

CHAPTER THREE

Muslim Thinkers ⁱ

O Allah (The Exalted) bless the One whose intercession is accepted on the Day of Resurrection.

There are some Muslim thinkers who do not like the interpretation of Qur'an or Sunnah in terms of scientific terminology. However, I believe there is nothing wrong in attempting to understand or interpret "Islam" in the light of modern knowledge. Through this I want to encourage freethinking, stimulate research ideas among Muslim scholars, scientists and students so that our understanding of Qur'an and Sunnah can be furthered.

The Globe

The Muslim scholar Al-Idrisi (1099-1165 CE), who was born in Ceuta, Spain in 1099 CE, made a 'Globe' of the world out of silver weighing 400 kilograms, for the Norman King of Sicily, Roger II (1093-1154 CE) in 1139 CE to come to Cordoba to Sicily and make the king a mapⁱⁱ (prior to Roger II, Sicily had been under Muslim rule). The 'Globe' exactly recorded on it seven continents with trade routes, rivers, major cities & mountains! What's more, Columbus, who thought the world was flat, took the map which was originally taken from Al-Idrisi's work from his voyages nearly 400 years later!"

Glasses

In 9th Century Islamic Spain, the Muslim scientist Ibn Faras invented eyeglasses – they were manufactured & sold throughout Spain for over two Centuries! Roger Bacon, the English scientist, first mentioned 'glass lenses' for improving vision in the 13th Century!"

Philosophy

The great Muslim philosopher Al-Firabi (870-950 CE) was once a gardener! His famous book, 'Fusu al-Hikam', had a great influence on philosophy & was used as a text book for several centuries in Europe!"

Valleys

The great Muslim scientists Ibn Sina also known in the West as Avicenna (980-1037 CE) & al-Biruni (973-1050 CE) mentioned in the 11th Century that geographical formation of valleys were formed over long periods of time by streams. The European drest, is noted as being the first to mention this is 1756 CE, 700 years later!"

The Moon

Muslims scholars, mathematicians, scientists, astronomers, physicians & philosophers including Thabit bin Qurrah (836-901 CE), Al Battani (858-929 CE), Al-Sufi (903-986 CE), Al-Hitham (965-1040 CE), Al-Zarqali (1028-1100 CE) & Ulugh Beg (1394-1449 CE), all have a surface feature of the moon named after them!"

No doubt these great Muslims are light in darkness!

ⁱ Scientific 'Did you knows' by Doctor Z. Haq & Doctor A.Zahoor.

ⁱⁱ 1001 inventions, p. 250