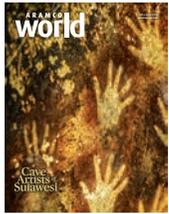




ARAMCO
world

May/June 2015
aramcoworld.com

Cave
Artists *of*
Sulawesi



Painted by blowing ochre-based pigment over a hand, stencil-paintings in more than 100 South Sulawesi caves vary in age from some 10,000 to nearly 40,000 years old, and alongside many of them are images of animals and fish that are just as old. Photo by Meridith Kohut.

Publisher
Aramco Services Company

President
Basil A. Abul-Hamayel

**Director
Public Affairs**
Alma S. Kombargi

Editor
Richard Doughty

Assistant Editors
Arthur P. Clark
Alva Robinson

Digital Media Editor
Johnny Hanson

Circulation
Edna Catchings

Administration
Sarah Miller

**Print Design
and Production**
Graphic Engine Design

Printed in the USA
RR Donnelley/Wetmore

**Digital Design
and Production**
eSiteful Corporation

Online Translations
Transperfect

Contacts
Subscriptions:
aramcoworld@aramcoservices.com

Editorial:
editor@aramcoservices.com

Mail:
AramcoWorld
Post Office Box 2106
Houston, Texas
77252-2106 USA

ISSN
1530-5821

Back Cover

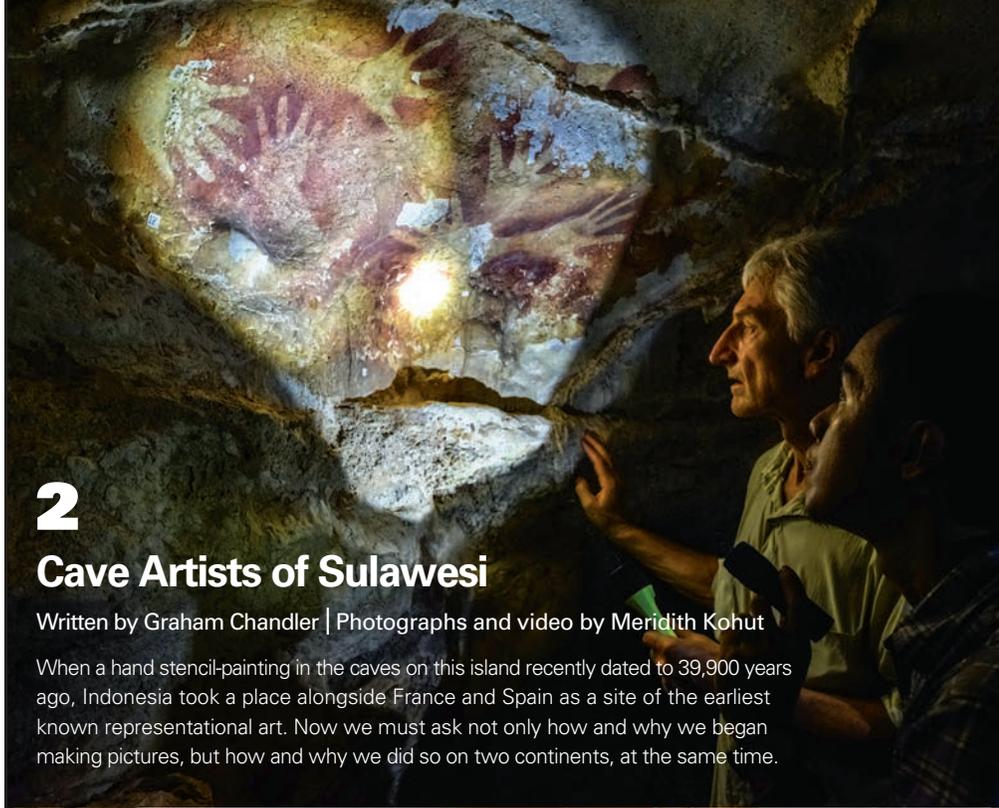


Graphic testament to three centuries of publishing, not only in Arabic but also in many far lesser-known languages, this panel of 24 esoteric typographical characters greets visitors to the offices of Brill publishing in Leiden, the Netherlands. Photo by Tom Verde.

We distribute *AramcoWorld* to increase cross-cultural understanding by broadening knowledge of the histories, cultures and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their global connections. In print, *AramcoWorld* is distributed six times a year, without charge, to a limited number of interested readers; online, it is archived and indexed from 1960 to the present.



Saudi Aramco and Aramco are trademarks of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company, a leading, globally integrated energy and chemicals company.



2 Cave Artists of Sulawesi

Written by Graham Chandler | Photographs and video by Meridith Kohut

When a hand stencil-painting in the caves on this island recently dated to 39,900 years ago, Indonesia took a place alongside France and Spain as a site of the earliest known representational art. Now we must ask not only how and why we began making pictures, but how and why we did so on two continents, at the same time.



14 Capital of Baklava

Written by Gail Simmons | Photographed by George Azar

In a city where baklava chefs train for 10 years, you know dessert-making is being taken seriously. Add competition from 500 other baklava specialists, and you can only be in Gaziantep, Turkey.

20 Coins of Two Realms

Written by Clive Foss

When Arab Muslims came to rule formerly Byzantine lands in the mid-seventh century CE, they continued using local coins and only gradually issued their own: The story was similar in Egypt, Mesopotamia and Persia. Viewed through a numismatist's magnifying glass, it was an age not only of conflict and change, but also of accommodation and pragmatism.



24

If I Forget You, Don't Forget Me

Photographed and written by Manal AlDowayan

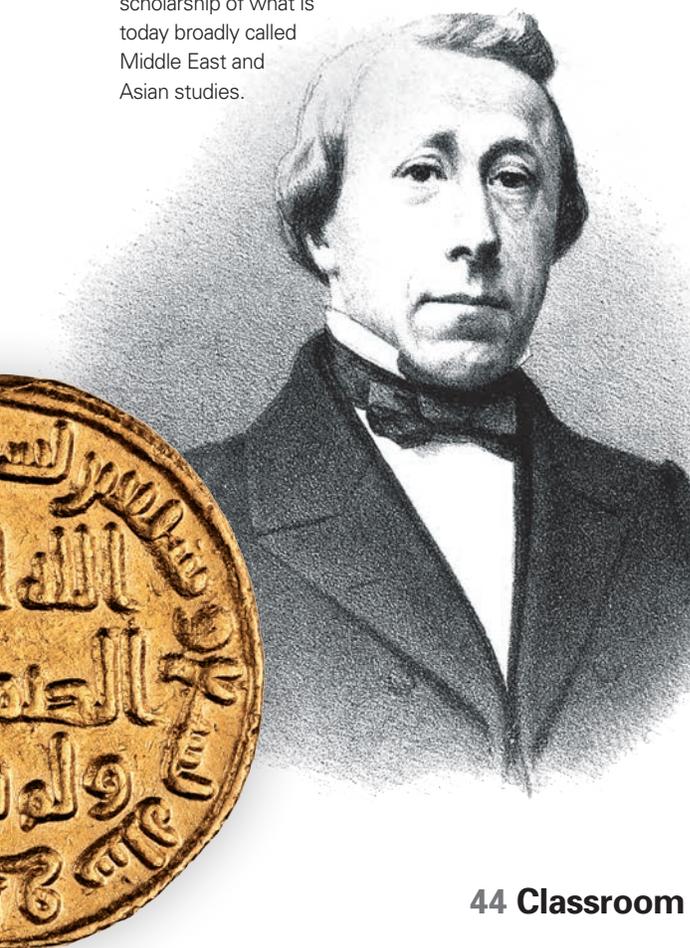
To reconstruct memories of her late father's generation, the artist and author interviewed her father's peers and made artifact-based portraits of his "unique generation that saw Saudi Arabia at its poorest and later at its richest," a generation that understands "what it means to build your dreams from scratch."



30 Brill's Bridge to Arabic

Written by Tom Verde

It started out as many successful businesses do: with a bit of vision, a prime location and some family connections. From its first Arabic text in 1732 to today, Brill's books helped build the scholarship of what is today broadly called Middle East and Asian studies.

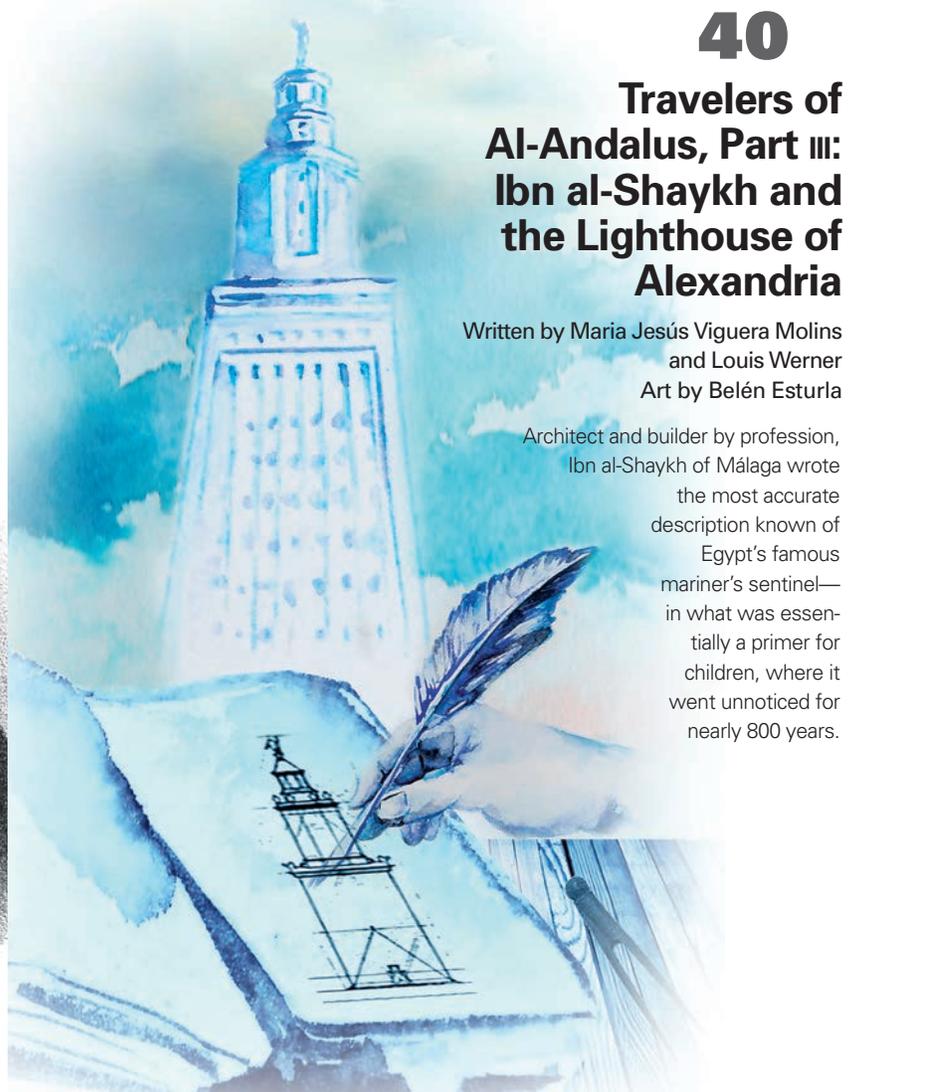


40

Travelers of Al-Andalus, Part III: Ibn al-Shaykh and the Lighthouse of Alexandria

Written by Maria Jesús Viguera Molins and Louis Werner
Art by Belén Esturla

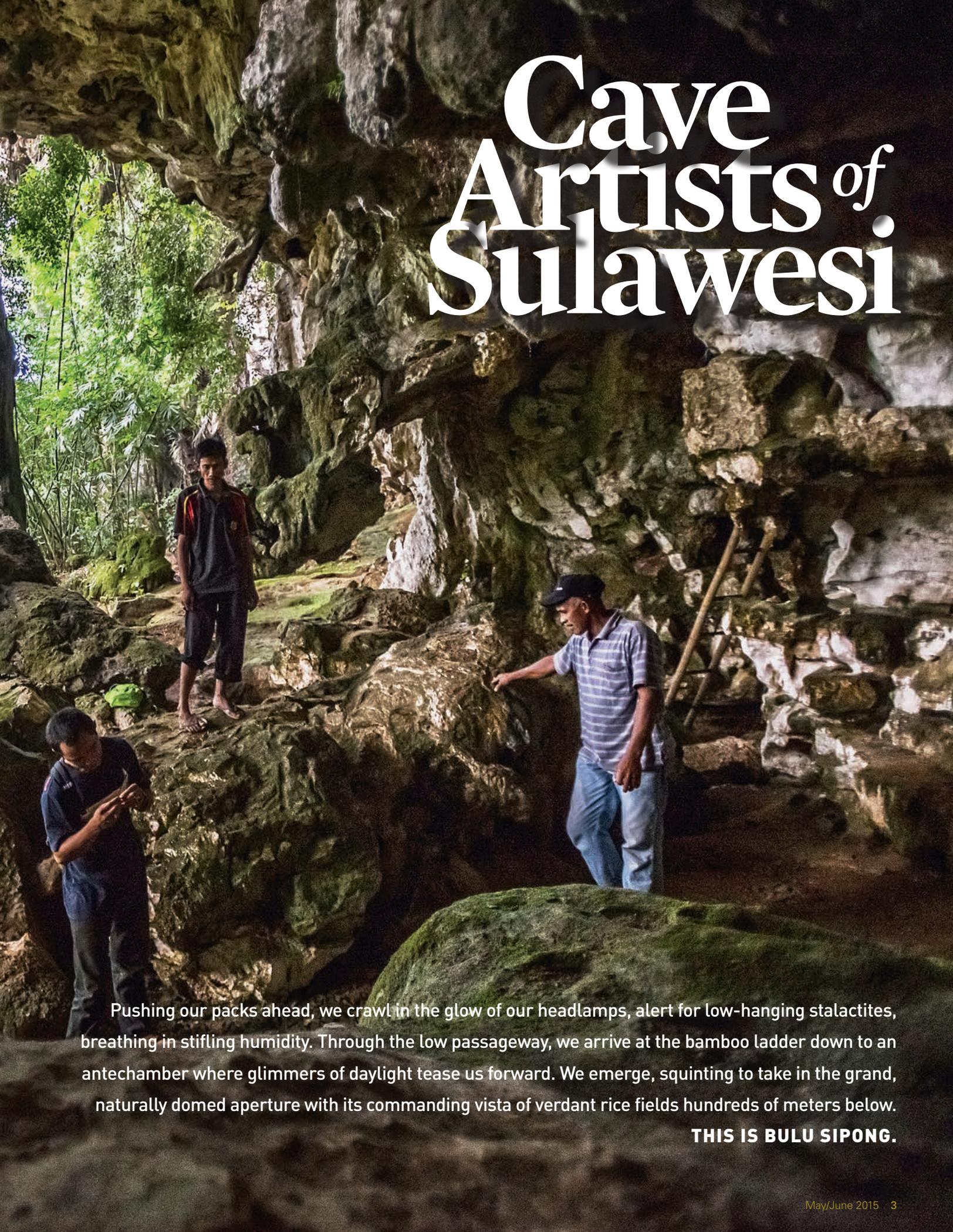
Architect and builder by profession, Ibn al-Shaykh of Málaga wrote the most accurate description known of Egypt's famous mariner's sentinel—in what was essentially a primer for children, where it went unnoticed for nearly 800 years.



Written by GRAHAM CHANDLER

Photographs and video by MERIDITH KOHUT





Cave Artists *of* Sulawesi

Pushing our packs ahead, we crawl in the glow of our headlamps, alert for low-hanging stalactites, breathing in stifling humidity. Through the low passageway, we arrive at the bamboo ladder down to an antechamber where glimmers of daylight tease us forward. We emerge, squinting to take in the grand, naturally domed aperture with its commanding vista of verdant rice fields hundreds of meters below.

THIS IS BULU SIPONG.



For years, Indonesian archeologists harbored strong hunches that some images in the caves dated back toward the arrival of modern humans 40,000 to 50,000 years ago.



BULU SIPONG IS JUST ONE OF HUNDREDS

of limestone caves in the Indonesian province of South Sulawesi, a little over an hour's drive north of its capital Makassar, a region where some of the world's oldest cave paintings have recently taken on new importance. One in particular—a red-hued hand stencil made by spraying wet pigment over a hand laid flat on the cave wall—was recently confirmed as the oldest known hand stencil image anywhere in the world: It was painted at least 39,900 years ago. That date has placed this region of South Sulawesi, called Maros-Pangkep, on the emerging world

Previous spread: **Archeologists and guides explore Leang Jarie ("Hand Cave"), one of several recently discovered homes to some of the world's oldest hand stencil-paintings.**

map tracing the origins and evolution of human cognizance and creative expression. It's a date that challenges long-held theories that this kind of art originated in southwestern Europe and spread eastward through south and Southeast Asia into Australia along early modern-human migration routes. As old as the European paintings 13,000 kilometers away, it shows for the first time that humans were producing advanced art forms along the entire breadth of the routes—from west to east—at similar times in prehistory.

We have come to Maros-Pangkep to talk to the Indonesian archeologists who have spent careers studying these caves, and to see for ourselves the art that's behind this latest expansion—if not revolution—in thinking about early human history. It's February, the rainy season, but fortunately, the skies have turned blue for the four days we have to explore 10 of the area's

best “cave-galleries” with archeologists Muhammad Ramli and Mubarak Andi Pampang.

The art in these caves has been known to locals and archeologists at least since the 1950s, and probably much earlier for those who live close by and whose ancestors had been scouring these hills for game and medicinal herbs for centuries. Until recently, it had been assumed by world archeologists that the Maros-Pangkep images couldn't be more than 10,000 years old due to the rapid erosion rates common to tropical karst (limestone) environments. But for some time, Indonesian archeologists based in Makassar had strong hunches that many of the images were much older, that they were created not long after modern humans arrived in the region 40,000 to 50,000 years ago.

“We made an assumption from the excavation evidence and compared it with evidence such as bones, shell

is critical to the study of the origins of religion and art; that in turn is critical to understanding the origins of creativity in the human mind. Even the simplest figurative art demonstrates a cognitive ability to produce representational images, as opposed to forms like cross-hatched lines engraved on a shell such as have been found in Java, Indonesia, dated to 500,000 years ago.

Just where and when figurative art begins has long intrigued archeologists. Modern humans, or *Homo sapiens*, evolved in eastern Africa some 200,000 years ago, and the current best

evidence shows that some of them migrated out of Africa both through the Levant and across the lower Arabian Peninsula. From there, some traveled west into Europe and others traveled east, spreading across south and Southeast Asia to reach Australia fairly rapidly, by about 50,000 years ago. Crucial to studies of the origins of figurative art is where along these great treks it appeared.

Theories formulated in the late 19th century pointed to art's origin in southwestern Europe and a gradual diffusion of



deposits and red ochre,” says Budianto Hakim, who is a researcher at Makassar's Archeological Research Office. “We based it on carbon dating and got 30,000 years ago.” (In fact, at one cave site we visit later, that evidence goes back 35,000 years.) But, as Hakim realizes, you can't directly infer that paintings will be of the same age as adjacent

stylistic ideas eastward. This was based on where the oldest art known to date had been found. As a result, a Eurocentric view of the origins of figurative art dominated the field for decades: The oldest non-figurative cave painting in the world so far is 40,800 years old, a red disk from El Castillo in northern Spain; the earliest known figurative rock art is a painted rhinoceros in France's famous Chauvet Cave, which has been carbon-dated to the range of 35,300 to 38,827 years ago. At the far eastern end of early human diffusion, the oldest rock art in Australia has been established at around 30,000 years old, although pigment and used hematite (a deep red iron ore) “crayons” have been found there in deposits dated to somewhere in the broad range of 36,000 to 74,000 years ago.



Opposite, left: **Members of the four-day expedition that took *AramcoWorld* to 10 of the Maros-Pangkep caves descend a bamboo ladder out of the interior of the cave named Bulu Sipong.** Above: **Archeologists Muhammad Ramli and Mubarak Andi Pampang, who work for the Centre for the Preservation of the Cultural Heritage of Makassar, capital of South Sulawesi, arrive at the shelter that serves as a base camp for research in the Leang-Leang Prehistoric Park where a sign, top, points to a cave: *Leang* means “hole” or “cave.”**



Pampang, left, says the Centre welcomes new discoveries of rock art that add to the more than 90 now surveyed. “We give full credit to the discoverer, honoring them each year and often providing them jobs,” he explains. Ramli, above, has been studying the caves and the art since the 1980s.

artifacts: The artists may well have been at work millennia after—or before—someone left the artifacts.

Dating the world's earliest art, particularly anything figurative,

date. Although it was used to date the Chauvet Cave rhinoceros image, the carbon-14 method is generally not useful, and it is often controversial, as it depends on the meticulous separation

of the chemical components of the paint to determine organic—and thus datable—ingredients. A method more recently applied to cave art, called uranium-thorium series dating, was used to date that oldest cave painting, the red disk in El Castillo.

But uranium-thorium doesn't directly date the paint: Instead, it dates samples taken from calcite accretions—where they are present—both under and over paint layers. The date of the calcite beneath the paint provides a maximum age, and the date of the accretions over the paint give a minimum age.

Uranium-thorium series dating has its detractors: A 2015 publication in the journal

Quaternary International by French scientist Georges Sauvet and collaborators claims much of the natural uranium can be depleted by leaching, skewing the results. “Application of the U/Th method for the dating of prehistoric rock art is still experimental,” they summarize. “Technical improvements and fundamental research on the causes of error are needed.”

Practitioners of the method respond that taking a sufficient depth of calcite for a sample minimizes this risk. “In order to control for this, we try to date layers in stratigraphic order,” says Alistair Pike, a reader in Archaeological Sciences at the University of Southampton who participated in the El Castillo dating.

Uranium-thorium is the technique that Maxime Aubert of the Place, Evolution and Rock Art Heritage Unit at Griffith University in Gold Coast, Australia, employed to date the Sulawesi art. “In our study, we measured at least three, and up to six, sub-samples per sample. Their ages are all in chronological order, confirming the integrity of our samples. If uranium had leached out, we would have had a reverse age profile—meaning the



Above: It was this hand stencil, in Leang Timpuseng, from which uranium-thorium dating of the rectangle-shaped sample, taken from near the little finger, yielded a minimum date of 39,900 years. Mimicking the artists' method, Pampang lays a hand on a wall in another cave, right: Of all the motifs in these caves, the hand stencils are the most common. The practice, asserts world cave-art specialist David Lewis-Williams, was not so much "to make a picture of a hand ('I was here'), but rather to make contact with the spiritual realm and its power."

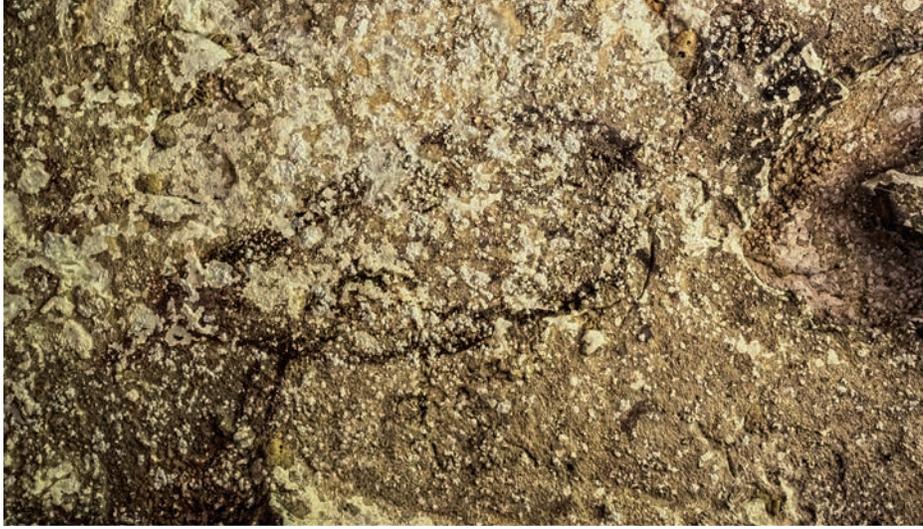


ages would have got older toward the surface where they should be younger,” he explains. Aubert first became involved here in 2012 when colleague Adam Brumm, who was working with the Indonesian archeologists on the paintings, noticed the calcite deposits on top of the paintings, and together they invited Aubert to “come over and have a look.”

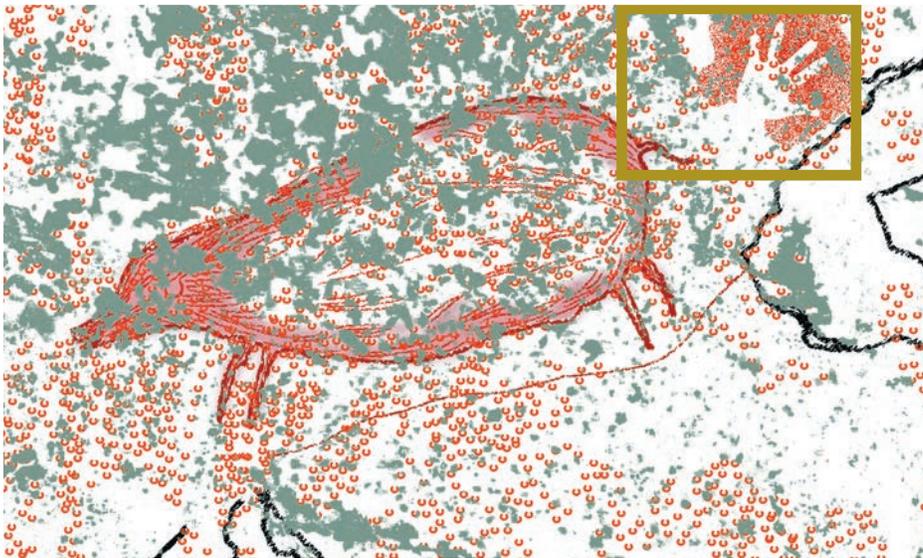
Our own adventure starts in Makassar, at the city's popular tourist attraction, the Dutch colonial Fort Rotterdam, which houses the Balai Pelestarian Cagar Budaya

Maxime Aubert of the Place, Evolution and Rock Art Heritage Unit at Griffith University in Gold Coast, Australia, used multiple sub-samples to ensure the accuracy of the dating.





Adjacent to the oldest known hand stencil is this now-faint drawing of a babirusa ("pig-deer"), left, that Aubert dated to 35,400 years old, near the time of the oldest figurative cave art in Western Europe. The archeologist's drawing below shows the babirusa, the handprint, flaked-off (exfoliated) areas as well as dozens of dot-like calcite accretions known as "cave popcorn" or, scientifically, coralloid speleothems.



familiar to fans of a popular Hollywood archeologist played by Harrison Ford. We nickname him "Indonesia Jones." He smiles and leads us out.

Chatter in the car on the busy road north toward Maros is of endless curiosity. Are previously undiscovered paintings still being found? Yes, says Pampang, we encourage locals to report new findings, and then government archeologists go in and survey them. "We give full credit to the discoverer, honoring them each year and often providing them jobs as maintenance and security for the sites," he explains. "We ensure they understand it's their own proud heritage."

Limestone karst formations soon dominate the landscape. We are driving on a flat plain, mostly of rice fields, but just a few kilometers away these closely grouped steep hills of limestone rise

DRAWING: LESLIE REFINE, GRAPH & CO / COURTESY MAXIME AUBERT; OPPOSITE, LOWER: BLAINEY WOODHAM

Makassar—the Centre for the Preservation of the Cultural Heritage of Makassar. A sprinkling of rain spatters the coconut palms and the fort's yellow walls with their red-trimmed windows and doors. Our guide and interpreter, archeologist Mubarak Andi Pampang, meets us and leads us up old granite stairs to the offices of Muhammad Ramli, second in command at the Centre. Sitting at his desk below Indonesia's national coat of arms, he greets us warmly and shares coffee. Clearly eager for the trip, he dons a hat

South Sulawesi Cave Region





Deep in the interior of Leang Sakapao, archeologist Ramli points out a painting—so far unique—showing a pair of mating babirusa with handprints around it.

abruptly from their green cover like giant loaves of bread 200 to 300 meters high. These are the formations that have become the art galleries. Covering a total area of about 450 square kilometers, they parallel the southwestern coast of Sulawesi, and they were sculpted over eons by rivers draining from the interior. At least 90 rock art sites have been recorded, and Ramli reckons many more remain.

We arrive at Leang-Leang Prehistoric Park, at the foot of the hills, where the Centre maintains a dozen staff who look after the caves and undertake excavations. The park is dotted with stunning natural limestone sculptures: Some wouldn't look out of place in a Henry Moore exhibition. A small river and yellow, blue and brown-patterned butterflies complement the picture; Sulawesi is known for its diversity of butterfly species. This is where we will spend the next four nights: sleeping on the floor of the archeologists' one-room wooden guest house, built on stilts.

Not wanting to waste even a precious minute, Pampang and Ramli take us to see our first paintings, in Leang Pettakere, within the park, before lunch. Pampang explains that "Leang" in Indonesian literally means "hole," and the term is also applied to mean "cave." It's a trudge through rain forest and a short climb in the sweaty South Sulawesi humidity to the cave's entrance—like many we will encounter, this one has a gaping opening, framed by overhanging limestone shaped into massive, leg-like vertical protrusions formed by millennia of erosion; vines twist around them like so many art nouveau ornaments.

The near-silence of the caves is broken only by the constant drip-drip of water. There is art, almost right away: We see our first images of the babirusa, or "pig-deer," indigenous to Sulawesi and long hunted for its meat but now on the endangered species list. Ramli points out an early attempt at restoration of the painting. "Balai Pelestarian Cagar Budaya Makassar tried to conserve the paintings by sharpening the paint-line, as we can see here," he says, but it is, he adds, rapidly fading.

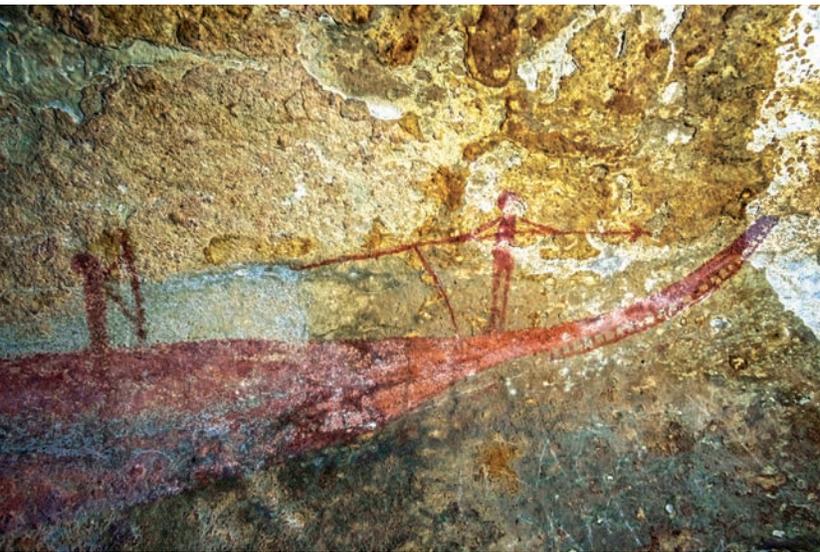
These Sulawesi animal images, and those we see over the coming four days, share many characteristics with known western European cave images. World expert David Lewis-

Williams, professor emeritus and senior mentor at the Rock Art Research Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, has observed, studied and written on the European paintings since the 1960s. "They are sometimes superimposed on another," he writes. "They are often juxtaposed without attention to relative size. Many are fragmentary, the head being the most frequently depicted part of animals."

Images face in differing directions, with no ground surface depicted. Hooves and other parts are not always drawn, but when they are shown, they sometimes hang loosely rather than stand on an imaginary ground surface, he adds. Moreover, "Images are presented devoid of contexts, with no trees, grass or other surroundings." Remarkably, we see that these observations can be said of the Sulawesi paintings, too.

And hand stencils are common to nearly all of these caves.

**The Sulawesi paintings
have many characteristics
in common with European
cave paintings.**



Also unusual among the Maros-Pangkep imagery is this boat with two people, which appears on a wall in Bulu Sipong. One person appears to be spearing fish while the other poles the craft.

Speaking of the southwestern European hand stencils, Lewis-Williams says interpretation is complicated: Image-making was, he asserts, a ritual. “One has to recognize that the caves are passages into a spiritual subterranean realm,” he says, adding that they are “veils” between worlds. “Placing a hand on the veil was not primarily to make a picture of a hand (‘I was here’), but rather to make contact with the spiritual realm and its power. Paint applied to the hand was probably a ‘solvent’, a powerful substance that facilitated penetration of the veil.”

Ramli points out that here, “some of them have incomplete fingers, only three or four, and some only the palms, and some show the arm.” Similar incomplete finger images are found



Above: This painting is interpreted by Ramli and Pampang as showing a woman with spiky hair dragging a lassoed anoa—an animal much like a small water buffalo. Left: At the entrance to Leang Sakapao, expedition staff stop for coffee and snacks.

in the western European and Australian hand stencils, too. Competing theories have been put forward on their meaning, from fingers bent as a sort of sign language, to ritual severing of fingers and even natural causes such as gangrene. “Some interpretations by previous researchers have compared them with the Papua and Aborigine culture, who cut their finger [off] when they are in grieving,” adds Ramli.

On the practical aspect, some experiments were carried out in the early 1990s by French prehistoric art specialist

Michel Lorblanchet in a cave in France. He replicated “spit-painting” by spraying paint from his mouth about 7 to 10 centimeters (2" to 4") from the rock wall, and he very closely duplicated various hand images.

It’s not known if the practice has been continuous, but a hand-stencil tradition exists even today among the dominant ethnic group of southwestern Sulawesi, the Bugis. When a family builds a new house, before they move in, the head of the family places his hand in a nut- or rice-powder mixture and presses an image on the main beams of the structure in a ceremony conducted by a specially designated master of ceremonies. The act is reputed to bring good fortune to the new residents.

Next we trek along raised sod walkways around rice fields and the occasional cattle farm to Leang Burung 2 whose long history of excavation stretches from 1970 to 2012. Most of



the caves are named by the locals based on what they first saw when the cave was discovered: “Burung” means “bird,” and Pampang tells us swallows used to nest here extensively. This site is not in a cave, but rather at the foot of the cliff, above which is a cave with paintings. The four-decade excavation went as deep as six meters below the surface before watering over, and it provided archeologists with one of the most continuous records of humans making tools and dining going back 35,000 years—the oldest evidence for modern humans in Sulawesi at the time. (Other sites, in Java, have evidence back 45,000 years.)

A sister site nearby called Leang Burung 1 shows how quickly many of the images are fading ever since trees were cleared from near the entrance, which admits more sunlight and carbon dioxide.

Four caves on the first day was an inspiring start. Back at base camp, the local archeology catering crew has brought in dinner: rice, fish and a soup Westerners would call oxtail, but here it’s the popular Indonesian *sop buntut*.



Pulverizing ochre that remains common in the area, Ramli, left, demonstrates the first step in making the pigment used for many of the drawings.

and flashlights on everything from a pelican eyeing a fish to a figure of a woman with a spiky hairdo dragging a lassoed anoa—an animal much like a miniature water buffalo, also endemic to Indonesia. The anoa is rarely seen today, and Pampang tells us it is now a protected species. The pelican has a gracefully curved neck; the fish in its gaze sports a perfectly formed tail and body. There's more than animals here: we spot one of the few Indonesian examples of a foot stencil.

To us, the images appear remarkably well preserved, but Ramli tells us when he first saw them in 1980 there were many more, and clearer, images. Increasing amounts of calcite



Left to right: A turtle depicted with its cross-hatched shell, head, tail and flippers/legs in Leang Bulu Balang; a pair of fish appear to almost swim in a small pool on the front wall of Leang Lasitae. "These are of ocean species, whereas the Jing cave paintings showed freshwater fish," notes Pampang. A small figurative painting, in Leang Jarie, shows a person.

Day Two's dawn brings a cultural diversion. Syarifuddin, a Bugis local, invites us into his home to see his ceremonial hand-prints made four years ago. He greets us with his wife, Mirnawati, and son Mohammed Dirgah. Sure enough, although faded, his handprints grace each of the home's six vertical beams.

Now it's back to caving. We plod along berms around more rice fields, with the occasional foot sinking ankle-deep into the mud, as we approach the karst. Pampang says this is a low-water area not usually accessible in rainy season, so we're fortunate to get to Leang Jing ("Evil Cave"). It's a rocky ascent in squishy, wet boots, onto rickety bamboo ladders whose rungs are twice as far apart as a more comfortable ladder.

But once we are inside the cool and dim interior, it becomes clear the ordeal is worth it. We're facing a veritable tapestry of the ancient hunting and fishing life. We play our headlamps

are obliterating many of the pictographs. He shows us where Aubert's team took a dating sample with a tiny diamond-bladed saw: this one came in at 25,000 years old.

Nearby Leang Jarie ("Hand Cave") was so named because when first discovered, it was a cave with nearly all handprints and hand stencils. But now, as with most of the other caves, the majority are covered with recent calcite intrusions, and few are clear. Ramli thinks one cause of the intrusions in all these caves is increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide, which reacts with the limestone to form new calcite deposits on the surfaces.

Next it's Leang Timpuseng—the cave that perhaps among all is the one we came so far to see: This is where the oldest hand painting in the world was dated by Aubert. Ramli shows us the stencil, and the tiny spot along the edge where the sample was almost surgically removed. There are the precise layers in cross

section: the calcite layer above the paint, the very thin reddish paint stratum and the limestone beneath it. We gaze in admiration at the meticulous sample that has made this a “ground zero” where a revolution in theory has been set in motion. And the hand isn’t all: A sample taken from the babirusa image here dated to 35,400 years old, which makes it one of the oldest in the world of an animal.

Our third day we start north and pick our way for 30 minutes through rice field pathways to Leang Lasitae. Above the front of the cave are two fish, crossed at right angles, and inside are numerous excellent fish images. Pampang explains that the predominantly marine imagery reflects what was likely the major resource: the ocean, which today lies some two kilometers distant, but then may have been closer. “These are of ocean species, whereas the Jing Cave paintings showed freshwater fish,” he says. The shapes are so

other painting of mating babirusa. Indeed, such couplings are extremely rare in the European caves, too.

Our final day brings us to Bulu Sipong cave after an hour in highway traffic and a half-hour boat ride along an inland waterway in a traditional, long, narrow fishing boat with a single-cylinder motor, followed by our 20-minute climb-and-crawl through the cave. There’s a new sight for us here, too, a technique common to the western European images but rare in Sulawesi: using natural rock features to emphasize subject images in a sort of a bas-relief. We see the method used to portray a centipede that is painted upon a naturally raised rivulet of calcium carbonate, which is used as the body of the creature. And, depicted both in profile and from above, a rare image of a boat and, aboard it, two humans. One appears to be spearing fish and the other poling or paddling the craft.

This centipede, left, in Bulu Sipong, shows the artist’s use of natural rock features to emphasize aspects of the subject, a technique common to the cave images in western Europe but rare in Sulawesi. Right: This faint image shows a pelican, with a curved neck, looking at a fish. Lower: A manta ray, painted in Bulu Sipong.



accurate, he adds, that they can infer the species.

From here, we walk a short distance to Leang Bulu Balang, which also faces toward the water. Here, we see our first images of turtles. Two turtle paintings sport cross-hatched shells, distinct heads, tails and flippers. We’re told these turtles, too, are endangered species.

Continuing the pace, Pampang promises something unique for our next cave. After one of the wettest treks in, through flooded rice fields that again mud-pack the boots, then a steep climb up the limestone detritus, Leang Sakapao doesn’t disappoint. Painted on a low ceiling, not much over a meter in height, so we have to lie on our backs to view it: a realistic image of a pair of mating babirusa. Ramli lies back in the cave dust and points out the details. “As we can see, there is a male pig-deer and the other is the female.” He knows of no



These watercraft images would be ideal for dating, says Ramli, but unfortunately, they lack sufficient calcite overlay. One more rare sight: a painting of a manta ray.

In a later interview back in Makassar, Hakim offers an explanation of why we saw so much wildlife in the caves. “We always related the painting to some kind of magical, sacred ceremony, as a hope or prayer that the hunting will get a good result,” he says. It was also a way of describing their environment, he adds.

Over the past four days, it feels as if we’ve not only seen paintings, but glimpsed also into prehistoric minds that we are only now recognizing put Sulawesi into the global picture of the early evolution of art. But like all new theories, this one too will take some time to crystallize, and that only after much more research and many more dating projects, if it is to be fully and unarguably accepted.

Hakim figures a whole lot more cave art, too, remains to be discovered and dated. He sees ancient Sulawesi as one of the geographic melting pots for the first migrations of modern humans. For example, “Kalimantan [Borneo] was one bridge to Sulawesi,” he says, and as a result, that is a prime new area to test.

Aubert agrees. He says he is planning more dating of rock art in Sulawesi, and he is currently dating paintings found in Kalimantan. By determining the ages of more Southeast Asian rock art, he will provide the Sulawesi works with a context.

The new dates from Sulawesi, says Aubert, “suggest a deeper origin for human creativity, perhaps in Africa.”

But time is of the essence in a more urgent sense, too. As we’ve seen on all four days of cave visits, the Sulawesi paintings are under environmental attack. They are fast disappearing. Back at the Makassar offices, we sit down in the Centre’s library with a concerned Iwan Sumantri, lecturer in archeology at the city’s Hasanuddin University. “As a researcher, as an archeologist, I am very worried for the mining around the prehistoric caves in Maros-Pangkep,” he says. “Moreover, how the local people threaten the preservation of the caves, such as burning rice stalks around them—making deterioration of the rock paintings faster.”

Conservation has taken on new urgency with the new dating. Sumantri says the first step in site preservation is documentation, and that about 90 of 127 caves with art so far discovered have been recorded. Second, he advocates a public information and awareness program, followed by rules and restrictions. “Physical conservation can be conducted, for example, to make the paintings last longer by searching out materials related to other rock art paintings.” Physical barriers, like fences at some of the more important sites, will help reduce vandalism, he adds.

After all, these are globally important sites. “It has implications not only for our understanding of rock art in Southeast Asia and Europe but also Australia,” writes Paul Taçon of Griffith University and his co-authors in a 2014 *Antiquity* article entitled “The global implications of the early surviving rock art

A ledge along the steep trail up the bluff to Leang Sakapao offers a dramatic view of surrounding hills, blocked partially by a massive, trunk-like pillar of limestone. The increase of population and human activity in the region is changing delicate balances of carbon dioxide, moisture and other environmental conditions that have preserved the paintings for so long, lending urgency to further dating work and regional conservation.





Teenagers stroll along a path in Leang-Leang Prehistoric Park, where the cave art is well documented; however, most of the 127 known caves lie outside the park's boundaries, and so far, only 90 have been surveyed. Right: In what may be a contemporary echo of a practice that began 40,000 years ago, Syarifuddin, a resident in a village near the park, shows the faded ceremonial handprints that he placed four years ago on the timbers of his home to bring—as tradition has it—good fortune.

of greater Southeast Asia.” He adds, “For instance, in Kakadu-Arnhem Land and other parts of northern Australia, the oldest surviving rock art consists of naturalistic animals and stencils. This opens up the possibility that the practice of making these sorts of designs was brought to Australia at the time of initial colonization, but it may alternatively have been independently invented or resulted from as yet unknown forms of cultural contact. All three possibilities are equally intriguing.”

To address these questions, Alistair Pike says new areas of

investigation now must include places like the Arabian Peninsula, where new research is currently under way, India and along the coastal migration routes.

It is the Sulawesi dates that have set it all in motion. “The new dates open a new chapter in the history of human creativity,” says Aubert. “It shows that at the same time, at opposite ends of the world 40,000 years ago, our species was painting the walls and ceilings of their caves. It suggests a deeper origin for human creativity, perhaps in Africa, and it reinforces the idea that our species is special, that art made us human.”

This is uniquely pleasing in Indonesia, says Hakim. “All this time Europe was known to have the oldest rock art painting. Now the oldest is in Maros, and I am truly proud of it,” he says. ☺



Passing villages and often chatting with residents along the way, archeologists Ramli, Pampang and their team boat out after four days in the caves. Local relations, says Pampang, are key to successful conservation. “We ensure they understand it’s their own proud heritage,” he says.



Writer **Graham Chandler** (www.grahamchandler.ca) focuses on topics in archeology, aviation and energy. He received his doctorate in archeology from the University of London and lives in Calgary, Alberta.



Meridith Kohut (meridith.kohut@gmail.com; meridithkohut.com) has produced news, features and video photojournalism from throughout Latin America for numerous world publications since 2008. A graduate of the University of Texas School of Journalism, she lives in Caracas, Venezuela.



Related articles at
www.aramcoworld.com
 Caves of Saudi Arabia: M/A 00
 Early migrations: S/O 12
 Rock art in Saudi Arabia: M/A 02



Explore the cave-galleries of South Sulawesi:



Through the bazaar's vaulted stone passageways, the coppersmiths' hammers tap-tap-tap patterns onto platters and bowls. Spice merchants heap chromatic cones, geometrically shaped to fill the air with scent. Shoemakers line their windows with handmade, cherry-red leather slippers, each tip curved delicately upward like a crescent moon. Every piece of merchandise, it seems, proclaims that Gaziantep (gah-zee-AHN-tep), in Turkey's southeast, is proudly alive with artisanal traditions.

WRITTEN BY *Gail Simmons*
PHOTOGRAPHED BY *George Azar*

And what Gaziantep is most proud of today is crafted not in its bazaars but in its kitchens: baklava, the sensually syrupy pastry of layered, paper-thin filo dough and crushed pistachios, first beloved in the bygone Ottoman Empire and today on menus and grocery shelves worldwide. Gaziantep's baklava, locals say, isn't just good: It's the world's best. That being quite a claim, I've come to investigate.



Freshly baked baklava fills the window of one of Gaziantep's more than 500 producers of the dessert that says "Middle East" like no other. So many bakers, says food specialist Filiz Hösükoğlu, right, means "there is great competition," and this "creates ambition to be the very best."

Accompanying me through the bazaar, where beyond the shoe-makers, glass-fronted baklava cafés vie with one another in their temptations to the peckish, walks Gaziantep native, food researcher and writer Filiz Hösükoğlu. I ask her if she believes the baklava hype.

"Everybody thinks the best baklava is produced in their own town," she says. "But people living in Istanbul—my relatives, my friends, colleagues—they always buy their baklava from Gaziantep. For special occasions, from all over Turkey, they kept calling, and in the end I said: 'Here are the telephone numbers to order it yourselves!'"

For her, the thriving artisanal traditions I had noticed in the bazaar are part of the reason Gaziantep's baklava stands out. "Where there are more than 500 baklava producers, as there are in this city, there is great competition," she explains. "And this competition means each producer excels in what he is doing. This

creates ambition to be the very best."

Geography has also favored Gaziantep, which lies along a major trunk of the Silk Road, the historic network of land and sea routes that wove together the empires of China and Asia with those of the Mediterranean and Europe, and which flourished for more than 1,500 years from the second century BCE. "When people travel the Silk Road, they bring ideas, have conversations. This is why Gaziantep cuisine is so rich," Hösükoğlu tells me. For as well as its baklava, the city is renowned for its kebabs (meat, vegetable and fruit),

The final touch of baklava-making is syrup, heated to precisely 108° centigrade (226° F) and poured onto baklava just out of the oven, here by head chef Coşkun Koçak. "Only in Gaziantep is the syrup added hot to freshly-baked baklava," says Hösükoğlu. "This hot-to-hot is what gives Gaziantep baklava its very special flavor."



bulgur wheat meatballs (*köfte*), dried aubergine (eggplant), stuffed grape leaves (*dolma*) and more. So confident is Gaziantep of its traditional cuisine that the city recently submitted its baklava to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intangible Cultural Heritage list, hoping it will join the recently accepted Turkish coffee.

But among all, it is the baklava for which Gaziantep cuisine is best renowned, even though the pastry is anything but unique to this city, or indeed even to Turkey. It's on the dessert menu throughout western Asia and the eastern Mediterranean, and it enjoys many regional characteristics.

"In Greece, they use walnuts instead of pistachios, and they add cinnamon," says Hösükoğlu. "In Iran, they add cardamom to a walnut-and-sugar mixture, and they flavor their syrup with rosewater. The Armenians add a ground nut mixture for every three or four layers of filling. But only in Gaziantep is the syrup added hot to freshly baked baklava. This hot-to-hot is what gives Gaziantep baklava its very special flavor."

According to culinary historian Charles Perry, a contributor to the *Oxford Companion to Food* who has translated four medieval Arabic recipe collections, baklava descends from layered breads first made in the Middle Ages by Turkish nomads in Central Asia. "The 11th-century Turkish dialect dictionary *Diwan Lughat al-Turk* records the expression *qatma yuvgha*, which translates in Arabic as *khubz mughaddan*, literally 'folded bread,' and





At Koçak Baklava as in the city's many other baklava kitchens, chefs roll filo dough so thin you can read a newspaper through it. This is craftsmanship, says Burhan Çağdaş. "The chef who makes and rolls out the dough cannot talk. He cannot think about anything other than baklava. He must be fit. He is only allowed to roll out the dough until the age of 35. Baklava chefs are like football players!"



At the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, records a procession called the *Baklava Alayı* in which the sultan presented a "tray of baklava for every 10 janissaries [on] the 15th day of Ramadan"—a practice that ended in 1826 with the disbanding of the elite-corps janissaries by Sultan Mahmoud II. Today, it is still something of a festival dish in Turkey, one served most frequently at en-

gagements, weddings, funerals and religious holidays such as *'id al-fitr* and *'id al-adha*.

In Perry's two early Persian recipes, however, the baklava was filled with lentils, rather than the nuts common today (although in Istanbul, palace recipes for baklava with a chickpea filling appeared as late as the 19th century). Today it is for pistachio nut fillings that modern baklava—particularly the baklava of Turkey—is best known. Pistachios are a key ingredient in a dish that has only seven (not counting the syrup): durum wheat flour, eggs and salt for the pastry, milk and semolina for the *kaymak*, or cream, which is added to the pistachios for the filling, and clarified butter. According to Efkân Güllü, owner of the baklava shop named Güllüoğlu Efkân Güllü and whose ancestors opened the first Güllüoğlu in 1871, it comes down to the sheer quality of these ingredients to impart to Gaziantep baklava its unique flavor. Now, Güllüoğlu is a national chain, with branches throughout Turkey and beyond, in-

to this day, the Central Asian Turkic nations make layered breads," he wrote. "The same word, *yufka*, is applied to the paper-thin sheets of dough from which modern baklava is made in Turkey."

Perry goes on to assert that some of the first recipes for what we would today recognize as baklava appeared in an early 16th-century Persian cookbook *Karnameh dar Bab-e Tebakhi ve Son'at-e An*, although he has also found a recipe for a dish that has some similarities with modern baklava in a 13th-century Arabic cookbook, *Kitab al-Wuslah ila al-Habib*, in which the pastries are fried crisp and topped with sugar, rosewater and pistachios. But it was in the royal kitchens of Istanbul's Topkapı Palace, during the 15th and 16th centuries, that according to Perry, the type of layered baklava familiar to 21st-century consumers probably evolved.

And it seems that, even in its very earliest incarnations, baklava was a special dish, one fit for ceremonial occasions. Syed Tanvir Wasti, emeritus profes-





Baklava filling is called *kaymak*—a cream of milk and semolina—and it is mixed with the ground pistachios, the most expensive ingredient. Gaziantep is near some of the world's best pistachio orchards, and most of its baklava contains about one-fifth pistachios by weight. At left, a tray of baklava bakes for 25 minutes at 200° centigrade (392° F).

pistachios from Gaziantep's renowned pistachio orchards. Those pistachios destined to fill baklava are picked early in the season, when they are small and sweet.

"The nuts are harvested only during the first week of August when they are green. If we don't take them from the tree when we do, just one week later they will be too yellow and we cannot use them for baklava," he explains, referring to the larger, more mature nuts that end up packaged as snacks on the world's supermarket shelves. Then there are the tubs of butter, bags of sugar beet for the syrup and sacks of durum wheat flour, all fastidiously arranged. He offers to demonstrate how baklava is made.

"We start at about 3 o'clock in the morning," Güllü says, showing me into a large kitchen where teams of chefs, all

cluding New York City.

Güllü is showing me around his warehouse for baklava production. First, there are the

dressed in crisp white aprons and neat caps, are working on different stages of the production. First, the pastry chefs feed a lump of dough into a mechanical roller. This begins the process of flattening the dough before it's rolled by hand with a wooden rolling pin on a marble slab, which keeps the dough cool. The sheet of yufka (filo) becomes thinner each time it's smoothed, and it is generously sprinkled with handfuls of wheat starch to prevent it becoming sticky. It's utterly mesmerizing.

"You can only get this thin doing it by hand," explains Güllü, who holds a piece of his company's wrapping paper behind the sheet to reveal that the dough is so thin you can read through it.

After around 15 minutes of strenuous hand-rolling, the dough is stretched across a circular tin and cut around the circle before another layer is added.

"This will be the top of the baklava, and we use the cut-off edges for underneath, so nothing is wasted," he continues. The chef works quickly. The layers are so fine that the dough can soon become dry and unusable. With a flat knife like a spatula, he spreads the kaymak into the dish, and then covers it with a generous layer of green pistachio pieces. More layers are added, until the dish contains around 40 layers of yufka with clarified butter spritzed between each one.

The baklava is then cut into the traditional diamond shape,



although squares and triangles are also popular. More warm clarified butter is poured onto the mixture before it goes into the oven, the furnace lined with black stones from nearby İslahiye and fired with oak wood. Here the baklava bakes for exactly 35 minutes, at exactly 200 degrees centigrade (392° F), in precise accordance with Gaziantep's Chamber of Industry's regulations on baklava production. When it's ready, the head chef—in this case, Güllü himself—pours the syrup, heated to precisely 108 degrees centigrade (226° F), onto the cooked baklava. It's cooled on marble for around 20 minutes before being packed, sold in the shop and eaten—ideally within four days.

This entire, labor-intensive process has taken one hour. I feel privileged to have witnessed it, as for many Gaziantep baklava producers, manufacture is a carefully guarded secret.

So confident is Gaziantep of its baklava that the city recently submitted it to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, hoping it will join the recently accepted Turkish coffee.

Another Gaziantep baklava maker, Burhan Çağdaş, owns Imam Çağdaş, a baklava shop whose roots go back to 1887. Over a plate of his baklava in his restaurant in the city center, with the medieval citadel, baths and caravanserai nearby, I ask him why people say Gaziantep baklava is the best.

“It's not just my opinion. I was part of the team that went to Brussels last year to register our baklava with the European Union for protected status,” he tells me. Gaziantep's baklava is the first Turkish product to receive the coveted status, which stipulates that only baklava that is both actually from Gaziantep, and that also follows rigorous production criteria, can carry the description “Gaziantep baklava.” Çağdaş thinks he knows why the bid succeeded. “We have the best ingredients, all of them carried on the Silk Road,” he says. The wheat comes from nearby Harran, where the soil is not irrigated—ideal conditions for the hard durum wheat. The butter comes from the Tektek Mountains, an area where, according to Çağdaş, the grazing is rich with native flora, which imparts to the clarified butter its distinctive flavor. And then there are the famous Gaziantep pistachios from the orchards that surround the city.

“The best ingredients make the best baklava,” he concludes.

Speaking to the same question, culinary historian

Charles Perry concurs by email that “you can find superb baklava in Damascus, as it was an administrative center under the Ottoman Empire and still has a substantial Turkish population.... But I still think Gaziantep makes the best, perhaps because it's the pistachio capital of Turkey, and consequently has a strong artisanal tradition of baklava-making.”

There is yet another ingredient, Çağdaş adds: workmanship. The qualities of a baklava chef are honed through a minimum of 10 years of training.

“The chef who makes and rolls out the dough cannot talk. He cannot think about anything other than baklava. He must be fit. He is only allowed to roll out the dough until the age of 35. Baklava chefs are like football players!” He goes on to say that in the kitchens, even negative body language is not allowed. “Baklava chefs must always look happy,” he declares.

In the 1940s and 1950s, before Çağdaş was born, baklava producers would lock their kitchen doors to keep safe the company’s secrets, but it’s local lore that some producers nevertheless learned rivals’ techniques by peeping through the keyholes of their doors.

I leave the restaurant and wander the old caravanserais (*hans*), testimonials to this city’s former prominence on the Silk Road. Many are now shops and restaurants patronized by the tourists and shoppers who throng the nearby bazaars. In a busy street just outside the covered part of the Elmaci Bazaar is the shop of baklava maker Elmacipazari Güllüoğlu, and it is owned by brothers Cevdet and Murat Güllü, kinsmen of Efkan Güllü. Its tables are filled with people savoring the pastry, washing it down with fluted glasses of sweet tea.

“In Gaziantep, it’s very hard to be a successful baklava producer,” Murat says. “But we haven’t changed what we learned from our grandfathers. We always make it the same way. Tradition is very important in Gaziantep. Here, everybody is a master of baklava. Most people will say, yesterday I bought baklava from there and it was perfect, or from another place, and it was perfect—it’s their subject of conversation.”

Two men in smartly pressed business suits tell me they are from Ankara, the Turkish capital. I ask why they came to this particular shop for baklava. “It’s so light and tasty,” says one. “In Ankara you can only eat one slice, but here I can consume four slices easily!” They go on to say that everyone has their favorite baklava producer, and will return to that same one, time after time. To do otherwise, he says, would be tantamount to betrayal. “It’s like having your favorite football team. Just as you cannot change your team, you cannot change your baklava maker,” he says as his fingers sweep from his plate the last sweet crumbs. 🌐



Ready for sale or shipping, each Gaziantep baklava wraps its filling in some 40 layers of filo. Left: Owners of the baklava bakery named Imam Çağdaş, which opened in 1887, Burhan, Talat and Talat Çağdaş are among the city’s multi-generational baklava families.



Historian and travel writer **Gail Simmons** (www.travelscribe.co.uk) surveyed historic buildings and led hikes in Italy and the Middle East before becoming a full-time travel writer for UK and international publications. She holds a master’s degree in medieval history from the University of York and is currently earning her Ph.D. She lives in Oxford, England. Photojournalist and filmmaker **George Azar** (george_azar@me.com) is co-author of *Palestine: A Guide* (Interlink, 2005), author of *Palestine: A Photographic Journey* (University of California, 1991) and director of the film *Gaza Fixer* (2007). He lives in Jordan.



Link:
kocakbaklava.com.tr



Related articles at
www.aramcoworld.com
Pistachios: N/D 13



Gaziantep baklava-making in video and time-lapse:

COINS



of Two Realms

Written by

CLIVE FOSS

Photographs courtesy of the author

Coins are such ordinary, everyday objects that we hardly pay attention to them, but it's hard to imagine a day without the small transactions they make possible. No less taken for granted is that worldwide all are official products of governments, and as such, they often bear simple but fundamental names, images and ideas that say much about that government.

It is the Lydians of what is now western Turkey who are credited with the invention of coinage around 600 BCE when

they stamped their symbol of state on pieces of metal as a guarantee of value. Ever since, coins have proven to have value also as historical records, cultural keys, evidence of trade, relations between states and the extent of a particular economy. They are all the more valuable when written sources are absent or problematic. Such is particularly the case in the mid-seventh century CE, during the first decades of Islam in the Levant, Mesopotamia and Persia. The historical texts we have were mostly written a century or more after the events they describe. Especially scant are records of the first decades of Islam, from the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632 CE to the mid-700s, that could inform us about the workings of the early caliphate and daily life in its provinces.

During the lifetime of Muhammad, Arabia did not issue its own coins, and coins are rarely mentioned in the Qur'an. For commerce, gold coins from the Byzantine Empire and silver ones from Persia were circulating, but they were used as bullion by weight rather than as coins with a fixed and often arbitrary value.

When the Arabs expanded into the Near East in the middle of the seventh century, however, they came into close contact with societies that had issued coins for centuries. The Byzantines, who ruled what is now Turkey, Syria, Palestine and Egypt, produced gold and copper coins while the Persian Sassanids, who dominated today's Iran and much of Iraq and Afghanistan, relied largely on silver. In all cases,

their coins bore an image of the ruler and an indication of religion: crosses for the Byzantine Christians and fire altars for the Persian Zoroastrians. The most common types of coins in the Byzantine realms were copper; the largest was somewhat larger than a US quarter or one Euro, and it carried an "M", the Greek number for a denomination of 40 *nummi*. The Persian realms used larger, thinner silver *dirhams*, a word derived from the Greek *drachma*.

The Arabs rapidly adapted to this system by striking copper coins in Syria, Palestine and Egypt as well as silver ones in Iraq and Iran. While all types showed continuity with the local traditions, the issues in Syria were the most varied, while those of the Sassanid territories conformed most closely to existing standards. All offer surprises and insights into the situation in the Near East during the early period of Arab rule.

The first surprise is that actual Byzantine coins continued to circulate extensively in Syria and Palestine for decades after the Arab conquest: gold ones endured longest, until the end of the seventh century; copper ones lasted some decades, until about 660 CE. Most of these copper coins were issues of Constantine II (r. 642-668 CE), and they showed the emperor on the obverse and "M" on the reverse. No one knows how these coins crossed the frontier between realms that were almost constantly at war. They seem too numerous to be explained exclusively by trade; the alternate explanation is a conscious Arab policy. In any case, the coins reveal close economic ties between the rival powers of Byzantines and Arabs.



The Byzantine coins were joined by masses of imitations, some close to the originals and others in a bewildering variety of types derived from them. They seem to represent a chaotic period in which local officials took the minting of coins into their own hands, as we don't know who issued them or much about when and where they were struck. It is hard to tell which, if any, of these imitations were the products of government authorities, but some types have symbols or inscriptions that suggest organization, even if they remain ambiguous or inscrutable.

Many of these coins follow Byzantine convention: The imperial figure has crosses in his hands and on his crown, and the denomination on the reverse usually has a cross above it. **1** On others, however, the crosses were removed. **2** All were issued under Arab rule, and while some bear inscriptions in Arabic, there is nothing Islamic about them.

Distinctly Islamic coinage first took shape under Mu'awiya ibn 'Abi Sufyan, founder of the Umayyad dynasty in 661, nearly three decades after the death of the Prophet. As an organizer, Mu'awiya brought the whole Islamic realm of the time under central control, and he mobilized annual campaigns by land and sea against Byzantium. And yet he also took pains to neutralize religious differences by striking gold coins that looked Byzantine: the obverse showed figures like the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, who ruled from 610 to 641, as well as his son; while the reverse showed the characteristic Latin inscription, the cross of the Byzantines was replaced by a staff with a small crossbar like an elongated letter "T". *The Maronite Chronicles*, written in the mid-seventh century by an anonymous Syrian annalist, asserts that the population, which was then still overwhelmingly Christian, boycotted these early coins because they had no cross, and indeed they were withdrawn from circulation. One rare specimen has survived from a hoard buried near Antioch in Syria. **3** (That Mu'awiya in 663 or 664 began dating coins using the Islamic *Hijri* calendar appears not to have provoked comparable objections.)

Despite this setback, Mu'awiya introduced order to the minor coins in two stages. The first series featured the traditional standing imperial figure, but it added the name of the mints where they were struck in Greek or, in some cases, in both Greek and Arabic. The main issue similarly had inscrip-

tions in Greek, Arabic or both, but with a distinctive type at each mint: a bust at Homs, in western Syria **4**; a standing figure at Damascus; two figures at Baalbek (today in Lebanon); and so on. The issues of Damascus, the capital, circulated throughout Syria and Palestine, indicating widespread commerce. These new bilingual coins still functioned in a traditional context, with familiar Byzantine types and crosses prominently displayed.

Several things are at work here. First, the conservative attitude that people have toward their money: In the US, for example, the one-dollar note has been virtually unchanged since 1928, and the portrait of Abraham Lincoln on the cent coin has been used continuously since 1909. In Britain, the seated figure of Britannia of the reverse of the penny lasted some 300 years. Likewise, in Syria the Byzantine types continued long after Byzantine rule. They thus represent cultural continuity: People lived in the same towns and villages; they traded with many of the same merchants; they used the same pottery and, for it all, the same coins. Perhaps most important, though, is that these coins indicate tolerance and accommodation on the part of the early caliphate.

The 20-year reign of Caliph 'Abd al-Malik, the fifth Umayyad caliph, which began in 685 CE, reflected a more distinctly Islamic program, manifested most dramatically in the construction of Jerusalem's *Haram al-Sharif* (Dome of the Rock) and his edict to conduct all government business in Arabic. In coins, experimentation marked his first years: The caliph replaced the imperial figure, the cross disappeared, the inscriptions became exclusively Arabic and—for the first time—words from the Qur'an appeared.

These new gold coins, with their Islamic inscriptions in Arabic, caused an international crisis. Because of a treaty that followed an earlier defeat, 'Abd al-Malik had

Most of the Syrian and Egyptian coins are far from being works of art; some of the early imitations even look like the work of a village blacksmith. The bilingual bronzes, on the other hand, are far better designed and struck than contemporary Byzantine issues. Likewise, the gold reflects careful design and execution, as fine as any coinage of the age anywhere.



r. 632-634 (11-13AH)
Caliph Abu Bakr

600CE 610 620

r. 610-641 (13BH-20AH)
Byzantine Emperor Heraclius

5



6



8



9



been paying tribute to the Byzantines. When, in 692, he tried to pay it with the new coins, Emperor Justinian II (r. 669-711 CE) refused them because the coins were of a type never seen before. Refusal of the tribute broke the treaty, and war followed. The offending coin was the gold piece that had three standing figures devoid of Christian symbolism on the obverse and a staff with a globe replacing the cross on the reverse. But most telling was the reverse inscription of the Muslim *shahadah*, or profession of faith: *bismallah la illah illa-allah muhammad rasul allah* (“In the name of God, there is no god but God alone, Muhammad is His messenger”). **5**

From then on, Islam was typically proclaimed on all coinage. Whether or not the coins single-handedly really provoked war, they certainly played an important role in relations between the hostile states, and they served as an important vehicle of propaganda.

The next stage of establishing a new Arab coin system brought standardization, with the image of the caliph on gold, silver and copper. The precious metal coins are rare today, but the copper ones, issued at 16 mints, are common. Several of these mints were in the frontier regions from which armies were deployed against Byzantium, suggesting that the coins were produced for the military or its suppliers.

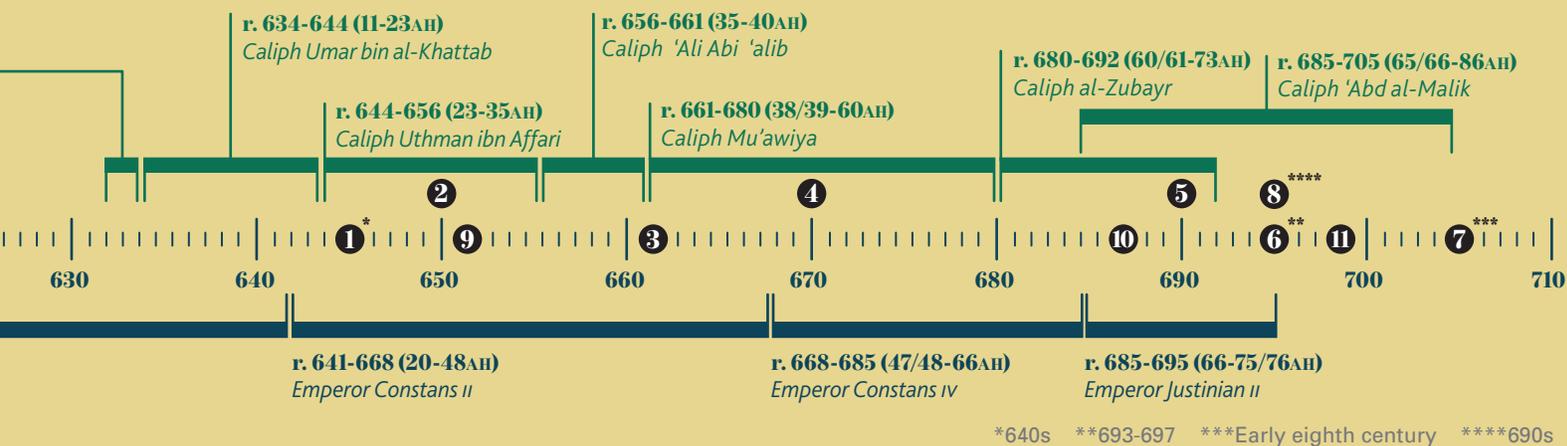
For the first time, the coins bore the figure of the caliph, who is identified as “The servant of God ‘Abd al-Malik, commander of the believers,” and on the reverse there appeared an object that has been identified as the *qutb* (rod or staff) symbolizing the caliph’s spiritual guidance, with the *shahadah* set around it. **6** The figure of the caliph was likely a common one: This one is strikingly similar to the statue **7** found in the Umayyad palace at Khirbat al-Mafjar, near Jericho. These coins were issued for four years, from about 693 to 697.

In Egypt, coins of the same period show much less variety. Egypt was far more centralized politically, and it used only one mint, in Alexandria. Its small, thick copper coins (no gold or silver was issued there) followed the same general development as the Syrian ones, though employing a different denomination. They began with imitations of the Byzantine, with the mintmark, “ALEX.” These yielded to a type inscribed, “MASR,” which was the Arabic name for the new Islamic capital at Fustat, now in southern Cairo.

Another series shows “ABAZ” in place of the mintmark, evidently representing the name of ‘Abd al-Aziz, governor of Egypt and brother of Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik. **8** This type no longer bore the crosses that featured on the earlier issues. Egyptian coins rarely circulated in Syria, and likewise, Syrian coins are virtually never found in Egypt, which shows that Syria and Egypt formed largely separate economic zones.

In the Persian lands, the existing network of mints con-





tinued to produce silver *dirhams* with only minor changes for the first 20 years of Arab rule that began in 651. The obverse bore the name and image of the previous Sassanian ruler, and the reverse added only the Arabic *bismallah* (“In the Name of God”) to the margin. The face of the coin continued to bear inscriptions in Pahlavi and an image of a Zoroastrian fire altar flanked by two priests. ⑨ By 685 CE, dirhams struck in Bishapur, Iran, added *Muhammad rasul Allah* (“Muhammad is the Messenger of God”). ⑩

So far, the imagery of the Arab-issued coins largely fit the established pattern: the figure of a ruler on the obverse and another culturally distinctive figure or symbol on the reverse. But at the close of the seventh century, ‘Abd al-Malik had united the empire and began to strike a universal coinage

at mints throughout the caliphate. Beginning in 77 AH (697 CE), an entirely new type of gold coin appeared, one showing Arabic inscriptions alone, mostly from the Qur’an. On the obverse: “There is no god but God alone / He has no associate / Muhammad is the Messenger of God” and “He sent him with guidance and the true religion to make it victorious over every religion.” On the reverse: “God is one, God is eternal / He did not give birth and He was not born” and “In the name of God, this dinar was struck in the year 79.” ⑪ The silver, with even longer inscriptions, followed two years later, as did the copper, whose smaller size was suitable only for the shahadah.

Today, these gold and silver coins (together with the mosaics inside the Dome of the Rock) represent the oldest surviving texts of verses of the Qur’an. At the same time, the old copper coins of Syria, with their Byzantine images, were called in and re-struck with the new inscriptional types. ⑫ This fundamental reform produced a truly Islamic, universal coinage, suitable to a united polity. Ever since, coins of Islamic countries have, with very few exceptions, avoided depictions of the human figure.

So, what do the coins tell us? In economic terms, they reveal a close connection with Byzantium for two decades after the conquest; they show that the whole region, city and country alike, remained on a money economy; they illustrate patterns of trade and military activity. Their cultural significance is even greater. They reveal the endurance of pre-Islamic symbols and, in Iran, rulers, for a half century or more, reflecting tolerance and accommodation during the age of transition from classical antiquity to Islam. ⑬



Clive Foss is retired from teaching history at Georgetown University. He lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he collects coins and writes on Byzantine and early Islamic history, archeology and numismatics.



Related articles at www.aramcoworld.com

Ptolemaic coins: N/D 06

Eucratides stater: S/O 97

Islamic coins: J/A 78

If I Forget

*you,
Don't Forget
me*

**IBELONGTOACOMMUNITY
BROUGHT TOGETHER BY A
COLLECTIVE LIFE JOURNEY
THAT IN TURN CREATED A
CULTURE OF ITS OWN. THIS
GENERATION CAN NEVER
BE REPLICATED. FOR ME,
THIS CREATES AN IMPOS-
SIBLE PAST TO RELATE TO ...
BUT I WANT TO RELATE.**

By reconstructing the memory of my late father's generation of men and women, I wanted to create my own stories and personal narratives from the collective memories of these men and women ... I want to own my past.

In times of uncertainty, it becomes hard to predict the future. By creating an emotional bond to the past, I can place myself in the present and gain an understanding of the historical story I belong to ... I want to own my future.

How do you photograph a memory that is forever changing? How do you capture a moment that existed 50 years ago in Saudi Arabia, let alone begin to understand it, on its own terms and on my terms? I document the journeys of the men and women, one generation before me, who came from different walks of life and met at a single point where they took off to the future together.

In one of my interviews, an oilman said, "I was lucky to be part of a generation that saw its dreams become a reality."

I, too, want to dream.

PHOTOGRAPHED AND WRITTEN
BY *Manal AlDowayan*



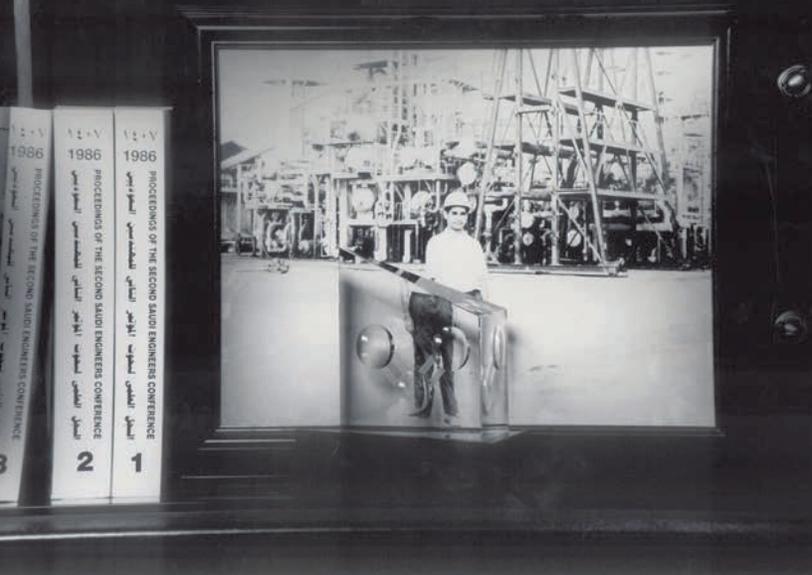


MOHAMMED AND OIL

This photograph was my motivation behind creating portraits of oilmen and women using as my subject matter the objects they collected over their lifetimes. This photograph is of my father in his high school classroom that was funded by Aramco. The oil samples were given to him by the company to learn the types of oils in the industry. These objects, along with others my father used in his life, like pens and mugs, had zero value to us growing up, but as soon as he passed away, they became precious mementos that carry a lifelong story. In this project, I searched for stories within people's objects by creating a portrait of what they chose to keep.

BADER'S CAMERA

Bader is a Palestinian who was forced to leave his country due to Israel's occupation. He came to Saudi Arabia in 1950 to work for Aramco. In 1978, Bader became a Saudi national. His career with Aramco lasted more than 41 years. Of all his prized possessions, he presented me with a box. Inside was an immaculately preserved camera and photos from his past. The pictures were of his house and his family in Palestine, both of which are no longer reachable. This box is suffused with evocative memories only Bader can fully re-live.

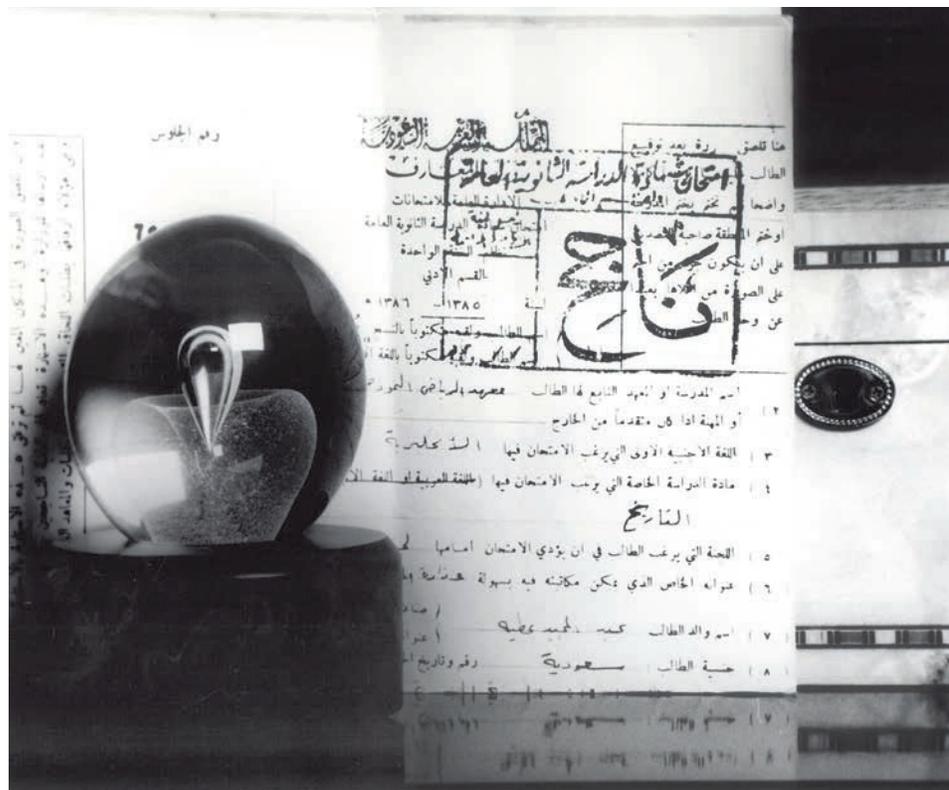


H₂O

Saud, a chemical engineer who was a shepherd as a child, told me the story of a dreadful drought that occurred in Saudi Arabia when he was eight years old. His father feared that their livestock wouldn't survive, so he had his eldest and youngest sons cross the Dahna desert with the sheep to sell them to the nearest town. The only sustenance they carried for this trek was a bag of dates and a leather bag of water. They survived that journey. Saud then moved to live with an uncle who had settled in a town with a school. He started going to school at age 10. After graduation from high school, he was lucky to be selected by the Ministry of Education, along with 20 other high school graduates from various parts of Saudi Arabia, to go to the United States for college: He earned his bachelor's degree in 1964 from the University of Texas in Austin. He then went to work for Aramco until 1997, when he retired as senior vice-president international operations of what had by then become the largest oil company in the world. In this photograph, you see an image of Saud standing in a plant during his first Aramco job. The object in the foreground is a model of a water molecule, H₂O, which he had described with genuine enthusiasm to me, as any true chemical engineer would. Saud's story is a reminder of how young Saudi Arabia is as a country.

OIL DROP

Oil drops were a common commemorative gift in those days, so I came across many in the homes of the men and women I interviewed. The focus of this photograph is the certificate in the background that has the word "passed" printed on it. It is a high school diploma that was presented to this young woman who ranked first among all the men and women in her grade. At the time, King Faisal issued a decree announcing that the top 10 high school graduates would receive a scholarship to study in America. When this woman requested her scholarship from the ministry, she was rejected and informed that this opportunity was only applicable for men. She traveled to King Faisal's palace in Ta'if and personally requested he grant her the scholarship she deserved, and he did. This woman opened multiple doors for women in Saudi Arabia to pursue higher education. She dedicated her career and life to training and developing women within Aramco. The tribute oil drop symbolically honors her lifelong achievement.



If I Forget You, Don't Forget Me is an attempt to reconstitute the collective memory of a generation that forever changed the face of Saudi Arabia's economic and political landscape. These men and women, including Manal's father, remained a mystery to her despite her having lived around them her entire life. Rather than nostalgically document historical elements from times past, this series opens history to interpretation and closer examination. What journeys did they take? Why did they leave their lives in tribal villages and join this young, burgeoning industry? How were they impacted by their studies abroad, and what part of the cultures they integrated with was imported and incorporated into their way of life?

Every seemingly banal item is memorialized and rendered precious. These objects contain hidden narratives and a link to understanding a pivotal generation that, in Manal's words, "straddled the divide between extreme poverty and extreme wealth. This can only happen once. No other generation will ever bear witness to this epic transformation."

BASHAR AL-SHROOGI
CUADRO GALLERY, DUBAI



MOHAMMED'S PENS

This photo captures a moment of extreme hope, energy and eagerness for the future. It was a turning point for many men who were in this photograph. These are students who gathered from across the Kingdom to attend English classes at Aramco. Upon completion of this class, they traveled to Beirut in 1961 to attain their high school diplomas, and then they moved on to America for their college degrees. Mohammed Saeed Al-Ali stands with his classmates next to him in the center. To his right stands my father. Also in this portrait I have included his Cross pens, which remain protected in their original box. The Cross pen is an award that Aramco, like other companies, bestowed to commemorate a certain number of years of service by an employee. These pens were valued as a mark of achievement. The Cross pen triggers countless memories for many Saudis whose fathers were of the same generation as mine and who had great achievements marked by small and personal objects.



OIL FAMILY

This photograph documents a journey of separation and reunification taken by a small Saudi family that moved between two cultures, adapting and flourishing. The family portrait was taken shortly after the arrival of Madhawi and the children, who traveled from Onaiza in Al-Qaseem province to New York City, where they were reunited with their husband and father, Hamad, who was still studying at the time of their arrival. This image is a portrait of a happy family, more Western in appearance than Saudi. The hardhat symbolizes what oil accomplished for this family as well as many families in Saudi Arabia: Oil was the stimulus for attaining dreams.





NASSER

In the foreground of this photograph is an image of Nasser at the beginning of his career, and in the background is his portrait after his retirement. Nasser, smiling in the front row, second to the left, joined Aramco as a very young boy. His job was to wash the engines of the cars American geologists used when they explored the desert. He endured a tough life growing up as a Bedouin and an even tougher life working for the company, initially at the lowest level. Nasser eventually retired from his position as an executive vice president. Nasser and the men and women who are in this project are a unique generation that saw the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at its poorest and later at its richest. They have a profound and unique understanding of what it means to build your dreams from scratch. No other Saudi generation will understand this state of mind.



THE FIRST

Mona carefully preserved stacks of news articles written about her at the time she graduated from high school, ranking first among all the young men and women in the Kingdom. Prominently placed on her desk was a photograph of her father, a strong advocate of her and her sisters' education. Mona related many stories about his sacrificing a great deal to ensure his daughters were well educated. He sent Mona, at the age of five, to boarding school at a French convent in Cairo. She moved back home during the political unrest between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Her father passed away when she was only 11, and his dying wish was that his daughters continue their education. Mona continued to study and received her degree.



IF I FORGET YOU

In this project, I made it a point to do most of my interviews and photographs within the spaces these men and women created after they had retired: the post-retirement "office." Noticeably, these offices eventually evolved into storage spaces or gyms. This particular photograph was the inspiration for the title of this whole collection because, while I was printing it, I noticed the frame on the right carried a prayer that translates, "God, if I forget you, don't forget me." I found those words to be so relevant to this project: How does one stop the act of forgetting? I guess through prayer. 🌐



Artist **Manal Aidowayan** works in black-and-white photography, sculpture, video, audio, neon and participatory installations that have attracted hundreds of women to use art to address social issues. Her works are in museum and private collections worldwide, and this year she was selected for a Robert Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva, Florida. She holds a master's degree in systems analysis and design, and she lives and works between Dubai and her native Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.



www.manaldowayan.com



Related articles at www.aramcoworld.com

Contemporary photography S/O 14

Contemporary art N/D 07

Text and photos excerpted from *If I Forget You, Don't Forget Me* by Manal Aidowayan and edited by Leila AlHabbal, published in 2013 by Cuadro Publications, ISBN 978-9948-16-986-4. The author gratefully acknowledges the project's participants: Mohammed N. Aidowayan, Mohammed Saeed Al-Ali, Nasser Al-Ajmi, Mona A. Attiya, Saud Al-Ashgar and Bader Biltagi. All images ©2015 Manal Aidowayan and reproduced with permission.

Brill's Bridge

TO ARABIC

WRITTEN BY
TOM VERDE

IMAGES COURTESY OF
BRILL

Amsterdam's 1883 International Colonial and Export Exhibition was a lavish, five-month celebration of Dutch colonialism and capitalism that drew more than a million visitors from around the world. Still, Amin ibn Hasan al-Halawani al-Madani al-Hanafi, who had traveled all the way from Cairo, was disappointed.



M

uslim jurist and part-time book dealer, al-Madani (as he was known in the West) had come in hopes of selling a large collection of manuscripts amassed during his travels throughout the Islamic world. Sitting alone at his exhibition table, he failed to interest a single passerby. That was, until he

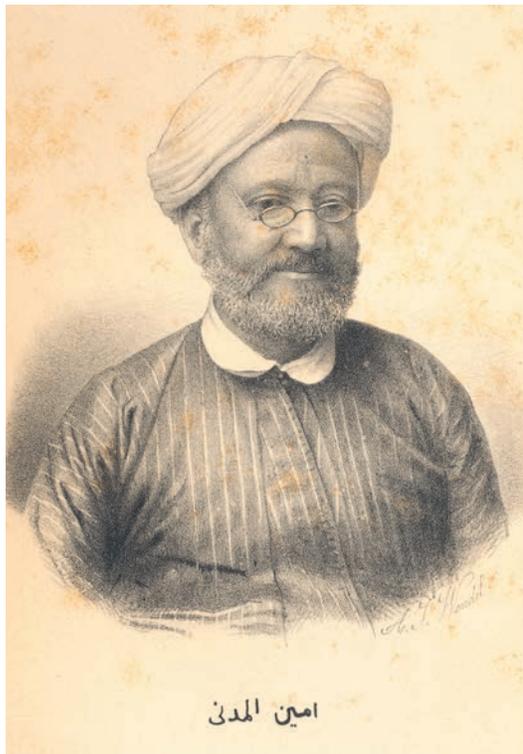
bumped into an acquaintance, Count Carlo de Landberg, a Swedish aristocrat and scholar of Arabic. He suggested al-Madani try talking to E.J. Brill, a publishing house in the nearby city of Leiden.

The Count's tip paid off. Not only did Brill's editors arrange for Leiden University's purchase of his entire, 600-vol-

Since its founding in 1575 along the Rapenburg Canal, Leiden University has drawn leading thinkers in many disciplines, including the study of Arabic and other "Oriental" languages and literature. Near its *Academiegebouw*, or main academic building, depicted above in the late 18th century, Jordan Luchtmans in 1697 opened a booksellers and publishing house whose relationship with the university—and with its Arabic scholars in particular—developed what Leiden professor Léon Buskens calls "a particular synergy."

ume collection, they accommodated him like a minor celebrity, feting him about town and introducing him to the local intelligentsia, who invited him to the Sixth International Congress of Orientalists in Leiden. There, as the lone Arab among some 300 European Assyriologists, Egyptologists, Arabists and the like, al-Madani was impressed at their mastery of Arabic and their passion for Arabic literature.

Their expertise was no coincidence. By the time of al-Madani's visit, Leiden's reputation as Europe's leading center for the study of Arabic was long established. From the



Amin ibn Hasan al-Halawani al-Madani al-Hanafi, known in the West more simply as al-Madani, visited Leiden in 1883, by which time the city's reputation as Europe's leading center for the study of Arabic had been long established. Brill bought a large collection of his collected manuscripts.

has decorously endured. From its very first Arabic text, published in 1732—an edition of Ibn Shaddad's 12th-century biography of Saladin—to its monumental, ongoing *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Brill has brought to Western scholarship hundreds of works that undergird the entire fields of Arabic and Oriental studies. And it all began as many businesses do: with a bit of vision, a prime location, and some family connections.

As the location, from 1575, of Leiden University, the fashionable Rapenburg Canal has long been the city's intellectual hub and, at one time, its publishing center. Having shaken off the yoke of Spanish Catholic domination during the Eighty Years' War (also referred to as the Dutch War of Independence, 1568-1648), the assertively Protestant city became known as a haven of religious tolerance, scientific innovation and unfettered thought. It was in Leiden that a group of English émigrés found refuge before setting sail for the New World on a ship named *Mayflower*; where in the university's medicinal garden Europeans first cultivated tulips, which had come as a diplomatic gift from the Ottoman court; and where the works of Galileo and Descartes (whose address for a time was Rapenburg 23) could be published in defiance of papal censors.

Brill's roots reach deeply into this past. In 1683, a 31-year-old bookseller named Jordan Luchtmans registered with Leiden's book sellers' guild and apprenticed in both Leiden and The Hague before opening a shop in 1697 at No. 69B Rapenburg. Some 150 years later, his business would

late 16th century, philosophers, theologians and linguists from across the Netherlands and Western Europe had flocked to the university in this handsome little Dutch city, about a half hour by car or train southwest of Amsterdam. Laboring with what Arabic manuscripts they could get their hands on, these scholars “revolutionized the study of Arabic,” says Alastair Hamilton, co-director of the University of London's Centre for the History of Arabic Studies in Europe, and “assembled one of the very best libraries of Arabic works in Western Europe.”

From two centuries prior to al-Madani's visit and continuing up to the present day, the centers of this intellectual activity have lain not only at Leiden University, but also with the firm of Brill, the oldest publisher in the Netherlands and among the oldest in Europe. Through wars, empires and economic booms and busts, Brill



In 1849, the bookshop passed to Evert Jan Brill, who ran it until his death in 1871. In the same year al-Madani visited, the firm moved to this building, which, although it is today a block of apartments, still carries the company name.

In Luchtmans's day,

bookshops and publishers were mostly synonymous. A bookshop owner operated as a publisher: The shop sold mostly what it printed. Book binders, too, were a separate trade: Instead of bound books, customers purchased folios (printed sheets) that they then took to a binder, often attached or affiliated with the book store. The binder would fold, gather, glue and sew the sheets into a finished book, for his additional fee.

become Brill. His location, next to the *Academiegebouw*, the university's main academic building, was known as "the realm of Pallas," after Pallas Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom, whom Luchtmans paired with Hermes to adorn his colophon, which today remains Brill's. Luchtmans's wife, Sara van Musschenbroek, descended from intellectuals and publishers including Christoffel Plantijn, printer to Leiden University and the famed publisher of one of the earliest polyglot (multilingual) Bibles, which he printed in one Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Aramaic and Syriac edition.

The broader European interest in Arabic and other "Oriental" languages at the time was in part commercial,

In this 17th-century depiction of Leiden University's library, at bottom right appears the *Arca Scaligerana*, a cupboard that held more than 300 printed works in Arabic, Hebrew and Ethiopian. Donated by Arabist and humanist Josephus Justus Scaliger, opposite lower, the collection not only was seminal to the study of languages and literature at the university, but also reflected Scaliger's own ideas that Arabic was best studied neither as a commercial nor a religious tool, but rather as another path to knowledge.



and Seventeenth Centuries, Hamilton observes how Erpenius's *Grammatica* remained the standard manual for the study of the language for two centuries, and "even when it was superseded in the 19th century," Hamilton notes, it "was still the model on which later works, including the present standard Arabic grammar by William Wright, were based."

Over the next three-quarters of a century, generations of Luchtmans continued to seek out and publish books on the languages, literature and history of the Middle East and Asia. As the university's official printer, the firm's symbiotic relationship with the school enabled Leiden professors to easily publish research in the emerging academic fields of Egyptology, Assyriology, Indology, Sinology, Persian and Arabic studies.

By 1848, the last Luchtmans descendant to run the firm, the professorial J. T. Bodel Nijenhuis,



E. J. Brill

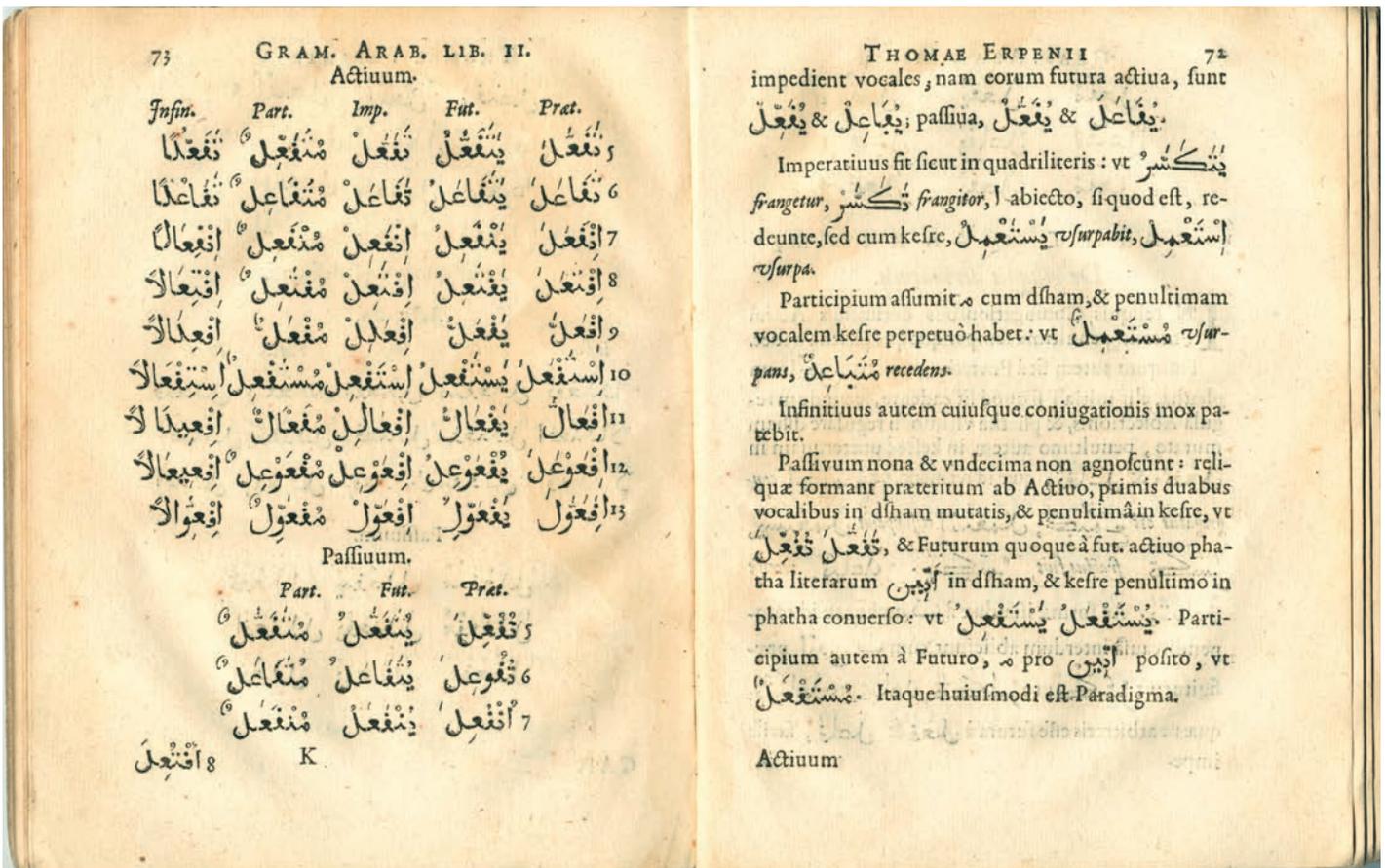
When the Luchtmans family entrusted Evert Jan Brill with their nearly 150-year-old business in 1849, Brill's family had worked for the firm for a generation.

retired to pursue his academic interests. The family and its sundry partners sold the business to the man they considered the most fitting heir: Evert Jan Brill.

Brill's family had worked for Luchtmans publishing since 1802. Evert well understood its day-to-day operations, and he shared the company's dedication to Arabic and Oriental studies. Under the firm's new, eponymous name of E. J. Brill, he courted top writers, such as the Arabist and Al-Andalus specialist R. P. A. Dozy, whose *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne*, published by Brill in 1861, remains a standard history of Moorish Iberia.

Perhaps even more significantly, Brill expanded the number of scripts and typefaces in his publishing repertoire: In addition to Arabic, he published Hebrew, Aramaic, Samaritan, Sanskrit, Coptic, Syriac, Persian, Tartar, Turkish, Javanese, Malay, Greek and several of their variants. From 1866-69, he rolled out the multi-volume *Études*

Modeling his work on well-established Latin grammars, Thomas Erpenius, Leiden University's first professor of Arabic, wrote *Grammatica Arabica*, published by Luchtmans. It remained in use for some 200 years.





Leiden University's preeminence in Arabic studies arose from its scholars' interest in seminal, often complex manuscripts that Luchtmans, and later Brill, also committed to publishing. After the Scaliger donation, one of the largest collections given to the University came from Levinus Warner, who lived some 20 years in Constantinople in the 1600s. His *Legatum Warnerianum* (Warner Legacy) holds such rare publications as ibn Hazm's *Tawq al-hamma* (*The Ring of the Dove*) from the early 14th century, far left, and the third volume of the ninth-century *The Annals of Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari*, left.

from the Holy Cities, Hurgronje's writing provided

egyptologiques (Egyptian studies) by Willem Pleyte, director of Leiden's National Museum of Antiquities and a member of Brill's own board of directors. This required not only Egyptian hieroglyphs but also hieratic, the script used for millennia by Egypt's priestly class—yet one more of the exotic, specialized typefaces that made Brill the world's top publisher for the most arcane and eclectic selection of texts both in and about Oriental and Middle Eastern languages.

"They excelled in printing in Oriental languages," says Kaspar van Ommen, coordinator of Leiden University Library's Scaliger Institute, "and they still, up to this day, remain one of the few publishing houses that can print in hieroglyphic, in Urdu, in Batak and in all these strange Oriental typefaces."

Brill himself died in 1871, aged 60, but his successors carried on and began to recruit more and more foreign scholars, too. The 16-volume *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk* (*History of the Prophets and Kings*), a ninth-century history of the Middle East by Persian historian Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, was published between 1879 and 1901, and required the efforts of 14 Arabists from six countries. Directing them was a pupil of Dozy's, Leiden professor M. J. de Goeje.

De Goeje's own star pupil was another Leiden professor and Brill author, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, who became a Muslim and, shortly afterward, spent a year between 1884 and 1885 in Makkah. There, he wrote a two-volume historical and ethnographic study of the city. Together with two books of some of the earliest photographs

scholars a wealth of new, detailed information on all aspects of the Hajj—especially pilgrimages from the former Dutch colonial possessions in what are now Indonesia and Malaysia.

By 1883, the year of al-Madani's visit, Brill had outgrown the Rapenburg bookshop, and it remodeled a former orphanage at 33a Oude Rijn ("Old Canal"). Massive granite lintels on the four-story building's brick façade still display the towering inscriptions in capital letters, "E. J. BRILL" and "BOEKHANDEL EN DRUKKERIJ" (bookstore and printshop), even though the building today is an apartment complex. Technologically cutting-edge at the time, the "shop" was more like a factory, with a pair of steam-driven elevators to haul bundles of paper and other materials to the upper floors.

At the turn of the 20th century, Brill no longer operated as the university's exclusive printer. In 1896 it had become a publicly traded company, and it was experiencing unprecedented growth. Many investors met with Brill's directors in the nearby *Den Vergulden Turk* (The Gilded Turk), a building whose elaborate tympanum sports a bust of a "Turk" in a gold turban, symbolizing the city's long-standing commercial interests in the East. In the early decades of the 20th century, the company published some 450 titles—three times as many as had E. J. Brill in his own lifetime; it also expanded its academic journals. "Scholars in all quarters of Europe, in Asia and in America were familiar with the name of Brill and knew the way to the Oude Rijn," writes Sytze van der Veen in his 2008 history of the company, *Brill: 325 Years of Scholarly Publishing*. Brill was



This elegant diagram appears in a ninth-century guide to veterinary medicine by Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Khuttuli. It was acquired by Warner and became part of his collection at Leiden University.

also increasingly familiar with, and reliant on, the firm's magnum opus: the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, the seeds of which were sown at the end of the 19th century and which are growing still, well into the 21st.

The multigenerational academic project, suggested by *Encyclopedia Britannica* editor William Robertson Smith, aimed to produce a reference work that would “contain all the available knowledge about the languages, cultures and religions of the Islamic world,” notes Arnoud Vrolijk and Richard van Leeuwen in their catalogue to last year’s exhibition, “Excellence and Dignity: 400 Years of Arabic Studies in the Netherlands.” Modeled on Germany’s 80-volume *Encyclopedia of the Ancient World*, the *Encyclopedia of Islam* was planned with a focus on philological themes like law, politics, literature and history, with entries contributed by an international team of Western scholars.

At the helm was chief editor M. Th. Houtsma, then a

professor of Eastern languages in Utrecht, but behind the scenes, the indomitable de Goeje did his share of the heavy lifting. And the task required plenty of intellectual muscle, not to mention patience. Houtsma was appointed in 1899; nine years later, the scholars had only just made their way through the letter “A.” Picking up a bit of steam, they bound the first volume—“A-D”—in 1913. World War I came and went, and it was not until 1936 that Brill published the full, four-volume edition in the three scholarly languages of the day: German, English and French. Packed within its 5,042 pages were more than 9,000 entries ranging in length from 50 to 50,000 words, many of which continue to impress and be of use to scholars to this day.

Yet as monumental and groundbreaking as it was, ultimately the *Encyclopedia of Islam* was what it was: a Western body of work by Western scholars on the Islamic world, tempered in an age of Orientalism. As such, writes scholar R. Stephen Humphreys in his 1991 study, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*, it “represented a specifically European interpretation of Islamic civilization.” It was not, Humphreys concludes, “that this interpretation is ‘wrong,’ but that the questions addressed in these volumes often dif-

Luchtmans's first published Arabic text appeared in 1732: Ibn Shaddad's 12th-century biography of Saladin. The technical challenge of reproducing Arabic letterforms was formidable.

fer sharply from those which Muslims have traditionally asked about themselves."

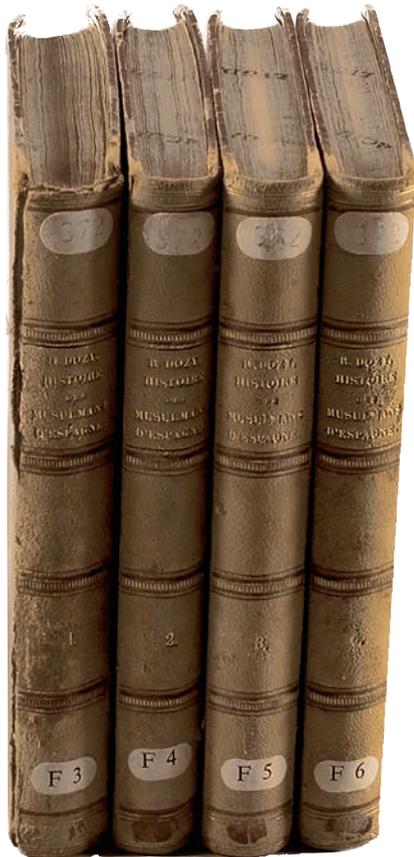
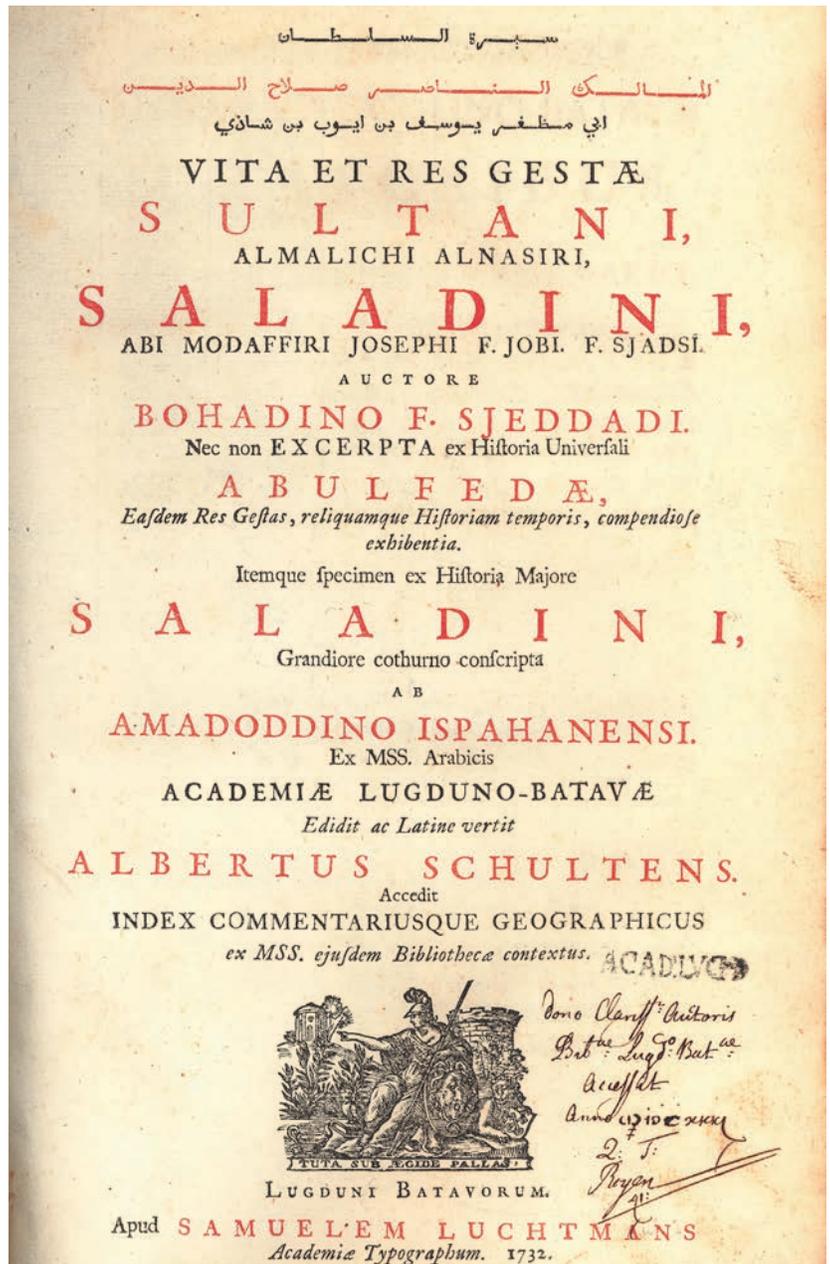
After World War II, Brill editors recognized the need for revision, and they began planning a second edition. While many entries remained the same or only slightly altered, the editorial and writing team now included Muslims, notably from Egypt and Turkey. This, Humphreys observes, produced a "change in tone" that was "perceptible and significant" between what were now being called *E11* and *E12*. Meanwhile, the editors of *E12* were even more giddily optimistic about the time and amount of work required to complete their project than had been the *E11* team: They predicted the first volumes would hit the shelves in 10 years. The job took more than half a century.

During that time, from the 1950s to the turn of the 21st century, scholarship, methods, identities and ways of thinking all changed dramatically. Nations emerged from colonial pasts into the complex and variegated independent present. It was not until 2006 that the final volume of

the now enormously expanded, 14-volume, second edition was published. It was just in time to begin plotting the third.

The *E13*, says project manager Maurits H. van den Boogert, is likely to take some 15 years. This next edi-

Historian and linguist Reinhart P. A. Dozy sought out, translated and cataloged Arabic and other primary sources to produce a four-volume *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne* (*History of Muslims in Spain*). Published by Brill in 1861, it is regarded today as the first serious scholarly work on its subject by a European.



tion, he says, "has explicitly incorporated the multitude of academic approaches and has a wider view on Muslims across the globe." It is also, he adds, "less Arab- and Arabic-centered," with both Persian and Turkic specialists on its board, and a far greater number of Muslim writers and others from non-European backgrounds.

Physically, it was in 1961 that Brill's ever-growing collection of set-in-lead typefaces prompted it to move the printing plant to the outskirts of Leiden, to Plantijnstraat, aptly named after the 16th-century printer Christoffel Plantijn. The editorial side of the business followed in 1985, and soon the digital printing revolution led to the scrapping of literally tons of lead fonts. Despite a few modern business setbacks—a misguided acquisition and threats of a hostile takeover—Jordan Luchtmans's 18th-century marketing strategy remains sound. It's as plain as the entranceway to the company's Plantijnstraat headquarters, which features not the Brill colophon, but rather a colorful, checkerboard pattern

of some of the company's most arcane letters and punctuation marks, many of which are familiar to only a handful of scholars on the planet.

"Partly, it has to do with tradition," says van den Boogert. "Arabic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Japanese, Chinese: From the start, Brill had a tradition of handling such complex scripts." In his view, it is the company's commitment to this tradition that has helped it survive.

"Other publishers have moved out of such publications, which has only strengthened Brill's position as a specialist in these kinds of things. So people come to us, and they say, 'We have a text which is Old Mongolian; would you be able to publish it?' and we can. So this is part of Brill's identity," says van den Boogert.

Digital books are the latest challenge, says publishing director Joed Elich, who oversees Brill's Middle East, Islamic, African, and Asian Studies departments. "If we make an e-book, we have to make 20 different versions, for the Kindle,

for Sony, for all of these different browsers, not all of which support certain characters. It's complicated."

Nevertheless Brill today publishes some 600 titles a year, together with 200 periodical journals, all of which are also available online. Disciplines have mushroomed, now including African studies and Asian studies; art and architecture; human rights; humanitarian and international law; social sciences; slavic and Eurasian studies; as well as traditional fields

such as philosophy and religion. Arabic studies remain central, but have much company: Brill's Middle East and Islamic studies department accounts for about one in six of the firm's titles annually, and only one-eighth of the jour-

nals. In addition to the full texts of *EI1*, *EI2* and the ongoing *EI3*, Brill also makes available online the *Index Islamicus*, a century-old, bibliographic database of publications in virtually all areas of Islamic studies, which it maintains through a team of bibliographers from London's School of African and Oriental Studies and a satellite office in Madrid.

With around 100 employees in Leiden and 20 more working mostly in sales in Boston, Brill remains small compared to its main competitors in today's academic publishing field, such as the UK's Routledge or the university presses of Oxford, Cambridge, Chicago, Yale or Harvard. But neither Elich nor van den Boogert is especially troubled.

"Our books have always been for niche, small audiences, not the mass market of conglomerate publishers," says Elich. The company's customer base is, in fact, largely institutional: academic libraries and universities that can afford to pay the comparatively high prices for Brill titles, in both their print and electronic versions. (For example, the online edition of the *EI3*, which includes *EI1* and *EI2*, costs \$31,730.) This does not mean, as van den Boogert is quick to add, that Brill publications—especially in electronic formats—cannot serve a wider reading public.

“ ”

Luchtmans' 18th-century niche-publishing strategy remains sound business more than 300 years later.



The magnum opus of Brill in the 20th century, the first edition of the *Encyclopedia of Islam* was released in 1936 after more than three decades' work: Its 5,042 pages contained more than 9,000 entries in four volumes, available in English, French and German. The second edition, more than twice as long, was finished in 2006; the third edition is expected to take some 15 years.



Today, Brill's second building, overlooking the Oude Rijn Canal, left, is full of apartments. In 1961, unable to accommodate its growing publishing business and the growing collections of multilingual, lead typefaces that it required, Brill moved to the outskirts of Leiden, above; the lead type was discarded in the 1980s with the digital revolution. Today, the address on Plantijnstraat—aply named after the 16th-century printer Christoffel Plantijn—remains Brill's head office.

“These texts are used in the classroom because their Arabic is relatively easy to read, in the sense that students can easily grasp their meaning, specifically with the historical texts,” says van den Boogert. “Now, if you only have the 1876 edition of such a text, in one copy in the library, which you can't really open because it's been bound too tightly, then you can't really use it in the classroom. But when it is online, it's open to multiple users and new possibilities, particularly when paired with an English translation.”

In the Arab world itself, too, the firm's reputation has steadily grown. “More and more scholars from the Islamic world—from Egypt, from Lebanon, Tunisia, Malaysia—are publishing with us. We are also trying to translate more of our books into Arabic as well,” says Elich. In 2012, Brill won the Abu Dhabi Book Festival's annual Sheikh Zayed Book Award for publishing and distribution excellence in Middle East and Islamic Studies—a badge of recognition from a leading hub of the fast-growing Arab book and publishing world.

The path to Leiden and Brill that once bore the footprints and inkblots of centuries of scholars is now traversed largely from one screen to another over data net-

works. Today, Amin ibn Hasan al-Halawani al-Madani al-Hanafi might have never bothered to sell his collection at all: Brill might have helped him find a web hosting agreement with Leiden's library. But both before him and after, Brill's books bridged centuries, continents and a polyglot world to introduce Western and now world readers to countless literary treasures of the Arab and Islamic worlds, and more. In our age when book publishing is struggling to come to terms with its future, Brill's hold on its founding mission seems as rare—and as precious—as the very titles it stamps with its 332-year-old colophon. 🌐



Connecticut-based freelance journalist **Tom Verde** (writah@gmail.com) is a regular contributor to *AramcoWorld*.

 **Link:**
brill.com

 **Related articles at**
www.aramcoworld.com
Abu Dhabi Book Fair: M/J 10
Arabic typesetting: J/A 07
Arabic printing: M/A 81



Brill: a graphic timeline:

TRAVELERS of AL-ANDALUS

part III

Cádiz ● Málaga ★

Alexandria ●

Madinah ●

Makkah ●

Ibn al-Shaykh and the Lighthouse of Alexandria

Written by MARIA JESÚS VIGUERA MOLINS and LOUIS WERNER

Art by BELÉN ESTURLA

Yusuf Ibn al-Shaykh al-Balawi was born in Málaga, on the southern coast of what is now Spain, in 1132, during the last years of the Almoravid dynasty's rule in what was then Al-Andalus. He is known to have made only one trip outside his homeland, a pilgrimage to Makkah in 1165, after which he returned the following year. He wrote little about it.

But what he did record, in a few brief pages, about one city on this journey, shed new light on one of classical antiquity's most storied monuments, about which legions of authors both before and after him wrote copiously and effusively, often with more imagination than fact. This monument, the lighthouse of Alexandria, said to be one of the "seven wonders of the ancient world," remains to this day a symbol of the very *idea* of travel.

Ibn al-Shaykh's Arabic manuscript, *Kitab alif ba* (or *Book of A and B*) was discovered in a Cairo library only in 1870, and it took another 60 years until the Spanish Ara-

bist Miguel Asín Palacios recognized its true importance. It had been written not as a travel account at all, but rather as a teaching tool for Ibn al-Shaykh's son, comprised of the jottings of random ideas and miscellaneous facts suitable for a child student. But buried within it, Palacios discovered the most precise description and measurement of the lighthouse of Alexandria that was ever made by an eyewitness before its toppling in 1323 by an earthquake.

Alexandria had always held allure for travelers from Al-Andalus who sought broader knowledge, as it was often their first port of call after leaving home, and it attracted scholars from the Islamic East who could offer teaching in subjects under-studied in the Arab West. One of these scholars was the Persia-born Abu Tahir al-Silafi, an expert in *hadith*, or the oral transmission of the sayings and practice of the Prophet and his Companions, from whom Ibn al-Shaykh took lessons—possibly within sight of the lighthouse.

In the context of the customarily rigorous analysis of *hadith*, it must have weighed on these scholars that so much unexamined legend, myth and outright exaggeration had accreted to the lighthouse itself, without any systematic effort to separate fact from fiction.

Some stories had said that the lighthouse was more than 650 meters high; that its marble cladding was so bright that a tailor could thread a needle by its light at midnight; that its beacon could be seen almost as far as Istanbul; or that it cost 23 tons of silver to build—almost twice the cost of the Parthenon in Athens.

Many of these legends were retold by the leading classical authors, including Pliny, Strabo, Lucian, Josephus, and the second-century CE Alexandrian Achilles Tattius, who described it as “a mountain almost reaching the clouds, in the middle of the sea.” Other unlikely stories were repeated by the usually more reliable Arab and Persian geographers: Al-Ya'qubi in the ninth century, Al-Masudi and Ibn Hawqal in the 10th, Al-Yaqut in the 11th, Al-Idrisi in the 12th and, even in years after Ibn al-Shaykh's visit, Al-Qazwini in the 13th and in the 15th Muhammad ibn Abd al-Mun'im al-Hamryari in his *Kitab al-Rawd al-Mu'attar*, or *Book of*

the Fragrant Garden. Al-Shaykh, it turned out, was nearly alone with the facts.

We know little of Ibn al-Shaykh's life. One thing we do know comes from the Moorish biographer Ibn al Abbar, in his encyclopedia of notable men of Al-Andalus, the *Takmila*. Ibn al-Shaykh, he wrote, was an architect and a builder who erected 25 mosques and sank 50 wells in his native Málaga. So it is not difficult to imagine Ibn al-Shaykh leaving his books behind to climb the staircase of the lighthouse, measuring rope in hand, to examine the lighthouse from below, above and inside.

Ibn al-Shaykh started by noting its exact location: “Between the Lighthouse of Alexandria and the city there is a distance of nearly a mile or more. The city is to the south of the Lighthouse.

This is located on a small island amidst water, and from here, a road above the water has been built to reach the shore, whose length is 600 cubits or more, its width 20 cubits and its height above sea

level 3 cubits. Therefore, when the tide is high, water covers this walkway.... The Lighthouse rises at the far end of the island.”

The base, he wrote, was formed by a square that measured 45 steps on each side: “Sea waters lashed often the platform that surrounds the building by its east and south sides. Between the building and the wall [which enclosed the platform] there are 12 cubits.... The building's foundations are on the

The lighthouse of Alexandria remains to this day a symbol of the very idea of travel.



rocks, under water.... This wall is built very steadily, as if only one piece due to the tight juncture of the limestone stones ... the inscription is on a wall of white stone looking to the sea ... with only the shapes of letters, set in hard stone, long and black ... still visible.”

That the words were faded would be no surprise, as the inscription had weathered more than 1,400 years of salty sea breezes. Dedicated to the lighthouse’s builder in 297 BCE, it was ordered by Alexander’s general Ptolemy I and finished 12 years later by his son Ptolemy Philadelphus. Although Ibn al-Shaykh could not read it, an earlier visitor had recorded it. Translated from Greek it read: “Sostratus the Cnidian, son of Dexifanos dedicates this to the savior gods on behalf of those who sail the seas.”

Ibn al-Shaykh next described and counted the 68 doors and rooms he entered while ascending the ramp from the first floor gallery, as well as its total height: 53 fathoms, plus nearly seven sub-structures. He was attentive to every dimension: “I wrote down all this on-site, since I went to the Lighthouse with the inkwell, and paper, and marked cord, so as not to lose even the smallest detail, for the Lighthouse is a wonder.”

Then he described the shapes of the tower’s three tiers: at the base, square; in the middle, an octagon; at the top, a cylinder. On top was a small mosque, said to have been built by one of Egypt’s first great Muslim rulers, Ahmad ibn Tulun, on the upper flat roof: “Four doors give entrance to it, as if it were a dome.” He added that the wood fire of its mirrored beacon was still lit, as in Greek and Roman times, on this upper part in order to guide boats into the harbor.

An added motive for Ibn al-Shaykh’s fascination with the lighthouse was likely something that had recently befallen a

similarly legendary lighthouse less than 100 kilometers from his hometown. In Cádiz, a famous lighthouse, reputedly of Phoenician origin, had been destroyed

in 1145—20 years before Ibn al-Shaykh’s pilgrimage. It had been felled by the Almoravid admiral Ali Ibn Isa Ibn al-Maymoon as a last desperate act before he deserted his post to join

The recent destruction of a famous lighthouse at Cádiz, Spain, may have added to the architect’s desire to take home measurements from Alexandria.



the invading navy of the conquering Almohads, who commanded that it be leveled in order to steal treasure that was rumored to be buried beneath it.

The 12th-century Granadan geographer Muhammad ibn Abu

Bakr al-Zuhri, who lived to see the destruction of this lighthouse in Cádiz, described it as a three-level, squared-off construction topped by a statue of a man

facing east, as if looking out across the sea to meet the gaze of the far more famous, six-meter statue of Poseidon leaning on his trident atop the Alexandria lighthouse.

Al-Zuhri's description lacks all specificity, but in the eyes of a reader of his day it could not help but call to mind the anonymously and contemporaneously written *Description of al-Andalus*, which praised Cádiz's pre-Islamic architecture by saying, "The whole city had also wonderful ancient remains which have not been altered by the passing of time. These vestiges testified to the city's power and the existence of a great kingdom." After al-Maymoon's wanton act, the city certainly had been altered for the worse, and as an architect and builder, Ibn al-Shaykh knew it.



When in 1165 Ibn al-Shaykh took such a great interest in the Alexandria lighthouse, was he perhaps thinking of the one that his countrymen had lost just 20 years earlier? Was he also making the case for the conservation and protection of Alexandria's, which was already in poor condition? And was he implicitly criticizing the Almoravids for having demolished it? It is fair to speculate that the reason Ibn al-Shaykh made such a detailed description of Alexandria's beacon was to remind his friends at home of what they had lost in Cádiz.

For two centuries after Ibn al-Shaykh's visit, the lighthouse of Alexandria was still in use for its function in the seaport was essential. Boats were controlled and guided from it, and their sailors, frightened after often hazardous journeys, felt relief in their hearts after glimpsing it, as we know well from written testimonies.

Ibn Battuta of Tangier, who visited Alexandria in 1326, just three years after the earthquake that toppled it, pointed out that already "one of its façades was in ruins." When he visited the city again in 1349, "it was such a total heap of rubble that it was not possible to get into it anymore, nor even to go up to its door." It was replaced by a small watchtower that stood until 1480, when the Mamluk Sultan Qayt Bey built over its ruins a fortress to which he gave his name, and which still guards the harbor to this day.

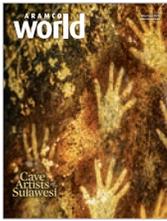
Although the lighthouse, called in Arabic *manarah* (place of fire that is used for illumination), ceased to exist, it has remained present in the West not only through historical memory



but also generically through the word "minaret" in English and its French and Spanish equivalents, *minarete* and *alminar*. Thanks to Ibn al-Shaykh's description, we can envision it as it stood, a beacon for both navigation and imagination. 🌐

Maria Jesús Viguera Molins, Ph.D., is a member of the Royal Academy of History in Spain and on the faculty of Madrid Complutense University. **Louis Werner** (wernerworks@msn.com) is a writer and filmmaker living in New York. **Belén Esturla** (esturlarui@gmail.com) is an artist and illustrator in Granada, Spain.

"Travelers of Al-Andalus" is a six-part series selected and adapted from the original 41-part series "El Viajero Histórico," an idea and production by Ana Carreño Leyva in *El Legado Andalusi: Una Nueva Sociedad Mediterránea*, the magazine of the Andalusian public foundation El Legado Andalusi, based in Granada, Spain, from 1990 through 2010. This article appeared in issue number 33, titled "Ibn al-Shajj de Málaga: deslumbrado ante el Faro de Alejandría." (www.legadoandalusi.com)



All the activities in this edition of the Classroom Guide—class activities, visual analysis, and 15-minute activities—focus on a single theme: *artifacts*.

FOR STUDENTS

We hope this 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 *AramcoWorld*, by teachers at any level, whether working in a classroom or through home study.

—THE EDITORS

Julie Weiss (julieweiss14@gmail.com) 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

Theme: Artifacts

Several articles in this issue focus on artifacts. These articles look at the objects people saved, the paintings they left on cave walls and the coins they made and used. In completing these activities, you will:

- define *artifact*
- choose objects that represent you and look for patterns among class members' choices
- “read” artifacts to find out what they reveal
- summarize and draw conclusions about the value of artifacts

What are artifacts?

To begin your exploration, start by asking, “What is an artifact?” Share with your fellow students any ideas you have on the subject. You don't need to give a dictionary-style definition; if what you associate with the word “artifact” is arrowheads that you saw at a museum, it's okay to say “arrowheads that I saw in a museum.” Have a student or your teacher write people's associations with the word *artifact* on the board. Then look up a definition of *artifact*, and write it on the board, too. How well does it line up with the associations you listed? Discuss with the person sitting next to you what difference, if any, you see between an *artifact* and an *object*. Would you call all your “stuff” artifacts? (You'll have a chance to examine your stuff shortly.)

What do artifacts reveal?

Artifacts can provide a great deal of information about individuals, groups, societies and specific moments in time. The following activities are divided into four parts. Three focus on artifacts described in articles in this *AramcoWorld*, and the other is personal. You can complete all of these activities if time permits, but if not, you can do them as a jigsaw activity, with different students completing different activities and reporting to the class about what they learned; or you can complete any of the activities as a stand-alone assignment.

What do artifacts reveal? Part 1: “If I Forget You, Don't Forget Me.”

This article is taken from an exhibition of photographs of objects with words associated with those photographs. The photographer, Manal AIDowayan, says she aimed to create photos of a generation of men and women “using as my subject matter the objects they collected over their



IF YOU ONLY HAVE 15 MINUTES...

“Capital of Baklava” reports that Gaziantep has applied to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Read about this at www.unesco.org/culture/ich. Based on what you read, do you believe that Gaziantep's baklava should be included? Write a letter either in support of, or in opposition to, its inclusion.

“Coins of Two Realms” explains that coins all over the world “often bear simple but fundamental names, images and ideas that say much about [the] government” that issued them. Choose a current-day coin to examine. What images does it have on the obverse (front) and the reverse (back)? What words does it include? If anyone in the class has coins from other countries, answer the same questions about them. What do the words and images on the coin(s) tell you about the government(s) that issued them? How do you reach that conclusion? Does the information you gather from the coin(s) conform to the information that the article says can be gleaned from coins of the past?



lifetimes.” Think about what might have made this artist decide that the objects that people collected would be a good way to make a photographic history of an entire generation. Hold your thoughts as you consider specific photos.

Divide the class into pairs or small groups. Assign each group one or two of the photos in the article. With your partner or group, talk about the photos—but don’t read the captions yet—using the following questions as a guide: What object did AIDowayan include in the photograph? Why do you think she believed the object was significant? Then read the caption that AIDowayan wrote. What did the object mean to her? Share with the rest of the class what you’ve discussed. As a class, discuss what, if anything, turns these objects into artifacts.

What do artifacts reveal? Part 2: Your Own Stuff

Try it yourself. As homework, choose an object that means a lot to you, one that you would use to represent you in a gallery or museum exhibit. It can be anything—a football, a shirt, a book—whatever you value that you believe reveals something important about you. Take a photograph of it if you have access to a camera. Reread a few of the captions in “If I Forget You, Don’t Forget Me” and use them as models to write your own caption for your own object. In your caption, be sure to explain what the object is, why it’s important to you, and what you believe it reveals about you. In class, display everyone’s photos and captions, and look at each other’s work.

AIDowayan was chronicling a generation in Saudi Arabia. Your class, in effect, is chronicling a specific group of people, a sample from a generation, too: Do you see any patterns? Perhaps many of you chose the same type of object or found similar meaning in whatever objects you selected. AIDowayan



generalized about the generation she was looking at: they were a generation that built its dreams, and that straddled poverty and wealth. How would you sum up what the members of your class value? What generalizations, if any, can you make about your generation based on the objects you care about? Write an introduction to your class’s exhibit of photos and captions, similar in tone to Bashar Al-Shroogi’s statement on page 26.

What do artifacts reveal? Part 3: “Coins of Two Realms”

Look now at what coins might reveal about the people who minted and used them. (Did anyone in your class choose a coin as the artifact that represents them?) Read “Coins of Two Realms.” Underline or highlight the places where the article answers these questions: In what ways are coins from the past valuable to people today? What historical gaps can they fill? What are some examples of what Byzantine and Persian coins reveal? What do Islamic coins reveal about relations among Arab Muslims and Byzantine Christians at that time? How do the coins challenge common assumptions about Muslim-Christian relations? In sum, what do the coins reveal about economic and cultural change?

Finally, using online sources, read up on the movement now current in the us to replace the portrait of President Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill with one of any of several notable women. Compare the arguments for that change with arguments Arabs, Byzantines or Persians might have made: What is different? What is similar? Why does what appears on any kind of money matter so much?

What do artifacts reveal? Part 4: “Cave Artists of Sulawesi”

As you have seen, artifacts can reveal a great deal to those who pay close attention to them. Artwork in caves is another type of arti-



fact that can tell us a lot about early human beings and how they developed. Read “Cave Artists of Sulawesi.” As you read, underline or highlight the parts of the article that add to your thinking about what artifacts reveal and what they add to our understanding of the past. When you’re finished, reread these important parts of the article, and write a short summary that answers these questions: What does cave art in Sulawesi reveal about the origins of human creativity? Which previous beliefs about human creativity do the cave artworks challenge?

What do artifacts reveal? Conclusions

Now you’ve looked at four examples of what artifacts reveal. Three of them come from articles in *AramcoWorld*, and the fourth comes from your own experience. Now, pull your thoughts about artifacts together by completing one of the following activities. Make a diagram that shows what artifacts reveal about individuals, generations, economic relations, cultural change and human evolution. Or write an essay on the subject, with a thesis that states what artifacts reveal, and use evidence to support the thesis drawn from what you’ve studied in these activities. Share your diagrams or essays with other students. Do you share similar understandings of the value of artifacts?

VISUAL ANALYSIS

Continuing on the theme of artifacts, return to “If I Forget You, Don’t Forget Me,” and we are going to add another layer to the analysis. The exhibition from which the article is drawn doesn’t just focus on artifacts. It focuses on *photographs of artifacts*—which sometimes means *photographs of photographs*! Choose one of the photographs from the exhibit. You’ve already explored what made the object significant. Now look at how Manal AIDowayan chose to photograph the object. Why do you think she took pictures of each object with a photograph? How are the objects and the photos-within-the photos related? What do the two together (photo and object) reveal that looking at the object by itself does not reveal? Why do you think she took the photos in black and white? What effect does their not being in color have on you?



Slavs and Tatars: *Mirrors for Princes—Both Sides of the Tongue.* “Mirrors for Princes” refers to a medieval genre of secular literature that raised statecraft to a level of religious jurisprudence or theology. Such texts, written to groom princes for leadership, existed in both Christian and Muslim lands, offering both praise and advice to their readers. The artists featured in this exhibition consider the genre a precursor to modern self-help books, in addition to its more conventional interpretation as a form of political commentary. In this show, the artists have focused on a particularly literary Muslim mirror, *Kutadgu Bilig (Wisdom of Royal Glory)*. A foundational text of Turkic literature, *Kutadgu Bilig* was written in the 11th century for the prince of Kashgar by Yusuf Khass Hajib. The voice reciting the literary masterpiece resonates from the gallery entrance as a series of sculptors explores the theme of tongue and heart—organs that reflect honesty and virtue. Frequently referenced in the audio excerpts, the tongue is interpreter of intellect and wisdom. With its focus on the text and through the use of sculpture, the exhibit is deeply concerned with linguistics and self-presentation. **NYU Abu Dhabi Art Gallery, through May 30.**

Hung and Tart (full cyan), 2014, handblown glass, 12 x 34 x 16 cm, reflects a melding of the heart and tongue.

Current **May**

Bazm and Razm: *Feast and Fight in Persian Art.* For centuries, Persian kingship was epitomized by two complementary pursuits: *bazm* (feast) and *razm* (fight). The ruler’s success as both a reveler and hunter/warrior distinguished him as a worthy and legitimate sovereign. The pairing of *bazm* and *razm* as the ultimate royal activities is an ancient concept with roots in pre-Islamic Iran. It is a recurring theme in the *Shahnama (Book of Kings)*—the Persian national epic—as well as other poetic and historic texts. This exhibition features some three dozen works of art in various media, created between the 15th century and the present day. Works from the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Department of Islamic Art that illustrate the linked nature of *bazm* and *razm* are displayed alongside corre-

sponding works—primarily Persian—from the departments of Asian Art, Arms and Armor, and Musical Instruments. The exhibition charts the gradual shift in meaning and usage of this pairing as it emerged from a strictly royal, or princely, context and became more widespread. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York, through May 31.**

Connecting Continents: *Indian Ocean Trade and Exchange* is a small display featuring objects that show the long and complex history

of Indian Ocean trade and exchange from ancient times. For thousands of years, the Indian Ocean has been a space through which people, objects and ideas have circulated. The monsoon winds enabled merchants to travel among Africa, the Middle East and Asia, exchanging valuable commodities such as textiles, spices and ceramics. From early coastal trade between the great ancient civilizations of the Indus Valley and Mesopotamia to the heyday of European East India companies until now, the Indian Ocean has remained a dynamic

economic maritime zone. This display presents objects from across different sections of the British Museum's collection, including a 19th-century boat from Indonesia created entirely from cloves and a Roman necklace made from sapphires and garnets, to tell this fascinating history of global interaction. The British Museum, **London**, through May 31.

Marvels and Mirages of Orientalism: *Benjamin-Constant in His Time* is the first major exhibition on Orientalism to be presented in Canada. Through this unusual retrospective, visitors will discover the dazzling color palette of an acclaimed painter of the *Belle Époque*, Jean Joseph Benjamin-Constant, who was influenced by his trips to Moorish Spain and the Morocco of the *cherifas*. His huge, spectacular canvasses conjure up fantasies of a dreamlike Orient, viewed through the prism of folklore, ethnographic pretext and pure imagination. **Montreal** Museum of Fine Arts, through May 31.

German archeologist Ernst Herzfeld in Central Asia; American collector and museum-founder Charles Lang Freer in China; and the many travelers worldwide who shared memories with mass-produced, hand-colored postcards. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through May 31.

Current / June

Sharjah Biennial 12: *The Past, the Present, the Possible* began to take shape in a private conversation between Danh Vo and curator Eugenie Joo in early 2013. They discussed the relevance of contemporary art; the potential to imagine something beyond current states of social and political confinement; and the need for artists to play active roles in imagining the possible. "SB12" showcases more than 50 artists and cultural practitioners from around 25 countries who participate in the process of imagining Sharjah through education, culture, religion, heritage and science by introducing ideas of the possible through art and work. Sharjah Art Foundation, **Sharjah, UAE**, through June 5.

Unearthing Arabia: *The Archaeological Adventures of Wendell Phillips*. Wendell Phillips headed the largest archeological expedition to South Arabia (present-day Yemen) from 1949-1951. Accompanied by leading scholars, scientists and technicians, he was on a quest to uncover two ancient cities—Tamna, the capital of the once-prosperous Qataban kingdom, and Marib, the reputed home of the legendary Queen of Sheba—that had flourished along the fabled incense road some 2,500 years earlier. Through a selection of unearthened objects as well as film and photography shot by the exhibition team, the collection highlights Phillips's key finds, recreates his adventures and conveys the thrill of discovery on the last great archeological frontier. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through June 7.

Beyond the Beat: *Drums of the World* explores the immeasurable cultural and historical significance of drums around the world through the presentation of dozens of drums of all shapes, sizes, materials and uses from Asia, Oceania, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the us. The collection is accompanied by dozens of videos, photographs and multimedia content selected from sources around the globe. The unique exhibition also highlights themes ranging from varieties of drum construction and performance techniques to differing concepts of rhythm in Asia, Africa

and the Americas, as well as the role of drums in rituals, military events and even systems of nonverbal communication. Musical Instrument Museum, **Phoenix**, through June 21.

Visions of Mughal India: *The Collection of Howard Hodgkin*. The second half of the 16th century until the first half of the 19th century was a time of cultural merging that saw Persian themes, Indian colors and Western influences find their way into Indian architecture and art. Never before shown in North America, the exhibition features exquisite paintings from this period produced in the Mughal court, the Deccani sultanates and the Rajput kingdoms. An outstanding group of elephant portraits, vivid evocations of daily life, royal portraits and dramatic illustrations of epics and myths are among the exhibition highlights. All works have been selected from the personal collection of British artist Howard Hodgkin (b. 1932), whose own paintings are displayed in the concurrent exhibition *Inspired by India: Paintings by Howard Hodgkin*. Organized by the Aga Khan Museum in association with the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. **Toronto**, through June 21.

Inci Eviner. The Drawing Center presents a selection of videos by Turkish artist Inci Eviner, whose work forges a relationship between new-media techniques and traditional Turkish art practices. The repetitive, hypnotically shifting scenes depicted in the artist's videos address contemporary feminism at the crossroads of the East and West ("the face of the middle-class woman," as she puts it), while exploring broader historical narratives and notions of the body and performance. Eviner's complex scenes employ a wide variety of drawing traditions, including engravings, ceramic-tile designs and architectural plans. The Drawing Center, **New York**, through June 28.

Current / July

Bedouin Textiles from the Collection of Robert and Joy Totah Hilden looks at the rich woven history of the Arab nomads who have inhabited the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere for millennia. The Bedouin were tribally organized, tent dwelling and herders of sheep, camels and goats. Their lifestyle required textiles such as tents and tent dividers, rugs, cushions, storage bags and camel-related textiles like saddlebags and camel ornaments. The exhibit includes handwoven textiles as well as photographs of the Bedouin and their lifestyle. **San Jose** Museum of Quilts and Textiles, through July 5.

Eye of the Beholder: *Taking Inspiration* explores the collection of the Bradford Museums and Galleries International Art Collection from a different perspective through which four artists have produced new, imaginative, thought-provoking works, taking inspiration from the objects in the collection and the ethos of collecting. To mark the 25th anniversary of collecting, this exhibition showcases art commissions created by artists and practitioners chosen for excellence in their field, who work in a medium or theme

complementary to the International Art collection: a ceramic mosaic by Lubna Chowdhary, Eric Broug's Islamic Jali screen, a digital installation by Soraya Syed and Barbara Green's silk hangings. Displayed alongside these are the collection items from which the artists have "taken inspiration" and artworks from the artists' collections. Cartwright Hall Art Gallery - **Bradford [uk]** Museums, through July 5.

Kawandi Adventure: *Quilts by Margaret Fabrizio*. Inspired by a 2011 exhibition of *kawandi* at the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco, Fabrizio was compelled to learn more about the Siddi women of Karnataka, India, who had created the dazzlingly colorful quilts (*kawandi*). In 2012 the artist spent two weeks in India, learning from the Siddi women their *kawandi* style of hand-sewing quilts. Returning to her home in San Francisco, Fabrizio created 20 *kawandi*-style quilts from scraps and recycled clothing she had collected in India. She then returned to Karnataka, taking some of her work to show the women. They were impressed and delighted. Many of the *kawandi* on display were created especially for this exhibition. **San Jose** Museum of Quilts and Textiles, through July 5.

The Prince and the Pir: *Dervishes and Mysticism in Iran and India*. The relationship between a ruler and his spiritual adviser in the Islamic world has historically been an important one. In the Persian-speaking contexts of Iran and India, a holy man known as a *pir* or *shaykh* often provided spiritual guidance. After the 12th century, many of these practiced Sufism. Sufis are known for their renunciation of material things. However, they did not necessarily withdraw from the world, and many were connected to social and political institutions. The negotiation of power and authority between princes and Sufis could sometimes become tense or hostile, but it could also lead to mutually beneficial interactions. This display presents diverse images of Sufis, from begging, wandering dervishes to legitimizers of princes' reigns. Works produced in Iran and India between the 16th and 19th centuries range from album and manuscript pages to objects used in daily life. The British Museum, **London**, through July 8.

Marvelous Creatures: *Animal Fables in Islamic Art* focuses on the real and mythical animals that appear in the legends, tales and fables of the Islamic world. Divided into the natural quadrants of earth, air, fire and water, these marvelous creatures introduce timeless stories such as the well-known and beloved classics: the *Shahnameh* and *1001 Nights*. Animals feature in the artistic productions of diverse cultures from far-flung times and places that are nonetheless connected by their shared celebration of traditional fables and the messages, knowledge and lessons found in these stories. The exhibition offers a number of interactive experiences for visitors and the majority of artworks presented are on display for the first time. A wide range of programs for adults, schools and families accompanies the exhibition. The Museum of Islamic Art, **Doha, Qatar**, through July 11.



The Traveler's Eye: *Scenes of Asia* features more than 100 works created over the past five centuries, providing glimpses of travels across Asia, from pilgrimages and research trips to expeditions for trade and tourism. The exhibition juxtaposes East Asian scrolls, Japanese woodblock prints and contemporary photography with maps, archeological drawings and souvenirs, concluding with three vignettes on Western travelers who recorded and remembered Asia during the last century:

Detroit to Baghdad: *Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here*. Baghdad's al-Mutanabbi Street, a winding thoroughfare of coffeehouses and shops where books have been sold for centuries, is the historic center of the city's intellectual and literary community. When a car bomb exploded there in 2007, printers, writers and artists from around the world joined together to commemorate the tragic loss of life and the attack on a street where ideas have always been exchanged. *The Al-Mutanabbi Street Starts Here* collection was founded by San Francisco bookseller Beau Beausoleil in the weeks after the bombing. The exhibition consists of selected broadsides, prints and handmade artist books from the collection, and includes poetry and writing workshops. Arab American National Museum, **Dearborn, Michigan**, through July 12.

Sultans of Deccan India, 1500-1700: *Opulence and Fantasy*. The Deccan Plateau of south-central India was home to a succession of highly cultured Muslim kingdoms with a rich artistic heritage. Under their patronage in the 16th and 17th centuries, foreign influences—notably from Iran, Turkey, East Africa and Europe—combined with ancient and prevailing Indian traditions to create a distinctive Indo-Islamic art and culture. This exhibition brings together some 165 of the finest works from major international, private and royal collections. Featuring many remarkable loans from India, the exhibition—which is the most comprehensive museum presentation on this subject to date—explores the unmistakable character of classical Deccani art in various media: poetic lyricism in painting, lively creations in metalwork and a distinguished tradition of textile production. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through July 26.

India: *Jewels That Enchanted the World* examines the legacy of 500 years of Indian jewelry, from the 17th century to the present. More than 300 pieces of jewelry and jeweled objects are brought together for the first time to showcase the beauty of Indian craftsmanship, the magnificence of gemstone setting and the refinement of Indian taste. Assembled from more than 30 museums, institutions and private collections, the exhibition is the most comprehensive ever staged on the subject. Its first section focuses on the jewelry traditions of South India: monumental pieces crafted from

gold, worked in relief and decorated with gemstone flowers and birds. The second is devoted to the jeweled splendor of the courts of the Mughals, who came as conquerors, ruled as emperors and, as connoisseurs, patronized artists, architects, enamellers and jewelers. A further section is devoted to the symbiosis between India and European jewelry houses and the cross-cultural influences that resulted in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It concludes with the work of two of India's leading present-day jewelry houses, The Gem Palace and Bhagat. Catalog in English and Russian. State Museums of **Moscow**, through July 27.

Current / August
Beyond Bollywood: *Indian Americans Shape the Nation* elaborates on the history and contemporary experiences of Indian Americans as they have grown to be one of the more diverse and well-recognized communities in the US. Photographs, artifacts, videos and interactives trace their arrival and labor participation in the early 1900s; their achievements within various economic industries; and their many contributions in building the nation. The exhibition also reveals how they have kept and shared their culture, and organized to meet the needs of the under-served. Asian Pacific American Center, **Washington, D.C.**, through August 16.

Current / September
A Cosmopolitan City: *Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo* explores how Old Cairo's communities lived together and melded their traditions to create an ever-growing, multicultural society during the seventh to 12th centuries. Although the city was governed by Muslim Arabs, its neighborhoods were populated by people from a patchwork of religious and ethnic communities, including native Egyptians and many immigrants. The exhibit puts a special focus on the three main religious communities—Muslims, Christians and Jews—whose members helped shape Old Cairo's neighborhoods, markets and public places. Each of Old Cairo's communities is brought to life through the 75 objects, many of which have never before been on display, including richly illuminated Qur'ans, Coptic and Hebrew manuscripts, ceramics, textiles, jewelry and architectural fragments. Other objects, such as game pieces and dolls, vividly remind the visitor of life in the city more than 1,000 years ago. Many of the artifacts in the exhibit were excavated at Fustat by the American archeologist George Scanlon between 1964 and 1972. The exhibit also includes several important works on loan from the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, including an 11th-century carved door from the cabinet that held the Torah in the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo, and a lusterware bowl decorated with a scene of a bird. The Oriental Institute, University of **Chicago**, through September 13.

Chief S. O. Alonge: *Photographer to the Royal Court of Benin, Nigeria* showcases the photographs of Chief Solomon Osagie Alonge (1911-1994), one of Nigeria's premier photogra-

phers and the first official photographer to the Royal Courts of Benin. Alonge's historic photographs document the rituals, pageantry and regalia of the court for more than a half century and provide rare insight into the early history and practice of studio photography in West Africa. National Museum of African Art, **Washington, D.C.**, through September 13.

One God—Abraham's Descendants on the Nile: *Jews, Christians and Muslims in Egypt from the Ancient World to the Middle Ages*. The longest tradition of coexistence among peoples of the Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths is in Egypt. Seen for the first time from this unifying angle, the exhibition takes a closer look at the many facets of religious life and the day-to-day coexistence of the three faith communities in the country from the time of the Romans through the reign of the Fatimids in the 12th century. The exhibition starts in Alexandria—the political, cultural and theological capital founded in 331 BCE by Alexander the Great. The Egyptian Christians emerged and splintered off from the Alexandrian Jewish community, with Christianity eventually becoming the dominant state religion until the arrival of the Arabs in 641. In the following centuries, Muslim rulers developed their own cultural and artistic identity, formed from the long-standing Greco-Roman tradition. Bode-Museum, **Berlin**, through September 13.

Current / October
EI Hadji Sy: *Painting, Performance, Politics*. In 1985 the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt commissioned the artist and curator EI Hadji Sy (born 1954 in Dakar, Senegal) to assemble a group of works of contemporary art from his homeland to initiate a long-term relationship between the two cities. Thirty years later, as part of a programmatic investigation into its collection, the museum presents a retrospective of Sy's career as a painter and cultural activist. The exhibition combines Sy's installations and paintings—sometimes executed with his bare feet or produced on such unusual surfaces as industrial rice sacking or synthetic kite silk—with his selection of ethnographic objects and artworks by colleagues from Senegal. It includes loans from international private collections and works from the museum's own collections. As a founder of the collective Laboratoire AGIT'ART, and a curator of numerous artist-led workshops and studio spaces in Dakar, Sy with his interdisciplinary practice continues to break new ground. Weltkulturen Museum, **Frankfurt**, through October 18.

Current / November and later
Woven Luxuries: *Indian, Persian and Turkish Textiles from the Indictor Collection*. Used for furnishings—as carpets, spreads, bolsters, hangings, clothing—and exchanged as diplomatic gifts, silk velvets have been preeminent luxury textiles in many parts of the Islamic world and Europe, especially from the 15th century onwards. The 11 textiles in this exhibition, selected from a private New York collection, provide a glimpse into the richness and diversity of Iranian, Indian and Turkish silk velvets. Spanning

three distinct cultural areas with their own design sensibilities and tastes, this group of textiles showcases different techniques of velvet production and suggests their varied uses. Of special note are the two complete 17th-century carpets from India and Iran, each measuring nearly 1.83 by 1.22 meters (72 x 48") and retaining not only their design elements but also their vibrant colors. These, along with nine other substantial textile fragments, show the cultural exchange between the Mughal, Safavid and Ottoman empires—and their shifting political, religious and economic ties. Asian Art Museum, **San Francisco**, through November 1.

Images of Women in 19th-Century Iran demonstrates the centrality of women in the artistic expression of 19th-century Iran and how they continue to inspire contemporary artists. The most popular representations of the Qajar era (1794-1925) have been of male sovereigns, whose life-size portraits exaggerate masculinity to depict power. Yet this era also saw a period of artistic modernization in Iran, particularly in paintings and photography, in which depictions of women became essential elements of the scenes. Showcasing women at the court, and in private, alongside images of female musicians and aristocratic women, this exhibition explores rarely told narratives of the Qajar artistic tradition. Museum of Islamic Arts, **Doha, Qatar**, through January 30.

Abdelkader Benchamma: *Representation of Dark Matter*. Abdelkader Benchamma creates an astronomical vortex in his strikingly graphic, site-specific drawing, rendered in intensely black lines against a wall's white surface. The work depicts the solar system's complexity and its nearly imperceptible dark matter. The physically expansive image resembles scientific illustrations of the Big Bang and alludes to explosive cosmic forces. The installation gives form to that which is infinitely large and perpetually transforming. The Drawing Center, **New York**, through March 1.

Gold and the Gods: *Jewels of Ancient Nubia* draws upon the world-class collection of jewelry from ancient Nubia (located in what is now Sudan) accumulated by the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), which constitutes the most comprehensive collection outside Khartoum. "Gold and the Gods" focuses on excavated ornaments from an early 20th-century expedition by MFA and Harvard University. Dating from 1700 BCE to 300 CE, they include both uniquely Nubian works and foreign imports prized for their materials, craftsmanship, symbolism and rarity. MFA, **Boston**, through May 14, 2017.

Coming / May
Egyptian Magic is a fascinating journey into the world of magic in ancient Egypt. Learn how, in a secret world where the gods and the dead are intrinsically linked to mankind, magic can influence destinies. The exhibition presents pieces from the largest collections in the world. Produced

AramcoWorld
(ISSN 1530-5821)
is published bimonthly by
Aramco Services Company,
9009 West Loop South,
Houston, Texas 77096-1799, USA.

Copyright © 2015 by Aramco
Services Company. Volume 66,
Number 3. Periodicals postage
paid at Houston, Texas and at
additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to
AramcoWorld
Box 2106
Houston, Texas 77252-2106

in close collaboration with Stichting Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, with the contribution of the Louvre Museum. Musée de la civilisation, **Quebec City**, May 27 through March 3.

Coming / **June**

Close to Home: *Celebrating California's Arab American Art.* When the Arab American National Museum (AANM) opened its doors 10 years ago, its inaugural exhibition *In/Visible* presented the works of Arab American artists addressing concepts of identity and place. This exhibition is an ongoing conversation between art and Arab identity in southern California and is part of the museum's 10th anniversary year. Presented in collaboration with the Lebanese American Foundation—House of Lebanon, the exhibition is the latest in a series of cultural programs the AANM has sponsored in southern California with the Southern California Friends of the AANM. This collaboration to promote the art of John Halaka, Doris Bittar and Olfet Agrama—talented Arab Americans based in southern California—helps spotlight the contributions of the Arab community. House of Lebanon, **Los Angeles**, June 1 through June 28.

The Royal Hunt: *Courtly Pursuits in Indian Art.* Expressions of imperial authority are universally embodied in royal imagery of the hunt, rulers pursuing prey as metaphors for power and martial prowess. This theme is celebrated throughout the history of Indian painting and became ubiquitous in later Rajput painting of the late 19th century. This exhibition features works from the Department of Asian Art, with loans from the Department of Islamic Art, the Department of Arms and Armor, and New York collections. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, June 20 through December 13.

Coming / **November and later**

The Fabric of India. The highlight of the Victoria & Albert's India Festival, this is the first major exhibition to explore the dynamic and multifaceted world of handmade textiles from India. It includes a spectacular 18th-century tent belonging to Tipu Sultan, a stunning range of historic costume, highly prized textiles made for international trade and cutting-edge fashion by celebrated Indian designers. Showcasing the best of the V&A's world-renowned collection together with masterpieces from international partners, the exhibition features over 200 objects ranging from the third to the 21st centuries. Objects on display for the first time are shown alongside renowned masterworks and the latest in Indian contemporary design. The skills and variety evident in this incomparably rich tradition will surprise and inform even those with prior knowledge of the subject, and is sure to delight visitors. V&A, **London**, October 3 through January 10.

Pearls on a String: *Art and Biography in the Islamic World* presents the arts of Islamic cultures from the point of view of authors and artists from historical Muslim societies, offering

an alternative to impersonal presentations of Islamic art. Instead, the exhibition focuses on specific people and relationships among cultural tastemakers threaded together "as pearls on a string," a Persian metaphor for human connectedness—especially among painters, calligraphers, poets and their patrons. The exhibition highlights the exceptional art of the Islamic manuscript and underscores the book's unique ability to relate narratives about specific people. Through a series of vignettes, the visitor is introduced to the art inextricably linked to the men and women who shaped the Islamic past and contribute to its future. Walters Art Museum, **Baltimore**, November 8 through January 31.

Egypt's Sunken Secrets displays 293 artifacts from different Egyptian museums: 18 from the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir Square, 22 from the Graeco-Roman Museum, 31 from the Alexandria National Museum, 15 from the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Museum and 207 from the Sunken Monuments Department. Institut du monde arabe, **Paris**, September 7 through January 2016; Martin-Gropius-Bau exhibition hall, **Berlin**, April 15 through August 2016; **London**, November 15, 2016, through March 2017.

Beweled Treasures: *The Al Thani Collection.* Spectacular objects, drawn from a single private collection, explore the broad themes of tradition and modernity in Indian jewelry. Highlights include Mughal jades, a rare jeweled-gold finial from the throne of Tipu Sultan and pieces that reveal the dramatic changes that took place in

Indian jewelry design during the early 20th century. The exhibition examines the influence that India had on avant-garde European jewelry made by Cartier and other leading houses, and concludes with contemporary pieces made by JAR and Bhagat, which are inspired by a creative fusion of Mughal motifs and Art Deco "Indian" designs. Part of the V&A's India Festival. **London**, November 21 through March 28.

PERMANENT / INDEFINITE

Europe Imagines the East brings attention to *chinoiserie*, an enchanting decorative motif depicting imaginary and whimsical interpretations of life in Asia, through four tapestries from the museum's collection. The motifs of *chinoiserie*, an 18th-century European concept, typically reflect exotic figures clothed in flowing robes and elaborate headdresses, situated in fantastical landscape settings. A blend of factual travel accounts, atlases, myth and fantasy, the scenes in these pieces capture the enthrallment of Europeans with visions of the Near and Far East, offering a wealth of iconographic images to study and explore. **Seattle** Art Museum.

Islamic Art Now: *Contemporary Art of the Middle East.* In recent years, the parameters of Islamic art have expanded to include works by artists from or with roots in the Middle East. Drawing inspiration from their own cultural traditions, these artists use techniques, and incorporate imagery and ideas from earlier periods. The **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art (LACMA) has recently begun to acquire

such work within the context of its holdings of Islamic art, understanding that the ultimate success and relevance of this collection lies in building creative links between the past, present and future. *Islamic Art Now* marks the first major installation of LACMA's collection of contemporary art of the Middle East. The first of a two-part program, the exhibition features approximately 25 works by artists from Iran and the Arab world.

Welten der Muslime (Muslim Worlds) looks at various topics that continue to play an important role in the way Muslims perceive themselves and others. Architectural structures such as the richly decorated wall of a guest house from Afghanistan serve as the living embodiment of various topics, for instance, the gender-specific use of space and the convention, now hotly debated, whereby women are assigned to the private sphere and men to the public. The complex diversity of the Islamic religion and the phenomena of everyday religious practice are illustrated through a range of objects from various Muslim sources. Ethnologisches Museum, **Berlin**.

Information is correct at press time, but please reconfirm dates and times before traveling. Most listings have further information available online and at aramcoworld.com. Readers are welcome to submit information for possible inclusion. Some listings appear courtesy of *Canvas* magazine (www.canvasonline.com).

AramcoWorld is published bimonthly in print and digital editions. Two-year (12-issue), renewable subscriptions to the print edition are available without charge to a limited number of readers worldwide who are interested in Arab and Islamic cultures and connections.

To subscribe to the print edition, go to www.aramcoworld.com and click "FREE subscription." You may also fax a signed and dated request to +1-713-432-5536, or subscribe by postal mail using either the card bound into the magazine or your own signed and dated request sent to *AramcoWorld*, Box 469008, Escondido, California 92046-9008, USA. If requesting a **multiple-copy subscription** for a class, specify the number of copies desired and the duration of the class. For residents of Saudi Arabia, all requests for subscriptions must be sent by postal mail to Public Relations, Saudi Aramco, Box 5000, Dhahran 31311, Saudi Arabia.

Change of address: Go to www.aramcoworld.com and click "Change of Address." You may also fax or mail to the addresses above: Be sure to include your subscriber code, or an address label from a recent issue, or your complete old address.

Back issues, from 1960 onward, can be read in full online and downloaded from www.aramcoworld.com. Printed copies are available for issues less than five years old, as long as supplies last. Request them by e-mail to saworld@aramcoservices.com, by fax to +1-713-432-5536, or by postal mail to Special Requests, *AramcoWorld*, Box 2106, Houston, Texas 77252-2106, USA. Bulk copies of issues less than five years old will be provided when available, without charge, for use in classrooms, workshops, study tours, lectures or other non-profit educational events.

Article Proposals: We welcome freelance proposals that follow our Guidelines for Contributors. These are online, under "About Us."

Permissions:

Texts of articles may be reprinted without specific permission provided that the text be neither edited nor abridged, that the magazine and author be credited, and that a copy of the reprinted article, or a link to it, is provided to the editors.

Photographs and illustrations: Much of our photo archive is available at www.photoarchive.saudiaramcoworld.com. Image licensing for approved uses is royalty-free.

No junk, ever: Contact us with confidence. You will receive no unsolicited marketing email or postal mail as a result of your subscription or inquiry.



