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# THE BULLETIN OF THE BFSA

(British Foundation for the Study of Arabia)



**BFSA**

British Foundation  
for the Study of Arabia

المؤسسة البريطانية لدراسة الجزيرة العربية

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(BFSA)

formerly the Society for Arabian Studies

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The Bulletin depends on the good will of BFSA members and correspondents to provide contributions. News, items of general interest, details of completed postgraduate research, forthcoming conferences, meetings and special events are welcome. Please contact Ionis Thompson or Sarah Searight. Emails: [ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk) / [sarah@searightlush.com](mailto:sarah@searightlush.com)

## Grants in aid of research

Applicants are advised to apply well ahead of the May and October deadlines. Full details on page 9.

## Membership

Membership details are available from the BFSA website [www.thebfsa.org](http://www.thebfsa.org). For membership renewals contact William Deadman, BFSA Membership Secretary, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, South Road, Durham, DH1 3LE, or email: [membership@thebfsa.org](mailto:membership@thebfsa.org)

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**On the cover:** al-Ash'aer Mosque, Zabid, Yemen  
Photo credit: Abdullah al-Hadhrani

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# WELCOME

Welcome to the 2014 edition of the Bulletin of the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia.

The issue opens with all the latest BFSA News, including information on our lecture series and essays from our two BFSA grant-winners.

This is followed by current News and Research by country – from a much-awaited round-up of Bahraini news from Dr Steffen Terp Laursen to information on developments in Yemen from Stephen Steinbeiser, including news on the al-Ash'aer Mosque in Yemen (our cover image). In addition to general news summaries by country, the Bulletin carries extended features on individual projects. Among the highlights is an article from Prof. Geoff Bailey who updates us on the DISPERSE project (or Dynamic Landscapes, Coastal Environments and Human Dispersals) in Saudi Arabia.

Do then turn to the section on Allied News and Research (page 42), which includes Dr Lucy Wadeson's Nabataean News, and, during the centenary year of the First World War, two compelling pieces on Great War research in Arabia. In addition to Will Facey's must-read book review section (page 64), the 2014 Bulletin contains a wealth of information on Arabian-related conferences and lectures, publications, resources and funding bodies, plus selected obituaries, and a back-page column from Carolyn Perry who reports on innovative developments in Yemen.

All that remains is to thank the indefatigable editorial team: Jean English, Sarah Searight, Ionis Thompson, Will Facey, Aurore Hamm and Carolyn Perry. Kind thanks also to all of the many contributors to the Bulletin, and to you, the reader, for your continued support of the BFSA.

Good reading!  
Dr Nadia Durrani (editor)

# BFSa NEWS

## THE BFSa

The British Foundation for the Study of Arabia (BFSa) was formed in 2010 through the merger of the Society for Arabian Studies (1987) and the Seminar for Arabian Studies (1968). We aim to act as a focal point and advocate for the study of Arabia's cultural heritage and to advance public knowledge of the Arabian Peninsula through the promotion of research into its history, antiquities, archaeology, ethnography, languages, literature, art, culture, customs, geography, geology and natural history. We do this through the raising of money, organization of events and the supporting of research and publications.

The BFSa organises lectures, oversees the annual Seminar for Arabian Studies, publishes its own monograph series, and supports research and publications on the region. Full details can be found at our website: [www.thebfsa.org](http://www.thebfsa.org). The following BFSa News pages will explore this work in more detail.

## BFSa LECTURES

### Lectures delivered

17 January 2013

*Tell es-Sultan/Ancient Jericho: Across the Eras of Human Civilization in Palestine* by Prof. Lorenzo Nigro  
(A joint lecture with the Palestine Exploration Fund and the Council for British Research in the Levant)

With over 10,000 years of superimposed occupations that have produced a steep mound overlooking a magnificent flourishing oasis, Tell es-Sultan, ancient Jericho, has gained the epithet of the 'World's Oldest City'.

To the field archaeologist, Jericho is a palimpsest of humankind's steps towards civilization: from the sedentarization of a community of incipient agriculturalists, to the invention of modular mud-brick architecture, pottery use, and the beginnings of long-distance trade.

Formative spiritual or cultural and ideological achievements also occurred at this site: the beginning of religious thinking, as testified by an ancestors' cult; the appearance of a community leader (a chief or a priest), and the rise of the city – a central place with heavy fortifications protecting the material and symbolic wealth of the urban community. This was not a linear process, but rather, a terrible struggle

marked by failures, collapses and destructions. With the tools of archaeology – four expeditions (two of which were led by British archaeologists) – we have tried to disentangle this thread of history. In so doing, we have left in the hands of modern Palestinians the physical summary of human life and a (still?) living witness of our deepest roots.

*Prof. Lorenzo Nigro is Associate Professor of Near Eastern Archaeology at Rome Sapienza University and director of expeditions to Motya, a Phoenician city in western Sicily, and to Palestine and Jordan. His current excavations at Tell es-Sultan/ancient Jericho are undertaken jointly with the Palestine Department of Antiquities.*

29 May 2013

*The Role of the PDRY in Creating a South Yemeni Identity* by Dr Noel Brehony  
(The Foundation's Annual General Meeting was followed by the following lecture)

Yemeni nationalism emerged in the early 20th century and the nationalist movements in both north and south Yemen were interconnected. Politicians assumed that when the south became independent in 1967 the two parts of Yemen would soon be united. Between 1967 and 1990 leaders constantly spoke of their commitment to unity despite the different nature of their regimes and political systems.

The South Yemeni leaders set out to impose a Marxist political and economic system, create a secular state and eliminate tribalism and residual loyalties to the Sultanates and Amirates of pre-1967 South Arabia. Aden turned to Moscow and its allies for defence and security support and promoted revolution in the rest of the Arabian Peninsula. This was in complete contrast to the YAR which remained tribal, conservative, Western-leaning and close to Saudi Arabia.

Both Yemens wanted unity but on their own terms. For one section of the Yemeni Socialist Party this meant working with allies in the north to supplant the regime in Sana'a. This led to two border wars between them – each followed by unity agreements that neither intended to implement. Other leaders conscious that the south had only a quarter of the population of the YAR wanted to focus on building a strong southern state whilst working closely with the regime in Sana'a to prevent conflict in such two closely linked countries. However, the policies of both sets of southern leaders were to reinforce a distinctive southern identity.

The south was fatally weakened by a virtual civil war in 1986 which damaged the state's legitimacy, power and economy. Rival PDRY politicians decried tribalism in their speeches but

built their personal power bases in their tribal homelands and recruited tribal allies into different parts of the armed forces. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 exposed Aden's failure to diversify its relations and sources of support. The northern regime grew stronger and more stable in the 1980s.

The PDRY and YAR concluded by late 1980s that unity was essential but a majority on both sides wanted a federation and not the full unity agreed – with limited consultation – by the two main leaders in December 1989. To make matters worse they agreed to unite two such diverse political systems within a matter of six months. It was no surprise that it should fail and lead to the civil war of 1994 after which the regime, dominated by northern politicians – but with some powerful southern allies – imposed itself on the south.

Today, the PDRY is seen by many southerners as a Utopia, forgetting its failings. The young people demonstrating in southern towns for independence have no memory of the PDRY but are persuaded that it was better than the status quo. Following the conclusion of the National Dialogue Conference a majority in both parts of Yemen seem to want a federal state though some argue for two regions and others for six, fearing that a distinct region for the south might foster, not suppress, a desire for independence. On the other hand, a Yemen with several regions would give expression to the local identities based on the Sultanates and Emirates of South Arabia and the long tradition of separateness in Hadhramaut – which the rivalries among PDRY politicians helped perpetuate.

*Dr Noel Brehony, CMG, is a Trustee of both the BFSa and the Altajir Trust, and Chairman of both the British Yemeni Society and the Anglo-Jordanian Society. His book on the PDRY, Yemen Divided, was published in 2011 (paperback in 2013).*

23 January 2014

*Cities of the Levant – the Past for the Future?*

by Philip Mansel

(A joint lecture with the Palestine Exploration Society and the Council for British Research in the Levant)

Cities have their own dynamism. Location, population, and wealth give them the power to defy or ignore a state. Levantine cities were precursors of – and warnings to – today's global cities. Eight characteristics distinguished them: geography; diplomacy; polyglottism; hybridity; trade; pleasure; modernity; and vulnerability.

The Levant means 'where the sun rises': the eastern Mediterranean. Levant is a geographical word, free from associations with race or religion. It is defined not by frontiers but by the sea.

In the Levant deals came before ideals. Dialogue trumped conflict. The modern Levant was a product of one of the most successful alliances in history, for three and a half

centuries after 1535, between France and the Ottoman empire. Based on international strategy, on the shared hostility of the two monarchies to Spain and the House of Austria, the 'union of the lily and the crescent' soon acquired commercial and cultural momentum.

These were the 'years of the consuls'. At times the ports of the Levant became diarchies between foreign consuls and local officials. During wars between the Ottoman Empire and Venice in 1694, and Russia in 1770, consuls in Smyrna persuaded the commanders of the Venetian and Russian navies respectively, not to attack the city, in order to prevent reprisals by Muslims against local Christians. While the Ottoman Empire was at war, Smyrna remained peaceful.

International languages for inter-communal communication, and polyglottism, were another characteristic of the Levant. Before the triumph of English, the Levant used two international languages. First was lingua franca, the simplified Italian generally understood by merchants and sailors in the Mediterranean.

From 1840, thanks to the spread of schools and of steam and rail travel, French, then the world language from Buenos Aires to Saint Petersburg, became the second – or for many the first – language of the Levant. It was spoken by pashas, viziers and sultans and was an official language of the Ottoman Foreign Office and the municipalities of Alexandria and Beirut.

Hybridity and multiple identities were another characteristic of the Levant. For three centuries Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Jews and Europeans lived and worked side by side in Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut. The juxtaposition of mosques, churches and synagogues in these cities was both contrary to Muslim law and inconceivable in European cities.

In Levantine cities, more than any others, no one group dominated demographically. In Smyrna and Beirut after 1700 populations were roughly half Christian and half Muslim; in Alexandria about a quarter Christian or Jewish and three quarters Muslim. Turks called Smyrna *gavur izmir* or infidel Izmir, as so many non-Muslims lived there.

Levantine cities were not romantic. They were trading cities, linking the economies of Europe and Asia. Like Hong Kong or Dubai today, they were synonymous with business. In all these cities the corniche, where the boats docked, was the principal meeting-place. The population of Smyrna rose from 5,000 to over 100,000 in the 17th century. In the 19th century the population of Alexandria rose from 5,000 to 300,000. It became the main port linking Egypt and Europe, with the largest stock exchange outside Europe and North America.

As well as trade, the cities of the Levant were also, for some, synonymous with pleasure. Carnival was celebrated at Smyrna with such frenzies of drinking and dancing that Turks thought the revellers mad. In his memoirs the Turkish

writer Naci Gundem wrote that it was the corniche that made Smyrna Smyrna. From sunset until midnight it was like “a fairy-tale country”, with “a magic atmosphere which made the most sombre and depressed souls end by laughing”.

The women of Alexandria, “modern to the tips of their delicate little feet” with “a furious desire to break with every prejudice, to taste every sensation” were, according to Fernand Leprette, one of its main attractions. They are the principal subject of Durrell’s *The Alexandria Quartet*. As early as the 17th century, according to the French consul the Chevalier d’Arvieux, Beirut was distinguished from rival ports like Sidon and Tripoli by love of drinking and singing: “all the citizens of Beirut, whatever their religion, live well together. They are polite, visit each other and arrange parties of pleasure.”

With the best foreign schools in the region, Levantine cities were so modern and so cosmopolitan that, to visitors from the hinterland, Smyrna sometimes seemed like a foreign country. Alexandria resembled a European city moored off the coast of Egypt. Beirut was ‘the Paris of the Middle East’.

Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut were also cities on the edge; race and religious hate, looting and burning, were ready to erupt. Daily co-existence in work and pleasure did not prevent periodic eruptions of nationalism. Soon after the Turkish army re-entered the city in 9 September 1922 a fire was deliberately started in the centre of Smyrna. The corniche became a wall of fire two miles long and a hundred feet high. Turkish and Jewish quarters were spared, most of Greek and Armenian Smyrna was burnt: while British French and Italian battleships watched, the corniche became a killing-field.

London, Paris, New York, Hong Kong and other global cities, are new Levantine cities. Like Levantine cities, they are increasingly different from their hinterlands. They too act as educators, liberators and modernizers. They too put deals before ideals; contain mosques, churches and synagogues, and international institutions; are devoted to trade, pleasure and hybridity, and use international languages. States are dinosaurs: cities are the future.

*Philip Mansel is a historian of France and the Middle East. His latest book is Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean (2010), a history of Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut. He is a founding Trustee of the Levantine Heritage Foundation, which collects documents and images, and organises conferences, about the wider Levant (www.levantineheritage.com).*

## 12 March 2014

### *Arabia: The Central, but Missing Link in World Prehistory*

by Prof. Michael Petraglia  
(Jointly hosted by the BFSA and the MBI al Jaber Foundation)

Satellite images show Arabia was well-watered many times in the past. Prof. Petraglia’s talk examined evidence (stone tools, rock art) from ancient rivers and lakes in Arabia. New archaeological discoveries demonstrate that Arabia was a central cross-road in the remote past and a key geographic link between early human cultures in Africa and Asia.

## Forthcoming Lectures

### 28 May 2014

#### *Why is the British Museum Collecting Modern and Contemporary Art from the Middle East?*

by Dr Venetia Porter

Venetia Porter is a British Museum curator responsible for the collection of Islamic art, in particular of the Arab World and Turkey, as well as for developing the Museum’s collection of the modern and contemporary art of the Middle East.

*The Foundation’s Annual General Meeting will be immediately followed by Dr Porter’s talk. 5.30pm in the Khalili Lecture Theatre at SOAS.*

### 19 June 2014

#### *Why Is Oman’s Archaeological Record So Important?*

by Dr Derek Kennet

Dr Kennet’s talk will cover his excavations at Rustaq, Oman. The talk is hosted by the Anglo-Omani Society. BFSA members are invited to attend free, but please send an email to [ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk) if you wish to do so.

*5.30pm in the Anglo-Omani Society’s Headquarters, 34 Sackville Street, London W1S 3ED.*

## Lecture notices

### Keep in e-touch

In addition to the BFSA’s own lecture programme, BFSA members are sometimes invited to attend lectures organized by other societies. Members **with email addresses** can be sent notice of these lectures as they arise, often at short notice. Any members who are not receiving such email notices but who would like to do so are asked to send a current email address to Ionis Thompson at: [ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk). Alternatively, do please visit our Facebook pages for all the latest news on-line; see page 13 for more.

## BFSA CONFERENCES

## The Seminar for Arabian Studies

The Seminar for Arabian Studies, founded in 1968, is the only international forum that meets annually for the presentation of the latest academic research in the humanities on the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest times to the present day or, in the case of political and social history, to the end of the Ottoman Empire (1922).

Papers read at the Seminar are published in the Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies in time for the Seminar of the following year. The Proceedings therefore contain new research on Arabia and reports of new discoveries in the Peninsula in a wide range of disciplines.

The Steering Committee is delighted to acknowledge the continued support and generosity of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation and the British Museum.

The 48th Seminar for Arabian Studies will be held from **Friday 25 July to Sunday 27 July 2014** at the British Museum, London. The MBI Lecture will be by Dr Lloyd Weeks, and its title will be ‘The Quest for the Copper Mountain of Magan: how early metallurgy shaped Arabia and set the horizons of the Bronze Age world.’

For further information see [www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies](http://www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies).

## The 2013 Seminar

*The 2013 Seminar was dedicated to three researchers of great standing in Arabian studies: Miss Beatrice de Cardi, Prof. Dr Walter W. Müller, and the founder of the Seminar, Mr Peter Parr. Dr Janet Starkey now provides a more detailed report on the papers given at the 2013 Seminar.*

Over 200 scholars and students attended the 47th Seminar, which was held over three days from Friday 26 July to Sunday 28 July at the British Museum, London. It had over 41 regular papers, several associated posters, and a special session dedicated to the languages of South Arabia. Subjects ranged from Palaeolithic landscapes in Yemen, to maritime oral traditions in Socotra; from studies of ancient bitumen to the analysis of pottery.

The Seminar began with a session on the heritage and archaeology of Qatar and the UAE. The opening paper concerned the spatial organisation of towns in the area, followed by a summary of Islamic Archaeology to be found

in the Qatar Archaeological Report. The third paper was presented by the MARES team from Exeter University painstakingly and precisely creating 3D-laser scans of boats in the National Museum of Qatar collection. The next two sessions were dedicated to the archaeology of Oman and reflected recent excavations and /or surveys there. The first session focused on the Iron Age and on sites in Wādī al-Hijr, Ibri and Salūt. The second explored the medieval sites of Qalhāt and al-Balīd, Zafar, and the 2011 survey of Izkī. In contrast to the archaeological emphasis of earlier sessions, intriguing aspects of oral history and the maritime cultural landscapes of the little-known islands of Masirah and Socotra were explored in the fourth session.

### Cultural contacts

On Saturday 27 July there were two strands: one dedicated to archaeology and history, and the other was a special session (see below). Papers in the first general session focused on the Arabian Peninsula and on associated influences of and contacts with surrounding traditions. The first two papers investigated ancient cultural connections between Arabia and Mesopotamia, Dilmun, Magan and the Indus. Other papers focused on Bronze Age pottery from Kuwait and Bahrain; on motifs on incense burners from southern Mesopotamia in the late first millennium BC, and on archaeological bitumen.

The second and third sessions on Saturday 27 July focused on Palaeolithic and Neolithic Arabia. M. Meredith-Williams recounted how the DISPERSE Project plans to study the many shell middens in the area (see page 27); while L.G. Marcucci described those found at Ras al-Hamra, Muscat in 2012. K. Bretzke et al. described excavations at Jabal Fayah and movements of Palaeolithic peoples; while R. Inglis investigated the Palaeolithic landscapes of the Jizān and al-Qunfudāh regions of Saudi Arabia. C. Kainert presented new analyses of pottery at Dosariyah, Saudi Arabia. The third session was brought to a close with a thought-provoking paper by S. Méry on the possibilities of cultural unity on both sides of the Strait of Hormuz in the 6th–5th millennia BCE. Continuing the theme of possible contact across the Red Sea, speakers in the fourth session presented papers about the archaeology and landscape of Highland Yemen; about the issues in relation to the classification of sanctuaries in South Arabia; on the possibility of ancient Yemeni mummification, and finally, on the discovery of a pre- to late-Aksumite town in Highland Ethiopia.

### Special Session: linguistics

In line with recent Seminar policy, in 2013 there was a Special Session designed to focus attention on a particular academic topic and to bring scholars from around the world to present papers and discuss. In 2013 the topic was the ‘Languages of South Arabia in antiquity and modern times’. The Session was organized in four themed panels and covered Ancient South Arabian, Modern South Arabian, and

the Arabic dialects spoken in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula. As Prof. Janet Watson now describes:

“The purpose of the session was to bring together experts on the extinct and extant languages of Southern Arabia in order to identify cultural, lexical, morphological and syntactic links between the languages. Papers dealt with Ancient South Arabian, the Modern South Arabian languages of Mehri, Jibbali, Hobyot, Harsusi, Bathari and Soqotri, and the Arabic dialects spoken in Yemen, Oman and south-west Saudi Arabia, focussing on links between the language groups. Work to date has highlighted shared basic lexical, morphological and syntactic features across the extinct and extant languages of the region, in many cases where languages are separated by large geographical distances (e.g. Rossi 1940, Behnstedt 1988, Retsö 2000, Holes 2006, Watson 2011). This session brought together experts on the three language groups – Ancient South Arabian, Modern South Arabian and southern Arabic dialects; experts on different types of oral texts – narratives, poetry and songs; and experts on different aspects of linguistics – epigraphy, syntax, morphology, semantics, phonology and phonetics.”

### Additional themes explored

In 2010, Lloyd Weeks edited the tenth Society for Arabian Studies Monograph entitled *Death and Burial in Arabia and Beyond. BAR International Series 2107* (Oxford: Archaeopress). A parallel session on 28 July 2013 explored the subject further, with reports from several archaeological teams excavating in south-eastern Arabia. Papers covered the orientation of Hafit tomb entrances, a new Wadi Suq cemetery in Ras al-Khaimah; and an Early Iron Age collective corridor grave at Daba, Musandam.

Continuing the linguistics theme from the previous day, the other parallel session on Sunday 28 July explored evidence of Greek in the phonetic writings of the early Arab grammarians and, in contrast, of Semitic loanwords in early Greek. C. van der Wal Anonby discussed traces of Arabian in Kumzari, a south-western Iranian language spoken by a subdivision of the Shihūh tribe on the coast of the Musandam Peninsula of northern Oman. Language contact between Nabataean and Arabic was presented in the light of grammatical borrowing by M. Al Hamad.

The topic of Nabataean and North Arabian inscriptions and archaeology continued into the second and third sessions on 28 July with papers about the classification of inscriptions from Taymā', on intriguing inscriptions in the Hisma desert in southern Jordan; and thoughts about the pre-Islamic religious beliefs of the North Arabian nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes. The third session focused on particular Nabataean sites, including a fortified settlement at Dūmat al-Jandal, Saudi Arabia and on Hegra/Madā'in Sālih, Saudi Arabia. The session concluded with a perceptive paper by W. Glanzman, about the pottery, people and politics of Southern Arabia in which he re-examined the thesis of Prof. Peter J. Parr about the

distribution of Nabataean wares within and beyond the territory of Nabataean political and economic influence.

The concluding session of the Seminar contained many intriguing and thought-provoking gems about medieval and modern history as well as ethnography. J.E. Taylor discussed whether or not the Vikings visited the Red Sea and Persian Gulf in a well-argued and thoughtful paper. Z.M. de Pierrepont outlined interrelationships between spaces, religious charisma, and authority in medieval Yemen; and A.R. Yaccob carefully outlined the complex interrelationships in southern Arabia between Imam Yahya, Ottomans and British during World War I. To conclude the Seminar, J. Charbonnier presented a fascinating paper on the management of time and spatial allocation of water using the example of the falaj al-Mālih sundial from the irrigated oasis of Ādam, Sultanate of Oman.

In association with the Seminar was an outstanding and informative MBI Lecture, presented by Dr Anthony Constable, on 'Arab Celestial Navigation' on Saturday 27 July 2013. This exceptional, beautifully illustrated and memorable lecture was followed by a reception kindly hosted by the MBI Al Jaber Foundation.

Papers from the 2013 Seminar are currently being edited by Prof. Robert Hoyland to be published in the summer of 2014 as volume 44 of the *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*. At the same time, papers from this Special Session are being edited by Prof. Janet Watson: to be published as a *Supplement to the Proceedings*, volume 44.

## The Red Sea VI

*Launched in the year 2000, the BFSA-supported Red Sea conference continues apace. Prof. Dionisius Agius writes:*

The Red Sea VI conference was held at Tabuk University from 17 to 21 March 2013. It was sponsored by the Saudi Commission for Antiquities (SCTA) and the MARES Project at the University of Exeter and the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia.

The conference was opened by the SCTA's President, HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, and the Governor of Tabuk, HRH Prince Fahad bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. In Prince Sultan's words "Holding the Sixth Red Sea Antiquities and Heritage Conference in Tabuk has a critical importance in the field of historical and archaeological studies and research, where global studies would connect through such conference aiming at clarifying the important role of the Red Sea in the existence of many cultures".

The Red Sea VI conference was the latest in the Red Sea Project series which started in the year 2000. There were 33 papers presented by international scholars and a number of researchers from Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti and Saudi Arabia

took part. Guests to this conference enjoyed a two-day visit to the islands in the North of the Hijaz and a visit to al-Hijr in the northern mainland.

Papers at this conference stimulated new thought and discourse about different human adaptations to and interactions with the environment of the Red Sea, both past and present. Several discussions evolved on the study of past methods of adaptation to and interaction with the marine environment suggesting solutions to present environmental problems. Equally, current scientific and ethnographic research helped us better interpret the past of Red Sea communities through archaeological, historical and linguistic data. Recently, Red Sea countries have increasingly been promoting the exploitation of marine resources. In several, the sea, viewed as a resource, has had a limited impact on the modern economies and societies of Red Sea countries. Yet recent research into the Red Sea past has demonstrated that the sea played a crucial role in the formation of early state-based societies and empires.

For the first time, the conference solicited collaboration with scholars from the natural sciences in order to stimulate interdisciplinary participation in the conference among scholars from the humanities and sciences, for the mutual benefit of both. Subjects covered at the conference on climate change included ecological and landscape change, species extinction, environmental disaster, desertification, coastal erosion, habitat fragmentation, flora and fauna, food culture, water storage and management systems, islands, heritage, cultural awareness and tourism, traditional architecture, the Hajj route, ports and harbours, epigraphy, identity and ethnicity, sea poetry and song.

The proceedings of previous Red Sea conferences have been published by Archaeopress as part of the Society for Arabian Studies (now BFSA) Monograph Series (see page 16). This tradition will continue: the papers will be published by E. J. Brill in 2015 just in time for the RED SEA VII conference to be held at the L'Orientale, University of Napoli. (Please see page 13 for details on the next Red Sea conference.)



Delegates from the Red Sea VI conference.

## MONOGRAPH SERIES

The BFSA now oversees the publication of a monograph series originally begun by the Society for Arabian Studies. Published and distributed by Archaeopress (B.A.R. International Series), the full list is published on page 16. This series includes research-based studies, conference proceedings, archaeological excavation and survey reports, plus MA or PhD theses where the contents provide an important synthesis or a significant addition to knowledge.

As series co-editor **Dr St John Simpson** explains: "We have published fifteen monographs to date, covering a wide range of topics ranging from PhD theses on the prehistory of the Tihamah and star gazing in Oman to the proceedings of five conferences on the Red Sea and Death & Burial in Arabia. The purpose of the series is to support rapid refereed publication of these forms of research through a dedicated sub-series within the BAR International Series published by Archaeopress. We have several more volumes which are either in press or in advanced stages of preparation. The next volume will be by Dr Yamandu Hilbert on a new Palaeolithic stone tool industry in Dhofar."

Potential contributors should contact either of the co-editors in the first instance: Dr St John Simpson: [ssimpson@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](mailto:ssimpson@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk) or Dr Derek Kennet: [derek.kennet@durham.ac.uk](mailto:derek.kennet@durham.ac.uk).

## GRANTS-IN-AID

The BFSA supports research on all aspects of the archaeology, history, culture and environment of the Arabian Peninsula. We have two rounds of grant-applications, with deadlines of 31 May and 31 October. Grants of up to £500 will be given to successful candidates.

Applicants will normally be informed of the BFSA's decision within six weeks of those dates. The grant will be held for twelve months from the date of receipt of the award. Recipients are required to provide a written report on their research, with an account of the expenditure, to be submitted within six months of the expiry of the period for which the grant was made. Successful applicants are required to submit a summary of their research for publication in the next issue of the BFSA Bulletin and may be asked to lecture to the BFSA on the subject of their research.

Applications should be submitted to Dr Derek Kennet at [derek.kennet@durham.ac.uk](mailto:derek.kennet@durham.ac.uk) and further details can be found on the Grants page of the BFSA website: <http://www.thebfsa.org/grants.html>

There now follows the two reports from the 2013 BFSA grant recipients, Charlotte Marie Cable and Larissa Alles.

# In search of the domestic

## Geophysical exploration at Bat (a BFSA grant report)

*Charlotte Marie Cable, a PhD candidate at Michigan State University, used her grant to cover air fares towards geophysical examination of the 4th and 3rd millennium BC Unesco World Heritage site of Bat in Oman. Report by Charlotte Marie Cable and Remke L. Van Dam.*

Although much is known about Hafit and Umm an-Nar mortuary practices, the same cannot be said about their settlements. We know of only a few third millennium BC settlements on the entire Oman Peninsula. In 2013, the American-Japanese Bat Archaeological Project (AJBAP) concentrated many of its efforts on understanding domestic settlement – the places where daily life occurred – in the third millennium BC.

Bat, in north-central Oman, is well-known both for its Hafit tombs and for its Umm an-Nar ‘tombs and towers’, which dominate the landscape even today. However, recent research (e.g., Thornton et al. 2013) suggests that Bat’s archaeological heritage is far more complex than previously understood. It has long been known that over 200m of the ‘Settlement Slope’ adjacent to Tower 1145 is crowded with Umm an-Nar domestic structures (Frifelt 1976), but these rectilinear buildings – built on the slope, and exposed for 4,000 years – provide disturbed and shallow contexts.

At the same time recent research has shown that the nearby wadi floor is not representative of the ancient landscape. In wadi environments such as at Bat, Hafit domestic structures, where present, are buried beneath c.1–2m of fluvial sediment (Fouache and Desruelles, 2010). Excavations in 2009 and 2010 at the third millennium BC tower known as Kasr al-Khafaji have exposed the remains of third millennium rectilinear stone buildings, 1–2 stones deep, and in two discrete phases. These structures continued out beyond the limits of the excavation, and their extent was unknown.

To guide future excavations of these unique third millennium BC non-monumental structures, AJBAP conducted one week of intensive geophysical prospection. Under the guidance of AJBAP co-Director Charlotte Marie Cable, geologist Remke Van Dam (Michigan State University) led a research team in the application of a suite of geophysical prospecting tools on the wadi plain adjacent to Kasr al-Khafaji. Previous excavation units containing third millennium BC walls had been backfilled, and thus provided an opportunity to compare known archaeological data with three complementary geophysical techniques: Magnetometry, Earth resistance (ER), and Ground-penetrating radar (GPR).

The intent was three-fold: (1) to calibrate each of the three geophysical methods to the local environment; (2) to compare the efficacy of each of the four techniques

(including traditional archaeological excavation); and (3) to identify ‘areas of interest’ for future excavation.

In addition to support from the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia, this research was made possible by a Waitt Grant from the National Geographic Society and was conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture, Sultanate of Oman.

## Methods

Geophysical survey grids were laid out on the 200m x 100m alluvial plain immediately northeast of Kasr al-Khafaji and southwest of the Settlement Slope. Three 20m x 20m grids (A, B, C) were located next to the Kasr al-Khafaji tower; the small rectangular area in Grid A outlines the 2009–2010 excavation. A further eight 30m x 30m grids were dispersed toward the Settlement Slope according to local topography and to avoid modern disturbances such as power lines. Surveys were conducted over several grids that covered known structures (backfilled after previous excavations) in addition to adjacent areas. Within these grids data were collected using all three geophysical tools. Over a period of 7 days, an area of 8400 m<sup>2</sup> adjacent to tower Kasr al-Khafaji was explored using three different high-resolution geophysics methods.

A high-resolution magnetic survey was undertaken using a Bartington Grad601 fluxgate gradiometer, equipped with dual sensor pairs for improved data collection speeds. This is one of the most common geophysical instruments used in archaeology. Data were collected in all grids, at 0.125m intervals along transects separated by 0.5m. Accurate positioning was achieved by walking along non-stretching survey tape with meter markings. Prior to surveying each grid, the instrument was calibrated at a fixed location within Grid H.

ER data were collected using a Geonics EM38 MK2 in all grids except grid B, at 0.125m intervals and along transects separated by 1m. The positioning was achieved using a Trimble GPS, mounted to a backpack carried by the operator. This procedure allowed for relatively fast data collection, but did induce some additional error, requiring post processing.

GPR data collection relied on a Mala Geoscience Pro-Ex system with a 200 MHz shielded antennae. Accurate positioning was achieved using a measurement wheel that triggering data collection at 0.1m intervals along survey lines. Compared to Magnetometry and ER data collection, GPR data collection is very time-intensive. Therefore data

were collected in a targeted fashion based on observations in the magnetometry and EMI datasets, including both ‘semi-3D’ and long 2D lines. Semi-3D datasets were collected in Grids A, B, and C, with an emphasis on not yet excavated areas adjacent to the 2009–2010 excavation. Additional semi-3D datasets were collected in Grids D, H, I, and M, and long 2D lines were collected as well.

## Results

Magnetometry datasets were processed in the field to remove spikes and static shifts. Magnetometry data are strongly affected by surface features such as dirt paths, irrigation channels, and metal cultural items. Although the survey area has lain fallow for a decade or more, magnetometry data showed almost no significant results – even over the previously excavated areas in Grid A. This suggested initially that there was too much modern background disturbance in the soil. Although no effort was made in 2010 on the part of the American Expedition to deposit metal objects in the backfill, the strong correlation between trench-lines and data disturbance suggests that Magnetometry is ineffective in areas of recent disturbance.

In order to test this hypothesis data were also collected over 1147y (Matariya’s ‘enclosure’): a circular area with stones visible on the surface. The area inside and surrounding this third millennium ‘enclosure’ has not been farmed in modern memory nor does it appear to have seen much by way of modern disturbance. It was therefore expected to yield a strong signal response. This it failed to do, suggesting that magnetic gradiometry is not a good method for identifying stone in alluvium in oases such as Bat.

Nevertheless, we noted several features of interest in Grid I and Grid M, where follow-up GPR surveys were conducted. The EM38 (EMI) earth resistivity data shows several areas of interest. Several areas (~5m x 5m and larger) with anomalous values were identified in grids D, I, L, and M, although resolution was not high enough to be able to identify individual rectilinear wall patterns. In addition, the in-phase (IP) component of the EMI data appears to show several smaller-scale anomalies in Grids F and M, suggesting the possible presence of subsurface structures. A more complete analysis of the results is pending additional processing (detrending, despiking, and GPS position corrections).

Where possible, areas of interest identified using the EMI were targeted with follow-up GPR surveys. GPR data show limited penetration depth, which is possibly the result of the loamy texture of the soils. However, several strong reflections are visible in areas with known Hafit walls. These results, although not yet fully analysed, suggest that GPR may indeed be the most promising tool to find buried domestic settlements. Processing of these data and construction of semi-3D maps of the site is time-intensive and ongoing.

## Outcomes & Methodological Gains

This project aimed to identify the distribution of occupational structures in the oldest known inland village of the Hafit period. Preliminary outcomes of the study include:

- Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) data produced the strongest correlation with known settlement structures. Data were collected in closely spaced 2D lines, and are being processed to produce semi-3D images of the unexcavated part of the survey area.
- Magnetic gradiometry, the most common geophysical tool in archaeology, did not produce the anticipated results. In addition to surface effects, the absence of strong anomalies is likely due to the limited magnetic contrast of rocks and host material and the target depth. Several weaker anomalies are present in the data, however, the significance of which will be further investigated by correlation with GPR.
- The electromagnetic induction (EMI) earth resistivity data show various areas of interest, but further processing is required before definite conclusions can be drawn.
- Based on this research, future geophysical prospection for archaeological activity in Bat (and in other arid oasis environments in Oman) should concentrate on the use of ground penetrating radar.
- Based on these preliminary results electromagnetic induction may be a useful tool in this area, although further processing and comparison with GPR data is needed.
- The strong presence of electro-magnetic signals – from metal in the soil, metal fences, power lines, etc. – inhibits the ability to use magnetic gradiometry.

## Future Research

Although collection of 3D GPR data is time consuming and therefore target, it appears quite useful in identifying distinct anomalies in areas with known Hafit stone walls northeast of Kasr al-Khafaji. We believe, therefore, that GPR is the best method for future geophysical exploration in this area. Beginning in 2013–2014, excavations around Kasr al-Khafaji will include areas of interest identified using GPR in order to focus our research on potential domestic areas. Use of GPR in the alluvium near to Matariya may provide perspective and context to this Hafit- and Umm an-Nar period tower, as well, and deserves further study.

### Bibliography

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Kondo, Yasuhisa, Christopher P. Thornton, and Charlotte Marie Cable (eds.). 2013. *American-Japanese Bat Archaeological Project: Preliminary Report of the 2013 Season*. Manuscript on file with the Ministry of Heritage & Culture, Sultanate of Oman.

Thornton, C. P. C. M. Cable, and G. L. Possehl. 2013. *Three Seasons at Kasr al-Khafaji (Tower 1146) at Bat, Oman*. In D. Frenez and 4M. Tosi (Eds.), *South Asian Archaeology 2007: Proceedings of the Nineteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeology, Ravenna, Italy, 2-6 July 2007*, Pp. 255-268. BAR International Series 2454 vol. 1, Prehistoric Periods. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.

# Patterns of legitimacy

## A local examination from Ibb (a BFSA grant report)

*The second 2013 BFSA grant was awarded to Larissa Alles, a PhD candidate at the School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews. The grant went towards her fieldwork in Yemen, which is for a thesis entitled The vulnerabilities of authoritarian upgrading in Yemen.*

This fieldwork was undertaken in the framework of research on the vulnerabilities of authoritarian upgrading in hybrid regimes using the example of Yemen. By contrast to the prevalence of authoritarianism in the Middle East, there have been, at least until very recently, few cases of successful democratization. The results of reform processes usually lead to what are called hybrid regimes. The research aims to investigate how the regime of the former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh managed to consolidate its grip on power with the help of liberalizing or even democratic reforms. In order to understand this complex process, it is important to look at legitimacy and how power used to be legitimated in Yemen, both on a national level and on more local levels where local authorities play an important and very influential role. If we understand how the previous regime managed to consolidate and legitimate its power despite different oppositional fronts that it faced, implications for potentials and pitfalls for the new Yemeni government may be drawn.

The BFSA grant contributed to the accomplishment of three months' field research in Yemen from June 11 until September 16, 2013. Based in Sana'a, I was conducting interviews with a variety of people from the economic private sector, representatives of different parties, independent journalists, intellectuals, and youths who had been actively involved in the 2011 protests. In addition, I got the chance to interview a few people in the cities of Ibb and Aden. Apart from the interviews, I attended the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) as an international observer.

### What role local authorities?

One of the main questions dealt with the role of local authorities. In order to illustrate my work in the field, I am taking here an example from Ibb province. It is commonplace to hear Yemenis from all sorts of political and social backgrounds complaining about the influence of sheikhs, blaming them for being main contributors to the instability of the country. However, at the same time, the majority of people (around 80% according to an informant in Ibb) prefer going to local sheikhs in order to solve problems and settle disputes instead to official courts. A young man who was suffering from a severe injury to his leg due to the reckless shooting by a local sheikh in the suq of Ibb two years ago, reiterated the same complaint about sheikhs as mentioned above. Even so, he would rather go to one of his tormentor's colleagues in case of a problem than to the state's courts. There is some writing about the inefficiency of Yemen's court system and its absence of any credibility due

to a high degree of corruption. Yet, particularly in the area of Ibb, there have been frequent protests against the scheming of certain local authorities.

### Gaining legitimacy

I was interested in how someone becomes a sheikh and particularly receives the attached legitimacy. A sheikh from an area close to the central town of Ibb explained that when his father, the previous sheikh of the area, died, all his sons gathered in order to elect their father's successor from their midst. This conforms to a typical kind of traditional legitimacy in Weber's sense. Yet, the sheikh also received some sort of legal-rational legitimacy from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs that issued him a special ID card and gave him a stamp with the Ministry's emblem. Every agreement brokered by the sheikh is finalized with this stamp and produced in at least three copies: one copy for each side of the dispute as well as one copy for the sheikh's personal archive.

Apart from inheriting the position, there have been cases of individuals to whom people come if they have problems or are seeking advice. Those individuals are often charismatic figures with an armed group in their background, yet without any ancestral relations to a sheikhly family. Once having acquired some sort of reputation for dealing with disputes, such a figure calls himself 'sheikh' and tries to extend his power and influence. According to some interviewees, people accept this person as a new sheikh. However, it seems to be a matter of armed force that influences the extent of power of a local 'sheikh', as well as his relations to the elite in Sana'a. The latter may either grant him his area of influence, or back a local adversary. In this regard, it was a profitable business of high-ranking members of Sana'a's elite to support local tribal wars during the last two decades. The opponents were dependent on military aid from their patrons, but were too busy to become potential competitors for power on a larger scale.

It is not only because of traditional or charismatic legitimacy that local authorities continue having a considerable amount of influence. There is also the lack of legitimacy from which the legal court system suffers that supports the influence of local authorities. The people however, subject to these authorities, do not play a role in granting legitimate power.

While being preliminary results, the insights I got in the field were a significant contribution to my research. I am looking at the role of local authorities and their ways of legitimating



The sheikh of the area of Ba'dan/ Ibb province



The sheikh's diwan where he receives guests and settles disputes

power in different areas of Yemen in order to reach a comparative picture. These insights from local levels complement the findings regarding the role of economics, the military and external actors in the evaluation of power maintenance in Yemen.

## BFSA news, on-line

For all social media users, you might like to know that the BFSA not only has a Facebook page (search pages for The British Foundation for the Study of Arabia) but a Twitter account (@theBFSA).

As well as advertising BFSA events and activities, the Facebook page has daily updates on topics such as work being carried out in the Arabian Peninsula, relevant news stories, museum or exhibition news, conferences or talks, and publications. We also feature images of sites, artefacts and landscapes from the Peninsula (keen photographers – please note!).

If you are a Facebook user, please 'Like' our page and then you will be able to contribute. You can either post comments on the posts, or send us material for us to add to the wall. If

you manage a relevant Facebook page please let us know so that we can 'Like' your page and promote your posts. Suggestions for how we can improve the page and increase the number of our followers are very welcome! If you are not a Facebook user you can still view the page without having to sign up.

We'd also be grateful if Twitter users would follow us: if you are posting about your work or activities that are relevant to BFSA, we'll retweet or follow you. We want to spread the word about all the activity that is taking place in the Arabian Peninsula as there is a huge amount going on, but it is not widely recognized beyond academic circles.

We look forward to hearing from you and to reading your posts and Tweets!

Carolyn Perry@carolynpperry



## STOP PRESS: Red Sea VII announced

News just in: the Red Sea VII conference will take place on May 26–30, 2015 in Naples (Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale').

Entitled 'The Red Sea and the Gulf: Two Alternative Maritime Routes in the Development of Global Economy, from Late Prehistory to Modern Times', this is the seventh BFSA-related international conference on the peoples of the Red Sea region and their environment.

Themes will include: The Red Sea and the Gulf in the global economy; naval technologies and maritime knowledge in the

Red Sea and the Gulf; people, ideas, technologies and religions between the Red Sea and the Gulf; Africa, Arabia, Persia: linguistic transitions; and Greek, Roman, and Byzantine trade to the East.

If you wish to speak, please send your abstract (250–500 words) and a brief CV by 15 December 2014.

For more information on how to submit your abstract, and on registration, location, accommodation, programmes, the planned workshops and so on, please surf to <http://www.unior.it/ricerca/9663/3/red-sea-project-vii-conference.html>.

# The BFSa Trustees

*Biographies and latest work outlined*

## Miss Beatrice de Cardi, OBE

### President of the BFSa

Beatrice de Cardi is the Foundation's President and, before its formation, was President of the Society for Arabian Studies from its inception in 1987. She is a distinguished archaeologist whose work in the field, identifying pottery and sites at risk of destruction, took her to Pakistan, Iran, the Emirates, Oman and Qatar. For almost 25 years she was Secretary of the Council for British Archaeology, who hold an annual lecture in her honour. She was awarded an OBE in 1973. Her retirement from the CBA enabled her to continue research in Oman and latterly in Ras al-Khaimah Museum, UAE, where, in an honorary capacity, she usually spent seven weeks each year until 2011.

She has received numerous awards, including the Al-Qasimi Medal, awarded by the Ruler of Ras al-Khaimah, the Burton Memorial Medal from the Royal Asiatic Society and the medal for outstanding service awarded by the Society of Antiquaries of London. She is a Fellow of the British Academy and a visiting professor at UCL. Beatrice will be 100 this summer and the Foundation sends her its very warmest wishes on this occasion.



Our president, Beatrice de Cardi, at work.

## Dr Derek Kennet

### Chairman

I am Senior Lecturer at the Department of Archaeology, Durham University and have been working on the archaeology of Islamic and pre-Islamic Eastern Arabia and the western Indian Ocean for almost 25 years. I am presently running field projects at Kadhima in Kuwait (in collaboration with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters), at Qarn al-Harf in Ras al-Khaimah (in collaboration

with the Department of Antiquities and Museums, Government of Ras al-Khaimah) and on the Batinah in Oman (in collaboration with Dr Nasser al-Jahwari of Sultan Qaboos University, the Anglo-Omani Society and the Omani Ministry of Heritage and Culture).

I teach a course on Arabian archaeology to undergraduates and MA students each year in Durham. I am also supervising four research students who are working on the archaeology of the region.

## Mr Simon Alderson

### Treasurer

I am the odd trustee out in terms of my background. My MA (and unfinished PhD) are in archaeology, but my field is Medieval Britain, and most of my experience of Middle Eastern archaeology was an excavation in Jordan a few years ago. Fortunately, I'm a trustee because I offer other experience in another field: I've been a qualified accountant for 20 years, and have run my own practice for 16. Over my career I have always dealt with charities, and currently serve as either treasurer or reporting accountant to six different charities.

Consequently, I offer both accounting advice and knowledge of charity law and regulations to the BFSa. I became involved with the BFSa because I've known Derek Kennet for many years and he asked me to! I'm a great believer in the work done by educational charities as a whole and, having a soft spot for archaeological charities in particular, it wasn't and isn't a difficult decision to get involved.

## Mr Michael Macdonald

### Honorary Secretary

I am a fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, and Academic director of the Online Corpus of the Inscriptions of Ancient North Arabia project which is based at the Khalili Research Centre, University of Oxford. It is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council of Great Britain and will produce a digital corpus of all the Ancient North Arabian inscriptions (Safaitic, Himaic, Thamudic, Dadanitic, Taymanitic, etc.), of which there are at present some 50,000, as well as texts in other ancient languages and scripts found in North Arabia.

I am also the head of the British component of the joint Saudi-German-British project Epigraphy and the Ancient Landscape in the Hinterland of Tayma, which is part of the Saudi-German 'Archaeology of Tayma' project. It will record the inscriptions around Tayma in their topographical, hydrological, and archaeological contexts.

## Dr Noel Brehony, CMG

I focus on modern Yemen particularly the lands of the south – the former Peoples' Democratic Republic of Yemen. I am chairman of the British Yemeni Society. My book on the PDRY, *Yemen Divided*, was published in 2011 (pb 2013).

## Dr Robert Carter

I am Senior Lecturer in Archaeology at UCL Qatar, where I run the MA in Archaeology of the Arab and Islamic World. I have broad interests in the archaeology and deep history of the region, from the Palaeolithic to the 20th century AD, particularly Neolithic seafaring, pearl-fishing and the foundation of the Gulf towns.

I currently have two research projects: The Origins of Doha Project, funded by the Qatar National Research Fund, which combines archaeology, oral history and historical research to examine the life of the city from its foundation through to the coming of oil; and the Shahrizor Prehistory Project, funded by UCL Qatar and the Institute of Archaeology UCL, which investigates prehistoric interactions in northern Iraq during the 6th and 5th millennia BC.

## Michael Crawford

I am an independent consultant on Middle East political risk, and I write on Saudi and Gulf history. After a 28-year career serving the British government, including in Egypt, the Yemen and Saudi Arabia, I was a Visiting Fellow at Princeton in 2009 and a Senior Consulting Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2010-11. My introductory book on Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab is due out in 2014.

## Mr William Facey

My publishing company, Arabian Publishing, is now into its twelfth year. Having published Robert Carter's magnum opus, *Sea of Pearls*, in 2012, I have brought out *The Principles of Arab Navigation* in 2013. My current major project, in collaboration with the University of Tübingen and with Michael Macdonald and Christopher Metcalf as editor and translator, is the first-ever publication of an English edition of Julius Euting's *Tagbuch einer Reise in Inner-Arabien* (2 vols., 1896 and 1914) – the fascinating record of Euting's travels in Arabia with Charles Huber during 1883–84. I continue to advise on various museum projects in Arabia.

## Dr Noel Joseph Guckian CVO, OBE

Former British Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman (2005–2011), with over 30 years experience in the Middle East and on Middle Eastern topics in London and at universities in the UK. Three previous stints as Head of Post (twice in Libya as Head of the British Interests Section in the Italian Embassy, including re-opening diplomatic relations in 1999) and once as the first Consul General in Northern Iraq, since the 1950s – based in Kirkuk. Wide diplomatic experience in the Middle East – postings were Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Libya (twice), Syria, Iraq and Oman (twice). Now working in the UK Private Sector on Middle East issues. And working on a number of pro bono positions. Honorary Fellow of the School of Government and International Studies, Durham University.

## Prof. Robert Hoyland

I am Professor of Middle East History, Institute for Study of the Ancient World - NYU, and Oxford University. I work on Arabic epigraphy and the origins of Islam and the spread of Christianity and Judaism in Arabia.

## Ms Carolyn Perry

The past year has been very busy for me as Director of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation. We are a UK-based charity founded by Arab philanthropist and businessman Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber, and we work in the areas of education, cultural dialogue and good governance. 2013 saw a major focus on Yemen – we've supported conferences, UNESCO projects on education at a strategic level, and also set up an independent journalism training institute in Sana'a (see page 78).

Of course, one of the highlights of our year is always the Seminar of Arabian Studies, of which we are long-time supporters. The 2013 MBI Al Jaber lecture, on Arab navigation, was a great success and we are all looking forward to the next one.

I've also been busy with being on the committees of CAABU (the Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding) and the Friends of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, and I've recently become a committee member of the Saudi-British Society.

## Dr St John Simpson

I am an archaeologist and a senior curator in the British Museum where I am responsible for the ancient Arabia and Iran collections in the Department of the Middle East.

I have curated two major exhibitions at the BM, *Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen* (2002) and *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World* (2011), and am currently working on several other projects. These include a catalogue of the Ancient South Arabia collection in the British Museum – a joint project with Prof. Avanzini, Pisa (see page 41), the publication of finds from Dr Kennet's excavations at the site of Kush in Ras al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates (see page 38), and the development of the museum as a major centre and repository of Middle Eastern postcards (see page 46).

I am also co-editor of the BFSa Monograph Series published by Archaeopress (see page 9 and overleaf).

## Mrs Ionis Thompson

As a member of the BFSa Trustee Board, I am responsible for organising BFSa's Lecture Programme and helping the Editor of the Bulletin. I am also Hon. Secretary of the Saudi-British Society.

I am a history graduate with a particular interest in the history and archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula and for 12 years I lived in Riyadh with my husband, teaching English and writing *Desert Treks from Riyadh* (recently re-issued) and *Riyadh Handbook*. On my return from Saudi Arabia I took part in UCL-led excavations in the UAE, and have also led a tour of Saudi Arabia for the Saudi-British Society.

## British Foundation for the Study of Arabia Monograph Series

*Series editors: D. Kennet & St J. Simpson*

The BFSa now manages the publication of the monograph series originally begun by the Society for Arabian Studies. This series includes research-based studies, conference proceedings, archaeological excavation and survey reports, and MA or PhD theses where the contents mark an important synthesis or a significant addition to knowledge. The monographs are published and distributed by Archaeopress.

### Published Monographs

Derek Kennet, with a contribution by Regina KrahI  
*Sasanian and Islamic Pottery from Ras al-Khaimah: Classification, chronology and analysis of trade in the Western Indian Ocean*. Archaeopress: BAR S1248 (2004). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs, No. 1. ISBN: 1-84171-608-1. £32.00.

Paul Lunde & Alexandra Porter (eds)  
*Trade and Travel in the Red Sea Region: Proceedings of Red Sea Project I held in the British Museum, October 2002*. Archaeopress: BAR S1269 (2004). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs, No. 2. ISBN: 1-84171-622-7. £33.00.

Janet C. M. Starkey (ed.)  
*People of the Red Sea: Proceedings of Red Sea Project II held in the British Museum, October 2004*. Archaeopress: BAR S1395 (2005). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs, No. 3. ISBN: 1-8417-18335. £30.00.

Nadia Durrani  
*The Tihamah Coastal Plain of South-west Arabia in its Regional Context c. 6000 BC – AD 600*. Archaeopress: BAR S1456 (2005). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs, No. 4. ISBN: 1-84171-8947. £32.00.

Janet C. M. Starkey, Paul Starkey & Tony Wilkinson (eds)  
*Natural Resources and Cultural Connections of the Red Sea: Proceedings of Red Sea Project III held in the British Museum, October 2006*. Archaeopress: BAR S1661. Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 5. ISBN: 9781407300979. £36.00.

Michel Mouton  
*La Péninsule d'Oman de la fin de l'Age du Fer au début de la période sassanide (250 av. – 350 ap. JC)*. Archaeopress: BAR S1776 (2008). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 6. ISBN: 978 1 4073 0264 5. £55.00.

Eric Olijdam & Richard. H. Spoor (eds)  
*Intercultural Relations between South and Southwest Asia Studies in commemoration of E.C.L. During Caspers (1934-1996)*. Archaeopress: BAR S1826 (2008). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 7. ISBN: 9781407303123. £54.00.

Lucy Katherine Blue, John Cooper, Julian Whitewright & Ross Thomas (eds)  
*Connected Hinterlands: Proceedings of Red Sea Project IV held at the University of Southampton September 2008*. Archaeopress: BAR S2052 (2009). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 8. ISBN: 978140730631. £43.00.

Eivind Heldaas Seland  
*Ports & Political Power in the Periplus: complex societies and maritime trade on the Indian Ocean in the 1st cent. AD*. Archaeopress: BAR S2102 (2010). Society for Arabian Studies Monographs No. 9. ISBN: 9781407305783. £29.00.

Lloyd Weeks (ed.)  
*Death and Burial in Arabia and Beyond: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Archaeopress: BAR S2107 (2010); ISBN 978-1-4073-0648-3. £55.00.

Harriet Nash  
*Water Management: The Use of Stars in Oman*. Archaeopress: BAR S2237 (2011); ISBN 978-1-4073-0799-2. £32.00.

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## NEWS AND RESEARCH BY COUNTRY, 2013

### BAHRAIN

**Dr Steffen Terp Laursen** brings us up to date on work in Bahrain opening with information on the 'Tree of Life' site.

The Ministry of Culture is in the process of launching a museum and visitors' centre at the 'Tree of Life' site in the centre of Bahrain Island. (The 'Tree of Life' is itself a c.500-year-old acacia that stands alone in the middle of an otherwise barren desert environment.) In 2011, a well-preserved Islamic period settlement was discovered next to the 'Tree of Life' site by the directorate of archaeology and heritage. In 2011, the site was partially excavated and the walls were then covered. In 2013, the archaeologists re-exposed some of the Islamic period houses, as well as excavating additional Islamic period housing. This will now be integrated into the visitors' centre, as part of a conceptual design proposed by architects, Bielinska & Basmaji. The excavation was directed by Ali Ebrahim and Dr Pierre Lombard.

### Bu Maher Fort excavated

A team of excavators from the Bahrain Ministry of Culture led by Dr Salman Al Mahari carried out excavations at the Bu Maher Fort on Muharraq Island. The site had previously been investigated by a Bahraini team in 1977 and by the Oxford Brooks team led by Dr Robert Carter in 2010. The work on the fort is part of the development of Bahrain's new UNESCO World heritage site 'Pearling, testimony of an island economy', commonly referred to as the 'Bahrain pearling trail'.

### 'Royal' Mounds of Aali, work resumed

From 16 October to 11 December 2013, the Bahrain National Museum and Moesgaard Museum resumed their joint investigations of the 'Royal' mounds of Aali under the auspices of 'The Bahrain Burial Mound Project'. Focus this year was placed on further investigations of Mound OA204, Mound O, Mound P, Mound E, Mackay Tomb 29, Mackay Tomb 30. As in the 2010 and 2012 seasons work, this year was concentrated on retrieving carbon samples necessary to radio carbon date the time of construction of the 'royal' mounds. Additionally, the previously excavated multi-chambered 'Aziz Mound' south of the royal cemetery proper was cleaned and the architecture was documented.

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### KUWAIT

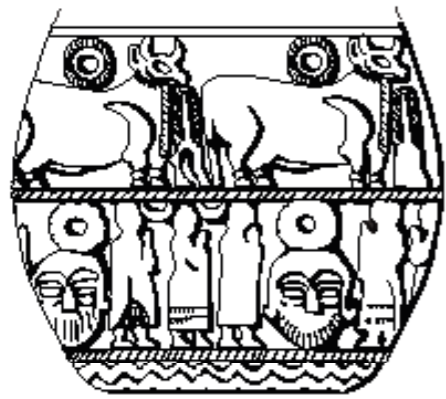
*An overview of the main projects and teams working in collaboration with Kuwait's National Council for Culture Arts and Letters, from Dr Derek Kennet with a contribution from Dr Flemming Hojland.*

NCCAL, or the Kuwait National Council for Culture Arts and Letters, National Museum of Kuwait has a policy of investigating Kuwait's archaeological heritage and of protecting it for future generations. NCCAL is currently undertaking excavation and recording of sites that are threatened by development. In addition, since at least 2001 NCCAL has been working with foreign archaeological teams to undertake research on Kuwaiti archaeological sites. NCCAL is presently working with various foreign teams on Kuwaiti archaeological sites and projects, as outlined below.

Prof. Piotr Bieliński, Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, Poland is undertaking survey and excavations of Bronze Age tumuli in the Sabiyya area of Kuwait mainland; excavations at the 'Ubaid site of Bahra 1 on Kuwait mainland; excavation of Kharaid Desht Late Islamic site on Failaka; excavations at the 8th-century Christian site of al-Qusur on Failaka; and underwater survey on and around the shores of Failaka.

Dr Mathilde Gelin of the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and French Institute for the Near East (IFPO), France, is undertaking excavations on the Hellenistic fort at tell F5 on Failaka; and excavations at the 8th-century Christian site of al-Qusur on Failaka.

Dr Flemming Hojland of Moesgaard Museum, Aarhus, Denmark is working on excavations at Failaka. He reports to the Bulletin as follows: "The 6th campaign of the Kuwait-Danish Mission to Failaka took place from October 15th to December 7th, 2013. New trenches were opened in Tell F3 and two phases of architecture dating to period 3B (c.1550 BC) were uncovered. The manuscript on the 2008–2012 excavations in Tell F6 is being prepared and scheduled to be finished by the end of 2014. Anna Hilton's 2013 publication *Failaka, Dilmun. The Second Millennium Settlements. Volume 4: The Stone Vessels*, which deals with the third-second millennium stone vessels found during Moesgaard Museum's excavations 1958–1963 on Failaka can now be ordered at Aarhus University Press." (please see image on next page.)



Soft stone vessel decorated in the mid 2nd millennium Failaka style (Anna Hilton 2013 fig. 257).

Dr David Lordkianidze, Director of the Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi, Georgia, is engaged in the survey of Bronze Age sites in the Sabiyya area; and excavation of Al-Awazen Late Islamic site in Failaka.

Dr Andrea Di Miceli of the University of Perugia, Italy is undertaking excavations at the late Islamic site of Quraniyya, Failaka.

Dr Derek Kennet of the Department of Archaeology, Durham University, UK is working on the survey and excavation of the Islamic landscape on mainland Kuwait including Kadhima, Mughaira and Shiqayya; and kite aerial photographic survey of the 8th-century Christian site of al-Qusur on Failaka.

Main staffing changes at NCCAL are as follows: Mr Shehab Ahmed Shehab has been promoted to Assistant Under Secretary for the Department of Antiquities and Museums and the Department of Engineering. Mr Sultan Al-Duwish has been promoted to Director of Department of Antiquities and Museums. Mr Hamid Al-Mutairi has been promoted to the Head of Survey and Excavation Sector of the Department of Antiquities and Museums. Mr Talal Al-Saei continues to be the Head of the Museums Sector of the Department of Antiquities and Museums.

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## OMAN

*A variety of archaeological projects is underway across the Sultanate of Oman. Dr Nasser Said al-Jahwari opens with a focus on work supervised by Oman's Ministry of Heritage and Culture, and then turns to work by Sultan Qaboos University.*

During 2012–2013, Oman's Ministry of Heritage and Culture (or MHC) undertook an active survey and excavation programme. Taking place across the Sultanate, some 16 archaeological expeditions, from both local and international institutions, worked under the supervision of the MHC. These include the following sites/areas:

### Tomb at Diba, Greek and Italian teams

Since its discovery in 2012, the site of al-Deer at Diba in Musandam has been the subject of several archaeological investigations by the MHC in collaboration with a number of archaeological teams. The site contains a communal grave measuring 14m long by 3.5m wide, and dating to the Early Iron Age. A large number of funerary items were found within the tomb, including around 188 skeletal remains plus many ceramic, stone and metal objects (including swords, daggers, arrowheads, and axes). In 2013, the Ministry, in collaboration with a Greek team, carried out a geophysical survey on site. Further archaeological investigations at the tomb were then undertaken by a joint team from the MHC and an Italian team from the University of Bologna. Their work yielded the first Mesopotamian cuneiform text in Oman: a stone pendant formed as an eye and inscribed with the word 'D.Jo.la', which is the name of the 'cure' god in Mesopotamia.

### Hasik, French team

The French archaeological work focused on surveying the coasts along the Arabian Sea from Al-Sharqiyah Governorate to Dhofar Governorate. This year's fieldwork concentrated on surveying the northern part of Dhofar (Jebel Qar and Hasik), and resulted in the discovery of a number of Stone Age sites. Among these is the site of Hasik dating back to the 'Fasad Period' (c.10,000–6,000 years ago). This is the second site from this period to be discovered in Oman.

### Bat Project, American-Japanese team

The American-Japanese archaeological team is one of a number of archaeological expeditions to carry out surveys and excavations in the World Heritage Site of Bat (listed in 1989). Since 2007 the above team has focused on conducting surveys and excavations in the 3rd millennium BC tower buildings and settlements such as the towers of Khafaji, Mataryah and 1156. The team's archaeological work during the 2013 season (see pages 10-11) concentrated on surveying the north-western area of Bat in the Wadi al-Kabeir,

Wahrah and Alain. This resulted in the discovery of three archaeological sites from the Stone Age and 3rd millennium BC as well as several examples of rock art. Additionally, the team carried out excavations in the Umm an-Nar and Wadi Suq buildings near Tower 1156. Moreover, the team conducted a geophysical survey in close proximity of Qasar Khafaji Tower.

### Buildings at Qalhat, CNRS

The French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) began work in the 13th-15th centuries AD site of Qalhat. The archaeological work during 2013 focused on the excavation of Qalhat's mosques, plus some of its large houses. The latter have a similar layout to the traditional houses known in Oman during the 1970s and 1980s.

### Rescue at Wadi al-Sahtan, Italian team

The MHC and the Ministry of Transportation and Communication collaborated to protect the archaeological features located in Wadi al-Sahtan in Rustaq. It was feared that these features might be disturbed by the construction of a road for the Wadi villages. An Italian archaeological team from the Catholic University in Milan was therefore instructed to carry out a survey. This resulted in the documentation of a number of archaeological features such as rock art along the Wadi.

### The Fort at Ras al-Hadd, British team

The British archaeological team began its survey and excavation in 2005 in order to define the ancient occupation along the surrounding coasts, swamps, and hills. The archaeologists identified a number of Iron Age and Islamic sites. Among them was Husun Ras al-Hadd where Islamic occupational layers were found. In 2013 the team continued its excavations inside the Husun (or fort). This resulted in the discovery of evidence for occupation from the Iron Age to around the 18th century AD.

### Dhank and Yanqul, American team

The American archaeological team is carrying out comprehensive surveys for the archaeological remains along the wadis located between Dhank and Yanqul in al-Dhahira Governorate. The results revealed a number of ancient occupational sites dating back to the Stone Age and Bronze Age as well as several copper mining and smelting sites. In 2013 the team also carried out 3D photography at one of the 3rd millennium BC towers located in the village of Safri in Yanqul. Additionally, the team found 63 new sites, including 16 settlements and two towers from the 3rd millennium BC, 24 tombs from the Hafit Period, and 14 tombs from the Umm an-Nar Period.

### Ras al-Hadd, Italian-French team

The joint Italian-French archaeological team began working in the Ras al-Hadd area in 1980s. Among their finds has

been the discovery of the site of Ras al-Hadd 6, one of the most important settlements found in the area. Dated to the Early Bronze Age (Hafit Period), it is the only settlement from this period to be found along the coast. It consists of mud-brick buildings and is surrounded by an outer wall. In 2013, the team continued excavating at this site, with a focus on one of the mud-brick buildings within the wall. The team also excavated another site located in close proximity to this settlement in the eastern part, namely Ras al-Hadd Site 5. The excavation showed that it was occupied during two phases, the first dated to the 4th millennium BC, and the second to the 3rd millennium BC. Both phases are dated based on the recovery of local and imported items from the Indus Valley.

### Dhank area, American team

The American archaeological team from Temple University is also carrying out archaeological investigations in Dhank area in al-Dhahira Governorate. A main aim is to attempt to identify the pattern of occupation in the area during the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. During season 2013 the team focused on excavating a cemetery located close to the village of al-Khabib in Dhank area. The site consists of 316 tombs from the Bronze Age. Additionally, a survey was done in Dhank area, including the sites of Abu Salih, al-Khutum and al-Falaj. Several Stone Age and Bronze Age sites were located. The team also excavated two tombs at the site of Bat in Ibri. Both tombs are built on top of a 3rd millennium BC tower, so indicating reoccupation in succeeding periods.

### Al-Hajar Project, British team

The British archaeological team began work on 'al-Hajar Sites' in the interior part of Oman in the 1980s. It has also studied *afaj* systems in the 4th–3rd millennium BC. In the course of this work, the team found a number of 4th–3rd millennium BC settlements, which consist of eight large tower buildings. In 2013, the team undertook a geophysical survey of the falaj, and documented archaeological remains in both Salut and Bisya sites.

### Bat and Zaiba Sites, German team

In 2008, the German archaeological team from Tübingen University started its archaeological investigations at the sites of Bat and Wadi al-Ain and surrounding sites in Ibri. The team found two Bronze Age settlements and tombs. In 2013, the team continued its work in the 3rd millennium BC settlement site at Zaiba which is located in the north-western part of Bat.

### Taqah, American team

The American archaeological team, this time from Ohio University, is carrying out surveys and excavations in Mudhi at Thamrait in Dhofar Governorate. The aim of this work is to record archaeological buildings and paleoenvironmental

resources that include water resources sites, flints, pastures, and frankincense sites. At the end of 2012, the team excavated in a small settlement south of Jebel Halqot village in Jibjat at Taqah. The excavation resulted in the discovery of a number of ancient houses, a courtyard, plus wooden and leather materials. The excavators suggest that the site had been occupied in the period from 600 BC to 50 BC.

Thamrait, National Geographic Society

The National Geographic Society is carrying out surveys and excavations of sites at Thamrait, south of the Empty Quarter, in order to locate settlements and define occupational phases in the area. In 2012, the team carried out excavation in the Nubian Complex through the Najd Plateau in Dhofar in order to find features from the Mesolithic.

Al-Safa Site, Italian team

Al-Safa, in Ibbi, is one of the important archaeological sites to be discovered in recent years. It was found by a joint team from the MHC and Bologna University in Italy. The archaeological investigations show it to have been a copper-mining site from the 1st millennium BC. The site is located along the ancient trade route that crosses the Arabian Peninsula. In 2013, surveys and excavations continued in the site, resulting in the discovery of around 230 furnaces as well as several bronze objects such as surface axes, swords, arrowheads, knives, spearheads, diggers and beads. The excavation provided insights into the copper smelting and production techniques in the site.

Overview of MHC events

- The MHC also participated in many events during 2012–2013, the se include:
- 1 The Symposium on Conserving the Traditional Local Architectural Style held in Hyatt Regency Hotel, Muscat, Oman.
  - 2 The Oman and the Sea Exhibition held in Paris.
  - 3 The regional workshop about the Agreement on Protecting the Cultural Heritage Submerged by Water held in the Kingdom of Bahrain.
  - 4 The Ministry hosted a workshop during October 2012 in collaboration with the Arab Regional Centre of World Heritage to train and equip the National Cadres on the International Heritage Concepts, the work mechanism of the committee and the agreement made in the year 1972.
  - 5 The regional Course on the Management and Conservation of Cultural Heritage entitled ‘Sites and Museum Sets’ held in the Qatari Capital, Doha and Sharjah in the UAE.
  - 6 The International Heritage Conference (Activities celebrating the 40th anniversary of the International Heritage and Sustainable Development Agreement) held in Kyoto in Japan.
  - 7 The Programme of Visiting Specialists and Workers in the

- Field of Monuments and Museums held at Qatar.
- 8 The Programme of Conserving the Historical Buildings and Archaeological Sites held at Kuwait.
- 9 The programme of Monuments and the Management and Protection of Cultural Heritage held in Doha, Qatar.
- 10 The 3rd International Conference and Exhibition on the Conservation of Architectural Heritage held in Dubai, UAE.

Sultan Qaboos University (SQU)

There now follows an overview of some of the archaeological works and activities carried out by the Department of Archaeology, at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) Oman.

During January–February 2013, the Department of Archaeology at Sultan Qaboos University started the first season of archaeological investigation in the area of al-Fulayj at Saham in the Northern al-Batinah Governorate. The results of the survey revealed useful information about the settlement patterns and funerary practices within the area of study.

The preliminary results also indicated that human activity in the area dates from around the Late Stone Age (c.5th–4th millennium BC) to Modern Islamic times. Thus, among the recovered archaeological features are lithic scatters of possible Late Stone Age, tombs dated to the Hafit Period (late 4th – early 3rd millennium BC), tombs and settlement remains from the Umm an-Nar Period (2500–2000 BC), possible Wadi Suq tombs (2000–1300 BC) and Islamic cemeteries and settlements as well as copper-mining and smelting sites. These results have highlighted the importance of this part of al-Batinah hinterland during the Early Bronze Age (EBA), particularly the Hafit and Umm an-Nar Periods. It has provided significant data regarding the EBA funerary landscape in al-Fulayj area. It yielded a large number of Hafit and Umm an-Nar tombs; their distribution across the landscape can provide important information about how the occupants of the area made use of the landscape during the EBA, as well as their activities and practices more generally across the whole of the Oman Peninsula.

The Maritime Footprints project

The Department of Archaeology at SQU in collaboration with the University of Southampton, Centre for Maritime Archaeology (CMA, UK) and the Maritime Archaeological Stewardship Trust (MAST), also carried out a one-season archaeological investigation at the Island of Masirah, south-eastern Oman.

The Maritime Footprints project sets out to explore the dynamic maritime cultural landscape through a variety of methodologies. It employed a range of terrestrial and maritime archaeological survey techniques and approaches, mapping selected sites, their geographical context and associated coastal features; it undertook maritime

ethnographic inquiry, studying the traditional boats, their use and change over time; it recorded oral traditions, and explored memory and practise relating to the sea and maritime activities.

Three case studies were identified to explore the changing maritime cultural landscape of the island from prehistory to the modern day in order to reveal a more nuanced appreciation of maritime activity, seafaring, and changing use of the marine resource over time and between the island’s two geographically distinct coastlines. The results of the 2013 MF preliminary survey season has further demonstrated the overwhelming connectivity of Masirah Island to the sea. It extended our knowledge of this rich maritime cultural landscape through the identification of over 350 new sites and coastal features. It also began to determine the character of the maritime landscape, its continuity and change over time and space, noting amongst other things, the marked difference between the east and west coasts, the variety of marine resources extracted and diversity of extraction.

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QATAR

Frances Gillespie sends news of the latest developments in Qatar, beginning with a look at the innovative work undertaken by the Qatar Museums Authority.

Construction continues on the new National Museum on the Doha Corniche, designed by Jean Nouvel, its interlocking planes inspired by the shape of a sand rose. It surrounds the traditional buildings of the first National Museum of Qatar, opened in 1975 in a former Emiri palace. Construction is scheduled to be completed at the end of 2014, with an opening date to be announced.

Mathaf, the Arab Museum of Modern Art, opened in Doha in 2010, with exhibition galleries, an education wing and a



The National Museum of Qatar under construction, October 2013.

research library. Established as a joint collaboration between QMA and Qatar Foundation, it continues to acquire new works and aims to become the leading voice on Arab modern and contemporary art in the region, hosting a number of exhibitions in 2013 including Adel Abdessemed’s *L’age d’or*.

Since its launch in 2008 the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA), designed by IM Pei as an impressive cubist structure on a purpose-built island off the Doha Corniche, has established itself as one of the world’s leading museums of Islamic art, recording its millionth visitor in February 2013. Special exhibitions this year have included *Ferozkoh: Tradition and Continuity in Afghan Art* which ran from March until June, and moves to London in autumn 2014. It showcases 37 objects from the MIA’s collections, each piece exhibited alongside an example of fine craftsmanship by contemporary artisans and artists from the Turquoise Mountain Institute in Afghanistan. Undoubtedly the most popular exhibition of 2013 was *Hajj: The Journey Through Art* which clocked up 40,000 visitors between its opening in October and the end of the year. Organized in collaboration with the British Museum, the exhibition explored all aspects of the Muslim pilgrimage and presented artworks from MIA and objects loaned by private Qatari collectors.



Mecca-centred map of the world, from *Kitab Kharida al-'Aja'ib wa Farida al-Ghara'ib* ‘The Pearl of Wonders and the Uniqueness of Things Strange’ Dated 3 Safar 983 AH (14 May 1575 CE) From the exhibition *Hajj: The Journey Through Art*. Museum of Islamic Art, Doha.

Modern art abounds

*Relics*, the largest retrospective survey of British artist Damien Hirst’s work ever to be assembled, was on display in the exhibition hall Al-Riwaq in the grounds of the Museum of Islamic Art from October 2013 to January 2014. Spanning over 27 years of Hirst’s career, *Relics* was the artist’s first solo show in the Middle East and included such iconic works as his series of spot paintings, the diamond skulls and the animals preserved in formaldehyde, as well as previously unseen artworks.

*Relics* was part of a series of cultural initiatives organized by QMA in order to foster discussions and cultural exchange between the UK and Qatar, forming part of **Qatar UK 2013**

**Year of Culture** which celebrated the long-established bilateral relations between Qatar and the UK. *The Miraculous Journey*, a series of 14 monumental bronze sculptures designed by Hirst and commissioned by Sheikha Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, chairwoman of the QMA and sister to the new emir, were unveiled in October in front of the Sidra Medical and Research Center on the outskirts of Doha. Reputed to have cost \$20,000,000, they chart the gestation of embryos in a womb from conception to birth, terminating in a 46-foot-tall anatomically correct baby boy. No sooner unveiled than they were rehoused in giant white pods, ostensibly to protect them from the dust and debris resulting from building work on the medical centre.

*The Miraculous Journey* is one of a number of outdoor sculptures by an international array of artists which have been installed around Doha over the past three years. Some have proved more popular than others. A 16-foot-tall bronze sculpture by Adel Abdessemed, depicting the French soccer player Zidane head-butting an Italian player at the World Cup final in 2006, was installed in October on the Corniche, the popular waterfront promenade. It lasted less than a month before it was removed and put into storage, with many residents claiming they found it offensive. Other works have met with public approval, including one of Louise Bourgeois's monumental spiders at the Qatar National Convention Center and '7', an 80-foot-tall steel sculpture by Richard Serra, in the park of the Museum of Islamic Art.

Other events taking place during the year of cultural exchanges between Qatar and the UK have included a performance of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* by the Globe Theatre at Katara Cultural Village, and a concert by the BBC Symphony Orchestra of music by British composers. As part of the exchange, exhibits including ceramics, glass, calligraphy, textiles and pearl jewellery from museums in Qatar were on loan to the V&A in London until January 2014.

Plans for a number of new museums, never officially announced, have been put on hold for the time being. Meanwhile temporary exhibitions from the collections are



Qatar Islamic Archaeological and Heritage Project. Conservation of walls in the 'palatial compound', Al-Zubara.

held at the new QMA gallery at Katara Cultural Village and in the exhibition hall Al-Riwaq. More information can be found on the website [www.qma.com.qa](http://www.qma.com.qa)

## Wonders of Al-Zubarah

A major event for the Qatar Museums Authority in 2013 was the inscription in June of the ruined town of Al-Zubarah as a World Heritage Site. The site lies around 92km north of Doha, on the north-western coast of Qatar. It consists of three main nuclei; the coastal town of Al-Zubarah, the ruins of the fort and settlement at Qalat Murair, and a traditional-style fort built in 1938 as a coastguard station. This is designated to house an information centre and small site museum.

Al-Zubarah is one of the largest and best-preserved examples of 18th–19th century traditional pearl-fishing and merchant towns anywhere in the Gulf. QMA and the University of Copenhagen implement the Qatar Islamic Archaeology and Heritage Project at Al-Zubarah which is focusing on the investigation, monitoring, restoration and preservation of the site, formally opened to the public in mid-December. Fieldwork in 2013 concentrated on two areas, the town souk and the 'palatial compound' of nine interconnected compounds. At the souq, the team has uncovered a dozen date presses either side of a passageway through the central area. This seems to indicate a light industrial or warehouse area – though this is not incompatible with this still forming part of the souq. At the palatial compound an unprecedented level of pitting has come to light inside one of the last remaining unexcavated spaces in the compound section that's been the



Qatar Islamic Archaeological and Heritage Project. The 1938 fort at Al-Zubara which will become a site museum and visitors' centre.



Qatar Islamic Archaeological and Heritage Project. One of many date presses excavated on the site of Al-Zubara.

focus of most past archaeological activity. These pits – many of which cut through each other, and several of which reach the waterline – seem to be related to the construction of the compound. The conservation team working alongside the archaeologists at the palatial compound have also lifted several wall etchings of sea vessels – mostly picturing dhows, but one picturing a western square-rigged vessel – from the compound for conservation.

## DAI on a roll

The Oriental Department of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) continued its South Qatar Survey Project in cooperation with the Qatar Museums Authority, with field surveys taking place from mid-February to mid-April 2013. Activities included the documentation of sites discovered through surveys along road and drainage projects and in the environs of wells. In addition, sites already known from previous visits were restudied. In this season several Early Neolithic sites with Qatar B lithic assemblages and also Middle Neolithic (Mesopotamian al-Ubaid Period) sites were recorded in the Western Coastal Region. A small sounding was undertaken at a Middle Neolithic site, dubbed 'Groom Baida' (white cliff) by the archaeologists, in order to explore its archaeological potential. In the northern region of the survey area several cairn fields of yet unknown date were recorded. The majority of sites registered in central Qatar are characterized by temporary settlements and structures of the more recent past surrounding the typical *rawd*a depressions. Pottery sherds from the last centuries are well represented, and the results showed that even temporary settlements of the 1970s can be dated by archaeological means. The archaeological survey was supplemented by geomorphological studies on the development of the Holocene coastal lines in order to reconstruct the settings at different historical periods back to the Neolithic. This research is carried out in co-operation with a team from the University of Cologne.

Field-work comprising archaeological, topographical and geophysical surveys as well as archaeological soundings will continue in February–April 2014.

## University of Wales excavations

In the spring of 2013 the University of Wales Trinity Saint David returned to Al-Ruwayda in north-west Qatar to carry out archaeological research on behalf of the Qatar Museums Authority. The site consists of a large fortress and settlement, including two mosques, a boatyard and merchants'



University of Wales and QMA. Excavated well, Al-Ruwayda.

warehouses. After several centuries of occupation it was abandoned in the 1760s when the inhabitants are thought to have moved south to the newly-founded pearling and trading port at Al-Zubarah.

During this season the main focus of the work was a 40m long stretch of wall which separates the small (Phase I) enclosure from the larger (Phase II) enclosure. The north face of the wall within the larger enclosure was completely exposed in a series of four large excavation areas. A number of structures built against the wall were uncovered, including one rectangular building perpendicular to the wall and another parallel to the wall. In addition a large number of post holes were identified as well as some later walls adjacent to a round tower at the west end of the wall. A small well with a depth of 2.4m was found and excavated next to the wall. At the bottom of the well a twisted animal hair rope was identified and recovered.

In addition to the usual finds of ceramics including Chinese porcelain and Julfar ware pottery a small carved bone plaque in the shape of an oryx was recovered.



University of Wales and QMA. Small bone plaque of oryx found in 2013.

## UCL Qatar developments

A branch campus of University College London opened its doors to students 2012, the first branch of a British university in Qatar. It runs three Master's degree programmes: MA in Archaeology of the Arab and Islamic World; MSc in Conservation Studies; and MA in Museum and Gallery Practice. The former lasts two years and tackles the archaeology of the Middle East from prehistory through to the Late Islamic period. The Conservation Studies programme also lasts two years and gives a practice-orientated holistic approach to cultural heritage preservation, with particular reference to the Middle Eastern context. The Museum and Gallery Practice MA lasts one year and focuses on the Arab and Islamic worlds, teaching management of collections, museums, galleries and sites, exhibition development, education and emerging digital technologies. Two further programmes admitted their first students in summer 2013: MA in Library and Information Studies, and Diploma in Academic Research and Methods. Further details can be found at: [www.ucl.ac.uk/qatar](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/qatar)

## The Qatar National Historic Environment Record (QNHER)

This project, now in its sixth year, is a collaboration between Qatar Museums Authority and the University of Birmingham and has developed a national database and GIS for heritage in Qatar (the QNHER). The database now holds records for over 5,000 archaeological sites, plus data from foreign missions and bibliographic collections. Please see the following piece for more information.

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## Qatar's Past, in detail

*Birmingham University's Richard Cuttler, co-director of the QNHER & Remote Sensing Project, updates us on their latest findings.*

The Qatar National Historic Environment Record (QNHER) and Remote Sensing Project is a collaborative project between the Qatar Museums Authority and the University of Birmingham, UK. The project is co-directed by Faisal Al-Naimi (Qatar Museums Authority), Richard Cuttler (University of Birmingham) and Vincent Gaffney (University of Birmingham). Over the past five years the

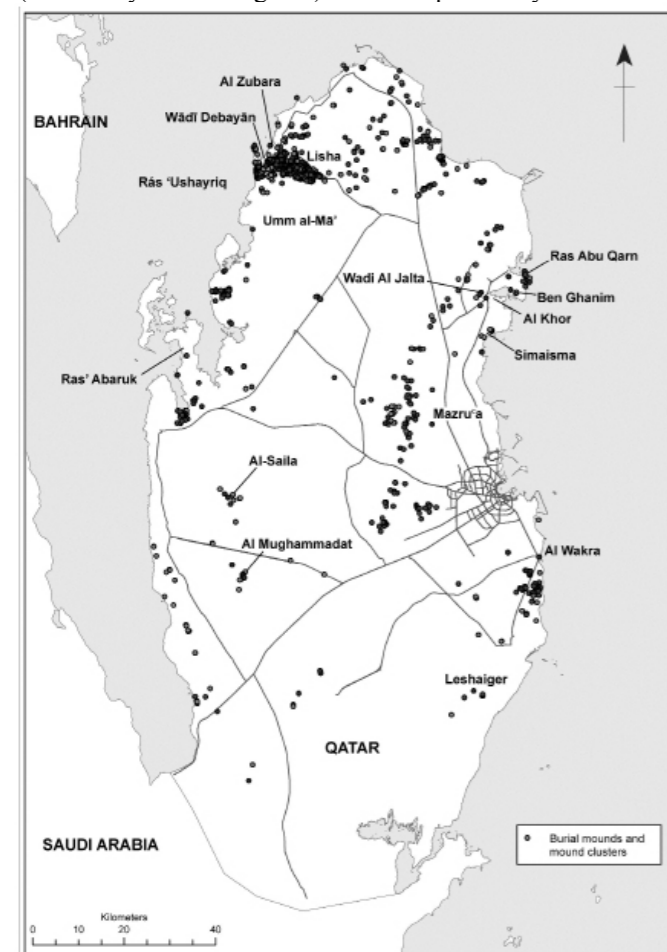


Figure 1: Distribution of prehistoric burial cairns across Qatar, and location of the Neolithic site of Wadi Debayan.

project has developed data standards, thesauri and a custom heritage management application that has been built using Open Source code.

The core module of this application is orientated towards the storage and retrieval of geospatial heritage data for the curation of all kinds of heritage assets. Based on MIDAS Heritage data standards and regionally relevant thesauri, it is a truly bilingual system. Significant attention has been paid to the user interface, which is user-friendly and intuitive. Based on a suite of web services and accessed through a web browser, the system makes full use of internet resources such as Google Maps and Bing Maps. The geospatial database includes information about buildings, archaeological sites, objects, photographs, organizations, people and a detailed history of where previous archaeological work has been undertaken. Since June 2013 the software has provided the Qatar Museums Authority with a fully integrated heritage data management system. This is an important tool for cultural resource managers and heritage researchers within Qatar.

The application has been designed to integrate with the data standards of other ministries, such as the Centre for GIS, Qatar. This enables important data about monuments to be shared with other stakeholders during the development process. The project has not only developed the geospatial web application, but has also been responsible for a programme of nationwide cultural mapping and survey. This has involved the analysis of satellite images and remotely sensed data for the identification of archaeological sites. This has been supplemented by extensive field survey that has now added more than 6,000 entries to the geospatial database. In particular the project has recorded large numbers of prehistoric burial cairns (see Figure 1, below left). Future proposals include expanding the system for a variety of specialist modules. One module nearing completion is a tablet-based survey module that will enable staff to access the web application from the field.

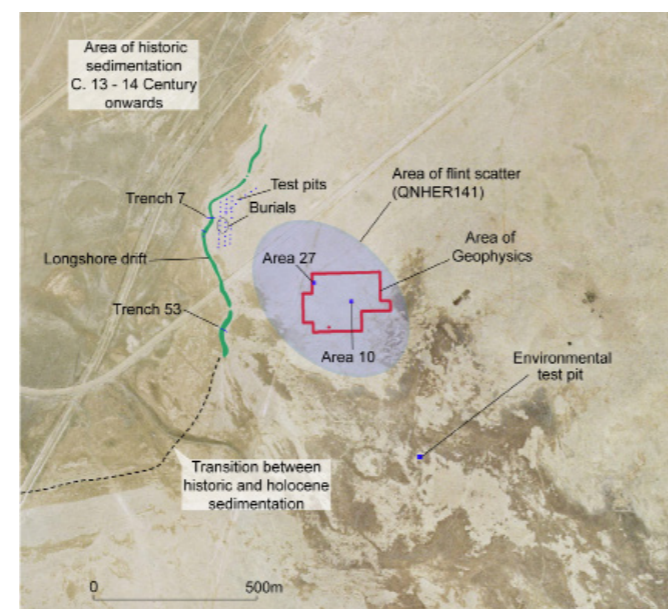


Figure 2: Wadi Debayan areas of investigation.



Figure 3: Neolithic burial of a robust woman, excavated at Wadi Debayan.

## Work at Wadi Debayan

Wadi Debayan to the east of the Ras 'Ushayriq peninsula, is one of the earliest Neolithic-Chalcolithic sites in the Gulf, and has beneath its surface some of the earliest-known structures in Qatar and evidence of human occupation dating back to 7,500 years ago (see Figure 2, left). A third season of excavations at the site by the QNHER project revealed six previously unknown burials, dated to over 5,000 years ago. Based on the shape of the pelvis and visage characteristics, such as a soft chin, one burial was thought to be the remains of an adult woman (see Figure 3, above). It is estimated that she was in her 30s or 40s, of a very robust build and was once approximately 6ft 2" in height.

Much of the 2012 to 2013 season has involved landscape study, geomorphology and environmental analysis to investigate past climate and sea level change. In particular a former beach ridge, the result of long-shore-drift (as shown on Figure 2), appears to have been the focus of activity from approximately 6,000 years ago onwards, when sea levels were higher. Several trenches have been excavated across the feature revealing overlying prehistoric layers to a depth of more than one metre. Much of the earliest activity comprises post holes and possible structures, with midden layers radiocarbon dated between 5,200 and 4,500 years ago. Towards the landward side were discrete dumps of homogenous material and pits full of shell fish, fish bones, and dugong bones. The faunal assemblage depicts a concentration of animals and shell fish. Some are from deep-water environments, while the shellfish assemblage suggests both low-energy tidal environments associated with mangroves and high-energy environments indicative of rocky coastlines. The former beach ridge was sealed by a matrix of larger stone that denotes a high-energy event around the coast of western Qatar sometime after 4,500 years ago. Some of the pottery sherds from the site are being subject to chemical analysis by specialists from Maersk Oil, Qatar, in order to determine the origins of the pottery manufacture.

## Marine archaeology

The work of the project also includes survey for archaeological sites within the intertidal and marine areas of Qatar. The project has processed significant areas of off-shore bathymetric (topographic) data. Located between the Ras 'Ushayriq peninsula and the northern tip of Qatar, these data have been analysed with a view to the discovery of features or sediments that might relate to the submerged landscape. This has led to the discovery of several former coastlines and enabled higher-resolution geophysics to be targeted within areas of archaeological potential. In collaboration with the Qatar Ministry of the Environment the project has used marine geophysics (mostly sidescan sonar) to survey extensive areas of the seabed around northwest Qatar (see Figure 4, below). This was used to identify geophysical anomalies that might relate to submerged landscape features that were then inspected by the dive team. Several of the anomalies will be subject to exploratory excavation and coring in the early part of 2014. The project has been using the 'backscatter' return from the sidescan



Figure 4: Location map showing the areas of marine geophysical survey and analysis, northwest Qatar.

sonar to classify the seabed and map areas of silts, sand, rock, reef etc. These further data layers not only provide information regarding the potential for deposits, but also provides an indication of where deposits might best survive.

During the 2012–2013 season the sidescan sonar survey also resulted in the discovery of seven previously unrecorded shipwrecks (see Figure 5, below). Each of the wrecks was inspected and recorded by divers from the QNHER project (Figures 6 and 7). The wrecks are all steel-hulled vessels and date within the past 80 years, but are providing important information about seabed preservation and future potential. Artificial reefs are also important for the Ministry of the Environment as each wreck is a ‘microcosm’ of marine life (Figure 8).

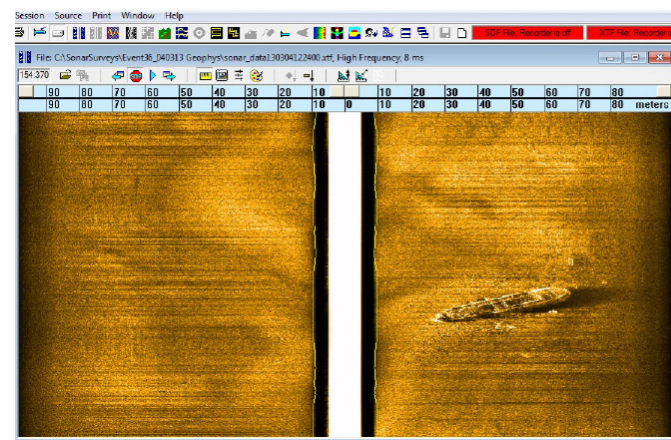


Figure 5: A newly discovered shipwreck is evident within sidescan sonar data.



Figure 6: A QNHER diver records a shipwreck located in 2013.

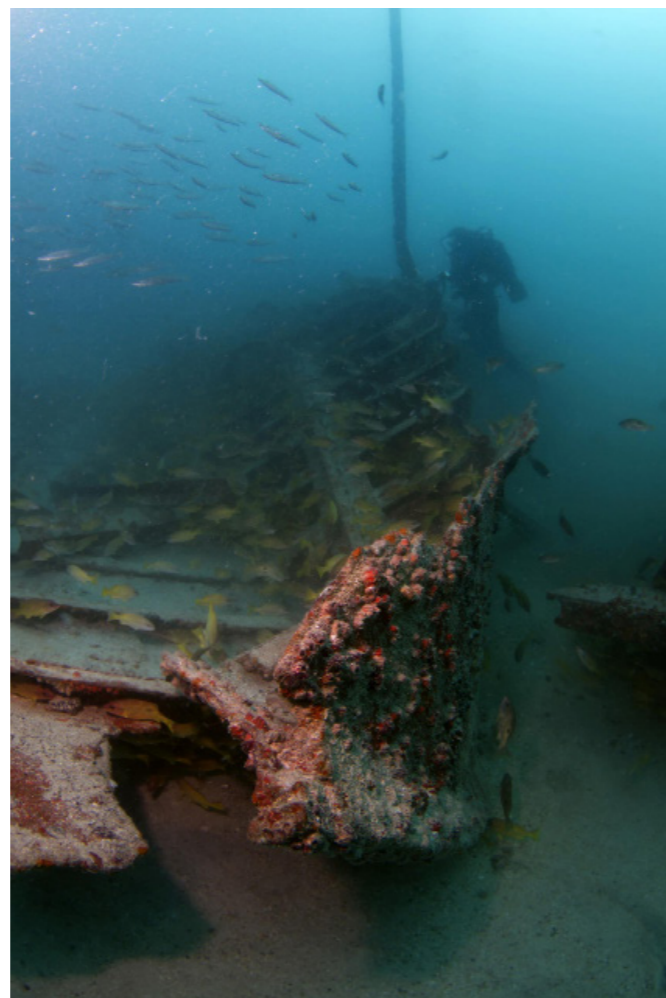


Figure 7: QNHER divers inspect newly discovered shipwrecks.



Figure 8: Shipwrecks become natural reefs attracting a range of marine life.

## SAUDI ARABIA

*There are currently some 22 projects being undertaken in the KSA in which foreign teams co-operate with the SCTA (Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities). In addition to the two British projects outlined below, other important projects include the DAI German excavations at Tayma and the French work at Madain Saleh. For more information on these, and other, projects and for the latest Saudi Arabian archaeological news, please see the SCTA website: [www.scta.gov.sa](http://www.scta.gov.sa).*

## DISPERSE Project

### The Saudi research

*The DISPERSE project (Dynamic Landscapes, Coastal Environments and Human Dispersals) has been undertaking illuminating field investigations in Saudi Arabia, as Prof. Geoff Bailey now explains.*

DISPERSE is a five-year joint project (2011–2016) between the University of York and the Institut de Physique du Globe Paris, funded by the European Research Council, involving a team of researchers and specialists led by Prof. Geoff Bailey (UoY) and Prof. Geoffrey King (IPGP). Its primary goals are to develop new methods of reconstructing prehistoric landscapes in the geologically unstable regions that have dominated the primary centres of early human evolution and dispersal, and to evaluate the impact of these changes on the archaeological record of human development.

The project research ranges widely from studies of the foot anatomy of early hominins to postglacial shell middens, geographically from the African Rift to the eastern Mediterranean, and chronologically from the earliest human populations in Africa to the threshold of the Neolithic period. The thematic emphasis is on the impact of active tectonics and sea level change, with a significant focus on underwater



Elevated coral terrace of Last Interglacial age on the Jizan coastline with embedded Palaeolithic artefacts.

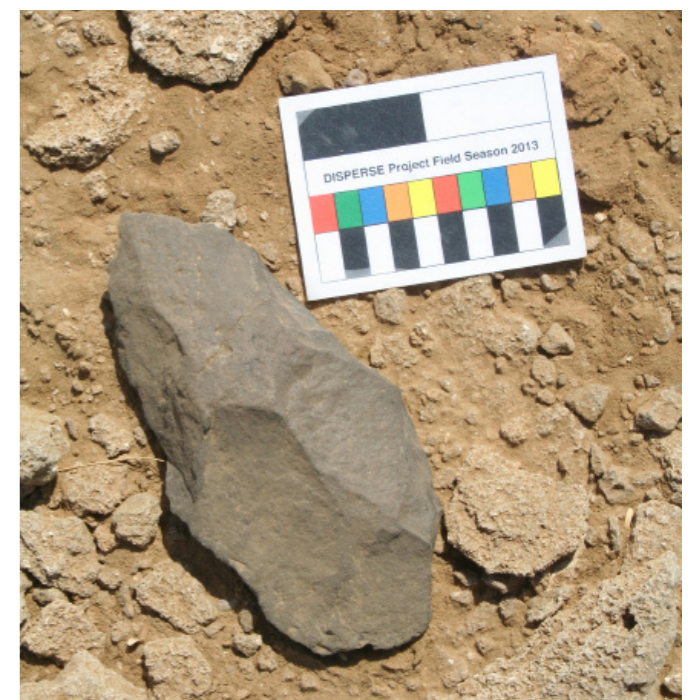
investigation of the submerged landscapes of the continental shelf. Fieldwork in Southwest Saudi Arabia forms a major theme of the wider project, and is a continuation of an earlier joint Saudi-UK project with Dr Abdullah Alsharekh of King Saud University.

### Why Southwest Saudi Arabia?

Southwest Saudi Arabia is a region of particular importance because of its proximity to the African Rift, the relatively easy conditions of sea crossing across the Hanish Sill during periods of low sea level, and favourable environments for early human occupation along the Red Sea escarpment and on the extensive submerged landscapes that would have been exposed when sea level was lower than present. This region is likely to have been a major zone of occupation and a pathway for contact and population movement between Africa and Arabia throughout the Pleistocene.

During 2013, project members spent six weeks of fieldwork in the Jizan region and the Farasan Islands between January and March, and 10 days of underwater exploration during June aboard the R/V *Aegaeo* of the Hellenic Centre of Marine Research. The research is being carried out in collaboration with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities and the College of Tourism and Archaeology of King Saud University. The offshore survey was conducted under the supervision of the Department of General Survey of the Saudi Ministry of Defence, and with the co-operation of the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, and the Saudi Geological Survey.

The on-land work on the Jizan mainland is focused on the search for Palaeolithic archaeology in what should be a key region for early human occupation of the Arabian Peninsula.



Palaeolithic handaxe from the surface of an elevated coral terrace on the Jizan coastline.

In the past year, field surveys have recovered over 700 lithics from 50 locations, with significant concentrations around the lava fields of Abu Arish, Sabya and Al-Birk. Finds include material of Early Stone Age, Middle Stone Age and possible Later Stone Age type. Part of the field season was devoted to the analysis of the stone artefact material in the Sabya Museum, where the finds are stored. Early Stone Age material includes simply-made handaxes, cleavers, and cutting tools made on large flakes, some removed from large discoidal cores. Middle Stone Age material includes a large number of flakes made on prepared cores including radial cores, pointed flake cores worked in one direction, flake-blade cores and prismatic blade cores. Potential Later Stone Age material is rare and includes small blade cores and small retouched flakes. Suitable raw materials for artefact manufacture are widely distributed and abundant, including basaltic lava, quartz, andesite, chert, shale, and fine-grained sandstone. A range of dating and palaeoenvironmental samples was collected and sent to the UK for specialist analysis. Finding stratified artefacts in situ is a major challenge, since the great majority of Palaeolithic finds, whether from previous surveys or our own, are surface finds. Nevertheless, we have identified a number of locations in the landscape where ancient sediments and buried land surfaces, some of them sealed by volcanic lava flows, are now exposed by headward erosion of stream channels and by the extensive quarrying activity that is taking place over very large areas of the Jizan landscape with the increased pace of development during recent years. At least one location includes stone artefacts embedded in an elevated coral terrace on the coast. The survey strategy is also designed to relate the distribution of finds to geographical variables



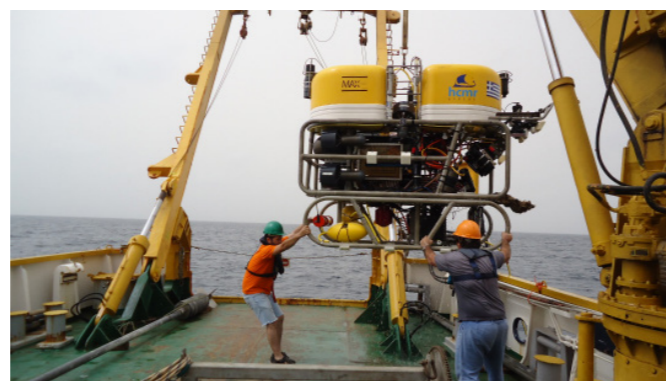
Farasan shell mound.

such as geology, topography and palaeoenvironment, and to dynamic changes in surface geomorphology.

## The importance of shell mounds

On the Farasan Islands, over 3,000 shell mounds or shell-bearing sites have now been recorded, and in the past year the main objective was to expand the sample of excavated sites and initiate a major programme of radiocarbon dating and palaeoenvironmental analysis. Three major clusters of sites were selected, resulting in the excavation of 17 shell mounds in a variety of micro locations associated with different molluscan assemblages and shoreline environments. Sites selected range from large shell mounds to smaller deposits, and stratigraphic sections were exposed through the full depth of every deposit to facilitate the dating programme. Column samples of shells were also systematically collected from all exposed sections to provide information on palaeoclimate and palaeoecology through analyses of shell growth structures and their trace-element and stable-isotope composition. Some of these shell samples were sorted and described in the field, and other material was brought back to England for specialist analyses. The Farasan fieldwork included, for the first time, the participation of a party of students from Jizan University.

The Farasan shell mounds are typical of coastal deposits associated with seafaring and reliance on marine resources. Such a way of life has been proposed for some of the earliest populations of anatomically modern Homo sapiens to leave



Remotely Operated Vehicle being deployed from the deck of the R/V Aegaeo for underwater survey in the Farasan Islands.



The scientific team on board the R/V Aegaeo at the end of the underwater mission.



Some of the excavation team on the Farasan Islands



Post-excavation work on material from the Farasan shell mounds.

Africa over 60,000 years ago, but testing that hypothesis requires underwater investigation, since shorelines older than 6,000 years ago were formed at lower sea level and are now submerged. A major part of our effort in previous years has, therefore, been devoted to the search for submerged shorelines and underwater material in the Farasan Islands, principally through diving exploration. In 2013, for the first time, we were able to deploy a full range of remote-sensing techniques to explore more widely and deeply across the continental shelf. At lowest periods of sea level, the exposed shelf region would have extended the coastline some 100km to the west. Thus, it is not only ancient shorelines that are now submerged, but also extensive areas of terrestrial landscape that are likely to have been an important resource for early human populations.

## Complex submerged landscape revealed

The underwater survey in June 2013 took advantage of the expertise of a 16-strong scientific team from HCMR aboard the R/V Aegaeo led by Dr Dimitris Sakellariou, and involved acoustic survey (multi-beam bathymetry, sub-bottom profiling and side scan sonar), use of a remotely operated vehicle with cameras, and coring equipment. Transects covered significant topographic features out to the edge of the continental shelf and 19 sediment cores were collected from submerged valleys and solution hollows. These are undergoing a range of palaeoenvironmental and geochronological analyses and are expected to throw significant light on changing environmental conditions on these now-submerged land surfaces. Preliminary results show a topographically complex submerged landscape with fault-bounded basins and sediments accumulated in depressions including evidence

of lake sediments, suggesting an attractive and well-watered landscape for human settlement.

In 2014, in addition to ongoing analysis of existing field data, new spells of fieldwork will take place to complete the current cycle of field research, including continued survey and excavation on the Jizan mainland, completion of on-land survey on the Farasan Islands, and a diving operation to complete underwater investigations initiated in previous years.

**Geoff Bailey, Anniversary Professor of Archaeology, University of York.** [geoff.bailey@york.ac.uk](mailto:geoff.bailey@york.ac.uk)

# Palaeodeserts

## Climate change and human evolution in the Arabian Desert

The University of Oxford is undertaking a five-year initiative, in collaboration with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities, to investigate archaeological sites ranging from one million years ago up to the recent past. The goal of the study is to examine migrations of humans and early humans across Arabia and the influence of wetting and drying of the peninsula over time. The international, interdisciplinary project includes archaeologists, environmental scientists, palaeontologists, geochronologists, geneticists, geographers and rock art specialists. Field work is occurring in many provinces of Saudia Arabia, where major discoveries have been made. Our research is clearly demonstrating the importance of water, as the archaeological sites are in close association with lakes and rivers, which have now disappeared. Our project will aim to address what happened to these early populations once water resources dried up.

**Prof. Michael D. Petraglia, Professor of Human Evolution and Prehistory, School of Archaeology, RLAHA University of Oxford**

**Green Arabia Conference: [www.palaeodeserts.com](http://www.palaeodeserts.com)**

# Traditional Dress

## Researching a Saudi biography

*The London Middle East Institute at SOAS has recently completed part of a research project on traditional dress in Saudi Arabia, a subject that has received little attention in academic circles. Aisa Martinez writes.*

Clothing is a powerful cultural statement that communicates the wearer's social values and identity. Embellished garments in Saudi Arabia incorporate decorative elements also used in other parts of the Middle East. By studying Saudi Arabia's

neighbours and the trade networks that brought fabrics and decorative materials from around the world into the Arabian Peninsula, we can construct a unique cultural biography of Saudis' regional dress styles.

The project uses a three-pronged interdisciplinary approach: object-based study of dress collections, archive and library research, and in-country fieldwork undertaken in 2012.

The Art of Heritage dress collection in Riyadh was used as a main source, but other major collections in Europe and Saudi Arabia were also consulted. Not all collections are 'complete', since garment styles and decorations change over time. We can see these changes in materials used throughout the past 100 years, in fabric qualities, textures, weights, colours, and types of decorative materials.

Notable Western travellers' collections that were used for this project include: Harry St John Philby, whose experiences throughout the region are documented at Oxford's Middle East Centre Archive; Lady Anne Blunt, whose personal diaries with watercolour sketches are housed at the British Library; and Dutch traveller Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, whose photographic collection of 19th century pilgrims in Mecca is held at the Tropenmuseum, Leiden. While black and white photographs are limited in showing garment details, and mostly male travellers provided a limited viewpoint of Arab women in public life, these records supplement information from the dress collections and fieldwork and show continuity and changes in regional dress styles throughout history.

In spring and summer 2012, I travelled around Saudi Arabia to conduct interviews, visit local museums, festivals, markets, and women's associations to update information gathered from the dress collections and historical archives, focusing on embroidery motifs and other embellishment styles, the use of certain materials, colours, and terminology. This incredible opportunity allowed me to see how the older, so-called 'heritage' style garments are still being reproduced, though by different people using new materials and colours. However, they still retain a cultural importance in the country. Perhaps future projects on culture and heritage of Saudi Arabia can incorporate this interdisciplinary approach and contribute to a growing body of academic work on the subject.

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## UAE

**Christian Velde, Imke Moellering and Ahmad Hilal** open the UAE section with an overview of news and research from the Department of Antiquities and Museums in Ras al-Khaimah. They begin with a report on the work undertaken at the Mohammed bin Salim Mosque.

Archaeological excavation and restoration work finally came to an end at the Mohammed bin Salim Mosque. The latter is the largest surviving traditional mosque in the UAE, and is still in use in Ras al-Khaimah Old Town (see also the BFSa Bulletin 2012). The work has successfully increased our knowledge about the historical development of this prominent 'Friday Mosque'.

Excavations revealed the presence of an earlier mosque, dating back to the second half of the 18th century (date as indicated by preliminary analysis of the finds). It is likely that even earlier version/s of the mosque existed – as recorded in the historical sources – but that they have not been found owing to the confined test trenches. With respect to the later 18th century mosque, excavations revealed that it was destroyed during the British occupation in 1819/20 and that a new mosque was built on its foundations. It has undergone several renovations and expansion phases up to the present day.

During the renovation work, modern additions were removed from the inside and outside and the original architecture, built from coral stone and beach rock, restored and provided with an outer layer of traditional plaster in layer technique. The most important addition, based on historical aerial photographs, has been the reconstruction of the original area for the call to prayer (*minara*). Situated on the mosque's entrance platform, it originally consisted of a raised platform and stairs secured by a mangrove-pole railing (see Figure 3). The adjacent photographs give a visual impression of this large mosque (28.5m x 36.5m) and its 60 interior columns after its successful restoration (see Figures 1 and 2).



Figure 1: Mohammed bin Salim Mosque from the southwest.



Figure 2 (top): Interior of the mosque.  
 Figure 3 (bottom): Outside platform and *minara* of the Mohammed bin Salim Mosque.

### Qarn al-Harf rescue excavation

Prior to road construction works for an extension of the Emirates Highway, a rescue excavation was carried out at the foot of Qarn al-Harf, where the destruction corridor runs through a protected area with prehistoric tombs (see also the Bulletin 2012). This resulted in the discovery and excavation of the remains of 14 tombs. The work was done in collaboration with Dr Derek Kennet from Durham University, and was undertaken by a team of British excavators, followed after their departure by a team from the Department of Antiquities and Museums in Ras al-Khaimah.

Built in different sizes and architectural styles, the tombs covered an area of approximately 250m<sup>2</sup> and were used for a period of approximately 3,000 years: namely, during the Hafit Period (represented by three tombs), during the Wadi Suq Period (represented by 11 tombs) and during the Iron Age and Late Pre-Islamic, when secondary burials were placed into two Wadi Suq tombs (QAH 5+6). (See below for more.)

The main period of this cemetery in Qarn al-Harf is the Wadi Suq Period, whose tombs are of megalithic appearance, built from large boulders and comprising up to three chambers with corbelled roofs. Two excavated tombs were very well preserved with many roof stones still in place. We will now offer a brief chronology for Qarn al-Harf and follow with an overview of some of the site's special features and finds.

### Qarn al-Harf: chronology in focus

**The Late Hafit Period:** This era is represented by the remains of three tombs (QAH 5a, QAH1f+g), which contained very few finds. Though one vessel shows typical Hafit features, several other pottery sherds represent already the traditions of the following Umm an-Nar Period. All three tombs had been heavily robbed of their stone material for reuse in the later Wadi Suq tombs, but we can assume that they consisted of a roundish interior chamber.

#### Transition from Late Umm an-Nar to Early Wadi Suq Period:

This transition is beautifully represented in one tomb (QAH 6 – see Figure 4) which has various Umm an-Nar traditions still visible within its architecture (built on an additional foundation wall, roundish shape, interior walls attached to one side, horizontal corbelling stones, raised entrance). In addition to QAH 6, five more tombs represent the early Wadi Suq period (QAH 1a-e). The latter are aligned on a ridge, heavily robbed and later reused for a mediaeval fieldwall, which was built on top of them. While their shapes differ from squarish to round, for maximum use of the narrow rocky outcrop, four of the five tombs possess three interior chambers, their dividing walls also still attached to one side (two of the above-mentioned Hafit tombs were originally situated underneath). In addition, the early Wadi Suq pottery is a well smoothed and fired fabric with few inclusions and red slipped. Worth mentioning are sherds of two early Wadi Suq vessels from QAH 6 and their respective designs: (1) black decoration on a red slip depicting ibexes and ostriches feeding on date palm trees, and (2) four human figures, each of them holding a stick or weapon and standing behind or next to each other.



Figure 4: Qarn al-Harf tomb 6 (and 6a in the foreground)



Figure 5: Qarn al-Harf tomb 5.



Figure 6: Qarn al-Harf tomb 2.

excavation by a rich variation of tomb types:

- a large rectangular tomb with rounded corners, three interior chambers with free standing division walls ('double Ghalilah type') and oblique corbelling (QAH 5, see Figure 5)
- a one-chamber tomb of 28m length ('Shimal type') with oblique corbelling (QAH 2, see Figure 6)
- two small, oval shaped tombs (5b + 6a), all of them built above ground
- one example however, was discovered to be a semi-subterranean tomb (QAH 2a, see Figure 7) with two chambers on top of each other, separated by large stone slabs

Pottery finds consist of the typical Wadi Suq beakers, spouted jars, and miniature jars with geometrical decoration composed of loops, zigzag and wavy lines between horizontal and vertical lines. Trade activities are also documented by the remains of several imported vessels from Bahrain. The excavated soft stone material is mainly composed of lids and jars, some bowls and spouted bowls. Worth mentioning is the discovery of reused and reworked soft stone objects, including a rectangular Umm an-Nar container (QAH 5), recarved lids, which had been joint to different jars (for example QAH 2), a soft stone sherd reworked into a spindle whorl (QAH 5) and a soft stone sherd, which had been reworked into a disc with a central hole (QAH 1a). Though heavily plundered all Wadi Suq



Figure 7: Qarn al-Harf tomb 2a (upper and lower chamber).

tombs were surprisingly rich in metal items, especially if compared with tombs from Shimal and revealed an extensive assemblage of spearheads, arrowheads, razor blades and metal vessels.

## Special features & finds at Qarn al-Harf

**Wadi Suq metal animals:** The most impressive finds from Qarn al-Harf include three unique metal animals, which might have been worn as pendants and/or brooches, as they are all provided with loops at the back:

- a silver lion from QAH 6 found together with several hundred highly decorative beads. Their rich variety includes exceptional beads made from silver spirals, striped and banded agates in different colour combinations, very large and elongated carnelian and agate beads, shell etc
- a silver bull found in QAH 1c
- and a dog from QAH 2 made from electron and found together with hundreds of beads, as well as shell finger rings, silver earrings etc

The dog's feature and manufacturing style strongly resembles two dogs standing back-to-back from Dhayah (Dh2), which were excavated in 1987 by the German Mission. Two more sets of two goats made from electron and standing back to back from Shimal (Sh99) and Dhayah (Dh2) complete the variation of metal animals excavated in Ras al-Khaimah's Wadi Suq tombs. We assume that all of them were originally manufactured in this Emirate, presumably in the area of Shimal, one of the largest settlements during the Wadi Suq Period (2000–1600 BC) on the Oman Peninsula.

**Secondary burials during the Iron Age and Late pre-Islamic Period:** Though no tomb structures were discovered from later periods at Qarn al-Harf, two Wadi Suq tombs had been used for secondary burials inside the collapse layers. The find of a significant bowl inside QAH 5 dating to the Iron Age, as well as the discovery of the remains of a notable soft stone bowl in QAH 6, indicate that both tombs were reused during this period.

Further remains of two later inhumations were discovered above the original bone layer and later collapse of QAH 5: a woman who had died during childbirth and a juvenile next

to her, who was buried with special jewellery. Both the find of an associated pottery vessel (juglet) and the jewellery, consisting of a shell disc pendant, loop earrings and beads made from carnelian and shell, can be associated with the Late Pre-Islamic Period. The same date applies to the find of an edged carnelian bead inside higher levels of QAH 5, bearing a significant shape and decoration of this period. Small pieces of bone remains in the upper layers of QAH 6 are linked to an exceptional golden drop earring and iron needle, dating to the same period.

## Ruth and Tim Ash: donations to the National Museum

After an absence of 34 years, Mrs Ruth Ash returned to Ras al-Khaimah in spring 2013 to donate a rich selection of ethnographic material from this emirate and its neighbouring countries to the National Museum. Collected by Ruth Ash and her late husband Tim Ash, while they lived and worked in the area between 1966 and 1979, the collection includes such items as traditional silver jewellery, rugs and carpets, traditional clothing, decorated metal pots, camel fittings, guns and swords, and Julfar pottery.

Mrs Ash was fondly received by the local inhabitants, many still remembering her as 'nurse Ruth' or 'Miriam', the local name given to her by Sheikh Mohammed bin Salim, the grandfather of Ras al-Khaimah's Ruler H.H. Sheikh Saud bin Saqr al-Qasimi. After she became officially in charge of maternity and child welfare in 1966, her work soon combined the responsibilities of nurse and midwife and the development of a hospital in the Nakheel area. After 1968 her husband served as advisor to the late Ruler, Sheikh Saqr bin Mohammed al-Qasimi, and, as Mrs Ash explained, "liaised between the ruler, the local tribes and the British Agency. His work led to a greater stability in what had been a turbulent area and he was able to defuse trouble before it got out of hand." Tim Ash's interest in history and archaeology coincided with the wish of the ruler H.H. Sheikh Saqr to organize archaeological excavations (Donaldson in Shimal, Hansman in Julfar), ethnographic research (Walter Dostal) and to start a museum, then planned next to the ruling family's historic summer residence in Falayah.

Both Ruth and Tim Ash were quickly accepted and trusted by Ras al-Khaimah's inhabitants and were able in those days to go anywhere without being shot at. As roads were very limited and basic 'nurse Ruth' walked on foot into the wadis to reach as many women and newborns for antenatal care as she could, also treating family members and their various medical problems (see Figure 8). Eventually a hospital with 60 beds, operating theatre and X-ray facility was built in 1968 and she was able to open a second clinic in Idhn, where people from there and from Ghail were treated on alternate weeks. When travelling all over Ras al-Khaimah for smallpox vaccinations, she was joined by Beatrice de Cardi, who would use the chance of transportation for her own archaeological surveys.

We were fortunate to spend three days with Mrs Ash in Ras al-Khaimah, listening to her memories and unique experiences and taking her to various places connected to her past life. Her great knowledge and insight into past local life and customs, sense of humour and gift for storytelling made this an unforgettable experience. An exhibition dedicated to Ruth and Tim Ash and highlighting their effort for Ras al-Khaimah and the wellbeing of its people is planned in the future inside the National Museum of Ras al-Khaimah.



Figure 8: Ruth Ash ('nurse Ruth') greeting patients in Ras al-Khaimah 1968.

important and interesting sites of archaeological, historical and cultural importance, surrounded by impressive, mountainous landscape. But since they are still difficult to access for tourists and local visitors, the Department of Antiquities and Museums initiated the part-time employment of Mr Stephan Hobe, a specialist in 'Heritage and Eco Tourism' to develop the respective touristic infrastructure in line with the Department's vision. Various aspects will be taken into consideration, including plans for information and visitor centres, car parks, footpaths, fencing, a ticket house, visitor toilets, watchman's accommodation etc. Once prepared these plans will be co-ordinated with the relevant departments in order to link them with the development plans of Ras al-Khaimah.

## Teams at work

After rescue excavations in Qarn al-Harf came to an end, an international study team put together by the dig director Dr Derek Kennet started work on the archaeological finds. It comprised Dana Goodburn-Brown (conservator), Jihyun Kwon (assistant conservator), Anna Hilton Soria (soft stones and beads), Alyson Cain (bone specialist), Lloyd Weeks (metalwork), Goenuel Bozoglu (finds assistant) and Helen David-Cuny (illustrator). In addition to this group Michel de Vreeze, a Dutch archaeologist from Durham University, stayed three months in spring and three months in autumn 2013 to work on the Wadi Suq pottery, which was excavated in the Qarn al-Harf tombs.

In March, Mademoiselle Julie Goy from the University of Paris studied metal artefacts from Iron Age sites in Wadi al-Qawr, southern Ras al-Khaimah for her PhD thesis on copper production in the UAE. She also undertook surveys in southern Ras al-Khaimah revisiting known copper mining sites. She was able to identify two new copper sites from the Middle Ages.

The French Archaeological Mission to the UAE, headed by Dr Sophie Mery, continued its survey of the sand dune areas around Jazirat al-Hamra. This year, Federico Borgi and Dalia Gasparini, Italian members of the team, focused on an area southwest of Jazirat al-Hamra. Several sites with Neolithic remains were found, as well as two multi-period sites with pottery from the 3rd millennium BC to the Iron Age.

*Report from Christian Velde, Imke Moellering, Ahmad Hilal, Archaeologists at the Department of Antiquities and Museums, Ras al-Khaimah. christian\_imke@hotmail.com*

## Sharjah

### Islamic Culture Capital 2014

Sharjah has the honour of being the Capital of Islamic Culture for 2014, and Sharjah Museums Department (SMD) is proud to be part of the culture and arts initiatives in the Emirate that contribute towards such achievements, writes **Aisha Rashid Deemas**.

Sharjah was selected as the Islamic Culture Capital of the Arab Region 2014 as part of the Islamic Culture Capital programme, which is sponsored and supervised by the Islamic Organisation for Education, Science and Culture (ISESCO) after it was found that the Emirate conformed to a rigorous set of criteria.

The Emirate of Sharjah has a rich Islamic heritage, and has made distinct and important contributions to Islamic culture in the scientific, cultural, literary and artistic works of its intellectuals, authors and artists.

Sharjah also continues to be a centre of learning, with its university city and numerous scientific research facilities, manuscript libraries, and archaeological centres, attracting scholars and researchers, as well as art, culture and science enthusiasts, from all over. Furthermore, the Emirate has an abundance of cultural landmarks and places of note –

Islamic monuments, schools, mosques and public parks – and a thriving culture including book fairs, art exhibitions, theatrical performances and translation and publishing activities, all of which combined makes Sharjah the cultural heart of the region.

SMD's 16 museums together capture the essence of heritage and culture in the Emirate and as such serve as a direct link between the people of Sharjah, the UAE, and the world at large and the rich Islamic history of the Emirates.

### A variety of cultural events

Supporting Sharjah in this milestone year, SMD will be hosting numerous culturally related events and exhibitions. These include *So that You Might Know Each Other – the World of Islam from North Africa to China and Beyond*, an exhibition from The Vatican Ethnological Museum, Vatican City, Italy, that will be held from March to June at the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization, while from the 2 April until 2 June, the Sharjah Calligraphy Museum will play host to the Sharjah Calligraphy Biennial – a celebration of Islam's most sacred art form – organized by Sharjah Department of Culture and Information.

In September 2013, the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization will host *Early Capitals of Islamic Culture: The Art and Culture of Umayyad Damascus and Abbasid Baghdad (650 – 950)*, an exhibition from the Museum of Islamic Art in Berlin, Germany from October to December. The exhibition, featuring rare archaeological material and selected art objects from the early centuries of Islam and supported by models, graphic media and more, will chart the transition from pre-Islamic to Islamic cultures, illustrating the adoption and adaptation of ancient forms, techniques and aesthetic practices as well as unprecedented, bold innovations.

SMD will also collaborate with Sharjah Children's Centres (SCC) on the 2014 edition of the Sharjah International Biennial for Children's Arts.

These exhibitions, and many more organized across Sharjah Museums, aim to celebrate Sharjah's numerous cultural achievements and promote interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue across the Arab world and beyond.

**Aisha Rashid Deemas, Director of Executive Affairs Sharjah Museums Department.**  
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## Our Monuments...

### 20 years of discoveries in Sharjah

The temporary exhibition *Our Monuments Narrate Our History* (April 2013–February 2014), writes **Nasir Abdelkarim Mohamed**, was the first to be presented in the newly created temporary gallery and marked the celebration of twenty years since the formation of the local archaeological mission of the Directorate of Antiquities and the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Sharjah Archaeology Museum (1993–2013). These two institutions have been blessed with the support of HH Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammad Al-Qasimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah and the Founder of the Sharjah Cultural Project.



*Antiquities from the Land of Sharjah temporary exhibition.*

### Antiquities from the Land of Sharjah

The exhibition *Antiquities from the Land of Sharjah* included invaluable artefacts discovered by more recent local archaeological excavations and was the first time these finds had been displayed at the museum. The display highlighted the ancient life of Sharjah's people from the Stone Age up to about 100 AD.

Some of the oldest items displayed were two hand axes from Al-Fayah dating from 125,000 BP, and other stone tools from between the 8th and 4th millennium. Another interesting group of finds dating from 4,750 BC, also from Al-Fayah, included stone tools, a dugong ivory pendant, as well as pearl and carnelian beads. From the Bronze Age a large piece of copper the shape of a crucible, copper alloy tools and beautiful soft-stone pots from Wadi Al-Helu were presented alongside decorated ceramics from Iron Age burials of Al-Buhais.

Evidence of trade routes could be seen from artefacts from Mleiha dating back to the Hellenistic period that included jewellery, coins and a number of human and animal statues and, from Dibba Al-Hisn, Roman glassware and ingots.

The range of artefacts discovered suggests that Sharjah and the UAE played an important role in the large commercial movement within the Peninsula at the time when incense, frankincense and multiethnic caravans passed northwards from Yemen.

### Sharjah excavations, overviewed

Evidence suggests that the inhabitants of the Arabian Gulf and the area that is now the UAE was an important part of the south-eastern portion of the Arabian Peninsula, with links to the major civilizations from the Indus Valley, Mesopotamia in the northern Arabian Gulf, Dilmun, ancient Yemen in the south and Persia in the north-east. The economic, political and social effects as a result of human and geographic interaction from these surrounding civilizations can be seen in some of the region's settlements and trade centres that reached high levels of sophistication, which enabled people to build suitable ports for import, export and commercial exchange. Many of the sites excavated provide evidence that they have been inhabited for very long periods, from the Bronze Age to the early Islamic period such as Mleiha with its Umm an-Nar ceramics to 100 AD alabaster vessels from Yemen.

Mleiha also provided an interesting range of inscriptions including a ceramic scarab with hieroglyphs from 300 BC, an amphora imported from Rhodes, and a headstone fragment with the South Arabian letters 'q, b, r', circa 150 BC; a stone fragment bearing the Aramaic letters, line 1: shams, line 2: dh, b..., line 3: n; and an alabaster vessel fragment inscribed with Thamudic letters, both seemingly dated to 100 AD.

With the discovery of oil in the 1930s, some excavators working with the foreign companies working in the field suspected the existence of something other than 'black gold.' Excavations have revealed a fascinating history of ancient peoples dating back over thousands of years.

The first excavation in the UAE was performed by a Danish mission, headed by Geoffrey Bibby and Peter Glob, who discovered tombs, some 5000 years old, in the Umm an-Nar area, Abu Dhabi, in 1959.

An agreement made between the UAE (at the beginning of the union) and Iraq at the end of 1971 helped local excavation teams work continue excavation work. Part of the agreement stipulated that Iraqi missions should be sent to the UAE to continue working on discovered sites and to conduct surveys in the areas that had not previously been excavated.

Today, surveys and excavations continue at many sites in Sharjah by both the local mission and international teams.

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# Sharing History

## An innovative exhibition

In December 2013, Sharjah Museums Department (SMD), as a long-time, strategic partner and key supporter, hosted the third international project meeting for the latest online exhibition devised by the independent 'Museum With No Frontiers' (MWNF) initiative. **Dr Ulrike Al-Khamis** writes.

Entitled 'Sharing History: The Arab World and Europe – 1815–2015', the project is aimed at creating a virtual online exhibition dedicated to exploring significant aspects in the shared social, cultural, artistic, scientific, industrial, and environmental history of Europe, Turkey and the Arab World between the turn of the 19th and 21st centuries. The initial focus will consider the period between 1815 and 1920, a crucial time in the relationship between the regions concerned.

However, 'Sharing History' is no ordinary history project but highly innovative with regard to both the project concept and the composition of the curatorial teams in that all aspects of the online exhibition will be presented from the viewpoint and perspective of the respective partners, not – as is usually the case – from a eurocentric perspective. The project builds on MWNF's 20 years of experience in organizing multilateral, transnational projects that deal with key aspects of the shared history, art and culture within the wider Euro-Mediterranean and Arab region, and that in an unprecedented, truly inclusive, egalitarian format which guarantees an equal voice and equal exposure to all partners, north and south.

'Sharing History' in its finalized online form will provide a substantial educational resource with benefits at many different levels. Most immediately, it will provide a uniquely comprehensive treasure house of transnational, multicultural and interdisciplinary information about key moments in the shared history of Europe, Turkey and the Arab World for the period 1815–1920, through its artefacts, cultural heritage and

monuments. The many online entry points provided by the project – through a comprehensive database, a permanent collection and an exhibition cycle envisaged to comprise 13 key themes – will allow global audiences to learn in innovative and multi-lingual ways that counter ignorance and intolerance while celebrating diversity through the exploration of a multitude of positive and often unexpected, cross-cultural connections. In its capacity as an intercultural, educational tool, Sharing History's revolutionary approach presents a real force for change in that it subverts and transcends established taxonomies, methodologies and definitions as well as – much more importantly – habitual ways of viewing 'the Other' through culturally and ideologically distorted prisms.

## A global platform

Beyond its considerable educational potential, 'Sharing History' is envisaged to provide value as a global platform for its well over one hundred partner museums and institutions, a platform that allows each of them to transcend physical, political and psychological borders to present and interpret their cultural heritage on their own terms to worldwide audiences – a key benefit particularly for those whose cultural heritage would otherwise remain invisible or indeed denied. In granting partner institutions global exposure on an ever more highly respected, international online platform, the MWNF 'Sharing History' project at the same time aims to support and celebrate cultural tourism in participating countries. Due to the project's extensive benefits, within the Arab world it has gained the full support of the Arab League, which indeed signed a Memorandum of Understanding with 'Museums With No Frontiers' in 2010 to implement joint projects aimed at increasing awareness about Arab culture and heritage, and strengthen collaboration on the cultural front between Europe and the Arab world.

Sharjah Museums Department has been involved with 'Museum with No Frontiers' since 2008, first featuring its Islamic Art Collections through MWNF's 'Explore Islamic Art Collections' platform. In the context of 'Sharing History', several museums belonging to Sharjah Museums Department will contribute relevant collections, including the Sharjah Art Museum, the Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization, the Sharjah Maritime Museum and the Sharjah Heritage Museum.

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The MWNF December 2013 meeting, Sharjah Museum of Islamic Civilization.

# Souq al-Qattara

## Restoring the past

For the past seven years, the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (or TCA), has been undertaking a detailed programme of archaeological investigation, conservation and site management at historic buildings throughout Al-'Ain, as **Peter Sheehan** explains.

Most of these 100-plus surviving historic buildings are concentrated in and around the major oases of the city: Al-'Ain, Mu'taridh, Qattara, Hili and Jimi. In fact, many of the buildings form part of the historic village – or *haraat* – that formerly existed at the edge of each of these oases. Each had its own complex shared-water supply that harnessed wells and underground water channels (*aflaj*) to tap water from the Hajar mountains to the east. The archaeological and cultural significance of this oasis landscape, with its plentiful historic buildings and archaeological sites, has led to its inclusion as one of the components of the Cultural Sites of Al-'Ain, inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO in June 2011.

Much of the TCA's work has been focused in and around the buildings that form part of the old village or *hara* of Qattara. Thus, the buildings at the southern end of the *hara* now form the impressive Qattara Arts Centre, built between 2009 and 2011. The latter was developed around the Bayt Bin 'Āfī, an historic building that was reconstructed during the 1990s. During the creation of the Qattara Arts Centre, archaeological excavations revealed a 5m sequence of archaeological layers or 'horizons' reaching back from the Iron Age to the Late Islamic period. The industrial installations from the Iron Age horizon are displayed within a specially designed basement. This allows them to be presented to the public as part of the wider interpretation of the archaeology of the site and the oases of al-'Ain.

## Refurbishing the souq

However, the most recent works have concentrated on refurbishment and reopening of Souq al-Qattara at the northern end of the *hara*. The presence of a souq in Qattara village dates from the 1930s, although the general form of the present building dates from its restoration in 1976. The souq building is 35m long and composed of 19 shops arranged in two rows either side of a central covered passage. Archive photographs of the old village of Qattara in the 1960s show that the southern part of the souq still formed part of a complex of mud-brick rooms and 'arish structures at that time. Recent archaeological work has revealed many details of this earlier building and how it was incorporated into the restoration carried out in the mid-1970s.

Like other historic buildings in Al-'Ain, Souq al-Qattara demonstrates the traditional building techniques of the oases – massively thick mud walls with limited small openings for



Souq al-Qattara at the beginning of the project.



A detail of one of the rooms of Souq al-Qattara taken during conservation work. It shows the different plaster finishes, which reflect the development of the building over time.



The central covered passage of Souq al-Qattara after the completion of conservation works on the building.

light and air, roofed with palm logs and palm-mat roofs, and mud-plaster floors and walls. Old photographs show that mud brick houses, often supplemented by 'arish structures (made from palm branches and leaves), continued to be extensively used in Al-'Ain until the end of the pre-oil era in the 1960s. Many historic mud brick farm walls contemporary with these historic buildings survive also within each of the oases.

The central part of the southern range of the souq originally consisted of a large central vaulted room that was used as a madrasa or school. This may have been the oldest part of the building around which the souq later grew. Three shops were added to the west of this vaulted structure, and access

to these appears to have originally been from the south, but at some point the doors on this side were blocked and the present arrangement of parallel rows of shops either side of a central passage was created. Another room was also built against the east side of the vaulted chamber. This contained a *madbasa* or date press where layers of dates would be stored in a sealed room and their juice (*al-dibs*) would trickle through a network of channels set into the floor and be collected in an earthen jar.

All the archaeological features noted during the current refurbishment of the souq have been preserved and most of them have been displayed by using a different plaster finish from that used in the parts rebuilt in the 1970s. A series of panels demonstrating the development of the building and of Qattara Village is on display in a room at the east end the east of the souq.

To the east of the souq, a separate single mud room represents part of an earlier group of buildings that surround the partially ruined traditional courtyard House of Mohammed bin Biduwa Al-Darmaki, which itself is somewhat hidden within a palm grove. Recent archaeological work suggests that the house dates from around 1600–1700 AD, a period which also saw the excavation for the adjacent sunken palm gardens of Qattara Oasis.

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## Publishing Kush And allied material

BFSa Trustee, **Dr St John Simpson**, of the British Museum's Department of the Middle East has undertaken extensive work and excavation in the Middle East and Central Asia. He is now focusing on the analysis and publication of this work.

Among his Arabian commitments is the analysis of the Late Antique, Mediaeval, and later finds from Dr Kennet's excavations at the site of Kush in Ras al-Khaimah (UAE). This will form a separate monograph in the BFSa monograph series (see page 16 for the full list). The volume includes contributions from over 20 authors and specialists, and includes final reports on the glassware, beads, metalwork, coins and contains numerous scientific analyses which were carried out at the British Museum on samples exported for this purpose.

A separate study has also been completed by St John, which looks at the equally important assemblage excavated at the port of Siraf, on the opposite side of the Persian Gulf. This is also a collaborative study which includes many more scientific analyses, including evidence for metalworking and numerous identifications of materials and pigments. This will accompany a separate report by Seth Priestman

on the pottery from Siraf in the British Museum and will be submitted to the British Institute of Persian Studies for publication as a monograph by Oxbow within the next year.

The results of these combined projects will throw significant new light on patterns of production and circulation of a complete range of portable material culture (so-called 'small finds'). Watch this space!

## Zayed University

*Timothy Power of Zayed University brings us up to date on his latest news.*

I set up an archaeological field school in al-'Ain for Zayed University students in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (TCA). The course introduced students to the Late Islamic oasis environment, lost villages and famous forts; the methods and techniques used in the documentation of historic buildings; typological quantification and statistical analysis of Late Islamic ceramics. We took twelve female Emirati students on the course; to my knowledge this is the first time that girls have been given any archaeological training in the UAE. The students are now working on the ceramics from al-'Ain and I'm hoping this will lead to publications.

I successfully applied for an AED 100,000 grant from Zayed University to set up the 'Buraimi Oasis Landscape Archaeology Project'. This is a three-way collaboration between Zayed University, Sultan Qaboos University and the Abu Dhabi TCA which aims to explore the historic unity and shared heritage of the Buraimi Oasis. The first phase of fieldwork will include a desk-based assessment and geophysical survey with targeted test-pitting in the open area between the Şa'arā' and Qaṭṭāra Oases. We hope to present our findings at the Seminar for Arabian Studies this year and will be applying for GCC funding to continue the project. We want to get Emirati and Omani students working together on the project.

I am currently working with Zayed University to set up a new undergraduate major and master's programme in 'Cultural Heritage Management'. This will include strands in archaeology, conservation, museum studies, and intangible heritage. There will be a strong vocational element taught through field schools which will require a ZU student centre to be built in al-'Ain. MA students will further be required to do an internship and dissertation. We will be hiring a new member of staff to teach conservation. We hope to get the new programmes up and running for Fall 2014. Ultimately we will get the course accredited with international cultural heritage organizations.

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## YEMEN

*Stephen Steinbeiser outlines key museum activities, archaeological research, and restoration work undertaken in Yemen during 2013.*

The National Museum in Sana'a experienced a theft immediately prior to the Eid al-Adha holiday. Seven early 20th century swords, as well as four pages from ancient Qur'anic manuscripts, were stolen. The Museum is currently closed while an investigation is ongoing. In general, looting and smuggling remain major threats to Yemen's heritage across the country.

After a multi-year hiatus, the Museum of Folklore in Tahrir Square in Sana'a reopened in time for World Museum Day, the week of May 18th. Unfortunately, many of the collections of traditional garments, tools, and furniture were on loan from private individuals who have since requested return of the items, forcing the museum to close once again.

### Archaeological research

Archaeological research in 2013 has been limited in Yemen because of ongoing security concerns and severe funding restrictions.

Some local archaeologists have been able to conduct smaller studies, however, including two fellows of the American Institute for Yemeni Studies. Maher al-Wajih completed a survey of ancient, inscribed wooden fragments found in several public and private museums near Sana'a. He analysed their provenance while cleaning, transcribing and translating (into Arabic) the *zabour* script. 'Ali Ghondel conducted a site study of al-Ja'ir Fort on the outskirts of Sana'a. Specifically, he photographed petroglyph engravings of animal and human figures, and documented pre- and early Islamic inscriptions. Copies of both research reports are available in the AIYS (American Institute for Yemen Studies) library in Sana'a.

### Restoration Projects Sponsored by Social Fund for Development

**al-Ashrafiya Mosque and Madrasa, Taiz:** This mosque dates from the 15th century CE. Mural painting and gypsum decoration restoration continued in 2013; restoration of the *qudad* waterproofing and cleaning of decorative elements were completed over the course of the year. Italian experts also conducted intensive training on conservation of wooden elements, in co-operation with Yemen's General Organization of Antiquities and Manuscripts (GOAM).



Road and cistern, Thula.  
Photo credit: Abdullah al-Hadhrani

**Great Mosque, Sana'a:** This mosque, constructed on order of the Prophet in the sixth Hijri year, has required reinforcement and repair of arches and walls. Restoration of the coffered wood ceiling is now complete. General restoration and utility works continue.

**Great Mosque in Shibam/Kawkaban:** The Great Mosque in Shibam dates to the Yufirid dynasty, and was constructed by Mohammed Bin Yu'fir around the 9th century CE. It fell into disrepair at the end of that dynasty until the first Ottoman period in Yemen when it was in use again. In 2013 the restoration documented the wooden, coffered ceiling in order to analyse colours prior to cleaning and restoring the painted wood. A seismic analysis was also conducted, to enable reinforcement of structural support. The women's mosque in Shibam, next to the Great Mosque, was opened and handed over to the city *waqf* in charge of the properties.

**Fort Complex of Thula:** Restoration of the fort at Thula covered 8,754 m<sup>2</sup> and included rehabilitation work on the old stepped road from the lower town gate, which was discovered in the course of project execution, to the upper gate of the fortress, as well as a cistern next to it. Details concerning the discovery (in 2009/10) of a complex of previously unknown buildings have explained the purpose of

an entire unit of an architectural system used for defensive purposes. The construction details show a gate with all of its annexes, towers, entry points with arches, pathways, walls, stairs and climbing passages. Many of these architectural details are unique to the Yemeni style which began in the Pre-Islamic era. The upper part of the mountain, which is reached by the stepped road, leads to the high point of the fort, where Sabaeen and Islamic structures are still visible. The restoration project, begun in 2003, sought to preserve cultural assets and to promote Thula as a destination for local tourism. It came to a temporary conclusion at the end of 2013 because of funding constraints.

**Dar al-Izz Palace, Dhu Jibla:** This is the oldest surviving Sulayhid-period palace in Yemen; original construction began circa 1087 CE. The palace is a five-storey rectangular building located in Dhu Jibla with one remaining façade (southern) rising to its full height. It was formerly used as a military barracks on the first and second floors and royal quarters on the three upper floors. Falling into disrepair, the palace became a quarry for local villagers, as well as a source of wood. The recent restoration project has sought to raise the awareness and capacity of local inhabitants to preserve heritage, while creating jobs in one of the poorest areas of the country.



al-Ash'aer Mosque, Zabid. Photo credit: Abdullah al-Hadhrani

**al-Ash'aer Mosque, Zabid:** al-Ash'aer Mosque, named after the emissary of the Prophet who founded it, dates to the period of the Zaydi ruler Husain ibn Salama, although few remaining parts are original. During the course of restoration, archaeological excavations uncovered the old minaret of the mosque, but an exact date for it has not yet been released. Maintenance works in the mosque continue, as well as the restoration of interior painting. Storm drainage ducts have been installed to keep water away from the mosque's foundation.

**Hays Mosque:** This mosque dates from 647–652 AH; as such it is believed to be the oldest Rasulid-era mosque in Yemen. The current restoration project began in 2008, with the goals of conducting structural reinforcement and decorative cleaning and conservation. In 2013 additional decorative elements were uncovered and excavation of the mosque continued, leading to a clearer understanding of the plan of the original site. The next phase will focus on inscriptions and colour analysis.

### Restoration Project Sponsored by Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (US Embassy)

**Al-Minara Mosque, Aden:** The Society for the Preservation of Aden's Cultural Heritage, with support from the US Embassy, completed the restoration of the 8th-century minaret of the al-Minara mosque in Crater. This is one of the oldest structures in the city, and sits in the centre of a bustling neighbourhood. The project entailed securing the site and rendering it suitable for tourism, as well as reinforcing the minaret, allowing visitors to climb to the top.

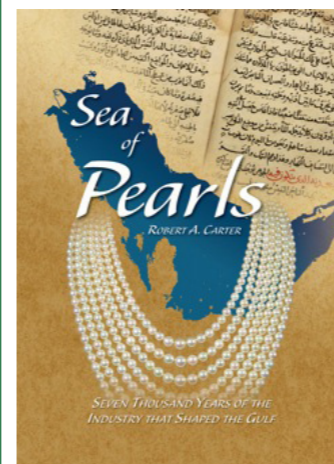
*Stephen Steinbeiser, Country Director  
American Institute for Yemeni Studies*

*From ARABIAN PUBLISHING*

### Sea of Pearls

*Seven Thousand Years of the Industry that Shaped the Gulf*

By Robert A. Carter



Hardback, jacketed.  
ISBN: 978-0-9571060-0-0  
330 x 245 mm, 384 pages,  
338 photographs, 26 maps;  
32 tables and charts  
Notes, Appendices,  
Bibliography, Index  
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## Yemeni collection

### New material at the BM

The Department of the Middle East at the British Museum covers all periods and cultures of the region, from prehistory to the present, writes **Dr St John Simpson**. It therefore includes ancient, mediaeval Islamic, ethnographic and modern collections. An important part of its collecting strategy is to continue developing its very important ethnographic collection and this is the material side to its other projects of collecting postcards of the Middle East (see page 46) or collecting modern Middle Eastern art.

### Going on-line

The Department has been very fortunate in receiving several important collections and items from Yemen, Oman and the United Arab Emirates in the past few years, all registered and put on its Collections Online. Some of these collections contain light-sensitive items such as textiles which can only be exhibited for short periods of time but putting them online allows them to be viewed and appreciated by everyone and from around the world.

### The Ingrams' donation

Last year it received a very generous donation by Leila Ingrams of costumes made and worn by her late parents, plus many other items collected by them in the Hadhramaut or by Leila herself in more recent years. As a small acknowledgement of this great generosity, the museum has placed two of her donations on display in the permanent gallery cases for Ancient South Arabia.

One is of a very striking ancient South Arabian sculpture found by her father at Shabwa and which shows a winged female deity holding a Classical 'horn of plenty'. It was last exhibited when it was privately loaned to the British Museum in 2002 as part of its exhibition *Queen of Sheba: Treasures from Ancient Yemen* but is now shown alongside other choice items illustrating expressions of religious belief and funerary custom in ancient South Arabia. The second item is a modern and brightly painted pottery incense-burner. This is exhibited alongside ancient examples as a very obvious illustration of how long and how deeply incense has been valued socially across this incense producing region.

[Further reading: *Doreen Ingrams' account of her time in Arabia*, A Time in Arabia: Life in the Hadhramaut was re-issued by Eland Press in 2013.]

# ALLIED NEWS AND RESEARCH

## NABATAEAN NEWS

*Nabataean news 2013, from Dr Lucy Wadeson.*

During 2013, various international teams continued their fieldwork projects in Petra. In March/April, Stephan Schmid (Humboldt University, Berlin) and Piotr Bienkowski (University of Manchester) continued their excavation of structures on the plateau of Umm al-Biyara in the framework of the International Umm al-Biyara Project (IUBP). The team found interesting evidence of reuse of buildings in the Roman and Late Roman periods. They also conducted a further season of work for the North-Eastern Petra Project (NEPP), in collaboration with Zbigniew Fiema (University of Helsinki) and Bernhard Kolb (University of Basel). The latter project is conducting a survey of several large, ruined architectural complexes in the quarter of the city centre between Wadi Mataha, Wadi Musa and the Palace Tomb. For more information on these projects, including reports from past seasons, see: [www.auac.ch](http://www.auac.ch). Further work is planned for March 2014, including continued excavation on Umm al-Biyara and scientific analyses of animal and plant remains.

The Brown University Petra Archaeological Project (BUPAP) conducted a study season during summer, in which a small team spent three weeks rechecking documentation and previous study areas. The team also made several trips to areas both north and south (e.g. Wadi Sabra) of their current study region to consider directions for the future of the project.

In October, the French Archaeological Mission at Petra (directed by Laurent Tholbecq, Université Libre de Bruxelles) continued work in the area of the Qasr al-Bint temple, in the city centre. Excavation (on a limited scale) took place in the north-west part of the complex, and finds from previous seasons were studied. Tholbecq's team also continued restoration and presentation work at the Obodas Chapel. The same team plans a new excavation on the plateau of al-Khubthah mountain in May 2014. Also in October, the 'International al-Khubthah Tombs Project' (IKTP), directed by Lucy Wadeson (Université Libre de Bruxelles), undertook a third season of excavation. Work focused on monumental facade tomb Br. 781 in the so-called 'royal' necropolis at the base of al-Khubthah mountain. The team excavated seven graves, which although had been previously looted, yielded a wealth of information on Nabataean burial practices. One of the major finds was an elaborate gold earring from one of the burials.

The 'Temple of the Winged Lions Cultural Resource Management Initiative' (TWLCRM), launched by the American Center of Oriental Research (ACOR) in Amman,



A Nabataean grave excavated by the IKTP, Tomb Br. 781, Petra. (Photo by L. Wadeson)

Jordan, in partnership with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities and the Petra Archaeological Park, continued its work throughout 2013. The project, directed by Christopher Tuttle (ACOR) is presently undertaking a multi-year campaign for the re-documentation, conservation, preservation, restoration, presentation, landscape rejuvenation, and re-publication of this important monumental complex. The temple precinct and some surrounding areas were excavated between 1973 and 2005 by the independent American Expedition to Petra (AEP) project, directed by the late Philip Hammond. The TWLCRM project will continue until 2015. For more details see: [asorblog.org/?p=3311](http://asorblog.org/?p=3311) and [www.facebook.com/TWLCRM](http://www.facebook.com/TWLCRM).

Fawzi Abudanah was recently appointed director of the Nabataean Centre for Archaeological Studies, based at the Petra College for Tourism and Archaeology (al-Hussein bin Talal University), Ma'an (Jordan). The centre is currently involved in the following fieldwork projects: The Great Arab Revolt Project (see page 44 for more), the Udruh Archaeological Project, the al-Thulaythwat Archaeological Project, and the mapping and documentation of ancient roads in southern Jordan project (between Showbak and Ras al-Naqab). The activities can be followed via the Centre's Facebook page.



Local workers (from left to right) Ibrahim Hamd, Suleiman Mohammad as-Samaheen and Ibrahim Mohammad as-Samaheen during the IKTP excavation (Photo by L. Wadeson)

### Conferences

In May 2013, Nabataean scholars came together to present the latest results of their projects at the 12th International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ), under the theme 'Transparent Borders'. The

conference was held between May 5th and 11th at the Humboldt University, Berlin. There were nine sessions devoted to the Nabataeans. The proceedings will be published in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 12.

### New Books

A new study of Nabataean religion has been published by Brill: *The Religious Life of Nabataea* (2013) is a revised version of Peter Alpass's PhD thesis (Durham). The proceedings of the *First International Conference on Nabataean Culture* (Wadi Musa, 5–8 May 2012) were recently published by Jordan University. The volume (*Studies on the Nabataean Culture*), edited by Nabil Khairy and Thomas Weber, brings together papers dealing with historical issues, epigraphy, art, architecture, religion, numismatics, and site preservation. It is available from Jordan University, foreign institutes in Amman and Amazon.

*Dr Lucy Wadeson*

*Université Libre de Bruxelles*

## World War One

### Research in the Arabian Peninsula

*As we mark the centenary year of the First World War, the Bulletin turns to some of the latest Arabian-related thinking and research on the Great War. We open with a piece by Prof. Eugene Rogan who delivered the Ghazi Al Gosaibi Memorial Lecture entitled The Arabian Peninsula in World War One to the Saudi-British Society on 3 December 2013, the essence of which he now synthesises for our readers.*

When war broke out in Europe in the summer of 1914, King Abdul Aziz, the ruler of Najd, had only just made his entry into the Persian Gulf. In 1913, his forces drove the Ottomans from Ghazi Al-Gosaibi's birthplace, the Hasa Province (now known as the Eastern Province). The move, part of the consolidation of the Third Saudi Kingdom, drew Ibn Saud out of central Arabia into the heart of complex global politics. The conquest of Hasa put the Saudi in the centre of Ottoman and British rivalry for domination of the Persian Gulf. And with the advent of the First World War, the Saudi ruler saw both dangers and opportunities for the consolidation of his expanding state.

The dangers were to do with the balance of powers in the Arabian Peninsula, in the Saudi–Rashidi rivalry. The Ottomans were keen to play on the rivalry to secure Arab support against the British. The opportunities arose through the supply of guns and gold through strategic alliances. The British were particularly keen to conclude an agreement with Ibn Saud as the latest local ruler to enter the 'trucial system' in the Gulf. Yet Ibn Saud was determined to preserve his independence from European colonial rule, and the examples of India and Egypt were there for all to see as a clear and present threat.

The Treaty of Darin confirmed British recognition of Ibn Saud's leadership and extended British protection over the Central and Eastern Arabian territories then under his control. In return, the Saudis pledged not to enter into agreement with, nor to sell any territory to, any other foreign power without prior British consent, and to refrain from all aggression against other Gulf states – in essence turning Ibn Saud's lands into another Trucial State. In concluding the agreement, Britain gave Ibn Saud £20,000, a monthly stipend of £5,000 and a large number of rifles and machine guns, intended to be used against the Ottomans and their Arab allies, who had sided with Germany against Britain in World War I.

Ibn Saud had avoided the dangers and secured the opportunities posed by the start of the war. He had secured Great Power protection, international recognition, and a sizable stipend and flow of weapons – with minimal restrictions on his independence.

For the remainder of the war years, Ibn Saud used British cash and guns to consolidate his position in Arabia, not by fighting the Ottomans and their allies, but by subordinating his local rivals: the Rashidis, who had declared their allegiance to the

Ottoman war cause, and the Hashemites, who concluded their own wartime alliance with Great Britain.

The Rashidis, having backed the Ottomans, would ultimately go down with the Empire (Ibn Saud secured victory in 1921). The Hashemites were more complicated. They were Britain's wartime allies, and they came out of the First World War strengthened by victory.

As World War I drew to an end, the British government was anxious to conclude a formal alliance with King Husayn and his Hashemite family. They sent Col. T.E. Lawrence, the famous 'Lawrence of Arabia', who had served as British liaison with the Hashemites during the Arab Revolt, to open negotiations with King Husayn.

Between July and September, 1921, Lawrence tried in vain to persuade King Husayn to sign a treaty that recognized the new realities of the post-war settlement. Husayn rejected nearly every feature of the postwar Middle East as a betrayal of Britain's promises to him: he refused to limit his kingdom to the Hijaz; he objected to the expulsion of his son, King Faysal, from Damascus and the establishment of a French mandate in Syria; he rejected Britain's mandates over Iraq and Palestine (which then included Transjordan); and he objected to the policy of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. The British ventured one last attempt to reach a treaty in 1923, but the bitter old king refused to sign. As a result, he forfeited British protection just as Ibn Saud began to mount his campaign to conquer the Hijaz.

In mid-October 1924, Ibn Saud's fighters captured the holy city of Mecca. They met with no resistance, and refrained from all violence towards the townspeople. Ibn Saud sent messengers to sound out Britain's reaction to the conquest of Taif and Mecca. He was reassured of Britain's neutrality in the conflict. The Saudi ruler then proceeded to complete his conquest of the Hijaz. He laid siege to the port of Jidda and the holy city of Medina in January 1925. The Hashemites held out for nearly a full year, but by 22 December 1925, King Ali surrendered his kingdom to Ibn Saud and followed his father's footsteps into exile.

Following his conquest of the Hijaz, Ibn Saud was proclaimed 'Sultan of Najd and King of the Hijaz'. The vast extent of territory under his control placed Ibn Saud in a different category from the other Gulf rulers of the Trucial States. Britain recognized the change in his status and concluded a new treaty with King Abdul Aziz in 1927 that recognized his full independence and sovereignty, without any of the restrictions on external relations accepted by the Trucial states.

Ibn Saud used the turmoil of the First World War to extend his kingship over most of the Arabian Peninsula. In so doing, he managed to preserve his independence from all forms of British imperial rule. In this he was assisted by a critical British miscalculation: they did not believe that there was any oil in Saudi Arabia.

## Trenches, trains, tents

### Digging the Arab Revolt of 1916-1918

*In our second piece on WWI research, Dr Neil Faulkner, Director of the Great Arab Revolt Project, offers an overview of his work, and reflects on the role of 'modern conflict archaeology'.*

As we approach the centenary of the First World War, the Great Arab Revolt Project (GARP) is reaching its conclusion. Set up in 2006 to investigate the archaeology of the First World War along the line of the former Hejaz Railway in north-western Arabia (today's southern Jordan), the project has now completed eight field seasons, and the next, in November 2014, will be the last.

The project's main activity has always been a two-week fieldwork season each autumn, involving a team of about 10 archaeologists and 15–20 volunteers, plus the research, analysis, interpretation, and publication associated with this fieldwork. The subject-matter – a guerrilla insurgency ranging over vast spaces – has necessitated a distinctive approach. Data have been generated at four separate levels:

**Level 1.** Archive research and general field reconnaissance in vehicles to locate and map military sites within the southern Jordan study area (mainly the area from Ma'an southwards to Mudawwara near the Saudi border).

**Level 2.** Archive research, field reconnaissance on foot, and GPS-based surveying to identify and plot military sites and features within specific militarized landscapes identified at Level 1.

**Level 3.** Metal-detector survey and measured ground survey to map and characterize a) groups of features forming coherent sites, and b) spreads of diagnostic artefacts, within the specific militarized landscapes surveyed at Level 2.



An Ottoman station building with improvised defences.

**Level 4.** Surface clearance, excavation, standing-building survey, and detailed recording to characterize and phase typical and/or significant features within the areas surveyed at Level 3.

Moreover, since most of the material evidence lies on or very near the surface, data recovery has been essentially a matter of horizontal exploration rather than stratigraphic excavation. In addition, since metalwork assemblages are of primary significance, the metal-detector has been an essential tool. Our data are therefore products of a distinctive repertoire of techniques amounting to a comprehensive 'archaeology of the surface'.

### Exemplar of modern conflict archaeology

GARP is a case-study in the new sub-discipline of modern conflict archaeology that has been developed over the last 15 years or so. The essential introduction is Nick Saunders' *Killing Time: Archaeology and the First World War* (2007), a comprehensive introduction to the sub-discipline, covering the full range of archaeological approaches to the landscapes and the material culture of the war.

Saunders is one of the two academic leaders of GARP, and the project has become a beacon of the general approach. He stresses that modern conflict archaeology is a world away from the crude 'buttons and bullets' surveys carried out by sundry 'battlefield archaeologists'. It is about investigating the entire human experience of modern industrialized warfare through the lens provided by material as opposed to text. It is about the insights to be gained from the transformation of landscapes and the creation, use, and loss of objects in the context of war.

The new sub-discipline has subsumed within itself part of an older established tradition of 'battlefield archaeology'. Much battlefield archaeology remains unreconstructed. Some of it is not 'archaeology' at all, but straightforward looting for personal gain. Some of it, performed for the TV cameras, is only marginally better, being almost wholly devoid of academic purpose. Some is technically rigorous in an archaeological sense, with, for example, meticulous plotting of metal-detected debris, but remains theoretically disengaged and therefore rather pointless: a bag of bullets from a muddy field tells us little.

It is when battlefield archaeology dissolves into modern conflict archaeology that something of real academic value emerges. The survey, excavation, and metal-detecting of the battlefield then becomes part of a much wider endeavour to grasp the scale, multi-dimensionality, and emotionally super-charged phenomenon of modern industrialized warfare.

### Archaeologies of modern industrialized warfare

The archaeology of the First World War (and modern conflict generally) is a growing sub-discipline concerned with the



Photo 4: An Ottoman Army tent-ring.

investigation, conservation, and public presentation of sites and artefacts of this period. Archaeology can deepen understanding of recent conflicts by helping to locate and characterize sites, and by reconstructing the circumstances and 'materiality' of war. It can also connect with, and contribute substantially to, wide public interest in the First World War.

Huge numbers – school parties, relatives of soldiers, and battlefield tourists – regularly visit sites on the Western Front. This interest is likely to reach a climax as we enter the centenary of the war (2014–2018). Other theatres of the First World War, however, have been relatively little explored, even though they offer great potential for research and public engagement with heritage.

The remains of the Arab Revolt are especially important for six reasons:

- First, they represent the struggle from which emerged the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the modern Jordanian Army, modern Arab nationalism, and many of the states of the modern Middle East.
- Second, they represent the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and therefore the background to the emergence of the modern Turkish nation-state and national identity.
- Third, they offer a range of military landscapes, sites, and artefact assemblages, and a range of memories, associations, and modern significances, which contrast with the more familiar archaeology, commemoration, and tourism of the Western Front.
- Fourth, they are associated with the exploits and legend of Lawrence of Arabia, an iconic historical and cultural figure in the English-speaking world.
- Fifth, they represent one of the latest phases in a long sequence of human activities imprinted on the landscape in the archaeology of southern Jordan.
- And sixth, they are subject to rapid destruction and vandalism, due partly to development pressures, partly to folk myths about 'Ottoman gold', such that recording, public information, and preservation are urgent.

### Revealing 'the war of the flea'

Guerrilla warfare – dubbed 'the war of the flea' in a seminal study by Robert Taber in 1965 – cannot be understood without the wide multi-disciplinary reach and multi-

dimensional vision of modern conflict archaeology. Three general observations about our discoveries can be used to illustrate this point:

1. The archaeological imprint of the former imperial army of occupation is highly visible in the largely unchanged desert landscapes of north-western Arabia. Railway stations – one every 17km on average along the entire 1300km length of the Hijaz Railway from Damascus to Medina – were converted into miniature desert forts with the addition of loopholes and breastworks. These were overlooked by hilltop forts nearby. Between stations were smaller fortified posts, such that every part of the line was under direct observation. And, attesting to the size of the former garrison, there are numerous military camps, typically comprising 20 or so 4m-wide rings of stones that had once been used to weight down the edges of canvas bell-tents. On the one hand, detailed investigation of a sample of these sites has provided an intimate insight into everyday life in the Ottoman Army on the Arab front between 1916 and 1918. On the other, it is the distribution of such sites – both forts and camps – across the landscape that reveals the shape of the war as a whole.

2. What does the shape – the distribution of sites – tell us? The Ottoman military sites are arranged like beads on a necklace. The Hijaz Railway was the vital artery of supply that sustained the Ottoman garrison at Medina; and also the primary target of the guerrilla insurgents operating in the vast open spaces of the desert on either side. The Ottoman imprint confirms that thousands of troops were pinned down in static positions by what T.E. Lawrence called ‘the silent threat of a vast unknown desert’.

3. That ‘silent threat’ was archaeologically almost invisible. But not entirely: at every site investigated in detail, there was evidence for fleeting, small-scale exchanges of fire, the outgoing represented by Ottoman Mauser cartridges, the incoming by Arab .303 bullets. The guerrillas were desert Arabs, men embedded in the landscape and its lifeways, moving through it rapidly on camels, leaving only the most minimal of material traces as they passed from one camping-ground to another. The sharp dichotomy between the highly-visible former presence of the Ottomans and the near-invisible former presence of the Arabs is the archaeological signature of asymmetrical warfare.

**Dr Neil Faulkner FSA, University of Bristol  
Project Director, Great Arab Revolt Project**



Photo 5: Ottoman Army uniform buttons from Wadi Rutm camp.

## Past postcards ME collection at the BM

The British Museum has started a major project to collect Middle Eastern postcards as a permanent public record of places and people across a region undergoing profound change, explains **Dr St John Simpson**. The images are an important visual record of buildings or landscapes before or after development, and they capture changes in fashion, whether architectural or personal. In the case of postally used cards, they add vast amounts of information on postal history, styles of handwriting and forms of personal communication. Whereas the printed image encodes the subliminal message of what the local manufacturer considered politically important (such as a National Day parade) or commercial (such as a view of the Old City in Jerusalem), the messages capture the immediate and personal impression, usually by a temporary visitor, of a place, its weather, food and people. At times banal and stereotyped, in other cases deeply personal and moving, the messages transform each card into an individual object. For

this reason, all used cards are different, and the more one sees and compares, the richer the data-set becomes.

The museum is acquiring all types of postcard, whether new or old, used or unsent, and includes North Africa, Egypt, the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia in its remit as these are either culturally or politically part of the Middle East at periods of antiquity or in recent times. All postcards are being fully catalogued on the museum's object database and the records appear with scanned images on its Collections Online section of the British Museum website. It would particularly welcome any donations and these are credited online and in perpetuity with the name of the person who gave or sent it. If you are interested in supporting or being part of this project, do contact Dr St John Simpson, either by sending him a card via the Department of the Middle East at the British Museum, London WC1B 3DG, or by email at [ssimpson@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](mailto:ssimpson@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)

## AWARDS AND PRIZES

### The International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)

The International Prize for Arabic Fiction announced the 16 novels in contention for the 2014 prize in early January. This year longlisted authors come from nine different countries, with the highest numbers from Morocco, Iraq and Egypt. A Kuwaiti writer, Ismail Fahd Ismail, makes the list for the second this year, following Saud Alsanousi's success in 2013. Five of the authors have been previously nominated for the prize; Amir Tag Elsir (2011 for *The Grub Hunter*), Inaam Kachachi (2009 for *The American Granddaughter*), Khaled Khalifa (shortlisted in 2008 for *In Praise of Hatred* and longlisted in 2013 for *Lanterns of the King of Galilee*) and Waciny Laredj who has been longlisted twice in 2011 and 2013 (*The Andalusian House* and *Lolita's Fingers* respectively). For the full 2014 longlist see: [www.arabicfiction.org/2014-prize.html](http://www.arabicfiction.org/2014-prize.html)

### The Banipal Trust for Arab Literature: The Saif Ghobash–Banipal Prize for Arabic Literary Translation

This annual award of £3,000 is made to the translator(s) of a published translation in English of a full-length imaginative and creative Arabic work of literary merit (published after, or during, the year 1967 and first published in English translation in the year prior to the award). Works are judged by a panel of four distinguished authors, critics and literary experts, two of whom read and consider both the Arabic original and the English translation.

For further information, see: [www.banipaltrust.org.uk/prize/](http://www.banipaltrust.org.uk/prize/)

### The Arab-British Centre Award for Culture 2013

At the end of May, The Arab-British Centre launched its Award for Culture 2013. For the first time since its inception in 2008, the award has been tailored to celebrate individuals who have made the most constructive contribution to British understanding of Arab culture over the last two years. In addition to the £2,500 prize money, The Arab-British Centre is able to provide the winner with opportunities to promote his or her work more widely. The Award for Culture 2013 is a successor to the Arab-British Culture & Society Award, which ran for four years between 2008 and 2011 and celebrated organizations which had made a considerable impact on the British public's understanding of the life, society and culture of the Arab world. The shortlist was chosen by a panel of distinguished experts with knowledge of the cultures of the Arab World and the United Kingdom. Baroness Helena Kennedy QC has returned as Chair of this year's panel. The other panellists are: Maxime Duda; Rose Issa; Deborah Shaw; and Brian Whitaker.

The Award for Culture 2013 has been presented to the London-based, Prague-born, Iraqi playwright whose plays address issues in the Arab world. The judges felt that through his work, most recently with his second full-length

play *The Prophet*, Abdulrazzak has risen to the occasion at a time where the Middle East is highlighted as a volatile and inaccessible place. Abdulrazzak has written three successful full length plays and six short plays and he is currently working on three screenplays and a further full-length play, *A Fire Blazing Brightly*. Describing his passion for writing plays, Abdulrazzak explained that, ‘theatre has the power to radically challenge your assumptions regarding a people or a culture and it can do so within the span of two or three hours’.

The Arab-British Centre would like to congratulate Hassan Abdulrazzak and the five shortlisted nominees; Danah Abdulla, Khyam Allami, Daniel Gorman, Reem Kelani and Amin Matalqa. Huge thanks also to the prestigious panel of judges for selecting a wonderful array of individuals who we look forward to working with in the near future in promoting their work.

For more information contact: Ruba Asfahani [rubas@arabbritishcentre.org.uk](mailto:rubas@arabbritishcentre.org.uk)

### The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) Book Prize

The BRISMES Book Prize administered the British-Kuwait Friendship Society Prize in Middle Eastern Studies from its inception until the end of 2010. The prize was funded by an endowment from the Abdullah Mubarak Charitable Foundation. The prize is now administered by the University of Cambridge. The prize is awarded for the best scholarly work on the Middle East each year. The chronological remit of the prize is from the rise of Islam until the present day, but outstanding scholarly entries from the pre-Islamic era may also be considered. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Robert H. Niehaus ‘77 Professor of Near Eastern Studies and Religion (Princeton University), has been awarded the 2013 British-Kuwait Friendship Society Book Prize in Middle Eastern Studies for his book, *Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age: Religious Authority and Internal Criticism* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

### Rawabi Holding Awards

These awards, hosted by the Saudi-British Society, are awarded annually to two British individuals who have made a significant contribution to Saudi-British cultural relations. The 2013 prizes were presented on 5 February, to Sir James Craig, former ambassador to Saudi Arabia and vice-chairman and founder member of this Society, and to Mr Michael Field, author and journalist.

### Barakat Trust

The Trust awards a number of scholarships and grants to students and scholars of Islamic art history, architecture and archaeology including conservation

and post-doctoral fellowships. Grants have covered conservation programmes; documentation of archives; events; exhibitions and museums; lectures; colloquia and conferences; scholarships towards a Master of Studies course in Islamic Art History and Architecture at the University of Oxford; scholarships and grants for post-graduate and post-doctoral study and research fellowships; travel and field trips; archaeological projects; and prizes to students at accredited schools and universities. The Barakat

Trust does not support the applied arts.

The closing date for applications is 15 February and the Advisory Committee meets in the early spring of each year.

Contact the Barakat Trust, The Oriental Institute, Pusey Lane, Oxford, OX1 2LE. [barakat.trust@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:barakat.trust@orinst.ox.ac.uk); further information on the grants can be found at [www.barakat.org/](http://www.barakat.org/)

## AVAILABLE GRANTS

### British Academy

The British Academy offers a number of academic, research and travel fellowships and other grants including skills acquisition awards and professorships. They are all offered for postdoctoral research in the humanities and social sciences.

For full details visit the British Academy website: [www.britac.ac.uk/funding/guide/](http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/guide/)

### The BFSA

The BFSA offers grants of up to £500 in support of research into the archaeology, history, culture and environment of the Arabian Peninsula. See the BFSA News Section of the Bulletin (page 9) and our website for more information: [www.thebfsa.org/content/grants](http://www.thebfsa.org/content/grants).

### British Institute for the Study of Iraq (BISI)

BISI Pilot Project Grants. The Institute welcomes funding applications for pilot projects in all fields of the arts, humanities or social sciences, concerned with any time period from prehistory to the present day. However, projects related to the theme of 'Exile and Return' are particularly welcome.

Funding of up to £8,000 is available for one such project a year. The Institute offers assistance to the award-holder in drafting a full research proposal to submit jointly to other funding bodies. Two academic references are required. All applications and references must be received by 1 February. Decisions will be announced in March. Only one BISI Pilot Project Grant can be made annually. However, the BISI also awards several Research Grants a year for short-term projects costing no more than £4000. Conditions and applications forms can be found on: [www.bisi.ac.uk/content/academic-grants](http://www.bisi.ac.uk/content/academic-grants)

*BISI Research and Conference Grants.* The Institute invites funding applications once a year to support research or conferences on Iraq and neighbouring countries not covered by the British Academy's BASIS-sponsored institutions, in any field of the humanities or social sciences, concerned with any time period from prehistory to the present day. A list of the British Academy-sponsored Institutes and Societies (BASIS) can be found on the following link: [www.britac.ac.uk/intl/index-basis.cfm](http://www.britac.ac.uk/intl/index-basis.cfm). BISI can only fund direct costs such as equipment, travel expenses, and consultancy fees, normally up to a total of £4,000 – although more substantial awards may exceptionally be made. BISI cannot pay institutional overheads, salary costs, PhD studentships, or other normal living costs. Applications must be received by 1 February annually with two academic references. Decisions will be announced in March.

*BISI Visiting Iraqi Scholar Grants.* Two grants are offered each year to be held in the UK by visiting scholars from Iraq in all disciplines within humanities and social sciences. These grants include a joint visiting scholarship with the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft (German Oriental Society). Priority is given to Iraqi scholars who have established links with UK institutions and would like to carry out collaborative projects with academics or heritage professionals in the UK. All applications and references must be received by 1 February annually. Candidates will be informed of the decision by early July. Please note that the next scholarships available are in the months of February to June and October to early December 2015. However if you have already received an invitation or made arrangements with a UK institution, there may be the possibility of taking up a scholarship in October to early December 2014. Formal leave of absence from the scholar's own institution or employer is required before an award is made; a copy of the permission for a leave of absence is to be sent to BISI. An acceptance form is required from each applicant in advance of making travel arrangements. All scholars must be able to converse in and understand English to a working level to ensure the placement is a success. For further information see: [www.bisi.ac.uk/content/visiting-iraqi-scholars](http://www.bisi.ac.uk/content/visiting-iraqi-scholars)

*BISI Outreach Grants.* Grants are available to support outreach and public engagement events and projects such as lectures, study days, and popular publications that relate to Iraq and neighbouring countries and to the areas of interest covered by BISI. Funding is normally up to £500 per project. Applicants should normally be residents in the UK. Preference will be given to events taking place in the UK, Iraq or neighbouring countries. Application forms must be supported by two references. All must be received by the

1st October. For further information see: [www.bisi.ac.uk/content/outreach-grants](http://www.bisi.ac.uk/content/outreach-grants)

Please see the website for full details and conditions of BISI's grants: [www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/](http://www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq/) or contact the administrator: [bisi@britac.ac.uk](mailto:bisi@britac.ac.uk).

### British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS)

BIPS welcomes applications from scholars wishing to pursue research in Persian Studies. Further information is at: [www.bips.ac.uk/research/](http://www.bips.ac.uk/research/). Most of BIPS' research income is set aside for collaborative research programmes. BIPS is currently seeking to attract applications from scholars in three 'umbrella' programmes: the History and Archaeology of Ancient Iran; the Empire and Authority in the Persianate World; and History, Myth and Literature in Modern Iran. The last one includes a lead project on 'The Idea of Chivalry (Javanmardi)'. All applicants for grants must be affiliated to a UK-based institute of higher education or a UK museum. Students applying for grants must give two references, and scholars applying for a grant cannot give references from inside their own institute. Travel grants are limited to £900. More information can be found on the BIPS website: [www.bips.ac.uk/research/](http://www.bips.ac.uk/research/).

### British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES)

BRISMES administers several scholarships and prizes each year:

*MA Scholarship.* BRISMES offers an annual Master's scholarship for taught Master's study at a UK institution. The Master's programme can be in any discipline but should include a majority component specifically relating to the Middle East. Preference will be given to candidates resident in the European Union, and to institutions who are members of BRISMES. For Master's programmes commencing October 2014, the award will amount to £1,200. The names of the winner and the institution will be publicised in the BRISMES Newsletter and website. Applications for October 2014 must reach the BRISMES Office by 31 March 2014. The decision by BRISMES Council will be announced as soon as possible thereafter. For information, please contact: [a.l.haysey@dur.ac.uk](mailto:a.l.haysey@dur.ac.uk)

*Research Student Awards.* For research students based in the UK working on a Middle Eastern studies topic. The annually available ceiling of £1,000 will either be given as a single award or divided (max. three).

### Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah Foundation BRISMES

*Scholarships.* The purpose of the scholarships is to encourage more people to pursue postgraduate studies in disciplines related to the Middle East in British universities. The scholarships will be for one academic year. The value of each scholarship will be £2,000. Two scholarships will be awarded. Applications should be made to the BRISMES Administrative office. The deadline for the latest round has

been extended to 30 April 2013. The applications have to be registered at any UK university, be a paid-up member of BRISMES (Student membership suffices), submit an application of 600–1000 words by email to the BRISMES research committee and obtain a brief supporting statement from their supervisor. The announcement of the award will be made in June and published in the July edition of the BRISMES newsletter.

For full details, deadlines and conditions of all the above see the website [www.brismes.ac.uk/student-area/scholarships](http://www.brismes.ac.uk/student-area/scholarships) or email [a.l.haysey@durham.ac.uk](mailto:a.l.haysey@durham.ac.uk).

### British-Yemeni Society Annual Academic Grant

Applications are invited from anyone carrying out research in Yemen or on a Yemen-related subject at a British or Yemeni University. Applicants' nationality is irrelevant. Applications may be made to assist with study in any subject or field, so long as it is concerned with Yemen and is for a specific qualification (e.g. BA, MA, PhD etc.) Post-doctoral researchers may apply, but will only be considered should no more junior applicants approach the Committee. Applications must follow normal academic procedures, i.e. an abstract supported by a recommendation from the applicant's supervisor. Applications are to reach the Secretary to the Committee by 31 March each year. The Committee will consider the applications and make the grant at the AGM in June. As a condition of the grant, the successful applicant will be required to make an acknowledgement of the grant in their thesis or dissertation. The applicant will also be expected to make a presentation to the Society (to be summarised in the Society's Journal) on the results of the research assisted by the grant.

Submissions and any queries are to be addressed to the Honorary Secretary, The British-Yemeni Society, 210 Stephendale Road, London SW6 2PP, email [allfreea@gmail.com](mailto:allfreea@gmail.com). For full details see the website: [www.al-bab.com/bys/](http://www.al-bab.com/bys/). A direct link will be found in the newsletter under the title 'The British-Yemeni Society Academic Grant 2014'.

### Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World (CASAW)

CASAW, a language-based area studies initiative funded by the AHRC, ESRC, HEFCE and SFC, offers funding for research internships, postgraduate internships and internships in publishing literary translations (Arabic) at the Universities of Edinburgh, Durham and Manchester. Website: [www.casaw.ac.uk/](http://www.casaw.ac.uk/)

### Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL)

CBRL currently offers *Travel Grants, Team-based Fieldwork Awards, Pilot Study Awards, Visiting Research Fellowships and Scholarships, Project Completion Awards and Project Affiliation* for research that comes under the following themes: the spread of early humans through

the Near East from Africa; the origins, development and practice of economic and social strategies in the Middle East from earliest times to the modern day; the development and workings of complex societies and their products; long-term landscape and settlement studies; the relationship between people, past and present, and their built and natural environment; synthetic studies of key historical periods; the interface between East and West; the investigation of multiple identities in the Middle East; the diachronic and synchronic study of the use of language, music and the written record in Middle Eastern society.

Further details, application forms and conditions of the grant schemes are available from the UK Secretary, CBRL, British Academy, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AH, or visit: [www.cbri.org.uk/support.html](http://www.cbri.org.uk/support.html). Information regarding the next deadlines can be located on the above website. Any queries should be addressed to [cbri@britac.ac.uk](mailto:cbri@britac.ac.uk).

#### Qasid Arabic Institute in conjunction with the Council for British Research in the Levant

The Qasid Institute has developed a reputation as one of the best private intensive Arabic-language programmes in the Middle East with teaching methods specifically designed for foreign students. Two scholarships are normally offered for the summer or for the autumn session. See the website ([www.bi-amman.org.uk/arabic.html](http://www.bi-amman.org.uk/arabic.html)) for more information.

#### The Emirates Natural History Group (ENHG)

The ENHG, the oldest NGO in the UAE dealing with archaeology and natural history, has previously provided several grants for relevant research and excavations including bird studies and funding an archaeological excavation at a Neolithic site at Abu Dhabi International Airport.

*Annual Awards:* The Abu Dhabi Natural History Group gives two awards each year. Nominations for both awards can be made by members of any of the UAE's three natural history groups, in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Al-Ain. Nominees, however, need not be members of any of the Groups, although serving officers of the Abu Dhabi ENHG (chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and secretary) are not eligible. The winners are selected by the committee of the Abu Dhabi ENHG early each year. The winners are usually announced at the Inter Emirates Weekend (IEW). Nominations may be sent by post to The Chairman, ENHG, PO Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, by 15th December each year.

#### Sheikh Mubarak bin Mohammed Award for Natural History:

This award is intended to acknowledge the contributions made by an individual, primarily through original research and publication, to the scientific study of the archaeology, history and natural history of the UAE. This award is in place of the Jashanmal Award that was presented for several years after the introduction of the ENHG in the UAE. The Award consists of an inscribed silver dhow and a cash sum.

For more information see: [www.enhg.org/AbuDhabi/AnnualAwards.aspx](http://www.enhg.org/AbuDhabi/AnnualAwards.aspx)

#### Gerald Avery Wainwright Fund for Near Eastern Archaeology

The Fund aims to encourage the study of non-classical archaeology and the general history of the countries of the Middle East. It holds an annual Schools Essay Prize, awards Research Grants to mature scholars and also sponsors a post-doctoral Fellowship. Applicants for the Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship had to 14 February to propose their project. Research Grant deadlines are on 1 April and 1 October. Visit the website for application forms and guidelines: [www.krc.orient.ox.ac.uk/wainwright/](http://www.krc.orient.ox.ac.uk/wainwright/). For further information contact: The Gerald Avery Wainwright Near Eastern Archaeological Fund, Khalili Research Centre, University of Oxford, 3 St. John Street, Oxford OX1 2LG. Email: [wainwright.fund@orinst.ox.ac.uk](mailto:wainwright.fund@orinst.ox.ac.uk).

#### International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)

For further details, see: [www.arabicfiction.org/](http://www.arabicfiction.org/).

#### Leigh Douglas Memorial Fund

The fund was established with donations from Leigh Douglas's family and friends to support continued scholarship on the Middle East. It is a charity, and has distributed more than £18,000 since 1990 to assist scholars and experts pursuing research, mostly on Yemen, in fields as varied as archaeology, social anthropology, folk tales, history, geography, linguistics, public health, and marine archaeology. Small grants have enabled scholars to travel, conduct field research or attend conferences, which otherwise would not have been possible. Grants include:

*The Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize.* This is awarded annually to the writer of the best PhD dissertation on a Middle Eastern topic in the Social Sciences or Humanities. The current value of the prize is £600 for the winner and £150 for the runner up. Anyone wishing to submit his/her dissertation for consideration should send a copy, together with an accompanying letter or recommendation from their supervisor to Professor Charles Tripp, S.O.A.S., Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London, WC1X 0XG, UK. The deadline for submission of entries was 31 January 2014. See: [www.brismes.ac.uk/student-area/leigh-douglas-memorial-prize](http://www.brismes.ac.uk/student-area/leigh-douglas-memorial-prize) for more information.

*Grants for Yemeni Studies.* Each year the Leigh Douglas Memorial Fund offers two or three small grants (in the region of £300) to assist scholars of any nationality whose research involves the study of Yemeni history, culture, economics, politics or society. Applications should include a brief curriculum vitae, an outline of the relevant research project and a letter of reference. There are two annual deadlines for applications: 1 November and 1 May. Further enquiries and applications should be sent by post to Dr

Venetia Porter, Department of the Middle East, The British Museum, Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3DG, United Kingdom. Email: [venetia@trippiyasa.demon.co.uk](mailto:venetia@trippiyasa.demon.co.uk).

For further information on Leigh Douglas and the Fund's work see [www.al-bab.com/yemen/douglas.htm](http://www.al-bab.com/yemen/douglas.htm).

#### Palestine Exploration Fund

The PEF awards small grants to students and others pursuing research into topics relevant to its general aims. The deadline has been extended to 20 February 2014. Please address applications to the Grants Manager, Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Mews, Marylebone Lane, London W1U 2AA. Enquiries can be addressed to the Executive Secretary. Email [ExecSec@pef.org.uk](mailto:ExecSec@pef.org.uk). Further details and application forms can be found at: [www.pef.org.uk/grants/](http://www.pef.org.uk/grants/)

#### Royal Asiatic Society

The Society offers several prizes for outstanding research in Asian studies, including the *Professor Mary Boyce Prize* (£250) for an article relating to the study of religion in Asia, and the *Sir George Staunton Prize* (£250) for an article by a young scholar, both for articles submitted to the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. The Society introduces five life fellowship per calendar year starting from January 2014 at the rate of £1500. For more information contact Alison Ohta, Curator, Royal Asiatic Society, 14 Stephenson Way, London W1 2HD. Tel: +44(0)2073884539; Email [ao@royalasiaticsociety.org](mailto:ao@royalasiaticsociety.org). More information can also be found on: [www.royalasiaticsociety.org](http://www.royalasiaticsociety.org).

#### Sir William Luce Fellowship

The Fellowship is awarded annually to a scholar working on those parts of the Middle East to which Sir William Luce devoted his working life (chiefly Sudan and Arabia). The Fund welcomes applications for the position of Sir William Luce Fellow which will commence in January 2015. The Fellowship hosted by Durham University during Epiphany term (12 January – 13 March 2015). The Fellowship, tenable jointly in the Institute for Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies and Trevelyan College, will entitle the holder to full access to departmental and other University facilities. The Fellow is expected to deliver 'The Sir William Luce Lecture', which will form the basis of a paper to be published in the Durham Middle East Papers series.

For further information see: [www.dur.ac.uk/sgia/imeis/lucefund/fellowship/](http://www.dur.ac.uk/sgia/imeis/lucefund/fellowship/) Applicants should send a CV, an outline of their proposed research and contact details for two referees by Wednesday 30 April 2014 to: The Secretary, Sir William Luce Memorial fund, Durham University Library, Palace Green, Durham DH1 3RN, UK. Tel. +44 (0)191 334 1218. Email: [Luce.fund@durham.ac.uk](mailto:Luce.fund@durham.ac.uk)

#### SOAS Scholarships and Studentships

The School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, offers numerous scholarships with relevance to Arabian studies. For further information see [www.soas.ac.uk/registry/scholarships/](http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/scholarships/) or contact: The Scholarships Officer, Registry, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG, UK. Email: [scholarships@soas.ac.uk](mailto:scholarships@soas.ac.uk)

#### Thesiger-Oman Fellowships

By the kind generosity of the His Majesty Qaboos bin Said Al-Said, Sultan of Oman, the Royal Geographical Society offers one annual fellowship of up to £8,000 for geographical research in the arid and semi arid regions of the world, as a memorial to Sir Wilfred Thesiger. The fellowship will focus either on the physical aspects or on the human dimension of arid environments. The fellowship funds a researcher with an outstanding research proposal, including periods of arid environment fieldwork. To reflect Thesiger's interests, research within the Middle East and other arid regions he visited will be given priority, but applications for work in the world's other arid regions is also welcomed. The deadline is 23 November each year. For more information see: [www.rgs.org/OurWork/Grants/Research/Thesiger-Oman+Fellowships.htm](http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Grants/Research/Thesiger-Oman+Fellowships.htm)

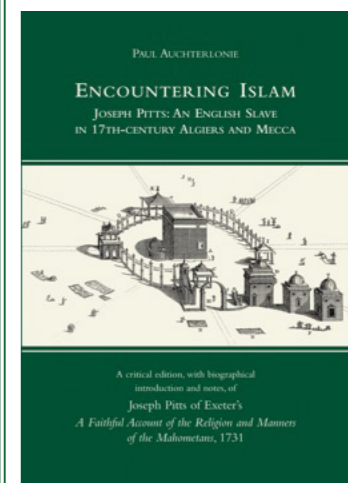
#### From ARABIAN PUBLISHING

### Encountering Islam

*Joseph Pitts: An English Slave in 17th-century Algiers and Mecca*

By Paul Auchterlonie

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234 x 156 mm  
352 pages  
17 illustrations, 1 foldout,  
2 maps  
Notes, Bibliography, Index  
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Price: £48.00

# CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

## Completed conferences 2013

### Red Sea VI

17–20 March 2013, Tabuk University, Saudi Arabia.

See the BFSa NEWS section, page 8.

### 12th International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ): ‘Transparent Borders’

5–11 May 2013, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

Every three years, ICHAJ brings together all of the researchers working in Jordan. ‘Transparent Borders’ was the main theme of the 2013 conference. Contributions were focused on the following aspects: Excavations reports (new excavations or advances in ongoing projects; including site management, new methods of excavation, documentation, interpretation and analysis); presentations of museums; illicit trade of antiquities; conservation methods; historical topics; new results in epigraphic studies in Jordan.

### BRISMES Graduate Student Conference: Minorities: between marginality and participation in the Middle East

8 May 2013, Oxford

The conference analysed traditional and innovative modes of participation, and discussed how recent political events have changed, challenged or maintained these. For further details, see: [www.brismes.ac.uk/events/58-brismes-annual-conference-2012](http://www.brismes.ac.uk/events/58-brismes-annual-conference-2012)

### The Location of Islam in Francophone Cultures: ‘Allah n’est pas obligé’

20 June 2013, University of Stirling, Scotland

This postgraduate study day of the Society for Francophone Postcolonial Studies (SFPS) brought together postgraduate researchers and attending scholars in the humanities and the social sciences to reflect on the location of Islam in Francophone cultures. Further information can be found at: <http://africanwords.com/2013/01/31/cfp-allah-nest-pas-oblige-the-location-of-islam-in-francophone-cultures-pg-study-day/>

### BRISMES annual conference: ‘Popular movements in the Middle East and the Arab World’

24–26 June, University College, Dublin, Ireland

The year 2013 saw BRISMES’ 40th annual conference held for the first time in Ireland. It was attended by some 200 participants from various disciplines, working throughout the Middle East. There were several papers on Arabia. Many of these focused on modern political and economic issues. Reflections on the literature of the Gulf, art and on ethnic identity were also discussed. Notable among them

was a paper entitled ‘Ibero-Americans Discover the Arabian Gulf’ presented by Federico Vélez, Zayed University, and ‘Split Vision: America in the Eyes of Gulf Arab Travelers’ presented by Kamal Abdel-Malek from the American University in Dubai. Others of interest included an excellent paper on the significance of social space in Bahrain, presented by Lisa Barrington, University of Lund.

Report by Dr Janet Starkey

### The ARAM Conferences

In 2013 Aram organized four conferences: three at the University of Oxford and one abroad at the University of Stockholm in Sweden. The Thirty-Sixth International Conference on the theme of **Neo-Aramaic Dialects** was held at the University of Oxford, **8–10 July 2013**. The Thirty-Eighth International Conference on **The Modern Arab Renaissance** took place at the University of Oxford, one week later, **15th–17th July**. For more information see: [www.aramsociety.org/conferences.htm](http://www.aramsociety.org/conferences.htm)

### Gulf Research Meeting

2–5 July 2013, University of Cambridge

The 4th Annual Gulf Research Meeting workshops included: boundaries and territory in the Gulf Region, Gulf cities as interfaces, a focus on Saudi Arabia and the Arab uprisings, reflexions about the relationship between the Gulf and Asia, and the Gulf countries and Latin America. For further information see: [www.grm2013@grc.net](http://www.grm2013@grc.net)

### 2013 ASTENE Conference: ‘Researched and Reflections’

12–15 July 2013, Aston University, Birmingham

The 10th Biennial Conference involved 80 participants from over 12 countries. While most papers focused on the Ottoman empire, the Levant and Egypt, there were several papers about Arabia, including one by Nicholas Stanley-Price, an adviser on cultural heritage conservation in Rome, on re-establishing the reputation of Raymond O’Shea’s *The Sand Kings of Oman* (Methuen, 1947), an important source for reconstructing the impact of the British presence in the Trucial States.

O’Shea’s account of the Liwa oasis had been criticized by Wilfred Thesiger and others, so that some even doubted the authenticity of the book, but Stanley-Price re-established its authenticity. Patricia Berg from the University of Helsinki spoke on a Finn, G.A. Wallin, who travelled in the Middle East, including around the Arabian Peninsula, between 1843 and 1850. His aim was to gather material about Arabic dialects and to achieve this purpose, Wallin assumed a Muslim identity as ‘Abd al-Wālī. Dr Wojciech Machowski, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, described the travels of Władysław Szczepanski (1877–1927), whose book, *In Arabia Petraea*, is a valuable source of information about the life

of the people of Arabia Petraea in the early 20th century; while Dr Carsten Walbinder, Birzeit University, Palestine described a German doctor, Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, who began his studies in Aleppo (1802–1805) before travelling to Yemen where he met an unexpected death in 1811. Elisabeth Monamy from Oriental Institute of the University of Vienna, introduced ‘Eduard Glaser: An Austrian Orientalist’. Glaser undertook four journeys in Arabia between 1882 and 1894 where he studied South Arabian inscriptions and brought a quantity back to Europe.

Report by Dr Janet Starkey

### The 2013 Seminar for Arabian Studies

26–28 July 2013, The British Museum

for a detailed report, see the BFSa NEWS section, page 7.

For the programme see:

[www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies](http://www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies)

### ‘Gertrude Bell and Iraq: A Life and Legacy’

12–13 September 2013, British Academy, London

This was a conference dedicated to the English traveller, author, and political officer who influenced British imperial policy-making and helped establish the Hashemite dynasties in Jordan and Iraq. Bell’s knowledge of the Middle East was acquired through extensive travels in the region, including Arabia. This was the first major international conference to examine Bell’s work.

For more information see: [www.britac.ac.uk/events/2013/Gertrude\\_Bell\\_and\\_Iraq.cfm](http://www.britac.ac.uk/events/2013/Gertrude_Bell_and_Iraq.cfm)

Report by Dr Janet Starkey

### The 47th Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting

10–13 October 2013, Sheraton New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana

The location for the meeting was just beside the vibrant French Quarter of New Orleans. The programme included 285 sessions that were presented in 12 panel time-slots. There were 20 papers that focused on Arabia and 29 on the Gulf. Again, like BRISMES, there was a focus on modern history, migration issues and contemporary politics with papers such as ‘Between Aden and Dhofar: The Lasting Image of Revolution in South Arabia’ by Nathan Christensen; ‘Contesting Hierarchy: Gulf States and Saudi Arabia’ by Karyn Wang; ‘Nostalgia for a Lost Homeland: the Hadramawt Independence Movement in Saudi Arabia’ by Iain Walker; and ‘The Geopolitical Dimension of Ottoman-Bedouin Relations at the Height of Inter-Imperial Rivalry’ by Mostafa Minawi, who discussed the Ottoman Empire’s international policy and the geopolitics of frontier zones as reflected in Ottoman-Bedouin relations.

Other papers such as ‘Race and Tribal Origin in an Arabian Oasis Town: the Case of al-‘Ula’ by Nadav Samin drew on interviews, manuscripts, family documents and ethnographic fieldwork (between 2011 and 2012) in the northwest Arabian oasis town of al-‘Ula, in order to discover how this

Saudi community asserts its connections to the Harb, a prominent Arabian tribe. In ‘YouTube Music Videos and the Construction of Yemeni Identity’, Ari Ariel examined videos featuring Yemeni Jewish singers performing ‘traditional’ songs. Yemeni diasporas – one Jewish, based in Israel and focused on an increasingly ‘imagined’ Yemen; and one Muslim, made up of emigrants and temporary migrant workers throughout the world, – interact through these music videos on YouTube. ‘The Revolution Will Be Staged Tonight: Contemporary Socio-Political Theater in Yemen and Oman’ by Katherine Hennessey, was on the recent history of drama in Yemen and Oman, as she examined the evolving use of theatre as a means and a locus of protest.

Useful papers were presented in the field of linguistics including ‘Linguistic Performance in Qatari Arabic’ by Michael Mendoza; ‘Mental and Linguistic Tropes and Their Relationship to the Metaphor’ by Ali Hussein; and an interesting socio-linguistic paper on ‘The Role of Performance in the Creation of a New Variety in Saudi Arabia’ by Mona Al-Shihry who identified a new variety of speech among Saudi Arabia’s youth, which is continuing to spread around the country. The study was based on three hours of recordings by six young famous Saudi YouTube bloggers (video bloggers), both male and female. Though the features of this variety are not yet stable, generally its speakers accommodate their language to that of al-Hijaz, which they consider to be a cosmopolitan centre that represents future aspirations of the youths.

On aspects of collective memory, two papers caught the audience’s attention. An excellent paper was presented by Mary Ann Fay about ‘Heritage Sites, Collective Memory and National Identity in the United Arab Emirates’ which focused on different interpretations of sites such as Bastikiyyah, the Dubai Museum and Hatta village in Dubai and the heritage zone in Sharjah. It examined whether collective memory, as preserved in these buildings and in artefacts on display, conveys what Emiratis remember of the past before independence in 1971 or whether they have been used to help construct a national identity. In ‘Transnational Nation: Mobility, Identity, and Place in Emirati Memoirs’, Matthew MacLean suggests a discontinuity between historical memory of a highly mobile past and Emiratis’ present identification with a national territorial space.

Report by Dr Janet Starkey

### 2013 Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR)

20–23 November 2013, Baltimore, Maryland

The annual meeting is the focal event of the year for ASOR and its affiliated research centres. Over 900 scholars, students, and interested members of the public came together for three intensive days of academic lectures, poster presentations, business meetings, evening receptions, and general conservation. For more information, visit: [www.asor.org/am/index.html](http://www.asor.org/am/index.html)

## 'The Archaeology of North Arabia: Oases and Landscape'

5–8 December 2013, University of Vienna, Austria

The International Congress 'The Archaeology of North Arabia: Oases and Landscape' took place at the University of Vienna between December 5th and 8th 2013. Some 22 international scholars from Europe, Japan and the Near East – environmental specialists, and those concerned with the archaeology and the history of the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula – gathered to discuss their latest results.

The scientific gathering in Vienna sought to fill a gap in providing a venue for presenting and debating new research projects in the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula. It was very generously funded by the Institute for Near Eastern Studies and supported by the Faculty for Philological and Cultural Studies of the University of Vienna, by the Saudi Heritage Preservation Society (SHPS), by the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Archaeology (SCTA), kindly supported by the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Vienna and by the Culture Section of the Magistratsabteilung 7, City of Vienna, kindly supported by the Austrian Oriental Society (Orientalische Gesellschaft, ORGES).

Greetings came from the Vice-Rector of the University of Vienna Prof. Dr. Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, HE Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Vienna, Mohammed Salloum (read by his deputy Mohammed Madani), Jamal S. Umar for the SCTA, and the Organizer, Marta Luciani. The meeting was then opened by Ricardo Eichmann, Director of the Orient Department of the German Archaeological Institute who spoke on 'The role of archaeological research in Saudi Arabia'. He introduced the important theme of the role of archaeology in Saudi Arabia during our globalized times.

Day one of the Congress then opened with Reinder Neef (of the Scientific Department of the Head Office of the German Archaeological Institute, Berlin) who discussed 'Beginning and development of oasis cultivation in S. Jordan and NW Saudi Arabia – An archaeobotanical view'. Michèle Dinies (of the Free University, Berlin), Birgit Plessen (Geoforschung Zentrum, Potsdam), Reinder Neef and Harald Kürschne (Free University, Berlin) then spoke on 'Holocene Palaeoenvironment, climate development and oasis cultivation in NW Saudi Arabia – latest results of palynological investigations at Tayma'. They offered very interesting data on the first attestations of date palms in the oases of Northern Arabia (including Southern Jordan). Surprisingly enough data point to the presence of grape and vine earlier than the palm tree – and the latter not before the end of the 3rd millennium BC (ca. 2200 BCE) in Northern Arabia. Thus, our current ideas of the onset of the 'classical' image of oasis landscape with vegetation dominated by palms and related, second-storey lower fruit trees must be revised.

The congress went on with two survey reports, focusing on the Neolithic and Chalcolithic oases cultures and their development into the 4th millennium BCE. The first was by Hans-Georg K. Gebel (of the Free University, Berlin) and read by M. Luciani on the topic 'First insights on the sociohydraulic foundations of oasis life: Rajail and Qulban Beni Murra'. The second by Sumio Fujii, (of Kanazawa University, Japan) on 'Archaeological Investigations at the Burial Fields of Wadi Ghubai, Tabuk Province, NW Arabia'. Different hypotheses for the trajectory from well-based pastoralism to oasis life were discussed.

Zbigniew Fiema (of Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) and Jérôme Rohmer (CNRS, Paris) then presented the first of the site-reports, focussing on late 1st millennium BCE and early 1st millennium CE Medain Saleh, with a talk entitled 'Early Hegra: the Excavations in Area 9 at Medain Salih'.

The first day was concluded by a keynote lecture by Michael C.A. Macdonald, Oxford University, who spoke on 'Some new "Ancient Records from North Arabia"' and described how our historical reconstructions of ancient North Arabian societies have been transformed thanks to the more recent textual, epigraphic and archaeological discoveries in the area.

### *The ultimate frontier explored*

The idea that the archaeology of North Arabia is the ultimate frontier in research of a scarcely investigated area of the Near East was underscored during the second day by reports from the field. These started with one from Jérémie Schiettecatte (CNRS, Paris) who discussed 'Al-Kharj oasis: landscape and settlement process from Mid-Holocene to the modern period'. Arnulf Hausleiter (German Archaeological Institute) then talked on 'Oases of Northern Arabia in Comparison'. Both mentioned novel finds dated to the second millennium BCE, in particular metal weapons from funerary contexts that find their best comparisons in Levantine specimens. These new discoveries pose the crucial question of the start of cultural interconnections between North Arabia and the Levant indicating a much earlier date than hitherto hypothesised. A further report was given by Saba Farès (University of Lorraine) and Dörte Rokitta-Krumnow (Berlin) on the subject of 'Recent results of the archaeological research in the oasis of Kilwa' (read by D. Rokitta-Krumnow).

Two case-studies verged on specific themes. Andrea Intilia (German Archaeological Institute, Berlin) gave a paper on 'The Qurayyah painted ware(s): regional distribution and chronological problems in the light of newest research', (read by A. Hausleiter), which discussed the recently-debated question of the identification and dating of the so-called 'Qurayyah Painted Ware'. This ceramic class was formerly known as 'Midianite pottery' because of its late second millennium BCE date and attestation in sites around the Hijaz, North Arabia, the Sinai and Southern Jordan, the area traditionally identified in literary sources (esp.



Pottery Sherds of Qurayyah Painted Ware from Qurayyah, courtesy DAI Orient-Abteilung.

the Old Testament) as the Kingdom of Midian. The second study was given by Guillaume Charloux (CNRS, Paris) on 'Managing the Water Supply in the Dûmat al-Jandal Oasis (Northern Saudi Arabia). An Exploration of the Ancient Hydraulic System'.

The second part of Day Two discussed a number of issues concerned with the textual records. Alessandra Avanzini (Università di Pisa) spoke on 'From South to North in ancient Arabia' and addressed the very important topic of choosing the most likely explanatory model(s) to account for the similarities and cultural contacts between the North and the South of the Arabian Peninsula – and their earliest date – as attested in the written record, and criticized a dating of significant migrations of the population in the historical period. Said F. Al Said (King Saud University, Riyadh) gave a talk on 'Dedan: Geschichte und Kultur' (in German), which offered an overview of the textual record discovered by the Saudi expedition to Khuraybah, ancient Dedan.

The following two lectures were both by scholars from the University of Vienna. Michael Jursa and Reinhard Pirngruber spoke on 'Northern Arabia in the cuneiform sources of the first millennium BC'. George Hatke then presented 'Imru' al-Qays, Shammar Yuhar'ish, and Shāpūr: Arabia between the Lakhmids, Himyarites, and Sāsānids', which discussed textual evidence for the presence of individuals carrying Arab names in the 6th century BCE in the first case, and the data from the 3rd to 6th century CE in the second instance.

The second day was rounded off by Sultan Muhsen and F. Naimi (of the Qatar Museums Authority) who gave 'An Overview of Archaeology in Qatar', focusing on some cultural management choices made in the Gulf state; and by the Conclusions presented by the Organizer of the meeting. The proceedings of the congress are in preparation and a follow-up in two years time is planned for December 2015.

*Report by the Conference Organizer, Ass.-Prof. Mag. Dr. habil. Marta Luciani of the Institut für Orientalistik, University of Vienna. marta.luciani@univie.ac.at*

## The Role of Museums and Cultural Institutions in Strengthening Identity: Museum Collections as Means of Defining Identity and Enhancing a Sense of Belonging

17–18 December 2013

This conference was organized by Sharjah Archaeology Museum, Sharjah Museums Department and took place on 17 and 18 December 2013. Delegates included a wide range of experts, intellectuals, academics and representatives from local and international museum and cultural organizations from the Gulf area. The main themes discussed were collaboration and relationships between museums and cultural institutions for the promotion of museums and the role of collections in defining the cultural identity of the Arab Gulf to enhance a sense of belonging among future generations.

The conference began with the opening speech by Habib Al-Sayegh, chairman of the Emirates Writers Union who introduced the conference topics of the reality of culture in the Gulf area and the Arab world, threats of globalization, Arab cultural failings, and the poor productivity of culture in the Arab world, which eventually results in undermining influence in the world.

Three main topics were addressed:

### *1. Museums in the Arab Gulf: Emergence and Evolution*

The topic was presented at three sessions with seven presentations focused on defining Arab culture in the Arab Gulf region and the importance of popular heritage in establishing identity. The challenges to identity that have emerged over the past three decades since discovering oil were discussed. The history of the museums, their emergence and evolution, were compared to their counterparts elsewhere in the Arab world.

### *2. Museums and Cultural Institutions: Co-operation and Integration to Preserve Identity*

This topic was presented at one session with two presentations highlighting the role of global cultural organizations and affiliated offices in the Arab Gulf and the collaboration with governments for the development of culture enterprises based on education and training courses to help nationals qualify as professionals in the field of museums.

### *3. Our Museum Our Identity: Steps and Success*

The topic was presented at three sessions with seven presentations. Papers on the projects and programmes, including those that lead to qualifications in museums and the cultural sector being offered at the universities in the Gulf region, were discussed. Obstacles and the poor take-up of these programmes were discussed as well as the refusal of universities to offer culture-related programmes as they are not economically viable.

Presentations were given on the role of cultural bodies and institutions in reinforcing efforts to preserve and strengthen identity in the light of innovative academic and educational



The Sharja 'Role of Museums' conference in progress, December 2013

programmes. Programmes are designed to target different groups of people from all ages and walks of life to preserve heritage and the cultural environment. The aim is to strengthen the identity of the locals and create channels of communication between expatriates and visitors with the purpose of removing misconceptions and promoting an understanding of the native culture of the region. The presentations offered an outlook of the future of museums and highlighted future plans and developments. Partnerships with global and world class museums were presented.

At the conclusion of the conference recommendations and conclusions were summarised as follows.

- The role of museums and cultural centres in the Arab Gulf should be highlighted and encouraged to enable them to work to their full potential. Stress was placed on the importance of educating and training nationals to become qualified professionals in the museum and cultural sector within current programmes and in particular for tour guiding.
- Museums and cultural organizations should be encouraged to use different media to highlight collections and objects towards the goal of strengthening community cultural identity and design and provide public educational programmes that contribute to the local cultural product.
- Holistic strategies should be established to preserve museums as cultural institutions and to strengthen cultural identity. Activities, programmes and department management are to be promoted with creativity and state-of-the-art technology.
- Museum-related topics should be included in educational curricula taught throughout the Arab Gulf region. Topics should include the importance of museums, collections and defining the educational, cultural and scientific role of museums.
- Enhance co-operation to organize, increase and enrich joint exhibitions with the participation of GCC countries.
- Establish a museums society of the Arab Gulf countries under ICOM, UNESCO.
- Launch a specialized website dedicated to the Arab Gulf museums network for documenting objects and defining similarities and differences among the collections in GCC countries. The website is proposed to be based in the emirate of Sharjah, UAE as it is the Capital of Islamic Culture for 2014.
- Encourage plans of co-operation and collaboration among museums and cultural institutions within the Arab Gulf

countries, also between museums and cultural institutions in the Arab world and, beyond, with the rest of the world. Share knowledge, information and experience to reinforce the relationships between nations and organizations.

- Urge international and regional organizations to hold events that highlight and promote the role of museums in strengthening the cultural identity of the Arab Gulf.

*Nasir Abdelkarim Mohamed, Sharjah Archaeology Museum. nmohamed@archaeologymuseum.ae*

## Conferences, lectures & seminars, 2014

(Information as per the Bulletin's press date of May 2014.)

### International Seminar: Kuwait Through the Ages

**Kuwait National Council for Culture Arts and Letters (NCCAL), 3–6 March, National Museum of Kuwait** NCCAL's seminar in Kuwait City 'Kuwait Through the Ages' took place in March. Of the 24 papers, there were contributions from the directors of the archaeological missions currently working in Kuwait as well as from scholars invited from the GCC and all over the world. NCCAL plan to publish the proceedings of this seminar.

### Royal Geographical Society seminar: 'The Natural Heritage of the Sultanate of Oman: field science in Oman – past, present and future'

**4 March 2014, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), 1 Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AR**

The above seminar was hosted by the National Field Research Centre for Environmental Conservation, Sultanate of Oman. It provided an opportunity for international figures, including many specialists from Oman, to present and discuss the British contribution to field research – past and present, plus Omani views on future priorities.

The following topics were presented: development and conservation, landscape, photography, wildlife or conservation and new technologies and plans for the future. Attendees also attended the launch of the exhibition which accompanies the seminar: 'Visions of Oman: from Ptolemy to the Present'. The exhibition ran from 4–28 March. For a full programme of the seminar please go to: [www.oman.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.oman.eventbrite.co.uk)

**'Saudi Arabia in the Wider Region'** by Sir John Jenkins (a Saudi-British Society lecture)

**5 March 2014, 5.30pm, the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, 43, Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1.** This Saudi-British Society lecture was given by Sir John Jenkins, who joined the FCO in 1980 and after studying Arabic at SOAS and elsewhere has served mainly in the

Middle East and South East Asia. His first posting was to Abu Dhabi. He has been British Ambassador to four countries, including Syria and Iraq. He was also the British Consul General in Jerusalem and the United Kingdom Special Representative to the Libyan National Transitional Council. He was Director for the Middle East and North Africa in the FCO between 2007 and 2009. He took up his appointment as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in June 2012.

For more information, contact: [ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk)

### The Paleodeserts Project conference: 'Green Arabia Conference – Human Prehistory at the Cross-roads of Continents'

**2–4 April 2014, University of Oxford**

Scholars and students from around the world gathered for three days of presentations and discussions covering the latest multidisciplinary research on the prehistory of the Arabian Peninsula and its role at the cross-roads of continents. See also page 29.

More information on: [www.palaeodeserts.com](http://www.palaeodeserts.com).

### AUS BRISMES Conference: 'Mapping Arabic Heritage: Language, Literature and Culture, Past and Present'

**14–16 April 2014, The American University of Sharjah (AUS), United Arab Emirates**

The Department of Arabic and Translation Studies (ATS) at the American University of Sharjah, with the support of the Centre of Gulf Studies (CGS), and the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) hosted the above conference covering all areas related to Arabian heritage, including Arabic language and linguistics, literature, culture, translation and Islamic studies.

Contact: Dr Imed Nsiri, Dr Mai Zaki Conference Email: [atsbrismes@aus.edu](mailto:atsbrismes@aus.edu)

### The ARAM conferences

The Aram Society has laid the foundation for the study of continuity between the Aramaic civilization and other Syro-Mesopotamian civilizations. Aram conferences, however, show how closely intertwined they are, and that Aramaic civilisation would not have flourished without an intellectual cross-fertilisation.

In 2014 Aram is organizing two conferences at the University of Oxford. The Thirty-Ninth International Conference on the theme of **Astrology in the Near East, 23–25 April 2014**. Then over **14th–16th July**, the Fortieth International Conference will focus on **Hatra, Palmyra, Edessa: Contacts and Cultural Exchange between Cities in the Fertile Crescent before Islam**.

For more information see: <http://www.aramsociety.org/conferences.htm>

**'Bee-keeping in Saudi Arabia'** by Julian Lush (a Saudi-British Society lecture)

**8 May 2014, 5.30pm, the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, 43, Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1.**

The May 2014 Saudi-British Society lecture was given by Julian Lush, Vice-Chairman of the British-Yemeni Society. Lush is a longstanding member of the London Beekeepers' Association. He has organized and led four visits by groups of British beekeepers to look into beekeeping in Arabian regions: they have visited Northern Oman, Egypt, Saudi Arabia (al-Baha province), and Dhofar, Southern Oman. He talked about the particular experiences the group had and the warm welcome they received when they visited King Saud University, Riyadh, and beekeepers in the al-Baha Province, Saudi Arabia.

For more information, contact: [ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ionisthompson@yahoo.co.uk)

### UCL Qatar, 'Museums in Arabia'

The Second Edition of the 'Museums in Arabia' conference **13–16 June 2014**, Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar. The conference is organized by Sarina Wakefield (Open University, UK) and Karen Exell (UCL Qatar), and is supported by the Qatar National Research Fund, UCL Qatar, the Museum of Islamic Art, and Qatar Museums Authority. It extends the discussions and debates initiated at the first Museums in Arabia conference which took place in July 2012 at the British Museum, London, as a special session alongside the Seminar for Arabian Studies. The session explored the role of the museum as an institution for the preservation and interpretation of heritage in a region whose past is based upon traditional practices and oral histories, and in which the intangible past has taken precedence over the preservation of the material past.

Although museums have been present in the region since the 1950s, the recent investment in high-profile museums in a number of the states of the Arabian Peninsula is establishing the museum as a central form of heritage preservation, arguably overshadowing local forms of heritage performance and preservation. In addition, the mega-museum projects in, for example, Abu Dhabi and Qatar are drawing the attention of the international media to the region, and such media interpretations of these developments have come to dominate the discourse. Critical analysis of the role of museums in the Arabian Peninsula is at an early stage. This conference explores a number of themes addressing questions such as: What challenges do museums in the region face in their development? What is the nature of the heritage collected, curated and displayed in the museums? How are the museum model and the implementation of international museological expertise impacting on local forms of heritage representation? What kind of audience are the museums speaking to, and how do local communities engage with the museums? What is the nature of community vis-à-vis the museum in the region?

This conference will be of interest to academics and students

working in the field of museums and cultural heritage in the region and globally, museum and cultural heritage practitioners, anthropologists, archaeologists, historians, and, more broadly, those with an interest in the sociocultural, economic and political landscape of the region.

For more information see: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/qatar/events/museums-in-arabia-conference>

### BRISMES Annual Conference: ‘The Middle East in Global Perspective: Interactions Across Time and Space’

16–18 June 2014, University of Sussex

The Annual Conference of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) is a three-day event that brings together prominent scholars, publishers, diplomats, non-governmental organizations, and the press to highlight areas of research and share information related to the Middle East.

From June 16–18 the University of Sussex is hosting this event as part of its growing investment in the field of Middle Eastern Studies. Plenary sessions include a keynote address by Professor Asef Bayat (University of Illinois), an expert on social movements and the politics of religiosity in the Middle East.

Few of the world’s regions are as intimately connected to the wider world as the Middle East. This is true historically, where the region has long acted as a crossroads of trade, culture and ideas, as well as in more contemporary contexts where, for example, the recent Arab protest movements are inspiring similar actions around the globe. The turn towards area studies in the 1960s has led to the flourishing of a specialized approach to Middle Eastern studies, in Britain as in other parts of the world. This has produced a great depth of detailed scholarly work on the region, though it also frequently separates our understanding of the Middle East from wider global contexts. Recently this has begun to change as scholars are increasingly focusing on the historical and contemporary intersections and interactions between the Middle East and the wider world. The 2014 BRISMES annual conference seeks to place these approaches at the centre of the discussion, encouraging applications for papers and panels that take up this theme in new and innovative ways.

The conference includes submissions that highlight the connections between the Middle East and other areas of the globe, as well as ties within the region, be they between individual countries or between sub-regions, such as the Mashreq, Maghreb, Levant, and Gulf. We also aim to encourage new dialogue between scholars studying the Middle East on either side of the divide between area studies and specific disciplines ranging from history to literary studies, anthropology to international relations, and many shades inbetween.

Within the overall theme of ‘The Middle East in Global Perspective’, our papers and panels have been mainly classified into the following sub-themes:

- Mashreq and Maghreb: Travel, trade and pilgrimage
- The Middle East and South-South connections
- Global networks and the Middle East: Religion, migration, politics, culture [including transregional and translinguistic networks in the pre-modern age]
- The Middle East, global interactions, and the rise of modernity
- Middle Eastern economies in global and historical perspective
- The new geopolitics of the Middle East [including the roles played by rising world powers such as China]
- Middle Eastern revolutions and revolts in global contexts [including grassroots activism, media mobilization, debates about international intervention]
- The Middle East in global cultural politics: Translation, representation, and perception
- Middle Eastern visual, literary, and popular cultures in global contexts

It is anticipated that a selection of the submissions related to the core themes will be published after the conference. Non-presenting conference participants are warmly welcomed.

For more information see: <http://www.brismes2014.co.uk/> or contact: [Brismes2014@gmail.com](mailto:Brismes2014@gmail.com)

### The 2014 Seminar for Arabian Studies

25–27 July 2014, British Museum, London

For more details on the Seminar, including an account of the 2013 Seminar, please see the BFSa NEWS section, page 7. Also visit: [www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies](http://www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies)

### Gulf Research Meeting

25–28 August 2014, University of Cambridge

This year the GRM workshops will include: considerations about ecology in the Gulf Region, reflexions about the foreign policy or the relation between the United States and the Gulf as observations about social media and the changing context of politics in the Gulf.

For further information, see: [www.gulfresearchmeeting.net/](http://www.gulfresearchmeeting.net/)

### 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR)

19–22 November 2014, San Diego, California

The Annual Meeting is the yearly coming-together of ASOR’s vibrant academic community. The conference attracts over 1,000 scholars and enthusiasts of archaeology, linguistics, geography, epigraphy, anthropology, and other fields related to the study of the ancient Near East.

For more information, see: [www.asor.org/am/](http://www.asor.org/am/)

### The 48th Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting

22–25 November 2014, Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC.

MESA is primarily concerned with the area encompassing Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Israel, Pakistan, and the countries of the Arab World from the 7th century to modern times.

Other regions, including Spain, Southeastern Europe, China and the former Soviet Union, also are included for the periods in which their territories were parts of the Middle Eastern empires or were under the influence of Middle Eastern civilization. Comparative work is encouraged. The meeting will again include a book bazaar and a film festival.

For more information see:

[www.mesa.arizona.edu/annual-meeting/](http://www.mesa.arizona.edu/annual-meeting/)

## NEW PUBLICATIONS ON ARABIA

Please see also the Book Reviews section for new publications, and the Societies, Associations and Other Online Resources section below for information on the newsletters of various societies.

### NEW BOOKS 2013–14

Achcar, G., 2013. *Marxism, Orientalism, Cosmopolitanism*. Saqi Books. ISBN: 978-086356793-3

Al-Farsi, S. 2013. *Democracy and Youth in the Middle East: Islam, Tribalism and the Rentier State in Oman*. I. B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076090-2

Al-Maqdissi, M., Braemer, F., Dentzer, J.-M. and Ishaq, E. (dir), 2013. *Hauran V: La Syrie du Sud du Néolithique à l’Antiquité tardive*. Volume II. Presses de l’Ifpo. ISBN: 978-2-35159-391-2

Al-Sharmani, M. (ed) 2013. *Feminist Activism, Women’s Rights, and Legal Reform*. Zed Books Ltd. ISBN: 978-1-780-32962-8

Al-Rasheed, M., 2013. *A Most Masculine State. Gender, Politics and Religion in Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-052112252-8

Bismarck, H. von, 2013. *British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961–1968: Conceptions of Informal Empire*. Palgrave Macmillian. ISBN: 978-113732671-3

Burdett, A. (ed.), 2013. *The Expansion of Wahhabi Power in Arabia, 1798–1932*. 8 Volume Set. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-184097270-2

Colgan, J. D., 2013. Petro-Aggression. *When Oil Causes War*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-110765497-6

Cluzan, S. and Butterlin, P. (dir.), 2014. *Voués à Ishtar. Syrie, janvier 1934, André Parrot découvre Mari*. Presses de l’Ifpo. ISBN: 978-2-35159-394-3

Decie, B. P. (ed), 2013. *The Art and Life of Chaouki Chamoun*. Saqi Books. ISBN: 978-086356791-9

Determann, J. M., 2013. *Historiography in Saudi Arabia: Globalization and the State in the Middle East*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076664-5

Eid, M., 2014 (July). *Arab Orientalism: Images of America in the Middle East*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076938-7

Erskine-Loftus, P. (ed), 2013. *Reimagining Museums: Practice in the Arabian Peninsula*. MuseumsEtc. ISBN: 978-1-907697-64-7

Hertog, S., Luciani, G. and Valeri, M. (eds), 2013. *Business Politics in the Middle East*. C. Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd. ISBN: 978-184904235-2

Junod, B., Khalil, G., Weber, S., and Wolf, G. (eds), 2013. *Islamic Art and the Museum. Approaches to Art and Archaeology of the Muslim World in the Twenty-First Century*. ISBN: 978-086356413-0

Kamrava, M. 2013. *Qatar: Small State, Big Politics*. Cornell University Press. ISBN: 978-0-8014-5209-3

Kinnimont, J., 2014 (July). *Bahrain in Focus*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-184885448-2

Khair, El-Din H., 2014 (April). *Arab-Iranian Relations*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076647-8

Kheirandish, E., 2014 (May). *Baghdad and Isfahan: A Dialogue of Two Cities in an Age of Science ca. 750–1750*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076833-5

Khoury, D. R., 2013. *Iraq in Wartime. Soldiering, Martyrdom, and Remembrance*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-052171153-1

Kropp, A. J. M, 2013. *Images and Monuments of Near Eastern Dynasts, 100 BC – AD 100*. Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-019967072-7

Jorum, E., 2014 (May). *Beyond Syria’s Borders: A History of Territorial Disputes in the Middle East*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076742-0

Lackner, H., 2014. *Why Yemen Matters. A Society in Transition*. Saqi Books. ISBN: 978-086356777-3

Mikhail, A., 2013. *The Animal in Ottoman Egypt*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-019931527-7

Morton, M. Q., 2013. *Buraiimi: The Struggle for Power, Influence and Oil in Arabia*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-184885818-3

Nasser, C. D., 2013. *Classic Palestinian Cuisine*. Saqi Books. ISBN: 978-086356844-2

Porter, V. and Saif L. (eds), 2013. *The Hajj: Collected Essays*. British Museum Press. ISBN: 978-086159193-0.

Purser, B. H. (ed), 2013. *The Persian Gulf: Holocene Carbonate Sedimentation and Diagenesis in a Shallow Epicontinental Sea*. Springer. ISBN: 978-3-64265547-0.

Rahnema, A., 2013. *An Islamic Utopian: A Political Biography of Ali Shariati*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076802-1

Reid, M. H., 2013. *Law and Piety in Medieval Islam*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-052188959-9

Samei, S., 2014 (June). *Ancient Persia in Western History: Hellenism and the Representation of the Achaemenid Empire*. I.B. Taurus. ISBN: 978-178076480-1

Smith, A. M. II, 2013. *Roman Palmyra: Identity, Community and State Formation*. Oxford University Press, USA. ISBN: 978-019986110-1

Smith, W. R., 2014 (March). *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-110762202-9

Stewart, S., 2013. *The Everlasting Flame: Zoroastrianism in History and Imagination*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-178076809-0

Tate, G. et al, 2013. *Sergilla, village d'Apamène*. Presses de l'Ifpo. ISBN: 978-2-35159-393-6

Takriti, A. R., 2013. *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans and Empires in Oman, 1965–1976*. Oxford Historical Monographs. ISBN: 978-019967443-5

Vaiou, M., 2014 (March). *Diplomacy in the Early Islamic World: A Tenth-century Treatise on Arab–Byzantine Relations*. I.B. Tauris. ISBN: 978-184511652-1

Wakelnig, E., 2014. *A Philosophy Reader from the Circle of Miskawayh. Text, Translation and Commentary*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-052119361-0

Wippel, S. (ed), 2013. *Regionalizing Oman: Political, Economic and Social Dynamics. United Nations University Series on Regionalism*, Volume 6. Springer Science, Business Media Dordrecht. ISBN: 978-940076820-8

Woertz, E., 2013. *Oil for Food: The Global Food Crisis and the Middle East*. Oxford University Press, USA. ISBN: 978-019965948-7

## JOURNALS & MAGAZINES

### Adumatu

www.adumatu.org/en  
ISSN 1319-8947. Adumatu, PO Box 10071, Riyadh 11433, Saudi Arabia. Editors: Professor Adbul-Rahaman Al-Ansary (ed.), Dr Khaleel Ibrahim Al-Muaikeel and Dr. Abdullah Muhammad Al-Sharekh.  
Contact: adumatu@alsudairy.org.sa

### Arabia Antica

http://arabiantica.humnet.unipi.it/

### Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy

www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0905-7196  
ISSN: 0905-7196. E-ISSN: 1600-0471. This journal serves as a forum for study in archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics, and the early history of countries in the Arabian Peninsula.  
Editor: Daniel T. Potts.

### Aram

http://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php  
ISSN 0959-4213. E-ISSN 1783-1342. Published by the ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies. It presents contributions to its annual International Conference, together with the ARAM Newsletter.

### Atlal: Journal of Saudi Arabian Archaeology

ISSN 1319-8351. Ministry of Education for Antiquities and Museums, PO Box 3734, Riyadh 11481.

### Banipal: Magazine of Modern Arabic Literature

www.banipal.co.uk/

### Bulletin of the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia

www.thebfsa.org/content/bulletin  
Past and present issues of our very own Bulletin can now be found online.

### Chroniques Yémenites

www.cy.revues.org  
An annual review in French and Arabic, produced by the Centre français d'archéologie et de sciences sociales de Sanaa (CEFAS). The same website also covers Chroniques du Manuscrit au Yémen, which can also be downloaded free of charge.  
Email cy@journals.org

### Current World Archaeology

www.archaeology.co.uk  
Published six times a year.  
Email: cwa@archaeology.co.uk

### Fauna of Arabia

www.libri.ch/App\_Web/EN/services/faunaofarabia.aspx  
A series on the terrestrial, limnetic and marine zoology of the Arabian Peninsula. It began as Fauna of Saudi Arabia but changed its name and remit in 1998. It can be ordered from Karger Libri AG, P.O. Box, CH-4009 Basel, Switzerland Tel. ++41-613061500. Email journals@libri.ch

### HAWWA Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World

www.brill.nl/hawwa  
Hawwa publishes articles from all disciplinary and comparative perspectives that concern women and gender issues in the Middle East and the Islamic world. These include Muslim and non-Muslim communities within the greater Middle East, and Muslim and Middle Eastern communities elsewhere in the world.

### International Journal of Middle East Studies

www.jstor.org/journals/00207438.html  
IJMES is a quarterly journal that offers original research on politics, society and culture in the Middle East from the seventh century to the present day. It is published by Cambridge University Press under the auspices of the Middle East Studies Association of North America. Editor: Beth Baron. Email ijmes@gc.cuny.edu

### Journal of Arabian Studies; Arabia, the Gulf and the Red Sea

www.tandfonline.com/rjab  
ISSN 2153-4764. Journal launched in 2011 based and published at the Centre for Gulf Studies, University of Exeter. The latest issue was published in December 2012. Main Editor is James Onley J.Onley@exeter.ac.uk

### Journal of the British-Yemeni Society

www.al-bab.com/bys/journal.htm  
ISSN 1356-0229. Contact the Honorary Secretary, British-Yemeni Society, 2 Lisgar Terrace, London W14 8SJ. Tel: 020 7603 8895.

### Journal of Near Eastern Studies

www.journals.uchicago.edu/toc/jnes/current  
ISSN 0022-2968. Based in Chicago, JNES has been devoted to an examination of the civilizations of the Near East for more than 120 years. Contact jnes@uchicago.edu. Access to previous issues can be found through the JSTOR database.

### Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient

www.brill.nl/jesh  
ISSN 0022-4995. E-ISSN: 1568-5209. JESHO contains studies extending our knowledge of the economic and social history of what was once labelled as the Orient: the Ancient Near East, the World of Islam, and South, Southeast, and East Asia. Contact: jesho@let.leidenuniv.nl

### Journal of Oman Studies

ISSN 0378-8180. Published by the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, Sultanate of Oman, POB 668, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

### Journal of Persianate Studies

www.brill.nl/jps  
ISSN 1874-7094 and E-ISSN 1874-7167.  
Edited by Sakd Amir Arjomand.  
Order through: marketing@brill.nl

### Levant

www.maney.co.uk/index.php/journals/lev/  
ISSN: 0075-8914; E-ISSN: 1756-3801. Levant is the international peer-reviewed journal of the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL), a British Academy-sponsored institute with research centres in Amman and Jerusalem, but which also supports research in Syria, Lebanon and Cyprus. Contributions from a wide variety of areas, including anthropology, archaeology, geography, history, language and literature, political studies, religion, sociology and tourism, are encouraged. Editor: Graham Philip.

### Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication.

www.brill.nl/mjcc  
ISSN: 1873-9857 and E-ISSN: 1873-9865  
Order through marketing@brill.nl. MJCC provides a platform for diverse and interdisciplinary work, including original research papers from within and outside the Middle East, reviews and review articles, to investigate transformations in communication, culture and politics in the region.

### Paléorient

www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/revue/paleo  
ISSN 0153-9345. A multidisciplinary six-monthly CNRS journal with an international audience, devoted to a number of aspects of the prehistory and proto-history of south-western Asia, including Arabia. CNRS Editions, 15 rue Malebranche, F-75005 Paris. Further information email: paleorient@mae.u-paris10.fr

**Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies**

[www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-proceedings](http://www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-proceedings)

The Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies is a peer-reviewed series which each July publishes papers read at the Seminar in the previous July. It is the prime source for the most recent research on the Arabian Peninsula within a wide range of disciplines and for the latest discoveries in the field.

Papers from the 46th seminar held at the British Museum in July 2012, edited by Lloyd Weeks and Janet Watson, are now available: ISBN 9781905739653; 361 pages, illustrated throughout in colour and black-and-white; published July 2013. £65.

**Saudi Aramco World**

[www.saudiaramcoworld.com](http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com)

The oil company, Saudi Aramco distributes its magazine, Saudi Aramco World, to increase cross-cultural understanding and to broaden knowledge of the cultures, history and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their connections with the West. The bi-monthly magazine is distributed without charge, upon request. Saudi Aramco World, Box 469008, Escondido CA 92046 -9008.

**Syria**

[www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/revue/syria](http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/revue/syria)

E-ISSN 1957-701X. Syria is an annual journal, which was launched in 1920 by the French Institute of the Near East. It is dedicated to the history and archaeology of the Semitic Near East from Prehistory to the Islamic conquest. Each issue of Syria provides 12 to 18 articles in French, English, German, Italian and Spanish.

**Tribulus, Journal of the Emirates Natural History Group**

[www.enhg.org/trib/tribpdf.htm](http://www.enhg.org/trib/tribpdf.htm)

ISSN 1019-6919. PO Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, UAE. This now appears annually, rather than bi-annually.

**Wildlife Middle East News**

[www.wmenews.com](http://www.wmenews.com)

There are great pressures on the environment and wildlife throughout the Middle East. The rapid pace of economic development, the fragility of the natural ecosystems and low population densities are factors making many indigenous species vulnerable to extinction. The expansion of human populations and the increasing contact between domestic and wild animals has also increased disease transmission between wild and domestic species, including humans. An extremely useful quarterly bulletin of wildlife news, Wild Life Middle East keeps abreast of the situation and also reviews new publications.

## SOCIETIES, ASSOCIATIONS & OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

Significant information is only given below for new organizations. For further details on organizations which have been described in previous editions, please see either the websites listed or the Bulletin online at: [www.thebfsa.org/content/bulletin](http://www.thebfsa.org/content/bulletin)

**Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH)**

[www.adach.ae](http://www.adach.ae)

**Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeological Survey**

[www.adias-uae.com](http://www.adias-uae.com)

ADIAS has now been absorbed into ADACH, but this website still contains a record of its activities.

**Al-Bab**

[www.al-bab.com/](http://www.al-bab.com/)

Abundant data relating to the Arab world, aiming to introduce non-Arabs to the Arabs and their culture.

**American Institute for Yemeni Studies**

[www.aiys.org](http://www.aiys.org)

**Arab-British Centre**

[www.arabbritishcentre.org.uk/](http://www.arabbritishcentre.org.uk/)

**Arab World Institute**

[www.imarabe.org/](http://www.imarabe.org/)

**Arabian Wildlife**

[www.arabianwildlife.com](http://www.arabianwildlife.com)

**Archaeozoology of Southwest Asia and Adjacent Areas (ASWA [AA])**

[www.alexandriaarchive.org/icz/workaswa.htm](http://www.alexandriaarchive.org/icz/workaswa.htm)

**Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East**

[www.astene.org.uk](http://www.astene.org.uk)

**Atlas of Breeding Birds of Arabia**

[www.dspace.dial.pipex.com/arabian.birds%20](http://www.dspace.dial.pipex.com/arabian.birds%20)

**Bahrain Society**

[www.bhainsociety.com](http://www.bhainsociety.com)

**Barakat Trust**

[www.barakat.org](http://www.barakat.org)

**British Association for Near Eastern Archaeology**

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<http://www.cefass.com.ye/spip.php?rubrique138>

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**The Qantara Project**

<http://www.qantara-med.org>

The Qantara project, which is part of the Euromed Heritage programme, aims to contribute to mutual understanding and dialogue among Mediterranean cultures by highlighting their cultural heritage. The project has brought together the Departments of antiquities and heritage in nine partner countries—France, Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Syria. The Qantara, Mediterranean Heritage, and Eastern and Western Crossings project has led to the establishment of a database that can be consulted on the Internet, which presents a transversal vision of the Mediterranean's cultural heritage.

**UAE Interact, Culture Pages**

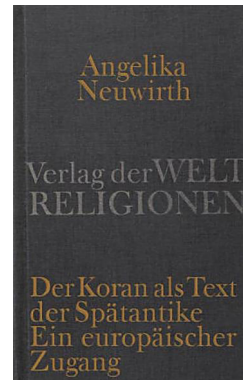
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# BOOK REVIEWS

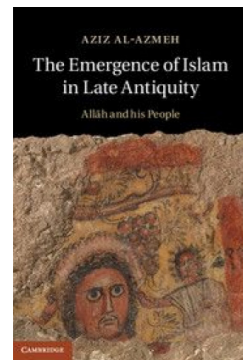
## Review Essay

This year's Books section opens with a Review Essay by **Werner Daum** who writes on:

### The Origins of the Qur'an and Islam: A Review of Current Scholarship.



***The Koran as a Text from Late Antiquity: A European Approach***  
Angelika Neuwirth  
Oxford: OUP, forthcoming, 2015.  
Extent, price and ISBN to be announced. (A translation of *Der Koran als Text der Spätantike: ein europäischer Zugang*. Berlin: Verlag der Weltreligionen, 2010. 859 pp. Hardback. €39.90. ISBN 978-3-458-71026-4)



***The Emergence of Islam in Late Antiquity: Allah and His People***  
Aziz al-Azmeh  
Cambridge: CUP, 2014. xxii + 614 pp. 6 b/w illustrations, 4 maps. Hardback. £110.00. ISBN 978-1-10703-187-6

In recent years and decades, the subject of this review has become an 'academic growth industry' (al-Azmeh). It is indeed a major focus of Middle Eastern studies, with a direct bearing on how we see Islam and its world. From amongst the plethora of recent publications, we shall be dealing here with the three topics which I believe are the most important and stimulating ones: Angelika Neuwirth's *Late Antiquity* thesis, Aziz al-Azmeh's *Out of Arabia* thesis, and the dating of the Qur'an.

It all began in the year 1977 when two studies conceived in a SOAS lecture theatre were released into the wider world in an effort to shake up the traditional view, that 'Muhammad created the Qur'an and thus Islam at the beginning of the 7th century AD' – which they largely succeeded in doing. Their impact (which had to do with both the Zeitgeist and the assumption, erroneous even then, that Arabia was a 'wilderness') continues to be felt strongly in Western scholarship. The two books were John Wansbrough's *Quranic Studies*, and Patricia Crone and Michael Cook's *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*. They

contended that practically nothing was known – by way of solid evidence – from 6th/7th-century Mecca and Arabia, and that therefore the origins of Islam should be sought a century or two after Muhammad, and in Syria/Palestine at that, and/or in Christian/Jewish milieus on the fringes of Arabia. The same would be true for the Qur'an, with the earliest manuscripts dating from the 2nd century AH. Even before 1977, each and every book on Middle Eastern history, art, Qur'anic or linguistic studies, took it as a self-evident truth that the 'inscriptions on the Dome of the Rock' (dating to sixty years after Muhammad) "represent the earliest known dated passages from the Qur'an" (Wikipedia).

This school of thought has earned itself the epithet of 'revisionism'. In recent years, however, two trends have emerged which suggest a totally different view. One, which I would qualify as current mainstream, is Angelika Neuwirth's Late Antiquity thesis; the other is Aziz al-Azmeh's contention that the Qur'an and Islam truly emerged out of the pre-Islamic religion of Arabia. We shall examine both. But the first subject we shall address is the dating of the earliest surviving Qur'anic mss, based on three recent studies by Sadeghi, Bergmann, Goudarzi and Déroche (see References below). All three come to the conclusion that the text of the scripture is the text recited, formalized and committed to writing by the Prophet Muhammad, and that it corresponds to our *textus receptus*. The inscriptions on the Dome of the Rock are not the oldest evidence. While debate on the roots of Islam will continue, the dating of the scripture's text to the time of the Prophet should no longer be a subject of scholarly discussion.

### The earliest manuscripts of the Qur'an

It is surprising how many Qur'anic mss dating from the 1st century AH have survived. It is even more surprising how little use scholars have made of these in order to underpin their theories. 'Little use' is a euphemism – 'none at all' would be nearer the mark. As Sadeghi remarks, the most devastating effect of ignoring the very existence of these codices, such as in Hagarism, is that it engendered the almost general assumption that there is no primary evidence, and that therefore anything goes.

We are very fortunate that this has now come to an end. Three epochal studies have at last addressed the manuscript tradition. Déroche has dated the ('Uthmanic) Parisino-Petropolitanus to the third quarter of the 1st/7th century, finding it to be a copy of an older ms. Even more revolutionary are the findings of Sadeghi/Bergmann and Sadeghi/Goudarzi. They subjected palimpsest folios from the San'a' trove to the most thorough investigation of letter forms, verse markers, etc, even using C14 dating. While decrying the fact that the approximately 6 to 10 folios which

are now in the West seem to have been purloined from the San'a' library, one must also recognize that this has enabled such detailed examination to take place.

In two in-depth and solidly convincing pieces of research, Sadeghi reaches the conclusion that the under-writing on one of the San'a' palimpsests must be dated not later than fourteen years after the Prophet's death, and that the prototype of the two early traditions that can be identified (the San'a' tradition and the 'Uthmanic tradition) goes back to the Prophet himself. There are differences between those two traditions; while Sadeghi hesitates whether they should be qualified as 'relatively significant', or as 'relatively small', I would definitely opt for the latter. A dating of this very ms to the first half of the 1st century AH had, incidentally, already been proposed by von Bothmer in this reviewer's Yemen (1987).

The revolutionary conclusion from this is that the Qur'an is a true and real historical document of the person and the time of which it speaks. It is so much nearer to its origins (indeed, it is the origin) than, for example, any ms of the New Testament is to Jesus. With this, "all those still current speculations about a successive development of the text or about a non-assured 'authenticity' of parts of it that would have been either modified at a later stage, or even constructed later around an imaginary prophet, have lost their basis." (Neuwirth, *Der Koran*, 24)

### Corpus Coranicum

Recent years have seen another important development in the material basis of Qur'anic research. Forty years ago, Neuwirth was struck by a most astonishing lacuna in Qur'anic scholarship: while there have been critical editions of the Bible (OT and NT) for almost two centuries, no such thing exists for the Qur'an! It seems almost impossible to believe, but it is so. This is going to be remedied over the next twenty or so years through the Corpus Coranicum project (see last year's Bulletin, 16–18) of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences, in co-operation with the CNRS (Robin, Déroche etc). Initiated and headed by Neuwirth herself, this truly centennial undertaking intends to assemble each and every accessible ms source in an open database, from which to establish the *textus criticus* of the scripture or mushaf, as the Qur'anic text is usually termed in Arabic (incidentally, a word of Sabaic origin). It will thus create the indispensable tool for serious research in the future.

The *textus criticus* project is not the only initiative we owe to Neuwirth; she has also opened up two new avenues of research into Qur'anic origins. The first takes as its starting point the fact that the Qur'an was not revealed in a single episode, but over a period of twenty-three years. While this has of course been common knowledge for the last 1,400 years, Neuwirth is the first to draw the conclusions that necessarily follow. Observing that the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad and recited by him in segments that often expressly refer to themselves as 'answers' to

certain questions (which are not recorded), she understands the revelation as a dialogue with its audience (in the way one would listen in to a person engaged in a telephone conversation). Such an understanding enables not only a more refined attempt to be made at organizing the suras in chronological order, but also facilitates a clearer grasp of the intellectual climate of the audience in its specific milieu in Mecca and Medina.

Her second avenue of research is the interpretation of this milieu as a pluricultural Late Antiquity environment, steeped in the period's philosophical and religious (both Jewish and Christian) views. The relevant 'intertexts' shedding light on this milieu would be post-biblical Christian and Jewish writings, such as talmudica, midrashim, apocrypha, pseudo-evangelia, homilies, etc. Collecting these 'intertexts' is a major element of the Corpus Coranicum project. It would eventually place the Qur'an within the shared culture of Mediterranean Late Antiquity, and thus, at the same time, welcome it within our own European heritage.

Neuwirth's *Koran als Text der Spätantike* is the most enlightening study of the Qur'an for decades, being that rare thing that must be hailed as a true masterpiece, and indispensable reading for everyone seriously interested in the many facets of the text, and the possibilities of its context. I say this despite disagreeing with the assumptions underlying her approach and many of the results flowing from it. (I believe, as set out below, that the Qur'an is not a Late Antiquity Mediterranean text, but that it stands in full continuity with the pre-Islamic religion of Arabia, with minimal 'outside' influence, if any.) Nonetheless, in some cases her conclusions are convincing. A good example is the comparison between the Muslim creed (Sura 112) and the Shema' Yisrael (Deut. 6, 4). There can be no doubt that Sura 112 refers to the Shema' (the proof is the ungrammatical form 'ahad') – not as a copy, as Neuwirth underlines, but as a renegotiation of the older text in a new, substantive way.

Those who have difficulties in reading Neuwirth's classical German style (an English translation is scheduled for 2015) will find a succinct introduction to her and her school's thinking in her *The Qur'an in Context* of 2011, in the two papers by herself and those by Marx and Sinai. The whole volume is a densely packed non-partisan reader on many aspects of our subject. I found the contributions of Nebes, Bukharin, Heidemann, Stein, Retsö, Bobzin, Reynolds, de Blois and Wild particularly enlightening. I also recommend the introduction to *Der Koran* (2010), Neuwirth's new translation-cum-commentary of the Qur'an (Suras 1–52).

### Al-Azmeh: Islam emerged in Arabia

The most recent publication on the origins of Islam is a pioneering piece of research. Aziz al-Azmeh, for the first time in more than a century, and indeed for the first time since Wellhausen, situates the emergence of Islam in – well, in the land and culture where it emerged, i.e. in Arabia, and

not in a Jewish–Christian milieu that somehow extended into Arabia. In short: he sees it as an ‘indigenous process’.

This is an important insight. In his reconstruction, al-Azmeh distinguishes three phases: the pagan religion of Arabia, the time of the Prophet which he terms ‘Paleo-Islam’, and Islam itself. In his view, the first, the pagan religion, is characterized by a ‘cluster of local cultic practices’ connected with the name (and nothing more) of a local divinity. He reconstructs this religion from elements he finds that are shared with the Northern Arabian tribes. Being not really familiar with Southern Arabia, he concludes that this basically ritualistic Arab religion was not supported by myths. He assumes that in the case of Mecca, the original local deity of Quraysh was the divine pair Isaf and Na’ila. I share this view. The next stage, Paleo-Islam, would have replaced these tribal divinities with one new (“the hitherto obscure”) deity Allah, and the creation of a novel cultic association for its worship (chs. 5 and 6), both realized through the genius of Muhammad, and formulated in the Qur’an. The visible characteristics of the new religion would have still continued to be *ritual*, anchoring it firmly in ancient Arabia. Al-Azmeh thus situates the emergence of Islam in ‘Late Antiquity’, meaning by this not Neuwirth’s culturally loaded term, but simply a period label. If the cultural milieu of Late Antiquity contributed anything, it would have been no more than a material element such as the idea of a ‘book’ and the compilation of a canonical version. In my opinion, one of the best chapters in this unfortunately often recondite and meandering, but also elegantly written work is entitled ‘Biblical Stories’ (pp. 488–97). Here, al-Azmeh lucidly refutes the idea that the biblical references should be understood as borrowings. Instead, he argues, they should be seen as providing motifs for the new, specifically Qur’anic exhortations and injunctions.

Al-Azmeh’s basic contention is presented with great detail and much vigour. His arguments would have been strengthened further had he included the enormous wealth of material now available from Southern Arabia. Mecca did *not* belong to the cultural orb of nomadic (Northern) Arabia: at the time of the Prophet, it had been for centuries part and parcel of the political and religious sphere of Yemen. Politically, this had begun in the 4th century, when Himyar set about expanding its dominion over most of the Arabian Peninsula. In the late 4th century, Himyarite armies were operating in the Hijaz, Najd and al-Hasa’. Towards the mid-5th century, these territories were formally annexed, under king Abikarib As’ad and his son Hassan (Abukarib As’ad in later Arabian tradition). This was the first unification of Arabia. Abikarib’s state not only included Mudar/Quraysh, but the king also recognized the sanctity of the Meccan shrine: he was held to be the first to cover the Ka’ba with a *kiswa* (“*auwal man kassa al-bait*”: Nashwan al-Himyari, *Himyaritic Qasida*, verse 76). The *kiswa* was made from cloth woven in Ma’afir (SW Yemen). The importance of this act has not been fully appreciated by Western scholars as being, as it was, a powerful expression of political and

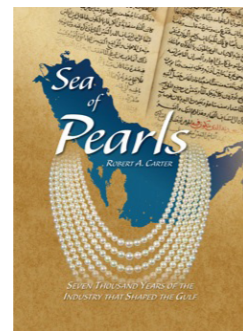
religious sovereignty. Covering a sanctuary with a *kiswa* is one of the rituals of the ancient South Arabian religion, first attested with this very name in the 3rd or 2nd century BC, and continued (in popular lore) to the present day.

Southern Arabia can contribute much of such hitherto unknown real-life ethnography to the study of the origins of Islam: not only are ‘*umra* and *hajj*, the *kiswa*, *hijra*, the holy months, and so forth taken over from pre-Islamic religion; their continued presence in Yemen can also elucidate their original significance within the reconstructed pre-Islamic religion of Arabia. Yemen, Hadramaut and Mecca formed one cultural and religious area. This has a bearing on much (if not all) of the religious vocabulary of the Qur’an (which is either directly Sabaic, or – when Syriac/Judeo-Aramaic – attested there centuries before Muhammad) and on its rhymed structures: five rhymed hymns are now known from Yemen, and much else of its institutions are relevant, such as pilgrimages, purity laws, the interdiction of female infanticide, rain-rogations, incantations, or the famous ‘Daughters of God’. Mecca – with the Ka’ba constructed in the very centre of the wadi bed, and a regular history of inundations – was a water/fertility sanctuary of a standard South Arabian type.

*Review essay by Werner Daum*

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#### ***Sea of Pearls: Seven Thousand Years of the Industry that Shaped the Gulf***

Robert A. Carter  
London: Arabian Publishing 2012.  
xx + 364 pages. 338 colour and b/w photographs. 26 maps, 32 tables and charts. Appendices, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Large format hardback, jacketed. £95.00.  
ISBN: 978-0-9571060-0-0

A diamond may be a girl’s best friend but the colour, lustre and shape of pearls have been valued for far longer.

Previously a mainstay of the Gulf economy, the cost of their import was said to be a major drain on the Roman economy. This book explores how they were first exploited and why they came to be such an important part of the Gulf economy. It is the first major book on the subject and combines new archaeological evidence with a re-analysis of economic data. It is clearly written, lavishly illustrated throughout in full colour and supported by a series of very clear maps.

The rise of sea-levels between about 12,000–8,500 BC flooded much of the basin stretching from Musandam to Basra, creating the basis of what is now the Gulf and plausibly providing the origin of the Flood story remembered in the early Mesopotamian epic tradition and later Biblical account. Early populations must have retreated and re-grouped in the face of this great marine transgression but, as archaeology shows, they embraced rather than shunned it, and used it not only to reconnect communities dispersed along the new coastlines but also harvest the new resources it offered, ranging from tuna to shellfish. The question of whether pearls were one of these new resources was raised as early as the 1960s but with little evidence. The discovery in 2001 of a single holed pearl in Carter’s excavations at the late 6th-millennium BC Ubaid-related site of as-Sabiyah, on the north side of Kuwait bay, reopened the question of the trade in painted pots and pearls, and the author was later approached to write this book on the history of the pearl. It is laid out chronologically and arranged in nine chapters, followed by two appendices detailing the types of pearls and the value of Gulf exports between 1602 and 1943, notes, a full bibliography, and an index.

It begins with the evidence for pearls from prehistory to the 7th century AD. During the 6th and 5th millennia BC, pearls were worn by communities in present-day Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Graves excavated at Jebel al-Buhais (Sharjah) offer the best evidence as they show that pearls were worn near the nose, whereas other shell and stone beads were worn as necklaces or sewn onto clothing. They also show how pearling began as part of a marine economy and the shells may have been simply collected through wading. Unsurprisingly, settlement sites offer less evidence as the rare finds that are made derive from casual loss or discard, whereas grave-goods offer evidence for complete assemblages, even if it remains unclear whether beads or clothing worn in death were also worn in the same manner during life. This is a common problem familiar to any anthropologist although not always recognized by their archaeological counterparts. It becomes an even bigger question when the graves have not been found, or in periods when social custom and/or religion forbid the interment of personal ornaments or clothing, and in these cases the low numbers of pearls found in occupation contexts alone may be very misleading. This might account for the low numbers of beads recorded from sites throughout the 3rd and 2nd millennia BC, especially as this was a major period of trade along the Gulf, but an increasing switch in

diet from marine resources to cereals, meat and dates might also help explain the reduction.

A reference in a 7th-century BC copy of an earlier Mesopotamian document gives the first reference to a diver (in this case Gilgamesh) attaching weights to his feet and therefore using a boat as a diving platform to reach the deeper beds which cluster in Arabian waters around Bahrain and between Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. The ‘Flower of Immortality’ that he sought is usually identified now as coral rather than pearl, but these were found together in the Achaemenid jewellery hoard excavated at Cyrus the Great’s capital of Pasargadae in Iran (cf. p. 10). This is the period from which coral first became highly valued and since they are often linked in later sources there may be a closer connection in their history of exploitation than previously recognized. Later Classical writers refer to a growing market for pearls, with sources mentioned in the lower Gulf and India until Pliny’s addition of Bahrain in the 1st century. Thereafter, pearls became widely used in jewellery and sewn onto clothing from the 3rd to 7th centuries, and Carter’s suggestion of Iranian involvement is consistent with the important role of the Sasanian port of Rishahr on the Bushehr peninsula as a gateway into Fars and a magnet for trade and investment at a period of settlement decline across eastern Arabia. The difference between a fishing centre and the main market is something that becomes even clearer in later periods.

In Chapter 2, Carter looks at the evidence for pearls during the medieval period (AD 632–1330). During the first two centuries, Islam was slow to gain a hold on the region as Christian churches and monasteries were spread throughout the region, a Jewish governor of Siraf is attested and many of the tombs there appear to have been used by Zoroastrians. It is from the 10th century onwards that Islamic geographers refer to the importance of pearling within the Gulf, and al-Biruni devotes a long section to the subject of pearls in *The Book Most Comprehensive In Knowledge on Precious Stones*. The use of pearls in jewellery is mentioned in the Qur’an and numerous similarities drawn between them and women’s beauty, ‘big, beautiful and lustrous eyes’ and pale glowing skin colour. The large size and value of individual pearls were marvelled at during a period when fabulous riches and exotic tales were repeated, conjoined and inflated by the chroniclers. Carter re-analyses some of their hearsay statements about how the pearls were obtained in the light of later diving practice and discusses their pricing structures. Bahrain was now the main centre of the pearling industry although Kharg island and pearling banks near Julfar are mentioned for the first time; on the other hand, the port of Siraf was described by Istakhri as ‘a great market for pearls’. The Nestorian monastery on Kharg had been abandoned but a small cemetery proves the survival of a local village community which may have been part of this new economy, and low numbers of pearls have been excavated in medieval contexts in Bahrain, Kush and Siraf.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine the economic effects of political rivalry during the period of the Kingdom of Hormuz, the Portuguese and the Safavids. During the early 14th century, Hormuz emerged as the largest market for Gulf pearls, and supplied Venetian as well as Chinese merchants. These resources were a major objective for 16th-century Portuguese adventurers, but their inaccurate descriptions of pearl diving reflect their arms-length reliance on taxes rather than direct exploitation at a period when the New World was also supplying vast quantities of (lower-quality) pearls. During the 17th century Bahrain was the main centre of pearling but control lay with the Safavid rulers of Iran and their exports to India explain the popularity of pearl settings in Mughal jewellery. Moreover, there was increasing local rivalry over the fishing rights.

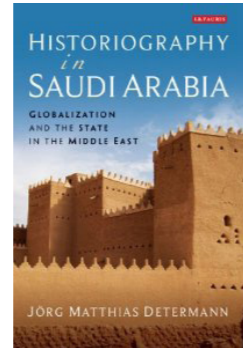
Chapter 5 looks at the rise of local Arab control of the pearling industry from 1700 to 1820. This is seen as marking a change from state sponsorship to tribal financing, and new pearling settlements were founded along the coast. These are the origins of most of the present-day capitals (Kuwait, Doha, Abu Dhabi) and major centres (Dubai, Sharjah, ‘Ajman, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah), plus a number of other less successful towns such as Zubara and Ruwaidah in northern Qatar which are now being explored by the Qatar Museums Authority. Pearling had passed from local tradition to a critical component of the modern national identity.

Chapter 6, entitled ‘The Boom Century’, looks at how pearls become the single most important export between 1820 and 1912. During this period, the value of Bahrain’s annual pearl exports increased fifteen-fold until it represented almost 90 percent of the value of their exports. Chapters 7 and 8 use the abundant written and oral testimonies from this period to show how pearling was organized and conducted, and are illustrated with photographs and descriptions of the boats, divers and equipment. At the peak, about 4,500 boats involved more than 74,000 men, and millions of oysters were harvested, opened and tossed back into the sea. Men were attracted from the coasts, deserts and oases, and their absence for up to four months a year helped empower their wives. But boom was followed by bust. The end is usually attributed to the introduction of cultured pearls in about 1925 but in Chapter 9 Carter shows that economic factors beginning with price freezes, loss of markets during the First World War, the Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression were far more important, and that the revenues and employment offered by the new oil industry from the 1930s onwards killed off hope of a revival. Pearling may have created a distinctive form of music but it was very hard work, and few divers seem to have regretted the demise of the industry.

This is not a coffee-table book about pearls but is essential reading for anyone attempting to understand Gulf history. It is a serious economic and historical survey from prehistory to the present, as it explores how pearling developed from a tiny component of a prehistoric fishing economy to become synonymous with the Gulf as increasing demand was

matched by deeper diving and greater financing of more and more boats. Over the course of the past two millennia at least, different centres of pearling rose and fell as different states and families emerged as controllers, investors and traders. Coastal populations increased and pearling became a major factor in the development of urbanism as well as the rise of the present ruling families along the entire Arabian littoral. The book is also a good read and a great credit to its author, Dr Robert Carter, to its editor and publisher, and to the vision of its sponsor, Hussain Ibrahim Al-Fardan. I thoroughly recommend it.

*Review by St John Simpson*



***Historiography in Saudi Arabia: Globalization and the State in the Middle East***

Jörg Matthias Determann  
London: I. B. Tauris, 2014. xviii + 325 pp. Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardback, jacketed. £59.50. ISBN 9781780766645

There can be few, if any, countries with a government as concerned with the interpretation of distant 18th-century history as Saudi Arabia. Although the modern kingdom was not established formally until 1932, the Saudi dynasty established its primacy in Najd in central Arabia from the mid-18th century onward. The arrangement the Al Sa‘ud made from 1744 with the religious reformer Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, his descendants and other leading Wahhabi clerics helped them spread their influence and power across much of the Peninsula during three periods in the late 18th–early 19th century, the mid-19th century, and from the early 20th century until today.

The kernel of Saudi domains has always been Najd, ruled by the Saudis and dominated by Wahhabi ideology. In addressing the relationship between these components and what they mean for the country’s outlying regions, tribes and minorities, Saudi historiography goes to the very core of the Saudi state’s character and the historical, political and religious legitimacy of the ruling dynasty. This is why senior Saudi princes, especially Crown Prince Salman, have taken a close interest in the output of Saudi historians. If I may purloin the phraseology of two novelists, for the Al Sa‘ud the past is not a foreign country, it is not even past.

In this new study Jörg Matthias Determann traces the development of Saudi historiography from the first chronicles recording the genesis of the first Saudi state to the present day. He shows how historiography is not easily coralled, even in Saudi Arabia, and how pluralism in the sense of divergent, sometimes contesting, narratives has emerged, irrespective of authoritarian government and the absence of formal political pluralism. In some cases the

government itself has stimulated or encouraged new trends, in other cases it has suppressed or excluded outlooks it finds awkward. Tracking these moves, Determann casts new light on the country, its leaders, and both religious and secular intellectuals within Saudi Arabia.

The book, published and nicely produced by I.B. Tauris, started life as a doctorate at SOAS. In 2013 it was a joint winner of the BRISMES Leigh Douglas Memorial Prize for the best PhD dissertation on a Middle Eastern topic. The Society for Arabian Studies, forerunner of the BFSa, assisted the author’s fieldwork in 2009 with a travel grant. A good doctorate does not always mean a good book, so I was relieved at Determann’s initial declaration that he had sought to develop his own arguments from reading the texts rather than applying to them theories about other historiographies. For those of us more interested in Saudi Arabia than in the theoretical constructs that often complicate the opening pages of converted doctorates, this is welcome. Determann also writes in a fairly clear, even-paced style. He supplies extensive footnotes and a bibliography that researchers will appreciate.

He opens by explaining how increasing prosperity, the spread of basic education, the state-sponsored establishment of an indigenous historical profession from the late 1950s, the creation of the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives in 1972, the import of educated foreigners, and the despatch of Saudi students overseas helped gradually to create, then fuel, a boom in Saudi historiography. He describes the development of a dynastic tradition that began with the Najdi chroniclers of the 18th and 19th centuries, notably Ibn Ghannam and Ibn Bishr. These chronicles, dating from the early and mid-19th centuries, were centred in Najd, portrayed the Peninsula before Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab and the Al Sa‘ud as sunk in ‘ignorance’ (*jahiliyya*), and disregarded as irrelevant events not connected with the Saudis.

This outlook, at once Najdi, Sa‘udi and Wahhabi, was one the regime continued propagating in the 20th century through domestic printing and by encouraging sympathetic Salafi authors in Iraq and Egypt, suppressing dissenting histories, and bowdlerizing Ibn Ghannam’s work (badly) to make it more accessible. Curiously, this indigenous tradition was then taken up and developed in the 1920s to the 1960s, mostly by foreigners who worked in, or who were closely associated with, the government and had limited contact with local communities. The Maronite Ameen Rihani, Druze Fuad Hamza, and Muslim convert H. StJ. B. Philby were among those who propagated a new dynastic exclusivism. This tended to marginalize Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab and the Wahhabi mission and to highlight the role of the Al Sa‘ud, especially Ibn Sa‘ud as founder of the modern Kingdom. Some, like the Egyptian Hafez Wahba, extolled him as an Arab nationalist hero.

This approach patently excluded and devalued the traditions, cultures and contributions of regions like the Hijaz, Asir

and the Eastern Province. From the 1920s particularist histories began appearing that stressed local traditions and local communities’ historic independence of the Al Sa‘ud. They covered earlier, pre-Sa‘udi periods and rejected the ‘*takfiri*’ notion of religious ‘ignorance’ before the Wahhabis. Partly in response to this trend, the government encouraged the development of a ‘national’ Saudi history grounded in nation and territory. The King Abdulaziz Foundation was to be its professional champion, though its archives still dated back only to 1744. The narrative was no longer to be exclusively Najdi or about Islamic or Arab ‘salvation’, but focused on unification and on how the Al Sa‘ud, especially modern founder Ibn Sa‘ud, served the Saudi nation. The Al Sa‘ud’s drive to develop and modernize the country became an important theme designed to foster national identity and loyalty to the dynasty. Yet this new approach did not overwhelm or drive out entirely the old ‘*takfiri*’ interpretation, which still has its adherents.

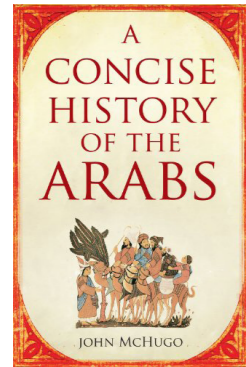
The final trends Determann describes involve, first, the proliferation from the 1990s of local, family, tribal and Shi‘i histories, many of which adopt the national narrative and stress the contribution of their subject area or group to the nation. Unsurprisingly, many of these have been published privately or abroad because of political sensitivities. The second trend sees greater concentration on social and economic history, with some young historians seeking to explain the Wahhabi movement as a reaction to deteriorating social and economic conditions in Najd in the early 18th century rather than to divine or religious inspiration. The Foundation has seen this as a troublesome view because it appears to play down the religious legitimacy of the regime. (The author usefully explains and illustrates the Foundation’s role in censoring and shaping Saudi historiography by ‘correcting’ books or having them banned. The regime prefers to co-opt rather than coerce authors. Those expressing dissent are marginalized, not punished directly, though some have found exile expedient.)

Determann acknowledges constraints or self-imposed limits on the scope of his work. He found it hard to include female historians, especially as he could interview only a few. He also excluded historians of Saudi origin beyond Saudi Arabia, such as Prof. Madawi al-Rasheed, whose voluminous work has much influenced Western perceptions of Saudi history. I would have welcomed analysis of linkages between external and domestic output and also of the impact of the internet on Saudi historiography and government control, an area the author mentions only briefly in his conclusion (although he makes much of the effects of globalization). Finally, I would have welcomed a quick look at the government’s own official handling of Saudi history in border disputes, such as in its Buraimi Memorials (mostly prepared on its behalf by Aramco historians under George Rentz). A change of pace and angle too could have come from considering how Saudi historians over the last century, and perhaps the regime itself, have covered awkward episodes in Saudi history, such as the

massacres in Kerbala or Taif in the early 19th century or the Saudi–Ottoman treaty of 1914.

Although the general reader may find this book a little detailed and dense, it will be of considerable value to anyone undertaking research into Saudi history, especially those on PhD or Master’s programmes who need an intellectual roadmap to the burgeoning Arabic literature on Saudi history. I wish it had been available to me earlier in my career. Determann has done us all a valuable service and is to be congratulated.

Review by Michael Crawford



***A Concise History of the Arabs***

John McHugo  
London: Saqi Books, 2013. 352 pp. Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardback, jacketed, and ebook. £20.00. ISBN: 978-0-86356-889-3. eISBN: 978-0-86356-894-7

John McHugo studied Arabic at Oxford and the AUC before qualifying as a solicitor, and over a long career has worked as an international lawyer in several Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt, Bahrain and Oman. The present book is intended, in his own words, “to introduce Western readers who are unfamiliar with the topic to the history of the Arabs for the first time. It assumes no background knowledge and is written with a non-specialist audience in mind” (p. 15).

It goes without saying that no two people attempting to write a ‘history of the Arabs’ in 350 or so pages are likely to agree on what should, or should not, be included, and McHugo candidly acknowledges in his Preface that he has “had to take difficult decisions about what to leave out” (p. 15). In practice, the balance of the book has been dictated largely by his own agenda: in his own words, “to show that what has happened over the decades – and, indeed, the centuries – is not a clash of civilizations but a concatenation of historical events, misguided policies and wilful ignorance which have opened an ever-deepening rift between Europe and the USA on one side, and the Arab world on the other” (pp. 15–16). Not everyone, of course, will necessarily recognize this as a helpful summary of Arab–Western relationships, even at the present time, but it does help to explain why, of his ten main chapters, only the first two (fewer than 60 of around 300 pages) are devoted to the Arab world before Napoleon’s 1798 invasion of Egypt – when, to use his own words, ‘The West [Took] Control’ – and also why certain areas of the Arab world, as he himself acknowledges (p. 16), receive less than their due attention. All this arguably makes the book’s title a trifle misleading – though certainly no more so than that of

Eugene Rogan’s authoritative *The Arabs: A History* (2009), which starts with the Ottoman conquests in the 16th century.

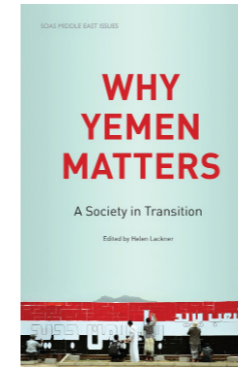
That said, the non-specialist reader who is seeking an introduction to events in the contemporary Arab world in their historical context is likely to find this a valuable and rewarding work. The author writes well, and the book (leaving aside a few odd transliterations) has been carefully produced. The sweep of his narrative takes the reader in the first two chapters from the Graeco-Roman world, through the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (‘When History Changed Direction’) and the Umayyad and ‘Abbasid caliphates, to the Ottoman period immediately preceding the rise of Western influence. Inevitably, the limited space at his disposal for this account makes it at times a somewhat breathless one, but by concentrating on the broad sweep of historical developments, in particular the shifting boundaries between the worlds of Christianity and Islam, he successfully sets the scene for the post-1798 period, where his own passions clearly lie, and which constitutes the main part of the book. Here, McHugo insightfully elaborates on a number of strands, taking us through, *inter alia*, the rise of Arab nationalism; debates between secularism and Islamism; the Arab–Israeli conflict and its consequences; and the ‘Age of the Autocrats’ and the rise of Islamism. His final chapter, entitled ‘Something Snaps: The Arab Spring and Beyond’, takes us up to the present, pinpointing the divide within Islam between Sunnis and Shi’ites as “the most sectarian fissure in Arab societies today”, but suggesting (with more optimism than evidence, perhaps) that the popular demands expressed in the Arab Spring will in the longer term prove to be as irresistible as those of the French Revolution.

Although not everyone is likely to agree with all McHugo’s judgments (implicit or explicit) on the various actors in this narrative, his account is always readable, nearly always both lively and well-focused, and just occasionally provocative. His account of the Mandate period seemed to me particularly perceptive, even if, on one or two occasions, I felt that he was talking as the international lawyer he has been, rather than the historian he aspires to be. As the chair of the Liberal Democrat Friends of Palestine, it is perhaps unsurprising that he makes no attempt to disguise either his view of the centrality of the Palestine/Israel dispute to Western–Arab relations, or of his own views on the main culprits in that dispute. Only once, however, in Chapter 8 (tellingly entitled ‘Iraq, Israel, Militancy and Terrorism’), did I have the sense that the narrative was somehow losing direction, and this was very much the exception rather than the rule. On a more peripheral point, I found it odd that he should have allocated so much space to Aswany’s *The Yacoubian Building* (pp. 290–2) when, with the exception of Rifa’a al-Tahtawi and Taha Hussein, there is hardly another mention of literary activity in the modern Arab world at all.

As well as the conventional bibliography, McHugo includes a glossary of Arabic terms and a short ‘Suggestions for Further

Reading’ section which will be particularly useful for the newcomer to the subject. All in all, although Middle Eastern specialists (in whatever discipline) are unlikely to learn much new from this book, McHugo’s reinterpretations may well prompt them to reflect on some of their own preconceptions; while for McHugo’s own target readership (the non-specialist wondering why the Arab world currently seems to be in such a mess), it is certainly to be highly recommended.

Review by Paul Starkey



***Why Yemen Matters: A Society in Transition***

Ed. Helen Lackner  
London: Saqi Books. xviii + 334 pp. Footnotes, Index. Paperback and ebook. £21.99. ISBN 978-0-86356-777-3. eISBN 978-0-86356-782-7

In January 2014, the British Yemeni Society in conjunction with the London Middle East Institute held a conference at the Brunei Gallery at SOAS entitled ‘Yemen: Challenges for the Future’. It generated fifty-six proposals for papers from academics and other experts at a time when preparations were being made for the National Dialogue in Yemen.

*Why Yemen Matters* records 16 of the 36 papers presented at the conference to more than 300 delegates. The publication of these papers is as timely as they are important. Although conceived with the very best of intentions, the National Dialogue has proved inconclusive and elections have been postponed indefinitely. All the challenges facing Yemen that continue to raise uncertainty about the future of its society and government in the post-Saleh transition era are covered in the conference record.

The conference papers are preceded by a detailed Introduction by the editor, written after her visit to Yemen following the conference. This reminds the reader of the historical background, the current political situation and the state of the economy. In the final part of her Introduction, the reader is given thumbnail sketches of the papers, which are divided into four parts.

Each part brings up to date the perennial issues facing the country and recent problems associated with the ‘Arab Spring’ and the toppling of Ali Abdullah Saleh from power. The first deals with ‘Politics and Security’, the second with ‘Regional Issues’, followed by ‘Economic Development’ and ‘Society and Migration’.

Apart from the Introduction and the papers themselves there is a useful ‘Historical Chronology of Events in Yemen since 1839’ and two good maps, one showing the administrative

districts with the major towns and the other the main geographical features. At the end of each of the four sections of the book there is a Further Reading list. There is also a Select Bibliography, followed by Notes on the Contributors and an index. Each section has extensive footnotes and some chapters contain tables and photographs. A minor criticism is the inclusion of a few very small black and white photographs that are not very clearly reproduced. With the possible exception of one showing the cemetery for Chinese Martyrs and the gravestone of Zhang Qiyin in San’a, they do not enhance the text.

The role of the emerging Yemeni community in China and the significance of the links between the two countries is the subject of the final chapter of the book. Yemenis have always migrated to other countries and relied on remittances to maintain their families, but this source of employment and income has become more difficult to find when most borders are closed to immigrants. Now Yemen itself has become a destination for refugees from the Horn of Africa. No mention is made of the airlift of the Jewish community to Israel more than fifty years ago. It would have been interesting to know what has happened to those few who remained in their homeland. Inter-marriage and a wide range of women’s issues, describing their employment and health problems, are well documented in four papers. Society appears more divided than ever after the National Dialogue. Although the young who make up three-quarters of the population have used the social media and arts to make their protest felt, they are pitted against the traditional power bases formed from the tribes and religious parties, which have dominated the dialogue.

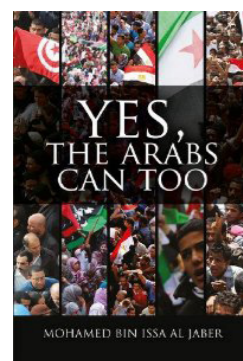
In other papers the longstanding and better-known challenges facing Yemen such as water scarcity and land disputes are discussed with some interesting details. There is a good example of a *marqum* or register listing an agreement over village water rights. Land disputes are more complex and can be violent, but the traditional way such disputes are handled is explained, and a model is offered for their resolution.

Since the belated conclusion of the National Dialogue the violence has worsened and the state appears out of control. The transition period had been extended for another year. This is depressing news but the reasons for this situation become clearer on reading the background in the papers dealing with the economy, the politics, the military power-base, and tribal identity. The rebellion in the north and the terrorism in the south that have become major sources of instability and a threat to the prosperity of the country and its people are also well explained.

This is altogether an excellent record of the best of the conference papers, which are brought to life through the personal experiences of the contributors. Their anecdotes and interviews with Yemenis make a welcome addition to

the events, facts and figures that form the basis of the papers. The reader is left in no doubt about what is the matter with Yemen, but why Yemen matters in the world today is not brought out so clearly. However from a humanitarian point of view and out of concern for the younger generation we should all be anxious about the outcome of the current transition in society.

Review by Julian Paxton



**Yes, The Arabs Can Too**

Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber  
London: Arabian Publishing,  
2013. xiv + 162 pp. Appendices,  
References, Index. Hardback,  
jacketed. £20.00.  
ISBN 978-0-9571060-9-3

Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa al Jaber is a successful Saudi businessman who in recent years, through the MBI al Jaber Foundation, has given strong support to education and the spread of knowledge about the Arab world. He is a UNESCO Special Envoy for Education, Tolerance and Cultures in 2005 and UN Spokesman for Global Forums and Reinventing Government in 2007. The MBI al Jaber Foundation has been the main sponsor of the Arabian Studies Seminar now organized by BFSa. This book asserts that Arabs should welcome globalization and exploit its many potential benefits through reform of their political and economic structures and by investment in education and modern technologies. Other peoples have done so – and the Arabs can, too.

The book is an English translation of the Arabic original written just after the start of the financial crisis in 2008 and before the Arab Uprisings of 2011. It begins by taking a brief look at the Arab Golden Age and the subsequent decline, followed by revival in the reform movements of the 19th and 20th centuries that drew their inspiration from the European Enlightenment. Today, Arab intellectuals and politicians want to embrace modernity while accommodating the different views on the role of Islam in relation to greater political and economic freedoms and issues such as rights for women. The Arabs need to escape from the legacies of the *dirigiste* economic systems of the mid-20th century and learn from the experience of Europe and the US and the recent success of China, India, Brazil and others. A key part of this is to fold the vibrant informal economies of the region into the official systems. The Arab world should not see the West as a threat or the ‘antithesis of Arab Culture’, but recognize that the spirit and ideas that have created the West today are not dissimilar to those that led to the Arab and Islamic Golden Ages.

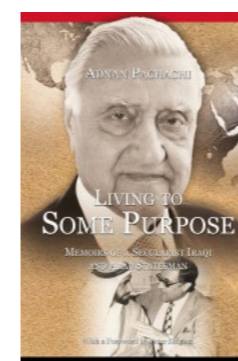
The subsequent chapters elaborate on these themes. He shows how globalization is now a given and argues that Arab governments and businesses must create strategies for getting the best from it – as their Western equivalents have done. For globalization to work effectively there have to be level playing fields, greater transparency in decision making, and regulatory systems that protect the interests of all, including employers and workers, without involving miles of red tape. The state and private sectors need to learn to work together and respect each other; civil servants should see themselves as servants of the people, not their bureaucracies. He wants to see a code of ethics to which all subscribe. None of this can happen without a strong commitment from the political and business leadership and efforts to educate all participants in how to get the best out of globalization. Anyone dealing with Arab governments and state companies will know that these ideals can be far from today’s reality. But other societies have changed – and so can the Arabs. The author sets out a blueprint for action.

The book examines sustainable development, referring to the UN Global Compact of 1991 which sought to encourage businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies. Many larger companies now do this but perhaps as a box-ticking exercise and not out of real commitment. The author describes the evolution up to 2009 of the international financial system and the pace of Arab adaptation to it. He clearly supports an Arab common market as a means of enabling the Arab world to talk with the same authority and influence as similar regional groupings. He analyses the virtues of a true Arab common market, though in the real world of 2013 the region is still a long way from the sort of integration and freedom of movement of capital, goods and people that it requires. The Mashriq and Maghreb can seem a long way from each other and look in different directions for investment and trade.

In these chapters he concentrates on what the Arabs need to do, and can do, but also has advice for Western governments and companies on how they can assist through further reform of their systems and by developing a greater understanding of what the Arabs are seeking to achieve. He sees recent developments within the G8 and G20 as important steps in this direction – and might have singled out developments such as the G8 Deauville as steps taken later.

The book is clearly addressed to an Arab audience, but anyone dealing with Arab governments and businesses will want to read what Sheikh Mohamed has to say. The book is written in a straightforward manner; the language is very clear. His arguments are based on fact with many examples given. The advice he offers is based on solid experience. Above all it should be read because it is written by someone whose own career is an exemplar of what can be achieved.

Review by Noel Brehony



**Living to Some Purpose: Memoirs of a Secularist Iraqi and Arab Statesman**

Adnan Pachachi  
Foreword by Peter Sluglett  
London: Arabian Publishing, 2013.  
xii + 228 pages. 17 photographs.  
Index. Hardback, jacketed. £25.00.  
ISBN: 978-0-9571060-3-1

Adnan Pachachi is about the same age as the state of Iraq and has been able to witness, sometimes to participate in, its tumultuous history during those decades. Born into a successful merchant and landowning family originally from Mosul, he was brought up in the privileged milieu of Baghdad’s cosmopolitan elite, and sent abroad for his education. During the last decade or so of the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq, he worked in the Iraqi foreign service, continuing after the 1958 revolution to become the Iraqi republic’s permanent representative at the United Nations and then its foreign minister under the military regime that preceded the Ba’thist coup d’état of 1968.

This event ended his service to an Iraqi state that had fallen into the hands of a small coterie of officers, ideologues and clansmen whose brutal methods were not long in making themselves felt. Pachachi resigned from government service and left Iraq to work for Shaikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi, helping to prepare the way for the independence of the United Arab Emirates. Thenceforth he devoted himself to this new state, of which he was to become a citizen. It was only on his retirement in 1993 that his attention focused once more on Iraq, a country still languishing under Ba’thist dictatorship, dealing with the legacy of two disastrous and costly wars and suffering under the ferocious economic sanctions imposed by the UN.

Like many others, Pachachi found himself in the difficult position of advocating the removal of sanctions whilst trying to avoid lending support or legitimacy to the government of Saddam Hussein. Pachachi’s remedy was to found a party of like-minded exiles under the less than exciting name of the Centrist Party. This gave him an excellent and increasingly exasperated insight into the political manoeuvring of Iraq’s exiled opposition, mired in powerlessness, hostage to foreign patrons, and riven by sectarian and ethnic differences, as well as by personal ambitions.

It was only in 2003, with the approach of the war against Iraq that US President George W. Bush was determined to launch, that the business of exiled opposition began to look as if it might have real consequences for the country. In anticipation of the imminent downfall of the Ba’thist regime, Pachachi again tried to group together others like himself who abhorred the communal, sectarian and ethnic character

of the main opposition forces. He formed the Independent Iraqi Democrats in the hope that it would provide a rallying point for all those Iraqis who yearned for an alternative to Ba’thist tyranny, but who did not want to fall into the hands of the communal parties or become clients of the American military occupiers.

It is at this late stage in his career that Pachachi’s memoirs really begin to come alive. The strengths of this book lie chiefly in the insights it provides into the couple of years when he was at the heart of events in Iraq in 2003–04. Up to that point these diplomatic memoirs have been, well, very diplomatic. They are curiously thin in terms of reflection and judgment, or in providing any revealing impressions of the many distinguished figures whom Pachachi met in his long career. Even Shaikh Zayed, whom Pachachi served faithfully and loyally for so many years, is quite a shadowy figure here.

As far as Iraq itself is concerned, although Pachachi invokes the revolutionary spirit of Thomas Paine in the title of the book, he has really very little to say about the Iraqi revolution of 1958, its aspirations, its enthusiasts and its disappointments. He maintains a discretion verging on blandness both about his own youthful activism in the Iraqi Youth Brigade, or about the threats made against Kuwait in 1961 by Abd al-Karim Qasim. Even his own appointment as Iraq’s foreign minister – seemingly the result of arcane neo-Mamluke factionalism amongst Iraq’s military rulers in the 1960s – is treated as the most normal thing in the world.

However, when he describes at first hand the wreck that the US-led occupation was making of his already ruined country, one can feel the passion beginning to stir. Scathing in his assessments of the ineptitude, prejudice and ignorance he encountered among the new overlords of Iraq, he is equally ferocious about the opportunistic and unscrupulous chancers who emerged amongst his own countrymen. They seized this moment of humiliation to advance their own interests, often under the guise of historical restitution, or the righting of wrongs done to the community they claimed to represent.

Of one thing, however, he is rightly proud. This was his insistence that a Bill of Rights should be included in the draft Iraqi constitution of 2004/05. He got his way and it stands as a monument to Pachachi’s service to his country. The depressing thing is that a quick glance at the document shows that virtually all of these rights have been systematically violated with impunity by those who have held the reins of power in Iraq since that time. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that the book should end rather abruptly, avoiding the painful fate of Pachachi’s humane vision in the violent and ruthless everyday politics of Iraq.

Review by Charles Tripp

# LIVES REMEMBERED

## Nigel Groom

1924–2014

*Nigel Groom died on 5 March 2014 after a very complicated medical history. Groom was a great friend of the Society and then of the BFSa. Most recently, for example, he donated all his copies of the Seminar Proceedings to the BFSa so that they could be digitalised. Below is an obituary-biography that Groom wrote himself, which his daughter, Mrs Alexandra Rose, kindly sent to the Bulletin.*

Nigel Groom, OBE, arabist, historian, spy-catcher and writer on perfume, was born on 26 April 1924 and grew up in Devon, where his father was a country rector.

Educated at Haileybury and Magdalene College, Cambridge, Nigel Groom joined the Indian Army in 1943 and served with the 3rd Gurkha Rifles and in Burma with the 2nd Karen Rifles. Joining the Colonial Service after the war, he was posted to the Western Aden Protectorate and in January 1948, on arrival in Aden, was appointed Political Officer, North Eastern Area, based in Bayhan, a remote Amirate bordering the central Arabian desert and accessible only in small RAF aircraft. His first duty was to superintend an operation, using RAF Lincoln bombers specially flown in from the UK, against a bedouin desert tribe who had rebelled against the rule of the Sharif of Bayhan; the operation was successfully concluded after two weeks with the loss of one camel. His district had a troublesome frontier with the Kingdom of Yemen and at that time none of it outside of Bayhan was administered, political influence over heavily armed tribesmen racked by blood-feuds being mostly exercised by messages to their leaders sent by runners. There were no roads or vehicles and travel was on horseback or camel or on foot. The area was unmapped and virtually unexplored and wherever he went he would take bearings with a pocket compass for a sketchmap of the country. His account of these days, in a well-reviewed book, *Sheba Revealed*, was published in 2002.

In 1950 Groom took over the Northern Area, based in Dhala, which was regarded at that time as the most difficult and troublesome part of the whole Protectorate. Again much of it was uncontrolled tribal area with considerable unrest fomented by the intrigues of the Imam of Yemen in pursuance of his claims over the whole country. In 1950 the British Agent for the Western Protectorate, Basil Seager, and his wife came to spend a few days of the Christmas holiday with him in Dhala's cool mountain air. An involved plot had been devised to murder both Seager and Groom and their escorting Arab soldiery at a lunch in a nearby village to

which they had been invited on Christmas Day. However, while out for a walk with an armed escort the evening before, Seager and his wife by chance met the chief assassin, a qat-crazed religious fanatic, and his party on their way to their assignment. The assassin immediately stabbed Seager with his dagger, causing serious injury, and in a subsequent exchange of fire the assassin and several others from both escort and assailants were killed or wounded. Groom had to signal to Aden for the immediate help of a doctor, who arrived after a five-hour journey over rough tracks normally never attempted in the dark, and for a substantial force of Aden Protectorate Levies to leave early on Christmas morning to help counter a tribal uprising planned to follow.

In 1952 Groom married Lorna Littlewood, the daughter of a British official in the Burma Government who had died on the trek to India out of Burma after the Japanese invasion, and took her back to Dhala, where she was told to “keep away from the windows at night in case of shots out of the darkness”. He subsequently worked in the Aden Secretariat handling Protectorate affairs, latterly as Assistant Chief Secretary. In 1958 he left for Nairobi (“like being on leave all the time after Aden”), where he worked first in the Kenya Cabinet Office and later as Defence Secretary in the East Africa High Commission, with secretariat responsibilities which included the Royal East African Navy, based in Mombasa, and the running of the East African Intelligence Committee. That job came to an end with the granting of independence to the East African territories.

In 1962 Nigel Groom commenced his second career, as an officer in MI5. Posted to D (later K) Branch in 1964, he was to spend the rest of his time, until his retirement in 1984, on counter-espionage work. In 1965 he was the case officer for an elaborate investigation which uncovered RAF Warrant-Officer Britten as a KGB spy in a top-secret RAF station. The discovery of one-time code pads, short-wave radio schedules, RV instructions, sketch-maps for dead letter boxes and a document copier disguised as a cigarette case attracted much press attention at the time. Groom was then brought into the small team examining allegations being sponsored by Peter Wright, and later given publicity by the journalist Chapman Pincher, that Sir Roger Hollis, the former Director-General, had been a Soviet agent. His investigations showed that, in every one of the specific leads put to him, the evidence was invalid. Subsequently he was tasked with the planning and supervision of all K Branch surveillance operations against the ‘legal’ Soviet bloc intelligence community in London; this period included the elaborate operations surrounding the Lyalin defection and the expulsion of 107 KGB and GRU officers masquerading as Soviet diplomats in 1971. Thereafter he returned to the investigation of leads to espionage and was to become head successively of two of the investigating sections. With a



record length of continuous service in K Branch, he ended up as one of MI5's most senior and experienced counter-espionage officers, with an unrivalled knowledge of the Soviet bloc's most sophisticated espionage techniques. Many of the major spy cases of the time passed through his hands. He was awarded the OBE in 1974.

Nigel Groom never lost his keen interest in Arabia and especially in the pre-Islamic history of Arabia, on which he became a recognized expert. This was kindled during his early days in Bayhan, where he discovered many inscriptions and ancient ruins and supported the American archaeologist Wendell Phillips when he sought to undertake excavations in Bayhan, leading to the first major archaeological expedition to South Arabia. In 1976 he compiled an archaeological map of South West Arabia, which was published by the Royal Geographical Society, and in 1981 he wrote *Frankincense and Myrrh: A Study of the Arabian Incense Trade*, which is now a standard work (Bayhan had been a centre of this trade). This was followed in 1983 by *A Dictionary of Arabic Topography and Placenames*, providing English definitions of several thousand Arabic words of topographical significance. He contributed regularly to the *Bulletin of the Society for Arabian Studies* and other academic journals, one special interest being the interpretation of Ptolemy's map of Arabia, and was one of the first members of the Seminar for Arabian Studies.

Nigel Groom's book *Frankincense and Myrrh* attracted the interest of an Omani company preparing to launch the high-class perfume Amouage, and he agreed to advise them on the historical background of the natural materials used in their products. This research led to a general dictionary-style reference book called *The Perfume Handbook* (1992). A much enlarged revised edition, *The New Perfume Handbook*, was requested by his publishers for the fragrance industry in 1997, and he was later commissioned to write *The Perfume Companion*, designed for a wider readership, which came out in 1999 with editions in several foreign languages. In 1996

he provided the questions for an entry on Perfume in the television series Mastermind.

Although hardly ever ill in his life, Nigel Groom discovered shortly after his retirement that he had developed a rare leg cancer. There followed a series of major operations, culminating five years later in the removal of a lung, although this was not allowed to curb his many interests. Lorna died in 2009. They had two children: Adrian (born 1955, married Julia Tideswell in 1984, children Katie (b.1986), Freya (b. 1988) and Tom (b. 1993)) and Alexandra (Tina) (born 1959, married Guy Rose in 1988, children Leo (b.1993) and Jasper (b.1997)).

## Susan Hillyard

1926–2014

Susan Hillyard, who has died aged 87, was the first European woman to live in Abu Dhabi. She arrived there with her husband Tim – a BP representative – and their small daughter Deborah in 1954. They left in 1958 when BP struck oil at the Umm Shaif offshore field, the exploration of which her husband had overseen. Her charming memoir of their life in *Abu Dhabi Before the Oil* (2002) is an invaluable source of information on the township's social history before oil wealth endowed its foreshore with a Manhattan skyline.

Conditions in the shakhdom in the 1950s were harsh. None of the amenities which expatriates normally took for granted existed. Susan's husband warned her that they would have to build their own house and that she would have to learn Arabic. Susan rose to challenges which would have dismayed a woman of lesser spirit.

Her warm personality and fluent Arabic brought her into close contact with the local community including members of the ruling family and their womenfolk; among them the Ruler himself, Shaikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al-Nahayyan and his younger brother and successor, Shaikh Zaid who was later to encourage Susan to record her memories of Abu Dhabi. One of young Deborah's playmates was Shaikh Nahayyan bin Mubarak, destined to become Chancellor of the future Al-Ain University.

She paid the last of several return visits to Abu Dhabi in 2007 to find it changed beyond recognition.

*John Shipman*

# Michael Rice

## 1928–2013

Michael Rice died at home on October 1st 2013 after a long period of declining health. He had three great loves in his life: his love of Egypt, his love of Arabia and the Gulf states, especially Bahrain, and his love of beautiful things; notably music, paintings, and dogs. One of his books, *Swifter than the Arrow* combined two of his passions and looked at the origin of the Egyptian hunting dog and its relations with its humans. He was a prolific author and perhaps his most important book was *Egypt's Making*, first published in 1990 with a second edition issued in 2003. It was widely acclaimed as 'bold and original' and is now available as an ebook. Michael had no formal training in archaeology and seems to have become interested in Egyptology when as a child he heard Tutankhamun's trumpets being played on the wireless. Later he was to become an advisor to the Egyptian government through his public relations consultancy company, allowing him to develop his interest further. Saudi Arabia also became a client and together with his team, he planned and designed some of the first museums in the Kingdom.

He had many other clients including Ghana, Cyprus, Guyana, Jamaica, Bahrain, the Sultanate of Oman and Qatar. The museum he planned in Qatar won him and his colleagues, together with Anthony Irving's Design Construction Group, one of the 1980 Aga Khan prizes for architecture. However it was his work for Bahrain which was to build the most long-lasting ties. Michael advised the Government of Bahrain on the organization of the Third Conference on Asian Archaeology, held in Bahrain in 1970. At the same time as the conference was being organized Michael led the team responsible for the planning and design of the first Bahrain National Museum.

As a direct result of the conference a small committee was formed composed of Beatrice de Cardi, Richard Barnett from the British Museum, Mortimer Wheeler, Laurence Kirwan, the Director of the Royal Geographical Society, and Michael to look at ways in which the archaeology of Arabia could be explored. It seems that the committee hoped in time to become a British School on the lines of the other Schools and Institutes across the world. Sadly this ambition was never achieved, but an invitation from the government of Qatar led to Beatrice de Cardi, together with other scholars, carrying out ground-breaking work there in 1973. The reports were published in 1978 'as a contribution to the over-all history of the region'. The Committee later gave birth to the Society for Arabian Studies whose wide range of interests reflects that of the founding committee. Now in its turn the Society has been reborn as the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia.

In 1990 Michael was instrumental in setting up the Bahrain–British Foundation, with the governments of the State of Bahrain and the United Kingdom, initially under the Chairmanship of the late Sir Anthony Parsons. The purpose of the Foundation was to provide the opportunity for young Bahrainis and Britons to spend a post-graduate year in each other's country, familiarizing themselves with its culture, institutions and way of life. Later, he was also the moving spirit behind the successful exhibition on Bahraini archaeology, called *Traces of Paradise*, which took place in the Brunei Gallery at the School of Oriental & African Studies London from July to September 2000. He published several books which reflect his interest in the Gulf. *Search for the Paradise Land* was published in 1984, followed in 1994 by *The Archaeology of the Arabian Gulf* which was issued as an ebook in 2011.

He was Chairman of the Bahrain Society 1997–2008 and remained an adviser to the Bahraini government almost until his death. His services were recognized by the award of the Order of Bahrain (1st Class) in 2002. The British government also acknowledged his contribution to British–Arab relations by his appointment as CMG ( Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George) in the same year.

Michael was very hospitable, holding splendid garden parties at his house outside Baldock attended by a wide range of guests of several nationalities and by his dogs. He was generous with his wide-ranging knowledge of the Arab world and with introductions to his many contacts, helping younger scholars to plan and carry out their research in the region. He retained his passionate interest in the archaeology of the Arab world until he died.

**Harriet Crawford**

# Sarah White

## 1968–2013

The untimely death of Sarah White last April, in Muscat, at the age of just 45, has left a void in the arts world of Oman and the Middle East.

Sarah first visited Oman, to see her parents, in 1985, while a student at Canterbury College of Art. Sarah gained a BA Hons in Fine Art at Bristol Polytechnic and a Masters in Fine Art from the Royal College of Art (RCA), London. One of only two people in her year at the RCA to graduate with distinction, Sarah received many prizes including the Darwin Scholarship, the Fleur Cowles Award and the Rosenberg Foundation Prize and exhibited her work internationally.

When visiting her parents in 1993, Sarah was asked by HE Mohammed Al Zubair to assist in cataloguing his collection of Omani artefacts. This led to Sarah's appointment to supervise the setting up of the Bait Al Zubair Museum in Muscat and she later became its first curator.

Sarah was responsible for building up the museum's eclectic collection of Omani historic artefacts including weapons, silver and clothing. It is now considered to be one of the finest private collections in the region. The generosity and foresight of HE Mohammed Al Zubair in making it accessible to the public has provided an important tourist attraction, as well as a valuable research source.

Sarah acquired an extensive knowledge of Omani arts and crafts and was always generous in sharing her learning with others – people would often seek Sarah's expert opinion on items they had bought from the Old Muttrah Suq. She herself had a good eye and found many interesting and unusual pieces for the museum when out and about.

Sarah maintained her love of art and created some notable and impressive artwork, from etchings to oils. She had a particular love of Omani architecture and reflected it in many of her paintings.

With her love of art, generosity of nature and hard work to promote art in Oman, Sarah was a leading force in the establishment of the Omani Society of Fine Arts. She worked to promote young Omani artists and provide showcases for their work, not just in Oman but internationally. She also travelled to Britain, with the British Council's Director and the Director of the Omani Society of Fine Arts, to raise awareness of the art world that was fast developing in Oman.

The tributes paid to Sarah, on her death, showed how much she was loved and valued by everyone who came into contact with her – in Oman and around the world. Her encouragement of young artists helped many of them establish successful careers. Her careful choice of Omani art for major buildings raised the profile of the indigenous art scene, exposing it to a wide audience.

Everything Sarah did was inspired by a genuine and deep love of Oman and, more especially, its people. She has left an indelible memory for the many artists she nurtured and her work gave the country a wider understanding and appreciation of its own wonderful heritage.

It is fitting that Sarah has been honoured by the naming of 'Gallery Sarah', a new gallery opened near to the Bait Al Zubair museum in October 2013. This gallery displays paintings and photographs and holds exhibitions, providing a showcase for local artists. In addition, the gallery has space in which workshops and seminars can be held and, overall, fulfils some of Sarah's aspirations for the Omani art world.

The naming of 'Gallery Sarah' offers recognition and tribute to a truly remarkable young woman who, in her short life, had enormous influence on the recognition of art in the Arab world and left a lasting legacy for generations to come.

**Rosemary Heaversedge**



"Interior of Jabrin Palace" (Oman), by Sarah White. Painted in 2005.

## LAST WORD

### Reporting from Yemen Media institute launched

*Media-related innovations are underway in Yemen, as Carolyn Perry, Director of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, explains.*

Last year I was able to fulfil a long standing ambition when I made my first trip to Yemen. I had wanted to visit the country since I worked on the 1997 Yemen Festival at the British Museum.

In 2012 Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber, patron and founder of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, of which I am Director, decided that he wished to set up an independent journalism training centre in Sana'a. The MBI Al Jaber Foundation has been supporting journalism training and a free press for many years: in conjunction with the LMEI at SOAS we have supported several conferences on Arab Media and we also have a track record in journalism training. For Sheikh Mohamed, press freedom is an important part of democracy and the democratic process, and with the events of 2011 and the revolution in Yemen, followed by the National Dialogue, it seemed that this was a good time for a training institute in the country to promote free and non-partisan press reporting.

At the beginning of 2013 planning started in earnest, and funding was put in place for an initial period of two years. We started talks with various Ministries in Yemen, and also interviewed potential staff. Although we wanted to have a local Director, we also wanted to recruit a staff member who would be familiar with all that funding from a UK registered charity implies.

#### Training the reporters

The MBI Al Jaber Media Institute in Yemen was to be an independent, privately funded institution to train journalists, students, teachers and citizens in all aspects of media. With a high-profile International Board of Advisors (including Nobel Laureate Tawakkol Karman and World Economic Forum member Dalia Mogahed) we hoped it would help to bring attention to the cause of journalists in Yemen, where in the past they have faced the threat of violence or imprisonment. In addition to offering training courses on journalism and reporting skills, the Institute would publish an online newspaper, with content supplied by staff, students and alumni. All courses would be free.

We were very lucky to secure as our Director one of the premier journalists in Arabic media, the BBC correspondent Abdullah Ghorab. Our media researcher is the British-Yemeni journalist Abubakr Al-Shamahi. In addition, both local and international



In Yemen, l to r: Abdullah Ghorab, Director of the MBI Media Institute; Carolyn Perry; Abdurahman Elshayyal, project consultant; and Mohamed, their driver.

journalists are employed as freelancers to bring their knowledge and expertise to the courses offered in our classrooms.

By May 2012 everything was ready for us to go and meet the necessary government officials, the new staff, and to search for premises: I was finally going to Yemen. Our trip was packed with meetings – we were received by the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Information who kindly agreed to join our Advisory Board, we met current journalism students who told us of the need for practical training to complement the theory they learn at University, we visited others doing training to hear of the issues they faced, we selected our office premises and even found time for a visit to the old town and to the magnificent Stone Palace. We also met up with some of the MBI Alumni who had received scholarships from us over the years. Everywhere we went the initiative and generosity of Sheikh Mohamed was acknowledged and appreciated.

Back in the UK we caught up with the paperwork and planning and I felt very proud when I received the news that the first course had taken place and had to be repeated immediately as it was oversubscribed. As I write we have an outreach course going on in Ta'izz: travel can be a security issue, so we need to take the courses to the people, a commitment of Abdullah Ghorab, who has himself been subject to intimidation and violence and was featured in last year's Human Rights Watch's report on journalism in Yemen.

On 3 December, 2013 we celebrated with a London launch. It was a great occasion, and the students even sent us a film to show. You can see it here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=457AbWHisQ>.

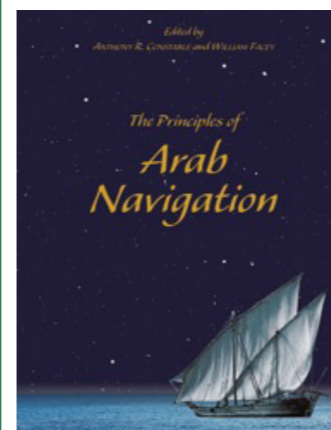
I'm very much looking forward to my next trip to Yemen and to seeing the courses in action. It is a fascinating and beautiful country, and even if I feel I have only just scratched the surface of the place, I can wholeheartedly say that it has been a privilege and a pleasure to work on a project there.

*Carolyn Perry, December 2013*

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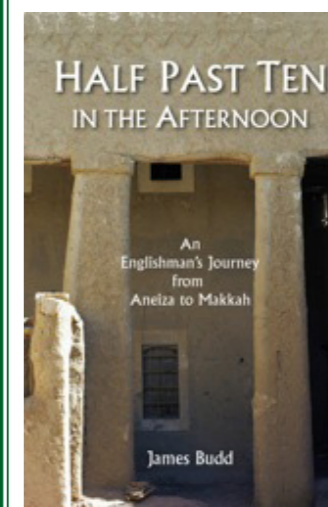
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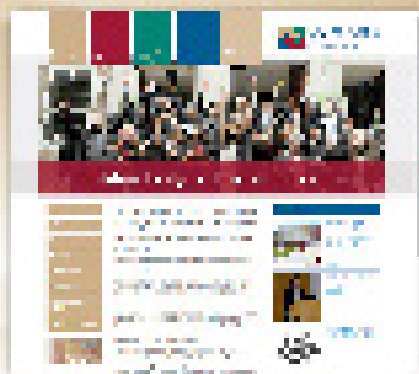
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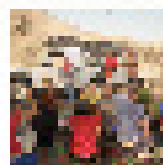
## The MBI Al Jaber Foundation is working to promote:



**Good Governance** – for example through support for Human Rights Watch, to strengthen civil society across the Arab world.



**Education** – the new MBI Al Jaber Building hosts the London Middle East Institute at SOAS.



**Cultural Dialogue** – we are long standing supporters of Connecting Cultures: Euro-Arab Dialogue in the Creative Domain.

We've been proud supporters of the Seminar for Arabists Studies since 2002, and have recently expanded to include more activities of the British Foundation for the Study of Arabics.

We're looking forward to seeing you all at this year's Seminar, and to welcoming all those interested in the study of Arabics to the MBI Al Jaber Public Lecture and Reception at the British Museum on 26th July 2014.



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