today was first prepared, but it probably dates back to the early 1600's, when the Chinese were establishing trading centers along the west coast of the Malay Peninsula. In the early 1400's, the Chinese admiral Cheng Ho led an armada of ocean-going junks, manned by more than 25,000 men, on an exploratory and trading mission from the south coast of China to Southeast Asia. The trade winds blowing to and from China and between the Arabian Gulf and India meet in the narrow, protected waters of the Strait of Malacca, and for this reason warehouses and commercial trading centers were established in this area. These entrepôts soon attracted the attention of the Portuguese, the Dutch and finally the British East India Company.



LAKSA LEMAK



ASAM LAKSA

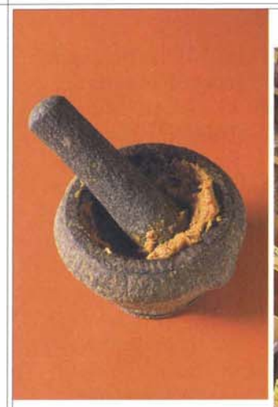
Nonya cooking IS THE RESULT OF BLENDING CHINESE RECIPES AND WOK COOKING TECHNIQUES WITH LOCAL SPICES AND INGREDIENTS USED BY THE MALAY COMMUNITY.

Originally known as the Straits Settlements, they grew into the cities of Malacca, Penang and Singapore.

The Chinese dominated early trade in the Strait of Malacca, and they brought their culinary traditions with them. However, only men were permitted to leave China to set up businesses on the Malay Peninsula. This policy naturally led to intermarriage with Malay women, and with Bugis, Javanese and Batak women from the island of Sumatra—and it resulted in culinary unions, too. The businessmen's Malay wives were known as *nonya*s (also spelled *nyonya*), a Malay honorific denoting a woman of prominent social standing. Unlike their husbands, many of whom adopted European dress and manners, the nonyas maintained close ties with Malay culture.

These women spoke a patois of Malay and Chinese—mostly Hokkien—dialects. They dressed in the Malay style in a batik sarong with a long blouse. The distinctive cuisine they developed in Penang, Malacca and Singapore is known as nonya cooking, and laksa is its signature dish.

Nonya cooking is the result of blending Chinese recipes and wok cooking techniques with spices and ingredients used by the local Malay community. The food is tangy, aromatic, spicy and herbal. Key ingredients include coconut milk, galangal (a subtle, mustard-scented rhizome similar to ginger), candlenuts as both a flavoring and a thickening agent, laksa leaf, pandan leaves (*Pandanus amaryllifolius*, or screwpine), *belachan*, tamarind juice, lemongrass, torch-ginger bud (*Etlingera elatior*), jicama, fragrant kaffir lime leaf (*Citrus hystrix*), rice or egg noodles and *cincaluk*—a powerfully flavored, sour and salty shrimp-based condiment that is typically mixed with lime juice, chiles and shallots and eaten with rice, fried fish and other side dishes. Even for Malaysians and some nonyas, *cincaluk* is an acquired taste.



A granite mortar and pestle, called *batu lesong*, is a must in every nonya kitchen; alongside are prepared nonya spices and ingredients including curry powder, black rice, *cincaluk*, *gula Melacca* and *sambal belachan*. Opposite: A traditional public market in Malaysia is flush with fresh vegetables and other nonya cooking ingredients.

The unique flavor of laksa and all other nonya recipes is determined by their *rempah*, the combination of spices that has been pounded into a paste, in a granite mortar, with a very specific texture and density. It is said that a nonya can determine the culinary skill of a new daughter-in-law simply by listening to her preparing *rempah* in a mortar. Nonya recipes are handed down from one generation to the next, and because of the time-consuming preparation of these dishes, it is a cuisine that is often at its best when served at home. Laksa is a notable exception to this rule.

Laksa served in Malay restaurants and food stalls is always *halal*—that is, it conforms to Muslim dietary regulations—but there are also Chinese restaurants serving *halal* laksa. Both Malay and Chinese establishments that cater to Muslim customers must have a license issued by the local Muslim authority, the Majlis Agama Islam, to certify that the food is properly prepared.

There are two basic styles of laksa: asam laksa (sour laksa) and laksa lemak (coconut-milk laksa). You find asam laksa, which uses a tamarind-pulp soup base and more chiles, in Penang. It reveals the influence of Thai cuisine and its emphasis on hot, sour, fragrant and pungent flavors. Laksa lemak originated in Malacca. This version is distinguished by its spicy, thick coconut-milk broth, similar in appearance and fragrance to south Indian curries. Both styles of laksa have ardent and steadfast supporters.

On a recent visit to Southeast Asia, I decided to revisit some of my favorite nonya restaurants and food stalls, and look for new establishments serving nonya dishes I had never tried before.

I started out by sampling laksa at the coffee shops in the Katong neighborhood of Singapore. I took a seat at a table along the shaded walkway of this nonya neighborhood and soon discovered that some of the good things in life never change. The laksa lemak, as served at the Hock Tong Hin Eating House, was just as I remembered it from 20 years earlier—a perfect balance of hot, sour, pungent, fragrant and aromatic flavors. The thin rice noodles were cooked perfectly, and there was just the right balance of coconut milk and chile to soothe and stimulate my taste buds simultaneously.

Moving up the west coast of the Malay Peninsula later that week, I arrived in Malacca, a well-known regional center of nonya cooking, where I discovered Restoran Ole Sayang, whose name is a nonya expression meaning "gift of love" in the culinary sense. Once I explained the purpose of my visit to the manager and the chef, there was no stopping the flow of nonya dishes that came out of the kitchen. I had *ikan goreng cili*, a butterflied deep-fried fish smothered in a pungent paste of fried chiles and finished with a generous squeeze of lime juice. Then there was *sambal belachan*, a small side dish of fermented shrimp paste that is first grilled and then pounded with chiles and a bit of oil before adding lime juice.

Nonyas—like nearly all Malaysians—are addicted to *sambal belachan*, and many would never consider traveling overseas without taking along a supply of this unique condiment to liven up the bland and flavorless cuisines (as the nonya perceive them) of such distant lands as Europe and the United States. On the road, they store their *sambal belachan* in airtight, unbreakable containers; it does not have the sort of fragrance you would want to have released in your suitcase.

At Ole Sayang I also tried *itek tim*—a translucent duck soup with braised, preserved lettuce. The dish looked more Chinese than nonya to me, but the chef pointed out that the slightly sour tamarind-based sauce clearly marked the dish as 100 percent nonya. My favorite Ole Sayang creation was *udang masak lemak nenas*—a bowl of grilled fresh prawns with chunks of locally grown under-ripe pineapple, served in a spicy coconut-milk broth. All of these dishes were eaten with steamed white rice.

A typical nonya meal at home is often followed by sweets made of glutinous rice flavored with pandan leaves; brown palm sugar, or jaggery, known as *gula Melacca*; and coconut milk. My favorite nonya dessert is *pulot hitam*, a dark purple-black glutinous rice cooked with pandan leaves and palm sugar and served with sliced ripe bananas and thick coconut milk. The addition of dried longan fruit lends a slightly smoky flavor to the dish. At home, on cold winter mornings, I have discovered that *pulot hitam* with warmed coconut milk makes an excellent substitute for hot cereal.

Farther up the coast in Penang, I was curious to know if the food-stall

night market on Gurney Drive was still operating. I had not visited Penang in nearly 25 years, but Hajji Muhamad Aziza, the Malay cab driver who picked me up at the airport late in the afternoon, assured me that the Gurney Drive food stalls were still heavily patronized by people from all over the city. When I asked him if he could recommend a food stall for traditional Penang-style asam laksa, he glanced at his watch and told me that he was ready to quit work for the day. We drove straight to Gurney Drive, and then set off on foot to Asam Laksa Stall #436.

Top: **Preparations for *popiah* (fresh spring rolls) are well under way at a restaurant in Kuching, Sarawak, East Malaysia.** Above: **Food stalls in Kuching stand ready for evening crowds to arrive.** Opposite: **Signs invite diners to visit nonya restaurants in Malacca.**

Following instructions from Hajji Muhamad, the stall owner set to work. The freshly sliced red onions and slivers of the uniquely flavored ginger bud blended perfectly with the thick, sour and fragrant tamarind-based broth that revealed just a hint of turmeric, shaved bonito fish, mint and sweet, ripe pineapple bits. Only after introducing me to several different subtle variations of Penang-style asam laksa served at different stalls did Hajji Muhamad agree to take me to my hotel, where I soon concluded that dinner that evening would be unnecessary.

A few days later I found myself once again in East Malaysia, on the banks of the Kuching River where I had first tried laksa and other nonya dishes in 1976. In the intervening years, the Kuching waterfront had been entirely redeveloped. Many of the old warehouses and food stalls were gone and a new, tree-shaded promenade dominated the south bank of the river. But that evening I was delighted to come upon River Café, a new open-air riverside restaurant specializing in a nonya version of *popiah*, or fresh spring rolls. The name comes from the Chinese *po* for "thin" and *pia* for "wrapper."

THERE IS NO MENU AT THE COFFEE SHOP NEAR THE ABANDONED STEAM ROLLER *because there is only one dish available: laksa.*

The restaurant was run by a formidable woman known as Auntie Yan, a nonya who prepared *popiah* according to an old family recipe. I ordered a plate for a small group of friends, but my attempts to look over her shoulder as she prepared our order met with a look of stern disapproval. I did my best to follow the deft movements of her hands and to estimate the proper proportions, but no amount of coaxing could encourage Auntie Yan to reveal the *popiah* secrets entrusted to her in her mother's kitchen.

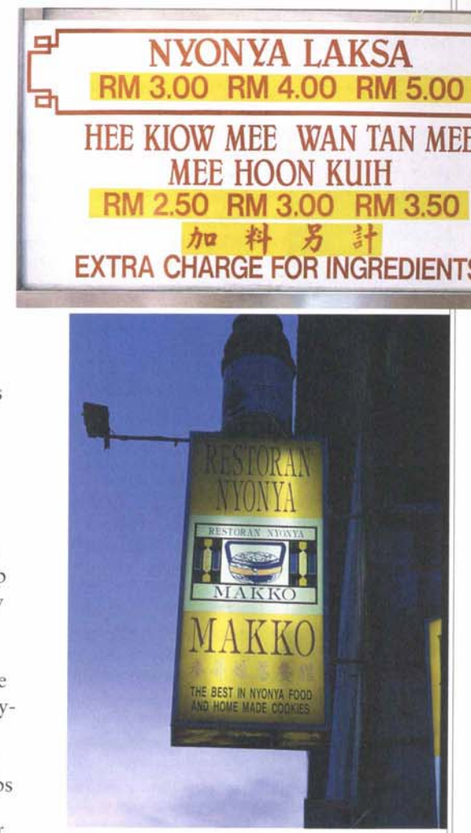
I returned to the table, and soon a half dozen perfectly wrapped and sliced *popiah* were set before us with small dishes of sweet plum dipping sauce. The finished result was a delicate and complex combination of textures, flavors, heat and pungent aromas. In homes, *popiah* is traditionally prepared by individual dinner guests or family members using fresh *popiah* wrappers, upon which they arrange their favorite combinations of grated jicama, lettuce, ground roasted peanuts, slivered omelet, chicken, prawns, parboiled and sautéed cabbage, bean sprouts, chile paste, fried bean curd, fried shallots, garlic paste and the dipping sauce.

My final stop in Kuching was a nondescript open-air coffee shop tucked away on a back street. I've patronized this establishment for nearly 20 years, yet I still don't know its name, so when I arrange to meet friends here, I simply tell them it is the place just up from the wharf with the abandoned steam roller out front. Every morning, shortly after dawn, crowds of Malay, Indian, Chinese and nonya families can be found seated at the dozens of round, marble-topped tables. Beneath large overhead fans, families with children, couples, businessmen, teenagers and the elderly create an ebb and flow of customers that continues until mid-morning.

I sat by myself, lost in thought, listening to the clattering of bowls and the roar of gas burners. Shifting clouds of steam filled the air, partially obscuring the cooks at work. The murmur of conversation was frequently punctuated by orders for tea, iced milk coffee or fresh fruit juices. There is no menu because there is only one dish available: laksa.

I watched as a western couple cautiously entered the coffee shop and took their places at an empty table. Within minutes, they were served two bowls of laksa. They protested briefly, asking to see the menu, but then realized that everyone around them was eating the same thing. They picked up their spoons, took their first careful sips and looked at one another with wide-eyed expressions of disbelief. They laughed briefly. Then they shook their heads, blinked tears from their eyes and fell silent as they leaned forward and continued eating.

Eric Hansen (ekhansen@ix.netcom.net) is a writer and photographer living in San Francisco who specializes in the traditional cultures of Southeast Asia and the Middle East. *Orchid Fever* (Vintage Books), his most recent book, focuses on trade in rare and endangered orchids.



The Food of Malaysia: Authentic Recipes from the Crossroads of Asia. 2000, Periplus Editions, 9-62593-606-8, $18.95 hb.

Penang Nyonya Cooking. Cecilia Tan. 1991, Times Editions (Singapore), 981-204-309-8, $14.50.

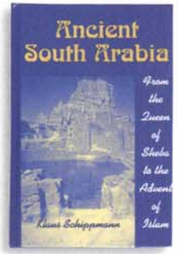
Red Heat: Secrets of Singapore-Nonya Cooking. Maureen Suan-Neo. 1995, John Arumainayagam, 0-9527-101-0, £20.00 hb.

The Secrets of Nyonya Cooking. Florence Tan. 2001, Times Editions, 981-232-121-7, RM36.90 / S$15 pb.

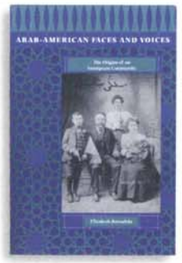
SuggestionsforReading

COMPILED BY DICK DOUGHTY AND ARTHUR P. CLARK

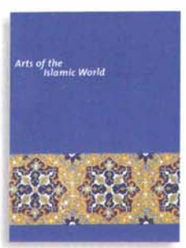
Readers of *Saudi Aramco World* who want to range more widely or delve more deeply than a bimonthly magazine can do will find interesting material, most of it recently published, in this list. Without endorsing the views of any of the authors, the editors nonetheless encourage varied and omnivorous reading 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*.



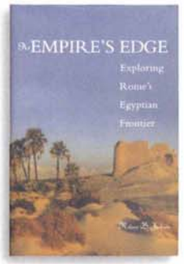
Ancient South Arabia: From the Queen of Sheba to the Advent of Islam. Klaus Schippmann; Allison Brown, tr. 2001, Markus Wiener, 1-55876-235-3, $39.95 hb, $18.95 pb.
Scholars interested in the region of Yemen, Dhofar in Oman and far southwestern Saudi Arabia, as well as lay readers willing to navigate the often academic prose, will be rewarded with detailed insights into the area. Schippmann, a German archeologist who has worked in Yemen, calls his book "an attempt to offer a consolidated overview" of a period covering the roughly 1400 years from the purported reign of the Queen of Sheba to the revelation of Islam in the seventh century. It sketches the relatively brief history of archeological exploration in the area, and addresses topics such as South Arabia's kingdoms, its land and sea trade routes, and its architectural and engineering heritage. The author calls South Arabian architecture, as understood from the remains of temples, city walls and irrigation systems, especially at Marib, "unique in the entire ancient Middle East" and predicts that "pleasant surprises" about ancient South Arabia await future archeological expeditions.



Arab-American Faces and Voices: The Origins of an Immigrant Community. Elizabeth Boosahda. 2003, University of Texas, 0-292-70920-X, $24.95 pb; 2-292-70919-6, $65 hb.
This labor of love documents the experience of Arabs who emigrated to Worcester, Massachusetts between 1880 and 1915. The author, a third-generation Worcester Arab-American, has interviewed immigrants from Lebanon, Syria and Palestine; she discusses their lives and their connections with fellow Arab immigrants in the United States and South America, particularly Brazil. She also highlights the political and economic factors that brought Arabs to America and led many of them to stay, even after they had met their goal of earning enough to prosper in their homelands. Interviewees, most in their 80's and 90's, are succinctly quoted about subjects including their neighborhoods, work, traditions and education. The author offers evidence aplenty of how hard work and creativity enabled Arabs to put down roots in America, to the benefit of the community and the country.

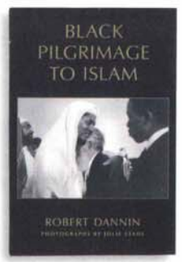


Arts of the Islamic World: A Teacher's Guide. 2002, Smithsonian Institution, [NO ISBN], $20 pb.
Orders: www.asia.si.edu/education.
This thoughtfully compiled resource comes with a beautiful set of 10 color art reproductions that can be passed around a class, hung on a wall or used in other ways. Fourteen brief, well-written "focus" chapters, activities and vocabulary all help educators employ the arts of the book, architecture and everyday objects as points of entry into understandings of Islam that are both cultural and religious—an approach that often proves more successful than a purely religious one. Lesson plans are pitched to levels from elementary to high school.

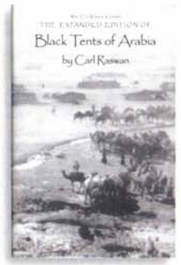


At Empire's Edge: Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier. Robert B. Jackson. Yale University, 0-300-08856-6, $40 hb.
Oman-based historian Robert Jackson has spent a lot of time over some two decades tramping through the deserts of Egypt. His favorite historical period is the Graeco-Roman—specifically from about 29 BC to the start of the Byzantine period in the late fifth century. He has tracked down an amazing collection of ruins and sites from this period, and compiled them in this appealing book, which is part history, part gazetteer, part explorer's adventure. It is packed with Jackson's fine photos of Roman ruins from across Egypt, most of which cover sites you've probably never seen. Jackson divides his subject into three geographical areas: the Eastern Desert, the Upper Nile Valley and the Western Desert. He explores the Red Sea coast, Roman stone quarries, the Porphyry Road, the desert trade routes. He visits the temples and fortresses of Roman Nubia. He catalogues Roman ruins in the inhabited depressions or oases of the Western Desert: the Great Oasis (Rome's term for the united oases of Kharga and Dakhleh), the Small Oasis (the united oases of Bahariya and Farafra) and of course Siwa, home of the famed oracle. Two aspects of the book stand out. First, it covers a lot of territory and gives you a good idea of just how extensive the Roman presence in Egypt actually was. Second, Jackson manages to keep us entertained along the way, supplementing his impressive array of hard facts with a good sprinkling of anecdotes, oddities and historical mysteries.
—ROBERT W. LEBLING, JR.

"Believing Women" in Islam. Asma Barlas. 2002, University of Texas, 0-292-70904-8, $21.95 pb.
The author, professor of politics and interim director of the Center for the Study of Culture, Race and Ethnicity at Ithaca College, New York, discusses the relationship of the Qur'an to the cultures that received, believed and socially interpreted its message. To the question whether Islam's scripture teaches or condones gender inequality or oppression of women, her reply is an emphatic negative. Moreover, she contends, the Word of God in the Qur'an clearly tells Muslims that men and women are equals, and practices to the contrary are thus matters of culture, not religion.

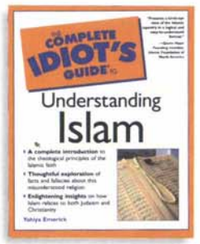


***Black Pilgrimage to Islam.** Robert Dannin; photographs Jolie Stahl. 2002, Oxford University, 0-19-514734-0, $35 hb.
Fifteen years of research have gone into the most comprehensive, candid and well-written social history of African-American Islam to date. The author's experience as a journalist and, more recently, teacher of urban anthropology at New York University shows as he brings facts and personalities to life. From the working-class and depressed urban neighborhoods to college campuses, community organizations and prisons, Dannin investigates the surprising range of expressions that Islam has taken, all the while inquiring how Islam has aided people seeking to overcome a legacy of slavery and racial oppression. His travels, conversations and readings show that the Nation of Islam, which commands a disproportionate share of national media attention, is but a thread in a much larger design, which is itself a rich element in the social tapestry of the United States.

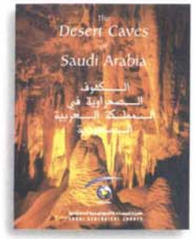


Black Tents of Arabia: My Life Among the Bedouins. Carl R. Raswan. 2003, Xlibris, 1-4010-5797-7, $34.99 hb; 1-4010-5796-9, $24.99 pb.
This is an expanded edition of the book first published in 1935, in which the author recounts his desert experiences in pursuit of knowledge of the Arabian horse. He later used what he learned to become a principal agent in building up the breed in the United States and Europe in the 20th century. Traveling in the Arabian Peninsula shortly before the founding of Saudi Arabia in 1932, Raswan was renowned among the tribes for his deep respect of Bedouin ways, especially horsemanship and horse breeding. Born in Dresden in 1893, he emigrated to the United States in 1921, where he assisted in the historic Davenport importation and with the establishment of the country's earliest Arabian stud farms. This edition contains 100 pages of photographs.

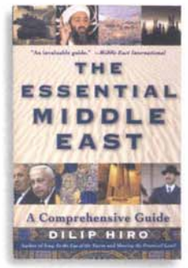
the bullet collection. Patricia Sarrafian Ward. 2003, Graywolf Press, 1-55597-376-0, $25.00 hb.
"The magic of Lebanon infects any person born there and any visitor who steps onto the land for even just one day," writes Patricia Ward in her story about troubled teenage sisters in war-torn Beirut. The narrator, Marianna, and her sister are the offspring of an American/Armenian marriage. In this deeply personal coming-of-age novel, each sister struggles to survive a near-fatal depression that is her own internal civil war. Marianna tells how her world grows smaller and smaller, until there is only her room—and then only her memories of a Lebanon both real and imagined. The adults in the sisters' lives inhabit an unreal world of denial, where civil war and depression are interspersed with hopeful truces, and family gatherings in the fresh piney mountains above the city promise that all will soon be well. The sisters know better—or do they? "What is this magic, this country that insists on being remembered even after forcing us to leave?" Good memories and bad can be equally haunting, and even when Ward writes of despair, her prose is lyrically poetic.
—WILLIAM TRACY



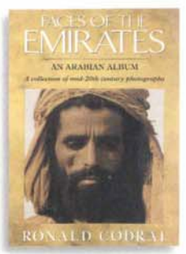
***The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam.** Yahiya Emerick. 2003, Alpha Books, 0-02-864233-3, $18.95 pb.
Don't be put off by the self-deprecating series title: This is one smart book, written in a conversational tone like talking to an interesting guest at a backyard barbecue. The author is a US-born convert who has done some serious homework without going pedantic along the way. A solidly interior understanding of the faith of a billion people is a complicated thing, and Emerick and Alpha know that, so to help you along, they've created one of the most efficiently packaged books in the "Islam 101" genre. Not only is it all here—faith, history, cultures and life styles; squirmy issues like sectarianism, colonialism, the "inner-struggle" meaning of *jihad*, heaven-hell-and-judgment—but also to help you navigate it, there are *two* tables of contents, a short version and a long one. Topical infographics with titles like "Just the Facts" and "Ask the Imam" pop up as intellectual snack food, and at the end of each chapter there is a box "The Least You Need to Know" that offers bulleted Cliff-Notes–style one-liners. Who'd pass up a book like this? Only a complete idiot.



The Desert Caves of Saudi Arabia. John Pint, Saudi Geological Survey. 2003, Stacey International, 1-900988-48-8, £25 hb.
This book introduces us to a truly unexpected natural wonder: the cool, dark, mysterious caves that underlie the deserts of east-central Saudi Arabia. Our guide is John Pint of the Saudi Geological Survey's Cave Exploration Unit (www.saudicaves.com). This large-format book showcases the dramatic photography collected over two decades during the exploration of limestone caves, caverns, sink holes and tunnels in the Umm-er-Radhuma formation, many located at the edge of the Dahna Desert, on the Summan Plateau. Pint tips his hat to a long line of explorers who preceded him, including Aramco's Max Steineke and Tom Barger, but he deserves credit for pioneering the systematic exploration of these caves, and for promoting their protection for future generations of Saudis and foreigners. He chronicles with lush photographs and spare English and Arabic text more than 20 years of cave exploration in Saudi Arabia and covers 11 major caves, including Ain Hit near al-Kharj, a sinkhole that leads to a vast aquifer, where divers have encountered what may be the clearest water anywhere in the world. Pint also highlights the joint cave exploration project of King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals and the Austrian Academy of Sciences. —ROBERT W. LEBLING, JR.

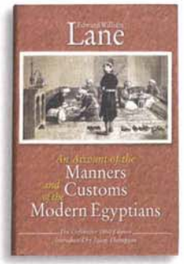


The Essential Middle East: A Comprehensive Guide. Dilip Hiro. 2003, Carroll & Graf, 0-7867-1269-4, $17.95 pb.
Newly revised and updated, this volume is a handy reference to the people, policies and issues dominating headlines today, but is lamentably short on cultural entries. Hiro, a prolific author and frequent commentor on Middle Eastern and Islamic affairs, focuses in this work on personalities who reached adulthood around the turn of the 20th century, so readers seeking greater historical depth should look elsewhere. Arranged alphabetically, the more than 1050 entries include succinct, straightforward treatments of topics ranging from religious and political ideologies through languages, the oil and gas industry, international agreements and historical places, to profiles of notable people and of every country in the region, defined here as Iran, the countries of the Fertile Crescent, the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt. —KYLE PAKKA

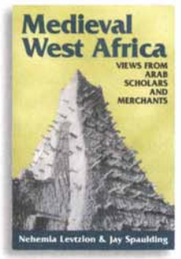


Faces of the Emirates: An Arabian Album. Ronald Codrai. 2001, Motivate, 1-86063-120-7, AED 185, hb. (Priced in UAE dirhams and, at press time, available only from the publisher or www.booksarabia.com.)
The author arrived in Dubai in 1948, when the emirate was part of the Trucial States (it became part of the United Arab Emirates in 1971), and he oversaw some of the first oil explorations there. But he was also a determined amateur photographer, and this is the last of a half dozen books of his photographs, edited posthumously by his son following Codrai's death in 2000. The mid-century portraits of rulers and members of various tribes, of shops, social customs and date farming, and the views of Dubai in the 1950's and 1960's are all two-way mirrors: Look one way and glimpse time past in a dramatically changed region; look the other way and see, in the bright exuberance of Codrai's imagery, a western visitor's humble fascination with people he came to respect deeply, and his desire that others, too, might see through his eyes.

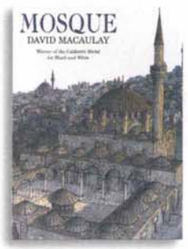
The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians. Edward William Lane. 2003, American University in Cairo, 977-424-748-1, $39.50 hb.
A landmark work of cultural anthropology, Lane's study of Egyptian society



has never been out of print since it was first issued in 1836. The definitive fifth edition of 1860, the basis of this reissue, was the result of a quarter-century of Lane's corrections, reconsiderations and additions and includes 131 illustrations by Lane, most made with the aid of a camera lucida. Lane (1801–1876) first traveled to Egypt in 1825, inspired by the discoveries made by Belzoni and others in the Valley of the Kings, but it was contemporary life that captured his imagination. He immersed himself in the culture, learning its language and adopting its way of life. The results were extraordinary: Out of his experiences came not only this work, but translations of *The Thousand and One Nights*, *Selections from the Qur'an* and the seminal *Arabic-English Lexicon*. Composed at a time of increased western interest in and contact with Egypt, but before the forces of modernization transformed the country, *Manners and Customs* is renowned for its comprehensive scope, detail and perceptiveness on such topics as Islamic laws and government, festivals, death and funeral rites, marriage, music, dancing, magic and alchemy, public baths and bargaining. Lane's work retains its power to charm and amaze—much like Egypt itself. —KYLE PAKKA



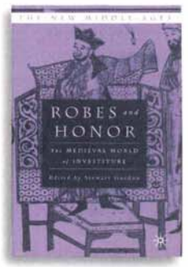
Medieval West Africa: Views from Arab Scholars and Merchants. Nehemia Levtzion and Jay Spaulding. 2003, Markus Wiener, 1-55876-304-X, $44.95 hb; 1-55876-305-8, $22.95 pb.
This is a "greatest hits" distillation of culturally informative passages from the writings of some 22 Muslim scholars from the ninth to the 15th century, drawn largely from Levtzion's comprehensive *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History* (2000, Markus Wiener). These were centuries when West African kingdoms grew wealthy on growing trade with the Muslim world, which then reached from Morocco to China, and the climate in much of West Africa was more temperate than today. This compact, 125-page volume is a useful introduction to the best writing that has survived, from the well-known passages of Ibn Battuta and Ibn Khaldun to many that will be new to all but the most dedicated scholars.



Mosque. David Macaulay. 2003, Houghton Mifflin, 0-618-24034-9, $18 hb.
As the author has shown in numerous award-winning books—*Cathedral*, *Pyramid* and *City*, to name a few—his unique gift is the ability to show how monumental historical creations have been fabricated through wonderfully complex sequences of logical steps. This book fits neatly into that lineage, which could seem formulaic by now if each book were anything less than fascinating. Though the mosque, architect and patron in his story are all fictional, the book is set in Istanbul between 1540 and 1580, during the lifetime of Sinan, the most renowned architect of the Ottoman Empire. The author remains faithful to that history and imparts genuine awe at the resulting beauty.

***Muhammad.** Demi. 2003, Margaret K. McElderry Books / Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 0-689-85264-9, $19.95 hb.
Sensitive prose and detailed, beautiful illustrations in the style of Persian miniatures make this one of the best books for young readers (and old) seeking an introductory biographical sketch of the Prophet Muhammad and the story of the origins of Islam. What is most remarkable is that the author presents this story as it is widely understood within Islam—her sources and book-jacket endorsements are all Muslims—yet in a way that illuminates that understanding for non-Muslims.

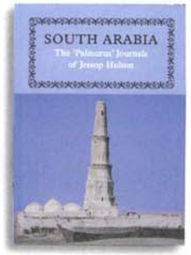
The Road From Damascus: A Journey Through Syria. Scott C. Davis. 2001, Cune Press, 1-885942-84-2, $29.95 hb; 1-885942-53-2, $17.95 pb.
In 1987, the author boarded a flight to Damascus to spend three months pursuing a dream as a travel writer. No hotels-and-sightseeing dilettante, he kept extensive notes as he traveled the streets and visited homes and offices in a country that in that year was far more security-conscious than the one he found when he returned in early 2001. He writes candidly, sometimes quoting at too much length, but quickly shows himself to be good company for a reader. His intrepid honesty and his sincere desire to illuminate the grassroots realities of a nation too often branded with stereotypes are admirable.



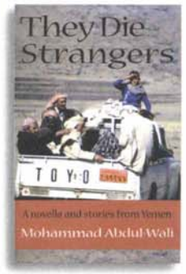
Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture. Stewart Gordon, ed. 2001, Palgrave (The New Middle Ages Series), 0-312-21230-5, $59.95 hb.
Investiture is the ancient practice of bestowing robes of honor on a deserving person, often by a king or other leader to someone who has shown loyalty or fealty or has achieved great distinction. The practice apparently originated among nomads of Central Asia. It spread east to Tibet, China, Japan and Korea, and west across Persia to the Arab world, Byzantium, North Africa, Eastern Europe and beyond. This colorful collection of academic articles examines numerous historical examples of investiture and the interesting parallels between honorific robing in medieval Christianity and in medieval Islam. Robing became widespread among the Abbasids of Baghdad, and was popular among the Fatimids and Mamluks of Egypt and the Mughals of India. Some Muslim holy men used a robe called the *khirqa* as a symbol of spiritual authority. While the robing tradition failed to take hold among most royalty of Western Europe, it did assume great importance for the papacy and the cardinals of the medieval Church. The book features an informative article on the famous mantle or robe of King Roger II of Sicily, a 12th-century Norman ruler with strong links to the Arab and Islamic world. This stunning red robe, now in Vienna, bears embroidered lions, camels, a date palm tree and a long Arabic inscription about its origins, and was used for centuries in coronation ceremonies of the Holy Roman Empire. —ROBERT W. LEBLING, JR.

The Sand Kingdoms of Oman, Being the Experiences of an R.A.F. Officer in the Little Known Regions of Trucial Oman Arabia. Raymond O'Shea. 2001, Columbia University, 0-7103-0675-X, $110 hb.
This memoir, covering the period 1944–1945 in what is now the United Arab Emirates, "is not intended to be a geographical, historical or ethnological treatise. It is simply a travel book, ... a diary of my day-to-day life...." Its strength lies in O'Shea's firsthand insights into the region at the end of World War II, when he was seconded to the British Overseas Airways Corporation (precursor of British Airways) in Sharjah, on the strategically important Cairo-to-Karachi route. He writes of an era when flying boats served the area, the impact of oil and gas discoveries had only begun to be felt, and industrial development was a dim dot on the horizon. O'Shea is remarkably perceptive when making a case for agricultural development, investment in education or even the study of seashells in the region, and offers detailed descriptions of fortifications and social customs. But reality has outstripped his imagination: He notes that financiers "had better think again" if they believe the airfield at Sharjah "is likely to become the 'Heath Row' of the Middle East"—which it has.

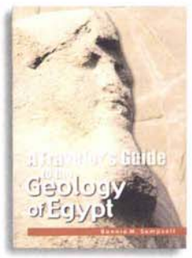
Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination. John V. Tolan. 2002, Columbia University, 0-231-12333-7, $24.50 pb.
This scholarly survey of anti-Muslim polemics in the Middle Ages shows how Christian views of Muslims evolved from the seventh to the 13th century and set the stage for the Orientalist misconceptions that survive in the West to this day. The expansion of Islamic civilization into realms formerly ruled by Christians—including Byzantium and Spain—led Christian theologians and commentors to seek explanations for the changes that swept their world. At first, the rise of Islam was viewed as God's punishment of a wayward Christian flock. Then Christian writers began portraying Islam as a heresy designed to lure Christians away from their religious heritage. Christians outside the Islamic world, such as those in northern Europe, imagined that Islam must be a return to idolatry and paganism, and this misconception was used to help justify the Crusades and the reconquest of Spain. Medievalist Tolan shows how the relatively fluid European beliefs about Islam turned rigid in the 13th century, leading to strict laws that separated Christians from Muslims and produced even greater distortions in perception, and he suggests that this European "denigration of the other" is the dark side of Christian universalism. —ROBERT W. LEBLING, JR.



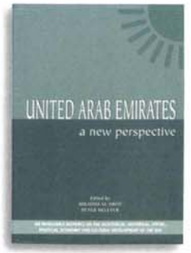
South Arabia, The 'Palinurus' Journals of Jessop Hulton, W. A. Hulton, ed. 2003, Oleander Press, 0-906672-29-5, $45 hb.
Dr. Jessop Hulton left London in 1832 at age 22, bound for military service in India. He became a ship's doctor, serving in the Arabian Gulf and on vessels surveying the strategic South Arabian and Socotran coasts. This book reprints his journals, which highlight in often fascinating detail his own explorations on stops from Muscat to Mocha. His section on Socotra, then being investigated as a coaling station for British ships steaming around the Cape of Good Hope to India, is particularly interesting. Most notable among Hulton's discoveries on the South Arabian mainland were inscriptions that ultimately helped decipher the script used by the Sabaeans, a pre-Islamic people whose capital was Marib and whose monuments dot the region. Indeed, Hulton was attempting to reach Marib when he fell ill in 1836; he died at sea aboard *Palinurus*, cutting short a remarkable career.



They Die Strangers. Mohammad Abdul-Wali; Abubaker Bagader and Deborah Akers, trs. 2001, University of Texas, 0-292-70508-5, $14.95 pb.
The book's eponymous novella and 13 short stories offer a passionate and ultimately autobiographical evocation of the life lived by many Yemenis as economic exiles abroad or in harsh conditions at home. The author, born in Ethiopia in 1940 to an Ethiopian mother and Yemeni shopkeeper father, was sent to study in Aden at age 14. He died in a plane crash in 1973. His vividly drawn characters grapple with issues arising from cultural displacement, poverty and fear of the unknown in a period of great political and social change in Yemen, yet the book has a wider and continuing resonance. In the novella, a nurse in Addis Ababa asks an Italian doctor shocked at the condition of his mortally ill Yemeni patient, "What else can these people do ... [but] leave their homes, country, family, to chase after a living?" Abdul-Wali's translators do a fine job capturing his realistic, efficiently phrased style in this first English publication of his work.



A Traveler's Guide to the Geology of Egypt. Bonnie M. Sampsell. 2003, American University in Cairo, 977-424-785 X, $22.50 pb.
Countless volumes have been devoted to the stone monuments of Egypt, but very few to the stones themselves. Sampsell draws interesting connections between geology and Egyptian society and how geological features influenced art, architecture and urban development. Indeed, the presence of so much building-stone in Egypt, but not in Mesopotamia, is perhaps the main reason the story of Egyptian history is better documented. With introductory chapters on geological processes, rock composition and formation, Sampsell sets the stage for an overview of Egypt's dramatic landscapes, region by region, from the corals of the Red Sea to the quartzite Colossi of Memnon in Luxor, and from the mountains of Sinai to the limestone blocks of the pyramids. Extensive maps, drawings, color photographs, a glossary and bibliography round out this impressive contribution to the still-emerging picture of one of history's greatest civilizations. Sampsell has written a book that sheds light on a basic, but often overlooked, aspect of ancient—truly ancient—Egypt that is a delight for the casual traveler and rockhound alike. —KYLE PAKKA



United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective. Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, eds. 1997 and 2001, Trident, 1-900724-47-2, £19.95 hb.
Fifteen chapters by diverse authors cover archeology, poetry, histories of tribal, colonial and independent eras, and the modern economy, industry and environment. Written for the specialist more than the general reader, this is nonetheless a valuable contribution to the resources available on the nation founded in 1971 by the confederation of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ra's al-Khaimah, Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain and Fujairah.

Veil: Veiling, Representation and Contemporary Art. David A. Bailey and Gilane Tawadros, eds. 2003, MIT Press, 0-262-52348-5, $25 / £16.95 pb.
From the hair and face coverings common in the Middle East to bridal costumes and nuns' habits in the West, the veil is "an item of clothing dramatically overburdened with symbolism ... [and] fought over by adherents and opponents," observes Reina Lewis in her introduction to this book, which is drawn from the Institute of International Visual Arts exhibition of the same name. Summarizing the work of 20 artists, and incorporating essays and several dozen literary excerpts from a kaleidoscope of viewpoints, the book offers insight into questions such as: Where did "the veil" come from? What are its meanings, in the East, in the West and in that growing, often exciting cultural space that is neither one nor the other? The editors challenge several notions common in the West: the veil as exclusively Middle Eastern, the veil as "Islamic," the veil as a barrier to social rights for women, and the interpretation of choosing to veil or not as equivalent to choosing "oppression" on the one hand or "freedom" on the other.

West of the Jordan. Laila Halaby. 2003, Beacon Press, 0-8070-8359-3, $13.00 pb.
This insightful first novel by Jordanian-American author Laila Halaby shows that the influences that shape the lives of many Arab women are the same ones that affect their American sisters: upbringing, religion, the urban-rural divide and economic and educational circumstance. Halaby writes about four young Arab women, cousins with deep family roots in Palestine. One still lives in the occupied West Bank, one is torn between her family in Jordan and her studies in Arizona, and two live with their immediate families in unfamiliar California. The novel speaks through different voices in successive chapters, and the chapters overlap in the narrators' shared memories of their collective extended family: grandparents and a spectrum of aunts and uncles, cousins, brothers and sisters. Halaby interweaves the women's stories, allowing us to see each cousin from multiple points of view. Her dialogue is comfortably authentic, whether traditional or transplanted. The four women relive the oft-repeated legends of their origins in Palestine: tales of births, weddings and funerals captured in photo albums and replayed on videotapes. Individual lives become fragments in a rich and intricate mosaic as the larger family history unfolds. —WILLIAM TRACY

Reader's Guide

BY JULIE WEISS

This two-page guide offers springboards, arranged thematically, that will help sharpen your reading skills and deepen your understanding of this issue's articles. We encourage reproduction and adaptation of these ideas, freely and without further permission from *Saudi Aramco World*, by all interested readers, especially teachers and students.

—THE EDITORS

Understanding What You Read

Pre-Reading Activities

An easy way to improve reading comprehension is to do something you probably already do: Flip through the magazine. Start with the Table of Contents. Look at the pictures, and read about the five articles. Which one intrigues you most? Go to the article. Read the headline. Look at the pictures. Read the captions. Jot down a few notes about what the article seems to be about, and a question or two you hope it will answer.

Reading-Comprehension Questions

The following activities are here to sharpen your reading by pointing you toward the most important parts of the articles. Complete them as written, or another way if it will work better for you.

"History's Curve" (pages 2–11)

One fast way to grasp the content of "History's Curve" is to create graphic organizers—visual ways to show a lot of information.

- First, make a timeline. Start at 30,000 BC and continue to the present, when Lukas Novotny is making a bow. Show dates that were important in the history of the recurved bow, and label each with its significance. Be sure to include: 3000 BC, 546 BC, 64 BC, AD 700's, AD 1788 and AD 1835. Continue to the present, noting the development of modern bow-making.
- Now turn your attention to the description of how Novotny makes a composite recurved bow. Make a flow chart that shows the sequence of his actions. (Note that not all of the steps he follows are shown in the photo sequence on pages 8 and 9!)You could use a variety of colors and/or shapes to show problems he had to overcome and adjustments he had to make due to constraints, such as available materials.

"Granada's New *Convivencia*" (pages 12–20)

What does *convivencia* mean? Does the story tell you? Check your response in a Spanish dictionary, in your library or on line. Why is this word important to the story?

Consider the word picture the author creates describing the scene on *La Caldería Nueva*: Who is there? What are they doing? Which languages do they speak? What might the scene resemble to you? How is *La Caldería Nueva* different from the way it used to be? When and how did it happen?

Consider the history in the article. When did Muslims begin ruling southern Spain? What was Córdoba like at its peak? When was that? What was Granada like at its peak? When was that? What is the Alhambra? When did Muslim rule end in *al-Andalus*? How many Muslims live in Granada now? Where did they come from? What is the new Mosque of Granada like? Why isn't it much bigger? What is the Pavilion of the Arts like? What does EAMS stand for? What is its aim? What is the Legacy of al-Andalus Foundation, and what has it done?

"Islam: FAQs" (pages 21–28)

Put each of the following topics at the top of a page. As you read the different sections of the FAQs, list your notes on the appropriate pages.

- Statistical Information (numbers, locations, etc.)
- Origins of Islam
- What Muslims Believe
- Differences Within Islam
- Connections to Judaism and Christianity
- Connections Between Islam and Society (e.g., women, justice)

Analyzing Visual Images

We spend a lot of our time looking at visual images—on television and computer screens, in newspapers and magazines, in art galleries and on billboards. Most of us enjoy them without thinking too much about them. It's a good idea, though, to be able to look at visual images with a critical eye: How was this image made? What is its creator trying to communicate? Why? What draws you in? How? What do you get from it? The photograph on pages 12 and 13 shows a panoramic, landscape view of the Albaicín district of Granada. The photograph on page 19 shows a sidewalk café.

Use these questions to help you compare and contrast the two photos.

- If you were the photographer shooting the panoramic picture, where would you be standing? Why might you want to take a panoramic shot of Granada to illustrate this story? What are the benefits of such a picture? Drawbacks?
- Where does your eye go first when you look at the picture? What draws it there—light? color? a particular object?

Class Activities

The activities in this section are designed to engage students with the material in *Saudi Aramco World* while encouraging them to connect it to the larger themes they explore in their other studies. This month's activities revolve around two basic concepts: **History** and **Symbols**.

Theme: History

What is history? It's the stories we tell about the past. Historians are a bit like detectives: They search for evidence and then use it to figure out what they think happened in the past. In other words, what changed, why did it change, and why did some of it remain the same?

What changes? What remains the same?

In everything a historian studies, there is either change or continuity—or, usually, some of both. Changes makes news: If you grew three inches taller since last year, that's news. Once you reach adulthood and your height doesn't change any more—well, ho hum. No more news. But not so for historians, who are as interested in what remains the same as they are in what changes. What conditions make it possible for some things to remain the same?

"Islam: FAQs" provides a story of Islam's past and present. It is in many ways a picture of remarkable continuity. This is worth looking at; after all, if there were only change, what would define Islam—or anything? Continuity is necessary for identity.

Make a timeline that starts with the revelation of Islam. Note that its beginnings marked a change from Judaism and Christianity. On the timeline, note other historical moments when change came to Islam, such as the rise of the Nation of Islam in the 1930's. Now, turning your attention to continuity, make a list of aspects of Islam that have not changed over time. What do the items on your list have in common? Add them to the timeline so that your graphic shows both change and continuity.

What causes change?

"History's Curve" presents one compelling view of change: a technological invention—in this case the composite recurved bow—"has, time and again, changed the course of history." (See page 3.) Think about it—a tool that changed the course of history! As a class, brainstorm a list of technological inventions you have used in the past week that have changed the course of history. Examples: the Internet, microwave ovens, penicillin, electricity, airplanes. Divide the class into pairs and assign each pair one invention. With your partner, write a dialogue between someone living today and someone who lived before your invention existed. Have today's person explain the invention to the person from the past, who will probably have a difficult time understanding what it does. (Imagine telling someone from 50 years ago that you could cook a full meal in three minutes by putting it into a box and pushing a few buttons!) Have the person from the past ask the questions a stranger to 2003 would probably ask. Act out your dialogue in front of the class.

Like the difference between a panoramic photograph and a close-up, "Granada's New *Convivencia*" presents a local historical story of intimate, short-term change. Think about a big historical change that happened recently, or that is happening now. How many can you name? How is it affecting your school or community? What caused it? Think about the immediate causes of the change, as well as causes that may have been brewing for quite some time. Then think about a smaller change. What caused it? Write a short statement (no more than a page) explaining the changes and how they came about.

Theme: Symbols

You find symbols in novels and plays you read in English class. Famous writers sometimes seem to have had a codebook telling them that water symbolized the unconscious and that butterflies symbolized change. Symbols seem to be a kind of shorthand where a common, everyday object stands for something bigger, often an idea. Symbols are everywhere, because human beings think symbolically. Red octagons symbolize stopping. Eagles symbolize Philadelphia's football team. What we wear symbolizes: a man's tie; a boy's backwards baseball cap. Religions have symbols; so do political parties.

Symbolic Actions

What we do can be symbolic, too. "Islam: FAQs" describes the ritual cleansing Muslims perform before prayers. Why clean hands, face and feet? What makes it clear that the cleaning is not necessarily about physical hygiene? Based on the material in the special section, what other symbolic actions are unique to Islam? What are some symbolic actions you take? What do they stand for? Why do you do them? Example: waving to greet someone.

Symbolic Objects

"Granada's New *Convivencia*" finds symbolic meaning in the city's buildings, such as the Alhambra and the new Granada Mosque. What does each symbolize? How would you describe the symbolism in the art of Miguel Ruíz Jiménez?

Julie Weiss is an education consultant based in Eliot, Maine. She holds a Ph.D. in American studies and develops curricula and assessments in social studies, media literacy and English as a Second Language.

- What colors predominate? What shapes? How would you describe this part of Granada based on the photograph? Are there clues in this photograph to what other parts of Granada might look like?
- A landscape picture needs a horizon to orient the viewer. Without this horizontal line, the photo would lack the context you need to make sense of it. What benefit did the photographer get from shooting this picture with the horizon so high in the frame?
- Now look at the photo of the sidewalk café on page 19. Where is the photographer now? What are the benefits of taking a picture like this? What are the drawbacks? What is this picture saying?

- Consider the foreground and background of the picture. Describe everything you see in the foreground. Why do you think the photographer included as much background as he did? What function does the background serve? How is it similar to and/or different from the horizon in the panoramic picture?
- Which picture do you like more? Why?
- Imagine you are photographing your community to show someone what it is like in half a dozen photographs. Where would you stand to make a panoramic shot? Where would you go to take close shots? What would you include? What would you exclude?

Events&Exhibitions

A rare 27-mm oval pearl from the horse conch forms the abdomen of a tarantula brooch designed by Stefan Hemmerle and intended to be worn on the shoulder.

Pearls: A Natural History features more than 600 ornaments and half a million pearls in an exhibition that combines nature, science, history, art and glamour. Visitors enter by stepping into a virtual undersea environment, where they can explore the inner nature of pearls through scanning electron microscope images and view a "family tree" showing different kinds of mollusks—clams, oysters, mussels and scallops—and the pearls they produce. Videos and displays tell the story of small, family-run pearl farms in China as well as large cultured-pearl factories in Australia and Japan. A display case deals with oyster pearls from the Red Sea. Pearl ornaments ranging from jewelry produced by the Hopewell culture of the Ohio River Valley (200 BC–AD 500) to a pearl-and-gem necklace given to Queen Victoria by Prince Albert are among the decorative items featured. ⓘ www.hmns.org, 713-639-4629. **Houston** Museum of Natural Science, September 27 through January 18.

The Cinema of Central Asia is the first comprehensive retrospective of films from the five newly independent countries between the Middle East and China.
- "The Fierce One" by Tolomush Okeev (1973, Russian with English subtitles), 7 p.m., September 26.
- "Takhir and Zukhra" by Nabi Ganiev (1945, Russian with English subtitles), 2 p.m., September 28.

The Middle East Institute will present a series of afternoon talks in association with the films. ⓘ www.mideasti.org or 202-785-1141. National Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**

Thematic Tours focus on particular artifacts and aspects of the museum's collections. *The Strange and the Marvelous in Islamic Lands* is one theme (September 15, 22 and 29 at 2:30 p.m.). Other topics include *Egyptian Science* (September 17 and 24 at 7:45 p.m.); *Women in Ancient Egypt* (November 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 2:30 p.m.); and *Religion in Ancient Egypt* (December 3, 10 and 17 at 2:30 p.m.). *Ancient Carthage From Hannibal to St. Augustine* is one of the museum's Monday Evening Themes programs, September 29 at 7:45 p.m. Musée du Louvre, **Paris.**

The Decoration of the Palace of Sedrata focuses on a group of six stucco panels uncovered in the 1950's in the ruins of a 10th-century palace in the desert region of Ouargla in Algeria. The panels' imaginative geometric designs combine Abbasid influences with elements of local patterns of ornamentation, and are the first evidence for the existence of palace architecture in Algeria. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, September 17 to January 5.

Tanagra: Myth and Archeology surveys the painted terra-cotta figurines named after an ancient city in Boetia (Greece), whose necropolis was uncovered during excavations in the early 1870's. The figurines were much sought after in the 19th century, giving rise to great rivalries among major museums and private collectors, in part because they seemed to evoke an image of antiquity that was more everyday, more decorative and less rigorously classical than commonly perceived. Although the earliest examples were created in Athens around 330 BC and represented a departure from the artistic conventions of the time, some of the finest specimens of these figures came from Tanagra and were exported all around the Mediterranean by the late fourth century BC. (A related lecture on the tanagras of Alexandria will take place in Liard Amphitheater, Sorbonne University, October 1 at 12:30 p.m.) Catalog. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, September 18 through January 5.

Burdens and Joys of Tradition(s): The Descendents of Sarah and Hagar in Conversation is a roundtable discussion among four women—a Muslim, a Christian, a Jew and a representative of a political organization—about their respective experiences with power and tradition. Women often experience limitations in their political and religious lives imposed by long-standing cultural traditions which are often dominated by men, yet which they do not wish to abandon. The path between extremes, the rediscovery of liberating elements and the search for new traditions make for a difficult balancing act. ⓘ www.ex-oriente.com. Vicarate-General, **Aachen**, Germany, 7 p.m., September 19.

Butabu: Adobe Architecture in West Africa features large black-and-white photographs by James Morris that illustrate the creative ways architects in West Africa shape earth and water into works of art and feats of engineering. Among the Batammaliba peoples of Togo, the term *butabu* describes the process of moistening earth with water in preparation for building. The exhibition dispels the misconception that African architecture comprises little more than mud huts. Included are buildings from Mali, Niger, Togo and Burkina Faso. Brunei Gallery, School of Oriental and African Studies, **London**, through September 19.

Teaching About the Arab World and Islam is the theme of teacher workshops cosponsored 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, school district, office of education or university. ⓘ www.mepc.org, www.awaironline.org. Sites and dates include: **Carmel, California**, September 19–21; **Salt Lake City**, September 27; **Austin, Texas**, October 3–4; **Philadelphia**, October 17–18; **Cincinnati**, October 24–25; **Anchorage, Alaska**, November 8; **McPherson, Kansas**, November 15; and **Willington, Connecticut**, November 18.

Rug and Textile Appreciation Mornings feature experts discussing "Pile Carpets from the Caucasus," September 20; and "Central Asian Tent Bands," September 27. Visitors are invited to bring relevant clean, well-vacuumed examples. Talks are at 10:30 a.m. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**

Eternal Egypt: Masterworks of Ancient Art from the British Museum displays some 150 pieces spanning 3000 years of Egyptian history. The exhibition includes colossal sculptures—such as the three-ton red granite Lion of Amenhotep III and a large standing statue of Ramesses the Great—as well as masterworks in wood, terra-cotta, gold, glass, bronze and papyrus. Egyptologists will lead a daylong symposium entitled "Tradition and Innovation: Artists in Ancient Egypt" on opening day. ⓘ www.thewalters.org. Walters Art Museum, **Baltimore**, September 21 through January 18.

In Hope and Despair: Life in the Palestinian Refugee Camps exhibits 28 photographs by Swedish journalist Mia Gröndahl documenting the lives of the residents of Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Sony Gallery for Photography, Adham Center, American University in **Cairo**, September 21 through October 16.

Fabric of Moroccan Life displays 67 fine and important North African weavings, reflecting the broad range of textile traditions that are part of the cultures of Morocco from the 18th to the 20th century. The exhibit is drawn from the Niblack Collection of the Indianapolis Museum of Art. National Museum of African Art, **Washington, D.C.**, through September 21.

Omar Bashir, a well-known *'ud* musician, will play traditional Iraqi music mixed with jazz-like improvisations at 6 p.m. Kennedy Center, **Washington, D.C.**, September 22.

The Dawn of Photography: French Daguerreotypes, 1839–1855 features some 175 of the best surviving examples of the medium that changed the history of art and visual representation. Photographic pioneers used daguerreotypes for artistic, scientific, ethnographic and documentary purposes. Catalog on CD-ROM. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, September 23 through January 4.

German History and the Conflict in the Near East is a roundtable discussion among Arab, Jewish and German participants moderated by Prof. Wolfgang Dressen, a specialist in neo-Nazism and intercultural politics. 6 p.m. ⓘ marielusie.syring@museum-kunst-palace.de. Museum Kunst Palast, **Dusseldorf, Germany**, September 25.

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. ⓘ www.aff.org. Films are shown in **San Francisco, Berkeley** and **San Jose, California**, September 26–29 and October 3–5.

HOUSTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE

Ex Oriente: Isaac and the White Elephant: Baghdad, Jerusalem, Aachen: A Journey Through Three Cultures in the Year 800 and Today. In the year 797, the Frankish king Charles I (Charlemagne) sent two envoys, accompanied by Isaac, a Jewish interpreter and merchant, on a journey from Aachen to the court of the caliph Harun al-Rashid in Baghdad. It was a journey through diverse cultures that taught the Christian and Jewish travelers and the Muslims they traveled among the value of their differences. On his return, Isaac brought Charles—who had meanwhile been crowned Holy Roman Emperor—a white elephant named Abu al-Abbas as a gift from the caliph. That return journey through the Holy Land, and the cultural intersection that it represented, is the center of this exhibition. City Hall and Cathedral, **Aachen, Germany**, through September 28.

Lost Egypt: Images of a Vanished Past, a collection of some 30 photographs dating from 1880 to 1930, provides unique documentation of Egypt of that period. The large-format glass-plate negatives carrying images of monuments, people, street scenes and farmers in their fields were recovered in 1985 when University of Chicago researchers were invited to view a collection of 800 negatives stored in an attic in Luxor. Most are the work of anonymous photographers. They can be seen at www-oi.uchicago.edu/OI/MUS/PA/EGYPT/BEES/BEES.html. Oriental Institute Museum, University of **Chicago**, through September.

From the Heart of Persia features 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.

"The Warm Light Is Still There" and "Negative Incursion," two online photo exhibitions by Palestinian photographic artist Rula Halawani, are presented by Al-Madad Foundation through September. www.almadad-foundation.org/exhibition/content.html, through September.

Middle East Festival of the Arts: Daanah—Music from the Middle East presents Saudi and Arabian Gulf folk and pop music by a "women's band" as heard at traditional women's wedding parties in the region. The troupe (whose name refers both to a rare black pearl and a beautiful woman) consists of Arab and American women performing with violin, *'ud, qanun, nay*, drums and voice. Band member Kay Campbell will teach a women-only folk-dance class before the concert; a Middle Eastern fashion show will follow. ⓘ kaycam@aol.com, www.umass.edu/fac/calendar/asian/events/MiddleEast.html. Fine Arts Center, University of **Massachusetts** at **Amherst**, 8 p.m., October 3.

Antoin Sevruguin and the Persian Image, a Smithsonian traveling exhibition, presents a glimpse into the history of Iran through the eyes of one of that country's most creative photographers. Sevruguin, who lived mainly in Tehran from the late 1830's to 1933, was influenced by both western and eastern artistic traditions and brought a new sense of artistry to Iranian photography. He served the royal court and also ran a public studio. Museum of Lifestyle and Fashion History, **Delray Beach, Florida**, October 4 through November 30.

Luxury Textiles East and West celebrates the 50th anniversary of the museum's costume and textiles department with a tripartite presentation highlighting more than 75 items dating from the 14th through the 20th centuries, including an Ottoman sultan's ceremonial barbering apron, a Mughal velvet tent and an Indonesian gilded wedding skirt. The exhibitions are "Ceremony and Celebration," presenting ritual garments and ceremonial textiles, through October 5; "Dress and Identity," displaying textiles indicating rank or status, October 30 through July 5; and "Opulent Interiors," August 2004 through April 2005. **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art.

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.

Children's Stories from Lebanon and Palestine by Theresa Amoon, Jahid Darwiche, Salim Daw and Praline Gay-Para will be read as part of activities to mark the opening of a new Islamic Arts Department at the Louvre, **Paris**, October 8, November 12, December 10 and January 21.

Gallery Lectures: Current Archeological Research present practicing archeologists and experts speaking on their recent discoveries. "Persian or Mediterranean? Research on the Location of Production Sites of Silks of Sassanid Design," Sophie Desrosiers, November 5; "Thought and Sign in Mesopotamia," Jean-Jacques Glassner, November 12; "Research on Attalid Portraits," François Queyrel, November 26; "Samarkand," Yuri Karev, December 3; "Gilgamesh and Symbolic Thought," Jean-Daniel Forest, January 21. All talks at 12:30 p.m.; the Liard Amphitheater, Sorbonne University, **Paris.**

Ancient Coins and Archeology: The Art of Portraiture and Ancient Monuments on Coins are seminars that examine representations of actual people on coins, including the Hellenistic rulers from Alexander III to Cleopatra, and Greek and Roman coins that provide the best contemporary snapshots of such monuments as the Pharos of Alexandria, contributing greatly to knowledge of the past. ⓘ 617-495-4544. October 9 and October 16, respectively. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts.**

The Aga Khan Lecture Series: A Forum for Islamic Art and Architecture will present free lectures from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Museum.
- "My Sultan, My Self: The Tale of Saladin and Torello in Renaissance Domestic Painting" (October 9);
- "When Literature and Architecture Meet: Intersection of Poems and Monuments in 16th-Century Istanbul" (October 23);
- "Iconomania and Iconophobia in Afghanistan: Religious and Political Images from Zaher Shah to Bin Laden" (November 13);
- "A String of Pearls: Cross-Currencies between Africa and Andalusia in the Era of Al-Sahili, Granada's Early 14th-Century Architect in the Court of Mali" (December 4);
- "Chinoiserie Ceramics in the Muslim World: Telling Them Apart" (December 11);
- "Kerman, the 'Miniature' Isfahan: A Study in Urban History" (December 12).

ⓘ 617-495-2355. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, from October 9 through December 12.

The Egyptian Temple: Rites and Architecture is a workshop that uses a diorama, models and simulations of Medinet Habou in Upper Egypt to help visitors understand the methods architects of antiquity used to solve construction problems. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, October 10 at 10 a.m., November 12 and 26 and December 10 at 6:30 p.m.

Diversity in Harmony is an exhibition of work by 17 artists of Arab and Middle Eastern heritage who live in the United States, Canada and Britain. It focuses on the effects of multicultural exposure to their work in painting, ceramics, video art, calligraphy and sculpture. Berkowitz Gallery, Mardigan Library, University of **Michigan, Dearborn**, through October 10.

The Hunt for Paradise: Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501–1576 explores the origins and evolution of the distinctive Safavid style that emerged during the first half of the 16th century. The show focuses on the great hunting carpet by Ghyas al Din Jami in the Poldi Pezzoli Museum and includes other carpets, ceramics, metalwork, lacquer and hardstones, as well as important examples of the arts of the book. Asia Society, **New York**, October 12 through January 18; Poldi Pezzoli Museum, **Milan**, February 23 through June 28.

Meet the Author: Tom Bissell will discuss his sojourn in Uzbekistan as chronicled in *Chasing the Sea: Lost among the Ghosts of Empire in Central Asia*. Freer Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**, 7 p.m., October 7.

From Delacroix to Matisse: Drawings from the Algiers Museum of Fine Arts is part of a program of events celebrating "Djazaïr, Algerian Year in France." It features a selection of drawings from the Algiers Museum of Fine Arts highlighting Orientalist artists of the 19th and early 20th century, such as Algerian-born Eugène Delacroix, and some of the leading exponents of French drawing of the time. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, October 17 through January 19.

Treasures from Ancient Iraq highlights more than 2500 artifacts encompassing the period from 150,000 BC to AD 700. Included is the Yelda Khorsabad Court, a recreation of a section of the palace of Assyrian King Sargon II (721–705 BC). ⓘ 773-702-9514, www.oi.uchicago.edu. Oriental Institute, University of **Chicago**, opening October 18.

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). Exhibit highlights are eight papyri written in Aramaic, part of a family archive belonging to Ananiah, a Jewish temple official, his wife, Tamut, and their children. 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.

Seattle Arab Festival features folk dancing and workshops, cultural and educational exhibits, a bazaar, children's activities and Middle Eastern food and drink. **Seattle** Center, October 18–19.

Symbolic Defiance: Palestinian Costume and Embroidery Since 1948 focuses on the last half-century of Palestinian cultural history and the revival of Palestinian costume and embroidery since the late 1980's. The exhibition is curated by the Palestinian Costume Archive, Canberra, Australia. Seattle Arab Festival, **Seattle** Center, October 18–19; Middle East Studies Association annual meeting, **Anchorage, Alaska**, November 6–9.

Art and Life in Ancient Iran, a gallery talk, will be presented by Karen S. Rubinson. 11 a.m. ⓘ www.metmuseum.org. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, October 12.

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 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. Rietberg Museum, **Zurich**, through October 19.

The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt presents 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. **New Orleans** Museum of Art, October 19 through February 25; **Milwaukee** Public Museum, March 28 through August 8, 2004; **Denver** Museum of Nature and Science, September 12, 2004, through January 23, 2005.

The Forgotten Debt of the Western World is a symposium devoted to

Continued from previous page

exploring the impact on the West of Islamic science, medicine, mathematics and trade. National Archeological Museum of **Madrid**, October 21–23.

Another View of Yemen exhibits 50 photographs by Barbara J. Michael and more than 100 ethnographic artifacts: traditional clothing from several regions of Yemen, silver jewelry, antique wooden boxes and tables, pottery, baskets, drums, fabrics and folk art. The photographs (1992–2000) show crafts and craftsmen, actors in the informal market economy, and places and spaces that document Yemen's cultural and geographical diversity and its socio-historical continuity. Art Center, Stephen F. Austin State University, **Nacogdoches, Texas**, through October 24.

Silk Road Stories will be told by local residents with cultural ties to the ancient system of trade routes across central Asia. They will share traditional, historical, folk and family stories from their homelands. Recommended for ages 10 and up. Meyer Auditorium, Freer Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**, 3 p.m., October 26.

ReOrient 2003 will present a festival of short plays by playwrights from, or focusing on themes concerning, the Middle East. This is the fifth anniversary of a festival pioneered by Golden Thread Productions, an ensemble that explores Middle Eastern culture and identity as represented around the globe. New Langton Arts, **San Francisco**, October 30 through November 23.

Adobe Plastering is the subject of a workshop in which participants will learn how to weatherproof adobe walls using a mixture of clay, wheat straw, prickly-pear juice and horse manure. Adobe Alliance features homes built according to traditional Egyptian methods. ⓘ simone@adobealliance.org. **Presidio, Texas**, October 31–November 2.

Gaza Mediterranée highlights archeological discoveries in Gaza from 1995 to 2000 that show the integral part played by this region in the Mediterranean, Hellenistic and Roman worlds. The exhibition is accompanied by a variety of documentation, including old and new photographs and video reports, linking the past to the present. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dunkerque, **Dunkirk, France**, through October.

Made in Palestine surveys work by 23 artists living in Palestine and a smaller number in Syria, Jordan and the United States in the first museum exhibition in the United States of contemporary art from Palestine. Representing two generations of modernists and postmodernists, it includes painting, sculpture, video, performance art, textiles, ceramics and photography. ⓘ www.artcarmuseum.com. The Station, **Houston**, through October.

<<< November

Authors in Art: Mosque features Caldecott Medal–winning artist and author David Macauley describing the construction of a fictional Ottoman mosque of the late 16th century. He reveals that a mosque is more than a structure serving a community's religious needs, but also an institution that provides education for students, food for the needy, lodging for travelers, sites for commerce and even public baths. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, November 5.

Visits to a Collection offers discussion of art including, in November, Iran and the Persians (Mondays); Coptic Egypt (Fridays); Islamic Art (Saturday, November 8 and 22). All programs are at 11:30 a.m. Subjects in December are Egyptian Antiquities (Mondays, 7:45 p.m.) and Roman Egypt (Saturdays at 2:30 p.m.) Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, November and December.

Visions: Palestine is the title of both an exhibition and a new book by documentary photographer Andrea Kunzig showing daily life among Palestinians and Israelis in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel. ⓘ rlr@zedat.fu-berlin.de. Emerson Gallery, **Berlin**, November 18–26.

Veil is a touring exhibition that examines the veil as a symbol in contemporary culture through the selected and commissioned work of 20 artists and filmmakers. The show explores the roles of photography, film and video as modern tools for addressing notions of the veil. An illustrated book, *Veil: Veiling, Representation and Contemporary Art* (2003, inIVA and MIT Press, ISBN 0-262-52348-5, $25 pb) has been produced in conjunction with the exhibition. Museum of Modern Art, **Oxford, England**, November 22 through January 25; Kulturhuset, **Stockholm**, February 20 through May 2.

Discoveries 2003 screens *Confession*, a film by Turkish director Zeki Demirkubuz (2001, Turkish with English subtitles), in the second annual showcase of new films from Asia. 2 p.m. Freer Gallery of Art, **Washington, D.C.**, November 23.

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. Museum of Arts and Sciences, **Macon, Georgia**, through November 9; Frick Art and Historical Society, **Pittsburgh**, November 29 through February 8.

Porphyry, the Purple Stone: From Ptolemy to Bonaparte focuses on the purplish-red rock first quarried in Egypt and its special role in architecture and sculpture from the Hellenistic period to the late 18th century. The stone's extraordinary hardness, the imperial monopoly on its exploitation and, above all, its royal color—for which it is named—bestowed a precious character and a remarkable symbolism upon it. In the medieval mind, it was linked to the emperor Constantine and to the grandeur of Rome, and its use by Carolingian rulers, popes and the Norman kings of Sicily thus had political implications. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, November 21 through February 16.

The City of Sardis: Approaches in Graphic Recording features images ranging from 18th-century pencil and ink drawings to computerized renderings of Sardis in western Turkey. The city, capital of the Lydian kingdom in the seventh and sixth centuries BC, has been the focus of a 45-year study by the Harvard University Art Museums and Cornell University. Lecture, "Filling in the Landscape: Arts and Crafts of Sardis, 600 BC–AD 600," October 31. Catalog. Fogg Art Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, through November 16.

Journeys & Destinations: African Artists on the Move features artists from the significant and long-standing African 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 reexamine the borders, both actual and imagined, between Africa and the rest of the world. National Museum of African Art, **Washington, D.C.**, through November 30.

The Nance Collection, containing 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, which is mounting a permanent rotating display of objects from the collection, beginning with one of the few original Bedouin tents on view in the United States. **Warrensburg, Missouri**, through November.

Saudi Arabian Traditional Costumes presents antique and reproduction costumes from each of the kingdom's five regions, along with artifacts from those areas lent by local collectors. The exhibition showcases *lailat al-hinna* (henna night), featuring a traditional bridal room with all the accoutrements for adorning the bride with henna the night before her wedding. Costumes vary from the elaborate caftan styles of the Eastern Province to the southern provinces' intricate beadwork on sturdy black cotton, while the clothing of the "flower men" of Asir Province is represented on a model wearing headdress and *fouta* (an often colorful strip of cloth worn as a skirt). Embroidery threads and beads of many colors in the western-, northern- and southern-area displays turn simple black *thawbs*—loose-fitting ankle-length shirts worn by boys and men—into works of art. Bedouin styles of the central areas are also displayed, as are an antique, hand-loomed woolen *farwah* (winter cloak) and a linen *thawb* with extra-long, tapered sleeves that were once popular there. Saudi Aramco Community Heritage Gallery, **Dhahran, Saudi Arabia**, through January.

Artifacts from mountainous 'Asir province in southwestern Saudi Arabia.

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<<< December

Trinidad: A Spiritual Portrait. Photographs by Wyatt Gallery. Mercedes-Benz Manhattan Gallery (41st St. at 11th Ave.), **New York**, October 2 through November 2; Kanvas Gallery (9th Ave. at 23rd St.), **New York**, December 1–22.

The Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra, directed by Abdel Razzak Al-Azzawi, will perform for the first time in the United States with the [US] National Symphone Orchestra and cellist Yo-Yo Ma. Program to be determined. Admission free. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, **Washington, D.C.**, December 9.

Stroke of a Breath: Calligraphy from the Islamic World looks into masterpieces of calligraphy from the ninth through the 20th century from Arab, Indian, Persian and Turkish regions of the Islamic world. The exhibition takes its title from a traditional expression that likens the movement of the pen in a master calligrapher's hand to the flow of breath. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, December 20 through July 18.

Afghanistan presents objects that testify to times and ways of life gone by. Besides artworks from the country's Buddhist and early Islamic period, the exhibition focuses on items of everyday use, arranged to reflect Afghans' history and values, war and vanity, pilgrimage and hospitality, work and songs. Highlights include a fully equipped Pashtun nomad tent from the southeast and a completely furnished yurt from the western part of central Afghanistan. The exhibition also features ornamental knotwork and embroidered garments, inlaid weapons, treen vessels, ceramics, objects woven of Mazari palm leaves, waterpipes, musical instruments, silver and glass jewelry, make-up utensils for women and men, amulets and prayer beads, oil lamps, household goods and architectural fragments. Museum für Völkerkunde, **Vienna**, through December 1.

Where Traditions Meet: Painting in India From the 14th Through the 17th Century uses the context of the full history of Indian painting—from early manuscript illustrations to the 18th- and 19th-century masterpieces of the Rajput and Mughal courts—to highlight the Persian stylistic influences on the artists of the Muslim courts during the formative years of India's painted arts. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, through December 7.

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.

Activities and Workshops offer a variety of activities for children from six to eight and from eight to 12 focusing on the ancient Middle East. Topics include "Living in Egypt," "The Creation of the World according to the Egyptians," "Three-dimensional Art in the Time of the Pharaohs," "Hieroglyphics," "Animated Egypt," "The Epic of Gilgamesh," "The Birth of Writing: Cuneiform" and "King Darius and His Scribe." ⓘ activitesmusee@louvre.fr, +33-1-4020-5177. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, through December.

<<< January

The Art of Resist Dyeing showcases approximately 25 objects that demonstrate various methods of decorative resist dyeing of 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.**, through January 5.

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

Homelands: Baghdad–Jerusalem–New York is a retrospective of the sculpture of Baghdad-born artist Oded Halahmy, which combines abstract elements with organic forms. Halahmy's monumental but engaging sculptures originate in modernist attitudes but pay homage to the art of the ancient Middle East, existing between abstraction and representation. Related event: A Celebration of Iraqi Culture in film, music and poetry, November 19, 5:00 p.m. Yeshiva University Museum, **New York**, through January 15.

<<< Later

A Woman's Treasure: Bedouin Jewelry of the Arabian Peninsula features more than 100 pieces, including jewelry, 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 15.

Portraits Without Names: Palestinian Costume focuses on 200 years of costume and embroidery. **Bathurst** Regional Gallery, **NSW, Australia**, February 20 through April 12.

Love and Yearning: Mystical and Moral Themes in Persian Poetry and Painting displays 26 finely illustrated manuscripts demonstrating how artists from the 15th to 17th century transformed the rich imagery of Persian lyrical poetry into stylized, detailed and colorful images. Manuscripts include pages from Nazami's *Khamsa* (*Quintet*), Jami's *Halft Awrang* (*Seven Thrones*), and *Bustan* (*Orchard*) and *Gulistan* (*Rose Garden*) by Sa'di, the latter one of the most widely read masterpieces of Persian literature. ⓘ www.asia.si.edu, 202-357-2700. Lecture by Massumeh Farhad, assistant curator of Islamic art, Sackler Gallery, 12 p.m., October 14. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through February 22.

Secret Splendors: Women's Costume in the Arab World. **Noosa** Regional Gallery, **QLD, Australia**, April 30 through June 14.

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

Traders on the Sea Routes: 12th-Century Trade Between East and West explores the trade routes of medieval Jewish merchants via the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea through a network of commerce whose nexus was Cairo. The experiential exhibit for young audiences includes model sailing vessels of the era—an Arab dhow and a Venetian galley—wall maps illustrating the routes between ports such as Venice, Jaffa, Hormuz and Cochin, and activity stations simulating bazaars where gems, spices and textiles can be handled. Yeshiva University Museum, **New York**, through August 2005.

Wondrous Journeys: The Walters Collection from Egyptian Tombs through Medieval Castles, a new installation of the permanent collection, traces the path of artistic achievement in the West from pre-dynastic Egypt to the early Renaissance. Walters Art Museum, **Baltimore**, permanent.

Spirit of Islam: Experiencing Islam Through Calligraphy is a website introducing visitors to the esthetics, spirituality and educational principals of the Muslim world through the time-honored art of calligraphy. It is based on the eponymous exhibition held in 2001–2002 at the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia in **Vancouver**. Educational additions to the website, such as lesson packages for elementary and high school teachers, are expected to be completed in January. **www.moa.uc.ca/spiritofislam**.

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. Most institutions listed have further information available through the World Wide Web. Readers are welcome to submit information for possible inclusion in this listing.

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