

The MUSLIM WOMAN

VOLUME XXXIV No. 1

March 2001



A monthly journal published by The Muslim Women's Association (Regd. Charity)

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FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 1999
TO NOVEMBER 2001

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❦ MEMBERSHIP ❦

The Muslim Women's Association is open to all Muslim Women. Membership Fees (which includes the subscription to *The Muslim Woman*) are: Annual UK £15 Overseas £20 Life membership UK £100 Overseas £120. Meetings of the Muslim Women's Association take place on the second Sunday of each month

❦ ALL CORRESPONDENCE ❦

should be sent to our address, THE MUSLIM WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION, P.O.Box 100, London W5 2XU. Articles, letters and other matter appearing in this publication do not necessarily express the official views of the Executive Committee of The Muslim Women's Association.

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, 8th April, at 4pm
Islamic Cultural Centre,
146 Park Road,
London NW8 7RG.

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers

Assalamu Alaykum

Attitudes to Work

Islam urges every able person to work hard and earn a living in a decent way. The dignity of work stands high in the eye of Islam, and we are urged to stand as dignified, dependable and responsible workers. Thus, we can provide for our families well.

There are those who are fortunate and well capable of working and providing for their families. There are those who are less fortunate and may be in need to various extent. Islam urges us to work hard for our living so that we will not be in need of others and lose our dignity and self-respect.

But for those who are in a position not to be able to work, God provides for them in ordering us to extend a helping hand. God says in the Qur'an:

In their wealth the Needy and the Destitute have their due. (51:10)

God's messenger Prophet Muhammad says:

"It is better for any of you to take your rope and bring a bundle of wood and sell it, in which case God will guard your honour; than to beg of people, whether they give or not."

"He who is able and fit and does not work for himself or for others, God is not gracious to him."

"God is gracious to him who earns his living by his own labour and not by begging."

THE MUSLIM WOMEN, published quarterly by The Muslim Women's Association, UK.

All articles and news for publication should be sent to the editor.

Typeset by Yahya El-Droubie, Croydon, TEL: 020 8654 8801

“He who has enough food for a day and night – is prohibited to beg.”

A good Muslim is a decent person . To earn a living, one has to work for it. The kind of work depends on one's ability, and on the opportunity available.

So, we are urged to depend on ourselves, to work honourably and earn our living as best as we can. The one who begs of people will lose his self-respect and will be open for ridicule, and his dignity will suffer.



Dear Members,

We, the Muslim Women's Association are trying to raise **ADVERTISING** for the newsletter. You can help by: calling attention to the adverts you see in 'The Muslim Woman' and asking your business acquaintances and family if they would wish to advertise. Please contact the editor for rates.

THE POLITICAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN CLASSICAL ISLAM

PART 2

According to one writer (M. Smith, 1928, p.203, attar, 1966), “the women saints...represent the greatest height to which Muslim womanhood has attained”. The first martyr in Islam was a freedwoman, Sumayyah bint Khubbat who endured persecution rather than yielding her new faith. The shrines of some women “saints” (Sayyidah Zainab in Cairo, Lalla Imma Tifellud in Algeria, etc.) are still visited by the faithful. Mainstream Muslim theologians, opposed to the *sufis*, denounce these women saints and the worship given to them. The *Shi'ite* accept female *mujtahids*) and especially Persia has a colourful history of them. A recent Iranian *mujtahid*, Bana Amin Isfahani (d.1977) was author of a *tafsir*. According to the Sunni view a woman cannot be a *mujtahid*. The most important contribution of women to Islamic faith have been their transmitting and teaching the traditions (*ahadith*). In Muhammad's lifetime the well-to-do women were taught to write and many of them (like Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet); 'Amra bint 'Abd al-Rahman; Asma' bint 'Umays, etc.) wrote down *ahadith* from the Prophet. 'A'ishah, the Prophet's wife ranks with the best traditionists (as Abu Hurayra, Ibn 'Umar, and Ibn al-'Abbas) credited with 1210 traditions directly reported from Muhammad (Bukhari and Muslim accepted 174 out of these, with an additional 54 only in Bukhari and 68 only in Muslim). She was consulted on the Prophet's *Sunnah* and gave *fatwas* not only on the sacred law but on practical family problems and womanly questions of dressing, hygiene and cosmetics as

well. The life of the famous female traditionists can be found in collections termed (very "politically incorrect") *Rijal al-Hadith* ("Men of the Traditions"). Some of them were also famous teachers and scholars, their lectures attracted a large number of people. Rabi'ah al Adawiyah, preached in Basra; in the 5th century of Islam Fakh al-Nisa' Shaykh Shuhda (The "Pride of Women") lectured at the Grand Mosque of Baghdad; Al-Shafi'i, founder of a school of *fiqh*, took lessons from Sitt Nafisah in Cairo; 'Umm al-Darda (7th century AH) lectured in the Mosque of 'Umar in Jerusalem in front of Caliph Sulayman; Ibn Khallikan, the biographer, was a pupil of 'Umm al-Mu'ayyad; the traveller Ibn Battutah studied with several *shaykhahs* in Syria, etc. These ladies always lectured from behind a curtain – in a famous story the daughter of Imam Malik, who was a learned lady, called her father's attention to the students' mistakes by knocking at the door of her room from the inside.

In the *Usul al-Fiqh* the *ahadith* related by women are held as much reliable as those related by men. According to the famous jurist Shafi'i, even traditions based on a *single woman's evidence* could be acceptable – he based his opinion on cases when the rightly guided Caliphs changed their decisions upon hearing a relevant *hadith* from a woman. In questions of principle, however, the always harsh Caliph 'Umar b. al-Khattab said that

"he could not give up the book of God and the practice of his Prophet because of the report of a woman ... for no one could tell whether she remembered or had forgotten.

The argument (i.e., the doubt in a single woman's trustworthiness) has repeatedly been applied by later jurists to prove that a woman cannot be a judge.

When in 1976 the recommendations of the General Conference

of Women Organisations called for women to hold judgeships and high governmental positions, only a few Muslim countries (like Turkey and Tunisia) allowed women to be judges. There are a few historical instances of woman *qadis*, the first example probably being the mother of Muqtadar Billah (908-932 AH) who presided at the High Court of Appeal and decided criminal cases. From among the classical authorities only Imam al-Tabari allows unconditionally women's judgeship. In the *Hanafi* school a woman can be judge in those matters where her testimony is of full value (i.e. except in cases of divorce, marriage contract, *hudud*, and blood money) – but this is considered "close to *haram*". Abu Bahar b. Tayyhab opposed the *Hanafi* view on the ground that it is not proper for a woman to appear in public and have contact with men, as it would be inevitable for a judge. The Pakistani Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Usmani distinguishes between what is allowed and what ought to be done, and claims that Imam *Hanifah* only said that judgeship of a woman is *not incorrect* but he nowhere said that she *should* be so appointed.

One of the most serious objections against woman judges is that they cannot write decrees affecting a large group of people or a whole nation because of the *hadith*:

"Never will succeed such a nation that makes a woman their ruler."

What is this strange *hadith*, which "has gained such wide acceptance that it came in time to be used as the basis of all major discrimination against the Muslim woman"?

...to be continued in the next issue

Extract from "Women's Leadership through the History of Islam",

by Dr Gabor Korvin, in *Hamdard Islamicus*, July-September 1999 issue.

POETRY

THE PROPHET

Meditation in God is my Capital
Reason and Sound Logic is the root of my Religion
Love is the Foundation of my Existence
Enthusiasm is the Vehicle of my Life
Contemplation of God is my Companion
Faith is the Source of my Power
Sorrow is my Friend
Knowledge is my Weapon
Patience is my Garb and Virtue
Submission to the Divine Will, is my Pride
Truth is my Salvation
Worship is my Habit
And in Prayer lies the coolness of my Eye and the
Peace of Mind

THE ISLAMIC GARDEN

Misbah Arif

In traditional Islamic houses the garden was at the very centre of the house in courtyard style. This was because it was the very heart of every household and was far more practical as it allowed women privacy as they rested. It provided a sanctuary for the whole household away from the pressures of everyday living. In good weather meals could be taken there, as could be held gatherings of social, business and religious kind. A garden is a place of peace and tranquillity, symbolising paradise. For in the Qur'an, Allah has used the image of a garden as a metaphor for paradise to help explain its beauty and calmness. For a garden is a living and breathing entity, with an abundance of natural beauty and calm. It contains the many creatures of Allah and grows from the Sun He created. The water cycle that nourishes the plants is indeed run by the sun.

The shrubs used varied due to the climate, personal preference and the overall style of the garden. However, the basic shape is full of symbolism. It is traditionally very geometrically shaped and consists of four sections broken up by streams of water with a water feature, such as a fountain, as the focal point in the centre

The fountain/water feature provides a focal point containing much of the rich symbolism of the water in the 'rivers'. It also splits the light up creating beautiful patterns; as Allah is often symbolised as a bright light it reminds us of Allah's majestic beauty.

Diagram 1 shows a basic outlay. The three shapes commonly used in an Islamic garden all have a meaning.

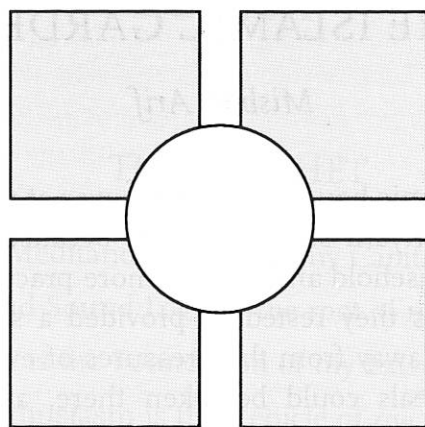


Diagram 1

A square (A) with four clearly separate sides (facing north, west, east and south) represents an Earthly object or being, with a clear beginning and end. While a circle (B), which is never ending, like the eternal Allah, represents a heavenly object or being"



As a sort of "in-between", the hexagon octagon (C) represents transition between the two. In a way all three shapes represent the states humans go through, first our life on earth (square/diamond), then barzaq, the waiting place after death (the hexagon/octagon), and finally paradise or hell (the circle). These geometric shapes are used to create vivid patterns and beautiful pictures dispensing with forbidden statues or disliked realistic

pictures. The geometric design is also a symbol of Allah, with its perfection and break from 'reality' or 'nature' - what we see as our Earth. In 'nature' you do not find such perfectly formed shapes, but Allah is perfect.

The garden is divided into four sections by water flowing through the sections and in their centre is a fountain or water feature. The four sections are like a prayer mat, reminding us of our duty to Allah. The four water channels represent the rivers of honey, water, wine and milk mentioned in the Qur'an (though they are all filled with water in the garden).

Paradise is described, on numerous occasions in the Qur'an, as a garden under which rivers flow. The water also symbolises purity and cleanliness, states it is important for a Muslim to remain in - in body, mind and heart. It clearly links with wudu and prayer. Prayer has been described in the hadith of the Prophet as jumping into a river of water five times a day. This is a reference not only to wudu and how it cleanses our body, but to how prayer refreshes and invigorates us. It cleanses our heart and soul of evil thoughts and prepares us for the tasks ahead. Water, especially running water, is also soothing and relaxing - as is prayer. Water also reflects light, which is a symbol of Allah. The water also gently reminds us of our five prayers we must not miss.

The garden thus provides us with a peaceful sanctuary from our busy lives and is rich in symbolism. It constantly reminds us of Allah and the reward that lies ahead if we strive to follow Him and His messenger. It is a pity that even in 'Muslim' countries they are fewer and fewer houses with a courtyard garden allowing women privacy and creating a strong central point to the house. However,

even in Britain, we can attempt to create some of the beauty and symbolism of an Islamic garden, perhaps with four sections, or a water feature or some geometric tiling - allowing us to experience some of the tranquillity and the refreshing feel of an Islamic garden. If you are fortunate enough to be able to travel to countries that once formed part of the Islamic Ummah (such as Spain, Turkey, etc.) you will find some traditional courtyard houses. Some of which you may be able to visit and then you can marvel at a traditional Islamic garden and bathe in its radiance.



SYMBOLISM

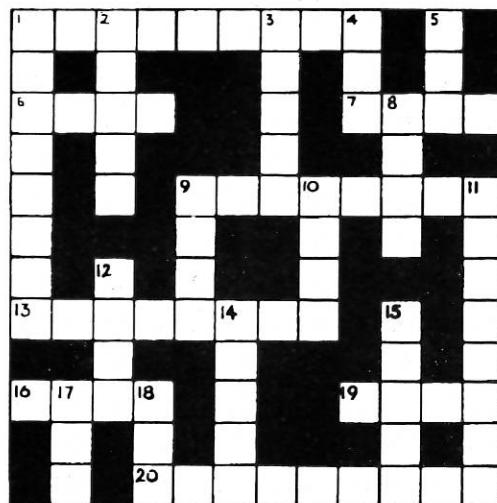
ISLAM - STAR AND CRESCENT

The star and crescent is the premier symbol of Islam and signifies concentration, openness and victory, as well as sovereignty and divinity. According to tradition, in 339 BC a brilliant waxing moon saved Byzantium (now Istanbul) from attack by Philip of Macedon. To mark their gratitude, the citizens adopted the crescent of Diana as the city's emblem. When the city became the Christian Constantinople in 330 BC, its crescent assumed the significance of an attribute of the Virgin Mary. In 1299, before conquering what is now Turkey, Sultan Osman had a vision of a crescent moon stretching over the world; it thus became a symbol of the Ottoman dynasty, and, when Constantinople fell to Muhammad II in 1453, the crescent came to represent both Islam and the Turkish empire. The star was added under Sultan Selim III in 1793 (its five points being established in 1844). The star and crescent is now a universal Islamic symbol and is displayed on the national flags of Turkey, Algeria, Malaysia, Mauritania, Pakistan, Tunisia, North Cyprus and the League of Arab States. It is also the emblem of the Islamic counterpart of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent Society.

From: Signs & Symbols, An Illustrated Guide to Their Meaning and Origins,
by Clare Gibson; published by Grange Books, 1996.



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

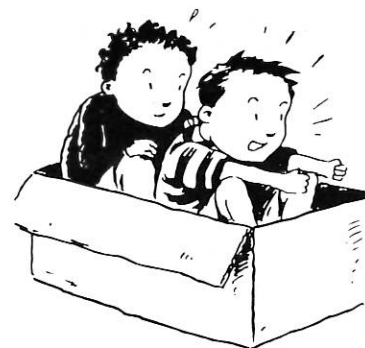
1. A wind of force
6. Flat floating structure
7. Lighting appliance
9. Citizen of the USA
13. Disperse
16. Small insect
19. Game played on horseback
20. Elite force

DOWN

1. Slayed the Hydra
2. One of the King's Own
3. Fruit
4. Slippery Fish
5. To blow bubbles with
8. Curved structure
9. Boy's Name
10. Grows in paddyfields
11. Very many
12. Exact
14. You sweep with it
15. Wide
17. Meadow
18. Part of a circle

ACROSS 1. Hurricane; 6. Raft; 7. Lamp; 9. American; 13. Scramble; 16. Flea; 19. Polo; 20. Commandos
DOWN 1. Hercules; 2. Rifle; 3. Apple; 4. Eel; 5. Gum; 8 Arch; 9. Adam; 10. Rice; 11. Numerous; 12. True; 14. Broom; 15. Broad; 17. Lea; 18. Arc

WHY WE DRIVE ON THE LEFT



IN THE UNITED KINGDOM and some of her former colonies; Australia, New Zealand, Kenya, Zambia, South Africa, Zimbabwe and India, the rule of the road remains to drive on the left. This also applies in Japan and the Mediterranean island of Malta, where they like to tell you that they drive in the shade.

However, the rule of the road in mainland Europe the United States is 'to drive on the right'.

The origin of the rule of the road dates back to how people travelled in feudal societies. As most people are right handed it made sense to carry any protective weapon in this hand. When passing a stranger on the road, it would be safer to walk on the left, so ensuring that your weapon was between yourself and a possible opponent. Jousting knights would hold their lances in their right hand, therefore passing on each others' right.

Revolutionary France was to overturn this historic practice, as part of its social rethink. Their military general and self proclaimed Emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte was left handed, therefore his armies had to march on the right so he could keep his sword arm between him and the advancing enemy. From this time any part of the world that was colonised by the French would travel on the right, the rest would remain travelling on the left.

Although America was originally a British colony, the French colonised the southern states such as Louisiana, as well as the east coast of Canada. The Dutch colonised New York (New

AN APPEAL

MADINA HOUSE

THE MUSLIM HOME FOR CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE IN LONDON

Madina House is a Muslim home for children in need of care, established in 1981 under the auspices of the Muslim Women's Association (a registered charity which has been functioning since 1962)

From its inception the organisers worked closely with the Department of Health and Social Security and all other Social Services Agencies in order to comply with the current guidelines on the running of Children's Homes. Subsequently Madina House was registered by the Department of S.S.I. under the Child Care Act.

Aim—The main aim of Madina House is to provide an alternative home for children who for whatever reason, are temporarily unable to live with their parent/s. At Madina House we provide a stable, caring background, founded on Islamic principles and practices. Since its founding we have cared for over 400 children.

The present home does no longer comply with today's regulations and we have been asked to find more suitable accommodation. Thus, we are in desperate need of finance to buy an appropriate building. Failing to do so, the future of Madina House is in question.

Please help us by giving generously to continue to care for our children in need.

Donations, whether by Cheques or Banker's Orders would be greatly appreciated.

AN APPEAL

MADINA HOUSE

"You shall not attain righteousness unless you spend on others of that which you love, and whatever you spend, verily God has knowledge of it."

The Qur'an 3:92

From.....

Name.....

Address

Telephone

I would like to make a donation/Zakat and enclose a cheque for the amount of £.....payable to **Madina House Trust**.

To be sent either to:

Madina House Trust, PO Box 29891 London SW20 0SS

or direct to:

The National Westminster Bank, Royal Garden Branch, Kensington High Street, London W8 5EQ

Account Number 77946405; Sort Number 50-30-101 a

Amsterdam), the Spanish and Portuguese colonised South and Central America and much of the south west parts of North America. Us British were in the minority when it came to shaping the traffic system. The new independent American republic adopted the drive on the right system.

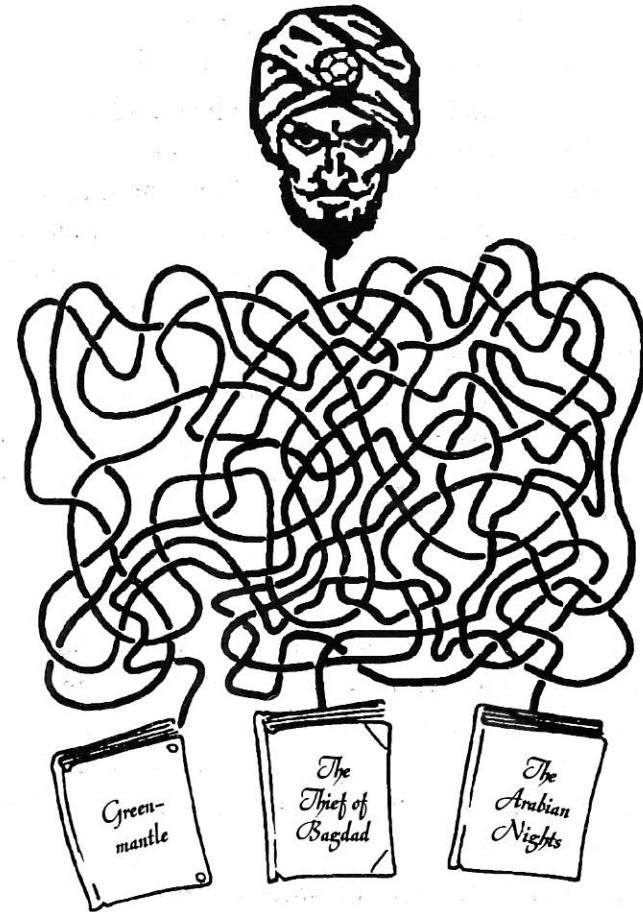
American motor cars were designed to be driven on the right by locating the drivers' controls on the vehicle's left side. With the mass production of reliable and economical cars from the United States, initial exports used the same design, so out of necessity other countries changed their rule of the road. The last European country to convert to driving on the right was Sweden in 1967. Napoleon has a lot to answer for!



JUNIORS' CORNER

STORY TALES

Everyone has a favourite storybook. Follow the lines to work out what the Grand Vizier's favourite book is.



MAURITIUS, THE PARADISE ISLAND

*Swadeka Ahsun**

Mauritius, a tiny island of 11865 sq km – 47km at its widest and 58km at its longest is located SE of Southern Africa, its neighbouring islands being Seychelles, famous for its tourist industry and Réunion, still under French control.

Mauritius is a young nation, geographically small, yet ethnically diverse. The Muslims form 17 percent of the population, the Hindus make up just over half of 1.1 million inhabitants, Sino-Mauritians form 3 percent. The remaining groups are: the Africans, the Aborigines, Whites of European origin, and those of mixed-race. In Mauritius the atmosphere of tolerance and mutual harmony is constantly nurtured.

Most of the Mauritian Muslims trace their roots back to India. There are mosques all over the island; the call for prayers can be heard five times a day. The biggest mosque, the Jummah Mosque, with its ornately carved architecture and beautiful minaret stands in the centre of the Capital, Port Louis.

Muslims take full part in mainstream Mauritian life. There have been successful Muslims in all spheres. The Muhajiroon are active, and the Ahmadis are missionary activists. There are also extremist groups such as the Hizb-u-Tahrir, active in regularly distributing posters, organising demonstrations and making controversial speeches, and the Hizbullah. But the majority are moderate Sunni Muslims.

Women are generally not allowed to enter mosques nor graveyards, only one or two have arrangements for women. The

Urdu and Creole languages are prevalent; the official language of the country is English. At the age of five I learned the Qur'an under the guidance of the Pakistani Sheikh in our local mosque which is located close to a Protestant Church, the St. James. The Ulama do play a great part, unlike in Britain, they are addressing social and intellectual issues, and are busy in Inter-faith networking. The Jamiat-ul-Ulama (Association of Islamic Scholars) address different issues. The Friday Sermon is widely read in Urdu as well as in Creole (pidgin-French – a language made up of two or more other languages, in this case French is one of the languages).

Compared to Muslims in Britain, the Muslims in Mauritius are culturally more homogeneous, and form a larger proportion of the population, in spite of belonging to different racial groups. People of European, African, Chinese and Indian descent created a truly multi-racial society where the various cultures and traditions flourish side by side. It is often cited as a model of peaceful and harmonious co-existence, but conflicts do arise. There are often vested interests out to exploit religious sentiments with the result that the most frequent and virulent forms of hatred, disruption and violence in many societies occur in the name of religion. The State provides an annual per capita grant – known as the religious subsidy to the major religions practised, namely Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. These subsidies enable the religious communities to meet such expenses as payment of wages to priests and the maintenance of religious buildings. Arabic and Urdu are taught at secondary and university levels. The two main Muslim newspapers are the Star and the Impact News. The mainstream press covers most matters of Muslim interest as well.

His Excellency, the President of Mauritius, Mr. Cassam Uteem a Muslim, is well known among the Muslim Community in Britain. He was invited last year together with Her Royal Highness Princess Sarwah El-Hassan of Jordan, to address the Conference Minorities, Britain and Islam, which was organised by the British Council, at the Royal Commonwealth Society in London. Delegates and speakers of thirty-six countries as well as academics, journalists and diplomats working in Britain took part. The conference explored the issue of mutualities from a variety of perspectives – religious, economic, political, social and cultural. The area of mutuality explored at the conference included both relationships between Britain and the Islamic world and the present role and future development of Britain's Muslim population.

The President, in his speech spoke on secularism and offered Mauritius as a model of secularism and toleration in which Islam enjoyed an honourable place. He explained that the Republican Constitution of Mauritius had been largely inspired by the Indian model established after independence. As in India, there was no state religion, but the Constitutions of both countries recognised the importance of religion in the life of the individual. He endorsed the definition of secularism by Jawarhalal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. 'It means freedom of religion and conscience, including freedom for those who may have no religion. It means free play for all religious subjects – only to their not interfering with each other or with the basic conception of the State.

In her speech on Education and Gender Issues, the Princess stated that it was tragic that many women in the subcontinent and

elsewhere were still denied access to the education that was their birthright. Islam, she emphasised, 'unequivocally supports the well-being and education of women'. Citing several hadiths in favour of female education, she argued that the women of the Prophet's family were unusually well informed and influential, amongst them artists, poets, warriors, businesswomen and patrons of culture. Nothing in Islam as originally proclaimed prevented them from entering politics or fully participating in public life. The reduction in the status of women, where it occurred, was due to the overlaying of the Sharia which granted women full equality, with customary law. Bearing in mind the diversity of Islamic cultures, the Princess argued that valid generalisations were impossible.

The Princess concluded by addressing the situation facing Muslim women living in Europe and the cultural dilemmas they faced in 'grappling with the post-colonial legacy of a questioned heritage' while absorbing the 'messages of western-style feminism'. The stark choices between cultural isolation and assimilation, between the practice of Islam and the pursuit of modernity that seemed to present themselves to Muslim women in the diaspora were falsely constructed. Those who had benefited from truly Islamic education would realise there was no intrinsic incompatibility between Islam and modernity.

The question and answer session following her address has been an issue raised over and over again. Latterly in a Human-Rights Conference organised by the Middle Eastern Countries on Gender Issues, the same subject has been debated over and over again, raising the status of women and giving them full protection in any society they belong.

Following His Excellency, Mr. Cassam Uteem's lecture at the Royal Commonwealth Society, The President visited Oxford during March 2000, as the Centre's distinguished Commonwealth Visiting Fellow. The President delivered a public lecture at the Auditorium, Magdalen College, on the subject – "Multiculturalism: Challenges and Opportunities, the Mauritian experience".

The focus of the President's lecture was the manner in which the rich cultural history of Mauritius now manifests itself in multi-cultural society, the principal elements of which are seen as the basis for the achievement of a unified pluralist tolerant and democratic national society.

*Swadeka Ahsun is originally from Mauritius. Swadeka obtained a BA in Arabic. She is preparing for an art exhibition at present. Her work ranges from calligraphy to mixed-media, reflecting the Arab World and the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Islam.

Exhibition at the Brunei Gallery
(Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, WC1H 0XG)

April 11th - June 22nd

Princess Salme Behind the Veil
Writer and Teacher

The life and writings of Sayyida Salm, Princess Salme bint

Said ibn Sultan al-Bu Saidi of Oman and Zanzibar.

KITCHEN TALK

DID YOU KNOW...

...that botanically rhubarb is a vegetable and an effective laxative? Originally rhubarb came from China several hundred years ago but gained its popularity only in the 19th century. However, it has declined drastically since the Second World War. But, rhubarb appears to be on an upsurge again. Watch out for exciting new savoury recipes!

MUTTABAG* — "Saudi Pizza"

Muttabag is a popular dish from the western region of Saudi Arabia. It is prepared by rolling out a dough ball into a large thin circle, sprinkling a mixture of minced beef and leek or spring onions in the centre of the dough, pouring two well-whisked eggs over, then folding the edges of the circle into the centre to form a square and frying it in heated butter over a large flat sauté pan until golden brown on both sides.

Many Arab dishes use "Gulf Spices" which one has to prepare oneself, especially here where one cannot get the ready mixture.

GULF SPICES†

Clean, grind and mix the following spices:
1 cup whole black peppercorns

1 cup cumin
 1 cup coriander
 1/4 cup cinnamon sticks
 1/4 cup cloves
 1/3 cup dried or powdered ginger
 1/4 cup cardamom
 1/4 cup cardamom roots
 1/3 dried red pepper
 1/4 cup turmeric powder or roots
 4 whole nutmegs

SAMAK MAGLI (Fried fish)

Fish is fried in a shallow frying pan after being cleaned and marinated in garlic crushed to a pulp with a pinch of salt, mixed Gulf spices, ground black pepper, turmeric and lemon juice.

*Finjan Gahwa (A Cup of Coffee) and a Bit of Everything – Abdalla Elmadani, Alwafa Printing Press, Dammam, 1993 (compliments of The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia, London, 1997).

†See A Taste Of The Arabian Gulf – Afnan Rashid Alzayani, published by the Ministry of Information, Bahrain, 1988.



HEALTH PAGE

DISABILITY, EXERCISE – AND MARTIAL ARTS!

The term 'martial arts' usually conjures up images of unarmed combat involving people in white robes flying through the air with the greatest of ease. But did you know that martial arts could help you with your arthritis and boost your independence and self-confidence?

Some forms of martial art could help protect against joint damage by strengthening and supporting muscles. such exercise can also help maintain a full range of movement without which joints can become unstable and painful.

Contrary to popular belief, martial arts are not essentially about combat or competition; but they can be excelled for fitness, health and self-defence. they vary considerably in emphasis, and once an appropriate style is chosen, it can be as vigorous or gentle as you wish, and a lot of fun too. You decide which level you wish to train to – but only after you have determined the limitations of your particular disability

Warming-up – A martial arts class usually consists of warming up and stretching, fixed movements, then group instruction for your particular grade. There may also be 'free-sparring', whereby techniques learnt in class are practised in partnership with a series of other class members.

Advice – But you should always start by consulting your GP and/or physiotherapist. they may not know much about martial arts; but this introduction to the subject should give you a basis for finding out more about the type of martial art that could suit you.

Once you have a clearer idea of a style and club suitable for you, discuss this with your doctor to ensure that they are involved in the decision and steer you in the right direction. If you decide to go ahead, make sure the instructor of your chosen club is equally aware and understanding of your disabilities. My belief is that martial art training can prove an excellent exercise regime and be a source of fun and achievement for people with arthritis. It could also potentially ease your disability. As long as you are honest with yourself, under GP and your instructor, you too could be a martial artist!

DIFFERENT TYPES OF MARTIAL ARTS:

Tai chi, Aikido, Karate/taekwondo, Kung fu, Kempo, Thai/kickboxing, Judo/ju jitsu.

Extracts from: Arthritis News, Winter 1995



ADVANCE NOTICE

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

JEWELLED ARTS OF INDIA IN THE AGE OF THE MUGHALS

Education programme

From 16 May to 2 September 2001 a superb exhibition of Indian jewellery from the al-Sabah collection, Kuwait, will be on view at the British Museum. The education programme includes the following events:

Evening Event

Khazana: Treasury of stories – Thursday 17th May 18.30-20.00

A magical tour through storytelling and Kathak dance bringing the mighty Mughals to life and combining poetry with human geometry and pure mathematics!

Storytelling: Vayu Naidu, Music and tabla: Sarvar Sabri, Lathak: Sonia Sabri.

Academic conference

Jewelled objects from Mughal India - Monday and Tuesday 4 and 5 June

In association with the Society of Jewellery Historians.

Details and the provisional programme will be available from mid-March from the education Department, The British Museum.

Tickets: £60 (£50 concessions)

Study Days

Shah Jahan & the Taj Mahal - Saturday 23 June

Speakers include: Hetty Elgood, Sheila Canby, Linda Leach, Mitchell Abdul Karim Crites.

Tickets: £25 (BMF £20, £15 concessions).

Mughal Costume - Tuesday 3 July

Join Anita chowdry to learn how to create your own Princely costumes based on clothes from 17th century India. You will need to provide your own fabrics. Max. 15 participants.

Tickets: £25 (BMF £20, £15 concessions).

Films

Indian Film Week 9-13 July

Daily film showing at 15.00. See July-August events programme for details. FREE.

Family Events

Listen to stories from the age of the Mughals,, make your own jewelled bowl, dress your doll as a Mughal prince or princess! During half term week (28.05.01-01.06.01) and in the summer holidays. See May-June and July-August events programme for details.

Booking Information

Please send cheques (payable 'British Museum') to British Museum Education Dept., indicating the full title and date of the event on the envelope. Booking queries or particular access requirements contact: 020 7323 8511/8854.

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