

Indian Ocean Trade in the 11th Century: New Data from Sharma (Yemen)

by Axelle Rougeulle

Since the early 70's and the British excavations at Siraf, the great Iranian emporium of the Persian Gulf in the medieval period, many efforts have been devoted to the study of the Indian Ocean trade, from the historical as well as from the archaeological point of view. The history of the Indian Ocean exchange networks is nevertheless far from being fully documented and many of its aspects remain obscure. This is the case in particular for the main evolutions suffered by that trade in the 11th century, a period of great mutation. Besides Siraf, the crucial changes of the eleventh century have been recently brought to light thanks to the excavations at Sharma, a coastal site of Hadramawt in Yemen.

The Indian ocean trade in the 11th century was mainly in the hands of Abbasid traders who dominated the Islamic exchange networks, from China to East Africa through the Red Sea and, of course, the Persian Gulf. The main emporiums of this period were Basra in Iraq, Suhar in Oman and above all Siraf in Iran (fig. 2). The great merchant families of Fars dominated the business and financial life of the region

from their wealthy trading centers in Shiraz, and most of the international trade of the time. But Siraf was badly damaged by an earthquake in 977, and the decline of the city was rapidly completed with the fall of the powerful Buyid dynasty which had been dominating the area since around 930. At the turn of the 11th century political troubles appeared on the plateau and communications between the inland capital cities and the harbour became more and more difficult. The traders of Fars therefore abandoned Siraf and started to settle in other ports, as in Sohar, where a Sirafi colony had long been established, on the island of Qays, which superseded Siraf in the Gulf trade around 1010, and in Hormuz, which later enjoyed a long period of prosperity under the Saljuqs of Kirman (1041-1186) and eventually dominated the mercantile activities and international trade of the Gulf. This geographical shift of the centers of the Gulf trade was paralleled by a major evolution in the social status of the Iranian merchant class as the great traders of that time achieved real political power.

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Al-'Usur al-Wusta

The Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists
Volume 14, Number 2 • October, 2002

Editor: Fred M. Donner

Associate Editors: Warren C. Schultz (Member News), Michael G. Morony (Book Reviews), Donald Whitcomb (Archaeology)

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Al-'Usur al-Wusta is published twice yearly (April, October) by Middle East Medievalists, and is produced at The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, U.S.A. The views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Middle East Medievalists, its officers, the editor of *Al-'Usur al-Wusta*, or The Oriental Institute.

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Manuscripts, news, reviews of Middle Eastern books, and other items for inclusion in *Al-'Usur al-Wusta* should be sent to Fred M. Donner, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th St., Chicago, IL 60637, U.S.A. Deadline for receipt of items for inclusion in April issues is the preceding March 1; for October issues, the preceding September 1.

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They became the true masters of the coastal areas, leaders of the region's prosperity and independent of the local dynasties in the hinterland.

The Indian Ocean trade underwent other very important changes precisely in this period. First, merchants of the Fatimid dynasty, which had settled down in Egypt in 969, began to organise their own Oriental networks with Aden in Yemen as a nexus, turning the Gulf vessels out of the Red Sea. Finally, the 11th century was also the time when coastal settlements in East Africa developed greatly, with the rise of large trading cities and the expansion of Islam, a development that some local chronicles impute to the immigration of people from Shiraz.

Sharma: literary and archaeological sources

A harbour in Yemen called Sharma is mentioned by several medieval geographers. In 985, al-Muqaddasi cites the names of al-Las'ah and Sharma in the list of cities dependant on Zabid, on the Red Sea coast. In the middle of the 12th century, al-Idrisi writes that Sharma and Las'ā, which is the ancient name of al-Shihr, are two landing places between Aden and Mirbat in Oman, one day of navigation apart in Hadramawt. Finally, around 1300, al-Dimashqī states that on the coast of Hadramawt there are two harbours, Sharma and al-Shihr.

The Yemeni Coast Survey Project has studied the southern coast of Yemen in the regional and international exchanges of the Indian Ocean, the harbours, networks and merchandise, more particularly in the medieval period. Archaeological exploration moved about 50km east of the city of al-Shihr in 1996 to Ra's Sharma. A very large port site of the early Islamic period was discovered there and two seasons of excavations followed in the winters

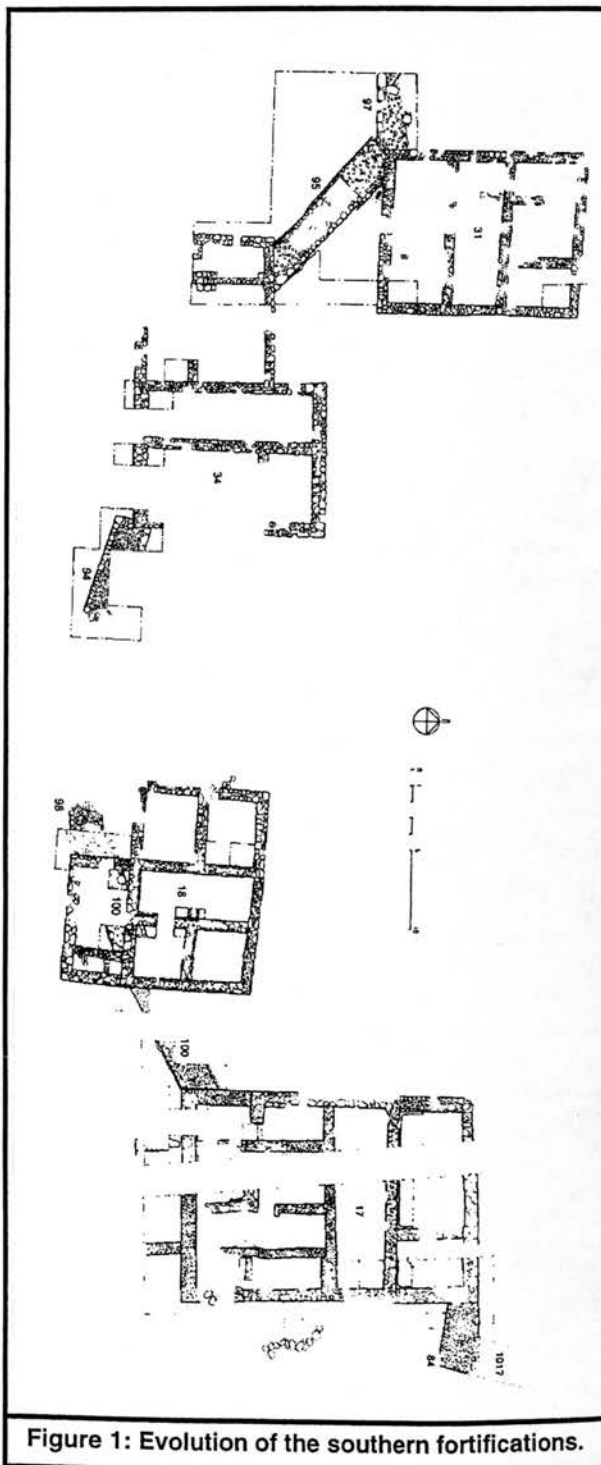


Figure 1: Evolution of the southern fortifications.

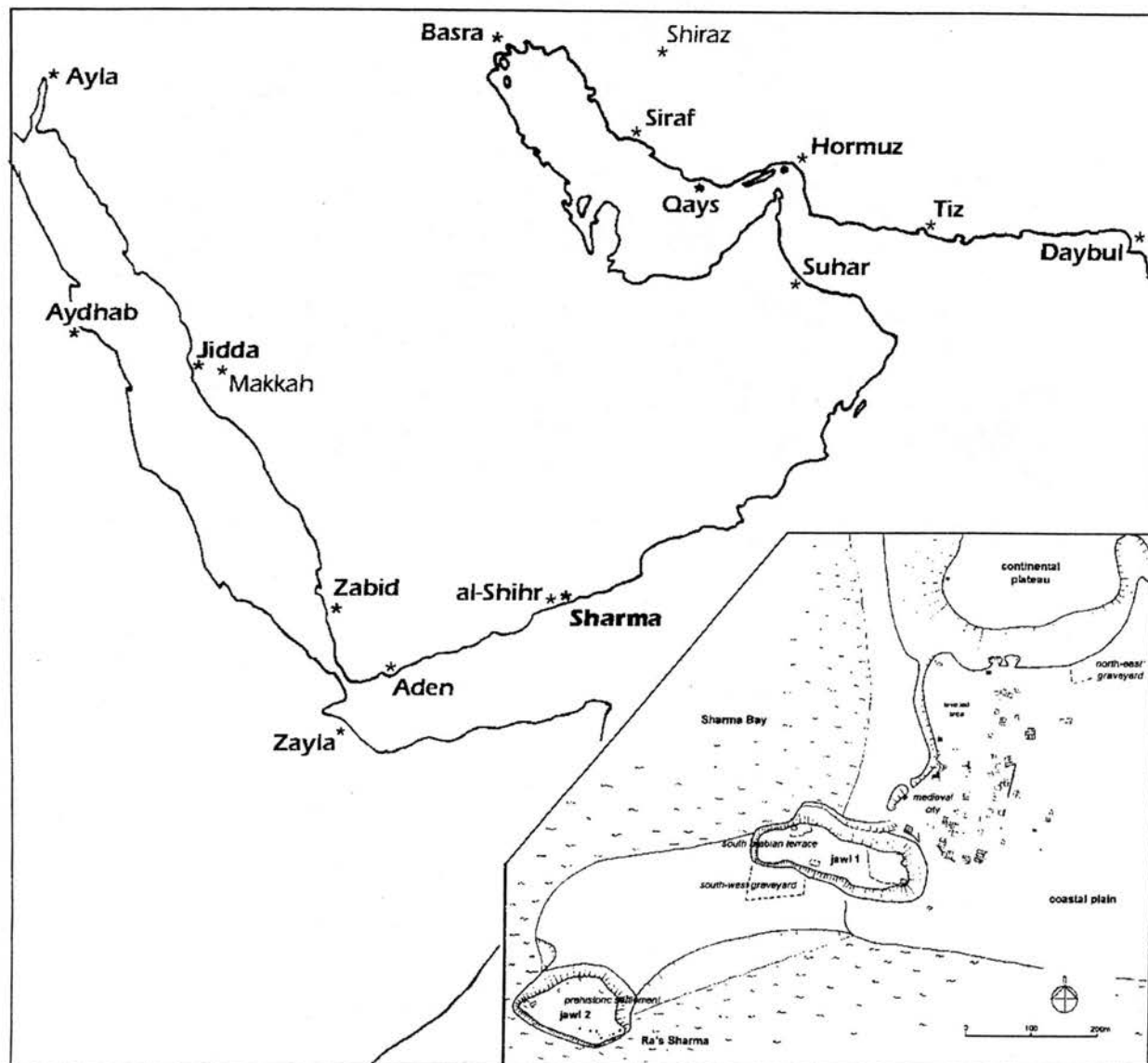


Figure 2. The Indian Ocean in the 11th century and the Ra's Sharma.

of 2001 and 2002. The results show that Sharma played a very important part in the history of the Indian Ocean trade in the 11th century.

An 11th century harbour of the Orient trade

The site of Sharma is very isolated. In this area, the continental plateau protrudes southwards into the sea; two small steep plateaus stand at the extremity of the plain, protecting a deep anchorage facing west. Sea resources are many, and several wells were found on the plain which was therefore probably cultivable. But

water is nevertheless scarce and the area is very isolated on the land side, being more than 10km away from the nearest oases and villages, across the desolate plateau.

In the early Islamic period, a large settlement ca 5ha wide was nevertheless founded there (fig. 2, 4). Except for a few pre-Islamic and late shards, all the archaeological material found there, on the surface as in excavations, may in fact be dated to a very limited chronological frame, starting at the end of the 10th century and ending in the beginning of the 12th. This material is very rich and varied, and mainly imported as early as the first level of occupation of

the site.

Chinese porcelains and stonewares are specially numerous: more than 4% of the ceramics found at Sharma were imported from China, an extremely high proportion compared with the quantities registered at other Islamic sites, for example 0.9% at Siraf. Pieces are of a very high quality and belong to many different types, some of them never registered previously in the Middle East. They are dated to the Northern Sung dynasty (960-1127) and come from at least 10 different kilns, from southern as well as northern China. Other imports are glazed ceramics, 5%, which

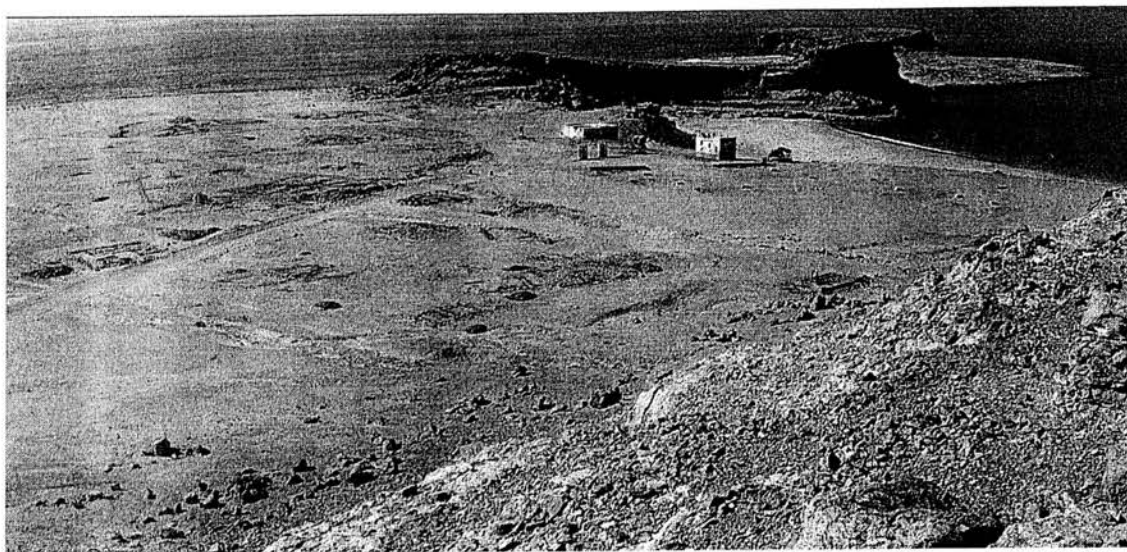


Figure 3. General view of the site from the continental plateau.

originate from the Persian Gulf area. Typical Abbasid wares of the 9-10th centuries are very rare, as are Saljuq frit pieces of the 12th century. Most of the glazed pieces are late sgraffiato bowls with incised, hatched or champlévé decoration, all types well-known at medieval port-sites of the Indian Ocean, from Pakistan to Eastern Africa; they are thought to have been produced in Iran and are generally dated to the 11th-13th centuries, contemporary with the decline of Siraf. Unglazed pieces are much more numerous and most of them have not been identified yet, but they seem to have been also mainly imported. They originated from India, Pakistan, the Gulf area, the Red Sea coast of Yemen, and above all from Eastern Africa. As a matter of fact, most of the types of the Tana tradition known at contemporary African port sites, from Kenya to the Comoros islands, are present in quantity at Sharma. It is therefore obvious that Sharma was a main harbour in the international exchange networks of the Indian Ocean, possibly the busiest Islamic port of the Orient trade in the 11th century.

A fortified emporium and an Iranian warehouse

This wealthy harbour was characterised by a very strong defensive system. The natural defences of the cape were improved by the construction of several fortification lines, starting on the con-

tinental plateau where various structures were built to guard the valleys leading to the plain. The settlement itself was protected by a surrounding wall more than 2m thick, which allowed a parapet walk on top, in two sections, south and east, meeting at a corner building (fig. 4). To complete this defensive system, the eastern part of the small plateau, on the southwestern edge of the city, was organised as a citadel, with two fortresses and a cistern inside a fortification wall. These strong defences and the isolated location of the harbour suggest that Sharma was an emporium founded by foreign merchants whose trade networks were already well established and who were most probably coming from Iran, as indicated by the quantity of Iranian ceramics found there.

The harbour site of Sharma exhibits some very strange town planning (fig. 4). About 50 buildings have been cleared on the surface, all built according to very regular and similar plans, very different from the usual layout of Islamic domestic architecture. Most of them may in fact be divided in two main types: the smaller ones measure about 35 to 55m² and are made of two or three contiguous rooms. The larger ones range generally between 105 and 145m² in area and have a plan of three or four rooms on each side of an axial corridor oriented east-west. All these buildings were erected far apart in the middle of an empty space: excavations

held between them have yielded only layers of domestic occupation, ashes and large heaps of refuse, without any trace of secondary structures. Three successive mosques have been discovered west of the city, at the edge of the small cliff overlooking the harbour, and two of the buildings so far excavated show much more elaborate construction techniques than the others, which are rather crude. But no clear planning or spatial organisation appears in the plan of that settlement, no main streets are visible, nor can distinctive city quarters, residential, commercial or industrial, be identified.

The general feeling looking at the plan of Sharma is in fact that this settlement was not a real harbour city. It looks rather like a huge warehouse, a fortified group of storehouses, each of the large buildings being the store of a merchant or a group of merchants. This very special function of the site may also explain some of its strange characteristics. First, the population of Sharma would in fact have been quite limited, mainly composed of *wakils* (agents), soldiers and craftsmen, and this fits much better with the small size of the mosque and graveyards, and with the scarcity of water resources. Second, no wealthy merchant was really living in Sharma, which was a purely functional place. This explains why no luxury items were found there, neither architectural decoration nor small objects. Most of the material found

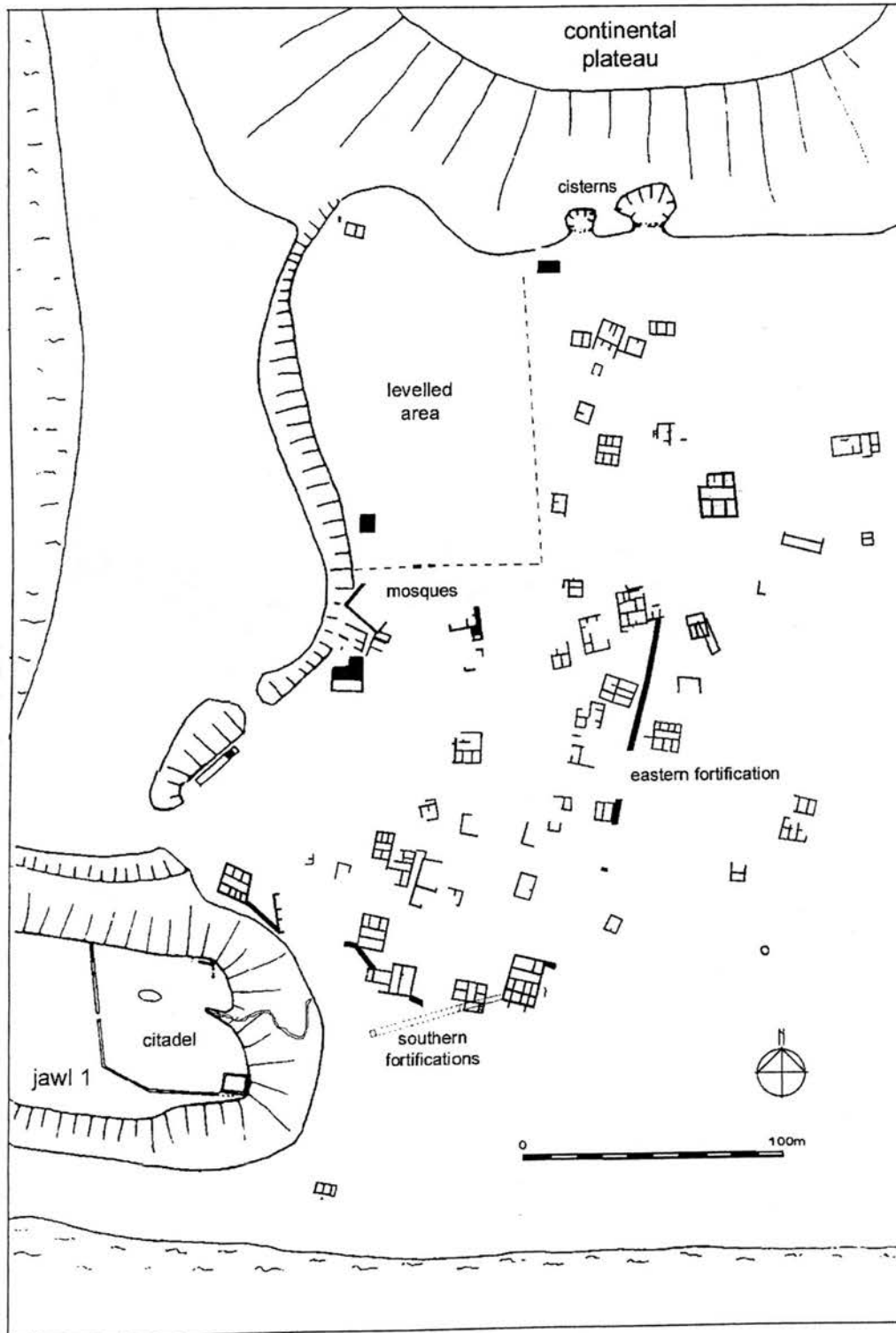


Figure 4. Plan of the medieval settlement.

seems to be broken fragile cargoes. Finally, there were probably not so many real commercial exchanges in the port: most of the ships laying at anchor in the harbour would only unload merchandise to be stored in the storehouses, and load new cargoes from the same depots. As for the local Hadrami commodities, which were surely traded in Sharma as shown by the many frankincense pieces found in excavations, they could well have been purchased mainly by barter, which would explain the complete lack of coins at the site.

Sharma: a main actor in the history of the Indian Ocean trade in the 11th century

All the archaeological information gathered to date at Sharma thus indi-

cates that this port was most probably a huge fortified warehouse, founded at the end of the 10th century by Iranian merchants on their trade routes between the Orient and the Gulf on one side, and East Africa on the other, and which remained one of the busiest harbours of the Indian Ocean until it was suddenly abandoned at the beginning of the 12th c. This site demonstrates all the factors affecting maritime trade in this period: a foundation linked with the earthquake at Siraf at the end of the 10th century and developed by the great Iranian merchants; and a location in Eastern Yemen possibly required by the domination of the Fatimid merchants at Aden, and a situation as the last possible port of call for Gulf ships on the southern coast of Arabia. Its very strong connec-

tions with East Africa could be the clue to an effective participation in the development of African trading cities.

It is hoped that further excavations at Sharma, together with studies of medieval texts, will deliver additional data on the history of this very interesting and unique site, which seems to have been quite troubled as seen from the evolution of the fortifications and its sudden end. This in turn will certainly bring new light on the history of the Indian Ocean trade in a crucial, yet badly documented, period.

Endnote: This project is supported by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CNRS (Paris), and the General Organisation for Antiquities, Manuscripts and Museums of Yemen (San'a).

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Obituary

Laila Ali Ibrahim

1917-2002

by Nasser Rabbat

Laila 'Ali Ibrahim passed away on Sunday, July 14, 2002. She was 85. Many students of Mamluk art and architecture have come to identify Laila with Cairo: she was the "Godmother" of the City and the guardian of its monuments.

Laila learned her metier informally through exposure to the best minds concerned with the fate of historic Cairo in the 1940s and 1950s. These included her father, Dr. 'Ali Ibrahim, a major Islamic art collector whom she adored, and K.A.C. Creswell, the eccentric Briton who spent most of his working life studying the Islamic architecture of Cairo. But she had one thing that most scholars of Cairo of her time did not have: total devotion to her subject. This showed not only in her publications, public lectures, and participation in countless organizations for the safeguard of the monuments of Cairo, but also in her tireless efforts to gain new converts to the study and appreciation of Cairo. To that end, she taught the history of Cairo at the American University of Cairo (AUC) and made herself available to any researcher, Egyptian or international, interested in studying Mamluk Cairo.

Laila's articles and one published book are solid, carefully researched, and clearly written pieces. She seemed to have focused mostly on little studied aspects of Cairene architecture that lesser scholars avoided. She took special interest, for instance, in Mamluk residential architecture, about which she published a number of erudite articles. She also delved into writing on little known or ruined monuments, such as the Khanqahs of Amir Qawsun and of Zayn al-Din Yusef or the Madrasa of Badr al-Din al-'Ayni. Her book on Mamluk building terminology, published in 1990 and co-authored with the late Muhammad Muhammad Amin, is an indispensable source for all students of Cairo. It is the distillation of the expertise of these two irreplaceable scholars: Laila with her intimate and extensive knowledge of the historic buildings and Amin with his profound familiarity with the legal documents related to them.

Laila spent more than half a century studying, teaching, and speaking for and on behalf of the architecture of Cairo. But she shunned all ceremonial social events and was interested only in constructive ones. Her admirers, however, managed to put together a collection of essays in her honor, *The Cairo Heritage*, which was edited by Dr. Doris Abouseif and published by AUC Press in 2001, although Laila unfortunately was unable to read it. Laila left a small but extremely valuable library that I hope will find an institutional home where it would become open to all researchers from all over the world. This is how Laila herself would have liked it to be.

Teaching the History of the Medieval Muslim World using Ross E. Dunn's *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: One Approach*

by Warren C. Schultz

Editor's Note: This contribution was sparked by the high turnout at the MEM-sponsored roundtable discussions on teaching-related issues held at the 2000 and 2001 MESA meetings.

So many variables affect what and how we teach that is important to acknowledge some them: What is our teaching load? How big are our classes? Do we teach courses on the "Middle East" or on the wider Muslim world? Do we consider ourselves area studies specialists first and foremost? Do we privilege our "discipline," be it history, literature, religious studies, etc.? Are we the "only Islamicist in town"? Do we teach primarily undergraduates? Is our job to prepare the next generation of specialists? Did we inherit classes that must be taught? Do we have flexibility in constructing new courses or in revamping old ones? The list could go on and on, but space considerations lead me to close this list by emphasizing the following question: what is the place of courses devoted to Islamic or Middle Eastern topics in the wider curriculum of our home institutions?

In my case the particulars are these: I teach history at DePaul University, a large private university in Chicago, Illinois. DePaul places primacy on undergraduate instruction. The teaching load is seven course per year, spread over three quarters. I was hired with the expectation that the courses I taught in Islamic history (whether introductory or upper-division) would need to fit into the University's general education requirements, the de-

partmental major, or (preferably) both. At DePaul, all undergraduates must take at least two history courses. While the idiosyncracies of DePaul's core curriculum are not pertinent here, two of its repercussions are important to note. First of all, the majority of students who register for a section of the Islamic history survey are not history majors, let alone junior-specialists-in-training. Secondly, departmental and university curricular goals insist that history courses address the methods and issues of the discipline of history in addition to coverage of content. I understand this to mean that I need to foreground questions of historical interpretation, introduce students to the analysis of primary sources, and generally acknowledge the question "how do we know what we know?"

When I was hired, I was able to sit down with a colleague (who had been the only "Islamic historian in town") and rework the basic Islamic History survey. It is, of course, possible to spend an inordinate amount of time arguing about periodization choices. In our case, our decision was also influenced by the reality that few students would take the entire sequence, and thus each course had to be self-contained, that is, capable of standing alone. With three, thirty-contact-hour quarters to survey the history of the Muslim world, we chose to divide those fourteen centuries into three

overlapping 500-year segments. The first quarter to cover approximately 600 - 1100 (the foundations), the second 1000 - 1500 (the "medieval" period), and the third 1400 - 1900 (the era of the great Muslim empires). We reserved the "modern" period for upper-division courses.

The Medieval Survey:

There is no denying that the history of the Medieval Muslim world is complex. This complexity is both a blessing and a bane to any instructor of an introductory middle-period course: A blessing in that one has a vast amount of topics, material, and historiographical concerns to draw upon; a bane in that one must not only spend a lot of time providing background information to contextualize those topics, but one must also face the challenge of providing pedagogical coherence for students. As Robert Irwin (1986) remarked about the second half of the 8th/14th century in the Mamluk Sultanate, it is difficult to find a narrative thread to link it all together. (One way to address these challenges would be to drop the survey approach entirely and focus instead on a particular region as a case-study of the currents and factors of medieval Islamic history - but that is another subject entirely.) This difficulty is exacerbated by

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the paucity of texts to use in an introductory course. The major English-language surveys which do address the medieval period with sophistication, such as Hodgson (1974) or Lapidus (1988), are, in my experience, inaccessible to many American undergraduates. The Longman volume by Holt (1986), with its focus on the eastern Mediterranean, is not suitable by itself if one wants to address the wider expanses of the Muslim world. The surveys by Spuler (1969) and Saunders (1965) present other difficulties in their use.

After experimenting with the above texts and trying several ways of organizing my medieval survey course, I eventually developed an approach based upon Ross E. Dunn's book, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century* (1986). The book is not recent, and it is thus probable that the approach I have followed after adopting this book as a course text is not novel. (As the prominent blurb on the back cover indicates, it was hailed by one reviewer as "an excellent synoptic introduction to the Muslim World of the Middle Ages.") In terms of content, this book offers a deft solution to the problem of providing coherence amidst the complexity. As opposed to a vertical thread of chronology - near impossible with so many geographical locales on which one could focus - the book provides a horizontal narrative thread of Ibn Battuta's journeys across the medieval Dar al-Islam and beyond. It begins with chapter about Ibn Battuta and his birthplace, and then presents a chapter by chapter discussion of the lands he visited in order of his travels (as near as can be determined). Each chapter then provides a wider discussion of matters of import for that location. Furthermore, as the reader advances through the book, Dunn introduces key concepts of societal and cultural nature. Thus, to give one example, in the early chapters on Tangiers and Morocco, Dunn provides an overview of the political/dynastic history of the region as well as necessary background on the topics of education, law, and the importance of the 'ulama' class. In chapter 5, "Persia and Iraq," to give a second, the narrative introduces the impact of the Mongol invasions,

and also provides background on the Shi'i alternative in the medieval Dar al-Islam. By introducing these many topics the text provides ample opportunity for any instructor to develop additional class sections and activities that build upon the basics provided.

Yet this book provides more than just content. It also provides many opportunities for an instructor to explore fundamental historical concepts and methods. This is what makes the book so useful for my situation. At one level, it is possible to supplement the journey narrative with many small primary source excerpts that relate to the topics raised. Thus as the students read about Ibn Battuta's journeys across the lands of the Mongol successor khanates, it is an easy fit to construct assignments based on the analysis of any of a number primary sources passages which discuss the Mongol impact. On another level, it is possible to introduce students to some of the key aspects of source criticism. Dunn's emphasis on Ibn Battuta's observations and occasional condemnations of the societal practices he observed, for example, provide a great window to explore critical matters surrounding the competence and biases of the observer. Furthermore, the chapter notes contain a running commentary on the difficulty of actually retracing Ibn Battuta's route from the *Rihla*, and thus provide an opportunity to examine problems of historical reconstruction. Finally, the last chapter (on the composition of the *Rihla*) offers a window to address issues of textural composition, convention, and transmission.

In a ten-week quarter, I am usually forced to short-shrift some material (it usually ends up being the China chapter). The longer time provided by a semester would allow one to further develop the issues raised by each chapter. Despite the time constraints, I usually supplement the course with another work. I have used with some success, for example, Douglas Patton's short work on Badr al-Din Lu'lu (1991), which offers through one man's life a case-study approach to many key developments and institutions of medieval Islamic history (Atabegs, Mongols, Mamluks, and more). Alternatively, I have

worked in an entire primary source in translation. Inspired by an earlier "Ideas, Methods, Issues" contribution (Homerin, 1999), I have of late used translations from the Islamic texts in the Paulist Press's Classics of Western Spirituality series, (most recently, Th. Emil Homerin's 2001 translation of Ibn al-Farid's wine ode.) In either case, while I have experimented with when to insert these other books into the course, I have come to the conclusion that such texts work better at the end of the course after the students have been exposed to the foundation of the Dunn text.

Conclusion:

Many years ago at the American Research Center in Egypt in Cairo, I heard a senior scholar in the field of Islamic history quip that "historiography is what historians talk about when they stop doing history" or words to that effect. Talking about teaching may lead to analogous remarks. Or worse, since our teaching is subject to those many variables mentioned above, our experiences may be idiosyncratic and of limited use to others. This latter thought was brought home to me when I found myself going through the course files of the same colleague referred to above after his recent and unexpected death. While sorting paper into various piles, I found myself engaged in a one-sided dialogue with my late friend as questions such as "now why did you use that text?" and "why did you structure the course this way?" ran constantly through my mind. Yet, in retrospect, I have found myself ruminating about his choices and how they challenge mine. The resulting changes in my courses may be minimal, but I have no doubt that some will occur. If my prior track record as an instructor who has frequently adapted (stolen?) ideas and techniques from others, how could they not? It is in that spirit of the ongoing exchange among teachers that I have offered these comments about how I teach Medieval Islamic history at the introductory level. While they may be of use to just a few, I hope that any conversation that may ensue would be less one-sided than the "dialogue" just recounted.

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Atlas of Ports and Itineraries of the Islamic Maritime World (APIM): Project for an International Database

Maritime exchanges have always played a very important part in the economic, political and intellectual life of the medieval Islamic world, connecting people and merchandise in the Mediterranean area and the Indian Ocean, from al-Andalus to China. Much new data has been collected on this subject in the past 30 years, from literary sources and archaeological work. New fields of textual investigation have been opened, such as local chronicles, customs and financial documents, and letters of merchants. Many ancient ports visited by Muslim boats have been excavated, their monuments and archaeological artifacts studied. Furthermore, new techniques as aerial photographs, geomorphologic studies, and so on, have brought totally new kinds of data to this subject.

Thus, a huge quantity of documentation has been and is currently being collected on the Islamic maritime exchange, the ports, networks, and merchandise, a documentation of great interest for many scholars dealing with this field of research all around the world. However, given its mass, its world-wide dispersion, and the many languages in which it is published, only a limited part of this documentation is accessible to each scholar. Synthetic research on various aspects are unrealizable and more specialized studies, on a given port for example, cannot be as complete as possible when many connections stay unnoticed. It seems therefore very important to start a global scientific co-operation on this subject, an international project of database on the Islamic maritime world, providing information easily accessible to all. The development of computer technology makes such an idea now feasible.

A section of the recently created laboratory UMR 8084 of the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research) has gathered together several archaeologists and historians working on the Islamic trade of the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean. A data entry specialist has therefore been appointed to work on this database. Hence, the aim of this database is to provide concise but detailed scientific information on all the ports connected with the Islamic exchange networks, and their trading activities, information which will allow the creation of thematic maps. Every harbour-site connected with the regional and/or long-distance Islamic maritime networks is concerned, whether in a Muslim country or not, from the Atlantic Ocean to the China Sea. The chronological frame includes the whole period of the great Islamic maritime international trade, i.e. from the 7th to the 15/16th centuries AD (1st-10th c. H.), but information on pre-Islamic activities of those ports, if any, should also be welcomed.

Competitions for Fellowships for Study and Research in Yemen

The American Institute for Yemeni Studies announces two competitions for fellowship programs of in-country residence and research in Yemen, one for U.S. citizens and one for citizens of the Republic of Yemen. The annual deadline for the receipt of applications for fellowships is December 31.

Both competitions have strict eligibility requirements that must be met before applications may be submitted. Before inquiring about the fellowship program, please be sure that you meet the requirements for the program in which you are interested.

Competition for U.S. Scholars

Support for this program comes from a grant from the State Department's Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs (State/ECA) through the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).

Eligibility is limited to U.S. citizens who are enrolled as full-time graduate students in recognized degree programs or who are post-graduate researchers. Awards will be made on the basis of merit as determined by a review committee of scholars from AIYS member universities. All funds currently available or pending come from US government sources and may be awarded only to US citizens. These fellowships are fully taxable after legitimate deductions for professional expenses.

There is no restriction as to field or discipline, but project funds may only be used to support research costs incurred in Yemen. Projects are not normally funded above \$10,000. Applicants may need to secure additional funding for other expenses or for extended research periods, but in the case of multiple awards AIYS reserves the right to modify or cancel its fellowship offer. A full statement of conditions governing fellowships may be obtained from the AIYS office. Researchers whose projects will take them to more than one country are advised to consider applying to CAORC's Multi-Country Fellowship Program as well as to AIYS.

1. General Fellowship Program

Proposals are invited from graduate and post-graduate scholars for feasibility studies or research projects. Collaborative or group projects are eligible for funding. It is permissible to combine Arabic language study with a research or feasibility project.

Arabic language training grants provide funds for a 10-week program at the Yemen Language Center (YLC), the Center for Arabic Language and Eastern Studies (CALES), or the Sana'a Institute for Arabic Language (SIAL); residence will be at the AIYS hostel in Sana'a. These fellowships, for which all local arrangements are made through AIYS' Sana'a office, are intended to enable persons to conduct research in Yemen, and applicants are encouraged to relate their intended use of fellowship funds to their present interests and to future research plans. Persons seeking general Arabic language training for purposes not related to Yemen should apply to other language programs.

2. U.S. Scholars in Residence Program

Proposals are invited from US post-doctoral scholars who plan to spend a sabbatical or post-doctoral time in Yemen. This includes individual or collaborative research or participation in ongoing AIYS-affiliated projects in Yemen.

Deadline for Applications

The deadline for receipt of applications each year is December 31. To be certain of consideration applications must be complete and in the AIYS office by the deadline. This includes letters of reference and transcripts sent directly to AIYS by third parties. For further information and contact the AIYS office.

Research Fellowships for Scholars who are Citizens of the Republic of Yemen

In order to encourage original research by Yemeni scholars in all fields of the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, the American Institute for Yemeni Studies (AIYS) may support research projects proposed by qualified researchers who are citizens of the Republic of Yemen. The deadline for receipt of applications each year is December 31.

For more information on these programs and for applications please go to the AIYS website at www.aiys.org.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

Organization	When and Where	Information	Telephone/Fax/Email/Web
Middle East Studies Association (2002 Meeting)	Nov. 23-26, 2002 Washington, DC [Paper Deadline: Past]	MESA Secretariat University of Arizona 1232 N. Cherry Ave. Tucson, AZ 85721	(520)-621-5850 mesa@ccit.arizona.edu www.mesa.arizona.edu
Middle East Studies Association (2003 Meeting)	Nov. 6-9, 2003 Anchorage, AK [Abstract Deadline: Feb.15, 2003]	see preceding	see preceding
Middle East Studies Association (2004 Meeting)	Nov. 19-22, 2004 San Francisco, CA	see preceding	see preceding
American Oriental Society (2003 Meeting)	Apr. 4-7, 2003 Nashville, TN [Abstract Deadline: Past]	American Oriental Society Hatcher Graduate Library University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1205	(734)-764-7555 www.umich.edu/~aos
American Oriental Society (2004 Meeting)	Mar. 12-15, 2004 San Diego, CA	see preceding	see preceding
American Historical Association (2003 Meeting)	Jan. 2-5, 2003 Chicago, IL [Paper Deadline: Past]	American Historical Assn. 400 A Street, S. E. Washington, DC 20003	(202)-544-2422 www.Theaha.org
American Historical Association (2004 Meeting)	Jan. 8-11, 2004 Washington, DC [Paper Deadline: Feb. 2003]	see preceding	see preceding
The Medieval Institute (2003 Meeting)	May 8-11, 2003 Kalamazoo, MI [Abstract Deadline: Past]	The Medieval Institute Western Michigan Univ. 1903 W. Michigan Avenue Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5432	Tel.: (616)-387-8745 Fax: (616)-387-8750 mdvl_congres@wmich.edu www.wmich.edu/medieval
Seminar for Arabian Studies (2003 Meeting)	July 17-19, 2003 London, UK	Seminar for Arabian Studies c/o Venetia Porter Dept. of Oriental Antiquities The British Museum Gt. Russell Street London WC1B 3DG, UK	Tel.: 44-207-323-8843 Fax: 44-207-323-8561 seminararab@hotmail.com www.arabianseminar.org.uk

ANNUAL MEETINGS

Organization	When and Where	Information	Telephone/Fax/Email/Web
College Art Association (2003 Meeting)	Feb. 19-22, 2003 New York, NY [Proposal Deadline: Past]	Suzanne Schanzer 275 Seventh Ave. New York, NY 10001	(212)-691-1051 ext13 www.collegeart.org
College Art Association (2004 Meeting)	Feb. 18-21, 2004 Seattle, WA [Proposal Deadline: Past]	see preceding	see preceding
International Medieval Congress (2003 Meeting) "Power & Authority"	July 14-17, 2003 Leeds, UK [Abstract Deadline: Past]	M. O'Doherty/J. Opmeer IMC, Parkinson 1.03 University of Leeds Leeds LS2 9JT, UK	Tel.: +44 (113) 233-3614 Fax: +44 (113) 233-3616 IMC@leeds.ac.uk www.leeds.ac.uk/imi/imc/imc.htm
International Medieval Congress (2004 Meeting) "Clash of Cultures"	July 12-15, 2004 Leeds, UK [Abstract Deadline: Aug. 31, 2003]	see preceding	see preceding
Dumbarton Oaks Conference (2003 Meeting)	April-May, 2003 Washington, DC [Paper: Invitation only]	Dumbarton Oaks 1703 32nd St., N. W. Washington, DC 20007	(202)-339-6940 www.doaks.org
ARAM International Conference (2003 Meeting) "Alcohol & Oils"	July 7-9, 2003 Oxford, UK	ARAM The Oriental Institute Oxford University Pusey Lane Oxford OX1 2LE, UK	Tel.: 44-1865-514041 Fax: 44-1865-516824 aram@ermine.ox.ac.uk users.ox.ac.uk/~aram
ARAM International Conference (2004 Meeting) "Palestinian Christianity"	July 6-8, 2004 Oxford, UK	see preceding	see preceding
American Academy of Religion (2002 Meeting)	Nov. 23-26, 2002 Toronto, Canada [Paper Deadline: Past]	American Academy of Religion 1703 Clifton Rd., Suite G-5 Atlanta, GA 30329-4019	(404)-727-7920 aar@emory.edu www.aarweb.org/annualmeet
American Academy of Religion (2003 Meeting)	Nov. 22-25, 2003 Atlanta, GA [Abstract Deadline: Mar. 2003]	see preceding	see preceding
American Academy of Religion (2004 Meeting)	Nov. 20-23, 2004 San Antonio, TX [Abstract Deadline: Mar. 2004]	see preceding	see preceding

NEWS OF MEM

New MEM Attorney and Agent

MEM has retained William F. Zieske, a Chicago attorney with the law firm of Ross & Hardies, as its attorney and registered agent. Mr. Zieske and Ross & Hardies are delighted to extend their legal services to MEM on an ongoing basis.

Ross & Hardies, now in its 100th year, is a full-service business law firm offering a comprehensive range of legal services from its offices in Chicago, New York and Washington, D.C. Its attorneys are regularly involved in matters throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, the Pacific rim and Asia.

Mr. Zieske is a civil litigation and trial attorney who represents clients ranging from individuals to multi-national corporations in the prosecution and defense of commercial and tort claims. His legal practice focuses on matters relating to below-ground facilities and resources, including oil and gas, underground storage, pipelines and utility facilities. He also represents one of the largest public libraries in Illinois on First Amendment and Internet issues.

Mr. Zieske's interests reach beyond the borders of the law, and his relationship with MEM is not his first contact with Middle East scholarship. Before earning his law degree with highest honors from the University of Notre Dame Law School, he earned his B.A., magna cum laude, in Anthropology and Jewish and Near Eastern Studies at Washington University in St. Louis. He continued his studies at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, where he entered the doctoral program in Comparative Semitic Linguistics in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

Mr. Zieske worked for several years as assistant to Bruce D. Craig, a current MEM director, in the Middle East department of the University of Chicago's graduate studies library, and maintains contact with several other MEMbers and with the Center for Middle East Studies on the Chicago campus.

At Notre Dame, Mr. Zieske edited the Law Review and worked as a student writer on a multi-volume legal treatise. Currently, he publishes articles on a variety of legal topics for legal and other trade journals. Mr. Zieske is a member of the American Bar Association, the Illinois State Bar Association and the Chicago Bar Association, and is particularly proud to accept membership in Middle East Medievalists.

A Word of Thanks ...

MEM wishes to express its profound appreciation to Dean Michael L. Mezey of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, DePaul University. Dean Mezey has generously underwritten xeroxing and printing costs incurred by MEM's Secretary-Treasurer, Prof. Warren Schultz of DePaul's History Department.

MEM also extends its sincere thanks to Dean Janel Mueller of the Division of Humanities, University of Chicago, for generously contributing to the salary of Al-'Usur al-Wusta's Editorial and Production Assistant, Aram Shahin.

MEMber News

Jere L. Bacharach published "Fustat Finds: Beads, Coins, Medical Instruments, Textiles and Other Artifacts from the Awad Collection" with American University of Cairo Press in Feb., 2002. The ten articles focus on material remains not included in most other studies. All of the material comes from the private collection of an Egyptian doctor who, subsequently, donated the artifacts to museums and universities, mostly in Egypt.

Early Islamic Egypt at MESA 2002

The 2002 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, which will take place on November 23-26, 2002 in Washington, D.C., will include a MEM-Sponsored panel entitled "New Approaches to Early Islamic Egypt". The papers included are:

- Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "The Economics of State Formation in Early Islamic Egypt;"
- Matthew Gordon (Miami University of Ohio), "Themes of al-Balawi's *Sīrat Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn*;"
- Jos van Lent, "A Date with Samuel: Locating a Key Apocalypse with the Egyptian Historical Context;" (withdrew)
- Petra Sijpesteijn (Princeton University), "A Pilgrim's Tale from Early 2nd/8th Century Egypt;"
- Lennart Sundelin (Princeton University), "Arabization and Islamization in the 9th-10th Century Egyptian Countryside;"

The panel will be chaired by Prof. A. L. Udovitch of Princeton University. Prof. Fred M. Donner of the University of Chicago will be discussant.

Classical Arabic Poetry at MESA 2002

The 2002 Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, which will take place from November 23-26, 2002 in Washington, D.C., will include a MEM-Sponsored panel entitled "Classical Arabic Poetry: Origins and Intersections". The papers included are:

- Samuel Liebhaber, "Writing and Epigraphy in the Pre-Islamic Nasib: Historical and Literary Dimensions;"
- Adriana Valencia, "The Construction of Space in the Mu'allāqa of Labid b. Rabi'a;"
- Raymond Farrin, "The Poetics of Persuasion: Abu Tammam's Panegyric to Ibn Abi Du'ad;"
- Shamma Boyarin, "The Abbasid Manner and its Influence on the Hebrew Poets of al-Andalus;"
- Jocelyn Sharlet, "The Poetics of the Hero in Classical Arabic and Persian Panegyric."

The panel will be chaired by Prof. Margaret Larkin. Prof. Everett Rowson will be discussant.

Call for Papers

Syriac Symposium IV

"Syriac Christianity: Culture at the Crossroads"

Princeton, New Jersey, July 9-12, 2003

Papers are invited for the Syriac Symposium IV, which will be held in Princeton, New Jersey, on July 9-12, 2003.

Preference will be given to papers or sessions that address questions of cultural or religious interaction. Such topics include but are not limited to: Semitic or Hellenistic influences on Syriac Christian life, literature, art or architecture; relations between Syriac-speaking Christians and "others": other Christians, Jews, Muslims, or the peoples and cultures of India and China. Other proposals in the areas of Syriac Christian literature, its Biblical versions, theology and history are also welcome.

This symposium meets jointly with the International Forum on Syriac Computing. This forum aims to give those working on computational projects in Syriac the opportunity to share information. Papers on all aspects of Syriac computing are welcomed, including: databases (lexical, bibliographical, catalogues), word processing, fonts, desktop publishing, critical editions, computer aided learning/teaching, software and systems.

Proposals are due January 15, 2003.

For more information please contact:

(For Syriac Symposium IV) kathleen.mcvey@ptsem.edu, Fax: 609-497-7728.

(For the International Forum on Syriac Computing) gkiraz@bethmardutho.org.

Conferences and Symposia

International Conference on Late Sasanian and Early Muslim Coins of Iran

The Heritage of Sasanian Iran:

Dinars, Drahms and Coppers of the Late Sasanian and Early Muslim Periods

The ANS and Columbia University hosted "The Heritage of Sasanian Iran: Dinars, Drahms and Coppers of the Late Sasanian and Early Muslim Periods" at Columbia University on June 8th and 9th, 2002. The conference presented a wide range of papers on the coinages of greater Iran from the 5th to 8th centuries CE. It also featured a workshop on the reading of the Pahlavi and Soghdian legends on these coins. The American Numismatic Society and Columbia's The Center for Iranian Studies and Middle East Center co-sponsored it with additional support from Middle East Medievalists. More than twenty people attended from as far away as Japan, Georgia, Egypt, France and Belgium.

The papers discussed the reading and interpretation of the legends and iconography on the different Iranian coinages of these periods, their use by governments in meeting administrative needs and legitimizing authority and their subsequent use and circulation. Michael L. Bates, Curator of Islamic Coins at the ANS, gave the plenary lecture entitled "The Coinages of Iran and Its Neighbors in the Seventh Century." The lecture traced the development of the late Sasanian coin type and its imitation in numerous succeeding coinages in Iran and adjacent regions.

The first panel, entitled "Iconography, Imitations and Unusual Coins," treated the use of symbolism and legends on sasanian coins, and their imitations. François Gurnet (Independent Scholar) discussed the alternating emphasis in Sasanian iconography on religious and dynastic symbols culminating in the sixth century in the creation of a relatively constant dynastic type. Stuart D. Sears (The American University in Cairo) gave arguments, relying on both numismatic and literary evidence, for the attribution of the mint legend WH to Veh-Ardashir, one of the Sasanian empire's capital cities. Aleksandr Naymark (Hoffstra University) discussed the imitations of drachms minted under Varahran V in Merv and the silver coinage of Bukhara.

The second panel, entitled "Monetary History of Transcaucasia," addressed coins and hoards of the Caucasus. Georges Depyrot (CNRS, France) discussed his remarkable encounter with dozens of such hoards in Georgia and Armenia. Medea Tsotselia (The Janashia Georgian State Museum, Tbilisi, Georgia) gave an overview of several of these hoards recovered in Georgia. Dr. Sears traced the evolution of several series of Muslim drahms struck in this region shortly before the introduction of dirhams.

The third panel, entitled "Monetary History of the Eastern Frontier," raised issues in the monetary history of eastern Iran. Parvaneh Pourshariati (Ohio State University) discussed the struggle between provincial elites and the Sasanian monarchy in sixth and seventh century Iran with special emphasis to Khurasan. Richard Frye (Harvard University) pointed out new avenues of needed research on the coinage of the Silk Route. Dr. Naymark gave insights into the coinage of Sogdiana and its circulation from Qutaiba b. Muslim to Abu Muslim.

The fourth and final panel, entitled "Money and its Uses," treated the ways early Muslim governments employed coins in the organization of the Islamic State and the legitimation of its authority. Kameya Manabu (Hokkaido University, Japan) tied the striking of Arab-Sasanian coins to payment of stipends, the 'aṭā' system, while Dr. Sears examined legends on the coinage of al-Ḥakam b. al-'Āṣ promoting an absolutist conception of government for the first time on Muslim coinage.

The abstracts of many of these papers may be found on the ANS web-site. Participants have been invited to submit their papers for publication to the *Journal of Ancient Iranian Studies*, *The American Journal of Numismatics* and *Al-Sikka*. The conference will meet again next year. Abstracts for proposed talks and inquiries should be sent to Stuart D. Sears (sears@aucegypt.edu) or Michael L. Bates (bates@amnumsoc.org).

REVIEWS • OF • BOOKS

FROM • THE • MIDDLE • EAST

REVIEW POLICY

Members of MEM are invited to submit reviews of recent books in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, or other Middle Eastern languages that they have read and that deal with subjects of interest to MEM's membership. In exceptional cases, reviews of books in English or other European languages will be printed, but the main focus will be books in Middle Eastern languages, because generally these are not reviewed in Western journals. *Al-'Usur al-Wusta* relies on the voluntary submission of reviews because review copies of books in Middle Eastern languages are not usually made available.

Reviews should be brief, 250 words or, if possible, fewer. A short note is sufficient in many cases, as it serves the main purpose of bringing a worthwhile work of scholarship to the attention of MEM members who may be interested in the subject it treats. Be sure to include full bibliographical information: full name of author, full title, place and date of publication, publisher, and number of pages. Send reviews directly to the editor.

Laṭifah al-Bakkāy, *Ḥarakat al-khawārij. Nash'atuhā wa-tatawwuruhā ilā nihāyat al-'ahd al-umawī (37-132 H.)* [The Khariji Movement: Its Origin and Development to the End of the Umayyad Period] (Beirut: Dār al-Ṭalī'ah, 2001). 320 pp.

This was originally a doctoral dissertation prepared at the University of Tunis, 1996, under Hichem Djait (Ju'ayyit). Bakkāy claims to offer unprecedented attention to non-military aspects of Khariji history and to Kharijism outside Iraq. This apparently amounts to taking seriously some of their religious claims, for she turns away in apparent disappointment when the Khawarij take up "merely" theological and juridical questions. To one familiar with recent scholarship in European languages (outstandingly English and Italian), it seems that she unnecessarily distances Kharijism from Islamic orthodoxy. So, for example, Bakkāy relates *khurūj* to leaving the place of one's adversaries, not Q. 4.100, "he who

goes out of his house as an emigrant to God and his messenger" (29). She doubts whether the call for a *shūrā* was genuinely early (a good example of her commonsense approach to contradictions in the record) but accepts reports associating the Khawarij from the beginning with *al-amr bi-al-ma'rūf wa-al-nahy 'an al-munkar*, ordering the good and prohibiting evil (31). This sounds right to me, but I wish she went on to compare ordering the good among the Khawarij and among Muslim ascetics in general.

Her supervisor has written that European scholarship is motivated by implacable hostility to Islam. Unsurprisingly, then, Bakkāy has not used recent scholarship in European languages. (No doubt the limitations of Tunisian libraries are also important, here.) Neither, more surprisingly, has she used any of the recent Ibadī publications from the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture in Oman. Still, she has come to some of the same conclusions as scholars writing in European languages, such as observing a certain radicalization of the movement over time (cf. Francesca on the rewriting of *asānīd* to distinguish Ibadī hadith from Sunni), and her general approach is not unsound, just behind the times. Her bibliography of scholarship in Arabic is a good complement to that of European-language scholarship in Crone and Zimmermann, *The Epistle of Sālim ibn Dhakwān* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2001), which see also for recent Omani publications.

- Christopher Melchert

Ibrāhīm ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥandūd, *Ihtijājāt Abī al-Faṭḥ ibn Jinnī fī al-Muḥtasib 'alā Abī Bakr ibn Mujāhid* (Buraydah, Saudi Arabia: Maṭba'at Safir, 1419/1998). 145 pp.

Ibn Jinnī (d. Baghdad, 392/1002?) was a native of Mosul and an adherent of the Ḥanafi school of law and the Basran school of grammar (see *Gal* 1:131 [125f]; *S* 1:191f). Over twenty of his works are

extant and have been published. An extract of his defence of rejected readings of the Qur'an was reviewed by Gotthelf Bergsträsser in *Nichtkanonische Koranlesarten im Muḥtasab des Ibn Jinnī* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1933). The whole work was edited in the late 1960s by 'Alī al-Najdī Nāṣif, et al., 2 vols. (Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'lá lil-Shu'ūn al-Islāmiyah, 1386-89). Now there has appeared this study by Ḥandūd, a scholar who teaches in al-Qaṣim, Saudi Arabia.

Ibn Mujāhid (d. Baghdad, 324/936) is famous for establishing seven acceptable textual variants or readings (*qirā'āt*) of the Qur'an. But he also assembled a collection of unacceptable readings, on which basis (along with some other sources named in his introduction) Ibn Jinnī sometimes playfully assembled this collection of nonstandard readings that he thought defensible, after all. Ibn Jinnī accepted that only Ibn Mujāhid's seven were practically suitable for public recitation, but he disliked that certain well-attested and reasonable readings should be dismissed with contempt. For example, he provides four arguments in favour of the caliph Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr's reading of Q. 94.1 as *a-lam*

nashraḥa ṣadraq, among them that it might be a doubly weakened version of the energetic, *nashraḥan* < *nashraḥanna*, supported by numerous poetic citations. Ḥandūd presents a selection of Ibn Jinnī's arguments with helpful cross-references, stressing where he takes issue directly with Ibn Mujāhid. As a piece of scholarship, it is less decisive than Bergsträsser, easier to read but probably less useful than Ibn Jinnī himself. However, its publication is one more hopeful sign that Muslims are coming to recognize the degree of textual indeterminacy that the medieval Islamic tradition accepted, somewhere between medieval Christian laxity concerning the Greek New Testament and Jewish rigour concerning the Hebrew and Aramaic Bible.

- Christopher Melchert

New and Recent Titles in Middle East Studies

FUSTAT FINDS

Beads, Coins, Medical Instruments, Textiles and Other Artifacts from the Awad Collection

Edited by Jere L. Bacharach
The ten studies in this volume demonstrate the wealth of materials and artifacts found in al-Fustat, the site of the first Arab settlement in Egypt.

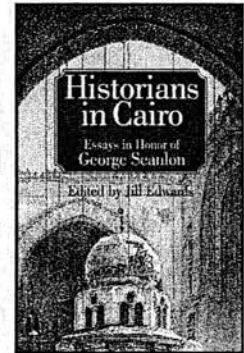


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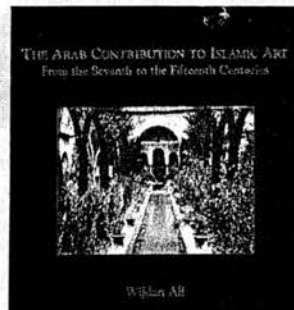


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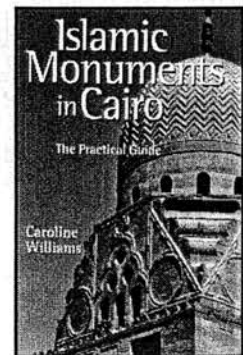


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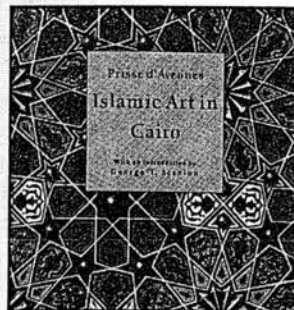


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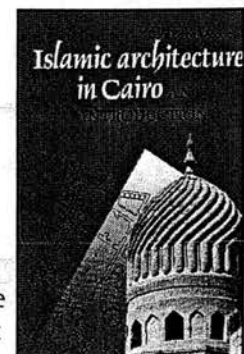


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Events and Exhibits around the World

The following are some of the exhibits worldwide that may be of interest:

The Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets:

Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., USA, September 13, 2002, through February 16, 2003.
Presents more than 50 carpets dating from the 15th to the 19th century.

7000 Years of Persian Art:

Kunsthal St. Peter's Abbey, Ghent, Belgium, September 13, 2002, through January 5, 2003.
Presents approximately 180 objects from the Iranian National Museum in Tehran dating from the Neolithic to the early Islamic period.

The Adventures of Hamza:

Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA, November 1, 2002, through January 26, 2003.
Presents 60 illustrations from the manuscript of the *Hamzanama* which was made for the 16th-century Mughal emperor Akbar.

The Legacy of Genghis Khan:

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA, November 5, 2002, through February 16, 2003.
About 200 objects are displayed dating to the period of Ilkhanid rule in Western Asia.

The Arab Horse:

Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France, November 25, 2002, through March 30, 2003.
The exhibit includes trappings; horse-themed ceramics, metalwork, textiles and enamel works of art; illustrations from *furusiyya* manuals and literary manuscripts; and orientalist paintings and sculpture.

Herzfeld in Samarra:

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA, through January 5, 2003.
Displays the notebooks, sketchbooks, travel journals, watercolors and ink drawings, site maps, architectural plans and photographs of Ernst Emile Herzfeld.

Under Foreign Influence:

MAK Museum, Vienna, Austria, through January 12, 2003.
Illustrates the various enameling techniques of Islamic, European and East Asian traditions through the presentation of religious and secular objects ranging from the 12th to the 21st century.

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Pages 22, 23, 25, Figs.1, 2, and 4: Dia-
grams and map by the author.

Page 24, Fig. 3: Photograph by the author.

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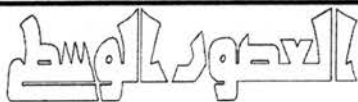
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Al-'Usur al-Wusta
Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists
The Oriental Institute
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Chicago, IL 60637 U.S.A.