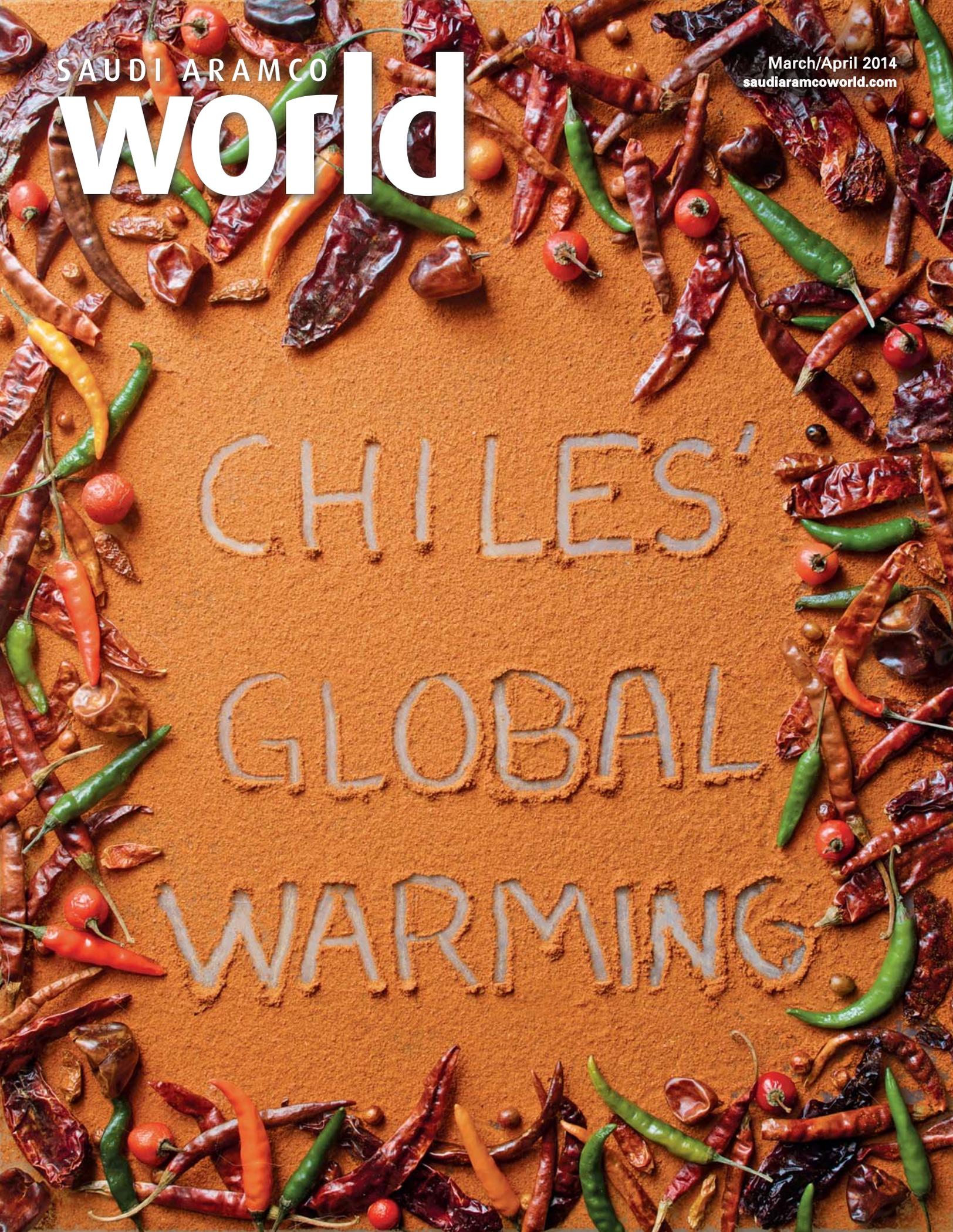


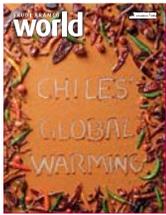
SAUDI ARAMCO

March/April 2014  
saudiaramcoworld.com

# World

CHILES'  
GLOBAL  
WARMING





Sweet or hot, fresh or dried, chopped, ground, flaked or whole, five species of *Capsicum* and their dozens of varieties set taste buds tingling from North Africa and Hungary to China and Indonesia within just 50 years of their introduction. Photo by Deana Sidney.

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**President**

Nabeel M. Amudi

**Director**

**Public Affairs**  
Ali M. Al Mutairi

**Editor**

Robert Arndt

**Managing Editor**

Dick Doughty

**Assistant Editor**

Arthur P. Clark

**Circulation**

Edna Catchings

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**Back Cover**



Captain's notes on a marine chart of the Bosphorus' southern mouth hint at the expertise the strait has always demanded from seamen, who today carry out a sequence of seven precision turns amid a swarm of commuter ferries and fishing boats, as well as the strait's own notorious eddies and cross-currents. Photo by Matthieu Paley.

Saudi Aramco, the oil company born as an international enterprise more than eighty years ago, distributes *Saudi Aramco World* to increase cross-cultural understanding. The magazine's goal is to broaden knowledge of the cultures, history and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their connections with the West. *Saudi Aramco World* is distributed without charge, upon request, to a limited number of interested readers.



## 2 Chiles' Global Warming

Written and photographed by Deana Sidney

Vying with Ottomans and Arabs for trade routes to black pepper-rich India, Columbus and those who followed ignited trade in New World *Capsicum* or "chile" peppers, which, unlike black pepper, adapted easily almost everywhere they were carried. From Morocco to Indonesia, by Silk Road and sea, chiles have been transforming tastes, improving nutrition and enriching culinary identities ever since.



## 12 The Immigrant's Progress

Written and illustrated by Norman MacDonald

"Without immigration, there is no progress, I have been told. In few places is this as true as Amsterdam, my own adopted home," writes the author and artist, who bicycled into his neighborhood to listen and sketch Kader, Karim, Leena, Nora, Fahim, Karsu, Osman and others.

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## Bosporus: Strait Between Two Worlds

Written by Louis Werner  
Photographed by Matthieu Paley

The 32-kilometer liquid line that winds between Asia and Europe and splits the city of Istanbul is a lifeline for marine commerce and one of the world's busiest waterways: It is also one of the trickiest straits to navigate, as tanker pilot Ahmet Turna demonstrates while northbound aboard the *M/T Ottoman Nobility*.



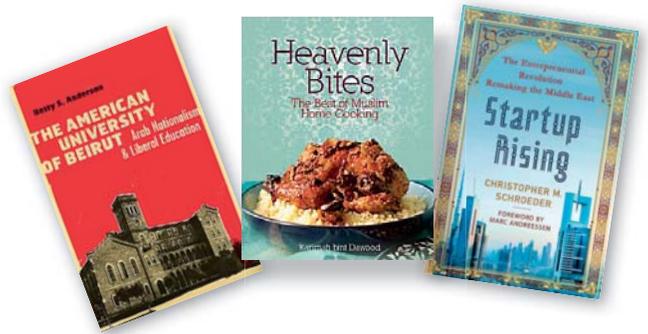
# 34 Unani: Medicine's Greco-Islamic Synthesis

Written and photographed by Stewart Gordon

Prevalent in western India and Pakistan yet largely unknown elsewhere, herb-based Unani medicine was born in Greece and Rome, and matured through centuries of dialogue among Arab, Persian and Indian physicians. Today it is one of India's five state-recognized non-western medical systems.



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# Chiles' Global Warming

Written and photographed by DEANA SIDNEY

Can you imagine a world without salsa? Or Tabasco sauce, harissa, sriracha, paprika or chili powder?

I asked myself that question after I found a 700-year-old recipe for one of my favorite foods, *merguez*—North Africa's beloved lamb sausage that is positively crimson with chiles. The medieval version was softly seasoned

with such warm spices as black pepper, coriander and cinnamon instead of the brash heat of capsicum chile peppers—the signature flavor of the dish today.

The cuisines of China, Indonesia, India, Bhutan, Korea,

# Recipes:

## Merguez and the *Capsicum* Transformation



Typical of culinary transformations brought on by Old World trade in New World capsicum chiles were the changes to the simple, classic lamb sausage of North Africa and the Middle East called *mirkas* or *merguez*. While a 13th-century recipe spiced it warmly with black pepper, cinnamon and coriander, today merguez

is defined by the brash heat of dried capsicums and is enjoyed from New York to Hong Kong.

At [saudiaramcoworld.com](http://saudiaramcoworld.com), author Deana Sidney presents one home recipe each for pre- and post-capsicum merguez—and then takes a video tour of today's merguez makers and fans in New York City.



Find recipes at [saudiaramcoworld.com](http://saudiaramcoworld.com).

Hungary and much of Africa and the Middle East would be radically different from what they are today if chiles hadn't returned across the ocean with Columbus. Barely 50 years after the discovery of the New World, chiles were warming much of the Old World. How did they spread so far, so fast? The answers may surprise you—they did me!

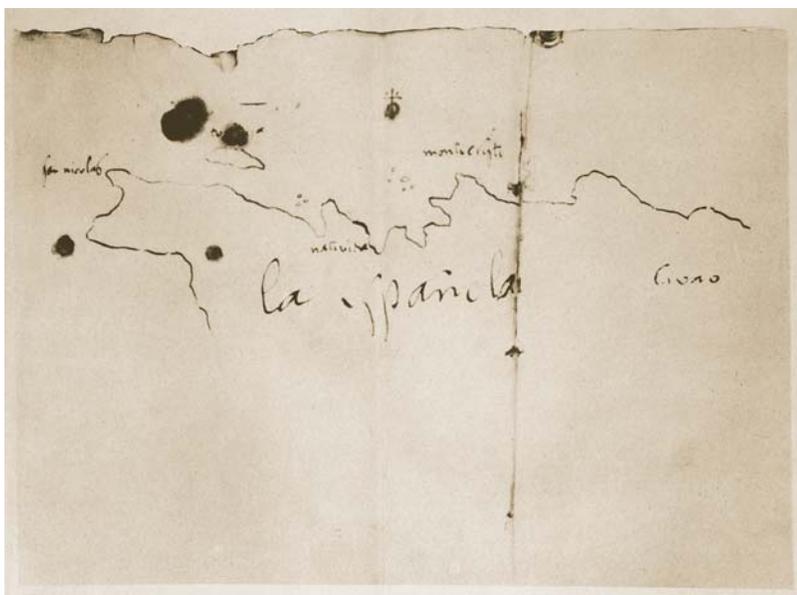
I learned that Mamluk and Ottoman Muslims were nearly as responsible for the discovery of New World peppers as Columbus—but I'm getting ahead of myself.

The global pepper saga begins in the first millennium

BCE with the combustible career of another pepper—black pepper (*Piper nigrum*) and its cousins, Indian long pepper and Javanese cubeb. Although *Piper nigrum* was first grown on the Malabar Coast in India, the taste for it enflamed the ancient world: No matter what the cost—and it was very high—people were mad for pepper. The Romans, for example, first tasted it in Egypt, and the demand for it drove them to sail to India to buy it. In the first century, Pliny complained about the cost: "There is no year in which India does not drain the Roman Empire of fifty million sesterces."

In one sense, the whole global system of trade—the sea and land routes throughout the known world that spread culture and cuisine through commerce—was engaged with the appetite for pepper, in its growth, distribution and consumption.

Not surprisingly, vast wealth came from the control of access to black pepper. India held the secrets of its cultivation and was the sole supplier;



Far left: **This sketch of the coast of "La Española" is attributed to Columbus's own hand, from his first voyage. He also recorded that, in response to being shown samples of black pepper, locals guided him and his crew to abundant allspice berries, shown dried at left.**

Silk Road trading routes throughout China and the Middle East were its primary delivery system.

The decline of the Mongol Empire, which had protected the Silk Roads, and the subsequent fall of Byzantium in 1453, began to fracture the great trading partnerships; warring factions began implementing embargoes along the land routes. The Mamluks and the Ottomans controlled choke points along the land and sea routes and levied punishing taxes on goods moving through their domains. This made the land routes unaffordably expensive, so if Europe was to have pepper, a new sea route had to be found to get it.

Both possible routes were perilous. Sailing around the African continent into the Indian Ocean had been proved possible in 1488 by Bartolomeu Dias of Portugal, thanks in part to Arab navigators, cartographers and sailors. Spain was left with the other option: to sail west across the uncharted



The world BC (“Before Chiles”) was for more than 1300 years defined by the map drawn by Claudius Ptolemy of Greece, shown above in a 15th-century copy. The Indian Ocean is shown as a closed sea, little of Africa shows below the equator, and the Americas are absent altogether.

Enslaved Africans were fed “slabber sauce”—a mash of capsicum peppers, flour and oil—poured over beans to keep them alive during the horrible sea journeys they were forced to endure. Portuguese sailors ate capsicums the way English sailors would eat limes, to ward off the diseases of long sea voyages, and they doubtless shared this secret with seaman of other nationalities.

In 1988, Chinese scholar E.N. Anderson wrote, “Among the *Solanaceae* is the New World’s gift to mankind, the chili pepper (*Capsicum frutescens* and *C. annum*). Brought to the Orient by the Portuguese in the 1500s, these plants did not remain a minor and local part of the diatom as did tomatoes and eggplants, but swept through the Far East with epochal effect. Perhaps no culinary advance since the invention of distilling had had more effect than the propagation of chili peppers in the Old World. The main one is *C. annum*. Not only did it incalculably benefit the cuisine of all those peoples civilized enough to accept it, it also is high in vitamins A and C, iron, calcium, and other minerals; is eminently storable and usable in pickles; can be grown anywhere under any conditions....”

Atlantic into *mare incognitum* and hope to reach India from the other side.

Columbus took advantage of a Portuguese discovery, the *volta do mar*, a great circular current, or gyre, caused by the earth’s rotation, one of two in the Atlantic Ocean. It shortened his travel time considerably, allowing him to reach what he thought was India (but that was actually a

Caribbean island—Samana Cay, Grand Turk, the Plana Cays, Mayaguana and Conception Island are all possibilities) when his crew was on the verge of mutiny. Columbus began searching for the spices and other treasures of India.

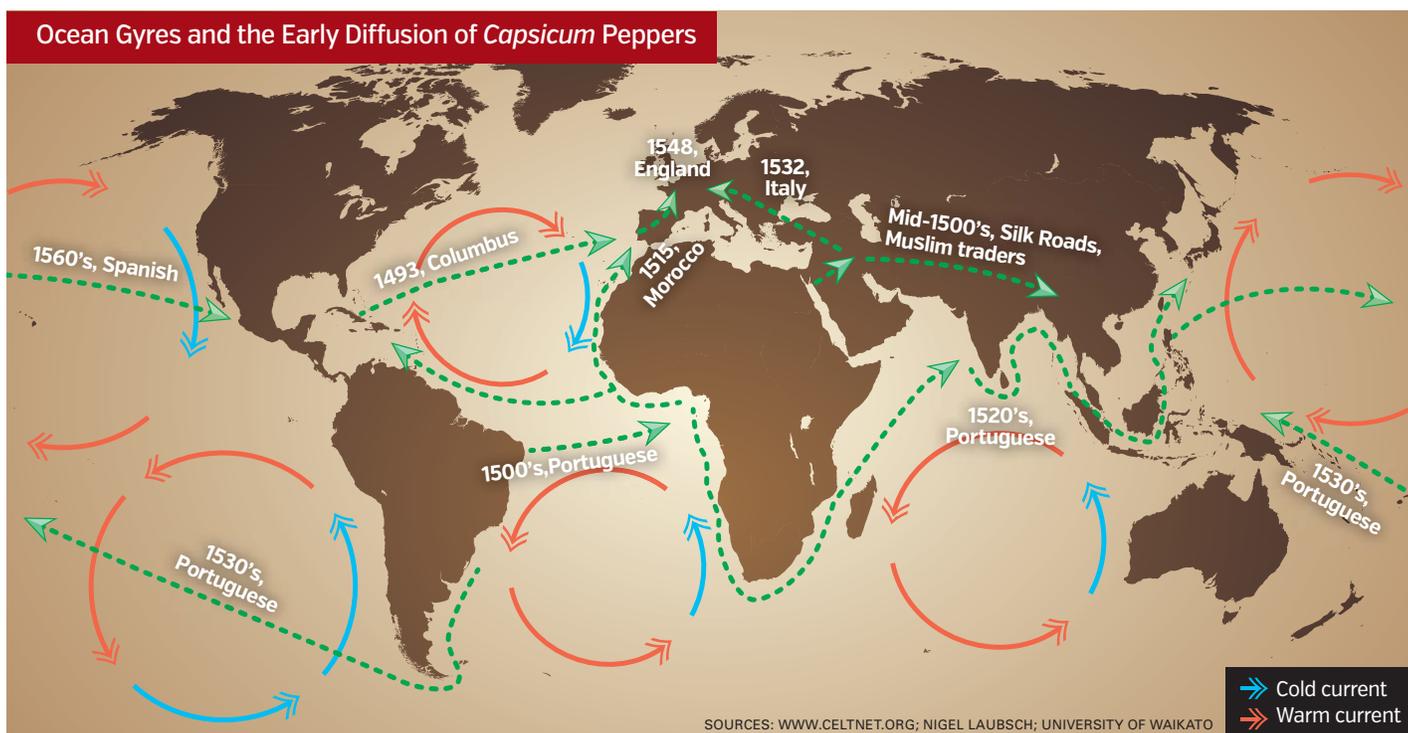
In the journal of his voyage, the entry for November 4, 1492 reads (in Samuel Eliot Morison’s translation): “The

Admiral showed to some of the Indians there cinnamon and pepper (supposedly of what he had brought from Castile to show) and they recognized it, it is said,



Produced in Portugal between 1500 and 1502, the Cantino world map shows the north-to-south line, in the left quarter of the map, stipulated by the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas. Spain received control westward, and Portugal eastward, of the line. Spain gained the greater territory, but Portugal held Brazil, from which it monopolized its newfound maritime route around Africa, which relied on the South Atlantic gyre, below.

Indians, especially poor Indians, took to capsicum chiles very quickly, and for once, this benefit was recorded. Indian food scholar K. T. Achaya discovered that South Indian composer Purandaradasa [1480–1564] had called chiles “savior of the poor, enhancer of good food, fiery when bitten.”



and by signs told him that in the neighborhood there was much of it.” The allspice berries they brought him smelled like cinnamon and pepper, but they were not the *Piper nigrum* he

had hoped to find. In an early example of hopeful rebranding, Columbus called the new spice *pimento*, after the Spanish *pimenta*, black pepper.

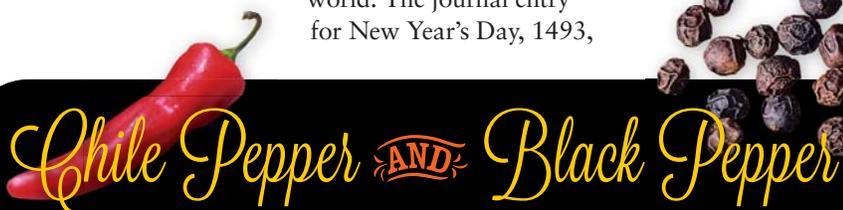
A month later, Columbus found another kind of pepper: the capsicum pepper that is now familiar—and indispensable—around the world. The journal entry for New Year’s Day, 1493,

Hungarian physiologist Albert Szent-Györgyi received a Nobel Prize in 1937 for isolating vitamin C, using vitamin-rich capsicums, and elucidating the citric-acid cycle. Vitamin C is among the ingredients that made capsicums a highly beneficial addition to the diet of poor people around the world.

reads, “The spicery that they eat, says the Admiral, is abundant and more valuable than either black or malagueta pepper [grains of paradise]. He left a recommendation to those whom he wished to leave there, that they

should get as much as they could.” The “Indians” called this pepper *aji* or *axi*. Two weeks later, the journal records, “There is also much *axi*, which is their pepper and is stronger than pepper, and the people won’t eat without it, for they find it very wholesome. One could load 50 [ships] a year with it in Hispaniola.”

The “spicery” Columbus was introduced to had by then been a valued food crop in the New World for some 6000 years. The fleshy, pungent fruits of a plant of the



## Chile Pepper AND Black Pepper

**CHILE PEPPER**, or *Capsicum* species, are members of the *Solanaceae* family, which includes potatoes, eggplants and tobacco. Botanist and pepper expert W. Hardy Eshbaugh reveals that there are 25 species of wild capsicums, of which four have been domesticated: *C. annuum* var. *annuum*, *C. chinense*, *C. baccatum* var. *pendulum*, and *C. pubescens*. (A fifth species, *C. frutescens*, grows semi-wild in the Old World.) Peppers may be either annuals or perennials, depending on species and climate, and can grow as vines, small shrubs or bushes. Jean Andrews states that *C. annuum* var. *annuum* and *C. chinense* became established in the Old World; they and *C. frutescens* all grow in Africa. *C. annuum* var. *annuum* and *C. frutescens* grow in India. *C. baccatum* var. *pendulum* and *C. pubescens* stayed in the Americas. Most capsicums sold in world markets are *C. annuum* var. *annuum*. Columbus took *C. annuum* var. *annuum* back with him on his first trips to the Caribbean islands, where they are thought not to be native, but to have been brought from Mexico by pre-Columbian sailors. Except for bell peppers, which have been bred to lack it, all capsicums contain greater or lesser amounts of capsaicin, which is responsible for their heat. That relative heat is defined in Scoville Heat Units, a somewhat subjective measure that determines at what dilution a capsicum’s heat ceases to be detectable in a sugar solution. (Laboratory chemical analysis by machine is more accurate.) Anaheim peppers rank at 1000 units, jalapeño peppers at 5000, Indian Tabiche peppers 90,000, habaneros 300,000, and Trinidad Moruga Scorpions can reach 2,000,000 Scoville Units. Police pepper spray tops the list at 5,000,000 units. Frequent exposure to capsaicin reduces the eater’s sensitivity to it, and it is possible that people who eat lots of hot chiles become psychologically addicted to the endorphins released by the brain in response to the peppers’ burn.

**BLACK PEPPER**, or *Piper nigrum*, is the dried fruit of a woody vine of the *Piperaceae* family native to the monsoon forests of Kerala in southern India. Although these peppers are Old World plants, they have a pantropical distribution. The genus includes 17 species, including Old World peppers like long pepper (*Piper longum* in India, *Piper officinarum* in Indonesia), cubeb (*Piper cubeba*), kava (*Piper methysticum*) and India’s betel (*Piper betle*). It takes several years for the pepper plant to mature at more than 3½ meters tall (12’), but it can grow to nine meters (30’). The vines are supported by trees or poles so the peppercorns are easier to harvest. *Piper nigrum* likes humidity but also well-drained soils, which is why it is so difficult to grow anywhere but in tropical rainforests.

nightshade family, capsicum peppers (*Capsicum annuum*) contain a tasteless, odorless chemical called capsaicin that gives them a “bite” in the eater’s mouth, warms his body and—thanks to the brain’s release of endorphins in response to the burn—lifts his spirits.

Though it wasn’t the black pepper he had hoped to find, Columbus had an optimistic view of the value of his new pepper, and he surely included *aji* in his presentation of New World plants to his royal patrons. Though Ferdinand and Isabella seem to have been unimpressed, capsicum peppers proved a popular product in an increasingly fast-moving world-trading network.

Jean Andrews, probably the foremost authority on chile history, believed the Portuguese had capsicum peppers even before they sailed to Brazil in 1500—thanks to Columbus. That could be true, since Spanish ships often docked at Portuguese-controlled harbors in the Canary Islands, at Cape Verde and in the Azores—all stops for ships traveling to and from Africa, the Mediterranean and later India and the New World. Crops, livestock, spices, gold, ivory, slaves—everything came through these islands on the way to and from Lisbon, and surely crews exchanged or sold goods and information.

More specifically, Columbus stopped at the Azores and stayed in Lisbon for a week—even meeting the Portuguese king—before returning to Spain from his first voyage to the New World. For this reason, Andrews and many other pepper scholars feel that it’s entirely possible that *Capsicum* seeds were shared with the court, or traded by Spanish seamen, as exciting New World novelties as early as 1493. They believe that the capsicums that proliferated so early in the Old World were from Columbus’s seeds (*Capsicum annuum* var. *annuum*) and not those that the Portuguese would later have found in Brazil (*Capsicum frutescens* or *chinense*). Nonetheless, it was the Portuguese and not the



In 1513, Ottoman cartographer Piri Reis examined 14 sources to produce this map whose rhumb lines predate cartographic latitude and longitude, and of which only this fragment, showing West Africa, the South Atlantic and the Americas, survives. By this time, chiles had begun reaching many Old World ports, the Middle East and parts of Asia, and they were growing in the Azores, other Atlantic islands and North Africa.

Spanish who spread capsicums far and wide as they traveled the trade routes that they had established in the East, Africa and then India. Within 20 years, capsicums were on their way into pots and onto plates all over the Old World.

Developmental psychologist Jason Goldman said, “Hot pepper consumption has a positive effect on your mental and physical health. When you eat a hot pepper, pain receptors in your mouth react with the capsaicin. This reaction also triggers an endorphin release.... This endorphin release produces a natural high that resembles a “runner’s high.” This overall feeling of well-being also might act as a natural pain reliever if you are suffering from body pain.”

Capsicum peppers went by many names when they were first introduced. They were known as Pernambuco pepper after a Portuguese settlement in Brazil, or Calicut pepper after an important spice port in India, but also went by the native name *aji*, *axi* or, in India, *achi*. In Java the Portuguese called

help from the Persians, Turkey and Portugal reached détente in the 1550’s, and the spice route was open again. Surely capsicum peppers were traded in the newly accessible Middle Eastern markets, with sailors the likely merchants.

It wasn’t just the Portuguese doing the spreading. Venice



**Dried chiles shipped well worldwide. From left: New World *Capsicum annuum* varieties include guajillo, ancho and New Mexico; a smaller *Capsicum frutescens* variety called “birdseye” chiles spread wild in Africa after birds spread their seeds from early gardens, and they are now common also in Southeast Asia; “Indian” chiles are among the most common varieties in India, which today grows and exports more chiles than any other nation.**

them Spanish peppers, as Germany and Sweden still do. *Chile*, an Aztec Nahuatl word, came to be used later.

In 1984, historian C. R. Boxer suggested that the Portuguese merchant ships that carried black pepper from Goa to Lisbon might have brought capsicums back to India on their return voyages. Jean Andrews wrote that some thin dried capsicum peppers are still referred to as *kappal molokai* in Calicut—“pepper from the ship.”

Sixteenth-century botanist Matthias de Lobel suggested the Portuguese were exporting capsicums from Goa early in the 16th century, as well as black pepper: Capsicums existed in Indonesia by 1510, and pepper authority Dave de Witt says capsicums were growing in the Azores, Madeira and Cape Verde by 1516, as well as along the west coast of Africa, where Portugal had established forts and trading posts. Then, with

was still trading with Europe and most of the Muslim world. Spain, Portugal and the Ottoman Empire continually fought and traded, and trade and military engagements from India to North Africa assured interaction between nations as ships were captured and cargos redistributed by the victors. When Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Lawgiver (called “the Magnificent” in Europe) drove through the Balkans and conquered Hungary in 1526, capsicum peppers came too, in the gardens that his army planted to feed the troops, and though the Ottomans eventually left, the capsicums stayed. By 1569, a Hungarian aristocrat listed *Türkisch rot Pfeffer* (Turkish red pepper) among the plants in her garden, and in no time at all paprika, a *Capsicum annuum* variety, had conquered Hungarian cuisine at all economic levels. In his 1963 book on paprika, Hungarian historian Zoltan Halasz

said that capsicum pepper was first used by Hungarian peasants, herdsmen and fisherman, who would have had close links to the Ottoman commissariat.

Not everyone loved capsicums when they were first introduced. The Spanish, who had brought them in the first place, only grew them as garden ornamentals. Italy and even Portugal did not take to them wholeheartedly either. European monastery gardens seemed to have had the most interest in propagating them in the early part of the 16th century. Northern European countries were indifferent to them save as a curiosity—although they were growing in Germany by 1542, probably thanks to Ottoman traders, who got yew wood for their bows, among other products, from Germany.

trade in black pepper to the east. And thus they don't mention, let alone carry, chilies. Nor do they appear in European cookbooks until the end of the 17th century." Of course, this doesn't mean they weren't being eaten by the lower classes, for culinary historians agree that there was precious little written of peasant cooking or gardening during that time.

For that reason, it is difficult to pin down the early impact of peppers. Records of pepper crops are virtually non-existent. Andrews felt they were ignored because capsicum peppers were considered "garden crops" both in European estate ledgers and in the Ottoman Empire's scrupulous records, and as such were neither taxed nor recorded. But it's not much of a stretch to assume that capsicum peppers tagged along with corn and

**Three popular capsicum peppers that took root in the Middle East—Maras, Urfa and Aleppo, shown below in their flaked form—are used in dishes throughout the region. Right: Fresh serrano, poblano and ripe jalapeño peppers.**



In fact, capsicum peppers did not become a popular culinary item in much of Europe for hundreds of years. Food historian Ken Albala proffered a theory for this when he wrote that "merchants had compelling reasons to maintain their

New World beans—valuable crops that were recorded—were traded by sailors who were given them as their voyage-portion while their masters dealt in vastly more valuable black pepper and other commodities.

How do peppers break down in world cuisines? India uses *Capsicum annuum* and *Capsicum frutescens* or *chinense*. (The hottest peppers, like the famous "ghost pepper," are mostly *Capsicum chinense* or *frutescens*). The Turks use *Capsicum annuum*, and in some localities sun-dry them and then cover and "sweat" them at night. China has *Capsicum annuum* and *chinense*. Korea uses *Capsicum annuum*, and Hungary uses many varieties of *Capsicum annuum* to make its famous range of paprikas. African chiles are mostly *Capsicum annuum*, but all are available on that continent. Morocco has a great variety of peppers, but most are *Capsicum annuum* varieties.



Today, most fresh chiles distributed by global supermarket grocers are varieties of *Capsicum annuum*.

Aside from intentional planting, natural dispersal by birds spread capsicum peppers far and wide. Unlike mammals, birds are not affected by capsaicin, but like to eat the brightly colored fruits. Lower classes who could never afford black pepper could easily grow capsicums—and they had good reason to do so: Peppers improved not only the flavor of food, but—unbeknownst to their consumers—also its nutritional quality. Throughout the Middle East, China and Africa, many cultures that had survived on rice or grain diets thrived with the addition of peppers. Anthropologist E. N. Anderson wrote, “Perhaps no culinary advance since the invention of distilling had had more effect than the propagation of chili peppers in the Old World..... Not only did it incalculably

red pepper to Kashmir and Nepal, because the local word for chili there is *khorsani*.” That northern route also brought chiles to China’s landlocked hot-chile provinces of Szechuan and Hunan, perhaps in the packs of traveling Indian Buddhists or by those Persian merchants still using the ancient routes—trading spices for Chinese porcelain and silk.

Remarkably, in just over 50 years, capsicum peppers were global. The love for the heat of black pepper—which comes from the alkaloid piperine—gave way to the charms of the more potent capsaicin of capsicum peppers. Food historian Ken Albala remarked, “Chili peppers are among the few foods that spread almost immediately after the discovery of the Americas to the whole world. Think of Thailand, India, Sichuan, or even

benefit the cuisine of all those peoples civilized enough to accept it, it also is high in vitamins A and C, iron, calcium, and other minerals; is eminently storable and usable in pickles; can be grown anywhere under any conditions....”

Indians, especially poor Indians, took to capsicum chiles very quickly, and for once this benefit was recorded. Indian food scholar K. T. Achaya discovered that South Indian composer Purandaradasa (1480–1564) had called chiles “savior of the poor, enhancer of good food, fiery when bitten.” Portuguese sailors ate capsicums the way English sailors would eat limes to ward off the diseases of long sea journeys, and they doubtless shared this secret with seaman of other nationalities. More grimly, enslaved Africans were fed “slabber sauce”—a mash of capsicum peppers, flour and oil—on the horrible sea journeys they were forced to endure.

Charles Perry, food historian and translator of Arab cookbooks, observed that “Persian merchants from Khorasan (a region that is now part of Iran, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan) introduced

Hungary for that matter, without chili peppers. I have a theory why. Unlike black pepper, [capsicums] can grow pretty much anywhere and don't need to be imported from the tropics. So they stand in almost everywhere as a hot spice."

Nonetheless, some cultures were slow to warm to peppers. The Persians, among the earliest traders in both black and red peppers, did not take to them wholeheartedly: There's little use of either in Persian cuisine. Charles Perry observed, "Well, the Persians do use red pepper in some dishes, such as *khoresh-e bamyeh* (okra stew—something about okra just demands red pepper), but their cuisine was never very peppery before chilies arrived."

Many of the cuisines of the Middle East have embraced capsicum peppers completely, often in the form of locally grown varieties, for *Capsicum annuum* hybridizes promiscuously. Markets all over Turkey and Syria are rich with many varieties, both fresh and dried and ground or flaked, named after their "home" cities: Maraş, Urfa, Aleppo and so on.

Africa loves *pili pili*—Swahili for "pepper pepper" (also known as *piri piri* or bird's-eye chile). It is grown in Malawi, South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Sudan and southern Ethiopia; it is cultivated commercially in many of these countries, as well as in India and Indonesia. The Portuguese *piri piri* hot sauce is eaten all over Africa.

Szechwan cuisine is virtually synonymous with hot pepper.

Koreans eat more capsicum peppers per capita than any other country: It is an ingredient in their kimchi and *gochujang*. Bhutan is mad for peppers—its pepper-full *ema datshi* is the national dish. Southern India loves the heat of its vindaloo dishes and grows much of the world's total capsicum crop—far more than South America or Mexico. And even today, Louisiana hot sauce is becoming popular in previously bland corners of the Middle East, thanks to visiting American oil workers.

What variety of *Capsicum* pepper wins the world popularity contest, you may ask? The person to answer that is botanist W. Hardy Eshbaugh, who spent years tracking peppers from their beginnings in Bolivia. In his article "Peppers: History and Exploitation of a Serendipitous New Crop Discovery," Eshbaugh said, "*Capsicum annuum* is the best known domesticated species in the world. Since the time of Columbus, it has spread to every part of the globe." A Purdue University article declared, "*Capsicum chinense* was also discovered at an early date and spread globally but to a lesser extent than *C. annuum*. The more limited global expansion of this species is most probably related to its later discovery in South America and the competitive edge enjoyed by *C. annuum*, which was firmly established in the Old World before *C. chinense* was introduced there."

The reason capsicum peppers have become so popular is clear. If you had only a bit of grain and vegetable to eat, a pinch of capsicum powder would make your meal more

emphatic and appealing; a piece of capsicum chile in your dish would add vitamins to your beans and rice. Cooks tasted the new peppers and added them to what they were already cooking as an exciting new note in their culinary vocabulary. One taste led to another and so it continues today.

How did cuisine change with peppers? The answer is demonstrated with the "before and after" recipes for lamb sausage that first led me down the pepper trail. You can see firsthand when you compare the "before" recipe from the 13th century and the "after" version of the recipe, which is rich with chiles. Both are delicious, but have very different personalities—think scholar vs. adventurer!

Here is a translation of the original recipe for *mirkas* (merguez sausage) from the 13th-century cookbook *Al Andalus*, translated by Charles Perry:

It is as nutritious as meatballs (*banadiq*) and quick to digest, since the pounding ripens it and makes it quick to digest, and it is good nutrition. First get some meat from the leg or shoulder of a lamb and pound it until it becomes like meatballs. Knead it in a bowl, mixing in some oil and some *murri naqi*, pepper, coriander seed, lavender, and cinnamon. Then add three quarters as much of fat, which should not be pounded, as it would melt while frying,

but chopped up with a knife or beaten on a cutting board. Using the instrument made for stuffing, stuff it in the washed gut, tied with thread to make sausages, small or large. Then fry them with some fresh oil, and when it is done and browned, make a sauce of vinegar and oil and use it while hot. Some people make the sauce with the juice of cilantro and mint and some pounded onion. Some cook it in a pot with oil and vinegar, some make it *rahibi* with onion and lots of oil until it is fried and browned. It is good whichever of these methods you use. ☺

Andrews notes that the word *pepper* had confusing beginnings. The long pepper, *pippali*, got its name from the sacred fig, *peppul*. *Pippali* became the name for black pepper as well. Unlike capsicum peppers, both long pepper and the more familiar black peppercorn are members of the same *Piper* family.



**Deana Sidney** (deanasidney@gmail.com) is a New York film production designer who also writes about food, style and history and regularly attends the Oxford Food Symposium. Readers of her blog "Lost Past Remembered" often come for the recipes and stay for the stories.

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capsicums: M/J 92, M/A 88  
black pepper: J/F 08  
Portuguese to India: J/A 05

# the Immigrant's Progress

Written and  
illustrated by  
Norman  
MacDonald



Without immigration there is no progress, I have been told. In few places is that as true as here in Amsterdam, my own adopted home. It was immigrants from Antwerp who, in the 1600's, helped Amsterdam become the richest city in Europe. Antwerp was the capital of the Dutch revolt against Catholic Spain in 1585. Spain laid siege, recaptured the city and gave Protestants two years to leave. Most migrated north, where Amsterdam became the new trading center.

These immigrants were instrumental in forming the first multinational company, the VOC (Dutch East India company), as well as the Amsterdam stock exchange, the grand daddy of Wall Street.

The downside was that many of their ships bound for the East Indies (Indonesia) lost half their crew to scurvy or malaria. A lot of foreign workers and sailors were needed to replace them. Success depended on immigrants.



No kings ruled here. The Protestant burghers (citizens) built city halls instead of palaces, such as the one shown to the left on de Dam. It's now a royal palace.

This era also brought intellectual ferment. Printing firms and publishers moved here, and they needed people to ink the type and perform a hundred other jobs.

Peter the Great came from Russia to study ship building. Rembrandt painted and René Descartes came from France to write. From then until today, the Dutch built up an attitude of tolerance for strangers, one that spawned a counterpart across the Atlantic in New Amsterdam, or as we know it, New York.



After World War II the Dutch government feared there might be too few jobs for all the people. Between 1949 and 1961 it pushed the opposite idea, emigration, through what was colloquially called an 'oprot' (get lost) policy. They were afraid of returning to the unemployment situation of the Great Depression of the 1930's.

Yet industry was growing, dollars from the Marshall Plan were flowing into Europe and jobs grew at an incredible rate. Soon there was no one available for the unskilled work, yet the government kept waving their best and brightest off on the Holland-America Line.

**All but one of these people live within a half-hour's bike ride from my house.**

Industry petitioned to recruit workers under 35 from Turkey and North Africa who could read and write, were healthy and had no police record.

Despite the tensions of the Cold War, decolonization and the beginnings of the European Union, by the 1960's, Amsterdam was the city of Liberty where not only everyone but just about everything was tolerated.



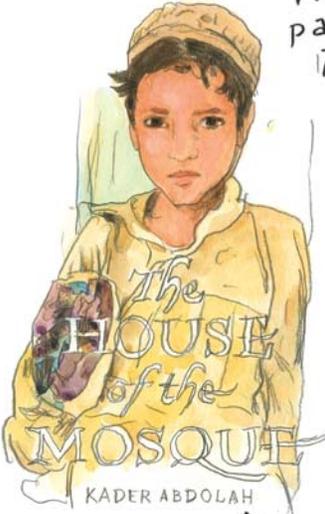
Including me. I came from Canada to Europe during those tumultuous years because the great artists were here; I came to draw, but I was too naïve to know that it was long over. I got a job with an

American company and free-lanced on the side. I was an immigrant—we used the word expat. I struggled, but though it wasn't Paris of the 1920's, still it was good. Amsterdam was and still is a city of bicycles, and I cycle. I meet a lot of people that way, a lot of immigrants. All of them portrayed here—except one—live within half an hour's bike ride from my house. These are their stories.

I lived in a small city in Iran. I wrote about this in 'The House of the Mosque'. The name is different. It was a city surrounded by mountains. Long winters. Short summers. Very religious. Big mosque. Big bazaar. Covered women. It was good.

I was a member of the leftist party and it was not possible to stay in the country. It was very dangerous. I escaped to Turkey. My party decided that I should then go to Moscow but then life changed everything. I came here. A new life. To be here was not a big issue. It was the changing of the language I wrote in.

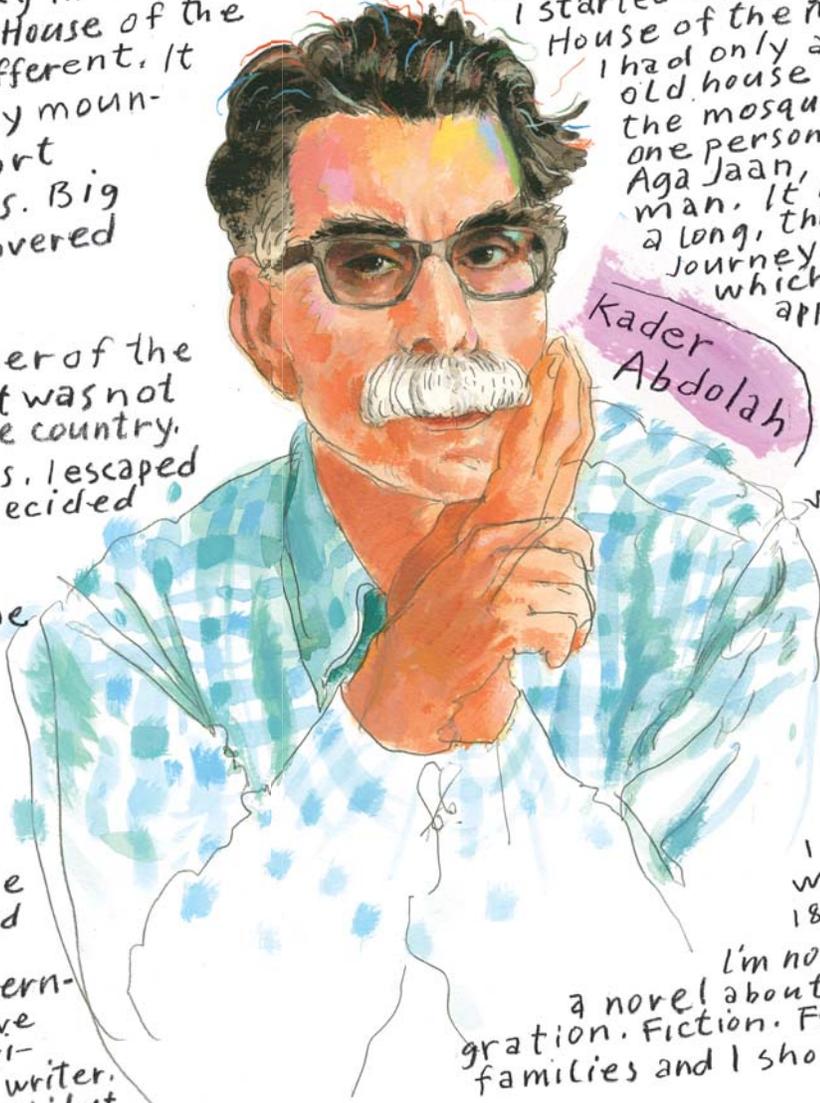
I had no papers in Turkey. The UN helped and the Dutch government gave me an invitation as a writer. I came but didn't want to stay. The country is tiny,



I was 33 years old and that is too late for a writer. Then I said, now or never. I took a big risk writing in Dutch.

There was a literary café in that city, Zwolle, and I went there every day. It had a nice atmosphere. Met a lot of friends. Still see them. Slowly I wrote my first story, then my second and third. I'm writing. I have the language under control. But on the other side, the language was shaping me. I realized I was being colonized by Dutch language.

When I start a new book, I have no idea about the story. Only one or two big lines. When I started writing 'The House of the Mosque', I had only a big old house behind the mosque and one personage, Aga Jaan, the old man. It became a long, three-year journey to see which people appeared.



Kader Abdolah

It's a wonderful journey to be with a new book because writing is a boring job.

I know. I have written 18 books.

I'm now writing a novel about immigration. Fiction. Four families and I show the

**It's a wonderful journey to be with a new book.**

changes in their lives. It was friendly when I came. Slowly the country changed. More immigrants and more populist parties. All countries are the same - slow in changing.

When I escaped from Iran to Turkey, it was a tough time. In those dark days, I started translating Canadian writer Margaret Atwood's work. It was beautiful to translate her to Farsi. Many years later I met her in an elevator in New York and without thinking said, "I love you." "That's nice," she replied, "but why?" Then I explained to her how she was with me in Turkey.

Karim:  
My father was born in Tlemcen, an old University town in the mountains in the north of Algeria, close to the Moroccan border. He met my mother in 1963, just after the long Algerian war of independence. My mother is Dutch and my mother's mother is Russian. My mother had come as a doctor on a program against tuberculosis. My father was a teacher and worked on that project as a volunteer during the summer.

At the end of 1963, they rode a motorcycle from Algeria to Germany, where my father did his studies and became an electrical engineer. That is where I was born in '66.

I did my high school in Holland, but when I wanted to study philosophy I ended up in Brighton, England. My first year was the most exciting in my life. It was such a relief from school where teachers would say, "Just do what we ask and don't do it differently."

Philosophy in England was very logical and formal, much closer to math than literature. I like puzzles. I met a lot of Americans at Sussex. My Professor suggested I apply to American Universities for my graduate studies. I did and got a full scholarship at Penn State. I thought then that you can't really understand the world if you don't understand America. Even then in the Cold War, it was so dominant and Holland has always been pro America.

Japan was another shock in my life. It was love at first sight. I enjoyed living in Tokyo. Japan was at the peak of its powers. People were spending money like water, the stock market was booming and I felt very much a foreigner. I ended up staying nine years.

At some point I realized I would never get used to Japan. The Japanese make it hard on themselves because of their work ethic and perfectionism. Can you be a foreigner forever? I decided to go back to Holland. I wanted to live in Amsterdam and decided to leave the academic world.

Karim Behammar - Philosopher



Can you be a foreigner forever?

Philosophy, I thought, has to be more public. It needs to be explained in simple terms that speak directly to people's experience. These are still my ambitions.

When I grew up, having an Arab name in Holland was exotic and interesting. There was Omar Sharif, and in Holland, the singer Ramses Shaffy. After 9/11, all that changed. There is a lot of suspicion about Arab names now. I feel Dutch with an Arab heritage, Arab liveliness and generosity with Dutch rationalism and a Protestant work ethic. Reconciling opposites, really. I feel I am a half-breed. When Obama was chosen I finally recognized, that's the kind of person I am.

Leena:

At our home in Kabul the door was always open. People just walked in. That much I know for sure: if you plan to have dinner with just the family you may end up with 15 people.

I went to kindergarten in Kabul before we went to Moscow, where I started school again. I can still speak Russian. I was 12 when we came here and started school in Amsterdam. We quickly made friends, and learned the new language. It was easy because they gave us special language study.

My sister now has her master's degree in business economics and is travelling around in South America for four months, celebrating with one of her university friends.

Mom (busy in the kitchen) is happy to be here and has no thoughts to be back in Kabul. She says, "where my kids are, that's where my home is. Wherever I go, whatever country, I can survive. Learn the language, get work, no excuses." That's the wisdom I learned from her.

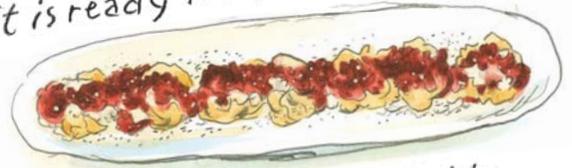
People here ask me how I feel, Dutch or Afghan. I tell them I don't know. I feel like a world citizen.

I came here the first day the restaurant started. They were renovating for a long time. When I came on opening day, it was messy and every thing was new but still in plastic. I said, "You are going to open tonight?"

"Yes, tonight. So hurry."

I unpacked. Removed plastic from the chairs and cleaned up just before the group came through the door, like 25 people, invited for the first dinner. After that day, I said, "I like it."

'Mantoe' is the name of our restaurant. It is also a dish that is prepared as a welcome gesture. The dough is rolled out, and cut piece by piece and a filling is added then placed in a pan and steamed. Then a sauce is added and it is ready for the table.



I'm glad my parents decided to come here. Sometimes you have to stand still and think about how lucky you are. That's how I look at it. That's the luck. I'm 24, single and happy.

"I came here 15 years ago."  
- Julia  
[Kabul]

"I've been here almost 5 years."  
- Anita  
[panjshir]



Leena

- Fahim

People told me that opening an Afghan restaurant was a big risk. No one knows Afghan food - only the war. Risk! People were shot dead and left lying

IN our street in Kabul—I understood what risk was. For those who worked for the government, like my parents, the choice was join the new government, leave the country, or die—simple as that. My parents were against the mujahidin and the Taliban but there was no way to fight against those forces with a pen.

I was 10 when we went to Moscow. The Soviet Union had ceased to exist and we weren't exactly welcome. There was no financial help. Nothing. My brother and I had to get money for food and rent. We had spent all our money just to get there. That's why I didn't go to school. We sold shoes and clothes, anything to make money. We had no papers, no resident permits. We are talking about 100,000 Afghans in the same situation.

It was a lawless society, especially with the mafia and police harassment. It was a day to day existence. You just wanted to leave.

### We sold shoes and clothes, anything to make money.

We chose Europe. Holland had a reputation as a multicultural society. We arrived in Amsterdam and couldn't speak the language. Our education really started.

There are no Afghan restaurants in Holland. So much in Afghanistan revolves around food. So many recipes come to the table. We have rice dishes from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Then we have

vegetables and meat dishes. No fish recipes. Afghanistan is landlocked.

We are having a mantle workshop soon. We put the idea on Face book and already have a lot of positive reactions.

When I came here I was alone. I was illegal. I had a visa to visit Germany, and before that expired I went to Holland. I got work as a painter working for a company of house painters.

Osman



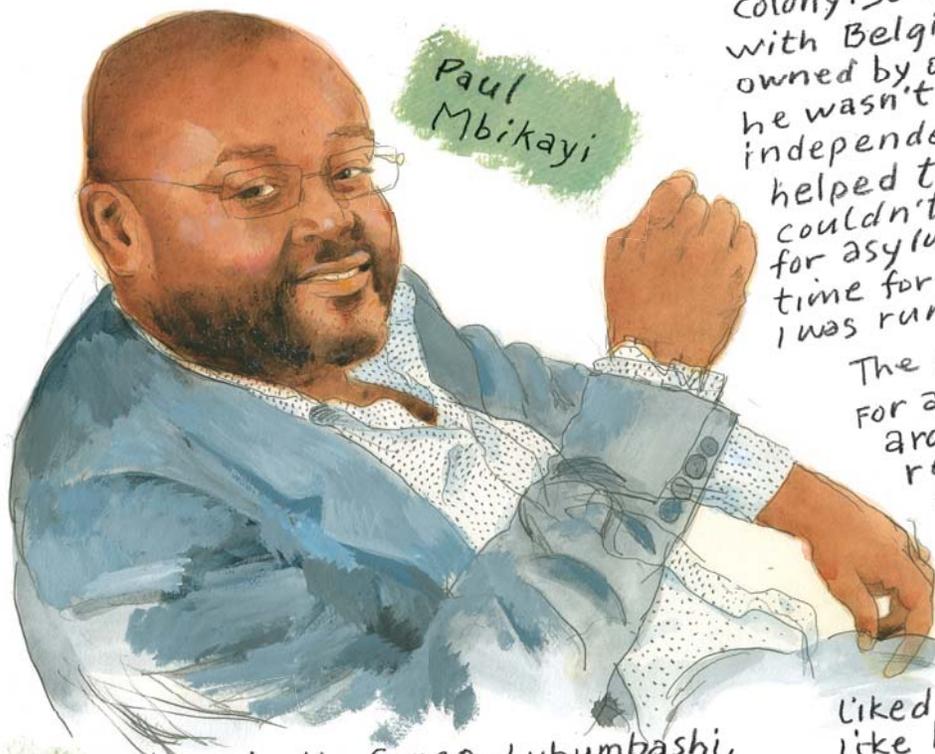
I didn't speak Dutch then, so I didn't understand what was said, except I was on a three-month trial. All

this time I couldn't leave the country because I might not be able to return. I could be turned back at the border.

Later they wanted my social-security number and work permit. That is when the foreman told the boss that I was a real good painter. The boss agreed, but said that they couldn't have illegal people working for them. I asked the authorities for a work permit, and they finally gave me one. When my wife joined me we already had one daughter. We have four children now. Two are married, one is studying in Turkey, and one is still in school here.

I had always worked for my father. When I did my military service he stopped working. When I returned there was no work, so I left.

I come from a town close to Ankara. When I go back it is still like I wasn't away. I still have friends I met in the military and that was 30 years ago.



Paul Mbikayi

colony. So we have a hate-love history with Belgium. Actually Congo was owned by one man, King Leopold II, and he wasn't very nice. After our independence in 1961, Belgium helped the dictatorships, so I couldn't be thankful to Belgium for asylum and angry at the same time for supporting the dictator I was running from.

The dictator I fled from is dead. For a long time, I've walked around with the idea to return. However, I've built a life here in Amsterdam. I found a job. Have a nice girlfriend. I'm settled. I've succeeded in creating a world made of values that I liked from Congo and what I like here.

I was born in the Congo, Lubumbashi, close to the Zambian border. I studied in Congo, Katanga and Kinshasa University.

**Actually Congo was owned by one man, King Leopold II**

I was political active with the authorities. This made it difficult to live there. The people I was in political contact with helped me get away, via Belgium to Holland. I couldn't stay in Belgium. We had certain conflicts: we were their old

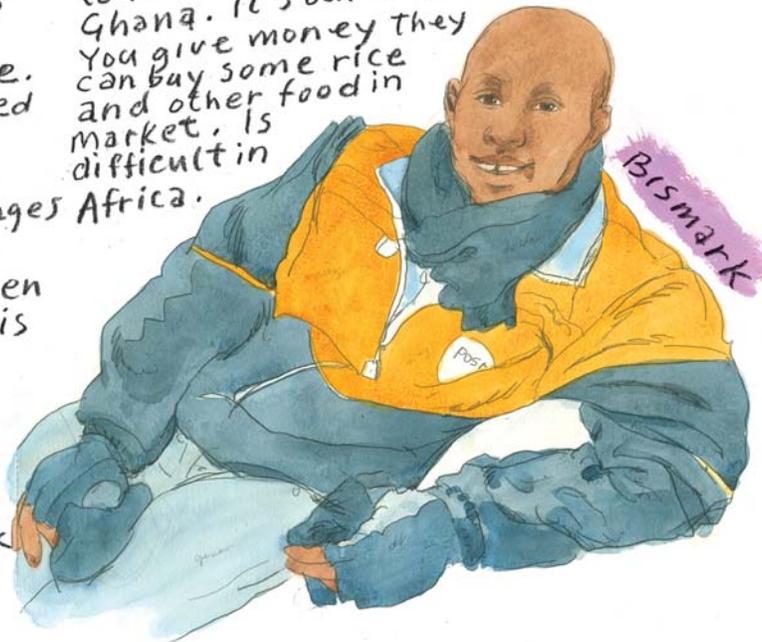
People from my work in Amsterdam encouraged me to continue my studies, so I studied civil technique and

water and road construction for five years. Now I am a bureaucrat. I get the chance to serve my host country. I'm quite proud.

I came from Ghana 14 years ago. I am Muslim but going back next month to visit. I migrate here. Yes it's a long story. You know? I need a future, earn money. First thing, I went to school and got my diploma. I drive a nice van and deliver packages for the Post Office. Is good. It is better here than Africa. I was 17 when I came. I'm now 31. But know Africa is always the problem.

to mother, father and friends in Ghana. It's our culture. I worry. You give money they can buy some rice and other food in market. Is difficult in Africa.

My father has a farm. He has cattle, maybe 200. I wanted another life. Africa is not like here. When I am here I care for the family back home as well. I send money



Bismark

I was born in Morocco and came here when I was 8. My family was here already. I was the one left behind. My mother died when I was 7 months old and I was nursed by an aunt. My father remarried and lived in Holland. I came later. So I have lived in both countries.

It was January '84, a Saturday, when I arrived, and I was already registered for school the following Monday. I don't remember much except that it was snowing. I had never seen snow. I scooped it off the cars and ate it and at school I had to take my coat off. That was strange because I had never worn one. The teacher told me to hang it in the hall and I wanted to keep it with me.

Growing up in Morocco in a small family, and now living in a big family I didn't know was really hard. My aunt was very liberal and educated and I came into a family that had little education.

### One day I gathered my stuff and left the house.

I had just started high school, my first year, when one day I gathered my stuff and left the house. I was with another girl, three years older, who had already left her family. We went to the police and I told them I couldn't live with them anymore, and they placed me with another family.

Since then I have lived away from my family. I always had a lot of difficulties living between two cultures. I'm still in touch with my family. They accept me now. My nieces and nephews like me, and I accept the way they live.

When I was 18 I started nursing. I remember a girl who also worked in the hospital, in the operating theater and we talked about working for an NGO (non-governmental organization) and doing something in Africa. I went to a meeting in Amsterdam about Doctors Without Borders. I applied and, after a course in tropical medicine, was accepted. I was offered Ethiopia. It was very challenging. It was extremely remote and sick people



had to walk two or three days for health care. We were in a compound hearing gunshots daily. After six months I finally thought I knew what I was doing and what was expected of me. My second mission was Somaliland.

After that there was a position in northern Ethiopia. It was the most beautiful one I ever did. We had eight mobile clinics. Mobile meant by foot. No roads. I went there for four months and stayed another nine. The people were amazing. Nice and kind, plus all the stunning nature all around us. I was never so remote as there.

I never thought I could do this work. Now I think everyone can if they don't give up the dream. I am richer than when I had a job. I have lost nothing. I've only won. You have to work where your heart is. For me, it's Africa. Ethiopia is my land. I will emigrate there one day

- Nora

## Karsu

I had a swimming career before music. My parents thought it necessary to add culture and sports to our education. I did swimming and piano and other games on the weekend. The swimming pool was close to home so we cycled there with cousins and moms. At one point, I thought, I was missing a lot of time so I quit swimming. I didn't miss getting up early in the morning for training.

The swimming time I put into my music. I began studying classical music when I was seven. I played the cello and clarinet for a while but my mind was on the piano. I really liked it because I saw on TV older men behind the piano in a recording studio. It was then I said to my father,

"That's what I really want to do." It looked so cool. I know my parents put off buying a car. Instead they went out and bought a piano.

I performed on stage at Carnegie Hall in 2007. I was 17 and didn't know what Carnegie Hall was. Then I heard that a lot of musicians wanted to play there. It was a big honor. That was when I was introduced to Jazz. I didn't know Jazz until we went to Jazz bars. I was under age but was part of a large group so they didn't ask for ID. We also went to restaurants that played Jazz. I performed at Carnegie Hall again in 2009 and in 2012.

At a certain time I started to play with other musicians. I learned a lot about their instruments, how they work and what is difficult to play. I started writing for them. I play and read classical music so bit by bit the freedom in Jazz started to work.



Daniel MESTER

Karsu Dönmez  
Baiksloter Kerk  
08-11-2013  
Amsterdam North

I'm now 23 and play Jazz five years. Later I went to a Jazz school in Amsterdam called DJAM Academy for a year.

In the band there is Daniel Mester, he's Hungarian, and Orville Breedveld comes from Suriname. The drummer is German, and the bass player is Dutch. I'm Turkish and Dutch (my parents are migrants from Turkey and I was born in Amsterdam), and my sound engineer is from Curacao. A kind of mini United Nations.

**I performed on stage at Carnegie Hall in 2007. I was 17.**

I signed a management contract with Sony but we started to notice it was better to do everything ourselves. We released my first album, 'Confession', on our own. Got good reviews and it will now come out in Germany and Turkey. We played it in Sao Paulo, Jakarta, Monte Carlo and many times in Istanbul with the band.

In Spring, I'm going to Turkey to study Turkish music. Some friends have a really nice studio in Datca in the area of Marmaris. I want it to be more upbeat. 🌐

Immigrants here are making progress and Dutch migrants found the good life overseas. Sounds like we're in the same boat. Observing people in a sketchbook feels just right.  
[www.macdonaldart.net](http://www.macdonaldart.net)  
[norman@macdonaldart.net](mailto:norman@macdonaldart.net)



# BOSF

*Strait*  
BETWEEN TWO  
*Worlds*

"A STRAIT THAT SURPASSES ALL  
STRAITS, BECAUSE WITH ONE KEY  
IT OPENS AND CLOSES  
TWO WORLDS, TWO SEAS."

—JOHN FREELY, AFTER DIONYSUS OF BYZANTIUM

# ORUS



WRITTEN BY  
LOUIS WERNER  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
MATTHIEU PALEY



Standing by one of the two magnetic compasses that back up electronic navigation equipment aboard the *M/T Ottoman Nobility*, Captain Tuğrul Vural is chief marine superintendent for Güngen Maritime and Trading of Istanbul, which owns four tanker vessels. Preceding spread: The *M/T Ottoman Nobility* enters the Bosphorus heading due north at some six or seven knots, carefully slipping its 269-meter length between European Istanbul on the left and Asian Istanbul on the right. The Maiden's Tower is visible at upper right.

# Look at an atlas of the oceans,

AND ONE PLACE ALWAYS SEEMS TO CATCH THE EYE. THE BOSPORUS, THAT NARROW WATERWAY CONNECTING THE BLACK SEA TO THE SEA OF MARMARA, WHICH CUTS THE CITY OF ISTANBUL INTO TWO HALVES, STANDS OUT ALONE AMONG THE WORLD'S OTHER MAJOR STRAITS AND CANALS. ALONG WITH ITS WIDER TWIN, THE DARDANELLES, THE BOSPORUS FAMOUSLY DIVIDES EAST AND WEST, WHILE THE REST—THE SUEZ AND PANAMA CANALS, THE MALACCA AND MAGELLAN STRAITS, TO NAME BUT A FEW—LINK DIFFERENT REGIONS.

Its function as a barrier between continents, a liquid line strung between Europe and Asia, has given the Bosphorus such prominence in both history and legend: The ancient Greeks sailed up the strait to their Black Sea colonies; the Persian king Darius built a floating bridge across it in the fifth century BCE; in 1451 CE, Mehmet the Conqueror built a fort on its

European bank to strangle Constantinople; during the Cold War, Joseph Stalin said that Turkish control over the Bosphorus held the USSR “by the throat”; today it is an essential part of the global shipping trade in petroleum.

From the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes, an epic poem now almost 25 centuries old about Jason's quest for



Awaiting clearance for the 90-minute passage to the Black Sea, commercial vessels anchor near the confluence of the Bosphorus with the Sea of Marmara amid the pleasure craft that, together with Istanbul's ferry traffic, rank the Bosphorus among the world's busiest waterways.

the Golden Fleece, to the 1936 Montreux Convention and its many amendments, which guarantees free commercial passage to ships of any nation, almost as much ink as water has flowed through the Bosphorus.

So it was a rare opportunity for a visitor to be invited to the bridge deck of the *M/T* (for Motor Tanker) *Ottoman Nobility* as it transited the strait from south to north, running empty to load oil at Novorossiysk, Russia, to deliver at Le Havre, France. The *Nobility*—of Suezmax size, the largest allowed in the Suez Canal—belongs to the fleet of a family-owned Turkish company, which got its start shipping sugar-beet molasses. Said Mehmet



**Mehmet Güngen, owner of Güngen Maritime and Trading, explains his family-owned company's rise from shipping molasses to petroleum.**

Güngen, one of the brothers, “We asked ourselves, if we could handle 30,000 tons of molasses in a single ship, why couldn't we handle five times that tonnage of petroleum? After all, liquid cargo is liquid cargo.”

So much is known about the hazards of navigating the Bosphorus, with its heavy traffic and its seven major turns—some through narrows barely twice as wide as the transiting ships are long—that the Turkish government's recently announced plan to dig a parallel canal on the European side, to be completed on the nation's 100th anniversary in 2023, does not seem farfetched, despite the prime minister himself calling it a “crazy idea”—not least because, as initially planned, it was too narrow and too shallow to allow for the water that transiting ships would displace and push out of the canal. The designated route, over hilly and unspoiled terrain, would require much excavation, unlike the Suez and Panama Canals, which took advantage of existing lakes at their midpoints.

Yet most people seem to agree that something must be done to protect both the Bosphorus's historic shoreline and its crowded shipping lane, which currently handles some 140 cargo vessels a day. Tanker traffic in particular is growing heavier as more oil is shipped from Black Sea ports. In 1979, the collision of a Greek freighter with the Romanian tanker *Independenta* at the strait's southern mouth caused an explosion that shattered windows on land and left 94,000 tons of crude oil burning for weeks along the shore.

Current computer simulations of the mid-strait explosion of a 1.1-million-barrel Suezmax cargo—half again as much as the *Independenta's*—show utter devastation for a kilometer and a half (1 mi) on both shores.

The *Nobility* queues at anchor in the Marmara off Zeytin Burnu, Olive Point. After a day's wait, it is released for transit on this Sunday afternoon under the command of Captain Levent Toker. Along as an observer is fleet superintendent Captain Tuğrul Vural. A pilot launch delivers the visitors to midships. Alongside the hull's extra freeboard—the ship is empty and riding high—hangs a steeply pitched, 16-meter-long (50') gangway. The climb onto the main deck, and then up another four flights to the wheelhouse, makes one worry about scraping the underside of the two bridges we will pass under. In fact, there's plenty of room: The bridges soar 64 meters (210') above sea level, and our ship rises only 42 meters (135') from the waterline.

Captain Toker grew up swimming and fishing for sea bass

in the Bosphorus just off Rumeli Hisari, the early Ottoman fort midway up the strait, built as part of the 1453 conquest of Constantinople. Captain Vural, with 27 years on the bridges of various ships, has passed through all of the world's important straits, canals and even rivers, and he sees the Bosphorus as his own front yard. A quick meal of rice and beans, always served

Sundays at noon, marks the completion of another week of Captain Toker's schedule—three months at sea for every month at home.

The second-century Greek geographer Dionysius of Byzantium wrote the earliest and most detailed topography of the Bosphorus, which has given us a most apt aphorism related by Istanbul historian John Freely: he called it “a strait

that surpasses all straits, because with one key it opens and closes two worlds, two seas.” Freely himself calls it “time's river in the country of dreams,” and quotes Procopius, chronicler of the reign of the sixth-century Byzantine Emperor Justinian I, calling it “a garland of waters.”

Measuring fully 269 meters (861') stem to stern, the *M/T*

*In 1800, Jean-Baptiste Lechevalier correctly counted the seven articulated bends of the Bosphorus, noting that each had a different current, a fact he observed by the changing colors of their surface waters whenever sudden rains diluted their salinity.*

At the engine room's controls, crew members await commands from the bridge.





The navigator marks the ship's route on the chart of the Bosphorus, which Captain Toker refers to along with electronic data, center, that highlights the positions of other large craft.

*Ottoman Nobility* swings in the wind, anchored by 200 meters (640') of anchor chain, even though the water here is only 25 meters (175') deep. The anchor's 15-ton weight, plus the chain's additional 85 tons, is winched easily onto the 25,000-ton ship, straight into the boatswain's store, where it jumbles into place next to neatly coiled ropes of more human dimensions. The two commands from the bridge that a deck mate listens for most closely—*funda!* ("drop anchor!") and *vira!* ("hoist anchor!")—indicate either homecoming or departure and, like many Turkish seafaring commands, come from Italian, thanks to centuries of Venetian and Genoese sea traders. On this ship, both commands are followed by *bismillah* ("in the name of God").

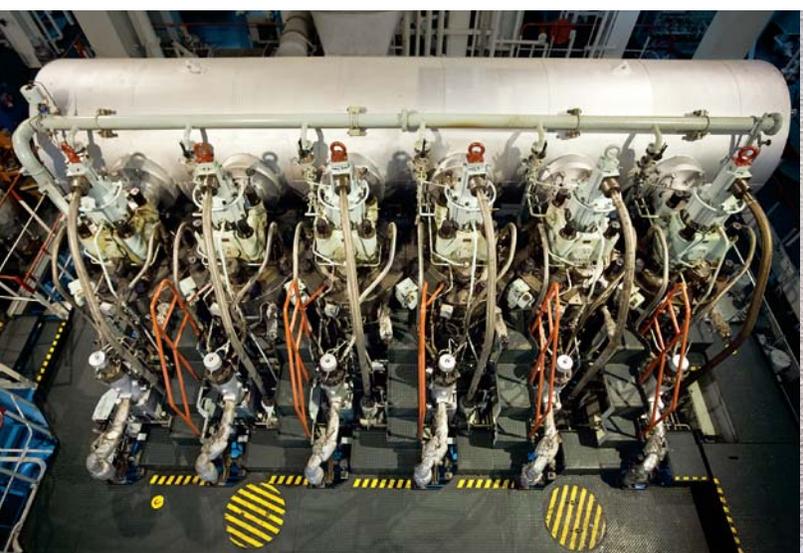
The Bosphorus is famous for its winds from all directions. Freely once spoke with an old captain in Üsküdar who catalogued them from memory: *yıldız*, or the northerly Star Wind; the month of February's *keşişleme*, bringing moisture

from Mt. Uludağ to the southeast; *karayel*, or early winter's Black Wind blowing from the northeast; the *poyraz*, named for Boreas, the Greek god of the north wind; *lodos*, named for Notos, the god of the south wind; and *melteme*, a northwest wind. The captain also remembered the names of storm systems that foretold the changing of the seasons: *hüzün fırtınası*, or spring's Agreeable Storm; *karakuş fırtınası*, summer's Storm of the Blackbirds; and *balık fırtınası*, autumn's Fish Storm, harbinger of the running of the tuna, a Byzantine symbol that can be seen on some of the empire's coins

## A SECOND BOSPORUS?

The Turkish government has proposed to reduce traffic on the Bosphorus by digging a roughly parallel canal between the Marmara and Black Seas west of Istanbul—a plan that the prime minister himself has called "crazy." The designated route requires much excavation in hilly and unspoiled terrain, and there are few natural waterways to take advantage of. With its width and depth recalculated, however, this mega-project may yet be realized.

Left: Capable of pushing more than 152,000 tons of ship and cargo, the *Ottoman Nobility's* engine is taller than any of the crew who operate it. Fuel for the crew, for this Sunday passage, is beans and rice, a simple dish traditionally eaten every Sunday aboard Turkish ships worldwide.



Facing today a variable southerly wind and a constant northerly surface current attributed to the Black Sea's cooler and less saline waters, the *Nobility* begins to move slowly toward the Bosphorus's lower mouth at less than half its top 15-knot speed. Toward Kadiköy, ancient Chalcedon, on the Asian side, it picks up the pilot who will help Captain Toker guide the ship on

many eddyings and bendings in one day's journey," accurately describing it as "bursting its way into the Marmara."

The most precise early description of these currents was set down by the Frenchman Jean-Baptiste Lechevalier, whose *Voyage de la Propontide et du Pont-Euxin* was published in 1800. He wrote that "there exists no other straits in the world



Having set out at dawn in pursuit of *lüfer*, or bluefish, fisherman Ufuk Doğan navigates mostly by avoiding the day's stream of tankers. "We small fishermen don't like tankers," he says.

its 90-minute transit of the strait. Although Toker could handily navigate the strait alone, insurance rules require a specialist pilot on the bridge, and the Turkish government requires an escort tug off the tanker's port bow, in case an engine or rudder failure requires emergency maneuvering.

The Bosphorus is an unusually complex waterway because of its unique northward subsurface current, known to drag fishing boats north against the southward surface current if they cast their nets too deep. But strong north-bound winds can also cause the surface current to reverse course entirely and, at each bend, cause eddies and cross-currents at the strait's alternating pinch points and wide bays. Apollonius called it "the eddying Bosphorus," and Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, the 16th-century Flemish author of the *Turkish Letters*, wrote that "buffeted against headlands ... it reaches Constantinople with

to which it can be compared—it surpasses all other in the beauty of its shorelines, the security of its anchorages, and the infinite variety of picturesque objects it offers the eyes of the navigator." He correctly counted its seven articulated bends, each with a different current, which he observed by the changing colors of their surface waters whenever sudden rains diluted their salinity.

Partly because of these currents, once under way, the ship cannot easily stop. A small launch comes along midships and matches speeds, and the pilot grabs the lowest rung of the dangling gangway. He climbs the 16 meters of freeboard to reach the main deck.

The crew greets the pilot, Ahmet Turna, at the bridge with handshakes, and Turna sets about his business, eyeing the cross-strait commuter-ferry traffic, which is especially heavy between Kadiköy and Üsküdar on the Asian side and Eminönü and

Opposite, above: **The Bosphorus is narrowest under the Sultan Mehmet Bridge—only 698 meters wide, just over double the length of the Ottoman *Nobility* itself. This is the third turn, and it requires a tricky double maneuver: 45 degrees to starboard (right) followed quickly by almost the same to port (left). On the bridge, pilot Ahmet Turna, left, guides Captain Levent Toker, right. Although Toker is qualified to navigate the strait himself, insurance rules require a specialized pilot at his side.**



Karaköy on the European. Turna and the others make a small and serious group. Besides the pilot and captain, a helmsman stands at the wheel, and each minute a navigator records heading changes in the ship's maneuvers book, double-checking the electronic chart glowing onscreen against his well-used paper chart, plotting the course with parallel rulers and dividers, much as in days of old.

In a similarly redundant, fail-safe spirit, a waist-high magnetic compass on each wing deck outside the bridge stands ready in the event of a loss of the electronic compass. "Electronics, not the 17,000 horsepower of mechanical power—plus steam, electrical and hydraulics, which we also produce on board—is what makes a modern ship move," says Toker, with only a bit of exaggeration.

The electronic chart glows with abundant information about depths and currents and plotted and actual course headings, as well as the positions of other large ships with GPS transponders. The chart's readout indicates that astern of us is the *Captain Nihat*—the name of the ship, not the name of its commander—but much of the pleasure-boat traffic goes unnamed and often unnoticed, as if they were so many ducks and geese. Disconcertingly, the bridge has a blind spot on the water over the bow that, when the empty ship is riding so high, stretches out in front about half a kilometer (0.3 mi), which

*Disconcertingly, the bridge has a blind spot on the water over the bow that, when the empty ship is riding so high, stretches out in front about half a kilometer.*

puts the cause, if not the consequences, of near-collisions squarely on the shoulders of reckless yachtsmen and fishermen.

Procopius's account of a 30-cubit-long sperm whale named Porphyrio, who menaced boats on the Bosphorus for 50 years, may have been mostly fiction, and the hundreds of commuter ferries that travel up, down and across the strait may have attentive professional pilots of their own, but fishermen like Ufuk Doğan add a palpable risk to traffic control on these waters.

Ufuk often sets out before dawn on his small boat, heading from the Karaköy quayside under the Galata Bridge out to mid-channel, where he hopes to hook *liifer*, or bluefish. While baiting his lines with needle-like *zargana*, he focuses on the tiny fry in his hands, not the huge hulls looming overhead. "We small fisherman don't like tankers," he says, "because their engine noise and dirty bilges ruin everything. My father, Alaatin, was known all over the Bosphorus as a great fisherman, and he gave me this boat, hoping I would make my living as he did. It is no longer possible."

The first of the seven turns the *Nobility* will have to make is 55 degrees to starboard—that's to the right—and it takes place at the Kız Kulesi, or Maiden's Tower, an islet off the Asian side just north of Kadiköy. It's often called Leander's Tower, though the strait that the Greek mythological character Leander swam across to visit his lover Hero was the Dardanelles, not

**In addition to fishermen and recreational boaters, Istanbul's commuter ferries make hundreds of crossings of the Bosphorus daily, linking the city's Asian and European sides.**





With nearly 32 kilometers of strait to its stern and the engine at a steady eight knots, fleet superintendent Captain Vural guides the author, the pilot and visitors down the tanker's 16 meters of freeboard to the deck of the pilot launch.

the Bosphorus. The Bosphorus, meaning “cow ford” in ancient Greek, gets its name from another myth, that of the god Zeus and the nymph Io: Zeus seduced Io and then turned her into a cow to shield her from the wrath of his wife, Hera, but she was not fooled. In vengeance, Hera sent a biting fly to madden the animal, which finally escaped by swimming across to Asia.

Pilot Turna pays little attention to the electronic indicators overhead for radar, compass heading, depth, rudder angle and rate of turn. Instead, his eyes are always forward, looking at the ubiquitous Turkish flags flapping on hilltops and at the water's edge on either shore, at the movement and height of the waves, and at how the smaller boats are faring that are more subject to currents and winds than the *Nobility*. “You must feel your way on each passage, not simply plot it before you set out. Each day is different. Which ferry will give you problems? Which changing wind will push your ship? All are questions without answers until you are on the bridge.”

The second turn, at Çengelköy, takes us to port (left) 30 degrees. Three long blasts help to clear the way through the unpredictable courses of motor yachts and sailboats, which on weekends are often captained by speed-loving amateurs. The pilot

speaks methodically to the helmsman, who repeats his orders in a calm counterpoint of call and response to indicate turn speeds and rudder positions—“14 degrees per minute” or “rudder at zero degrees”—and compass headings. The pilot carries a fact sheet for each passage, with notations of current and wind speeds, but he relies foremost on instinct and experience, secondly on briefings from pilots who have just transited in the opposite direction, and only then on the written word.

Passing Bebek on the European side, just north of Akıntı Burnu, or Current Point, the Bosphorus is at its greatest depth (100 meters or 162 feet), and here it runs the fastest. Captain Vural recalls his teenage years as a cadet in the nearby Maritime Academy, when for dawn training he pulled at the oars of his six-man boat with all his might against the eight-knot current, making minute progress into Bebek's sheltered bay where the cadets took their breakfast. “If we were to miss a stroke or break an oar, we could quickly find ourselves down at the Galata Bridge, hungry all day.”

The third turn, between Kandili on the Asian side and Aşıyan opposite, under the Sultan Fatih Bridge, is where the Bosphorus is at its narrowest—only 698 meters (2230') wide, and this requires

a tricky double maneuver: first a 45-degree move to starboard, then almost the same turn to port. If the turning speed is above 25 degrees per minute, stability can be lost, so each turn must be anticipated in smooth, deliberate moves.

In the *Argonautica*, Apollonius pays tribute to those helmsmen brave enough to pilot ships through the Bosphorus, recounting how a “monstrous wave reared up over the ship like a soaring mountain” and how the “excellent steersman Tiphys” stayed at the tiller. When the *Argo* did finally near the strait’s northern mouth at the Clashing Rocks, that pair of moving isles that smashed ships between them like cymbals, Jason released a dove, and when the dove passed safely between the rocks, the ship followed immediately. But a second wave approached suddenly, so “Tiphys eased off on the ship, which was struggling under the oars,” and “unharmful though terrified,” the Argonauts made it through.

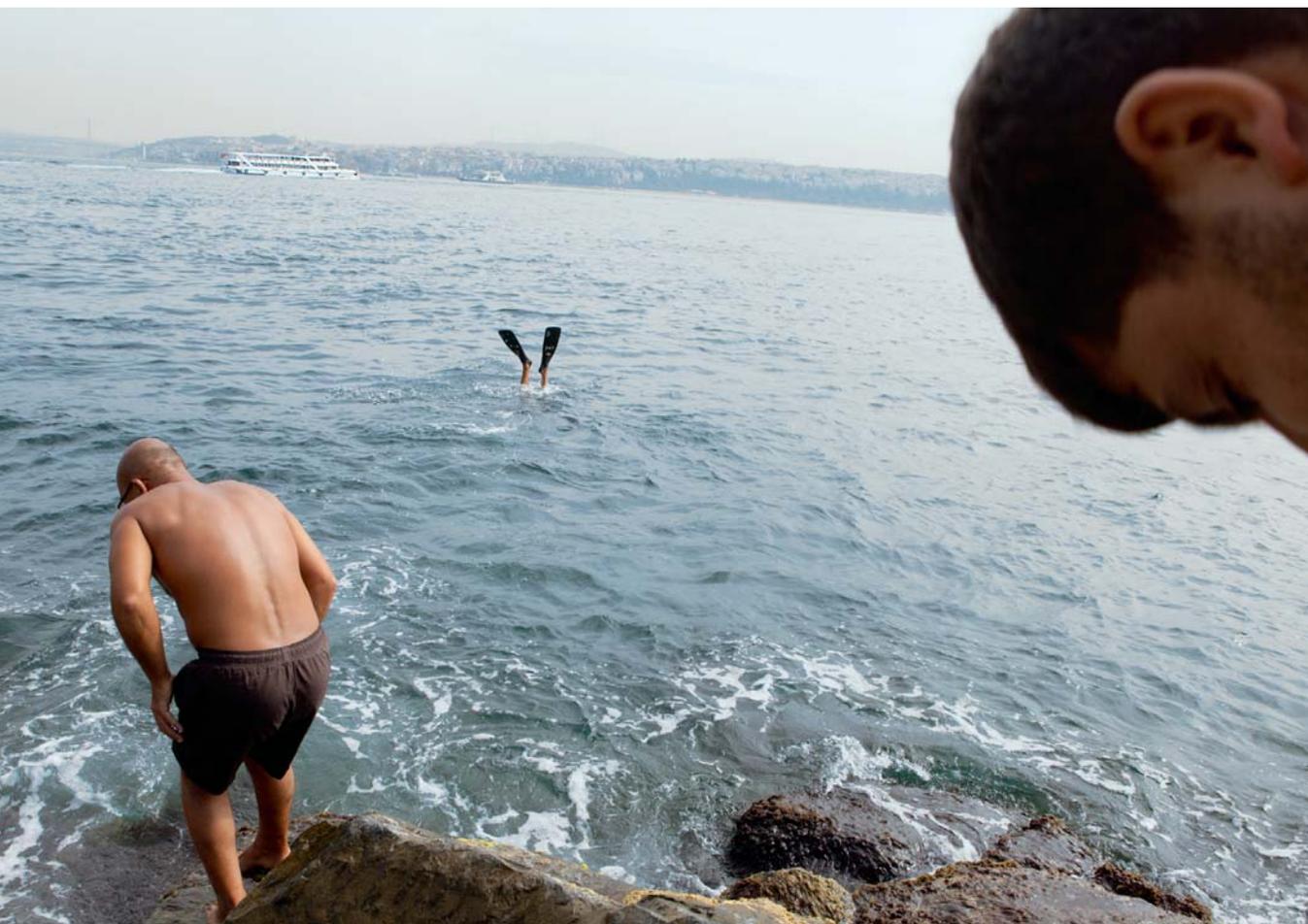
The *Nobility*’s fourth turn, back to starboard at Kanlıca Point, just across from İstinye’s sharply indented harbor, precedes the tightest turn of the entire transit, an 80-degree maneuver to port at Yeniköy, followed closely by a return to starboard at

the Asian side’s Umur shoals, across from Tarabya inlet. (Its name comes from the Greek *therapeia*, meaning “healing,” and refers to the neighborhood’s supposedly salubrious air.) Now appears the portside cape that the Byzantines called *Kledai tou Pontu*, the Keys to the Pontus. From here, an ever-widening view opens all the way to the Black Sea.

Pilot Turna, his job finished, disembarks onto a launch that pulls alongside the *Nobility* at a steady eight knots as he descends a rope ladder. As soon as the pilot boat veers off, the fast southerly current snaps it astern, making it drift quickly behind the tanker as it passes the Genoese castle above the fishing village and former Byzantine customs port of Anadolu Kavağı.

Further past Garipçe (“strange”) Point in Europe, across from Poyraz Burnu (“north wind point”), the ship passes the towers of a third Bosphorus bridge under construction and finally clears what is left of the Clashing Rocks—the western one of the pair known in Turkish as Öreke Taşı, or the Midwife’s Stool, now safely connected to the mainland by a causeway. From here, it will be a day and a half’s sailing to Novorossiysk.

*“You must feel your way on each passage, not simply plot it before you set out,” says Turna. “Each day is different. Which ferry will give you problems? Which changing wind will push your ship? All are questions without answers until you are on the bridge.”*



Despite the environmental and health concerns that go with heavy sea traffic, diving for mussels, left, and fishing, right, remain popular especially along the southern Bosphorus, where the catch can easily be taken home or sold at a nearby city market.



Beyond the portside cape that the Byzantines called “Keys to the Pontus”—their name for the Black Sea—the *Ottoman Nobility* will pass its final Bosphorus landmarks, the points on which now rise the towers of a third bridge, under construction.

Meanwhile, back at Sarai Burnu, or Palace Point, just below Topkapı, the former Ottoman palace, 55-year-old Yetkin Bodur is fishing. He’s after *istavrit*, or horse mackerel, but is having no luck today, so he is happy to put on fins and a diving mask to go pull lost hooks and rubber lures out of the shallows. A nearby diver, using an air hose

pumped by an old compressor, fills baskets with mussels, which he will sell to itinerant vendors all over the city. “I have been coming here for 20 years,” Yetkin says, “always looking at the ships passing this way and that. Small or large, sail or diesel, sunny or stormy. The Bosphorus never remains the same.” 🌐

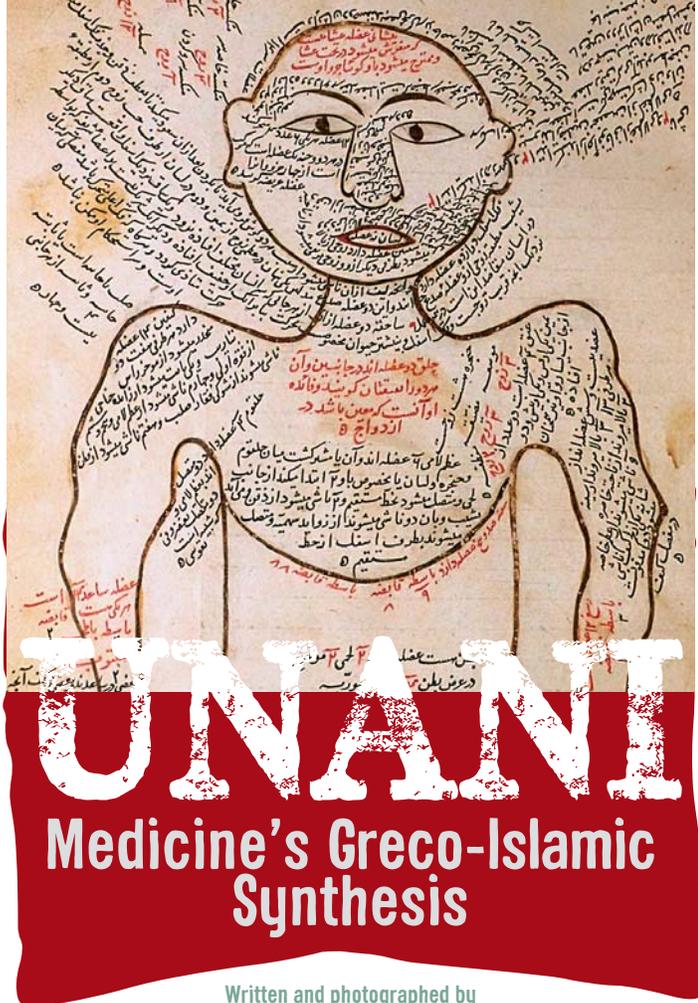


**Louis Werner** (wernerworks@msn.com) is a writer and filmmaker living in New York.

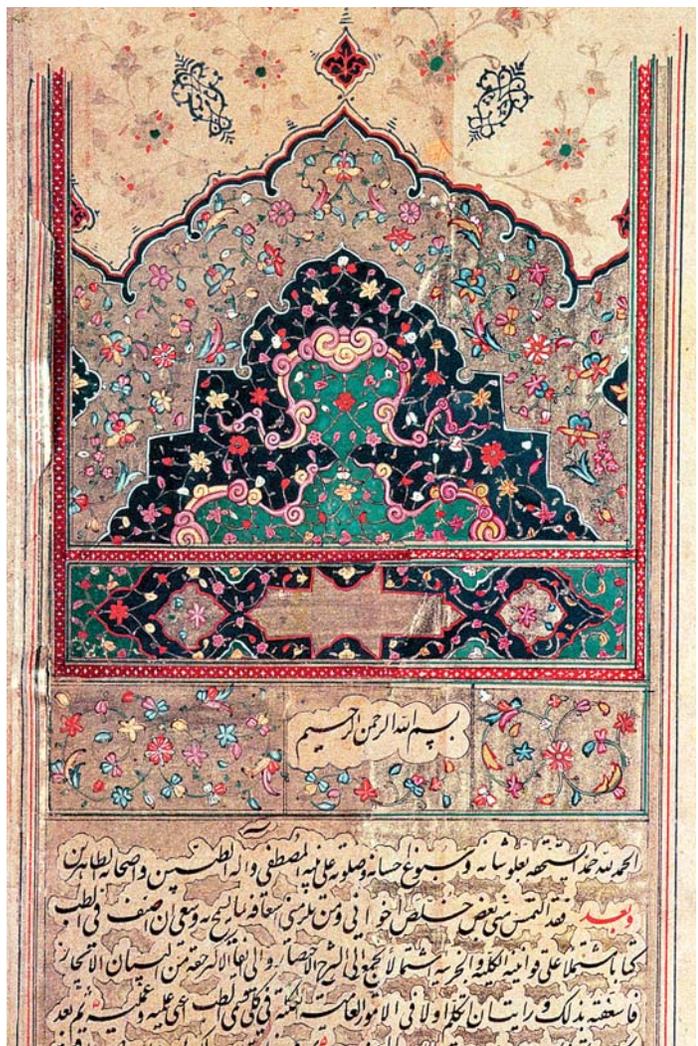
Istanbul-based photojournalist **Matthieu Paley** (www.paleyphoto.com) specializes in documenting the cultures and lands of the Pamir, Karakoram and Hindu Kush mountain ranges.



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Written and photographed by  
**STEWART GORDON**



Young men and women on motorcycles and motor scooters pull through a tall gate and park in the courtyard. It's the first day of a new semester at the Unani Medical College in Pune, India, and students gather to catch up with each other as they walk toward the three-story classroom building. Their conversations mix Urdu and English, and some carry American textbooks on anatomy and physiology. From this first moment, Unani's unique blend of ancient and modern, western and eastern, brings up the questions that often come when encountering a different way of medical thinking: Where did it come from? What does it offer?

The term *unani* refers to the ancient Greek province of Ionia, located in what is today western Turkey. According to Qaisar Khan, a professor at the college and a specialist in Unani history, the deepest roots of this type of medicine lie with the Greek and Roman concept of the body's four elements—earth, air, fire and water—as well as the idea that illness occurs when the body's essential physical states—mainly hot and cold, dry and wet—are out of balance. Imbalance affects many organs, such as the digestive tract, liver, heart and brain. Through observation of pulse, breath, eyes, urine and stool, a doctor can understand the imbalance and correct it, not only with medicines, but also with recommendations for rest, therapies and changes in diet and personal behavior. Medicinally, Unani looks first to compounds of herbs with long traditions of treating particular conditions, such as problems of the digestive tract or high blood pressure. But unlike other herb-based alternate medical systems, Unani medicines, Khan says, are produced from the whole plant, rather than from extracts of the active ingredient.



Left, top: In the early 15th century, scholar and physician Mansur ibn Ilyas included this diagram of human musculature in his *Tashrin-i Badan-i Insan* (*The Anatomy of the Human Body*). It was written some four centuries after Ibn Sina's encyclopedic *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* (*Canon of Medicine*), left, the world's premier medical text until the 16th century; the page depicted is in a Persian copy produced in 1632. Above: The main entrance to the Unani Medical College, in Pune, India.

This 14th-century illustration from one of the many editions of Ibn Sina's five-volume *Canon of Medicine* depicts both consultation and a pharmacy. The simple process of mixing natural, plant-based medicines remains much the same today for this Unani pharmacist, lower.



Unani's history, he explains, only began with Greece and Rome. Even then, he points out, medical practice always consisted of competing treatments, ideas and schools of thought in which doctors discussed theories and sought, copied and improved upon cures. The classical world of shared medical ideas and practices thus encompassed much of what is today the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa, and may even have extended to India: Sanskrit and Greek medical texts show striking similarities in their uses of the idea of four essential elements, as well as the correspondence of those elements to four "humors": wet, dry, hot and cold.

By the early first century CE, both texts and archeology confirm that commercial trade and the exchange of ideas between Rome and India had become frequent and commonplace. Medical ideas flowed farther still, as Sanskrit scholars worked in Central Asia along the Silk Roads and a medicinal trade flourished that linked South India to China.

In the sixth century, the medical school at Gundeshapur, in what is now western Iran, brought together doctors from the Byzantine Empire, Persia, India, China, Syria, Greece and Rome, and they included Buddhists, Hindus, Nestorian Christians, Confucians and Jews. After 638, under Muslim rule, the Gundeshapur academy continued for several centuries, and it was likely a model for the Abbasid Dynasty's House of Wisdom in Baghdad, where the eighth-century caliph Harun al-Rashid founded an extensive project to translate Greek and Latin texts into Arabic.

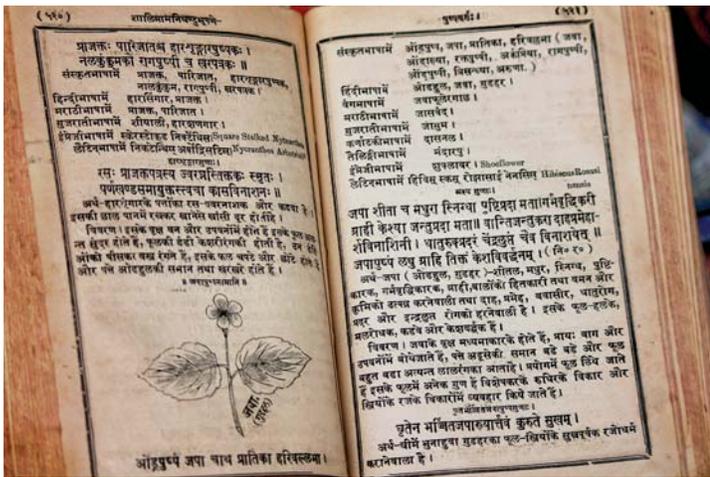
In the late eighth century, one of Harun al-Rashid's ministers sent emissaries to India not only in search of medicines, but also in search of Indian physicians, who indeed came and settled in Baghdad, where traditional Indian medical texts were translated into Arabic. By the ninth century, Islamic pharmacopeias routinely offered Indian medicines alongside those of traditional Greek medicine.

With the advent of paper, copies of medical books circulated farther and with greater frequency, from Baghdad to Persia to the caravan cities of the Silk Roads, east as far as Afghanistan and west to North Africa and Muslim Spain. They appealed to literate elites, curious about the body, health, diet and



the practical business of curing illness. By about 900 CE, the movement of both books and medical practitioners constituted a broad intellectual network of treatises, letters, comments and questions, from Bukhara to Cairo, Baghdad to Morocco.

The works of the two most famous doctors of the Islamic world in this period reflect this broad approach to health that Muslim physicians developed from classical foundations: Al-Razi (865–925, called Rhazes in the West), who practiced in Baghdad and in Rayy, near Tehran, and Ibn Sina (980–1037, called Avicenna), who moved among courts in Central Asia and Persia.



Plants form the basis of Unani treatments. Top left: This Unani formula is written in Urdu, the language common in northwest India and predominant in Pakistan. Above and right: Loose herbs for compounding and syrups from herbs appear in an Unani pharmacy in Hyderabad, India. Lower: The herb garden is a centerpiece of the Unani Medical College in Pune.

The education of both of these men included philosophy, metaphysics, astronomy, theology, mathematics, poetry and even practical engineering. As a result, their books on medicine often mixed cosmological causes with such empirical ones as the patient's environment, temperament and lifestyle.

Such books, however, are only important if they lead to alleviation of suffering and the curing of illness, and in that regard, the Baghdad court and the elites of dozens of cities within the Islamic world sought new medicines from India simply because they worked. Turmeric, for example, has anti-bacterial properties that can stop the festering and promote the healing of wounds. If eaten, turmeric retains some of its anti-bacterial qualities inside the body. Regardless of the theories of humors, working doctors knew an effective remedy when they saw one. This empirical knowledge passed into medical books, and indeed a striking feature of Ibn Sina's *Canon*, the most famous medical book of the age, is the sheer number of tropical plants and derivatives—some three dozen or more, many from India.

**Baghdad in the Abbasid era was not a singular "Golden Age" from which there was only decline; rather, in the successor courts, doctors continued to write and develop new methods.**

In the 13th century, a Latin translation of the *Canon* circulated from Italy north into Europe, where it became the principal medical text of the European Middle Ages. At about the same time, the Baghdad caliphate weakened, and as successor states emerged on its periphery in Central Asia, Persia and Afghanistan, physicians sought new positions in new courts. The *Canon* traveled with them and was translated into Persian and Urdu. In this way, Abbasid Baghdad did not represent a singular "Golden Age" after which there was only decline; rather, in the successor courts, doctors continued to write and develop new methods.

Following the Mughal conquest of northern India in the 13th century, the court of Delhi attracted many Muslim doctors. There, they came face-to-face with practitioners of the ancient Indian medical system known as Ayurveda, which they may have known previously by reputation or





through translated texts.

Rooted in the Sanskrit word for “life science,” Ayurvedic medicine was by then already more than 1000 years old. While Muslim doctors would have found Ayurveda’s description of the body as composed of four elements and four humors familiar, Ayurveda’s emphasis on energy flows and energy centers (*chakras*) would have been new—as would have been Ayurveda’s encyclopedic selection of more than 1000 tropical plants compounded for medicines.

As a result, within a few decades of the Mughal conquest, several Ayurvedic medical texts had been

translated into Arabic, and by the early 14th century, original medical treatises written in Arabic at the Mughal court routinely referred to local Ayurvedic medical practice and indigenous medicines. (In the other direction, some Greco-Islamic texts were translated into Sanskrit and Indian regional languages, too.) Both at the court of the Delhi Sultanate and those of later Muslim kingdoms of central and southern India, Muslim doctors worked alongside their Ayurvedic colleagues. This dialogue between Ayurvedic practice and what became Unani is encapsulated in an observation about himself made in 1590 by Muhammad Qasim Firishta, a historian and Muslim Ayurvedic practitioner:

After perusal of the books on the subject [medicine] commonly used in Iran, Turkey, and Arabia, his mind turned towards the study of the works of Indian physicians. He found their theories as well as their practice of medical science extremely well founded. He, therefore, thought it necessary to compile a book dealing with their medical principles and their

## A Doctor Goes to Delhi

Throughout the Mughal Dynasty, from 1520 to 1707, the Delhi court attracted talent. Perhaps typical is the story of Hakim Muhammad Da’ud, who arrived from Persia. It is related in the *Shahjahanama*, the official dynastic history.

From his experience in the healing art, he had been held in great esteem at the courts of the former Shah ‘Abbas; but after that monarch’s death, he had been illiberally treated by the successor Shah Safi, owing to the paltry jealousy of a clique who entertained hostile feelings toward him. When Shah ‘Abbas came to the throne, he was still of a very youthful age, so the hakim still received no encouragement.

application and with their system of treatment of diseases which at the outset appeared to be strange.

In these ways, each medical tradition learned from the other.

After 1707, the chaotic, at times violent, decline of the Mughal Empire presented practical dilemmas for court physicians. While some stayed, others sought patronage in the remaining Muslim kingdoms such as Oudh, Hyderabad and Mysore; still others moved to smaller kingdoms and towns across northern India, Bengal, central India, Gujarat and the Deccan. Indeed, the decline of the Mughal Empire resulted in the spread of what would soon be named “Unani” medicine across much of the subcontinent.

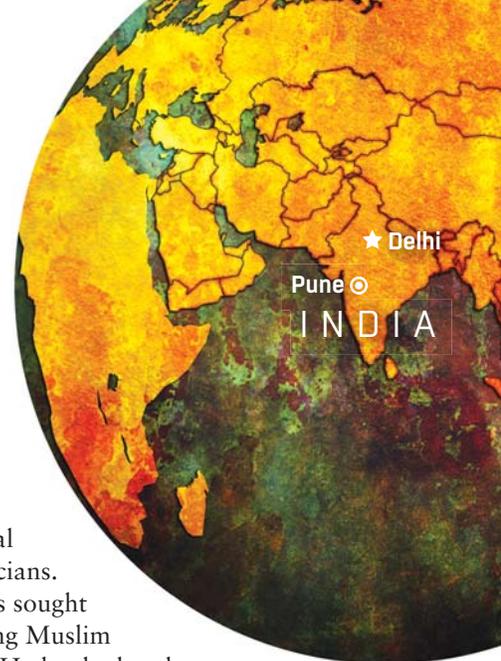
Until the late 18th century, Greco-Islamic medicine had been known in India simply by the Arabic word *tibb* (“medicine”). The earliest known references to the word “Unani” are in two late-18th-century medical treatises from Delhi: the *Takmila-i Unani* (*Perfection of the Greek*) and *Mu’ali-jat al-Nabawi* (*Prophetic Treatments*). In this same period, Indian doctors who emigrated west to the Ottoman Empire—of which Greece was then a province—were called “Unani.” In this short time, the term seems to have become synonymous with *tibb*.

In the second half of the 19th century, like their western counterparts, Unani doctors began to systematize their practices with colleges, examinations, diplomas, licenses, professional organizations and standardizations of medicines. These developed alongside and often in competition with the traditional apprenticeship system.

Unlike in western traditions, numbers of women were among students at the Unani medical colleges from the beginning. There had always been some female Unani practitioners, usually serving women who were secluded within households. Never before, however, had there been professionalization. This emerged partly under the patronage of several women leaders, such as the learned Begum of Bhopal,

Displeased with this shabby treatment, Da’ud set off for India. To his own good fortune, he arrived three weeks after Shah Jahan’s beloved daughter Jahanara had been badly burned in an accident. None of the court doctors had succeeded in relieving her pain, which Da’ud accomplished. He then oversaw her slow recovery, and this established his reputation as one of the emperor’s favored doctors, and he took his place among the elite medical families.

The story suggests that Persian medicinal practices differed somewhat from those in Delhi, and that immigrant doctors brought with them new, effective treatments.





plant both in Latin and in languages where it is known and used; its efficacy for various conditions; and contraindications and suggested dosages. The government has also funded regional Unani research centers, where formulas and promising plants are scientifically tested, and where the results are published in peer-reviewed journals and subjected to the same requirements of replication and statistical analysis used to establish western pharmaceuticals. Today, about 50,000 Unani doctors, supported by 41 medical colleges, work in India—a number 10 times greater than the number of licensed Ayurvedic doctors.

In Pakistan, where many Unani doctors moved following India's partition in 1947, government recognition of Unani medicine and training dates back to 1965, when the government established a board to set standards for Unani, Ayurvedic and Homeopathic medicines, to register and license practitioners and to sponsor research. The Ministry of Health directly controls Unani medical colleges throughout the country, which educate about the same number of Unani doctors as India—50,000—but here they make up a

At the government Nizamia Unani Hospital in Hyderabad, India, an arthritis patient receives treatment. Right: An Indian postage stamp commemorated the 25th anniversary of the hospital's founding in 1938.



who ruled the central Indian state for more than 30 years at the end of the 19th century. The needs of women's health and the availability of schools where women Unani doctors could be trained led to a rapid rise in the number of female practitioners, and even today the numbers of men and women at Unani colleges are roughly equal.

In 1985, the Indian legislature formally recognized and funded Unani as part of the AYUSH cluster of five alternate medical systems: Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddi and Homeopathy. With government recognition came more Unani medical colleges, more doctors and broader public acceptance. For the past two decades, the Indian government's Central Council of Indian Medicine has set the curriculum and standards for Unani medical colleges and funded the development and systematization of Unani medicine through a nationally recognized formulary published both in print and on-line. This database now includes the name of each

more significant sector of health care, as they serve nearly a majority of patients requiring primary care in rural areas.

Modern Unani practice retains much of its long tradition, including the core idea of balance and the principle that treatment assists the body to heal itself. Plants provide the vast majority of Unani medicines. The doctor examines the patient's pulse, eyes, urine and stool, and elicits details of family history and personal habits in order to tailor the treatment to the individual. Since the 1980's and 1990's, Unani has gained a reputation for efficacy in chronic illness that seem resistant to western medicines, particularly diseases of the digestive tract and high blood pressure. Patients are attracted to Unani doctors' commitment to them as individuals, and to the doctor's careful attention to medical history and situation.

Looked at in this light, Unani is more than merely the application to disease of a set of beliefs embodied in books: It is the fruit of a long, pragmatic search for cures, one that started millennia ago, crossed many lands and eras, and continues today. Even now, there are ongoing improvements in the delivery of Unani's herbs, as medical supply houses now prepare most of the single-plant medicines and ship them to all parts of India and overseas, subject to testing and safety under government oversight.

In training, the apprentice system is gone, and entrance examinations are highly competitive. In India, most—but not all—of the students are Muslims. The five-year curriculum, in Urdu or English, includes state exams every 18 months and is followed by a one-year internship and the certification exam that only 60 to 70 percent pass on the first attempt. (Retakes are permitted, six months later.)

As described by Rehan Safee, MD, professor at the Unani Medical College in Pune, much of the Unani curriculum would seem familiar to medical students worldwide: The anatomy textbooks, for example, are current editions from the US. Dissection of



**Unani doctors take a patient's pulse in a way that resembles not only Ayurvedic but also Chinese methods. Each of the doctor's fingers is placed in a position from which specific organs can be assessed.**

cadavers is required. The library houses western and Unani medical references, in addition to many research journals, largely focused on the herbal formulations, which are emphasized as a first line of medical response. There is, Safee says, no illusion that Unani is always the best or an exclusive response to all medical situations: From automobile accident

injuries to runaway infections, he says, many things are best done in a western-style hospital. Nevertheless, Unani has established the efficacy of its methods for chronic illnesses such as arthritis, high blood pressure, psoriasis, hepatitis and problems of the digestive tract.

Among students at the college, some plan post-graduate degrees in medicine, pharmacology, surgery, gynecology or preventive medicine, planning to become teachers or researchers; others are headed for nursing homes, hospitals or the National Rural Health Mission. Like

their western counterparts, only a few plan to open a family practice. Among all of them, says Arshad Pathan, MD, who both teaches at the college and conducts a private practice, their patients are likely to be about 70 percent non-Muslim.

The students' use of both Urdu and English in conversation and of both American and Indian textbooks is no mystery: It is a continuation of Unani's millennia-old tradition of pragmatic adoption of the best of other medical systems, while retaining the herbal practices central to local tradition. Rigorous training in colleges like the Unani Medical College in Pune looks like a good prescription for Unani's longevity. 🌐

**In 1985, the Indian legislature formally recognized and funded Unani as part of the AYUSH cluster of five alternate medical systems: Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddi and Homeopathy.**

**Students relax in the garden of the medical college in Pune. Since the 19th century, the number of women practitioners of Unani has roughly equaled the number of men.**



**Stewart Gordon** is an independent scholar attached to the Center for South Asian Studies at the University of Michigan. His most recent book, *When Asia was the World*, has been translated into languages including Chinese, Korean and Arabic. Samples of his next book, *A History of the World in Sixteen Shipwrecks*, can be found at [www.stewartgordonhistorian.com](http://www.stewartgordonhistorian.com).

**Related articles** from past issues can be found on our Web site, [www.saudiaramcoworld.com](http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com). Click on Archives/Back Issues, then on the relevant decade and on the cover of the issues indicated below.  
 Arab roots of European medicine: M/J 97  
 herbal remedies in Arabia: S/O 06  
 medicine in the western Mediterranean: J/F 11  
 House of Wisdom: M/J 82  
 coming of paper: M/J 99



## FOR STUDENTS

We hope this two-page guide will help sharpen your reading skills and deepen your understanding of this issue's articles.

## FOR TEACHERS

We encourage reproduction and adaptation of these ideas, freely and without further permission from *Saudi Aramco World*, by teachers at any level, whether working in a classroom or through home study.

—THE EDITORS

## Curriculum Alignments

To see alignments with us national standards for all articles in this issue, click "McRel Standard" under "For Educators" at [www.saudiaramco-world.com](http://www.saudiaramco-world.com).

**Julie Weiss** is an education consultant based in Eliot, Maine. She holds a Ph.D. in American studies. Her company, Unlimited Horizons, develops social studies, media literacy, and English as a Second Language curricula, and produces textbook materials.

## CLASS ACTIVITIES

The articles in this edition of *Saudi Aramco World* are about movement: the movement of people, of things and of ideas. The Classroom Guide activities are organized both by theme and by article. The Movement of People focuses on "The Immigrant's Progress"; The Movement of Things focuses on "Chiles' Global Warming"; and The Movement of Ideas focuses on "Unani: Medicine's Greco-Islamic Synthesis."

### Theme: *The Movement of People* Article: *"The Immigrant's Progress"*

We all move, one way or another, from one place to another. At the least, we move from one room to a different room within one building. At the most, we move from one country to another. To get yourself into a good frame of mind to explore immigration, think about your own movements and ask yourself how they affect you. Make a diagram that shows some of the places you have moved. Start with short distances, like walking around your neighborhood; continue with movements of greater and greater distances. Here's an example to get you started:

Me → my neighborhood → school →  
visiting relatives → (and so on)

In your diagram, include at least five destinations, each one farther away than the previous one. End your diagram with the farthest place from home that you have ever gone. Looking at the graphic, think about what it feels like to be at each location as you get farther from home. For example, when you walk around your neighborhood, you might feel comfortable, see people you know and recognize the surroundings. But if you go to another country, you might feel uncomfortable because things may look different and you might not know the language. Add these feelings to your diagram. Use any of the following to describe your feelings at each destination: words, colors, shapes, audio recordings.

Then pair up with another student. Take turns asking each other any questions you may have about your experiences of movement. With your partner, make a list of things that change as you travel greater and greater distances. For example, at what distance does the weather change? At what distance do the styles of the buildings change? At what distance does the language

change? How do these changes affect your feelings about being in these different places?

Read "The Immigrant's Progress," in which 10 individuals (including the writer and artist, Norman Macdonald) describe their experiences moving from their countries of origin to Amsterdam, in the Netherlands. As you read, underline or highlight the parts of the text that you find most significant, or take notes on paper if you don't have a copy of the article you can mark up. When you're done, look at your notes. Do you see any topics that appear in the stories of more than one or two of the individuals? Write those topics on a piece of paper. (You can do this part of the activity either by yourself, with a partner or in a small group. Limit your group's size to three or four people so that everyone has a chance to participate.) When you have a list of topics, choose a member of your group to share with the class the items on your list. Have one person write the items on the board or chart paper. [Note to teachers: If you are working with younger students, or if you want to save time, you can give your students a list of topics that you've pulled from the narratives yourself. They can use your list for the next part of the activity.]

Your list identifies some of the key issues that face people who move from one country to another. (If your diagram included going to another country, you may have experienced some of these issues yourself!) Write each of the topics at the top of a sheet of paper. Write a sentence stating the topic. For example, one topic that appears repeatedly in these immigrants' narratives is why people left their country of origin. Find the parts of the stories





the spices of India led to Christopher Columbus's surprise encounter with the Americas. The *Saudi Aramco World* article may provide a more detailed version of the story than you knew before, so re-read the first part of the article. Using a piece of paper in the landscape position, make a timeline that shows the events

where that topic is discussed. If you can, cut those parts from the article and paste them on the sheet of paper after your first sentence. If you can't do an actual cut-and-paste, copy the passages onto your sheet of paper. When you're done, read them through. In the case of our example, how would you sum up the reasons why these immigrants left their home countries? You might write something like, "Immigrants left their home countries for reasons that include political conflicts, religious differences and a search for creative inspiration." If you don't have time for everyone to do a page for all the topics, divide up the topics among groups of students so that each topic is assigned to a group. Then students can share their completed work.

When you're done, you now have an outline of an essay about the issues that have faced immigrants to Amsterdam. If time permits, write the essay, choosing quotes from the article to show readers what the immigrants have experienced, in their own words. You might find that the issues these immigrants have talked about are similar to those that immigrants to other places at other times have also experienced. In other words, you might find that your analysis is a case study of how and why people move from one country to another.

**Theme: Movement of Things**  
**Article: "Chiles' Global Warming"**

Let's continue exploring movement by shifting our focus from the movement of people to the movement of things. Read "Chiles' Global Warming," which describes how the *Capsicum* peppers became a worldwide phenomenon in the first half the 1500's.

Just as political conditions may affect people's decisions to move, political conditions may also affect the movement of objects. The first part of "Chiles' Global Warming" tells a story about how Europeans first found capsicum peppers. Some of that story may be familiar to you: American schoolchildren, for example, learn about how Europeans' search for a sea route to

leading up to Columbus's finding capsicum pepper. Then resume reading on page 7, where the article asserts that the Portuguese spread capsicums before the Spanish did, and continue reading through page 11, using the map on page 5 to follow along with what you are reading.

As you've read, writer Deana Sidney asserts that it is remarkable that capsicum peppers went global in just 50 years. To you, 50 years probably seems like a very long time. What accounts for the difference? With a group, identify and list different ways you communicate and travel. Next to each, make a note of how long it takes. For example, when you talk with someone who is in the same room with you, the communication takes place instantly. When you travel to another continent, you travel either by plane or boat, which takes either hours or possibly weeks. Which types of communication and movement take the longest amount of time? How long do they take? Why do they take that long?

Having thought about how you communicate and get around, return to the article. How did the peppers get around the world? Answer the question with your group. Given these methods of movement, do you agree with Deana Sidney that 50 years was a short period of time for the peppers to attain global status? Why or why not? Look back at your group's list of your own communications and movements. How long would it have taken in the 1500's to do the different actions on the list? Imagine how your life would be different if these activities still took that long a time. Write a story in which you are living in 2014, but methods of communicating and moving have returned to the way they were 500 years ago. (If you have less time, you might have a class discussion on the subject instead.)

**Theme: Movement of Ideas**  
**Article: "Unani: Medicine's Greco-Islamic Synthesis"**

So far, you've looked at the movement of people and things. Both are objects, that is, they take up space. Not so, however, with



**IF YOU ONLY HAVE 15 MINUTES...**

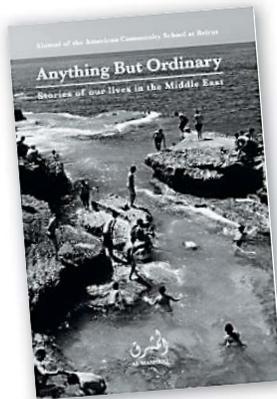
Choose one of the people who tell their stories in "The Immigrant's Progress." Read that person's story and respond to it in a graphic, a piece of writing or artwork. Some topics you might consider addressing in your response might be: why the person left his/her country of origin; how the person has been treated in Amsterdam (including how attitudes may have been different at different times); and how the person manages the tension of having been at home in two different countries.

ideas. The movement of ideas is a little bit more complicated because you can't actually see them move. How, then, can you measure how ideas move? To get a sense of the challenge, fill a clear glass with water. Add a few drops of food coloring. Watch the color disperse. (It works with a cup of coffee and some milk, too.) As you can see, it would be, at the very least, difficult to map the diffusion of color into the water.

Mapping the spread of ideas can be slightly easier—if you know what to look for. Read the article about Unani medicine. Use the map on page 37, along with the article, to track the development and spread of Unani. Since there is no way to see the movement of the medical ideas that comprise it, how does writer Stewart Gordon track the movement of the ideas that grew into Unani today? What objects—people and things—does he believe carried the ideas? To where? What evidence does he use that show this?

Think about how ideas travel today. Can you think of any ideas that travel as slowly and concretely as the medical ideas that make up Unani? If so, what are they? Why do they travel that way? What about ideas that travel quickly, along 21st-century electronic routes? Consider something that has recently gone viral. Can you figure out where it started and to where it spread first? Imagine living in a world where ideas could not travel this way: You would probably get a lot less information than you do now. How would that affect you? For a day, keep a log of the ideas and information you get from various sources. If you did not have electronics, which ideas do you think would you get anyway? In other words, if information had to travel the way people and objects travel, which information do you think would be significant enough that you would still get it? How might your life be different? Do you think it would be better? Why or why not?

Readers of *Saudi Aramco World* who want to range more widely or delve more deeply than a bimonthly magazine can do will find interesting material, most of it recently published, in this list. Without endorsing the views of any of the authors, the editors encourage varied and omnivorous reading as a path to greater understanding. The books listed here are available on-line, in libraries, from bookstores—we urge our readers to patronize independent bookstores—or from their respective publishers; International Standard Book Numbers (ISBN) are given to facilitate ordering. Please do not order books from *Saudi Aramco World*. The full-text electronic archive of “Suggestions for Reading” from 1993 to the present can be found on the magazine’s Web site at [www.saudiaramcoworld.com](http://www.saudiaramcoworld.com).



**Anything But Ordinary: Stories of Our Lives in the Middle East.** Anne Peet Carrington and Børre Ludvigsen, eds. 2013, Al Mashriq, 978-8-29993-202-8, \$20 pb. *Anything But Ordinary* is the third volume of stories and photographs by alumni and faculty of the American Community School in Beirut. The stories offer the unique views of young Americans who came from all over the Middle East to study at ACS from the 1930’s through the ’70’s, a time, as one early student remembers, “when Americans were loved and respected” throughout the region. The children were sons and daughters of American missionaries and teachers from Turkey, Palestine and Oman; of embassy personnel, international bankers and airline pilots in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon; and of employees in the oil fields of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and Iran. They write of learning “respect for other religions, races, cultures and nationalities,” but in the personal and often charming context of young lives in a boarding school, of classmates, teachers, class trips to historic ruins or sneaking rides on an electric tram.

**‘I became a student at ACS in 1955, when I was 15.... I had one foot in childhood and the other nudging the edges of adulthood. All of my recollections of Beirut are colored by that conjunction. When the tram rumbles out of my memory, the aspirations of childhood cling to it. When I bend toward yellow roses, I smell the perfume of adulthood.’**

—Sally Parmelee Young

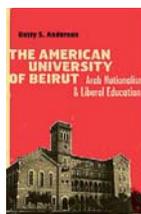
—WILLIAM TRACY



**The Arab Avant-Garde: Music, Politics, Modernity.** Thomas Burkhalter, Kay Dickinson and Benjamin J. Harbert, eds. 2013, Wesleyan UP, 9-780-81957-386-5, \$27.95 pb. The term “avant-garde” is usually associated with European culture. This volume argues that

many Arab musicians deserve to be considered avant-garde for their innovative work and their challenges to mainstream music, while exploring what it means to be authentic, trailblazing and modern. Chapters on Egyptian composer and early avant-gardist Sayyid Darwish (1892–1923) and Lebanon’s Ziad Rahbani (b. 1956) analyze their music, careers and passion for social and political causes. Other chapters analyze contemporary art music composers from Syria, the Extreme Metal music scene in Egypt, Palestinian hip hop, a US–Lebanon cultural-diplomacy project and Beirut composers using the sounds of war in their work. With its blending of theory and case studies, this book will be essential for people examining the rich complexity of music in the Arab world.

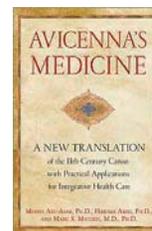
—KAY CAMPBELL



**The American University of Beirut: Arab Nationalism and Liberal Education.** Betty S. Anderson. 2011, University of Texas, 978-0-292-72691-8, \$55 hb. How did this educational landmark move from its founding as a sedate Protestant missionary college in 1866 to the

hotbed of Arab political activism that *Newsweek* in 1970 called “Guerrilla U” because of widespread student sympathy for the Palestinians? The author, a Middle East historian, explains how AUB found itself at the “intersection” of a quickly evolving American educational project for the region and a steadily growing student quest for national identity and empowerment. She shows how it shifted from its original missionary curriculum taught in Arabic to a liberal curriculum in English. In the 1920’s, women entered AUB and Anderson provides details of the slow but steady progress of women’s rights there. In the late 1960’s, student activism focused on regional issues, particularly the aftermath of the 1967 Arab–Israeli War and the rise of the Palestinian movement. When AUB was drawn into the Lebanese civil war from 1975, things turned tragic. The book concludes on an upbeat note by focusing on the “rebuilding” of AUB after the grim years of civil war.

—ROBERT W. LEBLING

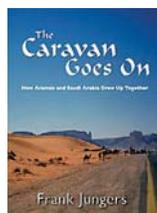


**Avicenna’s Medicine: A New Translation of the 11th-Century Canon with Practical Applications for Integrative Health Care.** Mones Abu-Asab, Hakima Amri and Marc S. Micozzi. 2013, Healing Arts Press, 978-1-59477-432-4, \$35 hb. Every civilization has its

defining genius and Ibn Sina (Avicenna in the West) was to the Islamic world what Aristotle was to Greece and Leonardo da Vinci to the Renaissance. He had memorized the Qur’an by age 10, then studied law, mathematics, physics and philosophy. At 16 he turned to the study of medicine, and his contemporaries were soon calling him “the prince of physicians.” His supreme work was *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb* (*The Canon of Medicine*). Over a million words long, it codified 11th-century medical knowledge, and was used in medical schools until the late 19th century. In this impressive new translation of its first volume, the authors have made a significant contribution by working from the original Arabic rather than the later Latin text, with its many errors. However, once they enter into interpretation, they overreach. For example, they say that Galen’s four humors, which Ibn Sina believed in, correspond directly with proteins, lipids and organic acids. There may be some incidental

connections, but Ibn Sina had no idea of the nature, properties or roles of these biochemical molecules. Another fallacious idea is that Ibn Sina was an early practitioner of alternative medicine. In fact, he practiced modern medicine as it existed in his time. Some was effective, but most is of questionable value. If Ibn Sina were a physician today, he would relegate alternative medicine to “not proven” status.

—DAVID TSCHANZ



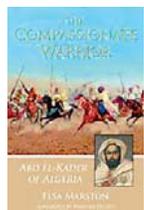
**The Caravan Goes On: How Aramco and Saudi Arabia Grew Up Together.**

Frank Jungers. 2013, Medina Publishing, 978-1-909333-919-4, \$29.83 hb, \$15.89 pb.

When Frank Jungers joined Aramco in 1947, its headquarters were in

San Francisco and it was owned by four US oil majors; when he retired as CEO in 1978, the giant petroleum company was based in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, and was 60 percent owned by the Saudi government, with full Saudi ownership just two years away. This autobiography tells the story of how Aramco and the kingdom formed a partnership that, in some ways, is reflected in today's Saudi Aramco. Jungers offers an insider's view of how Aramco dealt with such challenges as the coming of OPEC and OAPEC and the 1973 Arab oil embargo, not to mention the kidnapping of Minister of Petroleum Ahmed Zaki Yamani in 1975. Jungers played a key role in ensuring that Saudis received the training they needed to operate the company, integrating them into management. Notably, during the turbulent '70s, the policies he helped develop paved the way for the Saudi Arabia's purchase—rather than nationalization—of the business.

—JANE WALDRON GRUTZ



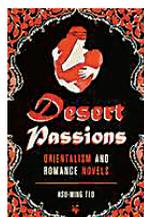
**The Compassionate Warrior: Abd el-Kader of Algeria.**

Elsa Marston. 2013, Wisdom Tales, 978-1-93778-610-6, \$16.95 pb.

Abd el-Kader was a remarkable 19th-century Algerian warrior and statesman who led his people in a long struggle against the French—and was later fêted

in France and America. Marston, a children's author and former Middle East resident, offers a good introduction to his achievements, sprinkling educational details throughout. She covers Abd el-Kader's revolt against the occupying French and his later rescue of Christian residents caught up in a conflict in Syria. Although Marston's style and tone are noticeably neutral, many young readers will be inspired by Abd el-Kader's bravery and brilliance. One hopes that this book will bring a new generation to the ranks of Abd el-Kader admirers, who can then graduate to fuller works about him, such as John Kiser's authoritative

*Commander of the Faithful: The Life and Times of Emir Abd el-Kader.* — ASMA HASAN



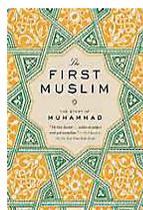
**Desert Passions: Orientalism and Romance Novels.**

Hsu-Ming Teo. 2012, University of Texas, 978-0-292-73938-3, \$60 hb.

This valuable work takes

a sweeping look at the confrontation between Arab men and western women in American romance novels, past and present. Since the 1919 publication of E. M. Hull's *The Sheik*, desert-themed love stories have permeated popular literature, marking a seemingly endless infatuation with an age-old paradigm the author calls “Loving the Orient.” Subsequent chapters consider the rise of romantic Orientalism in America; the Orientalist historical romance novel and contemporary shaykh romance novel; harems, heroines and heroes; tourism and terrorism; and readers' views of this phenomenon. Teo suggests that the dominant feminized discourse, where white women are the authors, producers, consumers and imagined actors, has led to a more nuanced understanding and interpretation of Orientalism. Alas, the image of the Arab lover embracing his female counterpart on the cover of *Desert Passions*, like hundreds of Harlequin romance novels, underscores America's symbiotic ties to the Middle East implicit in fact and fiction.

—JONATHAN FRIEDLANDER



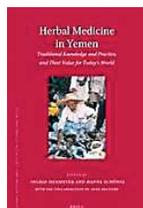
**The First Muslim: The Story of Muhammad.**

Lesley Hazelton. 2013, Riverhead Books, 978-1-59448-728-6, \$27.95 hb.

Among the spate of recent biographies of the Prophet Muhammad, this one stands out. Hazleton, a former Jerusalem-based journalist and

a psychologist, brings both of her professional skills to bear in this perceptive work, examining Muhammad's life within its historical context and offering insights into the struggles of the early Muslim community. Indeed, *The First Muslim* might be considered a prequel to her celebrated *After the Prophet: The Epic Story of the Shia-Sunni Split* (2009, Doubleday). Hazleton's mining of the earliest biographies of Muhammad has yielded anecdotes that even scholarly Muslims may not know (although the absence of discussion of Muhammad's last sermon may be missed by some). *The First Muslim* is a beautifully written and dynamic work that Muslims, those wanting to learn more about Islam and lovers of the English language will enjoy.

— ASMA HASAN



**Herbal Medicine in Yemen: Traditional Knowledge and Practice, and Their Value for Today's World.**

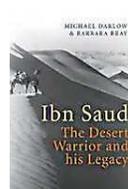
Ingrid Hehmeyer and Hanne Schonig, eds. 2012, Brill, 978-9-00422-150-5, \$140 hb.

Herbs and spices have long been a major component of the history and culture of

Yemen, sitting as it does at the crossroads of trade between India, Egypt and the Mediterranean. Many were not only used as flavorings for food, but were also regarded as medicine. How many of these plant-based materials passing through Yemeni ports were used for medicine by the local population? How were frankincense, dried aloe sap and bitter gourd (colocynth) used in Yemen, compared with the rest of the region? Is *qat* viewed as an acceptable herbal medicine? These and related topics are addressed in this collection of papers, which offer more than a casual introduction to herbalism. Recent research and

scientific testing of plants used in Yemeni herbal medicine has validated their traditional use, and could possibly lead to the development of new drugs and expanded health-care options in Yemen and elsewhere.

—DONNA S. EVANS



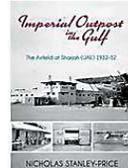
**Ibn Saud, The Desert Warrior Who Created the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.**

Michael Darlow and Barbara Bray. 2012, Skyhorse Publishing, 978-1-61608-579-7, \$29.95 hb.

This extensively researched volume details the life and legacy of Abdulaziz Al Saud, the giant

who united diverse tribes across the Arabian Peninsula. The authors provide a brief history of the Middle East and early Islam, then focus on the Al Sa'ud family in remote central Arabia. They follow Abdulaziz, or Ibn Saud as he came to be known, from his birth in 1880 through his death in 1953 as monarch of the kingdom he created. They describe how the young man learned by observing tribal customs as well as Ottoman and British colonial policies in Kuwait and other territories surrounding the Peninsula. Thus he mastered pragmatic balance, joining military strength with diplomacy and political bargaining, weighing retribution and forgiveness when molding relationships with tribes, religious factions, European powers and even within his family. The delicate balance he achieved among his kingdom's differing regions and traditions has continued to serve Saudi Arabia's leadership.

—WILLIAM TRACY



**Imperial Outpost in the Gulf: The Airfield at Sharjah (UAE) 1932-1952.**

Nicholas Stanley-Price. 2012, Book Guild, 978-1-84624-684-5, \$36.50 hb.

This history of commercial aviation's earliest years in the Arabian Gulf—and its role

in the social and economic forces shaping the region—does not disappoint. The title alludes not only to the comfortably appointed overnight stop of Imperial Airways at Sharjah Airfield in the early 1930s, but in a wider context to the British Empire's waning influence in a region trending steadily toward greater political and economic autonomy—both of which the author discusses at length. Stanley-Price offers a fascinating glimpse into the design, construction and operation of this key empire outpost and its impact on the region as a commercial and military aviation hub. Replete with previously unpublished photos, fascinating personal narratives and humorous asides, this is a “must read” for any Middle East aviation buff desiring to learn much more about a fascinating period in Gulf history.

—MICHAEL W. GEROW



**Islamic Geometric Design.**

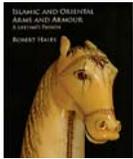
Eric Broug. 2013, Thames & Hudson, 2013, 978-0-50051-695-9, \$75 hb, \$14.95 pb.

This visually stunning book conveys the beauty and complexity of Islamic patterns

across a broad area from Spain and North Africa to the Middle East, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia and India. Color photographs of architectural monuments, with close-ups of intricate patterns in cut brick, mosaic faience, glazed ceramic tiles, carved stone and inlaid wood, accompany analytical

diagrams. The book progresses from basic design principles to explanations of the three main pattern families (based on squares, pentagons or hexagons), each derived from divisions of the circle. Points connect to form lines, polygons, stars and interlacing bands. An artist and designer, Broug explains how each pattern can be made using a compass and ruler with pen or pencil; step-by-step instructions are given in the appendix.

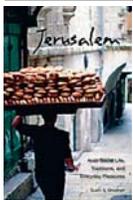
—CAROL BIER



**Islamic and Oriental Arms and Armour: A Lifetime's Passion.** Robert Hales. 2013, Robert Hales (C. I.) Ltd., 978-0-99263-150-5, £85 hb. A London dealer in fine Islamic and Oriental weapons for almost 50 years, Robert

Hales has selected hundreds of finely wrought daggers, swords and firearms, most dating from the 17th through the 19th century, for this beautifully illustrated volume. He has also included picturesque maces, bows, helmets and fine chain mail. He explains why the different types of arms and armor were fashioned as they were, and the reasons for the variations within each category. However, it is the sheer splendor of these weapons that lingers in the mind—an Indian dagger pommel in the shape of an elegant horse's head; an Algerian pistol encrusted with plaques of brilliant coral. Crafted to impress, these artful weapons were the male counterparts of the fine jewels worn by elegant ladies of their time, and they are every bit as beautiful.

—JANE WALDRON GRUTZ



**Jerusalem: Arab Social Life, Traditions, and Everyday Pleasures in the 20th Century.** Subhi S.

Ghosheh. 2012, Olive Branch Press, 978-1-56656-788-6, \$20 pb. "The citizen of Jerusalem personifies his traditions every moment of his life," writes

Subhi S. Ghosheh, who grew up just outside the walls of Jerusalem in the Shaykh Jarrah Quarter. Ghosheh's detailed descriptions of revered traditions, beliefs and customs in early 20th-century Jerusalem cover a vast array of topics—from raising children to wedding customs, folk medicine, food, religious celebrations, economic traditions, and birth and death rituals. They represent the material and moral history of Jerusalem and Palestine. He writes that the occupation of Palestine since 1948 has endangered these traditions and led to the "obliteration of indigenous Arab identity—both Islamic and Christian. Rebuilding the character of our people requires the revival of our traditions." Ghosheh's *Jerusalem* is a key to the past for a people looking to rebuild their future.

—PINEY KESTING



**Keep the Flag Flying: A Diplomatic Memoir.** Alan Munro. 2012, Gilgamesh, 978-1-90853-115-5, £17.95/\$27.95 hb.

This delightful, insightful book covers Sir Alan Munro's distinguished 35 years in the British diplomatic service—a

kaleidoscopic career that took him from the Middle East in 1958 to North Africa, Brazil and,

with periodic postings in London, finally to Saudi Arabia as ambassador in 1989–1993. His skillful handling of the complexities coincident with Britain's role in the First Gulf War proved his physical and professional capabilities, and these intricacies fill the final fifth of the volume. Munro is a master of the one-sentence vignette, saying more in a few words than some writers manage in whole chapters. These offer perceptive insights into prominent political activities and personalities in many Middle Eastern and African countries, all tempered with entertaining humor and perceptive wisdom.

—COLBERT HELD

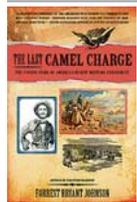


**Ladies of the Dance.** May Mansoor Munn. 2013, Anemone Press, 978-0-98578-321-1, \$14.95 pb.

This historical novel captures the emotions and political intrigue in the tension-filled days leading up to the June 1967 Six-Day War between Israel

and Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Jordan. It follows two Palestinian refugees—Alya and Omar Habeeb—who, with their mother, fled from their home in Jerusalem in 1948. They settled in Jordanian-controlled Beit Nuba, where Omar runs the family hotel. Their unfulfilled lives, Omar's involvement in the underground Fatah political movement and the occupation of the hotel by Israeli soldiers during the 1967 war exposes readers to the plight of Palestinian refugees. "We've lost what we once thought was ours—orange groves, homes, lives, even love," laments 28-year old Alya. The author skillfully draws from her own experiences as a Palestinian who left her home in Jerusalem in 1948 to describe this "dance" between longings for the past and hopes for the future.

—PINEY KESTING



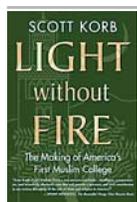
**The Last Camel Charge: The Untold Story of America's Desert Military Experiment.** Forrest Bryant

Johnson. 2012, Berkley Caliber, 978-0-42524-569-9, \$25.95 hb, \$16 pb.

In 1856, thirty-four camels arrived at Camp Verde, Texas, the first recruits to the US Camel Corps. Imported from Tunisia, Egypt and Turkey, they provided reliable transport across America's southwestern deserts, for—unlike horses or mules—they could survive on the scant desert forage and little water. In vivid prose, Johnson traces the short history of the Camel Corps, culminating in 1859 when a small contingent of men and camels found themselves surrounded by some 1800 Mojave Indians at a Colorado River ford. Outnumbered 50-to-one, the corpsmen charged their camels straight through the Indian throngs, racing to safety and a place in the history of the Old West.

*The Last Camel Charge* is a tribute to the men who blazed a trail west and to their exceptional animals.

—JANE WALDRON GRUTZ



**Light Without Fire: The Making of America's First Muslim College.** Scott Korb. 2013, Beacon Press, 978-0-8070-0163-9, \$25.95 hb.

This slim volume about Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California, will appeal to readers interested in comparative religious studies,

particularly those seeking to learn more about

Islam as practiced in the US today. The school is the brainchild of two American converts to Islam, Shaykh Hamza Yusuf Hanson and Imam Zaid Shakir, who pondered how they might encourage a generation of indigenous American-Muslim scholars. Eventually, they decided to establish a liberal-arts college that would combine Islamic tradition with America's culture and democratic values, one that would enlighten the spirit and eschew intolerance: light without fire. The author spoke to the school's founders and teachers about their dreams of a thoroughly American Islam. He writes about those talks and of enjoyable visits with the 15 students—male and female—in Zaytuna's 2010 inaugural freshman class.

—WILLIAM TRACY



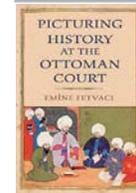
**Persian Gardens and Pavilions: Reflections in History, Poetry and the Arts.** Mohammed Gharipour.

2013, I.B. Tauris, 978-1-78076-121-3, \$92.50, £56.00 hb.

Much has been written about

Islamic gardens and Islamic architecture. Mohammed Gharipour usefully discusses the relationship between the two, with particular reference to the small structures that form part of Persian garden design. The book is for those with specialist interests rather than the general reader, but it is not an art book, in spite of more than a hundred illustrations, most of them Persian miniatures. While it is very useful to have these conveniently collected for reference, their size, quality of color reproduction, lack of details and the number of black-and-white plates mean the book does not do its subject justice in purely aesthetic terms. The contents are clearly arranged with useful glossary, bibliography and biographies of some of the main historical sources of information. It is a pity that quotations and references derive largely from well-known, easily accessible sources, many in English.

—CAROLINE STONE



**Picturing History at the Ottoman Court.** Ermine Fetvacı. 2013, Indiana UP, 978-0-253-00678-3, \$45 hb.

The second half of the 16th century saw a surge in illustrated histories produced at the Ottoman court—and anyone who assumes that sultans were

their sole patrons will discover a far richer story here. Ermine Fetvacı examines who commissioned these manuscripts, what courtiers had a say in the finished product and who at court read them. (Many, it turns out.) She shows how two grand viziers and two chief eunuchs, along with a small number of other courtiers, used illustrated histories to craft a public Ottoman identity, further political ambitions and disseminate their vision of the court and the sultan. By anchoring—but never mirroring—her study in details often bolstered by the reproduced manuscript illustrations, Fetvacı brings to life the ways in which the books themselves

reflected and shaped court hierarchy.

—LEE LAWRENCE

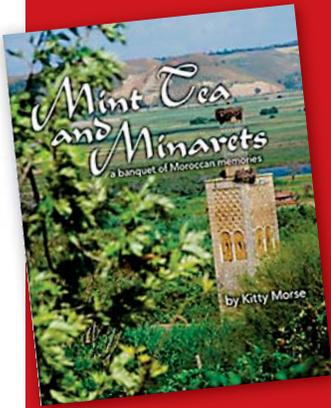


**Startup Rising: The Entrepreneurial Revolution Remaking the Middle East.** Christopher Schroeder.

2013, Palgrave MacMillan, 978-0-23034-222-4, \$27 hb.

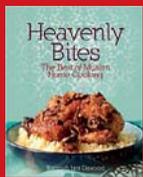
The author, a US-based

# Suggestions for Cooking



**Mint Tea and Minarets: A Banquet of Moroccan Memories.** Kitty Morse. 2013, La Caravane, 978-0-98521-644-3, \$30 pb.

With the finesse of a storyteller and flair of a cookery connoisseur, Casablanca-born Kitty Morse has perfectly sculpted her book into an account of her life in Morocco interwoven with a mouthwatering selection of recipes from the heart of Dar Zitoun—the traditional home that her British father restored in nearby Azemmour. Winner of the Gourmand World Cookbook Award for Arab Cuisine in 2013, this colorfully illustrated volume testifies to the culinary magic of heritage and history meeting passion and mystery. *Mint Tea and Minarets* will take you on a delicious journey that will tantalize your senses and touch you deeply. This is a cookbook with a soul. —MANAL BOUGAZZOUL

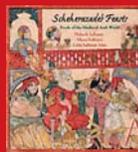


**Heavenly Bites: The Best of Muslim Home Cooking.** Karima bint Dawood. 2012. Kube Publishing, 978-1-84774-031-1, \$18 pb.

Karima bint Dawood describes her book as “a personal mix of faith and food, stories and recipes....” It affords a 50-recipe overview of the wide array of culinary styles that reflects this

**‘At the fish market, one never knew what the day’s catch would be—mackerel, sea bass, monkfish, tuna, or shark. Near a civic fountain, a worker scaled and gutted mackerel. The innards went to waiting felines.... On a bed of crushed ice, a fishmonger displayed squid, eel and a half-dozen still-quivering sole linked though the gills with a palm frond.’**

Muslim convert’s cosmopolitan background, thanks to an English mother, South African father and Mauritian grandmother. The Shaken Aubergine Salad packed a powerful bite, thanks to an assertive blend of garlic, sweet peppers and red chilies, and tasted even better two days later. The authentic flavors of Morocco came through in the delectable Moroccan Lemon Chicken Wings’ coating of fresh coriander, parsley, lemon juice and spices. Some clarifications would be helpful (as in the vague “1 lemon juice”), but that shouldn’t deter amateurs or experienced cooks from savoring the richness of the multiethnic Muslim kitchen, from Morocco to Bangladesh. —KITTY MORSE



**Scheherazade’s Feasts: Foods of the Medieval Arab World.**

Habeeb Salloum, Muna Salloum and Leila Salloum Elias. 2006, University of Pennsylvania Press, 978-0-81224-477-9, \$34.95 hb.

Freda Salloum, Habeeb’s wife and mother of Muna and Leila, inspired her family to record the traditional dishes of her hometown of Damascus. She’d have been delighted with the results. These freelance authors and specialists in Arabic language and literature give practical modern recipes for 120 dishes from medieval

Arabic texts. The honeyed carrots in rosewater, the browned lamb with saffron cinnamon rice and the caliph’s favorite shortbread bring to vivid life the kitchens of *The Thousand and One Nights*. At the same time, the literal translations of each original recipe and the introductory survey of the surviving cookery manuscripts mean that scholar and cook alike are able to follow how the authors have filled in details and made necessary substitutions for the kitchens of today.

—RACHEL LAUDAN



**Sweet Delights From a Thousand and One Nights: The Story of Traditional Arab Sweets.**

Habeeb Salloum, Muna Salloum and Leila Salloum Elias, I.B. Tauris, 978-1-78076-464-1, \$29 hb.

The cooks and confectioners of the medieval Arab world created one of the first and greatest of sweet traditions, exploring the possibilities opened up by cane sugar, which combines well with other ingredients and magically changes its properties on heating. Using a heady array of other ingredients, including fruits such as dates and citrus, nuts such as almonds, pistachios, pine nuts and walnuts, aromatics such as rose and orange blossom waters, cinnamon, cardamom, aniseed ginger and cloves, along with flour, clarified butter and egg whites, the caliph’s cooks created dishes still made today. Readers can turn to the authors’ strict translations of medieval recipes to check substitutions, their modern recipes as practical guides. The book’s organization into pastries, cookies, cakes and pies, candies and puddings makes welcome sense, while the contemporary recipes collected from Spain, Portugal, Sicily, North Africa and Mexico are a reminder of the wide dissemination of Arab sweets. —RACHEL LAUDAN

entrepreneur and international startup investor, paints a different picture of the Middle East and North Africa from the one so often featured in the mainstream media. Drawing from extensive travel and work in the region, he tells the stories of entrepreneurs, innovators and marketplace game-changers in cities like Amman, Cairo and Dubai who—despite local political, social and economic impediments—are achieving remarkable success. Fadi Ghandour and Samih Toukan, founders of Aramex and Maktoob, respectively, are among those featured. Schroeder highlights wider access to technology, via investments by firms such as Google, Intel and Yahoo!, as the enabler of the “startup revolution” in the region, but he does not understate the role of women, religion and the interactive local elements, or “ecosystems,” that are remaking the Middle East.

—MANAL BOUGAZZOUL

**A Time in Arabia: Life in Hadhramaut.** Doreen Ingrams. 2013, Eland, 978-1-90601-180-2, £12.99 pb.

This is a new edition of a compelling memoir, first published in 1970, about a now-vanished way of life. In 1934 Harold and Doreen Ingrams traveled to the Hadhramaut, a British protectorate on Arabia’s south coast. They crisscrossed the roadless interior by donkey and camel to learn about the local tribes. When Harold was appointed Resident Advisor to the feuding tribal leaders, the couple became the first Europeans to live among them. During some 10 years, never without her diary, Doreen helped her husband with his research, reports and negotiations. Her stories are unique, because as “Ingrams’ woman,” a British wife and mother fluent in Arabic, she was unrestrained by local traditions, even in conservative villages in remote valleys, equally able to visit with women and

children in the harems or with businessmen with connections in Java, Singapore and India.

—WILLIAM TRACY

**Wadi Sura—The Cave of Beasts, A Rock Art Site in the Gifl Kebir (SW Egypt).** Rudolf Kuper.

2013, Heinrich-Barth-Institut, 978-3-92768-840-7, £85/\$115 hb.

This monumental volume is a comprehensive account of one of the world’s most significant rock-art sites, representing traditions of early hunter-gatherers dating to 4400–6500 BCE, and also a lavish art book. The cave contains 8000 figures, many painted in red, yellow and white ground-earth pigments. While most depict humans, there are also ostriches, gazelles, giraffes, cattle and headless creatures that cannot be identified. The cave is in sight of the famous Cave of Swimmers discovered 80 years ago. The book first examines the cave’s surrounding archeological context, dating, pigments, latest approaches in rock-art study, conservation challenges and the impact of desert tourism. The second section reveals the complete trove of paintings and engravings in the cave for study and enjoyment. Panels are reproduced in fine detail at half natural size in 200 stunning double-page spreads. —PETER HARRIGAN





**Dice Kayek** won the £25,000 Jameel Prize 3 for “Istanbul Contrast,” a collection of garments that evoke that city’s architectural and artistic heritage. The collection demonstrates how vibrant and creative Islamic traditions continue to be today, the judges said; the translation of architectural ideas into fashion, furthermore, demonstrates how traditions can still transfer from one art form to another.

**Jameel Prize 3** exhibits works of the short list contenders for the third round of the international award, which focuses on contemporary art and design inspired by Islamic tradition. Of almost 270 nominations, this year’s short list includes artists from Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Morocco, India, Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and France, and the works on show range from Arabic typography and calligraphy to fashion inspired by Hagia Sofia in Istanbul, and from social design and video installation to delicate and precise miniature drawings. Victoria & Albert Museum, **London**, through April 21.

#### Current **March**

**Silver from the Malay World** explores the rich traditions of silver in the Malay world. Intricate ornament drawn from geometry and nature decorates dining vessels, clothing accessories and ceremonial regalia. The exhibition features rarely seen collections acquired by three prominent colonial administrators in British Malaya at the turn of the 20th century. Victoria and Albert Museum, **London**, through March 16.

**Diana Al-Hadid:** *Regarding Medardo Rosso* links two sculptors separated by more than a century, yet allied in their innovative questioning of traditional practice and their exploration of two-dimensional concepts in a three-dimensional sphere. Both Rosso’s and Al-Hadid’s work has the appearance of accident and happenstance, but in fact is derived from repetition and a meticulous awareness of material and perception. Rosso’s preoccupation with light and the capturing of ephemeral phenomena conceptually connects him more directly to impressionist painters than to other sculptors of his time. Al-Hadid mines her subject matter from Italian and Northern Renaissance painting, mythology and architecture, and explores pictorial devices usually confined to the two-dimensional plane. Like Rosso, who conceived of his sculpture from a single frontal point of view, Al-Hadid is also conscious of the viewer’s perspective, mindful of the whole space yet directing the interaction. Marianne Boesky Gallery, **New York**, through March 19.

**Hassan Hajjaj:** *My Rock Stars Experimental, Volume 1*, and **Nassiem Valamanesh:** *Distant Words* both explore the interface of living in and between merging cultures, paradoxically highlighting alienation and yet embracing differences. *My Rock Stars Experimental* is simultaneously a filmic haute-couture street experiment and a revival of African photography from the 1960’s and 1970’s, examining belonging in an increasingly globalized society where boundaries of cultural identity—most notably African, Arab and western—are constantly changing. *Distant Words* continues Valamanesh’s engagement with themes of longing and loneliness, not for a loved one or a place but for the ability to communicate and speak one’s mind. Valamanesh’s film combines animation, text and photography in which the artist conveys his isolation and frustration with his inability to speak the language when traveling through Iran, his father’s country. Crawford Art Gallery, **Cork, Ireland**, through March 22.

**The Life and Afterlife of David Livingstone:** *Exploring Missionary Archives* brings together archives, photographs, maps and artifacts relating to one of the best-known British explorers and humanitarian campaigners of the 19th century. He is famed for his extensive travels through Africa, his campaign against the slave trade and the rich archival legacy he left behind. A controversial figure, Livingstone was criticized for failing to make converts on his travels, and ultimately died evangelizing. Brunei Gallery, **SOAS, London**, through March 22.

**Dismantling the Archive:** *Representation, Identity, Memory in an Ottoman Family*. Encompassing three generations, from the late Ottoman to the Republic era, the family archive of Said Bey instigates a historiographical study of the daily and family life of the early 20th century. The exhibition attempts to clarify how an unexceptional family, as it passed through a complicated process of transition, expressed and represented itself through writing, photography and material culture to form and preserve memories. SALT Galata, **Istanbul**, through March 23.

**Count Your Blessings** exhibits more than 70 sets of long and short strings of prayer beads from various Asian cultures, many with flourishes, counters, attachments or tassels. Some are made of precious or semiprecious stones, others of seeds, carved wood, ivory or bone. Collectively, they reveal sophisticated and complex arrangements and structures based on symbolic meanings. Rubin Museum of Art, **New York**, through March 24.

**Parastou Forouhar:** *Kiss Me* is a series of textile banners that resemble the traditional religious ones that are draped in public spaces in Iran to commemorate the death of Shi’ite imams and martyrs. These colorful banners usually have a central medallion with messages about mystical devotion, spiritual love and self-sacrifice, but Forouhar has embroidered the medallion with lyrics from a famous 1950’s pop song, *Mara Beboos* (“Kiss Me”), by the “Iranian Elvis,” Vigen Derderian, and embellished the banners with feathers, furs, sequins and appliquéd motifs. Though the exhibition can be interpreted as the artist’s gesture of reconciliation with the past and her parents’ murder, it is also slyly subversive, for *Mara Beboos* first became a hit in 1953, when Iran’s brief democracy under prime minister Mohammad Mossadegh ended in a military coup. Rose Issa Projects, **London**, through March 28.

**Echoes: Islamic Art & Contemporary Artists** explores how contemporary artists respond to Islamic art and culture in their own work, through a series of visual conversations that make connections across cultures, geography and time. The installation juxtaposes historical objects and architecture with contemporary works that draw on traditional Islamic styles, materials and subject matter. The achievements of traditional Islamic art are represented by works in the museum’s collection dating from the ninth to the 21st century from Islamic cultures across the globe, including examples of calligraphy, ceramics, paintings, carpets and architecture. Contemporary works include sculpture, video, photography, paintings, ceramics and digital collage by such internationally recognized

artists as Shahzia Sikander and Rashid Rana. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, **Kansas City, Missouri**, through March 30.

#### Current April

**Hiwar:** *Conversations in Amman* is the exhibition resulting from a program of residencies and talks that brought 14 artists from the Arab world, Africa, Asia and Latin America together in Amman. The program was born out of the necessity to promote exchanges between artists from the margins, not solely by juxtaposing their works in this exhibition but also by giving them the possibility of learning from each other's practices and experiences. Also featured are works from the Khalid Shoman Collection by Abdul Hay Mosallam, Ahlam Shibli, Ahmad Nawash, Akram Zaatar, Amal Kenawy, Emily Jacir, Etel Adnan, Fahrelnissa Zeid, Hrair Sarkisian, Mona Hatoum, Mona Saudi, Mounir Fatmi, Nicola Saig, Rachid Koraichi and Walid Raad. Darat al Funun, **Amman, Jordan**, through April.

**Refocusing the Lens:** *Pranlal K. Patel's Photographs of Women at Work in Ahmedabad* looks into the lives of working-class Indian women as they labor in their homes as well as within the city's neighborhoods and major markets. Patel (1910–2014) was approached in 1937 by a Gujarati women's social-reform organization and hired to photograph women engaged in economic activities that supported the growing city's life. Challenging the view of women's work as limited to the domestic sphere, isolated and segregated, Patel's photographs reveal a complex labor landscape in which women worked alongside men in textile production, small businesses and manual labor. The exhibition also examines the role of amateur photographers like Patel in the context of the history of 20th-century Indian photography. Wellin Museum of Art, Hamilton College, **Clinton, New York**, through April 15.

**Slavs and Tatars:** *Language Arts* explores the performative use of language across alphabet politics. With their trademark mix of high and low registers, ribald humor and esoteric discourse, the collective turns to language as a source of political, metaphysical and even sexual emancipation, addressing attempts by nations, cultures and ideologies to ascribe a specific set of letters to a given language. The march of alphabets has always accompanied that of empires and religions: Latin script along with the Roman Catholic faith; Arabic with Islam and the Caliphate; and Cyrillic with Orthodox Christianity as well as subsequently the USSR. Within this body of work, it is phonemes, not peoples or nations, that are liberated from attempts to restrain and rein them in. The exhibition includes original works in Persian, Russian, Turkish, Georgian and English presented in a series of sculptures, installations, textiles and printed matter. Third Line, **Dubai, UAE**, through April 17.

**Mohamed Al-Ajlan** is a Riyadh-based Saudi artist who harmoniously blends abstract painting with calligraphic elements, resulting in intricate, layered works on paper. Park Gallery, **London**, through April 18.

**Amar Kanwar:** *The Lightning Testimonies* is a disturbing eight-channel video installation exploring the often repressed, always sensitive and newly urgent subject of sexual violence against women on the Indian subcontinent. The work

is a complex montage of simultaneous accounts, with stories ranging from wide-scale abduction and rape during the partition of India in 1947 to the powerful anti-rape protests in Manipur in 2004. Throughout the piece, Kanwar explores the many ways in which narratives of sexual violence are enmeshed within Indian social and political conflicts. Art Institute of **Chicago**, through April 20.

**Uruk:** *5000 Years of the Megacity* presents a comprehensive overview of the discoveries resulting from 100 years of excavation and study at the site of humankind's first metropolis, located at Warka in today's southern Iraq. Even 5000 years ago, Uruk boasted many of the features that we associate with modern megacities: municipal water supply, intensive commerce, cultural exchange and—once writing had been invented—extensive bureaucracy. Today, the city is best known as the seat of the legendary king Gilgamesh, subject of the world's first written epic, in which such now-familiar cultural elements as city walls, lion hunting and worship of the goddess Ishtar are mentioned. LWL-Museum für Archäologie, **Herne (Ruhr), Germany**, through April 21.

**Qalam:** *Calligraphy and Islam from the Middle Ages to the Present* exhibits historical and contemporary Arabic and Persian calligraphy and related material that offers a glance into one of the most poetic and spiritual art forms. The Qur'anic verses (96:1-5) that refer to God as the Creator who teaches "by the pen"—*al-qalam*—signal the esteem in which calligraphy is held in the world of Islam. The development of Arabic calligraphy, from its earliest linear forms in the eighth century to its standardization as a set of cursive scripts by a lineage of master typographers and calligraphers, evidences the shifting relative status of text and image throughout this history. The works in *Qalam* ask visitors to consider the relationship between calligraphy and Islam, as well as the continuing transformation and exhibition of this art form. The exhibition includes Qur'anic folios from the ninth through the 19th centuries; Persian and Iranian illuminated tales of love and mystical revelation; a Qing Dynasty (1644–1911) incense burner with Arabic inscriptions; traditional writing implements and materials from the collection of Darius Rejali; a documentary film of American Islamic calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya; and a body of contemporary calligraphy by renowned Iranian calligrapher and scholar Hamidreza Ghelichkhani. Reed College Library, **Portland, Oregon**, through April 27.

**Akram Zaatar:** *This Day at Ten* is the first major exhibition in Belgium by the Palestinian-Lebanese artist, who has emerged as one of the most prominent commentators on photography and war in the Middle East. Zaatar's work is closely tied to the practice of collecting and excavation: Through books, photographic installations and videos, his visual studies reflect the shifting nature of borders and the production and circulation of images in the political context of the region. WIELS, **Brussels**, through April 27.

#### The Crime Was Almost Perfect.

Although the link between art and crime can be traced back to ancient times, Thomas De Quincey explicitly theorized this connection in his notorious 1827 essay "On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts." Following De Quincey's

ironic proposal to analyze murder from an esthetic point of view, the exhibition brings together more than 40 artists, some from the Middle East, who cross the bridges linking art and the esthetics of crime and invoke the spirits of visual art, architecture, cinema, criminology and the modern crime genre, transforming the galleries into multiple "crime scenes." Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, **Rotterdam**, through April 27.

**Echoes:** *Islamic Art and Contemporary Artists* explores such questions as "What is Islamic art?" and "How do contemporary artists respond to Islamic art and culture?" through a series of visual conversations that make connections across cultures, geography and time. The exhibition juxtaposes historical objects and architecture with works by contemporary artists that employ traditional Islamic styles, materials and subject matter as their source, showing how they draw on their cultural and visual past to explore personal, political and esthetic concerns. "Echoes" is part of a citywide collaboration focusing on Islamic art and culture and featuring exhibitions, artists' residencies and public programming at The Nelson-Atkins Museum, the Kansas City Artists Coalition and the Kansas City Public Library. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, **Kansas City, Missouri**, through April 27.

**Wise Men From the East:** *Zoroastrian Traditions in Persia and Beyond* explains this ancient but living religion through objects and coins from Persia and beyond, including Islamic coins from Mughal India that follow the Iranian Zoroastrian calendar adopted by the emperor Akbar. Modern objects show the ongoing legacy of this ancient Iranian religion and its significance as a symbol of national identity for Iranians in modern Persia and beyond. British Museum, **London**, through April 27.

#### Current May

**Pinar Yoldaş:** *An Ecosystem of Excess* focuses on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a vortex in the North Pacific about the size of Central Europe made up of several million tons of plastic waste. Seeing this as a site of exchange between organic and synthetic matter, Yoldaş creates a post-human ecosystem of speculative organisms and their imagined environment, a new biological taxonomy of the species of excess. Ernst Schering Foundation, **Berlin**, through May 4.

**Haron Mirza:** *Random Access Recall* uses vintage furniture, used objects and disassembled instruments to create compositions that are esthetic, visual and auditory. Le Grand Café, **Saint-Nazaire, France**, through May 4.

**Neighbours:** *Contemporary Narratives from Turkey and Beyond* presents an extensive selection of contemporary artworks, examining common approaches to visual culture in 17 contiguous countries through the works of 35 artists. The exhibition brings together art by pioneering contemporary practitioners from places in the Balkans, Caucasia and the Middle East that share historical, political and cultural ties with Turkey, and addresses the themes of storytelling and travel—common denominators in the cultures and arts of the region—along with the notions of mobility, nomadism, migration and itinerancy and nuances of language, translation and cultural transmission. **Istanbul Modern**, through May 8.

**Court and Craft:** *A Masterpiece from Northern Iraq* examines one of the most rare and beautiful objects in the collection: a precious metalwork bag, made in northern Iraq around 1300. Decorated with a courtly scene showing an enthroned couple at a banquet as well as musicians, hunters and revelers, it ranks as one of the finest pieces of Islamic inlaid metalwork in existence. The exhibition explores the origins, function and imagery of this little-known masterpiece, as well as the cultural context in which it was made, probably in Mosul. The exhibition also includes rare contemporary manuscripts in which similar bags are depicted, a life-size display evoking the court banqueting scene on the lid and related metal objects. Courtauld Gallery, **London**, through May 18.

**Nilima Sheikh:** *Each Night Put Kashmir in Your Dreams* features nine banners painted by revered Indian-born artist Nilima Sheikh for a series focusing on the magical history and contentious present of Kashmir. Completed between 2003 and 2010, these scroll-like works, once scattered across India and Southeast Asia, have been brought together alongside two additional works that Sheikh will create especially for this installation. The exhibition's title is derived from a line in a poem by the Kashmiri-American poet Agha Shahid Ali. Sheikh's scrolls combine Ali's poems with excerpts from myriad sources, and her visual references include miniatures, wall paintings and magical Kashmiri folktales. While the paintings focus on the cosmopolitanism of the ancient Silk Roads, their contemporary perspective encourages viewers to think afresh about this contested territory. Art Institute of **Chicago**, through May 18.

**Mona Hatoum:** *Turbulence* foregrounds the diversity of the artist's work over the last 30 years. The notion of turbulence as a conceptual framework for the exhibition derives from the thematic and formal dichotomies in the artist's work, which render it familiar yet perplexing, inviting yet impenetrable, or, in other words, turbulent. *Turbulence* also echoes the artist's questioning of herself as distinct from grappling with issues of alienation and displacement. The exhibition presents more than 70 works, ranging from large-scale room installations to smaller works on paper, sculptural objects, kinetic installations and photographs. Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, **Doha, Qatar**, through May 18.

**Sharjah Art Foundation Exhibitions:** **Ahmed Mater:** *100 Found Objects*, through May 22; **Abdullah Al Saadi:** *Al-Toubay*, through May 22; **Eduard Puterbrodt:** *Between My East and My West*, through May 22; **Rasheed Araeen:** *Before and After Minimalism*, through June 13; **Wael Shawky:** *Horsemen Adore Perfumes and Other Stories*, through June 13; **Susan Hefuna:** *Another Place*, through June 13. Various venues, **Sharjah, UAE**.

**Charles Atlas:** *MC9* is a nine-channel synchronized video work with sound, featuring clips from 21 collaborative works between filmmaker Charles Atlas and choreographer Merce Cunningham. This immersive installation encompasses the entire 40-year working relationship between these two visionary artists. Together, they developed a radical new way of incorporating the camera into live performance, which

they referred to as “media dances.” Rather than using it as a static recording device, they allowed the camera to play an active part in the choreography. **SALT Beyoğlu, Istanbul**, through May 25.

#### Current June

**Don't Embarrass the Bureau** is a group exhibition featuring artists who question the workings of bureaucracy, in the time of so-called leaked democracy, by subjecting it to challenges that reveal how sensitive and even precarious it may be. The works in the exhibition query the legitimacy of the structures that govern our social, political and economic life and inspire us to rethink how we perform our roles as citizens. **Lunds [Sweden]** Konsthall, through June 1.

**Sacred Scenes: Icons of the Orthodox Church** presents works by renowned artist Vlasios Tsotsonis, whose artwork is found in churches around the globe, including in Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In addition to showing original, large-scale pieces by the artist and studies for his first us pieces, which he is completing at the Basilica of St. Mary in Livonia, Michigan, the exhibition explores the establishment and growth of Arab-American Orthodox communities. Arab American National Museum, **Dearborn, Michigan**, through June 1.

**Perspectives: Rita Bannerjee** draws on the artist's background as a scientist and her experience as an immigrant. Her richly textured works complicate the role of objects as representations of cultures; by juxtaposing organic and plastic objects, she concocts worlds that are both enticing and subtly menacing. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through June 8.

**Cleopatra's Needle** celebrates the Central Park Conservancy's upcoming conservation of the obelisk of Thutmose III, popularly known as “Cleopatra's Needle”; explores the meaning of obelisks in ancient Egyptian divine and funerary cults; and considers how these massive monuments were created and erected. An equally important part of the presentation shows the significance of this ancient architectural form in western culture. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through June 8.

#### Current July

**Gérôme and the Lure of the Orient** features paintings by the Orientalist and academic painter Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904), along with a selection of decorative objects that explore the intersection of eastern and western art production. Like many artists of his time,

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## In Focus: Ara Güler's Anatolia

Throughout his career, acclaimed photojournalist Ara Güler, Turkey's best-known photographer, took more than 800,000 photographs documenting Turkish culture and important historical sites. This exhibition reveals a selection of his never-before-shown images of Anatolian monuments, taking the viewer on a historical journey through the lens of one of the world's legendary photojournalists. Featured are photographs of medieval Seljuk and Armenian buildings that Güler, now 85, took in the early 1960's and printed in 1965. The exhibition brings images of important Anatolian structures to an



American audience, highlighting both the rich cultural history of the region and an important body of Güler's work. The 24 works on view also challenge Güler's self-definition as a photojournalist rather than an artist, and engage visitors in a critical debate about whether photography is an art form or a means of documentation. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, through May 4.

Gérôme was drawn to the Orient, a term that included the lands of the Middle East, North Africa and Asia Minor. In 1853, Gérôme first visited Constantinople, and between 1856 and 1880 took regular trips to Turkey, Egypt and Palestine, making artistic studies of the people and places he encountered. Back in Paris, he transformed his observations into highly polished pictures that earned him great acclaim. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, **Kansas City, Missouri**, through July 20.

**When the Greeks Ruled Egypt** explores the confluence of two cultures through more than 75 artworks. Gilded mummy masks, luxury glass, magical amulets and portraits in stone and precious metals demonstrate the integration of foreign styles while also paying tribute to the enduring legacy of ancient Egypt's distinctive visual culture. Despite centuries of cultural contact with Greece, the art and architecture of the Egyptian kingdom retained its distinct style, uninfluenced by Greek tourists, traders, diplomats and soldiers. So when Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, came to rule Egypt, he found it wise to adapt to the older culture, whose unique art forms had persisted for more than 3000 years. He installed himself as “pharaoh,” built a new capital at Alexandria and united the two major gods of each nation to form a new universal deity, Zeus Amon. The era of Ptolemy's dynasty was an age of profound curiosity and rich experimentation, as the Greeks, and later the Romans, met an established culture far older than their own and exchanged artistic, social and religious ideas with it. Art Institute of **Chicago**, through July 27.

#### Current September and later

**Saturated: Dye-Decorated Cloths from North and West Africa** celebrates the dyer's art from North and West Africa, including Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Cameroon. The exhibition presents 11 dye-decorated cloths produced by traditional techniques and worn as garments or accessories. Before the introduction of European-made printed textiles to Africa in the 19th century, textile designs were made with

natural dyes on plain homespun cotton, wool, raffia or other materials. Women were most often the dyers, and dye-decorated cloth was a major form of feminine artistic expression. **Dallas** Museum of Art, through October 12.

**Kader Attia**, the renowned French-Algerian artist, unveils a new site-specific commission. The work revisits the biblical story of Jacob's Ladder with a towering floor-to-ceiling structure of rare artifacts and books. Hidden inside this library is a cabinet of curiosities filled with items ranging from old scientific measuring devices to books by such authors as Descartes and Alfred Russel Wallace. At the center of the work, a beam of light shines up to a mirrored ceiling. Attia's multimedia installations reflect on anthropology, politics and science and are rooted in history and archival research. His works explore ideas around identity in an age of globalization. Whitechapel Gallery, **London**, through November.

#### Coming March

**View From Inside: Contemporary Arab Video, Photography and Mixed Media Art** is the theme of the Fotofest 2014 Biennial, which shows work by 49 leading contemporary Arab artists from the Middle East and North Africa in the first such large-scale presentation in many years. The multiple exhibitions are curated by one of the world's leading experts on Arab art, Karin Adrian von Roques, and spotlight issues of identity, emigration, gender and religion. Concurrent events include a conference on Arab art (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston), March 29; a forum on *Arabophobia* (Rice University), April 2; and showings of Arab films (Museum of Fine Arts), throughout April. info@fotofest.org. Various venues in **Houston**, March 15 through April 27.

**Lost and Found: The Secrets of Archimedes**. Archimedes—mathematician, physicist, inventor, engineer and astronomer—lived in the third century BCE. In 10th-century Constantinople, a scribe copied Archimedes's treatises onto parchment. In the 13th century, a monk erased the Archimedes text, cut the pages along

the center fold, rotated the leaves 90 degrees, folded them in half and reused them to create a prayer book. This process of reuse results in a “palimpsest.” In 1999, the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore and a team of researchers began a project to read the erased texts of the Archimedes Palimpsest—the oldest surviving copy of works by the greatest mathematical genius of antiquity. Over 12 years, many techniques, novel and traditional, were employed by more than 80 scientists and scholars in the fields of conservation, imaging and classical studies. This exhibition tells the story of the resulting rediscovery of new scientific, philosophical and political texts from the ancient world. The manuscript demonstrates that Archimedes discovered the mathematics of infinity, mathematical physics and combinatorics—a branch of mathematics used in modern computing. Huntington Library, **San Marino, California**, March 15 through June 8.

**The Divine Comedy: Heaven, Hell, Purgatory Revisited by Contemporary African Artists** converts three floors of the museum—Hell, Purgatory and Heaven—into the stage for a new interpretation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and for an esthetic approach to contemporary African art, exploring poetry and art as means of expressing the ineffable. Why Dante? Curator Simon Njami answers, “Because the *Divine Comedy* is first and foremost a human comedy. And I am convinced that nothing human can be alien to another human being.” Museum für Moderne Kunst, **Frankfurt/Main**, March 21 through July 27.

**Kaveh Golestan: The Citadel** features 45 photographs from the series titled “Prostitute,” taken between 1975 and 1977, which show Shah-e No (“new city”), a walled red-light district of Tehran that was razed after the 1979 revolution. The photographs are the only surviving depictions of the area and the women who worked there, many of whom lost their lives either as a result of Shah-e No's destruction or in the executions that followed. The portraits produced by Golestan, a pioneer of street

photography, are an intimate, humane gaze into the lives and personalities of the resident women. Golestan himself died in 2003 covering the Iraq war. Foam Photography Museum, **Amsterdam**, March 21 through May 4.

**Helen Pashgian:** *Light Invisible* debuts a new large-scale work by the Los Angeles-based light and space artist. It comprises 12 two-part columns formed of molded acrylic; as viewers walk past, around and between these columnar forms, the sculpture creates an immersive viewing experience that invites meditations on the nature of materials and light. **Los Angeles** County Museum of Art, March 30 through June 29.

**Nur:** *Light in Art and Science From The Islamic World* explores the use and significance of light and demonstrates that *nur*—which means “light” in both the physical and metaphysical sense—is a unifying motif in Islamic civilizations worldwide. The exhibition spans more than 10 centuries and includes 150 objects whose provenance ranges from Spain to Central Asia. It is organized into two major sections: one includes gold-illuminated manuscripts, luster-glazed ceramics, inlay metalwork in silver and gold and objects made from precious and semiprecious stones. The second shows such objects as equatorial sundials, astrolabes and anatomical instruments. The exhibition also highlights Spain’s role as a bridge between Europe and the Islamic world, and notes the idea of light as a metaphor shared by Muslim, Christian and Jewish cultures. Explanatory talks on April 3, April 18 and May 8. **Dallas** Museum of Art, March 30 through June 29.

#### Coming April

**How Green Was My Valley** presents the work of a new generation of artists for whom Palestine is thematic, and exposes worldviews unseen, voices unheard and a place unvisited by many. These works seek to change the way we see and make sense of the occupation of Palestine. The exhibition focuses on artists working in the face of intifadas, electronic walls, barriers and a shrinking landscape; they envision Ramallah, Jerusalem, Gaza, Hebron and other Palestinian cities as dual sites of ruin and potential, and point toward a landscape beyond the current occupation. WhiteBox Art Center, **New York**, April 3 through April 27.

**In Remembrance of Me:** *Feasting with the Dead in the Ancient Middle East* explores how the living and the dead interacted to commemorate ancestors in the ancient Middle East. More than 50 artifacts document how food and drink were regularly offered to nourish the dead in the afterlife and how two- or three-dimensional effigies preserved the memory of the deceased. The exhibition was motivated by the 2008 discovery of a stela in eastern Turkey that dates to about 735 BCE; it commemorates an official named Katumuwa. The lengthy text carved on it reveals that, in that region, the soul of the deceased was thought to actually dwell in the stela and needed to be cared for by the living. Other exhibits examine commemoration of and communication with the dead and different conceptions of the soul in ancient Egypt, Iraq and Israel/Palestine. Catalog. Oriental Institute Museum, **Chicago**, April 8 through January 4.

**Roads of Arabia:** *Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. An eye-opening look at the largely unknown ancient past of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this exhibition draws on recently discovered archeological material never before seen in the United States. The exhibition features objects excavated from several sites throughout the Arabian Peninsula, tracing the impact of ancient trade routes and pilgrimage roads stretching from Yemen in the south to Iraq, Syria and Mediterranean cultures in the north. Elegant alabaster bowls and fragile glassware, heavy gold earrings and Hellenistic bronze statues testify to a lively mercantile and cultural interchange among distant civilizations. The study of archeological remains only really began in Saudi Arabia in the 1970’s, yet brought—and is still bringing—a wealth of unsuspected treasures to light: temples, palaces adorned with frescoes, monumental sculpture, silver dishes and precious jewelry left in tombs. The exhibition, organized as a series of points along trade and pilgrimage routes, focuses on the region’s rich history as a major center of commercial and cultural exchange, provides both chronological and geographical information about the discoveries made during recent excavations and emphasizes the important role played by this region as a trading center during the past 6000 years. Nelson Atkins Museum, **Kansas City, Missouri**, April 25 through July 6; Asian Art Museum of **San Francisco**, October 24 through January 18.

#### Coming May

**Christian Marclay:** *The Clock* is a 24-hour single-channel montage constructed from thousands of moments of cinema and television history depicting the passage of time, excerpted and edited together to create a functioning timepiece

synchronized to local time wherever it is shown. The result marks the exact time in real time for the viewer for 24 consecutive hours. SALT Beyoğlu, **Istanbul**, May 9 through 25.

#### Coming September and later

**Jerusalem Show vi** (*‘Ala Abwab Al Janna*) encompasses exhibitions, film screenings, performances, talks, walks and workshops showcasing works of Palestinian and international artists, presented in the Old City of Jerusalem in various indoor and outdoor venues. **Jerusalem**, October 24 to November 7.

**Unraveling Identity:** *Our Textiles, Our Stories* unites textiles from across the globe to explore expressions of individual, cultural, political and social identity through the ages. In all times and places, clothing, adornments and other fabrics have articulated self and status, from ethnicity and occupation to religious belief. The exhibition, the first in the museum’s new venue, features more than 100 pieces that span 3000 years and five continents. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, Fall 2014.

**Egypt’s Mysterious Book of the Faiyum** is an exquisitely illustrated papyrus from Greco-Roman Egypt, one of the most intriguing ancient representations of a place ever found. The papyrus depicts the Faiyum Oasis, located to the west of the Nile, as a center of prosperity and ritual. For the first time in over 150 years, major sections owned by the Walters Art Museum and the Morgan Library & Museum, separated since the manuscript was divided and sold in the 19th century, will be reunited. Egyptian jewelry, papyri, statues, reliefs and ritual objects will illuminate the religious context that gave rise to this enigmatic

text, which celebrates the crocodile god Sobek and his special relationship with the Faiyum. Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, **Hildesheim, Germany**, Fall 2014; Reiss-Engelhorn-Museum, **Mannheim, Germany**, Spring 2015.

#### PERMANENT / INDEFINITE

**Marvels and Mirages of Orientalism:** *Benjamin-Constant in His Time* presents an acclaimed painter of the Belle Époque in a major exhibition of Orientalist art. The artist’s huge, spectacular canvases, now traveling for the first time, conjure up fantasies of a dreamlike Orient, viewed through the prism of folklore, ethnographic pretext and the erotic imagination. Benjamin-Constant’s dazzling color palette was greatly influenced by his trips to Andalusia and Morocco. Perspective is provided by paintings by artists of his time, from Delacroix to Gérôme, and reactions to his work by contemporary artists. **Montreal** Museum of Fine Arts, Winter 2015.

**Contemporary Art in Beirut.** The Aishti Foundation plans to open a 43,000-square-foot contemporary art exhibition and education space in Beirut’s Jal el-Dib quarter in the spring of 2015. The project’s leader, who was also one of the founders of the annual Beirut Art Fair, hopes that contemporary art will ameliorate the conflicts devastating the region. **Beirut**.

Information is correct at press time, but please reconfirm dates and times before traveling. Most institutions listed have further information available at their Web sites. Readers are welcome to submit information eight weeks in advance for possible inclusion in this listing. Some listings have been kindly provided to us by *Canvas*, the art and culture magazine for the Middle East and the Arab world.

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