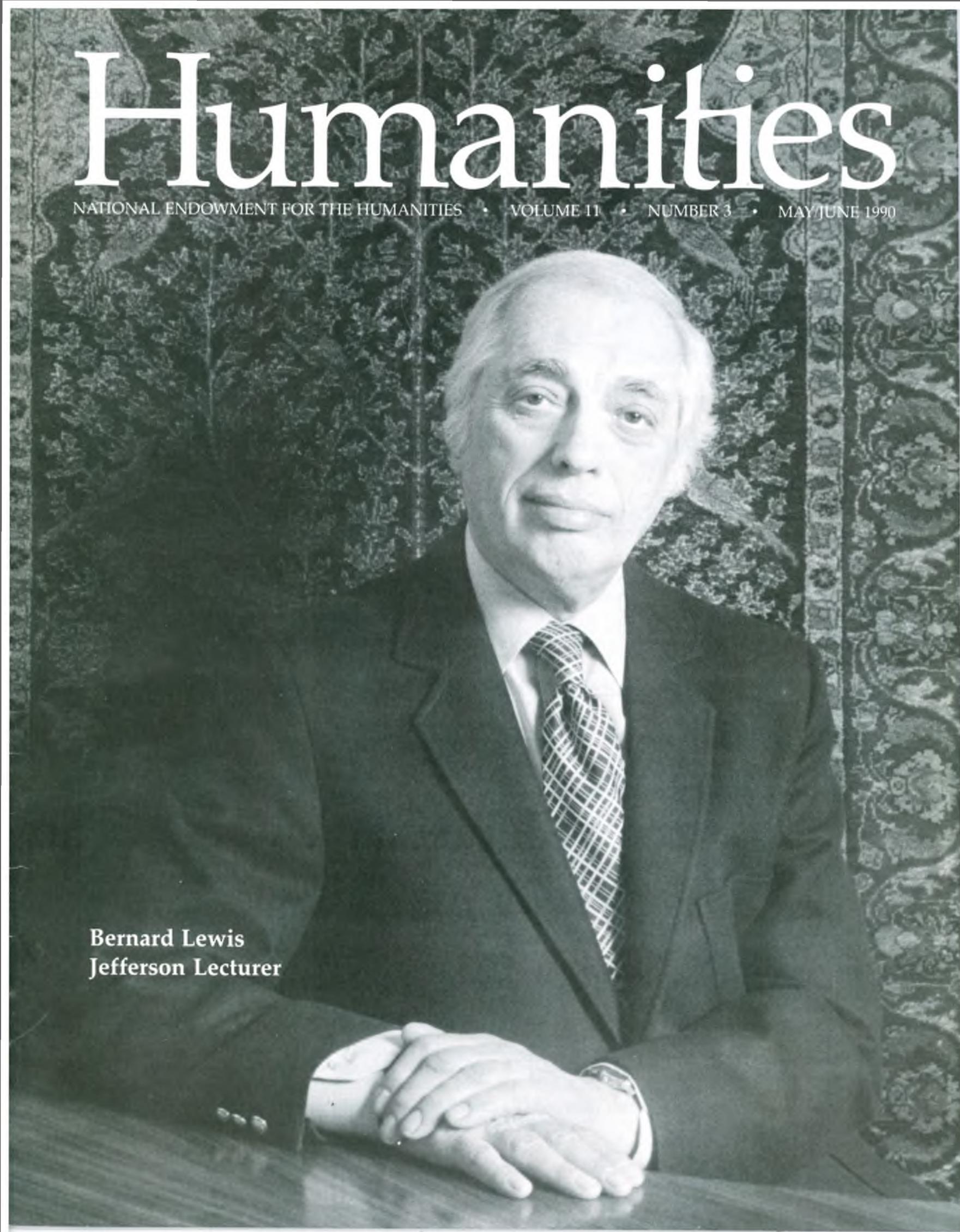
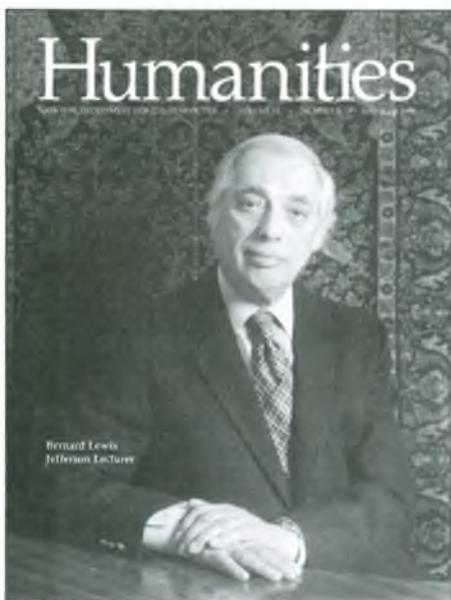


Humanities

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Bernard Lewis
Jefferson Lecturer





Bernard Lewis, 1990 Jefferson Lecturer.
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Humanities

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Editor's Note

Bernard Lewis

"The essential feature of scholarly research is, or should be, that it is not directed to predetermined results," says Bernard Lewis. "The historian does not set out to prove a thesis, or select material to establish some point, but follows the evidence where it leads."

For the past five decades Lewis has been following the evidence in a particularly challenging part of the world as a teacher and writer in the field of Near Eastern studies. For Lewis and others, the dilemma of the Westerner looking at non-Western culture is a recurring one. "If we don't study and teach other cultures we are called arrogant and ethnocentric," Lewis said recently, "and if we do we are accused of spoliation and exploitation." A professor at the University of London and then at Princeton, Lewis has been chosen as this year's Jefferson Lecturer in the Humanities, which is the highest award the federal government bestows for achievement in the humanities.

"His distinguished books have helped us to understand the culture and history of an important part of the modern world," said Endowment Chairman Lynne V. Cheney in announcing Lewis's selection as the nineteenth Jefferson Lecturer. "The Endowment is proud to recognize his many achievements as a writer, scholar, translator, and teacher." In this issue of *Humanities*, she talks with Lewis about Islam and about his particular interest, religion and the state.

Born in London in 1916, Lewis earned his bachelor's and doctoral degrees from the University of London and a *diplôme des études sémitiques* from the University of Paris. During World War II he served in the Royal Armored Corps and was later attached to a department of the British Foreign Office. After the war, Lewis returned to the University of London, where he was to spend the next twenty-five years teaching history in the School of Oriental and African Studies. In 1974, he came to the United States and became the Cleveland E. Dodge Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. He is now professor emeritus.

During his long teaching career, Lewis has written and edited more than twenty books on the Middle East, among them *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (1961), *The Middle East and the West* (1964), *History—Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (1975), *The Political Language of Islam* (1988), and the soon-to-be published *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: An Historical Enquiry*. The leading French historian Robert Mantran has this to say about his body of work: "How could one resist being attracted to the books of an author who opens for you the doors of an unknown or misunderstood universe, who leads you within to its innermost domains: religion, ways of thinking, conceptions of power, culture—an author who upsets notions too often fixed, fallacious or partisan. . . ."

His books have been translated into nineteen languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, Japanese, and Indonesian. His own knowledge of languages is prodigious, though he prefers to describe himself as a "student" of some of them. The list includes Latin, Greek, classical and modern Hebrew, classical and modern Arabic, classical Persian, Ottoman and modern Turkish, along with French, Italian, German, Danish, and what he calls "limited" Swedish and Russian.

Lewis holds five honorary degrees. He is a member of the American Philosophical Society, the British Academy, and the Turkish Historical Society, and a corresponding member of the Institut d'Égypte. In 1973 he received the Citation of Honor from the Turkish Ministry of Culture.

—Mary Lou Beatty

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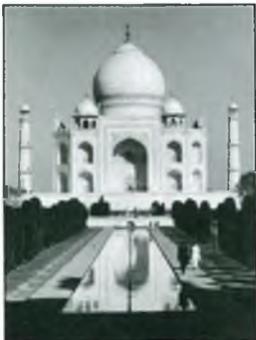
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Photo by Teresa Zahala

A Conversation with... Bernard Lewis

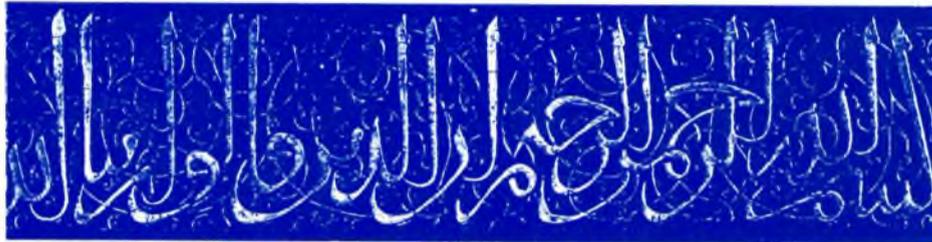


Photo by Robert P. Matthews

Islam was the topic when NEH Chairman Lynne V. Cheney met recently with the 1990 Jefferson Lecturer in the Humanities, Bernard Lewis. Professor Lewis is Cleveland E. Dodge Professor Emeritus of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University and has written more than twenty books in the field, among them *The Arabs in History*, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*, *The Assassins*, *The Middle East and the West*, *The Political Language of Islam*, and *History—Remembered, Recovered, Invented*. He is also the *Andrew D. White* professor at large at Cornell University.

Lynne V. Cheney: You wrote once that Christendom and Islam are sister civilizations. But they seem so different.

Bernard Lewis: They are different, but they're also the same.

Cheney: Wherein does the sameness lie?

Lewis: Let's start with Islam. To the west of it is Christendom and to the east of it is Buddhism and Hinduism and Confucianism. The really profound cultural division is east of Islam, not west of Islam. The difference between the Islamic world and the civilizations of Asia proper is much greater, much more profound, than the difference between Islam and Christendom. That fact has been hidden from us by the events of the last hundred or two hundred years. During the last couple of centuries the West has been dominant in the world, and the Islamic lands, as well as much of Asia and Africa, have all undergone the same experience of Western domination or influence, followed by their own responses and reactions to the West. It is not only we who tend to lump all non-Western civilizations together; they even lump themselves together. But historically they're very different. In the Middle Ages a Christian priest and a Muslim 'alim could argue. They could argue about religion and they could carry on a meaningful disagreement.

Cheney: And they would know some of the same characters to talk about.

Lewis: They would know some of the same characters from their scriptures and histories; they would have the same basic ideas about monotheism, revelation, and scripture. It might not be the same scripture, but they shared this idea of holy books revealed by God, of prophets inspired and sent by God, and they shared a good deal of common heritage, particularly the Judaic and Hellenistic elements. They both knew Aristotle and they both knew Bible stories. Christians and Muslims never showed their affinity more clearly than when they called each other infidels.

By this, both understood they meant the same thing. It would have been impossible for either a Muslim or a Christian divine to carry on the same sort of discussion with a Hindu priest or a Buddhist priest. Their approach to religion, to divinity, to life in this world, is so totally different that there wouldn't have been any basis for communication.

Cheney: That's the sense in which they are sister civilizations. I know this is a terrible question to ask someone who's a scholar and used to subtleties, but what is the single most profound difference?

Lewis: Well, I could give you several different answers. The answer I shall

give you is related to my own particular field of interest, and that is religion and the state.

I think the greatest single difference is that in Christianity, from the very beginning, there is this idea that church and state are different things. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's." There have been different opinions on what that verse really means, but it has generally been understood to mean that there are certain things in life which belong to religion and there are certain other things in life which are the concern of political authority. There have always been two, God and Caesar, *regnum* and *sacerdotium*, church and state. Sometimes they've been joined; sometimes they've been separated; sometimes they've been in conflict and sometimes they've been in harmony; sometimes one has prevailed and sometimes the other. But there have always been two. Whereas in Islam there have not been two, only one. Church and state are one and the same. There is no separate organization which is called the church. The idea that religion is concerned only with part of life and that other authorities deal with other parts is very alien to Islam.

I think this difference goes back to the origins. You know, Moses was not permitted to enter the Promised Land. He had a look, but he died outside. And Jesus was crucified. Muhammad, on the other hand, was what in modern language you would call a success story.

Cheney: That's interesting. Christianity wasn't in the beginning.

Lewis: No. Christianity suffered as a religion of the oppressed for a couple of centuries before it was able to take over the state. And by that time its character had been formed—this basic idea, the Christian idea of being tried and tested by adversity.

Cheney: But that must exist in Islam.

Lewis: For individuals, yes, but not for the community as a whole. That's Jewish and it's Christian, but in Islam there is a sort of "triumphalism" which is present from the beginning with the victories and achievements of the Prophet.

Cheney: But he was tried and tested, wasn't he?

Lewis: Yes, but he triumphed in his

lifetime. He became a head of state. He promulgated laws, he dispensed justice, he collected taxes, he made war, he made peace. He did all the things that a head of state does.

The late Ayatollah Khomeini summed it up in a phrase: "Islam is politics or it is nothing."

Cheney: Which is very revealing.

Lewis: I think that is revealing. There have been people in the Islamic world—in modern times, not earlier—who tried to achieve some sort of separation. But the idea of separation is alien to Islam. Secularism as such is under attack by all the fundamentalist and revivalist movements at the present time.

Cheney: When you describe to a lay person what it is you do and what you study and what you teach, what words do you use?

Lewis: Well, that depends which lay person and in what context. The term that's used at Princeton is Near Eastern studies. The department is called the Near Eastern Studies Department, and we are all professors of Near Eastern studies. That arose historically from the fact that it was originally a department of Oriental studies, in principle concerned with everything from the Aegean to the Pacific. In London, where I taught before I came to Princeton, the subject was called Near and Middle Eastern studies. All these terms are very recent. The term "Middle East" was invented in 1902 by the American naval historian, Alfred Thayer Mahan.

Cheney: Is that right?

Lewis: In an article which he published in a London magazine, *The National Review*. Talking about the importance of the Persian Gulf in naval and imperial strategy, he suggested a new term, Middle East, to designate this area. Near East is only a little older. It dates back to the end of the nineteenth century and was used principally by diplomatists.

It's always struck me as extraordinary that we all use such modern terms, such very colorless terms.

Cheney: And possibly ethnocentric. I'm not sure.

Lewis: Well, yes, to describe the region of the most ancient civilizations in the whole world. It's ethnocentric—you're right—or Eurocentric, but the odd thing is they continue to use it, even now, in the Middle East.

Cheney: How curious.

Lewis: Oh, yes. They also use it in Russia, for example, for which it's not the Middle East; it's the near south. And they use it in India and in China. Most extraordinary of all, they use it in the Middle East, and I suppose the reason is it's so difficult to find any other name for it.

Other names which are used are Islamic and Ottoman and Arab, all of which have the advantage of having more color and content than Near or Middle East, which are hardly even geographical expressions. On the other hand, none of them is quite adequate for the whole region. If we say the Arab world, there are Persians and Turks who are not Arab. And if we say Islamic, there are Jews and Christians who are not Muslims. Neither term is fully comprehensive.



Courtesy of Bernard Lewis

Bernard Lewis, about age 8, with his mother; and Lewis at the University of London shortly after World War II.





Courtesy of Bernard Lewis

Lewis, second from left, with Turkish Foreign Minister Fuad Koprulu at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Right: Lewis, in a desert tent, with Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, mid-1970s.



Cheney: So you would never say to someone that you are an Islamicist.

Lewis: Yes, I would, because my particular interest has been Islam, the history of Islam and the development of Islamic culture. I have been concerned primarily with Islamic civilization in the Middle East. There one needs to clarify. Islam originated in the Middle East, but there are now far more Muslims outside the Middle East than in the Middle East. Countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia now have the greater part of the Islamic world, and Southeast Asia alone has far more Muslims than the entire Middle Eastern and North African area.

Nevertheless, the Middle East is the birthplace and homeland of Islam—the site of memories that are the common property of Muslims everywhere, that define their self-perception, their identity. Every Muslim of any education in India or Southeast Asia knows the major events of medieval Islamic history in

the Middle East, but only specialists among the Middle Easterners would know much about Indian or Southeast Asian history.

Cheney: At this imaginary gathering you're at where someone has asked you to describe what you are and what you study, once you've given them an idea of your area of concentration, how do people react? I remember when I used to tell people I taught in the English department, that they would instantly become very wary of how they spoke, as though somehow grammar were my particular expertise.

Lewis: Well, I find people who are not part of the academic world react in one of two ways, generally speaking. They either think in terms of remote antiquity and expect me to know all about pharaohs and Hittites, which I don't; or else they go to the opposite extreme and think in terms of today's politics and expect me to be an expert on terrorism, oil, and conflict. I know a little more about these than I do about pharaohs and Hittites, but that isn't really what I'm interested in.

Cheney: How did you become interested in what you study?

Lewis: It was a series of accidents. I took my B.A. in history. To this day, if you ask me what I am by profession—my discipline—I would say a

historian. I'm a historian of a particular region, a particular period, but my basic discipline is history. I was going to be a lawyer and I took my B.A. and was supposed to be studying law. This was in London. I did well in my B.A., so I was awarded a graduate studentship on condition, of course, that I did graduate studies. Then two things happened. One was that in my legal studies, the next thing I had to take up was real property and conveyancing.

Cheney: That sounds awful.

Lewis: That was the moment of truth. And in my other studies, I was awarded another fellowship, a traveling fellowship which enabled me to go to the Middle East for the first time. I'd never been there and I had no family or personal connections with the area at all. I had just read about it. I had started to learn a couple of Middle Eastern languages, but I had never heard them spoken except, rarely, by fellow students. So I went off to Egypt—my first Middle Eastern country—by ship from Marseilles, a five-day journey.

Cheney: What year was this?

Lewis: That would have been 1938. There was an English Arabist in the nineteenth century called Edward Lane, who did a famous Arabic-English dictionary, and he describes in one of his letters his first visit to

Egypt as an Arabist. "I felt," he said, "as we approached the harbor, like an Eastern bridegroom about to unveil his bride and see her for the first time." I felt rather that way myself.

I had spent some time learning Arabic, but I learned only classical Arabic. I didn't know any modern Arabic at all, and this was about as useful as ciceronian Latin would be talking to a waiter in Naples.

Cheney: Or Old English in trying to ask for the W.C. in London.

Lewis: Yes, quite so. Well, I spent six or seven months in the region, and then I went back to London and was appointed assistant lecturer, which is the lowest form of human life in British universities, at the princely salary of 250 pounds a year. I taught for a bit, and then came the war and I was otherwise occupied for a number of years. I returned towards the end of 1945, and embarked on my academic career as a historian of the Middle East, from which I've never deviated.

Cheney: The humanities have been a fairly contentious area in the last

decade or so, perhaps always. Has it grown more contentious in Near Eastern studies, or are you somewhat exempt from the cultural wars?

Lewis: We're exempt in some respects because we are considered "useful." I hope you can hear the distaste with which I utter that word.

Cheney: Useful in that "You might be able to enlighten us about something we need to know for tomorrow."

Lewis: That's right. We do have a partial exemption, but the price of that exemption is very high in that we are expected to be, how shall I put it, political prognosticators. Of course, it's a very politicized field, as I don't need to tell you.

Cheney: One of the things that occurs to me when I am in the Middle East or talking to people who've been there has to do with the status of women, and people who are much more familiar with the Qur'an than I am explain to me that the prophet suggested that women were

the equal of men, were to be thought of that way. Is that simply wrong?

Lewis: Well, you know that theologians have a great capacity for interpreting texts, and there are texts which you can interpret in various ways. Women are the equal of men spiritually. Women have souls as men have souls; women have the choice of obedience or disobedience to God's commandments and therefore of reward or punishment in the hereafter. On the legal side—and the Qur'an also contains the basic precepts of what was afterwards developed into the code of Islamic law—women have fewer rights than men. A man is allowed to marry up to four wives and have as many concubines as he can afford.



Conference at the Castel Gandolfo, the summer residence of the Pope, August 1989. Lewis is third from right. Insert: Lewis with Pope John Paul II.



L'Osservatore Romano Citiz' del Vaticano

Lewis, fourth from right, in Moscow in the early 1980s, as a guest of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.



Cheney: That's not a good start for equality, is it?

Lewis: Nowadays there are interpretations. For example, the Qur'an says that you can marry up to four wives provided that you deal equally with them. Now, some modern interpreters say since it is obviously impossible to deal equally with four women, that means you can only have one, to which the fundamentalists say, "God doesn't talk in riddles. If God meant one, God would say one. If God says four, God means four." Which, I must say, seems to be rather reasonable.

Cheney: You once observed that for the most part Islamic women have had their cause espoused by autocratic rulers.

Lewis: In the modern period, yes, that is so.

Cheney: The Shah, for example.

Lewis: Yes, and it is in a sense paradoxical, but only paradoxical in a Western context. We are accustomed to regarding women's rights as a liberal cause—as the word "liberal" is used nowadays. Women's rights as understood in the West—that is to say emancipation, civil rights, monogamy, the right to initiate divorce proceedings—don't exist in the Islamic lands. In Islamic law only a man can divorce his wife; a woman can't—she can only ask a judge to order her husband to give her a divorce. On the other hand, Muslim law gave women property rights which they did not get in the Western world until very recently. Their

stature was, however, in most respects inferior, and this inferiority was seen, by jurists and theologians, as part of God's law for humankind. To change it is a flagrant violation of the customs of more than fourteen hundred years, and people resent it, so that it requires a really ruthless modernizing autocrat to change these things. The major reforms in favor of women were carried out by rulers like Ataturk in Turkey, who said in one of his speeches, "We cannot hope to keep up with the modern world if we deprive ourselves of the services of half the nation."

Cheney: That's nicely put.

Lewis: The Shah abolished polygamy in Iran; the Republic has restored it.

Cheney: You've talked about Ataturk before when you and I have had conversations. Are there three or four figures in the Islamic world that would in particular enrich our understanding of this part of the world and its history? Are there certain great figures that might be the beginning of wisdom for us?

Lewis: Well, Ataturk is obviously one. He brought tremendous changes in Turkey. He's now somewhat under attack among the more religious people who resent his secularism. He went very far indeed. He

repealed the Holy Law and disestablished Islam, introducing modern legal codes and the separation of religion and state. To a profoundly religious people this was very shocking, but it has held. Even now, when fundamentalism has become quite a force in Turkey as well as elsewhere, the secularist reforms are not so far in question. They still have a civil code of marriage, divorce, and inheritance, independent of Muslim law. Ataturk would certainly be one on my short list.

I don't know what the future will say about the late Shah, but his father would certainly rate a place as a major reformer.

There have been a number of very interesting figures in Egypt during the last two hundred years, reformers, writers, and thinkers. Unfortunately, not very much of this material has been translated. It is not readily available. In earlier times there are many truly great and memorable figures. One of my favorites is Ghāzālī, who died in 1111. He was a theologian, a philosopher, a moralist, who wrote a number of profoundly interesting books, including a kind of spiritual biography. He was a professor in Baghdad. In 1095, he resigned his chair and went on pilgrimage. According to his autobiography, he decided, after examin-



Courtesy of Bernard Lewis

ing his work and his motives, that both were flawed—his teaching, “because it was concerned with knowledge that was unimportant and worthless”; his motives, because his true aim was “an influential position and widespread recognition.” In resigning, he also expressed a judgment frequently heard in classical Islamic times—that to receive payment from the public treasury for teaching or religious duties is demeaning, and involves a measure of complicity in the sins of rulers. And being a man of principle, having come to this conclusion, he resigned.

Cheney: And then how did he live?

Lewis: He seems to have had some private means and could rely for the education of his children on educational trusts. Having provided for his family, he gave away the rest of his money. He has a wonderful passage in which he talks about the question of orthodoxy and heresy. Islamic notions on heresy are rather different from Christian notions, but there is also the question of what is correct belief and what is incorrect belief. In rejecting narrow and exclusive definitions of orthodoxy, he speaks with contempt about a clique of theologians who would make paradise their preserve.

Cheney: I can think of many modern equivalents of this particular metaphor, not some few of them in the academy, in fact. . . . Is there much of a proselytizing drive in Islam?

Lewis: Oh, yes, but not through professional missionaries. Every Muslim believer is a missionary for Islam, and Islam has spread rapidly over vast areas of the world, but without any professional mission organizations. They don’t do it that way.

Cheney: It’s done one-on-one.

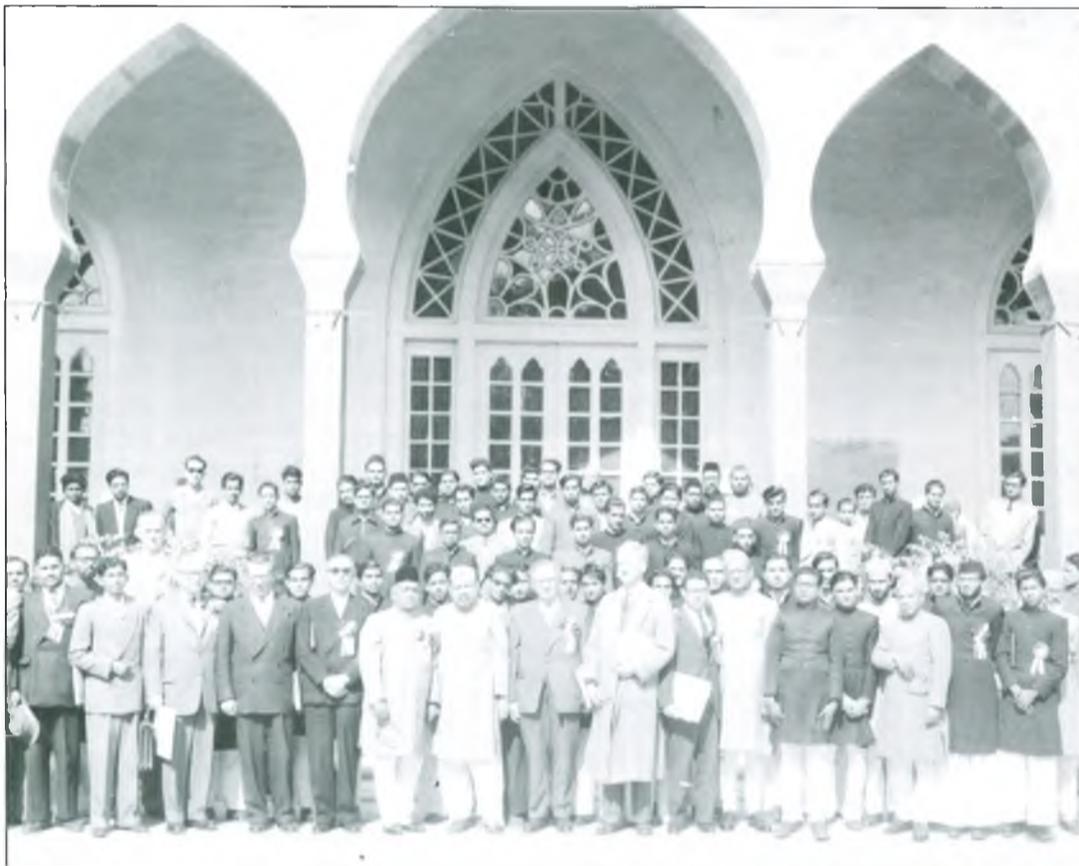
Lewis: Yes. It was not spread by force, as is sometimes said. That’s one of many popular misapprehensions. You know, the picture in Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* of the Arabian warrior coming out of the desert with the Qur’ān in one hand and the sword in the other, and offering his victims the choice between the two—well, that’s not only false, but impossible, unless you can assume a race of left-handed swordsmen, because by convention one uses the left hand for impure purposes and only the right hand may be used to touch the Qur’ān. But that’s a quibble. In fact, the choice was the Qur’ān, the sword, or tribute. People were permitted to retain their own religions provided these were recognized by

Islam as based on authentic revelations; they were allowed a considerable degree of autonomy in their own affairs provided they accepted the supremacy of Islam and the primacy of the Muslims. And I would say if you compare the record of tolerance in the Islamic world with almost any part of the Christian world up till, say, the seventeenth century, then they come out very well. They were much more tolerant of other religions and they were also much more tolerant of deviant forms of their own religion. And there’s nothing in Islamic history like the Christian wars of religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There were differences among Muslims, but nothing like the long and bloody wars and persecutions and repressions of Europe. Martyrdom in the Christian sense is very rare.

Cheney: Post-seventeenth century is a different situation.

Lewis: The seventeenth century and after brought the growth of secularism and a much more tolerant mood in Christian countries, first in England and Holland and then in the English colonies, later in the United States, later still elsewhere in northern Europe. There’s nothing in Islamic history to compare with that kind of tolerance.

Cheney: We have talked in the past about the quality of students at the undergraduate and the graduate level. Is the situation worse now than it was when you began teaching or ten years ago?



Courtesy of Bernard Lewis



Lewis (front row, sunglasses) among scholars at the Conference on Islamic Studies in Aligahr, India, late 1950s.



Lewis: It's better than it was ten years ago, but it's much worse than before the war.

Cheney: In your own experience at Princeton and other places you have taught, do you have any analysis of why it has declined, at least since you first began teaching, and perhaps why it's improved in the last ten years?

Lewis: I think it declined mainly because of the breakdown of secondary education. Good undergraduate teaching is only possible if the students arrive knowing something. If you have to spend the first two years in undergraduate education teaching them what they should have known by the time they were fourteen, they aren't going to get very far.

That brings me to another grievance: Both in high school and college, students are required to do history, but some may be incredibly specialized. There are often no requirements of general history courses. So somebody will meet requirements by taking a course on the history of France from 1789 to 1815. He will be extremely well-informed on the revolutionary and Napoleonic period and have only the vaguest ideas about what happened before and perhaps none at all about what happened after.

Cheney: I recently came across a program wherein a student could fulfill history requirements by taking a course in tuberculosis in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. That's very specialized.

Lewis: It is rather. Heinrich von Sybel, the German historian, said a long time ago that students should arrive at the university knowing their centuries. I think that puts it well.

If you say fourteenth century or seventeenth century, this should immediately evoke something in the mind of a reasonably cultivated man or woman, wouldn't you say? When you say seventeenth century, you think of baroque buildings and Vivaldi's music and things like that. Or the wars of religion.

Cheney: You have complained a few times in some of your essays about a decline of scholarly standards in your own field, people undertaking learned and synoptic efforts or efforts meant to be that way without knowing the languages, for example.

Lewis: It's almost inevitable. Previously the study of Middle Eastern history was cultivated by very few teachers teaching very few students, and therefore maintaining reasonably high standards. Suddenly, particularly in the fifties and sixties, there was an enormous growth of interest in the region for political reasons, military reasons, commercial reasons, and the development of these studies was liberally irrigated with oil and other money. And if there is a greater need for books than there are people who are capable of writing them, more appointments to be filled than people capable of filling them, then there will be a deterioration. It's inevitable. You get a kind of Gresham's law of scholarship.

Cheney: The bad driving out the good.

Lewis: Yes. That's not by any means limited to Middle Eastern studies. And here I see an improvement. There are some very good young people. I find that the students we've been getting at Princeton, and I think some from other universities too, during the last ten years are very much better, and they are better educated when they arrive. They are also more highly motivated. They have a better understanding of what scholarship is about and what scholarly standards mean. I don't know why this improvement should have taken place, but there have been enough cases for it to be unmistakable as a trend.

Cheney: Do they come from all different backgrounds and kinds of schools? I sometimes think what we have in this country is a great dichotomy, that we're educating a few youngsters very, very well from the

beginning and we're educating a lot of youngsters very, very poorly.

Lewis: This is something which I fear greatly. I think we're moving towards a kind of mandarin class, highly educated, sophisticated, capable of high-level mutual communication in ways that are unintelligible to other people, and then a mass of semiliterates whose highest aesthetic appreciation is a good soap commercial on television. I think that's a very dangerous development.

As a working academic, one is thankful for the young mandarins. They are really very refreshing, very encouraging. Their background is very mixed. I mean, in my first years at Princeton there were students from all over the country and a certain proportion from abroad.

Cheney: How has your own work been received by the Arab world?

Lewis: We, as Westerners, have a kind of curiosity which is not widespread in other cultures. Time and time again I've been asked, "Why do you study Islam?" And I've often been asked, "Since you know so much about our religion, surely you must realize that it's the true religion. What are you waiting for?" Another response is more suspicious. "Well, obviously you must have hostile intentions and you are spying out our secrets in order to subvert us from within." One gets both of these attitudes even at the more sophisticated level. I've had both reactions even in print from different people. What I find very gratifying is that a very large number of my books have been translated to Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, Japanese, Indonesian. I did a book called *The Assassins*, which dealt with the medieval sect of that name, and this was translated twice into Arabic independently, once in Damascus and once in Cairo. It was published in Persian twice, once under the monarchy, once under the republic, so it must have touched some chord. □



MODERN TURKEY R·E·V·I·S·I·T·E·D

BY BERNARD LEWIS

French historian Robert Mantran has called Bernard Lewis's The Emergence of Modern Turkey, first published in 1961 by Oxford University Press, "a Bible for the history of the late Ottoman Empire and the beginnings of the Turkish Republic, both for its wealth of documentation and for its profound and almost flawless analysis of events, political ideas, and intellectual and religious currents." This article is adapted from the introduction to the new French edition.

THE VERY FIRST time that I, as a student, set foot in Turkey, I came from Syria where I had been working on my thesis, and not, like most Western visitors, from the West. My academic training had been as a historian and an Orientalist, specializing in classical Islamic civilization. The fact that my approach was from the past and from the south, so to speak, instead of the present and the West, gave me a different—and I would claim a better—understanding of the country, its culture, and its problems.

That was 1938. Eleven years later I was to return for a longer period to

work in the Turkish state archives, newly opened to Western researchers, for a project in sixteenth-century history. I had studied Arabic and Persian before I approached Turkish. In my historical studies, I began with medieval Islam, from which I proceeded to the Ottoman Empire, and then, later, to modern Turkey. In considering the sustained endeavor to create a secular, modern, and democratic nation state, I was keenly aware of the immensity of the task they were undertaking and the difficulties they confronted.

Living in Turkey at that time, I could not but be aware of the momentous events that were taking

place around me. An invitation from the Royal Institute of National Affairs in London to contribute a volume on the westernization of Turkey gave me an opportunity to pursue this new interest in modern and recent history. In the course of the 1950s I made a number of trips to Turkey, of varying duration—partly to read books, periodicals, and newspapers in Turkish libraries, which were not readily available elsewhere, and partly to observe at first hand the continuing process of change.

For the men and women of that generation—my own—their whole life, their every thought, was dominated and indeed shaped by the ti-

The Ahmediye Mosque (Blue Mosque), Istanbul, built in 1609–17.



Courtesy of Office of Tourism Information, Turkey

tanic struggles in which they had participated, or which they had at the very least witnessed—the defeat and, as it seemed at the time, the destruction of fascism by an alliance of democrats and communists; the ensuing struggle between these ill-assorted allies to decide which of them would shape the future of the world; the emergence of a third force, enthusiastically supported by the United States, in the many countries liberated by the withdrawal of the West (though not the East) European empires. These issues loomed very large, and the choices before us still retained something of the clarity, even the starkness, which they had kept through the war years and which they have subsequently lost.

This clarity of choice gave a special significance to the already dramatic development of events in Turkey. What could be more illuminating, more in accord with the mood of optimism which victory had brought and which the Cold War had not yet dissipated, than the spectacle of a nation liberating itself from ancient bonds—a country of age-old authoritarian habits and traditions turning to democracy. Even now, almost forty years later, despite all the ensuing setbacks and frustrations, and there have been many, no one who was there at the time can ever forget the excitement, the exhilaration, of Turkey's first giant step towards a free and open society.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect was the very choice which the Turks made and to which they have ever since adhered. The three defeated Axis powers had democracy imposed upon them by the victors, and although it has since flourished in all three, this was by no means clear at the time. In Eastern Europe democracy, never very strong, was extinguished by native fascists and German Nazis, and the embers were stamped into the ground by the new Communist rulers. In the new states created by the ending of the West European empires, democratic institutions of a sort were bequeathed by the departing imperial powers and, in all but a very few, were soon abandoned or rendered meaningless. Almost alone, the Turks made a free and conscious choice of their own for democracy, fashioned their own representative institutions, and took the logical step of joining



Sultan and councillors, *Turkish miniature painting, mid-16th century.*

the Western alliance, for which they paid their membership dues in blood by sending a brigade of the Turkish army to fight in the Korean war. And despite troubles and disappointments, they did not abandon their alignment with the West, nor their commitment to the building of a free polity and society.

There were disappointments, some of them of internal, some of

external origin. Most of the characteristic features of modern Turkey—the liberal, capitalist economy, the secular national identity, the parliamentary system of government—were seen as part of a process of westernization, and sealed with a pro-Western alignment in international affairs. It was no easy matter to create a parliamentary democracy in a land of authoritarian traditions,

and no less than three times in the postwar period, in 1960, 1971, and 1980, the Turkish army intervened in the political process. This in itself was by no means unusual, and was a common event in all but the old, and a small minority of new, democratic countries. What was surely unique is that in Turkey, on all three occasions, the army, having accomplished its declared purpose of restoring stability, went back to its barracks and returned the country to civilian politicians, even permitting and accepting the defeat of its own political nominees. Internationally too, the Turkish Republic, despite many changes, pursued its pro-Western policy. It remains committed to NATO and the Council of Europe, and, already an associate, is an applicant for full membership of the European Economic Community.

This westernization has not been easy for the Turks, and has posed grave problems of identity for a people who, after all, came from Asia, professed Islam, and belonged by old tradition to the Middle Eastern Islamic world where, for many centuries, they had been unchallenged leaders. In some Muslim and even non-Muslim Asian and African countries, Kemalist Turkey was re-

Arab world, and elsewhere.

At first, the Turks, busy with their own affairs, were not troubled by such criticism. Indeed, for the most part, they were barely aware of these criticisms, which came from sources to which they attached no great importance. It was not until sometime later that they became aware of such new entities as the Third World and the nonaligned bloc, and began to take account of them in their political calculations. Nor, at first, were they too much disturbed by the manifest hostility of the Soviet Union. To most Turks at that time, Russia was the imperial power which, in the course of centuries of advance, had wrested many territories from the Ottoman Empire, and which still ruled over the greater part of the Turkish peoples. In this perspective, Russia was still the implacable hereditary enemy against which, as in the past, they needed the friendship and support of the strongest powers in the West.

But even inside Turkey, there were significant groups that opposed westernization, and in recent years these have begun to acquire some political importance. This change derives from two sources—first, the new democracy in Turkey, which,

the vastly increased importance of countries and regions that the Turks had been accustomed to disregard.

The critique of westernization came in the main from three sources. One of these was what might be called modish panleftism—fashionable ideologies and still more postures, imported in the main from Paris, London, and New York. These ideologies were of course opposed to the United States, to the Western Alliance, to the Council of Europe, to NATO, to capitalist economics, to military alliances, and to military bases other than those maintained by the Soviet Union in its satellite territories. Such views commanded considerable support in intellectual and more particularly academic circles, where they achieved a domination not unlike that which they, for a while, enjoyed in France. Of greater importance, in the long run, was the spread of Marxism, in a variety of forms, among Turkish intellectuals, and the development of Marxist-influenced political groups and, more effective, trade unions. Turkish Marxism in the main had more in common with Western European, especially French, opposition groups than with the official ideologies of Eastern Europe.

As in other countries, fashionable leftism was often associated with another vogue, which one might call Third Worldism—the tendency to idealize the Third World, and the desire to identify with Third World resentments against the West. For many young Turkish intellectuals, this sympathy for the Third World had an

added poignancy: but for the choices made by Ataturk and his associates, they too could have been sinless Afro-Asians instead of guilt-ridden Europeans. These attitudes are often linked with anti-Western and neutralist rather than pro-Soviet attitudes in foreign policy, and with a range of socialist programs for application at home.



Tughra (calligraphic emblem) of Sulaiman the Magnificent, 1520–66.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

garded as a betrayer of both Islam and Asia, and the Turks were denounced as lackeys of the West—as slavish imitators who had renounced their heritage and forfeited their self-respect. Even today, Kemal Ataturk, the founder and father of the Turkish Republic, occupies a prominent place in the demonology of the Islamic fundamentalists in Iran, the

through the freedom of the press, freedom of discussion especially in the universities, and through free and open elections, gave the opportunity for the expression of opinions, some old and traditional, some new and fashionable, which had previously been repressed or suppressed. A second factor was the changing international situation, and

Calligraphic page with the word Allah, from Album of the Conqueror (Sultan Mohammed II); Turkish (?), 15th century.

Most of the leftist and socialist critics of postwar Turkish governments limited their criticism of westernization to internal economic matters and to defense and foreign policy, and were content to retain the secular and modern, if not the democratic aspects of westernization. More consistent and more comprehensive in their rejection of westernization were the upholders of Islam, both traditional and radical. In the authoritarian phases of Turkish Republican history, traditionalist Islamic views were without political effect. In the democratic republic they find free expression, and command blocks of votes. They are not large blocks. In the general elections of 1973 and 1977 the National Salvation party, the principal exponent of militant Islam, dropped from 11.8 percent to 8.6 percent of the popular vote. Its suc-

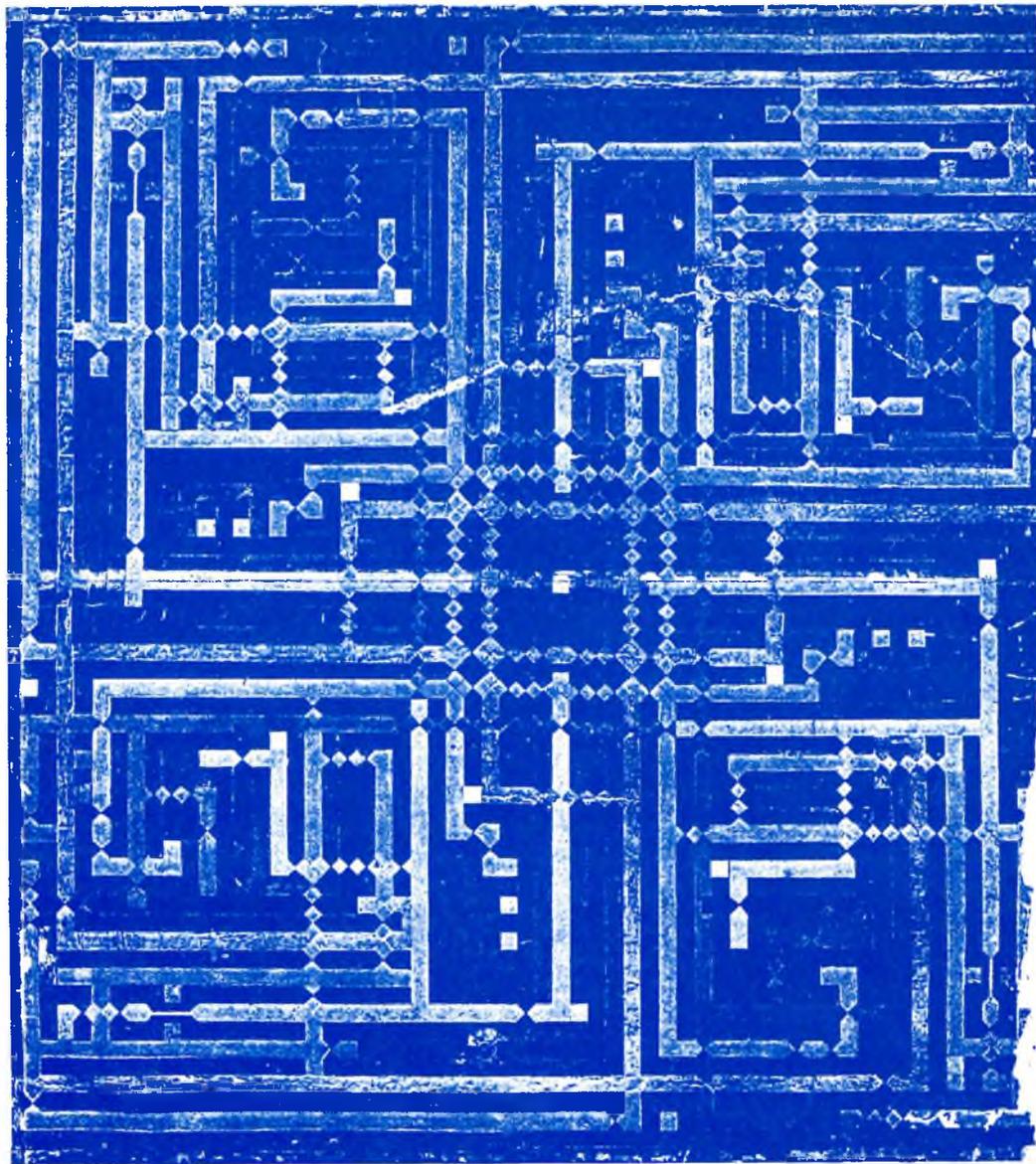
cessors in more recent elections have fared no better, with 7.1 percent of the vote won by the religiously defined Welfare party in the elections of 1987. This does not, of course, represent the full extent of their support among the electorate. The major parties have been showing increasing respect for Muslim sentiments and aspirations, and have no doubt been able to gather religious votes in consequence. Several times there have been attempts from outside to encourage Islamic revival. Fairly soon after the creation of the then militant Islamic Republic of Pakistan, its emissaries attempted for a while to promote Islamic movements in Turkey, but these attempts came to nothing and even had a backlash effect. The Saudis and perhaps some other conservative Arab states are believed to have sponsored and financed conservative Islamic activities, while more recently the fundamentalists of the Iranian revolu-

tion have tried to launch their own version of Islam in Turkey.

All this has had some, though limited, effect. The change is most noticeable in Turkish relations with the rest of the Islamic world. Previously, the Turkish Republic, as a secular modern state, shunned all Islamic groupings, and was represented, if at all, by unofficial observers at inter-Islamic gatherings. In the 1970s, Turkey began to send high officials as representatives to such meetings, and in May 1976 the Turkish government invited the Islamic foreign ministers' conference to convene in Istanbul and joined, albeit with some reservations, in supporting a series of strongly pan-Islamic resolutions, which condemned virtually all non-Muslim powers ruling over Muslim populations, with the exception of India and the Soviet Union. Since then Turkey has become and remains more actively involved in Islamic summit conferences and the

activities associated with them.

It is noteworthy, however, that while the resolutions of the inter-Islamic conferences are normally carried by consensus rather than by a vote, the Turks have made it clear that their participation in such consensus resolutions is always subject to two overall conditions—that they shall be committed to nothing contrary either to the Turkish constitution and political system at home, or to the basic principles of Turkish foreign policy abroad. These two reservations, at once fundamental and comprehensive, have in general been maintained. At home, Islam is certainly a far more powerful force in Turkish public life than it has been at any previous time since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Religious instruction is now an integral and accepted part of the educational system; religious literature is available everywhere; and graduates of the religious schools, in increasing num-



Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul

bers, are filling important public functions. While the more extreme elements, conservatives and radicals alike, appear to have made little headway, and the political parties that express their views have won little support, more moderate forms of Islam now affect a wide spectrum of political opinion, and reach high in public life. In this, it seems that the *Tarikats*, the former Sufi brotherhoods, have a considerable role. The Turkish state, however, remains constitutionally and legally secular, and there seems to be little or no prospect of any restoration of Islamic law, even in such basic matters as marriage and divorce.

In foreign policy, there has been some toning down of the previously whole-hearted Western alignment. There are several reasons for this. One is the feeling of disappointment at having been slighted by the West over such matters as Cyprus, the Aegean dispute, and Turkish relations with the European Economic Community. There has been some political calculation, in the attempt to win Islamic and Third World support at the United Nations and elsewhere in the Turkish dispute with Greece, and some hope of economic

—a possibility never far from Turkish minds—such alliances would be of little value. Islamic solidarity has not prevented some Arab states from supporting India against Pakistan, the Soviets against Afghanistan, and—nearer home—Greece against Turkey. Barring some major change, it is not likely to determine Turkish foreign policy.

Islamic feelings have, however, contributed to the growth of neutralism. There is far more neutralist sentiment in present-day Turkey than at the time of the Korean War, and various forms of neutrality have been advocated. A few argue in favor of a Swedish-style policy, but Turkey still lacks the social and political stability and the industrial power of Sweden. Furthermore, Sweden has Finland on one side and NATO on the other, while Turkey has the Soviet Union on one side and the Arab world on the other—a much less secure position. There are some who, recognizing the impossibility of the Swedish stance, hope to achieve a Finnish-style neutrality. Even here the Turkish position would be less favorable than that of Finland, which has proved itself in two bloody wars, and has, moreover,

Union in terms of the mending of diplomatic fences and concessions on such matters as maritime passage through the Turkish straits and overflights across Turkish territory. The major parties in Turkey, which together hold most of the votes, both support continued westernization, both at home and abroad. The real danger is not the triumph of the pro-Soviet forces inside Turkey, but rather alienation and drift, and in this the policies and attitudes of the countries that make up the European Economic Community will have a decisive effect. At the present time, the government of the Turkish Republic is trying to pursue both policies at the same time—continued westernization and Western alignment in domestic and foreign policies, with a partial return to Islamic values and an improved relationship with the Muslim world.

Both of these policies make Turkey a valuable ally of the West. An alliance is far more valuable and effective when it is based not only on perceived common interests, important as these may be, but also on genuine affinities—a community of beliefs and values, particularly concerning social, political, cultural, and economic matters. The Turkish alignment with the West is not limited to strategic and diplomatic considerations. It is the outward expression of a profound internal change extending over a century and a half of Turkish history, and resulting from a determined and sustained attempt to endow the Turkish people with those freedoms, economic, political and intellectual, which represent the best that our Western societies have to offer. This means that the Western relationship with Turkey can be a genuine alliance and not, as with some other countries under autocratic rulers, a temporary accommodation which would last so long as the ruler survives, does not take fright, and does not change his mind.

In Turkey as in every other country, the prime purpose of foreign policy is the protection and furtherance of national interests, foremost among them the defense of national integrity and sovereignty. Turkey is an old state, and the Turks bring to the consideration of these issues a sharpness of perception and a realism in assessment that are difficult to achieve in newer states with

"The real danger is not the triumph of the pro-Soviet forces inside Turkey, but rather alienation and drift..."

gain, at first through links with the oil-rich countries, and more recently through the development of what was seen as a natural export market for the developing industries of Turkey. However, most Turkish leaders, of whatever party, are hard-headed, and well aware that the Third World and Islamic blocs have little real political power and even less military power, and that in the event of a confrontation with the Soviet Union

the advantage of Sweden and NATO on its western flank. Turkey, on the contrary, would be surrounded by enemies or lukewarm friends.

There are still some in Turkey who wish to join the Soviet orbit. They are not numerous. But Turkish politicians are realists, and have always refused to predicate their policies on unpredictable help from elsewhere. There are already many kinds of accommodations with the Soviet



Metropolitan Museum of Art

Silk prayer rug made in the Ottoman court factory in Cairo, late 16th century.

without problems, are far more extensive and are friendlier than they have been at any time since the Turkish Revolution. Turkish involvement with the Islamic bloc has reached active participation at head-of-state level. But among the forty-three states of the Islamic conference, Turkey is still the only one with a functioning democratic and parliamentary political order, in which power can be and has been transferred by means of free and fair elections.

The combination of an Islamic relationship and a Western alignment is not easy—less for international than for internal reasons. Between the Islamic and the Western worlds there is no real conflict of interest, and friendly relations, at least of a bilateral character, exist at various levels. But the pro-Islamic and pro-Western elements inside Turkey draw on different philosophies, with different diagnoses of the Turkish predicament and different prescriptions for its resolution. There are Turks, however, including

shorter histories and memories. This realism has led, in Turkey, to a policy of alliances which, though sometimes questioned, has hitherto never been seriously challenged, and has survived both upheavals and transformations abroad, and successive changes of government and even of regimes at home.

In recent years, successive Turkish governments have tried to improve relations with non-Western and even anti-Western groupings—with the Arab world, the Islamic world, and more generally with the Third World and even on some occasions with the nonaligned group. The last did

not go very far—that is to say, these attempts did not convince the non-aligned bloc to give genuine and full acceptance to the Turks.

Of rather more importance are Turkey's relations with the Arab countries and Iran. Based on old historical, cultural, and religious ties, these have in recent years been underpinned by a growing economic relationship, through the export of Turkish goods and services to Middle Eastern countries, and the growth of Arab investment in Turkey. Iran is now Turkey's largest trading partner. Turkish relations with the Arab countries, though not

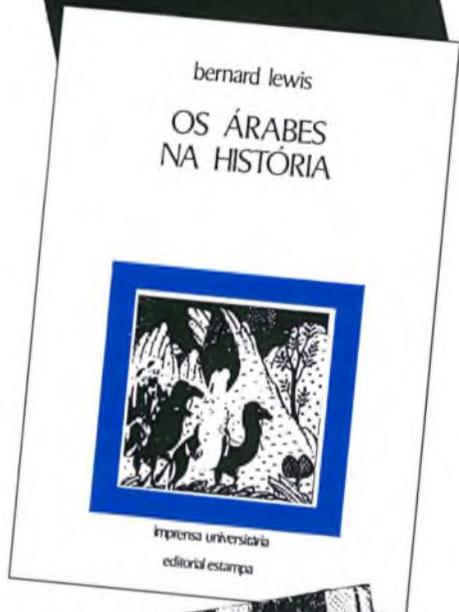
some in high places, who have found a way to reconcile their religious traditions and their political aspirations, their attachment to their past, and their aspirations for the future.

Twice before, in the course of their long history, the Turks have set an example and served as a model for others—under the Ottomans, of militant Islam; under Kemal Ataturk, of secular patriotism. If they succeed in their present endeavor to create, without loss of character and identity, a liberal economy, an open society, and a democratic polity, they may once again serve as a model to many other peoples. □

BERNARD LEWIS

BY

R. STEPHEN HUMPHREYS



WHEN BERNARD LEWIS published his first scholarly article in 1937 (at the precocious age of twenty-one), the scientific study of the Islamic world by the Europeans was still very recent.

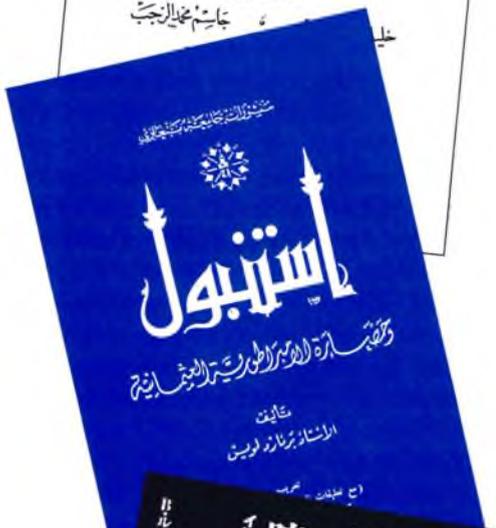
A series of landmark works published between 1880 and World War I had laid the foundations for our modern understanding of the religion, society, and politics of Islam. Lewis thus entered the field of Islamic studies during its second generation, in an era when younger scholars such as Louis Massignon, H.A.R. Gibb, Jean Sauvaget, and Joseph Schacht were emerging as the dominant figures. The work of this generation differed from that of its predecessors in important ways, as we shall see, but it continued to share their methods, their areas of interest, much even of their frame of mind. Lewis was entering a field of study which was still new, but one which had already succeeded in defining itself as a distinctive form of inquiry, a discipline in its own right.

The earlier generation had inevitably put much of its effort into the study of culture and religion, but it had also produced some splendid historians, as that term was defined in late nineteenth-century Europe:

that is, scholars who tried to reconstruct the political events and institutions of the past through the critical analysis of archival documents and other original sources. After World War I, however, history and Islamic studies tended to drift apart. Islamists now stressed the religious and cultural side of their field, perhaps because they perceived that history as then practiced, with its narrow concern for politics and power, could not uncover the underlying structures and values of Islamic life. On the other hand, there was a cost to this move away from history, expressed in a tendency to envision Islam as an entity divorced from time and space. The Islamists of this generation unquestionably displayed a growing acceptance of the spiritual validity of Islam as a religion, but they also tried increasingly to identify an enduring "essence" of Islam, an inner quality which had persisted through the vicissitudes of politics and surface changes in doctrine. This reification of Islam, and more broadly of Islamic culture, is epitomized in the work of H. A. R. Gibb, the most influential figure in the English-speaking world in the field of Islamic studies between the mid-1930s and the 1960s.

History in the meantime was changing; historians of the interwar era continued to give a privileged place to political events and institutions, but they were rapidly broadening their scope to include society as a whole. There was another shift in perspective as well: Most historians of the early twentieth century restricted their attention entirely to Europe and North America, rejecting Asia and Africa as subjects amenable to historical understanding.

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Bernard Lewis has written and edited more than twenty books, which have been translated into nineteen foreign languages.

But by World War II the more far-sighted historians had begun to recognize that their understanding of human experience would always be shallow and incomplete until they turned their attention to the other two-thirds of the globe. Whatever their intentions, however, they could achieve very little, because none of them possessed the linguistic tools and the cultural understanding to confront Asian and African societies directly. These skills were the monopoly of Orientalists, who (in the Islamic field at least) had largely turned away from a historical analysis of their subject.

Lewis was trained both in modern (i.e., post-Roman) history and in Islamic studies, and his achievement, both simple and profoundly important, was to bring back together the two streams of inquiry. His first article, on the guilds of medieval Islam, incorporated the immense erudition and cultural awareness of modern Islamic studies (in particular, the work of Louis Massignon), and at the same time demonstrated that Islamic history need not be an exotic subject, that it was open to exactly the same kind of analysis and interpretation as European history. His work represented history as Europeanists and Americanists knew and practiced it; far from searching for the essence of Islamic culture and society, Lewis presented an analysis of competing interests and classes and, always, a world in change. That first article also demonstrated an unusual talent for synthesis and clarity of exposition: The remotest periods, the most convoluted topics, the most outlandish names were made remarkably accessible. Unlike the work of almost any other Islamist of that era, then, Lewis's could readily be integrated into general historical discourse and assimilated by anyone with a broad and serious interest in the past.

Lewis's first article was widely regarded as the most authoritative statement on its topic for nearly three decades. The virtues of this piece, including its remarkable longevity, were repeated in his published dissertation (*The Origins of Islamism*, 1940), and then in the book that probably did more than any other to make his reputation, *The*

Arabs in History (first published in 1950, and almost constantly in print since). This latter was explicitly intended as an introductory survey of the subject, but its clarity, precision, and erudition made it for two decades the standard interpretation of early Islamic history.

TO THIS POINT Lewis had been a student of medieval Islamic history, and particularly of the Arabs. But in 1949 he was invited by the Turkish authorities to visit the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, which were just being opened to Western researchers. Over the next several years he published a series of articles which foreshadowed no less than a revolution in Middle Eastern history since the sixteenth century. The Ottoman archives, he showed, could at last provide students of the Middle East with a fund of documentary material fully equal to that available for modern European history—at least for those few who were unfazed by the terrifying demands of the Ottoman language and chancery script, not to mention chaotic organization and somewhat unpredictable procedures for gaining research permits. For the first time, historians could hope to penetrate a premodern Islamic society in depth, to produce not only properly documented political studies, but also serious analyses of governmental structure, economic change, and demography. Moreover, the Ottoman archives were as valuable for the Arab and Balkan possessions of the Empire as for its Turkish core. Turkish scholars, notably Ömer Lütfi Barkan and Halil İnalcık, had begun after World War II to make serious use of these treasures, but it is Lewis who revealed them to European and American scholars. In so doing he opened up what still remains the most dynamic and creative field in Middle Eastern history.

Lewis had conceived an ambitious program of studies on the Arab lands under Ottoman rule, but for a variety of reasons he put aside this work for more than a decade after the early 1960s. This decision permitted him to lay the foundations for yet another field, that of the Ottoman reform period and the origins

of modern Turkey. *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (1961, rev. ed. 1968) built heavily on the publications of modern Turkish scholars. It marked a watershed: For the first time the historical development of a contemporary Middle Eastern state was portrayed not merely (or even primarily) as something created by European intervention, but as an internal process generated by the changing goals and needs of Middle Easterners over a period of two centuries. Lewis's decision to focus on the Istanbul statesmen who initiated and tried to control this process, rather than on the machinations of European embassies, was in itself a radical change of perspective, and one which has underlain all serious research on this topic ever since. *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* is, in addition, a work of great density; almost every paragraph suggests a subject for a substantial monograph. It has been superseded in parts, as any important pioneering venture must be, but even now it is arguably the most satisfying overview we have of the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a modern nation-state. And as he had so often done before, he demystified the complexities of a seemingly alien society—in this case, ironically, by ripping late Ottoman history out of the Eurocentric "Eastern Question" in which it had always been embedded and placing it firmly within the context of Middle Eastern values and concerns.

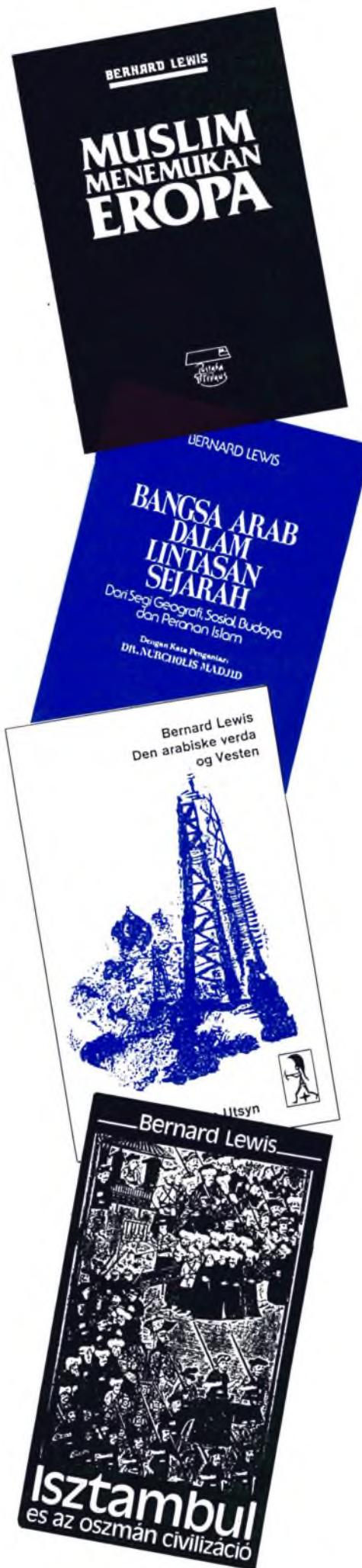
Lewis's recent scholarship—that published during the last decade or so—has not been less significant in either quantity or quality. Particularly noteworthy is *The Muslim Discovery of Europe*, published in 1982, which gives us our first clear overview of Muslim interpretations of European culture and society before the nineteenth century. If it has attracted less attention than his earlier work, that is because it extends and deepens ideas which he had already sketched in a host of concise but superbly crafted articles and essays. Apart from the intrinsic interest of his newer writings, they confirm what has been apparent throughout his long career: the extraordinary range of his scholarship, his capacity to command the totality of Islamic

and Middle Eastern history from Muhammad down to the present day. This is not merely a matter of erudition; rather, it reflects an almost unparalleled ability to fit things together into a detailed and comprehensive synthesis. In this regard, it is hard to imagine that Lewis will have any true successors.

BY THE MID-1960s, Lewis had begun to lay emphasis on a different role for himself, that of commentator on trends and problems in the contemporary Middle East. This was, to be sure, an interest that he had previously pursued from time to time, and contemporary concerns had always been latent in his scholarly publications for those who cared to read between the lines. The modern Middle East inspires strong feelings, and so it is not surprising that Lewis's writing on such topics as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the resurgence of militant Islam soon catapulted him into notoriety—lionized by some, excoriated by others.

The opening salvo in the attack against him was fired by Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978), a book which took Said, like Lewis himself, from the decent obscurity of a respected academic to the notoriety of a public intellectual. *Orientalism* is a polemic and means to take no prisoners; nevertheless, its general argument deserves attention, even if one rejects it in the end. If read critically and with due reserve, it compels a second look at aspects of Lewis's work that may have been taken too much for granted.

A first point should be mentioned. By the 1970s, Lewis's stature as the ranking scholar of Islamic and Middle Eastern history was so high that his policy-oriented statements were automatically invested with the authority of his scholarship, at least among nonspecialists. Such a situation inevitably provoked resentment among those whose positions could not gain a similar hearing. But fairness requires that we look at the other side of the coin: Lewis's authority meant that those who shared his outlook did not give his arguments the dispassionate critical scrutiny they required.



A second point, related to the first, may seem merely a matter of form and style, but it is not. As already noted, Lewis is a very skillful writer, and he commands all the nuance and irony of the British historiographic tradition. The surface of his prose is polished, calm, and objective, but the slight ironic smile is always present. His words clearly mean more than they seem to say, and this fact has occasioned some very pointed comments.

One might argue that irony does not mask meaning but enriches it, by pointing to the inevitable ambiguities of human behavior and the unexpected consequences of our actions. Moreover, rigid statements that are calculated to mean just what they say, neither more nor less, dictate the response to a subject and close out alternative interpretations. Irony, in contrast, suggests that an event must be understood in many ways; it demands a rethinking of preconceptions and first impressions. In short, irony creates meaning and, possibly, dialogue.

In the end, however, Lewis became and remains controversial not because of jealousy or literary cunning, but because of his interpretation of Middle Eastern and Islamic society. I have argued that Lewis tried to liberate his writing from the constraints of first- and second-generation Islamic studies, and to a considerable degree he succeeded. Not entirely, however: He struck a new path in political and social history, but he has accepted much of the Orientalist reconstruction of Islamic culture. In particular, he has adhered to the notion that the first four centuries of Islam constituted an era of intense cultural dynamism and creativity, followed by a turning inward until the dynamism of a new Europe in the 1800s compelled Muslims to shake off their stagnation. There were, of course, later periods of prosperity and cultural efflorescence, but no real effort to reevaluate the fundamental concepts inherited from Islam's first generations. This interpretation of Islamic history was almost uncontested in Western scholarship down to the mid-1960s, and it was in fact accepted by many contemporary Muslim critics. How-

ever, in new research over the last quarter-century, scholars of the current generation have come to see an unbroken evolution and innovation in Islamic thought, albeit within a well-established cultural tradition.

Finally, there is Lewis's political inheritance. He came of age during a decade that witnessed the near-triumph of totalitarianism in Europe and a murderous persecution of an entire people. It can be argued, as I would, that the Arab people have genuine grievances against Israel

"Only insofar as a historian knows what he believes can he use the past to illuminate the moral dilemmas of his own age."

and the West which he does not give full due. On the other hand, Lewis's critics would do well to remember the personal experience and hard-won realism that underlie his political writings; surely he has good reason to think expressions of militancy and fanaticism must sometimes be taken at face value.

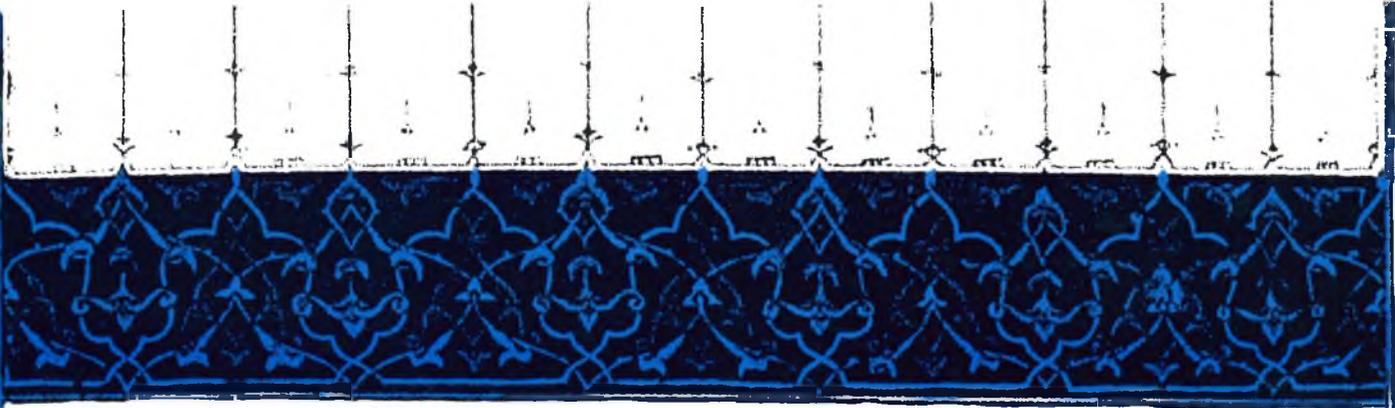
The crucial thing to know about him is that he is a traditional European liberal—one who looks to the legal and spiritual autonomy of the individual within a secular society as the central value and ultimate goal of politics. The body of his writing has been shaped, in both overt and subtle ways, by this frame of mind. He knows well enough that Europe has periodically betrayed, even mon-

strously violated, its liberal ideals. Even so, the values and aspirations endure, and these have remained his political compass. Hence Lewis's scholarly writing exhibits a persistent concern for the degree to which political thought and action in the Islamic Middle East have conformed to, or differed from, liberal concepts of toleration, individualism, and secularism. His references to this issue are not anachronistic; he recognizes that no pre-modern society, European or Islamic, could be expected to adhere to a full-blown liberal ideology. But for him liberal values are an objective good, and it is from that perspective that he has consistently viewed the Middle East and the world of Islam.

It is certainly not wrong to apply value judgments of this kind to the past or to other societies; we can hardly avoid it if we mean for history to be morally relevant to our own lives. On the other hand, we must frankly recognize that such value judgments tend to separate us from the concerns and ideals that have actually governed the lives of the people we seek to understand.

Lewis would not be without a response: It is undoubtedly important to understand the perspectives of others, but absolutely crucial—especially in a world as troubled and violent as ours—to be clear about one's own values. Only insofar as a historian knows what he believes can he use the past to illuminate the moral dilemmas of his own age. As to the values he has espoused, Lewis may even feel a certain vindication; that liberalism which a few years ago seemed so archaic, so much a relic of another era, has manifested its old power to challenge and inspire. Under such circumstances, it may be time to evaluate his achievement yet again. Surely no less is owed to the scholar who has done more than any other to bring the Middle East and Islam back into the mainstream of historical discourse. □

Since 1987, for a study of Islamic society in Aleppo and Damascus, 640–1260, R. Stephen Humphreys has received \$209,345 in outright funds from the Interpretive Research category of the Division of Research Programs.



EXCERPTS

FROM THE BOOKS OF BERNARD LEWIS

ON ARAB CULTURE: The first feature that strikes us is the unique assimilative power of Arab culture, often misrepresented as merely imitative. The Arab conquests united, for the first time in history, the vast territories stretching from the borders of India and China to the approaches of Greece, Italy, and France. For a while by their military and political power, the Arabs united in a single society two formerly conflicting cultures—the millennial and diversified Mediterranean tradition of Greece, Rome, Israel and the Near East, and the rich civilization of Persia, with its own patterns of life and thought and its fruitful contacts with the great cultures of the remoter East. Of the cohabitation of many peoples, faiths, and cultures within the confines of Islamic society a new civilization was born, diverse in its origins and its creators, yet bearing on all its manifestations the characteristic imprint of Arabic Islam.

From this diversity of Islamic society arises a second feature, particularly striking to the European observer—its comparative tolerance. Unlike his Western contemporaries, the medieval Muslim rarely felt the need to impose his faith by force on all who were subject to his rule. Like them, he knew well enough that in due time those who believed differently would burn in Hell. Unlike them, he saw no point in anticipating the divine judgment of the world. At most times he was content to be of the dominant faith in a society of many faiths. He imposed on the others certain social and legal disabilities in token of his primacy, and gave them an effective reminder if ever they seemed to forget. Otherwise he left them their religious, economic, and intellectual freedom, and the opportunity to make a notable contribution to his own civilization.

Like almost all other civilizations, medieval Islam was transcendently convinced of its own superiority and, in essentials, self-sufficiency. The

Islamic historical view of prophecy, according to which the mission of Muhammad was the last link in a chain of revelation of which Judaism and Christianity are the earlier links, enabled the Muslim to regard the Jew and the Christian as the possessors of early and imperfect versions of something which he alone possessed in its perfection. Unlike Christianity, which spread for centuries as the religion of the humble and dispossessed before becoming the state faith of the Roman Empire, Islam became during the lifetime of its founder the guiding code of an expanding and victorious community. The immense conquests of Islam in the first formative generations imprinted on the minds of the Believers the conviction of divine favor as expressed by the power and success in this world of the only community that lived by the God-given law. Muslims might learn much from wise infidels of other faiths, but the final touchstone of the validity of the lesson was the *Shari'a*, hallowed by direct revelation and confirmed by the success of its followers.

The Arabs in History (London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1950; New York: Harper & Row, rev. 1958, 1964, 1966), 140–41.

THE RADICAL TRADITION: In a sense, the advent of Islam was itself a revolution. It began with the Prophet's challenge to the old leadership and the old order in pagan Mecca; it culminated with the overthrow and supplanting of both—the one by the Prophet and his companions, the other by Islam.

While the predominant view among jurists in general supported the authoritarian tradition, there was always another strand in Islamic thought and practice, which was radical and activist, at times even revolutionary. This tradition is as old and deep-rooted as the first, and its workings can be seen through the centuries, both in Is-

lamic political thought and in the political actions of Muslims. The exponents of both traditions naturally looked to the life and teachings of the Prophet for guidance and inspiration; both concentrated their attentions on the political actions the Prophet found it necessary to undertake in order to accomplish his religious mission. While the authoritarians looked to the Prophet as ruler, as head of the state, exercising sovereign authority over his community in Medina, the radicals looked rather to the earlier career of the Prophet, when he was engaged in leading a movement of opposition to the pagan oligarchy of Mecca.

Though this opposition was primarily religious and moral in purpose, it inevitably took the form of political action. In this perception, the Prophet began as an opposition leader against the existing regime in Mecca, found himself obliged to leave his homeland for another place, namely Medina, where in due course he formed what in modern political language might be called a "government in exile," and from there was able to return to Mecca and accomplish his true purposes—the overthrow of paganism and the pagan regime and their replacement by Islam and a new Islamic order. In this, as in all else, the Prophet was seen as a model—the Qur'anic term is *uswa hasana* or in modern sociological language "role model." His career set a pattern which many later political aspirants attempted to follow; some succeeded, others failed. The 'Abbasids who went to eastern Iran to return to Iraq, the Fatimids who went via Yemen and North Africa to Egypt, were both trying to reproduce the prophetic sequence of opposition, struggle, migration, and return from the periphery to the center. There have been many later leaders, including some very recent ones, who tried to overthrow and supplant their rulers by following a similar route.

The Political Language of Islam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 92-3.

DEFENDING ORIENTALISM: The charge is often brought, by orientals against orientalists, that they are the servants of imperialism, and that their work is designed to serve the needs of the administrator, the trader, the diplomat, the agent, and the missionary. The charge is not entirely without foundation, and finds added support in the occasional appearances of the orientalist in person in one or other of these roles. In the only surviving European empire ruling over Islamic lands, that of Russia, scholarship is unmistakably—indeed avowedly—harnessed to the policies and purposes of the state.

Yet, as an assessment of the motives that impelled Western man, even till now almost alone

among mankind, to undertake the study of alien civilizations, this charge is ludicrously inadequate. Empire and commerce may have provided the stimulus and also the opportunity to undertake such studies; they did not, in free societies, direct them. The missionary and the colonial expert have, on the whole, played only a minor part in the development of Islamic scholarship in the West, and their work, with very few exceptions, has won scant respect and enjoyed little influence among scholars. The major advances were the work of men whose driving force was the desire to know and to understand, and whose methods were those of critical scholarship. Most of them were university teachers, independent of, and sometimes opposed to, the great imperial and commercial interests.

The first of the social sciences to give attention to Islam was history. Practical men wrote or sponsored histories of Ottoman Turkey, the last surviving Muslim great power; scholars examined the origins and early history of the Islamic faith and community. The former produced work which is now of interest only in so far as it is contemporary and firsthand; the latter laid the foundations of a great—and continuing—scholarly tradition.

Islam in History: Ideas, Men and Events in the Middle East (New York: Library Press, 1973), 21-2.

SLAVERY IN ISLAM: Travelers who compared Islamic with American slavery mostly overlooked the fact that they were comparing two different types of slave employment, domestic and economic. The slaves whom Western travelers in the East encountered and described were those employed in households, and their lot and degree of acceptance were certainly far better than those of domestic slaves in the Americas. But there were also slave workers in the Middle East, for example, in southern Iraq, where, according to British consular reports, agricultural labor in the pestilential climate was largely assigned to black slaves imported by sea. Later in the century, the sudden wealth accruing to Egypt from the export of cotton during the American Civil War enabled Egyptian farmers to grow rich and also to import black slaves to cultivate their fields. These were rarely seen or described by Western travelers. There were also some black laborers in the cities. Thus, even Snouck Hurgronje noted that "shining pitchblack negro slaves" were used in Mecca for "the hardest work of building, quarrying, etc." and believed that "their allotted work . . . is generally not too heavy for them, though most natives of Arabia would be incapable of such bodily efforts in the open air."

In fact, the limits of toleration accorded to persons of African or part-African origin varied considerably from time to time and from place to place. In Arabia, where Islamic sentiments were strongest, African slaves and freedmen could occupy positions of power and authority, though they were far less likely to reach such positions than their white colleagues. It was only after the virtual disappearance of the white slave that the black slave was commonly able to attain such heights. Children of Arab fathers and black—usually Ethiopian—concubines suffered no significant disability in the holy cities, where they were able to rise to the social level of their free Arab father. If their fathers were sharifs, they, too, were, or could be, sharifs. The swarthy son of a free Arab father and an African mother, by virtue of his father's status, could marry a white woman. But few if any Arab families were willing to give their daughters in marriage to a genuine African man.

The myth of Islamic racial innocence was a Western creation and served a Western purpose. Not for the first time, a mythologized and idealized Islam provided a stick with which to chastise Western failings. In the eighteenth century, the philosophers of the Enlightenment had praised Islam for its lack of dogmas and mysteries, its freedom from priests and inquisitors and other persecutors—recognizing real qualities but exaggerating them as a polemical weapon against the Christian churches and clergy. In the early nineteenth century West European Jews, newly and still imperfectly emancipated, appealed to a legendary golden age in Muslim Spain, of complete tolerance and acceptance in symbiotic harmony. This, too, had some foundation in reality but was greatly overstated to serve at once as a reproach and an encouragement to their somewhat dilatory Christian emancipators.

From *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, to be published this June (© 1990 Oxford University Press).

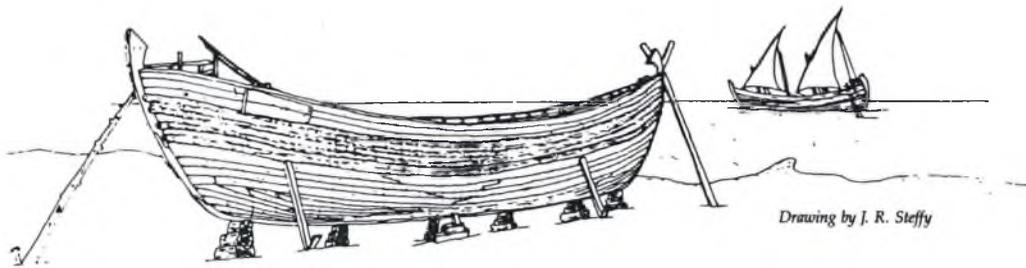
ON RECOVERING HISTORY: At all stages in the human process there seem to have been small minorities or individuals moved by what we might call scholarly curiosity. They are, however, quite exceptional. Basically, the recovery of history is a phenomenon which began in Europe at the time of the Renaissance and remains to the present day primarily a concern and an achievement of West European civilization and of its daughters and disciples in other parts of the world. For some scholars it is this kind of history alone which deserves the name of history—the rest being denoted by such terms as myth, legend, tradition, chronicles, or merely the past. The essential and distinctive feature of scholarly research is, or should be, that it is not di-

rected to predetermined results. The historian does not set out to prove a thesis, or select material to establish some point, but follows the evidence where it leads. No human being is free from human failings, among them loyalties and prejudices which may color his perception and presentation of history. The essence of the critical scholarly historian is that he is aware of this fact, and instead of indulging his prejudices seeks to identify and correct them.

The recoverers of history begin of course with what is remembered and transmitted. Unlike their predecessors, however, they are not content merely to repeat and pass on the memories of the past. They seek rather to fill its gaps and correct its errors, and their goals are accuracy and understanding. A frequent result, and sometimes perhaps even a purpose of their efforts, is that by analyzing the past they kill it. The minute and critical examination of treasured memories may reveal them to be false and misleading. Once this exposure becomes generally known, that part of the past loses its power. The scholarly recoverers of the past may therefore exercise a powerful destructive influence. In compensation, they can bring much that is new and enrich the collective memory as well as cleansing it.

Critical history begins with a dissatisfaction with memory and a desire to remedy its deficiencies. But there is more than one kind of dissatisfaction. The critical scholar may be dissatisfied with what remembered history offers him because he feels that it is inaccurate or deficient or misleading. But there are others whose dissatisfaction springs from a different cause. They would rather rewrite history not as it was, or as they have been taught it was, but as they would prefer it to have been. For historians of this school the purpose of changing the past is not to seek some abstract truth, but to achieve a new vision of the past better suited to their needs in the present and their aspirations for the future. Their aim is to amend, to restate, to replace, or even to recreate the past in a more satisfactory form. Here we may recall two of the main purposes of remembering the past, for communities as for individuals. One is to explain and perhaps to justify the present—a present, some present—on which there may be dispute. Where there are conflicting loyalties or clashing interests, each will have its own version of the past, its own presentation of the salient events. As Dr. Plumb has remarked, "Warring authorities means warring pasts." It is such situations which lead and have led, from immemorial antiquity, to the invention of the past, that is, to the improvement of memory.

History—Remembered, Recovered, Invented (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 53–6.



A TOOL FROM THE S

IDLY WATCHING the sponge divers, Mehmet Askin noticed some excitement offshore. He watched with interest as the divers broke the surface of the water about seventy-five meters from shore, bearing aloft vessels of some sort, apparent treasure from the sea bed.

The divers, working in a previously unexplored area of Serçe Limani Bay on the southern coast of Turkey, had discovered an ancient shipwreck—a medieval ship, it was to be learned, presumably sunk in a storm a thousand years ago.

The discovery occurred in the summer of 1973. Mehmet Askin passed the word to researchers from the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M University, and that

same year George F. Bass made the first archaeological dive. He returned in 1977 with a team of thirty-five, twenty of them divers who were archaeologists or archaeology students. From 1977 to 1979 Bass's group excavated the wreck, making dives twice a day and bringing up glass, pottery, rusted iron objects, and the wooden remains of the hull. For the specialists, work was just beginning. With NEH support, ship specialist J. Richard Steffy and archaeologist Frederick van Doorninck reconstructed and studied the pieces, which had been removed to the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology inside the medieval castle of Saint Peter overlooking the harbor in Bodrum, Turkey.

The Serçe Limani ship is a "one-of-a-kind ship," says Steffy. Its design fills a void in scholars' understanding of the transition from ancient to modern forms of ship construction. "Ancient ships were essentially built as planking shells, with the planking determining the shape of the hull," he says. "Modern naval architecture is just the opposite. First the keel is laid, then the framework is built on top of the keel, and then planks are fastened to it."

The Serçe Limani ship is the earliest example found of this "frame first" construction. Evidence suggests that it was probably a commercial ship, a two-masted, 37-ton lateener characterized by a triangular sail lashed to a tilted spar attached to a low mast.

When it sank in 1025 A.D., the ship was carrying an odd cargo—more than half a million pieces of broken glass. Roughly two tons of this cullet consisted of raw glass destined to be remelted and fashioned into glassware. The remaining ton consisted of glassware that appears to have been damaged in a fire, and a variety of waste produced during the manufacture of glassware. This part of the cargo was evidently smashed so as to take up as little space as possible; it was estimated as 10,000 vessels and some 200 vessel types. Secondary cargoes were intact glass artifacts, ceramics, amphoras of wine, and tools for fishing and ship-board repairs.

The conservation and reconstruction offer scholars valuable new in-



Photo by Robin C. M. Plancy

Top: A sketch of the Serçe Limani hull nearing completion. Above: Piecing together a bottle from the shards of broken glass that were part of the ship's cargo.

Susan Q. Jaffe is a writer-editor in the Office of Publications and Public Affairs.

EA

BY SUSAN Q. JAFFE

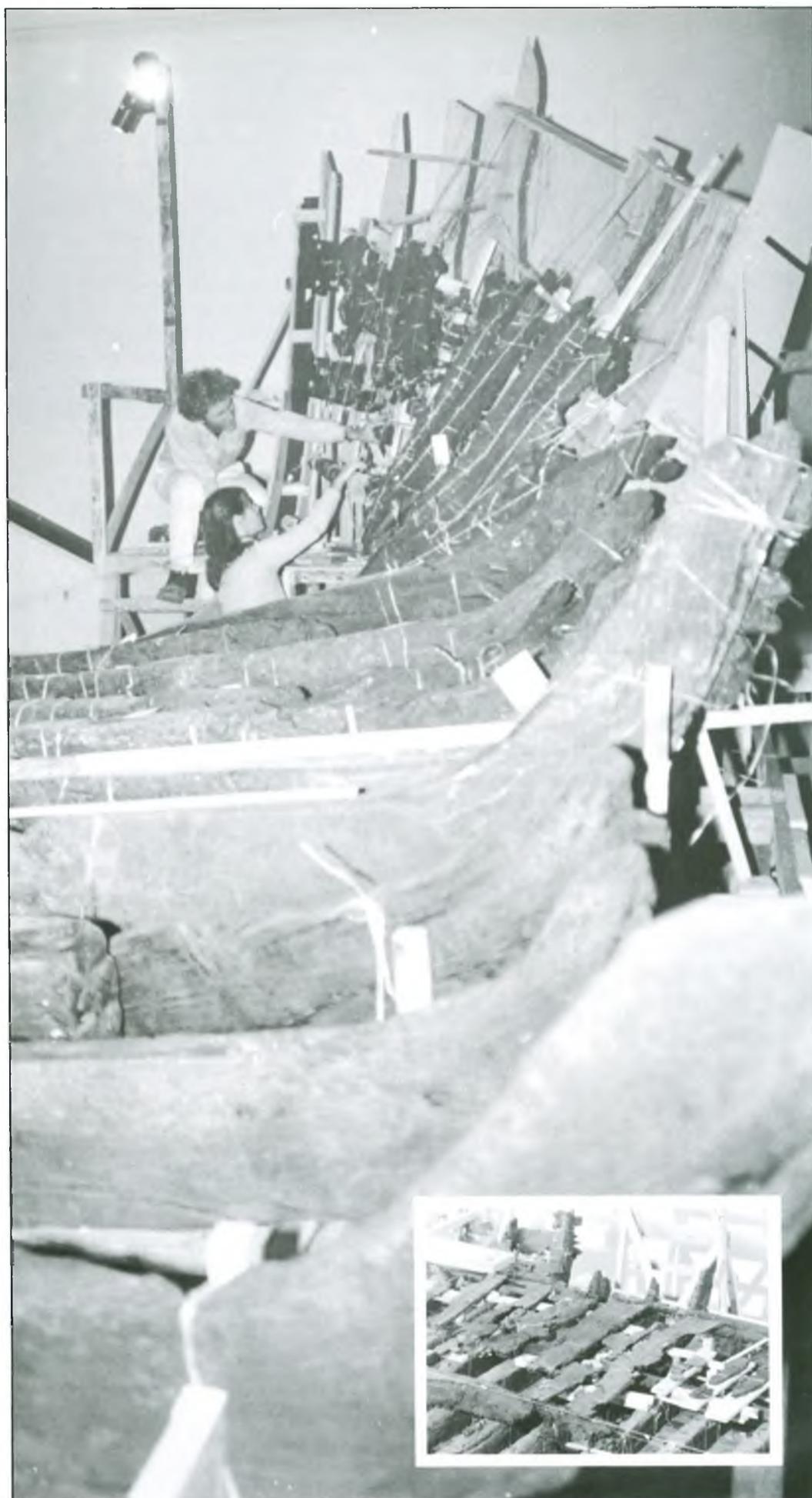


sights into eleventh-century Mediterranean watercraft. "The Serçe Limani wreck represents an undocumented ship type from a period and area in which comparatively little is known about maritime matters," says Steffy.

Specializing in the technological aspects of wreck remains, Steffy examines the construction of ships to learn about building materials and techniques. "The study of a ship's structure and contents is usually a study of the best technology and innovation that a society has to offer," he says. Steffy also examines ships' cargoes to draw inferences about the economies and politics of a period. "By studying just one ship in detail," he points out, "we can learn a great deal about the material culture, commercial practices, and even the political atmosphere of the time."

Steffy originally believed the ship was of Islamic origin. However, as scholars examined artifacts more closely, the origin of the ship and its crew became less evident. Equipment and coins found on the ship have both Islamic (Arabic) and Byzantine (Greek) characteristics. The amphoras are inscribed with Greek letters or monograms, indicating that they were produced for or owned by individuals with Greek names.

The discovery also sheds light on shipboard life. Artifacts indicate that those aboard played chess in the stern and played backgammon amidships. Tools for shipboard repairs included wood chisels, drill bits, a claw hammer, and a sail-repair kit. Recovered fishing equipment included lead weights for nets, some with Greek religious inscriptions; line fragments from nets; and



Photos by Donald A. Frey

Reconstructing the stern of the Serçe Limani ship, and a close-up of the interior of the middle of the hull. The ship is the earliest known example of the frame-first construction used in modern naval architecture, with a framework built on a keel and planks fastened to the framework.

bronze netting needles. The ship also was well supplied with defensive weapons. A dozen swords, one with an elaborately decorated bronze hilt, and lances and some sixty javelins were recovered.

According to van Doorninck, who specializes in the study of amphoras and anchors of the Byzantine period, one of the most valuable artifacts found on the ship was the cache of eight iron Y-shaped anchors. "These anchors have added a great deal of knowledge about medieval metallurgy and the evolution of iron anchors," says van Doorninck. Because medieval anchors are the largest surviving iron objects of the period, they are useful in tracing the history of iron-making technologies.

Anchors shaped like Ys were unknown until the mid-1970s, when finds were documented in the waters of the Aeolian Islands, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Israel, Sicily, and Turkey. "Previous research held that this sort of anchor did not exist," says van Doorninck. "Originally, some scholars even denied that the Y-shaped objects were anchors. After careful examination, we have come to the conclusion that they are, in fact, very good anchors, obviously the product of much practical experience."

Each Serçe Limanı anchor is hand forged from fourteen or fifteen pieces of iron. Medieval ironmasters realized that welds were stronger when the welding surfaces of two joined pieces of iron were minimal. Because the shanks of these thin anchors tended to break easily, they were made as short as possible to minimize breakage. The Y-shaped design was an advance over the ear-

lier V-shaped iron and wooden anchors, van Doorninck points out. A piece of iron was welded to the end of either of the anchor's arms to form a hook, which the sailors called "teeth." Modern study has shown that the anchor was the thinnest and weakest where these "teeth" joined the arms. Apparently this was purposely done so that the tooth would break more readily than the shank, whose fracture would make the anchor useless.

In examining the clues offered by Serçe Limanı in the transition from shell-first to frame-first forms of hull construction, researchers found that the vessel combines both techniques. By combining excavated evidence with experiments on research models, it was found that the keel, stem, sternpost, and ten frames amidships were erected first. The shape of the hull was dictated by a series of proportions based on the vessel's beam, or width, and simple angles. Then the builders began fastening belts of planks along the bottom, adding more frames in the hull's ends to stiffen the planking as construction progressed.

Ship specialists conclude that skeletal, or frame-first, building evolved in the Mediterranean area out of the earlier Greco-Roman shell construction method. This development eventually led to the building of larger, faster, more specialized ships that enabled Europe to explore and colonize other parts of the world.

Steffy achieved a mathematical picture of the ship's design by first aligning the hull fragments on a flat surface. After establishing the most likely order in which the hull frag-

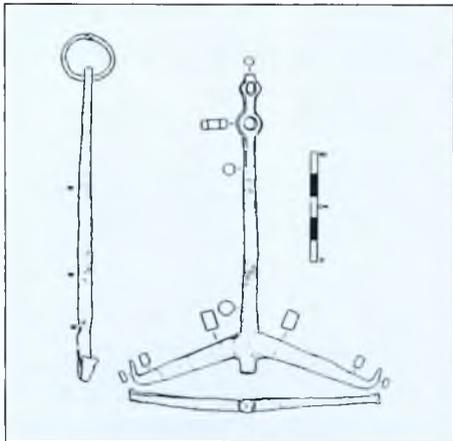
ments broke apart after sinking, the researchers then determined their three-dimensional alignment by means of a series of models.

The Serçe Limanı project has helped train students in hull recording and reconstruction and other interpretive methods of shipbuilding technology. An exhibition illustrating eleventh-century maritime life is slated for completion this summer in the Bodrum Museum. The exhibition will include not only the reassembled ship but also a replica of the midship section containing the original cargo, anchors, and tools. □

Since 1983, the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A & M University has received \$144,685 in outright and matching funds from the Interpretive Research category of the Division of Research Programs to excavate and reconstruct the Serçe Limanı ship.

Also, since 1987, the institute has received \$132,764 in outright funds through the Interpretive Research program to excavate a late Bronze Age shipwreck of the fourteenth century B.C., off Ulu Burun, near Kas, in southern Turkey. Believed to be the oldest known shipwreck in the world, the site has yielded important evidence of late Bronze Age trading patterns. Among the recovered artifacts is a gold scarab inscribed with the name of Nefertiti, wife of the Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaten. It is one of the few late Eighteenth Dynasty Egyptian objects excavated in Asia Minor and the Aegean.

This year, the institute has received \$131,000 from the Office of Challenge Grants to endow a staff position and renovate its headquarters in Turkey for the study of Old World sites.



Drawing of one of the Y-shaped anchors. Right: The ship carried small cargoes of ceramic cooking and tablewares similar to those from Syria and Palestine.

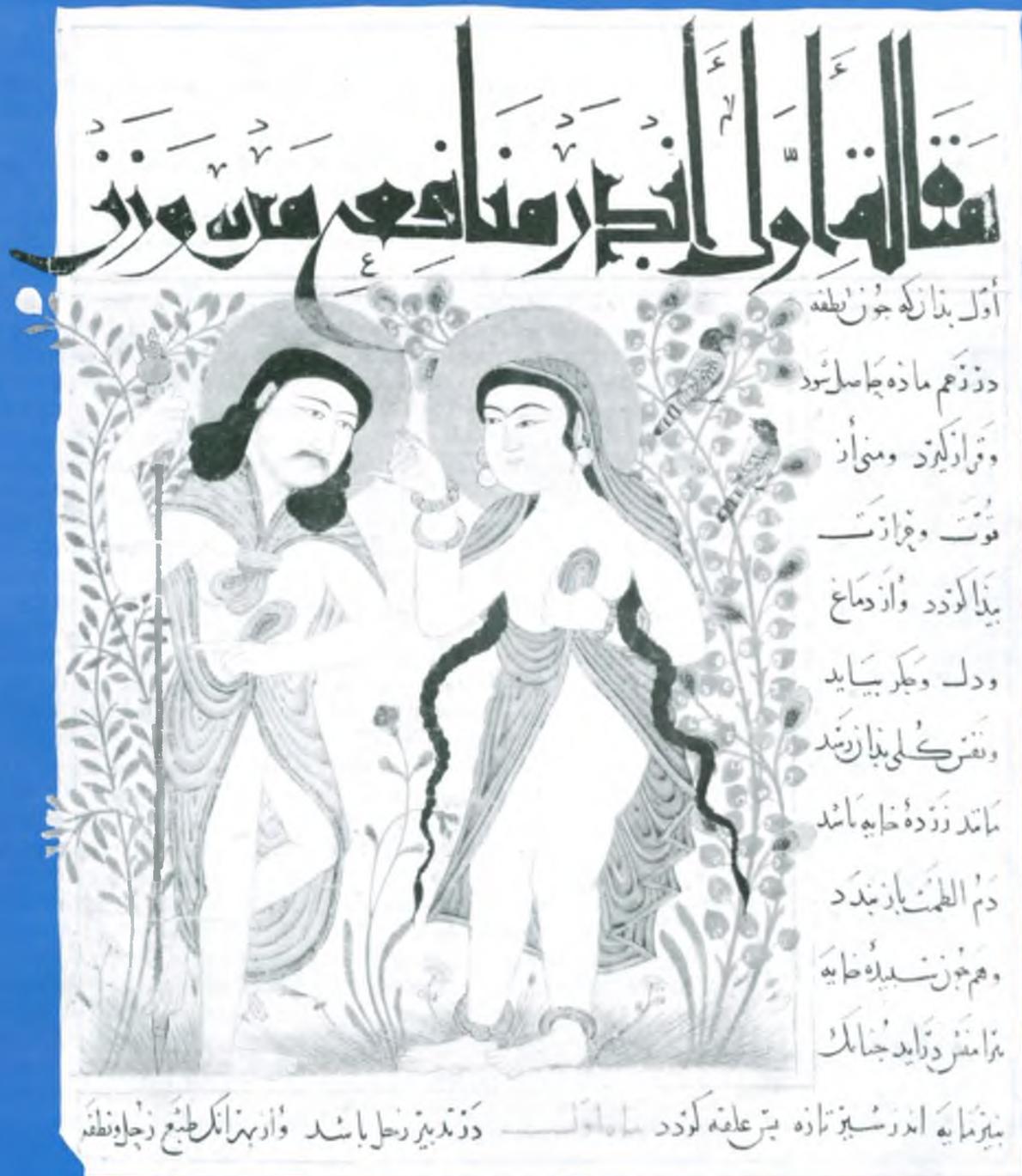


Photo by Donald A. Frey

I·S·L·A·M

and the History of Religions

BY ARTHUR W. SHIPPEE



NEW DEVELOPMENTS in the study of world religions have provided scholars with valuable insights into mankind's very early religious experience as well as into Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other traditions. Islam, however, has proved to be resistant to the methodology of the contemporary "history of religions" approach.

In recent years, both Western scholars as well as Muslims have approached the study of Islam from a variety of perspectives. Valuable insights have been gained by exploring the social, economic, and political dimensions of Islam. Within the past few years, even the perspectives of structuralism and semiotics have been applied to certain Islamic materials. But in all of this contemporary scholarship, where is the voice of the historian of religions? Why, in the words of C. J. Adams, an Islamicist, should it be that "where History of Religions has had some of its great-

est successes, it has been irrelevant to the work of the Islamicist?" Let us first identify the "history of religions" approach in the academic study of religion.

Before the publication of F. Max Muller's *The Sacred Books of the East* nearly a century ago, the nature of mankind's religious experience and life was an area of almost exclusive interest to the clergy. Although translations of sacred texts of non-Western religious traditions had been available for some time before the appearance of Muller's book, it was primarily his monumental work that provided scholars with access to the literature of the ancient Eastern traditions, opening the doors to the academic study of religion.

Since then, the study of religion has expanded with the growing awareness of how its subject matter is interrelated with disciplines such as history, anthropology, ethnology, linguistics, and others. With the expansion of this vision has come considerable rethinking of such fundamental issues as proper methodology and the philosophical assumptions underlying the discipline. Some have referred to the field as "phenomenology of religion" (Kristensen, van der Leeuw) while others prefer the name "history of religions" (Wach, Eliade, Kitagawa). Although these titles mark what are primarily methodological variations, each actually reflects a significant departure from their mutual historical parentage in the older field called "comparative religion."

The term "comparative religion" first gained wide acceptance in European university curricula before appearing on the American campus. As knowledge of the ancient traditions of the Near and Far East as well as those of the "contemporary primitive" rapidly expanded, the traditions, especially the latter, were described and evaluated in light of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the tradi-

tion of those who were the students. Although those working in many of the overseas mission fields made significant contributions, especially in linguistics and ethnology, their interest was not primarily in the objective recording of data but rather in an attempt to understand how to serve and relate the Christian message to those of another culture.

As the early years of the century progressed, the study of "comparative religion" became widely accepted within the halls of academe. The study more often than not meant a semester devoted to brief consideration of the major religious traditions—"primitivism," Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and so on. Each was considered in isolation from the others. Some background on the origins of each, when known, might have been followed by a biographical glimpse at its founder—Gautama, Jesus, Muhammad. The scriptures, beliefs, major sacred holy days, and practices of each very often followed. As the discipline matured, the original bias of comparing traditions against the standard of Christianity for the most part either disappeared or at least became less important.

The year 1917 saw the publication of Rudolph Otto's *The Idea of the Holy*, a work which signaled the beginning of a move in a new, though not unforeseen, direction in the study of religion. Fifteen years earlier, philosopher William James had published *The Variety of Religious Experience: A Study of Human Nature*, in which he explored areas such as "religion and neurology," "the sick soul," "saintliness," and "mysticism."

Otto, both a theologian and a student of comparative religion, undertook a rather different study from that of James. He chose to probe the nature of religious experience itself rather than its variety of manifestations. Otto condemned the sociological and psychological reductionism that characterized the study of religion in the early years of this century. He defended religious experience as "nonrational," by which he meant that the experience—a response to the encounter with "numen," or ultimate reality—pre-



Arthur W. Shippee is a professor of philosophy and director of religious studies at the University of Hartford. He will present the subject of this article at an international conference on "Christian-Muslim Studies: Present Intellectual Trends and Future Research Priorities" at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, June 7-9, 1990.

Previous page: Adam and Eve, from *Manafi' al-Hayawan of Ibn Bakhtishu'*, Maragheh Pierpont Morgan Library M500, f.4v

cedes rational reflection, and therefore conceptualization.

His work, now a classic in the academic study of religion, aroused great interest among students of religion, both in Europe and America. One of those who saw the far-reaching implications of his work was Mircea Eliade, who had succeeded Joachim Wach at the University of Chicago in 1955. In the introduction to his *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, Eliade writes that his work, building upon that of Otto, proposes to explore "the phenomenon of the sacred in all its complexity and not only in so far as it is irrational." With this purpose, Eliade presents a working plan for what has developed as the "history of religions," a discipline in this country virtually synonymous with his name and with the University of Chicago.

ELIADÉ'S INVESTIGATIONS into "the sacred in all its complexity" provide a broad glimpse into the history of religions as it has taken hold in America. Eliade held, with Otto, that the sacred is an objective reality, or, to be far more accurate, the only objective reality. However, Eliade further insists that individuals are confronted with a conscious and existential choice of living either within the sacred reality or in the profane world. Eliade contends that the post-Enlightenment West has for the most part chosen the latter, while "traditional" societies have chosen the former.

Eliade notes that mankind responds in a great variety of ways to the encounter with the sacred. Despite the nonrational, ineffable nature of the encounter, at some point people reflect upon the experience and in so doing conceptualize it. Among the conceptualizations, one stands out for Eliade's special consideration—that of myth.

Quite contrary to the common use of the term "myth" as an untrue story, Eliade finds religious "man" confronting his myth as the only significant, true, and meaningful account of the world in which he lives. Eliade argues that all myth is cosmogonic, that is, an account of the origin of things. All that exists—whether aspects of the natural world such as sky, vegetation, and animal life, or aspects of human life such as value systems and mores, which are

the source of political and economic systems—at one time did not exist but came into existence at a certain time. "In the beginning" (the early chapters of Genesis are a familiar example of cosmogonic myth), it was the gods who brought all that is into existence. The myth speaks of original creation, a sacred time absolutely distinct from history, which by its nature means change and aging until that history ends in death.

Eliade refers to time as "man's deepest existential dimension," that is, historical time most indicates to man his finiteness. Man is, in a sense, trapped in time or history, which lacks meaning because it is devoid of the archetypal models of the acts of gods that pervade the sacred and are related to man in myths. Without such models to provide meaning, history is a source of terror for man. (The late playwright Samuel Beckett, in *Waiting for Godot*, captured the image of terrorized man confronted by meaningless time.) History-bound man has neither freedom nor creativity. However, by knowing the myth and enacting its story in the form of rite, ritual, and festival, or by merely reciting the myth, man can periodically transcend meaningless time.

FOLLOWING ELIADÉ, others have based their investigations on his methods and principles, contributing to the evolution of history of religions as a discipline. In the recent PBS series *The Power of Myth*, made shortly before his death, Joseph Campbell has argued that mythical thinking and behavior are integral components of the human situation, if not easily recognized as such, and are very much alive and indeed thriving in modern mankind's ideas and practices. And Huston Smith, author of the classic *The Religions of Man* (1958), which presents the standard comparative religion approach, has modified his views based on Eliade's indication of the commonality that pervades the various religious traditions. The "objective reality" of which Eliade speaks becomes the basis for Smith's contention that "man has a profound need to believe that the truth he perceives is rooted in the unchanging depths of the universe; for were it not so, could the truth be really important?"

As Eliade and others working in the discipline of history of religions have investigated their data, a new picture of mankind has emerged which could not have come from the previous comparative study of religions. The comparative approach was often content to place one religious tradition discretely alongside another and then address the early history, founder, main beliefs, and practices of each one in turn. In sharp contrast, the history of religions takes a certain manifestation of religious belief or practice common to several traditions, such as the idea of ascension of a certain personality into the skies (Elijah, Christ, Muhammad, the shamans of east Asia, and countless others), and asks, what does this common phenomenon mean? For if a belief or practice is found in traditions widely separated by both history and geography, then the phenomenon is no doubt telling us something about the nature of mankind.



Yet the efforts of historians of religions have yielded little in the study of Islam. When Eliade, now deceased, published volume 3 of his *History of Religious Ideas* five years ago, he devoted two chapters to Islam. In the first, he discusses the traditional themes of the older comparative studies dealing with Islam. In the second, he surveys Islamic theological issues as well as Islamic mysticism. But where are the familiar categories one naturally associates with Eliade's work or with the work of others in the history of religions? They are quite conspicuous by their absence.

The question is complex. But two suggestions may be appropriate here. First, the methodology of the historian of religions may need reexamination. Orthodox Islam is not rich in myth, symbolic expressions, rites, and rituals, those forms that have proven so fruitful for investigations of other traditions by historians of religions. For all practical purposes, Islam was born and matured in the full light of history in an isolated island of sand. External influences upon its early formative years

were virtually nonexistent. Within less than two decades, Islam burst forth in full bloom, quite independent of a prolonged period of influence from other traditions. In this respect, Islam stands quite by itself. The categories that historians of religions have developed and used with such effectiveness in examining other traditions simply do not work here. Might it not be that the categories, and the methodology in general, are in need of revision?

Second, to use the distinction between "traditional" and "rationalized" religions drawn by sociologist of religion Max Weber, the significant contributions of the history of religions have been made in reference to the former. Islam, however, would fall within the latter classification with its elaborate body of systematic theology. The raw data of the history of religions, of course, have traditionally been phenomena, that is, various ritual practices, elements of myth, symbols, and so on. But elements of a rational system of theology are also phenomena, but of a different sort. Should the history of religions expand its vision to accom-

modate these also as data for its investigation?

Increasingly in recent years, the vast richness of the Islamic world has been probed by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars working side by side. The results have contributed significantly to modern understanding of the religious meaning of Islam. With further cooperation between Muslim and non-Muslim colleagues, each bringing a background of training in the history of religions and in Islamic studies, new and rewarding perspectives are bound to follow. □

In 1989, Hartford Seminary was awarded \$34,957 in outright and matching funds from the Conferences category of the Division of Research Programs to support "Christian-Muslim Studies: Present Intellectual Trends and Future Research Priorities."

In 1988, to support a three-day symposium on Islamic history and culture for scholars, teachers, and the general public, Trinity College in Hartford received \$21,064 in outright funds from the Public Humanities category of the Division of General Programs.



Metropolitan Museum of Art

Jonah and the Whale, from a manuscript of the *Universal History* (Jami at-Tawarikh) by Rashid ad-Din. Persian, late 14th century. The Old Testament story of Jonah also occurs in the Qur'ān, and was frequently illustrated in Persian histories of the prophets.

A SCHOLAR'S GUIDE TO ISLAM

BY JAMES S. TURNER

DURING the Middle Ages, as Western institutions faltered and languished, the civilization of Islam grew into a world power. With the rise of European colonialism in the seventeenth century, these positions began to change as the Muslim world felt the impact of Western technology and modernization. By the early twentieth century, Great Britain, France, and Holland dominated much of the Islamic world from North Africa to Southeast Asia. Since then, with the struggle of Muslim societies to assert their independence and identity in the modern world, the main trend in contemporary Islam is its resurgence. Displaying homogeneity despite fragmentation and the absence of a centralized religious hierarchy, Islam claims some 880 million adherents—nearly one-fifth of the world's population—in forty-four Muslim countries from Senegal to Indonesia, with considerable populations in the Soviet Union, India, China, England, and the United States.

Notwithstanding the jarring impact of the Islamic revival on the West in recent times, enormous progress has been made in Western understanding of Islamic culture during the past fifty years. Little-known outside the field of Middle Eastern studies, the major compendium of this information is the monumental and still-evolving second edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, being published by E. J. Brill in Leiden, Holland. Five hefty volumes of the second edition are in print, and fascicles, or segments, of a sixth are being published as they are completed. Regarded by scholars as the most important reference work in

James S. Turner is assistant editor of Humanities.



Mihrab (prayer niche) from the Madrasah Imami, Isfahan, built 1354.

The Encyclopaedia of Islam

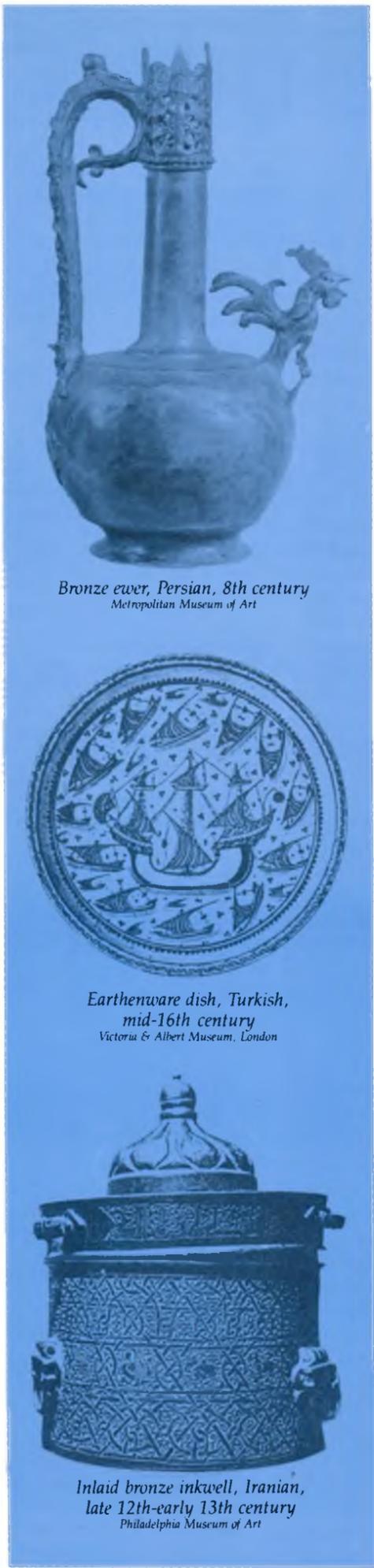
- Volume 1: A–Bz (1960)
- Volume 2: C–Cy (1965)
- Volume 3: H–Iram (1978)
- Volume 4: Iran–Kha (1978)
- Supplements to volumes 1–4:
 - Fascicles 1–2
al-'Abbās–Basbās (1980)
 - Fascicles 3–4
Basbās–Djawhar (1981)
 - Fascicles 5–6
Djawhar–al-'Irāqī (1982)
- Volume 5: Khe–Mahi (1986)
- Volume 6:
 - Fascicle 101–102
Makdishū–Malhūn (1987)
 - Fascicle 103–104
Malhūn–Mānd (1987)
 - Fascicle 105–106
Mānd–Mar'ashīs (1988)
 - Fascicle 107–108
Mar'ashīs–Māsardjawayh (1989)
 - Fascicle 109–110
Māsardjawayh–Masrah (1989)
 - Fascicle 111–112
Masrah–Mawlid (1989)
- Index (1989)

the field from the rise of Islam in the seventh century to modernity, the encyclopedia is equally indispensable to students of Islamic history, religion, language, literature, technology, society, and politics.

With support from the National Endowment for the Humanities since 1978, the second edition of the encyclopedia has been under way since the 1950s, when an international coterie of leading Islamicists set out to update the first edition, produced between 1908 and 1938. By the time the first edition was completed, the volumes were already largely outdated by new scholarship. So in 1948, a second edition was approved by the International Congress of Orientalists to expand the encyclopedia's scope both in the range of subjects covered and in the depth of coverage of traditional topics. A coeditor of the second edition almost from its inception, Bernard Lewis directed the use of NEH support from 1978 to 1988. The current editorial committee consists of Charles Pellat of France, Emeri van Donzel of Holland, Edmund Bosworth of England, and Wolfhart Heinrichs of the United States.

"The compilation of the first edition was dominated by the philological paradigm—the study of texts—which is still of major importance," says current project director Heinrichs, a professor of Arabic in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. "But during the last forty years or so, the scholarly approach to Islamic culture has been broadened by questions raised in the fields of sociology and anthropology and has put greater emphasis on nontextual aspects of Islamic culture—art, social life, technological developments, and so on."

Heinrichs points out that the dis-



Bronze ewer, Persian, 8th century
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Earthenware dish, Turkish,
mid-16th century
Victoria & Albert Museum, London

Inlaid bronze inkwell, Iranian,
late 12th-early 13th century
Philadelphia Museum of Art

inction made between the secular and the sacred in Western culture is not apposite in Islamic culture. "Islam is a religion, but in the largest sense it is the culture informed by the religion," he says. "So all aspects of the culture are subjects for articles in the encyclopedia."

To ensure that the encyclopedia contains the best possible scholarship, contributors are selected from recognized experts around the world—Muslim and non-Muslim—unlike the first edition, which was a European-American construct. The first edition was published in English, German, and French; the second is in English and French, with versions in Turkish and Urdu.

The encyclopedia's entries number in the thousands and range from sweeping to minute in compass. Those in geography include *Kustanti-niyya* (Constantinople) and *Lur* (Iranian people); those in art include *Ma'din* (metal work) and *Mahall* (palace); in the theology and philosophy, *Lāhūt* and *Nāsūt* (divinity and humanity) and *Mā ba'd al-Tabī'a* (metaphysics); in the history of science, *Kusūf* (sun/moon eclipse) and *al-Madjarra* (galaxy); and in literature, *Kissa* (the novel) and *Madīh* (panegyric poetry). There are entries on *Madjūs* (Zoroastrians), *Madrassa* (institution of learning), and historically important personalities, such as Arab historians, Ottoman ministers, and Chinese warlords.

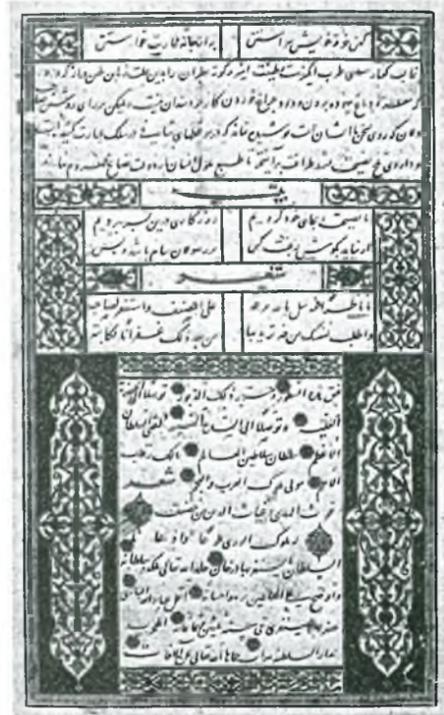
So far, the encyclopedia is only up to MA. But for an enterprise that has just reached the halfway mark, with a projected completion date of 2015, praise for the encyclopedia among scholars of the Middle East is lavish. "It's a summary of information about the widest range of premodern topics," says Jere L. Bacharach, chairman of the history department at the University of Washington in Seattle. "I expect that new graduate students entering the field will make their mark by reinterpreting certain major events—relationships between rulers, class consciousness, racial tensions, whatever—based on the data in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*."

Fred M. Donner, an associate professor of Islamic history in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago and a faculty member in the university's Oriental Institute, agrees: "For orientation in the broad

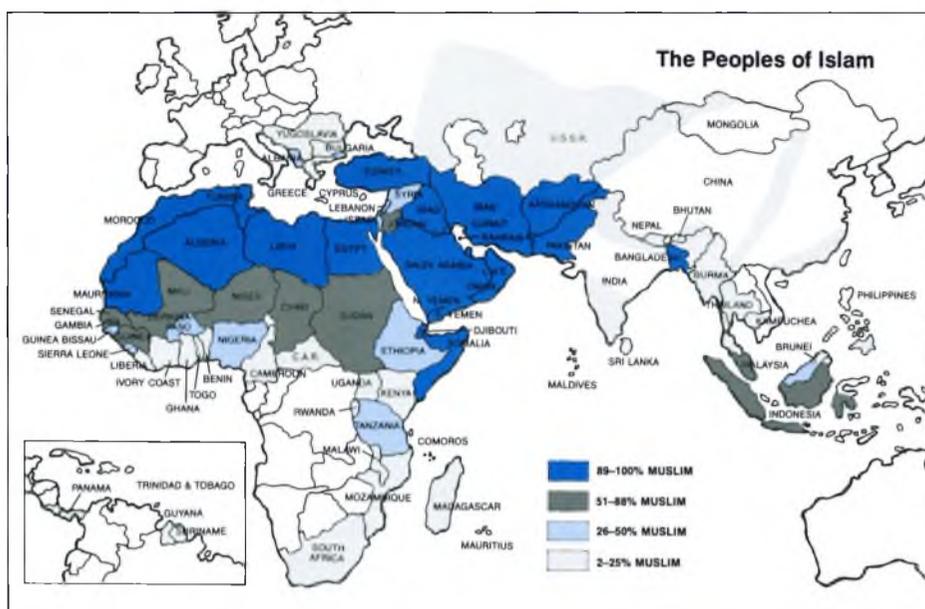
cultural tradition of Islam, it's superb. It's everybody's basic guide if you're working in this business."

For information on current events, however, scholars must look elsewhere. "Our editorial policy allows no entries on people who are still alive, although they may be mentioned in an article, and no discussion of actual political problems," says Heinrichs. An example of the latter concern, he notes, is the article on Jerusalem, which only covers up to 1948, when the British mandate keeping the city independent of Arab or Jewish jurisdiction officially ended.

Another characteristic is the encyclopedia's orientation toward non-Muslims, whose interest in Islam may lie more in its historical, sociological, anthropological, and cultural meanings, rather than toward Muslims, for whom the meaning of Islamic culture is theological and soteriological. "Some Shi'ite [minority] scholars who feel that Western scholars write from the Sunni [majority] perspective think that certain articles should be rewritten," Heinrichs says. The article on Islam's founder, Muhammad, which is forthcoming, is one that may pose a special challenge of perspective. But every effort is taken to avoid the political and concentrate on the factual. "Our policy is arguable, but I think it is also wise," comments Heinrichs.



Page from a *Gulistan of Sa'di Herat*, 1426–27



The estimated Muslim population worldwide is more than 880 million.

If the encyclopedia does not broach contemporary events, it nonetheless helped usher in the modern study of Islam. "Until the 1950s, only a handful of Western scholars were teaching anything related to the Islamic world, including Arabic, Persian, and Turkish language and literature as well as the history of the Near East or the religion of Islam," says Donner. "It used to be that the closest you could get to studying Islamic culture was a course on the Crusades. Even for a specialist, reliable information on the Islamic world outside of the first edition of the *E. I.*, in English or any European language, was largely unavailable."

Since 1960, when volume 1 of the second edition was published, sophistication in Western study of the Middle East has grown steadily, and introductory courses on Islam are now offered in religious studies departments at hundreds of colleges and universities in the United States. All this has had an impact on the appeal and need for the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, says Donner. "In some ways it makes it less necessary, and in others it makes it more necessary. It means there are more people who are informed and need to know specialized points and will then use it. On the other hand, it means that its contribution to general knowledge is less crucial, perhaps, than it was in earlier days. There are many more general books on Islam—dictionaries, encyclopedias, introductory texts—than there were in 1960. In a

way, the *E. I.* made these other books possible."

Many of the encyclopedia's articles represent original, ground-breaking research. Each article includes a basic bibliography of primary sources and secondary literature written up to the date of submission that enables scholars to get oriented and begin their own work.

Both Donner and Bacharach require undergraduates in their courses on Islam to read certain general articles in the encyclopedia, such as the one on the Abbasid dynasty, written by Bernard Lewis. "The Abbasids being one of the most important dynasties in Islamic history, he could have written a 500-page article," says Donner. "But his purpose was to give a general orientation, a masterful survey in a few pages, from which you can then move into more specialized areas—particular caliphs or institutions."

Because of the comprehensiveness of many of the articles in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*—even those written as far back as the 1950s for volume 1—the encyclopedia's continued primacy as a research tool seems assured. "Good general information on Islam is now available elsewhere," Bacharach notes. "But the number of new journal articles on specialized, noncurrent topics in Islamic studies is not overwhelming. So, for information on, say, a particular ruler or minister, or on Islamic naval warfare in the medieval period, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* is still the best place to start." □

Other NEH-Supported Projects on Islam

- This summer, at the University of Florida in Gainesville, an institute for secondary school teachers will address the role of Judaism and Islam in world history and their contributions to Western civilization.
- Also this summer, a summer seminar for secondary school teachers will be held at Columbia University to examine the Islamic vision in religion and literature through study of four classic texts.
- A critical study of the cultural context of Islamic science, including the appropriation, assimilation, and eventual fading of Greek science in medieval Islamic culture, is under way at Harvard University.
- To prepare a unit on Islam for inclusion in a college-level course on world cultures, twenty-five faculty members at Indiana's Butler University are studying Islamic culture through discussion of the *Qur'an*, works on Muslim history, and biographies of Muhammad.
- Mansoor Moaddel of Oberlin College in Ohio has received a fellowship to study Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East.
- Travel to collections grants have aided Peter R. Weisensel of Minnesota's Macalester College in studying Russian perceptions of Islam and Muslims from 1700 to 1930, and Caesar E. Farah of the University of Minnesota in studying German perceptions of Islam on the eve of World War I.
- Younger Scholars awards have enabled Jennifer L. Tiedeman of Durham Academy in North Carolina to study the status of women in the Muslim world, and Sarah L. Stein of South Eugene High School in Oregon to study portrayals of Arab-Jew conflict in literature.
- Dartmouth College has received support to plan a traveling exhibition, catalogue, and educational programs on images of paradise in Islamic art.



From 1978 to 1985, to produce the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Princeton University received \$117,961 in outright and matching funds from the Tools category of the Division of Research Programs. Since 1985, Harvard University has received \$120,406 through the same program to continue the project.

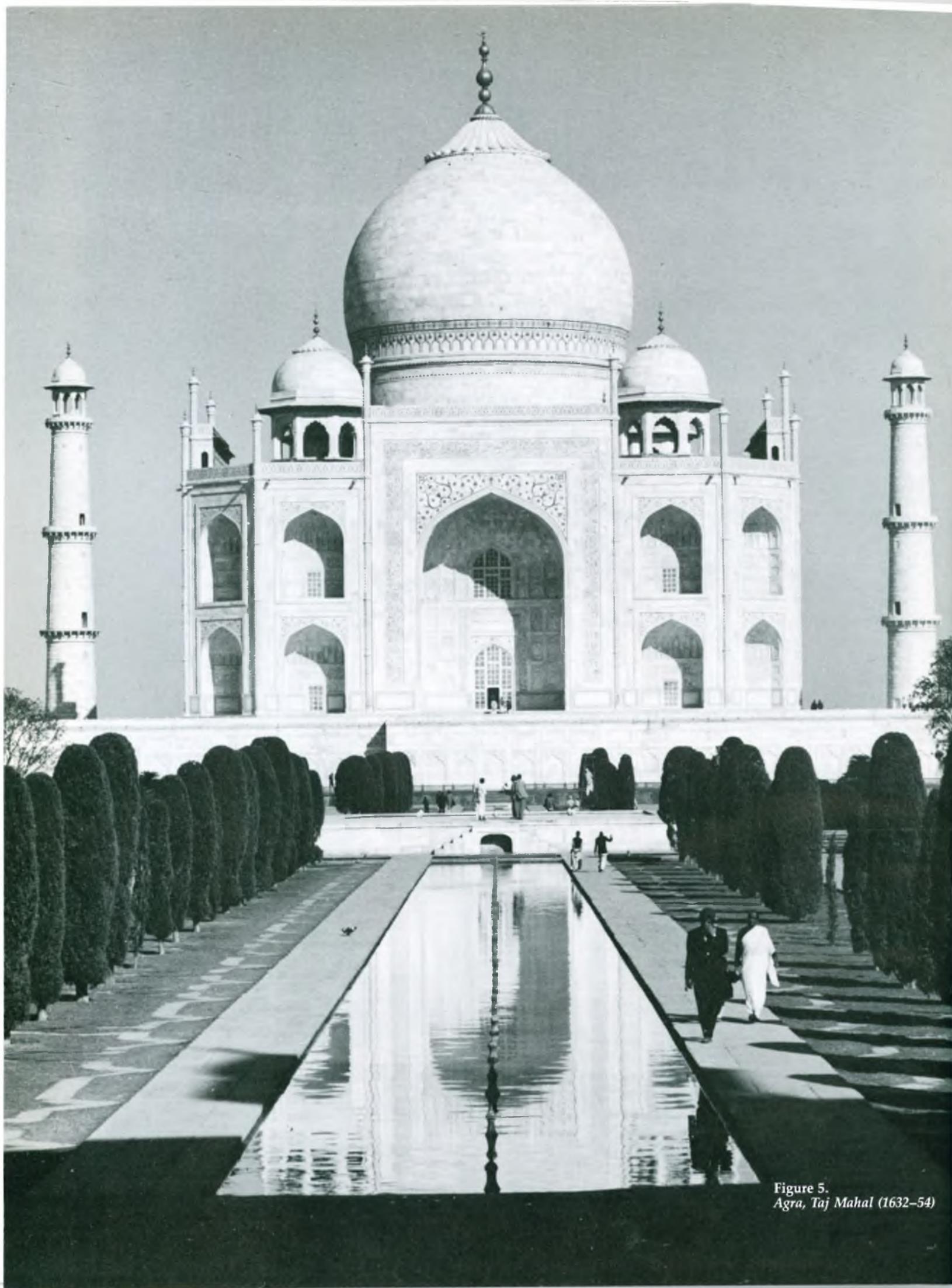


Figure 5.
Agra, Taj Mahal (1632-54)

THE SPLENDORS OF ISLAMIC ART

BY SHEILA S. BLAIR AND JONATHAN M. BLOOM

GOD'S REVELATIONS to Muhammad in early seventh-century Arabia mark the beginnings of Islam, which quickly spread over an enormous region stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to China, and from the central Asian steppes to the grasslands of Africa. The arts of the Islamic world developed out of earlier artistic traditions, primarily those of the late-antique Mediterranean world and of Sasanian Iran. Over the next six centuries, a distinctive Islamic culture emerged with such characteristic artistic forms as the mosque, the minaret, arabesque, and ornamental calligraphy.

The most productive period in the visual arts of the Islamic world spanned the years from the Mongol conquests in the middle of the thirteenth century to the advent of European colonial rule in the nineteenth. Within that time frame, the Alhambra, the Taj Mahal, and Persian miniature painting were produced. Our book, *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 1250–1800*, written with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, will set these and other works of art into their broader social and economic contexts, with an exploration of function, patronage, and meaning. The book will be published in 1995 as a volume in the Pelican History of Art series.

Sheila S. Blair and Jonathan M. Bloom are a husband-and-wife team of independent scholars of Islamic art in Richmond, New Hampshire. They are the Islam editors for The Dictionary of Art, Macmillan's forthcoming thirty-volume encyclopedia of world art.

In the thirteenth century, the arrival of Mongol nomads from central Asia disrupted many of the political and social institutions of Islamic urban society. The date 1250 is a watershed not only in Iran and Mesopotamia, the lands conquered by the Mongols, but also further west. Until this date, a caliph (successor to Muhammad) in Baghdad ruled in name, if not in fact, over most of the Islamic world, and a traveler would encounter familiar institutions from Cordoba in Spain to Bukhara in central Asia. After 1250, however, a series of distinct regional empires arose, each of which had its own urban centers and cultural identity.

In Spain, the spread of Christianity reduced Islamic rule to the Nasrid court at Granada, whose brilliant culture dominated western Islamic lands until 1492, when Granada was

conquered and non-Christians were expelled from Spain. The center of the Nasrid kingdom was the Alhambra, a palace located on a spur of the Sierra Nevada overlooking Granada. A complex of splendid royal residences, the Alhambra (from the Arabic *al-hamrā'*, the red [fort]) was built on the remains of an earlier fortress and palace under the patronage of the Nasrid sultans, particularly Yusuf I (r. 1333–54) and Muhammad V (r. 1354–91).

The Alhambra's Court of the Lions (*Figure 1*) was the centerpiece of the private quarters of the sultan, in contrast to the more public spaces of the Court of the Myrtles. In its middle stands a fountain that has given the palace its modern name. The twelve lions supporting the basin were probably reused from the earlier palace on the site. An eleventh-century



Photo by Mas, Barcelona

Figure 1. Granada, Alhambra Palace, Court of the Lions (1354–91)

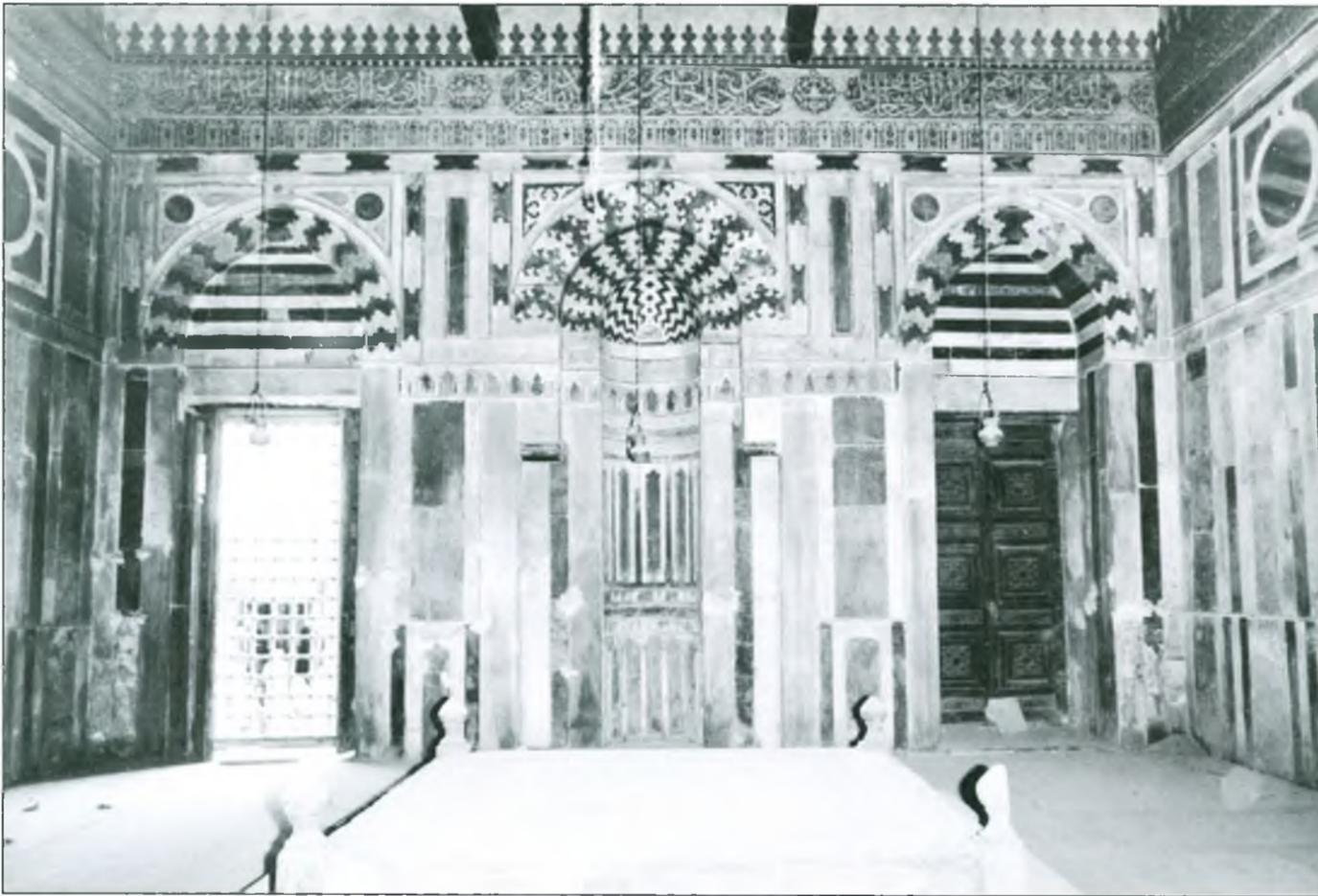


Photo by Michael Meinecke

Figure 2. Cairo, Mausoleum of Barquq, Interior of Tomb (1384–86)



Topkapı, Çelik Müzesi, İstanbul

Figure 3. Ceremonial caftan made for the Ottoman prince Bayezid, mid-sixteenth century

poem describing the palace connects them with Solomon's "brazen sea" (I Kings, 7:23–26), suggesting that the palatine traditions of the Mediterranean world were continued in medieval Islamic Spain. The architecture displays subtle harmonies of design in the mathematical rhythms and proportions of the arcades, and the carved stucco and tile mosaic reflect the finest workmanship of the day.

In Egypt and Syria, Turkish slaves from central Asia and the Caucasus known as Mamluks set up a self-perpetuating sequence of sultans that made Cairo the capital of Arab Islam for the next two and a half centuries. In Cairo alone, nearly 250 buildings survive from the period, giving the old quarters of that city their distinctive aspects.

Most of the buildings are trusts, or foundations, for pious purposes. Many of the foundations combined the tomb of the trust's founder with buildings providing a variety of social services, such as schools, hospitals, drinking fountains, and convents for mystics. The complexes

were wedged into the dense urban setting on irregular plots with the tomb facing the street (Figure 2), so that the deceased could garner the blessings of passersby. The exteriors were faced with superbly cut stone; the interiors were revetted with marble, mosaics, or carved stucco, depending on the budget. By the time of the sultan Barquq (r. 1382–99), marble was in short supply, so the interior decorators of his tomb had to slice antique columns into thin strips, which were pieced together in an intricate pattern of paneling.

In Anatolia (Asia Minor), a series of small principalities was eventually amalgamated under the Ottomans (1281–1924), who after 1453 transformed the moribund Constantinople of the late Byzantine period into the metropolitan city of Istanbul. Its culture and style set the tone for an empire that eventually encompassed the Balkans, Anatolia, the Levant (countries bordering on the eastern Mediterranean), Iraq, Arabia, Egypt, and North Africa.

One of the major sources of Ottoman wealth was the textile industry, which one historian has likened in importance to the heavy industry of

modern industrial societies. Anatolia was both a transit point for goods produced further east as well as a place of production. Pile rugs had been made for a millennium in the Middle East, but their production in commercial quantities coincides with the rise of the Ottomans. Even more sumptuous fabrics were reserved for the sultans' clothing. One ceremonial caftan (Figure 3), woven of seven colors of silk and gold thread in the mid-sixteenth century, has a never-repeating design of flowers, stems, and serrated leaves characteristic of the Ottoman court style.

In Iran, the Mongols themselves converted to Islam and embraced the urban culture, becoming major patrons of architecture and the arts. Book illustration arose as a major artistic form. Illustrated books had been produced sporadically in earlier periods, but under Mongol patronage their visual and expressive potential was realized. Later generations looked back to this as the time when "the veil was lifted from the face of Persian painting." Under the succeeding Timurid and Safavid dynasties, the arts of the book continued to flourish, creating a world of color and line in which birds sing and flowers bloom eternally.

One of the most magnificent examples of book illustration is a now-dispersed copy of the Persian national epic, the *Shahnama* (Book of Kings). The book was produced at Tabriz in northwestern Iran about 1335. There the cosmopolitan court workshops assimilated motifs and pictorial conventions from both East and West. In the illustration of "Nushirwan rewarding the vizier Buzurgmihir" (Figure 4), the trees in the lower right corner are based on Chinese prototypes.

In India, the first permanent Muslim principalities were established at the end of the eleventh century. In the sixteenth century, Babur, a prince who claimed descent from the Mongols, established the Mughal dynasty (1526–1824). The art and architecture of the Mughals combined the vibrant traditions of Hindu and Jain art with forms and motifs imported from Iran.

Perhaps the best-known example of this stylistic interplay is the Taj Mahal (Figure 5), built by the emperor Shah Jahan. It combines the plan of a typical Iranian garden pal-

ace with domes and pillared pavilions of distinctly Indian profile. Popularly celebrated as a memorial for his beloved wife Nur Jahan (Light of the World), the building symbolizes the emperor's aspirations as "King of the World." Set within a garden divided by water channels, the ensemble embodies the Islamic concept of paradise and is the culmination of a long tradition of funerary architecture in the eastern Islamic world.

With the advent of European colonial rule and the widespread importation of cheap manufactured goods, local artistic traditions weakened and old formulas were repeated unchanged. At the same time, Europeans and Americans, such as painter Frederick Church, began to appreci-

ate the rich visual heritage of the Islamic world and to copy Islamic decorative motifs. The fascination with the exotic Orient sometimes devolved into clichés such as the stereotypical Alhambra movie palace of the 1920s.

By examining the flowering of Islamic art and architecture during the centuries from 1250 to 1800, our volume will provide a much-needed resource on the history of Islamic art for teachers, students, scholars, and the general public. □

In 1989, Sheila S. Blair received \$90,000 in outright funds from the Interpretive Research category of the Division of Research Programs to support a history of Islamic art and architecture, 1250–1800.



Figure 4. "Nushirwan rewarding the vizier Buzurgmihir," from the *Shahnama* (Book of Kings), ca. 1335

Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution



Courtesy of Herbert F. Janick, Jr.

Herbert F. Janick, Jr. *Professing History Publicly*

SCHOLARS, certainly historians, are already convinced that connections with the past are important, but a lot of people aren't," says Herbert F. Janick, Jr., a professor of history at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury.

For the past fifteen years, Janick has endeavored to raise historical awareness among public audiences in Connecticut. In 1989, he received the Connecticut Humanities Council's Wilbur Cross Award for his outstanding contributions to the state's public humanities programming.

Devoted to the idea that historical awareness should inform public-policy decisions, Janick has contributed his communications skills as a project director, a lecturer, a panelist, a commentator, and a seminar leader in programs funded by the Connecticut Humanities Council across the state. He has served two terms on the council and has participated in every public humanities format: He has consulted on museum exhibitions, appeared in films, organized public-policy conferences, supervised scholar-in-residence programs, conducted oral-history projects, led walking tours, worked with teachers in summer institutes and other professional-development programs,

and participated in library-based book discussion groups.

Janick sees his involvement within a larger context: "One of the main currents in history today is an effort to try to develop a larger audience, in some ways to get back to the nineteenth-century notion of historians as people to listen to and read."

A scholar of Connecticut's twentieth-century social and cultural history, Janick has initiated several civic projects based on his knowledge. For example, he founded the Danbury Preservation Trust in the late 1970s to broaden the historical sensitivity of city officials, developers, and the general public. "We tried to give people a feel for how the past was recorded in the structure of their community—the buildings, open spaces, and streets—and give them some suggestions as to how they could use that awareness in future urban planning," he says. "The local 'built' community is important in giving people a sense of place, a sense of roots and uniqueness."

Notwithstanding the time he spends on public humanities efforts, Janick is a full-time academic with a busy undergraduate teaching schedule. Among his scholarly achievements is *A Diverse People, Connecticut 1914 to the Present* (1976), which is the standard study of modern Connecticut history. But finding the proper balance between his professional academic pursuits and his involvement in public humanities programs is a continuing challenge for him. "My career has been a series of public involvements, say four or five years of intense involvement, then pulling back to fulfill my academic responsibilities and to catch up on the profession, and then a feeling that I can reach out again," he says.

When Janick feels his inspiration for public programs begin to flag, he burrows into the reflective life of scholarship and teaching. A self-professed dilettante, he is free to teach to his interests, and, under no great

pressure to publish, can do research on topics of his choice.

"In academe there's more time for thinking about what you're doing," he says. "My public efforts have been helpful to me in expanding what I think about as history. They have really forced me not only to think about what I'm going to cover in my courses this semester, but to ask the broader question: How can history contribute to the outlook of lay people? Talking to people who are concerned with issues and problems and not just a self-defined specialty has broadened my own historical perspective."

Thinking of himself primarily as a "teacher-scholar" rather than a "scholar-teacher," Janick would like to see greater cross-fertilization between the academy and the public sphere. "The more the line between the academy and the public is erased, the better off a scholar is," he says. "Really, of what value is your knowledge if you can't communicate it as widely as possible? If scholars are not thinking that way, I think something's happened in our training that's not good."

Wherever possible, humanities scholarship should address public issues, Janick says. "Back when Western Connecticut State was a teachers' college, granted it was limited to the training of teachers, but its faculty spoke to business and civic groups and were called upon by newspapers to comment on events. There seemed to be much more of a sense that we were not just for those students who entered our doors but for the entire community, and I don't see that as a watering down of scholarship at all. Ideas in books don't have power unless they have an impact on the way people behave. I think that people want their learning to mean something in their everyday life, whether they are in or out of school. And a good teacher can make that happen."

—James S. Turner

CALENDAR

May ♦ June



Photo by Jay Anderson

The American Dance Festival will hold seminars and performances on "The Black Tradition in American Modern Dance," June 19-23, at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina.



Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village

This 1906 motorized bus of the Rapid Motor Vehicle Company is in the exhibition, "Americans on Vacation," opening Memorial Day weekend at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.



Museum of the City of New York

"The Hebrew in Colonial America: Historical, Literary, and Theological Aspects" is the subject of a conference at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, May 20-23.



Morris Arboretum

"Victorian Visions" examines the relationships of gardens to cultural values in a continuing outdoor exhibition at the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia.



Library of Congress

"Stations of Bach" lays out the musician's life and times, and includes performances by soloists and choruses on PBS May 25.



Schenberg Center

This Black Star Line stock certificate is part of an exhibition on the back-to-Africa movement leader, Marcus Garvey, at the African American Museum in Cleveland, Ohio through July.

—Kristen Hall



NOTEWORTHY

Second Printing

Sales of *The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* have reached the 50,000 mark and gone into a second printing of 15,000. The sales aren't all south of the Mason-Dixon line, either, according to Johanna Grimes, the *Encyclopedia's* marketing manager. She says the NEH-supported book has done best in the South, well in the West and Midwest, poorest in New England, well in New York City. Grimes attributes the spread of sales to displaced Southerners. "If you're from the South, there's always a part of you that's Southern."



Mahalia Jackson, as portrayed on a paper fan from the Dillon Funeral Homes and Burial Association, 1968.

The Jameses and LBJ

Sixty-one radio, TV, and film projects will be sharing in the \$12.9 million that NEH is spending as part of its media projects program. The money is designated for planning, scripting, and production.

The ETV Endowment of South Carolina, Inc., will spend \$1,000,250

to produce a five-hour miniseries on the James family, and KERA/Dallas will use its \$750,455 to create three one-hour documentaries on former President Lyndon Johnson. Other projects include WGBH/Boston's series of children's stories, *Long Ago and Far Away*; the New York Foundation for the Arts' miniseries on a Connecticut family during the Revolutionary War; and Los Angeles KCET-TV's biography of lawyer Clarence Darrow.

A Program for All Disciplines

The word *paideia* may be Greek to the general population, but to students at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, it signifies an interdisciplinary approach to education. The college's Paideia program evolved from an NEH challenge grant to develop a permanent endowment for the program, which includes two courses, one a freshman course and the second an advanced course to be completed by graduation.

The freshman course, taught by English and history professors, introduces students to primary texts in their historical contexts. The course emphasizes writing through five essay assignments. In the second Paideia course the students do a historical research paper. "We keep the program alive by supplying sabbaticals for faculty to refresh themselves," says Wilfred Bunge, head of the Paideia program.

Bunge also edits the program's journal, *Agora*, which has grown out of the program in an effort to maintain conversation among the disciplines. The journal is a forum for everything from faculty members' notes made on sabbatical to transcripts of guest lecturers.

Luther College matched the \$350,000 NEH challenge grant three to one. The ability to predict the budget has been a major help, Bunge says. "Otherwise you have to make a case for every innovative thing you want to do."

Making His Mark

Did you ever wonder how the lead gets in the middle of the pencil? Henry Petrowski did, and the result is a new book, *The Pencil: A History of Design and Circumstance*.

Petrowski, a professor of engineering at Duke University, began and completed his first manuscript with an NEH fellowship grant, which allowed him a year as a fellow at the National Humanities Center in Re-



Alfred A. Knopf

search Triangle Park, North Carolina, from August 1987 to July 1988. Using the pencil as a vehicle for exploring the relationship of engineering and culture, he set out to make engineering concepts available to the nonengineer. "The pencil," he recalls, "really seemed to take over the book."

The result was a 450-page compendium of history, social commentary, engineering principles, and pencil trivia. (*A pencil is two grooved slats of wood fused around the lead—really graphite—by hydraulic pressure.*)

Published by Alfred Knopf, the book has received attention in such places as *The Atlantic* and *Publisher's Weekly* and in the foreign media.

Petrowski says he used to regard the pencil as a neglected, common object, but now he sees differently. "To scrutinize the trivial can be to discover the monumental," he says. Well, he does have a point.

—Carole Parish

Ex Libris

BOOKS PUBLISHED RECENTLY WITH NEH SUPPORT

N·E·H

AWARD WINNERS

- ◆ **African Studies Association, Herskovits Award, 1989, co-winner**
Miller, Joseph C. *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.
- ◆ **American Historical Association, Helen and Howard R. Marraro Prize, 1989**
Grendler, Paul. *Schooling in Renaissance Italy, Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.
- ◆ **American Historical Association, James Breasted Prize, Best Book in English in Any Field of History Prior to A.D. 1000**
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- ◆ **American Institute of Graphic Artists, Certificate of Excellence for Design**
Addiss, Stephen. *The Art of Zen.* Lawrence: University of Kansas; New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989.
- ◆ **American Studies Association, John Hope Franklin Publication Prize, honorable mention**
Decorative Arts Society of the Society of Architectural Historians, Charles F. Montgomery Award
Old Sturbridge Village Research Library Society, E. Harold Hugo Memorial Book Prize, special recognition for an exhibition catalogue
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Younger Scholars Program

BY LEON BRAMSON

A JUNIOR FROM the University of South Alabama in Mobile won the 1989 student competition of the Alabama Philosophical Society with his paper titled "Artificial Intelligence and the Problem of Consciousness." A graduate student in English literature at UCLA had her undergraduate project on Julian of Norwich published in *Mystics Quarterly* (1989). A senior at Lawrence High School in Cedarhurst, New York, had her project on Sun Yat-sen published in *The Concord Review* (1989). These students received NEH Younger Scholars grants, and their papers resulted from the summer research projects they undertook with their awards.

The Younger Scholars program enhances the intellectual growth of promising high school and college students by providing them with research opportunities. (College seniors and graduate students are not eligible.) Awards support students' full-time work on humanities topics of their choice for nine weeks during the summer under the supervision of project advisers. Recipients do research and write a paper; no academic credit may be sought for these projects. Awards are \$2,200 for college students and \$1,800 for high school students, including \$400 for the project adviser.

The awards confer considerable prestige on their winners. Many college presidents mention them in their annual reports along with Rhodes

Leon Bramson is a program officer in the Division of Fellowships and Seminars. He developed the NEH Younger Scholars program in 1983.

scholarships, Truman fellowships, and Mellon, Watson, and National Science Foundation grants to outstanding undergraduates. High school students who win these awards tend to be more attractive to their first-choice colleges. In the journal of the National Collegiate Honors Society, a professor of English at the University of Rochester cited Younger Scholars as "the national program that in recent years has done more than any other to promote undergraduate research in the humanities."

Project advisers typically view their reward as the opportunity to work with talented and highly motivated students. Even before the project begins, the adviser's role is crucial. Advisers must bring the opportunity to the attention of capable students. Teachers need to start thinking about encouraging their outstanding students to apply for the program as early as possible before the November 1 application deadline. In August, the Endowment sends flyers announcing the Younger Scholars program to all advanced-placement teachers in humanities disciplines at the high school level, and to department heads in the humanities at all two- and four-year colleges and universities. Some institutions designate individuals to coordinate student research opportunities; at others, a dean or professor may take responsibility for getting the word out. One dean sends a notice to all sophomores with strong records of academic achievement and invites them to an individual meeting with him to discuss the program. An English professor has a group meeting with potentially interested students in his department.

Because the student writes the appli-

cation, the adviser should be a good listener and questioner. Students need to bear in mind that their projects must be completed within nine weeks, so an adviser can help by working with the student to narrow a topic and by making bibliographic suggestions. Younger Scholars are encouraged to develop their own proposals and are not permitted to work on a research effort being carried out by a professor or an institution.

After the awards are announced in March, planning sessions to work out a schedule and mutual expectations between Younger Scholar and adviser are urged. During the summer, advisers contribute to the success of Younger Scholars projects through weekly discussions of methods, topics, and bibliography. They challenge students to improve their writing through revision and provide moral support during moments of discouragement. Tact, generosity with time, willingness to discuss problems as they arise, respect for the intellectual growth and integrity of the student, and high intellectual standards—the qualities of any good teacher—are essential in advising young scholars.

"I have seen the way a scholar works, and I am convinced that I am ready to devote myself to such a life," wrote one Younger Scholar in a final report, indicating the tremendous impact an outstanding teacher can have on a capable student.

Application materials for 1991 Younger Scholars will be available in July 1990. Write or call the Division of Fellowships and Seminars, Room 316, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20506; 202/786-0463.

DEADLINES

Area code for all telephone numbers is 202.

	Deadline	For projects beginning
Division of Education Programs —James C. Herbert, Director 786-0373		
Higher Education in the Humanities—Lyn Maxwell White 786-0380	October 1, 1990	May 1, 1991
Institutes for College and University Faculty—Barbara A. Ashbrook, 786-0380	October 1, 1990	May 1, 1991
Core Curriculum Projects—Frank Frankfort 786-0380	October 1, 1990	May 1, 1991
Two-Year Colleges—Judith Jeffrey Howard 786-0380	October 1, 1990	May 1, 1991
Elementary and Secondary Education in the Humanities—F. Bruce Robinson 786-0377	December 15, 1990	July 1991
Special Opportunity in Foreign Languages—F. Bruce Robinson 786-0377	September 14, 1990	January 1991
Division of Fellowships and Seminars —Guinevere L. Griest, Director 786-0458		
Fellowships for University Teachers—Maben D. Herring 786-0466	June 1, 1990	January 1, 1991
Fellowships for College Teachers and Independent Scholars—Karen Fuglie 786-0466	June 1, 1990	January 1, 1991
Fellowships on the Foundations of American Society—Maben D. Herring, 786-0466	June 1, 1990	January 1, 1991
Summer Stipends—Joseph B. Neville 786-0466	October 1, 1990	May 1, 1991
Travel to Collections—Kathleen Mitchell 786-0463	July 15, 1990	December 1, 1990
Faculty Graduate Study Program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities— Maben D. Herring 786-0466	March 15, 1991	September 1, 1992
Younger Scholars—Leon Bramson 786-0463	November 1, 1990	June 1, 1991
Summer Seminars for College Teachers—Stephen Ross 786-0463		
Participants	March 1, 1991	Summer 1991
Directors	March 1, 1991	Summer 1992
Summer Seminars for School Teachers—Michael Hall 786-0463		
Participants	March 1, 1991	Summer 1991
Directors	April 1, 1991	Summer 1992
Office of Challenge Grants —Harold Cannon, Director 786-0361	May 1, 1991	December 1, 1990
Office of Preservation —George F. Farr, Jr., Director 786-0570		
Preservation—George F. Farr, Jr. 786-0570	June 1, 1990	January 1, 1991
U.S. Newspaper Program—Jeffrey Field 786-0570	June 1, 1990	January 1, 1991

DEADLINES

Area code for all telephone numbers is 202.

	Deadline	For projects beginning
Division of General Programs —Donald Gibson, Director 786-0267		
Humanities Projects in Media—James Dougherty 786-0278	September 14, 1990	April 1, 1991
Humanities Projects in Museums and Historical Organizations—Marsha Semmel 786-0284	June 8, 1990	January 1, 1991
Public Humanities Projects—Wilsonia Cherry 786-0271	September 14, 1990	April 1, 1991
Humanities Projects in Libraries—Thomas Phelps 786-0271		
Planning	August 3, 1990	January 1, 1991
Implementation	September 14, 1990	April 1, 1991

Division of Research Programs

—Richard Ekman, Director 786-0200

Texts

—Margot Backas 786-0207

Editions—Douglas Arnold 786-0207	June 1, 1990	April 1, 1991
Translations—Martha Chomiak 786-0207	June 1, 1990	April 1, 1991
Publication Subvention—Gordon McKinney 786-0207	April 1, 1991	October 1, 1991

Reference Materials

—Jane Rosenberg 786-0358

Tools—Helen Agüera 786-0358	September 1, 1990	July 1, 1991
Access—Jane Rosenberg 786-0358	September 1, 1990	July 1, 1991

Interpretive Research

—Irving Buchen 786-0210

Projects—David Wise 786-0210	October 15, 1990	July 1, 1991
Humanities, Science, and Technology—Daniel Jones 786-0210	October 15, 1990	July 1, 1991

Conferences

—Christine Kalke 786-0204

Centers for Advanced Study—David Coder 786-0204	December 1, 1990	July 1, 1991
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International Research

—David Coder 786-0204

	March 15, 1991	January 1, 1992
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Division of State Programs

—Marjorie A. Berlincourt, Director 786-0254

Each state humanities council establishes its own grant guidelines and application deadlines. Addresses and telephone numbers of these state programs may be obtained from the division.

To receive guidelines for any NEH program, contact the Office of Publications and Public Affairs at 202/786-0438. Guidelines are available at least two months in advance of application deadlines.

Telecommunications device for the deaf: 202/786-0282.

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