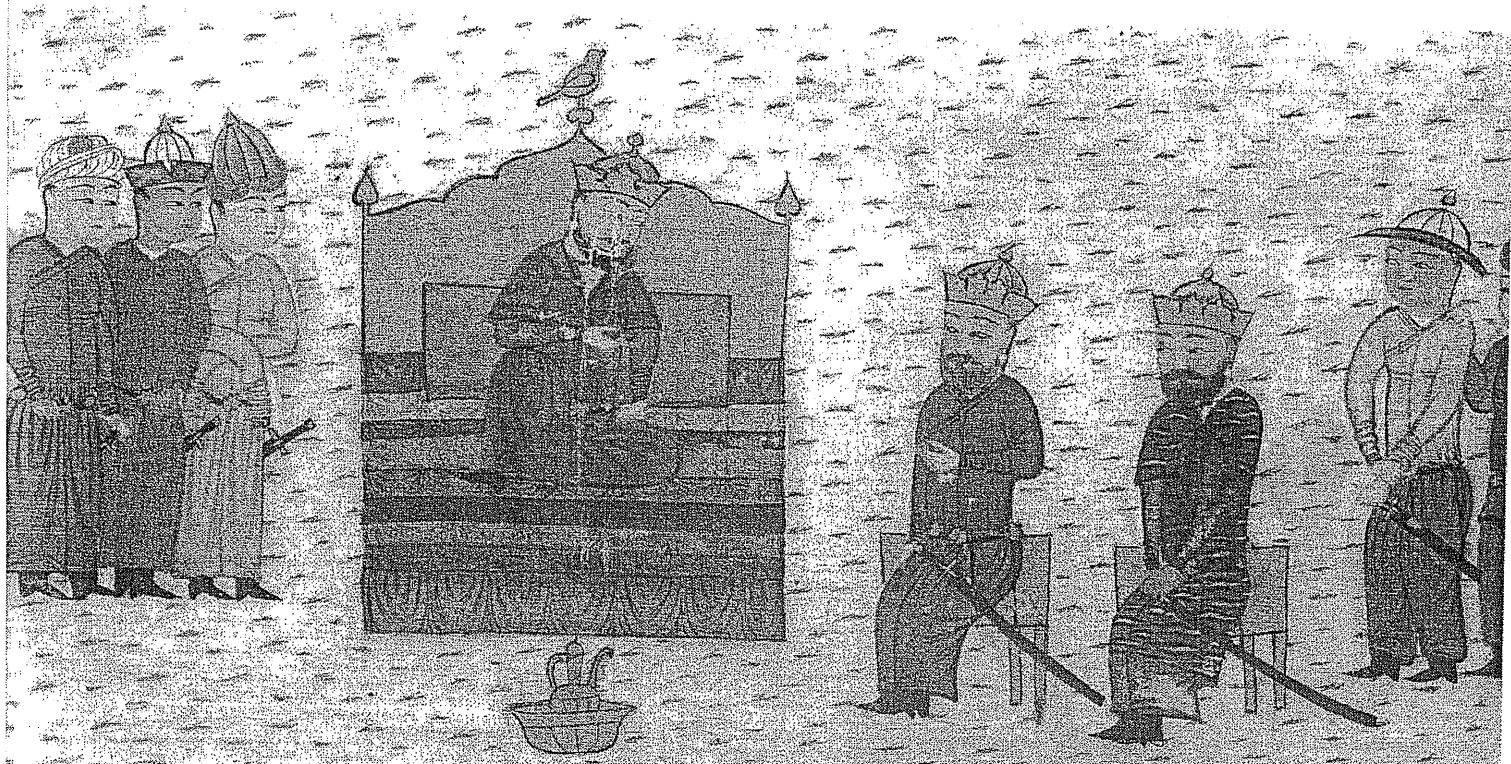


MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA



گذشته سخنهای باز
 پس بر نهادند کردن
 ابارستم و نامور پهلوان
 جوکوب و جوکو در رکت
 بااد و وورانی از رکت

جهاندار تا نیمه شب نخت
 بنیم برآمد ز درگاه شاه
 پنجید شد شهریار جوان
 ز لشکر بر رفتند ازادگان
 هم بوم ایران سر این رکت

نهادند خوان و می ارا
 شب تیره راکت سر باید
 بدان نامور بارگاه آمد
 ز بس جوشن و خود و ترک و
 جوکوب و شاپور و ارام

بس جوار نخت بر خا
 کشید تیغ از میان
 کان نزد شاه آمد
 کشید خورشید
 و جوکو در رکت و کوب

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GARDENS AND GARDENING

canal led to a basin on high ground near the palace, where it could be released as needed, flowing by gravity into the palace and gardens. When the source of water was lower than the field, garden, or residence where it was to be used, either a *noria* (waterwheel) or *shaduf* (pole and lever) was used to lift the water in buckets. Alternatively, in some landscapes a *qanat* (subterranean canal) could tap the elevated water table at the base of a mountain and carry it underground for many miles to a human-made oasis of farms and gardens. The mutual reliance on irrigation is but one indication of the close connection between gardening and farming.

Due to the ephemeral nature of plant life, no gardens survive from the medieval era, but historical descriptions, botanical treatises, agricultural manuals, and even poetry reflect the importance of gardening. Manuscript paintings (such as the "Bayad wa Riyad" and Mongol copies of the "Shanameh") that depict gardens are equally important, although these are scarce prior to the thirteenth century. Although they are untrustworthy as literal representations, they do show that gardens and landscapes provided the setting for public ceremonies, private colloquia, amorous trysts, hunts, outdoor banquets, and other social gatherings.

Few medieval Islamic gardens have been excavated because of the high cost and the specialized expertise necessary for soil archaeology. Consequently, we know very little about the specific botanical contents of early gardens, gardening tools, planting pots, or even correct soil surface levels. One exception is the Alhambra, where the original soil level in the Court of the Lions was observed .80 meters below the present pavement surface. Similarly, at the Generalife's Patio del Acequia, emergency excavations following a fire revealed an original soil level .70 meters lower than the present surface and pits for large shrubs in the corners of the garden. At Rusafa (Syria), the existence of a garden was inferred merely from the walkways and the lack of other built fabric. However, such excavations are rare and usually occur as an unanticipated archaeological by-product. Generally, site directors respect architectural authenticity more than the accurate design or horticultural contents of historic gardens. The unfortunate result is that medieval Islamic garden sites are today routinely planted with botanical matter from the Western hemisphere and modern hybrids that lack the intoxicating perfume of their medieval ancestors, or simply left as bare earth.

D. FAIRCHILD RUGGLES

See also **Agriculture; Horticulture; Irrigation; Technology; Mills, Water, and Wind**

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GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Compared to its contemporaries in the Middle Ages, Islamic society significantly promoted equality between the sexes and improved the social status and rights of women. Yet, judged from the perspective of modern conceptions of women's rights, some of the practices associated with Islam in the Middle Ages may appear discriminatory, owing to continually changing conceptions about women's identity and role in society and family. Islam emerged in a patriarchal society where fathers felt deeply ashamed for having a female child, often culminating in the common practice of pre-Islamic Arabia of burying her alive. There was no limit to the number of wives a man could have. Suppression of women and inequality between the sexes were apparent in all types of interaction.

With the emergence of Islam, the Qur'an reframed gender difference as part of God's creation and will (Q 49:13). The Qur'an is explicit in calling for the elimination of practices and customs that discriminate against women, with the purpose of establishing equality between the sexes, and it curses those who kill their daughters out of shame (Q 81:8–9). The interpretation and implementation of these reforms has varied across the considerable historical and geographical spans encompassed by Islamic societies. Some of the local customs of pre-Islamic times survived by concealing themselves behind a veneer of religious sanction. Consequently, the Prophet Muhammad's ideals concerning equality between the sexes have seldom been realized in a full and consistent manner.

The Prophet Muhammad demonstrated through his life and actions the special importance of equality, proper etiquette, and the mutual expression of love and kindness between the sexes. He strictly prohibited the beating of women, which was a common practice before his time. He also successfully campaigned against killing newborn daughters out of shame. He firmly established women's rights to property,

inheritance, and equality before the law. With the purpose of promoting personal modesty and preventing sexual corruption, he enjoined men and women not to expose their bodies in public, except in the company of their spouses and family members. He also commanded both men and women to lower their gaze in public places. He prohibited celibacy and strongly encouraged marriage, stating: "Marriage is my practice; whoever turns away from my practice is not from me." The Prophet first married at age twenty-five, to his wife Khadija, a forty-year-old widow. They lived together for about 25 years and had six children. After her death, he contracted other marriages with elderly and widowed women, mostly to support them and keep them from destitution. The one exception to this was Aisha, the only virgin among his wives.

The Qur'an declares that God created man and woman from one soul in a perfect manner: "O people! Take shelter in your Lord, Who created you from a single self and created from it its mate, and spread, from these two, men and women in abundance. And guard yourselves [for Allah] in Whom you claim [your rights with one another], and do not cut the ties [of kinship] to the wombs [that bore you]. Truly Allah is ever watchful over you." (Q 4:1). It is significant that the wording of the previous verse is explicit in ruling out that the first woman was derived or created from the first man. Instead, both are created simultaneously from a single primordial self.

Love and affection between men and women likewise comes from God: "And among His Signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may find tranquility in them, and He has put love and mercy between you. Surely in this are Signs for a people who reflect" (Q 30:21). God's purpose in creating differences between the sexes is not only to facilitate reproduction but also to play a role in God's self-disclosure through human diversity at other levels: "O people, surely We have created you female and male and made you peoples and tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Truly the most honorable among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most conscious of Allah, warding off evil [within and without]" (Q 49:13).

According to the Qur'an, the duties and the rights of both sexes are the same, except that man is elevated one degree above woman because particular financial responsibilities are imposed upon him as the head of the household (see Q 2:221; 3:195; 4:32; 4:124; 6:139; 9:67-68; 9:71-72; 16:58-59; 16:97; 24:30-31; 33:35; 33:58; 33:73; 40:40; 42:49-50; 47:19; 48:5-6; 57:12; 57:18; 60:10). Expressed metaphorically, man and woman are "garments" for each other (Q 2:187), providing protection, pleasure, adornment, and beauty to one other.

The Qur'an tells us that the first marriage was conducted in Paradise between Adam and Eve before their fall from Paradise (the Qur'an does not blame Eve [*Hawwa* in Arabic] for the first sin committed in Paradise; see Q 7:20-23, and many similar passages, where it is made clear that the fall from this original state of grace is a responsibility shared equally between Eve and Adam). The act of marriage in this world must be undertaken in the intention and expectation of permanence, as the righteous married couple who love each other has the choice to continue their marriage, even after death, in Paradise (Q 36:56; 40:8; 43:70). The Qur'an strongly recommends a man to have only one wife based on the reason that it would be almost impossible to maintain justice among multiple wives (Q 4:129). However, it also allows a man to have up to four wives provided that he treats each one of them equally.

The only woman whose proper name is openly mentioned in the Qur'an is the Virgin Mary, in Arabic *Maryam*, to whom chapter nineteen is devoted. Chapter four in the Qur'an is titled "Women" and presents some, but by no means all, of the issues in relations between the sexes. Another chapter ("The Woman Who Pleads") describes the struggle of one woman for the rights of all women. Following a dispute with the Prophet Muhammad, she pleaded to God for the abolition of an unjust pre-Islamic custom, and God accepts her prayers by prohibiting that custom (Q 58:1-3).

In Islamic law the members of both sexes are treated equally at the level of basic rights: inviolability of life, property, religion, consciousness, family, and honor. Islamic law granted women the right to work, to own property, and to inherit it, which were rather exceptional rights in the seventh century compared with other legal systems where women could not own property independent of their husbands up until recently.

Islamic law took special measures to protect women from false accusations by male members of the community for unchaste behavior. If such a claim is not proved with certainty by the testimony of four direct witnesses, the person who makes the false accusation is severely punished (Q 24:4, 24:19, 24:23). Furthermore, because he has been shown to be dishonest, he loses his right to testify before a court from that point forward. In Islamic law, differences between the sexes emerge in such issues as each parent's necessary role in the family, testimony in court, and inheritance.

Unlike many other religions, sexuality is not stigmatized in Islam. On the contrary, moral and moderate sexuality is sanctified within the boundaries clearly set by the Qur'an and the example and teachings

GENDER AND SEXUALITY

of the Prophet Muhammad. Adultery and fornication are strongly prohibited (Q 4:24–27; 5:5; 17:32; 25:68). The sexual attraction between members of the opposite sex is a creation of God which functions as a crucial drive for reproduction, but complete surrender to lust is considered destructive. Moderation and morality in sexual life are enforced by laws and moral guidelines; while the jurists dealt with the legal rules, the Sufis concentrated in their writings on moral education by cleansing the heart to protect a person from the danger of enslavement by lust. The Sufis saw human love as a stepping-stone to divine love. An important means of protecting self-restraint against overwhelming lust is the lowering of the gaze and not looking at members of the opposite sex, particularly at the eyes. A lustful gaze is condemned as a sin and as “adultery by the eyes,” which is very much in line with the biblical judgment on the same issue (Matthew 5:27–29).

In a marriage, both parties have the right to sexual satisfaction, which in its absence may constitute a legal ground for divorce. Lawful sex and sexual satisfaction are praised as aids to the concentration of the mind and heart and a means of protection for both wife and husband from sin and corruption. Above all, a lawful and moderate outlet for sexual expression protects the gaze of the eyes from unlawful and immoral looks. Husband and wife are required to love and respect each other and to be responsive to each other’s sexual needs. It is the duty of both partners to offer their best in the relationship.

The medieval Islamic literature does not recognize a conflict between *agape* (divine love) and *eros* (human love); instead, sexuality and love were not seen to be mutually exclusive. In place of conflict the relationship between them was characterized as complementary, similar to the relationship between *ying* and *yang* in Taoism. In contrast with medieval Christianity, which maintained a high level of tension between *agape* and *eros* (see John 2:15–17), a Muslim is encouraged both to marry and to love his or her spouse. Human feelings of love in marriage are reinforced by divine command, as conjugal love is required to be for the sake of God and with the intention of following His command and the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad. This positive approach to sexuality and love between the sexes drew criticism from some Christian theologians during the Middle Ages as evidence of depraved sensuality.

RECEP SENTURK

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GENGHIS KHAN

Genghis Khan (Mongolian: Chinggis; 1167–1227 CE) was the founder of the Mongolian world empire. Most of the information about his life is derived from the anonymous and partly mythical Mongolian source known as *The Secret History of the Mongols*, compiled probably around 1228. Born as Temüjin to a minor chieftain in northeastern Mongolia, the future Genghis Khan went through hard times as a youth. When Temüjin was just nine, his father Yesugei was poisoned by an enemy tribe. Yesugei’s supporters abandoned Temüjin’s family to its fate. Gradually, Temüjin managed to attract supporters from other clans and tribes, who became his *nökörs* (followers, comrades) and began to assert his authority over his clan and over the neighboring Turco-Mongol tribes. He advanced by forging alliances with influential leaders, then discarding them after they had served their turns. During his rise to power he attacked and executed his “sworn brother,” Jamuqa, and his first patron, Ong Khan. In 1184, Temüjin was enthroned the khan of his tribe, the Mongols, and in 1206, an assembly of the Mongol tribes (*quriltai*) proclaimed him as Genghis Khan, the harsh or universal khan, ruler of all the Mongols. Soon after the *quriltai*, Genghis Khan began his conquests. First, he turned to China, starting by attacking the Xi Xia dynasty in northwestern China in 1207 and reducing it into a tributary state in 1209. In 1211, Genghis Khan turned against the Jin dynasty that had ruled in Manchuria and northern China, and in 1215, he conquered its capital in present-day Beijing. Then his attention was drawn westward. In 1218, he overran the Central Asian empire of the Qara Khitai, which had been briefly ruled by one of his old enemies in Mongolia, Küchlüg (Güchülüg). This conquest brought Genghis Khan face to face with the empire of the Khwarazm Shah, the strongest ruler in the eastern Islamic world. Khwarazm’s massacre of a group of merchants who

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