Eid Emerging as a national festival

By Dr. Aslam Abdullah

The 1440 AH Eid was no different than the Eid of 1430 or earlier years. Millions attended special Eid prayers and joined festivities all over the world with their relatives and friends. They celebrated their victory over themselves for following a regimen and discipline that inspired them to control their hunger and thirst from dawn to dusk for the sake of following the guidelines given to them by their creator.

Fasting is obligatory upon every Muslim who physically can endure it, yet it is a voluntary act that most community members do in the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. Each region of the world has its tradition of observing the Eid. However, in Europe, the Americas and Australia and New Zealand, the Muslim community is creating new traditions of Ramadan and Eid celebrations. The Muslim population is about one percent of the total population in the US, yet Ramadan and Eid’s outreach is far ahead of their numbers. Political parties, local, regional and national

Muslims around the world celebrate Eid al Fitr

By: Aysha Qamar

Millions of Muslims all around the globe gathered to celebrate Eid al-Fitr this week, marking the end of the holy month of Ramadan. The name Eid al-Fitr translates to “Festival of Breaking the Fast.” The date of Eid al-Fitr depends on the lunar calendar, which is why it falls on a different date on the Gregorian calen-

Who is afraid of the Arabic Numerals?

This article was published in the New York Times Opinion Section, TMO is reposting it to share the quality work and message.

By Mustafa Akyol

Mr. Akyol is a regular contributing writer of Op-Eds for The Times. Should Americans, as part of their school curriculum, learn Arabic numerals?

CivicScience, a Pittsburgh-based research firm, put that question to some 3,200 Americans recently in a poll seemingly about mathematics, but the outcome was a measure of students’ attitudes toward the Arabworld. Some 56 percent of the respondents said, “No.” Fifteen percent had no opinion.

Cont on page 13.
Achieving the American Dream, An Immigrant’s Memoir

By Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Is there something magical about the country we call the United States of America? Seemingly there is. Here in this land of the brave, dreams are woven and achieved. Here, in this land of the free, ideas are created and lives are rebuilt around it.

Here, in the country, that offers people opportunities to pursue happiness the way they define it, people liberate them from the chains of traditions and customs that history has imposed upon them. America is not like any other country as it has a built-in mechanism to inspire people to change, change themselves, change their perceptions and change their communities. Thus, the story of every American is a story of change, a story of exploring horizons that elsewhere often stays in dreams.

Victor Begg’s (Victor is the English translation of Urdu word Ghalib) story is the story of yet another American who weaved a dream and then constructed a social reality around it for himself, his family and the community. People struggle to build their lives. So did Begg. In this struggle, Ghalib known as Victor Begg rediscovered himself, his religious roots and the real purpose in life. He used this rediscovery as a process of reaffirming to his fellow citizens in his adopted country that America is still a beacon of hope and light for all who come here as students or immigrants.

Victor began his life in America as an alien student, then became a green card holding employee, and then a naturalized citizen running a business that thrived and

Cont. on page 12
The Zabardust Khutbah

By Nadia B. Ahmad

Ding. Ding. Ding. Ding.

The text messages on our family chat came in rapid succession.

"Zabardust was zabar10"

“What’s zabar10?”

“How do you not know what zabar10 is?" "Zabardust"

“Oh, then why didn’t u just say that?”

“I was in the middle of the masjid, it was packed, and there was a six-year old child crying in front of me. We are not running around.”

“I am just another person accounts i.e. my family chat came in rapid succession.”

They want to hire a youth director.”

I responded, “That won’t make a difference. That’s their way of solving all problems is throwing money at them. They don’t need a youth director. They need the parents to get involved instead of the dump-the-kids-at-the-masjid-and-run.

That’s not what you did. We didn’t have a youth director. We had MYNA [Muslim Youth of North America]. We did it on our own with our parents.”

I would never really know what happens in what I refer to as the “bourgie desi masjid” except for the third person accounts i.e. hearsay. I only show up a couple of times in Ramadan before I have some encounter that makes me feel unwelcome there. Truth is I am just another mother with unruly children. Last Ramadan, I had someone try to move me while I was in the middle of prayer because I was praying near the food line, because the masjid was packed, and there was no place to go. Like they cannot wait 90 seconds for me to finish.

The year before I was scolded for bringing a double stroller and not putting it in the right spot. Ramadan brings out the best and the worst. If one is the mother of three kids, it will bring out the worst, because I am the one that makes the geriatric center/Islamic center feel less, when children are running around.

Muslims make up less than one percent of the population in Florida, but consist of ten percent of the prison population. The problem was not isolated. It was systemic. Muslims are overpoliced across the United States and are overrepresented in prison populations similar to other black and brown folks. The khutbah should not have been about one child that ended up in prison, but about the overall failures of the criminal justice system.

But the only person more unwelcome in a mosque than a mother with small kids is the justice activist. Sitting in the masjid and being meek will not do it. Pushing someone else’s child never helps anything. I listened to her pathetic apology after the prayer. I did not say anything, because I wanted to hear whatever pathetic excuse she had before I spoke. I let her ramble, “I am so sorry. My daughter is the same age. I understand. I am sorry I pushed her.”

Then she hugs my daughter, sits her in her lap and rambles on some more, strok-
Don’t Hide Your Islam- Engagement in your local community

By Quaid Saifee

The Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU) is a non-partisan think tank and research institute that focuses on the challenges and opportunities facing American Muslims. They recently issued a report titled: American Muslim Poll 2019: Predicting and Preventing Islamophobia

My goal is to briefly summarize their findings and recommendations that are relevant to the Muslim community.

Muslims love to talk about national and international politics and world affairs in general. You can be in a Muslim gathering and you will hear people talk about topics ranging from Trump, the Muslim ban, Imran Khan, etc. Things we rarely discuss are our communities: Islamophobia is just one branch on a far more expansive tree. We rarely talk about the health issues and are likely to be discriminated against because of their faith.

ISPU has been polling Americans of all faiths (including Muslims) for the last few years to figure out the status of Islamophobia. They statistically measure it and refer to it as the Islamophobia Index in which the higher the number, the stronger the Islamophobia. The Islamophobia Index inched up from 24 in 2018 to 28 in 2019.

The Islamophobia Index is based on a level of agreement regarding Muslims living in the United States, and that they:

• Are more prone to violence than others
• Discriminate against women
• Are hostile to the United States
• Are less civilized than other people
• Are partially responsible for acts of violence carried out by other Muslims

ISPU’s study concludes that Jews and Hispanics have the most favorable view of Muslims and white Evangelicals have the least. It also finds that lower Islamophobia is related to knowing a Muslim, knowledge about Islam, political inclination toward the Democratic party, and favorable views of minorities. The most surprising findings for me are the neutral factors, which make no difference in predicting Islamophobia. They are:

• Nativity: Being born outside or within the United States makes no difference on Islamophobia. Being an immigrant does not increase sympathy for American Muslims.
• Sex and Age: All other factors being equal, being a woman or being younger in age makes no difference in how Islamophobic someone is. It is often assumed that women and the youth are more sympathetic to minority groups, but that is not the case here.
• Education: Having a college education is not linked to a reduction in negative opinions about Muslims.
• Religiosity: Spirituality or a frequency of attendance to a house of worship does not affect Islamophobia. Islamophobia is therefore clearly more political and ideological than theological for most Americans. So, what do we do with all this information? Here are four recommendations from ISPU, along with my two cents:
  • Build Coalitions with Other Impacted Communities: Islamophobia is just one branch on a far more expansive and deeply rooted tree of bigotry. Muslims need to work with other like-minded people to address racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia both within our community and outside of it. Standing up for justice for all is not only our civic duty, but our Islamic one.
  • Keep Demystifying Islam: Knowing something about Islam is an even stronger predictor of reduced Islamophobia, more so than knowing a Muslim personally. It is therefore not enough to humanize Muslims as people or to make Muslim friends. We should take every opportunity to educate the public on the Islamic faith.
  • Do More Than “Interfaith”: As Islamophobia is more politically driven in nature, it is important to reach out to diverse groups and communities. We must reach across racial, class, and cultural divides, to people of all faiths and no faith, rather than just those who are typically involved in interfaith engagement who tend to be white and middle class. Also, I have noticed that Muslims are rarely engaged in interfaith dialogue with black churches in and around our community.
  • Work for Greater Good: When Muslims work together with other communities for a good cause, we develop bonds of human brotherhood which lends itself to a reduction in the negative perception of our faith. Again, isn’t working for the greater good the main message of Islam?

In my own life, I decided to get involved with Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion, an organization that empowers individuals and communities to advance equity and opportunity for all. Through this, I have learned so much about the struggle to make our society more equitable.

It is the responsibility of each of us to get involved in our local community, whether it be volunteering at the local library or participating in City Council meetings, joining the board of a local non-profit or volunteering for the campaign of someone who is committed to bringing about positive change. We should not expect people to care about our struggles if we cannot find it within ourselves to genuinely care about theirs.

To learn more about Islamophobia Index and ISPU, please visit and support at https://www.ispu.org/.
12 Killed in Virginia Beach Shooting

by TMO Staff

Another American shooting leaves citizens shocked as 12 are killed in a shooting at a municipal building in the Virginia Beach Princess Anne area June 2. According to the Mass Shooting Tracker data, it was the 171 mass shooting incident as of this year.

Although many details regarding the shooting emerged the weekend following, not all questions were answered and resolved.

DeWayne Craddock, an engineer for Virginia Beach’s municipal government, open fired at a municipal building Friday afternoon killing 12 and injuring 4 others, the Virginia Beach Police reported. The forty-year-old shooter was then fatally wounded in a shootout with the police.

According to the National Post, Police Chief James A. Cervera announced that the investigation regarding the gunman’s motives will still continue.

Reports say that Craddock’s professional and personal life do not suggest or even hint towards a reason or motive. “We do not have anything glaring,” Cervera said.

Craddock emailed a letter of resignation from his job Friday morning, City Manager Dave Hansen told the New York Times at a news conference.

Cervera said. "I want to officially put in my (2) weeks’ notice to vacant (sic) my position of Engineer III with the City of Virginia Beach,” the letter read.

“It has been a pleasure to serve the City, but due to personal reasons I must relieve my position.”

Hansen told the New York Times that officials will examine Craddock’s relationship with co-workers further, yet he does not sense concern or misgiving there.

While the identification of the gunman has been confirmed, the question of why the gunman committed the massacre remains as investigations continue. Craddock’s family has publically apologized to the victim’s and their families and do not condone such violence.
Hijab Bans Undermine Women’s Rights, Not Just Religious Freedom

By Engy Abdelkader

This article was originally published on Sojourners.

From Central Asia to Western Europe to East Africa, government officials are restricting women’s personal freedoms. What initially began as a solitary ban on conspicuous religious symbols in France — and widely perceived attack on the hijab and Muslims — has spread globally. In response, new and innovative legal responses are necessary. While prohibitions on Muslim women’s religious attire are typically viewed as infringing on religious freedom, they also implicate international women’s rights.

In 2004, France proposed a law prohibiting headscarves and other conspicuous “religious symbols” showing a student’s faith beliefs in public schools. The measure’s proponents argued that it was necessary to protect the separation of church and state in public education. France implemented the law that same year. Unsurprisingly, this law disproportionately impacts female Muslim students who observe hijab.

To some, and particularly when viewed in isolation, the French law appears to be an insignificant blip on the human rights radar. In the 15 intervening years since its passage, however, similar measures have infected nations in all corners of the world. In 2015, Belgian officials prohibited headscarves at some public schools. In 2016, a high school in Spain demanded a student remove her headscarf; the decision was later overturned. In 2017, Kazakhstan — a Muslim-majority country in Central Asia — similarly prohibited the headscarf in public education. In January 2019, Kenya’s highest court upheld a prohibition on headscarves in schools, permitting each to determine its own dress code. Most recently, in May 2019, Austria approved a dress code prohibiting headscarves in primary education.

The public, news, and political discourse treat such cases strictly in terms of religion rather than framing such legal controversies as also implicating women’s rights. Interestingly, the international community typically views such restrictions laws, practices, and policies exclusively through the lens of religious freedom. But, each of these legal developments also detrimentally affects a woman’s right to education. Recall, the right to education is a fundamental human right recognized in a myriad international documents and treaties. Significantly, the right is set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), an international document that enumerates the basic rights and freedoms inherent to all human beings, irrespective of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, place of residence, or any other status. In addition, particular gendered protections are located in the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the only international agreement that addresses women’s rights in the political, civil, cultural, economic, and social spheres.

To fully realize a woman’s right to education, CEDAW requires it to be available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable. Accessibility requires a prohibition against discrimination and encompasses both a physical and economic component. Acceptability refers to the quality of the curriculum and instruction while adaptability takes into account that education must be responsive to a society’s needs. Taken together, these principles are intended to prevent discrimination and promote gender equality in education.

Significantly, official restrictions on Muslim women’s dress don’t satisfy these basic requirements. From Belgium to Kazakhstan to Kenya, education is unavailable and inaccessible to students who choose attire that the government disfavors. If they are forced to pursue studies in private institutions with sometimes inferior resources, curricula, and instruction, then education is more likely to be unacceptable.

In certain European contexts, this also demonstrates an inability to adapt to an increasingly multicultural society. Essentially, seemingly neutral laws and policies have a discriminatory effect on female students because of the disproportionate impact on Muslim women who wear a headscarf. Civil society should mount related legal challenges under CEDAW; the offending nations are all state parties.

It is important to note that the United States has adopted a distinct approach from its global counterparts. The case of Nashala Hearn is representative. In 2003, Nashala was an 11-year-old student enrolled in the sixth grade at the Ben Franklin Science Academy in Muskogee, Okla.

On the second anniversary of 9/11, school officials used the dress code to prohibit Nashala’s headscarf. She was suspended twice for refusing to remove her hijab and essentially, denied access to education. Her parents then sued, claiming the policy violated her First Amendment right to free speech and free exercise of religion under the U.S. Constitution. Indeed, both claims reflect Nashala’s gendered choice. Nashala would not have experienced discrimination but for her status as a woman. The school’s actions — at the intersection of religion and gender — undermined Nashala’s fundamental human right to an education.

Several months later, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) intervened in the case on Nashala’s behalf. In its legal filing, the DOJ alleged unconstitutional religious discrimination and insisted, “No student should be forced to choose between following her faith and enjoying the benefits of a public education.”

Shortly thereafter, the parties settled the matter. Nashala returned to school wearing her headscarf.

The case of Nashala Hearn and others like it diverge from the international community’s common understanding of a Muslim woman’s right to education. The public, news, and political discourse treat such cases strictly in terms of religion rather than framing such legal controversies as also implicating women’s rights. Too many overlook the compelling intersection between religion and gender. In truth, the restrictive measures impacting Muslim women around the world don’t simply threaten religious freedom, they also undermine women’s rights.

Engy Abdelkader is based at Rutgers University and serves as a Public Fellow at the Public Religion Research Institute. This writing was adapted from a longer piece, The Victimization of Muslim American Women and the Challenges of Imperial Feminism in Comparative Context.
Because the timing of Eid al-Fitr is based on the sighting of the moon as per the Islamic lunar calendar, it can be difficult to predict when the festival will happen in any given country. While some Muslims wait to see the moon themselves, many either use the calculated time of the new moon or base it on the declaration made in Saudi Arabia. This year many celebrated Eid al-Fitr on Tuesday, June 4 while others Wednesday, June 5.

Eid celebrations vary culture to culture, family to family but begin with a special communal prayer. Muslims like to wear their best clothes or special clothes for Eid and enjoy a variety of meals including sweets.

Eid was first celebrated by Prophet Muhammad in 624CE following a victory in battle to commemorate the holiday Muslims greet one another with the phrase “Eid Mubarak” which can be translated to “have a blessed holiday.

Traditionally, Eid al-Fitr is celebrated for three days and is a national holiday in Muslim countries. In many countries, Muslims gather outside in open spaces to pray due to a large number of attendees unable to fit in the mosque.
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AN APPEAL

to strengthen your media-your voice

Islamophobia is a major obstacle for peace and religious harmony in our world. If it is not countered properly and effectively, it has the potential to create havoc all over the world. Gruesome terrorism in Christchurch, New Zealand, causing 51 murders is a glimpse of the future.

This bogey of Islamophobia is raising its ugly head worldwide. We recently saw the most gruesome terrorist attack on the innocent congregation gathered for Friday prayers in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Islamophobia has its roots in the US and Europe among those who believe in the concepts of supremacy on the basis of race, religion and ethnicity. Only through a long process of dialogue, discussions and education, this menace that is spreading fast can be checked effectively.

We need to invest in our younger generation to be able to counter constant attacks on Islam and Muslims. We want them to be skillful communicators, excellent writers and objective researchers. Only through bringing out facts and demolishing myths and stereotypes, our young journalists can challenge the narratives spread by Islamophobes.

TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES:

(a) We must prepare a strong team of our own reporters and communicators that will report objectively.

(b) We must support students willing to do accurate and balanced research on the issues that impact Muslims and other fellow citizens in America.

(c) We must fund internship with State and Federal Law makers by providing living expense stipends for Muslim students.

(d) We must provide Education on the political process and facilitate Muslim participation in local and federal government.

We need your help in carrying out this strategy that will prepare a strong contingent of our own reporters to effectively convey our message.

We are together in our movement to achieve these objectives. Many of our past interns and writers are now part of the main stream media.

Our interns and writers with the help of researchers have carried out following research projects in the past.

Here are the examples:

1) Demographic survey of Michigan Muslims and its political impact on Congressional districts,
2) Safeguarding Muslim civil right in America,
3) States that have passed Halal laws
4) How cities with high Muslim concentration have effectively used their positions to gain access to local councils or other legislative bodies,
5) And a Muslim perspective on Obama healthcare, etc.

We want our next research project to focus on the sources of Islamophobia and hatred incited to pitch communities against each other. We need at least $50,000 for this project.

Please fund this project and donate generously. Your donations are tax deductible.

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Homemade Chicken Vegetable Soup Recipe

by Noor H Salem

While spring is around the corner, snowflakes and cold wind chills are still upon us. There is nothing more heart-warming than enjoying a bowl of warm homemade soup, especially if it is loaded with vitamins and nutrients.

While it’s easy to drive by a fast-food chain or grab canned soup from the supermarket on a brittle cold day, the vast majority of these soups are loaded with ingredients detrimental to your wellbeing. Both fast-food soup varieties or even canned soup from your favorite supermarket may contain an excessive amount of refined sodium, preservatives, genetically engineered ingredients, and unhealthy fats.

The recent increase in organic food, such as canned or boxed soups, puts one at the face of dichotomy on their journey to better health. While unquestionably, certified organic soup is healthier than the ubiquitous unhealthy options available, they may still be extremely high in sodium, and don’t contain the vitamins and minerals of soup you may make with homemade broth. Making your favorite soup at home is not only rather easy but much healthier for both you and your family.

The homemade chicken broth is the star of the show, as it is loaded with numerous vitamins and minerals. Bone broth is loaded with a myriad of health benefits, including improving digestion, strengthening your immune system, and enhancing your cognitive health. You can use either chicken or meat to make your broth; both are loaded with vitamins and minerals that will do your health wonders. It is best that you do not purchase any bone broth or stock from supermarkets; the majority are extremely high in sodium (most likely the bleached and highly processed version) and contain genetically modified ingredients. Not only is homemade bone broth easy to make, but it’s also extremely healthy. It prevents and cures simple ailments like the common cold and flu and even aids in healing autoimmune disease. Bone broth is great for leaky gut, cardiovascular health, cognitive health, and yes, even digestive health. It’s simply amazing how many benefits it has.

Don’t underestimate the broth and don’t toss it out! Store it in an airtight container for future use, or turn it into a scrumptious dish like this below.

Try this recipe, and you’ll find yourself making homemade broth more often. Adding in vegetables, such as carrots, onions, broccoli, celery, and potatoes, boost the nutritional value of this soup, and increase the dietary fiber value as well. It’s important to note that it’s recommended you use either cold-pressed avocado oil or organic butter, for caramelizing the onions.

While extra virgin olive oil is one of the healthiest oils and one I cover extensively in my book, Sunnah Superfoods, it’s best not to cook with it using high heat. Olive oil has a low smoke point, thus its remarkable health benefits are destroyed.

For that, drizzle it on your soup prior to serving to increase the nutritional value, and add flavor. Enjoy this soup aside your favorite dinner, or on its own as a satisfying and mouthwatering meal!

**Ingredients:**

- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 3 tablespoons cold-pressed avocado oil
- 2 large carrots, finely chopped
- 1 cup cubed potatoes
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped broccoli
- 6 cups homemade chicken bone broth
- 2 additional cups boiling water
- 2 cups deboned shredded chicken (use from the broth’s chicken)
- 1 teaspoon turmeric, ground
- 1 teaspoon Himalayan pink salt
- ¼ teaspoon ginger, ground
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

**Directions:**

1. Place the diced onions and avocado oil in a large pot, and cook on high heat for about 2 minutes. Add the carrots, celery, potatoes, and broccoli. Stir fry for approximately 5 minutes, or until the onions are caramelized.
2. Add the chicken, spices, boiling water, and broth. Stir. Cover and cook on medium high heat for about 15-20 minutes, or until the vegetables soften up.
3. Remove from heat. Using a hand-blender, blend until it’s smooth and creamy.
4. Top with the fresh parsley and lemon juice. Serve warm.

Noor H. Salem is an author, speaker, and Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach, from Michigan. Noor works with clients in better understanding their bodies and healing with natural foods through her wellness practice, Holistic Noortrition. She presents various workshops, school lectures, group coaching classes, and community lectures on the topic of holistic health. Noor recently published her book, SUNNAH SUPERFOODS, a culmination of life-changing recipes and remedies, with a foreword by Dr. Waleed Basyouni. Her book consists of prophetic hadith, modern research, and delicious recipes, and is in the process of being translated into other languages.

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The book, in fact, a manual on how to make America stronger. His book proves that the American dream is still alive and bright. Every step he took directed towards those who participated in building strong local communities on the basis of their personal ties with their neighbors. The book not only gives a glimpse in the life of an immigrant but also creates a positive understanding of the faith he was born with, in India and reborn in the US. He demystifies several myths prevailing around Islam such as Islam is a totalitarian faith or a religion that disregards the notion of equality of the other. The book by narrating examples through the details of his personal and family life proves that Islam is at ease with all even with those who are fearful of it. It promotes the idea of dialogue, better understanding among communities, interacting with neighbors, working with other religious communities and standing for those who are neglected and marginalized. It encourages an institutionalized response to racism, bigotry, prejudice, and hatred on the basis of religion or ethnicity. The book explains to its readers that an average Muslim in America is no different than an average Christian or Mormon, Jews or atheist in pursuit of happiness. It documents the moment of an average Muslim American who gets perturbed by acts of violence around him, by statements of bigotry and racism against the other and by the apathy of people to challenge the wrong and injustice. The book highlights the driving principle in Begg’s philosophy that has constantly inspired him to interact with people on one to one basis and through their friendship work to bring about changes in the world. Begg believes in an open and candid society. He believes that good relations with neighbors would ultimately bring down the walls that separate people and inspire people to be selfless in their work for the community. Begg believes that relations with good neighbors become meaningful when one’s family is in harmony with its members, Begg proves that his interfaith marriage with a non-Muslim wife, who joined his faith, a practicing family can be raised. Begg demonstrates his selflessness along with the selfless of others in building communities and institution for a stronger cohesive America. The book is not just a 50-year story of an immigrant, but a reaffirmation of the values that America was founded and Americans have encouraged new immigrants to pursue. The book demolishes the myth that America is not suitable for raising a believing and practicing peaceful Muslim family and offers examples from Begg’s experience that the country is perhaps the best in raising practicing families. The book reasserts the country that Muslims do not live in isolation or promote seclusion. They are an integral part of the country and their local communities. The book is a must read for Muslims and non-Muslims. Every Muslim immigrant or native would find a reflection of his/her life reflection in the book and every non-Muslims would be reassured that a Muslim neighbor is as much committed to a just and peaceful society as any other American is.
Cont. from page 1. Eid Emerging

Cont. from page 1. Who’s Afraid

government bodies, private businesses and media outlets recognize Eid as an American festi-
val and participate in the festivities by visiting Muslim places of wor-
ship.

Before the Eid, each Muslim offers charity to all those members of the community who finan-
cially are weak. Islamic centers and mosques dis-
tribute millions of dollars to such people. On the
Eid day, Muslims in most cities invite non-Muslim
leaders to join the fest-
ivities. The presence of
state officials in Muslim
places of worship on the
Eid day has never been
regular. The Eid mess-
gages issued by the Presi-
dent and state officials or Congress members have also become regular.

Even big departmental stores have started cat-
tering to the Eid related needs of Muslim. Several
stores carry dates on a regular basis. Macy
recently introduced gift items specially designed for
Eid.

In almost every state in the US, the community
now organizes Eid pic-
cn or special program to bring the community
together. Eid is emerging as a symbol of Muslim
unity and it is most likely that in coming years, it would not only symbolize unity among
Muslims but also a suc-
cessful liberalized nation-
al unity. Certainly, this
day has the potential to
become a day of national solidarity for all.

Eid is not just a religious festival for Muslims. It
may have great signifi-
cance for everyone. It of-
fers an empirical reality about disciplining oneself for
promoting good. It proves that humans
can organize their lives around concepts that
are universal and useful for all. It proves that
individuals have been endowed with energy to
regulate their lives on
their own terms.

The mathematics
called al-jabir, which literally means “reunion of
broken parts.”

In the early 13th cen-
tury, an Italian mathema-
tician named Fibonaccii,
who studied calculation with an Arab master in Muslim North Africa, found the numerals and their
decimal system much more practical
than the Roman system, and soon popularized them in Europe, where the figures became known as “Arabic numer-
als.”

Meanwhile, the dis-
cipline of al-jabir be-
came “algebra,” and al-
Khwārizmī’s name evolved into “algorithm.”

Today, many words in
English have Arabic roots; a short list would include adject-
ive, allude, alchemy, al-
akai, almanac, jute,
mask, muslin, nadir,
sugar, syrup, tariff and
zenith. Some scholars
think that even the word “check,” which you get from
a bank, comes from the Arabic word sakk, which means “written document.” (Its plural, sukuk, is still used in Islamic banking to refer to bonds.)

There is a reason these Western terms have Ar-
abic roots: Between the
eight and 12th centu-
ries, the Muslim world, whose lingua franca was
Arabic, was much more
creative than Chris-
tian Europe, which was then in the late Middle
Ages. Muslims were the
pioneers in mathematics, geometry, physics, astron-
omy, biology, medicine,
architecture, trade, and, most important, philosophy. To be sure, Muslims had inherited these sciences from other cultures, such as the ancient Greeks, Eastern Christians, Jews and Hindus. Still, they ad-
vanced those disciplines with their own innova-
tions and transmitted them to Europe.

Why delve so deep into this much forgotten his-
tory? Because there are lessons for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Among the latter are Western conservatives, who are passionate
about protecting the
legacy of Western civil-
ization, which they often
define as exclusively “Judeo-Christian.” Of course, Western civil-
ization does have a great
accomplishment worth
preserving: the Enlight-
enment, which gave
us freedom of thought, freedom of religion, the abolition of slavery, equality before the law, and democracy.

Those values should not be sacrificed to the postmodern tribalism called “identity politics.” But Western conserva-
tives retreat to tribalism thumped in this.

They deny the wisdom in,
and the contributions of,
sources that are not Judeo-Christian. The third
great Abrahamic religion, Islam, also had a
hand in the making of the modern world, and
honoring that legacy would help establish
a more constructive dia-
logue with Muslims.

Of course, we Muslims
ourselves have a big
question to answer: Why
was our civilization once
so creative, and why have we lost that golden
age?

Some Muslims find a
simple answer in piety and the lack thereof,
thinking that decline
when Muslims turned “sinful.” Others
assume that the early
majesty can be traced to
mighty leaders, whose
reincarnations they hope
to see again. Some find
solace in conspiracy the-
ories that blame enemies
outside and “traitors” within. Above all, it would create
among Muslims a sense
of unity. Certainly, this
can encourage Muslims to
come together to help
the community to
make progress.

Here is a more realistic
explanation: The early
Islam civilization was creative because it was
open-minded. At least
some Muslims had the
urge to learn from other civilizations. There
was some room for free
speech, which was ex-
to.

That allowed the work
of towering Greek philoso-
phers such as Aristotle
to be translated and
discussed, theologians
of different stripes to
speak their minds, and
scholars to find indepen-
dent patronage. From
the 12th century onward, however, a more uniform
and less rational form
of Islam was imposed by
despot caliphs and sul-
tans. So Muslim thought
turned insular, repetitive
and systemic sciences is
geometry that is totally
useless. “The sum of
two angles in a triangle is
two right angles — what benefit
does it have?”

Exactly why this tragic
closing of the Muslim
mind happened, and how
it can be overturned,
is the biggest question
facing Muslims today.

We should not lose
time through denials and
blame games. At the same
time, how-
ever, others should not
make the mistake of
judging Islamic civil-
ization by looking at its
worst products, many of
which are now rampant.

It is a great civilization
that has made significant
contributions to humanity,
especially the West.

That is why you
should know about the
Arabic numerals.”

And that is
to good. “... we
must have
lost that golden
time through
denials and
blame games.”

Mustafa Akyol is a
se-
ior fellow on Islam
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My case and point. The zabardust khutbah without any effect. Two days later in two seconds flat, things were back to the way they were. Earlier that week, I was at the musallah on the other side of town when a man told my 8.5-year-old son, he was not allowed on the men’s side. My son, being the eldest, is actually quiet and docile. He was going back to his dad and to get his shoes. He came back and said he was not allowed on the men’s side by some man. Love to all the men who think parenting is supposed to only happen on the women’s side of the mosque. And love to all the women on the women’s side who cannot stand the sight of a child being a child. So please reserve those crocodile tears about losing our youth for the 30 minutes of a Friday once a year and forget it about those tears at all other times. I carry a pack of tissues and diaper wipes at all times.

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