

Dar al Islam Teachers Institute

Alumni Newsletter

Spring 1999

“Relate in the Book (the story of Mary) when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East.”

Qur'an (19: 16)

Editors

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Notes on Qur'an

By Dr. Mohammad Shafi

Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ

The name of Mary (Maryam) appears 34 times in the Qur'an. Twenty-three (23) times it is mentioned after the name of Jesus and eleven (11) times in direct description of her own experience. She is described as one of the two "Examples" among women for the believers (Surah 66, ayah 11). Those who uttered words of "grave slander" against her were condemned by setting a seal on their heart "for Blasphemy" (Surah 4, ayah 156). She is described as having been born on the prayer of her mother (called the `woman of 'Imran' and believed to be a descendent of Moses) who wanted a son to dedicate to the service of the Temple. When a girl was born, the concern of Mary's mother was allayed by a message from God telling her that this is a special girl who would serve the Temple well. As Mary grew older, there

was competition amongst the elders as to who would be responsible for her care during her service in the Temple. Zakariyya, a relative of Mary, was selected. Mary was in seclusion in an eastern chamber of the Temple when an angle appeared to tell her of the birth of Jesus. An entire chapter in the Qur'an is named after her. The following verses are a selection from the Qur'an describing the story of Maryam.

A. Surah Maryam
(Cont. on page 6)

What's New?

Deadline High School Essay Contest moved from April 1 to April 15

Because of this late reminder we're moving the deadline for the Dar al Islam High School Essay Contest. As you may know from the previous newsletter, this project was initiated to foster scholarly research among the students who are being taught by people like you; alumni of the Dar al Islam Teachers Institutes. The type written,
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Curriculum Corner

New Resources and Where to Find Them

Media Room

Swashbuckling Adventure Films

Let's face it. The more adventuresome a video is, the more our students enjoy it. Some of you, while here at Dar al Islam, viewed "**The Message: The Story of Islam**". Used as a teaching tool across the world, this world famous epic portrays the birth of Islam in Makkah and the lives of the earliest Muslims who encountered persecution and even torture at the hands of the aristocracy. The English version stars Anthony Quinn and Irene Papas. A new edition has been produced. This re-make has been digitally improved in both picture and sound. It also contains the entire wide-screen picture of the original film. Put the popcorn in the microwave and get ready for action!



For another historically oriented action video, check out "**Lion of the Desert**", starring Oliver Reed and Anthony Quinn. This is a dramatic epic of the struggle of Omar Mukhtar, leader of the Muslim resistance in North Africa against the imperialism of the Italians under Mussolini; and inspiring story which will have your students rooting for the underdogs who fight against a powerful war machine at tremendous odds. This film has also be digitally updated with better sound, pictures and wide screen format.

Initially banned by the French government, the **Battle of Algiers** was the first film to depict the revolt of Algerian Muslims against French Colonialism. With a newsreel-like authenticity of staged street riots, we watch Algerians struggle for the return of their country.

These videos are helpful tools for teachers who are covering Islamic history, world history or European colonialism.

All three are available at a \$10.00 discount from Astrolabe Pictures and Books, and are available for \$29.95 each. If you're interested in purchasing any of these videos, now is the time! Astrolabe can be reached at 1-800-392-7876 or fatih@aol.com

Library

Kidnappings, Plagues and Golden Nuggets of Africa

If you're seeking books with a sense of adventure, there are plenty out there to keep your students riveted. One of the best is "**The Adventures of Ibn Battuta , a Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century**" by Ross Dunn. (ISBN # 0-520-06742-6) Students can accompany this somewhat flamboyant traveler from the markets of Tangier to Makkah, Persia, Central Asia, and China. This book is a gem for those of you who are teaching World History or World Geography. It also makes the reader aware of how difficult life was for earlier travelers. There are tales of war, political intrigue, and disease. (Encountering the Bubonic Plague on his way home, Battuta arrived in Damascus only to find a death rate of 2000 people per day.) There's never a dull moment in this book.



Equally fascinating is a book based on the true-life story of the African scholar Hassan al-Wazzan, who was kidnapped by Sicilian pirates and taken to Rome. There he was presented as a "gift" to Pope Leo X. While in the Pope's court, al-Wazzan was baptized as "**Leo the African**". This story is told against the backdrop of the 16th century Mediterranean world and describes the fall of Granada, the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, and the magnificent setting of Renaissance Rome under the Medicis. This adventure tale does a tremendous job on linking events in North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. "Leo the African" (ISBN # 0-7043-2613-2) was written by Amin Maalouf.

Around the World in 180 Days: Or How to Fit Islamic Studies into a Standard World Civilization Course

Ninth graders at Burlington High School, in Burlington, Vt., are introduced to the study of history in a somewhat traditional one-year World Civilizations course. The idea is to have students learn specific historical and geographic information, as well as develop an understanding of the general themes and concepts that repeat throughout human history. For the past 1 million years or so we humans have developed complex civilizations that reflect our social and political habits, and in this year-long course, we explore the major social, political, economic and technological changes that have created and destroyed societies and civilizations from pre-historic times to about 1500 CE.

What becomes crucial to me, as the teacher, is to develop in students, an understanding that all of today's cultures and societies have histories and those histories repeatedly have crisscrossed each other, sometimes in war, often creating change. As a result, there is more than one way to view any given event in history. So, while I tackle the study of world civilizations chronologically, and deal with one civilization at a time at the start, by the time Rome falls, students must begin associating the events of different civilizations that are happening concurrently. This means that the study of Islam and the Islamic civilization during the medieval eras actually is broken into three parts: the rise of Islam; Islam as a religion; and Islam's connection to the rise of Western Europe.

The objective of Islamic studies in my class is first to have students understand the development and significance of Islamic culture and civilization as it is introduced in the 600s CE and rises in political, economic and social power through the middle ages (to about 1500 CE). During this segment of our studies, students will learn the names and importance of key Islamic religious, political, and intellectual leaders. We consider the socio-economic conditions in the middle east, particularly Saudi Arabia and the conditions of nomadic tribes in 500-600 CE, setting the stage for the arrival of Muhammad. While we consider the basic message of Muhammad at this point, we stay the course of examining the political developments of the Islamic world. Students become familiar with the political system that develops through the establishment of caliphs and the political splits that occur. As we learn about different Islamic leaders, we read a handout, "Cordoba: The Gold Caliphate," which gives students a view of Islam's "golden age" in Spain. We also look at legal issues that arise, including questions of citizenship and attitudes toward non-Islamic people, since the concept of citizenship and how different political systems handle the question is a common theme that runs through the course. Studying the rise of the Islamic world provides a perfect opportunity to study geography and improve mapping skills. As we look at the reach of Islam, students weave in the study of economic development under Islamic rule. They map trade routes and become familiar with the products and, perhaps more important, the ideas that are traded. This gives me a good opportunity to reinforce the idea of cause and effect in history. I begin these lessons having students speculate



Ideas That Work Alumni share their ideas and experiences

By Fran Brock
Burlington High School

about the possible consequences of stretching an empire from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans. Then we study the exchanges and trade made possible during the height of the Islamic world. The idea of a civilization's golden age is not new to students, so they quickly understand that they should look to see what advances are being made in the area of the arts, mathematics and the sciences. It is at this point, that my own studies at Dar al Islam come in most useful. I share with them photos of the Abiquiu mosque and madressa, focusing on the geometric design of the wooden doors and windows. I also have a set of slides that exhibit the use of calligraphy, geometry and vegetation in the tiles and other architecture in some of the Arabic states.

We read about such people as the philosopher Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and physician Ar-Razi. We also read some of Omar Khayyam's "Rubaiyat." As a basic reading, beyond our textbook, I have students read an essay from the Arab World Notebook on Arab Contributions to Western Civilization. I have a small collection of books on the Arab and Muslim worlds, which provide some excerpts and primary source comments by notable individuals. However, I am always on the prowl for more primary source material that is accessible to (that is, can be read and understood by) ninth graders. It is at this point that students are assigned a paper on medieval Islam. They may choose one person, one technology or one idea discussed, conduct further research, and decide why that person's actions, or the invention or idea was significant to either the Islamic world or to the entire world.

As I mentioned, there are two other points in our studies when Islam is again discussed. Prior to turning attention to the rise of Western Europe in the fourth quarter, we take a short break to look at the five major religions in the world as part of a comparative religion unit, conducted after all five religions have been introduced through the study of history. We compare the basic tenets and practices of the religions, and explore how each religion answers such universal questions as: "who created the world?" "why are we here?" and "what happens after death?" It is at this point that we talked more in depth about Muhammad's teachings, the Qur'an and Hadith, and discuss basic tenets of the religion, including the Five Pillars.

We conclude our study of Islam as we study the Crusades and the rise of Western European powers. Closure comes as we look at the power merger between King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. This is an important segment of the course because it is important that students read about both sides in the "Holy Wars." They practice their interpretation and analysis skills by reading contrasting reports by Western and Muslim writers. Similarly, through the use of a video about the fall of Granada and supplemental readings, students study the broader question of power and shifts in power. I do, however, ask students to speculate as to who might go aboard those ships in the late 1490s that start setting sail for points uncharted in the west. It is my way of reminding students that once again, trade and travel will move people and ideas from one section of the world to another and such exchanges will cause change.

As I've explained, World Civilizations is an introductory course for ninth graders, designed to introduce students to the study of the world's

(Cont. on page 6)

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

**The Middle East
Outreach Council**

Established in 1981, the Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC) is a nonprofit organization working to increase public knowledge about the people, places and cultures of the Middle East, including the Arab world, Israel, Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan. MEOC resources and activities are apolitical and nonpartisan. They are directed primarily to nonspecialist audiences at the k-12, college and community levels. MEOC is an affiliated organization of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA).

Why Join MEOC?

Membership in MEOC makes you part of a nation-wide network of information and resources on the Middle East. This network helps you keep informed about new resources, circulates ideas for incorporating the Middle East into school curricula, provides answers to your questions about resources, and gives you advance notice of workshops and other educational programs nationwide.



**of the National Council for the
Social Studies**

Several of the Dar al Islam staff participated in the booth displays at the November NCSS conference in Anaheim, California. In an effort to make our Institutes more visible to Social Studies teachers from across the country. Those of you who attended the 1998 Teachers Institutes may remember Daniel Milnor, the young “up and coming” photographer employed by the Kodak Com-

(Cont. from page 1, What's New)

double spaced research papers 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 scripture of

picture from NCSS conference

Institute alum & colleagues visit Dar al Islam booth at NCSS in Anaheim

the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam?

- Examine relations between husband and wife, parents and children and the extended family.

Remember, the new deadline is **April 15**. Send entries to Karima Alavi, and if you have any questions about the contest, give her a call at (505) 685-4584 or contact her at kdalavi@roadrunner.com.

Dar al Islam hosts their first booth at the annual conference

pany. Many of his photographs of the Dar al Islam Institute and the facilities were so stunning that we made some posters out of them. If you see us at a conference booth, please be sure to stop by and check out Daniel’s work. You’ll see why Kodak has employed this outstanding young artist!

In Profile

Linking University Outreach Centers and Secondary Educators

Many of you are already aware of the tremendous educational programs offered by university-based outreach centers. Many of these centers are also closely linked with MEOC, and therefore know what your classroom and resource needs are. Free workshops are offered by Harvard University, Georgetown University, the Universities of Pennsylvania, Utah, Texas, Michigan, Oregon and California just to name a few. If you live near these universities, MEOC could serve as your link to all that they offer secondary educators.

Other Membership Benefits

As a MEOC member, you'll receive:

- Access to MEOC's electronic bulletin board
- A tri-annual newsletter containing valuable information about curriculum resources, workshops, grants and other tips
- An annually updated listing of organizations and resources focused on the Middle East
- A membership directory
- Catalogues of teaching materials

There is a special joint MEOC-MESA membership for K-12 and community college teachers only. For membership information contact Mary Martin at the University of Pennsylvania at (215) 898-4690 or marym@mec.sas.upenn.edu or visit their web site at <http://menic.utexas.edu/menic/meoc>

Faculty Focus

Hamza Yusuf is a very familiar face to many of our alumni. He has participated in the Dar al Islam Teachers Institutes since 1995.

This young, dynamic educator has lived an interesting and unusual life which exemplifies the injunctions of the Prophet Muhammad to "seek ye knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

Hamza was born in Walla Walla, Washington where his father was a professor of Humanities at Whitman College. After spending many years in California, Hamza's family moved to Maryland where he attended high school. During his first semester in college Hamza became a Muslim and dropped out to travel in search of knowledge. This "trek" as he calls it, lasted 10 years and took Hamza to the United Arab Emirates, Arabia, Algeria, and finally to Mauritania, a country Hamza revisits often. During his travels, he studied Arabic, Islamic theology and jurisprudence, hadith science, Qur'an and Tassawuf or Islamic psychology (generally referred to as Sufism).

In 1986, upon returning to the United States, Hamza completed a degree in nurs-

ing and worked for four years as an R.N. in a critical care unit of a county hospital.

photo

When opportunities for teaching arose, Hamza's life took another turn. He completed a degree in Religious Studies from San Jose State. Since then

he has focussed his life on traveling and teaching. He currently teaches Islamic Studies to adults in Hayward, CA. Two years ago he started his own educational organization called "Zaytuna Institute" (www.zaytuna.org). Many of Hamza Yusuf's lectures are available in videos and cassettes through Alhambra Productions (408) 244-1402 or MeccaCentric at www.meccacentric.com or (800) 607-9810.

Perhaps the most memorable summer for our teachers here in Abiquiu was 1997 when Hamza was accompanied by Sheik Abdullah, a tall, elegant man from Mauritania who spoke no English and yet, through Hamza's efforts, made a lasting impression on all who were fortunate enough to encounter both of these men.

(Cont. from page 1, *Qur'an Notes*)

(19)

Ayahs 16-21

Relate in the Book (the story of) Mary when she withdrew from her family to a place in the East.

She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We sent to her Our angel, and he appeared before her as a man in all respects. She said: "I seek refuge from thee to (God) Most Gracious: (come not near) if thou dost fear God."

He said: "Nay, I am only a messenger from thy Lord, (to announce) to thee the gift of a holy son." So she said: "How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me and I am not unchaste?"

He said: "So (it will be): thy Lord saith, "That is easy for Me: and (We wish) to appoint him as a Sign unto men and Mercy from Us".

B. Surah Imran (3) Ayahs 35-37 and 42-48

Behold! A woman of 'Imran said: "O my Lord! I do dedicate unto Thee what is in my womb for Thy special service: so accept this of me: for Thou hearest and knowest all things.

When she was delivered, she said: "O my Lord! Behold! I am delivered of a female child!"—and God knew best what she brought forth—"And no wise is the male like the female. I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Thy protection from the Evil One The Rejected."

Right graciously did her Lord accept her: He made her grow in purity and beauty: to the care of Zakariyya was she assigned.

Every time that he entered (her) chamber to see her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Mary! Whence (comes) this to you?" She said: "From God: for God provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure."

Behold! The angel said: "O Mary! God hath chosen thee and purified thee—chosen thee above the women of all nations.

"O Mary! Worship thy Lord devoutly; prostrate thyself, and bow down (in prayer) with those who bow down."

This is part of the tidings of the things unseen, which We reveal unto thee (O Apostle!) by inspiration: thou wast not with them when they cast lots with arrows, as to which of them should be charged with the care of Mary: nor wast thou with them when they disputed (the point).

Behold! The angel said: "O Mary! God giveth thee glad tidings of a Word from Him: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and in the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to God;

"He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity, and he shall be (of the company) of the righteous.

She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?"

He said: "even so; God createth what He willeth; when He hath decreed a plan He but saith to it 'Be' and it is! "and God will teach him the Book and

Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel, and (appoint him) an apostle to the Children of Israel.

C. Surah Nisa (4) Ayah 156

That they rejected Faith; that they uttered against Mary a grave false charge.

D. Surah Anbiyaa (21) Ayah 91

And (remember) she who guarded her chastity: We breathed into her of Our Spirit, and We made her and her son a Sign for all peoples.

Note: the Qur'an talks about Jesus being created of "a Word of God" and from God breathing into Mary "of Our Spirit". Similar words are used for the creation of Adam.

E. Surah Sajda (32) Ayah 9

But He fashioned him in due proportion, and breathed into him something of His spirit. And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing and sight and feeling (and understanding): little thanks do ye give.

For more on this subject, refer to the index of the Qur'an you received at the Dar al Islam Institute.

(Cont. from page 3, *Ideas That Work*)

history. My goal in the course is to have students develop an understanding of such cultural universals as political, economic, social and belief systems; the concept and causes of change; and the concept of power -- how it is gained and lost. Students hone their evaluation and analytical skills as they sort out cause and effect, conflicts and resolutions, and consequences of actions and decisions. But most importantly, students are exposed to many ideas, and many ways of solving similar problems. By studying the medieval Islamic world, students are able to realize that today's Muslims have a very strong and deep world history. My hope is that by studying the origins of the world's people, students can better understand the roots of contemporary issues that face us in the Middle East, Southeast Asia and, to no lesser degree, in the United States.

Alumni News

Well, "class of July, 1998", all that pampering paid off. **Amy Sharpe** had an 8 pound, 8 oz. baby girl on November 1. Welcome to the world Claire Lee and congratulations Darby and Amy. Amy sent thanks to all of you for the excellent care you gave to her this summer.

A heartfelt Thank You to **all of you** who contacted Karima Alavi with information on how you're utilizing and expanding upon what you learned at the Dar al Islam Teachers Institutes. Many of you were mentioned during her recent presentation at the annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association.

Eric Westmark (96) was one of fifty educators who completed an 8 week course on world religions, sponsored by the Sacramento county Board of Education

John Grega (97) designed and taught a new Winterim course for Notre Dame College. The title of John's class is "Islamic Thought and Culture". John also continues to teach at McDonogh High School.

Thais da Rosa (94) and her eight year old daughter Gabriela enjoyed a trip up the Mekong River and into Saigon, Kampuchea, Laos and Thailand.

Paul Dickler (96) traveled to Japan with the Fulbright Memorial Fund. He has also done work with the Social Science Education Consortium on issues dealing with Japan.

Congratulations to **Julie Guild** (97) who was named 1998 Oklahoma Middle School Teacher of the Year!

Calendar of Events

Turkey: Understanding Islam: Impact on Politics,

Economics and Education

Ankara, Turkey

(June 6 – 17, 1999)

Coordinated by the Council on

International Educational Exchange

(212) 822-2747

Dar al Islam 1999 Teachers' Institutes

Abiquiu, New Mexico

(July 11 – 24)

(August 1 – 14)

Visit the Dar al Islam booth at the annual NCSS conference in Orlando, Florida
(November 19 – 21, 1999)

World History Association

International Conference and

Institute for High School Teachers

Comparative Civilizations and

World History

Victoria, British Columbia

Ralph Croizier (250) 721-7404

Summer Teacher Workshop on

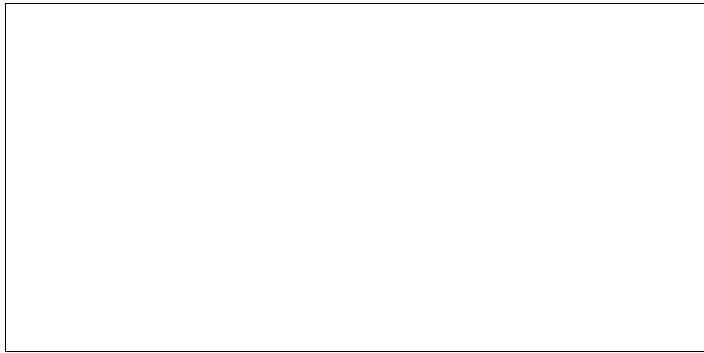
The Three Religious Traditions of the

Middle East and North Africa

Harvard University

For dates and info: Carol Shedd

(617) 495-4078



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Surfing the Web

Discovering Sites to visit in the Classroom



Planning to hold a costumed banquet for your students? Will they be traveling the Silk Road or visiting the al-Hambra Palace from all corners of the world? If your class needs idea for costumes, they couldn't find a more fascinating and helpful site than The Costume Home Page at <http://member.aol.com/nebula5/tcpinfo3.html>. This gold mine of information and photos offers a wealth of ideas for making costumes from every continent. It's an easy to navigate site with pictures of such costumes as "a Druze man from Lebanon", "A Fruit Seller from the Philippines" and "A Bethlehem Woman". There's also plenty of info on African textiles and masks. Now your students won't have any excuses for not dressing up for your grand event!

With the passing of King Hossein, Jordan has been in the news often. Is your class interested in learning a bit more about the late King of Jordan? They can visit his web site at www.kinghussein.gov.jo. Students can tour his office and palace and learn more about the history of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Students can obtain facts concerning just about every nation in the world at <http://www.eff.org/govt.html>. This site offers information on geography, recent political events, and what international organizations are doing in the area. It includes links to all United Nations sites and regional groups such as the European Community. This is a great place to start for students who are researching a particular nation or region. For current events in many parts of the world they can turn to the Christian Science Monitor on-line newspaper at <http://www.csmonitor.com>.