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Caravanserai:
Traces, Places, Dialogue in the Middle East

The caravanserai were roadside inns built to shelter men, goods, and animals along the Silk Road that connected China, Central Asia, and Europe in ancient times. These staging posts formed the world's first globalized overland network and stand as a testament to a flourishing period of multicultural exchange in the Muslim world. Today, the ruined and restored caravanserai of Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, captured in **CARAVANSERAI: TRACES, PLACES, DIALOGUE IN THE MIDDLE EAST (5 Continents; October 2012; \$50.00 US; 90 color and black-and-white photographs; 180 pages; in English and in French)** by Belgian photographer and writer **Tom Schutyser**, serve as a platform for an era of renewed cross-cultural exchange. Stunning photographs of these vanishing caravan routes and their surrounding landscapes welcome readers to engage in a dialogue on healing relations between the Muslim and Western worlds, in the same way the inns once welcomed travelers and pilgrims to share goods, ideas, and discoveries.

Photographs and texts by **Tom Schutyser**, introduction by **Andrew Lawler**, contributions by **Reza Aslan, Robert Fisk, Rachid al-Daif, Dominique Moïsi, and Paul Salem.**

About the Photographer

Tom Schutyser is a Belgian documentary photographer, writer and researcher who specializes in architecture, culture, and history. While his professional career in international business has led him through various disciplines and expertise, throughout he has been a traveler, researcher, nomad, restless mind, critical thinker, humanist, and multiculturalist.

Schutyser became intrigued by the caravanserais and fascinated by the connections between these centuries-old structures and current international affairs in the Middle East, the West, and the East. His first series of photos from northern Iran resulted in an art collaboration with Gilles Neuray, a series of gallery exhibitions in Portland, USA, and his first solo exhibition in Paris, France, in collaboration with l'Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture (ENSA) of Paris-Val de Seine. In 2009, another four-month road trip through Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan led to a second visual documentary on the caravanserais. The photographic series "Caravanserais in the Levant" has been exhibited in Lebanon at Silk Factory in Beiteddine and at Art Lounge in Beirut, and in a group photography

exhibition at Springbox in Portland, USA. He and his wife Drieke are currently living in the USA. More information can be found on Schutyser's website: www.consideratcaravanserai.net.

About the Contributors

Andrew W. Lawler, a contributing editor to *Science* and *Archaeology*, also writes for *Smithsonian*, *Discover* and other publications.

Reza Aslan, an expert on religions, is the author of the international bestseller *No God but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations, he is associate professor of creative writing at the University of California, Riverside.

Robert Fisk is a multiple award-winning journalist on the Middle East, based in Beirut. He writes for *The Independent* and other publications.

Dominique Moïsi is a senior adviser at the French Institute for International Relations (IFRI), and the author of several books on politics.

Rachid al-Daif is a novelist whose books have been translated from his native Arabic in eleven languages.

Paul Salem is director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut.

About the Book

CARAVANSERAI: TRACES, PLACES, DIALOGUE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

5 Continents Edition

October 2012

U.S. \$50.00

Hardcover; 90 color and black-and-white photographs; 180 pages; 11 ½ X 9 ½ inches

ISBN: 978-88-7439-604-7



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