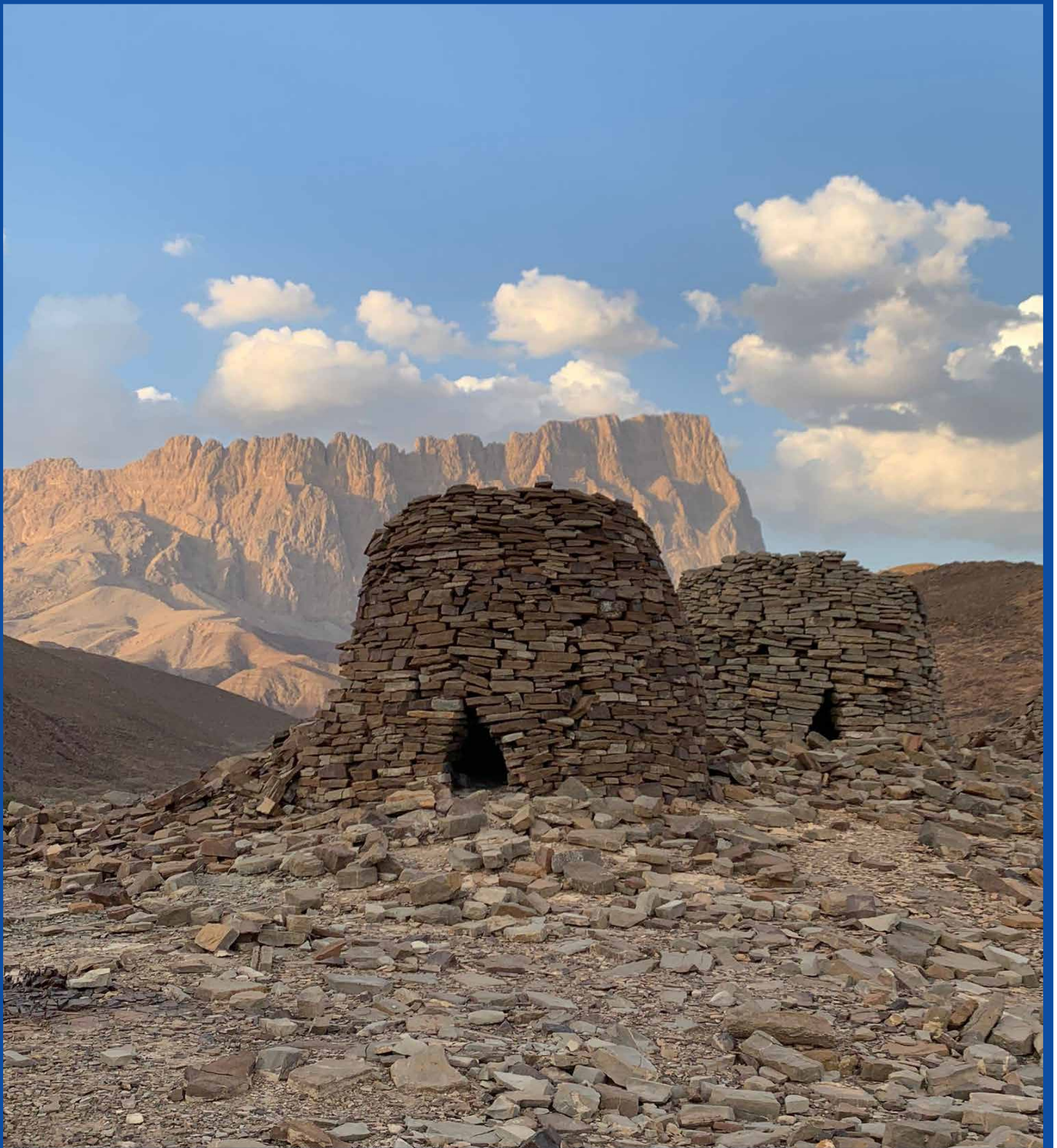


Number 30

2023 Spring Edition

THE IASA BULLETIN



IASA
International Association
for the Study of Arabia
الرابطة الدولية لدراسة الجزيرة العربية

International Association for the Study of Arabia (IASA)

formerly the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia

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The IASA Bulletin is an e-publication for members of the IASA. It is published twice a year, in Spring and Autumn. The Bulletin depends on the good will of IASA 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: bulletin@theiasa.com

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors of the articles. They do not purport to reflect the opinions or views of the IASA or its members.

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Excavations near Hili (Al Ain). Excavations of Bronze Age features in Trench 3. Image: Daniel Eddisford. See p. 27

WELCOME FROM OUR CHAIR

I am delighted to welcome Kate as the new Bulletin editor. Many members will know Kate from her role as the Seminar Secretary and she is now bringing her energy and enthusiasm to our Outreach. The trustees decided in 2020 to devote more resources to Outreach to raise awareness and the profile of IASA to attract more members and enable us to expand our activities. We gave ourselves three years to assess whether it is working, and all the evidence suggests that it is.

Twenty Twenty-Two was a good year for IASA with our membership at the highest level since the former Seminar for Arabian Studies was merged with the Society for Arabian Studies in 2010 to create the British Foundation for Arabian Studies, which was renamed IASA in 2019 to reflect our growing international membership. More and more of our members are from the Arabian Peninsula. One reason for the increased interest in IASA has been the broadening of interest in archaeology and history in the counties of the peninsula, especially Saudi Arabia. This is also reflected in the 2022 Seminar in Berlin and in the large number of abstracts submitted for the 2023 Seminar.

We are all looking forward to the 56th Seminar for Arabian Studies which will be co-hosted by Moesgaard Museum and Aarhus University, Denmark, on 4th-6th August 2023. It is a beautiful setting, and the museum is amazing. Preparations are well in hand. We are immensely grateful to Steffen Terp Laursen and his colleagues for their work in what is likely to be a highly successful and enjoyable seminar. I am very much looking forward to attending. The Bulletin also has information about the IASA research grants. We set great store by these and were disappointed that we received no applications in 2022, the first time this has happened. So do please spread the word and encourage people to apply.

IASA inherited from the Society of Arabian Studies overseeing the publication of a monograph series which 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. We have not received any proposals for monographs in the last few years. However, we are committed to continuing the series so please do consider

submitting ideas to the series editors. Please see the website for further details.

Several of our trustees will have to stand down over the next two years. If you would like to join the committee – or want to recommend someone who might – then please let me know. We are looking for people who have a strong interest in one of the disciplines that IASA covers, and we want to recruit more international committee members to reflect the changing membership of IASA.

We arranged our first in person event in October 2022 when Professor Hugh Kennedy gave a lecture on Al Baladhuri (a report of his lecture appears in this Bulletin). I know that many people are getting fed up with Zoom events and would like more in-person events. I hope we can arrange at least one hybrid event in 2023. Over 400 people registered for the lecture given by Ahmad al-Jallad, one of our trustees in February - showing that Zoom is ideal for an organisation like IASA with a membership spread across the world. We are currently trying to arrange a lecture in late April led by Professor Janet Watson, Professor Dawn Chatty and Dr Jack Wilson related to the recently published book *Language and Ecology in Southern and Eastern Arabia* (edited by Janet Watson, Jon Lovett, and Roberta Morano) and we are in touch with the King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies about a joint event later this year. If you have ideas for future lectures, please let us know at contact@theiasa.com.

Noel Brehony
Chair
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IASA NEWS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello and welcome to the 2023 Spring edition of the Bulletin. You may already be familiar with me in my capacity as the Secretary to the IASA Seminar and it gives me great pleasure to take over as Outreach consultant.

It was wonderful to see so many of you in person in Berlin last summer. Dr Arnulf Hausleiter and his

team were fabulous hosts and I think you can agree it was a tremendous success. Our preparations are well underway for this year's IASA Seminar in Denmark hosted by Dr Steffen Terp Laursen, and I'm looking forward to seeing you again this summer in Aarhus - be it virtually, or in person.

For those of you who don't know me, I am a museum practitioner. For over sixteen years I directed museums in the UK and UAE, most recently as Director of Museums, to the Department of Antiquities and Museums, Government of Ras Al Khaimah (RAK). I recently completed a Professional Doctorate in Heritage, and since 2018 I have been lecturing in both Heritage and Museum Studies at Durham University. You can find out a little more about my time in RAK and the redevelopment project I was managing in this edition's *The Last Word* p. 35.

This edition has some fabulous updates from Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE. Do please get in touch if you would like to share your work with the IASA membership either for inclusion in the next Bulletin or for our social media channels.



Kate Ayres-Kennet
outreach@theiasa.com



Al Zubarah walkway and shaded rest area. Image Robert Carter.

TRUSTEE NEWS

Trustee biographies may be found on our website.

Upgrades at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Al Zubarah and other sites by Robert Carter

Visitor facilities have been upgraded at Al Zubarah, Qatar's UNESCO World Heritage Site, with the addition of a walkway and signage that take the visitor more than 2km across the site to various places of interest and excavation points, including the town wall, a merchant's house, fortified sheikh's compounds and the market area. Al Zubarah was founded as a pearl fishing town in the 1760s but rapidly became the main trading entrepot for the Gulf, dealing in all kinds of goods from around the Indian Ocean and beyond, before being abandoned after a series of attacks by jealous regional rivals. The walkway includes shaded areas to rest and view the site, and was specially designed so that it requires no intrusive supports and does not damage any part of the site.



A view from the walkway of one of the excavated areas. Image: Robert Carter

Other sites in Qatar were also upgraded with detailed signage so that visitors can locate and understand key elements of the site, and appreciate how they enhance our knowledge of Qatar's past. These sites include Al Jassasiya (rock art site), Zekreet (19th c. fort and warehouse with date presses), Al Ruwaida (large 18th c. fort and town, likely with earlier elements), Al Rekayat (19th c. fort) and Barzan Towers (early and mid 20th century fortifications). For further updates about work in Qatar, please see p. 23.

IASA LECTURES

The IASA holds at least three online events per academic year, in addition to the Annual Beatrice de Cardi Lecture, named in honour of our late President, usually held in the Summer following the AGM.

If you are a likeminded organisation and would like to hold a joint event please contact us via bulletin@theiasa.com. Members with suggestions for events are also very welcome to forward them.

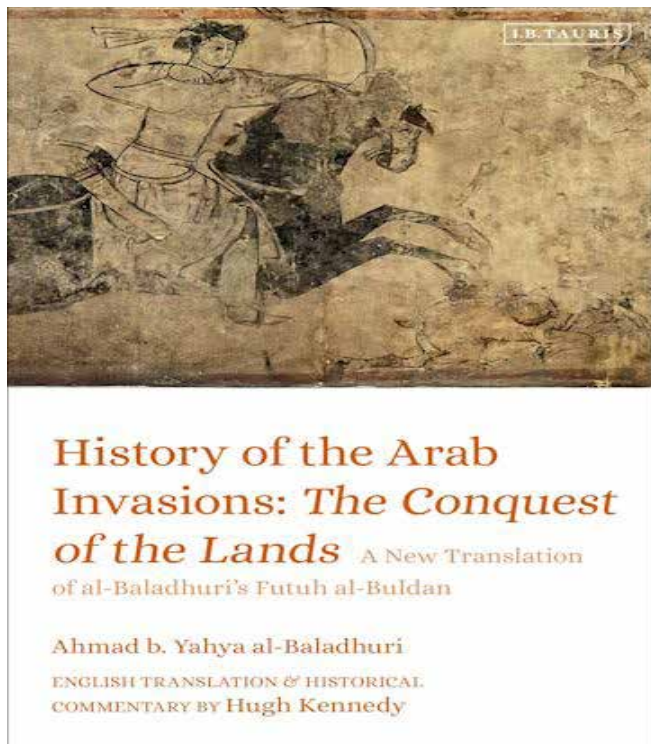
17th October 2022 The Annual Beatrice de Cardi Lecture: Al-Baladhuri's Account of the Muslim Conquest of Arabia by Hugh Kennedy, Professor of Arabic at SOAS, University of London, and the author of numerous books and articles about the first four centuries of Islam.

This - the first in-person lecture since Covid - discussed the way in which Prophet Muhammad and his immediate successor Abu Bakr established Muslim control over the Arabian Peninsula. Professor Kennedy has recently completed a new translation of Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Baladhuri's book ("Futuh Al-Buldan") which is published by I B Tauris. Professor Kennedy examined not only the process of conquest but the way in which a historian from the Abbasid period, two centuries later, presented and described it.

Al-Baladhuri's history of the Arab Invasions is perhaps the most important single source for the history of the great Arab conquests of the Middle East in the sixth and early seventh centuries. The author, who died in 892, was a historian working at the court of the Abbasid Caliphs in Baghdad and had access to a wide variety of earlier writings on the conquests; he preserved accounts that are not found anywhere else. It was written about 865-6 a little before the decline of the Abbasid Caliphate and was the first major account translated into English. It has become the go-to text and has influenced the way that the conquest has been seen in the English-speaking world. Al-Baladhuri was a master of the style of classical Arabic using a form of compressed prose.

What makes this book of enduring importance is Al-Baladhuri's great interest in the origins of the Islamic state and its institutions. It is not just a book of battles won and conquests achieved but gives greater space to administration, land-holding and fiscal and economic developments. The author frequently diverts into subjects that

fascinated him such as genealogy, etymology, and administration. His text is greatly enlivened by anecdotes, stories - some bizarre and some funny - poetry and excursions into whatever caught his interest. He often devotes more words to disputes and the behaviour of some Muslim leaders rather than on their triumphs. His breadth of learning is so wide that there can be an element of “looking how clever I am.” But this can add to its readability, and it remains a key text for anyone interested in the formation of the Islamic world.



In this lecture, Professor Kennedy considered how practices that later took root often began as a result of improvised decisions made in recently conquered oases, villages or towns. At Khaybar, for example, the Prophet Muhammad by allowing Jews to keep their land but pay taxes laid the basis for the taxation of non-Muslim communities within the later empire. At Taif with its higher rainfall and fertility, Al-Baladhuri gives fascinating details on what could be taxed – leading to a discussion of fiscal structure for centuries to come. At Najran the Muslims encountered a well-established Christian community and led to rulings on what the Christians were obliged to do and what guarantees were provided to them by the Muslim rulers.

Unfortunately, there is little on Yemen (which al-Baladhuri never visited) and Oman in contrast to accounts of the conquests of Gulf, where the Muslim armies faced fierce resistance. In Bahrain and the adjoining mainland there was the first encounter with Zoroastrians. The experience

in Bahrain led to an understanding of how Zoroastrians should be treated in Iran. They – and later Buddhists and Hindus in Sindh - were given a status extrapolated from how Christians and Jews were regarded as “people of the book”. On the other hand, the inhabitants of Yamama rejected the Muslims initially leading to a fight to the death before they were subdued.

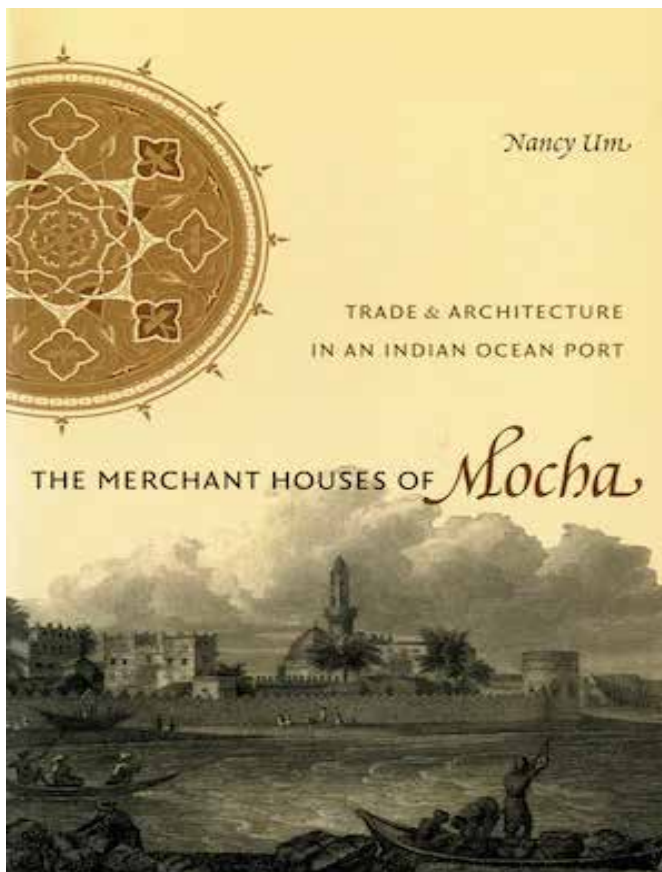
After the death of the Prophet some areas rescinded their allegiance. In most places Muslim rule could be re-established by negotiation but in parts of Central Arabia and in Hadhramaut they were put down with force – leading al-Baladhuri into a discussion on tribal warfare. The last of these campaigns was against the Kindi in Hadhramaut. Initial resistance was followed by integration with a Kindi marrying one of Abu Bakr’s daughters. A later descendant was a famous philosopher who initiated the translation of the Greek philosophers into Arabic.

No other source gives a tour d-horizon to match that of Al-Baladhuri or his style and his sometimes-bizarre excursions into what interests him – making even the modern reader interested. A video of the lecture is available on the IASA [YouTube channel](#).

12th December 2022 Mocha in the 17th and 18th Centuries: Yemen's Age of Coffee by Dr. Nancy Um, Associate Director for Research and Knowledge Creation at the Getty Research Institute and a faculty member in the Department of Art History at Binghamton University 2001-2022. A joint lecture with the British Yemeni Society and The MBI al Jaber Foundation.

Mocha is synonymous with coffee. The first coffee drinker is reputed by many sources to have been Shaikh Ali bin Umar Al-Shadhilli, who was born in Zabid and lived and was buried in Mocha in the early 15th century. That attribution may be contested but there is no doubt of his importance as a spiritual guide and founder of a Sufi lodge in Mocha. Mocha was developed as a major port by the Ottomans in their first period of occupation of Yemen from 1538 to





1626. It quickly flourished because of its position at the southern end of the Red Sea at the Bab al Mandab giving it easy access to the Indian Ocean. Mocha's location made it particularly attractive to merchants from India, notably the port of Surat in Gujarat and close links quickly developed between the two port cities and dominated its trade. It was the Ottomans who set up the commercial coffee system and facilitated its cultivation on a large scale. After their departure, the Qasimi Imams continued to use Mocha, which prospered under their control until the early 19th century when it entered into a long period of decline exacerbated by the rise of Aden and the opening of the Suez Canal. Mocha's merits – and its access to coffee – attracted the attention of European merchants – British, French and Dutch who established themselves in the city from the late 17th century.

Nancy Um's research explores the Islamic world from the perspective of the coast, with a focus on material, visual, and built culture on the Arabian Peninsula and around the rims of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. In this talk she drew on the research that she conducted for her book *The Merchant Houses of Mocha: Trade and Architecture in an Indian Ocean Port* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009). She shared new findings and interpretations that have emerged since its publication. Dr Um discussed

the available sources for research in Mocha. There are the many accounts from travellers such as Carsten Niebuhr who visited and died in the city in the late 18th. Many of these fed off previous accounts and need careful interpretation. Another major source are the large English and Dutch East India companies, whose economic and commercial records often include descriptions of happenings in the city and give clues to how wider major political events that might affect trade and security. Yemeni chronicles often look at Mocha from the perspective of the highlands. By triangulating the accounts of foreigners, residents in the city and Yemen chronicles on the same event – for example a major French attack on Mocha in 1737 – the full impact can be properly assessed. These sources can also illuminate how Mocha was affected by periods of instability over succession crises in the Qasimi period.

Mocha was the point of export, but it was part of a wider system. The main coffee market was at Bayt al-Faqih where under the Qasimis, coffee was brought down from the highlands and sold in bulk. Merchants went to Bayt al-Faqih from Mocha (or used agents) as did those from Jeddah which was a centre of trade for the northern part of the Red Sea. It was a cash market using silver coinage. The Imams took a close interest in the trade from which they benefitted and in Mocha itself and used the usually influential governor, the overseer of Trade (Ami al-Bahr) and others to ensure a flow of revenues and to keep in touch with international events.

As an art historian Nancy Um argues that the visual evidence from early maps and photographs need to be recognised for what they can reveal and bring to life the written accounts. One of the earliest photos was by Auguste Bartholdi (who designed the Statue of Liberty) and shows examples of the Red Sea style of architecture than can be seen in other port cities. There is a clear connection with architectural features in Surat introduced by the Gujarati traders. Another important source are the many photographs taken by Hermann Burckhardt in 1909. Dr Um was able to use these photographs and the memories of elderly residents to trace what is left of these buildings. Many have been destroyed, most tragically the tomb of Al-Shadhilli at some time during the current war that started in 2015. However, a mosque dedicated to him nearby has survived – so far.

Report by Noel Brehony

31st January 2023 Yemen and Ethiopia: archaeology and movement across the Red Sea by Richard Lee, winner of the British Yemeni Society Academic Award. Joint lecture with the British Yemeni Society.

Richard Lee, a current PhD candidate in the Dept of Archaeology, University of York, gave a joint online talk, in February last, about his research. Nearing the end of his doctoral study the talk focussed on his research subject investigating the impact of obsidian on the first millennium BC relationship between Ethiopian Tigray and the Yemen Tihamah. The speaker has a long career as a field archaeologist having worked in Yemen, Ethiopia, Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, and Benin, as well as an extensive period in the British commercial archaeology sector. Last year the speaker was the recipient of a British-Yemen Society scholarship award which contributed to travel expenses to Zanzibar where he presented a conference paper at the Pan-African Archaeology Conference on this very topic.

In Ethiopia the period under investigation is the pre-Aksumite, and on the Yemen the same timeframe (800-400 BC) is usually referred to as Sabeaen or, by some, South Arabian. The archaeological record of both regions is one that is still being developed hence there are many questions still arising about terminology, chronology, and identification. The speaker proposed that obsidian, probably sourced at the Nabro volcano in the Danakil depression, was a significant factor in the emerging social complexity in Ethiopia ca. 800 BC. One of the primary recipients of trade with Tigray are the sites on the Yemen Tihamah including Al-Midaman, Al-Hamid, Al-Kashawba, Al-Mohandid, and to the north of Aden Ma'layba-Sabir.

Danakil depression sourced obsidian had been traded with Egypt in the fourth millennium BC and with the Yemen Tihamah in the fifth millennium BC hence an early trade route was in place by the time this research's temporal definition began. What became apparent during the research was that significant quantities of obsidian were arriving at some Yemen Tihamah sites suggesting that either an economic or aesthetic factor was at play in exchange. In return, it appears that Yemen was exporting incense, ceramics, potentially writing in the form of inscriptions, and possibly construction skills. The latter may be in evidence at the Temple of Yeha, and Meqaber Ge'awa temple in Ethiopian Tigray, and the former can be evidenced both there

and at other sites across the Tigray highlands. A full cultural transfer from Yemen to Ethiopia was transpiring in the early first millennium BC. A Sabeaen influence is in evidence in the earliest stratigraphic phases of Yeha and Meqaber Ge'awa indicating an early South Arabian presence in Ethiopia.

Between Ethiopia and Yemen is both the Danakil depression, and the Red Sea, both challenging topographies that were being crossed. Obsidian was being transported east, and incense was being transported west. In Tigray a trade route links Yeha temple, with the site of Ona Adi, Meqaber Ge'awa and then crosses the Danakil depression, where Nabro volcano, source of the obsidian, is located. The exchange mechanism is unknown but obsidian was then being transported east across the Danakil to the Red Sea, where it was shipped to, most likely it would appear, the Tihamah coastal site of Al-Midaman and then into the Tihamah interior. As well as the obsidian moving east there are various African ceramic styles which are perhaps forming a part of the long-distance trade potentially linking the Gash Delta with Eritrean Adulis, possibly the Farasan islands, and as far south as Sabir, close to Aden. There is also the added factor of trade arriving from Egypt, despite a veritable lack of Egyptian evidence in either Tihamah or Tigray. It has been suggested by many that the Egyptians were visiting Punt, this trans-Red Sea locality defined by Sudan, Eritrea, Yemen, and Djibouti.

The speaker concluded by noting that the late Rodolfo Fattovich had defined a Tihamah Cultural Complex in operation across the Red Sea that included much of the definition that has previously been applied to Punt. Certainly, the first millennium BC in the Yemen Tihamah and Ethiopian Tigray were being motivated, economically or otherwise, by the exchange of obsidian that appears to be a singular component of the growth in social complexity in the early first millennium BC. Further archaeological fieldwork is required in both Ethiopia and Yemen, both of course still experiencing military conflicts, in order to populate the first millennium BC with more data.

Report by Richard Lee

FORTHCOMING IASA LECTURES

The IASA 2023 lecture series is currently being finalised and members will be sent details in due course. Non-members may check our social media accounts for details, or contact outreach@theiasa.com.

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.



Moesgaard Museum. Image: <https://www.moesgaardmuseum.dk>

From 4th – 6th August 2023, the 56th Seminar for Arabian Studies will take place at Moesgaard Museum and Aarhus University, Denmark. This year we celebrate the 70th jubilee of the pioneering Arabian Gulf expeditions (est. 1953-). The seminar has been jointly organized by the department of Archaeology at Aarhus University and the Orient

Department at Moesgaard Museum.

Approximately 75 papers will be delivered during the conference ranging from the Paleo/Neolithic of the Arabian Peninsula to early Islamic times. On 5th August, 11 of these papers will be delivered in a special session, Bronze Age Arabia - 70 years on... - what we have learned, and what we still don't know?, in which invited international experts will treat the latest research on Bronze Age Arabia and explore new directions. There will also be approximately 25 thematically oriented posters.

On 4th August, Prof. Adrian Parker, Professor of Geography in the Department of Geography at Oxford Brookes University, will deliver the keynote Beatrice de Cardi Lecture at this year's Seminar (sponsored by the Society of Antiquaries). The keynote lecture will be held in the new main auditorium of Moesgaard Museum and is followed by a wine party also at Moesgaard Museum. The wine party will be a celebration of the 70th jubilee Moesgaard Museum and Aarhus University pioneering expeditions to Bahrain and will be attended by a number of long retired senior pioneers of the first expeditions (1953-1978).

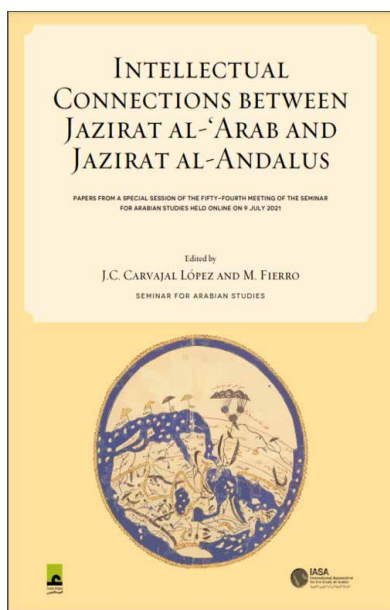
We cordially invite you to participate in the conference, which will be held as a hybrid event in presence and virtually. Registration will be open soon.

Please note before you reserve accommodations in Aarhus that the Seminar will be held at Moesgaard Museum only on the first day (4th Aug.) and at Aarhus University on both the second and third day (5-6th Aug.). It is highly recommended that reservations are made in Aarhus Town in proximity to Aarhus University and not near Moesgaard Museum.

Further information can be found [here](#) and from the Seminar secretary, Kate Ayres-Kennet: seminar.arab@iasa.com

IASA PUBLICATIONS

Intellectual links between Jazirat al-‘Arab and Jazirat al-Andalus



This book is the publication of the special session “Intellectual connections between Jazirat al-‘Arab and Jazirat al-Andalus”, celebrated in the 54th Seminar for Arabian Studies (2021), with the support of Casa Árabe in Cordoba, Spain. The book is published by Casa Arabe, with editorial support from the IASA Standing Committee. The session offered many interesting results, of which five are included in this volume. The sixth paper of the volume (the first one in the organisation of this volume) emerges out of the Keynote Lecture delivered by Maribel Fierro. They are all highly original studies that trace the connections and bridges between culture, philosophy, religiosity and memory between very distant lands.

The first paper of the volume, authored by Maribel Fierro, discusses the ways in which the Holy City of Madina, in the Hejaz, became present in religious practices in Maghreb and al-Andalus. Madina was of course the resting place of the Prophet and the birthplace of the founder of the Maliki school of law (Malik ibn Anas). It became the object of so strong a devotion that believers unable to travel would undertake ‘virtual’ pilgrimages by sending letters to be read at Muhammad’s Grave. Fierro also notes how the narrative of the attempt of two Iberian Christians to steal the body of Muhammad was instrumentalised as a call to protect al-Andalus from the advance of the Christian polities. The last part of the paper

is dedicated to explore the ways in which a vision of Umayyad Cordoba as a new Madina was built as an attempt to boost the Umayyad’s political credentials.

The connections of al-Andalus with Madina and other Eastern centres of knowledge are further explored in the next paper by Abdenour Padillo Saoud. He follows the evidence of biographical dictionaries to find out where Andalusí scholars were travelling to learn. They visited different masters in Kairouan, Cairo, Iraq, and, most importantly, Madina and Mecca. The period under consideration encompasses the years between 711, the beginning of the conquest of al-Andalus, and 852, the end of the emirate of ‘Abd al-Rahman II, a turning point in the historical construction of the Umayyad polity in the Iberian peninsula and of the travels of the early scholars. It is in this early period when the intellectual life of al-Andalus was more dependent of the centres of the knowledge of the East; after 852, Andalusí scholars developed their own culture of learning schools, and, although travels continued, destinations were more diverse. Padillo Saoud is able to offer an overview of the masters that the early Andalusí scholars visited and the topics on which they showed most interest.

From the centrality of Arabia in the religiosity and the intellectuality of al-Andalus it is necessary to go on to consider the presence of the Arabian tribes in the collective mind. This is the object of study of the next paper, written by Jaafar Ben El-Hajj Soulami. The author develops a detective work to try to recompose the works of Ibn Habib, the earliest Andalusí genealogist, on the bases of the work of later scholars. In his reconstruction of Ibn Habib’s writings, Ben El-Hajj Soulami shows what the priorities of the scholar were, and how central the memory of Arabia was in Andalusí thought. Ibn Habib links the history of al-Andalus to a sacred history that connects the Andalusí tribes with Biblical tribes and with the Islamic sacred genealogy (the Prophet and His companions). Interestingly, the Berbers are given a special (negative) place in this sacred history, which additionally tends to ignore the great Islamic conquerors of the West (like ‘Uqba ibn al-Nafi‘ al-Fihri) and the non-Muslim Iberian families. The clearest beneficiaries of this mentality were the Umayyads, representatives of the prestigious Quraysh tribe, which they promoted to the point of creating a registration office of Qurayshis in al-Andalus. Ben El-Hajj Soulami offers many interesting reflections about the meaning of this

particular institution in relation to the “genealogical science.”

And from genealogical science, the next paper by Sara Solá Portillo and Dana Zaben takes us to medicine. The authors explore in this text the role of the Arabic language as a medium of transmission of knowledge. Arabic was for centuries a spoken dialect of the nomad tribes of Arabia, but thanks to the Islamic expansion and the rise of the Caliphates became one of the main scientific and philosophical languages of the Middle Ages. Solá Portillo and Zaben focus on medical Arabic, in particular Galen’s *On Simple Drugs*, and on the translations that enabled the transmission of ancient knowledge in Greek to Latin, via Arabic. But the influence of Arabic goes beyond simple transmission. Galen’s original text was translated in Baghdad in the 9th century by Hunayn ibn Ishaq and his disciples. This was a task that involved no less than creating a new pharmacological terminology, and that allowed later generations of Arabic scholars to advance medical knowledge significantly, and this is clearly seen in the footprint that the Arabic left in Latin as well. When Gerard of Cremona translated *On Simple Drugs* from Arabic to Latin in Toledo in the 12th century, he was forced to use Arabic words to reflect Greek technical terms, and he even commented on the book with the use of arabisms to expand the text. As Solá Portillo and Zaben note, this is a case example of a larger tradition of transmission of knowledge that went beyond mere translation, and that had the connection between Arabia and al-Andalus at its core.

The deep meaning of translation is also the focus of the reflection made by José María Toro Piqueras in the next paper. The connection between Arabia and al-Andalus is not unilinear and clear in this paper, but that does not mean it is not there. Toro Piqueras’ analyses, in his own words, “the hidden threads that link the Arabian and the Iberian peninsulas” through an analysis of a tale by Jorge Luis Borges, one of the most famous literature writers in Spanish language, but also a prolific translator. The tale “Averroes’s Search” considers the efforts of Averroes, Ibn Rushd, to understand Aristotle without the necessary background, and highlights both the futility of any attempt to reach a perfect transmission, but also the creative engagement that any translation involves. Toro Piqueras takes this element of reflection to Borges’s own story. The Argentinian writer used an Orientalist translation into English of a famous mu‘allaqa where “death”

was translated as “the blundering of a blind camel.” The misleading translation, however, becomes the source of creativity in Borges’s tale, as the discussion on the metaphor is central to the story. Toro Piqueras argues that the source of this creativity is an ultimate understanding of the mu‘allaqa beyond the Orientalist translation, which is a reflection of the intimate historical connection between Arabia and al-Andalus in the fantasy of the Argentinian author.

The final paper in this collection inverts the direction of the flow of relationships between Arabia and al-Andalus. If all the other papers focus on the influence of Arabia on al-Andalus, or on the thought about al-Andalus, the work of Naser Dumairieh looks at the influence of a prominent Andalusí mystic, Ibn ‘Arabi, on Hejazi scholarly debates. In particular, Dumairieh focuses on two scholars of the Akbarian tradition, Al-Shaykh al-Makki and Muhammad ibn Rasul al-Barzanji al-Madani, who wrote apologetically in favour of the philosophy of Ibn ‘Arabi and against his polemicists. For Dumairieh, the presence and the argumentation of these two scholars reveals the spread of traditions of Akbarian thought in the Arabian Peninsula before the development of Wahhabism. This not only offers a glimpse of the variety of the intellectual life in the Hejaz in the seventeenth century, but also brings to light another connection between Arabia and al-Andalus.

It is fair to say that papers collected in this volume covered a range of topics that account for the many links that connect the two Islamic peninsulas, some of them as solid as ostensible, others more ethereal and surreptitious, but not less relevant.

By José C. Carvajal López

The editors are always keen to hear from potential contributors, who in the first instance should contact either: Dr St John Simpson: ssimpson@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk or Dr Derek Kennet: derek.kennet@durham.ac.uk.

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COUNTRY NEWS AND RESEARCH

BAHRAIN

An archaeology of African presence in Bahrain (7th-19th c. AD). Overview of ceramic, epigraphic, and toponymic evidence by Awet T Araya

This paper presents an overview of my PhD research, which focused on the archaeological investigation of the African presence in Bahrain during the Islamic period (7th - 20th centuries). The study uncovered African ceramics, an Arabic inscription, and toponymic indicators, suggesting a strong and continuous African presence in Bahrain.

By implication, the results affirmed the historical link between the Red Sea/East Africa and the Gulf, previously only attested in textual sources.

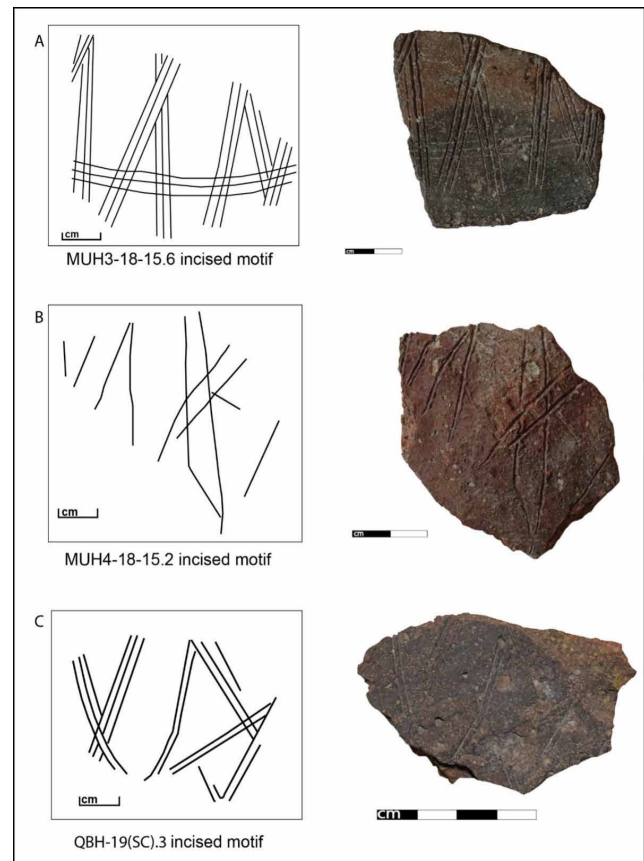


Figure 1. Examples of the TIW/TT style sherds excavated from Muharraq town, Bahrain (Image ©Awet T. Araya)

The African ceramics identified in this research indicate Bahrain's link to East Africa and the Horn of Africa. One ceramic group falls under the 'Triangular Incised Ware (TIW) or Tana Tradition (TT)' of the East African coast (Horton & Chami, 2017, p. 140). Several sherds of this type were found from excavations in Muharraq town in a context associated with pearl/fish facility and dated to the 7th- 8th century AD (Fig. 1). Similar ceramics were also identified at other sites in Bahrain, such as Bilad al-Qadim and Qala'at al-Bahrain, from later periods (11th – 16th centuries AD). TIW/TT style ceramics were previously reported elsewhere in the Gulf, such as in Siraf (western Iran), Julfar (Ras al-Khaimah, UAE), Sohar, Ras al-Hadd, and Inqat/Khor-Rori (Oman), and Sharma (eastern Yemen) (see Whitcomb, 1975; Hansman, 1985; Kervran, 2004; Rougeulle, 2007, 2015; Priestman, 2021) suggesting a wide distribution of this ware and a strong link with the Swahili coast.

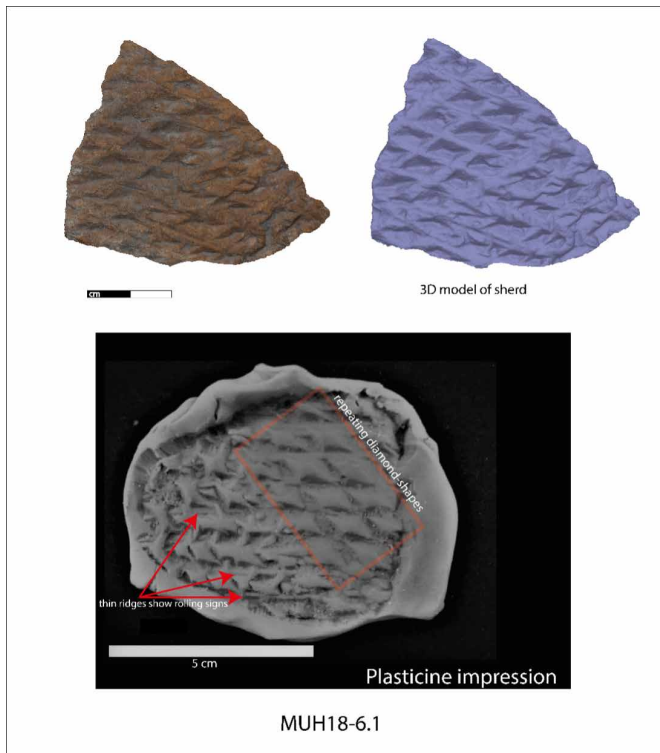


Figure 2. An example of African Rouletted sherd excavated from Muharraq town, Bahrain (Image ©Awet T. Araya)

Another category of African ceramics found in Bahrain is Rouletted ware (Fig. 2), a ceramic tradition common in the Great Lakes Region and central and West Africa (see, for example, Soper, 1985; Haour, Manning, Arazi, & Gosselain, 2010; Kyazike, 2013). A number of sherds of this ware type were uncovered from excavations at Muharraq town, Samahij, and al-Sayah island, often associated with coastal activities. African rouletted ware has yet to be found elsewhere in the Gulf, making the Bahrain sherds significant as material evidence of links beyond the coastal region of East Africa.

Red slipped, and Black burnished ware (BBW/SBBW) ceramics of possible Horn of Africa origin were also identified. However, further research is required to determine their provenance as similar ceramic wares are produced in western India, particularly Gujarat (Priestman, 2021b, pp. 82-83; Insoll, Carter, Almahari, & MacLean, 2021, p. 403). A preliminary petrographic analysis of some SBBW/BBW sherds from Muharraq town indicates more than one source or manufacturing technology, possibly of non-Indian varieties. African slipped/burnished ceramics were previously found in the Gulf, such as the Comorian Red Slip and Red Slip with graphite stripe found at the medieval site of Sharma (Rougeulle, Sharma: un entrepôt

de commerce médiéval sur la côte du Ḥaḍramawt (Yémen, ca 980-1180), 2015, p. 173); and a Black or Brown burnished type sherd at al-Balid, Oman, which is almost certainly Horn of African style, possibly from northern Ethiopia (cf. Fusaro, 2021, pp. 77-8; fig. 13).

The identification of these African ceramics augments the putative material evidence for African presence previously attested in Bahrain, such as an ivory rod from Muharraq town (Carter & Naranjo-Santana, 2011, p. 36; fig. 27); ivory fragments from Qala'at al-Bahrain (Frifelt, 2001, p. 54), as well as ivory and ebony objects from the famous site of Bilad al-Qadim (MacLean & Insoll, 2003, p. 563).



Figure 3. Arabic inscription from Jidda Island, Bahrain, thought to be engraved by an enslaved person working to quarry rock used to mend the Bahrain fort in 1561, Bahrain (Belgrave, 1960, p. 75) (for translation, see Højlund, 2013, p. 174)

Additionally, epigraphic and archaeological evidence from Jidda Island, northwestern Bahrain, suggests that an enslaved African may have written a 16th century Arabic inscription found there (Fig. 3). The engraver referred to himself as an 'abd (meaning slave or servant), thus, clearly stating his social status. While the engraver's African association is still a matter of debate, funerary gravestones with cup marks for playing the East African board game 'Mancala' have been found in Bahrain (Insoll, Almahari, & MacLean, 2019, p. 28). Given the possibility that the gravestones were quarried from Jidda Island (Højlund, 2013) and some of these stones are contemporaneous with the Arabic inscription suggests a possible African origin for the engraver.

Furthermore, other evidence suggests the presence of Africans in Bahrain based on the toponyms of Jeblat Hebshi, Zinj, and Baijwiayah. I hypothesize

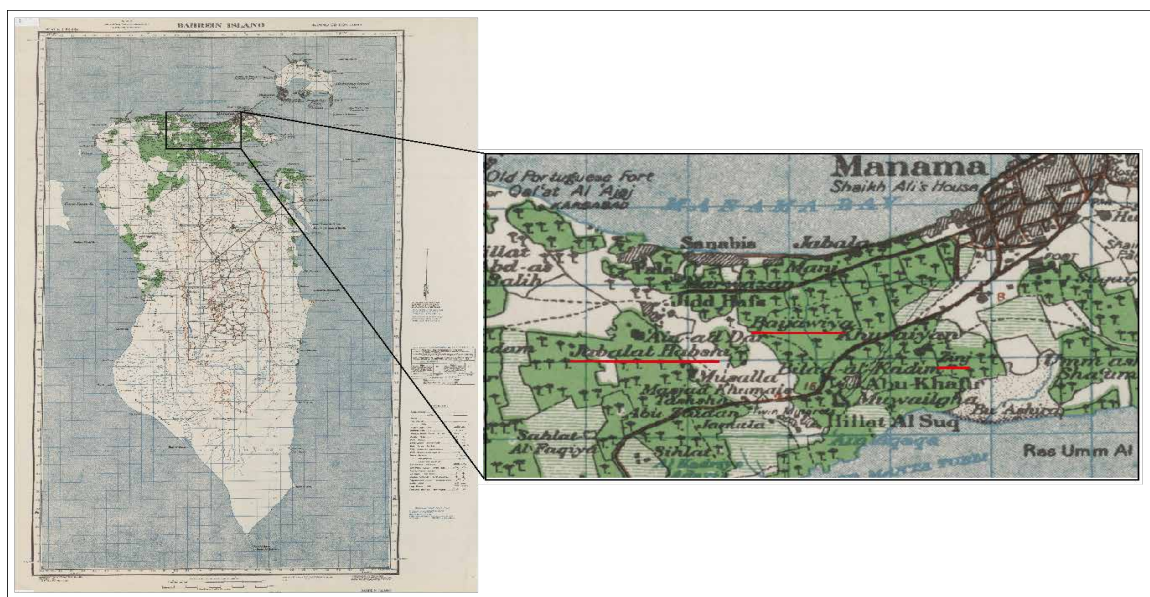


Figure 4. Image showing *Jeblat Hebshi*, *Bajawiyah* and *Zinj*, underlined by red lines. Note the locations within the extensive agricultural areas. Bahrain 1937-39 (reproduced after mapBH, 2022)

that these toponyms relate to the ethnonyms 'Habash', 'Zanj', and 'Bajawi' (Beja), which suggest a possible association with Northeast and East Africa (see Muller, Uhlig, & Belcher, 2005; Ullendorff, Trimingham, Beckingham, & Watt, 2012; Arndt, 2018, p. 62; Perry, 2014, p. 34). To investigate this hypothesis, archaeological investigations were conducted at these three localities. The results show some material indications of African presence, mainly at *Jeblat Hebshi*, where an African sherd and other materials suggest an impoverished community existed there between the 15th and 19th centuries. While further research is needed to expand this hypothesis, preliminary indications from 19th/20th century sources such as Lorimer (1915) and historical maps of Bahrain mention these places as rich agricultural lands (Fig. 4) (Lorimer, 1915; mapBH, 2022). This raises the possibility that the villages were what Benjamin Reilly called 'African agricultural colonies' (Reilly, 2015, pp. 57-8), given the involvement of African labour in plantations in Bahrain, at least in the 18th and 19th centuries (Ricks, 1988).

These results shed light on the archaeology of the African diaspora in Bahrain and the Gulf and corroborate the complex historical connection between the Red Sea/East Africa and the Gulf during the Islamic period. They add to the rich African heritage in Bahrain in music and dance performance (i.e. *Tambura*, *Leiwa* etc) and ritual traditions such as *zar*.

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Life and death at Tell Abraḡ during the 2nd and 1st millennium BC: The Abraḡ Research Project's 2022 season

by M. Degli Esposti (Italian Archaeological Mission in Umm al-Quwain) and F. Borgil (Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Studies – Polish Academy of Sciences).

Between October and November 2022, the Italian Archaeological Mission in Umm al-Quwain (IAMUQ) carried out the fourth field season of the Abraḡ Research Project, in collaboration with the Tourism and Archaeology Department of Umm al-Quwain (TAD-UAQ) and the Department of Earth Sciences of the University of Milan.



Figure 1: Zenithal view of the IAMUQ excavation on the eastern flank of Tell Abraḡ (November 2022). The red outline indicates the extent of the step trench excavated by D.T. Potts in 1990, which has been re-cleaned by the IAMUQ, removing the collapsed baulks between the original excavation's squares. The structures of Building I are visible to the right, with the reconstruction of its earliest core's layout.

Building on previous seasons' results (Degli Esposti and Borgi, 2020; Hussein Kannoama, Degli Esposti and Borgi, 2021; Michele Degli Esposti et al., 2022), the investigations focused both on the multi-period site of Tell Abraḡ and the burial ground of Abraḡ 2, located some 700m to the east of the former site. Given that the eastern extension of Tell Abraḡ's settlement and the western reaches of Abraḡ 2's burial ground are truncated and/or obscured by modern development, the two sites were surely much closer to each other in the past and can thus be considered as a single archaeological complex.



Figure 2: Ongoing excavation in Building I.

At Tell Abraq, the excavations are currently targeting contexts dated to the mid-2nd and 1st millennium BC, with evidence for late pre-Islamic activity during the first centuries AD. The latter is so far only witnessed by extensively robbed graves and a concentration of scattered materials which yielded a remarkable number of terracotta figurines, bronze statuettes, and two exceptional stone statues. While most of these items, currently under study, find parallels in late Pre-Islamic sites in the Arabian Peninsula, the two statues at a first glance recall Parthian prototypes and can be most likely connected to the period of Characanian hegemony over the maritime trade in the Persian Gulf (e.g., Gregoratti, 2011).

The most striking discovery of the Mission, a huge stone building (Building I) for which several construction phases are evident, can be dated to the mid-2nd millennium or to its final quarter (additional radiocarbon dates are pending). One of the main results of the 2022 season has been the identification of the original layout of the earliest core of the building, later enlarged with successive additions. The peculiar building technique of this earlier edifice finds no parallel in South East Arabia, both for the quality of the mortar binding the walls and the presence of small triangular windows (or ventilation slits) on all the surviving walls. This induces some speculation about the possible external influences leading to its construction, which will be investigated with a survey of the architectural traditions of the neighbouring regions. The fact that a particular concentration of imported large jars, two of which bear the impression of exotic cylinder seals (Majchrzak and Degli Esposti, 2022), was found in a dump within the area of this earlier building, highlights its relevance. This is made even more evident by the contrast with the site's surrounding areas, where more ephemeral constructions are witnessed, apparently at the same date.



Figure 3. View of the northern wall of the original core of Building I, showing the aligned triangular windows (three surviving and two dismantled ones).

Excavation at Abraq 2 provided insight into the funerary architecture adopted by the same community that likely erected Building I. A strong indication in this direction is the use of the same building technique for some of the grave structures, particularly for those that can be recognised relatively early in the construction sequence. So far, five subterranean or semi-subterranean chambers were identified. Four of these, however, appear to be connected and possibly represent the progressive extension of a single-chamber original grave. Despite being heavily robbed, enough grave goods survived to trace the prolonged use of the graves from the late 2nd through the 1st millennium. This continued use can be associated with the progressive expansion of Building I with changing and less peculiar building techniques.

A fundamental component of the project is the geoarchaeological study of the area, in turn connected with the broader study of the Umm al-Quwain lagoon (M. Degli Esposti et al., 2022). During the last campaign, the excavation of a deep trench at the northern footing of the site's mound has provided evidence for an apparent phase of dune emplacement which should be stratigraphically bracketed between the Late Bronze Age contexts preceding it and the Iron Age (II ?) levels post-dating it. If confirmed, this would constitute an unhoped-for window on ancient climate changes, at such a discrete scale that is not always possible to achieve.



Figure 4. Ortho-rectified view of the excavated burial chambers at Abraaq 2 (November 2022).

Overall, a more complex picture of the site layout during the 2nd and 1st millennium is emerging, going beyond the image of a massive step-terraced site built over the buried remains of the Early Bronze Age tower and surrounded by other light-material structures. The environmental background for the site's development over this period is also being reconstructed based on solid data. The coming seasons will hopefully shed more light on the open questions that, as is often the case, the renewed excavations raised even more than solving previous doubts.

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Seeb Community History Project by Maria Gajewska, Leila Araar, Rosalind MacDonald, Richard Wilding, Charlotte Nash and Seth Priestman

Seeb is the site of an extensive coastal settlement located in the northern suburbs of Muscat, now under imminent threat from urban development. Historical references to the site (also known as Damā) date to the 1st century AD, and the name occurs consistently in Islamic and later Portuguese sources. Previous investigations by a team directed by Prof. Romolo Loreto in 2013 indicate the presence of areas of deep stratigraphy, intact occupation deposits and architectural remains, covering most phases of the Islamic period. More recently, documentation by the local community has continued to highlight the exceptional quality of the finds' assemblage with pottery, glass, soft stone, worked bone, etc drawn from across the Indian Ocean world, often closely comparable to materials from other key urban centres in the region such as Sohar, Samarra or Siraf. However, the extent of the site, as well as the pace at which its boundaries may have changed, remain unclear. Furthermore, as the site is currently undergoing intensive development, the scope for survey which could clarify this is narrowing rapidly.

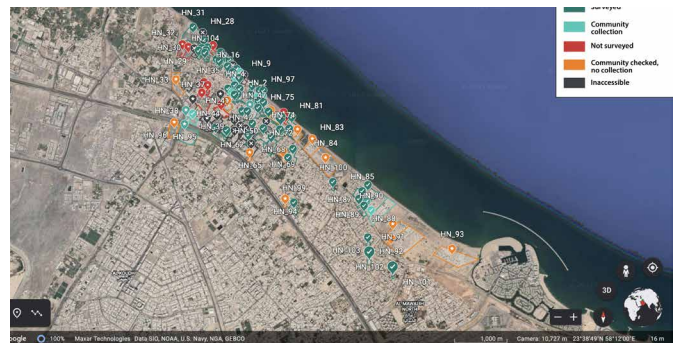


Figure 1. Map of areas surveyed (Google Earth, 2023).

To address this gap, a three-week field-walking survey, followed by an additional week of finds

processing, was carried out, building on Loreto et al's work and incorporating local interest in archaeology and heritage. The project was co-directed by Dr Seth Priestman and Dr Eve MacDonald, with Maria Gajewska acting as field director, and a team comprising Leila Araar (digital archaeologist), Charlotte Nash (glass bangle specialist), Rosalind MacDonald (community archaeologist), and Richard Wilding (photographer).

The survey area, which focused on Al Hail North – part of Seeb which hitherto has shown the most promise of archaeological potential – was mapped in Google Earth in advance of the project, in collaboration with local residents. We have identified pockets of undeveloped land and vacant lots within an otherwise dense, residential neighbourhood. These were assigned unique IDs. Although the coverage was sufficient to allow for some conclusions on spatial patterns, it should be noted that due to the nature of the local terrain, the sample we have surveyed is thus not randomised but purely dictated by practical constraints. The implications of this will be addressed in the final analysis.

Field recording was entirely digital, utilising the opensource KoboToolbox platform (<https://www.kobotoolbox.org>), primarily managed by Leila Araar (University of York). Pottery comprised the overwhelming majority of the finds. These were cleaned, sorted, and labelled. The bulk of the identification was carried out by Maria Gajewska (University of Cambridge), following guidelines, including a reference collection from one of the largest collection areas, established by Seth Priestman and outlined in publication (Priestman 2021a, b). The results will be plotted on a map in GIS software, to visualise the changing boundaries of the settlement through time. The assemblage is very rich, comprising numerous imports from across the Indian Ocean, including Iraq, Iran, India, East Africa, and China. They cover a range from the Early Islamic period until the present day. Facets of the collected assemblage deemed to be of particular interest include the presence of some early Chinese pottery (Changsha ware), a significant assemblage of most types of the Samarra horizon (including lustre wares), and an extensive collection of Indian and, to a lesser extent, East African ceramics. A potential chronological gap in the 14th to 16th centuries has also been noticed. A small but significant assemblage of glass bangles was collected and is

currently being analysed by Charlotte Nash (British Museum and University of Kent).



Figure 2. Sample survey assemblage: Area HN_1 (©Richard Wilding, 2023).

In addition to Loreto et al's work, one of the project's catalysts was the local interest in archaeology. Since 2020, residents of Seeb have been contacting archaeologists on social media, asking for help in identifying the pottery they have found across the area. To capitalise on this interest, we decided to include the material collected by the local community in our analysis. Where they collected archaeological material from the surface (i.e., analogously to a walking survey), we have integrated the data directly into the analysis. Where they acquired material from deep but unstratified contexts (most commonly from house foundation cuts and construction spoil heaps), we have utilised the (limited) qualitative information such data provide. For instance, one of the areas where foundation cut data was available yielded a remarkably large quantity of Early Islamic material, pointing to the potential earliest nucleus of the site and providing a suggestion on where we may want to excavate in the future.



Figure 3. Community workshop (©Richard Wilding, 2023).

In order to integrate the community interest and support future development, a workshop on survey methods and on identifying medieval pottery was organised (following from a pilot workshop led by Maria Gajewska in March 2022), in addition to extensive social media outreach and collaboration with local and Omani organisations (Oman Think Urban, Bat Archaeological Project, Rustaq Community Heritage Group). Public workshops, social media and continuing conversations with residents and other stakeholders form important channels in the pursuit of the project. The future ambition is to build a network to facilitate broad engagement in the monitoring and learning associated with the investigation of a significant historic urban centre of Oman.

Acknowledgements: The Seeb Community History Project would like to thank the British Institute for Persian Studies, the Anglo-Omani Society, and the University of Cambridge for funding the project and the University of Cardiff for logistical assistance. We would also like to extend our warmest thanks to the local community of Seeb for their interest, enthusiasm, and continued support. Here, special thanks are due to Ms Alix Normandeau and Mr Mohammed al-Amri, for their extensive assistance, as well as their profound knowledge of local and Omani history.

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The Wadi al Jizzi Archaeological Project 2023: Excavations of Domestic Buildings in the Wadi al Zuhaimi by Bleda S. Düring, Leiden University

In 2023, following a hiatus in field work related to COVID-19 pandemic, a second stage of WAJAP was initiated. This involves small scale

excavation of targeted sites to obtain more detailed information on the function and dating of specific sites identified during survey work by the WAJAP team. The first site selected for this follow up work was that of Site 73 / Site 66, locally known as Burj Huraiz near the village of Qatariya where we have rural domestic settlements dating to the Umm an-Nar (2700-2000 BCE) and the Wadi Suq (2000-1600 BCE) periods.



Figure 1. Sites in the Liwa hinterlands showing the location of Sites 73 and 66.

Site 73 / 66 was selected because of its well preserved Bronze Age domestic building (Düring et al. 2019). In particular the Wadi Suq buildings are important, as very few settlements from this period are known across eastern Arabia. The archaeology of Bronze Age southeastern Arabia (Umm an-Nar 2700-2000 BCE; Wadi Suq 2000-1600 BCE; Late Bronze Age 1600-1300 BCE) has been dominated by research on large and monumental settlement sites and tombs, and we know relatively little about domestic buildings and domestic economies (Döpfer 2018).

For the 2023 season we excavated three trenches of 5 by 10 metres, which were located over two buildings that had been dated to the Wadi Suq in earlier survey work on the basis of the associated pottery, and one that was dated to the Umm an-Nar period.



Figure 2. Central area of Site 73, with investigated buildings and trenches highlighted.

The two trenches in the Wadi Suq area of the site yielded mixed results. In trench BP.08 we found a building that was originally a Wadi Suq building but had been modified and re-used in the Late Islamic period. Almost all the contexts collected (Loci) from this trench are mixed, containing both Wadi Suq ceramics and Late Islamic sherds (the latter mainly coarse cooking wares and coarse handmade pottery). By contrast in trench BQ.04 a better preserved Wadi Suq building was excavated. In the southeast of the building an entrance was found. Further, two possible installations built with cobbles were also found in the east and the southwest. No constructed floors or in situ finds were retrieved, however.

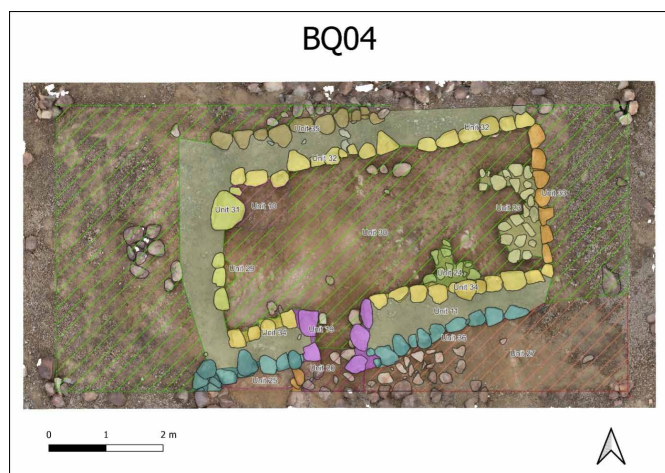


Figure 3. Trench BQ.04 showing the walls of Building 44.

In trench A0.18 the remains of an Umm an-Nar building 33, one of the smaller Umm an-Nar buildings in Site 73, were excavated. The building comprises of a rectangular structure that is situated on a small rock outcrop. The building has two internal walls, one that runs parallel to the southern exterior wall and creates an elongated room in the south of the building. The second internal wall is at 90 degrees to the northern wall and separates the northern half of the building into two spaces. In the center of the room is a larger open area that might have been a courtyard space. No doors into the building or into the southern room have been detected, and it is assumed that the entrances were at a higher level in the walls.

The walls of Building 33 stood to a considerable height of ca. 60 cms, and give a good insight into how buildings were constructed at this time. The walls are a mixture of larger, boulder sized stones with flat side facing the wall surface, and smaller cobble sized stone, occurring as a filling, alongside

a large amount of silty loam that was used as a mortar. Inside Building 33 a considerable amount of stone and loam collapse was encountered, suggesting that the building walls originally were completely stone built.

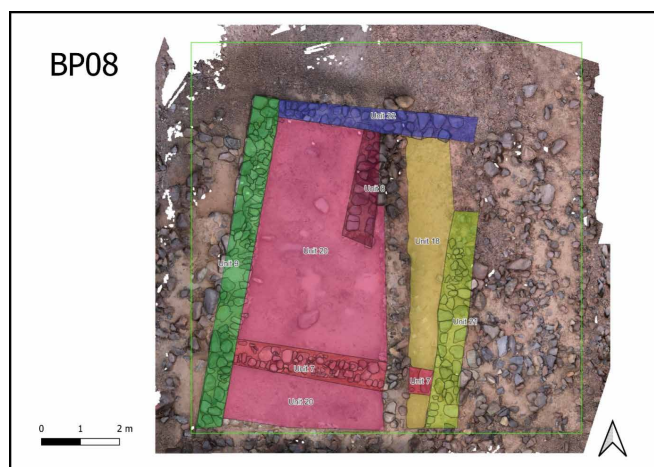


Figure 4. Building 33 in trench A0.18.

In between the wall collapse we found a number of ceramic clusters of partially complete vessels, including one that we could reconstruct to about half a vessel. This find situation indicates that these vessels were located somewhere higher in the building, for instance on the roof or on a shelf, and collapsed with the walls.



Figure 5. Ceramic cluster in Trench A0.18 in between wall collapse and reconstructed vessel.

In the central space of the building, we found a surface with trampled ceramic sherds, and some ashy patches. The deposit below contained much interesting material. Apart from a good amount of pottery (separate sherds, not ceramic clusters), we found some animal bone, soft stone pieces, shells of species not encountered elsewhere, fish bones, denticulate shells / beads, and a good amount of charcoal. Among the more remarkable finds are a bent copper pin, an Indus sherd with graffiti and half of a soft stone bowl with six double circled dots.

The 2023 excavations were sponsored by the Beatrice de Cardi Award and Leiden University. We are grateful for the support of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism staff of the Sultanate of Oman. The excavations will continue in 2024.

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Possible Ancient Historical Connections in Dhofar

by Warren P. Aston.

Two enigmatic structures on the isolated Qamar coast, west of Salalah, have mostly avoided scholarly scrutiny until recently. In a new effort, long-time Oman researcher, Warren Aston, is exploring the origins and purpose of a structure near the settlement of al Hauta, and its possible link to another at Khor Kharfot, both sites situated on the Qamar coast near the border with Yemen.

Historians have long noted the emergence of a group of unclear origin, usually referred to as the Minjui, or simply Minju. By some historical accounts they became the last dynasty to rule over ancient Merbat [Mirbat] at the eastern end of the Salalah bay, now represented by several prominent structures of dry wall construction, and some tombs, before moving westwards to Zafar, the precursor capital to al Baleed by ca.AD 1000. There are emerging indications that they continued moving, or perhaps expanding, further west.



Figure 1. The tower at al Hauta, below the higher terrain inland, taken facing northwards (image: Warren P. Aston).

A study of shrines in Dhofar published in 2010 briefly reported the presence of a stone tower (kūt) overlooking a tiny coastal community east of Rakhyut, and noted stories from local informants that it was built by the “Minjuwi” as the base of a pulley system bringing goods down from the plateau above. The squared tower stands over 6 meters tall with raised rectangular panels on each side.

The same claim by locals about a pulley built by the “Menjuin” had been recorded in 2010 by Aston for a large collapsed stone structure sitting below the high plateau on the eastern side of the bay at Khor Kharfot, west of Rakhyut. The mouth of Wadi Sayq, the Qamar mountains largest drainage system, Khor Kharfot is presently uninhabited but has multiple human structures indicating long, intermittent, habitation.



Figure 2. The collapsed tower, believed to also be squared originally, at Khor Kharfot, with the plateau visible directly behind it (image: Warren P. Aston)

The Ministry of Heritage and Culture in Salalah was advised about the al Hauta structure following its initial examination in December 2021, and it is now registered as a protected archaeological site with them.

Although the study of both towers is ongoing, with further field work planned for February 2023, there are early indications that a link may exist between the two towers, one standing and one collapsed, potentially bringing new appreciation to the roles of this particular group in our understanding of Dhofar’s past. The full preliminary report can be accessed [here](#).

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Further investigations at al-Khutm Bronze Age monumental tower Al-Dhahirah region, Oman by Enzo Cocca (CNR National Research Council, Italy), Maurizio Cattani (University of Bologna, Italy) and Francesca Barchiesi (University of Bologna, Italy)

Al-Khutm tower is a well-preserved monument dating to the end of 3rd and the first half of 2nd millennium BCE. Since 1988 the site is registered in the UNESCO world Heritage list together with other monuments of Bat and the tombs of Al Ayn, representing a unique portrayal of the landscape in the 3rd millennium BCE (Thornton, Schmidt 2015). Thanks to the high state of preservation and monumentality, the tower of al-Khutm is currently undergoing a project of valorisation that will enhance the main features of the building and surrounding area.



Figure 1. Al-Khutm. Frontal view of the perimeter wall with the excavated area in 2022 campaign (Photo: Maurizio Cattani)

Identified in the early 80's as one of the towers of Bat, al-Khutm was covered by a deposit of collapsed stones several metres deep and remained only partially visible until 2015, when a project – funded by the Ministry of Heritage and Culture of Oman – started excavations for the complete investigation and following restoration of the monument (Cocca et al. 2019).

The results of these first years of excavations carried out by an Italian team (2016-2018), directed

by Dr. Enzo Cocca and supervised by Prof. Maurizio Cattani of the University of Bologna, were impressive: the tower with a circular plan has a diameter of 20-22 m and a total height from the surrounding plain of 8 m. The inner area is unique among all the known towers, presenting a central corridor with floors and doors leading to lateral rooms. Common to other monuments is the well, located approximately in the middle of the central corridor (Thornton, Cable, Possehl 2016).

The investigations allowed identification of a complex system of structures annexed to the tower along the western perimeter and on the north-eastern side. A monumental wall, built on the western and south-western sides, enlarges the lower area connected to the tower, while other walls and a monumental staircase located on the northern side define a later construction dating to the 2nd millennium BCE.

Even though the earliest main entrance to the tower was not clearly identified, a complex path running along a monumental ramp was supposed on the north-western side thanks to the presence of corridors with doors marked by thresholds and pivots (Cocca et al. 2016).

Along with the restoration activities of the monuments, a further phase of excavation started in the last months of 2022 carried out by the University of Bologna. The aim was to continue investigations of the external perimeter wall to establish the stratigraphic dating of the monumental structure and to present the full view of the site to visitors.

This last campaign was fully satisfactory: among the main results of the investigation is the full layout of the perimeter wall, built with the same technique of the tower, assuming an original height of at least 4 m. Dimensions and technical characters support the idea of a purposeful monumentality in the design of the building, and the interpretation of defensive function of the structure.

Outside the perimeter wall, a concentric space 2.50 m large was recognized as buffer zone, delimited by a dry-stone wall, possibly built to support the external terraced plain (although this interpretation is still to be clarified) (Fig. 1 & 2). Several traces of activities were recognized in the stratification

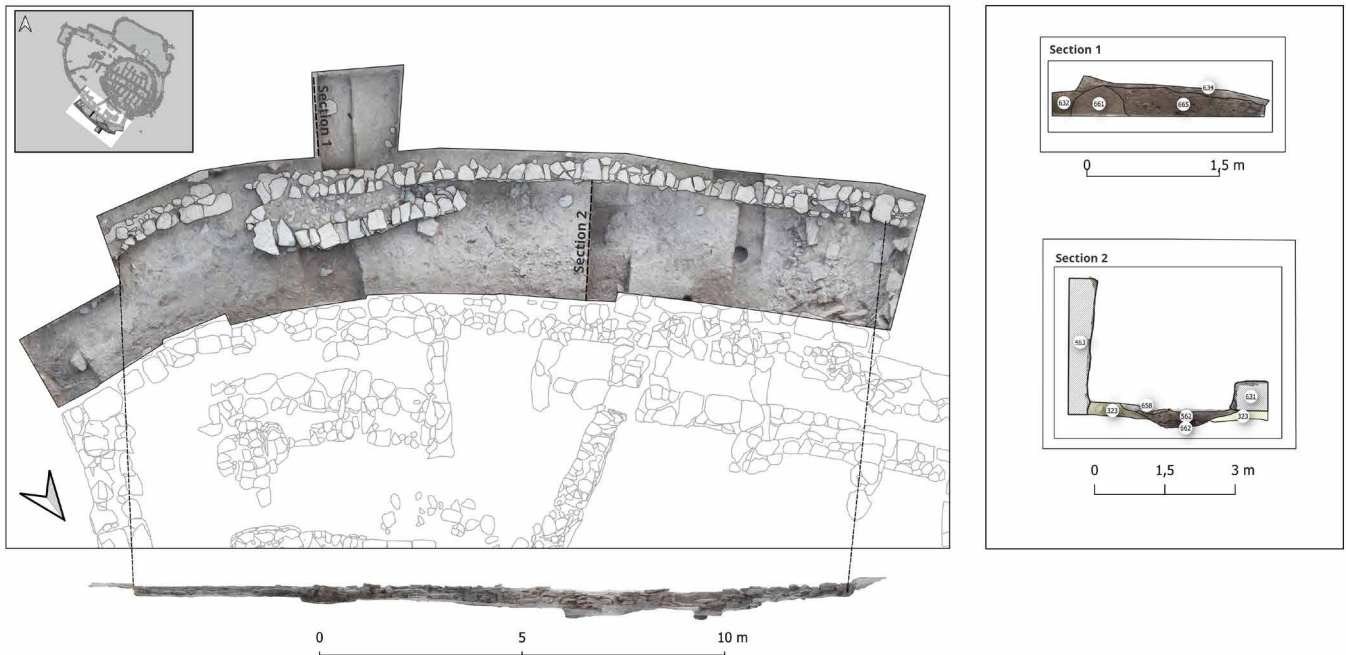


Figure 2. Al-Khutm. Map of the excavated area in 2022 campaign with sections (Elaboration: Enzo Cocca)

dating to the 2nd millennium BCE (above the collapse SU 479), while the lowest layer, containing Umm an-Nar pottery, allowed the team to confirm the construction of the tower at the end of 3rd millennium BCE (Fig. 3).

The activities will continue with the study of the buffer zone up to the building associated with the aforementioned entrance on the north-western side of the tower, in order to complete the footpath for visitors and to improve the visibility of the monument.



Figure 3. Al-Khutm. Selection of finds from 2022 campaign. 3.1: Soft-stone vessel with dot-in-circle decoration from the collapse SU 479. 3.2: Pottery with an incised mark on the rim from SU 636. 3.3: Painted pottery with an applied wavy ridge on the shoulder from SU 636. 3.4: Painted pottery from SU 485. (Photos: Francesca Barchiesi)

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QATAR

Human Populations and Demographics in Qatar from the Neolithic to the late Iron Age by Ferhan Sakal and Sara Tomei

The project “Human Populations and



Three graves of Al Kharsaah cemetery during the excavations in 2020. Image: Robert Carter

Demographics in Qatar from the Neolithic to the late Iron Age” started in 2018 as a joint adventure of Sidra Medicine, Tor Vergata University of Rome and Qatar Museums, and it was awarded a National Priority Research Grant of the Qatar National Research Fund. The aim of the project is to conduct the first detailed analysis of skeletal remains from the prehistoric populations of Qatar. It combines interdisciplinary techniques aimed at reconstructing not only population dynamics but also cultural changes, lifestyle, dietary patterns and human genetic diversity both temporally and spatially in ancient Qatari populations.

In two excavation seasons five sites were subject to excavations and yielded seven skeletons in different states of preservation. Additionally, remains from previously excavated graves were newly analysed using a comprehensive array of morphological and molecular analyses (including ancient DNA profiling and stable isotope analyses). This multidisciplinary approach is allowing us to gain insights into prehistoric Qatari society.

Several individuals displayed dental pathologies suggesting that the individuals studied might have used the teeth for daily activities. Markers of skeletal pathologies and metabolic diseases were also found. The ancient DNA and stable isotope data is also providing insights on the diet and mobility of the prehistoric Qatari Society. Additionally, the chronology of graves in Qatar was revised with absolute dating methods based on bone and teeth bioapatite, as usually bone collagen is not sufficiently well preserved in hot environments.

The project was finalized at the beginning of 2023 and the results will be subject to publication very soon. This project was supported by a grant from the Qatar National Research Fund (NPRP10-0208-170411). The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Qatar National Research Fund.

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Excavations at Ain Muhammed and Mesaika, two Early Islamic sites in north Qata

by Robert Carter

The Qatar peninsula is unusually rich in well-preserved sites of the Early Islamic period, with more than 20 sites and clusters identified so far, mostly in the north. Surface material shows a date range for most of them between the 8th and 9th centuries CE. In order to investigate these sites and explore the possibility that they spanned the period of transition between Christianity and Islam, the Landscape of Faith Project was set up. Funded by Qatar Museums (QM) in collaboration with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD), excavations began in November-December 2022 at two sites in north Qatar: Ain Muhammed and Mesaika. Both revealed unexpectedly large and well-built domestic structures, broadly similar in conception but with the former site including more plastered elements, such as windows with

plastered archways. The architecture of both is more complex, more heavily built and more highly finished than that found at the site of Murwab, a large dispersed site of the mid-late 9th century which has been investigated since the 1950s by Danish and French teams. However there are also similarities with Murwab at both sites, for example in the provision of numerous plastered platforms and basins. Their excavated material dates both of them provisionally to the very late 8th or very early 9th century CE, earlier than Murwab. Although not located directly on the coast, both sites show evidence of intimate connections with the sea, while the bulk of their material culture consists of imported ceramics and glassware typical of 8th-9th century sites found elsewhere in the Gulf region and southern Iraq. Numerous outstanding questions remain, particularly concerning the nature of the economic and subsistence activities practised at these and similar sites, the degree of sedentism, the faith of the inhabitants, and the nature of their connections with the outside world. In addition to the excavations, an extensive kite survey of other sites was undertaken by Frank Stremke, building on work begun in 2018. The project is directed by Robert Carter (QM) and Andrew Petersen (UWTSD).



3D Digitization of Fossil Dugong Sites in Qatar

by Nick Pyenson and Ferhan Sakal

Mr Essa Al-Mansouri and Dr. Sakal, both Qatar Museums, at a Miocene fossil dugong site in Qatar. Photo: N. D. Pyenson / Smithsonian Institution

Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) are herbivorous marine mammals that are ecologically important for

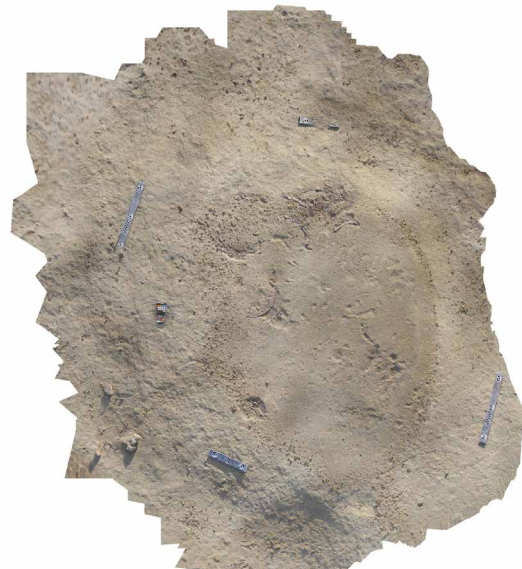


Corner of a room with a plastered basin at Ain Muhammed. Image: Robert Carter.

sustaining coastal habitats, especially in the Gulf Region, which holds the second largest population of this species in the world, after Oceania. Dugongs are also at-risk from habitat loss, pollution, and ship-strike. Historically, dugongs have had a cultural and economic importance to the Gulf Region since the Neolithic, over 7,500 years ago. Recent fieldwork in western and northern Qatar has revealed more details about this population in the Gulf, which lives alongside major petroleum development sites. However, there is also a fossil record of dugongs of Qatar that extends to at least 20 million years ago, which remains incompletely documented. In a collaboration between Qatar Museums and the Smithsonian Institution, Ferhan Sakal and Nick Pyenson have started a project to collect in situ 3D digital data from selected early Miocene dugong fossil sites, which are threatened by wind erosion, infrastructure development and vehicle access. This work will create digital records to preserve these fossils, as well as 3D digital workflows to be applied to other fossil sites in Qatar.

The first season of the project took place in February 2023 during which few previously known dugong fossil sites were visited and digitized.

Below: A preliminary orthographic image from a 3D model of the same Miocene dugong site in Qatar. Photo: N. D. Pyenson and Digitization Program Office / Smithsonian Institution.



the excavations.



Figure 3. Recording Bronze Age structures in Trench 1.1. Image: Daniel Eddisford.



Figure 4. Trench 11 through several Bronze Age structures. Image: Daniel Eddisford.



Figure 5. The excavation team at breakfast. Image: Daniel Eddisford.

LIVES REMEMBERED



Photo: BSA, used with permission

Myrto Georgakopoulou (1976 - 2022)

On 15 December 2022 Myrto Georgakopoulou, an exceptionally talented archaeological scientist with a trajectory in the Arabian Gulf, passed away. Myrto was a member of UCL Qatar from 2013 to 2019. She was a Lecturer in archaeological science and taught regularly in the master programmes of the MSc Conservation Studies and of the MA Archaeology of the Arab and the Islamic World. She also participated in countless teaching and dissemination events. As the academic member of staff in charge of the archaeological laboratories of UCL Qatar, she designed and then managed some of the most cutting-edge facilities in the Middle East. Thanks to her, the use of metallographic and petrographic microscopes, SEM and XRF analysis was easily available for researchers in Qatar and all over the Middle East.

After obtaining a BSc in Chemistry from Imperial College, London, Myrto received a MSc and a PhD in Archaeological Science from the Institute of Archaeology of UCL. She became a member of the Fitch Laboratory of the British School at Athens, first as an Archaeological Chemistry Fellow (2005-2009) and then as first Scientific Research Officer of the institution (2009-2013). Her next position was as Lecturer in archaeological science in UCL Qatar (2013-2019), and her last position was associate researcher at the Cyprus institute. Myrto's first speciality was Aegean archaeometallurgy, with a PhD on Early Cycladic Metallurgy. However, her interest encompassed a wide range of archaeological materials from many different places and times. During her career she taught and supervised a large number of students

and took part in research projects all over the world.

As a member of UCL Qatar, Myrto lived and worked in Doha and was an active researcher in numerous projects all over the Middle East. She was extremely supportive of students and postdocs, usually the more precarious members of academia. She made possible numerous MA, MSc and PhD dissertations by helping students to read and work with complex data (often going the extra mile even for people who were not under her direct supervision). Her support for the development of archaeological science in the region was tireless and huge, if often not well acknowledged. She often was consulted for advice on archaeological science by museums and universities, she provided support and access to the laboratories of UCL Qatar to colleagues, thus making many research endeavours possible.

Among Myrto's abundant research, a few articles have been published in the Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies. These deal mainly with the analysis of ceramics of the Gulf, just one more of the many archaeological materials on which she specialised. Her fundamental contribution in this field consists in the application of a routine for the provenance studies of archaeological ceramics with Wavelength Dispersive X-Ray Fluorescence analysis (which she herself developed and published in 2017). Myrto brought excellence to the analysis of chemical ceramic data of the Gulf, and many of her results still await publication.

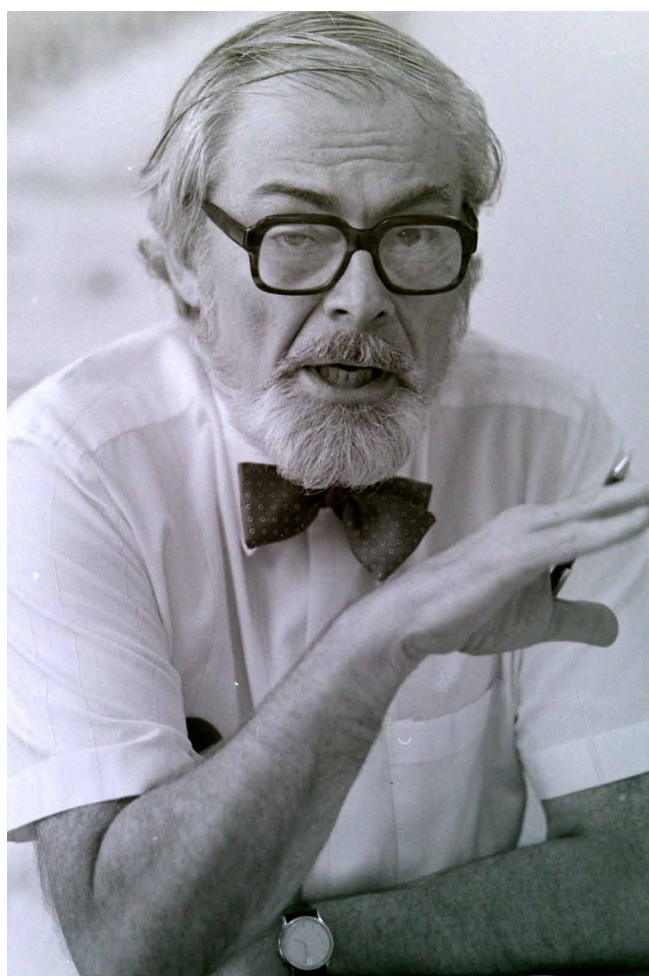
Beyond the academic, Myrto was simply an excellent and wonderful person. She was a beloved friend, much liked by colleagues and students alike. She was intelligent and kind, and showed a strong sense of responsibility at all times. Myrto will be sorely missed by her family: her husband Tom and her daughter Nefeli, her mother Iphigenia and her sister Aliko and her family. The void left by her is also felt throughout by numerous friends, colleagues and students.

In her memory, her family has asked the British School at Athens to set up a programme of 'Myrto Georgakopoulou' Scholarships to support postgraduate students and early career researchers

in the disciplines of Archaeological Science and in Archaeometallurgy, where she made her most important contributions. Donations can be made through the Donate section of the British School at Athens website (<https://www.bsa.ac.uk/donate/>). To ensure the donation is sent to the fund, donors should include the name Myrto Georgakopoulou in the section 'Additional Comments'. For more information, please visit Myrto's [obituary](#).

by José C. Carvajal López

Dr Anthony Constable (1929 - 2022)



The physicist, teacher and historian Tony Constable, who died in December aged 93, will be best remembered by IASA members for the public lecture he gave at the British Museum in 2013. The talk, sponsored by the MBI Foundation, was a very well-received explanation of the astronomical lore and navigational methods used by Indian Ocean dhow sailors – techniques based on measuring the height of the Pole Star above the horizon. As his grateful publisher, I was soon able to report that as a result of his lecture, the collection of articles that he and I had just edited, entitled *The Principles of*

Arab Navigation (London: Arabian Publishing 2013), had rapidly sold out.

Tony's interest in Arab seafaring was kindled by the years he spent in Oman as head of the department of medical physics at Sultan Qaboos University, and was a natural outgrowth of a lifelong interest in astronomy. A stickler for exactitude, he was a born polymath with an awe-inspiring range of scientific interests. His unbounded energy combined with a relentless focus on the topic of the moment, and a gift for communicating complex concepts in his characteristically commanding, humorous and forthright manner. He was voraciously curious about how things worked, and was a renowned fixer of gadgets of all kinds.

Anthony Robert Constable was born in Manchester in 1929, the second of seven siblings, and demonstrated a precocious talent for technology from the age of twelve. His first passion was for making simple radio sets, enabling him to tune in to the BBC's wartime broadcasts. He had vivid memories of the bombing of Manchester and the time spent in the family Anderson shelter. After the war, he served an apprenticeship in electrical engineering before studying physics and maths at London University. His varied career then oscillated between teaching and research. After a spell in Britain he taught physics and astronomy at the University of Ottawa, Canada, while also pursuing research in low-temperature physics, and he was a founder member of the well-known Algonquin College.

By the time he returned to the UK in 1965, Tony was married with three children: Sara, Martin and Ruth. He soon embarked on a completely new career in medical physics, joining the Institute of Urology in London University, where he set up a new department and specialized in nuclear medical studies. He became a member of the scientific committee of the International Symposium on Radionuclides in Nephrology and was principal organizer of its annual meeting at the Royal Society in 1981, and principal editor of its proceedings. He wrote many papers on all aspects of the subject and, in the early 1980s, was made an honorary member of the British Nuclear Medicine Society (BNMS) and elected a Fellow of the Institute of Physics. Meanwhile he helped to found the British Vintage Wireless Society (BVWS), serving as its chairman and editing the newly created *Vintage Wireless Bulletin*. He summarized this interest in a book entitled *Early Wireless* published in 1980.

In his mid-fifties, Tony took early retirement in order to explore yet another path in life – that of working in the newly-formed Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. In its College of Medicine he set up a new department of Clinical and Biomedical Physics. This involved teaching, further research in nuclear medicine, and work on radiation protection. From that he became the industrial radiation protection adviser to the University and eventually to the entirety of Oman.

He left Oman at the age of seventy to retire for a second time. But his energy and desire for self-improvement were undimmed and by 1992 he had completed a PhD at Imperial College, London. His thesis addressed the discoveries by the great physicist Heinrich Hertz in the 1880s and the emergence of radio telegraphy. From then on, he immersed himself full-time in the study of the early history of science and technology. He wrote many papers, one of which was to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the first transatlantic radio transmission by Marconi in 1901, given to the Newcomen Society in 2001. He participated in such television programmes as the National Geographic Great Machines series in 2010, for which he set up and operated a simulation of the Titanic wireless equipment and its final message. In addition to his work on medical physics and nuclear medicine, he wrote numerous articles on wireless history and scientific instruments in the journals of the BVWS and the Scientific Instrument Society, maintaining an average of one publication for each year of his life. At the same time he developed a particular skill in restoring early electrical measuring instruments, which proved very useful to the Science Museum in London.

When I was approached in about 2009 by Dr Yacoub Yusuf Al-Hijji, of the Centre for Research and Studies on Kuwait, with the idea of developing a book on the early navigation techniques used by Arab seamen, Tony gladly seized the opportunity to join me as co-editor, and contributed the wonderful article that will probably never be surpassed as an introduction to the subject. In addition, his advice was greatly appreciated not only by me but also by the other contributors to the book – Hasan Salih Shihab, Paul Lunde, Eric Staples, and Yacoub Al-Hijji himself.

Tony enjoyed imparting his knowledge right up to the end. His final assignments were lectures on various aspects of the history of science at the

University of the Third Age branch in Ealing, where he lived. For us in Arabian studies, he was a great example of an outside specialist shining the light of his expertise on an aspect of Arabian culture. True to his strictly scientific outlook, he was given the humanist cremation at Mortlake that he had insisted on. He is survived by his three children, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

by William Facey

‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṭayyib al-ANṢĀRĪ (1935 - 2023)



The academic world mourns the loss of the scholar who was the pre-eminent symbol of Saudi Arabian archaeology. Professor ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṭayyib al-Anṣārī died on 6th March 2023 at the age of 87 after a long illness. His name will forever be associated with academic archaeological research in Saudi Arabia, research which he established ex nihilo at a period when the kingdom was closed to foreign archaeological teams.

After receiving his PhD in 1966 from the University of Leeds¹, he took up a teaching post at the University of Riyadh and there set up the Society for History and Archaeology under which,

1. Al-Anṣārī, A., A Critical and Comparative Study of Liḥyānite Personal Nams, unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, University of Leeds, 1966.

from 1971, he organized a series of archaeological surveys at the site of Qaryat al-Fāw. In 1978, he founded the Department of Archaeology and Museums within the Faculty of Letters at the University, as well as its Museum of Antiquities, with the aim of carrying out archaeological excavations and surveys under the aegis of these two bodies. From this point on, al-Anṣārī's name would forever be associated with the ancient site of Qaryat al-Fāw where he directed excavations from 1972 until 1998, in which year he handed over the direction of the project to one of his former students who continued it until the final season in 2004. It is no exaggeration to say that between 1966 and 1999 al-Anṣārī created a training ground in archaeology and epigraphy at the University of Riyādh, and in Saudi Arabia as a whole, which has formed generations of scholars and continues to do so. His former pupils, now professors and high officials responsible for the antiquities of Saudi Arabia, will keep alive the name of al-Anṣārī.

In addition to his academic duties, al-Anṣārī occupied successively the posts of Dean of the Faculty of Letters (1971–1972, 1974–1978), Director of the Department of History (1974–1978), Director of the Department of Archaeology and Museums (1978–1986), and from 1996 H.M. King Fahd bin 'Abd al-'Azīz Āl Sa'ūd appointed him to the Consultative Council (*Mağlis al-Shūrā*) where he served for two sessions. Al-Anṣārī has bequeathed us a legacy of great scientific importance. His 1982 book on Qaryat al-Fāw² has become an essential reference work. In it he published the principal results of the first eight seasons of excavation on the basis of which he formulated the broad chronological phases of the site (c. 4th century BC to 4th century AD). These are described and illustrated in richer detail in the six volumes of the final report published in 2019 and 2021³.

2. Al-Anṣārī, A., Qaryat al-Faw. *Šūra li-l-ḥaḍāra al-'arabiyya qabla al-Islām fī 'l-Mamlaka 'l-'Arabiyya 'l-Sa'ūdiyya. Ğāmi'at al-Riyādh 1377-1402* [English title: Qaryat al-Fau. A portrait of Pre-Islamic Civilization in Saudi Arabia. University of Riyadh 1957-1982].

3. Al-Anṣārī, A. (dir.), Qaryat (al-Fāw). *Šūra li-l-ḥaḍāra al-'arabiyya qabla al-Islām fī 'l-Mamlaka 'l-'Arabiyya 'l-sa'ūdiyya. Vol. I-II. Al-Tanqībāt al-athariyya* [The archaeological excavations]. *Dirāsa wa-taḥlīl wa-'i'dād 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṭayyib al-Anṣārī* (King Saud University, al-Riyādh), Sālim Aḥmad Ṭayrān (King Saud University, al-Riyādh), 'Aṣim Nayif al-Barghūthī (King Saud University, al-Riyādh), Fu'ād Ḥasan al-'Amir (King Saud University, al-Riyādh). Riyadh: King Saud University — al-Hay' al-'amma li-l-siyāḥa wa-l-turāth al-waṭanī. Volume I-II : 550 +342 + Figs 516 pp., 2019. Vol. III. Pottery; IV. Coins; V. Metalwork; VI. Tombs (published in 2021); VII. Inscriptions (in press).

In addition to his numerous academic and popular publications, we also owe to him the series *Prominent Cities on the Frankincense Route*, twelve illustrated studies of important ancient sites in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia which he published between 2003 and 2015⁴. We also owe to him, among others, the launch of the biannual journal *Adumatu*, specializing in archaeological and epigraphic studies of ancient Arabia, of which he was editor in chief.

There is not space here to list all the brilliant achievements of Professor 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Anṣārī in the archaeology and ancient history of his country, Saudi Arabia, to which, with great passion and perseverance, he devoted his entire academic career. Archaeologists, epigraphists, historians, and anthropologists working on the ancient sites of Saudi Arabia are deeply indebted to Professor 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Anṣārī for his pioneering work in opening up the country to research on the archaeology and history of pre-Islamic Arabia, which had previously been inaccessible to the population of the kingdom and to the world.

We offer our sincere condolences to the relatives, friends, colleagues and pupils of Professor 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṭayyib al-Anṣārī.

Raḥima-hu Allāh wa-askana-hu faṣīḥa ḡannāti-hi.

by Mounir Arbach

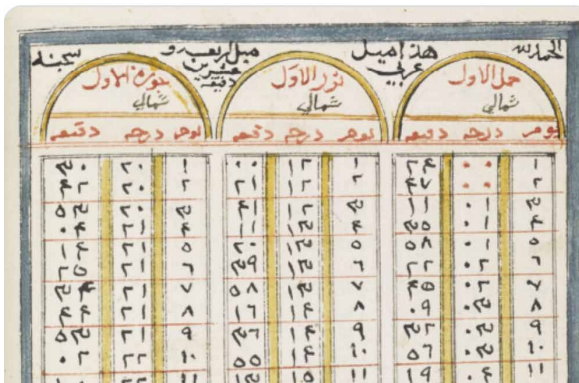
4. Al-Anṣārī, A. et al., Qurā zāhira 'alā ṭarīq al-bukhūr, [Prominent Cities on the Frankincense Route] published in Arabic and English between 2003-2015: Najrān, al-'Ulā, Ḥā'il, al-Tā'if, Khaybar, Taymā', al-Jawf, 'Asīr, al-Bāḥa, al-Qaṣīm, al-Qaṭīf, al-Riyādh.

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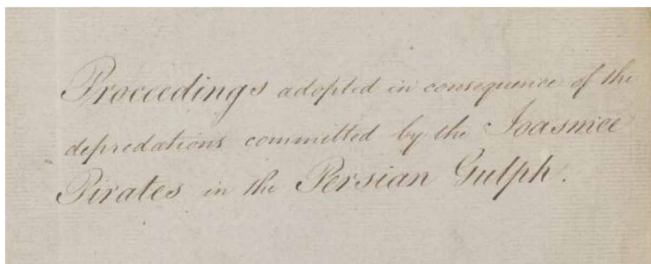
The British Library/Qatar Foundation [Partnership](#) which is digitising [India Office Records and Private Papers](#) (IOR) 1600-1950 and [Arabic Scientific Manuscripts](#) held at the British Library for the [Qatar Digital Library](#) (QDL) is now into Phase 4 with the [Qatar National Library](#) (QNL) until December 2025. This phase will see IOR archive series not previously digitised including the [IOR/L/PS/9](#) ('Correspondence relating to areas outside India') and [IOR/P](#) ('Proceedings and Consultations of the Government of India and of its Presidencies and Provinces'). Examples of recently digitised collection items include an Arabic language

[nautical almanac](#) from 1844 of information for navigation in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and Red Sea.



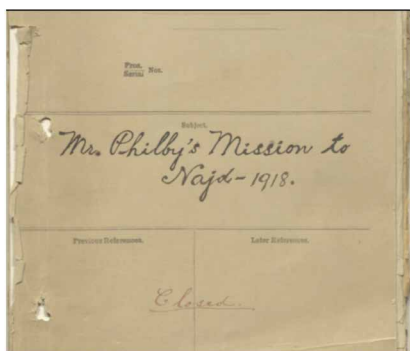
[Nautical Almanac](#)

Since our last update there have been some new illuminating blogs by BLQFP staff published on British Library blogs. These have included an examination of Arabic etymology in connection with the translation of [‘piracy’](#) and the origin of the Arabic words qursān/qarṣanah. On a related topic three of our colleagues discussed our [Conscientious Bilingual Description](#) project on how to deal with problematic language used in the colonial records on which we work.



‘Proceedings adopted in consequence of the depredations committed by the Joasmee Pirates in the Persian Gulph,’ Vol. 2 [f5r] (1/266), British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/F/4/649/17851

The geographical significance of a [hill](#) in Dhofar and an account of [H. St John Philby’s crossing of Arabia](#) in 1917/18 and his [legacy](#) have also featured.



IOR/R/15/5/66, f.1 22/16 Mr Philby's Mission to Najd - 1918.

Our Conservation Team detailed the [process](#) of conserving large-scale maps prior to digitisation and our Audio Curator shared thoughts on [‘Wayn tkhallīnī’](#) by Iraq’s Rashīd al-Qundarjī as well as compiling Political Music from the Arab World (1919-1959) including the Gulf with recordings from the British Library Sound Archive.

Recent QDL Expert Articles include Finding Aids on the [IOR/G/29/2-14 \(1708-1762?\)](#) series on Gombroon (Bandar ‘Abbas), the [British Residency in Baghdad](#) and [railways](#) in British occupied Mesopotamia, as well as [IOR/R/15/4 Residency Agency](#), Trucial Coast, 1930-1951



Painting by Richard Temple depicting the British attack on Ra’s al-Khaymah in 1809, part of their effort to impose their authority along the Trucial Coast.



Check out the first of a two-parter, examining a lease which commenced in 1794: the [75 year lease](#) of the port of Bunder Abbas to the ruler of Oman. Do keep an eye out on our [twitter](#) feed for Part 2!

All the catalogue descriptions and articles on the QDL are bilingual and a link is provided at the top of every page to switch between English and Arabic.

We look forward to keeping in touch with the IASA – follow the BLQFP on [@blqatar](#) for all the latest news including the #mapofthemoth and #newlydigitised highlights and do keep in touch as well with the QNL on [@QNLlib](#).

NEW PUBLICATIONS ON ARABIA

Julius Euting: An Epigraphic Adventurer in Northern Arabia, 1883–84

William Facey

Epigraphist, artist, keen hiker and traveller, the German scholar Julius Euting (1839–1913) was one of the great Semitists of his time. Born in Stuttgart, he moved to Strasbourg in 1872 just after the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine to take up a post as librarian in the newly founded Kaiser Wilhelm University, and adopted it as his home. In a life full of academic achievement, he made ground-breaking contributions to Punic, Hebrew and Aramaic studies.

In 1883, Euting embarked on his most significant and dangerous journey, in the company of the French-Alsatian geographer Charles Huber (1847–84). Their expedition into remote northern Arabia, first to Ha'il and then through areas that Huber had already explored in 1880–81, had as its goal the collection of ancient texts and the investigation of archaeological sites such as Taymā' and Madā'in Sālih, and was also intended to enable Huber to firm up his geographical discoveries. But they failed to collaborate successfully. Their relationship was poisoned by Franco-German rivalry and Huber's financial dependence upon Euting, and the two men separated at Madā'in Sālih. Euting made his way to the Red Sea coast at great risk to his life, while Huber stayed on in Arabia, only to be murdered north of Jiddah in July 1884.

Unlike Huber's dry lists of data, Euting's notebooks are replete with vivid observation, entertaining anecdotes and personal reactions, alongside the earliest careful records of Aramaic, Nabataean and Ancient North Arabian inscriptions and rock art. Their most outstanding feature is the vast quantity of watercolours and sketches that adorn them. A version of these notebooks was published in 1896 and 1914 as *Tagbuch einer Reise in Inner-Arabien*, with line drawings based on these watercolours. This important document of European exploration of Arabia is presented here for the first time in English, with a lavish selection of Euting's original artwork in place of the published line drawings.

The project has been running for several years, and has benefited from the generous support of Baron Lorne Thyssen-Bornemisza as well as the

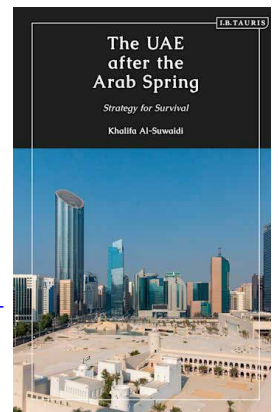
Euting Archiv at the University of Tübingen, where Euting's original diaries are held. The translation has been carried out by Christopher Metcalf, with William Facey and Michael C.A. Macdonald providing the editorial input. An extensive introduction presents the story of Euting's life and his relationship with Huber, and sets his 1883–84 journey in the context of 19th-century Arabian exploration. Finally, the affair of the Tayma Stele, the celebrated Aramaic inscription now in the Musée du Louvre, comes under the spotlight. The analysis of that notorious Franco-German imbroglio, first presented in Facey's *Charles Huber: France's Greatest Arabian Explorer* (Arabian Publishing, 2022), casts doubt on the prevailing idea that Huber first saw the Stele in 1880, and gives Euting his due credit for its actual discovery in 1884.

Publication of the two-volume set is scheduled for 2024. Euting's epic 2,000km journey on camelback in 1883–84 can now take its place as one of the significant landmarks of Arabian exploration alongside those of the other great 19th-century travellers in the Peninsula. For further information, and to offer any comments and advice, contact William Facey at wfacey@medinapublishing.com.

EUTING, JULIUS (2024), *Diary of a Journey through Inner Arabia, 1883–84*. Translated by Christopher Metcalf. Introduced and edited by William Facey and Michael C.A. Macdonald. Foreword by John Healey. 2 volumes. Colour illustrations throughout. Footnotes, bibliography and index. Cowes: Arabian Publishing

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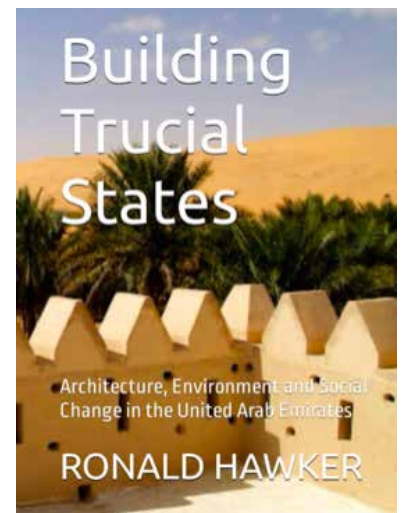
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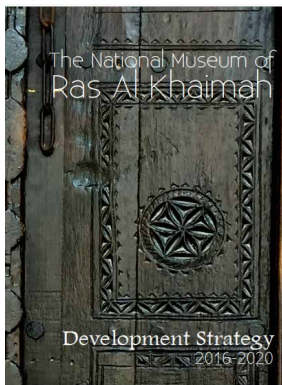
If you have a publication forthcoming, please share the details with us at: outreach@theiasa.com



THE LAST WORD

The Last Word in this Edition of the IASA Bulletin goes to Kate Ayres- Kennet who details the work she undertook when Director of Museums in Ras Al Khaimah.

In December 2015 I took a four-month sabbatical from my role managing a heritage project in the UK to appraise the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah (RAK) and write its first Development Plan. Four months turned into six and, before I knew it, I had fallen in love with Arabia and had moved to RAK as Director of the National Museum, later to become Director of Museums.



The Development Plan advocated for a three-phase process and was presented to and sanctioned by HH Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, the Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, 7 months later. Phase one was Interim and included writing a 4-year Development Strategy for the National Museum. As part of this strategy, I wrote

vision and mission statements for the museum and the vision was broken down into five strategic objectives with high-level aims. These strategic objectives would form the basis for the long-term work carried out by the museum. These were to:

1. Be an inspirational museum;
2. Attract as wide an audience as possible, both actual and virtual, providing visitors with a unique experience which is enjoyable and educational;
3. Provide learning opportunities and a full programme of educational services for the benefit of individuals and groups of all ages, involving

audiences of diverse cultural, social and economic backgrounds;

4. Strive to become a leading, sustainable museum;
5. Promote our association with other national and international organisations including the Al Qasimi Foundation and Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority as well as foster other heritage relationships.

By 2020 we would:

- Redisplay the museum to provide better care and interpretation of the collections;
- Attract 15,000 visitors each year;
- Develop and implement an educational strategy for the Department;
- Improve facilities for staff, visitors and collections to encourage research and develop a café and shop to increase revenue;
- Ensure that the National Museum, and its collections, are recognised as a cultural gem which can be used to promote the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah.

The Interim Phase was anticipated to take a year and would overhaul the museum prior to any major redevelopment work taking place. Tasks included improving the visitor offer by undertaking maintenance of the building, redisplaying the galleries and providing an orientation leaflet for visitors; Improving collections care by writing policy and procedure documents based on the Arts Council England's Accreditation Scheme and

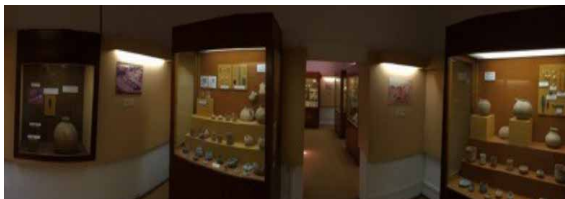
employing collections staff to implement them; Employing an Education Manager who would write an education strategy and undertake outreach activities with the schools and local communities; and finally, making the work of the Museum and the Archaeology sections visible through social media. We also designed a logo for the Museum to distinguish it from the main Department of Antiquities and Museums. This was inspired by an object in the collection.



متحف رأس الخيمة الوطني
The National Museum
of Ras Al Khaimah



Image: The Department of Antiquities and Museums, Government of Ras Al Khaimah.



*The National Museum galleries before and after temporary redisplay (missing updated text panels).
Images: Kate Ayres- Kennet.*

The Development Phase was anticipated to take twenty months and would involve extensive consultation to provide a fully-costed redevelopment plan for the museum. Finally, the Delivery Phase, based on similar projects I had worked on in the UK, was anticipated to take a further two years with the museum re-opening in December 2020 to coincide with the 200th Anniversary of the signing of the peace treaty and in time for the 50th anniversary of the UAE in 2021.

Following permission from HH Sheikh Saud, I assembled a national and international team of architects, engineers and heritage professionals who spent eighteen months developing the



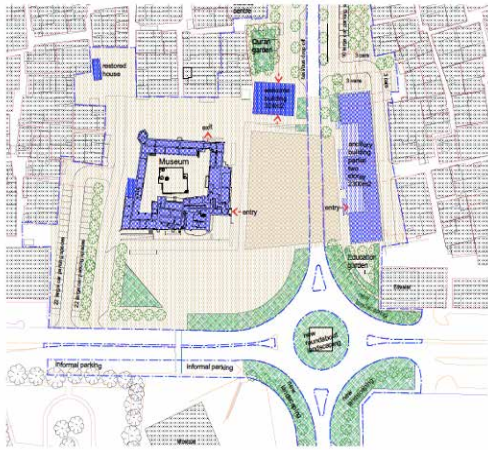
Some members of the Redevelopment Team in 2017 which included staff from the Department of Antiquities and Museums. Image: Kate Ayres- Kennet

masterplan. This was developed as a holistic approach which would create a cultural hub in the Old Town with the National Museum as its gateway. Working with other RAK Government departments, our plans incorporated elements from other masterplans drawn up for the Old Town and we anticipated our project would act as the catalyst for the area's regeneration. The Masterplan for the Museum included creating space around the fort to simulate that it was once surrounded by sand. To this end, plans were drawn up in conjunction with Municipality to relocate the roundabout further east and re-route the road behind the fort to create a plaza in front of the museum for events and celebrations.

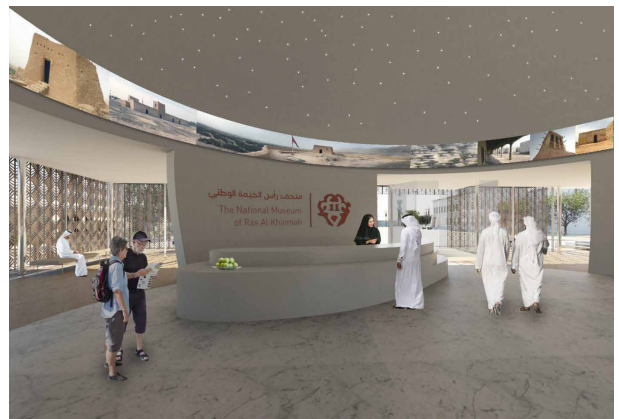


The fort in Ras Al Khaimah 1949-50. Source: Wilfred Thesiger, Pitt Rivers Museum.

The fort was to be restored and given over entirely for display. All offices, stores, and the conservation lab were to be removed and relocated in purpose built buildings across the plaza which would also house all Department of Antiquities and Museums (DAM) staff. A Welcome Building with bronze *areesh* walls and a pearl dome, inspired by traditional architecture and pearl fishing, was designed to house the ticket desk, shop and cafe.



Left: The road in its current loaction. Right: the proposed location. Images: Nicholas Hare Architects.



The Welcome Building and plaza of the National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah designed using traditional elements incorporating areesh walls and a pearl domed roof along with a falaj. Images: Nicholas Hare Architects.

For the first time, by taking a holistic approach to heritage management, through the Redevelopment Project, the Department of Antiquities and Museums was able to take forward and address the issues identified in Hilal, Kennet and Humble's (2015) paper presented at the IASA Seminar. They had noted that many sites in Ras Al Khaimah had the potential for heritage tourism and if well-developed they 'can give cultural heritage a role in the modern economy' (ibid, p. 156). The Development Project therefore not only focussed on improving the quality of the experience for visitors to the museum, but also to the other archaeological sites around RAK that were under the auspices of the DAM. The scope of the project had widened considerably to factor in the wider vision for the DAM as a whole, not just the museum, and HH Sheikh Saud approved a ten-year phased approach which would see the first phase with part of the museum and enhanced facilities at the archaeological sites open for National Day, 2020 and the Dubai Expo 2020 which would see increased visitors to the emirate.

Working closely with the archaeology section we drew up a project identity for the DAM: Heritage Vision - the logo based on one of the prehistoric tombs at Dhayah. At the key sites identified by the archaeologists, we wanted to provide quick wins which could be as simple as improved signage or information boards that would be relatively inexpensive to produce but would create a brand identity for the DAM and an improved experience for the tourist. Visitor Centres for the Shimal and Dhayah archaeological parks were also factored in which would replicate the architecture of the Welcome Building to unify the experience across the emirate under the DAM's brand. I requested a booth on the RAK Tourism Development Authority stand and together the Director of Archaeology, the Site Protection and Development Manager and I promoted the work of the Department throughout 2016 and 2017 at the World Travel Market London, ITB Berlin and the Arabian Travel Market, Dubai.



Above: Heritage Vision. Dhayah Tomb image: Kate Ayres-Kennet; Logo: Inca Creative. Right: At the ITB Berlin. Image: Kate Ayres-Kennet.

By the end of 2017 we had met four of the five targets as set out in the strategic objectives two years ahead of schedule: all open galleries were redisplayed; we had developed an education strategy and were holding regular events liaising with local schools and the community; our visitor numbers had risen to just over 15,000 from 10,095 at the end of 2015 and we were maintaining a presence on social media with a new brand identity that defined the museum as a separate entity. We had even collaborated with the Louvre Abu Dhabi and loaned them our star object for a 3-year period.



Wadi Suq gold pendant loaned to Louvre Abu Dhabi. Image: Kate Ayres-Kennet.

The Development Phase was completed and presented to HH Sheikh Saud in December 2017 at which point the costs were sent for review. I returned to the UK in March 2018 to have my son and to date this project remains under consideration.

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Ayres, C. (2016) 'The National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah Development Strategy 2016-2020' National Museum of Ras Al Khaimah, Department of Antiquities and Museums.

Hilal, A., Kennet, D. and Humble. (2015) 'Towards a Heritage Management Strategy for Ras Al Khaimah, UAE' In Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies 45, pp. 149-158.





Thank you to our members for your continued support, and to all of the contributors to this edition of the IASA Bulletin.

IASA SOCIAL MEDIA

If you do not already follow the IASA on social media, please do so. You do not need to have a Facebook account to see our page, and as well as posting our own news and information about events and lectures etc., we repost articles and items of interest from the news and from other organisations. It's a great way of keeping up with what is happening in the Arabian Peninsula. As well as [Facebook](#), we are on Twitter (@IASArabia), Instagram (@theiasarabia) and [LinkedIn](#).

We also welcome any items of interest to share, or even just your photographs of sites, museums, the natural landscape or flora and fauna of Arabia. Just message us via any media!

*Above: Excavation of a Bronze Age Surface.
Below: Excavation of Bronze Age Buildings near Hili 16 (Al Ain, UAE). Images: Daniel Eddisford (see p. 27).*

