


SIR RICHARD FRANCIS BURTON: THE MOST FASCINATING MAN OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

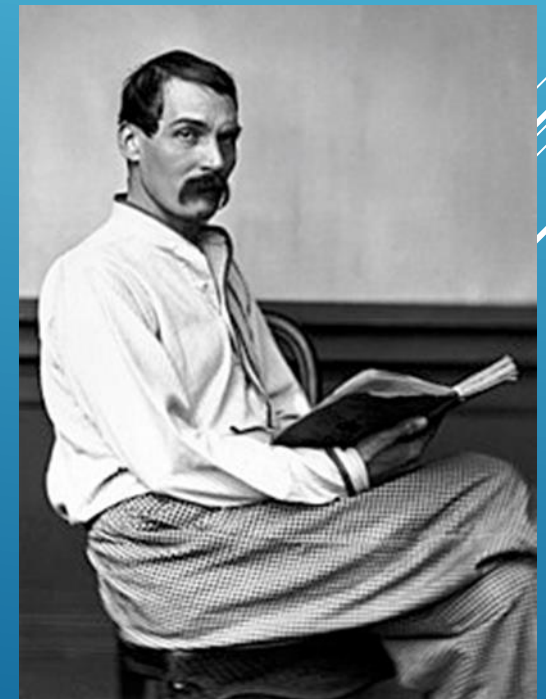
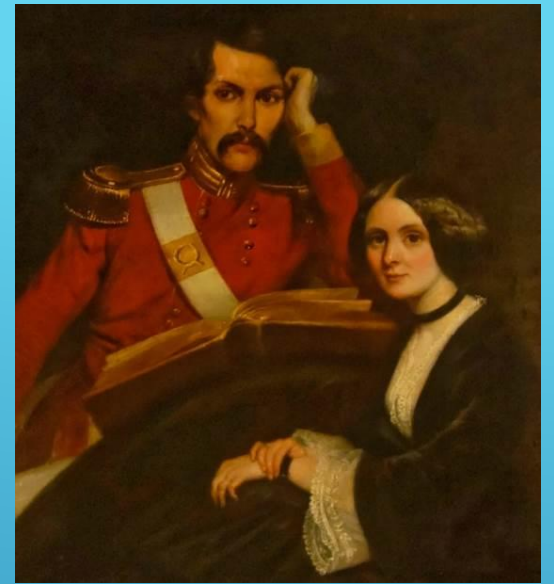
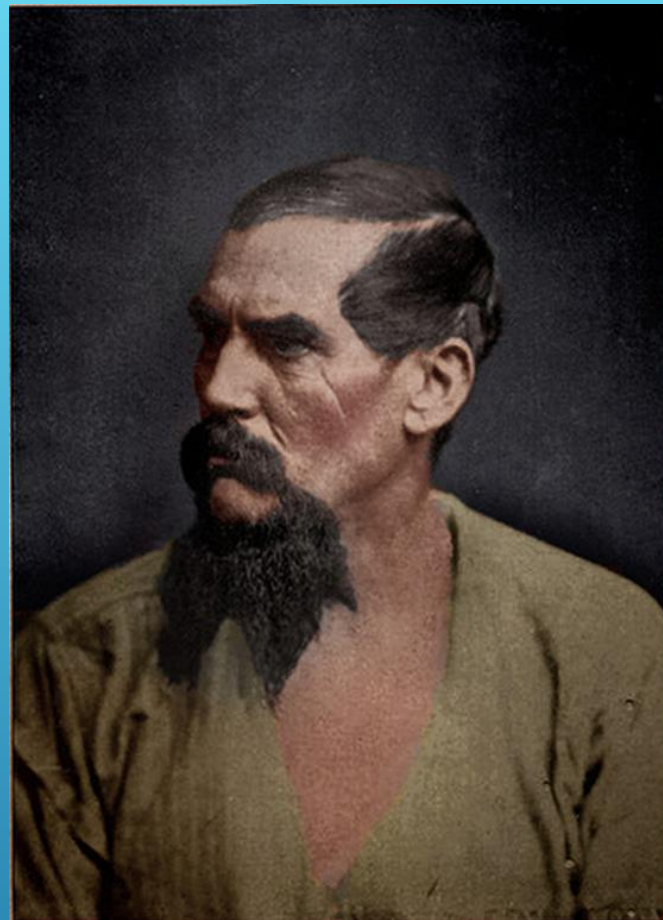
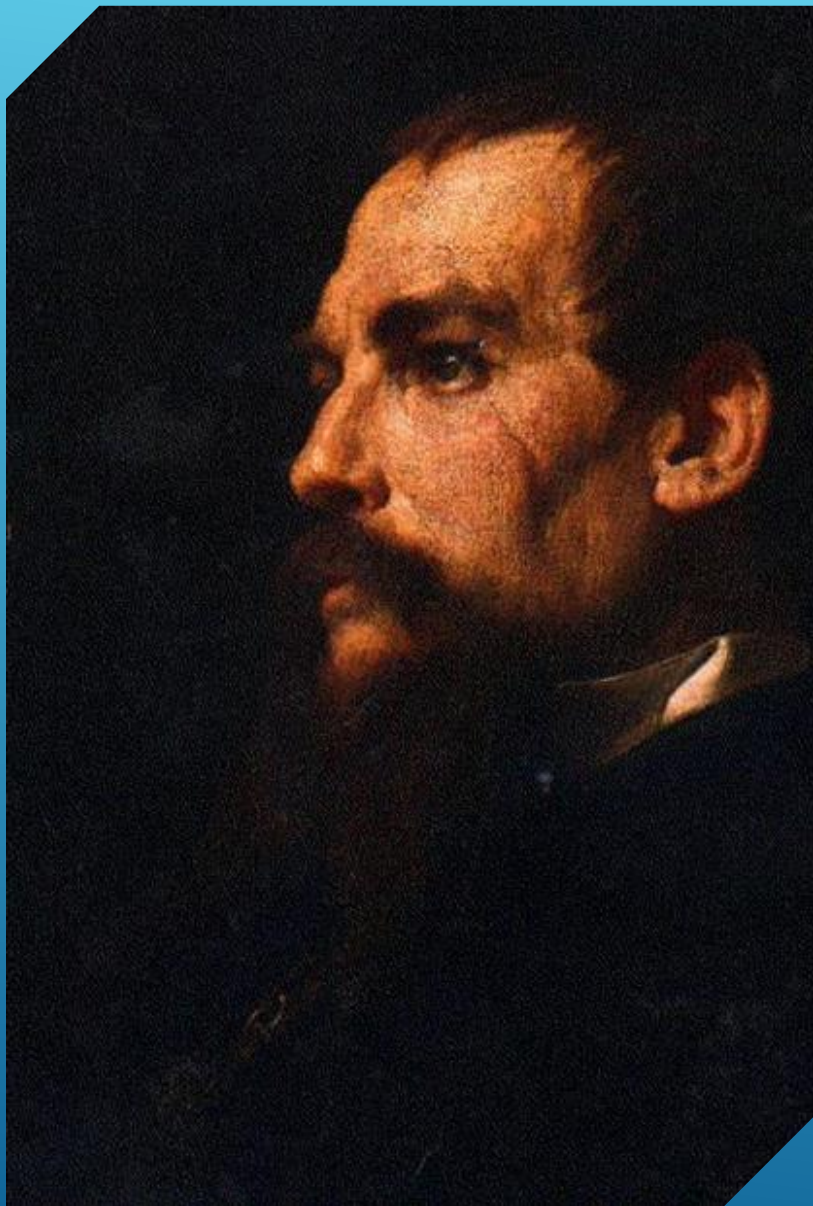
Marshall C. Eakin

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

24 January 2024

THE METHOD TO MY MADNESS

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Week 1: January 10 | Who Is this Richard Burton Fellow? |
| Week 2: January 17 | <u>no class</u> – <u>Marshall will be in Cuba!</u> |
| Week 3: January 24 | The Infidel in Mecca |
| Week 4: January 31 | The Search for the Source of the Nile |
| Week 5: February 7 | Exploring Brazil |
| Week 6: February 14 | Translating Pornography? |
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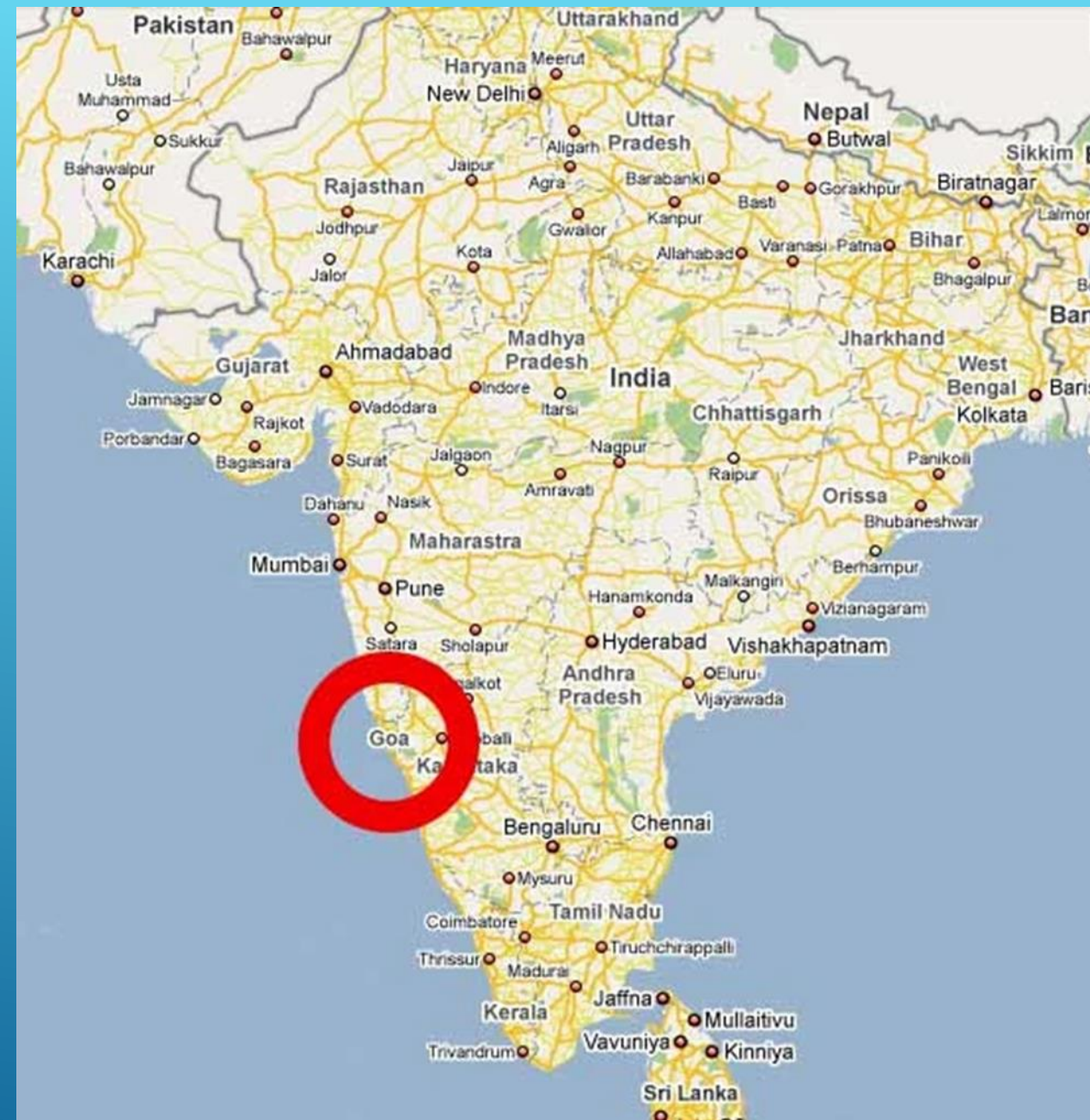
RICHARD BURTON

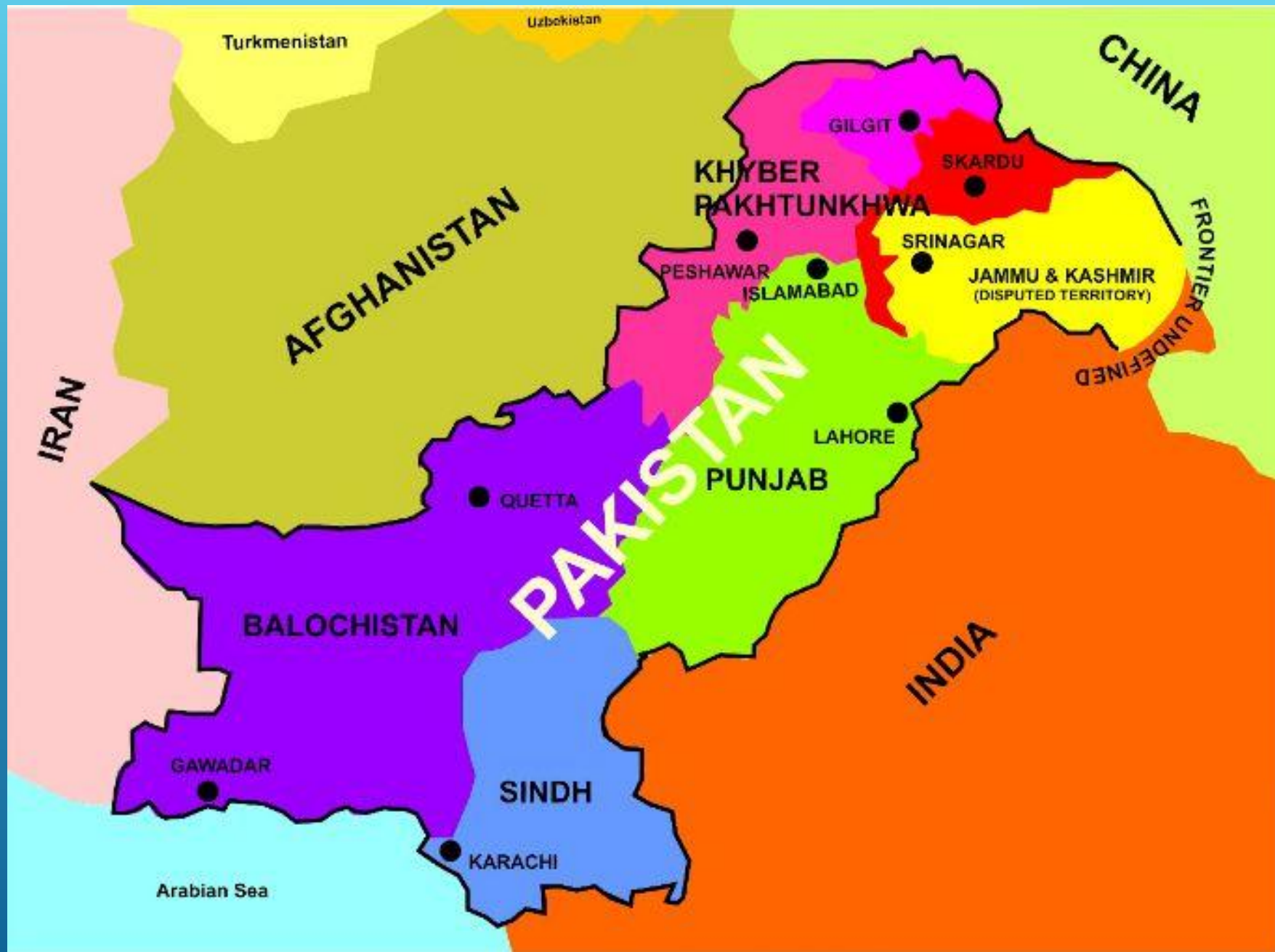
Mary Lovell, *A Rage to Live: A Biography of Richard and Isabel Burton* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000)

Fawn M. Brodie, *The Devil Drives: A Life of Sir Richard Burton* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1967)

Byron Falwell, *Burton: A Biography of Sir Richard Francis Burton* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1963)

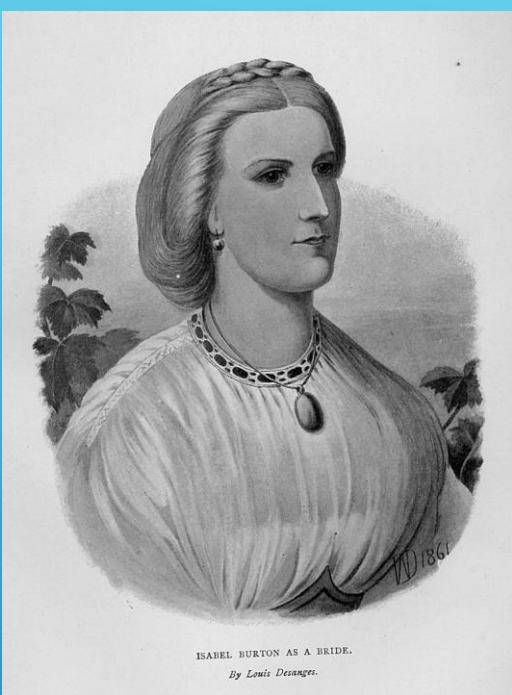
- ▶ 1842 - to India
- ▶ learning Hindi, Gujarati, Persian
- ▶ infamous report on brothels
- ▶ “participant observation”?
- ▶ going native
- ▶ Portuguese Goa and Luís de Camões





- ▶ 1849 – Richard returns to England (deathly ill)
- ▶ living with family (sister, aunt, brother)
- ▶ writing first books - on Goa, Sindh, and falconry
- ▶ the early anthropologist
- ▶ two years, four books, 1500 pages of text
- ▶ marriage rejections – little money, reputation





ISABEL ARUNDELL



- ❑ 1831
- ❑ aristocratic, Catholic family
- ❑ initial encounter in Boulogne-sur-Mer (1851)
- ❑ waiting – gypsy story
- ❑ Richard courts other women
- ❑ marriage in 1861 (sort of secretly)



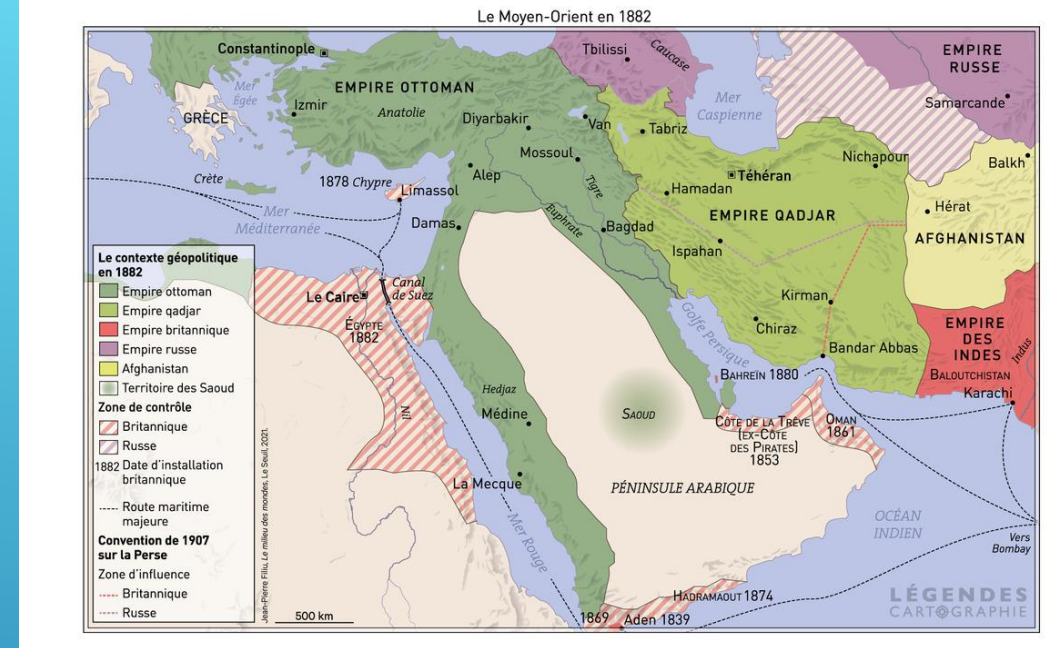
- ▶ introductions to Royal Geographical Society
- ▶ networking
- ▶ cold shoulder from East India Company
- ▶ on leave to study and master the Egyptian accent
- ▶ not fully straightforward about his intentions

PLANNING THE PILGRIMAGE





- ▶ undergoes circumcision
- ▶ April 1853 – shaven head, beard, clothing
- ▶ Sheikh Abdullah, a Persian scholar
- ▶ accompanied to Southampton by an “interpreter”
- ▶ two-week voyage to Alexandria
- ▶ recognized by Turkish friend
- ▶ stays with British Consul-General in Alexandria



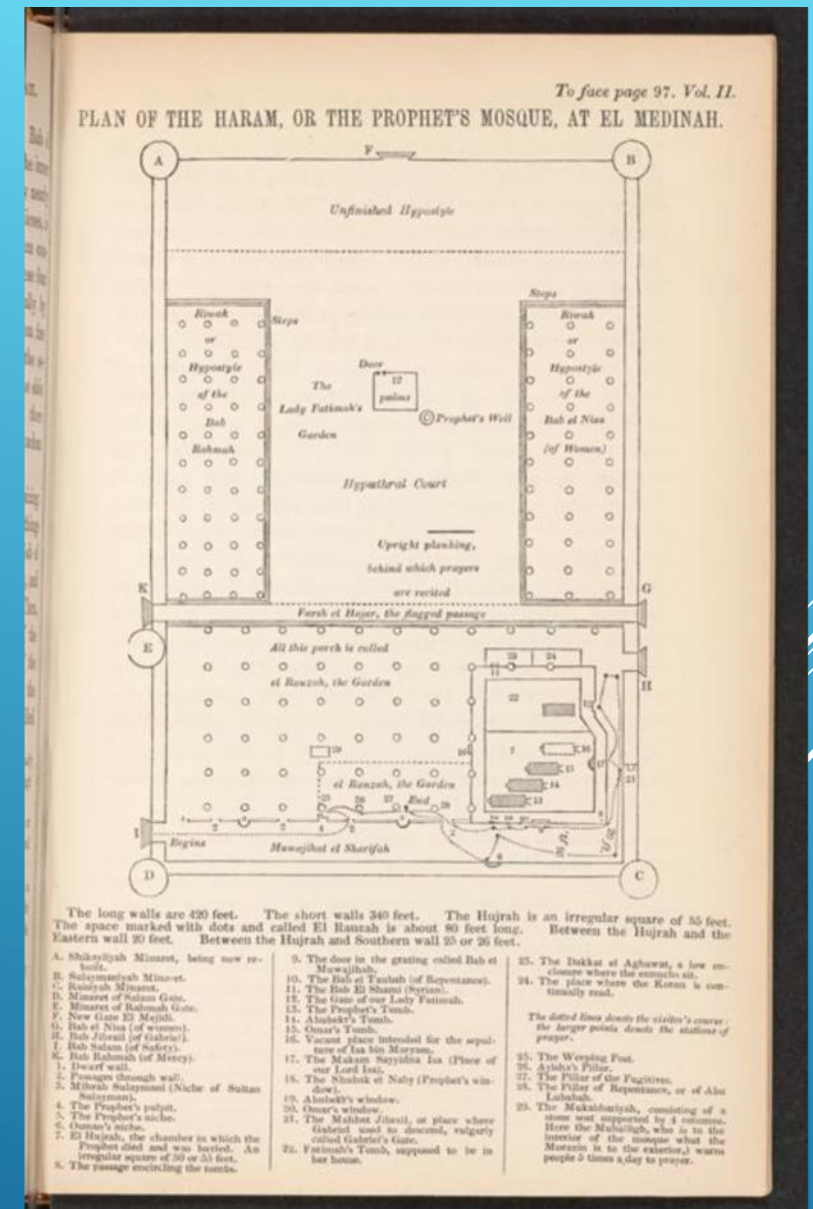
- ▶ spends a month revisiting the Koran and prayers
- ▶ medical help
- ▶ a wandering dervish with knowledge of medicine and horoscopes (Sufism)
- ▶ waiting in line for passport and license in costume (Turkish consulate)
- ▶ two saddlebags and a Persian rug

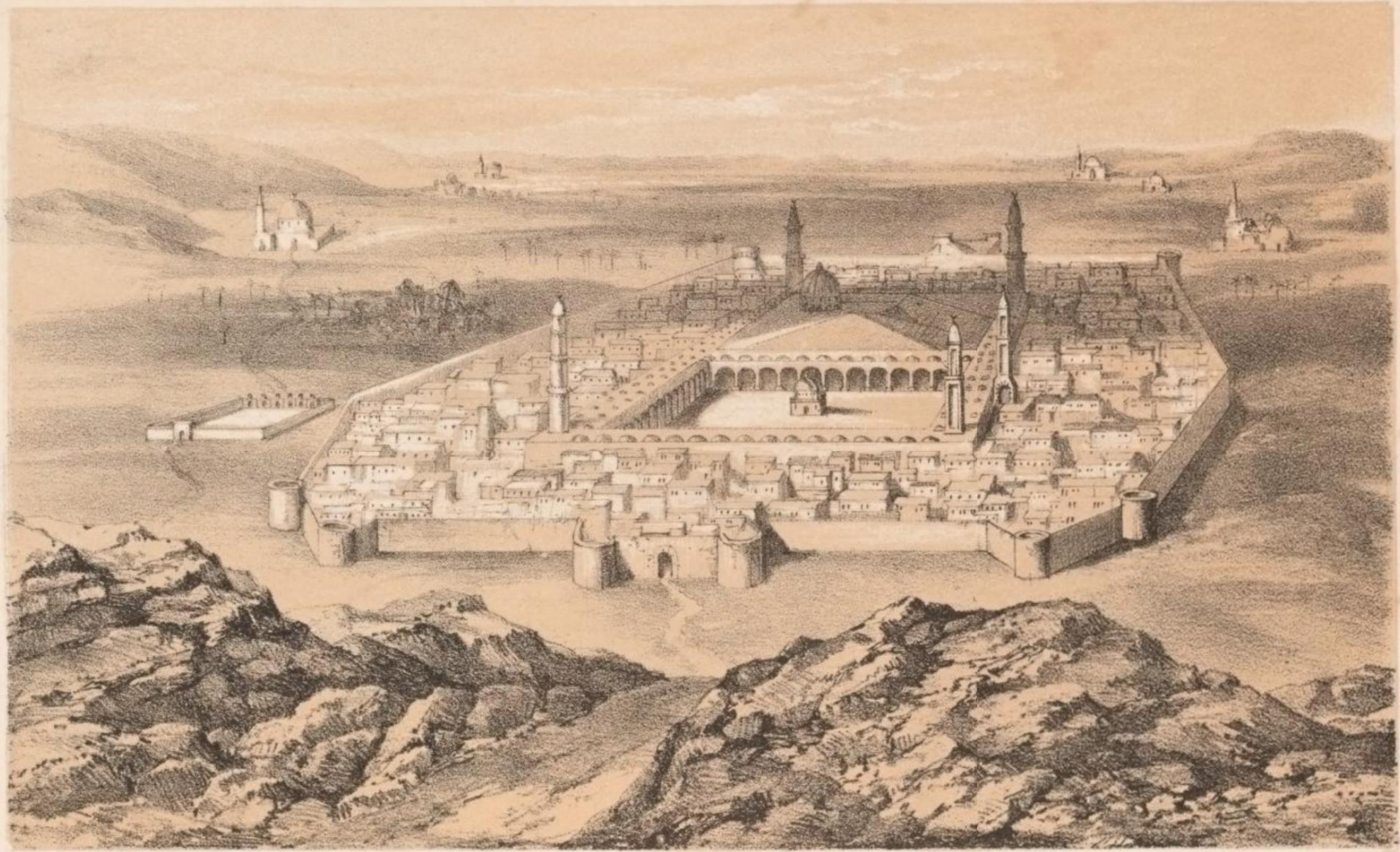


- ▶ Pathan (Pashtun) born in India of Afghan parents, educated in Rangoon
- ▶ special pocket Koran
- ▶ two camels and his “Mecca boy”
- ▶ purchases special set of pilgrim clothing
- ▶ 30 hours across the desert
- ▶ joins a group at Suez



- ▶ 14 days on overcrowded ship to Yanbu
- ▶ joins several caravans for safety
- ▶ 36 hours to Medina
- ▶ visit to Mohammed's tomb
- ▶ spends a month in Medina waiting for his caravan
- ▶ earns the title of Hajji





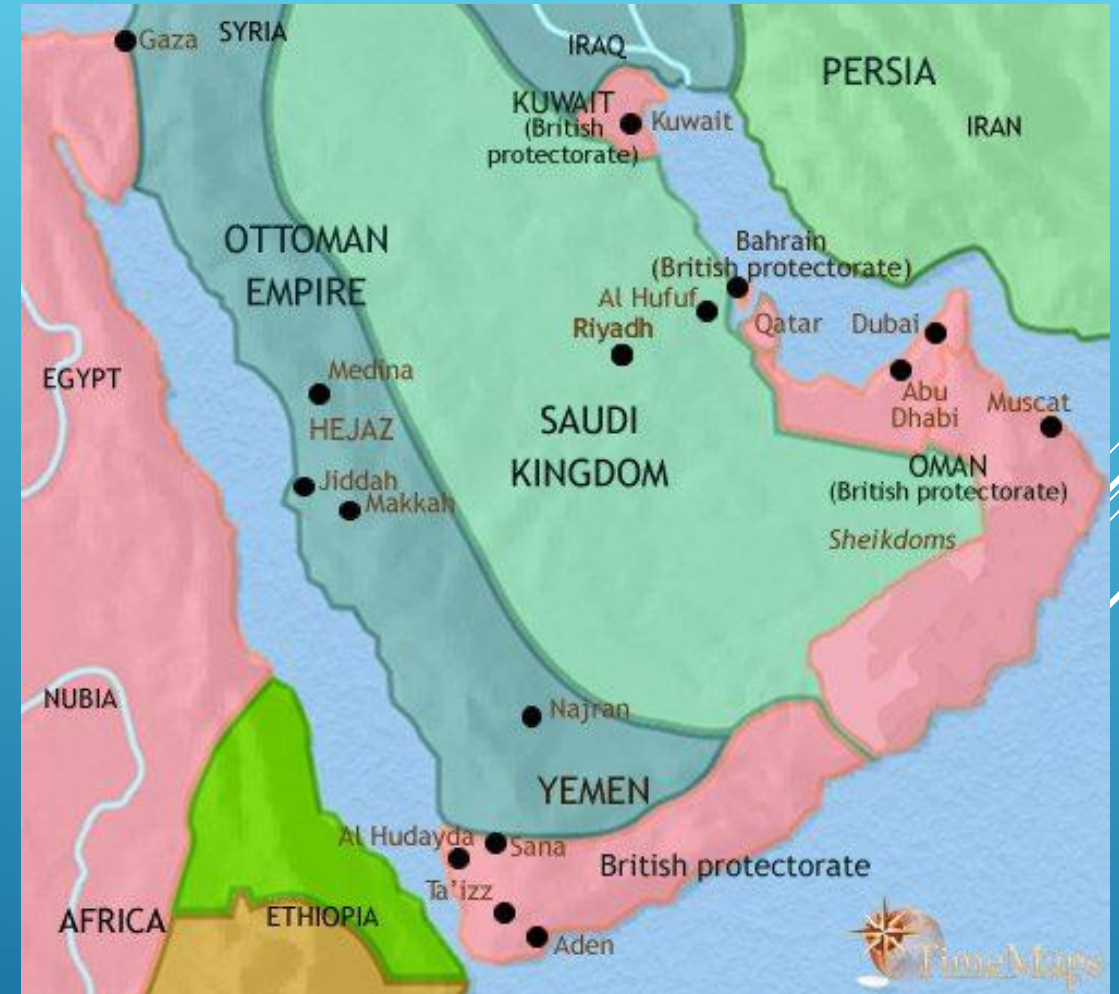
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SKETCH OF EL MEDINAH, BY A NATIVE ARTIST.

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cont

- ▶ joins Damascus caravan in late August
- ▶ 50,000 strong
- ▶ 10 days, 250 miles of desert
- ▶ exhaustion, heatstroke, sunstroke, cholera, typhoid
- ▶ two days from Mecca, clean up and change clothes
- ▶ attacks

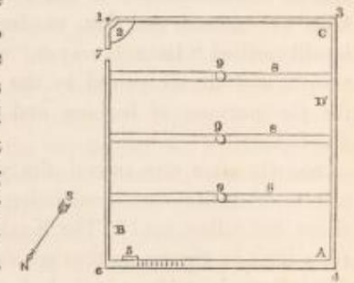


- ▶ into the Great Temple
- ▶ Kaaba, black stone, rubbing with hands and head
- ▶ circles seven times counter-clockwise
- ▶ goes inside (40 x 35 feet)

cials, dark-looking Meccans, of whom the darkest and plainest was a youth of the Beni Shaybah family*, the true-blue blood of El Hejaz. He held in his hand the huge silver-gilt padlock of the Kaabah†, and presently taking his seat upon a kind of wooden press in the left corner of the hall, he officially inquired my name, nation, and other particulars. The replies were satisfactory, and the boy Mohammed was authoritatively ordered to conduct me round the building, and recite the prayers. I will not deny that, looking at the windowless walls, the officials at the door, and the crowd below —

“ And the place death, considering who I was,” ‡

my feelings were of the trapped-rat description, acknowledged by the immortal nephew of his uncle Perez. This did not, however, prevent my carefully observing the scene during our long prayers, and making a rough plan with a pencil upon my white Ihram.



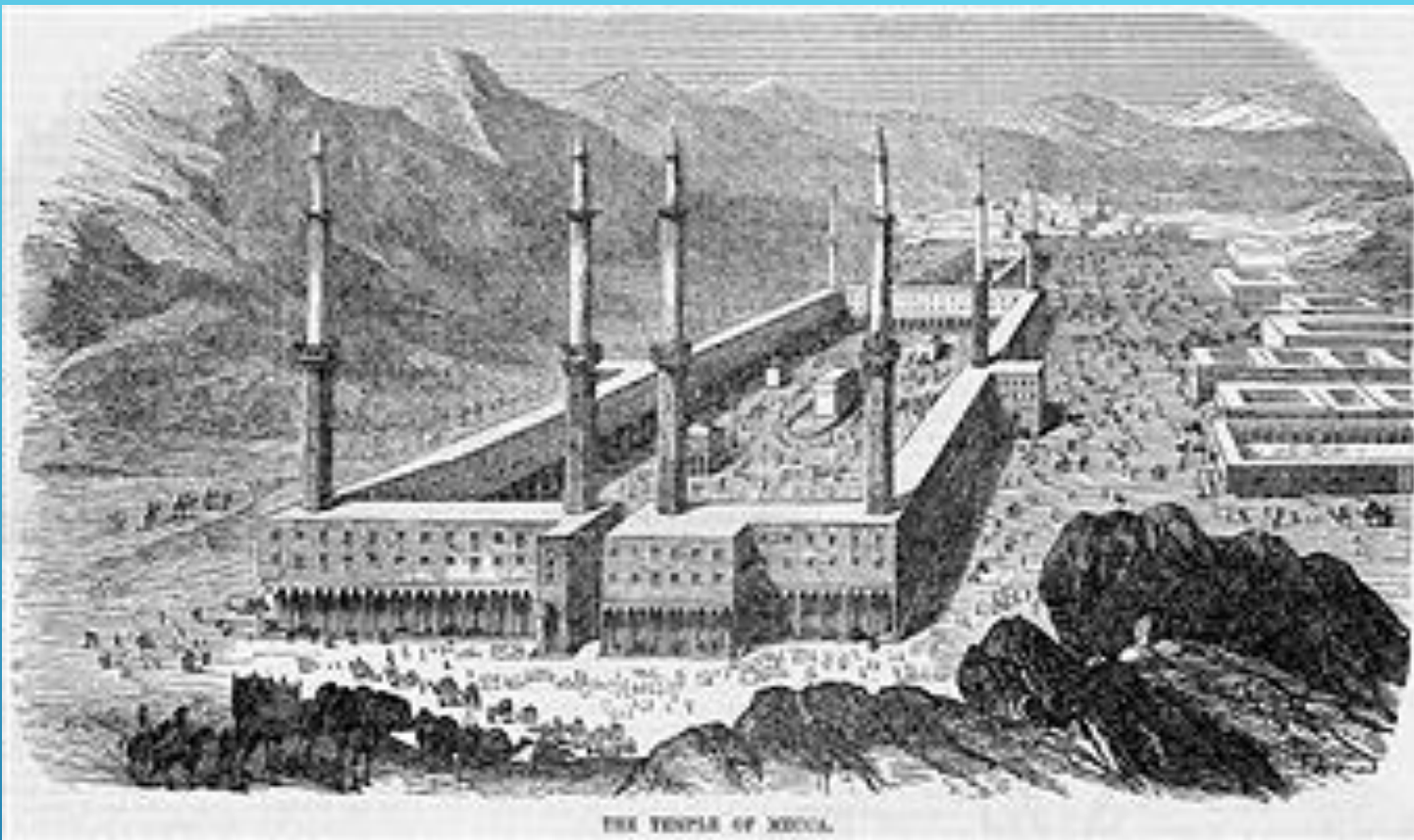
PLAN OF KAABAH.

1. Black Stone (exterior).
2. Wooden safe, in which key is kept.
3. Yemeni corner.
4. Shami corner.
5. Bab el Tautah, dwarf door, leading to staircase by which men ascend to the roof.
6. Iraki corner.
7. Door.
- 8, 8, 8. Rafters.
- 9, 9, 9. Columns.
- A. First place of prayer.
- B. Second place.
- C. Third place.
- D. Fourth place.

* They keep the keys of the house. In my day the head of the family was “ Shaykh Ahmed.”

† In Ibn Jubayr’s time this large padlock was of gold. It is said popularly that none but the Beni Shaybah can open it; a minor miracle, doubtless proceeding from the art of some Eastern Hobbs or Bramah.

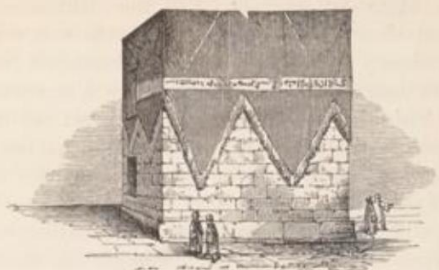
‡ However safe a Christian might be at Meccah, nothing could preserve him from the ready knives of enraged fanatics if detected in the House. The very idea is pollution to a Moslem.



1853



secured at the bottom to the metal rings in the basement, was tucked up by ropes from the roof and depended over



The Kaabah in its new covering.

each face in two long tongues. It was of a brilliant black, and the Hizam, — the zone or golden band running round the upper portion of the building, — as well as the Burka (face-veil)*, were of dazzling brightness.

The origin of this custom must be sought in the ancient practice of typifying the church visible by a virgin or bride. The poet Abd el Rahim el Burai, in one of his Gnostic effusions, has embodied the idea : —

وعروس مكة بالكرامات تجلي

And Meccah's bride (*i.e.* the Kaabah) appeareth decked with (miraculous signs.)

This idea doubtless led to the face-veil, the covering, and the guardianship of eunuchs.

The Meccan temple was first dressed as a mark of honor

the Kaabah is called Uryanah (naked), in opposition to its normal state, "Muhramah," or clad in Ihram. In Burckhardt's time the house remained naked for fifteen days ; now the investiture is effected in a few hours.

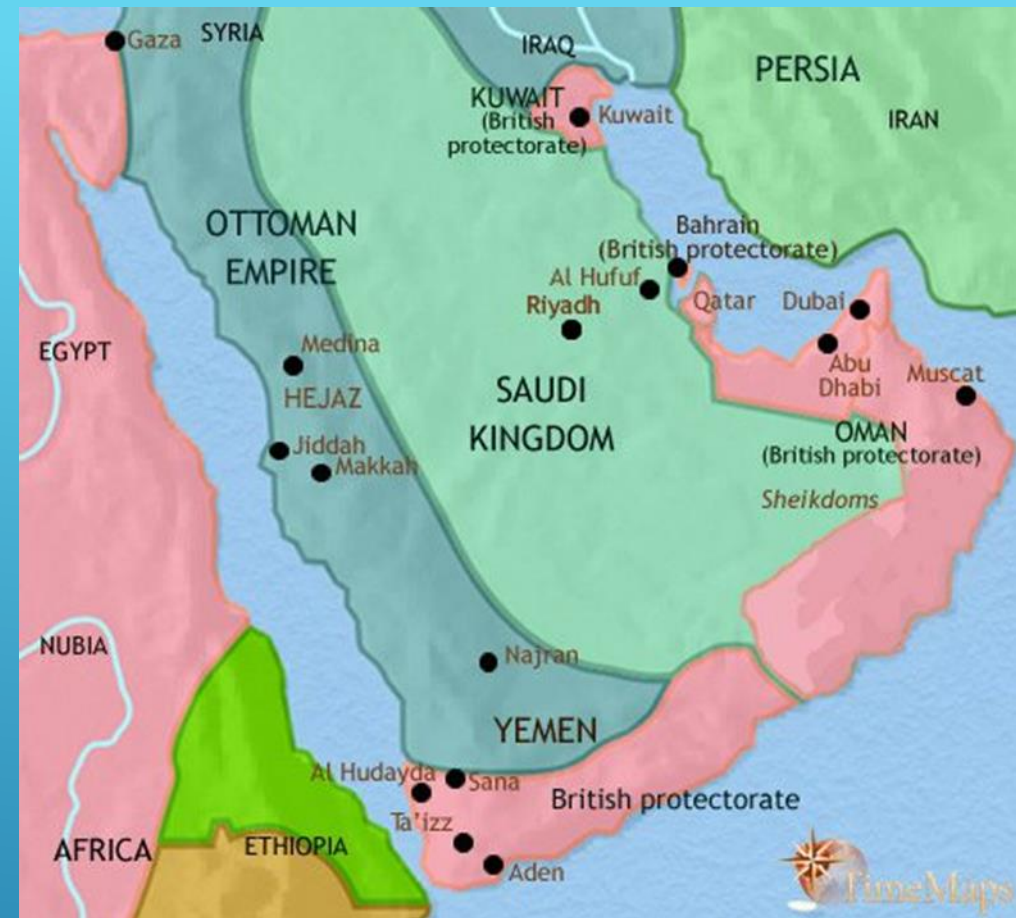
* The gold-embroidered curtain covering the Kaabah door is called by the learned "Burkat el Kaabah" (the Kaabah's face-veil), by the vulgar Burkat Fatimah ; they connect it in idea with the Prophet's daughter.



- ▶ six-hour walk to Mount Arafat
- ▶ conferred the state of Hajji
- ▶ green turban



- ▶ two-day return trip to Jeddah
- ▶ secret visit to British consulate for funds
- ▶ back across the Red Sea
- ▶ Mohammed's suspicions proven true
- ▶ sheds disguise and joins passengers as Lt. Burton



- ▶ assumes Arab garb for painting in Cairo
- ▶ writing up his account and preparing for East Africa
- ▶ returns to duty in India
- ▶ permission to go to Somalia
- ▶ preparing for the next great adventure



PERSONAL NARRATIVE
OF A
PILGRIMAGE
TO
EL MEDINAH AND MECCAH.

BY
RICHARD F. BURTON,
CAPTAIN BOMBAY ARMY.

"Our notions of Mecca must be drawn from the Arabians: as no unbeliever is permitted to enter the city, our travellers are silent."—GIBSON, chap. 50.

SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS.
1857.

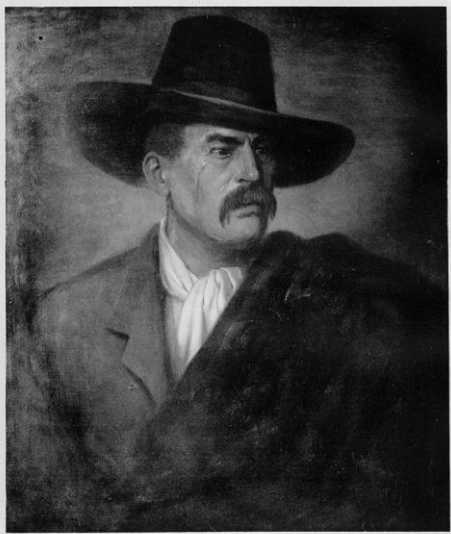
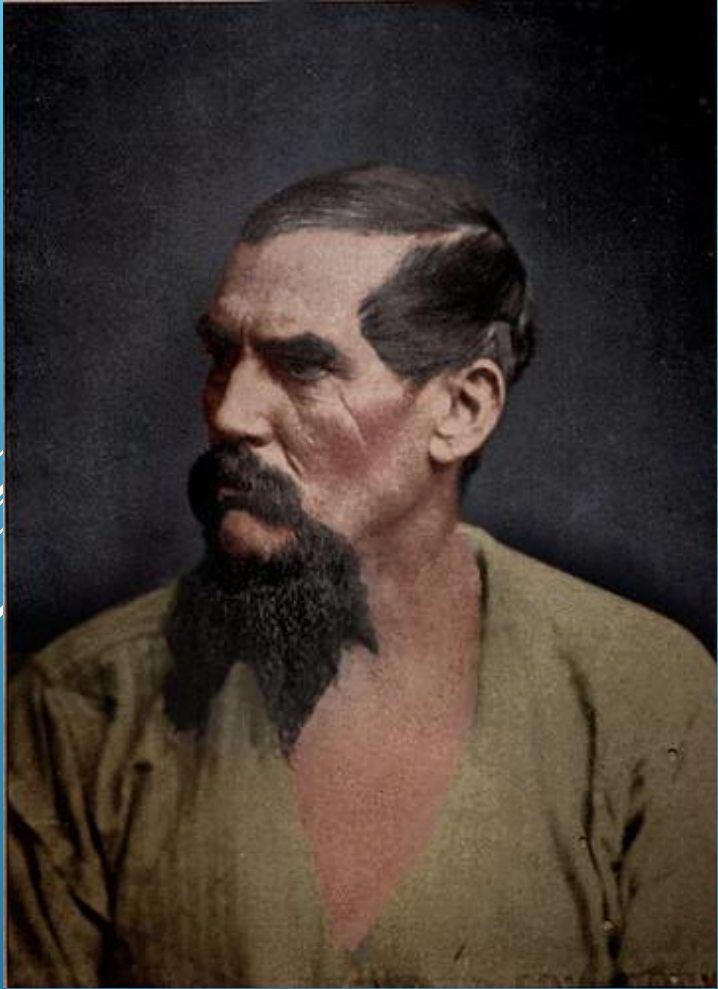
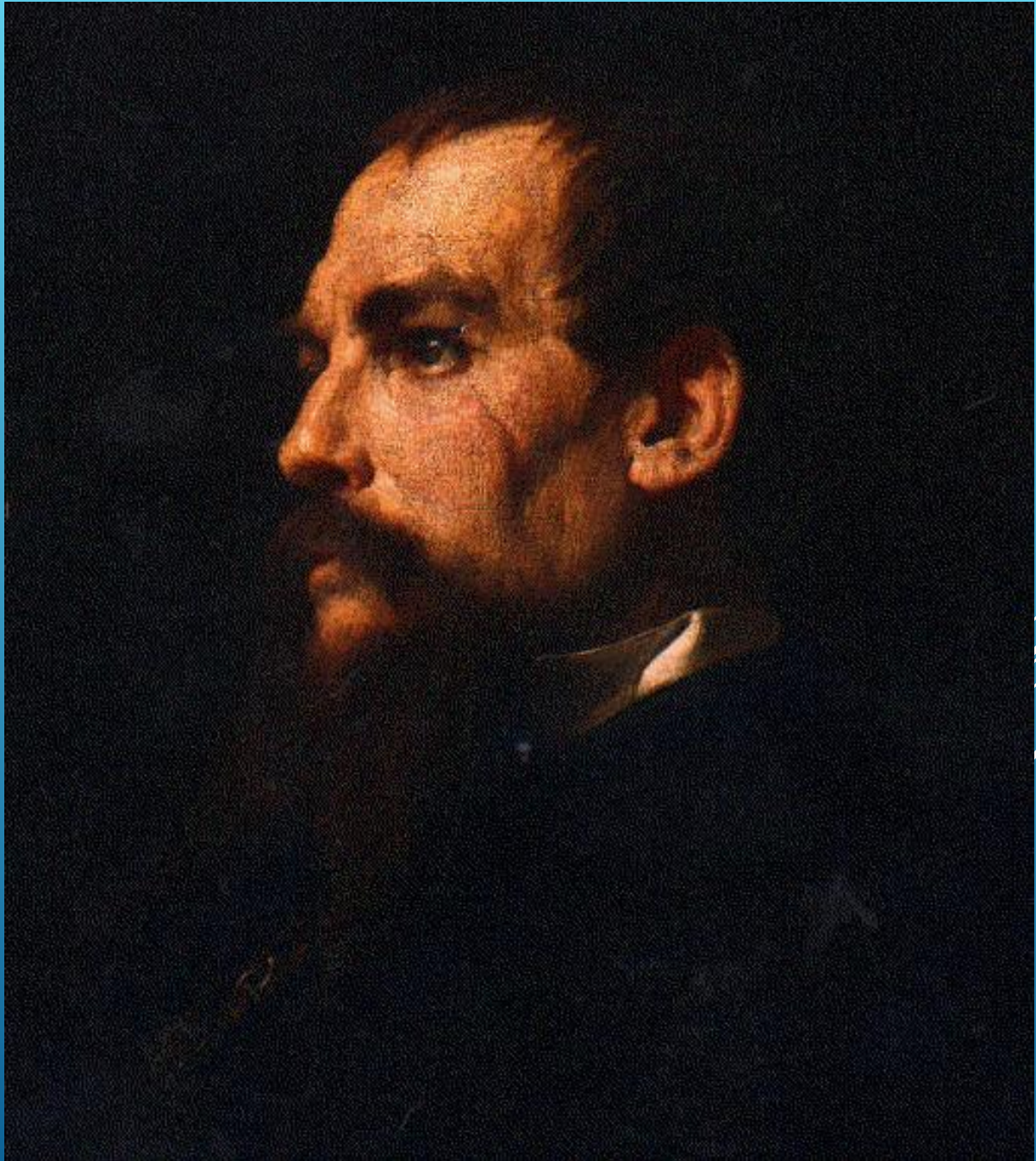
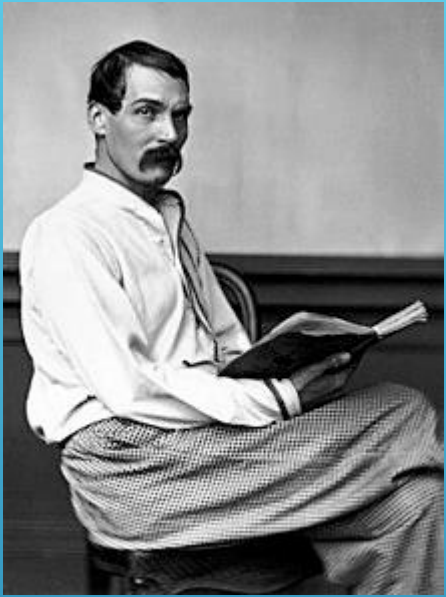
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M. J. BURTON DEL.

THE PILGRIM.

SAMPSON LOW



SIR RICHARD BURTON IN 1879.
By Madame Gutmansthal de Benvenuti (Trieste).