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Making a Living in the Desert

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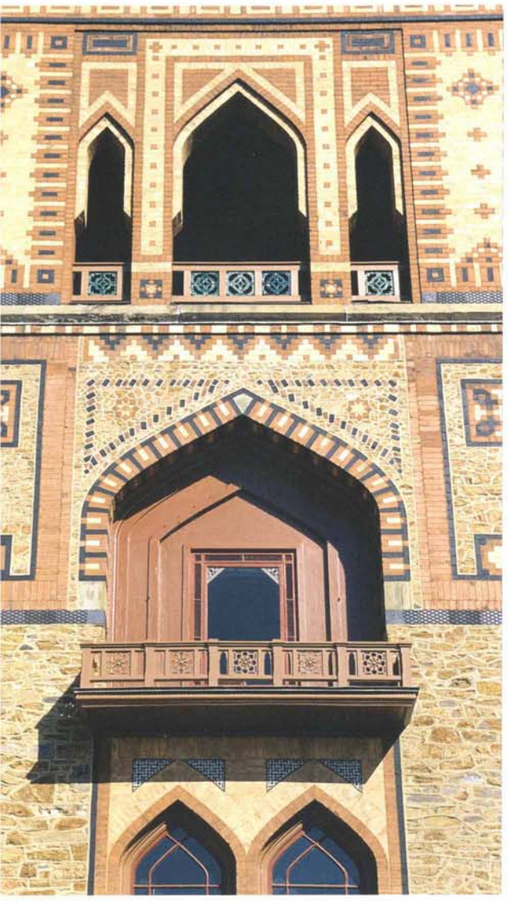


A Treasure House on the Hudson

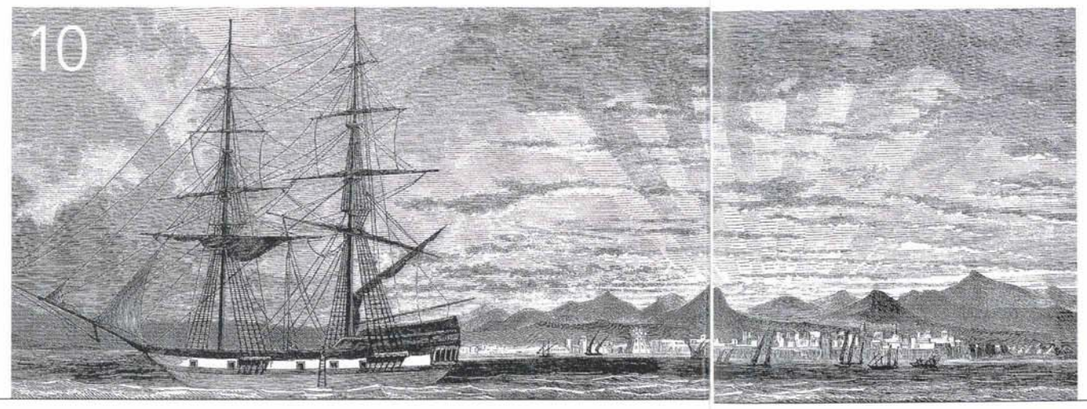
Written by Louis Werner
Photographed by Kevin Bubriski

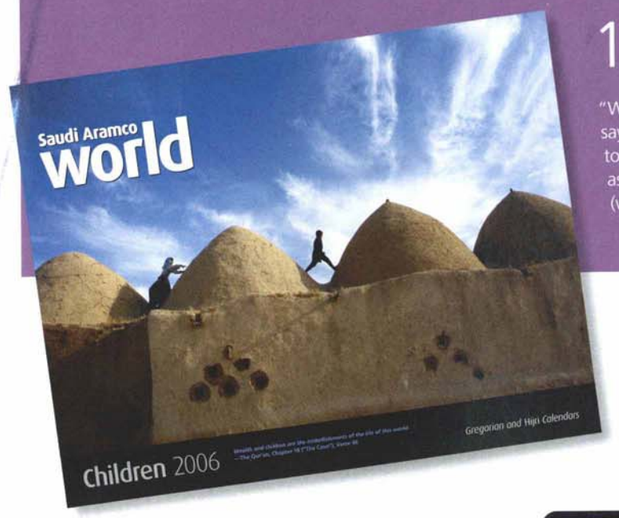
In 1868, a trip to the Middle East by the most renowned painter of the Hudson River School, Frederic Edwin Church, proved so inspiring that he turned his estate into a studied reflection of his fascination with the art he encountered.

Queen of the India Trade

Written by William Facey

Halfway along the east coast of the sea that linked Asia with the Mediterranean, Jiddah is well known as the port for pilgrims to the Holy Cities of Makkah and Madinah. But its historic prosperity came far more from the India trade, for the city lies—most conveniently—at the northern edge of the seasonal monsoon.





17 Children 2006

Written by Elizabeth Warnock Fernea and Paul Lunde

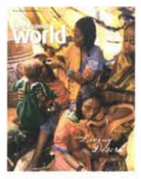
"Wealth and children are the embellishments of the life of this world," says the Qur'an (18:46). *Saudi Aramco World's* calendar features tomorrow's leaders from across the Arab world, at home and at play, as well as explanations of both *hijri* (Islamic, lunar) and Gregorian (western, solar) calendars.

Making a Living in the Desert

Written and photographed by Arita Baaijens

Following the seasons and the rains is a way of life for the many tribes of pastoralists in that half of Sudan, Africa's second-largest country, where land is too dry to farm but good enough for grazing. From the entirely nomadic Shanabla to the increasingly settled Kababish confederation, most nomads are distant from the war in Western Darfur state, and home is still "where we pitch our tent."

Cover:



Preparing for a wedding ceremony, women of the Shanabla tribe set their hair in tight braids embellished by colored wool and beads. The celebration brings together friends, extended family and neighbors—including the farmers on whose land Shanabla livestock may be grazing, with whom good relations are important. This traditional exchange of grazing for natural fertilizer benefits both farmers and herders, but it can also give rise to tensions when crops are damaged. Photo by Arita Baaijens.

Back Cover:

Children collect seashells along the coast of Zanzibar, Tanzania. As in many countries worldwide, children make up nearly half of the nation's population. Offshore ride craft that for centuries ferried goods between the port and oceangoing ships. Photo by Andrea Kuenzig.

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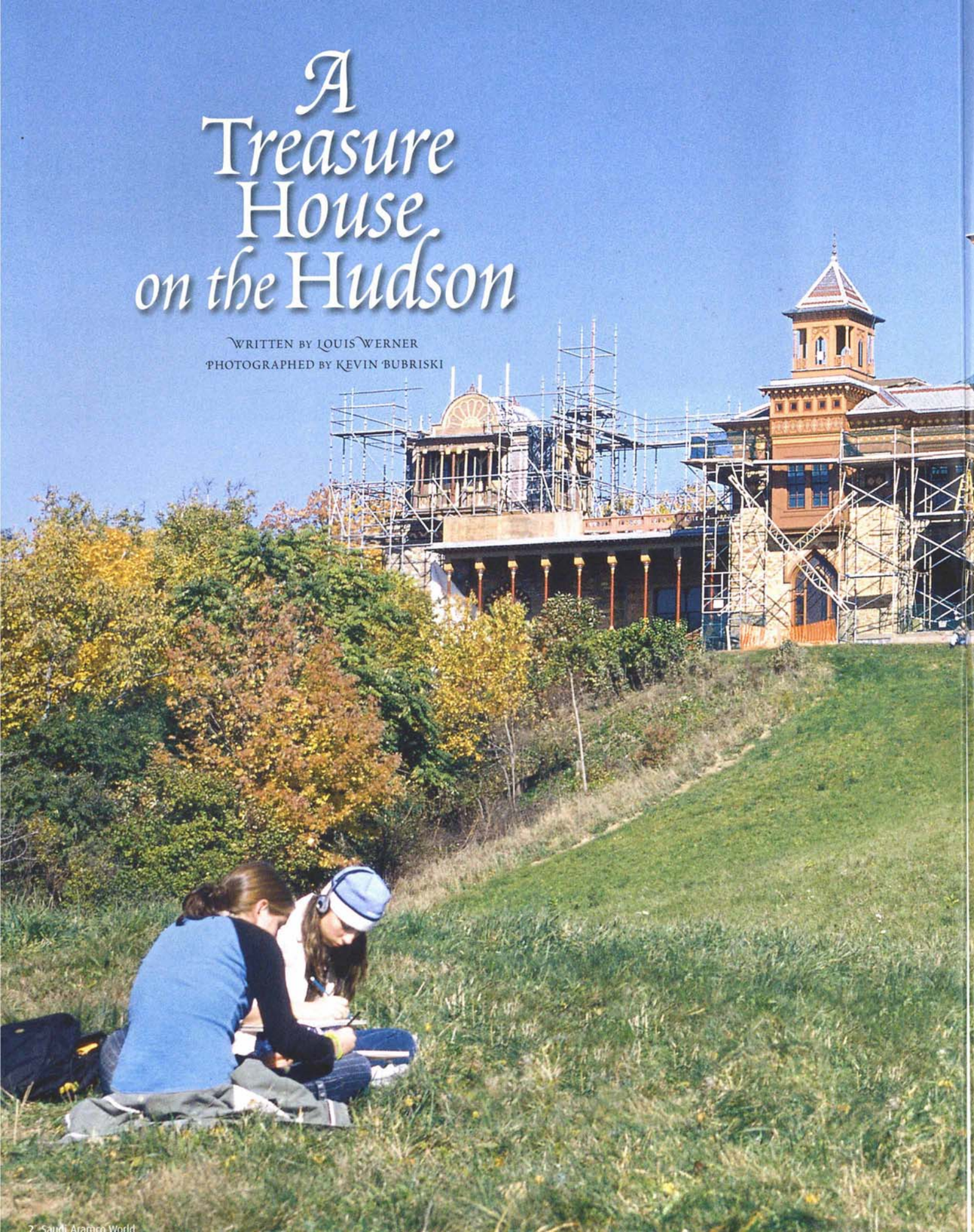
A Treasure House on the Hudson

WRITTEN BY LOUIS WERNER
PHOTOGRAPHED BY KEVIN BUBRISKI



Built on the 18-acre estate that Frederic Edwin Church purchased in 1860, Olana, in its original design, was based on a French manor. Today the house is a National Historic Landmark visited by some 150,000 people each year. Inset: **A portrait of Church by Charles Loring Elliot, painted in 1865, hangs in Olana.**

On a hill overlooking New York's Hudson River, and nearly in the shadow of the Catskill Mountains, stands Olana, a home built by one of the 19th century's most celebrated American painters, Frederic Edwin Church. An orientalist confection in the eyes of many visitors today, Olana in fact traces its inspiration, design and furnishings back to Church's three-month trip to the Levant in 1868. The resulting tug-of-war between Church's careful observation and his personal artistic invention makes Olana an architectural landmark of Middle Eastern vernacular set in a New World landscape.

The name "Olana" comes from Strabo's *Geography*, in which the Greek historian named a fortified treasure house on the Araxes River that flows from Turkey into the Caspian Sea. (Today the river is known as the Aras.) There is nothing in Church's papers to suggest why he chose the name, but there is no doubt the place recreated a certain fantasy for both Church and his wife, Isabel. She wrote about a particularly sublime moment they had shared in the mountains of Lebanon: "We came upon an Arabian Nights looking house.... The most beautiful verdure

"I have got new and excellent ideas about house building since I came abroad."

surrounded the enchanted spot, ...glimpses of the river and mountains one caught over and over." She may as well have been describing Olana.

Church made the trip to Alexandria, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, Petra and Baalbek—regretting having missed only the Giza pyramids—in the company of Isabel and their young son Frederic Jr. from December 1867 to February 1868. The voyage served as a getaway from the family's grief over the deaths of the Churches' two older children, and for him as an artist, it was an opportunity to go beyond his preoccupation with the American ethos of wilderness.

Church had made his name and fortune in the 1850's with such oversize paintings as "Niagara" and "Heart of the Andes," which captured nature's raw power so spectacularly that crowds

paid admission to see them. Darwin's theory of evolution had recently put into scientific words the feelings, as poet and art critic John Ashbery writes, of the "grander spectacle that inspired Church and his fellow artists in the halcyon days when nature could still be read as a message of hope set down in God's cursive unfaltering hand."

For a deeply religious man like Church, the Holy Land represented just the opposite of nature, a place of unchanging tradition and fixed belief. There, Church was struck by the stratigraphy of human existence: It was a place where the mark of human presence appeared everywhere. This newfound appreciation of the man-made landscape informed his subsequent paintings, which were often of classical ruins and other long-settled places. One of the greatest of these is of the "Treasury" at Petra, titled "El Khasne," which still hangs over Olana's sitting room fireplace—the only major work he never sold.

Before Church departed on his trip, he had commissioned the design of a French manor from a conventionally trained New York architect. But in the Middle East, he gained more than a philosophical appreciation for the antique: He also learned the more practical lessons of household esthetics, of how to create domestic comfort. Upon his return, he cancelled the manor and set about planning a house that would reflect his new thinking. The main wing of Olana was completed by 1872, and an attached studio was added in 1888.

A careful reading of his wife's trip diary and the popular Middle Eastern pattern books of the time helps a visitor to Olana see precisely how Church's design choices were made and from where they came. For example, he chose some interior colors to evoke the ceiling of a specific Damascus home, while some masonry motifs he lifted from designs in his library's books, which themselves were copied from known buildings.

Olana's furnishings and carpets, seemingly thrown helter-skelter throughout the house, evoked his desert camps. "I for one was fascinated with tent life," wrote his wife, probably echoing Church's

Upper: **For Church and his wife, Isabel, Olana's vistas of the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains recalled their views of the Barada River in Syria.** Above: **Church designed Olana's exteriors with an eye not only to decorative patterns, but also to the effects of sunlight on stone that had so profoundly impressed his painter's esthetic. Of his visit to the Nabataean ruins of Petra, in Jordan, he wrote: "I never beheld anything so beautiful in rocks."**

Several of Church's paintings still hang in Olana, where a pointed-arch window gives a view of the Hudson.

feelings as well. He plotted the curves of Olana's carriageways so as to capture the same vistas of water and mountains he remembered seeing on the Barada River that flows through the Anti-Lebanon Mountains. That he should have sent home from Syria three white donkeys to pull a cart from which he could take in these views only confirms his eagerness to relive that experience every day.

Church himself was overly modest in specifying the sources of Olana's inspiration. In a letter to a friend, he wrote, "Having undertaken to get my architecture from Persia, where I have never been—nor any of my friends either—I am obliged to imagine Persian architecture—to embody it on paper." Elsewhere he wrote, "I made it out of my own head."

But Holly Edwards, curator of a recent exhibition on American orientalism at the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, corrects such understatement, writing in the exhibit's catalogue that "this modest description conveys Olana's unique character but makes light of the voracious study and extensive travel that went into it.... A visit to this extraordinary house leaves little doubt that the real and imagined orient was the most important province in Church's empire of the eye." She called Church "the archetypal figure" among American orientalists because he found no artificial divisions among Middle Eastern-inspired painting, designing, collecting and decorating, all of which drew from a common well of pattern.

Church enlisted the technical help of Calvert Vaux, codesigner of New York City's Central Park, to get his floor plans onto paper, but he himself took over the myriad designs for Olana's painted wall stencils and polychrome masonry, architectural woodwork and even the decorative calligraphy—whose spelling he was able to check from a dictionary of Arabic and Persian in his library.

Into Olana's layout he translated the plan of a traditional Damascene house, with a central courtyard and radiating rooms. He added a Moorish arch spanning an exterior alcove leading to the front door. The entry hall, called the Court Hall, was adjoined by smaller rooms left and right and a grand staircase straight ahead, set on a broad, four-step dais.

In the Middle East, Church learned household esthetics —how to create domestic comfort.

"I have got new and excellent ideas about house building since I came abroad," he had written from Beirut to a friend, then describing just such a floor plan. His plan for a dome on the Court Hall was not to be, however, so he chose to evoke the sky with a light blue ceiling paint instead.

In her diary, Isabel Church expressed her admiration for the concept of a hidden inner elegance entered through an unassuming portal. The interior of Damascus houses, she wrote, is "a great contrast to exterior.... Enter by a low narrow door, even I had to stoop, to go through, and thereafter passing through a small courtyard, find yourself in a large court paved with marble, white, mosaiced with colored marble, with fountains playing and flowers and orange and lemon trees making a pleasant shade and perfume, on one side a room entirely open with raised dais, divan, and decorated, then many other rooms [accessible] by smallish door on court."

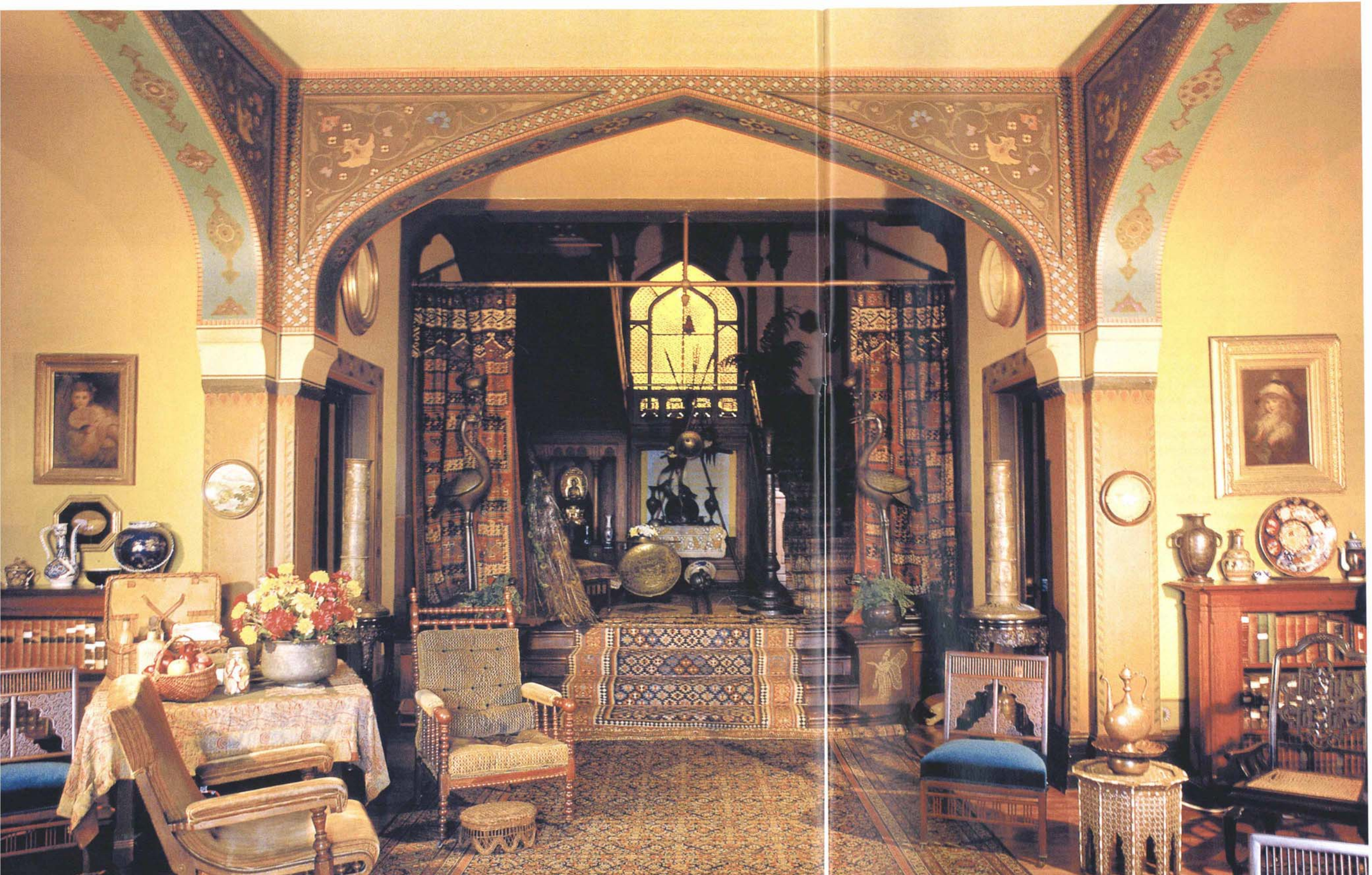
Olana's rooms are stenciled in colors, some metallic and some pastel, that evoke both the reflectivity of mirrored ceilings in traditional rooms and the soft matte tones playing on the rocks at Petra that so impressed Church. "All the rooms have...mirrors on walls and ceiling," wrote Isabel of Damascus, "highly and gorgeously decorated, and mirrors everywhere, amid the decorations little bits of mirror, and all woodwork inlaid with ivory and mother of pearl. At night by candlelight the effect must be quite splendid."

Of the fine gradations of sunlight on sandstone, Church himself wrote in notes of his visit to Petra, "The tombs, many of them, were cut in a rich orange-red rock full of waving shades. Sometimes the rock was of a lovely dove tint also full of graded tints. I never beheld anything so beautiful in rocks."

On February 25, at Petra's "Treasury," or *khazna*, Church wrote, "This wonderful temple is cut in the face of a tremendous precipice which is of a black color with an olive tinge in it. The rock when freshly exposed is of a beautiful reddish salmon color miscalled pink by some travelers. It is wonderful to see so lovely and luminous a color blazing out of black stern frightful rocks...."

The iterative color changes in Church's sketches for the stencils that were later used at Olana—mauves, olives, salmons and, yes, dove tints—show just how painstakingly he worked to capture the mood of Petra's stone on Olana's walls. Six years after his travels, transforming this passage almost word-for-word into oil paint, he also completed the most important painting originating from this trip: a view of the khazna spied through the shadowy narrows of the *siq*, the rock passageway that leads to it. This is by far more personal than his other paintings, which include a panoramic "Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives" and a now-lost "Damascus from the Heights of Salihye."

That Church should have so fully captured the details of the khazna's façade is remarkable, given the rush he was in to sketch it. At all times afraid of bandits, he wrote of his working method, "I flung open my pocket sketchbook and drew the scene roughly, we then dashed down the path and seized another view, and so on, sketching and running until we reached the



Left: **In the Court Hall, the grandest of Olana's rooms, Church drew the archway stencils based on Persian patterns from Isfahan's Chehel Sutun (Forty Columns) pavilion and the Masjid-e Shah (Royal Mosque). He and Isabel furnished the room with "rugs, armour, stuffs, curiosities, etc. etc...old Turkish clothes, stones from a house in Damascus, Arab spears, beads from Jerusalem, stones from Petra, and 10,000 other things." A light blue ceiling evoked the sky.** Above: **Surrounding two of Olana's fireplaces are painted tiles by Ali Muhammad al-Isfahani, a leading ceramic artist of Tehran and a contemporary of Church.**

Decorative patterns, applied with paint and stencil, ornament Olana's fascias (above) **and tiles surround its doors** (above left). **Church's sources for such patterns were popular books by Emile Prisse d'Avennes, Jules Bourgoin and Pascal-Xavier Coste, which were published near the time of his own travels.** Lower: **Restoration specialist Robert Hills applies a fresh coat of paint to a stenciled design. Today, Olana is maintained by the New York State Historical Society.**

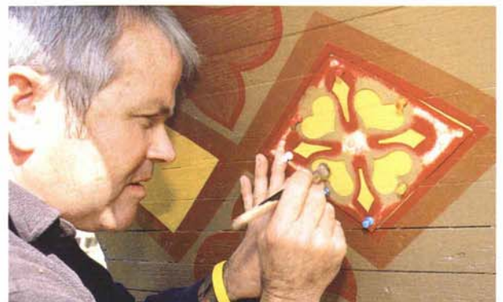
narrow plain below where the camels had long preceded us."

When not "sketching and running," he worked on camelback. "About twelve days of nodding on a camel ought to loosen a man's spine into chronic politeness," he wrote in a letter to a friend. The jagged lines in his sketch-filled Petra notebook, still in Olana's collection, attest to this.

John Ashbery believes that Church felt that the coldness of northern light contradicted Olana's warmhearted spirit and its origins under a desert sun, even though most artists prefer northern light to paint by. This, he writes, was likely the reason Church softened the light in his studio with amber-tinted glass and a latticed shade that resembles a *mashrabiyyah*, the turned-wood lattice panels whose varieties are common throughout the Middle East.

Pattern books of Middle Eastern motifs were also important sources for the expression of 19th-century Europeans' and Americans' taste for orientalism. Prisse d'Avennes' *L'Art Arabe d'apres les monuments du Kaire* is perhaps the best known, but those by Jules Bourgoin (*Les Arts Arabes*, 1868), Pascal-Xavier Coste (*Monuments modernes de la Perse*, 1867) and Eugene Collinot (*Les Ornements de la Perse*, 1882) were of equal renown. The latter three were Church's ready references.

The vase-and-tendril stencils on Olana's interior doors and a six-pointed masonry star under a second-floor window were borrowed, via Bourgoin, from a Jerusalem church and an Alexandrine mosque, respectively. Illustrations from Coste, who was Ottoman governor Mehmet Ali Pasha's architect in Egypt for 10 years, were the basis for the piazza's columns. The Court Hall archway stencils were drawn from Isfahan's Chehel Sutun (Pavilion of the Forty Columns), Masjid-e Shah (Royal Mosque) and Mader-e Sultan Islamic school. Tiled panels (*zillij*) in the brickwork above three windows are said to be patterned after motifs in the Alhambra.



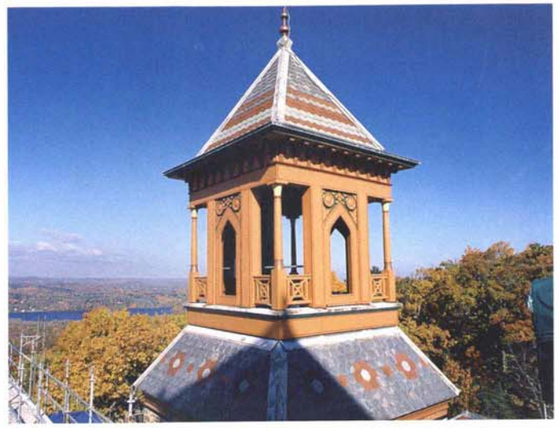
At times, Church's studied eclecticism went farther afield than the Middle East and the Islamic period. The mantelpieces and the studio wing balustrade were both designed by Church's student Lakewood de Forest and executed at a woodcarving studio de Forest had established in Ahmedabad, India. The Court Hall stencils of winged Assyrian gods at the foot of the main stair originate in the pre-Islamic Near East.

Church was also the first American collector of neo-Safavid Persian tile work by the ceramist Ali Muhammad al-Isfahani, who was active in Tehran in the 1870's and 1880's. Two fireplace surrounds, signed by the artist, two figurative panels in relief and several vases by al-Isfahani were sent to Olana by W. L. Whipple, an American missionary friend of Church's stationed in Tabriz. Whipple also provided Church with carpets, metalware and Persian paintings.

More than 2500 travel photographs were in Church's collection, many bought or made in the Middle East. Among them were a picture of Church and his son on a camel, some 70 architectural images from the Palestine Exploration Fund and design studies from the Alhambra by Juan Laurent. Olana's library also contained the standard orientalist literature of the time: Washington Irving's life of the Prophet Muhammad, Edward FitzGerald's *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*, Firdausi's *Shahnamah* and Sir Richard Burton's *Arabian Nights*, in addition to guidebooks and monographs on Persian art, Indian architecture and Arabian topography.

The most unmistakably Middle Eastern elements in the house are the Arabic calligraphy over the front door (which reads *marhaba*, "welcome") and in the stenciled cartouches in the sitting room. Church was much taken with a verse in the Bible's 39th Psalm—"While I was musing, the fire burned:..."—and he asked Whipple for an approximate translation into Arabic, which was then inscribed over the sitting-room fireplace.

Olana's furnishings are a no less idiosyncratic meld of East and West.



Olana's bright red cupola offers another view of the Hudson. The years before and after his Middle Eastern travels marked the pinnacle of Church's fame. In later years, his desire for travel waned —"with the exception of Syria," he wrote. He died in 1900.

Church sent at least 15 crates of goods home from his trip, which he described as "rugs, armour, stuffs, curiosities, etc. etc...old Turkish clothes, stones from a house in Damascus, Arab spears, beads from Jerusalem, stones from Petra, and 10,000 other things." Spears still lie about the Court Hall, and the studio's curio cabinet still contains frankincense and stones Church collected at Petra.

The interior's studied clutter was perhaps also inspired by the Churches' visit to the Damascus home of Lady Jane Digby, who had scandalized Victorian values by marrying a Syrian and living independently. "Of somewhat disgraceful notoriety," Isabel Church sniffed, but she found Lady Jane's taste impeccable and inspiring nevertheless. "Her rooms were furnished semi-oriental, semi-European, forming a very agreeable and pretty coordination," she wrote.

After returning from the Levant, Church lived another 30 years. He traveled in Mexico and painted throughout New York state, all the while watching his popularity and health slowly decline. Tastes in art were changing fast, with the Barbizon school leading the gradual extirpation of the large studio paintings typical of Church's work.

With evident nostalgia, Church wrote in a letter to a friend, "With the exception of Syria, I think I will never desire ardently to revisit the Old World."

Upon Church's death in 1900, his son Louis took over Olana's management. When Louis's daughter-in-law died in 1965, Olana came within weeks of being sold at auction and its contents dispersed. Quick action by architectural preservationists saw that it was transferred intact to state ownership. Today it is a state historic site, open to the public under the trusteeship of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Unlike other great orientalist homes in the United States—Longwood Plantation in Natchez, Mississippi (unfinished), P. T. Barnum's "Iranistan" mansion in Bridgeport, Connecticut (burned), and Doris Duke's fantastical Shangri La in Honolulu—Olana's esthetic lineage reaches back to real sources and real places. With Isabel's diary in one hand and Church's Middle Eastern pattern books in the other, a visitor to their house today can almost follow their footsteps through the Levant and realize that, for them, it truly was a treasure house and, as Church called it, "the center of the world." ⊕

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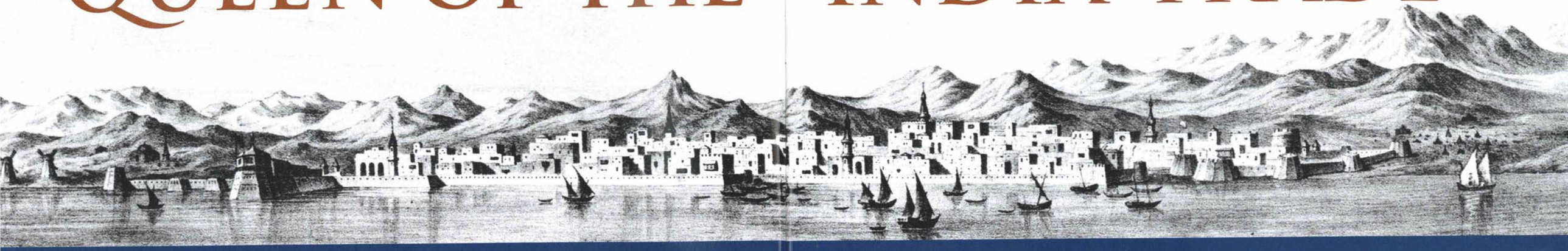
Exhibition: Treasures From Olana, www.treasuresfromolana.org
(See also p. 46.)

Saudi Aramco World thanks Olana Associate Curator Valerie Balint for her assistance in this article.

FOR 1200 YEARS, PILGRIMS, TRADE WITH THE EAST AND AN UNLIKELY WIND REGIME MADE JIDDAH

QUEEN OF THE INDIA TRADE



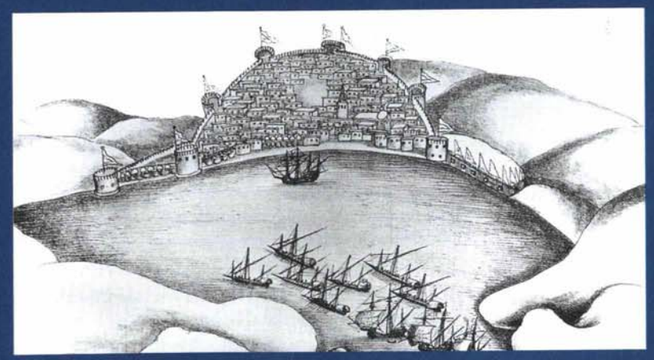
WRITTEN BY
WILLIAM FACEY

Jiddah is today the second-largest city in Saudi Arabia, and the busiest port. In 2004, it handled some 33 million tons of cargo, and one million passengers passed through it. Top: This engraving is based on a mid-19th-century sketch by a British naval captain. The mountains are slightly exaggerated. Note the fortifications at both left and right, as well as the desert encampments, far right. Until modern times, the loading and unloading of cargoes was still done using lightering craft. The Scottish explorer James Bruce summed up Jiddah's advantages after his visit in 1769: "The port of Jiddah is a very extensive one, consisting of numberless shoals, small islands, and sunken rocks, with channels, however, between them, and deep water. You are very safe in Jiddah harbour, whatever wind blows, as there are numberless shoals, which prevent the water from ever being put into one general motion; and you may moor head and stern, with twenty anchors out if you please." Opposite: The earliest known depiction of Jiddah shows the unsuccessful Portuguese raid of 1517. They never reached Jiddah again.

"Praise be to God, who has made the port of Jiddah the best of ports...." So wrote the Hijazi chronicler Ahmad ibn Faraj in his 16th-century history of his native city. Of more than a dozen ports that have served merchants, pilgrims and navies all along the 2300-kilometer (1400-mi) Red Sea route linking Asia and Europe, it is Jiddah that has best stood the test of time.

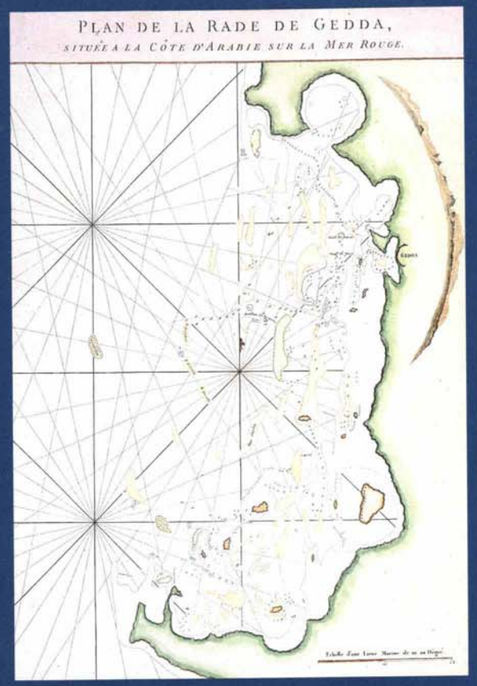
Jiddah's city center still contains the multi-storied houses of coral stone and plaster, adorned with teak doorways and lattice-work balconies, that typified the architecture in ports on both sides of the Red Sea until the last century. Some 400 to 500 buildings, dating from the 18th and 19th centuries—even some entire streets—testify to long-term investment and prosperity, a pattern that continues today in Saudi Arabia's second-largest city and one of the largest modern container ports in the Middle East.

Ibn Faraj goes on to say that Jiddah is "attached to the Ka'bah," and indeed the city was and is known throughout the Muslim world as the port of Makkah, which lies inland some 75 kilometers—48 miles, only a day and a night by camel. It is easy to take for granted that Jiddah's economy depended on the pilgrimage to Makkah and the mercantile activity that came with it.



There is only limited truth in that view. Pilgrims did go in for a good deal of buying and exchange all along their routes and at Makkah itself, and rulers from Egypt to Muslim India often sent food subsidies and other gifts of pious patronage to the Holy Cities. Ship captains from India also sometimes combined their cargo-carrying with pilgrim traffic. However, the pilgrimage takes place only during one month of the year. Furthermore, the Islamic calendar is a lunar one, so the time of the pilgrimage advances by 11 days each solar year. (See page 19.) As a result, about half of the pilgrimages in any 33-year period fall outside the months of the north-east monsoon, which blows from October to March—and it was only during the latter part of that season that ships regularly sailed north into the Red Sea, in order to reduce their wait for the northerlies of early summer that could carry them home. These facts decouple the pilgrimage from the India trade, and they mean that historians must regard the two activities separately.

Moreover, the vast majority of pilgrims traveled to the Holy Cities not by sea but overland, with the great caravans from Cairo, Istanbul, Damascus, Baghdad and southern Arabia. The



Left: A 1775 chart of Jiddah harbor details soundings and the contours of the coastline. Right: A digital image from nearly 50 kilometers' altitude (30 mi) shows both continuity and change along the coastline, as well as the vast, post-1980's sprawl of Saudi Arabia's second-largest city northward and inland from the original harbor. Near the top, King 'Abd al-'Aziz International Airport is visible.

general rule was that only pilgrims from sub-Saharan Africa, India and Malaysia arrived in Jiddah by boat.

Historical statistics are few, but travelers' and officials' reports indicate widely varying pilgrim numbers. One of the highest was 100,000, recorded in the year 1279. In 1383, some 17,000 pilgrims crossed Sinai in the Egyptian caravan, and in 1503 the Italian traveler di Varthema estimated about 40,000 in the Damascus caravan. In 1814, during the Ottoman campaign against the Al Sa'ud, Jacob Burckhardt reported that only 500 pilgrims arrived from Africa via Sawakin (in today's Sudan). In 1831, a British report estimated 120,000 pilgrims in total, about 20,000 of whom arrived at Jiddah by sea from India, Malaya, the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea ports of Suez, Qusair, Sawakin and elsewhere—and that seems to have been the best year for half a century or more. What is striking is how small overall pilgrim numbers were. They cannot have contributed a very great deal to the prosperity of Jiddah.

NIEBUHR AND BURCKHARDT WERE CLEAR THAT JIDDAH'S PROSPERITY WAS BASED ON ITS ROLE AS THE EXCLUSIVE RED SEA PORT BETWEEN INDIA AND EGYPT.

Things changed only with the introduction of steamships, which became common in the Red Sea after the 1869 opening of the Suez Canal. Although steam dealt a blow to the overland pilgrim routes, it proved a boon to the maritime ones: In 1893, 96,000 pilgrims were registered arriving in Jiddah by steamship, and figures of that scale were commonplace into the 1920's. Change came again with international air travel: Today, some two million pilgrims pass annually through Jiddah's King 'Abd al-'Aziz International Airport—80 percent of the total number.

So for the 1200 years before the arrival of steam, something more than Ibn Faraj's reference to Makkah is needed to account for Jiddah's prosperity and endurance as an entrepôt. That factor is the sea trade between India (and points east) and the Mediterranean. The English explorer and hydrographer James Wellsted, who surveyed the Hijaz coast in 1831, was struck by Jiddah's supremacy in commerce. He listed the goods brought there from India: rice, sugar, fine muslin, cashmere shawls, other coarse and fine cloths, indigo, teak, coconut oil, coconuts, pepper, ginger, turmeric, other spices from the Far East and coffee from Yemen. The greater part of these goods, he reported, were purchased by the Jiddah merchants for transshipment to agents in Cairo, who in turn sold both locally and for export to the Mediterranean and Europe. In addition, wheat, tobacco, Persian rugs and dates were imported to Jiddah from Iraq and the Gulf for local consumption. Wellsted wrote:

> Jiddah, from its critical situation, is well adapted as a commercial depôt for the productions of the upper and lower parts of the [Red] sea. Boats from Yemen, or the southern part of the sea, are not permitted to pass this port without entering to pay a heavy duty, the consequence of which is, that they prefer landing their cargoes there, a part of which being required for the Egyptian market, is re-shipped from thence in vessels belonging to the Jiddah merchants.

Before Wellsted, both the German explorer Carsten Niebuhr, in 1762, and the Swiss explorer Johann Burckhardt, in 1814, had remarked on Jiddah's pivotal role in the Red Sea trade. They both make it clear that Jiddah's prosperity was based on its role as the exclusive Red Sea entrepôt between India and Egypt. According to Niebuhr, Jiddah was "no more than a mart between Egypt and India. The ships from Suez seldom proceed further [south] than this port; and those from India are not suffered to advance [north] to Suez."

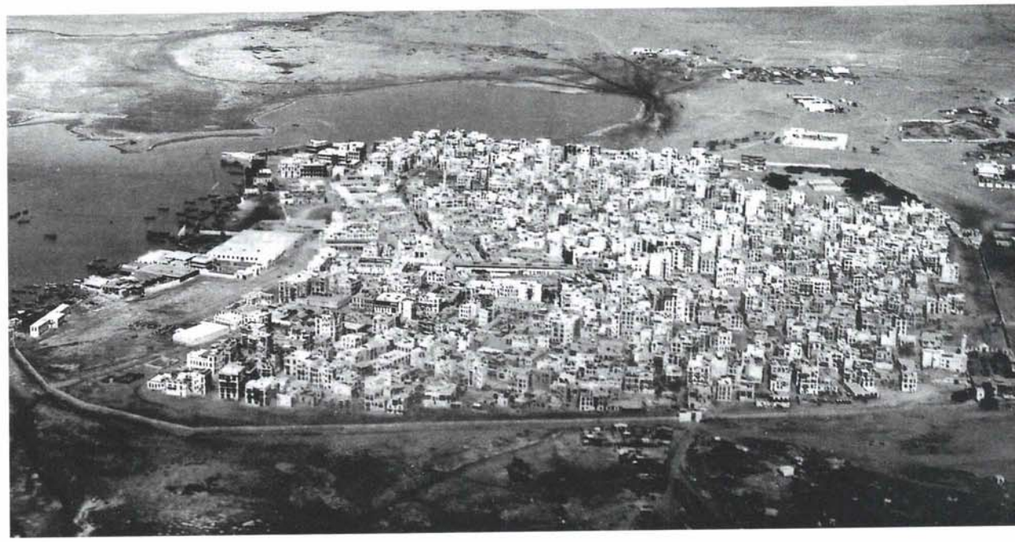
Burckhardt was equally emphatic:

> The fleets, principally from Calcutta, Surat and Bombay, reach Djidda in the beginning of May, when they find the merchants already prepared for them.... Large sums are also sent hither by the Cairo merchants to purchase goods on their account; but the cargoes for the greater part are bought up by the merchants of Djidda, who afterwards send them to Cairo to be sold for their own advantage. The India fleets return in June or July.... It is the nature of this commerce that renders Djidda so crowded during the stay of the fleet. People repair thither from every port on the Red Sea.

Their comments illuminate one of the central rules of Red Sea commerce, formalized by a pact between shipmasters and port authorities: Customs dues on the India–Egypt trade were to be paid at Jiddah. Over the centuries, control of Jiddah oscillated mostly between the Sharif of Makkah and governors appointed from Egypt; the latter would have run it as an Egyptian port with some split of revenues to local authorities to reflect the delicate, uneasy balance of power between Cairo and Makkah. Regardless of who was uppermost, however, it seems to have become compulsory for ships to call at Jiddah and declare themselves. In part, this reflected the political reality that control of Jiddah was key to the control of Islam's two holy cities, Makkah and Madinah, and, from there, of the whole of the Hijaz. Thus favor shown toward Jiddah—whether, on the one hand, by the Sharifs of Makkah or, on the other, by the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultans of Egypt from the 12th to the 16th centuries and their Ottoman successors after 1517—reflects the desire to maintain a hold over the heartland of Islam.

Jiddah was founded sometime around AD 646, when the Caliph 'Uthman decided that al-Shu'aybah, to the north, should be abandoned because Jiddah offered a safer harbor. Jiddah's role remained minor until the 10th century, when Fatimid-ruled Cairo eclipsed Abbasid Baghdad. The India trade followed the shift in regional power: The Arabian Gulf gradually ceased to be the main artery of commerce from the Indian Ocean into the Islamic lands and the Red Sea took its place. In response, some wealthy Persian merchant families abandoned Siraf, on the Gulf, and migrated to Jiddah, and from this point Jiddah begins to figure in historical accounts as a prosperous Red Sea port with a city wall and water cisterns.

During the centuries that followed, Jiddah seems to have experienced at least three periods of decline, generally attributable to misrule, but in the main its trajectory was upward. Both the celebrated Persian traveler Nasir-i Khusraw, in 1050, and Ibn Battuta, in 1330,



This view, taken in 1938, looks northwest over the old city. Still visible is the wall along the southern side, which stood until 1947.

JEAN BAPTISTE NICOLAS DENIS / NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM; EARTHSAT / DIGITAL GLOBE / GOOGLE EARTH

COURTESY WILLIAM FACEY

Pilgrims debark from a steamer in the 1940's. Pilgrim traffic through Jiddah grew dramatically in the mid-19th century as steamships replaced the traditional overland caravan routes.

found the city flourishing. Prosperity continued into the 15th century, driven by ever-growing demand in Renaissance Europe for luxury goods, the trade of which was controlled by the Mamluk rulers of Egypt and the Serene Republic of Venice.

With the Portuguese discovery in 1498 of the route into the Indian Ocean around the Cape of Good Hope, Jiddah took on a new strategic significance. The Mamluk rulers of Egypt were keenly aware of the threat to their control of the India trade that the Portuguese represented. It was vital to prevent the Portuguese from seizing Aden, because from there, they could control the Red Sea. Jiddah was reinforced, its wall rebuilt, and in 1517 the only Portuguese raid on Jiddah failed.

After 1517, when the Ottoman Turks took control of Egypt, the Hijaz and Yemen, they maintained the same vigilance; in 1538, a large Ottoman fleet sailed down the Red Sea and all the way to Gujarat in India, where it confronted the Portuguese. As a result, the Portuguese never managed to gain a foothold in the Red Sea. Ottoman security policy ensured that Egypt's grip on Jiddah remained tight—a state of affairs that maintained the city's economic prosperity while depriving it of political autonomy.

In 1700 a French doctor, Charles Jacques Poncet, visited Jiddah and observed that "there is great trading thither, for all the vessels which return from the Indies come to anchor there. The Grand Seignior [i.e., the Ottoman Sultan] does usually employ 30 great vessels in those seas for the transportation of merchandizes."

The English traveler William Daniel, in the same year, is more detailed in his description of trade at Suez, which he says had:

> about 40 sail of ships, who trade every year between that place and Judda; their outward merchandise being little or nothing but provisions and pieces of eight, and their return all sorts of spices, muslins, silks, precious stones, pearls and amber-grease, musk, coffee and many other druggs; which are brought by the trading vessels which come yearly from India to Mocha and Judda, and transported by land [from Suez] to Cairo and Alexandria.

By the time of Niebuhr's visit in 1762, Britain had established the basis of its trading empire in India, and Jiddah was increasingly frequented by ships of the British East India Company, which had a "factory," or depot, in the town. Whoever's writ ran in Jiddah, and whatever rules applied, the port's role in the India trade seems to have been a well-established feature, and the foundation of its commercial position.

Jiddah's pivotal role in the India trade thus owed much to political factors. But a close look at records of Red Sea voyages reveals a deeper reason than politics for its commercial success: the wind pattern of the Red Sea.

It is quickly apparent from those records that the half of the Red Sea north of Jiddah presented a serious obstacle to sailing vessels. The great navigator Ahmad ibn Majid, who lived in the last decades of the 15th century, gave comprehensive sailing instructions in his navigation manuals for all the coasts of the western Indian Ocean, the Arabian Gulf and the Red Sea. As a virtuoso long-distance navigator himself, Ibn Majid took pains to record everything he knew for his fellow practitioners in the India trade. How significant it is, then, that he covers the southern half of the Red Sea in detail, but the northernmost point that he describes is Jiddah. Oceangoing seamen of the India trade never went beyond Jiddah. Ibn Majid and his contemporaries were experts in the monsoon sailing regime, and he makes it clear by omission that the northern Red Sea fell outside it.

This is because in the northern half of the Red Sea above Jiddah, the prevailing wind blows from the north the whole year-round. Even in the southern half, the wind blows from the north for most of the year. It is only during a relatively short time between October and March or April that a southerly wind blows, and it blows reliably only as far north as the latitude of Jiddah and, on the African side, 'Aydhab.

That left sailing in the northern part of the Red Sea to smaller coasting vessels, which could take advantage of on- and offshore breezes at most times of the year, provided they were not in too much of a hurry. (Fleets of Ottoman galleys could, and did, make their way from Suez all the way down the Red Sea and back again, but galleys can be rowed.) One such voyage was recorded in 1541 by the Portuguese João de Castro, mathematician and future viceroy of the Indies, who conducted the first European scientific exploration of the Red Sea coast of Africa.

THERE WAS MORE TO JIDDAH'S HISTORIC SUCCESS THAN THE PILGRIMAGE AND THE INDIA TRADE: THERE WERE THE WINDS.

SEASONAL SAILING IN THE RED SEA AND ARABIAN SEA

Driven by warming and cooling of the Asian landmass, monsoon winds blow seasonally throughout the Indian Ocean region, from the Red Sea in the west to the South China Sea in the east. In the Red Sea, the monsoon's influence stops at 21 to 22 degrees north latitude—about where Jiddah lies. In the northern Red Sea, where the winds are unaffected by the monsoon, the wind is from the north year-round. The Swiss explorer Johann Burckhardt wrote in 1814: "The fleets, principally from Calcutta, Surat and Bombay, reach Djidda in the beginning of May .... The India fleets return in June or July."

MAX STEINEKE / SAUDI ARAMCO
SAMIA EL-MOSLIMANY / SAUDI ARAMCO WORLD / PADIA

Today, about two million pilgrims from around the world pass annually through Jiddah's King 'Abd al-'Aziz International Airport.

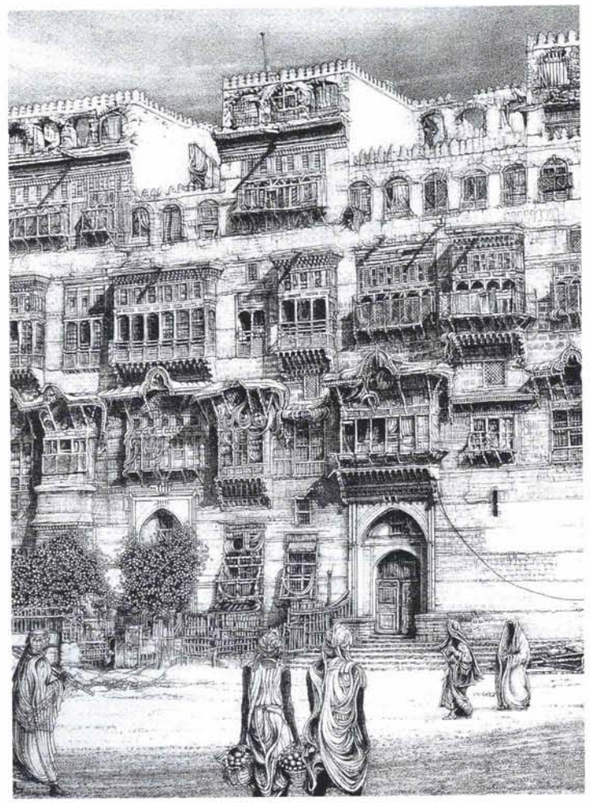
It took him and his men 66 days to go from Massawa north to Suez, and they got there mostly by rowing into contrary breezes. Only twice did they get a day of sailing. On seeing the size of the Ottoman fleet at Suez ("41 'royal ships' and five large vessels") and the defenses, they decided that discretion was the better part of valor and they prepared to return south. On leaving Suez, de Castro sighs: "We were at death's door in our ships from exhaustion." By contrast, the return voyage to Massawa took them a mere 25 days.

This natural fact of Red Sea winds is a constant in the history of those waters. It provides some explanation why, both far back in antiquity and in Islamic times, ports on the Egyptian side show a tendency to be some way down the coast and not at Suez, at the farthest north. Suez might look on the map as if it were in an obvious position geographically, but in navigational terms it was inaccessible. That is why we find, under the Ptolemies and Romans, Myos Hormos (Qusair) and Berenike (Ras Banas)—both quite a way down the African coast of the Red Sea—developed as ports and served by well-maintained land routes from the Nile Valley. Only with the coming of steam in the 19th century did the wind regime of the Red Sea become irrelevant to the location of ports, and it is only then that Suez rose to preeminence.

The Jiddah–'Aydhab latitude—the northern limit of southerly winds—was thus always the limit of sail-powered direct trade bound for Alexandria or Cairo. But after Roman times, why did the major commercial port of the Red Sea develop on the Arabian, and not on the African or Egyptian, coast? Only the pilgrimage to Makkah explains that: Islam changed the pattern of the centuries-old India trade by making the Hijaz coast of the Red Sea a destination for the first time. And on the Hijaz coast, there was no better-placed port than Jiddah.

The beauty of Jiddah's traditional Red Sea architecture is a living memorial not just of its unique role as the port of Makkah, but also of the central part it played in the sailing commerce between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. The teak for the ornate filigree screens on the *rawasheen* balconies of Jiddah's old houses symbolizes both the trade with India and the cooling breezes that once blew that trade to its harbor—and blew it no farther. ⊕

In the early 20th century, some of Jiddah's most ornate *rawasheen*, or bay windows with turned-wood screens, adorned "Bayt Baghdadi" ("Baghdad House"). Notable residents have included the Ottoman governor, Harry St. John Philby and, in the 1930's, the offices of Standard Oil of California (SOCAL), the founding partner of what later became the Arabian American Oil Company, forerunner of today's Saudi Aramco.



A publisher, historian and museum consultant, **William Facey** has studied the countries of the Arabian Peninsula for more than 30 years. His main focus has been Saudi Arabia, and he is the author of *Riyadh: The Old City, Back to Earth: Adobe Building in Saudi Arabia* and *Saudi Arabia By the First Photographers.* He is director of Arabian Publishing Ltd., London.

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Indian Ocean trade: J/A 05
Pilgrimage routes: J/F 04
Ibn Battuta: J/A 00
Ahmad ibn Majid: J/A 05
Jiddah architecture: S/O 87
Jiddah beautification: M/A 84
Rawasheen balconies: S/O 71

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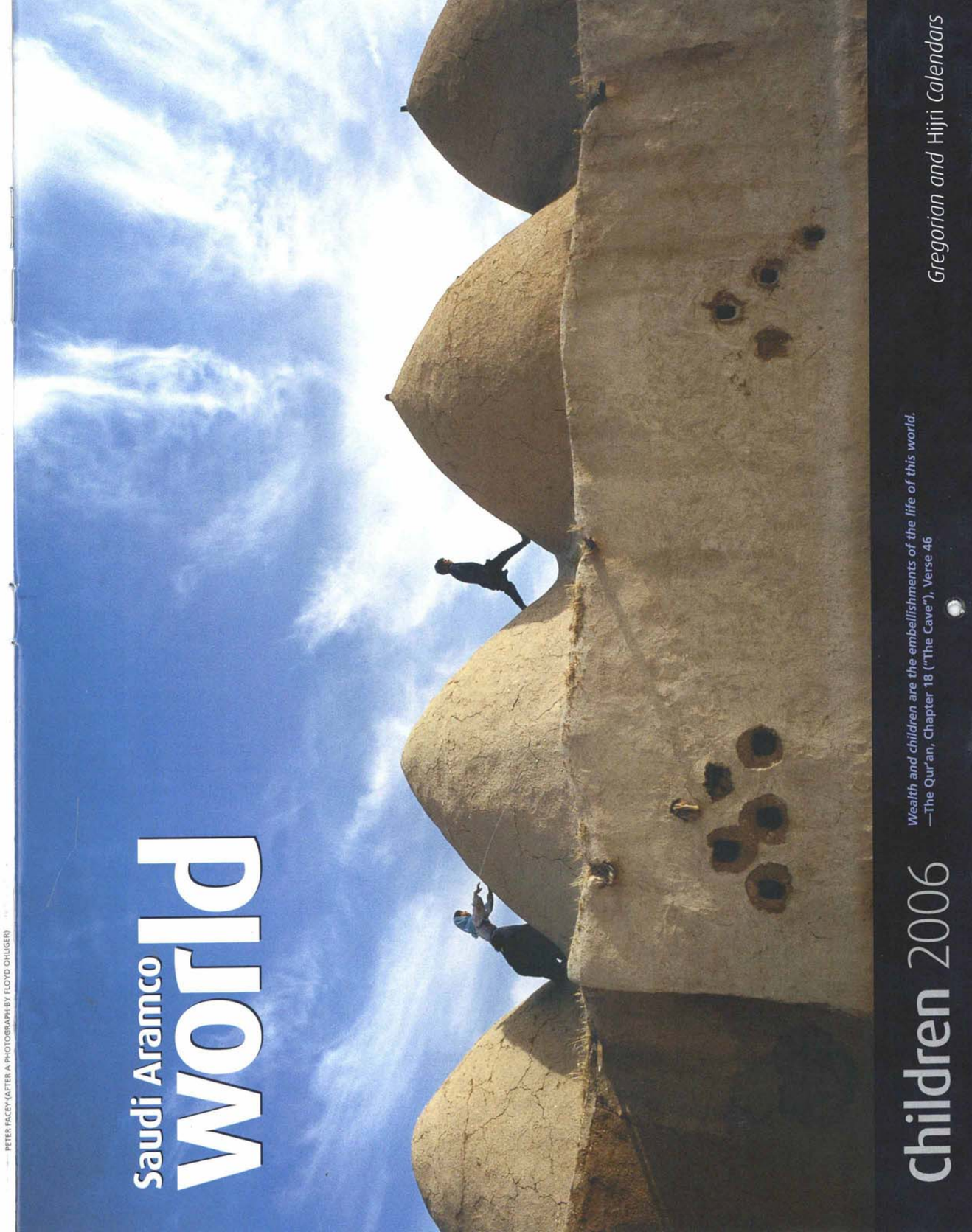

New Generations in the Middle East

Cover: **A boy and a girl chase across a domed rooftop in Am Al Aboud, near Aleppo, Syria, one of a dozen villages which have retained this ancient architecture. Photo by Ed Kashi.**

BY ELIZABETH WARNOCK FERNEA

Lubna is 15 years old and lives in Kuwait. She is a sophomore at a private high school where the classes are taught in English. Her father and mother, who work in banking and at Kuwait University, respectively, feel strongly that she should also have a formal background in Arabic, the language of her heritage and her Islamic faith, so Lubna spends Fridays at home being tutored by a local teacher.

Omar is 14. He lives in Cairo. His father died several years ago. Last year Omar had to drop out of his neighborhood public school and go to work to help support his mother and four younger siblings. Fortunately, his 16-year-old brother Gamal was already working in a small, privately owned factory, and the owner hired Omar as well. Omar is proud to be contributing to the family income, he says, but he regrets having to leave school, since that means he will not be able to rise much beyond his present unskilled job. Television is the family recreation. Omar loves westerns, as well as pop-music programs from both the West and the Arab world.

Nadia also lives in Cairo. She's 11, and she attends a private elementary school in well-heeled Zamalek, across the Nile from the city center. Both her parents work full-time. Her mother is a journalist and her father is in advertising. Thus Nadia and her eight-year-old sister, Hala, are escorted to and from school by the family nanny.

Abdul Hamid is 16 and lives in Morocco's capital, Rabat. The son of parents who are both lawyers, he is enrolled in a public school, but he receives special tutoring in mathematics. This tutoring, his parents hope, will help him score well on the national exams that determine whether or not he will go on to a university. On weekends, he often helps his father, who has started an extensive organic garden in the family's country house just outside Rabat.

Driss, a friend of Abdul Hamid's, wants to go to medical school, but his family cannot afford tutoring. Driss is the sixth of eight children, and he lives with his mother and seven siblings in a small two-room apartment. His father is a "guest worker" in France who regularly sends money home, but Driss and his older brother still have to work part-time to help make ends meet.

Lubna, Omar, Nadia, Abdul Hamid and Driss are very different from the Middle Eastern children romanticized by writers in the past. The small figure, photographed in a nomadic or rural landscape, so isolated from—and foreign to—the urban world the writers inhabited, is gone. To begin with, more than half of all children in the Middle East today live in cities, not in the country or, rarer still, in desert oases. This shift to predominantly urban life has taken place in just over 40 years.

The new generation is growing also in numbers and in interconnectedness. Demographers point out that half of the Arab world's total population today is under the age of 15. These young people are growing up in a world of wider horizons and shorter distances than that of their parents, thanks in no small part to the communications revolution. Lubna, in Kuwait, and Omar, in Cairo—despite the differences between their social and economic positions—watch many of the same television programs and listen to the same commercial messages offering designer jeans and jogging shoes, sports equipment and electronics.

This is a generation with high material expectations and occupational ambitions. Children in this generation see themselves as citizens of modern nation-states. They take for granted the right to free education, something that, in some of their countries, was once limited to the elite. This raising of hopes is dramatic: Driss would have been unable to think of medical school in Morocco 20 years ago, and at that time, Omar's regret over leaving school would have been less, since he would have known that other choices were simply not available.

Lubna, Omar, Nadia, Abdul Hamid and Driss also live in societies where class systems are changing. A real middle class has emerged, recruited on the basis of merit and economic interest rather than lineage, and it is playing an important role in social and business life. But in this middle class, it is increasingly common to find both parents working full-time, so children end up spending time at home alone—another great change from the past. As more women work outside the home and women's roles in the family are gradually renegotiated—a bit more here and a bit less there—this, too, affects children by changing the traditional family unit and the relationships within it.

"A child is a gift from God." This saying, so common throughout the Middle East for centuries, expresses a basic cultural tenet held by Muslims, Christians and Jews of the region: Not only are children much desired and loved on their own terms, but they also have symbolic importance: An adult becomes a mature and full-fledged member of society only when he or she marries and has children. A family is a living symbol of continuity between the past and the present.

New and ever greater differences between past and present make that linking role a difficult one, points out Mohammed Shoufani of Morocco's Ministry of Education. "Children are the most important and the most complicated people in our society today, pulled as they are between two worlds.... At a time when old absolutes are crumbling and old values are disregarded, ...young people...are endangered because they are, in terms of values at least, at sea."

Indeed, the future of the Middle East will be determined by the choices made by young people like Lubna, Omar, Driss, Abdul Hamid, Hala and Nadia.

This article is abridged from "A New Generation in the Middle East," *Aramco World*, January/February 1998.

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Patterns of Moon, Patterns of Sun

It is he who made the sun to be a shining glory, and the moon to be a light (of beauty), and measured out stages for her, that ye might know the number of years and the count (of time).
—The Qur'an, Chapter 10 ("Yunus") Verse 5

BY PAUL LUNDE

The *hijri* calendar

In AD 638, six years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam's second caliph 'Umar recognized the necessity of a calendar to govern the affairs of the Muslims. This was first of all a practical matter. Correspondence with military and civilian officials in the newly conquered lands had to be dated. But Persia used a different calendar from Syria, where the caliphate was based; Egypt used yet another. Each of these calendars had a different starting point, or epoch. The Sasanids, the ruling dynasty of Persia, used June 16, AD 632, the date of the accession of the last Sasanid monarch, Yazdagird III. Syria, which until the Muslim conquest was part of the Byzantine Empire, used a form of the Roman "Julian" calendar, with an epoch of October 1, 312 BC. Egypt used the Coptic calendar, with an epoch of August 29, AD 284. Although all were solar, and hence geared to the seasons and containing 365 days, each also had a different system for periodically adding days to compensate for the fact that the true length of the solar year is not 365 but 365.2422 days.

In pre-Islamic Arabia, various other systems of measuring time had been used. In South Arabia, some calendars apparently were lunar, while others were lunisolar, using months based on the phases of the moon but intercalating days outside the lunar cycle to synchronize the calendar with the seasons. On the eve of Islam, the Himyarites appear to have used a calendar based on the Julian form, but with an epoch of 110 BC. In central Arabia, the course of the year was charted by the position of the stars relative to the horizon at sunset or sunrise, dividing the ecliptic into 28 equal parts corresponding to the location of the moon on each successive night of the month. The names of the months in that calendar have continued in the Islamic calendar to this day and would seem to indicate that, before Islam, some sort of lunisolar calendar was in use, though it is not known to have had an epoch other than memorable local events.

There were two other reasons 'Umar rejected existing solar calendars. The Qur'an, in Chapter 10, Verse 5, states that time should be reckoned by the moon. Not only that, calendars used by the Persians, Syrians and Egyptians were identified with other religions and cultures. He therefore decided to create a calendar specifically for the Muslim community. It would be lunar, and it would have 12 months, each with 29 or 30 days.

This gives the lunar year 354 days, 11 days fewer than the solar year. 'Umar chose as the epoch for the new Muslim calendar the *hijrah*, the emigration of the Prophet Muhammad and 70 Muslims from Makkah to Madinah, where Muslims first attained religious and political autonomy. The *hijrah* thus occurred on 1 Muharram 1 according to the Islamic calendar, which was named "*hijri*" after its epoch. (This date corresponds to July 16, AD 622 on the Gregorian calendar.) Today in the West, it is customary, when writing *hijri* dates, to use the abbreviation AH, which stands for the Latin *anno hegirae*, "year of the *hijrah*."

Because the Islamic lunar calendar is 11 days shorter than the solar, it is therefore not synchronized to the seasons. Its festivals, which fall on the same days of the same lunar months each year, make the round of the seasons every 33 solar years. This 11-day difference between the lunar and the solar year accounts for the difficulty of converting dates from one system to the other.

Though they share 12 lunar cycles—months—per solar year, the *hijri* calendar uses actual moon phases to mark them, whereas the Gregorian calendar adjusts its nearly lunar months to synchronize with the sun.

The Gregorian calendar

The early calendar of the Roman Empire was lunisolar, containing 355 days divided into 12 months beginning on January 1. To keep it more or less in accord with the actual solar year, a month was added every two years. The system for doing so was complex, and cumulative errors gradually misaligned it with the seasons. By 46 BC, it was some three months out of alignment, and Julius Caesar oversaw its reform. Consulting Greek astronomers in Alexandria, he created a solar calendar in which one day was added to February every fourth year, effectively compensating for the solar year's length of 365.2422 days. This Julian calendar was used throughout Europe until AD 1582.

In the Middle Ages, the Christian liturgical calendar was grafted onto the Julian one, and the computation of lunar festivals like Easter, which falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox, exercised some of the best minds in Christendom. The use of the epoch AD 1 dates from the sixth century, but did not become common until the 10th. Because the zero had not yet reached the West from Islamic lands, a year was lost between 1 BC and AD 1.

The Julian year was nonetheless 11 minutes and 14 seconds too long. By the early 16th century, due to the accumulated error, the spring equinox was falling on March 11 rather than where it should, on March 21. Copernicus, Christophorus Clavius and the physician Aloysius Lilius provided the calculations, and in 1582 Pope Gregory XIII ordered that Thursday, October 4, 1582 would be followed by Friday, October 15, 1582. Most Catholic countries accepted the new "Gregorian" calendar, but it was not adopted in England and the Americas until the 18th century. Its use is now almost universal worldwide. The Gregorian year is nonetheless 25.96 seconds ahead of the solar year, which by the year 4909 will add up to an extra day.

Historian **Paul Lunde** (paullunde@hotmail.com) specializes in Islamic history and literature. His most recent book is *Islam: Culture, Faith and History* (2001, Dorling Kindersley).

Converting Dates

The following equations convert roughly from Gregorian to *hijri* and vice versa. However, the results can be slightly misleading: They tell you only the year in which the other calendar's year *began*. For example, 2006 Gregorian spans both 1426 and 1427 *hijri*, but the equation tells you that 2006 "equals" 1427, when in fact 1427 merely began during 2006.

Gregorian year = [(32 x *hijri* year) ÷ 33] + 622 **hijri year** = [(Gregorian year – 622) x 33] ÷ 32

Alternatively, there are more precise calculators available on the Internet: Try **www.rabiah.com/convert/** and **www.ori.unizh.ch/hegira.html**.

Girls play in the yard of a private school in Beirut, Lebanon. Photo by Katrina Thomas / *Saudi Aramco World* / PADIA.

Saudi Aramco **world** 2006

JANUARY
DHU AL-HIJJAH 1426 – MUHARRAM 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 1	**2** 2	**3** 3	**4** 4	**5** 5	**6** 6
7 7	**8** 8	**9** 9	**10** 10	**11** 11	**12** 12	**13** 13
		'Id al-Adha				
14 14	**15** 15	**16** 16	**17** 17	**18** 18	**19** 19	**20** 20
21 21	**22** 22	**23** 23	**24** 24	**25** 25	**26** 26	**27** 27
28 28	**29** 29	**30** 30	**31** 1			

FEBRUARY
MUHARRAM – SAFAR 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 2	**2** 3	**3** 4
4 5	**5** 6	**6** 7	**7** 8	**8** 9	**9** 10	**10** 11
11 12	**12** 13	**13** 14	**14** 15	**15** 16	**16** 17	**17** 18
18 19	**19** 20	**20** 21	**21** 22	**22** 23	**23** 24	**24** 25
25 26	**26** 27	**27** 28	**28** 29			

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Bedouin boys climb pillars at the Temple of Awwam (the Temple of the Sun) in Marib, Yemen, once the capital of the Sabaean kingdom. The temple was built around 400 BC. In its heyday, from 750 BC until the end of the fourth century of our era, Marib counted some 50,000 inhabitants. Photo by Samer Mohdad / Corbis.

MARCH

SAFAR — RABI' AL-AWWAL 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 1	2 2	3 3
4 4	5 5	6 6	7 7	8 8	9 9	10 10
11 11	12 12	13 13	14 14	15 15	16 16	17 17
18 18	19 19	20 20	21 21	22 22	23 23	24 24
25 25	26 26	27 27	28 28	29 29	30 1	31 2

APRIL

RABI' AL-AWWAL — RABI' AL-THANI 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 3	2 4	3 5	4 6	5 7	6 8	7 9
8 10	9 11	10 12	11 13	12 14	13 15	14 16
15 17	16 18	17 19	18 20	19 21	20 22	21 23
	Easter					
22 24	23 25	24 26	25 27	26 28	27 29	28 30
29 1	30 2					

Saudi Aramco **world** 2006

A mother guides her daughter along the rocky shore of the Red Sea in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia. The Seaside Mosque is in the background. Photo by Lynsey Addario / Corbis.

MAY
RABI' AL-THANI – JUMADA AL-ULA 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 3	2 4	3 5	4 6	5 7
6 8	7 9	8 10	9 11	10 12	11 13	12 14
13 15	14 16	15 17	16 18	17 19	18 20	19 21
20 22	21 23	22 24	23 25	24 26	25 27	26 28
27 29	28 1	29 2	30 3	31 4		

JUNE
JUMADA AL-ULA – JUMADA AL-AKHIRA 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
					1 5	2 6
3 7	4 8	5 9	6 10	7 11	8 12	9 13
10 14	11 15	12 16	13 17	14 18	15 19	16 20
17 21	18 22	19 23	20 24	21 25	22 26	23 27
24 28	25 29	26 30	27 1	28 2	29 3	30 4

Saudi Aramco **world** 2006

A late-afternoon bike ride through a street in Rimal ("Sands"), an affluent neighborhood in the city of Gaza, affords a boy a few moments of solitude. Photo by George Baramki Azar.

JULY
JUMADA AL-AKHIRA — RAJAB 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 5	**2** 6	**3** 7	**4** 8	**5** 9	**6** 10	**7** 12
8 12	**9** 13	**10** 14	**11** 15	**12** 16	**13** 17	**14** 18
15 19	**16** 20	**17** 21	**18** 22	**19** 23	**20** 24	**21** 25
22 26	**23** 27	**24** 28	**25** 29	**26** 1	**27** 2	**28** 3
29 4	**30** 5	**31** 6				

AUGUST
RAJAB — SHA'BAN 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 7	**2** 8	**3** 9	**4** 10
5 11	**6** 12	**7** 13	**8** 14	**9** 15	**10** 16	**11** 17
12 18	**13** 19	**14** 20	**15** 21	**16** 22	**17** 23	**18** 24
19 25	**20** 26	**21** 27	**22** 28	**23** 29	**24** 30	**25** 1
26 2	**27** 3	**28** 4	**29** 5	**30** 6	**31** 7	

Saudi Aramco **world** 2006

Iraqi children play in front of murals whose color and whimsy belie the purpose of the wall they're painted on: protection against car-bombs. Photo by Lynsey Addario / Corbis.

SEPTEMBER

SHA'BAN — RAMADAN 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
						1 8
2 9	**3** 10	**4** 11	**5** 12	**6** 13	**7** 14	**8** 15
9 16	**10** 17	**11** 18	**12** 19	**13** 20	**14** 21	**15** 22
16 23	**17** 24	**18** 25	**19** 26	**20** 27	**21** 28	**22** 29
23 30	**24** 1	**25** 2	**26** 3	**27** 4	**28** 5	**29** 6
30 7						

OCTOBER

RAMADAN — SHAWWAL 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1 8	**2** 9	**3** 10	**4** 11	**5** 12	**6** 13
7 14	**8** 15	**9** 16	**10** 17	**11** 18	**12** 19	**13** 20
14 21	**15** 22	**16** 23	**17** 24	**18** 25	**19** 26	**20** 27
21 28	**22** 29	**23** 1	**24** 2	**25** 3	**26** 4	**27** 5
		'Id al-Fitr				
28 6	**29** 7	**30** 8	**31** 9			

Saudi Aramco **world** 2006

Hogla Ramadan eyes her week-old baby son, Zain Al-Din, as the family celebrates his birth in Marioteya, a suburb of Cairo. Photo by Michael Nelson.

NOVEMBER
SHAWWAL — DHU AL-QA'DAH 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 10	2 11	3 12
4 13	5 14	6 15	7 16	8 17	9 18	10 19
11 20	12 21	13 22	14 23	15 24	16 25	17 26
18 27	19 28	20 29	21 30	22 1	23 2	24 3
25 4	26 5	27 6	28 7	29 8	30 9	

DECEMBER
DHU AL-QA'DAH — DHU AL-HIJJAH 1427

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
						1 10
2 11	3 12	4 13	5 14	6 15	7 16	8 17
9 18	10 19	11 20	12 21	13 22	14 23	15 24
16 25	17 26	18 27	19 28	20 29	21 30	22 1
23 2	24 3	25 4 Christmas	26 5	27 6	28 7	29 8
30 9	31 10					

Making a Living in the Desert

Written and photographed by
Arita Baaijens

"Come and sit by the fire." Fatima Yussif, my hostess, pushes a few small goats aside and points invitingly at a stool. Milk simmers in a pot above the flames. It will be breakfast for the several children who are still asleep in the large family bed in her tent.

The wind blows relentlessly across the savannah. It is bitterly cold as the winter dawn shimmers through gray clouds of dust. The men, shepherds of the Shanabla tribe, return shivering from their nocturnal rambles. They wear thick overcoats with extra blankets wrapped around their shoulders. They guide the flocks along to their *farig*, or family camp, where I've become a temporary live-in relative. Fatima's small tent is pitched next to that of her favorite son.

A nomad's tent is almost always a woman's property and responsibility. Usually it is richly adorned with colored cloth and plaited leather bags, but Fatima has furnished hers sparingly. There is a roll-up bed made of dried palm fronds, and next to it an *utfa*, a woman's camel saddle, which is stuffed with leather bags and gourds. The wall behind the bed is covered with dark brown cowhides. There is a wooden trough, several stools and a few cooking utensils. That's all.

Fatima runs the household mostly on her own. Her husband, Mohamed Nur, works in the camel market of El Obeid, the capital of Sudan's Northern Kordofan province, about 40 kilometers (25 mi) northwest. During the great drought of 1984 and 1985, which affected some 4.5 million people from Chad to the Red Sea, the family lost much of its livestock, and Mohamed was forced to go to town to look for work. He ended up building a house there, marrying a second wife and starting a second family. Now, he visits the farig once a week.

While this Shanabla family eats breakfast, three kid goats stand tethered outside their tent. Like camels, goats do well in dry areas.

See additional photos at www.saudiaramcoworld.com.

In November 1949, the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco) launched an interoffice newsletter named *Aramco World*. Over the next two decades, as the number of Americans working with Saudi colleagues in Dhahran grew into the tens of thousands, *Aramco World* grew into a bimonthly educational magazine whose historical, geographical and cultural articles helped the American employees and their families appreciate an unfamiliar land.

The magazine is now published by Aramco Services Company in Houston, Texas on behalf of Saudi Aramco, which succeeded Aramco in 1988 as the national oil company of Saudi Arabia. In 2000, *Aramco World* changed its name to *Saudi Aramco World* to reflect this relationship.

Today, *Saudi Aramco World*'s orientation is still toward education, the fostering of cooperation and the building of mutual appreciation between East and West, but for the last four decades the magazine has been aimed primarily at readers outside the company, worldwide, as well as at internal readers. Its articles have spanned the Arab and Muslim worlds, past and present, with special attention to their connections with the cultures of the West.

Subscriptions to *Saudi Aramco World* are available without charge to a limited number of readers interested in the cultures of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their connections with the West. Multiple-copy subscriptions for seminars or classrooms are also available. From Saudi Arabia, please send subscription requests to Public Relations, Saudi Aramco, Box 5000, Dhahran 31311. From all other countries, send subscription requests—signed and dated, please—by postal mail to *Saudi Aramco World*, Box 2106, Houston, Texas 77252, USA, or by fax to +1-713-432-5536.

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Sudan Facts

Area: 2.5 million square kilometers (965,000 sq mi), 1/4 the size of the United States.
Estimated population (2004): 40 million
Estimated percentage of North Sudanese who are full-time pastoralists: 7 to 15
Estimated percentage who are part-time pastoralists: about 50
Estimated number of tribes in Sudan: 500
National population of camels: 3 million (world's second largest, after Somalia)
Population of other livestock: 113 million
Percentage of livestock owned by nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists: 90
Percentage of land that is arable: 5
Percentage that is "permanent pasture": 46
Area of North Kordofan Province: 185,000 square kilometers (71,400 sq mi)
Major tribes of North Kordofan: Kababish, Hawawir, Kawahla and Shanabla are herders; Gawaama and Dar Hamid are agro-pastoralists; Bederia are farmers.

Among the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes in northern Sudan, wives enjoy a great deal of freedom because the male head of the family spends much time away from home traveling with camels or, as Mohamed does, working in town to supplement the income the family gets from livestock. When the husband is absent, women run their lives independently, although they will often consult male relatives on important decisions. In terms of a woman's workload, a husband's presence does not make much difference: Fetching water and firewood, cleaning, looking after children and small animals, cooking, washing, mending clothes, weaving mats, selling milk and setting up and breaking down the tent are all women's jobs. (See page 41.) Although family life without a husband's consistent presence has disadvantages, it lightens a wife's load in one respect: It means a greatly reduced stream of visitors for whom tea, coffee and meals must be prepared.

The bleak sun hovers above the treetops as Fatima's daughter Aisha carries two jerry cans to the paved road. The plastic containers are filled with goat's milk, and she will sell them to the wholesale buyer who passes by at eight every morning. He will sell the milk in the market in El Obeid. Other tribes frown on this practice because the custom of the region demands that milk be distributed free, not for profit.

Aisha and Fatima, however, have more basic issues to worry about. The Shanabla tribe (pronounced sha-**na**-bla) is unique among the major tribes of North Kordofan because the Shanabla have no *dar*, or government-recognized homeland. As a result, the tribe leads an entirely nomadic existence. Until recently, this was easy because there were enough communal grazing grounds to accommodate the Shanabla's camels, cattle, sheep and goats. Farmers, who are mainly from the Bederia and Gawaama tribes, were usually pleased when Shanabla arrived on their lands: After all, animal dung is excellent fertilizer, and it came free of charge.

But times have been changing. Since the 1970's, government-supported, investment-driven agriculture has put vast areas of formerly pastoral land to the plow throughout the White Nile region. In the last decade, Sudan's agricultural area has grown by about 30 percent, much of it on land that the Shanabla used during the dry season, from October to May. But without a dar, Shanabla have been powerless to check this encroachment on their resources. Now, many of their wells lie inaccessible on farmland that also often blocks traditional migration routes. As a result, the tribe has been forced to spend less time in more fertile regions and more in the drier lands, where grazing can be scarce and where long-term desert climate cycles have made droughts worse.

Saddlebags decorated with cowrie shells adorn the wall of a Shanabla tent.

Drought- and heat-resistant sorghum is the leading cereal crop in all of Africa, and it is believed to have been first domesticated more than 8000 years ago in the Sudan–Ethiopia region. Its flour is the basis of *asida*, a thick porridge that is a staple food of many northern Sudanese nomads. Camels like to eat sorghum plants, too, and this is one source of the common tension between farmers and nomads.

All of this means that Shanabla livestock have less to eat, and many Shanabla are struggling to maintain their subsistence livelihoods. Industrial-farm landowners are not generally among the farmers that host the Shanabla, and the small-time tribal farmers who remain are increasingly likely to object to the arrival of itinerant Shanabla.

This is exactly the situation at Fatima's farig. After hearing about a neighboring farmer's complaint that Shanabla sheep and camels had once again eaten into his harvest, Fatima's brother Ibrahim, who has joined her by the fire, comments flatly, "Our animals have to eat." To prevent trouble, Ibrahim says, he and his brothers have taken to letting their flock browse at night.

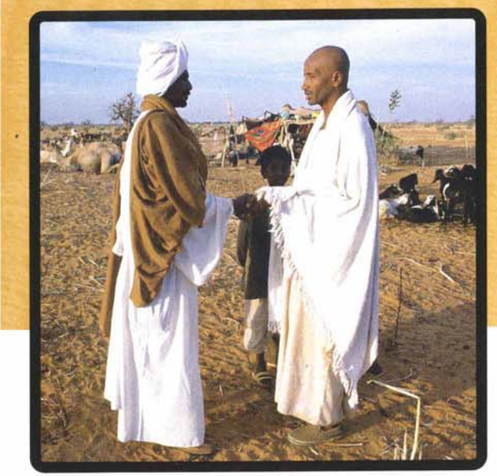
As we sit chatting around the fire, a farmer's wife rides by on a donkey. As one of the family's guard dogs begins to bark, she shouts, "This is our land! It would be better if that dog looked after your herd!"

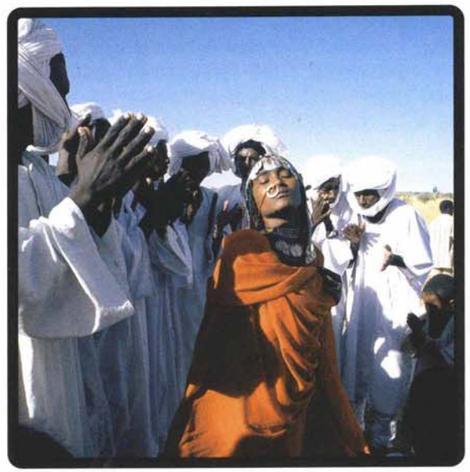
Ibrahim sighs. "A farmer can stick his spade into the ground anywhere he wants," he complains, "but nobody seems to care about the needs of nomads. It's all one big headache. If he loses sight of his animals, even for the shortest time, he will be in trouble with a farmer."

Ibrahim has a point: As untilled pastureland shrinks, crop damage by livestock is on the rise. If a farmer is not pleased with the compensation settlement he is then offered by a Shanabla *shaykh*, the farmer can take his case to court, where nomads have no say in the assessment of damages nor any right of appeal. As one Shanabla shaykh put it dryly, "Conflicts between herders and farmers are as old as Cain and Abel."

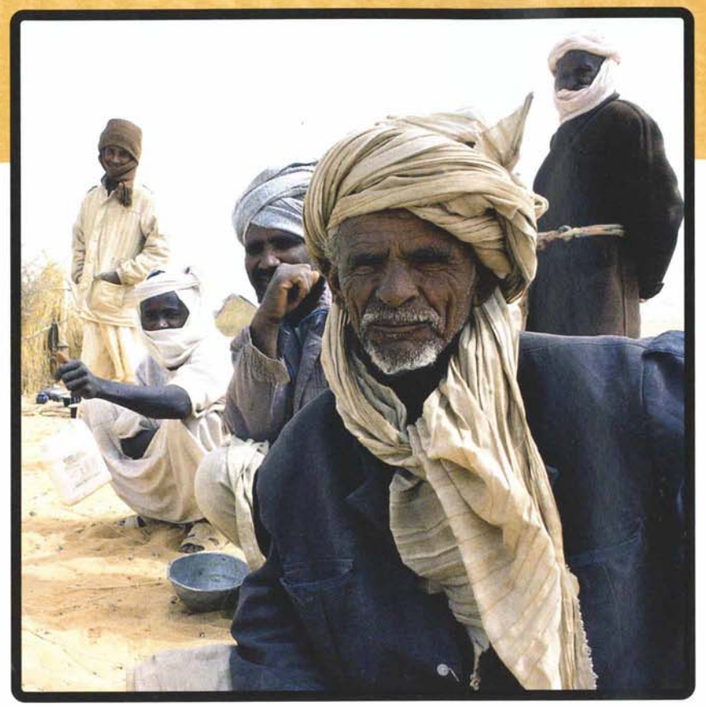
After the herdsmen have breakfast and a few hours' sleep, it is time for the camels to graze. Ibrahim has grown-up sons

Above: **A knife is one of a herder's most basic tools, and nomads often wear them strapped around the upper left arm.** Left: **A Kababish woman has set a mirror between a pair of wooden bowls used for oil and makeup.**





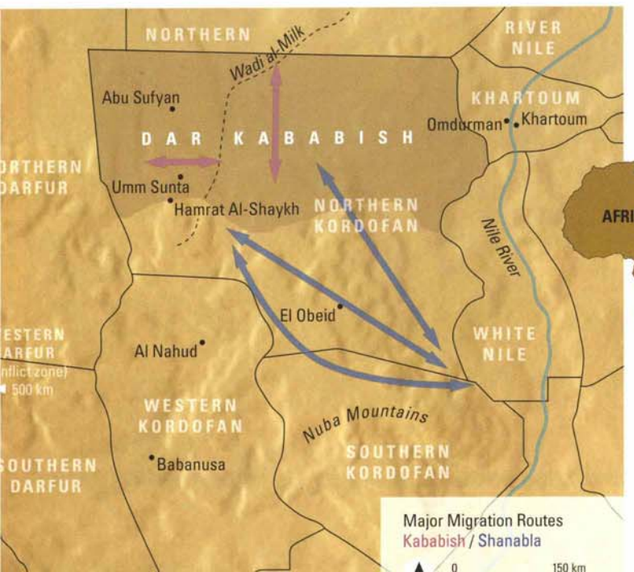
Left: **At the edge of his *farig*, or family camp, livestock trader Abdel Bagi** (left) **shakes the hand of a guest arriving at his daughter's wedding celebration. Among the guests will be both fellow nomads and local farmers.** Below: **Fadrallah Salih is a salt trader whose caravans often meet and do business with families of the tribes they encounter.** Lower left: **A young woman takes her turn dancing during the celebration of a Shanabla boy's circumcision.**



who help him with these tasks. His younger boys take care of the sheep and goats. Girls do some of the domestic chores. "It's a hard life," both Ibrahim and Fatima agree, "but don't forget that in the rainy season, our lives are a lot happier. During the wet summers there is grass everywhere. No trouble with angry farmers then!" they say cheerfully.

Omar Egemi is an assistant professor of geography at the University of Khartoum, and he is also employed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to study ways to reduce resource-based conflicts between farmers and nomads. When he was young, his father was a Nile Valley trader who bartered with the Beja, a camel-herding tribe that lives in eastern Sudan and southeastern Egypt. As a child, Omar was fascinated by the Beja's stories and lifestyle. Later, he traveled with them and wrote a master's thesis about subsistence economics in the Red Sea hills.

He confirms what Fatima and Ibrahim say. "Half of Sudan consists of land that is not suitable for agriculture. Only nomads know what to do with these areas. The



Pastoralism

Pastoralism in the Sudan is a centuries-old form of natural resource use and management. It entails varied types of movement, ranging from pure nomadism, typically characterized by camel breeding and long-distance, year-round movement, to periodic, seasonal ("transhumant") movement over shorter distances. Some pastoralists are "agro-pastoralists," which means that they combine seasonal farming with livestock-raising and varying degrees of nomadism.

fattest sheep and camels for the market are reared in marginal areas where no human being wants to live. The livestock sector annually contributes $140 million to the national economy. That is 23 percent of total [national] exports," Egemi exclaims, adding that this income from the nomadic sector is second only to that of the oil sector.

But in spite of this statistic, Egemi asserts that scientists, development workers, policy makers and politicians have all tended to "favor agricultural development at the expense of pastoralism." This, he says, leads to fewer people taking part in livestock raising, food insecurity among nomads, increased farmer–nomad conflicts and the concentration of livestock in fewer hands. Egemi can only shake his head at all this.

"Pastoral movement is an efficient adaptation to non-equilibrium ecologies," he explains. "Mobility is the only way to rear animals in marginal areas on a sustainable basis." In addition, it is essential to maintain—as the Shanabla and others do—a diversity of livestock, to split large units into smaller ones in times of drought and to use regional, non-hierarchical decision-making systems that respond efficiently to changing conditions.

Judiya is the Arabic word for the traditional means of reconciling tribal conflicts. It is based on mediation, forgiveness and agreement on fines, rewards and restitution. When there is resolution, it is then formalized with a recitation from the Qur'an.

Amni bint Hamid is a member of the Kababish.

Like most large tribes, *Shanabla* do not travel all together. They live and migrate in *small, family-based groups.*

Better than reconciliation, of course, is conflict prevention. Shanabla will often donate small goats and firewood to farmers, and they will also buy sesame oil, soap and grain from them. Most significantly, they will intermarry with farmers. And for any Shanabla festivity, farmers in the area are always invited. Many farmers are among the guests at a marriage celebration taking place in the Shanabla camp of Shaykh Abdel Bagi, a prominent livestock trader. For him, good relations with the people on whose land he and his clan are staying is a matter of good business.

"Is the meat ready yet?" Abdel Bagi rushes into the *rakuba*, a hut used as kitchen, that belongs to the groom's mother, Bakheita Hamid. The rakuba is jammed with women stooped over the fires on which large pans of camel meat and onions in gravy are simmering. Abdel Bagi tastes it. "Very good," he declares. He has a reputation at stake: His guests must be completely satisfied.

The groom's friends arrive, sweeping through the farig on racing camels. Clouds of dust rise everywhere, whips crack, and women turn to shout encouragement. "It will be our turn later," a girl says with a smile. She is busy adorning her braids with shining beads. In the afternoon, her golden jewelry and headdress will shine during the dance party for the young.

Later, when the celebration is in full swing, a colorful caravan of camels passes the camp—Shanabla enroute from one place to another. "This is how we arrived here, one week ago," says Bakheita, pointing her wooden spoon at the tall utfas hung with pieces of flapping cloth that protect mothers and children against sun and wind. Beds, stools, sticks and canvas all sway to the rhythm of the baggage camels. Bright-eyed, the women in the rakuba watch the grand procession disappear. The horizon beckons.

Ecology of Pastoral Lands

In North Kordofan, 70 percent of the soil is sandy and supports only annual grasses and acacia trees. The other 30 percent, found in the central and southern districts of the province, is clay and heavy clay, which supports a richer cover of vegetation. Most of the nomads' wet-season grazing areas are located in these regions.

North Kordofan is a dry zone. Rainfall varies from none at all in the far north to little in the southern savannah. Droughts occur every four to five years, and severe, multi-year droughts take place about once a decade. This complex ecosystem is well suited to pastoralists, who follow the rains with their herds. Scouts select sites with good grazing, and the poorer sites are left to regenerate.

Unlike the Shanabla, the Kababish (pronounced ka-ba-**beesh**) are the tribe with the largest dar in all of Sudan. At the beginning of the 20th century, their paramount chief and modern founder, *nazir* Ali Al Tum, with British assistance, allied several tribes into a confederation that took on the name Kababish, and under his leadership the Kababish lay claim to most of the vast territory between the Nile and Darfur—much of modern North Kordofan province, an area approximately the size of North Dakota or Syria.

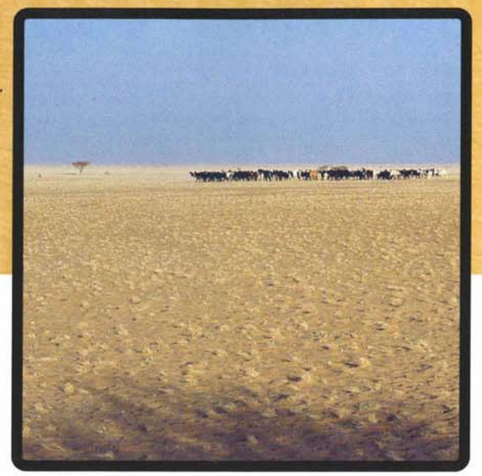
"That was a phone call from Saudi Arabia." Nazir Al Tum Hassan puts his satellite phone back on the dashboard of his Toyota Land Cruiser. It's very late at night, and he is driving to his headquarters in Umm Sunta, 360 kilometers (220 mi) northwest of El Obeid.

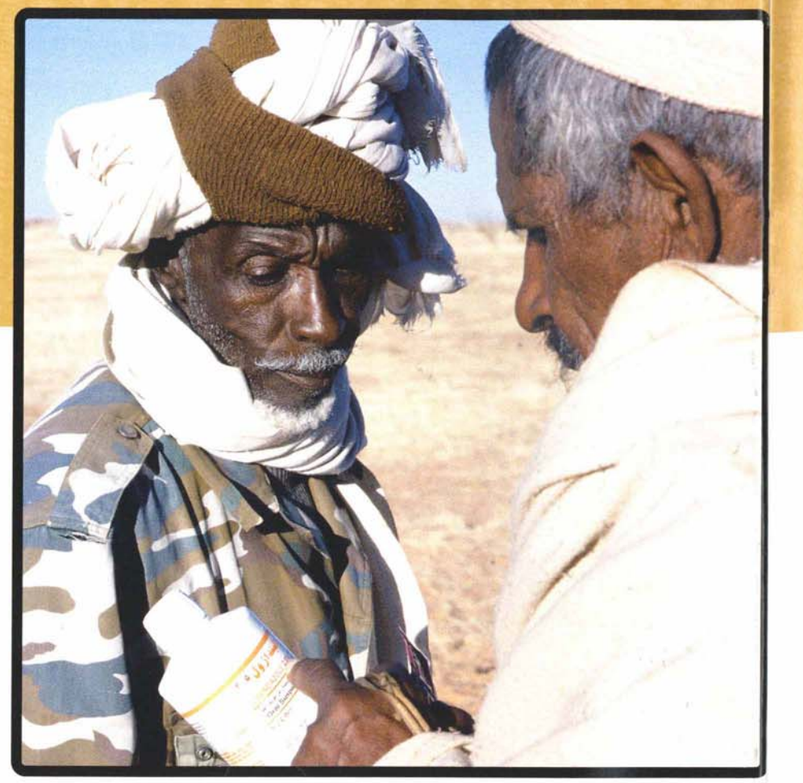
On the day of 'Id al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice), Kababish women line up for prayers behind the men.

"I would not be able to do this work without a car," he says, explaining that he is constantly driving to meetings and conflict-resolution sessions to administer the affairs of the tribe's estimated 70,000 members. He says he sees too little of his immediate family, but such are the burdens of a nazir, a near-royal title he has held for 15 years.

"We're home." The nazir is tired. He steers his car onto the *hosh*, the courtyard, where growling dogs jump on the vehicle. "As long as you stay close to me, they will not hurt you," he grins.

I first met the leader of the Kababish several years ago in El Obeid, at the home of his cousin Nahid Fadlallah. Everybody rose when Al Tum Hassan entered. They remained silent when he spoke. A few weeks later, we met again in the Kababish capital of Hamrat Al Shaikh, a four-hour drive east of Umm Sunta. Again, everyone bowed deeply before him.





Right: **Juma Sineen (left) is one of many Kababish who lost camels in the drought of 1984–1985. He now owns sheep and goats near Umm Sunta, and he works occasionally as a guide for travelers. He discusses a medicine for camels with Shaykh Hamid.** Above: **Small clumps of grass offer plentiful fodder in the winter grazing areas of *dar Kababish* (the Kababish homeland).** Below: **Herders haul water from a well using rope and a bag made from a goatskin.**

Now at home, he wants only peace and quiet. His shoes are off, the turban leaves his head, and he lets out a sigh of relief as he drops heavily onto one of the beds along the walls of the richly decorated tent.

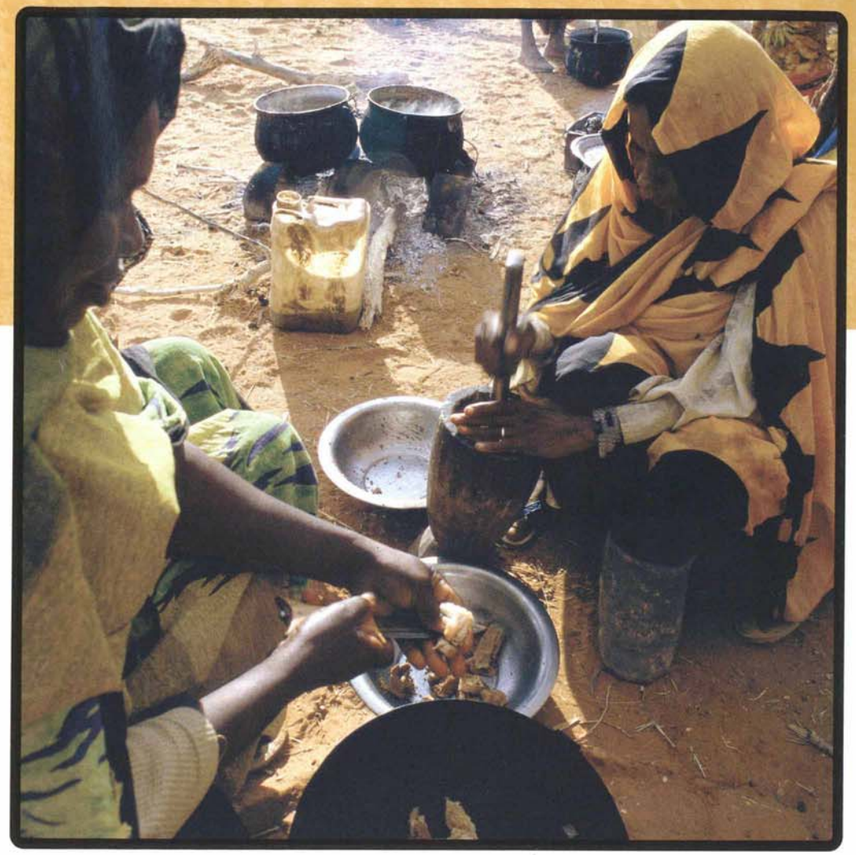
"Make yourself at home," he chokes as his two little daughters smother him playfully. His teenage son Hassan has more interest in the machine gun the guards bring inside than in his father's return. Fatma, his 40-year-old wife, looks at the family scene and smiles. Self-confident, she addresses her husband with a tone of friendship and partnership. Both were raised in the ruling family of the Kababish, and both studied at Omdurman University.

"You met my eldest daughters in El Obeid?" Fatma asks me the next day, incredulous. She looks up from a large pot where mutton is simmering. I reply that I met the two students when I visited Fatma's sister, who lives with her family near the university. In fact, the house was full of nephews and nieces—and all were at the university. There were boys who would have much preferred to go traveling with the camels, but in the nazir families, university study is now an obligatory part of growing up.

Al Tum Hassan's mother clacks her tongue. "When I was young, studying was unthinkable for girls. Not that my childhood was boring." Then, she says, the ruling family traveled throughout the land, living in tents, and she believes she saw far more of the country than do the nazir family girls growing up in Umm Sunta today.

For Al Tum's family, the nomadic life ended when the need for education increased with the burden of administration. The lives of the other Kababish families have changed as well: In the thorny acacia forest of Umm Sunta stand several thousand permanent dwellings built of wood and sturdy white tenting cloth. All belong to sedentarized families who have moved from camel and sheep herding to vegetable farming, truck driving and wage labor on mechanized farms.

Right: **In the *rakuba*, or kitchen area, of the family's tent, Shanabla women grind coffee beans and cut up camel meat for guests.**



"Almost all Kababish lost their cattle in the catastrophic drought of 1984 and 1985," explains Hassan's cousin, Salim Musa Ali Al Tum. Then, he says, he watched destitute nomads leaving for the cities in search of food and work. Many invested whatever money they were able to save in new livestock, and a large number of families returned to the rural areas. But not all women, he says, were prepared to carry on where they had left off. Many preferred to stay with the children in the summer camps near the cities, where there were wells, a school and a small hospital. It's the elder boys and the men, who look after the sheep and the camels, who enjoy roaming the land and who pushed for return to nomadic life after the drought.

Salim Musa says thoughtfully, "It is a good development that children are going to school. But as a result, a lot of nomad knowledge is lost. The teachers do not teach anything about plants, trees, animals, wells and grazing areas." He says he would love to accompany me on the next leg of my travels among the tribes, but he is a government official now, he says, and he also has family obligations.

But Juma Sineen says he will go with me. Juma is one of those Kababish who never fully recovered from the 1984–1985 drought. He lost all his animals and moved to El Obeid, where he found work as a guard. As soon as he had assembled another herd of sheep and goats, he left for Umm Sunta, where he still lives with his wife and two of his children. His eldest daughter has married and lives in Debba, near the Nile. One of his sons works as a driver in Omdurman, and every now and then sends some money back to the family. Juma no longer owns camels, but he has not forgotten how to put on a saddle. We agree to go into the dry northern and western part of the Kababish dar. We attach our bags of provisions and water cans to the saddle pommels: Time to leave.

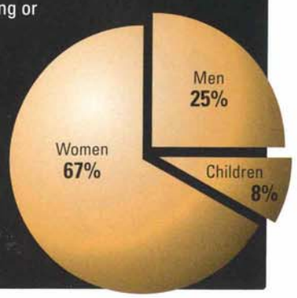
"This reminds me of old times," Juma beams as we leave Umm Sunta. He is more than 70 years old, and he speaks nostalgically about his past. Before the drought, he used to

Nomad Work

Women—Daily: Morning milking; making tea, cooking breakfast and feeding family members; cleaning; collecting water and wood; marketing milk; making cheese and butter; evening milking; cooking supper and feeding family members; handicrafts. Occasional: Nursing young animals; making or preparing mats and poles, pegs and ropes for tent.

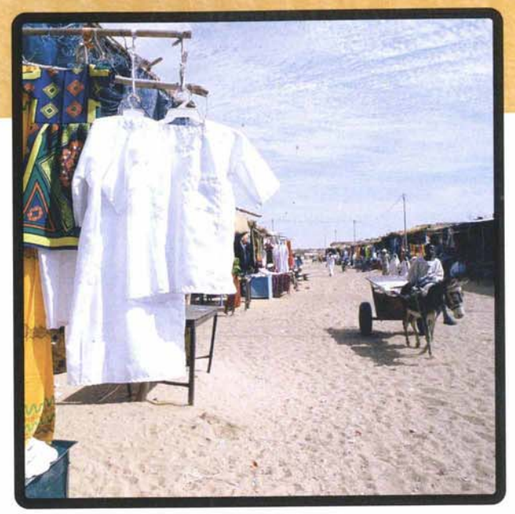
Men—Daily: Morning milking; herding and rearing livestock. Occasional: Marketing livestock; wage labor in towns or abroad.

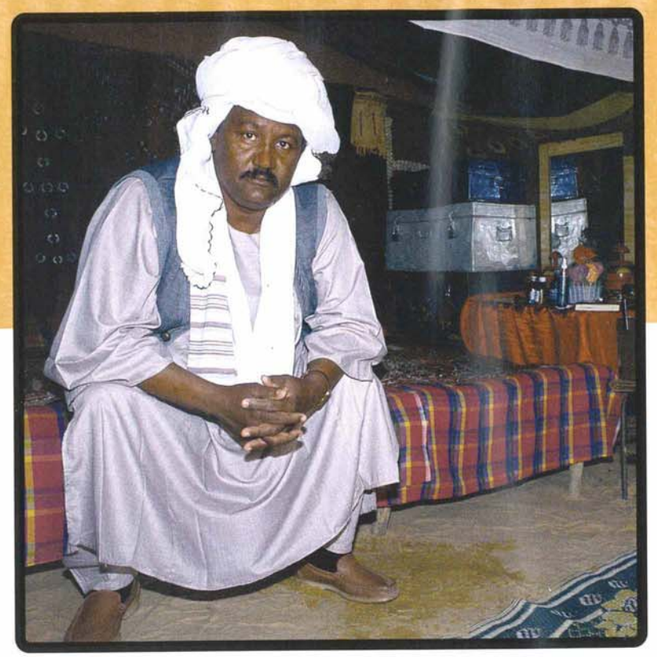
Children—Daily: Herding and rearing small livestock.



Source: *Study of Pastoralists Seasonal Settlement Areas at Sheikan and Um Rawaba Localities.* 2002, The Reduction of Natural Resources-Based Conflicts Among Pastoralists and Farmers Project, North Kordofan, SOS Sahel International UK.

Below: **The market streets of Hamrat Al-Shaykh are popular with Kababish, who come to the town to sell livestock and buy clothing, hardware, groceries and other supplies.** Right: **Nazir Al Tum Hassan governs the affairs of the 70,000 members of the Kababish, a confederation of tribes with origins in the early 20th century.**





accompany young Al Tum Hassan as the nazir made his annual inspection round. Now, as then, Juma has his Kalashnikov handy: In this country, no one travels unarmed, mostly as a precaution against bandits.

Our first destination is Shaykh Hamid's camp, near the border of North Kordofan and Darfur, the far western province where war has taken tens of thousands of lives in the past two years. I met Shaykh Hamid four years ago, and I am looking forward to seeing him again. We follow a dry river bed, where acacia trees and baobabs abound.

"Agul. Markh. Kitir. Sayal." Effortlessly, Juma lists the names of the grasses, plants and shrubs we pass. His intimate knowledge of vegetation means survival for a herdsman. One grass has higher nutritional value; another is poisonous; still others provide essential minerals for the digestive systems of camels and sheep.

Along the way, Shaykh Fadlallah Salih Mohamed Al Tum and his guard join us. The month is January, when the *tulba*, or "herd tax," is collected for the government by the nazir's representative. Fadlallah knows all the families in the area, and he knows approximately how large their herds are. Although this is information a nomad will never volunteer, Fadlallah knows that wells are ideal places to estimate the sizes of herds.

The shaykh is certainly not universally welcome at this time of year, but you would never suspect that from the receptions we receive. "Welcome, welcome," we hear everywhere we go. Unfailingly, by the time we have unloaded our camels, our host has already made a fire and brought tea; later, he will slaughter a goat. I find the jubilant hospitality difficult to accept, for a goat has considerable value. But refusing the gift is inconceivable in a land where a man is judged by his generosity to guests.

In Shaykh Hamid's farig, it turned out he had been informed days ago about our impending arrival. He greets us with a warm embrace and quickly takes us to where a large white tent shelters us from

The Annual Cycle

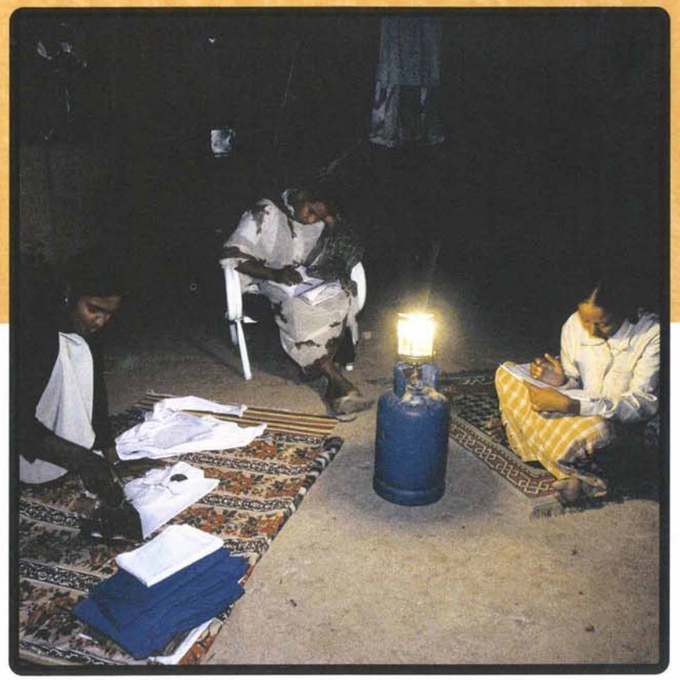
(March to June) Saif: *Hot and dry* — Families stay in camps with permanent water wells.

(June): Early rains — Young men move with the herd according to rains.

(July to October) Kharif: *Cool and rainy* — Families join the herders and follow the rains.

(November to February) Shita: *Cold and dry* — Depending on grazing, families may remain together or split into smaller units. Kababish men take camels to the winter grazing areas on the waterless sand plains in the far north *(gizzu)*, while most families stay behind near seasonal water wells. Shanabla stay in the southern regions of North Kordofan and move camp every six weeks or so, depending on the hospitality—or lack of hospitality—of local farmers.

Right: **Young women of the *nazir*'s family spend an evening ironing and studying at their home in Umm Sunta, where several thousand Kababish families now live permanently.** Lower: **A campfire under a full moon in dar Kababish.**



the biting wind. Our stiff hands and faces warm up in the bright winter sun, and hot tea takes care of the rest.

In the evening, Hamid and his wife announce that I will sleep inside their house, for "it is too cold outside." The tent is surprisingly warm and bright. Large discarded shawls cover the ceiling. Bags of grain and salt have been stowed behind pieces of canvas. Tooled and decorated leather storage bags adorn the walls. There is a fire burning in an iron basin, and the youngest grandchild gently sways in a hammock-like cot above the bed. She is crying. Her grandfather puts the little one on his lap and comforts her until she is asleep again.

In the days that follow, days are spent with the neighbors and relatives constantly drifting in and out for chats, and evenings are for the entertainment of gossip and stories around the fire. This easygoing family life is in stark contrast to the tension in which the Shanabla live. These Kababish do not depend on a farmers' charity, for their dar is immense, and, in addition, this part of it is too remote and insufficiently arable to attract the eyes of even the irrigated-agriculture developers. Here, the nomads can still go where they please.

From Shaykh Hamid's farig I spend several more weeks traveling through the desert in the company of Juma, and we encounter enormous diversity. We meet nomads who have become farmers. We meet families who make long journeys with hundreds of camels. Sometimes we find a woman at home alone, out in the middle of nowhere, because her husband is working in Libya. There are days we travel entirely alone. Sometimes we share a meal with a lone herdsman who looks after his sheep, or we drink tea with camel drivers who transport cut slabs of salt. And every now and then we come across nomads who have started a little shop and have placed the camels in the care of relatives. All of this makes it almost impossible to describe what Salim Musa calls "real nomad life."

"Don't bother!" smiles anthropologist Salah el Shazali of the University of Khartoum. "A nomad fits no label. He has too many roles. The key word is flexibility. It all depends on circumstances whether a herdsman will look for work in town or abroad, or become a farmer and subcontract his herd. Nomads minimize their risks by spreading them out, and the possibilities of doing this are endless.

"Nomad life is under pressure," he adds, "but it will not disappear from Sudan." Like Egemi, he points out the contribution of livestock-raising to the economy. "This is one solid support pillar for the future. The other is the age-old ability of the nomads to adapt."

As far as the nomads themselves are concerned, there is not even a hint of hesitation when I ask elderly Juma what he would do with a million dollars.

"Buy camels and start again," he says.

Arita Baaijens (www.arita.baaijens.com) lives in Amsterdam, where she is a writer and photographer and a former environmental biologist. For the past 15 years, she has trekked each winter through the Egyptian and Sudanese deserts with her camels. Photo by Erik Buis.

Related articles from past issues can be found on our Web site, www.saudiaramcoworld.com. Click on "indexes," then on the cover of the issue indicated below.

Beja tribe: M/J 98

Reader's Guide

WRITTEN BY JULIE WEISS

For students: We hope this two-page guide will help sharpen your reading skills and deepen your understanding of this issue's articles.
For teachers: We encourage reproduction and adaptation of these ideas, freely and without further permission from *Saudi Aramco World*, by teachers at any level, whether working in a classroom or through home study.

—THE EDITORS

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 issue's activities revolve around the theme **Interaction of Humans and the Environment**. Geographers who use this theme point out that while the environment influences human activities, humans also modify the environment. In the activities below, you will consider both.

How do people adapt to natural environments?
For these activities, think about natural environments as comprising earth, water, the atmosphere and living things.

Let's begin by looking at climate, which is part of the natural environment. Climate refers to long-term weather trends. Since people can't intentionally change climate, they have to adapt to it. When you look at a people's way of life, you can see that they adjust to living in different climates in a variety of ways. Russians wear fur hats to protect themselves from the cold. Spaniards take a siesta, or rest, in the hottest part of the afternoon. You get the idea. As a class, brainstorm as many different ways that people adapt to specific climates as you can think of. Use a world map to spark your thinking. List your ideas on chart paper.

With these adaptations in mind, read "Queen of the India Trade." With a group, find Jiddah on a map. Discuss what you notice about its location. A few questions to get you started: What land mass is it on? What body of water is it near? Where is it relative to Makkah? What is its latitude? (The latitude should grab you. What is significant about it? If you don't know, find out: Look in a geography book or on the Internet.) Based on what you find out, what can you tell about Jiddah's climate?

Now, take a close look at how writer William Facey constructed "Queen of the India Trade." Facey builds a persuasive argument that is based on Jiddah's location and climate—specifically its winds. With your group, find and highlight the key sentences in the article where Facey takes each step in his step-by-step argument. Based on your highlights, what is Facey's point? Write it down. How does climate fit into his account?

Return to the question *"How do people adapt to the natural environment?"* How did the people who lived in Jiddah, and those who came there to trade, have to deal with the climate? How did they shape their lives around it? What happened to those who ignored the climate and tried to travel off-season?

"Making a Living in the Desert" also presents stories of people adapting differently to the same climate. Divide the class in half. Have half take the role of the nomads (the Shanabla and Kababish), while the other half takes the role of farmers. With your group, prepare a PowerPoint or poster presentation in which you describe how your group makes its living and how that has been shaped by the climate. Include visual material in your presentation—graphic organizers, when they're appropriate, and/or the photographs that accompany the article. When both groups have presented, discuss what generalizations you can make about how climate affects ways of life and how people adapt to climate.

Why do different people value the natural environment in different ways?
For this question, think specifically about the land. "Making a Living in the Desert" shows that the Shanabla have a unique relationship to the land. In a sentence or two, describe it. Then describe how the Kababish relate to the land. What accounts for the differences? In your answer, include both lifestyle and political realities. Remember that the Kababish have a homeland while the Shanabla do not. How might that affect the way the two groups value the land they live on?

Then, what about you? How do you value the land you live on? If you live in a city, perhaps much of the land is obscured (paved or covered with houses or apartments). If you live in the country, perhaps you think about land a lot. Either way, how do you feel toward this land? How does the land affect how people around you "make their living"? Write a journal entry exploring how you value (or don't value) land. You might focus on a specific piece of land, or keep your entry more general.

How do people try to overcome the limitations the natural environment imposes on them?
People aren't always happy to adapt to the natural environment. Often they try to surmount the limitations it puts on them. Think about some examples by completing the following activity. Put each of the following titles at the top of a sheet of paper: Overcoming the Land; Overcoming the Water; Overcoming the Climate; and Overcoming Other Living Things. As a class, come up with examples that fit in each of the four categories. Include examples from your own life, as well as historical examples. Cast a wide net. There are hundreds of possibilities. Here are a few to get you started:

- **Highways and roads** help people overcome rough terrain so they can reach a destination quickly.
- **Bridges, storm sewers** and **levees** help people overcome water. (And we saw in New Orleans how levees don't always work.)
- **Air conditioners** help people overcome the limits of high temperatures. There's no need for a siesta if you've got an air conditioner.
- **Pesticides** and **vaccines** help people overcome a few of the dangers posed by other living things.

Class Activities (cont.)

When you've finished your lists, think about the articles in *Saudi Aramco World*. How did some of the people you read about in "Queen of the India Trade" use technology to overcome nature? How are some of the people in "Making a Living in the Desert" trying to adapt to the limits of the land and climate? How are others trying to overcome them? How well are they succeeding?

Are there costs of trying to overcome nature?
Focus on "Making a Living in the Desert." Farmers are using irrigation to help them cultivate land that otherwise isn't well suited to agriculture. What problems does this cause for other people? What problems might they be causing to the natural environment? Do you think the benefits outweigh the costs?

As a class, choose five ways people currently try to overcome nature. Make sure they are things that affect you personally, like air conditioners and pesticides. Divide the class into three teams for a debate. One team argues that yes, the benefits outweigh the costs. The second team argues that no, the costs outweigh the benefits. The third team moderates, posing the questions and deciding which team has argued more persuasively.

When is it impossible to overcome nature?
In the past year, people all over the world have witnessed ways that nature cannot be overcome. Think about two of the natural disasters that have struck in the last 12 months. Discuss the following questions with a small group: Was there a way the disaster could have been prevented? Was there a way damage could have been minimized? What have people been saying about ways they might avert such disasters in the future, or at least minimize their impact?

Now think about the impact of natural disasters. Choose one of the disasters from this past year or the droughts discussed in "Making a Living in the Desert." Put it in a circle in the center of a piece of chart paper. With your group, create a web that shows the effects of the disaster. Start with the "primary effects," for example, the number of people or animals who died and homes and businesses destroyed. Then add "secondary effects"—how those deaths and losses affected people. How many effects can you think of? When you're done, write a journal entry reflecting on the long-term effects of natural disasters.

Analyzing Visual Images

In each "Reader's Guide," you analyze a visual image. In this issue's edition, you will analyze visual images two different ways. First you will consider an element of the visual composition of the photo, as you usually do. In addition, you'll also look at the photo as evidence—much as historians look at letters, buildings and public documents to try to understand the past. You'll be looking at these photos as evidence of human–environment interaction.

Photography is a two-dimensional medium that can, to varying degrees, show three dimensions. There are several ways photographs achieve a three-dimensional look. Light and shadow, for example, show the texture of the headscarf in the photo on page 37. In other photos, like the one shown here, a clear line divides the frame, creating a foreground and a background. Your eye is trained to know that what's larger is closer and what's smaller is farther away.

Now think about this photograph as evidence of human–environment interaction. Why do you think the photographer chose to take the picture with the plant in the foreground and the person in the background? What impression does the photo give you about the relationship between people and the natural environment? Imagine you are the person in the photo. How do you think you would feel?

Now imagine the photographer had taken the picture the other way around—with the person nearby and the plant in the distance. What would such a photo suggest about how people and nature interact?

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Events&Exhibitions

Style and Status: Imperial Costumes From Ottoman Turkey presents some 100 of the world's finest and most luxurious Ottoman royal textiles from the Topkapı Palace Museum, the Kremlin Armory and other collections. Distinguished by their bold designs, breathtaking colors and technical complexity, Ottoman imperial silks were fashioned into clothing, furnishings and such "movable architecture" as tent hangings and floor covers. They denoted rank and privilege and were important in the economic, political and ceremonial life of the Ottoman Empire. By the late 15th century, the Ottoman silk industry, centered in Bursa, exported raw and woven silk as well as cloth of gold and silver to Europe, the Balkans and Russia—the Ottomans' largest market. Some exported fabrics were fashioned into ceremonial robes or hangings but most became luxurious ecclesiastical items, such as chasubles and copes. The artistic influence of Ottoman textile motifs endures today, inspiring artists like William Morris, who incorporated Ottoman motifs into his textiles and wallpapers. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through January 22.

Right: **Short-sleeved kaftan of brocaded silk with gilt-metal thread and silk thread, 16th century.** Opposite page: **Kaftan of brocaded silk with gilt-metal thread, mid-16th century.**

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION / TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM (2)

<<< Ongoing

Teaching About the Arab World and Islam is the theme of teacher workshops co-sponsored by the Middle East Policy Council in Washington, D.C., and conducted by Arab World and Islamic Resources and School Services (AWAIR) of Berkeley, California. The program is fully funded and workshops may be requested by any school, district, office of education or university. ⓘ www.mepc.org or www.awaironline.org; 510-704-0517. Sites and dates currently scheduled include: **Louisville, Kentucky**, November 17–18; **Washington, D.C.**, November 19; **Green Bay, Wisconsin**, December 2; **Concord, New Hampshire**, December 9; **Houston**, January 5; **Atlanta**, January 26–27; **Salisbury, Maryland**, February 4; **Fullerton, California**, February 28; **Burlington, Massachusetts**, March 14–15.

Theme Tours of the Louvre's Collections are organized around 10 subjects, most involving three to five weekly visits, each of which deals with one period, artifact or location. Example: "The Palaces of the Ancient Near East" meets Mondays at 2:30 and focuses on the palace of Nineveh and provincial Assyrian palaces on November 21 and the palace of Darius at Susa on November 28. Other cycles are about Egyptian antiquities, Egyptian religion, Egyptian society, nature in Egypt, stelae and funerary texts of ancient Egypt, the arts of Islam, the Islamic world, and the Orient in painting. Admission 22.50 (three sessions) or €37.50 (five sessions). ⓘ 33-1-4020-5263. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**.

Dafatir: Contemporary Iraqi Book Art introduces the work of 17 contemporary Iraqi artists, some still living and working in Baghdad, to explore the current proliferation of book-form art. Islamic miniatures were first developed as illustrations for texts but soon became an autonomous art form, albeit with various links to texts, that remained more interpretive than illustrative. Dafatir ("notebooks" in Arabic) presents the experiments of three generations of Iraqi artists, including one woman, and their diverse approaches. The topics of the notebooks range from modern poetry to documentation of current events, and stylistically the works range from representational to total abstraction, presenting a distillation of socio-political and historical-cultural changes in Iraq in the last decade. ⓘ 940-565-4005. University of North **Texas** Art Gallery, **Denton**, through November 22.

Design Made in Africa: Material, Shape and Contemporary Lifestyle presents a selection of 45 objects by 30 designers from 14 African countries, introducing an international audience to contemporary African creativity. A series of talks by Ethiopian designer Fasil Giorghis, currently leading a restoration project in Axum, and Kenyan artist Magdalene Odundo accompanies the exhibition. Bilingual catalogue. Brunei Gallery, SOAS, **London**, through November 25.

Ancient Egyptian Art for the Afterlife presents Pre-Dynastic (4000–3000 BC) ceramics and stone and Old Kingdom (3000–2100 BC) and Ptolemaic (200–300 BC) funerary sculpture, stelae and coffin boards. The accompanying catalogue places the works in context, providing an overview of ancient Egyptian history and the purpose of funerary art. Mint Museum of Art, **Charlotte, North Carolina**, through December 4.

Malcolm X: A Search for Truth presents personal and professional papers—speeches, sermons, radio broadcasts, diaries, correspondence and other documents—and other artifacts from the life of Malcolm X. Highly controversial during his lifetime, feared by some because of his separatist views, Malcolm X left the Nation of Islam toward the end of his life, embraced orthodox Islam and denounced racism. The Malcolm X Collection, opened with this exhibition, is expected to prompt reevaluation of the life and thinking of one of the 20th century's most important black Americans. Schomburg Center, **New York** Public Library, through December 31.

The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt dramatically illustrates the ancient Egyptian concept of the afterlife through 143 magnificent objects and a life-sized reconstruction of the burial chamber of the New Kingdom pharaoh Thutmose III (1490–1436 BC). Ranging in date from the New Kingdom (1550–1069 BC) through the Late Period (664–332 BC), the works of art include luxurious objects that furnished tombs, including jewelry, painted reliefs, implements used in religious rituals, a sarcophagus richly painted with scenes of the afterlife and an ancient painted model of the royal barge that carried the pharaohs along the Nile. **Dayton [Ohio]** Art Institute, through January 3.

Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia. Between 550 and 330 BC, the Persian empire stretched from North Africa to the Indus Valley and from Central Asia to the Arabian Gulf. Cyrus, Darius and Xerxes established sophisticated networks of power, initiated far-reaching legislation and created monumental architecture. This exhibition, which includes many artifacts from the National Museum of Iran, the Persepolis Museum and the Louvre, draws on oriental sources rather than classical texts and sheds new light on ancient Persia, while challenging the conventional portrayal of the Persians as despotic and ruthless. The exhibition examines innovations of the Persian kings that helped them control their empire, including a decentralized administration, a complex road network and an imperial postal service that ran from Sardis to Susa, as well as their military forces, shown in stone reliefs and casts of Persian guardsmen. The extraordinary expansion of the empire, particularly under Darius, is illustrated through objects that relate to such distant corners of the empire as Egypt, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Greece. The final section of the exhibition features the famous Cyrus Cylinder, sometimes referred to as the first declaration of human rights. A full education program accompanies the exhibition. Catalogue £25. British Museum, **London**, through January 8.

Iran Before Islam: Propaganda and Religion AD 224–651. The Sasanian kings of Persia were Zoroastrians, followers of an ancient Iranian religion, and they buttressed their position as rightful kings by publicly emphasizing their religion. Rock reliefs, coins and other objects always depicted them as rulers by divine right, protected by the divine and thus ever victorious against Rome and other enemies. This display of unique Sasanian objects, together with photographs of the great rock reliefs at Naqš-i Rustam, captures vital links between the Persian Empire and the advent of Islam in the mid-seventh century. British Museum, **London**, through January 8.

Legendary Heroes and Ancient Kings in Iranian Painting. The *Shahnamah*, the Persian national epic that inspired these illustrations from the 14th through the 19th century, has been hailed as a "certificate of Persian identity." Vividly capturing the lives of Rustam and other great ancestors of the Achaemenid dynasty, they represent a unique balance of power, delicacy, magic and harmony. Their influence still infuses Persian art today, binding Iranians into a tradition more than 2500 years old. British Museum, **London**, through January 8.

Treasures from Olana: Landscapes by Frederic Edwin Church features 18 of the artist's own paintings that he displayed in his carefully devised interiors at Olana. (See page 2.) The majority are landscape oil sketches, which illustrate the artist's favorite domestic landscapes and his journeys not only to the Middle East, but also to South America and Europe. During a period of debate regarding the artistic merit of an oil sketch versus a finished painting, Church boldly exhibited these *plein-air* oil sketches as finished works of art alongside his precisely rendered "Great Pictures"—a testament to his belief in the quality of these smaller works. This is the first time they have been displayed together outside Olana. The Museum of Fine Arts, **Houston**, through January 8; National Academy Museum, **New York**, February 9 through April 30.

<<< Ongoing

The Art of Medicine in Ancient Egypt. The causes of illnesses were little understood in ancient Egypt, and their prevention and cure were major concerns for most Egyptians—concerns that inform much of ancient Egyptian art. This exhibition highlights objects from the museum's collection that address illness, allowing visitors to appreciate them in new ways. Included will be the rarely seen Edwin Smith Papyrus, one of the world's oldest scientific documents. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through January 15.

West by East examines how Europe has been viewed by the Muslim world. "Islam and Europe appear to constitute two separate entities, antagonistic, irreconcilable, radically different," the organizers write. "Now that millions of Muslims live in Europe, we want to tell a different story." Curator Abdelwahab Meddeb, a Tunisian writer, asked eastern artists and intellectuals how they viewed the West and presents their answering present-day artworks—paintings, photographs, videos, interviews and a mural—in confrontation with mirrors, manuscripts, maps, paintings, photographs and a tombstone from the 12th through the 19th century—altogether 215 works in seven sequences. Centre Cultural Bancaixa, **Valencia, Spain**, through January 15.

Pearls of the Parrot of India. The *Khamsa (Five Tales)* of Indian poet Amir Khusraw Dihlavi, dating from 1597 or 1598, is represented here by one of the most sumptuous manuscripts of the early Mughal period. Twenty-one surviving full-page illustrations from the manuscript are owned by the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, another eight by the Metropolitan. The unbinding of the Walters's manuscript for conservation purposes will allow all 29 painted folios to be united in this jewel-like exhibition. Also on view will be eight to 10 decorative and text pages from the manuscript and other Persian and Indian manuscripts belonging to the Walters. Lecture December 8, 6 p.m., $22. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through January 29.

Silver and Shawls: India, Europe, and the Colonial Art Market highlights the evolution of shawls and silver tablewares produced during the colonial period in India, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. The presentation hinges on two opposing stylistic developments: that shawl design evolved from traditional, Indian compositions and decoration to patterns that responded to European tastes; while Indian silver production grew from small studios of foreign artisans producing restrained, Georgian-styled objects into a larger industry employing local artists and incorporating "exotic" imagery. Sackler Museum, **Cambridge, Massachusetts**, through January 29.

Deciphering Sumerian: François Thureau-Dangin commemorates the work of the museum's Keeper of Eastern Antiquities, whose book *Les Inscriptions de Sumer et d'Akkad*, published a century ago, was the definitive work on translation of the royal inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, through January 30.

The Bishop Jades includes carvings of jade, agate, quartz, lapis lazuli and many other hard stones that represent the sophisticated art of Chinese lapidaries during the late Qing dynasty (1644–1911) as well as the highly accomplished works of Mughal Indian jade carvers that provided an exotic inspiration to their Chinese counterparts. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through February 12.

Mummy: The Inside Story uses cutting-edge computer graphics and the latest scientific and medical research to allow visitors to view a "virtual unwrapping" and autopsy of the 2800-year-old mummy of Nesperunnub, priest of Karnak in Egypt. Visitors sit in a state-of-the-art immersive theater where, wearing 3-D glasses, they can scrutinize the mummy's body and objects inside the wrappings. **Houston** Museum of Natural Science, through February 12.

Saladin and the Crusaders presents 130 artifacts from Middle Eastern and European collections that show the cultural encounter represented by the Crusades and personified by Richard Lionheart, Saladin, the chivralric orders, the Crusaders, and the pilgrims. Paintings, reliquaries, weapons, coins and astronomical instruments juxtapose the Crusaders' culture and that of the region they not only conquered but inhabited. The exhibition shows that the encounter of the two worlds was by no means only about war, but also included peaceful exchange and mutual cultural inspiration. Another section of the exhibition displays relics of Crusaders and pilgrims from Central Germany. ⓘ www.archlsa.de/saladin. State Museum for Prehistory, **Halle, Germany**, through February 12; State Museum for Nature and Mankind, **Oldenburg, Germany**, March 5 through July 2; Reiss-Engelhorn Museums, **Mannheim, Germany**, July 23 through November 5.

Gold: The Asian Touch examines the meanings and uses of gold in different Asian cultures. While including some golden status symbols, the exhibition's primary focus is on the subtle and distinctive combination of gold with other materials and its use in enriching and enhancing luxury objects and works of art. Works on view are mostly Chinese and Japanese, but also include gold inlaid and overlaid weapons from Mughal India and gilded silver vessels from Parthian and Sasanian Iran. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through February 19.

Petra: Lost City of Stone, a traveling exhibition, features extraordinary art and artifacts from the red sandstone cliff city in southern Jordan. Petra was a major crossroads of international trade routes from the first century BC to the second century of our era, when it was governed by the Nabataeans, who were renowned for their skills in trade, agriculture, engineering and architectural stone carving. The exhibition presents some 200 objects, including stone sculptures and reliefs, ceramics, metalwork and ancient inscriptions, and a selection of 19th-century artworks documenting the European rediscovery of Petra. Glenbow Museum, **Calgary, Alberta**, through February 20.

Silk & Leather: Splendid Attire of 19th-Century Central Asia features different types of garments and accessories worn by the ruling class and urban and nomadic elites of the region. The exhibition includes coats, hats, boots, belts, queue covers, children's clothing, purses, pouches and veils. Leather, felt and fur, as well as a distinctive clothing style that included trousers, made life easier for the horse-riding nomadic pastoralists of the vast, sparsely populated Eurasian steppe. Until the Russian conquest, completed in the late 19th century, the western part of Central Asia, including Samarkand and Bukhara, was ruled by different groups that had originated in the Eurasian steppes. Although they largely gave up their nomadic lifestyle, these ruling elites retained their taste for rugs, textiles and the garments worn on the steppe. The copious production of silk, its brilliant dyeing and multifaceted use in textiles of urban and nomadic manufacture, along with the continued use of leather, were all part of the spectacular blossoming of the textile and related arts during the 19th century in western Central Asia. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, through February 26.

Morocco: Art and Design 2005 presents a broad overview of the contemporary art climate in Morocco, displaying painting, photography and sculpture as well as industrial and fashion design by 21 artists, all of whom have strong reputations in Morocco, and in some cases also abroad. Wereldmuseum **Rotterdam**, through March 5.

Viewing Text, Reading Image: Examining a 16th-Century Manuscript offers a unique opportunity to examine the museum's 1584 copy of Nizami's *Khamsa (Five Tales)*, a 12th- to 13th-century quintet of long narrative poems—among the most copied and illustrated works of Persian literature—that is both a collection of beloved stories and an ethical and moral commentary. The exhibition considers the process of producing such a work, from the modular layout of the text pages to the design of the painting sequences, and finally the felicities, as well as slips, of the copyist's pen. The full impact of the original *Khamsa* is further explored through accompanying translation of the text and explanation of the images. University of Pennsylvania Museum, **Philadelphia**, through March 26.

Lawrence of Arabia: Man and Legend underscores a number of changes in current views of Lawrence and attempts to take a middle path through the widely varying interpretations of his biography, portraying him "as neither saint nor charlatan." Imperial War Museum, **London**, through April 17.

Threads of Tradition: Palestinian Bridal Costumes highlights magnificent embroidery and colorful dresses from the late 19th and early 20th century in the Munayyer Collection. Other objets d'art, such as brass oil lamps, inlaid wooden tables and tapestries, complement the dresses. Embroidery patterns, some dating back to pre-Islamic and pre-Christian times, became incorporated into the rich designs and brilliant colors that identify the specific village or town where the dress was made. The collection, one of the most extensive in America, is presented by the Palestinian Heritage Foundation. Antiochian Heritage Museum, **Ligonier, Pennsylvania**, through March.

Tiraz: Early Islamic Textiles comprises nine rarely seen fabric fragments, one bearing the name of Caliph Marwan II. Created between the seventh and 13th centuries, *tiraz* are a type of textile popular in the early and medieval Islamic periods. Although the term comes from the Persian word for "embroidery," it came to

signify the luxurious and expensive textiles produced as gifts of honor and symbols of power in public and royal factories throughout the Islamic world. Particularly through the 10th century, examples of tiraz from North Africa showed continuity with the artistic forms of the Greco-Roman period, and when Egypt came under Muslim control, North African craftsmen incorporated aspects of that symbolic vocabulary into Arab artistic forms. Thus some early Islamic textiles in this exhibition demonstrate combinations of such late antique and Coptic motifs as human and animal figures. **Brooklyn Museum, New York,** through June 4.

Mummies: Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt features 140 objects—including 14 mummies and/or coffins, the largest collection ever to leave the British Museum—and illustrates the fascinating story of how Egyptians prepared and sent the dead into the afterlife. It covers embalming, coffins, sarcophagi, *shabti* figures, magic and ritual, amulets and papyri, and displays furnishings created specifically for an individual's coffin, such as spectacular gold jewelry and a wooden boat to transport the dead into the underworld. Bowers Museum, **Santa Ana, California,** through April 15, 2007.

<< November

The Vision of Contemporary Arab Photographers presents 30 people taking pictures of what is, in one way or another, their own world: Some live in the Arab world; others left it but have returned; some have left for good, carrying parts of their world with them; still others were born abroad but are ineluctably linked to the Arab world. Here, the goal is to reverse the orientalist photographic paradigm and, instead, take a look at the Arab world through its own eyes. The images vary by subject, color, format, locale and in every other way; the photographers vary by nationality, gender, personal history and relationship to the Arab world. As a result, the exhibition is not an attempt to define an identity, but is, instead, simply the emanation of an identity, to be taken on its own terms. Institut du Monde Arabe, **Paris,** November 22 through January 15.

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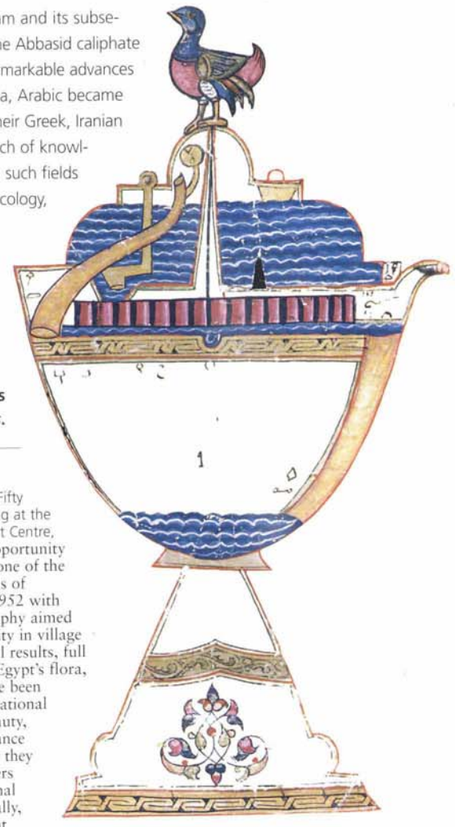
The Golden Age of Arab Science. The coming of Islam and its subsequent territorial expansion, especially after the establishment of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad, brought about an intellectual flowering that led to remarkable advances in all branches of science. From Andalusia to the borders of China, Arabic became the language of scholarship. Going beyond their translations of their Greek, Iranian and Indian predecessors, Arabic-speaking scientists carried the torch of knowledge to new heights and into new disciplines. Scholars worked in such fields as philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, optics, medicine, pharmacology, chemistry and alchemy, grammar, geology and engineering. The exhibition presents Arab achievements in all these sciences, and closes with examples of their application in practical forms. Institut du Monde Arabe, **Paris**, through March 19.



Al-Jazari designed a hydraulically activated mechanical cup so that the bird atop it would revolve and twitter as the cup was filled. This cross-section drawing is from al-Jazari's 1315 *Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices*.

<< December

Dancing Tragedies and Dreams is a performance by El-Funoun Palestinian Dance Troupe, widely recognized for its leading role in reinvigorating Palestinian dance and music heritage. The program includes the group's most acclaimed dances as well as several dances from its latest production, "Haifa, Beirut & Beyond," a contemporary dance saga of love, exile and resistance inspired by the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish. ⓘ www.el-funoun.org. The Historic Lincoln Theatre, **Washington, D.C.**, 7:30 p.m., December 2.

Psalms of Ali Ufki is a concert of sacred music inspired by the music and life of Ali Ufki, who lived in the cosmopolitan environment of 17th-century Istanbul. This concert is the result of an ongoing collaboration among a group of Boston musicians representing the religious traditions of Turkish Muslim, Jewish, Greek Orthodox and Protestant Christian communities, each of which played a role in the life of Ali Ufki. ⓘ www.dunyainc.org. Temple Beth Zion, **Brookline, Massachusetts,** 5 p.m. December 4.

Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs includes 130 works from the Egyptian National Museum and presents a selection of 50 spectacular objects excavated from the tomb of Tutankhamun, including one of the canopic coffinettes, inlaid with gold and precious stones, that contained his mummified internal organs. Additional pieces in the exhibition derive from the tombs of royalty and high officials of the 18th Dynasty, primarily from the Valley of the Kings. These additional works place the unique finds from the tomb of Tutankhamun into context and illustrate the wealth and development of Egyptian burial practice during the New Kingdom. The exhibition, more than twice the size of the 1979 "King Tut" exhibition, marks the first time treasures of Tutankhamun have visited America in 26 years. **Fort Lauderdale** Museum of Art, December 15 through April 23.

<< January

Egyptian Landscapes: Fifty Years of Tapestry Weaving at the Ramses Wissa Wassef Art Centre, Harrania presents an opportunity to see tapestries from one of the world's greatest schools of weaving, founded in 1952 with an educational philosophy aimed at encouraging creativity in village children. The masterful results, full of vivid depictions of Egypt's flora, fauna and people, have been widely hailed in international art circles for their beauty, humanity and significance for all forms of art, for they were created by weavers who have had no formal art training. Additionally, the project has brought prosperity, education, better health, self-respect, satisfaction and better status for women to all of the villagers involved. The exhibition features works from the Centre's permanent collection as well as new pieces and retrospectives by two of the weavers, charting their work from childhood. Two other weavers will be working at their looms in the gallery during the exhibition. ⓘ www.wissa-wassef-arts.com. Brunei Gallery, SOAS, **London**, January 19 through March 17.

The Rediscovery of Mada'in Salih, Ancient Hegra, Saudi Arabia. Site director Laila Nehme lectures at 6 p.m. Stevenson Lecture Theatre, British Museum, **London**, January 19.

The Babylonians: Life in Ancient Southern Iraq is an Iraq Study Day with presentations by Harriet Crawford, Irving Finkel, Andrew George, Frances Reynolds and Diana Stein, co-sponsored by the college and the British School of Archaeology. ⓘ archaeology@fce.bbk.ac.uk. Birkbeck College, **London**, January 28.

<< February

Archaeology in Iraq: The Case of Hatra. Hatra, in the desert of northern Iraq, flourished from the late first century BC until its destruction by the Sasanian Persians in 241. It was a vassal city of the Parthians, whose empire in the Near East rivaled that of Rome, and inscriptions show that the local nobility was of Arab stock. Susan Downey of UCLA explores the role of Hatra in antiquity, and discusses the effect of modern politics on the excavations, restoration and damage to the site. 4:30 p.m. University of **Buffalo, New York**, February 7.

From the Nile to the Schuylkill: The History of Penn Museum's Egyptian Collection is a lecture by Jennifer Wegner of the Museum's Egyptian Section, which holds more than 42,000 artifacts from Egypt and Nubia, one of the largest in the US. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, 6 p.m. February 15.

When Speech Was Nails: The Visual Poetics of Writing in Ancient Mesopotamia is a lecture by Steve Tinney, associate curator of the museum's Babylonian Section, presented as part of the Penn Humanities Forum on Word and Image. University of **Pennsylvania** Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, 5:30 p.m. February 22.

Lost Nubia: Photographs of Egypt and Sudan 1905–07 features photographs of the first University of Chicago Epigraphic Expedition. The images, most taken from the original glass-plate negatives, document Egyptian and Nubian temples, scenes of the scientific team at work and ethnographic scenes of a now-vanished lifestyle. Catalogue. ⓘ www.oi-uchicago.edu. Oriental Institute Museum, **Chicago,** February 24 through May 7.

KEIR COLLECTION / A. C. COOPER / INSTITUT DU MONDE ARABE

The Fabric of Life: Ikat Textiles of Indonesia. Renowned for the richness and variety of their textiles, the peoples of Indonesia have the most complex and esthetically sophisticated fabrics of all of the Pacific islands. Their lives are interwoven with textiles, beginning in earliest infancy and continuing until the wrapping of the funerary shroud. This exhibition examines the variety of form, function and imagery of a single important and technically intricate Indonesian tradition known as *ikat*. A number of distinctive regional traditions will be included. The imagery ranges from boldly geometric compositions to figural patterns woven with astonishing artistic and technical virtuosity. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, February 28 through September 24.

<< March

Edward Said: Debating the Legacy of a Public Intellectual is a symposium that will consider how the coming century might best engage with the works of Said, who died in 2003. Speakers will first illuminate Said's attempt to revive and inflect the critical methods of Goethe's ideal of a "world literature" with the pluralistic humanism that has influenced postcolonial theory, comparative literature and diaspora studies. Speakers will also discuss Said's relationship to the politics, historiography and aesthetics of imperialism, decolonization and anti-colonial resistance. ⓘ Debjani. Ganguly@anu.edu.au. Australian National University, **Canberra,** March 15 and 16.

Daughter of Re: Hatshepsut, King of Egypt is devoted to the legacy of the great female pharaoh of Egypt's 18th Dynasty. She ruled for two decades —first as regent for, then as co-ruler with, her nephew Thutmose III (c. 1479–1458 BC). During her reign, at the beginning of the New Kingdom, trade relations were being reestablished with western Asia to the east and were extended to the land of Punt far to the south as well as to the Aegean Islands in the north. The prosperity of this time was reflected in the art, which is marked by innovations in sculpture, decorative arts and such architectural marvels as Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri. Much of the exhibition is based on the museum's own extensive holdings of objects excavated by its Egyptian Expedition in the 1920's and 1930's, supplemented by loans. Catalogue. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, March 21 through July 9.

<< April

Encountering the Other: Religious Tolerance and Hospitality is a symposium focused on dialogue among the three Abrahamic faith traditions—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—on what role religion can play in shaping a response to religious others. ⓘ sarahmacmillen@gmail.com. University of **Notre Dame [Indiana],** April 24.

Nubian Gallery Opens February 25. New permanent installation of artifacts documenting Nubia from the fourth millennium BC into the common era. The gallery displays sculpture, glass, pottery, and metalwork, including never before exhibited objects such as a heavily tooled archer's quiver and 2000-year-old textiles. Oriental Institute Museum, **Chicago.**

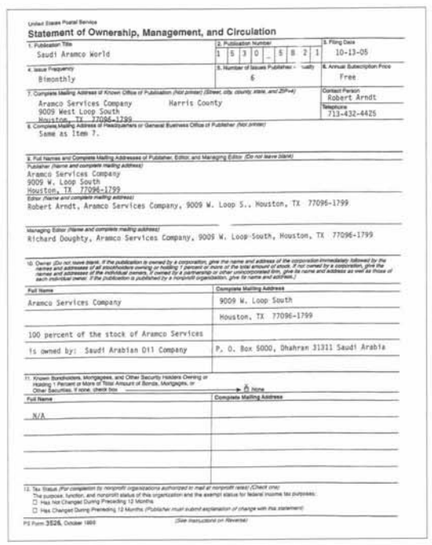
<< Permanent

Glimpses of the Silk Road: Central Asia in the First Millennium documents an astonishing amalgam of different influences, combining Hellenistic imagery and Near Eastern motifs with Chinese and Indian features. Goods and raw materials as well as new ideas, religious beliefs, artistic styles and motifs, and technological innovations were transmitted throughout the region along the Silk Road. Wall paintings from the Kushan kingdom and later Kucha illustrate this blend of eastern and western traditions. Two Parthian ivory rhytons from Nysa exemplify the transmission of technology and motifs in the applied arts, combining Iranian and Greek themes and styles. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York.**

Egypt Reborn: Art for Eternity is an installation of over 1200 Egyptian artifacts that makes available masterpieces of every period of ancient Egyptian history, including some of the most important in the world. The exhibition ranges from the Predynastic Period (ca. 4400 BC) to the 18th Dynasty reign of Amunhotep III (ca. 1353 BC), including such treasures as an exquisite chlorite head of a Middle Kingdom princess, an early stone deity from 2650 BC, a relief from the tomb of a man named Akhty-hotep and a highly abstract female terra-cotta statuette created more than 5000 years ago. Additional exhibits illustrate themes in Egyptian culture, including women's roles, permanence and change, temples and tombs, technology and materials, art and communication, and Egypt and its relationship to the rest of Africa. Brooklyn Museum, **New York.**

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.**

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



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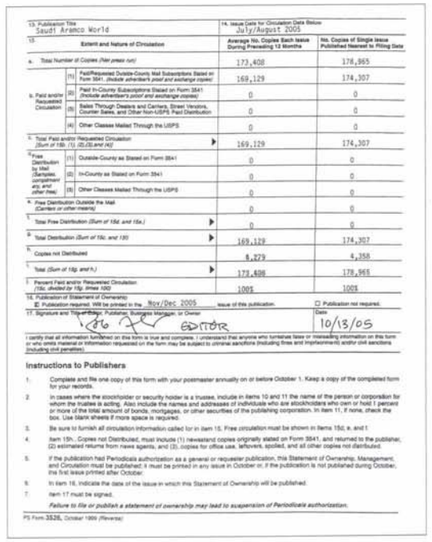

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