

Quseir al-Qadim, Egypt: Text and Context in the Indian Ocean Spice Trade

by Donald Whitcomb

Quseir al-Qadim, a small port of the Egyptian coast of the Red Sea, was excavated by the University of Chicago from 1978 through 1982. The site provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between historical and archaeological evidence. In the entry "Qusaïr" in the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1927), Plessner states that Quseir "flourished particularly in the 'Abbāsid period" and was revived only after Selim I. Over 50 years later, in the second edition (1982, but doubtless written several years earlier), Garçin states:

1. Quseir "lost its importance in the Roman period;"
2. importance returned "towards the end of the Romano-Byzantine" and early Islamic periods in connection with the needs of the Hajj pilgrims;
3. development of Qūş under the Fatimids "from the end of the ...11th century" led to increased use of this port;
4. the Mamluks used the port for "naval units ... and some commercial operations;"
5. "the revival" of Quseir began after 1365 and continued to grow throughout the 15th century."

The excavations at Quseir al-Qadim between 1978 and 1982 provide

abundant evidence for a rather different history. The port was very active and prosperous during the early Roman Empire. Thereafter, it was abandoned for almost a millennium; there is no trace of Byzantine (Coptic), Umayyad, or Abbasid occupation at Quseir (fig. 1). The resettlement of this port is indicated by numismatic and other artifactual evidence to have been in the late 11th or beginning of the 12th century (Fatimid occupation is unlikely). The period of greatest prosperity was the Bahri Mamluk period, with traded artifacts from India, China, Syria, and even Tekrur (West Africa). Numismatics and the large corpus of letters found in the excavations confirm this conclusion. The settlement of the 15th century may have shifted to the site of the modern port.

Beyond chronology, this analysis of the historical fortunes of Quseir points to a prevalent tendency, the conflation of political events with broader economic trends. Only Garçin's statements on the Mamluk and later history appear to be correct. This discussion will focus on the famed spice trade with the Indian Ocean from the point of view of the documents (letters) and artifacts (spices) found in the excavations in comparison with evidence

SEE QUSEIR, PAGE 26.

In This Issue

Quseir al-Qadim	25
Ideas, Methods, Issues: Aesthetics of Islamic Art	28
MEM Bulletin Board	30
MEM Scholar Profile: Farouk Omar	31
Annual Meetings	32
News of MEM:	34
Elections	34
Prize	34
Member News	34
Creswell Again	36
Conferences	38
Pioneers: H.A.R. Gibb	42
Book Reviews	44
Contributors and Credits	47

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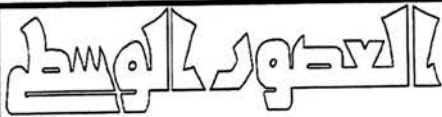
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Al-'Usur al-Wusta

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Book reviews should be sent to Michael G. Morony, Department of History, UCLA, 405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024, USA. Archaeology articles should be sent to Donald Whitcomb, The Oriental Institute, 1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. Other manuscripts, news, and information for inclusion in *Al-'Usur al-Wusta*, and inquiries, 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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Middle East Medievalists

Middle East Medievalists (MEM), founded in 1989, is a professional non-profit association of scholars and organizations interested in the Islamic lands of the Middle East during the medieval period (defined roughly as 500-1500 C.E.). MEM's main objectives are to encourage scholarship on the medieval Middle East and to foster lines of communication among its members.

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The Board of Directors of MEM is elected annually at the general business meeting, normally held in the fall at the annual meeting of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA). (For information, see "Annual Meetings" section inside this issue.) The next business meeting will take place at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, December 7, 1995, in the Dupont Room of the Washington Hilton and Towers, Washington, D.C., in conjunction with MESA. The Board of Directors for 1995 consists of the following members:

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QUSEIR, FROM PAGE 25.

of the Cairo Geniza and other historical sources.

Quseir al-Qadim

The 1978 and 1982 seasons of excavation revealed Islamic occupation on the southern edge of the Roman town, forming a crescent around the silted-up Roman harbor (fig. 2). In addition to a series of houses along a passage leading toward the bay, a residential complex was situated on a natural prominence in the center of this area (excavated in 1982). This was called the Sheikh's house. While totally lacking architectural embellishments, these well-constructed residences obviously refer to urban architecture of the Nile valley. The 1980 excavations concentrated on broad horizontal clearance of structures in the east of the site near the beach. The Eastern Area revealed a very different settlement, a complex of foundations (possibly multiple reconstructions) not unlike village constructions along the Red Sea littoral in recent times. This settlement presents the paradox of a "rich" artifactual contents in a "poor" architectural setting.

Both of these settlements, the sheikh's house and the Eastern Area, produced evidence of Indian Ocean trade; most obviously, this included Far Eastern ceramics, both celadons and porcelains (early blue & white Ming wares were found

only in the Eastern Area). Another eastern import from these excavations, due to the remarkable preservation of cloth and other organics, is the resist dyed textiles. These brightly patterned textiles were made in India for Islamic markets; the majority were found in the Eastern Area. The discrepancies between the settlement of the Sheikh's house and that of the Eastern Area is confirmed with preliminary analysis of the Islamic coins recovered (see Table 1, below).

The divergent dates of these coin assemblages strongly suggests two different periods of occupation, an Ayyubid settlement of the 13th c. around the Sheikh's house and a Mamluk resettlement on the beach in the later 14th c. This change in locality suggests that an interruption in occupation is a strong possibility.

The commercial patterns of the Indian Ocean have usually been styled the "spice trade." The particular conditions of preservation at Quseir has allowed some recovery of these products. The records of the Cairo Geniza, and studies of mercantile structures such as the Karimi, indicate that the vast majority of the wealth was tied up in spices (cinnamon, ginger, etc.), aromatics (sandelwood, etc. and perfumes), drugs (medicines) and varnishing plants. The majority of these products have left no traces in the archaeological record, even at Quseir. The plant remains recovered (usually by dry sieving) present an interesting picture of imports (and probably consumption)(See Table 2, below).

TABLE 1. Coin dates at Quseir al-Qadim by location (all dates C.E.)

Coin dates	pre-1200	1200-1250	1250-1300	1300-1350	1350+	Mamluk
Sheikh's house	5	10	--	--	--	--
Eastern Area	1	3	3	2	13	8

TABLE 2. Imported plants at Quseir al-Qadim by location.

	Sheikh's house	Eastern Area	origin
coriander	--	35	Egypt
garlic	1	2	Egypt
fenugreek	--	30	India?
peppercorns	--	25	India
coconut	8	5	India
peach	24	1	Egypt?
hazelnut	119	0	Mediterranean
walnut	7	0	Mediterranean
almond	8	3?	Mediterranean
pine	8	0	Mediterranean
pistachio	15	0	Medit. or Iran

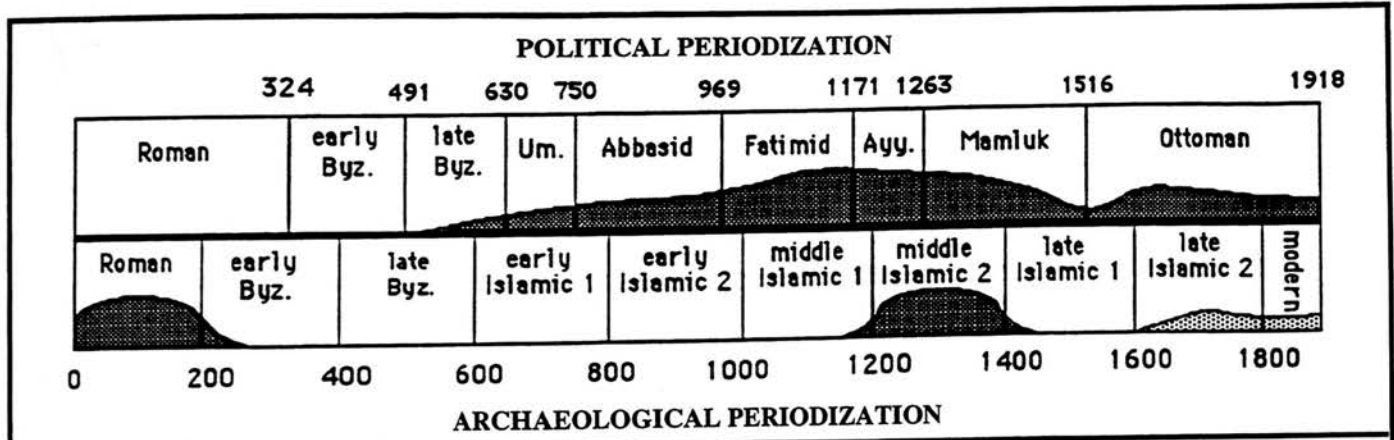


Fig. 1. Comparison of the relative importance of Quseir al-Qadim according to literary and archaeological evidence.

While the data is not complete and samples are in any case selective, several implications may be drawn from the list of imports. First, the spices and condiments which had been introduced into Egypt from pre-Islamic times makes up a large component of the diet of medieval Quseir. Imports from India (and southeast Asia) were probably constant for both periods; the plants listed here should be augmented with others that were not recovered. The most fascinating discovery was the decline in imported nuts from the Mediterranean region in the Mamluk period. This strongly suggests that these plants were not being exported eastward via the Red Sea. A partial explanation may be the opening of Syrian trade to the east in the Mamluk period. No doubt other factors, such as an increase in regional trade patterns, may be suggested.

Documentary evidence

The marvelous preservation of artifacts is not confined to Quseir but extends throughout this magical land. For the preservation of contemporary documents in Egypt, there is no better example than the letters of the Cairo Geniza. These are best known from the research of Goitein, who has produced an extensive analysis of the society and commerce of the medieval Jewish community of Egypt. The classic Geniza period refers to the 250 years of the 11th to the first half of the 13th century; the majority of these documents predate the Islamic occupation at Quseir.

The excavations at Quseir have produced a corpus of documents similar to the Cairo Geniza. Like the Geniza, this is a random preservation rather than an archive; the Quseir letters were not gathered together for storage but found as a

random part of normal trash accumulation. These letters, about 200 of which are fairly complete, detail the daily life of the community, ranging from discussion of crops and trade to love letters. While several prominent specialists have taken these documents to hand, very little analysis has resulted. The Quseir letters still await their Goitein.

One expectable result of such analysis will be more detailed information on the commercial relations of the 13th and 14th century, Quseir's participation in the spice trade. The present archaeological investigations at Quseir indicate the im-

precision of Garçin's history of this port. At the same time, Garçin has painted a broader analysis of the commercial trends in medieval Egypt. This suggests a major reorientation of "living space" at the end of the 14th century, a conclusion closely conforming to the changes witnessed in the Quseir excavations. The marginality of Quseir gives its history a fragility, whether written as an aspect of political events or broad economic trends. Fortunately the archaeological record - with its seeds and letters - allows a reexamination of interpretative assumptions for this settlement and its larger context. ■

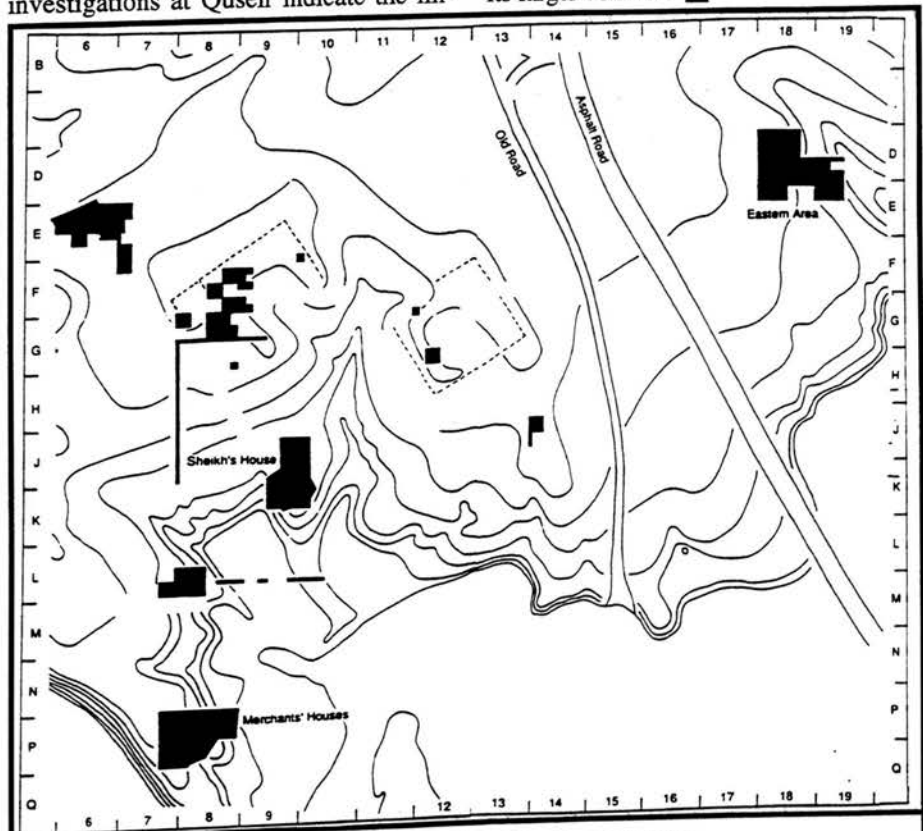


Fig. 2. Plan of the excavations at Quseir al-Qadim, 1978-82.

The Aesthetics of Islamic Art: Towards a Methodology of Research*

by Valérie Gonzalez

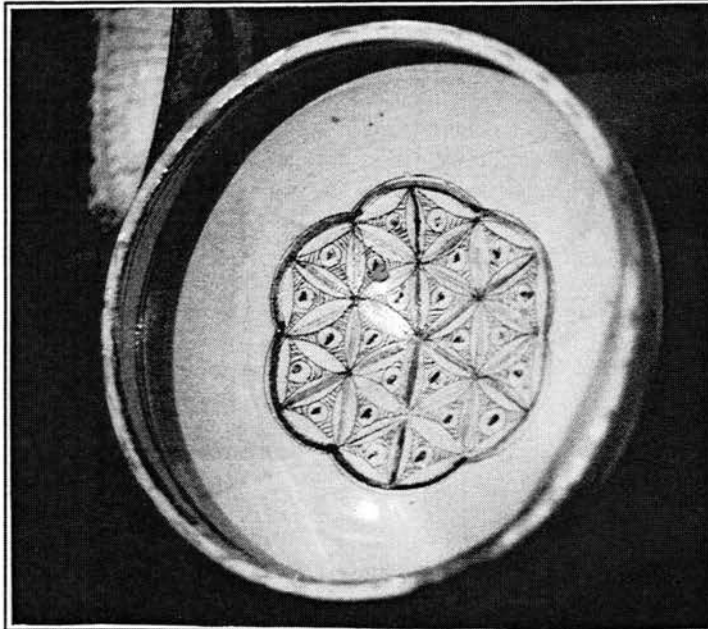
As a discipline that is still young, the aesthetics of Islamic art has reached the present, with the exception of a scant few attempts, mainly under the discipline of history and of its laws, or according to some varied, but often vague, methods. Some historians of art, some practitioners of the plastic arts, or some writers have, each according to his own orientations, delivered their intuitions and interpretations on the subject, with or without the assistance of the method of aesthetic analysis. The disparity and the relatively small number of these studies are obvious. The immediate consequence of this situation is that a number of questions remain unanswered, or must be made more profoundly and, sometimes, reformulated and asked again. It is thus necessary to reconsider the aesthetics of the Islamic arts as a subject entirely apart, not subordinated to history, but coordinated with it.

Aesthetics, like the history of art, is a purely Western science, presupposing a vocabulary and modes of analysis generally foreign to scholars of the Arab-Muslim world. It was born in the framework of Western art, and developed from its adven-

tures and conquests. To study the artistic works of Islam in the light of aesthetics means, then, to subject them to an outside view, which carries the risk of deformation and inevitably engenders a distracting gap between the object studied and the ob-

classified in three categories: those applied to the analysis of artistic forms and their language, those pertaining to the theoretical conceptualization of aesthetics, and those having to do with the exploitation of written sources. (1) *Tools of the first kind*

spring from the observation of the object itself, and therefore require simultaneously employment of the classic methodological tools of art history. Their objective is to grasp the inherent plastic logic in works of Islamic art. These are: registering the components of the object, materials and techniques of fabrication, themes, composition, form, etc.; bringing to light its plastic properties and functions; and defining the choices, options, and concepts which it expresses in the material. (2) *Tools of the second kind* enable one to examine and reflect on this plastic logic previously circumscribed. These tools permit one to appreciate the options implied by this logic for the spirit, and make it possible



Islamic Museum, Cairo. Ceramic bowl (10th-13th cent.) from Transoxania.

server. Consequently, the essential requirement for such an enterprise is to control the gap, by determining a method of approach that is as well-adapted as possible to the context of Islamic civilization. In other words, it is obviously necessary to use the tools of the traditional science of aesthetics, but to use them according to approaches previously defined on the basis of specifically Islamic data.

The tools: These tools can be

sible to define the conceptual system determined by these options. In the pictorial domain, for example, the concept of two-dimensionality engenders a particular perception of representation, contrary to that induced by the concept of perspective. This perception constitutes one of these options. Two-dimensionality, combined with the stylization of figures, or some other aesthetic option, forms a conceptual figural system that conveys to the viewer a

* Translated from the French by Fred M. Donner, with assistance of Gene Gragg and the author.

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certain vision of the world. (3) *Tools of the last kind* require the consultation of historical and literary texts; this makes it possible to interpret the meaning the art studied has for the society that produced it—collecting the written documentation relating to the artistic creation, reconstructing the social context of the work, and defining the modes of thought that conditioned its emergence. Finally, an aesthetic study of Islamic art cannot be complete without the help of a valuable and useful instrument for all kinds of analysis: the comparison with other arts—in this case, with the arts of those cultures of Orient and Occident that nourished the production of Islam.

Ways of Approaching Works of Art:

First of all, the aesthetic study of the Islamic arts must base itself on their historical progression, following their chronological order from their origins until the nineteenth century. Indeed, if Western output is based on a succession of discontinuities, of changes of orientation, and of artistic revolutions that make each period in its history a distinct cultural space, notoriously different from what preceded it, Islamic art has followed, comparatively speaking, a linear evolution. It has revered a multi-faceted aesthetic logic, to be sure, but one nearly unchanged in its main lines from the era when it made its choices under the Umayyads and first Abbasids, until the dawn of the contemporary epoch. For example, one may discuss European painting of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries without referring to that of the Roman or Gothic period, whereas the Iranian miniature cannot be understood except from the perspective of the medieval Islamic figural arts.

The typically occidental mode of approaching art by hierarchical categories, then, must be left aside when studying Islamic art. In Islam, in contrast to Europe, artistic production is simultaneously one

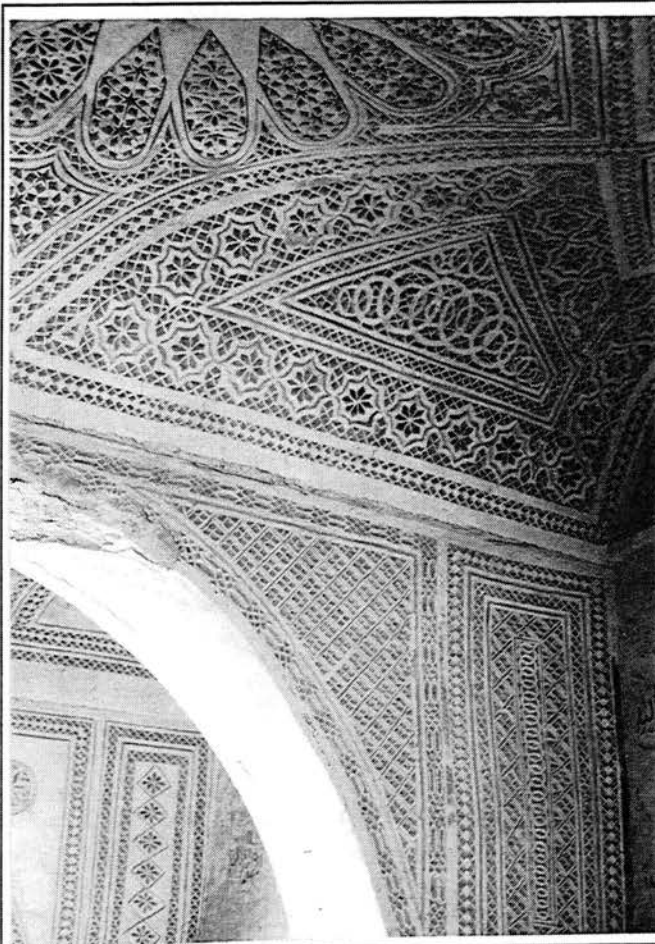
and plural, in the sense that the forms of plastic expression, however diverse they may be, all lead back, in one way or another, to God. The idea of the divine is always presented, explicitly or implicitly, in every work of art. Moreover, the division between sacred and secular works which characterizes Western art before the contemporary era does not appear in the same manner in Islam. There exists, rather, a great permeability of artistic forms

called “major arts,” are the depositaries of an elevated aesthetic sense, while others, called “minor arts,” arise only from technical skill, and where the dichotomy “art / craft” marks a clear distinction in the objectives and functions of each of them in the creative process. An aesthetic commitment, or similar figural forms, can nonetheless contribute to generation of very diverse kinds of works. Some simple objects are capable of bearing just as much

information as prestigious monuments, or of disproving a hypothesis founded solely on examination of the latter. Arabic calligraphy, the superior art in Islam if there is one at all, embellishes all of the objects on which it is placed, including the most humble, and so tends to equalize the values of various forms of artistic production.

On these grounds, two errors of approach are to be avoided. The first consists of establishing a nexus of meaning between a decoration and the object on which it appears, as if one flows out of the other and was intimately tied to it—even though the same ornament may be found on another object of completely different character. The second error would be to neglect the examination of some kinds of works in favor of others which are considered, *a priori*, to be more representative for a particular study. For example, Fatimid representations of human figures on building decoration appear conventional and related to the stylized art of the classical Abbasid era; but, on objects, they are imbued with a realism

that reminds one of Hellenistic figural art. Consequently, the study of such a question of aesthetics demands the observation of all branches of Islamic art that are relevant to it, without arbitrary pre-selection; unless this is done, comprehension of the object may prove to be reductionist or defective.



Tamelhat, Algeria. Carved plaster decoration (18th cent.) in tomb of Sidi El Hadj 'Ali.

between the religious category and the category called “profane,” the former always liable to break into the latter or to superimpose itself on it. Thus, one can find the name of Allah inscribed in epigraphic decoration on any object, be it courtly or domestic, as a summons to the submission to God in all circumstances.

Moreover, Muslims have not classified their arts in the same way as the Occident, where certain kinds of works,



MEM BULLETIN BOARD

NOTICE

The Bulletin Board posts short notices by MEM members seeking specific information for research. Notices must be brief enough to fit in one of the boxes. Repetition of notices in subsequent issues will depend upon demand.

-Ed.

TOPKAPI RENOVATIONS

A member of MEM currently working in Istanbul informs us that the Topkapı Library in Istanbul will be undergoing renovations, probably beginning next summer (1996), although timing depends on securing the necessary funding. During the renovations manuscripts held by the library will be unavailable, and microfilms may also be difficult to acquire. Those planning to do research at the Topkapı Library in the near future should contact the Library's Director, Dr. Filiz Çağman, to inquire about availability of materials they may wish to use.

ARABS IN MEDIEVAL ITALY

I am interested in the Arab occupation of Central Italy during the 9th and 10th centuries C.E.—specifically, the area of Molise and any possible Arab settlements in this area. If you know of sources of information on this area, or if you are or know of a scholar with a special interest or expertise in this area, I would appreciate hearing from you.

-Frank Licameli
Valeria Historical Research
P.O. Box 505
Westchester Sta., NY 10461
or email: licameli@aecom.yu.edu

IBN WASIF'S SOURCES

One of the sources used by Alfonso el Sabio, King of Castile and Leon (1252-1284), in writing his *General Estoria* (History of the World) was the *Kitāb jawāhir al-buhūr* of the Egyptian historian Ibn Wasif. We are interested in the way Alfonso used this source to describe Nebuchadnezzar's supposed invasion of Egypt. Unfortunately, all the manuscripts available to us which are cited by that name in GAL (S) are late abridgments, and do not contain the relevant passages.

We would very much like to hear from anyone who has further information about Ibn Wasif and his sources.

John Hayes (Near Eastern Studies) & Jerry Craddock (Spanish & Portuguese), University of California, Berkeley, CA, 94720, USA.

'AZĪZA AL-SAKSAWĪYA

I am looking for references to the 7th/14th-14th century Moroccan saint 'Azīza al-Saksawīya and her tribe of Saksīwa (sometimes Saksāwa, from the S. Mašmūda of the Jabal Daran). I am aware of one contemporary reference to 'Azīza in Ibn Qunfudh's *Uns al-faqīr*, and the references to her tribe in Ibn Khaldūn's *Ibar* and Ibn Abī Zar's *Rawḍ al-qirtās*. I would appreciate any other references to 'Azīza and the Saksīwa from either contemporary or later sources.

Marianne Engle Cameron, 560 Riverside Drive #14K, New York, N.Y. 10027.
Internet: mcamreon@ellis.uchicago.edu.

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Medieval Encounters, A Journal of Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue, is a new journal published by E. J. Brill. The editors are seeking articles in all fields of medieval inquiry. *Medieval Encounters* is intended as a cross-cultural, cross-disciplinary forum for discussion of the intersections and interactions of Jewish, Christian and Muslim culture in the period from the fourth through the fifteenth centuries C.E. The journal covers all aspects of culture, including History, Languages, Medicine, Music, Philosophy, Religion, Science, and Art. PLEASE SEND MANUSCRIPT INQUIRIES TO: Gordon D. Newby, Near Eastern and Judaic Languages and Literatures, Trimble Hall 123, Emory University, Atlanta GA 30322, Telephone: 404 727-2916, Internet: gdnewby@emoryu1.cc.emory.edu.

RESEARCH IN TEHRAN

The Institute for Cultural Studies and Research, Tehran, conducts an exchange scholars program. Qualified scholars interested in participating should inquire by writing to The Institute for Cultural Studies and Research, 64th Street, Jamal ad-Din Asadabadi Avenue, Tehran 14374, Iran.

MEM Scholar Profile

Farouk Omar

HISTORIAN, ĀL AL-BAYT UNIVERSITY

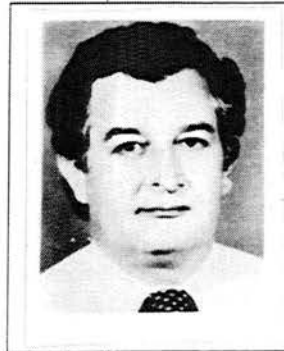
Professor Farouk Omar (Fārūq 'Umar Fawzī) was born June 6, 1938, in Mosul, Iraq, and attended primary and secondary school there. Following his basic education, he attended the University of Baghdad, where he took his B.A. degree with honors in History in 1959. He received a scholarship from the government of Iraq to study at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, where he took his Ph.D in Islamic History in 1967; his dissertation, entitled "The 'Abbāsīd Caliphate, 132-170 A.H.," was prepared under the supervision of Professor Bernard Lewis of SOAS, with whom he worked closely during his studies in London.

Upon completion of his studies and a brief stint as lecturer at the University of Baghdad, Professor Omar served as lecturer at the University of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from 1968 until 1970. He returned to Baghdad as Assistant Professor of History from 1970-1973. He then became Director of the Department of Social and Literary Studies for the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research for several years. In 1977 he returned to academic life; during 1977-78 he was research associate and visiting lecturer in Arab history at the University of Lancaster, England. When he returned to University of Baghdad in 1978, he was appointed chairman of the History Department there (1978-80), and in 1979 was promoted to full professor of Islamic history. From 1980-83, he was professor of Islamic history at the College of Arts, University of the United Arab Emirates; from 1983-93, he was again professor of Islamic history in Baghdad, serving a second term as chairman of that department in 1985-86. In 1993-94, Prof. Farouk Omar was professor of Islamic history the College of Arts, Musurata, Libya, and in 1994 he assumed his present post, as professor and chairman of the department of Islamic history, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Āl al-Bayt, in Mafrāq, Jordan.

Professor Omar has been a lifelong student of Abbasid history, and has attained worldwide recognition for his many fine publications in all aspects of this field, in both Arabic and English. His London dissertation was published as *The 'Abbāsīd Caliphate* (Baghdad, 1969). In Arabic, he has produced over a dozen monographs. These include *Tabī'at al-da'wa al-'abbāsīya* [*The nature of the 'Abbāsīd propaganda*] (1970); *Al-'Abbāsīyūn al-awwalūn* [*The first 'Abbāsīds*] (3 vols., 1970-1993); *Al-Khilāfa al-'abbāsīya fī 'aṣr al-fawḍā al-'askarīya*, 247-334 H / 861-946 M [*The 'Abbāsīd caliphate during the period of military anarchy*, 247-334 A.H. / 861-946 A.D.] (1974; 2nd printing, 1977); *Muqaddima fī dirāsāt maṣādir al-ta'rikh al-'Umānī* [*Introduction to the study of the sources for Omani history*] (1979); *Ta'rikh al-khalij al-'arabī fī l-'uṣūr al-wustā al-islāmīya*, 1-906 H / 622-1500 M [*History of the Arab Gulf in the Islamic Middle Ages*, 1-906 A.H. / 622-1500 C.E.] (1985); *Al-Judhūr al-ta'rikhīya li-l-wizāra al-'abbāsīya: dirāsa taḥlīliya naqdīya li-qirā'at Sūrdīl...* [*The Historical roots of the Abbasid wazirate: a critical analysis*

of Sourdēl's interpretation...] (1986); *Al-Fikr al-'arabī fī mujābahat al-shu'ūbiya--'aṣr al-khilāfa al-'arabīya al-islāmīya* [*Arab thought in confrontation with Shu'ūbism: era of the Arab-Islamic caliphate*], (1988); *Ta'rikh al-'irāq fī 'uṣūr al-khilāfa al-'arabīya al-islāmīya*, 1-656 H / 622-1258 M [*History of Iraq during the Arab-Islamic caliphate, 1-656 A.H. / 622-1258 C.E.*] (1988); and his important reflection on *Al-Ta'rikh al-islāmī wa fikr al-qam al-'ishrīn* [*Islamic history and twentieth-century thought*] (1980).

In addition to his many monographs, Professor Omar has published over three dozen articles in Arabic and English, including the article "Hārūn al-Rashīd" and several other entries in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* and in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The titles of a selection of these provides some idea of the range of Professor Omar's interests. They include "Siyāsāt al-ma'mūn tujāh al-'alawīyīn" ["The policy of the caliph al-Ma'mūn toward the 'Alids"], *Majallat Kulliyat al-Ādāb / Bulletin of the College of Arts*, University of Baghdad 16 (1973), 275-98 [hereinafter *MKA*]; "The Composition of Abbasid Support," *MKA* 11 (1968), 158-82; "Min alqāb al-khulafā' al-'abbāsīyīn: 'khalīfat allāh' wa 'zill allāh' "



[Titles of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs: 'God's caliph' and 'God's shadow'], *Majallat al-Jāmi'a al-Mustansiriya* 2 (1971), 323-39; "The nature of the Iranian revolts in the early Abbasid period," *MKA* (1974); "The guilds [*aṣnāf*] during the Abbasid period," *Proceedings of the International Conference on Urbanism in Islam (ICUIT)*, October 22-28, 1989 (Tokyo, 1989); "Naṣra jadīda ilā 'alāqat al-Turk bi-l-khilāfa al-'abbāsīya," ["A new view on the relations between the Turks and the Abbasid caliphate"], *Al-Maktaba* 65 (1968); "al-Alwān wa dalālatuhā al-siyāsīya fī l-'aṣr al-'abbāsī," ["Colors and their Meaning during the Abbasid period"], *MKA* 14 (1971), 827-46; "Al-Jāhīz mu'arrikhan," ["Al-Jāhīz as historian"], *MKA* 29 (1981), 409-32; "Asbāb inḥiyār wa suqūṭ al-imāma al-Ibādīya fī 'Umān fī 280 H," ["The Causes of the Decline and Fall of the Ibādīya Imāmate in 'Umān in 280 A.H."], *MKA* (1977).

Professor Omar has also translated into Arabic a number of important studies in English and French, including the first chapters of Daniel C. Dennett's Harvard dissertation, *Marwān b. Muḥammad* (1983), the first chapters of Dominique Sourdēl's *Le Vizirate Abbāsīde* (1986), V. V. Barthold's *Palestine in the Middle Ages* (1975), and Emile A. Nakhleh's *Arab-American Relations in the Persian Gulf* (1977).

Professor Farouk Omar can be reached at the Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Āl Al-Bayt, P.O. Box 772 Jubayha, Amman, Jordan.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

Organization	When and Where	Information	Telephone No.
Middle East Studies Association (1995 Meeting)	Dec. 6-10, 1995 Washington, DC [Paper Deadline: Past]	MESA Secretariat University of Arizona 232 N. Cherry Ave. Tucson, AZ 85721	(520) 621-5850 Fax: (520) 321-7752 e-mail: mesa@ccit. arizona.edu
Middle East Studies Association (1996 Meeting)	Nov. 19-24, 1996 Providence, RI [Abstract Deadline: Feb. 15, 1996]	see preceding	see preceding
American Oriental Society (1996 Meeting)	March 15-20, 1996 Philadelphia, PA Abstract Deadline: Oct. 15, 1995]	American Oriental Society Hatcher Graduate Library University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1205	(313) 747-4760 Jonathan_Rodgers @ub.cc.umich.edu
American Oriental Society— Midwest Branch (1996 Meeting)	Feb. 11-13, 1996 La Grange, IL [Paper deadline: early Jan. 1996]	Mark W. Chavalas Dept. of History Univ. of Wisconsin-LaCrosse LaCrosse, WI 54061	(608) 785-8360
American Oriental Society— Midwest Branch (1997 Meeting)	Feb. 16-18, 1997 Wheaton, IL [Paper deadline: early Jan. 1997]	Richard Averbek Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Deerfield, IL 60015	(708) 945-8800
The Medieval Institute (1996 Meeting)	May 2-6, 1996 Kalamazoo, MI [Paper Deadline: Past]	The Medieval Institute Western Michigan Univ. Kalamazoo, MI 49008-3851	(616) 387-8745 FAX: (616) 387-8750
American Historical Association (1996 Meeting)	Jan. 4-7, 1996 Atlanta, GA [Paper Deadline: Past]	American Historical Assn. 400 A Street, S.E. Washington, D.C. 20003	(202) 544-2422
American Historical Association (1997 Meeting)	Jan. 2-5, 1997 New York, NY [Paper Deadline: Feb. 15, 1996]	see preceding	see preceding
College Art Association (1996 Meeting)	Feb. 21-24, 1996 Boston, MA [Paper Deadline: Past]	Suzanne Schanzer 275 Seventh Ave. New York, NY 10001	(212) 691-1051 ext. 5 FAX: (212) 627-2381
College Art Association (1997 Meeting)	Feb. 12-15, 1997 New York, N.Y. [Paper Deadline: April '96]	see preceding	see preceding
American Academy of Religion (1995 Meeting)	Nov. 18-21, 1995 Philadelphia, PA 1703 [Paper Deadline: Past]	American Academy of Religion Clifton Rd, Ste. G-5 Atlanta, GA 30329-4075	(404) 727-7959

ANNUAL MEETINGS

Organization	When and Where	Information	Telephone No.
American Academy of Religion (1996 Meeting)	Nov. 23-26, 1996 New Orleans, LA [Paper Deadline: March 1, 1996]	see preceding	see preceding
Byzantine Studies Conference (1995 Meeting)	Nov. 9-12, 1995 New York, NY [Paper Deadline: Past]	Ralph Mathisen Dept. of History Univ. of South Carolina Columbia, SC 29208	(803) 777-5195 FAX: (803) 777-4494
Byzantine Studies Conference (1996 Meeting)	Fall, 1996 Chapel Hill, NC [Paper Deadline: early Jan. 1996]	see preceding	see preceding
Dumbarton Oaks Conference (1996 Meeting) "Aesthetics and Presentation in Byzantine Literature, Art, & Music"	May 3-5, 1996 Washington, DC [Papers: invitation only]	Dumbarton Oaks 1703 32nd St, NW Washington, D.C.	(202) 342-3245

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NEWS OF MEM

MEM Business Meeting and Elections

The 1995 business meeting of MEM will take place at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday, December 7, 1995, in the Dupont Room of the Washington Hilton and Towers, Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA). All MEMbers or persons interested in joining MEM are invited to attend the business meeting. Please make note of this date and plan to attend.

Two new members will be chosen at the business meeting for three-year terms on MEM's Board of Directors. The new Board members will replace Michael G. Morony of UCLA, and Maria Eva Subtelny of the University of Toronto, whose terms of service as Directors will end on December 31, 1995.

MEM Graduate Student Prize

At its meeting of November 19, 1995, in Phoenix, the Board of Directors of MEM decided to offer an award of \$250 for the best graduate student paper in a MEM-sponsored panel at the annual Middle East Studies Association meeting. The winner will be announced at the annual business meeting of MEM. Although modest in amount, it is hoped that this award will encourage graduate students to take an active part in organizing MEM-sponsored panels at MESA, and in attending the conference.

Students who are scheduled to present a paper on a MEM-sponsored panel at MESA and who wish to have their contributions considered for the prize should submit a copy of their paper to MEM's Secretary-Treasurer, Matthew Gordon, by **November 1, 1995**. Send papers to: Matthew Gordon, Department of History, 254 Upham Hall, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056, USA.

MEM-Sponsored Panels at MESA

MEM will sponsor three panels (the maximum permitted to affiliated organizations) at this year's meetings of the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) in Washington, D.C. **PANEL 1, "Topics in Early and Middle Abbasid History,"** Thursday, December 7, 5:30-7:30 P.M. Participants are **Matthew S. Gordon** (Miami Univ.), "Al-Tabari's Treatment of the Samarran Turks;" **Hugh Kennedy** (Univ. of St. Andrews, Scotland), "Capital and Province in the Early Abbasid Caliphate;" **Tayeb El-Hibri** (U. Mass, Amherst), "The Making of an Orthodox Political Response to the *mihna*;" **Rebecca M. Foote** (Harvard), "Humeima, Jordan: Discovery of the Abbasid Qasr, Headquarters of their Revolution;" **Paul M. Cobb** (Univ. of Chicago), "Al-Mutawakkil in Damascus." Chair: **Matthew S. Gordon**; Discussant: **Hugh Kennedy**. **PANEL 2, "Defining Issues in Islamic Theological Literature,"** Friday, December 8, 10:30 A.M.-12:30 P.M. Participants are **John Walbridge** (Indiana Univ.), "Islamic Views of Greek Theology;" **Peter Heath** (Washington Univ.), "Al-Ghazali's Theological Rhetorical

Style;" **Sherman Jackson** (Indiana Univ.), "Modernism in Medieval Islam? Ash'arite Responses to Mu'tazilite Doctrines on Good and Evil;" **Ahmet T. Karamustafa** (Washington Univ.), "Belief, Not Acts: The Social Trajectory of a Theological Orientation." Chair: **Jack Renard** (St. Louis Univ.); Discussant **Richard C. Martin** (Iowa State Univ.). **PANEL 3, "History and Historiography in Early Islamic Syria and Mesopotamia,"** Saturday, December 9, 8:00-10:00 A.M. Participants are **Fred M. Donner** (Univ. of Chicago), "The Holy Man in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria;" **Chase F. Robinson** (Oxford), "Historiography and the Conquest of Northern Mesopotamia;" **Steven C. Judd** (Univ. of Michigan), "Heretics and Heroes: Ghaylan al-Dimashqi in Islamic History;" **Marianne Engle Cameron** (Univ. of Chicago), "The Evolution of Khalid b. al-Walid's *nasab* and its Historiographical Value in Constructing a Biography of a Prominent Companion." Chair and Discussant: **Roy P. Mottahedeh** (Harvard).

Please support MEM and attend these panels!

MEMBER NEWS

Jere Bacharach (University of Washington) will spend seven weeks at St. Cross College, Oxford, this fall as Samir Shamma Visiting Lecturer in Islamic Numismatics and Fellow of the College. He has edited a volume entitled *Restoration and Conservation of Islamic Monuments in Egypt* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1995), and two of his articles have been accepted for publication: "Al-Amin's Designated Successor: The Limitations of Numismatic Evidence," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (forthcoming), and "Marwanid Building Activities," *Muqarnas* (forthcoming).

Jonathan P. Berkey (Davidson College) is currently conducting research on storytellers and preachers in the medieval Islamic Near East, on popular religion, and on food and fasting.

Sheila S. Blair has recently published, with Jonathan M. Bloom, *Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (Oxford, 1995), and *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250-1800* (New Haven & London, 1994). She is currently researching a handbook of Is-

Islamic epigraphy for Edinburgh University Press.

Jonathan M. Bloom has recently published, with Sheila S. Blair, *Compendium of Chronicles: Rashid al-Din's Illustrated History of the World* (Oxford, 1995), and *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250-1800* (New Haven & London, 1994). He is currently researching the history of paper.

Michael Bonner (University of Michigan) expects publication of his study *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War: Studies in the Jihād and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier* in the American Oriental Society Monograph Series in late 1995. His article "Definitions of Poverty and the Rise of the Muslim Urban Poor" is forthcoming in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.

Amikam Elad (The Hebrew University, Jerusalem) has published *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies and Pilgrimage* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

Farouk Omar Fawzi (Al al-Bayt University, Mafrāq, Jordan) anticipates publication soon of his monograph *The 'Abbasid Caliphate: The period of decline and fall*. He is currently conducting research on the army and politics during the early centuries of Islam.

Valérie Gonzalez (Université de Provence and Université Lumière, Lyon II) is currently engaged in a research project entitled "Aesthetics and artistic creation in Islam: language and signification of the works of art."

Ulrich Haarmann (Christian-Albrechts-Universität, Kiel) will spend the academic year 1995-96 as a fellow at the Berlin *Wissenschaftskolleg*, where he hopes to finish his book on *awlād al-nās* (sons of Mamlūks). His edition of Abū Ḥāmid al-Qudsi's *Duwal al-Islām al-sharīfa al-bahīya*, continuing work started by the late Subhi Labib, should appear in 1995 or 1996 as volume 37 of *Bibliotheca Islamica*. He is active in the European Science Foundation's project on "Individual and Society in the Mediterranean Muslim World", and has for some time been co-editor (with Wadād al-Qādī, Chicago) of

E.J. Brill's series *Islamic History and Civilization*.

Walter E. Kaegi (University of Chicago) reports that Cambridge University Press has now published his 1992 book *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests* in a revised paperback edition (1995).

Amalia Levanoni (University of Haifa) has recently published "The Mamluk Conception of the Sultanate," *IJMES* 26 (1994), 373-92; "The Mamluks' Ascent to Power in Egypt," *Studia Islamica* 72 (1990), 121-144; and "The Consolidation of Aybak's Rule: An Example of Factionalism in the Mamluk State," *Der Islam* 71 (1995), 243-56. He book *A Turning Point in Mamluk History* is scheduled to appear this year from the publishing house of E.J. Brill, Leiden.

Shaun Elizabeth Marmon (Princeton University) has recently published *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islam* (Oxford, 1995).

Robert B. Mason (Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto) completed in 1994 his doctoral dissertation for the University of Oxford entitled *Islamic Glazed Pottery, 700-1250*. His article "New Looks at Old Pots: Pottery from the Islamic World" is forthcoming in *Muqarnas*. He is working on putting ceramics in spatial, chronological, cultural, and technological contexts.

Josef W. Meri (State University of New York at Binghamton) is engaged in research on the cult of evergreen Elijah, on the depiction of death and knowledge in medieval Islamic society, and on *'ayyārūn* and *shuṭṭār* in medieval Islamic society.

Roy P. Mottahedeh (Harvard University) is engaged in research on Būyid administration and on the literature on *'ajā'ib*.

Norbert Nebes (Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena) has recently edited *Arabia Felix. Beiträge zur Sprache und Kultur des vorislamischen Arabien. Festschrift Walter W. Müller zum 60. Geburtstag*, unter Mitarbeit von A. Richter, J. Kottsieper, und M. Maraqtan (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1994), and has published *Die Konstruktionen mit / fa- / im*

Altsüdarabischen. Syntaktische und epigraphische Untersuchungen (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995). His current research is on epigraphic South Arabian and the grammar of classical texts.

Ian Richard Netton (University of Leeds), formerly Reader in Arab and Islamic Civilisation and Thought in the University of Exeter, U.K., has now taken up his new post as Professor of Arabic Studies at the University of Leeds. His new address is: Dept. of Modern Arabic Studies, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, U.K. Curzon Press will publish two new books by Professor Netton in October: *Text and Trauma*, and *Seek Knowledge*.

Bernard O'Kane (American University in Cairo) has recently published "From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design," *Ars Orientalis* 23 (1993), 245-64; "Iran and Central Asia," in M. Frishman and H. Khan (eds.), *The Mosque* (London, 1994), 118-39; and "The Minaret of Vabkent," in R. Hillenbrand (ed.), *The Art of the Saljuqs in Iran and Anatolia* (Costa Mesa, CA, 1994), 46-54. His article "The Gunbad-i Jabaliyya and the Development of the Domed Octagon in Iran" will appear in the *Marsden Jones Memorial Volume*, now in press. He is currently doing research for a book to be called *Late Fourteenth Century Persian Painting: The Kalila u Dimna Manuscripts*.

Valeria Fiorani Pacentini (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan) has recently published "Merchants & Merchandise and Military Power in the Persian Gulf (Sūriyān / Shahriyāj & Sirāf)," *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Memorie*, ser. IX, vol. 3. She has edited a volume of essays currently in press, entitled *The Place of the Dead: The Coastal Area of Makrān* (Pisa: Giardini, forthcoming).

William S. Peachy (King Saud University, Riyadh) is currently engaged in research on English-language translations of the Qur'ān.

Moshe Perlmann (Brookline, MA) has recently published, with T. Philipp, *Al-Jabarti's History of Egypt* (2 vols., Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994) (translation and notes).

Daan van Reenen (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) continues work on his dissertation, which is based on an extensive computerized database of *hadith* that he has compiled. He continues to sponsor the "Network on Early Islam", which interested parties can join by contacting him at sofie@let.vu.nl.

Marlis J. Saleh (University of Chicago) recently completed her doctoral dissertation, entitled "Government Relations with the Coptic Community in Egypt during the Fatimid Period."

Thomas A. Sinclair (University of Cyprus) has articles on Kayseri, Konya, and Mesopotamia forthcoming in the *Enciclopedia dell'Arte Medievale*.

David D. Testen (University of Chicago) recently completed his dissertation for the University of Chicago entitled "Asseverative *la-* in Arabic and Related Semitic Particles." He is currently engaged in research on historical linguistics, comparative Semitic (Arabic focus), comparative Iranian (Ossetian focus), and the history of Transcaucasia.

Brannon M. Wheeler (Pennsylvania State University) has been appointed Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Penn State. He has recently published "Orientalist Translation and Anthropological Reading: Charles Hamilton vs. Claude Lévi-Strauss," in *Critique: Journal of Critical Studies of Iran and the Middle East* (Fall, 1994), 9-30. His book *Applying the Canon in Islam: authorization and maintenance of interpretive reasoning in Hanafi scholarship* is forthcoming from the State University of New York Press. He is currently engaged in research on *sūra* 28 of the Qur'an, *riḍā'*, and *faḍā'il al-amṣār*.

Negin Yavari (Tehran University) has organized, with Dr. Didier Gazagnadou of the Sorbonne (Paris VIII), a conference sponsored by the French Research Institute in Iran on the concept of "Iranianness" (see "Symposia and Conferences" for fuller information). She has been awarded a fellowship to spend the autumn and winter at the Centre for Islamic Studies at Oxford, U.K., in order to revise for publication her dissertation on Nizām al-Mulk.

Once More, With Accuracy:

K. A. C. Creswell

by Neil MacKenzie

Editor's Note

The "Pioneers" column article on K.A.C. Creswell by Neil MacKenzie, as it appeared in the previous issue (*UW*7.1, April, 1995), was missing a sizable chunk that spanned two paragraphs and seriously distorted the content of both. The computer file for this article was carefully proofread for accuracy before being "placed" in the Bulletin, but it appears that in the process of "pasting up", the program employed sometimes drops part of a file, leaving a lacuna that can only be detected by carefully proofreading again after the layout phase. The editor vows to perform this procedure scrupulously in the future. Responsibility for the omission is, of course, entirely that of the editor, who apologizes to readers and to the author. Rather than reprint in complete form only the two affected paragraphs, we reprint here the text of the Creswell article in its entirety, omitting only one of the illustrations that appeared in *UW*7.1. Readers wishing to cite the article should, of course, refer to this version.

-Ed.

If "chronology is the spinal column of history," then the works of K. A. C. Creswell stand in turn as the spinal column of the history of Islamic architecture. His monumental volumes tracing the development of Muslim building represent the core of this discipline, a basis for continual addition and amendment, and the indispensable starting point for any student in the field.

Born in London in 1879, Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell was educated at Westminster School, and later studied electrical engineering. This combination provided him with skills in mathematics, architectural drawing, and (with exceptional lucidity) writing, that enabled him to

produce the remarkable works for which he is remembered. After some years in various employment, he applied in 1914 for an appointment for an appointment to the Archaeological Service of India. He had, meanwhile, developed a strong interest in Muslim architecture, particularly that of Persia. He never, however, reached either India or Iran, as World War I intervened. Posted to Egypt in the Royal Flying Corps in 1916, he was commissioned Captain in the R. A. F. in 1918. In 1919 he was appointed Inspector of Monuments in Allenby's military administration, first in Syria and then Palestine. After a year of intensive archaeological survey in this area he felt prepared to embark on his major work, a history of the Muslim architecture of Egypt. With the patronage of King Fuad, he began this herculean task and his residence in Cairo both of which continued, effectively, for the remaining 54 years of his life.

In 1931 he was appointed lecturer and then professor at Fuad (now Cairo) University, a post which he held until 1951. In 1956, as a result of the Suez War, his personal library was threatened with sequestration, and a crisis was averted when the American University in Cairo offered him sanctuary for his books as well as a professorship. He maintained this position until his final return to England in 1973 where he died the following year.

The achievements of Creswell are fundamentally threefold: 1) as architectural historian; 2) as conservationist/preservationist; and 3) as bibliographer/bibliophile.

As a necessary prelude to his work on Egypt, Creswell devoted his first two volumes, *Early Muslim Architecture*, to the study of the Umayyads and early Abbasids in Syria/Palestine and Iraq, but also including Egypt, Tunisia, and Spain. These were published in 1932 and 1940, with a second edition to Volume I appear-

ing in 1969. The *Muslim Architecture of Egypt* (two volumes—1952, 1959) continued this project to the mid-fourteenth century. Its completion through the Circassian Mamluks was a feat that even Creswell's 94 years did not allow.

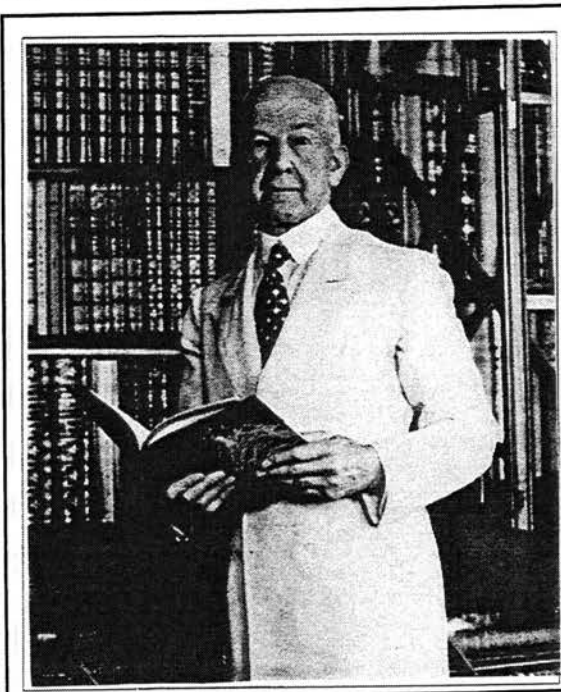
His scholarship was based on facts and order. Creswell's study of an individual building consisted of an analysis of the relevant historical texts, the plan and development of the building, and its architectural origins. He insisted on exact chronology in all his studies, and traced individual architectural forms, such as the squinch and pendentive, back to their earliest examples. This process, which—in Creswell's view—identified the origin of an architectural feature by its earliest known example, brought justified criticism from other scholars. The system, however, was necessary to establish the basis for comparative analysis on a broader plain.

Creswell had little patience for theory as such. He approached the chronological study of buildings as an end in itself, emulating his admired friend Max Van Berchem, and he detested theoreticians who could not back their claims with rigid chronology and comparable plans and architectural features. While this led to (generally) unexcelled studies of individual buildings, it brought Creswell criticism, much of it predictable if not always justified. His studies were accused of concentrating on chronology and dimensions, while lacking a broader spatial sense in terms of geography, religion, and culture.

While some of this criticism is germane, most of it is ultimately specious. Admittedly Creswell was interested in buildings for their own sake at the expense of human context, and perhaps his studies of Umayyad and early Abbasid architecture would have been enhanced had they concentrated on the history of regional styles rather than insistence on a strict chronological sequence from Iraq through Spain. The point is, however, that it was Creswell who *did* it. Beginning his fieldwork at the age of 39, for fifty-five years he doggedly pursued his chronology, plans, and analyses of standing buildings and archaeological sites—surveying, measuring, and photographing, all with profes-

sional skill. His chronologies of buildings, based on historical texts and travel literature, were of the best caliber, despite his inability to read Arabic. He was competently assisted by Arabists, however, as evidenced by the many passages translated in his texts. He maintained constant vigilance for new archaeological discoveries in the Islamic Near East and visited them whenever possible, and continually searched for new literature on his subject.

As a member of the Higher Council for the Conservation of Arabic Monuments (1939-1951), Creswell was almost



solely responsible for the clearance and repair of the walls and gates of mediaeval Cairo. In addition, he applied continuous pressure upon government authorities for works of conservation and restoration not only in Cairo, but Syria and Palestine as well.

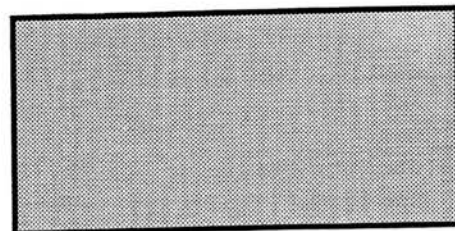
As bibliographer and bibliophile, Creswell demonstrated considerable talent. Even before his introduction to the Middle East, he began on his substantial *Bibliography of the Architecture, Arts, and Crafts of Islam* (1961), which contained over 12,000 items. His personal library, a virtual museum of chronicles and travelogues, many of folio size and exquisitely bound, remained even after its acquisition by the American University his personal domain—reinforced by his presence. Only with the utmost tact and physical care could the prospective student peruse his

tomes without immediate—and severe—admonishment.

Creswell's personality was difficult. His rigorous professional discipline extended into his personal life and he often expected excellence from those incapable of rendering it. Frequently hypercritical of other scholars, especially theorists who ignored (at least to him) obvious facts, he was himself extremely sensitive to criticism, especially that of Sauvaget, who approached Islamic archaeology from a broad-based institutional/cultural perspective. Many considered Creswell hot-headed, a bully, prejudiced, opinionated, and a throw-back to the heyday of British imperialism. As his colleague R. W. Hamilton put it in an obituary notice on Creswell, he "was the master of casual encounters in the streets, of which his stick was the symbol if not the instrument." (*Proceedings of the British Academy*, 60 [1974]) But to those (regardless of nationality) who rendered him service—whether source materials from their publications, translations, or assistance in his physical recording of monuments—he was generally appreciative. Further, he was genuinely helpful and supportive to those truly interested in Islamic architecture and did much to place his students in the Egyptian antiquities department and the museums of Cairo.

While Creswell published prodigiously, his major works remain the great green volumes on *Early Muslim Architecture* and *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*. These will continue to be the mainstay of scholarship in Islamic architecture as well as the framework of further research for the foreseeable future.

Bibliographical Note: For much of my source material, I am indebted to *Muqarnas*, vol. 8 1991, K. A. C. Creswell and his *Legacy*, especially the articles by Oleg Grabar, Robert Hamilton, Julian Raby, and Michael Rogers.



UPCOMING CONFERENCES & SYMPOSIA

7th Symposium Syriacum

and

5th Conference on Christian Arabic Studies

Call for Papers

These two conferences will be held in August, 1996, at Uppsala University and Lund University, Sweden, respectively. The 7th Symposium Syriacum will be held in Uppsala 12-14th August, 1996. The 5th Conference on Christian Arabic Studies will be held in Lund 15-18 August, 1996. All scholars and students interested in participating in either conference are kindly requested to notify the organizers (see below). The Organizing Committee invites suggestions of the names of possible participants who may not have received news of the conferences.

Those planning to participate only in the 7th Symposium Syriacum, or in both the Symposium and the 5th Conference on Christian Arabic Studies, please notify by mail or fax:

Symposium Syriacum, Uppsala University, Department of Asian and African Languages, Box 51, S-751 20 SWEDEN.
Fax: (4618) 181094

Those planning to participate only in the 5th Conference on Christian Arabic Studies please contact:

Professor Bo Holmberg
Institute of Middle East Languages
Lund University
Bredgatan 4
S-222 21 Lund, SWEDEN
Fax: +46 46-10 44 28

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN WORLD HISTORY

CALL FOR PAPERS

The World History Association is planning its fifth annual conference on the theme of Science and Technology in World History, to be held June 21-23, 1996 at California State Polytechnic University in Pomona, California.

Prof. Mahmood Ibrahim of Cal Poly Pomona is interested in forming a panel on science and technology in Islamic history. Those who are interested in submitting a paper for this panel should contact Prof. Mahmood Ibrahim or Prof. David Smith, Program Chair, Dept. of History, Cal Poly Pomona, 3801 West Temple Ave. Pomona, CA 91768. Prof. Smith's e-mail is DRSMITH@csupomona.edu.

International Congress on PRE-MODERN ENCYCLOPEDIA TEXTS

1-4 July, 1996

COMERS

(Centre for Classical, Oriental, Medieval and Renaissance Studies), University of Groningen, The Netherlands

CALL FOR PAPERS

This project treats Encyclopedic literature as a paradigm, rather than a prescriptively defined genre. The congress will deal with a wide range of encyclopedic texts, from the lexical lists of the ancient Near East, through Greek mythographical digests, early medieval Syriac compilations, studies of particular medieval encyclopedias, and studies of the "encyclopedic culture" of the later Middle Ages and Renaissance, as embodied in, for example, collections of moralised lore, bestiaries, handbooks, cosmographic treatises, etc. This congress should offer a splendid opportunity for an interdisciplinary meeting at the crossroads of the Western, Ancient Near Eastern, Byzantine, Islamic, and other pre-modern traditions.

Scholars engaged in research on any aspect of encyclopedic texts are invited to present a paper. The conference will be structured around five domains: 1. Encyclopedia: Definitions and Theoretical Questions. 2. Cultural and Political Uses. 3. Reception and Transmission of Texts. 4. Epistemology of Encyclopedic Knowledge. 5. Organisation of Knowledge. Scholars who are interested in presenting papers should submit a proposal to the organisers, indicating the title of the paper, a brief abstract (no more than 300 words), and the domain in which they would like it to be included.

For further information, contact Dr. Peter Binkley at COMERS, providing your name, affiliation, address, telephone, and e-mail, and whether you wish to present a paper or simply to attend. Interested persons will be sent information on hotels, registration fees, etc. COMERS / International Encyclopedia Congress, Oude Boteringestraat 23, 9712 GC Groningen, The Netherlands. Fax: (50) 63 72 63; Telephone: (50) 63 72 58; e-mail: binkley@let.rug.nl.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES & SYMPOSIA

CHARTING THE HORIZONS: ISLAMIC AND JUDAIC VALUES AND TRADITIONS IN DIALOGUE, CONTACT AND CONTRAST

November 5-7, 1995 - Denver, CO,
U.S.A.

The Conference will deal with aspects of Islamic-Judaic Studies, especially as related to values and traditions in contact, contrast and dialogue. Some papers will continue themes of previous conferences, Muslims and Jews in North America, and Women, Families and Children in Islamic and Judaic Traditions. A very limited number of travel subsidies may be available upon request.

For fuller conference information, contact Program Chair, Institute for Islamic-Judaic Studies, University of Denver, Denver CO 80208, USA.

E-Mail: SWARD@DU.EDU (Internet).
Fax: 303-871-3037.

Telephone Inquiries: 303-871-3020.

HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE KURDS

The Society for the Advancement of Kurdish Studies plans a conference on the pre-modern history and archaeology of the Kurds, to mark the 400th anniversary of the writing of the *Sharafnama* of Sharaf al-Din Bitlisi. The conference will be held in the fall of 1996 at the Kurdish Library, Brooklyn, N.Y. A lecture series at the Kurdish Library and exhibits at the Kurdish Museum and other institutions are also planned.

Papers on all aspects of Kurdish history and culture up to the nineteenth century planned. For registration and further information, write to: SAKS-400, Kurdish Library and Museum, 345 Park Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11238, USA, or SAKS Coordinator Dr. Mehrdad Izady, 157 West 79th Street, #5B, New York, N.Y. 10024, USA.

APPROPRIATING AND RE-AP- PROPRIATING THE PAST: HIS- TORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY IN ISLAMIC AND JUDAIC TRADI- TIONS

October 20-22, 1996 - Denver, CO,
U.S.A.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Conference invites papers dealing with aspects of the perception (and misperception) of the past in Islam and Judaism, including universal histories, intraconfessional chronicles, accounts of critical junctures such as early Islamic times, Islamic Spain, Jews of Islamic lands, the Ottoman Empire, etc. Keynote addresses will be offered by Lenn E. Goodman and Azim Nanji.

One page abstracts are due in Denver by July 15, 1995. Abstracts should include presenter's name, address, academic affiliation, E-Mail, telephones and fax. Abstracts should be sent to: Professor Lenn E. Goodman, Program Chair, c/o Institute for Islamic-Judaic Studies, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208, USA, or to SWARD@DU.EDU (Internet), or Fax, 303-871-3037.

SYMPOSIUM ON THE HISTORY OF ARABIC SCIENCE

The sixth International Symposium on the history of Arabic science will be held in Ra's al-Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, in December, 1996. The conference will be organized by the Institute for the History of Arabic Science, University of Aleppo, Syria, and the Center for Studies and Texts in Ra's al-Khaimah, U.A.E.

For further information, contact Professor Kh. Maghout, Director, Institute for the History of Arabic Science, University of Aleppo, Syria; or Ms. Amal al-Rifa'i, Fax [in Syria, country code 963]: 21-229184.

THE HISTORY OF ISLAMIC ART HISTORY Collectors, Collections, and Scholars, 1850-1950

CALL FOR PAPERS

The conference will be held on **October 18-19, 1996** (provisional date), and is sponsored by the Barakat Trust and The Victorial and Albert Museum, London. The aim of the conference is to investigate the evolution of Islamic art history into a serious academic subject, and to focus on the role of collectors, museums, and institutions in that process. Papers will concentrate on the study of Islamic art in various European and Middle Eastern countries, to reveal the development of distinctive traditions of scholarship as well as the interplay between amateur scholars, collectors, archaeologists, museum and university professionals.

Those interested in proposing a paper for consideration by the committee should send an abstract of 100-250 words together with name, address, institutional affiliation, telephone, fax, and e-mail, to the address below. Papers will be limited to 20 minutes to allow time for discussion. Abstracts must arrive before **31 January 1996**.

The Barakat Trust Conference
49, Elsworth Road
London NW3 3BS England, U.K.

RECENT CONFERENCES & SYMPOSIA

Papers of the Conference on Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari

The Institute for Middle East Studies at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, held its conference on al-Tabari from 30 August-2 September 1995. In the nature of things, the final program varied slightly from the preliminary program announced earlier in *UW*.

The final program included the following speakers and papers, in order of presentation: **Tarif Khalidi** (AUB), "Tabari: an Introduction." **L. M. Whitby** (St. Andrews), "Tabari and the Old Testament." **Jane D McAuliffe** (Toronto), "Tabari and the Prelude to the Prophet." **Zeev Rubin** (Tel Aviv), "Lost Sassanian Historiography in Tabari." **M. Zakeri** (Frankfurt), "Tabari on Sassanian History: a study in sources." **Lawrence Conrad** (Wellcome Institute, London), "The Uses of Number in the Era of al-Tabari." **J. Nawas** (Utrecht), "The Use of Number in Tabari." **Stephen Humphreys** (UC Santa Barbara), "Tabari and Sayf b 'Umar." **Khalil Athamina** (Bir Zeit), "Tabari and al-Baladhuri." **A. Vrolyk** (Utrecht), "The Making of the de Goeje edition." **A. Tayob** (South Africa), "Tabari and the Companions of the Prophet." **C. Gilliot** (Aix-en-Provence), "Al-Tabari and the 'History of Salvation'." **Chase Robinson** (Oxford), "Tabari and the Historiography of Northern Mesopotamia." **Sebastian Günther** (Halle), "Early Shi'ite Historiographical Sources used by Tabari." **Moshe Sharon** (Jerusalem), "The Affair of Mukhtar." **Matthew Gordon** (Miami Univ., Ohio), "Tabari and the Turks of Samarra." **Hugh Kennedy** (St. Andrews), "The Structure of Narrative in Tabari's account of the Abbasids." **E. Landau-Tasserion** (Jerusalem), "Dhayl al-Mudhayyal." **O. Ismail** (Qatar), "The Other Tabari." **R. Lilie** (Berlin), "Tabari and Theophanes on the Arab Invasions of Byzantium." **Walter E. Kaegi** and **Paul M. Cobb** (Chicago), "Shahrbaraz, Heraclius, and Tabari." **J. Howard-Johnston** (Oxford), "Tabari and the Last Great War of Antiquity." **Elton Daniel** (Hawaii), "Bal'ami's Persian 'translation' of Tabari." **A. Khalidov** (St. Petersburg), "Russian Translations from Tabari's History." **Hugh Kennedy** (St. Andrews), Summing Up.

For further information on these presentations, contact the authors or the conference organizer, Dr. Hugh Kennedy, Department of Mediaeval History, University of St. Andrews, Fife KY 16 9AL, U.K. Tel. 0334-476161. Internet: hnk@st-andrews.ac.uk.

The Concept of "Iranianness" and its impact on Scholarship

This symposium dealt with the question, "How did the concept of "Iranianness" influence the Iranian intellectual and Western Iranologists in the construction of the "scientific object" of their studies (historical, anthropological, archaeological, or philosophical)?"

The symposium was sponsored by the Institut Français de Recherche en Iran (IFRI) and was held on 31 May, 1995 at the Institute. It was organized by Dr. Negin Yavari (Institute for Cultural Studies and Research, Tehran) and Dr. Didier Gazagnadou (Université de Paris VIII -- Sorbonne).

For information on the proceedings, contact IRFI, P.O. Box 15815-3495, Tehran, Av. Felestin, Av. Shahid Nazari -- 52, Adib St., Tehran 13158, Iran. Fax (98 21) 640-5501.

NETWORK FOR EARLY ISLAMIC STUDIES

The Network for Early Islamic Studies is open to all scholars interested in this field. It provides, via the Internet, periodic updates on research activities, conferences, and other news relating to Early Islamic Studies.

Scholars wishing to join the Network should contact Daan van Reenen at the following e-mail address: sofie@let.vu.nl.

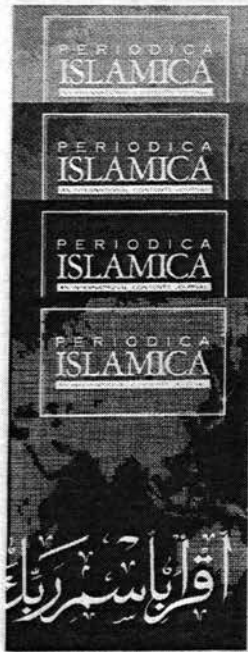
MAMLUK STUDIES REVIEW

The Middle East Documentation Center (MEDOC) of the University of Chicago is presently organizing the first issue of *Mamluk Studies Review*, which will appear annually beginning in the Fall of 1997. If you would like to contribute an article to the first or subsequent issues, contact the editor, Bruce D. Craig, Middle East Documentation Center, The University of Chicago, 5828 South University Avenue, 201 Pick Hall, Chicago, IL 60637, U.S.A. Tel. (312) 702-8426. Fax (312) 753-0569. E-mail: mideast-library@uchicago.edu.

ELECTRONIC DISCUSSION GROUP FOR MAMLUK SPECIALISTS

MEDOC has also initiated an on-line forum for communication among Mamluk specialists. Subscribe by sending a message to majordomo@listhost.uchicago.edu. The body of the message should read: subscribe mamluk your-address. Leave the subject line blank. MEDOC will soon make its *Mamluk Studies: A Bibliography*, containing over 3400 citations to secondary literature in the field, available in searchable format via a World Wide Web site to be established in the near future.

Discover the wide world of Islamic literature



The journal is produced to a very high standard, and should be a very useful source for all libraries and information users concerned with Islamic issues.
Information Development (London), Volume 7, Number 4, pages 241-242

This journal is doing a singular service to the cause of the publicity of periodical literature on Islamic culture and civilization in all its diverse aspects. Every scholar of Islamic Studies should feel indebted to you for this service.

PROFESSOR S.M. RAZAULLAH ANSARI
 President, International Union of History and Philosophy of Science (IUHPS)
 Commission for Science and Technology in Islamic Civilization, New Delhi, India

(Periodica Islamica is) an invaluable guide...
 PROFESSOR BILL KATZ
Library Journal (New York), Volume 118, Number 21, page 184

Periodica Islamica is a most valuable addition to our reference collection.
 PROFESSOR WOLFGANG BEHN
 Union Catalogue of Islamic Publications, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz
 Berlin, Germany

It is recommended for all research libraries and scholars of the Islamic viewpoint.
 DR. RICHARD R. CENTING
MultiCultural Review (Westport, Connecticut), Volume 2, Number 1, page 40

You should be congratulated on Periodica Islamica which should prove to be a valuable journal to persons interested in Islam and the entire Muslim World.
 AMBASSADOR (RTD.) CHRISTOPHER VAN HOLLEN
 The Middle East Institute, Washington DC, USA

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IN MEDIEVAL MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

H. A. R. Gibb

by Ira Lapidus

Sir Hamilton Alexander Roskeen Gibb was the greatest English-language Arabist and student of Islam in this century. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, in 1895, educated at Edinburgh, he joined the newly founded London School of Oriental Studies in 1921, and was named Professor of Arabic in 1930. In 1937 he became the Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford University. In 1955 Gibb went to Harvard, where he hoped to find a more open intellectual environment, greater support for the field of Islamic studies than was available in Britain, and new students to train as future generations of Arabists. He came to Harvard as University Professor and James Richard Jewett Professor of Arabic.

By the time Gibb came to Harvard, he was already known world wide for the extraordinary breadth of his studies. His works on classical and modern Arabic literature had become standards in the field, and he had written on early Arabic poetry and syntax, law and politics, and Islam and Arab societies in contemporary times. Gibb wrote extensively on history as well, including studies of political and religious institutions, Saladin and the crusades, and the basic institutions of the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. His deepest insights were contained in his studies of poetry, Islam, religion and politics, and his studies of the relationships of civilizations.

I came to Gibb's classes looking

for a course on Asia, because a high school teacher had told me that the study of Asian history was still young and it was possible to work on big, uncharted subjects. At Harvard in 1956 the two obvious choices were Fairbank and Reischauer's course on East Asian history, and Gibb's course on



Islamic history. "Rice Paddies" was taught at 9:00 A.M. and Islam at 11:00 A.M. I went first to Gibb's class and have stayed in the field for nearly forty years.

Gibb's came with a towering reputation, and a presence to match. He was awesome. Over six feet tall, heavy, with a ruddy complexion, his balding head held high, Gibb seemed aloof and secure in his

own thoughts, but in individual conversation he was surprisingly inarticulate. "Well, yes, yes, hrumpf," he would say, looking about as if expecting someone else; no long trains of chatter. Students went away feeling inadequate, unworthy of having disturbed the great man. In class, though, he was poised and forceful, and his lectures, one after another, orchestrated a great vision of Islamic history. He brought into clear relief the contours of a vast subject. He illustrated his ideas with great erudition from his exhaustive readings in the corpus of early Arabic-Islamic literatures. In that context he wore a look of good-natured, slightly avuncular interest in his students; after all, he was taking us on a journey of the mind. I wanted to go on that journey; I was enthralled by his imaginative reach. I wanted his recognition, too, and I am still moved to remember that he said of my first paper "very good," which was said to mean "very good indeed."

Gibb inspired reverence and awe in all of us. L. made himself into a detective to find the secret of Gibb's power. In

Harvard's Widener library the stack floors did not correspond to the windows, and L. found that if he lay on his stomach on one upper floor he could look through the very top of the arch of the window of the floor below and see Gibb in his study across the courtyard. By patient waiting, he could report Gibb's daily routine: "He comes in at about 9:10; he reads the mail. He takes

out his notebook for the translation of Ibn Battuta (seen through binoculars). He answers the telephone." Week after week, L. provided us with breathless revelations.

And then there were Gibb's teas. I was invited to the first while still a junior in college, with a small group of students, and we sat in Gibb's living room arrayed in a circle. Being the shortest, I naturally had the deepest sofa as my seat. I was ill from tension. What would I say? Everybody else must have been ill too because nobody had anything to say. Gibb funferred and hrumped. Finally, I thought of something. I said, "This is very good tea," and I meant it, never having tasted tea that was anything more than puckery water. "What kind is it?" More silence. Lady Gibb: "It's Liptons." Still more silence.

But I learned and learned. Gibb made me a scholar. In my first year of graduate school, I enrolled in a reading tutorial. I went to see Gibb; he suggested some reading on pre-Islamic Arabia. I went back a week later. He asked me what I thought was important. Then, what did I think was problematic, still at issue. He suggested new reading addressed to the new issues. So I started to see Gibb weekly, in my naivete and curiosity reading everything he suggested and coming back every week to talk about it. About the fifth or sixth week, reading about the Umayyads, I was baffled by the literature. It is still painful for me to remember this. Gibb grew very agitated. He threw up his hands. "I don't tell graduate students what to do," he said. "You have to read actively and sort out the data." He stood up; I had to go. I went home, crushed, but I sorted out the data and created a file for information on the military, the administration, court decoration and ceremony, the titles of the caliphs, tribal politics, settlements, agricultural reclamation, everything—on and on. I had been taught to look on my own for the questions that needed to be asked.

From Gibb I got the fundamentals of my vision of Islam, my grasp of the tension in Islamic societies between states and religious communities, and the fundamentally ambiguous relationships between them. I learned to think about history as the intersection of both moral and mechanical forces. Gibb encouraged me to go to other scholars for other dimensions of my formation. He urged me to be a professional historian. I took my degree in History, and

went to work with Claude Cahen in Paris. Gibb also encouraged my study of sociology with Talcott Parsons and Robert Bellah. He was always on the alert for new ways to deepen and refresh the study of Islam and Arabic culture.

Gibb loved his poetry seminar best. He came with a small paper notebook in which he had evidently been making notes for some forty hours. As we sat round the table trying to read and translate the poetry, Gibb would occasionally erase a few words and then enter some new idea in a minute hand. It was a pleasure to hear him translate. He lent the poems dignity in their diction, and in one line after another he made obscure phrases meaningful, evocative and alive. By the end, the poem was a whole. An accomplished and well-known Arabist sat in on that seminar, and we had exchanges like the following: "What does this mean? I can't find it anywhere." "Well, well, it means 'such and such'." "No." "Yes." "How do you know?" "Hrumpf." Gibb cited some obscure source, or perhaps an intuition drawn from the context of the poem, or he would pick up a volume of Lane's dictionary and, typically, open it to within a page of the entry he wanted. Open mouthed, we returned to awe.

Always, though, that virtually complete incapacity for small talk: or so it seemed. One day, in my third year of graduate school, I met Gibb coming up two long flights of stairs to the courtyard and atrium where the Middle East Center was then located. I was walking down. We stopped about three steps apart, eye to eye for the first time. Gibb started to fumble. "Oh," I said, "you are inviting me to tea." "Yes," he said. So I asked when and where and who was coming, and how nice to see so and so, etc. Gibb looked visibly relieved. The secret of talking to him was to talk to him. Ever after we had perfectly pleasant conversations. If I started them and was direct and forthright, Gibb chatted comfortably. Gibb was simply very shy.

In March, 1964, he suffered a disastrous stroke. He would never recover the use of the right side of his body. He couldn't walk with his right leg. To move his right arm, he had to lift it with the other hand. His speech? He understood, he could make himself understood laboriously, but only to friends. He who had been so eloquent could not longer fully speak our

common tongue.

I was going for physical therapy for a broken ankle, and I saw him for the first time after his stroke some two months later, in the hospital corridor. Gibb was in a wheelchair; he had lost some forty or more pounds. He was frail, he was needy. He greeted me with words I could not understand, and with an expression which I had never seen in the eight years I had worked with him, despite the tea parties, our many intellectual discussions, and the frank conversations we had had about the "field," our colleagues, and my career. He looked at me with affection. I wanted to stroke his head; I am sorry that I didn't.

Gibb retired to Oxford. I saw him several times again, when he returned, partially recovered, for his last term as director of the Middle East Center at Harvard. I visited him during my sabbatical year in Oxford in 1968-69. We gossiped about the field, and we exchanged books.

This has not come out as I intended. I should have said more about Gibb's contributions to Islamic and Arabic studies. I urge you to read the obituaries written by Albert Hourani in the *Proceedings of the British Academy* 58 (1972), and by William Polk in the *Year Book of the American Philosophical Society*, 1972. I can't bring myself to try to assess him or sum him up. I am still moved by awe and love. He gave me my education, my learning, my life's work. I have not been entirely worthy, but enough so to be at peace with him in my mind. And sad; I miss him.

Major Publications of Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb

The Arab Conquests in Central Asia (London, 1923); *Arabic Literature: an introduction* (London, 1926); Ibn al-Qalānisi, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades*, translated (London, 1932); *Whither Islam? A Survey of Modern Movements in the Moslem World* (London, 1932); *Modern Trends in Islam* (Chicago, 1947); *Mohammedanism: An historical survey* (Oxford, 1949); *Islamic Society and the West, I, Islamic Society in the Eighteenth Century*, with Harold Bowen (2 parts, Oxford, 1950 and 1957); *The Travels of Ibn Battuta, A.D. 1325-1354* (Cambridge, 1958); *Studies on the Civilization of Islam* (Boston, 1962).

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.

Sulaymān b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Dhiyīb, *Dirāsa taḥlīliya li-l-nuqūsh al-ārāmiya al-qadīma fī Taymā', al-Mamlaka al-'arabiya al-Sa'ūdiya [Analytical Study of the ancient Aramaic inscriptions in Taymā', Kingdom of Saudi Arabia]* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-malik Fahd al-waṭaniya, 1414/1994). 191pp., plates, bibliography.

Although the subject of this work falls outside the range of interest of most of *Al-'Usur al-Wusta's* readers, I call attention to it as an example of the high-quality work in the inscriptional record that is currently being produced in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The text thoroughly describes 33 inscriptions and offers a full linguistic, palaeographic, and content analysis of each, based on a wide range of scholarly publications in Arabic, English, French, and German. This work should quickly become a part of the standard secondary literature in Aramaic studies. We can commend the author for his work and

express the hope that he and other Saudi scholars will produce more works of this kind and quality. [Incidentally, the bibliography indicates that in various articles the author Romanizes his name as "S. al-Theeb", a fact of which bibliographers may wish to take note.]

-Fred M. Donner

Sa'd 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Rāshid, *Kitābat islāmīya ghayr manshūra min "Ruwāwa" al-Madīna al-munawwara [Unpublished Islamic inscriptions from "Ruwāwa," Medina]*. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Waṭan, 1413/1993. 128pp., black-and-white illustrations, maps, and tables.

The current controversy on the historical origins of Islam, which has been marked by the appearance of several widely divergent and (sometimes) mutually contradictory theories, is a reflection of the fact that our main sources of putative information about Muḥammad, his early community, and their successors are literary compilations that are clearly much later than the events they describe. Given this fact, the most important new material for clarifying the uncertainties surrounding the origins of Islam in Arabia may well come from the discovery and publication of new documentary evidence dating to the early Islamic period. The volume under review is a most welcome addition to this small, but gradually growing, body of documentary evidence on early Islamic times.

The author publishes here 55 Arabic inscriptions gathered at Ruwāwa, a site about 50 km south of Medina, where they are found carved into the flat surfaces of large boulders. Nine of the inscriptions are dated, the earliest to 76 A.H. and the latest to 246 A.H., with five clustering between 100 and 140 A.H. The publication is exemplary: each inscription is carefully described, and accompanied by a halftone photograph and a clear line drawing. Especially noteworthy is the careful analysis of the inscriptions as a whole, including complete tabulation of all personal names. The letter-forms of the dated inscriptions are

conveniently presented in tables in an appendix; examination of the palaeography of the dated ones helps make possible, of course, an estimation of the dates of many others on palaeographical grounds. Moreover, the way in which each letter (*alif, bā'*, etc.) is rendered in all the inscriptions is discussed in a separate section (pp. 113-122). There is also a separate tabulation (pp. 107-108) of key features or words/phrases (e.g., the four inscriptions that include Qur'ānic *āyas*, occurrences of *Muḥammad rasūl Allāh* (once), *āmin*, *Allāhumma, tīb Allāh, lā ilāha illā llāh*, etc. All of this adds to the usefulness of the volume.

The author is to be commended for the careful and thorough way in which these vitally important documents have been published. We hope that he and his students and colleagues will continue to work with this material, so that the thousands of remaining unpublished inscriptions that still dot the Arabian countryside can be made available for scientific study.

-Fred M. Donner

Muḥammad Muḥammad Mursī al-Shaykh, *Al-Imārāt al-'arabiya fī bilād al-Shām [The Arab Principalities in Geographical Syria]*. Alexandria: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriya al-'amma li-l-kitāb, 1980.

This is a thoughtful and straightforward presentation of an historical phenomenon of the post-'Abbāsīd age in Syria: the rise of independent "Arab principalities" or "bedouin dynasties." To be precise, this is a study of three such principalities: the Mirdāsīds of Aleppo, the Banū 'Ammār of Tripoli, and the Banū Munqidh of Shayzar, all of whom flourished in the eleventh and twelfth centuries C.E.

The book begins with an introductory chapter that sketches the tribal background to the rise of independent tribal-based principalities in Syria, and very briefly discusses the interface between nomadic and settled societies that makes such principalities possible; this is fol-

REVIEWS

lowed by a conventional geographical sketch of northern Syria. Chapter two discusses the Mirdāsids. It is, it must be admitted, a bit disappointing. On the one hand, it lacks the depth of Suhayl Zakkar's study on this dynasty, which the author did not consult; on the other, it does not provide the proper historical context that one finds in Hugh Kennedy's recent treatment. However, it is an excellent narrative of the simple sequence of events and the main political challenges to the Banū Mirdās, particularly with regard to relations with the Byzantines.

Chapter three, on the Banū 'Ammār of Tripoli, is structured in much the same way as chapter two. Here, the main themes that the author discusses are the ambivalent relationship of this dynasty with the Fatimid caliphate, and the local challenge posed by the recently-arrived Crusader armies. Along the way, the author is able to solve some chronological and prosopographical puzzles that had escaped the scrutiny of earlier Orientalist scholarship. Likewise, chapter four is a narrative account of the rise, heyday, and fall of the Banū Munqidh of Shayzar and their relationship with the Crusader principalities and the Byzantine empire.

The final chapter is a sort of grab-bag of topics outside the realm of political history, some of which leave a little to be desired. Although this book does not otherwise evince any strict partisan or nationalist commitments, the author does have a tendency to laud the Arab virtues of these principalities, particularly in his section on the survival of their "Arabness." This results in some unfortunate statements, notably the designation of the Umayyad dynasty as an "Arab kingdom" and of the 'Abbāsids as a melting-pot of less virtuous elements. The remainder of this chapter is given over to unrelated sketches on leisure, patronage of the arts and learning, population, and religious minorities.

This is not a book of wide-ranging theories or fancy models. But it is highly recommended for anyone wishing a good, clean, detailed narration of *what happened* under these three Arab principalities, based on all the relevant Arabic (and some Latin) sources, and engaging with the bulk of (older) Western secondary

scholarship on the subject. Along the way, the reader can meet with some informed thoughts from the author on the general phenomenon of independent, nomad-based states and the course of Arab culture in medieval Syria.

-Paul M. Cobb

Ritshard Murtel [Richard Mortel], *Al-Aḥwāl al-siyāsiya wa-al-iqtisādiya bi-Makkah fī l-'aṣr al-Mamlūkī* [Political and economic conditions in Mecca in the Mamluk era]. Riyadh: Jāmi'at al-Malik Sa'ūd, 1985/1405. 273 + xii pp.

Richard Mortel's study of the political and economic history of Mecca during the Mamluk period fills critical gaps in Mamluk studies scholarship, as well as the history of the Middle Period of the Hijaz. Most research in Mamluk history represents views from the cultural centers of Cairo and Damascus, not altogether surprising since such are the vantage points of the Mamluk period sources. As for the Hijaz, the gap is unfortunately apparent when one examines the relevant chapters in general histories of this part of Arabia, for example, de Gaury's *The Rulers of Mecca* (1934) or Peters's *Mecca: A Literary History of the Holy Land* (1994). These offer but brief discussions of the later medieval centuries, and their approach to the history of the Hijaz has to varying extents been determined by the selections made by F. Wüstenfeld when he compiled his *Die Chroniken der Stadt Mekka* (1861).

Mortel's book is a straightforward and informative account of the political and economic history of Mecca. Although it deals chiefly with the period of the Mamluk sultanate, this volume may be of interest to non-Mamlukists as well. The organization of the book is based on the periodization of the political history of the Meccan sharifate, and is presented in seven chapters. An introduction includes an overview of the book's principal sources, a number of which have apparently not been used in secondary literature dealing with the topic at hand, and along with the extensive bibliography, form a thorough com-

pendium on the historiography of the medieval Hijaz. The first chapter deals with the period from the 10th through the 12th centuries when Mecca was ruled by the Ja'afirah and the Hawashim lineages. The second chapter deals with the early thirteenth century when Ayyubids and Rasulids struggled to dominate the region, as well as the first decades of the Mamluk period. The following four chapters cover the period up to the fall of the Mamluk sultanate in 1517. The seventh chapter deals with economic conditions in Mecca during the Mamluk period. A conclusion outlines in twenty-seven itemized points the results of the study, the first five of which deal with the centuries before 1250.

The author approaches the subject primarily through local sources, including not only those authors that Wüstenfeld included within his compilation, but, more significantly, also the Meccan chroniclers and biographers Najm al-Din 'Umar Ibn Fahd and his son, 'Abd al-'Aziz, who until now have been largely neglected by researchers. Mortel uses also the standard Egyptian, Syrian, and Yemeni historians of the late thirteenth through early sixteenth centuries. The result is a study that clearly illustrates the gradually dominating role of the Cairo sultans in the affairs of the Hijaz, as seen from the perspective of Mecca. The importance of Mortel's contribution is that it offers in substantial detail a view of the Meccan *sharif's* attempts to counter not only the hegemonic aspirations of neighboring sultanates, but also the machinations of their Meccan rivals. Scholars interested in the history of Mecca and western Arabia will consider this book required reading.

-John Meloy

Abū l-Ma'ālī al-Musharraf b. al-Murajjā b. Ibrāhīm al-Maqdisī, *Faḍā'il Bayt al-Maqdis wa l-Khalīl wa Faḍā'il al-Shām* [The Merits of the Holy House, Hebron, and Syria]. Edited with an introduction by Ofer Livne-Kafri. Shafa 'Amr: Dār al-Mashriq, 1995. 419 pages and 9 page English introduction.

This book is the definitive edition

REVIEWS

of Ibn al-Murajjā's collection of hadith reports about the Merits of Jerusalem, Hebron, and Syria, written around the 430s/1030s. The text is essential reading for anyone interested in Jerusalem in the early Islamic period. It is one of the two earliest collections of traditions about the merits of Jerusalem (the other is that of al-Wāsiṭī). While known from a manuscript in Tübingen, and used by some scholars (it is one of the basic sources of information that Amikam Elad used in his recent book, *Medieval Jerusalem & Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995]), the text had not been available in a printed edition before.

Ibn al-Murajja's book, like the other Merits of Jerusalem books, is a collection of hadith reports. 594 traditions are included, divided into four sections: praises of Jerusalem, praises of mosques, praises of Syria, and praises of Hebron.

The first section on the merits of Jerusalem is by far the longest part and its 407 traditions cover a wide variety of topics, including a substantial number of traditions about the Dome of the Rock. Of special interest is a "guide to pilgrims" section that includes the prayers that Muslim pilgrims are to recite at the Muslim holy sites on the Ḥaram and elsewhere in Jerusalem.

The other shorter sections include 94 traditions on the merits of mosques, 46 traditions on the merits of Syria and 47 traditions on the merits of Hebron, which focus on the Tombs of the Patriarchs and also include a "guide to pilgrims". Livne-Kafri includes numerous footnotes for each hadith report, most of which identify the individuals recorded in the isnads. The book has extensive indices and bibliography.

Livne-Kafri has published a number of articles, mostly in Hebrew, about the Merits of Jerusalem literature, but regrettably here includes only a brief introduction (in English).

The book is attractively produced in paperback by an obscure Israeli-Arab publisher, and is poorly distributed. It deserves better and it is worth the effort to track it down.

Continuing on the same theme,

readers may be interested in the publication of a brief text of 32 hadith reports on the merits of Syria (Egyptian National Library - History 497): Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Hādī (705/1305-1306-744/1343-1344), *Faḍā'il al-Shām*, edited by Majdī Faḥī al-Sayyid (Tanta: Dar al-Ṣaḥāba li-l-Turāth, 1988, 39 pages).

-Robert Schick

Badrī Muḥammad Fahd, *Ta'riḫ Baghdad li-l-mu'arriḫ Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī* [The History of Baghdad by the Historian Ibn al-Najjār al-Baghdādī]. Baghdad: Dār al-shu'ūn al-thaqāfiya al-'amma, 1986.

The *Ta'riḫ Baghdad* of Ibn al-Najjār (d. 643/1245) originally comprised some thirty volumes, according to Kātib Ḥeblī, although he had seen only one. Like the *Ta'riḫ Baghdad* of al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, it comprised biographies of persons who had lived in or at least passed through Baghdad, especially Muslim men of religion. Ibn al-Najjār's *Ta'riḫ Baghdad* (which is, Fahd finds, the title of the book: 27f) covered persons whom al-Khaṭīb had neglected and who had come after the close of al-Khaṭīb's period, about 450/1058-59. In our day, one volume is known in Damascus, one in Paris.

Fahd begins his study with a biography of Ibn al-Najjār (ch. 1). On the basis of the Paris and Damascus manuscripts, he discusses Ibn al-Najjār's methods, such as careful combination of alphabetical arrangement to the grandfather's name, chronological arrangement thereafter (38-40). Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī's arrangement of names is notably haphazard by comparison. The *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* includes a three-page article on "Alphabetization, History of," by Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse. In Latin, alphabetization did not go beyond the first letter until 1050 C.E., and complete alphabetization was not common until about 1250. Obviously, someone needs to write

the history of alphabetization in Arabic.

The most interesting section to me is Fahd's list of Ibn al-Najjār's sources (ch. 4). Lists like this tell us about the readership of earlier works. Unfortunately, this one is unevenly researched. Some authors are carefully named and dated, others not. I was struck by the inclusion of both *Ṭabaqāt al-ṣūfiya* (100 biographies) and *Ta'riḫ al-ṣūfiya* (1,000 biographies) of al-Sulamī (131). I had never come across a quotation of the shorter book, although, ironically, it is the one that has survived to our day. Then I checked the *Ṭabaqāt* for a biography of 'Abd al-Malik ibn Yazīd, concerning whom Ibn al-Najjār cites *al-Ṭabaqāt*, and found none. Plainly, Ibn al-Najjār took his information from the *Ta'riḫ* and misnamed the book, an easy mistake to make. (I cannot actually prove that the *Ta'riḫ* had any entry for this name, but al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, 2:348, cites the *Ta'riḫ* for the biography of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn Yazīd, a disciple to Abū Ḥamza, and mentions that his father was a traditionist.) Plainly, too, Fahd did not check his list of citations.

Fahd closes with a survey of quotations from Ibn al-Najjār by later writers like al-Ṣafādī, with lists of page references (160-66). One regrets that al-Dhahabī, *Ta'riḫ al-Islām*, was not yet available, although it should have been possible to include *Siyar al-lām al-nubalā'*. Also, references are to the folios of the Damascene manuscript, not to the published version (Ibn al-Najjār, *Dhayl Ta'riḫ Badhdād*, Dā'irat al-ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniya, n.s. ix/A/xiv/i-v, 5 vols. [Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniya, 1978-86]), of which at least the first three volumes should have been available before Fahd went to press. The only topic whose discussion I missed was a comparison between Ibn al-Najjār and al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, perhaps with a list of persons covered by Ibn al-Najjār missed by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī.

This work is certain to interest anyone working on Baghdad in the 150 years or so after al-Khaṭīb al-Badhdādī.

-Christopher Melchert

REVIEWS

'Abd al-Fattāḥ Aḥmad al-Fāwī Maḥmūd (editor), *Uṣūl al-malāmatīya wa-ghalaṭāt al-ṣūfiya* by Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī. [Cairo:] Maṭba'at al-irshād, 1985.

Maḥmūd's introduction occupies pp. 7-132, the text of al-Sulamī (d. Nishapur, 412/1021), pp. 138-212. Maḥmūd spends most of his time defending the orthodoxy of Sufism. His comments on Malamatism scarcely go beyond quotations of the work being introduced, falling well below Abū l-'Alā' 'Afīfī, *Al-Malāmatīya wa-l-ṣūfiya wa-ahl al-futūwa* (Cairo: 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1945) (= *Mu'allafāt al-jāmi'a al-falsafiya al-Miṣriya*, 5). Maḥmūd ignores Jacqueline Chabbi, "Remarques sur le développement historique des mouvements

ascétiques et mystiques au Khurasan, IIIe/IXe siècle/IVe/Xe siècle," *Studia Islamica* 46 (1977), 5-72, the other crucial study of the Malāmatīya. The only advantage of al-Fāwī's text is its inclusion, at the end, of a section on the errors of some Sufis, previ-

ously noticed by A. J. Arberry, "Did Sulami Plagiarize Sarrāj?" *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1937), 461-65.

-Christopher Melchert

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GRAPHICS CREDITS

Page 27, Fig. 2: Plan of the excavations at Quseir al-Qadim, 1978-82, after C. Meyer, *Glass from Quseir al-Qadim and the Indian Ocean trade* (Chicago, 1992), fig. 2.

Page 28: Islamic Museum, Cairo. Ceramic Bowl (10th-13th century) from Transoxania. Photograph by Fred M. Donner, Dec. 1966.

Page 29: Tamelhat, Algeria. Carved Plaster decoration (18th century) in tomb of Sidi El Hadj 'Ali (d. 1260). Photograph by Fred M. Donner, July, 1979.

Page 37: K. A. C. Creswell. Photograph by Jack Gordon. Courtesy of American University in Cairo Rare Books and Special Collections Library.

Page 42: H.A.R. Gibb. Photograph by Fabian Bachrach.