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Tel 00971 4 6087777
00971 4 6087643
Fax 00971 4 2960550
P.O.Box 3135 DUBAI-UAE
www.dicd.gov.ae
farbabi@dicd.ae

DUBAISUN

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Editor In Chief

Dr. Hamad Ahmed Al Shaybani

Executive Editor

Saeed K. Al Rahoomi

Co-Executive Editor

Adel Juma Matar

Editorial staff

Helal Al Fili

Mohammad Tawfiq

Fatma Arbabi

Baha AL Sanhoury

Ashraf Shebl

Design & Layouting

Jamal Halloum

Production & Distribution

Helal Al Fili

Ahmed AL Ameen

Photographer

Khadem Husain



EDITORIAL

Children in Islam



Islam is very particular about children. **F**irst of all they have all the rights to be loved and compassionated. **S**econdly they must be given a proper brought up in which they can have all the lessons of ethics, manners and good character.

If we really wish our children to have faith, all our attitudes and sensitivities in certain subjects, the way we go to bed and get up, the way we exert ourselves in prayer, the way we spread our affectionate wings over our children, must all reflect our faith in Allah, the Almighty, and their hearts must be filled with such faith. We should always try to be the ideal for them, to avoid any kind of behavior which might make them feel contempt for us.

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Fitness for Purpose & **Trustworthiness** Patience

Two qualities a leader must possess are fitness for purpose and trustworthiness. These are expounded in the Qur'an which essentially stipulates two criteria for employee selection, the first being strength (fitness for purpose) and the second, trustworthiness. The Qur'an cites these in two places and in both cases in relation to the employment of Prophets.



The
Healing
POWER
of Prayer
Beads

Y

ahya related to me from Malik that Ziyad ibn Abi Ziyad said that Abu'd-Darda had said, «Shall I not tell you the best of your deeds, and those that give you the highest rank, and those that are the purest with your King, and are better for you than giving gold and silver, and better for you than meeting your enemy and striking their necks?» They said, «Of course.» He said, «Remembrance (dhikr) of Allah ta ala (Hadith Bukhari Book 15:7.24).»

Towards this goal many Muslims carry a sibhah, or prayer beads. Traditionally, prayer beads are used to keep track of how many times one has recited Subhan Allah, Alhamdulillah and Allahu Akbar. The most popular way is to use them after the obligatory prayer to recite the dhikr [remembrance of] Allah:

Narrated Abu Ma'bad: (the freed slave of Ibn 'Abbas) Ibn 'Abbas told me, «In the lifetime of the Prophet it was the custom to celebrate Allah's praises aloud after the compulsory congregational prayers.» Ibn 'Abbas further said, «When I heard the Dhikr, I would learn that the compulsory congregational prayer had ended (Bukhari Vol.1: Book 12: 802).»

However, although the dhikr Allah has been recited from the time of the Prophet, the sibhah as we now know it today has not been recorded as being in existence at that time. Some accounts of history show that Muslims adopted the sibhah from India in the 2nd Islamic century and through them, in 1214, that the Christians adopted the idea and started using the rosary (Gulik).

However, methods of assistance have always been employed in religious devotion even before the sibhah. Tradition states that before the sibhah, stones were sometimes



used to recite. Other religions used knotted cords or woven shawls to keep track of recitations.

Modern technology, however, has added a new dimension to prayer beads when electronic sibhah were invented. Many people even prefer not to use a sibhah at all. However, using a sibhah is not only helpful in keeping track of remembrances, but can be healing as well, depending on which wood or stone has been used to make the beads.

At the Islamic Shopping Network many kinds of prayer beads are available from Turquoise and Tiger Eye stone to Sandalwood and Rosewood beads. A search of other sites reveals a number of sites dedicated to making custom stone beads for all religions. A search of the local markets of the Middle East reveal an even larger selection of sibhah.

And just as using beads for prayer is a

long-standing tradition, so is healing with beads. Throughout history cultures have used gemstones and wood for healing. Dr. Robert Frost, a physician in Basel, Switzerland, recently studied the scientific properties of these gems and woods and created a method of testing woods and gemstones that reveals their healing properties in scientific terms (Frost). In his clinical work, Dr. Frost discovered that using the correct gemstone or wood could reduce pain, prevent allergic reactions, improve coordination and even increase muscle strength.

To give some examples; Tiger-eye is traditionally used to enhance understanding and strengthen belief. It is healing to the stomach area and is often used to assist with problems of the kidney, pancreas, liver, small intestine or stomach. It has also been found to have a calming effect on people who hold it.

Turquoise keeps the feeling of unconditional love in one's heart and helps one feel more connected with Allah. It also assists in the digestion of proteins and thus aids digestion. Turquoise also helps draw out negative feelings such as envy or anger from a person. It assists in healing ailments of the thyroid, throat, ears, neck and respiratory

system. It can also help to combat allergies or heart problems.

Beads of amber can help lift the heaviness of burdens, amethyst can be spiritually uplifting or heal the stomach or liver, and black onyx helps one to change bad habits. There are many books and websites that speak about the healing power of gems. Beware in your search, as some sites are mystical and foreboding. But there are an equal number of scientific books and websites that offer information on gems to the general public.

The healing power of wooden prayer beads is often in their scent, which is released and revived with usage. The scent of rosewood is traditionally used for nervous tension, frigidity, and headaches. It also assists the immune system, helps to fight viruses and regenerate cells. It is good for jet lag and skin inflammations and has the ability to relax a person without making them drowsy.

Beads made of sandalwood emit a scent that has been used for healing since

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Some accounts of history show that Muslims adopted the sibhah from India in the 2nd Islamic century”





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Sandalwood is an antidepressant, antiseptic, insecticidal, and sedative wood

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the time of the prophet. Sandalwood is an antidepressant, antiseptic, insecticidal, and sedative wood. It can assist in the healing of cells and is used to assist the immune system in any healing process or to prevent illness.

In the Tafseer of Ibn Juzayy, it is said that the Prophet Mohammad said in a message from Allah, “I am in my slaves opinion of

Me and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in himself, I remember him in My self.” For this reason and the reason of easy transport, prayer beads are a popular gift from one Muslim to another. With a little more thought, this gift can be physically uplifting as well as spiritually.

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Emerald

Emeralds are fascinating gemstones. They have the most beautiful, most intense and most radiant green that can possibly be imagined: emerald green. Inclusions are tolerated. In top quality, fine emeralds are even more valuable than diamonds.

The name emerald comes from the Greek ‘smaragdos’ via the Old French ‘esmeralde’, and really just means ‘green gemstone’. Innumerable fantastic stories have grown up around this magnificent gem. The Incas and Aztecs of South America, where the best emeralds are still found today, regarded the emerald as a holy gemstone. However, probably the oldest known finds were once made near the Red Sea in Egypt. Having said that, these gemstone mines, already

exploited by Egyptian pharaohs between 3000 and 1500 B.C. and later referred to as 'Cleopatra's Mines', had already been exhausted by the time they were rediscovered in the early 19th century.

Written many centuries ago, the Vedas, the holy scriptures of the Indians, say of the precious green gems and their healing properties: 'Emeralds promise good luck ...'; and 'The emerald enhances the well-being ...'. So it was no wonder that the treasure chests of Indian maharajas and maharanis contained wonderful emeralds. One of the world's largest is the so-called 'Mogul Emerald'. It dates from 1695, weighs 217.80 carats, and is some 10cm tall. One side of it is inscribed with prayer texts, and engraved on the other there are magnificent floral ornaments. This legendary emerald was

auctioned by Christie's of London to an unidentified buyer for 2.2m US Dollars on September 28th 2001.

Emeralds have been held in high esteem since ancient times. For that reason, some of the most famous emeralds are to be seen in museums and collections. The New York Museum of Natural History, for example, has an exhibit in which a cup made of pure emerald which belonged to the Emperor Jehangir is shown next to the 'Patricia', one of the largest Colombian emerald crystals, which weighs 632 carats. The collection of the Bank of Bogota includes five valuable emerald crystals with weights of between 220 and 1796 carats, and splendid emeralds also form part of the Iranian National Treasury, adorning, for example, the diadem of the former Empress Farah. The Turkish



sultans also loved emeralds. In Istanbul's Topkapi Palace there are exhibits with items of jewellery, writing-implements and daggers, each lavishly adorned with emeralds and other gems.

Fingerprints of nature

The lively luminosity of its colour makes the emerald a unique gemstone. However, really good quality is fairly rare, with inclusions often marring the evenness of the colour – signs of the turbulent genesis which has characterised this gemstone. Fine inclusions, however, do not by any means diminish the high regard in which it is held. On the contrary: even with inclusions, an emerald in a deep, lively green still has a much higher value than an almost flawless emerald whose colour is

paler. Affectionately, and rather poetically, the specialists call the numerous crystal inclusions, cracks or fissures which are typical of this gemstone 'jardin'. They regard the tender little green plants in the emerald garden as features of the identity of a gem which has grown naturally.

So where do they come from and how is it that they exist at all? In order to answer these questions, we need to look far, far back into the time of the emerald's origin. Emeralds from Zimbabwe are among the oldest gemstones anywhere in the world. They were already growing 2600 million years ago, whilst some specimens from Pakistan, for example, are a mere 9 million years young. From a chemical-mineralogical point of view, emeralds are beryllium-



aluminium-silicates with a good hardness of 7.5 to 8, and belong, like the light blue [HYPERLINK «http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/aquamarine.html»](http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/aquamarine.html) aquamarine, the tender pink [HYPERLINK «http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/morganite.html»](http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/morganite.html) morganite, the golden heliodor and the pale green beryl, to the large gemstone [HYPERLINK «http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/beryl.html»](http://www.gemstone.org/gem-by-gem/english/beryl.html) family of the beryls. Pure beryl is colourless. The colours do not occur until traces of some other element are added. In the case of the emerald, it is mainly traces of chromium and vanadium which are responsible for the fascinating colour. Normally, these elements are concentrated in quite different parts of the Earth's crust to beryllium, so the emerald should, strictly speaking, perhaps not exist at all. But during intensive tectonic processes such as orogenesis, metamorphism, emergences and erosion of the land, these contrasting elements found each other and crystallised

out to make one of our most beautiful gemstones. The tension involved in the geological conditions conducive to the above processes produced some minor flaws, and some major ones. A glance through the magnifying-glass or microscope into the interior of an emerald tells us something about the eventful genesis of this unique gem: here we see small or large fissures; here the sparkle of a mini-crystal or a small bubble; here shapes of all kinds. While the crystals were still growing, some of these manifestations had the chance to 'heal', and thus the jagged three-phase inclusions typical of Colombian emeralds were formed: cavities filled with fluid, which often also contain a small bubble of gas and some tiny crystals.

Logically enough, a genesis as turbulent as that of the emerald impedes the undisturbed formation of large, flawless crystals. For this reason, it is only seldom that a large emerald with good colour and good transparency is found. That is why fine emeralds are so valuable. But for the very reason that the emerald has such a stormy past, it is surely entitled to show it - that is,





something like 'king of the gemstones'. And it was a royal welcome indeed which used to be prepared for it. Whenever a particularly beautiful ruby crystal was found, the ruler sent high dignitaries out to meet the precious gemstone and welcome it in appropriate style. Today, rubies still decorate the insignia of many royal households. But are they really all genuine rubies? Read on to find out more!

as long as only a fine jardin is to be seen, and not a rank garden which spoils both colour and transparency.

Ruby

Which colour would you spontaneously associate with love and vivacity, passion and power? It's obvious, isn't it? Red. Red is the colour of love. It radiates warmth and a strong sense of vitality. And red is also the colour of the ruby, the king of the gemstones. In the fascinating world of gemstones, the ruby is the undisputed ruler.

For thousands of years, the ruby has been considered one of the most valuable gemstones on Earth. It has everything a precious stone should have: magnificent colour, excellent hardness and outstanding brilliance. In addition to that, it is an extremely rare gemstone, especially in its finer qualities.

For a long time India was regarded as the ruby's classical country of origin. In the major works of Indian literature, a rich store of knowledge about gemstones has been handed down over a period of more than two thousand years. The term 'corundum', which we use today, is derived from the Sanskrit word 'kuruvinda'. The Sanskrit word for ruby is 'ratnaraj', which means



Only a little bit of chrome ...

Ruby is the red variety of the mineral corundum, one of the hardest minerals on Earth, of which the sapphire is also a variety. Pure corundum is colourless. Slight traces of elements such as chrome, iron, titanium or vanadium are responsible for the colour. These gemstones have excellent hardness. On the Mohs scale their score of 9 is second only to that

of the diamond. Only red corundum is entitled to be called ruby, all other colours being classified as sapphires. The close relationship between the ruby and the sapphire has only been known since the beginning of the 19th century. Up to that time, red garnets or spinels were also thought to be rubies. (That, indeed, is why the 'Black Ruby' and the 'Timur Ruby', two of the British Crown Jewels, were so





“ Somewhat paradoxically, it is actually the colouring element chrome which is responsible for this scarcity ”

named, when they are not actually rubies at all, but spinels.)

Ruby, this magnificent red variety from the multi-coloured corundum family, consists of aluminium oxide and chrome as well as very fine traces of other elements - depending on which deposit it was from. In really fine colours and good clarity, however, this gemstone occurs only very rarely in the world's mines. Somewhat paradoxically, it is actually the colouring element chrome which is responsible for this scarcity. True enough, millions of years ago, when the gemstones were being created deep inside the core of the Earth, chrome was the element which gave the ruby its wonderful colour. But at

the same time it was also responsible for causing a multitude of fissures and cracks inside the crystals. Thus only very few ruby crystals were given the good conditions in which they could grow undisturbed to considerable sizes and crystallise to form perfect gemstones. For this reason, rubies of more than 3 carats in size are very rare. So it is no wonder that rubies with hardly any inclusions are so valuable that in good colours and larger sizes they achieve top prices at auctions, surpassing even those paid for diamonds in the same category.

Birthplaces of fine rubies

Which is the most beautiful ruby-red? Good question. The red of a ruby may involve very different nuances depending on its origin. The range of those nuances is quite wide, and could perhaps be compared to hotel categories, from luxury accommodation down to a plain inn or hostel. For example, if the gemstone experts refer to a 'Burmese ruby', they are talking about the top luxury category. However, it does not necessarily follow that the stone is of Burmese origin. It is basically an indication of the fact that the colour of the ruby in question is that typically shown by stones from the famous deposits in Burma (now Myanmar): a rich, full red with a slightly bluish hue. The colour is sometimes referred to as 'pigeon-blood-red', but the term 'Burmese colour' is a more fitting description. A connoisseur will immediately associate this colour with the legendary 'Mogok Stone Tract' and the gemstone centre of Mogok in the North of Myanmar. Here, the country's famous ruby deposits lie in a mountain valley surrounded by high peaks. Painstakingly, gemstones of an irresistible luminosity are brought to light in the 'valley of the rubies'. Unfortunately,

really fine qualities are quite rare even here. The colour of a Burmese ruby is regarded as exceptionally vivid. It is said to display its unique brilliance in any light, be it natural or artificial.

The journey to the world's most important ruby deposits takes us further on to the small town of Mong Hsu in the North-East of Myanmar, where the most important ruby deposits of the nineties lie. Originally, it was believed that these rubies would hardly prove suitable for use in jewellery, since untreated Mong Hsu ruby crystals actually display two colours: a purple to black core and a bright red periphery. Only when it had been discovered that the dark core could be turned into deep red by means of heat treatment did rubies from Mong Hsu begin to find their way on to the jewellery market. Today, the Mong Hsu gemstone mines are still among the most important ruby suppliers. In the main, they offer heat-treated rubies in commercial qualities and sizes between 0.5 and 3 carats.

Ruby deposits also exist in neighbouring Vietnam, near the Chinese border. Rubies of Vietnamese origin generally display a slightly purplish hue. Rubies from Thailand,

another classical supplier, however, often have a darker red which tends towards brown. This 'Siamese colour' - an elegantly muted deep red - is considered second in beauty only to the Burmese colour, and is especially popular in the USA. Ceylon rubies, which have now become very rare, are mainly light red, like ripe raspberries.

Other ruby deposits are located in Northern Pakistan in the Hunza Valley, Kashmir, Tadjikistan, Laos, Nepal, and Afghanistan. But rubies are also produced in India, where deposits with relatively large crystals were discovered in the federal states of Mysore and Orissa. These crystals have many inclusions, but they are, nevertheless, eminently suited to being cut as beads or cabochons.

Lately, people have begun to talk about East Africa as a source of rubies. Straight after their discovery in the 1960s, rubies from Kenya and Tanzania surprised the experts by their beautiful, strong colour, which may vary from light to dark red. But in the African mines too, fine and clear rubies of good colour, purity and size are very rare. Usually the qualities mined are of a merely average quality.

By Karima Burns, MH, ND





How to
Manage
your
Children's
mental
growth?

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Children tend to continue a behavior when it is rewarded and stop a behavior when it is ignored

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Your kid behavior may be a problem if it doesn't match the expectations of the family or if it is disruptive. Normal or "good" behavior is usually determined by whether it's socially, culturally and developmentally appropriate. Knowing what to expect from your child at each age will help you decide whether his or her behavior is normal.

What can be done to change a child's behavior?

Children tend to continue a behavior when it is rewarded and stop a behavior when it is ignored. Consistency in your reaction to a behavior is important because rewarding and punishing the same behavior at different times confuses your child. When

your child's behavior is a problem, you have 3 choices:

Decide that the behavior is not a problem because it's appropriate to the child's age and stage of development.

Attempt to stop the behavior, either by ignoring it or by punishing it.

Introduce a new behavior that you prefer and reinforce it by rewarding your child.

Developing Multiple Plans

Many young people leave high school with a narrow plan of action and with few alternatives. They fully expect to be successful with the plan and are not prepared to face any barriers. Developing flexibility in career planning requires a sense of purpose, problem solving skills, and several plans.

Self-Advocacy and Marketing

As young people move towards further education, or into the labor market, it is critical for them to market and advocate for themselves. With scarce opportunities and confusing bureaucracies, there is a need to develop communication skills, self-confidence, organizational adaptability, and effectiveness in human relations. This requires activities such as mentoring, role-played practice, and ongoing economic, emotional, and informational support.

Managing Changing Relationships

The emotional and social changes adolescents experience can challenge young people as they try to cope with barriers in the education system and labor market. Friends provide emotional support, but this is a time when friendship patterns are changing. Parents are needed for emotional, material, and information support, but, at the

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**Adolescence
is a period of
considerable stress**

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same time, they need to allow young people sufficient room to develop their own sense of identity. Coping with relationship issues can be facilitated through communication, human relationship training, and problem solving, which blurs most of the traditional distinction between career and personal counseling.

Meeting Basic Needs

Young people have a strong need for community. Other central needs include having a sense of meaning in life, physical and emotional security, and basic structure in relationships and living. As young people move beyond high school, many of these basic needs require reevaluation. In addition to changing relationships, questions emerge as to how to make a living, how to plan meaningful activities, and how to effectively manage time. To facilitate these changes, young people need to establish a sense of purpose and understand how they are meeting their current and future needs. Counselors can help clarify these issues. Without this type of developmental assistance, young people often lack the resilience to maneuver within increasingly competitive educational and labor market environments.

Coping with Stress

Adolescence is a period of considerable stress. While much of the stress can be minimized through support, persistence, and active decision making and planning, there still will be times when young people find themselves in difficult situations. Coping with stress is associated with various competencies such as organizational adaptability, human relations, problem solving, and self-confidence. Particular strategies for stress management include relaxation techniques, managing 'self talk,'





career events was considerable, suggesting a definite need for youth to develop competence in handling loss and grieving. Counseling in this domain blurs many of the traditional distinctions between the personal and career areas.

Bridging Programs

Many young people lack “hands-on” experience as they attempt to enter the world of work. Many also are unfamiliar with, and fearful of, moving into post-secondary education. To address this concern, counselors need to develop work experience and co-op education programs to help young people acquire the necessary experience. Post-secondary education entry programs can also play an important role in easing transition difficulties.

Information and Information Access

The challenge in the information age is not only how to gather information, but how to turn information into personally relevant knowledge. Young people need up-to-date information on careers, education programs, and market trends. They must also develop skills to assess the relevance of information. Acquiring these skills involves both theoretical and applied knowledge. Counseling strategies within this domain include helping young people develop research, interviewing, and critical analysis skills.



The challenge in the information age is not only how to gather information



focusing, and using support systems.

Coping with Loss

We were surprised at the extent to which young people were influenced by various personal losses. These losses involved death in the family (usually grand parents) and the experience of parental separation and divorce. The impact of these losses upon

-When your adolescent talks:

- Pay attention.
- Watch as well as listen.
- Try not to interrupt.
- Rephrase his or her words or ask your child to “break it down” to be sure you understand him or her.
- If you don’t have time to listen right now, set a time when you do have time.

-It's okay to disagree with him or her, but disagree respectfully, not insultingly.

Direct the discussion toward solutions.
Be willing to negotiate and compromise.
This will teach problem solving in a healthy way.

Summary

When rules need to be set, go ahead and set them! Don't be afraid to be unpopular for a day or two. Believe it or not, adolescents see setting limits as a form of caring. Try not to get upset if your adolescent makes mistakes. This will help your adolescent to take responsibility for his or her own actions. Remember to offer guidance when necessary.

Let your child be the adolescent he or she wants to be, not the one you wish he or she was. Also, try not to pressure your adolescent to be like you were or wish you



had been at that age. Be sure to praise your adolescent, not only for success but for the effort as well. Be a parent first, not a pal. Your adolescent's separation from you as a parent is a normal part of development.

Don't sweat the small stuff. Some little

annoying things that adolescents do may not be worth a big battle—let them go. Give your teen some leeway with regard to clothes, hairstyle, etc. Many teens go through a rebellious period in which they want to express themselves in ways that differ from



and frequently annoy their parents. However, stay aware of the messages and ratings of the music, movies, and video games to which your child is exposed. Don't be afraid to share with your adolescent that you have made mistakes as a parent. A few parenting

mistakes aren't that crucial. Parents also should share with their teens some mistakes they made as adolescents.

Talk to your pediatrician if you are having trouble with your adolescent. He or she may be able to help you and your preteen or teen find ways to get along. this is a time when friendship patterns are changing. Parents are needed for emotional, material, and information support, but, at the same time, they need to allow young people sufficient room to develop their own sense of identity. Coping with relationship issues can be facilitated through communication, human relationship training, and problem solving, which blurs most of the traditional distinction between career and personal counseling.



Salima AL Hammadi
Former educational advisor - Educational Researcher



The Aesthetic
Features

*O*riental
Rugs



“ Although there are references to carpets by early Greek and Arab writers, just when the first Oriental rug was woven is unknown ”

During the past century, the Oriental rug has become valued throughout the world as a work of art. With its rich history and color, the **Oriental rug** often is called the aristocrat of carpets. Although the Oriental rug of today may not soar through the air like the magic carpet of Arabian legend, the Oriental rug does perform magic, transforming interior spaces into extraordinary spaces.

The term, Oriental rug, traditionally has been used to describe hand-knotted rugs from the East. The process typically involves stretching warp threads on a loom and knotting the pile to these threads. When a row of knots is completed, a weft thread is inserted. Once the entire carpet is knotted, the pile is shorn. To a large degree, the precision of the design depends on how tightly the rug has been knotted and how short the pile has been cut.

The rug's density, or number of knots per square inch, can be a useful indicator of the fineness and durability of the rug -- the more knots the better. A superb Oriental rug may have more than 500 to 1,000 knots per square inch.

Historically, the great carpet-producing areas include Turkey, Persia, the Caucasus and Turkestan. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, India and China also must be added to the list. And under Arab influence, Spain, too, has produced hand-knotted rugs of distinction.

History

Although there are references to carpets by early Greek and Arab writers, just when the first Oriental rug was woven is unknown. In 1949, a Russian archaeological expedition to the Altai mountains in southern Siberia





excavated a royal burial mound that contained a miraculously preserved frozen carpet. Known as the Pazyryk carpet, it was used as a saddle cover for a horse interred in the burial mound. Beautifully designed, the rug dates from the 4th or 5th century B.C. and is the earliest-known surviving example of a hand-knotted carpet.

One theory is that the technique of knotting carpets was begun by the nomadic tribes of Central Asia. These tribes produced small rugs typically decorated with geometric motifs inspired by plant and animal forms. For the nomad, the rugs were both decorative and utilitarian, serving as floor covers, wall hangings, curtains and saddlebags.

Because the nomadic carpet-makers were forced to dismantle their looms and move on whenever their security was threatened by natural elements or human foes, their creations may contain irregularities in weave, selvages and design. The wandering nomads are credited with spreading the art of carpet-making to new lands and peoples.



Some of the greatest carpet-making centers developed in *Persia* and *Turkey*. Persian manuscripts from the reign of Chosroes I, the king of Persia from 531 to 579, describe the Spring Carpet of Chosroes. This rug was woven of wool, silk, gold and silver. It was studded with precious stones.

The period from the 16th century through the first half of the 18th century is known as Persia's golden age of carpet-making. A number of carpets survive from this era and are recognized for their harmony of colors and originality of designs.

Carpet-making probably has been taking place in Turkey at least as long as in Persia. After his visit in 1271 to the Turkish region known as Anatolia, Italian traveler Marco Polo described the area's carpets, with their geometric designs and animal figures, as the most beautiful in the world.

Turkish rugs appear frequently in the paintings of well known artists. In fact, German artist Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543) painted the geometrically patterned rugs so often that they came to be known in the West as *Holbein carpets*.

It was primarily through Italian mer-

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One theory is that the technique of knotting carpets was begun by the nomadic tribes of Central Asia
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chants that the Oriental rug became recognized and valued in Europe. Venice early established itself as a major trading trader with the East. Venetians spread Oriental rugs along their narrow streets, hung the rugs from windows and used them to decorated their gondolas.

By the early 16th century, Oriental rug collections could be found in the great courts of Europe, including those of Catherine de Medici and Charles V. The Lord Chancellor of England, Cardinal Wolsey, is reported to have purchased 60 Turkish carpets from a Venetian dealer to furnish his palace at Hampton Court.

Western interest in Oriental rugs waned





“ Plants, flowers, and even geometric motifs, also have special meanings ”

during the 17th and 18th centuries. But after the great exhibition of 1891 in Vienna, Europeans had renewed enthusiasm for the carpets. Americans soon followed suit. Western importers began asking the carpet-makers to modify dimensions, and sometimes color and design, to satisfy the tastes of Europe and the Americas. In the 20th century, the appeal of the Oriental rug continues to grow.

Designs of Oriental Rugs

No matter how well woven and rich in color, the Oriental rug probably would cease to fascinate without its seemingly infinite variety of designs. Regions develop and jealously guard their own patterns and designs, passing them down from generation to generation. By studying a design, it often is possible to date a carpet and determine where it was produced.

To a certain extent, carpet-weaving areas can be divided into those using floral designs and those using geometric shapes and patterns. Floral patterns dominate in Persia and India. Caucasian and Turkoman rugs almost always employ geometric designs; when the rare floral pattern is used in these rugs, the design tends to be stylized and rectilinear. In Turkey, both floral and geometric designs are used, although the latter are more common. Chinese rugs are easily recognized by patterns that include dragons, monsters or fabulous birds.

Most creatures possess symbolic meaning, and, in China, the dragon represents imperial power and also has strong associations with Confucianism. In Persia, however, the dragon symbolizes evil; in India, death. Scenes of fighting animals on Oriental carpets typically represent the struggle between good and evil.

Plants, flowers, and even geometric motifs, also have special meanings. The



to find any animal or human figures on early Turkish rugs.

Turkish prayer rugs are characterized by rich and minutely detailed decoration. Found on all prayer rugs is the arched mihrab, or prayer niche, which is pointed to Mecca when the rugs are used in prayer.

cypress tree symbolizes mourning, as well as immortality through death. The palm and the coconut are metaphors of blessing and fulfillment. The peony symbolizes wealth, while the lotus foretells a great lineage.

A universal symbol found in South America, Egypt, India and elsewhere is the geometric swastika that has been a popular border design. In China, the swastika symbolizes peace -- a meaning apparently ignored in 20th-century Europe. A frequent Mohammedan symbol is the crescent which signifies faith. Another universal symbol, the endless knot, represents wisdom and immortality.

Because the Prophet Mohammed spoke against the artistic representation of humans and animals, geometric patterns often dominate the designs of Islamic peoples. Although Persia embraced the Islamic Shiite religion, the area's carpet-makers often continued to decorate their creations with lively animal and human figures in dream-like surroundings. On the other hand, it is quite rare



By: Hatem Husain
 Researcher and editorial free lancer

The Quran and the Environment

By: Kareem Ghoneim

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The floor of the present day Pacific Ocean is studded with a large number of submerged

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Control of Pollution in the Environment:

According to scientists and philosophers man is considered as the major factor in disturbing the natural balance of the universe. Man interferes intentionally or unintentionally in the earth's ecosystems by impairing its perfect order and precise sequence. But it seems that man has cut off his nose to spite his face and he now is the victim. Grave dangers are manifested in pollution of the air, water, soil, outer space and others, as well as the irrational exploitation of the environment's

resources, and inconsistent distribution of human settlements. All these factors have lead to different problems, all of which are marked by a disturbance to the earth's natural balance.

Urban populations are concentrated in towns usually emerging close to one or more natural resources (water, oil, fuel, sea, etc.) which create a marked disturbance in the existing natural balance. This imbalance is mainly attributed to the increasing waste disposal (human or industrial), exploitation of resources and density in population. It must be admitted that man's claims on the environment



disruption to the natural balance of various bio- and eco-systems all over the world. This irresponsible behavior has led to a depletion in the atmosphere and this poses the greatest threat worldwide.

There are countless examples of disturbances to the environment. Forests have been removed, deserts have been encroached upon, and many species of plants and animals have disappeared throughout the world. All these affect the macro- environment because it is an integrated whole.

The climate has changed and is in fact still changing due to unwise human activities. There are, however, natural and non-human induced reasons for the climate changes that should not be ignored, such as the pattern of the earth's rotation around the sun and volcanic explosions. The over-use of wood, excessive removal of pasture land, and deforestation which destroys and eradicates magnitudes of the earth's vegetation all play a role in raising the earth's absorption of the sun. In addition, there is the high use of energy over and above man's need, which raises the temperature of the atmosphere and thus affecting climate.

The over-use of non-renewable resources - oil, coal and natural gas - leads to a continuous increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which, in turn, raises the temperature.

The ozone layer has been further exposed to destruction as a result of the exhausts of planes flying in the higher altitudes, as well as gases and fumes expelled from nitrogenous fertilizers and atmospheric pollution from factories. The danger of the depletion of the ozone can only be imagined when we realize to what extent the earth will be exposed to more carcinogenic rays. As a result the climate will altered worldwide, destroying the



dense forests, reducing agricultural output and killing most living creatures except for insects which can withstand the ultraviolet rays.

Man's disruption to the natural balance of forests leads to various problems that are reflected on him as well as other creatures on earth. Soil is washed away, humus shrinks, rainwater runs in torrents, temperatures fluctuate, high and severe winds become more common and drought spreads globally.

In addition to toxins expelled into the air and waste pumped into the water by factories, nuclear explosions, radioactive pollution, there is the problem of man-made chemical pesticides used to control pests

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There are countless examples of disturbances to the environment

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which are injurious to the agricultural or animal wealth. Pesticides and other toxins interfere with the ecosystems and have destructive consequences that appear in all layers of the atmosphere, water, soil, and



“ Selfishness and aggression has overcome mankind ”

outer space. In attempting to eradicate or control these creatures which compete with man for survival and natural resources, man has designed deadly poison which he breathes in or drinks and eats through crops, meat and dairy produce

The corrupters of the earth, whether those who deny God, practice injustice or go against the universal laws, are referred to by the following Quranic verses.

“There is the type of man whose speech about this world’s life may dazzle thee, and he calls The God (Allah) to

witness about what is in his heart: yet is he the most contentious of enemies? When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and cattle. But Allah loves not mischief” (Al-Baqarah: verses 204 and 205)

An incidence occurred prior to these verses being revealed. A man named Al-Akhnas Ibn Shuriq came to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to embrace Islam, but as he turned to leave, he happened to pass by a pasture and grazing animals. He set it alight and killed the cattle. The verses were sent down as a sign of Divine disapproval.

This incident recurs over history on a wider scale involving millions of people throughout the earth. The natural wealth deposited by Allah for the benefit of mankind has been spoiled. Selfishness and aggression has overcome mankind, as they have become corrupters of earth, the surrounding atmosphere and neighboring outer space. Allah the Almighty says:

“Mischief has appeared on the land and sea, because of (the need) that the hands of man have earned, that (Allah) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from evil).” (Ar-Rum: verse 41)

Mischief on the land and sea is inflicted by man’s unwary interference with the natural laws and environmental systems that are ultimately against his own interests. Environment pollution, which is tantamount to the disruption of natural balance, is the main form of corruption on earth.

As Allah created man on earth, he decreed that man should preserve this habitat. He gave man the right to invest in it and benefit from it. He enjoined upon man not to cause mischief anywhere. He addresses whoever may think of disturbing the natural balance, the earthly equilibrium, or inflicting injustice.

“Seek not mischief in the land, for Allah loves not those who do mischief.”

(Al-Qasas: verse 77)

Islam and its Ummah is moderate, where its people do not consider nature and cosmic objects as deities, but at the same time do not tamper with or spoil them. The relationship between the Muslim and the universe is one of harmonious benefit and use. When Allah takes an oath by some creatures, he draws attention to the fact that man should recognize their value and take care of them.

“By the sun and his splendor. By the moon as it follows him. By the day as it shows up (the sun’s) glory. By the night as it conceals it. By the firmament and its

“
He gave man the right to invest in it and benefit from it
”



“ Noise leads to environmental, psychological and physical harms ”

structure. By the earth and its expanse.”

(Ash-Shams: verses 1-6)

**“By the night as it conceals (the light).
By the day as it appears in glory. By the
creation of male and female.”**

(Al-Lail: verses 1-3)

**“I call to witness the siting of the stars.
And that is indeed a mighty adjuration
if you but-knew, That this is indeed a
Quran most honorable.”**

(Al-Waqi'ah: verse 75-77)

With such an adjuration and call for revering other creatures and aspects of His creation, Allah urges man to jettison bashfulness towards them because such an attitude does not yield progress or civilization. Removing the beauty of these creatures and failing to draw the benefit from them causes man to neither gain in morals nor lead him to progress or civilization.

Controlling Noise Pollution:

Noise leads to environmental, psychological and physical harms. There is evidence that inhabitants of large cities suffer from fatigue and psychosomatic disorders due to constant exposure to noise. Although noise has been considered harmful or at least unpleasant, noise pollution has been regarded as the worst



negative effect of the industrial era, and a characteristic of industrially developed societies. Yet, little attention has been given to it, as pollutants of the air or the water have tended to take precedence.

This is due to the following factors: noise is caused by a variety of sources everywhere. It is not easily targeted; the effect of noise disappears as it stops, without leaving a lasting trace on the environment, although continuous exposure to noise leads to certain disorders, as explained below; noise is a domestic or local environmental pollutant. Unlike water and air, its effects do not spread from one country to another.

What is the definition of noise?

According to the Encyclopedia Americana, it is the pressure that harms man and other animals. Sir. A. Wilson Committee of Noise



in nature and measured them in dB:

- Natural breathing -10dB;
- Rush of tree leaves in breeze-50 dB;
- Traffic in a crowded street - 70 dB;
- A large water fall- 90 dB;
- A nearby machinegun - 130 dB
- Aircraft taking off-140dB;
- A rocket in lift-off - 175 dB.

Sounds are divided into the following categories: very quiet, quiet, audible, medium, high, and noisy. The last category is painful at 130 dB. There are several sources producing this noise:

- Some natural sources like thunder, storms, clashing waves, dogs barking, wind, waterfalls, avalanches, fires, etc.



- Man-made noise coming from agricultural and industrial equipment, transportation etc, and even household tools, machines and instruments.

Affairs defines it as the sound that is undesirable to the receiver. A recent definition of noise is that it is a form of environmental pollution that is not less dangerous than the man-made toxins.

Noise is measured by “phon” and “decibel” (dB) - the former being the unit of sound pitch, the latter being the unit of its pressure or impact. At 1000 Hertz, phon = 100dB, at 3500 Hertz: 100 phon=89 dB, and at 50 Hertz: 100 phon= 110db. The decibel is the minimum of the difference between two sounds detectable by the human ear. At zero, the sound is very low. It rises gradually until 130 dB at which degree it becomes painful, Scientists have determined the noise values of some sounds

In major

cities one kind of noise is known as the “ambient or background noise”, which means everything one may hear at home, in the street and at work, created by planes - particularly jets - traffic, street vendors, children playing, radios and other audio sets, washing machines, factory machinery, workshops, live bands, etc.

The dangerous effects of noise

Noise has seriously bad effects on the human ear. But does it have physical, psychological or social effects?



“ “ It may be temporary, partial or complete. The human ear can endure sounds safely up to 60 dB ” ”

1- The auditory damage:

The level of noise in major cities and urban centers has become so serious that it will be a danger to public health if it continues at the present rate. Although noise has existed around man for millions of years, its medical dangers have only been recognized since 1930, when homes were used in different kinds of vehicles running inside and between cities. One of the earliest studies on the biological effects of noise was that sponsored by US Naval research office under the supervision of the University of Chicago, and published in early December in 1953. It indicated that US marines who worked in noisy conditions suffered from excessive fatigue, occasional nausea, and loss of libido.

Reports filed by research committees in the following decades indicated that more than 20 million people were suffering from noise-induced hearing loss in the US alone, as noise was the most prominent of the environmental pollutants. A study concluded in 1968 by the Federal Council of Science and Technology (specific





committee for the environment) warned that about 4.5 million workers might apply for compensation for loss of hearing.

Excessive noise damages thousands of cells in the ear leading to an immediate loss of hearing, which happens in explosions and wars. Constant exposure to noise may lead to a gradual damage of the cells and a gradual loss of hearing. Deafness may even result from a bullet fired or an explosion. In the former case, deafness results from auditory waves, whereas in the second it results from pressure waves. The pathological disorders in that case involve the outer ear, as the drum congests and may be pierced due to mechanical changes. It also involves the middle ear, as the parts may be torn and loose, then bleed and an aqueous fluid can subsequently appear in it.

Deafness means a weakening in the hearing. It may be temporary, partial or complete. The human ear can endure sounds safely up to 60 dB, but may be injured by more intensive sounds that affect it constantly or temporarily. Deafness happens at the following stages:

- 1- Weakness in hearing for a short period that may disappear after some minutes or hours (with occasional loud noises in factories, workshops or crowded places).
- 2- Constant weakness, due to which one fails to hear a quiet talking (usually resulting from continuous daily exposure to high noise).

- 3- Complete permanent deafness (resulting from a continuous daily exposure to very high noise like explosions and bombs).

Records on workers in Sweden indicate that many are exposed to loud machinery noise daily. About 5000 people suffered hearing loss in 1973 and the figure rose to 16,000 in 1977. An official report of the Environment Affairs Council in US issued in 1970 indicated that about 16 million industrial workers faced the risk of losing their jobs due to the weakness in their hearing abilities.

2- Non-Auditory Damage:

The Fetus: The fetus floats on fluids that protect it from jerking movements, but barely from noise. It can hear internal sounds (the mother's heart beat, the movement of the intestines, and the air in her lungs) as well as external sounds (the mother's voice and any surrounding sounds or voices). Studies indicate that the fetus experiences muscular spasms if the mother is exposed to excessive noise. It develops a response similar to the post-delivery - "Motor reflex action". The heartbeat of the fetus, after its sixth month, accelerates if the mother is exposed to extreme noise. Research conducted on animal fetuses, when human cases are difficult to study, reveal



bone deformities in the fetuses whose mothers were exposed to noise that led to a hormone imbalance.

The Nervous System, the Circulatory System and the Endocrine Glands:

Extreme noise affects the nervous system, and creates electric pulses that travel through the nerve fibers to the brain cortex, the highest functional region in the brain. The cells of the cortex are stimulated to identify incoming noise. Sub-cortex regions are also affected, particularly the reticular formation (a lump of cells at the base of the brain) which is directly related to the higher layers of the brain up to the meninges, as well as the spinal cord. Consequently, the autonomic nervous system, particularly the sympathetic system is stimulated. The latter controls the circulatory system (the heart and the blood vessels), the function of the endocrine glands and the digestive system - particularly the stomach. Disorders of varied intensity occur according to the intensity and duration of the noise, and are reflected in several physical disorders.

Medical studies also indicate that noise leads to higher rates of cholesterol and tri-glyceride in the blood, which blocks the blood vessels and leads to heart attacks and heart failure. Excessive

production of the corticosteroid hormones is related to heart attacks, and is caused by the effect of noise on the adrenal gland.

3) Psychological and Social Damage:

Man - and animals - behaves properly when in a stable, normal mental state, according to the observations of psychosociologist Charles Kort and some of his colleagues. The study showed 2567 cases of people who live in noisy areas and heavy traffic in Holland. Psychological studies on industrial workers indicate that those who are subject to high-density noise suffer from irritability, dizziness, headaches, moodiness and anxiety.

Children are naturally more affected by noise than adults. The mental capacities of





school pupils are influenced by the surrounding noise, for example near airports where they feel distracted and frustrated. Children under 7 are the most sensitive to noise, as they become annoyed and often cry if they hear a sudden loud sound.

Soft music calms the nerves, whereas the loud music and jerky movements performed by young people in nightclubs leads to severe tension due to the effect of amplifiers, not to mention the auditory harms indicated earlier.

Calmness relaxes the nerves, noise irritates them: Concentration and deep contemplation need a calm atmosphere to allow the person to be creative. The noise from a wedding down the street to me has compelled me to stop at this point until the street is calm once again.

Generally, life in a big city like Cairo is full of noise. An intellectual can hardly be creative in such an atmosphere. Like all major cities, the roaring of machines and the clinging of steel conceal the humming of bees and the twittering of birds. Chimneys and discharged toxic smokes replace the gardens and parks that gave

“**Children are naturally more affected by noise than adults**”

sweet smells. Noise also disturbs those sleeping, leading to muscular contractions, so that one wakes up feeling tired rather than fresh.

Now, in the Glorious Quran, are the verses that call to avoid noise, such as the following:

“Neither speak thy prayer aloud, nor speak it in a low tone, but seek a middle course between.” (Al-Israa: verse 110)

“O you who believe, raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet. Nor speak aloud to him in talk, as you may speak aloud to one another, lest



your deeds become void and you perceive not. Those that lower their voices in the presence of the apostle of Allah – their hearts has Allah tested for piety: for them is forgiveness and a great Reward.”

(Al-Hujurat: verse 2,3).

“And be moderate in thy pace, and lower thy voice, for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass .” (Luqman: verse 19)

The Quran and the Sunnah enjoin quietude and self-control as well as caring for the feelings of others, and avoiding anything that can hurt them: even a loud voice. The first verse orders Muslims not to voice their prayer too loud, nor in an inaudible voice. They should seek a middle course in the “jahriyah” (in Arabic, articulated so as to be heard) in prayer and not the “sirriyah” (in Arabic; sub-vocalized). In the second verse, the Muslims are asked to lower their voices in the presence of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon

him). The injunction is both particular and general. Noise must generally be avoided particularly in solemn gatherings. The last verse carries Luqman’s exhortations to his son, and approves of them. The exhortations of previous prophets and apostles that are mentioned in the Quran are meant to be a source of advice to Muslims. In Luqman’s exhortation, the son is advised to lower his voice, and avoid speaking unnecessarily loud. To instill this message, he uses the metaphor of the braying ass, which implies that any pollutant of the environment or anything that is conducive to public discomfort is just as unpleasant and hateful.

At the time of Prophet (peace be upon him) his Companions were considering how to call for the five daily prayers at their appointed time. Suggestions included blowing a horn, drumming or ringing of bells, but all were turned down by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah revealed to one of the Companions a procedure in calling the prayer. He proposed it to Prophet who approved of it. But the Prophet chose Bilal to do so.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the noise pervading some so-called Islamic countries has nothing to do with Islam. Unless the teachings, principles and the code of behavior approved by Islam are adhered to, one can not pretend to be a real Muslim.



Pollution in the Natural Environment and Ethical Environment

Pollution is any quantitative or qualitative change in the animate or inanimate components that cannot be accommodated by the ecological systems without disturbing their balance. Before the industrial revolution there were no problems with pollution as the natural cycles of ecological systems could easily accommodate and recycle the waste of the different human activities.

Pollution as a quantitative change only rises as the rates increase of some natural components in the environment, such as the rise in carbon dioxide due to massive forest fires. Quantitative change may also occur as a result of a slight addition to a certain material in a sensitive area, such as oil spillages from tankers due to accidents or defects. It also occurs as a result of introducing lethal or toxic materials, even in their normal concentrations, such as mercury, carbon oxides and radioactive material.

Qualitative pollution results from the addition of synthetic or industrial compounds foreign to the natural ecological systems, which accumulate in water, air, food, or soil. Foremost among these are

insecticides and herbicides. Pesticides containing chlorine, like DDT, have proven to be the most dangerous compound.

Pollution is one form of corruption (“fasal” in Arabic) mentioned in the Glorious Quran eight times. Counting the derivations of the word “fasal” mentioned elsewhere in the Quran raises the number to 49. “Fasal” involves physical corruption like disrupting the environmental phenomena and the contents of the universe (water, soil, food) by foolish human interference in the natural balance created by Allah the Almighty, Who did so wisely,

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**Allah revealed
to one of the
Companions a
procedure in calling
the prayer**
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perfectly and infallibly to fit the life of all creatures.

Water pollution in general means polluting water streams, wells, rivers, seas, rain and underground water in such a way that makes it unfit for man, animals, plants, or the sea and ocean creatures. Air pollution involves the discharge of gases, smoke and fumes (the solid, liquid and gaseous forms of matter) into the air surrounding living creatures, and the change of its natural composition. This leads ultimately to the unsuitability of the habitat, contrary to what Allah willed for His creatures. Physiological, economic and biological damages are, in fact, devastating to man,

animals, plants and other creatures.

It is highly portentous that pollution reached places hitherto unthinkable. The rate of lead in snow in Greenland was found to be higher than the rate some decades ago. This is a peculiar phenomenon as the island is almost deserted. It has no cars or factories. Finally, it was concluded that this high rate was attributed to the winds, which carried the vapor, smoke and gases from European factories to such remote territories.

Soil pollution is a form of corruption of the natural properties and compositions created by Allah to serve vegetation and the preservation of pure rainwater. Air pollutants can affect the water and soil also, since air, water and soil are systems that are closely interrelated.

Any form of reverting the straight-forwardness enjoined in the saying of Muhammad: "Say believe in Allah, then be straight forward," pollutes life in this world. The necessities of life are to be obtained honestly. Theft, bribery, embezzlement, and such things pollute what one does for a living. Islam defines the relationship between people and the society, and between them and the vast universe on the bases of love, amity, peace, cooperation, fraternity, and the rejection of grievances, envy, hatred and hard feelings. All forms of hatred, envy, spoiling the relationships between people, terrorizing the peaceful, usurping land and property, looting and plundering, or involving the world in destructive wars are pollution of the security and stability of life. Marriage is the proper form of satisfying the sexual activity. Adultery, fornication or homosexuality and such things are a pollution of the souls and the purity of genealogies.

The moral environment is the mental state of an individual, a group, or a country, within which the international acts of the

individuals occur. It may be so wide as to include several countries or continents if their populations belong to one moral code and live according to a comprehensive moral ground.

This environment may be good or evil. A good moral environment encompasses the individuals of a society who live by certain morals like tolerance, patience, endurance, generosity, chivalry, courage, justice, charity, humility, pride and high energy and others. An evil moral environment is one pervaded by low morals like treachery, lying, cheating, trickery, panic, roughness, permissiveness, spouse insolence, indecency, slander, hypocrisy, arrogance, despair, etc.

Islam commends kindness and calls for spreading virtues among people. It lays

down, the foundations for a healthy moral environment. The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah (peace be upon him) is the epitome of this code. The Quran describes him in many ways.

The Prophet was enjoined to observe good manners and behaviour. The order applies to all Muslims:

“Repel (evil) with what is belief: Then will he between whom and thee was haired become as it were thy friend and intimate.” (Fussilat: verse 34)

The Messenger of Allah says that he has been sent to perfect the virtuous morals. This means that the previous heavenly messenger came to call for the worship of Allah alone and then for the virtues. Muhammad (peace be upon him) came to complete the framework of virtues.

By: Karem S. Ghoneim MD. Scie.



Miraculous
Nature of
Qor**an**
is
Muslims'
Lifeboat^{only}

**We will soon show»
them Our signs in
the Universe and
inside themselves
until it will become
quite clear to them
«.that it is the truth**



By revealing the Holy Koran to mankind, God the Almighty counsels contemplation of life and commands man to read and ponder over the secrets of the universe. Reading is the most efficient way to attain knowledge. Fully assimilating the significant value of reading, early Muslims were avid readers whose unquenchable thirst for knowledge and staunch belief in God's ordainments drove them to fathom and thoroughly explore the inexhaustible wells of knowledge and concepts provided by the Noble Koran. That tireless pursuit of knowledge created generations of Muslim scholars and philosophers whose teachings and opinions still



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**the Koran conforms
exactly to modern
science**

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enrich human sciences until now. Muslim scholars, like Ibn Sina, Ibn Hayan, Al Razi, Ibn Al Haithman and many others, laid the foundation stone upon which many world civilizations have been established, including the Western civilization itself.

But unfortunately enough, however, Muslims, after ignoring the benefit of knowledge and relegating to oblivion the value of sciences and learning, forfeited their scientific stature and consequently lagged behind the wagon of world advanced civilizations.

Could the scientific miracles inherent in the Noble Koran be some sort of catalyst that might spur the Islamic youth to restore the lost glory of Islam?

Islamic intellectual Dr Zaghoul AL Najjar says towards this effect: « There have been myriad Muslims who have excelled themselves across history in all areas of life and who have immensely contributed to advancement of sciences across the globe. But the deteriorating situation Muslims now suffer at all levels prove in no uncertain way that Muslims have stopped learning and are no longer ready to fathom the secrets and miracles of Koran, a Holy Book that until now affects our way of life and whose verses explain the laws of the universe that are incomprehensible to many of us and as a result we've lost the scientific edge we used to maintain when Muslims were leading the world and setting examples for knowledge pursuit and exploration of the universe.»

There is indeed no human work prior to modern times that contains statements which were equally in advance of the state of knowledge at the time they appeared and which might be compared to the Koran. It comes as no surprise to learn that Religion and Science have always been considered



to be twin sisters by Islam and that today, at a time when science has taken such great strides, they still continue to be associated, and furthermore certain scientific data are used for the better understanding of the Koranic text.

What is more, in a century where, for many, scientific truth has dealt a deathblow to religious belief, it is precisely the discoveries of science that, in an objective examination of the Islamic Revelation, have highlighted the supernatural character of certain aspects of the Revelation.

The Noble Koran contains infinitely more precise details than many scientific discoveries today which are directly related to facts discovered by modern science: these are what exercise a magnetic attraction for today's scientists.

One of the more popular aspects of the I'jaaz (the miraculous nature) of the Koran in these times concerns its comments on aspects of science that the Prophet (PBUH) and his people could not have known about. It should be remembered however, that the Koran is not meant to be a book primarily devoted to a discussion of 'science', but rather a book that is meant for the guidance of mankind. As such, any references to subjects of a scientific nature are typically brief and not very descriptive. The I'jaaz, however appears in the fact that even in these limited descriptions, the Koran conforms exactly to modern science,



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**but rather a book
that is meant for
the guidance of
mankind**

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**Typically, this canal
is extremely narrow
and tight**

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and imparts knowledge that was unknown during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH). These descriptions are free from retroactive ideas that plagued humanity from the earliest of times, such as the concept that the Earth is stationary, and all the other planets and stars rotate around it.

There are numerous examples of such verses, such as the description of the formation of human life. The sperm of man is referred to as a mixture of liquids since the sperm is composed of various secretions from the testicles, the seminal

vesicles, the prostate and other glands. From the literally millions of sperms produced and ejaculated, only one sperm is actually used in the fertilization process - a very small quantity. This is referred to in a number of verses by the word ‘nutfah’ which signifies a small quantity of mixed fluid. The sperm then joins the female egg and forms the zygote.

During the delivery process, the passage of the baby from the mother’s womb to the outside world occurs through the birth canal. Typically, this canal is extremely narrow and tight. However, shortly before the birth, certain changes occur, including the release of certain hormones, the contractions of the uterus, and the breakage of the ‘bag of water’ surrounding the baby, all of which contribute to making the canal loose. This is referred to in 80:20, «then We made the passage (though the birth canal) easy.»

Perhaps the best way to appreciate the beauty of the above verses is to see pictures of the human embryo as it goes through the various stages of development. The vivid yet simple descriptions given in these verses (i.e. 22:5) were unknown to the people of the Prophet’s time, demonstrating the i’jaaz of the Koran in Science.

Other facts that are given in the Koran include the description of the formation of milk (16:66), the notion of orbits for the planets (21:33 and 36:40), and the description of the water cycle (15:22, 35:9 and more). Every verse that discusses nature and the creation falls into this category. In many verses, Allah Himself commands mankind to ponder over the creation, and mentions these as an indication of His Existence and Power. (3:190-191)

In a nutshell, there can never be a real

contradictions between the Koran and the Laws of Allah concerning the creation (i.e. actual science). The Koran is the Book of Allah, and since it is from Allah «there is no doubt in it» (2:1)

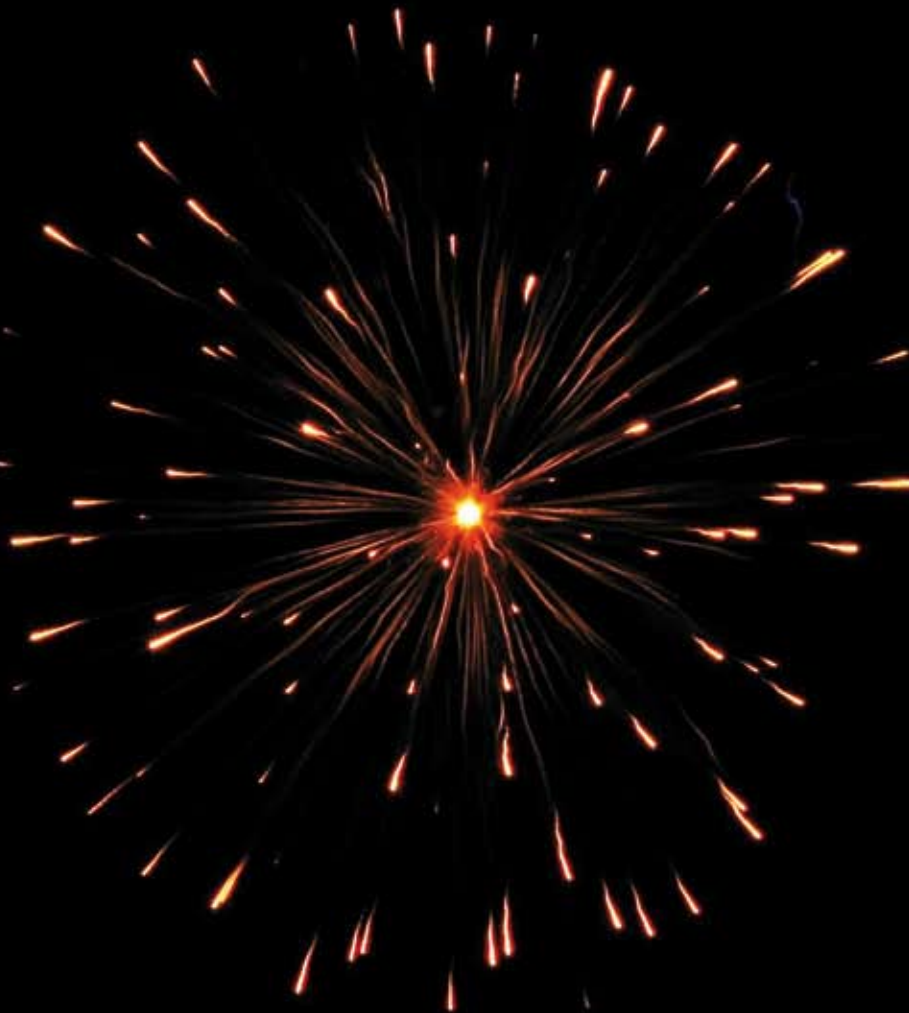
Likewise, the laws that govern the creation are also from Koran. What is studied as 'science', on the other hand, is the attempt by man to understand the creation and laws of Allah. Therefore it is possible for a scientific assumption to be incorrect, and this is clearly demonstrated by historically scientific 'facts' as the Earth being flat, or the orbiting of the Sun around the Earth. These concepts were believed to in so strongly by the 'scientists'

of their time that, on occasion, those who opposed them were harassed and even killed. Yet, later scientists discovered the inaccuracy of these concepts.

One final note is that Muslims must go back to the teachings of the Noble Koran as commanded by God, if they ever desire to restore their lost glory and rid themselves of the state of backwardness plaguing their world at present.



Source By: Islamic Organization agency



Fitness for

Purpose.

& TRUSTWO

Patience

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wo qualities a leader must possess are fitness for purpose and trustworthiness. These are expounded in the Qur'an which essentially stipulates two criteria for employee selection, the first being strength (fitness for purpose) and the second, trustworthiness. The Qur'an cites these in two places and in both cases in relation to the employment of Prophets. The first mentioned is the Prophet Yūsuf (pbuh) who was essentially appointed minister of finance, economy and planning, in place of Al-'Āzīz, who was dead at that time, with a portfolio that extended over agricultural strategic development. The Qur'an states:

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Typically, this canal is extremely narrow and tight

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قَالَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا يَا أَبَتِ اسْتَأْجِرْهُ إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنِ اسْتَأْجَرْتَ الْقَوِيُّ الْأَمِينُ

And said one of them (the two women): “O my father! Hire him! Verily, the best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy” (28:26).

Importantly, the reference for employment came from one of these two

TRUTHINESS

قَالَ اجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلَيْمَ
[Yūsuf] said: “Set me over the storehouses of the land; I will indeed guard them with full knowledge” (12:55).

The second is the Prophet Mūsa (pbuh), who, through his kindness to watering the sheep of two women in the Madyan region of the Arabian Peninsula, was employed by their father, believed to be the Prophet Shu'āib (pbuh), to work for him.

women, who had observed the leadership qualities of the Prophet Mūsa (pbuh) at the well, which the Qur'an highlights as being strength and trustworthiness. The commentary on this statement expounds this word الْقَوِيُّ “Al-Qawi” (strong), stating that it is not limited to physical strength, although that meaning is also valid, but rather fitness for purpose. Thus, leadership is assigned accordingly. This is made clear by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

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who appointed Abū Bakr as caliph as he possessed the best credentials for this role, having been the right hand man to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) since the beginning of his mission. However, he appointed Khālid ibn Al-Waleed as the military leader for the Muslims, as he demonstrated skills in warfare management and Muāth ibn Jabal as his viceroy to Yathrib, as he displayed qualities as a gifted preacher (dā'iyah) and Jā'far ibn Abū Ṭālib as spokesman and Amīr for the migrants to Abyssinia, as he possessed the best communication skills. Thus, it is both necessary for

leadership to be assigned to those most fit to carry out a given task and for leaders themselves to recognize the qualities of future leaders and develop them accordingly.

A further leadership quality is patience through adversity. A leader must be patient and forbearing. The Prophet Yūsuf (pbuh) is one of the best examples of this from the Islamic tradition. Uniquely, his story is given in a single chapter of the Qur'ān, which details his biography in a chronological approach, a reporting method not seen elsewhere in the Qur'ān. The question thus arises, why does Allāh go to the extent of giving his life story in such a detailed narrative, set out chronologically, but not for other Prophets? The answer lies in the lesson for leaders – a leader must be patient through adversity as Yūsuf (pbuh) was, so Allāh chose to give a comprehensive account of leadership qualities found in Yūsuf (pbuh) through the adversity he faced and how his approach led to ultimate success. Allāh states,

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ
وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالْثَمَرَاتِ وَيُبَشِّرُ الصَّابِرِينَ

“And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits, but give glad tidings to the patient ones” (2:155).

His patience extends through trials, which include attempted murder, being separated from his parents from a young age being sold into slavery, being wrongfully accused of a crime and imprisonment on false pretenses. However, his patience paid dividends, ultimately being absolved of his crimes and being put in a leadership role in Egypt, working closely with the king and saving Egypt from the terrible effects of a famine, to eventually being reunited with his family. Thus, the sequence of

tests and ultimate victory through patience and leadership, is highlighted through a chronological narrative.

The leadership lesson is thus that a true leader has patience and does not retaliate to injustice with injustice and is forbearing and wise. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) received the revelation of this chapter during his “year of grief” when his first wife Khadijah bint Khuwailid as well as his paternal uncle Abū Ṭālib ibn Abdul Muttalib both died. This is significant as they were both his supporters, the former not only as a wife but also as a financial supporter, Khadijah being a wealthy merchant from Makkah, and the latter being from amongst the social elite in Makkah, whose position prevented any harm from coming to Muhammad (pbuh). As such, the story of Yūsuf (pbuh) was a source of strength in adversity for Muhammad (pbuh) reminding him as well as believing followers up to the present day to reflect on the leadership qualities demonstrated by Yūsuf (pbuh) and apply them to our own lives. Yūsuf (pbuh) did not wallow in self-pity, which many would do, but rather took a pro-active approach, thereby affecting positive change from the ‘inside-out’, and by working on his sphere of influence throughout.

A further example of patience in Prophethood in the Qur’ān, is the Prophet Nūh (pbuh), who persevered against a rebellious society for nearly a millennium. The Qur’ān states:

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِي لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا
 فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَائِي إِلَّا فِرَارًا
 وَإِنِّي كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوا أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ
 وَاسْتَسْمَعُوا نِيَابِهِمْ وَأَصْرَبُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا
 ثُمَّ إِنِّي دَعَوْتُهُمْ جَهَارًا
 ثُمَّ إِنِّي أَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَأَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ إِسْرَارًا

“He [Nūh] said: «O my Lord! Verily, I have called my people night and day (i.e.

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Typically, this canal is extremely narrow and tight

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secretly and openly), but all my calling added nothing but to (their) flight (from the truth). And verily! Every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted (in their refusal), and magnified themselves in pride. Then verily, I called to them openly (aloud); Then verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and I have appealed to them in private... “ (71:5 - 10).

This call of the Prophet Nūh (pbuh) to his Lord for assistance occurred after a lifetime of patient perseverance. The lifespan of the Prophet Nūh (pbuh) is believed to be over 950 years. The choice of language is of great consequence, for as the Prophet Nūh (pbuh) speaks, his graphic illustration of a deviant nation who would place their fingers in their ears and cover themselves with their clothing to avoid listening to him speak, gives us a vivid understanding of the extent of his difficulty.

All of us as leaders, with a set objective, mission and goal, must therefore draw the lesson that we cannot achieve our vision without patience and being steadfast. Furthermore, the hurdles placed before us are often, as was the case with the Prophet Nūh (pbuh), unpalatable and undesirable, but needed to be faced and challenged in order to achieve the desired objective.

By: Kasim Randeree

Muslims'

Contribution to

Science

Here the reader can get some information about Muslims & Science in the past ...

Astronomy :

Muslims have always had a special interest in astronomy. The moon and the sun are of vital importance in the daily life of every Muslim. By the moon, Muslims determine the beginning and the end of the

months in their lunar calendar. By the sun the Muslims calculate the times for prayer and fasting. It is also by means of astronomy that Muslims can determine the precise direction of the Qiblah, to face the Ka'bah in Makkah, during prayer. The most precise solar calendar, superior to the Julian, is the Jilali, devised under the supervision of Umar Khayyam. The Qur'an contains many



references to astronomy.

«The heavens and the earth were ordered rightly, and were made subservient to man, including the sun, the moon, the stars, and day and night. Every heavenly body moves in an orbit assigned to it by God and never digresses, making the universe an orderly cosmos whose life and existence, diminution and expansion, are totally determined by the Creator.» [Qur'an 30:22]

These references, and the injunctions to learn, inspired the early Muslim scholars to study the heavens. They integrated the earlier works of the Indians, Persians and Greeks into a new synthesis. Ptolemy's *Almagest* (the title as we know it is Arabic) was translated, studied and criticized. Many new stars were discovered, as we see in their Arabic names - Algol, Deneb, Betelgeuse, Rigel, Aldebaran. Astronomical tables were compiled, among them the Toledan tables, which were used by Copernicus, Tycho Brahe and Kepler. Also compiled were almanacs - another Arabic term. Other terms from Arabic are zenith, nadir, albedo, azimuth.

Muslim astronomers were the first to establish observatories, like the one built at Mugharah by Hulagu, the son of Genghis Khan, in Persia, and they invented instruments such as the quadrant and astrolabe, which led to advances not only in astronomy but in oceanic navigation, contributing to the European age of exploration.

Geography :

Muslim scholars paid great attention to geography. In fact, the Muslims' great concern for geography originated with their religion. The Qur'an encourages people to travel throughout the earth to see God's signs and patterns everywhere. Islam also requires each Muslim to have at least enough knowledge of geography to know the direction of the Qiblah (the position of the Ka'bah in Makkah) in order to pray five times a day. Muslims were also used to

taking long journeys to conduct trade as well as to make the Hajj and spread their religion. The far-flung Islamic empire enabled scholar-explorers to compile large amounts of geographical and climatic information from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Among the most famous names in the field of geography, even in the West, are Ibn Khaldun and Ibn Batuta, renowned for their written accounts of their extensive explorations. In 1166, Al-Idrisi, the well-known Muslim scholar who served the Sicilian court, produced very accurate maps, including a world map with all the continents and their mountains, rivers and famous cities. Al-Muqdishhi was the first geographer to produce accurate maps in color. It was, moreover, with the help of Muslim navigators and their inventions that Magellan was able to traverse the Cape of Good Hope, and Da Gama and Columbus had Muslim navigators on board their ships.

Humanity :

Seeking knowledge is obligatory in Islam for every Muslim, man and woman. The main sources of Islam, the Qur'an and the





“ Typically, this canal is extremely narrow and tight ”

Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad’s traditions), encourage Muslims to seek knowledge and be scholars, since this is the best way for people to know Allah (God), to appreciate His wondrous creations and be thankful for them. Muslims were therefore eager to seek knowledge, both religious and secular, and within a few years of Muhammad’s mission, a great civilization sprang up and flourished. The outcome is shown in the spread of Islamic universities; Al-Zaytunah in Tunis, and Al-Azhar in Cairo go back more than 1,000 years and are the oldest existing universities in the world. Indeed, they were the models for the first European universities, such as Bologna, Heidelberg, and the Sorbonne. Even the familiar academic cap and gown originated at Al-Azhar University.

Muslims made great advances in many different fields, such as geography, physics, chemistry, mathematics, medicine, pharmacology, architecture, linguistics and astronomy. Algebra and the Arabic numerals were introduced to the world by Muslim scholars. The astrolabe, the quadrant, and other navigational devices and maps were developed by Muslim scholars and played an important role in world progress, most notably in Europe’s age of exploration.

Muslim scholars studied the ancient civilizations from Greece and Rome to China and India. The works of Aristotle, Ptolemy, Euclid and others were translated into



Arabic. Muslim scholars and scientists then added their own creative ideas, discoveries and inventions, and finally transmitted this new knowledge to Europe, leading directly to the Renaissance. Many scientific and medical treatises, having been translated into Latin, were standard text and reference books as late as the 17th and 18th centuries.

Mathematics:

It is interesting to note that Islam so strongly urges mankind to study and explore the universe. For example, the Holy Qur'an states:

«We (Allah) will show you (mankind) Our signs/patterns in the horizons/universe and in yourselves until you are convinced that the revelation is the truth.» [Qur'an, 14:53]

This invitation to explore and search made Muslims interested in astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, and the other sciences, and they had a very clear and firm understanding of the correspondences among geometry, mathematics, and astronomy.

The Muslims invented the symbol for zero (The word «cipher» comes from Arabic sifr), and they organized the numbers into the decimal system - base 10. Additionally,

they invented the symbol to express an unknown quantity, i.e. variables like x .

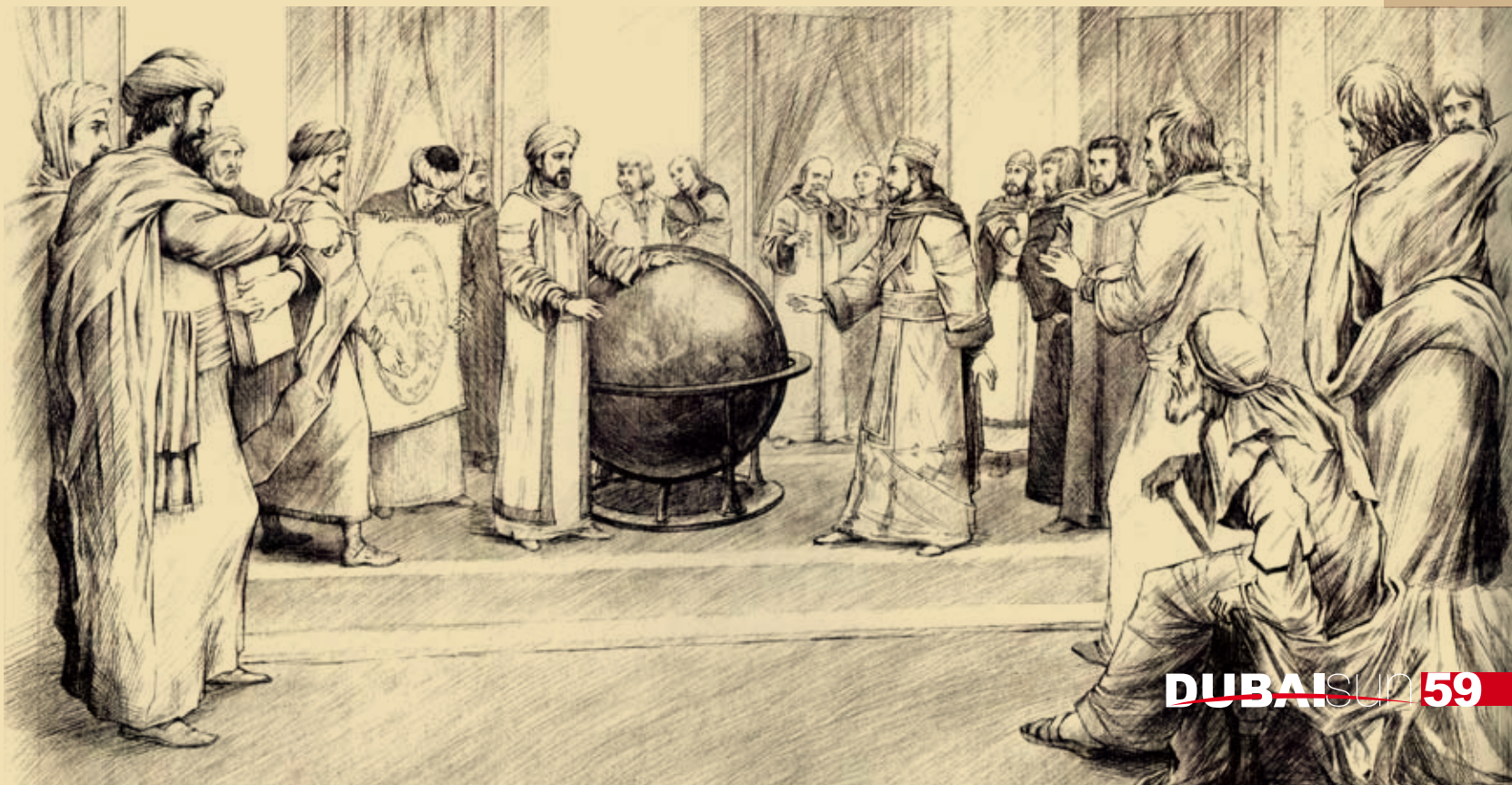
The first great Muslim mathematician, Al-Khwarizmi, invented the subject of algebra (al-Jabr), which was further developed by others, most notably Umar Khayyam. Al-Khwarizmi's work, in Latin translation, brought the Arabic numerals along with the mathematics to Europe, through Spain. The word «algorithm» is derived from his name.

Muslim mathematicians excelled also in geometry, as can be seen in their graphic arts, and it was the great Al-Biruni (who excelled also in the fields of natural history, even geology and mineralogy) who established trigonometry as a distinct branch of mathematics. Other Muslim mathematicians made significant progress in number theory.

Medicine :

In Islam, the human body is a source of appreciation, as it is created by Almighty Allah (God). How it functions, how to keep it clean and safe, how to prevent diseases from attacking it or cure those diseases, have been important issues for Muslims.

Prophet Muhammad himself urged



people to «take medicines for your diseases», as people at that time were reluctant to do so. He also said: «God created no illness, but established for it a cure, except for old age. When the antidote is applied, the patient will recover with the permission of God.»

This was strong motivation to encourage Muslim scientists to explore, develop, and apply empirical laws. Much attention was given to medicine and public health care. The first hospital was built in Baghdad in 706 AC. The Muslims also used camel caravans as mobile hospitals, which moved from place to place.

Since the religion did not forbid it, Muslim scholars used human cadavers to study anatomy and physiology and to help their students understand how the body functions. This empirical study enabled surgery to develop very quickly.

Al-Razi, known in the West as Rhazes, the famous physician and scientist, (d. 932) was one of the greatest physicians in the world in the Middle Ages. He stressed empirical observation and clinical medicine and was unrivaled as a diagnostician. He also wrote a treatise on hygiene in hospitals. Khalaf Abul-Qasim Al-Zahrawi was a very famous surgeon in the eleventh century, known in Europe for his work, *Concessio* (Kitab al-Tasrif).

Ibn Sina (d. 1037), better known to the West as Avicenna, was perhaps the greatest physician until the modern era. His famous book, *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*, remained a standard textbook even in Europe, for over 700 years. Ibn Sina's work is still studied and built upon in the East.

Other significant contributions were made in pharmacology, such as Ibn Sina's *Kitab al-Shifa'* (Book of Healing), and in public health. Every major city in the Islamic world had a number of excellent hospitals, some of them teaching hospitals, and many of them were specialized for particular diseases, including mental and emotional. The Ottomans were particularly noted for their

building of hospitals and for the high level of hygiene practiced in them.

Definition :

The word ISLAM has a two-fold meaning: peace, and submission to God. This submission requires a fully conscious and willing effort to submit to the one Almighty God. One must consciously and conscientiously give oneself to the service of Allah. This means to act on what Allah enjoins all of us to do (in the Qur'an) and what His beloved Prophet, Muhammad (pbuh) encouraged us to do in his Sunnah (his lifestyle and sayings personifying the Qur'an).

Once we humble ourselves, rid ourselves of our egoism and submit totally to Allah, and to Him exclusively, in faith and in action, we will surely feel peace in our hearts. Establishing peace in our hearts will bring about peace in our external conduct as well.

Islam is careful to remind us that it not a religion to be paid mere lip service; rather it is an all-encompassing way of life that must be practiced continuously for it to be Islam. The Muslim must practice the five pillars of the religion: the declaration of faith in the oneness of Allah and the prophet hood of Muhammad (pbuh), prayer, fasting the month of Ramadan, alms-tax, and the pilgrimage to Makkah; and believe in the six articles of faith: belief in God, the Holy Books, the prophets, the angels, the Day of Judgment and God's decree, whether for good or ill.

There are other injunctions and commandments which concern virtually all facets of one's personal, family and civic life. These include such matters as diet, clothing, personal hygiene, interpersonal relations, business ethics, responsibilities towards parents, spouse and children, marriage, divorce and inheritance, civil and criminal law, fighting in defense of Islam, relations with non-Muslims, and so much more.

By: David W. Tschang