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The collection itself, ranging from early Islam to the 18th century, is organized according to both historical period and geographical region. The reference library and the publications of DAI are closely related to the collection.

DAI has sponsored archaeological excavations in Bahnsa, Upper Egypt that date to the Fatimid period. Before the Invasion of 1991, the school of art associated with the DAI promoted skills in the study of the varied artistic genres that are represented in the collection. At present, our annual lecture series has been revived and is a focal point for historians and other specialists in the field. It features talks by prominent international scholars on various topics of Islamic art, archaeology and architecture.

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The Journal of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah

The journal Hadeeth ad-Dar of the Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah (DAI) is published quarterly. The articles, views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the policy of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah (DAI).

Complimentary subscriptions are available upon written request.

Printed in Kuwait

On the cover: detail of LNS 98 C Dhih, 9th c AD, Iraq, (see article page 20, "Ceramic and Glass Conservation and Restoration").

Editorial office and subscription request address:
Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah
National Council for Culture Arts and Letters
P.O. Box 33996, Salie, 13100, Kuwait.
Tel: 965 240 0965
Fax: 965 240 0988
email: publications@darmuseum.org.kw
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Produced by the editorial staff of Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah (DAI)
GERMAN PENETRATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST
BEFORE AND DURING WORLD WAR II

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY GRIGORY L. BONDAREVSKY

The lecture concerns the German penetration of the Middle East before and during World War II. It is based on the study of original documents from archives throughout Britain and Europe, especially those of the German secret service, which worked very hard in the Middle East before and during World War II.

Some historians are of the opinion that there was a period of relative calm between the exchange of letters in 1932 between Nuri Sa'id, the Prime Minister of Iraq and the ruler of Kuwait, Sheikh Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah regarding Kuwait's northern borders and Abdul Karim Qasim's threats of annexation when Kuwait declared her independence in 1961. Relevant documents of the period, however, deny this assumption and show that German diplomats in Iraq not only actively encouraged King Ghazi of Iraq in his territorial ambitions towards Kuwait, but gave them popular credence. This was not because the Germans were anti-Kuwaiti but because they wished to break British influence in Iraq so that they, themselves, could become the dominant power in its affairs.

From 1932 until the start of World War II, therefore, the Iraqi press waged a continuous propaganda war against Kuwait and its ruler. It was personal and vicious, as it not only insulted Sheikh Ahmed and criticised his policies in Kuwait, but was also cleverly designed to cause the maximum amount of discontent among the Kuwaiti population. Articles appearing regularly in the Iraqi press were only part of a secretly funded German campaign that repeated old claims that Kuwait was part of the Basra Vilayet. In an order of 6th July 1935, before the outbreak of World War II, many young Iraqis were persuaded to settle in Kuwait to cause unrest in the country and provide the core of a Fifth Column.

In 1935, the Iraqi government established a Ministry of Propaganda and Information in Baghdad. It worked around the clock disseminating misinformation and lies. British and German reports reveal that this anti-Kuwaiti campaign was partly directed by King Ghazi himself. It accused the Kuwaiti government of smuggling arms into Iraq, an accusation disproved by British reports of the period that confirmed that although arms smuggling had, indeed, taken place, it was carried out by the Iraqis themselves.

Over the next few years, armed incursions into Kuwaiti territory started to occur with increasing frequency and in 1938 the Iraqi government officially informed the British that it planned to build a port on Kuwaiti territory in north Kuwait to link it by rail to the existing Iraqi road network. They submitted a long side-memorandum to the British Undersecretary of State at the Foreign Office, R. A. Butler, which listed the following requests. Firstly, they asked permission to establish an Iraqi/Kuwaiti customs unit and secondly requested the re-adjustment of the northern border of Kuwait, including the northern part of Kuwait Bay. This 're-adjustment', if implemented, would have deprived Kuwait of about one third of her territory. The Iraqis concluded by emphasizing that Kuwait had always been part of the Basra Vilayet and, as Iraq had succeeded the Ottoman Empire, Kuwait was therefore Iraq. This, of course, conveniently ignored the terms of the Sèvres Treaty of 1920 and the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. These demands were discussed at a meeting of the Middle East Sub-Committee of the British government, an important think-tank, which finally recommended that the Iraqis build their port on the Iraqi side of the Khor Abdullah.

The Iraqis used other lines of persuasion in their offensive against Kuwait when, in February 1939, they invited some prominent Kuwaiti merchants and two former members of the legislature to Baghdad. There they were treated with deference and promised positions of power in King Ghazi's new kingdom which would incorporate Kuwait. In March 1939, the British Intelligence Service discovered that, with the help of disaffected Kuwaitis and some members of the Kuwaiti opposition, King Ghazi planned to invade Kuwait. Five armoured divisions of the Iraqi army were deployed on the Kuwaiti border and were on the point of crossing into Kuwait when news arrived that King
Ghazi had died in a car accident.

From the start of the 1930s, the British position in Europe had undoubtedly become progressively weaker. Its influence had declined sharply with the advent of Hitler, the creation of the Axis/Berlin role, the occupation of the Sudetenland and Austria, and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. Similarly, in the Middle East, Arab attitudes had generally hardened and Britain gradually lost power and influence as Pan-Arab propaganda spread, anti-colonial feeling grew and continued lack of support for the Palestinians changed the perceptions of many.

A much more important but lesser-known reason, however, was the very active, many-sided work of German diplomats in the Middle East and especially in Iraq.

German interest in Mesopotamia first emerged a century ago when Kaiser Wilhelm II, drew up a master plan to control the Gulf region and open the road to India by building the famous Berlin/Baghdad railway. After the defeat of Germany in the Great War it was generally thought that German interest in Mesopotamia had declined but documents show that even at the time of the Weimar Republic, from 1919 to 1933, this was not so. Indeed, when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, the second phase of the German invasion of Iraq started.

The first foreign diplomat to arrive in Baghdad after independence was the German ambassador, Fritz Grobba. German archives and the private papers of Herr Grobba prove a fascinating study. Fritz Grobba started his career in 1913 as a translator in the Consul General's office in Jerusalem and, during World War I, he commanded a battalion the Turkish army. In 1924, he became the first German ambassador to Kabul. Even before his arrival in Baghdad as ambassador, Fritz Grobba had established contacts with King Faisal I as early as 1920. When King Faisal (who was not hostile to Kuwait) died, Grobba immediately attached himself to his son, King Ghazi and became very close to him. His first official gift to Ghazi was an up and running broadcasting station, which was installed in his royal palace, Qasr al Zuhoor, the Palace of Flowers.

As well as cultivating the king, Grobba had close contacts with a group of high-ranking army officers who had formerly served in the Turkish army during World War I and through them obtained huge arms contracts for famous German arms manufacturers such as Krupp. Indeed, Krupp and the Deutsche Bank had created a special financial and business company called the Iraqi Industrial Consortium, which financed many German projects in Iraq. The British appeared unaware of this, as their ties to the monarchy were so close that they regarded Iraq as being totally under their influence.

The real breakthrough for the Germans, however, came when an old friend of Grobba, General Baqr Sidqi, was appointed Chief of the Iraqi General Staff. Grobba visited Sidqi nearly every day and his attentions paid dividends. One day Sidqi asked him if he could send a very good German officer to Baghdad to help him. A month later, a German Colonel arrived, in the guise of a geologist, and was asked to prepare a plan to defend Iraqi Kurdistan against a British invasion from the Gulf. After frequent meetings with many Kurdish leaders, a plan of action evolved and Sidqi eventually admitted to Grobba the real reason behind his activities. By instigating an uprising of Iraqi, Iranian and Turkish Kurds, he planned to establish a separate Kurdish state in the north. The thought of the bloodshed that would have ensued had this plan been implemented evoked no protest from the German ambassador, however. Indeed, he was happy at the thought, for such mischief would cause many problems for the British.

The British, however, had not been sitting idly by. They organised a change of government and then, suddenly, General Baqr Sidqi was assassinated by fellow officers and later King Ghazi was killed in a car accident and a lot of people who were against British interests, died. After the death of Baqr Sidqi, the British ambassador made the strange statement that now they were once again in Iraq with the best of relations with the new government chaired by Mr. Riffai. The Germans, realising that the British were now on the alert, acted accordingly. As the political situation in Europe became tense, with war expected at any minute, Fritz Grobba was instructed to make approaches to another Arab state, Saudi Arabia.

The German government had, in the past, made approaches to the Kingdom and Saudi officials had
already visited Berlin where King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman al-Saud’s adviser had not only agreed to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries but had also received one million Reichsmarks for the purchase of armaments. Fritz Grobba’s subsequent private talks with Ibn Saud related mainly to co-ordination and policy and from the notes of his conversations, it would seem that there was nothing anti-British or anti-Kuwaiti about their discussions. Grobba persuaded Ibn Saud to remain neutral in the event of a war between Britain and Germany in 1939 and also extracted a promise from the Saudi monarch that, should the British oust him from Baghdad, he would find a place for him in Jeddah. Ibn Saud was as good as his word. When war broke out and Iraq broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, Fritz Grobba became the German ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

On September 3, 1939, war was declared. Two days after the start of the war Hitler received two very important memoranda. The first, written by Baron Max von Oppenheim, was entitled “The Importance of the Islamic Orient for Germany” and the second, by Oskar von Niedermayer, “Politics and Strategy in the Middle East”. Both men were old and experienced experts on Middle Eastern affairs. It was Max von Oppenheim who had written the Kaiser’s famous 1898 speech, given in Damascus, in which he had proclaimed, to the three hundred million Muslims of the world, the friendship and assistance of Germany. And, although the 1915 German mission to Afghanistan, headed by Oskar von Niedermayer, had failed to persuade Amir Habibullah to support Germany in the war, his bravery was legendary and his knowledge of the Middle East unrivalled. Together they counselled Hitler that if Britain were to lose control of the Middle East then her Indian Empire would fall and Germany would win the war. A master plan, code-named ‘South-East’ was therefore prepared to bring this objective to fruition.

The springboard of ‘South-East’ was Iraq. This was an unfortunate choice for the people of Kuwait, however, as Germany chose to degrade British influence by encouraging Iraqi Nationalists to invade their country. The Germans were not anti-Kuwaiti. Their policy was solely motivated by anti-British feelings. They knew that, should Kuwait be invaded, the British would come to the aid of Sheikh Ahmed, a move that would consequently arouse very bitter feelings in Iraq and place the British in an untenable position.

It was with German connivance, therefore, that a new wave of Nationalist propaganda began in Iraq in October, 1939, when the Grand Mufti of Palestine, Amin al-Hussaini, arrived in Baghdad and set up his office. He had many friends in Iraq and was in close contact with the officers of the ‘Golden Square’ with whom he had served in the Turkish army in World War I. The Mufti received a donation of eighteen thousand Dinars from the Iraqi parliament for his cause and money poured in, too, from the Germans, the Italians and many other sources including the Association for the Defence of Palestine. Amin Hussaini then bought a very influential newspaper, ‘Al Istiqal’, which poured out nationalist, anti-British propaganda.

In April 1940, the Mufti and his nationalist allies organised a coup d’état which resulted in Rashid Ali Gailani again becoming Prime Minister. Rashid Ali Gailani was well known as a friend of the Germans and held talks with Franz von Papen who was quick to promise him help in the name of Hitler. Rashid Ali Gailani, who had always favoured the annexation of Kuwait, seized his opportunity when the negotiations broke down over the port on the Khor Abdullah. When the British refused his demands for Iraqi sovereignty over Warba and Bubiyah Islands he told the British ambassador that he would take over the whole of Kuwait.

In April 1941, Rashid Ali Gailani again came to power as the result of a coup and became Prime Minister of Iraq for the fourth time. News reached the Regent, Prince Abdullah, that his arrest was imminent and, dressed as a woman, he escaped from the palace with the aid of the American ambassador who took him in his official car to the British base at Habbaniyah. The British then arranged for him to travel to Cairo where he met Winston Churchill.

Winston Churchill listened with interest to the Regent and realised that harsh measures were called for if Iraq were to continue to remain within the British sphere of influence. He gave an order to send two brigades of the British India army to Basra and their arrival, on April 3, 1941, surprised the officers of the Golden Square and resulted in what was to become known as the thirty-day war.

The Iraqis only decided to fight the British after they had been given assurances from von Papen that he would come to their aid. The German planes were late in arriving, however, and the British, fighting out of Habbaniya and Shuiba, defeated the Iraqi troops. As a result, Rashid Ali Gailani’s rebellion crumbled and he fled across the border to Iran.

At the end of December 1940, Hitler signed Directive No. 21, code named ‘Barbarossa’, relating to the German invasion of the Soviet Union. Before this plan was implemented, however, Hitler signed two other directives, No 30 and 32, code named ‘Middle East’. One directive stressed that German support for a rising in Iraq would tie up British troops and shipping at the expense of other theatres of the war and, in conjunction with an attack on the Suez Canal, British con-
mol in the Middle East could be broken. The other outlined a new master plan for the conquest of the Orient.

After the success of Barbarossa, Hitler planned to have his armies converge on Rashid Ali Gailani’s Iraq, which would be used as a springboard to advance his operations in the east. German troops would march from North Africa across Egypt and Palestine to Iraq and, from Europe, through Turkey and the Caucasus to Iraq. In addition, the German, Italian and Japanese navies would sail up the Gulf and converge on Basra. In 1942, Hitler and the Japanese ambassador signed a top secret document which, after the war, gave Germany control of all lands to the west of Pakistan and Japan, all lands to the east of Pakistan. Later, one of the Hitler’s generals asked him why he had given India, the jewel in the crown of the British Empire, to the Japanese. Hitler answered that once he had annihilated the British, he would then throw the Japanese out of India. Indeed, Hitler was so sure of his victory over the Soviet Union that he had already appointed a Gauleiter of India.

To assist his conquest of the Middle East, Hitler set up a special unit, Force F, stationed in a propaganda and espionage centre near Athens. There he assembled students of all Arabic, Persian, Afghani and Indian dialects whose role would be to ease the path of German armies as they penetrated the Middle East.

In May 1942, Rashid Ali Gailani and Amin Hussaini had a meeting with Mussolini in Rome. Amin Hussaini proclaimed himself the supreme leader of the Arabs but Rashid Ali Gailani insisted that the title should be his as he had been Prime Minister of Iraq four times. Although Hitler often referred to Mussolini as his brother it was, nevertheless, the case that Germany’s best spies were in Rome and within ten days of this meeting it was reported to Joachim von Ribbentrop in Berlin. When Hitler heard that Rashid Ali Gailani’s plan for his future kingdom included not only Iraq but Khuzistan, Kuwait and Bahrain, he objected to the inclusion of Khuzistan whose 80 million tonnes of oil he wished to keep for Germany.

With the start of Barbarossa the main theatre of war moved to the Soviet Union. After the defeat of the German army near Moscow in December 1941, however, the German General Staff concluded that they could not continue to attack on a 2,000-mile front. They divided the German Army into two main groups, Group A and Group B. Group A had the task of occupying Tbilisi, Baku and the Middle East while the task of Group B was to attack Stalingrad. Group A, with 600,000 officers and men and the best tanks and artillery moved forward accompanied by the forces of special Force F. The fight around Stalingrad, however, was so bloody that Hitler had to take two tank armies from Group A and left it weakened in consequence. Stalin was quick to realise that should the advancing German army take Baku and its oil fields, the Soviet Union would suffer a dreadful blow. He made a special appeal for help to the peoples of Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and north Caucasus who raised a mighty army that fought and smashed the Germans. Of the 600,000 men in Group A, only 50,000 survived. Thus, Hitler’s dreams of conquest came to nothing.

Simultaneously the Hitler military machine suffered heavy blows from other quarters. The advance of the Afrika Korps, under Rommel, received a decisive blow at El-Alamein and the Turkish government decided against entering the war on the side of the Axis. Neither did it permit German troops stationed in Bulgaria to cross Turkey and enter Iraq from the west.

In May, 1941, after the expulsion of Rashid Ali Gailani, the British High Command had asked Sheikh Ahmed of Kuwait if Umm Qasr could become a British military port and Sheikh Ahmed had agreed, on the understanding that it should be demolished at the end of the war. Despite the expense, the British agreed and at the end of the war the infrastructure of the port was destroyed to prevent it being taken over by the Iraqis.

After the war, King George V presented the defenders of Stalingrad with a special award in honour of their sacrifices. To this day, many people in Russia remember the great help they received from the people of Britain during World War II, especially during the most difficult months of the defence of Stalingrad and the North Caucasus. A month before the 55th Anniversary, the City Council of Volgograd proclaimed Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, an honorary citizen of Stalingrad for her assistance to the Soviet Union during the war; a very rare honour.

Thus, the failure of Barbarossa and the victories of both the Allied and Soviet forces during World War II, foiled Iraqi plans to take Kuwait and firmly secured the position of the British in the Gulf.
IN PURSUIT OF GILGAMESH: RECOVERING A MASTERPIECE OF ANCIENT LITERATURE

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY ANDREW GEORGE

One of the least publicized but most important academic tasks now going on in the humanities is the recovery of man's most ancient literature, the poems and narratives of ancient Mesopotamia. The languages of Sumer and Babylonia died out with the demise of cuneiform writing on clay tablets about two thousand years ago. Their restoration to mankind's sum of knowledge occurred only in the last 150 years, with the recovery of large numbers of inscribed clay tablets from archaeological sites in Mesopotamia and their consequent decipherment. The new subject was known as Assyriology and in due course became a topic of study (although a very small one) in the major universities, especially in Europe and North America.

Such is the quantity of clay tablets so far excavated and the worldwide shortage of people able to read them that large numbers of cuneiform texts which have lain in European and American museums for decades remain unread, even now. So it is still possible to pick up a clay tablet in, for example, the British Museum in London and be the first person in two or three thousand years to read the words written on it. The excitement that can accompany such a moment has not diminished since the well-known occasion when George Smith, one of the pioneers of Assyriology in the 1860s and 1870s, found inscribed on three clay tablets from Nineveh the Babylonian account of the flood story. He was so thrilled at what he read that he walked around the room taking his clothes off.

What Smith had found turned out to be three sources for the eleventh section of the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh. The Epic of Gilgamesh is a long narrative poem that tells the story of a legendary king of the city of Uruk. With his superhuman appetite for physical pursuits Gilgamesh exhausts his people. In order to divert Gilgamesh's energy elsewhere the gods create Enkidu as his friend and counterpart. Enkidu is born a wild man but seduced by a prostitute and civilized. Hearing of Gilgamesh's tyrannical excesses he enters Uruk and confronts him. The pair fight and then become firm friends. In a quest for fame and glory the two heroes embark on an expedition to Lebanon to conquer the ogre Humbaba in the Forest of Cedar. In doing so they desecrate the sacred groves of the gods. On returning to Uruk in triumph Gilgamesh repudiates the goddess Ishtar's amorous advances and despatches with Enkidu's help the fiery bull she brings down from the sky to wreak her vengeance. The heroes enter Uruk at the peak of their glory.

Angered by these twin deeds of sacrilege the gods condemn Enkidu to die, and after a vision of Hell he duly meets his doom. Gilgamesh holds a lavish funeral for his friend and takes to the wild, distraught with grief and consumed by the fear of death. He wanders in search of the survivor of the Flood, the immortal Utanapishtim, from whom he expects to wrest the secret of eternal life. Eventually he finds him, beyond the edge of the world, and learns of life and death, the different destinies of gods and men. Utanapishtim tells the famous story of the Flood, in which after overthrowing the gods made him immortal. He explains that this was a one-off event. Gilgamesh cannot attain his desire in the same way. He tests Gilgamesh's ability to stave off death. Exhausted by his journeying Gilgamesh cannot stay awake a moment longer. In abject failure Gilgamesh is sent home with a gift, the magic plant of rejuvenation, but even this he loses. He returns to Uruk with Utanapishtim's ferryman. Although still incomplete, the poem is clearly a work of extraordinary profundity, power and beauty, and is rightly identified as the first great masterpiece of world literature.

First set down in writing nearly four thousand years ago, the text of the poem went through many minor changes in the course of its history as a written text. Pieces of the epic come from four main periods and many different archaeological sites. There are currently eleven Old Babylonian fragments of the Babylonian Gilgamesh. They were written in the eighteenth century BC, a time when the Babylonian language was the vehicle of a dynamic and vigorous new literature. Those Old Babylonian Gilgamesh tablets that were excavated by archaeologists come from various sites in southern Iraq, including Sippar, Ischali, Tell Harma and Nippur.

From the later second millennium BC we have another eighteen tablets and fragments of the epic. Only five of these stem from Babylonia, having been found at Nippur and Ur. The rest come from sites in the far west, from Tell Meskene (Emar) on the Syrian Euphrates upstream of Raqa, from Megiddo in Palestine, and from Boghazköy (Hattusa), the Hittite capital in central Anatolia. At this time the poem of Gilgamesh was known in several different versions in Babylonian and was also
translated into foreign languages, such as Hittite and Hurrian.

If all we knew of the Epic of Gilgamesh were these older pieces of second-millennium date, we should not understand properly the poem's plot nor what the poem is about. But the pieces that George Smith found are just a very few of the large number of tablets and fragments of tablets from the library of the last Assyrian kings, particularly Ashurbanipal, who ruled over much of the Near East from his capital at Nineveh in the mid-seventh century BC. This library was discovered in 1850 by a British adventurer called Austen Henry Layard and shipped back to London by the East India Company.

Among the many extraordinary treasures of Babylonian and Assyrian intellectual culture gathered in the Assyrian royal library were four copies of the late edition of the Epic of Gilgamesh, numbering about 35 tablets in all. Like the rest of the library, these tablets were found shattered into small pieces, so that the work of rebuilding them continues to this day. Some pieces certainly remain under the soil of Kuyunjik, the citadel mound of Nineveh, and will probably never be found. But here other sources come to the rescue.

The Neo-Assyrian Gilgamesh tablets written at Nineveh at the tail-end of the Assyrian Empire have been supplemented by pieces of similar date excavated in other Assyrian cities, Ashur, Nimrud (ancient Kalah) and Sultantepe in Turkey (ancient Huzurina). Other large collections of clay tablets, especially from southern cities such as Babylon and Uruk, have yielded many further pieces of the epic. These date mostly from the sixth to second centuries BC and many are still unpublished. With their help the text of the late version of the epic is slowly being pieced together.

The sources of the cuneiform text of the Babylonian Gilgamesh were last collected between the covers of a single book in 1930, when 108 fragments of the late epic were known. Since that time the number of known pieces of the late epic has nearly doubled, to 182. From 1985 to 2001 I was engaged in the task of collecting all these cuneiform texts in a replacement for the old edition. The work involved the study at first hand of all the extant fragments of the Babylonian epic, old and late, the production of line drawings of them, the decipherment of previously unknown sections of text and the incorporation of all this material into a reliable academic edition. This work is now at an end. A preview of the results can be seen in my recent translation of the epic published in the Penguin Classics series, which utilized all the sources of the epic, published and unpublished, known in 1999.
ing of the text of the epic. A little piece of inscribed clay tablet, about two by three centimetres, was identified in September 1998 as part of the opening lines of the epic. It had lain unnoticed in the British Museum since 1878. The fragment reveals that, for over one hundred years, Assyriologists had not correctly understood how the fragmentary lines were to be reconstructed, and had telescoped the first two couplets into one. Though we still lack a word of lines 2 and 4, now at last the text’s beginning becomes clear:

He who saw the Deep, the country’s foundation,
[who knew ...] was wise in all matters!
[ Gilgame, who] saw the Deep, the country’s foundation,
[ who ...], was wise in all matters!
15 [He] ... everywhere ..., and [learnt] of everything the sum of wisdom.

He saw what was secret, discovered what was hidden,
he brought back a tale of before the Deluge.

Thus the very beginning of the epic summarizes the momentous implication of the story to come. It celebrates the hero Gilgamesh as privy to the arcane secrets of the Deep, the cosmic abode of the god of wisdom. This was the source of the profound wisdom on which Babylonian civilization was built. In journeying to the ends of the earth, Gilgamesh learnt from the immortal Uta-Napishtim the wisdom of olden times.

All the new pieces referred to up to this point have been sources for the epic as it was known in the first millennium BC. The discovery of older pieces is a rarer event, but I cannot finish without mentioning the appearance last year of a complete Old Babylonian tablet (c. 18th century BC) that offers for the first time a more or less complete account of two dreams Gilgamesh had on his way to the Cedar Forest.

More pieces of the epic will continue to be found, both in museum collections and in new excavations in the city mounds of Mesopotamia. As with all the ancient literary texts in Sumerian and Babylonian currently in the process of recovery, every generation or so a new edition will have to be made. In this way the Epic of Gilgamesh, now about two-thirds recovered, will one day stand again as a complete text for the whole world to admire.

Before concluding, a word about the end of the epic. On returning home Gilgamesh invites his companion to climb on to the walls of Uruk and look down on the city stretched out within. Implicitly the poet asks his audience to do the same. And these are the words that end the poem:

‘A square mile is city, a square mile date-grove, a square mile is clay-pit, half a square mile the temple of Ishtar; three square miles and a half is Uruk’s expanse.’

Ends, as well as beginnings, are important, but the significance of this conclusion has been lost to modern commentators, who pay too much attention to the wall they identify as Gilgamesh’s enduring monument. It is, however, the city that is the focus of the poet’s gaze. Within it are all the activities of man, symbolized by the poet’s four divisions. The ‘city’ means the human habitations.
where men are born, grow up, come of age and raise their families in turn. The ‘date-grove’ stands for the agricultural work that produces the food to sustain men. The ‘clay-pits’, where building mud is excavated for bricks and pottery, symbolize the work of building and the manufacturing crafts. And the temple of Ishtar represents man’s spiritual and intellectual life. There, in the collective life of the city, rests all human activity. For the Babylonians the city, ancient and eternal, was the quintessential mark of civilization, without which there could be no human society. What the poet is telling us in turning our gaze on the city is that all men are subsumed in mankind. The individual perishes but the race of men is immortal. And this is what all of us must accept, even, finally, at the end of his struggle, the greatest king of old.

The epic’s many profound insights into the human condition, the place of man in the great scheme of things and the path to true happiness, already bring home to a wide audience the intellectual profundity and poetic imagination of the long dead poets of ancient Babylonia.

At the same time they serve as a reminder of how the people of the ancient Near East already anticipated in their intellectual life much that we think of as special to our own modern culture. For the Near East was, indeed, the Cradle of Civilization, where man first learnt to live in cities and first developed advanced technology and sophisticated thought. The modern descendants of these ancient peoples should be proud of those achievements made so long ago. The nations of the modern Near East should not be slow to remind the rest of the world of the enormous debt we all owe to their ancestors.
Burning Mirrors: An Example of the Application of Greek and Arabic Geometry

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY ROSHDWI RASHED

For a scientific mind, all understanding comes from an answer to a problem. If there is no questioning, then there cannot be any scientific understanding. These problems could be theoretical as well as practical. It happens, quite often, that a suitable answer requires the use of mathematics. This is especially true for many fields: engineering, architecture, music, scientific instruments, etc. The purpose of this lecture is to delve as deep as possible into history, in order to find the earliest applications of geometry and to understand their significance.

One such subject is ‘burning mirrors’. Burning mirrors became an important field of research in Alexandria during the third and second centuries BC for Ctesibius of Alexandria, Archimedes, Dositheus, Apollonius, and others. We are now aware of this fact thanks to the Arabic translations of ancient Greek works (sadly lost in the original Greek version). It is now established that this research was the fruit of two projects developed in tandem over a long period: catoptrics and the theory of conic sections. The linkage of the two disciplines made it possible to answer questions regarding burning an object at a certain distance by reflection of sunrays using mirrors.

In the beginning of the ninth century, scholars were not satisfied with the conclusions of their Greek and Byzantine predecessors. They decided to take a fresh look at the problem of the convergence of reflected rays to a single point and the distance of this point from the reflector, while taking into consideration the requirements of geometrical proof. The philosopher and mathematician Abu Yousuf Yaqub ibn Ishaq al-Kindi is one of the most important figures in this field, although many authors pursued this work. Recently accumulated material confirms it as a surprisingly rich intellectual and original scientific contribution. A century later, the problem was transformed, and instead of burning mirrors, scientists became interested in burning instruments as a whole. The geometric investigations in the focal points associated with near and far sources drew attention not only of elliptic and parabolic mirrors, but included also a totally new and unsuspected development at an early date (around AD 985) of plano-convex and equiconvex lenses. A new field was born devoted to anastastics or dioptics, which has been wrongly attributed to mathematicians of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This new topic, linked with the two domains, optics and especially theory of refraction, and to the conics theory, was developed by Abu Said al-Aha’s Ibn Sahl and his successors: Abu Ali al-Hasan ibn al-Haytham in particular. With these mathematicians emerges a completely intellectual concept. It is one of the subjects of contemporary exchanges of ideas and studies, not only on conics and on their applications to optics, but also on projections, which were motivated by the need to improve the design of astrolabes, sundials, etc. Thus, one can see the close link between advances in mathematical theory and technical needs, tied to the production of highly specialised scientific instruments – for that time – a link already was known in the field of gnomonics.

In brief, the Greek legacy on burning mirrors was twice transformed during the ninth and tenth centuries. It went far away from its own limits with al-Kindi and his successors, to the conception of this new field on anastastics or dioptics with Ibn Sahl. With the latter, the question became: given a beam of light rays can one transform it into a pencil of rays satisfying certain given conditions, e.g. that the rays be parallel, or converge toward a point? Ibn Sahl explicitly poses this problem and by using conics, he was able to advance the study of lenses.

The question frequently asked is about what were early applications of geometry? The main goal of this lecture is to provide, at least, a partial answer to this question.

It is about the application of mathematics in physics and astronomy as it was before the eighteenth century. However, thereafter the situation changes.

What is applied mathematics? Moreover, what is its impact on the development of the field of mathematics and other sciences?

Burning mirrors are considered the first application of mathematics. Burning mirrors are mirrors or a set of mirrors such as elliptic or parabolic mirrors. Indeed, they were used to light up temples, churches, and other worship places. The second use, brought by Archimedes legend, which says that burning mirrors were used as weapons to destroy the Roman fleet off Syracuse in Sicily. This legend played an historical role in research and investigations regarding the use of burning mirrors. The raised questions were about ways of using mirrors and how can they burn an object located at a given distance? People believed in that legend and thought of using burning mirrors as a military arm. Rulers encouraged scholars to carry on researching the subject.

Humanity is indebted to Aristotle for the oldest doc-
device.

In the ninth century, Anthemius of Tralles left a manuscript on burning mirrors. The lecturer has an Arabic translated copy of this manuscript. When comparing the translated copy with the original manuscript, it was discovered that the translation was more valuable than the original; the Arabic copy is enhanced and enriched.

In the tenth century Abu Ishaq al-Kindi, studied this manuscript and made a commentary, he then decided to study the subject of burning mirrors himself. There is a manuscript copy of his work in Tareq Rajab Museum, Kuwait, dated AD 902.

Al-Kindi solved a problem that was left by Anthemius with no solution. In fact, Anthemius tried unsuccessfully to assemble twenty-four plane mirrors. Al-Kindi assembled twenty-four regular pyramidal mirrors. He also made some corrections in Anthemius’ work. After Al-Kindi, other scholars such as the astronomer al-Bouzjami carried works on burning mirrors. The most remarkable of them was al-Ala’ Ibn Sahl (AD 984) who made a breakthrough in burning mirrors history in the tenth century. He studied different types of mirrors and is the first to use the inherent rays’ refraction by interfacing surfaces. He also used conic sections to discover optical lenses and to discover, many centuries before Kepler and Snell, the law of refraction that was later known as Snell’s Law. Thus, the Constant Sine Law was reinvented by Snell and enhanced by Christian Huygens in the early eighteenth century. Research in the field of optics continued with Descartes who stated the optics laws as it is now known.

It is also worth mentioning the contribution of Ibn al-Haytham, who is one of the founders of the science of optics. If Ibn Sahl concentrated more on the theoretical aspect of conic sections, Ibn al-Haytham was brilliant in both theoretical and practical aspects. Ibn al-Haytham’s studies on spherical mirrors, optical lenses, and the laws of optics led to the various applications we use in our daily life.

To summarise, the application of mathematics to burning mirrors started in Alexandria with Archimedes, Apollonius and Diocles. The Greek legacy was updated twice between the ninth and tenth centuries. Two breakthroughs in the advancement of the subject: one with the work of Al-Kindi, and the second was with Ibn Sahl which led to the establishment of a new field: refraction as a branch in optics. Also in the tenth century Ibn al-Haytham accomplished valuable theoretical and practical work in optics. Later, Kepler and Descartes finalised the optics laws and gave a new face to optics which is now an important branch of mathematics.

Finally, let us quote what the French mathematician d’Alembert said about how important mathematics is: “Without mathematics there is no science”. Also, the German philosopher Kant once said, “In every science there is a piece of mathematics”.


Uncemented mathematical application. He used mathematics in building an organ.

Optics is considered most appropriately placed in the discipline of applied mathematics.

In early times, there were two traditions: the Archimedian school and the schools of Euclid and Ptolemy. We will restrict our study to conic sections: the parabola, ellipse and hyperbola.

The best known scientist in this field, after Archimedes, who came 30 years later, was Apollonius who taught conic sections and drew figures of burning mirrors, parabola in particular. Elliptic mirrors were not known before sixth century. As for the hyperbola figures, they were discovered for the first time by Arab scholars in the tenth century.

In the third century, Diocles wrote a book “On Burning Mirrors” (Ταυρονοσ γαλλονοσ). However, the only preserved copy of this book is an Arabic copy translated during medieval times.

However, it is worth mentioning here that before deciding upon the translation of a work into Arabic, Arab scholars had to study the subject and assess it.

Secondly, the standing of religion toward burning mirrors was debated between Qusta Ibn Luqa and Ali Ibn al-Munaj jm; a subject studied especially when rulers showed interest in the subject. The verdict was that burning mirrors were not a miracle in a religious sense, but a phenomenon that could be explained scientifically.

Diocles’ book had four chapters:

I Building parabola mirrors
II Building special mirrors
III Optics
IV Geometry

Diocles reported in his book some experiences carried out by his predecessors such as the one aiming to concentrate sun rays to burn an object giving a circular shape. Another experience was about using the sun’s rays to burn a point at each hour to be used as a timing
The Automatic Mechanical Hydraulic Organ of Banu Musa Shakir

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY MONA CHAARANI

Music is one of the oldest art forms in the world, known by all nations and ages including the prehistoric world. It is an integral part of human and social life. Psychological research has shown that music soothes emotions, refines the senses and fills the soul with ecstasy and joy.

The history of Arabic music and instruments goes back to the ancient Arab Kingdoms. The Arabs showed a great interest in music and both the musicians and attendant craftsmen were respected, glorified and encouraged in their endeavours.

Arabic Musical instruments are classified under three general distinct categories:

Although classical thought does not consider the organ to be of Arabic origin, thorough research of an old Arabic manuscript by the sons of Musa bin Shakir, entitled "Al-Alat Allati Tuzamiru Binafsa" (The instrument that plays by itself) shows a complete description of the Arabic organ and includes theories of mechanical music.

The principal part of a mechanical musical instrument is the keyboard. B. de Koecke is the inventor of a wheel that spins on its axis, thus striking bells on its revolution. References prove that the first music made in this way was first heard in 1487 AD.

The Organ

The organ is defined as a musical instrument containing a keyboard resembling that of a piano called a 'Manual' and the pedals that are played with the feet. The keys control the passage of air into several wooden or metallic pipes. The pipes are fixed vertically in an architectural design according to length and volume. A whistle is attached to the lower end of each pipe. An electric motor controls the passage of air through the pipes. In ancient times this was substituted by a bellows controlled by the players' feet or alternatively by another person. The organ is the biggest musical instrument and the richest in term of depth and variety of sounds it can generate, with the ability to mix them, giving the richness of a large orchestra. The musician may mix sounds using several rows of keyboards.

The History of the organ

Historians have not been able to pinpoint the origin of this instrument, but most of them agree that it was the Greek, Ctesibius who first developed this instrument, and set the methodology of construction. Controversy lies in dating the era of Ctesibius to the second or third century AD. However, a description of Ctesibius’s organ is found in Vitruvius’ book ‘Architectura’ dated the second half of the first century BC.

Ctesibius invented an organ he called Hydraulis. The mechanism was based on the principal of water pumps substituting the air generated from the musician’s lungs as in earlier instruments. Controversy remained until later ages with regard to the function of the water. Some thought that water should be placed inside the pipes; others believed that the water should be heated to control tonality. Strangely, the historian Fetis in the mid
nineteenth century questioned the nomenclature itself arguing that the water has no function. Finally in 1875 the musician-priest Clément Loret defined the function of water as being similar to the weights present in the modern organ, i.e. that water controls air pressure in the pipes.

The manuscript of Alat al-Zamir of the sons of Musa bin Shaker.

Dated the 3rd Century AH / 9th Century AD and found among a collection of manuscripts pertaining to geometry, astronomy and music. It is written in Arabic interspersed with some Persian expressions.

Before embarking upon the study, a complete diagram of the instrument is necessary. Although the original diagram by Banu Musa is lost, from the detailed description in the text we can reconstruct it.

Description of the hydraulic organ of Banu Musa

In reality, the simplicity of the description in the text gives no clue to the extreme complexity of the mechanism. In principle, this description divides the instrument into four distinct parts, composed of multiple elements.

(i) The Main Body of the Apparatus

It is made up of a large basin divided into two compartments, which resembles a pump with two ventricles or chambers. Each compartment consist of the following elements:

1. A lever composed of a rigid bar, mobile around an axis fixed to walls of the basin. (A recipient and a counterweight W, fixed to the two ends of the bar, are in equilibrium when the recipient is empty)

2. A valve located at the bottom of each compartment, connected to recipient V via a chain, which makes the valve open and close automatically.

3. An exhaust pipe MN, welded at point M to the upper surface of the body C of the pump which carries the air in the compressed air bag. Another pipe mm welded at n returns to the interior of the body C to let the air in as it empties.

(ii) The compressing bag:

The two pipes MN and M'N' bend into the interior of a compression bag and each one is provided at its bent end with a valve which closes by own weight in the absence of air pressure. Air enters into it continuously through one of two tubes and is compressed in the bag. This bag is provided with a neck E attached to an elbow T, where the air is compressed, and the pushed back through the flute to produce musical tunes.

(iii) The water distributor:

It consists of a vessel that is always full of water, mounted on top of the main body. In the centre of this basin, which is always sealed hermetically, is found a half ring, pq attached to a vertical axle, k. It rotates in a horizontal plane below the two valves j and j' pushing the two alternatively, to allow the alternate passage of water from the two tubes.

The vertical axle, k rotates through a gear system
composed of a wheel, with teeth geared to a pinion. This gear, \( Z \), is rotated by a horizontal axle attached to a wheel, \( D \), with buckets. The wheel (turbine) is set into motion by a stream of water that comes through the top \( A \), attached to the reservoir \( R \).

(vi) The whistling flute and its melody composing roller:

A sonorous tube pierced with nine holes, provided with a whistle comprises the flute. Eight rods, moving around a horizontal axis, open and close, according to the melody, eight holes of the flute. The ninth is always open. One end of each rod has a valve, which closes the mouth of one hole at the required moment, while the other rests on the composing cylinder.

(vii) The melody composing roller:

On the lateral surface of a large cylinder \( U \), moving around a horizontal axis, are fixed thick pegs (following circles parallel to the rods), whose lengths are proportional to the notes of the melody. This cylinder is rotated by a gear system formed by two discs with teeth, \( O \) and \( H \). The disc \( O \) is rotated by a stream of water that puts in motion a large (turbine) wheel with buckets attached to its axis. Let us call the wheel \( D \). The speed of rotation of this wheel is changed accordingly when the stream of water comes from tap \( A \), only, or from tap \( A \) and the basin balanced by the counter weight \( P \).

Distribution of pegs on the melody composing roller:

After having described with remarkable precision the cylinder and its levers, the sons of Musa bin Shaker turn to the details of the process for the distribution of pegs on the lateral surface of the cylinder in order to produce a well-determined tune.

This method, quite like the method of "graphic recording/registration", is perfect in its precision and brings out the scientific and technical genius of the brothers.

This method makes use of a large cylinder, resembling a pulley; its lateral surface coated with black wax. Eight scales are prepared to be movable around a horizontal axis, whose free ends touch the wax-coated surface of the cylinder. The other ends of these scales are connected to the fingers of the flutist via threads or very fine strings to facilitate the mobility of fingers on the flute.

When the flutist plays a melody, the cylinder is set into a uniform circular motion. The lines of this motion are printed on the wax. It occurs as follows: when the flutist lifts his finger to open a hole and produce a well-determined note, the end of the scale which is connected to the finger rises and the other touches the wax firmly and traces the desired sign. Each finger repeats this action. This done, it is easy to measure the respective lengths of these traces and then to tailor the corresponding pegs to fix them around roller in an order indicated by these very traces.

The "Automaton" of the sons of Musa bin Shaker

The sons of Musa bin Shaker described in their work
the mechanism of a mechanical flautist, which was the first time a fully mechanical device produced music just like an instrument. The device was an automaton that played by changing rhythms and by uncovering the holes of a flute. In the words of sons of Musa bin Shaker, "If you want to build an automatic flautist, all you have to do is insert the assembly of the organ in the stomach of a statue so that only the mouth piece is visible. Then cover the levers with the fingers of the flautist and connect them internally through the flautist's arm to the pegs fixed to the music-composing roller inside the body of the statue".

The air-conduits, leading from the upper surface of the large basin forming the pump of the organ traverse the body of the statue and finish at its mouth. When the apparatus is fed with the required quantity of water, air passes continuously through the pipes, the compressing bag and its accessories, to the mouth of the flautist. The statue plays his fingers on the flute like a real instrumentalist and sings his melody. (figs. 2-3)

**Variations of melody by a helicoidal motion**

The sons of Musa bin Shaker proposed a method by which the transverse motion is simultaneous with cylinder's rotation on its axis, thus producing the desired helicoidal motion.

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**The “Automatic Flautist” of the sons of Musa bin Shakir.**

In this work, the sons of Musa bin Shaker have tried to follow up on the inventions of their predecessors and add their own contribution to them. They were not slavishly following the Greeks — they enriched established knowledge with their own scientific discoveries and innovations. Thus, this work deals with the ingenious and interesting application of technique and knowledge that the Greeks possessed of levers, toothed wheels, wheels with floats and the motive force of water.

In the description of their organ, the sons of Musa bin Shaker seem inspired by the Greeks, particularly by Apollonius of Perga (260 to 190 or 170 BC). In the description and function of the hydraulic organ, much has been borrowed from Apollonius, but the sons of Musa bin Shaker have replaced here the siphons with reservoirs to obtain a continuous flow of water and added a cylinder to the apparatus. Through the use of this cylinder, the sons of Musa bin Shaker made a mechanical organ.

To summarise, we may say that reference to this work, the sons of Musa bin Shaker may be classified among the most renowned scientists of the Islamic world who were truly encyclopaedic.
RESTORATION OF BAIT AL-AQQAD.
THE DANISH INSTITUTE IN DAMASCUS

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY JENS DAMBORG

The Danish Institute in Damascus was established in 1996. Its domicile in Damascus at Bait al-Aqqad was confirmed by a presidential decree signed on October 12th 2000. During the first four years, the institute had no facilities to accommodate its activities. A number of possibilities were investigated in Damascus. The Bait al-Aqqad was found to be the most suitable to serve the purpose. Although the buildings were in ruins, it was quite clear that the Bait al-Aqqad was unique and as such, it is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List of Historical Monuments. The purpose of the Danish Institute is, in accordance with its objectives, to preserve and develop the cultural links, which exist or will be established between Denmark and the Arab and Islamic countries:

* By supporting Danish artists and scholars engaged in artistic or scientific activities in the fields of archaeology, history, social sciences, language, literature, religion, architecture, art music, health and environmental studies,
* By initiating projects within relevant subject areas, if possible in cooperation with other Danish institutions or individuals,
* By co-operating with scientific institutions, artistic establishments and with the relevant authorities in the Arab and Islamic countries,
* By supporting and initiating publication activities related to the above subjects.

The Institute is governed by a board comprising appointed members from various Danish ministries, universities and museum. A director manages the institute.

In the new premises of Bait al-Aqqad the Institute has at its disposal four guest rooms and three small flats, with a total of 11 beds, all rooms are provided with bath rooms with showers and WC. The first and second floor of the East wing contains the director's flat and office. The ground floor contains a common kitchen, library, conference room and reading room. All rooms on the first and second floor are provided with air-conditioning.

The History of Bait al-Aqqad

Before commencement of the restoration works, a team of Danish architects and conservators from the Danish National Museum carried out a detailed building archaeological study, and during the demolishing-and building works further observations were recorded and analysed. In addition, documents in the archives of Damascus have been studied, only to disclose that an Aqqad family has owned the house for the last 150 years, but some members from the Azem family have also occupied the Aqqad house. The inlaid-stone and paste ornaments in the Winter Qa'ā have many similarities with the Azem Palace (1749-52). The written sources are sparse. Much of our present knowledge is therefore based on the building archaeology and architectural studies combined with their context in the Old Damascus. Studies of the history are still in process, we are thus aiming at publishing a book describing the history and restoration of Bait-al-Aqqad later this year.

Basically, Bait al-Aqqad represents a period of about 500 years, but hidden in the walls fragments of a 2,000 years old Roman theatre have been found. It has been known from a text by Flavius Josephus (37-94 AD) that Herod the Great built a theatre along the southern side of Via Recta. The map of the old town clearly shows some curved streets South of Souq al-Souf indicating the perimeter of the theatre. It was, however, not known, exactly where it was located, it was therefore with great surprise that the eastern entrance to the theatre was found concealed behind a clay wall, also a large portion of the rear stage-wall with remains of an arch was found towards North.

After the Mongol destruction of Damascus in 1401, it took a long time for the city to recover. Especially during the period of the Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay (1468-95) a number of impressive buildings were erected, some of them in the immediate neighbourhood of Bait al-Aqqad. There are good reasons to believe that essential parts of the Qa'ā and the Liwan are fragments of a monumental Mamluk building, possibly a palace.

The main features comprise two magnificent buildings, to the North and South of the yard, both dated to about 1470, late Mamluk period. In the traditional Arab house the yard towards South is closed by the Liwan with an open arch facing the yard and used for outdoor activities during the hot season. Towards North is the reception room or the so-called Winter Qa'ā. The Liwan is unique in the Old Town; the total height is 11.5 meters and thus the highest one in a domestic house in the Old Town. The decorated exposed wooden beams and panels in the ceiling are from about 1760. From its ablaj stonework and decorated façade, it is obvious that the original West and East wings were located further backwards. Fragments of 'Kufic' ornaments are visible where the East and West wings are joined to the Liwan. The relatively large fountain is a clear indication, too that the yard has been much larger.

To the East and West of the Liwan two rooms are located. The one towards East is provided with 1763-
decorated wall panels topped by a likewise decorated cornice with about a hundred separate motives of Turkish landscapes, mosques and palaces.

A devastating earthquake in 1759 caused fire and collapse of a large number of buildings, therefore only few mosques and Madrasas exist from before 1759. As far as we know, only in Ba't al-Aqqad we do find Mamluk remains in a domestic house.

The decorated façade of the winter Qa'a is unique too. Similar decorations can be seen on the Minaret of the nearby Mosque al-Qali (1470) and on the façade of Madrasa Sabuniye (1459-64). The interior walls and ceilings are also from about 1760 and typical for that period. An inscription in the wall gives the date 1754-55.

In the Northeast corner, another interesting building is located. The fair-faced façades are typical mid 1700. The alternating courses of black basalt stones can be seen in several other buildings from that period. The interior of the top floor room is, however, typical Turkish rococo from about 1850. The basic colors are blue, therefore, called the Blue Room. The room is lavishly decorated with fantasy palaces, landscapes, and steamboats at Bosphorus.

On the first floor, behind the West wing, two decorated and panelled rooms are located, an inscription in one of the rooms indicates 1766 as the year of construction. Under the rooms are vaults, now belonging to the neighbour. We believe that they formerly belonged to Ba't al-Aqqad and served as stables.

Restoration and Conservation.

The contract for the building works was awarded to a government contractor, a local branch of Military Housing Establishment. The branch is mainly dealing with repair, reconstruction and restoration of government buildings in Damascus.

The restoration was further carried out in collaboration with the Syrian Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums. The conservation works were carried out by a Syrian team of conservators headed by a conservator from the Directorate of Antiquities, and with conservators from the Danish National Museum as consultants. Most of the local conservators were young people without any prior experience; they were trained on site, and did a great job. The works were supervised and coordinated by the author.

All building works, conservation works, compensations to the previous owners and all other expenses related to the establishment of the Danish Institute.
were paid from Danish funds. Through a government agreement to the Institute shall be the user of the house for 50 years. The Syrian Ministry of Culture will remain the owner. The work commenced in 1998 and was completed in October 2000. The total cost of the restoration works including air condition, local conservators but excluding compensation to the former owner; the cost of furniture and professional fees was 25 million SYP, or 550,000 USD.

The principles of restoration may be approached in two ways. One way is to restore and reconstruct exactly in the way that it was originally. However, what is original if the rooms have been refurbished several times? Therefore, one has of course to determine the period to be represented. On the other hand, there may be a need for some modifications in order to meet the requirements for a certain function or for aesthetic reasons.

The restoration of the house has been extremely complicated, not only because of its serious state of decay after having been left vacant for more than 20 years. It also has to be restored for the future use of a modern institute, with all up to date computer facilities, air conditioning and sanitation, which should be incorporated with due respect for the historical building.

Furthermore, since the house during the last 500 years had undergone reconstructions, additions, alterations and modernizations, it often had to be decided which period should prevail in the final works. It was for example decided to clear away the 19th century renovation of the original mid-18th century decorations of the walls in the winter Qa'a. In the Blue room, however, it was decided to reveal and restore the mid 19th century decorated walls and ceiling, although there were substantial ceiling boards were used to replace rotten and missing boards above the beams in the so-called Red Room, which is from the same period and with the same decorated patterns.

The decorated walls in Qa'a had been painted with green oil paint during the French period. There was a time when everything should look European and gone was all the beautiful old decorations. The paint was removed with a mixture made of caustic soda, linseed oil and water, without causing any damage to the decorations. The lower parts of some walls had been plastered in cement mortar, which has a most damaging effect on the stones. All cement plaster was removed by using hammer and chisel. The stones were repaired with mortar comprising lime, sand and coloured tile grout, the latter to provided binding and colour to the mortar. Only to a very limited extent did we restore the inlaid paste in the decorations. The walls are restored to give a general impression of the room and it is clear for the observer, which parts have been restored and which are the original ones.

Throughout the restoration work it was imperative to reuse as much as possible of the original building parts. Although maybe 30% of a door or a window
nailed on top of the beams; layers of dry clay mixed with straw are laid on top and compacted with a stoneroller. During former times, the roofs were finished off with compacted clay. Today a more durable solution is called for, namely a 40 mm cement/sand screed reinforced with chicken wire mesh and finished off with an artificial insulating material. In the rooms proper and on roof terraces 25 mm marble tiles are bedded in pebble stones and mortar. The insulation layer has also been used in the bathroom floors and behind the wall tiles in the showers.

Doors, windows and wall panels are wooden, previously cut in the mountains. Today all such wood is imported. All exposed wood components such as doors, windows and some ceilings are treated with paint based on linseed oil and natural pigments.

Especially the painted decorations of the ceilings were in a very poor condition, with loose flaking layers of foundation layers and paint. The loose flakes have been fixed to the surface by means of different types of glue. Bare surfaces have been applied with several layers of foundation material; sometimes six layers were needed to provide a surface flush with the surroundings. The paints, which have been used, are all water-based, sometimes ready-made paint and sometimes natural pigments mixed with water and natural glue.

By combining Syrian and Danish efforts, skills and knowledge, we succeeded in preserving a tiny part of the history of Damascus. Hidden behind the walls of the old town there are many other interesting buildings in need of restoration. If a suitable function and finance can be found, more historical buildings may be saved in the future.
CERAMIC AND GLASS CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION: PERSPECTIVES FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM AND DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY KIRSTY NORMAN

Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah has employed conservators continuously from 1988 until the present. This is a fact that many people may be unaware of, as our work, like that of curators, is necessarily "behind the scenes".

I came to Dar al-Athar in 1988, having trained as an Archaeological Conservator specialising in the conservation and restoration of Ceramics and Glass, at the British Museum. I and the other conservators come to Kuwait for periods of 4-8 weeks at a time, and thanks entirely to Sheikha Hussah Sabah al-Salem al-Sabah's support, the conservation programme is expanding continually. One of the projects we have been working on has been preparation of objects for the series of catalogues to be put out by the collection, and most recently I have been working on the Ceramic and Glass catalogues. This is an opportunity for me to use both the catalogue material, and objects worked on at the British Museum, to look not only at the techniques used by a conservator, but how they have changed, and are being constantly re-evaluated.

As an archaeological conservator, I have had the pleasure of being able to deal with material from the moment it emerges from the earth. Even at this stage, the conservator may be involved, for instance in lifting fragile material for careful excavation in the lab, or taking samples of associated material like charcoal, for Carbon 14 dating. Once ceramic or glass objects reach a museum, it has been assumed in the past that they would be pretty stable, but with low-fired pottery from the Middle East in particular, this may not be the case. Soluble salts picked up during burial may effloresce out on objects, and in conditions of fluctuating humidity, this repeated crystallisation of the salts can cause surfaces to flake off, and pottery bodies to crumble. Museum stores need to have stable temperatures and humidity, and it is the conservator's job to monitor this. Soluble salts such as sodium chloride may be removed by soaking in water, and this was a common practice when I worked at the British Museum. With the advent of more sophisticated analytical testing however, it may be possible to find evidence in the fabric of pottery of what foods were cooked or stored in an object. Conservators therefore have to take this into account before desalting, or even washing, objects: can the object be kept stable by good storage instead, or might one take a sample before washing for later analysis? Conservators are increasingly being required to question the real need for any intervention work, even the simplest, and examine the alternatives first. I am therefore going to use two objects to show how these questions were answered, and to judge the results.

An Anglo-Saxon glass beaker (1883.12-14.16) in the British Museum provided the opportunity for a radical re-think of the normal restoration process for glass objects. This beaker, from Taplow in Buckinghamshire (UK), had been restored 15 years earlier, by infilling with a coloured methacrylate resin. It was very incomplete, and the problem of infilling such an object had resulted in a rather poor and mishapen restoration. With time, the resin had discoloured and opacified, and the beaker was in a sorry state.

We thought long and hard. A plaster restoration in pottery, for instance, has a chance of lasting for 100 years or more, but a resin fill as commonly used on glass objects will almost certainly discolour long before that. We wanted to find a way of stopping the restoration/re-restoration treadmill. The result was quite dramatic. It was decided that, instead of gap-filling the object at all, we would create a perfect, tailor-made glass mount for it, and the original sherds could then be stuck onto the mount with a clear, reversible adhesive. The object was dismantled, cleaned of old resin, and stuck back together as far as possible. A clay form reproducing the inner profile of

the object was then made for the fragments to rest on. Because the object was extremely irregular, this was built up slowly by hand, consulting the curator where there was any question of the shape of missing areas. From this clay form, a substantial four-part plaster mould was made, and with the help of the Glassblowing Workshop of the Royal College of Art, a clear glass mount was blown using the mould. The beaker was assembled on the mount. This was one of the most pleasing projects I have worked on, because the solution was such an elegant one. The mount has a lustrous clarity impossible to achieve with resin, and from the distance of a few feet, it is hard to see that the clear glass is a mount at all, and not a gap-fill. As long as the mount survives, the object will hardly need any work in the future.

In this particular case, there was no question about removing the unsightly old restoration, and this is frequently also justified on safety grounds, as old adhesives and fills may become unstable. This was the case with LNS 98 C, a restored 9th century AD dish from Iraq, which had been chosen for Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah's travelling exhibition "Islamic Art and Patronage". Lieve Vandenbulcke, the conservator unpacking the objects at one of the venues noticed that part of the rim was unstable, and the object was taken to the Conservation Lab for investigation when the unstable area was cleaned, it became apparent that not only was the object heavily restored (which we knew) but that the restorers had used fragments from other objects to fill missing areas. This is not uncommon: I saw it on Greek 5th century vases and Italian majolica jugs in the British Museum, and we have seen it on other objects in the DAI collection. Using ceramic sherds rather than plaster gives the object a more authentic feel when touched, and sound when tapped.

Below: Blown glass mount being removed from the four-part plaster mould

Left: The beaker restored, with the fragments adhered to the clear glass mount.
But it meant that the dish would have to be dismantled in order to understand what was really going on. In a case like this, the usual examination methods with ultra-violet light (restored areas fluoresce more brightly) and x-raying can only tell one so much. What emerged was astounding. The dish had been made up from an assemblage of sherds from approximately 21 different objects: only about 25% of these belonged to LNS 98 C itself. Not only that, but what had appeared to be three cartouches containing the inscription "Al Mulha" (the"

Many of the sherds had been filed down to fit, and in cases such as this, pairs had even been sandwiched together to produce the correct glaze colours on both sides of the new "sherd".

other way to find out what was going on, and this sort of case can lead to real problems not only aesthetically, but also in dating: if a sample is to be taken for thermoluminescence testing for example, where does one take it from? Will one hit original, or fake? However, there are cases where there are not these justifications. The restoration may be wrong, but it may also be quite clear what is restored, and what is not. It may also be skilled and interesting work in itself. Increasingly museums, including Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah, are deciding to

The remaining original fragments belonging to LNS 98 C. Dismantling had revealed the fact that the "cartouches" around the rim were in fact a running inscription that had been cut into sections.

keep examples of old restorations as part of the history of their collections, but it is still a relatively new idea. Conservators have to be able to respond to these and other changes, and at times, initiate them. This for us is no bad thing: it is one of the many aspects of our work that will keep it endlessly interesting.

Mercifully proved to be a running inscription which had been cut up by the restorers. The whole appearance of the dish was to change, therefore, with re-restoration. This solved our curator Manuel Keene’s long disquiet about this object: he had never seen such a piece with cartouches! The re-restoration, carried out by Lieve Vandenbulcke, used only the fragments from the original. The other fragments were of course kept: they are part of this object’s history too. The dish returned to the travelling exhibition, now accompanied by a storyboard designed by the conservator explaining what has happened, which incidentally has proved one of the most popular exhibits in "Islamic Art and Patronage"!

Should the object have been taken apart at all? In this case there was no

LNS 98 C re-restored. Because the inscription around the rim repeats, it was acceptable to paint in the missing areas, whereas the more free floral design in the centre could not be completed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
A European Policy on Islam

AND

Islam in Europe

ABRIDGED FROM A LECTURE BY INGMAR KARLSSON

One of the most persistent historical myths in Europe is that Charles Martel saved the West from destruction by his victory over the “Saracens” at Poitiers in 732. The Saracens were however, not driven out of Europe but back over the Pyrenees, returning to Southern Spain where a Muslim state then continued to exist for almost 900 years. This Islamic presence on the European continent did not lead to the collapse of Western civilization but, instead, to a unique and fruitful symbiosis between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, and to an unprecedented progress in science, philosophy, culture and art. Thanks to Muslim, Jewish and Christian scholars from Toledo, Seville, Cordoba and Granada, the Greek classics also became known north of the Pyrenees. Hence, Muslim Spain challenges our prejudices and stereotypes. Today it is important to recall this cohabitation – “convivencia” – and to establish that Islamic culture is not that alien from a European point of view as it is sometimes depicted in our prejudices and clichés.

There is a great ignorance about the debt our own culture and civilization owed to the Islamic world and about the role Islamic scholars played in preserving and developing the Hellenistic knowledge that we see as the basis of our Western civilization. Not only did Muslim Spain gather and preserve the intellectual heritage of ancient Greece and Rome, it also interpreted and expanded upon that civilization and made a vital contribution of its own in many fields of human endeavour.

At the close of the Middle Ages, both Islam and Judaism were thus constitutive elements in the formation of Europe. As a result, Islam is simultaneously an alien, an original and – due to increasing immigration – a new element in the Europe of today. There are already more than 15 million immigrants from Muslim countries in the European Union. In Sweden, a country with less than nine million inhabitants, the about 300,000 immigrants with a Muslim background are already the biggest religious community outside the Protestant church. Today Islam is a Swedish religion in the same way as Christianity and Judaism are.

This belies Rudyard Kipling’s famous quotation “East is East and West is West, and never shall the twain meet”. The two cannot only meet, they must meet, and this meeting is already going on, even if there are still forces on both sides who want to make the Mediterranean a clear dividing line.

“We fear what we don’t know” is a saying attributed to Ali ibn Abu Talib, the fourth Caliph. Unfortunately, after more than 1400 years, it still applies in far too many quarters, both in the West and in the Muslim world.

Although, as a result of modern technology and communications, contacts between the Islamic world and Europe have never been so close as they are today, ancient suspicions still live on.

On both sides, ignorance and fear are creating hostile images with no basis in reality. The mosaic patterns of which these images are composed of are often interchangeable. Many Muslims now feel that they are continually forced to defend their own faith and their own culture against Western prejudices that originate in an erroneous picture of Islam.

On the other hand, religious and ethnic minorities in many parts of the Muslim world feel threatened by extremist groups and by politicians who use Islam for their own obscure purposes. This also leads to a growing anxiety in Europe about the expansion of Islam. Estimates of the number of Muslims in Europe in 25 years vary between 25 and 60 million. Irrespective of what figure proves to be correct, the European Union is no longer conceivable without an “Islamic green” component. If the gap between Islam and the West is seen as unbridgeable, we will however, never be able to integrate our growing Muslim communities.

Islam has been increasingly used as an explanation for social, cultural, economic and political conflicts. This applies to relations between Europe and its Muslim neighbours, between North and South and also to divisions within many Muslim states.

As examples we might recall how Willy Claes, the former Secretary-General of NATO, tried to give NATO a new role by depicting what he termed Islamic fundamentalism as a greater threat to Europe than communism. Seven years ago, in an article that appeared in Foreign Affairs, Samuel Huntington, Professor at Harvard, predicted an imminent “clash of civilizations” between the Western world and its Muslim neighbourhood.

The growing gap between North and South, between “the have-nots” and “the haves”, tends to lend weight to this argument. Islam could serve as a rallying cry, focusing the bitterness of the Third World against what is regarded as Western dominance over the economic and political order after the Cold War. As the non-aligned movement becomes less relevant, Islam is increasingly emerging as the strongest political force in the Third World. Perhaps radical Islamic movements will be linked up with other radical groups, and maybe
they will cooperate with them, adopting the motto, “my enemy’s enemy is my friend”.

From a Western perspective, therefore, the security policy and political agendas of the Third World and Islam appear to be coinciding to an increasing extent.

In many parts of the world, Muslims currently feel themselves to be besieged and cornered by the Western world. They have been on the losing side in wars that have been given religious motives in Bosnia, Kosovo, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Chechnya. They encounter Israeli soldiers in the occupied territories and in earlier Lebanon and they are squeezed by Hindu sectarianism in Kashmir.

In addition, Muslims in the United States and Europe feel themselves to be discredited, on probation and under suspicion on the grounds of their religious beliefs; this feeling was confirmed when the first accusations regarding the motives behind the Oklahoma City bombing were more or less automatically targeted at Muslims and Islam.

The many internal conflicts and domestic antagonisms in the Muslim world are adding to the political instability. The deterioration in the political and economic situation gives the Islamic movements increasing political scope.

We might say that the Islamic movements have acquired a “monopoly by default”. In many states, they often constitute the only credible and effective genuine opposition to the regime in power, since all official political opposition is banned and, furthermore, has been physically eliminated in many cases. Even in parts of the Muslim world that are characterized by rapid economic and social development, Islam will prove attractive to those who feel that they have lost their bearings and long for what used to be firm frames of reference.

As a result, if political systems in the Muslim world are not opened up to allow broader ideological competition, the Islamic movements will be the sole heirs when the existing regimes collapse.

In political terms, however, Islam is not a cohesive ideology that is just waiting to be implemented. Instead, it might be characterized as several different visions of how society should be arranged to meet the needs of its citizens in a better manner and of the form that politics should take.

Like nationalism, Islam also lacks a cohesive political agenda that offers concrete solutions for specific problems. Instead, Islamic political ideology is often a question of vague references to Islamic law.

Few Islamic movements currently appear to be capable of modernizing Islamic principles so that they can be applied in today’s society, complying with international norms as regards human rights, minority questions and treatment of women.

Political Islam is not completely static, however, blindly trying to turn the clock back to the age of the Prophet. Political views and approaches to political action cover a broad spectrum, ranging from democratic reformists to radical activists who advocate violence and reactionaries who have no concrete vision of society.

Today, when Islamic tendencies are gaining strength, the Western world has two political alternatives for action.

One is to influence and encourage Muslim states to follow the path of political pluralism and enter into a dialogue with “moderate” Islamic movements. The other is to try to pursue a “containment” policy.

The latter alternative - trying to stop Islamic movements by supporting the regimes which are oppressing them - would undoubtedly prove much more difficult than the struggle against Communism.

Challenging an ideology based on an unsuccessful economic system is one thing, but demonising and fighting a culture and a faith which has been in existence for almost fifteen hundred years is quite a different matter. Furthermore, the regimes, which the Western world would have to support in this case, could not be regarded as natural allies. It is politicians like Saddam Hussein in Iraq, the late Hafez al-Assad in Syria and Muammar Qaddafi in Libya who are the most determined opponents of the Islamic movements. These are rooted in serious and deep-seated political, social and economic problems that will not be solved by repression.

If the West encourages the existing regimes to resist fundamentalist tendencies on the grounds that, in any event, fundamentalism is harmful to our interests, there would be a risk that we would ignore or not be sufficiently sensitive to tendencies and trends which may be genuinely democratic and which would therefore favour our long-term interests. A policy of this nature would also lead to fully justified accusations of a hypocritical attitude and approach to democratic ideals. As already mentioned, the fact that Islam has been excluded from the political process has contributed to polarization and radicalisation. One aspect of our policy should therefore be to encourage the current regimes to bring Islamic movements and groups that are not inclined to violence into this process. This would “social-democratise” them, to use an expression coined by Olivier Roy, encouraging them to move more rapidly in the direction of moderation and a pragmatic policy that aims at dealing with current problems.

As a result, we should endeavour to maintain a dialogue with “moderate” Islamic movements.

The arguments against this approach which are commonly cited - both in the West and in the Muslim world - are that the fundamentalists would exploit it to “kidnap democracy”, applying the motto “one man, one vote, one time”. Moreover, in the fact the parliamentary elections in Algeria in December 1991 demonstrated that a liberalization of the political system involves a risk that strong forces will emerge whose belief in democracy is by no means unambiguous. Despite all the rhetoric about the need for pluralism, political reform and democratic systems, the combination of Islam and democracy seems to be the source of just as much anxiety amongst Western governments as amongst the despots and authoritarian regimes of the Muslim world.

If the Western world made it completely clear, right from the start, that it accepted the results of democratic elections, no matter who came out on top, it would
then be easier to adopt a firm position when democratically-elected Islamic governments abused their power. This would mean that criticism could not be dismissed as an expression of anti-Islamism. The question of Islam's compatibility with democracy could have been tested in Algeria. For far too many people in the Muslim world, the Algerian elections have instead to some extent become a test case for Western attitudes to Islam and democracy. The Western world's reaction to the military coup might be described as passive — or perhaps it was even an expression of tacit approval.

A dialogue would be even more important since the prospects of the marginalization of the religious movements in the short term as a result of economic and social reforms which benefit broad groups in society are not particularly good. Nonetheless, one of the objectives for an Islamic policy must be to contribute to reforms in the economic and social area, and hence European assistance should be employed to promote and exert pressure in favour of economic and social reform.

States such as Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Turkey, which are close to Europe, will play a key role in establishing a stable relationship between Europe and the Muslim world. As a result, high priority must be given to support for social and economic development in these states.

Assistance and a political dialogue can never be of more than marginal importance, however. The kind of economic development, which is required to marginalize the fundamentalist groups, assumes, in its turn that European markets will be opened up. The emphasis must therefore be on "trade not aid", and this applies in particular to the EU Mediterranean policy. A policy of this nature is also essential if it is to be possible to control immigration pressures.

Religious and cultural divisions between Islam and Christianity can be seen from the Far East to the Mediterranean, and in Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans. These areas are potential trouble spots but, at the same time, it should be noted that the most serious rifts are between Islam and the Orthodox churches - there are often close links between local nationalism and Orthodox Christianity.

Furthermore, antagonism between the West and the Muslim world tends to be on functional rather than geographical lines. The problems may however, accumulate and become consolidated to such an extent that Huntington's picture of the clash of civilizations gains credibility. This, in its turn, could be exploited by the extremists on both sides. This makes specific, concrete problems more difficult to solve since they assume an ideological disguise, which blows them up out of all proportion and hides the possibility of achieving a negotiated solution.

We must therefore keep the question of Islam and the concrete issues separate - we must "de-Islamise" them. As a result, the problems that exist should not be presented as a cultural confrontation with Islam. Bilateral differences with Islamic countries must not be described in Islamic terms unless there is direct evidence that Islam is causing the problem. Instead, criticism of the relevant phenomena per se must be presented in precise terms - for example criticism of human rights violations or support for international terrorist activities - matters that we all condemn, irrespective of the religious or cultural background of the perpetrators. If a fundamentalist Islam is presented as the source of all evil, this will strengthen such movements since marginalized and dissatisfied groups will get the impression that the fundamentalists must be on the right track if they can scare and shake the Western world to such an extent.

If Islamic groups come to power, the EU must agree on certain minimum conditions that must be fulfilled if bilateral relations are to be maintained. These conditions should be linked to human rights and the norms for relations between countries. This must be the primary guiding principle, not the domestic Islamic-based legislation, which regimes of this nature might introduce.

Islam is a central factor in several explosive national and ethnic conflicts - in Bosnia, Kosovo, the West Bank and Gaza, Cyprus, Kashmir, Nagorno-Karabakh and Southern Sudan. The way in which the Western world reacts to and intervenes in such conflicts will be reflected in our relationships in a broader sense. Cooperation with Muslim states in peacekeeping operations within and outside the Muslim world may be one element in a confidence-building policy.

Despite the continuous expansion of contacts and growing interdependence, there is also increasing suspicion and misunderstanding between the Muslim world and Europe. Countering the hostile and threatening scenarios produced on both sides will become an increasingly important aspect of a European Islamic policy. As a result, there must also be a greater focus than in the past on confidence-building measures in the cultural area. This focus was one of the aims of the Conference on "Relations between Europe and the Muslim World and on the Position of Muslims in Europe" which was held in Stockholm in June 1995, on the initiative of the Swedish Foreign Minister and which had a follow up in Jordan a year later. These conferences should not just be a one-off event but followed up and given a broader content.

Immigration and integration policies will become increasingly important components in a European Islamic policy. Only a depoliticised and liberal Islam can be integrated into Europe, and an integration of this nature is only possible if it runs parallel with an economic and social integration. If this is successful, the Islamic religious communities may become bridges between Europe and their countries of origin.

Racism, intolerance and a narrow nationalism are currently gaining strength throughout Europe, in reaction to a level of immigration that is insignificant compared with what we are likely to encounter in the future. These problems are already so serious that they can only be solved by joint European endeavours and a consistent European immigration and refugee policy. There are several questions that need to be faced.

To what extent should European countries be opened up to non-European immigration, including the reception of refugees?
What religious, cultural and linguistic elements in the identity of immigrants are to be furthered, tolerated or resisted? Multiculturalism has become a prestigious concept, but it has a broad spectrum of meanings, ranging from the question of whether the genital mutilation of girls should be tolerated or whether girls should be allowed to wear veils in schools, to the issue of home-language training and multicultural curricula.

One essential prerequisite for successful integration is that we build up our knowledge of the diversity of Islam and the varied nature of Muslim immigration. Now that the red peril has disappeared, we are urged to believe that it has been replaced by a green Muslim threat. There is clearly a risk that this image will be exploited to reinforce a feeling of European unity. In view of the fact that there are already more than 15 million immigrants with a Muslim background in the European Union — a number acceding to that of the Scandinavian members — and that immigration from the Muslim world is going to continue, we must rid ourselves of this false negative scenario as soon as possible. A scenario which is often depicted in terms of uniform, fanatical Muslim masses preparing to storm the bastions of the West's welfare system under green banners of Islam, with scimitars in one hand and the Koran in the other.

The Muslims in Europe are not a featureless Third World mob, but consist of people from all classes in society and with varying degrees of religiosity. The majority not only have a relaxed relationship to religion but also are in fact more interested in worldly pleasures than many European puritans. Only a minority of Muslims are organized members of a religious or political community.

As a result, Europe is not currently facing the threat of a fundamentalist fifth column of Muslim immigrants. Instead, Islam's internal splits are clearly reflected in the Diaspora. Muslims in Europe are not only divided by their different languages, cultures and skin colouring, but also by the various branches and sects of Islam which, in addition, are often in bitter competition with each other for Islamic souls. Furthermore, we must also consider political antagonisms, for example between Kurdish and Turkish immigrants. Perhaps the greatest problem currently faced by Muslim immigrants is that their diversity has meant that they often lack a common spokesman or a representative organization that can present their case.

A policy designed to facilitate the integration of Muslim immigrant groups must be based on the following prerequisites.

* There are already large Muslim communities in most West-European states. These communities will not only expand but they will also demand greater political influence as increasing numbers of Muslims become naturalized citizens and become enfranchised in their new home countries.

* Muslims are not as easy to integrate and not as willing to allow themselves to be integrated as previous immigrant groups. An Islamic identity encompasses customs and traditions that deviate from those that are regarded as normal in the societies in which many Muslims are now living. Demands will be made for special rights and for a special status, in addition to the entitlements enjoyed by the native population. In many cases, these demands will not only be difficult to satisfy, but also impossible, and this will lead to tension.

* Undesirable and undemocratic political tendencies in their countries of origin may be channelled into their new home countries by Muslim communities. Both the governments of Muslim states and the various sects and organizations will attempt to exploit the immigrants for their own purposes.

In the light of these factors, what is the best way to integrate Muslim immigrants?

Although Jews and Christians are accepted as "peoples of the book", Islam has always been a dominant and hegemonistic religion in historical terms. In Europe, Muslims must learn to live as a minority and to accept the fundamental pillars of modern European societies, that is to say pluralism and a secular social system characterized by tolerance of people with a different political or religious viewpoint.

The objective must be integration that is as rapid as possible, taking into account and respecting those who, while respecting our values, wish to maintain their own cultural and religious identity. Taking into account special religious features must not however extend to excusing pupils from aspects of their education that do not suit their parents. Muslims must themselves become active in working for young people, so as to give a generation which has grown up in Europe a cultural background of their own while, at the same time, integrating them socially into their new environment. The Muslim communities must cooperate with each other and avoid fighting out their theological disputes openly on European territory.

As a result, a “domestic” leadership will have to emerge, thus permitting the elimination of the label attached to Islam as an alien and dangerous cult. This domestic leadership will not only consist of Muslims born in Europe, but perhaps also of native converts.

Most Muslims consider that they must comply with laws and regulations in their new home countries, but this willingness is undermined in many quarters by external appeals by organizations that prefer a “pure” Islam, without compromise. As a result, we must not tolerate the establishment of parallel political institutions, as is currently the case in Britain where there is a separate Muslim parliament. This is due to an excessively broad interpretation of the concept of multiculturalism or perhaps, as in Sweden, a misguided general spirit of goodwill, sweetness and light, or simply flabbiness.

Furthermore, we must not be too easy-going in dealing with religious and political fanatics who utilize their exiles in Europe for subversive activities directed against their home countries or for internal disputes. Under no circumstances should tolerance be extended to totalitarian views or ideas. While we should demonstrate sympathy for Islam as a religion and ensure that the prerequisites for the exercise of religion are as favourable as possible, we must also demonstrate firmness as regards compliance with our own laws. At the same time, we
must beware of regarding all religious expressions as signs of fundamentalism, or unwillingness to adapt and to become integrated into Swedish society. A process of Islamization amongst immigrants is only dangerous if it comes into conflict with the norms of a pluralistic society and a democratic state. For many immigrants from Muslim countries, religion and a general sense of piety are one way of counteracting the feeling of rootlessness that they experience. Thus, religion may be a by-product of the break with their own cultural background and not necessarily a protest against the new society in which they are living. Hence, greater religiosity is not the same thing as suspicion and intolerance of a secularised European environment but may instead, create an inner tranquillity which promotes tolerance and hence integration.

Individuals who devote themselves to preaching a doctrine of hatred directed against Europe and against Christianity, and who abuse our pluralistic societies, must be dealt with firmly and rejected. Nevertheless, at the same time, we must not regard radical Muslim groups as an expression of an overall campaign to attack the Western World from within. There is no such plan and, furthermore, there is no Muslim leadership capable of drawing up such a campaign. Antagonism and enmity between different sects are often stronger than hatred of the Western World. Apparently, only 6 per cent of the Arabs in France regularly visit a mosque and only a few of the 60-70,000 Muslims in Sweden who practise their religion are fundamentalists. As far as the vast majority are concerned, the cultural and identity-supporting aspects of their religion are the most important factors.

Only a depoliticised and liberal Islam can be integrated into Europe, and such integration is only possible if it is paralleled by economic and social integration. In turn, one prerequisite for a development of this kind is controlled immigration and a common European immigration policy designed to create a liberal and tolerant Islamic community in Europe. If this is to be achieved, those who are willing to become integrated must feel that they are welcome and that they belong here. The feeling of “where do I belong?” is one of the primary breeding grounds for fundamentalists who want to create and exploit a spiritual ghetto under the banner “you have no affinities either here or with your corrupt and morally decadent government in your home countries - you have to fight against both of them”.

If Muslim immigrants are to be able to feel that they belong, it is essential that:

* Islam is recognized and regarded as a “domestic” religion. There is nothing which intrinsically indicates that a Muslim cannot be as good a Swede as a member of the Pentecostal Brethren or an adherent of the Jewish faith, or that mosques cannot be as natural a feature of Swedish cities as churches have always been in Aleppo, Damascus, Mosul or Cairo.

* Education in the Islamic faith is not only improved, but is made mandatory in our schools. The demonic factors needs to be eliminated on a mutual basis. Ignorance breeds prejudice and hatred. As a result, the media must also rectify the stereotyped and oversimplified view of Islam that is currently conveyed.

* Society protects everyone who wants to be integrated into European society, but who is under threat and under pressure not only from local extremists and groups which are hostile to immigrants, but also from Muslim extremist groups.

* Immigrants are given an opportunity to formulate and articulate their views and wishes.

* We pursue development cooperation and foreign policies that are designed to reduce the pressure of immigration and to make immigration more manageable in human and political terms.

If immigrants are integrated in this way, the Islamic community in Europe can become a bridge between Europe and immigrants’ countries of origin. “Euromuslims” will then be able to set an example, and transfer democratic approaches and liberal ideas and reforms to their native countries. This would enable a fruitful triangular relationship to develop between the Islamic communities, their native countries and their new home countries, since many people living in the Diaspora want to maintain close contacts with their origins. On the other hand, if integration fails and immigrants with a Muslim background feel that they are subject to religious tutelage, forced into ghettos and socially marginalized. With continuing high rates of unemployment we will have to reckon with the emergence of underground fundamentalist Qur'anic schools in our immigrant suburbs, and with teachers who urge their pupils to fight with all the means at their disposal against what they regard as an oppressive Swedish society.

Instead of a modern, tolerant “Euromuslim”, we will see a development of a “GhettoIslam”, supported by fundamentalist forces in the Islamic world. Radical mullahs throughout Western Europe are currently attempting to exploit the psychological, cultural and material problems of Muslim immigrants for their own purposes, and politicians such as Jean-Marie Le Pen and Jorg Haider are giving them wind in their sails as a result of the polarization, which they have advocated in France and Austria.

If developments move in this direction, we must reckon that militant Muslim organizations will also endeavour to pursue their struggle with the Western World – which they regard as the incarnation of all-evil in Europe.

In this case, a “holy war” can become a reality in Western Europe sooner than we suppose, not in the form of a military struggle between the West and the Islamic world or the clash of civilizations that Huntington has in mind but as a kind of permanent guerrilla warfare in the ghetto-suburbs of our major cities.

One of the aims of the conference on relations between European and Islamic Cultures an on the position of Muslims in Europe that was held in Stockholm five years ago was to initiate a discussion on how we with common efforts can prevent this scenario from becoming reality. Few tasks can be more important on our common agenda in the years to come.
Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin
(1799 - 1837)

Abridged from a lecture by Alexei Vassiliev

As a nation, Russia remembers and reveres those heroes of its past who have contributed to its national glory. Although they are many and include famous writers, dancers, musicians and even astronauts, it is Russia's national poet, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin, who has won the enduring love and respect of the Russian people. Indeed, he is hailed, not only as a poet, writer and thinker but also known as the father of Russian leaders and the creator of Russian literary language.

Pushkin was born in Moscow on June 6th 1799 into an aristocratic Russian family, which could trace its descent to the 13th century. His descent on his mother's side, however, was much more colourful as he was the grandson of Abraham Petrovich Hamibal, Peter the Great's African slave who was himself, the son of a wealthy Abyssinian prince.

Pushkin's education began very early and from his childhood he spoke, read and wrote perfect French, this being the language of the household. He also had an excellent knowledge of Italian, which his father and uncle both spoke fluently. Although his tutor at home, a learned priest from the Marinsky Institute, taught him Russian, scripture and arithmetic, it was Pushkin's love of reading that was to provide him with the quality of education that only a love of reading and access to an extensive library can provide. In later life, Pushkin realised this and made the profound remark; 'Reading is the best form of learning'. The remark was not lightly made and stands true to this day.

He started to write in French at the age of seven, producing some fables and small comedies of which "L'Escamoteur" is the only survivor and at ten, wrote "La Tolyade" a heroic comic poem about a war between dwarves.

View of the Lyce and the Catherine Palace Church, Tsaritsoe Selo, from a drawing by I. Meyer. 1850's
During his childhood, Pushkin was influenced by many people, among them his grandmother, Mariya Alekseevna Hannibal, who spoke beautiful Russian and his nurse, Anna Rodionovna, from whom he absorbed the rich Russian dialect. Count Buturlin, one of the most educated men of his time and a passionate bibliophile, whose library was considered the best in Moscow, was a close friend of the family. Indeed, his family's circle of friends included Moscow's leading literary intelligentsia and the French tutor of the Buturlin children is said to have remarked: 'Let us hope this child lives and lives; we will see great things from him'.

In 1811, Pushkin was enrolled in the famous Imperial Lycée, Tsarskoe Selo near St. Petersburg. It was there that he was to spend the happiest days of his life. The Imperial Lycée was a school for the elite of Russian society and only those designated for key posts in the government were permitted to sit the entrance examinations. Of the thirty-eight boys chosen, only thirty passed, one of whom was Pushkin. Education and civilisation are not synonymous and the Imperial Lycée assiduously fostered both. It forbade corporal punishment and was the only institute in Russia that offered its students an excellent education while fostering those qualities of mind and spirit that continue to distinguish gentlemen the world over. It encouraged independence of thought, a sense of self-confidence, close comradeship, an incorruptible sense of honour and honesty, respect for one's fellow men and contempt for servility. Most of its graduates retained this spirit throughout their lives. Other pupils at the Lycée included the famous Russian writers, Anton Delvig and Wilhelm Kuchelbecker, the diplomat Prince Alexander Gorechakov, Admiral Fyodor Matyushkin, Count Sylvester Brogho, the talented musician, Nikolai Korsakov and the Decembrist and close friend of Pushkin, Ivan Pushchin.

Alexander Pushkin

Despite the intellectual stimulus of his childhood it is also true, however, that Pushkin spent the best years of his life in an atmosphere of war and the preparations for war that were being mounted against the military might of France. In 1812, as the Russian regiments marched past the Lycée on their way to give battle to the approaching armies of Napoleon, Lycée boys would often catch sight of their relatives among the officers. The ensuing war, which culminating in Napoleon's bitter, winter defeat at the gates of Moscow was to change the course of history. It affected Pushkin deeply and its influence, and the personality of Napoleon, are themes that run continuously through his works.

From 1813 to 1817, Pushkin started to write serious poetry while still at school. During this period he wrote over a hundred poems, one of which "To My Friend, a Poet", dedicated to his friend Anton Delvig, was the first of his poems to be published. Interestingly, the opening cantos of his long poetic fairytale, "Ruslan and Ludmilla", were actually written on the wall of the punishment room at the Lycée and it was at a literary gathering at the Lycée that Pushkin came to the notice of Derzhanin. Zhukovsky, an established poet, was also said to be 'enchanted' by one of his poems, given to him by Pushkin's uncle.

Pushkin graduated in 1817 and, with some of his colleagues, joined the Life Guard Hussars regiment stationed at Tsarskoe Selo. Lack of money, however, later decided him to opt for a career in the Civil Service and his mood during this period is embodied in the humourous verse, "To My Comrades".

Among Pushkin's closest friends were the Turgenev brothers, Alexander and Nicholas, sons of the Director of Moscow University, Nicholas Turgenev was a member of the Union for Welfare and it was from him that Pushkin developed his hatred of serfdom, a theme that threads several of his published poems. It is especially noticeable in the ode, "Liberty". Indeed, "Liberty" took the Turgenev brothers by surprise as they had not expected such clarity of political thought or such historically philosophical depth from the young writer. Although the poem was the embodiment of the hopes of progressively minded Russian society it was not, however, received well by the authorities.

From then on, the Imperial Government took an
interest in Pushkin and his works and such was their disquiet that, by 1820, they had Pushkin transferred from St. Petersburg to Yekaterinoslav. Formally speaking, he was not exiled but transferred to another place of service, yet his movements were nevertheless curtailed. He was barred from visiting Moscow and St. Petersburg between 1820–1826 and was never allowed to experience the freedom and influences of foreign travel.

Initially, Tsar Alexander I had wanted to send him to Siberia because he had flooded Russia with rebellious verses and all the young boys know them by heart. Pushkin’s friends, however, stood up for him and had Siberia replaced by a different destination. Now in exile, Pushkin spent four months travelling in the lands of Caucasia, the Crimea and southern Russia before settling in Kishinev. “Ruslan and Ludmilla” was published at this time but he very soon quarrelled with the publisher, Nikolei Gnedish, who pocketed the lion’s share of the author’s fee.

After Kishinev, Pushkin travelled to Odessa and was enchanted by the sea, the city and the people. He enjoyed the theatre, where the Italian Opera group performed, and in the heady atmosphere of the south, was roused to creativity. Despite being in exile he wrote many marvellous poems such as “The Caucasian Prisoner”, “The Bakhchisarai Fountain”, “To Orlov” and “The Gypsies”. Many of his poems were dedicated to a reassessment of Napoleon’s role in history as Pushkin now saw him not just as a villain and a tyrant, but also as a man who had aroused a longing for freedom in Europe and Russia.

Pushkin’s stay in Odessa was marked by several passionate love affairs. “What need have you of my name?” was dedicated to the elegant Polish beauty, Karolina Sobanska and “Beneath the Blue Sky of her Native Land” to Amelia Riznich, the beautiful Italian wife of a merchant, who sadly died of consumption in 1824. His greatest love, however, was General Vorontsov’s wife, Yelizaveta, a woman of exceptional beauty and bewitching aristocratic elegance. Pushkin, however, made the mistake of writing several insulting epigrams about her husband, such as “Half-Milord, Half-Merchant” and “The Singer David was of Small Stature”, which both denigrated and infuriated Colonel Vorontsov. Unsurprisingly, Pushkin found himself exiled to his parents’ estates of Michaelovsky in Pskov province in 1824.

Pushkin’s meeting with his parents was not entirely happy as they showed him little sympathy or understanding. Kept under surveillance by the secret police his parents and sister left him with his old nurse, Arena, and returned to Moscow. Life at Michaelovsky soon became intolerable to the poet although he produced many poems there.

It seems, too, that he must have been politically active at the time as his name cropped up more than once during the 1826 investigations into the events of December 14th at Senate Square and the later hangings of the Decembrists. Despite his anxieties and apprehensions, however, Pushkin continued to work at an intense pace. In 1826 he was sent for by Tsar Nicolas I who managed to persuade him to adhere to new reforms in exchange for more freedom of expression. On the same day, Pushkin finished his great work “The Prophet”.

In February 1831, Pushkin married the beautiful Natalya Goncharova, a celebration marked by the completion of his noble work, “Eugene Onegin”. This period was one of great creativity, which saw the production of “Tales of Bekin”, “A Small House in Cologne” and some thirteen short stories and articles.

Some months later, the newly married couple moved to St. Petersburg where Pushkin began a new era in his life and wrote “Copper Equestrian”, “The Queen of Spades”, “Dubrovsky” and “The Captain’s Daughter”. His life, however, had its problems as relations with his family continued to be strained and the Imperial Court ignored his genius, treated him with suspicion and intrigued against him.

A more serious state of affairs arose in 1836 when Lieutenant Georges d’Anthes began a deliberate and ostentatious courtship of his wife, Natalya, which soon attracted the attention of polite society. On November 4th of that year, Pushkin challenged him to a duel, which was only avoided by the intervention of friends and the marriage of d’Anthes to Yekaterina Goncharova.

Despite his marriage, however, d’Anthes continued his bold courtship of Natalya and, on January 25 1837, Pushkin wrote to d’Anthes father saying, “I’m forced to state, baron, that your own role was not entirely proper... After his despicable behaviour, I refuse to allow your son to talk to my wife... he is simply a coward and a scoundrel.”

On January 27th, the duel took place. D’Anthes was, indeed, a coward and a scoundrel. He did not
comply with the conditions of the duel that had been sent out by letter the previous day and turned and fired at Pushkin before reaching the required twenty paces. Pushkin died of his wounds saying, "Farewell, farewell". He was only thirty-seven years old.

Over ten thousand people came to pay their last respects to the poet and, as is so often the case, glorified his works after his death. Time, however, has not diminished them. The real miracle is that the tenor and truths of his poems are as real today as they were then. Pushkin, indeed, remains the eternal contemporary of modern Russia.

Pushkin’s works have been translated into more than a hundred languages. Of all writing, poetry is the most difficult to translate as it not only touches the heart but runs to the melody of its first language. Yet Pushkin’s poetry demands even more than that, for to learn to love Pushkin, one must know and love Russia and the Russians.

Pushkin’s poems are a part of every Russian in a way that the West cannot even begin to understand as there is no comparison to this phenomenon in western literature. Pushkin was a Russian and as such understood the people, their nature and their country. Russians relate to him and feel close to him. They regard him in the light of a best friend or a blood relative and, in addition, consider him a demi-God. Everyone is familiar with Pushkin and he speaks in words that are as true today as they were when they were written in the mid-19th century. During World War II, Soviet soldiers went to war with Pushkin’s words on their lips, a part of their present and an element, too, of their future.

Alexander Fardovsky, a great poet of the Soviet era, remarked that it was only after the end of the Patriotic War that he truly understood Pushkin.

What Pushkin wrote in 1830 could be spoken equally truthfully to Russian rulers of today. "You must understand indeed that Russia never had anything in common with the rest of Europe". He opposed the idea that all nations are doomed to follow the path of the west, a belief that is increasingly common in the thoughts of Arabs and Moslems today.

There is a material collision than runs through all of Pushkin’s works that reminds us of his piety. Its essence consists in contrasting Pushkin’s heroes as they are and act with what they could be and were supposed to be. This collision forms the atmosphere and milieu of Pushkin’s works especially those of his later, mature period. His poetry conveys that ‘evil’ in the world is a force that tries to transform the human, a divine and spiritual being, into an economic one. To replace the divine in him so that he finally becomes an animal. According to Pushkin, to subdue creative aspirations for the consumption of carnality and to substitute egoistic aspirations for educational culture reflects a collision of the great and the mean. The spiritual and the material is often resolved in Pushkin’s creations by its reflection in the Russian spirit and the Russian national character. Indeed, Pushkin’s ‘Russian-ness’ permeates all his writing and he has always focused vividly on the Russian spirit, its history and its suffering.

Global responsiveness and the capacity for artistic identification are inherent in Pushkin both as a political genius and as a Russian poet. To a great degree this responsiveness is directed at a much broader entity than other peoples and is used to connect the poet to the whole universe, the world of angels and demons. This artistic identification also connects the poet to the whole world of nature; the stars at night, the falling snow, the moods of the sea and the roar of avalanches — in short with the whole outer world. In a few words, Pushkin could paint vivid pictures in the mind that could move the reader to laughter or tears but always lifted the spirit to the stars.

The brilliant quality of Pushkin’s intelligence, however, not only ranked him among the world’s best poets but also among the greatest of Russian sages. Reading his letters, diaries and articles one sees a clear wisdom, which surprised some of his contemporaries who had not realised that such a penetrating, sober and fresh mind ran alongside his poetic consciousness. Nikolai Gogol, the author of ‘Dead Souls’ wrote of Russia’s National Poet that, “none of our poets is above him or can be described as more national than him. This right belongs to him. He combines the world’s strength and flexibility of our language like a lexicon. He has expanded its limits more than anybody else. Pushkin is an extraordinary phenomenon. He is maybe the only manifestation of the Russian spirit. He is a Russian man in his development and demonstrates what Russia can become in perhaps two hundred years. He reflects the Russian nature, the Russian soul, the Russian language and the Russian character with the purity of the convex surface of an optic glass reflecting the landscape”.

Pushkin thus reveals the very spirit and character of the Russian people. Over the years, he paid glorious tribute in verse to all the important historical events in Russian history and marked them with his own greatness of spirit. His belief in the Russian character shines through every line of his poetry and no one can doubt the strength and steadfastness of such a nation or of such a people.