Bagh-e Babur, Kabul, Afghanistan: The German Archaeological Institute Excavations 2002

by U. Franke-Vogt, K. Bartl and T. Urban

Parks and gardens of the Mughal period (1526-1858) are a fascinating, but difficult, field of research. Descriptions of Persian gardens are repeatedly used due to the lack of authentic detailed descriptions from the Mughal period. Many Mughal gardens in present-day Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan, especially those of the early part of the period (16th/17th century), are destroyed or modernized; and it is only through archaeological fieldwork that these parks can be reconstructed. However, such investigations have started only recently. The layout of Mughal gardens is related to Persian parks of the Early Islamic period. This tradition of Islamic gardens has fore-runners in the Achaemenid and Sasanian periods. In both Persia and Iraq, gardens were created in palatial contexts, such as the well-known examples at Samarra in the 9th century AD and Shiraz of the 10th century AD. In the later Islamic period, Timurid gardens had a great influence on garden design, especially on those built by the first Mughal emperor Babur, who was himself of Timurid descent. Beginning with Babur's Rang Bagh as the earliest example, the development reached its most creative phase under Jahangir, was taken to perfection by Shah Jahan, and declined under Aurangzeb.

Several characteristics deriving from the older Persian traditions define Mughal gardens; these are principles of geometry, symmetry, straight channels and rectilinear pools (i.e., the chahar bagh tradition). The layout and plan of these gardens reflects a symbolism evoking both paradise and political order (fig. 2). Mughal gardens in India also absorbed many local customs; Hindu craftsmen introduced an organic quality of design in their carved columns, lintels and eaves, and carved flowers. Mughal gardens belong to two types: those surrounding a mausoleum, and those developed for leisure. The Mughal mausole-

SEE BABUR, PAGE 2.
BABUR, FROM PAGE 1.

leum set in its garden did not derive from
Iranian precedents; it is more likely to have
evolved from Mongol tradition or even from Hindu mythology.

Bagh-e Babur
Bagh-e Babur is one of the largest public gardens
in Kabul, covering almost 11 ha.
southwest of the old city near the Kabul
River at the western slope of the Koh-e
Sher Darwaza (Fig. 1). There is little docu-
mentation of the numerous alterations over
its nearly 500 years of history. Today, only
a few of its elements can be considered as
original Mughal features with certainty.
Among these are the general lay-out of the
garden characterized by its central axis,
the terraces with (newly created) pools, and
the enclosure wall, which was probably
built during the 17th century. The tomb of
Babur and the mosque built by Shah Jahan
also belong to the Mughal period.

Parapaglio describes four main phases of
alterations identified through written
sources or miniatures (1975/6):
1. Babur’s tomb, its platform and marble
screen, the mosque, the perimeter wall,
water reservoirs, a caravanserai, and a gate-
way with a gilded cupola, all built by
Jahangir and Shah Jahan (first half of the
17th century)
2. the pavilion and the palace, built by
Amir Abdurrahman or Habibullah (end of
the 19th/early 20th century)
3. the small building protecting Babur’s
tomb, swimming pools, water reservoirs,
and three fountains, built by Nadir Shah
(ca. 1930)
4. buildings, including a swimming pool
and greenhouse, dating to the last forty
years.

Following geophysical prospecting
carried out by ICOMOS, the German Ar-
chaeological Institute undertook an ar-
chaeological research program in the Bagh-
e Babur prior to reconstruction by the Aga
Khan Trust for Culture. The purpose was
to rehabilitate a much disturbed area into
an Islamic garden according to its original
Mughal concept. During the first season an
archaeological training project took place.
A topographic map was prepared and three
trenches were opened, on the 10th, 8th and
7th terraces of the garden (Fig. 2).

The octagonal structure on the 10th terrace
Trenches A and B were located immedi-
ately west of the pavilion and reached a
size of 20 x 7 m with three architectural
phases (Fig. 3). The oldest structure was
the octagonal pool or basin (Level 1), lo-
ned almost exactly in the center of the
terrace. Its walls were made by a concrete-like mixture of lime, clay?, and small stones, while the floor is made of burnt bricks. Stratigraphy, shape and construction suggest that this is one of the pools built by Shah Jahan in the first half of the 17th century. The octagonal shape of the basin is known from other Mughal gardens, with well-known examples at Fatehpur Sikri (period of Akbar/1556-1605) and Nishat Bagh in Kashmir built by Jahangir (1605-1627).

Somewhat later the octagonal basin fell out of use and was replaced by a rectangular pool made of burnt bricks. The center of this basin was accentuated by a fountain framed by a mill stone, probably used secondarily. The floor of this structure consists of mortar and slate slabs, but no traces of a water-proofed floor were found. The rectangular basin was probably constructed together with the pavilion at the end of the 19th century.

The channels on the 8th and 7th terraces
Trench C was situated in the center of the 8th terrace, in between the flower beds. Sections of an old water channel were discovered beneath fill and debris (fig. 4), directly in the main axis of the terrace as seen from the pavilion. Trench D revealed another water channel on the 7th terrace, running in an east-west direction. The dating of the channels is rather difficult since finds, mainly pottery and bone, were few and indistinctive and derived from the mixed contexts of the fill layers.

The Future of the garden
The discovery of the old basins and of parts of the old water system not only add completely new structural aspects, they also confirm for the first time that the garden was in fact oriented along a central axis. In the light of the meager written and pictorial sources, only archaeological fieldwork can answer questions concerning the original structure of the garden. The eighteen days of excavations carried out at Bagh-e Babur, accompanied by a training program, provided new information on the axial lay-out
and terracing, its basins and channels. The next excavations will further clarify the structural layout and sequence of terraces, basins, and other structures and provide a better dating of the remains. One of the major tasks for the future is to combine these results with the communal needs for a recreation zone in this heavily damaged area of Kabul.
What about Bilad al-Sham?

The Importance of Umayyad Syria in the Formation of Islamic Theology

by Steven C. Judd

I
n the context of my continuing research on Umayyad influence on early Islamic thought, I have devoted a fair amount of attention to the intellectual life of the Umayyad capital at Damascus. I have, not surprisingly, found ample evidence, particularly in Syrian sources, that Damascus was a vibrant intellectual center during the Umayyad period. What is surprising is the degree to which Syrian, more specifically Umayyad, influence on Islamic thought has been overlooked by modern scholarship on fiqh and kalâm. Our secondary sources are virtually silent about the influence of Umayyad Syria on the development of Islamic thought. The imperial capital appears to be devoid of serious intellectual activity. This is not the norm for seats of empire. Instead, capitals of ancient empires typically became their intellectual, religious, cultural and artistic centers. Why, then, does Umayyad Damascus seem to be an intellectual and theological vacuum?

Modern efforts to understand the development of early Islamic theology have faced a number of stubborn obstacles. The most vexing of these is the paucity of source materials from the first and second centuries of the Islamic era. The sources we are forced to rely upon are typically late, from the 3rd/9th century at the earliest, and predominantly originate from Iraq. The lack of early texts and the nature of the sources we do have produce several consequences for our understanding of early Islamic theology.

First, when purportedly early sources are found, they attract tremendous attention. Think, for example of the attention scholars have devoted to al-Hasan al-Basri's risāla, the kitāb al-irjā', and to a lesser extent, the early Hanafi creeds. While analyses of these texts have contributed greatly to our understanding of the development of Islamic thought, they have also narrowed our focus to the internal workings of specific "documents" whose survival may be attributed to historical accident rather than to the importance of the documents themselves. These sources, fascinating as they are, may not accurately reflect the intellectual environment from which they emerged.

Second, later third century sources are predominantly of Iraqi provenance and tend to minimize the influence of the Umayyad period on the formulation of Islamic doctrines. The latent bias of most 'Abbasid era historical sources, which typically denigrate the Umayyads as mere secular kings (muʿālak), is well-known. Its impact on our understanding of early Islamic theology is less frequently recognized. The image of theology during the Umayyad period projected by available sources is one in which the regime itself did not play an active role in shaping religion. Instead, theology, and concern about religious matters generally, were the realm of opponents to the regime, the piety-minded opposition as Marshall Hodgson labeled them. Opponents of the regime, quietist or otherwise, asserted their moral voice against a theologically silent, but still impious Umayyad dynasty. Consequently, the locus of religious discussion, and of religious authority, moves away from Damascus, the political and economic locus of the empire. Damascus becomes an imperial but not an intellectual capital.

This version of early Islamic theology, at least in part the product of accidents of source preservation and the biases of the Umayyads' vanquishers, merits reconsideration. Indeed, one would expect the Umayyad period to be rich in theological discourse. The empire's geographical growth brought with it an increasingly diverse collection of converts, who would likely have asked equally diverse questions about the faith. The prophet, his Sahaba and even the tabiʿūn were deceased, denying the community religious authorities who had intimate knowledge of early Islamic times and forcing them to engage in the contentious process of finding answers on their own. Surely as the capital of a growing empire, Damascus would have been the place where most of these new legal and theological questions would need to be answered.

Not only was Damascus the imperial capital, but it was also the site of Muslims' first intensive encounters with Christian theologians and with Greek methods of argumentation inherent to kalâm. In Christian sources we find suggestions of lively religious debate between Christians and Muslims, such as the alleged correspondence between 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz and the Byzantine emperor Leo III, or John of Damascus' refutation of Islam. However, we do not find material from their Muslim opponents, or even strong evidence of such dialogues in Muslim sources.

It is essential to remember that
kalâm is inherently dialectical, that kalâm is not merely theology, but the process of arguing about theology. To participate in kalâm one must have an opponent. The Arabic sources do offer some evidence of the existence of theological foes to the Umayyads, including the qadarites, various kharjite groups and at least some of the murtâzîtes, incidentally all later labeled as heretics. By contrast, their Umayyad interlocutors remain largely invisible. The sophistication of the arguments made by Umayyad opponents and the evolution of those arguments suggest that they were engaged in debate with competent, pro-Umayyad scholars who could challenge their views effectively.

Uncovering the theological viewpoints of these pro-Umayyad mutakallîmin, or in some cases even identifying them, remains a difficult task. Unfortunately, it is improbable that a cache of previously undiscovered Umayyad era sources will suddenly materialize to transform our understanding of Umayyad era kalât. This should not deter us from trying to uncover Umayyad views. Instead, in order to see beyond the virtual silence of early sources regarding Umayyad theological activities, we must look more carefully at the sources that are available and pay particular attention to Syrian sources, such as Ibn ‘Asâkir’s Tarîkh madinat Dimashq and al-Mizzî’s Tahâhid al-kamal, even though they are not particularly early.

A close examination of biographies of Syrian scholars from the Umayyad period does reveal their concern with matters of theology and their active participation in kalât. For instance, many of the theological views of ‘Abd al-Rahmân b. ‘Amr al-Awzâ‘î, arguably the most influential scholar of the Umayyad period, can be gleaned from Ibn ‘Asâkir’s 82 page biography. From a close reading of Ibn ‘Asâkir and other sources, we can reconstruct al-Awzâ‘î’s conception of faith (imân), his basis for rejecting ‘Ali’s claims and his position on qadar and other aspects of his theological views.

Ibn ‘Asâkir also offers important insights into the career of Makhûl al-Shâmî, who is mistakenly labeled as a qadari by some modern scholars. Instead, he actively debated a variety of theological topics and taught Hadith to the children of the Umayyad caliphs.

It is also important to look more closely at scholars who are not usually identified as Syrians, but had close connections to Damascus. For instance, the Medinan al-Zuhri, who is often described as the first to write down Hadith (in some sources after being ordered to do so by the caliph Hishâm), spent significant periods of time in Damascus and answered questions from several Umayyad caliphs. In fact, much of Ibn ‘Asâkir’s 93 page biography of al-Zuhri describes his interactions with ‘Abd al-Malik and Hishâm.

Dispensing with the assumption that Bilad al-Shâm was devoid of intellectual, particularly theological, activity during the early Islamic period, may significantly alter our understanding of the development of Islamic theology. The reconstruction of the theological atmosphere of Umayyad Damascus requires us to rely on later, particularly Syrian sources like Ibn ‘Asâkir and to dig deeply into the biographies of scholars like al-Awzâ‘î, Makhûl al-Shâmî and al-Zuhri, along with their many students, who either lived in or frequented the imperial capital. While this may be a leap of faith for some, it is certainly as tenable as the alternative of accepting the proposition that the imperial capital of the Islamic Empire had little or no influence on the formation of the emerging faith.

Franz Rosenthal
1914-2003

With great sadness MEM conveys news of the death of one of its distinguished Honorary Members, Professor Franz Rosenthal, on April 8, 2003, in New Haven, CT. He was 88. Professor Rosenthal, who emigrated from his native Germany just before the Second World War and taught at Dropsie College before moving to Yale University, where he spent the majority of his career, was well-known for his many outstanding publications in the fields of Arabic and Islamic studies and in Aramaic studies, including A History of Muslim Historiography, Knowledge Triumphant, his translation of Ibn Khaldun’s Muqaddima, and dozens of other titles.

Obituary

In Honor of George Makdisi
1917-2002

by Ridwan al-Sayyid

[Translated by Jonathan Brown]

On September 5th 2002, George Makdisi, professor emeritus of Islamic studies at the University of Pennsylvania, passed away at the age of 85. In a career that spanned forty years, his research and teaching blazed a new and uniquely balanced path in the study of Islamic civilization. Makdisi never gained a "popular" following, but his work certainly deserved it, for he was central figure in our holistic re-envisioning of Islamic civilization for our modern context.

George Makdisi was born in the United States during World War I to a family that originally hailed from Northern Lebanon. After graduating from high school he planned to attend law school and eventually hoped to pursue a career in the state department. He dreamt that one day he would return to Lebanon as the American ambassador.

After graduating from college with a degree in legal studies, however, something happened that changed his plans: when World War II erupted, he went to Princeton to study Arabic and Islam and was subsequently recruited by the US Army to work in their translation bureau. When he returned to Princeton, Philip Hitti advised him to go to Paris in order to study under Louis Massignon. Hitti believed that Makdisi’s true interests lay in the study of religious history, and that there was no opportunity in the United States for studying the history of Islam as a faith. As concerns the Islamic world, the American academy was primarily interested in philology, history and emigrant Arabic literature.

Makdisi heeded the advice of his professor. He had learned French at home as well as during the war, and he decided to move to Paris, where he would remain for six years. There he became a valued student and personal friend of Massignon. He also had occasion to meet Henri Laoust, who left an indelible mark on Makdisi’s career.

This effect was borne out in Makdisi’s unusual choice for his dissertation topic: the life of Ibn ‘Aqil al-Hanbali and his work in the fields of hadith, fiqh and tafsir. This choice, however, was not odd because Massignon lacked some familiarity with Hanbalis. In fact he had learned from his work on al-Hallaj that the mystic had been counted among their number and that it was the Hanbali judge of Baghdad and his colleagues who objected to the accusations of heresy mounted against al-Hallaj and the death sentence they carried. This had led Massignon to study the various Sufi factions to which some Hanbalis adhered as well as their doctrine of Divine Love (al-lubb al-illahi). Thus Massignon had superceded the prevailing view of the Hanbalis as a purely literalist legal school by discovering elements of the Hanbali world that were extremely vibrant in the mystical sense, even verging on doctrines of al-Hallaj himself. In this new and almost bizarre understanding of Hanbalism one can even perceive, if I may say so, strikingly leftist sentiments when one views a man like Ibn ‘Aqil (d. 513 / 1119), who became famous for issuing the maxim “where there is social good there lies God’s law.”

Massignon, a devotee of spiritual experience in all its forms (he was raised Catholic, loved Islam deeply, was drawn to the Jesuits and Benedictines and died a Melchite priest, belonging to a denomination within the Catholic Church but using an Eastern rite), startled Makdisi with the wide range of his interests, and his incisive knowledge. The student admired his teacher’s love for exploring the duality of meaning and the beauty inherent in marginal or obscure issues. It may have been Massignon who alerted Makdisi to Ibn ‘Aqil, who was otherwise unknown at the time. Massignon must have known of him from the scholar’s spiritual references to al-Hallaj and because he was accused of being a closet Mu’tazilite.
It seems that Makdisi, a conservative Catholic, was drawn to the Hanbalis for the same reasons as Henri Laoust: the rigid consensus on which the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* was built, the fact that they defended the Arabic caliphate in the face of the *Sufi* movements and sectarian strife, their proximity to the Qur'an and the Prophet's *sunnah*, their having rescued man's relationship with God from the realm of dialectical argumentation, and their understanding of *fiqh* as the forum in which the needs of the people could be addressed.

Although these issues arose directly from discussing Makdisi's dissertation, it seems that Islamic cultural and religious history and the Hanbalis in particular remained the focus of Makdisi's interests until his death, just as they had for professor Laoust. Makdisi began his academic life with Ibn 'Aqil, and at the time of his death he still was occupied with correcting his manuscript for the last volume of the Hanbali scholar's *al-Wādiḥ fi usūl al-fiqh*. Between the 1950's and the 1990's he published many studies on the Hanbalis and the *ahl al-hadīth*, among them a two-volume work by Ibn 'Aqil called *al-Funūn*, which originally consisted of approximately fifty volumes in all. He also published another work by Ibn 'Aqil on *usūl al-fiqh* as well as Ibn Qudama al-Hanbali's *Tahrir al-nazar fi *'ilm al-kalām*.

Makdisi bequeathed his interest to his students, for Merlin Swartz wrote his dissertation on Ibn al-Jawzi and published that scholars' book on preachers and thinkers. Eventually he published his book on hadith concerning God's Attributes (*ahādīth al-ṣifāt*).

After returning from France, Makdisi worked at several American universities. The academic surroundings had changed, for by the early 1960's Arabic and Islamic studies in the United States had undergone profound developments and matured significantly. These changes had taken place in part because of the interests that the American government had come to have in the field. In the wake of the Second World War, when America's interests in the Middle East and the Islamic world took on a new dimension, the United States had found that the poorly developed state of Arabic and Islamic studies insufficient to meet the country's wartime and postwar needs. Specifically, the intense competition of the Cold War necessitated a deeper and more up-to-date understanding of Arabs and Muslims. Also, the novel trends of area studies and cultural-civilizational studies provided a new forum for Arabic and Islamic scholarship. One might add one final factor, namely the migration of many European scholars from a variety of fields to the United States either as refugees or because of attractive employment offers. Among the prominent Arabist arrivals we find H.A.R. Gibb, Joseph Schacht, Gustave von Grunebaum, Fazlur Rahman and Bernard Lewis.

Makdisi worked with Gibb at Harvard, and when that venerable scholar's chair was left open after his death, Makdisi competed for it with the rest of his colleagues. When Muhsin Mahdi was selected to replace Gibb, Makdisi chose to leave Harvard and accept an offer from the University of Pennsylvania, where he worked from the mid 1970's until his early eighties, when he chose to retire after spending thirty years there.

Makdisi did not identify with Gibb, Schacht and von Grunebaum as much as Mahdi did, but it is specifically to Gibb's credit that both Makdisi and Mahdi followed in his footsteps to a great extent. Gibb played a foundational role in bringing new methodologies to bear on Arabic and Islamic studies in both England and America, especially in the field of modern Islam. While Makdisi was interested in the cultural history of Islam's middle period, primarily the Islamic educational system, Mahdi was solely concerned with the Aristotelian philosophical legacy in Islamic thought. Both men were Arab, and their studies thus had important personal dimensions for them. Muhsin Mahdi, who also retired several years ago, saw in the Aristotelian rationalism represented in the thought of al-Farabi and Ibn Rushd the future of Islam and the Arab world. Conversely, Makdisi felt that it was essential to study the authentic core of Islamic intellectual history and not its imported elements. These indigenous aspects of Islamic civilization, Makdisi believed, had the greatest influence on Islam's past and held the most potential for affecting its future. In one sense Makdisi was more occupied with religious life and the importance of religion because he was a practicing Catholic as well as due to his interests in religious life in America. Moreover, unlike Mahdi, he had little connection to the modern Arab world and its lifestyle. As a result he had little interest in the various rightist and leftist revolutions and the political or cultural struggles going on in the Arab world.

Makdisi's biggest impact was not his study of the Hanbalis or Ash'arism, although his contributions to these aspects of religious and cultural history were very important. Rather, it was his study of the educational system in classical Islamic civilization that proved the most influential of his works. He examined the curriculum used in the madrasa system, its composition and how it emerged. He investigated how madrasas appeared, how they were run and their systems of funding. How did literature and the transmission of learning (*taḥarrur al-*ilm) come about, and how was it passed on both geographically and chronologically from generation to generation? What were the jobs and positions occupied by scholar in these societies? Where these functionaries selected for their positions and what did the notion of selection or elitism imply in that context? What was the relationship, or network of relationships,
between these scholars and the state? What explains the massive efflorescence of madrasas and their accompanying pious endowments (awqāf)? Last but not least, what was the place of knowledge, scholars and the madrasa system in the grand venture of Islamic civilization? What role did they play in that civilization’s relations with the West?

George Makdisi was perceptive enough to demonstrate that the Arab-Islamic system of learning, throughout its various dispensations, was based on one model whose different manifestations and intellectual focuses shifted according to geographical location, socio-economic surroundings and ideological leaning. Its basis, however, remained the same: the study of language, religion, and philosophical sciences, with logic and its auxiliary disciplines binding all these subjects together. It was the parochially devout from among the merchants and scholars who first founded the madrasa (Hanbalis, Shafi’is, Shiiites and the Brethren of Purity), but they were unable to perpetuate the system without the intervention of the state (the Nizāmiyya and the system it spawned). Indeed the European university system is drawn directly from its Islamic predecessor, but with different priorities. While the Islamic world had founded its educational program on essentially humanist notions, Europeans developed humanism by caulking it onto the Scholastic educational model that they had borrowed from the Muslims.

Some of Makdisi’s innovative work has been translated into Arabic. Ihsan ‘Abbās translated two long articles on the emergence of the madrasa system written in 1953 and 1955 for the journal of the American University in Beirut: al-Abhāth. In the midst of it all, it was ‘Abbās who vehemently criticized Makdisi’s edition of Ibn ‘Aqîl’s Futūn in the mid 1970s. Later, in the 1990s, King ‘Abd al-‘Azīz University in Jedda undertook the translation of his first book on madrasas. As for Makdisi’s book on humanism in the Islamic educational system as well as his articles on cultural and religious history, they remain out of the reach of Arabophone students to this day.

Just as George Makdisi’s entrance into academia coincided with the beginning of a new stage in Arabic and Islamic studies in America, so does his death symbolize the end of that period, which had already been declining for two decades. For, in the beginning of the 1980s, Arabic and Islamic studies in the United States witnessed the emergence of a strongly critical trend in scholarship, which was also imported from Europe. It called for a reexamination of Islam’s origins, the historical personality of the Prophet, the nature of the Qur’an and Sunna and, in effect, the entirety of received opinion about the course of early Islamic history. This approach rejected the then definitive explanations of these issues, which depended on the study of cultural and civilizational structures, their rise, development and eventual fall. These notions had provided the basis for von Grunebaum, Lewis, Rahman, Gibb and Makdisi’s work. Another characteristic that distinguished this new state of the field is the nearly complete separation between “Middle Eastern Studies” and “Arabic and Islamic Studies,” not only because of differing interests but also as result of varying methodologies. Unlike the more textually driven tradition of Arabic and Islamic studies, “Middle Eastern Studies” incorporated social science approaches, anthropology and sought to interpret phenomena materially, often through the use of political and economic research. These new trends have been thrust to the forefront, as the tragic events of September 11th pushed the United States to a deeper involvement in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. The field has taken on strong domestic implications, for in this country there has long been a struggle over the image of Islam and Arabs. Obviously the two are totally different constructs, but the American populace, specifically the right wing evangelical movement, had not yet grasped this distinction. Martin Kramer wrote a booklet several months ago in which he accused American scholars of Islam and the Middle East of harboring pro-Arab and pro-Islam biases and, as a result, of having failed to sufficiently diagnose the dangers presented by Islamic fundamentalism. Kramer also claimed that most of these scholars had their chairs endowed or supported by various governments. In his eyes, these scholars were in many ways responsible for the events that transpired in New York and Washington.

The tragedy of September 11th and the events that followed have spurred a wide variety of interests in Arabs and the Islamic world. In the shadow of Makdisi’s death and at the close of his semial career, it is immediately clear that, at the dawn of the twenty first century and in the wake of profound global change, the study of Arabs and Muslims, their past, present and future, desperately needs scholars of his caliber.
# ANNUAL MEETINGS

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<td>MESA Secretariat</td>
<td>(520)-621-5850</td>
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<td>(2003 Meeting)</td>
<td>Anchorage, AK</td>
<td>University of Arizona</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mesa@ccit.arizona.edu">mesa@ccit.arizona.edu</a></td>
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<td>(2003 Meeting)</td>
<td>Kalamazoo, MI</td>
<td>Western Michigan Univ.</td>
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<td>Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5432</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar for Arabian Studies</td>
<td>July 17-19, 2003</td>
<td>Seminar for Arabian Studies</td>
<td>Tel.: 44-207-323-8843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2003 Meeting)</td>
<td>London, UK</td>
<td>c/o Venetia Porter</td>
<td>Fax: 44-207-323-8561</td>
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<td>Dept. of Oriental Antiquities</td>
<td><a href="mailto:seminararab@hotmail.com">seminararab@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>The British Museum</td>
<td><a href="http://www.arabianseminar.org.uk">www.arabianseminar.org.uk</a></td>
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<td>College Art Association</td>
<td>Feb. 18-21, 2004</td>
<td>Suzanne Schanzer</td>
<td>(212)-691-1051 ext13</td>
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<td>New York, NY 10001</td>
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<td>M. O'Doherty/J. Opmeer</td>
<td>Tél.: +44 (113) 233-3614</td>
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<td>International Medieval Congress</td>
<td>July 14-17, 2003</td>
<td>IMC, Parkinson 1.03</td>
<td>Fax: +44 (113) 233-3616</td>
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<td>(2003 Meeting)</td>
<td>Leeds, UK</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>ARAM</td>
<td>Tel.: 44-1865-514041</td>
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<td>(2003 Meeting)</td>
<td>Oxford, UK</td>
<td>The Oriental Institute</td>
<td>Fax: 44-1865-516824</td>
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<td>&quot;Alcohol &amp; Oils&quot;</td>
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<td>Oxford University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aram@ermine.ox.ac.uk">aram@ermine.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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<td>Atlanta, GA</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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**NEWS OF MEM**

**New MEM Secretary-Treasurer**

At its annual business meeting, held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Middle East Studies Association in Washington D.C. last November, MEM’s membership elected Professor Kate Lang of the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, as next Secretary-Treasurer. (As most of you know, the offices of Secretary and Treasurer will be split in the near future, and Professor Lang will then become Secretary.)

Professor Lang received her Ph.D. in Early Islamic History from the University of Chicago in 1997. She is currently Assistant Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where she teaches Middle East History, Historiography and Women’s History. Her research focuses on Arabic historiography.

**MEMber News**

**Shahzad Bashir** (Carleton College) published *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions: The Nurbačshiyya between Medieval and Modern Islam* (South Carolina, 2003).


**Th. Emil Homerin** (University of Rochester) published *Unyar Ibn al-Fārid: Sufi Verse, Saintly Life* (Paulist Press, 2001), which includes translations of the poet’s Poem of the Sufi Way and the Wine Ode. A second revised edition of Homerin’s *From Arab Poet to Muslim Saint: Ibn al-Fārid, His Verse, and His Shrine* was published by the American University in Cairo Press in 2001. More recently, Homerin was the guest editor of *Mamluk Studies Review* VII (2003), a volume dedicated to Arabic Literature in Mamluk Domains (1250-1517). His essay in this volume is entitled “Living Love: The Mystical Writings of ‘Ā’ishah al-Bā‘uniyah (d. 922/
Kate Lang (University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire) received a $100,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities Schools for a New Millennium Program to assist teachers in implementing history and technology projects across the curriculum at Augusta Middle/High School in Augusta, Wisconsin.

Neil MacKenzie is continuing his research on historical and archaeological aspects of the ‘Ajlan area under the Ayyubids and Mamluks. He is an ACOR/CAORC fellow (Sept. 2002–April 2003).


Josef W. Meri is Visiting Research Fellow in Medieval Islamic History & Civilization at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London. He is serving as General Editor of Routledge’s Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia. Meri has finished writing the entry “Hagiography, Islamic” for the Dictionary of the Middle Ages supplement and has also recently completed an annotated English translation of ‘Ali b. Abi Bakr al-Harawi’s Kitāb al-‘Ishārat ilā Ma‘rifat al-Ziyārat (A Lonely Wayfarer’s Guide to Pilgrimage). He is presently working on a monograph on Sacred Landscapes of the Medieval Islamic World (Muslim, Jewish, and Christian).


Maria Tolmacheva (Washington State University) has been awarded a sabbatical leave for spring 2003. In February, 2003, she will participate in the international conference, “Middle Eastern Islam from Afar: South/Southeast Asian and African Perspectives,” convened at Bellagio, Italy. Her travel plans include visits to China, Lebanon, Syria, Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

William Tucker (University of Arkansas) recently completed an article titled, “Bayan b. Sam’an and the Bayaniyya” which will be published in Shi‘ism, ed. Etan Kohlberg (Ashgate/Variorum, forthcoming).

Hayrettin Yucesoys (Washington University in St. Louis) is working on, “A Supra-Lunar Look at Historiography: The Case of Islamic Historiography.” This article on the solar and lunar eclipses in Arabic historiography will serve historical astronomy by providing examples from Arabic historiography, but more importantly it will contribute to the study of medieval Islamic historiography.

The Mamluk Bibliography Project

The Middle East Documentation Center at The University of Chicago is pleased to announce that the entirely rebuilt Mamluk Bibliography Project is now online at http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/su/mideast/mamluk

The Mamluk Bibliography is an on-going project (begun in 1986) of the Middle East Documentation Center at the University of Chicago, the aim of which is to compile two comprehensive bibliographies: one records published primary sources relating to the Mamluk sultanate of Egypt and Syria, and the other records secondary research and discussion germane to the subject. The secondary source bibliography is greatly expanded since its last update, and the primary source bibliography has never before been available. Both can be searched and browsed using new software created specifically for this project. Between them, the two databases contain more than 10,000 entries.

It is hoped that the comprehensive nature of these bibliographies will make more readily apparent the field’s advances and its deficiencies. Entries in the bibliographies may fall outside the chronological and geographical limits traditionally used to demarcate the sultanate if their content has some relevance to the period. Two major examples of this are Ibn al-ʿArabi and Ibn al-Farid, both of whom died before the Mamluk period but influenced it greatly. Because no attempt has been made to evaluate the scholarly value of the material included here, the bibliography may provide some insight into various perceptions of the subject as well.

The bibliographies have been tested, but there are certainly bugs yet to be found. Despite this, the bibliographies are being made available to the public, and it is hoped that users will report any issues that arise.

This is not a final product, and never will be. New entries are added to the database literally every day (though the online version will be updated quarterly). The primary source bibliography, in particular, is still in its infancy. Its several thousand records are only a fraction of the tens of thousands that exist. It is being made available at this point in its development because it has reached a size at which it may be helpful to users.

For a full explanation of the project and its history, see About the Mamluk Bibliography Project, which is linked from the above page.
Conferences and Symposia

The Ninth International Workshop of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva
"The Dissemination of Islam within and beyond Muslim Societies
- Theoretical, Historical, Anthropological and Comparative Perspectives"
June 10-11, 2003

The conference will be the concluding event of a semester-long workshop on the dissemination of Islam and Islamic ideologies in diverse historical and contemporary settings. Some of the papers that will be presented are:

Brannon Wheeler (Univ. of Washington), "Polemics or Conversion? Biblical Israel and the Jews of Medina in Muslim Qur'an Exegesis;" Michael Chamberlain (Univ. of Wisconsin), "Ibn Taymiyya on da'wa and Legitimate Rule;" Rainer Brunner (Orientalisches Seminar, Freiburg), "The Shi'iization of Iran under the Safavids as reflected in Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi's 'Bihâr al-Anwâr;';" Daphna Ephrat (Open Univ., Israel), "From an Elite of Mystical Wayfarers to Local Communities: the Dissemination of Sufism in Late Medieval Palestine;" Anke von Kuegelgen (Univ. of Bern), "The Role of the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya in Disseminating Islam within Central Asia in the 18th and 19th Centuries;"

38th International Congress on Medieval Studies
Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 8-11, 2003

The 38th International Congress on Medieval Studies will be held on the campus of Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan from 8-11 May, 2003. Some of the papers which will be presented are:

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 copy of books in Middle Eastern languages are usually not 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.


This two-volume work is a new edition of the fundamentally important history of Jerusalem and Hebron by the historian Mujir al-Din (died 1520). The two volumes are the published versions of two MA theses at al-Najah National University in Nablus by 'Adnân Yûnis 'Abd al-Majid Abû Tabânâh in 1999 (volume 1) and Mahmûd 'Awadah Ka'bânî in 1997 (volume 2). The division between the two volumes follows that of the standard 1973 edition (Amman: Maktabat al-Muhtasib). The two volumes have introductions by the two editors as well as copious footnotes identifying the people mentioned in the text. The volumes are attractively printed and use (mostly successfully) red ink to set off section headings and names of people whose biographies follow.

The editing work is adequate and corrects a few typographical errors found in the 1973 edition, but this new edition suffers from the major flaws of not having an index, and of lacking in the margins running indications of the pagination of the 1973 edition. Thus one can not use the index produced by Ishaq Mûsâ al-Husaynî and Hasan al-Sîlwâdî, Faha'isî Kitâb at-Uns al-Jalîlih bi-Tarih al-Quds wa-al-Khalîl li-Mujir al-Dîn al-Hanbâlî (Jerusalem: Dâr al-Tîfl al-'Arabi, 1988), nor find references given in secondary literature without much bother.

The editors note manuscript variants of individual words in their footnotes, but inexplicably fail utterly to mark the many places where their text varies widely from the 1973 edition. There are dozens of places where paragraphs and even whole pages found in the 1973 text are missing from their edition, and vice versa. Those large-scale discrepancies between the two editions cry out for explanation and indicate that this new edition does not supersede the 1973 edition. Further critical work on the manuscripts is clearly needed before a definitive edition can be produced.

- Robert Schick

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Karin Bartz, German Archaeological Institute, Orient Department, Podbielskiallee 69-72, 14195 Berlin, Germany.
Email: karbart@zedat.fu-berlin.de.

Jonathan Brown, Graduate Student, Department of Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations, The University of Chicago, 1155 E. 58th St., Chicago, IL 60637, USA.

Ute Franke-Vogt, German Archaeological Institute, Eurasia-Section, Im Dol 2-6, 14195 Berlin, Germany.
Email: Ute.Franke-Vogt@t-online.de.

Steven C. Judd, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Southern Connecticut State University, 501 Crescent St., New Haven, CT 06515-1355, USA.
Email: judd@scsu.sc.stateu.edu.

Ridwan al-Sayyid, Professor, The Lebanese University, Dâr al-Ijthâd, P.O Box 5581/14, Sâqiyyat al-Janîzir, Binâyat Burj al-Kârlûn, 2nd floor, Beirut, Lebanon.
Fax: 011-961-1-785-111.

Robert Schick, Assistant Professor, The Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies, 5-8-660/1/B/1 Chirag Ali Lane (Box 153) Station Road, Hyderabad, 500 001 AP, India. Email: schickrobert@hotmail.com.

Thomas Urban, Poschinger Str. 23, 12157 Berlin, Germany.
Email: th.urban@snafu.de.

GRAPhICS CREDITS

Page 2, Fig.1: Diagrams by the authors.
Pages 3 and 4, Figs. 2, 3, and 4: Photographs by the authors.
Middle East Medievalists (MEM) is a non-profit association of scholars interested in the study of any aspect of the history and civilization of the Middle East in the period 500-1500 C.E. Regular membership in MEM is open to persons of all nationalities. Regular members receive two issues of *Al-‘Usur al-Wusta*, the Bulletin of Middle East Medievalists, annually (April and October). Institutions (libraries, etc.) may join at the same rate as individuals.

You may join MEM by sending the membership application form at the right (or a photocopy thereof), along with the appropriate dues payment, to Katherine Lang, Secretary-Treasurer of MEM, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004, U.S.A.

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**Middle East Medievalists**

**Membership Application Form**

**Name**

**Mailing Address**

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**SCHEDULE OF DUES**

For addresses in North America (Canada, Mexico, U.S.A.) [check one]:

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Send completed application form, with your check (in US Dollars or British Pounds only) payable to "Middle East Medievalists" to: Katherine Lang, Secretary-Treasurer of MEM, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004, U.S.A.