

Ruler of the Ottoman Empire from age 16, Sultan Abdülmedjid I keenly cultivated ties to industrializing Europe. He had to reduce his aid to hungry Ireland lest he impertinently outdo Ireland's own ruler, Queen Victoria of England. He nevertheless earned wide praise, including this news clipping from April 21, 1847. Lithograph courtesy Bridgeman Images.

Publisher

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President

Nabeel M. Amudi

Director

Public Affairs
Alma Kombargi

Editor

Richard Doughty

Assistant Editors

Arthur P. Clark
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Circulation

Edna Catchings

Administration

Sarah Miller

Print Design

and Production

Graphic Engine Design

Printed in the USA

RR Donnelley/Wetmore

Digital Design

and Production

eSiteful Corporation

Online Translations

Transperfect

Contacts

Subscriptions:
aramcoworld@aramcoservices.com

Editorial:

editor@aramcoservices.com

Mail:

AramcoWorld
Post Office Box 2106
Houston, Texas
77252-2106 USA

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Back Cover



Inspired by the many cats in the streets of Er-Riadh, French street artist C215 adorned the Tunisian village with more than a dozen polychrome felines. Photo by Kevin Bubriski.

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *AramcoWorld*, formerly *Saudi Aramco World*. Our name has changed to reflect our global organization and readership. Our award-winning coverage awaits you inside and at www.aramcoworld.com.

Saudi Aramco and Aramco are trademarks of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company. Saudi Aramco is a leading, globally integrated energy and chemicals company. We distribute *AramcoWorld* to increase cross-cultural understanding by broadening knowledge of the histories, cultures and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their global connections. In print, *AramcoWorld* is distributed six times a year, without charge, to a limited number of interested readers; online, it is archived and indexed from 1960 to the present.



SULTAN ABDÜLMEDJID I EMPEROR OF TURKEY

By the undersigned NOBLEMEN, GENTLEMEN & Inhabitants of
IRELAND
we leave most respectfully to approach Your Majesty, in order to testify our deep-felt thanks and gratitude for the munificent aid and attentionately displayed by Your Majesty towards the suffering and afflicted Inhabitants of IRELAND, and to thank Your Majesty for the liberal Contribution of

One Thousand Pounds

2 An Irish Tale of Hunger and the Sultan

Written and photographed by Tom Verde

In 1847, the staple food of Ireland's poor—potatoes—was being ruined by blight. Among those to send aid was the 24-year-old Sultan Abdülmedjid I of Turkey. His gift—and there may, or may not, have been more than one—spawned both legend and diplomatic friendship.

12 Djerba's Museum of the Street

Written by Caroline Stone
Photography by Kevin Bubriski

As street art grows more popular worldwide as a mark of civic vitality, a French-Tunisian partnership sponsored more than 200 works by more than 100 street artists from more than 30 countries in the village of Er-Riadh at the center of the Tunisian island of Djerba.

"When people saw what was being painted on other people's walls," says one resident, they said, "We want something too!"





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The Blues of Arabia

Written by Edward Fox
Photography by Hatim Oweida

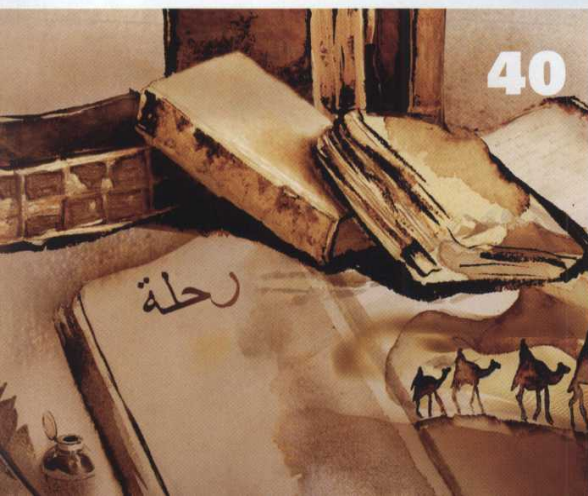
The music known as “Voice of the Gulf”—*sawt al-khaleej* in Arabic—came from fishermen and pearl divers who joined tales of hardship and longing with cathartic rhythms, which today resonate from Kuwait south to Oman—especially in Bahrain, where the Ensemble Muhammad bin Faris enralls audiences weekly with modern touches on tradition.

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Luxor’s First Local Lens

Written by Maria Golia
Photographs courtesy of Ehab Gaddis

In 1907, Attiya Gaddis opened in his native Luxor its first Egyptian-owned photographic studio. Based there, he photographed more than 60 years of events and hundreds, even thousands, of people, creating a uniquely local visual record that his descendants are preserving and making available to the public.



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Travelers of Al-Andalus, Part 1: The Travel Writer Ibn Jubayr

Written by Daniel Grammatico and Louis Werner
Art by Belén Esturla

Our six-part series begins with a two-year pilgrimage by one of the great founders of the literary genre of *rihla*, or travelogue. Over later centuries, his style was widely emulated (and plagiarized), and today the *rihla* of Ibn Jubayr uniquely illuminates a 12th-century Mediterranean world of paradoxical complexity.

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Written by Julie Weiss

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