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THE BFSA BULLETIN



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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Notes for contributors to the Bulletin

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 email: current_research@thebfsa.org

Grants in aid of research

The grants scheme has been reformulated and details, including deadlines are announced on the BFSA website

<https://www.thebfsa.org/content/grants>

Membership

Membership details are available from the BFSA website 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

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WELCOME

Welcome to the 2015 special edition of the *BFSA* Bulletin.

Our cover feature highlights our President Beatrice de Cardi with this special edition of the Bulletin to celebrate the occasion of her 100th birthday in June 2014. On pages 13-14 you can read all about the impressive career that Beatrice has had so far, and her many successes in the understanding of the archaeology of the Arabian peninsula.

Next, there is all the latest *BFSA* news including an exciting expanded grants scheme and interesting new lectures and conferences to get into your diaries, don't miss The Red Sea VII in Naples! A new feature is *BFSA* members' news, a space where members can share their research interests. If you have anything to contribute, please email: current_research@thebfsa.org. and stay up to date with *BFSA* on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-British-Foundation-for-the-Study-of-Arabia/442298619144095> or on Twitter @TheBFSA.

Do make sure that you read current News and Research by country – from a round-up of Omani news from Dr Nasser Said al-Jahwari (page 18) to rock art on Socotra Island, Yemen by Dr Julian Jansen van Rensburg (page 46).

In addition to Will Facey's must-read book review section (page 70), the 2015 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 Dr Ash Parton of the Palaeodeserts Project (page 85).

All that remains is to thank the editorial team: Sarah Searight, Ionis Thompson, Will Facey, Beatrice Dohin, Carolyn Perry, and the new research contributing editor Tim Power. Kind thanks also to all of the many contributors to the Bulletin, and to you, the reader, for your continued support of the *BFSA*.

Dr Sarah K. Doherty (editor) @sherd_nerd

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: <http://www.thebfsa.org>. The following BFSA News pages will explore this work in more detail.

BFSA LECTURES

Lectures delivered

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 modern and contemporary art of the Middle East.

19 June 2014

Why Is Oman's Archaeological Record So Important?

by Dr Derek Kennet

Dr Kennet's talk discussed his excavations at Rustaq, Oman. The talk was hosted by the Anglo-Omani Society. See the article by Will Deadman, in the Oman section, page 18 for further details on the excavations at Rustaq.

15 January 2015

The Holy Land Lovingly Explored and Documented in the Late Ottoman Period by Dr. Hisham Khatib

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

BP Lecture Theatre in the Clore Centre, British Museum.

20 November 2015

The Greening of Arabia: Water, Fossils and Early Peoples by Prof. Michael Petraglia

Part of the MBI Al Jaber Lecture series held the MBI Al Jaber Seminar Room, London Middle East Institute, SOAS.

Michael Petraglia returned from excavations in Saudi Arabia the day before giving the lecture and discussed 'hot off the press' research on the 'Greening of Arabia: Water, Fossils and Early Peoples', part of his team's exciting Palaeodeserts Project. He used the three main headings listed in the title ... 'Water, Fossils and Early Peoples' to present their research findings.

The lecture is available to watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXGDN-E2QCo> and see Dr. Ash Parton's article in "Last Word", page 85.

Professor Michael Petraglia is Co-Director of the Centre for Asian Archaeology, Art & Culture, University of Oxford & Senior Research Fellow at Linacre College Oxford.

18th March 2015

The Art of Collecting by Prof. Nasser D. Khalili

A joint lecture and reception with the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, Corpus Christi College, Merton Street, Oxford

Prof. Khalili is a world-renowned scholar, collector and philanthropist. Since 1970 he has assembled eight of the world's finest art collections, which include Islamic Art and art of the Hajj pilgrimage from 700 - 2000. These collections have contributed to more than 50 international exhibitions and items from the collections have been exhibited in museums worldwide including the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The Khalili Collections will be fully represented in a series of 88 books, including exhibition catalogues, of which 70 have already been published.

21 March 2015

Study Day: Networks of the Red Sea: travel, trade and connections with lectures by Claire Somaglino, Carl Phillips, Roberta Tomber and Aylin Orbasli

(Jointly hosted by the BFSA and the Friends of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology)

An exciting day discussing the latest work on both sides of the

Red Sea: excavations and research spanning five millennia of inter-regional activity.

Claire Somaglino: Ayn Soukhna and exploring the Red Sea: from the reign of Khafre to the end of the XVIIIth Dynasty. Dr Claire Somaglino is an Associate Professor at Paris-Sorbonne (History Department), a member of IFAO and a member of the French-Egyptian archaeological mission to Ayn Soukhna.

Carl Phillips: The southern Red Sea coast of Arabia in the 2nd-1st millennium BC: relations between Arabia, Punt and Ethiopia.

Mr Carl Phillips is a Research Associate at CNRS Paris. He has excavated extensively in Yemen, Oman and the UAE. His current research includes connections along and across the Red Sea.

Roberta Tomber: To east and west: the ins and outs of trade at Egypt's Roman Red Sea ports.

Dr Roberta Tomber is a Visiting Fellow in the Department of Conservation and Scientific Research at the British Museum, and specializes in trade through the Red Sea. She was the co-director of the 2012 excavations at Quseir al-Qadim, Egypt.

Aylin Orbasli: Historic Towns of Saudi Arabia's Red Sea Coast: trade, pilgrimage, architecture and society.

Dr Aylin Orbasli is a Reader in Architectural Regeneration at Oxford Brookes University. She works as a heritage consultant, and researches the meaning and conservation of heritage in Islamic towns and settlements in Arabia.

Forthcoming Lectures

4 June 2015

Recent discoveries in and around Petra

by Dr Lucy Wadeson

The lecture is jointly hosted by the BFSA and the London Middle East Institute and will be immediately preceded by the BFSA AGM. 5.15PM in the G6 Lecture Theatre, Institute of Archaeology, UCL.

18 June 2015- to be confirmed

Architecture that "fills the eye;" building traditions in highland Yemen

by Prof. Trevor Marchand

Part of the MBI Al Jaber Lecture series held the MBI Al Jaber Seminar Room, London Middle East Institute, SOAS. 5.45PM. Prof. Marchand is Professor of Social Anthropology at SOAS.

25 July 2015

Turning the World Upside Down: the Emergence of Camel Caravans and Overland Trade in the Ancient

Near East

by Prof. Peter Magee

6.00PM at the BP lecture theatre, British Museum. Book via the British Museum website or email info@mbifoundation.com. *Annual MBI Lecture Lecture at the Seminar for Arabian Studies*.

October 2015- to be announced

Connecting Cultures

by Mark Evans

Part of the MBI Al Jaber Lecture series held at the MBI Al Jaber Seminar Room, London Middle East Institute, SOAS.

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 49th Seminar for Arabian Studies will be held from **Friday 25th to Sunday 27th July 2015** at the British Museum, London. The MBI Lecture will be by Dr Peter Magee (see Forthcoming Lectures, above).

For further information see <http://www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies>.

The 2014 Seminar

The 2014 Seminar was dedicated to Miss Beatrice de Cardi, Honorary President of BFSA on the occasion of her 100th birthday in June. Dr Sarah Doherty now provides a more detailed report on the papers given at the 48th Seminar for Arabian Studies.

The 48th Seminar for Arabian Studies (SAS) organised by the

British Foundation for the Study of Arabia (BFSA) and supported by both the MBI Al Jaber Foundation and the British Museum, took place on Friday 25th July to Sunday 27th July, 2014. Approximately fifty papers were presented at the three-day event. The papers covered a variety of subjects including archaeology, history, epigraphy and languages as well as literature, art, culture, ethnography and geography with research covering a broad time-scale, from the earliest periods to the present day.

The Seminar began chronologically on Friday 25th July, with papers on the Palaeolithic to Neolithic Arabia, chaired by Robert Carter. Topics of lectures focused mostly on burial practices, with two papers on the graveyards of Neolithic Adam, Oman, and the occurrence of multiple graves at Umm al-Quwain 2, in the UAE. Other papers included Ubaid period bitumen and an evaluation of the Neolithic landscape of Qatar. The afternoon session was chaired by Lucy Wadeson and papers considered the Early Historical/Classical periods. The Nabataeans were an ever-popular subject, with presentations on the Saudi French excavations of Hegra and Tayma. An interesting paper on the topic of Rock Art from Dahaisi Cave, Socotra Island was given by Julian Jansen Van Rensburg (see a write up of Julian's research under the Yemen section of the Bulletin, page 46).

Islamic Archaeology and History

The lead theme of Saturday 26th July detailed the wealth of work going on throughout the Arabian Peninsula on sites dating to the Islamic Period. Various aspects of the period were covered including the aromatics trade, petroglyphs, the Pearling town excavations at Doha, ceramics trade, and the recycling of Chinese porcelain in Oman. Boats and the maritime trade were important themes with analysis of boat engravings by Dionsius Agius and team, and Omani-Portuguese interactions described by Eric Staples and Abdul Rahman al-Salimi. Water catchment, seasonal exploitation of water and storage was another hot topic, with Andrew Petersen detailing the work of the excavations at Qatar to extract and store freshwater, and Stephen McPhillips et al describing an occurrence of seasonal tribal exploitation of Abbasid in Northern Qatar.

Ethnography

The afternoon session was chaired by Julian Jansen van Rensburg and discussed various aspects of ethnographic research undertaken throughout Arabia. Papers included gift giving in Oman by Marielle Risse, exploring the traditional houses of Sana'a by Waleed Al Sayyed, memories of 20th century migrants to the Gulf by M. H. Illias and Voices from Masirah by Hanadi Ismail.

MBI Lecture: Prof. Lloyd Weeks:

"The Quest for the Copper Mountain of Magan: How early metallurgy shaped Arabia and set the horizons for the Bronze Age World"

In the evening of Saturday, Professor Lloyd Weeks from the University of New England, New South Wales, delivered the MBI Al Jaber Lecture in the BP lecture theatre. He presented his research on the location of the 'Land of Magan', sometimes referred to as the 'Copper Mountain of Magan', using some fascinating archaeological evidence and rigorous scientific data as well as ancient Mesopotamian textual sources.

Professor Weeks discussed the social, technological and economic roles of metals in the early complex societies of the ancient Near East, identifying the ways in which a Bronze Age copper 'boom' in south-eastern Arabia underpinned its integration into the long-distance exchange systems and cultural encounters that characterised the Bronze Age world. Large scale copper production in the 3rd millennium BC changed Bronze Age society in south-eastern Arabia as the region became more closely connected, both economically and culturally, with other civilisations in the greater Persian Gulf region, from Mesopotamia to Iran, and even the Indus Valley. It is interesting to note that more than 4000 years before petroleum re-configured Arabia's role in the modern world, copper played a similar part in its development during the Bronze Age.

This was followed by a reception sponsored by the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, a British registered charity which aims to promote cultural dialogue and exchange between the Middle East and wider world (see back page for more).

Bronze and Iron Ages

In this session, chaired by St John Simpson in the early morning and Lloyd Weeks in the mid-morning, speakers presented on their excavations in Dhank, Oman (Williams and Gregoricka), Masafi, UAE (Eposti and Benoist), and Bat, Oman (Kondo and Miki). In the mid-morning, funerary archaeology was the focus, with burials at Bat (Döpfer), Dhank (Luthern and Williams) and an additional paper on the hinterlands of Sohar as part of Wadi al Jizzi described by Bleda Düring (further details in this Volume).

Archaeology and History of Ancient Yemen

A special session followed on the history of Yemen, which began by focusing on the religion and funerary practices. Agostini spoke about the excavations of the temple of 'Athardhu—Qabdin Barāqish and Daum considered the evidence for sacrifices in the religions of ancient Yemen before Islam to the present. Buckley and Fletcher analysed and discussed the evidence for ancient mummification practices in Yemen. Sultan spoke on the possibility of the monuments of Marib being astronomically orientated and Hatke considered the Iron age political ideology in the Near East and its relation to the Res Gestae.

Language

The final special session discussed text and languages, with papers including analyses of Qur'anic recitation by Brierley et al. and Archaic Soqotri texts by Naumkin and Kogan. There were additional papers on Khawr Kharfūt in Oman (Phillips et al) and approaches to analysing burial practices in Qatar (Zamora et al.)

The seminar, held in the Clore Centre at the British Museum, attracted a large number of participants on each of the three days and the presentations stimulated interesting and lively debate between speakers and the audience. A highlight of the Seminar on the third day was the presentation for Beatrice de Cardi OBE, FBA, FSA, pioneering archaeologist and expert on the pre-Islamic cultures of the Arabian Gulf and Baluchistan. Beatrice, who launched several expeditions in the Gulf region that yielded the first examples of Ubaid pottery in the area, celebrated her 100th birthday earlier in the year. Derek Kennet, representing the SAS, presented her with flowers and a gift to mark the occasion.

Papers from the 2013 Seminar have been edited by Prof. Robert Hoyland and have been 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 have been edited by Prof. Janet Watson: and published as a *Supplement to the Proceedings*, volume 44. To order this volume please contact:
Archaeopress, Gordon House, 276 Banbury Road, Oxford
OX2 7ED, UK, Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 1865 311914
Email: bar@archaeopress.com

The Red Sea VII

The BFSA is pleased to be supporting the Red Sea VII conference: "The Red Sea and the Gulf: Two Maritime Alternative Routes in the Development of Global Economy, from Late Prehistory to Modern Times", 26 – 30 May 2015.

The University of Naples "L'Orientale" will host the Red Sea VII conference, which for the first time will provide a comparison, on a scientific level, between two sea corridors and their shores, the Red Sea and the Gulf, which are similar geographically and environmentally, complementary to each other as well as competitors in their economic and cultural interaction with the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, both in the past and in the present. The conference will be an opportunity to meet and exchange information among scholars from worldwide institutions interested in the western Indian Ocean, and also an opportunity to share new ideas and to promote innovative projects based on international collaborations.

For further information, please contact the organising committee: Email: redsea7@unior.it

Tel.: +39 – 0816909614/716 or 0816909616/741

Or alternatively contact :

Dr. Andrea Manzo amanzo@unior.it

Dr. Chiara Zazzaro czazzaro@unior.it

Red Sea VI conference in 2013, was the previous conference 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 the previous 2013 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.

The proceedings of previous Red Sea conferences have been published by Archaeopress as part of the Society for Arabian Studies (now BFSA) Monograph Series. This tradition will continue: the papers will be published by E. J. Brill in 2015.



The poster for the Red Sea VII

MONOGRAPH SERIES

One of the core activities of the BFSA is to contribute to the accessibility of research on the Arabian Peninsula, and this includes overseeing the publication of the monograph series originally begun by the Society for Arabian Studies. The series includes research-based studies, conference proceedings, archaeological excavation or survey reports, and MA or PhD theses where the contents mark an important synthesis or a significant addition to knowledge. The monographs are edited by Dr Derek Kennet and Dr St John Simpson and published and distributed by Archaeopress.

A selection of titles can be found on page 86 and a full list on our website: <https://www.thebfsa.org/content/monographs>. All titles can be ordered from Archaeopress via bar@archaeopress.com.

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 or Dr Derek Kennet: derek.kennet@durham.ac.uk.

NEWS & RESEARCH

This year, some of our members shared their latest research interests, PhD theses topics and other newsworthy tidbits relating to the Arabian Peninsula. If you would like to contribute, please email: current_research@thebfsa.org

Doctoral research on contemporary Yemen

Larissa Alles, PhD Candidate, School of International Relations, University of St. Andrews

The doctoral research “*The Vulnerabilities of Authoritarian Upgrading in Yemen – Pitfalls and Prospects for Hybrid Regimes in the Wake of the Arab Spring*” is located in the theoretical debate of post-democratisation. The particular focus is on authoritarian upgrading of regimes in the Middle East with a focus on the case study of Yemen. Introducing liberal reforms after Yemen’s unification in 1990 – such as elections and a multi-party system – were essentially not

supposed to bring the country onto the path of open and competitive politics, but to ultimately strengthen the regime. Hence, liberalising reforms contributed to the resilience of incumbent elites.

However, in the light of the Arab Spring the question arises, what the vulnerabilities of authoritarian upgrading are, and if these vulnerabilities have contributed to the breakdown of the authoritarian regime in Yemen in the course of the uprising in 2011. Of particular interest is the structure of authority on local and regional levels in Yemen, and the linkage and interdependence of traditional and (neo-) patrimonial forms of leadership. The study benefits from fieldwork conducted in 2013 with the generous support of the BFSA, the BYS and BRISMES.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.standrews.ac.uk/intrel/people/index.php/lka3.html>

Site-Seeing: Postcards of the Middle East and the Visual Construction of Place, 1890s to 1990s,

Dr St John Simpson, BFSA Trustee and Assistant Keeper of the Department of the Middle East in the British Museum.

How is a sense of place visually constructed and communicated? How do certain views of places or landscapes become iconic, transforming ‘sites’ into ‘sights’? How do these authoritative images evolve in the context of wider political, social and economic changes? These are key research questions of a new AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Award PhD, jointly supervised by Dr St John Simpson and Dr Nick Baron of the University of Nottingham. This project begins in September 2015 and will examine the role of the picture postcard as a crucial technology of twentieth-century visual culture and modern place-making. To do so, it draws on the BM’s growing but already extensive collection of postcards of the Middle East, spanning colonial and post-colonial periods, and analyses the production and use of these postcards both as visual media and as material objects. This collection is part of the BM’s registered holdings and new acquisitions are regularly added to the Collections Online section of the BM website. The project aims to use modern social media to update findings on a regular basis and includes organising occasional lectures and seminars. Anyone interested in hearing more about this, or the BM’s postcard collection, is welcome to contact St John ssimpson@britishmuseum.org.

New Research project from Zayed University on British Environmental Perceptions in Oman for Sabrina Joeseeph and Brigitte Howarth

Sabrina Joseph & Brigitte Howarth received a research grant from Zayed University to study the following: British Environmental Perceptions, Ecological Realities and The

Development of Land and Water Resources in the Trucial States and Oman: Late Nineteenth through mid-Twentieth Centuries. Historical scholarship on the Middle East and North Africa indicates that Europeans perceived and depicted the physical environment as one characterized by degradation and ruin, mostly at the hands of local populations. Unfortunately, such views survived into the post-colonial period and shaped government policies and the work of development agencies, in spite of scientific/ecological research highlighting the resiliency and heterogeneity of the region's landscape. Existing research has by and large provided little insight into the Arabian Peninsula. Focusing primarily on the Trucial States and Oman, this interdisciplinary project draws on British travel literature, colonial government archives, and historical specimen data to examine Western perceptions of and policies towards the region's natural environment between the late nineteenth through mid-twentieth centuries, and the extent to which such views coincided with ecological records on the region. Finally, the study will de-construct Anglo-European representations of the desert environment and explore how such perceptions shaped British environmental policies and strategies in the Trucial States and Oman, particularly between the 1930s-1950s.

GRANTS IN AID

In 2014 the *BFSA* received a very generous donation from Prof. Valeria Fiorani Piacentini. We are extremely grateful to her. This exciting development has allowed the *BFSA* to develop its research grant scheme and to increase the amount we award, enabling us to support more substantial and varied research projects.

The *BFSA* grants are intended to support research in any academic area covered by the *BFSA*'s aims, which are to promote research relating to the Arabian Peninsula, in

particular, its archaeology, art, culture, epigraphy, ethnography, geography, geology, history, languages, literature and natural history. Grants may be used to fund fieldwork, library or laboratory-based research or research support.

The main objective of the research must fit within the scope of the *BFSA*'s aims, and applications must be linked to clear and achievable plans for immediate. The number of awards made each year will depend on the strength of applications. Main Research Grants up to £4,000 and Small Research Grants up to £1,000. It is expected that grants of a combined value of up to about £8,000 will normally be awarded each year.

Guide to applicants

There are two types of research grant:

- Small Research Grants: up to £1,000 (for all categories of researchers)
- Main Research Grants: up to £4,000 (for post-doctoral research)

The application deadline is **15th May** each year, awards will be announced by the **middle of June**.

Applicants to the Main Research Grants should normally hold a doctorate at the time of application. Exceptions can be made for researchers with a proven track record of post-doctoral level research and publication. Applicants for Small Research Grants can be at any level of their career, though they would normally be expected to be at least in the second year of a relevant university undergraduate degree.

For more details, and how to apply, visit the *BFSA* website:

<https://www.thebfsa.org/content/grants>

There now follows the reports of this year's award recipients:

Establishing a chronology for Holocene climate and environmental change

Mleiha, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (a *BFSA* grant report)

Adrian Parker is Professor in Geography at Oxford Brookes University where he leads the Human Origins and Palaeoenvironments (HOPE) research group. Report with Frank Preusser, Joachim Eberle, Sabah Jasim and Hans-Peter Uerpmann.

The Holocene epoch has been punctuated by a series of abrupt climatic events with several phases of hyper-aridity, which have coincided with changes observed in the archaeological record (Parker et al., 2006). To date, only a few fluvial or lacustrine records covering the early to mid-Holocene period from the region have been studied. Little or no information is available for the late Holocene from these geoarchive types (Parker and Goudie, 2008).

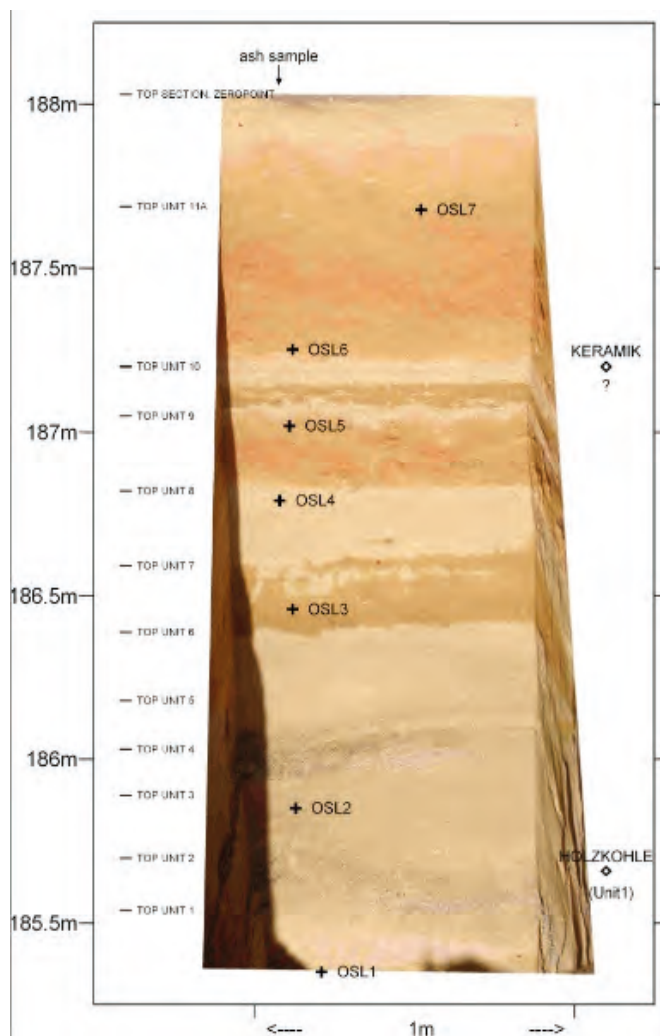
The purpose of this ongoing study is to analyse sediments from geoarchives from the interior of SE Arabia in order to determine and build the past climatic context of the area against which the archaeology can be set. Key methods are being used to understand how changes in rainfall and aridity have varied over the time using physical, chemical and biological analyses. The Mleiha region of Sharjah Emirate provides a unique record for human occupation spanning the last 125,000 years from the Palaeolithic through to the modern day.

The Jebel Faya anticline forms a narrow, discontinuous bedrock ridge, which extends approximately 30 km from Jebel Buhais in the south, through Jebel Faya, Jebel Mleiha to Sha'biyyat As Saman, a few kilometres south-west of Dhaid. The Faya range is predominantly formed of Cretaceous limestones and conglomerates. Outcrops of serpentinite outcrop in places along the Faya range.

Two major drainage systems have developed in the Faya area. The southern system cuts through the Faya range, between Jebel Aqabah and Jebel Faya, and merges into Wadi Iddayyah – Batha Ar Rafi'ah. The northern drainage system flows towards Jebel Faya and Jebel Mleiha and is deflected northwards towards Sha'biyyat Milehah. The alluvial fans in this part of the system extend as far as Dhaid, where they merge into a series of channels, which converge at Falajal-Mo'alla to form Wadi Madsah.

Samples for palaeoenvironmental analyses were collected from a topographic depression (Lat/Long N25°08'20.83" E055°51'44.64") to the west of Mleiha, close to Jebel Faya and Jebel Mleiha, which is filled with fluvial, lacustrine and aeolian sediments. These sediments were identified as part of the University of Tübingen-Sharjah archaeological research project led by Prof Hans-Peter Uerpmann and Dr Sabah Jasim, and provide an extensive chronological sequence spanning the mid to late Holocene period. Natural sediment exposures were extended using test pits. In addition, quarrying for sand in the area for construction purposes has led to several sediment exposures through the dune-sequence overlying the lacustrine silts and fluvial gravels which extend laterally beneath the dunes. Initial findings from three test sections (MLQ, MLP and MLL) are reported here. Several other sections are currently being studied and details will be reported in full at a later date.

Seventeen samples were dated using Optical Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating from four key sediment sections (Table 1). Preliminary results suggest the following sequence of events is recorded within the examined sediments. A series of basal gravels were noted in two of the sediment test pits (MLP and MLL). It should be noted that these gravels were not bottomed. The coarse grained layers in the lower sections of these three profiles show clear features of fluvial deposition via episodic sheet floods or shallow water channels from the Hajar Mountains transporting the predominantly ophiolite-rich material. An OSL age of 6.55 ± 0.62 ka (4550 ± 620 BC) was determined towards the base of test pit MLP. During the Neolithic, wetter conditions than today have been recognised across south-eastern Arabia. During this period monsoonal rainfall led to the development of lakes and active channel flow in wadis across the region with evidence for grassland covering the dunes of the Rub al-Khali in the region between 8.50 – 6.00 ka (6500–4000 BC) (Parker et al.,



MLP section, Mleiha UAE, showing location of OSL samples.

2006; Parker and Goudie, 2008). Evidence for Neolithic occupation of the landscape in the Mleiha region has been identified from a number of important stratified and dated archaeological sites found along the eastern flanks of Jebel Buhais and Jebel Faya.

Aeolian cream-coloured sands, dating to the Bronze Age, 4.30–4.10 ka, were found sealing overlying the gravels in three of the test pit sections (MLQ, MLP, MLL). These dates correspond to a regionally identified phase of aridity, which has been interpreted from sand infilling the desiccated lake basin at Awafi, Ra's al-Khaimah and a major phase of dune accumulation near Al Ain, where 7 m of emplacement occurred between 4.30 and 4.00ka (2300–2000 BC) (Atkinson et al., 2012). Three phases of ponded lacustrine sedimentation were identified at Mleiha and dated to ~ 4.00 ka (2000 BC), 1.80 ka (AD 200) and 0.17 ka (AD1830) respectively. In test pit MLP the uppermost lacustrine layer contained Late Pre-Islamic Mleiha period pottery. OSL ages for lacustrine silts from the sections broadly fit into the Late Iron Age and PIR/pre-Islamic recent/ Late Pre-Islamic periods. No other lake sites have been identified from elsewhere in the region dating to this period. This provides the first terrestrial palaeoenvironmental record from SE Arabia spanning this period. These lacustrine silts extend

laterally westwards and are overlain by red aeolian dunes up to 8 m high. These dunes show rapid dune encroachment over the site during the last 1500 years.

At Mleiha a major inland settlement was present during the pre-Islamic recent period. Between the 3rd century BC and the 4th century AD two substantial mud-brick forts and numerous houses and burials are known to have existed. Kennet (2005) suggests that by the 3rd century AD occupation had declined and that by the 5th century the site was deserted altogether. In addition to the decline of settlements across SE Arabia at this time, Kennet suggests that there is evidence for a wider economic decline during this period. The cause for this decline is uncertain. However, the pattern of reduced settlement that began after the first or second centuries AD and continued until the seventh century AD may have been linked to the severe droughts identified by Fleitmann et al. (2009) from a speleothem record from Hoti Cave in the Hajar Mountains of Oman. Of note is a decline in rainfall between AD 500 and AD 1,000 with an intense drought occurring around AD 530.

During this period, a series of profound societal changes have been suggested from Arabia which coincides with the transition between the Late Pre-Islamic and Islamic periods within the archaeological record. The development of lacustrine sediments at Mleiha may help explain the inland expansion of Late Pre-Islamic period influence due to increased water availability.

The decline of the Late Pre-Islamic sites at Mleiha may be linked to increased aridity and major drought, as identified in the Hoti Cave speleothem record, which led to major changes in water availability, desiccation of the water body and the onset of major dune reactivation and migration across the Mleiha landscape. The ongoing work at Mleiha is crucial for understanding the climate and landscape record through time and how this may have impacted human occupation as identified in the archaeological record.

Funding to support the dose rate calculations for the OSL dating was kindly provided the Emirates Natural History Group (ENHG) and the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia (BFSA).

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Table 1 to show OSL dates from Mleiha, UAE

Sample	Depth (cm)	Grain size (µm)	n	rod	K (%)	Th (ppm)	U (ppm)	W (%)	D (Gy ka ⁻¹)	D _e (Gy)	Age (a)
MLE-1	25	04-11	5	-	0.81 ± 0.09	1.77 ± 0.19	3.29 ± 0.36	4 ± 4	-	no signal	-
MLE-2	85	63-100	24	0.24	0.65 ± 0.04	1.27 ± 0.11	1.82 ± 0.14	4 ± 4	1.25 ± 0.12	2.87 ± 0.16	2290 ± 250
MLE-3	125	63-100	27	0.28	0.59 ± 0.07	1.00 ± 0.12	1.87 ± 0.22	4 ± 4	1.13 ± 0.15	4.64 ± 0.27	4100 ± 590
MLP10-7	35	160-200	12	0.17	0.82 ± 0.07	1.24 ± 0.10	0.96 ± 0.21	4 ± 4	1.27 ± 0.16	2.33 ± 0.12	1840 ± 250
MLP10-6	78	160-200	12	0.11	0.86 ± 0.09	1.27 ± 0.09	0.81 ± 0.15	4 ± 4	1.26 ± 0.16	2.50 ± 0.09	1990 ± 260
MLP10-5	100	200-250	30	0.17	0.90 ± 0.05	1.96 ± 0.09	1.08 ± 0.10	4 ± 4	1.37 ± 0.13	2.57 ± 0.13	1870 ± 200
MLP10-4	125	160-200	12	0.08	0.86 ± 0.07	1.70 ± 0.12	0.98 ± 0.17	4 ± 4	1.32 ± 0.15	3.57 ± 0.87	2710 ± 730
MLP10-3	160	150-200	30	0.20	0.72 ± 0.04	2.10 ± 0.09	1.13 ± 0.12	4 ± 4	1.23 ± 0.11	4.86 ± 0.18	3950 ± 390
MLP10-2	220	160-200	12	0.20	0.62 ± 0.06	1.38 ± 0.10	1.27 ± 0.18	4 ± 4	1.13 ± 0.10	4.92 ± 0.30	4370 ± 470
MLP10-1	270	150-200	30	0.18	0.62 ± 0.03	1.61 ± 0.07	1.23 ± 0.12	4 ± 4	1.11 ± 0.10	7.24 ± 0.24	6550 ± 620
MLQ10-1	150	160-200	12	0.17	0.72 ± 0.07	0.69 ± 0.19	1.08 ± 0.09	4 ± 4	1.13 ± 0.15	0.36 ± 0.03	320 ± 50
MLQ10-2	200	160-200	11	0.09	0.84 ± 0.07	1.58 ± 0.12	1.19 ± 0.23	4 ± 4	1.32 ± 0.18	1.41 ± 0.05	1070 ± 140
MLQ10-4	321	160-200	12	0.19	0.84 ± 0.08	1.30 ± 0.09	0.79 ± 0.16	4 ± 4	1.18 ± 0.14	1.80 ± 0.10	1520 ± 200
MLQ10-5	395	200-250	30	0.15	0.69 ± 0.04	1.36 ± 0.06	0.89 ± 0.10	4 ± 4	1.04 ± 0.09	1.89 ± 0.06	1810 ± 170
MLQ10-6	490	150-200	32	0.17	0.72 ± 0.04	1.83 ± 0.08	1.16 ± 0.13	4 ± 4	1.16 ± 0.11	2.64 ± 0.08	2270 ± 220
MLQ10-7	535	160-200	12	0.23	0.81 ± 0.08	2.25 ± 0.16	1.27 ± 0.25	4 ± 4	1.31 ± 0.17	5.63 ± 0.22	4310 ± 600
MLQ10-8	585	150-200	32	0.25	0.76 ± 0.04	2.07 ± 0.08	1.37 ± 0.12	4 ± 4	1.25 ± 0.11	6.18 ± 0.28	4930 ± 480

Shell Midden Research in Saudi Arabia

Part of the DISPERSE Project (a BFSA grant report)

The second 2014 BFSA grant was awarded to Niklas Hausmann, a PhD candidate at the University of York. The grant went towards his research on the shell middens of Saudi Arabia as part of the DISPERSE Project (see page 33), and enabled him to present his research at two conferences in Brazil and Argentina. His thesis topic is entitled: “Farasan Islands: An Isotope Study.”

I am a PhD student in the DISPERSE-Project at the University of York. One of the project's main aims is to analyse the coastal settlements in Arabia during the early Neolithic. My PhD “Farasan Islands: An Isotope Study” focuses on the over 3000 shell middens on the Farasan Islands, Saudi Arabia. It is the most elaborate site of coastal exploitation on the Arabian coast, with the highest concentration of shell midden sites in the world. The middens are exceptional, especially when compared to the small number of prehistoric coastal sites on the Arabian mainland located 40 km further east. They accumulated over a period from 6500 to around 4000 cal BP and their different constellations of sites and sea level suggest a change in the environment as well as exploitation intensity. The actual occupation duration of individual middens is still a part of ongoing research as there are many different stages of occupation and clusters of middens that align with different palaeoshorelines. The shell middens range from small, deflated clusters to 6 m high mounds of tightly packed shell. Mostly there is little or no fine-grained sediment present and most layers are clast-supported. 90% of the excavated shell middens contain high amounts of *Strombus fasciatus* shells.

My research deals with the accumulation of these *S. fasciatus* shells during this time of intense exploitation. I am trying to evaluate the possibility of using the isotopic records in *S. fasciatus* shells to reconstruct the water temperature of the shells' environment when it was alive, to find out about the season of death. Ultimately this seasonality study will give me an insight into exploitation patterns and accumulation rates of the sites.

The great number of sites suggests an intense exploitation that can be almost called industrialised. However, by not actually knowing how much of the shell deposit is being used at a time, it is not clear if all accumulated at once by a large island population or if it accumulated slowly but steadily by a much smaller number of people.

It is likely that the truth is somewhere in between but how this is related to site distribution, archaeological finds, burials, environmental change and possibly the change of social structures, is yet to be found out.

To verify *S. fasciatus* as a seasonality proxy, I collected modern shells at different times of the year and sampled the most recent growth increments to compare the isotopic

composition to the temperature of the water at the time of collection. I found that the isotopic composition is strongly correlated to the water temperature and can be used to calculate the hypothetical temperature with an error of less than 1°C.

I also carried out analyses using laser ablation to look at the change in elemental composition with the change in temperature. Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS) was used to measure the Mg/Ca ratio of the shell aragonite with promising results. Because LIBS is faster and more cost-effective, we made the first step towards a mass production of seasonality and climate data from archaeological shells.

Using the money awarded by the BFSA, I was able to present my research at the conference of the International Council for Archaeozoology in San Rafael, Argentina in September 2014. The presentation was a success and was well received. The immediate result was the invitation to an additional conference in Tubarão, Brazil, the I Seminário Internacional de Arqueologia Subaquática (First International Seminar of underwater Archaeology) hosted by Deisi Scunderlick Eloy de Farias at the beginning of October. Here I was able to present the research to an archaeological community that has been heavily influenced by shell midden research and had a great interest in the Arabian shell midden sites as well as the tools and methods used in Saudi Arabia. An additional invitation followed by the Museum for Shell Middens in Joinville, Brazil to give another talk and foster relationships for future international projects comparing Brazil, that has the largest shell middens, and Saudi Arabia, that has the area with the most concentrated shell middens in the world.

To conclude, the money awarded by the BFSA made it possible to not just present my research at a very important conference to an international community of archaeologists but also laid the foundations for two additional presentations and future research with shell midden specialists.

Niklas Hausmann (University of York) for the DISPERSE Project

The First 100 Years

a celebration of our President, Miss Beatrice de Cardi, OBE

On the 5th June 2014, Beatrice celebrated her 100th birthday, Sarah Searight writes this tribute in honour of the Founder of the BFSa and to highlight her amazing life and dedication to archaeology so far. Here's to the next 100 years Beatrice!

Beatrice de Cardi's appetite for ancient places was stimulated as a child when driving with her father through Britain and it was while studying at University College London that she was enticed by Mortimer Wheeler to lend a hand at the excavations he was directing at Maiden Castle. It was Tessa Wheeler who taught her the techniques of pottery typology and excavation; it came as a great shock when Tessa died unexpectedly in 1936.

After university Beatrice trained as a secretary and was then invited by Wheeler to become his secretary at the London Museum in Lancaster House where he was the Keeper. WW II intervened, Wheeler joined up and Beatrice continued to play a prominent role at the Museum, even living in the building and fire-watching during the Blitz. With bombs raining down it was decided to close the museum and Beatrice was seconded to the Foreign Office. She was promptly despatched to China as P.A. to the Foreign Office official there. Beatrice was put to supervising the transport by air of vital war materials to Chiang Kai Shek and chasing up cargo from India to China, flying over the 'Hump' between the two, looking down on the corpses of Dakota planes that had failed to make the altitude over mountainous hazards: *'I was lucky!'* was Beatrice's comment.

After the war she worked in India and then in the newly formed Pakistan in the Trade Commission based in Karachi. In her spare time she threw herself into archaeology, inspired by an article by Stuart Piggott in which he described some unidentified, elaborately painted pottery from Quetta. Beatrice decided with Wheeler's help (he was now DG of Archaeology of India) to extend its distribution in the unsettled terrain of Baluchistan. Wheeler lent his foreman, Sadar Din, to be her travelling companion and Wheeler provided the maps. *'It was a wonderful arrangement,'* recalls Beatrice; *'we located 47 sites, a dozen of which had the so-called "Quetta ware."* Wheeler told her to publish immediately, an edict she has followed throughout her life and advised others to do the same. She found more of the ware when venturing over the border into Afghanistan. Then a telegram to Karachi told her she must apply for the post of assistant secretary at the newly formed *Council for British Archaeology* (CBA). It was a task she fulfilled (soon as Secretary) from 1947-73.

While at the CBA Beatrice continued her research in Baluchistan, close to the Iranian border, in 1957 surveying the Mula Pass, the main migration route to Upper Sind.



Beatrice at her desk, 1966.

A period focusing on the CBA and writing up notes, was followed by a return to the western half of Baluchistan, i.e. south-eastern Iran; here she was briefly arrested as a spy but luckily could appeal to the local governor to whom she had paid a courtesy call a few days earlier. *'I always impressed on my companions the importance of sprucing up, having a scrub in the local baths, before calling on local dignitaries.'* Then at Bampur she found some distinctive grey ware: a visit to Geoffrey Bibby at the Moesgard Museum in Denmark confirmed that the sherds from Bampur were comparable to those from the Trucial Coast.

And so began her long and well-known association with the Trucial States, later the United Arab Emirates, an early highlight of which occurred in 1968 when she and Brian Doe undertook an ambitious survey of Ras al-Khaimah, always her most favoured spot. This was followed by work in Oman and Qatar, in the latter identifying the presence of 'Ubaid-related pottery. Come the 1970s she focused on locating and recording sites at risk owing to the great pace of development. As a result of her research many new sites in the lower Gulf were identified, dating from the early Neolithic to the medieval period. And her work – both there and in Britain - has been much appreciated and recognised with the award of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), the Gold Medal of the Society of Antiquaries in 2014, an annual 'Beatrice de Cardi lecture' organised by the CBA which also renamed their headquarters in York 'Beatrice de Cardi House' in honour of her centenary. A festschrift of essays in Beatrice's honour that reflects the range of her activities *Arabia and its Neighbours: essays on prehistorical and*

historical developments, was published by Brepols in 1998.

Of her fieldwork in general, Beatrice told one interviewer. *'I have never had any difficulties ... I am not a woman or a man when I am working in the Gulf or anywhere else. I am a professional and have always been accepted as such.'* However, Beatrice has always been renowned for being immaculately turned out (even rising extra early when on a dig to ensure make-up was properly in place for the day), often in clothes she had made herself. She remains a devoted 'foodie', reading cook books for pleasure and welcoming guests as an excuse to plan and execute a fancy menu. She also in her 90s developed a longstanding interest in her family's Corsican history and its American links, sustained by her visit to the USA in the 2000's.

BFSA owes its existence to Beatrice who – together with Michael Rice - set up in 1987 the Society for Arabian Studies, renamed BFSA in 2010. The Foundation remains forever grateful to its remarkable founder.

Sarah Searight [see also Nadia Durrani: Current Archaeology 297, 2014; and Current World Archaeology 10, 2005]



(Left) Beatrice at Wadi Duftah, February 2005



(Above) Photograph from 1968 during Beatrice's first survey to Trucial Oman, the later UAE, which she did together with Brian Doe who might have taken this photo. It was made during a camp setup in Fujairah. (Christian Velde *pers comms*)

BFSA Trustees

Biographies and latest work

Ms Carolyn Perry

Chair

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 last year's Bulletin).

Of course, one of the highlights of our year is always the Seminar of Arabian Studies, of which we are long-time supporters. The 2014 MBI Al Jaber lecture, by Lloyd Weeks, was a great success and we are all looking forward to the next one by Peter Magee.

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, with whom I recently organised the Red Sea Study Day.

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 Derek Kennet

Co-Editor of Monograph Series

I am currently taking two years out from my job in the Department of Archaeology, Durham University to teach in the Archaeology Department at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. I 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 Kuwaiti 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). At SQU I am teaching elective courses on the archaeology of Oman and Eastern Arabia. Meanwhile at Durham I continue to supervise six research students who are working on the archaeology of the region.

Dr St John Simpson

Co-Editor of Monograph Series

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, which is a joint project with Prof. Avanzini, Pisa, the publication of finds from Dr Kennet's excavations at the site of Kush in Ras al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, and the development of the British Museum as a major centre and repository of Middle Eastern postcards. I have been recently awarded AHRC funding to co-supervise a PhD on this subject, jointly hosted with the University of Nottingham (see page 8). I am also co-editor of the *BFSA* Monograph Series published by Archaeopress, and welcome any proposals or suggestions for future titles (see page 8).

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). I am co-editing a book on Yemen (Yemen to 2020) due to be published in English and Arabic during 2015.

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.

Mr 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 came out in 2014.

Mr William Facey

Arabian Publishing's project to produce the first English edition of Julius Euting's *Tagbuch einer Reise in Inner-Arabien* continues, in collaboration with the University of Tübingen and with Michael Macdonald and Christopher Metcalf as editor and translator. In the meantime Arabian Publishing will bring out a reprint of Eldon Rutter's *The Holy Cities of Arabia*, a neglected masterpiece of Hajj writing first published in 1928. I continue to advise on museum and national park projects in Arabia. In 2014 I published a little book by the well-known financial journalist David Shirreff, on what is wrong with the banking system and how to put it right. It's entitled *Don't Start from Here: We Need a Banking Revolution* (Crunch Books).

Prof. Clive Holes

I got my BA in Arabic and Turkish from Cambridge University (at Trinity Hall) in 1969 (MA 1973), and my PhD in Arabic Linguistics at Wolfson College, Cambridge in 1981. I also did an MA in English Language at Birmingham University in 1971-2. During the 1970s and early 80s, I was an Overseas Career Officer of the British Council, serving in Bahrain, Kuwait, Algeria, Iraq and Thailand. I was also involved in planning and setting up Sultan

Qaboos University, Muscat, Oman in the mid-80s and was the Director of its Language Centre 1985-7 whilst on leave from Salford University, where I was Lecturer in Arabic and Applied Linguistics 1983-7. In 1987 I returned to the UK to take up a Lectureship in Arabic at Cambridge and a Tutorial Fellowship at Trinity Hall, being promoted to Reader in Arabic in 1996. In January 1997 I moved to Magdalen College Oxford and the Oriental Institute to take up the Khalid bin Abdullah Al-Saud Chair for the Study of the Contemporary Arab World, from which I retired in 2014. I was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2002. My main interests are the languages, dialects and popular cultures of the Arabian peninsula from the earliest times to the present.

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, which this year presented me with one of the Rawabi Holding Awards for promoting Saudi-British relations.

Dr Robert Wilson

I retired from the Foreign Office in 2014, after a career of 32 years as analyst and diplomat concentrating on the Arab World, with postings in the UAE, Bahrain and Yemen (in addition to Iraq and Libya). I first lived in Yemen, teaching English in the highland town of Hajjah (Yemen Arab Republic), from 1972 to 1973.

NEWS AND RESEARCH BY COUNTRY, 2014

BAHRAIN

Prof Timothy Insoll *brings us up to date on work in Bahrain opening with information on his project focusing on the Islamic Period.*

Two seasons of fieldwork have been completed on the Bahrain Islamic funerary inscriptions project. This involves compiling an inventory and catalogue of all the Islamic funerary inscriptions on Bahrain pre-dating AD 1900. The research is being co-directed by the author with Dr Rachel MacLean, and Dr Salman Almahari of the Directorate of Archaeology and Heritage, Bahrain. To date 141 separate gravestones have been recorded. These are carved from single blocks of limestone, or double blocks of limestone, and can be either hollow or solid. Where two blocks of stone are utilised, the two sections can be jointed together. Many have inscriptions cut on five faces (see photo). Preliminary indications are that a wide range of biographical and historical data has been collected. The research is being completed with permissions and support from the relevant local communities, the Wakf authorities, the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities, and the Court of the Crown Prince. Excavation also forms a significant component of this project for some of the inscriptions are buried, as are some of the shrines, tombs, and mosques in which they are located.

Additional trial excavation unconnected with the funerary



An example of a gravestone and its mosque location excavated in March 2015 in the Abu Anbra Cemetery, Bilad al-Qadim, Bahrain (photo. T. Insoll).

inscriptions project but also focused on Islamic period sites has also been taking place in Ain Abu Zaydan, and on a mound in Abu Anbra, sites first surveyed by this author in 2001. This is to permit further understanding of the settlement chronology of the Bilad al-Qadim area.

I am also curating, with Dr Rachel MacLean, the exhibition in the new visitors centre at the Al-Khamis Mosque, again in Bilad al-Qadim. The centre has been designed by Wohler Architects of Copenhagen and construction is imminent, on completion of the current tendering process. This is one of a number of site museums built (e.g. at the Tree of Life site) or planned (e.g. at Barbar Temple, the Saar Archaeological Site, and A'ali) by the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities under the initiative of its President, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa. This scheme is building upon the success of the Qala'at al-Bahrain museum, and the

associated site presentation.

Prof Timothy Insoll, University of Manchester
tim.insoll@manchester.ac.uk]

Bahraini Cultural Activities

Dr Sarah Doherty gives an overview of museum developments and cultural activities in the region.

The 10th edition of the Spring of Culture Festival, which was held under the theme “Ten Bright Years”, was launched by the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities. The festival ran for two months during February and March, and featured a variety of events and activities, and included academic seminars, music and song concerts, theatrical performances, art exhibitions, and much more.

Art Exhibitions

The Bahrain National Museum in collaboration with Al-Mansouria Foundation for Culture and Creativity, hosted ‘Modern and Contemporary Saudi Art, The Al-Mansouria Collection’, an exhibition which illustrated the evolution of Saudi contemporary art from the 1960’s to present day.

In addition, ‘Qal’at Al Bahrain through the Ages’ was an interactive art installation designed to enhance the visitors’ experience of the site and raise awareness about its historical significance.

The Bahrain National Museum also hosted the ‘Berber Women of Morocco’ exhibition, an amazing showcase of millennia-old Berber culture and identity told through exquisite objects from the Atlantic coast of Morocco to the eastern edge of the Arabian Maghreb region.

Lectures and Thought Symposia

The Spring of Culture’s diverse agenda also included a number of select lectures and thought symposia which catered to a wide range of interests.

Among them was a lecture hosted by Bahrain National Museum with the speaker Dr. Timothy Insoll, Professor of African and Islamic Archaeology at the University of Manchester, who presented the results of archaeological research completed in Bilad Al-Qadim between 2001-2015, with a focus on the Islamic period and on what has been learnt about past life, trade, settlement, and architecture.

Bahrain’s archaeological riches showcased in Sharjah, UAE

An exhibition showcasing Bahrain National Museum’s

artefacts depicting the period spanning from 2000 BC to 300 AD opened at Sharjah Archaeological Museum. The exhibition, which ran until the 29th March, 2015, was held at the provisional exhibition hall at Sharjah Archaeology Museum under the theme: “Ancient Bahrain: The Power of Trade” (2nd Millennium BC -3rd Century AD). Sharjah Museums Department is holding the heritage exhibition in coordination with the Ministry of Culture in Bahrain (see pages 38-40).

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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

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 its own 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 the following foreign teams who are working on the following Kuwaiti archaeological sites and projects:

Dr Flemming Hojland, Moesgaard Museum, Aarhus, Denmark.

Excavations of Bronze Age or ‘Dilmun’ Tell F6 on Failaka
Field work on the first stage of this project has now been completed and the results are being prepared for publication.

Prof Piotr Bieliński, Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, Poland
Survey and excavations of Bronze Age tumuli in Sabiyya area of Kuwait mainland; Excavations at ‘Ubaid site of Bahra 1 on Kuwait mainland. Field work on the first stages of these projects has now been completed and the results are being prepared for publication; excavation of Kharaid Desht Late Islamic site on Failaka; excavations at 8th century Christian site of al-Qusur on Failaka; underwater survey on and around shores of Failaka.

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

Dr David Lordkiandize, Director, Georgian National Museum, Tbilisi, Georgia: Survey of Bronze Age sites in Sabiyya area and excavation of Al-Awazen Late Islamic site in Failaka.

Dr Andrea Di Miceli, University of Perugia, Italy: Excavations at the late Islamic site of Quraniyya, Failaka

Dr Derek Kennet, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, UK: Survey and excavation of the Islamic landscape on mainland Kuwait including Kadhima, Mughaira and Shiqayya; field work on this project has now been completed. A study season is planned for 2015 and the results will then be prepared for publication; kite aerial photographic survey of the 8th century Christian site of al-Qusur on Failaka. Field work on this project will be completed by the end of April 2015 and the results will then be prepared for publication.

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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 Sultan Qaboos University.

During 2013-2014 a number of archaeological projects were carried out (some still ongoing) all over the Sultanate of Oman. They are under the supervision of Oman's Ministry of Heritage and Culture (MHC), and the Department of Archaeology at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in collaboration with other international institutions.

Sultan Qaboos University (SQU)

In 2014, the Department of Archaeology at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) carried out some surveys and excavations in a number of areas in Oman, including Saham and Rustaq in the Batinah Region and the area of Hamasah in Buraimi.

Saham Project

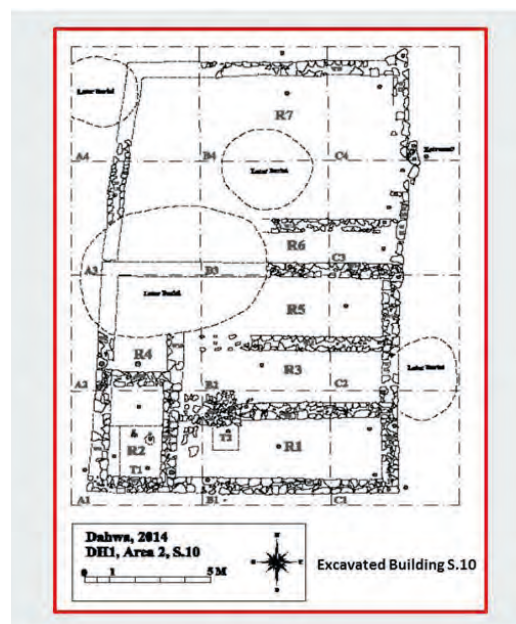
During January–February 2014, the Department of Archaeology continued its second season of archaeological investigation in the areas of al-Fulayj and Dahwa at Saham in the Northern al-Batinah Governorate. This project is funded by internal grant from SQU. The work this season concentrated on continuing the survey in al-Fulayj area where a number of sites were identified, including a large number of Hafit cairns and beehives (late 4th-early third millennium BA), Umm an-Nar tombs and settlement (mid-late 3rd millennium BC), Sasanian-Early Islamic fort, and

other Islamic settlements. Moreover, the survey continued recording mining/smelting sites in al-Fulayj, Dahwa, al-Mahab and Sumaidi. This season also included excavation of two tombs in al-Fulayj area: a Hafit tomb and an Umm an-Nar tomb (see photo). The former did not yield any finds while the Umm an-Nar tomb yielded large number of Umm an-Nar pottery sherds, human bones and tooth, and soft stone fragments.



The two excavated tombs at al-Fulayj during Season 2014

An extensive survey was also done for the area of Dahwa where a large Umm an-Nar settlement and cemetery was identified. Part of the settlement was cleared and excavated where stone square and rectangular structures were identified. The finds included large quantity of Umm an-Nar pottery, ash, charcoal and shells. Samples of the bones recovered from the excavated Umm an-Nar tomb as well as charcoal from the Umm an-Nar excavated settlement are subject for C14 analysis.



The excavated structures in the Umm an-Nar (3rd millennium BC) settlement at Dahwa during Season 2014



Examples of archaeological materials found during the survey and excavations

Ministry of Heritage and Culture (MHC)

A variety of archaeological activities have been carried out by the Oman's MHC; some of which are a continuation of previous works. All in all, some 25 archaeological expeditions, both local and international institutions, are taking place across the Sultanate. Among these are:

Hasik site in Dhofar, French Mission from the Archaeological National Center (ANC)

The Ministry, in collaboration with the French Mission from the Archaeological National Center (ANC), is undertaking a project for surveying the coast of the Arabian Sea from the south eastern (al-Sharqiyah) province to the Province of Dhofar; to study and document human settlement dating back to the period between 10,000 and 2,000 BC. The mission has documented numerous archaeological sites and shell middens dated back to the Late Stone Age (7th-4th Millennium BC) in the areas of Jalan Bani Bu Ali, al-Sharqiyah Sands, Bar al-Hikman and the island of Masirah. This year, the mission continued its work along the shores of Dhofar in the area between Hasik, al-Shuwaimiyah, al-Halaniyat Islands and al-Dhariz. A number of archaeological settlements have been documented, notably in the caves of Natef where archaeological excavations indicate that occupation in these caves dates back to the Neolithic. It yielded several archaeological finds of this time, including a piece of rope in Natef 2 cave, as well as other materials such as flint tools, beads, pieces of frankincense, and the skeletal remains of fish and turtles. Moreover, a sounding was dug in a prehistoric shell-midden at Al-Halaniyat Islands (HLY-4) dating back to the Neolithic (5th-4th millennium BC). Finds included ornaments like tools beads made of fish teeth and a number of stones used in manufacturing these beads. Additionally, in the area of Al Shuwaimiyah, several Neolithic sites and shell-middens were recorded, including a large settlement dating back to the mid-Neolithic (7th-5th millennium BC). The surface of the site is covered with lithic arrowheads. Other studies conducted by this

mission included also investigating the archaeological site of Aldhariz 2 in Salalah. It is dated back to the mid-Neolithic period (6500-4500 BC).

Al-Deer at Diba in Musandam: University of Bologna, Italy

Last year the MHC in collaboration with a number of archaeological teams from Italy and Greece has undertaken archaeological survey and excavations in an Early Iron Age communal grave (14m × 3.5m) at the site of al-Deer at Diba in Musandam. This year more archaeological excavations at this tomb were undertaken by a joint team from the MHC and an Italian team from the University of Bologna. The results revealed another tomb just close of the first one. It is 20m long, and contained a number of finds including pottery and bronze vessels, daggers, beads and trade seals.

Dimma Site in Seeb, Italian Team

A full archaeological campaign (survey and excavation) was conducted in order to define the importance of the ancient Medieval town of Dimma in al-Seeb Area (Loreto 2013). The results of this work permitted the investigators to define the limits of the key archaeological areas as well as their history of occupation and type of settlements. Three archaeological areas were defined and investigated (Sectors A, B and C). The archaeological remains found in all three defined area suggest that the ancient town of Dimma was situated in an ideal position. It is well-protected by two military fortresses, rising at the entrance of two major wadi courses, thus, providing the town with protected harbours and freshwater. The recovered finds, mainly pottery, indicate different occupations at the ancient Dimma, including the 16th-17th centuries and 11th-13th centuries.

Maritime Archaeology Project

Oman's MHC has recently conducted a number of maritime archaeological surveys in Qalhat area, the Sea of Oman in cooperation with a Chinese team, and in al-Wusta Province in collaboration with a Dutch team. The ministry is about to implement a programme of surveys, and studies for the underwater archaeology along the coasts of the Sultanate. Thus, the ministry is currently preparing for this program to be established in accordance with international practices. During the coming period it will be implemented in two phases: the first is archival and scientific data collected from inside and outside the Sultanate (e.g. China, India, Zanzibar, UK, the Netherlands, Portugal), while the second phase is devoted for surveys to be carried out in several provinces in which a very brief survey was carried out at al-Duqom Area.

Restorations and conservation

The MHC continues its restoration works in a number of historical/archaeological sites. Among these are the restoration taking place in Harat al-Bilad in Manah, Harat

al-Busaid in Adam, as well as other forts and historical monuments in the Sultanate such as Hisn al-Hamam in Dimawa al-Taein, Hisn al-Minaykh in Dhank, Hisn Aswad in Shinas, Hisn al-Wasil in Bidyah, Hisn al-'Adfin in Wadi Bani Khalid, Hisn Marjab in Buraimi, and Hisn Bait al-Nad in Mahadha .

Museums

The MHC is currently in process of establishing and developing a number of museums in the capital city (Muscat) and other cities. These include, for example, the establishment of a Maritime History Museum in Sur, a Natural History Museum in al-Qurum area in Muscat. It also aims at developing and rehabilitating other museums such as the Omani-French Museum and the Child Museum in Muscat. Moreover, the MHC has recently opened the Sa'aidya School Museum in Muscat.

The Omani Encyclopedia

The Omani Encyclopedia is one of the important publications that was launched by MHC in 2014. It is the result of 8 years of work and it consists of 11 volumes. It represents a new addition to the World national encyclopedias.

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Necropoleis of Bāt and Al-Ayn

Stephanie Döppler and Conrad Schmidt, of the University of Tübingen, Germany update us on the work of the German teams in Oman, focusing on the cemeteries of Bāt and Al-Ayn.

The necropoleis of Bāt and Al-Ayn are located at the south-western fringe of the Jebel al-Akhdar, the main mountain range in the north of the Sultanate of Oman. Bāt is situated 25 kilometres to the east of the town of Ibri and 5 km to the south-east of the village of Al-Wahra at the Wadi Sharsah. Al-Ayn lies approximately 20 kilometres east of Bāt at the Wadi Al-Ayn. The most noticeable landmark of the surrounding area is the 2000 metres high Jebel Mishd, located only 5 kilometres north-east of the site. While Bāt consists of several hundred Umm an-Nār and Hafit tombs from the 3rd millennium BC, Al-Ayn features mainly a row of 19 well preserved Hafit tombs. In 1988, both Bāt and Al-Ayn together with al-Khutum were listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites.

In contrast to Al-Ayn, where no archaeological excavations



Hafit tombs of Al-Ayn.

have been conducted before the Tübingen project, investigations in the necropolis of Bāt go back to the 1970s. Under the direction of Karen Frifelt, a Danish team worked on several tombs at the northern edge of the necropolis in 1972. Between 2004 and 2008 nine tombs in various states of preservation were investigated, as well as partly reconstructed by Gerd Weisgerber from the German Mining Museum Bochum.

In the spring of 2010, a new archaeological research project of the University of Tübingen concentrating on the sites of Bāt and Al-Ayn was initiated under the direction of Conrad Schmidt. The aim of the project was to investigate the socio-economic development on the Omani Peninsula during the Hafit (3200 – 2700 BC) and the Umm an-Nār (2700 – 2000 BC) periods. Thus, the project focused on the use and function of 3rd millennium tombs, burial customs, settlements, material culture, and chronology. At Bāt the emphasis lay on two tombs, 155 and 156, out of a group of three Umm an-Nār tombs in the centre of the necropolis and two burial pits aside.

Tomb 156 has an outer diameter of 8.10 m and is divided into two separate, semi-circular chambers. Each chamber has its own entrance. Between 2007 and 2008 the German Mining Museum reconstructed the outer facade of the tomb, in order to prevent it from further decay. In a collapsed part of the tomb's exterior wall, a badly preserved skeleton was found. It was associated with metal plates and iron arrow heads, dating it to the Samad period (300 BC – AD 300). The interior of both chambers was fully excavated by the Tübingen project in 2010 and 2011. Its fill revealed Umm an-Nār as well as Wadi-Suq, Iron Age, Samad and Late Islamic material, among which were very fragmented human bones, pottery, stone vessel fragments, jewellery, and metal objects. All finds were scattered throughout the fill.

In front of the eastern entrance of Tomb 156 a burial pit with primarily human bones, complete pottery vessels, jewellery, and other small finds were investigated. The findings can be interpreted as the removal of the deceased with their grave goods from the neighbouring tombs and thus represent a tomb inventory in secondary placement. The removal was most likely conducted in order to free space for new



Tombs 154, 155, and 156 in the core area of the necropolis of Bāt (GGH Solutions in Geosciences).



Samad period burial in Umm an-Nār Tomb 155

burials within a tomb. This burial pit is one of two such pits excavated by the Tübingen project at Bāt.

Tomb 155 lies in the direct vicinity of tomb 156 and was excavated between 2012 and 2013. It has an outer diameter of 6.5 m and only one entrance facing west. In the fill and especially on its stone floor many finds were discovered. Among them are 532 beads including a 7.6 cm long biconical carnelian bead from the Indus, Umm an-Nār and Iron Age chlorite vessels and pottery. Inside a gap in the floor a skeleton in flexed position aged at 16 to 25 years was discovered. The skeleton was associated with several iron arrow heads of the Samad period making it very akin to the burial on the exterior wall of Tomb 156 (see above left).

At Al-Ayn the archaeological investigations concentrated on two out of the row of 19 Hafit tombs, Tomb 6 and Tomb 7. Both tombs have a single chamber and an outer diameter of up to 5.75 metres and are thus smaller than the Umm an-Nār tombs at Bāt. While in Tomb 6 only a Jemdet-Nasr pottery sherd and a Hafit copper pin was found, the filling of Tomb 7 yielded mostly non-Hafit material, including coarse Iron Age pottery, beads, and metal objects.

The material evidence makes it clear that Tomb 155 and Tomb 156 at Bāt and Tomb 7 at Al-Ayn from the 3rd millennium BC were reused in much later periods. As most of the excavated tombs in both necropoleis show signs of it, reuse is clear not a unique occasion, but rather a common practice of the Samad period in the region. As result of the

research it can be summarized, that the Omani tombs of the 3rd millennium BC might function as a physical space, which helped to evoke collective memories. As they are a key aspect in shaping group identities, reused tombs in the necropoleis of Bāt and Al-Ayn can be interpreted as locations where the group identity was stored and kept for the future.

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Rustaq-Batinah Archaeological Survey

*The Rustaq-Batinah Archaeological Survey is a collaborative project between Durham University, Sultan Qaboos University, and the Omani Ministry of Heritage and Culture. It is principally funded by the Anglo-Omani society, as **William Deadman** explains.*

The aims of the RBAS project are to undertake archaeological survey of the Rustaq wilaya, and to explore the lower Batinah – the major area of modern settlement and agriculture at the northern extent of the plain near the coast. It is the intention of the project to locate and record all archaeological surface remains in the area in order to assist the Omani Ministry of Heritage and Culture in managing and preserving sites, and to utilise the data to analyse the ancient settlement history of both areas.

Generally speaking, despite the significance of the region, very little archaeological survey has been carried out in the Batinah, aside from a small number of key sites discovered early on in the history of archaeological research in Oman – instead research has focused on the southern side of the Hajar Mountains. Rustaq itself has played an important role throughout the history of Oman, certainly during the Islamic period and possibly earlier, in late antiquity. Despite its importance, virtually no survey has been carried out in either the town or the wilaya of Rustaq. In recent times, the coastal strip of the Batinah has supported the greatest density of Oman's population and cultivated land; it boasts key resources including a significant water supply, a fertile plain and the marine habitat of the coast. However, paradoxically practically no archaeological sites have been documented in this area. The RBAS project will address the lack of research in both of these key areas of the Batinah. RBAS archaeological survey commenced in December 2013, and to date two 5-week seasons have been completed. The project is co-directed by Dr D. Kennet and Dr N.S. al-Jahwari of Sultan Qaboos University; the team is primarily made up of undergraduate and research postgraduate students from Durham University. Traditional field survey methods are supplemented with remote sensing, including

the use of high resolution satellite imagery, and kite photography carried out by the team specialist.

During the 2013/2014 season focus was centred on the Rustaq area, which transpired to be extremely rich in archaeology, despite rapid development of the town and its surrounding areas. At the first level of survey, remote sensing was used to detect and locate archaeological sites that were visible on high-resolution satellite imagery – these were subsequently visited and recorded in the field including an Iron Age hillfort, Hafit and other prehistoric cairn tombs, and numerous Late Islamic settlement and refuges. This was followed by systematic field survey and pottery collections in the agricultural areas of the town itself, and known archaeological sites within the wilaya including two Umm an-Nar settlements and two large Iron Age II villages – more than 10,000 sherds were collected during the course of the season. Historical research into Rustaq was carried out by the RBAS historian.



Zajara Well

During the second season – carried out between December 2014 and January 2015 – the team continued archaeological survey in the Rustaq wilaya, and also began to investigate the lower Batinah plain of Suwaiq and Musanah. Systematic survey was carried out covering areas between the major Rustaq sites, especially along the course of the two major wadis that converge just north of the town, in the course of which a densely distributed network of Iron Age II villages was discovered. Work also continued in documenting several of the major sites discovered in the first season, especially a major Umm an-Nar settlement boasting three round towers, as well as evidence of continued occupation into the second millennium. On the lower Batinah, a survey strategy primarily centred around pottery collection was implemented. Two transects – cross-sectioning the currently inhabited part of the plain from the coast to the limit of the cultivated area – were studied: current and abandoned fields and bare areas were walked and pottery was collected, and the presence of certain diagnostic marine mollusc species was noted (especially *Terebralia sp.*) as well as the distribution of zajara and bore-hole wells. This strategy proved successful, as a significant number of prehistoric sherds were found: 3rd and 2nd millennium pottery – including Indus valley storage jar sherds – and a substantial volume of Iron Age ceramics. Research was also carried

out into the development of the Batinah plain by the team's geomorphologist.

The Rustaq-Batinah Archaeological Survey project is planned to run for three further seasons, in which the team will expand investigations on the lower Batinah and complete a systematic survey of the Rustaq wilaya.

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Wadi al Jizzi

Field school documenting the history of the landscape

The Wadi al Jizzi Archaeological Project is a systematic and long term archaeological surface survey project, investigating the rich archaeological heritage of the Wadi al Jizzi region from the Palaeolithic until the early Modern period, directed by Dr Bleda S. Düring

The project is a collaborative project between Leiden University and the Ministry of Heritage and Culture of Oman. It is a field school for Leiden students, aims to contribute to local capacity building, and documents an archaeological heritage threatened by ongoing developments, such as infrastructural projects, industrialisation, and urbanisation. The first pilot season took place in January 2014 with a team of five and a second season will take place with 13 participants. The first phase of the project is scheduled to last for five years.

The Wadi al Jizzi constitutes a major natural route through the mountains, and is one of the few such passages in Oman. This route connecting the interior and the coast has been important for traders, travellers, and pastoralists through the ages. Further, in the Hajar al Gharbi foothills behind the Sohar coastal plains important copper ore deposits are present, which have been mined from the third millennium BC up to the present. Earlier research by Costa and Wilkinson has already demonstrated the richness of the archaeological dataset in the region. Today this heritage is threatened by infrastructural projects, mining and urbanisation.

The overall aim of the Wadi al Jizzi Archaeological Project is to document the history of settlement and land use of the region in a systematic manner. Three thematic research questions structure our investigation of history of settlement and land use of the region. The first one focusses on subsistence practices, or how one obtains food in this region,

and how this was affected by ecological and technological transformations. The second is concerned with mining and metallurgy, and how this industry transformed local landscapes and societies. The third topic consists of the funerary landscape of the Wadi al Jizzi region, that is how we can best understand the tens of thousands of funerary monuments (cairns and cemeteries), and what types of societies they relate to.

The Wadi al Jizzi project aims to contribute to the study of how past societies managed to survive in the challenging environment of Oman and how people were impacted by the development of interregional trade centred on Oman's mineral resources. These are issues that remain central to Omani society today.

The great advantages of reinvestigating the Wadi al Jizzi region today is that we can draw on a range of satellite images, and GIS technologies that were not available up to recently. These technologies make it possible to recognize and document a large range of features prior to fieldwork, which can then be investigated on the ground in a more efficient manner. The project endeavours to eliminate all paper forms and to input all data directly onto computers in the field to speed up the documentation process and eliminate errors.

At present the survey has focussed mainly on the Wadi Suq / Wadi al Jizzi corridor from the coast to the mountains. First, we have been investigating Islamic field systems and villages located along the Falaj al Mutaridh – probably the largest canal system in the entire Oman peninsula, in order to better understand this important irrigation system and how it changed over time. Second, we have been investigating funerary monuments along the corridor, which include cairns and tombs dating to the Hafit, Umm an Nar, Wadi Suq, and early first millennium CE. Among the most exciting discoveries are large number of cairns with glazed pottery probably dating to between 400 – 800 CE, a large Wadi Suq cemetery of some 400 graves (in fact the eponymous site where Karen Frifelt excavated in the early 1970s), and a substantial Umm an Nar / Wadi Suq period cemetery at Wili, that includes about 200 tombs.

Our results along the middle reaches of the Wadi al Jizzi suggest peaks in Prehistory - at present mainly visible in tombs and graves, and the Islamic to modern periods – a phase that is related to the construction of the Falaj al Mutaridh and other irrigation canals. The Iron Age is absent completely from the region surveyed so far. Our aim for 2015 is to further complete our transect along the Wadi al Jizzi from the coast to the mountains, while in the future we hope to do similar work along the Wadi Fizh and other natural corridors in the area. For updates on our work and further information please see: www.wajap.nl

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Adam

4 seasons' progress

Dr Guillaume Gernez *updates us on the results of four seasons of the French Archaeological Mission to Adam, which have included some magnificent finds.*

Four campaigns of surveys in the area of Adam, under the supervision of Jessica Giraud (2007-2011), had designed the first archaeological map and drafted a complete overview of the early settlement patterns, funerary landscape and ancient environment of the whole region, from prehistoric times until the end of the pre-Islamic period. With the agreement and help of the Ministry of Heritage and Culture in Muscat, and the support of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a regional and diachronic programme in the area of Adam, including surveys (pedestrian and drone), excavations and studies is on-going under the supervision of Guillaume Gernez (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne) and Jessica Giraud (French Institute for the Near East) from January 2012.

Until now, the fieldwork of the French Archaeological Mission to Adam focused on 5 main operations corresponding to each period / topic: the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic occupation and environmental changes in Sufrat Dishshah, the inland Neolithic settlement of the late fifth millennium BC in the south of Jabal Salakh, two Bronze Age (Umm an-Nar and Wadi Suq) graveyards, one enigmatic group of Iron Age buildings near Jabal Mudhmar and a study of traditional water systems and their management in the Oasis of Adam. Several preliminary reports have been published and the final report on the excavations of the Bronze Age necropoleis is under process. The most important discovery of the 2015 season is a unique set of bronze reduced sized weapons, including bows, arrows and quivers, located in the main Iron Age building.

Dr Guillaume Gernez, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Guillaume.Gernez@univ-paris1.fr



From the 2015 campaign, an unique set of bronze reduced sized weapons, including bows, arrows and quivers, were uncovered in the main Iron Age building at Adam.

The Greeks in Oman

The “Ichthyophagoi” at Bimah

Romolo Loreto introduces us to a new project by the University of Naples “L’Orientale”, the Ministry of Heritage and Culture, Sultanate of Oman and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

This project centres on the historical issue of the Ichthyophagoi and human adaptation to coastal and maritime life in the Northeastern Sultanate of Oman during the Iron Age. The project focuses on the coastal site of Bimah, discovered by the Italian archaeological Mission to the Sultanate of Oman, directed by Maurizio Tosi, between 1985-88.



Excavation of hut H5. ©University of Naples “L’Orientale” archaeological project to the Sultanate of Oman

The first textual sources of Greek authors attest that Ichthyophagoi lived along the coast of both the River Ocean, between Arabia and Iperborei, and the Eritraean Sea (Red Sea). At the time of Herodotus, Ichthyophagoi appear as people with high technical knowhow and linguistic ability. This perspective changes after the conquests of Alexander the Great. Since then Ichthyophagoi, as well as the Iperborei and other “strange” people, come to be classified as a group located at the edge of the world, living outside of the common social rules. Therefore, we have the archaeological opportunity to investigate one of the Arabian Gulf coastal areas where Ichthyophagoi lived. Archaeological evidence from the site and its related area, from wādî Bimah to wādî Fins, wādî Shab and wādî Tiwi, suggests that this region has seen a huge sequence of occupation starting from the Neolithic (lithic assemblages) and the Bronze Age (at least one of the main towers from Bimah are dated to this period) and fully emerged during the Iron Age. Thus, the history of the Ichthyophagoi took place since the VI millennium BC, when the climate changed, perhaps linked with the monsoons, allowing people to settle down along the sea shores. Initially, these groups would have developed new strategies and adaptation techniques, such as the ability to exploit the lagoons, coastal areas and sea.

Romolo Loreto University of Naples “L’Orientale”

Modern South Arabian languages

Documentation and ethnolinguistic analysis

This community-based project, funded by the Leverhulme Trust 2013-2016, is led by Prof Janet C.E. Watson, with Miranda Morris and Domenyk Eades as Co-Investigators, Saeed al-Mahri as local research assistant (RA), and a large number of Omani participants. The project has four aims as Prof. Watson describes:

1. Collection of large corpus of audio and audio-visual data from MSAL languages spoken on mainland Yemen and Oman (Mehri, Hobyot, Bathari, Harsusi, Shahri). The material relates to culture-specific activities, with focus on threatened activities, materials and skills. Data will be archived with metadata, annotations and transcriptions in Roman and Arabic-based script at ELAR: <http://elar.soas.ac.uk/>.
2. Development of Arabic-based script to write and transcribe material in the languages.
3. Development of comparative cultural lexicon across all six MSAL.
4. Development of concepts for comparative grammar of MSAL.

The outputs will include: open-access archive; comparative cultural lexicon; book of cultural texts transcribed in roman and Arabic-based scripts, translated into Arabic and English; academic and outreach articles by investigators and local RAs; and, after the end of funded project, a comparative grammar. Several Oman-based MSAL speakers have been trained to collect and upload data using digital recorders, transcribe using the new Arabic-based script, and translate material into Arabic. Over 100 hours of material have been collected to date, of which 85 hours have been archived.

One key project objective is dissemination and community involvement. To date, 20 lectures have been presented at local and international level, several jointly with local RAs, and 5 academic and 2 outreach articles published. Please visit our website for more information and contact details: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/arts/info/125219/modern_south_arabian_languages/.

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QATAR

This Qatar report was drafted by several authors working at the QM Departments of Architectural Conservation, of Archaeology and of Heritage Management (Adel Al Moslemani, Faisal Al Naimi, Dr Ferhan Sakal, Dr Alice Bianchi, Maja Arslanagic Knezevic, Sonia Barchiche), by Dr Robert Carter (UCL Qatar), Dr Christoph Gerber and Dr Kristina Pfeiffer (Archaeological Institute).

In the spring of 2014 the Qatar Museums Authority was renamed Qatar Museums (QM). The aims were to keep the Authority's mandate as a cultural instigator, through combining a group of museums and heritage sites and aiming at developing, promoting and sustaining the cultural sector at the highest standards in order to fulfil the cultural goals set by the 2030 Qatar National Vision. More information can be found at www.qm.org.qa

As in the previous years, QM promoted throughout 2014 a series of exhibitions which took place at various museums and galleries. Mathaf, the Arab Museums of Modern Art, hosted Etel Adnan's *In All Her Dimensions*, and Mona Hatoum's *Turbulence*. Al Riwaq's exhibition hall displayed the Richard Serra retrospective *Passage of Time*, an immersive sculpture made up of two 66.5m long and 4.1m tall steel curves that snaked diagonally through the space.

Commissioned as a work of public art, Serra created also a breathtaking sculpture which spans over a kilometre within the Brouq nature reserve, a natural corridor formed by gypsum plateaux. *East-West/West-East* consists of four steel plates measured by their relation to the topography; they rise to 14.7m and 16.7m above the ground.

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) organized three temporary exhibitions which gave visitors an insight into the Museum's art collections. *Ceramics of al-Andalus* focused on rare and beautiful ceramics from Spain. The objects on display exemplified the blending of Muslim and Christian artistic motifs. *The Tiger's Dream: Tipu Sultan*, on the other hand, explored the life and times of the South Indian ruler and statesman, Tipu Sultan. The centrepiece of this exhibition was a group of 24 paintings showing Tipu's victory at the Battle of Pollilur in 1780. Using digital imaging, images of all paintings were displayed in their entirety and reconstituted as one piece. Additionally, *Kings and Pawns*, uncovered the history of chess, backgammon and other board games, offered the intriguing opportunity to glance into everyday culture in the Gulf and the wider world.

The construction activities for the new National Museum of Qatar on the Doha Corniche continue and the desert rose, which inspired its architect, Jean Nouvel, takes on more and more shape. At the QM gallery in Katara Cultural Village an exhibition organized by the National Museum was dedicated to *Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim al Thani – A Leader's Legacy*, which took viewers back to the beginnings of the modern history of Qatar, with a focus on one of the most influential leaders of the country.

Qatar hosted the annual UNESCO World Heritage Committee conference

The 38th Session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) was successfully held in Doha from the 15th until the 25th of June, 2014, with H. E. Sheikha Al Mayassa Bint Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani as Chairperson. The State of Qatar announced during the session's opening the donation of \$10 million to a new fund to protect World Heritage sites affected by conflict or natural disaster and called on all states to support this initiative by contributing to the newly created fund. The Committee delegates examined the state of conservation of several World Heritage properties, debated on a global strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, on properties in danger and inscribed 26 new properties on the World Heritage List (21 cultural, 4 natural and one mixed property).

In conjunction with the WHC Session the annual International Youth Forum (YF) took place from the 4th until the 15th of June organized by the State Party of Qatar with the support of Qatar Museums. The Youth Forum was held in Al Zubarah and Doha (Qatar) with 44 youth representatives between 18 - 30 years of age from the States Parties members of the WHC and from States Parties of the Arab region. The theme of the forum was the Cultural heritage of Qatar: management, preservation, sustainability and impact on local communities. Lectures, workshops and site visits focused on the several Forum objectives including understanding the 1972 Convention and the challenges of its implementations; explaining the role of local people in Heritage management; providing young people with skills related to preservation and conservation and tools to understand how the WHC works. Additionally, the participants drafted a resolution that they presented to the States Parties delegates at the opening ceremony of the WHC.



Unesco: The members of the World Heritage Centre in Doha

The QM Division of Cultural Heritage

The reorganization of the old antiquities services within Qatar Museums resulted in the establishment of the Division of Cultural Heritage that comprises the Departments of Archaeology, Architectural Conservation and Heritage Management. While the functions of the first two departments are self-explanatory through their names, the latter covers a variety of functions and services, many of them connecting QM to other government institutions and initiatives. Preventive archaeology, cultural tourism, and international relations are part of this department as are new documentation and analytical tools.

Old Doha Rescue Excavation (ODRE)

The rapid and extensive infrastructural and residential development in Qatar increasingly puts heritage assets under threat which are neither identified nor yet documented. Until recently, surveys and excavations have mainly been undertaken in areas that drew scholarly interest, independently of priorities dictated by development. In cooperation with developers, QM's Division of Cultural Heritage continuously identifies and documents heritage assets under threat through preventive archaeological investigations. A great example of successful cooperation between developers and QM is the Old Doha Rescue Excavation which was undertaken prior to the Qatar Rail Doha Metro Project.

While most of the stations did not impact heritage assets, one station in central Doha was chosen for rescue excavation due to its location in the heart of the modern town and, at the same time, in one of the oldest areas of Doha as attested also by the British records. The latter mentioned also Bidda, a much older town than Doha; both built directly on the shoreline.

The rescue excavation took place as a cooperation between QM Department of Archaeology and University College London in Qatar, the latter following the invitation of QM to join the excavation team. UCL's contribution was funded by a generous QNRF grant as part of its *Origins of Doha and Qatar Project* (NPRP5-421-6-010). The joint mission investigated the Doha Souq Station Area between December 2013 and April 2014. In four major excavation areas and two small soundings the team was able to uncover almost 2 metres of occupation deposits containing well-preserved architectural remains, installations such as *tananir* (ovens) and storage facilities, and large number of small finds.

Although the excavation areas were not physically connected, four major occupation phases could be identified in each and all areas.

The oldest phase (ODRE 4) is represented by single features without any architectural remains. In all four major areas installations such as pits, fireplaces and *tananir* were directly cut into the natural beach sand. These installations seem to be the remains of activities which were taking place on the

beach. Upper parts of large storage vessels turned upside-down and used as *tananir* show a very common practice of recycling. Some remains, like postholes, may belong to simple shelters or may have housed wooden beams used to stabilise the dhows placed on the beach, as seen in some historical photographs. This phase dates most probably to the early 19th century or slightly earlier, since the oldest existence of a built town is recorded in British maps in 1823.

The next phase (ODRE 3) is represented by the first architectural features and therefore may have started around the 1820s, and lasted up to the late 19th century or early 20th century. Architecture consists mostly of buildings with very small rooms, built from rough, irregular, small *faroush* (beach rock) and limestone. They were built along narrow alleyways. The small rooms were connected to each other and were probably surrounding an open courtyard. Some of the rooms were equipped with clay *tananir* which were often reused storage vessels. Additionally, two symmetrical, abutting compounds were discovered consisting of adjacent kitchens and a main entrance from an alleyway, equipped with a screening wall to avoid prying eyes.

The following phase (ODRE 2) contains buildings which stood in the 1940s and later; their dates of construction remain to be confirmed by artefactual study and may vary from area to area, but are likely to fall in the first three decades of the 20th century. The main characteristic of these is the use of hard plaster as mortar between the stone rows of the walls. Furthermore hard plaster was used to render the base of the walls in order to form a prominent skirting.

The youngest phase (ODRE 1), attested only in one of the excavated areas, represents the remains of the modern era, beginning from the 1960s. These are mostly remains of modern installations such as electricity supply, sewerage, parking areas, etc. The main architectural feature is a large building of concrete and concrete blocks which was the largest private building in the area according to aerial pictures. Elsewhere the architecture from phase ODRE 2 was still in use until the demolition of the houses of the whole area between 2008 and 2009.

This rescue excavation represents the first large-scale historical archaeology excavation that has taken place in a living town of the Gulf. The results reveal the occupation history of Doha from its foundation, possibly in the first half of the 19th century, to the mid 20th century. A well-stratified and highly detailed ceramic sequence for this period is available for the first time. In the absence of detailed historical and economic records for towns such as Doha, and in the light of ongoing development in the historic cores of the modern cities of the Gulf, in which most of the archaeological record is being destroyed without being investigated, this research will be of great use to future historical archaeologists of the region. Economic

data will reveal aspects of diet, everyday life and changing consumption patterns, trade relations and levels of wealth throughout the period of the 19th-20th century, from the pearling boom through the decline of its industry, and ultimately the arrival of oil wealth and international consumer goods in the 1950s-1960s.



Building remains showing various phases..



Excavations at the Central Doha site, 2014

Doha's Old Palace

Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani's Old Palace was originally built in the early 20th century. The palace was at the centre of Qatar's political leadership for approximately 25 years, serving as residence of the Royal Family and the seat of government. It was then restored and converted into the National Museum of Qatar in 1975. In 1980 the building won the Agha Khan award for restoration and rehabilitation of Islamic architecture. Although now closed, the Old Palace is undergoing an important restoration supervised by the QM Department of Architectural Conservation in cooperation with Ziegert Roswag Seiler Architekten Ingenieure (Germany). The Palace is restored in its original fabric without the use of air conditioning. The building will be a living gallery exhibiting a way of Qatari life that has almost been lost amid the rapid expansion of the past decades; it will be at the heart of the new National Museum of Qatar.

Al Ruwais Mosque: Excavation and Conservation

Al Ruwais is one of the oldest coastal towns in the country and is located in the north of the Peninsula. The Al Ruwais Mosque, presumably one of the oldest in Qatar, is said to have been founded by Ahmed Ezz el-Din bin Kassab Al-Sadah, towards the very end of the 17th century CE. The Mosque in its present form dates back to the 1940s; in the 1970s, the top of the minaret was damaged by lightning and the outer wall was rebuilt with seashell bricks, which was the favoured construction material of that time. The building was then neglected for a long time and suffered from harsh weather conditions, which resulted in longitudinal cracks on the walls, the collapse of building elements due to humidity and infiltration of seawater into the foundations. In spite of all of these damages, the Mosque preserved its old character and authenticity; a prompt intervention in 2014 was therefore launched by the QM Department of Architectural Conservation in order to rescue this important monument. Prior to the planned restoration activities the QM Department of Archaeology carried out test pitting in order to retrieve information about the conditions of the foundations, as well as to shed as much light as possible on the earlier phases of the building and the site.

The team excavated five small sondages placed around the mosque and inside the building between the pillars of the covered courtyard. The investigations showed that the building foundations were not set very deep and were adjusted to the relief of the area. Especially, the eastern and western walls of the mosque follow the outline of the slope on which the mosque was built. Noteworthy is a sequence of pottery from the layers underneath the foundations of the northern wall of the mosque where, among others, painted Julfar Ware sherds, currently under study.

Al Zubarah and the Qatar Islamic Archaeological and Heritage Project

The inscription of the Al Zubarah Archaeological Site into the World Heritage List effected not only an increase of publicity and awareness for local history, but also new challenges in the maintenance of the exposed remains and the requirement for a better understanding of the history and economy of the site. Thus, research and conservation activities as a joint project between the Qatar Islamic Archaeological and Heritage project under the leadership of Copenhagen University and Qatar Museums continued also during 2014 at Al Zubarah and surroundings.

Archaeological investigations were intensified in different areas of the town such as the Palatial Compound, the Outer Town Wall and the *Souq* (market) area. In the latter 15 new date presses were exposed which add up with the many others date presses found in the previous seasons. They attest the scale and specialization of date processing and storage operations that took place in this market and industrial area.

Excavators observed a high degree of individualism in the design and maintenance of each *madbasa* (date press) despite of the date processing centralization in the *Souq* area closed to the beach.

The site of Al Zubarah keeps representing an enormous challenge for conservators in charge of preserving and maintaining the exposed architecture of the town threatened by harsh environmental conditions. Although the architecture at Al Zubarah can be seen as “stone architecture” (gypsum and soft beachrocks) it shares several characteristics with earthen architecture. Erosion caused by the sea, salt, wind, drastic change of temperatures and humidity during the day (averaging around 20% to 50%) attack masonry and plaster and cause additional damage affecting the conservation of Al Zubarah. Exposed mortar and gypsum building materials exhibit very high salinity concentrations in both mortar and gypsum, which can reach >30% in the sand and soils on-site as well as approximately 15% in the wall structures.

Conservators use various methods of consolidation, using predominantly local materials and, where possible, traditional techniques, both at the archaeological site and at the Fort, the restoration of which is nearly complete.

The QM Archaeology Department held weekend activities at the fort during the winter months and for Qatar National Day celebrations which included camel rides, traditional Qatari food and henna. Additionally, outreach and educational programmes for school groups foster the popularity of the site. For a large number of international schools, Al Zubarah Archaeological Site is now a fixed part of the curriculum. These events and programmes together with the UNESCO World Heritage inscription, the continued coverage of activities at the site in the local press and the opening of the Visitor Centre in December 2013 raised awareness for the site to potential visitors the number of which increased by 170% in 2014 as a clear evidence that the site is now considered a tourist attraction.

German Archaeological Institute

The Oriental Department of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) continued the South Qatar Survey Project in cooperation with Qatar Museums from February to April 2014. The activities carried out in the General Survey were predominantly focussed on the documentation of sites and their surroundings that were discovered by employees of QM, and the continuation of the Well Environs Survey. In addition, the work included the search for sites situated in topographical areas of interest or representing landmarks.

Besides Middle Neolithic (Mesopotamian al-Ubaid Period) sites to the east of the Dukhan ridge along an inland sabkha, also some small Qatar B (Early Neolithic) flint knapping sites were documented. It was observed that until today the

soil deflation is as much as 0.7 m in those areas. In southern central Qatar more temporary settlements and structures of the recent past were recorded, such as several typical tent structures and tent location patterns. Finds such as pottery



Aerial view of the Souq area with several date presses (*madabis*) at Al Zubarah.



The Visitor Centre within the Fort at Al Zubarah.

sherds were found frequently and they could be dated between the last centuries and recent times. Coins were also found which helped to date an abandoned farm to the early 1960s.

Besides the General Survey a special survey was carried out in the Asaila region with the aim to achieve systematic information about the type and distribution of Neolithic sites (Qatar-B) and single findspots. During this survey, 0.5 x 0.5 sq km squares were systematically surveyed and diagnostic samples were taken. The results demonstrate a very high density of land use in this area during the 5th mill. BC.

The archaeological survey and excavation were supplemented by geomorphological studies carried out in cooperation with a team of the University of Cologne. Another project was dedicated to the endangered site of Umm Al Houli to the south of Al Wakra. The archaeological site is enclosed by a huge sedimentation basin which belongs to the New Port construction area. A first season of archaeological rescue investigations was carried out

between February and April 2014. The protected area of the site extends over an area of 24 ha and shows several building remains from two phases, dating between the mid 19th and the mid 20th c. AD. The aims of the first season were the investigation of the site's extension and a complete documentation of the architectural structures on the surface. A measurement grid (QNG) with 40x40m and 20x20m squares was set on the entire site. It was marked with pegs with the aim to provide bench marks for the applied prospection methods and the geo-referencing of aerial images. A magnetometry prospection revealed fireplaces, several walls and a house structure in the western lower part of the site. One of the main achievements of the first season was the site's documentation by ortho-photography and kite-imaging. The data is being transferred into scatter-plots and a 3D model of the archaeological topography.

Three soundings were carried out with the aim to clarify the state of preservation of the buildings, the stratigraphy and the city wall continuation. Sounding 1 covers a room corner of an early phase two-room building. The sounding revealed plastered house walls and two occupation layers. Inside the building, a thick layer of small snail shells belongs to the most prominent features. In Sounding 2 the stratigraphical connection between the building phases was achieved. The sounding revealed that a later building, together with an attached large hearth, were set into the courtyard of an abandoned building of the earlier phase. This showed that the difference in between the building phases was quite short. The third Sounding was targeting the city wall and had the aim to find its continuation from the southernmost tower to the coastline. The connection to the wall, however, could not be found and further studies are required to investigate these features.

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The Origins of Doha and Qatar Project

*The Origins of Doha and Qatar Project is now in its third year. The project combines archaeological investigations with historical research, GIS work, architectural recording and anthropological research, to tell the story of Doha and its people, from its foundation through to the coming of oil. It is a UCL Qatar project, funded by the Qatar National Research Fund and is directed by **Dr Robert Carter** of UCL Qatar, with **Daniel Eddisford** as field director.*

The Gulf towns, most of which were founded as pearl-

fishing settlements in the last three centuries, remain under-explored. Urban archaeology is an unfamiliar concept in the region, and few inhabitants of the modern towns realise that a tangible record of the past survives in many areas beneath their feet. This lack of recognition, coupled with the frenetic rate of development in towns such as Doha, means that the archaeological legacy of the Gulf towns is highly threatened. Neither is what archaeology can contribute to our understanding widely recognised: the historical sources for the region are scanty up to the mid 20th century, and mainly rely on political histories written by outsiders. In contrast, the information that can be recovered by archaeology relates to the everyday life of the people who actually lived in the town, and who still live there: what people ate, where they got their water, how they made a living, what they bought, what they built, and how they lived. The resulting joint QM-UCL Qatar excavations (the Old Doha Rescue Excavation, ODRE) is described in more detail in this publication by Ferhan Sakal, leader of the QM team (see previous section).

The GIS work is led by Richard Fletcher and is based on maps, photos and historical accounts going back to the early 19th century, as well as a priceless resource of aerial photographs from the 1940s-1950s that document the final configuration of the old town, and how it grew and developed at breakneck speed once oil revenues arrived in the 1950s. This study is revealing the anatomy of the traditional town: how it was structured, and how the rhythms of life were structured by climate (the construction and orientation of homes and streets, religion (the distribution of mosques), society and tribe (the foundation, configuration and growth of Doha's districts), water resources (the distribution of wells) and, perhaps most importantly for a pearl fishing settlement such as Doha, trade and relations with the sea, through which nearly all the necessities of everyday life were obtained.



Ground Penetrating Radar Survey in the Bida' area, 2015

The Doha excavations will furnish the people of Doha with objects and knowledge which relate directly to the past lives of its people, but archaeology and GIS is only part of the story. The most challenging aspect of the study, yet most relevant to the current population, is the recovery of living memory and direct knowledge. We have been gathering oral histories from the inhabitants of old Doha with the help of a dedicated team of young Qatari anthropologists, in order to record the first-hand experiences of the people who lived

in the traditional town, and who witnessed the dramatic and irreversible transition to the modern town. This work, we hope, will encourage local interest in Doha's past and its legacy, by leavening the dry output of archaeological and historical work with human experience, to put Doha's people at the centre of the study.

Our current fieldwork, which is progressing as I write, consists of recording of one of Doha's main well sites, Nu'aija, which provided much of Doha's drinking water before the arrival of desalination plants. We are also beginning a Ground Penetrating Radar survey of Bida', the other core of the old town, along with Doha town centre. Bida' was originally a separate town, said to have been founded earlier than Doha, and the two eventually grew together. We think that archaeological remains survive below the ground surface at Bida', which is now parkland, and in the long term we hope to be able to investigate this through excavation.



Recording traditional wells in central Doha with Qatar Museums staff 2015

Finally, we must acknowledge the support that has allowed this project to take place. Our thanks go to H.E. Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad Al-Thani, Chairperson of Qatar Museums; Mr Faisal Al-Naimi, Head of the Department of Archaeology at Qatar Museums; Professor Thomas Leisten, Head of the Division of Cultural Heritage, Qatar Museums; and the generous source of our funding, the Qatar National Research Fund.

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The Qatar National Historic Environment Record (QNHER)

Birmingham University's Dr Richard Cuttler, co-director of the QNHER & Remote Sensing Project updates us on the development of their custom software for heritage management and their post-excavation season in Qatar.

The Qatar National Historic Environment Record and Remote Sensing Project (QNHER) is a collaborative project between the University of Birmingham and the Qatar Museums. The project is Co-Directed by Faisal Al Naimi (Qatar Museums), Richard Cuttler (University of Birmingham) and Vince Gaffney (University of Bradford). The project is now in its seventh year and has focused on the development of custom software for the management of heritage in Qatar. This has involved not only the design and development of the software but also the population of the database.

Software for Heritage Management

The new software has been built from open source code and allows for the recording and retrieval of a comprehensive heritage data. The different types of data includes archaeological and historic sites, buildings, landscapes, designated legal status, excavations, surveys and other fieldwork, site monitoring, geology, topography, land-use, artefacts, and bibliographic references. The interlinking of all this information within a single system offers greater potential for interpretation and analysis of the cultural resource.

The User Interface splits into three areas: data lists on the left for browsing and searching records, a map in the upper right for interaction with spatial records (Figure 1) and a record detail area in the lower right part of the screen for viewing and editing records. Information in the data lists window relates to geospatial data displayed in the mapping window (Figure 1), which can be displayed on a range of layers, including georeferenced satellite images, orthorectified aerial photographs or simply map layers from web resources such as Bing or Google. This negates the need for expensive georectified satellite imagery.



Figure 1: The Qatar National Historic Environment Record user interface showing the data list and mapping windows. The layout changes from right to left when switching to Arabic language

Detailed information about each data source is accessed through a third window, which allows for the editing and updating of records. Heritage Areas, Events and Resources are linked to each other by a drag-and-drop system.

Testing of the first beta version commenced in January 2013, and from 2014 onwards the custom software was transferred to the QM servers. Proposals for future module development include a buildings module, translation module and public

access module. The database has largely been populated through data mining and extensive survey, which has resulted in the entry of more than 7,000 archaeological sites and 25,000 photographs.

Post Excavation Season

In addition to development of the QNHER software the team has focused on the analysis of the finds in advance of preparations for publications about the marine archaeology and excavation undertaken as a part of the research project.

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Archaeological Aerial Survey in Qatar

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David has been working with Qatar Museums on archaeological projects in northern Qatar since 2009. The focus of the work has been the excavation of two Islamic period sites Ruwayda and Rubayqa as authors Drs Andrew Petersen, Austin Hill, & Diane Derr explain.

In collaboration with Virginia Commonwealth University the project was awarded a research grant by the Qatar National Research Fund (NPRP 4-998-6-026) to investigate ways of documenting archaeological sites using UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles). The advantages of UAV's over other forms of aerial imagery are that UAV photographs can be higher resolution than satellite photographs, more reliable than kite photography and cheaper than renting either a helicopter or fixed wing aircraft. These advantages mean that a UAV can be used to take more photographs more frequently and significantly at pre-set positions enabling a virtual aerial grid to be established over the site. The site of Ruwayda in northern Qatar was selected as the most suitable site for the initial trials both because it is a large site (0.5 x 2.5km) that needs to be mapped and because it is remote from any habitation and can therefore be safely deployed.

In February 2014 the first UAV survey of the archaeological site of Ruwayda took place covering the central area with both conventional visible light cameras as well as a range of specialist cameras including both thermal and Near Infra Red units. During the first week trial flights over the site were used to calibrate the equipment and to establish safety protocols for use. Although in theory one person can control the UAV it was found necessary to always have two people on site one with back up radio control following the progress of the UAV and the other monitoring the GPS automated flight from a dedicated lap top.

Although the automated GPS system within the UAV made

it possible to cover the site with a virtual grid this was not accurate enough for 3D mapping so a series of ground control points fixed with a total station was laid out as a control. The survey of the centre of the site comprising the fort and associated structures (mosque, warehouses, workshops and palace) was completed within ten days. Because numerous overlapping photographs of the site were taken different views of the same feature create a stereoscopic effect which combines to form 3D images. When the photographs were collated and 'stitched' together using specialist software a highly accurate 3D map was produced which is accurate to within 1cm.

The rationale for using Near Infra Red and thermal cameras was to determine whether there were sub-surface features or otherwise invisible aspects of the site which could be detected using different means of remote sensing. The Near Infra Red cameras are usually used as a way of seeing the ground in areas where there is dense vegetation. Because the site has a sparse covering of bushes and other plant life the Infra Red images were less useful as a diagnostic tool. However the thermal camera had more interesting results displaying different amounts of heat emissions in different parts of the site. The thermal images were useful in two ways- firstly they made indistinct features such as wall lines much more visible than in conventional visible light photographs and secondly some features which are not visible on the surface were visible on the thermal images. In a second phase of project due to start in March 2015 selected areas will be excavated to test the relationship between features visible on the thermal images and what lies below ground.



Overview of Ruwayda

During a second season of aerial survey which took place in November 2014 the coverage of the 3D visible map was extended to the west of the centre to include the entire western half of the site as well as the intertidal zone. During this second season the thermal camera was upgraded to a thermal video camera which enables a continuous stream of thermal images to be taken which can then be sampled for the best images. Preliminary results of the aerial survey

work have been presented at the A2RU conference held in November at Iowa State University as well as at Annual Research Conference of the Qatar Foundation held in Doha also in November.

Andrew Petersen is Director of Research in Islamic Archaeology at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Austin Hill (Chad) is honorary Research Fellow at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Diane Derr is Assistant Professor and Curator of the Innovative Media Studio at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar.

Qatar: Art on the Rocks

Robyn Pelling from the University of Birmingham describes the many fine examples of petroglyphs that can be found all over Qatar.

Surrounded by the sea, with only the almost impassable desert of the Rub' Al Khali as a terrestrial frontier, Qatar has had a long, important and varied association with the sea. Because of this, many of the features of the archaeological landscape of Qatar are related to this maritime environment; including the petroglyphs. These are diverse, and are found pecked into the Eocene limestone jabals predominantly found on coastal sites.

Sporadic investigations have taken place over the past 40 years, and recently, further investigations focusing on location and analysis have gained momentum. Mapping has been undertaken, and initial work on scientific dating carried out.

There are a number of designs that are typically found in Qatar. The most frequent is that of cup marks, in two conventional designs; a linear formation of two rows of cupules, commonly known as “mancala” board type, and a “rosette” formation of a central cupule surrounded by a ring of such (Figure 1). The number of rows or the number of cupules can vary in either design. Other motifs include figures such as boats, animals, or footprints, and symbols or wasms which are related to the local Bedouin tribes. Further designs include linear channels and basins, which in some areas have been combined into a “comet” form. Graffiti is also prevalent across the jabals, some of which is believed to have been created at the turn of 20th century as there are examples of graffiti having been marked using the Hijri calendar which could merit further investigation.

Most of the more concentrated areas of petroglyphs are situated in the north. These are primarily close to the coast, and extend west as far as the al Zubarah headland. Whilst in the east, isolated sites, away from the main concentration, have been found as far south as Doha. There are reports of

multiple sites located close to Doha, however these have yet to be verified.



Figure 1: The “rosette” formation of a central cupule. Photo: R. Pelling.

Following the presentation of works at the Seminar for Arabian Studies, work is currently centred on the recording of the extent of the rock art across some of the more extensive jabal formations around Qatar. In particular, recent work has highlighted further concentrations of petroglyphs in the north-west of the country at al Ghariya and Jabal al Safya.

Previously, recorded art was known to be within the protected village of al Ghariya. Further survey has highlighted highly weathered, previously unrecorded examples at relatively isolated sections of the surrounding jabals. QNHER 20812 is a site which is predominantly rosette mancala formations, whilst QNHER 20814 is an apparently isolated linear mancala formation at the western extent of the jabal series.

At Fuwairit, the limestone has long been known to bear many fine examples of petroglyphs. Immediately to the south of this area is al Safya (now known as the modern village of Fuwairit). The nearby jabals are smaller, predominantly sand covered, unlike those at Fuwairit which are larger and dominate the skyline.

One jabal, QNHER 645, is covered particularly densely with petroglyphs, some of which have a unique design of any of those known in Qatar currently. Amongst the usual cup marks, there are a number that appear as the outlines of shapes, segmented in the centre. As these lie amidst a number of other petroglyphs believed to be used for gaming purposes, it is thought they were created for similar reasons. There are also two “comet” types, which are usually linear channels converging down on a central basin. The second is unusual, and represents the second unique type of design on this jabal (Figure 3). Three linear channels descend the limestone surface and converge on a rosette formation of cupules. A large jabal on the western edge of the area revealed a second limestone outcrop with numerous petroglyphs, QNHER 20809. This did not have the same range of designs as QNHER 645, but there were a significant number of cup marks in both linear and rosette gaming formations.



Figure 2: Map of Petroglyph Locations in Qatar, created by Liam Delaney

Interestingly, despite a number of large jabals in between, these are the only two that show extensive petroglyphs.

Some of the smaller jabals show weathered examples of cup marks in both linear and rosette mancala types, with one example closest to the sea, QNHER 20807, showing an unusual oval outline with a depression at one end which resembles a crude fish. Smaller limestone ridges around the outskirts of the main jabal area, as at al Ghariya, have more relatively isolated examples of cup mark formations. These petroglyphs, for example QNHER 20808, are generally shallow, showing high levels of weathering.

Acting on local information further survey in the south of Qatar revealed a new site at Jabal Marmi. Initial survey has located figures of three animals, thought to be two camels and a deer. The central animal (camel) appears under a dome which possibly represents a sand dune (Figure 4). The age and authenticity of these petroglyphs has yet to be established, however it seems likely that it is related to modern graffiti close by.

Jabal Marmi is an unusual site for the location of petroglyphs. It is several kilometres inland, unlike almost every other site; which are believed to be related to coastal settlement, nor is it close to any known historical track-ways, as at Jarr Umm Tuwaim. This is perhaps an indication that



Figure 3: A “comet” type Formations. Photo: R. Pelling

they are not concurrent with the other areas of petroglyphs in Qatar.

The petroglyphs are proving to be a consistently enigmatic feature of the archaeological landscape. It is encouraging to know that we are continuing to locate new sites, which indicate the changing uses of the landscape and add to the cultural heritage of Qatar.

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SAUDI ARABIA

DISPERSE Project

on land and sea

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

The work of the project continued during 2014 with on-land and underwater survey in collaboration with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA), Riyadh, Dr. Abdullah Alsharekh and Dr. Saud Al Ghamdi of King Saud University, and staff of the regional SCTA offices in Jizan Province (Jizan and Farasan) and Asir Province (Abha). The team also established collaborative links during the year with the Saudi Geological Survey (SGS) for the further development of joint investigations into coastal and underwater geological survey.

A lengthy field season extending over a 6-week period in January, February and March of 2014 was led by Dr. Robyn Inglis (University of York) in collaboration with Dr. Anthony Sinclair and Dr. Andy Shuttleworth (University of Liverpool), and other members of the DISPERSE team, and was devoted to continued survey on land in the provinces of Jizan and Asir (Figure 1). Work was focussed on wadis and land surfaces associated with volcanic outcrops and lava flows in the areas of Wadi Jizan, the Jebel Akwa volcanic cones near Wadi Sabiya and the extensive volcanic province of the Harrat Al Birk, which extends down to the modern coastline and most probably offshore onto the now submerged landscape. In addition to volcanic areas, the survey also targeted quarries and natural sections cut through wadis in search of buried deposits with potential to contain stratified and dateable artefacts, and shoreline features comprising coral terraces and raised beaches representing earlier periods of high sea level.

In the Jizan province, extensive quarrying and excavation of the landscape is taking place in response to massive new investment in roads, buildings and general infrastructure, while the coastal zone more widely is undergoing development, road building and other disturbance. All of this is helping to expose ancient land surfaces, but it is also leading to a high rate of destruction, or increased risk of destruction, of archaeological material.

In total, the survey visited 40 localities and recovered 717 stone tools, including tools diagnostic of all the major Palaeolithic periods: Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic (or Early, Middle and Late Stone Age). The team also identified new rock art panels in the Wadi Shafqah on the northernmost edge of the Harrat Al Birk (Figure 2). All locations were logged using GPS, and at the end of the season the lithic material was taken to the Sabiya Museum (Jizan) for preliminary study, where it is stored pending further analysis.

Particular attention was devoted to mapping the extensive coral and beachrock deposits at Dhahaban quarry near Al Birk, reported on last year, where Middle Stone Age artefacts are embedded in a fluvial cobble unit that interfingers with cemented marine and coral deposits representing an earlier period of high sea level. The unit is capped by cemented wind-blown sand, and the whole

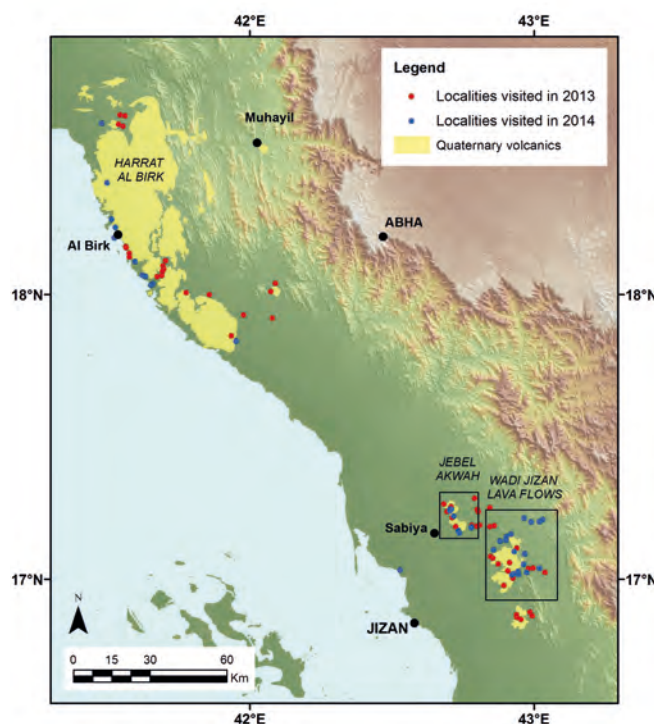


Figure 1. Map showing location of 2013 and 2014 discoveries in Jizan and Asir Provinces.



Figure 2. Rock art panels in Harrat Al Birk, Asir province.

complex is banked up against an earlier volcanic cinder cone and basaltic lava flow, offering a number of opportunities for radiometric dating. Samples from the sand unit were collected for OSL (Optically Stimulated Luminescence Dating), which is being carried out by Dr. David Sanderson and his team at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research centre (SUERC) in Glasgow.

Isolated examples of stratified artefacts were also recovered from fluvial deposits stratified beneath volcanic tuffs in Wadi Jizan and Wadi Sabiya (Figure 3). Samples for OSL dating were recovered and samples of the volcanic tuff from both locations have been collected for Argon/Argon dating by ISMAR (Istituto di Scienze Marine), Bologna, who are working in collaboration with SGS on the analysis and dating of the volcanics of the western escarpment in relation to the opening of the Red Sea.

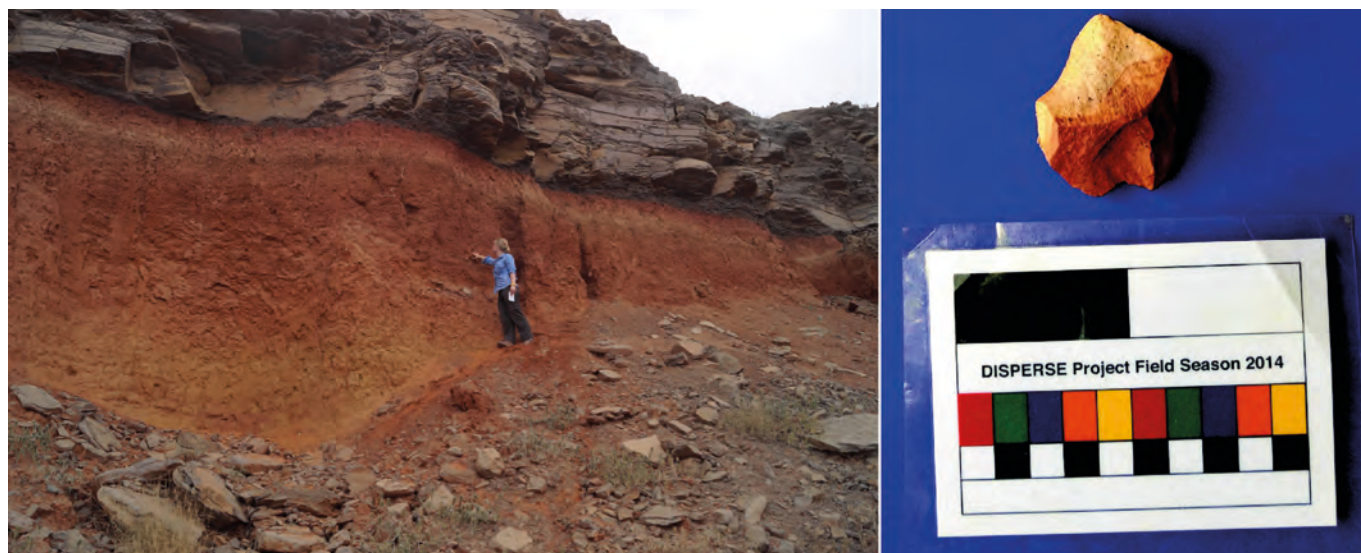


Figure 3. Quarry section in Wadi Jizan showing floodplain deposits with a worked artefact stratified beneath a volcanic tuff.

Later in the year, in November-December 2014, Geoff Bailey and Robyn Inglis returned to Saudi Arabia on an SGS mission to examine in more detail the raised coral terraces and beachrock sediments on the Farasan Islands and along the Asir coastline (Figure 4). The survey team included Dr. Bill Bosworth (Apache, Egypt), a leading authority on the structural geology of the Red Sea Basin. The work included collection of coral and shell samples from coral terraces for U-series dating, detailed GPS measurements of terrace elevations, and collection of additional volcanic samples, including further examination of the deposits at Dhahaban Quarry. The results should provide important new data on sea-level change and an improved geochronological framework for the interpretation of landscape evolution and archaeology in the region.

In March, the underwater team led by Garry Momber carried out renewed work on the Farasan Islands. The diving team included 4 members of the Maritime Archaeology Trust (Southampton) and 4 Saudi archaeological divers from SCTA Riyadh. Work included excavation of submerged caves and other submarine features identified in previous diving expeditions (Figure 5).



Figure 4.. SGS Survey 2014 team in Al Birk: Front (L to R): Adel Jurais, Nawaf Widinly, Mustafa Khorsheed; Back Row: Salem Al Nomani, Bill Bosworth, Ali Al Saeedi, Geoff Bailey, Robyn Inglis, Najeeb Rasul.

Further details can be found on the DISPERSE Project website at <http://www.disperse-project.org>

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Figure 5: Underwater excavation with Faris Hamzi (L) and Jumah Al Sadiq (R).

Ad Diriyyah

Preserving the old capital

Restoration and development work on the old capital of the al Saud at Ad-Diriyah in Wadi Hanifah now incorporated into the expanding Saudi capital Riyadh is entering its fourth year with one major element nearing completion. Peter Harrigan updates us on the latest developments.

The Historical Ad Diriyah Development Programme includes projects covering heritage preservation, urban and architectural rejuvenation and cultural and socio-economic developments as an initial phase. It will lay the groundwork

for and support sustainable tourism and heritage projects and initiatives involving the private sector.

In 1972 the ruined settlement was placed under the protection of the Saudi Antiquities act and in the late 1980s a plan to restore the site was approved. The Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA) and Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA) took responsibility for the ambitious programme covering an area of 30 square kilometres. In 2010 UNESCO declared the core Al Turaif area of Ad Diriyyah as a World Heritage site, the second to be inscribed in Saudi Arabia after Madain Salih.

The scope of the Historical Ad Diriyyah Development Programme includes detailed surveying, documentation, archaeological investigations and 3D laser scanning. This has been followed by comprehensive restoration of the site which includes both stabilization and reconstruction.

The area will house a number of museums which will be housed in restored buildings around the site and which will focus on the First Saudi State. In addition to the main Ad Diriyyah Museum which will create an overarching introduction to the site and its interpretation there will be a number of focus themed museums. These include a Life and Architecture Museum which will cover everyday life in the settlement in its heyday as well as exhibitions on traditional mud building and stone masonry techniques. A military museum will reveal the expansion of the first Saudi state and its defence against the Ottoman six-month siege. A trade and treasury museum will be housed in the old treasury building and focus on the thriving trade and economy of the Saudi capital in the 18th century. An Arabian horse museum with stables which will exhibit pure desert bred Nejdi Asil Arabian horses, with bloodlines that reach back to the famed stables of the Al Saud in the 18th century. Much of this historic bloodstock was seized and brought to Cairo by the invading Turko-Egyptian forces on the fall of Ad Diriyyah and became the foundation bloodlines of the stud of Mohammed Ali Pasha. Interactive displays and heritage trail as well as a market place are also contained within the walled site along with the restored palaces, mosque, *hammam* (bath house) and smaller residential buildings.

On the Eastern side of the Wadi the impressive Al Bujeiri Quarter has been created including the Sheikh Mohammed Abdulwahhab Foundation and mosque, gardens, landscaped terracing leading down to the Wadi. The architect for buildings in Al Bujeiri Quarter is Dr Rasem Badrem who employs distinctive fusing of traditional Arab Islamic architectural materials and styles with modernism.

A curved bridge will link Al Bejeiri, which is flanked by the modern town of Ad Diriyyah, over to the historic site.

Wadi Hanifa which sustained the growth of Ad Diriyyah into a flourishing oasis settlement, has already been extensively

rehabilitated by Arriyadh Development Authority, a project which has received the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, among the first ever given to an environmental project.

Such has been the expansion of today's Saudi capital with its estimated population approaching six million that the outskirts of Riyadh now merge with those of the modern settlement of Ad Diriyyah.

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Madâ'in Sâlih, ancient Hegra

Archaeological work 2014/5

The second four-year excavation programme at Madâ'in Sâlih, ancient Hegra in north-west Arabia, started in 2014 and is due to finish in 2017. Drs Laïla Nehmé, Daifallah al-Talhi, and François Villeneuve describe the most recent seasons' work.

Ten excavation areas were opened in 2014 and 2015: five inside the Residential Area, and five outside (figure. 1). In the Residential Area, the work concerned three different kinds of structures: military, domestic and religious. Outside the Residential Area, it concerned exclusively tombs.

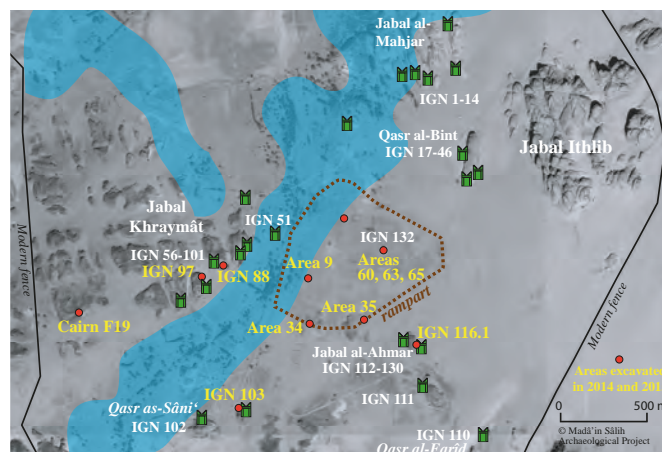


Figure. 1. Satellite image showing the location of the 2014 and 2015 excavation areas. © Madâ'in Sâlih Archaeological Project

Excavation of the South-Eastern gate (Area 35), one of five gates previously identified along the rampart, continued. The gate is flanked by towers (figure. 2), and its walls are built of reused stone blocks some of which bear inscriptions in Nabataean, Greek and Latin. The texts confirm both the presence of the Third Legion Cyrenaica and a substantial phase of occupation in the Roman period.

One of the most important elements associated with the rampart is a military camp, discovered in previous surveys.

The rectangular camp is dominated in the east by a citadel. The date of the camp — Nabataean or Roman — is not certain yet. The discovery of three skeletons below the south-eastern corner of the camp shows that the area was previously a cemetery.

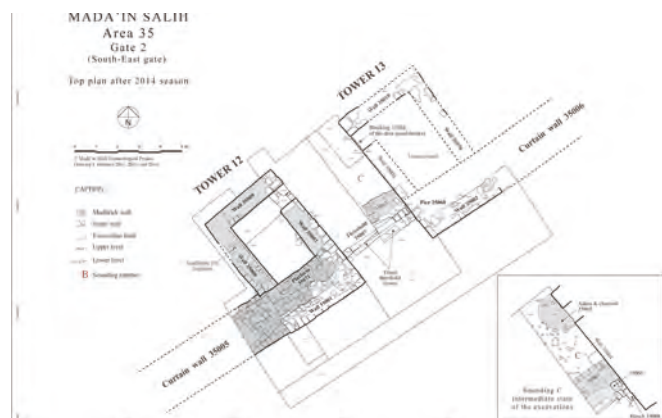


Figure 2. Top plan of the South-Eastern gate after the 2014 season. © Madāin Sālīh Archaeological Project

The domestic structures excavated in the residential area are located in Areas 9 and 65. Elements of statuary and monumental architecture were reused in the latest levels, suggesting the existence of an important public building during the Nabataean period. A staircase, the first example in Madā'in Sālīh, was identified in the northern half of the enclosure. Analyses of the features of the Upper stratum have led to the conclusion that the structures belonged to open-air forecourts leading to an important room or building. The preliminary date of the Upper stratum is between the late 2nd and the 4th century AD. The Lower stratum has a *terminus ante quem* of the end of the Nabataean and/or beginning of the Roman period.

One other domestic quarter was excavated in the Residential Area in 2014 : an extension of the excavations undertaken in 2003 by the Department of Antiquities of Saudi Arabia at the foot of the south-western side of the outcrop known as IGN 132 (figure. 1).

The area on top and at the bottom of IGN 132, one of the two sandstone outcrops standing in the northern part of the Residential Area (see figure. 1) forms a large sanctuary the most important element of which is a paved platform on which stood a tetrapylon. (figure. 3). In 2015, the sanctuary was totally excavated and the area at the bottom of the outcrop, between the stone basins and the wells, excavated down to bedrock. Immediately above the latter, the remains of a cistern or basin, covered with hydraulic mortar and dated to the Nabataean period, were discovered. The following chronology for IGN 132 and its immediate surroundings can be tentatively suggested: at the end of the first century BC, a sanctuary/high place was installed on IGN 132, accessible from the west. A second phase may be represented by wall 60666, built before the area with the basins was backfilled. A third phase is finally represented by the period when the basins were in use, the *terminus post*

quem of which is AD 250.

Finally, the area immediately south of outcrop IGN 132 (Area 63) yielded an ashlar wall and other structures belonging to several phases of occupation, details of which are unclear. One or more building phases corresponds to the sanctuary on top of IGN 132. At a later period several walls were built abutting this ashlar wall.

Outside the residential area, Nabataean monumental tombs and cairns were excavated. In 2014, Nabataean tombs IGN 88, 97 and 103 were either excavated or cleared. The first two, with decorated façades, were emptied in 2014; the third, IGN 103, is a simple funerary chamber relatively high on the cliff. Some of the pit tombs within this chamber still contained archaeological sediment which may help dating. Finally, in 2014, a new rock-cut tomb was discovered on the eastern flank of 'Jabal al-Ahmar' (figure. 1), between IGN 116 and 117. The tomb (IGN 116.1, see figure 4) was hidden behind a sand dune and was found to contain at least 25 individuals, some in wooden coffins, apparently of the first and second centuries AD. Large amounts of pottery vessels were found in the sand layer which covered the terrace (actually the remains of a quarry) in front of the door.



Figure 3: The platform and tetrapylon on top of IGN 132 after restoration © Madāin Sālīh Archaeological Project



Figure 4: External view of new tomb IGN 116.1 at the end of the 2015 season © Madāin Sālīh Archaeological Project.

Following the 2011 survey a cairn complex of the circular tower-tomb type was chosen for excavation in the Jabal al-Kharymât area. The excavation uncovered associated burial structures containing human bone fragments and sea shell beads used as body ornaments and funerary offerings.

In conclusion, these paragraphs give only a very small idea of the work undertaken at Madâ'in Sâlih during the last two years, focusing mainly on the results of the excavations proper and much less on the other studies which included the restoration or consolidation of several structures: Area 2 was fully restored, parts of Area 9 were backfilled, the platform on top of IGN 132 was restored with mud-bricks. Also, specialists studied the pottery, the fauna, the macro-vegetal remains, the coins and the metal objects. It is therefore important to note the highly interdisciplinary character of the work undertaken, of which this report gives only a small idea. The other important conclusion concerns the chronology of the site, initially thought to be occupied only in the Nabataean period, but now proved to be occupied as early as the 5th century BC, and until at least the fifth century AD.

Full reports for each season (2008 to 2014) can be downloaded on the HAL-archives-ouvertes website of the CNRS or ordered from the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities' Department of Yearbook and Publications. <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-01122002>.

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UAE

Nasir Al Darmaki opens the UAE section with the latest developments at Sharjah Archaeology museum. Collated by **Hazelle Anne Page**.

Sharjah Museum

Sharjah Archaeology Museum hosted two specialist exhibitions in 2014 as part of Sharjah's celebrations as Islamic Cultural Capital 2014, awarded by the Islamic Organization for Education, Science and Culture (ISESCO).

The Story of Discovering an Artefact in Sharjah, 7th May - 7th September 2014

The exhibition was inaugurated in conjunction with the International Museums Month, 2014 under the theme "Museum Collections Make Connections". Sharjah Museums Department celebrated the month across their museums with a series of events, educational workshops and programmes that aimed to make their collections form connections with the community.

This exhibition aimed to expose visitors to the secrets of an artefact's journey, from its discovery to its display in a museum. Initially, the visitor was introduced to the creation of an artefact, followed by its discovery by excavators, and

how it is processed afterwards. The excavation strategy was described, including lifting an artefact from site, its documentation, and preparation for transportation to the laboratory.

The exhibition highlighted the stages an artefact undergoes in the hands of specialists from its examination in order to identify it, estimate its age, study its significance in the context of the site and similar finds elsewhere and the necessary procedures required to clean and conserve the artefact in preparation for research and display.

Finally, the exhibition discussed the interpretation and display of an artefact as presented in a showcase for the visitors' contemplation and enjoyment. This also introduced the need for the long term care of an artefact that is continued by monitoring its new environment for changes that may cause damage.

The exhibition provided an opportunity for all to understand the efforts of scores of excavators, archaeologists, conservators, researchers and display experts who contribute to the processes of discovery of an artefact, its care and study in order to make the artefacts and their stories available to everyone thus preserving Sharjah's ancient history.



A group of stele on display that represent the unique island culture of Bahrain
Image: Courtesy of Sharjah Museums Department.



An incense burner from the "Discovering an Artefact" exhibition at Sharjah.
Image: Courtesy of Sharjah Museums Department.

Ancient Bahrain: The Power of Trade

29 October 2014 - 29 March 2015

The exhibition was inaugurated by His Highness Sheikh Doctor Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi, ruler of Sharjah and Sheikhha Mai Al-Khalifa, Minister of Media and Culture, the Kingdom of Bahrain. The exhibition includes more than 130 rare artefacts on loan from the collection of The Bahrain National Museum. The exhibition presents unique steatite stamps, finely worked pottery, glass and alabaster vessels, ivory objects, gold jewellery and stone funerary stelae. The artefacts illustrate the story of life in Bahrain and the Gulf and how people struggled to survive in their harsh environment and with scarce resources.

The exhibition demonstrates the importance of Bahrain, known in ancient times as Dilmun and later as Tylos and its prominent position thousands of years ago as a commercial centre that lay on the old commercial sea routes that connected the Arab East to the Indian Subcontinent. The exhibition presents and discusses four main points:

- Dilmun and Tylos: centuries of commerce and prosperity. The availability of water resources in Bahrain and its fertile soil along with its island nature and strategic location attracted people and provided the opportunity for them to play an important role in the active commercial life in the region during the period 2000 BC to 300 AD.
- Dilmun: The Gulf's store house in the Bronze and Iron Ages (2000-500 BC)

Visitors can appreciate the role of Bahrain's islands – the beating heart of Dilmun from 2050 BC – through international commerce and the magnificent wealth so gained; the innovative ways created to organize commercial transactions that involved using stamps as a way to signify possession and authentication; the establishment of a weight system and as a place to store merchandise. This importance is emphasised by the name of 'Dilmun' repeatedly appearing in texts left by ancient civilizations such as those from Mesopotamia.

- Tylos: a meeting point for international commerce (200 BC – 300 AD)

Bahrain was known during the Hellenistic Age as Tylos, during which time Dilmun's place as a prominent commercial centre was maintained through its connections with the cities and countries that emerged after the division of Alexander of Macedon's lands in the 4th century BC. The exhibition shows the influence of the Hellenistic culture on the people of Bahrain during that period.

- The effects of commerce: a unique local culture
The scale of commercial activities on the island, its accessibility and its connections with various markets

and cultures left social and cultural marks. Even though evidence indicates that art, beliefs and industry were affected by traditions and practices of the Arabian Peninsula, Mesopotamia and others, the exhibition also illustrates that the local island culture made use of these influences and assimilated the ideas that better suited the nature of the island producing a new and unique cultural legacy.

Nasir Al Darmaki, Curator and Khaled Saleh, Senior Researcher

Small find notes

Staff at Sharjah Archaeology museum, part of Sharjah Museums Department have prepared some 120 objects for a new archaeological display venue being developed at Mleiha, Sharjah.

In the process of examining and condition checking the objects about 40 % required some conservation work. Some objects had been previously conserved and had been on display but a few had not.

Two objects were of particular interest; a silver 'pendant' and a silver and iron stick/pin/handle.

Silver Griffin pendant, SM1997-262 from Al Buhais, Sharjah
This object had not been previously cleaned and presented an uneven surface of grey/lilac and green corrosion products. It was described as a copper alloy object (indicated by the small amounts of green corrosion) but the grey/lilac coloured surface suggested silver was present.

On cleaning, a silver griffin-type, possibly female, animal was revealed. The head has a beak-like, open mouth, the neck a mane of hair or even possibly feathers supporting two 'straps' or necklaces; from the body a pair of front and a pair of rear legs, a crescent shape joining the two haunches and back to back curly tails. The object is incomplete as one whole animal is present and only the rear part of a second. The object is 40mm long and 37mm high. On the reverse are two silver loops, one behind the neck has a ridged surface that could have been used for hanging the object as a pendant from a necklace. The surface corrosion was mostly lilac silver chloride or Horn silver with soil trapped within its matrix over a black silver sulphide layer which was left intact as its removal would have probably destroyed the object.

The object is similar to other pendant or plaque type jewellery objects found in the area where the design has two animals standing back to back, joined at the tail end and facing in opposite directions made of gold or electrum as found at Tell Abraq, Sharjah and Um Al Qawain, Qattarah, Al Ain, Dhayah and Shimal, Ras Al Khaimah, Bidya, Fujairah and Hamala, Bahrain. The animals represented include goat-type animals and lions, some of which have



Front view: Silver Griffin SM1997-262, (left) before treatment and (right) after treatment. Image: Courtesy of Sharjah Museums Department.

been found with many beads suggesting they were used as pendants hung from a necklace such as those from Shimal and Dhayah, (Nayeem, 1994). These objects are generally dated to second millennium BC.

Silver and iron 'stick', SM1994-380, from Mleiha, Sharjah

This fragment of a long stick-like object had been previously conserved, but was suffering from copper corrosion over much of the silver surface especially in the grooves. The active green corrosion was removed and a protective layer applied. The stick is 60mm long with a diameter of around 5mm.

The stick or pin or spoon handle is made of sheet silver wrapped around an iron core. The join where the sheet of silver meets is visible along the 'back' of the stick. The silver is decorated with deeply incised grooves and the end of the stick is in the design of a goat-type animal head. The head has two ridged horns, extending backwards with ears underneath, an eye on either side of the head and an open mouth.

On one side of the head, within the orbit of the eye appears to be a complete eye-ball possibly made of Egyptian faience or glass. It has an opaque yellow/brown surface. On the other side is an incomplete eye-ball which shows some iridescence similar to degraded glass.

XRF analysis was undertaken of the silver at the site of the cheek, a horn and two places on the body of the stick. The complete eye was sampled twice and the incomplete eye once.

All samples had a high level of silver present, between 75 to 87% silver. The cheek sample contained 13% lead whereas the other locations had a content of less than 0.7% lead.

Most copper readings were between 10 and 17% but two samples, the cheek and one location on the stick shaft gave readings of between 6 and 7%. All samples contained gold, the minimum 0.72% and the maximum 1.76%. The lower copper content in two sample locations could be attributed

to the copper leaching out of the silver and oxidizing and therefore lost from the object. The analysis results for the eye did not seem to be particularly different from the other sample areas on the head or body of the stick and so identification is not confirmed.

The identification of this object is not certain. It could possibly be part of a kohl stick, a pin or a handle for a spoon or strainer. It is probably first to second century AD.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks to Dr Nadji of the Physics Department, University of Sharjah for XRF analysis.

Hazelle Page, Collections Manager, Charlotte Rerolle, Archaeological conservator, Sharjah Museums Department. hpage@smd.gov.ae



Side view of silver/iron stick, SM1994-380 Image: Courtesy of Sharjah Museums Department.



Close up of head showing complete 'glass-eye.' Image: Courtesy of Sharjah Museums Department.

Ras al-Khaimah

latest news and research

Christian Velde, Ahmad Hilal, and Imke Moellering, *Archaeologists at the Department of Antiquities and Museums, Ras al-Khaimah, detail the latest research in the region, including excavations at Queen Sheba's palace, first identified by BFSA President, Beatrice de Cardi.*



Figure 1: Burj Hillu 1935 – 2012 – 2015

Burj Hillu: saving the historical watchtower

The Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah possesses more than 80 historical watchtowers, used to secure its coastal towns and inland oases in the past. Burj Hillu represents this rich heritage inside Ras al-Khaimah Old Town and has been finally brought back to its old glory.

Built after 1820, when the Old Town and its defences were destroyed by the British, Burj Hillu (Figure 1) was originally situated at the edge of the creek to watch over and defend the south-eastern side of the historical town. With a height of 10m, the round tower is constructed with inclining walls, using fossil coral stone, wadi stones, fossil beachrock and limestone slabs bound with traditional mortar. The watchtower is divided into three storeys with its ground floor being entirely closed and only accessible from inside. The first floor is provided with four cannon holes to all major directions. The entrance was also located in the first floor and its door could originally be reached from outside through climbing up a rope, while a ladder served inside the tower to move between the different storeys. The second floor was unroofed and surrounded by a parapet wall with loopholes for shooting with rifles. Crenellations on top allowed shooting in an upright standing position while at the same time providing protection from the attackers. Both ceilings/floors were traditionally resting on mangrove beams, covered with a strong layer of connected palm fronds and a final layer of mats made from palm leaves.

Unfortunately an attempt to restore Burj Hillu during the early 1990s changed its original structure, features

and overall character completely, resulting in a different shape and disproportional appearance. Moreover, the addition of modern materials, including concrete, steel and paint, prevented any binding with the core of the original watchtower and left it heavily cracked and damaged.

In order to save and preserve Burj Hillu's original architecture the Department of Antiquities and Museums embarked on an extensive and authentic restoration process. After carefully studying the traditional building materials on the spot and the original design and shape through historical photographs, all modern additions were removed. They were then meticulously replaced and restored with authentic building materials to bring back Burj Hillu's original shape and height. Furthermore it has been proposed by the Department of Antiquities and Museums to integrate the tower into the development plans of the Municipality and to establish a public space around it. This final step will visually enrich the neighbourhood, while at the same time focus on Ras al-Khaimah's rich heritage.

Queen Sheba's Palace: a medieval palace overlooking the palm gardens of Shimal

On behalf of H.H. the Ruler, Sheikh Saud bin Saqr al-Qasimi, a detailed report about 'Queen of Sheba's Palace', the only medieval palace in the UAE and one of the very few examples in the Oman Peninsula and lower Gulf, was produced, highlighting its archaeological and historical importance for the Emirate of Ras al-Khaimah and beyond.

Excavation History

The remains of Sheba's Palace are scenically situated on top of a mountainous plateau above Shimal village (Figures 2 and 3) and were initially described by Beatrice de Cardi in 1968 during her first survey of Ras al Khaimah. Later, the plateau was examined and partly excavated by a German team of architects and archaeologists from Aachen University. Originally being part of the international excavation project at Julfar al-Mataf (1989-1995), their work in Sheba's Palace was carried out in the years of 1992 and 1994. Small areas inside the palace were excavated in order to establish its architectural history. Today, the documentation about this work is part of the Department of Antiquities and Museums' library. A short note about the building's excavation and dating was also published in 1995 (Franke Vogt 96, German Mission to Julfar and Sheba's Palace (Ras al-Khaimah, UAE) in: Proceedings of the Seminar of Arabian Studies 26, 165-167).

A study of the documentation could distinguish three main phases, which can be linked with major phases of the Islamic history of Julfar/Ras al-Khaimah, Integrating the Palace into Julfar's and Ras al-Khaimah's history.

The earliest palace (Figure 4) was most probably built

between the 12th-13th century when Julfar, the famous trading town representing early Ras al-Khaimah, became an important part of the emerging Indian Ocean trade network. The palace was situated above the palm gardens of Shimal which formed the core of the early town of Julfar. A large fortified building/palace was erected on top of a platform, situated at the north-western corner of the mountain plateau which was fortified at the same time. The rectangular building was strengthened with three round towers at the corners. The interior comprised several wings of rooms divided by a corridor and possessed a large cistern with a barrel shaped vaulting remaining intact until today. Remains of previous buildings could not be detected and the earliest excavated pottery sherds date this phase to the 12th-13th century AD. The construction of Wadi Sur, the town wall of Julfar, which is also connected to the same plateau, might have started around this time as well.



Figure 2: Queen of Sheba's Palace

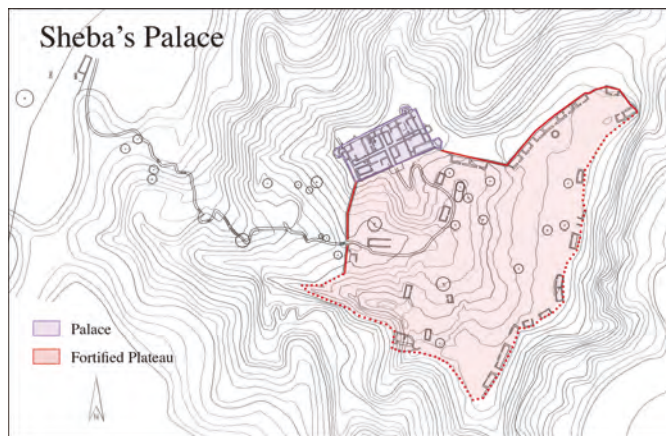


Figure 3: Queen of Sheba's Palace – Plan

It remains unclear how long the palace was utilized, as it had been kept clean during its use and no datable sherds were left behind after its abandonment. It might have been abandoned after a major conflict arose between Julfar and the Kingdom of Hormuz, situated on an island of the same name off the Persian side of the Gulf. We know from historical sources that Julfar tried to occupy Hormuz twice in the years of 1499 and 1515 with the help of the town of Lar. As a repercussion Julfar's ruling elite seems to have been eliminated and from 1520 onwards Julfar was ruled by Hormuzi governors which might have had no further interest in the palace.

After a period of abandonment the palace and surrounding

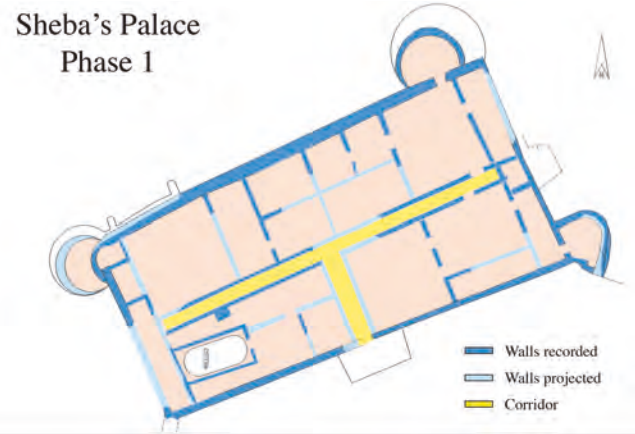


Figure 4: Queen of Sheba's Palace – Phase 1

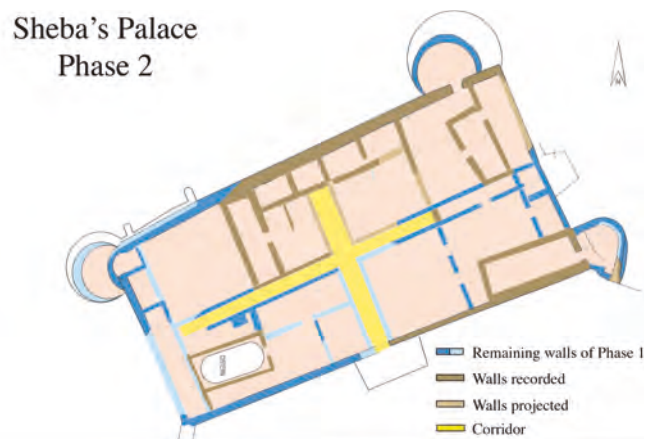


Figure 5: Queen of Sheba's Palace – Phase 2

plateau were reused in the 17th/18th century (Figure 5), when the Quwasim started to rule Ras al-Khaimah. We assume that they converted the palace into their summer residence, using older walls where possible but also rebuilding and altering the plan in several areas. At the same time the plateau was re-fortified and huts were set up against its defence walls. At the beginning of the 19th century it was abandoned again, coinciding with the Wahabi disturbances and the British attacks on Ras al-Khaimah.

By the end of the 19th century the palace had collapsed and its former rooms were rebuilt into single room stone huts which are typical for the landscape of Shimal. Eventually the plateau was abandoned at the beginning of the 20th century and has been decaying to its present state.

It is important to note ...

No connection exists with the Queen of Sheba, the Queen Zenobia or any other Arabian queen. The palace is of medieval origin and therefore much later than the legendary Queen of Sheba, who is said to have lived in the 1st millennium BC and had no association with this area of the Arabian Peninsula. Though Queen Zenobia represents a certain historical figure, she also lived much earlier during the 3rd century AD. Instead, archaeological research has proven that it was most probably the palace of the medieval rulers of Julfar and later the summer residence of the

Quwasim rulers of Ras al-Khaimah. The title 'Queen of Sheba's Palace' seems instead the outcome of some local legend.

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Belgian Excavations at Mleiha, Sharjah

Dr Bruno Overlaet, *Director of the Belgian excavations sends us the latest report from the field*

A Belgian team, working in close collaboration with Sharjah's Department of Antiquities has been excavating since 2009 at Mleiha and is now focusing on the PIR A period (3rd – 2nd century BC). A small settlement mound (AI) has been excavated, revealing an occupation from PIR A to PIR C (2nd century AD). Work now concentrates on the adjacent graveyard Area AV. Ground Penetrating Radar Research and aerial surveys revealed several clusters of monumental block shaped towers that were built on top of underground burial chambers. Smaller gravepits without monuments on top are found around these clusters and dispersed between them. Although all tombs were plundered in antiquity, the remaining finds included weaponry, alabaster/calcite vessels, jewellery and local and imported ceramics. Several stamped Rhodian amphora fragments dated from the first half of the 2nd century BC.



The Belgian excavations at Mleiha (aerial photo B. Overlaet).

The square funerary monuments were built with mudbrick and were possibly solid. Their outside had a white plaster coating and sometimes a small, low platform, usually the size of a single mud brick, was placed against the northern wall. The top of two of the seven tomb towers at area P had been decorated with three rows of gypsum bricks and ridges and with free standing steps. It links them to similar monuments at Qaryat al-Faw (KSA) and the earliest funerary monuments at Petra (Jordan). The Mleiha monuments had

reclining walls and stood originally between 4 and 6 meters high. Excavations at zone Z will continue in the fall of 2015.

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The Oasis Landscape of al-Ain and Buraimi

The modern towns of al-Ain and Buraimi straddle the border between the United Arab Emirates and Sultanate of Oman. These towns have grown up in the past forty years, a product of the oil wealth of Abu Dhabi, attracting migrants from the interior of Oman and Indian Subcontinent, but there might be evidence for much earlier occupation as project leaders Dr Timothy Power & Peter Sheehan reveal.

Buraimi is the name applied to a group of villages in this oasis, viz. Geemi, El Kantara, Oheli, Ain, Saara, and Matrid. These six villages correspond to the oases of Jīmī, Qaṭṭāra, Hīlī, al-ʿAyn and Muʿtarīḍ in the UAE and Ṣaʿarā in Oman, to which should be added Ḥamāsa. By the time Percy Cox visited the place in the early twentieth century, these historic oases had been joined by “the recently formed Bani Yas colony called Masʿudi, started by the eldest son of the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi... and the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi’s new settlement at Jahali... [which] possessed a nice new fort and a walled date and fruit orchard” (Cox, 1925:207-08). Somewhat later came al-Muwaijī, of which Wilfred Thesiger in the mid-twentieth century observed the “villages [of the Buraimi Oasis] are ruled from Muwaiqih by Zayid bin Sultan of the Al Bu Falah” (Thesiger, 1950: n. 10, p. 163). The historical sources attest to a continuously developing landscape responding to changing political and economic circumstances. The recent explosion of population and dramatic expansion of settlement afforded by the oil boom is but the latest chapter in the story of the Buraimi Oasis.

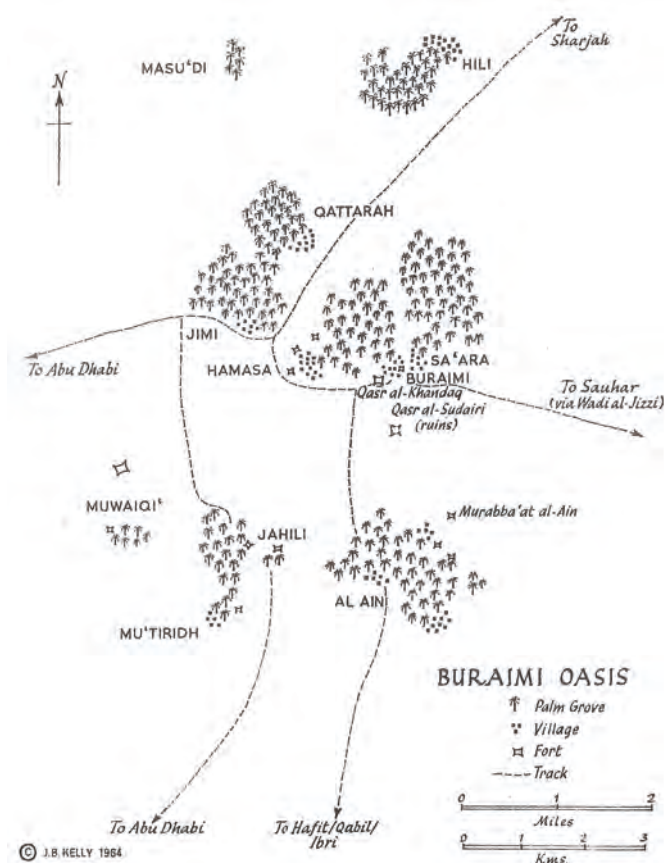
The earlier development of the oasis landscape may be charted by archaeology. Bronze and Iron Age settlements have been found in al-Ain – though the landscape context remains poorly understood – and the Early Islamic period is now emerging as a major period of agricultural expansion. Only a handful of sherds dating from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries have so far been found in al-Ain and Buraimi, implying that permanent settlement in the medieval centuries was extremely limited. Excavations by TCA Abu Dhabi in Qaṭṭāra Oasis, prompted by the transformation of the rebuilt Bayt Bin ʿĀtī al-Darmakī into the Qattara Arts Centre, demonstrated that the adjacent palm groves were dug in the eighteenth century (Power & Sheehan, 2012: 297-303).

Given that groundwater generally moves from the mountains in the east to the plain in the west, and the effort involved in developing the hydraulic infrastructure increases further from the water source, it might be conjectured that the more easterly Ḥamāsa and Ṣa'arā' Oases are older. Indeed, the Ibādī histories refer to the demolition of forts in the oases around the year 1633, implying that there was some sort of sedentary occupation at the time, though the contemporary landscape remains mysterious. The present oasis landscape of al-Ain and Buraimi therefore seems to be a product of the Late Islamic period.

The Late Islamic oasis landscape was comprised of three discrete zones: an inner oasis consisting of sunken palm-groves wherein fruits and vegetables were grown beneath the canopy; an outer oasis made up of open fields given over to the cultivation of cereals and animal fodder; and an oasis hinterland constituting a managed savannah landscape providing grazing. This agrosystem was supported by ground water flowing down from the Ḥajār Mountains, which was tapped by hand- or animal-drawn wells and by sloping subterranean channels called aflāj (sing. falaj), and supplemented by seasonal rains and flow of surface water in the wādīs. An impression of the complexity of the system may be had from Lorimer's Gazetteer:

"The general aspect of the oasis is verdant and fruitful... Each village has its separate belt of date groves; within the village the subdivision of arable land among owners is minute, and individual holdings are on the average extremely small... The palms of the oasis number about 60,000. Fruits other than dates are lemons, sour and sweet limes, pomegranates, water melons, musk melons, bananas, mangoes, grapes, figs and olives; the papai also exists. Cereals are wheat and barley in spring, and jowari and millet in autumn; vegetables include sweet potatoes, radishes, brinjals, beans, onions and garlic. Pulse, cotton – both of the white and red flowered varieties – and lucerne yielding 8 to 9 crops a year are among the other products. Leguminous plants are not sown among the cereals, but follow them in rotation on the same ground; stubble, too, is ploughed in and never burnt. It is said that coffee was once cultivated on the slopes of Jabal Hafit, but the plantations, if any ever existed, have now disappeared." (Lorimer, 1915: 260-264)

However, only the palm groves and aflāj have survived modern development to any great extent and these have consequently loomed large in the academic literature, whilst the open field systems and grazing lands have tended to be forgotten. The 'Buraimi Oasis Landscape Archaeology Project' was set up, in part, to provide a more holistic approach to the historic landscape. Remote sensing, geophysical survey and test-pitting in the large open area adjacent to the UAE-Oman border fence – the last surviving extensive open area of the historic Buraimi Oasis – revealed a multi-period field system abandoned in the first half of the nineteenth century (Power et al, 2015). This field system



Map of the Buraimi Oasis. After: Kelly 1964

stretches from Ḥamāsa Oasis in Oman to Jīmī and Qaṭṭāra Oases in the Emirates and provides a historic context for palm gardens presently isolated by modern development. Zayed University students in collaboration with the TCA Abu Dhabi are now undertaking an archaeological survey of Qaṭṭāra Oasis and collecting oral history from the former inhabitants of Ḥārrat al-Qaṭṭāra. This latest campaign of field work aims to document the symbiotic relationship between the three oasis zones outline above and further our understanding of the development of the oasis landscape. Plans are currently underway to develop a heritage trail through Qaṭṭāra Oasis and install a permanent archaeological exhibition in the Bayt Bin 'Ātī to improve presentation and public access. In this way, we hope to enhance the oasis component of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of al-Ain.

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More information: <http://arabiaandtheislamicworld.blogspot.co.uk/2014/06/buraimi-oasis-landscape-archaeology.html>

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Abu Dhabi: Real Data from Real Buildings

In this article, UCL PhD student Tia Kansara outlines her work on the modern buildings of Abu Dhabi and its occupants.

This research considers the widening of indoor thermal comfort parameters of buildings in the Gulf. Beginning with Abu Dhabi, this thesis aims to understand the impact of the harsh summer on the communal spaces indoors. These Transitional Zones (TZs) offer an opportunity to prepare occupants to challenge steady-state environments. These are spaces between the outside and the main parts of a building that are artificially cooled. Monitoring the buildings during the summer months of 2011 led the Researcher to consider the impact of a possible decrease in cooling in the TZs, and thus study the response from occupants.

The benefits of monitoring the performance of buildings, known as Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE), include encouraging occupants to give their evaluations to the various stakeholders, leading to better designs of the urban environment in the long run. POE allows the different stakeholders of a building to understand where improvements would result in an increase in efficiency of using resources like electricity and water indoors. In addition, this can quickly diagnose Sick Building Syndrome and various other such health impacts from badly designed and managed buildings. Research in Abu Dhabi shows a lack of knowledge of the benefits of evaluating the built environment, as well as a lack of reference to established theory for the Gulf Region.

The results show that although the temperature is raised in the TZ, there are no negative impacts on the occupants. In most cases the occupants have responded with positive comfort scores despite the increase in temperature indoors.

Lessons learnt from collecting primary data from building owners, facility managers, occupants and designers has led to some positive feedback from stakeholders.

Win-Win

A pilot of the results and the potential impact of the study were sufficient to get stakeholder buy-in. For the duration of the field study, the results were periodically presented to apply to the specific requirements of the stakeholders. This proved fruitful to maintain a good working relationship with building managers. Managers, with building owners would grant access and determine the level of support for the research, such as providing security clearance, as well as access to data like indoor thermal comfort. Communicating to occupants led to a better understanding of how their survey responses could determine improvements to the

building, as these would be shared with key decision-makers. Furthermore, how policy-makers could impact the larger move towards a sustainable Emirate, as they would often understand the macro response and upon reflection make larger data sets available for analysis.

Continuity

High employee turnover in Abu Dhabi required measures by the Researcher to reduce the chances of the field study being discontinued. In some cases, collaborators had left the country or had transitioned to different jobs and thus were no longer available to continue their support. A signed document, with an explanation of the research to show what was agreed upon proved helpful in this eventuality.

Multi-lingual

Collecting occupant responses required documents and surveys to be translated from English into Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Bengali and Arabic. At times, this required an assistant to accompany the Researcher. This enabled a cultural sensitivity between the differing ethnicities, allowing the Researcher to maintain the corresponding etiquette.

Physical Presence

A physical presence, visiting and creating a network of people who value one's input, is necessary to build a community of individuals who support the longer-term aims of the research. The Emirate has a plethora of government departments with many over-lapping mandates. These require multiple visits to establish grounds for collaboration.

This thesis aims to map occupant experiences in buildings of the Gulf Region. Further understanding of the built environment and its impact on occupants will lead to an improvement of future designs of thermally comfortable buildings.

YEMEN

Dr Salwa Dammaj, *Country Director of the American Institute for Yemeni Studies opens with the latest news on the restoration projects going on across Yemen.*

The Social Fund for Development funded several restoration projects in the recent six months of 2014. These include the Great Mosque in Shibam (in the northern governorate of al-Mahwit). This is one of the outstanding Islamic antiquities in Yemen and the Muslim world. The project also aimed to recycle and re-use old materials in the restoration and repairing process by training local workers to do the job and engage them in the site's work. The history of the mosque dates back to the reign of the Ya'furi State's rulers in the third and fourth centuries A.H (ninth or tenth century A.D). The mosque was built with skilfully carved stones brought

from nearby ancient sites dating back to the pre-Islamic era. The stones' facets were skilfully carved. Another project dealt with restoration of the Thula Bastion in the north.

Repairs continued in the fifth phase for repair of the Al-Ashrafiya Mosque and School in Taiz. This major historical monument dates back to the Rasulid reign in the 8th century A.H (c14th C A.D.). It is one of the most important architectural and decorative mosques, not only in Yemen but in the Muslim World. The building gains special historical and artistic value for its unique alabaster and wooden decorations and wall inscriptions. Local teams were trained to make the architectural restoration. The team included 66 craftsmen receiving professional training in restoration. Italian experts from the Institute of Cultural Heritage in Venice helped the Yemeni team in repairing the building.

A further restoration project dealt with paving streets in the historic coastal city of Zabid. This city is listed in the World Heritage's list of vulnerable historical cities. The city has suffered from several problems such as dust and mud, the lack of a coordinated traffic system and problems created by permanent and temporary parking. The project is intended to pave the city's main streets and squares including the old market area. This will have a positive impact on the city's milieu and properly organize traffic flow. This in turn will serve as a complementary contribution to the preservation and improvement activities aimed to keep the city in the list of the World Heritage. Propping up and repairing the Al-Mansouria School of Jubun in Al-Dhala has entered a second phase. This school in Jubun is one of the most important architectural and historical monuments of the Tahirid State. It was established at the end of the 15th century A.D., earlier than Al-Amiriya School in al-Rida'. The building is characterized by its open hall reinforced by trim marble pillars.

The Social Development Fund has also financed the translation and printing of a catalogue of old Islamic Yemeni coins. The project is intended to make this significant catalogue available for researchers. The project also documents the Islamic coins which have been used in Sana'a from the first to sixth centuries A.H./ c7th-12th C A.D.) A book has also been published on the Socotran spoken dialect.

Socotra Island is one of the Republic of Yemen's islands in the Indian Ocean. The archipelago was made a governorate in 2014. The island is inhabited by some 80,000 people who have their own spoken dialect. Socotra's population inherited this spoken dialect from ancient ancestors and maintained its structure continuing to the present day. The Social Development Fund also published two significant books about Yemen architecture from the 1980s. These are translations of *The Art of Building in Yemen* by Fernando Varanda and the major edited volume of Serjeant and Lewcock on San'a': *An Arabian Islamic City*.

U.S. Ambassador Funds Conservation

Two restoration projects have been sponsored by the U.S. Ambassador's Fund in 2014. One is the Sultan's Palace situated in the old city of Aden, which is presently known as "Crater City". It was built within the period 1912-1918, during the reign of Sultan Fadhil Al-Abdali of Lahj. It is one of Aden's most prominent historical sites. The National Museum of the General Authority for Antiquities and Museums in Aden occupies the central part of the palace and the Yemeni Center for Studies and Research is in the eastern part, while its western part is still vacant. The building is characterized by its unique architectural style and shape, besides its distinguished location. The other is the Children's Museum project in Sana'a. This project seeks to restore an historic Sanaani watchtower (*nawba*) on the property of the National Museum and re-purpose it into a functioning exhibition space, specifically for children. This would create the first dedicated children's museum in Yemen. The National Museum is a complex of buildings that originally served as part of the private residence of the last Imam of North Yemen. It is now government-owned and operated, and open to the public daily. Currently, it houses exhibits on Yemeni archaeology and customary ways of life, containing pre-Islamic artefacts, as well as items from contemporary heritage. The watchtower, or *nawba*, is a mud brick structure from the early part of the last century. Primarily used for defensive purposes, the *nawba* also doubled as a storage tower for grain in peacetime. This tower currently stands on the eastern edge of the museum property, a prominent feature in the perimeter wall of the entire complex. It rises above the museum buildings and a main artery for traffic in Sana'a, and is thus highly visible.

Dr Salwa Dammaj, Country Director, American Institute for Yemeni Studies, Sana'a, Yemen

The Rock Art of Dahaisi Cave, Socotra

The Socotra Karst Project (SKP) was initiated in 2000 by Peter De Geest to explore the caves on the island, Dr Julian Jansen van Rensburg updates us on the latest developments.

The first expedition in December 2000 (SKP1) discovered and began with the mapping of Hoq Cave, which has proved to be the richest source of evidence for Socotra's links with the wider Indian Ocean world. Over the course of the next nine years, a further nine expeditions were carried out, adding up to a period of more than five months of field work. Currently around 50 caves have been explored, adding up to a total of around 32km of mapped underground galleries. During 2002 the SKP expedition discovered and mapped Dahaisi cave and the rock art therein. However, it was not until recently that this archived material was made available

to the author to study during his visiting research fellowship at the Berliner Antike Kolleg.

Dahaisi cave is located in the eastern interior of Socotra, on the western edge of the Mōmi Plateau at an altitude of around 580 metres above sea level. The five meter high and ten meter wide entrance to Dahaisi cave is partly concealed by a huge overhanging fig tree that covers the entrance to a subterranean passage which heads 175 meters down, in an easterly direction. The main passage is approximately two metres high and five metres wide, and terminates in a large chamber with a vertical water filled sump.

The rock art is spread throughout the side gallery and main passage of the cave, although the majority is found in the final chamber surrounding the water filled sump. The rock art within this gallery is spread across 3 panels, which are located along the southern, eastern and western walls. The images are all drawn from charcoal or some other form of dark organic material, and in several areas along the western panel they have been covered by calcite. Dating the charcoal and calcite deposits has not yet taken place, although the potential for obtaining dates from these samples is high.

The motifs found on these three panels are made up of a series of depictions of anthropomorphic and animal figures, geometric designs, crosses and images of what look strikingly like ships. The southern panel (Figure 1) has the largest variety of visible imagery, while the western panel is replete with geometric designs (Figure 2).

The presence of a large number of cross motifs is hardly surprising when we look at Socotra's historical record, which mentions a strong Nestorian Christian influence on the island from at least the 6th century. However, the variety of different types, such as the Latin, Greek, budded, potent and forchee cross appear to demonstrate that it is possible that they may have been influenced by other forms of Christianity brought to the island by missionaries such as Francis Xavier (d. 1552), who visited the island with the express desire to convert the Christians population to Catholicism. Despite the strong Christian influence

we also learn from historical sources that the inhabitants were believed to have been involved in witchcraft, and had the ability to change the weather, cause the island to disappear and shape shift. The presence of possible antlered anthropomorphic figures on the southern panel maybe representations of the animal form a shaman may take when entering the spirit world, and could be related to the shape shifting myths. That these symbols occur alongside the cross symbols could be indicative of a melding between Christian and Pagan beliefs reported in the historical sources.

What is also particularly interesting is the depiction of two different types of ship within the cave, especially when we consider that the cave lies over seven kilometres from the coast and 30 kilometres from any known historical anchorage. While it is possible to tentatively identify the three-masted vessel as being European and the single-masted vessel as being Arabian the question is why would these vessels have been drawn in Dahaisi and what do they represent?

In addition to the various motifs, there are a number of seemingly random geometric designs, which dominate the imagery of the western panel. Whilst it would seem tempting to assign these to some form of entopic phenomena I believe that they may have served a more mundane purpose. Indeed, when looking at similar designs in northern Yemen, which are interpreted as having been representative of plans or maps of structures, one cannot help but look for parallels with the enigmatic wall alignments that lie outside Dahaisi cave (Figure 3).

Further imagery found within the cave includes a dromedary with what appears to be a person sitting astride it (Figure 4). Similar imagery is found depicted on a limestone outcrop in Eriosh, on the north coast and it may be possible that there is some correlation between the two sites. The depiction of this animal is difficult to interpret as dromedary do not occur naturally on Socotra, and it may be that, much like the images of the vessels, this image is a representation of some event, or memory.



Figure 1. The southern rock art panel showing the wide variety of motifs present © Socotra Karst Project.



Figure 2. The western panel showing the array of geometric patterns found © Socotra Karst Project.

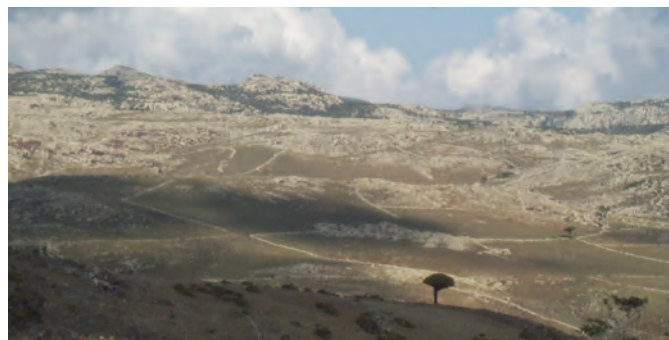


Figure 3. A series of walls alignments as seen from Dahaisi cave © Julian Jansen van Rensburg.

Recently further funding has been received by the author from National Geographic / Waitt Foundation to undertake a more detailed record of the cave art found throughout Dahaisi cave. The recording and analysis of this rock art imagery from Dahaisi cave is the beginning of a wider study by the author to locate, record and map the rock art of Socotra before more of this heritage is damaged or lost beneath ongoing development, as has occurred in Eriosh.

Petroglyphs discovered on Socotra

In March 2011, a series of hitherto unknown petroglyphs were discovered and photographed by Vladimir Melnik on the south coast of the island of Socotra, Yemen. These were recently passed to the author to include in his ongoing study of the rock art on Socotra. While further analysis is ongoing, at present I have identified a number of extremely interesting glyphs. These include outlines of different sized feet, an orant (a figure with raised arms), several cupules and what appears to be some form of script. These glyphs have parallels with the petroglyphs found at the site of Eriosh on the north coast of the island. According to Naumkin and Sedov (1993: 582), Eriosh dates to the second half of the first millennium BC, due to its association with dolmen-type structures found in the vicinity. The importance of this discovery on the south coast is that it not only adds to our limited knowledge of rock art on Socotra (the current corpus includes six petroglyph sites and two cave sites), but also highlights the archaeological potential of what was considered to be a barren unpopulated southern coastal plain. Moreover, this site can greatly add to our understanding of the cultural and religious lives of the people of Socotra in antiquity.

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Dr Julian Jansen van Rensburg, Friends of Socotra, Post-doctoral visiting fellow at the Berliner Antike-Kolleg, (Freie Universität Berlin) & steering committee for the Seminar for Arabian Studies. jansenvanrensburg.julian@gmail.com



Figure 4. A camel motif found on the eastern panel © Socotra Karst Project.



Figure 5: Close up of Petroglyphs (perhaps a foot?) from Socotra

Conservation of the Socotra Cormorant in the Eastern Arabian Gulf

Staying with Socotra, but turning to the conservation of its wildlife, Dr Sabir Bin Muzaffar describes the conservation programme now in place for the Socotra Cormorant, listed as Vulnerable by International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

Socotra Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax nigrogularis*) are iconic seabirds distributed throughout the Arabian Gulf and into the Gulf of Oman, the western Arabian Sea along the shoreline of southern Oman and Yemen. The populations in the western Arabian Sea are considered to be separate from those in the Arabian Gulf. The global population has been estimated at 750,000 individuals consisting of about 110,000 breeding pairs. The species is considered Vulnerable by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. The Arabian Gulf hosts the bulk of this population and species breeds in small islands.

The most recent estimates of populations of breeding Socotra Cormorants within the United Arab Emirates are from between 2011-2013. The Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) has estimated around 12,000 pairs in about 3-6 island

colonies in the Abu Dhabi Emirate. The largest colony in UAE is on Siniya Island in Umm Al Quwain Emirate, with an estimated breeding population of 28,000-35,000 pairs. Monitoring by EAD suggests that most populations in Abu Dhabi are undergoing decline and several have disappeared since the last estimates from the 1990s. Thus, a conservative estimate of the breeding populations in UAE at present is 50,000 breeding pairs within the UAE.

I initiated a study on the breeding Socotra Cormorants on Siniya Island, Umm Al Quwain, UAE in 2011 that has now evolved into a long-term study projected to continue in the years to come. Much of the account below is based on our ongoing work at Siniya Island.

Socotra Cormorants generally nest on sandy islands with loose gravel substrate to allow construction of bowl shaped nests. On Siniya Island, nesting occurs in early to mid-August and egg-laying occurs between mid to late September. First chicks are seen in early to late October in each breeding season. Chicks are naked at birth and grow the first coat of downy feathers within one week. Chicks begin forming loose groups called 'creches' within two weeks of hatching. Creches became larger with the progressing season and numbered in the thousands late in the season (November-early December).

Socotra Cormorants feed on a variety of fish and there could be marked inter-year variation in the diet. For example, in the 2011/2012 breeding season, the diet was almost entirely Sailfin Flying fish (*Parexocoetus mento*) during the early part of the season (before November). As the chicks became larger, the diet was switched to include other fish, including Blue-stripe Sardine (*Herklostychthys quadrimaculatus*) and Pink-eared Emperor (*Lethrinus lentjan*), presumably to compensate for the larger size of chicks that needed a more lipid-rich diet. In contrast, the diet in 2012/2013 was different from 2011/2012 with most of the diet consisting almost entirely of Anchovies (*Engrasicholina spp.*) throughout the season. Halfbeaks (*Hyporhamphus*), and scads (*Selarcruenophthalmus*) also formed minor components of the diet in both years. It appears that the species is highly adaptable and feeds opportunistically on abundant fish species. Limited studies from elsewhere suggest that Sardines (*Sardinella sp.*), scads (*S. crumenophthalmus* and *Atule mate*), and a range of other fish species formed part of the diet in the Hawar Islands colony in Bahrain. Thus, different colonies may have different diets drawing on available local fish resources although the major fish groups targeted could be similar.

Satellite telemetry using back-pack platform transmitter terminals (PTTs) and GPS loggers, indicate that Socotra Cormorants forage distances ranging from 10-70 km during the breeding season on Siniya Island. Post breeding dispersal of breeding birds suggested dispersal westwards

towards Abu Dhabi waters or dispersal north along the UAE shoreline out through the Strait of Hormuz and around the Musandam peninsula of Oman.

Accumulation of plastic and other debris originating from the Arabian Gulf constitutes a major threat to the breeding habitats in Siniya Island. Large deposits of plastic bottles, buoys, fishing lines, fishing nets, appliances and used car-batteries remain scattered all over the island. Littering in the Arabian Gulf is difficult to control and with an estimated annual 46,000 vessels traversing in and out of the Strait of Hormuz. The effects on breeding seabirds have not been measured although leaching of chemicals and compaction of plastic seems to be obvious possibilities. Fishing line entanglement is a widely recognized source of mortality in many seabirds including Socotra Cormorants. Many birds are found dead on Siniya Island, either entangled in fishing line or hooks.



Nesting Socotra Cormorants with chicks. Photo: Sabir Bin Muzaffar

In spite of substantial threats, the Siniya Island breeding population seems to be stable with 28-35,000 breeding pairs nesting annually. Since Socotra Cormorants are Vulnerable and global populations are still declining, there is a need to undertake urgent conservation action. Four areas may be identified for conservation purposes: (i) conservation of breeding colonies; (ii) conservation of roosting areas; (iii) conservation of foraging areas; and (iv) public awareness. Siniya Island is recognized internationally as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and it could benefit greatly from more focused conservation efforts. This would safeguard not only the Socotra Cormorants but also a range of other species including shorebirds that use the shallow mudflats extensively during migration; and the Critically Endangered Green Turtles (*Cheloniemydas*) that use the islands shallow lagoons and seagrass beds for foraging.

Dr Sabir Bin Muzaffar is a wildlife biologist specializing on the ecology, migration and diseases of birds. He is an Associate Professor at the Department of Biology, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain

Searching for human fossils in Yemen

We turn now to a brand new exciting project for Yemen, where UCL PhD researcher Aalaa Al-Shamahi hopes to uncover Palaeolithic remains in Yemen's caves.

Yemen warrants the attention of palaeoanthropologists for a number of reasons:

1. East Africa is the presumed hot bed of hominin evolution, with dispersal out of Africa often cited as being via the Sinai-Levant route. However Yemen sits on the Bab-el-Mandeb strait, the shortest route out of east Africa. This coupled with the historic weight given to the coastal dispersal theory suggests that this alternative dispersal route, via hypothesised land-bridges, merits further investigation. Of course the two routes need not be mutually exclusive. Understanding the dispersal routes is especially important given the evidence of earlier dispersals of Anatomically Modern Humans (AMH) out of Africa prior to the successful global dispersal.
2. While Neanderthal anatomy has always been understood to be cold adapted, they have been found to the north of the Arabian Peninsula in Iraq and the Levant and recent years have seen the expansion of their range to the east, well into Asia. They also often lived in small, isolated populations, and so examining whether they ever went that far south is warranted. The Neanderthal question in this region is particularly important given that the timing of the first interbreeding event between Neanderthals and AMH (around 50-60,000 years ago) is consistent with Upper Palaeolithic people coming into contact with Neanderthals as they dispersed out of Africa.
3. Our understanding of hominin species is being challenged, particularly in terms of new species, within species diversity and interbreeding, the hominin tree is looking more like a bush than ever before. New discoveries from Denisova and the Far East, to ancient DNA, to *Homo erectus* diversity in Dmanisi, have led to a need for us to find more fossils to understand the record we have, and elucidate species diversity and interbreeding questions. Exploration is especially needed in regions with little historical attention from palaeoanthropologists, particularly in Arabia where the lithic record (even in the Middle Palaeolithic) is diverse in time and space.

However, work in Yemen has not historically received the attention it deserves for various reasons. Momentum

improved partly due to the discovery of Yemen's first stratified Palaeolithic site at Wadi Surdud, extremely significant as so few stratified sites have been found in Arabia. Sadly, just as Yemen's Palaeolithic was on the cusp of being at its most informative, rapidly deteriorating security forced the abrupt end of the work of international teams. It therefore seemed logical that as a British-Yemeni dual national and palaeoanthropologist I should assemble a team of Yemeni academics, with the co-operation of Yemen's General Organization of Antiquities and Museums and links to Sana'a University, to conduct field-work. We do not have the same inaccessibility problems as international teams and believe that Yemen remains a key location for palaeoanthropological research.

The objective is to find hominin fossil material, an ambitious task, but as a palaeoanthropological endeavour, no matter how many lithic assemblages are found it is hard to know who is making them without finding associated fossils. Fossils are crucial to research in the Arabian Peninsula where no hominin fossils have yet been found. We are focusing on caves, as realistically this is where fossils are most likely to be preserved considering the antiquity of the period of interest and the heat of the region. We are therefore conducting extensive prospecting and surveying for stratified Palaeolithic caves across the Yemeni highlands and its borders, excluding areas where local tribes/groups are hostile.

To cover this large region, remote or laboratory surveying techniques will be implemented. Using geological maps, satellite images and aerial photos we are identifying palaeolakes and water systems in areas of Pleistocene deposits, near possible cave systems; research in Arabia keeps highlighting an association between lithics and palaeolakes, and caves were more likely to be occupied if they were near a water source. We also intend to employ Digital Elevation Model analyses to identify terrain with the potential for rock-shelters and caves, as these have little been mapped in Yemen.

Remote surveying techniques are time efficient, aiding and targeting fieldwork. They are also useful for working in unstable territories as research and analyses can continue regardless of fluctuating security on the ground. For example, a week before we were scheduled to conduct a short field season, airstrikes began in Yemen forcing us out of the field and back into the lab to use this delay to expand our analysis. Meaning that when security improves, hopefully before our longer scheduled field season at the beginning of 2016, we should be even more prepared to conduct targeted fieldwork.

Report by Aalaa Al-Shamahi (a.al-shamahi@ucl.ac.uk)
Department of Anthropology, University College London

NABATAEAN NEWS

One of our members' favourite features, here follows the latest on Nabataean news and research 2014, from Dr Lucy Wadeson.

Several teams continued their fieldwork projects in and around Petra throughout 2014. In March, the 'North-Eastern Petra Project', directed by Zbigniew Fiema (University of Helsinki), Stephan Schmid (Humboldt University) and Bernhard Kolb (University of Basel), continued their survey in the quarter of the city centre between Wadi Mataha, Wadi Musa and the Palace Tomb. Architectural studies of some of the largest structures at the site were undertaken, and detailed plans and descriptions of the smaller, water-related installations were made. The results of the 2014 fieldwork support the previously proposed hypothesis that the area should be identified as the Nabataean royal quarters. At the same time, Stephan Schmid and Piotr Bienkowski (University of Manchester) continued excavations on the plateau of Umm al-Biyara in the framework of the 'International Umm-al Biyara Project'. For more information on these projects, including reports from past seasons, see: <http://www.auac.ch/>. In April, Robert Wenning (Münster University) and Thomas Weber (University of Jordan) undertook a second season of documenting the 'Sculpture of Ancient Petra', including pieces stored in the Petra Museum or visible in the field. Their current list of known sculpture has reached 711 objects.

In May, a Belgian-French team, directed by Laurent Tholbecq (Université Libre de Bruxelles) excavated a built structure on the plateau of Jabal al-Khubthah which turned out to be a cultic platform, providing new information on Nabataean religion (Fig. 1). During July, the 'Petra North Ridge Project', directed by Megan Perry (East Carolina University) and Thomas Parker (North Carolina State University), continued the excavation of domestic structures, tombs, and the city's northern wall on the North Ridge. Excavation results confirm that the area was used for mortuary purposes from the 1st century BC until the end of the 1st century AD, approximately the time that the northern city wall was constructed. Housing complexes were built on the North Ridge in the 1st century AD, overlapping with its use as a cemetery, which were destroyed in the 4th century and not rebuilt.

In October, the French Archaeological Mission continued work on the Qasr al-Bint temple, excavating Building B. At the same time, a joint Belgian-French team, under the direction of Laurent Tholbecq, conducted a new survey in Wadi Sabra, 6.5 kilometres to the south of Petra's city centre. They produced the first general map of the site, which now allows a new understanding and interpretation of the various archaeological remains.



Figure 1: Team members on the last day of excavation on the plateau of al-Khubthah, Petra



Figure 2: During excavation of a Nabataean tomb in the hinterland of Petra

The 'Temple of the Winged Lions Cultural Resource Management Initiative' continued training and working with members of Petra's local community throughout the year as part of the project's broader social engagement strategy. Fieldwork focused on the conservation of the east wall of the temple's cella, the continued clearing and recycling of the numerous excavation dumps and stone piles that surround the site, and the architectural documentation of the extant ruins. The project also conducted limited but critical test excavations in the temple's southwest quadrant aimed at determining the area's structural integrity. The project also underwent a change in leadership, with Glenn J. Corbett and Maria Elena Ronza named co-directors by outgoing director Christopher Tuttle.

Fieldwork also took place in the Jabal Sharā outside Petra, providing new information on life and society in the hinterland. Lucy Wadeson (Université Libre de Bruxelles) and Fawzi Abudanah (Nabataean Centre for Archaeological Studies, al-Hussein Bin Talal University) excavated a Nabataean family tomb which was discovered during the 2012 survey of the 'Petra Hinterland Tombs Project' (Figs. 2–3). This tomb, located 14 kilometres to the north-west of Rās an-Naqab, is a monumental built hypogeum associated



Figure 3: Co-directors (Lucy Wadeson and Fawzi Abudanah) of the Petra Hinterland Tombs Project with Abu Abdullah during excavation of a Nabataean tomb

with an ancient road and two settlements. Although previously looted, the excavators recovered material that allowed the tomb to be dated to the 1st century AD. The human remains will be studied by Megan Perry during 2015. This excavation also provided Jordanian students at Hussein Bin Talal University with fieldwork training. Fawzi Abudanah and Marc Driessen (University of Leiden) undertook a season of survey at Uduh, the Roman fort 15 kilometres to the east of Petra, with special focus given to the Qanat system and the plan of the fortress. Abudanah also continued the mapping and documentation of ancient roads in the Jabal Sharā region.

At the other major Nabataean city of Hegra (Madā'in

Sâlih), the Saudi-French archaeological project (directed by Laila Nehmé, Daifallah al-Talhi and François Villeneuve) continued excavation in early 2014. For a summary of the fieldwork results, see pp 43-5.

The exhibition 'Petra, Desert Wonder' has been showing at the Jordan Museum in Amman since July 2014, and will continue for several more months. This exhibition, which celebrates the rediscovery of Petra 200 years ago by Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, began at the Antikenmuseum Basel und Sammlung Ludwig in Switzerland in 2012 under the name 'Petra, the Wonder in the Desert', before moving to the Dutch National Museum in Leiden. A series of public lectures on the Nabataeans has accompanied this exhibition in Amman.

In December 2014, Laurent Tholbecq and Lucy Wadeson organised a one-day workshop at the Université Libre de Bruxelles on 'Nabataean and Roman Sculpture at Petra: Current Research and Perspectives'. This workshop brought together scholars from Germany, France and Belgium who presented the results of their latest projects. Methodological approaches to the study of sculpture from Petra were also discussed and assessed. The proceedings of this workshop will be published in a separate volume later in 2015.

Dr Lucy Wadeson

Université Libre de Bruxelles

Dr Wadeson will give the BFSA AGM lecture on 4th June

AWARDS AND PRIZES

The International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)

The International Prize for Arabic Fiction announced the 16 novels in contention for the 2015 prize in early February. This year's shortlisted authors come from nine different countries, with the highest numbers from Morocco, Iraq and Egypt. Atef Abu Saif, Jana Elhassan, Lina Huyan Elhassan, Shukri al-Mabkhout, Ahmed al-Madeeni and Hammour Ziada have been announced as the six authors shortlisted for the 2015 International Prize for Arabic Fiction. Their names were revealed by a judging panel chaired by award-winning Palestinian poet and writer, Mourid Barghouti, at a press conference in Casablanca. The event was held at the Royal Mansour Hotel, in partnership with the Moroccan Ministry of Culture and the Casablanca International Book Fair. For the full details see <http://www.arabicfiction.org/news.465.html>

The award will be announced on Wednesday 6 May 2015 in Abu Dhabi.

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/

The 2014 winner was Sinan Antoon for the translation of his novel *The Corpse Washer*. Yale University Press
ISBN: 9780300205640

British-Kuwait Friendship Society Book Prize in Middle Eastern Studies

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. In each of the years since the prize commenced, it has attracted around 50 nominations

from some 20 publishers and the overall standard of entries has been extremely high. The prize is awarded for the best scholarly work on the Middle East each year. Normally the chronological remit of the prize will be from the rise of Islam until the present day, but outstanding scholarly entries from the pre-Islamic era may also be considered. The 2014 prize recipients were Lara Deeb & Mona Harb *Leisurely Islam: Negotiating Geography and Morality in Shi'ite South Beirut* Princeton University Press. There were two runner up titles: Asma Afsaruddin *Striving in the Path of God: Jihad and Martyrdom in Islamic Thought* Oxford University Press and Remke Kruk *The Warrior Women of Islam: Female Empowerment in Arabic Popular Literature* IB Tauris. See <http://www.bkfsprize.co.uk/> for more information.

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 2014 prizes were presented on 11th February to Andrew Mead, publisher, and Ionis Thompson, who is also a *BFSA* Trustee.

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; further information on the grants can be found at www.barakat.org/

University of Arkansas Arabic Translation Award

The King Fahd Center awards an annual prize up to \$10,000 for the best book-length translation of Arabic literature from any of the following genres: poetry, novel, short story collection, drama, or literary non-fiction such as autobiography or memoir. Submitted translations must be previously unpublished in book form. All translation rights must be cleared for publication.

For this award the original author (if still holding rights to the work) will receive, in lieu of royalties, \$5,000 and the translator (or translators) will receive a total of \$5,000. Independent judges select the award winning translation, which will be published by Syracuse University Press as part of its prestigious Middle East Literature in Translation series.

Submissions are usually accepted until the 30th April each year. Award winners will be announced the following fall, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Middle East Studies Association.

Contact Professor Adnan Haydar ahaydar@uark.edu
http://cavern.uark.edu/rd_arsc/mest/4766.php

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:
<http://www.britac.ac.uk/funding/guide/>

The BFSA

Through a generous donation, the BFSA has recently been able to offer a greater number of research grants to worthy scholars. The main objective of the research must fit within the scope of the BFSA's aims, and applications must be

linked to clear and achievable plans for immediate.

The number of awards made each year will depend on the strength of applications. Main Research Grants up to £4,000 and Small Research Grants up to £1,000. It is expected that grants of a combined value of up to about £8,000 will normally be awarded each year. See the BFSA News Section of the Bulletin (page 4) and our website for more information: 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.

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

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. 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 2016. 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 2015. 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

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

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

British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS)

BIPS welcomes applications from scholars wishing to pursue research in Persian Studies. The British Institute of Persian Studies' Main Grants Programme awards funding in an open, biannual competition for projects. Applications are invited from scholars wishing to pursue research in all fields of Iranian and the wider Persianate world studies in any relevant subject, including anthropology, archaeology, the visual arts and architecture, history, linguistics, literature, philosophy, religion, political science and cognate subjects, as well as for the organisation of conferences, lecture and workshops. In line with our funding priorities, the Institute continues to maintain a balance between supporting large-scale projects with far-reaching effects and smaller-scale research, publication or fieldwork-based endeavours.

Travel and Research grants for UK Undergraduates BIPs has become increasingly aware of the steady interest among British undergraduates in visiting Iran, is offering a limited number of bursaries in 2015/16 to encourage such visits to Iran and wider Persian world. In addition to the application form applicants should submit a one-page proposal outlining their research project, including the time-scale, the itinerary and the breakdown of expenses. Any topic that is relevant to an academic study bearing on Iran will be considered. However, successful candidates will not receive more than £1,200 and should not expect a bursary to cover all the costs of a journey to Iran; they should be prepared to supplement it from other sources. Grants will be paid only after recipients who require a visa have obtained it.

Research and Lead Projects 2011-17

Most of the Institute's income is set aside for collaborative research projects and our research strategy is divided into three broad programmes, each containing a lead project headed by a Programme Director. Applicants for projects within programme specification are encouraged to discuss their application with the relevant Project Lead. More general questions can be directed to the Chairman of the Research Committee, Dr Lloyd Ridgeon Research-Committee@BIPS.ac.uk.

Grants are available to support primary research in Iranian studies. All applications should demonstrate that the Institute's funds are sought for a clearly defined, original piece of research that will have an identifiable outcome on completion of the Institute-funded component of the research.

Funds are available to facilitate initial project planning and development; to support the direct costs of research; and to enable the advancement of research through workshops or conferences, or visits by or to partner scholars. Applicants may seek support for any combination of eligible activity; individual applications are available from a minimum of £200 up to a maximum of £8,000. Deadlines are the 16th February of each year.

See: <http://bips.ac.uk/grants/>

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 2016 must reach the BRISMES Office by 31st March 2016. The decision by BRISMES Council will be announced as soon as possible thereafter. For information, please contact: 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 each round is 31st March. 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 or email 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. For full details see the website: www.al-bab.com/bys/. A direct link will be in the newsletter under the title 'The British-Yemeni Society Academic Grant 2015'.

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/

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. Information regarding the next deadlines can be located on the above website. Any queries should be addressed to 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) 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

Elphinstone Scholarships

A number of Elphinstone PhD Scholarships at Aberdeen University are available across the arts, humanities and social sciences, linked to specific, individual research projects. These Scholarships cover the entirety of tuition fees for a PhD student of any nationality commencing full-

time study in October 2015, for the three-year duration of their studies. For further details please contact Dr Zohar Hadromi-Allouche (zohar@abdn.ac.uk).

Fully Funded Two-year Masters Scholarships, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

The scholarships are offered for high-achieving students from anywhere in the world. Proficiency in both Arabic and English is required. Students who graduated in recent years, or who are now studying for their bachelor's degree in their final year, are eligible to apply for admission for the coming academic year, 2015-16. Places are available in Politics and IR; Sociology & Anthropology; Media & Cultural Studies; Legal Studies; Comparative Literature; History; Philosophy; and Arabic Language & Linguistics.

Information: www.dohainstitute.edu.qa/EN/Academics/SchoolSSH/Pages/Default.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/. 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.

International Prize for Arabic Fiction (IPAF)

For further details, see: 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 is 31 January. See: 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.

For further information on Leigh Douglas and the Fund's work see 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 is around the 27 February. 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. Further details and application forms can be found at: 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 fellowships 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. More information can also be found on: 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/ Applicants should send a CV, an outline of their proposed research and contact details for two referees by 30 April 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

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/ or contact: The Scholarships Officer, Registry, SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG, UK. Email: 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

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CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Completed in 2014

Bahrain Fort Lecture by Pierre Lombard **29 January 2014**

The Director of the French archaeological mission in Bahrain Dr. Pierre Lombard gave a conference at the Bahrain fort on the 29th of January about the work achieved in the archipelago since the fifties.

Presenting the main steps of the archaeological mission since its founding in 1977 by Mrs. Monique Kervan, Pierre Lombard described the mission's interventions on numerous research sites and the progress that was hence achieved. His speech then embarked the audience on a time travelling experience to ancient times, from the Dilmun necropolis – contemporary of the brilliant Mesopotamian civilization – to the Islamic and Portuguese periods, without forgetting the Generals of Alexander of the Tylos era.

Dr. Pierre Lombard opened his exposé by mentioning the future projects of the French archaeological mission, as well as its expectations concerning the discoveries that could be made. Finally, a long and rich exchange with the public lifted the veil from some mysteries of the History of the archipelago, such as the cult of the ophidians or the epopee of Gilgamesh. <http://www.ambafrance-bh.org/Conference-of-Dr-Pierre-Lombard>

The Sewn Boat Workshop **14-16 February 2014, German University of Technology, Oman**

A small group of leading scholars and specialists who work on sewn boat technology attended the Fibre and Wood: Sewn Boat Construction Techniques through Time workshop at the German University of Technology, Oman, Feb. 14th-16th, to discuss their research. The three-day workshop provided an opportunity to expand and deepen our knowledge of sewn-boat technology from both the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. This technology was responsible for facilitating the wide range of maritime cross-cultural encounters in the Arabian Peninsula prior to European involvement in the Indian Ocean region, and the workshop provided an opportunity to explore variety, comparing and contrasting different regional approaches to the process of sewing planks.

Two days of presentations on sewn boats in Arabia, East Africa, India, Southeast Asia and the Mediterranean were complimented with a one-day hands-on practical workshop, where the participants engaged in sewing wooden planks using different materials and techniques at the

Oman Maritime traditional boatyard in Qantab in order to demonstrate the different traditions.

The workshop organizers Dr. Lucy Blue and Dr Eric Staples would like to thank H.E. Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Albusaidi, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Oman), the German University of Technology (Oman), the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (Oman), the Research Council (Oman), the Centre for Maritime Archaeology at the University of Southampton (UK), the British Museum (UK), and Oman Maritime for their generous support of the endeavour.

Report by Eric Staples

International Conference on Archaeological Parks and Sites (ICOMOS) . Dhofar University, Oman **20-3 February, 2014**

A variety of site visits were undertaken by participants of the conference, including Albaleed Archaeological Park, The Frankincense Museum, Wadi Dawkah and Sumhuram.

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.

‘Saudi Arabia in the Wider Region’ by Sir John Jenkins
**5 March 2014, 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 retired from his post as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in January 2015.

The Palaeodeserts 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 at www.palaeodeserts.com.

AUS/BRISMES conference 2014: Mapping Arabic Heritage: Language, Literature and Culture, Past and Present

14-16 April 2014

The Department of Arabic and Translation Studies (ATS) at American University of Sharjah, with the support of the Center of Gulf Studies (CGS), and the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES), invited paper presentations, which covered all areas related to Arabic heritage, including Arabic language and linguistics, literature, culture, translation and Islamic studies. Abstracts of original research in the following fields included:

Theoretical and applied issues in Arabic language and linguistics, including linguistic analysis, Arabic language teaching, Arabic dialectology, and the history of Arabic and its contact with other languages.

Arabic literature studies covering any period from pre-Islamic era to the present.

Islamic studies and studies on the history and culture of Arab society in any time period.

Theoretical and applied issues in Arabic translation and interpretation.

For more information please contact atsbrismes@aus.edu.
 Conference website: <http://www.aus.edu/atsbrismes>

‘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 long-standing 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

Museums in Arabia Conference

13-16 June 2014, UCL Qatar

The second edition of the Museums in Arabia Conference was held in Doha in co-operation with UCL Qatar, The Museum of Islamic Art, Doha and the support of the Qatar National Research Fund.

This conference was 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 socio-cultural, economic and political landscape of the region.

Conference organisers: Sarina Wakefield (Open University) & Karen Exell (UCL Qatar)

The conference explored 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?

BRISMES annual conference: The Middle East in Global Perspective: Interactions Across Time and Space

University of Sussex, 16-18 June 2014

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.

The University of Sussex hosted 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 sought to place these approaches at the centre of the discussion, encouraging applications for papers and panels that took up this theme in new and innovative ways.

The conference included 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. The aim was 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 in-between.

Within the overall theme of 'The Middle East in Global Perspective', our papers and panels were 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

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

The 48th Seminar for Arabian Studies

25–27 July 2014, The British Museum

for a detailed report, see the BFSA NEWS section, page 5.

Gulf Research Meeting

25-8 August 2014, University of Cambridge

The 5th Annual Gulf Research Meeting workshops included: Social Media and the Changing Context of Politics in the Gulf, The United States and the Gulf: Towards a Reassessment of Gulf Commitments and Alignments? Representing the Nation – the Use of Heritage and Museums to Create National Narratives and Identity in the GCC, The Future of Yemen, Employed, yet Underemployed and Underestimated: Leadership, Ownership and Work Motivation in the Gulf, Green Economy in the Gulf Region, Enhancing the Learning Ecosystem in the GCC: Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC), The GCC States' Foreign and Security Policies after the Arab Spring, Science & Technology Education, Research and Innovation in GCC Countries (Sponsored by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences). For further information see: <http://gulfresearchmeeting.net/index.php?pgid=Mg==&year=2014>

Qanat Conference:

17-19 October 2014, Durham University

Discussions covered the problems of dating and classifying qanats, their function, distribution and history as well as the requirements for their construction and maintenance and the way in which they can be explored archaeologically. The workshop was attended by numerous well-known, international 'qanatian' scholars, such as Dale Lightfoot (Oklahoma State), Peter Magee (Bryn Mawr), Hugh Kennedy (SOAS), Carmen del Cerro (Madrid, Autonoma), Morteza Fattahi (Tehran & Oxford), Maurits Ertsen (Delft), Thierry Gonon (EVEHA) and Professors Chris Gerrard, Ian Bailiff and Tony Wilkinson from Durham itself.

There is still much we don't know about historical qanats, but maybe there is some light at the end of the tunnel...

Report by Dr Derek Kennet.



The happy faces of some (most!) of those who attended the 'Qanat archaeology and environment workshop' at the Department of Archaeology, Durham University (17th-19th October) organised by Julien Charbonnier and Kristen Hopper and partly funded by the BFSa.

A talk by Roger Harrison, author of *Wings Over Arabia*, illustrated by some of the spectacular photographs he took of Saudi Arabia from the air.

22nd October 2014, Saudi-British Society

Venue: Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, 43 Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1K 2NJ.

Punctuated Populations in Ancient Arabia

24 October 2014, Leiden University.

A small, informal symposium was organised by Bleda Düring, Peter Akkermans and Harmen Huigens of the Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, The Netherlands. The aim of the symposium was to explore the strong fluctuations that are apparent in the archaeological record of ancient Arabia and see to what degree demographic trends are converging/diverging across this vast area. Important in this regard are not only climatic fluctuations, but also the way in which people dealt with challenging environmental conditions, i.e. in particular the role of social developments, economic strategies and technological innovations.

Speakers were Bleda Düring (Leiden University) "*The Population Peak Puzzle in the Wadi al Jizzi Region, Oman*", Derek Kennet (Durham University) & Nasser Al-Jahwari (Sultan Qaboos University) "*The Quantification of Ancient Settlements around Rustaq on the Batinah coast, Oman*", Nasser Al-Jahwari (Sultan Qaboos University) "*The Early Bronze Age Funerary Archaeological Landscape of the Western Part of Ja'alan Region: results of three seasons of investigation (2010-2012)*", Peter Akkermans & Harmen Huigens (Leiden University) "*From Long-Term Trends to Short-Term Vagaries: Punctuated Settlement in Jordan's Black Desert*", Max Haibt & Arnulf Hausleiter (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut) "*Population-Size and Productive Resources in the Early Oasis Society of Tayma, Saudi Arabia*", Philipp Drechsler (Universität Tübingen) "*A Flourishing Epoch? The Middle Neolithic in Eastern Arabia*", and Michiel Goddijn (Archol) "*Burial tombs in the Batinah Region near Shinas, Oman*".

Some of results and points of interest:

The nature of settlements in Arabia is different from most areas in the Near East. It is characterised by non-urban settlements that usually have a relatively limited lifespan before being abandoned (although there are some notable exceptions);

This is linked to the tribal organisation of the population and a tendency to revert to transhumant pastoralism; only a limited amount of land was/is suitable and available for agriculture;

It is therefore necessary to conduct systematic regional multi-period surveys in order to understand long-term trends; peoples do not simply vanish, but disperse and/or relocate across the landscape;

One of the consequences is that we are measuring activity not population; it is difficult to quantify settlements and population;

In each surveyed area there are alternating periods of higher activity (hot phases) and lower activity (cold phases); sometimes with remarkable differences in short periods of time;

There are periods where Arabia is in sync with trends in the Near East, but there are others where they do not converge;

There are significant regional differences;

There are significant local differences;

This highlights the importance of understanding the complex interplay of environmental and climatic conditions with economic strategies, technological innovations and social developments of each community.

Report by Eric Olijdam

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

22-25 November 2014, Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington DC

A program of 270+ sessions were squeezed into 12 panel time slots. The programme was enormous by MESA standards and is varied. MESA's Committee for Undergraduate Middle East Studies organised an undergraduate research workshop which took place on the Saturday. A poster session of the participants' work was held in the afternoon just before panels began. A new panel on academic freedom, free speech, and faculty governance, with the recent situation of Dr. Steven Salaita and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign being the impetus. What does it all mean for Middle East studies scholars?

Following this past summer's violence in Gaza, some scholars have debated whether and how to respond on both an individual and a collective basis. Calls to support the BDS movement have grown. At this special session, conference attendees will had an opportunity to learn about and discuss the issues surrounding BDS in a moderated, open forum. The program featured current events sessions on ISIS in Iraq and Syria and the violence in Gaza, as well as a session that looks at policy relevance and the public role of academics. Workshops designed with students and/or junior colleagues in mind include a skill-building workshop on turning dissertations into books and one that addressed the issue of how to transform scholar speak into language that works in a public setting.

Heritage of Doha and Identity of Qatar Workshop, 5th November 2014, UCL Qatar

On 5 November 2014 UCL Qatar alongside Qatar National Research Fund (QNFR) hosted a public workshop Heritage of Doha, Identity of Qatar. The workshop presented the work of UCL Qatar's QNRF-funded Origins of Doha project, including the results of the joint Qatar Museums-UCL Qatar excavations in central Doha. These archaeological findings will then be used to explore the history and people of Doha, the transformation of the traditional town to a modern city, and the experience of its inhabitants through time.

The first part of the workshop outlined the results of the excavation and wider study, and considered the vulnerability of this archaeological heritage. The second part of the workshop presented the initial results of the specialist studies arising from the excavation, and other research of the Origins of Doha and Qatar Museums teams.

The daily lives of the people of Doha were explored and illustrated, as well as the architecture and urban environment of their town. This was achieved not only through historical and archaeological studies, but also through the voices of the people who lived in the old town and experienced at first-hand the momentous changes that brought it to the present day.

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

19–21 November 2014, Sandiago, SA

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 conversation. For more information, visit: www.asor.org/am/index.html

Ghazi Al Gosaibi Memorial Lecture

26 November 2014, Saudi-British Society

Dr. Basmah Mosleh Omaid, CEO of Alsayedah Khadiya Bint Khawilid Businesswomen Centre, Jeddah, gave a talk entitled Saudi women and their participation in National Development.

Venue: Arab–British Chamber of Commerce, 43 Upper Grosvenor Street, London W1K 2NJ.

For more information <http://www.saudibritishsociety.org.uk/main/prevlectures.html#2014>

Events in 2015/6

DASI workshop: Aramaic inscriptions of the Gulf

27 January - 3 February 2015, Pisa, Dipartimento di Civiltà e Forme del Sapere

A workshop on the Aramaic inscriptions of the Gulf was held in Pisa from January, 27th to February, 3rd.

Dr. Maria Gorea, researcher of the Université de Paris VIII - Département d'hébreu, took part of the workshop and explained the peculiarities of those inscriptions. Particular requirements for their digitization were investigated.

The DASI system was also described and tested for entering of those inscriptions in view to a possible future collaboration. <http://arabiantica.humnet.unipi.it/>

Leiden Center for the Study of Ancient Arabia Launched

17 March, Leiden University

On March, 17th 2015, Leiden announced the establishment of the Leiden Center for the Study of Ancient Arabia (LeiCenSAA) to promote research on the ancient languages and cultures of Arabia, and to disseminate this knowledge to the broader public. The inauguration of the Center was celebrated with an evening event in the National Museum of Antiquities (RMO) in Leiden. On display were several specimens from the Oosters Institute's collection of Ancient South Arabian miniscule inscriptions. VIP guests were treated to an up-close examination of the artifacts, and enjoyed a short lecture on the history of their discovery and decipherment. After a few remarks by the Center's director, A. Al-Jallad, and an opening ceremony by the Dean of Humanities at Leiden University, Prof. H.W. van den Doel, BFSA Hon. Sec. Macdonald gave the keynote Leiden-Aramco Lecture on Ancient Arabian Civilization, entitled: "Forgotten Civilizations at the Heart of the Ancient Near East". The evening concluded with a reception.

LeiCenSAA is a meeting place for those interested in Arabia's ancient heritage. Each year, the Center will organize a public lecture by a high-profile international scholar on Ancient Arabia, which will be followed by an annual conference. Brill's Semitic Languages and Linguistics Series will publish the proceedings. The Center, with the support of the Leiden University Library, publishes a peer-reviewed, open-access journal, entitled Arabian Epigraphic Notes (AEN). AEN is a forum for the publication of new epigraphic finds and for the discussion of relevant historical and linguistic issues. The first volume will appear in 3rd quarter 2015.

To help train the next generation of scholars of Ancient Arabia, the Center organizes an "Epigraphic Summer School" in conjunction with the Leiden Linguistic Summer School. Students will have the opportunity to train in some of the epigraphic languages of Arabia -- such as Nabataean Aramaic, Safaitic, Dadanitic, and the non-Sabaic Ancient South Arabian languages -- which are rarely, if ever, on the curriculum of Western Universities. We hope to expand this learning opportunity to include a field school in Jordan, where students are able to learn the methods of carrying out an epigraphic survey.

The Center's board will each year award a prize to the best PhD thesis written on a subject dealing with Ancient Arabia. This important recognition of young talent also hopes to promote the study of the cultures and languages of Ancient Arabia across disciplines.

One of the goals of the Center is to communicate important discoveries and advances from the field to the broader public. The Center's blog will contain popularizing entries and updates about current excavations and new journal articles, and book reviews geared towards non-specialists. Our event

calendar will gather in one place the dates of all conferences relevant to the study of Ancient Arabia, but also the release dates of publications in the field.

The Center is located in the same building on the Leiden University Campus as the Library of the Netherlands Institute for the Near East (NINO). To augment this, the Center is currently building a research library of hard-to-access works on Ancient Arabia, including out-of-print books, research notes, databases, photographs, etc. The preliminary collection includes parts of the libraries of Professor A. Drewes and Dr. G.M.H. King.

For more information about the Center, its activities and publications, and to learn how to become a sponsor, please visit <https://www.arabianepigraphicnotes.org>, our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Leiden-Center-for-the-Study-of-Ancient-Arabia/804197999659178>, or email the Center's director, Dr. A. Al-Jallad at a.m.al-jallad@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Report by Witte Singel-Complex

The Lost Dhow: A Discovery of the Maritime Silk Route **15 March-26th April 2015, Toronto Museum, Canada**

In 1998, an Arab ship carrying goods from China was discovered at the bottom of the Indian Ocean off Belitung Island, Indonesia. Dating from the 9th century (China's Tang Dynasty), the Belitung shipwreck is the earliest Arab vessel of this period to be found with a complete cargo, including silver ingots, bronze mirrors, spice-filled jars, intricately worked vessels of silver and gold, and thousands of ceramic bowls, ewers, and other vessels. Uncovering its mysterious origins reveals the interconnections between two great powers, the Tang and Abbasid Empires, whose influence collectively stretched from the East China Sea to North Africa. The Lost Dhow: A Discovery from the Maritime Silk Route provides the earliest evidence of a maritime silk route — and confirms the vibrant exchange of ideas and technologies that occurred centuries before the Portuguese entered the region in the late 15th century. Through the display of approximately 300 objects from its cargo, this exhibition tells compelling stories about the ship, its crew, and the treacherous movement by sea of domestic and luxury wares between continents 1,200 years ago.

Red Sea VII

26-30 May 2015, The University of Naples "L'Orientale"
The BFSa is pleased to be supporting the Red Sea VII conference: *"The Red Sea and the Gulf: Two Maritime Alternative Routes in the Development of Global Economy, from Late Prehistory to Modern Times"*, 26 – 30 May 2015. The University of Naples "L'Orientale" will host the Red Sea VII conference, which for the first time will provide a comparison, on a scientific level, between two sea corridors and their shores, the Red Sea and the Gulf, which are similar

geographically and environmentally, complementary to each other as well as competitors in their economic and cultural interaction with the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, both in the past and in the present. The conference will be an opportunity to meet and exchange information among scholars from worldwide institutions interested in the western Indian Ocean, and also an opportunity to share new ideas and to promote innovative projects based on international collaborations.

For further information, please contact the organising committee: redsea7@unior.it

Sharjah Biennial 12: The Past, the Present, the Possible.

7 June 2015, Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE

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

Unearthing Arabia: The Archaeological Adventures of Wendell Phillips.

Ends 7 June, Sackler Gallery, Washington DC

Wendell Phillips headed the largest archaeological expedition to South Arabia (present-day Yemen) from 1949-1951. Accompanied by leading scholars, scientists and technicians, Phillips was on a quest to uncover two ancient cities—Tamna, the capital of the once-prosperous Qataban kingdom, and Marib, the reputed home of the legendary Queen of Sheba—that had flourished along the fabled incense road some 2500 years earlier. Through a selection of unearthed objects as well as film and photography shot by the exhibition team, the collection highlights Phillips's key finds, recreates his adventures and conveys the thrill of discovery on the last great archeological frontier.

PEF Annual Conference: Crisis Through the Ages

3 July 2015, British Museum

The PEF Anniversary 1 day conference will take place between 9am and 5pm on the 3rd July at the British Museum, and in association with the Department of Middle East, on the theme of "Crisis Through the Ages". Each speaker will focus on an issue of crisis in the region relevant to their specialist area, which range in time from the earliest periods of human history right through to the modern era. Tea and Coffee are provided. Lunch is at the individual's expense, and there is a reception afterwards.

See <http://www.pef.org>

Eleventh Biennial ASTENE Conference

Friday 17 July – Monday 20 July, 2015 University of Exeter

As usual, contributions to the Conference are welcome that cover a wide range of disciplines and interests. It is envisaged the conference will cover many themes – including, but not limited to:

- ASTENE travellers in both directions: visitors from the Middle East in Europe (and America) and visitors from the West in the East,
- Travels in tandem, or group travels that were not a package tour,
- Something to write home about – what travellers chose to write about and how they related their adventures to their friends and family – what was to be omitted and what to be emphasized,
- Solo travellers – in search of knowledge, adventures, business, leisure,
- Professionals and dilettanti in the art of travel – what makes a traveller, a traveller's identity,
- Tracking a traveller – in other people's notes, diaries, and memoirs.

On Saturday evening 18 July there will be a showing of the movie 'Death on the Nile' with Peter Ustinov playing the part of Hercule Poirot. Elisabeth Woodthorpe will recall for us the making of this movie. On Sunday evening 19 July there will be an after dinner talk about 'The Early Members of the Travellers Club, London.' On Monday 20 July there will be a private visit to the former home of Agatha Christie. Henrietta McCall will give a talk at the house about Agatha's husband Max Mallowan, the archaeologist.

ARAM society, The River Jordan

13-15 July 2015 University of Oxford

ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies is organizing its Forty First International Conference aims to study the River Jordan, to be held at the Oriental Institute, the University of Oxford, 13-15 July 2015.

The conference aims to focus its attention on the three northern sources of the river Jordan (the Dan, Baniyas, and Hasbani streams) and the area of the Sea of Galilee (the sea itself not a topic of the conference) and the Jordan river's southern course up to where it enters the Dead Sea (the sea itself not a topic of the conference). Essentially, the conference would cover in its study both banks of the river Jordan (not the hinterland of the riparian countries).

The conference will start on Monday 13th July at 9am, finishing on Wednesday 15th July at 6pm. Each speaker's paper is limited to 45 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes for discussion. All papers given at the conference will be considered for publication in a future edition of the ARAM Periodical, subject to editorial review. If you wish to participate in the conference, please contact

Tel. 01865-514041 Email: aram@orinst.ox.ac.uk

ARAM Society: Travellers, Pilgrims and Orientalists during the 1st Millennium in the Levant

20-22 July 2015 University of Oxford

ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies is organising its Forty Second International Conference on Travellers, Pilgrims and Orientalists during the 1st Millennium in the Levant, to be held at the Oriental Institute, the University of Oxford, 20-22 July 2015.

The conference will start on Monday 20th July at 9am, finishing on Wednesday 22nd July at 1pm. Each speaker's paper is limited to 45 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes for discussion. All papers given at the conference will be considered for publication in a future edition of the ARAM Periodical, subject to editorial review. If you wish to participate in the conference, please contact Tel. 01865-514041 Email: aram@orinst.ox.ac.uk

48th Seminar For Arabian Studies

25-7 July 2015, British Museum

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 MBI Lecture will be by Dr Peter Magee (see Forthcoming lectures on page 5).

For further information see www.thebfsa.org/content/about-the-seminar

ARAM Society: The Aramaic Kingdoms and the Aramaic culture in the Ancient Near East

18-20 July, 2016 University of Oxford

ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies is organizing its Forty Fourth International Conference on the Aramaic Kingdoms and the Aramaic culture in the ancient Near East, to be held at the Oriental Institute, the University of Oxford, 18-20 July 2016.

The conference aims to study the formation of the Aramaic kingdoms and the expansion of the Aramaic culture in the

ancient Near East (including the Arabian Peninsula).

The conference will start on Monday July 18 at 9am, finishing on Wednesday July 20th at 1pm. Each speaker's paper is limited to 45 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes for discussion. All papers given at the conference will be considered for publication in a future edition of the ARAM Periodical, subject to editorial review. If you wish to participate in the conference, please contact Tel. 01865-514041 Email: aram@orinst.ox.ac.uk

ARAM Society: Semitic Linguistic Studies

21-22 July 2016 University of Oxford

ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies is organizing its Forty Fifth International Conference on the Comparative Studies of the Classical Semitic Languages, to

be held at the Oriental Institute, the University of Oxford, 21-22 July 2016. The conference aims to study the common elements and parallel developments of the different Semitic languages and their strong support to a linguistic family-tree.

The conference will start on Thursday 21st July at 9am, finishing on Friday 22nd July at 6pm. Each speaker's paper is limited to 45 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes for discussion. All papers given at the conference will be considered for publication in a future edition of the ARAM Periodical, subject to editorial review. Contact: Tel. 01865-514041. Email: aram@orinst.ox.ac.uk

NEW PUBLICATIONS ON ARABIA

NEW BOOKS 2014–15

Al-Sabah S., Tr.; Asser, Tr. L., & King, J. 2014. *Mubarak Al-Sabah: The Foundation of Kuwait*. London: I.B. Tauris. 304 pp. Hardback. £35.00. ISBN: 978-1-7807645-4-2

Bushrui & Malarkey (eds) 2015. *Desert Songs of the Night: 1500 Years of Arabic Literature*. Saqi Books, Literature, Bformat Pb 480pp £12.99 ISBN 9780863561757 eISBN 9780863561856

Crawford, M. 2014. *Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab*. Viii + 152 pp. Bibliography, Index. London: Oneworld Notes in text. £30.00. ISBN 978-1-78074-589-3

Eigeland, T. 2015. *When All the lands were Sea: A Photographic Journey into the lives of the Marsh Arabs of Iraq*. Interlink. £18.99. ISBN 978-7-56656-982-8

Exell, K., & Rico, T. 2014. *Arabian Peninsula: Cultural Heritage in the Arabian Peninsula: Debates, Discourses and Practices*. Ashgate

Hoyland, R. G. 2015. *In God's Path: The Arab Conquests and the Creation of an Islamic Empire*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2015. 978-0-19-991636-8. Price: £18.99

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

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

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

Magee, P., (2014) *The Archaeology of Prehistoric Arabia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. £65.00. ISBN 978-0-521862-31-8

McHugo, J. 2014. *A Concise History of the Arabs*. Saqi Books. £10.99, ISBN: 978-0-86356-742-1

Munt, H. 2014. *The Holy City of Medina: Sacred Space in Early Islamic Arabia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xviii + 228 pp. 2 maps. Footnotes, Bibliography, Index. Hardback, paper cover. \$95.00. ISBN: 978-1-107-04213-1

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

Spalton, A., & al-Hikmani, H. 2014. *The Arabian Leopards of Oman*. Illustrated by Vicky White. London: Stacey Publishing. £29.99. ISBN 978-1-909022-362

Urkevich, L. 2015 *Music and Traditions of the Arabian Peninsula*. New York/London: Routledge.

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

Worrall, J. 2014. *Statebuilding and Counterinsurgency in Oman: Political, Military and Diplomatic Relations at the End of Empire*. London: I.B. Tauris 2014. £62.00. ISBN 978-1-84885-634-9

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-Muaikel 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.

Atlat: 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. 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

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.

Saudi Aramco World

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

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

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

Wildlife Middle East News

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. Significant information is only given below for new organisations.



SOCIETIES, ASSOCIATIONS & OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH)

www.adach.ae

Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeological Survey

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/

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

Arab-British Centre

www.arabbritishcentre.org.uk/

Arab World Institute

www.imarabe.org/

Arabian Wildlife

www.arabianwildlife.com

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

www.alexandriaarchive.org/icaz/workaswa.htm

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

www.astene.org.uk

Atlas of Breeding Birds of Arabia

www.dspace.dial.pipex.com/arabian.birds%20

Bahrain Society

www.bahrainsociety.com

Barakat Trust

www.barakat.org

British Association for Near Eastern Archaeology

www.banea.org

British Council, Middle East pages

www.britishcouncil.org/me.htm

British Institute of Persian Studies

www.bips.ac.uk

British Institute for the Study of Iraq

www.bisi.ac.uk/

British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

www.brismes.ac.uk

The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies seeks to encourage and promote the study of the Middle East in the UK.

British-Yemeni Society

<http://www.al-bab.com/bys/>

Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World

www.casaw.ac.uk/

Centre Français d'Archéologie et de Sciences Sociales de Sanaa (CEFAS)

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

Council for Arab-British Understanding

www.caabu.org

Council for British Research in the Levant

www.cbri.org.uk

Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Orient Department

www.dainst.org

French Institute of the Near-East (Ifpo)

www.ifporient.org/

Friends of the Hadhramaut

www.hadhramaut.co.uk

Friends of Soqatra

www.friendsofsoqatra.org

Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, Exeter University

www.huss.ex.ac.uk/iais

George Lewis Fine Art

www.georgelewisart.com

Janet Rady Fine Art

www.janetradyfineart.com/html/home.asp

London Centre for the Ancient Near East

www.soas.ac.uk/nme/ane/lcane/

London Middle East Institute

www.lmei.soas.ac.uk

Mathaf Gallery

www.mathafgallery.com

MBI Al Jaber Foundation

www.mbifoundation.com

Oman & Arabia Natural History

www.oman.org/nath00.htm

Ornithological Society of the Middle East

www.osme.org

Oxford Brookes Archaeology and Heritage (OBAH)

<http://heritage.brookes.ac.uk/>

Palestine Exploration Fund

www.pef.org.uk

Palaeodeserts

The Palaeodeserts Project is examining environmental change in the Arabian Desert over the last one million years. <http://www.palaeodeserts.com/>

NEW: Qatar Digital Library (British Library)

<http://www.qdl.qa/en> The Qatar Digital Library (QDL) is making a vast archive featuring the cultural and historical heritage of the Gulf and wider region freely available online for the first time. It includes archives, maps, manuscripts, sound recordings, photographs and much more, complete with contextualised explanatory notes and links, in both English and Arabic.

Royal Asiatic Society

www.royalasiaticsociety.org

Saudi Arabian Natural History Society

For further information contact the acting coordinator Margaret Thomson, on margthomza@yahoo.com, or the Secretary Janet Jacobsen, jan_jacobsen24@hotmail.com

Saudi-British Society

www.saudibritishsociety.org.uk

Seminar for Arabian Studies

www.thebfsa.org/content/seminar-arabian-studies

The Travelers in the Middle East

Archive (TIMEA) <http://timea.rice.edu/>

The Travelers in the Middle East Archive (TIMEA) is a digital archive that focuses on Western interactions with the Middle East, particularly travels to Egypt during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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.

UAE Interact, Culture Pages

www.uaeinteract.com/culture

The Yemen Manuscript Digitization Initiative

YMDI is a collective of research librarians and leading scholars of classical Islam, Middle Eastern history, and Arabic Literature whose mission is to preserve the Arabic manuscripts in the private libraries of Yemen. <http://ymdi.uoregon.edu/>

BFSA Spotlight on...

George Lewis, Artist & Photographer

BFSA member George Lewis, an artist and photographer now living in New York, spent four years in Muscat as the court painter to the Sultan of Oman and was widely exhibited by Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan who heads the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Social Development. During this time he specialised both in portraits and haunting landscape scenes, focusing on documenting a society that was swiftly changing, while also aiming to maintain its ancestral integrity. He currently exhibits his work in Soho Manhattan, which highlights his love for the beauty of the Arab world. One of his new projects is the “Salon Project” which creates new spaces for dialogue and collaboration between traditionally isolated silos of activity with the aim to cultivate a culture of active listening and empathy towards others. Lewis’s most recent exhibition was with Poltrona Frau at 145 Wooster Street in New York City until the 12th April 2015. See <http://georgehewley.com/>



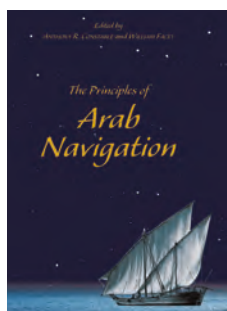
Midnight in the Empty Quarter, photo part of the Middle Eastern Landscapes Series by George Lewis.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review Essay

This year's Books section opens with a Review Essay by **John P. Cooper** who writes on:

The Principles of Arab Navigation



The Principles of Arab Navigation

Anthony R. Constable and William Facey (eds)
London: Arabian Publishing 2013. xiv + 146 pages. Colour and b/w illustrations throughout, 11 maps. Appendices, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardback, jacketed. £35.00. ISBN: 978-0-9571060-1-7

GIVEN THE PROMINENCE of seafaring in the contemporary history-telling of the Arabian Peninsula – and in the narratives of the emergence of the modern Gulf states in particular – it is shocking how much work remains to be done in forming a basic understanding of the underlying skills that enabled this seafaring to take place. Bringing together contributions from six scholars on the subject, this excellent volume takes some significant steps forward: it explains clearly and in unprecedented detail the mathematical methods employed by indigenous ocean-going seafarers, and in doing so gives the lie to portrayals of 'Arab' seafaring as scientifically inferior or reliant on little more than coasting.

The volume comprises nine chapters. The first three, by physicist Anthony Constable and nautical scholars Hasan Shihab and Yacoub al-Hijji respectively, fulfil the much-needed task of explaining, as the volume title has it, the principles underlying 'Arab' navigation. These chapters take us through the use of the so-called star-compass – not an instrument *per se*, but an indigenous knowledge system that uses the rising and setting of constellations to determine direction – and on to determination of latitude using the Pole Star, measuring distances at sea, establishment of longitude, and ultimately determining position at sea. Although there is a slightly confusing overlap in subject between these separately authored chapters, it is here that the volume is at its most innovative – and, for the mathematically anxious reader, the most demanding.

Eric Staples builds on these theoretical foundations with an account of their experimental application on a real journey: the passage from Oman to Singapore of the Jewel of Muscat, a reconstruction of a 9th-century sewn vessel. While navigational observations were based on the altitude of the Pole Star, the experience underlined the more nuanced use of circumpolar stars to infer north.

A more vicarious exploration of real journeys follows in Paul Lunde's two chapters on the maritime routes and sailing times set out in the works of Sulayman al-Mahri: these establish the extent of the maritime world known to Sulayman, the routes taken and navigational techniques adopted, and the rhythmic impositions of meteorological seasons on sailing dates.

Al-Hijji's engagement with Alan Villiers is a particularly welcome intervention. Villiers's *Sons of Sindbad* has become a classic account of Arab seafaring at the end of the era of sail. An outsider with no previous experience of the region, Villiers's admiration for the many qualities of his Kuwaiti crewmates is apparent. Nevertheless, as al-Hijji illustrates, he was not immune from the prejudices of empire: al-Hijji gently demolishes Villiers's pervading narrative of decline with respect to Arab navigational skills.

William Facey's return to the subject of Red Sea navigation highlights not only the challenges of navigating in that sea, but also the scholarly gaps that remain to be filled in understanding how movement there was affected. The chapter deals admirably with navigation in the monsoon-influenced southern part of the Red Sea, below Jeddah, as it was understood by Ibn Majid and Sulayman al-Mahri in particular. But their world ended at Jeddah, and the navigational space of the northern Red Sea was quite different, dominated as it was by northerly winds. The abundance of archaeological evidence of port sites there shows nevertheless that these were an entirely surmountable obstacle. Facey's use of traveller accounts show the routes Arab sailors took at these higher latitudes: though I wonder whether their apparent preference for coasting was driven more by the need to access diurnal winds in progressing northwards than a reluctance to cross the open sea.

Book titles are inevitably and inherently shorthand, and it is no doubt a churlish reader who takes a title to task for failing to capture the nuance and particularity of the field created by the text within. Nevertheless, the notion of 'Arab' navigation presented in the title of this book is a troublesome one. It is in the nature of maritime activity that individuals and communities of various ethnicities and knowledge systems are brought into contact, and that ideas and skills are transferred as a result: we need only look to the transmission

of Islamic beliefs around the western Indian Ocean seaboard for an example. One implication of the phrase 'Arab navigation' is that there was (or is) a form of navigation that is peculiar to Arabs, and indeed that all Arabs, at least those who navigated, subscribe or subscribed to a particular heritage of navigational knowledge. While endorsing the phrase by using it in two of his three chapter titles, al-Hijji gives us ample reason to eschew it. Even in eastern waters, not all 'Arab' navigators shared the mathematically most demanding forms of this knowledge, and rather used methods most relevant to their particular environmental contexts (chapters 3 and 8). Moreover, there is plenty within the methods and conventions of this putative 'Arab' seafaring to show that it built upon ancient Mesopotamian, Greek and Persian mathematical and astronomical traditions, among others. To be fair, Facey points out in his Foreword that these "stellar navigation techniques [were] common to Arab, Persian, Indian and other mariners in the Indian Ocean". And as Lunde observes in chapter 5, the star compass was used not only by Arabs, but also by "Persians, Gujaratis, Malabar, Cholas, Klings, Malays and Javanese", though he has little doubt that it "originated among Arabic-speaking mariners of coastal Arabia" in the Abbasid period. In this he follows Ibn Majid's attribution of the innovation to the "Three Lions" – navigational authors writing ca. AD 1100 whose works are now lost. But even if this was the case, it did not come about on an intellectual day zero.

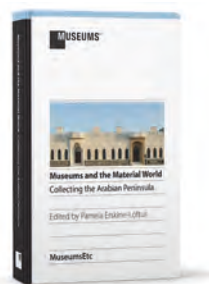
The notion of Arab navigation is tested even further in al-Hijji's brief and somewhat incongruous contemplation of 'Arab' navigational methods in the Mediterranean (chapter 8), which were both different from eastern 'Arab' navigational methods, and, according to al-Hijji, held in common with Mediterranean navigators of other ethnicities: so in what way was any navigation done there 'Arab'? Add to this the variation over the centuries of what it means to be 'Arab', and we find ourselves on a very slippery deck.

The reason for the Arab bias in the work is down in part to the selection of largely Arab or Arabist contributors, and also, of course, to the range of historical texts available to them: not least the early modern works of Ibn Majid and Sulayman al-Mahri, as well as more recent *rahmanīs* of Kuwait captains explored by al-Hijji. This reviewer wonders what an exploration of Indian and Persian (and other) navigational texts might yet do for our appreciation of navigational traditions, and their intellectual history, in the western Indian Ocean.

There are yet other effects of allowing Arabic texts to dominate this volume. One is that it allows the interests and prejudices of Ibn Majid and Sulayman al-Mahri to determine the boundaries of enquiry. Constable, Shihab and al-Hijji

do us an immense service by explaining the navigational science of Ibn Majid and his kind. But Ibn Majid does a poor job of hiding his contempt for those navigators who had not mastered it; and this world-view has heavily influenced the architecture of the volume. Recognition of the astronomical skills of the most learned Arab seafarers is indeed long overdue, and *The Principles of Arab Navigation* is a resounding riposte to Orientalist contempt for the indigenous skills of western Indian Ocean seafarers. However, mathematics-based navigation is not the only form of way-finding that merits our admiration, and this volume leaves plenty scope for future scholars to explore the cognitive, sensory and socially-reproduced navigational knowledge that did not find its way into Arabic navigational texts. The deployment of often highly localized knowledge of wind, current, sea state, landscape, sea-bottom, animal behaviour, cloud-forms, sounds and smells enabled people to create and sustain navigation-based ways of life at multiple levels, and we should not allow a rather snuffy Ibn Majid to persuade us that this is not a field meriting further investigation.

Review by John P. Cooper



Museums and the Material World

Pamela Erskine-Loftus (Ed)
Edinburgh and Boston:
MuseumsEtc. 540 pp. 35 colour
illustrations. Hardback, paperback
and ebook formats. £89.00
(hardback), £59.00 (paperback),
£39.00 (ebook). ISBN 978-1-
910144-17-6 (hardback), 978-1-
910144-16-9 (paperback), 978-1-
910144-18-3 (ebook)

RESEARCH INTO MUSEUMS and collecting practices in the Arabian Peninsula has certainly been gathering momentum in recent years. Indeed, the Seminar's very own Special Session on *Museums in Arabia* held in 2012, the first such gathering of its kind, was arguably a watershed moment helping to pool emergent yet scattered research efforts, prompt intellectual exchange and propel new directions of scholarly enquiry. Since then academics and independent researchers alike have been jockeying to stay ahead of the field. It is early days yet, Peninsula museology is very much in its infancy and published works are still thin on the ground. However, the title currently under review is actually a second edited volume for Pamela Erskine-Loftus, who has done much to make research in this area more readily available. Once the reader comes to terms with the publication's price tag and perseveres with the somewhat protracted editorial chapter, a rewarding selection of essays and case studies awaits, highlighting all manner of collections from archaeology to vintage couture. Intellectually rigorous and authored by assorted academics and regional practitioners, they present valuable insights and

discussions – both practical and theoretical – concerning varied approaches to collecting in the region, as well as some of the social actors – governments, private individuals and communities – behind the collections and practices under study.

Whilst these informative contributions provide important and fascinating snapshots of the under-researched museological landscape of the region, they are equally significant for other reasons. The rest of world, even the rest of the Middle East, has tended to be patronizingly dismissive of indigenous Arabian culture – an unfounded yet familiar trope pervading both popular and academic circles, which in turn has been able to gain currency due to the paucity of available research. As contributor Karen Exell notes in her chapter on private collections in Qatar: “Because few people were looking, it was assumed there was little to see.” With the high-profile museum projects of recent years, such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and Qatar’s Museum of Islamic Art, this attitude has been clearly visible in international media coverage, which is frequently marked by the erroneous assumption that, prior to these projects, which most often employ star architects and varying degrees of collaboration with Western institutions, the countries of the Peninsula have enjoyed no previous or significant history of museums or, worse still, have any of their own heritage worth displaying. Thus, by revealing something of the true depth and variety of culture in Arabia, as reflected in the region’s museums and collections, the papers in this edited volume help to address such popularized and pernicious misconceptions and, furthermore, challenge some of academia’s more established, Western-centric narratives on cultural heritage and museum practice.

An interesting example is Aisha Mellah’s revealing chapter on the aforementioned Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, which houses a magnificent collection steadily amassed through international auction house purchases. While it is indeed refreshing to see such artefacts most commonly found in Western institutions displayed in an Islamic milieu, it is significant that a Muslim country has chosen to frame these objects as ‘Islamic Art’ – a western art-historical construct with Orientalist baggage that, ironically, has tended to exclude material culture from Arabia. In her case study of the museum, Mellah explores not only the collection and its underlying discourses, but also interrogates the genre of Islamic Art itself, ultimately questioning the function and legitimacy of Islamic art museums in an Arabian Peninsula context.

Coming from the perspective of Saudi Arabia’s rich textile heritage, Konstantinos Chatziantoniou also touches on this subject in his detailed overview of the cultural database project being launched by the King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture. Although he views this project as lying firmly within the field of Islamic art, he points out that “an understanding of what Islamic art is and how Saudi

heritage constitutes the continuation of the great Islamic art tradition of the post-medieval period is not always obvious among Arabic-textile experts”. His recommendation, albeit a passing one, to revisit traditional understandings and classifications of Islamic art in relation to Arabia’s material heritage is refreshingly progressive and, save for the recent publication *Islamic Art in Oman* (2010), which explores various forms of traditional Omani heritage in this light, appears to be virtually uncharted territory. The case of Islamic art is but one example, yet it represents a clear message emerging from the contributions in this volume: that due care must be taken when applying Western-centric disciplines, taxonomies and theoretical frameworks in a Peninsula context, if indeed they are even relevant or appropriate at all. Certainly, in the practical area of collections management and database systems, the challenges posed by such taxonomies and Western approaches can be particularly acute, and Chatziantoniou’s chapter along with several others, such as Patricia Joyce Redding’s account of the Al Sadu Weaving Co-operative in Kuwait, offer practitioner insights and localized solutions to cataloguing and management systems.

Of course heritage and culture, particularly in the traditionally oral societies of the Arabian Peninsula, is never merely confined to material objects, and accordingly significant intangible heritage collections exist in the form of oral histories and archives of poetry, music and song. These intangibles constitute stand-alone collections in their own right, whilst also containing valuable interpretive content that can support and elevate other collections, including material objects. Indeed, in many ways they can be seen as indigenous Peninsula collections *par excellence*, not merely for their authentic representative qualities but also for the future-forward opportunities they present. Looking ahead, contributor Sahar Mohammed Sharif sees the exciting virtual potential of such intangible collections and of language in particular. She suggests that Khaleeji Arabic be preserved as a collection in itself, one that could be exhibited to wider audiences through multi-media and cutting-edge technology – a most fitting idea given the unique cultural quality of Arabia, a region which manages to be so simultaneously local and global, traditional yet hyper-modern.

As museologist Sharon Macdonald astutely observes, “*the museum does not exist*”, and, one might add, even less so the collection. As products of their unique cultural contexts, museums and collections in Arabia, much like anywhere else in the world, defy convenient definition. As such, in this newly emerging field of study, perhaps one of the best ways to approach an understanding of the Peninsula’s diverse cultural landscape and associated practices is through exposure to examples and case studies such as those presented in this useful volume.

Review by Alexandra Hirst



In the Land of the Emirates: The Archaeology and History of the UAE

Daniel T. Potts

London: Trident Press/Abu Dhabi: Sultan bin Zayed Media Centre, 2012. Colour and b/w illustrations throughout. ISBN: 978-190548657-1

THIS BOOK PRESENTS a concise and up-to-date synthesis of the history of the modern-day territory of the United Arab Emirates. It is an excellent introduction to the area's rich history, from the Palaeolithic to the present day. As one would expect from its author, it is well written and contains a wealth of information. It draws on the half-century and more of archaeological research initiated by the Danish Archaeological Expedition led by P.V. Glob and T.G. Bibby, when they started excavations of part of a small settlement and associated cemetery on the island of Umm an-Nar in 1959.

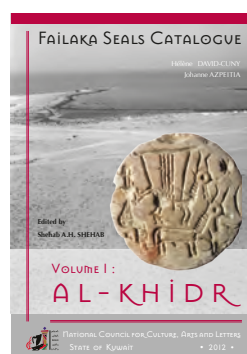
In the Foreword by Sheikh Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, chairman of his eponymous Cultural and Media Centre, it is stated that the aim of the book is to make this fast-growing body of information accessible to Emiratis and others interested in the area [p. 3]. Popularizing our work and making it available to a wider non-specialist audience is a laudable goal that very few archaeologists have been able to achieve successfully, especially in written form. A good example is Dan Potts's own *Ancient Magan: The Secrets of Tell Abraq*, released in 2000 by the same publisher (see my review in *Bibliotheca Orientalis* LXIII/5-6: 593-7). One of the appeals of that booklet was the way in which it was constructed: the colour-coding and many intertextual references made it very easy to flip through according to one's interest. This is not possible with *In the Land of the Emirates*, which follows the standard, linear textbook format. I therefore believe that, with nearly 200 pages, this book will find its main audience among undergraduate students and a limited, mainly expatriate readership with a general interest in the history of the region, rather than among ordinary Emiratis. Having said that, with more than 250 illustrations, the book has great visual appeal and is produced to the highest standards.

The rich history of the Emirates is skilfully presented in ten chapters in a clear and comprehensible style, although the text, especially in the earlier chapters, is at times a touch flowery and the tone somewhat pedantic. One major drawback is the absence of a standardized map accompanying each chapter, listing the (principal) sites mentioned in the text. Most of the maps that do feature are taken from previous publications and lack a coherent editorial style; in fact they are not adapted to reinforce or amplify the information discussed within the volume. Of

great appeal is the use of selected inscriptions and writings presented in boxes in the margins (references to them being included in the main text) – although their use and distribution is very uneven and heavily biased towards the recent past. There is also an overkill of historic maps in the final chapters, especially since they do not seem to add anything to the history of the Emirates as presented. The decision to present “a journey through time in the United Arab Emirates” (jacket), from the Palaeolithic right through to the present day, is not a common one in the academic world and is potentially fraught with ethical issues. What struck me most however when reading the book is the difference between the earlier (archaeological) chapters and the later (historical) ones, both in the level of detail, the density of the language used and, more importantly, in the range of topics discussed. There is a considerable imbalance between the two sections that cannot be attributed to some periods being better represented than others. The chapters get more detailed as time progresses, but at the same time become much narrower in focus. The dearth of archaeology in the last chapters is disappointing; archaeological research can provide a counterbalance to the historical record and consider issues rarely dealt with in written sources or offer a different perspective (cf. Moreland 2001, *Archaeology and Text*).

Allow me therefore to finish this review with a plea for more historical archaeology in the Gulf region. In many respects the historical era, particularly our archaeological understanding of the Middle and Late Islamic periods, is still very sketchily understood. It is essential to thoroughly research and document a part of the Gulf's past that is rapidly disappearing as many countries modernize at such a phenomenal rate, not least the UAE. Research such as that being done in the greater Buraimi oasis by Timothy Power and associates, for instance, is therefore of great importance.

Review by Eric Olijdam



Failaka Seals Catalogue. Vol. 1: Al-Khidr

Héléne David-Cuny and Johanne Azpeitia

Kuwait: National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, 2012.

116 pp. Line drawings and colour and b/w illustrations throughout. 4 maps. Bibliography. Large-format softback. ISBN 97899906-363-7

THE PRESENT MONOGRAPH is the first in a series of volumes dedicated to documenting seals found in scientific excavations on Failaka, an island located off the Bay of Kuwait. Failaka was colonized during the City IIb period and formed Dilmun's northern frontier for more than seven

centuries. During this time, Failaka was one of Dilmun's principal trading centres and home to a major religious site. Its location just beyond the marshy deltaic entrance to the Gulf meant that it had great strategic significance and could function as an ideal vantage point from which to monitor and control maritime movement to and from Mesopotamia and Elam. There is evidence for an earlier 'Mesopotamian' horizon on Failaka dating to the late Ur III period (Højlund 2012, *The Dilmun temple on Failaka, Kuwait. Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 23).

Between the first exploration of the island in 1957 by the Danish Archaeological Expedition and the production of the volume under review no less than 717 seals have reportedly been found [p. 9], nearly all dating to the 2nd millennium BC – a quantity that is truly unique and unsurpassed anywhere in the ancient Near East, especially given the limited exposure of the mostly modest Bronze Age remains and the absence of contemporary burials on the island. Vol. 1 of the *Failaka Seals Catalogue* deals with a collection of 72 seals from the site of al-Khidr, a small settlement located along a natural bay on Failaka's north-western extremity that was surveyed and partly excavated by the Kuwaiti-Slovak Archaeological Mission during four campaigns between 2004 and 2008. So far only some preliminary results of this research have been published, including a very coarse chronology (Barta et al. 2007, Geophysical prospecting of the Bronze Age site al-Khidr, Failaka Island, State of Kuwait. *Študijné Zvesti Archeologického Ústavu* 41: 69–73; Barta et al. 2008, Al-Khidr on Failaka Island: Preliminary results of the fieldworks at a Dilmun-culture settlement in Kuwait. *Türkiye Bilimler Akademisi Arkeoloji Dergisi* 11: 121–34; Benediková and Barta 2009, A Bronze Age settlement at al-Khidr, Failakah island, Kuwait. *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 39: 43–56; Hajnalová et al. 2009, Environmental research at al-Khidr, Failakah Island, Kuwait. *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 39: 197–202; see also the KSAM website at www.kuwaitarchaeology.org).

The extent of the settlement is indicated by three shallow tells located in close proximity, following the ancient shoreline. It is worth recalling that at Tell F3, excavated by the Danish Archaeological Mission on the other side of the island, occupation displayed a horizontal stratification, shifting and partly rotating across the site. If this were also the case at al-Khidr, the actual size of occupation at any one time was much smaller than indicated by the present situation.

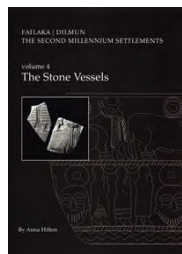
Only one tell has been subjected to excavation, the other two not being accessible as they are located within the confines of a modern cemetery. The KSAM excavated a portion of KH-1 (a little over 600 m²), divided over three separate zones, resulting in the partial exposure of only a handful of buildings, in two architectural horizons. The discovery

at KH-1 of 72 seals – including one from the surface – is therefore quite unexpected but nevertheless completely in line with other excavations on the island. The collection consists of one Ur III cylinder seal (with a short cuneiform inscription listing the owner's name, title and patronym), 17 Dilmun stamp seals in Style IA, 23 in Style IB, 19 in Style II (including one unifacial and three bifacial disk seals), and one in Style III (a bifacial disk seal); the remainder of the seals are not well enough preserved, bear a purely geometric motif or are seal blanks. According to the available information at least one complete seal impression was found at al-Khidr (Barta *et al.* 2008: fig. 14). This impression on a piece of bitumen, created by a seal executed in Style II, is regrettably missing from this otherwise outstanding catalogue. It is as yet unclear if there are more (fragmentary) seal impressions from this site. Since sealings are very rare on Failaka this omission will hopefully be corrected in a future volume. The time frame indicated by the indigenous Dilmun seals reflects a period of at least 400 years. However, the bulk of them are executed in Styles IB and II, datable to Failaka Periods 2A and 2B, and if the seals are anything to go by then occupation did not amount to much after Period 2B as there is only one Style III seal in this collection. It is unclear whether the Ur III seal should be attributed to the earlier 'Mesopotamian' horizon – possibly also attested in the KSAM excavations (Benediková and Barta 2009: 54) – or whether it constitutes an '(exotic) heirloom' brought to the island at a later date.

As well as the seal catalogue by Hélène David-Cuny and Johanne Azpeitia, *Failaka Seals Catalogue. Vol. 1: Al-Khidr* contains a very useful and instructive introduction by Hélène David-Cuny that not only outlines the methodological foundation of this and future volumes, but also deals with a variety of aspects that have received limited attention up till now, the most important being the sections on stone types, surface treatment, and manufacturing techniques. On many levels, this volume represents a great improvement over other publications of seals from the Dilmun orbit, setting a new standard for future research. By standardizing documentation, particularly the way in which the seals are illustrated, this series will in my opinion form a milestone in the study of Dilmun seals and iconography. One therefore deeply regrets that it has an extremely limited distribution and cannot be ordered at the ministry or be bought commercially. This is a serious shortcoming that is astounding in this day and age. Hopefully it will be rectified, as this and future volumes scheduled thoroughly deserve to be part of every serious library dealing with the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula and the ancient Near East, and particularly those concerned with seals and iconography. Scientific research of these intriguing and important materials is only possible when it is available to a larger audience. It is sincerely hoped that the volumes of this series will become readily accessible in hard copy and/or at least electronically (in high-definition) in an open-access

environment. After all, what is the purpose of producing the Failaka Seals Catalogue when it is inaccessible for future academic study?

Review by Eric Olijdam



Failaka/Dilmun: the Second Millennium Settlements. Vol. 4: The Stone Vessels

Anna Hilton

Moesgaard: Jutland Archaeological Society (distributed by Aarhus University Press), 2014. 192 pp. 448 drawings and photographs, many in colour. 1 map. Bibliography and Appendix. Large-format hardback, paper cover. Kr. 298/£31.80. ISBN 978-87-88415-80-3

STONE VESSELS have been made and used in the Middle East for more than eleven millennia. Within this region they pre-date the invention of pottery and they were widely traded in antiquity. The appearance or properties of the stone helped govern how stone vessels were valued or used, and many classes were strictly utilitarian, being used for storage, cooking or lighting. Some were decorated, occasionally carved in relief or inlaid with other materials. At times these vessels were considered valuable exotica, particularly in regions far removed from their source areas, and some of these ended up in royal treasuries, elite tombs or temples.

This beautifully illustrated volume is the latest publication of the results of excavations by the Danish Archaeological Expedition to Failaka between 1958 and 1963. It is based on a corpus of 387 vessels, all fragmentary, dating from the mid-3rd to late 2nd millennia BC. It includes all the diagnostic pieces out of a total number of 1,465 pieces from these excavations which are divided between the Kuwait National Museum and Moesgård Museum. The study was begun by the author in 2008, formed part of her MA thesis at the University of Copenhagen, and is a very impressive piece of work.

After a brief introductory section on the sites where they were found (mostly Tell F3, followed by the so-called 'Palace' on Tell F6 and residual pieces from around the Hellenistic Fort on Tell F5), the book continues with an optical classification of the types of stone used. Seven of these are varieties of the chlorite family, three are medium-hard to hard stones of igneous origin, including basalt and dolerite, and the last class was calcite; colour illustrations are used to visually characterize each. Four varieties dominated the diagnostic assemblage and all are chlorite. Many of the pieces are reproduced in colour as well as in line drawings.

The main text then falls into three main parts, the first providing a full catalogue arranged in typological order

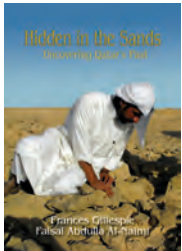
according to vessel form, followed by a section discussing the types of decoration, and concluding with a discussion of how this approach enables them to be grouped into eight different styles. Three date to the 3rd millennium and either originate in south-east Iran (Figurative or Undecorated Styles, the former also known as 'Intercultural Style' or 'Jiroft' in the literature) or south-east Arabia (Umm an-Nar Style). All of these appear to be heirloom pieces as they pre-date the earliest levels in which they were found. The remainder date to the 2nd millennium BC and include two south-east Arabian classes (Wadi Suq Style and Late Bronze Age Style). The last three classes support earlier suspicions that there may have been a local tradition on the island and these are termed the Figurative, Geometric and Plain Failaka Styles respectively. They are also unusual in suggesting that soft-stone vessel production could occur far from the source areas. The low ring or stepped bases (Types 1F/51E, 20A, 20C, 48A, 49A–B, 50A–B, 51A, 51C–D, 68A), rare basket handle (Type 15/61E), guilloche motifs and registers of figurative decoration (e.g. Type 27/41D) strongly recall features typical of metalwares and suggest these are all skeuomorphs. The iconography includes close parallels with Dilmun seals which strengthens the hypothesis of local production, and as none of this Figurative class shows signs of soot or residue (unlike many of the Umm an-Nar or Wadi Suq Style vessels for example) they are interpreted as having been used in cultic rather than domestic functions: unfortunately this could not be proven by distributional analysis.

Some of the pieces in this book have been previously published, including most of the sherds with religious dedications, but as they only total thirteen in all, they represent a very small proportion of the total. None of the vessels were from graves (unlike many of the parallels cited from production zones) and, although the author warns that their stratigraphic contexts were confused, it is suggestive of how many stone vessels were used in the settlement. A quantified approach looking at this question in comparison to the frequency of pottery would be a useful approach for more recently excavated materials. Moreover, many of the stone vessels underwent lengthy curation before final discard, illustrating how greatly they were valued and explaining the wear, loss of inlays and pigment, modification of form and transformation of function on some of these pieces. Other sherds were simply used as a handy source of raw material for making other types of small object. A few showed traces of dark residues and scientific analysis of these should be considered in future in order to determine whether these are food residues or whether they reflect another function and, if any prove to be bituminous in origin, whether this can be geochemically characterized and compared with known sources in Iraq or Iran.

This is a fine publication and a useful resource for the study

of the circulation of material culture and the development of iconography in the Failaka region during the late 3rd and 2nd millennia BC. It is also an important addition to the growing literature on the production and use of stone vessels in antiquity from the Mediterranean to Central Asia.

Review by St John Simpson



Hidden in the Sands: Uncovering Qatar's Past

Frances Gillespie and Faisal Abdulla Al-Naimi

Newport, IoW: Medina Publishing 2013. 48 pp. Colour illustrations throughout. Large-format softback. £12.95. ISBN: 978-1-909339-06-4

PERHAPS THE FIRST THING which strikes one about this book is the sheer volume of people and organizations who have contributed to its creation. From the joint authorship to its academic consultant, Dr Richard Cutler, numerous assisting experts, practitioners and advisors in Qatar and beyond, to the corporate sponsors, Maersk Oil, not to mention the plenitude of general supporters and other such creditees, this has clearly been a truly collaborative enterprise – a reflection, no doubt, of the worthy focus of the book, and also of its well-known author, Francis Gillespie, who accordingly takes the time to express her appreciation in a lengthy acknowledgements section. Indeed, she cites the tireless counsel of Faisal Abdulla Al-Naimi, Head of Antiquities at Qatar Museums (QM), as utterly essential to the book's fruition, thus naming him as co-author in recognition of this contribution.

Gillespie is certainly well positioned to co-ordinate the considerable collective input from which this publication has benefited. A seasoned expatriate, she formerly managed the Qatar Archaeology Project – a joint venture between Qatari authorities and the University of Birmingham – and has worked variously as an English teacher and freelance writer, authoring numerous articles and popular publications relating to the country and its natural and historical heritage, and is a regular contributor to the *Bulletin*. This book represents her “long-held ambition to introduce young people in Qatar, whether citizens or expatriates, to the fascinating story of Qatar's past” – a past all too easily concealed by the ultra-modern landscape of Qatar today. Indeed, even back in the mid-70s during the creation of the Qatar National Museum, those who worked on the project can recall how local children would regularly visit the new museum in the evenings to copy down the exhibition texts realizing, often for the first time, that they actually had a history.

A commendable undertaking then, *Hidden in the Sands*, is certainly the first book of its kind, introducing younger

audiences not only to Qatar's rich archaeological heritage but also the discipline of archaeology itself, and potentially inspiring new generations of Gulf archaeologists. Archaeology might, if approached incorrectly, be a challenging subject with which to engage and excite young people, yet, from the outset, this fact-filled and richly illustrated book successfully injects the necessary fun into its educational content. Breaking Qatar's story down into fifteen thematic chapters, including such key topics as stone tools, rock carvings, pearling, and, of course, al-Zubara, this book also includes a useful glossary of archaeological terms and there is even an interactive online website (www.hiddeninthesands.com). Furthermore, it exists in both English and Arabic versions, with the Arabic being a good-quality translation and a handy reference for archaeological terminology. Although aimed primarily at youngsters, *Hidden in the Sands* is suitable for general readers, and is certainly something of a bookshelf staple in the various curatorial offices and libraries at QM.

Review by Alexandra Hirst



The Hajj: Collected Essays

Edited by Venetia Porter and Liana Saif

London: The British Museum, 2013, Research Publication 193. x + 278 pp. Colour and b/w illustrations throughout, 1 map. Large-format softback. Notes, Glossary, Bibliography, Index. £40.00. ISBN 978-086159-193-0

THIS EXCELLENT COLLECTION of essays is a fitting companion to the British Museum's recent exhibition: *Hajj: Journey to the Heart of Islam*. Appropriately, given the nature of the *Hajj*, it covers a wide range, not only in terms of subject and geography, but also in treatment. Unfortunately, with twenty-nine essays competing for attention, it is impossible to say something about each of them – omission by no means implies lesser interest or importance.

The essays range from academic and specialized research – such as *Royal Ottoman Inscriptions* (Tütüncü) or *Ships that Sailed the Red Sea* (Agius) – to contributions that expand our perceptions of the *Hajj*, giving it a new importance in terms of its practical effects and world influence. The volume is divided by topic, beginning with a useful outline to orient those not familiar with the subject: *The Religious and Social Importance of the Hajj* (Abdel Haleem), followed by two pieces that make up the first section on the early history and politics.

The next group deals with the *Hajj* routes and here there is a great deal for archaeologists and indeed architectural historians, for example *The Khans of the Egyptian Hajj*

Route ('Abd al-Malik) with its plans and photographs of these fortified structures. *Trade and the Syrian Hajj* (Milwright) is one of the few articles touching on the economic aspects of the *Hajj*, although *Hajj Ports of the Red Sea* (Le Quesne) sheds some important light, among other things, on its victualling.

The third section on travellers and on the colonial powers' relationship with the *Hajj* is of particular interest to the non-specialist reader. *The Rail Hajjis* (Green), primarily using two fascinating accounts by somewhat atypical *hajjis*, discusses the effects of the opening of the Trans-Siberian Railway on the *Hajj* and the impact of journeys taken, not within the cultural and religious 'bubble' of the traditional *Hajj* caravan or even among co-religionists travelling for trade, but in a completely secular and alien environment.

Other articles tackle the practical problems of the journey, including preoccupations, whether European or Ottoman, that are still alive today: fear of epidemics – a recurring and very real danger – and of the spread of Wahhabi and Pan-Islamist ideologies, balanced by the wish of colonial governments not to interfere in religious practices and to be perceived as essentially benign. An interesting coda to the subject is provided by the last article in the volume: *Organizing Hajj-going from Contemporary Britain* (McLoughlin).

Other than *The Rail Hajjis*, there is little on the numerous Muslim accounts of the *Hajj*, but *Pilgrim Pioneers* (Facey) provides an excellent and highly readable survey of British travellers, some converts and some not, who went on the *Hajj* and subsequently wrote accounts, with reflections on the question that always, down the centuries, excited great interest with regard to such people: to what extent were they sincere, if at all?

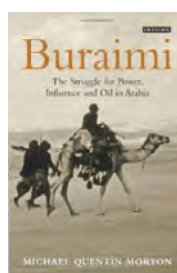
The final section covers material and aesthetic aspects of the *Hajj*, with special reference to textiles, which formed an important part of the exhibition. Here there are a number of excellent offerings, including *Dar al-Kiswa al-Sharifa: Administration and Production* (Nassar), which gives a clear and very interesting account of the history of the *kiswa* and how it was actually produced, and a chapter on the less-known *Textiles Made for the Prophet's Mosque at Medina* (al-Mojan).

The volume itself is good-looking, in keeping with other British Museum publications, and well laid out with interesting and unusual illustrations, very well reproduced, for which credit must be given to the designer, since of necessity they are mostly on the small side. The maps too are clear and informative, although there is an occasional mismatch with the text e.g. Shinqit/Chinguetti on p. 66. The

notes, bibliography, etc are all as they should be. If there is a quibble, it is that for ease of handling the paper could be lighter, and for durability the cover could be stiffer; but these are minor points.

With such riches, it seems greedy to ask for more and no volume can have everything. Nevertheless, it would have been interesting to have a more detailed account of the economics of the *Hajj* and its ramifications, as well as the trade goods associated with it. This is discussed in the excellent *The Syrian Hajj* (Milwright) and, of course from a modern perspective, in *Souvenirs and Gifts* (Khan), where more hard information would have been valuable. Another fascinating subject, touched on but not developed, no doubt because it strays beyond the boundaries of the main theme, is that of alternative pilgrimages adopted by those who had no hope of going on the *Hajj*, for example in *West Africa – 'A Longing for Mecca'* (Nixon), and encouraged for reasons of political prestige, in the case of Delhi, as mentioned in *Inscribing the Hajj* (Blair). Hopefully, there will one day be an opportunity to add to this exemplary selection.

Review by Caroline Stone



Buraimi: The Struggle for Power, Influence and Oil in Arabia

Michael Quentin Morton

London: I.B. Tauris, 2013. xviii + 286 pages. 26 b/w photographs, 3 maps. Glossary, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardback, jacketed. £25.00. ISBN 978-1-84885-818-3

THE CASUAL OBSERVER might be forgiven for wondering what all the fuss was about. After all, Buraimi in the 1950s was just a scattered collection of small villages deep in the Arabian Desert. But, as this book shows, the affair not only affected borders and relations between Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and Oman, but also involved international oil companies ranging on both sides and served as a thorn in the side of Anglo-American relations, even drawing the attention of prime ministers and presidents.

There were nine villages in Buraimi oasis in 1949 when Saudi Arabia asserted its claim: six were loyal to the ruler of Abu Dhabi and three to the sultan of Muscat and Oman (as the sultanate was known at the time). Saudi Arabia's drive to expand its boundaries was prompted partly by the possibility of oil but also by an assertive nationalism encompassing claims to any territory that the Al Saud had once occupied over the past two centuries, no matter how briefly. A Saudi detachment was sent to occupy the village of Hamasa in the oasis in 1952. Attempts at negotiation failed and eventually the British-officered Trucial Oman Levies ousted the Saudi

contingent in 1955. The matter did not end there, however, as Riyadh did not officially relinquish claims to the Abu Dhabi part of the oasis until the bilateral treaty of 1974, while it did not formally recognize Oman's ownership of the other villages until their bilateral treaty of 1990. But questions concerning the Saudi–Abu Dhabi border are still not settled.

As the author is not an academic, one might imagine this volume to be a breezy, anecdotal account of one of the pivotal disputes in the modern history of Eastern Arabia – perhaps even story-telling along the lines of Hammond Innes's novel *The Doomed Oasis*. But this is a serious and objective book, reflecting Morton's background as a barrister. It is based on extensive research – particularly Foreign Office files, some reference to US State Department records, and the archives of BP and Chevron, as well as a thorough coverage of the existing published literature (although some recent publications that shed additional light are conspicuously missing). Despite the seriousness of its approach, the book is entertainingly and compellingly written, bringing leading characters to life and providing wide-ranging background. The reader's understanding is enhanced by a comprehensive list of *dramatis personae* and the sprinkling of photographs of many of the participants throughout the text. In addition, the author has taken care to convert currencies in use at the time into pounds sterling and to update the amounts to present-day values.

Morton's interest was originally sparked by a boyhood spent in the region and he authored an earlier book about his father's experiences in eastern Arabia as an oil company geologist (*In the Heart of the Desert: The Story of an Exploration Geologist and the Search for Oil in the Middle East*. Aylesford, Kent: Green Mountain Press, 2006; see review in the 2007 Bulletin pp. 56–7). Now he has produced perhaps the most authoritative account of the entire Buraimi episode which, as the author notes in his Epilogue, has been addressed by J.B. Kelly's pro-British treatment and ARAMCO's pro-Saudi works, as well as several doctoral theses. Morton has also made good use of the thoroughly researched memorials produced by both sides for the Arbitration Tribunal that met and collapsed in 1955 (the Abu Dhabi and Oman memorial was largely written by British diplomat and oil company official Edward Henderson, and that of Saudi Arabia by George Rentz and other ARAMCO employees).

A few quibbles could be noted. A general map of the Arabian Peninsula is included, as well as two maps of boundaries in eastern Arabia (although neither indicates the Riyadh Line of 1937). Given the discussion of oil deposits, a topographical map would have been useful and the detail of discussion in the text cries out for a large-scale map of Buraimi oasis itself. The author's treatment of the background, context

and facts of the Buraimi affair is top-notch but he grows less authoritative when he moves geographically away from the oasis. In sum, however, this book is a good and accurate read.

Review by John E. Peterson



Half Past Ten in the Afternoon: An Englishman's Journey from Aneiza to Makkah

James Budd

London: Arabian Publishing. 240 pp.

14 colour and 16 b/w photographs.

Glossary and Index. Hardback, jacketed. £20.00. ISBN 978-0-9576763-3-6

IN THE SAUDI ARABIA of the 1960s the Western expatriate community of English-language teachers contained more than its fair share of eccentrics. There was one teacher who kept his own camel on a free-range basis in and around his house, and this reviewer can recall a dinner party there ending in disorder when the camel broke into the modest-sized dining-room in pursuit of the dessert then being served and panicked on becoming wedged between the sideboard and the nearest row of diners' chairs. The high priest of that community, a senior lecturer in the English Department of Riyadh University, would hold court in the evening in the lobby of the Sahari Palace Hotel out by the old airport, collecting and retailing the gossip of the local educational world over games of chess with selected acolytes. It is from that hotel that James Budd writes to his mother in September 1966, recounting the hardships of an erratic and unscripted journey from Beirut to Riyadh on the then national carrier, Saudi Air. He says nothing however about the high priest in the lobby, nor indeed about any of the other members of this expatriate community of which he was a lone upstate outlier away to the north. This tactful reticence does him credit of a kind. A more mischievous raconteur in his position could have had a field day.

James Budd has spent a large part of his life as a teacher and translator in various countries of the Gulf region. This book is a personal memoir of his encounter with Saudi Arabia and with Islam. Its primary focus is the five years he spent in the Najdi town of Aneiza ('Unayzah) in the 1960s, teaching English at the secondary school there. The Western expatriates employed in Saudi Arabia as teachers had the rare advantage of close day-to-day contact with local nationals, and classroom relationships could readily extend into other areas of life. The interactions with staffroom colleagues and students that the author describes are mainly social, always interesting, and often amusing. His main narrative technique is the use of dialogues and conversation pieces put together from memories going back more than

forty years, as supplemented by access to letters written to his parents at the time, and enlivened with the gentle humour which is his hallmark. This technique is effective, and paints a picture which is entirely plausible and realistic.

Saudi Arabia in those days was a place of utter strangeness to visitors. One initially baffling local feature was the continuing widespread use of the biblical ghurubi time, the sunset-based setting of the hours of the day – which provides Budd with the title of his book, the local way of saying 4.30 p.m. For him this strangeness would have been easier to accommodate because he arrived in Saudi Arabia with some prior knowledge of Arabic. He rightly observes that undergraduate Arabic needs a good deal of further development before its possessor can use it to punch anything like his own weight socially or professionally in the Arab world. He also hints that the proficiency in Arabic which he subsequently acquired may in fact have contributed to the sudden decision of the educational authorities – never properly explained – to transfer him to Riyadh after five agreeable years in Aneiza, and then not renew his contract. The reality is that there are parts of the Arab world where a foreigner's proficiency in Arabic can be resented almost as an invasion of privacy.

The treatment of day-to-day life in Aneiza broadens out into a discussion on Western travellers who recorded their views of that town, including Charles Doughty (who, like Budd himself, had to remove himself from there at short notice), St John Philby, and the modern-day anthropologist Donald Cole (with Soraya al-Torki). There is also an account of the events leading up to the Six-Day War, intercut with contemporary opinion on the ground in Aneiza. This leads in turn to a discussion of the poet Nazar Qabbani and his taking up of political verse following the Nakba.

The reader is then fast-forwarded to 1988, and a chapter titled 'Journey to Makkah'. This is a spiritual journey. Its first part is an account of the author's conversion to Islam, which occurred not as an epiphany but rather as the culmination of a process of osmosis over the years. Once he had uttered the *shahada* (which took place while he was back in England, in Ipswich), the author was astonished how straightforward and natural he found his new faith to be. The second part of his journey is the Hajj he performed in 1995 from Muscat, where he was then resident. His account of the ritual observances is leavened with comments on the logistical irresponsibilities of his Omani Hajj contractor, the bodily vicissitudes and ailments of the Hajj, and the violent rapacity of a Pakistani taxi-driver in Makkah. The discussion in this chapter of his encounter with Islam is presented in a calm, candid and matter-of-fact way, and commands respect.

He made a return visit to Aneiza in 2011, to find the

townscape greatly changed. He renewed a number of acquaintances and made some new ones, but, in the nature of things, these reunions were more formal, and lacked the liveliness and spontaneity of his dealings with the locals back in the 1960s.

His book concludes with an Arabic-to-English glossary. It contains the usual suspects conventionally set out for the benefit of the non-arabist reader, but these are peppered with an eclectic selection of terms to fascinate the linguist. One such is *fusa'*, which means what the French call *le pet jésuite* and has an obvious relevance to majlis-based modes of social interaction; another is *nuhut*, meaning the coining in conversation of an all-too-apt metaphor, thereby attracting the evil eye and the need for an immediate pious ejaculation to deflect it. He reminds us all that the learning of Arabic is a never-ending work in progress.

Review by Alastair Hirst

Scenes of Sana'a: Yihye Haybi's Photographs from Yemen, 1930-44

Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper

Jerusalem: The Israel Museum 2014. 141 pp. Bilingual English/ Hebrew. 60 b/w photographs. Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardback. \$35.00. ISBN 978-965-278-426-1

THIS DELIGHTFUL BOOK arises from a special exhibition on the same subject which was curated by Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper, the leading authority on traditional Jewish life in Yemen. Some of our readers may remember the topic from her preview lecture at the Seminar for Arabian Studies in London in 2006, when I recall a mixed row of Yemeni and Saudi colleagues in front of me who were on the edge of their seats in excitement as she showed image after image of a vanished past. Her subject then and now is Yihye Haybi (1911–77), a young man from the important Jewish community in San'a who fell in love with photography, as is clear from an early "selfie" taken showing him cradling one of his cameras while the second records the scene. He also owned a motorcycle, a record player and a radio, and acquired these while working as a medical assistant in an Italian clinic in San'a between 1930 and 1944.

It was during these years that he used his cameras to record an extraordinary range of scenes at time when public photography was strictly prohibited. It was viewed not only as an unwelcome intrusion in Muslim society but also as an act of espionage, and he only received permission to openly take photographs the year before he emigrated to Israel in 1944. Some of these images were shot in his place of work, and these show afternoon tea in the garden, men playing cards, and Haybi grinning as he poses with an Arab

cook holding a framed poster of Mussolini dated 24 March 1929. The political dimension of his Italian employers is underlined by yet another shot apparently showing the Imam, who prohibited Western intrusions, inspecting the demonstration of a newly supplied Italian anti-aircraft gun in August 1937. This was a period when Italy was moving towards an alliance with Germany and Japan, and the British authorities in neighbouring Aden were understandably very concerned about the motives of the Italian delegation in San'a.

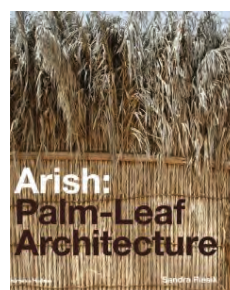
The remainder of the photographs show life in San'a, then still a very small city, and range from scenes in the Jewish quarter and artillery drill outside the city walls to covert views of the Imam proceeding to Friday prayers. One exceptional photograph was taken during a public execution of a murderer: the camera shutter closes at the precise moment when the executioner's sword makes contact with the bare neck of the condemned. Yet another records the degradation of Jewish men surrounded by vultures as they dispose of animal carcasses collected from the streets of San'a in an extramural area (the practice must be ancient but here consigned to this minority alone). The old walls of the city in the background of a photograph of cannon drilling contrast with the modern appearance of the Bab al-Yemen gate in another. Haybi's thoughts are unrecorded but it seems inconceivable that he was not attempting to contrast the advance of modern technologies with the stifled pace of life in San'a under the Imamate, and the paradox of what he was able to observe and record. Although Muslims feature in some of his photographs, most images were taken within his own community, and he was in regular demand to take personal portraits. People were indeed his preferred subject and his pictures record individuals, faces, postures and dress, whether it is of a Yemeni clutching his khanjar with both hands and with his left cheek filled with qat, two sisters with a sewing machine, a seated rabbi with the Torah open in front of him, weddings, or scenes of mourning the dead.

These years also effectively marked the end of the Jewish community in Yemen, and when Yihye Haybi left for Israel with his family he of course took his precious cameras and glass plate negatives with him. He died of a heart attack in 1977, only a month after retirement and sadly before he could realise his dream of publishing his archive. His widow finally consented that this collection enter the Israel Museum, and Dr Muchawsky-Schnapper has done the world a great service, not only by helping ensure their survival for posterity but allowing us to see an old part of Yemen through the lens of his camera.

And it is here that she has also shown that, while the camera may never actually lie, it can certainly deceive the literal-minded. Photography was forbidden on the Sabbath or other holidays so his photographs of individuals wearing Sabbath

clothing were posed. Another shot of a young woman wearing full wedding attire turns out to be a staged shot of his sister as real brides feared the influence of the evil eye. A lovely scene of a beautiful young lady wearing Jewish festive gear and holding a local boy's hand with Haybi to her right turns out to be of the daughter of an Italian doctor. Yet another discrepancy emerges between the plain dress worn by young Jewish women in some photographs and other records which stress the high level of finery in their everyday dress. In short, we have multiple ethnographies: one where social customs dictate the reality which Yihye Haybi was attempting to accurately record through careful and sensitive re-enactment, but where the incautious modern viewer is liable to over- or miss-interpret the significance of what is seen in the photograph. This reminds us that photographs are invaluable records but, like paintings, are compositions which have been carefully framed or constructed for a purpose; but that at the same time, through coming to an awareness of this process, we can gain a deeper and more sensitive contextualization. Yihye Haybi clearly understood these nuances and this edition of his poignant pictures is an important addition not only to the visual record of Yemen but also to the appreciation of how early photography has helped shaped our understanding of the visual transformation of the Middle East from the late 19th to the early 20th centuries.

Review by St John Simpson



Arish: Palm-leaf Architecture

Sandra Piesik

London: Thames & Hudson, 2012. 192 pp. 295 colour and b/w illustrations. Large-format hardback, jacketed. Notes, Bibliography. £28.00. ISBN 978-0-500-34280-0

DUBAI, FIFTY YEARS AGO, was largely composed of palm leaf structures, as were many towns in the Gulf. It is an area that has developed at extraordinary speed and one of the victims of this process has been the indigenous architecture. This is particularly true of the palm and reed buildings which, although beautiful and appropriate to the climate, are very fragile. Like most traditional architecture, 'arish had no written manuals of construction and, as it needs constant renewal, its survival depends on techniques being passed down, usually within a family or community; once the chain is broken, the skill is all too likely to be lost. Sandra Piesik gives the example of a couple of 'arish buildings constructed by an 82-year-old badawi, one of two remaining members of his community possessing the necessary technical knowledge. This book is therefore particularly welcome as a reminder and a record of a very endangered species.

This excellently researched work is closely linked with the

Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage (ADACH) and with the 'Arish Research Project. Aware that an important element in the cultural identity of the region was on the verge of extinction, researchers have made serious efforts to learn traditional crafts and techniques from the last practitioners, now often very elderly, so as to preserve them, if necessary artificially, as part of the national heritage. Since most of the examples of 'arish today are reconstructions, the author pays tribute throughout the book to the individuals and museums fighting to keep the tradition alive.

The book begins with a number of wonderful historic photographs chronicling the final phase of 'arish buildings in the first half of the 20th century. They were, in fact, recorded by the Portuguese from as early as 1635 and archaeological evidence suggests their existence for 4,000 and, in one area, Delma Island, possibly 7,000 years.

Here, as elsewhere, something of the historic and cultural background is given: Delma was an international centre of pearl fishing mentioned by the Venetian jeweller, Gasparo Balbi, in 1590, with Indian and Iranian contacts and influences. Archaeological evidence makes it clear that palm-leaf architecture by no means indicated a backward or primitive society. Julfar, for example, in Ras al-Khaimah, owed its wealth to the pearl trade and imports included ceramics from China, while contacts with Iran made barjeel, or wind-towers, a feature of summer structures to promote cooling in 'Ajman.

The next sections cover seven major Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Umm al-Qaiwain, 'Ajman, Sharjah and Dubai, each of which shows local differences in both techniques and style. The social and cultural implications of the way the buildings were organized is also discussed: the requirements of a city such as Abu Dhabi, where the architecture had to be adapted to the creation of markets and other larger spaces, was inevitably different to a structure in an oasis, or where the building was used for only a limited part of the year, for example by the pearl divers during the fishing season. Each section is accompanied by numerous photographs demonstrating the local style and establishing a typology. The relationship of the architecture to the economy of the oases that provided the raw material is also considered, as well as the trade in matting and other palm products to regions where they were lacking, such as 'Ajman.

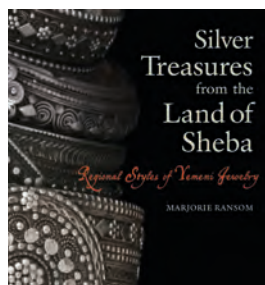
In each area, particularly significant buildings are described, sometimes with accompanying plans, and there is much useful vocabulary for the different types of construction scattered through the text. Japan is often praised for its use of inexpensive and basic materials to obtain sophisticated and elegant effects, but images in this book show that with

'arish, the Gulf also demonstrated great mastery. The section 'Design Details' provides beautiful examples of the range of patterns and techniques used.

In the final sections, construction techniques are described and illustrated and Sandra Piesik also discusses modern applications – wedding halls, majalis, cafés, tourist attractions, even shelters at a nature reserve – since, clearly, 'arish is unlikely to survive in the long run unless some contemporary use can be found for it.

Arish is an attractive and well-designed book of considerable interest to anyone concerned with the urban history and ethnography of the Gulf, its crafts, sustainability, or architecture-without-architects in general.

Review by Caroline Stone



Silver Treasures from the Land of Sheba: Regional Yemeni Jewelry

Marjorie Ransom

Photographs by Robert Liu

Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2014. xviii + 246 Colour illustrations throughout. Hardback, jacketed. Notes, Bibliography, Index. £35.00. ISBN 978-977-416-600-6

WHEN MARJORIE and David Ransom were posted to the United States Embassy in San'a in the 1970s, they quickly became captivated by the glorious silver jewellery for which the country was renowned. With great foresight the couple began collecting and recording this unique heritage, fearing its ultimate demise as the silversmiths began to age and their skills were no longer being passed on to the next generation. Many of the finest Jewish craftsmen had already emigrated to Israel in the late 1940s.

Over the following years and subsequent return visits (David sadly died in 2004) Marjorie Ransom sought to document the regional styles and silversmithing techniques of this diverse country. Her aim was to form a definitive collection, a formidable task that involved travelling to remote regions to seek out original pieces. Ransom has managed to create a unique collection of jewellery (mainly Yemeni), which has been exhibited at several venues in the US.

The Ransom Collection forms the basis of this lavishly illustrated book, which also includes many fine costumes. It has been superbly photographed by Robert Liu, whose images bring to the fore in exquisite detail the skills of the Yemeni silversmiths. While these are mostly studio shots

there are a few of women shown wearing the jewellery, thereby giving the reader an added insight. Unfortunately it is a constant frustration for those writing about traditional jewellery that few such pictures exist. A rich and diverse collection of necklaces, elaborate chest pieces, head ornaments, bracelets, armlets, belts, rings, and earrings are illustrated. These were ornaments of both ritual and economic importance.

For the purposes of clarity Ransom divides the country into its various regions and then leads us through each one with images of jewellery relevant to that area. A map or two here would have been helpful in locating some of these little-known governorates. Breathtaking landscape images open the chapters and give a certain context to the pieces shown. The various silver smithing techniques and forms are discussed and compared. Over the years Ransom has developed a close rapport with many of the silversmiths and their families while recording their work (a further volume is promised focusing on these craftsmen, which would be most welcome). Photographs illustrate the techniques of filigree, granulation, and applied wirework, together with chains made with the loop in loop technique and transformed into sophisticated belts with ornate buckles. All depict exquisite workmanship and the range of traditional designs is a revelation. Sometimes an important piece is stamped with the maker's seal.

Ransom vividly conveys the excitement felt when she discovers new and interesting aspects of the silversmith's work. We learn the differences between the two schools of Yemeni Jewish work – Bawsani and Badihi – both of which specialized in very fine granulation work. In the northern Hadramaut, women excelled at making loop in loop chains. The high points of the narrative are the author's enthusiastic exchanges with the women who own or wear the ornaments. She has established a reliable and trusted relationship with them, eliciting some fascinating facts and anecdotes. She recounts some amusing coincidences and encounters during her travels.

The book is beautifully produced, though one can criticize the choice of grey ink for the captions which makes them hard to read, and the reproduction of some of the items is rather dark. But as a researcher and collector myself I value greatly this new work which is an important record of a vanishing tradition and a book for both the specialist and the generalist. Readers will be impressed by the sheer beauty and originality of the jewellery which once played such an integral part in the economic and social lives of the women of the Yemen.

Review by Clara Semple

LIVES REMEMBERED

Michael Gallagher

M.B.E., F.R.G.S., F.L.S.

1921–2014

Michael Gallagher, who has died aged 92, was an outstanding naturalist, for whose services to wildlife conservation in Oman he was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire in January 1994. His wartime service in the Royal Army Service Corps took him round the Cape of Good Hope to join the 8th Army in the Western Desert of Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, after which he went to Sicily and mainland Italy, before returning to England to join the British Liberation Army for the Normandy landings to end the war in Germany. His further service took him back to the Middle East, Guyana and Christmas Island where his interest in natural history flourished in places where little study had so far been carried out.

On retiring from the British Army in 1976 in the rank of Major, he joined the Office for Conservation of the

Environment in the Sultanate of Oman, where he continued his study of natural history, wrote *The Birds of Oman* and set up the Oman Natural History Museum. By the time he retired from the Oman Government in 1998 no fewer than 29 wildlife species had been named after him, including mammals, reptiles, insects, a scorpion, a fish, molluscs and a plant. The author of many scientific papers, popular articles and books, his achievements were celebrated with a seminar, resulting in a Festschrift book in his honour entitled *The Natural History of Oman*.

Michael Desmond Gallagher was born on 02 September 1921 and went to Ardingly where he shot in the school VIII. Following his father Brigadier Henry Gallagher, CBE, BSc, he joined the RASC as a volunteer on the outbreak of war and went to Sandhurst. Later he shot for his corps at Bisley. After the end of World War II he saw service in regimental and staff postings in Palestine, Gibraltar, BAOR, Guyana, Christmas Island, Bahrain and Sharjah. Adopting nature as a hobby, he led adventure training projects and was selected to join the 1974-75 Zaire River Expedition. His posting as DAQMG, Military Assistance Office, HQ British Forces Gulf in Bahrain led to close contacts with Oman. In 1973

he led a reconnaissance to study an area of the Jebel Al Akhdhar with a view to recommending boundaries for a national park. In 1975 he joined the first British Flora and Fauna Expedition to northern Oman and two years later led the second British Expedition to Dhofar. In January 1977 he joined the Office of the Adviser for Conservation of the Environment as Assistant Adviser (Field Studies) and was commissioned to write *The Birds of Oman*.

In 1982 he joined the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture under His Highness Sayyid Faisal bin Ali Al Said, where he established the Oman Natural History Museum and later extended it to include the Whale Hall and the Fossil Exhibition. Within the Museum he established the National Herbarium of Oman and its associated Botanic Garden, as well as the Shell and Coral Collections, the Insect, Invertebrate, Fossil, Osteological and other collections. Michael's quiet manner sometimes masked his strong passion for natural history. He received specialists and students alike with warmth and dedication to push forward research in the hands of all who were interested, whether as a hobby or as professionals. Once, when at dinner with a prominent Omani family, his hostess asked what species the bat was that had just swooped over them. Without a flicker he replied 'Look at page so-and-so and you will find out.' Only later did she discover that it was not a bat but a bird. Michael was such a gentleman that he would never have contradicted her in front of others. Even after retirement, he was able to display his meticulous command of detail and plain language, as both author and a Contributing Editor for *The Journal of Oman Studies*. The carpet of wild flowers on the sea front by his house would never have been there but for Michael's persistence that influenced local affairs in his latter years.

In 1975 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and was awarded the Zoological Society of London's Stamford Raffles Award for 1993 in recognition of his "contributions to zoology, in particular to Arabian ornithology". In 1994 he was elected a Fellow of the Linnaean Society of London. His bibliography extended to over 114 books, scientific papers and articles in popular journals, a record that would be the envy of many a university professor. He never married.

He died peacefully in his sleep on the morning of 27th July 2014.

David Insall

Leila Ingrams

1941-2015

BFSA greatly regrets to record the tragic death on 22 March of Leila Ingrams at the age of 74.



She spent her early childhood in South West Arabia and her attachment to Yemen and the wider Arab world profoundly influenced the course of her life.

With the death of her mother, Doreen, in 1997, Leila became sole manager and trustee of the legacy of two illustrious parents, Doreen and Harold Ingrams - an obligation which she acquitted with diligence and generosity.

The unique role of her parents in the pacification of Hadhramaut 1937-40 (for which they were awarded the Lawrence of Arabia Medal by the Royal Central Asian Society in 1939), their books and surveys enmeshed their name in the modern history of the region. Leila welcomed the approaches of scholars and researchers, and would not infrequently take younger academics directly under her wing. Her protégés included Dr. Saddiq Maknoon whose doctoral thesis was based on his study of Harold Ingrams' career in Hadhramaut, and Dr. Spencer Mawby who has written a definitive study of Britain's disengagement from Aden and South Arabia.

The Ingrams legacy flourished under her aegis. In 2000 Leila welcomed a proposal by the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS), where she was well known for her voluntary work in the Library, to arrange a lecture to commemorate her mother's journeys of exploration, for which Doreen had been awarded the Society's annual Burton Memorial Medal in 1993 (Harold Ingrams had received the same award in 1945). The lecture, given by G Rex Smith, was entitled: 'Ingrams Peace' Hadramawt 1937-40: Some Contemporary Documents.

Leila contributed two antiquities, found by her father during

his travels in South Arabia, to the British Museum's Queen of Sheba Exhibition in 2002 (and recently made a generous donation of Yemeni artefacts to the Museum). In 2003 she attended a seminar at the University of Aden on her father's period of service in Hadhramaut; she has also provided some of his historic photographs for permanent display at the museum in Seiyun.

In 2010 Leila travelled to Singapore to attend an exhibition on Arabs in S E Asia sponsored by the National Library of Singapore. An article by her about conditions experienced by her parents during their time in Hadhramaut, and their memorable tour in 1939 of diasporic communities in the East Indies, was published in the exhibition catalogue.

Leila was an active member of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) where she enjoyed entertaining friends and visitors. Both her parents had given lectures there, and were gold medallists of the Society for their contribution to the exploration of the Arabian Peninsula. In recent years the RGS has been the venue for Leila's several initiatives, one in collaboration with the British Council, to promote the culture and heritage of Yemen.

Other initiatives which she has staunchly supported have been to bring groups of Yemeni musicians and singers to London to take part in the International Music Village Festival in Kew and to perform further afield, in Wales and in Liverpool (during the city's annual Arab Arts Festival which Leila used to attend).

In 2012 she agreed to the reprinting by Eland of her mother's charming and evocative memoir: *A Time in Arabia* (1970) for which she wrote the 'Afterword'. She had earlier encouraged the Hadhrami poet and writer, Najib Sa'id Ba Wazir, to translate the text into Arabic, and this was published in Aden in 2011.

Leila's literary career started with the mammoth task, undertaken with her mother, of collating and editing *Records of Yemen, 1798-1960*, published in 16 volumes by Archive Editions in 1993. Leila's own book: *Yemen Engraved: Illustrations by foreign travellers 1680-1903* was published in 2006. This followed the format of an earlier work which she co-authored with Richard Pankhurst: *Ethiopia Engraved* (1988).

Leila succeeded her mother as Patron of Friends of Hadhramaut (FOH), a charitable association sponsoring welfare and humanitarian projects in Yemen's eastern province. She shared this position with the late Jim Ellis until his death in 2000 when he was succeeded as co-patron of FOH by his widow, Joanna. Leila also supported charities operating in Sana'a and other parts of the country.

The other cause close to Leila's heart was Palestine and she was involved in many supporting activities, including street protests. Her mother's book: *Palestine Papers 1917-1922: Seeds of Conflict* (1972) was reprinted by Eland in 2009, reaffirming in a sense Leila's own commitment to the Palestinian cause.

This writer first met Leila in the early 1970s in Muscat where she was working for the Omani government's Economic Adviser, John Townsend, and also temporarily for the Director of Information, Shaikh Nasir Seif al-Bu'ali who was later appointed Oman's first ambassador to London. His father, Shaikh Seif, a Zanzibari Omani, had been known to Harold Ingrams, and owed his appointment as State Secretary in Mukalla to Harold's recommendation. Leila's sister, Zahra, who was to predecease Leila, also visited Muscat from Bahrain at that time.

Notwithstanding her stewardship of a demanding parental legacy, Leila carved a niche for the expression of her own identity. The mainspring was her philanthropic spirit which roamed widely, touched many hearts and will be as widely mourned, not least by her many friends overseas.

John Shipman

Prof. Tony Wilkinson

F.B.A.

1948-2014

BFSA is sad to announce the death on Christmas Day of Prof. Tony Wilkinson of Durham University at the age of 66, who made a significant contribution to landscape archaeology in the Middle East (particularly in Yemen and, most recently, the Fertile Crescent) and was for many years an active member of the Foundation's Committee when it was the Society for Arabian Studies.

Tony was widely recognized as one of the world's leading experts in landscape archaeology, and as the theoretician, methodological innovator, and field archaeologist who revolutionized our understanding of the ancient landscapes of Mesopotamia and the broader Middle East.

A more thorough obituary will follow but those wishing to watch an interview with him in 2013 in which he discussed his work can find it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MPDEsNrdLg>

Ionis Thompson

LAST WORD

The Palaeodeserts Project was Arabia once full of lakes and lush plantlife?

The Palaeodeserts Project has been a regular feature in international archaeology news, with exciting new evidence for wetlands instead of desert. As Dr Ash Parton now explains, this could have significant impact for our understanding of the movements of human populations out of Africa.

When you think about Arabia, the images that typically come to mind are those of an intensely arid landscape of endless sand seas and scorching heat, however, it has not always been this way. At various times over the past few hundred thousand years, Arabia experienced prolonged humid periods which transformed the landscape into one littered with rivers, lakes and wetlands. Since the Arabian Peninsula lies at a critical position for the movement of early human populations out of Africa, knowing how and when these humid periods occurred is fundamental to our understanding of early population movements. Large climatic shifts would have had a profound effect on early human groups moving across the landscape, allowing populations to exploit a wide range of resources during more humid times, and presenting a considerable barrier to population movements during arid phases. These issues lie at the heart of my research, and are a key component of the Palaeodeserts Project at the University of Oxford. Led by Professor Michael Petraglia, and with the support of the European Research Council (ERC), the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA), and HRH Prince Sultan Bin Salman, our five-year project has recently uncovered intriguing new insights into how the 'greening' of Arabia played a critical role in the development of our species.

Over long timescales, green periods in Arabia are predominantly tied to fluctuations in the position of the African and Indian Ocean Monsoon rainfall belts. For many years it was thought that major humid episodes in Arabia were driven by global ice volume changes and glacial cycles. As the great ice sheets contracted every ~100,000 years, the monsoon belts intensified and shifted much further north, bringing with them large volumes of summer rainfall to much of the Arabian Peninsula and transforming the landscape. Conversely, during global glacial periods the monsoon rains were pushed further south and Arabia returned to the dry conditions we see today. This would mean that for most of human history the climate of Arabia was unable to support our ancestral populations.

Some of our recent findings, however, are providing a



Figure 1: Photo of the Mundafan basin in the Rub' al-Khali, southern Saudi Arabia. This large depression was once home to a large freshwater lake.

serious challenge to this notion. Evidence from ancient lakes and rivers, buried beneath the sands of the Rub' al-Khali and Nefud deserts, has shown that humid episodes may have occurred as frequently as every ~23,000, in line with periods of maximum solar radiation (Parton et al., 2015a; 2015b).

As such, we now believe that there have been many more potential 'windows' for the expansion of human populations into and across Arabia than previously thought – a notion supported by the large number of archaeological sites scattered across the peninsula (Groucutt et al., 2015).

In the Rub' al-Khali desert to the east of Najran in southern Saudi Arabia, the Palaeodeserts Projects has unearthed a series of buried artefacts situated along the edge of an ancient lake basin. Today the landscape is extremely arid, with no water or vegetation for many miles around (see Figure 1), however, our findings show that the basin was once home to a large freshwater lake fringed by grasslands and palms. Here, it seems, a group of early hunter gatherers took advantage of the lush environment, leaving behind a number of stone tools that eventually became embedded within the lakeshore, and leaving behind them tantalising clues as to the movements of early populations out of Africa. Further to the north, recent findings from the Nefud in northern Saudi Arabia near the towns of Tayma and Ha'il, have also yielded a wealth of archaeological, environmental and animal material that demonstrate how dramatically the climate of Arabia has changed, and how important these changes were to human and animal populations. In the spring of 2013 we uncovered ancient lake deposits from an oasis town called Jubbah (Figure 2). These sediments have provided an incredibly detailed record of rainfall and vegetation changes for the region and will provide a critical framework for the regional archaeological record. Jubbah, it



Figure 2: Photo showing the logging and sampling of a large ancient lake sequence near the oasis town of Jubbah, Saudi Arabia.

seems, has been an important focus for human populations - most likely due to the presence of a large lake - with evidence for occupation of the oasis stretching back over 200,000 years. To the west near the town of Tayma, some of our most impressive discoveries were made in the autumn of 2013. Here, we discovered a wealth of animal remains, again situated adjacent to an ancient lake (Figure 3), including oryx, fox, grebe, jaguar and perhaps most impressively, elephant. These are surrounded by numerous smaller lake deposits, upon which stone tools possibly reaching as far back as 500,000 years have been deposited.

Such findings are testament to both the variability of the Arabian climate, and the fundamental role such changes have played in the trajectory of early human populations.



Figure 3: Excavating fossil remains embedded into the surface of an ancient lake deposit in the Nefud Desert near Tayma, northern Saudi Arabia.

Increases in rainfall every ~23,000 years led to increased freshwater availability and the expansion of vegetation. This allowed animal and human populations to expand their seasonal range beyond Africa and the Levant, and exploit new pastures deep into the Arabian interior. It's likely that as they expanded, these groups had to adapt to their new environment and in so doing, developed new technological capabilities that allowed them to successfully disperse across the world. Yet, while it seems that all regions of Arabia experienced dramatic climate shifts over the past few hundred thousand years, it is unlikely that such changes were uniform across the entire peninsula. As such, issues concerning the spatial and temporal variability of the Arabian climate continue to be the main focus of my research, and that of the Palaeodeserts Project. The incredible findings from our sites have demonstrated that hidden beneath the vast sand seas of Arabia lies evidence for a complex and dynamic climatic history; one that undoubtedly shaped the fortunes of our earliest ancestors. While we endeavour to uncover more of these secrets, we are literally still just scratching the surface of Arabia's rich history, and we hope that we can continue to give the region the recognition it deserves as a place that has been central to the development of our species.

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Some of the findings of the Palaeodeserts team have been recently published in the journals *Geology*, *Quaternary International* and the *Journal of Human Evolution*. Ash's work has also recently been reported by media outlets such as the BBC, Science Daily and the Daily Mail. For more information about the project, visit the Palaeodeserts website or follow them on Facebook. You can also follow Dr Ash Parton's latest updates on Twitter @ashparton.

At present, Ash Parton is the palaeoenvironmental specialist for the Palaeodeserts Project from the School of Archaeology at the University of Oxford. His role within the project, and the overall aim of his research, is to understand the spatial and temporal variability of the Arabian climate over the past few hundred thousand years, by reconstructing environmental changes from ancient lake, river, soil and sand dune deposits. By developing a detailed record of climate changes for the region, Ash hopes to improve our knowledge of the long-term drivers of climate changes in Arabia, and how these changes may have impacted upon early human populations.

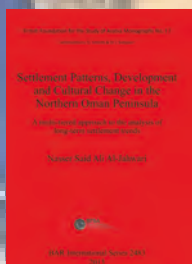
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Foundation Patron and Chairman H.E. Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber with BBC Correspondent Lyse Doucet and Sir Alan Duncan, UK Special Envoy to Yemen and Oman at the 2nd Annual British Yemeni Society Lecture on 4th February, 2015.

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The MBI Al Jaber Foundation has sponsored the Seminar for Arabian Studies since 2002 and we are now also proud sponsors of The British Foundation for the Study of Arabia.

We operate across the MENA region, but have several programmes that focus on the Arabian Peninsula, notably the MBI Media Institute, Sana'a, which is an independent privately funded organisation for the development and training of journalists in Sana'a, Yemen. Run by BBC Arabic Correspondent Abdullah Ghorab and set up in 2013, the institute has so far trained more than 1000 Yemenis in journalism and reporting skills of all kinds and levels.

We are also founding sponsors of Connecting Cultures, a unique, UNESCO-backed educational initiative that brings young people from the Western and Arab world together on short journeys into the wilderness of the Omani desert to encourage face-to-face dialogue and promote better understanding.

Come and say hello to MBI Al Jaber Foundation staff at this year's Seminar for Arabian Studies and the MBI Al Jaber Public Lecture at the British Museum (see pages 5-6 of the Bulletin for details), or follow us on Facebook or Twitter @mbifoundation

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We host a regular lecture series at the MBI Al Jaber Building, London Middle East Institute, SOAS.

Some of the talks are organised jointly with The BFSa, all are free and open to the public. Lectures cover an exciting range of topics including the media, politics, archaeology, architecture and art of the MENA region. The final lecture of the current academic year, *Architecture that "Fills the Eye": building traditions in highland Yemen* will be presented by Professor Trevor Marchand from SOAS and held later this year.

Lectures scheduled for 2015/16 include Mark Evans on the Connecting Cultures programme, and Artist and Project Design Adviser Patricia Millns on clothing and identity in Arabia. The talks are recorded and can be found on the MBI Al Jaber Foundation YouTube channel.



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