

In memoriam
Paolo M. Costa, 1932–2019

Paolo M. Costa died on 13 January 2019. One of the big names of Arabian archaeology since the 1970s and a regular participant at the Seminar for Arabian Studies, he is a great loss to the field and will be much missed.

He was born in 1932 in Turin where he obtained his degree in Roman archaeology. From 1964 to 1969 he lived in Baghdad where he was secretary of the Italian Institute of Archaeology and a professor at the University of Baghdad. He cooperated with the Directorate General of Antiquities of Iraq to organize the archaeological collections in the new Iraq Museum and carried out several surveys on Islamic sites.

Between 1970 and 1975 he served as archaeological adviser to the Yemen Arab Republic. During this period, he established the archaeological section of the National Museum of San'a, carried out several surveys, and was in charge of the first comprehensive study and conservation programme of the Great Mosque of San'a. He also drafted the first antiquity law to control the research and conservation of the Yemeni cultural heritage.

From 1972 to 1976 he cooperated with the Middle East Centre of the University of Cambridge (UK) and carried out research on early Islamic architecture in the Arabian Peninsula. In 1976 he worked with the World of Islam Festival Trust to organize the exhibition 'Nomad and City' at the Museum of Mankind in London.

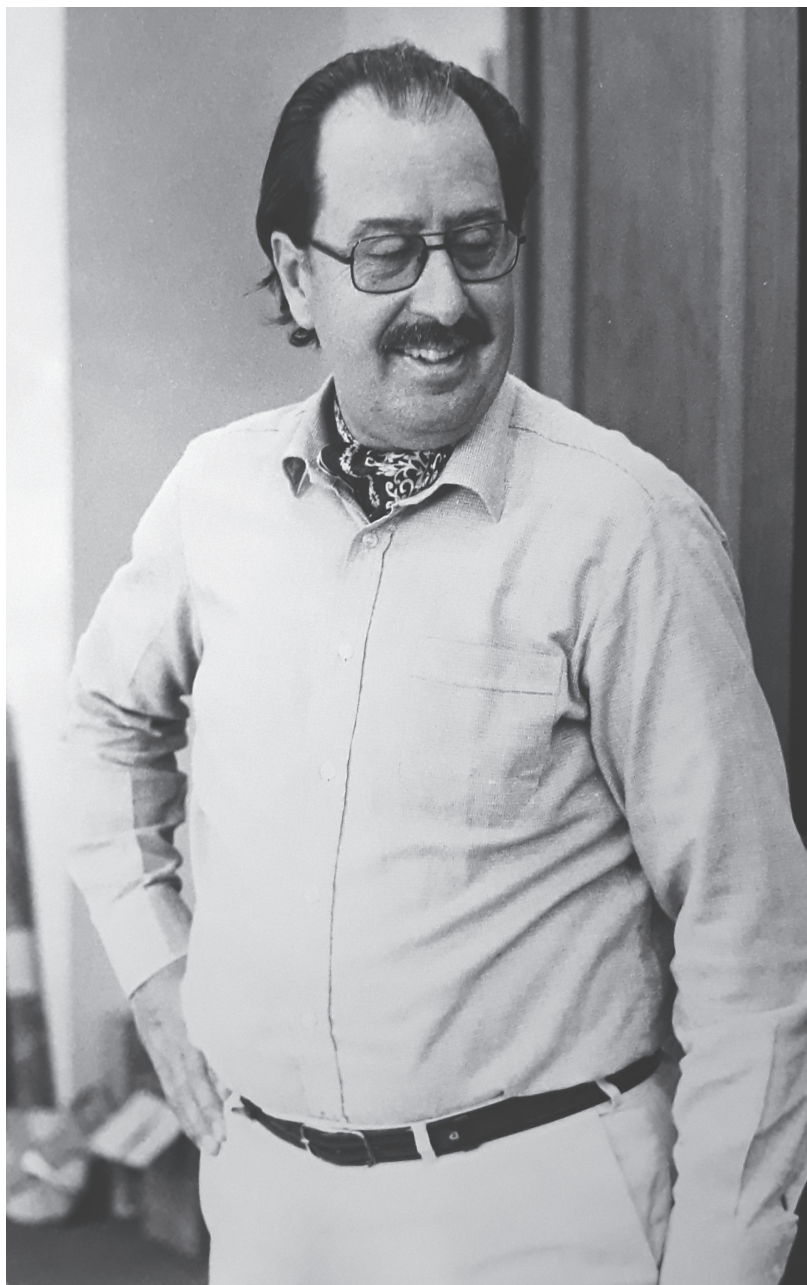
In 1976 he was appointed as an adviser for archaeology in the Sultanate of Oman, where he resided until 1986. Over this decade, he organized the Department of Antiquities (now Ministry of Heritage and Culture). He started a regional inventory of archaeological sites and buildings of historic interest and directed excavations at sites in Salalah, Arja, Bawshar, Saruj, and Ghafat. He conducted exploratory works on the Jebel Akdhar and in the areas of Muscat, Bahla, Ibra, Wādī Tanuf, and Wādī Ma'awil.

Costa was the deputy chairman of the first 'International Conference on Oman Studies' held in Muscat in November 1980, which was attended by over 100 scholars. He was also the coordinator of the 'Heritage of Oman Festival' held in Muscat by the Ministry of Heritage and Culture in the same year. He was appointed as editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Oman Studies*. At the end of his term of service Costa was awarded the Civil Order of Oman by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said.

He is the author of numerous scientific publications including several monographs, such as *Yemen: A land of builders* (1977), *Musandam Architecture and Material Culture of a Little Known Region of Oman* (1991), *Studies in Arabian Architecture* (1994), and *Historic Mosques and Shrines of Oman* (2001).

He is survived by three children and his wife Germana.

Dennys Frenez



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