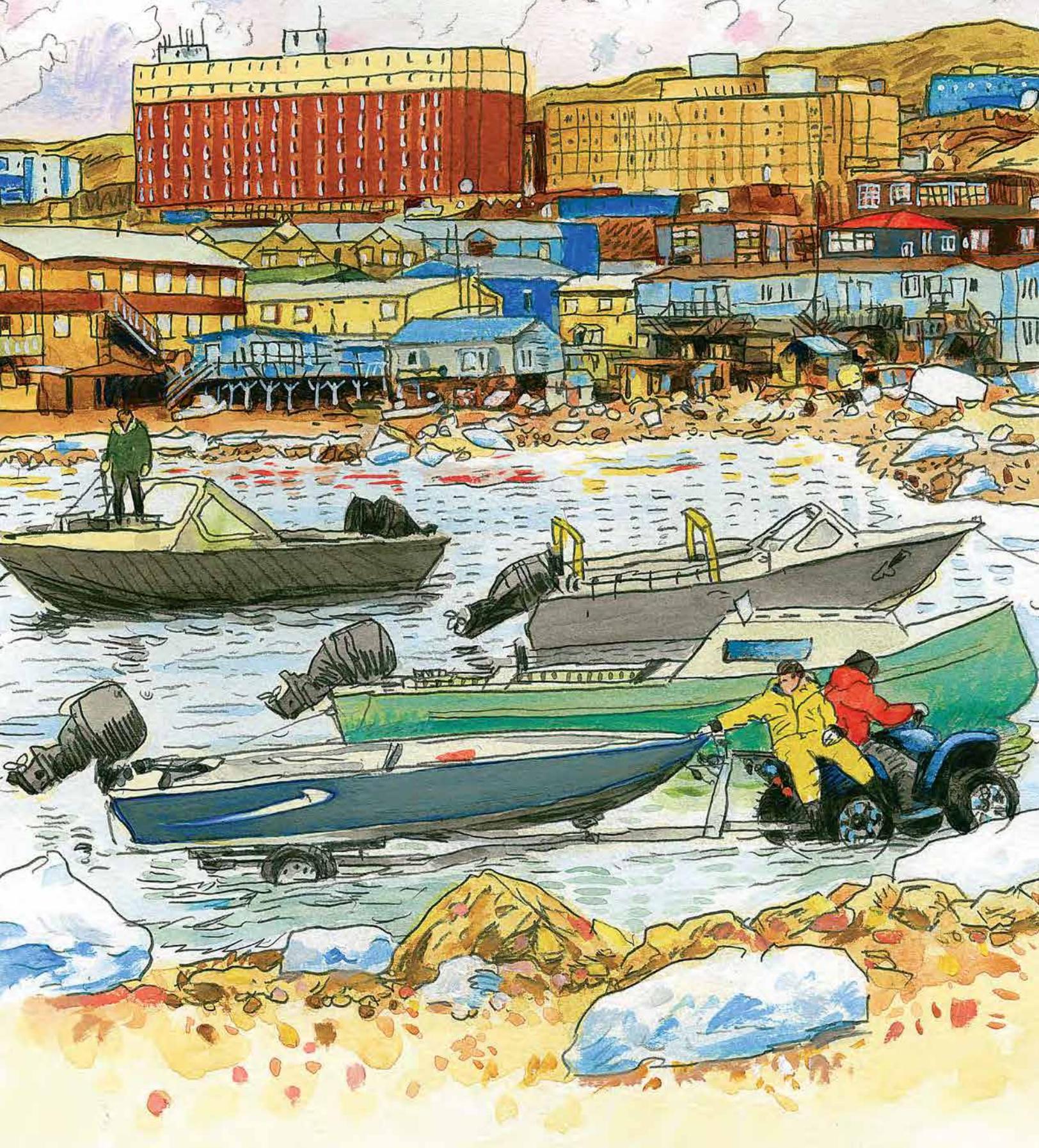
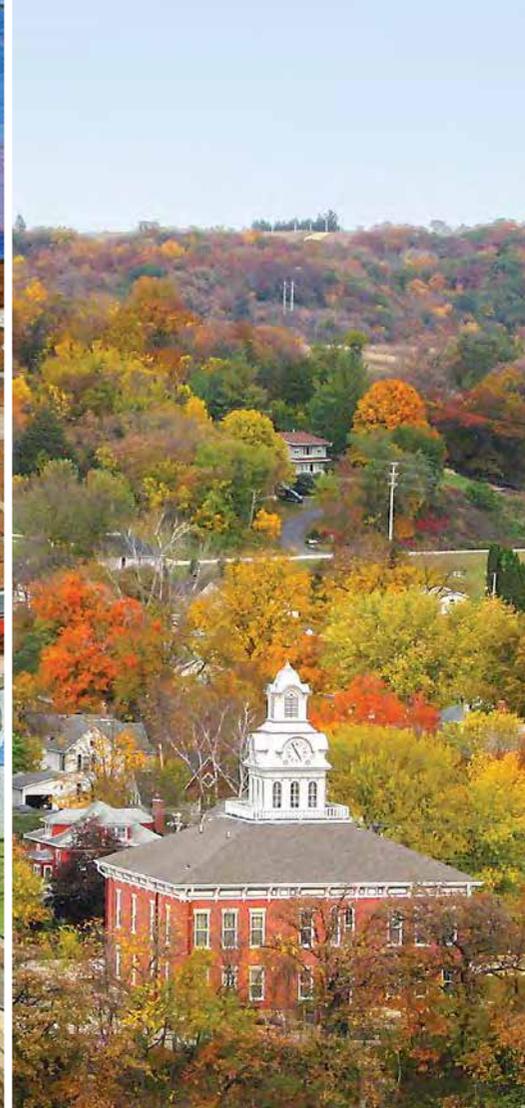
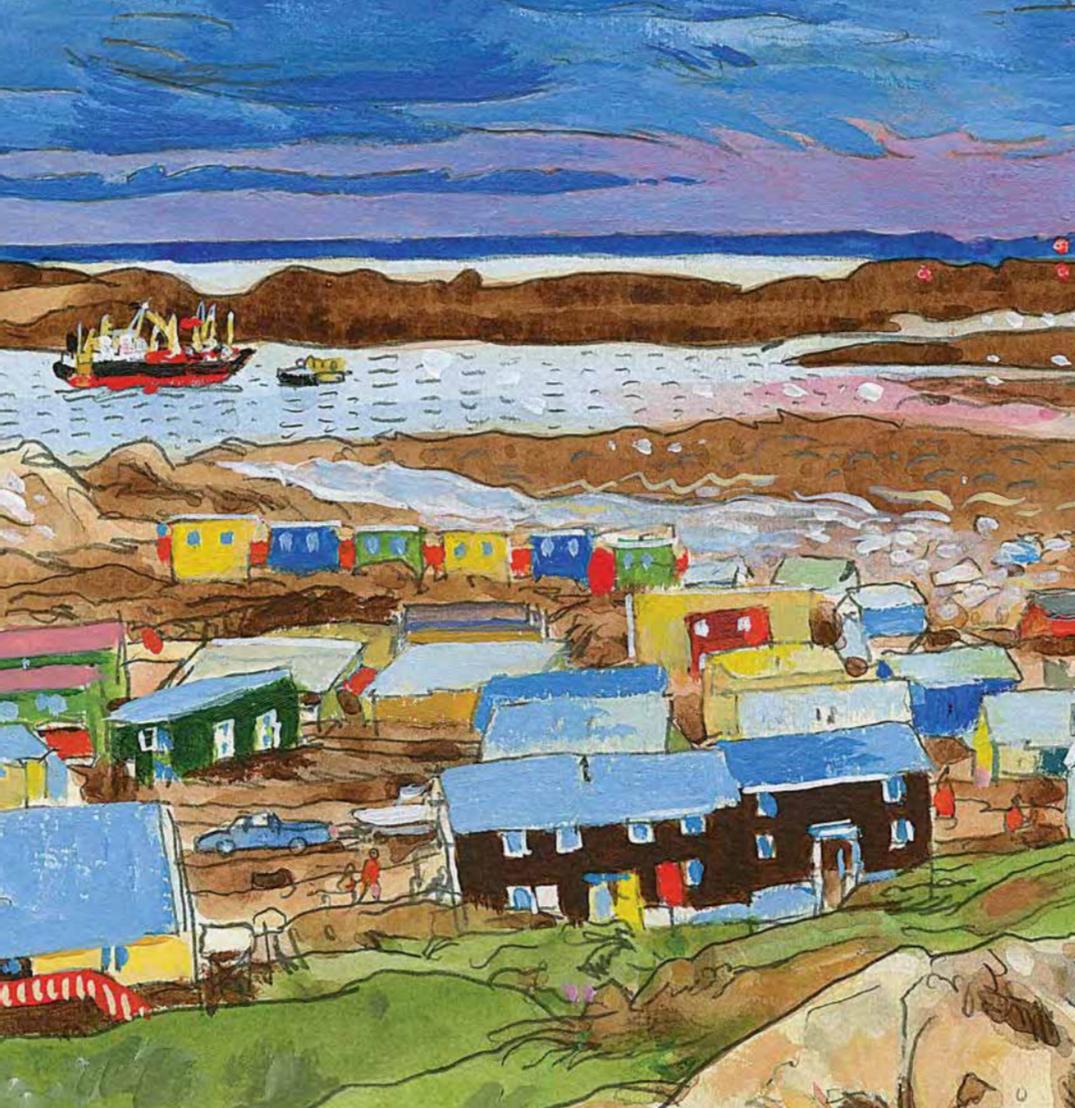


JANUARY FEBRUARY 2017

AramcoWorld





4 The Place of Many Fish

Written and illustrated by Norman MacDonald

That is how “Iqaluit” translates into English from the Inuit language. It’s the name of Canada’s smallest territorial capital, just 8,000 people on the chilly shores of Frobisher Bay, a town governing a polar archipelago half the size of Western Europe that is Canada’s largest—and newest—province, Nunavut. Once a frontier for fishing and hunting, later for whaling and the fur trade, Iqaluit today is a fast-growing outpost on the world economic stage.

14 Small American Town, Big Algerian Legacy

Written and photographed by Brian Clark

In 2008 Kathy Garms, a teacher in Elkader, Iowa, led the launch of a student essay contest in honor of her town’s Algerian namesake, Amir Abd el-Kader. In September this year’s seven winners received scholarships.

 [Online CLASSROOM GUIDE](#)

 [2 FIRSTLOOK](#) *Photo by Matthieu Paley*

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We distribute *AramcoWorld* in print and online to increase cross-cultural understanding by broadening knowledge of the histories, cultures and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their global connections.

Front Cover: Taking advantage of waters that are unfrozen for less than half the year, fishermen dodge ice blocks to pull small boats onto shore near downtown Iqaluit, since 1999 a territorial capital and far-north outpost of global economic opportunity. Art by Norman MacDonald.

Back Cover: Depicting this town that is too far north for trees to buffer arctic winds, the artist’s sketch of Iqaluit hints at the challenges awaiting new arrivals. As one told him, “People enjoy sitting and talking. This place is full of oral history.” Art by Norman MacDonald.



18 Rousseau's Turban

Written by Ian Coller

Late in his life, one of the most celebrated minds of the European Enlightenment, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, donned Turkish attire. It was a personal expression of the mobility between Western Europe and the Muslim world—and the new ideas these crossings engendered, which he articulated in writings that changed history.

24 Cracking Coconut's History

Written by Ramin Ganeshram

Ocean currents and maritime traders first brought coconuts to nearly every tropical coast. Now global food producers are bringing them to nearly every grocery shelf. Heritage cuisine, health fad or a little of both? Five recipes from five lands can help you decide.

34 Malika VI: Sayyida al-Hurra

Written by Tom Verde
Art by Leonor Solans

When she governed the Moroccan coastal city of Tétouan, the Spanish accused her of organizing piracy, while at home she won respect from both Moroccans and post-1492 Andalusian émigrés. On land and sea, hers was a life charted by crisis.

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FIRSTLOOK

“Children can swim before they walk”

Photograph by Matthieu Paley

That’s a Bajau saying I learned three years ago while I was in Southeast Asia working on stories about the evolution of the human diet. I was visiting traditional, self-sufficient communities to see how food shapes daily life. Here I was arriving for lunch at this family’s home off the coast of Pulau Bodgaya (Bodgaya Island), in the Celebes Sea of northeast Sarawak, Malaysia. My host was named Marita. She was inside preparing food as I arrived.

The family is Bajau, one of several names used by roughly a million people living scattered along the coasts and archipelagos in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Bajau are often called “sea gypsies” for their frequently nomadic, subsistence ways, and to this day some do not hold a national citizenship.

The Bajau get most of their food directly from the ocean. They eat everything from many kinds of fish to sea urchins and octopi, all of which they catch mostly by spearfishing or gathering at low tide. Underwater, Bajau are famous for being able to hold a breath for several minutes.

It was not easy to get from shore to the house: I could swim or take a dugout canoe. I chose the canoe. With no language in common, I used my curiosity about food as a kind of universal way to communicate. On assignment or in my own daily life, I often bond with and become closer to people around food. It connects all of us.

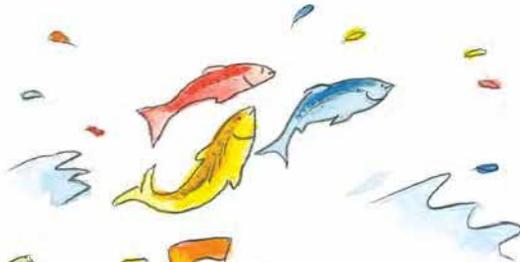
We ate a simple meal of small fish fry with some ground cassava, which Marita prepared in a curved, wok-like pan over an open fire. The breeze cleared smoke through the bamboo lattice, and the six of us ate with our hands as the water lapped underneath the house.

—Matthieu Paley
www.paleyphoto.com





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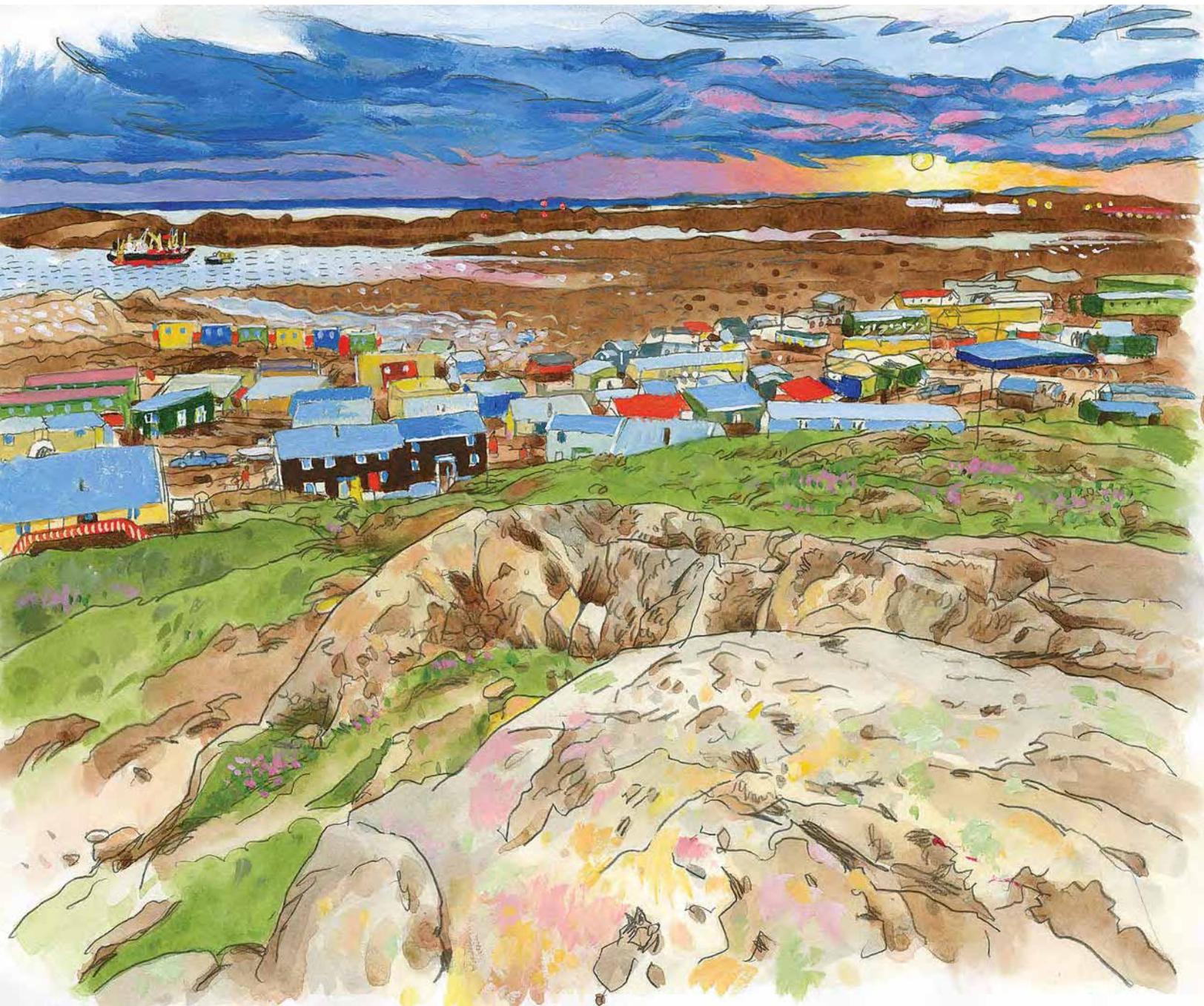
The Place of Many Fish

written
and
illustrated
by
Norman
MacDonald

There is no road to Iqaluit. You fly in or, in the summer for a few weeks, you can arrive by boat. It's a city of 8,000 people at the western point of Frobisher Bay, on Baffin Island, just below the Arctic Circle. Its name means "Place of Many Fish" in the Inuktitut language. Its history is one of travelers and centuries of nomads of the water, land and ice. Seventeen years ago Iqaluit became the capital of Canada's farthest northeast territory, Nun-

avut. It was around then that it began attracting more people from the Canadian South and even around the world.

In recorded history, Martin Frobisher's 1575 journey to Baffin Island was the first time Europeans stayed over winter. He was searching for the Northwest Passage to China, but he forgot about that when he found what looked like gold. He loaded his ship with it, but back in England it was identified as



pyrite and used as road gravel.

In oral history, the Inuit he met during his stay, and who still make up most of the population, descended from the Thule culture that had come from Asia. Traveling by boat and dog sled, they spread across the North American Arctic as far east as Greenland between 1000 and 1600 CE.

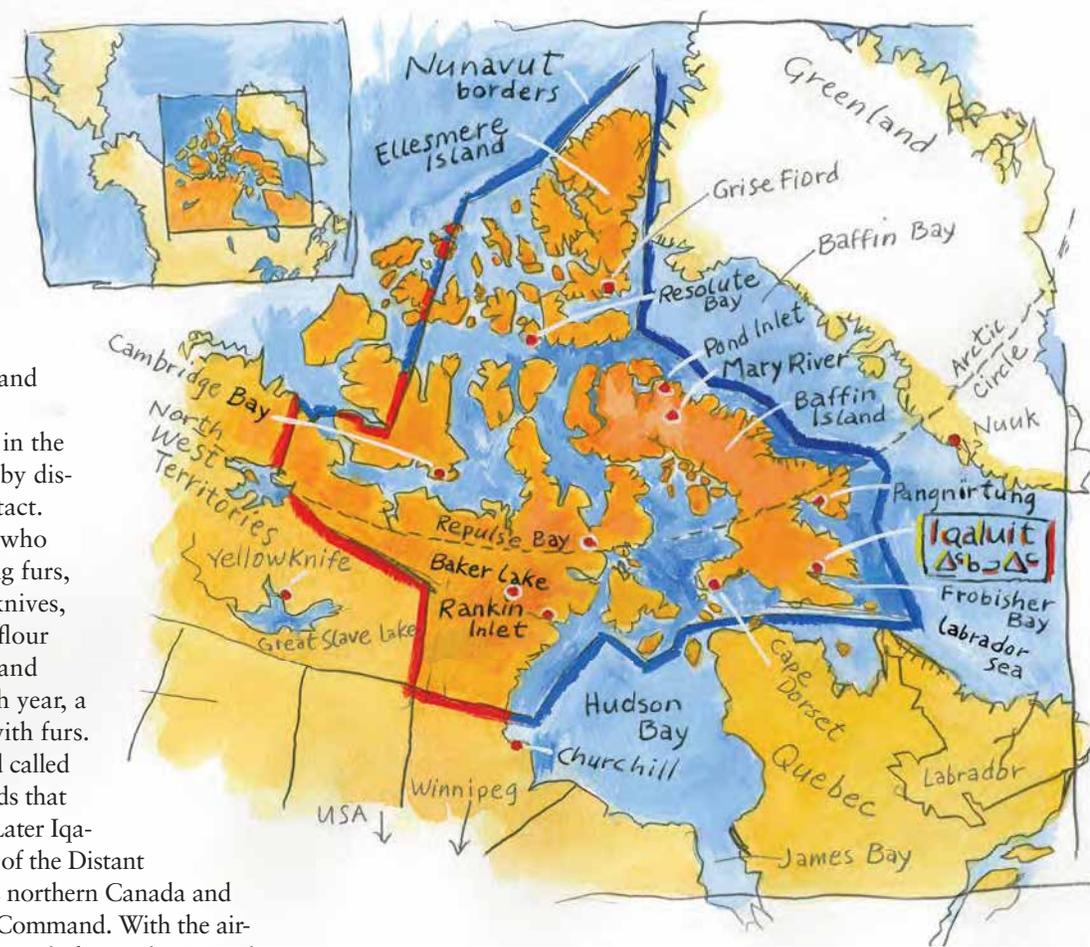
In the 18th century, as elsewhere in the Americas, the Inuit were decimated by diseases that came from European contact.

For the next 300 years, the Inuit who survived trapped and hunted, trading furs, meat, clothing and labor for metal knives, harpoons, pots, guns, ammunition, flour and tea with the Hudson Bay posts and whalers. When the ice broke up each year, a ship arrived with supplies and left with furs.

Iqaluit began in 1942 as an airfield called Crystal Two, part of a chain of airfields that supplied aircraft to wartime Britain. Later Iqaluit was used in the Cold War as part of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) radar line across northern Canada and also as a base for the US Strategic Air Command. With the airmen came nurses, teachers and more people from what in Iqaluit is called “the South”—pretty much everywhere else.

In 1999 Canada split Nunavut off from its Northwest Territories and made Iqaluit the capital. It’s now the smallest territorial capital in Canada, while Nunavut is the largest Canadian territory, bigger than France, Spain and Germany combined. There is a new legislative-assembly building and a midday 20-minute traffic jam at the main intersection when everyone goes home for lunch. From downtown it’s just 15 minutes to get to the airport—walking. Drivers slow down here if they think you may want to cross the road.

People are coming to Iqaluit today from all over the world, mostly for jobs in education, medicine, construction, mining and more. It even has a website promoting tourism. Sixty percent of the residents are Inuit and most others are white. Recently people from different parts of Asia and North Africa have been arriving. Being born in the South (New Brunswick) myself, I was curious about what life is like in this northern frontier of globalization.



Madeleine Redfern mayor of Iqaluit

As a mayor, you don’t have as much power as people perceive. You work with other councilors, staff and other levels of government. Iqaluit has grown tremendously since 1999. We were just over 3,000, and now we’re approximately



*It takes a woman
with fortitude
and conviction.*

8,000. That puts a lot of pressure on us to manage and keep up with the growth. We have to develop new areas of land for development, laying roads and pipes, which is very expensive. To give you an idea, a kilometer of road, unpaved, is C\$750,000–1,250,000. Laying pipes is another million dollars per kilometer, and to pave the road is another million.

It's difficult to do this with a tiny tax base and short windows of time to get it done. But I really do enjoy politics. Meeting people, interacting with committee members. Everyday problems and challenges. At the territorial level, there is no party system. It's a consensus government.

"Jack, I want you to talk to Kohl about you growing up in the North wearing fur."



Even though we have had five women mayors, a woman member of Parliament and a woman premier, politics here is seen as a male-dominated arena. Inuit society is divided very much on gender.

So it takes a woman with fortitude and conviction. I chose not to re-run for mayor when I was getting my first grandchild. I was glad to be able to help my daughter. Health issues are huge in Nunavut. That's why our territorial government spends a quarter of its C\$1.6 billion budget on health. My background is law, so I try to highlight and bring some rational thinking to the situation. Being a mayor is a position of influence. It's all I can do. Sometimes I succeed.

Jack Anawak

former member of parliament

Under colonialism we saw our parents basically treated like servants. I went to the residential school in Churchill. We only went from late August until May. When we came home, we started living off the land again. I finished grade eight and wanted to go to grade nine. My parents thought it was fine, but the missionary told my dad I was to stay home and help. I did, and I hunted and trapped with my own dog team. By the way, when we catch a seal in the cold winter, like minus 40 Celsius, we eat some of its liver and wait a few minutes. Then *boom!* It feels like a furnace was lit inside you. Warms you right up.

At the same time, I read any book I got my hands on—romance novels or the history of World War II, didn't matter. I was learning. None of my kids have lived in an igloo or a sod hut.

In 1975 we were introduced to our form of government. Our first local government was called a settlement council, which had no power. I was at that time mayor in Rankin. In 1988

I got a chance to run for Parliament and won a seat.

When Jean Chrétien was prime minister of Canada, we had a G7 conference in June 1995 in Halifax. The PM was a friend of Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor. He brought Kohl north after the meeting. There was a polar bear skin spread out to dry. It was the time the EU was planning to ban the fur trade the following year.

"Jack," he said, "I want you to talk to Kohl about you growing up in the North wearing fur. There's an interpreter." Jean claims I got Kohl to delay the ban on fur for at least another year. That gave the hunters a bit more time to plan ahead.

William Beveridge

executive director,
Inuit Heritage Trust, Inc.

My grandfather Abraham told me this story about when he went to the Hudson Bay trading post. If anyone wanted a rifle, he said, they stacked the Arctic fox furs flat on the floor until the stack was as high as the length of the rifle.

Inuit then were nomadic and

had seasonal areas. That was our life back then. In the '50s and '60s, they were forced to locate in settlements, usually where there was a trading post and a Roman Catholic church. That's where they decided to build the community. My father came from Scotland and became a Hudson Bay boy, met and married my mother in 1969.

The settlements gave the government more control of the North to prove it was part of Canada. I was born in a hospital in '73, but my uncle was born seven years earlier out on the land, no nurses or doctors. The change happened very quick. It's been 50 years. That's all. Some parents never went to school, or not like the kids do now. We are slowly improving. More Inuit are going to university. We need to take on leading roles and higher positions.

Syllabics is the writing system introduced to

I stepped out of the plane and thought, "Oh my God!"



the Inuit by the missionaries. The Cree Indians also use it. Today we are losing this in the younger generation. English is everywhere, on TV, radio, Internet, but there is an app from iTunes for Syllabics.

Muhammad Wani

chief boiler and gas inspector, Nunavut

There's multiculturalism in this country. Half here in Iqaluit are Inuit. Most workers have come from down south, and we work together. No problems have I seen. We are now more than 100 Muslims in Iqaluit among Jews, Christians, Hindus and so many other cultures.

I'm happy here. I like my work and the people I work with. I'm a government employee. I inspect gas and boilers in all of the 25 communities all over

Nunavut. There is also an electrical inspector and also building and fire-marshall inspectors. All in our safety division. If anything is not working properly, I report it and it's taken care of.

I was born in Pakistan, Karachi. My schooling was the British system. I'm a mechanical engineer. That's also what I did in the military for 20 years. Once I received my immigration papers, I came right here. Most of my family were already here, in the South or in Michigan in the US.

I knew nothing about Nunavut. Writing the citizenship exam, I had to find out where it was. When the plane landed, it was dark outside. I stepped out of the plane and thought, "Oh my God!" It was winter. My inspector showed me around Iqaluit. When I went to my apartment, the depressing thing was it was light for only a few hours a day, and the temperature was in the minus-50s. There was nothing but white snow and ice. I was homesick.

When I go south I stock up on food. There is no halal meat up here. So when my provisions get low, I go south for more, and of course the family gets together as best we can. I am on the board of some committees, so I can travel south three or four times a year to meetings and conferences.

Walrus and seal are not halal because they are not fully sea animals. Fish is halal because it is always in the water. Prawns and lobster are good. In Islam there are different sects, Sunni and Shi'a. Each has its own rules for halal. Some say if a fish has scales, don't eat it. We should all be on the same footing, but each has its idiosyncrasies.

Our plan is to set up a food bank to help serve the community. We have to nominate someone at the mosque, and our organization down south in Toronto will help out with the food storage. We need freezers and space for the other foods like cans, etc. They are waiting for us to give the go-ahead, but we have to get things here in order first. They will pay the salary for the person we hire.



Terry Dobbin

city councilor and editor
of *Nunavut News/North*

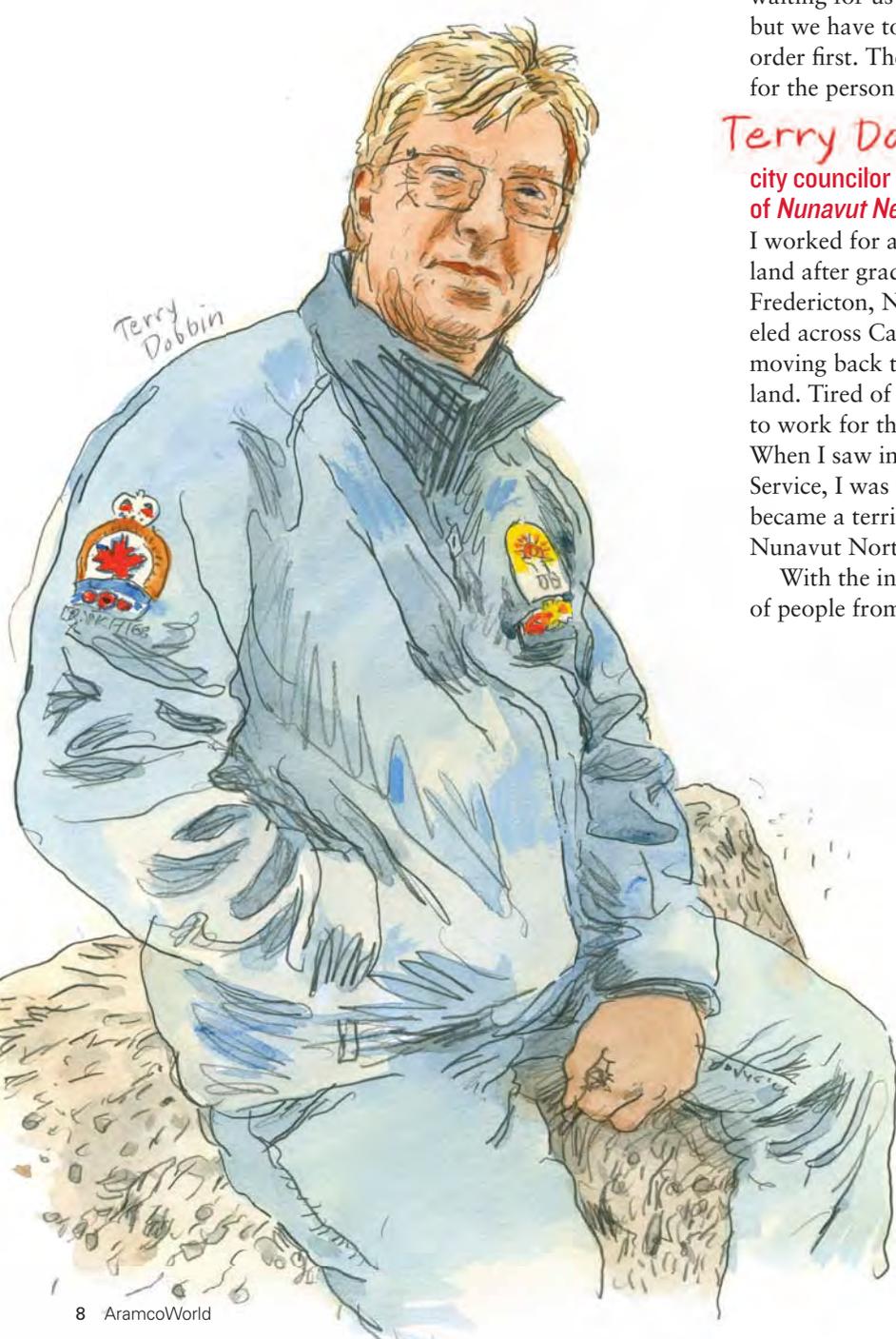
I worked for a newspaper in Newfoundland after graduating from university in Fredericton, New Brunswick. I then traveled across Canada for three years before moving back to Corner Brook, Newfoundland. Tired of the gypsy lifestyle, I started to work for the *Western Star* there. That was in the '90s. When I saw in that newspaper an ad for the Northern News Service, I was hit by the lure of the North. When Nunavut became a territory in 1999, they wanted someone to open the Nunavut North office.

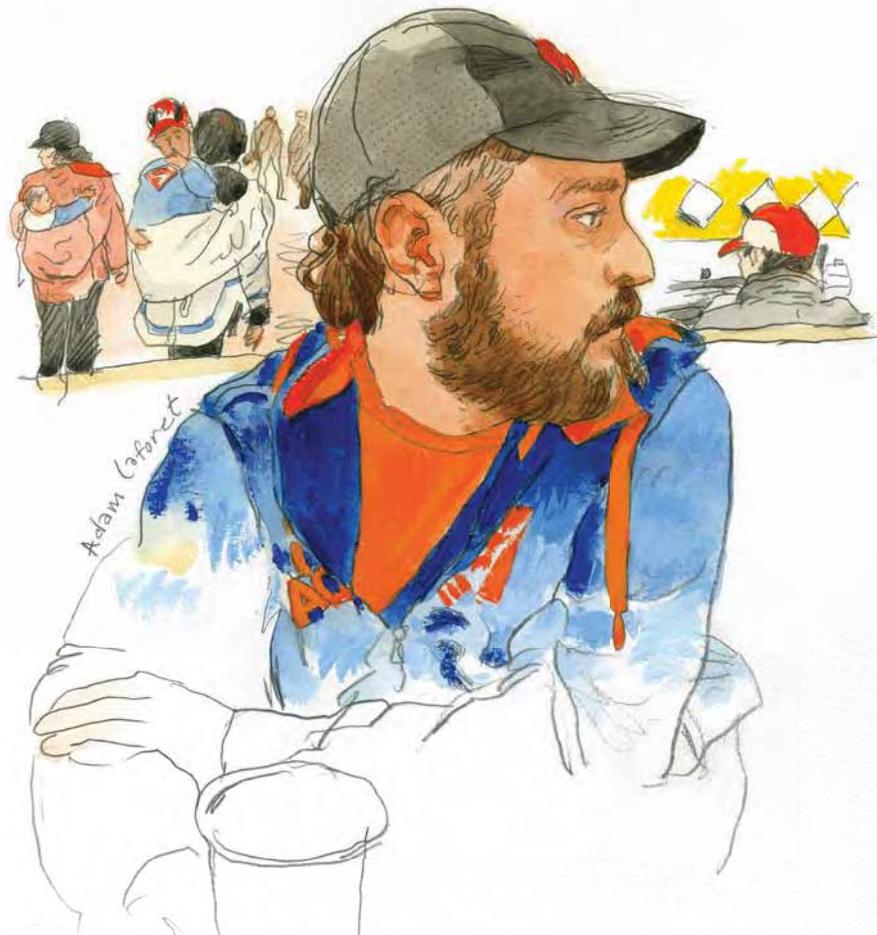
With the increase in population, there seems to be a lot of people from Newfoundland and Quebec. Newfound-

I was hit by the
lure of the North

landers are transient people anyhow. The fishing industry deteriorated so you couldn't buy a job there in the '90s. The 2000s had the offshore oil boom. So I took the big adventure.

Because of jobs, Iqaluit is becoming really multicultural. Workers come from as far away as Pakistan and Africa. Before it was local Inuit people. Now it's global and some have been here longer than I. The fear here is that the language





and culture may die, especially in Iqaluit.

The truth-and-reconciliation council considered the residential schools for native children as cultural genocide. Treaties have been signed, and we Canadians have not been honoring these treaties. After 17 years I still feel the distrust.

Adam Laforet

chef and student

I was working at Research in Motion, Blackberry, for five years at their factory in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario. Then I went to Norway for two years, and when I got back, the job I was told that would be there wasn't. Two weeks before I got back, they laid off 600 people from the two departments I worked in.

My wife saw there was a full-time job available at Arctic College, up there on the hill. She applied, and they got back to her real fast and offered her the job. "Holy cow, I think we are moving to Iqaluit."

Two days after we arrived, just after New Year's, there was the worst storm in decades, with 125-kilometer winds, and we couldn't see anything in the dark. The whole building was shaking. We thought, "What have we done?" The temperature was down in the minus-60s. They close the schools at minus-52. After nine instructional days, they lowered the temperature limit down further to reopen the classrooms.

My wife teaches nursing. Nursing and teaching are the two programs that are available for a four-year degree at the college. My wife had a one-year contract at the nursing college. I took a job cooking at the Gallery restaurant because it would be easy walking away if we decided to leave.

But we liked it, and she took another contract. At this point I thought I should be doing more than cooking. I took a look at the teaching program. It wasn't terribly expensive. I

don't teach yet. I'm going to do my last year.

The winter is dark, the wind howls, snow blows with crazy noises echoing around buildings. At least three times a week there are the spectacular aurora borealis, at times covering the whole sky with huge shivering green sheets. This is a nice town. People enjoy sitting and talking to each other. This place is full of oral history.

Lucie Idloat

singer/songwriter

We don't have a word for art. We had our community jokers, singers, shamans, healers. Most mothers throat sing to their children. My mother did. Very rhythmic really, very poly-rhythmic.

I started by going to the theater for indigenous people in Toronto. You had to audition (on tape), send it in, explain why you need to be accepted. For me it was overwhelming. I liked acting very much, but I was not prepared to make the move south so I came back north.

It was through the Native Women's Association of Canada that I was asked if I would perform. With full band, it was new and felt good.



I sang my own music.

First song I recorded was "My Mother's Name." It was about a dark time in Canadian history, in the '40s, when Inuit names were replaced with numbers. I toured with my band. What? 20 years. It was never permanent. The first album was about my origins, the community and things around me. The second album was about relationships.

I wrote a song called "Lovely Irene," and it's on YouTube. Later I called it "Angel Street," and it was about an abusive relationship. It was brought to the attention of the mayor of Iqaluit at the time, Elisapee Sheutiapik, whose sister was murdered. She renamed the street the town's woman's shelter was on Angel Street. Then she put out a plea to all mayors of capital cities to name a street in their city Angel Street in support of women. I'm not sure how many there are now. There was St. John's, Edmonton, Regina, Fredericton, Yellowknife, Kamloops and now more. It makes me pretty proud of Elisapee.

Sometime after my last album, I lost the desire to create. It will come back I know. All I know is I'm a woman of the North. In my heart, I am where I want to be.

The arts and cultural industries are doing well now.



Alethea Arnaquq-Baril documentary filmmaker

When you are taught values that come from elsewhere, on a fundamental level it messes you up. When you are taught in English and you don't progress in your mother tongue, it becomes more difficult to communicate with the older generation that only speak Inuktitut. It's easy to see colonialism at every step undercutting people's sense of self-worth.

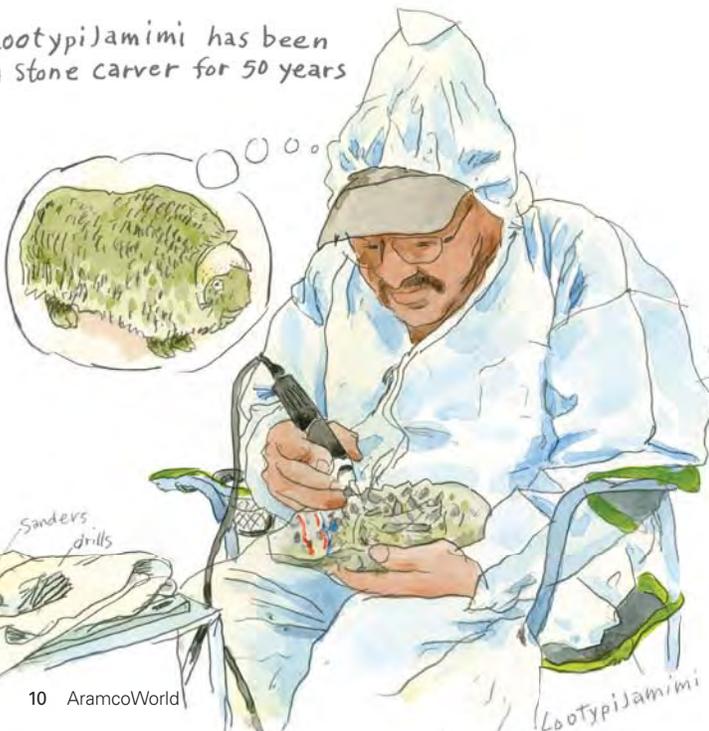
The arts and cultural industries are doing well now. Inuits have the largest number making a living at their arts and crafts per capita in North America. We have a lot of visual artists, printmakers and soapstone carvers. The film industry is relatively small, but it's surprising the production we do.

Tourism is heavily promoted but difficult to do in ways that don't interrupt communities and wildlife.

In the '60s, '70s and '80s, hunters could earn a cash income from seal fur. The activists in the South put an end to that. They've done it twice. Suddenly hunters couldn't afford the fuel or ammunition. It's a massive problem for us. We need other economies, and our options are mostly in destructive resource extractions like mining and offshore drilling.

One of my passions is advocating for the revival of the seal hunt because it's one of the few options we have for a cash income that doesn't simultaneously destroy the land

Lootyijamimi has been a stone carver for 50 years

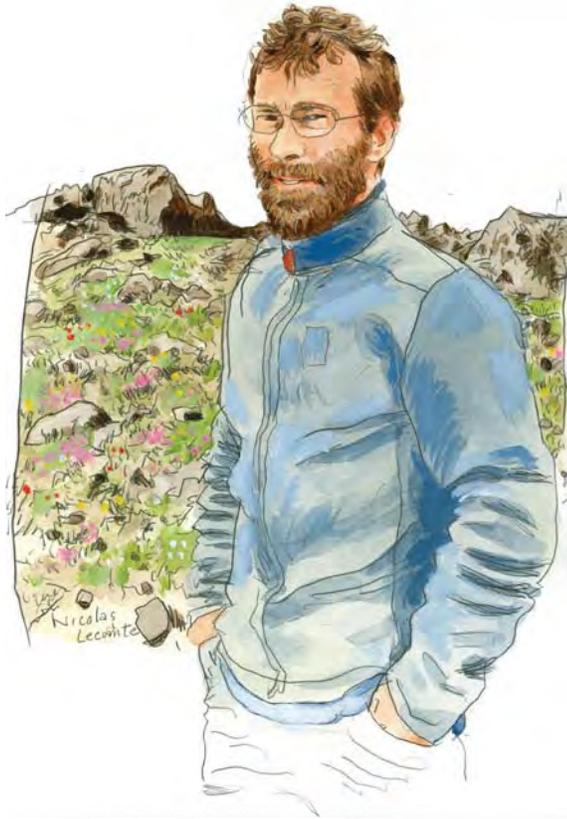


and the animals. The seal is the biggest untapped resource we have. They are plentiful, and we eat them anyway. My documentary *Angry Inuit* is about how we've been affected. It just premiered at Hot Docs in Toronto.

Nicolas Lecomte

professor of biology,
University of
Moncton, New
Brunswick

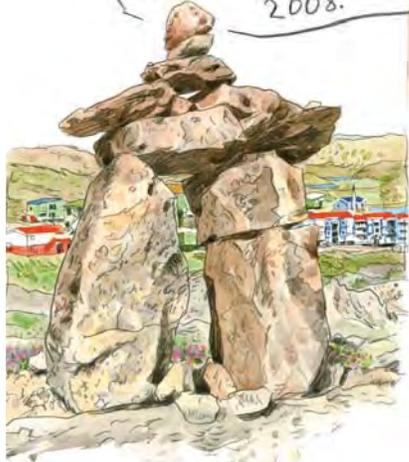
When you have a temperature change of up to two degrees, you can have a fivefold change in predator factor. Imagine a bird nesting in Northern Quebec or as far north as Ellesmere Island. The number of predators is not the same, so a bird is very keen to travel as far north as it can to escape the predation factor. It can happen very fast.



A plane ticket to Iqaluit, was expensive, but I did it. First 2 months - nothing. Then I got 3 interviews. Each one offered me a job. Iqaluit is really a bubble of its own. Now I'm working for the city. When the mosque was built, I made sure permits and paperwork were done properly and materials arrived.

I'm now studying logistics at MIT, online. I'm coming to the end of working only in the Arctic. If I can start a company in logistics that serves the Arctic and to 'the South', it would be a dream. I got 4 sisters and 4 brothers in Toronto. The time I have seen my nieces and nephews can be counted in hours.

I was studying commerce at Ryerson College in Toronto. A friend was already working at Arctic College here. I remembered he had said, 'anyone can get a job here.' Then came the crash of 2008.



Inukshuk above Iqaluit: human likeness of stone by Inuit for communication and survival - eg pointing to where fish can be found.

Another direct effect of climate change is the increasing presence of humans in the north. The Mary River iron mine wants to ship iron ore south using boats all year round. To do this they have to break the ice, and that eliminates the bridge for many migrating species. Yet Nunavut needs employment and industry.



Mohammad Hussain

materials
coordinator,
city of Iqaluit



Brahim Hamiou

driver

I came from Morocco. I lived a half hour from the capital, Rabat. Casablanca is about two hours from my town. I met my wife online. She asked me to visit Canada, to Iqaluit. We married, and I came here in the summer of 2008. It was a big change for me, especially in the wintertime. Minus-40s to the minus-60s, colder with wind chill. I then walked to the hospital where I worked as a security guard.

Last summer when it was four or five degrees Centigrade, I left for Morocco where it was plus-54 when I arrived. Very hot for me. I couldn't wear jeans, just shorts and a T-shirt. Most of the time was spent on the beach where there was a breeze. Now I'm used to the weather in Nunavut. Plus-10 is too hot for me.

The last blizzard we had, I was driving a school bus and dropped off workers, and then I had to pick up the kids because the school closed down and get them home. After this I bussed workers and co-workers again. When the last one got out, I drove on in the snow and got stuck in a two-meter high snow bank on the Road to Nowhere by the mosque. The road was closed, so I had to leave the vehicle there and start walking. It was late and no visibility. I was well clothed. I had on my winter parka that was made here by the help of an Inuit woman.

When I came here, I didn't know how to drive a vehicle. No diploma. Nothing. I work with security at the hospital, then at the airport. Then I start driving a cab. I have some friends here, taxi drivers, from different countries like Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Lebanon. 2011 until now I drive a cab. Now just part time. Night-time shifts became too much for me. We have one boy and want to spend time with him. I talked to my friend. He was manager of a construction company. He said he would teach me to drive everything.

There are some programs here in Nunavut to learn this. I pay half and the government the other half. He taught me to use all the loaders, and now after two years he taught me to drive a tractor trailer. I just got my license, Class 1, this week. Down in the South you have to go to school and spend a lot of money. Thank God I got it here.

When I came here, my wife, father-in-law and her brother took me hunting and started teaching me hunting stuff. I got a license for firearms. I bought a rifle and started hunting with family and friends. With Inuit friends I learn a lot. I bought a Ski-Doo. Driving the first time, I got frostbite. I now have a *gamutik*, a big box sled, to pull behind the Ski-Doo.

My son is now seven. He went out boating yesterday with his grandpa. My mom was

here in March until June, when we still had some blizzards and a lot of snow blowing. We live on the second floor, and the wind shakes the house, which scared her. I told her not to worry, this is normal. She had a good time. She wants to come back again.

William Flaherty

conservation officer, Department of the Environment

My ancestors came from Quebec, my parents and grandparents. They lived on the eastern side of Hudson Bay. I don't have a real sense of home. It's up there on Ellesmere Island and my home is down south also. I travel to other parts of Nunavut but mainly I stay on Baffin Island. In the winter we use snowmobiles, our only means of transportation in the snow.

When my parents were resettled, meaning sent north, they were put on the beach at Grise Fiord, and the boat left. There were no buildings. No stores. No Starbucks. No food. No shelter from storms. Just dirt and what was lying on the beach. First they had to assess their situation. What were the species available for survival? You can only hope there are caribou or seal. Don't ask me how, but they survived. I'm one of the children.

Back in former times, your education was for survival on the land. I went out hunting for the first time when I was five years old. I was eight or nine when I got my first seal. Eleven when I helped catch my first

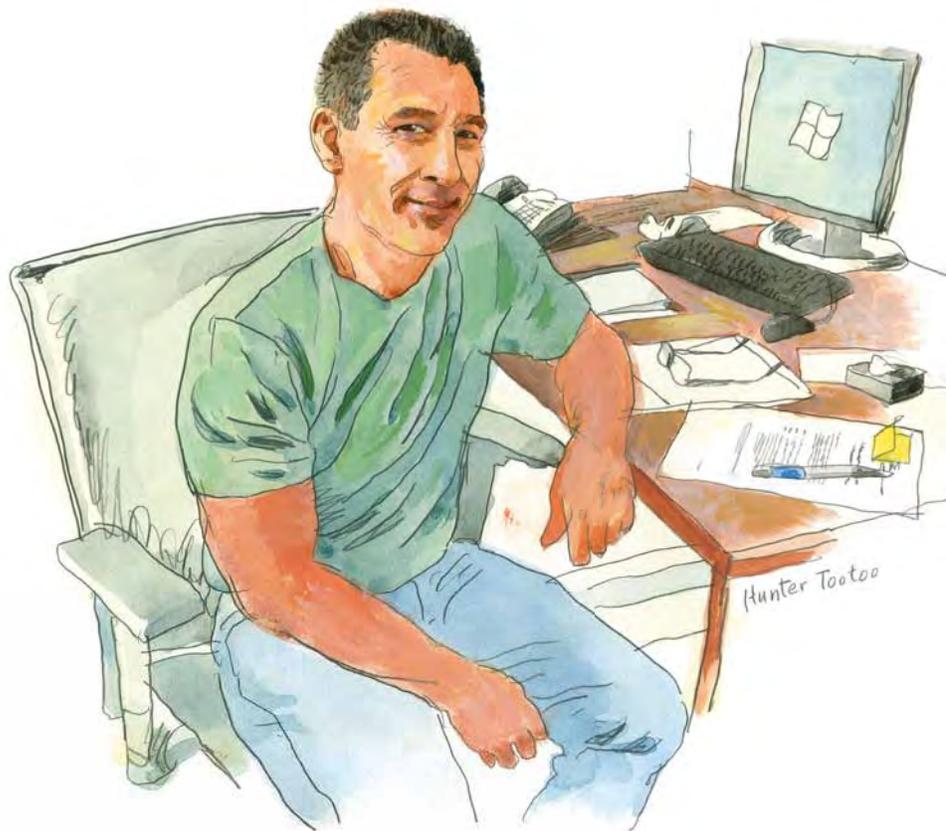
They were put on the beach at Grise Fiord and the boat left.

I see us as being resilient.

narwhale and beluga. In regards to the polar bears, whatever you hear in the media about the Canadian Arctic, like the ice is getting smaller, that's true, but we have many more bears right now. Healthy. A few years ago, we saw hardly any. Now we can't stay in tents and feel safe. We have to live and vacation in cabins.

At the moment there are not many caribou on Baffin Island. This fluctuates. The musk ox are multiplying rapidly.

The media tell people there is much less ice so polar bears are unable to hunt. Not true either. Polar bears are very adaptable. They can eat whatever is on the land—eggs, seaweed, berries. They can hunt in open water. Seals sleep on the surface, even on rough sea. A polar bear swims toward a seal, dives deep and comes up under the seal. They are easy pickings.



Hunter Tootoo

member of parliament

My dad was 13 years old when he moved to a town. That has a big impact on people in that short period of time. Within 60 years we transformed from a traditional nomadic lifestyle to surfing the Internet. Surviving off the land to a wage economy.

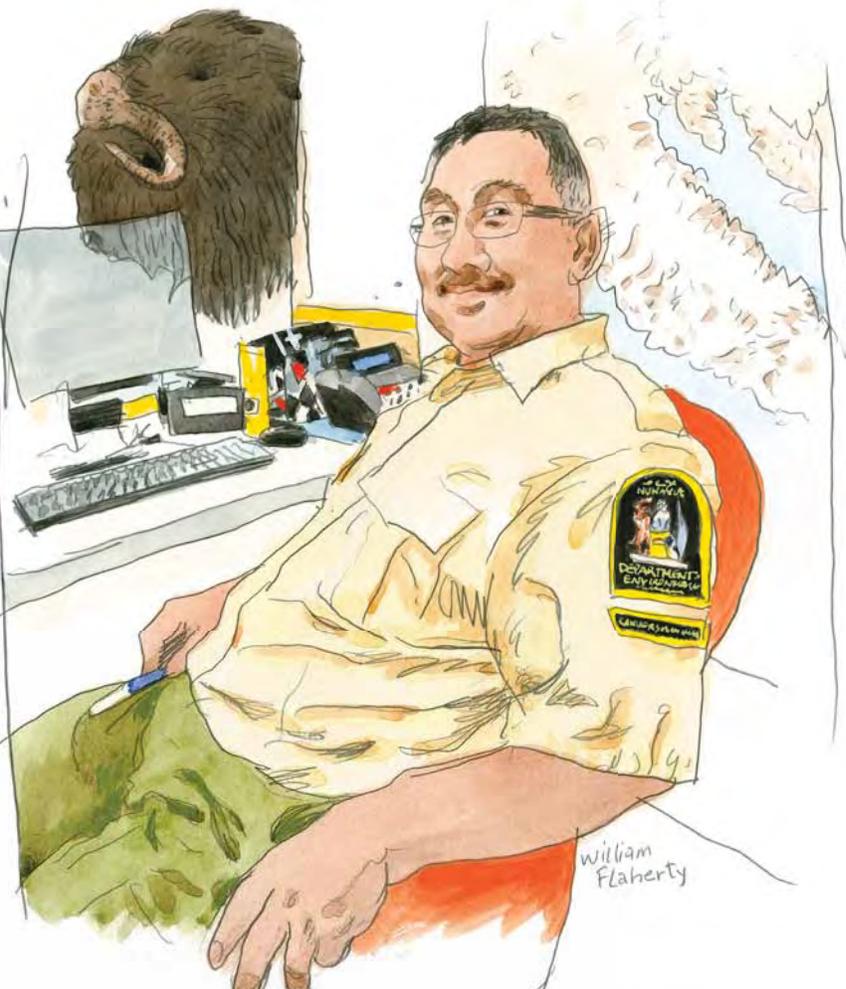
I see us as being resilient. In the North people come up to work and fall in love with the place and end up staying. We may have the coldest and harshest climate in the world, but our hospitality and friendliness is warm.

In the old days on the land, everyone worked together, shared among everyone in the group. Basically the government said, "Come to the town and we will give you a house and money for food." The government of that time thought it was the best thing to do. We were a people that were self-reliant. Now we are a reliant population.

I see now we are moving back to our old culture. We have to be self-sufficient in a different environment. It is now wages and business.

Think of it as a marathon race. Then, we ran the 50-yard dash, timewise. Are we where we want to be? No. Are we getting there? Yes. ☺

Iqaluit is nothing like any other Capital. More like a pioneer town of earlier times—kind of lay back, (the speed limit is 30 Kph). People have time to talk. I could have stayed longer.
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SMALL AMERICAN TOWN



BIG ALGERIAN LEGACY

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY
BRIAN CLARK

UNTIL LAST YEAR, 17-YEAR-OLD VICTORIA MILLER ADMITS SHE WOULD HAVE HAD TO SEARCH ONLINE TO LEARN WHERE ALGERIA IS, LET ALONE DESCRIBE THE EXPLOITS OF ONE OF ITS MOST FAMOUS HEROES.



was really taken by Amir Abd el-Kader’s character and how he handled the multiple challenges he faced, including when some of his own people didn’t believe in him,” says Miller, who lives in the northeastern Iowa town of Decorah. On September 19 she was recognized as one of seven winning essayists in the 2016 Abdelkader Global Leadership Prize.

After reading diplomat John W. Kiser’s biography, *Commander of the Faith-*

ful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader (Monkfish, 2008), for a class in human geography at Decorah High School, Miller now says she regards him as an international role model. Her new understandings, she adds, help her feel more comfortable talking to Muslims.

“Abd el-Kader’s legacy deserves to be remembered along with Nelson Mandela, Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s,” Miller enthuses, “because they were all pursuing the same dream: to reach peace.”

Indeed, the Algerian prince (*amir* or *emir* in Arabic) united tribes in North Africa and fought for independence; later, during the 1860 Mount Lebanon civil war, he helped save thousands of Maronite Christians from massacre—an act for which President Abraham Lincoln lauded him. When the amir passed away in 1883, *The New York Times* eulogized him as “one of the few great men of the century. The nobility of his character won him the admiration of the world.”

Even decades earlier, in 1846, so widely admired was he that Iowa farmers named their new town after him, and today Elkader, Iowa, is the only US town named for an Arab. Since 2008 it has been reviving his legacy, thanks largely to the eight-year-old nonprofit Abdelkader Education Project (AEP).

Kathy Garms, executive director and cofounder with

Kiser of the Elkader-based AEP, furthers Miller’s sentiment, explaining that the story of the amir “inspires civility, tolerance and understanding” and offers “models of ethical leadership, moral courage and humanitarian conduct.” The AEP, Garms continues, works to “shape the minds, hearts, values of the next generation.”

And this is where AEP’s Abdelkader Global Leadership Prize essay competition comes in.

Its award ceremony was held this year about 130 kilometers south of Elkader in Cedar Rapids, where it was nearly cancelled due to rising floodwaters on the Cedar River. But the student writers and their families braved the threats of high water to meet Kiser as well as teachers and leaders of civil-society groups from around the country.

Kiser says he is pleased with the results so far.

“The students’ stereotypes about Muslims and Arabs have been challenged, and their minds opened to the diversity of the Muslim world,” he observes. As a role model, he says, Abd el-Kader “is a unifier ... [whose] probing intellect, ethical courage, compassion, depth of knowledge ... impress all who learn about him.”

And his advice to the winners was simple: “Treat others as they would want to be treated ... and resist stereotyping.”

Garms affirms the broadening of students’ horizons.

“We started this with an essay contest for students, but we’d like

to expand our programs and create additional tools to reach a wider audience of police, military and businesses to promote better intercultural understanding,” she says.

After the awards program, the winners and family members toured the Cedar Rapids Islamic Center and visited one of the city’s historic sites: the oldest standing mosque in the United



Abdelkader Education Project co-founder and executive director Kathy Garms opened the group’s seventh annual forum on September 19 in Cedar Rapids. Students competed for scholarships in the Abdelkader Global Leadership Prize, and educators explored the legacy of Algerian freedom fighter and peacemaker Amir (Prince) Abd el-Kader, *opposite, lower*, whose name lives on in Elkader, Iowa, *opposite, top*, population 1,300 and the only town in the United States named after an Arab.



“ABD EL-KADER’S LEGACY DESERVES TO BE REMEMBERED ALONG WITH NELSON MANDELA, GANDHI AND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.’S BECAUSE THEY WERE ALL PURSUING THE SAME DREAM: TO REACH PEACE.”

—VICTORIA MILLER, IOWA HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION WINNER



Abdelkader Global Leadership Prize 2016 WINNERS

US COLLEGE DIVISION

Noreen Choudhary, Villanova University, Pennsylvania (\$1,500 scholarship)
Rebecca Alcock, University of Wisconsin-Madison (\$1,000 scholarship)

US HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

Daud Shad, Mountain Lakes, New Jersey (\$1,000 scholarship)
Mohammad Rawwas, Cedar Falls, Iowa (\$500 scholarship)

IOWA HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

Victoria Miller, Decorah High School (\$1,000 scholarship)
Madison McCabe, Decorah High School (\$500 scholarship)

ELKADER HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION

Samantha Wiedner (\$300 scholarship)

States, built in 1934.

Elkader Mayor Josh Pope hopes the AEP inspires young people “to carry on the values of the amir.” In addition to hosting the AEP, Elkader is a sister city to Mascara, in north-western Algeria, where Abd el-Kader was born in 1808. Today Mascara’s population of 150,000 dwarfs Elkader’s 1,300 residents. “Abd el-Kader serves as a great example about how people of different cultures can live together in peace and understanding,” he says.

In early September Pope traveled at the invitation of the Algerian government to speak at its own Emir Abd el-Kader Award ceremony, which recognized organizations in the Mediterranean region for work in economic cooperation and interfaith relations.

The interfaith aspect of Abd el-Kader’s life impresses Miller deeply.

“I’m a Christian, and I’ve had my own difficulties—though certainly on a different level—but I know it’s important to stay

positive and hopeful,” she says.

Now, she wants to add study of comparative religions and “the psychology of how we learn and react to stereotypes” to her aspirations for a career in medicine.

“Victoria grew a lot in the process of reading about el-Kader and writing her essay,” says Miller’s mother, Yvette Powers, noting diplomatically that her daughter was not always supported by some members of her extended family.

“I believe people need to accept all races and creeds,” she declares. “I hope she was able to open some eyes.”

Brian Miller, Victoria’s father, says he and his daughter talked about the life of Abd el-Kader when she was writing her essay.

“It opened up quite a discussion,” he says. “I believe there

Forum attendees received a tour of the “Mother Mosque of America,” built in 1934 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, by immigrants from what is now Syria and Lebanon. Although not the first mosque built in the us, it is the oldest standing mosque; its proximity to Elkader, 130 kilometers away, is coincidental.



University of Iowa freshman and winner in the contest's Elkader High School Division, Samantha Wiedner, right, talks with Jefferson High School tenth grader Lena Osman outside of the Islamic Center of Cedar Rapids. "Being intolerant to other cultures and religions isn't going to get us anywhere," Wiedner says. "Despite all our differences, we should be able to co-exist."

are good Muslims and bad Muslims, just like all people."

Abd el-Kader, he says, "was a good guy," adding that he hadn't ever really thought much before about why the town was called "Elkader."

National high school division winner Daud Shad lives far from Iowa, more than 1,600 kilometers east, in New Jersey. He says his elder brother encouraged him to read Kiser's biography and enter the contest.

"I'd never heard of el-Kader, 'the George Washington of Algeria,'" says the 17-year-old, whose parents were born in Pakistan. "There need to be more leaders on all sides like el-Kader because he embodied the best of religion and humanity."

Samantha Wiedner, 18, grew up in Elkader, and she won the high school competition for her town.

"I knew Elkader was named after the emir, and I knew where Algeria was, but that was about it," says Wiedner, now a freshman studying Russian and international relations at the University of Iowa.

She says she learned that "being intolerant to other cultures and religions isn't going to get us anywhere. Despite all our differences, we should be able to coexist."

Noureen Choudhary, 20 and a student at Villanova University, learned about the essay contest from her mother, who was born in Algeria.

"I first heard the name Abd el-Kader in a song popularized by Algerian musicians Khaled, Faudel and Rachid Taha," says Choudhary, who was born and raised in Philadelphia. Though she was only four, she says the memorable tune and appealing lyrics made her wonder who it was about.

"My mother told me he was an Algerian hero," she continues. "I now realize he is a figure widely heralded as an ideal Muslim, humanitarian, warrior, leader and source of Algerian national pride of the 19th century."



Choudhary initially thought Abd el-Kader was "too obscure for Westerners to know about." She was stunned to learn that a small town in Iowa was named for him, and that there is a group devoted to the study and promotion of his life and work.

"Not many people achieve great things like he did," she says. "He practiced his faith in an exemplary manner." 🌍



Brian Clark is a Wisconsin-based writer and photographer who contributes to the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, *Los Angeles Times* and other publications.

 www.abdelkaderproject.org

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Amir Abd el-Kader J/A 10

ROUSSEAU'S TURBAN

Written by
IAN COLLER

Sometime in 1731, a struggling young would-be musician calling himself Vaussore de Villeneuve spent his last few pennies on a meager supper at an inn in rural Switzerland. The world would later know him by one of the greatest names of the 18th century:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

He glanced enviously over at the hearty meal being consumed nearby by another traveler, a man with an ample beard, furred cap and violet robe—an Orthodox monk or archimandrite. The priest, whose name was Athanasius Paulus, from the Ottoman city of Jerusalem, gestured to his neighbor to share his meal.

They soon discovered that they could converse in a kind of corrupted Italian, the lingua franca in many parts of the Levant. Athanasius, who was traveling through the cantons of Switzerland raising funds for—depending on his audience—restoration of the Holy Sepulcher or the ransom of Christian captives, proposed that Villeneuve join him to help present his case more eloquently in French. Feckless, friendless and traveling under his pseudonym, Rousseau accepted. After a series of fundraising missions across Switzerland and in neighboring countries, the pair planned to travel on through Germany and Poland toward Jerusalem.

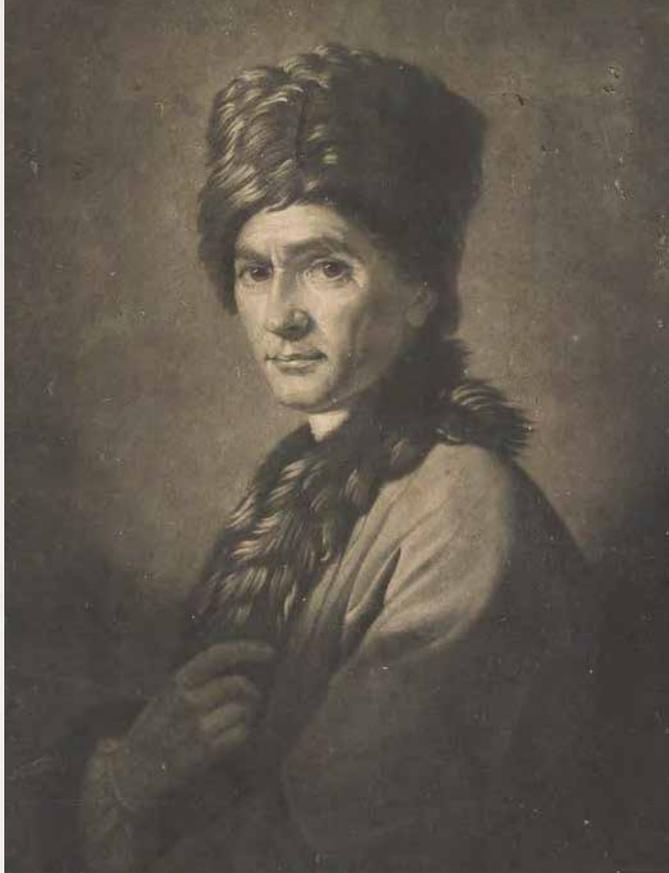
If this young man, who would become known as one

of the great minds of the Age of Enlightenment, had gone east with Athanasius, the history of European philosophy would not have been the same.

Instead, Rousseau chose to follow a road toward Paris. There, seeing by chance an announcement of an essay competition at the Academy of Dijon, he was struck with a radical idea: the “arts and sciences” of which Europe was so proud, he decided, had brought more misery than progress to its people by alienating them from natural goodness. He decided to enter the competition.

His controversial *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*, signed with his real name, won him the academy’s prize. It signaled the start of a career that made him the most talked-about writer in late 18th-century Europe and a crucial figure of the intellectual crisis we call the Enlightenment.

What can this tell us about the relationship of Islam to the European Enlightenment? Rousseau might seem a poor candidate for such a question. His great works were novels like *La Nouvelle Héloïse* and *Émile*, his autobiographical *Confessions*, and groundbreaking political



This portrait of Jean-Jacques Rousseau was painted in 1766, after he had adopted Ottoman-style attire in the years following publication of *Émile*, which was a controversial best-seller.

essays like his 1762 “On the Social Contract.” He never traveled outside of Western Europe, nor did he produce works that could pretend to any degree of Eastern scholarship. There are many other Enlightenment thinkers who might offer more favorable grounds for study of this question. For example, various French encyclopedists expatiated on the Muslim world, and other philosophers busied themselves translating the Qur’an or writing lives of the Prophet Muhammad.

Yet Rousseau was closer to the Muslim world than many of these scholars: not just in his thought, but also in his life. “We have three principal religions in Europe,” he wrote. “One admits only of one revelation, another of two, and the third of three.” In this simple way, Rousseau broke down the differences among the major religions, insisting on their equal right to respect. Had he been born in Istanbul, he argued, he would have become a Muslim: To him, religion was in many ways an arbitrary result of geography. He argued for a tolerance that allowed individuals to make choices according to conscience while channeling their spirituality into civil society. Rousseau was not a proponent of the separation of church and state: He believed in a civic religion that could transcend sectarian divisions, and he admired the Prophet Muhammad’s ability to unite and lead his people.

What Rousseau’s writings reveal is not a hostile encounter with an “Other” he saw as fundamentally different, but rather a whole set of observations that he drew from his personal experiences and those of his family, experiences across a world that was not so easily divided into separate Christian and Muslim spheres. This may tell us something rather different from the now-conventional view that Europeans looked out toward Muslim cultures through a screen of exotic

Rousseau’s writings reveal personal experiences across a world that was not so easily divided into separate Christian and Muslim spheres.

stereotypes, which became known pejoratively as “Orientalism,” most famously through the 1978 study of that name by Edward Said. The reality is more complex.

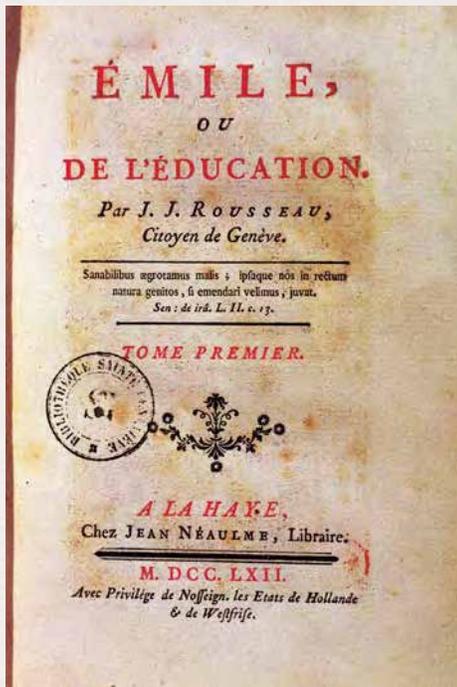
Just like Rousseau, many Europeans were migrants, refugees or travelers of one kind or another, crossing between worlds, in flight and exile, in search of education, fortune or even the next meal. Rousseau’s life was never fixed or stable: Even at the height of his fame in 1762, he was forced to flee France in the dead of night for fear of imprisonment or execution. He searched hopelessly for a degree of stability, never owning a house or furniture, dependent on the generosity of others and often too proud to accept it.

The Watchmaker of Istanbul

Even before his birth, Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s path was already marked by a world in motion. His father, Isaac Rousseau, from a refugee French Protestant family in Switzerland, married a young woman named Suzanne Bernard. Soon after the wedding, he left his pregnant wife and traveled to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, where he worked as a watchmaker to the Ottoman elite. Evidence suggests that such decisions were relatively common

The inscription at the bottom of this plaque, produced in 1912 in commemoration of the bicentenary of Rousseau’s birth, translates “Jean Jacques! Love your country”—and yet his father had found his career in Istanbul, and at age 15, Jean-Jacques ran away from home in Geneva to Italy.





in the first decade of the 18th century. Markets were saturated at home, so Swiss artisans had to look outward to the world.

Isaac's brother André went to Amsterdam; his uncle Jacob moved to London; and his brother-in-law Gabriel Bernard left for Venice, and then for Charlestown in the American colony of Carolina. His cousin

Jacques, also a watchmaker, accompanied the embassy sent by the French government of Louis XIV to Persia and established himself permanently in Isfahan. Jacques's son Jean-François Rousseau, raised speaking fluent Turkish and Farsi and studying Arabic and Armenian, became the French consul at Basra. He was said to resemble Jean-Jacques so much that on his first visit to Paris some thought Jean-Jacques had returned from the grave, wearing magnificent eastern robes.

Istanbul, the most populous city in Europe—some 40 times the size of Geneva and even one and half times larger than Paris—was the wealthy and flourishing capital of an empire that straddled Europe, Asia and Africa. Goods passed through the city from across the Ottoman Empire, Persia and India, and even as far as China and Japan. We know little of Isaac's life there, but seven years is a long time to stay away from his family. Istanbul had just been restored definitively as the Ottoman capital, and the new Sultan, Ahmed III, would transform the city into a capital of leisure and consumption in what has been celebrated as the "Tulip Era." In comparison to dour Geneva, this expanding, exciting city must have been a revelation.

Yet Isaac Rousseau returned in 1711 to Geneva, to a seven-year-old son he did not know, and soon his wife was expecting Jean-Jacques, the "unhappy fruit," as he later wrote, of that return. Like so many women of the era, Suzanne succumbed to the perils of childbirth. "I was born feeble and sickly," Jean-Jacques wrote. "I cost my mother her life, and my birth was the first of my misfortunes." In Rousseau's mind, his father's

decision to leave Istanbul was the cause of his mother's death. His elder brother seems never to have recovered from this family trauma: in his teens he disappeared—perhaps also to the East—and was never heard from again.

Jean-Jacques too was introduced quite brutally to the itinerant life. Aged just 14, apprenticed to a watchmaker, he found himself one night locked outside the city gates of Geneva. Faced with punishment, he took the precipitous decision to run away. Renouncing not only his residence but also the Protestantism in which he had been raised, he traveled to Annecy in the Savoy region, then part of Italy, where he converted to Catholicism. In the house of Madame de Warens, his protector and later paramour, he found some refuge, but in time grew resentful of her other suitors. Envyng the urbane manners of a Parisian music master at the house, Rousseau stole his name, Villeneuve, and appended it to an anagram of Rousseau: "Vaussoire." This is how he found himself sharing a meal on the road with the archimandrite.

It was during the pair's sojourns in the Swiss town of Soleure that Rousseau-as-Villeneuve—who was also claiming falsely to be a Parisian—was summoned to meet the Marquis de Bonnac, former ambassador to Istanbul and now French ambassador in Switzerland. Rousseau poured out his story to this cultivated man, and then with even greater effect to the ambassador's wife, finding for the first time the kind of audience that would later respond so passionately to his remarkable *Confessions*, writings that seem modern even today in their bare-all honesty. "He must not be suffered to follow that Greek priest," Madame de Bonnac declared.



Above: "All that we have not at our birth, and that we need when grown up, is given us by education. This education comes to us from nature itself, or from other men, or from circumstances," Rousseau wrote in *Émile, or On Education*, published in 1762, in which his main character ultimately finds his deepest insights amid the social mobility of Algiers. Right: An engraving for an early 19th-century edition of the book serves as a visual metaphor for the larger European "Enlightenment" that Rousseau's ideas helped drive.



Late in his 66-year life, Rousseau cultivated an interest in botany, gathering and classifying herbs around Ermenonville, France, often collaborating with the noted pharmacist and botanist Fusée Aublet.

Soon Rousseau was on his way across the border into France, with assistance from the Bonnacs, and onward to Paris where he would ultimately find fame, if not fortune.

Rousseau's *Émile* in Algiers

Here the curious anecdote might have come to an end. We know that Jean-Jacques Rousseau did not travel to Jerusalem or anywhere in the Muslim world—at least physically. Only through the self-identified hero of his most famous novel, *Émile*, published to great controversy in 1762, did he complete the journey he had begun.

Émile was an 18th-century best-seller and the educational foundation of the revolutionary era. It has been credited with inventing a new conception of childhood and criticized for its emphasis on separate spheres for men and women. It is one of the books that form the intellectual basis of contemporary Western civilization. Most editions, however, leave out the final, uncompleted volume, entitled *Émile and Sophie*. Yet this volume is the most interesting of all: *Émile* leaves the European setting, and he finds the realization of his education in North Africa.

In the last (and incomplete) chapters, Rousseau has *Émile*, disgusted by society and the breakdown of his relationship

with Sophie, leave France by ship. En route to Naples, the ship is seized by corsairs, and *Émile* is taken as a captive to Algiers. Laboring in a quarry under the lash of a foreman who whips his charges beyond their strength, *Émile* organizes his fellow slaves into a strike, showing the true meaning of his philosophical education through his resilience in the most extreme circumstances.

The quarry's owner calmly summons *Émile* to explain his actions. *Émile* is astonished: Any European master, he declares, would have had the strikers beaten or killed. "I

found that the names of Moors and Pirates," he declares, "carry with them certain prejudices against which I had not been sufficiently on guard. They are not inclined to pity, but they are just; and although one can expect neither

gentleness nor clemency from them, one need fear neither caprice nor wickedness." The idea of the "generous Turk" soon became a familiar one, used in theater and operas like Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* (1782). But here it was not accompanied by any of the romantic trappings of Orientalism. Rousseau rejected the exoticism of the "Arabian Nights"—pirates, harems and sultans—for a surprisingly rationalist conception of Algerian society.

As *Émile*'s fame spreads, he is called into the service of the *dey*, or ruler, of Algiers, Assem Oglou, who, the narrator

Rousseau rejected the exoticism of the "Arabian Nights" for a rationalist conception of Algerian society.



Though he never traveled outside Europe, his family of emigrants and his encounters with polyglot travelers stimulated his empathetic imagination. “The world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is infinite,” he wrote in *Émile*.

reports, “had arrived in the position of supreme power by the most honorable route that could take him there: from a simple sailor, passing through all the ranks of the navy and the army, he was raised step by step to the highest functions of the state, and on the death of his successor he was elected to succeed him through the unanimous suffrage of the Turks and the Moors, the men of war and the men of the law.”

Rousseau’s tale indeed reflected recent events in Algiers, where a new dey, Muhammad ben Othman, had come to power in 1766 under circumstances similar to those described in the tale. Algiers was unusual in that its ruler was elected through the acclamation of the militia, just as Rousseau suggested. But Rousseau’s interest in Algiers lay more in the example it offered of the radical social mobility that he, like other European philosophers, considered to be an essential element of Eastern “despotic” societies. Aristocratic writers such as Montesquieu or Voltaire saw this as a flaw, arguing that there was no freedom in a society where a slave could become a minister, or a minister punished with destitution or death, by the decision of the Sultan alone. They did not view the inequality

inherent in their own society as a problem, but as a necessary element of society. Rousseau—son of a poor watchmaker, not a wealthy aristocrat—saw things very differently.

“Why are Turks generally more humane, more hospitable than we are?” Rousseau asked in *Émile*. His answer was that in Ottoman lands even the greatest individuals knew they could find themselves reduced to misery, whereas in France a noble could never find himself in the place of a peasant, or vice-versa. Social mobility, Rousseau felt, drove an imaginative identification of each individual with all other members of society, no matter how rich or poor. This new idea of a society shared by all, and not just by the rich and powerful, helped drive the French Revolution and the modern Western conception of social justice.

Rousseau’s “Salamaleki”

If Rousseau only accomplished his journey to the Muslim world in a fictional guise, this was not his only experiment with cultural difference. When he was forced to flee over the Swiss border after the publication of *Émile*—whose radical ideas on religion had proved too much for the French authorities to tolerate—he decided to adopt a new manner of dressing, forsaking the wig, breeches and waistcoat of court fashion for the long loose robe and round cap of Ottoman attire. He complained that bladder problems made a tight-fitting garment unsuitable, but he could easily have adopted other, more conventional styles: the shepherd’s frock, the kilt, the toga or the priest’s soutane.

Rousseau’s choice of Armenian dress was not caprice or exoticism, but a deliberate and meaningful act that conveyed much about his understanding of himself. In his *Confessions*, Rousseau reported the hostile reactions from the surrounding Swiss populace.

I had a little Armenian wardrobe made for me, but the storm excited against me made me defer its use to better times, and it was only several months later that, when new attacks forced me once again to use catheters, I decided I might take up this new form of dress at Môtiers without risk.... So I donned the coat, the caftan, the fur cap, the belt, and having attended divine service in this outfit, I did not see any impropriety in wearing it to my Lord Marshall’s.

*His intimate world was peopled
by the in-betweens of a larger
cultural space.*

In his new garb, Rousseau now bore a curious resemblance to the archimandrite he had encountered three decades earlier. While Ottomans would easily have recognized it as Christian, his neighbors in Switzerland imagined it as Islamic. This clearly did not concern Rousseau. In fact, he seems to have encouraged it. The response that pleased Rousseau most was that of the Lord Marshall Keith, a Jacobite exile from Britain who had taken up the governorship of Neuchâtel, and who took Rousseau under his wing. “Seeing

me dressed thus,” Rousseau reported, “His Excellency greeted me simply with *Salamaleki* [Peace upon you], which settled everything, and I no longer wore any other dress.”

The Marshall was well versed in the customs of Islamic cultures and the ways of religions beyond his own. His household was polyglot, including Ilbrahim, a Buddhist Kalmuk Tartar; Mocha, an African of uncertain origins; and a young Turkish woman named Emetulla, rescued by the Lord Marshall’s brother at the bloody Russian siege of Ochakov, an Ottoman city in Ukraine. During these months in 1763 in Môtiers, Rousseau undertook the modern education of Emetulla, whom he described as his *bonne soeur* (dear sister). It seems that Emetulla played muse to Rousseau’s metamorphosis, teasing another guest prior to his first appearance that “a man from my country has arrived, at least one dressed as an Armenian. You will dine with him. Guess who he is.” Another of his guests admired the “turban” Rousseau wore that made him appear like the hero of one of his own novels. These choices can show us the extent of Rousseau’s willingness to project himself imaginatively into different worlds, as he developed radically new ideas that shaped the course of modern history.

Entangled Encounters

For Rousseau, then, Islam and its associated cultures were no exotic “Other” against which his European identity was defined, but an intimate element of his cultural repertoire. By experimenting with his connections to the Muslim world, Rousseau found ways to practice his social and cultural independence, exercising a form of principled choice that he saw as the foundation of political liberty. He pushed the geographical, cultural and even religious limits of identity, insisting on the individual’s capacity to choose different and original pathways across



At Paris’s Louvre museum, a statue now honors the writer whose thoughts were once so controversial he had to flee France.

different worlds. Yet not all of these roads were so felicitous.

By way of epilogue, we must return, sadly, to the archimandrite with whom we began. After leaving Rousseau, Athanasius continued his peripatetic journey back to Jerusalem, but three years later, his life took a very different turn. He arrived in Holland with a new *compagnon de route* called Jan Paus, carrying with him several letters of patent from European royalty and church officials. When these letters were discovered to be forgeries, he was tried

before the court of aldermen in Bosch, convicted of collecting money on false pretenses and hanged with the forged documents nailed above the gallows.

Ultimately, then, Athanasius did not follow the path to Jerusalem any more than did young Vaussore de Ville-neuve, the vagabond with a remarkable

destiny whom he stumbled upon in his journey. Through a random act of generosity in offering a hungry young man a bite to eat, this otherwise unremarkable charlatan burst for a moment onto the stage of modern history.

Rousseau’s wandering path was also significant in shaping what we consider today to be the “West.” His intimate world was peopled by the in-betweens of that larger cultural space: his father, Isaac, regretting his return to Geneva while his relatives settled happily in Persia; the colorful household at Môtiers with the Turkish refugee Emetulla; the ill-fated, double-dealing archimandrite; the cosmopolitan Marshall in exile from Scotland; and even Rousseau’s alter egos—Vaussore, who was ready to tread the path to the East, and fictional Émile, who found the fullest realization of his rules of conduct as a slave in Algiers. These crisscrossing cultural paths through Europe and neighboring Islamic lands were woven into the writings and ideas that Rousseau never tried to separate from his life, and in this sense they speak today with insight and clarity to our contemporary world his thought helped to create. ☉



Ian Coller, Ph.D., is associate professor of history at the University of California, Irvine. Born in Australia, he previously taught at the University of Melbourne and La Trobe University, Australia. His prizewinning book *Arab France: Islam and the Making of Modern Europe, 1798-1831* was published in 2011 by the University of California Press. He is currently working on a history of the French Revolution and Islam.

This article is adapted by the author from “Rousseau’s Turban: Entangled Encounters of Europe and Islam in the Age of Enlightenment,” in *Historical Reflections*, vol. 40, no. 2, Summer 2014, ©Berghahn Journals.

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DANGER
FALLING
COCONUTS


Danger
falling
coconuts

C



CRACKING COCONUT'S HISTORY

WRITTEN BY
RAMIN GANESHAM

ONE OF THESE NUTS
IS A MEAL FOR A MAN,
BOTH MEAT AND DRINK.
-MARCPOLO





DANITA DELIMONT / ALAMY; OPPOSITE, LEFT: BIBLIOTECA ESTENSE / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES; RIGHT: G. DAGLI ORTI / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES; PREVIOUS SPREAD, MAIN: PA IMAGES / ALAMY; LOWER: RICHARD LEVINE / ALAMY

FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, THE COCONUT PALM HAS ENTWINED ITSELF IN HISTORY,

from tropical coasts to typical shelves in global groceries. Called the “tree of life” by the many cultures that have depended upon it through time, it provides sustenance, succor and shelter. While it now grows on every subtropical coastline around the world, genetic testing underwritten by the National Geographic Society in 2011 showed the coconut originated in India and Southeast Asia. From its original home, the nut—which can float—made its way independently, traversing both hemispheres.

But historians also agree that coconuts traveled at the hands of men, and it was most likely seafaring Arab traders who carried coconuts from India to East Africa as much as 2,000 years ago. Even the name they conferred on the fruit—*zhawzhat al-hind*, which means “walnut of India”—survives in Arabic today.

These mariners encountered coconuts as they traded with their Indian counterparts who sailed small, nimble *dhow*s, coast-hugging boats made from teak or coconut-wood planking lashed together with coconut fiber (*coir*). The dhow was adopted by Arab merchant mariners themselves, and the boats continue to be made today, but with modern materials.

These same traders also introduced coconuts to Europeans, first along the trans-Asian Silk Roads. Among them was the Venetian adventurer Marco Polo, who encountered the tree in

Egypt in the 13th century, calling its fruit “the Pharaoh’s nut.”

Beginning in the early 16th century, the coconut came to Europe through the “maritime Silk Road” following explorer-colonizers like Vasco da Gama, who pursued a direct trade route between Portugal and India, guided by maps and navigational information charted by the famed Arab navigator Ahmad ibn Majid a half century before.

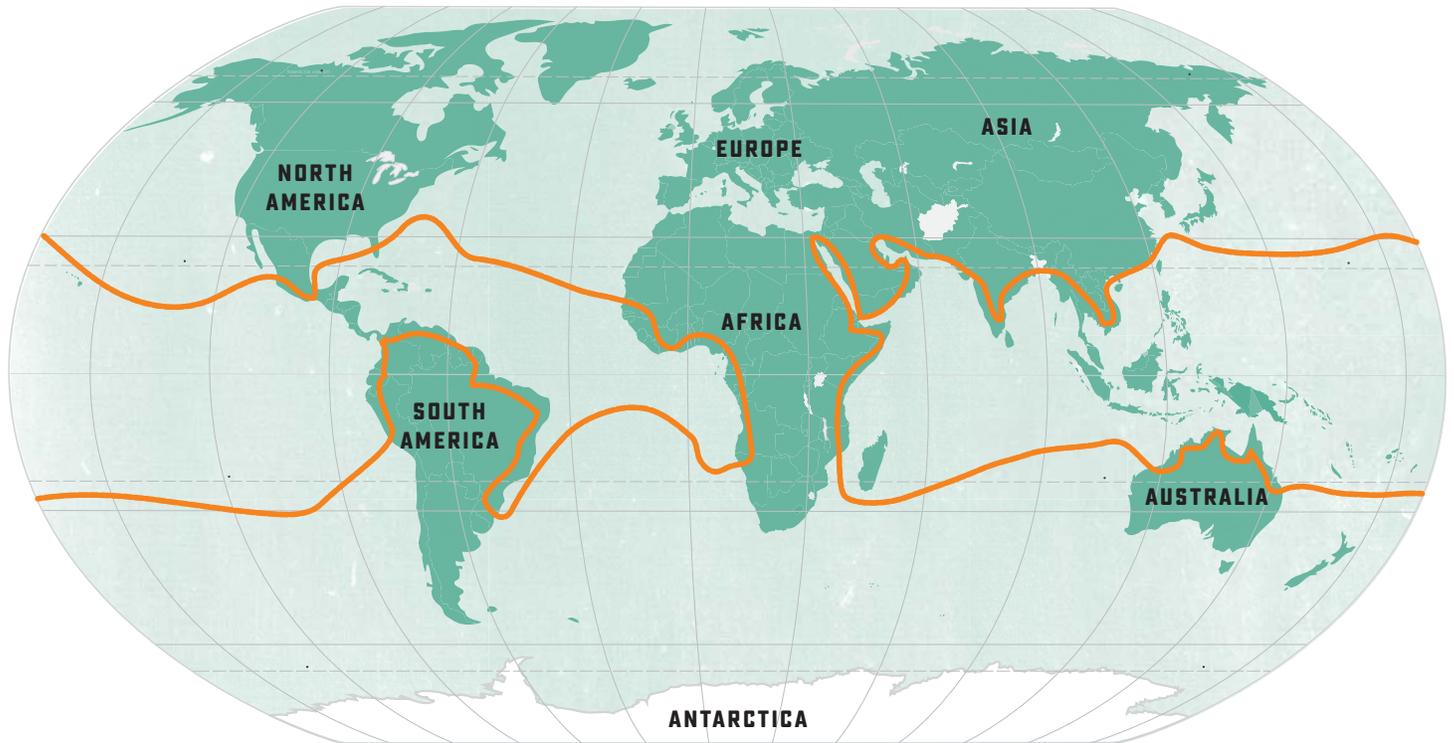
From da Gama and other Portuguese traders came the coconut’s contemporary and most recognized international name: They called it *coco-nut* because it resembled a *cocuruto*, or skull, with three dots on its end like two eyes and a mouth and coconut fibers that resembled hair.

Also in the early 16th century, Antonio Pigafetta, a Venetian nobleman who can be counted as one of history’s first adventure tourists, accompanied Ferdinand Magellan on one

The *cocuruto* (“crown of the head” in Portuguese), from which the South Asian drupe takes its modern name, was hinted at in the illustration at left printed in a 15th-century edition of Dioscorides’s *Tractatus De Herbis*; the merchant’s scales allude to the coconut’s value in Europe. Carried much earlier by Arab traders into Mesopotamia, a coconut palm was depicted in a bas-relief, lower, in the Aleppo Archaeological Museum. Opposite: A boatman in Thailand offloads fresh coconuts that will be consolidated for onward shipping to meet rising global demand. Much of the new interest comes from the West where (previous spread) marketing aimed at health- and exercise-conscious consumers took sculptural form on a bridge in London, and new products—especially beverages and oils—line the shelves of high-end grocery chains.



DISTRIBUTION OF COCONUT PALMS



of his Europe-India commercial voyages. Pigafetta made particular note of the coconut in his travel journal:

Coconuts are the fruit of the palm trees. And as we have bread and wine, oil and vinegar, so they get all these things from the said trees. With two of these palm trees, a whole family of ten can sustain itself. The coconut trees last for a hundred years.

At home, Europeans found it useful for both food and decorative items. Sixteenth-century Europeans believed that coconut shells had magical healing powers, and they fashioned them into elaborate goblets inlaid with precious metals and gemstones. This practice continued well into the 19th century.

It was the darker side of the European sea trade that took coconuts to what are now the Americas. To the Caribbean, coconuts came with colonialism and the slave trade (which also brought numerous indentured from India), and it thrived in the region's moist, subtropical climate.

Cocos nucifera are drupes—a category of fruit that includes dates, olives, black

pepper, various nuts and “stone fruits” like peaches, plums and mangoes. Unlike them, however, the uses of coconut palms go far beyond the fruit’s edible white flesh and clear water. Since antiquity coconut palms have been used for their wood, oil, sap and coir.

But it’s particularly in the Western world that around four years ago professional and top amateur athletes began drinking coconut water for its natural electrolytic properties. Since then, coconut water has been heavily marketed as a beverage, and since 2013 consumption rates have been rising by double digits. Since 2015, export of fresh coconuts by the Philippines—the world’s biggest producer—has gone up more than 80 percent. Coconut production, export and processing have become a multibillion-dollar global industry.

“Its foothold in specialty food began with coconut water and extended to coconut oil, alternative dairy like coconut milk, yogurt and ice cream, and to snacks like coconut chips, as well as a flavor in everything from tea to popcorn,” says Denis Purcell, head of content for the Specialty Foods Association, a nonprofit trade organization of producers, growers and purveyors. “It ties in with dietary movements like vegan because it can be used as an alternative to butter.”

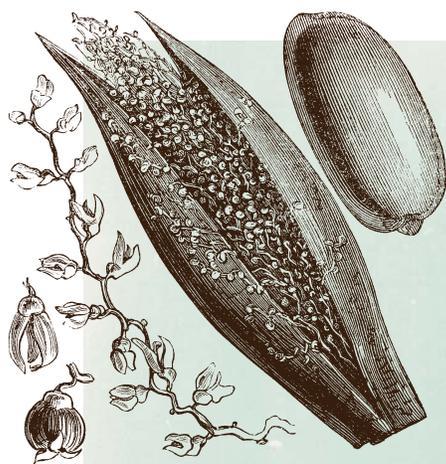
For the first time since Arab traders loaded up all those centuries ago, the coconut, in all its processed variations—fresh, frozen and dried; milk, sugar, oil and syrup—has

Much as coconuts often floated their own way to new habitats in the Indian and South Pacific oceans, happenstance at times propagated coconuts to New World shores as well. In 1878 the *Providencia*, a merchant vessel carrying coconuts from Trinidad, ran aground off the coast of Florida. Its cargo washed ashore, and while never contributing much to the Florida economy, the coconut palms changed the landscape: So much so that today Palm Beach County is named for them.



PALM COUSINS

While both coconuts and dates come from trees in the palm family that grow in tropical and subtropical latitudes, the climates each requires could hardly be more different. *Cocos nucifera*, the coconut palm, requires humidity and regular rain. *Phoenix dactylifera*, the date palm, thrives in hot, dry regions. Both trees produce “drupes”—fruit with a single pit inside—but the date palm will produce its fruit in four to eight years, while the coconut palm needs eight to 10 years. Both can live 80 to 100 years. Both are also used for wood, fiber, fruits and sap.



THE DATE PALM
Phoenix dactylifera



THE COCONUT PALM
Cocos nucifera

once again become a global “it” ingredient, not restricted to niche producers but a profit-maker for the largest food producers worldwide. As it inches its way further into the Western mainstream, including health and beauty and even household-cleaning products, coconut is following its oldest pattern of sustaining many aspects of life.

This is all far less novel in its more native geographies, like South India and Southeast Asia, as well as on East Africa’s tiny island of Zanzibar, Tanzania, where coconuts are a staple ingredient in everything from breads to beverages, from meat dishes to desserts.

Here, market days begin with the purchase of coconut and the opening and processing of the coconut into milk. Grating coconut meat is among the first skills passed from mother to daughter. Zanzibari women also find work making roofing material from coconut leaves and rope from its fibers, while coconut oil is important in the blessing of newborns. During Islamic holy days, coconuts and coconut products are among

the key food donations to local mosques.

The Arab influence in coconut trade and cultural adoption also endures in North African and Middle Eastern recipes, where it is most often used in ceremonial or special-occasion dishes—a clue to its once-upon-a-time rarity.

In Egypt, for example, *sobia*, a drink enjoyed during *iftar*, the fast-breaking in Ramadan, is made with a base of coconut milk rather than wheat, barley and oats—grains more popularly used in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. Senegalese, likewise, enjoy *iftar* with coconut-rice pudding. In Lebanon, Syria and Egypt, a semolina cake mixed with grated coconut called *hareesh* (or *basbousa*) is popular for all manner of special occasions. In Morocco, the *ghoriba*, a small coconut cookie, is popular with chai, whereas whole coconuts are processed into snacks that are sold in public markets.

Some of these appear in the recipes that follow, designed as a brief culinary journey with coconut through the Arab and Muslim worlds.

EGYPTIAN SOBIA SERVES 4

Sobia is a drink served chilled. The ingredients vary by region and can include barley, wheat and oats as a base and can be flavored with tamarind, cardamom and cinnamon. Garnish with raisins, pistachios or rose petals. This Egyptian version features coconut milk and coconut as both the base and main flavoring. For a vegan recipe, replace the evaporated milk with coconut cream.

1 c evaporated milk	1 t cornstarch dissolved in 1 t water
1½ c coconut milk	2T crushed pistachios, for garnish (optional)
⅓ c sugar	1T golden raisins, for garnish (optional)
2T sweetened coconut flakes	1 t dried rose petals, for garnish (optional)
¼ t cinnamon	
⅓ t cardamom	
½ t vanilla	

1. Combine the evaporated milk, coconut milk, sugar and coconut flakes in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir well and bring to a simmer, about 2 minutes. Stir until sugar is dissolved, about 1 minute more.
2. Add the cinnamon, cardamom and vanilla. Stir in the cornstarch mixture and whisk for 3 to 4 minutes or until the mixture thickens slightly.
3. Pour the sobia into a blender or food processor and process on high for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Pour into a container and refrigerate until totally chilled.
4. Add in any optional garnishes and serve in a tall glass.

SRI LANKAN EGG CURRY WITH HOPPERS

SERVES 4

—From *Cooking with Coconut*

Hoppers, or *appam*, are a staple in Sri Lanka and South India. They come in a variety of forms, the most common being a thin, bowl-shaped crêpe with a coconut milk-based egg curry or other topping. They are most often eaten at breakfast. Because the hopper batter needs to ferment, it should sit at room temperature overnight, making it a dish requiring advance planning. But it's well worth the wait!

Hoppers

- 1 t active dry yeast
- 1 T plus 1 t sugar
- 1 c warm water (110°F/45°C)
- 1 c rice flour; ¼ t salt
- 1 c coconut milk, at room temperature

Coconut oil for frying

Egg curry

- 1 T coconut oil
- 1 shallot, minced
- 5 fresh curry leaves
- ½ t Maldive fish flakes or fermented shrimp paste
- ½ t chili powder
- ½ t ground cumin
- ½ t ground turmeric
- 1 green chile, minced
- 1 c coconut milk
- 1 small cinnamon stick
- 6 hard-boiled eggs, sliced in half lengthwise
- 1 t salt

1. Start with the hopper batter: Stir together in a large bowl the yeast, sugar and ¼ cup of the warm water. Let sit until the mixture begins to foam and bubble, about 2 minutes.
2. Stir in the rice flour, salt and remaining ¾ cup of water and mix well until the batter is smooth. Set aside to rise overnight in a warm spot and cover with plastic wrap. It should double in size.
3. To make the egg curry, heat the coconut oil in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the shallot and fry until it begins to soften, about 1 minute. Add the curry leaves and fry until they begin to blister, 30 to 40 seconds, and then stir in the fish flakes and fry, stirring, for another minute. Stir in the chili powder, cumin, turmeric and green chile and fry for 30 seconds.
4. Add the coconut milk and cinnamon stick. Bring to a simmer and cook until the mixture begins to thicken, about 10 minutes. Add the hard-boiled eggs and salt and simmer 10 minutes longer.
5. While the curry is cooking, fry the hoppers: Mix the coconut milk and the remaining 1 tablespoon of sugar into the risen batter. The batter should be thin—about the consistency of French crêpes. Add lukewarm water as needed to achieve this consistency.
6. Heat a small wok over medium-low heat and brush with coconut oil. Pour about ¼ cup of batter into the pan and swirl it around so the batter thinly coats the pan, about 20 cm diameter. Cover the pan, allow the hopper to cook for 1 minute and then gently remove. Repeat until all the batter is used. Serve hot with egg curry spooned into the center of the hopper.

ZANZIBAR COCONUT FISH CURRY

(*Mtuzi wa Samaki*)

SERVES 4

Coconuts are so important to daily life in Zanzibar, from cultural traditions to trade, that historians through the ages have mistakenly thought that coconuts originated on the island. In fact, they were most likely brought by Arab merchants millennia ago. Curries, featuring the local red-curry powder, are often prepared with coconut milk as a base. If Zanzibar red curry is not easily found, make a substitute version using the recipe *at right*.

Salt and pepper to taste

1 kg firm-fleshed fish fillets such as tilapia or cod

½ c cornstarch

3T coconut oil or more as needed

1 medium onion, chopped

2 medium red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded and chopped into small cubes

6 cloves garlic, minced

3 t Zanzibar red curry powder

1 c tomatoes, crushed

2 c coconut milk

1 T tamarind syrup

1. Season the fish fillets to taste with salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Heat a large deep-frying pan over medium heat and add the coconut oil. Dredge the fish pieces in the cornstarch. Knock off any excess before gently placing the fillets in the oil. Fry until golden brown on both sides, about 4 to 6 minutes per side. Remove the fish fillets from pan and set aside on a plate lined with paper towels.
3. Add more coconut oil to the pan as needed and sauté the onion and bell peppers until the onion begins to soft-

en and become translucent, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add the garlic and fry 1 to 2 minutes more.

4. Stir in the curry powder and mix well, frying for 1 minute. Pour in the tomatoes, coconut milk and tamarind syrup. Stir very well and lower heat to a simmer.
5. Return the fish fillets to the pan and continue to simmer for 6 to 7 minutes or until the fish is cooked through and can be flaked easily with a fork. Serve over plain rice or coconut rice. (See recipe on p. 33.)

ZANZIBARI RED CURRY POWDER

MAKES ABOUT ½ CUP

Chilies, which are ubiquitous in other African, Indian and Thai curries, are notably absent from the Zanzibari version of curry. If you prefer a spicy curry, feel free to add cayenne or other powdered chili pepper.

1½T cumin seeds or
1 T ground cumin

1½T fennel seeds or
1 T ground fennel

1½T coriander seeds or
1 T ground coriander

1 T ground turmeric powder

1 T ground cinnamon

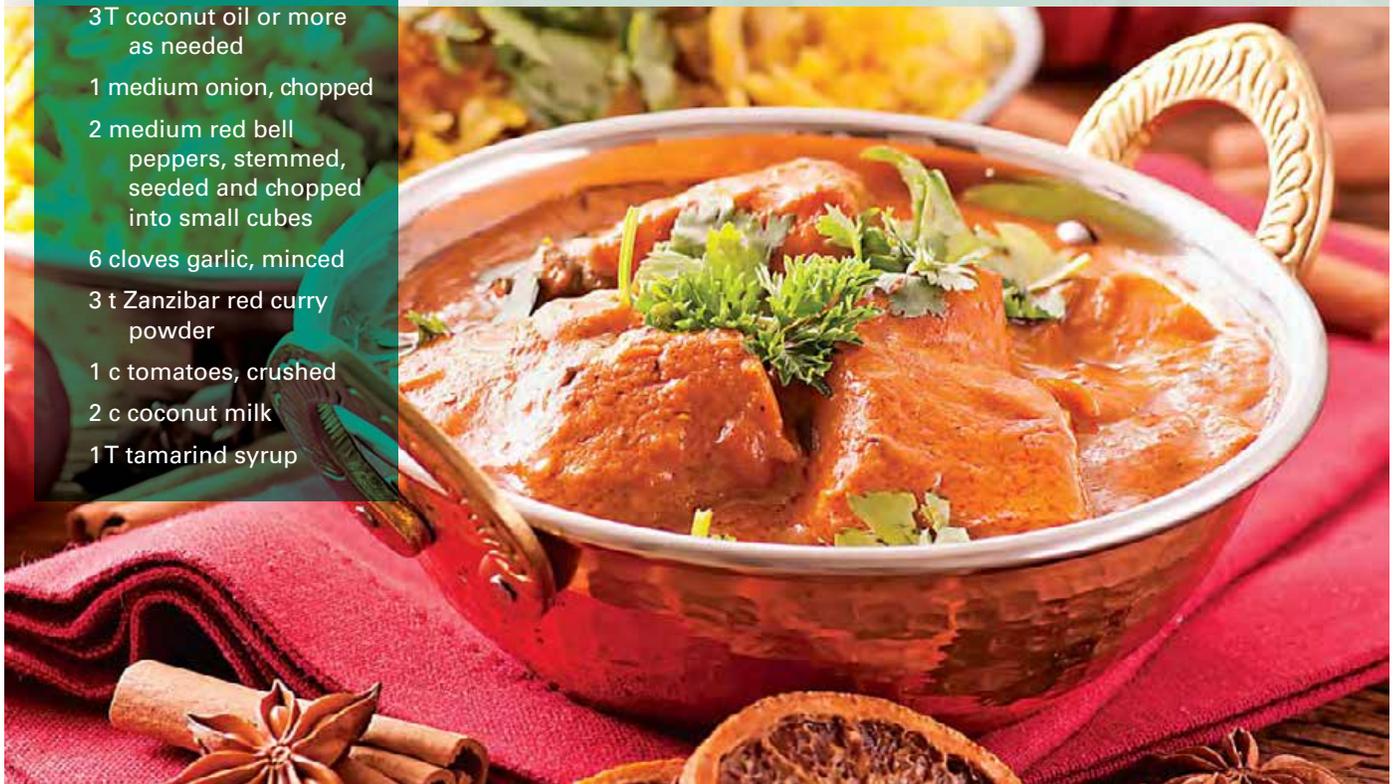
1 T ground ginger

2T Hungarian paprika

1 t salt

1 T brown sugar

1. If using whole cumin, fennel and coriander, grind the spices together in a clean spice or coffee grinder and set aside.
2. Mix the ground cumin, fennel and coriander with the remaining ingredients and combine well. Store in an airtight jar.



HAREESH

(Middle Eastern Coconut Semolina Cake)

MAKES 1 CAKE

—From *Cooking with Coconut*

Hareesh, also called *basbousa*, is a dense cake made from semolina flour doused in sugar syrup and garnished with pistachios. Some versions, like this one, add coconut. (You may wish to use half of the syrup to start, and then determine if you want to use the whole batch.) Hareesh is perfect with hot black tea.

½ c (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
2 c heavy cream
⅓ c milk
⅓ c plain strained (Greek-style) yogurt
1 t vanilla extract
2½ c semolina flour, or more as needed
1 c grated fresh or frozen coconut
½ c sugar
½ t baking powder
¼ t ground cardamom
Zest of 1 lemon, grated
Chopped pistachios for garnish

For Syrup:

2 c sugar
1 c water
1 t rosewater
1 t lemon juice



1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C). Grease a 20 cm cake pan.
2. Combine the butter, cream, milk, yogurt and vanilla in a large bowl and whisk well until smooth.
3. Whisk together in a medium bowl the semolina flour, coconut, sugar, baking powder, cardamom and lemon zest. Add to the milk mixture and whisk well until you have a very thick, smooth batter that can be cut with a knife. Add more semolina—a spoonful at a time—if needed.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Dip a sharp paring knife in hot water and use it to cut a pattern of squares or diamonds that are about 3 x 3 cm (see photo) in the batter. Bake the hareesh for 30 to 40 minutes, or until it is golden brown and firm to the touch. A cake tester inserted into the center should come out clean. If the hareesh isn't browned but is cooked through, place it under the broiler for 30 seconds to 1 minute. Cool for 10 minutes, then run a knife along the score lines.
5. While the hareesh is baking, prepare the syrup: Combine the sugar and water in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and simmer until the mixture becomes a syrup, about 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in the rosewater and lemon juice, and allow to cool to room temperature.
6. Pour the syrup over hot hareesh. Decorate each square of hareesh with the crushed pistachios. Allow to cool, then serve and enjoy.

TAMIL COCONUT RICE

(Thenga Sadham)

This is a popular recipe in South India, where coconuts are used in a variety of vegetarian dishes. This recipe also works well with cold, leftover rice.

- 1 c basmati rice
- 1 t salt
- 2T coconut oil
- 1 t grated ginger
- ¼ t asafetida powder
- 1 t mustard seeds
- ¼ c channa dal or yellow split peas
- 2T cashews
- 2 dried red chillies
- 5 curry leaves
- 1 c freshly grated or fresh frozen coconut (defrosted and drained)

1. Make the rice: Place the rice in a bowl and add 2 cups of water. Using your hand, swirl around the rice until the water becomes cloudy and gently drain the water. Repeat 5 times and set aside.
2. Bring 2 cups of water to a boil in a medium saucepan with the salt and 1 teaspoon of the coconut oil. Add the washed and drained rice, bring back to a boil and lower heat to simmer for 25 minutes. Drain in a colander if necessary; set aside to cool.
3. Heat the remaining oil in a large frying pan or wok over medium low heat and add the ginger and asafetida. Fry for 10 to 15 seconds before adding the mustard seeds. When the mustard seeds begin to pop, in about 1 minute, add the channa dal or split peas, cashews and red chillies. Fry, stirring until the channa and cashews begin to lightly brown, about 2 minutes.
4. Stir in the curry leaves and fry them for 1 minute. Then add the coconut. Mix well and fry, stirring until the coconut begins to brown lightly, about 3 to 4 minutes.
5. Add the cooked rice to the pan and mix gently so that the coconut mixture is well distributed. Season to taste with salt as needed.



Freelance journalist **Ramin Ganeshram** is the author of the forthcoming *Cooking with Coconut: 125 Recipes for Healthy Eating: Delicious Uses for Every Form—Oil, Flour, Water, Milk, Cream, Sugar, Dried, and Shredded* (Workman/Storey, 2016).



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MALIKA

مَلِكَة

Written by TOM VERDE
Art by LEONOR SOLANS

SAYYIDA AL-HURRA

From Bangladesh to Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan to Indonesia, Senegal to Turkey, it is not particularly rare in our own times for women in Muslim-majority countries to be appointed and elected to high offices—including heads of state. Nor has it ever been.

During a period stretching back more than 14 centuries to the advent of Islam, women have held positions among many ruling elites, from *malikas*, or queens, to powerful advisors. Some ascended to rule in their own right; others rose as regents for incapacitated husbands or male successors yet too young for a throne. Some proved insightful administrators, courageous military commanders or both; others differed little from equally flawed, power-seeking male potentates, and they sowed the seeds of their own downfalls.

This series presents some of the most notable historical female leaders of Muslim dynasties, empires and caliphates.

The sixth and final story in this series takes place in the early 16th century, when Morocco offered haven to Muslim and Jewish émigrés in the wake of the fall of Al-Andalus to Christian Spain.



Ruler and defender of Morocco's coastal city-state of Tétouan, Sayyida al-Hurra was a woman of many identities. Her name—really a title—loosely translates “an independent noble lady,” but to her detractors she was a “pirate queen.” Hasna Lebbady, author of *Feminist Traditions in Andalus-Moroccan Oral Narratives* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), counts her among the Andalus-Moroccan heroines who populate the nation's history and folklore.

Sayyida al-Hurra's life was charted in large part by the crises of her era. These began most dramatically in 1492 with the expulsion of her family and fellow Muslim and Jewish countrymen from their beloved city of Granada in Al-Andalus (now southern Spain) by the forces of Ferdinand and Isabella. The event signaled the end of nearly eight centuries of Muslim rule in the Iberian Peninsula.

The “many thousands of the unfortunate emigrants,” lamented Algerian-born historian al-Maqqari a century later, were absorbed by major North African urban centers such as Fez, Oran and Tunis. Others, al-Maqqari observed, “peopled the desert towns and districts of the country [including] Tetwán (Tétouan), Salé, and the plains of Metidja, near Algiers.”

Among the wave of refugees was *qaid* (tribal chief) Moulay Ali ibn Rashid, his wife, Lalla (Lady) Zohra Fernandez, a Christian convert to Islam, his son Moulay Ibrahim and his daughter—the future Sayyida al-Hurra, whose birth name was probably Aisha, and who was likely born sometime between 1485 and 1495. The Rashids were a noble clan that claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad through Idrisi I, founder in the eighth century of Morocco's first Islamic dynasty. Soon after the family's exile from Al-Andalus, they settled in the Rif Mountains southeast of Tangier, where Moulay Ali founded and led the city-state of Chefchaouen, near Morocco's northern coast. As a refugee himself, Moulay Ali opened Chefchaouen's gates to waves of fellow Andalusis fleeing the Spanish *Reconquista*.

Aisha would have been a young witness to all this upheaval while, as a girl, she received a first-class education. She excelled in languages, including Castilian and Portuguese, as well as theology. Among her teachers was famed Moroccan scholar Abdallah al-Ghazwani, whose father, the equally celebrated shaykh Oudjal, supposedly once put his hand to Aisha's head and declared, “This girl will rise high in rank.”

In 1510 she took her first steps towards fulfilling Oudjal's prediction by marrying Abu Hassan al-Mandari, governor of Tétouan since 1505. Roughly 55 kilometers north of Chefchaouen, at the mouth of the Martil River, Tétouan was Morocco's major port, an entrepot for goods from the interior and beyond. The fortified town was also a tactical base for maritime raids against the northern port of Ceuta, which

at various times was held by rival Muslim (Nasrid) and Christian (Portuguese) powers. In 1400, fearing Tétouan's position, the Portuguese had attacked it and left it in rubble.

“For 80 years it remained abandoned, until a Granadan captain decided to restore the city,” reported the 16th-century historian Al Hasan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzan, later known as Leo Africanus—who, like Aisha, was a refugee from Al-Andalus. The captain he referred to was Al-Mandari, one of Granada's last military defenders and, by tradition, modern Tétouan's founding father. “He was given the authority to restore the city and collect taxes,” Al Hasan wrote. “He rebuilt the city walls, erected a fort and ... waged many a war with the Portuguese, often attacking Ceuta, Ksar and Tangiers.”

There is disagreement among historians over whether the man Aisha married was this particular Al-Mandari or another, younger member of the family of the same name who had succeeded him—perhaps a son (possibly Mohammad al-Mandari) or a nephew. In either case, her education, strength of character and presence of mind established her as a political leader, independent of

male supervision, instruction or approval.

“She was trusted by her male relatives, and this seemed to be a feature of Andalusian-Moroccan women in general,” Lebbady observes. “She knew what needed to be done under different circumstances and these are the kinds of qualities that would have made her a leader.”

The al-Mandari marriage alliance was a wise move. With Aisha serving as co-regent of Tétouan, and the concurrent appointment of her brother Moulay Ibrahim as vizier to Ahmed al-Wattasi, Sultan of Fez, the Rashids positioned themselves as major players in the effort to unify Morocco against the fast-growing powers of Spain and Portugal.

The need for unity was genuine.

In 1488 the Portuguese circumnavigated the southern tip of Africa and established their own direct sea route to Arabia, India and Southeast Asia. The gambit cut into the profits of North African merchants who for centuries had acted as middlemen between Western Europe and Asia. The Portuguese also established colonies along the African coasts, linking them to the interior. At the same time, the Spanish, gazing hungrily across the Strait of Gibraltar and warily at Ottoman expansion in the Mediterranean, clung stubbornly to their own outposts along the North African coast: Tripoli, Algiers, Santa Cruz and others.

Meanwhile, south of Fez, in what is now north-central Morocco, Ahmed al-Wattasi sought an alliance with Portugal to help him fend off rebellious Saadi tribesmen supported by England. The Mediterranean, once known as a Roman lake, had become an international and internecine stew.

Al-Mandari, Aisha's husband, died sometime between 1515

*Many of her
“privateers” were
also Andalusian
refugees.*



and 1519, and Aisha became Tétouan's sole ruler. It was at this time she took on the formal title *sayyida al-hurra, hakimat titwan*—Sovereign Lady, Governor of Tétouan. (Europeans wondered if “Sayyida al-Hurra” was her actual name since it appears in contemporary Spanish records as *Sida el-Horra*; what seems most likely is that, unaware of her given name, they confused it with her title.) Nonetheless, as Sayyida al-Hurra, she effectively governed Tétouan for the next quarter-century or so, during which time “the city soon reached an unheard of level of prosperity,” as Spanish historian Germán Vázquez Chamorro writes in his recent study, *Mujeres Piratas (Women Pirates)* (Edaf Antillas, 2004). Much of this prosperity derived from one obvious source: attacks on Spanish and Portuguese ships laden with goods, gold and other treasures.

It was Sayyida al-Hurra's association with the famed privateer Oruç Reis—known to the West as Barbarossa—that helped cement her “pirate queen” reputation. Born in Lesbos around 1474, Oruç and his older brother, Hayreddin, were among the most notorious of the so-called Barbary corsairs. As they moved their base around the Mediterranean as nominal servants of the Ottoman sultan, their exploits included raids on Spanish colonies, battles with Knights Hospitalers and even a daring attack on the (much larger) flagship of Pope Julius II in 1504. A fearsome figure, Oruç sported a silver prosthetic arm. Despite the handicap, according to eyewitnesses, he “fought to the very last gasp, like a lion,” Yet he had a soft side: between 1504 and 1510, he helped transport Muslim refugees from Spain to North Africa. This earned him the affectionate nickname Baba Oruç (Father Oruç), which, to the European ear, was misheard as “Barbarossa,” which happened to mean “Redbeard” in Italian.

Whatever the actual color of his whiskers, Oruç's politics and sympathies attracted Sayyida al-Hurra's attention and admiration. Joining forces, the two soon dominated the waters of the Mediterranean, raiding both ships and towns and taking Christian captives. Spanish sources from 1540 tell of attacks on Gibraltar and the loss of “much booty and many prisoners” for whom Sayyida al-Hurra negotiated ransom. The Portuguese, meanwhile, “prayed for God to allow them to see her hanged from a ship's mast,” as Chamorro notes. Sébastien de Vargas, royal Portuguese envoy to the court of Fez at the time, characterized her as “a very aggressive and bad-tempered woman about everything.”

But whether or not Sayyida al-Hurra and Oruç were “pirates” really depended upon which end of the cannon one was facing. “Piracy was rampant in the 16th century and

by no means limited to the southern coast of the Mediterranean,” says Lebbady. “English pirates used to intercept the Spanish galleys coming back from the Americas, and what they took as booty was a major source of income for the government of Queen Elizabeth I.”

In contrast, during the time of Sayyida al-Hurra, Morocco did not have a navy, and it depended on “privateers”—as Lebbady calls them—to defend the coast.

“Many of these privateers were Andalusis who settled in places like Salé and Tétouan. Under the command of Sayyida al-Hurra, they helped her to fend off the aggressive Iberians who were colonizing Morocco and at times enslaving most of the populations,” Lebbady says. “So Sayyida al-Hurra was doing the same thing to the Iberians as they were doing to the Moroccans. I wouldn't call her a pirate. To refer to her as pirate is to put the blame on those who were defending their land from aggressive colonial powers.”

As her power grew, so did her reputation. In 1541, during a whistle-stop tour through the region to help drum up support for his beleaguered dynasty, Ahmed al-Wattasi asked for her hand in marriage. She accepted, but refused to travel to Fez for the wedding, insisting instead that it take place in Tétouan. It was the only time in Moroccan history that a sultan married outside the capital. News of the wedding traveled as far as Madrid, where it troubled Philip II and was viewed by some as the Muslim equivalent of the power marriage between Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile.

But Sayyida al-Hurra's power was not to endure. Her on-again-off-again diplomacy and spats with the Portuguese in Ceuta prompted its governor to cut off commercial ties with Tétouan, and local merchants grumbled that her temper and pride had become bad for business. Meanwhile, her son-in-law Moulay Ahmed al-Hassan al-Mandari (Abu Hassan's grandson), anticipating the downfall of the Wattasids, allied with their tribal foes, the Saadis. He arrived in Tétouan in 1542 with a small army and usurped his mother-in-law. Accepting her fate, she retired to Chefchaouen, where she lived nearly 20 years more, until July 14, 1561.

Historians say she was the last Islamic woman ruler to hold the title “al-Hurra.” Though she left no known writing of her own, the words of her fellow Andalusian, the 11th-century poet Wallada, daughter of Al-Mustakfi, ruler of Córdoba, elegantly summarize her poise and power, not to mention those of all women leaders who distinguished themselves throughout history:

Worthy I am, by God of the highest, and
Proudly I walk with head aloft. ☪

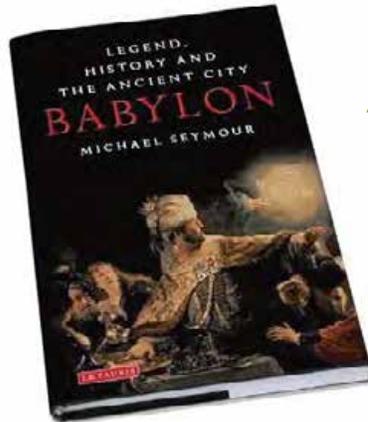
A regular contributor to *AramcoWorld*, **Tom Verde** (tomverde.pressfolios.com) thanks Carlos Abellanossa, Betsy Raymond Stevenson, Rachel Sprouse, Leila Abouzeid and Sarah Al-Hamad for their assistance. He dedicates the six-episode *Malika* series to the late pioneer of Islamic women's history Fatima Mernissi. **Leonor Solans** (www.leonorsolans.com) is an artist living in Granada, Spain. Art direction for the series is by **Ana Carreño Leyva**. Calligraphy is by **Soraya Syed**. The logo graphics are produced by **Mukhtar Sanders** (www.inspiraldesign.com).



REVIEWS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Without endorsing the views of any of the authors, the editors encourage reading as a path to greater understanding.

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“[Babylon] is surrounded by a broad deep moat full of water, and within the moat there is a wall ... with enough space ... [on top] for a four-horse chariot to pass.”

—Herodotus’s *Histories*

Babylon: Legend, History, and the Ancient City

Michael Seymour. 2014, I.B. Tauris, 978-1-84885-701-8, \$110 hb.

There are two kinds of archeology, this wide-ranging book tells us: the kind of pits and trenches at the site itself, and the kind of metaphors and meanings accrued to the site over following centuries. Ancient Babylon, “a city buried under its own mythology,” has both, writes Michael Seymour. We learn how its most famous archeologist, Robert Koldewey, made possible the reconstruction, from bits of rubble, of the Ishtar Gate in 1930 in Germany. More relevant to the first word in the subtitle, we learn also of Babylon’s connection to the works of Voltaire and William Blake; paintings by Rembrandt and Brueghel; the story of the lovers Pyramus and Thisbe (the inspiration for Romeo and Juliet) in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, via Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*; and the weighted phrase “the writing on the wall,” from the Prophet Daniel’s interpretation of the words mysteriously appearing on King Belshazzar’s banquet hall. Such references make this book essential reading, for without knowledge of Babylon’s long reach into Western cultural history, we are all somewhat illiterate.

—LOUIS WERNER



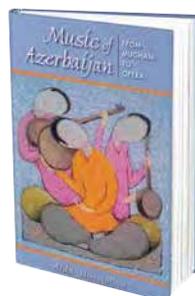
Count Waclaw Rzewuski’s Concerning Oriental Horses and Those Originating from Oriental Strains

James E. Luck, trans.; Andrew K. Steen, intro. 2015, Tale of the Breed Books, 078-8-46092-362-6, \$145 hb.

In 1817 Count Waclaw Rzewuski left Poland to journey to the Nejd, the great central plateau of Arabia where the famed *nejdi koheilans* (high-caste Arabian horses) were bred and raised by the Bedouin, but almost never sold to a Westerner. One of the wealthiest and most colorful Europeans ever to arrive in the region, Rzewuski lived and rode with the local tribes from whom he purchased a number of purebred Arabians. In 1820 Rzewuski returned to Poland where he founded one of the first Arabian stud farms in Europe and, over the next several years, com-

pleted his memoirs. Andrew Steen has collaborated with translator James Luck to publish much of Rzewuski’s manuscript, and combine it with the story of this remarkable man’s life. Illustrated with Rzewuski’s own sketches, this beautifully bound volume goes far to explain how the count’s appreciation of the Arabian horse led to a life of adventure and admiration for the Bedouin, who shared their deep love of the *nejdi koheilan* with the golden-haired aristocrat they knew as Taj al-Fahr (“Wreath of Fame”).

—JANE WALDRON GRUTZ



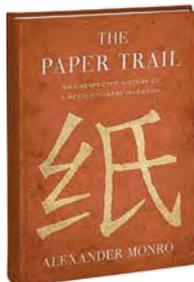
Music of Azerbaijan: From Mugham to Opera

Aida Huseynova. 2016, Indiana UP, 978-0-25301-937-0, \$30 pb.

This is the first book to focus on the composed art music of the Republic of Azerbaijan,

bordered by Russia and Georgia to the north, Iran to the south, and Armenia to the west. Beginning in the early 1900s, Azerbaijani composers used elements from Western art music and blended them with their older music styles, notably the *mugham* system of modes and improvisation, as well as *ashiq* folk music. Uzayir Hajibeyli (1885-1941) wrote the first opera in the Islamic world, *Leyli and Majnun*, a tragic love story known throughout the Middle East, which premiered to rapturous Baku audiences in 1908 and set the bar for generations of composers that followed. Under decades of Soviet control, composers, musicians and conductors trained with leading Russian artists and worked to synthesize East with West in myriad compositions. While the Azerbaijanis took from the USSR, their music also inspired Russian composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich. Jazz found a welcome in Azerbaijan, where it combined with improvisation and modal practices and became known as *jazz mugham*.

—KAY HARDY CAMPBELL

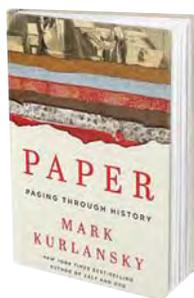


The Paper Trail: An Unexpected History of a Revolutionary Invention

Alexander Munro. 2016, Alfred A. Knopf, 978-0-30727-166-2, \$30 hb.

Paper: Paging Through History

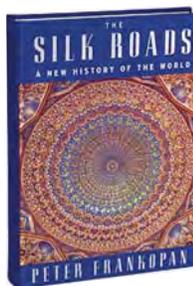
Mark Kurlansky. 2016, W.W. Norton, 978-0-39323-961-4, \$27.95 hb. Paper played a critical role in Islam, for transmitting divine scripture, administering an expanding empire and raising Islamic



culture to higher levels, as these two titles emphasize. In his fresh look at a very old technology (dating to China's Han dynasty some 2,000 years ago), Munro examines the Arab/Islamic "obsession with paper, scripts,

bookmaking and book decoration" beginning in the mid-ninth century, which helped win converts to the faith. His story of how paper made its way from East to West is rich in detail. Though invented in China, it was "paper's journeys across Eurasia and the Maghrib that matters most," enabling "the most powerful civilizations in the world to become paper cultures." Paper favored in the Arab world was "usually made from a recipe of linen and hemp" glazed with "a mixture of rice powder, starch, quince kernels [and] egg white" to help the calligrapher's pen glide across its surface. Kurlansky covers much of the same ground, with a more writerly flair. He points out that before the rise of Islam in the seventh century Arabs "had little need for writing material." With the coming of Islam, "more and more copies of the Holy Book were needed, and each copy had to be made with painstaking accuracy" in beautiful script:

"the origin of Arab calligraphy." In addition to the importance of paper to Arab scientists, translators and authors of mathematical and medical treatises, Kurlansky also dwells engagingly on the role paper played in the culinary arts. —TOM VERDE



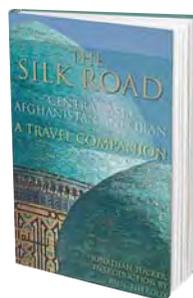
The Silk Roads: A New History of the World

Peter Frankopan. 2016, Alfred A. Knopf, 978-1-10194-632-9, \$30 hb.

The Silk Road: Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran, A Travel Companion

Jonathan Tucker. 2015, I.B. Tauris, 978-1-78076-925-7, \$25 pb.

Frankopan provides in 500 fast-moving pages nothing less than the entirety of East-West contact



from the earliest ages until the 21st century, with asides on how goods, religion, technology and political ideologies bounced back and forth along pan-Asian networks—"roads" both physical and metaphorical. Where else might one read full chapters about the roads of "wheat," "furs," "crisis" and "genocide" on which Genghis Khan, Stalin and John Foster Dulles traveled in words and deeds. Wisely chosen illustrations—from a Vermeer domestic scene containing a Chinese ceramic and the Taj Mahal's Italianate inlay of precious stone to an ultramodern airport in Baku—tell their story, one of movement and stasis in fits and starts that builds to nothing short of a new world history. Tucker's book qualifies more as a tourist guide, with concise chapters on the architecturally significant segments of the road connecting such cities as Merv, Balkh, Samarkand, Tabriz and Hamadan. While relatively light on history, its linear organization and sprinkling of site-inspired anecdote and poetry make it a useful and entertaining handbook while en route.

—LOUIS WERNER

A Traveler's Trio *Reviews by Robert W. Lebling*

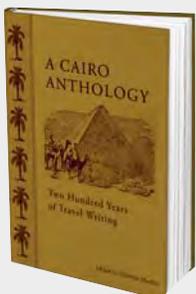


A Beirut Anthology: Travel Writing through the Centuries

T. J. Gorton, ed. 2015, AUC Press, 9-789-77416-698-3, \$18.95 hb.

This kaleidoscope of historical glimpses—ranging from Strabo in 140 BCE to T. E. Lawrence in 1918 and beyond—highlights one of the Middle East's most remarkable cities. Beirut's legacy is not so much one of monuments as of historical and cultural connections. The city has often been a window on the East for Westerners and a gateway to the West for people of the Middle East. In recent times, ar-

chaeologists have uncovered more remnants of Beirut's first claim to historical renown: from the third to the sixth centuries CE, it was site of the greatest law school of the eastern Roman Empire until a devastating earthquake in 551 brought an end to the city's era of legal and literary scholarship. But the city was rebuilt and regained its attractions. Over the centuries, it fell to the armies of Crusader King Baldwin of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, the mighty Muslim conqueror Saladin and others. By the 19th century, Beirut had become a key stop on Europeans' "Grand Tour" of the Holy Land. Many of the monuments and attractions cited no longer exist, but the colorful, welcoming personality of Beirut is clear to view in these historical descriptions. Beirut's gradual recovery from Lebanon's vicious civil war of the 1970s-1980s shows the city's remarkable staying power.

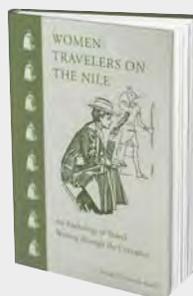


A Cairo Anthology: Two Hundred Years of Travel Writing

Deborah Manley, ed. 2013, AUC Press, 9-789-77416-612-9, \$18.95 hb.

This collection of short writings about Egypt's capital by travelers over the past two centuries offers revealing insights into the city's remarkable character. As travel writer Edith Butcher described it in 1914, Cairo is essentially five cities: Ptolemaic, Early Christian, Arabic (i.e. Early Islamic), Medieval

and Modern. While Egypt's capital is situated just across the Nile from the Giza Pyramids, it was not a pharaonic capital. But its history is very rich nonetheless. The writers describe with awe the Citadel, Cairo's "Acropolis," built by Saladin and upgraded by Muhammad Ali, founder of modern Egypt, in the early 19th century. Butcher, Pierre Loti, Stanley Lane-Poole and others tour the many historic mosques of Cairo, with special regard for the Mosque of Ibn Tulun, the city's largest and perhaps the oldest preserved in its original form. Richard Burton, Alexander Kinglake, Edward William Lane and other guides wander the colorful bazaars and streets of Cairo. The selections also include glimpses of the city's beautiful gardens and, of course, there are entertaining excursions to the Giza Pyramids.



A Nile Anthology: Travel Writing through the Centuries

Deborah Manley and Sahar Abdel-Hakim, eds. 2015, AUC Press, 9-789-77416-723-2, \$18.95 hb.

Without the Nile, there would be no Egypt as we know it. Sweeping through eastern Africa from south to north, the grand river creates a lush if often narrow ecosystem in a sterile desert, making agriculture, transportation, economy, culture and high civilization possible. When travelers visit Egypt to explore its antiquities and unique present-day attractions, they cannot ignore the Nile. Some choose to travel on the Nile—in the 19th

century aboard four-cabin *dahabiyas*, in modern times in floating hotels. This book takes readers up the Nile, sharing the impressions and insights of river travelers over the centuries. The oldest is Ibn Haukal, journeying in the 10th century; the most recent is the Deborah Manley, the book's coeditor, who traveled the river in 1990. In between is a collection of great observers, most from the 18th and 19th centuries, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Florence Nightingale and Jean-François Champollion. Crocodiles, Nile buffalo and other intriguing wildlife are described with interest and sometimes awe. The archeological treasures along the journey are studied in affectionate detail, sometimes presenting treasures that have vanished into the mists of time.



EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

Highlights from our searchable listings at aramcoworld.com



CURRENT / JANUARY

Shadow Puppet Theatre from Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. Shadow puppet theater is found in many societies. Puppets, normally carved from animal hide and painted on both sides, are placed between a light source and a white cloth screen, with audiences watching the performance from both sides. This art form has historically been a significant part of the artistic, spiritual, social and political lives of many Southeast Asians and has retained its appeal even in recent decades as television, film and the Internet have become increasingly available. Shadow theater performances are often associated with life-changing

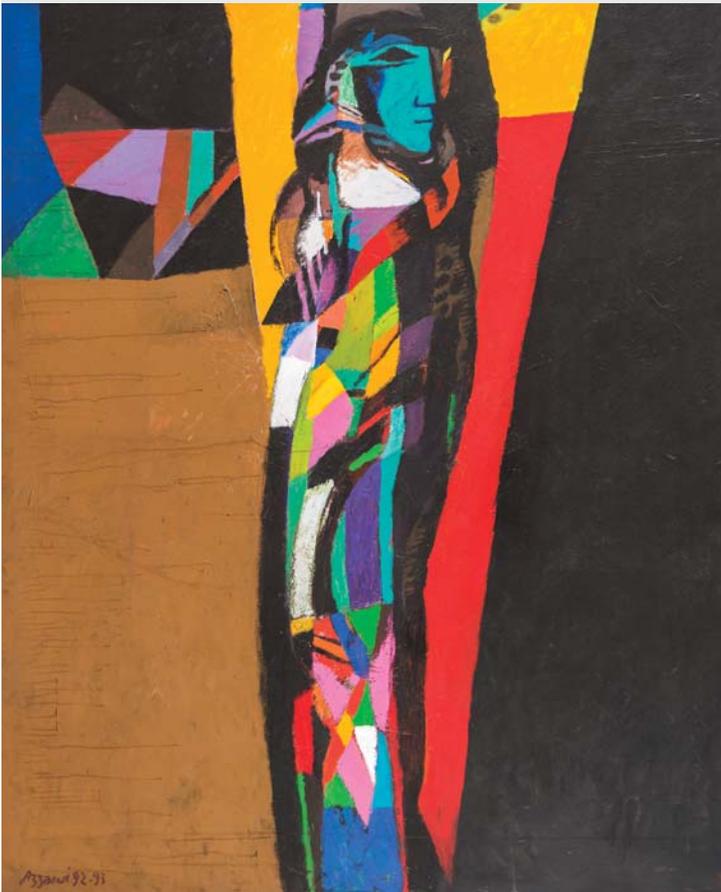
and ritual events, and puppets can be viewed as sacred objects. In shadow theater, old and new stories are presented to audiences with puppets representing the universe from deities to demons, traders to royalty. Clowns provide humor through verbal and visual jokes and make the stories topical to local spectators. The exhibit draws on the museum's unique collection of Southeast Asian shadow puppets. The British Museum, **London**, through January 29.

images on Islamic armor were at times believed to provide their wearers with divine safety and success in combat. This exhibition, featuring some 30 works from the Met's collection, examines the role of text and image in the construction and function of arms and armor in the Islamic world. Verses from the Qur'an; prayers that invoked God; the *Asma al-Husna* (99 Beautiful Names of God); as well as mystical symbols and more were all used to imbue military apparel, weapons and paraphernalia with protective powers. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through February 13.

CURRENT / FEBRUARY

Power and Piety: Islamic Talismans on the Battlefield. Inscriptions and

Ocean Explorers: From Sindbad to Marco Polo. Guided by the legend



"Kingdom of Delusion," 1992; acrylic on wood, 183 x 152.5 cm. Al-Azzawi's works, including the one pictured above, reflect the impressions of an artist shaped by the history of his homeland, Iraq.

DIA AL-AZZAWI: A Retrospective (From 1963 until Tomorrow)

This enormous retrospective presents the first monograph of Iraqi artist Dia al-Azzawi. Showing more than 500 works in a range of media, the exhibition maps an itinerary of modernism across which a transformation of history gives form to modern life.

Held at two locations to trace the fullness of al-Azzawi's practice, the first part of the exhibition begins with a survey of his early engagement with historical and popular sources, among them the late Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish and Iraqi poets Fadhil al-Azzawi, Saadi Youssef and Musaffar al-Nawab. The exhibition goes on to chart the shifts that occur in his practice, his relation to the techniques of printmaking and, finally, the consolidation of the relation between image and text into the *defta*, a personal interpretation of the artist book form developed throughout the 20th century.

The second part of the exhibition profiles the relationship between art and politics that emerged in his practice after 1968. It traces the formation of his critical use of the human form in response to the collapse of the Palestinian liberation movement in 1970 and the artist's experience during his later military service in 1973 in Kurdistan. This posture was reactivated after a period of withdrawal following the artist's move to London in response to the 1991 Gulf War. Part One: Arab Museum of Modern Art; Part Two: QM Gallery Al Riwaq, **Doha**, through April 16.



ary Sindbad as well as explorer Ibn Battuta, the historical geographer al-Idrisi and others, this exhibit sets sail on a voyage of discovery from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean over nearly a millennium, ending in the early 17th century. Using sound, images and optics to complement travel diaries and artifacts, the exhibition conveys the many bountiful maritime exchanges that flourished in the seas of the Old World, which linked African gold and Western silver, Greek coins and Golconda diamonds, glassware from Alexandria, Venice and Bohemia, and porcelains, silks and spices from China and the archipelago Maluku Islands. Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, through February 26.

Syria: *A Living History* brings together more than 5,000 years of art to highlight the contributions the diverse cultures within Syria—Mesopotamian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Persian, Ottoman and Arab—have made to world heritage. Many of the works are being shown together for the first time, giving audiences new insight into the cultural traditions of both ancient and present-day Syria, thereby underscoring the dialogues among these traditions throughout the ages. Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, through February 26.

CURRENT / MARCH

Phantom Punch: *Contemporary Art from Saudi Arabia in Lewiston*,

Maine features artists who explore topics including the narratives and esthetics of Islamic culture in an era of globalization, as well as consumerism and the position of women in Saudi culture. They explore contemporary Saudi life through the emerging subcultures of humor, video, YouTube, fashion, animation and calligraphy while blending international pop culture and traditional Saudi themes. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog with essays by curators. Bates College Museum of Art, Lewiston, Maine, through March 18.

CURRENT / APRIL

Drawing in the Diaspora: *Comic Art & Graphic Novels* by Leila Abdelrazaq. Leila Abdelrazaq's comics and illustrations fuse art and activism. Her experiences as the daughter of a Palestinian refugee have informed her work throughout her artistic career, shaping her subject matter and storytelling. The exhibition includes original illustrations from her zines and comics, including her debut graphic novel *Baddawi*, her father's coming-of-age journey in a refugee camp, and her short comic *Mariposa Road*, which ties the struggles of undocumented immigrants with the imprecise nature of Palestinian citizenship. Her other works focus on political movements in Chicago and across the states, from the fight to free Rasmea Odeh to the #Arabs4Black-

Power network. Arab American National Museum, Dearborn MI, through April 19.

CURRENT / MAY

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

COMING / JANUARY

Pattern Recognition: *Young Artist of the Year Award 2016 (YAYA16)* brings together newly commissioned work from the nine artists who are shortlisted for the 2016 edition of the YAYA16, open to Palestinian artists up to the age of 30, organized biannually by the A. M. Qattan Foundation. The projects in the exhibition explore how strategies of repetition open up avenues for critically rethinking issues of time, place, memory and authenticity. Straddling the gray zones between

fact and fiction, original and copy, ruin and repair, the works re-imagine the mechanics of representation in the context of Palestine where geographies, histories and identities are fragmented. The Mosaic Rooms, London, January 20 through March 25.

COMING / APRIL

The World Made New explores five artists' reconceptions of history and landscape. Often departing from superficial reality, the diverse narrative practices suggest another kind of truth, one in which self-referential approaches blend autobiographical details with personal mythologies of birth, transfiguration and constructed identity. Islands, markers and symbols are recurring motifs. Ritual and performativity emerge as points of connection. The viewer is taken on a journey through the natural environment and human society fraught with disorienting coincidences, displacement, rupture and imaginative leaps. Pi Artworks, London, April 7 through May 20.

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