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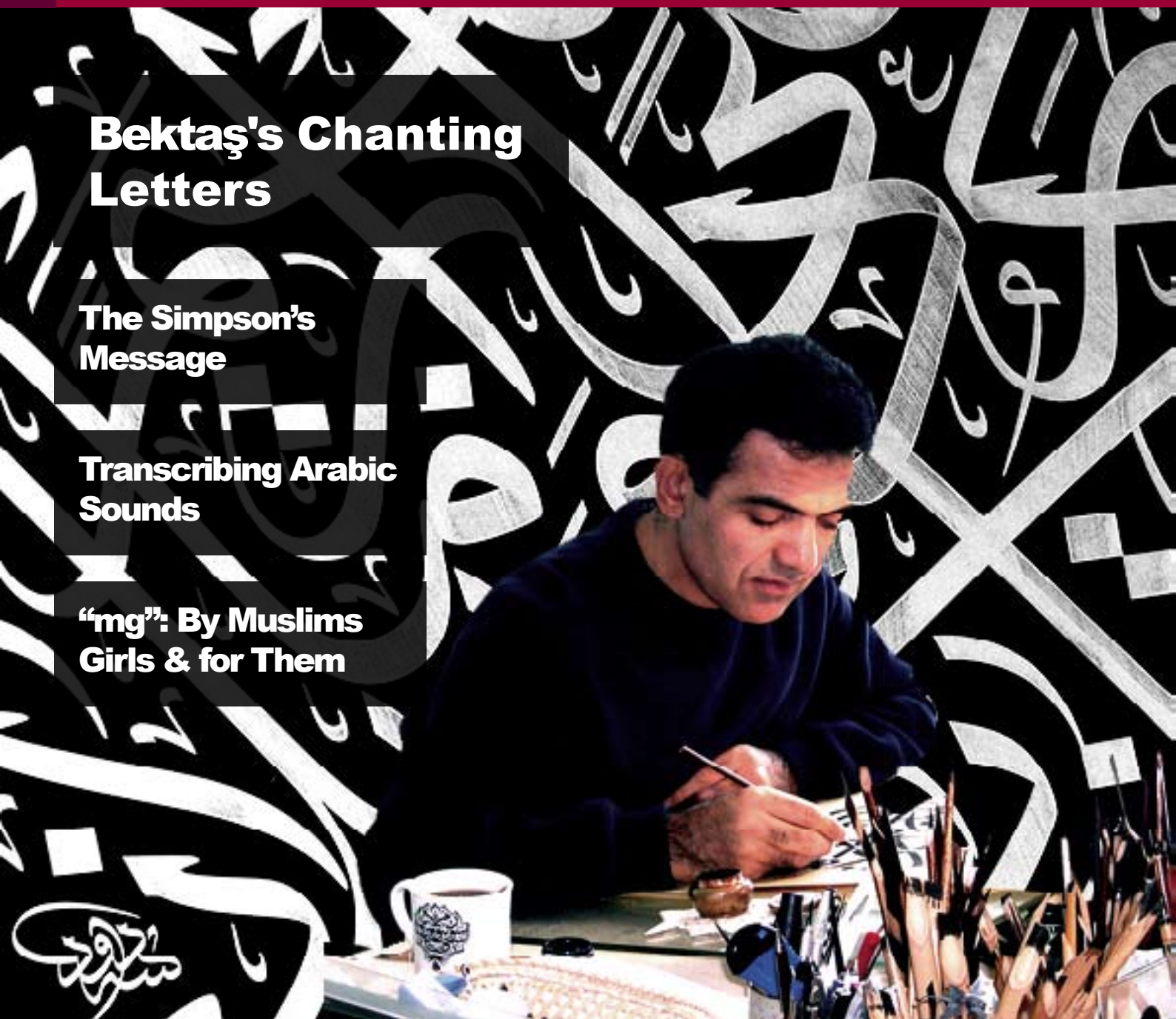
ELECTRONIC ISLAAMIC MAGAZINE

Bektaş's Chanting Letters

The Simpson's Message

Transcribing Arabic Sounds

"mg": By Muslims Girls & for Them



The Depressions of a Faithless Society

The Pouring Guest

New Sections!

Media Perspectives & Photo-Tips

ABOUT I-MAG

About I-MAG:

I-MAG is a free online non-profit Islaamic monthly magazine published by Nashiri E-Publishing House.

I-MAG is an acronym of Islaam Magazine. I-MAG is pronounced in two syllables; "I" as in "eye", and "mag" as in magazine.

I-MAG is edited by a team of talented youth from all around the Islaamic world.

I-MAG is published in P.D.F. format, which means it can be read on any operating system. Moreover, it can be read on your P.D.A. (palmtop) or on some mobile phones, which makes I-MAG your perfect companion for reading a staid content about Islaam.

P.D.F. files resemble the look of a normal paper magazine which gives the reader a feeling of intimacy. I-MAG has a very creative eye-inviting design which makes reading a most enjoyable journey for the eye and the mind.

I-MAG P.D.F. file when printed looks the same as any other printed magazine. This is convenient for those who still prefer to read from a paper source.

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Scope and Readership:

I-MAG has a general scope, and is interested in publishing works in all the fields that are of concern to the Muslim, be he/she a layperson or a philosopher, a child or a grown-up.

The diverse content of the magazine also appeals to non-Muslims who will find an enriching content about Islaam.

We are often asked why I-MAG is labelled Islaamic although it publishes a very diversified content "which we do not expect from an Islaamic magazine." The answer is simply that Islaam is so diversified and touches every aspect of life to the point that it left us with no choice but to diversify the content of I-MAG.

Legal Notice:

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FEATURES OF THE NEW ISLAAMIC DISCOURSE (Part 3 of 4)



By Dr. Abdelwahab Elmessiri*

3. Reviving the Islaamic World View:

The bearers of the new discourse, on the other hand, are not content with importing ready made Western answers to the questions posed by Western modernity. They have developed a radical exploratory generative discourse that neither attempts to reconcile Islaam with Western modernity, nor does it preoccupy itself with searching for the points of contrast (or similarity) between the two. Rather, it sets forth to explore the main traits of Western modernity, presenting a radical, yet balanced critique. In the meantime, the bearers of new discourse go back to the Islaamic world view, with all its values and its religious, ethical and civilisational specificities. They explore it and try to abstract an epistemological paradigm from it through which they can generate answers to the problems raised by Western

modernity and to any other new problematics. One can place the modern attempts aimed at reviving fi'qh (jurisprudence) from within in the context of this generative approach. Rather than impose Western analytical categories on the Islaamic world view, the bearers of the new discourse try to discover its fundamental categories. One can safely argue that the new Islaamic discourse, issuing forth from an Islaamic framework, opens the door of ijtihaad regarding both the modern Western world view and the Islaamic religious and cultural heritage.

4. Constructing Comprehensive Solutions:

Given this radical generative approach, the new Islaamic discourse is by necessity comprehensive. While at the grass roots level the bearers of the new Islaamic discourse raise the

slogan "Islaam is the solution", at the philosophical level they raise a more complex one, "Islaam is a world view". Theirs is a discourse that stems from a comprehensive world view from which different ethical, political, economic and aesthetic systems are generated. It is an Islaamic discourse that deals with architecture, love, marriage, economics, city planning, philosophy of law and history, modes of analysis and thinking etc. It deals with the quotidian, the direct, and the political, as well as with the total and ultimate. Actually, the new Islaamic discourse claims that it is addressed not to the Muslims only, but also to "all humanity." In other words, it claims that its project for reform is an answer to the crisis caused by Western modernity. (In this respect, its claim is similar to the claim made by the Islaamic discourse that prevailed during the time of the Prophet, peace be upon

him).

5. Benefiting from Western Modernity:

By virtue of their open ended critical interactive approach to Western modernity, the bearers of the new Islaamic discourse are able to benefit in a creative way from this modernity without being engulfed by it. Issues such as class conflict, the necessity of an equitable distribution of resources, the woman question, and the influence of the environment on shaping man's personality had already been debated by Muslims before. However, the sensitivity and intense awareness of the new discourse vis-à-vis these issues have been enhanced, thanks to the interaction with Western modernity. The bearers of the new discourse do not object to benefiting from this modernity in discovering the mechanisms of the solutions for these problems nor the solutions themselves, so long as such solutions do not contradict the Islaamic paradigm.

6. Realising New Challenges:

Opening up to the modern Western world view and critically interacting with it have alerted the bearers of the new discourse to aspects that would otherwise have been difficult for them to realise. Issues raised by Western modernity such as international relations, globalisation, the menace posed by the media and the central state to the human individual, the increasing amount of leisure time available to ordinary people, and the processes of standardisation and levelling, were never raised by humanity in the past, and expectedly were not raised by the old Islaamic discourse.

7. Understanding the Crisis of Modernity:

The bearers of the new Islaamic discourse discovered that opening up to Western modernity and studying it in a critical and interactive manner may serve in sharpening the awareness



of Muslims who would then come to know the nature of the crisis of Western modernity and its magnitude. Consequently, this may increase the Muslims' knowledge of, and confidence in, themselves, and may even help them discover the creative and generative potentials within the Islaamic world view. The bearers of the new Islaamic discourse, having realised the wide gap separating science, technology and democratic procedures from human values, try to address themselves to this issue. For instance, in the case of science and technology, they try to

benefit from the technological and scientific achievements of Western modernity, without adopting its world-view and without accepting the claims of scientific neutrality and value-freedom. An attempt is made to incorporate these achievements within an Islaamic value system (see below). The same applies to democracy. The attempt to distinguish between democracy and shoora (consultation) is an attempt to incorporate democratic procedures within the Islaamic value system, so that value-free democratic procedures do not become the frame of reference, and do not arrogate for

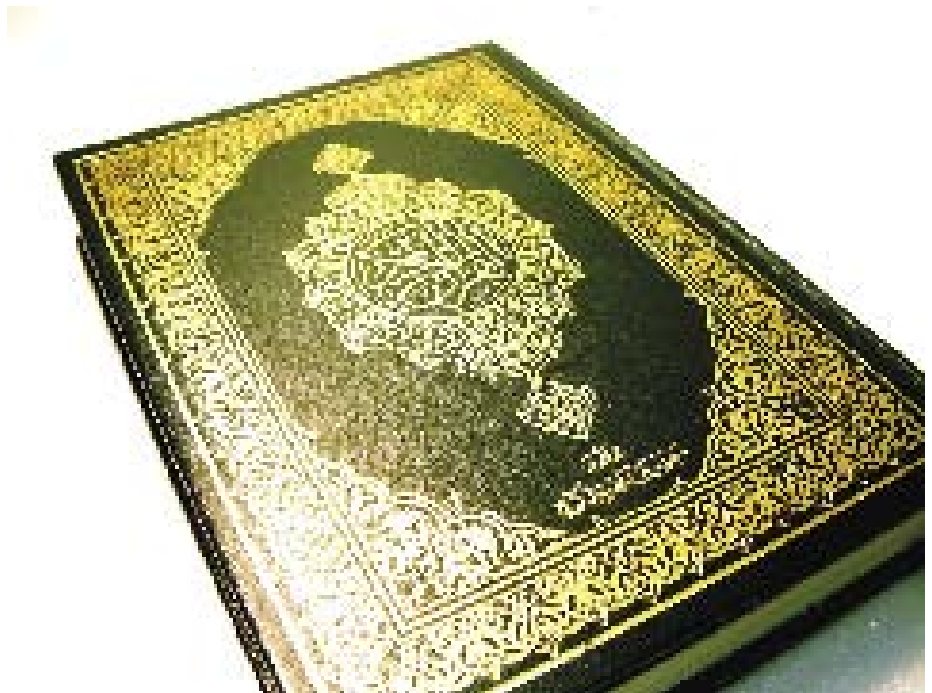
themselves the status of an ultimate value.

8. Islaamising knowledge:

The bearers of the new Islaamic discourse realise that the human sciences are neither precise, nor universal or neutral, that they contain several human biases, and that they are fundamentally different from the natural sciences. But the human sciences do not lose their value on account of this lack of precision and neutrality. On the contrary, their ability to deal with human phenomena is thereby enhanced. The difference between the natural sciences and the humanities emanates from the fact that the basic subject of the humanities, that is man, cannot be reduced in his entirety to the natural-material system. Human reality is radically different from material reality, in spite of the existence of man in the natural-material world. Thus, the bearers of the new Islaamic discourse attempt to establish human sciences that do not exclude the human element and that are, consequently, different in their basic premises, principles, ambitions and criteria from the natural sciences. The main characteristic of the human sciences is that they are not, and cannot, be value-free, and that they have to be incorporated within a value system, which is the Islaamic value system in the case of the Muslims. This, indeed, is the basic premise of the Islaamisation of knowledge project, or the project for generating Islaamic knowledge.

9. Establishing an Islaamic Lexicon:

The bearers of the new discourse are quite aware of what is referred to as “the new science” that comprises concepts such as indeterminacy and that does not move within the framework of the concepts of hard causality within which the old (19th century) science moved. The bearers of the new Islaamic discourse realise that the



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terms in the Western lexicon are not simple, for they are an integral part of a complex cultural lexicon that determines their purport and meaning. For instance the word ‘a’ql (mind–reason) within the Islaamic context has a specific and definite Islaamic meaning. Having been so impressed by modern Western civilisation, and having failed to master the subtleties of its cultural idiom, the former generation imagined that the word “reason” in the modern Western philosophical lexicon was synonymous with the word ‘a’ql in the Islaamic lexicon. Hence the deep admiration for, and even fascination with, Western rationality and the Enlightenment project. On the other hand, the bearers of the new discourse have knowledge of the complexity of the category of the mind in the Western lexicon and the contradictions inherent therein. They are also familiar with the Western critique of reason, a critique that divided it into “instrumental reason”, “critical reason”, “functional reason”, “imperialist reason”, “abstract reason”, etc. The critique also talks of “the negation of

reason”, “destruction of reason”, “deconstruction of reason”, and “decentring reason”. Thus, it is no longer tenable to suppose that the word ‘a’ql, as it exists in the Islaamic lexicon, is synonymous with the word “reason”, as it exists in the modern Western lexicon. With the emergence of irrationalist absurdist tendencies in the West, the matter has become even clearer and more crystallised.

10. Realising the Cultural Dimension of Human Phenomena:

The bearers of the new Islaamic discourse realise the cultural dimension of most human phenomena, religion included. The bearers of the old discourse stopped at the distinction between what is ‘halaal (permissible) and ‘haraam (forbidden). The car and the beef burger are undoubtedly ‘halaal, and so is canned meat, as long as it does not contain pork. However, the pioneers did not grasp the cultural dimension of the commodity and that it is rooted in a comprehensive world view. (It should also be added that a full realisation, on the part



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of many Western intellectuals, of the nature of the commodity as a cultural artifact was still quite rudimentary and nascent). Consider the car for instance: when a driver turns the ignition key, he, more often than not, thinks that he is handling a simple machine that transports him from one place to another, which of course is a fallacy. Driving the car is an act rooted in a whole world view that manifests itself in a specific life-style; it necessitates prospecting for oil then drilling innumerable wells. Huge oil tankers cross the oceans to deliver huge quantities of oil to the hungry gas-guzzlers and to over-heated houses. That of course results into the pollution of the atmosphere, the land, and the sea. Troops are deployed to guarantee the flow of cheap energy and to protect the “national security” of the consumers. Speed gradually becomes the sole criterion for judging human conduct and city planning. Towns are planned in such a way as to facilitate the movement of speeding cars; and consequently, old traditional districts and buildings are demolished. The same can be said of the beef burger and the take-away food. The cultural dimension of these commodities, which seem perfectly innocuous, absolutely ‘halaal, and entirely unblemished from the purely religious point of

view, is an organic part of a world view that conflicts with the Islaamic world view and Islaamic certainties. The realisation on the part of the bearers of the new Islaamic discourse of the importance of the cultural dimension of all phenomena is manifest in their acceptance of the nationalist idea, and their refusal to take a confrontationist attitude vis-à-vis it. They accept cultural plurality within the framework of Islaamic values, and realise the importance of forging an alliance with the nationalist elements in a common confrontation with the forces of hegemony and globalisation that try to eradicate autonomy, specificity, and the very idea of absolute values and transcendence.

11. Developing Islamic Theories of Progress:

The bearers of the new Islaamic discourse are perfectly aware of the problem of the environment and the ecological crisis. Concepts such as “infinite progress” (which are central concepts in Western modernity) are deemed by them as hostile to the very idea of boundaries and therefore to the idea of man and nature, and, eventually, to the idea of God. Such concepts are atheistic, not only in the religious, but also in the epistemological human sense. Thus, the bearers of the

new discourse persistently search for new theories of development and new concepts of progress. They argue that Islaamic theories of development should be radically different from the generalist Western theories, promoted by “international” organisations, for such theories have proven to be largely a failure, and have led to an environmental crisis and to more impoverishment of the masses. To this is to be linked the continuous criticism by the bearers of the new discourse of consumerism (the invitation to accelerate consumption, the revolution of rising expectations, etc.) and their realisation of its danger to the environment, natural resources and man’s psychological and nervous systems.

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This article was translated from Arabic by Azzam Tamimi and is published in collaboration with www.elmessiri.com



The Depressions OF A FAITHLESS SOCIETY

By Harun Yahya

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God declares in the 'Qura~n that He has created mankind according to a certain disposition in the verse: "So set you your face steadily and truly to the Faith: (establish) God's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Arroom, verse 30)

The disposition of mankind relies on being a servant to God and having faith in Him. Since man is unable to meet his unlimited wishes and needs by himself, he naturally needs to humble himself before God and turn to Him.

If the individual lives in accordance with this disposition, he attains true confidence, peace, happiness and salvation. If he denies this disposition and turns away from God, he spends his life in distress, fear, anxiety and grief.

This rule, which is true for man, also holds true for societies. If a society is comprised of people who believe in God, it becomes a just, peaceful, happy and wise society. Unquestionably, the opposite also holds true. If a society is unaware of God, then the order of such a community is basically ruined, corrupt

and primitive.

When societies that have turned away from God are examined, this fact is readily seen. One of the most important results of irreligious thought is the abolishment of the concept of morality and the development of completely corrupt societies.

Transgressing religious and moral bounds, and catering exclusively to the satisfaction of human wishes, this culture is a system of oppression in the fullest sense of the word. In such a system, all sorts of degeneracies from sexual perversion to drug addiction are encouraged. Eventually, societies that are devoid of human love and are egoistic, ignorant, shallow and nonsensical have grown up.

In a society where people live only for the satisfaction of their own desires, it surely is not possible to maintain peace, love and amity. In such a society, human relations depend on mutual interests. An extreme feeling of distrust prevails. When there is no reason for one to be sincere, honest, reliable or well-behaved, nothing stands in the way of dissimulation, falsehood, or betrayal. The members of such societies have "cast God away behind their backs (with contempt)" (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Hood, verse 92), and thus never acknowledged the fear of God. Since they cannot "make a just estimate of God", they are unmindful of the day of judgement

and the day of account. For them, hell is nothing more than an idea appearing in religious books. None of them think that they shall have to give an account of themselves in the presence of God after their death for all the sins they have committed during their lives in this world, or that they may ultimately be doomed to an eternal life of torment in hell. Even if they do think about it, they suppose that they will enter paradise after they "pay for their sins", as it is expressed in this verse:

"This because they say 'The Fire shall not touch us but for a few numbered days': For their forgeries deceive them as to their own religion." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of A~l 'Imraan, verse 24)

Thus they are led to spend their lives doing their best to satisfy their own desires and needs.

This situation naturally brings on the ethical degeneration and moral collapse that we see in many societies today. In their own reasoning they suppose "we have come into this world but once and will live for only 50-60 years and then die, so let us get the best of things here". The thought system based on this erroneous reasoning may bring with it all kinds of injustice, prostitution, theft, crime and immorality. One subscribing to it may become involved in all kinds of crime, homicide, or fraud. When every individual thinks of nothing but the satisfaction of his own needs and

desires, everyone else—including his family and friends—have secondary importance. Other individuals in society have no importance whatsoever.

In a social structure that rests on interest relations to a large degree, the mutual distrust of people hinders the formation of peace both at the social and individual level and it causes people to live permanently in a state of doubt, unease and irresolution. Not knowing by whom, when or how misdeeds will be committed in such a society, people live spiritually in a condition of great fear and distress. General distrust and suspicion cause them to lead very unhappy lives. In a society where all kinds of moral values are disregarded, the outlook of people on notions such as family, honesty and chastity is quite alarming, for they have no fear of God.

In such societies, the lives of people do not rely on mutual love and respect. Its members feel no need to show respect to each other. They do not display a caring attitude to each other without a good cause. Actually, they are quite right, in terms of their ignorant reasoning, in behaving this way. They are taught throughout their lives that they have evolved from animals and that their souls will be lost forever upon their death. They therefore deem it meaningless to respect a body of ape origin that will rot under the earth and that they will never see again. In their corrupt logic, “all the others as well as themselves are to die and be buried under the earth, their bodies will decay and their souls will vanish. So why would they bother to do good to other people, and be self-sacrificing?” Indeed, these thoughts permeate the subconscious of everyone who has no belief in God or, therefore, in the hereafter. In societies with no belief in God, there is no basis for peace, happiness, or confidence.

The purpose of all we have said is not to suggest that “degeneration occurs in societies where there is no belief in God, therefore there must be belief in God.” God must be believed in because God exists

and whoever denies Him commits a great sin before Him. Our intention in noting that societies where belief in God does not exist become corrupt is to emphasise that the fundamental viewpoints of these societies are wrong. Wrong viewpoints lead to ill consequences. A society that commits the biggest sin of denying God is sure to suffer the worst outcomes. These outcomes are worthy of attention because they show how mistaken this society is.

The common characteristic of such societies is their being deceived as a whole. As stated in the verse, “Were you to follow the common run of those on earth, they will lead you away from the way of God.” (The Holy ‘Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Alan’aam, 116), that most of society share a common character creates a “mass” psychology that reinforces the already-existing disbelief. God describes such societies that are unmindful of Him and the hereafter as “ignorant” in the ‘Qura~n. Even though the members of this society may study physics, history, biology or similar sciences, they do not have the sense and conscience to acknowledge the power and might of God. And they are ignorant in that sense.

Because the members of an ignorant society are not devoted to God, they go astray from His path in different ways. They follow people who are incompetent servants of God just like themselves, taking them as examples and adhering to their ideas as absolute truths. Ultimately an ignorant society ends up a closed society that increasingly blinds itself, becoming further and further divorced from reason and conscience. As we have stated at the beginning, the most notable aspect of this system is that members of such a society act in consonance with anti-religious indoctrination.

God describes in the ‘Qura~n with a striking parable how such a life, resting upon a vain and corrupt basis, is destined to be ruined:

“Which then is best? He that lays his foundation on piety to God and His

good pleasure? Or he that lays his foundation on an undermined sand-cliff ready to crumble to pieces? And it does crumble to pieces with him, into the fire of hell. And God does not guide people that do wrong.” (The Holy ‘Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Attawbah, 109)

There is yet another point to be remembered: every society and every person has the opportunity to be rid of the indoctrination, way of life and philosophy of ignorance. God sends them messengers who warn them and inform them of the existence of God and the hereafter and who tell them the real meaning of life. And along with His messengers He sends righteous books that answer all the questions that are derived from the very conscience of people. This is the law of God that has existed since eternity. In our day, the guide of all people is the ‘Qura~n, which shows the right way and leads people from darkness to light. People will be judged according to their own preferences. The messenger who brought the book to people thus called out to them:

“Say: ‘O you men! Now Truth has reached you from your Lord! Those who receive guidance, do so for the good of their own souls; those who stray, do so to their own loss: and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs.’” (The Holy ‘Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Yoonus, 108)

The author, under the pen-name Harun Yahya, has written more than 200 books which are published in 37 languages all over the world. Harun Yahya's books appeal to all people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, regardless of their age, race and nationality, as they centre around one goal: to open the readers' mind by presenting the signs of God's eternal existence to them.

Harun Yahya Website:

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Harun Yahya official bookstore:

www.bookglobal.net

Absolute RELIGIOUS CERTAINTY is Dangerous at Home and Abroad



By Robert Jensen*
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"I am not anti-Islaam or any other religion."

"I support the free exercise of all religions."

"For those who have been offended by my statements, I offer a sincere apology."

Those were Army Lt. Gen. William Boykin's responses to criticisms of his recent fundamentalist theological commentary. The latter two seem honest; there's no reason to doubt that he believes in religious freedom

or doubt that he is sorry for the offence his remarks caused. But based on Boykin's public statements, there are many reasons to doubt that the first statement is genuine. It seems pretty clear that Boykin is anti-Islaam and anti-any-religion-other-than-Christianity, just as are many evangelical Christians who claim a "literalist" view of the Bible. Such folks agree that everyone should be free to practice any religion, but they also believe

those religions are nothing more than cults. That's what Boykin meant when he said of the Muslim warlord in Somalia he was fighting, "I knew that my God was a real God, and his was an idol." Idols are false gods, not real ones. To such Christians, who sometimes refer to themselves as "biblical Christians," there is only one religion -- Christianity, which is truth. All others are cults. The general can believe in freedom of religion and



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feel bad when he offends a person with another religion, yet still be convinced that all those other religions are, in fact, false.

Check out the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association website and you'll see it spelled out: "A cult is any group which teaches doctrines or beliefs that deviate from the biblical message of the Christian faith."

Or, read Franklin Graham, president of the international relief organisation Samaritan's Purse and C.E.O. of that association named after his father: "[W]hile I respect the rights of all people to adopt their own beliefs, I would respectfully disagree with any religion that teaches people to put their faith in other gods."

There's no ambiguity there. If you believe in Christ, your faith will save you. If you believe anything else, you are in a cult -- and you're in trouble when it comes to eternity. Graham and Boykin, of course, are free to believe what they like. In Graham's case, one might say it's in his job description. Boykin's situation is trickier, given that his new job as the Pentagon's deputy undersecretary for intelligence

requires him to deal with a number of predominantly Muslim countries. But this is important beyond the question of Boykin's fitness to serve in a high-level position. It points out that the crucial gap in the culture over faith is not between those who are religious and those who aren't, but between those who are 100-percent convinced their religion is the only way to salvation and those who are willing to live with a little less certainty.

On the question of which religion is "true," I don't have a dog in that fight. I've been a secular person for as long as I can remember and have never felt the need for a faith-based belief system. I find all religions about equally interesting, and baffling.

But I do have a stake in the question of certainty: I think absolute certainty is dangerous. I have moral and political convictions and respect others who do, but I think people should be open to the possibility that their belief system could be just a bit off -- or maybe all wrong. That's something that philosophers and scientists (at least the good ones) agree on.

I know many religious people

who don't shrink from their own convictions, yet take seriously the limits we humans face in trying to understand the complexity of the world. Even though we have different theological views, I can talk -- and have talked -- across those differences with such folks, often working with them in movements for social justice. I think everyone benefits from that kind of discussion and interaction.

Conversations with people like Franklin Graham and Lt. Gen. Boykin are more difficult -- not because I don't want to talk but because often there isn't anyone really listening on the other end. Whatever one's religious convictions, that's bad for public discourse in a pluralist democracy.

**Robert Jensen is a journalism professor at the University of Texas at Austin, a founding member of the Nowar Collective, and a member of the board of the Third Coast Activist Resource Centre. He is the author of "Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim Our Humanity."*

His website: <http://uts.cc.utexas.edu/~rjensen/home.htm>

THE RISE OF PRODUCTIVE YOUTH:

“mg Magazine”, Written by Muslim Girls, For Muslim Girls

By Marwah El-Azhary

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mg magazine logo

Yasmine El-Safy, a 13 year old American-Egyptian Muslim girl decided to do something productive with her skills and talents. In the following article Marwah El-Azhary interviews Yasmine El-Safy to discover more about mg magazine and how what started as an idea, came to reality.

Why did you start mg? How did you get the idea for it?

I started a Yahoo! Group for Muslim girls! I was really excited and I had fun with it. It led me to wonder if we could start our own magazine. So we started an online magazine. Then I decided I wanted a real live magazine! So I found a printer and some girls and started it!

Yasmine found her ambition and went for it, something every person should do in order to achieve success

Who were the first girls in the team and how did you all bring the first issue together?

I got a few of my friends, Sarah, Tahyia, Noor, Sindus, and Laila to help me. After I created a Yahoo! Group I met some other people, Marwah, Shayma, Aya, and Amal. I work with other girls too, but they don't have the same leading roles in producing the magazine as the girls above.

Why a magazine?

I've always loved writing and I didn't see anything in the media that really

represented Muslim girls. We are thought of as a minority, but we're not.

What age group are you aiming mg at?



First ever issue of mg magazine

I want *mg* to be a magazine for Muslim teen girls. I'm not going to create an age restriction, but we generally aim at girls around 12 to 18. I do have girls of all ages working with me...even some older than 18. But most article writers are within that age range. I thought our magazine would be more appealing if it was written by Muslim girls so that readers could relate to the subjects, instead of it being put together by adults for Muslim girls.

What made the idea come to a reality?

I designed some things on the computer and found a printer. It was hard. I wasn't prepared for it but we did it!

How did you organise the

making of the magazine when you first started?

It took a long time to get it off the ground. I got some advertisers and a tiny group of girls to help.

What kind of articles do you publish on mg?

It's got all kinds of articles! We've got quizzes, book reviews, poetry, short stories, essays and other articles having to do with everyday life.

What are your hopes and objectives for mg?

I hope that *mg* will become popular among Muslim teen girls. I want to inspire them and give them ideas, and get them thinking about what's going on around them. I want them to question and seek answers, and prosper into successful people. I believe that by giving them something to be part of, they can create identities for themselves and be more confident with their religion and their work. I also hope to make *mg* bi-monthly by next year- if we can get enough contributors and funding.

What experiences are you





Second issue of *mg* Magazine

gaining?

I'm gaining lots of experience, obviously, in the business world. I had to learn how to talk to potential advertisers and how to deal with people. It doesn't sound hard, but it takes practice. It's difficult for me, though. But it's all worth it.

Whose experience did you learn from in order to create this magazine?

I mostly had to make big mistakes to figure everything out. My mom gave me lots of business advice that really helped, though.

What recognition have you received so far? What kind of response have you had to your first issue?

Bridges TV did a short news spot on us. They will be airing 30 adverts daily on the magazine, starting soon. People like the idea of our magazine. The people I have talked to have been very excited.

Tell us about your family, your schooling and how you fit it all in with your student schedule.

My dad is from Egypt and my mom is from the United States. She became a Muslim six years ago. My younger brother, Yasser is ten, and my little sister Sumaiyyah is two. I went to private school until fifth grade. Then my mom decided to home-school us. At the beginning we experimented with classic schooling, where we sat

on desks and worked from textbooks, and then we tried not having a schedule, and after a while we found something that suited all of us. I sometimes do math and science. My mom really likes history, so we usually do read a lot. I do believe that the magazine is my education though. I don't think education is about preparation, I think it's about life itself. I didn't wait to prepare to create a magazine. I just did it. I

Yasmine believes some skills cannot be learnt from a textbook and is excited to gain experience

learn lots of things through the magazine anyway. I'm a writer, photographer, a graphic designer, a publisher, a salesperson, and a publicist. That's quite a bit. And I think some of these are skills you can't gain through a textbook. This is my training and I hope to continue the magazine through my years.

My mom supports me with business advice and drives me everywhere I need to be.

What is the drive that makes you continue to be a successful editor-in-chief?

I love what I do. I want to be successful. I'm willing to do the work.

Yasmine wants to use her skills and talents to benefit her Ummah

You have to love what you do and be committed to it if you want to be successful.

What has been the most fun in publishing this magazine? What has been the most difficult so far?

Publishing does get difficult. I'm a bit of a control freak. I have to do certain jobs. Not because I like them, but because I feel like I'm the best one at doing them. And I trust myself

to be committed.

Getting advertisers has been the most difficult part. We rely on funding from them, because publishing a magazine is hugely expensive. You can't charge subscribers for the exact cost of printing, because it would be way too expensive.

Deadlines are hard, too. In general, we're good with meeting deadlines but there's all the little technical stuff that gets in the way.

The thing I love most about the magazine is that I can express myself through it. I love to write, and *mg* allows me to use my talents and ideas in a way that can benefit other people.

I love being "The Boss", too. I get a good idea and I can give out assignments and prepare everything. I feel like I'm running a business. And I really love what I do. I feel so wonderful, feeling like I'm this big important person running a company. Aren't I, though?

Yasmine also takes part in fundraising activities for *mg* magazine, and the latest fundraiser is helping Palestinian farmers by promoting their olive oil.

It is clear that *mg* magazine has come a long way since its first issue in October 2004, and with the determination of these young girls, the magazine will prosper and grow into a fruitful experience for both the organisers and readers.

Contact *mg* Magazine!

For more information on *mg* magazine visit www.mgmagazine.net

For general enquiries e-mail: admin@mgmagazine.net

How Plants

Camouflage Themselves



By **Ali A. Naser**

We know that animals camouflage themselves for protection. Lions, wild cats, tigers, and other wild animals have their special colours. God, His almighty, gives the possibility of camouflaging to animals, but what about plants? Botanists have noticed that plants had given this possibility too!

Lithpos

Lithops (commonly called "flowering stones" or "living stones") are true mimicry plants: their shape, size and colour causes them to resemble small stones in their natural

surroundings.

The plants blend in among the stones as a means of protection. Grazing animals, which would otherwise eat them during the periods of drought to obtain moisture, usually overlook them. Even experts in the field sometimes have difficulty locating plants for study because of this unusual deceptive camouflage.

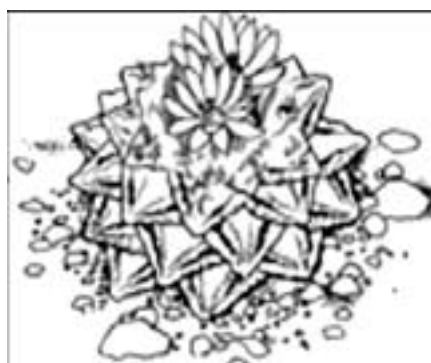


Fig.2: A living rock

In the wild, living stones inhabit vast dry regions of southern Africa. Several areas in which these plants grow receive less than two inches of rainfall per month throughout the entire year. In an extreme situation

of low rainfall, at least one species of lithops (living stones) depends on mist or fog to provide its main source of moisture. Lithops could not survive in many areas that they are found were it not for their capacity to store water. In fact, almost the entire plant is devoted to this function. This "body" of the plant is divided into two succulent leaves fused together in the shape of an inverted cone. The fissure or slit at the top of the plant is the division of the two leaves. There is no stem as such, but rather the taproot joins abruptly at the base of the leaves.



Fig.3: Lithops

The structure of the plant reveals to the imagination the harsh



Fig.1: A living stone



Fig.4: Michael Wood/*Boletus edulis*

environment in which lithops live: the scarcity of water demands that young plants limited to only two leaves and root system, as more extravagant growth would only serve to waste water. The leaves are thick to store enough water for the plants to survive for months without rain. The plants are small and keep a low profile to minimise the effect of the intense heat and light of their climate.

Boletus

Boletus mushroom (commonly called: Porcini, Cepe, King Bolete) often looks like the inedible pepper mushroom, and you can easily confuse the golden-brown mushroom with the poisonous

pseudo golden-brown mushroom. The delicious edible boletus can hardly be distinguished from the bitter one.



Fig.5:Boletes (left), king (right)

Boletus edulis is distinguished from other members of the bolete group by a combination of characters: substantial size, a smooth to wrinkled brown to reddish-brown

cap surface, drab white pores becoming yellowish olive in age, a usually club-shape site with distinctive white reticulations at the apex, mild test, and absence of colour change.

It is the justice of God to whom be ascribed all perfection and majesty, to give every thing its own secrets for surviving.

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Modernity

Alongside

HISTORY

By **Marwah El-Azhary**
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As I sipped my deliciously sweet hot tea, my eyes carefully followed the steam's journey from the white porcelain mug towards the ceiling and then disappear into thin air. Not bothered about the steam's short lifespan, my eyes switched to concentrate on my surroundings; the rich relaxing colours my mind processed encouraged me to sit further back into my comfortable chair and deeply inhale.

This place was fit for a king, much needed after the struggle I had been through to get here. Sitting in the Dar Attaw'heed, Intercontinental Hotel, in Makkah, I continued to sip my tea, my eyes occasionally dashing from one corner of the Zamzam cafe to another.

I analysed my surroundings, taking in the well chosen paintings of nature on the walls and the magic they possessed.

Strangely the magic portrayed in the paintings seemed to leak into the café, for the whole hotel seemed like an illusion, a mirrage in the middle of a thirsty desert, a magical palace high up in the mountains.

It seemed that everyone was enchanted by this magical spirit, but I deeply sensed that this spirit was not coming from the hotel alone. This modern hotel stood right next



Modern site: hotel

to Almasjid Al'haraam, the home of the Ka'bah.

On cue, my eyes darted to the wall-to-wall window in front of me, but not only my eyes observed, my soul had awoken, absorbing a different view. By far, this Masjid, with its mysterious and otherworldly white and grey colours, stood proudly, guarding the sacred Ka'bah, the most ancient building in the world.

I stood up, walking towards the window, observing Allaah's worshippers sat there on the white marble floor, patiently waiting for the next prayer.



Historic site: Ka'bah

They all faced an ancient building, the Ka'bah, with their backs to a modern building, the hotel. With their backs to the hotel, one would assume that they had given their backs to the world, giving their sole attention to Allaah and the Hereafter.

Both buildings are indeed made of the same earthly materials and were built with the same architectural process, yet it was unmistakably clear they were both different.

Paying for my tea, I walked out of the hotel. I had my worldly recuperation; I now needed spiritual healing



The Zamzam Café

in the air.

Then the journey ended as I stood on the steps leading down towards the Ka'bah, the eyes of my soul drank in the Ka'bah's elegance and pride, a complete contrast to the paintings I earlier saw in the hotel that was pleasing to the eye, but would never exceed the ultimate soul quencher, the Ka'bah. Just as the water quenches the thirst of our thirsty bodies, the Ka'bah quenches the thirst of our thirsty souls.

There I stood, walking in the footsteps of the Prophets and the believers, yet they walked on sand, while I walked on marble. They circled the Ka'bah on the ground, most probably in the blazing heat, while I could circle indoors in the Masjid's cool

to take on its role.

Joining the masses, I walked into Al-masjid Al'haraam, and instantly felt a difference in the modern building I had just left and the ancient building I was now walking towards.

Without a doubt you could tell that the two buildings had the same human touches to them, but what was different was that in front of the Ka'bah, your soul was set free to fly with the birds who had already taken a dose of euphoria long before I got there.

I was now in front of Allaah's Holy House; I was now feeding my hungry soul, a complete contrast to feeding my hungry appetite back at the hotel. Indeed the hotel had to play soothing instrumental tunes to ensure the hotel residents were relaxed and happy, a complete contrast to the spiritual, euphoric atmosphere that radiated with Allaah's Mercy, making the soul deliriously elated. In the hotel the hard marble floors are delicately polished to ensure our ease and satisfaction, a complete contrast to the polished marble floors in Almasjid Al'haraam, which are converted into soft, bouncy cushions that help you float



Modern hotel and ancient site side by side shade, or on the first ground or on the roof top.



The Prophet's Masjid, an ancient site dressed in modern attire

The modernisation made it hard to imagine how it was like when Haajar was there, all alone with her son. It made it hard to imagine if they ever imagined how it would be in centuries to come. It was hard to imagine if they ever imagined that a Masjid would be erected around the Ka'bah, guarding it with pride. It made it hard

to imagine if they knew that air conditioning and fans placed in Almasjid Al'haraam's high ceilings would take the place of the sun's cruel blaze, leaving no shadow for them to seek refuge in. I wonder if they ever imagined that the sandy, pebbled floor they walked upon would one day become a cool marbled floor, stretching out as far as the eye can see.

There I sat in another modern hotel, this time in the city of Madeenah, sipping my tea, thinking about the wisdom behind all the signs that Allaah has left for us to ponder on. Indeed Allaah says: "And He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth: behold, in that are signs indeed for those who reflect" (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Aljaathiyah, verse 13).

There I stood in front of the Prophet's grave, amazed that a part of history stood along side a modern

world. The feeling I had in Makkah was resurrected again; I felt sad that I could not imagine how my surroundings must have been like at the time of the Prophet. How beautiful and successful architectural modernisation is, I thought, and how sad it is that things cannot remain as they are. Indeed the only One that will always remain is our Lord, Allaah.

Surely the world will keep rotating into a newer world, but it is our memories and the beliefs, morals and teachings we leave for our children, and the generations to come, that will always remain; just like the beliefs and teachings of past nations have remained for us to acknowledge and pass on; an everlasting baton race.

Indeed this world is just a passing trial; advice that the historical buildings warn us of, in case we have become like those who have forgotten. Certainly these historical buildings

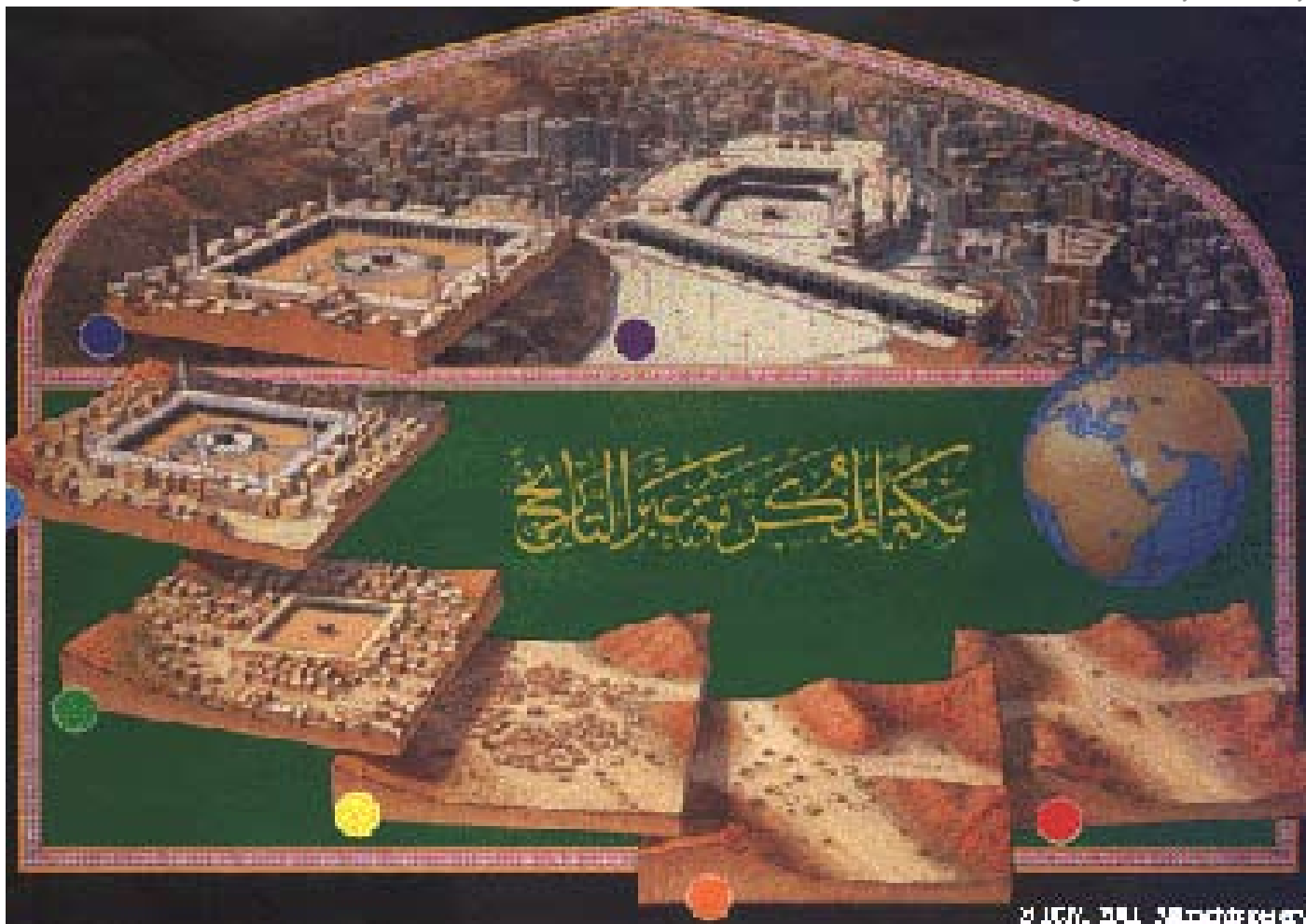
and sites are signs, reminding us of the nations that have passed away. Surely these signs are food for the soul, whereas modern buildings feed our worldly exterior.

There I was again, sitting on the modern plane, leaving the ancient holy land, sipping my tea, and reflecting on my journey.

Surely in years to come, new things will be made; modernity will persevere on its endless quest. Our times will be looked back on as ancient history; this is indeed the scheme of things.

Indeed as the plane released itself into the air, my thoughts concluded to this; in our times, modernity stands alongside history, and in the years to come, our modernity will become the history that will stand alongside a brave new world.

Makkah evolving from history to modernity



APPLICATION between and Islaam Ideology

By Hicham Maged

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In the past issue of I-MAG, I clarified the conceptual meaning of Islaam in the article titled "Islaam as a Lifestyle." I had shown why we - Muslims - follow Islaam.

In one sentence I can say; we follow Islaam because it's our road map to gain rewards from Allaah and enter Heaven via fulfilling our mission to urbanise earth.

For this mission to be complete, Islaam told us to follow the sharee'ah. Sharee'ah simply is the framework which defines rules for the Muslim community to work within, and this framework is based on two main sources: the 'Qura~n (Muslims' Holy Book) and the Sunnah (traditions and acts of the Prophet Mu'hammad).

For sure, people ask the traditional question: If Islaam is like that, why are Muslims accused of making bad actions all over the world everyday?

To answer this, first I have to highlight that since the dawn of history until present, any ideology - either religious or political or social - has its main concepts which are then applied by people who understand these concepts according to their own perception:

- When people understand the concept, this means that the model is clear and was applied in a right way.
- When people misunderstand the concept, this means that the model is not clear and was applied in a wrong way.

So, as long as Muslims understand their ideologies in a right way there's no problem.

Islaam throughout history till present had many great examples of people who understood the idea right and thus made life better for mankind all over the history until the current 21st century. This starts from the Prophet Mu'hammad (P.B.U.H.) and the 'sa'haabah (companions of the Prophet) and the followers.

On the other hand and similarly, if Muslims understand their ideology in a wrong way, this causes the problem to happen and examples are numerous worldwide.

We all know about people who do wrong acts in the name of Islaam, but I say that this can't be related to the main concept and principles of Islaam 101%, because they didn't understand Islaam at all, even if they do pray and worship Allaah.

If we take a look at history, we'll find that it is full of great examples of what I mentioned and this is found in every nation and every era, regardless a special religion:

- Christianity - for that matter - had the same good ideology in its own way, so it will be unfair to say that people who apply its concept incorrectly throughout history until now are doing this because it tells them to do so;
- The nudity and pornography which we see today applied mostly from people who are named to be Christians are not representatives of the rules of Christianity, and the same matter for Judaism or other religions and beliefs;

• Mahatma Ghandi was also a great example for liberating India from the British occupation, and this was because the Indians had understood his concepts regardless that he was not a follower to any of the three divine religions;

• Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin...etc., were typical examples of how an ideology can be transferred and applied incorrectly, regardless they were Christian. It's the same with every religion and ideology everywhere.

So simply, applying any good ideology in a right or wrong way depends on how people perceive it according to their education, culture, perception, etc., and not to the concept ideology itself.

You notice that I used the term "good ideology" because I mean they have a noble concept, and I'm not talking about ideologies which have lowness or harmful concepts from the beginning.

Thus, Islaam - as a religion - had its own ideology which we can all understand better now, and as I always say: Islaam is not a call for death; it is rather a call for life.



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BRITISH MEDIA AND Islaamophobia

By Hasan Hamarsha

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"There are a various dimensions of anti-Muslims prejudice in Britain, relaying especially on numerous statements and images that have been appeared in recent years in the media. Certain closed views of Islaam that generally support a 'clash of civilisations' perspective pitting 'us/the West' versus 'them/Muslims' are widespread in Britain" (Vetrovec, 2002).

The Race Relations Act issued in 1976 in the U.K. doesn't deal with Muslims as an ethnic group, and this leaves you "with the absurd situation that you can be as rude as you wish against Muslims" (Vetrovec, 2002). In spite of that, this paper deals with the Muslim minority in the U.K. as an ethnic group. There are at least four reasons to do so, firstly, Simon Cottle advises that "the relationship between media and ethnic minorities is characterised by complexity, and one way of opening this up to considered discussion is to focus on particular context" (2000). Secondly, Abbott (1998:106) states that race is more likely to be defined in terms of culture or religion. In fact, religion is regarded as culture. Islaam, as a religious faith, includes people from different racial backgrounds, Asians, Blacks, Whites, so any prejudice towards this group reflects the new racism which Van Dijk (2000) explains. This reflects the shift in defining racism from biology to culture. This opens the possibility that non-whites can be racist, and allows that whites can be victims of racism (Gaandy, 1998:79). Thirdly, this paper considers Islaamophobia to be a result from the negative stereotypical representation of the Muslim minority in the British media. In fact, stereotypical images of Muslims, particularly but not exclusively Arabs, are prevalent in the British Society.

Both the Rushdie's affair panic in 1989 and Mr. Kilroy-Silk's article against Arabs and Muslims early this year support Cottle's (2000) point of view that "many journalists and news proprietors do indeed harbour racist views and sentiments." These are just two examples of the racist minds which legitimise to the public their prejudice and discriminations towards the minorities in the society.

In 1989, under the term "freedom of speech", the British writer Salman Rushdie wrote *The Satanic Verses*, an offensive novel full with blasphemous, racist and anti-Semitic representation (Ahsan and Kidwai, 1993:170). Muslims in Britain protested to ban the book, which attacks their religion. The British media, with rare exceptions, played a very negative game against Muslims and took Rushdie's sage as a golden opportunity to represent Muslims in a stereotypical way. The media's rage against Islaam: "escalated step by even sillier step to a wholly mindless anger first against Bradford Muslims, then against all British Muslims, then against all Muslims, and ultimately against Islaam Itself" (Ahsan and Kidwai, 1993:41).

The nature of media coverage surrounding the Rushdie's affair transformed the dominant view toward Muslims in Britain. "The book burning in Bradford on January 1989 was sized in the press as evidence of an "uncivilised" and "intolerant" Muslim nature" (Vetrovec, 2002). The media picked on Rushdie's affairs without any concern for the anguish suffered by the Muslims, even after the author of *The Satanic Verses* himself frankly admitted that he was being used as a pawn in a wider game.

Although in his book *Racism and*

the Press, Van Dijk (1991:3) defines the Islaamic term 'fatwa' as a license to kill, he states that the press not only contributed to the legitimisation of prevalent prejudices against the Muslim minorities in the Western countries, and against Islaam and Arabs in general, but also emphasised the socio-cultural superiority of White Western or European values and cultures. Thus, mentioning 'terrorist' all the time will stereotypically refer to Arab. "Violent men who are our friends or allies will seldom get that label" (Van Dijk, 2000). Muslims are frequently portrayed as oil suppliers, as terrorists, and more recently, as blood thirsty mobs (Said, 1997:6).

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FATHER'S ADDRESS



By **Lutfi Zaghlul***
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A Palestinian Child Talks About His Imprisoned Father

My conscience is the address of my father,
He dwells in my soul and heart.
I talk of him everywhere,
Honour him "all the time".

In prison he stubbornly and daringly
battles against jailer's chains.
He swore by God, the
compassionate,
By the holy shrine of Makkah,
By all oaths that Palestine is his one
And sole homeland.

Father's address is the abode of
freemen.
He is laureated for his persistent,
enthusiastic,
Proud and endless fighting in
captivity
Against the usurper to regain his
homeland.
It's a promise that will sooner
Or later be faithfully fulfilled.

Father's address is the chains of jail.
As a child I am earnestly longing for
dad,

Eagerly looking forward for his
meeting,
But alas,
The usurper takes no heed of
children's emotions.

My father is not a terrorist;
He is a legitimate struggle symbol...
For the liberation of our homeland,
A torch lightening the path
For coming generations.

Father's address is permanent;
It's in the heart of Palestine,
Imprinted on its figs and olives,
On the hills of vine and thyme.

When freedom once called my
father,
He readily answered the call
And proceeded forward with it.

Palestine is the home of prisoners,
Of martyrs, the banner-defenders.
My father in his den behind bars is
still roaring.

Certainly, he will not come back

home
Except after liberation.

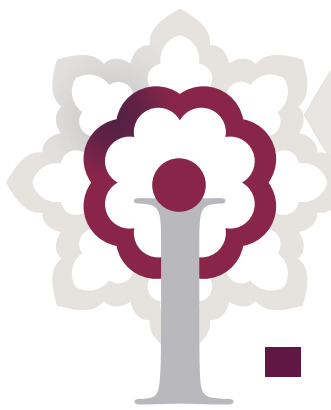
Father's address is all Palestine,
The high mountain and the valley...
With it flowers and singing birds.
Here I was born
And so were my father and
forefathers.

Behind bars,
My father heroically challenges the
"Promised Land" legend;
He draws the map of our country
And writes down its birth certificate.

Translated by: Basheer Sharaf

**Lutfi Zaghlul is a Palestinian poet.*

His website: <http://www.lutfi-zaghlul.com/>



Write to I-MAG

ELECTRONIC ISLAMIC MAGAZINE

Mass
Macrophone

DO YOU HAVE
COMMENTS ON WHAT
YOU READ IN I-MAG?

**Email your opinion including
your name, email, country of residence,
and a personal picture (optional) to:
imag@nashiri.net
and it will be published in the
next issue of I-MAG**

DAVUD BEKTAŞ'S

CHANTING LETTERS

Amazed by its beauty and simplicity, I spent some time trying to figure out the words of the Arabic calligraphy the invitation card had. My wearing attempts were only ended by the help of one of the event's organisers who provided the answer to me; "Yaa Wadood." What was more amazing is the fact that the Davud Bektaş (pronounced as Daawood Baktaash), the calligrapher who produced this great work, does not speak Arabic; his wife Deniz Oktem was translating his answers to me. I met them during Bektaş's exhibition in Kuwait which was organised by the Ministry of Endowments and Islamic Affairs in cooperation with the Kuwait Arts Association under the title "Taraaneem Alhuroof" or "The Chants of the Letters."

Religious Family and Traditional Learning

The first question that came to my mind was how could he excel in Arabic calligraphy while Turkish language is written in Latin letters since the establishment of the republic by Kamal Atatürk. Bektaş answers that his family is a religious one, so he learnt how to read the 'Qura~n since he was a small child. He has

always been interested in writing and seeing paintings, but he started to consider Arabic calligraphy when he joined high school which was a religious one.

Calligraphy is taught in a traditional way, there is a mentor-student relationship through which the art is learnt. Bektaş went to Istanbul to study and received a law degree from Istanbul University. During that time he met his teacher Hasan Celebi with whom he stated his calligraphy lessons.

"At some periods in history, calligraphy in Turkey was only done by several people and some thought it was going to be lost, but during the last 20 years it has improved, and Istanbul is the centre of this art." Bektaş recounts.

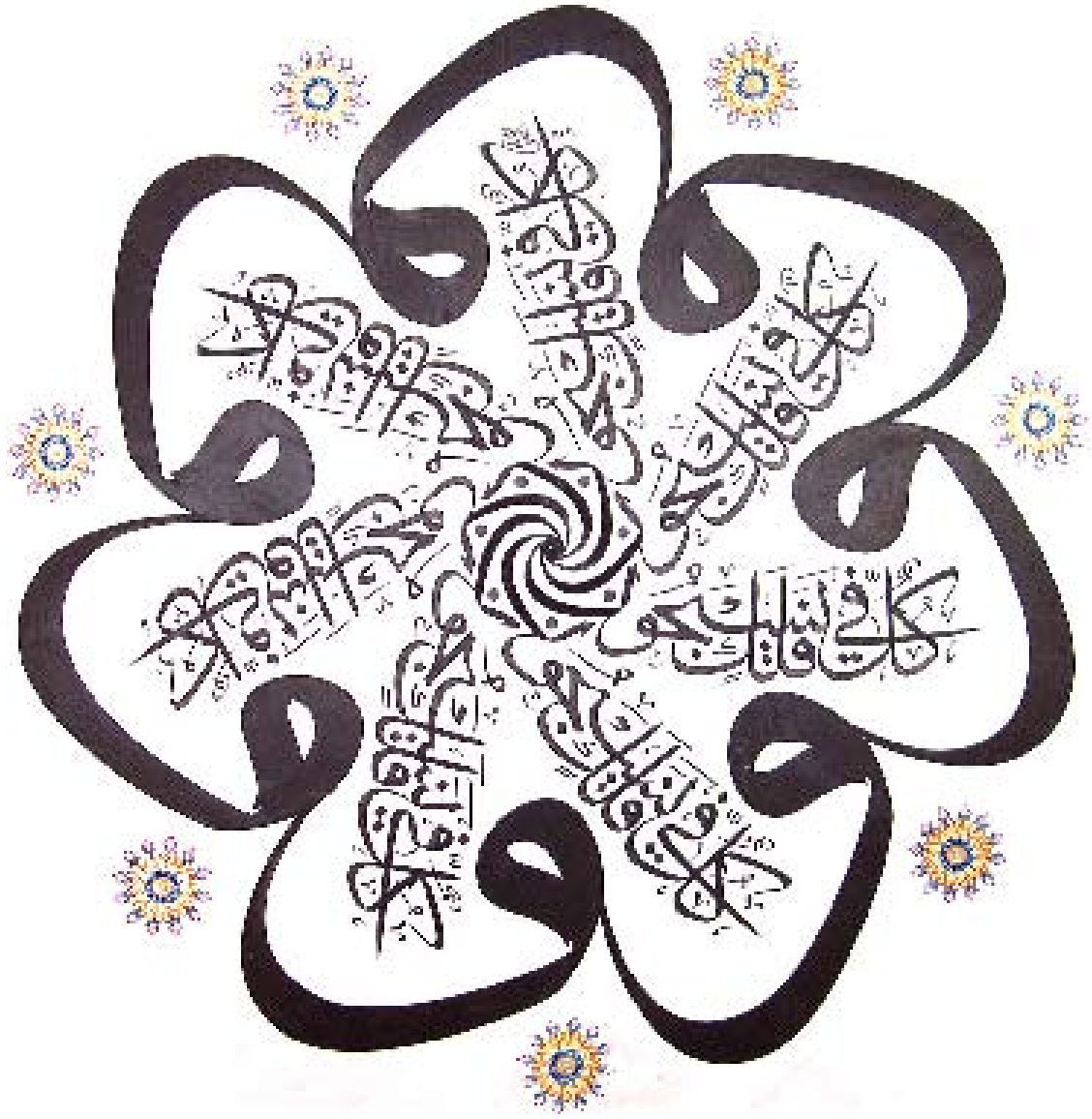
By Hayat Alyaqout

hayat@nashiri.net



The invitation Card:

"Ya Wadood" which means in Arabic "Oh the Most Loving" in reference to Allaah Almighty.



A verse from the Holy 'Qura~an: "They float each in an orbit" the chapter of Yaaseen, verse 40.
The work gives an impression of floating.

Inspiration

"Just like any other art, you cannot pinpoint from where you start ... when you get the inspiration you do it." Bektaş thinks. Starting the task could be either stalagmitic or stalactitic; sometimes there is a statement that attracts his attention and he starts to find a way to put in on. Sometimes he sees a good combination of letters and looks for a statement that brings the beauty if these letters together. Someone might also require him to write a

certain thing and he has to charge his energy to find a way to put the statement in a creative way. Bektaş assures that calligraphers consult each other, they also have joint exhibitions but they do not work on one piece together.

The Thuluth Script

Amongst the various scripts Arabic calligraphy has, Bektaş is deeply interested in the thuluth script. "The most attractive thing to me in the thuluth was the composition of

letters and words." During high school he bought a handbook on calligraphy called "Kalem Güzeli" by Mahmud Yazır which kindled his interest.

Illuminations and Computers

Bektaş concentrates on the calligraphy, while a team of illuminators takes care of doing the illumination that appear in some of his works. "Illumination is still alive in Turkey and there are many artists." Bektaş adds.

"Computer cannot be a threat to the art of calligraphy ... the memory of the computer is good, but it cannot think." Bektaş thinks. His

wife Deniz Oktem adds that “with the pen you have a nice flow and see how the pen moves with the ink ... with the computer every thing will be the same. All calligraphers go against the computers.” she adds and smiles.

“The Muslims is from whose hands and tongue the Muslims are safe”

*A Hadeeth by Prophet
Mu'hammad P.B.U.H.*



ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY

Arabs before Islaam had a primitive writing system because the dominant culture was an oral one. With the pressing need to write the Holy 'Qura-an and to devise a better writing system that facilitates reading the 'Qura-an to the new Muslims who recently learnt Arabic, the Arabic writing system received new additions such as the dots some letters have and the diacritics marks were also devised.

The cultural exchange with the new areas Islaam came to produced several scripts such as the koofy (Kufic), the naskh, the thuluth, the deewaany, and many others. Each script has its own characteristics and uses. The thuluth script is known of its flexibility and graceful curves. This script has one third of the letter leaning downward the other letter, it was thus called the thuluth which means one third in Arabic. Due to its nature, the thuluth

is not commonly used for ordinary writing, but rather for producing artworks.

“We said: O fire be coolness and peace for Ibraheem [Ibrahim]” (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Alanbiyaa-, verse 69).



DAVUD BEKTAŞ

About Davud Bektaş

Davud Bektaş was born in the village of Akoluk near Adana in 1963. He attended the elementary school in the village and continued his education at the Imam-Hatip high school of Adana. In 1981, he was accepted to the law school of Istanbul University and in 1992 he graduated and received his law degree.

During high school, he got interested in the art of Islaamic calligraphy. He thus decided to take classes. When he arrived in Istanbul towards the end of 1981 to attend law school, he started Islaamic calligraphy lessons with the calligrapher Yusuf Ergun Erzincani. He studied the thuluth with this master for a short period of time. Introduced to the calligrapher Hasan Celebi in 1982, he started to get lessons from him. He learned the scripts of thuluth, naskh and ri'q'ah from Celebi. In 1994, he received his diploma (ijazah) from his teacher. Currently Bektaş is taking specific classes from Professor Ali Alparslan on the 'taliq and the deewaany scripts. Moreover he is teaching Islaamic calligraphy classes in Istanbul.

International Awards

In the International Islaamic calligraphy competitions organised by I.R.C.I.C.A., Bektaş received the following awards;

1. In 1986, the first prize in the jaly thuluth script and honourable mention award in the style of direct imitation;
2. In 1989, the first prize in the jaly thuluth script;
3. In 1993, the first prize in the thuluth script;

In 1997 he received the first prize in the Islaamic Festival organised in Tehran.

National Awards

1. In 1988, he received the first prize in the Islaamic calligraphy competition organised as part of the Gulhane Festival in Istanbul.
2. In 1991 and 1992, he participated in two competitions organised in Urfa and received the first prizes at both organisations.



"He who serves people becomes their master"



Do you speak Arabic? Good for you! As you can follow up what Amr Khaled says in Life Makers episodes and other past programs. But excuse me sir, I speak English, so what shall I do?!

From this simple fact, Daralislam-Live.com had been established. DaralislamLive.com is a non-profit organisation (N.P.O.) which aims to provide an English translation portal for Amr Khaled and future preachers' works and Islaamic literature which has not yet been translated into English. It is also a site which calls for creative and performing arts talented individuals to take part in projects to reform our Islaamic community.

In Arabic, "Dar Alislam" means "the home of Islaam", where strangers worldwide unite in a close-knit community to integrate the teachings of the 'Qura~n and the Sunnah of the Prophet in their daily lives. "Live" calls people to "Live" again by improving themselves and the society around them; thus calling people to step out of the darkness and into the light and live productively in the home of Islaam.

Complementary, the main logo had to reflect a specific message: "to symbolise the message of Islaam that was revealed in Arabic, to which we are propagating via the English

DaralislamLive.com

Enlighten Your Life!

By Hicham Maged

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language. It also symbolises the translation projects DaralislamLive produces from the Arabic language into the English language".

So we find that the "D" in English symbolises the English message, while the "Dal" (D in Arabic alphabet) symbolises the Arabic message. Both letters are connected with each other the way that both of DaralislamLive's material from Arabic to English connects with each other, and also the way it connects the audience to Islaam. This logo is geared towards an audience who are mainly interested in the translations produced.

There's a second logo, which is geared towards a general audience who are mainly interested in DaralislamLive's various services, such as the creative and performing arts section, the projects section, the forums, and other sections which

requires the audience to be practical and proactive participants. The dove symbolises peace, because Islaam is peace, and it is replacing the 'D' in order to represent the peaceful members of the home of Islaam who advocate peace, conciliation, or negotiation. The dove is illustrated in a flying motion with wings spread out, which gives out the concept that all members of peace should spread their wings to success by living actively in their society and spreading Islaam through their positive actions. Doves were also messengers, thus a means of communication, which also symbolises the mission that each person has. The leaves around the letters 'A' and 'R' symbolise the continuous progress and productivity of the da'wah mission everyone works so eagerly towards.

People there had this definite mission; to make a positive difference in the lives of people who do not under-



stand the Arabic language and long to read influential Islaamic literature, such as the works of Amr Khaled and other influential texts.

To framework its mission, DaralislamLive.com had listed the following objectives:

- To clear out any misconceptions of Islaam;
- To promote the true, peaceful Islaam via their work;
- To create an online community that is proud of their Islaamic identity;
- To create an awareness of the teachings of Islaam via their work;
- To encourage their online community to come up with new ideas to promote Islaam;
- To make their online community a place where people can use their skills to benefit the community, discover their hidden talents and develop them;
- To give their online community a sense of belonging; a real online family that supports each other via encouraging each other to take part in good, beneficial and productive actions.

For that matter, they plan to achieve this mission through propagating Islaam and ultimately via:

1. Translating the works of Amr Khaled into the English language, since it is the main and widely-spoken language;
2. Translating various influential lectures from a wide range of preachers who propagate Islaam;
3. Taking part in other peaceful da'wah projects on the website to encourage volunteers to use their skills, talents and knowledge for the sake of Allaah.

There had been co-operation with Amrkhaled.net, as it has uploaded DaralislamLive's "The Manners" translations in the languages section. DaralislamLive is working to ask to have a link or section on Amrkhaled.net in order for a wider audience to benefit from the many of translations it has completed.

Translated work that DaralislamLive.com has completed are:

- Tarawee'h Series 1422 Rama'daan;
- Konouz, Rama'daan 1424 (2003);
- Konouz, Rama'daan 1425 (2004);
- 'Qura~n Contemplations, 2003;
- The Family;
- The Caliphs;
- The Mothers of the Believers;
- The Companions;
- International Lectures (delivered abroad);
- Until They Change What is within Themselves;
- The Guidance;
- Palestine;
- Live Discussions;
- Curing the Hearts;
- Worship;
- The Manners;
- Other Lectures;
- Written magazine and newspaper articles by Amr Khaled shown on Amrkhaled.net;
- Amr Khaled's News page on Amrkhaled.net;
- Schedule of T.V. Shows and Visits page on Amrkhaled.net;
- Cartoons Gallery on Amrkhaled.net;
- Send a letter to Amr Khaled page on Amrkhaled.net;

- Amr Khaled's Profile on Amrkhaled.net;
- Start Here page on Amrkhaled.net
- Other various articles, surveys, sections and forum articles on Amrkhaled.net

Finally, if you want to have "sada'qah jaariyah", (continuous/ flowing charity in Arabic) and to have an excellent opportunity to do something for your community, please feel free to be a volunteer at DaralislamLive.com and become one of the various members who are gathered from all over the world, where the youngest member is 15 years old, and the oldest is 57.

You have the choice to either be among the translators, graphic and flash designers, editors and proof-readers, marketers, web designers, programmers, web developers, and P.D.F. booklet illustrators, video subtitle members, forum moderators, researchers, advertisers, chat room operators, audio recorders, team co-ordinators and administrators who are all working under the main slogan of DaralislamLive.com; **Enlighten Your Life!**

Contact DaralislamLive.com
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TRANSCRIBING ARABIC PHONEMES

A Preliminary Attempt

By Hayat Alyaqout

or more correctly:
'Hayaat Alyaa'qoot!

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Transliterating Arabic sounds into English writing system has always been problematic. This stems from the fact that Arabic has nine consonant sounds that are not found in English. And Although the Arabic alphabet has 28 letters while the English one has 26, the English alphabet has several repeated sounds; k, q, and sometimes c all denote the same sound for instance. We should thus pay attention to the difference between a grapheme; the smallest written unit or in other words a letter, and a phoneme; the smallest unit of sound. K, q, and c - in certain cases - are thus three graphemes but all represent one phoneme; /k/.

The same problem exists when it comes to vowels. Arabic has two types of vowels:

1. **Tense vowels**, and there are three of them. Combining tense vowels is possible to create new sets of vowels. Tense vowels can be combined with lax vowels as well;

2. **Al'harakaat** (الحركات) or what could be loosely called **lax vowels**. They are milder versions of the three tense vowels plus some other representations. Lax vowels are represented by diacritics marks placed on the letter that they affect, although they are not - most of the time - written out explicitly and it is left to the reader to assume to right 'harakah. What makes things more complicated is that lax vowels can affect tense vowels creating a new pronunciation of the vowel.

The International Phonetics Association(I.P.A.) has a comprehensive transcription scheme that explains the way on how to transcribe every sound modern languages have. The system is excellent, yet it is neither normal-reader-friendly nor keyboard-friendly, and subsequently does not cater for the needs of a normal reader and a normal publication.

The task of devising an expressive and easy-to-understand scheme to transcribe Arabic phonemes is necessary, but is not necessarily



easy. And what we have in hand is quite unsatisfactory, as it does not always reflect the real pronunciation of the Arabic sounds in addition to the lack of standardisation that is dangerously prevalent. Indeed, most attempts wither away simply because of the apathy or because of the ultraconservative nature of some who think that "if it's not broken, don't fix it." The ways used to transcribe Arabic sounds are not broken, yet they are not up to the pressing need. I know that many

would resent my suggestion to write "Islaam" and "Allaah" instead of "Islam" and "Allah" that have been unanimously used for decades if not centuries, but who said that unanimity always means correctness?

Here is a preliminary scheme followed by some reflections on the matter. From this issue of I-MAG and on, we shall follow this phonemes transcription scheme.

All suggestions and contributions are welcome and will be published in I-MAG since discourse is the only path for successful ventures. I hope that Allaah accepts this effort and grants us all sincerity and success.

CONSONANTS

PHONEME IN ARABIC	PHONEME DESCRIPTION	INTERNATIONAL PHONETICS ASSOCIATION SCHEME	I-MAG SCHEME
1. ح	Devoiced pharyngeal fricative sound.	/ħ/	'h (h preceded by an single ending quote) As in mu'hammad مُحَمَّد
2. خ	Velar fricative sound.	/χ/ or /x/	kh As in khaleefah خليفة
3. ص	Velarised /s/	/S/ or /Sʷ/	's (s preceded by an single ending quote) As in 'sadi'q صادق
4. ض	Velarised /d/	/ɖ/	'd As in 'diyaa-ضياء
5. ط	Velarised /t/	/t̪/	't (t preceded by an single ending quote) As in 'taari'q طارق
6. ظ	Velarised /ð/ (ð as in the first sound of them)	/ð̪/	'th (th preceded by an single ending quote) As in 'thilaal ظلال
7. ع	Voiced pharyngeal fricative sound.	/ʕ/ or Superscripted / ^c /	' (a single opening quote) As in 'aly علي and 'eed عبد
8. غ	Uvular fricative sound.	/ʁ/ or /ʁ̥/	gh As in ghaafir غافر
9. ق	Uvular fricative sound.	/q/ or /G/	'q (q preceded by an single ending quote) as in 'Qura~n قرآن
10. ث / ذ	Interdental fricative sounds. /θ/ is devoiced while /ð̪/ is voiced.	/θ/ as in "three" and /ð̪/ as in "that"	th as in thalaathah ثلاثة th> as in th>immah ذمة

TENSE VOWELS

VOWEL		I-MAG REPRESENTATION	
1.	أ الألف Alif	أ (الألف الممدودة) Always in the middle of an utterance. The letter before it as affected by a fat'hah.	aa as in salaam سلام
		ا At the end of the utterance	a as in huna هنا
		ي (الألف المقصورة) 	a as in Mu's'tafa مصطفى
2.	أ الهمزة Hamzah	Plosive glottal (or laryngeal) sound represented as /ʔ/ in the I.P.A. transcription scheme.	
		أ أ + فتحة أ + ضمة أ + كسرة = إ أ (همزة وصل)	a as in amal أمل ou as in oumمي أمي i as in it'qaan إتقان i ibtisaam ابتسام
		آ ā = 'ā + ʾ ī = ī + ʾ	a~ as a~maal آمال and a~آل a~ and 'Qura~n قرآن
		أ (In medium or final position)	- as in wa-d وأد and bara-برأ
		ء ن . ث . ي ؤ اء	- as in kuf-كفء and shay-شيء - as in mi-th>anah مئذنة, madaa-nمدائن, shaa'ti-شاطئ - as in ro-yah رؤية aa- as in baraa-براء and in shaa-Allaahإن شاء الله

TENSE VOWELS, CONTINUED

3.	<p>و</p> <p>الواو</p> <p>Waaw</p> <p>/w/</p>	<p>Combining w with other tense vowels:</p> <p>و + ا</p> <p>و + ي</p> <p>و + و</p> <p>Combining w with lax vowels:</p> <p>و + فتحة</p> <p>و + ضمة</p> <p>و + ضمة (الواو الممدودة)</p> <p>و + كسرة</p> <p>و + سكون</p> <p>و + شدة (و + و)</p>	<p>waa as in waa'sil واصل</p> <p>way as in way'h ويح or wy as in samaawy سماوى</p> <p>woo as in Dawood داوود and 'taawoos طاووس</p> <p>wa as in waleed وليد</p> <p>wu as in wud ود and wus' وسع</p> <p>oo as in roo'h روح</p> <p>wi as in widaad وداد</p> <p>aw is in mawt موت</p> <p>ww as in nawwaar نوار</p>
4.	<p>ي</p> <p>الياء</p> <p>Yaa-</p> <p>/y/</p>	<p>Combining y with other tense vowels:</p> <p>ي + ا</p> <p>ي (مفتوحة) + و</p> <p>ي (مضمومة) + و (مضمومة)</p> <p>Combining y with lax vowels:</p> <p>ي + فتحة</p> <p>ي + ضمة</p> <p>ي + كسرة (الياء الممدودة)</p> <p>ي + سكون</p> <p>ي + شدة (ي + ي)</p>	<p>yaa as in yaaseen ياسين</p> <p>yaw as in yawm يوم or</p> <p>yoo as in Yoosuf يوسف</p> <p>ya as in yamshi يمشى</p> <p>yu yumkin يمكن</p> <p>ee as in 'hadeeth حديث</p> <p>ay as in bayt بيت (and not the bait as pronounced in most dialects)</p> <p>yy as in sayyid سيد</p>



LAX VOWELS (DIACRITIC MARKS)

LAX VOWEL		REPRESENTATION IN ARABIC	I-MAG SCHEME
1.	Kasrah كسرة	Represented as: ِ	i as in ri'haab رِحاب (written underneath ِ)
2.	'Dammah ضمة	Represented as: ُ	u as in Yoosuf يُوُسُف (written above ُ)
3.	Fat'hah فتحة	Represented as: َ	a as in Mu'hammad مُحَمَّد (written above the second َ)
4.	Sukoon سكون	Represented as: ّ	Sukoon means silences and it thus means there is no diacritic mark affecting the sound. When the sukoon is placed on a vowel, it changes its pronunciation. (written above the letter)
5.	Shaddah شدة (Gemination)	Represented as: ّ	Doubling the letter whether a consonant or a vowel when written above the letter in question i.e. Mu'hammad مُحَمَّد, Makkah مَكَّة and Fawwaaz فَوَّاز (written above the letter)

REFLECTIONS



The Odyssey of "Al"

"Al" which commonly appears in family names in Arabic as well as being the definite article meaning "the" should not be hyphenated in both cases. For instance, we write Ala'q'sa and not Al-A'q'sa.

1. "Al" - as a part of family names - originally came from the word "Ahl" أهل (folks of family in Arabic) and then was clipped to "a-l" آل, and at a later stage to "Al" ال. In I-MAG we shall stick to the final stage of development; "Al." "Al" in Arabic is integrated in the family name and is not a separate entity and should not thus be hyphenated in English.

2. "Al" as the definite article should be also integrated in the word. Arabic is known to blend morphemes (the smallest units of grammar) and make them integral parts of the words. In English for example, we do not spell "unable" as "un-able" because the morpheme "un" is a bound morpheme (cannot stand alone) and thus became a part of the word, but we spell "the" as a separate word because "the" is a free morpheme in English (can stand alone). In Arabic, the definite article is a bound morpheme and cannot stand

alone and is thus always integrated in the word.

Why "Y" and not "I"?

Yaa- Annisbah ياء النسبة in Arabic is added to the end of nouns to coin relational adjectives as is always geminated. Y is more representative of this gemination than i. So, we write Al'araby not Al'arabi, Attoonisy not Attonisi.

Writing Right

We transcribe according to how we pronounce; we write assalaam not alsalaam, arrazy not alrazy. A non-native speaker is not concerned with how we write the word in Arabic, but with how we pronounce it.

Compound Proper Names

1- Names prefixed with 'abd and similar words:

'Abd Arra'hmaan, 'Abd Allaah, 'Abd Alwadood, Waly Arra'hmaan, and Sajjad Arra'hmaan. Each part is written separately because in Arabic each one of them is a separate word. The germination should be represented. Some use 'Abdur Ra'hmaan for instance, and this is the perfection way because in Arabic 'Abdar Ra'hmaan and 'Abdir Ra'hmaan are also possible. So, it is safer to use the most neutral form 'Abd Arra'hmaan.

2- Names suffixed by "Deen":

Noor Addeen, Shihaab Addeen, Ni'tham Adeen.

3- Names with Aboo, Aba, Abi:

Aboo Bakr and Aboo Hurayrah. Abu is always used since abi and aba are used for grammatical conditions that are restricted to Arabic.

Be Fair with the H:

When a word ends with an h, it should be always transcribed as such; Fa'timah not Fa'tima and Ousaamah not Ousaama.

Dark L:

Dark L is spelled as double l as in Allaah.

Names:

In I-MAG we respect the way people spell their names and we thus do not impose this transcription system neither on our team nor on our writers or guests when it comes to names transcription. Changing the spelling of names can be impractical since one name appears on official papers and certificates.

One thing we could do in the future, is to provide the transcription of all the names that appear in I-MAG between brackets. This will convey the real pronunciation of the name to the reader and in the same time respects the spelling people use for their names.

Cyber Attempts:

In cyberspace, a system for transcribing Arabic sounds was devised. It uses English numbers to denote Arabic sounds. "7" for instance is used to transcribe (ح) sound due to the similarity of their shape. So 'Hayaat would be 7ayaat.

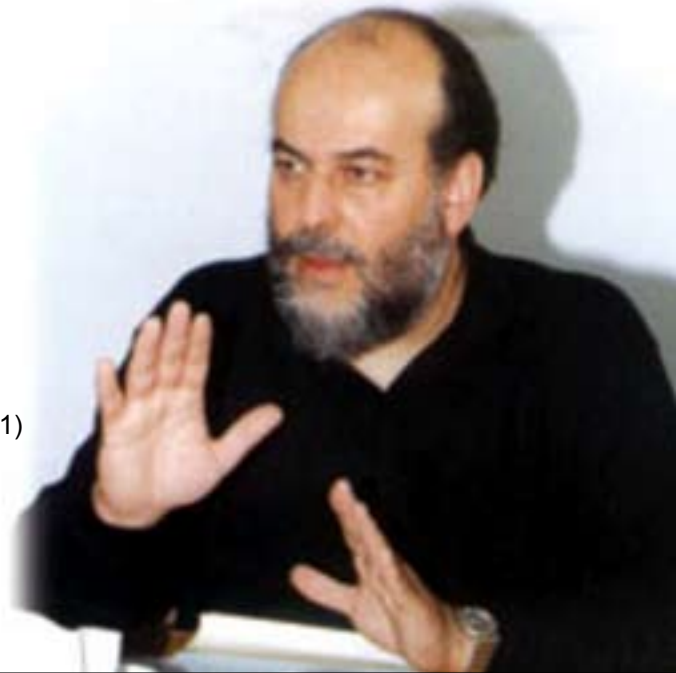
It's not known who devised that system, but it's gaining popularity in Internet-based informal communications.

For more information, read this report: <http://www.aawsat.com/default.asp?issue=8780&page=internet&article=141010>

In next issue of I-MAG in shaa- Allaah, Hayat Alyaqout continues her series about the 'hijaab that started in the last issue.

First Signs of Numerical Miracles IN THE HOLY 'QURA~N

(Part 1)



By Bassam Jarrar*

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Introduction:

The Noon Centre for 'Qura~nic Studies and Research specialises in 'Qura~nic Studies. One of its priorities is the carrying out of research into numerical and mathematical miracles in the 'Qura~n. This is because the world of mathematics and numbers is the world of provable facts, Math having virtually become the language of physical and social sciences. And why should this not be so when the whole universe is based on numbers? Allaah says: "He takes into account every single thing." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Annaml, verse 28.)

Thus far, the numerical miracles of the 'Qura~n have not been given their due merit. This may have been justified in the past, but in the modern computer age it is surprising to find that we are still only at the beginning of the road, and the research is still scant. At the Noon Centre, we are aware that attracting the attention of researchers, scholars and lay readers requires massive research and effort to impress new factual

findings on minds, although we are also aware that hesitation and reservation about what is new is a healthy phenomenon. Thus, we feel that our duty is to give evidence for the credibility and significance of numbers in miracle studies in the 'Qura~n in particular and in 'Qura~nic Studies in general. In this small book, the Noon Centre's first fruit, the reader will find six chapters which give evidence of the mathematical miracles in the Holy 'Qura~n. The reader will observe that each chapter is a basis for a mathematical line of thinking. We thereby aim to draw the attention of those interested to the possibilities, on the basis of which we can conduct research on mathematical miracles. What is suggested is a mere sample of examples and logical premises to get the researcher "on the road". Despite our conviction that there are other lines of approach, we have nonetheless limited ourselves to these six. In themselves they should be more than enough to give an idea of what we mean when we talk of the mathematical miracles of the

'Qura~n.

Some people ask about the usefulness of such studies. It might be sufficient to say that we are dealing with what exists as part of the composition of the Holy 'Qura~n – that is, we research and describe our findings. Nothing more. In other words, we describe the Holy 'Qura~n from a numerical perspective. Even this is not without value, and there must be repercussions in 'Qura~nic Studies in general. We have felt that some of these benefits are:

1. This perspective helps to clarify the issue of the miracle of the 'Qura~n, making it easier for people engaged in da'awah to present proofs and establish evidence, and for seekers of the truth to reach certainty;
2. It helps to settle many controversial issues pertaining to 'Qura~nic sciences such as: the use of the 'Qura~nic script that is known as Ottoman script; the order of the surahs (chapters of the 'Qura~n); the names of the surahs; the number of ayat (verses) in each surah, and so on;
3. It greatly helps to refute the

doubts of orientalist and sceptics that relate to the compiling and writing down of the first copy of the Holy 'Qura~n (the Mu's'haf). Some of the meanings of the verses become clear, such as:

"We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; And We will assuredly guard it (from corruption)." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Al'hijr, verse 9);

4. It helps with the interpretation of the Holy 'Qura~n. The discovery of the numerical structure of the universe has also helped the understanding of many facts about creation and its miracles;

5. There are logical premises that suggest the possibility of understanding the universe in the light of 'Qura~nic numbers and vice versa. Why should this not be so when the Creator is also the one who revealed the 'Qura~n?

This is only a little of what we hope to achieve with Allaah's help, and Allaah is the Guardian of Success.

Chapter 1

Chapter number 74: Almuddathir (The Cloaked One) – An Introduction to a Numerical Miracle

Absolutely the first verse of the Holy 'Qura~n to be revealed to the Prophet Mu'hammad (P.B.U.H.) in his prophethood stage was: "Recite! In the name of thy Lord the Creator, who created mankind from a clot of blood..." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Al'ala'q, verse 1.)

However, the first revelation in the Prophet's mission or apostolic phase was "O, thou wrapped up in a mantle..." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almuddathir, verse 1.)

In other words, the revelation of surah 96 to Mu'hammad (P.B.U.H.) made him a Prophet. When he received surah 74, he was asked therein to deliver a message to

mankind and eo ipso became a Messenger, or Apostle.

What concerns us in this context is the chapter of Almuddathir, which is the first revelation of Apostleship, rather than Prophethood.

Because the chapter was not revealed in its entirety on one occasion, it records the first moments, and the ensuing attempts to refute, oppose, resist and nullify the truth of the 'Qura~n. The chapter discusses the failure of the Idolaters in this respect, a failure that reduced them to defiance and antagonism. In this they were like all the arrogant; like all those whose hearts and minds are filled with self-interest and lust; like all those who, accustomed to a situation, no matter how bad, detest all change, even one that brings with it blessing and goodness.

Because of this tendency in people, there has to be a shock, a threat that will break down the barriers and throw aside the veils that conceal. There has to be a sense of danger in order to mobilise energies to revolt against customs, traditions and norms. Hence there is the threat of sa'qar (hell-fire)

- "Naught doth it permit to endure and naught doth it leave alone." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almuddathir, verse 28). Sa'qar burns and changes all the features of transient beauty - "Darkening and changing the colour of man" (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almuddathir, verse 29) - that lure those oblivious of the illusory nature of this transient present life. The 'Qura~n then proceeds with: "Above it are nineteen." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almuddathir, verse 30). Hell-fire is watched over by nineteen angels. It is possible that there are nineteen of these noble creatures or nineteen types or categories. We do not know.

In his book "Fi 'Thilaal Al'Qura~n" (The Shades of Meaning in the 'Qura~n) Sayyid 'Qu'tb surmises: "Why there are nineteen – whatever

this number signifies – is a matter known to Allaah who harmonised all existence and creates in proportion and measure." Though ultimately we agree with this, we ask if the number here is to be considered as one of those verses in the 'Qura~n that is beyond comprehension because they relate to the metaphysical, where no person can appreciate any part of its significance or its implications, or if it is rather a hint to open the mind to the many meanings and mysteries contained in the 'Qura~n.

However, we believe in the rule that we should try to understand utterances, not disregard them as meaningless, and we believe that the key to unlocking many of these mysteries is to be found in the ayat: "Above it are nineteen. And We have set none but angels as guardians of the Fire; and We have fixed their number only as a trial for unbelievers..." (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almuddathir, verse 31).

The 'Qura~n thus provides a detail of this mysterious number: "We have fixed their number only as a trial for unbelievers..." We do not want to explore the meanings of the Arabic word jaal (to fix their number), but we simply find that the verse states that this number is a trial for the unbelievers. If we refer to the meaning of the Arabic word fitnah (trial), we find that its root meaning means to expose gold ore to fire to separate the gold from the impurities by smelting. Thus, each process intends to extract the usable from the useless. The target group, then, is the group of unbelievers. Number 19, as stated in the Holy 'Qura~n, can thus be seen as a "sorter", separating the righteous from the wicked.

Some interpreters hold that stating the number 19 in the ayah is there merely to tempt the idolaters of the 'Quraysh into making the issue an object of inquiry and ridicule. However, this opinion views the

word fitnah only in a negative light, seeing it as a source of no good. However, fitnah has other shades of meaning that depend on the true nature of the one who is exposed to it, what Allaah knows of them, and what Allaah wills. Thus, Allaah leads astray whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases as we find if we consider verse 155 of chapter 7 (Ala'raaf), where Allaah says through the words of Moosa (Moses): "This is no more than a trial. By it Thou causest whom Thou wilt to stray, and Thou leadest whom Thou wilt into the right path."

"And We have fixed their number only as a trial for unbelievers – in order that the People of the Book may arrive at certainty, and the believers may increase in faith – and that no doubts may be left for the People of the Book and the believers, and that those in whose hearts is a disease and the unbelievers may say 'What doth Allaah intend by this mathal?'" (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almu'dathir, verse 31). Mustafa Khayry says in his work, "Almu'qta'taf Min 'Uyoon Attafaaseer" (Selections from the Leading Interpretations): "This number has become an instrument of temptation for unbelievers in two ways:

1. They say mockingly: Why are there not twenty? And,
2. They say: How can only 19 be sufficient for punishing most of the creatures of the world from the beginning of creation to the Day of Resurrection?

The theme of these two questions is the denial of the omnipotence of God."

It is obvious that such an argument relates to the unbeliever whose mistaken approach leads him to false conclusions. But the question still remains: How can such a number divide the unbelievers' camp in such a way that out of it can emerge those who believe to join the believers' group?

So, how can this number, or this trial, be a cause for certainty for

the People of the Book? Most interpreters say: "They will find what Allaah has told us about the number of hell-fire guardians compatible with what they already believe." But we do not know how this agreement in one fact can result in certainty for the People of the Book. We know that there are agreements in various matters and that there are divergences. What prevents us from explaining this agreement in the light of the above quotation? And if agreement in this little fact can lead to certainty for the People of the Book and to the increase of faith in those who believe, how can you eradicate doubt in order "that no doubts may be left for the People of the Book and the believers...." Is it logical or sensible to think that all this issues from the agreement of the fact that states that the gyuardians of hell-fire are nineteen?

The verse continues: "And that those in whose hearts is a disease and the unbelievers may say 'What doth Allaah intend by this mathal?'" (The Holy 'Qura~n [T.M.Q.], chapter of Almu'dathir, verse 31).

Some interpreters understand: "What doth Allaah intend by this mathal (saying)?" is a question to suggest that this number is as strange as the saying.

Others say that this mathal is their description rather than their number, i.e. what Allaah means by describing the guardians as 19. So how can this small number be able to punish so many of the Jinn and humanity who are sent to hell-fire?

Yet others hold that these verses talk about the future. This belief stems from the fact that the Makkan chapters were the earliest of the revelations and they discuss hypocrites, "those in whose hearts is a disease", and that hypocrisy appeared only in Madeenah. To a certain extent this is acceptable, but although interpreting the mathal as a description is correct, it does not resolve the matter, so we will try

here to express our opinion, which may contribute to the interpretation of the verse.

We say that if you ask a Christian or a Jew about evidence that proves the existence of the Creator, you find them producing evidence approximating to that of the Muslim approach, which contradicts the approach of an atheist. And if you ask a Christian or a Jew about prophecies and the supernatural, similarly, you will find them giving evidence from an approach somewhat similar to that of the Muslim. This is because between us there is no controversy about our belief in the Unseen or the notion of religion, but rather about whether faith fits in with reality or not, and it is a controversy that also relates to the details of Islamic law. Thus, Muslims and the People of the Book do not argue about the existence of the Creator but about His attributes, actions, laws and judgements. Atheists and hypocrites, on the other hand, deny the very idea of religion and make tangible material things the ultimate goal and the ultimate end.

In the Next issue:

Continuation of Noon Studies' Chapter 1 on Numerical Miracles in the Holy 'Qura-an

Book Information:

First Signs of Numerical Miracles In the Holy Qur'an.

Author: Bassam Jarrar.

Reviewed by: Tariq Hamideh and Basim Albassumi.

Publisher: Noon Center for 'Qura-anic Studies & Researches.

Website: www.islamnoon.com

**Bassam Jarrar is the Director of Noon Centre for 'Qura~nic Studies and Researches.*



The Assembly for the Protection of Hijab (Protect-Hijab) was launched in February 2004. Its vision is to campaign nationally and internationally for the protection of every Muslim woman's right to wear the 'hijaab in accordance with her beliefs and for the protection of every woman's right to dress as modestly and as comfortably as she pleases. In achieving this, it has the following aims:

1. To bring an end to the 'hijaab ban wherever it has already been imposed;
2. To prevent the spread of the 'hijaab ban developing any further;
3. To co-ordinate the various efforts being made to end or prevent the Hijab ban;
4. To provide a platform for Muslim women to express their views;
5. To expose and discourage any false stereotypes which present Muslim women as being oppressed;
6. To liberate Muslim women from any form of race, religious or sex discrimination whether it be state, institutional, organisational or individual discrimination.

Since its inception, Protect-Hijab has been busy organising numerous events, campaigning and networking to raise awareness and appreciation of the severe damage that the 'hijaab ban in France and elsewhere

ProHijab

'Hijaab = Our Freedom + Our Choice + Our Right

in Europe is causing as a violation of women's human rights.

Initial projects included campaign letters to M.P.s and M.E.P.s, and a launch event at the House of Commons on Monday 14th June 2004. The launch was initiated with a gathering of prominent M.P.s, M.E.P.s, human rights organisations



M.P. Fiona McTaggart officially launches Protect-Hijab

and other supporters. Fiona McTaggart M.P. officially helped launch the campaign.

August 2004 saw Protect-Hijab's Chair, Abeer Pharaon, present a paper at the Second Session of the Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom in Brussels.

Several other papers have been presented by Protect-Hijab representatives in forums across Europe. These have included the British Labour Party's Conference, the Eleventh Annual International Law

and Religion Symposium in the U.S.A., the Headscarf Conference in Turkey, the European Social Forum in London and the National Assembly Against Racism's Annual General Meeting.

In July 2004 a hugely successful



Abeer Pharaon presents the 'hijaab case at the Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights & Religious Freedom

pan-European conference themed 'Hijaab: A woman's right to choose' was hosted by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone at London's City Hall.

With high profile speakers from the Muslim, Christian and Sikh faiths, government officials, civil liberties and human rights groups; attendees were able to discuss the implications of the ban and to build coalitions to combat it, as well as to portray an honest picture of the reality of the 'hijaab to the wider public.

4th of September 2004 was marked as the International 'hijaab Solidar-



July 2004 conference hosted by Mayor Ken Livingstone



Hijab solidarity day marks a world wide demonstration



Protect-Hijab members meet with United Sikhs & M.E.P. Caroline Lucas to push the project forward

ity Day. Muslims and non-Muslims around the globe participated in demonstrations, to mark their empathy and support for French school girls who were returning to school with the ban in force.

Protect-Hijab extensively promoted the day with heavy television campaigning in prominent networks and news channels such as Aljazeera and Iqraa. Debates were held in Iranian talk-shows. Most recently, a successful press conference was held to launch a Written Declaration in Strasbourg, on 23rd February 2005. Hosted by M.E.Ps Caroline Lucas and Baroness Sarah Lud-

ford, the conference marked the launch of the campaign in support of the Written Declaration presented before the European Parliament on Monday 21st February 2004.

The campaign for this Written Declaration against the ban of religious symbols is Protect-Hijab's most pressing current project.

The pressure is now on to reach the 367 signature target for the Written Declaration to be adopted by the European Parliament. The Protect-Hijab website www.prohijab.net has been dedicated to the campaign, and contains contact details of all M.E.Ps, up to date list of signatures, model letters and suggestions on how to campaign. With the dedication of the five main signatories, Protect-Hijab and its supporters, from all nationalities, faiths (and no faiths) are working tirelessly to generate diverse and innovative ideas to raise awareness and to encourage citizens to get involved in lobbying their M.E.Ps, to ensure we reach our target figure (367) before the 21st May 2005.



Strasbourg Parliamentary Press Conference hosted by right - left: M.E.P. Caroline Lucas & Sarah Ludford.

How You Can Help!

Letters to M.E.Ps are available on the Protect-Hijab website, as are other resources and campaign ideas.

If you would like to help in any other capacity contact us on:
+44 (0) 208-908-9109
alternatively contact our media department on:
+44 (0) 778-625-7120
or +44 (0) 794-778-7222

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Assembly for the Protection of Hijab

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Personal CHANGE

By Reem Aldhaheeri*

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Who on earth does not change? I would say nobody! We are all influenced by many factors that make us (willingly or unwillingly) change. In fact, it is not only us who change, the whole universe around us does. It is the nature of life. Through centuries and eras, creatures living on earth have managed to change their methods of living to adapt to their environments. Some changed their shapes to be able to live and survive.

Our personalities are also shaped according to the different circumstances we go through. Physiologists say that the way we are raised in our families, our surrounding environment and even our genes, all shape our personalities. This does not mean that once our personalities are shaped we can not change. Each one of us has the ability to change if he/she had enough faith and motivation. In this section you will learn how to change and improve yourself by following tips and advice that I hope will make your life better.

What is Personal Change?

In the dictionary, the word change means the following:

1. To make different, to transform or alter;
2. To give a different position, course, or direction;
3. To undergo substantive modification.

Personal change can be intellectual or emotional. It can come from

skills-based learning, or it can come more dramatically as a result of a personal crisis. As we grow and gain experience, we change our ways of thinking, our perceptions of life and our beliefs. Think about the person you were ten years ago, are you still that same person? Probably not. The experiences you went through during those ten years made you the person you are now, which means that you constantly change, even if you do not notice this change.

Why Do I Need to Change?

Each one of us has personal strengths and weaknesses. Think of things in yourself that you want to change or improve. I am sure that as you are reading, there is

at least one thing that popped up to your mind. Maybe it is your low self-esteem, your weak memory, or your unaccepted anger. No one is complete but Allaah. We all think of how we can improve ourselves and become better people. Everyone looks for good relationships, good health, good jobs, in general we all seek happiness. Therefore, if you have a problem that holds you from being happy or living the life you always wanted to live, then you should work on solving this problem. You need to think of personal change/development if you are frustrated or not comfortable with your life. Or if you feel fear, depression or anger which prevents you from enjoying your life.



© Photograph by Grmoshah, from Iqta.com



Is Personal Change Difficult?

You might now think to yourself, "This is how I am and I don't think that it is possible for me to change after all these years". Let me tell you that science has improved a great deal and there are now new techniques that make change easier for people than it was years ago.

You will need to know what those techniques are and how you can use them, but most importantly you will have to believe in them and in the fact that you are able to change. It might take you months or maybe years to change and improve yourself. Always remember that you will be able to reach your goals at the end if you do not surrender quickly! Motivation and inspiration are the most important keys to personal change.

There are many examples of people who were able to change their lives incredibly and you could be one of them. It is said that you are what you think. Your life is a story, and the author of this story is you. If you want a great life you have to write a great story!

Next Issue:

When is it time to change

What are the difficulties of change

How can we change

"Everybody wants to be somebody; nobody wants to grow."

Johann von Goethe

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The Simpsons:

Spreading a Message the Youth Need to Adopt

By Marwah El-Azhary

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The Simpsons, voted the greatest running cartoon show in recent awards, is renowned for the significant, symbolic messages it aims to depict to the viewers via a caricature medium. It is a show that can be enjoyed by two diverse viewers:



- An adolescent audience: youngsters who are able to relate to the youth in the cartoon with their everyday problems and joys.
- A mature audience: adults who can observe the show and relate to the political, religious and social issues the show portrays, often indirectly transmitted, exclusively for adults and mature adolescents to comprehend.

A particular episode in the Simpsons inspired this article to be written, which will be discussed as follows.

The basis of the episode's main subject matter presents the influences of the television, especially on the youngsters of the fictional town of Springfield, U.S.A. The majority of the youth in the Simpsons devotedly watch their favourite 'The Itchy and Scratchy' cartoon show, similar to

the real world's popular cartoon show, Tom and Jerry. The episode begins with Homer Simpson, the protagonist and head of the Simpson family, finding himself a victim subjected to a hammer attack to his head. To his shock he is only to discover that the criminal is his two year old daughter, Maggie. In response to this incident, the matriarchal blue-haired mother, Marge Simpson, is intrigued to discover what inspired her daughter to carry out this horrendous act.

While Lisa and Bart Simpson, the senior offspring of the Simpson family, are fervently enjoying 'The Itchy and Scratchy' show, Marge discovers that her daughter Maggie is influenced by the violence contained in the cartoon, as the cat and mouse race to slam each other on the head with a hammer.

As an ordinary American citizen with an instinctive duty to protect the family and neighbouring residents, it is common to complain about any issue in a democratic country that exercises the freedom of speech.

This instinctive duty leads Marge to compose a letter directed to the producers of the cartoon, voicing her profound concerns on the violence daily broadcasted to the public. The managing director rejected Marge's requests to include non-violent themes to the cartoon, stating that "we won't change a cartoon just because of one screwball; you would need a lot of people for us to take your irrational requests in consideration."

Determined not to lose this battle, Marge begins what she terms a "crusade" to change the nature

of television. From demonstrations in front of the television station to letters and petitions, neighbouring residents in Springfield join the common goal to bring an end to violent and inappropriate television shows. Through her campaign she attracts the attention of the press and is interviewed on a prime-time news program. There she pleads the viewers to raise their concerns and write to the cartoon producers. In fact, hundreds of people write in to complain about the violence on the show, which finally seems to have an effect on the producers. The managing director makes a telephone call to Marge and reluctantly asks her to share her ideas on an alternative themed episode; in turn she gives them a peaceful episode rather than the past violent ones. Marge permits her children to watch the cartoon which has changed into one that portrays images such as peace and love, which children can positively absorb in order to adopt these characteristics.

The children of Springfield are unimpressed by this innovative version of their cartoon, which leads them to head outdoors to their front gardens. They are pictured as walking from the darkness into the light, rubbing their television static eyes, stepping into the sunlight and playing in the fresh air with other youth, being productive and proactive in their society. These youth finally have a purpose in life as they break the chains of television and free themselves, resulting from the determination of one woman: Marge Simpson.

The youth have abandoned the television, replacing it with activi-

ties such as bird watching, fishing, sports, building various things, etc. Homer is surprised at his children's dramatic change of character and calls it, "the golden age", as they show characteristics such as politeness, courtesy and outgoingness in society. Indeed Homer touches a fine point when he tells Marge, "I always knew you would change the world."

This episode gives the impression that the Simpsons live in a perfect world; but if it was that perfect in reality, we would not have video clips that present half-naked women provocatively popping out on our screens, attempting to sell their music, with directors using every well known trick in the marketing strategy book.

Many are against such productions being broadcasted daily on exclusive music channels and standard channels on Arab satellites, illuminating the faces of societal members in cafes, restaurants and homes. Many television programs on the Arab Satellites, including Iqraa, have frequent discussions concerning this new societal disease, which namely infringes many of the teachings of Islaam, such as lowering ones' gaze, guarding ones' modestly, and performing an act with a productive and decent aim. However, those in the music and video clip industry are adamant that their productions are what the viewers want, a similar response to the managing director in the Simpsons portrayed earlier; in the name of business, they believe they are not defying any principles.

In reality, a fog has descended on our youth. This leaves them blinded and paralysed by these video clips and the illicit messages they illustrate. Indeed this produces a generation who have hindered their purpose in life; they become lazy, empty-headed and mind warped by such materials. The hypnotising light of the television tempts these youth to follow in the footsteps of these

singers in the way they act, dress and talk; a nation of zombie wannabes.

So what is the cure to this social disease? A few youth attempted to compose a petition in order to voice their concerns over these video clips. Nevertheless, those in video clips. Nevertheless, those in the video clip industry argue that these people have the choice to simply change the channel, giving a choice to the viewers' preferences. Alternatively those against these video clips say this disease should not be present in Arab societies, as it socially conditions the youth to involve themselves in sinful activities. It also produces sick minded individuals to commit sick minded crimes, which recent reports on Arab television have shown.

Surely this is comparable to Maggie Simpson hammering her father on the head, as she too was following in the footsteps of her cartoon friends. The youth of our society also copy these video clips, consciously or subconsciously, losing their identity with every glimpse they take.

Marge Simpson did not agree with the violence on the television, and she achieved her objective to immobilise it from the mainstream media. Although it is a cartoon, it reflects real life campaigns which have been successful, such as banning scenes with nudity and excessive violence from shows targeted at the general youth population. These social actors feel that they have a duty to voice their concerns until they are heard, so shouldn't we as people who are concerned about these video clips follow our instinctive duty? Shouldn't we voice our concerns in a proactive and productive manner like Marge Simpson, rather than complaining between ourselves about the horrors of such video clips that even our young children are subjected to? Indeed our society requires genuine role models who are modest, humble and successful in their everyday lives; not role mod-

els who spread the message to the youth to engage in immoral activities which defies beliefs of many Arabs regardless of their faith.

Marge Simpson achieved her dream to cleanse the television from violence, let us achieve our vision to cleanse our media from indecency and immorality; as citizens of the world it is our right to exercise this freedom of speech. Let us strive to end the vice plot to use the woman's body to sell such products and ideas. Like the youth in the Simpsons, it is time to step out of our homes, rub our television static, mind wrapped eyes, and step into the real world's illuminating brightness. The whole world awaits the arrival of our success; don't let the television press the power off button to your life. Begin the first step of success by pressing the power off button on the television's remote control and make a difference in this world.

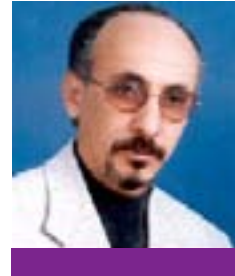
Tips to Boycott Indecent Clips:

1. Delete these channels; the more people who watch these video clips, the more advertising money these video clips gain.
2. Write to television stations that air such video clips.
3. Advise all your friends to delete these channels.
4. Don't buy or download songs that have indecent video clips.
5. Don't mention these clips and indirectly advertise for them.
6. Watch alternative channels that airs nasheed and decent video clips and encourage others to do so.
7. Write petitions directed to broadcasting companies who air these video clips and the directors and producers who make them.
8. Let everyone know about these tips, make copies and raise awareness about this boycott to cleanse our television from such immorality.

Balance and Imbalance

IN THE EQUATION ON “DIFFERENTIATION – CONTINUITY” BETWEEN CIVILISATIONS (Part 3 of 4)

“Following Scientific revolutions, and through an unexpected transfer, scientists are now facing a different science’. This is the conclusion reached by Thomas S. Khun in his theory on the structure of scientific revolution. In the case of technological revolutions however, the whole world is exposed to a gradual change, and the rate of change depends on the nature of the technologies of impact and their interaction with the elements of the social environment.”



By Hussein Maaloum*

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The Civilisational “Differences – Continuity” Equation

The problem raised, herein, can be easily solved if we use the two extremes of this relation in an equation, as follows: if “civilisational continuity”, on the other hand, is necessity imposed – in human terms – by development, renewal and the ability to keep abreast of progress in the different fields of knowledge, then “civilisational differences” are foremost an objective necessity imposed by the order of values as a basis for the specificities of identity, patriotism and nationalism.

While admitting that “continuity” between civilisations means that they influence and are influenced by each other in different parts of the world, the equation will be balanced as long as there is a sustainable “activation” of the elements on both sides. In this case, we would be performing what is called “civilisation interaction”, but if one side of the equation is activated at the expense of the other side, we shall be faced with an unstable, or unbalanced, operation, in other words, with a “civilisational disorder”. How can this “disorder” be identified? Or rather, how can we give evidence of a disorder in this equation?

In the first hand, as regards “civilisational differences” and the civilisational specificity that this signifies, the “disorder” will certainly become noticeable by activating this side of the equation at the expense of “continuity”.

This can be observed in the case of civilisational “narcissism” or “chauvinism”. And these two consecutive operations necessarily lead to what can be called “civilisational superiority”, so that “civilisational differences” are - rightly or wrongly - transformed into a civilisational “superiority”. The interesting observation, here, is that this “civilisational superiority” with the - narcissistic and chauvinistic - “centralisation” that it implies, may come true under two conditions: the first one, is by activating the elements of civilisational “differentiation” rather than those of civilisational “continuity” and the second, is that civilisational specificities must develop in an environment favourable to civilisational development and progress, more than other similar or contrasting specificities.

On the other hand, as regards “civilisational continuity”, the “disorder” clearly seems due to the activation of the elements pertaining to this side, at the expense of “differences”. This is the effect that takes the shape of civilisational “dependency” or of civilisational “withdrawal” (to retire into one’s shell), two contrasting phenomena which inexorably lead to what can be called a civilisational “disturbance”, so that civilisational differences are, willy-nilly, transformed into civilisational “monster”. What matters, here, is that this civilisational “monster” can be traced through examining withdrawal and

dependency in their social unfurling in time and space.

Civilisational withdrawal is based on the remembrance of the heritage and the attachment to past moments of glory and self – sufficiency, and on breaking with the civilisation of the “present” by replacing the disappointing present with a glorious past. It, then, bears the flag of civilisational “differences” and “crystallises tradition” into defensive moulds, concepts and mechanisms that are resistant to discovery and renewal. This means that civilisational “withdrawal” offers a cultural representation of the historic “self” as a central pivot, by leaping over the geographic dimension, or the dimension of space.

As to civilisational “dependency”, which on a longing for geographic space and on hanging on to strong positions of the “present time” as moments of self-sufficiency in the present, it breaks with the civilisation of “the past”, whatever this past may be, and promotes cultural “penetration” while allowing such penetration to materialise by filling the stag and become a whole system of penetration pertaining to the proselytising civilisation that is dedicated to it. This means that civilisational “dependency” provides a civilisational representation of the geographic “other” and revolves around it, by leaping over the dimension of history, or the dimension of time.

We are left with what we have called

civilisational “disorder”. This can be quite clearly observed in the broad area, which lies between civilisational “dependency” and “withdrawal”. This area is full of cases of civilisational “rockers”, which go from “beggary” (when a society borrows whole readymade theoretical, and material, systems in the creation of which it has not participated in the least), to “adjustment”, or “accommodation”, (in which case the “society” seeks to reconcile entirely different systems with each other) etc.

On this basis, we can trace the “disorder”, or rather demonstrate a lack of balance in the civilisational “differences – continuity” equation. So, by being conscious that the three cases of “dependency”, “withdrawal” and “disorder” are the result of the activation of the three elements related to civilisational “continuity”, at the expense of the civilisational “differences”, it becomes clear to us that this civilisational “continuity” is nothing, but the adoption of a foreign culture with the aim of imposing its values within.

If we seek an appropriate appellation for this process, the only possible one is civilisational “invasion”. An “invasion” is, in fact, “attempt by one society to impose its values on another”.

That kind of “invasion” was carried out by the Greeks and by the Romans, for example, to impose their “civilisational values” by force on the countries subjected to invasion, to which they imposed their rulers, their religions, and their economic system. This is, also, what took place from the 15th century in the colonies, where Europe sought to impose its civilisation, although it only succeeded in provoking “disorders” in the “civilisations” of these colonies.

That was no mere civilisational “continuity” or free exchange of “values”, or even an equal “interaction” between two societies standing on a par in matters of sovereignty, self-determination, and freedom of action. It is, at any rate, a find instance of civilisational “invasion” since the new “Western” culture began to exercise its hegemony over

the cultural system of the colonised societies as it sought impose its own values on these societies.

Hence, “civilisational invasion” is a reality, not an “illusion”, and what happened in the past might be less ominous than what is taking place in the world today.

In fact, the essence of the problem is that the world is living, at present, a reality, that we must highlight in this context, in the sense that “the Western civilisation” is the strongest civilisation, especially at the scientific, technical, military, and economic levels, and it is the one that can activate the elements pertaining to “cultural” continuity, much more than other civilisations, whether they be similar or different.

Furthermore, this “acculturation from abroad”, or rather this “cultural invasion”, takes place through organised and totalitarian tentatives to surround and besiege, or to swallow and finally to hegemonies completely in a “factual and effective” manner, a “dialogue of cultures”, the necessity of “modernisation” and “keeping pace with the century” in what is dubbed “the new world order”.

Let us take, for example, this last expression, “the new world order”. Regardless of many problems, questions and stands, and concerning this “new order”, and seeing that the most powerful country in the world did not submit a project, for this “new world order”, since the whole world is to cooperate in solving this problem, but considers that this is an entity that was really born, and the people – as watchers – must come to terms with it.

To enforce this “negative, passive habituation”, the “proselytisers”, rather than “explainers” of the “new world order”, relied on four main propagandist points: the definitive victory of the capitalist ideology and the end of the historic phase to it, the hegemony of one axis over the whole world, the resulting denial of the possibility of resistance, the hegemony of technology over the history of progress and the resulting “technological” – rather than human or social – necessities which arose and finally the idea of globalisation that marks the end of

nation, with the resultant refutation of pluralism and participation.

These four propagandist premises have the common aim of turning action into “fixed” trends with a legendary “universal” dimension, which means that we should find out the psychological effect induced by the call for this negative and apathetic adjustment, while mentally preparing for a total subjection and “hegemony” and while admitting that this is an inevitable development which we, the poor, backward, persecuted world, the “south”, cannot induce.

Our only reaction is to comment on this “paradox”, that characterises the contemporary world, reflected in the contradictions of the current economic order with, on the one hand, a “globalisation” based on mutual reliance, and on the other hand, the tendency of all the societies in the world to “withdraw” into narrow frameworks, such as sub-cultures and ethnic groups, a civilisation made up of minorities and trends.

The question of this paradox, its aspects, its causes and variations, is nothing, but one aspect of the problem suffered by national cultures all over the world. It is that of “civilisational invasion” by the Western civilisation, which relies on the “power” of science and technology, that is, on political and economic hegemony, to impose its own “cultural” hegemony. This is what countries in the “south” are exposed to in general.

READ IN THE NEXT ISSUES:

Civilisation and Technology and the Struggle of Informatics

**Hussein Maaloum is an Egyptian researcher and writer. He is the editor-in-chief of the “African Strategic Report”, which is published biennially by the Arab Development Institute. Maaloum has published several books and researches in the fields of political thought, political economy and international relations.*

The Common Cold: WIN THE BATTLE AGAINST YOUR POURING GUEST

Med-Aware By
Radwa Samir

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The common cold is a pouring guest on our health. All of us suffer from the common cold several times each year, especially in winter and during the period between seasons. Because of the common cold we may have lost many days of work as it affects our activity, makes us lazy and tired.

It is time now to win your battle against the common cold. Let us know more about this pouring guest.

Common Cold I.D:

The common cold is a viral infection and there are more than 200 virus cause symptoms of the common cold such as Parainfluenza, Rhinovirus and Corona virus.

Some scientists believe that the common cold virus lives –as a normal body flora- in our noses, as the best incubation temperature for the common cold virus is 90 Fahrenheit, which is the temperature of the nose and the presence of mucous membrane –in the nose- also helps the virus to live.

The scientists who believe that the common cold virus is found as normal flora in the nose support their theory by the evidence that some times the surrounding community is completely free from the common cold virus and by doing accidental change in temperature some people start to show common cold symptoms.

Common Cold and Flu:

There are great similarities between the common cold and flu in symptoms as:

- Mucous buildup in the nose.
- Difficulty in breath through the nose.
- Sneezing.
- Sore throat.
- Cough.
- Headache.

So how we can differentiate between the common cold and the flu?

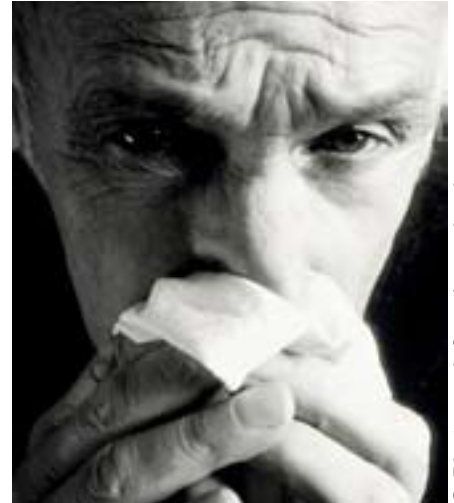
The flu is always combined with a fever (40C)

and it is more dangerous than the common cold. Also the duration of common cold virus is shorter than flu virus.

Transmission of the Common Cold: Transmission of the common cold is mostly by two ways:

1. Inhalation drops of mucous full of cold germs from the air.
2. If your hands touch something like the telephone which may carry cold germs, then you touch your nose or your eye, the germ will enter your body and you will get the cold.

Management of the Common



© Photograph from imagebank.com

Cold:

To be honest with you, there is no cure for the common cold virus as we depend on our immune system to kill any viral infection which enters our bodies. So having a strong immune system equals a low possibility to have a viral infection.

• **Enhancing your immune system:** To enhance your immune system we advise to take a teaspoonful of pure honey in the early morning before breakfast. Honey is a good immune system elevator.

Also, many herbalists advise to take Echinacea (cone flower) as they consider it as the most powerful immune stimulant. Nigella sativa which is well known in the Arab world as (habet albaraka) is also good as an immune enhancer.

• **Treatment of the common cold symptoms:**

1. Rest in bed, especially in first day you feel that you have cold.



Echinacea



2. Drink plenty of fluids and warm drinks.
3. Gargle with warm salted tea –as tannic acid found in tea precipitate protein of germs in the throat and salt solution has a disinfectant action.

Home Remedies

Green Pharmacy and Home Remedies for the Cold:

- Eat fruits contain vitamin c as orange, lemon and strawberry.
- Boil eucalyptus leaves and inhale its steam. It helps in clean airways.
- Use sage gargle: make strong tea with handful of sage leaves add a little honey allow to cool then use it as a gargle.

Anti-catarrhal tea: make a standard tea with thyme, ground ivy, and hyssop. Drink at the onset of cool or when you have catarrhal.

Tonic for purifying the blood:

Green Pharmacy

- 2 oz (50gm) elder shoots
- 2 oz (50gm) primrose flower and leaves
- 1 oz (25gm) dandelion root
- 1 oz (25gm) young nettle leaves

Use freshly dried ingredients for this tonic. Put 1-2 teaspoonfuls of the mixture in a cup and pour on boiling water. Allow to stand for a few minutes. Drink one cup of the hot liquid a day sweetened with sugar. This tonic helps to eliminate toxic substance such as a uric acid from body.

English tea

- 4 oz (100gm) raspberry leaves
- 1 oz (25gm) balm leaves

Use freshly dried ingredients for this tea. Mix leaves together and pour boiling water onto them. Add sugar if you like but no milk. This tea is a pleasant alternative to ordinary tea and aids digestion.

Footbath for colds and influenza:

- 225 gm freshly ground mustard seed
- Boiling water

Put the ground mustard seed into a muslin bag and boil in 1 liter of water. Add the liquid to a hot footbath to relieve the symptoms of colds and flu.

Aloe (Aloe Vera)

Aloe is well known from a very long time ago. Ancient Egyptians knew aloe vera and till now it has great a rule in folk medicine.

Aloe is originally found in east and South Africa and was introduced to India. The used part is leaves which contain viscose juice. That juice is evaporated to dryness and can be used at that form internally with caution of course.

Use:

In the dry form it is used as purgative, anthelmintic. The liquid form is very good in relive irritation of skin.

Anise (Pimpinella Anisum)

Anise is found in Egypt, Greece and west Asia. It is also cultivated in central Europe. The part used is fruit of anise which upon distillation produces a volatile oil contain anethol.

Use:

Carminative and pectoral. It is very useful against cough and chest infection, the steam of anise is useful to clear the chest. Anise tea in very good for infants to relive flatulence. If you have problems in your voice, we advise you to drink anise tea. In some countries the lower part of the anise plant is used in cooking as it helps in digestion.



Aloe vera



Anise

Aroma THERAPY

(Part 2)

Welcome again to the world of aromatherapy. Hope you enjoy using this type of therapy as it easy to do at home. In the last issue we presented to you some plants that could be used in aromatherapy, and we will continue in this issue with some plants used also in aromatherapy which can be easy found around you in the garden or even in your kitchen.

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus Officinalis*)

The name rosemary means rose of sea, a reference to the original habitat of the plant on the dry, sandy countries of the Mediterranean Sea. Even today the best pungent oil comes from Spain or North Africa;



Rosemary

the dryer and hotter the climate, the better the aroma. Rosemary is a very famous herb in Lebanon and widely use in Lebanese food. Rosemary oil smells quite similar to eucalyptus.

Safety issue:

Rosemary is not advised for people with high pressure, as it is a stimulating oil. It should be avoided by people who suffer from epilepsy.

Main use:

Eases muscular ache and pains, backache, poor circulation, stimulates scalp and eases dandruff,

clears breath in cold and flu. It also stimulates the mind and wakes up the brain.

Suggested blends:

1. For aches and pains and poor circulation try to use four drops of rosemary, two drops of lemongrass and four drops of nutmeg in 20 ml of carrier oil.
2. For a hair and scalp tonic try to add five drops of rosemary and five drops of tea tree to 20 ml of unfragranced shampoo. Use this shampoo on your hair then wash your hair as normal.
3. To ease breath in colds and flu, add three drops of rosemary and three drops of tea tree to a bowl of nearly boiling water and inhale the vapour for 20 minutes.
4. To stimulate the brain vaporise three drops of rosemary and three drops of peppermint.

Nutmeg (*Myristica Fagras*)

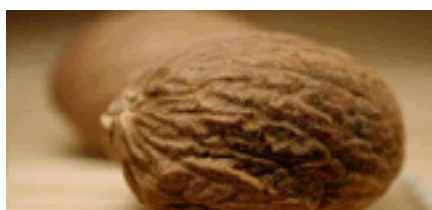
The nutmeg tree grows in Indonesia and Sri Lanka. The fruits are covered with a layer called mace which is removed before processing. The high aromatic nutmegs are steam distilled to give a fragrant essential oil.

In Western herbal tradition nutmeg was prized for their digestive tonic and muscle warming properties.

Safety issue: A strong oil, so should be used in moderation.

Fragrance profile: Warm sharp spicy and sweet .

Main use: Eases muscle ache and pain, soothes and calms indigestion, relieves stomach cramps. Also helps to re-energise the body after illness, uplifting the spirit and restoring the circulation.



Suggested blends:

1. For aches and pains add two drops of nutmeg, four drops of cardamom and four drops of grapefruit to 20 ml of carrier oil and massage into affected area.
2. To ease digestion add two drops of nutmeg, four drops of peppermint and four drops of ginger to 20 ml of carrier oil and make an abdominal massage.
3. As a restore tonic add one drop of nutmeg, two drops of black pepper and two drops of orange to a warm bath and relax in the water.

Cardamom (*Elettaria Cardamomum*)

Cardamom produces aromatic flowers that turns into little seed pods filled with tiny black seeds. The pods are traditionally eaten in India after eating spicy food. Cardamom is commonly used in Eastern medicine as a lung tonic and immunity-boosting plant remedy.



Safety issue:

No issue

Main use:

Soothing and opening chest, helps in soothing stomach cramps and indigestion. Uplifts the mind and gives positive feelings.

Suggest blends:

1. To improve breath add three drops of cardamom and two drops of cedarwood to a bowl of nearly boiling water and inhale the vapour. Repeat twice daily.
2. To help ease digestion massage the abdomen twice daily with three drops of cardamom, three drops of coriander and four drops of orange in 20 ml of carrier oil.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE PALESTINIAN WOMAN on Two Fronts

In commemoration of International Women's Day, it is a time to highlight the Palestinian woman plight and struggle. It is a time to heed the Palestinian woman struggle in terms of her political, social, and economic achievements. The efforts of the Palestinian woman have been extraordinary in Palestine over the past 57 years.

Israel's repressive policies in military-occupied West Bank and Gaza have had a devastating impact on the lives of Palestinian women and children, a new U.N. study says.

"The capacity of Palestinian women to cope with this new situation has been declining, and the number of women dependent on emergency assistance, particularly food assistance, has risen," the report said.

"Women have not only been subject to increasing violence, but their responsibilities within households have expanded due to the death, imprisonment or unemployment of male members of households."

The study quotes the U.N. Children's Fund (U.N.I.C.E.F.) saying that 38 percent of Palestinian mothers have reported increased difficulties in gaining access to health services, and 65 percent reported the quality of their food had deteriorated. However, Palestinian women struggle mightily to take care of their families in the face of this adversity, while supporting and participating in the resistance movement. Their bravery and determination are stunning. Palestinian women have always been extremely active politically, and this involvement predates the creation of the state of Israel. For example, Ghassan

Kanafani, the most important Palestinian writer of the 20th century, stated in his book "Palestinian Resistance literature in Occupied Palestine", that women used intimidation tactics to the British Soldiers by chanting national songs. He described how that singing and chanting was counted as a popular means of resistance widely spread in the Palestinian society at the time of the 1936 Palestinian Revolution.

In the 1930s and 40s, early attempts were made to organise women into associations and societies, mostly initiated by bourgeois class educated women, who's main focus was on the right of education and work for women, with rare discussions about political participation. We recall May Ziyadah, a renowned writer, who was one of the first women artists who held meetings in her house (in the thirties) for artists and poets.

In the 1950s and 60s, the Palestinian woman had the opportunity for education and higher education during the Naasir of Egypt era. Naasir opened the education system for all Arabs, for free, in the name of Pan Arabism. Palestinian women became writers, poets, and researchers. Early political participation was emerging.

The first intifadhah (1987) came to create the political consciousness of Palestinian women and their ability to organise and mobilise. The sustainability of the first intifadhah was facilitated by the resourcefulness of Palestinian women. Women were active in many aspects of civil society and in the popular committees. For example, Palestinian women took a leading role in the 1987 boycott campaign against Israel products in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. This boycott initiative was incredibly hard to mobilise due to the lack of indig-



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enous Palestinian industry. In order to convince Palestinian families to boycott Israeli products, it was necessary to provide them with alternative sources of income and products. So Palestinian women began establishing their own industries such as cheese making, jam making, bread baking and community gardens, and in doing so were not only able to encourage the boycott initiative but also develop the infrastructure-base for a Palestinian economy.

Also during the first intifadhah, Palestinian women led a campaign to reopen schools (which had been closed by the Israeli army). During this campaign, Palestinian mothers established underground community schools that their children could attend. This campaign, along with many others, was in addition to their street activism directly confronting the occupational forces. When the Israeli soldiers would arrest a child, Palestinian women would come out collectively and demand that the child be released, all claiming that the child

was their own. With dozens of women demanding the return of their 'own child', the soldiers often felt pressured to release the child they had in custody.

During Ala'q'sa intifadhah (2000), Israeli forces stepped up attacks and aggression against women and children, as well. As a result, many women suffered various Israeli violations. One hundred and sixty nine (169) women and 65 children were killed by Israeli forces. In addition, 24 women died on checkpoints and crossing borders due to the Israeli forces brutalities. One hundred and twenty six (126) women were detained in Israeli prisons. The Palestinian women suffered also the most from house demolitions which put a heavy burden on housewives whose families became homeless.

Many women detainees were held in solitary confinement, had to give birth in their prison cells, tortured, verbally, emotionally and sexually abused and threatened. Many were held jointly with Israeli criminal prisoners, as well. Palestinian women prisoners have been subjected to extreme brutal and violent conditions, deprived of basic human needs and prisoner's rights, in violation of Geneva Conventions. For example, when a Palestinian woman is detained or harassed by an Israeli soldier at a checkpoint, not only is she victimised by the occupation soldiers, she also risks getting into trouble with her family for arriving home late.

Palestinian women in the Occupied Territories have much greater opportunities than women in other parts of the Arab world to participate in the labour force, vote and hold political office and play visible, active roles in civil society. But the realities and effects of dispossession and occupation counterbalance many of these social gains. The conflict has taken a heavy toll and caused serious negative impacts on the physical and psychological health, education, economic security and access to basic services and rights of Palestinian women.

In spite of these circumstances, Palestinian women exemplify the strength and capability that women possess to survive and function. They continue to support each other, their families and their neighbours by actively working

for peace within their communities—politically, economically and socially. Palestinian women continue to resist the occupation. They are also resisting the construction of the Apartheid Wall.

The Apartheid Wall is already having a devastating impact on the lives of Palestinian women living in villages and cities along its path. Families are being cut off from access to large portions of their agricultural land and greenhouses. More than 100,000 olive and citrus trees have been uprooted, and many wells and irrigation systems have been destroyed or isolated behind the Wall.

Women especially feel the impact of being cut off from their families. Because most women move to their husband's home when they marry, many women live in different cities or villages than their families. The completion of the Wall has brought dozens of new military checkpoints all over the West Bank. 16 villages, with over 11,550 inhabitants, are now completely isolated between the Apartheid Wall and the Green Line. No one is allowed to enter these villages except the residents. Friends and family members from outside these villages are not allowed to visit their neighbours on the other side of the Wall.

Amid the devastation wrought by nearly four years of the intifadhah, a subtle but significant transformation is under way in the lives of many Palestinian women. Normally confined to domestic chores and child care, they're now playing central roles in the survival of families in which husbands have found themselves without work.

The intifadhah has emboldened women to assert themselves in new realms, from finding part-time work and taking control of family finances to political involvement. The women raised money through non-government organisations (N.G.O's) to refurbish their husbands' boats and are employing Palestinians who do have access to the sea to captain the vessels.

Despite the oppression and occupation, the Palestinian woman sustained the momentum of her struggle for

rights and equality. The year 2005 was marked by women participation in presidential and municipal elections as voters and candidates. Women's participation was highly observed in West Bank and Gaza. For example, in last January election, 68 of 414 candidates for local councils were women. Her struggle led to the ratification of the elections' law. Article 28 was ratified to ensure that women shall have, at least, 2 seats in every local council.

Local Palestinian women's groups must continue fighting for political rights, and demand funding that actually has the ability to change the oppressive realities under which Palestinian women live the realities of patriarchy and occupation combined. The dream of gender equality and a Palestinian state will never be realised if the priorities of women struggle are forgotten, that is, if they divorce politics from the personal.

In brief, the Palestinian woman is still craving to achieve her rights and equality. She strives to shoulder her responsibility in developing and shaping the Palestinian society. In spite of trouble, she stands tall and fights on two fronts by all means to achieve her goals.

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THOUSANDS OF TITLES for the Palestinians

By Hasan Hamarsha

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© Photograph Hasan Hamarsha

The Sixth Palestine International Book Fair - jointly organised by the Palestinian Ministry of Culture and U.N.E.S.C.O. - was held at Albeerah Exhibition Hall from March 7th – 17th, 2005.

The book fair was last held in 1999 and Israel has not allowed the Palestinians to import books since the outbreak of Ala'q'sa intifadhah at the end of 2000. In this year's book fair, U.N.E.S.C.O. had facilitated the transportation of books and publications.

The book fair was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of the Palestinian National Authority Ahmad 'Qurai, together with the chairman of the U.N.E.S.C.O. Executive board, Hons-Heinrich Wrede, and the Assistant Director-General of U.N.E.S.C.O. for Culture, Muneer Bouchenaki.

By gathering some 211 publishers from over ten Arab countries, and more than 25,000 titles, most published after 2000, and over 500,000 books at the Occupied Palestinian Territory from several Arab countries, the event was an occasion for cultural dialogue, spread of ideas and exchange of editorial contents, both of educational and creative nature.

In this occasion, a number of side activities were being organised (literary evenings, round tables, projections, book presentations, workshop, etc.), among which the round table on "The role of the book fair in promoting reading and professional relations", chaired by Yahya Yahluf, the Palestinian Minister of Culture, Milagros del Corral, Deputy Assistant Director-General of U.N.E.S.C.O. for Culture and Peter

Weidhaas, former Director of the Frankfurt Book Fair.

The event, focusing on book as a part of the living cultural industries, stresses on the necessity to work for the dialogue process in the Middle East and for the revitalisation of the Palestinian culture.

The objective of such initiative is to bring together and stimulate business and cultural exchange among professional and cultural stakeholders, both from the Arab and non-Arab world. The publishers and other book professionals participating in the book Fair are destined to play an important social role through their field of competence, in promoting culture, openness and a dialogue among people and civilisations.

By
Khaled Al-Abdulghafour

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Translated by Ahmad Konash

■ Idea

Wait until its perfect!

I see photographing fireworks just like painting art; the more time you give, the more it becomes beautiful. And that's the only secret behind successful firework pictures that we "wow" on!



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Shooting FIREWORKS



■ Tools

- . A Camera (SLR - Semi SLR).
- . A Tripod.
- . A Cable Release.
- . A height speed film (400) in the case you are using a Conventional camera.



Cable Release



Tripod

■ Steps

. Place the camera on the tripod, and choose the preferred position that would best suit the desired composition (Portrait, Landscape). If you don't have a tripod, you can use a wall, a tree, or even an empty cola can!

. Set the camera on Manual control "M", and make sure that the flash isn't on.

. Set your Aperture to "F11", and the Shutter to "B" (in case you don't have this option in your camera, try several different shutter speeds, 2, 1", 2", and 4").



. Select Manual Focus. (MF), and set it to infinity "∞".

. If you have a Cable Release, plug it to the camera. It will enable you to maintain stability 100% to the camera, if you don't have it, just make sure to be gentle when pressing the button, so you don't move the camera.

. Identify the direction and the latitude of the fireworks, and be ready.

. Once you see that the firework has been sent to the sky, press the button, and do not release (in case using "B" mode) until the last spark is off. Waiting for the last spark to fade out is what creates the scenery.

. Take more than one picture with different settings, this will increase your experience for the next time you shoot fireworks.



If you have any nice designs that you would like to share with us, please contact:

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By
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“A Photoshop Collage”

This collage has elements from the state of Al-Madeenah, Saudi Arabia, which includes the Holy Mosque, Khaybar, Madaai-n Saalih and other elements.

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**“Engulfed by Serenity
from Childhood”**



**“Dear Father,
It Kills You”**



Shaikha 2005



Photo by
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Shaikha is 20 years old. She is a student of media and communication at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi. She likes photography and designing because they help her to express her feelings through translating it into photographs.

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I.MAG

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