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Guidelines and Transliteration

Guidelines for Authors

For details on the submission of papers and the preparation of papers for publication, authors are requested to consult and follow the latest *Guidelines for Authors*. These are available on the International Association for the Study of Arabia website at <https://www.theiasa.com/seminar/publication/>. Please contact the editors on <https://www.theiasa.com/seminar/publication/> for further information.

Formatting

Electronic versions of papers being submitted for publication should be set in Times New Roman 12-point typeface if at all possible, with double-line spacing on A4-paper size and 2.45 cm margins all round.

The IASA System of Transliteration of Relevant Characters

Quotations, single words, and phrases from Arabic or other languages written in non-Roman alphabets, are transliterated according to the systems set out below.

- We firmly encourage authors to use the correctly transliterated form of any place name, but the names used for types of pottery, archaeological periods, and cultures which have become archaeological standards should be used in that form: Umm an-Nar, Julfar ware, etc. If any place name needs to be given in a non-standard format, the correctly transliterated form should be added in the first instance in any paper (see *Guidelines for Authors* for more details).
- Personal names, toponyms, and other words that have entered English or French in a particular form, should be used in that form when they occur in an English or French sentence, unless they are part of a quotation in the original language, or of a correctly transliterated name or phrase. In the latter cases, they should be correctly transliterated, even when they occur in an English or French sentence.

1. Arabic

ء M	ج j	ذ dh (dh)	ش sh (sh)	ظ ẓ	ق q	ن n
ب b	ح ḥ	ر r	ص ṣ	ع ʿ	ك k	ه h
ت t	خ kh (kh)	ز z	ض ḍ	غ gh (gh)	ل l	و w
ث th (th)	د d	س s	ط ṭ	ف f	م m	ي y
Vowels	a i u ā ī ū	Diphthongs	aw ay			

The underlined variants can be used to avoid any ambiguity, e.g. *lam yushir* vs. *lam yushir*.

Initial *hamzah* is omitted.

Alif maqṣūrah is transliterated as ā.

The *lām* of the article is not assimilated before the ‘sun letters’, thus the form should be *al-shams* but not *ash-shams*.

The *hamzat al-waṣl* of the article should be shown after vowels except after the preposition *li-*, as in the Arabic script, e.g. *wa-^ll-wazīr*, *f^ll-bayt*, but *li-l-wazīr*.

Tāʾ marbūṭah (ة) should be rendered *-ah*, except in a construct: e.g. *birkah*, *zakāh*, and *birkat al-sibāḥah*, *zakāt al-ḥiṭr*.

2. Persian, Urdu, and Ottoman Turkish

Please transliterate these languages using the system set out for Arabic above with the additional letters transliterated according to the system in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (<http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-islamica/system-of-transliteration-of-arabic-and-persian-characters-transliteration>) except that ž is used instead of zh. There is a useful table to convert Ottoman Turkish to modern Turkish characters on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Turkish_language.

3. Ancient North and South Arabian Consonants:

ʾ b t ṭ ḥ g ḥ d ḏ r z s¹ s² s³ š
ḏ ṭ z ʿ ġ f q k l m n h w y

4. Other Semitic languages

Please use the transliteration systems outlined in the *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* (BASOR) 262 (1986), p. 3. (www.jstor.org/stable/i258780).

Editor's Foreword

The Seminar for Arabian Studies is the longest-running academic forum dedicated to the presentation of research on the cultural and natural heritage of the Arabian Peninsula. Since its first meeting in 1968, the Seminar has covered a wide range of subjects including archaeology, epigraphy, history, ethnography, art, architecture, linguistics, and literature from prehistory to the present. In 2019 the Seminar changed from being a British-based forum to an international setting, starting with a meeting at the University of Leiden and continuing with other European institutions. This year marks another turning point, as the meeting is being organized for the first time in the Arabian Peninsula, at the Zayed National Museum, Department of Culture and Tourism (Abu Dhabi), bringing this increasingly important international meeting to the region.

The 57th Seminar for Arabian Studies, held in Paris in 2024, was a particularly memorable event, bringing together scholars from a broad range of disciplines to discuss the archaeology, history, epigraphy, and philology of the Arabian Peninsula. In 2024, the Seminar took place from 27 to 29 June within the elegant architectural setting of the Institut national d'histoire de l'art, located in a remarkable 19th-century covered passage. The Steering Committee was especially grateful for the strong institutional support provided by the International Association for the Study of Arabia, AFALULA, Sorbonne Université, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, CNRS, Musée du Louvre, and the Senate of the French Republic.

Participation continues to grow annually, and in 2024 over 230 attendees joined the event both online and in person — the largest number ever. The academic programme was particularly rich, comprising eighty-eight papers and twenty posters, organized across several thematic sessions. In an effort to accommodate a broader range of contributions, two new presentation formats were introduced: a short rapportage format (15 minutes long) for fieldwork updates and a longer format (25 minutes long) allowing for synthetic overviews. Both were well received and reflected a desire to balance detailed case studies with broader interpretive syntheses.

The geographical breadth of the contributions was notable, with research presented from across the Arabian Peninsula. While continuing to highlight the evident and growing significance of research conducted in the north-west of the Peninsula, we are also pleased to note that, for the first time in many years a dedicated session 'Ancient South Arabia' was held, focusing on the south-west of the Peninsula. In addition, the programme embraced new thematic directions, such as heritage and community building, highlighting the growing recognition of the role of archaeology in cultural preservation and sustainable development.

As in previous years, special sessions provided a platform for focused discussions on timely topics. Two such sessions were held alongside the plenary. The first addressed Zaydi governance in Yemen, reflecting the Seminar's ongoing commitment to expanding its coverage of lesser-explored areas, particularly in the medieval and modern periods. The papers of this special session form part of this volume. The second, entitled 'Late Antique Arabia (4th–8th centuries): a changing landscape', gathered eleven specialists in archaeology, environmental studies, history, and epigraphy to examine the dynamic transformations of the region during this pivotal period. This session concluded with a keynote lecture by Martina Müller-Wiener and Martin Gussone, entitled *More than the Lakhmid capital — The late heyday of al-Hira in the early Islamic period*. The papers from the Special Session on Late Antique Arabia will be published in a Special Issue of *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy*.

In sum, the 57th Seminar was an intellectually stimulating and collegial gathering, and sincere thanks are due to the organizing team in Paris for their dedication in making the event such a success.

This volume of the *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* includes seventeen papers presented in the ordinary sessions and three papers presented in the special session 'Zaydi governance in Yemen', held in Paris. Our thanks go to all the authors who submitted papers and to the anonymous reviewers who contributed to the

academic robustness of the result. The publication of the volume within a year of the event itself is possible thanks to the efforts of a team which includes myself as Editor, and the Assistant Editors Irene Rossi, Akshyeta Suryanarayan, José Carvajal López, Daniel Eddisford, and Orhan Elmaz. We are also thankful for the support of Patrick Harris and Erin McGowan, the dedicated Archaeopress team, who worked hard to facilitate timely publication. Finally, we wish to thank Helen Knox, our copy-editor, whose indefatigable work and exceptional efforts have helped to bring this volume to completion. The Seminar for Arabian Studies and the *Proceedings* are organized by the Steering Committee of the Seminar for Arabian Studies and the International Foundation for the Study of Arabia (IASA). For additional information on the Seminar, please contact Kate Ayres-Kennet (seminar@theiasa.com). The IASA (formally the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia) is a charitable organization that promotes research on the cultural and natural heritage of the Arabian Peninsula. The IASA produces two annual bulletins. For further information about IASA, please write to contact@theiasa.com or visit the IASA website at www.theiasa.com.

Silvia Lischi

May 2025

Society of Antiquaries of London, Beatrice de Cardi keynote lecture

This year's lecture, generously supported by the Society of Antiquaries of London, entitled *More than the Lakhmid capital – The late heyday of al-Hira in the early Islamic period*, was given by Dr Martina Müller-Wiener and Dr Martin Gussone.

The Beatrice de Cardi Awards are administered by the Society of Antiquaries of London. The grants are worth up to £15,000 for archaeological research on the United Arab Emirates, the Sultanate of Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the Pakistan province of Balochistan.

The deadline for applications is 15 January annually.

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In Memoriam

Walter Wilhelm Müller (1933–2024)

A few weeks after his 91st birthday, Walter W. Müller, Professor Emeritus of Semitic Studies, died in Marburg. His name is inextricably linked with the post-war history of the study of ancient South Arabia and, like few others in his field, he has had a lasting influence on it. Walter Müller was born in 1933 in Weipert-Neugeschrei, then part of Czechoslovakia, in the Bohemian Ore Mountains. After being expelled in 1946, he attended the Realgymnasium in Beerfelden and Michelstadt in the Odenwald, where he passed his *Abitur* in 1955. Having graduated from high school, he initially studied Catholic theology in Mainz. Inspired by Hebrew, he took additional language courses in Syriac-Aramaic and Arabic in the first few semesters and began to turn to Semitic languages. Despite a tempting offer to continue his theological studies at the Germanicum in Rome, which would have relieved him of all future financial worries, he switched to Semitic Studies at the Mainz Seminar for Oriental Studies and continued his research in Tübingen with the internationally renowned South Arabian expert Maria Höfner, who at the time held the only professorship in the German-speaking world in Semitic Studies with a focus on Sabaic. This was even less of a career-conscious decision than it is today and was not without considerable risk if one wanted seriously to embark on an academic career. As he often mentioned with pride, Maria Höfner then became his doctoral supervisor, and in 1962 he wrote his dissertation which was a lexicographical and etymological work on the roots *mediae* and *tertia*e w/y in Ancient South Arabian.

Walter Müller's decision to move to Tübingen, however, was also significantly encouraged by the fact that this university offered the largest range of Middle Eastern subjects at the time and provided a unique opportunity to study Sabaic and the other Ancient South Arabian languages in a comparative linguistic environment. Otto Rössler, who was still teaching in Tübingen at the time, provided the methodological tools for this important work on Semito-Hamitic grammar, opening up the subject beyond the traditional relationships between Semitic languages; Müller always referred to him as one of his teachers. Before completing his doctorate, he took advantage of a Fulbright scholarship to spend a year as a research assistant to the Islamic scholar Gustav E. von Grunebaum at the newly founded Near Eastern Centre in Los Angeles, where he also had the opportunity to deepen his knowledge of the spoken Ethio-Semitic languages with Wolf Leslau. During his years as an *assistant* at Rudi Paret's Chair of Islamic Studies in Tübingen he completed a lexicographical and etymological thesis on Mehri which earned him his *Habilitation* in Semitic philology. A brief glance at the literature on linguistics at the time shows that Modern South Arabian was a much-neglected field in Semitic studies. Müller's examination of this language group produced results



that are still valid today. In a nutshell, they can be summarized as follows: Modern South Arabian is closely related to the Ethiopic languages. Ultimately, this finding leads to the implicit conclusion that Modern South Arabian is not to be regarded as the historical continuation of Sabaic or — probably — of the other Ancient South Arabian languages, a conclusion that was further confirmed by subsequent research a few decades later.

In addition to philology and linguistics, Tübingen also focused on another area, promoted by the geographer Hermann von Wissmann, ‘one of the last pioneers in the history of the discovery of our earth’, as Müller described him in his obituary. It is difficult to underestimate the importance for epigraphy of the opening up of South Arabian regional studies. Although philology, and in particular the greater understanding of lexicon and grammar, is an indispensable prerequisite for the correct translation of ancient South Arabian texts, a deeper understanding of an epigraphic document requires a clear idea of how it is embedded in its environment, for which geographical and topographical knowledge of the terrain often provides invaluable assistance. Müller’s collaboration with Hermann von Wissmann therefore provided him with an excellent preparation for the occasion when, after the end of the civil war in 1970, he was given the opportunity to lead the first German Yemen expedition in post-war history with two colleagues. This expedition, which had set itself the goal of epigraphic, archaeological, and linguistic exploration, opened up not only the epigraphic exploration of pre-Islamic southern Arabia but paved the way for scientific institutions, such as the German Archaeological Institute, to enter Yemen.

Even though Müller always described his years in Tübingen as his best and most productive, his full impact was in Marburg, where he was appointed full professor and successor to Otto Rössler in 1975. It was in Marburg that he trained the majority of his students who, after graduating, visited him again and again to work with him. He was particularly fortunate with his students from Arab countries. Many of them came to Marburg from Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan to study the languages and cultures of pre-Islamic Arabia with him, and he maintained personal contact with them after they had completed their doctorates. They are now either professors or in leading positions in antiquities administrations in their home countries. It was in Marburg that the *Sabaic Dictionary* (1982) was created through many years of collaboration with his colleagues A.F.L. Beeston, Jacques Ryckmans, and Mahmud Ghul. This has provided a solid basis for understanding the corpus of inscriptions that has since grown immensely through archaeological excavations and surveys in Yemen. Written in cooperation with Jacques Ryckmans and Yusuf M. Abdallah, his student from Tübingen and later president of the Yemeni Antiquities Administration, the *Textes du Yémen antique inscrits sur bois* (1994) laid the foundations for the decipherment of the Ancient South Arabian minuscule inscriptions, a new form of text carved on sticks that emerged in Yemen in the 1970s. It is sometimes difficult to read and, in contrast to the monumental inscriptions, was used for texts from everyday economic and legal life.

Müller was a giant in his subject. He investigated every aspect of it, to which his 200 publications bear eloquent witness, and in his extensive review activity he went far beyond the actual boundaries of the discipline. He repeatedly returned to the Old Testament and its environment in smaller works. In addition to ancient South Arabia, the cultural landscapes of pre-Islamic central and northern Arabia are also the subject of his numerous contributions to handbooks and encyclopaedias. It was always a major concern of his to make accessible their cultural history which, as in the case of South Arabia, stretches from the early first millennium BC to the advent of Islam, and to bring the latest state of research to those working in neighbouring disciplines and an interested public. An impressive example, which also provides an insight into the author’s working method, is his article ‘*Weihrauch* [Frankincense]’ — published in 1978 as a separate publication — in the supplement volume of *Pauly’s Realencyclopaedie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. With his extensive knowledge of the sources, including classical literature, Müller was the first to trace the significance of frankincense for the ancient Near East and the ancient world and recognized the central role played by the South Arabian communities of Saba’ and Ma’in, Qatabān, and Ḥaḍramawt in the cultivation and trade of this indigenous product.

The interpretation and editing of South Arabian inscriptions formed the core of his work, in which he set high standards for the next generations. He published large numbers of newly discovered inscriptions, each of which provides a further piece of the mosaic of knowledge of the language and culture of ancient South Arabia and, in

particular, its religious history, which differs significantly from that of the rest of the ancient Near East and of Islam. He is also to be thanked for his numerous new interpretations of the great Ancient South Arabian texts, which every generation tries to tackle anew. He translated and annotated a representative selection in *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments* (Texts from the world of the Old Testament) (1982–1988), which demonstrates the immense progress that has been made in the understanding of Ancient South Arabian inscriptions. But he was not above doing time-consuming research work, which included the bibliography with commentary *Südarabien im Altertum* (2001; 2014), published in two volumes which, according to him, is often used but never cited. His concern was never to approach a matter with hypotheses. Rather, his work is characterized by an almost encyclopaedic knowledge of material, facts, and literature and above all by the extensive use of source texts and their critical evaluation.

Müller received numerous honours and honorary memberships. To name just a few: he was associated with the Mainz academy as a full member from 1987 and for many years as chairman of the Oriental Commission. The German Archaeological Institute elected him a corresponding member in 1977 and a full member in 1983. On his 60th birthday, he was honoured by his colleagues and students with a Festschrift entitled *Arabia Felix. Contributions to the language and culture of pre-Islamic Arabia* (1994). In 1998 he was presented with the highest honour of Yemen — for whose country and people he had a sincere, but not uncritical, affection — in the form of a gold medal, which was minted on the occasion of the unification of the two Yemens on 22 May 1990. He was an honorary member of the German Oriental Society and was particularly pleased when he was elected a Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy in 2001, the year of his retirement. Even after his retirement, he continued to play an active role in academic life and continued to publish right up to the end. With him, the study of ancient South Arabia has lost one of its most renowned representatives, who exerted a lasting influence on it for half a century.

Norbert Nebes

Müller first attended the Seminar for Arabian Studies in 1975 and from then on was a regular attendee and speaker for four decades. Together with A.F.L. (Freddie) Beeston and Jacques Ryckmans, he was an essential part of each Seminar until he became too ill to attend. He was always amiable but did not hesitate to correct an error and was therefore an extremely valuable member of the meetings. Over the years, he contributed numerous times to PSAS on a wide range of subjects, all of which extended our knowledge by clarifying difficult areas of Ancient South Arabian and wider Semitic philology, and the pre-Islamic history and societies of Arabia. He was always elegantly dressed and had a professorial dignity, but occasionally showed sparks of humour, particularly after some excellent wine. In a moving tribute after the death of Freddie Beeston — who was the very opposite of him in terms of appearance (T-shirt, jeans, and shoulder-length white hair) — Walter (as he was known at the Seminar) told how after one session of the Seminar, Freddie invited him for a drink and they went to a local pub. Unfortunately, it was extremely crowded and there was nowhere to sit, so Freddie said, ‘Oh well, we’ll just have to sit on the floor.’ This they did and it was probably the first time since his youth that Walter had done so, especially in the company of someone who looked like Freddie! All those who knew him will miss Walter Müller, his brilliant work, and all he contributed to the Seminar.

Michael Macdonald

April 2025

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In Memoriam

Khaldūn Hazzāʿ ʿAbduh Nuʿmān (1967–2024)

It is with profound sorrow that we commemorate the premature passing of Prof. Khaldūn Hazzāʿ ʿAbduh Nuʿmān, a distinguished Yemeni epigrapher and historian, whose scholarly dedication and human qualities left an indelible mark on all who knew and worked with him.

Born in Taʿizz Governorate, Khaldūn began his academic journey at Ṣanʿāʾ University, where he earned his MA in 2003. His thesis on the reign of the Himyarite king Shammar Yuharʿish, supervised by ʿAbdallah al-Shayba, was soon published as a monograph under the title *Al-awḏāʿ al-siyāsiyya wa-l-iqtisādiyya wa-l-ijtimāʿiyya fī ʿahd al-malik Shammar Yuharʿish* (Ṣanʿāʾ, 2004).

Most of Khaldūn’s historical and epigraphic research was dedicated to a crucial area of the Ancient South Arabian territory: the Yemeni highlands stretching between Ṣanʿāʾ and Ṣafār, with a focus on the region of Dhamār. He tirelessly trekked this region’s mountains to reach remote sites and record inscriptions. We owe him the knowledge of new texts that he published over the years and which have substantially contributed to rewriting the history of the area in the first centuries AD. It was precisely at Dhamār University that Khaldūn made his career in higher education, beginning as a teaching assistant.

Deeply committed to the preservation and valorization of Yemeni antiquities, he also actively worked in museums to organize and catalogue their rich collections, such as at the Baynūn Museum under the direction of Ahmad al-ʿAzizi. Since 2007 Khaldūn had supported Italian researchers in a cooperation project aimed at the digital cataloguing of Ancient South Arabian inscribed objects preserved in Yemeni museums (CASIS). This collaboration opened the way to his enrolment as a doctoral fellow in the Oriental Studies PhD programme at the University of Pisa in January 2009, under the supervision of Alessandra Avanzini. He eventually moved to Italy, joined for a time by his wife Afriqiya.

I had come to know Khaldūn through the CASIS project, but the years of the PhD, which we shared side by side until our dissertations in October 2012, allowed me more closely to appreciate him both as a scholar with immense and passionate knowledge of Ancient South Arabian history and as a delightful companion in our studies. Khaldūn’s dissertation, *A Study of South Arabian Inscriptions from the Region of Dhamār* (Pisa, 2012), presented dozens of unpublished texts that he had personally discovered in fifty sites across the area, and was exceptional in both the quantity and quality of new data.



Aden, 2008. Photo by Alessandra Lombardi.

During his Italian years, Khaldūn also became a collaborator of the *Digital Archive for the Study of pre-Islamic Arabian Inscriptions* (DASI), for which he contributed editions of hundreds of texts and translations into Arabic, significantly broadening the accessibility of this resource. He continued to provide updates and corrections to the archive even after his return to his beloved homeland, where he had long envisioned resuming university teaching and expanding his family. This indeed happened soon, with his professorship at the University of Dhamār and the joyful birth of his two children, Shammār and Taif, born to his wife Nahed.

Driven by a vision to establish a permanent space for the study and training of archaeology students at the university, Khaldūn also spearheaded the creation of the Dhamār University Museum, hosting a range of artefacts spanning prehistoric to historic times. As early as 2015 he had played a key role in the recovery and reassembly of artefacts from the Dhamār Regional Museum, which had been destroyed by an airstrike. No doubt, most scholars of ancient Yemen saw the chilling photographs he shared of the museum's ruins. Indeed, Khaldūn always carried his inseparable camera to document antiquities, landscapes, people, and events.

While unpretentious about his scholarly achievements, his career progressed rapidly after his return to Yemen, encompassing directorial responsibilities at the University of Dhamār. Despite the difficulties he had to face in recent years, Khaldūn remained deeply committed to his teaching at Dhamār University and to publishing the results of his epigraphic surveys. He leaves behind a legacy of scholarship in Arabic, English, and French, by his own pen and in collaboration with both Yemeni and European colleagues.

Among his last contributions in European languages, we should include here the article on new early Sabaic inscriptions discovered on the Somali coast, published in 2021 in *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* and co-authored with CNRS colleagues. A contribution to the studies in honour of Christian Robin, published in 2023, focused on new inscriptions from the site of Maṣnaʿat Māriya, administrative centre of the Muhaqraʿum tribe. The same volume also included an article from the *Dhamār Epigraphical Series*, a publication initiative dedicated to the Dhamār region that Khaldūn carried forward with Alessia Priolella over the years in different editorial venues. In 2024 he contributed several epigraphic articles in Arabic journals, culminating in his final piece entitled 'Janūb al-Jazīra al-ʿArabiyya wa-shamālu-hā fi nuqūsh Ḥuṣn Kuḥlān (al-Yaman)' (*South and North Arabia in the Inscriptions from Ḥuṣn Kuḥlān (Yemen)*) — published posthumously in the inaugural issue of the journal *Athīrat* in February 2025, following careful editing by Mohammed Maraqtan and Mounir Arbach.

His sudden death at the age of 57, on 19 August 2024 following a heart attack, came as a shock to all who knew and appreciated him — for his intellectual curiosity and passionate rigour, as well as his deep generosity and delightful companionship, always marked by a brilliant sense of humour that brought relief even in the most difficult situations. Our heartfelt thoughts go to his beloved family.

Irene Rossi

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