

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The **MUSLIM WOMAN**

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The next meeting of the MWA will take place at the Islamic Cultural Centre, 146 Park Rd., London NW8 on Sunday, 13th September 1992, at 4.30 pm sharp

Speaker: Mrs. Saeeda Sherif on TALAAK

MWA INVITES SISTERS TO THEIR MILAD-UN-NABI ON 27.9.92
(see pack page)

MWA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	Mrs Khanam Hassan
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MEETINGS OF THE MWA TAKE PLACE ON THE SECOND SUNDAY EACH MONTH

LANGUAGE & POETRY IN MOORISH SPAIN (Part 2)

by Titus Burckhardt

In order to give the reader who has no command of Arabic some indication of what constitutes the special character of this language, and why there is a specifically Arabic mode of thought, we must go further back and point out that a language is governed either by a phonetical or a visual logic, depending on its structure. In each language, both principles are present, but the one or the other always predominates. In a language determined by phonetical logic, each word is derived from a simple combination of sounds, expressing a basic event, or better, a basic action, not by means of any onomatopoeic imitation, but because the word itself is by its nature an event that takes place in time, so that independently of all conventions it corresponds to an action. The word is essentially action, and in accordance with this logic, language comprehends every thing that it names in terms of doing and being done. As for the visual logic which is also inherent in every language, it is based on the fact that every word uttered arouses a corresponding image to the mind, which in turn reacts upon the language, for one image gives rise to another. In this way expressions are formed, whose different elements correspond to various visual concepts; at this stage the word no longer develops from out of its own original phonetical content, but is more the servant of the imaginative combinations.

The inner unity of sound and event, or word and deed, is evident in the structure of Arabic. It runs like a scarlet thread through all its word formations, for every Arabic word derives from a root verb, consisting of three consonants, which normally expresses a basic action, such as "unite," "divide," "contain," "penetrate," and so on, while each of these "auditory formulae" include every physical, mental and spiritual application of the same idea. Each of these roots grew with almost algebraic regularity into a whole tree of words, in which the meaning of the underlying action is always echoed, no matter how distantly or closely.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, Arabic is a perfect language because it can not only be declined and conjugated, but because the "what" and the "how" can be derived from an action — in other words, nouns and adjectives can be derived from the verbs. However, this is possible only because in Arabic, the "doing" verbs are far more comprehensive than, say, in English. Much of what we tend to express by using an adjective in conjunction with the verb "to be," such as "to be beautiful,"

"to be inside," "to be outside" is expressed in a single verb in Arabic. Thus, the basic deed from which a whole tree of expressions grows need not necessarily be an action in the usual sense of the word; it could be a cosmic action, such as the shining of light, or a purely logical action, such as "to be small" or "to be big," and it is this very ability to refer any manner of existence back to basic action, that lends Arabic its extraordinary capacity for abstraction. It has developed virtually its entire theological, philosophical and scientific vocabulary from its own root words, regardless of its "Bedouin" origin. The fact that in Arabic it is always a basic action which forms the link between the particular and the general is crucial to the Arab mentality. Arab thought, quite apart from its content, is essentially active — in its incisive fashion, it may sometimes be lacking in the necessary distance for creative graduation and balance, but never in acuity and immediacy. At the outer extremes it can vary between headlong impetuosity and hairsplitting pedantry. The innate relationship between sound and content — the presence of the three-letter root in all words of the same stem — produce a certain attunement of the hearing, an inborn feeling for rhythm, which, too, is characteristic of the Arab.

There is a close connection between what we have been saying about the inner logic of the Arabic language and the fact that, like all Semites, the Arabs comprehend the divine origin of things essentially as a deed. The divine command, "Be!" is the originating deed from which all else stems, and the act of commanding presupposes power. Platonic metaphysics — to which we shall return later, as it plays an important role in the framework of Islamic culture — sees this divine origin as a radiation, like the emanation of light from a source, and it substitutes auditory symbolism with pictorial symbolism.

But in addition to the "active" element, there is also a "static" side to the Arabic language. Both are evident in the sentence formation, the former in the so-called verbal sentence, in which the verb comes first and everything else is qualified by it, and the latter in the so-called "nominal" sentence, in which noun and adjective are simply placed side by side, without any linking verb. Thus *Allāhu karīm* means "God (is) merciful" — the connecting "is" is unnecessary, for the mere naming of things is evidence that they "are." This makes it possible to express any thought with extreme brevity, as if by an equation. An example of this is the fundamental formula of Islam, the sentence: "(There is) no deity besides God" (*lā ilahā illa-Llāh*). This sentence appears in Latin on one of the first coins minted in Toledo by Mūsā ben Nuṣair, in the following form: *non deus nisi deus solus*. This all too

literal rendering has at least the advantage of capturing the comprehensive "synthetic" character of the formula. On closer inspection, here, we are no longer dealing with an equation, based on the formula "being is being," but a reduction, a conversion which can be appropriately expressed by the words "There is no (independent) being besides the one sole being."

Because of the way in which one word expressing an action can be used as a derivation for countless other terms for modes of existence, Arabic lends itself particularly well to describing the emotions and changes of will; it can describe the "subjective" in an "objective" way. This combined with its capacity for succinct statement, as well as its unlimited wealth of vocabulary supplied by the endless derivations from the root forms, not to mention the multiplicity of sounds and the rhythmic alternation of long and short syllables, makes it a poet's language that can translate an image, a situation, a landscape into an inner occurrence, which is melody and rhythm at the same time.

Islamic-Arab education is above all linguistic, if for no other reason than that the Koran in its Arabic wording is taken as the word of God. School instruction begins with the children learning to recite the Koran by heart. In Spain, says Ibn Khaldūn, efforts were made to transmit a general knowledge of the language to the children at an early age, to develop their linguistic style of writing as well as their handwriting, and to teach them the fundamentals of the art of poetry.

There is scarcely a scientific work to be found from Moorish Spain that is not embellished with verses. Among the Moors, virtually every statesman of repute was able to compose verse. A man would frequently be appointed minister because he had chosen the right moment to express the right words in a poem. And part of being a true knight entailed composing a poem before drawing his sword and rushing into the fray.

From 'MOORISH CULTURE IN SPAIN', English Translation
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PRESS RELEASE

Since the start of the armed conflict in the Yugoslav republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the situation has drastically worsened. An estimated 200,000 Bosnians have fled their homes. Many hundreds have been killed or wounded. The Serbian army has taken control of many Muslim-dominated towns and villages including Koragad, Jablena and Billena over the previous weeks.

It was reported that more than 60 (sixty) mosques in Sarajevo have been destroyed. The Khosrove Bige History Islamic Library has also been burned.

"Serbian militants yesterday launched their fiercest attack yet on Bosnia's capital, pounding Muslim areas with heavy machine-gun and mortar fire which set buildings ablaze and left corpses on the streets. "This is the most difficult and dramatic day in Sarajevo's long history," said Sarajevo Radio"

The Independent news paper

Islamic Relief has sent US \$15,000 and DM 14 000 in aid and preparations are also being made to send another 15 tonne container of food worth over £20,000. A new appeal has been launched targetting to raise £500,000 to help the people in desperate need of food, medicine and shelter (tents and blankets).

Help is urgently needed as time is fast running out. No donation is too small.

PLEASE HELP US HELP THEM.



Zainal Abidin
COORDINATOR

SMILING IS CHARITY

Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) is reported to have said:
"There is no person who does not have the obligation of (doing) charity every day that the sun rises."
Whereupon he was asked:
"O Messenger of God, from where would we get something to give in charity (so often)?" He replied:
"Indeed the gates to goodness are many: glorifying God, praising Him, magnifying Him, saying 'There is no god but Allah', enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong, removing (any source of harm from the road, listening to the aggrieved, guiding the blind, showing the seeker his need, striving as far as your two legs could carry you and with deep concern to give succour to him who asks, carrying with the strength of your arms (the burdens of) the weak. All these are (acts of) charity which are on obligation on you".

And he added: "And your smiling in the face of your brother in charity, your removing of stones and thorns from people's paths is charity, and your guiding a man gone astray in the world is charity for you."

Any person who comes across this beautiful saying must pause for some moments to consider some of its meanings and implications. The saying (Arabic Hadith) has two main concerns: (1) awakening the springs of goodness in the human heart and (2) strengthening the society with the bond of love, affection and brotherhood.

Charity, as it is traditionally understood, consists of money or various objects given by the rich to help the poor or by the strong to help the weak. Charity according to this understanding, is extremely narrow and its effects on the life of society is limited. The saying of the Prophet, however, takes charity out of this narrow, physical meaning and on to a spiritual plane that opens up a vast and limitless world by emphasising that.

Every good is charity and on every person is the obligation of charity. This is a unique concept of charity. Isn't it "giving"? Indeed. Then let every

act of giving be charity - even a smile in the face of your brother, charity has a physical and spiritual dimension which are thus fused into one so that a person can say in giving charity: 'Take this penny', or 'take this helping hand' or 'take this feeling!'

It is all one practical method processding from the depths of the soul but we do not always realise the essence of it. The noble Prophet makes us realise the single spiritual essence which lies behind every act of goodness. But the Prophet (Pbuh) does not want us merely to know. Knowledge is not an end in itself. He wants to make us return to goodness, goodness which is the very word of God, and the word of God is supreme. He wants that each of us should move and stir ourselves from within into goodness so that giving would become a habit of life, and that this habit would pass from person to person and prove infectious throughout society. The wisdom of the prophet lies in expanding the scope of goodness so that it becomes within the scope of each individual. If charity or goodness were to remain restricted to tangible things or to money, many persons would be prevented from doing humanitarian deeds and much wealth would remain locked up within individuals with no one benefiting and no one discovering its rich and abundant meaning. The noble Prophet himself acted in a kind and concerned manner in all his human relationships just as a kind and concerned father would behave towards his son. He showed the way to people - step by step - and identified himself with their problems tirelessly. He showed in so doing the best way to train people and to win their hearts. That is why he made actions which seem to be quite a significant part of charity. That is why he was able to say:

"Smiling in the face of your brother is charity and pouring out from your bucket into your brother's bucket is charity."

There are some people who never smile and they never open their facial features when they meet others. There are people who are even aringy with a drop of water, a drop of God-given water! They may be malicious or within them there is a disease which has blocked the springs of goodness in their souls. The problem is not merely a smile or a drop of water. It concerns the act of giving. Giving is movement from within which opens up the locked doors of the self, stirring the spiritual hand and making it open freely and widely. Giving is a positive movement and the soul that is conditioned by positive impulses is a living, stirring, active soul which stands in marked contrast to the negative, cramped and feeble soul.

Charity in its tangible, narrow sense divides people into the receivers on the one hand and the givers on the other. This division inspires among the receivers the feelings of weakness and even of error, and among those who give feelings of pride and conceit. Such a division, for society, is extremely evil.

But the Islamic concept of charity which includes all good actions however small they may be, allows every person whether rich or poor, to become givers and receivers on an equal basis. This points to another basic principle of Islamic thought and behaviour - that the standard on which life is judged is not the materialistic or the economic standard alone but one based on faith, feeling and sensitivity which form the core of human relations.

Mankind has always been absorbed with and infatuated by amassing wealth and possessions, and often considers such materialism to be the very mainstay of life. But a society based on the economic and materialistic considerations alone is often dry and hard and callous and is eaten up by hatred and envy. Of course, Islam does not neglect the material world and the needs of life. Indeed it gives it due attention. But it does not merely stop there, because life in actuality does not stop there. Instead it carries it

on to wider and varied horizons, to greater and higher levels. For Islam is the religion of life complete. And from it comes the tiles of faith, affection and love to bind hearts and the society together. God says in the Quran:
"And (as for the believers) God has brought their hearts together. And if you had spent all that is in the earth you could not have brought their hearts together." (8:63).

The Prophet, (Pbuh) has said: "No one of you believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

This is the essence of charity. So begin by meeting your brother with a smile. This would open up locked souls, penetrate to the depths of the heart and exert a magnetic bond on society. Read the Hadith again and see how it reaches into the depths of the soul, the essence of existence and creates hearts that are tender, pure, radiant and beautiful.

Adapted from Muhammad Qutb's "QUBUSAL MINAR-R-RASUL"
by Abdul Wahid Hamid

LORD CHESHIRE, VC, DIES

Lord Cheshire, VC, died 31.7.92 at the age of 74. When he came to open one of the very early fund-raising bazaars of the MWA - at the invitation of Begum Jan - we were delighted by his easy friendliness and by his simplicity.

His skills as a bomber pilot won a DSO, a DFC and 2 bars to the DSO; the VC being added in 1944. He was the official British Observer at the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagazaki in 1945.

In contrast he set up the Cheshire Foundation Homes in 50 countries and in 1989 the Memorial Fund for Disaster Relief.

One cannot condone what was done either in Germany or Japan nor the raising of a statue to 'bomber' Harris which Group Captain L. Cheshire so strongly supported.

However, all his actions during the many years dedicated to others were informed by a determination to use his abilities to the full, to lead and guide, to serve others.

KITCHEN TALK

by A. Muslim

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

Ingredients:

8 Oz (225g) self-raising flour
1 tsp baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
3 oz (75g) butter
3 oz (75g) caster sugar
1 egg, beaten
1-2 tbs milk
8 oz (225g) strawberries
 $\frac{1}{2}$ pt (250g) double cream
1 oz (25g) icing sugar, sifted

Method:

1. Sift together self-raising flour, baking powder and salt. Rub in butter until mixture resembles fine bread-crumbs.
2. Stir in sugar. Add beaten egg a little at a time until mixture begins to form a soft but not sticky dough, adding milk as necessary.
3. Knead dough on a lightly-floured surface for about 2 min until smooth. Roll out to $\frac{1}{2}$ in (1.2cm) thick. Using a $2\frac{1}{2}$ in (6.5cm) fluted cutter, cut out 9 rounds.
4. Put on greased baking sheets, well spaced apart, and cook at 375°F , 190°C , gas 5 for 12-15 min or until golden and firm. Cool shortcakes on a wire rack.
5. Wash and hull strawberries. Reserve 4, finely chop remainder. Whip cream until soft peaks form. Reserve 3tbsp of whipped cream for decoration. Stir $\frac{1}{2}$ oz (15g) icing sugar and chopped strawberries into remaining cream.
6. Split each strawberry shortcake in half through the middle, sandwich halves together with strawberry cream. Dust each shortcake with remaining icing sugar.
7. Thinly slice reserved strawberries. Put a teaspoon of reserved double cream on the top of each shortcake, decorated with slices of strawberry and fresh mint springs.

MWA BUSINESS

by Zubeda Osman

JULY MWA MEETING

The Meeting was held at the Islamic Cultural Centre on Sunday 12 July, at 4.30 pm.

The Meeting was attended by nearly 50 members and visitors.

Apologies: Mrs. Nisa Ali, Mrs. Mavis Badawi and Mrs. Karima Mustafa.

The Meeting was opened with the recitation of Sura Fatiha by Dr. Zubeda. Mrs. Turki read Sura Al-Baqara, verses 284-286.

The Annual Bazaar to be held on Sunday, July 26, was discussed.

SURA AL-TAHREEM & AL-TALAAQ

We had the honour of having a distinguished scholar Dr. Sohaib Hassan, to speak to us on this occasion. He chose extracts from Sura Al-Tahreem and Al-Talaq which were relevant for us women.

The first was an incident which took place in the family of the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). One of his wives gave him some honey to eat which he liked very much. Two of his other wives became envious and conspired together to stop him from eating that again by saying that when he ate the honey he smelt of 'Mughafer' which is a flower which smells of garlic. He believed them and vowed never to eat honey again. Allah (Subhanahu-Wataala) sent him the message that he should not stop eating what is good and pure and Halaal. So that Muslims should not impose any restrictions upon themselves which Allah has not imposed upon them.

The second incidence was when the Prophet gave one of his wives an important secret to keep. She could not keep it and shared it with one of the other wives. This brought trouble for the Prophet. When Allah

informed the Prophet of what she had done he confronted her. She wanted to know who had told him, and he said, He who knows and hears all things. No plotting and planning escapes his knowledge. He is also capable of replacing scheming wives with those who are devout and those who fear Allah.

The Prophet was a kind, gentle, trusting and unworldly person who did not like to hurt anybody least of all his wives whom he loved and respected. Hence Allah guided him in dealing with their harmful behaviour by this warning.

Dr. Hassan went on to give the examples of four other women whose stories are mentioned in the Quran. Two of these ladies were the most pious ever created, and the other two the most vicious ones. The first two were Asia, the wife of Pharaoh and Maryam (Razialla ho Tala Anhum) and the last two the wives of Nuh (Alaihis Salaam) and Lut (Alaihis Salaam).

Asia, the wife of Pharaoh, accepted Islam and was brutally tortured and killed for it. Maryam was chosen to be the mother of Esah (Jesus), the Prophet of Allah, because she was devout and guarded her chastity.

The wife of Nuh on the other hand was not loyal to him and went round telling everyone that he was mad (When he was building the ark). The wife of Lut who reported the coming of his visitors (angels who came as handsome young men) to the wicked of the city. Allah had sent them to warn Lut of the impending destruction of these evil people.

These stories give examples of the power of good and evil which exists in all of us, women and men alike. The important thing is to recognise what is good and what is evil, and not to be dubious about it. The Quran and Hadith must be studied together in depth by all of us as the learned speaker has done.

Dr. Hassan's speech was greatly appreciated by our members, and he was asked to give us a short talk on his thesis for Ph.D. which he recently obtained.

His research has been on the coming of the Mehdi. He told us that Mehdi means 'The Guided one'. The most authentic Hadith points to the possibility that he is likely to be born in Damascus. His coming will precede the coming of the Prophet Esa (Alaihis Salaam), who will join the Umma in prayer led by the Mehdi.

The members and guests were served with refreshments and the meeting came to a close with the recitation of Sura Al-Asr by Mrs. Soraya Yousef. - May Allah give us all the guidance to benefit from this knowledge that we have gained today. Ameen.

MWA BAZAAR

by Nisa Ali

On Sudnay, 26th July 1992, the Annual Bazaar was held at the Islamic Cultural Centre London. Sheikh Hassan, Imam at the ICC read a recitation from the Holy Qur'an before Mr. F. Ali declared the Bazaar open.

We are very pleased with our members. Delicious foods were offered and the elaborate clothing stalls, book stalls, the flowers were so well organised; so was the tea and soft drink stall.

We would like to express our gratitude to the ladies of the khawateen of North London and all the other stall holders and their helpers, and all those who donated cash or kind. With your work and support we raised £1102-79 net.

CONGRATULATION

Our best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Faris Badawi on the birth of their third child and to the grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Badawi (our treasurer) congratulation.

SYMPATHY

We wish to extend our condolences to our dear Sister Aminah Toor Sineen, of Scottdale, Pennsylvania, at the passing away of her dear mother. May your faith in Allah help you to overcome your grief and loneliness. May her soul rest in peace.

LETTER TO MADINA HOUSE

Assalamualaikum;
Dear Sister,

Re: Charity Morning

With this letter, please find enclosed a cheque for £212, raised during our Charity Morning. I am sorry that we were not able to raise more, but insya Allah, we hope that at least the function has raised to the community the plight of Madina House.

Insya Allah, we pray that Allah will help us all.

Thank you.

Your sister in Islam

Mariam Mohammad

UMO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our President, Mrs. Khanam Hassan, was re-elected to the Committee of the UMO at their AGM on 6th and 7th September. Congratulations! Other ladies representing the MWA were Mrs. Nisa Ali and Mrs. Soraya Youssef.

154 YEARS OF INDIANS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Mrs. Nisa Ali, our secretary, represented the MWA at the United Islamic Association's Tea Party and Exhibition of '154 years of Indians in the Caribbean' on Sunday 12th July 1992.



The Muslim Women's Association

Milad-un-Nabi(ﷺ)



ON THE OCCASION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF
PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH) SISTERS ARE
CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND MILAD

on Sunday 1st Rabi-al-Thani 1413 AH
27th September 1992 at 4.45pm
at the Islamic Cultural Centre
146 Park Road, London NW8

Guest Speaker: KHADIJA KNIGHT
