The journal *Hadeeth ad-Dar* of Dar al-Athar al-Islamyyah (DAI) is intended to share the wealth and beauty of Islamic culture contained within the extensive and comprehensive al-Sabah Collection of Islamic art and the variety of scholarly and artistic activities associated with the collection.

The collection itself, ranging from early Islam to the 18th century, is organised 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 Bahnasa, Upper Egypt that date to the Fatimid period. We are also involved in the Raya excavation at al-Tur, in the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. 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, history, archeology and architecture.
The Indian Ocean in Medieval Maps and Stories

Marina A. Tolmacheva
Presented in English
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Too often bodies of water – rivers, great lakes, seas and oceans – are thought to divide and separate peoples and cultures. By contrast, the Indian Ocean helped connect the Arab world to the lands east and south since Antiquity. Arab seafarers had preceded not only the Portuguese and the Ottomans in sailing between Arabia, India, and Africa, but long before them also the Persians and the Greeks. For many centuries, Arab geographers, travelers, and navigators provided the most current, detailed, and fascinating information about the vast “Indian Sea” (Bahr al-Hind). Medieval visitors from the West like Marco Polo, Nicolo Conti or Pedro de Covilhaú and from the East like the Chinese explorers of Zheng Ho’s fleets could hear sailors’ stories about the countries rimming the ocean, their coastlines and distant ports. Significant amounts of hard data and narratives were contained in cosmographies, encyclopedias, and in books of the travel (Rihla) and Mirabilia (‘Adja’ib) genres for the readers and scholars of the Dar al-Islam and countries beyond.

Yet for over a thousand years the representation of the Indian Ocean in maps remained sketchy, imprecise, incorrect or downright misleading. More than with any other part of the Old World, medieval maps present us with puzzling questions of Indian Ocean cartography and the history of geographical knowledge. Remaining accessible, yet mysterious, the Indian Ocean also served as the setting of numerous legends and stories full of wonder and awe. Modern science has provided answers to some questions, while some puzzles are still awaiting solution.

The foundations of modern geography were developed in Classical Antiquity. We owe the very concept of ocean to ancient Greeks. However, in the earlier poems of Homer the Ocean (Okeanos) is a river that flows around the world which is shaped as a convex disk. In the centre of the disk is the Mediterranean Sea. By about 500 B.C.E. the Greeks had developed the concept of continent and the beginnings of cartography. They divided the spherical earth into hemispheres; each hemisphere was further subdivided into two parts, the inhabited earth north of the equator and the uninhabited southern land of the Antipodes. Early on, the two landmasses were thought to be divided along the Equator by the expanse of the Ocean. The southern part was Terra Incognita “Unknown Land;” it was acknowledged to be unexplored and was rarely shown. However, it had a tenacious cartographic history, occasionally reappearing on medieval and early modern European maps in the lower southern portion.

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of the Indian Ocean (including the mid-15th century Catalan world map) until the eventual discovery of Australia and the Antarctic.

The earliest Greek maps show the earth in an oval shape, surrounded by vast expanses of the Ocean Sea with four named inland seas whose contours show a significant degree of precision. Usually, these maps show only the Okumene, the Inhabited Quarter of the globe, oriented to the north. This concept was later inherited by the Muslim scholars as al-Ma’sura, and the Islamic world maps show only the inhabited parts of the eastern hemisphere (though oriented not to the north, but east or south). Arabic cartographers also adopted the concept of the Ocean (Uqaynus), or the Surrounding Sea (al-Bahr al-Muhit), of which the Indian Ocean was a part well known by the Arabs. In fact, we owe the name “Indian Ocean” to the Arab practice of calling seas by names of land destinations for Arab seafarers. Thus did the equatorial waters of the Ocean that separated Arabia from India gain the name of the Indian Sea (Bahr al-Hind) in Arabic and Islamic cartography.

The Indian Ocean is a unique geographical and ecological system dominated by monsoon weather regimes. In the age of the sail, monsoons regulated the navigation and regional commerce. The movement of the air masses between the enormous Asian landmass and the warm water expanse of the Indian Ocean is especially apparent in the western part of the ocean between India, Arabia, and East Africa. The northeast monsoon brings the relatively cool, dry winds from October to March, while the southwest monsoon (April through summer) brings heavy rainfall and squalls. The resulting pattern of sailing – from India and Arabia south-bound with the northeast monsoon in the fall of the year with return voyages after the spring equinox was discovered over two thousand years ago and first recorded in the Greek commercial itinerary of the first century C.E., The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.

Ancient commercial navigation between the wider ocean and its western gulf is well attested. Ancient mariners and merchants met in the markets and emporia dotting the coasts lines of Yemen, Somalia, East Africa, India, and Ceylon (today Sri Lanka, the Ancient Taprobane). By 100 B.C.E., the Greeks were using nautical charts and periploi - prototypes of modern pilot books. The Greek word periplous means a sea-route guide, a set of coastal sailing directions. In periploi, distances between points of destination were augmented by descriptions of the coastal features such as bays and harbors, navigation landmarks and lighthouses, places where fresh water was available and where repairs to a vessel could be made. The anonymous author of the Periplus writes about sailing between Gujarat, Arabia and the Horn of Africa:

“They make the voyage to this place Barygaza (modern Broach – M.T.) in a favorable season who set out from Egypt about the month of July, that is Epiphi. This whole voyage as above described, from Cana and Eudaemon Arabia, they used to make in small vessels, sailing close around the shores of the gulf; and Hippalus was the pilot who by observing the location of the ports and the conditions of the sea, first discovered how to lay his course straight across the ocean. For at the same time when with us the Etesian winds are blowing, on the shores of India the wind sets in from the ocean, and this southwest wind is called Hippalus, from the name of him who first discovered the passage across.”


Since ancient times, the shape and expanse of the Indian Ocean was a matter of speculation closely linked to the shape and extent of the African continent. The best seafarers of antiquity were Phoenicians who are credited with development of marine charts. The Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 B.C.E.) recorded two accounts of circumnavigation of Africa by Phoenicians. The massive body of water east of Africa was named in Greek the Erythraean Sea, that is “Red Sea,” and later called in Latin Mare Rubrum. The modern Red Sea received its name in the high Middle Ages; the Ancients called it Sinus Arabicus, the Arabian Gulf. Today’s Arabian Gulf was their Sinus Persicus, the Persian
Gulf. Navigation between India and the Persian Gulf was sufficiently developed in the time of Alexander the Great that one of his generals, Nearchus (c. 360-300 B.C.E.), had a fleet built on the Indus and sailed west to the Euphrates with the returning Greek army (this voyage is recorded in Arrian's *Indica*).

The crowning achievement of Greek cartography was the *Geography* of Claudius Ptolemy (ca. 85-165 C.E.). In its eight books accompanied by 26 maps, the great astronomer attempted a world geography with degree coordinates of longitude and latitude for all the known places in the eastern hemisphere. The Indian Ocean is said to be the largest sea, while the Atlantic Ocean is not even mentioned by name.

However, Ptolemy (like Aristotle and unlike Herodotus) did not seem to believe that Africa could be circumnavigated or that the Indian Ocean was connected to the world Ocean that surrounded the landmass of the Inhabited Quarter of the Earth. Instead, south of the equator, Africa extended east toward Asia, forming the southern coast of the Indian Ocean. The Ethiopian Sea, the earlier Erythrean Sea of the *Periplus* became a landlocked sea. This unknown southern coast has no name or locations, and all the coastal African place names gathered from the earlier sources are marked on what is in fact the east coast of Africa and the western coast of the ocean. Many of the names used by Ptolemy are similar or identical to those in the *Periplus*, including Azania, the eastern coast of today's Somalia and lands further south. The southernmost place name is Rhapta, located at 7° 30' S., although the total southward span of the coast before it turns east is approximately to the latitude of 14° S. Navigation in these parts is fraught with danger, as described in the *Periplus*:

"Beyond Opone (Hafun in Somalia – M.T.), the shore trending more toward the south, first there are the small and great bluffs of Azania; this coast is destitute of harbors, but there are places where ships can lie at anchor, the shore being abrupt; and this course is of six days, the direction being south-west. Then come the small and great beach for another six days' course and after that in order, the Courses of Azania... In this place there are sewed boats, and canoes hollowed from single logs, which they use for fishing and catching tortoises...

Two days' sail beyond, there lies the very last market-town of the continent of Azania, which is called Rhapta; which has its name from the sewed boats (rhapton ploiarion) already mentioned; in which there is ivory in great quantity, and tortoise-shell. Along this coast live men of piratical habits, very great in stature, and under separate chiefs for each place. The Mapharitic chief governs it under some ancient right that subjects it to the sovereignty of the state that is become first in Arabia. And the people of Muza (Mokha in Yemen – M.T.) now hold it under his authority, and send thither many large ships; using Arab captains and agents, who are familiar with the natives and intermarry with them, and who know the whole coast and understand the language."


With the rise of Christianity, the teachings of ancient Greeks were rejected or forgotten, and the new concepts of the Earth and Universe relied heavily on literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Cartography underwent considerable changes, too. World maps were oriented to the east, where Paradise was. In the so-called T-O diagram of the inhabited world the Mediterranean Sea was sometimes named, but the Indian Ocean disappeared into a gulf (sinus) of the Ocean Sea (Mare Oceanum) represented by the T-bar.

Some Christian authors took literally the Biblical references to the "four corners of the
earth," as in the 9th-century map of Beatus, often reproduced in medieval European manuscripts. Beatus’s map shows the uninhabited southern land beyond the "Red Sea," Mare Rubrum. This is part of the Terra Incognita of the Ancients.

The earliest extant Christian world maps come from the 6th century Christian Topography, a work written in Greek by an Egyptian monk in Sinai. A merchant in his earlier days, the author is known as Cosmas Indicopleustes, "Cosmas the India-voyager." Cosmas believed that the earth was flat and rectangular. The four seas shown are gulfs or inlets of the Ocean. Four rivers flow out of Eden in the far east: the Nile, Tigris, Euphrates, and Geon (Gehon). The latter name is identified usually with the Ganges, though sometimes with the Indus. Linguistically, it is very close to the name Djayyun (جیحن) used in Islamic geography for the Amu Darya in Central Asia.

Cosmas’s world map illustrates the major puzzle of medieval cartography of the Indian Ocean. He had visited India; he had sailed the Red Sea and knew its African and Arabian coasts, he visited Ceylon and left us detailed descriptions of commerce between ports and countries, including references to the silk trade of China. Yet his maps show no evidence of his geographical knowledge, and it is easier to follow his narrative by consulting Ptolemy’s map or any of the early medieval European authors.

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Early Arabic geographers used the Arabian tradition, the Persian and Indian sources in translation, and the works and maps of Greek geographers, including Ptolemy. Early Islamic maps are often oriented to the east; world maps are sometimes centered on Iran. Later maps are usually oriented to the south, and world maps may be centered on Mecca. Regional maps largely focus on Muslim countries. This cartographic tradition is classified as the school of the Atlas of Islam.

In the non-Ptolemaic Arab cartography, the Ocean surrounded the world, and that made the Indian and Atlantic oceans parts of the same body of water. Scholars like the historian al-Mas’udi (10th century C.E.) and Abu ’l-Raihan al-Biruni, (early to mid-11th century C.E.) believed that the two oceans communicated despite the difficulties of navigation. Al-Biruni wrote in Qanun al-mas’udi fi hay’at wa’l-’unum:

"To the south of the Inhabited Quarter is the Great Sea. It connects with the eastern Surrounding ocean (al-Bahr al-Muhit). . . . Those who sail in the western part of this Great Sea usually travel as far as Sofala of the Zanj. . . . They do not sail beyond it. . . The reason is that. . . the sea is compressed between the mountains and narrows and with high and low tides the current flows this way and that, so that ships collide and crash, and navigation is impossible. However, the way to the Ocean Sea either through these narrows or around the southern part of the continent is not impossible. I have found evidence that these two seas do connect, though we have not seen this with our own eyes."

وعم هذا فليس معناه عن الانتصال ببحر
وقفاً من تلك المضايق ومن جهة الجنوب
وإراة تلك الجبال فقد وجدت علامات اتصالهما
وإن لم نشاهد

[al-Biruni, Al-Qanun fi ’l-Mas’udi, ed. M. Nizam u ’d-Din, Hyderabad, 1954-55, p. 711].

Difficulties of navigation and dangers of maritime travel were a constant concern of sea voyagers. Many of the stories in The Marvels of India (’Adidab al-Hindi) by Buzurg ibn Shahriyar al-Ramhurmi (900-953) deal with wonderful, and sometimes miraculous, adventures as told by the captains and merchants who sailed the western Indian Ocean. A story related by Captain Ismail Jawhah about slave trading in east Africa has him leaving Oman on his ship for Qanbaluh in the year 922. Strong winds drove the ship as far as south as Sofala of the Zanj, a place recognized to lie beyond the boundaries of Islam and thought to be populated by cannibals. Some other stories in this book contain fantastic motifs familiar from the
Arabian Nights, especially the stories of Sinbad the Sailor. Such stories were geographically widespread and persisted over time; a few have been found in medieval Chinese sources, and some were relayed to Marco Polo who brought them to Europe.

On a more realistic note, the historian al-Mas'udi (d. 345-6/965), who had sailed along the East African coast, writes:

"Ship owners from Oman cross this sea to reach the island of Qanbalu, located in the Sea of Zanj. That city has a mixed population of Muslims and non-believers from the Zanj. Omani ship owners whom we mentioned asserted that this gulf, known as the Gulf of Barbara and marked [on maps] as the Sea of Barbara and the land of Kafuna, is even longer than we said earlier and its waves are gigantic and "blind," meaning that they go up and down, like tall mountains, without flat expanses in-between... They say this verse in the rajaz metre:

Barbara and Khafuna, your wave is mad!
Khafuna and Barbara, their wave is as you see."


Elsewhere, al-Mas'udi mentions seeing Ptolemy's Geography, and some passages in his Murudj al-Dhabab seem to describe a Ptolemaic map. Note in particular the use above of such toponyms as the Gulf of Barbara (الخليج البوربي), that is Sinus Barbaricus, later the medieval Italian "Golfo Barbarico." Al-Mas'udi also cites the more idiomatic Arabic name, the Sea of Barbara (بحر بوربي), vocalized to correctly transmit the ancient name "Opone."

Parts of Ptolemy's Geography were translated into Arabic as early as the 9th century, but it was not until the 12th century that the greatest Arab cartographer al-Idrisi firmly incorporated the Ptolemaic cartographic concept in his world map. In that map, created in Sicily for the Norman ruler Roger II, al-Idrisi has the coast of Africa extend east just south of the Equator. However, unlike Ptolemy, his Indian Ocean (Bahr al-Hind) is not fully enclosed and connects in the east with the Surrounding Ocean (al-Bahr al-Muhit). Al-Idrisi set the pattern for description of Africa and the Indian Ocean by the scholars from the western Muslim lands like Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi and the cosmographers of the 14th and 15th centuries. For example, the round world map in Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddima, written fully 250 years later, is based on that of al-Idrisi.

The popular destinations on the East African coast were Mogadishu, Malindi, Mombasa (now in Kenya), Kilwa and the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba (now in Tanzania), and Sofala, now in Mozambique, a major center of gold trade. Several of these locations were visited by both al-Mas'udi and Ibn Battuta (between 1325 and 1354). Parts of the Indian coast were visited and described by both Ibn Battuta and, half a century earlier, Marco Polo (traveled 1271-95).

Marco Polo is perhaps the first European author since classical times to mention the monsoon. He writes: "I must tell you that it takes a full year to complete the voyage, setting out in winter and returning in summer. For only two winds blow in these seas, one that wafts them out and one that brings them back; and the former blows in winter, the latter in summer." There are other common themes in their narratives, whether fantasy and fact. In India, Marco Polo described the pirate danger on the Malabar coast:

"You must know that from this kingdom of Melibar, and another near it called Gozurat, there go forth every year more than a hundred corsair vessels on cruise... Their method is to join in fleets of 20 or 30 of these pirate vessels together, and then they form what they call a sea cordon, that is, they drop off till there is an interval
of 5 or 6 miles between ship and ship, so that they cover something like a hundred miles of sea, and no merchant ship can escape them. For when any one corsair sights a vessel a signal is made by fire or smoke, and then the whole of them make for this, and seize the merchants and plunder them. After they have plundered them they let them go, saying: “Go along with you and get more gain, and that mayhap will fall to us also.” But now the merchants are aware of this, and go so well manned and armed, and with such great ships, that they don’t fear the corsairs. Still mishaps do befall them at times.”

A half century later, on a voyage from Ceylon, Ibn Battuta experienced exactly such a “mishap” while traveling from Quilon north to Honavar. Twelve armed ships attacked and overpowered Ibn Battuta’s vessel. “They took the jewels and rubies which the King of Ceylon had given me and robbed me of my clothes and provisions with which the pious men and saints had gifted me. They left me no cover for my body except my trousers and took the possessions of all the others and left us off on the shore.”

فأخذوا جميع ما عندي ما كتب أخباره للشمال، وأخذوا الأخواص والأهواز التي أعطانيها ملك سيلان وأخذوا ثيابي والزرادات التي كانت عندي ما أعطيته الصاحبين والأولاء ولم يتركوا لي سائرًا خلا السراويل وأخذوا ما كان جميع الناس وأنزلوا بالساحل.


Then as now, Sri Lanka was famous for precious stones, in particular rubies. Marco Polo says that the king owned a ruby the length of a man’s palm and the thickness of his arm, flawless “and glowing like red fire.” Marco Polo also says Kublai Khan had sent an embassy to purchase it, but the king would not part with it.

This royal ruby is also mentioned in the seventh voyage of Sinbad.

Another Sinbad motif recurs in the hearsay account of Madagascar relayed by Marco Polo. Beyond Madagascar, he says, no one sails because of the strong southern current. This echo of the story of Sofalat al-Zanj (across the Mozambique channel on the African mainland), is reinforced by the confirmation that ships come there from the north for ivory and ambergris, as they did in Antiquity.

According to Marco Polo, Madagascar is also the home of the griffon, and some men had actually seen it. They described it as a huge bird and not, as Europeans then believed, a blend of bird and lion: “They report that they are so huge and bulky that one of them can pounce on an elephant and carry it up to a great height in the air. Then it lets it go, so that the elephant drops to earth and is smashed to pulp, whereupon the griffon bird perches on the carcass and feeds at ease.” Polo says that the islanders call this enormous bird, with a wingspan of 16 cubits, the Roc (Arabic رُكَح, familiar from the fifth voyage of Sinbad). Roc’s feathers were as big as palm leaves. The wind was the rush of its wings and its flight was lightning. The egg of the roc is said to be over 50 cubits in circumference.

Scholars of folklore have pointed out similarities between the Roc (Rukh) and other mythical birds – Garuda in India and Simurgh in Iran. The story of Garuda carrying off an elephant appears in the two great ancient Sanskrit epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. In the 12th century, Benjamin of Tudela speaks of shipwrecked sailors carried off the ocean islands by griffins, very much in the way Sinbad describes his own rescue on one of his voyages. A Chinese source of 1178 tells of a large island off Africa with birds large enough to use their quills as water containers, and Abu Hamid al-Andalusi (1080-1160 C.E.), saw such a quill brought to Spain by a merchant from the China seas.

For a long time, these stories were interpreted as exaggerated references to the African ostrich. It is now believed that the myth originated from accounts of an extinct bird or its eggs, identified as the enormous Malagasy subfossil, the Aepyornis, or Elephant bird. This flightless bird...
was up to three meters tall and possibly became extinct in the middle of the second millennium. Its modern name “Elephant bird” may have been inspired by its size or by the legend retold by Marco Polo and others. Its eggs, live or fossilized, were known as early as 1420, when the Portuguese sailors attempting to reach the Cape of Good Hope reportedly found eggs of the “roc.” This is noted in a caption on the Fra Mauro map of the world (1459), which says that the roc “carries away an elephant or any other great animal.” In 1599, Tomasso Aldrovandini included a woodcut depiction of a roc with an elephant in its talons in his Ornithologia. In 1658, Etienne de Flacourt, director of the French East India Company and governor of Madagascar, wrote of the reported sightings of the Elephant bird, real or at least remembered in folkloric memory under its local name Vouran Patra (vorompatra).

Travelers like Marco Polo or Ibn Battuta were neither geographers nor cartographers. Before the Portuguese, true exploration of the Indian ocean was undertaken half a century after Ibn Battuta by the Chinese. Between 1405 and 1433, seven voyages into the Indian ocean were undertaken under the direction of the Ming courtier Zheng-Ho. The first three voyages went through the Malacca strait as far as Calicut. The fourth, fifth, and sixth voyages (1413-1422) reached East Africa and Arabia.

Zheng Ho’s funeral stele in Fujian province speaks of traversing more than 100,000 li (50,000 km) of water, of the ocean waves huge like mountains rising in the sky and of “barbarian regions” far away. At least two maps have been published with claims to be the earliest extant maps showing parts of Africa. However, both the Da Ming Hun Yi Tu “The amalgamated Map of the Great Ming empire” (1389) and the Sino-Korean Kangnido map (1402), if authentic, predate Zheng-Ho and thus cannot represent the results of his voyages. A hemispheric map of the world, claiming to be a 1763 copy of a 1418 map, has been shown to date to the Manchu period. The medieval Indian and Korean round world maps are centered on Mt. Meru in Central Asia and oriented to the east (Chinese maps are oriented to the south); they are schematic and weak in the representation of the western parts of the eastern hemisphere. Moreover, these maps did not circulate to the west, either in Asia or in Europe, and thus did not contribute to the emergence of modern cartography. By contrast, Ptolemy’s Geography and accompanying maps, created in Hellenistic Egypt, were translated from the Greek into Latin at the dawn of the Renaissance and dominated the European cartography until the mid-fifteenth century.

The transmission of knowledge between Europe and the Arab world historically included both academic and practical learning. From the late eleventh century C.E. the flow of information was largely directed westward and greatly enriched the cultural and academic life of the western Mediterranean. This included the development of the new European world maps and sailing charts that eventually helped lead the Portuguese around Africa into the Indian ocean. By the mid-15 century, long before Bartolomeu Dias reached the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, some maps were already showing Africa as a continent surrounded by water from the south, as on a 1447 update of Ptolemy with modifications based on sailing charts.

The culmination of medieval European cartography was the 1459 map by Fra Mauro, commissioned by King Afonso V of Portugal. This map is a synthesis of Ptolemy’s Geography, portolan charts, and data from the narratives of Marco Polo and other European travelers. On the map of Fra Mauro, the Indian Ocean extends south, overcoming the tendency to protrude eastward from the Horn of Africa. In 1497, the Portuguese flotilla of Vasco da Gama completed the circumnavigation of Africa and reached India. Very soon, the Indian Ocean became a central feature of Portuguese, and then Dutch, cartography. The cartographic image of the Indian Ocean was rapidly transformed, becoming both different and more complete. Barely two decades after Vasco da Gama’s first voyage to India, the Indian ocean map of the so-called Miller Atlas, produced by the Portuguese king’s official cartographer Lopo Homen in 1519, showed the recognizably modern coastlines dense with names of ports and cities alternating in black and red ink. From now on, even while the less explored interior was still filled with entertaining pictures of animals and princes, the coastal outlines represented much more fact than fiction.
"Collecting for Pleasure and Prestige - The Kunstkammer-Collections of the Habsburgs"

Lecture By Agnes Stillfried
Presented in English
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A Kunst und Wunderkammer – literally a collection of art and marvels or curiosities – was the pride and joy of every European princely collector during the Renaissance and the Baroque periods, that is the 16th and 17th century. They competed for choice objects and were sometimes not above spiriting away artworks from a rival’s collection or agent. Such objects were also highly appreciated diplomatic gifts. A Kunstkammer was assembled for the private enjoyment of its princely owner and to impress and astound his friends and selected guests. Sadly, many of these collections have not survived or are only known to us from inventories and descriptions.

This lecture looked at what are perhaps the greatest Kunstkammer-collections to survive, those assembled by members of the Imperial House of Habsburg. Their collections are now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna in Austria. The most avid Habsburg Kunstkammer-collectors were Archduke Ferdinand of the Tyrol (1529-95), the younger son of the Emperor Ferdinand I and regent of Bohemia and later of the Tyrol, and his nephew, the Emperor Rudolf II (1552-1612), one of the greatest patrons of art ever to sit on a throne. Rudolf amassed a fabulous collection in his palace in Prague and called acclaimed artists, scholars and scientists to his court, which formed the cultural centre of Europe around 1600.

It is important to realize that most of the objects included in a Kunstkammer were not intended for practical use, but were magnificent showpieces to document a prince's taste, wealth and erudition. They were often made expressly for display in a Kunstkammer. A Kunstkammer was regarded as a mirror of the world, a microcosm ruled by the prince, which was a reflection of the macrocosm ruled by God.

These collections represented the wealth of contemporary knowledge. The 16th century saw a vast increase in knowledge, it was, after all, the age of discoveries that saw Europeans establish new trade routes to far-flung corners of the world: America had been discovered in 1492, Magellan had circumnavigated the globe in 1522, Copernicus had just discovered the heliocentric universe, and new heavenly bodies were being discovered and studied with the help of modern telescopes.

The discovery of new continents brought many exotic and rare objects to Europe – artworks, natural objects, fauna, and flora. To own these objects documented both a prince's interest in science as well as his wealth and power. For example, when the Spanish conquistador, Hernando Cortez, received some

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fabulous exotic objects from Montezuma, the last Emperor of Mexico, in 1519 he sent them home to the King of Spain, who was the Habsburg Emperor Charles V. When Charles went to meet his Flemish subjects for the first time in 1520, and later when he went to London for difficult negotiations with King Henry VIII of England, he took them with him – not as gifts but to display them in his residence, as examples of his wealth and authority and of the extent of his vast empire in which the sun truly never set. So assembling a Kunstkammer was not merely an expression of personal taste but clearly also an act of political representation.

In a Kunstkammer, objects were loosely arranged into five, frequently overlapping groups: naturalia – natural objects; exotica – exotic objects from far-away places; artefacta – artifacts, man-made objects, usually examples of outstanding technical skill and craftsmanship. This means that, for example, a coconut mounted in gold was a naturalia, an exotica and an artefacta. Then there were scientifica – scientific instruments, clocks and automata, state-of-the-art technology, if you like, products of man’s ingenuity and an expression of his desire to understand the world; and, last but not least, mirabilia – miraculous specimen of art or nature, anything strange or rare or unusual.

Many of these objects one would not expect to find in a museum today, but for the 16th and 17th century they were an expression of man’s interest in the world, his thirst for knowledge, as well as a prince’s way of documenting his wealth and authority. It was thus perfectly natural for the Emperor Rudolf II to call the foremost scientists and scholars to his court – together with astrologers and alchemists charged with turning lead into gold.

For this lecture, objects were arranged not chronologically but by medium, or material, focusing first on what were perhaps the most highly-prized exhibits: exotic or legendary objects imbued with magical powers. This included things like dragon’s tongues (actually sharks’ teeth), a griffin’s claw (fossilized buffalo horn), a unicorn horn (narwhale tusk), and bezoars (figure 1) (concretions found in the stomachs of ruminant animals such as goats and lamas, its name is derived from the Persian “padhsar”, protection from poison) – all of which were credited with the power to detect and neutralize poisons. Reflecting their perceived value, they are all mounted in gold and embellished with precious stones and delicate enamel. Even if we do not accord them the same legendary curative powers today, we must acknowledge the high esteem in which they were held in earlier centuries, which is documented by the status accorded to them in a princely Kunstkammer. The Habsburg Kunstkammer also contained non-magical naturalia – things like a magnificently set Seychelles nut (believed to be a fruit of the sea), coconuts, and ostrich eggs, all, of course, in sumptuous settings.

Scientifica represented both state-of-the-art science and technology, and outstanding craftsmanship. Among the objects in Rudolf’s Kunstkammer was a celestial globe (figure 2), made for him in Augsburg in 1583/4. Just a few years after Copernicus’ revolutionary assertion that the sun formed the centre of the universe, this clockwork-driven globe demonstrates the workings of the cosmos. This mechanical model of the sky simulates the movement of the sun, the moon and the stars, and can project this movement to the past and into the future, as well as tell time from the position of the stars and vice versa. Naturally, it is beautifully decorated with depictions of the signs of the zodiac and other heavenly bodies to make it fit for Rudolf’s Kunstkammer. Other scientifica contained in a Kunstkammer are imperial toys – beautiful small silver sculptures that are really automata, many of which can move or even play music – and elegant table clocks.

One of the best-known objects in the Kunsthistorisches Museum is Cellini’s Saliera. The celebrated Florentine goldsmith made this unique artwork in 1540-43 for the King of France. A technical masterpiece, it is an allegory of the world featuring Neptune, the god of the
sea, opposite the goddess of the earth, set above a base that depicts the four winds and the four times of the day. However, it is, at least in theory, also a princely salt-and-pepper-shaker: the small golden ship serving as a container for salt, the little golden temple on the flower-strewn meadow for pepper.

In the 16th century, lapidary works – vessels cut from semi-precious stones – became popular Kunstkammer-objects. It is a difficult and time-consuming technique as these semi-precious stones are as hard as steel to cut, and it can take many months or even years to cut and hollow them out with a drill in the desired shape.

The tradition goes back to Antiquity and the Middle Ages, as attested by various antique objects, such as Cameos and an almost translucent chalcedony bowl remounted for Ferdinand II. Among them are the largest extant monolithic rock-crystal vessel (probably made in 13th century Sicily and weighing incredible 12.8 kg) and various Cameos cut for classical rulers. The foremost of these are the Ptolemaic Cameo (cut for King Ptolemy II of Egypt c. 279-270 BC), and the Gemma Augustea (cut in AD 10 for the Emperor Augustus).

It is not surprising that Rudolf, who regarded himself as the rightful successor to the ancient Roman Empire, eagerly acquired them for his Kunstkammer. But he also commissioned works from Milanese stone-cutters who carved fabulous vessels – from rock crystal, lapis lazuli (figure 3) and many other semi-precious stones – for him, many of which are now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. The princely collectors of Europe competed for the best pieces, and in order to guarantee the exclusivity he felt his imperial majesty required, Rudolf called the foremost Milanese artists to his court in Prague. Once they were established there, the Miseroni produced breathtaking objects, many of them delicately set in gold and enamel by Rudolf’s court goldsmith, Jan Vermeyen, who also made his sumptuous private crown which is now in the Treasury in Vienna.

As true Kunstkammer-objects, none of these magnificent vessels served any practical purpose except to document the emperor’s great wealth and taste, and the artists’ outstanding technical skills. Perhaps the most typical Kunstkammer-object is the rock-crystal “pyramid” cut by Dionysio Miseroni in 1651-3. 1.15 m high, the upper four cylinders were actually carved out of the octagonal rock-crystal base. It is important to remember that the value of such vessels or objects cut from semi-precious stones was many times that of paintings. For example, the inventory of the estate of King Phillip II of Spain (the cousin of Ferdinand of the Tyrol and the uncle of Rudolf II) priced the fabulous paintings by Titian in his collection (which are now in the Prado in Madrid) between 50 and 200 ducats each, but vessels cut from semi-precious stones from 200 ducats upwards.

In the course of the 17th century, however, ivory became the material of choice for Kunstkammer-objects, supplanting lapidary vessels. These delicate show-pieces also served
no practical purpose but illustrated the taste of the princely collector and the incredible craftsmanship of the artists who seem to defy the limits (quite literally considering many of the shapes) of an elephant tusk, itself a highly-valued naturalia and exotica. Among the breathtaking objects in the Kunstkammer collection in Vienna are a princely centre-piece in the form of a large ivory ship with paper-thin sails billowing in the wind and manned by sailors cut from coloured paper, and the sculpture of a phoenix (figure 4), so realistic it seems to be alive. Interestingly enough, the acclaimed anonymous Austrian master from the early 17th century (known as the Master of the Furies) who made it defies tradition and does not emphasize ivory's smooth, transparent surface-quality but negates it to imitate most convincingly the young bird's beak, plumage and claws. This is truly an example of art dominating nature.

However, the most amazing ivory objects of all are surely the two sculptures depicting the Emperor Leopold I and his son, King Joseph I (figure 5), respectively. Each is mounted on a charger, one triumphing over the Habsburgs' enemies, the Ottomans and the French, the other over the fury of war to mark the beginning of a new Golden Age. Mathias Steinl from Vienna signed and dated them 1693. It is almost unbelievable how convincingly Steinl manages to depict in the single medium – ivory - such disparate materials as the Habsburgs' armor, lace trimmings, their full wigs; he even renders the horses' teeth and veins beneath their skin. Steinl seems to defy the boundaries of the medium. Despite their small size (each is only c.50 cm high) the statues are truly monumental; and they document the political and dynastic aspiration of the House of Habsburg, their present and their future glory.

Steinl's statues are also perfect examples of Kunstkammer-objects: naturalia, exotica, mirabilia and artefacta of breathtaking virtuosity. However, they date from the late 17th century and with hindsight they also represent something of a last flowering of the Kunstkammer as the dawning 18th century marked its demise, and with the Age of Reason beginning to hold sway in princely collections they start to look more like the museums we know today.

The objects shown are in the Collection of Sculpture and Decorative Arts of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna/Austria.
International Sea-Trade Routes
Makran and the Arabian Sea at the Dawn of the Portuguese Arrival

Lecture By Valeria Fiorani Piacentini
Presented in English
21 January 2007

“And for this the kingdom has been given
the name of Dâr al-Amân
(The Abode of Security)”

Such was the situation at the dawn of Portuguese arrival. Salghur Shah’s shrewd and pragmatic political line, and his vigorous policies of balance and understandings with the various forces of his dominions, paved the way to a political line, which would survive his own life (1505) and secure the kingdom of Harmuz’ survival and mercantile power for longer than one century ahead.

Such was the situation in Makran, too, as portrayed by vivid glimpses of traditions and popular stories, archaeological sites and ruined monuments of that time, as many precious clues to the re-reading of all available sources...very few indeed!

The surveys carried out by the Italian archaeological, historical and anthropological research team in Makran during the two last decades of the previous century have brought to light solid evidence of the descriptions provided by the literature, allowing us to outline a first history of the peopling of this region, which was undeniably marginal for the great civilizations and the empires which ruled it over various periods, but which – despite the harshness of its human and physio-graphical environment – experienced periods of unquestionable prosperity and splendour.

Grandeur and misery alternated. Decline brought new wars, tribal feuds, strife, pillaging and new misery. And along with all this, it brought new waves of conquerors and invaders, desolation and anarchy, pillaging and piracy. We are reminded of the descriptions given by Arrian in his detailed account of Alexander’s “hazardous march through Gedrosia” and “his descent to the Ocean Sea” - a region of no interest, except for its strategic position, being a “frontier zone”. For the rest, it was commonly considered a land of wild and ruthless peoples (“black and savage”), brigands, smugglers, mercenaries, and traffickers. A land of legends and alarming tales, where “much was little, and the only commodity available in plenty was banditry and violence...to enter it meant death for anyone rash enough to cross its rocky gorges or immense desert wastes, where nothing was and nothing survived”, as the Res

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**Gestae (Kutub al-Futuh)** of the Arabs describe Makran. Those sent by the Caliphs to explore it complained that “a large army would not have found the wherewithal for survival, while a smaller one would inevitably been massacred in the ambushes to which both the nature of the terrain and the temperament of the local inhabitants so aptly lent themselves.”

However, re-reading the literature, carefully sifting all primary sources, complementing this material with local oral tradition and the new data brought to light by the first archaeological survey, it soon became clear that – all along an almost continuous string of oases lining the banks of the two rivers forming the “Green Belt”, where irrigation is made possible by means of traditional systems (named locally “gabrband” – the ghabarband, kariz and khawr-jah) – unexpected striking vestiges of funerary areas, mausoleums, castles, towers and towering forts with ruined walls and huge ramparts, caravanserais, imposing monumental birkas were proving to be as many evocative albeit solid pictures of a past splendour and prosperity.

Thus, carefully sifted, the available literature gave a new, vivid picture of this region. Archaeological data and all “monumental” evidence began to complement – without contradicting it – the evidence provided by the literary sources.

Epic poems, ballads, songs told us of a gallant world still surviving in the memories of local poets, a world populated with heroes and beautiful princesses, princes and kings, pirs and jinns, monsters, drakes, sailors and pirates. Behind the veil of myth and beyond the seduction of legend, it has been possible to sense a kernel of historical reality. Hence, we began to record all this no less precious material.

Archives finally are proving to be another no less valuable source and support in this field. They have also given rich, new information concerning unmistakable links between the Green Belt and the coastal region, interactions and contacts with the Arabian Peninsula and the Iranian plateau, and – via the great monsoon routes – with even more distant countries and regions…including the Mediterranean basin.

Anthropological and ethno-anthropological research has advanced the study of the current settlements through the analysis of their organization, ever dependent on the “water factor”, a vital element, the focal point of life, source of wealth in this arid, desolate and decidedly inhospitable desert – pre-desert region. The ethnological study has focused the crafts’ sector with its traditions and artefacts, its ust ds, whose secrets have been transmitted to them down the centuries, invaluable key in its turn to a closer interpretation of the available written sources and literature.

The archaeological survey of Southern Makran was carried out in collaboration with a team from the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the CNRS (Paris), under the direction of Dr. Roland M. Besenval. The initial approach to the territory confirmed and emphasized the literary image, leading to first map of the archaeological sites and surface pottery (1987 on). Botanical studies (E. Lattanzzi, E. Leporatti) and geo-morphological ones (P. Sanlaville, J. Evin, A. Prieur, G. Wilcox and others) have furnished a picture of the natural habitat, giving an idea of the environment and the extent of the changes which have occurred in the course of centuries, of any anthropic impact on the environment and vice versa.

After three field-work seasons, we realised that, rather than contradicting one another, the sources could be read as complementary, one image flashing out the other: they describe a territory, which given its geographical location, has always represented a natural corridor between the Iranian plateau and its culture to the west, and the Indus system to the east, the Central Asian basin with its fabulous riches and civilisations to the north, and the Indian Ocean and the regions overlooking and/or gravitating towards it to the south, which includes the Arabian world and its culture.

Because of this special geographical position, Makran is a natural axis for north-south east-west communications. In specific contexts, it played a crucial part as a major military and/or trade route. In times of disorder and disruption, it would retreat into autarchy, and slide into anarchy, torn by family and tribal strife.
In other words, in certain phases of its history Makran was a “frontier region” playing a vital strategic role for the control of certain areas, assuming the function of “well-equipped fortress and bastion”. In others, it also operated as a “trade route”, in its turn a market place, with merchants and peoples of every race, language, colour and religion converging there from all parts of the world to buy and to sell the rarest and most precious merchandise, a hectic humanity engaged in business of all kinds.

Documenting has been a race against time, often carried out in extremely adverse environmental and physical conditions. Sites, monuments – or, more precisely, what remained of them – do still represent the physical evidence of a past, which is now rapidly vanishing, increasingly damaged by lack of human interest, and the havoc wrought by both atmospheric elements and animals.

However, and despite it, the research work so far carried out has provided interesting new data, suggesting times during which we may suppose south-western Baluchistan had enjoyed a somewhat higher status than it is to day, a settled life with all related activities (such as agriculture, trade, craftsmanship and speculative activities as well). It has revealed an important cultural heritage, enabling us to go back to the region’s earliest phases of settlement, and allowing new chronologies and understanding of the local society, its material culture, its traditions, and its evolution towards a difficult modernity.

The Political Framework at the End of the Fifteenth Century.

The last decade of the 15th century witnesses the rise to power of the Safavids and their supporting troops, the fearful Qizilbash and Turkmen soldiers. The coronation of Isma’il Shah at Tabriz in 1501 marks the beginning of his military campaigns and conquests. New shahenshah of Persia, with him we also witness the triumph of the Qizilbash and the reunification of the Iranian regions under formidable territorial campaigns, which culminates in the proclamation by Shah Isma’il Safavi of a new Persian Empire, and Shi’i Islam being declared the State Religion. However, resistance was far from being at an end. The rest of Persia would be brought under Safavid control only after ten years of hard fighting (1501-1510): the end of the Aq-Quyunlu (1503), the annihilation of the last remaining forces of the Qara-Qoyunlu, the clash with Bayazid II in Anatolia (1505 on), and the aggressive, devastating raids by the Uzbeks.

It was also the time when the governorships of Yazd, Kirmanshah and many other districts along the main trade caravan routes were falling in the hands of the powerful qizilbash amirs, leaving the turuq al-mafażat open to the Qizilbash and Türkmen formidable forces and their thrust at the sea.

The consequence of the rise to power of the Safavids would be an unavoidable disruption of the traditional balance of power on the Iranian mass-continent and, along with it, of the political forces ruling the life of the Gulf too, and its immense volume of trade. These same years, as already outlined, mark the eve of the Portuguese presence, and the beginning of their military action in the Gulf and their conquests.

After the death of Fakhr al-Din Turan Shah II, Malik of Hormuz, in 1470, his son Salghur Shah (1475 – 1505) consolidated and ensured for more than a century ahead the maritime and naval supremacy of Hormuz, and, along with this, the survival of its prosperous mercantile dominion in the changing balances of forces both on the Asian continent and on the seas, where the Portuguese presence loomed.

The purpose of the following sketchy excursus is to focus on the reorganisation of this kingdom’s power system and structure as envisaged and realised by Salghur Shah, at a time when the unending struggle between the Safavids and the Uzbeks was perceived by this ruler and his court as the most impending threat to the sovereignty and economic survival of the kingdom vis-à-vis the formidable Portuguese fleet. And within such a framework, to outline the role played by Makran: its Green Belt was a military and militarised “bastion” and “fortress” against the incursions of the Uzbek and Turkish soldiers, and its coastal area, where headharbours were flourishing, was a prosperous market and outlet along the sea routes.
Salghur Shah (1475 – 1505):
New Balances and State Affairs.

The full extent of the decline of the authority of the ruling institution became apparent on the death of Turanshah II (1470). The unreliability of the soldiery (still recruited on the Iranian continent) and dissensions among his sons and successors paved the way for years of civil war, shaking the kingdom and staining it with blood.

Appointed ra’is (regedor) of Qalhat (Oman) by his father, Salghur Shah felt himself to be in danger after the latter’s death. At the moment he was to have succeeded him, having married an Omani woman, he fled to the interior of Oman to seek refuge with his father-in-law, Ajuwad of the Banu Jabr. Here, however, he did not receive the hoped help against his brother and pretender, Shah Vays, so he sailed to Shilaw (the local Iranian name of the city of Siraf), where he succeeded in winning over the two local ra’is, Ra’is Nur al-Din and Ra’is Kamal. Thus he acquired far more formidable allies than the Banu Jabr would have been, as “Banu Jabr were people of the interior and the desert without experience at sea.”

This changed relationship is highly significant. It gives us a flash of the articulated society of the time and the practical balance of powers between the Arab and Persian elements in the Harmuz administration. They were not separated components. On the contrary, there was no formal “boundary” between the two, nor any precise definition of either.

Turanshah II had always maintained a balanced equilibrium in assigning positions and a cautious policy of marriages. His court was open, cosmopolitan, and he enjoyed receiving and entertaining honourable guests from all corners of the world. In times of trouble, these links enabled the malik to find his most faithful supporters among the people of the interior. This was also the case of Salghur Shah.

Nimdihi, the chronicler of the time, defines Salghur as “a descendent of Hud... the most glorious”. Be that as it may, Salghur Shah was famed as a generous and fair ruler, appreciated by both Persian and Arab elements. He was related on the female side to both. He was also related to Makran through his father, Turanshah II, who had given his sister as wife to the ruler of Makran.

Extremely capable, he kept his distance from the events developing on the Iranian continent. When in 1503, the Qizilbash of Isma’il Shah Safavi conquered Semnan and the Fars region, when the capital-city Shiraz also capitulated, Salghur did not hesitate to pay tribute to the new emperor of Persia and his provincial governors (a fixed tax, the muqarrariyyah, a sort of “immunity grant”) in the line of Harmuz mercantile policy. Thus he guaranteed safe passage for caravans, merchants and merchandise.

Then Salghur Shah put large efforts in the reorganisation of Harmuz’ systemic structure: army, chancery and administrative structures, taxation system. In addition, the fundamental dichotomy between the Arab and the Persian elements, and the hostility of the one for the other was just as sharp and strong as ever.

Given these circumstances, Salghur Shah did not limit himself to paying the tribute agreed upon with the Safavid authorities, but energetically applied certain measures aimed at putting an end to the continuous uprisings of the land-based enclaves.

Harmuz and the Consolidation of a New Administrative Apparatus.

Salghur Shah was famed as a generous and fair ruler, appreciated by both Arabian and Persian communities. First of all, he reorganised the army, recruiting loyal troops on the Arabian Peninsula, and strengthened fortresses and defence vis-à-vis the new powers emerging on the Iranian plateau. He is also depicted as a Man of Religion. But, in practice, the religious institution was subordinated to the political institution, following a pragmatic, traditional line. According to Samarqandi’s account; “people of all religions, and even idolaters, meet in the city of Harmuz and nobody permits any hostile gesture or injustice against them. For this - he concludes - has the city been given the name of Dar al-Aman (The Abode of Security)” Barboasa’s notes, written at the end of the same century, complement other chronicles on the mirabilia of the city built on the island of Jerun, underlining
the pietas of Salghur and enhancing his skilled policy.

The bureaucratic apparatus was reinforced and by the death of Salghur certain significant changes had occurred. More far reaching in its consequence was the re-structuring of the mulk of Harmuz in a hierarchical centralised structure, which in many respects resembled that of a central administration.

Though the available literature does not allow us to draw clear distinctions between the various offices and officials, there are some notes that enable us to distinguish between the functions of different officers of this vast dominion. When Salghur came to power, the powers of neither wakil nor ra's were clearly defined, and their functions to some extent overlapped. After his reforms, the offices of wakil and ra's were reinforced. Wakils and ra's were designated by the ruler, it seems on the basis of marriage links and "tribal" loyalties, and were always subordinated to the authority of the malik; all affairs had to be decided with his approval.

These possessed "courts" were replicas of the royal court. The chronicles devote very little space to the activities and the life of these peripheral courts (garrisons, cities and surrounding region, etc.). However, some scraps of information allow us to shape a lively image of the time, dominated by the power and influence of the great merchant-families, their immense riches and wealth, their vessels and a world-wide range of financial and economic business.

The wazir became the very organ of this centralised administration, the head of the bureaucracy, the principal officer of the kingdom. His power and rank surpassed those of the majority of the high officers of the state. By the time of Salghur Shah's death, the administration was entirely in his hands, and he was so powerful that only the name of kingship was left to the infant prince.

Though directly threatened by the worrying growing power of Lar and the Laristan, Salghur did not let himself be involved in the struggles taking place on the Iranian mass-land. However, the need to keep this organisation in a state of constant readiness, facilitated the dissemination of suspicion, antagonisms, rebellions, peripheral ambitions. The Iranian elements - so prominent in the royal enclave - became restless and unreliable. They rebelled against the authority of the ruler, constituting a positive threat to the malik's political power and to Harmuz' very survival.

Makran and Salghur Shah's Embargo on all Strategic Raw Materials towards the Iranian Harbours.

It was at this precise moment that Salghur Shah sharply changed his policy: he turned his back to the Iranian "un-loyalties" and sought to balance them by strengthening both the Arab element and the Harmuz' Arabian dependencies, on the one side, and the Makrani component on the other.

Thus the Malik put into force a kind of 'embargo' on all strategic raw materials travelling towards the Iranian harbours necessary for the construction or repair of local vessels, such as wood, copper, iron, rope, pitch, etc. Shipping activities (and wealth) were diverted towards the Arabian seaboard. As a result, the Iranian harbours and merchant-families, losing their naval independence and no longer able to depend on an adequate commercial fleet of their own, became totally dependent on Harmuz for their mercantile traffic. This included the Safavids, their Amirs and governors.

As a result of this policy, the strategic importance of the Arabian and Makrani seaboard were enhanced both in military and mercantile terms.

As a result of this policy, however the strategic importance of the Arabian and Makrani seaborders were enhanced both in military and mercantile terms. Bahrain stand out in this period as a main harbour and outlet along the sea routes of the Gulf, ports of call, shipyards, markets renowned for the wealth and beauty of their merchandise, fresh water and vegetables supplies.

Then, within the framework of the new Harmuzi order, things in Makran began to evolve and change. The region gained a new political, economic and strategic relevance:
threshold of East and West, fortress and bastion, Harmuz' rulers used to recruit their troops from Jask and Jaghin's districts.

All in all, Makran is a large territory (balad in Arab sources), delimited by the Indus river to the east, and by Kirman and Sijistan to the west, bordered by other districts of Turan – with its capital city of Kij / Kec; its shores the "Bahr al-Fars". Thus, beyond the sharp description of moon-like landscapes, scorched by the sun and the hot summer wind (the famous gwat, which inspires jinns and drives mad human beings), another picture of the region emerges, that of an active and prosperous region, operating as a "trade route" and market place.

By that time, Makran's hinterland is no longer a barren land devastated by military campaigns and institutional chaos. The roads connecting the hinterland with the seaboards are no longer critical or dangerous for travellers and caravans because of the continuous raids and pillaging by ruthless tribes. The region appears rich in densely populated cities and minor centres surrounded by orchards, gardens and cultivated fields. Here, one could find beautiful houses (though many of them have a straw roof) and many mosques, and it is also possible to meet people coming from every region in the world.

The inhabitants speak Farsi, Arabic and a local "dialect" called "Makri". The local population is "Balusi", even if large communities of Persians, Arabs and Hindus are settled in the main centres and harbours of the region, both in the hinterland and along the seaboards. They wear rich, colourful dresses and long drapes. Their religion is generally Muslim, though it is well possible to meet Hindus, Kufri (idolaters) and Zardusht (Zoroastrians).

Then, following the caravan tracks through bare, broken passes across the Central and Southern Makran Ranges and narrow rock-lined ravines, the caravans could reach to the seaboard and the city of Dabol – at the mouth of the Indus/Mihan river, a good harbour, well sheltered, where Arab ships use to call and one can find rich merchandise. In Dabol live wealthy Arab and Gujarati merchants. The ruler of the place gets great incomes from collecting customs, and resides in a beautiful palace; there are also many mosques.

All along the coastal region, Daybul/Dabul, Basani/Pasni, Gwadar, Jiwani, Tiz/Tez, Jask and Jaghin stand out as harbours and outlets, shipyards, markets, strongholds renowned for their goods, fresh water, meat, rice, sugar, vegetables and dates. Passing convoys call at these well-sheltered harbours, naturally defended at the back by coastal ranges with its indented crests and whitish salty depression. Only Dabol is surrounded by fertile fields, well cultivated, where flourishing villages are abundant.

And again, we are informed that Tiz is “an important harbour on the sea route to al-Basrah, where ships are accustomed to call to take on supplies”. Both Tiz and Jask are head-harbours and outlets of the rich hinterland; the Mughistan eastwards and the Kirman and the Fars westwards. Good caravan-routes connect these two ports with the main markets of the interior; these routes are safe, good caravanserais and cisterns in great quantity make them agreeable to travellers and their escorts (sic). The malk of Harmuz is in the habit of paying good tributes to the various petty rulers always rioting and fighting each other for power along these important trade networks, the backbone of Makran's wealth and mercantile prosperity, too.

Undoubtedly, by the time of Salghur Shah's rule, Makran stands out as one among the participants in the network of overseas trade. Here, one could buy all kinds of merchandise, from precious fabrics of silk brocades to velvets, from precious /semi-precious stones (as lapis-lazuli, turquoise, rubies, emeralds and sapphires, carnelians…) to all sorts of marbles, from amber, incense and frankincense to beautiful horses from Arabia, from spices, aromas, asafetida, medical herbs to dates and dews (such as indigo and purple), from marvellous pearls of any size and colour coming from Bahrain and Julfar to slaves, ivory and oyster feathers from Africa.

In conclusion, certainly, Salghur Shah consolidated and ensured the maritime and naval supremacy of Harmuz and, with this, the survival of its systemic structure in the changing balance of force both on the Asian continent and on the seas, where the Portuguese presence loomed. Salghur's new policy allowed the kingdom of Harmuz and dependencies to survive despite the disastrous struggles for power that took place after his death.
Music to Wash Off the Sea: Communal Sea Song Tradition of Kuwait

Lisa Urkevich
Presented in English
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Before oil wealth had a major impact on the economy in the 1930s, the peoples of the Arabian Gulf earned their livelihood through pearl diving and international trade. Merchant boats, which were gone for about six months out of the year, traveled to East Africa and India and various points in between, depending on where they originated and the goods they carried. Mercantile industry played a major role in the livelihood of the region and helped foster cultural exchange between Gulf people those of other cultures. Perhaps more importantly, however, was the pearl diving trade. During the pre-oil era, over half of the population of Kuwait and Bahrain was involved in pearl diving, as divers, captains, merchants, food suppliers, and in other support roles.

Divers would normally leave for the entire season, four months, from May to around mid September. Hundreds of boats from each port would go out all at once, eventually converging in several large areas of pearl beds. A great deal of cultural interchange resulted among peoples of the Gulf, as dozens of Bahraini boats might be anchored near dozens of Kuwaiti, Qatari, and Trucial, as well as others—perhaps a hundred boats anchored at the same bank. For centuries, before Kuwaitis and other Gulf residents became involved in the practice of pearl diving in the 1700s, Bahrainis had been engaged in the livelihood; thus, Bahrain was considered the center of the Persian Gulf pearl industry and consequently, their sea-pearl diving tradition is heralded as the oldest.

There were not enough indigenous people in the Gulf region to supply labor for the pearlling ships. A great deal of the seamen of Bahrain were of African or Indian heritage. However, in Kuwait, it is believed at one point, 90 percent of the men on the boats were Bedouin or desert men, from inner Kuwait, Iraq, or the heart of Arabia, that is, the Saudi Najd region. Bedouin were known to make good pearl divers, since they were accustomed to a harsh life, hard work, little food, and they were extremely lean and thus would sink easily.

Life on board the pearlling boats was extremely difficult and the pearlers suffered great hardships. Undernourishment was common, and the men frequently were tormented by lung disease, fungal infections of the skin, scurvy, rheumatism and arthritis; and of course, they faced vicious shark attacks. In addition, since a diver would go into the water about 120 times a day for approximately a minute, these men were existing two hours a day without air. No doubt, slow degeneration of the brain was often suffered because of these long cycles of diving and the lack of oxygen.

Accounts about the difficult life onboard abound:

"A diver was in the water from dawn to dusk

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with hardly anything to eat or drink the whole day but a handful of dates, some water, and a couple of glasses of tea, because you can't dive fifteen fathoms down with a full stomach. [15 fathoms equals 90 ft.—although 15-20 feet was the average dive] "There could be as many as 80 men crowded on each small boat and at night they were so exhausted they would crawl into any empty corner you could find and sleep with another man's feet in your face..."

Since the average workday lasted 16 hours, divers regularly collapsed when finished, thus there was no time or interest in any kind of "entertainment." However, there was a great need for songs, that is, for work songs. The heat, the hunger, the loneliness, and the never-ending labor required the divers to have some kind of external encouragement. Justifiably, every pearl diving boat was equipped with a small group of professional musicians (figure 1), usually 2 to 3 men that included at least one lead singer (figure 2) called a naham (that is, "one who wails or laments"), a drummer who performed on the India-made double-headed barrel drum (figure 3) called tabl bahi (sea drum), and maybe a third musician to play the small cymbals known as twysat (lids) or to assist in singing. Since a good naham could attract workers to a boat, keep them motivated by singing through the chores (figure 4), and help them pray to God for protection, he was well paid, at times more than the divers. Occasionally the musicians might assist in heaving an anchor or hoisting a sail, but their primary assignment was considered more important—that is, to encourage the weary, burdened men with song.

J.G. Lorimer's Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf lists Kuwait in 1907 as having 461 boats with 9,200 sailors, which would indicate at least 500 active musicians. Years before, even more boats were recorded. The Dutch explorer Carsten Niebuhr, noted that by 1750, Kuwait actually had 800 pearl diving boats in a population of 10,000. One can assume then that there were at least 1000 men who served as chantymen, thus at least 10% of the population of Kuwait were at one time professional musicians. This is a remarkable amount in a lone community, and consequently, the musicality of the environment was extraordinary.

Of course, the divers and helpers onboard boats sang alongside the musicians, and on shore, women in Kuwait were singing songs affiliated with the diving life. And then when the men returned from sea, the musicians were heard by, and influenced, the local community. Music making was a daily, ongoing significant part of Kuwaiti life. With such a tradition, it is understandable that even today Kuwait maintains a highly musical nature steeped
in the ways of the past. For instance, one can frequently hear young people incorporating the hocket sea clapping of the divers into their modern lives, such as to display exuberance at high school assemblies or at popular music concerts.

Work Songs

It is believed that there were around 23 standard works songs associated with pearl diving boats, but today, only about half a dozen are known. Two of the most important are dawwari and yammal. Dawwari is the Gulf word for "capstan," a spool-shaped wheel around which the anchor rope is wound. A dawwari song is chanted for any non-vigorous gliding rope pull, such as that of pulling the boat toward shore. It is perhaps best well known for pulling the vessel closer to the anchor. Throughout the day, a pearl diving boat would let out its anchor rope so that the boat could drift over various places of pearl beds within one large area. The divers might go down over one place for an hour or so, and once determined that a locale was no longer fruitful, more rope was let out so the boat could drift to the next hopefully fertile area, where divers again would descend, and so forth. At the end of the day the boat might be extraordinarily far from its anchor, and thus the men had to pull in a great deal of rope in order for the boat to glide back to its original anchor position. According to Kuwaiti sea musicians, such a task might take hours. Since this work is so tedious, a motivating song is needed, and thus dawwari was sung.

For dawwari (figure 5), the men line up on both sides of the rope and a naham stands near the seaside of the line. The men pull the rope and walk in a circular fashion: they move away from the seaside then quickly walk back to the front of the rope to grab and pull more of the line. The seamen will begin this process by singing a low drone sound called nehbo. After a while, the large drum, tabl, comes in with a steady pulse, the pace of the workers quickens and the men clap in interlocking rhythm (hocket) as they work and move. If a dawwari is to take a long time, that is, if there is much rope, then the boat is probably a bit larger and will have several naham who will sing, each taking turns.

Once the boat is over the anchor, yammal, a song used for a hard pull, is performed (figure 6). For yammal, the men repeatedly heave the rope and then collectively groan and expel air in unison, making the guttural sound of a camel when it collapses with a heavy load. During this, the naham is freely walling and clapping, often singing texts about the hardships or life.

Non-work Songs: Uns/fidjeri

At the end of the four months of the pearl diving season, after arriving back at their home ports, the divers and workers would greet their friends and families, but later they would gather at a men's meeting place, a diwaniya (in Kuwait) or dar (in Bahrain, Qatar) and perform a musical suite known as uns (happiness) in Kuwait and fidjeri (til dawn) in Bahrain. These evening performances would take place many nights throughout the year, but were considered of great importance immediately upon the return from the sea. The musical event would cleanse the men, remove the ugliness of their experience, make them feel like human beings again and not just laboring animals. Since the life on the boats was so harsh, the evening musical performances were needed to provide a collective release of this pent up experience of suffering. It was a way for the seamen to "decompress" and celebrate their surviving the season. This was music to wash away the sea.

The pieces were, and still are, performed in a prescribed order. First there is some kind of song that will pay homage to the desert manifested by the use of the frame drum (tar).
The three genres of sea entertainments songs are *haddadi*, *emkhalif*, and *hassawi*. Each genre subdivides into movements that can include *erjohan*, which is a free non-metered section featuring the naham; *tanzilah*, which is a choral movement with pre-set text; and then there is a third closing movement called *nehma*, again, featuring the naham soloist, but here the music has percussion, is metered and the audience-participants will become highly active clapping and dancing.

Non-work songs are for the most part are performed seated on the floor. All gather around closely and face toward the center where a predominance of the instrumentalists are placed. In small diwaniyas and on larger boats, like merchants ships where entertainment

sea songs and here they use sea instruments: one *tabi bahri* (sea drum), half a dozen *mirwas* (figure 8) (small double headed drum cupped in the palm), 10 *jahaila* (figure 9) (large ceramic water jar), one *hawwan* (metal coffee mortar common in Kuwait) and maybe a pair of *twysat* (small hand cymbals more common in Bahrain). songs were performed, this tight seating arrangement would have been used by necessity. It is not staged, that is to say, there is no bifurcated room where performers face an audience. No one faces an audience but rather the men face one another, as the "audience" are also the participants. Interestingly, even today
when a large open space is available or the men are on a stage for reenactment, the musicians and male choir will still huddle closely together, facing inward, as if on a boat.

During an uns/fidjeri evening (figures 10 - 11), once all of the sea songs are performed, the group will take a break and then will reassemble usually around 1AM, often with added participants, and perform urban traditional music. The most important of this city type in Kuwait is sawt, an ud (lute) music that, in sea performances includes the dignified male pair dance ziffan. Sawt was originally a separate genre, a chamber music that sea musicians borrowed and adapted by including, along with the dance, more instruments and robust handclapping. This interlocking handclapping, heard in sawt and throughout Kuwaiti music, is often said to represent the sound of the waves breaking against the boat. Such is a fitting musical element in the traditional songs of this community of the sea, that is, of the people of Kuwait.

Song Lyrics:
Many of the naham work songs as well as the musical sections of seated sea entertainment music that feature the naham (like erjohn and nehma) use texts from the zuheiry poetic genre. Zuheiry have a 7 line rhyme scheme: AAABBBBA.

HADDADI
Pt. 1, Erjohn (Zuheiry Poem, 7 lines, rhyme AAABBBBA)
Naham soloist, Free rhythm

1. Firstly, may I say, Glory to God, the owner of the Throne
2. Secondly, Mohammed is God's Messenger
3. Thirdly, we go on pilgrimage to God's house
4. Fourth, we see the light of blessings
5. Next, we pray that God sheds peace on the Prophet
6. Then, we ask for the mercy of God

HADDADI
Pt. 3, Nehma (Zuheiry Poem, 7 lines, AAABBBBA)
Instruments continue, Naham soloist

I parted with the one whose beauty is without compare My heart is in despair and tainted with sorrow I kept fighting the feeling of separation My body is with me but my soul is wandering, may it heal And the swords of my beloved cause me pain I don’t think my heart will ever heal You stay settled, while I wander everyday

Figure 1
The Bin Hussein Band, which performed during the lecture

Figure 2
The singer, known as a Naham with the Bin Hussein Band

Figure 3
The drummer with his tabla bahri

Figure 4
Seamen at work on a boat – pulling up the divers

Figure 5
Reenactment of a Dawwari

Figure 6
Rowing and singing Yammal

Figure 7
Tabi bahri in the front; tarat in the back row

Figure 8
Clapping and playing small mirwas drums

Figure 9
Playing jahalla jars

Figure 10-11
The Bin Hussein Band in full swing at the lecture
A Trial of Ibn Khaldun

Juma Sheikha
Presented in English
5 November 2007

This lecture is on Abou Zayd Wali-i-din Abdel Rahman bin Khaldun, a follower of Maliki School of Jurisprudence. He was of Yemeni Hazrami origin, born in Tunis in Ifriqiya, migrated to Seville in Andalusia, and died in Cairo, Egypt.

Our objective for this lecture is not to present Ibn Khaldun’s biography, since he himself has written his autobiography, al-Ta’rif. However, we are somehow obliged to highlight the main milestones in his life in order to be able to point out his strengths and weaknesses. The stages of his life can be traced as follows:

Stage I:
This lasted for about nineteen years, from birth in 732 AH/1332 AD in Tunis, until his migration in 751 AH/1350AD. He spent most of that period studying at the Zaytouna Jami with great scholars.

Stage II:
Stage II lasted for 25 years, from 751 AH/1350 AD to 776 AH/1374 AD and was spent in political adventures. Here emerged some of the negative aspects of his life. He spent the earlier part of that stage in study and reading at Fez, which was one of the most important cultural centres in the Far West.

Stage III:
This lasted for eight years, from 776 AH/1374 to 784 AH/1382 AD. He stayed four years in Ibn Salama citadel, where he wrote his Prolegomenon in five months and started his book Al-Ibar. He spent four years in Tunis finishing his book, relying on the reference books in the libraries of Hafsis.

Stage IV:
This final stage lasted 24 years, which he spent in Egypt from 784 AH/1386 AD to 808 AH/1406 AD. This period was dedicated to teaching and his career as a judge, which totalled less than five years at sporadic times. During that time he reworked his Prolegomenon and the book of Ibar. The Egyptian versions seemed more elaborate than the Tunisian ones.

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The case against Ibn Khaldun

From the political point of view he was accused of opportunism. After the death of his parents during the plague in the year 749 AH/1348 AD, he began to look for a practical career. As he came from an Andalusian aristocratic family and because of his early ambition, he contacted the minister Ibn Tafergeen, who appointed him to the court of Hafsids in 751 AH/1351 AD as a scribe. This post did not last for long, as the Emir of Constantine managed to conquer Tunis in 753 AH/1352 AD. Therefore Ibn Khaldun fled to Basquara after the defeat of the Hafsid army, either because he was afraid of the Emir of Constantine, or because he was looking for a higher post than he held in the Hafsid court in Tunis.

Whatever the reasons that forced Ibn Khaldun to quit his birthplace, he developed a negative tendency for opportunism, justifying means by ends. He didn’t mind being mean to or conspiring against those who had been generous to him or to deny their favours in order to fulfill his aim, or to avoid an expected inconvenience.

For example, when he reached Basquara from Fez after leaving Tunis, he was well received by Marinid Sultan Abu Anan. As Ibn Khaldun admits, he favoured him by attending his cultural council for debate, and gave him the post of writing and signature, in spite of his young age. However Ibn Khaldun participated in the conspiracy launched by the Hafsid Amir Abu Abdalla Mohamed, who had been captive in Fez and wanted to restore his reign in Bagaya, in exchange for the post of Hajib (chamberlain). (This is considered the second post in the state, next to the Emir or Sultan). Ibn Khaldun was motivated by greed and disloyalty to his ex-master and tried to justify his behaviour by citing the old friendship between his family and the Bani Hafs family in the city of Tunis. Ultimately, the conspiracy failed and Ibn Khaldun was jailed for two years in 755 AH/1354 AD.

Also, in 784 AH/1382 AD he migrated to Egypt, where he was highly honoured by al-Zahir Barquq, its ruler who appointed him a teacher of Maliki jurisprudence at al-Qamhia school. He was appointed a magistrate (following the Maliki Jurisprudence) in 786 AH/1384 AD.

He also taught at Zahiria Barquqia School in 788 AH/1386 AD and the Prophet’s Tradition (Hadeeth) at the school of Sarghatmish in 789 AH/1387 AD.

He was appointed as the Sheikh of Sufis in Baybars Khanqa (monastery), though he himself was never a Sufi, with the aim of earning a salary. However, when an uprising took place against Barquq, he gave Fatwa (religious opinion) with other opportunists of his type, to oust Barquq.

Was he forced to sign as he claimed?

His excessive ambition and avidity for high positions led to his humiliating fall and trial, which led to the rejoicing of his enemies. This pattern increased as he grew older. He was repeatedly jailed and put on trial at the end of his life. He never learned and he continued conniving for high positions.

We might ask, as Ibn Khaldun was appointed and then dismissed from posts several times subsequently, sometimes with few weeks in between, was he a real judge? Or just a ball in the hands of Egyptian politicians and rulers at that time and why did he agree to be appointed then fired and insulted in such a disrespectful manner?

The position made him vain and arrogant towards his peers and colleagues in the profession. As Ibn Taghribirdi points out, Ibn Khaldun practiced his job as a judge with ‘great sanctity... he had a good fame’. However, in the words of Taghribirdi, he was ‘too arrogant’. He refused intercessions even from the highest ranking people. This of course gives him credit, however it might indicate a kind of childish approach, as a result of over-rating the position he held.

Such conduct almost destroyed him in Maghreb, when he was employed in the Marinid court, and resulted in his dismissal and trial in the East. In the Mamluk court, he was more mature.

This behaviour continued during his old age. When he was removed from the court, he behaved in a friendly manner: paying compliments, joking with others, behaving modestly. However, when he was reappointed
he became conceited. He would disrespect others, act in a cruel manner, exceed all boundaries, and comparing himself to Jesus Christ, who arrived in Egypt to fill it with justice after it had been filled with evils.

Ibn Khaldun took things too far and his court became a battlefield between him and those responsible for theological legal advice, writers of certificates and endorsers of contracts and fighting parties. In his own words he would "punish them mercilessly" without thinking the least of their response. This caused Al-Maqrizi, his own disciple, who acknowledged Ibn Khaldun's greatness, knowledge and nobleness, to say: He was never without an enemy, an envious or a strong opponent.

His extreme power turned into weakness and his boldness into faint heartedness. Ibn Hajjar says: "When he was reappointed in Sha'ban 807 AH, he practiced his job with extreme softness, incompetence and weakness!"

Ibn Khaldun was also clever in flattery. Numerous examples could be traced in this respect. In his Prolegomenon, we read the dedication he wrote to Al-Hafsi Abi al-Abbas Ahmed in the Tunisian version and to Al-Marini Abi Fares Abdul Aziz II in the version of Fez and to the Mamluk Al-Zahir Barquq in the Egyptian version. This enables us to discover his capacity of exaggerated praise and excessive panegyric, producing affected epithets that confirm flattery.

Flattery led him to treachery against his own nation, helping a tyrant like Timurlane conquer Damascus. He convinced the dignitaries of the city to abandon resistance and to seek safety by asking for peace with a military leader whose compliance with treaties was known to be unreliable. To Timurlane, such agreements were simply a means to paralyze resistance, in preparation for attack on his victims. This was what actually happened with Damascus in 803 AH/1400 AD.

Another anecdote related by Al-Maqrì is that Ibn Khaldun told Timurlane: 'let me kiss your hand'. The latter asked "Why?" "Because it is the key of territories", Ibn Khaldun said, referring to the fact that Timur conquered five territories and his fingers are five. This showed Ibn Khaldun's cunningness. "I wrote a book on history on which I spent much time and I left it in Egypt. Now I'd like to leave and bring this book and come back to die in your service."

In his book Aja' b al-Maqdour fi Nawa'il Timur, Ibn Arabshah (d. 854 H/1450 AD) mentions the meeting of Timurlane with Damascus dignitaries which was attended by Ibn Khaldun in his national dress. Ibn Khaldun would watch Timur with a gazing look and if Timur looked at him he would direct his eyes downward. Ibn Khaldun spoke loudly at the meeting, saying "Our lord! Thanks to the Great God, the elevated. I often honoured kings of the world by my presence, reviving through my history books their past chronicles, which had already been forgotten. I saw many western kings and met many sultans; saw the world east and west. Everywhere I went I was acquainted with the Emir and Viceroy of each country. However, I thank God as my life time extended and I was favoured to see the real king, who follows the proper jurisprudence in his ways as a sultan. If the food of kings is eaten to escape damage, then our Emir's food is also eaten for the same purpose and in order to gain honour."

At this point Timur was so impressed that he was about to dance with joy. He started to address him with a special interest asking him about the kings of al-Maghreb, their news, the history of their dynasties and their monuments (knowing Timurlane intended to attack the region and that the information would be used against himself).

Ibn Khaldun might have felt a sense of guilt after he left Timurlane and reached Egypt. He wrote a letter to the ruler of Maghreb telling him of what happened between himself and Timurlane. Can we consider this message a kind of atonement? Probably. It is possible Ibn Khaldun had sent it as a warning to king of Maghreb so he could prepare if Timur went forward with his plans.

For Ibn Khaldun, means are always justified by ends. In order to get rid of one of his competitors, the judge Mohamed Youssif Al-Rikrau (799 AH/1398 AD) of Moroccan origin, he issued a legal decree, which he claimed to be written in Rikrau's handwriting, denoting the lowering of the status Barquq, Egypt Sultan. Rakrau denied
the claim and asked that the paper be examined, the deceit was discovered. When Barquq was sure of that, Ibn Khaldun was fired in disgrace.

In his academic writings, Ibn Khaldun was also not completely honest. Talking of Al-Hussein bin Ali in his *History*, he said that Al-Hussein bin Ali was killed with his grandfather’s sword, and for this he was cursed by the heads of Shi’a in Egypt. Ibn Hajjar al-Askalani, a contemporary of Ibn Khaldun, wanted to make sure about the matter, he examined *al-Ibar*, but he didn’t find that statement. In fact Ibn Khaldun confirmed the statement in the Tunisian version, but omitted it from the Egyptian version after he settled in Cairo. He wouldn’t leave such statement in his book while living in a country where Shi’a theology had been well established for centuries.

From the intellectual point of view, Ibn Khaldun had some attitudes that are unacceptable today. His attitude towards women, for example, was conservative, influenced by Greek philosophers, classifying women with slaves, workmen and animals. Epithets of cowardice, humility, lack of enthusiasm for clan are attributed to women, who are always dependent on others, especially in matters related to defense.

In *Prolegomenon* he gives examples of that, saying “haven’t you heard of what was said by Imam Ibn al-Khatib (al-Razi) about women - that they are made subordinate to men in many legal matters. They have no power of taking decisions. Men are protectors and maintainers of women”.

Ibn Khaldun quotes the above Qu’ranic verse incompletely in order to reach a conclusion that he personally wants. If it is quoted fully, then we realize that the preference given to men is conditioned by spending their money. If this condition is missing, then preference also drops.

Understanding his attitude concerning the relation between the ruler and the subjects requires some background. One of the dangerous diseases affecting the Arab intellect for centuries is confusion between what is sacred and what’s secular. This caused the relationship between the ruler and the subjects to be defined as that between a herdsman and a herd. In such relationships, commands are given by a herdsman to be carried out by the herd, without questioning or protest. People accepted this definition. That’s why Arab societies, throughout history, were always ruled by dictators.

In order to justify this behavior, scholars and men of religion interpreted the verse that mentions the predecessor to God on earth, an interpretation in which the ruler has all the power, depriving the ruled of any rights. In this way, it was established in the Arab thought that a ruler is the successor of God (His Caliph) on His Earth and the protector of His wealth. This means complete destruction of democracy, which aftermath is still suffered till now.

However, Ibn Khaldun explained the case of succession not as succession to God but as the succession of Prophet Mohammed, since this is exclusively applied only to whomever absent and not present. He always worried about the possibility of mixing up between the sacred and the secular in his political thinking and was one of the early advocates of the succession of the Prophet.

That said, he believed that a sword was required to maintain a society and that the sword is in the ruler’s hand who represents the clan, on which the state is based. Such is the earliest stage of the state. The second stage is represented in the dictatorship of the ruler, who has become a Caliph, whether to God or to the Prophet, and has the ultimate power and is authorized to have complete right to public wealth. The ruler’s objective is to be the sole person to enjoy both power and wealth except for what he allows others to share with him. Ibn Khaldun didn’t consider this a form of injustice. On the contrary, he thinks that injustice is the attempt to take those two assets from the ruler and their absence might lead to the deterioration of the state and of mankind.

Concerning nature, Ibn Khaldun believed in reason and its power. It is “an exact measure and its judgments are true”. As for what’s beyond nature, it is completely incapable of judgment since it is driven away from its proper domain. For that reason Ibn Khaldun limited himself to the present and the past. As for the future, it seems not to exist in the eyes of Ibn Khaldun.
According to his rational method, the future is classified under metaphysical knowledge which is part of Heavenly knowledge and not part of the sciences of reasons.

Unfortunately Ibn Khaldun contradicts himself in the chapter dedicated to natural sciences being one of the branches of the Rational Sciences. He ignores natural sciences as they seem useless from his point of view. "We have to avoid looking into these matters as they mean nothing to us. This is consistent with the principle of leaving out getting involved into what doesn't really interest you, as a good Muslim. Questions about nature are not interesting from the religious point of view, nor are they important for our life; therefore, they should be left out!"

Ibn Khaldun didn't give up the conservative thinking. He still considered agriculture as a means of living for the overpowered and assumed that it was an area that did not require science or good rational planning. This was to sentence the most important economic activity in the Arab world to malaise and recession.

Finally, Ibn Khaldun overlooked many incidents despite being the most capable person to write about them, as he lived in different courts in Maghreb and Andalusia. Such incidents are concerned with contacts and agreements between Moroccan and European parties. He, among other historians, didn't refer to such agreements to escape the reaction of those who avoid dealing with Christians. This was his attempt to conceal confidential pacts with intolerable concessions which could have resulted in deepening the conflicts between the courts in Arab Maghreb.

The Defence of Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldun as a scholar has many distinctive positive traits. As every fair researcher, Arab or non Arab admits, he is the founder of sociology, a theorist and historian. He is also remarkable for developing what came to be known as autobiography. Moreover, he is an innovator in the style of writing at an age when affected style was fashionable. One look on the treatises he wrote while he was working at the court of Abu Salem al-Marini is enough to appreciate the new style, free from the restrictions of rhymed prose which was the fashion at that age.

However on certain occasions he would use them in response to the public taste. According to his disciple Ibn Amar, "he used to follow the style of the Ancients, such as Al-Ghazali and Al-Fakhr al-Razi. He criticized the new style provided by Persians and their followers in adopting a format that would exaggerate the use of verbal disputes."

His poetry was not highly appreciated; however, he was outstanding in literary criticism. He was also well informed on the science of jurisprudence and the science of Hadeeth or Prophet's Tradition. He was also a superb talent in logic. Generally speaking he was well aware of the different branches of knowledge in his age.

With his Prolegomenon, he supersedes the ancients as well as the Moderns. As Al-Maqrizi suggests, "Few can make a similar achievement. It is the cream of learning and sciences and the fruit of good discretion and understanding. It questions the identity of objects, defines the reality of incidents and events, expressing what's existing and investigating the origin of whatever exists in such language, better than pearls arranged in a row and water when moved by the breeze."

Ibn Khaldun showed a great degree of modesty in the beginning and end of his Prolegomenon, expressing the grace, the learning and the fairness he was known for. He admitted that he launched a new method of scientific thinking, but he also acknowledged that he did not bring it to its climax/didn't reach perfection in that respect. There is still possibility of incompleteness or error. Therefore a reader should amend these mistakes and get into deeper discussions of such issues.

Ibn Khaldun remains of a special flavour, his genius and his supremacy should be judged in the framework of a certain background which moved his intellect and his emotions. Some of his thoughts and general principles and his methods of analysis were echoed in the ideas of scholars and philosophers in Europe, after
Arab civilization had been transferred to them on a golden plate.

Therefore, it is not wrong to say that Ibn Khaldun has preceded Karl Marx in inspiring the materialistic interpretation of history. He admitted that quality of life is definitely a decisive factor in the development of history and society. He also said that differences among peoples and nations in their customs and traditions and morals are related with how they earn their living. He said: "the difference among generations is interpreted by the difference in their style of living." Probably Ibn Khaldun has influenced Machiavelli when he said that social phenomena could be purely objective without resorting to moral standards. He also might have influenced Montesquieu when he included economics in history.

It is confirmed that Ibn Khaldun has preceded all these in relating history to natural history. For him, a society develops according to certain rules and natural laws that have to be deducted and discovered through the study of its evolution in (beginning, climax and decline) and through the study of its different activities (positions, ranks, sciences, crafts, arts, letters).

Not only was Ibn Khaldun a creative writer but he was also a distinctive speaker and a persuasive orator. That's why he was always selected for difficult assignments, locally and abroad. Ibn Al-Ashmar of Andalusia (765 AH/1363 AD) sent him to an embassy to sign a peace agreement between Gharanda and Seville, in which he was successful. Very often, princes of Maghreb employed him to spread their propaganda among Arab tribes and Ibn Khaldun rarely failed in his missions.

Timurlane was impressed by his speech, as were Egyptian scholars, as well as laymen. His enemies as well as his friends, admitted that his speeches on two occasions were exclusively superb and that there is no one in Egypt who would be equal to him in presenting entertainment, knowledge, and rhetorical style.

Ibn Khaldun proved that he was loyal to his friends. This is demonstrated in the attempt he made to save his friend Ibn al-Khatib who was imprisoned in Fez on the order of Sultan Al-Ghani bi'llah.

Ibn Khaldun was loyal to his roots, proud of his identity. He never changed his costume; always wearing the Maghrebi turban and the black Berber cloak.

Historians who wrote his biography confirmed his handsome look and high morals. As a judge he was known for his fairness as he refused the concessions of the highest statesmen and dignitaries. Before he held his legislative position in Egypt, corruption was common in that field with deviation from fairness or equality. He did everything possible to maintain justice on strong foundation. Ibn Khaldun paid a great price in order to maintain the respect of jurisdiction to achieve justice. His keenness on equality among people and his deviation from twisted ways, tricks and favouritism turned many Egyptians against him. Therefore he was fired from his position, put on trial, and betrayed.

In conclusion, it is time to read our heritage objectively without exaggerated veneration or unjustifiable depreciation. Such reading will enable us to gain benefit from our heritage, following its positive sides and avoiding its negative effects.

Ibn Khaldun with all his strengths and weaknesses was, after all a human. He was proud of his ancestors, confident of his own distinction and genius, had soaring ambition and a creative mind. He is proud of his positions, stubborn in his conduct. In dealing with his contemporary politicians and his colleagues, he was Machiavellian. In applying the law he was extremely cruel. He showed excessive flattery to the rulers and sometimes he seemed quite loyal in his conduct, showing deep understanding of the political game of his age and his society. He predicted the decline of civilization on the southern shores of the Mediterranean and its rise on the northern shores. He disregarded conventional thinking and trusted reason - he was aware of its powers and limitations.

Therefore we can say that Ibn Khaldun is undoubtedly the trustworthy scholar and politician. That requires, of course that we accept all that is suggested by "scholarship", such as fairness, high morals and creativity and all that is suggested by the word "politics", including evasion, flattery and intrigue.
This presentation relies on some recently published research papers and books by Rushdi Rashed, and other scholars; among them George Saliba, Adel Anbouba, A.B. Yuchkivitch and Christian Hozil. Through these works we can review the social context of the growth of Arab science, lessons deduced from the history of Arab science, and some characteristics of Arab science: comprehensive scope, multi-resources, translation and integration of different scientific traditions, the birth of new sciences, a scientific approach applied on theoretical sciences, experimentation as a basic measure in applied sciences, and the birth of a new scientific tradition and the universality of Arab science.

Science history as an independent field of study was created during the 18th century. It continued to develop because of its importance in fields like education, history, philosophy, sociology and physical science.

Until the 1960s, the image of Arab science looked quite distorted and unrealistic for many reasons, e.g. scarcity and inaccuracy of information on Arab science. There were also some weak points in the sources of that knowledge and some irregular echoes of Latin translations of Arab science. To this can be added to linguistic deficiencies and gaps in the scientific knowledge of Orientalists, and philosophic and social factors promoting an atmosphere of biased thinking in the West.

The main ideas supporting this statement can be summed up in the following, as suggested by Rushdi Rashed:

"Science has a Western provenience, and a Western evolution. The scientific revolution took place in the Renaissance after a period when darkness prevailed. The experimental method was only applied since the age of the Renaissance. The only value of Arab science is manifested in the translation of Greek texts, the origins of which had been lost. Originally, it was accepted that what exists in Arab science, is only a reflection of Greek science in theory and methodology. Most Arab science remained buried in the manuscripts, and did not affect much the progress of science throughout ages."

Such ideas became deep convictions held by Western as well as Eastern Arab intellectuals. It is this general belief that contributed to creating a superiority complex in West, and an inferiority complex in the East. This has led to major social and philosophical damage.

Science historians, motivated by the statement "referring science back to the West," focused their interest solely on Greek civilization and that of the age of Renaissance. The concentration on such two peaks of civilization exclusively led to the emergence of some inconsistencies. Unreasonably
magnifying Greek science and attributing an excessive revolutionary character to the Renaissance European sciences created similar problems.

Such inconsistencies caused the growth of a new party of science historians, who tried to understand the gap between Greek age and the Renaissance. Their efforts did not rely on any hypothetical statement, but rather on direct study of scientific Latin and Arabic texts.

In the early seventies of last century Rushdi Rashdebegan his efforts to establish a specialized centre for Arab Science within the framework of the National Centre for Scientific Research in Paris. The society for the history of science and Arab Islamic philosophy was established and an international magazine was launched to carry on research in that field. An important institute for study and documentation of Fund Sezkin was established Frankfurt, Germany.

Research has led to the production of a large amount of information on the Arab scientific achievements — too many to sum up in few pages. However, the titles of some major chapters can be cited here. If we limit ourselves to Mathematics, though other sciences have gone through a parallel development, we will find the birth of algebra and the reading of Euclid in terms of algebra. There is also the rise of Geometric algebra and its growth (algebra applications for Apollonius cones, for example) and the beginning of mathematical analysis, the birth of trigonometry and its consummation with its two branches, spherical and flat, and the evolution of Euclidean geometry (preparing for the rise of other kind of geometry).

There is also the evolution of geometrical projection (application in geography and Astrolabes). Another major development took place in minute calculations and the general proofs in arithmetic, compatible calculations and the use of the decimal point on a large scale. Moreover, there is the great revolution in the science of light, the application of mathematics in the field of physics and the geometric study of lenses and their different forms. All those discoveries have changed the image of Arab science and contributed to the attraction of more interest in it.

The characteristics of Arab science are many and include:

- the assimilation of all scientific branches, whether theoretical or practical, since the 9th century.
- the use of multiple sources with Greek science especially in focus. (It also relied on Persian and Indian sources. Most probably it was influenced by Chinese learning. Undoubtedly there was a local heritage of continuing civilizations since Babylonian civilization.)
- systematic translation. Multi-sources of Arab science were not the result of the strategic geographic situation of the region or the outcome of the passing of trade caravans and their unplanned meeting in the area. It was rather the outcome of an unprecedented translation movement that began in the 8th century, according to George Saliba.

The translation movement was initiated by a commission of political authority for political-economic reasons to help in the administration of the country. Therefore the translation bureaus at the end of the 7th and beginning of 8th century became active in response to the needs of scientific research in particular. Translators were often specialized in the scientific subjects they were addressing. Translation was not just transforming texts from one language to another; it was rather a study and commentary on the translated texts.

The adoption of a new methodology relying on the application of one science on another in the field of theoretical sciences and resorting to experiment as a standard proof in applied sciences is a primary characteristic of Arab science. This marked the birth of a new scientific tradition. One of the characteristics of Arab science is the multiplicity of its sources. This would naturally result in the adoption of new scientific practices, different from previous experiences. This contributed to the emergence of new scientific chapters.

To refer to the application of one science to another, according to Rushdi Rashed, it is the real beginning of classical science which stands in opposition to the prevailing ideas. Greek heritage promoted segregation between races and abstaining from the exchange of knowledge with a different race.”
The application of geometry to science resulted in the appearance of analytical geometry. The application of algebra on arithmetic resulted in the renewal of numbers theory. The expansion led to the application of algebra and arithmetic on some chapters of geometry (the works of Mahani, Kargi and others on Euclid’s Rules). The application of arithmetic and geometry on astronomy resulted in the birth of trigonometry, with its two branches during the Arab era.

As a theoretical science, algebra has combined between two methods, the geometrical proof method and the arithmetical logarithmical method. Its integration with other sciences has influenced scientific thought in the Arab period, exactly as the science of geometry has influenced Greek thought.

The second important characteristic of Arab scientific thinking is using experimentation as a standard for proof making and the generation of scientific laws. With the exception of Archimedes, one can assume that Greek science did not apply experiment. The application of experiment as standard proof and for the deduction of scientific laws has reached its climax in the works of Ibn al-Haytham (the science of images). His followers carried on with the same methodology using some technical lab objects to represent nature.

All such new features, whether methodology or the form and content of science, can’t be described as a developed Greek tradition. It is rather a completely new tradition whose sources were Greek tradition.

The universality of Arab science is due to the international sources it has, the multiplicity of its contributors, and the evolution of their beliefs. It is also universal due to its expansion. In the geographical region, science is international (from China to Spain). It is also international as far as language is concerned, since Arabic became an international language since the beginning of the 9th century AD.

Its translation into Latin has contributed to its formation in Europe. This was possible through two channels, i.e., translation and interaction with others. Systematic translation in Europe has taken place since the 12th century. It started with two schools: the school of Salerno in the East. In the West, there was the school of Toledo. Interaction took place by means of scientists who studied science in Arabic and developed it in Latin.

Acceptance of other cultures and a respect for science and the work of predecessors did not restrict criticism and objection to them. We have Ibn al-Haytham writing Suspicions on Ptolemy. Al-Razi (865-925) wrote Suspicions on Galenous and Al-Khayam on Euclid. Arab science was therefore not a science of just commentary, but a science of criticism since its beginning.

Science spread into urban society and was not limited to Dar al-Khilafa and the courts of princes. It prevailed not only in Bayt al-Hikma (House of government), observatories, hospitals and schools, but also in government offices and mosques. In government offices it took the form of arithmetic and algebra. In the mosque it was astronomy, timing, and a science of theological prescription.

Social study of Arab science as Rashid suggests, "has to point out the role of society and Islamic city in that historical movement. At this point we can understand how different independent scientific currents could meet, and interact." This study also helped to present the role of Waqf (charity) in the continuation or survival of scientific institutions such as schools, observatories and hospitals, in spite of the changing moods of political authority along that extended period.

Arab science prospered as a result of conscious support from the ruling authority, by means of consistent translation. Here we can refer to the theory of George Saliba. He thinks that Orientalists wrongly identified the vehicles through which Arab science was developed.

In this respect there were two theories: the theory of interaction between civilizations and that of scientific centers, i.e., the transfer of science through the enlargement of some scientific centers in the East from the Hellenic period (Antioch, Nishapur, Harran and Alexandria). Translation coincided with the movement of scientific research. It is well-known now that the Orientalist theory, based on the assumption that Arab science went through three phases: translation and assimilation and scientific production, is wrong.
History of the Gulf Region in the Ottoman Archives

Lecture by Zakariya Qurshun
Presented in English
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In the 16th century, Ottomans dominated the Arab world and one of their key activities was the creation and maintenance of relevant archives. These archives could be considered a conservation of Arab history during that period.

For four centuries, Arab territories from Yemen to Tunis were provinces in the Ottoman Empire, so we mustn’t ignore the huge amount of documents written about such areas, part of which are the correspondence between the capital and such provinces. Copies of such correspondence are available at the archives of the Ottoman cabinet in Istanbul. Unfortunately Turkish historians were late in reaching regional documents and using them. Another problem appears here, namely the lack of any information about the condition of these documents.

Egyptian National Archives and Syrian National Archives are accessible via central archives, but nothing specific is known of the archives related to Al-Hijaz province, Ihsa governorate, and Al-Basra Gulf. When the Ottomans left the administration of these territories, their documents remained.

Modern political history in any of the Arab provinces that turned into capitals doesn’t go beyond the second half of the 19th century. This excludes many stages of Arab geography. Comparing modern Arab history of the 20th century to that of the Ottoman period as a whole shows how insufficient it is being detached from Ottoman documents. These documents, related to the period the 16th century till the 1st quarter of the 20th century, preserved in Istanbul, represent Arab geography more than any documents outside Istanbul.

The Arab world, especially in the Gulf, was involved with the Ottoman Empire from the first quarter of the 16th century. However, actual Ottoman control began in the age of Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni in 1534 AD, when Baghdad came under the Ottoman administration.

The military campaign on Baghdad launched by al-Qanuni lasted for one year. It was motivated by two important factors, in addition to other political and economic issues. One was to put an end to the threat of Portuguese, who had the largest naval empires in the 15th and 16th century. The second was to protect the Sunni Islamic world from the Iranian threat, which was the most dangerous and had to be stopped.

These two reasons ensured a quick stability for Ottoman reign in the Arab countries, keeping in mind that Arabs suffered for a long time the absence of a central government and were fed up with internal wars between tribes and factions. This explains the smooth introduction of Ottoman rule and its perseverance.

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When Sultan Suleiman al-Qanuni was in Baghdad, delegations came from Basra and the nearby locations declaring their submission. This facilitated the integration of Basra in 1546 AD and Ilsha in 1550 AD under the Ottoman rule. With its establishment in Basra and Ilsha, the Gulf became a sphere for the activities of the Ottoman Empire. It is interesting that, at that time the Gulf was called the Persian Gulf by Iranians and Europeans, the Arabian Gulf by Arabs, and the Basra Gulf by the Ottomans.

Not only did this ensure independence for the region, but also gave the inhabitants an opportunity to move easily from one place to another. Arab tribes migrated to Iraq and other places in the Gulf they considered suitable for them, whether for economic reasons or just for seeking a safer refuge. It was not unusual to find a tribe from the borders of Anatolia, settled in the Gulf area.

In other words the Ottoman countries that enjoyed peace had a great influence in the formation of human geography in Iraq and the Gulf area. The Ottoman state did not interfere with the traditional structure of Arab tribes, which were integrated in the administrative system, and was able to make a well-established administration in the area for a long time.

Naturally, documents provide large information on the administrative centres such as Mosul, Baghdad, Basra and Hijaz. However, information about sedentary inhabitants was much larger than those related to Bedouins who inhabited large areas. In spite of all this there is much information in the Ottoman archives about influential Arab tribes which occupied large areas in Hijaz, e.g., Anza, Bani Harb, Bani Qahtan, Otabya and Shamar tribes. We can also acquire much information about the branches of important tribes that lived in the Basra Gulf area such as Bani-Khaled, Al-Ajman, Al-Murr, al-Duwaisir, al-Manasir, Bani Hajir, Matir, Khadhail and Bu-Ali (figure 1).

Starting from the 17th century the central Ottoman administration, established in the Basra Gulf in the 16th century, became ineffective, allowing local administrations to act independent. Many reasons led to that condition, most important of which was the reformation of balance among world powers.

The Ottoman Empire made considerable effort during this period to remain strong in the East, especially in the Basra Gulf, trying to make up for its diminishing influence in Ottoman Europe. Therefore efforts were intensified to assert its actual political presence in the area. The most important of which was the attempt to stop the influence of the British in the Basra Gulf region.

From the second half of the 19th century till the early years of the 20th century, the Basra Gulf was a battle field for an Ottoman-British conflict which remained secret sometimes and was open at other times. Unexpectedly, this conflict had its influence in the emergence of modern Gulf States.

In Ottoman documents we must review some incidents that disturbed security in the region in the 19th century and their impact on the stability of Kuwait and the al-Sabah family. Pre-19th century documents mention that Kuwait was an important harbour. We will look at Kuwait through the 19th century archives.

Undoubtedly the Ottoman administration realized the strategic importance of Kuwait and
knew quite well that any power controlling the region will threaten Basra and consequently the rest of Iraq. Therefore the Sublime Porte [the Divan (court) of the Ottoman Empire] had correspondence with the Basra governor and ordered him to be aware of the events in the region.

Al-Basra governor came to know of British policy and their movements in the Gulf through Abdel Jalil al-Tabatabawi (figure 2) who was one of the most famous merchants in the area. He reported all to Istanbul. The following information was cited in his letter to the Sublime Porte in Jumada al-Akhar 1263 AH/1847 AD: "There is nothing unusual about Kuwait and its neighbours. As for Najd governor we find the Sublime Porte warning Baghdad governorate, asking them to hinder the attempts of the British, even the possibility of sending forces was considered to stop foreign interference in Kuwait. From the correspondences we understand that Kuwait Sheikhs did not approve of such developments and they were pro-Ottoman Empire and against the British.

After these developments came the idea of integrating Kuwait in the administrative divisions as a province of the Ottoman state. The Sublime Porte instructed the Baghdad governor to persuade the Amir of Kuwait to change the country into an Ottoman Province. During that time there were positive dialogues between the Amir and the governors of Baghdad and Basra. This increased the number of commercial ships from Kuwait to Basra. Unlike other ships, these ships carried the Ottoman flag. The number of ships carrying cargo from Kuwait to Basra between 1860 and 1861 reached 138.

Figure 3

and his Bedouins, there is nothing significant about them. In Bahrain two British ships arrived few days ago with their commander who had a private meeting with its Sheikhs. The commander instructed Sheikh Ali to go to Tunb Island on the spot. The commander informed the two sheikhs that he will sail to Oman to instruct the sheikhs there to meet him at that island, in order to inform them of the commands he is commissioned to convey." From that letter we understand that the British activities had not begun in Kuwait yet, and that the Sheikhs of Kuwait are still on their old policy.

In a later letter he mentioned that the British consulate in Bandr bu Shahir increased its interaction with the Sheikhs of Kuwait. Here

Figure 4

Something unusual took place as indicated in the archives. Abdullah al-Faisal, the governor of Najd, asked Mohammed Nameq, the viceroy of Basra in 1866 AD, to join Kuwait to Najd. This again showed the importance of Kuwait. However, this didn't exceed the reign of Nameq Pasha, as Abdullah bin Sabah, the Amir of Kuwait was worried that this could lead to impose taxation on Kuwait.
In 1869 Midhat Pasha was appointed a governor of Baghdad; his sole objective was to restore the Ottoman administration which was lost. He always believed that the security of the Gulf meant the security of all Arabia. Therefore the first step he took after his appointment was to solve the Kuwait problem which was left undecided by Nameq Pasha. He pointed out that in a report he sent to Istanbul as follows: "Kuwait has such a strategic importance that it has to be strongly related to Ottomans. The British have spread their control over Bahrain and now it is the turn of Ihsa' and Qatif. If they manage to do that they will occupy Kuwait."

Midhat Pasha was fully convinced that the protection of al-Qatif, Ihsa and Basra is related to good relations with Kuwait. Therefore, the advent of Kuwait coming under the control of any foreign power might threaten Iraq and Arabia. He followed his predecessor’s policy and the first thing he did was to establish good relations with Abdullah bin Sabah, inviting him to Basra, committing himself to levy no taxes on Kuwait and not to interfere in its existing administration since the Ottoman Empire was taking all necessary measures to stop foreign interference.

Abdullah bin Sabah had two choices, either to agree with the British as most Gulf Sheikhs did, or to unite with the Ottoman state representing the Caliphate, taking full responsibility for the consequences. He was loyal enough to take the second choice and was appointed as a commissioner (governor) in 1869 AD and the Ottoman flag flew high in Kuwait. Such efforts delayed the British presence until 1889.

With the support of Kuwait, Midhat Pasha was able to launch the military campaign on Ihsa earlier than originally planned. He benefited from financial support from Abdullah bin Sabah and was allowed to use a military base for the campaign he was planning. The aim of that campaign was quite clear: prevent the occupation of Qatif and Ihsa'. The British were benefiting from the chaos among the al-Saoud and this might have precipitated the anti-Ottoman disaster Midhat Pasha feared.

An important fact has to be highlighted, if Abdullah bin Sabah hadn't supported that campaign, it wouldn't have been successful. As a result, the British might have imposed their control over places like Bahrain at an earlier date. His attitude (Abdullah bin Sabah) was highly appreciated and was praised in documents. In return for that he was given 150 tonnes of dates annually and he was commissioned to run the palm groves in Faw. In addition to that, Abdullah bin Sabah and his two brothers Mohamed and Mubarak were awarded decorations from the fifth grade (figure 3).

Midhat Pasha went to Kuwait by himself in late 1870 in order to thank Abdullah bin Sabah and to strengthen the relationship with him. Midhat Pasha was the first Ottoman governor to visit Kuwait. He explained his visit as follows: "The town (borough) of Kuwait houses around 5000 to 6000 families. Its land is elevated, without any water or gardens or plantation. However its climate is tender and healthy. It is extremely beautiful with a large harbour, well-protected by the sea from the raids of Bedouins. From the land side, it is protected by a number of tribes and Bedouin clans loyal to Kuwait. That's why its residents enjoy a sense of security. Its architecture and inhabitants are growing day by day. Most of the inhabitants follow the Shafi'i school of theology, with few followers of Hanafi, Hanbali or Malikites schools of theology. There are no Jews, Christians, Wahabis or Shites among the population and everyone worked in trade or the marine professions. It has
more than thousand boats; the smaller are used in pearl diving and miscellaneous tasks, being sent to nearby harbours like Basra and Bandar Bu Shahr. As for larger ships, they are used in trade, carrying cargos to India, Baluchistan, Zinjibar and Yemen. The Kuwait governorate (commission) follows Basra. It is under the guardianship of Sheikh Abdullah al-Sabah, who has a deputy for judicial matters and another deputy for keeping discipline. There are no taxes imposed by the state and there are no civil servants other than the commissioner (or governor) like security guards and the like."

Not only did Abdullah bin Sabah participate in the military campaign but also he contributed in achieving stability after it was over. During the reign of Ra’uf Pasha, most Ottoman forces withdrew from Ihsa, so Muhamed bin Saud attracted some clans to his side against the administration in Qatif and its neighbours in the autumn of 1878 AD. Abdullah bin Sabah sent one thousand soldiers and twenty ships to stop the rebellion and he managed to subdue the clans. After that Ihsa’s stability returned to the region. That is why Sultan Abdel Hamid (figure 4) sent Abdullah bin Sabah a Khil'a (a dress) and granted him the title of Pasha as a sign of gratitude.

Kuwait was the most important strategic site for supporting the Ottoman rule in the Gulf. That’s why it was frequently mentioned in Ottoman documents.

In the report on Basra and its neighbourhood it was suggested that a custom office should be established in Kuwait. The name of Abdullah bin Sabah was mentioned in the report, which angered the minister of interior and he commented as follows: "Abdullah Pasha, whom our sultan granted the title of Amir al-Umara, is Abdullah Pasha al-Sabah. He was given this status because he fought against the Bedouins of al-Qatif and the surrounding areas who rose against the honoured Sultanate, and for his repair of telegraph lines which were cut, restoring the flow of communication between Baghdad and Basra."

The minister commented on Basra deputy governor saying that he "sent Ottoman flag to Kuwait" saying: "This is not true; they (Kuwait) work in the service of the State (Ottoman) and raised the flag for more than 100 years. During the reign of Mohammed Nameq Pasha the post of Qabuji Pashi was given to the father of Abdullah bin Sabah."

In the same document, he includes information about Kuwait: "Agriculture is impossible in Kuwait; even drinking water is not accessible, as it is brought from far away. Kuwaitis own the ships sailing to India and to all other destinations. They carry dates from Basra to other places. The cargo carried is not produced in Kuwait, that’s why it is not a good idea to establish a custom office since this will result in paying for employees. Kuwait nowadays is a store for goods and the coming of Kuwaitis to the Basra harbour brings prosperity, not only for Kuwait but also for Basra...."

He continued saying: "Kuwait belongs to Al-Sabah family; their heads are Abdullah Pasha al-Sabah, Sheikh Mohammed and Sheikh Mubarak. Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah was given the post of Al-Istable al-Amer, because of the efforts he made in service of the state. He was exempted from all kinds of taxes. If Iran launches any attack, Kuwait ships will be in service of the Ottoman fleet. The above statement reflects the attitude of the Ottoman state towards Kuwait.

The good relationship continued in the same style during the reign of Sheikh Mohammed. After the death of Sheikh Abdullah, the letter of appointment was sent to Sheikh Mohammed naming him a commissioner as well as granting him the same share of dates as was given to Sheikh Abdullah. Some officials objected to that, however, the minister of finance ordered all commitments to be paid as in the past.

The unusual death Sheikh Mohammed gave the Ottoman-Kuwaiti relations a new dimension. The sons of the dead appealed to the Sublime Porte through the Basra governor. They complained about Sheikh Mubarak and asked that he be removed from the post of the
Unexpectedly some Ottoman officials endorsed the matter and asked to launch a military campaign on Kuwait.

Youssif Ibrahim of Basra was quite convincing and was able to deceive the people of Zubair and Kuwait, persuading them to send telegrams and complaints against Sheikh Mubarak (figure 5). Sultan Abdel Hamid took interest in the matter. At that time Youssif Ibrahim activities were supported by Iran and the British.

Ibrahim did not find enough support from Istanbul, so he made some arrangements with Sheikh Jasem to launch an attack on Kuwait. Sultan Abdel Hamid immediately sent a special envoy to stop Sheikh Jasem from moving in the direction of Kuwait. The sultan was keen to put an end to the disagreement in the family, so he appointed Sheikh Mubarak to the post of Qa‘im maqam (governor). He also stopped the attempts made by Basra officials to give the palm grooves in Khout al-Zeit to the heirs of Sheikh Mohammed without informing Istanbul.

Ottoman-Kuwaiti relations didn’t suffer any crisis until the year 1899, but even then it was never completely cut off. Sultan Abdel Hamid II was the permanent mediator between Ibn al-Rashid and Sheikh Mubarak. When Ibn al-Rashid wanted to launch attack on Kuwait in 1901 – 1902, he was completely set back as it is illegitimate to shed Muslim blood. Sheikh Mubarak showed readiness to obey and conform to the policy of Sultan Abdel Hamid which aimed at the unity of Islamic world, and made some of his close friends like Sheikh Khazal, show their loyalty to the Ottoman state.

Sheikh Mubarak offered financial support in the project intended to establish al-Hijaz railways, generated by Sultan Abdel Hamid’s policy to have an Islamic league. Therefore he was awarded the medal of Al-Hijaz railways by Sultan Abdel Hamid.

After the Italians had seized western Tripoli, the Ottoman state launched a campaign inviting the entire Muslim world to support the mujahidin (against Italians). This had promptly received the response of Sheikh Mubarak and Sheikh Khazal who sent considerable amount of money. At this time the Sultan Mohammed Rashed granted him the Majeed decoration of the first grade (figure 6). This was received on 6 February 1911, in a ceremony held in Kuwait. Sheikh Mubarak wore the decoration during the ceremony.

An agreement signed in 1913 between the British and the Ottomans was quite effective in helping the emergence of modern Kuwait. The British wanted to cut the relationship between Kuwait and the Ottoman state (figure 7), while the Ottomans insisted on the non-interference of the British in Kuwait. After long negotiations both recognised the independence of Kuwait. Here are the borders of Kuwait as discussed in the Ottoman Council before the agreement:

“The borders of Kuwait begin from Khor al-Sibia, extending northwards to Um al-Qasr, Safwan and Jabal Sanam. On the north east side, it is bordered by the regions under the administration of al-Basra governorate which extend in a circle of 35 degrees till Baten Mountain; the borders extend through the mountains to the point of Hafr. Then from Hafr al-Baten in a straight line till Jabal Muneef on the coast of the Basra Gulf. This later border extends from the seaside, from north to south between Jabal Khour al-Sibia and Jabal Muneef. With all these borders are the island of Machin, al-Fulayka, al-Faw and Um-Mardin. All are under the command of Sheikh Mubarak al-Sabah, who also has property in Basra.”.

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Figure 1
Payroll of the Sheikhs of Al-Afman and Al-Murrah

Figure 2
A Letter from Abdul-Ja’al Tabatabawi

Figure 3
Sultanate decree awarding medals to Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah

Figure 4
A Letter from Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah to Sultan Abdul-Hameed II

Figure 5
Telegram from the people of Kuwait to the Sublime Porte supporting Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah and expressing discontent of Youssif Al-Ibrahim

Figure 6
The Ottoman Majeed medal, presented to Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah

Figure 7
Ottoman Empire logo

The above is not all that is included in the Ottoman documents. Rather, it is a brief a trip among the Ottoman archives.
The question of Islam’s attitude towards images is an interesting field to consider when investigating the idea of a “constructed” Orient as Edward Said formulated it in his book Orientalism (1978). By “images” we mean figurative representations of beings having the “breath of life” (ruh in Arabic), i.e. humans and animals. In the 19th century, Western Orientalism started to define Islam as being “iconophobic”. This idea is still alive.

If specialized scholarship has nowadays another perception, prevailing Western (but also Eastern) opinion takes it for granted that Islamic cultures never produced figurative images representing living beings or, at least, that they were hostile towards them. Even an acute thinker like the British anthropologist Jack Goody affirms in the preface of the French translation of his Representations and Contradictions (2003) that Islam does not allow any kind of images, neither in the secular nor in the religious field. Interestingly enough, this idea is not only widespread among Orientalists and Western researchers, but has also been adopted by numerous Arab artists and intellectuals of the 20th century, as their writings show.

Therefore, the idea of Islamic iconophobia is not only a Western representation and I found it appropriate to discuss. My lecture will first go back to the earliest forms of artistic expression in Islamic history, then give an overview of the evolution of figurative art in classical times, in the Arab lands, Persia and the Ottoman Empire. To conclude, I will come back to the Orientalists and the question of image and try to analyze where the idea of “iconophobia” could come from.

In Prophet Muhammad’s times, the Arabs did not have a solid tradition of figurative art. Like other places in the Near East, most were directed to non-sculpted stones (ansab), although recent archaeological findings showed that there has been a production of sculpted idols in Arabia itself. Sometimes, as was the case in Makkah, they were imported from the Fertile Crescent. Nevertheless, there was no specific iconographic tradition in the Peninsula at the eve of Islam, in contrast to most neighbouring areas.

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After the conquest of territories belonging to cultures with old figurative traditions, like Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Iran in the first decades after the hijra, the new Islamic power was confronted with an abundance of images. Thus it is interesting to look at the initiatives that were taken in this initial period.

The first official buildings erected to represent the new religion were the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (691-92) and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus (706 to 714-15). The historians Ya'qubi and al-Muqaddasi, writing between the 9th and 10th century A.C., affirm that the Dome of the Rock was built to rival the splendid Christian churches dominating the town. The Damascus mosque was the caliphal mosque and had, as such, a central place. Both buildings had a symbolic character for the rulers: They had to represent the new Islamic power in a distinctive manner and break with the Christian traditions prevailing until then in the region.

We can also presume that in these very early times of Islam, the artists working on both these monuments had been trained in a late Hellenistic, i.e. iconic tradition. This is evident from the style of the decorations in both monuments, which is in perfect continuity with the art practiced in the region before the Arab conquest.

If we look at the Umayyad mosque in Damascus, we notice a quite intriguing thing: the mosaics in the outer yard represent landscapes, but these landscapes are devoid of any human or animal being, i.e., of any being provided with ruh, the breath of life. And this in spite of the realistic character of the buildings and plants represented. The same is true of the Dome of the Rock, where the influence of antiquity is even more evident. The conclusion to be drawn out of this is that the craftsmen were probably instructed in this sense. Otherwise how could we explain that coming from a figurative tradition they would avoid representing humans and animals, although working, stylistically, in this same tradition?

What was said until now seems to confirm that there is an original and intrinsic Islamic iconophobia. As you can easily guess, things are more complex.

We just have to look at Umayyad country castles, built in the Syrian desert only a few years later than the two mosques, to realize that “iconophobia” might not be an appropriate term to design art production in Islamic times.

In Qusayr Amra, built between 725 and 750, there was a fresco showing the rulers of the world at that time: the Byzantine emperor, the Shah of Iran, the Emperor of China and a Turkish ruler; a character sitting on the throne was as described by Richard Ettinghausen in his Arab Painting (1977), probably representing the caliph who had been victorious over all these rulers. There is also a famous fresco of a naked woman in the same building.

In Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi (727) there is a representation of gaea, the goddess of Earth and others of musicians and hunters; on the ceilings, there is bas-reliefs in the shape of heads of men and women, as well as of animals. In Khirbat al-Mafjar (724-43) the dome of the bathroom is decorated with heads; there are other representations of living beings as well.

We must conclude that the antique iconographic tradition of representing living beings which had been abandoned in the first two buildings erected for religious purposes in Islamic history - survived in the palaces of the Umayyad caliphs. The Umayyad castles, with their images of humans and animals, are far from being unique in Islamic history.

Under the Abbassids, the figurative tradition was kept alive, as the frescoes in the caliphs’ palace of Samarra, which began to be built in 838, show. The palace was destroyed in World War I, and only the drawings by the German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld, made between 1911 and 1913 and published in 1927, survived.

Figurative art is not limited to the early times of Islamic civilization: it will exist under most ruling dynasties throughout history. Exceptions, like the Almoravids and Almohads of the Maghreb do exist - but they are, as I said, exceptions.
Figurative arts in the classical period of Islam

The Arab world

Figurative representations will not only be found at the caliphs’ court or in the palaces of the aristocracy. From the Abbasid period on, there are objects of current use, like ceramic dishes, ewers, incense burners, etc., decorated with figurative images or shaped in animal form. Such objects might have existed already under the Umayyads, but there is no material trace of them. This is a general problem when dealing with Islamic art; we fail to consider if what has survived is representative of the de facto production of an epoch or not, since the employed materials were, most of the time, fragile and many objects have been destroyed.

From the eleventh century on and in this case it is again impossible to say if there have been earlier examples—illustrated manuscripts started to be produced. The oldest known manuscript having survived is the Treaty on Fixed Stars by al-Sufi (1009-10), which is derived from a work by the Greek astronomer Ptolemy (lived ca. 90-168 AC.). Constellations are represented, as was usual in the ancient Greek tradition, as human beings. As in many other Arab scientific treatises, on medicine or pharmacology for instance, drawings were not necessary for the comprehension of the text, nor were they directly related to it. This means that the author of the manuscript, probably the calligrapher at this early stage, had made figurative images just because he wanted to, perhaps to embellish the book.

From the 13th century on, figurative manuscript illustrations became independent from any scientific or academic purpose, as in the illustrated manuscripts of Kalila wa Dimna or of al Hariri’s Maqamat, the best-seller of the time. One of the best known Maqamat versions is a copy signed by the Iraqi artist Yahya al-Wasiti belongs to the French National Library in Paris. This “Mesopotamian School”, as it was called by Richard Ettinghausen, survived the destruction of Baghdad in 1258 by the Mongol invaders. It might have been, as some guess, at the origin of the Persian figurative painting tradition.

Persia

Painting in Islam is often linked to Persia. Early Western research tried to explain it by the Shiite character of the country. However, Iran became Shiite only after the Safavids took power in 1501, whereas the oldest illustrated manuscripts date back to the end of the 13th century.

The country possessed, during its Islamic history, some of the most famous painting workshops that produced numerous masterpieces of the so-called ‘art of miniature’. The legends of the Shahnameh, the Book of Kings, were one of their main topics. Kept alive by oral tradition, the pre-Islamic epic illustrating the glorious deeds of the Iranian kings had been composed in verses by Firdawsi in 1010.

The oldest illustrated manuscripts of the Shahnameh can be dated back to the beginning of the 14th century, but the reasons leading to the transposition of a written oeuvre into an illustrated one are not clear. It might go back to earlier Central Asian traditions of book illustration, or have been inspired from ceramics, on which episodes of the Shahnameh had been already drawn in the 12th or 13th century. The manuscripts of the Book of Kings are considered to be among the finest expressions of Persian Islamic art: One of the best known copies is the so-called Houghton Shahname, painted in the Safavid capital of Tabriz between 1522 and 1535, offered in 1568 by to the Ottoman Sultan Selim II.

Historical scenes were also represented, including the lives of the prophets mentioned in the Holy Qur’an, from Adam to Muhammad. One of the first examples is Rashid al-Din’s Universal Chronicle painted for the Mongol ruler Ghazan Khan (1295-1304). Its oldest copy in Persian is dated 1314. Rashid al-Din took his inspiration from different painting traditions, Mesopotamian, Byzantine and Chinese. It was not the first time that the Prophet was represented: the oldest image known to us is in a manuscript painted in the Anatolian town of Konya in 1250. From these times on, representations of Prophet Muhammad became quite usual, even if his face was in most cases covered with a veil or a flame.
The Ottoman Empire

The tradition of historical painting was perpetuated by the Ottoman School. The oldest Ottoman illustrated manuscript, a history of Khosrow and Shirin, is dated 1499. However, Ottoman painting developed after the conquest of Tabriz and Herat in the beginning of the 16th century, when Sultan Selim I took some painters from these famous schools to Istanbul. The Ottoman Court liked to have its deeds recorded in painting and the main battles of the sultans were depicted in books.

The Ottoman sultans also introduced a new genre, first secretly and, from the 19th century on, publicly: portrait painting. As early as the 15th century, the Italian painter Gentile Bellini was asked to portray Sultan Muhammad (Mehmet) II, the conqueror of Constantinople, a famous picture now at the National Gallery in London.

Indigenous painters were to take over later on. In the 16th century, an ancestors’ gallery was ordered by Sultan Murad (Murat) III from the court painter Nakkash Osman. These portraits were used as patterns to represent the sultans in historical paintings. In the 18th century, a new series of portraits was made by the famous Levni (d. 1732). These are considered as the last representative of the Ottoman style.

Portrait painting also existed in Persia from the 16th century on. The Mughal painting school, founded in India after the closing down of the Herat School and the subsequent moving of many Persian painters to India, is well known for its rulers’ portraits.

This brief overview of figurative painting in the central Islamic lands should of course not make us forget that calligraphy and abstract patterns were the most used forms of artistic expression in the Islamic world until the 19th century. However, it shows that speaking of “iconophobia” is at least exaggerated if not completely wrong.

Is there a scriptural origin of iconophobia?

Should we deduce from what was said until now that Western Orientalists entirely invented the concept of an Islamic “iconophobia”? This would be, of course, as wrong as their assumption that Islam does not allow figurative images. On the one side, it has to be said that they did find a concrete illustrations. When entering a mosque, Western travellers were struck by the fact that it was decorated with geometric and vegetal patterns or with Arabic script, but not with figurative representations, in contrast with what they knew from most churches in Christianity.

On the other side, it has to be said that if Orientalism as an academic discipline studying “the Orient” is a product of the 19th century. It has its foundations in a theological tradition going back to the Middle Ages, mainly on the study of Islamic religious texts in order to refute them. The Arabic language was studied in order to understand these texts and no need was felt to learn the living language of the time. Most Orientalists had therefore studied on texts before knowing the Orient directly - if they ever did.

Orientalism was often (not always) an abstract science, not one based on field work. This origin of the discipline explains why Arabic and Islamic cultures were mainly known from texts, and most of the time, from religious texts.

What do the founding religious texts, i.e. the holy Qur’ān and the hadith say about images? The Qur’ānic verse which is usually referred to in regards to figuration is in Sura 5, 90, where believers are called to stay away from ansab, ansab being the holy stones venerated by the Arabs before Islam. This verse, which also condemns alcohol and gambling, is aimed at abolishing the pagan habits which Islam came to abrogate.
In the hadith, some texts do deal with images, suwar (or sometimes tamathil) within chapters about prayer or other obligations. No text treats specifically the question of images. It is also worthy to note that Sunni and Twelver Shi'ite Islam, although not having the same hadith collections, do not differ noticeably in their perception of the question. This contradicts the affirmation that the Shi'ite character of Persia could have been at the origin of a more liberal attitude towards images.

There are two main points evoked in the hadith regarding images. The first is that they are impure and the second is the condemnation of the makers of images (musawwirun) to eternal fire. Many hadith texts compare images to impure beings like dogs. Twelver Shi'ites go even further: to dogs they add urine. The consequence of impurity is that since the praying place has to be ritually pure, the presence of an image would invalidate the daily duty of praying.

Shi'ites admit that if an image is covered during prayer, it can be left in the room. The place an image has in the space might change its status: images that nobody would adore, like such on carpets or cushions, are allowed. The main concern expressed here is the fear of idolatry. Images are treated like idols and idols are impure. Therefore, images cannot be allowed in a space where prayer is performed.

The second concern derives from the term musawwir, which designs the painter as well as God, the Creator. Following this interpretation, the painter tries to put himself on the same level as God, by creating beings which only God has the right and the power to create. The painter's punishment in the after world will be at the measure of his earthly arrogance: he will be punished with the fire of Hell until he will be able to insufflate the breath of life in his creatures. Therefore, another type of hadith suggests that painters should - if they do not want to give up their profession - only paint plants and other inanimate objects.

From these texts, and from what we observed since Umayyad times, the conclusion is, in our opinion, the following: Islam does not necessarily condemn figurative images in general, but has banished them from the places of worshipping as well as from religious practice, considering them to be impure. Another argument in favour of this thesis would be that the images of Prophet Muhammad and other prophets produced from the 13\textsuperscript{th} century on never appear in books used for religious purposes, but only in secular texts, like universal chronicles or popular tales.

Therefore, rather then defining Islam as iconophobic, it would be more precise to say that it has developed a use for figurative images which differs from Christianity. In Islam, images were allowed or tolerated in the secular but not in the religious space, out of the fear of falling back into idolatry.

Since the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, the modernization process of the Muslim world induced, among its numerous changes, a "multiplication of images" in everyday life. Visual arts, photography, cinema, video and now digital images have become elements of everyone's environment.

Technology has, to a large extent, contributed to this "multiplication of images" in past times. The number of figurative images may have been minimal for technical and economical reasons: they were difficult and expensive to produce. A problem that modern techniques have solved, contributing to popularize images and make them accessible to everyone.

Like in the past however, one place has been kept free of this "multiplication of images": the mosque. This shows, in our opinion, that there is a consequent attitude towards images in Islam, which has nothing to do with a generalized iconophobia. Rather, this can be explained by the impurity attributed to images, impurity that banished them from the sacred space. This separation has been respected throughout Islamic history until now.
Solar Conscious Design in Architecture

Lecture by Adnan al Anzi
Presented in English
31 January 2005

A good architectural design must consider energy efficient building forms. It is important - from the long-term economical point of view - that architects design solar-conscious buildings so that energy investment and user-comfort are both facilitated in an age that is plagued by the rising cost of fuel and environmental degradation. This is particularly important in the extremely harsh summer climate of Kuwait, where shading is scarce and valuable. This presentation introduces the concept of solar architecture and the factors that shape it throughout human history. The benefits of solar architecture to both the architects and the public are discussed thoroughly.

The sun has fascinated humans since the creation of mankind. This fascination has two conflicting relationships with man: It can be a friend as well as an enemy to man as it is shown by the sketch by Le Corbusier (figure 1), who said “it is the mission of modern architecture to concern itself with the sun.” This fascination affected greatly the solar architecture that is discussed in this lecture. There are five different factors that influence the evolution of solar architecture as an art and science. These factors are: natural adaptation, religious creeds and practice, historical influences, scientific advancement, and literature. These factors show that the implementation of solar geometry is utilized to increase indoor comfort or to create dramatic religious effects.

First: natural adaptation to climate
The main objective of buildings is to create shelter from uncomfortable outdoor weather conditions. Lay people understand this fact, as can be seen when evaluating how the building form responds to weather diversity.

For example, one can see that vernacular architecture in hot and humid climates utilizes wood structures and large openings to increase natural ventilation; while in hot and arid climates the use of small openings and massive walls characterize their architecture (figure 2). This contrast in the forms of buildings and the use of materials for different weather is stated by Vitruvius in his ten books of architecture, written in the 1st century BC: “design of buildings out to conform to the diversity of climate”. It is important to remind ourselves that the sun is the main factor in climatic change in our planet. In fact, the word climate is derived from the Greek word “klima”, which means the slope of earth with respect to the sun.

Natural adaptation to climate is also very well witnessed in the Arabian Desert, where...
one can see that Arabs in the desert orient there tents toward south to utilize the sun movement to increase comfort conditions. This practice proves there keen understanding of the dynamic change of sun paths on daily and seasonal basis, since the sun path is low in the sky in winter and high in the summer (figure 3). The same concept was also understood and applied by the Pueblo Indian descendents of the Aansazi Native Americans in south-western Colorado, where they took advantage of natural rock formation with a south orientation to build villages (figure 4).

Second: religion and culture

The sun is a great sign of God and that is why human kind have been fascinated by the sun throughout history, to the point where it was considered a god by so many civilizations. There are many of verses in the Holy Qur’an that describes the sun as a great creation of Allah. Allah, in some verses, swears by the sun. There is even a verse in Qur’an, where Prophet Ibrahim argues with himself and his people. He, at one time, chose the sun as his god and when it disappeared, he refused it, arguing that he doesn’t like a god that disappears.

Many other verses in the Holy Qur’an describe God as the lord of sun rise and sunset; the lord of the two sunrises and the two sunsets in a different verse and the lord of the sunrises and sunsets in a third one. Sunrises and sunsets are interpreted scientifically as the daily changing direction of the sun relative to our planet.

Zoroastrians, Hindus, Buddhists, the Druids of England, the Aztecs of Mexico, the Incas of Peru and many others worshiped the sun. Arabs in the pre-Islamic ages also worshiped the sun according to their myths, where they believed in the immanence of the sun, such as “Allat,” and there are actually many mentions in the pre-Islamic Arabic literature that describe the sun as god.

Ancient civilizations have not only worshiped the sun but even have built temples with dramatic solar architecture. For example, Stonehenge in Salisbury (figure 5), England (from c. 2950 BC) is believed to belong to a sun worship cult. It is designed so that the sun rises in between the two main posts in the summer solstice. The same solar drama is found in a temple in Newgrange in Ireland (3100 BC), where the sun is penetrating through the main hall for 17 minutes in the winter solstice.

Ancient Egyptians had also worshiped the sun god Ra as it is shown in Abu Simbel (figure 6). In this example, one can witness the sun shining through the long corridor on the face of the four statues only two days a year (October and February 22). The sun worship was also practiced by the Greeks, where they worshiped Apollo and even build huge temples to the sun god.
Third: historical influence
The contribution of civilizations to solar architecture throughout history is vast. I’ve already discussed the construction of temples for sun worship by the Greeks, Egyptians and the people of ancient Europe. Now I would like to discuss solar architecture in public use.

There are many examples demonstrating the contribution of civilizations to solar architecture, but I’ll focus on examples from the Greek experience. The city of Priene is a Greek city in Asia Minor, was built with solar conscious planning. In this city, all houses have southern apertures to utilize the sun. The same concept was also applied in the city of Olynthus (figure 7).

The mature understanding of solar utilization in Greek architecture is documented by the great Greek philosophers. This included Socrates, who stated in the 4th century B.C.: “The house with a south aspect, the sun’s rays penetrate into the porticoes in winter, but in summer the path of the sun is right over our heads and above the roof that there is a shade”.

This statement shows an understanding of how to utilize the solar orientation, so low winter sun rays penetrate the spaces from sunrise to sunset and high summer sun rays are easily shaded by the roof and little overhangs, while it is impossible to achieve this benefit in east, west orientations and roof surfaces. Mathematical calculations reveal that south facades are exposed to longer direct solar radiations in winter than summer. A mathematical proof of Socrates’ statement for Kuwait City shows that more solar radiation is incident on a south facade in winter than summer.

The Romans have also used solar principles in their architecture, where they pioneered the use of glass for space heating purposes as it is evident in the baths of Herculaneum and Pompeii. This Roman solar principle is to achieve passive heating happened to be the first documented use of glass in architecture, which is used nowadays in cold climates to achieve both comfort and energy savings.

Fourth: scientific advancement
Even though the sun movement was very well understood by ancient people, the deep understanding of scientific facts of the solar system have always been a source of debate between philosophers. In fact, the contribution of Greek and Muslim scholars gave a strong platform to Nicolas Copernicus in 1543 when he published his treatise “The Revolution of Celestial Spheres”. He went against the church and pronounced the theory that the sun and not the earth was the centre of the universe. The scientific facts of this century are therefore based on the theory of “The Revolution of Celestial Spheres”.

Studying solar geometry and movement is essential for architects to develop the necessary intuition. This isn’t possible without going through the mathematical models.
that describe the shading performance of different shapes and orientations of physical geometry and materials in buildings within their environmental and site contexts. It is important to mention that it is also necessary to use mathematical solutions in an aesthetical context - challenge only solved by talented architects.

The last scientific base of aesthetical consideration in architecture is stated by Marcel Breuer, who discussed the importance of the identity and beauty of the shading device in buildings: “The sun control device has to be on the outside of the building, an element of the facade, an element of architecture. And because this device is so important a part of open architecture, it may develop into as characteristic form as Doric column”. This statement shows the necessity of integrating aesthetics, building identity and comfort in buildings. Marcel Breuer’s idea of a shading device extends beyond the functional use of shade in buildings to building identity, as is the case in Le Corbusier brise-soleil or sun breakers that became an identity to most of his buildings in the Indian side of Kashmir. [Le Corbusier’s largest project was the development of Chandigarh, which serves as the capital of two states, Punjab and Haryana.]

James Marston Fitch stated in his book *American Home, the Environmental Forces that Shape It*: “To minimize stressful fluctuations across the interface between the building and its immediate environment, manipulation of physical factors must be extended far beyond the building wall”. This means that architects have to be able to manipulate not only walls, but also other interior and exterior physical parameters to control environmental forces. The physical parameters can be building orientation and even site.

In addition, Ralph Knowles gave a reference and a boundary to architects’ imagination in his statement: “While it is true that design depends on imagination, imagination itself depends on the terms of reference given to it. These should be in the form of most reliable knowledge available”. This statement limited imagination to the latest available scientific discovery. It is important to mention at this point that Ralph Knowles wanted architects to be practical and to limit their imaginative talent to real solutions.

The application of the latest scientific and mathematical tools in solar architecture is used in teaching solar energy for building in the department of architecture in Kuwait University. In fact many students have used
solar radiation calculations, the sun machine, and computer simulation in their projects in early and developing stages of design.

**Fifth: Literature factor**

This factor creates an excessive challenge for architects, because they have to transform the literature of great human poetry into a visual architectural literature. In this part of the presentation, an Arabic poem of al-Mutanabbi is presented to the audience with translation to explain the beauty of the solar interaction with the environment. This poem describes the beautiful landscape of the countryside of the city of Bewan in medieval Persia, where the poet was surrendered by the beauty of the landscape and its influence on him and his companions. He described the interaction between himself and the gold sun spots that run away from his finger tips:

*The lush of groves caught in an eternal spring*

*Among them, an Arab brave, would appear strange of features, gestures, and expressions*

*This jinn laden garden, should King Solomon be passing through, would no doubt require an interpreter*

*Fearing that the sheer beauty of this enchanting place was enough for noble knights and their loyal steed to abandon their mission*

*So I wandered in paths veiled from the sun, yet sustained me with ample light*

*The sun showered my garments with glittering dinars that flutter away from my finger tips, Surrounding fruits with sheer lucidity like ambrosia without vessels*

Finally, there are many good examples of solar architecture in modern times. The basic principles of solar architecture have been used by famous architects such as Le Corbusier, Paul Rudolph, Oscar Niemeyer, Richard Neutra and I. M. Pei (figure 8).

In summary, the benefits of utilizing solar architecture are economic, environmental and aesthetic. Applying solar principles in architecture can capture and/or avoid the heat of the sun to create indoor comfort and reduce the level of emissions that cause environmental pollution and global warming as well.

![Figure 7](image)

**Figure 7**

![Figure 8](image)

**Figure 8**
Herb Containers of Arabia
Syrian Glazed Jars of the Mamluk Period

Lecture By Géza Fehérvári
Presented in English
27 September 2004

Good architectural design must consider energy efficient building forms. It is important - from the long-term economical point of view - that architects design solar-conscious buildings so that energy investment and user-comfort are both facilitated in an age that is plagued by the rising cost of fuel and environmental degradation. This is particularly important in the extremely harsh summer climate of Kuwait, where shading is scarce and valuable. This presentation introduces the concept of solar architecture and the factors that shape it throughout human history. The benefits of solar architecture to both the architects and the public are discussed thoroughly.

The baluster jars were used even before the Ayyubid period. Several such examples are known not only from Syria, but also from Egypt, Iraq and Iran. They have globular or spherical bodies, tall necks and everted or rolled rims. They vary in size, but the majority of them are large, measuring over 30 cm in height. Hence they could be used for holding and transporting larger amount of goods, most likely grains, oil or wine.

The albarello or, in plural albarellli have somewhat narrow cylindrical or polygonal bodies, tall necks and everted rolled rims. They were, until quite recently, apothecary vessels. It appears that this type was invented and introduced in Syria during the late 12th or early 13th century, although a recently discovered brownish glass vessel of the same type, which may be dated to the late 10th or early 11th century, could be regarded as this type. In any case the pottery version has very quickly spread over to Iraq, Iran and then to Italy and Spain, whence it spread all over Europe.

The third type of jars, the kuan type, as its name indicates, owe their origin to the imported Chinese, mainly blue and white jars which were arriving in the Near and Middle East during the 14th century. It is this third type, the kuan jars that this article is concerned with. At present some twenty-one such vessels are known to this author. It is interesting to note that most of these jars were discovered in sea ports or close to main harbours. Of the known vessels one is now preserved in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, two in the Royal Museum of History and Arts in Bruxelles, one provided with a lid is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; nine examples are in the Tareq Rajab Museum in Kuwait (figure 1) and the rest in various private collections in London and Amsterdam. Two more have to be added now to the twenty-one, since two such jars were sold at Christie’s in October, 2004.

Professor Géza Fehérvári received his doctoral degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London in 1961. In the same year he was appointed a lecturer at SOAS and later, a Professor of Islamic Art and Architecture. He retired with the title of Professor Emeritus in 1991, and joined the Hungarian Diplomatic Service as the Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary to Kuwait. After retiring in 1995, he joined the Tareq Rajab Museum as curator.
These jars are characterised by their ovoid bodies, short necks and everted, sometimes rolled rims. The necks and shoulders carry undulating scrolls, zigzag lines or simple crosshatchings. The main decoration, however, is on the central part of their bodies, either in slanting vertical panels, or in lobed cartouches, alternatively large floral or rather herbal designs may fill the surface of the body without a cartouche, a panel or a frame.

At closer examination it was noticed that the special designs in the panels, cartouches or standing freely, are actually pictures of the herbs the vessels had originally contained and in which they were exported. Thus, they can be regarded as "labels": An "international identification" that anybody, dealing with medical herbs, without any difficulty would be able to recognise. The "labels" of these known vessels presented eight different herbs. The identification of the herbs became possible by the use of two major publications: An extensive study by Anthony G. Miller and Miranda Morris, Plants of Dhofar. The Southern Region of Oman. Traditional, Economic and Medical Uses, Oman, 1988; the other one is the facsimile edition of Dioscorides’ Materia Medica, which was published in Graz in 1970.

[Based on the drawings in these two important publications, Mr. Tareq Rajab has drawn the relevant parts of these herbs and the author would like to express his gratitude to Mr. Rajab for his excellent illustrations.]

It is not possible here to give a full account of all the twenty-one jars and all the eight different herbs identified, only three different types were chosen and illustrated for this article and one, somewhat later example which seems to corroborate the theory put forward by this writer. For the complete publication of these jars see my "Herb Containers of Arabia. Syrian Glazed Jars of the Mamluk Period", Arts of Asia, vol.34, no.5, 2004, pp.41-55.

The first type of these jars present series of attached flowers in slanting vertical panels on the body of which now four examples are known. At the time when the article was published only two such vessels were known: one in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv.no.1956-160 and another in the Royal Museum of History and Arts in Bruxelles, inv.no.7812. This group, because of the main decoration, was named as "jars depicting ‘attached flowers’ or ‘eye’ motives". Since then two more jars with identical decoration were acquired by the Tareq Rajab Museum in Kuwait, namely inv.nos.CER2658TSR and CER2659TSR. It is the latter example which is illustrated here (figure 2). The herb that these jars may have contained was identified as euphorbia
cactus (figure 3) which reveals a series of fruit attached to each other and flanked by sharp thorns. The juice of this herb, according to Miller and Morris, was used to treat eye infections and also for various skin conditions.

The second type, of which only one example is known at present, illustrates a jar with a floral bush. The jar is in the Tareq Rajab Museum and on its body there are three large and several smaller flowering plants, painted mainly in blue, with branches in black (figure 4). They are shown without any panels, cartouches or frames. As an addition to its main design or "label," there is an undulating floral scroll on its shoulder and crosshatchings with dots on the neck. There is another similar herb illustrated in Dioscorides’ Materia Medica, where it is identified as onopordo acanthium (figure 5), which can speed up recovery from convalescence.

The third type of jars, of which five examples are known, is in the wide central band within lobed cartouches present floral sprays with four petals. A beautiful example of these five jars is the blue and white painted vessel in the Tareq Rajab Museum (figure 6). The central band of this and the other similarly decorated jars is bordered either by zigzag lines or by crosshatchings, while on their shoulders undulating floral scrolls run around. This group was identified as "jars decorated with floral spray with corollas." The herb that is illustrated on their bodies is identified as ficus sycomorus (figure 7), which for medical purpose was used on wounds to keep them dry and to help healing.

With the exception of one, all these jars, irrelevant whether they were painted in black, black and blue or just blue, were dated to the 15th century. The last example, a considerably smaller vessel, only 15.5cm
high, is definitely later. Probably as late as the 16th or even 17th century. Nevertheless its decoration in the central one band is not only interesting, but also seems to support the theory that the central designs on these jars are indeed herbs used for medical purpose. The central band is divided into five vertical panels, three of which presents a design that seems to be a simplified version of the four petaled herb (figure 8), identified as *ficus sycomorus* (figure 7). The other two panels present the picture of a female person. In the first one this person is crying or perhaps her face has some spots (figure 1), while in the second one she seems to be happy and recovered (figure 9). Accordingly, this small jar with its two portraits offers a strong support to the theory that the major designs of these kuan type jars are not just simple decorations, but rather labels, identifying the contents of the vessels.
Islam has a positive attitude towards the science of genealogy. It acquired a great honour as the Prophet (pbuh) took interest in the subject and persuaded his companions to learn it. He proclaimed the mastery of Abu Bakr on the practice.

However, Islam prohibited the misss-use of lineage and taking pride in ignorant fanaticism. It was narrated that the Prophet (pbuh) said: “whoever calls for tribalism, or fighting or death for the sake of that end, is not one of us”

In the beginning the science of genealogy was one of the branches of history and many scholars took interest in the science as an extension of the science of history. It soon became an independent science, with its own special rules, techniques and masters.

Scholars have often asserted the importance of the science, highly praised its advantages and persuaded others to study it in the introductions they wrote to their works on lineage. Not only did Imam bin Hazm point out the benefits and the legitimacy of the science, but also he refuted the statements claiming its knowledge as useless and the ignorance of it as harmless. In the introduction of his book Al-Ansab [Genealogy in English] Imam al-Sam'ani says: “The science of genealogy is one of the most important sciences that God inspired”, then he cited the Prophet’s (pbuh) words: “learn from your lineage what makes you good towards your blood relations, as this results in love of the family, prosperity and longevity”. The late Sheikh Hamad Jassir said: “The science of lineage acted as introduction to the study of the history of Arabs; it represents its primary stage”. He added: “on this basis we look at aspects of our heritage and we have to base our study and research of the science on that perspective”.

Abu Bakr al-Sidiq was the first to seriously study genealogy which was inherited later by companions and scholars after him. Imam al-Zuhari (d.124 AH) was one of the earliest authors in this field. At present, the interest in studying lineage extends to distinguished scholars, such as members of the board of scholars in the Saudi Kingdom who write on the subject and write introductions to works of other authors.

It is well-known that writing on the lineage of Arabs and Muslims, started in the second century AH. The practice grew more during the prosperous Islamic centuries, and then diminished gradually to disappear in the age of deterioration.

This state of decline lasted until the modern age of revival, when writing on lineage again flourished in the 14th century AH. There were some limited attempts by Arab researchers to publish books on the subject, for example, Suleiman al-Dikheel who published Al-Qalqashandi’s Nihayat al-Irab fi ma’rifat Ansab

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al-Arab [Achievement and Goals in Tracing Arab Genealogy] in 1332 AH. There is also Ahmed Wasfi Zakariya (d. 1384 AH) who wrote a book entitled Asha’ir al-Sham [Branches of Tribes in Al-Sham] which was published in 1363 AH. There is also the book written by Omar Reda Kahala, Mu’jam Qaba’il al-Arab [A Dictionary of Arab Tribes], which was published in 1368 AH in Syria. In Iraq, Abbas al’Azzawi wrote Asha’ir al-Iraq [Branches of Tribes in Iraq], published in 1365 AH.

Other books were published and edited in Arab countries, as some Arab authors showed interest in the lineage of Arab tribes. In 1368 AH Muh’ib bin al-Khatib published the 10th part of al-Ikleel [The Wreath], while Mahmoud Shaker edited, Jamharat Nasab Qorysh, which was published in 1381 AH (figure 1).

In Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Hamad al-Jassir was a pioneer in the revival of that science, encouraging others to write and edit by publishing his own editions of manuscripts, including works on genealogy, including encyclopedic works such as Mu’jam Qaba’il al Mamlaka [Dictionary of the Kingdom Tribes] and Jamharat Ansab al-Usar al-Mutahaddira [Encyclopaedia of the Genealogy of Civilised Ages] and others.

The science of genealogy is a special interest in this region. In spite of the fact that Arab society is not fond of reading, books written on that subject are very popular. This is pointed out by the scholar of Arabia Sheikh Hamad al-Jassir who says: “I wrote on history and geography, on literature, and journeys. Then I wrote on genealogy in my two books Mu’jam Qaba’il al Mamlaka [Dictionary of the Kingdom Tribes] and Jamharat Ansab al-Usar al-Mutahaddira [Encyclopaedia of the Genealogy of Civilised Ages] which were received with great interest.”

This science acquires its importance as it is based on universal law and human instinct, as explained in the Qur’an in Sura XLIIX [Al-Hujurat], verse 13: “Mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).” In verse 54 from Sura XXV [Al-Furqan] it says, “It is He who has created man from water. Then has he established relationships of lineage and marriage, for thy lord has power (over all things).”

Allah has already explained the point of creating people in this form: namely, getting acquainted with each other leads to much benefit for the nation. There is also man’s need to have a party to support him, verse 13 from Sura LXX [Al-Ma’arif]: “His Kindred who sheltered him”. Given the natural instinct that urges men to get acquainted with his origins, genealogy books are very popular, not only among Arabs, but also among the most advanced nations.

In the more civilized societies, with flourishing sciences, the interest paid to the science of genealogy is high. Research in the subject flourishes as a result of a scientific revival leading to more studies and research in all fields of life, including demography and history of populations, investigating their roots and genealogy, and the relationships between individuals, families, tribes and clans.

Many works of genealogy were written in the Abbasid age. This interest decreased during the ages of decline. Eventually there was a revival in the modern age. Authorship on lineage always coincides with the ages of prosperity, as evident in this list of the most famous writers on genealogy:

- Kharash al-Shibani al-Ajli (d. 120 AH), Akhbar Rabee’a wa Ansabeha. [Chronicle of Rabee’a and their Genealogy]
- Imam al-Zuhari (d. 124 H)
- Abu’l Yaqdhan Sihim bin Hafs (d. 190 H), Nasab Khandaf wa Akhbaraha [Genealogy of Khandaf and their Chronicle]
- Mu’arrij al-Sidousi (d.195 H), Hadif fi Nasab Quraysh [The Missing Text from the Genealogy of Quraysh]
- Mohammed bin Sa’ib al-Kalbi (d. 146 H) who wrote Akhbar bani Taghlib wa Ayyamuha [Chronicle of Bani Taghlib and their Battles]
- Hisham bin Mohamed bin Sa’ib al-Kalbi (d. 204 H), Jamharat al-Nasab [Encyclopaedia of Genealogy] (figure 2)
- Abdel Malek bin Hisham al-Himyari (d.213 H), Ansab Himyar wa Mulukaha [Genealogy of Himyar and their Kings]
- Abu Obyd al-Qasm bin Salam al-Azadi (d.224 H), Al-Nasab [Genealogy]
- Ibn Sa’d al-Waqidi (d.231 H), Al-Tabaqat al-
genealogy is due to the rarity of specialists and the lack of interest from academic and official organizations. This gave unqualified persons the opportunity to write on the subject without any moral or professional rules. This was also encouraged by the financial benefits of publishing, which allowed those looking for fame to write on the subject.

The civilized west still takes interest in the study of regional tribal conditions and supports field scientific research on the subject. Much was published on the various aspects of the subject in the late 14th century AH. Mozal wrote on the Arabs of al-Rola, Thames Barfield wrote a work on Central Asian Arabs in Afghanistan. Dr. William Yang wrote a book on the tribes of Rashayda in Sudan. Bruce Angam wrote his book The tribe of Al-Zufair.

As western Orientalists took an interest in genealogy with the advent of renaissance, in the meantime Muslims withdrew from that field in the 13th and 14th centuries AH. Orientalists began publishing translated books on genealogy in the 12th century AH. A German orientalist, Ferdinand Wüstenfeld published Ibn Durid al-Ishiqiq (The Derivation), a book on the genealogy of Arab tribes and Ibn Habib's Mukhtalaf al-Qabo'il wa mu'talafih [Different and Intimate Tribes]. He made detailed charts for the genealogy of Arab tribes. Another published the 11th part of Ansab al-Ashraf: The genealogy of nobles by Balaziri.

In the early 14th century Hebrew University in Jerusalem published two parts of the above...
mentioned book, namely, the 5th part and the 2nd part of the fourth section. Later, the French published *Gamhurat Ansab al-Arab* (Encyclopaedia of Arab Genealogy) by Ibn Hazm and *Nasab Quraysh* (Quraysh Genealogy) by Abdulla al-Zubairi. *Turfat al-Ashab fi Maʾrifat al-Ansab* (Friends and Anecdotes in Learning Genealogy) was published in Sweden about the same time.

At the turn of the 13th century the Austrian orientalist Zambaro wrote his book *Mujam Ansab al-Usar al-Hakema fi Ṭarikh al-Islami* (A Dictionary of Ruling Dynasties' Genealogy in Islamic History), which was published in Arabic by the Fuad al-Awal University Press, Egypt. He tried to trace the pedigrees of all rulers and sultans in the Islamic world. He was followed by Douglas Lorimer who drew intricate pedigrees for a number of ruling dynasties in Arabia. The age of tracking pedigrees in this region was launched when Mohammed Amin al-Tamimi traced the pedigree of Al-Saud in 1363 AH and 1382 AH.

In the beginning genealogical studies were focused only on ruling dynasties, soon it spread and became a phenomenon in the Gulf, especially after the last economic boom. Hence the art of preparing pedigrees is quite common among calligraphers and publishing houses. Dr. Emad al-Atiqi from Kuwait University has made an attempt to set some rules for preparing pedigrees in his book *Dalli Incha’ wa Tahqiq Salasil al-Ansab* (A Guide to the Formation and Verification of Genealogical Pedigrees).

In the United States there are 53 magazines and periodicals specialized in genealogy, according to statistics collected in the mid-14th century AH. In each American state there is a genealogists’ society. In Washington D.C. there is a board which issues licenses for genealogists, and there are many forums and conferences held on genealogy in America and Europe. In spite of all the interest in genealogy in the West, we haven’t had any specialized periodicals since the passing away of the scholar of Arabia, Sheikh Hamad al-Jassir.

The science of genealogy in our country is excluded from educational syllabuses. No official organization is responsible for its follow up. That’s why it is still not up to standard. In addition, unqualified people take up writing in this very sensitive and great science, which distorts its image and has caused much criticism.

Throughout my experience of 20 years, I discovered many obstacles that hinder the mastery of the science and created a great disagreement, not only among the members of one family, but also among researchers. This is due to little interest in recording the genealogy of families and tribes.

In the past this was not preserved in writing because of illiteracy and the lack of security, creating many gaps in the chains of genealogy. This led to many disagreements among researchers and narrators. They often rely on the hearsay of others and can’t distinguish between specialised and other sources.

This issue is evident in what has been added to the genealogy of some tribes because of the similarity of tribal names, their branches and the tendency to establish relationships among similar names, fabricating stories to prove the relation and take it as true after the passing of one or two generations.

Genealogists like al-Hamadani and Al-Jassir have pointed out that similarity in names might cause mixing up in genealogy. Difficulties are also originated by the ignorance of many people of their lineage and their adherence to oral narration and their belief that what they received from their ancestors as the right version. Experience showed that an ordinary man cannot trace the line of his ancestors after the 5th grandfather, unless this information is certified scientifically and legitimately.

Many writers on the subject of genealogy tend to follow some approaches that are contrary to the basic rules in the subject. A researcher has to be very careful in dealing with such received criteria. Imam Malek gave an example when discussing the juridical criterion, stating that "individuals’ statements of their genealogy are likely to be true, since they claim no honour to themselves." As a matter of fact, this is a juridical rule which had been formulated to attribute a child born through adultery to a father in context of inheritance laws. Such a statement was never cited in books of genealogy, but it came in a book on jurisprudence. However,
unspecialized writers and laymen chose to adhere to that rule, ignoring the second part of the statement, relying on it in tracing their genealogy and replying to their opponents. The fact is that members of one family or one tribe might have different opinions on their attribution to a certain grandfather. So those involved in scientifically researching genealogy are less confident in the efficacy of that well known rule.

Equally unreliable is oral narration, which a researcher should not completely trust. He has to seek what may prove or disprove that narration, since an oral narrator is not an ultimate authority on genealogy due to ignorance, fanaticisms and exaggerated self esteem. Sheikh Hamad al-Jassir in this context, points to the unreliability of oral narration in the following words: “Each narrator takes the side of his own tribe or a tribe he personally favours. Similarly, he might attribute unfavourable qualities to whoever he doesn’t like”. On another occasion, talking of the genealogy of some tribes of Najd he says: “We can’t rely on what’s narrated by laymen”.

This includes what’s narrated by such people concerning genealogy, stories related to the causes of migration of families or tribes as well as their names. People tend to believe whatever they received from their fathers and forefathers. However this practice shouldn’t be followed by researchers without investigation. We are warned against blindly copying forefathers in the Holy Quran: verse 170, Sura II [Al-Baqara]: “when it is said to them: Follow what God hath revealed: they say ‘Nay! We shall follow the ways of our fathers.”

Many genealogists are likely to rely on sources that are reliable and unreliable. In brief, sources on genealogy could be classified into weak books like those by Ibn al-Kalbi and Mughirli, doubtful books like The history of Saif bin Omar, unedited books like compiled books, sourceless books, and fabricated books like Imtah al-Samer [Entertaining the Listener].

One of the main causes of weakness for any source, even if written by a scientist, is to be written at a distance. Many genealogists wrote their works while they were far from the quarters where certain tribes or families lived. An example of that practice is the book entitled Al-Jamhara [The Encyclopaedia] by Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi, who wrote on the tribes of al-Jaziera, though he never went there, or visited their quarters.

Cheaters and fabricated stories are also contrary to the science of genealogy. One has also to be careful of weak or unreliable narrations cited by well known historians. Sheikh Abu Abdel Rahman al-Zaher says in this respect: “What’s claimed by Al-Sayadi, Ibn Zaid or others, attaching a new tribe’s name to an old one, cannot be accepted without discussion, unless it is based on sources indicating long centuries series”.

Many laymen and writers rely on oral colloquial poetry in genealogical attribution, which is not a proper methodology to be applied by a good researcher. An Arab proverb says: “The sweetest poetry is the most untrue”.

The scholar Sheikh Hamad al-Jassir is the first one to avoid relying on contemporary colloquial poetry. In an interview he says: “unfortunately since mid-last century i.e. after 1350 AH until today, a kind of literature has grown of a lower status; faking and changes have become commonly practiced”. The reliability of the book and its scientific value decline as the author cites more colloquial poetry in its content.

Genealogy is one of the most prestigious and honourable sciences. It is not limited to Islamic or Arab culture, but it is one of the branches of science frequently written about during times of scientific and cultural prosperity and which diminishes during ages of cultural a scientific decline.

Writing on genealogy is an international phenomenon. However it has some negative aspects in some Arab countries, as it lacks appliance of professional measures and suffers from deviation from scientific and social targets.
ESSENCE AND APPEARANCE:
LOOKING AGAIN AT MUGHAL PORTRAITS

B. N. Goswamy
Presented in English
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Drawing the likeness of anything is called taswir. ... His Majesty (the Emperor Akbar) himself sat for his likeness, and also ordered to have the likenesses taken of all the grandees of the realm. An immense album was thus formed; those that have passed away have received a new life, and those who are still alive have immortality promised them."

Abu’l Fazl, Ain-i Akbari

As regards myself (the emperor Jahangir), my liking for painting and practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, either of deceased artists or of those of the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face be the work of a different master, I can discern which face is the work of each of them. If any other person has put in the eye and eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is, and who has painted the eye and eyebrows.

Jahangir, Tuzuk-i Jahangiri

The Mughals were - patrons as much as their painters - "intent upon the present moment, and profoundly interested in individuality," as that subtle knower of the arts of India, Ananda Coomaraswamy, observed while discussing Rajput Painting. Commenting upon the art of the Mughals, he said that among their 'greatest successes' were those that were achieved in portraiture, the 'sheer intensity of observation, passionate delineation,' raising some 'individual works to the highest possible rank.'

The great quality of Mughal portraits apart, something to which one will return, it may not be far wrong to state that in India the very notion of what can be called 'true portraiture' came in only with the Mughals. This is not to say that there was no interest in, or mention of, portraiture in the earlier periods. Prior to the 16th century, in fact, there are profuse references to portraits in the literature of India, but how portraiture, likeness in other words, was viewed was very different from what it is generally understood to be.

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Portraiture in pre-Mughal India implied no lack of observation, but it meant essentially laying the right kind of emphasis on **lakshanas**, characteristic or cognitive attributes that defined a person, or made one recognize him. Simply put, the Mughal painter, on the other hand, was prone to looking unblinkingly at a person when he wanted to take a likeness.

It is possible to go into these contrasting approaches at length, the one intent upon essence, and the other upon appearance; a large number of images can be considered. But a simple example or two, even in purely verbal terms, might make the point. Consider, thus, this description by the emperor Jahangir in his Memoirs, of his father, the great Akbar:

*In his august appearance he (Akbar) was of middle height, but inclining to be tall; he was of the hue of wheat; his eyes and eyebrows were black, and complexion dark than fair; he was lion-bodied, with a broad chest, and his hands and arms long. On the left side of his nose he had a fleshy mole, very agreeable in appearance, of the size of half a pea.... His august voice was very loud and in speaking and explaining had a peculiar richness. In his actions and movements he was not like the people of the world, and the glory of God manifested in him...* 

![Figure 1](image1)

![Figure 2](image2)

Much earlier than this, in what one might call the native Indian tradition, the 7th century poet Bana, described his patron, the emperor Harsha whom he had the opportunity of observing day after day — being his court poet and chronicler — in the most conventional of terms, classical descriptions of a **Chakravartin**, ‘the Great Man turning the Wheel’, never far from his thoughts. He speaks thus of the redness of Harsha’s lips “bedewing all the regions of space like the exudation of a branch of the heavenly tree”; the great emperor’s toenails were “like the ten directions of space impersonate”, spreading rays “white like fine linen”; his two thighs “bore the weight of the earth which rested on his heart, like two sandalwood trees with the rays from crest jewels of the serpents clustered around them”; and so on.

The eyes of one of Harsha’s generals are described by Bana again as “being exceedingly soft, sweet, white and large, as if they had drunk the Milk Ocean”; his forehead was “full and wide beyond even the mountain Meru’s flank....” It is clear that here Bana is constantly moving from the world of observation into that of iconography, similes and poetic flamboyance interesting him more than actual, verifiable detail. The approach is aimed at conjuring up a vision, an ideal that transcends ages, rather than invoking a real image of a person caught in a moment of time.

Whatever caused this change of approach, a number of factors come to mind, the fact remains that for and under the Great Mughals magnificent portraits were made. Understandably, turning out likenesses of each succeeding emperor must have been the most natural thing for the painters to do, for the arts centred essentially round the court.

Even from what has survived the ravages of time, it is possible to form a fair idea of the numbers and the quality of these portraits. The emperors can be seen everywhere in illustrated manuscripts that chronicled the reigns, in the company of other figures in allegorical images, receiving princes and generals, issuing commands, conferring favours upon the elect, inside the harem, by themselves in isolated folios destined to enter imperial albums. There were, naturally, other figures too that were carefully observed and portrayed, but almost always attention goes first to royal figures. Especially to those in which an emperor is seen by himself, gazing royally in one direction, or contemplating something, like a jewel or a flower, held in one elegant hand.
There is stylization in these images, but also keen observation.

When Jahangir is rendered by the painters Hashim and Nadir-al Zaman, holding and gazing at a portrait of his late father, Akbar, (figure 1) the viewer’s eye is ensnared at once by the sheer magnificence of the image: the noble, self-assured head surrounded by a glittering nimbus, the splendid patterning on the brocaded green-and-gold *jama*, the elegantly tied turban with a wrap-around string of pearls and emeralds and rubies at its base, the double-string of pearls and emeralds and rubies wound round the neck, the gold pendant. The wonderfully observed portrait of his father that the emperor holds up does not have the same air of grandeur, for the apparel is far simpler and there is no jewellery on his person. But there is gravity in it and great presence, brought in as much by the finely rendered nimbus that surrounds the head as by the orb of authority and dominion that rests in his hand.

There is subtlety in the whole rendering for neither the emperor nor the painters could have been able to cast out of their minds the not so distant events of Jahangir, while still a prince, having virtually rebelled against his father and set up a parallel court. Is there a sense of guilt in the painting then, one wonders, a moment of introspection perhaps? But these thoughts come to mind only when one dwells upon the picture or goes into history: simply viewed, the painting stands out as yet another brilliantly rendered image of royal refugence.

Magnificence again is the theme of Nadir-al Zaman’s portrait of Shah Jahan examining a newly-cut seal. The royal head is nimbate, with fine rays radiating from the circle which is left uncoloured directly behind the emperor’s head to throw it into sharper relief; in his left hand the emperor holds the engraved seal, much as he would hold a flower or a ruby in some state portraits; his right arm covers the hilt of the dagger that is tucked in his waist-band, while the hand rests lightly on a sword. The precious look, the sharply observed features, the superbly coloured mauve dress set off by the golden-yellow fastenings of the *jama* under the right armpit, the strings of pearls and emeralds and rubies that bedeck the turban and the neck and the wrists of the emperor: everything is carefully worked in. The moment chosen for the rendering of this portrait with a seal – the accession of the emperor to the throne of India – is naturally meaningful. But, once again, what comes across at sight is an image of sumptuousness and splendour.

Portraits such as these – imperial, sub-imperial, royal, princely - are what came to define our view of Mughal work. It is easy to understand that this level of quality was not always reached, but a great many painters were involved, and a significant number of opulent works were produced. What does not often receive an equal amount of attention, or at least appreciation, however, is the portraits of persons of lower worldly rank that the painters so often turned out. A whole range of them has come down: images of holy men and seekers, poets and painters, physicians and astrologers. More often than not, they appear to be simple works, sometimes only brush drawings devoid of colour, not demanding close attention from the viewer. But when one regards them with care, one discerns in them a sense of warmth, a feeling of closeness to the subject that is so often missing from the more formal, state portraits that the period is so rich in.

The most well-known among the portraits of relatively ordinary men is, of course, the celebrated ‘Dying Man’: Inayat Khan, whom Jahangir described in his memoirs as just ‘skin stretched over bones’, someone whose bones had even ‘begun to disintegrate’. But there are so many others that are compelling in their quality: a painter like the aged Keshavadas, humble petition in hand, attempting to catch the emperor’s eye; a nearly blind Mullah seated listening to a poorly clad servant paring a fruit; two un-named saintly men conversing seated in the open, under a tree; Gosain Jadup, gaunt and bent with age, in his cavernous hovel, with the emperor Jahangir facing him; a group of Sufis and poets occupying a simple carpet, reciting or listening (figure 2); the physician
‘Masih-al Zaman’ seen by himself in a thumbnail sketch (figure 3): these are the kind of images one speaks of here. There is an air of intimacy in these studies, a ‘passionate delineation’, that leaves one deeply affected. It is possible that the whitening of distance from the subject, a sense of identification on the painter’s part with the inner self of these unpretentious characters, is what makes them what they are. But, whatever the case, these are supreme achievements: simple but extremely refined, sharply observed but as if from the inside.

Not infrequently, these paintings of ordinary men, caught in the spiral of time, succeed in touching off thoughts in the viewer’s mind that come from somewhere else than the work itself. From the domains of literature, for instance, or of music. On my part, for instance, that wonderful portrait of an old man ascribed to Nadir-al Zaman—leaning upon a staff, telling beads, lean, desiccated frame, body marked by the ravages of time, bent back, stooped shoulders—never fails to bring to mind a relatively recent poem by the great Urdu poet, Sardar Ja’afri.

The painting is filled with allusions: the vast uncharted area of darkness behind the figure suggestive of approaching end, the delicately rendered flowering plant in the foreground as if it were a promise of return. But so also, with similar allusions and assertions, is Ja’afri’s poem which he titled: ‘My Journey’ and begins with the words: “Phir ik din aisaa aayega/ haathon ke kamal kumhlaayenge/ aankhon ke diye bujh jaayenge...”. Nearly four hundred years separate the painting from the poem, but I am tempted to cite it in full here. This, because somehow it enhances the painting: it does not only allow us to see it differently, but also makes us wonder if thoughts such as these were also not coursing through the painter’s head four centuries ago. In any case this is how, roughly translated, the poem runs:

And then that day will come:
when the lotuses of my hand will begin to wither,
the lamps of my eyes will grow dim,
and, from the branch that my tongue is,
all butterflies of speech and articulation,
shall fly away one by one.

All the forms that I know, all shapes that I hold dear,
a blossom like flowers, wonted in smiles,
will disappear, sinking to the bottom of dark, eddying waters.
And this earth, this sliver of diamond that I tread on,
will, for me, cease to be.
All the dawns, and all the dusks that I know
will turn into a dew-drop,
a tear perhaps?
or a fistful of dust?

But I know that I shall come back again;
return.
And shall speak again through the lisping tongues of little children,
the sweet twitter of birds.
When seeds sprout in the soil and little shoots will begin caressing
the surface of the earth with their tiny fingers,
I shall be there.
And I shall open my eyes once more
and see the world afresh, through each leaf,
each bud that blossoms.
Then shall I rest little dew-drops, as if judging their weight,
on my outstretched palm.
I shall be everything then, and everywhere:
in the colour of henna
in the sounds of words
in the rhythm of poetry
in the glow upon the cheek of each newly-wed bride.
I shall be everywhere then, and everything.
When winter will come and leaves begin to fall
it is under my feet that they will crackle.
And all the blue lakes that are in the sky,
all the gold in the streams that flow
on this earth,
shall be reflecting me then, my presence.
And every tale that is told anywhere
shall belong to me.
Sardar shall be the name of each lover that there is
And ‘Sultana’ that of each beloved.

What am I?
A fugitive, elusive moment
in this wonder-house of Time;
Just a drop that fingers
and trembles
as it makes its way
from the carol of the past
into the goblet of the future.
I go to sleep, then wake,
And then go off to sleep again.
This is the way it has been
since Time began:
I am but a part of the Play that is. Death does not come to me.
I do not cease to be.

Figure 1
Jahangir gazing at a portrait of his late father, Akbar

Figure 2
A group of Sufis and poets occupying a simple carpet

Figure 3
The physician ‘Masih-al Zaman’