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THE
K O R A N,

COMMONLY CALLED
The Alcoran of MOHAMMED,
Translated into ENGLISH immediately from
the Original ARABIC;

WITH
EXPLANATORY NOTES,
TAKEN FROM THE MOST
APPROVED COMMENTATORS,
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A Preliminary Discourse.
VOL. I.

By GEORGE SALE, Gent.

Nulla falsa doctrina est, quæ non aliquid veri permisceat.
Augustin. Quæst. Evang. l. ii. c. xl.

LONDON,

Printed for L. HAWES, W. CLARKE, and R. COLLINS, at the
Red Lion in Pater Noster Row; and T. WILCOX, at Virgil's
Head, overagainst the New Church, in the Strand.

MDCCLXIV.

Thomas
Jefferson's
QUR'AN



Printed in London in 1764, George Sale's English-language "interpretation" of the Qur'an stood among the best in English for 150 years. Thomas Jefferson appears to have bought his copy in 1765 to further his studies in comparative law. Photo by Aasil Ahmad.

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Back Cover



A Mumbai embroiderer is eclipsed by his handiwork: a sheer, delicately ornamented *ghagra*, or multi-paneled wedding skirt, glistening with glass and crystal beads. Photo by David H. Wells.

Saudi Aramco, the oil company born as an international enterprise more than seventy-five years ago, distributes *Saudi Aramco World* to increase cross-cultural understanding. The magazine's goal is to broaden knowledge of the cultures, history and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their connections with the West. *Saudi Aramco World* is distributed without charge, upon request, to a limited number of interested readers.

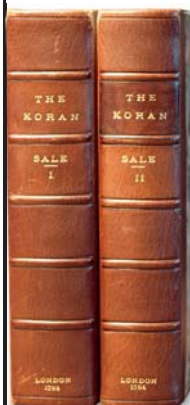


2 Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an

Written by Sebastian R. Prange

Photographed by Aasil Ahmad

While he was a law student, Thomas Jefferson bought a newly published English rendition of the Qur'an. What can that purchase tell us about him? About his politics, as an ambassador and as third president of the us? Or about the legacy of religious freedom and pluralism that he left to his country?



8 In the Shade of the Royal Umbrella

Written by Stewart Gordon

Call an umbrella plain, prosaic or merely practical, but, to a historian, it opens up to reveal a colorful and powerful past: Invented at least four times over more than 3000 years in places as different as Africa and Japan, umbrellas were—until very recently—reserved for royalty and religious figures.

Spine of the Silk Roads

Written by

Andrew F. Lawler

Photographed by

Tom Schutyser

Like today's airports with their restaurants, hotels and shopping malls, caravanserais and *khans* were once where business happened, along every highway and in every city, for more than 1000 years. Some of the best of the few that remain are in Lebanon and Syria.

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Mughal Maal

Written by Louis Werner
Photographed by David H. Wells

Embroidery has been a refined art in India since even before the extravagance of the Mughal era, and today's embroiderers are stitching newly eclectic, dazzling designs and ornaments called *maal* into neo-traditional fashions with appeal that reaches beyond Delhi to the runways of Paris, New York and London.

Listening for Al-Andalus

Written by Kay Hardy Campbell
Photographed by Tor Eigeland

Born in Madrid, Eduardo Paniagua is perhaps best described as a musical archeologist. He is both a performer of early music and the founder of Pneuma, a recording label that is seeking out lost sounds—and producing a few new ones—from one of the world's most influential musical cultures.



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One Card at a Time

Written by Piney Kesting
Photographed by Aasil Ahmad

"Making cards is my small effort," says 15-year-old Saanya Hasan Ali, who has turned a basement full of craft supplies into \$26,000 for education and disaster relief—and into inspiration for young people to "grow into something beyond your expectations."





Facing the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. stands the Jefferson Building, the main building of the Library of Congress, the world's largest library, with holdings of more than 140 million books and other printed items. The stately building, with its neoclassical exterior, copper-plated dome and marble halls, is named after Thomas Jefferson, one of the "founding fathers" of the United States, principal author of the 1776 Declaration of Independence and, from 1801 to 1809, the third president of the young republic. But the name also recognizes Jefferson's role as a founder of the Library itself. As president, he enshrined the institution in law and, in 1814, after a fire set by British troops during the Anglo-American War destroyed the Library's 3000-volume collection, he offered all or part of his own wide-ranging

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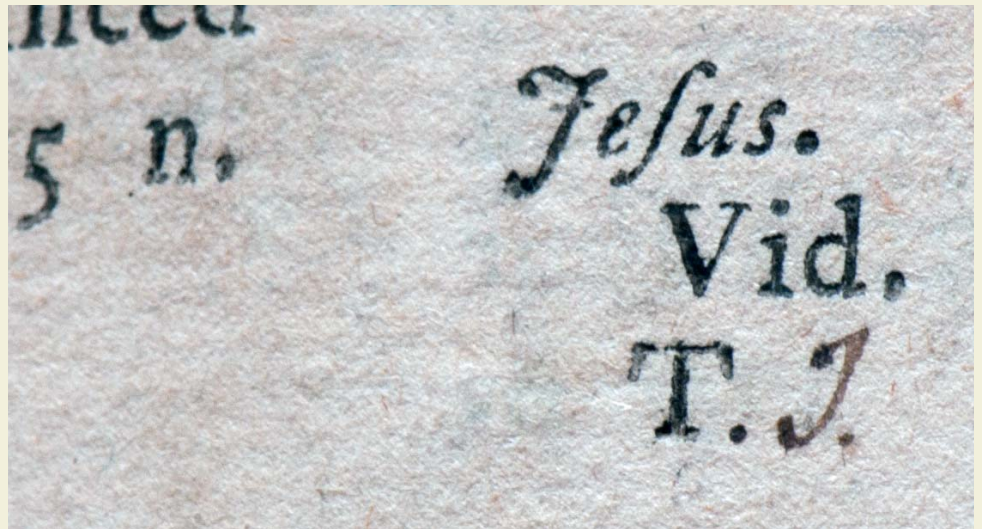


book collection as a replacement for the losses, commenting that “there is in fact no subject to which a member of Congress may not have occasion to refer.”

Among the nearly 6500 books Jefferson sold to the Library was a two-volume English translation of the Qur’an, the book Muslims recite, study and revere as the revealed word of God. (See “‘Translation’ or ‘Interpretation?’,” page 6.) The presence of this Qur’an, first in Jefferson’s private library and later in the Library of Congress, prompts the questions why Jefferson purchased this book, what use he made of it, and why he included it in his young nation’s repository of knowledge.

These questions are all the more pertinent in light of assertions by some present-day commentators that Jefferson purchased his Qur’an in the 1780’s in response to conflict between the US and the “Barbary states” of North Africa—today Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. That was a conflict Jefferson followed closely—indeed, in 1786, he helped negotiate a treaty with Morocco, the United States’ first treaty with a foreign power. Then, it was relations with Algeria that were the most nettlesome, as its ruler demanded the payment of tribute in return for ending semiofficial piracy of American merchant shipping. Jefferson staunchly opposed tribute payment. In this context, such popular accounts claim, Jefferson was studying the Qur’an to better understand these adversaries, in keeping with the adage “know thy enemy.” However, when we look more closely at the place of this copy of the Qur’an in Jefferson’s library—and in his thinking—and when we examine the context of this particular translation, we see a different story.

From his youth, Thomas Jefferson read and collected a great number of books, and a wide variety of them: The collection he eventually sold to the Library of Congress comprised 6487 volumes, ranging in subject from classical philosophy to cooking. Like many collectors of the time, Jefferson not only cataloged his books but also marked them. It is his singular way of marking his books that makes it possible to establish that, among the millions of volumes in today’s Library of Congress, this one specific Qur’an did indeed belong to him.



In the 18th century, the production of books was still an essentially manual process. By means of a hand press, large sheets of paper were printed on both sides with multiple pages before being folded. They were folded once to produce four pages for the *folio* size, twice to produce eight pages for the *quarto* or four times to produce the 16-page *octavo*. These folded sheets, known as “gatherings,” were then sewn together along their inner edges before being attached to the binding. To ensure that the bookbinders would stitch the gatherings together in the correct sequence, each was marked with a different letter of the alphabet on what, after folding, would become that gathering’s first page.

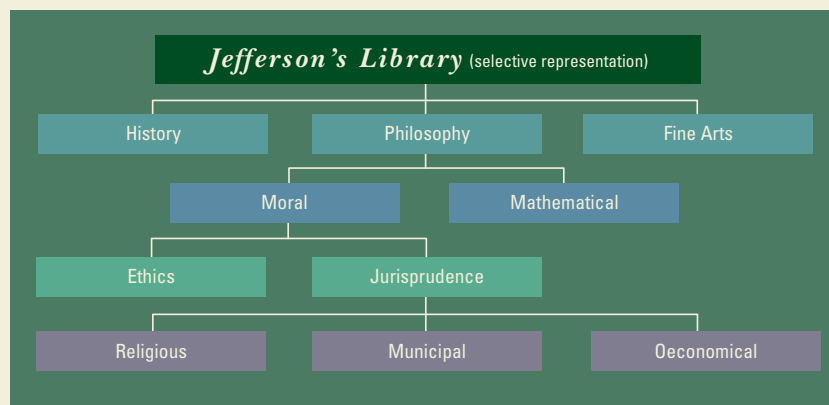
Thus, in an octavo volume like Jefferson’s Qur’an, there is a small printed letter in

The initials “T.J.” were Thomas Jefferson’s device for marking his books: On this page, the “T.” is the printer’s mark to help the binder keep each 16-page “gathering” in sequence, and the “J.” was added personally by Jefferson.

yet unmistakable signature appears clearly on the two leather-bound volumes in the Library of Congress.

Jefferson’s system of cataloging his library sheds light on the place the Qur’an held in his thinking. Jefferson’s 44-category classification scheme was much informed by the work of Francis Bacon (1561–1626), whose professional trajectory from lawyer to statesman to philosopher roughly prefigures Jefferson’s own career. According to Bacon, the human mind comprises three faculties: memory, reason and imagination. This

trinity is reflected in Jefferson’s library, which he organized into history, philosophy and fine arts. Each of these contained subcategories: philosophy, for instance, was divided into moral and mathematical; continuing along the former branch leads to the subdivision of ethics and jurisprudence, which itself was further segmented into the categories of religious,



the bottom right-hand corner of every 16th page. It was Jefferson’s habit to take advantage of these preexisting marks to discreetly inscribe each of his books. On each book’s 10th gathering, in front of the printer’s mark *J* he wrote a letter *T*, and on the 20th gathering, to the printed *T* he added a *J*, thereby in each case producing his initials. This subtle

municipal and “oeconomical.”

Jefferson’s system for organizing his library has often been described as a “blueprint of his own mind.” Jefferson kept his Qur’an in the section on religion, located between a book on the myths and gods of antiquity and a copy of the Old Testament. It is illuminating to note that Jefferson



Jefferson organized his own library, and he shelved religious books, including his English version of the Qur'an, with other works under "Jurisprudence," which fell under "Moral Philosophy."

did not class religious works with books on history or ethics—as might perhaps be expected—but that he regarded their proper place to be within jurisprudence.

The story of Jefferson's purchase of the Qur'an helps to explain this classification. Sifting through the records of the *Virginia Gazette*, through which Jefferson ordered many of his books, the scholar Frank Dewey discovered that Jefferson bought this copy of the Qur'an around 1765, when he was still a student of law at the College of William & Mary in Virginia. This quickly refutes the notion that Jefferson's interest in Islam came in response to the Barbary threat to shipping. Instead, it situates his interest in the Qur'an in the context of his legal studies—a conclusion that is consistent with his shelving of it in the section on jurisprudence.

Jefferson's legal interest in the Qur'an was not without precedent. There is of course the entire Islamic juridical tradition of religious law (*Shariah*) based on Qur'anic exegesis, but Jefferson had an example at hand that was closer to his own tradition: The standard work on comparative law during his time was *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, written by the German scholar Samuel von Pufendorf and first published in 1672. As Dewey shows, Jefferson studied Pufendorf's treatise intensively and, in his own legal writings, cited it more frequently than any other text. Pufendorf's book contains numerous references to Islam and to the Qur'an. Although many of these were disparaging—typical for European works of the period—on other occasions Pufendorf cited Qur'anic legal precedents approvingly, including the Qur'an's emphasis on promoting moral behavior, its proscription of games of chance and its admonition to make peace between warring countries. As Kevin Hayes, another eminent Jefferson scholar, writes: "Wanting to broaden his legal

studies as much as possible, Jefferson found the Qur'an well worth his attention."

In his reading of the Qur'an as a law book, Jefferson was aided by a relatively new English translation that was not only technically superior

to earlier attempts, but also produced with a sensitivity that was not unlike Jefferson's own emerging attitudes. Entitled *The Koran; commonly called the Alcoran of Mohammed*, it was prepared by the Englishman George Sale and published in 1734 in London. A second edition was printed in 1764, and it was this edition that Jefferson bought. Like Jefferson, Sale was a lawyer, although his heart lay in oriental scholarship. In the preface to his translation, he lamented that the work "was carried on at leisure time only, and amidst the necessary avocations of a troublesome profession." This preface also informed the reader of Sale's motives: "If the religious and civil Institutions of foreign nations are worth our knowledge, those of Mohammed, the lawgiver of the Arabians, and founder of an empire which in less than a century spread itself over a greater part of the world than the Romans were ever masters of, must needs be so." Like Pufendorf, Sale stressed Muhammad's role as a "lawgiver" and the Qur'an as an example of a distinct legal tradition.

This is not to say that Sale's translation is free of the kind of prejudices against Muslims

that characterize most European works on Islam of this period. However, Sale did not stoop to the kinds of affronts that tend to fill the pages of earlier such attempts at translation. To the contrary, Sale felt himself obliged to treat "with common decency, and even to approve such particulars as seemed to me to deserve approbation." In keeping with this commitment, Sale described the Prophet of Islam as "richly furnished with personal endowments, beautiful in person, of a subtle wit, agreeable behaviour, shewing liberality to the poor, courtesy to every one, fortitude against his enemies, and, above all, a high reverence for the name of God." This portrayal is markedly different from those of earlier translators, whose primary motive was to assert the superiority of Christianity.

In addition to the relative liberality of Sale's approach, he also surpassed earlier writers in the quality of his translation. Previous English versions of the Qur'an were not based on the original Arabic, but rather on Latin or French versions, a process that lay-

ered fresh mistakes upon the errors of their sources. Sale, by contrast, worked from the Arabic text. It was not true, as Voltaire claimed in his famous *Dictionnaire philosophique* of 1764, that *le savant Sale* had acquired his Arabic skills by having lived for 25 years among Arabs; rather, Sale had learnt the language through his involvement in preparing an Arabic translation of the New Testament to be used by Syrian Christians, a project that was underwritten by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in London. Study-

ing alongside Arab scholars who had come to London to assist in this work, he acquired within a few years such good command of the language that he was able to serve as a proof-reader of the Arabic text.

It is thus not so surprising that Sale turned from translating the holy text of Christians into Arabic to rendering the holy

"We the General Assembly of Virginia do enact that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer, on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities."

— From the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, ratified 1786; drafted by Thomas Jefferson in 1777

“Translation” or “Interpretation”?

“In this Qur’an, We have put forward all kinds of illustrations for people, so that they may take heed—an Arabic Qur’an, free from any distortion.”

That quotation from Surah 39, Verses 27-28, of the Qur’an was rendered into English by Muhammad A. S. Abdel Haleem, Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. It emphasizes a basic yet far-reaching fact about the holy book of Islam: It was received and recorded in the Arabic language. Muslims believe that the Qur’an is inseparable from the language in which it was revealed, and for this reason, all Muslims worldwide recite it in Arabic, even though today the vast majority of Muslims are neither Arabs nor native speakers of Arabic. Many

Muslims also regard the eloquence of the Qur’an as evidence of its divine provenance. A popular story recounts how, in the time of Muhammad, the most famous poet of Makkah converted to Islam after reading one of its verses, convinced that no human could ever produce a work of such beauty.

This makes any attempt to render the Qur’an into another language a daunting task, and explains why Muslims prefer to call non-Arabic versions of the Qur’an “interpretations.” The difficulties are compounded further by the interpretive problems inherent in all translations, that is, the word-by-word demand for decisions about the intended meaning of the original and the most suitable equivalent in the target language. These

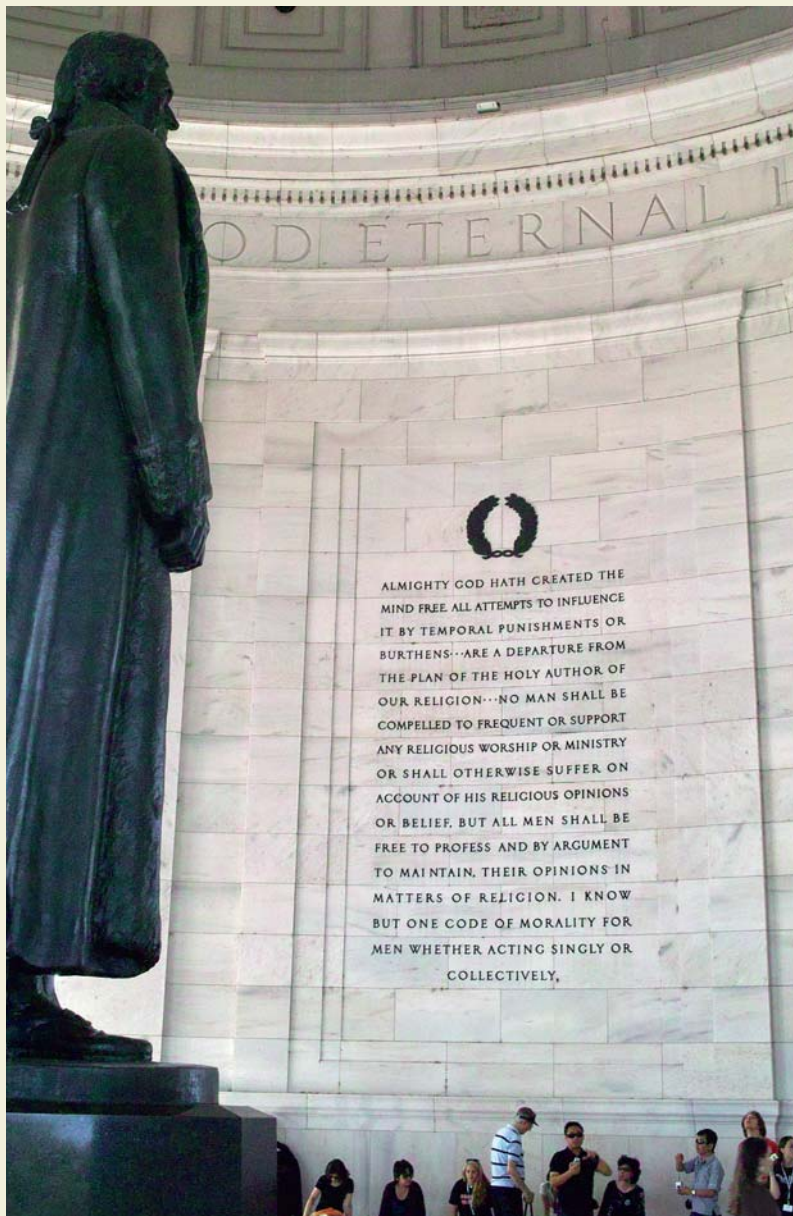
issues the Qur’an itself seems to anticipate: “Some of its verses are definite in meaning—these are the cornerstone of the scripture—and others are ambiguous. The perverse at heart eagerly pursue the ambiguities in their attempt to make trouble and to pin down a specific meaning of their own: only God knows the true meaning.” (Surah 3, Verse 7, Abdel Haleem version)

Most modern-day “translators” of the Qur’an explicitly engage these issues and explain their particular approach and decisions. While there will never be a definitive Qur’an in any language other than Arabic, these days English readers are able to choose from among a wide selection of careful “interpretations.”

text of Muslims into his native English. Noting the absence of a reliable English translation, he aimed to provide a “more genuine idea of the original.” Lest his readers be unduly daunted, he justified his choice of fidelity to the original by stating that “we must not expect to read a version of so extraordinary a book with the same ease and pleasure as a modern composition.” Indeed, even though Sale’s English may appear overwrought today, there is no denying that he strove to convey some of the beauty and poetry of the original Arabic.

Sale’s aspiration to provide an accurate rendition of the Qur’an was matched by his desire also to provide his readers with a more honest introduction to Islam. This “Preliminary Discourse,” as he entitled it, runs to more than 200 pages in the

An inscription inside the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. quotes Jefferson’s 1777 statute on religious pluralism that inspired the constitutional right that “no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust.”



edition Jefferson purchased. Fairly presented and conscientiously documented, it contains a section on Islamic civil law that repeatedly points out parallels to Jewish legal precepts in regard to marriage, divorce, inheritance, lawful retaliation and the rules of warfare. In this substantial discussion, Sale displays the same quality of dispassionate interest in comparative law that later moved Jefferson.

But did reading the Qur’an influence Thomas Jefferson? That question is difficult to answer, because the few scattered references he made to it in his writings do not reveal his views. Though it may have sparked in him a desire to learn the Arabic language (during the 1770’s Jefferson purchased a number of Arabic grammars), it is far more significant that it may have reinforced his commitment to religious freedom. Two examples support this idea.

In 1777, the year after he drafted the

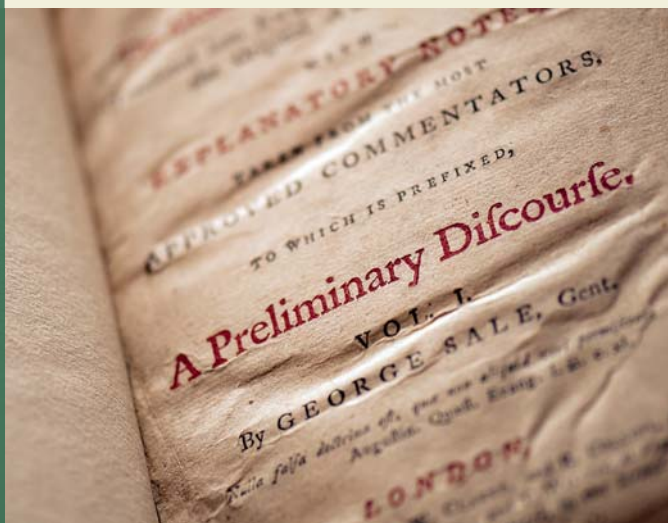
“The style of the Korân is generally beautiful and fluent, especially where it imitates the prophetic manner, and scripture phrases. It is concise, and often obscure, adorned with bold figures after the eastern taste, enlivened with florid and sententious expressions, and in many places, especially where the majesty and attributes of God are described, sublime and magnificent; of which the reader cannot but observe several instances, though he must not imagine the translation comes up to the original, notwithstanding my endeavours to do it justice.”

— from “A Preliminary Discourse”
by George Sale

Declaration of Independence, Jefferson was tasked with excising colonial legacies from Virginia’s legal code. As part of this undertaking, he drafted a bill for the establishment of religious freedom, which was enacted in 1786. In his autobiography, Jefferson recounted his strong desire that the bill not only should extend to Christians of all denominations but should also include “within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan [Muslim], the Hindoo, and infidel of every denomination.”

This all-encompassing attitude to religious pluralism was by no means universally shared by Jefferson’s contemporaries. As the historian Robert Allison documents, many American writers and statesmen in the late 18th century made reference to Islam for less salutary aims. Armed with tendentious translations and often grossly distorted accounts, they portrayed Islam as embodying the very dangers of tyranny and despotism that the young republic had just overcome. Allison argues that many American politicians who used “the Muslim world as a reference point for their own society were not concerned with historical truth or with an accurate description of Islam, but rather with this description’s political convenience.”

These attitudes again came into conflict with Jefferson’s vision in 1788, when the



states voted to ratify the United States Constitution. One of the matters at issue was the provision—now Article VI, Section 3—that “no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.” Some Anti-Federalists singled out and opposed this ban on religious discrimination by painting a hypothetical scenario in which a Muslim could become president. On the other side of the argument, despite their frequent opposition to Jefferson on other matters, the Federalists praised and drew on Jefferson’s vision of religious tolerance in supporting uncircumscribed rights both to faith and to elected office for all citizens. As the historian Denise Spellberg shows in her examination of this dispute among delegates in North Carolina, in the course of these constitutional debates



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Aasil Ahmad (www.aasilahmad.net) is a freelance photographer and photo editor for *Islamic Monthly* magazine. He recently completed a project in Kashmir teaching photography to children affected by the 2005 earthquake. His photos of the Hajj were featured at the Contact Photography Festival in Toronto. He lives in Washington, D.C.


“Muslims became symbolically embroiled in the definition of what it meant to be American citizens.”

It is intriguing to think that Jefferson’s study of the Qur’an may have inoculated him—to a degree that today we can only surmise—against such popular prejudices about Islam, and it may have informed his conviction that Muslims, no less and no more than any other religious group, were entitled to all the legal rights his new nation could offer.

And although Jefferson was

an early and vocal proponent of going to war against the Barbary states over their attacks on US shipping, he never framed his arguments for doing so in religious terms, sticking firmly to a position of political principle. Far from reading the Qur’an to better understand the mindset of his adversaries, it is likely that his earlier knowledge of it confirmed his analysis that the roots of the Barbary conflict were economic, not religious.

Sale’s *Koran* remained the best available English version of the Qur’an for another 150 years. Today, along with the original copy of Jefferson’s Qur’an, the Library of Congress holds nearly one million printed items relating to Islam—a vast collection of knowledge for every new generation of lawmakers and citizens, with its roots in the law student’s leather-bound volumes. 🌐

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In the Shade of the Royal Umbrella

Written by **Stewart Gordon**

In the title scene of the 1952 classic movie “Singin’ in the Rain,” Gene Kelly escorts his newfound love to her home, in the rain. They share the shelter of his umbrella. He kisses her at her door and then dances with his umbrella in the downpour until a beat cop squelches his exuberance. Kelly folds the umbrella, hands it to a passerby and walks off the scene. This sums up how most of us today think of the umbrella: a practical item unworthy of notice until it’s raining.

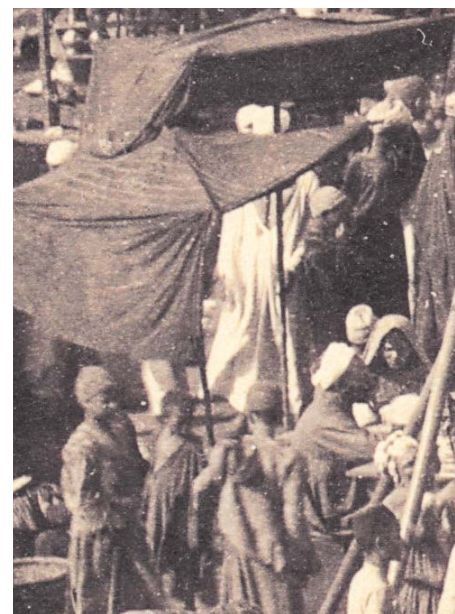
It was not always so. Behind this prosaic present is a powerful past. I first encountered a much different sort of umbrella in India. In a market in the western province of Rajasthan, I purchased a large, heavy bamboo umbrella whose cotton fabric was all colorful cutwork, embroidered with animals. It could not possibly have kept out the rain. Years later, I found out I owned a traditional wedding umbrella: At the head of a procession of his relatives, the groom rides to his wedding on a white horse while an attendant holds this sort of large, ornate umbrella over him. This umbrella signifies that, at least for this one day, the groom is a king.



Top: In Rajasthan, India, a shop sells brightly patterned sunshade umbrellas, which are still used in wedding and festival processions such as this one above.



Just right of center, on the lower register of this fragment of a fresco excavated from the 14th-century BCE tomb of Queen Nefertiti, there appears a sunshade umbrella, supported by a pair of crossed sticks on a pole, with an additional hanging flap. Right: This detail of an albumen print, dated between 1860 and 1890, shows a Cairo market in which vendors are using sunshades of a nearly identical design.



The royal umbrella, carried by an attendant, not only shaded the king from the sun, but also symbolized his power in procession, battle and the hunt. For millennia, it has been a common symbol among rulers in a huge portion of the world that includes the Middle East, Egypt and North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Persia, South and Southeast Asia, China, Japan and Korea. The royal umbrella flourished in Muslim, Hindu, Confucian, Buddhist, animist and some Christian courts. Rulers sometimes bestowed umbrellas on high officials and generals as a visible recognition of their loyalty.

The royal umbrella was not an idea that spread from invention in one place—in fact it was invented at least four times. The earliest recorded examples are from Egypt's Fifth Dynasty, from about 2500 to 2400 BCE. Decorations on tombs and temples from these times portray a flat, square, crossed-stick umbrella shading gods and kings. The hieroglyph for umbrella signified sovereignty as well as the "shadow," or influence, of a person. Thus the umbrella augmented a pharaoh's shadow. The history of the square umbrella is long, and, although it is no longer associated with kings, such umbrellas can still be found shading market carts in Egypt.



This bronze model of an umbrella-covered sulky-like carriage from Gansu, China dates to the second century CE.

The second invention of the umbrella took place in China. A classical text titled *The Rites of Zhou* from 400 BCE describes the construction and use of a round, segmented, silk umbrella whose function was to shade ceremonial chariots. Somewhat later reliefs illustrate such an umbrella, and archeologists have excavated several complex brass castings used to hold the ribs of such umbrellas. This kind of royal umbrella remained a symbol of Chinese royal privilege, and it appears in countless court paintings. When Marco Polo arrived at the court of Kublai Khan in 1275, he found the Mongols had adopted many Chinese customs, including the bestowal of a special umbrella on the highest commanders in the army:

An officer who holds the chief command of 100,000 men, or who is the general-in-chief of a great host, is entitled to a [gold] tablet that weighs 300 *saggi*.... Every one, moreover, who holds a tablet of this exalted degree is entitled, whenever he goes abroad, to have a little golden canopy, such as is called an umbrella, carried on a spear over his head in token of his high command.

From China, the royal umbrella spread to Japan and Korea. In Japan, it ceased to be a royal prerogative within a few centuries, and it found widespread use throughout society. Woodblock prints and paintings of the 18th century often feature a theme of ordinary people under umbrellas in the rain. Korea, however, could not have been more



On a doorway that led to the fifth-century BCE throne room in Persepolis, Iran, a relief shows King Xerxes I shaded by an umbrella. Some two centuries earlier, Assyrian artists showed King Ashurbanipal, below, shaded by an umbrella with a hanging flap that resembles those depicted in Egypt.



different. There the umbrella remained a strictly royal symbol. Because Korean artwork never pictured the emperor, his presence was signified by a horse with an empty saddle, shaded by the royal umbrella.

The third invention of the royal umbrella was in Mesopotamia, centuries after the Egyptian square parasol. In bas-reliefs at Nineveh, shading King Ashurbanipal of Assyria, who ruled from 668 to 627 BCE, is a round and pointed umbrella. From there, the royal umbrella drifted both west and east. In Greece, it lost its association with kingship and became particularly associated with women. Aristophanes' play *Women at Thesmophoria* satirized Athenian attitudes toward both women and men. In the final scene, the women boast of their steadfastness:

And then there's your omission
To keep up your old tradition
As the women of the race have always done:
We maintain our ancient craft
With the shuttle and the shaft
And the parasol—our shield against the sun.

These attitudes carried west to Rome, where the umbrella was deemed too effeminate for men's use. Juvenal, for example, wrote of a "pretty fellow, to have presents sent to him of green sunshades." On Roman coins, the umbrella appeared only twice, both times in association with the Middle East: One coin was issued around 40 CE in Palestine and the other between 218 and 222 CE by Emperor Heliogabalus, who was from Syria. Overall, the Roman Empire passed on to Europe no legacy of a royal umbrella.

East of its Mesopotamian origins, however, the royal umbrella flourished. Bas-reliefs on the walls of Persepolis, dating from 500 BCE, show the king seated or walking under his royal umbrella.

Later, from the third to seventh centuries, the Sassanians ruled the next great empire that included Persia. From their original homeland on the borders of China,

they migrated west across the Central Asian steppe, and they either brought with them the Chinese tradition of the royal umbrella or they adopted the Persian royal umbrella when they arrived. In either case, Sassanian kings ruled beneath royal umbrellas, as shown on the rock-cut bas-relief at Taq-e Bostan, from about 380 CE.

In Constantinople, founded in 330 CE, umbrellas appear prominently in Christian artwork. With the rise of Islam in the seventh century, it becomes more difficult to document the uses of royal umbrellas because most Islamic art favored geometry and calligraphy over depictions of people. In Abbasid Baghdad, from the eighth to the 13th centuries, courtiers and scholars wrote on mathematics, astronomy, history, medicine and philosophy, but nothing about day-to-day court ritual.

It is from later texts in Egypt that we get some insight. Paula Sanders of Rice University has analyzed three texts from Egypt that describe processions and court ritual under the 10th- and 11th-century Fatimids, whose caliphs appeared in procession under a royal umbrella—a practice that they attributed to the earlier Abbasid dynasty. For the whole of the Fatimid period, factional power was constantly shifting, and the caliph selectively bestowed the right to display an umbrella, which signaled the recipient's support and commitment to the caliph.

In sub-Saharan West Africa, the royal umbrella frequently appears in both Islamic and non-Islamic kingdoms. There, it is possible that the umbrella came south from Islamic Tunisia and Morocco, along the trade routes across the Sahara. It is equally possible that it was indigenous—and thus yet another independent, parallel invention. Umbrellas were part of the king's regalia in all major kingdoms of West Africa, including Ashanti, Benin, Sokoto and Dahomey. In European

drawings from the 18th century and in early photographs from the 19th century, kings of these states conduct royal business from beneath a large royal umbrella.

Rulers in East Africa, too, adopted the royal umbrella. It is prominent in texts and frescoes in Ethiopia that date to the 1200's, and its use continued in an unbroken tradition well into the 20th century. Royal umbrellas were also found in courts on the East African coast, where it is likely that they spread via Muslim trade ties with Egypt and the lands of the Arabian Peninsula. Ibn Battuta, the most traveled man of the Middle Ages, reached East Africa in the 14th century. At Mogadishu, he wrote that the king entertained him well, feeding him delicacies from the Middle East. During processions, Ibn Battuta noted that royal umbrellas protected the king from the sun:

Over his head were carried four canopies of colored silk, with the figure of a bird in gold on the top of each canopy.... In front of him were sounded drums and trumpets and fifes, and behind him were the commanders of the troops, while the *qadi*, the doctors of law, and the *sharifs* walked alongside him.

Later, both Ottoman Turkish and Safavid Persian court paintings also show royal umbrellas.



Ruling in Persia more than 1000 years after Xerxes I, Khosrau II was depicted at Taq-e Bostan watching a hunt from under a royal umbrella.

The sub-Saharan umbrella may have arrived with trade, or it may be a **fifth independent invention.**

Prominently displaying large, colorful umbrellas, this engraving dated 1820 is titled "English Embassy in Komassi, West Africa."



Both this Chinese-influenced Tibetan depiction of the Buddha, below, and this Muslim Mughal miniature of Shah Jahan, right, date from the 17th century, and both show their subjects seated under umbrellas.



The fourth invention of the royal umbrella was in India, where the earliest evidence is from Buddhist literature and reliefs dating back to about 300 BCE. In these early texts, when Siddhartha Gautama left behind his royal upbringing to meditate on the sufferings of the world, he was shaded by a cobra's hood, a tree, or an umbrella. In particular, the umbrella became a symbol of his successful search for enlightenment, and in these texts he is referred to as the "Buddha of the White Umbrella." Early Buddhist sculpture does not portray the Buddha, but rather objects associated with him: An empty platform and the *bodhi* tree, a cobra or an honorific umbrella signify his presence.

After the Buddha's death, his followers sent small portions of his ashes to other groups of followers, who built mounds over the ashes. Several umbrellas mounted on a single shaft topped these mounds, and these became known as *stupas*, such as those built at Sanchi in Central India around 100 BCE.

The reliefs on the stupas at Sanchi also show kings, under royal umbrellas, arriving in procession to honor the Buddha. (Incidentally, multiple umbrellas on the tops of stupas are the origin of the Chinese pagoda, which added walls and made the multiple umbrella into an architectural form.)

Also in the earliest Hindu writings, dating to the first four centuries of our era, umbrellas regularly shade kings. In this quotation from the *Ramayana*, Ram's father contemplates his life:

In my fathers' footsteps treading I have sought the ancient path,
Nursed my people as my children, free from passion, pride and wrath,
Underneath this white umbrella, seated on this royal throne,
I have toiled to win their welfare and my task is almost done!

The royal umbrella continued as an unbroken tradition for all Indian kings for the next millennium and a half. The artwork of the southern Islamic kingdoms makes it clear that both Muslim and Hindu kings used the royal umbrella. For example, the Battle of Talikota, in 1386, pitted the Hindu king of Vijayanagar against the Muslim sultans of Bijapur, Golconda, Bidar and Ahmadnagar. A contemporary painting shows the adversaries approaching the battle under their respective royal umbrellas. Throughout the British colonial period, India's princes ruled from beneath royal umbrellas—some of which were by then manufactured in London. When he visited India in 1911, King George of England walked beneath a royal umbrella.



Hindus, too, adopted the umbrella in both religious and royal settings. At Angkor, Cambodia, a statue above depicts the Hindu god Vishnu, and a relief detail, right, depicts a battle in which a ruler fights from beneath an umbrella.



Sometime around 800 CE, the royal umbrella began to flourish in Southeast Asia, adopted by kings in Cambodia, Laos, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam and Java. The custom may have come from India or China, as both cultures strongly influenced the region at the time. A charming story from 12th-century Burma illustrates the umbrella's symbolic power: The king was unable to choose his successor from among his five sons. One night, he ordered his royal umbrella set up, and he commanded that his sons sleep in a circle around it. The successor was chosen when the umbrella fell in one son's direction, and in the chronicles he became known as "the king whom the umbrella placed on the throne."

Two of the most famous early sites in Southeast Asia, Borobudur in Central Java, which dates from the eighth and ninth centuries, and Angkor in Cambodia, dating from the 10th to 12th centuries, are both replete with umbrellas. Among the nearly 3000 reliefs adorning Borobudur, umbrellas identify kings, nobility and famous figures from the Buddha's life.

At Angkor, a huge bas-relief portrays a battle between the Cambodians and the Champa kingdom (in current-day Vietnam). On it, generals and noble advisors all have umbrellas, supporting speculation that, as in Fatimid Egypt, bestowal of an umbrella cemented loyalty. The king, however, has more umbrellas surrounding him than anyone else—15 in all—complete with an entourage of umbrella carriers.

In India, the royal umbrella was a virtually unbroken tradition among both Muslim and Hindu rulers.

In Burma as in India, the tradition continued into the 19th century. Dutch and British emissaries observed the king shaded by umbrellas in processions, and they negotiated with the king while he was seated under his royal umbrella. In 1867, the English resident at the Burmese court and his wife were granted the privilege of an umbrella, likely a political move aimed at holding off a British takeover. (It was not enough, however, and the British did take over Burma in 1885.) Thailand, which remained more or less independent, continued its tradition of the royal umbrella until recent decades, and in 1967, Jacqueline Kennedy, wife of US president John F. Kennedy, was granted a ceremonial umbrella when she visited Thailand.

The earliest evidence of an umbrella in Europe comes from the Utrecht Psalter, which is generally dated to the 900's. One of its illustrations shows an angel holding an umbrella over King David. However, it is not until the 13th century that scholars have found evidence of a royal umbrella, and then only in Italy, which at that time was receiving much culture and learning from Islamic Spain, including medicine, philosophy, cuisine, music and the game of chess. Venice, with its close trading ties to the Islamic world, adopted the umbrella for the doge when he was in a procession, and so did the pope in Rome. But the royal umbrella just never caught on

From Korea, a religious painting uses an umbrella, below left, as does a modern statue of King Naresuan in Thailand, below.



Above left: Arriving in Japan in the 17th century, the Portuguese ambassador was depicted under an elaborate umbrella. Above right: Japan was one of the few places where umbrellas became objects of fashion from an early time, and today the bamboo parasol remains a national folkloric symbol.



Although Europe never fully embraced the royal umbrella, the late-18th-century artist Laurent Pechaux painted one over Pope Gregory XI, top; the 17th-century French artist Charles Le Brun painted two above a chancellor, above, and an 1894 fashion print from France shows a lady's parasol tensioned by springy ribs of newly available lightweight steel.



lution came lightweight steel and, with that, a drive to make a light, foldable, rainproof umbrella. Inventors in Europe and America filed hundreds of patents for folding mechanisms, rib arrangements and even provisions for concealing swords or pistols in umbrellas. Following dozens of minor improvements, the modern umbrella began to emerge, and by 1910, Britain was exporting more than three million a year—many to Asia. Germany and Italy were Britain's chief competitors, making cheaper models.

This long and complicated history of the umbrella shows that it did not simply “diffuse” from one place of invention outward to a wider world. It was invented at least four times, and it moved in unpredictable ways, sometimes never leaving its country of origin, like the Egyptian square umbrella, and other times moving into a society that completely changed its meanings and uses. Greece, Rome and 18th-century England

in Europe. In addition to its cooler climate, the influence of the Crusades led courts by 1300 to regard the royal umbrella as a foreign symbol, one used by enemies. By the end of the 18th century, even the papal umbrella had been replaced by a four-cornered, flat canopy.

Later, there were exceptions. Portuguese and Spanish colonial traders returned from Asia with umbrellas, and around the 16th century those lost their royal status and became occasional items of courtly fashion. Though Mary Queen of Scots owned one in 1562, and the term “ombrello” appeared in an Italian-English dictionary of 1598, they were unknown in the larger society. It was only in the 18th century that umbrellas caught on as a fashion item—and that still as sunshades made of cotton or thin leather, of no use in the rain. In the 19th century, these ladies' parasols went through almost yearly fashion shifts.

The water-resistant umbrella first appeared in England in the late 18th century to protect clerics and officials during outdoor duties. They were heavy, stiff and slow to dry. They leaked, their whalebone ribs rotted quickly, and the folding mechanisms often failed. All umbrellas, whether to protect from rain or sun, were deemed too “feminine” for ordinary Englishmen.

With the Industrial Revo-



In modern times, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei, above left, used a yellow umbrella at a ceremony on his birthday, and a traditional ruler in Ghana, right, used several in his party for a corn festival parade in Accra. The large umbrellas in the background resemble the ones depicted in the early 19th century. (See page 11.)

deemed the umbrella “feminine,” while the Japanese umbrella was acceptable for both men and women but spread from royal to general use.

Several points about this complicated process seem significant. Rulers everywhere seek symbols that enhance dignity, visibility and the loyalty of subjects. They were willing to experiment with new symbols, such as the royal umbrella. Several sorts of travelers, such as emissaries, traders, monks, learned men and professional soldiers, brought back, often over long distances, information about royal symbols. For centuries, the royal umbrella was part of a shared courtly world that stretched from Asia to Africa and Spain. It was part of a familiar courtly scene to those who traveled for political reasons, business or advancement. The royal umbrella was frequently a potent political symbol. Because it was tied to no religion, region, language or ethnic group, kings could use it to rally disparate groups. The umbrella was also, however, granted to a select few at court. When the recipient traveled under it, every observer knew of his personal ties to the king. It was a public commitment of personal loyalty, important in times of factional strife and threats to the throne—a situation all too frequent among kings.

Today, the world of the royal umbrella is almost entirely gone, but with imagination and the memory of history, we can recall the lavish decorations, dignified processions and royal associations it carried—every time it rains and we pop open our umbrella. ☂

Through modern times, the umbrella was part of a familiar courtly scene.



The unreliability of Europe’s early steel umbrellas caught the eye of French satirist Daumier, above left, but by the time Gene Kelly turned his bumbershoot into an iconic Hollywood dance prop in “Singin’ in the Rain,” the waterproof umbrella had become plain and practical, offering little hint of its symbolic and powerful past.



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Travels of Marco Polo. Manuel Komroff, ed. 1926, Garden City Publishing Co.

WRITTEN BY ANDREW F. LAWLER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TOM SCHUTYSER

SPINE OF THE

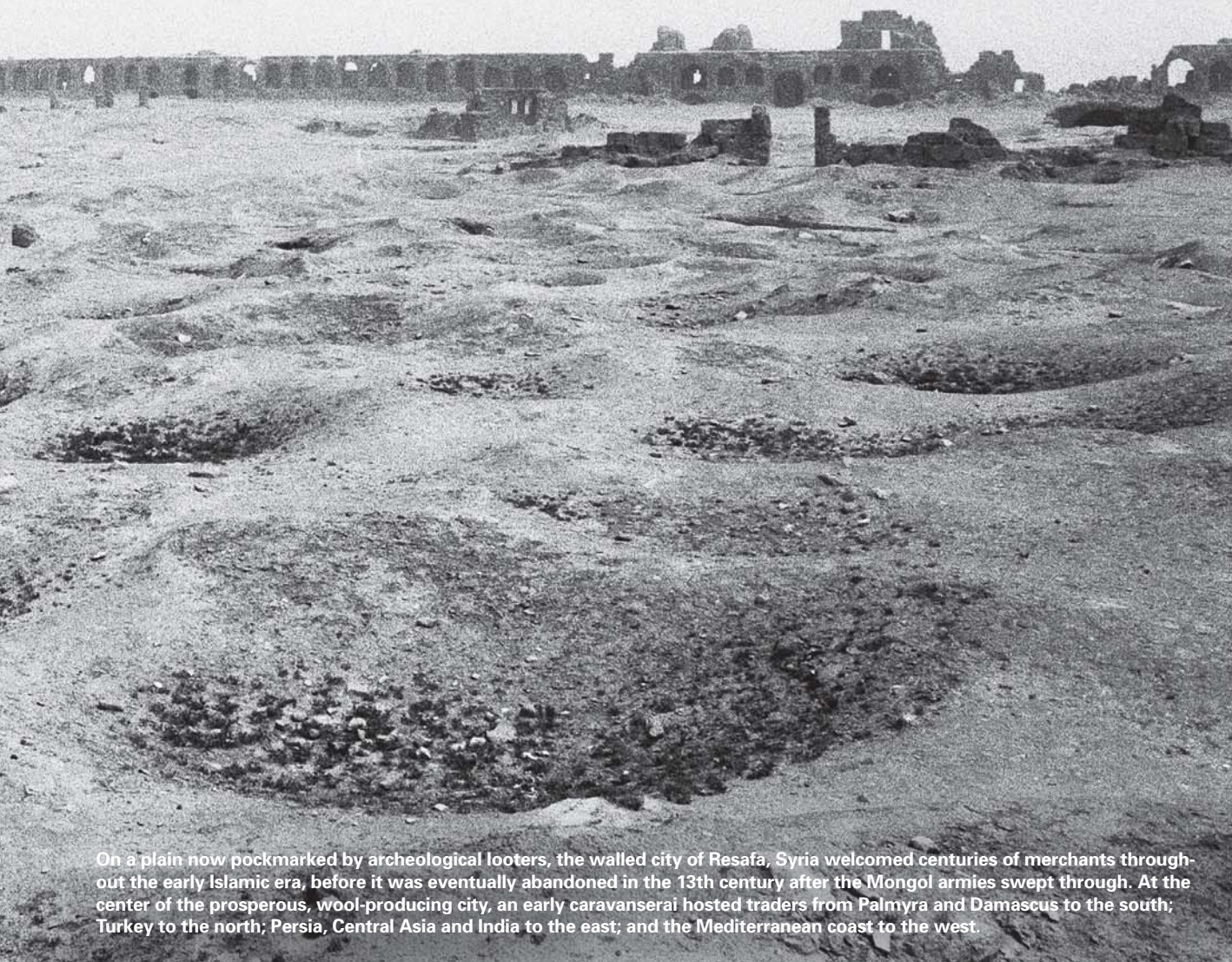


IT WAS A HOT NIGHT IN THE NILE DELTA IN 1326. WHEN THE INVETERATE TRAVELER IBN BATTUTA CLIMBED WEARILY TO THE BREEZY ROOF OF HIS LODGING, he was pleasantly surprised to find set out for him “a straw mattress and a leather mat, vessels for ritual ablutions, a jar of water, and a drinking cup.” For the 14th century, these were four-star accommodations.

Without such places to rest in safety and relative comfort, Ibn Battuta’s famous 28-year journey across Africa and Asia might never have taken place. Indeed, it was not until the Islamic era, beginning in the seventh century CE, that long-distance travel became a matter of at least as much routine as risk. Essential to this change was the spread of systems of traveler’s lodgings, from Spain to China, which opened the world to innumerable merchants, pilgrims and others who, like Ibn Battuta, were driven by sheer curiosity.

Today, the evocative ruins of sturdy, walled roadside caravanserais still dot the landscape, from the deserts of North Africa to the highlands of Iran and even as far east as the humid lowlands of Bangladesh. Other lodging compounds, known as *khans* and *funduqs*, can still be found crammed into the old quarters of cities in the Middle East and Central Asia, most now dilapidated and variously used as cheap housing, parking lots or commercial storage. For these buildings, official protection from decay or demolition is rare, but, despite this, a few have been restored. No one knows for sure how many remain.

SILK ROADS



On a plain now pockmarked by archeological looters, the walled city of Resafa, Syria welcomed centuries of merchants throughout the early Islamic era, before it was eventually abandoned in the 13th century after the Mongol armies swept through. At the center of the prosperous, wool-producing city, an early caravanserai hosted traders from Palmyra and Damascus to the south; Turkey to the north; Persia, Central Asia and India to the east; and the Mediterranean coast to the west.

“They don’t have the religious significance of a mosque, or the political importance of a palace, so they don’t merit preservation in the same way,” says Olivia Constable of the University of Notre Dame, who is one of the few scholars to delve deeply into the historical economy and architecture of the caravanserais and khans.

The buildings were more than just early roadside hotels, she explains. As their name suggests, caravanserais accommodated whole caravans en route, while khans were substantial compounds built in towns alongside markets (*suqs*). Funduqs (the word still often used today for “hotel” in Arabic) tended to be more like boarding-houses, also often built near markets. All three were, to varying degrees across continents and centuries, vibrant centers where peoples, religions and ethnicities mingled. In particular, caravanserais

The largest khan in today’s best-preserved city of khans—Aleppo, Syria—is the Khan al-Jumruk (Customs Khan), which was built in the late 16th century as a typical, two-story plaza of shops and consulates below merchant residences. At its center, the small, domed mosque still stands.



FROM NORTH AFRICA TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO INDIA,
A STRANGER COULD USUALLY EXPECT TO FIND
A KHAN STAFFED AND RUN BY PEOPLE FROM HIS OWN LAND.

were probably more like airports today, resembling small towns in themselves, with places to sleep, eat, shop, pray, meet and mingle while livestock rested, awaiting the next stage of the journey. Here you might make an unexpected profit on a load of exotic goods, trade rumors of bandits or tax collectors, or just savor tea with your own countrymen in a distant land.

By the 19th century, steamships and trains began to render caravanserais and khans obsolete. But for more than a millennium, they were essential to the vibrancy, prosperity and cosmopolitan character of the medieval world, the vertebrae that formed the spine of the storied Silk Roads.

“At each of these stations between



Cairo and Gaza,” Ibn Battuta noted, “travelers alight, and outside each khan is a public watering hole and a shop where he may buy what he requires for himself and his beast.”

Less well known is the fact that the khans were also the centers of trade in cities. During the 15th century, there were more than 300 khans in Cairo alone. And in mercantile hubs like Alexandria in Egypt and Aleppo in Syria, a stranger could

Like hotel meeting rooms today, spaces for conversation and negotiation, such as this one on the Khan al-Jumruk’s second floor, were essential to a khan’s commercial success.

Most khans and caravanserais were entered through a single gate, below, made tall and wide enough for loaded camels to pass. Once through this gate into the Khan al-Tamathili, near the port in Tripoli, Lebanon, travelers found some 74 rooms like this vaulted one, lower, for storage, stabling and sleeping.



usually find one staffed and run by people from his own land, or even from his own city. Built in what might be called an early international style, most caravanserais and khans were remarkably similar in appearance and design, whether you were in Morocco or India. That generic look was probably no less comforting to tired travelers then than a Holiday Inn logo is today.

Visitors would approach plain high walls and enter a rectangular courtyard through a single gate, tall and wide enough to allow loaded camels to pass through. Just inside the gate, a scribe might jot down your name, your hometown, the nature of your goods and the number of your livestock. Many compounds had second stories to lodge the human visitors, leaving the ground floor to house goods and animals. Good ventilation, running water, clean latrines and private rooms were among the amenities guests could expect from a good caravanserai or khan. This simple and efficient design proved both durable and adaptable over the centuries, and it was itself a remarkable melding of East and West.

In the Mesopotamian epic of Gilgamesh, composed in the third millennium BCE, the hero makes a journey to obtain the elixir of immortality. Along the way, he finds rest at an inn: It's the first known written reference to a lodging-place for travelers. But the true roots of the caravanserai, as part of an organized system

of trade, date to the fifth century BCE, when the Persian Empire built the 2500-kilometer road from Sardis to Susa. It necessarily included, at regular intervals along its length, stables with feed for horses, camels, donkeys and other beasts of burden, as well as hous-

ing for the caravaneers who guided them. The effort required immense organization in a vast land filled with mountains, deserts and bandits. "Royal stations exist along its whole length, and excellent caravan-serais ... free from danger," wrote an impressed Herodotus.

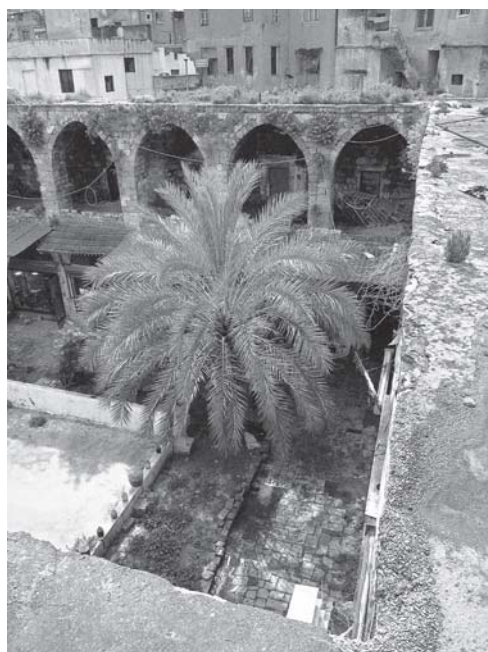
In the later Greek-speaking Mediterranean world, inns called *pandocheions*—"accepting all comers"—were widespread. (It was at a *pandocheion* that the Good Samaritan mentioned in the Christian New Testament left the traveler who had fallen among thieves.) *Pandocheions* were a motley lot, sometimes little more than ramshackle taverns, and often considered unsavory places.

In the Byzantine centuries that followed, Christians began to make pilgrimages throughout that empire, and the quality and reputation of *pandocheions* gradually improved.

Some of the inns that catered to pilgrims did so for free. Beginning in the seventh century, Islam picked up both this tradition and the word: the Arabic *funduq* has its roots in *pandocheion*, and the Umayyad caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz in 719 instructed the governor of Samarkand to build caravanserais throughout his lands and provide travelers with free room and board for up to two days and two nights. Such organization and patronage not only facilitated the flow of trade, but also helped rulers collect taxes on it and keep an eye on strangers as well.

In their architecture, these medieval caravanserais drew variously on the designs of square Roman forts, Persian palaces and





Left: One of the only khans not built for commerce, Tripoli's Khan al-Saboun (Soap Khan) was constructed in the early 17th century as a barracks, but it was soon adapted as a center for the city's soap industry, which is today beginning to reclaim its legacy.

Right: Where once horses, camels and mules might have been tethered, a courtyard in Aleppo's 17th-century Ottoman Khan al-Wazir (Vizier's Khan) reflects the traditional design.

Opposite: Once specializing in the product its name suggests, Aleppo's Khan al-Zeit (Olive Oil Khan) has a fountain at its center.



use them, rent a nearby shop and stay for the short or the long term," says Katia Cytryn-Silverman, an archeologist at Hebrew University who has studied khans. "And they were often in the heart of the city."

One of the oldest and best preserved of the ancient urban khans lies at the center of abandoned Resafa in central Syria. Today, it is hard to imagine that this desolate desert spot was once an eastern anchor of the Roman Empire, and that its tumbledown white stone walls once dazzled in the sun, built on an economy based largely

on a prized local wool. During the Byzantine era, pilgrims visited the nearby tomb of St. Sergius and the cathedral built to commemorate him. The khan may date to the sixth century, but there are no written records.

Later, the city became a favored one under the Umayyad Dynasty and the khan became the city's economic center. But in the 13th century, the Mongols destroyed Resafa on their westward march, and it was never rebuilt. Tourists now wander past the unornamented khan, half-buried in its own rubble, on their way to see the more impressive remains of the basilica. Yet this low-slung caravanserai, on what was Resafa's main street, still exudes a solid and pragmatic air, as if loaded camels might yet emerge from the arched gate and pace down the road carrying bales of fine wool to Constantinople or Damascus.

Keeping caravanserais from deterioration—and keeping the ewers filled, the straw mattresses fresh and the feed-boxes replenished—required organization and money. Rulers, charitable foundations, and religious and merchant groups all ran

Central Asian family houses to produce their pragmatic, universal design theme. Local masons could use local materials—mud brick, fired brick or stone—to create a structure, open to the sky but protected by high walls, that looked similar whether it was near the Mediterranean coast or the Hindu Kush.

By the ninth and 10th centuries, caravanserais dotted the hills of Muslim Spain, the deserts of Iran and the mountainous borders of China. At times, they inspired poets, including Omar Khayyam, who in the late 11th century used the caravanserai as a metaphor for the transience of life:

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way

In urban settings, the walls of the khans also ensured protection and increased privacy as well. Some khans were simple compounds; others were elaborate, nearly palatial, establishments, with intricately carved columns and marble courtyards. "Merchants could



DESIGNS OF CARAVANSERAI AND KHANS DREW ON MOSQUES AND VILLAS, FORTS AND PALACES TO CREATE A PRAGMATIC AND NEARLY UNIVERSAL DESIGN THEME.

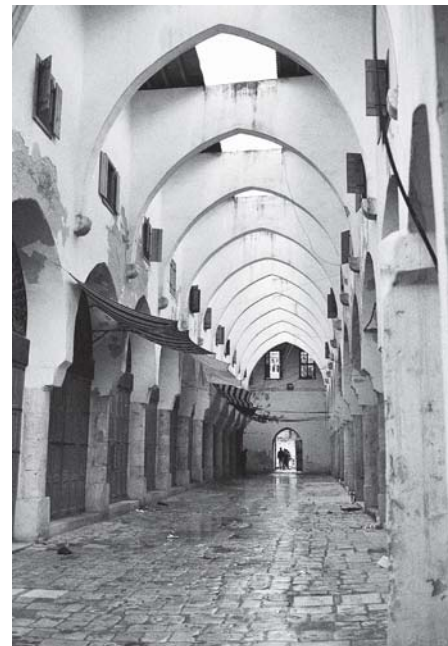
caravanserais, khans, funduqs and other varieties of lodgings. Constable has found legal records in the Middle East that show that caravanserai managers were explicitly expected to take good care of the building and ensure clean latrines, access to water and security.

When that societal support crumbled with the coming of industrialized travel in the 19th century, the khans and caravanserais became relics. In Cairo, most have been demolished. In the cities of the Levant, however, particularly Lebanon and Syria, a number survive and, in a few, a handful of modern merchants keep the buildings and the institution alive.

In the old Phoenician port of Tripoli, in today's Lebanon, Mohammad Amir Hassoun proudly works out of a corner office in a 600-year-old khan not far from the city's high citadel. Long a center of trade and later of learning—once boasting a library with 10,000 books—Tripoli derived much of its wealth from olive oil and soap. For generations, Hassoun's family traded in traditional soaps, but in the early 20th century, factory-made soaps drove his grandfather and others out of the business and, with their departure, the city's Khan Al-Saboun (Soap Khan) went into decline. Hassoun grew up knowing nothing of soap-making; he sold gold jewelry. But after his shop was robbed one night in 1985, his great-uncle encouraged him to restart the family business. He now owns several shops, a small factory and fields where he grows herbs and aromatics. Now he says he's able to make a decent living while maintaining a family tradition and

making a local, organic and sustainable product. "Villagers can stay on their land, and we even feed the pits from the apricots we use to their animals," he says.

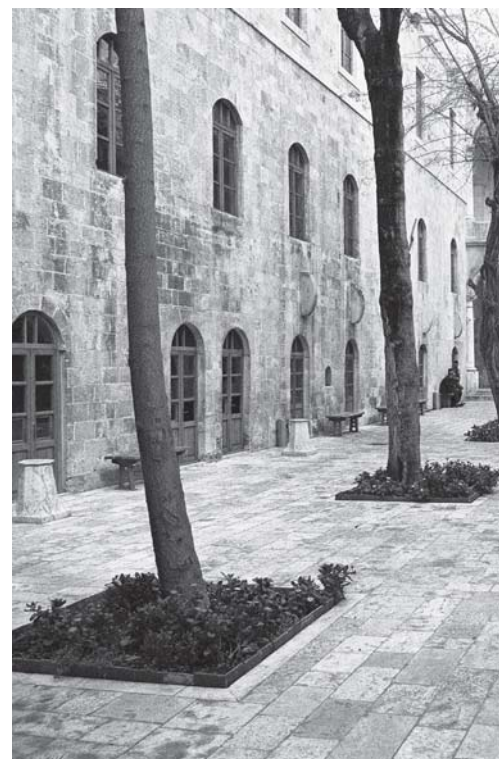
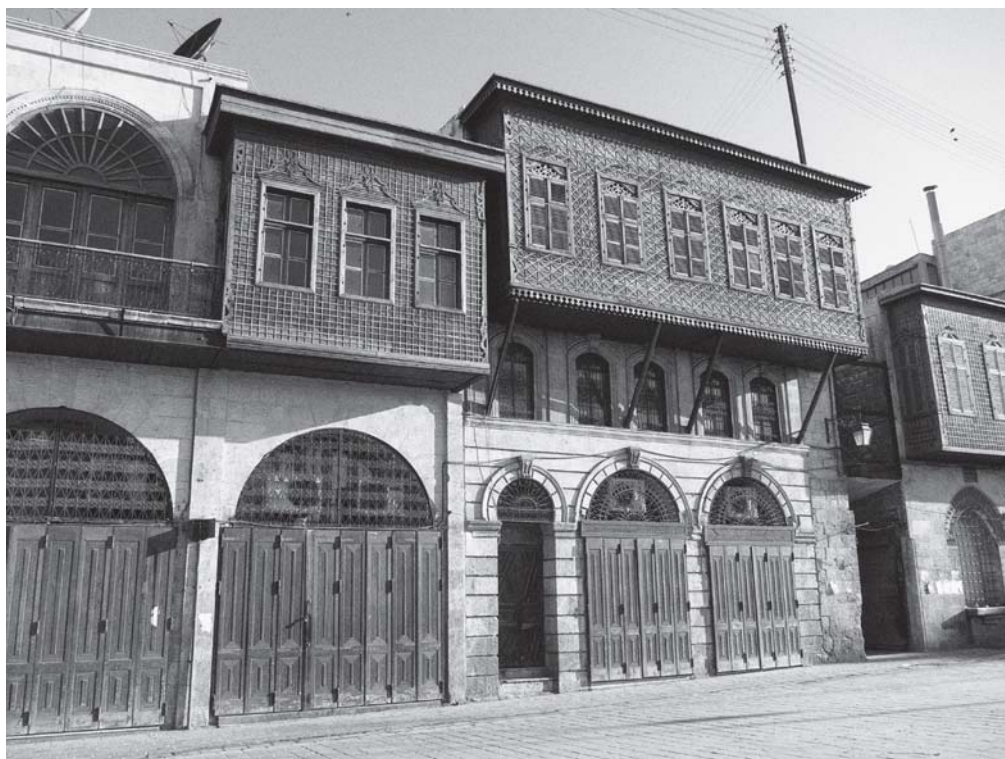
Although Hassoun shares ownership of the khan with other families, it is still a ramshackle affair, receiving neither government help nor charitable donations. Water drips from the roof onto rubble scattered on the second-floor arcade. But Hassoun's success has drawn other merchants, who now cluster in shops along the first floor—part *petite renaissance* and part backward glimpse to the time when khans were "a vital part of the urban fabric," says Constable.



One of few khans to be restored in Lebanon, Tripoli's Khan al-Khayyat (Tailors' Khan) is also an unusual example of a khan that may have been built not around a courtyard, but by roofing over a much older street.

On the other side of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountains, east from the Mediterranean, the Syrian city of Aleppo boasts dozens of khans amid the twisting and narrow alleys that make up the city's famously labyrinthine suq.

ways khans adapt to their times. On the second floor, a cloth merchant named Ali Khour walks from his small curtain shop down the hall to a corner room with high ceilings. Here, he says, visiting merchants of old spent their evenings talking, drinking sweet tea



Custodian of the museum-like upper quarters of Aleppo's Khan al-Nahaseen (Coppersmiths' Khan), Madame Jenny Poche, left, is a descendant of Bohemian crystal traders. Above: Along the perimeter of the square of Aleppo's main mosque, recently restored merchant housing shows traditional woodworking. Above right: Restoration returned a quiet elegance to Aleppo's Khan al-Shibani, which now hosts cultural events and a permanent exhibition about urban restoration efforts in the historic Syrian city.

In the large compound called Khan al-Jumruk (Customs Khan), textile merchants move rolls of carpets and bales of

cloth in and out of the shops under the arcades, much as they have for more than 400 years. The courtyard is large enough to contain its own mosque. Above the entrance are finely carved details dating from the 17th century.

Today, the tangles of electrical wires, the glare of fluorescent lights and the echoing rumbles of Korean-made trucks small enough to pass through the narrow alleys are all reminders of the

or coffee and playing chess and backgammon.

As he prepares coffee on a small stove at his desk, Khour tells how he journeys on the modern Silk Road—a flight to Dubai—to buy the Chinese textiles favored by his customers. The khan, he says, is in disrepair, and he's not sure how much longer he'll be able to hold out in the face of global competition.

Another short walk from Khour's shop lives another tenacious holdout, Madame Jenny Poche. Diminutive and elegant at 71, dressed in black and smoking a long cigarette, she speaks in French-accented English. She gestures for me to be seated in her drawing room. A liveried servant hands out coffee in small china cups. We might be in an 18th-century townhouse in Brussels. Madame Poche explains that her family's life in the khan began in the early 19th century when her great-grandfather—a crystal merchant from Bohemia—arrived to seek his fortune. That put him near the end of a tradition that began in 1539, when the khan was built as a home for Venetian travelers, who used it as a base for their trade throughout the Middle East.

The vibrant days when foreign traders lived in Aleppo's old city are forgotten by all save a handful of such people as Madame Poche. But scholars are gradually discovering that khans, and especially the ones for foreigners (*fondacos*), formed a practical cornerstone for more than a millennium of relations between Europe and the Middle East. Two centuries before Ibn Battuta slept on the rooftop in

the Nile Delta, Benjamin of Tudela marveled at the multicultural feel of Alexandria: “Merchants come thither from all the Christian kingdoms,” he wrote, mentioning lands as far away as Norway and Ireland.



When they arrived, they went to a khan set aside for their countrymen. These compounds allowed foreigners to speak their own tongue, eat their own foods and practice their own religion. Over time, some Islamic governments in the region insisted that Christian merchants reside exclusively in these khans—which were often locked at night. This made it possible both to keep a watchful eye on the foreigners and ensure their safety.

Ibn Jubayr, who visited the Mediterranean port of Acre

during the Crusader era, noted that at the entrance to one khan are stone benches, spread with carpets, where are the Christian clerks of the customs with their ebony inkstands ornamented with gold. They write Arabic, which they also speak.... The merchants deposited their baggage there and lodged in the upper story. The baggage of any who had no merchandise was also examined in case it contained concealed (and dutiable) merchandise, after which the owner was permitted to go his way and seek lodging where he would. All this was done with civility and respect, and without harshness and unfairness.

Even at the height of the Crusades, Venetian and other European merchants continued a lucrative trade with their Muslim counterparts, often selling timber and iron and buying silks and spices. In the Khan al-Jumruk and many other khans, there are hints of European influence in the architecture—a curved stairway here, a neoclassical balustrade there.

Unlike Aleppo, Damascus started smartening up its suq back in the 19th century and kept going. But if you look closely behind the façades on the old Roman main street—now called Straight Street—you will encounter the medieval city, in both restored and faded splendors.

The most impressive restoration is the Khan As'ad Pasha, a massive, multi-domed building dating from 1751 that was restored in 1990. It is constructed around an expansive courtyard with high

ablaq columns—built in alternating layers of black and white stone—and a circular fountain at its center; the courtyard was open to the sky but is today covered with a modern glass skylight that helps illuminate an art gallery.

More typical of the remaining urban khans in Damascus is Khan al-Zeit (Olive Oil Khan), just a few alleys away. This 500-year-old khan is small, even intimate, with a graceful arcade and an enormous tree shading its fountain. Today it hosts stores selling women's clothes. Here, the bustle of the Damascus suq recedes as birds chirp in the branches above the sunny stone courtyard.

Until a half-century or so ago, camels and horses were stabled in an area behind it, says Maher Almisski, who owns a nearby shop. He is proud to show off the khan, but he adds that the shop owners worry that one day it may be turned into a single commercial space, forcing them to move out.

Even as urban khans around the Middle East are demolished, left to decay or turned into boutique hotels or historical monuments, Constable says that scholars and governments may be waking to their importance. Caravanserai “helped forge that world” that preserved classical learning, tied East with West and made the medieval Middle East a dynamic, wealthy, multicultural region. The loaded camels may be gone, but the weathered walls still testify to that long era's bold and roving spirit. 🌐

Italianate motifs in Aleppo's Khan al-Obabia reflect the cultural cross-fertilization that took place over centuries when each khan and caravanserai helped shape the geography and economy of transcontinental trade.



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Ibn Battuta: J/A 00



Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

Olivia Remie Constable. 2009, Cambridge University Press, 978-0-521-10976-5, \$42 pb.



Mughal Mail





Threads of silk and cotton seem to pour and swirl in intricate, hand-stitched embroidery designs of beads, disks, sequins, glass, crystals, lace and their own patterned and built-up stitching: It's all "precious goods"—*maal*.



Written by
Louis Werner

Photography and multimedia at
www.saudiaramcoworld.com by
David H. Wells

A hush has fallen over this upstairs room in north Mumbai, hot and humid in November despite the slow-turning ceiling fans. India's wedding season is approaching full swing, and the workers sit at their bed-frame-size embroidery stands, cross-legged, busy and hunched close over their needles and threads. Around them are arrays of round, square and tubular beads; circular and flattened wire; metallic ribbon; sequins; and short lengths of spun wire with varied gold and silver textures, called *nakshi*, *saadi* and *kohra*.



Bedrolls and suit-cases line the workshop's walls, but their owners are not likely to get much sleep, nor will they be visiting their families back in West Bengal and Bihar anytime soon. Nor is the overhead television turned on, as it might be if a cricket match were being played and work were slow. Only the day's several tea breaks interrupt the break-neck schedule.

In coming weeks, brides, grooms and their extended families from many of India's top socialite families will depend on these men to finish bedecking their wedding garments in a manner that, in a former time, would have well pleased even the most demanding prince or rajah. For design partners and workshop owners Abu Jani and Sandeep Kholsa, this is as it should be: Indian pride in the famous Indian art of embroidery, which they have done much to foster.

Abu and Sandeep have placed Indian embroidered garments, such as the *shervani* (knee-length coat fitted closely at the waist), the *gote* (wide, flared pajama pants), the *ghagra* (multi-panel wedding skirt), the *dupatta* (stole-like head covering) and the *kurta* and *kurti* (long and short tunic), on Hollywood red carpets and Mayfair runways—not to mention in Bollywood itself and at the lavish parties of New Delhi industrialists. Their Mumbai shop, in smart Kemps Corner, sells saris for \$9,000 and shervanis for \$16,000. For a single wedding, some 50 garments might be sold to one family for the



several daytime and nighttime appearances that custom requires.

Yet for 37-year-old embroiderer Rehmat Shaikh, a married man with a young son in his West Bengal village four hours from Calcutta, his monthly salary of 8,000 rupees (\$200) seems like decent pay. His brother working on the railroad back home makes much less, he says, and risks his life every day. Shaikh meanwhile takes pride in his precise and artful work. "I know no less than 1,000 different designs," he says, not an unreasonable number given the great variety of embroidery pieces—in metal, cotton, silk, plastic, glass and Swarovski crystal, all known collectively as *maal*, literally meaning "material" or "stuff," but here with the connotation of "precious goods"—that he applies to the fabric with different stitches and knots.

François Bernier, the French physician in Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's court, wrote of much the same work 300 years ago in his *Travels in the Moghal Empire*: "Large halls are seen in many places, called

The art of Mughal-style embroidery starts with an abundance of raw materials, from a profusion of ornamental *maal* above to thread, below, that varies by material, weight and color. Opposite: Shamina Talyarkhan, founder of Shameeza Embroideries, reviews orders from New York, which are then listed on an erasable board opposite, lower.

karkanahs, or workshops for the artisans. In one hall, embroiderers are busily employed, superintended by a master." He continued, "[M]anufactures of silk, fine brocade, and other fine muslins, of which are made turbans, girdles of gold flowers, and drawers worn by females, so delicately fine as to wear out in one night" might cost up to 10 or 12 crowns, "or even more when embroidered with fine needlework."

But in at least one way, things have changed. Bernier noted, "In this quiet and regular manner, their time glides away, no one aspiring to any improvement in the condition of life wherein he happens to have been born. The embroiderer brings up his son as an embroiderer." No more: Shaikh's father was a farmer, and Shaikh wants his own son to grow up to work as an IT man in an office in Bangalore. Perhaps due to the globalized garment trade and to the growth of India's middle class, both at home and abroad, whose members can afford fine embroidery work, many more workers have entered the embroidery trade than



*"I know no
less than 1000
different designs."*

- Rehmat Shaikh

in previous generations, and it seems likely that many kinds of office work will be available to the generation that will follow.

Shaikh's specialty is *zardozi*. This uses a straight needle with cotton or silk thread in a cross-stitch, often to apply all varieties of *maal*, frequently in gold and silver, to the fabric. *Zardozi* is a highly creative art and may use nothing more than colored threads to create organic or geometric designs, sometimes couched over a paper cutout called a *wasli* to raise the pattern or run-stitched along the folds of a pleated metallic ribbon, called *gota*, to create the veins and ribs of a leaf or petal. The craftsman can

also freely modulate both the length of the stitch and its orientation on the fabric, cross-hatch the stitching alternately on the diagonal or use French knotting to vary shimmer and smoothness.

Abu's and Sandeep's 33-year-old floor supervisor is soft-spoken Firoz Malik, who can lend a hand with the workshop's other

Working four, five or six to a frame, lower, young craftsmen often choose the embroidery trade in pursuit of upward mobility. During the height of the wedding season, many sleep in the shop at night and each morning place their bedrolls on overhead shelves, right.



main embroidery technique, *ari*, which is done with the same kind of hooked needle used in French tambour lace-making, itself a craft of Eastern origin. Firoz's eighth-grade education is considered advanced for a man in the needle trade.

The *ari* needle is held vertically like a dental pick, moving up and down rapidly in a sewing-machine motion. Firoz first picks up the *maal* one by one onto the barrel of his needle. He punches the needle



thread is single, double or triple, and according to the diameter of the holes in the sequins and beads that are being attached.

Ari work goes faster than *zardozi*, but if it's done carelessly, the chain stitch on the underside of the fabric can unravel if the thread is broken in any one place. Having to tie stop knots to mend it breaks the rhythm and jars the smooth, fast lines that *ari* is known for, so embroiderers must get it right the first time. A flower pattern measuring 10 by 25 centimeters (4 x 10") might take an *ari* man 15 hours, which is about half the time of a *zardozi* job of the same area.

Both *ari* and *zardozi* embroidery work are said to be of Persian origin and were perfected under the Mughals. An even finer Persian embroidery called *chikan kari* reached near-

perfection under the nawabs of Awadh in the 19th century; that has been revived and brought to an even higher level by Abu and Sandeep. Using untwisted cotton thread on cotton fabric in white and off-white tones, *chikan* work is known for its 35 unique stitches, including shadow (applied underneath the fabric, so the top side is smooth yet shaded from below); *jaali* (separates the warp and weft threads into bundles of four within a reinforced perimeter, thereby making screen-like perforations in the fabric); and *murri* (shaped like grains of puffed rice). Each one is simple yet very elegant. The *chikan* workers are all village women, and they do not work with the men in Mumbai: They work in a *haveli*, or country house, outside Lucknow.

Abu and Sandeep's design department is staffed with recent graduates of India's top fashion institutes, all with a practical, problem-solving outlook. One recent project was to lighten a Rabari-style coat—traditionally made by that tribe in the Kutch area of Gujarat—which uses glass mirrors stitched into place in a mosaic pattern. But such work is impractical for modern wear and impossible to drape attractively. The designers replaced the glass with metal foil in different hues, thus achieving the same reflective quality, broadening the color palette and at the same



down through the fabric and, with his left hand holding a spool of thread underneath the embroidery frame, makes a quick loop around the needle's hook before pulling the thread back up through the fabric and over a millimeter left or right, thereby fixing the *maal* in place before making the next up-and-down needle punch. The *ari* needles are of different sizes, depending on whether the



time lightening the wearer's shoulder load enormously.

In the 16th century, in the time of the Mughal emperor Akbar, his vizier Abu al-Fazl ibn Mubarak wrote in the *Ain-i Akbari*, a logbook of his emperor's reign:

His majesty pays much attention to various stuffs; hence Irani, European, and Mongolian articles of wear are in much abundance.... The imperial workshops in the towns of Lahore, Agra, Fatehpur, Ahmedabad and Gujarat turn out many masterpieces of workmanship, and the figures and patterns, knots and variety of fashions which now prevail astonish experienced travelers.... [A] taste for fine material has since become general, and the drapery used at feasts surpasses every description.

In central Mumbai, Shamina Talyarkhan has long astonished even the most experienced travelers with her eye for fashion. Recently named by *Time* magazine as one of the world's top businesswomen in the luxury trade, she remembers how she started in the 1970's. Freshly arrived in New York, wearing saris and lugging suitcases of embroidered dresses up and down Fifth Avenue, she found disappointment. "They didn't buy," she says, "but I learned

something important—how to design and sell embroidered pieces to famous couturiers—people like Valentino, Yves Saint Laurent, Escada, Ralph Lauren and Reem Acra—so they could fit them into their own creations."

Now, her busy workshop in Mumbai's Worli district turns out swatches, samples and full production runs for these and other top designers. "We start with pure ideas," she says, "playing back and forth with mood prompts and word associations. Then I turn them into a swatch, and I get feedback, then into a full size sample, and get more feedback. Only then do I go into production." The order board hanging near the supervisors' station lists current and upcoming jobs by level of urgency. Today, all of them seem to need to be finished and shipped by tonight.

Her men embroider Mughal-style elements onto panels of western fabrics like tulle, georgette and chiffon, which are then re-sewn into garments ranging from ball gowns and wedding dresses to fancy sweaters and casual jackets. At first, it seems strange to see fine Indian stitchery combined with suede, or crushed and coiled crepe, or tiger-stripe-printed silk, pleated and covered with peekaboo black netting. But then it all makes perfect fashion sense: Just as in

Akbar's time, it is an amalgam of diverse tastes and traditions.

"My motifs are inspired by all kinds of sources," says Shamina, as she points to her library of pattern books and museum catalogues, "from *bidri*, or inlaid metal, and glassware patterns, Mughal textiles in the V&A's collection, even miniature paintings. But I had to educate my workers too about quality control. My fabrics are mostly pale greens and pinks, lavenders and peach tones, and their hands were often soiled from long bus commutes. Luckily, soap flakes usually did the job. My biggest problem was the apprentices' reluctance to use thimbles. Blood dripping from pricked fingers just doesn't wash out!"

The process of arranging an embroidery frame is almost as complicated as setting up a loom. Cloth must be stretched tight to be embroidered, but Shamina's fabrics are usually too delicate to be stretched



The wari needle is held vertically like a dental pick, moving up and down rapidly in a sewing-machine motion. Firoz picks up the maal one by one onto the barrel of his needle. He punches the needle down through the fabric and, with his left hand holding a spool of thread underneath the embroidery frame, makes a quick loop around the needle's hook before pulling the thread back up through the fabric and over a millimeter left or right, thereby fixing the maal in place before making the next up-and-down needle punch.



and embroidered directly; they must first be stitched flat onto a stronger nylon-mesh backing. The backing is then stretched over the frame by a cord with multiple loops. The desired patterns are then pounced onto the stretched fabric using chalk powder and paper templates perforated with pinholes. Four to six men can work comfortably

around one frame, sometimes working on a single large pattern, more frequently working on multiple smaller pieces to be cut out and sewn individually onto sleeves, backs and bodices. The needle must be pushed firmly through both the base fabric and the nylon-mesh backing. When the job is complete, the mesh threads are unraveled and pulled away one by one, leaving the fine fabric free with the embroidery work intact.

Haze silhouettes skyscrapers in Mumbai, above; in New York, lower, a shipment of embroidery awaits unpacking at Shameeza Embroideries, where other finished dresses, opposite, await their clients.

Twenty-six-year-old Muhammad Khalid from Bihar is working on a painstaking four-handed job with his bench-mate Tasleem Muhammad, shaping and holding down the pleats of a flower design to be sewn tightly in place. If it is not done right and consistently, the quality controllers who inspect each piece will send it back to be redone. Muhammad and Tasleem are part of a larger production team responsible for a six-week job: 270 pieces of four panels each, later to be cut out of the fabric and tailored individually into each dress.

At another frame, ari workers are fixing five different kinds of blue beads as well as square and round sequins onto the fabric. A needleman picks up each shape in a repeated sequence, sometimes stacking two of the same shape at a single position in order to add a third dimension to the design. To save time and motion, an expert might pick up multiple beads onto his needle, which he can drop one by one into each chain stitch without having to pick them up individually. A needleman's eyes are the first thing to deteriorate in this work—not





backs or legs as in Mumbai's unskilled trades—and threading a needle is easy in comparison to stitching tiny beads into a perfect line with zero tolerance for disorder.

Shamina's best workers, she says, are her swatch makers, because it is the swatches that are scrutinized back in the New York or Paris design studios before approval for full production. Even so, swatches sometimes go through several versions, sent back and forth to Mumbai with cryptic comments handwritten on the order card, like something on a doctor's prescription pad: "Only 1 and 3 dot rows, no 4 dots," or "Add space between floating fade out beads," or "Fewer sequins per dot," and on and on.

When jobs back up in Shamina's workshop, she sends them out to her subcontractor, Muhammad Muazzam Siddiqui, one of Mumbai's many start-up embroidery entrepreneurs who are satisfying the demand for handmade pieces, which has exploded thanks to Internet-based marketing and sales. Any Web site selling low-end Indian garments offers much the same kind of ari and zardozi stitchery, but the difference is not only that the maal is plastic and glass rather than gold and crystal, but also—and

critically—that the detail, the quality control and the overall coverage of the cloth is far less than what Shamina, Abu and Sandeep produce.

Among Siddiqui's 40 employees, all clustered around 15 embroidery frames, is 22-year-old Mustaqim Shaikh, from Mednapur village in West Bengal. Shaikh started as an apprentice near his home after finishing fourth grade and, ever since



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David H. Wells (www.davidhwells.com) is a freelance documentary photographer affiliated with Aurora Photos. He specializes in intercultural communications and the use of light and shadow to enhance visual narrative, and has twice won Fulbright fellowships for work in India. His photography regularly appears in leading magazines. A frequent teacher of photography, he publishes *The Wells Point* at www.thewellspoint.com.

coming to Mumbai six years ago, has felt that he made the right decision. Looking over at his boss, he says he sees himself wearing those shoes in the not-so-distant future. After all, he explains, in a prospering country that adds hundreds of thousands of cars to its roads every month, it is only natural that more people than ever are buying the most finely embroidered kurtas and kurtis, saris and dupattas. 🌐

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Embroidery in:

Ottoman Turkey: M/J 07 Kashmir: J/A 02
Central Asia: J/A 03 Palestine: M/A 97
Saudi Arabia: M/J 03



www.abusandeep.com



Visit Shamina Talyarkhan's workshop with multimedia documentary photographer and videographer David H. Wells at www.saudiamramcoworld.com.



In the year 1015, traveler Ahmad al-Yamani fell ill in Malaga, on the southern coast of al-Andalus—Muslim Spain. He complained that he couldn't sleep because of all the music-making. "Around me, the strings of lutes, tunburs and other instruments vibrated from all directions, and different voices blended in singing, which was bad for me and added to my insomnia and suffering." He tried to find quiet lodging, but "it was impossible, because music was uppermost in the concerns of the people of that region."

Listening for Al-Andalus

WRITTEN BY KAY HARDY CAMPBELL / PHOTOGRAPHED BY TOR EIGELAND

One of the world's most influential musical cultures flourished from the eighth to the 15th century in the southern Iberian realm called al-Andalus by the Arabs who lived and ruled there. Only traces of that original music remain today, in poems, written histories, illustrations and oral traditions handed down through generations, yet Andalusian music and its many descendants still inspire performers and audiences around the world.

Arabs have always considered the music of al-Andalus a pinnacle of Arab

culture. It gave rise to poetry and song forms that influenced the European troubadours, whose music in turn became part of the Renaissance, and is still heard today.

Often attracted first by the romantic reputation of al-Andalus, modern-day musicians worldwide love to "reimagine" its music, blending beautiful old Spanish melodies with Middle Eastern, medieval, flamenco and gypsy influences. Many performers and audiences are also inspired by the ideal of *convivencia*, the

complex co-existence that occurred among Islamic, Jewish and Christian cultures in al-Andalus.

Anthropologist Jonathan Shannon of New York's Hunter College writes about the music and culture of al-Andalus.

"Today, people look at our world full of conflict, and romantically view the period of al-Andalus as one of cultural tolerance where Muslims, Jews and Christians all got along and created wonderful poetry, music, food and architecture. They think that if we want to understand tolerance

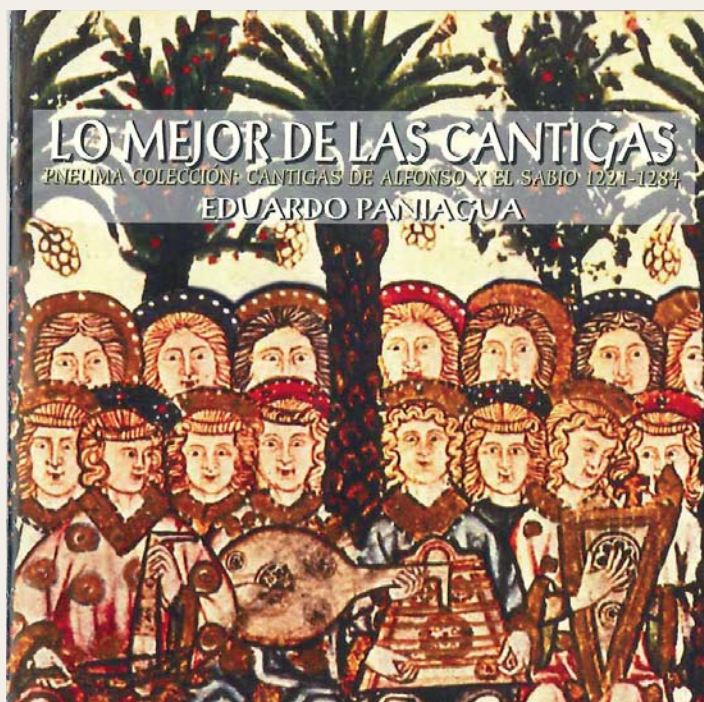


Echoing the Middle Ages from his Madrid studio, Eduardo Paniagua plays a psaltery, or lap harp, as longtime collaborator Wafir Sheikh el-Din plays an 'ud, or fretless lute. Their Iberian predecessors include these frieze figures, opposite, from Santiago de Compostele, Spain, and the illustration, below, that Paniagua chose for the cover of one of his most popular recordings, "The Best of the Cantigas."

The musical and poetic ideas of Al-Andalus spread into Europe, North Africa, Egypt and beyond.

"It's a joy to be able to do this work," Paniagua reflects. "Yet I don't know why it entered me. I don't know why I have this love of Arab music and early music. I only know that I love it."

Music was an integral part of daily life in al-Andalus, from the first days the Arabs arrived in 711 until years after the last Arab ruler was expelled from Granada in 1492. Holidays and weddings were incomplete without music and dancing. Professional singers, male and female, were attached to aristocratic homes and royal courts. Al-Andalus's most famous musician was Ziryab, originally from Baghdad. After arriving in Córdoba in 822, he established a music school and set down rules for classical music performances. These suites of vocal and instrumental music are known now as the *nubah*. He is best known for innovating the tuning and playing of the 'ud, the unfretted lute, Arab music's signature string instrument and predecessor of the modern guitar. Especially in Seville, craftsmen refined and invented musical instruments. Polymath thinkers wrote about music theory. Andalusian musicians developed their own interpretations of the *maqamat*, or modes and scales, that grew distinct from those of the eastern Arab world. Around the year 1000, when the original Andalusian caliphate splintered into smaller states, two new forms of popular poetry sprang up and were set to music: *muwashshah* and *jajal*.



today, let's look back to medieval Spain. Some people see that as a potential loose model for how the world should be." Those people, he says, and many modern Arabs as well, often see al-Andalus as a "golden age." In Spain itself, after centuries of willful forgetting of the contributions of Muslims and Jews to the national history, Spanish musicians and artists have for some decades reveled in a kind of willful remembering—and

re-mythologizing—of their multicultural past.

For Madrid musician, architect and recording producer Eduardo Paniagua, re-imagining the elusive music of al-Andalus is a lifelong passion that has led him on a musical journey across continents, centuries and cultures.

Blending a kind of musical archeology with his own imagination, Paniagua has spent decades teasing out

musical threads from the past and weaving them into something new and alive. He plays on both medieval Spanish and modern Middle Eastern instruments. He hunts for songs and poems in old manuscripts, finds inspiration in poems on palace walls and studies images of musical instruments in drawings and carved reliefs. He seeks out living masters of Arab music in North Africa and rescues historic recordings from oblivion.

As the centuries passed, the musical and poetic ideas of al-Andalus spread north into Europe, south into North Africa and east into Egypt and beyond. Later, after 1492, additional waves of exiles from the Muslim and Jewish communities of al-Andalus moved to North Africa and points east, bringing with them music and poetry, while those Arabs and Jews who remained in Spain kept making their own style of music until speaking and singing in Arabic were officially banned in the 16th century.

Though most books on Andalusian music theory were lost, anecdotes about that musical world point to its exuberance. Some old *muwashshahat* poems survived, and they are still sung in Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. The classical nubah vocal and instrumental suite tradition incorporated many *muwashshahat*, and the poems live on in the nubah tradition, mainly in Morocco, Algeria, Libya and Tunisia.

The trouble for musicians today is that they can't be certain that the repertoires performed by modern ensembles in North Africa and the eastern Arab world in fact use the same melodies once played in al-Andalus, or even close approximations. There are simply no written musical scores of music from Andalusian times. Musicians in medieval Europe and the Middle East didn't help the situation either, since they regularly set old poems to new melodies, and new poems to old melodies. Thus a *muwashshah* heard in Egypt today might be set to an old Andalusian poem, but the melody may be only 100 years old.

Folklore and music historian Dwight Reynolds has been studying the music of al-Andalus and North Africa for two decades. "It is quite probable that a large part of the Andalusian music repertoire is old. We just can't tell which part," he says.

This allows—or forces—modern musicians who attempt to revive the sounds of al-Andalus to make many bold choices and judgments that inevitably open them up to criticism. First, they must select repertoire from

There are no written musical scores from Andalusian times. This leaves modern musicians to make many careful—often bold—choices.

the living, mostly North African, traditions or from written traces of "lost" music. Then they must decide whether to perform in a large ensemble (such as the modern groups in North Africa) or in a smaller group (such as a typical eastern Arab ensemble), or to follow historic Arabic sources that usually describe a solo singer accompanied by a single instrument. Musicians also have to decide whether they'll play modern or antique instruments, and then they must also choose rhythmic and vocal stylistic interpretation.

For Paniagua, such uncertainty has become familiar territory, and one key to his enduring passion, he says, is that it started early, at home. Born in 1952 in Madrid to an unusually musical family, Paniagua was the son of a well-known hematologist who collected records and filled the house with music played on the family record player.

"We loved all kinds of music, not only classical," Paniagua says, smiling. "And in

our house there was no television. Only music."

Eduardo is the third of four brothers: Gregorio and Carlos are older

and Luis younger. Gregorio studied cello at the Madrid conservatory, and as boys the three younger Paniagua brothers also picked up instruments. In the early 1960's, Gregorio became fascinated with the early-music movement in Europe and the US. In 1964, when Eduardo was 12, Gregorio formed a band called Atrium Musicae ("The Music Court") that included his brothers. They began to perform medieval music on period instruments, using historic drawings and paintings as a guide. The group first performed in local high schools, and gradually expanded to museums and theaters.

"It was a golden age in the family," recalls Luis.

The Paniagua brothers made their first recordings in 1969. Eventually they made 22 records, including an album of classical Greek music based on notations on papyrus fragments. The group toured Europe and the US, and in 1972 it performed at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Luis Delgado is another prominent Spanish musician who finds inspiration for his many compositions and recordings



in the musical heritage of al-Andalus. As a young man, he performed and recorded with Atrium Musicae. "I have a very positive feeling from that time," he recalls. Gregorio, he says, "opened our minds to early music with a concept of freedom and joy."

During the heyday of Atrium Musicae, Eduardo and his brothers first encountered the classical music of North Africa. Eduardo recalls that Gregorio heard some recordings and, while on his

Growing up in Madrid with brothers Luis (center), Carlos (right) and Gregorio (not shown), Eduardo (left) recalls, "We loved all kinds of music, not only classical. And in our house there was no television. Only music."

honeymoon in Morocco, sought out masters of the traditional music known as *ala*, the local term for the *nubah*. Gregorio

later brought the highly regarded classical Tetouan ensemble of Abd al-Sadiq Shiqara to Spain to record courtly music from the 12th and 13th centuries.

The connections that the Spanish members of Atrium Musicae made with their Moroccan counterparts launched them into a far more profound series of encounters with the music of al-Andalus and North Africa. Just three years later, Atrium Musicae recorded instrumental selections from the North



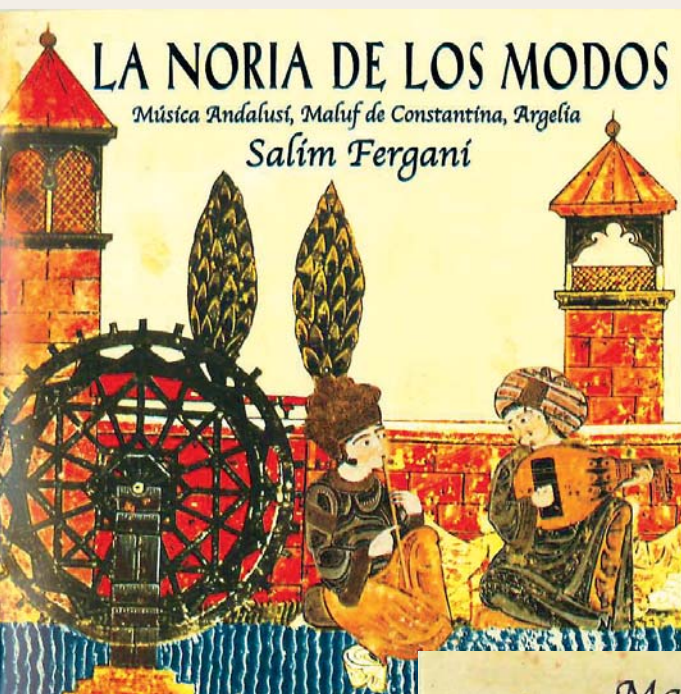
African repertoire played on medieval Spanish instruments.

After Atrium Musicae disbanded in 1984, Eduardo, Carlos and Luis Paniagua formed Calamus, a group that also included Luis Delgado and Begonia Olavide, whose specialty was the psaltery, or medieval lap harp. Calamus produced two CDs using medieval Spanish and Arab instruments, which reflected their growing knowledge of the traditions.

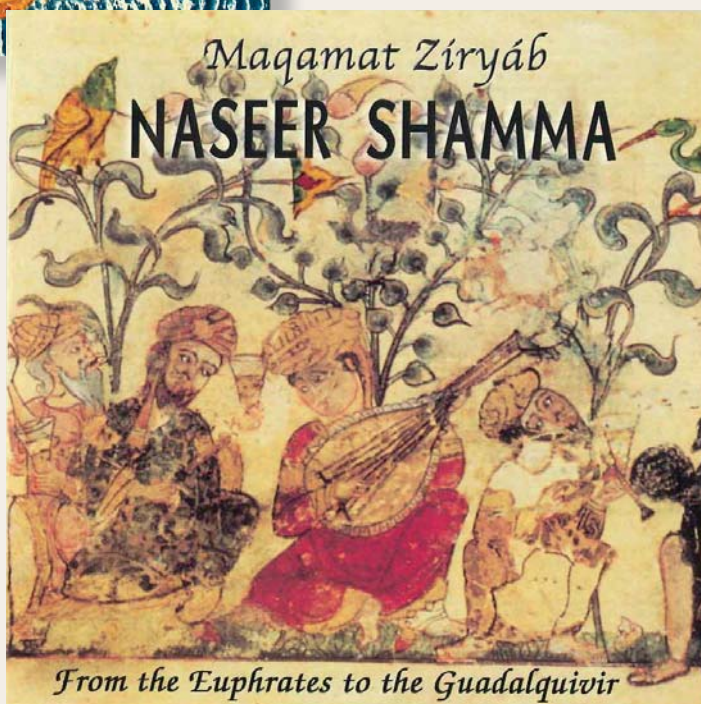
Reynolds has followed these musicians over the decades. "If their first efforts now seem uninformed, much to their credit they all took it very seriously, and for a couple of decades now have pushed further and further into the tradition. They could have stopped with the type of music they were doing in the 1970's, but they didn't. They kept on studying, and they kept on collaborating."

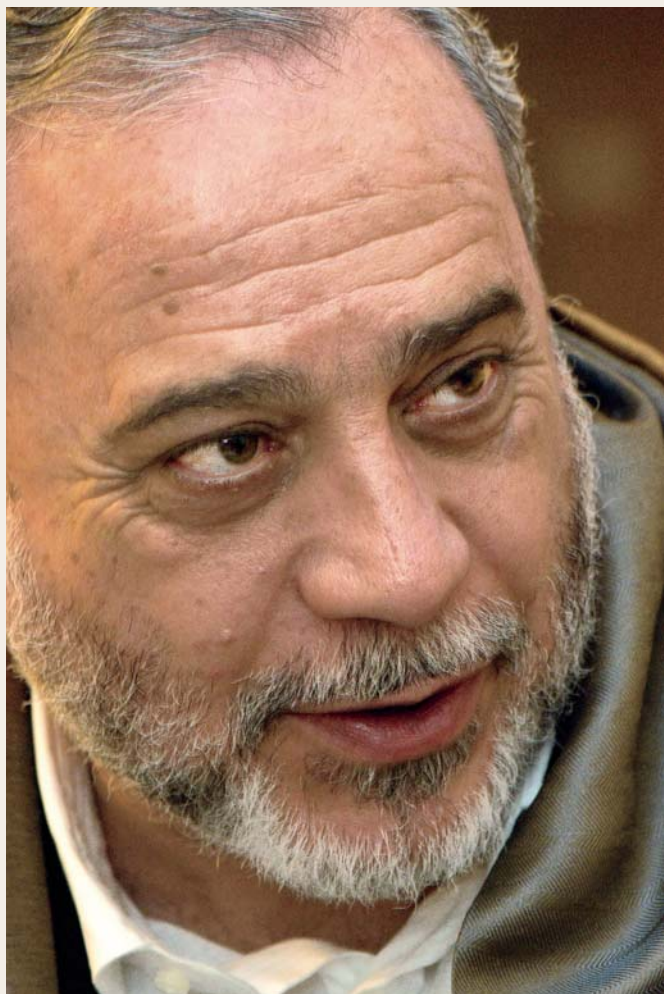
Carlos married Olavide, and the couple now lives in Tangier, where he works as a luthier of early string instruments, working from medieval illustrations and other artwork. He and Olavide regularly perform, record and collaborate with Moroccan musicians.

Gregorio went on to pursue both his own musical projects as well as fine art. Luis Paniagua became a well-known sitar player who also, these days, plays a classical Greek lyre made by his brother Carlos.



Together Paniagua and Sheikh el-Din, left, have toured and collaborated with dozens of musicians and groups since the 1990's. Above and right: Medieval artworks are characteristic elements on the covers of Pneuma's more than 120 recordings. Such art tells us much about instruments and how music was performed.





new interpreters of this music, but classical recordings of performers and styles that have received little attention in other previous labels. Thanks to Pneuma, these recordings are now available."

One of Paniagua's first recording quests is also his most ambitious, a still-unfolding journey that, if he completes it, will mark an unprecedented feat: Initially under contract with Sony, and later on Pneuma's label, he has set out to record all 420 songs of the 13th-century songbook known as the "Cantigas de Santa Maria," which was compiled in Toledo under the patronage of King Alfonso X.

These songs chroni-

and sounds that can please modern ears, too.

As he continues to work through the "Cantigas," Paniagua has also recorded North African groups playing the classical nubah suite music of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, and joined with other Spanish and Arab musicians to play combinations of medieval period and modern Middle Eastern instruments. They recorded several popular nubah and named their trans-Mediterranean group Ibn Baya, after one of Paniagua's most admired Andalusians: philosopher, scientist, composer and musician Ibn Bajjah, also known as Avempace, who lived in the late 11th and early 12th centuries. The years of study and practice that Paniagua and his Spanish colleagues had invested came to fruition in these recordings: talented musicians, a perfect blend of instruments, a careful choice of repertoire and high production values. (See "A Pneuma Sampler," page 40.)

"I learned a lot from the Ibn Baya recordings," Paniagua says. "The music of North Africa is a living tradition, not fixed. It sounds different at home or at a wedding. And the poetry is very important. It's the expression of the music, and they can change one bit of poetry for another."

In Paniagua's home studio in suburban Madrid, hundreds of musical instruments from around the Mediterranean fill two walls of floor-to-ceiling display cases. A large collection of LPs and books about the Middle East and its music flank the others.

He picks up a medieval lap harp, a two-winged psaltery made by his brother Carlos from an illustration from the 13th or 14th century. He begins to play an old Andalusian tune from North Africa. A multi-instrumentalist, Paniagua also plays the *qanun*, the plucked zither of the Arab world and Turkey. On both psaltery and qanun, he explains, he deliberately uses simple plucking techniques and a pared-down ornamentation that he believes would have been prevalent in medieval times.

Later, he plays an improvisation on the Eastern European flute, the *kawala*. Though he also plays the end-blown reed flute of the Arab world called *nay*, Paniagua chooses to use the *kawala* when he's

"It's a joy to be able to do this work. Yet I don't know why it entered me. I don't know why I have this love of Arab music and early music. I only know that I love it," Paniagua says.

Eduardo began to focus on the production of recordings. In 1994, he founded his own label, Pneuma, which means "spirit" in Greek. By early this year,

Pneuma's output had surpassed 120 CD's, a pace of some eight to 10 each year in a prolific, wide-ranging exploration of music in medieval Spain, North Africa and, increasingly afield, in the eastern Arab world. For bringing so much of this music to the broader public, the Academy of Spanish Music has nominated Paniagua three times for its Best Classical Musical Artist award.

For Delgado, "Eduardo's work in recent decades has been of enormous importance for the dissemination and knowledge of Andalusian music, not only in Spain, but in Europe. His recordings include not the

clinging the miracles of the Virgin Mary are a mosaic of the region's traditions, Paniagua says, making them an exceptionally rich source for exploring Spain's medieval music. Not surprisingly, the "Cantigas" are popular with early music ensembles worldwide.

Although no one knows for sure precisely which instruments were originally used to perform the "Cantigas," detailed illustrations in surviving manuscripts give a surprising amount of detailed information. They also often depict Arab and European musicians playing together. Alfonso almost certainly had Arab musicians in his court: Nine years after his death, his son employed 27 salaried musicians, including 13 Arabs, two of whom were women. Like other early music ensembles around the world, Paniagua's group, Musica Antigua, began to experiment with Arab rhythms and instruments in performances and recordings of the "Cantigas," seeking a balance between interpretive historical fidelity

performing medieval Spanish music: It sounds better to modern ears when playing the scales of North Africa and medieval Spain, he explains.

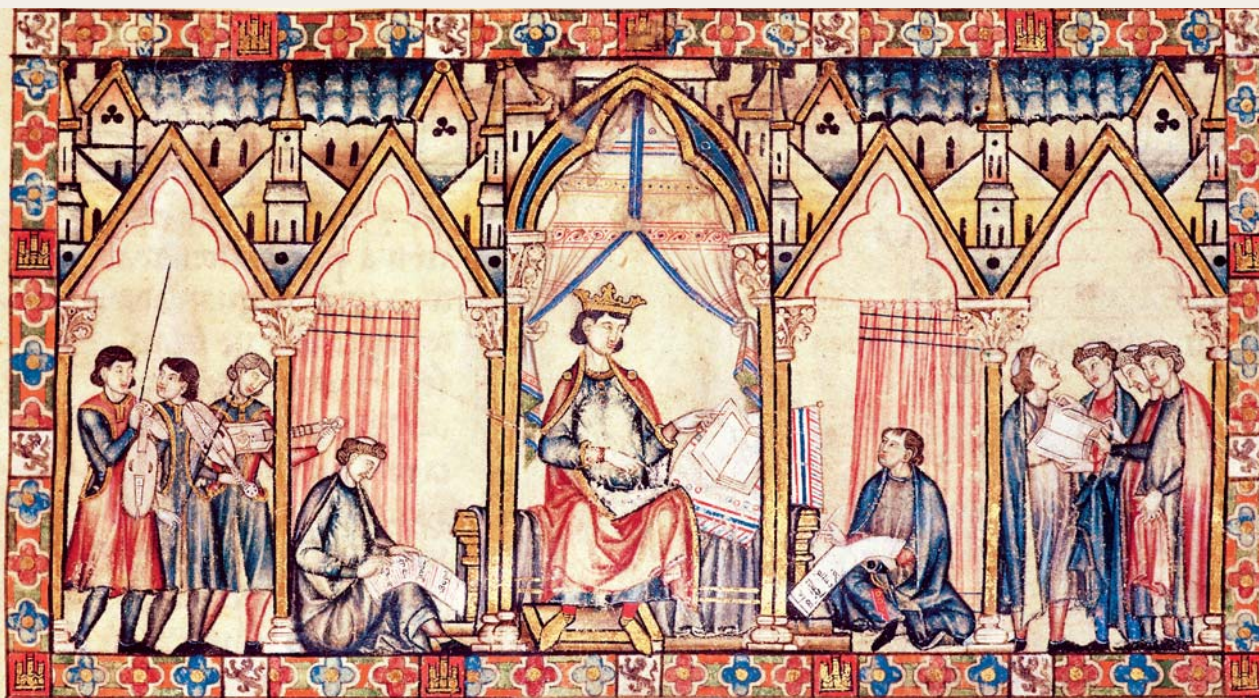
A frequent collaborator with Paniagua is Wafir Sheikh el-Din, a Sudanese

scientific knowledge and turn it into an actual experience. He knows how to put something on the stage.

"I think the most important work we do," he adds, "is the connection of the three cultures—Jewish, Muslim and

period illustrations, many showing medieval musicians. Most CD's have their notes translated into both English and French.

"The music speaks for itself," Paniagua says, "but what's really fascinating is where it was found, where it comes



A 13th-century illustration accompanying one of the "Cantigas de Santa Maria" includes musicians in the court of King Alfonso x.

from, the history of it. Sometimes it takes twice as long to do the texts as the recordings, due to all the translations and research."

Alongside performing, recording and producing, Paniagua's job with Madrid's regional government connects him to architecture much as he is connected to music:

singer and 'ud player living in Madrid who brings his Arab background to many of Pneuma's projects. An early member of the popular world-music band from southern Spain, Radio Tarifa, which blended Spanish and Mediterranean music, Sheikh el-Din was studying in Madrid when he says he fell in love with a recording by Calamus called "Splendours of al-Andalus." He made contact with Paniagua, who happened to be looking for an 'ud player to join the Cantigas project.

Christian. This is the main dish for me, because in my personal life, I dedicate myself to make a connection with religion. When we perform, we notice that people are thirsty to find connections between the cultures."

Paniagua's own thirst for the subject has led Pneuma to produce CD's exploring not only the three cultures of al-Andalus, but also Gregorian and Catalanian chants, Sephardic songs, songs about the famous Battle of Arcos in 1195, the legend of El-Cid and the legacies of the troubadours.

Despite this musical range, Pneuma recordings maintain a distinct graphic style. This is where Paniagua the architect comes in: He

is deeply involved in the design of each one, and the liner notes, which he writes himself, are usually extensive enough to require their own booklet. The CD covers and notes are all filled with abundant

He advises landowners in rural areas on the restoration of old structures, especially in villages and town centers; he catalogues significant old buildings and tries to keep them from being destroyed.

Indeed, some of Paniagua's most interpretive recordings connect the music of al-Andalus to its architecture. The CD "La Felicidad Cumplida" ("Perfect Bliss") sets poetic inscriptions carved on the walls of Seville's Alcázar Palace to traditional al-Andalus melodies from North Africa. It includes a song set to this builder's or architect's prayer, which appears in 18 places in the Alcázar:

O my trusted Friend! O my Hope!
You are my Hope; you are my
Protector!
Bless my work with Your Seal
of Approval.

Similarly, the CD "Mudejar Builders" celebrates the multicultural history evoked by the Church of St. Martin at Cuellar, built in the 12th century by *mudejars*, Arabs who lived in the Christian territories of Spain before 1492. The

"I think the most important work we do is the connection of the three cultures."

—Wafir Sheikh el-Din

Sheikh el-Din has worked with Paniagua ever since on many recordings, touring with him in the eastern Arab world.

"I love Eduardo's work," he says, "especially as a producer, because he can take

Following are a dozen recommendations for adventurous listeners. Most Pneuma CDs can be ordered on-line, including at amazon.com and cduniverse.com.

A Pneuma Sampler

Aire de al-Andalus ("The Air of al-Andalus" / PN-550) Lovers of the contemplative woodwind sound of the Middle Eastern *nay*, the end-blown reed flute, will enjoy this compilation, which features Middle Eastern flutes spanning medieval and modern music traditions from al-Andalus to Persia.

Al Muedano ("Muezzin" / PN-750) This recording explores the melodious Muslim call to prayer, as well as prayers and meditations from around the Middle East, including a stirring choral call to prayer recorded in Damascus. Several tracks include fountains or birdsong in the background.

La Felicidad Cumplida ("Perfect Bliss" / PN-290) Virtuoso musicians El Arabi Serghini, Larbi Akrim, Jamal Eddine ben Allal and Eduardo Paniagua take Arabic inscriptions from the walls of the Alcázar of Seville and set them to traditional Andalusí and Andalusí-inspired melodies for a beautifully interpretive recording.

La Noria de los Modos ("The Wheel of the Modes" / PN 890) Music-master Selim Ferghani of Constantine, Algeria, performs traditional Andalusí songs and instrumentals in several *maqamat* (modes) in the Constantine style. Ferghani is accompanied by Yusef Bounaas, Bachir Ghoulí, Kaled Smair and Nabil Taleb on this intimately sound-textured recording.

Lo Mejor de las Cantigas ("The Best of the Cantigas" / PN-600) This rich and wide-ranging sampler of 20 songs from the ongoing Cantigas project demonstrates several of Paniagua's approaches to the reconstruction of medieval Spanish music from the time of Alfonso X.

Maqamat Ziryab by Naseer Shamma (PN-480) The Iraqi 'ud master performs solo improvisations and compositions exploring the *maqamat* introduced to al-Andalus by its most famous musician, Ziryab, who came from Baghdad in the early ninth century.

Nuba al-Maya (PN-630) This is one of several landmark recordings by Eduardo Paniagua's Ibn Baya ensemble that bring together European and Middle Eastern artists, including the featured Omar Metioui

of Tangier, Morocco, to play selections of the traditional *nubat*, the classical North African musical suites said to have originated in al-Andalus.

Poemas de la Alhambra ("Poems of the Alhambra" / PN-230) Ibn Jamrak (1333-1393) is known as the Poet of the Alhambra, since many of his verses grace the walls and fountains of the Granada palace. Some of them are performed to traditional Andalusí tunes and the ambient sounds of the Alhambra's fountains by musicians including the Moroccan-Spanish ensemble of El Arabi Serghini, Larbi Akrim, Jamal Eddine Ben Allal, Eduardo Paniagua and Luis Delgado.

Ritual Sufi-Andalusí (PN-530) This is a rare recording of the mystical brotherhoods of Tangier, Morocco, based on poems composed by the 13th-century mystic al-Shushtari.

Tesoros de Al-Andalus ("Treasures of al-Andalus" / PN-1110) Using reconstructed medieval and traditional Middle Eastern instruments, Paniagua's early music group Musica Antiqua interprets songs and melodies from North Africa and farther East.

Tres Culturas ("Three Cultures" / PN-100) Three ensembles perform music from the Muslim, Jewish and Christian traditions of medieval Spain, including romances and Sephardic songs, music for the Road to Santiago de Compostela and Andalusí music accompanied by the 'ud.

Zambra de Moriscos (PN-1140) The "Moriscos" were Muslims who stayed in Spain after 1492, and they danced and sang the exuberant evening entertainment known as *zambra*. This CD combines texts and melodies from Spanish and Andalusí sources.

Alhambra Palace in Granada, too, inspired several Pneuma recordings featuring the verses of poets whose words are inscribed on its walls. One incorporates the soothing sounds of the Alhambra's fountains in the background, while another evokes three stories from American author Washington Irving's beloved book *Tales of the Alhambra*.

Paniagua has also delved into the music of Islam. The CD "Al Muedano" ("Muezzin") features several versions of the *adhan*, or call to prayer, including a stirring choral version recorded



in the chanters' hall of the Umayyad mosque in Damascus. He has also made recordings of the religious associations in Tangier singing Arabic poetry of al-Andalus.

Pneuma is a small shop: Paniagua works calmly with his longtime sound engineer Hugo Westerdahl in the Axiom sound studio off Madrid's bustling Plaza Santa Ana, where locals sample tapas late into the night. The two men are putting the finishing touches on another unusual project: a recording made using instruments sketched by Leonardo da Vinci but never before built.

Three artists from around the world built prototypes, including a lightweight paper organ, a mechanical bowed instrument with a keyboard known as a *viola organista* and a silver viola with a neck in the shape of a horse's head. Paniagua says their challenge is to eliminate the mechanical sounds the instruments make while being played and to soften some harsh tones coming from the viola.

Then they turn to Paniagua's next project: a duet between 'ud and sitar with Iraqi 'ud master Naseer Shamma, who runs a music school in Cairo. Paniagua is also putting final touches on the latest "Cantigas" disks—one about Jesus and another of women's "Cantigas" featuring Samira al-Qadiri, a singer from Tetouan, Morocco. Playing a track from this recording, Paniagua points out how her vocal timbre and delicate ornamentation produce a different overall sound than one hears from western vocalists. Though it was challenging for the singer to learn the melodies by

Paniagua shows liner notes to writer Kay Campbell. In some cases, research for a *Pneuma* recording, he explains, takes more time than production of the music.

ear, Paniagua seems delighted to present another approach to the music of medieval Spain to his listeners.

American musician Bill Cooley recalls that it was in the late 1990's that he became fascinated with the music of medieval Spain and came across "Splendours of al-Andalus" by Calamus. Although the music was compelling, he says he was most intrigued by the black-and-white photograph of instruments that appeared on the back cover. "I used to look at the photo with a magnifying glass, wondering how the instruments were made."

Inspired by the music and a growing desire to learn to build medieval instruments, Cooley traveled to Madrid to study 'ud with Wafir Sheikh el-Din, as well as instrument-making. Sheikh el-Din soon introduced him to Paniagua.

"I came here because of the work Eduardo does. It shows on an international level what that means. He has created a resource, not only for people in Spain, but internationally, for people to study music that is no longer played so much or recorded much. You can find other recordings of Andalusian music from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, but you have to go there to find them. So what Eduardo's doing when he records these traditional groups is very important."

As Paniagua reaches the halfway mark of his quest to record all of the "Cantigas"—which he estimates will total 60 CD's in the end—he says he

Crafted by Paniagua's brother Carlos to resemble such instruments as the one appearing on the cover of *Pneuma*'s 2009 catalog, opposite, this replica medieval 'ud is on display in Granada at the Pabellón de al-Andalus y la Ciencia.




feels "freer and less guided by outside criticism, because the work is there. If something comes together really well, all the elements work. It's a complex, intuitive world. The more you learn about history, the better you can step ahead with your interpretations. Yet this music is always a thesis. It's something you propose to do. I can never put my hands in the fire and say with certainty, "This is the way it was done." 🌐



Kay Hardy Campbell (www.kayhardycampbell.com) lives near Boston, where she plays the 'ud and helps direct the annual Arabic Music Retreat at Mount Holyoke College.



Photographer and writer **Tor Eigeland** (www.toreigeland.com) has covered assignments around the world for *Saudi Aramco World* and other publications, and has contributed to 10 National Geographic Society book projects.

 **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.

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Ziryab: J/A 03

Tunisian music: J/A 01


Saudi music: M/A 07

Alhambra: J/A 06, S/O 92

Washington Irving: S/O 08

roots of flamenco: N/D 94

Portuguese fado: M/A 01

 www.pneumapaniagua.es



One Card AT A Time

WRITTEN BY PINEY KESTING
PHOTOGRAPHED BY AASIL AHMAD

In the late afternoon, 15-year old Saanya Hasan Ali can often be found in the comfortable family room of her home in Potomac, Maryland. But she isn't doing homework, and she isn't in front of a computer screen. She is cutting, drawing, measuring, gluing and folding, surrounded by a colorful chaos of paper, rubber stamps, buttons, stickers, ribbons and glitter.

"I just love arts and crafts," exclaims Saanya, whose talent for designing and making greeting cards is matched by her dedication to helping children and families in need. During the past six years, Saanya has raised an astonishing \$26,000 through the sale of her cards, all while juggling the schedule of an active ninth-grader.

Saanya's unexpected success began in 2005, when her family was moving from Houston to Washington, DC. "My mother received an e-mail from friends who had just founded the Pennies for Education and Health (PEH) organization. They were raising money for children in Gujarat, India to be able to go to school," explains Saanya, who was nine years old at the time. Her mother, Salma, offered to donate \$75 in Saanya's name, a sum that would pay for one child's schooling for a year. But Saanya decided she wanted to raise the money herself.

"I was in third grade then, and I couldn't even wrap my mind around the fact that kids couldn't go to school over there," she says.

Saanya and her mom unpacked one of the moving boxes filled with Saanya's crafts supplies, and she made cards to sell at a family wedding that summer. To her own surprise, she earned \$600—enough to send eight children to school for the year—though her goal had been only \$75.

"I kept on making cards, and the following summer I was able to help support the kids for another year," explains Saanya, who by then



"The designs are inspired by pictures that I see in books and magazines," says Saanya. "Mostly it's just ideas we come up with by using different kinds of paper and color combinations and stamps, stickers, buttons, ribbon and glitter. Sometimes my father will bring his work down to the basement where we make cards, my brother will help, and my mom and I always make cards together. If I have a lot to make, I'll invite friends and cousins over, and we'll put music on and dance and make tons of cards!"





"I couldn't do it without my family," says Saanya, shown here with her mother, Salma, brother, Zayd and father, Arif, who adds that "sharing is a constant topic of discussion at the dinner table."

had established her own non-profit organization called "Children Helping Children." By 2007, she had earned a total of \$10,000 for PEH. One of her goals now, she says, is to support the schooling of these first eight children until they graduate from college.

"Saanya has truly been the most inspiring person and a great role model, not only for young girls and boys of her age but also for adults," comments Saleha Khumawala, co-founder of PEH. "She has done this not only by making and selling innovative cards, which have now become fairly well known, but also through her eloquent speeches and articles, and—more importantly—by her passion, enthusiasm, relentless hard work and humility."

Encouraged by success, Saanya began to support other organizations, including SOS Children's Villages and the Central Asia Institute, which builds schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as earthquake-relief efforts in Haiti, Pakistan and, most recently, Japan.

In 2007 she led a card-making workshop at the World Children's Festival on the National Mall in Washington, DC., and in 2009, an article about her appeared in *Family Circle* magazine. That not only brought new orders, but also unsolicited donations of card-making supplies. "We had Federal Express boxes full of supplies arriving at our home," recalls Salma.

As demand for Saanya's cards rose, card-making became a family-and-friends activity, too. "I didn't want card-making to become a chore, because it is something I love to do and it makes me feel really good inside," explains Saanya.

"I couldn't do it without my family," she emphasizes, adding that it is often hard to find the time to make cards amid school and sports activities. Her mother often helps assemble the cards now, and when her younger brother, Zayd, was seven, he used his toy dump truck to help clean up. Now nine, Zayd is making his own cards. (See above right.) Saanya's friends join her during the summer and school breaks.

"The most important thing we have tried to teach our children is that it is important to give back at every stage of your life," emphasizes Salma. Her husband, Arif, notes that "sharing is a constant topic of discussion at the dinner table."

"I would love to continue making cards," says Saanya, acknowledging that her project has helped her to see the world through different eyes. "Now that I am in high school, I would also like to start giving talks in inner-city schools to try to inspire other kids to do their own projects. No matter who you are, there is always an opportunity to make a difference. Making cards is my small effort," she adds. "If everyone does their small part, it can grow into something beyond your expectations." 🌍

In His *Sister's* Footsteps

Nine-year-old Zayd Ali is planting trees in Kenya. Inspired by his sister Saanya, Zayd decided he too could raise money by making cards. But Zayd wanted to choose his own charity, and when his mother showed him the Web site for the Green Belt Movement (GBM), he was hooked.

Founded by 2004 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Wangari Maathai, GBM has planted more than 45 million trees in Kenya and inspired the planting of more than a million

additional trees around the world. "I love trees and I love nature," explains Zayd, who will enter fourth grade this fall. "Wangari Maathai said that planting seeds of trees is like planting seeds of hope, so I decided to make peace-tree cards." Zayd started making his first cards, often with the help of friends, this spring.

Since then, Zayd has raised more than \$300. "I really like it when my mom gets an e-mail telling us that I have planted 150 trees. It makes me feel so good inside," he smiles.

During his last birthday, Zayd raised more money when he asked his friends not to bring presents but to instead donate to GBM by purchasing his cards. "But my mom still gave me presents," he confesses with a twinkle in his eyes.



Pennies for Education and Health

Pennies for Education and Health (PEH) was founded in 2003 by Basheer and Saleha Khumawala in the aftermath of the earthquake in Gujarat, India. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, the non-profit organization provides funding through donor sponsorships for the education and health care of 510 children. It has more than 300 children on its waiting list.



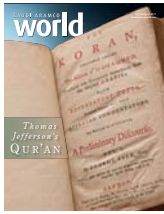
Piney Kesting is a Boston-based freelance writer and consultant. Inspired by her first visit to Lebanon many years ago, she has been exploring and writing about the Middle East ever since. She is a frequent contributor to *Saudi Aramco World* and other international publications.



Aasil Ahmad (www.aasilahmad.net) is a freelance photographer and photo editor for *Islamic Monthly* magazine. He recently completed a project in Kashmir teaching photography to children impacted by the 2005 earthquake. His photos of the Hajj were featured in a series called "A Minox in Mecca" at the Contact Photography Festival in Toronto. He lives in Washington, D.C.



www.thegivingcard.org
www.pehchildren.org



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

Curriculum Alignments

To see alignments with national standards for all articles in this issue, click "Curriculum Alignments" at www.saudiaramco-world.com.

Professional Development Workshops

The Middle East Policy Council, an independent, non-partisan educational organization, offers free Professional Development Workshops to help K–12 educators understand the geographical, political and human complexities of the region and to provide valuable teaching resources. MEPC will design a workshop to give your school, organization or conference innovative tools and strategies for teaching about the Middle East and Islam. For information, e-mail Barbara Petzen at bpetzen@mepc.org with your name, school or organization, phone number, and subject and grade taught. MEPC has also developed a companion Web site, TeachMiddleEast.org, with background essays and lesson plans.

Julie Weiss is an education consultant based in Eliot, Maine. She holds a Ph.D. in American studies. Her company, Unlimited Horizons, develops social studies, media literacy and English as a Second Language curricula, and produces textbook materials.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

This issue of *Saudi Aramco World* contains articles that in one way or another are about the past. The activities in the Classroom Guide approach studying the past in a couple of different ways. In the first theme, "On the Road," students compare past and present to explore continuity and change over time. In the second theme, they consider how people examine evidence, then draw conclusions and make inferences based on it.

Theme: On the Road

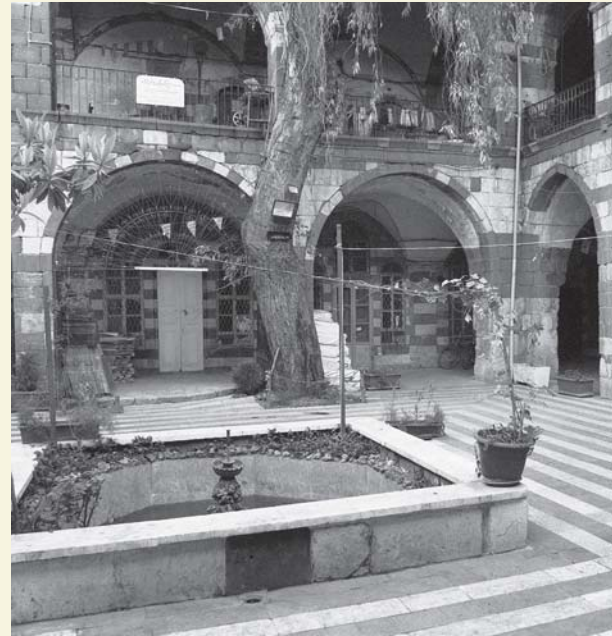
If you've traveled for any distance, you're probably at least a little bit familiar with some of what makes it possible: highways, airports, hotels, restaurants and so on. Have you ever wondered how travelers got to places before there were trains, planes and automobiles? Where did they stay before there was a Motel 6 or a Comfort Inn? Where did they eat? It can be hard to imagine what things were like before people did things the way we do them today. But they had their ways—over centuries and centuries. In these activities, you'll learn about services for travelers who lived hundreds of years ago. By the time you're done, you should be able to imagine what it was like to travel along the Silk Roads. Then you'll see what's changed—and what's remained the same.

Your Own Travel Experience

Think about a trip you've taken. Maybe your family got on a plane and flew to a big city where you visited family or maybe some museums. Or maybe you drove to a national park. Or took the train to visit your grandparents. Or rode the subway to the beach. Decide on a trip, and write answers to these questions about it: Where did you go? Whom did you go with? What was the purpose of the trip? What kind of transportation did you use? What did you do while you were there? Where did you eat and sleep?

Write a paragraph describing some aspect of the trip. For example, you could write about the eight-hour ride with your family, stuffed into the car with the dog panting on your lap. Maybe what you remember most was being hungry and having to wait for what felt like forever until lunch. Have volunteers share their paragraphs with the class.

Now step back from the specifics. As a class, think about the things that made the trip possible. Make a class list. Use the questions above as your guide. For example, transportation will be one of things. Use them as categories. When you've got the list, leave it where everyone can see it so you can use it to guide you in your reading.



Travel in the Past: Reviewing the Reading

Read "Spine of the Silk Roads," on pages 16 to 23. When you're finished, discuss with a small group the following questions, just to be sure you understand what you've read. What were caravanserais? What were *khans*? What were *funduqs*? What did they look like? What amenities could visitors find there? What were some different reasons that people traveled? Who benefited from the elaborate systems of funduqs and caravanserais? When did people stop using caravanserais? Why?

Comparing Travel Then and Now

Working with a partner, compare travel accommodations on the Silk Road with travel accommodations you might find today. Make a T-chart. Title the left-hand column "Travel Then" and the right-hand column "Travel Now." Go through the article to fill in the left-hand column with descriptions of what caravanserais, khans and funduqs looked like; who stayed there; what was expected of travelers when they stayed there; and what amenities travelers could expect. In the right-hand column, identify elements of modern travel that correspond to each of the items in your first list. For example, in the left-hand column, you may have written, "travelers who stayed in a caravanserai had to provide their name, hometown and what they had with them, including livestock." In the right-hand column, you might write, "travelers who stay in motels have to register, including providing their address, credit card information, and license plate number." Have pairs get



together to compare their charts. Add to your chart if you get new ideas from the pair you've met with.

Advertising Travel Accommodations

No doubt you've seen or heard advertisements for travel accommodations. If you've traveled on a highway, you've probably seen billboards; if you listen to the radio, you may have heard jingles; and if you watch TV, you've likely seen ads. Web sites also function like ads. Visit the Web site for a motel or hotel chain. Notice what the site emphasizes. Working with a small group, take the role of someone developing an ad campaign for a caravan-

serai. Here are some things to consider:

- In which media will you advertise? (Billboards, radio, TV, newspapers/magazines, Web site? All of them? Some?)
- To whom will you be marketing your accommodations?
- What need(s) does your accommodation meet?
- What will you emphasize in your ad campaign?
- How will you distinguish yourself from other caravanserais, funduqs and khans?

With your group, put together an ad campaign for your caravanserai. Choose at least two media in which to advertise, and be able to explain why you chose those media (that is, why they are appropriate for your target audience). Put together a presentation of your ad campaign, as though you are pitching it to executives who run the caravanserai you are advertising. Remember that you need to be persuasive on two levels: First, you must persuade your listeners that the ad campaign will effectively increase their business; second, your ads must persuade potential travelers to visit your caravanserai.

Evaluating What You've Learned

Effective learners can explain what they've learned. As a class, discuss what you have learned from this activity. Here are a few questions to guide your self-evaluation: What have you learned about continuity and change over time? What have you learned about the role that advertising plays in the economy? What have you learned about how to be persuasive?

Theme: Assumptions, Evidence, Conclusions and Inferences

Another way to learn about the past is to study objects that people have left behind. What can you learn from just *one* object? How can one object help us understand the past? "Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an" shows us that we can learn a lot. Read the article, on pages 2 to 7, in which writer Sebastian Prange carefully examines Jefferson's copy of the Qur'an and shows how to use evidence to figure out a piece of the past.

Assumptions

Research always begins with assumptions. Sometimes the assumptions are as simple as assuming that something is important and worthy of attention. "Spine of the Silk Roads," for example, reports that only a few people have *assumed* that caravanserais are worth preserving and studying. "Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an" *assumes* that this one particular copy of the holy book is worthy of attention—that it can reveal something worth our knowing.

In the case of Jefferson's Qur'an, Sebastian Prange identifies another assumption—but it's one that he sets out to disprove. Find that assumption in the article, and underline it or highlight it. Discuss with a partner why Prange might believe it is important to disprove this assumption. As you proceed with the rest of these activities, remember what Prange is trying to accomplish. Keep asking yourself, "How does this evidence help or hurt Prange's effort?"

Evidence

In the article, Prange goes through, step by step, the process of posing questions, identifying evidence and determining what that evidence shows. Fill in the chart below to help you see clearly what he has done.

Question	What's the Evidence?	What Does It Reveal?
How do you know the Qur'an belonged to Jefferson?		
Where in his collection did Jefferson catalogue the Qur'an?		
When did Jefferson buy the Qur'an?		
Which translation of the Qur'an did Jefferson have?		

Notice that all the questions in the table can be answered based on the evidence. It's possible, with the right documents, to know when Jefferson bought his Qur'an and where he catalogued it in his collection.

Historians love it when this happens: evidence answers specific factual questions.

Inferences

Now that you've got the information and you understand what it reveals, move on, as Prange did, to the more difficult question: What can you infer about how the Qur'an influenced Jefferson? Begin by looking up the word "infer." You will notice that there are several definitions. One suggests that inferences are conclusions based on evidence, but another suggests that inferences can also be guesses. For the purposes of this activity, let's make this assumption: inferences are *tentative conclusions* we can draw based on evidence, but *proving* these inferences would require more evidence. Prange himself is cautious when he suggests that making inferences from the data he has gathered is tricky. Find the part of the article where he states what he is hoping to infer from the work he has done. Highlight it.

What does Prange hypothesize about Jefferson's Qur'an? Highlight the places in the article where he makes these hypotheses. Notice that he frames his ideas with conditional words like "may." What evidence does Prange offer to support his hypothesis? Do you find it persuasive? Why or why not?

Now take a step off the solid ground of evidence and conclusion and make some inferences of your own. What evidence do you imagine you would need in order to be convinced that that the Qur'an influenced Jefferson's ideas about religious freedom? With your partner, write down one or more examples. Then ask the opposite question: What evidence would you need to prove to you that the Qur'an did *not* influence Jefferson's ideas about religious freedom?

Finally, create a new piece of evidence: a fictional document that would—if it were

real—either prove or disprove Prange's hypothesis about how the Qur'an influenced Jefferson. To get ideas about what kind of document you might create, look at the kinds of evidence Prange has used to make his case. (You can also look at the kinds of evidence presented in another article, "In the Shade of the Royal Umbrella," on pages 8 to 15, for examples.) Create your document and present it to the class, explaining how it proves or disproves Prange's inferences about how the Qur'an influenced Thomas Jefferson.

Current June

Homage to Shafic Abboud: *Works by 12 International Arab Artists.* Espace Claude Lemand, **Paris**, through June 25.

Archaeologists and Travelers in Ottoman Lands. In the late 1800's, the University of Pennsylvania began excavating the ancient city of Nippur, located in present-day Iraq. This marked the first American expedition in the Middle East. Over a decade, the excavation team unearthed a remarkable collection of nearly 30,000 cuneiform tablets. This exhibition tells the stories of three men whose lives intertwined during the Nippur excavation, as well as the story of the excavation. Osman Hamdi Bey, director of the Imperial Museum in Istanbul (now the Istanbul Archaeological Museum), was the gatekeeper for all excavations in the Ottoman Empire. Also an accomplished painter, Hamdi Bey created a painting of the excavations at Nippur. This painting, along with another Hamdi Bey painting in the Penn Museum's collection, is featured in the exhibit. University of **Pennsylvania** Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, through June 26.

Current July

"No Equal in All the World": *Artistic Legacies of Herat, Afghanistan* celebrates the visual culture of Herat and Afghanistan, developed in this region from the 1100's to the present day and influential far beyond the modern boundaries of Afghanistan. In the medieval period, Herat was renowned for its production of inlaid metalwork. In the 1400's, the city was lauded for the countless cultural achievements of the Timurids, and the sophistication achieved in the courtly art and architecture of this period inspired the work of Safavid, Uzbek, Mughal and Ottoman artists active later in, respectively, Iran, Central Asia, India and Turkey. British Museum, **London**, through July 3.

Numinous: *Paintings by Yari Ostovany*, an Iranian artist living in the us, explores the space between his two cultures and the symbiotic relationship between Persian and western art. Lucid Art Foundation, **Inverness, California**, through July 4.

The Spirit of the East: *Modern Europe and the Arts of Islam.* A new visual universe opened for 19th-century Europe with the discovery of the arts of Islam. The expansion and democratization of travel and the development of photography helped art dealers and their patrons develop a new way of seeing; publications and exhibitions diffused the new field of artistic knowledge. Collections of Islamic art were built whose range and depth still testify to Europe's fascination with the East, and this exhibition suggests that we are today the heirs and beneficiaries of the new visual vocabulary. European art developed not only the fantasies embodied in orientalist painting, but also looked eastward for a new esthetic that might transform western representation, examining textiles and carpets, ceramics, metalwork, marquetry and ivory carving for a new repertoire of forms, themes and techniques. Musée des Beaux Arts de **Lyon, France**, through July 4.

Afghanistan: *Crossroads of the Ancient World* highlights some of the most important archeological discoveries from ancient Afghanistan. The exhibition showcases more than 200 unique pieces on loan from the National Museum of Afghanistan in Kabul, accompanied by selected items from the British Museum, ranging from classical sculptures and ivory inlays to gold-inlaid personal ornaments worn by a nomadic elite. Together they showcase the trading and cultural connections of Afghanistan and how it benefited from being an important crossroads of the ancient world. The earliest objects in the exhibition were found at the site of Tepe Fullol, which dates to 2000 BCE. The later finds come from three additional sites dating between the third century BCE and the first century CE. British Museum, **London**, through July 17.

Reconnecting East and West traces the remarkably rich documentation of Islamic ornament and design by European scholars, artists and architects who traveled to the Middle East in the 19th century. The 45 works on view reveal the diversity of Islamic ornamental vocabulary and its application to a wide variety of buildings, books, textiles and objects. Featured are spectacular color lithographs from Émile Prisse d'Avenne's *Islamic Art in Cairo*, plates from Owen Jones's *Grammar of Ornament* and *Alhambra*, paintings by orientalist artists and prints after Jean-Léon Gérôme that reflect the ubiquity of these motifs in orientalist art. **Dubai** Community Theatre and Arts Centre, **United Arab Emirates**, through July 18.

Captured Hearts: *The Lure of Courtly Lucknow.* A cosmopolitan Indo-Islamic-European capital, Lucknow was the 18th- and

Jameel Prize 2011: Shortlist Exhibition

features more than 20 works by the 10 artists and designers shortlisted for the biennial international Jameel Prize. Their works draw strongly on the artists' own local and regional traditions, using particular materials and iconography with strong connections to traditional Islamic art, and range from felt costumes to sculpture made of handmade terra-cotta brick, from mirror mosaic to digital collages inspired by traditional Persian miniature paintings. Much of the work refers to the artists' own hybrid cultural identity: the mix of old and new, minimalism versus ornament, tradition versus modernity and home versus exile. The winner of the £25,000 Jameel Prize 2011 will be announced at the V&A on September 12. Victoria & Albert Museum, **London**, July 21 through September 22.



Babak Golkar's "Negotiating the Space for Possible Coexistences No. 2" was built in 2009 of Persian carpet, wood, Plexiglas and paint and measures 119 x 110 x 47 centimeters (47 x 43 x 18½").

19th-century cultural successor of the resplendent Mughal Empire. It fostered some of the most vibrant artistic expression of its day in a variety of media, and represented a rare intersection of eastern and western artistic traditions. The exhibition features album paintings, historical and religious manuscripts, textiles, period photographs, metalwork, glassware and jewelry that offer proof of a rich and dynamic culture. Musée Guimet, **Paris**, through July 18.

Rebirth: *Lebanon 21st-Century Contemporary Art* features 48 Lebanese artists whose works tackle the theme of rebirth. The pieces on show are either recent or were created for the exhibition by artists including Talar Aghabashian, Christina Anid, Ara Azad, Zena Assi, Issam Barhouch, Huguette Caland, Joseph Chahfe, Flavia Codsi and Targheed Darghouth. **Beirut** Exhibition Center, through July 24.

Paradise Lost addresses the relationship between art, nature and technology. Consisting of digital media and video works, the exhibition features pieces by 21 artists whose works examine the impact of technology on the environment. **Istanbul** Modern, through July 24.

Central Nigeria Unmasked: *Arts of the Benue River Valley* reviews the arts

produced in the Benue River Valley, source of some of the most abstract, dramatic and inventive sculpture in sub-Saharan Africa. The exhibition includes more than 150 objects used in a range of ritual contexts, with genres as varied and complex as the region itself—figurative wood sculptures, masks, figurative ceramic vessels, and elaborate bronze and iron regalia—and explores the history of central Nigeria through the dynamic interrelationships of its peoples and their arts. Fowler Museum at UCLA, **Los Angeles**, through July 24; National Museum of African Art, **Washington, D.C.**, September 14 through March 4.

Tents, Camels, Textiles of Saudi Arabia and More: *An Exhibit of Bedouin Weaving* shows pieces acquired by Joy Totah Hilden and Robert Hilden between 1982 and 1994 in Saudi Arabia and nearby countries. Initially, Joy Hilden says, "I simply loved the pieces I saw and wanted them. Then I began to realize that they were being sold because the owner had abandoned the nomadic life. It became clear not only that nomadism was dying out but that the techniques of spinning, dyeing and weaving were falling by the wayside as well. I saw the opportunity to create a collection in order to pass on my love of the craft and what I learned from it to others." ① 415-399-0333, ext. 15. Mills Building, 220 Montgomery Street, **San Francisco**, through July 29.

Dis[Locating] Culture: *Contemporary Islamic Art in America* showcases American Islamic artists, broadly defined, and aims to problematize stereotypes and challenge notions of cultural and religious homogeneity. Michael Berger Gallery, **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**, through July 30.

Battleground: *War Rugs from Afghanistan* features examples of a new and electrifying kind of Oriental rug. The rug weavers of Afghanistan, renowned for their artistry, depict on their rugs the world that they see. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and throughout more than three decades of international and civil war, they have borne witness to disaster by weaving unprecedented images of battle and weaponry into their rugs. Flowers have turned into bullets, landmines and hand grenades. Birds have turned into helicopters and fighter jets, sheep and horses have turned into tanks. **Pennsylvania** Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, through July 31.

Contemporary Views iv: *Contemporary Egypt* features an overview of Egyptian art, with pieces from early artists who helped pave the way for Egyptian contemporary art, to works by today's emerging generation. Artists displayed include Taha Halim, Mounir Canaan, Taha Hussein, Omar El-Nagdy, George Bahgory, Adel El-Siwi, Hamdi Attia, Khaled Hafez, Hazem Taha Hussein, Gihan Suleiman, Kareem El-Quray and Hany Rashed. Al-Masar Gallery of Contemporary Art, **Cairo**, through July 31.

Current August
Cleopatra's World focuses on the image of Cleopatra as last Queen of Egypt, at a time when Egyptians, Greeks and Romans all left their mark on life and death and when love, international politics and power struggles changed the world order. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, **Copenhagen**, through August 7.

Bayt Al-Aqqad: *A House In Damascus* marks the reopening of the David Collection and features a building that the Syrian government placed at the disposal of the Danish Institute in Damascus in 1997. After major restoration, Bayt Al-Aqqad now stands as a splendid example of Islamic urban architecture. The house's oldest parts date back to the 15th century, although changing styles left their mark in ensuing centuries. Visitors can examine the house's history from 1470, when it was built on the ruins of a Roman theater, through its massive restoration. David Collection, **Copenhagen**, through August 7.

The Salvaged Gods From the Palace of Tell Halaf. During an expedition in the Middle East in 1899, Max von Oppenheim unearthed the remains of a palace dating from the early first millennium BCE on the Tell Halaf mound in what is today northeast Syria. Most of the spectacular finds were brought to Berlin and were not—as originally intended—exhibited on Berlin's Museum Island, but were displayed in a renovated factory in 1930. During World War II, a bomb destroyed the private museum and the unique sculptures it housed. Nearly 60 years later, one of the largest restoration projects ever

undertaken has led to the reconstruction of the monumental stone sculptures and relief panels, pieced together from 27,000 fragments. Visitors can now view sculptures that were once thought to be lost forever. Staatliche Museen zu **Berlin**, Pergamon Museum, through August 14.

Dubai Then: *Charlie Koolhaas* investigates the Dubai that unites the new, the old, the global, the local. Gleaming architecture, high-profile structures, seven-star hotels and the largest malls coexist with labor camps, old souks, street food and public beaches, all demonstrating the assimilation and collision of cultures. The photographs trace the geography of the city, uncovering unexpected new dimensions of it along with a new concept of globalization and cultural integration—a harmony without mixing—that is unique to Dubai. Pavilion Downtown **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**, through August 18.

1100–1900: *The 40 Greatest Masters of Indian Painting* presents 240 of the works of artists who, in their own tradition, are equivalent to Dürer, Michelangelo, Rembrandt or Vermeer in the West: 'Abd al-Samad, Farrukh Beg, Nainsukh, the "Master of the Elephants" and many others. The milestone exhibition provides an overview of the development of Indian painting from 1100 to 1900. Museum Rietberg, **Zurich**, through August 21.

Patterns of Life: *The Art of Tibetan Carpets* explores the stylistic variety and uses of Tibetan carpets, saddle rugs, sleeping rugs, pile pillows, cushion covers and door rugs, placing them alongside paintings, sculptures and everyday objects. Tibetans have created carpets for decorative and functional purposes for centuries, using both indigenous motifs and designs, such as snow lions, as well as medallions and checkerboard patterns, which suggest considerable influence from Tibet's historical trading partners as far afield as Iran. Rubin Museum of Art, **New York**, through August 22.

Heracles to Alexander the Great: *Treasures from the Royal Court of Macedonia, A Hellenic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy* shows more than 500 extraordinary objects, most never before exhibited. Recently discovered in the royal tombs and the palace at Aegae, the ancient capital of Macedonia, they rewrite the history of early Greece. Aegae—relatively unknown until the unlooted tombs of Philip II and his grandson Alexander IV were found 30 years ago—has continued to yield a wealth of objects, from beautifully intricate gold jewelry, silverware and pottery to sculpture, mosaic floors and architectural remains. Ashmolean Museum, **Oxford, UK**, through August 29.

Current September
Roads of Arabia: *Archaeological Treasures From the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.* The study of archeological remains only really began in Saudi Arabia in the 1970's, yet brought—and is still bringing—a wealth of unsuspected treasures to light: temples, palaces adorned with frescoes, monumental sculpture, silver dishes and precious jewelry left in tombs. The exhibition, organized as a series of points along trade

and pilgrimage routes, focuses on the region's rich history as a major center of commercial and cultural exchange, provides both chronological and geographical information about the discoveries made during recent excavations and emphasizes the important role played by this region as a trading center during the past 6000 years. More than 300 works—sculptures, ceramics, jewelry, frescoes—are on display, dating from antiquity to the beginning of the modern period, the majority never before exhibited. State Hermitage Museum, **St. Petersburg, Russia**, through September 4; Pergamon Museum, **Berlin**, October through December.

To Live Forever: *Egyptian Treasures From the Brooklyn Museum* uses some 100 pieces of jewelry, statues, coffins and vessels dating from 3600 BCE to 400 CE to illustrate the range of strategies and preparations that the ancient Egyptians developed to defeat death and to achieve success in the afterlife. The exhibition explores the belief that death was an enemy that could be vanquished, a primary cultural tenet of ancient Egyptian civilization. Exhibits include the vividly painted coffin of a mayor of Thebes, mummies, stone statues, gold jewelry, amulets and canopic jars. **Nevada** Museum of Art, **Reno**, through September 4; Frist Center for Visual Arts, **Nashville, Tennessee**, October 7 through January 8.

Trade Goods and Souvenirs: *Islamic Art From the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam* presents more than 170 works of art ranging from opulent ceramic vessels from medieval Iran to rare textiles from Spain and miniatures from Iran and India. The Amsterdam artifacts are complemented by pre-Islamic art from the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, including colorful perfume flasks and glass dishes, Coptic textiles, bronze weapons and a unique decorated shield from Iran. These objects demonstrate how much the Islamic tradition inherited from such earlier cultures as classical antiquity and the Byzantine and Sassanian Empires, and at the same time illuminate the historical ties between the West and Islamic cultures. Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, **Leiden, Netherlands**, through September 4.

Cleopatra: *The Search for the Last Queen of Egypt* features nearly 150 artifacts from the time of Cleopatra VII, taking visitors inside the modern-day search for the elusive queen, a search that reached the desert sands of Egypt to the depths of the Bay of Aboukir near Alexandria. The exhibition includes statuary, jewelry, everyday artifacts, coins and religious tokens from the time around Cleopatra's rule. **Cincinnati [Ohio]** Museum Center, through September 5.

Gifts of the Sultan: *The Arts of Giving at the Islamic Courts* is a pan-Islamic exhibition spanning the eighth through 19th centuries and including more than 240 works of art from three continents: carpets, costumes and textiles, jewelry and other objects of precious metals, miniature paintings and other arts of the book, mosque furnishings and arms and armor. *Gifts of the Sultan* introduces viewers to Islamic art and culture with objects of undisputed quality and appeal, viewed through the universal lens of gift giving—a practice that

proliferated at the great Islamic courts not only for diplomatic and political purposes but also as expressions of piety, often associated with the construction or enhancement of religious monuments. **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art, through September 5; Museum of Fine Arts **Houston**, October 23 through January 15.

Turkish Taste at the Court of Marie-Antoinette features objects made in the Turkish manner for members of the French court. France has long been fascinated by the Ottoman Empire, and for hundreds of years the taste for *turquerie*—pieces produced in the West that evoked or imitated Turkish culture—was evident in French fashion, literature, theater and opera, painting, architecture and interior decoration. It was during the late 18th century that the Turkish style reached new heights, inspiring some of the period's most original creations. Frick Collection, **New York**, through September 11.

Adornment and Identity: *Jewellery and Costume From Oman* features a selection of 20th-century silver jewelry, weaponry and clothing from Oman, including bracelets, anklets, necklaces, earrings, hair ornaments, *kohl* pots and men's accessories. The jewelry is decorated with coins, coral and glass beads and gold leaf, with many amuletic pieces incorporating elaborate Qur'anic cases. British Museum, **London**, through September 11.

In Search of Biblical Lands: *From Jerusalem to Jordan in 19th-Century Photography* presents photographs created between the 1840's and the early 1900's. On view are daguerreotypes, salted-paper prints and albumen silver prints by leading photographers of the time, including Félix Bonfils, Felice Beato, Maxime du Camp, Auguste Salzmann, James Graham, Louis Vignes, Frank Mason Good and Frédéric Goupil-Fesquet. Rather than soaring vistas or monumental architecture, photographers captured a more modest scene: ancient villages nestled in a stony landscape, a once-great city subsiding within its walls, and people repeating patterns of life unchanged over millennia. Getty Villa, **Malibu, California**, through September 12.

'Abbas: 45 Years in Photography features 133 black and white photographs and four audio-visual clips by acclaimed Iranian photographer Abbas Kiarostami. As a member of the Magnum agency since 1981, he has covered important political and social events. Through his photographs, which also depict the Iranian Revolution, he aims to show his dedication to the struggles within different societies of the world. National Museum of **Singapore**, through September 18.

The Golden Temple of Amritsar: *Reflections of the Past* is the first major exhibition documenting one of the world's most beautiful and iconic buildings, both the center of the Sikh faith and a place of pilgrimage for followers of other traditions. On show are original photographs, paintings and engravings, enhanced with extracts from over 70 eyewitness accounts by, among others, European spies, travelers, artists, *memsahibs* and raconteurs who visited the shrine in the 19th century.

The exhibition traces the temple's history, beginning with its origins as a place where the Buddha once meditated, to its role as the inspiration behind a guerrilla insurgency that eventually led to the establishment of a Sikh empire in the 18th century. ① www.soas.ac.uk/gallery, Brunei Gallery, SOAS, London, through September 24.

Inside the Toshakhana: *Treasures of the Sikh Courts* brings together some of the finest examples of Sikh art and heritage in public and private collections as a tribute to Punjab's rich artistic traditions. The *toshakhana* (treasury) in question belonged to the one-eyed ruler of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who amassed a magnificent collection of beautiful objects and works of art—jewelry, paintings, textiles and arms and armor. The exhibition focuses on objects connected with the Sikh court of Lahore generally and Ranjit Singh's toshakhana specifically, which was dispersed a decade after his death. Brunei Gallery, SOAS, London, through September 24.

Innocent Surrogates: *Photographs by Lale Tara* consists, the artist says, of two-dimensional copies of the reality we believe in. In her latest cycle of staged photographs, she introduces the viewer to the concept of transcendental teleportation—a journey in space-time—and invites us into a world that transcends the rational mind. Istanbul Modern, through September 25.

The Art of the Writing Instrument From Paris to Persia. Every culture that values the art of writing has found ways to reflect the prestige and pleasure of the craft through beautiful tools. Writing implements such as pens, knives and scissors, as well as storage chests, pen-cases and writing desks, were often fashioned from precious materials: mother-of-pearl, gems, imported woods, gold and silver. Once owned by statesmen, calligraphers, wealthy merchants and women of fashion, these objects highlight the ingenuity of the artists who created them and underline the centrality of the written word in the cultures that produced them. Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, through September 25.

Rina Banerjee: *Chimeras of India and the West.* Sensual sculptures made of shells, animal skulls, feathers and Indian fabrics; spectacular installations combining colonial objects and plastic materials found in the streets of New York; dream drawings in exotic colors depicting the body in a trance state—Banerjee's works express the ambiguities of

her twofold identity as a product of both East and West, the illusions bequeathed by the past, the contradictions of the post-colonial world and the underside of globalization. Musée Guimet, Paris, through September 26.

Out of Place features four artists—Hrair Sarkissian, Ahlam Shibli, Ion Grigorescu and Cevdet Ereğ—who explore the relationship between dominant political forces and personal and collective histories. The exhibition centers on urban spaces, architectural structures and the condition of displacement. Darat Al-Funun, Amman, Jordan, through September 29.

Current October

Sajil: *A Century of Modern Art* is a comprehensive cross-section of art from the Arab world produced over the last 100 years. The exhibition brings together more than 200 artworks from Mathaf's extensive collection, presenting turning-points in artistic thought as it evolved in the Arab world during the century leading up to the 1990's, and helping to set Arab modern art in its historical place within a larger art-historical tradition. It also emphasizes the several common moments and concerns that make it possible to talk about a shared identity in the region. Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar, through October 1.

Kashmir in 19th Century Photography is a contribution to the study of early photography from South Asia and presents a small but impressive selection of the most important studios active in Kashmir, including such great names in early Indian photography as Baker & Burke, Samuel Bourne, William D. Holmes and John Edward Saché. Museen Dahlem, Berlin, through October 2.

The Use of the Astrolabe: A Masterpiece of 16th-Century Illumination displays a scientific manuscript created between 1555 and 1559 by an unknown master in French court circles. It explains the functions of this ancient instrument according to the teachings of the German astronomer Johannes Stoeffler, presenting a geometry lesson and a visual delight. Musée du Louvre, Paris, through October 3.

Mummies of the World presents 150 human and animal mummies and related artifacts from South America, Europe, Asia, Oceania and Egypt, showing how science can shed light on the historical and cultural record. The exhibition includes interactive multimedia exhibits that illustrate how such tools as computer tomography, magnetic resonance imaging, DNA analysis and radiocarbon dating allow researchers to deduce facts about the lives, history and cultures of the mummies. Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, through October 23.

Zaha Hadid: *An Architecture* examines over three decades of the groundbreaking Iraqi-British architect's work through a selection of projects (both completed and in progress), allowing visitors to fully enter the universe of Hadid. A graduate of the prestigious Architectural Association School in London, where she later taught, Hadid typically interlaces taut lines and curves and uses sharp corners and overlapping planes.

Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, through October 30.

Current November

Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs presents an array of possessions unearthed from the boy king's tomb, including his golden canopic coffinette and the crown found on his head when the tomb was discovered. The exhibition offers information about the extraordinary discovery of the tomb, and the belief system and burial rituals of ancient Egypt, and the results of the latest scientific testing conducted on Tutankhamun's mummy. Melbourne [Australia] Museum, through November 6.

Body Parts: *Ancient Egyptian Fragments and Amulets* features 35 representations of individual body parts from the Museum's ancient Egyptian collection, using both fragments of sculptures and objects created as distinct elements to illuminate the very realistic depiction of individual body parts in canonical Egyptian sculpture. Ancient Egyptian artists carefully portrayed each part of the human body, respecting the significance of every detail. Brooklyn [New York] Museum, through November 27.

Current December

1001 Inventions: Discover the Muslim Heritage in Our World traces the story of 1000 years of science from the Muslim world dating from the seventh century onward, looking at the social, scientific and technological achievements that originated in the Muslim cultural sphere. It features more than 60 exhibits, interactive displays and dramatization showing that many modern inventions, spanning fields such as engineering, medicine and design, can trace their roots back to men and women of different faiths and cultures who lived in Muslim civilizations. California Science Center, Los Angeles, through December 31.

Before the Pyramids: *The Origins of Egyptian Civilization* explores Egypt's Pre-Dynastic and Early Dynastic material culture and shows how these early materials shed light on our understanding of later Egyptian culture. The most fundamental aspects of ancient Egyptian civilization—architecture, hieroglyphic writing, a belief in the afterlife and allegiance to a semi-divine king—can be traced to Egypt's Pre-Dynastic era 1000 years before the pyramids were built. The exhibition displays 140 objects, including pottery, stonework, carved ivories and objects from the tombs of the first kings and of the retainers who were buried alongside them. Catalog. Oriental Institute Museum, Chicago, through December 31.

Current January and later

Global Patterns: Dress and Textiles in Africa focuses on the accomplishments of African weavers, dyers, bead embroiderers and tailors, and highlights the continuities, innovation and exchange of ideas that mark dress and textile production in Africa. Throughout centuries, African textile artists seamlessly and joyfully integrated into their visual vocabulary new design elements and new materials such as glass beads, buttons and fabrics that arrived as the result of trade with places as far away as India and Indonesia. Beadwork, kente cloth and indigo-dyed cloths

called *adire* are among the highlights of the display. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, through January 8.

Second Lives: *The Age-Old Art of Recycling Textiles* highlights the ways people in various cultures have ingeniously repurposed worn but precious fabrics to create beautiful new textile forms. Examples include a rare *sutra* cover made from a 15th-century Chinese rank badge, a large patchwork hanging from Central Asia stitched together from small scraps of silk *ikat* and a pictorial *kantha* from India embroidered with threads recycled from old saris. Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., through January 8.

Of Gods and Mortals: Traditional Art from India. In India, art is an integral part of daily life. The importance of paintings, sculpture, textiles and other art forms comprises two basic categories, one related to religious practices and the other to the expression of prestige and social position. This new installation of works from the Museum's collection features some 28 pieces, principally representing the 1800's to the present. Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, through March 1, 2012.

Painting the Modern in India features seven renowned painters who came of age during the height of the movement to free India from British rule. To move from the margins of an art world shaped by the colonial establishment, they organized path-breaking associations and pioneered new approaches to painting, repositioning their own art practices internationally and in relation to the 5000-year history of art in India. These artists created hybrid styles that are an essential component of the broad sweep of art in the 20th century. After independence in 1947, they took advantage of new opportunities in art centers around the world, especially Paris, London and New York; at the same time, they looked deeply into their own artistic heritage, learning from the first exhibition of Indian art in 1948 at Raj Bhavan in Delhi and taking inspiration from ancient sites. Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, through June 1, 2012.

Coming September

Life and Death in the Pyramid Age: *The Emory Old Kingdom Mummy* places the mummy—excavated at the sacred site of Abydos in Middle Egypt in 1920—in the context of ancient Egypt's mummification and burial practices and the cult of the dead, and explores the social and political changes that marked the end of the Pyramid Age. The development of the site of Abydos and the cult of Osiris is also a focus of the exhibition, with a link to the current excavations at the Middle Cemetery where the Old Kingdom mummy was found nearly a century ago. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, September 10 through December 11.

Patriots & Peacemakers: *Arab Americans in Service to Our Country* tells true stories of heroism and self-sacrifice that affirm the important role Arab-Americans have played in the United States throughout its history, contributing greatly to society, fighting and dying in every war since the American Revolution, defending the Constitution and

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supporting the nation's democratic form of government. The exhibition highlights service in the armed forces, the diplomatic service and the Peace Corps. Personal narratives highlight Arab-American men and women of different national and religious backgrounds. Arab American National Museum, **Dearborn, Michigan**, from September 11.

12th Istanbul Biennial: *Untitled*. The theme "Untitled" refers to the Cuban-American artist Feliz Gonzalez-Torres, the inspiration for this edition of the fair, which explores the relationship between politics and art. Group exhibitions have been arranged in five sections called "Untitled (Passport)," "Untitled (Ross)," "Untitled (Death by Gun)," "Untitled (Abstraction)" and "Untitled (History)." The 45 solo exhibitions also relate to these sections, but the artists' names will be released only at the opening of the fair, in keeping with its theme. **Istanbul**, September 17 through November 13.

Golden Nights on the Silver Screen explores musical gems from the classic Egyptian cinema of the 20th century and features live music by the Georges Lammam Ensemble and Middle Eastern dance performances by the Jawaahir Dance Company. Ritz Theater. **Minneapolis, Minnesota**, September 22 through October 2.

"Wonder of the Age": Master Painters of India, 1100–1900 presents some 220 works selected according to identifiable hands and named artists, dispelling the notion of anonymity in Indian art, which has traditionally been classified simply according to regional styles or dynastic periods. The high points of artistic innovation in the history of Indian painting are demonstrated through works by 40 of the greatest painters, some identified for the first time and each represented by five to six seminal works. Recent scholarship has begun to securely link innovations in style with specific artists and their lineages; together with careful study of artists' inscriptions and scribal colophons, it is now possible to construct a more precise chronology of the development of Indian painting. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, September 28 through January 8.

Borusan Museum of Contemporary Art will open in the Perili Köşk, a renovated 1910 building in the Istanbul suburb of Rumeli Hisarı, exhibiting part of the Borusan Holding company's 600-piece collection of works by Turkish and international artists. The building serves as the company's headquarters and will be open to the public on weekends. **Istanbul**, September.

Coming **October**
In the Kingdom of Alexander the Great: *Ancient Macedonia* retraces the history of Alexander's homeland from the 15th century BCE to the Roman period, presenting more than 1000 artifacts from museums in northern Greece and from French archaeological digs, particularly the Portal of the Enchanted Ones, a masterpiece of Greco-Roman sculpture. "People know that Alexander was Greek, but they don't know that he was also Macedonian, or that Macedonia is in Greece," says the Louvre's director of Greek antiquities. "The exhibition presents

an opportunity for visitors to rediscover Alexander in the light of his origins." Musée du Louvre, **Paris**, October 3 through January 2.

Vaults of Heaven: *Visions of Byzantium* offers a glimpse into the complex and vivid world of the Byzantine Empire through large-scale contemporary photographs by Turkish photographer Ahmet Ertuğ. The images highlight culturally significant UNESCO heritage sites in present-day Turkey, with a focus on the Karanlık, Tokalı and Merymana churches in the dramatic Cappadocian region of central Anatolia. **Pennsylvania** Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, October 15 through February 12.

Tutankhamun: *The Golden King and the Great Pharaohs* features more than 100 artworks, most of which have never been shown in the United States before this tour. These spectacular treasures—more than half of which come from the tomb of King Tutankhamun—include the golden sandals found on the boy king's mummy; a gold coffinette that held his stomach; golden statues of the gods; and King Tut's rings, ear ornaments and gold collar. Also showcased are objects associated with the most important rulers of the 30 dynasties that reigned in Egypt over a 2000-year span. The exhibition explores the splendor of the pharaohs, their function in both the earthly and divine worlds, and what "kingship" meant to the Egyptian people. Among the highlights is the largest likeness of King Tut ever discovered: a three-meter (10') statue of the pharaoh found at the ruins of a funerary temple. Museum of Fine Arts **Houston**, October 16 through April 15.

Lost and Found: *The Secrets of Archimedes*. In Jerusalem in 1229 CE, the greatest works of the Greek mathematician Archimedes were erased and overwritten. In the year 2000, a team of museum experts began a project to read those erased texts. By the time they had finished, the team had recovered Archimedes's secrets, rewritten the history of mathematics and discovered entirely new texts from the ancient world. This exhibition tells the story, recounting the history of the book, detailing the patient conservation, explaining the cutting-edge imaging and highlighting the discoveries of the dogged and determined scholars who finally read what had been obliterated. Walters Art Museum, **Baltimore**, October 16 through January 1.

God Is Beautiful; He Loves Beauty: *The Object in Islamic Art and Culture* is a three-day symposium whose keynote speaker will be Paul Goldberger, the Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic and writer for *The New Yorker*, who will discuss the Museum building, designed by I. M. Pei, as a work of Islamic art in its own right. Other speakers, each presenting a paper on a work of art in the Museum's collection, include curators, art historians, academics, researchers, archaeologists, independent scholars and calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya. This fourth biennial Hamad bin Khalifa Symposium on Islamic Art is free and open to the public. ① www.islamicartdoha.org. Museum of Islamic Art, **Doha, Qatar**, October 29–31.

Coming **November**
Underground Revolution: 8000 Years of Istanbul displays finds uncovered in one of the most important

archaeological excavations of Turkish history: the Yanıkapi dig in Istanbul, which revealed Neolithic settlements dating back 8500 years, including a unique collection of 34 sunken ships. As the actual artifacts are too fragile to move, the exhibition presents them through photographs, information panels and digital demonstrations. Istanbul Centre in **Brussels**, November 30 through November 31, 2012.

Coming **January**
Beauty and Belief: *Crossing Bridges With the Art of Islamic Culture* opens at the Brigham Young University Museum of Art, **Provo, Utah**, in January. Later venues are the **Indianapolis [Indiana]** Art Museum, the Museum of Fine Arts, **Houston** and the **Brooklyn [New York]** Museum of Art.

Sacred Journey: *Hajj* opens at the British Museum, **London**, in January.

PERMANENT/ INDEFINITE
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 at their Web sites. Readers are welcome to submit information eight weeks in advance for possible inclusion in this listing. Some listings have been kindly provided to us by *Canvas*, the art and culture magazine for the Middle East and the Arab world.

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