Sponsorship of a madrasa, reflecting the value of farmland in the urban economy of Zabid, Yemen

by Edward J. Keall and Ingrid Hehmeyer

A report in Al-‘Usūr al-Wusta 5.2 (Oct. 1993), the fieldwork of the Canadian Archaeological Mission of the Royal Ontario Museum (CAMROM) includes defining the role of agriculture in the life of a medieval city, Zabid, in Yemen. New insight on the subject was discovered fortuitously in 1998 when inscriptive panels flanking the mihrab of the Citadel Mosque were found to contain not the expected Qur'ānic text, but rather a 940/1533 notice of a waqf dedication in support of a madrasa. The waqf is especially significant because the inscription specifies tracts of land and measures of harvested grain that are dedicated to the madrasa. This meshes well with the hypothesis that the primary factor in sustaining Zabid’s economy was agriculture rather than international trade.

This is not to deny that foreign goods reached Zabid. There is ample field evidence, for instance, to corroborate Ibn Battūta’s words that Chinese pottery was exported to Yemen (cf. Carswell, 1985, 18). CAMROM has unearthed 12th-13th century Sung and Yüan celadons, as well as 14th-15th century Yüan and Ming blue-and-white porcelains. But these were luxury items, imported in relatively small quantities into Zabid. There is nothing to support the idea of a merchant city singularly dependent upon trade for its existence, like al-Mukhā, where the coffee trade brought lavish profit, even at least temporarily, and furnished prosperous merchants with the capital for building grandiose mansions (cf. Brouwer, 1997, 137).

The absence of opulence is especially apparent on the Red Sea coast, where CAMROM’s 1997 fieldwork focussed on what purported to be Zabid’s Ziyādīd period port (9th-early 11th century). Iraqi turquoise-glazed and Chinese stoneware potsherds provide a 9th-10th century date and help identify the site tentatively as al-Ahwāb, a name cited in both ‘Umāra al-Yamanī (ed. Kay, 1892, 8) and al-Khazraji (ed. ‘Asal, 1913, 382). But from the ephemeral, though widespread habitation one envisions al-Ahwāb as a sprawling settlement becoming quite lively upon return of the Indian Ocean ships, but otherwise no more than a fishing village. The settlement moved up the bay during Rastūlid times, to follow the shifting anchorage, becoming known as al-Fażza. But here, too, the same modest settlement was repeated. The pattern supports the hypothesis that foreign trade was only a minor factor in sustaining Zabid’s economic life.

While it is argued that agriculture provided Zabid’s real economic sustenance, an infrastructure had to be in place, diversion barrages and distribution canals regulated, for land to be productive. As already

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MADRAZA, FROM PAGE 33.

expounded in Hehmeyer & Keall (1993, 26), Wādī Zabid is a typical arid terrain flood course where because of seasonal rains, a mass of water arrives suddenly from the mountains as a spate which must be utilized immediately, or run to waste. Depending upon the rain's intensity, usually resulting from a late afternoon thunderstorm, the flow varies from a few hours to more than a day before the spate subsides to a modest base flow. Distributing the water immediately is the key to success. Hehmeyer (1995, 46) describes traditional spillway devices that provide an overflow for the release of excess water, in the event of an exceptional flood. Al-Khazraj (ed. 'Asal, 1918, 75) gives us vivid accounts of damage caused to life, property and crops on the plain after heavy rains caused water to run out of control.

CAMROM has not produced archaeological evidence to tie the beginning of spate irrigation to Zabid's foundation as a city in 204/823. Certainly, a 4.5 m rise in irrigation sediment (Hemeyer & Keall, 1993, fig.1) reflects considerable accumulation. Also, Kopp (1981, 128) argued that, seen from the air, the fields in the Wādī Zabid landscape reflect a system of long standing - the implication being that a new settling-pond field has square corners and straight banks when first laid out, and these become less distinct as sediment deposition and repairs obscure the original profile. But this does not automatically imply that these fields are a thousand years old.

It has become suggested in the profession recently that sediment rise can be calculated on the basis of an average of approximately one metre per century. Both Ueli Brunner and Brigitte Coque used this figure in their respective reports on ancient irrigation systems, at the Fourth International Conference on the Civilizations of Ancient Yemen, San'a', Yemen, March 1998. Along the Wādī Zabid, CAMROM has measured a sediment rise of 11 m within a distance of 200 m from the main wadi stream. In this instance, hypothetically, we have eleven metres reflecting eleven centuries of irrigation operation. But there may be subsurface anomalies which distort the picture. Away from the down-cut main stream, the sediment may be exaggerated in height because it lies over earlier, naturally deposited alluvium. In addition, one must be cautious about applying too readily the one-metre-a-century principle because the catchments of different wadis are not necessarily the same.

From al-Khazraj (men) of a diversion barrage broken by a flood in 802/1399 ('Asal, 1918, 414) we have an indication that an irrigation system was in place, at least as early as the 14th century. Salameh (1995, 42 and Nachtrag) refers to an 18th century manuscript in which disputes concerning water allocation are described going back to the 14th century, too. For the verbal tradition that the present allocations are based on a water law codified by Shaykh Isma'il al-Jabarti, who died in 875/1470 (Ibn al-Dayba', 1983, 139), see TESCO (1971, 5). Al-Jabarti assigned spate water not according to the Shari'a principle of upstream priority (al-ā'lá fa-`l-ā'lā), but following established use (uruf), with allo-
cations by prescribed calendar dates. Now, from the discovery of the Citadel Mosque waqf inscription, we have some intimate details of the operation, at the level of an individual farm, in the early 16th century.

The Citadel Mosque waqf is dedicated in support of a madrasa by Iskandar whom we must assume, because of the 940 date, is Iskandar Mawz, who controlled Wadi Zabid between 936-943/1530-1536. CAMROM concludes that the original building was a mosque, attributable to an unknown Rasūlid sponsor on the basis of the painted decorations (Keall, 1984, 54). The madrasa dedication allows us legitimately to use the building's traditional name of al-Iskandariyya, even though the tradition of a school (and its waqf) had long been forgotten. Iskandar was a "Lawandi." The Lawandis were "Levantine" mercenaries (Blackburn, 1971, n. 122), originally assigned by the Ottomans to aid the Mamluks in their scheme to exclude the Portuguese from the Red Sea. Yemen was seized in 1516 as part of this exercise. When the Mamluk state was overthrown in 1517, a leaderless army in Yemen was left without formal authority, but nevertheless with power in parts of the country. Jealous rivalry and murderous intrigues amongst these Lawandi officers produced a litany of assassinations. Iskandar lasted in power longer than most, employing a slave corps to restrain his rivals, but with a reputation for justice (Blackburn, 1971, 64). One may assume that the land donated to the waqf was possibly confiscated. Nevertheless, details about the properties may be taken as representative of Wadi Zabid land management and productivity in general.

In the inscription, the properties dedicated to the madrasa are different parcels of land from three named canals (canal=sharij) of the Wadi Zabid network. The size of the individual properties are given in ma‘ād, a land measure which is still in use in the Wadi Zabid today, equaling 0.35 ha (TESCO, 1971, 18). The respective levies from each property are listed as dry measures using the terms mudd (pl. amdād) and thuman. No crop is specified, though it can be assumed it is sorghum. Varisco (1994, 164-5) cites Ibn al-Mujāwir and gives one thuman as 1:32nd portion of a mudd in the Ayyūbīd period, and equates it with one zabād (pl. azbād), as the amount of grain eaten by an individual in a month’s time. Levies vary from 0.19-0.53 amdād per ma‘ād. From use of the term sharij we can extract the nuance that the land and the water form part of one integrated system, for sharij implies the deflector berm at the head of the canal, the canal itself, and the tract of land watered by it (Kopp, 1981, 126).

The inscription, then, indisputably demonstrates that farmland and the successful management of the irrigation infrastructure of the Wadi Zabid were of

Illustration Two. Al-Iskandariyya, projecting mihrab, minaret, and citadel corner tower

SEE MADRASA, PAGE 47.
Middle Iranian Sources for the Study of Medieval Islamic History

by Touraj Daryaee

Middle Iranian refers to the languages that were in use in Iran (present day northwestern India to Iraq and from Central Asia to the Persian Gulf) from the end of the Achaemenid empire (end of the fourth century B.C.E.) to the medieval Islamic period (end of thirteenth century C.E.). The north-eastern branch of these languages includes Sogdian and Khwārazmian, and the southeastern includes Khotanese and Bactrian. The northwestern branch of Middle Iranian includes Parthian and the southwestern includes Middle Persian, usually called Pahlavi (distinct from New, or modern, Persian). These languages were written in various scripts and some are better represented than others in the material available. For this and other reasons, they have mainly remained in the hands of philologists who have toiled to clarify and edit the various texts that were written in these languages. Historians, on the other hand, have made very little use of them, even though many texts in Middle Iranian languages were written in the early Islamic period. The discussion that follows will describe these materials and the various ways that they can be used for medieval Islamic history.

Most of the sources in Sogdian are religious texts of the Buddhists, Manichaens, and Christians written between the sixth and tenth centuries C.E. The many minor Sogdian inscriptions are more important for Irano-Turkic relations than for the early Islamic era. Some of the Sogdian documents, found in Mount Mugh, are important because they date back to the eighth century C.E. and give us some understanding of the Muslim economy. As for the Khwārazmian material, there is more from the seventh century onwards which includes ossuaries found at Tug Qala with inscriptions and glosses in Arabic dictionaries, such as the Muqaddimat al-adab of Abu'l-Qāsim Mahmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhshari, who lived in the twelfth century. The Khotanese texts are not useful for the Islamic period, even though some were written during this period, since they are usually Buddhist texts on religion and medicine. Bactrian is the only important southeastern language which contains important material for medieval Islamic historians. Bactrian texts from the Sāsānian period survive - most recently a hundred documents written on leather were found which give important information about late Sāsānian and early Islamic history. The most valuable are legal documents written on papyrus, as late as the end of the eighth century. Several of these documents refer to Ru'b-khan, the ruler of Ru'b and Samangān who aided Qutayba b. Muslim in defeating the Hephthalites in 710 C.E. In addition, documents on the sale of slaves and other economic matters provide good evidence concerning social conditions in eastern Iran in the seventh century. The latest dated Bactrian document from 757 C.E. is a deed of sale which interestingly mentions a new currency, "Arab silver dirham," rather than the traditional "gold dinar" or "Persian silver." The documents also refer to tax payment to the Arabs (M.N. Sims-Williams, "Nouveaux documents sur l'histoire et la langue de la Bactriane," Académie des inscriptions & belles-lettres, 1996, avril-juin, Paris, pp. 633-654; Ibid, "New Findings in Ancient Afghanistan," see http://www.gengo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~hkum/bactrian.html).

While there is no Parthian material for the Islamic period, the Middle Persian texts provide a plethora of information that has yet to be utilized. The reason for this neglect is two-fold, involving the historicity and the translation of the surviving texts. These texts were written by Zoroastrian priests from the provinces of Fārs and Kermān (and perhaps Iraq) and mainly concern theology and cosmology. Although they do not give detailed chronological information, they provide a communal reflection on events in the Islamic period. By utilizing these texts, one can gain important information not only concerning the Zoroastrians of the Iranian plateau and Iran, but also the Byzantines, Arabs, Turks, and Muslims in general. The second problem is that some of the most important texts still await proper translation. Such shortcomings have left these texts mainly in the domain of philologists who are concerned with linguistic and philological aspects. If we are to use these texts for history, they need to be edited and translated properly, but very few historians have utilized these texts for the early Islamic period: Michael Morony, Philippe Gignoux and recently Jamshid Choksy. The Middle Persian material is categorized based on its contents and in relation to early Islamic history in the following categories: I) Coins & Inscriptions; II) Encyclopedic texts; III) Philosophical & Kalām texts; IV) Legal texts; V) Epic and geographical texts; VI) Apocalyptic texts; and VII) Pazard texts.

I) Coins & Inscriptions. Dirhams (from Middle Persian drahm), issued by the Muslims continue to have legends in Middle Persian until the eighth century (a few are found even later, for example on Buyid coins and medallions). These include the name of the person whose image is inscribed on the coins, a slogan, date, and the place of the mint. The coins are an invaluable source for understanding...
the economic and political history of the early Islamic era from Iraq to Khwārizm (M. Bates, “Islamic Numismatics,” *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, Vol. XII, No. 2, May 1978, pp. 1-16 & Vol. XII, No. 3, December 1978, pp. 2-18). Coins tell us where the different Arab governors ruled, and when the Arab Muslims were able to capture and secure a city or province. The different slogans on the coins tell us which group, e.g. the Umayyad governors, or the Zubayrids, or the Khwārizm, or any other group, controlled a specific region at a specific time (M. Mochiri, *Arab-Sasanian Civil War Coinage, Manichaeeans, Yazidiya and Other Khwārizm*, Paris, 1987).

There are also many minor Middle Persian inscriptions of a funerary nature from the late Sasanian or the early Islamic period which are mainly found in the province of Fārs. The intensity of funerary finds in a specific region (in Fārs most of these funerary inscriptions belong to Zoroastrians; some others to Christians) can lead us to better understand the religious makeup of a province. One then has to ask why so few inscriptions of this type exist elsewhere if most of the people of the plateau were Zoroastrians? Were there differences in burial customs or different religious configurations in other provinces? Bilingual inscriptions (Middle Persian and Arabic) have been found at Qal’a Bahman which concern the repair of a castle by a Muslim named Hāzim b. Muhammad b. Janān in 786 C.E. (A. Hassuri, “Two Unpublished Pahlavi Inscriptions,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Band 134, Heft 1, 1984, pp. 94-97).

II) Encyclopedic Texts. These texts appear to have been written in Sasanian times, but material was added to them in the early Islamic period. 1) The *Dēnḵard* (Acts of Religion), compiled in the ninth century and originally divided into nine books, is one such text. The third book covers religious and philosophical matters and criticizes the tenets of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The fifth book answers questions posed by a certain Ya’qub Khalid an and a Christian named Bōx Marē. An eminent Middle Persian scholar has called this text, “the book of Daylamites,” because it appears that Ya’qub was a Daylamite (J.P. de Menasce, *Une encyclopédie Mazdéenne, le Dēnḵart*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris, 1958, p. 30-31). 2) The Bundāhīsh (Primal Creation) is another important text which deals with historical events up to the thirteenth century C.E. and contains illuminating information on late Sasanian history, the Arab Muslim conquest, the ‘Abbāsi revolution, such sectarian movements as the Khorramiyya, and the Turkic invasion of the Near East. One important chapter chronicles historical events from the beginning of time to the early Islamic period from the Zoroastrian point of view. Other parts of the text refer to Arab Muslims and the effect of their settlement on the Iranian plateau. 3) Dādešṭān dēnēg (The Judgments of Religion) poses ninety-two questions concerning laws and precepts, which a priest named Manūchehr answers, and deals with the problems of interaction with the Muslims up to the third century of the hijra. Thus, this type of text is important for understanding the effect of Arab Muslim settlement in cities where Zoroastrians lived and the process of Islamicization on the plateau.

III) Philosophical & Kalām Texts. These texts deal with Zoroastrian theology and philosophy as well as those of other religions. 1) Škand i guñmānīg wīzār (Doubt Dispelling Explanation), written by Mardān Farrox in the ninth century C.E. is the most interesting text in this category. Its method of argumentation is different from other Mazdean texts in that it uses “ilm al-kalām against the tenets of Manichaeism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Dahris. This important Zoroastrian scholar, prob-
The Rivâyat of Farrobay Sroš is a short text dated 377 Yazgerdi / 1008 C.E. and refers to Muslims in regard to marriage and matters relating to religious priesthood. 2) Pūrsī i Islândiyar Farroxb Buzrûn contains answers to such questions as marriage, and more importantly, buying bread, meat and prepared food from Muslim bazaars and selling commodities to them.

V) Myth & Geographical Texts. This small body of texts deals with the story of Iranian heroes and the geography of the late Sasanian period, but some information about the early Islamic period is present as well. Șahrəstənîhâ i Ėrənəsîr (The Provincial Capitals of Iran) is the most important text, last redacted at the time of the Caliph al-Mansûr. Although the provincial capitals of Iran are mentioned, such cities as Mecca, Medina and more distant places such as towns in Africa are also listed along with the supposed builders of these places, according to the Zoroastrian religion. The Dēnkard discuss matters pertaining to myth and is useful for understanding Zoroastrian views of the Muslims. For example, the mythical Avestan Azhi Dahâka, who is a serpent / dragon, becomes an evil ruler in these texts, and is labeled a Tāziq (Arab) and rules from bâbil (Babylon). This myth is most probably a reaction to the Arab Muslim conquest and the establishment of the 'Abbasî capitol at Baghdad.

VI) Apocalyptic Texts. A number of significant apocalyptic texts deal with the Arab Muslim conquest and its aftermath. The most detailed is that of the 1) Zandî Wahman Yasn (The Commentary of Wahman Yasn), which discusses events from the end of the Sasanian period to the Turkic invasions of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The text predicts the Arab Muslim invasion, the devastation that it had for the Zoroastrian population and the Mazdean religion, the 'Abbâsi revolt, the Khorramiya, the 'Aziz and the position of the dehçãns. 2) The Jâmâsp nāmag (The Book of Jâmâsp) contains the predictions of Jâmâsp, the wazir of Wištâsp, who writes about some of the events in the text previously discussed. Jâmâsp presents information about the people neighboring Iran (including the Arabs), their worship and some common beliefs about their diet. 3) Abar madan i šah wahrâm i warzawand (On the Coming of the King Wahrâm Warzâwand) is another interesting text, composed in verse, which deals with Muslim rule, the imposition of jizya, and the destruction of fire-temples, and calls for the restoration of the Zoroastrian religion and the destruction of mosques and what it calls "the evil religion."

VII) Pázand Texts. These texts, written in Middle Persian with Avestan script, have not received the attention they deserve. They are an excellent source for understanding the religious and social beliefs of the Iranians in the medieval period. Some of the texts also exist in Pahlavi, but others are quite unique and include information on praying, saying grace, repenting, breaking spells, destroying demons and curing toothaches, headaches, fever and the like. There are many instructions on how to wash hands and wear the sacred belt, the kustì. These texts, as well as some of the New Persian Zoroastrian texts that contain Pázand writing, describe Muslims and their beliefs. One text which has only survived in its Pázand form, contains a word play dealing with the Arab Muslim invasion and Zoroastrian cosmology; one passage states that the Arabs will rush to Iran like the demon Hēsm (Demon of Wrath). The name of the demon is written Hāšem referring to Hášim, the ancestor of the Prophet Mohammed, the 'Abbasî and the descendants of 'Ali (S.S. Hartman, "Secrets for Muslims in Parsi Scriptures," in Islam and its Cultural Divergence, Studies in Honor of Gustave E. von Grunebaum, ed. G.L. Tikku, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Chicago, London, 1971, pp. 69-70).

What can these texts tell us? Each category has its own kind of information, giving us a different perspective from the Islamic sources. The aim of this brief summary of some of the sources is to encourage historians of the medieval Islamic era to utilize these texts as a complement to the Arabic and New Persian sources. Middle Persian sources, as well as Armenian, Syriac, and Greek sources, should be used for insights into the psyche and the mentality of Zoroastrians (who faced a tide of conversion in the ninth and tenth centuries), and their view of history unfolding and how to keep their community vibrant. The use of these sources is still limited by
their shortcomings, but because they are written from a communal perspective, they give answers or help give answers to the questions which preoccupy social and economic historians of the medieval Islamic era.

**Bibliographical Note**

The following sources are the most comprehensive and useful for dealing with Middle Persian texts as well as other texts and inscriptions in other Middle Iranian languages:

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<td>Middle East Studies Association</td>
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<td>University of Michigan</td>
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<td>American Historical Association</td>
<td>Jan. 7-11, 1999</td>
<td>American Historical Assn.</td>
<td>(202)-544-2422</td>
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<tr>
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<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td>400 A Street, S. E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Medieval Institute</td>
<td>May 6-9, 1999</td>
<td>The Medieval Institute</td>
<td>(616)-387-4145</td>
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<td>(1999 Meeting)</td>
<td>Kalamazoo, MI</td>
<td>Western Michigan Univ.</td>
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<td>College Art Association</td>
<td>Feb. 25-28, 1999</td>
<td>Suzanne Schanzer</td>
<td>(212) 691-1051 ext15</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1999 Meeting)</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>275 Seventh Ave.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1998 Meeting)</td>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
<td>1703 Clifton Rd., Suite G-5</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aar@emory.edu">aar@emory.edu</a></td>
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<td>American Academy of Religion</td>
<td>Nov. 20-23, 1999</td>
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<td>(1999 Meeting)</td>
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# ANNUAL MEETINGS

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<tr>
<td>Byzantine Studies Conference</td>
<td>November 5-8, 1998</td>
<td>Ralph W. Mattheisen</td>
<td>(803) 777-6068</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1998 Meeting)</td>
<td>Univ. of Lexington,</td>
<td>Dept. of History</td>
<td>FAX (803) 777-4494</td>
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<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Univ. of South Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Medieval Congress</td>
<td>July 12-15, 1999</td>
<td>M. O'Doherty/J. Opmeer</td>
<td>Tel. +44 (113) 233-3614</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1999 Meeting)</td>
<td>Leeds, UK</td>
<td>IMC, Parkinson 1.03</td>
<td>Fax +44 (113) 233-3616</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Saints&quot;</td>
<td>[Proposal Deadline: Past]</td>
<td>University of Leeds</td>
<td><a href="mailto:IMC@leeds.ac.uk">IMC@leeds.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>1703 32nd St., N. W.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Byzantine Eschatology&quot;</td>
<td>[Paper: invitation only]</td>
<td>Washington, DC 20007</td>
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<td>ARAM 12</td>
<td>April 13-16, 1999</td>
<td>Beirut</td>
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<td>&quot;History and Archaeology of Beirut&quot;</td>
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<td>Midwest Region of the American</td>
<td>Feb. 14-16, 1999</td>
<td>Richard E. Averbeck</td>
<td>Tel.: (847) 317-8017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oriental Society</td>
<td>Hebrew Union College</td>
<td>Trinity Evangelical Div. School</td>
<td>Fax: (847) 317-8141</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1999 Meeting)</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>2065 Half Day Road</td>
<td>Email: RAverbeck@compuserve</td>
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MEMBER NEWS

Camila P. Adang (Tel Aviv University) is preparing three articles dealing with Ibn Hazm: “From Mālikism to Shāfi‘īism to Zāhirism: The ‘Conversions’ of Ibn Hazm,” “A Jewish Reply to Ibn Hazm: Ibn Adret’s Polemic against Islam,” and “Fatāra in the Writings of Ibn Hazm.”

Michael D. Bonner (University of Michigan) is continuing his research on poverty and the poor in early Islam and economic thought.

C. Edmund Bosworth (Manchester University) and Denis Sinor (Indiana University) were presented in persona, and Richard N. Frye (Harvard University) in absentia, with the UNESCO Silver Avicenna Medal by the Director-General Federico Mayor for their work on the multi-volume project History of Civilizations in Central Asia, on the occasion of the publication of Vol. 4 The Age of Achievement: A.D. 750 to the end of the Fifteenth Century. Part 1. The Historical, Social and Economic Setting, ed. M.S. Asimov and C.E. Bosworth (UNESCO Publishing, Paris 1998). The book contains chapters by Bosworth on Central Asia under the Umayyads, the Ghaznavids, the later Seljuqs and the Khwarazmshahs, and the later Delhi Sultans; and by Sinor on the Uighurs in Mongolia and the Kyrgyz, and the Kitan and the Kara Khitai. Part 2. Intellectual and Cultural Achievements, will appear at the end of 1998. The History of al-Tabari, Vol. V, The Sāsānids, the Lakhmidis and Yemen, transl. and commentary by C.E. Bosworth, is now in press.


Eleanor Congdon (Plymouth State College) was recently appointed Assistant Professor of Medieval History at Plymouth State College, Plymouth, New Hampshire.

terfaith Dialogue,” sponsored by the Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.; July 26, 1997: “His Character was the Qur’an: The Ethical Imperative and the Essence of the Muhammadan Sunna,” paper delivered at the Naqshbandiya Foundation Fourth International Milad-un-Nabi Conference, University of Illinois, Chicago Circle.

Kathryn Coughlin Dé (Georgetown University) is seeking to locate and identify manuals, naqwizil, and Islamic court records from medieval Spain and Morocco as sources for her dissertation on the social history of Muslim-Christian relations.


Richard C. Martin (Emory University) recently published with Mark Woodward Defenders of Reasons in Islam: Mu’tazilism from Medieval School to Modern Symbol (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997). He is preparing with Adal S. Gamal a translation of an 11th-Century CE Mu’tazili manuscript on prophethood and miracles by an unknown student of Abu Rashid al-Nasaburi. He, Carl Ernst (University of North Carolina) and Bruce Lawrence (Duke University) have established a regional exchange for graduate students and faculty in Islamic studies: the Carolina-Duke-Emory Consortium for Islamic Studies.

Karen Rose Matthews (University of Colorado at Denver) recently completed her PhD dissertation, “They Wished to Destroy the Temple of God: Responses to Diego Gelmírez’s Cathedral Construction in Santiago de Compostela, 1100-1140” (University of Chicago, 1995). Her article “Negotiated Meanings and Urban Audiences for the Inscriptions on the Sultan Hasan Madrasa Complex in Cairo,” will be published in selected papers from the conference, “Inscriptions as Art in the World of Islam” sponsored by Hofstra University. Her article, “Expressing Political Legitimacy and Cultural Identity in the Year 1000: the Use of Spolia on the Ambo of Henry II” is under review. She is preparing a monograph entitled, The Creation of a New Art: Themes in the Study of Islamic Art and Architecture.


John Meloy (American University of Beirut), has completed his dissertation for the University of Chicago entitled “Mamluk Authority, Meccan Autonomy, and Red Sea Trade, 797-859/1395-1455,” and is now teaching in the History and Civilization program at AUB.

Hasan Qasim Murad (University of Karachi, Retired) is presently working on a 3-volume study of the life, thought, and caliphate of ‘Umar II. He recently finished revising an article on the comparative analysis of sources for the miḥna of Ibn Taymiya.

Judith Pfeiffer (University of Chicago) will be conducting research in Iran and Turkey for her dissertation, “Conversion to Islam among the Ilkhans in the 13th- to 16th-Century Narrative Traditions.” She will be based at the Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft in Istanbul from November 1998-October 1999.


Elizabeth Sartain (American University in Cairo) is preparing a critical edition of Fatimid documents from Qarṣ Ibrîn. She is also continuing her research on Islamic government (ṣiyâsa shar‘iyya).

Elizabeth Savage published A Gateway to Hell, a Gateway to Paradise, the North African Response to the Arab Conquest, (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997). She is currently preparing studies on the historiography of early North Africa and the works of Tādûs Lewicki for Variorum. A camera-ready manuscript of Early Abbasid Coinage, a typology is available to anyone interested. This coin catalogue covers the early Abbasid period up to the reforms of al-Ma’mûn in 218. The British Museum Press described it as a “wide-ranging survey ... which sheds light on subjects as diverse as art, religion and regional development as well as economic and political history.” Heretofore, copies have only been available to a handful of elite scholars. Should others be interested in acquiring a free copy write or email me at esavage@msn.com. (Work: 044 01442 842401).

Maya Shatzmiller (University of Western Ontario) is preparing a monograph entitled The Berbers and the Islamic State (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, forthcoming).


Paula Stiles (University of Rhode Island) is preparing her Master’s thesis on Arabization of the Knights Templar during the Crusades.


Daniel Varisco (Hofstra University) published Medieval Folk Astronomy and Agriculture in Arabia and the Yemen (Variorum Press, 1997). He is presently researching a monograph on traditional irrigation in Yemen. He is also webmaster of “Yemen Update,” currently at http://www.geocities.com/Athens/oracle/9361.

Knut S. Vikor (University of Bergen) published Sufi and Scholar of the Desert.
Centre of Furusiyya Studies

A new association of scholars has been formed named al-Halqa. The purpose of this association is to promote academic research in the subjects of military science, technology, tactics and other aspects of warfare within the Islamic World during the pre-modern era. al-Halqa’s field of interest also extends to those cultures which either influenced developments in these fields within Islamic civilization, or which were themselves influenced by various aspects of warfare in the Islamic World. al-Halqa intends to promote and organize meetings of similarly interested historians, symposia etc., and to publish a journal.

If you would like more information about al-Halqa or would like to join the association, please contact the Centre of Furusiyya Studies via one of the following:

Dr. David Nicolle, “Beaucaire,” 67 Maplewell Road, Woodhouse Eaves, Leics. LE128RG, England. Tel. and Fax: +44 (0) 1509 890428;

Dr. Shihab al-Sarraf, Saint Denis Le Thiboult, 76116 RY, France. Tel: +33 (0) 235 021480 and Fax: +33 (0) 235 232040.

**MADRASA, FROM PAGE 35.**

fundamental importance for sustenance of Zabid’s economic and cultural life.

**Bibliography:**


étion critique, avec introduction et notes par J. Chelhod, Sana’a.


- Tesco-Vizitner-Vituk, 1971. Survey of the agricultural potential of the Wadi Zabid, Yemen Arab Republic. Land Tenure and
MEM Scholar Profile

Ibrahim Boutchiche
HISTORIAN, SULTAN QABUS UNIVERSITY

Dr. Ibrahim Boutchiche (Ibrâhim al-Qâdirî Bûshish) was born in January, 1955, in the village of al-Sâ’idiya, district of Wijda, Morocco. He received his elementary and secondary education in Wijda. He then attended the Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abd Allâh University in Fez, from which he received his ijâza (roughly equivalent to the B.A.) and diblâm (roughly equivalent to the M.A.) in Islamic history in 1977 and 1984, respectively. Along the way, he also earned a certificate in education from the Teachers’ College in Rabat (1979), and taught history and geography at the secondary school level in Mïknâs from 1980-83. However, he was soon called back to teach at the university level, serving as Assistant Professor at Mawlay Ismâ’îl University in Mïknâs from 1983 until 1991, including a term as chairman of the history department. He received his doctorat d’état from Mawlay Ismâ’îl University in Islamic history in 1991, and was promoted to Associate Professor (ustâdh muhâdir). His dissertation was entitled al-Hayât al-ijtâ’îya fi-tarîkh al-andalus khilâl’ asr al-murâbi’in [Social life in the Maghrib and Andalusia during the Age of the Almoravids]. In 1994, he took up a position teaching in the history department at Sultân Qabûs University in Masqât, ‘Umân.

Dr. Boutchiche’s interests focus on social, economic, and intellectual history, including such diverse topics as the question of social classes and the role of magic in society. His doctoral dissertation was recently published in Egypt (Alexandria: Dâr Shabab al-Jami’a), but before it appeared he published several other books on the subject. These include Aṯâr al-ijtâ’îya fi-tarîkh al-andalus al-siyâsî min muntaṣîf al-qarn al-thâlith hattâ zuhâr al-khîlîfâ (250 h-316 h) [Effects of ijtâ’a in the political history of Andalusia from the middle of the third century until the appearance of the caliphate (250-316 A.H.)] (Râbat, Dâr ‘Ukâz, 1992), as well as Ta’rîkh al-gharb al-islâmî: qirā’ât jadida fi ba’d qadîyâ al-mujtama’a wa-l-ḥaḍârî[History of the Islamic West: new views on some problems of society and civilization] (Beirut: Dâr al-tâli’a, 1994), a collection of conference papers and articles published previously in various periodicals. These include studies of the concept of “class” and its relevance to our understanding of social organization in the Islamic West, the history of the common people (al-‘awâm) in the medieval Maghrib in view of the paucity of source material, the Christian communities of the Islamic West during the Almohad age, etc.

Dr. Boutchiche has also published papers on the relations between the Arabian Gulf and the Indian subcontinent from the 1st-3rd centuries A.H.; on the impact of warfare on the scale of taxation in the Maghrib and Andalusia during the Almoravid era; on the crisis of trade in Andalusia at the end of the period of the emirates (in al-Manâhîl 32 [1985]); on the political role of the cultured elite in the Maghrib, the example of the movement of Ibn Masarr (in Dirâsât ‘arabiyya); on land ownership in Andalusia during the emirate (in al-Manâhîl 32 [1989]); etc. Among his publications are a number dealing specifically with the history of Mïknâs, such as one on the development of agriculture in Mïknâs from the Almoravid era to the end of Marinid times (in al-Manâhîl 33 [1990]). He has also taken an active interest in questions of historiography, as in his article “Muqtârahât Il-mîlîd madrasa ‘arabiyya li-l-ta’rîkh” [“Suggestions for the inception of an Arab school of historical writing”], published as part of the proceedings of a conference on “Revisionist historiography” held in Baghdad, 1987. Likewise, he has been very keen to advance an awareness of Arabic manuscripts and to publish original documents; this effort is reflected in articles such as his “Wathâ’iq hâwâl al-ta’rîkh al-dînî li-l-maghrib fi al-qarnayn 5 wa 6 h: madkhal li-dirâsât il-qâ’at al-sultân bi-quwwâ al-taṣawwuf” [“Documents about the religious history of the Maghrib in the 5th and 6th centuries A.H.: introduction to the study of relations between the authorities and the powers of Sufism,” Majallat Dâr al-Niyâba 17-18 (1988)].

Dr. Boutchiche is an active member of numerous scientific societies in the Arab world and has attended many conferences in the Arab world and in Europe.

Dr. Ibrahim Boutchiche can be reached at the Sultan Qabûs University, College of Arts, Department of History, P.O.B. 42, Masqût 123, Sultanate of Oman. Fax: 014210.
At the end of the nineteenth century, the Turkish government asked its Minister of Education to prepare a report on European universities and the possibility of introducing Western-style higher education in the Ottoman realm. The Minister travelled to the great European educational institutions and submitted his report to the Sultan's court. Asked by the Sultan what the most surprising aspect of his visit was, the minister replied: "In Budapest I attended a lecture on Islam. The speaker was an Hungarian Jew. The audience was composed of Hungarian Christians. And everything he said about Islam was correct."

The minister's report - and this delightful anecdote - were well-received at the court. The Ottoman authorities were impressed by the openness and tolerance of the various European university systems and took some steps to introduce educational reforms into their own educational system.

The Hungarian Jewish scholar referred to in the anecdote was Ignaz Goldziher, the savant who pioneered the scientific study of Islamic languages and texts in the West. During his long career he produced books and articles that are studied by Islamicists to this day. His work had a profound effect on Western scholarship in the areas of comparative philology, religious studies, and the emerging discipline of Semitics. His vast oeuvre includes over eight hundred items. The titles of his major books are familiar to all students of Islam. His earliest work, *Mythos bei den Hebräern* (1876), was influenced by Max Müller's work on solar mythology and addresses a topic that has attracted scholarly attention: the relationship between theories of myth and the early narratives of the Hebrew Bible. Islamic scholars in Egypt and elsewhere in the Muslim world recognized the importance of Goldziher's accomplishments and considered him a valued colleague. Goldziher understood the political and social implications of his scholarly work. Throughout his life he strived to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding between Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

Much of Goldziher's inspiration for this life-long commitment to Orientalist scholarship derived from his 1873-74 journey to the Middle East. He was then 24 years old and at the end of a 5 year period in which he had travelled throughout Europe and studied with the eminent European Arabists of his day. When he arrived in Damascus and then proceeded to Cairo he was fluent in Arabic, and this eased his entry into Muslim institutions. The bulk of his time in the Middle East was spent in Cairo, where his language skills, intellectual acumen, and persistence gained him an introduction to the Shaykh Al-Azhar, the administrative and spiritual head of Al-Azhar, Islam's oldest center of religious learning. Goldziher was the first European to attend lectures at this prestigious academy. He was allowed to do so only after the Shaykh gave him a rigorous examination. Of the four months that he spent at Al-Azhar Goldziher later wrote "Both the students and the teachers treated me as if I were one of them, although I never posed as a Muslim. These were four glorious months of spirited learning." His professors gave him an Arabic title which evoked the sound of his German name - Shaykh Zarawi. The Arabic document which the head of Al-Azhar wrote on Goldziher's admission to the theological school reflects a more relaxed period in interfaith relations, a period in which a non-Muslim scholar, fluent in Arabic, could gain permission to study at an institution closed to outsiders. "There appeared before us the Hungarian talib Ignaz, a man of the ahl al-khitab with the presentation of his desire to delve into the sciences of Islam under the eyes of the wise and learned shaykhs of the mosque... He declares himself far removed from all pursuit of mockery... Thus it is the decision of God that this youth become a neighbor of our flowering mosque, and one must not obstruct the decision of God." During his later years, Goldziher's pride in this affiliation remained. He proudly signed his books with the phrase Ignaz Goldziher, the Magyar Azhari.

But it was not only with the Egyptian religious establishment that Goldziher formed lasting ties at that time. He was also acutely aware of the political struggles then raging in Egypt and allied himself
with progressive nationalist forces. He sympathized with the views of Egyptian nationalists opposed to both the Ottoman Turks and the European colonial powers. Goldziher befriended the influential thinker Jamal ad-Din Al-Afghani, (1838-1897) who called for Egyptian independence from all foreign powers. Al-Afghani, who lived in Egypt from 1871 to 1879, had a profound effect on Egyptian politics in particular and on Arabic political thought in general. The mid 1870s were a formative period in Al-Afghani's political development. His charisma and oratorical ability attracted many followers. Visiting European intellectuals were eager to meet with him, and he with them. Of the Europeans, it was Goldziher with whom he formed the closest association. The friendship with Al-Afghani and the other social and intellectual ties that Goldziher formed during this 1873-74 visit had a profound effect on his understanding of Islam as it is lived. As Lawrence Conrad noted in an important series of articles on Goldziher, the full import of this trip must be understood in the context of the times. For Goldziher arrived in the Near East in the heady early days of the nahda, the great revival of Arab communal and cultural awareness that characterized the intellectual and social history of the later nineteenth and early twentieth-century Levant.

Though the necessity for religious tolerance was a theme that emerges from Goldziher's oeuvre, he himself was the victim of intolerance throughout his life. The breadth and depth of his scholarship was recognized by experts throughout the world; but despite his stature as a scholar, the state-controlled University of Budapest would not grant him a regular university appointment. A Jew, even one educated within Hungary's own university system, was not a suitable candidate. A contemporary of Goldziher's, the linguist Bernard Munkacsi, in writing of his own travels at the hands of the university administrators, described the fate of Jewish students who aspired to university professorships in mid-nineteenth century Hungary: "The honors degree, Ph.D. and academic achievements were all in vain! Where teacher's posts were given, certificates of baptism were required. Teachers-to-be of Jewish origin had to settle their 'religious status' before being employed by the state. Many of my attempts to acquire a secular job have failed."

Goldziher, while bitter at rejection by the system that educated him, did not vent his spleen at the Hungarian authorities. Rather, he reserved his most caustic remarks for his Jewish co-religionists. When Goldziher, in his mid-twenties, realized that admission to the regular university faculty would be denied him, he accepted an administrative job with the Budapest Jewish community. As secretary of the Israelite Congregation of Pest, the Reform Synagogue with the largest membership in Europe, Goldziher was responsible for the religious, educational and social activities of the congregation. As Raphael Patai noted "a man without Goldziher's intense scholarly drive, and more important, with a thicker skin, could have found at least some measure of satisfaction in occupying this influential position."

But there was to be no sense of satisfaction in Goldziher's professional life. He served the Jewish community for thirty years. In his diaries, and in his letters to friends, he complained bitterly about his fate. Early on in his period of service he wrote "It was decided that I become a slave. The Jews wanted to have pity on me. This is the misfortune of my life." It is remarkable that Goldziher did not succumb to these bitter feelings and sink into inactivity. On the contrary, he persisted in his studies and developed a system which enabled him to produce scores of books and articles over these thirty years. During the working year he would read Arabic texts at night, translating and taking notes, and this after working eight hours in the congregation's office -- during which he supervised a staff of ten employees. On his six week summer vacation he would take these books and notes (and later, when he married, his wife and son) to the mountains and write a complete monograph in one sustained effort. Among the magisterial works written in this manner were: Islam: Studies in the Religion of Mohammad (in Hungarian-1881), the long German-language monograph on the Zahiris (1884), and the authoritative Introduction to Islam (German-1910).

It was only in 1905 that Goldziher, then aged 55, received a regular university appointment in Budapest. During his employment at that city's Reform Jewish congregation he turned down serious job offers from the most important European and Middle Eastern centers for the study of religion and culture. Among the offers: In 1893 the University of Heidelberg, at the urging of the great Semitist Noldeke, offered him a professorship. A year later Cambridge University invited him to occupy the chair left empty at the death of William Robertson Smith, the eminent philologist and historian of religion. In the early 1900s Goldziher received offers from the Khedive of Egypt to teach in Cairo -- and from Zionist leader Max Nordau to teach at the projected Hebrew University in Jerusalem. (Surely he was the only person who received job offers from both of these figures!)

To all of these offers, Goldziher, tied to Budapest and his family, friends and regular employment, said no. His refusal to consider teaching positions outside of Hungary -- coupled with his continuing bitterness and anger at the Jewish community for "enslaving" him in his administrative position -- are congruent with the general psychological picture we get reading the letters -- that despite his accomplishments and world-wide acclaim he felt 'trapped' in a situation in which his worth was not recognized. And from that trap he could see no way to free himself. This was the way that Raphael Patai, the late anthropologist whose father was a student of Goldziher's, saw the master's psychological problems. A more recent study and analysis (L. Conrad 1990) sees Patai's reading of the diary as flawed. For along with Goldziher's stridency and occasional emotional outbursts, there is much in his letters that is positive. To use Goldziher's emotional outbursts as the basis for an interpretation of his life and work seems unreasonable.

Robert Simon, Goldziher's biographer, noted that "he transformed correspondence into a veritable cult. A letter from a valued colleague or student was joyfully received. He told A.S. Yahuda that "if I receive a letter from Noldeke or Snouck I feel as if I were given a precious gift. A happy and solemn mood descends upon me immediately." And these were
not mere missives of politeness. Scholars who have perused them note that these letters and Goldziher's detailed replies could pass for scientific papers and convey more ideas and have greater scientific value than many of the mass-produced pieces of modern philology. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences has preserved a good deal of the master's correspondence, and as one observer put it, "the mere quantity of these letters is astounding: 45 boxes containing 13,700 letters from 1,650 people." Goldziher clearly followed his own advice. Joseph Somogyi, a student of Goldziher's who emigrated to the U.S. and taught Arabic at Brandeis University, quoted his teacher as exhorting him to do two things "if you want to prosper in life: answer every letter or card you receive, even if your answer be negative; and give lectures at the Orientalists' congresses. This is as important as literary work."

On occasion, Goldziher's personal concerns emerge in his letters, though for the most part they are concerned with matters philological and textual. Some of these letters served as drafts for his academic papers. He also kept a diary and in it he allowed himself greater freedom of expression. Portions of these diaries were published in the 1970s. William Montgomery Watt, in an essay in the diaries, noted that they contained a startling revelation about the great scholar: "His apparently effortless mastery of his subject and the even tenor of his scholarly expositions suggest a placid existence in the groves of academia. The publication of the diary shows such a suggestion to be completely erroneous. All these works of serene and profound scholarship came from one who was engaged for over thirty years in an intense spiritual struggle against forces which made his daily life almost unbearable and threatened to destroy all his confidence in himself."

Goldziher's literary legacy of books, articles, letters was vast. His other great legacy to scholarship was his students: He taught and inspired a generation of Islamicists, Semitists, and students of religion. These students, in turn, founded scholarly lineages of their own. Many of his Jewish students were murdered by the Nazis. Others fled Europe and survived. They taught, wrote, and inspired a new generation of scholars in New York, Boston, London, Moscow and Jerusalem.

Examination of Goldziher's work and life can lead us to a more nuanced reading of the Western project of Understanding Islam. Edward Said claimed that after Renan Western scholarship produced no new conceptualization of Islam and the Orient. But as Lawrence Conrad has noted, Goldziher's career flatly contradicts one of Said's most important conclusions. For Goldziher's work is itself a critique of Orientalism. It is an attempt to present Islam as it is presented and interpreted in its own textual tradition. Goldziher sharply attacked Renan and repeatedly sought to disprove his Aryan-Semitic formulations. As al-Afghani also produced a trenchant critique of Renan's views, one might imagine the young Hungarian Jewish Orientalist and the older Middle Eastern religious and political thinker critiquing and demolishing Renan's views as they walked through Cairo in the winter of 1874.

Sources/References:

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Netherlands Ulama Project

The main aim of the Netherlands Ulama Project (NUP) is to study the emergence and evolution of the ulama in early and classical Islam (through AH 400) with special emphasis on the role of the non-Arab converts (mawali). NUP has its own information system which comprises, alongside a data entry program (TabaqtKamila), statistical and geographic programs for flexible and elaborate data analyses.

The project has two databases. The main database, which has been completed, is a representative sample of 1,049 ulama (for Hadith, Tafsir, Qira'a, Nahw and Fiqh). The other database, currently being collected, will comprise all known grammarians of the period (estimated to be about 400); at present it counts 2,10 grammarians. For each individual scholar some 100 variables can be entered. The data are collected from as many classical biographical dictionaries as we can get our hands on.

NUP is a research project funded by the Dutch government's Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). The grant for the project was awarded in 1994 to us as principal investigators and lasts until 1999. After termination of the grant, we hope to continue our project in enlarged form, depending on the possibilities of our new University/employer.

Dr. Monique Bernards & Dr. John Nawas, Groen van Prinstererlaan 32, 5252 AK Vlijmen, The Netherlands. Email: john.a.nawas@let.uu.nl. Tel.: 31-73-5119616.
European Research Workshop:

The Shi’i Century and the Iranian Milieu

The European Research Workshop on “The Shi’i Century and the Iranian Milieu” was held at Wolfson College, Oxford, 11-14 June 1998. The objective of the Workshop was to examine and discuss various aspects of culture, religion, and politics in the Eastern Islamic world in the 4th/10th century, and to consider plans for future research in this area.

Eleven speakers delivered papers at the Workshop; a list of the speakers and their papers follows, together with a brief summary of their contents.

**Wilfred Madelung** (University of Oxford): “The Zaydiyya in 10th-Century Iran.”

Professor Madelung briefly outlined the history of the Shi’i/Zaydi movement in Daylam and eastern Gilan (Tabaristan) from its beginnings in the late 2nd/8th century. His paper focussed primarily on the establishment of the Buyid dynasty, with capitals in Shiraz, Isfahan, Rayy, and, ultimately, Baghdad, where from the mid-4th/10th until the mid-5th/11th century the Buyids controlled the Abbasid caliphate. The Buyids revived pre-Islamic traditions of Persian kingship; they and their officials sponsored extensive scientific and literary activity in Arabic.


Professor Daniel discussed the 4th/10th century as a transitional phase in the development of Islam in Iran, and connections between religion and the rise of Persian prose literature. Examining the extent to which the latter phenomenon might be connected to attempts on the part of the Samanid rulers to combat various heterodox movements in their domains of Khurasan and Transoxiana, he concluded that although the problem of heterodoxy looms large in the prose texts of the period, it is difficult to pinpoint specific ‘heresies’ at which these texts were aimed. (Professor Daniel’s participation was made possible by a grant from Wolfson College.)


This Arabic work, written in the mid-4th/10th century for the local Muhtajid rulers of Chaghaniyan (southern Transoxiana), is an encyclopaedia of sciences written for the instruction of court secretaries and officials. It is of particular interest as it employs the tashjir form (entries are composed in the shape of an inverted tree, a method of composition which can only be conceived and practiced in a written medium); it contains an important chapter on history which integrates a variety of historical traditions.

**Jurgen Paul** (Institut für Orientalistik, Halle): “The Histories of Isfahan.”

Professor Paul’s paper discussed the development of the genre of local histories (that is, biographical dictionaries centered on a given town or region) in relation to two Arabic histories of Isfahan written in the 4th/10th century, and examined the extent to which such sources can be used to shed light on issues of cultural and social history. (Professor Paul was unable to attend the Workshop; his paper was read by Dr. Julia Ashrani-Bray of the University of St. Andrews.)

**Wadad al-Qadi** (University of Chicago): “Al-Tawhidi: A Sunni Voice in a Shi’i Century.”

A militant Sunni, in a Baghdad ruled by the Shi’i Buyids, in many of his writings he attacks Shi’ism on historical, theological and experiential grounds, and expresses particular alarm at the expansion of Shi’ism due largely to Isma’ili missionary activities.

**Joel Kraemer** (University of Chicago): “The Ancient Sciences in the Shi’i Century: Appropriation or Marginalization?”

Professor Kraemer questioned the view that the appropriation of the Greek philosophical and scientific heritage, through Arabic translations, commentaries, and original works, was a marginal phenomenon, arguing that it was widely supported by dynastic and other patronage and by the foundation of institutions for the purpose of preserving and disseminating this heritage. He raised the question of possible connections between Shi’ism and this flourishing of philosophy and science, but concluded that the period represents a particularly dynamic phase in the constant evolution of Islamic civilisation. (Professor Kraemer’s participation in the Workshop was made possible by a grant from the British Academy.)


Professor Richter-Bernburg’s paper examined the treatment of architectural ‘wonders’ in Arabic geographical works of the 3rd/9th and 4th/10th centuries. He argued that whether writers drew their information from conventional literary tradition or from autopsies, in such writings ‘architecture is a signifier of meanings which are extra-architectural.’

**Annabel Keeler** (University of Cambridge): “Two Early Persian Tafsirs.”
This paper compared two early Persian Koranic commentaries: the Persian 'translation' of Tabari's (d. 3017/923) Arabic commentary, and the so-called 'Cambridge Tafsir.' Both these works were written in Eastern Iran, within no more than 100 years of each other (late 4th/10th and early 5th/11th century), and probably represent the Hanafi school of Sunni Islam. They are, however, remarkably different with respect to form, style, and overall content, examination of which may tell us much about the development of religious writing in Persian.

**Tilman Seidensticker** (University of Jena): “Arabic and Persian Four-Line Poems.”

Professor Seidensticker surveyed various accounts, both indigenous and orientalist, concerning the origins of the Persian quatrain (ruba’i). He himself argued for the theory of Arabic origins (first suggested by Fritz Meier), based on the tendency towards four-line poems among the poets of the Abbasid period, in particular the secretary-poet Khalid ibn Yazid al-Katib, who used the form for love poems. It was later expanded (in both Arabic and Persian) to include other themes, and became a popular form for mystical poetry.


This paper (which was illustrated by slides) discussed various types of dualistic beliefs in Iranian religions and their transmission in symbolic form, and stressed the importance not only of conflict but of balance between the forces of good and evil. This concept of balance is expressed iconographically in such diverse sources as the Luristan bronzes (8th-7th century BCE), the 10th-century Palatine Chapel in Palermo, and 12th-century Saljuq buildings in Anatolia and in Eastern Iran.

**Julie Scott Meisami** (University of Oxford): “The King From the East and the End of Days: Myth, History and Politics in the Samanid Milieu.”

This paper discussed the persistence and conflation of apocalyptic legends surrounding such figures as Bahram Chubin and Abu Muslim and their influence on Zoroastrian apocalyptic texts written in Islamic times in both Middle and New Persian, in the contexts of Samanid politics and legitimatory strategies, the rise of New Persian literature and the revival of Persian cultural traditions under the Samanids, and the eschatological expectations current during the 4th/10th century, which included predictions of a ‘King from the East’ prior to the End of Days who would restore justice in the world.

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**Islamic Numismatic News Network**

**Arab-Byzantine Forum IV**

The fourth forum on the Arab-Byzantine coinage of the Fertile Crescent in the seventh and eighth centuries CE will take place at the American Numismatic Society in New York on Saturday, November 14, at 10:00 AM. The forum is co-sponsored by the Oriental Numismatic Society.

The speakers list is still being compiled. Presentations of any sort are welcomed: from formal lectures of a half-hour or so to brief descriptions of new or strange coins. Anyone who wishes to address the meeting should communicate with the Forum organizer, Charles Karukstis, at the address below. Presentations can be:
- on the Arab-Byzantine coinage itself
- on any related Islamic or late Roman coinage
- on the history and culture of Bilad al-Sham in the Umayyad era.

Among the speakers this year will be Professor Alan Walsmsley of the University of Sydney, who has participated in the excavations at Pella and catalogued the coins found there. He is a specialist in the social and economic history of the region and era.

Those who wish to attend the Forum, and have not received mailings for previous fora, should also contact Karukstis:

Mr. Charles Paul Karukstis
P.O. Box 221871
Charlotte, NC 28222-1871
704 388-1421
charlie@charliek.com

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**The ISLAW Catalogue**

The Oriental Institute at the University of Leipzig (OIL) has set up a new Internet Site, beginning in April 1998. The “ISLAW - Catalogue” is a first attempt to collect all existing sites on the Internet about Islamic Law and the Law of Islamic States. Everyone doing Oriental and Islamic Studies or who has an interest in International Law could be interested in the Catalogue. The URL is as follows: http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~orient/islaw.htm

For more information, criticism, and for new links, please contact Thoralf Hanstein, (Editorial Team) (e-mail: oil@rz.uni-leipzig.de).
Second International Conference on

The Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomena
(“INSAP II”)

to be held 7-14 January 1999 on The Mediterranean Island of Malta

The sky makes up half of mankind’s world; the Earth around us makes up the other half. This meeting will explore mankind’s fascination with the astronomical phenomena that define the sky - the lights in the sky, by day and by night - which have been a strong and often dominant element in human life and culture. Scholars from a variety of disciplines (including Anthropology, Archaeology, Art, Classics, History and Prehistory, Mythology and Folklore, Philosophy, the Physical Sciences, and Religion) will attend “INSAP II” to discuss the impacts astronomical phenomena have had on mankind. Presentations by attendees will be grouped under four main topics: Literature; Art; Myths and Religion; History and Prehistory.

Among many presentations will be:

Imad A. Ahmad (Bethesda, Maryland): “Astronomical Inspiration in the Rubayyat of Umar Khayyam”; Daniel Varisco (Hofstra Univ.): “The Mystical Symbolism of the Lunar Stations in Medieval Islamic Cosmology.”

The Conference will allow the attendees to address the many and variegated cultural impacts of the perceptions of the day and night skies, providing a mechanism for a broad group of artists, historians, philosophers, and scientists to meet, compare notes, and have the chance to ask those questions of each other about their work which may have been lying fallow for decades. Attendance will be by invitation from among those applying.

Full information on the Conference and an application form can be obtained by contacting the Organizing Committee, or from our Website (http://ethel.as.arizona.edu/~white/insap2.htm).

This Conference is the second to be held on this general theme. Details of the first meeting (held at Castel Gandolfo, Vatican State, 27 June-2 July 1994), and the publication references that include many of the papers presented there, may be found at http://ethel.as.arizona.edu/~white/insap.htm.

This Conference is sponsored by the OTS Foundation and the Vatican Observatory.

The Organizing Committee:
Professor Raymond E. White, Steward Observatory, University of Arizona (Chair) (rwhite@as.arizona.edu)
Rev. George V. Coyne, S. J., The Vatican Observatory (gcwayne@as.arizona.edu)
Dr. Rolf M. Sinclair, National Science Foundation, Arlington VA (rsinclair@nsf.gov)
Prof. Frank Ventura, Malta (fvem@cis.um.edu.mt)

7th International Congress on Greco-Oriental and African Studies

The 7th International Congress on Greco-Oriental and African Studies with the cooperation of the University of Cairo will take place in Cairo (December 12-15, 1998). The topic of the congress is the Relations between Egypt and Greece from Hellenic times until the present day. There will be four sections: 1) Sources; 2) Archaeology and Art; 3) History; 4) Social Sciences.

For further information write or call Prof. Vassilios Christides, 39 Solomou St., Kryoneri Attikis 145 65 Greece, Tel. and fax: (00301) 81.61.037.

Daily Life in the Ancient Near East

February 14-16, 1999
Hebrew Union College
Cincinnati, Ohio

The Midwest Region of the American Oriental Society (MWAOS), the Midwest Regional Organizations of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) and the American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) will hold their annual joint meeting at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, February 14-16, 1999, on the topic "Daily Life in the Ancient Near East".

All who are interested in reading a paper related to this topic at the meeting should contact the Program Coordinator at their earliest convenience. The deadline for the abstract is January 1, 1999. For more information, please contact:
Richard E. Averbeck, 1999 Program Coordinator, Midwest AOS/SBL/ASOR, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2065 Half Day Road, Deerfield, IL 60015, USA. Tel.: (847) 317-8017. Fax: (847) 317-8141. Email: R.Averbeck@compuserve.com.
The Second Biennial Conference on Iranian Studies
May 22-24, 1998, Bethesda, Maryland


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La tradition manuscrite en écriture arabe
[The manuscript tradition in arabic script]
DEUX JOURNÉES D'INITIATION (19 ET 20 NOVEMBRE 1998)

A workshop for students preparing the edition of an Arabic, Turkish or Persian text.

**Sessions will be in french.**

This stage of initiation to manuscripts is aimed primarily to students of the third cycle preparing the edition of an Arabic, Persian or Turkish text. The sessions are organized by the Arab section of the IRHT and will take place on the campus of the Collège de France (conference hall of the second floor, escalier A, 52 rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, 75005 Paris.)

Program: Thursday 19 November 9:30AM: welcome of the participants; 9:45AM: presentation of the program and aim of the meeting; 10:00AM: the manuscript as a source of information on the history and the transmission of a text: information given by the calligraphy and the book as an artisanal object; colophons, liminar texts, marginal annotations (G. Humbert, IRHT); pause; 11:15AM: reading of some notices of the catalogue of Arabic manuscripts of the BNF (M.-G. Guesdon, BNF); 12:00PM: how to handle a manuscript? (M.-G. Guesdon, BNF); lunch 1:15: Libraries and other institutions concerned with Arabic, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts in France. (A. Nouri, BNF); 15:00: writing workshop (with regard to the expositions on writing at the BNF-Tolbiac) (A. Berthier, BNF).

Friday 20 November: 9:30AM: particularities of African manuscripts (C. Hamès, CNRS); 9:45AM: Christian Arabic manuscripts (P. Géhin, IRHT); pause; 11:00AM: reading of a page of an aljamiado manuscript (J.-P. Molénat, IRHT); 11:45AM: questions of punctuation (M. Jaouhari, Université de Bordeaux); 12:00: discussion on the future of this meeting; lunch; afternoon: presentation of some manuscripts of the BNF (A. Berthier et F. Déroche).

Attention! It is obligatory to register in order to attend (registration fee: 50FF). Please ask for a registration form from the IRHT if necessary: G. Humbert, IRHT-CNRS, section arabe, 52 rue du Cardinal-Lemoine, F-75005 Paris. Tel: 0144271863 (Thursday, Friday p.m.). Email: humbert@alize.msh-paris.fr.

For more information contact: Marie Genevieve GUESDON, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des manuscrits, division orientale, 58, rue de Richelieu, 75004 Paris Cedex 02. Tel 33-1-47 03 75 91, Fax 33-1-47 03 76 65, Email marie-genevieve.guesdon@bnf.fr.
Third International Round Table on Safavid Persia
19-22 August, 1998 - University of Edinburgh

The Third International Round Table on Safavid Persia was held at the University of Edinburgh on 19-22 August, 1998. It was sponsored by: The University of Edinburgh’s Arts, Divinity and Music Faculty Group Research Fund; The Foreign and Commonwealth Office; The Iran Heritage Foundation; The Barakat Trust; The British Institute of Persian Studies; National Museums of Scotland; Out of the Nomad’s Tent, Edinburgh; The British Academy; The University of Edinburgh Development Trust. The following is the list of speakers:


For further information, contact:
Dr. A. Newman, IMES, 7-8 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9LW, UK,
tel. (0) 131 650-4182/4-78, FAX 44 (0)131 650 6804, or
http://www.arts.ed.ac.uk/eiasime/events/RoundTable.html, or AJN@holyrood.ed.ac.uk.
Table ronde

AFEMAM 1998 COLLOQUE 1, FRIDAY, 3 JULY

Unité et diversité des sociétés et des cultures dans l'Islam

LA GESTION SPONTANÉE OU INSTITUTIONNELLE DES DIFFÉRENCES DANS LES MONDES MUSULMANS TRADITIONNELS ET CONTEMPORAINS ET SES BLOCAGES ÉVENTUELS

The following are the presentations given at the round table on "Unity and Diversity of Societies and Cultures in Islam," held on Friday, 3 July, 1998 at the Université Lumière-Lyon II:

Jean Claude Chabrie (CNRS, Université Paris IV - Sorbonne), starting from Assyria (confluence of arameo-judeo-armeno-greco-iranian-kurdo-arabo-turkish cultures) reduced the ethnocentric and nationalistic dogmas and encompassed the polyethnic and multicultural musical themes of the region and its vicinity. He studied the acoustic systems of Antiquity, from the European, Mediterranean, and Asiatic evolutions to the modal genres and systems, as well as instrumental languages, especially those of the 'ud and the tanbūr.

Oleg Grabar (The Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ), discussed two themes, illustrated by projections: 1- whether the differences which emanated from a common past, the world of Late Antiquity in the Mediterranean and its equivalents in Iran, India, South and South-East Asia, were really differences or were rather variant degrees of jahiliyah; 2- the later contacts by accidental borrowing, wanted or imposed, demonstrated by two examples.

Stéphane Pradines (Paris IV-Sorbonne), gave a presentation on "The Swahili mihrawb: local evolution and influence of the Arab world." The Swahili culture extends from Somalia to Northern Mozambique. The typological examination of the decorative forms and motifs of Swahili mihrawb allowed the identification of 8 local groups and the observation of foreign architectural influences. These exogenous elements could be Fāṭimid, Ethiopian, Saljuqīd, Yamani, Indian or Pakistani. These were taken as indices to establish a map of historical relations in the Indian Ocean.

Eric Geoffroy (Univ. de Strasbourg), spoke on the unity and diversity of Sufism. The Sufis regarded themselves as belonging to a single spiritual entity and as travelling the same path of initiation. But the emergence of particular paths, the variety of the spiritual temperaments of the Sufis, and the heterogeneity of their social profiles as well as the doctrinal cleavages that traversed this milieu, all attest to the diversity which encompasses the term ṭāsawwuf. Thus, Geoffroy analyzed the exterior pressures which, throughout history, have made Sufism bend toward certain norms.

Jérôme Lentin (INALCO, Paris), discussed the linguistic variety of the Arab-Muslim world which has been characterised by its sublety and pragmatism. Arabisation, generally connected to Islamisation, was accomplished at different rhythms and according to diverse modalities. Orally as well as in writing, many languages were able to maintain themselves and intermediary varieties were constituted. Dialectal varieties multiplied and reinforced themselves and koines (urban, regional, or from literary expression) were elaborated. At a parallel level, if the two polar varieties (the dialectal and the literary) remained distinct, the linguistic continuum which they carried was intensively exploited.

Dominique Mallet (Univ. de Bordeaux, Directeur de l'IFEAD à Damas), attempted to show how the philosophical thought of Arab philosophers was alimented by a paradoxical solicitude for differences by using one of the first works which attempted to reconcile Aristotle and Plato, "The Treaty of the Harmony of the Opinions of Plato and Aristotle." "Unity and diversity", "the administration of differences" were the tasks assigned by a Parmenidean to philosophy. It is exactly because they were philosophers that Arab Aristotelians could not mix the exercise of thinking with the effacement of differences. They attempted to reconcile: 1) the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle; 2) religion and philosophy; 3) reason and mystic effusion; 4) thought and action; 5) political sovereignty and philosophical speculation; 6) Greek and Arabic; 7) the text and its commentary, etc. The characterisation of their intellectual movement as a concordist, reconciliatory enterprise would deny that the Arabs merely philosophized.

Babar Johansen (EHESS, Paris), discussed "A System of Differences: The Normative Pluralism of Fiqh Schools," At the center of Sunni fiqh lies the contingency of every human action, including the interpretation of revelation. It excludes the creation of an authoritative doctrinal instantand legitimizes the formation of many schools of fiqh, each with its own doctrines. The differences between these provide a legal foundation for the judiciary decisions, which pronounce multiple and distinct individual norms for cases of the same type. The importance of these differences has been reduced by Western scholarship. This contribution would serve to demonstrate their relevance for a recon-
The Formulation of a Local Juridical Culture. The author became interested in the mechanisms of reproduction of the judiciary norm within the Maliki madhab while working on the juridical discourse regarding handling of the material structures of the city and the organization of urban spaces in the Maghribi cities of the post-Almohad period. In particular, the author looked at the modes of expression in Tunis, capital of the Hafsid state and new bastion of Ifriqiyan Malikism, which at that time knew a great activity on the juridical level by the coming together of the Qarawi tradition with Andalusian and Oriental doctrines. The author presented certain juridical mechanisms used in Tunis during this period to define the contradictory corpus of the Maliki madhab which was to be applied to a particular case. These methods attempted to reconcile on a local level the diverging doctrinal opinions and the scriptural material with the contingent reality.

Joseph Shatzmiller (Duke University), gave a presentation on "The Jews in Neighbouring Societies." The degree of participation of the Jews in the enclosing societies in the Medieval East and West will be examined. The employment of languages by the Jews and onomastic material will be taken in consideration in different historical contexts.

Jean Claude Garcin (Université d'Aix en Provence), spoke on "Politics and Difference: Tolerance or the Search for the Foreign?" This contribution attempted to demonstrate how political elaboration has passed in pre-modern Muslim societies through tolerance and a search for the foreign which might well find itself at the center of the construction of the state.

The Mamluk Sultanate: Cities, Societies, Economies

A conference entitled “The Mamluk Sultanate: Cities, Societies, Economies” will be held on Thursday, December 3, 1998 in Chicago, Illinois. Professor Robert Irwin (Senior Research Associate, School of Oriental Studies, London University) will deliver the keynote address for the conference. The title of Professor Irwin’s presentation is “Under Western Eyes: A History of Mamluk Studies.”


This one-day event, scheduled on the affiliated meetings day of the annual MESA meeting, will be held in the modern conference facilities of the DePaul University Center in downtown Chicago, just minutes from the MESA hotel. It will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Registration: There is no registration fee. If you plan to attend, or for more information, please contact the conference coordinator: Warren C. Schultz, Department of History, DePaul University, 2320 N. Kenmore, Chicago, IL 60614, USA. Tel. (773) 325-2561. Email: wschultz@wpost.depaul.edu.

This conference is organized by Mamluk Studies Review, a journal devoted to the study of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt and Syria, 1250-1517. It is sponsored by DePaul University, the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Financial support has been received from the University Research Council of DePaul University, the Norman Wait Harris Fund of the Center for International Studies at the University of Chicago and the Middle East Documentation Center of the University of Chicago.
REVIEW POLICY

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

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


While it is true that the author wrote this book more than 12 years ago, its novel approach to the period in question, the Umayyad period, makes it an important contribution to the field. The author looks at the Umayyads’ and oppositional parties’ struggle for power within early Islam, and how these parties used different methods to disseminate their parties’ propaganda to the people. As the title implies, he concentrates on the propaganda used by the Umayyads to propagate their rule of the Islamic Empire.

The book is divided into eight sections, the first three of which look at the social, economic, religious and cultural background of the Umayyad age. These sections also look at the rise of the oppositional movements during that age and their backgrounds. It is in these first three sections that the author defines the terms to be used in the book. This effort by the author is unique and one would wish others to imitate it. This stems from the fact that many a reader, including this one, assumes that their translation of Arabic terms is, if not the exact then a very close approximation of the author’s intent. With this in mind the following example should clarify the previous point. The author uses the Arabic word siyāsa which one would guess to mean ‘politics,’ yet the author points out that what he really means by the word is ‘police.’ Without this clarification many a point would have been lost on the reader.

The rest of the book defines the propaganda tools at the disposal of the Umayyads and looks at how they utilized these tools for their purpose. The methods utilized by the Umayyads, according to the author amounted to speeches, books, coins, buildings etc. The author looks at each of these methods and analyzes the way in which the Umayyads used them. Examples of the use of religious literature by the Umayyads for propaganda purposes are the invention of hadith and the manipulation of Qur'anic exegesis, all to shore up their own regime. ("f-ikhrirat al-ahdith al-nabawiyya wa-fussurat al-ayât al-qur'aniyya wa-fqîhî hâl-ahrâr al-dî‘a.") (p.258.) Specific examples include the Prophet hadith: lâ fâjîma ‘ummatî lâl al-âlã (My community does not agree on error), as being used by Mu‘awiya to appease the populace and legitimize his rule. (pp.208-209.). For the author it is not important whether the above hadith was authentic or not; what matters is that it was circulated at the beginning of Mu‘awiya’s reign to consolidate his power and appease the pious opposition. The author is a little more direct when he discusses the reason behind ‘Abd al-Malik’s building of the Dome of the Rock. He argues that the Dome of the Rock was built during the civil war with the counter caliph: ‘Abd Allâh b. al-Zubayr, in order to divert pilgrims from going to Mecca where the latter was ruling. Not only did ‘Abd al-Malik build the Dome of the Rock, he also circulated a hadith on the authority of Ibn Shihâb al-Zuhri that the Prophet said, “People do not gather except at three mosques, the Haram Mosque (in Mecca), My mosque (in Medina), and the Mosque in the Holy House (Jerusalem)." and this latter mosque stands in the place of the mosque in Mecca and the rock (where the Prophet ascended to heaven from) stands in the place of the Ka‘ba.” (p.175.)

As one can see from the above there is no love lost between the author and the Umayyads. He views them as usurpers, especially Mu‘awiya, who had no legitimacy as such to rule the Empire. Thus we find the work falling in the same pitfalls as those of many scholars, whether Western or Arab, when it comes to its anti-Umayyad stance. Yet even with this in mind one finds his analysis of Umayyad actions quite interesting and unique. The book proposes yet another approach to early Islamic history, which the author builds quite effectively. If for no other reason the book deserves reading because of its sound methodological approach.

- Khaled Keshk.


This book examines the religious policy of al-Ma‘mun known to students of Abbasid history as the Mihna. It is divided into five chapters together with an introduction and indices. The study attempts to answer three major questions: were the Mu‘azzilites supporters of Abbasid rule? Did they have a major role in the institution of the Mihna? What was the main underlying cause of the Mihna? In the introduction, Jadân gives a historical and intellectual account of the controversy around the createdness of the Qur‘an and highlights the conclusions of his study.

Chapter one, "The Mu‘azzilite and the Caliphate," deals with the relationship between the Mu‘azzilite and the caliphate until the reign of al-Mutawakkil. In this
chapter Jad‘ân reviews the history of the Mu'tazila with the Abbasids and whether they were instruments of the caliphs providing ideological support to the rule. He takes the issue from the emergence of the Mu'tazila to point out that this trend did not emanate from internal dispute or controversy, rather it came into existence as a response to theological and cultural challenges that the Muslim community faced during its first two centuries. According to Jad‘ân the Mu'tazila cannot be viewed as a single entity. There were groups who allied with the Abbasids and supported them; but there were also groups who did not. It was among the latter that Jad‘ân locates the historical-authentic Mu'tazili ideology and practice. Jad‘ân asserts that the createdness of the Qur‘an was not a particularly Mu'tazili doctrine in exclusion to other individuals and groups. Therefore, one cannot argue that al-Ma'mûn imposed a Mu'tazili principle. Equally intriguing is his opinion that the Mu'tazilites of the Mihna period did not try to convince al-Ma'mûn to initiate the Mihna nor did they take an active part in it. Rather, it was some controversial personalities, such as al-Bishr al-Marsi, who were falsely believed to be Mu'tazilites, that were responsible for the Mihna.

The second chapter, "The Mihna," is devoted to a historical analysis of the Mihna from its first institution by al-Ma'mûn until the reign of al-Mutawakkil when it was abolished. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the historical details of the event so that the writer could highlight the working elements in the Mihna. Biographical accounts of those involved in the Mihna are provided in the third chapter, "Motivations and Men." It is assumed that the exposition of the main players in the Mihna would provide a vantage point from which the hidden motivation of the Mihna could be uncovered. The underlying causes of the Mihna as Jad‘ân sees them and the arguments of the previous chapters are provided in the fourth chapter, "Justifications for History." According to Jad‘ân, power competition or more precisely the intrinsic inclination of political authority toward gaining monopoly of power was the real underlying motive of the Mihna policy: "it is impossible for the political to submit but to a single logic, logic of state or logic of kingship" (p. 290).

The fifth chapter is a broader exposition on the nature of the "Dialectic of the religious and the political in Islam." Taking the Mihna as an example, Jad‘ân reviews the debate in classical Islamic literature on caliphate and kingship to conclude that the fault line in Islamic tradition was the binary opposition between political and religious authority. "And the truth is that the struggle between 'ahl al-din' and 'ahl al-dawla' in Islam was one of the most significant forms of political struggle. And in the battle of al-Mihna, imposition of the createdness of the Qur‘an and call for obedience were just a justification or a pretext to flame the struggle, not a cause or reason for it." (p. 359)

Jad‘ân’s treatment of the subject is absolutely of scholarly quality, though the reader will have to work hard to get a meaning out of many rhetorically inflated sentences. As one of the renowned scholars of Islamic philosophy he was able to integrate the theological dimension of the issue of the createdness of the Qur‘an into his study. We should point out, however, that his categorization of the Mu'tazila as authentic non-conformist and deviant conformist may help the reputation of the Mu'tazila, but it troubles his argument since it assumes an essence fixed at a given time that must have been the true character of the Mu'tazila. His references to classical sources are impressive. However, his neglect of recent scholarship on the subject is an evident deficiency of his work. This is particularly harmful to his reassertion, that the Mihna was in fact a struggle between the caliphate and the religious establishment represented by ahl al-hadith, not only because he fails to incorporate the conclusions of a trend of scholarship extending from Gibb to M. Hodgson, I. Lapidus, P. Crone-M. Hinds and others into his thesis, but also he rediscovers an explanation which has already been developed. As it appears, the conceptual trend that Jad‘ân seems, knowingly or not, to adhere to still continues to have currency in the Mihna scholarship, T. El-Hibri and J. Nawas being the most recent proponents of it. The disturbing aspect of such an explanation is, however, exactly its rigidity, which does not recognize any merit to anything other than 'logic of state,' content of which is presumed to be universal. No less puzzling is the fact that this 'logic' is always defined in opposition to other social and political forces in the society, to the religious establishment, i.e. ahl al-hadith, in our case. One would appreciate this approach's illuminating explanations of certain historical phenomena, but when it comes to explain the history as a whole, as is the case in many instances, from the Battle of Jamat to Ottoman-Safavid relations, one wonders how monolithic and boring the history would become.

- Hayrettin Yucesoy


Since the publication long ago of Historia de los mozárabes de España (Madrid, 1897-1903) by F.J. Simonet, and Los mozárabes (Madrid, 1947-48) by I. de las Cagigas, no one has undertaken the task of writing a general book devoted to all aspects of the life of Christian people who lived in al-Andalus. These books obviously are out of date. New sources have appeared since then, many of which have been edited already. These sources provide us with a lot of new and interesting data on the life of this community, its social-political organization, its religious practices, its cultural activities, etc. In addition to that, the biased view that characterizes both books, especially that by Simonet, is also outdated. Khuayla's book has appeared to fill the gap, although only for readers of Arabic. Khuayla exploits many of the sources, such as the historical work by Ibn Hayyân, al-Muqātabis (2nd Part: ed. M.‘A. Makki, Beirut, 1973; 3rd Part: ed. M. Antuña, Paris, 1937; 5th Part: ed. P. Chalmerta, F. Corrente, M. Sobh, Madrid, 1979) and the I'llān (ed. A.H. al-Saqā, Cairo, 1980) by al-imām al-Qurtubi, which contains quotations from several Christian
apologetic works. Nevertheless, the previous books devoted to the Mozarabs remain a valuable collection of data and useful information about the life of Christians under Muslim rule. Kuhayla himself has made extensive use of both of them, especially of Simonet's.

In his book, Kuhayla deals with several subjects concerning the social, cultural and political life of the Christian community in al-Andalus. He divides the work into four books, which he then subdivides into chapters. The first book deals with social classes existing both in Hispania before the Arab conquest and in al-Andalus after this event. Kuhayla emphasizes the fact that in al-Andalus all social classes participated in the administration of the state, even non-Arab people -- be they Muslim, Christian or Jewish.

The second and third books focus on the social life of the Christian community in al-Andalus. In the second book the author pays attention to the internal life of the community: its administrative and ecclesiastical internal organization, its social composition and social life, and lastly, its cultural life. The third book concerns itself with the relationship between Mozarabs and the Muslim government. Kuhayla stresses the good relations existing between them, and holds that there were influences in both directions in the social and cultural fields, but in the religious field influence moved only in one direction: Islam influenced the way Mozarabs understood their own religion. The Mozarabs held posts in the state administration, army and politics, and played an important role in the relationships between the Muslim government of al-Andalus and extrapeninsular Christian kingdoms such as Byzantium.

The last book deals with risings of native people, Christians or Muslims, against the Muslim government. The author reports the movement of the martyrs of Cordoba, the revolts of personages such as Ibn Marwan al-Jilliqi or ‘Umar ibn Haṣṣin, as well as the help that some Christians gave the Northern kingdoms against the Muslim government. Kuhayla insists that the reasons for the risings were not religious but social ones.

In the appendices, Kuhayla provides us with several helpful maps, tables and graphs concerning the history of al-Andalus.

Without reaching the degree of partiality which characterised the work by Simonet, throughout the book the author makes evident his wish to show the good situation in which the Christians lived in al-Andalus. Kuhayla insists that the Muslims were not the ones who violated the pact of the dhimma, but rather the Christians.

A formal feature that detracts considerably from the book is the errata we find in the bibliographical references in Latin characters, which have not been checked with due solicitude.

Notwithstanding these small reservations, this book is a valuable and helpful work on the history of the Mozarabs, as well as an important contribution to the general knowledge of this community, joining the more specific studies that have been published recently, such as the book by Millet-Gérard, *Chrétiens mozarabes et culture islamique dans l’Espagne des VIIe-IXe siècles* (Paris, 1989), which studies how the Mozarabs see Islam through their literature in Latin, or the several works by Koningsveld (e.g. "Christian Arabic Literature from Medieval Spain: An Attempt at Periodization" in *Christian Apologetics during the Abbasid Period* (1994), 203-224) and M. Th. Urvoy ("La culture et la littérature arabe des Chrétiens d’al-Andalus," *Bulletin de Littérature Écclésiastique*, 92, 1991, 259-275) focused on Mozarab cultural production written in Arabic.

- Mayte Penelas

Arabic language edition, is a condensed version of Khaled Marrar’s 1996 MA thesis for the Institute of Islamic Archaeology, al-Quds University on the Nabi Musa shrine near Jericho. The paperback book is attractively produced and the English translation is completely fluent. It presents a study of the history and architecture of the Islamic shrine of Moses, first built by the Mamluk Sultan Baybars in 1269, and renovated and enlarged a number of times in the Ottoman period. The shrine was the scene of a major Islamic pilgrimage festival each spring, which the Palestinians have revived in the last couple of years.


- Robert Schick


This book is an exceptionally good critical edition and commentary on an important text on calligraphy written by the Egyptian Mamluk period calligrapher ‘Abd al-Rahmān Ibn al-Ṣā‘īgh (769-845/1367-1441). The text of Ibn al-Ṣā‘īgh’s treatise on scripts and shaping the calligraphic pens discusses the characteristics of the various types of scripts, the types of pens to be used, and how the individual letters should be shaped. The edited text, which forms the core of the book, would take up only a couple dozen printed pages, but in this edition, the text is accompanied by so many photographs and line drawings illustrating specific points that it is spread out
over some 140 pages, followed by another 60 pages of footnotes that form Sa’d’s commentary on the text as well as on the development of the Arabic script and calligraphy in general.

The book begins with a presentation of the surviving manuscripts of Ibn al-Sā’īgh’s treatise, the known details of Ibn al-Sā’īgh’s career, including a presentation of the surviving manuscripts in his hand, and the importance of his treatise.

The production values of the hardback book are high, and for a change the photographs are well produced, making this book not only informative but also exceptionally attractive.

- Robert Schick


This book is about a controversial topic: Saqūṭi Bani Sā’ī. Najāḥ al-Ṭā’ī revives the controversy over the succession to the Prophet by arguing that the Saqūṭi was a revolution planned and executed even before the death of Muhammad. The author asserts that the leaders of the Saqūṭi made every effort to prevent ‘Ali b. Abī Tālib from succeeding the Prophet. In this book, al-Ṭā’ī addresses several indicators that show ‘Ali’s right to succeed Muḥammad. These indicators are: the divine text (al-naṣṣ al-ilāhī); the public oath of allegiance (al-bay’a); the theories of electing a leader (naẓariyyāt intīkhāb al-ra’īs); the tribal custom of electing the leader (al-‘irf al-qabālīf intīkhāb al-ra’īs); and the divine will (al-waṣīyiyyah al-ilāhīyyah).

The first indicator of ‘Ali’s succession to the Prophet, according to al-Ṭā’ī, is al-naṣṣ al-ilāhī, which includes 300 verses in the Qur’ān favoring ‘Ali’s succession to Muḥammad. Also, al-naṣṣ al-ilāhī includes the speech of Muḥammad at Ghadir Khumm where he designated ‘Ali as the commander of the believers after his death. The second indicator is the bay’a. Immediately after the Prophet gave his speech at Ghadir Khumm, the 100,000 Muslims who were present at Ghadir pledged allegiance to ‘Ali, including Abū Bakr and ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. But, the masterminds of the Saqūṭi (Abū Bakr, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn al-Jarrāh, Mu’ādh

The author asserts that the leaders of the Saqīfa did not leave any opportunity for the 100,000 Muslims who heard the Prophet’s speech at Ghadir to renew their allegiance to ‘Ali after the Prophet’s death. The Saqīfa, according to al-Ṭā’ī, was a white revolution (inqilāb ayyād), in which a handful of men assumed authority at a time when the Banū Hāshim were occupied in burying the Prophet. Al-Ṭā’ī argues that usually military or civil revolutions occur at midnight when members of the government are asleep, or when the leader is out of the country, or during the change of power between one leader and another. At the Saqīfa, Abū Bakr claimed power at the very same moment when the Prophet was handing the authority to “his inheritor” ‘Ali.

According to the theories of electing the leader, a caliph must be elected by a popular bay’a from all the Muslims who can be present in the capital city of the Islamic government. Also, the bay’a must occur in a public place known to all adult and sound Muslims. The author argues that the bay’a for ‘Ali at Ghadir was a popular bay’a, whereas the bay’a for Abū Bakr at the Saqīfa was private and secret. Al-Ṭā’ī claims that although ‘Ali was given a popular bay’a at Ghadir, he did not need such a bay’a because he was mentioned as a successor in the divine text. The popular bay’a is necessary only where the divine text does not mention a successor. However, at the Saqīfa the Muslims ignored both the popular bay’a and the divine text.

Al-Ṭā’ī argues that if the Muslims had chosen a successor according to the principles of the ancient Arab tribal custom, ‘Ali would have been the successor. The tribal custom in the Arabian peninsula gave the leadership to a man of noble lineage (nasab), dignity, courage, and generosity. The author claims that only the family of Hashim possessed such values.

Al-Ṭā’ī writes that the Prophet left an oral divine will appointing ‘Ali as his successor. In fact, the Prophet did not leave a written will either because he was too ill to write or because ‘Umar prevented those around the Prophet from providing him with a pen, fearing that he may write a divine will appointing ‘Ali as his successor. But, according to al-Ṭā’ī, the Prophet left an oral divine will when he said: “I am leaving you with the Book of God and the people of my house, you shall not go astray if you hold to them.”

Al-Ṭā’ī concludes that the Saqīfa was planned in advance by the triumvirate Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and Abū ‘Ubayda who withdrew from the Prophet’s house clandestinely to assemble at the Saqīfa and claim power. The Saqīfa was a white revolution, according to al-Ṭā’ī, that prevented the Muslims from freely electing ‘Ali to power. Obviously, the author represents a Shi‘i point of view, which transmits history the way it ought to be. The book, in fact, lacks any counter argument, i.e. Abū Bakr favored by the Prophet to lead the prayer when he was ill, and ‘Ali’s pledge of allegiance to Abū Bakr not once but twice. This book is very informative and can be recommended for anyone studying the Saqīfa and early Islam.

- Hussam S. Timani

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