

'1001 Inventions by Muslims' Awarded

By Arwa Aburawa

A Muslim scientist who helped chart the lost innovations of Islam in the book *1001 Inventions: Muslim Heritage in Our World*, has recently been granted a fellowship by the British Science Association for his efforts.

Over the last two decades, Professor Salim Al-Hassani has helped reclaim Islamic scientific, artistic and techno-

logical advances which have been marginalized or simply forgotten in a world focused on Western advancements.

Professor Al-Hassani told IslamOnline.net that "the '1001 Inventions' project is about the history of science and focuses upon the thousand year period from the 7th century onwards that is currently under-appreciated by many around the world."

In fact, the period between the 7th and 17th centuries has been labeled as the 'Dark Ages' in the West despite the exceptional scientific advances in the Muslim world.

Science and the 'Co-operation of Civilizations'

In a post-9/11 world, where everyone seems to point to a 'clash of civilizations' there is clearly a need for more cultural understanding and respect for the Islamic world and Al-Hassani maintains that science can play a significant role in this.

"By showing the common scientific and cultural heritage of the world's different societies, we can give people a new found respect for the different cultures of the world," he said. "This also helps to overcome short-sighted misconceptions about cultural superiority, and helps the world appreciate and respect the beliefs, lifestyles and history of their fellow man."

He went on to say that he hopes "this will reduce extremist ideas, cement social cohesion and empower young people to consider careers in science and technology."

The professor was also keen to point out that the '1001 Inventions' book does not focus entirely on Muslim scientific achievement but rather shows that it was the contribution of many different cultures that had helped create the modern era.

"The achievements of the Muslim world were built upon the knowledge they received from other civilizations: the Greeks, Babylonians, Assyrians, Chinese and Indians," the professor explained.

"And the Renaissance that took place in Western Europe was only possible thanks to the huge influence that the Muslim civilization (among



Professor Salim al-Hassani

others) had on European thinkers, scholars and scientists."

Science versus Religion?

The Foundation for Science Technology and Civilisation (FSTC), which is the educational foundation behind the '1001 inventions' book, recently distributed 3,000 free copies to UK schools and plans to distribute 90,000 copies of the book to US schools in the next 12 months.

This move has been interpreted as a direct reaction to Atheist Richard Dawkins' of the book *The God Delusion* who distributed free DVD's of his work to UK schools in celebration of Darwin's 200th anniversary. Whilst dismissing that they were solely motivated by Dawkins, the FSTC did admit that they hoped to "encourage debate about the relationship between science, faith and culture."

Al-Hassani also remarked

that, "Whilst the Dawkins DVD teaches young people about 'the experimental scientific method', it fails to point out that it was pioneered by a religious physicist called Ibn Al-Haytham, who saw no conflict in being both a Muslim and a scientist."

World-wide Audience

To continue their educational work, 1001 Inventions will be launching a brand new and interactive exhibition at the Science Museum in London in early 2010. This will be the first of a four year tour.

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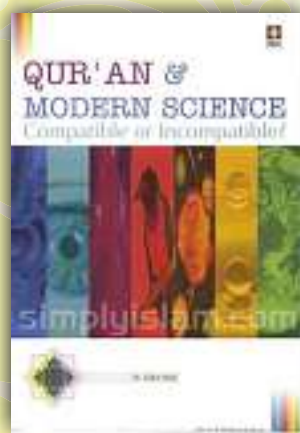
كتاب الأسبوع Book of the Week

Quran & Modern Science: Compatible or Incompatible?

Written By Zakir Naik

Al-Qur'an, however, is not a book of Science but a book of 'Signs'. These signs invite Man to realize the purpose of his existence on earth, and to live in harmony with Nature. Al-Qur'an is truly a message from Allah, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. It contains the same Message of the Oneness of God, that was preached by all prophets, right from Adam, Musa, Isa to Muhammad (PBUH).

Several detailed tomes have been written on the subject of Qur'an and modern science and further research in this field is on. Insha'Allah, this research will help mankind to come closer to the Words of the Almighty. This booklet contains only a few of the scientific facts present in Al-Qur'an. I cannot claim to have done full justice to the



subject.

Prof. Tejasen accepted Islam on the strength of just one scientific 'sign' mentioned in Al-Qur'an. Some people may require ten signs while some may require hundred signs to be convinced about the Divine origin of Al-Qur'an. Some would be unwilling to accept the Truth even after being shown a thousand signs.

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