

Dar al Islam Teachers Institute

Alumni Newsletter

Fall 1998

“Verily! In the creation of the Heavens and the Earth... There are indeed signs for the men of understanding.”

Qur’an (3:190)

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Notes on Qur’an

By Dr. Mohammad Shafi

The use of the word Aayah (Sign) in the Qur’an

The word Aayah, its plural, and conjugations appear in the Qur’an 381 times. Aayah means “a Sign” and sometimes refers to a verse of the Qur’an. In general, it means Sign, Wonder, Marvel, Miracle, and Masterpiece. When used in the sense of other than a verse, the Qur’an often refers to the Signs, Wonders, and Miracles in nature all around us. These signs are then used as arguments for the existence of a single God or in arguments for His ability to create life (or recreate it after death). The following verses from Sura Ar-Rum (the Roman Empire), Number 30, verses (or Aayat) 17-28, are typical.

17. So (give) glory to God, when ye reach eventide and when ye rise in the morning;

18. Yea, to Him be praise, in the heavens and on the earth; and in the late afternoon and when the day begins to decline.

19. It is He Who brings out the living from the

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What’s New?

Dar al Islam Introduces High School Essay Contest

We have just completed our fourth year and our eighth Institute! There are currently 174 teachers in American schools (and one in Canada) who have spent part of their summers here in Abiquiu. In an effort to encourage scholarship on Islam at the secondary school level, we are initiating our first annual High School Essay Contest. We plan to extend the essay contest to the Middle

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Curriculum Corner

New Resources and Where to Find Them

Library

For those of you who want to take a look at Muslim women in your classroom, there are two new curriculum units designed to assist you. The Council on Islamic Education has teamed with the National Center for History in the Schools to produce "Muslim Women Through the Centuries. A Unit of Study for Grades 7 -12". Student activities focus on Women's Rights in Islam, Gender Roles, Muslim Women Leaders Through the Centuries and Famous Muslim Women Role Models. Contact the CIE at (714) 839-2929 or cie@earthlink.net. The cost is \$15.



Women in World History, another California based organization, has just published "Women in the Muslim World: Personalities and Perspectives from the Past". This contains 21 biographic readings as well as critical thinking questions and activities. The biographies are links to the Hajj, the trades, political and religious leadership, the veil, and singers and poets. The cost of the unit is \$19.95. Contact Women in World History at 1030 Spruce St., Berkeley, CA 94707 or womenwhist@earthlink.net.

Dar al Islam Library Gift to School Libraries of Institute Alumni

This past spring Dar al Islam mailed a gift package to the school libraries of all alumni from **1994 through 1997**. The packets were sent to the schools where the teachers worked at the time they attended the Institute. Each package contained the following items:

- one poster of Makkah
- one map of "The World of Islam"
- one "Guests of God" video (about the Hajj)
- a copy of "Islam, the Straight Path" by John Esposito
- two issues of Aramco Magazine
- a reprint of an Aramco Magazine article on Jerusalem
- two book catalogues
- a Dar al Islam information brochure

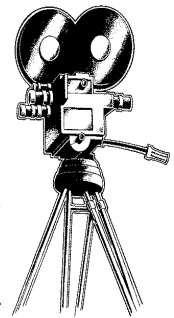
Please check that the materials are available to the teachers in your school, and we hope that you and your colleagues enjoy these items.

Media Room

There is a wealth of videos on the market which are useful tools in the classroom. Perhaps the one that people are the most excited about is "Tales of Arab Detroit". The video shows the many different sides of the Detroit Arab community as they struggle with their attempts to maintain their traditional values in a modern American city. When an Egyptian poet is invited to perform a 1000 year old epic "sparks fly". Tales from Arab Detroit blends voices, poetry, song and dance into the familiar story of cultural conflict and resilience. This 1995 video is 45 minutes long and is available for \$29.00 plus S & H. Contact

Dennis Hoppe
3319 Greenfield Rd. # 192
Dearborn, MI 48120
(303) 842-0838
Dhoppe@publ.tln.lib.mi.us

If you're interested in using other films in your class which focus on the Arab World, you might want to look at the offerings of Arab Film Distribution. They enclose a "film information sheet" with every rental. This offers background information that will enhance your use of their videos as a teaching tool. They also rent "B" films and "sexploitation" films from Hollywood's early days. Videos such as "Flash Gordon in Beirut" and "Ilsa the Harem Keeper of the Oil Sheiks" offer a great opportunity to



study the origins of stereotypical portrayal of Arabs in North American popular culture.

You can contact them at:

Arab Film Distribution
4127 10th Ave, N.E.
Seattle, WA 98102
(206) 322-0882
info@arabfilm.com
www.arabfilm.com

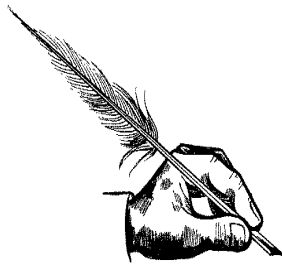
☞ Special video offer for
Teacher Institute Alumni

Have you heard about the CNN coverage of the Hajj? CNN's 1998 airing of the Hajj has received more interest and feedback than anything else they've ever aired, with the exception of the Gulf War.

Astrolabe Videos is distributing two CNN films *The Hajj: Journey of Faith* and *The Hajj: Mission of the Lifetime* packaged together in a forty-four minute video for \$19.95. This offer is being made to Islamic organizations only. BUT— they have agreed to extend this price to you if you identify yourself as an alum of the Dar al Islam Teachers' Institutes. Although there is some repetition between the two broadcasts, this is an excellent teaching tool. Don't miss this opportunity to bring to your classroom two of the most popular films ever made on the Hajj.

Call Astrolabe Videos at:

1-800-392-7876 and ask for Jawaad.
Their e-mail address is faith@aol.com



Ideas That Work

Alumni share their ideas and experiences

By Bill Turpen, Oklahoma School
of Mathematics and Sciences

I designed this unit to be used with high school students who are beginning a study of North Africa and the Middle East. By modifying the vocabulary items, however, a teacher can use this plan to introduce any of the less commonly taught cultures. Through a study of loan words, students gain an appreciation for the vastness of the region which was at one time under Islamic leadership. Many of the loan words I use are rooted in the scholarship of people – both Arab and non-Arab – who studied under the patronage of Muslim rulers. This contributions to American life become obvious as this lesson progresses. I begin with writing the following words on the board:

video-recorder	first class	monopoly
services	digital	computer system
software	airbus	beach boy
inner-city	nonstop	

“Wella for men, Hair and Body Shampoo”

I explain that these English words were found in a single edition of the German magazine, *Der Spiegel*, and that they represent some of the English words found in contemporary German. We discuss these words to discern the type of civilization, or reputation, which is associated with the United States. (My students notice the focus on computers, technology, transportation, grooming ... and one might infer an element of materialism perhaps.)

I put a new list of words on the board, without revealing their source. This is a list of words borrowed by the English language. They're listed under “cultures” as follows:

Culture A	B	C	D
admiral	atlas	alchemy	average
arsenal	almanac	alkali	baroque
barracks	magnet	cataract	borax
caliber	tariff	cornea	candy
checkmate	traffic	elixir	julep
magazine	check	gauze	lute
		retina	marzipan
			racquet
			sherbet
			syrup

I make sure the students know the meaning of each word, point-

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(Cont. from 'What's New?', page 1)
School level at a later date.

The purpose of this project is to foster high quality scholarly research among the students who are being taught by alumni of Dar al Islam's Teachers' Institutes.

We will provide a "question or query" for each new year, and ask your students to write a 3 – 5 page research paper on the subject at hand. Papers should be type written, double spaced, and one-sided. The paper must include a bibliography and end-notes for citing references.

This year's essay's should focus on family values, and consider the following questions:

- What are the issues confronting family values within the United States today?
- Who is responsible for teaching family values?
- Has this changed through time?
- How are family values rooted in the scriptures of the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam?
- Examine relations between husband and wife, parents and children, and the extended family.

Students should use a translation of the Qur'an that has commentary to accompany the text. You all have a copy of Yusuf Ali's Qur'an which has

very helpful commentary at the bottom of every page.

Students should also know that theological positions in Islam

are based on a consensus of scholars; a scholar's individual opinion is binding only on that scholar and no one else.

Each school is limited to 3 contestants. If you are lucky enough to have several students participate, please send us your top three selections, to Karima's attention, by April 1, 1999. Assuming that we have enough entries that merit awards, we'll be offering three student a plaque and a monetary award as follows:

1st place	\$300.00
2nd place	\$200.00
3rd place	\$100.00

All students who enter will receive a Certificate of Participation. If you have any questions, contact Karima at (505) 685-4584, or 685-4515 ext. 24. Good luck to all your students, and we hope to hear from many of them.

New Faculty in 1998

We expanded our faculty with three new people and one "returnee". Khalid Blankinship of Temple University returned after teaching here in 1996. We also enjoyed lectures by his wife, Manar Darwish who is a professor of Art History. Other new faculty were Vince Mansur Cornell and Rkia Elaroui-Cornell, both of Duke University. Welcome!

A Closer Look at Companies and People Who Produce Islamic Educational Materials

Council on Islamic Education

Office Address: 9300 Gardenia Street #B-3, Fountain Valley, CA 92708
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 20186
Fountain Valley, CA 92728-0186
tel: 714-839-2929 fax: 714-839-2714
e-mail: cietrc@earthlink.net

The Council on Islamic Education (CIE) is a national non-profit resource organization for K-12 educators, school division publishers, education officials and policymakers, curriculum developers, and other education professionals. CIE is comprised of scholars of history, religion, education and related disciplines at major universities and institutions throughout the United States, as well as curriculum specialists and teachers. CIE works with textbook publishers during the development of new K-12 history-social science instructional materials, conducts in-service workshops for schools, districts and organizations, participates in annual education conferences, and produces supplementary resources for educators to help them teach about Islam, Muslim history, and selected world history topics in an accurate, inclusive and meaningful manner.

Many of you have met Shabbir Mansuri, the Founding Director of the CIE. He visited the Institutes in '97 and '98 as a guest speaker. He was accompanied in '97 by Munir Sheik, a CIE staff member who lectures on Islamic Spain. Shabbir founded the scholar-based (CIE) in 1990 to serve as a resource organization for K-12 publishers, educators and education professionals. He has served as a member of the California Dept. of Education's Legal Compliance Review and Balanced Treatment Review panels, is a member of the Advisory Council for the California 3Rs Project (Rights, Respon-

In Profile

sibilities, Respect), and has represented CIE as a member of the California Education Round Table, a joint forum of six statewide educational institutions.

The Council on Islamic Education's objectives include, but are not limited to, the following:

Providing scholarly input to school publishers during the development or revision of history-social studies texts and materials.

Working with state and local education officials to reinforce the belief that teaching about religion in public schools can be a worthwhile and successful endeavor.

Producing resources designed to expand the repertoire of available materials on Islam, Muslim history, and other under-represented components of world history.

Training educators with techniques and information designed to maximize their ability to teach *about* the religions and cultures of the world.

Publications and Teaching Resources

CIE offers a number of publications and resource materials for educators. *Teaching About Islam and Muslims in the Public School Classroom* is a handy reference book used by educators in over 40 states. *Beyond a Thousand and One Nights* provides literature excerpts from a variety of genres, along with discussion questions. More detailed teaching units on a variety of topics, such as cultural interactions between Europeans and Muslims leading up to the Renaissance, Muslim Spain, literature from Muslim civilization, important Muslim women in history, and the Crusades, are also being produced by CIE. Other materials, such as a guide to Muslim holidays, are available as well.

Faculty Focus

Dr. Mustansir Mir is the Institute faculty who has participated in the program every year since its inception in 1994. Appearing to be quiet and shy at the beginning, Dr. Mir's wry sense of humor soon endears him to teachers and colleagues alike.

One of 7 children, Mustansir grew up in Lahore, Pakistan in a home which emphasized education. Upon receiving an MA in English Literature at Punjab University, his academic plans changed directions after studying Arabic under the tutorship of Dr. Zia-ul-Haq Sufi. The Qur'an and its language were the focus of Dr. Sufi's teaching.

Mustansir first came to America on a two month fellowship in Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan. The short stay soon became a longer stint, which led to an MA and PhD in Islamic Studies from U. of M. This led to faculty positions in Pakistan, Malaysia, England and the United States, teaching a variety of courses such as Introduction to Islam, Islamic Intellectual History, Islamic

Law, Sufism, Muslim Sages, Qur'an Exegesis, and the Qur'an as Literature.

Dr. Mustansir Mir

When asked how he met his wife, Mustansir provided the following story:

"Sheer good luck (on my part only, that is). Someone

who knew both our families put the families in touch with each other. My aunt, as a duly authorized agent, visited Talat's family and, upon her return, told me that the match had been made. I did not get to see Talat before the wedding day. This does not mean I did not try; it only means I failed in my attempt."

Mustansir and Talat now have three children, ranging in age from 9 to 19.

Joining the Dar al Islam Institute faculty came as a result of a chance meeting with Mr. Kabbani, a founding trustee of Dar al Islam. As the years have passed, Mustansir has seen the program go into greater depth and intensity for the teachers. His advice to alumni of the program is to stay in touch with Dar al Islam and to share ideas about incorporating information about Islam into the curriculum.

(Continued from 'Notes' on page 1)

dead, and brings out the dead from the living, and Who gives life to the earth after it is dead: and thus shall ye be brought out (from the dead).

20. Among His Signs is this, that He created you from dust; and then,-- behold, ye are men scattered (far and wide)!

21. And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect.

22. And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours: verily in that are Signs for those who know.

23. And among His Signs is the sleep that ye take by night and by day, and the quest that ye (make for livelihood) out of His Bounty: verily in that are Signs for those who harken.

24. And among His Signs, He shows you the lightning, by way both of fear and of hope, and He sends down rain from the sky and with it gives life to the earth after it is dead: verily in that are Signs for those who are wise.

25. And among His Signs is this, that heaven and earth stand by His Command: then when He calls you, by a single call, from the earth, behold, ye (straightway) come forth.

26. To Him belongs every being that is in the heavens and on earth: all are devoutly obedient to Him.

27. It is He Who begins (the process of) creation; then repeats it; and for Him it is most easy. To Him belongs

the loftiest similitude (we can think of) in the heavens and the earth: for He is Exalted in Might, full of wisdom.

28. He does propound to you a similitude from your own (experience): do ye have partners among those whom your right hands possess, to share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you? Do ye fear them as ye fear each other? Thus do We explain the Signs in detail to a people that understand.

If you want to read other verses similar to these, you can find them listed in the index of your Qur'an under the word "Signs". Many different subjects are discussed under this heading, and students often enjoy comparing such verses.

(Continued from 'Ideas' on page 3)

ing out that "magazine" is used here as a storage facility for weapons. My students then attempt to discover something about each of these four cultures, based upon the words they've given to the English language. For instance, Culture A seems to have a strong military aspect to it. Culture B focuses on travel, commerce and trade. Culture C seems to be advanced in science and medicine, and Culture D seems to have a variety of characteristics, but a clear appreciation of upper class "distractions" such as sweets, games and music.

To conclude the lesson, I point out that all four "cultures" on the board are actually different aspects of Islamo-Arabic culture, and that all these words have entered the English language from Arabic. Just as the English-to-German loan words revealed some, but not all aspects of American culture, the Arabic-to-English loan words also fail to convey the entire spectrum of this vast civilization to us. This exercise also works well as an introduction to a unit that covers the broad range of Arab and Islamic contributions to western culture, art, literature, science and philosophy.

Alumni News

Joyce Briscoe ('95) sent us a post card from the Island of Crete. She spent a whole month back-packing through the Greek Isles last summer.

Robert Brown ('96) conducted a very successful workshop on "Teaching Islam" for the San Diego County Middle Schools Partnership. Over 50 teachers attended. Bob spent this past summer in Andalusian Spain, pursuing his interest in Moorish architecture.

Mary Furlong ('94) attended a Japan Institute at Mount Holyoke College last year. While there, she met **Judy Nierenberg** ('95) and **Helen Finken** ('96).. **Bill Turpen** ('94), **Bill Shandor** ('96) and **Robert Brown** ('96) met while attending a summer institute at the University of Michigan.

Betty Lau ('97) started a pilot program in the Arabic language and culture for the Seattle area. She's publishing a manual on the activities so other states or school districts can replicate the program.

The knowledge we gain at institutes can prove helpful in so many ways. While on a community service project in Atlanta, GA, **Jackie Walker** ('95) encountered a group of new immigrants who were all Somalians in grades 1-4. One hundred percent of them were Muslim, and their teacher knew nothing of the children's religion, history or language. Jackie used what few Arabic and Islamic expressions she knows, and found that the young students immediately connected with her. For her next visit, she brought books in English that have Islamic stories. She also took one of Nadina's Barnes' dolls of a Muslim woman at prayer. She felt very lucky to be able to connect with these wonderful children.

Ann Kennedy ('96) has been busy coordinating workshops on Islam for Oklahoma teachers. She also did a Medieval Banquet at her school and had "visitors" from Nigeria, Germany, Italy, Greece, Spain, Japan and China. Another Oklahoma teacher, **Patricia Anduss** ('96) has done several workshops for the state's geography teachers. The first stop on her workshop "Geography: at the Heart of It All" is the Middle East.

Calendar of Events

NCSS Annual Conference
Anaheim, CA
(Nov. 20 – 22, 1998)

The National Council for the Social Studies will be hosting its 78th Annual Conference in Anaheim California. This year, Dar al Islam will be hosting a booth in Exhibit Hall C. Please stop by to visit Karima and Hakim as they work to increase awareness of the Dar al Islam Teachers Institutes. (If you'd like to volunteer to help us at the booth, please do so! It would be nice to have some alumni involved.)



Culture and Daily Life of the Arab World
Washington, DC
(Oct. 24, 1998)
Georgetown University
Zeina Seikaly (202) 687-6176



Northeast Regional Conference
for the Social Studies
Boston, MA
(March 3-6, 1999)
Susan Szachowicz
(508) 587-9762



Perspectives on the Crusades
Washington, DC
(Nov. 12, 1998)
Georgetown University
Zeina Seikaly (202) 687-6176



Middle East Studies Association
Annual Conference
Chicago, IL
(December 3 –6, 1998)
Call MESA at (520) 621-5850



Dar al Islam 1999 Teachers Institutes
(July 11 – 24 and August 1 – 14)



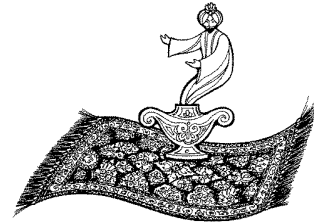
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Surfing the Web

Discovering Sites to visit in the Classroom



Want a treasure trove of links to Islamic web sites?? Many Muslim women's organizations have joined together to produce a page with virtually hundreds of links. Want to hear the Qur'an recited? No problem, - click on "al-Qur'an" and "recite". Do your students want to hear a lecture by Yusuf Islam who was formally know as Cat Stevens? Click on "Radio al Islam" and an enormous selection of lectures will be available to them. For those who are studying family values in Islam, the subject of our Essay Contest, (see page 1) there are links called "Marital Relations and Mutual Rights in Islam" and "Islam and Women's Rights". Other sections cover such subjects as Muslims in Japan, Prophethood of Women, Islamic Hijab, and even Humor in Islam. The address for this home page is <http://www.albany.edu/~ha4934/sisters.html>. Another site this leads to is <http://www.ipa.net/~amirah/bism2.html> . From here, you can access sites like "Islam 101", "Understanding Islam and Muslims" and "Islam Q & A". The Muslim Women's League also has an extensive site at <http://www.mwlusa.org/mwl> . Their article, "An Islamic Perspective on Women's Dress" is often used in classrooms when studying Hijab. If you have any questions about what they've written on their web site, you can e-mail them your question at mwl@mwlusa.org.