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The issue is devoted to the thousand year history of female poets of Iran

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Mission Statement

The mission of IMPMS is to make people aware of the great contributions of Islamic civilization to the West, and indeed to the whole world, by presentations and dissemination of written and audio-visual materials, and also through participation in academic conferences as well as by organizing events on this subject.

Welcome to IMPMS! The goal of our non-profit, nonsectarian organization is to make people better aware of the contributions that Islamic civilization has made to this country, and indeed to the whole world, in many fields of knowledge and art. Between about the 8th and 16th centuries CE (still known to many as A.D.), the Islamic civilization that prevailed from Spain (before 1492) to India and Central Asia, as well as in North and West Africa, led the world in development of mathematics, astronomy, physics, medical science and practice, and other scientific fields, as well as social sciences. The works of its great poets are still recited, and translations of some have become best-sellers in the U.S. Its architectural gems are renowned and have had an important influence on architecture throughout the world. Manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and related languages are highly valued by museums and collectors for the beauty of the calligraphy and in some cases the delicate miniature paintings that adorn them – not to mention the scientific knowledge or engaging tales or fables their texts may convey. Music from lands where Islam was or is prevalent has also had notable influence elsewhere, including the Americas.

Not least, medieval Islamic civilization offers good examples of interfaith cooperation. Not only Muslims, but also Christians, Jews and people of other faiths were among the great scholars, writers and artists. We believe it important that Americans, especially our youth, learn more about medieval and post-medieval Islamic civilization in order to be better prepared to counter the negative views and ill-informed prejudices about Islam and Muslims that have spread so widely in recent years. IMPMS uses various means to inform people about the many positive contributions of Islamic civilization to the whole world. We give talks at schools and colleges, as well as at churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other houses of faith. We participate in academic conferences. Articles about important scholars are included in our quarterly Newsletters. Another method we used in 2011 was an Essay Contest for high school juniors and seniors. In June 2012 IMPMS sponsored the screening in Dallas of an award-winning documentary film entitled “Out of Cordoba,” which tells the history and the significance today of two great contemporaneous 12th century scholars from Cordoba, Spain, one Muslim, the other Jewish.

We would welcome your support. For details on how to become an IMPMS member, contact:

Mr. Moazam Syed mf897s@aol.com

PLEASE JOIN IMPMS TODAY

IMPMS goals are to disseminate information about Islamic civilization's contribution to world civilization through presentations of lectures and seminars to students and teachers at all levels from Middle School to University and to establish a library of books, manuscripts, and other learning resources of and about major Medieval and Post-Medieval Muslim scholars in the Islamic World.

If you like to support these activities, please become member of IMPMS and donate generously

For membership please send name, address, phone number, e-mail address and \$25 annual membership fee to IMPMS:

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**“When God solves your problems, you have faith in His abilities;
when God doesn't solve your problems He has faith in your abilities”**

Imam al-Qurtubi: The Andalusian Commentator of the Holy Qur'an

Al-Qurtubi: The Man and His Scholarship

By Yushau Sodiq, Associate Professor at TCU

He was Imam Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Abi Bakr bin Farh, al-Ansari, al-Khazraji, al-Andalusi. His nickname was Abu `Abdullah. He was born at al-Maqqari, Spain in 580/1179 and received his early education, knowledge of the Qur'an, Arabic language, and poetry from his parents and from other renowned scholars in Spain. Al-Qurtubi traveled to Egypt where he learned from prominent Muslim scholars of his time like Shaykh `Abdullah bin Sulayman bin Da'ud al-Ansari and Abu `Amir Yahya bin `Amir bin Ahmad al-Ash `ari. He finally settled down in al-Munyah in Upper Egypt. The year of his arrival in Egypt is unknown. He died and was buried in al-Munyah, Egypt in 671/1273 C.E.

In Egypt, Al-Qurtubi devoted all his time and energy to scholarship. He was one of the greatest Maliki scholars, versed in many Islamic sciences, especially the science of interpreting the *Qur'an* (*ilm al-tafsir*) and Islamic jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*). He taught and debated with his teachers until he won their applause and recognition. Al-Qurtubi wrote a number of books on various Islamic subjects and sciences, which include:

1) *Al-Asna fi sharh Asma' Allah al-Husna* (on the interpretation of the beautiful names of God).

2) *Kitab Sharh al-Taqqasi fi Mukhtasar Al-Tamhid* (Treatise on the explanation of *Taqqasi*) The Abridged Version of Al-Tamhid by Ibn Abd Al-Barr.

3) *Al-Muqtabas Fi Sharh Muwatta Malik bin Anas* (The Selected Commentary on the Muwatta of Imam Malik bin Anas).

5) *Al-Jami` li Ahkam al-Qur'an* (The Compendium of the Legal Rulings of the Qur'an).

Al-Dhahabi, in his work, *Tarikh al-Islam*, describes al-Qurtubi as: "An Imam versed in numerous branches of scholarship, an ocean of learning whose works testify to the wealth of his in-depth knowledge, the width of his intelligence and his superior worth." His contemporaries described him as a pious person. His ascetic life did not debar him from learning, studying, writing, teaching, and contributing scholarly works to his community.

Al-Qurtubi and His Tafsir "Al-Jami` fi Ahkam al-Qur'an."

The legal approach which al-Qurtubi follows was an attempt to interpret the *Qur'an* by deducing from the text the laws that relate to human actions to enable the believers to know what is lawful and unlawful. The jurists consider the *Qur'an* "a book of law." This legal approach to the *Qur'an* is not free from criticism. Hassan Hanafi, a modern Islamist, has pointed out that despite the fact that the rules which were deduced by the scholars of the past were socially oriented in many cases, these rules were presented as "absolute laws," accepted as they were, and hardly challenged by succeeding generations. Hanafi claims that the time frame of the establishment of these rules was ignored, and the changing nature of human beings and their environment were given little attention. Therefore, the laws became stagnant because they fail to meet and satisfy the modern legal needs of the community. Hanafi appeals for a new interpretation of the *Qur'an*.

Al-Qurtubi's Objectives in His Tafsir

Undoubtedly, his most celebrated work is: "*al-Jami` li Ahkam al-Qur'an, al-Mubayyinun lima Tadammanahu min al-Sunnan wa ayi al-Qur'an*." This work became the indispensable sourcebook for scholars of the *Qur'an*, especially for Islamic law students. Al-Qurtubi did not mention when or where he began this work or when he finished it. Zalat argues that al-Qurtubi might have begun this work after he left Qurtuba and finished it at al-Munyah in Upper Egypt. Al-Qurtubi states in his introduction his main purposes and objectives. He says:

Since the book of Allah contains all of Islamic sciences, ... I found it worthy to work on the *Qur'an* all my life. I would spend all my time on it with full attention. This commentary will include short stories and wise sayings. I will dwell on forms of Arabic language, on its conjugation (*I'rab*) and on different readings of the *Qur'an* (*qira'at*). I will bring forth many prophetic traditions (*ahadith*) to support whatever I say as regard the laws and revelation of the verses (of the *Qur'an*). I will also narrate the occasions of revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*), elucidate and reconcile their meanings (where differences are found), and explain those (matters/cases) that are difficult to comprehend by citing the opinions of the forbearers (*salaf salih*), and narrate the views of those who followed them among the succeeding generations.

After elucidating his objectives, he lays down his methods in concrete terms. Al-Qurtubi discusses and describes fully all related subjects about the importance of studying the *Qur'an* and its sciences.

Al-Qurtubi's methodology in his *tafsir* can be summarized as follows:

a) Explaining the meanings of the verses of the *Qur'an* in general and legal verses in particular. It is on this basis that some scholars have considered and recognized this *tafsir* a treatise on the science of the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*Usul al-Fiqh*).

b) Narrating the occasions of revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*), that is, the incidents or circumstances with reference to which the revelations came to Muhammad (PBUH).

c) Elaborating the strange and difficult words of the *Qur'an* (*Gharib al-Qur'an*).

d) Referring each opinion to its author or authors.

e) Narrating different versions of variant readings (*qira'at*) of the *Qur'an* and establishing a *Qur'anic* word's etymology (*I'rab*) wherever possible.

f) Omitting many stories from the historians and story-tellers, especially the narration of the Jews (*Isra'iliyat*), which he considers highly prejudiced against Islam and unreliable.

g) Reporting from trustworthy narrators (*thiqat*), especially those who wrote books on Islamic laws and those who were recognized and admired by the Muslim scholars of the past, the *salaf salih*.

h) Explaining the opinions of each scholar or the views of each school of thought, and analyzing their reasoning without any prejudice. Al-Qurtubi had occasionally supported the views of other schools of law rather than his own Maliki school. He said that he would be objective and support the truth wherever he found it.

The tafsir of al-Qurtubi "al Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an" remains the only classical text on the legal interpretations of the entire holy Qur'an. There are some other books and authors like Imam al-Shafi' and Ibn al-Arabi, who interpreted the Qur'an from legal perspective, but they limited themselves to the legal verses (ayat al-ahkam) in the Qur'an. It was al-Qurtubi alone who pioneered the interpretation of the entire Qur'an from a legal perspective. Finally, al-Qurtubi in his exegesis was a free researcher who was polite in his criticism, kind in his responses to his opponents, thorough in his arguments, deep in his discourse, and rigorous in his analysis. Al-Qurtubi was a man of great modesty. He lived a simple life and died peacefully at Munya in Egypt in 671 /1273 C. E. His book, al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, had continued to have great impact on Muslim commentators of the Qur'an until today. No Muslim scholar can be recognized as an authority in Tafsir without his familiarity with Al-Qur'tubi's work. It is one of the works which are indispensable for any Muslim commentator.

International Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Studies on June 19th 2013 at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO



Dr. Ahmed has chaired a meeting at the International Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Studies on June 19th 2013 at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO on "Thomas Aquinas in the Middle Ages and Beyond". He also presented a paper on "Medieval Muslim Scholar Ibn Rushd (Averroes): Influence of his Philosophical ideas on the West".

Importance of Education and Muslim Scientists Contribution to the Knowledge during Medieval Years" April 21st 2013

Dr. Ahmed has presented a lecture to the youth group at Colleyville Mosque, Colleyville, TX. He outlined the contributions of Muslim scholars and scientist have made between 8th and 14th century in various fields of knowledge including Mathematica, Philosophy, Medicine, Surgery, Optics, History, Chemistry and Social Sciences. The presentation was followed by a question answer session.



Dr. Ahmed with Dr. Asra Khan
Principal Sunday Islamic School Colleyville, TX

Dr. Ahmed with member of Youth Group
Islamic Center Colleyville, TX

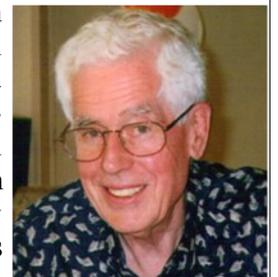
UNESCO Marks 900th Anniversary of Azerbaijani Poetess Mahsati Ganjavi



The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) celebrated the 900th anniversary of Azerbaijani poetess Mahsati Ganjavi in Paris on May 16, 2013. Mahsati Ganjavi, a 12th century poetess, was born in the Azerbaijani northwestern city of Ganja, which was then within a large empire ruled by a Turkic sultan. Mahsati's poetry was in Persian, which was the administrative and literary language of the empire. On May 18, 2013, her 900th anniversary was again celebrated in another UNESCO event, this time in Azerbaijan itself. Elchin Efendiyev, Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, spoke there about the creativity of Mahsati Ganjavi.

IMPMS Says Farewell to Our Founding Member, Past President and the Dear Friend A Brief Profile of Mr. Edward Thomas

Born and grew up in Westfield, New Jersey, about 20 miles west of New York City. B.A. in Mathematics from Yale University. 3 years in U.S. Navy. Taught mathematics at a high school in Kabul, Afghanistan, for 2 years. After getting an M.A. in International Relations from Columbia University, joined U.S. Foreign Service. Following full-time study of Persian at the Foreign Service Institute, had several assignments in Iran, including as American Vice Consul in Tabriz and then Consul in Mashhad. Post-graduate Near East studies at Princeton University 1962-63. On Iran Desk at State Department, Washington DC. Later was Peace Corps Director in Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), then in Iran. Taught in France 1979-81, then lived and worked in Morocco, first as a USAID project chief, then for nine years as Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission.



After retiring from that position, moved to Dallas in 1995. As a Fulbright senior scholar, was Professor of International Relations at a university in Uzbekistan 1999-2000. Has published many articles concerning the Muslim world and various of its countries. An active member of the Institute of Medieval and Post-Medieval Studies since its founding in 2005 and was its president in 1911 and 1912. Has taught Continuing Education courses at SMU on "Great Thinkers of the Muslim World" and, earlier, "From Kabul to Baghdad: How a Turbulent Region Got That Way."