

ASTROLABE

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A CIS Student Research Journal



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ASTROLABE

A CIS Student Research Journal

Astrolabe is a student research journal that is published on behalf of the College of Islamic Studies (CIS) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) by HBKU Press.

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Astrolabe is a student publication platform created in the spirit of our Islamic heritage and the quest for students to engage with the issues of significance to Muslims in the contemporary global context.

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Dean's Message

Dear Reader,

Astrolabe: A CIS Student Research Journal is now at its fourth issue, and a testament to the breadth of topics that are explored at the College of Islamic Studies (CIS), Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU). Collectively, the *Astrolabe* journals reflect the richness as well as the sheer potential of Islamic thought and relevance to contemporary debates.

The journal is an important part of a broader undertaking to rekindle the intellectual ethos of the Islamic civilization. This mission is both critical and ambitious, and is incumbent upon every actor within Muslim communities across the globe. As an entity that fosters the development of knowledge and knowledge-makers, we at CIS consider it our purpose to activate critical thinking and reflective interactions, novel applications of Islamic thought towards global issues, and an independent sense of responsibility to positively contribute to our communities.

Our students are some of our greatest ambassadors, who are inspired to be bold thinkers, lifelong learners, and generous global citizens, and are driven to serve humanity with their intellect and integrity. I encourage you to take the time to read some of the enclosed works that appeal to you the most and I hope you find these discussions both insightful and enjoyable.

Recep Şentürk, PhD

Dean, College of Islamic Studies

Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Introductory Note

*Learning is only the outer wrapping of the letter,
The dry husk that covers the nut and not the kernel concealed within.
Yet the husk must exist to ripen the kernel,
So from learning comes the sweet knowledge of Faith.*

Mahmūd Shabestarī

From “The Secret Rose Garden (*Gulshan-i Rāz*)”

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Astrolabe: A CIS Student Research Journal*. Each edition is a collection of diverse ideas, discussions, and topics that are perceived and assessed through an Islamic perspective in the course of the students’ graduate journeys.

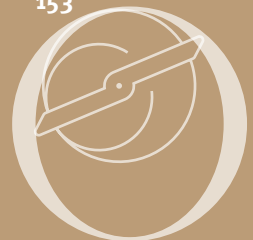
The journal takes inspiration from its namesake, the astrolabe, and is a scholarly representation of the ancient instrument in navigating the rich potential of our scholarship and civilizational history. Our students are encouraged to take the helm, steer towards the academic questions that specifically call to them, and refine their skills to be able to design their voyage and enjoy the spirit of their academic quests.

Within the pages of this edition, you will encounter discussions rooted in our histories, from the times of the caliphate to female mystics and monsoon travelers in the Medieval Age. While one article evokes the beauty of *nūr* across Islamic architectural creations in the broader region, other authors explore contemporary topics, including Islamic Fintech, vaccine ethics, regional edupreneurship, and domestic violence.

Each issue provides its own eclectic collection of Islamically-informed academic discussions. We continue to take pride in this platform which has provided opportunities for our students to share their scholarly forays with an audience that nurtures its spirit of curiosity and learning.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Divine Light, Al-Nūr, as an Aesthetic Concept in Islam

Hanan Amr

ABSTRACT

This study aims to elucidate different concepts and theories about *al-Nūr*, the Divine Light, and its implementations in art and architecture. The study relies on the concept of *al-Nūr* as an Islamic aesthetic value; it is one of the Holy Names of God and has different explanations in Islamic sources. The meanings and interpretations of *al-Nūr* in Qur'an, Hadith, and Islamic philosophy were considered. The Verse of Light in the Quran (24:35) has a particular significance in this research; and has had a profound and continuous influence on artists and architects throughout Islamic history.

Keywords: Divine light, oil lamp, architectural opening openings, light, aesthetic values, Islamic architecture

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CONCEPTS OF AESTHETICS IN ISLAM

In the main two sources of Islamic doctrine, the Qur'an and the Hadith, many terms are used to state the concepts of beauty and aesthetics. One major term is *ḥusn*, which means “beauty” in Arabic. From this term comes one of the major fundamental Islamic beliefs—the belief of the oneness of God through His beautiful names and attributes also referred to in Arabic as *Asmā' a Allah al-Ḥusnā*. Muslims should believe in all the attributes of God and search for their reflections in themselves and in the world around them. Here, the focus is on one of these attributes, *al-Nūr*, which means “The Light,” referring to the Divine Light.

Al-Nūr has a multi-dimensional meaning and effect on human life, both physically and spiritually. It is also closely related to art. The Verse of Light (*Ayat al-Nūr*) in the Holy Qur'an relays one of the most symbolic and metaphorical images that have influenced the imagination of Muslim artists (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The word *al-Nūr* in Arabic calligraphy by calligrapher, Rami al-Shadfan.

AL-NŪR “THE LIGHT”: THEORIES, MEANINGS, AND CONCEPTS

Al-Nūr is a noun derived from the Arabic letters *Nūn* (ن), *Wāw* (و), and *Rā'a* (ر). The three letters together refer to the features of lighting, vibrations, and unsteadiness, which are some characteristics of *al-Nūr* “Light” and *al-Nār* “fire” as well.¹ In Islam, the concept of

1 “The Word *al-Nūr* in Qur'an [in Arabic],” *Islamweb*, April 9, 2012, <https://www.islamweb.net/ar/article/179087/%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%85>.

al-Nūr has attracted scholars and researchers regarding its outer appearance and inner meanings. This follows the methodology of interpreting the text of the Qur'an according to a prophetic hadith mentioned in *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*: "Every verse (in the Qur'an) has an outer aspect and an inner aspect."²

The word *al-Nūr* occurs in the Holy Qur'an 43 times as a single noun with different meanings, whereas the overall words related to light occur 71 times.³ Analyzing the 43 times that *Al-Nūr* is mentioned in the Qur'an, it is observed that five of these occurrences refer to physical light, such as the daylight, moonlight, and the illumination that is opposite to darkness. In another six times, *al-Nūr* is referred to as the light that God gives to the faithful on Judgment Day, specifically the light of the believers (*al-mu'menūn*) and the martyrs (*al-shohad'a*). In six instances, *al-Nūr* denotes the Divine Light. The rest have a potential of different meanings, including faith (*iman*), the religion of Islam, guidance (*hudā* and *hedāya*), the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH), knowledge, and the clarity of perception.

The Verse of Light (Āyat Al-Nūr)

In the Qur'an, the concept of *al-Nūr* is directly addressed as the Verse of Light (*āyat Al-Nūr*). It is the verse 24 in chapter 35, which is titled as *al-Nūr* "the Light." (Figure 2).

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكُوتٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ
كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيُّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ
وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُّورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ لِلنَّاسِ
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The Parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! Allah doth guide whom He will to His Light: Allah doth set forth Parables for men: and Allah doth know all things.

2 Nicholas Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light: The Lamp in Islamic Culture and Other Traditions* (USA: World Wisdom Books, 2018), 5.

3 William A. Graham, "Light in the Qur'an and Early Islamic Exegesis," in *God is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth: Light in Islamic Art and Culture*, ed. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 45.



Figure 2: Beginning of Āyat al-Nūr from an 11th or 12th century Qur'an from Iraq or Persia (Stone, 2018).

In this verse, it is the one and only occurrence where the word *al-Nūr* is used to denote Divinity.⁴ The Verse of Light is one of the verses which has allegorical meanings (*āyāt mutashābihāt*).⁵ The Qur'an employs allegories to speak to man through the language of symbolism.

The Verse of Light has different interpretations by many Qur'anic commentators from the first century of Islam up until the present day. In general, it has two main interpretations: one by Sufis and the other by non-Sufi commentators. Sufi exegetes are concerned more with the microcosmic "inner" level of meaning by interpreting the language as symbolic and metaphorical. However, most non-Sufi commentators insist that the verse has to be interpreted in a sense that God is incomparable and can therefore not be equated with light, which is created.⁶

One of the earliest Qur'an commentaries is the one of al-Ṭabari⁷, *Gāmi' al-Bayān*, from the 10th century, in which traditional Muslim exegeses are presented. For the interpretation of the Verse of Light, he states as cited in English translation by Bowering:

God, the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, is understood in three ways; as the guide of the inhabitants of Heaven and Earth, the ruler of the world who adorns the universe with light by day and by night, and the one who illuminates the hearts of the believers. The likeness of His light, depending on the crucial interpretation of the suffix "hu" in *nurihi* is also explained in three ways as the light of divine guidance, the heart of the believer which enshrines the light of faith and the Qur'an, or the light of Muhammed. The niche is explained literally as a windowless recess in the wall of a house, a candlestick, or a wick, and symbolically, as the chest of the believer holding the lamp of faith and the Qur'an in the glass of his heart, or as the body of Mohammed enclosing the lamp of faith. The glittering star is traditionally explained by Ibn 'Abbas

4 Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 3.

5 In the Holy Qur'an, the verses are either with clear dogmatic meanings (*āyāt muḥkamāt*) or with allegorical meanings (*āyāt mutashābihāt*): "He it is who has bestowed upon thee from on high this divine writ, containing messages that are clear in and by themselves—and these are the essence of the divine writ—as well as others that are allegorical" (3:7).

6 Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 50.

7 *Mohammed bin Jarīr al-Ṭabari*, 839–923 CE (224–310 AH), an Iranian scholar, historian and commentator on the Qur'an.

as one of the five brilliant planets or by Muqatil as either Venus or Jupiter, whereas al-Ṭabari leaves open the possibility of interpreting the adjective “glittering” as either *durriyun*, without Hamza, sparkling like a pearl or as *dirri’un/durri’un*, with Hamza, repelling evil like a shooting star that is launched against the devil.⁸

The blessed tree is explained as bathed in sunlight all day with the sun neither rising nor setting on it and as raised high on a hill, with neither a mountain casting a shadow on it nor a valley reflecting its shade. The tree is not of this world, yet it stands at the very center of the universe (in Syria), neither a fraction to the east nor a fraction to the west, encircling all the trees of the world. The tree resembles the believer who worships God with pure intention, without ascribing partners to God, is grateful for the divine blessings, steadfast in trials, just in actions, and truthful in words. The oil of the olive tree, with its sap shining along the bark, is likened to Mohammed’s prophethood that was transparent to the eyes of others even before he publicly proclaimed it, just like olive oil appears as a translucent, brilliant substance before being touched by fire. The phrase “light upon light” is explained either as Mohammed following Abraham, his prophetic forbearer; the light of Qur’anic revelation given by God to humanity; or the light of divinely infused religion shared by all human beings since creation.⁹

Al-Ghazālī (1058–1111 AD) in his *Mishkāṭ al-Anwār*, in which he comments on the Verse of Light and had adapted the title of the book directly from the verse, describes various levels of light with hierarchical relationships between different manifestations of the light. He explains the symbolism of the elements mentioned in the verse in association with the five faculties of the human soul: the niche related to the sensory spirit, the lamp with the imaginative spirit, the glass with the intellectual spirit, the tree with the discursive spirit, and finally the oil with the transcendental prophetic spirit.¹⁰

Mishkāṭ (Niche)

The word *mishkāṭ* is an Ethiopic loanword translated as “niche in a wall” or “window.” Mujāhid and Ibn Qutayba¹¹ maintain the Ethiopic origin of the word.¹² The niche for al-Ghazālī is related to the sensory spirit of the human soul.¹³ Saḥī ‘Alī Shāh Ni‘matullāhī¹⁴ equates the *mishkāṭ* with the body; he uses the word *mishkāṭ* as it means in Persian, that is, perforated brass or copper lamps. He compares the holes in the *mishkāṭ* through which light passes with the five physical senses.¹⁵

8 Gerhard Böwering, “The Light Verse: Qur’anic Text and Sūfī Interpretation,” *Oriens* 36 (2001), 130–131.

9 Böwering, “The Light Verse,” 130–131.

10 Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 35.

11 Mujāhid was a Muslim scholar from the 8th century (d. 104/722), and Ibn Qutayba was a Muslim scholar of Persian origin from the 9th century (d. 276/889).

12 Böwering, “The Light Verse,” 118–119.

13 David Buchman, *Al-Ghazali: The Niche of Lights*, (Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1998), 39.

14 Saḥī ‘Alī Shāh Ni‘matullāhī was born in Isfahan in 1251/1835 and died in Tehran in 1316/1898. He lived in India and left behind a monumental mystical exegesis of the Qur’an in verse.

15 Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 52–55.

Misbah (Lamp)

The word *misbah* is derived from the Arabic word *ṣubḥ*, which means the morning. Thus *misbah* means an instrument that gives light.¹⁶ Referring to the Verse of Light when *misbah* as an instrument is placed in the niche, it generates more light than it would in an open space. According to al-Ghazālī, the *misbah* is connected to the rational spirit through which the perception of divine knowledge takes place.¹⁷

Zujajah (Glass)

The word *zujāj* which means glass, and it is used only once in the Qur'an in the Verse of Light. Otherwise, the word *qawārīr* is used. The transparency of glass makes some scholars such as Maḥmud Bina-Motlagh¹⁸ refer to it as the subtle manifestation corresponding to the human soul.¹⁹ Al-Ghazālī relates the glass to the imaginative spirit; the glass protects the light from being extinguished by violent winds and rough movements, and this is what imagination does as the one that can organize rational knowledge.²⁰

Kawkab Durrīy (Glittering Star)

Kawkab in Arabic means a planet or a star; commentators translate *kawkabun durrīyun* as a glittering star. The analogy of the *misbah* with the glittering star suggests its context to be at night as stars glow in the darkness. According to Böwering's summary of the verse, "The simile of *ayāt an-nūr* replicates a nighttime experience, one in which the desert traveller is surrounded by the stars and guided by the light of the heavens and the earth."²¹

Shajarah Mubārakah (Blessed Tree)

Shajarah mubārakah means the blessed tree. Here, it refers to the olive tree as mentioned in the verse (Figure 3). In the three monotheist religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—the olive tree has a sacred significance. In Jewish and Christian literature, the olive tree is related to the tree of life, the tree of paradise, the tree from which Jesus' cross was made, and the tree that stands in the center of the world. This tree is located in Jerusalem according to Christianity and Judaism.²² In the Qur'an, the olive tree is related to Sinai as in "Also a tree springing out of Mount Sinai, which produces oil and relish for those who use it for food." (23:19–20).²³ It also relates to the holy land of Palestine as in Surat al-Tin,

16 Ahmen Mokhtar Omar, *The Dictionary of the Modern Arabic Language* (Cairo: The World of Books, 2008), 1263.

17 Buchman, *Al-Ghazali: The Niche of Lights*, 40.

18 Maḥmud Bina-Motlagh is a Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Philosophy of Science at Isfahan University of Technology, Iran.

19 Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 60.

20 Buchman, *Al-Ghazali*, 39–40.

21 Böwering, "The Light Verse," 129.

22 Böwering, "The Light Verse," 121–122.

23 «وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنْبُتُ بِالذَّهْنِ وَصَبْغٍ لِلْكَالِينَ».

the Chapter of the Fig, “*By the Fig and the Olive*” (95:1)²⁴; referring to *al-Ṭabari* exegesis, the oath in the beginning of the verse, which invokes the fig and the olive, refers either to the holy places where these plants grow or to the mountains in Syria and Jerusalem, respectively.²⁵



Figure 3: Image for an olive tree in the Holy Land (PC: Thaher Amr).

For al-Ghazālī, the fourth spirit, which is the reflective spirit, is most the appropriate similitude to the tree. One of the characteristics of the tree is that it starts with a single root and then splits into two branches. From each branch, other branches grow and so on until the branches of rational divisions are created. Finally, the tree reaches its final conclusion by producing fruits.²⁶

Zayt (Oil)

Olive oil is the key product of the fruit of the olive tree. The olive tree in Christianity and Judaism is a tree of heavenly rather than terrestrial origin, whose oil is a source of both life and light (Figure 4). This can be corroborated by the phrase used in the Verse of Light: “*Whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it.*”²⁷ In al-Ghazālī’s *Mishkāt al-Anwār*, the fifth spirit is the holy prophetic spirit, which is ascribed to the friends of God as the utmost degree of purity and nobility.²⁸

«وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونَ» 24

25 Al-Ṭabari, *Jami’ al-Bayan ‘an Ta’weel Aye al-Qur’an* “*Al-Tabari Exegesis*,” (Riyadh: Al-Turath Center, 2013), 240–241.

26 Buchman, *Al-Ghazali*, 40.

27 Böwering, “The Light Verse,” 121.

28 Buchman, *Al-Ghazali*, 41.



Figure 4: Depiction of the Menorah with olive trees on the right and left sides, from Jewish Cervera Bible, Joseph Asarfati, 1299 (Stone 2018, 42).

AL-NŪR “THE LIGHT”, SPIRITUALITY AND SYMBOLISM

In his book, “*Sufi Expressions of the Mystic Quest*,” Laleh Bakhtiar clarifies that:

It is through symbols that one is awakened; it is through symbols that one is transformed; and it is through symbols that one expresses. Symbols are realities contained within the nature of things. The entire journey to God is a journey in symbols, in which one is constantly aware of the higher reality within things.²⁹

Cosmological Symbolism of the Light by Ibn al-ʿArabī

Muḥyiddin Ibn al-ʿArabī (1165–1240), known as *al-Shaikh al-Akbar* or “The Greatest Master,” is one of the most eminent Sufi scholars. He considered light in his interpretation of cosmology and referred to the symbolism of light in his discourse about astrology with metaphysical principles. Ibn al-ʿArabī affirms that the sun is the heart of the world, and it communicates light to all the other stars, including the fixed stars; and that it is illuminated by the direct and continuous radiation of a Divine Revelation.³⁰

Moreover, Ibn al-ʿArabī envisaged the relationship between the movement of the sun and the moon. There is a simple interaction between the solar rhythms and those of the moon, which traverses the Zodiac in 28 days; and it is assigned 28 stations spread in an

29 Laleh Bakhtiar, *Sufi Expressions of the Mystic Quest*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976), 25.

30 As to the fixed stars, although now it is known that they represent sources of light independent of the sun; however, Ibn al-ʿArabī’s theory is still viable once one accepts that the fixed stars are autonomous lights in the sensible order. The comparison here is in a symbolic sense. The sun represents the center of radiation of the Divine Light for a determined world, while the fixed stars symbolize the interferences of the light of a superior world. See: Titus Burckhardt, *Mystical Astrology According to Ibn Arabi* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, 2001), 27.

unequal but rhythmic mode over the 12 paths of the Zodiac (Figure 5). In Sufi esotericism, these 28 mansions of the moon correspond to the 28 letters or sound of the sacred Arabic language.³¹

Abū Bakr Sirāj al-Dīn (1909–2005) stated that light is a manifestation of divine knowledge; and thus, the soul of the mystic is symbolized by the moon that reflects the light of the sun. The ray of light that passes between them is the symbol of intellect, and the light symbolizes the spiritual intuitions of the mystic.³²

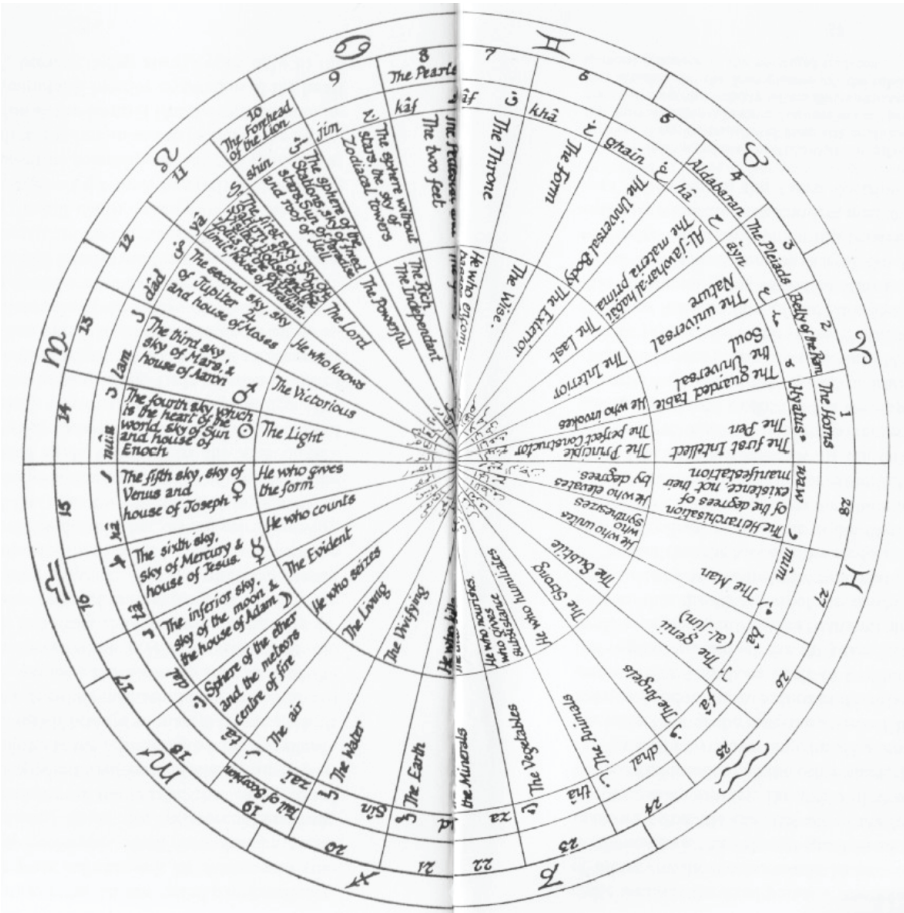


Figure 5: Chart of Creation by Ibn al-ʿArabī (Burckhardt, 2001, 32–33).

31 Burckhardt, *Mystical Astrology*, 35.

32 Bakhtiar, *Sufi Expressions*, 59.

In the chart of creation by Ibn al-ʿArabī, the sound of *Nōn* and the name of God *al-Nūr* are related to the 14th position of the moon, the fourth sky which is the sky of the sun, the heart of the world, and the house of Enoch.

Spiritual Meanings of the Light in Islamic Texts

In Islam, the references to light is associated with the metaphoric spiritual path. These meanings were clear in the verses mentioned in the Qur’an. It was also clear in the praise by Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) for Tamīm al-Dārī when he lit up the Medina Mosque with oil lamps for the first time. He said, “You have illuminated Islam, may Allah enlighten your path in this life and hereafter.”³³ Muslims, according to prophetic traditions, are requested to recite a prayer while walking to the mosque to accomplish the five daily prayers; the prayer is all about asking illumination from God.³⁴

The same meaning of illumination is repeated in other sayings of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). The virtue of reading *Surat al-Kahaf* (Chapter of the Cave) every Friday is clarified in the prophetic hadith of how it shines the days of the reader from one week to the other: “Whoever reads *Surat al-Kahaf* (Chapter of the Cave) on the day of Juma’ah (Friday) will have a light that will shine from him from one Friday to the next”³⁵ (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Miniature of the Seven Sleepers “Ahl al-Kahaf” in the cave at Ephesus, by Agha Reza, ca. 1590 (Dĥwty 2014).

33 “Sura An Noor , verse 36 [Tafsir Al-Qortobi],” accessed November 14, 2020, <https://quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/qortobi/sura24-aya36.html#qortobi>.

34 «اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ لِي فِي قَلْبِي نُورًا وَفِي لِسَانِي نُورًا وَفِي سَمْعِي نُورًا وَفِي بَصَرِي نُورًا وَمِنْ قُوَّتِي نُورًا وَمِنْ تَحْتِي نُورًا وَعَنْ يَمِينِي نُورًا وَعَنْ شِمَالِي نُورًا وَمِنْ بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ نُورًا وَمِنْ خَلْفِي نُورًا وَاجْعَلْ فِي نَفْسِي نُورًا وَأَعْظِمْ لِي نُورًا»
See Sahih Muslim, *The Book of Prayer – Travellers*, accessed January 30, 2021, <https://sunnah.com/muslim:763j>.

35 Narrated by al-Haakim, 2/399 and al-Bayhaqi, 3/249. “Virtue of Reading Surat Al-Kahf on Friday,” *Islamweb*, accessed February 14, 2012, <https://www.islamweb.net/en/fatwa/27666/virtue-of-reading-surat-al-kahf-on-friday>.

In addition to the prophetic hadith and common Islamic traditions, the concept of light is present in poems and prose writings. This spiritual dialogue between the contrast of darkness and light is strongly present in Jalal al-Dīn al-Rūmī's poem, "Things Are Revealed by Their Opposites."³⁶ In his book, *Travelling the Path of Love: Sayings of Sufi Masters*, Vaughan-Lee collected Sufi quotes of different scholars in a chapter titled "Light upon Light." Light with its qualities is always present in mystic thoughts.³⁷

Symbolism of Light for Sacred Persons in Islamic Paintings

In Islamic art, artists use symbols to manifest the essence of God, since the imagery of God is prohibited in Islam. In Eastern paintings such as Persian miniatures, symbols represent mystical thoughts and concepts. The light in these paintings, which symbolizes the sacredness of saints and prophets, has a significant presence through the drawing of fire. Indeed, the artists were visually aware of the different types of fire and light, although they were not fully informed of the mystical meaning of such distinction, as Ramezanmahi and Ghehi claimed in their research about the iconography of *Miraj Nameh* (Figure 7).³⁸



Figure 7: The visit of the Prophet of Islam and the Prophet Adam, form *Miraj Nameh*.

The examples of a bright halo as a presentation for sacred people in Islamic miniatures have no limitations, such as the manuscript from *Siyer-i Nebi* (1595 AD) showing Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in the mosque (Figure 8), and the miniature from *Khamse of Nizami* depicting the Mi'raj with the Prophet (PBUH) surrounded with an aura of light (1539–43 AD; Figure 9).

36 Jalaluddin Rumi, *Things Are Revealed By Their Opposites*, accessed January 30, 2021, <https://www.dar-al-masnavi.org/n.a-I-1121.html>.

37 Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, *Travelling the Path of Love: Sayings of Sufi Masters* (California: The Golden Sufi Center, 1995), 116–118.

38 Somayeh Ramezanmahi and Hasan Bolkhari Ghehi, "The Manifestation of Fire and Light in the Icons of Mir-Heidar's *Miraj Nameh*," *International Journal of Arts* (2012), 16–25.

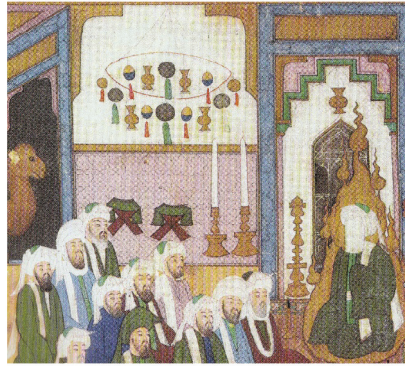


Figure 8: Manuscript from Siyer-i Nebi (1595 AD) showing Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in the mosque with lamp and hanging ornaments (Stone, 2018, 107).



Figure 9: Miniature from Khamasa of Nizami depicting the Mi'raj with the Prophet (PBUH) surrounded by an aura of light (1539–43) (Wikiwand 2021).

THE CONCEPT OF LIGHT IN SCIENCE AND PHYSICS

Scientifically, light as an object for a quest has undergone a long history. It was always the sparkle which attracted physicians, astronomers, and mathematicians. In the ninth century, al-Kindi (801–873 AD), whose works linked the Athens Academy with Baghdad's House of Wisdom, continued where the Greeks stopped, asking whether light came from the eye as Empedocles theorized, from the object as Epicurus believed, or from both according to Plato.³⁹ Eventually, scientists confirmed that light is purely physical in nature. It reaches

³⁹ Bruce Watson, *Light: A Radiant History from Creation to the Quantum Age* (New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2016), 42.

the retina of the eye, where it is converted into neural activity and passed along to the brain. The visual impressions are not limited to sensory experiences produced by the nervous system, but also involve the cognitive background of the observer, which gives meaning to the visual experience.⁴⁰

Alhacen ibn al-Haytham

Although the first Arabic compositions about optics was by al-Kindi, the most significant studies on light was produced two centuries later by Ḥassan Ibn al-Haytham (965–1040 AD). He is known in the Western world as Alhacen and is one of the most prominent names in the science of light and its philosophy. He is also regarded as the greatest physicist of the Middle Ages, especially for his outstanding work, *Kitāb al-Manāẓir* or “The Book of Optics,” in which he describes refractions of light in calculating the distance from the earth to the stars (Figure 10).⁴¹ Ibn al-Haytham says, “What light is belongs to the natural sciences, whereas *how* it behaves (belongs) to the mathematical sciences.”⁴² Ibn al-Haytham examined light in seven comprehensive volumes more thoroughly than anyone before Newton.⁴³

As Watson cited in his book, the light for Ibn al-Haytham formed infinite numbers of pyramids, and the vision occurred when the eye met the pyramid of light. He made the first anatomical diagram that illustrated the process of human vision and the relation between the eye and the brain (Figure 11). He noted that all vision was refracted through the eye’s crystalline humor and interpreted by the brain. The master of optical invention for Ibn al-Haytham was the camera obscura, although the Chinese were the first who noticed that the hole in a wall streams outdoor light onto indoor surfaces and flips over the image. Ibn al-Haytham, however, was the first who made the fully operative light box called the “Dark Room.” The room of a small box had a pinhole and, using five lit candles on the far side, all five flames were projected inverted in perfect proportion. He continued his experiments and calculations to find out that light did not mingle, nor did its rays cross. The “Least Light,” which diminished only when an object blacked it out, was where Newton began his search centuries later.

40 Robert L. Solso, *Cognition and the Visual Arts* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), 3.

41 Markus Hattstein, “Science in Islam,” in *Islam: Art and Architecture*, ed. Peter Delius and Markus Hattstein (Potsdam, Cambridge: H.F. Ullmann, 2015), 56.

42 Elaheh Kheirandish (2015), 66.

43 Watson, *Light*, 45.

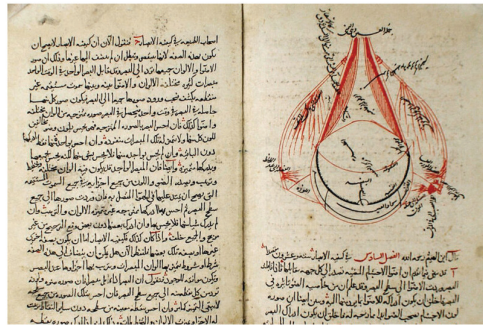


Figure 10: Diagram by Ibn al-Haytham shows that humans see because light rays reflect off objects creating images inside the eye (Tasci 2020).

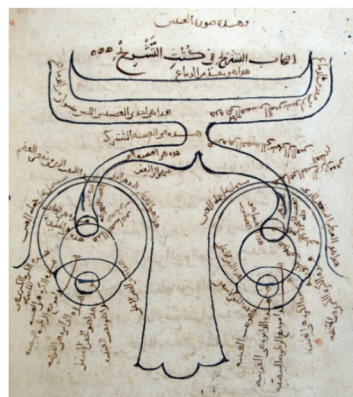


Figure 11: Diagram of the visual system Ibn al-Haytham published in 1083. The oldest known drawing of the nervous system shows a large nose at the bottom, eyes on both sides, and a hollow optic nerve that flows out of each one toward the back of the brain (Namopanik 2021).

According to Gonzalez, Ibn al-Haytham's theory of vision combined the scientific realm with aesthetic considerations; he recognized beauty and ugliness as objective and visible facts, which he called perceptual meanings (*al-ma'āni al-mubšara*). In his book, as Gonzalez cited, Ibn al-Haytham listed these meanings in 22 notions, including light, color, form, volume, and so on.⁴⁴ For Ibn al-Haytham, light is the source of sight, perception, and beauty. As Watson cited from Smith's *Alhacen Theory of Visual Perception*, "for light creates beauty, which is why the sun, moon, and stars will appear beautiful."⁴⁵

44 Valerie Gonzalez, *Beauty and Islam: Aesthetics in Islamic Art and Architecture* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2021), 20.

45 Watson, *Light*, 46.

IMPLEMENTATIONS FOR AL-NŪR IN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Al-Nūr in Arabic Calligraphy

Calligraphy is considered as the most noble of Islamic arts because it gives visible form to the revealed word of the Qur'an. It is also the art most widely shared by all Muslims as anyone who can write is in a position to appreciate the merits of a good calligrapher. It can be said without fear of exaggeration that nothing has typified the aesthetic sense of the Muslim people as much as the Arabic script.⁴⁶

The secrets in the geometries of the Arabic letter was the main focus for Moustafa and Sperl in their study, *The Cosmic Script, Sacred Geometry, and the Science of Arabic Penmanship*. They explored "spiritual geometry" and how it governs the structure of individual letter shapes, starting with a quote by Euclid: "The script is spiritual geometry, though made perceptible by a physical instrument."⁴⁷ In their study, Moustafa and Sperl analyzed the description of each letter and how it was drawn by master scribes such as Ibn Muqla, Būysunghur, and aṭ-Ṭayyibī. The research here highlights their study and analysis for the letter *Nūn*, the first letter of the word *Nūr*, and it is the sound letter for the mansion of the moon connected to the beautiful name of God, *al-Nūr*, in Ibn al-ʿArabī's chart of creation.

Nūn is composed of a semicircle endowed with a special feature described as tooth (*sinna*), ration (*nisba*), or law (*sunna*) predetermined in mind. It is defined as the small segment needed to extend one extremity of a semicircle with the diameter of the letter *alif* until the latter can be framed on four sides by the Cardinal Golden Rectangle, and it measures one-eighth of *alif*. The sample *Nūn* by Būysunghur, shown in Figure 12, illustrates remarkable precision to the proportional geometrically developed core by the researchers.⁴⁸

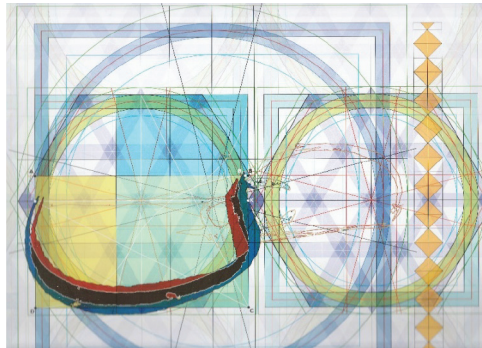


Figure 12: Diagram shows the *Nūn* of Būysunghur (red) with the *Nūn* of aṭ-Ṭayyibī in the 'Mother Circle' core (Ahmed Moustafa, Stefan Sperl 2014, 493).

46 Titus Burckhardt, *Art of Islam Language and Meaning* (Indiana: World Wisdom, 2009), 52.

47 Ahmed Moustafa and Stefan Sperl, *The Cosmic Script, Sacred Geometry, and the Science of Arabic Penmanship, Volume 2* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2014), 287.

48 Moustafa and Sperl, *The Cosmic Script*, 486–493.

The Verse of Light, as a major influence on the artists and architects, witnesses many uses in Islamic artifacts and products. By default, the verse is written in the revived manuscripts of the Qur'an since early Islamic history (see examples: Figures 13 and 14).



Figure 13: *Ayat al-Nūr* from a 10th–12th century Quran manuscript. Brown University Library. (Stone, 2018, 56) (left).



Figure 14: *Ayat al-Nūr* and subsequent verses from a Quranic manuscript made in Bust in the year 1111. (Stone, 2018, 51) (right).

The calligraphy of the Verse of Light is still present in the architectural elements of some mosques and religious buildings. An example is the *miḥrab* (the niche in the mosque wall oriented towards Makkah) brought from Isfahan to the Cleveland museum, the original building of this *miḥrab* is still unknown (Figure 15).⁴⁹

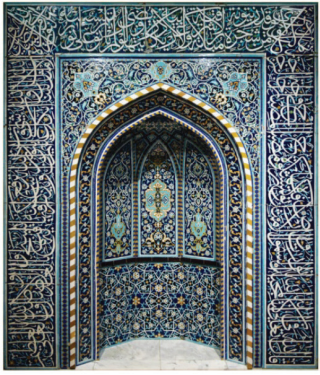


Figure 15: Miḥrab with epigraphic inscription of *Ayat al-Nūr* with shining glazed tiles. Isfahan, Iran, early 7th century. (Art, 2021).

49 “Prayer Niche (Miḥrab),” *The Cleveland Museum of Art*, accessed January 11, 2021, <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1962.23>.

Another incredible example is the calligraphy of the Verse of Light on the interior side of the dome of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. Hagia Sophia was erected in the 6th century AD as a church. The present dome, constructed in 562 AD, is the first large dome of the agricultural revolution age. The calligraphy in the center of the dome was executed by Hattat Kazasker Mustafa Izzet Efendi during the Fossati intervention between 1847 and 1849 AD (Figure 16).⁵⁰



Figure 16: The detail of the calligraphy of Ayat al-Nūr at the apex of the dome of Hagia Sophia, executed in gold and colored mosaic (HSRT 2021).

Use of *Al-Nūr* in Architecture

Light is one of the main components of architectural design; it has a mandatory functional role of lighting, either through access of daylight or by adding artificial light fixtures. It also has an aesthetic function for adhering to architectural elements; and functions as a tool for applying certain conceptual thoughts and converting architecture and architectural spaces to human architecture. Skilled uses of light, including intensity, contrast, and movement characteristics, can make the space a dynamic human environment full of life, creating full interactivity between the space and the user.⁵¹ Consequently, the orientation of the mosque is important from aesthetic and functional aspects. In addition to facing Mecca, openings that show sunset and sunrise are important to remind people of prayer times by daylight.⁵²

50 Revza Ozil, "The Conservation of the Dome Mosaics of Hagia Sophia," *Light on Top of the Black Hill: Studies Presented to Halet Cambel* (1998), 546.

51 Hayam Mahdy Salama, "Light as a Central Component in the Aesthetics of Islamic Architecture and its Impact on the Creation of Contemporary Design Formulations," *International Design Journal* 9, no. 1 (2019): 227.

52 Honey Arjmandi et al., "Psychological and Spiritual Effects of Light and Color from Iranian Traditional Houses on Dwellers," *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 6, no. 2 (2011): 298.

Robert Hillenbrand proposed six physical categories for the use of light in Islamic architecture. The first category is direct light through architectural elements such as oculi, windows, skylights, arcades, and other openings. The second is the employment of different elements to reflect light, such as water, mirrors, glass mosaics, and luster tiles. The third category includes certain materials which have the capacity to absorb and radiate light, such as ivory, rock crystal, gold, white marble, and precious or semi-precious stones. The fourth is the use of lighting devices. The fifth is the manipulation of light and shadow to create forms. The sixth and final category is the use of external reliefs for decoration in varied forms, which are enlivened by direct sunlight.⁵³

Light in Qibla Walls and Mihrabs

The first category of using the direct light is presented in the treatment of the *qibla* wall and the dome chambers in most mosques. The qibla wall is the wall facing the direction to Mecca towards which Muslims should orient during their prayers. It is created such that it is more lit and brighter than the other walls. An example is the qibla wall of Ismihan Sultan Mosque in Istanbul, where the two tiers of three windows flood light into the area surrounding the mihrab (Figure 17).⁵⁴



Figure 17: The qibla wall of Ismihan Sultan Mosque. Photo by John Eaton 2017 (Eaton 2021).

53 Robert Hillenbrand, "The Use of Light in Islamic Architecture," in *God is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth: Light in Islamic Art and Culture*, ed. Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 89.

54 Islamic architecture contains a variety of fabulous examples of mihrabs with different treatments. Due to the size of research, only these examples have been studied.

Another treatment of the qibla wall related to light is by including a presentation of the Verse of Light in the mihrabs. An example is the mihrab of Adina Mosque in Pandua, Bengal, from the 14th century. The interior of the mihrab niche has four rows with 28 rectangular panels in relief, with lamps suspended from chains within each panel (Figure 18).⁵⁵



Figure 18: Rows with lamp reliefs in the mihrab of Adina Mosque in Pandua, Bengal. Photo by Rana Safvi on Twitter.

Light through Domes and Ceilings

Another treatment for direct light is the use of skylights, openings, and *muqarnas* (an Islamic architectural invention for ornamented vaulting). They mimic the stars and the plunging comets. Alhambra in Granada witnesses one of the fabulous sovereignty of light in Islamic architecture. The ceiling of the Sala de los Abencerrajes in Alhambra Palace, with the use of stalactites and muqarnas, transforms the surface into perforated reliefs to filter, trap, and diffuse the light (Figure 19).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Naseem A. Banerji, *The Architecture of the Adina Mosque in Pandua, India: Medieval Tradition and Innovation* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 11–70.

⁵⁶ Burckhardt, *Art of Islam Language*, 84.

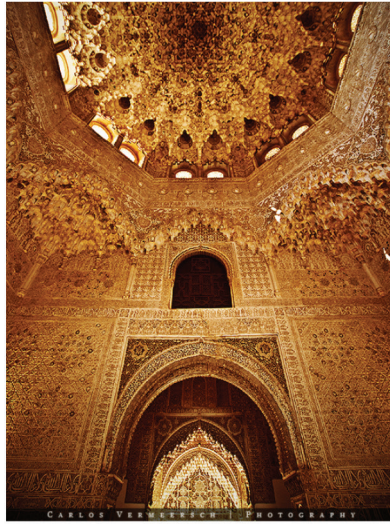


Figure 19: Stalactites in the ceiling of the Sala de los Abencerrajes in Alhambra Palace, photo by (Solrac1993, 2021).

Another fabulous example which combines architectural treatment with the calligraphy of the Verse of Light is the dome of Hagia Sophia. Sunlight, which floats all around the building and shines upon the gilded mosaics, enters mostly from the 40 windows encircling the base of the dome. Its apex is 56 m and runs around the dome (Figure 20).⁵⁷

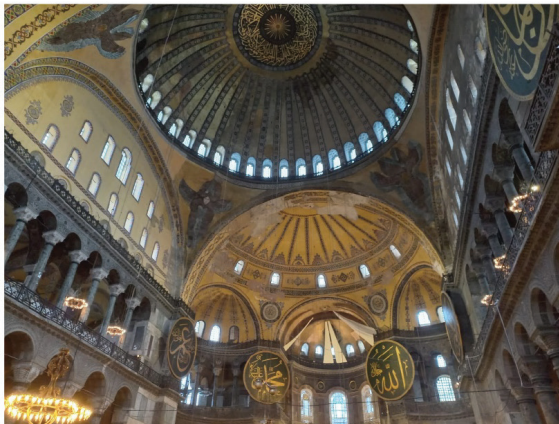


Figure 20: The interior of the dome of Hagia Sophia- Hanan Amr, 2022.

⁵⁷ Hattstein and Delius, *Islam*, 554.

According to Hayam Salama, Muslims call some openings *qamariya*, referring to *qamar* (the moon) and *shamsiya* referring to *shams* (the sun). Qamariya are rounded holes used in ceilings to illuminate internal spaces while having privacy such as in the baths and restrooms (Figure 21). Shamsiya is an architectural opening in walls, made of marble, stone, or plaster with vegetation and written motifs; some can be covered with stained glass (Figure 22).⁵⁸



Figure 21: Qamariya on the ceiling of Çemberlitas Bath. Istanbul. (Wisaal, 2012).



Figure 22: Bright light from shamsiya opening in the mosque of Ibn Tulun in Cairo, Egypt (Salama, 2019, 237).

The Arabic names of these openings affirm the relation that is always present between the human and universe in Islamic thoughts.

⁵⁸ Salama, "Light as a Central Component, 237.

Light through Windows and Wall Openings

Openings in the walls as windows are the most common architectural elements to introduce light into the building. In Islamic architecture, especially the mosques, these openings have been elaborated by adding some layers on them or by being treated differently. The use of porous walls in Sheikh-lotf Allah mosque in Isfahan is a stellar example. The openings are covered with perforated floral motifs, the light streams through these screened windows, and their shadows play a fabulous composition on the monochromatic ground (Figures 23 and 24).⁵⁹

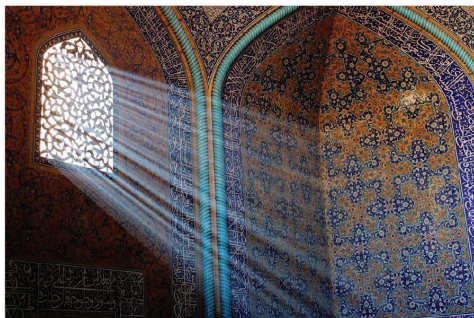


Figure 23: Image of light streaming through the porous wall in Sheikh Lotf Allah Mosque, Isfahan. Photo by Rumnita Mazumder.

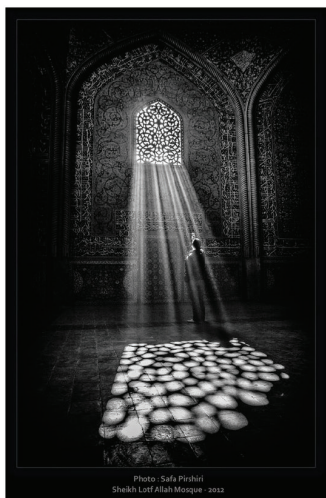


Figure 24: Image by Safa Pirshiri showing the dialogue between light and shadow in the mosque of Sheikh Lotf Allah, Isfahan, Iran.

⁵⁹ Hattstein and Delius, *Islam*, 510–511.

Another significant mosque where light dialogues with the shadow is the mosque of Ibn Tulun in Cairo (Figure 25). The windows in the mosque are not meant to bring sufficient light. They have another role of being the mediator between the sun and the interior of the mosque. According to Swelim, in the morning when the sun moves, it shines onto the piers, arches, and the floor of the arcade (*riwaq*). Its rays illuminate the outlines of the windows and their different geometric designs. As the sun rises further, it shines alternately on the piers and the floor between the piers. This lighting effect decorates the whole *riwaq* and is described as a “carpet of light.” Consequently, this light indirectly is reflected upward to illuminate the interior of the mosque.⁶⁰



Figure 25: The sun shines through the screened window in the Mosque of Ibn Tulun (Swelim 2015, 121).

Direct Light through Reflective Materials

According to Hillenbrand, the second category of using the light in Islamic architecture is the use of different elements and materials to reflect light such as water, mirrors, glass mosaics, and luster tiles. Different reflective materials were used in the walls and floors of the buildings to capture the light and reflect it. It gives the space a dynamic quality by creating textures of light and shadow.⁶¹

60 Tarek Swelim, *Ibn Tulun: His Lost City and Great Mosque* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 119–121.

61 Hillenbrand, “The Use of Light, 99–100.

Reflective Glass

Glass is a reflective material that has been used in Islamic architecture. Persians developed glass in their architecture in Orsi windows where colored glass is used to decorate the interior and exterior. Orsi windows are a mix of wooden Garih tiles with colorful pieces of glass. The use of glass in Islamic Iranian architecture refers to the light allegory, which has been inherited from ancient Iranian traditions, such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Mithraism, to illuminate their doctrines.⁶²

A good example is the Mosque of Nasir al-Mulk in the city of Shiraz, which was built from 1876 to 1888 AD by the order of Mirzā Hasan Ali (Nasir al-Mulk; Figures 26 and 27). In this mosque, people can feel and experience the effect of light and observe dynamic images appear and change continuously, depending on the weather and the position of the light.⁶³

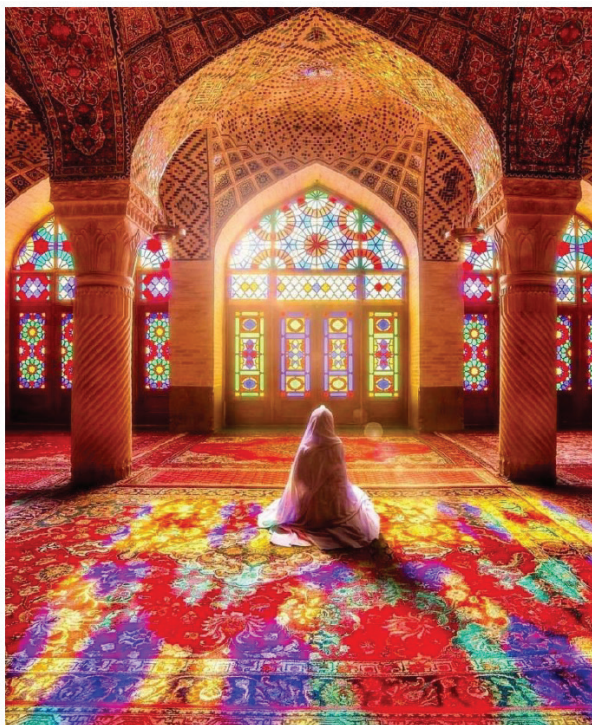


Figure 26: Light through Orsi windows in the Nasir al-Mulk Mosque. Photo by Amazing-iran.com.

62 Parinaz Faghihi, Fernando Quintas, and Teresa Almedia, "Architectural Glass in the 18th to 20th Centuries in Iran," *5th GLASSAC International Conference* (Lisbon: NOVA FCT, 2017), 43–45.

63 Faghihi, Quintas, and Almedia, "Architectural Glass."

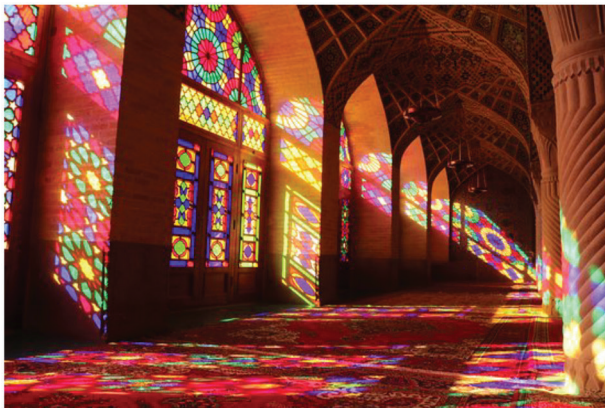


Figure 27: Light effects through Orsi windows. Photo by (Rasaeipoor 2021).

Manifestation of Water in Architecture

Water is also used as a natural reflective material and has some conceptual and metaphoric aspects in addition to the aesthetic appearance. The use of water in large flat expanses makes it function as a mirror, which is sited near the monuments so that it reflects as much of the architectural mass as possible. The Court of the Myrtles at the Alhambra is a significant example for the reflective pool for the buildings and the sunlight (Figure 28).⁶⁴



Figure 28: The North Facade of Court of the Myrtles at the Alhambra. Photo by Richard F. Ebert.

The reflective dialogue between water and glass is manifested in the Qur'anic story of Solomon and the queen of Sheba, Bilqis. In the final episode of the story, Prophet Solomon

⁶⁴ Hillenbrand, "The Use of Light," 94.

invited the queen to enter his palace where he put her throne, the floor of which was made of glass or crystal. She lifted up her skirts thinking it was water; however, Solomon corrects her mistake, declaring that the palace is made of glass (Figure 29).⁶⁵



Figure 29: Image from lacquered panel depicting Bilqis, lifting her dress to cross the crystal floor of Solomon Palace, mistaking it for a pool of water, Iran, 15th century (Stone 2018).

Reflective Materials as Marble, Mosaic, and Luster Tiles

The use of reflective materials in Islamic architecture was also influenced by other cultures, sub-cultures, and traditions. Iconic Islamic monuments are distinguished by their selected materials in addition to their design. The shimmering surfaces of white marble in the Taj Mahal in Agra, especially under the sunlight, is a part of its prominence and distinction (Figure 30).



Figure 30: The white marble of Taj Mahal reflected in the water mirror. Photo by Joe Bindloss.

⁶⁵ Gonzalez, *Beauty and Islam*, 26.

Another type of reflective material is the glass mosaic. Mosaic tiles have much more sparkle when the sun strikes its surface as it comprises many small pieces fitted together, and the smallest deviation from a plane surface creates refracted light.⁶⁶ The Dome of the Rock, completed in 691/692 AD in Jerusalem in the Umayyad era of the Caliph Abd al-Malik, is the first monumental Islamic building to witness the beauty of reflective mosaic associated with the mother of pearl. Floral motifs and Quranic inscriptions adorn the interior façade of the shrine (Figure 31).⁶⁷



Figure 31: Detail of the interior mosaics in the Dome of the Rock showing hanging crowns, jewelry, and inscriptions. © Said Nuseibeh.

USE OF *AL-NŪR* IN THE MOSQUE LAMPS

The use of lamps and light devices is the fourth category of the six physical ones proposed by Robert Hillenbrand for the use of light in Islamic architecture for functional, aesthetic, or conceptual purposes.

History of Mosque Lamps

Historically, lighting the mosques with oiled lamps began with the early mosque in the time of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). Tamīm al-Dūrī, an Arab-Christian monk from Palestine who converted to Islam and became a companion of the Prophet, had advised the Prophet to build a minbar in the Mosque of al-Medina and to use oil-lamps to illuminate it (Figure 32). He adopted this from Christian Palestinian and Syrian practice.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Hillenbrand, “The Use of Light,” 99.

⁶⁷ Moya Carey, *An Illustrated History of Islamic Architecture* (Leicestershire: Anness Publishing, 2012), 38.

⁶⁸ Böwering, “The Light Verse,” 117–118.



Figure 32: Manuscript from Siyer-i Nebi 1595 AD showing Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in the mosque with lamp and hanging ornaments (Stone, 2018, 107).

Thus, the oil lamps were first introduced to mosques as an influence from the religio-cultures of Christianity and Judaism. The oil lamp in Jewish Scriptures most often symbolizes God lighting the way for the chosen people (Figure 33). The best known symbol of Judaism is the Jewish Menorah, the seven-branched candelabrum.⁶⁹

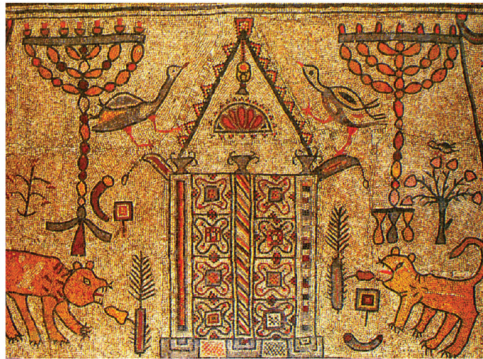


Figure 33: Mosaic floor of 6th century Beth Alpha synagogue, depicting Torah shrine with hanging lamp suspended from its gabled roof (Stone 2018, 32).

The lamp also has an important place in Christianity. In the Orthodox Church, the oil lamp should be lit when the church is consecrated, and the light should never go out (Figure 34). In the Catholic Church, the oil lamp should stay burning on the altar, and this

⁶⁹ Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 31–33.

refers to the commandment in the Book of Exodus, where a lamp filled with the purest olive oil should always burn in the tabernacle. The lamp symbolizes the presence of God.⁷⁰



Figure 34: Manuscript of The Abingdon Apocalypse from late 13th century showing an altar with two candlesticks and a lamp above (Stone 2018, 33).

Mosque Lamps, Function, and Symbolism

In addition to the lighting function, the mosque lamp in Islamic art has a conceptual and metaphoric interpretation for the Verse of Light (*Āyat al-Nūr*). In the verse, the concept of God is equated to a light shining in a glass lamp hung in a niche, which has been associated with the miḥrab image since the 12th century (Figure 35).⁷¹

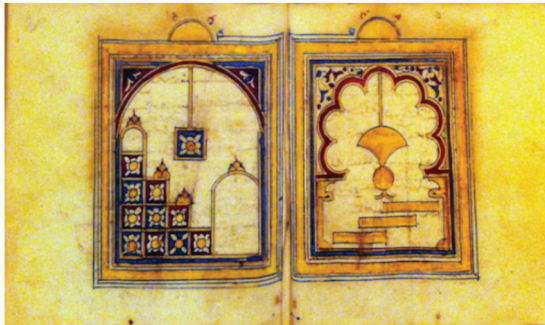


Figure 35: A painting from the prayer book of Al-Jazūli, Maghreb, 1844 AD. It shows a golden lamp suspended centrally within a lobed arch resembling a miḥrab (László 2013, 234).

⁷⁰ Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 33–35.

⁷¹ Filiz Çakır Phillip, “Collections, Panel,” *Aga Khan Museum*, accessed October 12, 2020, <https://www.agakhanmuseum.org/collection/artifact/miḥrab-panel-akm585>.

In addition to the physical glass lamps on mihrabs in the mosques, many decorative panels in stone, stucco, and ceramics have ornamented different buildings throughout Islamic history (Figures 36 and 37).



Figure 36: Stele with lamp motif with inscription from Light Verse in Budayriyyah Madras, Cairo. (1357 AD) (Stone, 2018, 140).



Figure 37: Fritware, unglazed panel, from Syria, probably (1575 AD). In the center of the arch, a suspended cobalt blue mosque lamp reveals the declaration of the Muslim faith, the shahada (Phillip 2020).

Glass Mosque Lamps

Rock Crystal Lamps

Rock crystal, which is a natural material, contains a variety of quartz with exceptional transparency. It was mined and carved in Mesopotamia and in the Byzantine Empire.⁷² In the early Islamic era, a crystal lamp was placed above the Mihrab of Companions of the Prophet in the Great Mosque of Damascus. This was placed in the first Islamic century by the Umayyad caliph al-Walid, who reigned from 705 to 715 AD. The lamp was known as *Qulaila*, referring to accounts by Ibn ‘Asakir, al-‘Umari, and al-‘Ilmawi in which it is described as a pearl (*durra*) that shone like a lamp (*siraj*).⁷³

Rock crystal lamps were used in major Islamic shrines; some lamps are mentioned in historical accounts (Figure 38). For example, in Mecca in the Zamzam Dome, Ibn Jubayr noted the exclusive presence of rock crystal lamps; and Ibn al-Najjar in his history of

⁷² Avinoam Shalem, “Fountains of Light: The Meaning of Medieval Islamic Rock Crystal Lamps,” *Muqarnas XI: An Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture* (1994), 3.

⁷³ Shalem, “Fountains of Light,” 2.



Medina (1197 AD) recorded a variety of lamps in the tomb of the Prophet (PBUH), including more than 40 made from silver, two of crystal, and one of gold.⁷⁴



Figure 38: Fatimid carved rock crystal lamp, 10th century Iraq, converted to a vase in 13th century Venice.

Manmade Glass Lamps

The glass industry was an ancient tradition, and it was revived in the countries of eastern Mediterranean with different techniques in the 12th century. Glassmakers in Islamic empires were famous in Syria and Egypt. The first step was the creation of a glass object by free-blown methods or blown in the traditional manner. The object was then cooled in an annealing oven, painted with enamel pigments and gold after it cooled down, and reheated again with both materials together (Figure 39).⁷⁵



Figure 39: Procession of glass workers with a working furnace on a float. From a manuscript dated to the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Murat III, late 16th century AD (Carey, *An Illustrated History of Islamic Art & Design* 2012, 64).

⁷⁴ Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 81–82.

⁷⁵ Carey, *An Illustrated History*, 64.

During the overlapping Ayyubid (1171–1260 AD) and Mamluk periods (1250–1517 AD), enameled glass mosque lamps became closely associated with the history of Islamic art.⁷⁶ Before the Mamluk period, glass lamps were simple shapes with simple decorative features (Figure 40).



Figure 40: Free blown glass lamp dated 10th–12th century, this lamp has a roughly globular body, a neck shaped like funnel, and three small vertical handles. Lamps of this type, with or without wick holders, were widely used in the Islamic world and in parts of southern Europe (Stefano Carboni, David Whitehouse 2001, 77).

In the 14th century, Mamluk Cairo demonstrated religious enthusiasm by establishing new mosques and colleges called *madrasas*; and to light these buildings, hundreds of highly decorated enameled mosque lamps were suspended from the ceilings.⁷⁷ The hanging lamps were decorated with gilt and enameled designs. Mostly, the neck was designed with the Light Verse or other Qur’anic verses, and the patron who established the foundation might be named on the body. The calligraphic blazon of the Mamluk Sultan and his officers’ emblems all were shown on the glass vessel (Figure 41).⁷⁸ Mamluk mosque lamps usually take the form of a vase-shaped vessel with a flattened globular body and a wide, funnel-shaped neck.⁷⁹

76 Johanna Salvant et al., “Investigation of an Enameled Glass Mosque Lamp: A 13th–14th Century Mamluk Example or 19th-century European Version?” *Heritage Science* 4, no. 5 (2016), 1.

77 Carey, *An Illustrated History*, 67.

78 Almut von Gladiss, “Decorative Arts,” in *Islam: Art and Architecture*, ed. Peter Delius and Markus Hattstein (Potsdam, Cambridge: H.F. Ullmann, 2015), 199.

79 Salvant et al., “Investigation of an Enameled Glass Mosque Lamp,” 1–2.



Figure 41: Mosque Lamp with the name of its patron, Qawsun (d. 1342), amir of the Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalaun, made in Egypt. On the neck, the Verse of Light is enameled. Metropolitan Museum.

Metalwork Mosque Lamps

In Islamic Empires, craftsmen demonstrated their expertise by using different materials and techniques. For mosque lamps, the limitation in the size of the glass lamps and the desire to achieve larger dimensions may have been the primary reason for the development of similarly shaped lamps made from perforated metal (Figures 42 and 43). The majority were made from metal, such as bronze, copper, brass, and sometimes gold and silver for important shrines.⁸⁰



Figure 42: Mosque lamp, openwork sheet brass, Iraq or Iran, 10th century (Collection 2020).



Figure 43: Image for a Mamluk mosque lamp, made for the mausoleum of Sultan al-Zahir Baybars, 1277 (Stone 2018, 90).

⁸⁰ Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 83–93.

Opaque Mosque Lamps

The majority of metal lamps overcame the opacity of the material by perforating the lamp body in order to allow light to pass. However, rather surprisingly, in the development of the mosque lamp, a greater thickness of the metal was used with less transparency.⁸¹ These opaque metal lamps were mainly used for decoration and symbolism rather than lighting up the space, such as the lamps in Figures 44 and 45.



Figure 44: Engraved brass mosque lamp, 11th century (Stone 2018, 102).



Figure 45: Mamluk brass lamp inlaid with silver and gold, late 14th century (Stone 2018, 102).

Another type of an opaque lamp which superseded the Mamluk glass lamp was in Ottoman, Turkey, and was made from pottery. The tradition of ceramic mosque lamps goes back to at least the 13th century, as demonstrated by examples in Figure 46 and Figure 47. It is evident that in such cases, the “lamp” was not intended to act as an actual lighting device and instead was primarily symbolic.⁸²

⁸¹ Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 103.

⁸² Stone, *Symbol of Divine Light*, 105.



Figure 46: Mosque lamp from Suleymaniye Mosque, height 48 cm, Istanbul, 1557. Victoria and Albert Museum.



Figure 47: Iznik mosque lamp, height 38.5 cm, signed by Musli, 1549, probably made for Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem. British Museum.

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Al-Nūr, represented either in its physical or symbolic interpretations, has a remarkable presence in Islamic culture, art, and architecture. The Verse of Light and its interpretations have a great potential for visual and symbolic presentations. The verse begins by mentioning that God is the Light of the Heaven and the Earth, and it contains two different objects from each of them; the glittering star from the Heaven and the olive tree from the Earth. An allegory of God's light is then described with architectural elements, such as niche, lamp, and glass.

Interestingly, most of the artefacts and the architecture studied in this paper are related to the elements mentioned in the verse. Lighting the mosque by mosque lamps started with glass lamps using oil. The oil is mentioned in the verse by referring to the oil from the olive tree, a tree that has a symbolic presence in the three monotheist religions. Mihrabs in mosques have a symbolic representation from the verse by hanging lamps in their niches. Later, the images of mihrabs with hanging lamps appear in different presentations, such as paintings, miniatures, carved panels in stone or stucco, and glazed tile panels. The architectural elements and openings in religious buildings are used for lighting as well as symbolic purposes. The symbolism of these openings is noticed as a dialogue between shadow and light; it is also clarified by adding the calligraphy of the Verse of Light or by using reflective materials as glazed tiles, luster, and glass. The relationship between architectural openings and light is illustrated in the titles given to some of these elements, such as *qamariya* and *shamsiya*, which are connected to the moon and the sun, respectively. Finally, *Al-Nūr* is an aesthetic value by itself and is an element used in art and architecture to enhance beauty, "For light produces beauty, and thus the sun, the moon, and the stars look beautiful ... light by itself produces beauty" (Ibn al-Haytham).

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Nation Without Nationalism: A Study on the Critique of Nationalism by Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938)

Mohammed Asaf

ABSTRACT

This paper illustrates the critique of nationalism in India by the South Asian philosopher, Muhammad Iqbal, focusing on his famous Allahabad address in 1930. There is an inescapable tension animated in his political thought presented in this speech. Although he rejects the idea of nationalism as a Western construct, he accepts it practically when he suggests a territorial solution for the Muslim minority question in India. In this study, we approach this contradiction in light of the recent development of the nationalism debate in India and argue that this confusion is untenable from the subaltern perspective of nationalist debate. Iqbal views the “Muslim nation” as a cultural unit based on religious solidarity,

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liberating it from the clutches of the centralizing or homogenizing tendencies of the state. This study recovers his distinctive political philosophy from the debris of polemics and illustrates thoroughly how a Muslim intellectual did interact with the ideas and institutions of Western modernity in a particular time in South Asia.

Keywords: Muslim nation, nationalism, Indian state, subaltern studies

INTRODUCTION

Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) was an influential intellectual figure from South Asia. He was a doyen of Urdu poetry and a seminal philosopher of his time. However, he was also a “controversial” politician in India and a “true” patriot in Pakistan for a specific reason. It was that his idea of a “Muslim nation” was almost certainly the real motivation for the formation of Pakistan. In this study, we analyze this cause by examining it in light of his critique of nationalism. This study perceptively engages with his political visions for an ideal nation; and thereby, recovers his distinctive political philosophy from the debris of polemics and illustrates thoroughly how a Muslim intellectual did interact with the ideas and institutions of Western modernity during a particular time period in South Asia.

Here, we specifically examine Iqbal’s views on nationalism based on his famous presidential address delivered at the annual session of the All-India Muslim League on December 29, 1930 (also known as The Allahabad Address, henceforth in this name), published in *Speeches, Writings, and Statements of Iqbal* compiled by Latif Ahmad Sherwani.¹ In this speech, he outlined a political vision for an independent nation of Muslim-majority provinces in the northwestern frontier of India. This speech was deliberately chosen to elaborate his critique of nationalism because this speech is often referenced in public and academic debates in India to explicate Iqbal’s “communal” political thought, which made him the first public intellectual to articulate what would become known as the “two-nation theory” and thus the progenitor of the idea of Pakistan. Re-reading the overused material with that purpose in mind demands a different engagement with the text, recuperating his thoughts through a new conceptual framework and locating his convictions within the intellectual matrix of the time. This article is, in some sense, an attempt to accomplish this goal.

Colonial Modernity and Indian Nationalism

It is a general historical fact that the Indian political nation, as we see it today, did not exist before establishing British rule in India. However, regarding the source and evolution of nationalism, whether it is embedded in pre-modern solidarity or how these local solidarities were consolidated, is a matter of debate among the scholars in India. There is little disagreement that the Indian nationalism that confronted British imperialism, which led ultimately to the formation of the Indian state in 1947, is a historical product of colonial

1 Latif Ahmad Sherwani, ed. *Speeches, Writings, and Statements of Iqbal* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 2006).

modernity.² In other words, Indian nationalism, developed through anti-colonial movements like Indian National Congress (INC), was a new phenomenon that was shaped by the structure of the modern state administered by the British empire. However, how did Indians “imagine” themselves is a much-contested terrain among scholars.

Early nationalist scholars focused primarily on the supremacy of nationalist ideology and building national consciousness to which all other consciousnesses were merged and subordinated. The emergence of nationalism, in this sense, was formed through shared antipathy toward the British rule in India. In contrast to this political explanation, the early Marxist school analyzed the nationalist movement in terms of economic development during the colonial time, such as the rise of industrial capitalism and market society.³ However, these scholarships leave little space for the inner conflicts within this ideology. Therefore, by engaging critically with these grand narratives, different school of thoughts emerged, unearthing different strands in Indian nationalism. These schools can be divided broadly into the neo-traditionalist, neo-Marxist, and subaltern categories.

Neo-traditionalist and neo-Marxist scholars brought a new interpretation to the nationalism debate. Unlike classical scholars, they focused more on the internal contradiction within nationalist thought. Since India has always been a plural society, it is difficult to reduce all to a single authentic nationalist thought. Different groups imagined the nation in a variety of ways, and there was a conflict of interest in those imaginations. A new group of scholars, usually identified as the “Cambridge School” that emerged from the neo-traditionalist school, questioned the very ontology of a unified nationalist movement and traced instead a series of localized movements that built into national identity. For instance, by tracing the origins of nationalism in India, Bayly argued that it emerged from the pre-existing sense of territoriality based on the patriotic sense of the land and indigenous ideas of public morality.⁴

Scholars from these schools have given enormous attention to the “politicization of society” by encountering colonial modernity along the lines of traditional forms such as caste, region, religion, language, and so on. They identified two key triggers of this change: the introduction of Western education and political representation. As a result of this, a new status group of Western-educated elites emerged from the existing privileged indigenous groups. Marxist scholars explain this phenomenon in terms of middle-class formations and see this educated elite as the “traditional intellectual” in Gramscian terms, which operates as ideological bearers of nationalism; Iqbal belonged to this elite group.

Another and the most influential intervention in this debate comes from subaltern thinkers. This group was represented mainly by Ranajit Guha and his interlocutors. In their approach, a “structural dichotomy” between the domains of elite politics and subalterns had existed in Indian social life as two completely autonomous forms of

2 Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition and After: The History of Modern India* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2007).

3 Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885–1947*; Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition*.

4 Christopher Bayly, *Origins of Nationality in South Asia: Patriotism and Ethical Government in the Making of Modern India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998).

consciousness. Guha argues that the bourgeois leadership failed to establish its hegemony on the language of subordinated groups or subalterns through persuasion or coercion.⁵ They had a different idiom of mobilization and action, which is separated from elite politics. The establishment of the nation-state in India, in his view, was just a “dominance without hegemony.”⁶ This new historiographical approach has undergone a considerable shift, with the focus moving from class to community, from material analysis to privileging of culture, mind, and identity.⁷ This new shift was also associated with the shift of focus from actual subaltern to “intellectual subaltern” that includes elite and dominant groups as well. Scholars like Dipesh Chakrabarty, Partha Chatterjee, Gyan Prakash, and others began to trace intellectual colonization and recover the internal strand of nationalism.

In his famous essay with the captivating title “Whose Imagined Community?”, Partha Chatterjee challenged the Western modal of nationalism and argued that the nationalism that emerged in India was a “different” but a “derivative discourse” from the West.⁸ It is a “derivative discourse” because the idea of politics based on a territorial nation-state was already established and had become a part of the social imaginary. At the same time, there was an alternative vision that could unite India at the social level, if not the political level. For this reason, he argued that the history of nationalism in India is essentially constituted by two different histories: the history of the spiritual domain and that of the material domain. While colonized people were able to imagine themselves as a nation, materially, they had no choice but to choose the forms of politics given to them through colonialism. By deepening this critique to another level, Gyan Prakash argues that these inner and outer spheres are untenable because the latter is an extension of the former.⁹ Therefore, the adaption of the nation-state by the political elite was not a mere emulation of the Western modal; instead, it was critiqued and redefined in terms of the spiritual or traditional domain. Hence, this political thought is not a Western import, but rather shaped through encountering one another.

Situating Iqbal in Muslim Political Thought

From the above discussion, it can be discerned that nationalism is a site of political contestation in India. This political contestation and the differences, however, were limited to not only the inter-community level but the intra-community level as well. There was considerable diversity within the Muslim community regarding the approach toward the British government in India. The Muslim intellectual tradition in India was developed by engaging with colonial modernity. This engagement ended up with multiple voices for and against the acceptance of new political ideas and institutions brought about by the British

5 Guha Ranajit, *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

6 Ranajit, *Dominance Without Hegemony*.

7 Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition*.

8 Chatterjee Partha, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton N.J: Princeton University Press, 1993).

9 Prakash Gyan, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton N.J: Princeton University Press, 1999).

administration. This period was also characterized by the extensive adoption of print technologies and the emergence of new educational centers, both religious and secular, within the Muslim community. As a result of this, a rich political discourse of Islam developed in which thinkers like Iqbal were born within the community.

The decline of the Mughal dynasty and its replacement by British authority led Muslim politics into an utter decay in India. British rule introduced a new political culture into India, which was radically different from what Indians had experienced before. This new form of politics was established along with the transformation of imperial power from Company to Crown in 1857. Confronted by this modified political context, Muslim intellectuals and traditional scholars engaged in fierce debate over the adaptation and repudiation of modern political ideas and institutions. Regarding the contestation of politics, three voices emerged predominantly within the Muslim community. Modernist reformists represented the first strand in this category. A typical example of this category was Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, a self-conscious modernist who started the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, which was converted later to Aligarh Muslim University, a center of “Islamic modernism” during this time. He proposed a rationalist interpretation of Islam which reconciled with the modern sciences. He urged the Muslim community to adopt modern and English education and saw a solution for the Muslim plight in it. Scholars from this group understood the utility of the colonial government and therefore did not see any issue of incompatibility between Islam and modern politics.¹⁰

The second category was the strand of traditional ‘ulamā, whose vision could be called neo-traditionalist. This included revivalist movements like Deobandi (established in 1867), Barelwi movement, Ahl-i-Hadith, Ahmadiyya, and others. Scholars from this group largely remained indifferent to the question of politics, even though they were part of the anti-colonial nationalist movements in many ways. Regarding the Deobandi movement, Metcalf argued that ‘ulamās generally kept away from the question of politics and focused more on developing the ethical qualities of the believers. Through their madrasa system, they bolstered Islamic education and sought the creation of a moral community that observed Islamic law appropriately.¹¹ Similarly, Sanyal argues that the Barelwi movement was to renew the strict allegiance of Muslim communities to sharia.¹² They believed that Muslims’ loss of political power was due to the moral weaknesses in the Muslim community; therefore, an ethical return is inevitable. It is important, however, to note that there were considerable differences between these movements regarding the theology of everyday life, and these groups had contested against each other for the social authority within the community. What is interesting is that this group took the current form of politics for granted without seeing any contradiction in associating with it.

10 Mohammad Adnan Rehman, “Nation as a Neo-Idol: Muslim Political Theology and the Critique of Secular Nationalism in Modern South Asia,” *Religions* 9, no. 11 (2018): 355.

11 Barbara Daly Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

12 Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi and His Movement, 1870–1920* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996).

A third category is a group that comes in between these two groups considering their stand on politics in India. It supported reformism and called for re-interpreting Islamic ideals within the new circumstances. They found Islam as a source of current social, political, and economic crises in India. This group of scholars was represented by the Western-educated elites concerned about Muslim identity and politics in such a turbulent time. They were predominantly professionals and not traditionally trained scholars; therefore, the neo-traditional ‘ulamā questioned their authority over Islamic knowledge. Scholars like Abul A’la Maududi, Muhammad Iqbal, and Abul Kalam Azad can be classified under this category. Even though they had their own different interpretations of Islam and politics, they were deeply engaged with the question of politics in modern times.

Breaking this compartmentalization, scholars—especially traditional scholars—had come to the question of politics in the later period. For instance, the Khilafat movement, which started in India for demanding the re-establishment of the Caliphate for the Muslim world, brought many ‘ulamā to the political stage who were indifferent to the issues concerning politics earlier. *Jamiat Ulema-ei-Hind* (Association of Islamic Scholars of India), which was established in 1919, was at the forefront in providing leadership for the Muslim community in Northern India during this time. They criticized the ‘separatist’ politics of the Muslim League and questioned their claim of Muslim representation.¹³ One of the eminent scholars in this front was Maulana Husayn Madani (1879–1957), a leading Deobandi scholar. Madani was directly involved in the debate with Iqbal regarding the question of nationalism. On the political front, Madani supported the INC like Maulana Azad. Following Azad, he developed a political theology in his famous work, “Composite Nationalism” (*mutahida qaumiyyat*). Madani argued that nationalism based on a territory is compatible with Islam and is even justified in the Islamic tradition. He criticized Iqbal’s idea of nationalism by pointing out that the idea of a nation based on territorial solidarity has a history in Islamic tradition. The Arabic word *qaum* in Islamic tradition can be translated to denote “nation” today. The treaty of Medina was an earlier form of “composite nationalism,” he argued. By agreeing with Madani’s concept of *qaum* broadly, Iqbal refuted composite nationalism on the basis of *millat/umma*, the two legitimate concepts for community in Islam, and argues that the basis of a Muslim *qaum* cannot be other than their *millat* (religion).¹⁴

Iqbal’s Views on Nationalism

In his famous Allahabad address (1930), Iqbal outlined his vision of politics that would ensure the complete development of India’s Muslim culture. At the outset, he declared that Islam and nationalism were incompatible ideologies. The term “nationalism,” according to him, refers to the making of a secular community based on territorial solidarity. Iqbal observed that the ultimate result of this process was to relegate religion to the private

13 Yohanan Friedmann, “The Attitude of the Jam’iyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind to the Indian National Movement and the Establishment of Pakistan,” in *The ‘Ulama’ in Modern History*, ed. Gabriel Baer (Jerusalem: Annul of Israel Oriental Society, 1971), 157-83.

14 Rehman, “Nation as a Neo-Idol,” 355.

sphere, which was impossible to think of in the case of Islam.¹⁵ Scholars have argued that the political philosophy of Iqbal was based on his perception of Islam as a complete system that could offer solutions for social, political, and economic crises of the time.¹⁶ Hence, he posed Islam as a counter-ideology to Western civilization and Marxism. Confronting the models of politics derived from these ideologies, he sought a new form of politics that was based on Islam in which Muslims would have complete cultural autonomy for their holistic development.

For the sake of analysis, this article examines this long speech after dividing it into two parts. In the first part, Iqbal discusses his theoretical engagement with the idea of nationalism or the nation-state in general from the perspective of Islam. In his view, Islam comprises of ethical and political dimensions of a social life. The political dimension includes a social structure regulated by a legal system and animated by a specific ethical ideal.¹⁷ Therefore, it is developed into a well-defined community, possessing a moral universe of its own. In other words, Islam constitutes a moral community that is political in nature. These communitarian forms of life, however, is shaped by the contours of different cultural landscapes. Iqbal argues that this political community is under attack owing to the influx of cultural and political ideas from the West. He laments that “our young men” have accepted this without any critical appreciation.

Iqbal figured that the political structure based on territorial-based nationhood had emerged in the West owing to some specific historical circumstances. Therefore, he argued that this notion of territory as the only principle of political solidarity was adaptable to the Christian tradition because, in Europe, Christianity was understood purely as a monastic order that gradually developed into a church organization. Politics, in this sense, is not integral to Christianity; thus, it has bifurcated the already spiritual domain from the material. For this reason, it is not contradictory to adopt a national system of ethics and polity instead of the universal ethics of Jesus. The Protestant revolt against the established church authority was successful because Luther’s protest was not directed against any system of politics associated with Christianity. However, the peculiar political condition in which this occurred resulted in a complete separation of religion from the political authority. The ultimate result of this transformation was the domestication of religion, i.e., Christianity, into private life, which, in this sense, was a natural development.

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- 15 Regarding Iqbal’s categorical view of nationalism as secular and secularism as privatization of religion, both views are contested and criticized as simplistic by a vast majority of scholars today. It is obvious from his writing that the Western political experience was his primary reference to develop his argument. However, there are considerable diversities within the “Western” political experiences with regard to nation-state formation and secularization processes. See, for instance, Casanova, José. 2011. “The Secular, Secularizations, Secularisms.” In *Rethinking Secularism*, edited by Craig J. Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen, 54–74. Oxford, N.Y: Oxford University Press.
 - 16 Javed Majeed, introduction to *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, by Muhammad Iqbal, Saeed Sheikh, ed. (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012); Iqbal Singh Sevea, *The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal: Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
 - 17 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*.

This is not possible in the case of Islam, Iqbal argues. He emphatically states that “a Luther in the world of Islam, however, is an impossible phenomenon”¹⁸ as Islam does not bifurcate the world of spirit and matter in the first place. He further explains that “the nature of the Prophet’s religious experience, as disclosed in the Quran, however, is wholly different. It is not a mere experience in the sense of a purely biological event, happening inside the experiment and necessitating no reactions on its social environment. It is individual experience creative of a social order.” The immediate outcome of revelation in Islam was to form a social and political order. The social order was, therefore, integral to the life of Islam; however, it was disrupted by the Western imported form of politics. Iqbal identifies nationalism as a political project to unify the community on a secular ground, which is destructive to the idea of the Muslim community in Islam. He says, “At the present moment, the national idea is racializing the outlook of Muslims and thus materially counteracting the humanizing work of Islam.”¹⁹

In the second part of his speech, Iqbal deals with the Muslim minority question in India. This question is germane when Muslims happen to be a minority and marginalized within the anti-colonial nationalist movement represented by the INC. This issue had animated well in the political discourses of the time. The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) turned away from these nationalist politics proposed by INC and began to address Muslim questions separately. Iqbal’s association with IUML was well-known, and he had held various posts in its organization.²⁰ However, the politics of IUML was depicted as “communal” and therefore considered as anti-national. By tracing the early historical formations of Indian secularism, Tejani argues that secularism in India had less to do with creating ethics of tolerance than the formulation of nationalism which is often defined in opposition to the “communal” politics of the Muslim League in the early twentieth century.²¹ Therefore, the politics of IUML was framed as separatist, communal, and anti-secular; and Iqbal addresses this “othering” well in this speech.

Iqbal proposes a territorial solution for this crisis through a religious line. What he was seeking ultimately was a politics in which “Islam is itself destiny and will not suffer a destiny.”²² In this address, he calls for a “Muslim India within India,” situating it geographically in the Muslim-populated northwestern frontier of united India, including Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind, and Balochistan. For him, this divide would benefit the development of Muslims and non-Muslims in India because this state was based on cultural autonomy. He then addresses the allegation of “communalism” and argues that “community, which is inspired by feelings of ill-will toward other communities

18 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, 5.

19 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, 6.

20 Sevea, *The Political Philosophy*.

21 Shabnum Tejani, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890-1950* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007).

22 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, 6.

is low and ignoble”; otherwise, it is “indispensable to the formation of a harmonious whole in a country like India.”²³

There are a number of issues with Iqbal’s idea of the nation. It is not clear from his speech what would be the status of the non-Muslim minority in such politics. Interestingly, he ignored the plight of Muslims consciously or unconsciously in other regions of India, especially in South India. What interests me the most is the outward contradiction in his position, which is animated in the same speech. Although he rejects the idea of nationalism as inherently inimical to Islam, he accepts it as a solution to the Muslim question in India. At no point in his speech does Iqbal address this contradiction adequately, probably because he might not have felt this as a contradiction as we do today. In this situation, it is important to examine what exactly did he mean by a “Muslim nation.” Considering his critique of nationalism illustrated in the first part, it is difficult to assume that he was thinking about a separate modern nation. Instead, he was reimagining a different form of politics, similar to a nation without nationalism.

This confusion is most likely a product of a specific conception of nationalism. Typically, nationalism has been understood as a territorially based claim of a community. Anderson argues that nationalism is “an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.”²⁴ When he writes “inherently limited,” he refers to the territorial character of nationalism as essential to the very existence of the idea. What is more at stake here is the sovereign aspect of it within a territory that is in the making. In his vision of “nation,” it is possible to argue that Iqbal contests this sovereign aspect of the territorial authority than the territoriality of the state itself because “territory” had become the basis of reorganization of nations by that time.

Chatterjee argues that nationalism in India is imagined in two spheres, spiritual and material.²⁵ Intellectuals in India imagined indigenous or communal nationhood spiritually; however, politically they had no choice other than to comply with the political sovereignty of the colonial state. The Muslim discourse of nationalism, therefore, must be understood within this context. In this sense, Iqbal’s idea of a “Muslim nation” could be viewed as an attempt to form a different form of polity where the political aspects of Islam would not be curtailed. This is legitimate because, as Ayesha Jalal pointed out, Pakistan as a separate state became a realistic option for the Muslim elite only after 1946;²⁶ therefore, Iqbal’s aspiration to form a Muslim nation has to be understood within an open-ended context of a spectrum of political possibilities. Nevertheless, it should not be considered as a “derivative discourse,” rather a different mode of politics itself as Prakash rightly observed.²⁷ Thus, a mutual transformation or hybridity, to quote Bhabha, is to be imagined

23 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, 6–10.

24 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1983), 23.

25 Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*.

26 Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

27 Prakash, *Another Reason*.

in the form of politics in which Western and Muslim traditions change and are adapted together.²⁸ However, Iqbal was also aware of the dominance of the nation-state discourse in this encounter when he says, “I do not know what will be the final fate of the national idea in the world of Islam. Whether Islam will assimilate and transform it, as it has assimilated and transformed many ideas expressive of a different spirit before, or allow a radical transformation of its own structure by the force of this idea, is hard to predict.”²⁹ In any case, he provided a different imagination to politics, although it was not developed through the formation of Pakistan.

As noted, the territorial aspect of a nation-state was not as problematic to him as the sovereignty of the state because nationalism is a political project to make a community, regulating the conduct of the subject in a desirable way. As Taylor observed, nationalism and secularism are deeply intertwined so that the modern nation-state can function as the moral authority.³⁰ According to him, such a form of politics is predicated upon two features, horizontal solidarity and secular homogenous time. Interestingly, Iqbal sensed some deeper structures of the modern nation-state and its homogenizing or centralizing tendencies ahead of others in his time. What is at stake here is the intrusive power of the secular modern-state to form its subjects, regulating and defining the space or religion for the sake of the national community.³¹ Iqbal could sense this power of the modern state, if not wholly, while critiquing nationalism.

CONCLUSION

This paper examines Muhammad Iqbal’s critique of nationalism articulated in his famous Allahabad address in 1930 in light of the recent development of the nationalism debate in India. By problematizing an inescapable tension animated in this speech regarding the acceptance of the idea of nationalism, this paper calls for a different approach to understand his political thought within the intellectual context that blossomed under British colonialism. We approach this contradiction through the prism of subaltern critique of nationalism and argue that this confusion is untenable if approaching through this perspective. Iqbal visualized the “Muslim nation” as a cultural unit based on religious solidarity, not on the territorial solidarity that is integral to the modern nation-state. Although the territory is an essential component in understanding nationalism in its mainstream sense, his critique of nationalism was not against the very idea of territory; rather it was against a territory-based state’s homogenizing tendencies, which is secularizing in his view. Moreover, his call for a Muslim nation has to be understood

28 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

29 Sherwani, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, 6.

30 Charles Taylor, “Modes of Secularism,” in *Secularism and Its Critics*, ed. Rajeev Bhargava (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998).

31 Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*; Mahmood, *Religious Difference in Secular Age: A Minority Report*.

within an open-ended context of a spectrum of political possibilities.³² Therefore, his idea of a “Muslim nation” cannot be reduced to the idea of Pakistan that developed later because it has fallen into a political format of a homogenizing modern-state structure, which Iqbal never aspired to.

32 The central argument of this essay aligns with a similar argument (drawing on a different theoretical framework) that Sevea and others have proposed. However, this essay problematizes Iqbal’s speech, arguing that his speech itself is riddled with contradictions that demand a different perspective to approach it. This study tries to perceive the speech through a perspective drawn from the subaltern critique of nationalism.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

COVID-19 – The Catalyst for Digital Transformation in Financial Services and Islamic FinTech: Evidence from Qatar

Sara Cherqaoui

ABSTRACT

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has challenged normalcy and affected various aspects of the economy, including financial service providers. However, technological transformation has played a crucial role in enhancing service delivery and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In Qatar, the Qatar Central Bank (QCB) works with financial services and Islamic FinTech to enhance digital transformation in the country. The Qatar FinTech Hub (QFTH) collaborates with entrepreneurs, SMEs, and other investors to incubate and establish supportive technology innovations. Though the formal Islamic finance industry has been around since the late 1970s with a handful of

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<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/sites/default/files/catalystdigitaltransformation.pdf>

institutions and negligible scope, it has increasingly grown over the past two decades, while digital transformation has developed far slower. This study explores the role of COVID-19 as a catalyst for digital transformation in Islamic banking. Technology is being increasingly implemented to enhance the providence of financial products and services.

Keywords: Islamic finance, Islamic banking, digital transformation, FinTech, digital currency, Qatar, COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID-19 led to drastic changes for both people and organizations. When COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, most organizations were forced to halt their operations due to lockdowns and strict health measures. As a result, it created an opportunity for organizations to consider digitizing their services. Financial technology (FinTech) has enabled financial services to be provided digitally instead of the conventional standard that requires individuals to be present physically. Qatar has revolutionized its financial services in the Middle East, continuously improving the interactions with Islamic banking. Islamic FinTech is the application of technology to Islamic banking to enable continuous provision of financial services.¹ Therefore, it helps to address the impact of COVID-19 by reducing physical movement in financial facilities. It is plausible that COVID-19 is the catalyst for the technological transformation witnessed in the Islamic finance industry in Qatar. Though financial service providers have been slowly introducing FinTech, COVID-19 has helped accelerate its application to work around the restrictions which resulted in people being unable to freely interact. Because people were required to stay at home, it made it easier for them to appreciate the applications of FinTech. Furthermore, Qatar is set to host FIFA World Cup 2022; and thus, embracing the latest technology in financial services is crucial to give visitors the best experience. Digital innovation is necessary to enhance FinTech, especially in Islamic finance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

FinTech is Important for Financial Growth

Before COVID-19, financial service providers were slow to introduce digital transformation; however, COVID-19 being declared a pandemic accelerated this process. Although it was possible to access digital financial services, most people habitually preferred conventional methods. Islamic banking, in particular, was less digitized; however, the pandemic created an unprecedented need to digitize financial investments, especially those affected by COVID-19. According to Henk Jan Hoogendoorn, chief of the financial sector office at Qatar Financial Center (QFC), "As QFC, we try to understand

1 Sofya Glavina, Irina Aidrus, and Anna Trusova, "Assessment of the Competitiveness of Islamic Fintech Implementation: A Composite Indicator for Cross-Country Analysis," *Journal of Risk and Financial Management* 14, no. 12 (2021): 602.

what is going on with FinTech and how it can help banks. We noticed that 90 percent of the FinTech companies deliver to financial institutions, so those companies do not need to be regulated and only the companies involved in payments need to be regulated. Therefore, we in QFC came up with a solution to help those technology providers, and we gave them the opportunities to get a commercial registration in QFC.”² The transformation of Islamic banking can help increase financial inclusion, especially for SMEs, where there is an increasing need for funding for their businesses or innovation. If the company aligns with the Shariah law, the owner can access equity from an Islamic bank. Through FinTech, it is possible to automate these transactions, including the financial transactions of the borrower, to determine the profitability of a business. The adoption of Fintech provides enormous possibilities for enhancing services to clients and, accordingly, increasing competitiveness within the financial services and Islamic banking sectors.

Qatar FinTech Hub (QFTH)

The Qatar FinTech Hub (QFTH) is an organization that works with a wide range of groups and develops technology infrastructure that helps realize an organization’s goals. In 2020, QFTH ran its Incubator and Accelerator programs, i.e., the Wave 1. These programs facilitate entrepreneurs’ innovative and cutting-edge FinTech ideas to accelerate their journey. QFTH collaborates with entrepreneurs, SMEs, and other investors to incubate and establish supportive technology for their innovations, the demand for which has further increased due to COVID-19. QFTH explores available ideas and defines ways to realize them through financial support. Statements that meet the organizational parameters are supported to develop the financial technology infrastructure. To further provide practical support, Qatar established Fintech Circle, a coworking space, and facilitated free commercial registration and licensing for the first year of a startup’s operation. This initiative was started by Qatar Development Bank (QDB) and offers support to both domestic and international FinTechs. To achieve this, QFTH works with other FinTech hubs, banks, and academic institutions to strive towards transforming Qatar’s financial technology landscape.

Why Qatar Needs a Diversified Digital and Knowledge-Based Economy

The Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030) seeks to reform the country by ensuring that vital sustainable goals are achieved. Its key pillars are economic, social, human, and environmental development. FinTech is applicable in digital banking, e-wallet, insurance technology (InsurTech), digital payment, and digital saving, which contributes specifically to the economic pillar. Providing residents of Qatar with a high standard of living helps diversify the economy through digital innovation. The aim of QNV 2030 is to incorporate technology into various aspects of the economy. The digital framework is achieved

2 Deepak John, “FinTechs have Vital Role in Financial Inclusion: Official,” *The Peninsula Qatar*. Last modified 9 Dec. 2021. <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/09/12/2021/fintechs-have-vital-role-in-financial-inclusion-official>.

through continuous support of innovations that modernize the financial technology infrastructure. COVID-19 disrupted the preserved traditions in finance and created a demand for digital transformation in financial services and FinTech. Modernization is critical to the development of FinTech in Qatar and to enhance Qatar's position among other Gulf countries. The knowledge-based economy objective must respond to economic disruptions resulting from COVID-19.

How FinTech has Evolved in Qatar

Even though Islamic finance has been around for a long time, there has been very little digital transformation associated with it. There is a wide range of products and services offered by Islamic banking, which require technological infrastructure support to enhance service delivery. The Islamic segment has grown considerably since 1963. According to financial estimates, the industry is worth \$19 trillion globally.³ There have been considerable changes to allow Islamic banking to compete with conventional banks. Therefore, this financial sector has enabled bankers to provide better options that offer their clients economic opportunities to grow their businesses. In Qatar and across the globe, the 2008 financial crisis increased the need for an alternative source of funding that supports entrepreneurs. The move resulted in significant progress, which attracted research interests and professional training on specialized skills required to facilitate financial banking. However, Islamic banking has encountered challenges such as conventional banking, resulting in economic loss. Owing to its infrastructure, the sectors incurred losses from defaults or supported enterprises operating on losses. During the pandemic, a number of SMEs and banks saw declining profits and losses in the second quarter of 2020 compared to the previous quarter given that the activities of international financial institutions (IFIs) are based on the demand from SMEs, their dependence being deeper than that of conventional FIs.⁴ Thus, the Islamic financial sector is supposed to suffer more losses this time. In this context, the approach to the transformation of operating models in financial institutions have attracted much attention globally. From this perspective, the pandemic is being recognized as a turning point for the digitalization of the industry.⁵ In Qatar, Islamic financial services have responded to these challenges by introducing digital transformation to enhance effectiveness and reduce the risk of default.⁶ According to KPMG, Qatar's leading banks have embraced digital transformation to enhance resilience, offering contactless payments like Apple Pay, self-service solutions, and a pragmatic experience for customers.

3 "The Roundtable Discusses the Future of FinTech," *Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU)*, 17 Jan. 2022. <https://www.hbku.edu.qa/ar/news/CIS-SP-REDFOFT>.

4 "Finance," *Zawya*, 2020. <https://www.zawya.com/en/smes/finance>

5 Glavina, Aidrus, and Trusova, "Assessment of the Competitiveness."

6 KPMG Report "Qatar Banking Perspectives 2021: Technology, Innovation, and Sustainability." *KPMG*, 2021.

METHODOLOGY

In the analysis process, this study uses a qualitative content analysis to analyze the role of COVID-19 in the digital transformation of financial services and Islamic FinTech evidence from Qatar. Over the years, digital banking has revolutionized financial services, with most services being offered online. Most financial services providers have fully integrated digital banking into all their provisions. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digital transformation process owing to the mandate requiring people to operate from home. Islamic banking, too, was not spared as people seeking Shariah-compliant services demanded digital access to these options. In addition, Islamic banking faced competition from other financial service providers offering Shariah-compliant products and services. Thus, to increase inclusion and meet demand, it was impossible to avoid digital inclusivity. It is suggested that Islamic finance integrated with FinTech can help reduce the economic impact of the pandemic. This study focuses on how Islamic finance in Qatar has managed to deal with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic through digital transformation.

A review of literature was conducted to obtain the relevant research content online. Keywords such as digital banking, e-wallet, digital payment, digital banking, FinTech in Qatar, and Islamic banking were used to identify relevant sources for this study. This qualitative research method analysis was supplied by an exploratory study to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on the digital transformation of both financial services and Islamic finance in Qatar.

Qatar’s financial service providers have reported significant growth with new Islamic financial services providers entering the market. These are Shariah-compliant institutions targeting the gap in the provision of Islamic banking services. With FinTech’s development, it is projected that the institutions will continue to grow in the future. The use of digital currency has also accelerated financial technology, and institutions are aligning their services to allow their customers to transact and invest in blockchain and cryptocurrency.

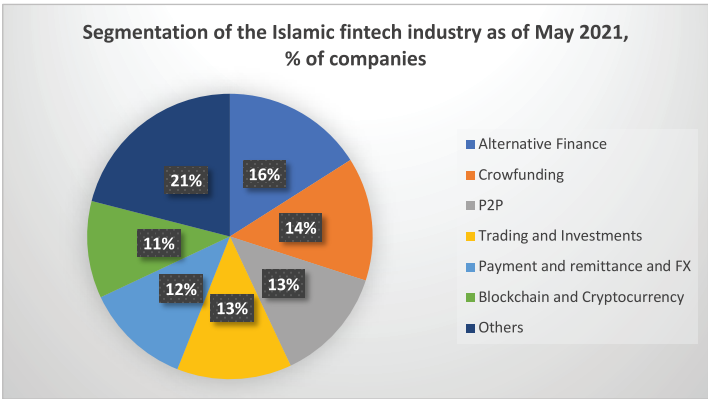


Figure 1. Segmentation of the Islamic fintech industry as of May 2021, % of companies. Source: Global Islamic Economy Reports, Dinar Standard.

Figure 1 shows how the need for financial services has changed over the years.⁷ Investors now seek support for new products and services that were less popular before COVID-19, while the diversification of offerings has affected people's reliance on conventional banks as the central source of funding. The market segmentation of Islamic banking post-COVID-19 can be used to predict a future where people will rely more on Islamic FinTech because of its competitive products and services.

The College of Islamic Studies (CIS) at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) in Qatar organizes workshops to discuss the impact of technological inclusivity in Islamic finance. These workshops entail transforming the services offered by financial institutions to ensure that they align with technical requirements. To achieve QNV 2030, all the transformation catalysts and prospects must be discussed and implemented effectively. This is achievable through collaboration between the regulators, academia, and financial service providers. There is an increasing need to train students who are capable of working with the digital system to help transform Qatar's financial services: "...financial technology includes developments in technology and changes in business models that can contribute to transforming the process of providing financial services through innovative tools, channels, and systems, pointing out that the value of global investments in the financial technology sector reached 133.5 billion dollars in 2019, and its stability at the level of 105.4 billion dollars during the spread of the pandemic [COVID-19] in 2020, and its decline to 98 billion dollars in the first half of last year. It is logical to believe that FinTech will drive and shape the transformation of the financial."⁸ COVID-19 disrupted the economic sector, prompting it to redefine its services and its business models to allow customers the required access to services with reduced risk.⁹ Key players have mentioned: "Financial institutions worldwide are realizing that they need to focus on a different sort of innovation, better technology, modernize infrastructure, and improve customer experience. Retail can monetize data using big data analytics. FinTech is one of the developments arising from the fourth industrial revolution. FinTech is the application of technology and innovation to solve the needs of consumers and firms in the financial space—think credit cards, online banking, and blockchain-powered cryptocurrencies."¹⁰ In Qatar, financial service providers use technology to digitize products and services. When COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, directives to stay at home prompted banks to increase service accessibility by reducing the need to visit a bank. Technological advancements were

7 Glavina, Aidrus, and Trusova, "Assessment of the Competitiveness."

8 John, "Fintechs have Vital Role." <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/09/12/2021/fintechs-have-vital-role-in-financial-inclusion-official>.

9 "Covid-19 Acts as Catalyst for New Digital Business Models." *The Peninsula Newspaper*. 9 May 2021, <https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/09/05/2021/COVID-19-acts-as-catalyst-for-new-digital-business-models>.

10 "Qatari Financial Institutions, Fintech Collaborations Would Lead to Customer Value Advantage, Says Seetharaman." *Gulf Times*. 15 Jan. 2022. <https://m.gulf-times.com/story/707991/Qatari-financial-institutions-fintech-collaborations-would-lead-to-customer-value-advantage-says-Seetharaman>

made to allow clients to access services in the comfort of their homes. Through FinTech, payments, transfers, and remittances could be done with ease, with 85 percent of the transactions being conducted digitally.¹¹ QCB's vision aims at ensuring that financial service providers enable the use of the digital wallet and face and voice authentication to access mobile banking services.

FINDINGS

This study focuses on the digital transformation in financial services occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic in Qatar. The country has progressed in the inclusion of financial technology in Islamic finance. As part of its determination to incorporate Islamic finance, the Islamic fintech market in Qatar was estimated at \$850 million in 2020 and is projected to grow to \$2 billion by 2025.¹²

Additionally, the outbreak of COVID-19 accelerated the implementation of financial technology in the banking sector. It was safer for customers to access bank products and services online without the need for physical interaction. Thus, clients turned to the use of digital payments, digital wallets, and e-wallets. This implied that a significant number of financial service providers had to create a digital platform for their customers. QCB worked with banks to facilitate the digital transformation. QCB also collaborated with colleges to introduce training for students with technological studies relevant to the financial sector. In addition, QFTH works with other organizations to provide a digital banking infrastructure by receiving, incubating, and developing supportive technology for digital transformation. Ideas that meet the QFTH parameters are set and enhanced as the organization seeks to increase digital innovation in the country.

For Qatar to achieve its QNV 2030, it must deal with the impact of COVID-19 on the four key pillars of its vision. The economic pillar requires the government to work with financial service providers to enhance technological transformation. Residents of Qatar observing social distancing and other COVID-19 containment measures have increased the demand for online banking services. Islamic finance must adapt to technological changes to compete with conventional financial service providers. Furthermore, some of the traditional banks are including Shariah-compliant products and services to attract more customers. This implies Islamic banking must embrace FinTech to compete effectively. New products that are Shariah-compliant are increasing, and there is a need to include them in the range of products provided by Islamic finance. Recently, CoinMENA, a Shariah-compliant exchange certified by the Bahrain-based Shariyah Review Bureau, has become the first regional digital asset exchange to operate in Qatar. The use of digital

11 "How Fintechs Are Revolutionising Remittances in Emerging Markets." *Oxford Business Group*, 10 Feb. 2022, <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/news/how-fintechs-are-revolutionising-remittances-emerging-markets>.

12 "Qatar Offers Vast Opportunities for Global Fintechs." *Gulf Times*, 15 Mar. 2022, <https://www.gulf-times.com/story/711805/Qatar-offers-vast-opportunities-for-global-fintechs>.

currency has escalated over the last year.¹³ According to Thomson Reuters, the IMF estimates crypto market capitalization at \$2.5 trillion, and in the future crypto assets will play a significant role in the financial market and the banking industry. Hence, Islamic banks need to include an infrastructure that supports digital currencies to enable their customers to trade and transact digitally.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 acted as a catalyst for the digital transformation of Qatar's financial services and Islamic FinTech over the past two years. There is an increased implementation of technology to enhance the providence of financial products and services. Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, financial service providers provided both conventional and digital banking services. However, when the pandemic broke, people were required to work from home, thus escalating the need for digital access to financial services. During the initial stages of the pandemic, it was safe to work from home; however, people needed to go out to buy supplies. Through digital transformation, people were able to access financial services online from the comfort of their homes. Through QFTH, Qatar has advanced its technological infrastructure to help entrepreneurs and SMEs develop supportive technology for their innovations. With digital transformation, it is possible for financiers to manage and determine whether the business is making a profit. Islamic banking is affected by defaulters who reduce its ability to fund other companies. With digital integration, it is possible to integrate the organization with the accounts of entrepreneurs and SMEs to ensure that they do not default on their payments.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Flattening the Curve of COVID-19 with/without the Vaccine: An Islamic Ethical Perspective

Naeema Halim

ABSTRACT

“Will you take the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available?” It seemed a simple survey question that I had to answer while taking part in a study conducted by HMC’s mental health service on “People’s attitudes towards the COVID-19 vaccine” in November 2020; however, I would admit that it did cause some uneasiness, which further exacerbated as I continued answering more questions. Suddenly, this realization dawned upon me that a decision in this regard was not entirely based on my personal choices and circumstances; it involved transferring this highly contagious virus to other people in my vicinity for which I would be held accountable. Vaccines have managed to control and eradicate specific diseases in the past. At the same time, an anti-vaccinationism campaign has taken center stage in the public health discourse, especially related to childhood vaccinations. However, in the case of COVID-19, vaccine hesitancy is of a slightly different nature,

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triggered by the fear that the vaccine has been developed too quickly and thus is not safe enough. This conflicting moral approach raises some questions that would be addressed in this paper. How has the issue of vaccination been morally evaluated in mainstream public health ethics? Will COVID-19 vanquish the anti-vaccinationism movement or has it fueled it further? How have Muslim scholars addressed the issue of vaccination, especially in the context of such pandemics?

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, vaccine hesitancy, anti-vaccinationism, public health ethics, Islamic ethics

1. INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has wreaked havoc in people's lives worldwide. Until the time of writing, approximately 5 million people have succumbed to this deadly virus.¹ With the identification of the new variant Omicron in November 2021, efforts to find an effective and permanent cure to this virus have also gained momentum with recommendations from scientific experts for a third booster shot as one of the ways to mitigate risks against this new variant.² The objective is to also achieve herd immunity by vaccinating a maximum portion of the world's population.³ After the massive outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, Pfizer-BioNTech and other sizeable pharmaceutical companies accepted the momentous challenge of developing an effective yet safe vaccine with a 95% efficacy rate, with a common pledge that "we, the undersigned biopharmaceutical companies, want to make clear our ongoing commitment to developing and testing potential vaccines for COVID-19 in accordance with high ethical standards and sound scientific principles."⁴

Nonetheless, just like in the case of other vaccines, the anti-vaccinationism movement for COVID-19 gained momentum. As a matter of fact, the campaign started months before the development of any vaccine. "We don't have a vaccine yet, and already there is an anti-vaccination voice about it," said Katherine O'Brien, Director, Department of Immunization, Vaccines, and Biologicals at the World Health Organization (WHO).⁵ What is the background of this entire movement? What are the motivating factors that have led to this hesitancy toward vaccines, especially related to this deadly coronavirus pandemic? To understand, a brief history of vaccinations will be discussed first along with their success and failure rates in eradicating various epidemics. The factors that led to the

1 As per the latest data from WHO, last updated on March 4, 2022.

2 Talha Khan Burki, "Omicron Variant and Booster COVID-19 Vaccines," *Lancet Respiratory Medicine* 10 (2022): E17, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600\(21\)00559-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600(21)00559-2).

3 Until presently, 63% of the world's population has received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. See: Ritchie, Hannah et. al. "Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19)," Our World In Data, 2020, <https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus>.

4 "COVID-19 Vaccine Maker Pledge," Pfizer, 2020, <https://www.pfizer.com/health/coronavirus/pledge>.

5 Katrina Megget, "Even Covid-19 Can't Kill the Anti-Vaccination Movement," *BMJ* 369 (June 4, 2020): m2184, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m2184>. <https://www.bmj.com/content/369/bmj.m2184>.

anti-vaccinationism movement will be analyzed then through the standpoints shared by its proponents and opponents, especially in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, a comparative analysis will be made with the Islamic ethical discourse.

2. VACCINATIONS: MORAL DELIBERATIONS IN PUBLIC HEALTH ETHICS

2.1 History of Vaccination

The development of vaccines is a significant phase in the history of humanity. In this regard, the contribution of Lady Montagu⁶ holds great significance as the individual who introduced the smallpox variolation⁷ in Europe in 1721, after her return from the Ottoman empire in Turkey.⁸ She was followed by Edward Jenner, a country doctor from England, who in 1796 introduced the shift from variolation to vaccination⁹ and performed the world's first vaccination on the local peasant population.¹⁰ However, this proved to be a sore point for the intellectual elite and was the source of several acrimonious discussions. Subsequently, opposing voices were heard from some physicians who advocated the eradication of smallpox through hygiene, quarantine, and disinfection.¹¹ With the progress of the 19th century, the initial wave of enthusiasm for vaccination subsided when difficulties were experienced in sustaining the virus through arm-to-arm inoculation and when it was found that, on some occasions, syphilis¹² was transmitted in the process. In some areas, there was significant opposition from religious leaders and anti-vaccinationist societies who opposed the principle of infecting humans with an animal disease. Confidence in the procedure was also diminished by the occurrence of smallpox in some cases which had previously been successfully vaccinated. This arm-to-arm vaccination in England continued until the end of the 19th century until it was finally banned in 1898.¹³

2.2 Anti-Vaccinationist Campaign

The above discussion clearly illustrates that there has been opposition to vaccination since its inception. Although anti-vaccine thinking receded in importance post-1940s owing to advancements in vaccine science and public awareness to protect children from widespread

6 An English aristocrat, writer, and poet in 18th century Europe.

7 The method of inoculation first used to immunize individuals against smallpox.

8 Herve Bazin, *Vaccination - A History: From Lady Montagu to Genetic Engineering*, 30.

9 Vaccination was a new step forward in variolation, based on the common observation amongst rural residents that a person who had been exposed to cowpox (belonging to the same genus as the smallpox virus) would develop immunity against smallpox.

10 Ibid., 60.

11 Ibid., 56

12 Syphilis is a bacterial infection usually spread by sexual contact. The disease starts as a painless sore, typically on the genitals, rectum, or mouth. Syphilis spreads from person to person via skin or mucous membrane contact with these sores.

13 Donald A. Henderson and Bernard Moss, "Smallpox and Vaccinia," in *Vaccines*, eds. SA Plotkin, WA Orenstein (Philadelphia: Saunders, 1999).

outbreaks of infectious diseases like measles and polio, anti-vaccine thinking started flourishing again in the 1970s because of increased media and internet coverage.¹⁴

2.3 Arguments of Anti-Vaccinationists

2.3.1 Scientific Arguments

Vaccines cause diseases

Anti-vaccinationists argue that vaccinations are the cause of various diseases like diabetes, cancer, and hearing/vision loss. The link between vaccination and autism created a huge uproar when a worldwide controversy was created from an article by British gastroenterologist Wakefield and his co-authors.¹⁵ It claimed that the MMR vaccine played a causative role in autism in children, which then led to a notable decrease in MMR vaccination in Europe and the United States.

Vaccines do not work

This claim stems from the belief that the incidence and prevalence of disease have not decreased due to vaccines but due to other factors such as improvements in public health practices. As proof of point, evidence has been used such as graphs prepared by Raymond Obomsawin,¹⁶ which show the drop in the incidence of an infectious disease prior to the introduction of its vaccine.

Alternatives to vaccination

A number of alternatives are available for disease protection as proposed by some nutritionists, which include a healthy diet to strengthen one's immune system naturally.

2.3.2 Socioeconomic Political Arguments

Taking control of people's lives

The anti-vaccinationists consider this as a scheme of the medical profession to take charge of people's lives by controlling the health of their children and making decisions on their behalf.

Big business and big government

They further argue that by taking control of civilians' lives, governments have conspired

14 Jason L. Schwartz and Arthur L. Caplan, *Vaccination Ethics and Policy: An Introduction with Readings*, 39.

15 Recently got retracted by Lancet.

16 The source that I consulted mention his claim as having a doctoral degree in health science and human Ecology. His biography online is limited, with access to only one article entitled "Traditional Life Styles and Freedom from The Dark Seas of Disease" published by OUP in 1983. According to this article, Obomsawin served as the executive director of the California Rural Indian Health Board; manager of Overseas Operations for CUSO, Canada's largest non-governmental development organization; and chairman of the National Commission Inquiry on Indian Health.

with pharmaceutical companies to impose mandatory vaccination programs on the general population to generate large profits.¹⁷

2.3.3 Religious Arguments

At the individual level, religion is a common reason to refuse vaccination. The MMR vaccine, combined with the rubella vaccine, was originally derived from the cells of aborted fetal tissue. Furthermore, the MMR vaccine contains porcine gelatin as a stabilizer, a means for ensuring effective storage. As there is a wide range of practice preferences in every religion, some individuals belonging to religions such as Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism may be opposed to injecting a porcine product into their body along with the vaccine. In addition, other religious views, such as the ones held by Dutch-Protestant Christian congregations, consider vaccinations as “inappropriate meddling in the work of God.” These groups, therefore, believe that we should not change the predestined fate of someone who becomes ill.¹⁸

2.4 Response to the Anti-vaccination Movement

The World Health Organization (WHO) claims that vaccinations prevent more than two million deaths every year and have led to the eradication of smallpox, polio, and whooping cough.¹⁹ The proponents of vaccination thus call this anti-vaccinationism movement irrational, based on conspirational thinking and falsified data. They substantiate their point by claiming that the 19th century resistance to smallpox vaccination led to further outbreaks of the virus and needless deaths. They further blame this group for their disruptive efforts against the well-being of the community by causing outbreaks of previously controlled diseases and causing huge financial losses to vaccine manufacturers by keeping them out of the market. Pro-vaccination proponents thus propose certain measures that will hasten the eradication of anti-vaccinationist campaigns by continuing to fund and publish high quality studies to investigate concerns about vaccine safety and providing compensation for legitimate cases of injury caused by a vaccine. Most importantly, they believe in educating healthcare professionals, parents, and patients to counter false claims of anti-vaccinationist groups, ensuring that accurate vaccine information is accessible to the general public so that they are able to make informed decisions after evaluating the risks and benefits.²⁰

3. COVID-19 AND THE ANTI-VACCINATION MOVEMENT

The above discussion clearly shows that the anti-vaccinationism campaign has taken center stage in the public health discourse over the past decade or so, expressing a moral outrage and suggesting conspiracy-styled beliefs, especially related to childhood

17 David E. Newton, *Vaccination Controversies*, 90.

18 Azhar Hussain, Syed Ali, Madiha Ahmed, and Sheharyar Hussain, “The Anti-vaccination Movement: A Regression in Modern Medicine,” *Cureus* 10, n.7 (2018): e2919, <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.2919>.

19 David E. Newton, *Vaccination Controversies*, 85.

20 Jason L. Schwartz and Arthur L. Caplan, *Vaccination Ethics and Policy: An Introduction with Readings*, 41.

vaccinations.²¹ However, in the case of COVID-19, the concerns leading to vaccine hesitancy are slightly different. Thus, we observe that even people who favored vaccinations in the past are hesitant in getting vaccinated against this virus as is explained below.

3.1 Reasons for Vaccine Hesitancy

Vaccines have managed to control and eradicate various diseases in the past, yet recent public polls have shown concerns regarding the efficacy and safety of the COVID-19 vaccine, a term called “vaccine hesitancy.” Some arguments by anti-vaccinationist groups are detailed in previous sections. I will now expand on the same arguments in the context of COVID-19.

Safety of the new vaccine

Considering the unprecedented nature of the virus, one dominant concern is the rapid pace of vaccine development.²² In addition to a segment of population that has refused vaccines to date, the novelty of the disease and concerns over safety and efficacy of the vaccine have a sizable proportion of the American population indicating reluctance to getting vaccinated against COVID-19.²³ Unfortunately, high levels of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy are reported even from countries severely affected by the pandemic.²⁴

Immunity building through a holistic lifestyle and improved hygiene

The avoidance of vaccines also stems from the belief that boosting immunity is the most effective way to combat the virus. Although this is a common argument for protection against all diseases, this has gained significant momentum in the case of COVID-19—especially considering the apparent source of this deadly virus from the Hunan seafood market at Wuhan, China, where bats, snakes, raccoon dogs, palm civets, and other animals are sold.²⁵ Although this claim has been challenged by public health organizations as mere myths,²⁶ there are a few studies that have proven that COVID-19 in people with underlying

21 Naomi Smith and Tim Graham, “Mapping the Anti-vaccination Movement on Facebook,” *Information Communication and Society* 22, n.9 (2019): 1310-27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1418406>.

22 Shingai Machingaidze and Charles Shey Wiysonge, “Understanding COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy,” *Nature Medicine* 27, n.8 (2021): 1338-9, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-021-01459-7>.

23 Wen-Ying Sylvia Chou and Alexandra Budenz, “Considering Emotion in COVID-19 Vaccine Communication: Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy and Fostering Vaccine Confidence,” 35, n.14 (2020): 1718-22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2020.1838096>.

24 Wojciech Feleszko, Piotr Lewulis, Adam Czarnecki, and Paweł Waszkiewicz, “Flattening the Curve of COVID-19 Vaccine Rejection—A Global Overview,” *Vaccines* 19, n.1 (2021): 44, <https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines9010044>.

25 Muhammad Adnan Shereen et al., “COVID-19 Infection: Origin, Transmission, and Characteristics of Human Coronavirus,” *Journal of Advanced Research* 24 (2020): 91-8, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jare.2020.03.005>.

26 Swapnajeet Sahoo et al., “Demystifying the Myths about COVID-19 Infection and its Societal Importance,” *Asian Journal of Psychiatry* 54 (2020): 102244, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102244>.

health conditions or comorbidities has an increasingly rapid and severe progression, often leading to death.²⁷ The importance of an ecosystem-based lifestyle as a potential way to cope with the pandemic is also being argued as one of the reasons behind Japan's success in the initial flattening of the curve despite being in close proximity to China, the epicenter of the disease. In addition to a healthy lifestyle, sanitary practices such as regular hand washing, gargling of the throat, the use of chopsticks while eating, and utilizing hot towels are all being termed as contributing factors for this.²⁸

Low incidence of COVID-19 in children

There are many ethical considerations in vaccinating children against COVID-19. As the incidence and disease burden of COVID-19 is low in children, the argument is that vaccination should not be primarily performed for their self-protection but for that of the community, mainly the elderly or high-risk individuals.²⁹

Inverse correlation of BCG vaccination vs. COVID-19

Scientific data suggests that Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) immunization is associated with lower incidence and gravity of the COVID-19 disease across different countries, even when BCG immunization was performed in childhood. This makes for another solid reason to resist the COVID-19 vaccine.³⁰

Media coverage and misleading narratives

The online anti-vaccine movement against COVID-19 also plays a huge role in this resistant approach towards vaccination. The Centre for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) has lambasted social media companies for allowing the anti-vaccine movement to remain on their platforms.³¹ A conspiracy theory against COVID-19 vaccine was also spread in Pakistan when a renowned political commentator and columnist claimed that the virus was a grand scheme to target Islamic nations, designed to allow Jews to rule the world, and to embed nano-chips in the bodies of people to gain control through 5G towers.³²

27 Adekunle Sanyaolu et al., "Comorbidity and its Impact on Patients with COVID-19," *SN Comprehensive Clinical Medicine* 2, n.8 (2020): 1069-76, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42399-020-00363-4>.

28 Ai Tashiro and Rajib Shaw, "COVID-19 Pandemic Response in Japan: What Is Behind the Initial Flattening of the Curve?" *Sustainability* 12, n.13 (2020): 5250, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12135250>.

29 Christiane Sigrid Eberhardt and Claire-Anne Siegrist, "Is There a Role for Childhood Vaccination Against COVID-19?" *Pediatric Allergy and Immunology (Wiley Online Library)* 32, n.1 (2021): 9-16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/pai.13401>.

30 Abhibhav Sharma et al., "BCG Vaccination Policy and Preventive Chloroquine Usage: Do They Have an Impact on COVID-19 Pandemic?" *Cell Death & Disease* 11, n.7 (2020): 516, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41419-020-2720-9>.

31 Talha Burki, "The Online Anti-vaccine Movement in the Age of COVID-19," *Lancet Digital Health* 10 (2020): E504-5, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2589-7500\(20\)30227-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2589-7500(20)30227-2).

32 Yusra Habib Khan et al., "Threat of COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy in Pakistan: The Need for Measures to Neutralize Misleading Narratives," *The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 103, n.2 (2020): 604-5, <https://doi.org/10.4269/ajtmh.20-0654>.

4. ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON VACCINATION

With the advancements in science and medicine over the last few decades, new ethical dilemmas have arisen calling for a renewed religious bioethical discourse.³³ As anti-vaccinationism currently poses one of the biggest global threats to human health, it is extremely important to shed some light on this topic through the lens of the Islamic tradition. Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim³⁴ addressed this sensitive issue in his book *Islam & Vaccination*,³⁵ where he not only gives rebuttals to the anti-vaccine arguments posed by some Muslim scholars but has also dedicated a separate chapter addressing the issue in the light of Islamic medical jurisprudence. Some of these arguments are as follows:

4.1 Theological Arguments

Ebrahim refers to an argument by the late Dr. Ayesha Hamdan³⁶ who was of the view that vaccination undermined Islamic teachings. According to her, the verse in Surah at-Tin [95:4] “Indeed, We created humans in the best form” proves the point that Allah has created man in the best form spiritually, mentally, and physically. Why does man then challenge the perfect creation of Allah in an attempt for more efficacy? She further argues that implementation of a vaccination schedule means that the human body is not perfect enough to withstand infectious diseases and that Allah did not do His job well by producing a baby who needs human intervention to survive.

Counter Argument: Ebrahim rebuts by arguing that protection against diseases does not mean tampering with Allah’s creation; rather it shows man’s active role as His vicegerent on earth when he takes care of his body. With regard to protection against diseases, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) gave detailed guidance in this regard on avoiding plague-stricken areas, including in his hadith, “When plague is rampant inside a locality, do not go inside it, but if you are already inside, do not come out of it.”³⁷ Relating this hadith concept with the modern-day concept of vaccination, choosing not to vaccinate will place other people at risk.

4.2 Juristic Arguments

Ebrahim shares the case made by Dr. Abdul Majid Katme,³⁸ who argues on the basis of impure ingredients used in various vaccines, thus making them unlawful. He also raises the concern that the HPV³⁹ vaccination causes immorality in young girls.

Counter Argument: According to the concept of *istihāla*, Muslim scholars justify the use

33 Eich Brockopp, Muslim Medical Ethics, From Theory to Practice, 213.

34 Seychellois scholar of Islamic bioethics and an emeritus professor of Islamic Studies in the School of Religion and Theology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

35 Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, *Islam & Vaccination*.

36 Dr. Ayesha Hamdan was the Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology in the College of Medicine, Saudi Arabia, and died in 2019.

37 Al-Bukhari (5739) and Muslim (2219).

38 British psychiatrist and Chairman of the Islamic Medical Association in the UK.

39 Human papilloma virus usually transmitted through sexual contact.

impure substances if they are converted to something else in the finished product. With regard to the HPV vaccine, its sole purpose is to protect against cervical cancer and not promoting promiscuity.

4.2.1 Benefit-Harm Assessment

The author refers to the fatwa issued by Sheikh Abdal-Aziz ibn Bāz,⁴⁰ who allowed immunization before the onset of disease even if there are some minor side effects such as fever, bodily pain, and so forth, on the basis of the legal maxim “lesser of the two evils.” However if the harm is greater, then the legal maxim, “There should be no harm or reciprocation of harm,” should be followed.

Ebrahim further concludes that vaccinations protect both the person and others who come in contact, that is, provide herd immunity. Thus, they fulfil the requirements of *Maqāsid al-Sharī‘a* as well.

Preservation of religion

Since vaccination acts as a preventive measure that promotes the wellbeing of a Muslim, he can successfully perform his religious obligations.

Preservation of life

Vaccinations successfully preserved millions of lives around the world by reducing mortality.

Preservation of lineage

Vaccines safeguard future generations when parents immunize their babies against deadly diseases, thus preserving the progeny.

Preservation of intellect

Islam promotes peace and mercy, which is achieved through the mental satisfaction that oneself and one’s family is safe from disease.

Preservation of wealth

Vaccination provides an exceptionally cost-effective measure in preventing the later occurrence of the disease.⁴¹

Ghaly⁴² also shares similar views on the topic. He quotes the response of al-Qaradāwī⁴³ on the fatwa issued by scholars in Nigeria calling polio vaccination unlawful on the basis of some impure hormones that cause women to become infertile. Al-Qaradāwī unequivocally disapproves of their opinion on the basis of various Qur’anic verses and incidents from the Prophet’s life regarding safeguarding one’s body, which is a trust from Allah. He has the backing of notable religious scholars from the International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA).⁴⁴

40 Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia from 1993 till his death in 1999.

41 Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, *Islam & Vaccination*, 45-66.

42 Professor of Islam & Bioethics at CILE (Center of Islamic Legislation & Ethics).

43 Egyptian Islamic theologian & chairman of the International Union of Muslim Scholars.

44 Mohammed Ghaly, *Islam and Disability* (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 123-5.

Istihāla and Ḍarura

Moreover, al-Qaradāwī further clarifies the use of istihāla and gives three requirements which must be satisfied in advance before using impure ingredients in medical treatment:

1. The medicine must be vital for the life of the individual taking it.
2. The product must be recommended by a knowledgeable and trustworthy Muslim physician.
3. No source from a permissible product is available as an alternative medicine.

Based on this concept of Ḍarura (necessity), the use of Biothrax (anthrax vaccine) and Rotateq (rotavirus vaccine) was not permissible by the 81st Conference of the Malaysian Fatwa Committee by the National Council of Islamic Religious Affairs held in March 2006.⁴⁵

5. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Vaccines are an important tool for controlling and eventually eradicating COVID-19 from the global populace. However, vaccine hesitancy still poses as a major hindrance against achieving this goal. To improve vaccine uptake and increase the global vaccinated population from 63% to 80% and above, it is imperative that any vaccine to be administered to the public be rigorously tested after considering all the associated risks and benefits and not be perceived as premature in its dissemination.⁴⁶ The Prophet (peace be upon him) was reported to have said, “There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment.”⁴⁷

Although it is incumbent on every Muslim to take ethical decisions that do not conflict with their moral and religious values, Islam places high importance on the overall wellbeing of the community. It has been scientifically proven that vaccines have not only managed to eradicate various deadly diseases, but also strengthened individuals’ immunity as well as that of their communities. Nonetheless, the benefits must be balanced with the risks, especially in terms of rapid vaccine development as in the case of the one against the COVID-19 virus and its associated variants. Ethical considerations are vital to decision-making when deploying such vaccines in crisis situations. Special consideration should be given to high-risk populations first, which in this case are older individuals or those with compromised immunity. It is incumbent on the concerned health authorities to put in the best possible effort and implement evidence-based guidelines to avert preventable harm from any new COVID-19 vaccine. Any mandatory laws regarding COVID-19 vaccination should be enacted considering the four principles of bioethics: respect for autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.

45 Engku Nuraishah Huda E. Zainuddin, Khairul Azizul Mohammad, Athirah Aris, and I. A. Shahdan, “Vaccination: Influencing Factors and View from an Islamic Perspective,” *International Medical Journal Malaysia* 17, n.2 (2018): 273-80, <https://doi.org/10.31436/imjm.v17i2.997>.

46 Steven Taylor et al., “A Proactive Approach for Managing COVID-19: The Importance of Understanding the Motivational Roots of Vaccination Hesitancy for SARS-CoV-2,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 11 (2020): 575950, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.575950>.

47 Sahih Bukhari, 5678.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Investigating Dynamics of Social Edupreneurship Toward Combatting Educational Marginalization in the MENA Region

Khairunnisa' Mohamed Hussain

ABSTRACT

With the advent of technology in recent decades, entrepreneurship is increasingly being viewed as an essential tool of empowerment. Social entrepreneurship, in particular, helps to transform conservative minds into innovative creators and develop extensive opportunities across all fields of knowledge. In this study, I aimed to investigate the exogenous and internal factors responsible for entrepreneurial activity in the MENA region, with a specific focus on Qatar and Morocco, as well as understand the roles played

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<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/sites/default/files/socialedupreneurship.pdf>

by various stakeholders within the local entrepreneurship ecosystems in the region. A series of interviews with entrepreneurs and key training providers in Qatar and Morocco was conducted, along with comprehensive analyses of relevant legal documents and governmental reports. My findings underline the importance of government involvement and bureaucratic assistance in ensuring entrepreneurial growth and success for local youth and new business ventures. Socioeconomic factors, such as gender and culture, as well as individual attitudes to risk also affect the productivity and efficiency of entrepreneurship in Qatar and Morocco. Furthermore, both governmental and non-governmental bodies were found to play crucial roles in advancing local entrepreneurial standards. Understanding the dynamics of entrepreneurship in these two Arab nations enables the formulation of effective strategies and policies in order to benefit society at large.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, social edupreneurship, educational marginalization, MENA region

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has been traditionally defined as starting a new, and typically small, business and generally involves the process of constructing, launching, and operating the business.¹ However, more often than not and particularly in today's context, this definition runs way short. Indeed, the dynamic interaction between enterprising individuals and lucrative opportunities should be greatly emphasized, with the former facing numerous challenges and obstacles in search of the latter.²

Entrepreneurship is rapidly transforming into a global, cross-cultural, and multi-dimensional phenomenon,³ with countries increasingly viewing it as an integral element for long-term economic development, job creation, and competitiveness.⁴ Cooke, Uranga, and Etxebarria (1997) suggested that the sustainability of national economic growth is highly dependent on the continuous promotion and advancement of entrepreneurial activity.⁵ Indeed, a landmark report commissioned by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 2004 determined the importance of entrepreneurship, particularly in emerging countries, in spurring domestic employment and wealth toward achieving one of

1 Ali K. Yetisen et al., "Entrepreneurship," *Lab Chip* 15, no. 18 (2015): 3638-60.

2 Sankaran Venkataraman, "The Distinctive Domain of Entrepreneurship Research: An Editor's Perspective," in *Advances in Entrepreneurship, Firm Emergence, and Growth*, ed. J. Katz and R. Brockhaus (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1997); and Gerry Segal, Dan Borgia, and Jerry Schoenfeld, "The Motivation to Become an Entrepreneur," *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research* 11, no. 1 (2005): 42-57.

3 Bart Clarysse and Nathalie Moray, "A Process Study of Entrepreneurial Team Formation: The Case of a Research-based Spin-off," *Journal of Business Venturing* 19, no. 1 (2004): 55-79.

4 Jodyanne Kirkwood, "Motivational Factors in a Push-pull Theory of Entrepreneurship," *Gender in Management* 24, no. 5 (2009): 346-64.

5 Philip Cooke, Mikel Gomez Uranga, and Goio Etxebarria. "Regional Innovative Systems: Institutional and Organizational Dimensions," *Research Policy* 26, no. 4 (1997): 475-91.

the most critical Millennium Development Goals established by the United Nations (UN) in 2000—the alleviation of poverty and hunger.⁶

Today, social entrepreneurship (SE) is increasingly being touted as a strategy in propelling the development and sustainability of global economies, with various studies citing it as crucial in shaping attitudes, aspirations, and intentions of individuals striving to launch new ventures. In addition, known as altruistic entrepreneurship, SE refers to doing business to serve a particular social purpose. Social entrepreneurs integrate commerce and social issues such that the lives of people connected to the cause are significantly enhanced. Success to social entrepreneurs is often not defined along the profits margin alone—rather, their contributions and impact on the world are also essential factors.

Ranked as the richest country in the world per capita as of 2018,⁷ Qatar has few incentives to pursue entrepreneurial skillsets for its citizens. Yet, the Qatari government is keen to stimulate entrepreneurship as a tool to diversify the economy and reduce its dependence on oil and gas exports. This fervent enthusiasm is illustrated by the introduction of a number of government measures aimed at driving entrepreneurial activity to exploit business opportunities, including the establishment of semi-governmental agencies and the creation of free economic zones. Nevertheless, the entrepreneurship sector in Qatar continues to face major obstacles and wide-ranging challenges impeding its growth prospects.

In contrast, there remains limited collaborations between the private sector and the Moroccan government in providing health and social services to the needy and vulnerable.⁸ Despite their undoubtedly massive potential, social enterprises in Morocco remain predominantly latent, often starting as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These NGOs have limited capacities, with restricted access to finance and generally low levels of revenue generated beyond donation funding. Only by identifying and rectifying such integral issues in both countries will they be able to effect positive change and emerge as key players in the regional and global entrepreneurship sector.

Through this study, I aim to fill a gap in the literature by identifying critical socioeconomic factors in the Qatari and Moroccan schemes, which would then allow for more targeted and better-suited policies and programs, thus ensuring higher productivity and success rates in the entrepreneurial sectors in these countries. Using different sources, I also investigated the roles played by key contributors to the entrepreneurship ecosystem.

6 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, Commission on the Private Sector and Development), *Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor* (2004), <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/library.html>.

7 “World Economic Outlook Database, April 2019,” International Monetary Fund (IMF), <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2019/01/weodata/index.aspx>.

8 Kareem El-Bayar, “The Legal and Regulatory Framework Governing Social Entrepreneurship in the Middle East: Opportunities, Challenges, and the Way Forward,” *Middle East Youth Initiative, International Center for Not-for-Profit Law* (2010); Meryem Kabbaj et al., “A Study of the Social Entrepreneurship Ecosystem: The Case of Morocco,” *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship* 21, no. 4 (2016): 1650021-1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1142/S1084946716500217>.

KEY DETERMINANTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Essential Behavioral Characteristics of a Social Entrepreneur

The phenomenon of SE has progressively infiltrated public discourse over the preceding decades.⁹ However, the concept is still, by its own nature, open to multiple interpretations owing to its innate feasibility and capacity to focus on individuals versus organizations. Numerous definitions have since been put forth, attempting to address the sustainability and scalability of the social enterprise and subjectivity of the term “positive social impact,” including entrepreneurial innovation, financial stability, and pattern-breaking social change.¹⁰ Indeed, entrepreneur M2, a youth mentor, program manager, and solopreneur of SkillsMotion, described the local SE scene in Morocco as a relatively new concept, having first gained traction around 2015, but without a unified definition as yet:

“There are very diverse definitions of SE in Morocco. Some communities define it as NGOs or non-profit organizations, others define it as being an entrepreneur or social enterprise with only marginalized people as the main target. A third category refers to a classical entrepreneurial company with an end goal of directing social activities such that it can reimburse its benefits.”

Entrepreneur M2 acknowledged the frustrations of having such divergent definitions as social enterprises and entrepreneurs often do not fit entirely into either definitive category and thus face rejections by potential investors, sponsors, and communities. Nevertheless, she believes that this could also mean that budding entrepreneurs could find their own spaces within the ecosystem given the broad spectrum of definitions of SE in Morocco.

Given the hazy definitions of SE within the Arab world, as well as the ambiguous distinction between traditional entrepreneurship and SE, we have detailed the essential behavioral characteristics of entrepreneurs that are generally distinct from those of non-entrepreneurs. As shown in Figure 1, the majority of stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystems in Qatar and Morocco that were interviewed listed passion (46.7%) and

9 Charles Leadbeater, *The Rise of the Social Entrepreneur*, (London: Demos, 1997); and Paul C. Light, *The Search for Social Entrepreneurship*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008).

10 See J. Gregory Dees, *The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship*, (Stanford University: Center for Social Innovation, Graduate School of Business, Kauffman Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, Ewin Marion Kauffman Foundation, 1998), www.faculty.fuqua.duke.edu/centers/case/files/dees-SE.pdf; Roger L. Martin and Sally Osberg, “Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Spring 2007): 27-39; Sophie Bacq and Frank Janssen, “The Multiple Faces of Social Entrepreneurship: A Review of Definitional Issues Based on Geographical and Thematic Criteria,” *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development* 23, no. 5-6 (2011): 373-403; Janelle A. Kerlin, “Defining Social Enterprise Across Different Contexts: A Conceptual Framework based on Institutional Factors,” *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (2013): 84-108; Rob Lubberink, “Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development,” in *Decent Work and Economic Growth. Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, ed. W. Leal Filho et al., (Cham: Springer, 2019). https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-71058-7_47-1.

resilience (46.7%) as the dominant characteristics essential for the success of entrepreneurs and their enterprises. This finding aligns with that of a previous study, which identified these two traits as the main drivers of entrepreneurial accomplishments. As entrepreneurs M1 and M7 noted, respectively:

“One needs to be 100% passionate, not about the solution, but about the problem because the solution can change. What matters is not how they do it, but rather how they end it; and there are many ways of ending a problem, and they will have to pivot many times to get to the end of the problem.”

“An entrepreneur needs firm conviction and resilience to succeed because things will get in the way. I believe the reason we do not have more social entrepreneurs is that people give up too easily, rather than pivoting or using the feedback loop to improve. Resilience is the key in going that extra mile toward entrepreneurial success.”

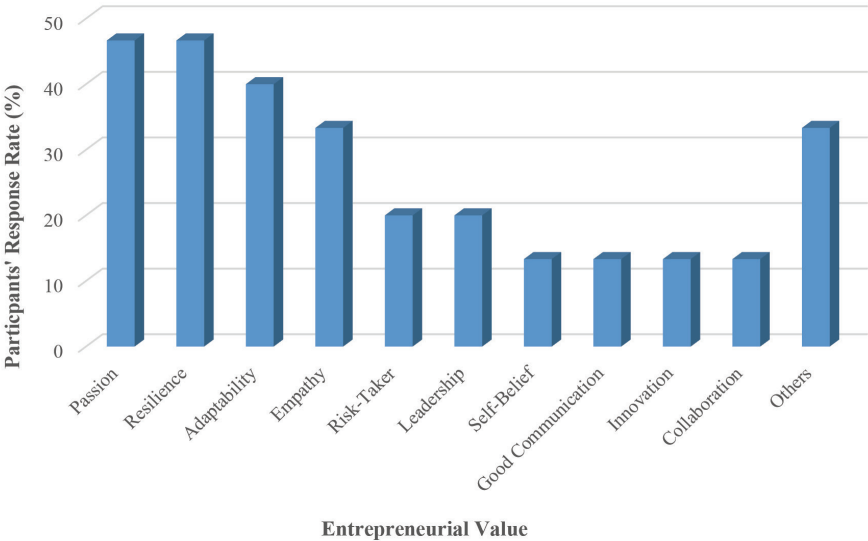


Figure 1. Behavioral characteristics essential for entrepreneurial success.

In addition, similar to previously cited literature, adaptability (40.0%) and risk taking (20.0%) constitute two other personal characteristics identified by several entrepreneurial stakeholders in this study (Figure 1). According to entrepreneur Q10, an entrepreneur needs to keep an open mind to be able to learn and embrace every step of his learning journey, including mistakes, changes, and important decisions. Having an agile mindset and being confident and unashamed to reach out and ask for assistance would open doors to new opportunities and collaborations. Being a risk-taker is also highly crucial in entrepreneurship as the business journey is a highly dynamic and ever-evolving one, brimming with ups and downs.

Interestingly, empathy was also listed as one of the most desirable personal values by 33.3% of the entrepreneurial stakeholders interviewed in this study (Figure 1). Even though several of these stakeholders do not identify themselves as social entrepreneurs, their entrepreneurial ambitions are undoubtedly propelled by their innate desires to do social good and create social impact in their communities. As entrepreneur Q12 succinctly noted:

“We need to see humans as humans. It is not only about my business idea, but rather about how I can turn my ideas into effective solutions for the end-user.”

Underlying Motivations Behind the Desire for Social Change

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2019/2020 Global Report, more than 40% of entrepreneurs in 35 of 50 countries at least agree that their underlying motivations of launching businesses are to make a difference in the world.¹¹ Mair and Marti have previously also stressed the relevance and importance of understanding the underlying motivations behind the desire for social change to the study of SE.¹² However, with SE being a relatively new field of study, much of the previous literature focuses on identifying motivations of traditional entrepreneurs, whereas those of social entrepreneurs have not been adequately investigated. This is particularly so with regard to the Arab region, where limited research has been conducted. However, these studies are highly pertinent given the socioeconomic and political events leading up to and following the Arab Spring in 2011.

Today, Arab entrepreneurs, and in particular social entrepreneurs, are often motivated by societal issues that have arisen through decades of instability and lack of progress within the region. Indeed, for entrepreneur Q12, who is originally from Palestine, the desire to venture into the entrepreneurial world stems from her astute observation of difficult challenges faced by communities in underdeveloped countries and conflict areas across the MENA region:

“I see a need for us to build better communities, better lives, and better conditions for all. Many complain about these social issues without trying to find solutions for them. Instead, what we need to do is to help these people identify their strengths and start their own circles of influence so that they themselves can come up with practical solutions and create an impact on others gradually.”

Although several entrepreneurs have determined a clear distinction between traditional and social entrepreneurs in other parts of the world,¹³ it is not as clearly defined

11 Niels Bosma et al., *GEM 2019/2020 Global Report* (London, U.K: The Global Entrepreneurship Research Association [GERA], London Business School, 2020).

12 Johanna Mair and Ignasi Marti, “Social Entrepreneurship Research: A Source of Explanation, Prediction and Delight,” *Journal of World Business* 41 (2006): 36–44.

13 Ganesh N. Prabhu, “Social Entrepreneurial Leadership,” *Career Development International* 4, no. 3 (1999): 140–145, <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620439910262796>; Johanna Mair and Ernesto Noboa, “Social Entrepreneurship: How Intentions to Create a Social Enterprise Get Formed,” *IESE Working*

in the Arab world. Several social entrepreneurs interviewed in this study expressed their desire to merge traditional entrepreneurship with the non-profit world. This is probably due to the amalgamation of several inherently unique features of Arab social entrepreneurship in today's context, namely:

1. A generational shift in Arab demographics, leading to a burgeoning youth population and subsequent interest in change and innovation;
2. High levels of unemployment and low levels of traditional job opportunities, resulting in job insecurity; and
3. The desire to create a social impact and witness a change in social circumstances for their communities.

Entrepreneurs M3 and M8 voiced their opinions accordingly:

"I needed something encompassing both aspects; how to make profit while creating an impact globally. SE is the perfect answer between my passion, which is civic engagement, helping with problems that the community faces, and bringing added value to the world; and having something sustainable where you can think strategically and work with different resources toward certain goals."

"I embarked on SE so that I can combine entrepreneurship with non-profit objectives. You can combine creating an impact, changing others' lives, and changing your own life; and you can inspire yourself while indirectly inspiring others and making a change in their lives."

Moreover, entrepreneur Q9 noted that his primary motivation in launching his social enterprise was the realization that there was a gap in the education sector in Qatar, especially in terms of technology, compared with other sectors where its use was far more advanced. Similarly, entrepreneur Q15 described being inspired by the explosive nature and high accessibility of knowledge present today, quipping that the probability of an individual retrieving answers to questions and mastering skills through internet digitization is very high, whereas such ease of access to information is not available in traditional markets. He further stressed the importance of using knowledge to produce effective tools to make lives better.

Indeed, the motivational index in the GEM 2018 global report highlights that Qatar-based entrepreneurs are 3.39 times more motivated by opportunity than necessity

*Paper No. D/521 (September 2003), <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.462283>; Susan A. Ostrander, "The Growth of Donor Control: Revisiting the Social Relations of Philanthropy," *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (2007): 356-372, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0899764007300386>; Karla A. Boluk and Ziene Mottiar, "Motivations of Social Entrepreneurs: Blurring the Social Contribution and Profits Dichotomy," *Social Enterprise Journal* 10, no. 1 (2014): 53-68, doi:10.1108/SEJ-01-2013-0001; Roger L. Martin and Sally Osberg, "Social Entrepreneurship: The Case for Definition," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Spring 2007): 27-39; and Filipe M. Santos, "A Positive Theory of Social Entrepreneurship," *Journal of Business Ethics* 111, no. 3 (2012): 335-51.*

compared to those based in Morocco (1.39 times) (Appendices A and B). This may be owing to the distinct differences between the two MENA countries in terms of levels of income and unemployment, as well as the differing levels of traditional job opportunities. Entrepreneurs in Qatar, with their high level of income and job opportunities, are more likely to view entrepreneurship as an opportunity for a change in the job environment, wealth attainment, high status, and success. In fact, eight of ten nascent entrepreneurs in Qatar indicated that building massive wealth has spurred them towards their entrepreneurial paths. This is highly typical of opportunity-based entrepreneurs, who zealously initiate a business as they are drawn to venture strategies and their economic potential.¹⁴ As Qatar propels itself toward an innovation-driven economy, the proportion of such opportunity-based entrepreneurship will continue to rapidly increase.

Conversely, GEM studies conducted over time have ascertained that the proportion of necessity-driven entrepreneurship is much higher in developing or low-income nations than in developed or high-income countries.¹⁵ Indeed, Morocco-based entrepreneurs often need to embark on their entrepreneurial journeys out of necessity because of a lack of traditional job opportunities in existing organizations, dissatisfaction with current positions, and high unemployment levels in the country. As a result, many Moroccans are pushed to start a venture to create a sustainable livelihood for themselves and their families.

Nevertheless, underlying motivations for some social entrepreneurs may be even more closely related to those of traditional entrepreneurs than for others. Indeed, entrepreneur M2 reasoned that SE provides a free space where she can make her own decisions and implement her ideas from scratch, being able to build innovative products while challenging herself. Although she asserted that she was not motivated by personal profit, she acknowledged the importance of having solid financial goals to enable entrepreneurs to move forward in their journey.

Socioeconomic Challenges Facing Entrepreneurship

Previous studies have found that several socioeconomic factors affect entrepreneurship, such as wealth status, education level, gender, and culture.¹⁶ In this study, specific factors are identified that are key in influencing entrepreneurial journeys in the Qatari and Moroccan context, albeit for differing reasons. For instance, the female interviewees identified gender bias as a major contributing factor in hindering their entrepreneurial capabilities, while the male interviewees reasoned that females in Qatar and Morocco face

14 Pavlos Dimitratos et al., "SME Internationalization: How Does the Opportunity-Based International Entrepreneurial Culture Matter?" *International Business Review* 25, no. 6 (2016): 1211-1222, doi:10.1016/j.ibusrev.2016.03.006.

15 International Development Research Centre (IDRC), *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor: GEM-MENA Regional Report 2009 (Middle East and North Africa)* (Cairo, Egypt: IDRC, 2010).

16 Gerard George and Shaker A. Zahra, "Culture and Its Consequence for Entrepreneurship," *Entrepreneurship and Practice* 26, no. 4 (2002): 5-8; and Alicia Coduras Martinez et al., "A Global Perspective on Entrepreneurship Education and Training," *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Special Report* (2010).

inherent issues that affect their entrepreneurial activities. Religious and cultural issues, such as the requirement of a male *mahram* for travel-related business activities, as well as women entrepreneurs desiring to enter already seemingly saturated markets, such as food and beverage and cosmetics industries, were several explanations identified as the rationale for gender preference toward curbing entrepreneurial interests.

In addition, entrepreneur M2 noted the relative ease with which male entrepreneurs were able to close business deals, whereas female entrepreneurs were expected to tread tentatively in a professional and formal manner and yet face rejections because of cultural stigma. However, a recently published article found no difference between Qatari men and women in assessing entrepreneurship-related challenges and barriers.¹⁷ The GEM Global Reports in 2018 and 2019–2020 further confirmed this finding with the ratio of nascent female to male entrepreneurs being equal (Appendix A).

The same, however, cannot be said in the Moroccan entrepreneurial ecosystem. The GEM Global Reports noted that male entrepreneurs dominate the ecosystem by a 2:1 ratio (Appendix B), although the Morocco-based entrepreneurs interviewed in this study did not broach the gender issue. More in-depth studies with different methodologies need to be conducted to establish the relationship between these socioeconomic factors and entrepreneurship in the Arab world.

Furthermore, there are several other cultural aspects that prove problematic for entrepreneurs and prevent them from thriving in their initial years. As with most Arab cultures, having strong, dependable, and extensive networks is important in facilitating increased earnings for budding entrepreneurs. According to entrepreneurs Q9 and Q16, accessing bigger markets remains a major challenge and an elusive reverie for many as there remains much room for improvement in the transparent processing and approval of tender applications.

Moreover, the level of education and wealth status are also entwined with the propensity to risk—the degree to which an individual responds to risk; which often differentiates entrepreneurs from employees.¹⁸ Local Qatari graduates consider government employment as a safe haven, providing them with both comfortably minted salaries and job security and permanence. In contrast, entrepreneurship requires more advanced and specialized training while offering little reward and incentive. As such, it is often regarded as an opportunity for a side income in addition to a regular government job, instead of a full-fledged business endeavor. Indeed, such concerns were raised by entrepreneur Q1, who courageously gave up his lucrative engineering and real estate career in favor of establishing a young start-up educating and providing guidance and support to fellow entrepreneurs in Qatar.

A similar thread is witnessed in Morocco with the lack of a fully supportive system and generally risk-averse mindsets. Although families are often at hand to provide

17 Ahmed Mehrez, “Investigating Critical Obstacles to Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies: A Comparative Study between Males and Females in Qatar,” *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal* 25, no. 1 (2019), Online ISSN: 1528-2686.

18 Irfan Hameed and Zainab Irfan, “Entrepreneurship Education: A Review of Challenges, Characteristics and Opportunities,” *Entrepreneurship Education* (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41959-019-00018-z>.

financial assistance, particularly during the initial stages of business, entrepreneurial ambitions are consistently met with objection, skepticism, and doubt, in favor of “real jobs,” as related by stakeholder M5, an operations manager at Enactus, Morocco. Research findings by the GEM Global Reports in 2018 and 2019–2020, however, show that people in both Qatar and Morocco increasingly view entrepreneurship as an alluring career option (Appendices A and B). Interestingly, both entrepreneurs M4 and M8 also remarked on the negative way of thinking among fellow entrepreneurs, who treat one another as competition rather than being supportive of each other’s business ideas and entrepreneurial journeys.

PRINCIPAL STAKEHOLDERS WITHIN THE ARAB SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEMS

Exogenous Dynamics of Entrepreneurship

Similar to many parts of the world, entrepreneurship is rapidly gaining recognition and support in the Arab region. However, challenges remain in ascertaining the forms of entrepreneurship that should be encouraged and promoted to the Arab youth to ensure that their entrepreneurial mindsets and journeys are on the right path. Indeed, entrepreneur Q16, the founder of Riyada, broached on the issue,

“Entrepreneurship is on the rise, but the way it is being taught and advocated for in the MENA region is very commercialized and profit-oriented. Making millions and becoming millionaires should not be the end goals of every entrepreneur. We are not in the Silicon Valley where you are surrounded by venture capitalists, and if one just wants to make money, one will fail miserably. Entrepreneurship has a much bigger potential and role in making the world a better place.”

Given the recent exponential interest in entrepreneurship globally, various wide-ranging challenges have inevitably arisen. Barriers to entrepreneurial growth include bureaucratic and corporate governance issues and ease of access to finance and funding.¹⁹ As individual Q6 reported in her Masters dissertation, these factors may indeed play a significant role in influencing the negative business attitudes of some small businesses and young start-ups in Qatar, particularly prior to the Gulf crisis (June 2017 to January 2021) when Qatar experienced immense pressure to adopt a more aggressive business friendly approach to its investment and entrepreneurship.²⁰

19 Susan Marlow and Dean Patton, “All Credit to Men? Entrepreneurship, Finance and Gender,” *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice* 29, no. 6 (2005): 717-35; Fredrik Svensson, *Essays on Entrepreneurship and Bureaucracy* (Doctoral dissertation, Mid Sweden University, Sweden, 2008). <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2:117369>; and Mansheng Zhou and Haixia Xu, “A Review of Entrepreneurship Education for College Students in China,” *Administrative Sciences* 2 (2012): 82-98.

20 Sousa R. A. AlSelaiei, “Female Entrepreneurs – Obstacles and Challenges in the Qatari Market (Masters dissertation, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar, 2017).”

Furthermore, it was found that over two-thirds (68.9%) of the experts interviewed in the 2017 National Entrepreneurship Survey (NES) cited a lack of public policy on entrepreneurship, bureaucratic processes, and government regulations as key constraints, with 37.8% stating difficulties in accessing financial support (Figure 2).²¹ Nonetheless, based on findings reported in the GEM Global Reports in 2018 and 2019–2020, which established the National Entrepreneurship Context Index (NECI) to measure the ease of starting and developing a business, government policies on taxes and bureaucratic processes in Qatar are relatively sufficient and above the global average ratings (Figure 3a). Indeed, the Arab nation is among the top-placed countries globally, behind only Switzerland and the Netherlands.

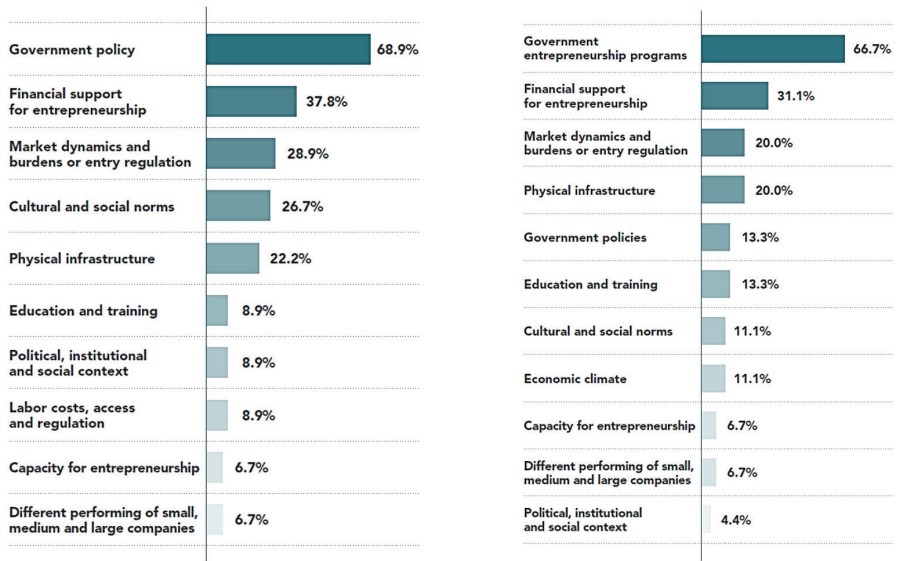


Figure 2. Key factor constraining (left) and fostering (right) entrepreneurship in Qatar, 2017 (adapted from GEM, 2017).

21 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), “Qatar National Report 2017,” <https://www.gemconsortium.org/report/qatar-national-report-2017-english>.



Figure 3. Entrepreneurial framework conditions in (a) Qatar and (b) Morocco (yellow: 2018; red: 2019; grey: global average expert ratings—1: highly insufficient, 5: highly sufficient; adapted from GEM, 2017).

In particular, entrepreneur Q12, a lecturer at QU and co-founder of EduEnterprise and WomenEdMENA, noted differing opportunities provided to local and expatriate entrepreneurs, with the latter having limited options in relation to legalities and access to funding. As such, they tend to register their enterprises in a foreign country to gain sufficient freedom in managing their own businesses as well as to sidestep unfavorable legal policies and regulations pertaining to entrepreneurship. This opinion mirrored that of stakeholder Q13, an outreach program manager at Akhlaquna, who acknowledged that Qatari nationals were given priority in gaining sponsorships and financial support from major national organizations.

Similarly, the lack of a comprehensive legal framework is also proving to be a challenge for Moroccan entrepreneurial stakeholders, and this finding is further supported by the GEM Global Reports, whereby bureaucratic government policies are deemed to be insufficient and below global average ratings (Figure 3b). Indeed, entrepreneur M1, CEO at Education for Employment (EFE), Morocco, lamented that current public policies on entrepreneurship meant that NGOs are often forced to take “creative” and risky decisions to generate revenues via the establishment of separate private entities owned by the NGOs to support their non-profit activities. To be instated as Moroccan associations—a term used in the legal policy framework to define organizations that are not allowed to generate profits, but will be one of the few to be eligible for high governmental funding—one would need to show a tremendously high level of compliance with the given criteria set by the government.

This view was echoed by entrepreneur M2, who noted that the local entrepreneurial ecosystem was currently skewed toward companies legally registered as NGOs, enabling them to benefit hugely from funding and sponsorships from the Moroccan government and impact investors. Entrepreneur M6, president of Fondation Sanady, one of only 200 associations out of 150,000 with such privileged benefits, acknowledged that social entrepreneurship has not yet taken off in Morocco, and legal statuses of social enterprises are vague and ambiguous. Stakeholder M3, the director of training programs at Moroccan

Center for Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship (MCISE), concurred on the lack of legal statutes afforded to social entrepreneurship,

“We still exist within the model of charity in Morocco. SE is not the main focus of the ministries in charge of commerce and entrepreneurship so there is no advertising, and it is not covered in the academic curricula. However, given that Morocco is a developing country, the ground and context is perfect for SE that can help in solving social issues sustainably.”

In addition, capital investments remain one of the dominant concerns of budding entrepreneurs in Morocco who are both unable and unwilling to pursue their entrepreneurial goals to their full capacities owing to a lack of resources and proper business mentoring. For instance, access to skilled talent is dismally lacking within the Arab entrepreneurial ecosystem. Viable and supportive human capital (individuals who are passionate, versatile, autonomous and creative) is essential to creating a competent team and building a scalable and sustainable enterprise, yet it is woefully scarce. Entrepreneurs, particularly new start-ups tight on budget and funding, thus often rely on volunteers and young professionals, resulting in high turnover rates and unnecessary expenditures. As entrepreneur Q15, a professional trainer and International Coach Federation (ICF) coach, bemoaned:

“We need to understand the golden triangle comprising economic, social, and political aspects existent within the MENA region. It is a very complex field; however, as is common among many Arab nations, the youth population is huge, the countries are economically poor, and the level of awareness is lacking. Money is not a good enough motivator despite the fact that they are in need of it. We, therefore, find ourselves with individuals who are comfortable with the status quo and are unwilling to change with the times and learn new skills and systems.”

Interestingly, stakeholder Q2 and entrepreneurs M1 and Q16 also perceived the lack of market diversification and flexible business models as an equally dominant reason behind the faltering entrepreneurial activity in both Qatar and Morocco. As stakeholder Q2 succinctly explained:

“During the blockade, when Qatar lost a lot of traditional economic partners, people started to view entrepreneurship as a tool of empowerment, and new opportunities and programs arose along with changes in societal needs. However, the market is not large enough to absorb a wide spectrum of entrepreneurs and is currently saturated in certain areas such as the restaurant business and other profitable businesses that attract interest. We need economic diversification beyond hydrocarbons and gas. The more diverse the economy, the more opportunities there will be for entrepreneurs.”

Role of Governmental Institutions

Since year 2000, Qatar has intensified efforts to regulate financial investments into the local economy. For instance, Law No. 13 of 2000 allows foreign capital investment in a

variety of fields such as education, development, information technology, and industry.²² Indeed, pursuant to the recently approved Investment Law No. 1 of 2019, a non-Qatari investor may now invest up to 100% of the project capital across all economic sectors, including banking, insurance, and real estate,²³ and may receive such incentives and privileges as exemptions from income tax and customs fees. Similarly, other ministerial decrees were formulated to spur local investment opportunities, with laws related to businessmen, investors, consumer protection, and partnerships with the governmental sector being continually ratified in the past two decades. In particular, Law No. 34 of 2005 on Free Zones Investment and Decree-Law No. 16 of 2010 on e-commerce transactions have contributed toward developing an investor-friendly business environment in Qatar.²⁴

Other ministries in the Qatari government have also jumped on the entrepreneurial bandwagon. The Ministry of Transport and Communications (MoTC) established the Digital Incubation Center (DIC) to boost information and communications technology (ICT) innovation in Qatar, particularly among local youth at the critical initial stages of developing viable technology-related ventures.²⁵ By recently launching major projects in partnership with Microsoft and Huawei, respectively, MoTC and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) underscore the emphasis on the development of digital and technological skills among Qatari youth and students and the importance of entrepreneurial skills to empower them in their efforts to pursue education.²⁶

Several entrepreneurs and entrepreneur educators interviewed for this study stressed the importance of governmental institutions in easing the entrepreneurial journey, particularly for start-ups and young businesses. Indeed, the majority of the stakeholders within the Qatari entrepreneurial ecosystem highlighted the significant roles played by QDB and Qatar Business Incubation Center (QBIC) in promoting entrepreneurship and SMEs in the country. This coincided with the findings of the GEM NES 2017, in which government entrepreneurship programs were mentioned by 66.7% of experts as a key factor in fostering entrepreneurial activity in Qatar.²⁷ QDB and QBIC, along with other governmental organizations such as Bedaya Center, Silatech, and Nama, provide extensive support programs through accelerators, incubators, and education and mentorship programs to assist young Qatari nationals in establishing their business ventures.

Just like its Qatari counterpart, the Moroccan government is also actively promoting entrepreneurship at the national level, revamping and rejuvenating business systems and career prospects for budding entrepreneurs while also injecting numerous capital investments into the ecosystem. In particular, entrepreneur M2 and stakeholder M5 noted

22 The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI, Invest in Qatar), “Laws and Regulations” (2019), <https://invest.gov.qa/laws-and-regulations/>.

23 MoCI, “Laws and Regulations.”

24 MoCI, “Laws and Regulations.”

25 Ministry of Trade and Communications (MoTC), “Digital Incubation Center” (2019), <http://www.motc.gov.qa/en/dic>.

26 MoTC, “Digital Incubation Center”; MoEHE, 2019.

27 GEM, “Qatar National Report 2017.”

the establishment of an “automatic entrepreneurial status” for youth, offering more attractive and flexible tax deductions to entice them to venture into entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneur M8, a social edupreneur and founder of NoBox Lab, Morocco, also remarked that the Ministry of Education has piloted a nationwide initiative aimed at further promoting entrepreneurship in the country. First initiated two years ago in Rabat and Casablanca, the Student Entrepreneur project offers a dedicated innovation and incubation center and student entrepreneurship club in every tertiary institution, catered to assist and support final year projects for young students with innovative ideas.

Role of Non-Governmental Organizations

Although Qatar has instituted many entrepreneurial and educational initiatives to drive economic diversification through the establishment of a knowledge-based economy, there remains much room for improvement.²⁸ The Qatari government realizes the crucial role played by NGOs and privately-owned companies in the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Qatar. Such institutions and companies provide essential entrepreneurial skillsets and know-how, as well as well-rounded services to assist individuals and businesses in achieving success in their entrepreneurial journeys. For instance, INJAZ Qatar collaborates with leading local organizations and educators in preparing local youth for workforce preparedness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy.²⁹

Similarly, ibTECHar, a young start-up company that has already achieved regional and global success, provides integrated services through the implementation of technological and educational domains, in creating an effective and adaptive environment across the entire educational system in Qatar. Voicing his ambitious aims for the company, entrepreneur Q1 asserted:

“Today, we have a global Pearson model having an impact on education. How can we develop our own regional Pearson model that understands our culture, heritage, language, and system of values and provide a suitable educational experience for the people in the region to flourish and to nurture?”

Entry into non-saturated business markets in Qatar could not only mean lucrative profits, but also opportunities to transform societal mindsets and create niches according to the present needs of the society. EdClude, a social enterprise promoting awareness on Down Syndrome and other special needs, is such an example of a community-based organization aiming to be a changemaker in advocating for inclusive educational systems in Qatar. Entrepreneur Q3, co-founder of EdClude, stressed the need for vocational training and internship programs for youth with special needs, as well as subsequent job placements in proper workplaces:

28 Yagoub Ali Gangi, “The Role of Entrepreneurship Education and Training on Creation of the Knowledge Economy: Qatar Leap to the Future,” *World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development* 13, no. 4 (2017): 375-88.

29 INJAZ Qatar. (n.d.). <https://injaz-qatar.org/>.

“Every child has the right to education, no matter what his abilities. What we want to eventually achieve is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn and be independent.”

The entrepreneurial ecosystem in Morocco may be relatively young, although many NGOs are working with the youth in deciphering entrepreneurship, keeping them motivated and positive. These organizations, including INJAZ Al-Maghrib, MCISE, StartUp Maroc, ENACTUS, Global Shapers, and Startup YourLife, aim to bring about a positive impact on society through the facilitation of establishing businesses and providing sustainable support. In particular, ENACTUS has firmly established itself at the top of the entrepreneurial pecking order by introducing its labs and integrating its programs into the core curricula of higher educational institutions in Morocco.

Indeed, entrepreneur M2 acknowledged the supportive role of local NGOs in Morocco facilitating SMEs and female entrepreneurship, and providing youth with early stage funding, training, and incubation opportunities to ensure the viability and scalability of their business models. Entrepreneur M8 listed three main forms of support readily available and highly accessible for Moroccan entrepreneurs:

“There is a high-value chain of organizations providing support from pre-ideation all the way to the scaling phase, particularly in the last three years. We now have support in the form of training—technical, entrepreneurial or managerial; funding—small seed funding to huge grants or loans for innovative projects at zero interests; and mentorship, where you get access to a network of fellow entrepreneurs and investors within the ecosystem.”

The media has also played a leading role in promoting entrepreneurship in the Arab world. Stars of Science, the pioneering innovation television initiative by QF, was created to empower budding Arab entrepreneurs to develop technological solutions for their communities. Entrepreneur Q8, deputy executive director at Qatar Scientific Club and founder and chief executive officer at Thakaa Technologies, acknowledged his place as a finalist in the edutainment program in jumpstarting his entrepreneurial journey. As entrepreneur Q12 aptly noted:

“The Qatari entrepreneurial ecosystem is highly dynamic with many organizations working with social media influencers to promote entrepreneurship in coordination with the youth and economy ministries. We also have individuals and enterprises supporting and providing online sessions for start-ups via Twitter and other social media platforms.”

Similarly, in Morocco, apart from several social media initiatives to raise awareness, a recently produced television show was aired to showcase start-ups and diverse experiences through their entrepreneurial journeys. With more than five million people tuning in each week, accounting for approximately 15% of the Moroccan population, entrepreneur M8 believes that entrepreneurship is no longer a taboo concept in society.

Efforts are still insufficient in providing wholesome business aid and relief toward

attaining entrepreneurial sustainability across the country, with support primarily directed toward the public promotion of entrepreneurship and the foundations of starting a business. Entrepreneur M4, a professional coach at EducationCM, Morocco, bemoaned the realities behind pursuing entrepreneurial journeys for many:

“There is a difference between reality and merely having competitions and pitching presentations at the end. I have seen some very good projects and presentations on education, including learning strategies, tools and platforms; however, they have yet to come to fruition. A lot of projects crash due to lack of funding and support; hence, social entrepreneurship in Morocco is not rooted in reality at the moment.”

Nevertheless, international organizations have also staked their claim and set a firm foothold at the top of the Moroccan entrepreneurial ladder, possibly much more than in Qatar, which is more reliant on local entrepreneurial networks. These organizations, including the U.S. Embassy, the World Bank, and the British Council, assist in cultivating entrepreneurial values and mindsets in society and provide training and support opportunities for budding entrepreneurs. Entrepreneur M2 was a recipient of a lucrative grant from the British Council, which enabled her to pursue her entrepreneurial ambitions through the first years of her start-up venture.

Although widely available, these entrepreneurial initiatives, workshops, and training services are not usually intensively promoted, and the lack of grassroots movements and national-level marketing results in budding entrepreneurs and start-ups within the Arab world being unaware of their existence. Entrepreneurs find it difficult to formulate their own strategic plans and business models for their enterprises as they would need to abide by specific stipulations set by their investors and sponsors. Nonetheless, with even King Mohammed VI pushing for entrepreneurship to be fostered by both the private and public sectors in Morocco, the ecosystem and its principal stakeholders are doggedly aiming to nurture and build an entire community of young and driven entrepreneurs.

SOCIAL EDUPRENEURSHIP IN THE MENA REGION

Social Edupreneurship as an Innovative and Effective Tool

As in other parts of the globe, educational institutions in the Arab world have been shut down, either partially or fully, because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, affecting almost 100 million children between 5 and 17 years of age.³⁰ Owing to the lack of digital infrastructure in many Arab countries, these children are unable to continue with their education virtually. The longer the children are not in school, the bigger the risk that they lose interest and motivation to learn, forget what they have learnt previously in school, and may not resume school upon re-opening. As shown in Figure 4, Morocco was one of the

30 United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), *Preventing A Lost Decade: Urgent Action To Reverse The Devastating Impact Of COVID-19 On Children And Young People*, (New York, U.S., 2021), <https://www.unicef.org/media/112841/file/UNICEF%2075%20report.pdf>

top countries facing educational poverty in 2010,³¹ with 37% of the population aged between 17 and 22 years with less than four years of formal schooling, the minimum amount of time required to gain basic literacy skills. The global pandemic has inevitably exacerbated educational poverty, particularly in many of these Arab and African nations.

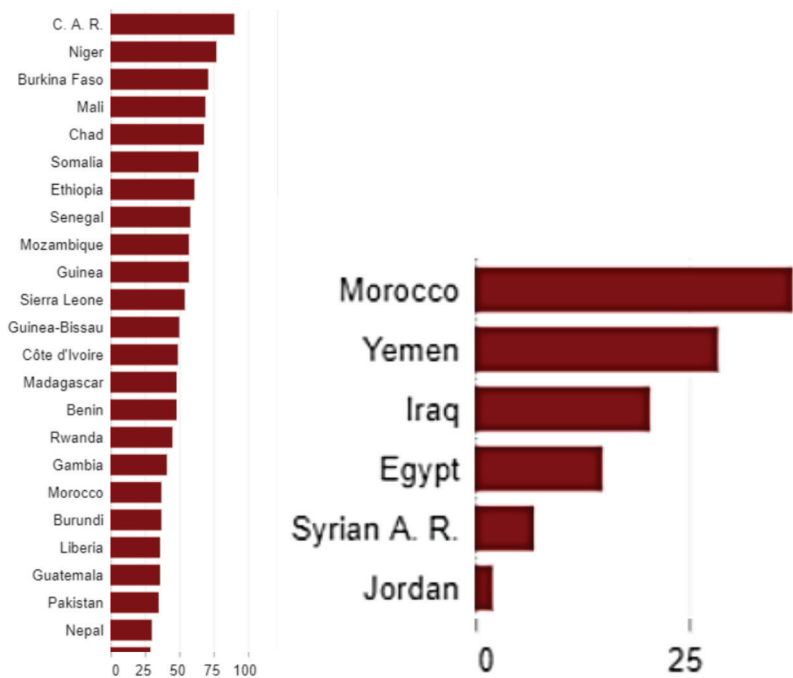


Figure 4. Top countries facing highest levels of educational poverty, 2010 (adapted from UNESCO, 2010).

The youth constitute a substantial slice of national populations across the Arab states. As this slice becomes considerably larger in the coming decades, it is imperative to address pertinent societal issues faced by the youth. These challenges include high levels of unemployment, mediocre quality of education, and inadequate and restricted access to other basic services such as healthcare and public transportation. This study focuses on how social entrepreneurship in the education sector can facilitate in combatting educational marginalization experienced in the MENA region.

According to entrepreneur M6, 600,000 babies are born in Morocco annually, and 3,000,000 students abandon formal education. These children leave school by the age of 12 years, many of whom do not complete or even start high school education. Similar to

31 UNESCO, 2010.

many other countries in the MENA region, gender-based discrimination remains rampant in Morocco, with young women and girls marginalized from equal access to decent work and tertiary educational opportunities. Entrepreneur M7 cited:

“What does it say about your education system if it results in girls dropping out of school, getting married, and having babies? The system right now is very gendered, with opportunities often going to boys. However, we know that girls and boys are intellectually equal, so why would you lose out on the potential that the girls would have to offer?”

Traditional educational systems in the Arab world are becoming increasingly dated, inadequate, and incapable of conforming to societal development and emerging needs. Targeted at memorization, these classical systems do not foster critical thinking and entrepreneurial skills. Furthermore, the skewed educational processes do not highlight potential and cater to students' needs. As acknowledged by entrepreneur M6:

“Every year, 27%–28% of the national governmental budget is spent on education in Morocco. We spend a lot of money, but we spend it badly. The quality of the educational curriculum in schools is also outdated, and there is a lack of proper infrastructure, sanitary facilities, and training for teachers.”

These factors, coupled with high levels of youth unemployment and socioeconomic exclusion, present an urgent need for the Moroccan educational system to be transformed. Social entrepreneurship provides a useful and effective tool in aiding stakeholders within the education sector to reconstruct and revolutionize the educational frameworks as noted by entrepreneurs M6 and M8, respectively:

“In social entrepreneurship, you need to answer a need, and there is definitely a need in the education sector and to help support the youth. Even if it is a drop in the ocean, we need to make it happen.”

“When you're working in the education sector, there is always a sense of social responsibility because the youth is an important component of the society. It will be good to have stakeholders besides the ministry to reform and rethink the educational system in the country, such that you will not just have one way of thinking and you can be more efficient.”

Qatar-based entrepreneurs interviewed in this study paint a slightly varied picture of the educational system in the country. This is probably owing to the differing socioeconomic conditions faced by the Qatari population, with much lower levels of unemployment and relatively higher level of education. In fact, entrepreneur Q14 surmised that unlike many other parts of the Arab region, there is a higher proportion of women pursuing tertiary education than men. Strong-willed and determined to forge brighter futures for themselves, their families, and the country, these women often progress to powerful positions and create a substantial impact in society.

Several Qatar-based entrepreneurs have expressed their desire to see the educational

system in the country develop even further. For instance, entrepreneur Q9 hoped for entrepreneurship to be introduced in schools and integrated within the curricula to change prevailing mindsets. Similarly, entrepreneur Q16 wished to foster social innovation mindsets starting from high school to equip students with useful and empowering skills so that youth themselves will be able to recognize societal problems, seek improvement, and take responsibility in creating changemaking solutions for society. As entrepreneur Q12 aptly noted:

“There is a difference between education and schooling. We focus a lot on schooling, but we do not celebrate the idea of continuous learning, developing skills, building capacity, and trying out new ideas. Social initiatives help people test their skills and see their strengths in a different light. Besides the classic way of gaining knowledge, SE connects knowledge to day-to-day life and experiences.”

SE in the education sector within the Arab world remains highly underdeveloped, and there is much room for improvement. Entrepreneurs Q11 and M1 explained further, respectively:

“SE is one of the most difficult forms of entrepreneurship as there is no sustainable model of SE in the Arab world. It is a very new concept in the region, and we are still trying to figure it out. Fortunately, many people are already driven by charity, so the values are there. We just need to find ways to mobilize them and create support systems in which we can execute projects and make them sustainable.”

“The current ecosystem does not provide enabling conditions for SE to flourish as much as the other sectors due to an education system that is very outdated and not focused on 21st century skills, such as digital and soft skills. Although it is really taking off at the moment, there has yet to be many successful examples. It is a work in progress.”

Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Entrepreneurship in the MENA Region

Across the globe, big and small corporate and non-profit enterprises are greatly impacted by the ongoing global pandemic. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, national governments have enforced strict restrictions across major sectors. Although some of these restrictions have eased in several parts of the world, the lack of compliance with public health policies, pandemic fatigue, and the emergence of viral variants have resulted in multiple waves of infection and consequent persistent disruptions to daily life. The MENA region is no different as Arab governments put in place stringent measures in an effort to curb the spread of the virus within their populations.

In Qatar, policymakers have been forced to introduce harsh restrictions that have affected entrepreneurs, such as an inbound travel ban, control of movement outside of people's homes, and closure of many commercial entities such as cafes, gyms, and retail shops. Due to the significant reduction in demand and subsequent dwindling revenues, profits have drastically diminished, and operational costs have become a burden on entrepreneurs, further resulting in inevitable permanent business closures.

To counter the effects of COVID-19 on entrepreneurship, the Qatari government introduced several policies focused on supporting and enhancing the private sector and increasing its self-sufficiency, announcing an economic stimulus package of QAR 75 billion (approximately USD 20.6 billion). Other government-affiliated corporations soon followed suit. The COVID-19 National Response Guarantees Program was also introduced by QDB in order to provide financial relief to private businesses in supporting staff payroll and rental fee payments. In addition, several private and public institutions, including the national regulator of utility supplies (Kahramaa), offered utility fee exemptions for businesses during the initial phase of the pandemic.

The education system in Qatar has seen its entire delivery model severely disrupted, with schools and tertiary institutions shutdown completely for the first six months of the pandemic and only partially resuming until present day. According to entrepreneur Q10, who also teaches at a public girls' school, the pandemic has uncovered the depth of the educational gap in the country:

“If you are a student studying in a private school in Qatar, you inevitably pay a substantial amount for your education so you can get access to digital devices and systems if you need to. However, education in public schools is free, regardless of nationalities, which means that students are unable to get instant access to iPads or laptops required for home-based learning throughout the pandemic. I have students whom I had initially lost contact with as they were not attending classes. They did not know how to as they did not have Wi-Fi in their homes.”

To aid students to seamlessly resume their education, particularly those without access to technology, the Ministry of Education has since speedily distributed tablets and Wi-Fi routers at no cost to needy households. Indeed, the global pandemic has highlighted the inequality in educational opportunities still faced by many in Qatar, and perspectives have shifted on how to increase and provide equal access to the digital world for all students. With schools increasingly open to integrate e-learning platforms into their curricula since the pandemic, entrepreneur Q16 recognized the need for these schools to also adopt SE and its innovative ideas into the educational systems.

Since entering a state of health emergency on March 20, 2020, Morocco has received international praise for its rapid and coordinated pandemic response. Although a large number of business entities were forced to close down permanently, entrepreneurs across diverse sectors have kept the national economy afloat with localized healthcare solutions and creative digital systems. Medical masks were manufactured on a large scale to provide for the Moroccan population, while public administrative information and education were executed via innovative platforms. Vulnerable groups were also assisted with the introduction of specific support programs by the Moroccan government.

The strict lockdown measures imposed have culminated in abrupt closures of SMEs in the informal sector, potentially setting off a financial recession in the country and further resulting in 10 million people being at immediate risk of falling into poverty. In response to the pandemic, the Moroccan government has raised US\$3.2 billion towards its Crisis

Management Special Fund, and the Central Bank has introduced such fiscal measures as suspension of income tax returns, leasing maturities, and bank loans to provide financial support and ease bureaucratic constraints on businesses.

The IMF predicts the unemployment rate in Morocco will increase even further to 12.5% in 2020 as a direct result of the pandemic, particularly affecting youth and recent graduates (Moroccan Higher Planning Commission). To support these youth, the Intelaka youth entrepreneurship program was established in February 2020 to foster innovative ideas and skills and cultivate entrepreneurial mindsets. This is especially crucial to address the immediate needs of the youth population in Morocco as noted by entrepreneur M1:

“There is a lot of potential in our Moroccan youth, but there is also a very high level of unemployment among them. They want to work; however, they are not prepared, regardless of their level of education. Although local SMEs are in need of skilled talent, they lack the human capital to grow their businesses. Therefore, we need to provide the youth with demand-driven skills, either hard, soft, language or even employee eligibility, re-orientate and re-skill them so that they can apply for jobs that leverage their backgrounds and are career-launching and family-sustaining.”

Post-Pandemic Outlook of Social Entrepreneurship

The current health and economic crisis experienced globally has highlighted the influence of SMEs and entrepreneurship in sustaining the global economy, which has been severely affected by uncertain recovery outlooks, disrupted economic activity, and containment measures adopted by governments. Several sectors are more drastically affected than others, including hospitality and tourism, oil and gas, construction, and real estate. A recent global survey conducted on the impact of the pandemic on the private sector revealed that 45%–50% SMEs have experienced financial impact, with up to 79% of them expecting further decline in revenues in the coming months.

Entrepreneurship has been a powerful tool used within the MENA region to address such socioeconomic challenges as unemployment and market diversification over the past two decades. Given the elevated level of structural unemployment in the region (approximately 10%), especially among the youth at more than 25% on average, SMEs account for a significant level of job opportunities. This is probably a more accurate picture for Morocco than for Qatar because Moroccans view entrepreneurship as a necessity than an opportunity, whereas the reverse is true for Qatar-based entrepreneurs. Indeed, it was found that nearly 30% of formal employment in the private sector is attributed to SMEs, although this number is much higher in other parts of the Arab region such as Iraq (approximately 90%), Lebanon (55%), Jordan (43%), and Tunisia (40%). The global pandemic may have inevitably reversed these regional development efforts due to the drastic impact on the entrepreneurial ecosystem, resulting in even higher levels of unemployment and poverty.

Digital innovation has undoubtedly emerged as one of the most critical aspects necessary in today's world to strengthen resilience and effectively meet the needs of the

future. Enterprises and entrepreneurs have capitalized on the rapidly evolving socioeconomic environment by conceptualizing innovative initiatives and introducing digitalized services. For instance, a virtual hackathon (Hack COVID-19) was recently initiated by QDB to provide a platform to budding entrepreneurs to ideate creative solutions toward combatting the pandemic. QDB has also launched a virtual training program to assist SMEs in addressing operational challenges they face as a result of the pandemic. Entrepreneur Q15 says:

“When it comes to training and education, Arabs seem to prefer face-to-face interaction, although there has already been a plethora of educational services and courses available online. It remains to be seen if this will change post-COVID-19, although I hope that the society will embrace such positive change.”

CONCLUSION

To date, SE remains an unclear concept encompassing various distinct models across the globe, depending on a wide variety of exogenous and internal factors. Numerous scholars have attempted to define SE, yet the term remains vague and incomplete when applied to any particular ecosystem. Bacq, Hartog, and Hoogendoorn (2013)³² argue that a generalized worldwide definition of SE may not do justice to the distinct differences inherently existent within the phenomenon as a result of multiple factors such as the individual origins of each entrepreneurial ecosystem. This view mirrored the findings of this study, in which entrepreneurs interviewed voiced different opinions on what SE means to them. Although many associate it with non-profit organizations, some relate SE to businesses engaged in CSR, and others use the term for non-profit organizations starting private for profit ventures. The observation that SE implies concepts that vary hugely across cultures and contexts, therefore, substantially hinders identifying true determinants that are able to explain this phenomenon on a global scale.

Regardless of the ambiguity of its definition, the concept of SE is rapidly expanding and attracting increasing attention across many sectors. Social entrepreneurs can be called changemakers whose goal is to achieve systemic and sustainable social change. This is typically attained through innovation, either by inventing new products and/or services or through adapting existing systems, such as revamping healthcare services to make it more affordable and equitable. The end goal for social entrepreneurs is the alleviation of poverty or the general upturn and development in the well-being of their societies.

Today, the Arab world is experiencing a demographic shift with an average of more than 50% of the population aged younger than 25 years. Coupled with high levels of unemployment, decades of political hegemony, and economic stagnation, this has resulted in profound social unrest borne out of exasperation, resentment, and fury. Widespread

32 Sophie Bacq, Chantal Hartog, and Brigitte Hoogendoorn, “A Quantitative Comparison of Social and Commercial Entrepreneurship: Toward a More Nuanced Understanding of Social Entrepreneurship Organizations in Context,” *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship* 4, no. 1 (2013): 40–68.

discrimination along gender, racial, cultural, and religious lines have substantially deepened fractures within the social fabric. The region is in desperate need of political and economic reform.

Blending financial sustainability and social change, SE offers a highly effective solution to counter these societal issues in the Arab world. The region features unique characteristics of SE that are distinct from those in other parts of the world owing to the specific set of social, economic, and political challenges not witnessed elsewhere. Unsurprisingly, clear differences in the entrepreneurial ecosystems exist even within the region. Qatar was selected as a representative model of the relatively more developed Arab nation in the Gulf, while Morocco represents a developing environment in North Africa. In this study, we have showcased the similarities and differences between the two countries in adopting the concept of SE.

A common thread between both the Qatari and Moroccan ecosystems lies in the behavioral traits of the entrepreneurs interviewed in this study, and the underlying motivation behind their entrepreneurial ventures. The majority of stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystems in Qatar and Morocco listed passion and resilience as the dominant characteristics essential for the success of entrepreneurs and their enterprises. Empathy, a value differentiating social entrepreneurs from traditional ones, also ranked high on the list of most important personal characteristics to possess. This finding aligns with previous studies, which have identified these traits as the main drivers of entrepreneurial accomplishments. Motivations of the social entrepreneurs interviewed also conformed between the two ecosystems as well as with a typical social entrepreneur. The aim of creating lasting social impact and aiding in societal development constitutes the primary motivating factor behind the push for SE for many of these entrepreneurs.

This study also raises several critical issues that hinder entrepreneurial growth in the Arab region. Arab entrepreneurs generally feel that their entrepreneurial journeys are hampered by the lack of support systems in the form of familial backing as well as community mindset toward SE as a legitimately solid career option. Furthermore, there is a lack of exogenous support due to gaps in legal frameworks, insufficient access to financing and funding, and dearth of skilled talent within the entrepreneurial ecosystems in Qatar and Morocco. Although governments and private corporations in both countries are increasingly promoting SE with a wide variety of entrepreneurial courses, workshops, and training services, these programs are often not effectively marketed and advertised to the general public. Budding entrepreneurial talents, therefore, remain unaware of the available opportunities, while the society maintains its dated misperceptions on SE.

The existing educational systems in Qatar and Morocco leave much to be desired, with varying forms of deep-rooted inequalities within. Although Qatar is a much richer nation with plentiful resources and a relatively higher level of educational system than Morocco, entrepreneurs in both countries seek educational reforms. They claim that inadequate access and meagre quality of education can be countered by introducing entrepreneurship in schools and integrating it within the curricula. Establishing this will set off a chain in fostering social innovation in the youth, equipping and empowering them with essential

and demand-driven skills such that they will be transformed into future changemakers within their societies.

Entrepreneurship, with an emphasis on SE, is increasingly being proposed, recognized, and peddled as a catalyst for growth and sustainability of global economies³³. Despite the massive development in entrepreneurship training and education and the upsurge in the number of entrepreneurial courses and organizations in recent years, the focus on the importance of relevant policies and programs remains inadequate, and guidance as to how they can be better implemented to support SE is insufficient.³⁴

Qatar has a unique opportunity to establish itself as a regional and global leader in the entrepreneurship sector. The Qatar National Vision 2030 comprises of a crucial element in promoting entrepreneurial values and nurturing talented young entrepreneurs in innovation and creativity. In addition, the stability of the Qatari government as well as the presence of well-established and internationally recognized banking and finance industries lends credence to its ambitious aspirations to evolve into a key player in the field of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education.

Similarly, the African market in general and the Moroccan market in particular presents a real opportunity for social entrepreneurs, even in the presence of numerous social issues. There has been a lack of initiatives to encourage and promote an entrepreneurial culture so as to set up a favorable environment for developing innovative solutions for addressing social issues. There is an urgent desire for collaboration, cooperation, and interconnectedness among significant actors within the entrepreneurial ecosystem to ensure greater efficiency and productivity. Fostering local social entrepreneurship in Morocco is essential in achieving sustainable human and economic development in the country and region.

I believe the contribution of this study is, therefore, twofold. Firstly, it contributes to the nascent stream of literature investigating major contextual determinants of the SE ecosystems in the MENA region, particularly those in the education sector. Furthermore, analysis of major obstacles in the entrepreneurial journey in Qatar and Morocco as well as the determination of socioeconomic factors impacting social edupreneurship in these countries can assist in the adoption of constructive strategies to counter them. Productive policies and programs, both at state level as well as non-governmental, can then be efficiently implemented and specifically aimed to heighten creative critical thinking, self-assertiveness, and self-reliance. In addition, appropriate and targeted investments in social edupreneurship can nurture a generation of catalysts confident in embracing change through innovation. The success of such strategies and policies may provide an inspiring model for the region and even the world, as well as spur a global entrepreneurial movement as we continue to seek sustainable economic pathways toward personal and global development.

33 Heidi M. Neck, Patricia G. Greene, and Candida G. Brush. *Teaching Entrepreneurship: A Practice-based Approach*, (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2014).

34 Slavica Singer, Jose Ernesto Amoros, and Daniel Moska, *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor: 2014 Global Report*, (Wellesley, MA: Babson College, 2015).

In this study, we successfully ascertained the major factors impacting entrepreneurship in the Arab world, with a specific focus on SE in Qatar and Morocco. The roles of various key entrepreneurial players in the entrepreneurship ecosystems in both countries were investigated, particularly in the SE sector. Figure 5 shows how the different contributors work together to spur entrepreneurial growth in Qatar.³⁵ The role of SE in addressing gaps within the education sectors in Qatar and Morocco was also thoroughly explored.

Education provides a much-needed stimulus for economic development, poverty reduction, and enhanced social mobility. Ensuring that everyone receives equitable access to quality education should thus be a central priority for all governments. Indeed, educational achievements should be the product of potential, talent, and merit as opposed to external social circumstances. However, deep-rooted inequalities based on gender, wealth and income status, race, and geography persist to this day.

With the exponential rise of SE across the globe, particularly in developing nations, key stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem can capitalize on it to effect social change. The use of SE as a powerful tool in addressing social issues and overcoming challenges can indeed provide value-added benefits to the developing world. Understanding the benefits of SE should, therefore, be doggedly pursued to ensure that SE is used to its fullest potential.

35 GEM, “Qatar National Report 2017”.

بيئة ريادة الأعمال في قطر
الشكل 22



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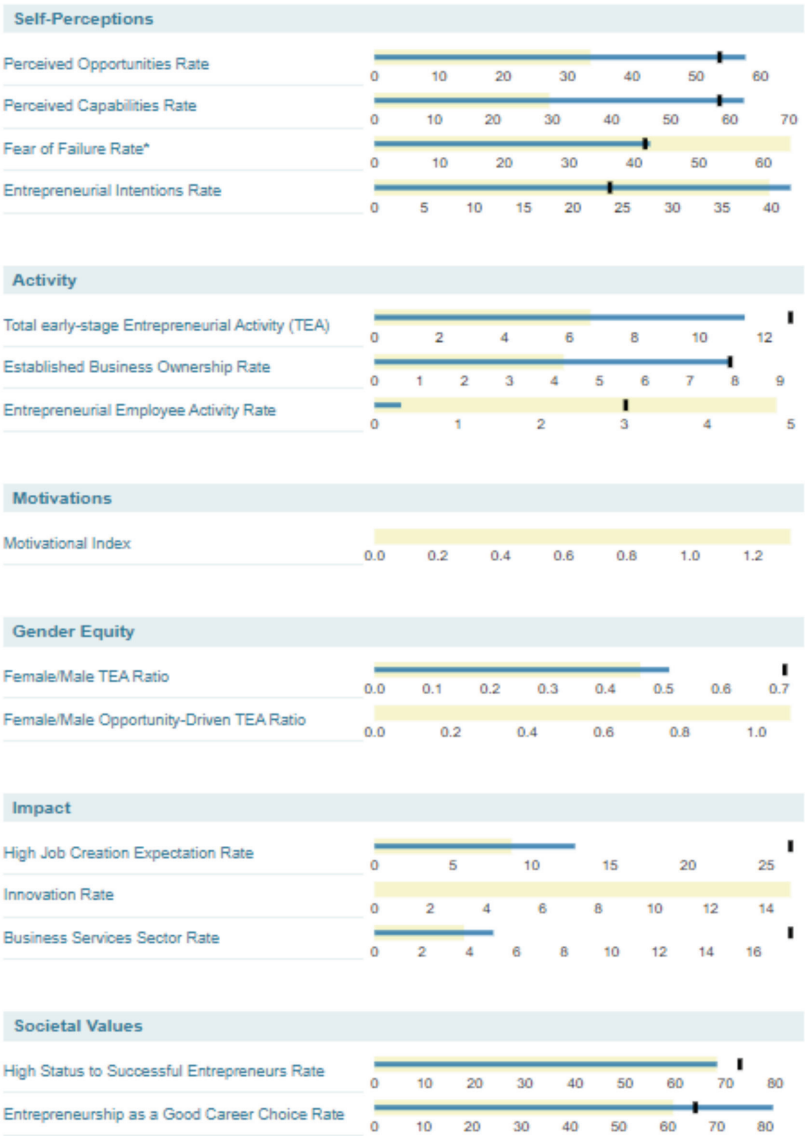
APPENDIX A

Entrepreneurial Behavior and Attitudes in Qatar, 2018-2020
(yellow bar: 2018; blue bar: 2019-2020; black bar: global average)
(adapted from GEM, 2018 and 2019-2020)



APPENDIX B

Entrepreneurial Behavior and Attitudes in Morocco, 2018-2020
(yellow bar: 2018; blue bar: 2019-2020; black bar: global average)
(adapted from GEM, 2018 and 2019-2020)



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Concept of Love in Medieval Women's Mystical Experience: Revisiting the Works of Rābi'a Al-'adawiyya and Mechthild of Magdeburg

Adam Folorunsho Olowo

ABSTRACT

The concept of love is not a new phenomenon in the history of mystical ideas. It features predominantly in all fields of knowledge, including literature, metaphysics, psychology, and law. However, in the Christian and Islamic worlds, it is also a theme that has been central to mysticism right from the very beginning. It is a truism to say that the history of mystical ideas would be severely lacking without exploring the element of divine love. Given that love is a common phenomenon shared by all human beings regardless of race,

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<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/sites/default/files/conceptoflove.pdf>

culture, and traditions, it serves as the perfect theme to investigate in the comparative study of mysticism. In this regard, this study seeks to elucidate the conversation about the contributions of medieval Christian and Muslim women to mysticism. In a bid to address the issue of androcentrism in contemporary mystical studies, this study will examine the works of two prominent medieval women mystics from both religions: Rābi‘a al-Adawiyyah, a Muslim; and Mechthild of Magdeburg, a Christian. This is in an attempt to understand how both women understood the concept of love; more so, how they employed it in relation to the divine. Using a comparative approach, this study will compare and contrast the application of the concept of love in the works of Rābi‘a al-Adawiyyah and Mechthild of Magdeburg while discussing the relevance of their contributions to the study of mysticism. By doing this, it is hoped that our general understanding of the Middle Ages would be better illuminated, thus, making for a greater acknowledgement of medieval literature in the field and adding to existing sources on the history of the study of religion.

Keywords: Love, women mystics, androcentrism, Rābi‘a al-Adawiyyah, Mechthild of Magdeburg, mysticism, Transcendent Being

INTRODUCTION

The concept of love is not a new phenomenon in the history of mystical ideas. It features predominantly in all fields of knowledge, including literature, metaphysics, psychology, and law. However, in the Christian and Islamic worlds, it is also a theme that has been central to mysticism right from the very beginning. It is a truism to say that the history of mystical ideas would be severely lacking without exploring the element of divine love. Given that love is a common phenomenon shared by all human beings regardless of race, culture, and traditions, it serves as the perfect theme to investigate in the comparative study of mysticism. In early Christian and Islamic literature, the concept of love was a theme that was greatly explored by mystics in connection to the “Absolute Being.” Even though the practice was widely in circulation in the Christian world before the advent of Islam, it was not until the 8th century that divine love began to gain traction in the mystical traditions of the Islamic world. According to Leonard Lewisohn, one of the first Sufis who spoke of the concept of divine love in the Muslim world was Hassan al-Basri. However, a well-organized system of love only began to appear in the mystical literature of early Sufis in the 9th century; an idea that developed in the philosophical mysticism¹ of Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya.² In Christian and Islamic mysticism, it is argued that the concept of divine love is an idea that is deeply rooted in the holy revelatory scriptures of both religious traditions; and while love itself is one of the divine attributes of God in Islam (*al-Wadūd*), words such as

1 This paper adopts the term “philosophical mysticism” instead of “mystical theology” because both mystics exploration of love transcends the limits of a religious rationality associated with Islam or Christianity as a religion.

2 Leonard Lewisohn, “Sufism’s Religion of Love, from Rabi ‘a to Ibn ‘Arabi,” *The Cambridge Companion to Sufism* (2015), 152.

“covenant” or “testament” are mostly employed to describe the love relationship that exists between the divine and his creation in the Christian mystical tradition. With the newly developed interest of modern scholars in the mystical traditions of both the East and West, the 20th century saw a growing concern in bringing the great classical mystical literature of the Christian and Muslim mystics into European consciousness. This was done by translating early mystical literature from their original languages, be it Hellenic or Arabic, into European languages; and in this regard modern works, such as *The Translation of Jalāl al-Dīn Rumī’s Mathnawī* (1925) by Nicholson, *Meister Eckhart Sermons and Treaties* (1987) by Maurice Walshe, and the *I Ching* (1967) translated by Richard Wilhelm are noteworthy. More so, the modern mystical works of scholars such as Anne-Marie Schimmel³ and Toshihiko Izutsu⁴ within the Islamic world and Evelyn Underhill⁵ from the Christian world are invaluable to enlightening modern students of mysticism about the history of mystical ideas in the Christian and Islamic worlds.

The history of the study of mysticism as a discipline is far from complete. Over the years, there has been a continued discussion over the androcentric bias that characterizes modern scholars’ exploration of the discipline, almost projecting the field as a male-dominated industry. Although this may, in part, be owing to the lack of familiarity with medieval literature on women mysticism, it may also be as a result of mere disinterest of the majority of modern scholars to explore the contributions of women to the discipline. I believe that medieval women’s mysticism has been understudied in modern mystical discourses and the need to revive the vast range of women’s voices that have been silenced over the course of many centuries has become imperative. In this study, I seek to elucidate the conversation about the contributions of medieval Christian and Muslim women to mysticism. It examines the works of two prominent medieval women mystics from both religions: Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya, a Muslim; and Mechthild of Magdeburg, a Christian. This is in an attempt to examine how both women understood the concept of love, and in particular, how they employed it in relation to the divine. Using a comparative approach, this study also compares and contrasts the application of the concept of love in the works of Rābi‘a and Mechthild while discussing the relevance of their contributions to the study of mysticism. Through this study, we hope that our general understanding of the Middle Ages will be better illuminated, thus ensuring a greater acknowledgement of medieval literature in the field and adding to existing sources on the history of the study of religion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Deriving insight from the philosophical work of Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, which attempts to structurally compare between the worldviews of Sufism as represented

3 See Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (University of North Carolina Press, 1975).

4 See Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism—A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (University of California Press, 2016).

5 See Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness* (Wentworth Press, 2019).

by Ibn ‘Arabī and that of Taoism as represented by Lao-tzu⁶, this study also aims to follow the same course of reasoning. Therefore, rather than attempting an essentializing comparison between Islam and Christianity, I have aimed at a structural comparison of the concept of love in Sufism as represented by Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya and the concept of love in Christianity as represented by Mechthild of Magdeburg. With a significant awareness of the pitfalls that a comparison of this sort may attract, this paper circumvents a superficial analysis by laying bare the fundamental structure of each woman’s mystical position independently and objectively, before proceeding to highlight any comparative consideration.

THE INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHIES OF RĀBI‘A AL-‘ADAWIYYA AND MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG

Two remarkable personalities in medieval women mysticism, Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya (d. 810) and Mechthild of Magdeburg (d. 1294), have preoccupied scholars of women’s religious history and spirituality for decades. A comprehensive intellectual biography of both Rābi‘a and Mechthild is pivotal to understanding their mystical ideas given that there is a significant correlation between the life experiences of both women mystics and their mystical experiences; Rābi‘a’s self-mortification in Basra and Mechthild’s asceticism in Magdeburg has had a significant bearing on their spiritual development. The criteria for selecting these two women were based on age, the medieval period, content, the similarities that are apparent in their mystical ideas, as well as religion (Christianity and Islam). The intellectual biographies of both the mystics are briefly discussed in the following subsections.

Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya

The accounts of Rābi‘a’s life has been a subject of contentious debate in academia. This could be, in part, owing to the unavailability of credible sources on her life experiences, or the lack of familiarity with modern contemporary scholars of medieval literature. Some modern scholars have subjected Rābi‘a’s historical narratives to criticism. Scholars such as Julian Baldick have not only questioned the words or sayings ascribed to Rābi‘a in history but also the credibility of her existence in the history of women mysticism.⁷ Nonetheless, the continuous transmission of Rābi‘a’s stories throughout the ages is enough justification to prove Rābi‘a’s existence. Originating in the 8th century in the Arabian Peninsula, her name has featured in several written sources as she continues to be discussed as one of the prominent figures in the history of medieval women mysticism. Her stories not only attract the attention of scholars interested in Sufism but also those interested in the role that women played in Islam.

Rābi‘a was born into a financially challenged family in Basra between 95 and 99 A.H.

6 See Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism—a Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).

7 Julian Baldick, “The Legend of Rābi‘a of Basra: Christian Antecedents, Muslim Counterparts,” *Religion* 20, no. 3 (1990): 29.

(714–718 A.D.). Her parents were devout Muslims, and along with her three elder sisters, they all lived on the outskirts of the Basran society in what is presently Iraq. She was named Rābi‘a by her parents, meaning “the fourth,” which translates correctly into the sequence of her birth as the fourth daughter of the family. Regarding her *kunyas*, “al-‘Adawiyya,” “al-Qaysiyya,” and “al-Basriyya,” these are titles that were either derived from her the tribe of Qays b. ‘Adi of which she was a member or from her place of birth, al-Basra.⁸ She became an orphan at a very young age after which she was captured by bandits and as a result was sold into slavery along with her three sisters. She ended up in Baghdad with a master who treated her with disdain and cruelty. Given the incredible beauty of Rābi‘a and the number of marriage offers she received from different men in Baghdad, her master exploited her talent as a singer and her beauty by forcing her into entertaining people and he lived off her earnings. The story surrounding her freedom attracts divergent opinions; however, according to Suleyman Derin, after a miraculous event witnessed by her master, he was overwhelmed by it and freed her in the end.⁹

Therefore, based on the above narration, it is believed that the hardship that Rābi‘a encountered right from infancy had a direct bearing on her spiritual development as a lover of God. Growing up as an orphan with no parental care whatsoever, as early as eleven years of age in an Islamic society where the idea of guardianship is stressed, deprived Rābi‘a of societal protection. She sought protection, instead, from the Most High, and replaced her loneliness with close proximity to the Divine Being. If not for the painful episode that characterized Rābi‘a’s early life, it may be argued that the Rābi‘a we now know may have never existed.

Rābi‘a lived a life of absolute devotion and worship, and although she, on the one hand, features as one of the founders of medieval Sufi asceticism, she stands as the original advocate of all later Sufi doctrines of divine love. Rābi‘a subscribed to an anti-marriage philosophy as she viewed marriage as an obstacle in the path of annihilating herself in the love of God; therefore, she rejected many marriage proposals including those of ‘Abd al-Wahīd b. Zayd (d. 793) and, arguably, Hasan al-Basri (d. 728; which although chronologically impossible, was narrated in more than one account). In response to ‘Abd al-Wahīd b. Zayd, Rābi‘a was recorded to have responded as follows, “O sensual one, seek another sensual one like yourself, have you seen any sign of desire in me?”¹⁰ Her mystical idea of love pervaded the doctrines of Sufism for many centuries and continues to be reflected upon up until the present time. As Ibn Arabī rightly said, “She is the one who analyzes and classes the categories of love to the point of being the best interpreter of love.”¹¹

Through her contributions, Rābi‘a infused the medieval atmosphere with her philosophical mysticism, and although she spent a significant period of her life in isolation,

8 Derin Suleyman, “From Rabi’a to Ibn al-Farid: Towards Some Paradigms of the Sufi Conception of Love” (PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1999), 112.

9 Suleyman, “From Rabi’a to Ibn al-Farid,” 114.

10 Suleyman, “From Rabi’a to Ibn al-Farid,” 116.

11 Gavin Picken, *Spiritual Purification and Islam: The Life and Works of al-Muḥāsibī* (London: Routledge, 2011), 25.

she had many disciples and contacts. Irrespective of the credibility of sources, Rābi'a's biography, as accounted in some hagiographic works, affirmed her contact with Hasan al-Basri, which according to Derin is highly unlikely. It was reported that she engaged in a number of mystical debates with several Sufis, one of whom was Hasan al-Baṣrī. Her philosophy of love transcended any other mystical ideas in the early period, and it was adopted by many over Hasan al-Baṣrī's gloomy approach to mysticism. Among her associates, according to Derin, was Rābi'a al-Qays of Basra (d. 810), Sufyān Thawrī (d. 798), and even Dhun al-Nūn al-Misrī (d. 856). As for disciples and followers, Muadh al-'Adawiyya, Umm al-Darda, Maryam of Basra, and many others are featured in hagiographic books.¹²

Mechthild of Magdeburg

Defying the patriarchal establishment of the 13th century, a woman emerged who was a relatively significant figure in the history of medieval women thinkers and a prominent exponent of ascetic theology in Christian mysticism. Her name was Mechthild of Magdeburg (d. 1297). The details of her actual life are restricted to what appears in her collections, yet her stories continue to be transmitted among scholars of women's religious history and spirituality. She was born into an aristocratic Saxon family in the early period of the 13th century in 1208. The majority of the details surrounding Mechthild's life and spiritual development are from an extract of her masterpiece, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, translated from its original German format and introduced by Frank Tobin in 1997. This book represents the efforts of many decades, the completion of which became possible when Mechthild was already old, blind, and frail.

As early as twelve years of age, Mechthild had started receiving mystical experiences which she described as a divine greeting from the Holy Spirit. According to Beer, this loving greeting came to her every single day and caused her to experience a two-dimensional feeling of love and sorrow, the sweetness of which increased as the day passed.¹³ The early stage of Mechthild's spiritual development was marked by a passionate desire to renounce worldly pleasures of all kinds in order to become one with Christ. In her struggle to liberate her body, she went far away from home to join the beguines in Magdeburg, which indicated her devotion and unwavering determination in the imitation of Christ. In her journey towards self-mortification, her contact with the mendicant orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis may have been an external influence. She not only shares the mendicant's asceticism and humility, but also its reformation zeal designed to combat the clerical corruptions of the time.

Mechthild commenced the writing of *The Flowing Light* around 1250, and a striking feature in this writing was her decision to write in German (her native tongue), rather than Latin. According to Beer, the 13th century period valued literary materials that were written in Latin, and scholars during this period subscribed to Latin as a language to

12 Suleyman, "From Rabi'a to Ibn al-Farid," 120.

13 Frances Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages* (Boydell Press, 1992), 81.

appeal to a bigger crowd. Mechthild, unlike the others, challenged the status quo and in doing so, boosted the Middle Low German language while making her work accessible to a more varied audience.¹⁴ Mechthild's method of composition was to write in the manner in which she received the ecstatic vision, which was related in a prose-like manner, poetry, or on a long sheet preserved by her longtime Dominican friend Heinrich of Halle, who also provided valuable assistance in the course of writing the book.¹⁵ Following the abrupt persecution of outspoken and reformist Christians by corrupt members of the clergy, she was forced to seek refuge in Helfa where she was welcomed and lived until she died in 1297.

THE CONCEPT OF LOVE IN MEDIEVAL WOMEN'S MYSTICAL TRADITION: RĀBĪ'A AL-'ADAWIYYA AND MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG

The history of medieval women's mystical tradition is a long and substantial one, and it would be impossible to do justice to the breadth and depth of knowledge exhibited by these medieval women mystics within the scope of this study. For the purpose of this study, two distinguished women mystics of the Middle Ages who were not only unique in the history of their own faith but also in their respective age as well were chosen. The paragraphs that follow structurally and comparatively examine the concept of love in the philosophical mysticism of Rābī'a al-'Adawiyya and Mechthild of Magdeburg to illustrate the different methodologies of love from two different religious traditions, and more importantly to deduce the point of convergence in both women's approach to mysticism.

a. The Concept of Love in the Philosophical Mysticism of Rābī'a al-'Adawiyya

It goes without saying that love is a complex phenomenon to classify; however, that has not deterred people from attempting to develop a philosophy of love within a mystical system. The concept of love constitutes an area of concern in early mystical discourse as well as among modern mystics; and given that the Sufis consistently subject love, as a phenomenon, to a mystical psychology of "stages" and "stations," the mystical classification of the stages of love has always attracted divergent views from the very beginning. Nonetheless, while the stages of love may be heavily contested in academia, one point of convergence among early Sufis was on "love" as the most important factor in establishing a human-divine connection.¹⁶ Tracing the historical development of the classification of love in Islamic mysticism back to its origin, it is unsurprising to see many scholars designate Rābī'a al-'Adawiyya as the major exponent of a well-organized theory

14 Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience*, 70.

15 Emily Hunter McGowin, "Eroticism and Pain in Mechthild of Magdeburg's *The Flowing Light*," *New Blackfriars* 92, no. 1041 (2011): 608.

16 Carl Ernst, "The Stages of Love in Early Persian Sufism, from Rābī'a to Rūzbihān," *The Heritage of Sufism* 1 (1999): 435.

of love in the history of Sufism. The selfless love of God advocated by Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya distinguishes her not only among her contemporaries but also her predecessors.

Within the context of the medieval period, Rābi'a's level of spirituality was unmatched in the history of medieval mystical practices, distinguished by the absolute renunciation of worldly desires, set apart in her unparalleled level of sincerity, and annihilated in the profound love and longing for God's union. Her philosophical mysticism of love implied an exclusive and unconditional concentration on nothing else but God, an understanding that is captured in her response to Sufyan al-Thāwri when she was asked about the reality of her faith, "I have not worshipped Him from the fear of His fire nor for love of His garden so that I should be like a lowly hireling. Rather, I have worshipped Him for love of Him and longing for Him."¹⁷ This dictum captures the whole of Rābi'a's theoretic understanding of love, which leaves no room for the love of something else aside from Him. A testimony of her unwavering devotion to divine love is a famous story that was in circulation in Basra that talked about how Rābi'a was on the street holding a torch in one hand and an ewer in the other. People wondered about why she was carrying these two items, and she said:

I want to throw fire into paradise and pour water into Hell so that these two veils disappear, and it becomes clear who worships God out of love, not out of fear of hell or hope for paradise.¹⁸

The logic behind Rābi'a's saying is apparent in the obvious distinction between "creation" and "creator." Anything created including paradise and hellfire is a distraction on the path to divine love, so that anyone who loves God for the sake of paradise or out of fear of Hell is not loving God per se but something else distinct from Him. Therefore, to love God for the sake of deriving benefits or avoiding disasters is a wrong perception of what divine love is meant to be. To enlighten the question of what divine love really is in the philosophical mysticism of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, it would have to be considered under two subheadings: God–Human design and Human–God design.

God–Human Design: Agape Love

The God–Human design illustrates the love that originates from God towards His creation. While Rābi'a did not preoccupy herself with the God–Human design, references to God's love for humanity are scattered throughout her teachings. From Rābi'a's teaching, one can derive that the origin of love itself comes from God; for according to her, it would be impossible for love to exist in the first place without God serving as the primary source. This understanding of love is quite central to Rābi'a's philosophical mysticism and it is reflected in the way she approached issues of legal standing. According to Derin, Rābi'a was faced with a question on whether or not the repentance of a sinner is always acceptable to God, and she replied, "No one can turn to God before He turns to them."¹⁹ Following

17 Ernst, "The Stages of Love," 438.

18 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 39.

19 Suleyman, "From Rabi'a to Ibn al-Farid," 124.

this logic, Rābi'a established God as the sole inventor and originator of "love," and the choice of either reciprocating the love or ignoring it ultimately lies with the creation.

Another element that features in the God–Human design is the principle of divine jealousy. In no other Sufi literature has God been qualified with such an adjective, and it appeared first in Rābi'a's teachings.²⁰ According to Rābi'a, this understanding of divine jealousy informs the strict prohibition of *shirk* (associating a partner with God) in Islam, for God requires that His creation extends absolute love to only Him and nothing else. He is the kind of God that will not hesitate to punish anyone that shares with Him the love that is due to Him alone. In one of her excerpts, Rābi'a addresses God as follows:

O Beloved of hearts, I have none like unto Thee,
Therefore, have pity this day on the sinner who comes to Thee
O my Hope and my Rest and my Delight
The heart can love none other but Thee.²¹

The God–Human design indicates the downward trend by which love moves from the Ultimate Reality down to His creation, with God serving as the initiator of love while distributing it throughout the entire universe.

Human–God Design

In direct contrast to the God–Human design, the Human–God design indicates an upward trend by which love travels from the creature to the creator. This dimension of love has been the area of concentration of many Sufis even before Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya; however, the one thing that sets her apart from her predecessors and contemporaries is her idea of an organized theory of love. This was particularly why the renowned Andalusian Sufi Scholar, Ibn Arabī, described Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya as "one who analyzes and classifies the categories of love to the point of being the most famous interpreter of love."²² Addressing Rābi'a's categories of love, her oft-quoted classification of love into two distinct forms constitute the fundamental elements of Rābi'a's philosophical mysticism. These two loves are the selfish love and the selfless love.

The *selfish love* (*hub al-hawā*) is a reward-motivated love that comes from the fear of or the desire to achieve something that will be of great benefit to an individual. It is not surprising to see or to think that many people fall under this category of love. This is because of the fact that it comes naturally for human beings to be selfish and for them to be paid in return for their service. However, Rābi'a condemns this category of Human–God love relationship as she clearly relates in one of her poetries: "I have loved you with two loves, a selfish love and a love that is worthy of You. As for the love which is selfish, I occupy myself therein with the remembrance of You to the exclusion of all others."²³

20 Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 59.

21 Joseph Lumbard, "Love and Beauty in Sufism," in *Routledge Handbook on Sufism* (Routledge, 2020), 173.

22 Ernst, "The Stages of Love," 439.

23 Suleyman, "From Rabi'a to Ibn al-Farid," 125.

Even though Rābi'a was aware of the natural disposition of the selfish love in human beings, she argued that such love can be neutralized by annihilating oneself in the remembrance of God. In one of the anecdotes related to Rābi'a on selfish love, it was said that Rābi'a came across a group of elders, and she asked each one of them why they worship God. One replied for the fear of hell and another replied for the love of paradise; whereas Rābi'a replied, "He is an evil servant he who worships God from fear and terror or from the desire of reward."²⁴

However, from a legal point of view, the love of God for the sake of material benefit is completely acceptable in Islam, for of what use is paradise or hell if not to serve as motivation to establish closer contact with God. If the Prophet is reported to have said, "Love God for His bounties on you,"²⁵ then Rābi'a may be considered as being excessive in her disapproval of "selfish love."

As for the *selfless love* of God (*al-Hub lillāh*), it assumes a very important position in the philosophical mysticism of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, perhaps the most significant of all. This type of love is what is known by the later Sufis as *ishq* (eros). The extraordinary and undivided love of God exhibited by Rābi'a in the 8th century Basra not only set an example during her age but is still strongly admired by contemporary Sufis. The selfless love for God denotes that nothing else is worthy of love except God; love that is immune to distraction for the lover of God sees nothing else but God even when his eyes are closed. The understanding of selfless love is better captured in Rābi'a's prayer:

O my Lord, whatever share of this world Thou dost bestow on me, bestow it on
Thine enemies,
and whatever share of the next world Thou doest give me, give it to Thy friends—
Thou art enough for me.²⁶

This line of prayer has been repeated in different forms and variations by Sufis throughout the ages, and it established Rābi'a as the face of divine love in the religious history and spirituality of medieval women.

Although selfless love is the final one in the stages of love and thus the best of them all, it is a level that is not easily attainable for it requires a complete renunciation of earthly desires and to be replaced with a profound love of God. The only thing that matters to the Gnostic is the hope of God and the word of His praise, which is sweeter than any word and a source of happiness for the soul.

When a lover finally becomes mired in the love of God, he will indirectly cease to exist and vacate the self. As al-Ghāzālī rightly explained, the natural inclination of the Gnostic towards personal wants and earthly materials disappears from his consciousness and he becomes fully annihilated in divine love. The body, heart, and soul of the seeker will be consumed with grace; and in that state, even if thrown into hellfire, he would not feel a thing for he has become one in spirit with God and immune to physical pain. This type of

²⁴ Suleyman, "From Rābi'a to Ibn al-Farid," 126.

²⁵ Suleyman, "From Rābi'a to Ibn al-Farid," 126.

²⁶ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 40.

love is not motivated by material benefit but by seeking his worthiness, as is transmitted in one of Rābi'a's famous prayers:

O my Lord! If I am worshipping You from fear of fire, burn me in the fires of hell; and if I am worshipping You from desire for paradise, deny me paradise. But if I am worshipping You for Yourself alone, then do not deny me the sight of Your magnanimous face.²⁷

Rābi'a was not the only woman mystic who chose the mystical path; several other women, some of whom were among her disciples and interlocutors, subscribed to the same understanding of divine love. However, unlike them, Rābi'a exceeded them in scope and dimension, which consequently set her up as the model of selfless love in medieval women's history of mysticism.

The Concept of Love in the Philosophical Mysticism of Mechthild of Magdeburg

In the study of Christian medieval women mystics, two particular women have preoccupied modern scholars of female mysticism and spirituality: Hildegard of Bingen whose work provides valuable insight into contemporary thought; and Mechthild of Magdeburg who claimed that God inspired her work, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, and addressed God in ways that surpassed the usual boundary of divine love.²⁸ Thus, the combination of Mechthild's concept of divine love and the alleged divine authorship of her book not only differentiate her from other medieval women mystics but also informs contemporary scholars' preoccupation with her subject. It is this concept of love in Christian thought that is best captured in Mechthild's work which, allegedly, is an inspired product of God himself.

Love and eroticism are two significant elements that factored greatly into Mechthild's mystical teachings; and while many among her predecessors and contemporaries have explored the same mystical path,²⁹ the only facet that separates Mechthild's application of erotic language and imagery from those that went before her was her "un-allegorical" intention. Her employment of sexually stimulating language to describe her relationship with Christ reflects actual human concupiscent drive and a way of gaining intimate proximity, thus becoming one with him. Her inclination towards divine eroticism is, as stated in her book, driven by a dream she had about the Mass of John the Baptist, subtitled, "An Allegory of Justification by Faith."³⁰ In this dream-like vision, Mechthild met John the Baptist, St. Peter, and the Virgin Mary; and at the behest of Mother Mary, she took her communion, thus becoming one with Christ. This dream, according to Mechthild,

27 Suleyman, "From Rabi'a to Ibn al-Farid," 131.

28 Jane Duran, "Mechthild of Magdeburg: Women Philosophers and the Visionary Tradition," *New Blackfriars* 87, no. 1007 (2006): 43.

29 In the old testament, Ezekiel and Hose referred to Israel as an ungrateful bride, St Paul metaphorized the Church as Bride and Christ as Bridegroom, and the eleventh century Bernard of Clairvaux made use of allegorical erotic language.

30 Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience*, 85.

symbolizes her acceptance into the divine circle, a new family of the spiritual elite. Following this dream, the subsequent visions of Christ that she received assumes a sexual undertone, seeing herself as the bride and Christ as the beloved. In *The Flowing Light*, she wrote:

I hear a voice (says the youth)
Which speaks somewhat of love.
Many days have I wooed her
But never heard her voice.
Now I am moved
I must go to meet her,
She it is who bears grief and love together,
In the morning, in the dew is the intimate rapture
Which first penetrates the soul.³¹

In this poem, Christ assumes the likeness of a handsome youth seeking the pleasure of a woman (Mechthild); and in an attempt to indulge Christ, she dresses in a white robe and goes into the woods to wait for her lover. The beloved (Christ) upon arriving asks her to dance with him, after which he invites her into the riverbank saying:

For thou art weary! Come at midday
To the shade by the brook
To the resting place of love.³²

At the resting place where she meets with Christ, she undresses and embraces Christ's delight. Mechthild finally consummates with her Lord as related in one of her poetries:

Now comes a blessed stillness
Welcome to both, He gives himself to her
And she to Him
When two lovers come secretly together
They must often part, without parting.³³

From the above lines, it is clear that Mechthild's methods of divine union and relationship with Christ were related through erotic language and sexual imagery in what may seem an inappropriate employment of anthropomorphic expressions of the divine. It is the view of Mechthild that the body of a female mystic is the perfect vessel for divine inspiration, which enables her (women mystics) to act and talk in a manner that is divinely ordained. This understanding factored into Mechthild's claim that Christ inspired the authorship of *The Flowing Light*, implying that her work is a source of divine revelation. Now, according to Frances Beer, Mechthild's approach may have been motivated, to some extent, by the erotic poetries of the German *minnesingers*. Some of the lines or at least

31 Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience*, 94.

32 Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience*, 94.

33 Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience*, 95.

similar ideas of the *minnisingers* found entry into Mechthild's poetry, which further raises suspicion about Mechthild's divine authorship.³⁴

Mechthild was not alone in her erotic approach of divine union; many others among her contemporaries employed a similar approach, the most famous among them being Beatrice of Nazareth and Hadewijch of Antwerp. Although the writings of Beatrice and Hadewijch may be subjected to allegorical interpretations, Mechthild's theo-eroticism reflects her personal and intentional sexual desires of the divine. The erotic nature of her work was a source of considerable provocation for the members of the clergy, which explains why she took refuge in Helfa in fear of persecution.

POINT OF CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE

Having examined the concept of love as represented in the works and teachings of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, a Muslim, and Mechthild of Magdeburg, a Christian, the main purpose of this study is to attempt a structural comparison between the mystical stand of both medieval women mystics; and to deduce the points of convergences and divergences in their works. Given that mystical concepts and ideologies now appeal to modern-contemporary scholars of interfaith relations as a viable field of exploration, a comparative analysis of the mystical stands of Rābi'a and Mechthild will not only add to the existing literature in the field but also create an additional avenue where Christians and Muslims can potentially find common ground for a peaceful relationship.

With regards to the concept of love as represented in their works, the areas where both women mystics converge are multifaceted, and the similarities that characterize their work in terms of life experiences, mystical developments, and teachings are easily deducible. The dominant motive that runs through the entire thesis of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya, as well as of Mechthild of Magdeburg, is the imperative of an incorruptible and undiluted love of God. This motion is scattered across the entirety of *The Flowing Light* as well as the anecdotes or stories relayed about the mystical teachings of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya. In an attempt to annihilate themselves in divine love, Rābi'a lived most of her adult life in seclusion and she would often retreat into the forest to pray and embrace God's presence in the most silent of places. Her match in the 8th century medieval history of women mysticism was non-existent, surpassing them in the seclusion of holiness, and more so in the complete devotion and pure unconditional love of the Ultimate Reality. The same is true of Mechthild of Magdeburg who although born in an aristocratic family renounced her birth privileges to join the beguinage for the sake of God. Mechthild's love of God is even more convincing when compared to Rābi'a, for while it may be argued that Rābi'a's poor background played a role in her unconditional love of God, Mechthild was devoted to Christ even in the face of numerous material resources.

From the unconditional love of God comes the complete renunciation of worldly desires. As it is a defining element among all mystical figures and the study of mysticism itself, the emphasis on the renunciation of the material world was a common feature in the

34 Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience*, 96.

mystical teachings of Rābi'a and Mechthild. In Rābi'a's philosophical mysticism, the ascetic approach to Sufism dominated her teachings as she developed a love of God that was neither motivated by worldly material nor fear of an unpleasant event; for the worship of only God was enough for her to the exclusion of all others. The same can be said about Mechthild of Magdeburg who also deserted her family's wealth to live a life of destitution. It was as a result of this that both women refused to get married which according to them was a source of distraction on the path of divine love.

The only area where there is a fundamental divergence of opinion in the mystical stand of both women is concerning the intensity of their approach. While Rābi'a's understanding of selfless love of God was, to some extent, excessive in light of the Islamic juridical tradition—in terms of developing an ontology that fails to recognize the material importance of existence and an eschatology that rejects the idea of reward and punishment (*wa'd* and *wa'id*)—she was still within the tolerable bounds of approaching the divine in Islam. The use of erotic language and imagery as apparent in the writings of Mechthild of Magdeburg was non-existent in Rābi'a's teachings, and the un-allegorical interpretation that Mechthild's work attracts was also a source of great provocation in Christianity. Had Rābi'a employed the same approach in her description of the divine, she would not only be overstepping the boundary of God–Human relationship in Islam but would be subjecting the divine to anthropomorphic terms, which is strongly abhorred in Islam. Therefore, although both mystics appealed to an idea of love as a path to divine union, the issue of eroticism and anthropomorphism are two fundamental areas where both women diverge.

The case of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*) is a very sensitive issue especially in Islam, one that sets both religions—Christianity and Islam—apart. The nature of God as transcending all imaginable knowledge and ineffable to all human sensitivity is a theory that is strongly upheld in Islam. However, while He (God) stands unique in His essence, He at the same time uses attributes that are essentially human-related such as having eyes, hands, ears, face, and sitting (on His throne). However, irrespective of the very few who subscribe to a literalist interpretation of these attributes, the Mutazilite adopts a complete renunciation of anthropomorphism tendencies, whereas the Asharite and Maturudite embrace the middle way—the formula of *bi-lā kayfa* (without asking how). Alternatively, the Quranic references to God's physical attributes are understood metaphorically in the case of the Mutazilite, and figuratively (with clear proof) in the case of the Asharite and Maturudite. Sufi literature also employs similar metaphorical and allegorical language in their remembrance (*zikr*) of the divine. In sharp contrast to Christianity where the nature of God takes on a more anthropomorphic nature in the likeness of the crucified Jesus, this informs why both mystics diverge in their love relationship with the Ultimate.

Deriving insight from the philosophical work of Toshihiko Izutsu in comparative mysticism *Sufism and Taoism*, which attempts to structurally compare between the worldview of Sufism as presented in the *Fusus al-Hikam* (The Bezels of Wisdom)³⁵ of

35 See Muhyi ad-Din Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ali Ibn Arabi, *The Bezels of Wisdom* (New York, N.Y.; Ramsey; Toronto: Paulist Press, 1980).

Ibn Arabī and Lao-Tzu's metaphysics of Tao, this study follows the same course of reasoning. The several translations of the works and teachings of both women have been an invaluable contribution to the field of comparative mysticism; and although issues of interpretation and terminological difficulties are still a source of concern when comparing between two or more religious traditions, it is safe to conclude that mysticism could serve as a common avenue with the potential of ending an age-old rivalry that characterizes Christian–Muslim relationships. An emphasis on the selfless love of God as represented in the teachings of Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya and Mechthild of Magdeburg also serve as a common core, a magnetic force that attracts adherents of both religions to a common ground, and through spirituality unifies them in the face of diversity.

In summary, Rābi'a and Mechthild both developed an unconditional love of God to the exclusion of all others, and they not only stand unique in their respective age but perhaps in the entire history of their religion. As they both projected the concept of divine love, however, from a different perspective, they serve as models for aspiring mystics and essential figures in the comparative study of mysticism.

CONCLUSION

Love is a universal phenomenon; while it defies the idea of a scalar system, it also extends the bounds and scopes of religion. Unlike any other phenomenon, it transcends the realm of form and matter into the realm of eternity, enabling the possibility of a close relationship between the divine and the human being. Although love is an expression that features in all religions, the lover establishes a direct connection with God (the Beloved) that cannot be placed within the context of any religious creed or doctrine. As the concept of love is a significant characteristic of mysticism in the Christian and Islamic mystical traditions, so does love exist among adherents of other religions as well as atheists. Irrespective of the differences in approach, the fundamental idea of love remains unchangeable, an unconditional love of God to the exclusion of all others. Not until human beings develop an undiluted love of God, thus following His laws, their understating of God and the world as a whole will forever remain obscure.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Islamic Law in the Maritime World: Malabar and the (Re)formation of Legal Circularities Across the Indian Ocean

Noorudeen Pattasseri

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I examine the (re)formation of Islamic law in the Indian Ocean world with a special focus on the legal exchanges centered around the Malabar coast in the Western Indian Ocean. In this study, I evaluate the location of Islam in the Indian Ocean in the broader intellectual and cultural map; the distinctive features of the periphery of this oceanic region, particularly Malabar; and the general characteristics of Islamic law that was formulated in a diverse social and political imaginary of this littoral area. In conclusion, I clarify the relevance of law in the discussion of Islam and Muslims in the Indian Ocean world.

Keywords: Indian ocean, Islamic law, peripheriness, monsoon Islam, Muslim minority, littoral states

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<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/sites/default/files/islamiclawmaritime.pdf>

INTRODUCTION

Twenty-three-year-old Hafizuddin Hakim was distressed at calling birthplace Kerala, a state in South India with a lot of greenery and beauty, “God’s Own Country.” In 2016, he left his hometown upset with the “un-Islamic” habitat found in his surroundings. After a few days, Hakim’s family got a message that their son had reached the “Islamic destination” in Syria to join the newly established radical Islamic movement, Islamic State for Iraq and Syria/Levant (ISIS/ISIL) and fight against the world’s infidels. A year later, a report in the *India Today* magazine claimed that around 100 people had left India to join ISIS. Recently, with reference to the UN report on terrorism, the *Economic Times* observed that there is a “significant number” (around 150–200) of Muslim youth leaving India to join various terrorist and extremist organizations and participate in the holy war known as jihad. There are various news reports, documentaries, and studies that have been published about this trend among the Muslim youth in Kerala.

The youth from Kerala joining the various terrorist groups share some common features, including:

- i. they firmly believe that their home country India is not Islamic, and therefore, one cannot live there as a “perfect Muslim;”
- ii. migration (*hijrā*) from a non-Muslim state to an Islamic state is compulsory for all Muslims living in places like India; and
- iii. *jihad* against non-Muslim states and people is essential to rebuild the disintegrated Islamic state (*khilāfa*).

In addition to the reports and debates on the migration of Muslim youth to terrorist hotspots in the Middle East and their joining global terrorist organizations, there has been a report about the existence of an “Islamic village” in Kerala. The alleged place was Athikkad in the Malappuram district of Kerala. This Islamic village consisted of many families that had relocated from different urban and rural spaces in Kerala. They had intended to build an “Islamic habitat” in the state to live a “complete Muslim life.” Hence, they constructed their own masjids, schools, residences, and commercial centers. Gradually, they decreased their dependence on outsiders and lived their religious life in a separate location.¹ According to the Indian journalist, Stanly Johny, Muslim youth missing since 2016 were closely associated with global radical Salafist ideologies and were influenced by puritan Islam that propounded that secular and non-Muslim places were evil capitals.²

Why do these Muslims of Kerala think of and long for an “Islamic landscape” in the Arab-Islamic Middle East? Is it impossible to lead a religious life in non-Arabic and non-Islamic social and political contexts? These are the questions that pushed me to study the functions of Islamic law in a non-Middle Eastern, non-Arabic, and non-Islamic social context. I will argue here that the Indian Ocean has been a space of exchange, whereas

1 “‘Significant Numbers’ of ISIS Terrorists in Kerala, Karnataka: UN Report on Terrorism,” *The Economic Times*, July 26, 2020; “About 100 People from Kerala Joined ISIS over the Years: Police,” *India Today*, November 11, 2017.

2 Stanly Johny, *The ISIS Caliphate: From Syria to the Doorsteps of India* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018).

the western part of the Indian Ocean world has a diverse nature from its counterparts in the Middle-Eastern Arab-centric Islamic world. Therefore, the law and religion that formed among these people also have certain distinctive features. The people, ideas, culture, and commodities played a central role in making this oceanic world a unique unit of life, and Islamic law is one of the central features that shaped the Indian Ocean with more settled regulations.

The Indian Ocean: Place and People

The area of the Indian Ocean has been a disputed issue for many years. There are numerous debates on the exact geographical location of the Indian Ocean. Relying on various historical accounts on travel and transportation through this region, Edward A. Alpers defined the ocean as a connected geographical location between Asia and Africa. He said,

The simple answer is that it encompasses everything from the Cape of Good Hope into the Red Sea, across to the South China Sea, and down to Australia; but as one begins to think about the Indian Ocean as a historical region, it is useful to keep in mind that both the reality and the idea of the Indian Ocean have changed over time.³

It has also been considered as one of the oceanic divisions situated between Asia to the north, Africa to the west, Australia to the east, and Antarctica to the south. There are several marginal seas in it. They are the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, Andaman Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Bay of Bengal, and the Great Australian Bight.⁴ The Indian Ocean's northern frontier, the Indian Subcontinent, divides the Ocean into two parts: the north-western side by the Arabian Sea and the north-eastern side by the Bay of Bengal. The region that consists of the Indian Ocean and its hinterland is known as the Indian Ocean world. Historically, this Indian Ocean world has been known as the birthplace of the first "global economy," the pre-modern version of "globalization," and an early "cosmopolitanism" in the medieval world.⁵

People living in the Indian Ocean world started navigating in 5000 BCE. Many archaeological excavations along the littorals of the Indian Ocean justify this notion of early navigation.⁶ Geographically, a continent consists of mountains, rivers, plains, and forest; whereas an ocean comprises wind, waves, and currents. Unlike land travel, oceanic travel is determined according to the nature of these components in water. People traveled across the Indian Ocean world in response to such climate changes at different times. The consistent travel across the ocean for various purposes such as trade, propagation, and sightseeing enriched the region as a global center for knowledge and economy.

3 Edward A. Alpers, *The Indian Ocean in World History (New Oxford World History)* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

4 Joseph R. Morgan, Viktor Filipovich Kanayev, and Philomene A. Verlaan, "Indian Ocean," in *Britannica Academic* (Encyclopædia Britannica, April 2021).

5 Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006).

6 Alpers, *The Indian Ocean in World History*.

The travel across the Indian Ocean was based on seasonal changes in the ocean. Most of the travel took place during the monsoon season. The climatic conditions in the ocean varies with the season; the first season is from November to January, when high-pressure winds blow across the Asian continent, and dry winds blow from Arabia and western India across eastern Africa, crossing China towards Southeast Asia. This is the north-eastern monsoon, which helps the movement of ships around the Indian Ocean, especially from the north to the south and the South China Sea. This is the best season to sail to the Red Sea and the Indian Coast from the eastern part of the Indian Ocean. The second monsoon season is from April to August, when the abovementioned process happens in reverse order. The southern hemisphere blows the heavy wind across the north. The southwest monsoon is the most fruitful time for farmers in South Asia and Southeast Asia when they receive heavy rains. In this season, the wind blows strongly, mainly during June and July, and traveling is difficult. As a result, many ports in western India and western Malaysia are closed during this time. However, Arab travelers would choose the southwestern monsoon (*mawsim al-kaws*), which begins in March and ends in May, to travel to the East African Coast and Malabar.⁷ The continuous travel and crisscrossing based on seasons worked as a catalyst for the development of the Indian Ocean world.

Muslims reached the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula by traveling through land, whereas their travel across the Indian Ocean world was via sea. Arabs comprised one of the significant traveling communities of the Indian Ocean world. They traversed the ocean even before the advent of Islam in Mecca in the century and continued their travels after their conversion to Islam as well. The converted Arabs traveled to the coastal regions of the Indian Ocean for trade and religious propagation. The historical accounts testify that within less than a century after the advancement of Islam in Arabia, Muslims had dominated more than half of the maritime world. The eastern, western, and southern parts of the Mediterranean were entirely under Muslim rule, while some parts of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean were also under Muslim control during this short period.⁸ During their commercial ventures, they approached local communities in littoral regions, both with commodities as well as faith. Consequently, non-Muslims started converting to Islam, and Muslims became a larger religious community in the Indian Ocean world.⁹ Muslims in the Indian Ocean world led the trade and even ruled different areas of the Indian subcontinent.¹⁰ The later development of Islam in the Indian Ocean world is associated with the mobility of people and the circulation of ideas during different seasons across the ocean. Trade was the central focus of this mobility and circulation. However, Muslims also traveled for tourism and the Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca. The 14th century Moroccan traveler, Ibn Battuta, has been known as the “tin opener” of the Indian Ocean world owing to his multi-faceted role in different parts of the Muslim world,

7 Sebastian R. Prange, *Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

8 Hassan S. Khalilieh, *Islamic Maritime Law: An Introduction* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

9 Milo Kearney, *The Indian Ocean in World History* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004).

10 Michael Pearson, *The Indian Ocean* (London; New York: Routledge, 2010).

especially in the hinterlands of the Indian Ocean.¹¹ The merchants and sailors developed new maps and constructed new types of dhows for sail.

Malabar was one of the essential nodal points for Indian Ocean travel. Due to its geographic specifications, it allowed travelers to have a halting station during their long journey across the Ocean. There were many ports in the western coastal regions of the Indian subcontinent. However, the southwestern ports, especially the Calicut port in Malabar, were crucial locations for traders and other traveling communities in the Indian Ocean. Early travel accounts of famous Arab and European travelers have noted the importance of Malabar ports in the Indian Ocean world. The Moroccan traveler, Ibn Battuta (d.1369), and the Portuguese traveler, Durate Barbosa (d. 1521), have written extensively about the people, trade, and customs on the Malabar coast. Pepper was the major commodity of trade that attracted Arabs and Europeans to Malabar.¹² It was known as the “black gold” among traders, and Malabar produced the commodity in large volumes to be exported to different parts of the world. There were also several other commodities transported from and to Malabar, as is clear from Barbosa’s description of the littoral’s brisk trade. According to the Portuguese traveler:

Merchants on the Malabar coast took on board goods for every place, and every monsoon 10 or 15 of these ships sailed for the Red Sea, Aden, and Mecca; where they sold their goods at a profit, some to the merchants of Judah, who took them on thence in small vessels to Toro; and from Toro, they would go to Cairo, and from Cairo to Alexandria, and thence to Venice, whence they came to our regions. These goods were pepper (great store), ginger, cinnamon, cardamoms, myrobalans, tamarinds, precious stones of every kind, seed pearls, musk, ambergris, rhubarb, aloes-wood, great store of cotton cloth, and porcelains. Some of them took on at Judah, copper, quicksilver, vermilion, coral, saffron, colored velvets, rosewater, knives, colored camlets, gold, silver, and many other things which they brought back for sale in Calicut. They started in February and returned in the middle of August to the middle of October of the same year. In this trade, they amassed a lot of wealth. On their return voyages, they would bring with them other foreign merchants who settled in the city, and started building ships and to trade, on which the King received heavy duties.¹³

The region of Malabar was prosperous due to the cultivation of various agrarian products, as well as its recognition as a prominent port of call for various routes emanating from around the Indian Ocean world. The flow of commodities and the mobility of people eventually contributed to the development of new forms of culture, language, and law in

11 Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson, eds., *India and The Indian Ocean: 1500-1800* (Calcutta; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

12 Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650*. Cambridge South Asian Studies 45. (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

13 Duarte Barbosa, *The Book of Duarte Barbosa, An Account of the Countries Bordering on the Indian Ocean and Their Inhabitants*, ed. Mansel Longworth Dames, vol. 2 (Hakluyt Society, 1918).

the Indian Ocean world, especially in Malabar. This happened mainly through the hybridization of local customs and foreign practices, global trends and peripheral realities, and mainstream texts and marginal contexts. In short, Islam reached the littoral region of the Indian Ocean through Arab-Muslim travelers, who never strictly imposed the norms that they received from their homeland. Instead, the scholars among them engaged with the local people living under non-Muslim rule and developed a customized law, which was appropriate for the realities of the peripheries of the Muslim world.

Itinerary of Islamic Law: From Land to Water

Islamic law is the code for Muslim life. According to the standard positions in classical legal scholarship in Islam, Islamic normative tradition is originated from God the Almighty and is known as *Sharia*. The Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition are the scriptural foundations of Islamic law. The later canonization of Sharia is known as *fiqh*. Two centuries after Prophet Muhammed, Islamic law developed alongside the geopolitical expansion of Islam and the incorporation of different cultures.

Islamic legal history is a much-debated subject. In a recent article, while considering disputes over the origin of Islamic law, Walter Edward Young opined that:

Certainly, attention must be paid to divergences as well as parallels. Notions that merit attention include those of cross-germination, Islamic juridical pluralism, the determining role of Islamic axioms, the formative dynamic of dialectical disputation, and most importantly, the avoidance of unsupported assumptions and formal/informal fallacies.¹⁴

Notwithstanding the debate on the origin of Islamic law, it is essential to acknowledge the possibilities of an Islamic normativity after the coming of the Prophet Muhammed to Mecca. The Quran and the prophetic tradition are the foundation of this particular Islamic normativity. The development of Islamic law along with the emergence of four Sunni schools of thoughts, Shāfi'ī, Hanafī, Malikī, and Hambalī, is also from such an Islamic normative framework.

All major scholarship that articulates arguments over the origin and evolution of Islamic law are based on the understanding of Islamic law in the Arab-Islamic world, which is also known as the “center” of Islamic law where “standard” opinions and “mainstream” forms of the law were formed. Almost all studies miss Islamic law as having developed in the “peripheries” of the Muslim world, where “marginal” law was followed since the emergence of Islam in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Africa.¹⁵ However, the works of Marshal Hodgson (1974), Azyumardi Azra (2004), Ronit Ricci (2011), Sebastian Prange (2008), and Iza Hussin (2016) initiated the studies of the Muslim periphery using different approaches. Along with the geographical understudy, there has

14 Walter Edward Young, “Origins of Islamic Law,” in *The [Oxford] Encyclopedia of Islam and Law. Oxford Islamic Studies Online*, May 28, 2014.

15 Mahmood Kooria, *Cosmopolis of Law: Islamic Legal Ideas and Texts across the Indian Ocean and Eastern Mediterranean Worlds* (Leiden: Leiden University, 2016).

also been a temporal imbalance in the antecedent studies of Islamic legal history. A recent study by Ahmed El Shamsy on Shāfiʿī legal history examined the development of Shāfiʿī legal tradition in the 10th century, which is the development of Islamic law in its formative period.¹⁶ Mahmood Kooria in his doctoral dissertation has studied the later development of Shāfiʿī Islamic law, including the circulation of Islamic legal texts and ideas between the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean worlds.¹⁷

Islamic law became the catalyst for the social and political imaginary of Muslims in the heartland and disseminated beyond that particular space by crossing borders and oceans. Islamic law shaped in the local peripheries, especially where Muslims were under non-Muslim rule, however, was different from that which developed in the heartland of Islam. The Indian Ocean world is one of such peripheries of Islam; and therefore, the Islamic law developed in this region is likely to have differences and dissimilarities considering the diversity in customs and socio-political lives.

Law in Maritime Space: Conflicts and Reconciliations

Since the eighth century, Muslims had begun to migrate to different non-Muslim regions. There were many historical reasons that prompted the migration from the abode of Islam (*dār al-Islām*) to the abode of infidels (*dār al-ḥarb*). The central reason was the political instabilities in many Arab or Middle Eastern countries and the development of trade and commerce by water. By the 12th century, the vast majority of Muslim populations were living under various non-Muslim regimes that were far from Arabia. Consequently, many Islamic jurists and scholars extensively worked on the theological aspects of the Muslim life in non-Muslim social and political situations. In fact, all the four major Sunni legal schools, especially the Shāfiʿī and Hanafī schools, supported Muslims staying outside the abode of Islam owing to various reasons, including strengthening the religion in foreign localities.¹⁸

By the 16th century, the center of Islamic law had begun to shift to various localities. Until then, Islam was centered in Cairo, Khurasan, Baghdad, Damascus, and the religious capital, Mecca.¹⁹ When scholars from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Africa began to engage with and counter the Arab-Islamic-centric Islamic accounts, they came to produce various legal accounts that often contradicted the Arab-Islamic-centric Islamic law books. This process can be called “peripheralness” of Islamic law, wherein regionality and customs were taken into consideration for legal procedures.²⁰ All juridical functions in Islamic law work according to diverse historical specificities;

16 Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

17 Kooria, *Cosmopolis of Law*.

18 Khaled Abou El Fadl, “Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities: The Juristic Discourse on Muslim Minorities from the Second/Eighth to the Eleventh/Seventeenth Centuries,” *Islamic Law and Society* 1, no. 2 (1994): 141–87.

19 C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century: Daily Life, Customs, and Learning. The Muslims of the East-Indian Archipelago*, trans. J.H. Monahan (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

20 Kooria, *Cosmopolis of Law*.

and therefore, peripheralness becomes a common feature of Islamic law in the Indian Ocean world.²¹

Islam formed in the peripheral locations of the Indian Ocean has its own distinctive features and is different from that in the Arab-Islamic world. This particular form of Islam that could be found in Malabar and elsewhere in various littorals of the Indian Ocean has been called “Monsoon Islam.”²² Muslims who lived in monsoon Asia faced numerous challenges owing to their non-Islamic social and political circumstances and hence began producing their own legal interpretations, which were not familiar to the Muslims in the heartland of Islam. With this kind of legal negotiations, the advocates of Monsoon Islam were able to live a social and political life in a non-Muslim context. Along with the existence of a central classical form of Islamic law, Monsoon Asian scholars envisaged developing standard commentaries, sub-texts, and independent legal opinions based on the experiences of local Muslim lives. To some degree, Monsoon Islam is a product of the tension between Islam in distant and local locations.

The Makhdūm clan was one of the Ḥaḍramī religious scholar families in sixteenth-century Malabar, members of which negotiated with the central Islamic world from the local peripheral realities of Monsoon Asia and eventually helped in the development of a typical Monsoon Islam. Prange considered two texts of the prominent Makhdūmi scholar, Zayn al-Dīn al-Makhdūm II (1531–1583), also known as Makhdūm II, *Tuhfat al-mujāhidīn* and *Fath al-muʿīn*. He used the text *Fath al-muʿīn* as a perfect legal textual arbitrator that dealt with the issues related to commerce, marriage, and other aspects of common life. To Prange, this text played a major role in the localization of Islam, often working as a catalyst for a “glocal” Islam. More than any other legal document in sixteenth-century Monsoon Asia, the *Fath al-muʿīn* was central in transoceanic network formations, by which a ground was set for Monsoon Islam to be a distinctive character of Islam in peripheries like Malabar. Through this kind of analysis of the members of the Makhdūm clan and their works, Prange determined Makhdūm II’s indigenization phenomenon as the quintessence of Monsoon Islam’s development in the sixteenth-century Indian Ocean world.

Custom (‘*urf*’) and habit (‘*adat*’) played a supportive role in the formation of Islamic law in the Indian Ocean world. Customs relate “more to actions and practices than to thoughts, ideas, or beliefs,” and they encounter with Islamic law in a friendly, accommodative, or combative manner whenever there are disagreements.²³ In contrast to written laws (*lex scripta*), customary laws are historically considered as unwritten laws (*lex non scripta*), which are well versed in a cultural setting through “oral, flexible, anonymous, old, primitive, folkish, peasant-like, and rural.”²⁴ These customary laws are later inventions in Islamic law, which are relied on mainly to find solutions as per the

21 El Fadl, “Islamic Law and Muslim Minorities,” 141–87.

22 Sebastian R. Prange, *Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast*.

23 Ayman Shabana, *Custom in Islamic Law and Legal Theory: The Development of the Concepts of ‘Urf and ‘Ādah in the Islamic Legal Tradition*, 1st ed, Palgrave Series in Islamic Theology, Law, and History (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

24 Shabana, *Custom in Islamic Law*.

public interest (*maṣlaḥa*) between legal theory (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and substantive law (*furū' al-fiqh*). However, customary laws are an abstract tool in Islamic legal methodology. Although jurists have considered local circumstances such as customs and habits, they often did not bother about such exceptions in many places. The Islamic legal texts produced in the Indian Ocean world had considered local customs and cultural practices in their legal works. The fatwa collection of Makhdūm II, *al-Ajwiba al-'ajība 'an al-as'ilat al-gharība*, is one of such legal works that accommodated the local realities in the Indian Ocean world. Such inclusiveness resulted in the customization of Islamic legal ideas, which also extended to the development of Islamic law in a non-Islamic context.

Almost all the littoral regions around the Indian Ocean were under the control of non-Muslim rulers. In Malabar, until the beginning of the 16th century, there were no Muslim kingdoms; all the Muslims in the region were living under various Hindu rulers. In contrast, Arab Muslims, especially those from the Hijaz, Cairo, Baghdad, and Hadramawt, have been considered Muslims in Islam's heartland owing to their socio-political affiliations under the Caliphate. This particular "Muslim" habitat has been known as the "center" of the Muslim world, while its counterpart, viz. the "non-Muslim" habitat has been labelled as the "periphery" of the Muslim world. There is a dearth of scholarly discourse over the issue of the periphery, barring a few exceptions in recent academic studies by select modern scholars.²⁵

However, the center and periphery division can be analyzed through three lenses: geopolitics, linguistics, and demography. From a geopolitical perspective, the so-called "center" of Islamic law was under the moral universe and normative framework of Sharia. During the 16th century, the Ottomans, Mughals, and Safavids politically dominated most of the Muslim world. To some degree, these empires established their rules and laws according to Islamic norms. It, however, did not mean that they established a perfect caliphate system as envisaged by Islamic law. In contrast, local regions like Malabar, which were far away from the "center," did not have the shadow of such Islamic moral universe and normative framework. Instead, the Muslims in these regions lived under the sovereignty of non-Muslim rulers, in whose realm the dominant public consciousness was different from that at the "center." A linguistics point of view implies the differences in language. In the "center," Muslims used one of the Semitic languages, such as Arabic and Persian, which have a long tradition of producing abundant scholarship in various Islamic sciences. Therefore, there are many familiar idioms that constitute the "Islamic" for communicating with the people in this "center." In the Malabar periphery, Muslims used the languages of the Dravidian linguistic family; however, Islamic scholarship in these languages was very rare even by the 16th century. The demographic lens refers to the number of Muslim populations in these two diverse spaces. In the center, the bulk of the population was Muslim; whereas in the periphery, the majority was non-Muslim. These aforementioned differences have to be taken into consideration while figuring out the Muslim life and Islamic law in Malabar during the 16th century. This is a land-based

25 Kooria, *Cosmopolis of Law*.

categorization, although there is another form of considering the Indian Ocean as a single maritime unit. In Makhdūm II's legal works, there are cases specific to the Malabar region.

The differences in the center and the periphery are reflected in the formation and reformation of legal tools in these two regions; however, they do share many common normative features. Along with Muslim traders, many scholars and Sufis traveled across the Indian Ocean.²⁶ This extensive mobility of scholars and Sufis was subject to new legal forms and orders in the Indian Ocean world. In Michael Pearson's opinion: "The law was the seal of oceanic unity on which the towns thrived."²⁷

There were many encounters between different legal forms in the Indian Ocean world. The legal encounter between the European law and the Islamic law was the focal point of various political disputes after the 16th century in the Indian Ocean world. In addition, along with the Muslim presence, Islamic law has played a significant role in shaping the social life in the Indian Ocean world. While the Arabic language was the *lingua franca* of the ocean, Islamic law provided a regulatory legal framework for various disputes in the oceanic world;²⁸ Islamic maritime law was mainly used to settle various legal disputes in the sea. Muslim jurists applied the custom practice ('*urf*') to engage with maritime law. Early maritime records from the littoral regions of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean such as jurisprudential queries, the Cairo Geniza documents, early travel accounts, navigational literature, international commercial contracts, and diplomatic treaties show the application of custom practices in various maritime legal disputes by Muslim jurists.²⁹

The majority of the Muslims in the Indian Ocean littorals were followers of the Shāfi'ī school of thought. The Muslims in Malabar were known as "Mappilas." They were not a homogeneous community; instead, there were a variety of customs and traditions within the Mappilas. Most of them were either locals who converted to Islam from Hinduism or Arab-Malabar hybrids through marriage.³⁰ Islam in the Indian Ocean had exchanges with Islam in Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, and Baghdad in contrast to Islam as practiced by Hanafi Muslims under Turco-Persian rule.³¹ The flourishing of texts and scholars in the Shāfi'ī school also vindicates the school's dominance in the Indian Ocean world.³² However, the Shāfi'ī law of the Indian Ocean world has its own indigenous features in contrast to the Shāfi'ī law practiced in the heartland of Islam. The formation of the Shāfi'ī law in the Indian Ocean world is more or less closely associated with the various exchanges and

26 Anne K Bang, *Sufis and Scholars of the Sea: Family Networks in East Africa, 1860-1925*, 2005; Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean*, The California World History Library 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

27 Pearson, *The Indian Ocean*.

28 Alpers, *The Indian Ocean in World History*.

29 Khalilieh, *Islamic Maritime Law: An Introduction*.

30 Sebastian R. Prange, *Monsoon Islam: Trade and Faith on the Medieval Malabar Coast*.

31 Stephen Dale, *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

32 Kooria, *Cosmopolis of Law*.

encounters with the local practices in peripheral regions. Such a diverse form of Islam in littoral regions has been shaped by legal encounters at different times. The law was also not formed in a single moment and developed over centuries of exchanges and encounters. The spread of Islamic law across the Indian Ocean world was mainly through trade and empire. The exchanges of ideas and people along with commodities made this dissemination easy.³³ In a nutshell, Islamic law is one of the legal forms in the Indian Ocean world, which acted as a creative arbitrator in multiple complexities.

CONCLUSION

The experiences of Islamic law in the littorals of the Indian Ocean are different from those in the central Islamic heartland in the Arab-Islamic world. Islamic law in the Indian Ocean world is related to the question of Muslim life in non-Muslim contexts. This is because the majority of Muslims living in the coastal regions of the Indian Ocean were the under periphery status owing to their numbers as well as socio-political status. Therefore, they were compelled to follow certain customs as part of local traditions and dominant cultures, which could not be entirely appropriated with the so-called Islamic normativity.

In the case of Malabar, Muslim political affiliation was based on Hindu rule; hence, cultural forms including dress, language, and food were affiliated to the customs followed by the majority of non-Muslim followers. Such a distinctive feature was not similar to the social and political context of Islam in the Arab-Islamic world. Most of the heartlands of Islam came under the Caliphate umbrella; however, some of the Indian Ocean Muslims were out of this particular political affiliation. Therefore, a direct translation of Islamic law was impossible in the Indian Ocean Islam. Scholars and Sufis considered the dilemma of living as a Muslim in a non-Muslim socio-political context, and therefore, started to reproduce Islamic law within the Islamic normative framework developed in the heartland of Islam. These newly developed laws were slightly different or in a different form from the Islamic law as developed in the Arab-Islamic world. However, the shaping of Islamic law in the Indian Ocean world was based on the consistent intellectual and spiritual interactions with the people and ideas of the Muslims and Islam in the heartland of Islam. Thus, these laws were not new, but “recycled” models of the law that was redefined with the support of Islamic normativity. That is why Muslim scholars in the Indian Ocean region regularly connected with Islamic scholarship in the Arab-Islamic world.

The connections, communications, and encounters between the scholarship in the Arab-Islamic world and the littorals of the Indian Ocean led to the development of Islamic law in the Indian Ocean world. The legal texts from this region explicitly show such rich legal conversations between Islam in a non-Muslim context and Islam in the heartland or legal encounters between the central Islamic estate and the local periphery. The Indian Ocean world formed a unique space for the convergence of these two entities.

33 Fahad Ahmad Bishara, *A Sea of Debt: Law and Economic Life in the Western Indian Ocean, 1780-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

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العنف الأسري في بعده الاجتماعي والفقه- النوازل والمستجدات

أحمد محمود عبد القادر

الملخص

يُعتبر العنف الأسري إحدى أبرز الظواهر الاجتماعية تعقيداً وخطورة وانتشاراً، نظراً لتعدد أشكاله وانعكاس آثاره على كيان الأسرة وبنية المجتمعات. وللحاجة إلى بحث أخطار ظاهرة العنف الأسري في ظل تناميها في المجتمعات الإسلامية كسلوك عام، وكنتيجة لتداعيات وباء كورونا، جاء هذا البحث لتحري مفهوم العنف الأسري، والوقوف على أسبابه ودوافعه، وبيان موقف الشريعة الإسلامية منه استناداً إلى المنظور الشرعي والاجتماعي لعلاج، موظفاً في ذلك المنهج الوصفي الذي يصف الظاهرة ويحدد أشكالها، والمنهج الاستنباطي للوصول إلى مقارنة علاجية لهذه الظاهرة.

جاء البحث مؤلفاً من مقدمة وثلاثة مطالب وخاتمة؛ حرصت في المقدمة على توفر أركانها جميعاً، من مشكلة وأهمية وأهداف ومنهج وخطة للبحث، ثم تطرقت في المطلب الأول إلى تثبيت الظاهرة كمفهوم وأنواع وأسباب ومشكلات اجتماعية، وبيئت في المطلب الثاني موقف الشريعة من العنف الأسري من خلال دراسة مقاصد تكوين الأسرة والحكم المترتب على ضرب الولد والزوجة. أما المطلب الأخير فاستعرضت فيه بعضاً من مقترحات علاجية فقهية واجتماعية. وختمت البحث بذكر أهم ما توصلت إليه

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<https://www.hbku.edu.qa/sites/default/files/shariadomesticviolence.pdf>

من نتائج، وهي: أنَّ العنف الأسريّ من الظواهر المعقّدة التي يصعب علاجها، لتعدد أسبابها، وممارستها - في الغالب - بعيدًا عن أعين الناس، وصمّت غالبية الضحايا، إمّا خوفًا من الفضيحة، أو لاعتقاد خاطئ في فهم العنف الأسريّ. كما أنَّ علاج ظاهرة العنف الأسريّ يتوقف على تحديد أسبابها، وتجفيف منابعها، لأنَّ الأسباب تتعدد وتختلف بحسب البلد والبيئة الاجتماعية، فتختلف - بالتالي - طرق العلاج. ومن أهمّ الحلول المقترحة: تطبيق تعاليم الإسلام وممارسته في الحياة الأسريّة، بدءًا من اختيار شريك الحياة، وآداب التعامل معه، وإيفاء كلّ فرد من أفراد الأسرة حقّه، وتوضيح مقصد تكوين الأسرة للمتزوجين وللمُقبلين على الزواج، وتدريبهم على إدارة شؤون الأسرة والقدرة على التعامل مع الواقع الأسري ومتطلباته.

كلمات مفتاحية: العنف الأسري، الشريعة، البعد الاجتماعي

ABSTRACT

Domestic violence in its social and Islamic jurisprudence dimensions

Ahmed Mohamud Abdikadir

Domestic violence is considered as one of the most complex, dangerous, and widespread social phenomena due to its various forms and how it effects the family and society structure. This research was performed due to the need to examine the dangers of domestic violence which has increased in Islamic societies, especially as a repercussion of the Covid-19 pandemic. This paper defines the concept of domestic violence, investigates its causes and motives, clarifies the related opinion of Islamic law, and finally suggests a remedial approach to domestic violence based on the Islamic, legal and social perspectives. The study employed a descriptive approach to describe the phenomenon and to identify the forms of this phenomenon. This paper: 1) examined the concept of domestic violence, causes, and types, 2) clarified the Islamic legal opinion of domestic violence by examining the purposes of family formation and the ruling of beating the child and the wife, 3) presented and suggested some fiqhi and social solutions. Finally, the study concluded that domestic violence is complex and difficult to treat due to multiple reasons, often because it is practiced behind the scenes and because the victims of domestic violence, generally, keep silent either out of fear of scandal or for the misconception about understanding domestic violence. Solutions to stop domestic violence depend on identifying its causes thoroughly as the causes are many and vary from a country to another. The most important solution is educating and practicing Islam teachings in the family life: starting with choosing a life partner, the etiquette of dealing with husband/wife, fulfilling the rights of each family member, and educating couples who are getting married about the purpose of forming a family and how to deal with family matters.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Sharia , society, jurisprudence

إنَّ العنف الأسري ظاهرة موهلة في القِدم منذ الأسرة الأولى - أسرة آدم - عندما قتل أحد الأخوين الآخر، وظلَّ صراعًا منتشرًا بين المجتمعات بدرجات متفاوتة تخضع للعادات والأعراف والثقافات البيئية.

وإذا كان العنف وسيلة يستخدمها المعنّف للسيطرة على الآخرين كي يطيعوه، ويحقق مصالحه منهم، فإنَّ أكثر من يتعرض له داخل الأسرة في الغالب هم الفئة الضعيفة كالزوجة، والأطفال، والمسنّين، والمُعاقين. فالعنف الأسري ظاهرة خطيرة تشتكي منها كلّ المجتمعات، وتحذّر ممارستها كل الشرائع والأنظمة، لما تفرزه من الآثار السيئة والتفكك الأسري الذي يهدد أمن المجتمعات والدول، لذا باتت ظاهرة العنف الأسري ملفتة لأنظار الشرعيين والاجتماعيين والتربويين والقانونيين والحقوقيين لدراسة مصادرها ومنابعها وأشكالها، وإيجاد الحلول المناسبة لمعالجتها والحدّ من انتشارها.

وإذا كان العنف الأسري سلوكًا يمسّ بنيان الأسرة وكيانها، ويؤدي إلى خللها وتفكّكها على نحو يهدّد سلامة المجتمع، فإنَّ الإسلام أولى الأسرة عناية تضمن لها القيام على أسس قوية سليمة تقوّي أواصر العلاقات بين أفرادها، وتكفّل لها الحماية من الخلل والتفكّك؛ فصالح المجتمع وسلامته من الخلل والفساد والتفكك يعتمدان على دور الأسرة التربوي صلاحًا وفسادًا، لأنها أول مسؤول عن تزويد الأمة بفرد صالح، وإعداد جيل سليم، فإذا استقامت أحوالها استقام المجتمع، وإذا خربت أحوالها وساءت فسد المجتمع لفساد أهم أركانه.

إنَّ العنف الأسري مخالف لتعاليم الإسلام وآدابه التي بيّنت كيفية تعايش أفراد الأسرة وتناغمها وتبادل الاحترام بينها، وهو انتهاك سافر لكرامة الإنسان.

إشكالية البحث

ظاهرة العنف الأسري من المشكلات الاجتماعية العصرية المعقدة، ولها تأثير ملموس في المجتمعات بصورة عامة، لأنها تمسّ كرامة الإنسان وحرّيته، وتقوم على ظلم الإنسان لأخيه. وقد اتجهت أنظار الباحثين ومنظمات حقوق الإنسان إلى إعداد البحوث التي تساهم في تعميق فهم المشكلة من خلال الدراسات التحليلية الاجتماعية والتربوية، لإيجاد حلول واقعية معقولة للمشكلة في شتّى البلدان. ورغم تلك الدراسات والبحوث التي أُعدّت حولها، فإنّها تزداد يوميًا بعد يوم، ما يجعلها تشكّل خطرًا على المجتمعات الإنسانية، ويستدعي بحثها من جوانب أخرى، ويتطلب تحركًا علميًا نحوها لمنع انتشارها وتقليل آثارها. وتتلخص مشكلة البحث في كون العنف الأسري ظاهرة اجتماعية تختلف أسبابها من وجهة نظر الباحثين، حيث يرى بعض الباحثين أنّ من أسباب العنف الأسري أن تُضرب الزوجة والأولاد ضربًا تأديبيًا، بينما يرى فريق آخر من الباحثين أنّ هذا الضرب من معالجات العنف الأسري. وهذا ما دعانا إلى اختيار بحثها من خلال تناول موقف الشريعة الإسلامية من العنف الأسري، ورعايتها الأسرة بالنظر إلى الممارسة السلوكية، لتقديم المقترحات الأنسب لحلها على نحو شامل.

وعلى هذا تتمثل إشكالية البحث في الإجابة عن الأسئلة الآتية:

1. ما مفهوم العنف الأسري لدى الشرعيين والاجتماعيين؟ وما مظاهره؟

2. ما علاج ظاهرة العنف الأسريّ فقهيًا واجتماعيًا؟
3. كيف يُستفاد من التجارب الدولية في معالجة سلوك العنف الأسريّ في بلدانها؟ وما موقع التجربة القطريّة منها؟ وما تجلياتها؟

أهمية البحث

تكمن أهمية البحث في دراسته للعنف الأسريّ بوصفه ظاهرة معقدة لها أبعاد متعددة. ورغم وجود جذور الأسس السليمة في بناء الأسرة في الإسلام وآدابها، فإنّ كثيرًا من أولياء الأمور لا يراعون تلك الآداب الشرعية، ما أدى إلى انتشار هذه الظاهرة في المجتمعات الإسلامية، إذ أصبحت الأسرة هدفًا لعوامل التفكك والتدمير نتيجة عدم مراعاة القيم الإسلامية تجاهها. ويقدم البحث حلولًا ناجعة متوازنة من الناحيتين الفقهية والاجتماعية.

أهداف البحث

- محاولة إبراز أسباب المشكلة، وطرح الرؤية الملائمة لمعالجتها، انطلاقًا من أنّ الحلّ الأمثل يأتي من العمل على التركيز في الجانب التربوي، ومراعاة آداب التعامل بين أفراد الأسرة، وإنزال كلّ شخص منزلته فيها.
- إبراز مخاطر العنف الأسريّ وآثاره السلبية على المجتمع، واستهدافه كيان الأسرة التي تُعدّ الخلية الأولى للمجتمع التي يتوقف صلاح المجتمع وسلامته على صلاحها وسلامتها من القلاقل والاضطرابات التي تسبب الخلل والتفكّك.
- دراسة الظاهرة من جوانبها المختلفة الاجتماعية والفقهية، وبيان الآثار المترتبة عنها، والأحكام الفقهية المرتبطة بها، لتقديم العلاج المناسب لها.

منهج البحث

سيعتمد البحث على المنهج الوصفي الذي يقوم بوصف ظاهرة العنف الأسريّ واستقراء أشكالها، والمنهج التحليلي الذي يركّز على تحليل أسباب العنف الأسريّ والآثار المترتبة عنه، ثم المنهج الاستنباطي للوصول إلى مقترحات شرعية واجتماعية لمعالجة العنف الأسريّ.

الدراسات السابقة

يُعدّ العنف الأسريّ من أخطر السلوكيات التي تهدم البيوت وتفتت المجتمعات وتخرم بنائها. وبما أنّ العنف الأسريّ من أكثر الظواهر الاجتماعية انتشارًا في المجتمعات، تناول بعض الدراسات ظاهرة العنف الأسريّ من الناحية الاجتماعية مهملةً الجانب الشرعي، في حين تناولت دراسات أخرى الجانب الشرعي وأهملت الجانب الاجتماعي؛ فمن الدراسات التي تناولت الجانب الشرعي:

- «العنف الأسريّ دوافعه وآثاره وعلاجه من منظور تربوي إسلامي 2005م» لمحمد بن عبد السلام سليمان العرود، وهي رسالة ماجستير مقدمة إلى كلية الشريعة والدراسات الإسلامية في جامعة

اليرموك الأردنية. وقد تناول الباحث فيها مفهوم العنف وأنواعه وأشكاله ودوافعه وآثاره ثم تناول علاج العنف من منظور إسلامي. وتفتقر أطروحتي عن هذه الرسالة في أنها تضيف الجانب الاجتماعي، وتُعَرِّج على الجهود الدولية والمحلية لعلاج العنف الأسري.

- «العنف الأسري: صوره وأحكامه دراسة مقارنة 2017» لنادية جواد كاظم، وهي رسالة ماجستير مقدمة لكلية الفقه في جامعة الكوفة (العراق). وقد تناول الباحث فيها المفاهيم المرتبطة بالعنف، ثم عرَّج على الحقوق الأسرية، وتعرَّض بعد ذلك إلى أسباب العنف وصوره، ثم تناول في آخر البحث الآثار الاجتماعية المرتبطة بالعنف الأسري. ويختلف بحثي عن هذا البحث في أنه يتناول الجانب الاجتماعي بشكل مُوسَّع، مع بيان سبل العلاج الاجتماعية، وذكر الجهود الدولية والمحلية لمكافحة العنف الأسري.

وأما الدراسات التي تناولت العنف واقتصرت على الناحية الاجتماعية مهملة الجانب الشرعي، فنذكر منها ما يأتي:

- «التماسك الأسري وعلاقته بالعنف ضد المرأة 2015» لنجمة إسماعيل الفارس، وهي رسالة ماجستير مقدمة لكلية الدراسات العليا بالجامعة الأردنية. وتنقسم هذه الرسالة إلى قسمين: قسم نظري اقتصرت فيه الباحثة على الجانب الاجتماعي فقط، وقسم عملي قامت فيه الباحثة بدراسة حالة وتحليلها، ثم توصلت إلى بعض النتائج. وتفتقر هذه الرسالة عن أطروحتي في أنَّ رسالتي قامت على التجسير بين علم الشريعة وعلم الاجتماع، دون أن تتطرق إلى دراسة أي حالة.
- «العنف الأسري ضد الزوجة في المجتمع الليبي 2014»: دراسة حالة لبعض النساء المتزوجات في مدينة الزاوية، إلهام العجيلي أحمد الجديدي، وهي رسالة مقدمة للحصول على درجة الدكتوراه من كلية الدراسات العليا بجامعة النيلين في السودان. وقد تناولت الباحثة فيه المفاهيم المتعلقة بالعنف، ثمَّ عرَّجت على دراسة بعض الحالات، فيما يشمل بحثي على الجانب النظري من حيث المستويين الشرعي والاجتماعي، ويفتقر عن هذا البحث أيضًا بذكر الجهود المبذولة من قبل دولة قطر والجهود الدولية.
- «العنف الأسري بين المواثيق الدولية والشريعة الإسلامية 2014» أحمد عبد الوهاب عبد الله المعايطة، وهي رسالة دكتوراه مقدمة لكلية الدراسات العليا بجامعة العلوم الإسلامية العالمية في المملكة الأردنية. ويمتاز هذا البحث بذكر الجانب القانوني مقارنةً بالجانب الشرعي، ويفتقر بحثي عن هذه الرسالة في النظر إلى الجانب الاجتماعي ودوره في معالجة العنف الأسري.

خطة البحث

- مقدمة: تناولت مشكلة البحث وأسئلته وأهميته، وأهدافه، ومنهجه، وهيكله.
- المطلب الأول: المفهوم والأشكال والأسباب والآثار - الفرع الأول: مفهوم العنف الأسري وأشكاله. الفرع الثاني: أسباب العنف الأسري. الفرع الثالث: آثار العنف الأسري.
- المطلب الثاني: موقف الشريعة من العنف الأسري - الفرع الأول: مقاصد الشريعة في تكوين الأسرة. الفرع الثاني: حكم العنف الأسري.

- **المطلب الثالث: علاج العنف الأسري-** الفرع الأول: علاج العنف الأسري من المنظور الشرعي.
- الفرع الثاني: علاجه من المنظور الاجتماعي
- **الخاتمة: أهم النتائج والتوصيات.**

المطلب الأول: مفهوم العنف الأسري، وأشكاله وأسبابه وآثاره

انطلاقاً من أن للعنف الأسري مفاهيم متعددة باعتبارات مختلفة، نظرًا إلى تعلّقه بالجانب الاجتماعي والفقه، فإننا نقدم تعريف مفردتيه أولاً، ثم تعريفه المُركَّب كمصطلح له علاقة في مجالات عدة.

الفرع الأول: مفهوم العنف الأسري وأشكاله

أولاً: مفهوم العنف: العنف في كلام العرب: «الخرق بالأمر وقلة الرفق به، وهو ضد الرفق»¹. والتعنيف: «التعبير واللوم»². والعنف لدى الفقهاء هو «معالجة الأمور بالشدة والغلظة»³ أمّا مفهومه الاجتماعي فهو «استعمال غير مشروع لوسائل القسر المادي بغية تحقيق غايات شخصية»⁴. فبمقارنة هذين التعريفين، الفقهي والاجتماعي، يظهر لنا أن تعريف الفقهاء أعمّ وأشمل من تعريف الاجتماعيين الذي يحصر «العنف» باستخدام القوة المادية، بينما يشمل التعريف الفقهي ما هو أوسع من ذلك كسوء الأدب، والجفاء مع الآخرين، والتلفّظ نحوهم بكلمات نابية، وغير ذلك ممّا يدل على محاربة الإسلام معاملة القسوة والشدة في جميع الحالات.

ثانياً: مفهوم الأسرة: الأسرة لغّة: «عشيرة الرجل وأهل بيته»، وتأتي بمعنى: «الدّرع الحصينة»⁵. وكلا المعنيين مترابطان في الدلالة على أن الرجل يتقوّى بقرابته، ويشدّ عضده، ويتحصن بحصونها. والأسرة هي مؤسسة اجتماعية يكونها رجل وامرأة بعقد شرعي يهدف إلى إنشاء الخلية الأولى التي تساهم في بناء المجتمع.

ثالثاً: تعريف العنف الأسري: بعد أن تمّ لنا تعريف المفردتين، يمكن لنا أن نعرّف العنف الأسري كمصطلح

- 1 ابن منظور، محمد بن مكرم بن علي، أبو الفضل، جمال الدين ابن منظور الأنصاري الرويعي الإفريقي (ت 711هـ) لسان العرب، الحواشي: لليازجي وجماعة من اللغويين، دار صادر - بيروت، ط3، 1414 هـ (9/ 257).
- 2 زين الدين أبو عبد الله محمد بن أبي بكر بن عبد القادر الحنفي الرازي (ت 666هـ)، مختار الصحاح، تحقيق: يوسف الشيخ محمد، المكتبة العصرية - الدار النموذجية- بيروت، ط5، 1420هـ / 1999م، (ص219).
- 3 محمد رؤاس قلجعي، حامد صادق قنبي، معجم لغة الفقهاء، دار النفائس للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع، ط3، 1408 هـ - 1988 م، (ص323).
- 4 محمد البيومي الراوي بهنسي، العنف الأسري، أسبابه، آثاره، وعلاجه في الفقه الإسلامي، حولية كلية الدراسات الإسلامية والعربية للبنات بالإسكندرية، مج9، ع 32، ص 8، نقلاً عن: العنف ضد المرأة والحماية المقررة لمواجهته في الشريعة الإسلامية د. عيلة عبد العزيز عامر، ص 9.
- 5 لسان العرب، مرجع سابق، (4/ 19-20).

مركب. فالعنف الأسري هو «تصرف مقصود يُلحق الأذى أو الضرر المادي أو المعنوي بأحد أفراد الأسرة، ويكون صادرًا من قبل عضو آخر من نفس الأسرة»⁶.

وقد عرّفت منظمة الصحة العالمية العنف الأسري بأنه «كل سلوك يصدر في إطار علاقة حميمة، ويتسبب أضرارًا أو آلامًا جسمية، أو نفسية، أو جنسية لأطراف تلك العلاقة»⁷.

رابعًا: أشكال العنف الأسري: إنّ للعنف الأسري أشكالًا ومظاهر عديدة باعتباريات مختلفة، فبالنظر إلى الوسيلة المستخدمة مع المُعْتَف يمكن تقسيمه إلى:

- **العنف الجسدي:** وهو كل فعل موجه إلى المُعْتَف بقصد إلحاق الضرر به، ويتم باستخدام القوة مع المُعْتَف، سواء كان ضربًا، أو خنقًا، أو فذقًا، أو تهديدًا، أو غير ذلك من وسائل الشدة والتعنيف، وهو من أشد أشكال العنف الأسري ظهورًا، إذ تبرز آثاره على الضحية⁸.
 - **العنف اللفظي:** ويقصد به الإساءة اللفظية التي تصدر من قبل المُعْتَف ضد المُعْتَف، كالاستهزاء والسخرية والاحتقار والسب والذف، وغير ذلك، مما يدل على تقليل شأن الشخص المُعْتَف.
 - **العنف النفسي:** هو فعل يمسّ عواطف المُعْتَف ومشاعره، مثل الشتم والنعت بألفاظ بذيئة، وممارسة ضغوط نفسية، ما يترك آثارًا نفسية في الشخص، ويزعزع ثقته بنفسه، ويدمر شخصيته داخليًا⁹.
 - **العنف الاجتماعي:** هو فرض حصار على الشخص المُعْتَف من قبل أفراد الأسرة، وتضييق الخناق عليه، ومنعه من الانخراط في الحياة الاجتماعية والتواصل والتفاعل مع المجتمع دون مبرر. وهناك أنواع أخرى من أشكال العنف، كالعنف التعليمي، والعنف الاقتصادي، والعنف الجنسي، والعنف الفكري العقدي السياسي.
- وينقسم العنف باعتبار مَنْ يقع عليه (الضحية) إلى: عنف ضدّ الزوجة، أو العكس، عنف ضدّ الأطفال، سواء كان العنف من قبل الوالدين أو الإخوة الأكبر منهم، وعنف ضدّ الكبار المسنين، وعنف ضدّ الخدم.

الفرع الثاني: أسباب العنف الأسري:

إنّ تحديد أسباب العنف الأسري من أصعب القضايا، لأن الأسباب المجتمعة فيه لا يمكن إرجاعها إلى مصدر واحد ومنشأ متفق عليه، ولأنّ ظاهرة العنف لم تحظْ بالاهتمام والدراسات الشاملة لجميع جوانبها على الرغم من أنّ انتشارها في المجتمعات خطير منذ الأسرة الأولى إلى يومنا.

ونحاول فيما يأتي أن نعرض عددًا من الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى العنف الأسري، ومنها ما يتعلق بالمُعْتَف القائم بالعنف، وما يتعلق بالمُعْتَف الذي يقع عليه العنف.

- 6 البينجوني، سردار رشيد حمة صالح محمد، العنف الأسري والعلاج القرآني، جامعة الملك خالد - كلية الشريعة وأصول الدين، ع16، 2016، ص 69.
- 7 نهى عدنان القاطرجي، العنف الأسري بين الإعلانات الدولية والشريعة الإسلامية، بحث مقدم إلى الدورة التاسعة عشرة لمجمع الفقه الإسلامي الدولي - إمارة الشارقة - 26-4-2009، ص 5.
- 8 حمدان، سعيد بن سعيد ناصر، العنف الأسري ضد المرأة، جامعة طنطا - كلية التربية، ع 4، 2011، ص 12.
- 9 العنف الأسري والعلاج القرآني، مرجع سابق، ص 69.

أولاً: الأسباب المتعلقة بالمعنف

إنَّ الأفعال التي تصدر من بعض الناس الطبيعيين تؤدي إلى السلوك العنفي، حيث تُظهر الدراسات والحقائق أنَّ مرتكبي العنف الأسري هم أفراد عاديون من عامة الناس، وليسوا منتهمين - بالضرورة - إلى فئة مُشوَّهة أو مُختلَّة عقلياً، ولكنَّ أؤكد بعض الباحثين أنَّ عدداً كبيراً من المتهمين بالعنف الأسري لهم تاريخ إجرامي، وذكروا أنَّ 50% من الرجال الذين يضربون زوجاتهم أمضوا وقتاً في السجن، وأنَّ العنف الأسري لدى هؤلاء الأشخاص لم يكن حادثاً، بل كان تقليدياً لأشخاص آخرين.¹⁰ وهذه الأسباب كثيرة، لا يتسع المقام لذكرها جميعاً، ولذلك نكتفي بذكر أهمها وأكثرها تأثيراً، وهي:

- **خطأ فهم بعض النصوص:** يخطئ بعض الناس فهم النصوص الدينية والأحكام الفقهية، ومن ذلك اعتقاد جزء من الرجال بأنَّ من حقهم ضرب الزوجة والولد احتجاجاً بالآية: ﴿وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ﴾ النساء، الآية 34. وحديث: «مُرُوا أولادكم بالصلاة وهم أبناء سبع سنين، واضربوهم عليها وهم أبناء عشر، وفرقوا بينهم في المضاجع».¹¹

وقد نشأ هذا من ضعف الوازع الديني. إذ أظهرت دراسة استقصائية أجرتها الجمعية الوطنية لحقوق الإنسان أنَّ 35% من حالات العنف الأسري سببها ضعف الوازع الديني.¹²

- **الأسباب النفسية:** إنَّ هذه الأسباب تنشأ من شعور انفعالي بعد أن يغمر الشخص الغضب والضغط اليومي الذي يتعرض له، وخصوصاً في عمله، إضافةً إلى حبِّ التملك والغيرة التي هي شعور مختلط بالغضب والعاطفة التي تعاني منها العديد من النساء حول العالم، وتُسمى الغيرة العمياء للرجل الذي يراها علامة على حبه لها، في حين تراها المرأة علامة على الشك وعدم الثقة. هذه هي الأسباب التي تجعل السلوك العدواني منتشرًا للغاية، حيث يفقد القائم بالعنف عقله وتزول إرادته.¹³
- **الأسباب الأسرية:** يؤثر وضع الأسرة بشكل عام على الأولاد، سلباً أو إيجاباً، حسب مستوى الاستقرار الذي تتمتع به الأسرة. ولقد ثبت أنَّ الأسرة من أهم عوامل الضبط الاجتماعي، ولها التأثير الأقوى. والتفكك الأسري هو مجرد نوع من عدم الاستقرار الأسري، مما يحدث نوعاً من الاضطرابات الاجتماعية. وتشمل سلوكيات العنف الأسري نهج الأسرة في التفاعل الاجتماعي، حيث يمكن أن يؤدي إلى رد فعل عنيف من الأولاد ضدَّ والديهم، أو نحو غيرهم إذا غادروا المنزل، والتعامل مع أي شيء يتعرضون له من العنف والغضب الذي قد يؤدي إلى العنف أو إساءة استخدام السلطة الاجتماعية.¹⁴

10 شقلاوب، نوري محمد أحمد، العنف الأسري: الأسباب والآثار وطرق الوقاية، مجلة جيل العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية، ع 5، فبراير 2015، مركز جيل البحث العلمي، ص 117.

11 الألباني، صحيح أبي داود، رقم 495.

12 العنف الأسري مظاهره وأسبابه وعلاجه، مرجع سابق، ص 24.

13 العنف الأسري أسبابه وعلاجه في الفقه الإسلامي، مرجع سابق ص 181.

14 المرواني، نايف محمد، العنف الأسري: دراسة مسحية تحليلية في منطقة المدينة المنورة، المجلة العربية للدراسات الأمنية جامعة نايف العربية للعلوم الأمنية، مج، 16، ع 51، يوليو 2010، ص 97-98.

• **الفقر:** قد تؤثر المشاكل المالية للأسرة والفقر والمعاناة التي تعاني منها في ظهور الخلافات داخل أفراد الأسرة، ما يؤدي إلى العنف الأسري. فهذه المشكلات الاقتصادية التي لا يستطيع رب الأسرة سدها تدفعه أحياناً إلى أسلوب العنف تجاه أسرته للتنفيس عن مشاعر الخيبة ومعاناة الفقر الذي ينعكس في سلوك الأب العنيف تجاه الأسرة؛ فعوامل الضغط كالبطالة والديون تزيد من إحساسه بالعجز والضعف، وتأثير الفقر على شخصية الفرد لا يظهر إلا باستمراره فترة طويلة؛ فإن تواترت الضغوط النفسية، واستمر الفقر عليه وعلى ذريته لمدة طويلة، ولم يكن لديه تعليم ديني وأخلاقي، فغالباً ما يتحول إلى سلوك العنف إزاء أسرته، لأن الإنسان الذي يحظى بقدر من التربية الدينية والأخلاقية لا يلجأ إلى استخدام العنف¹⁵.

• **الثقافات وعادات المجتمع ونظرية الحضارات:** إن المجتمع الذي ترى عاداته وثقافته في استعمال العنف حقاً للآباء والأمهات لتربية الأولاد يبرر العنف إذا تعلق بذلك الحق، وبإمكان الوالدين إذاً أن يفعلوا كل ما يريدان من أجل تربية الأولاد. ووجود هذه النظرية في أوساط المجتمع يسمح للوالدين بأن يستخدموا العنف دون شعور منهما بما يرتكبانه من إساءة، بل بالعكس، تُعتبر بعض هذه السلوكيات لدى هذا المجتمع من قيم الشرف والمكانة لاستخدامها كأمر حتمي. وهذا نشأ عن فهم خاطئ لحق الراعي في تربية رعيته؛ فأكثر العنف الأسري يقع تحت ستار التأديب وتحمل المسؤولية عن سياسة الزوجة والأطفال. وهذا العذر لا معنى له، لكنه يُستخدم كوسيلة لإحكام سيطرة رب الأسرة على أفراد أسرته، مع ما يشوبه من الانتقام الخالص عند هيجان الغضب.¹⁶ ومن ذلك اعتقاد بعض المجتمعات أن ضرب الزوجة إصلاح، فهو يثبت رجولته، ويفرض كرامته، ويجعل زوجته مطيعة ومحترمة له، وخاضعة لأوامره. وهناك أسباب أخرى تأتي من المعنف يمكن ذكرها مثل: الانحرافات الدينية والأخلاقية كشرب الخمر واستعمال المخدرات، وتأثير وسائل الإعلام، والتأثر بالأفلام العنيفة، وغياب أسلوب الإقناع والحوار والتشاور بين أفراد الأسرة، وعدم مراعاة الفروق والتناسب بين الزوجين عند الاختيار. وكل هذه الأسباب التي ذكرنا تدخل تحت باب واحد هو عدم قدرة رب الأسرة على إدارة شؤونها، وعدم فهم التعامل مع أوضاعها، وقيادتها نحو الطريق الصحيح الذي يحفظ كيانه، ويحميها من عوامل الهدم والتفكك.

ثانياً: الأسباب المتعلقة بالمعنف

لعل بعض التصرفات الخاطئة التي تصدر من قبل المعنف تكون سبباً للعنف داخل الأسرة، ومنها ما يلي:

• **التقليل من شأن المعنف وجعله متدنياً أمام الآخرين،** مما يؤدي به إلى الانتقام بالعنف، ويدفعه أحياناً إلى مهاجمة من يحقره بشدة، رداً للإهانة عن نفسه، واستعادةً لكرامته في هذا الموقف؛

15 العنف الأسري: الأسباب والآثار وطرق الوقاية، مرجع سابق، ص 118.

16 الطبري، أحلام حمود، العنف الأسري مظاهره أسبابه علاجه، وزارة الأوقاف والشؤون الإسلامية - دولة الكويت، ط1، 2015، ص 22.

وغالبًا ما تصدر تلك النماذج عن بعض الزوجات تجاه أزواجهن، أو عن الأولاد تجاه والديهم، أو الأخ الصغير تجاه أخيه الأكبر أمام الأصدقاء.

- رفض الزوجة المعاشرة الزوجية عندما يطلبها الزوج دون الإفصاح عن السبب، سواء كان تعبًا يُثقل قدرتها الجسدية، أو كان مرضًا أو غير ذلك؛ فهذا الامتناع إن استمرَّ يقود الرجل إلى إبعاد زوجته، واستخدام سلوك العنف تجاهها، وربما يصل أحيانًا إلى الطلاق.
- قبول المعتنف بالعنف الذي يمارس ضده، ما يشجع القائم بالعنف على مواصلته إلى أن يجد مقاومة من قبل الضحية.
- الانخداع بالمذاهب والنظريات الغربية التي تُدعى نظريات تحرر المرأة، وتدافع عن حقوق النساء كما تُدعى، والتي ترى أنَّ الزوجة بعنادها تثبت هويتها واستقلاليتها. وقد تأثرت بعض النساء بهذه الدعوات، وحاولن تطبيقها داخل أسرهنَّ، وهو ما يؤدي أحيانًا إلى إهمال الزوجة لبعض الواجبات الزوجية، أو الشعور بمساواة الزوج. ولذلك أصبحَ عرضة لمواقف العنف الأسري من قبل أزواجهن؛ فهذا الانخداع بتلك النظريات ينشئ جهلاً أو انحرافاً عن المنهج الصحيح الذي بيّن واجبات كلٍّ من الزوجين على نحو منظم عادل.¹⁷

الفرع الثالث: آثار العنف الأسري

إنَّ العنف الأسري أمر غير مرغوب ومذموم شرعياً، واجتماعياً، وتأتي منه شرور كثيرة، كما تنتج عنه آثار سيئة. وقد جاء حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إِنَّ الرِّقَّ لَا يَكُونُ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا زَانَهُ، وَلَا يُنْزَعُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا شَانَهُ».¹⁸ وللعنف الأسري آثار جسيمة تؤدي إلى انحراف الأسرة عن وظائفها الأصلية، وابتعادها عن القيم المثلى؛ فمن الآثار التي تترتب عنه على سبيل المثال:

- تشعر ضحية العنف الأسري بالخوف وانعدام الأمن والدعر والضييق النفسي والضعف الشخصي، والتخلف العقلي، وغالبًا ما يكون الشخص الضحية غير راضٍ عن أشياء مثل الأكل والشرب، ويؤثر ذلك على نومه، وقد يرى رؤية مخيفة يمكن أن تؤدي إلى ظهور أمراض نفسية، أو سلوك عنيف أو إجرامي. وهذه الظروف القاسية لا تسمح لمن هم في هذه الحالة أن يكونوا سعداء، ولا تساعد على أن يكونوا أشخاصًا يتمتعون بصحة جيدة، وتحرمهم من أن يكونوا أعضاء نشطين يساعدون في بناء أسرة جيدة.
- التفكك الأسري: إنَّ تفكك الأسرة من أخطر الأمراض الاجتماعية التي تؤثر على المجتمع وتعوق تطوره وتحقيق أهدافه، وهو ما قد يؤدي إلى الانهيار الاجتماعي والدمار. ومن أشكال التفكك الأسري انهيار الأسرة، والطلاق، وقطع الصلات بين أفرادها. وبتفكك الأسرة ينهدم بناء الفرد أولاً، وينهار المجتمع ثانيًا.
- ظهور الكراهية والاشمئزاز والحسد، إذ نجد المعتدى عليه يكره الجاني ويبغضه، وربما قد يحاول التخلص منه في مرحلة ما، لأن الطبيعة الجبلية ترفض الإساءة والتعدي.

17 العنف الأسري أسبابه وآثاره، مرجع سابق، ص 186.

18 صحيح مسلم، رقم: 2594.

- محاولة الهروب من المنزل أو الانتحار: هناك مواقف صعبة يحاول فيها الضحية الهروب من الواقع المؤلم المتمثل في العيش تحت العنف والظلم، فيحاول الهروب ومغادرة المنزل والذهاب إلى مكان ما، أو الانضمام إلى التنظيمات الإجرامية، ويفكر بعض ضحايا العنف في الانتحار بالاختناق، أو القتل، أو الحرق، أو الغرق، أو ما شابه؛ وكل هذه الأمور ليست مجرد حالة استياء، بل هي قضايا خطيرة في غايتها.
- يساهم العنف الأسري في الانحرافات الأخلاقية والسلوك والشذوذ والعنف في السلوك الإنساني عند الأطفال والكبار، ويؤدي إلى خروج الشخص عن النهج الصحيح، والتوجه إلى تعاطي المخدرات، والسَّرقة والكذب والخداع والتمرد، وعدم احترام الكبار. وتُعَدُّ هذه الآثار الأكثر خطورة والأكثر ضرراً على الأسرة والمجتمع، لانتهاكها القيم الأخلاقية للمجتمع، ودورها في انتشار الرذائل فيه.
- تؤثر مشاكل العنف على عقل الشخص وأفكاره وتصوّراته، وتعطل تفكيره، وتعوق وعيه، وتنعكس سلباً على الإنجازات العلمية والثقافية، ويمكن أن تسبب في تسرّب الطالب من المدرسة، أو الفشل في السنوات القادمة، فيفشل في بناء مستقبله، ولا يكون عضواً فاعلاً في مجتمعه، بل قد يصبح عبئاً على عائلته، ويهدد بالنتيجة كيان الأسرة والمجتمع.¹⁹

المطلب الثاني: موقف الشريعة من العنف الأسري

تميّز الإسلام بتحقيق العدل والبسر والتسامح، ومراعاة مصالح الناس، والدعوة إلى اللطف والرحمة والإحسان في كل شيء. وأولى الإسلام الأسرة عناية فائقة، وسلّط الضوء على بيان الأحكام والآداب المتعلقة بإنشاء أسرة قوية متماسكة سليمة، وحدّد المقاصد الأساسية للأسرة في تكوينها، وركّز على أهمية الدور الذي يلعبه كيانها ووجودها وحمايتها في المجتمع، مع تمكينها من أداء الأدوار المنوطة بها، كما حذّر ممّا يتعارض مع تعاليم الإسلام السمحة وقيمه العليا، من سلوك عدواني واستعمال للقوة ضدّ الأسرة أو غيرها. وممّا لا يُختلف فيه كون العنف الأسري سلوكاً عدوانياً، وفاحشة عظيمة تتنافى مع روح الإسلام، ومثله السامية، ومقاصده في تكوين الأسرة، لتؤدّي الوظائف المُكلّفة بها، وتحقق المقصود منها لتسود المحبة والمودة والوئام بين أفرادها. وعلى هذا نركز بيان مقاصد الشريعة في تكوين الأسرة، والحكم الفقهي للعنف الأسري في الفرعين الآتيين:

الفرع الأول: مقاصد الشريعة في تكوين الأسرة

إنّ الشريعة الإسلامية أولت تكوين الأسرة عناية فائقة، وربطت بها مقاصد نبيلة وغايات سامية وحكم عظيمة، تضمن لها الاستقرار، وتعيد لها النفع في حياة أفرادها والمجتمع في الدارين إذا روعيت تلك المقاصد في تكوينها، أمّا إذا أهملت تلك المقاصد والغايات فسوف تتعطل الحياة الأسرية، وتتفاقم المشاكل الأسرية والاجتماعية بقدر ما غاب من المقاصد والحكم؛ ولا يمكن معالجة هذه المشاكل إلّا

19 العنف الأسري والعلاج القرآني، مرجع سابق، ص 74-75.

من خلال إعادة الحياة إلى مسارها الصحيح، عن طريق مراعاة تلك المقاصد.²⁰ ويمكن لنا أن نذكر أهم مقاصد الأسرة فيما يأتي:

- **مقصد حفظ النسل:** إنَّ من أهم مقاصد تكوين الأسرة حفظ النسل، وإبقاء النوع البشري، إيجاداً وإبقاءً. وقد نصت نصوص القرآن والسنة على أنَّ الغرض الأصلي من الزواج هو حماية النسل وحفظ النوع الإنساني، كما اتَّفَق العلماء على أن المحافظة على النسل من الضروريات الخمسة التي نصَّت الشريعة على حفظها.²¹

ولذا رغبت الشريعة في الزواج، وأكَّدت أنه ليس في الإسلام التبتل والرغبة عن الزواج، قال تعالى: ﴿فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ﴾، النساء، الآية: 3، وقال أيضاً: ﴿وَاللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ﴾، النحل، آية: 72. ووصف النبي صلى عليه وسلم الزوجة التي ينبغي أن يُتَزَوَّجَ بها بصفات حائِثاً على تكثير النسل، فقال: «تَزَوَّجُوا الْوُلُودَ الْوُدُودَ، فَإِنِّي مَكَاثِرٌ بِكُمْ»،²² وقال: «تُنَكِّحُ الْمَرْأَةَ لِأَرْبَعٍ: لِمَالِهَا وَلِحَسْبِهَا وَجَمَالِهَا وَلِدِينِهَا، فَاطْفَرُ يَدَاتِ الدِّينِ، تَرَبَّتْ يَدَاكَ»،²³ كما ذُكِرَ بالصفات المطلوبة من الزوج في حديث «إِذَا جَاءَكُمْ مِنْ تَرْصُونِ دِينَهُ وَخُلُقَهُ فَأَنْكِحُوهُ، إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوا تَكُنْ فِتْنَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ وَقَسَادًا».²⁴ فهذه الأدلة من الآيات والأحاديث تدلُّ على التَّغْيِبِ بالمقصود الأصلي من الزواج، والإرشاد بالسمات المطلوبة لمن يقوم بالزواج ليتحقق المقصود منه، وتقوم الحياة الزوجية على أركانها الإنسانية التي تسودها المعاملة الطيبة، والعشرة الحسنة، وتؤثر تأثيراً فعَّالاً في إصلاح أعقابها، وتسلم من العنف.

وإذا كان حفظ النسل هو المقصود الأصلي في تكوين الأسرة، فإنَّ هناك مقاصد أخرى لتكوين الأسرة تابعة ومكمِّلة له، وهي:

- **مقصد التحصين والإعفاف وحفظ الأنساب:** من مقاصد الزواج الذي هو السبيل الوحيد لتكوين الأسرة في الإسلام تحصين الإنسان، وغيض بصره عن الرؤية الحرام، وحفظ فرجه من الفاحشة،

20 ناصر عيسى أحمد البلوشي (باحث رئيسي)، وأمين أحمد عبد الله قاسم النهاري ورضوان بن أحمد (مشاركين)، مقاصد تكوين الأسرة في الشريعة الإسلامية: دراسة تأصيلية، مجلة القلم، ع 14، سبتمبر 2019م، ص 120.

21 يوسف حامد العالم، المقاصد العامة للشريعة الإسلامية، المعهد العالمي للفكر الإسلامي - الدار العالمية للكتاب الإسلامي، ط 1، 1994، ص 405.

22 النسائي أبو عبد الرحمن أحمد بن شعيب بن علي الخراساني، (ت 303هـ)، السنن الكبرى، حققه وخرَّج أحاديثه: حسن عبد المنعم شلبي، أشرف عليه: شعيب الأرنؤوط، قدم له: عبد الله بن عبد المحسن التركي، مؤسسة الرسالة - بيروت، ط 1، 1421 هـ - 2001، (5/ 160).

23 البخاري، أبو عبد الله، محمد بن إسماعيل بن إبراهيم، صحيح البخاري، تحقيق: جماعة من العلماء، الطبعة السلطانية، المطبعة الكبرى الأميرية ببولاق مصر، 1311 هـ (7/ 7)، وصحيح مسلم تحقيق: محمد فؤاد عبد الباقي، دار إحياء الكتب العربية: فيصل عيسى البابي الحلبي - القاهرة (وصوِّرتُها: دار إحياء التراث العربي - بيروت، 1086/2).

24 الترمذي، أبو عيسى محمد بن عيسى (ت 279 هـ)، سنن الترمذي، تحقيق وتعليق وتخريج الأحاديث: بشار عواد معروف، دار الغرب الإسلامي - بيروت، ط 1، 1996 م، (2/ 386).

كما قال الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم: «يَا مَعْشَرَ الشَّبَابِ، مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ الْبَاءَةَ فَلْيَتَزَوَّجْ، فَإِنَّهُ أَغْضُ لِلْبَصْرِ، وَأَخْصَنُ لِلْفَرْجِ»،²⁵ وكذلك أشار إلى أَنَّ الزواج يُحَصِّنُ نصف دين المرء، فليتيق الله في الشطر الآخر.

فالنكاح يساعد على السيطرة على الشهوة، والإبعاد عن قوتها الشريرة ولا يستوي من يجيب طلب الله رغبة في تحصيل الولد ومن يجيب إشباعاً لطلب شهوته، فالشهوة والولد بينهما ارتباط، ولا ينبغي أن يقال: المقصود قضاء الوطر، والولد لازم منها، ولا يقصد لذاته، بل الولد هو المقصود بالفطرة والحكمة، والرغبة باعثة عليه.²⁶

وحفظ الفروج يتضمن الحفاظ على الأنساب، ويحقق الأغراض الاجتماعية والنفسية والصحية التي تجعل النسل قوياً في حد ذاته، وقادراً على البقاء والاستمرار، حيث إنَّ الأنساب المحفوظة تعزز التكامل الاجتماعي، كما تقوِّي انتماء الفرد إلى المجتمع، وثقته واعتزازه به، ولتحقيق هذا المقصد حُرِّمَت الزنا، وزواج المحارم، وكل ما يؤدي إلى اختلاط الأنساب.²⁷

● **مقصد ترويح النفس وتحقيق السكون النفسي والمودة:** من المقاصد المطلوبة التي اعتبرها القرآن في تكوين الأسرة الإيناس وترويح القلب باجتماع الزوجين وملاعبتهما، وتحقيق السكون النفسي، والرحمة والمودة، والاستقرار الأسري، كما قال تعالى: ﴿وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً﴾، الروم، الآية: 21، وقال أيضاً: ﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا﴾، الأعراف، الآية: 189.

فالسكون في اليتين هو الاستقرار النفسي، والمودة والرحمة تعبران عن مدى الاستقرار العاطفي بين الزوجين، ولا يمكن تصور استمرار الحياة الأسرية إلا بحصول السكينة والمودة والرحمة التي تُعتبر أهم وسيلة في تحقيق الهدف الأصلي، وهو حماية النسل وإبقاء النوع البشري.

● **مقصد القيام على تحمل المسؤولية والتعاون على أعباء الحياة:** من مقاصد تكوين الأسرة أن يجاهد الزوج نفسه في رعاية الأسرة، ويقوم بحقوقها، بدءاً من الزوجة وانتهاء إلى الأولاد، وأن يصبر على ما يلاقي من الأذى، ويتحمل مسؤولية تربية الأسرة، وإرشادها إلى الطريق الذي يرضي الرب، ويسعى في كسب الحلال من أجلها،²⁸ لذا يقول الله عز وجل: ﴿الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ﴾، النساء، الآية: 34.

وإذا قرَّرت الآية أَنَّ مسؤولية القوام تكون على عاتق الرجل، فإنَّ على المرأة تحمُّل بعض المسؤوليات تجاه أسرتها، كرعاية الزوج وتربية الأطفال، وتدبير المنزل، وتنظيم شؤونه، ما يدلُّ على تقسيم المسؤوليات بينهما، ويخلق فرص التعاون بينهما في الحياة الأسرية، ويجعلهما

25 صحيح مسلم، مرجع سابق، (2/ 1018).

26 الغزالي، أبو حامد محمد بن محمد الطوسي (ت 505هـ)، إحياء علوم الدين، دار المعرفة - بيروت، بدون طبعة وتاريخ (27/ 2).

27 جميلة قارش، المقاصد الشرعية في الأسرة ودورها في تفعيل قوانين الأسرة في البلاد الإسلامية، المؤتمر الدولي التاسع، ص 1019.

28 المقاصد العامة للشريعة الإسلامية، مرجع سابق، ص 408.

سعداء. وبهذا التعاون المشترك تتولد روح الإحسان، ويتكامل التوازن بين الأدوار، وتتوطد أركان الأسرة، ولا تهزّها عواصف التفكك.

الفرع الثاني: حكم العنف الأسري

إنّ حكم العنف الأسريّ حرام لتعارضه مع مقاصد تكوين الأسرة، إذ القصد منها أن تُبنى حياتها على المودة والرحمة والاستقرار والتآلف والتعاون بين أفرادها، لا أن تتحول إلى خوف وقلق وجدال مستمر وانتشار سلوك عدواني، وارتكاب جرائم ضد الإنسانية، وهو ما يعيق الأسرة عن مواصلة طريقها وبقائها سليمة، كما أنّه مخالف لتعاليم الإسلام، فقد حثّ الإسلام على الرّفق، وحرّم الاعتداء على الزوجة والأولاد، لأنّ هذا الاعتداء ظلم، والظلم حرام بكلّ صورته. كما جعل الإسلام حُسْن العشرة الطيبة مقياس الخيرية، قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ وَأَنَا خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِي»²⁹ وقال تعالى: ﴿وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ﴾، النساء، الآية: 19، قال أبو بكر الجصاص في تفسيرها: «أمر للأزواج بعشرة نساءهم بالمعروف، ومن المعروف أن يوفّيها حقّها من المهر والنفقة والقسّم، وترك أذاها بالكلام الغليظ والإعراض عنها والميل إلى غيرها، وترك العُوس والقُطوب في وجهها بغير ذنب، وما جرى مجرى ذلك»³⁰. وقال الشافعي في تعليقه على حديث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم «لا تضربوا إماء الله»: «جعل لهم الضرب، وجعل لهم العفو، وأخبر أنّ الخيار ترك الضرب»³¹ فالنبيّ صلى الله عليه وسلم لم يضرب زوجة ولا خادماً قطّ.

ومسؤولية الرجل عن أسرته وقوامته عليها يجب أن يستخدمهما بأسلوب يتوافق مع روح تعاليم الإسلام والآداب المشروعة للمعاشرة الحسنة، وأن يتحمّل ما يلاقيه من الأذى، ويراعي رعيته بما يخدم كيانهما ويعين على استقرارها، فإنه سيُسأل يوم القيامة عما أسند إليه من المسؤولية، ويجازى عليها بخيرها وشرّها.

ضرب الزوجة والولد:

وأما الآية ﴿وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاضْرِبُوهُنَّ﴾، النساء الآية: 34، فهي خاصة في حالة ثبوت النشوز من قبل الزوجة، والأمر بالضرب أمر إباحة، وليس أمر إيجاب ولا ندب، وهو ضرب لا يؤثر في الجسد كما شرطوه؛ والفقهاء متفقون على جواز ضرب تأديب الزوج لزوجته إذا خالفت أمره، أو نشزت، وإن كان الأولى تركه.³²

29 ابن جبان، محمد أبو حاتم، الدارمي، البُستي (ت 354هـ)، صحيح ابن جبان، ترتيب: الأمير علاء الدين علي بن بلبان الفارسي (ت 739 هـ)، حَقَّقَهُ وخرَجَ أحاديثه وعلّق عليه: شعيب الأرناؤوط، مؤسسة الرسالة - بيروت، ط1، 1408 هـ - 1988 م، (9/ 484).

30 الجصاص، أحمد بن علي أبو بكر الرازي الحنفي (ت 370هـ)، أحكام القرآن للجصاص تحقيق: عبد السلام محمد علي شاهين، دار الكتب العلمية - بيروت، ط1، 1415هـ/1994م، (2/ 138).

31 الشافعي، أبو عبد الله محمد بن إدريس المطلبي (ت 204هـ)، الأمّ، دار المعرفة - بيروت، دون طبعة، 1410هـ/1990م، (121/ 5).

32 الجزيري، عبد الرحمن بن محمد عوض (ت 1360هـ)، الفقه على المذاهب الأربعة، دار الكتب العلمية - بيروت - لبنان، ط2، 1424 هـ - 2003 م، (5/ 65).

كما يجوز للوالد ضرب ولده للتأديب، وللصلاة اعتياداً عليها، أخذاً من الحديث في أمر الصلاة. ولكنَّ لضرب التأديب ضوابط تحافظ على عقلية الطفل ونفسيته، فلا يكون ذلك قبل سن العاشرة، فهذه الفترة هي فترة التربية ومرحلة النشأة، ولا بدَّ أن يحرص فيها الوالد على بناء شخصية الولد من النواحي الفكرية والخلقية والثقافية، متبعاً أسلوب الرأفة والحلم والرحمة، والردُّ على الإشكاليات التي يطرحها الولد بلطف، وتصحيح أخطائه بعيداً عن العنف، فلا يلجأ إلى أسلوب الضرب كي لا يدمر قدرات الطفل وإبداعاته المستقبلية.

والضرب مخالف لفطرة الله التي فطر الناس عليها، وهو عادة مكتسبة إذا لم تكن تعود إلى الأمراض الجينية، فقد أثبتت بعض الدراسات أن 96% من الآباء الذين يضربون أولادهم كانوا قد تعرضوا للضرب في صغرهم.³³

وبهذا يمكن لنا أن نقول إنَّ الضرب الذي يُجيزه الفقهاء بحق الولد جاء نتيجة التدرج في عملية تدريب الولد، إذ لا يُتصوَّر أن يُؤمَّر بالصلاة في هذه السنِّ دون أن يعقل فائدة ما يُؤمَّر به، ويُضرب إذا لم يستجب للأمر، لأنَّه إن تلقى الجهود التربوية والرعاية والمراقبة، وغُرس الإيمان في قلبه في سنِّ التكوين، فسرعان ما يُذعن لطلب الوالد. أمَّا إذا عصا بعد هذه الأمور كُلِّها فسيكون اللجوء إلى الضرب مقابل عصيانه في مقصد حفظ الدين.

المطلب الثالث: العلاج للعنف الأسري

العنف الأسري ظاهرة من الظواهر الاجتماعية المُعقَّدة التي تتطلب حلاً جذرياً، لما لها من التأثير السلبي على بنية المجتمع، ومن ثَمَّ تنتج عنها مشاكل وخيمة تجرُّ المجتمع إلى ويلات التمزق والتفكك. وحماية الأسرة حماية للمجتمع، وقد اهتمَّ الإسلام بحمايتها، والإرشاد إلى ما يحفظ وحدتها، وذمَّ ما يمس كيانها.

ويتطلب حلُّ هذه المشكلة تحديد أسبابها، ومنابع صدورها. وفيما يلي نعرض أهم الحلول تجاه هذه الظاهرة من منظور شرعي ومنظور اجتماعي.

الفرع الأول: علاج العنف الأسري من المنظور الشرعي

إنَّ الإسلام وضع لهذه الظاهرة حلولاً، انطلاقاً من مبدأ تطبيق الأسلوب الوقائي الذي كان من المفترض أن يتمَّ في حالة الاختيار وبعده، حيث بيَّن مواصفات الاختيار، وحقوق أفراد الأسرة، وسبل التعامل الأمثل للعيش التي ربما تكون سبباً لمنع حدوث العنف الأسري كما سبقت الإشارة، لأن أسباب العنف الأسري ترجع إلى ظلم أحد أفرادها للآخر، أو عدم القدرة على التكيف. كما بيَّن الإسلام أساليب العلاج عند ظهور بؤار العنف الأسري للسيطرة على الوضع قبل أن يستفحل أو يصل إلى طريق مسدود. ويمكن أن تتمَّ الحلول عبر الطرق الآتية:

33 الدسوقي، رشا عمر، العنف الأسري ضد الأطفال، جمعية المسلم المعاصر، مج 34، ع 1، مارس 2010، ص 183.

- **تعريف الحقوق الشرعية:** لا بدّ أن يُركِّز على تقديم الفهم الصحيح للحقوق الشرعية بين أفراد الأسرة، وتوضيح الإشكالات التي ربما تكون سبباً للعنف الأسري، لأنّ كثيراً ممن يتزوجون لا يعرفون حقوق كلّ من الرّجل والمرأة، بل يرى بعضهم الأمور من وجهة نظره، وأنّ ما يفعله هو من حقّه، ولكنّ الحقيقة ليست كذلك؛ فمفهوم «القوامة» لا يعني استخدام القوة ضدّ الزوجة، وظلمها أو الاعتداء عليها، فالطاعة واجبة على الزوجة إذا كانت في معروف. ومن الواجب تعليم الوالد أنّ التعنيف على الأولاد ليس من تربيّتهم، وليس شيئاً من تأديبهم، وكذلك أن يعرف الولد منزلة برّ الوالدين في الإسلام، وعقاب عقوق الوالد، وأنّ لوالده الملك له ولماله.
- **غرس ثقافة الرّفق والرحمة:** تعزيز القيم والأخلاق الفاضلة في سلوكيات أفراد الأسرة، وحثّهم على الالتزام بتبادل الاحترام، وتطبيق منهج الحياة الأسريّة في الإسلام. وهذا بدوره يسهم في تقليل حدّة الخلافات بينهم، ويشجع على تحمل الأذى والتّصبر، قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «يَا عَائِشَةُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَفِيقٌ يُحِبُّ الرَّفْقَ، وَيُعْطِي عَلَى الرَّفْقِ مَا لَا يُعْطِي عَلَى الْعُنْفِ، وَمَا لَا يُعْطِي عَلَى مَا سِوَاهُ»³⁴، وقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «وَأَسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا؛ فَإِنَّهُنَّ خُلُقَنَ مِنْ ضَلَعٍ، وَإِنْ أَعْوَجَ شَيْءٌ فِي الضَّلَعِ أَعْلَاهُ، فَإِنْ ذَهَبَتْ تَقِيمُهُ كَسَرْتَهُ، وَإِنْ تَرَكْتَهُ لَمْ يَزَلْ أَعْوَجَ، فَاسْتَوْصُوا بِالنِّسَاءِ خَيْرًا»³⁵، وكذلك الأحاديث السابقة مثل: «خياركم أحسنكم أخلاقاً، وخيركم خيركم لأهلها، وأنا خيركم لأهلي»، «ولا يضرب خياركم». و«الرَّاحِمُونَ رَحْمَهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى؛ اِرْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُم مِّنَ فِي السَّمَاءِ»³⁶.
- **إنصاف المظلوم ونصره:** فالعنف الأسريّ ظلم يقع على بعض أفراد الأسرة، وهذا المظلوم له حقّ النّصرة ومدّ يد العون، ودفع الظالم عنه. قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «انصر أخاك ظالماً أو مظلوماً»³⁷، فالنصر حقٌّ للمظلوم، فلذا يجب على كلّ من رأى معتصفاً يعتدي على شخص آخر أن يأخذ يده عن الظلم، لأنّ ترك الظالم وعدم الأخذ بيده يشجع على استمرارية ظلمه.
- **تفعيل دور المُحكّمين:** في حالة ظهور خلاف بين الزوجين يلزم تكليف حكمين بإصلاح الزوجين، على أن يتمّ اختيارهما من بين ذوي الكفاءة والقرابة المعنية بهذه الأسرة، وأن يُخْلِصَا في توافق الزوجين وإنفاذ الأسرة من الطلاق، قال تعالى: ﴿وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا﴾، النساء الآية: 35. وهكذا يتمّ تحديد الظالم منهما وأخذ يده.

34 البخاري، مرجع سابق، برقم 6927، ومسلم برقم: 2593

35 المرجع نفسه: 5185، 1468

[أخرجه أبو داود \(٤٩١\)، والترمذي \(١٢٤\)، وأحمد \(٦٩٤\)، وصححه الألباني، موقع الدرر السنية: https://dorar.net/hadith/search?q=%D8%A7%D9%91%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%net/hadith/search?q=%D8%A7%D9%92%D8%AD+%E8%B1%D9%8A%D9%8E+&fallopts=on&t=*%&st=p&xclude=&](https://dorar.net/hadith/search?q=%D8%A7%D9%91%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%net/hadith/search?q=%D8%A7%D9%92%D8%AD+%E8%B1%D9%8A%D9%8E+&fallopts=on&t=*%&st=p&xclude=&)

37 البخاری، برقم 2444.

- **حلول قضائية:** إذا تطور الأمر ولم يتم حل الخلاف بين الزوجين والإصلاح بينهما، ووصل العنف إلى حد الإضرار، فإن من الممكن علاجه بأن ينزع القاضي ولاية المعنّف سواء كان زوجاً أو والدًا، وعقابه عقوبة رادعة ليعتبر غيره، ويطلق الزوجة من الزوج المعنّف، كما يجوز لها أن تخلع إنقاذًا لنفسها من سقف العنف الذي يمارس ضدها.

الفرع الثاني: العلاج من المنظور الاجتماعي

من الحلول المقترحة علاج العنف الأسري من المنظور التربوي الاجتماعي، كظاهرة اجتماعية تهدّد تماسك المجتمع وسلامته إن لم يُقدّم علاج ناجع وعاجل لها. ونذكر فيما يلي أهمّ الحلول من منظور اجتماعي، وهي:

- الاهتمام بحقوق الأسرة عند وضع المناهج سواء ما يتعلق بالأطفال أو الزوجين أو الوالدين أو العلاقات الشخصية أو بنية المجتمع، مع التركيز على قيم العدالة والتسامح والتشاور، ونبذ التسلط والاستبداد والظلم.
- إعداد برامج ثقافية واجتماعية للمجتمع ضد العنف للحد منه، وتنمية المجتمع وتدريبه على كيفية حل النزاعات لمساعدة الأطفال والشباب على تطوير المهارات الاجتماعية، وكذلك برامج إعادة التأهيل وتدريب الوالدين على تطبيق طرق العلاج المناسبة للأطفال.³⁸
- استغلال دور الإعلام في توجيه المجتمع وتقويم سلوكه، وتخصيص برامج إعلامية لمساعدة الأسر في التغلب على العنف الأسري، ونشر رسائل التوعية للوالدين، وتنقيفهم بمراعاة الأطفال في المراحل العمرية المبكرة، وعرض الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى العنف لتجنبها، وتبسيط الضوء على العنف الأسري من خلال الحديث عن نتائجه النفسية والاجتماعية وآثاره السلبية على المجتمع والفرد.³⁹
- سنّ قوانين ضد العنف الأسري لحماية الأسرة، وإلزامية تنفيذها، وتقديم خدمات الرعاية القانونية للمتضرّين للعنف الأسري، وتوفير وسائل الاتصال للأسر لمساعدتها في كيفية إبراز العنف الأسري من خلال الرسائل النصية القصيرة، وتقديمها للجهات المعنية بها.⁴⁰
- إنشاء المؤسسات الاجتماعية التي تعزز أهمية التعايش والتفاهم داخل الأسر، وقيادة الأسرة وأمنها، وتشجع على تبني مقاربات اجتماعية إيجابية لبناء الأسرة بحيث يتم الاتفاق على الخيارات بين الزوج والزوجة، وتحقيق العدالة بين الزوجات، وتحديد الحقوق والالتزامات المفروضة على تكوين الأسرة، وتقديم الرعاية لضحايا العنف الأسري وإعادة تأهيلهم، وتقديم المساعدة الاجتماعية والنفسية والمالية.⁴¹

38 العنف الأسري وعلاجه الفقهي، مرجع سابق، ص 214

39 العلاق، عبد الله بن أحمد، العنف الأسري وآثاره على الأسرة والمجتمع، بحث ماجستير منشور في الشبكة العنكبوتية، ص 25

40 العنف الأسري علاجه، مرجع سابق، ص 52.

41 العنف الأسري ضد المرأة، مرجع سابق، ص 289.

الخاتمة: أهم النتائج والتوصيات

بعد أن تيسّر لنا العرض الموجز للموضوع بتوفيق الله، نعرض أهم ما توصلنا إليه من النتائج، كما نقدم بعض التوصيات المهمة في نظرنا.

أهم النتائج

- إن العنف الأسريّ من الظواهر المعقدة التي يصعب علاجها، لتعدد أسبابها، وممارستها غالباً بعيداً عن أعين الناس، وصمت غالبية الضحايا، وكتمانها لما تتعرض له من العنف، إمّا خوفاً من الفضيحة، أو لاعتقاد خاطئ في فهم العنف الأسريّ.
- من أهم الحلول تطبيق تعاليم الإسلام وممارسته في الحياة الأسريّة، بدءاً من اختيار شريك الحياة، وآداب التعامل معه، وإيفاء حقّ كل فرد من أفراد الأسرة، وتوضيح مقصد تكوين الأسرة للمتزوجين وللمقبلين على الزواج، وتدريبهم على إدارة شؤون الأسرة، والقدرة على التعامل مع واقع الأسرة ومتطلباتها.
- إنّ علاج ظاهرة العنف الأسريّ يتوقف على تحديد أسبابها، ومن ثمّ سدّ منابعها، لأنّ الأسباب تتعدد وتختلف بحسب البلد والبيئة الاجتماعية، وإذا اختلفت الأسباب تختلف طرق العلاج.
- إنّ الشريعة الإسلامية اهتمت بالأسرة، وأحاطتها بسور من المقاصد والآداب لحمايتها من التعرض لعوامل الانهيار والتفكك، وأوضحت سبل التعامل إن طرأ خلاف.

التوصيات

- العناية بكتابة الأبحاث المتعلقة بالعنف الأسريّ التي تتناوله من جميع زواياه، وتعرض طرق علاجه من المناظير الشرعية، والاجتماعية والتربوية والقانونية.
- تعزيز التوعية بحقوق الزوجين، وبثّ الفهم الصحيح، وتقديم دورات تثقيفية تركز على الآثار المترتبة عن العنف الأسريّ.
- تكاثف الجهود المجتمعية بما فيها هيئات الفتاوى، ومساهمة دور المساجد في الخطب والندوات.

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حادثه الإحراق في عهد عثمان

دراسة وصفية تحليلية

عبد الأحء مصطفى عبد الرحمن لو

الملخص

يُعتَبر الجمع العثماني أو - بتعبير أدق - توحيد المصاحف في عهد سيدنا عثمان - رضي الله عنه - من أهم المراحل التاريخية التي مرَّ بها الكتاب العزيز، وكانت هذه الواقعة العظيمة والمهمة في مصير القرآن تضمّنّت أموراً كثيرة، منها الجمع بين المحفوظ والمسطور، والتركيز على العرْضة الأخيرة، وما كان بلغة قريش، ثم وصل الأمر إلى إحراق بعض النُسخ التي كانت سبباً في كثرة الاختلاف في القراءات. وركّزت هذه الدراسة على عملية الإحراق كجزء من الجمع العثماني، باعتباره قضية قد تبدو بسيطة، ولكنها تحمل دلالات متعددة، ولها تأثير كبير في تاريخ القرآن الكريم. واعتمد البحث على منهج الاستقراء في تَبُّع الروايات الإسلامية حول حادثه الإحراق من طرق ورودها وطبيعتها، ثمّ المنهج الوصفي التحليلي الذي يتجلى في تحليل مضامين الروايات والنصوص المُستشهد بها، مع الاستعانة بالمنهج التاريخي في العودة إلى الأحداث وقراءة النصوص في ضوء تاريخها وملاحظة تاريخ الأفكار وتطورها. كما حاولت الدراسة أن تستجلي الآثار التي تركتها حادثه الإحراق على النص القرآني، وعلى التراث الفقهي، والفكر السياسي الإسلامي بشكل عام

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ABSTRACT

The reality of the burning of the Quranic copies during the Caliphate of Uthman Ibn Affan: an analytical descriptive study

Abdoul Ahad LO

The Ottoman collection, or more precisely, unifying the Quran dialect and reciting method during the rule of the Caliph Uthman ibn Affan, is considered one of the most important stages in the history of the Holy Book. This great and critical event in the fate of the Quran comprised many matters: the compiling of the memorized versus and the preserved manuscripts, the focus on the last verse following Quraysh dialect (where Mohammad was from), then the burning of some copies contained variations in the reciting method. This study focused on the reality of the incident of burning these Quran copies (to prevent future conflicts/confusion) during the compiling process of its verses. It is an issue that may seem simple, but it carries multiple connotations and has a significant impact on the history of the Holy Quran. This research used the induction approach in tracing the Islamic narrations of the burning incident from the circumstances and the ways in which it occurred, then the descriptive-analytical approach to analyze the contents of the cited narrations and texts, in addition to the historical method by examining how that event is narrated in old texts to observe the history and development of ideas. The study also attempted to reveal some of the effects that the burning incident has left on the Quranic text, on jurisprudential heritage, and on Islamic-political thought in general.

Keywords: Collection of the Quran, burning of the Quran, Uthman ibn Affan, the ruler

مقدمة

إنَّ القرآن الكريم يمثل المصدر الرئيس والكتاب الأساسي لدى المسلمين، وقد تمتَّ العناية به من قبلهم قديمًا وحديثًا سواء من حيث حفظه أو تدوينه أو تلاوته أو فهمه. ذلك لأنه يمثل الرسالة الإلهية الخاتمة التي تسعى إلى إقامة علاقة اتصال مباشر بين الإنسان وربِّه، فضلًا عن استجابتها لمتطلبات الإنسان على مرِّ الدهور، وصلاحيّة تعاليمها في حل المشاكل البشرية على اختلاف العصور. ولهذا الأمر، بذل المسلمون كابرًا عن كابر جهودًا مضنية في الحفاظ عليه، بدءًا من كتابته بالوسائل البدائية في عهد النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم - مع حفظه في الصدور، مرورًا بجمعه بين دفتين، ثم توحيد النصِّ في شكله الرسمي، وصولًا إلى ضبط قراءاته وتقييد رسمه.

وقد مرّت هذه العملية بمراحل مختلفة عبر أجيال متعددة، إذ قدّم كلّ جيل دوره الواجب كي يستطيع ضمانه للجيل اللاحق، ويبني الخلف فيما انتهى إليه السلف، فيتحقق بذلك مدى تكفل الله بحفظه ورعايته.

هذا، ويُعتبَر جمع القرآن في عهد الخليفة عثمان - رضي الله عنه - من أبرز المراحل التي تركت بصمة واضحة في تاريخ القرآن، إذ كانت هذه المرحلة بمثابة الانتقال من حالة فوضوية القراءة - إن صحّ التعبير - إلى تبني مصحف رسمي، أو - بتعبير آخر - الانتقال من العمل الفردي إلى العمل المؤسّساتي. وكان ذلك بهدف توحيد المسلمين وحملهم على قراءة واحدة رسمية، والتقليل من الاختلافات التي كانت منتشرة بينهم.

وتضمنت هذه العملية أمورًا كثيرة، منها الرجوع إلى المسطور والمحفوظ في الصدور، والمقارنة بينهما، مع التركيز على ما تحويه العرّضة الأخيرة، ثم وصل الأمر إلى تضييع - أو إحراق - النسخ التي خالفت النسخة الرسمية.

وكانت حادثة الإحراق هذه من بين الأمور الهامة التي رافقت عملية جمع القرآن وتركت آثارًا عديدة في التراث الإسلامي؛ إذ تمّ تفسير دوافعها من قبل المسلمين وغيرهم على رؤى ونظرات مختلفة، ورسمت من ناحية أخرى طريقة جديدة في التعامل مع القرآن ممّا لم يحدث من قبل، كما وضّحت أيضًا بعض الأمور التي يصح للحاكم فعلها من التدخل في الأمور الدينية.

وعلى الرغم من أهمية هذه الجزئية في تاريخ المسلمين، وخصوصًا فيما يتعلق بتاريخ القرآن، فإنّها بقيت هامشية لدى الباحثين، فلم تكن هناك - في حدود اطلاعنا - بحوث أو كتب خُصّصت لدراسة هذه الجزئية، بل ظلّت تُذكر - عرّصًا - في سياق الحديث عن الجمع العثماني دون الوقوف على حقيقتها ودوافعها، ناهيك عن الآثار المترتبة عليها.

ومن ثمّ شعر الباحث بحاجة تلك الجزئية إلى بحث مستقل يقف على دراسة حقيقتها ودوافعها وآثارها، فشمّر عن ساعد الجدّ لمقاربتها مقارنة تأخذ بعين الاعتبار أبعادها المختلفة.

1. أسئلة البحث

يحاول هذا البحث دراسة حادثة الإحراق التي وقعت في عهد سيّدنا عثمان رضي الله عنه، كتصرفٍ رافق عملية جمع القرآن، سعيًا إلى اكتشاف مدى ثبوت الحادثة وفقًا للمصادر الإسلامية المختلفة، ثم فهم طبيعتها، والدوافع التي أدّت إليها، والآثار التي ترتبت عليها.

وفي هذا الصدد، يكون السؤال الذي يمكن طرحه كإشكالية للموضوع هو: ما حقيقة حادثة حرق المصاحف التي تمت في عهد عثمان رضي الله عنه؟

وهو سؤال تتفرع عنه أسئلة أخرى عديدة، منها: ما المقصود بعملية الإحراق؟ وما طبيعتها؟ ما مدى ثبوت الحادثة وفق المصادر الإسلامية؟ ثمّ ما هي الدوافع التي أدّت إليها؟ وكيف تمّ تفسيرها من قبل المسلمين ثمّ المستشرقين؟ وهل كانت مسألة اجتهادية لها علاقة بالفكر السياسي؟ وماذا كانت ردة فعل الصحابة تجاهها؟ وهل حققت المقصود منها؟ وما هي الآثار التي ترتبت عليها؟

2. أهداف البحث

- تهدف هذه المحاولة المتواضعة إلى تحقيق أهداف عدّة، منها:
- اكتشاف مدى ثبوت حادثة الإحراق وفقاً للمصادر الإسلامية.
 - فهم الرؤى والنظرات المختلفة حول تفسير دواعي الإحراق.
 - بيان الآثار المترتبة على عملية الإحراق بأبعادها المختلفة.
 - إبراز أهمية حادثة الإحراق كجزء من عملية جمع القرآن في عهد عثمان.
 - مناقشة بعض القضايا التي تثار حول حادثة إحراق المصاحف.

3. أسباب اختيار الموضوع

- يعود اختيار الموضوع إلى دوافع موضوعية وذاتية، منها:
- أهمية الموضوع وعدم اطلاعي على دراسة وافية بالغرض المقصود.
 - صلة الموضوع بتخصصي الذي هو الدراسات القرآنية المعاصرة.
 - الإيمان بقدرة البحث على شحذ همم الباحثين وتبنيهم على التعامل - بعمق - مع الجزئيات التي قد تبدو بسيطة في تاريخ القرآن.

4. دراسات سابقة

لم أتوصل خلال البحث عمّا كُتِب في الموضوع إلى أيّ دراسة سابقة حاولت أن تتناول موضوع حرق المصاحف وفق الأهداف التي نسعى إليها، على أنّ ذلك لا يعني عدم تعرض الكتب والدراسات له؛ بل يلاحظ له حضور بارز في الكتب التراثية في سياق حديثها عن جمع القرآن كما سنتلمس ذلك لاحقاً، ولكن دون تخصيصه بكتاب مُعيّن أو حتى فصل خاصّ فضلاً عن التوسع في دراسة رواياته وآثاره.

أما المحاولات المعاصرة فقد سلك أغلبها مسلك الكتب التراثية في سرد الحادثة ومحاولة تبريرها دون الوقوف على دراسة أبعادها المختلفة. هذا مع وجود بعض الدراسات التي سعت - ولو لم تكن دراسة الإحراق هدفها - في جمع بعض مرويات الحادثة مع الإشارة إلى بعض أبعادها، مثل ما نجده عند محمد شرعي أبو زيد الذي جعل دراسته أحد مباحث الفصل الرابع من الباب الثاني في رسالته «جمع القرآن في مراحل التاريخ من العصر النبوي إلى العصر الحديث»¹ حيث أورد بعض مروياته، كما تضمّن كلامه ذكر بعض آثار الإحراق وإن لم يصرح بذلك.

ونجد ما يشبه هذا عند الحضرمي أحمد الطلبة، في محاولته «عثمان بن عفان والردّ على الشبهات الواردة حول جمعه للمصحف»²، إذ تحدث فيه عن الإحراق باعتبار أنّ هناك شبهات تثار حوله، فحاول أن

1 رسالة ماجستير في التفسير وعلوم القرآن في كلية الشريعة بجامعة الكويت، سنة 1419هـ ص 145 وما بعدها.

2 نشر مركز سلف للبحوث والدراسات. شوهد بتاريخ 11/1/2020م، في: <https://salafcenter.org/4171/>

يردّ عليها بإبراز ما يعتقد أنّه هو دوافع الإحراق، ولكن دون توسع الباحث في جمع كافة الروايات، ناهيك عن دراسة الموضوع بجوانبه المختلفة.

وكُلّ هذا إنّما يعكس الفجوة البحثية القائمة حول دراسة حادثة الإحراق في عهد عثمان دراسة علمية. ومن ثمّ سعت هذه المحاولة إلى تغطية هذه الفجوة بالتوسّع في الموضوع عن طريق فهم حقيقته، وطرق وروده، وكيفية تفسيره، والآثار المختلفة التي ترتبت عنه ممّا هو غائب في الدراسات السابقة.

5. منهج الدراسة

للوصول إلى أهداف البحث قام الباحث بتطبيق مناهج مختلفة حسب ما يناسب السياق وما يفيد في تحقيق المقصود. وذلك بدءًا بمنهج الاستقراء في تتبع الروايات حول حادثة الإحراق وطرق ورودها في المصادر الإسلامية، ثم المنهج الوصفي التحليلي المتمثل في تحليل مضامين الروايات والنصوص المُستشهد بها، مع الاستعانة بالمنهج التاريخي في العودة إلى واقع الأحداث وقراءة النصوص في ضوء تاريخها، وملاحظة تاريخ الأفكار وتطورها.

أولاً: حقيقة الإحراق وطبيعته

تُمثّل حادثة الإحراق نقطة مهمة في تاريخ جمع القرآن في عهد سيّدنا عثمان رضي الله عنه، وقد تم تفسيرها على رؤى وتوجهات متباينة، كما خلفت آثارًا عديدة في التراث الإسلامي. وباعتبار أنّ الخطوة الأولى في دراسة أي حادثة تتجلى في البحث عن مدى ثبوتها، سننطلق إلى ذلك عن طريق استنطاق المصادر الإسلامية المتنوعة فيما يتعلق بوقوع حادثة الإحراق.

1. ثبوت الإحراق

إنّ المتأمل في تناول المصادر الإسلامية لحادثة جمع القرآن في عهد عثمان رضي الله عنه، يجد أنّها -في العموم- تشير إلى عملية حرق المصاحف كتصرف رافقَ هذا الجمع. ويمكن أن نذكر المصادر الإسلامية التي أشارت إليه وفقًا للتصنيف الآتي:

أ. نماذج من كتب التاريخ

حين نتأمل في مصادر التاريخ الإسلامي نلاحظ أنّ أغلب الكتب التي ترجمت لسيّدنا عثمان تحدثت عن جمع القرآن في عهده باعتباره خدمة كبيرة للمسلمين. وفي إطار ذلك، غالبًا ما تذكر هذه المصادر حادثة حرق المصاحف باعتبارها أحد الأمور التي وقعت في سياق هذا الجمع. ويمكن أن نسجل ذلك - مثلاً- عند ابن العربي (ت543هـ) في كتابه **العواصم**، حيث ذكر أنّ سيّدنا عثمان - عليه الرضوان - أمر بعد تمام عملية النسخ وجمع المصحف بإحراق ما سواه³ ونحو الأمر عثمان بن بكر بن العربي **العواصم من الشواصم**. تحقيق وتعليق: محب الدين الخطيب، مكتبة السنة الفاهرة، ط 1، 1412هـ. المؤرخين ابن الأثير (ت630هـ) الذي تحدث أيضًا عن الحادثة مبينًا أنّ سيّدنا

عثمان أرسل المصاحف «وحرق ما سوى ذلك»⁴ ونجد ابن كثير (ت774هـ) يذكر الواقعة أيضًا فيقول: «وأما المصاحف فإنما حرّق ما وقع فيه اختلاف وأبقى لهم المُتَّفَق عليه»⁵. والملحوظ في هذه الأمثلة من كتب التاريخ أنها تذكر الواقعة، ولكنها لا تستند في حكايتها إلى ذكر السند، وإنما تكتفي - في الغالب - بذكر الحادثة دون الاهتمام بالرواية وسندها. وربما يعود هذا إلى حرص المنهج الحديثي على السند أكثر من حرص المنهج التاريخي على ذلك، أو لاستناد هذه الكتب إلى روايات أهل الحديث كما لا نلاحظ هذا الأمر عند ابن العربي الذي نقل عبارة البخاري بالحرف.

ب. نماذج من كتب الحديث

إن الناظر في كتب الحديث على اختلافها يلفي أنّ الجمع الثالث حظي باهتمام بارز لدى المُحدِّثين كغيرهم من العلماء. ويجد المتأمل في كتبهم أنّ كثيرًا منهم تحدّث عن حادثة الإحراق كنصرف وقع في سياق الجمع العثماني. ولتأكيد هذا سنشير إلى بعض نماذج ممّا رواه الأئمة.

يُعتَبَر الإمام البخاري (ت256هـ) من أقدم المُحدِّثين الذين ذكروا حادثة الحرق، إذ روى في صحيحه (باب جمع القرآن) حديثًا بسنده عن أنس بن مالك أنّ سيدنا عثمان - بعد إتمام نسخ المصاحف - «أمر بما سواه من القرآن في كلّ صحيفة أو مُصحَف أن يُحرَق»⁶. ونجد الأمر نفسه عند الإمام الطبراني (ت360هـ) الذي ذكرها مروية بسنده عن الصحابي نفسه وهو أنس بن مالك، ولكن بصيغة أخرى، إذ رواه بلفظ: «وأمرهم أن يحرقوا كلّ مُصحَف يخالف المُصحَف الذي أرسل به»⁷. وقد رواه البيهقي (ت458هـ) أيضًا بطريق أنس وبصيغة الطبراني نفسها⁸.

ويبدو أنّ رواية البخاري مثّلت أقدم ما في الباب من رواية، وهذا ما جعلها - بالإضافة إلى مكانة البخاري من حيث تقديم روايته على رواية غيره - عمدة في الباب؛ إذ اعتمد عليه جلّ المتأخرين عنه في إثبات الحادثة، واعتبروا روايته الأصل الذي يُرجع إليه، مع الاستعانة بالروايات الأخرى التي حاولت أن تُسوِّغ مشروعية الإحراق بذكر أنّه وقع بإجماع الصحابة، مثل روايات ابن أبي داود كما سيأتي عند الحديث عنه. ومن الملحوظ في الروایتين السابقتين اتفاق الصحابي

- 4 أبو الحسن علي بن أبي الكرم محمد بن محمد ابن الأثير، الكامل في التاريخ، حوادث 30. تحقيق: أبي الفداء عبد الله القاضي. (دار الكتب العلمية - بيروت، ط1، 1987م). ج3، ص9.
- 5 أبو الفداء إسماعيل بن عمر بن كثير، البداية والنهاية. (دار الفكر، دون ط، 1986م). ج7، ص171. وذكر حادثة الإحراق أيضًا في كتابه فضائل القرآن. [انظر: فضائل القرآن. (مكتبة ابن تيمية، ط1، 1416هـ) ص67].
- 6 محمد بن إسماعيل البخاري، صحيح البخاري. تحقيق: محمد زهير بن ناصر الناصر. (دار طوق النجاة، ط1، 1422هـ). ج6، ص183.
- 7 سليمان بن أحمد بن أيوب الطبراني، مسند الشاميين. تحقيق: حمدي بن عبد المجيد السلفي. (مؤسسة الرسالة - بيروت، ط1، 1984م). ج4، ص156.
- 8 أبو بكر أحمد بن الحسين الخراساني البيهقي، السنن الكبير. تحقيق: محمد عبد القادر عطا. (دار الكتب العلمية - بيروت، ط3، 2003م). ج2، ص61.

أنس بن مالك، مع الاختلاف - اختلافًا لا يضر - في الصيغة بالبناء للمجهول (أن يُحرق) في البخاري، وبالبناء للفاعل (أن يحرقوا) في رواية الطبراني.

ج. نماذج من كتب علوم القرآن

ربما كانت كتب علوم القرآن أكثر توسعًا وإسهابًا في قضية الإحراق مقارنة بغيرها، نظرًا لارتباط الأمر بتخصصها. ونحن في هذه العجالة، سنكتفي بذكر أقدم مصادرها التي ذكرت الحادثة كدليل على صحة ثبوتها.

وعند إمعان النظر في هذا النوع من الكتب نجد من أقدم رواياتها ما ذكره أبو بكر السجستاني (ت316هـ) مرويًا بسنده عن أنس بن مالك أيضًا وبعبارة البخاري تقريبًا، إذ رواه السجستاني بلفظ: «وأمر بسوى ذلك من صحيفة أو مصحف أن يُحرق».⁹ يعني فقط دون لفظ القرآن الوارد في البخاري. وقد رواه ابن أبي داود أيضًا من طريق آخر بصيغة الطبراني نفسها ومع الصحابي نفسه أيضًا.¹⁰ هذا بغض النظر عن مروياته الأخرى التي لم يكتفِ فيها بذكر وقوع الإحراق، وإنما وصل فيها إلى الدفاع عنه باعتبار أنه حدث بإجماع الصحابة.¹¹

ومن الأهمية بمكان أن نشير هنا إلى أن السجستاني مثّل بذلك مرجعًا مهمًا مهّد الطريق لكتب علوم القرآن التي أتت بعده، إذ تبع خطوته في ذكر الواقعة جُلّ من تكلم بعده عن الجمع العثماني من أئمة علوم القرآن أمثال أبي شامة شهاب الدين المقدسي (ت665هـ)،¹² و بدر الدين الزركشي (ت794هـ)،¹³ والإمام البقاعي (ت885هـ)،¹⁴ و جلال الدين السيوطي (ت911هـ)،¹⁵ وهكذا إلى من جاء بعدهم من المعاصرين. وبعد هذا التواطؤ الذي شهدناه في المصادر الإسلامية - على اختلاف تخصصاتها من كتب التاريخ والحديث وعلوم القرآن وحتى كتب التفسير¹⁶ - على ذكر حادثة الإحراق يمكن القول إنَّ غلبة الظن تقتضي ثبوت الحادثة من ناحية التاريخ. ويبقى بعد ذلك أن نحاول تحرير طبيعتها بناء على ما ورد فيها

- 9 أبو بكر بن أبي داود، عبد الله بن سليمان السجستاني، كتاب المصاحف. تحقيق: محمد بن عبده. (الفاروق الحديثة - مصر، ط1، 2002م). ص88.
- 10 المصدر السابق، ص91.
- 11 انظر المصدر السابق، ص96، ص98.
- 12 شهاب الدين عبد الرحمن بن إسماعيل المقدسي أبو شامة، المرشد الوجيز إلى علوم تتعلق بالكتاب العزيز. تحقيق: طيار آلتى قولاج. (دار صادر - بيروت، دون ط، 1975م). ج1، ص51.
- 13 بدر الدين محمد بن عبد الله الزركشي، البرهان في علوم القرآن. تحقيق: محمد أبو الفضل إبراهيم. (دار إحياء الكتب العربية، ط1، 1957م). ج1، ص236.
- 14 إبراهيم بن عمر بن حسن الرباط البقاعي، مساعد النظر للإشراف على مقاصد السور. (مكتبة المعارف - الرياض، ط1، 1987م). ج1، ص419.
- 15 جلال الدين عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر السيوطي، الإتقان في علوم القرآن. تحقيق: محمد أبو الفضل إبراهيم. (الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، دون ط، 1974م). ج1، ص209.
- 16 انظر - مثلاً - القرطبي، شمس الدين، أبو عبد الله محمد بن أحمد، الجامع لأحكام القرآن. تحقيق: أحمد البردوني وإبراهيم أطفيش. (دار الكتب المصرية - القاهرة، ط2، 1964م). ج1، ص52.

من روايات قد تختلف في صيغها.

2. طبيعة الإحراق

مما نلاحظ في الروايات السابقة أنها تتقاطع في الوجود بمادة الحرق بالحاء المُهملة، على أنَّ هناك روايات أخرى بالإعجام أي: الحَرْق. وأشار إلى هذه الرواية أبو بكر السَّجِسْتَانِي في المصاحف، بعد أن سرد رواية أنس بن مالك حيث قال: «وقال غيره: يخرق».¹⁷ ويعني قوله: (غيره) أنَّ رواية الحرق بالإهمال حصلت من طريق واحد فقط. على أنَّها حظيت بشهرة أكثر لدى العلماء. وربما كان هذا الأمر هو ما دفع ابن حَجَر العسقلاني (ت852هـ) إلى القول بأنَّ رواية الأكثر كانت بالخاء المُعجَّمة.¹⁸ ذلك باعتبار أنَّ الإهمال له طريق واحد فقط. نعم يَعتبر ابنُ حَجَر روايةَ الخاء (الحَرْق) أكثر ثباتاً،¹⁹ فيما يرى ابن العربي أنَّ كلتا الروايتين - الحاء أو الخاء - جائز²⁰ نظراً لثبوت الروايتين.

ومن المحتمل أن يعود هذا الاختلاف إلى النَّسَاح خصوصاً إذا أخذنا بعين الاعتبار طبيعة الكتابة في ذلك الوقت وصعوبة قراءتها، الأمر الذي من شأنه أن يجعل الحاء تختلط بالخاء لعدم وضوح الكتابة. على أي، نجد - رغم كون رواية الخاء أثبت كما يقول ابن حَجَر - أنَّ القضية اشتهرت بحرق المصاحف لا بخرقها. وهنا نتساءل ما الذي يفسر شهرة رواية الحاء المُهملة بدل الخاء الأكثر ثباتاً؟

واعتقد أنَّ هناك بعض المعطيات يمكن أن تساعد في تفسير ذلك. منها أنَّ رواية الحرق كانت أكثر انتشاراً لدى المُحدِّثين؛ لكونها أصحَّ بناءً على قواعدهم كما يقول ابن عطية (ت541هـ).²¹ وقد يدلُّ على هذا قول ابن حَجَر: «وأكثر الروايات صريح في التحريق».²²

ويبدو أنه لا تناقض بين قولِي ابن حَجَر؛ إذ ربما يقصد بقوله: «أنَّ الخاء أثبت» يعني في رواية (أن) يخرق. ويقصد بقوله إن «أكثر الروايات صريح في التحريق» باعتبار الصيغ الأخرى من مادة الحرق (أن) يحرِّقوا (أن) يخرق (حرق) ونحو ذلك. وعلى هذا، فلا تعارض بين قوليه.

ومن الملحوظ أنَّ هناك رواياتٍ أخرى غير الحرق والخرق ذكر بعضُها أبو عبيدة (ت224هـ)، منها التشقيق وهو رواية مصعب بن سعد،²³ ومنها التمزيق وهو رواية أبي مجَلَز،²⁴ ومنها المَحو وذكرها ابن

17 أبو بكر السَّجِسْتَانِي، المصاحف، مصدر سابق، ص88.

18 أحمد بن علي بن حَجَر أبو الفضل العسقلاني، فتح الباري شرح صحيح البخاري. تخريج وتصحيح: محب الدين الخطيب. (دار المعرفة - بيروت، 1379هـ). ج9، ص20.

19 المصدر السابق، الصفحة نفسها.

20 أبو بكر بن العربي، العواصم من القواصم، مصدر سابق، ص83.

21 انظر: ابن حَجَر العسقلاني، فتح الباري، مصدر سابق، ج9، ص21.

22 المصدر السابق، ج9، ص21.

23 أبو عُبيد القاسم بن سلام بن عبد الله، فضائل القرآن. تحقيق: مروان العطية وآخرين. (دار ابن كثير، ط1، 1995م). ص284.

24 المصدر السابق، ص325.

جَبَان (ت354هـ)،²⁵ ومنها أيضًا الدَّفَن كما ذكرها ابن أبي داود.²⁶ ولا مانع من صحة هذه الروايات كلها كما يشير إليه بعض الدراسات؛²⁷ إذ من المحتمل أن يقع على بعض الصحف الحرق وعلى البعض الآخر التمزيق أو غيره. كما أنه لا مانع من أن يتم التمزيق أولاً ثم الحرق وبعده الدفن والله أعلم. أما المَحْو فهو - كما يشير ابن حَجَر العسقلاني - أعم،²⁸ وقد يُقصد به بالنتيجة مطلق الإتلاف الذي يشمل الحرق وغيره.

ويمكن بعد ذلك كله أن نقرر أن حقيقة ما وقع كانت إحراقًا بالنار كما يشير أغلب المرويات.²⁹ وربما اختاروا الحرق دون غيره؛ لأنَّ الحرق أُفيد في المقصود الذي هو الإتلاف، ولأنَّه أسهل مقارنة مع غيره أيضًا. ويبقى بعد هذا أن نتناول: كيف تمَّ تفسير عملية الإحراق؟ وما هي الدواعي والعوامل التي أدت إليها؟ وهو ما سنناقشه في المبحث التالي.

ثانيًا: دوافع عملية الإحراق

إذا أمعنا النظر في تفسير دواعي الإحراق نجد أنَّ هناك اتجاهاتٍ ورؤى مختلفة، يميل بعضها إلى تبرير العملية وبيان شرعيتها، نظرًا لأنها كانت ترتبط بحفظ القرآن الذي هو مسؤولية على عواتق الأمة، بينما يرى بعض آخر أنَّ هناك أبعادًا أخرى سياسية لم تكن ترتبط - ارتباطًا وثيقًا - بمصير القرآن. وسنحاول هنا أن نشير إلى بعض هذه التوجهات المختلفة مع مناقشتها.

1. رأي المسلمين

الفكرة التي يتبناها المسلمون - في العموم - هي أنَّ عملية الحرق جاءت في سياق الجمع العثماني الذي كان يهدف إلى حلَّ مشكلة الاختلافات التي كانت موجودة بين النُّسخ القرآنية، والتي أدت إلى تكفير بعضهم بعضًا.³⁰ وكانت عملية الحرق بدافع إتلاف النُّسخ التي خالفت النسخة الرسمية. ويبدو هذا المنحى أكثر وضوحًا مع رواية الطَّبْراني سالفه الذكر: «أنَّ يحرقوا كلَّ مُصحف يخالف المُصحف الذي أرسل به». إذ تُعتبر هذه الرواية من أكثر الروايات صراحة في بيان ما وقع عليه الحرق. بالإضافة إلى ما قاله الإمام الكرماني (ت786هـ) الذي فصل الكلام فيه ببيان أنَّ المحروق هو ما كان أحد الأمور الأربعة: «القرآن المنسوخ، أو المُختلَط بغيره من التفسير، أو بلغة غير قريش، أو القراءات الشاذة».³¹

- 25 محمد بن حبان، صحيح ابن حبان. ترتيب: الأمير علاء الدين علي بن بلبان الفارسي. تحقيق: شعيب الأرناؤوط. (مؤسسة الرسالة-بيروت، ط1، 1988م). ج10، ص361.
- 26 أبو بكر السَّجِسْتَانِي، المصاحف. مصدر سابق. ص132.
- 27 انظر لذلك: محمد بن عبد الرحمن الطاسان، المصاحف المنسوبة للصحابة. (دار التدمرية، ط1 ن2012م). ص343.
- 28 ابن حَجَر، فتح الباري، مصدر سابق، ج9، ص21.
- 29 انظر: أبو بكر السَّجِسْتَانِي، المصاحف، مصدر سابق، ص91.
- 30 انظر: المصدر السابق، ص95.
- 31 شمس الدين الكرماني، محمد بن يوسف. الكواكب الدراري في شرح صحيح البخاري. (دار إحياء التراث العربي-بيروت، ط2، 1981م). ج19، ص9.

وعلى الرغم من أنَّ الكِرمانِي لا يذكر لهذا روايةً، ممَّا يعني أنَّه ناجم عن تأمله عن طريق السبر والتقسيم بالمحاصرة العقلية، فإنَّ إمعان النظر في هدف الإحراق قد يؤيد رأيه ويفترض أن يكون المحروق لا يخرج عن هذه الأنواع الأربعة؛ لأنَّها - في الغالب - هي التي لا تتوفر فيها الشروط الواجبة لإضافتها في المُصَحَّف الإمام. ومع ذلك، فإنَّ دليله هذا لا يكفي في تحرير جميع ما وقع عليه الحرق؛ لاحتمال أن يكون هناك نصوص أخرى محروقة غير هذه الأنواع الأربعة، بل وربَّما كان هذا هو ما دفع العلماء إلى السكوت عن هذا الأمر وعدم الجزم فيه. نعم، يكون لقوله وجاهة إذا كان مرادُه أنَّ هذه الأنواع هي التي كانت عملية الحرق تستهدفها، وهي التي تمَّ حرقها بالفعل من القسم الذي يفتقد صلاحية القراءة، مع احتمال حرق أنواع أخرى مما يصلح للقراءة، ولكن كُتِبَ في المصاحف الفردية، وإنَّما أحرِقَ لوجوده في مُصَحَّف سيدتنا حفصة الذي كان هو المرجع الرئيسي.

على أيٍّ، نستفيد من رأي الكِرمانِي أنَّ دافع الإحراق كان يكمن في حلٍّ - أو تقليلٍ - مشكلة الاختلافات بين الصُّحف المكتوبة بسبب اختلاط هذه الأنواع بغيرها مما ثبت في العَرَضَة الأخيرة. نعم، ربما يؤكد كَوْنُ هذا الأمر دافعاً للإحراق اتفاقاً الصحابة - وهم أحرص الناس على حفظ الرسالة القرآنية - مع سيِّدنا عثمان، بحيث كان بعضهم يتمنى لو أمكن أن يحلَّ محلَّه ويفعل صنعته.³² إذ من الجلي أنه لو كان لعثمان مقاصد أخرى غير حلِّ تلك المشكلة لخالفه بعض الصحابة في اجتهاده، ولا يصدِّم عن ذلك كونه خليفةً للمسلمين.

صحيحٌ أنَّ ابنَ مسعود خالفه في البداية،³³ وهي مخالفة تدل على أمرين: الأمر الأول أنَّ الحرق كان أمراً اجتهادياً، والأمر الثاني أنَّ الصحابة جميعاً اتفقوا مع عثمان في هذا الأمر؛ بدليل عدم وجود مخالف آخر غير ابن مسعود. ناهيك عن كون مخالفته لم تكن بسبب رؤيته عدمَ شرعية حرق المصاحف، وإنَّما بسبب تمسكه القوي بما سمع من الرسول - صلى الله عليه وسلم - كما تدلُّ عليه الروايات.³⁴ وكان له الحقُّ في ذلك، وخصوصاً إذا ذهبنا إلى أنه كان يعتقد أنَّ الجمع قد حصل بعمل فردي من زيد بن ثابت كما توحى إليه عباراته. هذا بغضِّ النظر عن صحة أو عدم صحة ما يروي بعضهم من رجوع ابن مسعود عن رأيه واتفاقه أخيراً مع الرأي العثماني.³⁵ وبذلك كلُّه نفهم أنَّ دافع حرق الصحف كان يتمثل في حلِّ مشكلة اختلاف النُّسخ؛ إذ كان عثمان

32 انظر: باب اتفاق الناس مع عثمان. [أبو بكر السَّجِسْتَانِي، المصاحف. مرجع سابق، ص 66].

33 المصدر السابق، ص 75 وما بعدها.

34 ينظر: أبو بكر السَّجِسْتَانِي، المصاحف. مصدر سابق، ص 74. وانظر أيضاً: الشاطبي، إبراهيم بن موسى بن محمد اللخمي، الاعتصام. تحقيق ودراسة: محمد بن عبد الرحمن الشقير وآخرين. (دار ابن الجوزي للنشر والتوزيع، ط 1، 2008م). ج 3، ص 15.

35 يُعتَبَر ابن كثير ممن يرى أنَّ ابن مسعود تراجع عن هذه المخالفة التي كانت - حسب رأيه - نتيجة غضبه من عدم مشاركته في كتابة المصاحف. [انظر: ابن كثير، فضائل القرآن. مرجع سابق. ص 67-68]. ويبدو أقرب الاحتمالات أنَّ رفضه لم يكن بسبب غضبه من ذلك، وإنَّما بسبب أنه لم يرَّض أن يتخلَّى عما سمعه مباشرة من النبي (ص) ويخضع لفعل زيد بن ثابت الذي ترعرع أمامه. وهذا الاحتمال أقرب ما توحى إليه عباراته. انظر في هذا المعنى: محمد بن عبد الرحمن الطاسان، المصاحف المنسوبة للصحابة. مرجع سابق، ص 671 وما بعدها.

يرى أن بقاء النسخ المخالفة في أيدي الناس مع توحيد القراءة ربما لا يكفي لحل المشكلة؛ لاحتتمال عودة المشكلة نفسها مع الأجيال القادمة في حال بقاء النسخ. ويلاحظ أنه لم يخالف عثمان في اجتهاده حول حرق المصاحف إلا الخوارج الذين قتلوه لأسباب كثيرة منها اعتقادهم أن عثمان ابتدع في حرق المصاحف.³⁶

2. آراء بعض المستشرقين

إن الممعن النظر في تناول المستشرقين للقضايا التي تخص تاريخ القرآن يلقي أن قضية الإحراق كان لها حضور بارز في كتاباتهم، باعتبارها أحد الأمور التي لعبت دوراً مهماً في تشكيل المصحف الأم. وسنحاول هنا أن نشير إلى نماذج من هؤلاء المستشرقين الذين ذكروا الحادثة وحاولوا أن يجدوا لها تفسيراً. ونبدأ بالفرنسي ريجي بلاشير (Régis Blachère) (ت1973م) الذي تحدث عن الإحراق معتبراً أنه وقع بتدبير يكاد يمثل «هتكا للمقدسات».³⁷ ويظهر من خلال تحليله أنه كان يرى أن الصحف المحروقة لها شرعية النسخة الرسمية نفسها، باعتبار أنها مروية جميعاً عن النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم. وهذا التوجيه صحيح من ناحية أن القرآن نزل بأحرف متعددة كلها صحيحة من حيث الثبوت في الأصل. ولكن التحقيق في الأمر يدل على أن النسخ المحروقة لم تكن بدرجة النسخة الرسمية نفسها؛ لأننا إذا نظرنا إلى سياق الجمع العثماني لنفي - كما سبق - أنه كان بهدف حل مشكلة الاختلاف، وذلك بالاقصاء على ما ثبت في العروة الأخيرة وإلغاء غيره،³⁸ وإبعاد الشاذ وما لم يكن بحرف قريش. وهو أمر يؤكد أن النسخ المحروقة - كما سبق إيضاحه - لم تكن بالدرجة نفسها التي كانت في المصحف الأم كما يوحي إليه كلام بلاشير.

ونجد مثل ما يوحي إليه قول بلاشير عند المستشرق جون جلكريست (John Gilchrist) الذي يرى أن المصحف الأم الذي جمعه زيد بن ثابت كان مصحفاً لا يختلف عن المصاحف الأخرى التي جمعها بعض الصحابة، وكان بطريقة ابن مسعود وغيره.³⁹ وهذا افتراض - كما لا يخفى - مبني على أن عمل زيد كان فردياً وهو أمر تنسفه الأدلة التاريخية.

هذا بخلاف وجهة نظر فريدريش شفالي (Friedrich Schwally) (ت1919م) الذي يعتبر ما فعله عثمان من إحراق الصحف خدمة كبيرة للوحدة الإسلامية، ولكنه يرى في المقابل أنه أدى إلى خسارة كبيرة لوثائق كانت تمثل وسائل للتعرف على كيفية نشوء القرآن.⁴⁰

36 ابن العربي، العواصم من القواصم، مصدر سابق، ص76. وابن كثير، البداية والنهاية. مرجع سابق، ج7، ص171.

37 ريجي بلاشير، القرآن: نزوله، تدوينه، ترجمته وتأثيره. ترجمة: رضا سعادة. (دار الكتاب اللبناني، ط1، 1974). ص31.

38 أبو بكر الباقلاني، محمد بن الطيب، الانتصار للقرآن. تحقيق: محمد عصام القضاة. (دار الفتح-عمان، ط1، 2001م) ج1، ص65.

39 John Gilchrist, *Jam'Al-Quran*. P: 20-21. Available on this link (24/09/2022)

<https://dokumen.tips/download/link/jamal-quran-gilchrist>

40 تيودور نولدكه، تاريخ القرآن. تعديل: فريدريش شفالي. ترجمة: جورج تامر. (دار نشر جورج ألمز، نيويورك، 2001م). ج2، ص341.

وصحيح أن كلام المستشرق شفالي لا يخلو من وجهة، إلا أنه من الأهمية بمكان أن نشير إلى أن تفادي المشاكل التي كانت تؤدي إليها تلکم الصحف في حال بقائها أهم من حفظ هذه المصلحة التي يتحدث عنها شفالي. كما أننا نستفيد من دلالة الإحراق التي قام بها سيدنا عثمان قاعدة تقديم درء المفسدة على جلب المصلحة التي تُعتَبَر إحدى دعائم الدين الإسلامي، وتخالف ما يدعو إليه شفالي. أما ما يثيره بعضهم من أن عملية إحراق المصاحف كان فيها نوع من الاستبداد لتحقيق أهداف سياسية بسبب نزعة عثمان الأرستقراطية،⁴¹ فهو مبني - كما يقول عبد الصبور شاهين - على دعوى لم تثبت تاريخياً، وهي افتراض أن المجتمع الإسلامي كان منقسماً - حينئذ - إلى طبقات بالمفهوم الحديث، وأن هذه الطبقات كانت في صراع مادي لتحقيق النفوذ السياسي.⁴² وليس أدل على عدم صحة هذا الافتراض من إجماع الصحابة - كما مر - على ما فعله عثمان، وهم من هم في شدة إثارة الآخرة ونعيمها على الدنيا وحطامها. هذا بصرف النظر عن التسامح الموجود في الجمع العثماني الذي تمثل في إبقاء المصحف يحتمل أكبر قدر ممكن من الأداء المُحتمَل.⁴³

وغاية ما هنالك أن دافع عملية الإحراق كان - كما يفسره السياق - لحفظ القرآن من جانب الوجود والعدم؛ بتقييد الاختلافات التي كانت موجودة. وكان هذا الاجتهاد العثماني بإجماع الصحابة يعني عملاً مؤسسياً. وبالتالي تصبح نسبة الحرق إلى عثمان نوعاً من التجوُّز، وإلا فهو عمل قامت به الأمة الإسلامية حينئذ، وكان لهذا العمل آثار كثيرة متنوعة في التاريخ الإسلامي، وهي ما سنحاول تناوله في المبحث التالي.

ثالثاً: آثار حادثة الإحراق

لا بد لنا، ونحن في خضم الحديث عن إحراق المصاحف في العهد العثماني، من أن نحاول استجلاء ما خلفه من آثار في التراث الإسلامي. وحين نتأمل في دراسته بعمق نلفي أن هناك آثاراً كثيرة ترتبت عنه من أبعاد وجوانب مختلفة لعل من أبرزها:

1. الأثر القرآني

سبق أن لاحظنا أن هدف الإحراق كان تقييد الاختلافات الموجودة في القراءات المختلفة أو المتعارضة في بعض الصور؛ ولهذا وقع الإحراق على ما لم يُتَّفَق عليه من المنسوخ والقراءة الشاذة والمُختَلَط بالتفسير وما كان بغير لغة قريش.⁴⁴ ويوحى هذا إلى نجاح عملية الإحراق إلى حد كبير؛ لأن هذه العناصر

41 انظر لذلك: أحمد نصري، آراء المستشرقين الفرنسيين في القرآن الكريم: دراسة نقدية. (دار القلم - الرباط، ط1، 2009م). ص222 وما بعدها.

42 عبد الصبور شاهين، تاريخ القرآن. (نهضة مصر للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع، ط3، 2007م). ص 210 - 211. (بتصرف في العبارة).

43 محمد بن محمد ابن الجَزْري، النشر في القراءات العشر. تحقيق: علي محمد الضُّبَّاع. (المطبعة التجارية الكبرى، دون ط). ج1، ص33.

44 كما تقدم في نص الإمام الكرماني.

الأربعة أصبح عددها محدودًا بالمقارنة مع القدر الذي كان من الممكن أن يوجد منها في حال عدم الإحراق. إذ كان من المتوقع أن يكون مجموعُ المُختلَط بالتفسير وحده عددًا كبيرًا، ذلك بالنظر إلى كثرة الصحابة وحرصهم على فهم القرآن. هذا ناهيك عن المنسوخ، والقراءات الشاذة، وما نزل بحرف غير قريش. ولكن، أصبح هذا المجموع كله - بفضل الإحراق - أمثلة مُحَدَّدة وعددًا قليلًا، ممَّا يعني أنَّ الحرق العثماني قد حقق نجاحًا كبيرًا في تقييد الاختلاف بإتلاف ما كان سببًا في حدوثه.

وعلى الرغم مما يقوله المستشرق شفالي Schawally (ت1919م) من أنَّ إحراق المصاحف لم يكن في وسعه أن يحلَّ المشكلة؛ لأنَّ التركيز حينئذ كان على الحفظ في الصدور أكثر مما هو على الكتابة في السطور،⁴⁵ فإنه كان من المستبعد أن يرجع أحد من الصحابة إلى قراءته السابقة بعد أن تمَّ الإجماع من قبلهم - بكلَّ أريحية - على ما في المصحف الأمّ. ممَّا يعني أنَّ الإحراق لم يكن لأجلهم، وإنما كان من قبل ما يسمى - لدى الأصوليين - بقاعدة اعتبار المآل.⁴⁶ وذلك بتفادي عودة المشكلة مرة أخرى مع الأجيال اللاحقة. وهذا الهدف تمَّ تحقيقه، إذ لم يصل من تلكم الأنواع الأربعة التي كان الإحراق يستهدفها إلا نادر جدًّا. وبالتالي فقد نجح الإحراق في مقصده.

وخلاصة القول هنا أنَّ حادثة الإحراق قد حققت المقصود من تقييد الاختلاف الذي كان من المُتوقَّع أن يبقى أو يعود مرة أخرى في حال عدم حدوثها. وقد تركت لذلك أثرًا عظيمًا على القرآن الكريم من حيث صونه من الاختلافات المؤثرة وضمانه للأجيال اللاحقة.

2. الأثر الفقهي

إنَّ من يمعن النظر في حادثة الإحراق العثماني يجد أنَّ الآثار التي خلَّفتها لم تقتصر على القرآن الكريم فقط، وإنما شملت جوانب أخرى من أبرزها المجال الفقهي. ذلك أنَّ إحراق المصاحف شكل حادثة غير مسبوقة في التعامل مع القرآن، وهي إحراق صحف أو مصاحف قرآنية. وبسبب هذا، كانت بمنزلة اجتهد للصحابة في واقعة جديدة طرأت عليهم، وهي: كيف سيتم التعامل مع نسخ قرآنية غير صالحة للاستخدام؟

ويبدو أنَّ اجتهدهم في المسألة أدَّى بهم إلى اعتبار الإحراق وسيلة مناسبة لحلَّ هذه الواقعة. ولذلك تمَّ الإجماع من قبلهم على الحرق، فأُسِّسوا به حكمًا جديدًا هو جواز حرق نسخ تحوي آياتٍ قرآنية.

ومن ثَمَّ أخذ الفقهاء شرعية حرق أجزاء من القرآن إذا لم يعد صالحًا للاستخدام، بل وسَّعوا الأمر ففاسوا - بالأولى - الكتب الإسلامية وغيرها على القرآن الكريم اعتمادًا على فعل الصحابة. وهذا ما يدلُّ عليه قول ابن بَطَّال (ت449هـ): «وفي أمر عثمان بتحريق الصُّحف والمصاحف حين جمع القرآن جواز

45 تيودور نولدكه، تاريخ القرآن. مرجع سابق. ص 341-342.

46 مفاد هذه القاعدة أنَّ المجتهد ينبغي له النظر فيما يؤول إليه اجتهداه وعواقب ما يترتب عليه من مصلحة أو مفسدة. [وللتوسع فيه انظر: الشاطبي، إبراهيم بن موسى بن محمد اللُّخمي، الموافقات. تحقيق: أبو عبيدة مشهور بن حسن آل سلمان. دار ابن عفان، ط1، 1997م]. ج5، ص177.

تحريق الكتب التي فيها أسماء الله تعالى»⁴⁷ بل اعتبروا الحرق في مثل هذه الحالة أفضل وسيلة لما يرون فيه من صون المحروق عن وطئه بالأقدام.⁴⁸

ومن الملحوظ أنَّ هناك من العلماء من يرى منع الحرق كما نجده عند السرخسي (ت490هـ)،⁴⁹ لما فيه من نوع الاستخفاف، معتمداً في ذلك على عدم ثبوت حادثة الإحراق،⁵⁰ إلا أن رأي الجمهور الذي هو الجواز في المسألة يبدو أقوى من ناحية الدليل، نظراً لما يبدو من ثبوت الإحراق تاريخياً كما سبق بيانه. نعم، لا يخفى أنَّ أقلَّ شيء يمكن أن نصف به ما فعله الصحابة هو الجواز، بل ويمكن أن يرتفع إلى درجة الندب أو حتى الوجوب، وخصوصاً إذا اعتبرنا أنَّ الحرق كان وسيلة متعينة؛ لكونه أنسب في تحقيق الهدف الذي هو الإتلاف، فضلاً عن ارتباطه بشيء له علاقة بمصير القرآن الكريم من حيث حفظه الذي هو أمانة منوطة بعواتق السلف لخلفه.

وعلى هذا كله يمكن القول إنَّ حادثة حرق المصاحف أثبتت قاعدة مهمة تتجلى في جواز حرق مصاحف قرآنية - وبالأحرى كتب علمية - إذا دعت الضرورة والحاجة إلى ذلك. وبهذا نفهم أنَّها أسست حكماً شرعياً وخلفت أثراً فقهياً عديدة ممَّا لا يتسع المقام لسرد تفاصيلها.

3. الأثر السياسي

حين نتأمل - بدقة - في تصرف سيدنا عثمان في حادثة الإحراق نجد الأمر مرتبطاً - ارتباطاً وثيقاً - بالفكر السياسي، ذلك أننا إذا دققنا في الأمر نلفي أنَّ عثمان تصرف باعتبارين: الاعتبار الأول هو كونه أحد الحفظة للقرآن وصاحب أهلية للاجتهاد في قضية عايشها فعرف تفاصيلها، والاعتبار الثاني هو كونه تصرفاً باعتباره والي المسلمين، وعلى عاتق ولي الأمر أن يعتني بدفع الشر و جلب الخير لمن هم في رعايته، وخصوصاً إذا كان الأمر متعلقاً بحفظ دينهم.⁵¹

ولا شك في أنَّ هذا البعد الأخير يجعل القضية ذات علاقة وثيقة بالفكر السياسي وحدود ما يفعله الحاكم. وبالفعل، فإنه يوجي إلى مشروعية تدخل الإمام في الشؤون الدينية، وبالأحرى إذا كان الأمر متعلقاً بالقرآن الكريم الذي به قوام الأمة.

ومن هنا نفهم أنَّ شعور سيدنا عثمان بهذه المسؤولية الكبرى هو الذي دفعه إلى الاجتهاد في

47 ابن بطال أبو الحسن علي بن خلف، شرح صحيح البخاري. تحقيق: أبو تميم ياسر بن إبراهيم. (مكتبة الرشد - السعودية، ط2، 2003م). ج10، ص226.

48 المصدر السابق، الصفحة نفسها.

49 اختلف في سنة وفاته فقول سنة 490هـ وقيل سنة 483هـ. واختارنا السنة الأولى لأنها تبدو أصح لدى العلماء. [انظر: محيي الدين عبد القادر بن محمد بن نصر الله، الجواهر المضية في طبقات الحنفية. (نشر: مير محمد كتب خاتنه، دون ط). ج2، ص28].

50 محمد بن أحمد بن أبي سهل السرخسي، شرح السير الكبير. (الشركة الشرقية للإعلانات، دون ط، 1971م). ص1049.

51 انظر في هذا: الماوردى، أبو الحسن علي بن محمد، الأحكام السلطانية. تحقيق: أحمد جاد. (دار الحديث - مصر، دون ط، 2006م). ص40. وابن تيمية، تقي الدين أحمد بن عبد الحليم، السياسة الشرعية في إصلاح الراعي والرعية. (وزارة الأوقاف السعودية، ط1، 1418م) ص21 وما بعدها.

تحريق المصاحف باعتباره وسيلة لإنقاذ القرآن من الاختلافات المؤثرة في رسالته. ووافق الصحابة على اجتهاده لأنهم كانوا يرون مثل رأيه كما يلمح إليه بعض المرويات، ومن جهة أخرى لوجوب طاعة ولي الأمر في مثل هذه المسألة، نظرًا لأن الإمام إذا اجتهد في مسألة مظنونة ودعا إلى موجب اجتهاده وجب متابعتة.⁵²

ومن هذا أخذ بعض العلماء - كما فعل أبو بكر الباقلاني (ت402هـ) - جواز تحريق الصحف التي فيها القرآن للإمام إذا أدى اجتهاده إلى ذلك.⁵³ نعم، ربما يكون هذا سببًا في حوادث الإحراق التي حدثت فيما بعد عند بعض الولاة، كما فعل مروان بن الحكم في حرق مصحف حَفْصَة بعد وفاتها،⁵⁴ لما كان يرى من احتمال أن يأتي زمن يشك فيه الناس في المصحف الإمام، لاختلاف قد يحدث بين المصحف العثماني وبين مصحف حَفْصَة.⁵⁵ وهو احتمال قوي، وخصوصًا إذا اعتبرنا أن الجمع العثماني - كما يؤكد بعض الروايات - كان متضمنًا ترتيب السور،⁵⁶ ما يعني أن الترتيب فيه قد يختلف عن ترتيب مصحف حفصة رضي الله عنها.

ويدل ذلك كله على أن الإحراق العثماني - بحكم ارتباطه بالسياسة الشرعية - ترك آثارًا سياسية كثيرة من تدخل الإمام واجتهاده في الشؤون الدينية، كما خلف آثارًا أخرى فقهية وغيرها، مما يصعب إحصاؤه ويعزّز استقصاؤه في هذه العجالة.

الخاتمة

بعد هذا التطواف العلمي حول حادثة إحراق المصاحف في عهد سيّدنا عثمان رضي الله عنه، يمكننا أن نقول - وإن لم نعالج الموضوع بعمق في أبعاده المختلفة - بأننا حاولنا اكتشاف بعض جوانب مهمة لهذه الواقعة، من خلال دراسة حقيقته ودافعه وبعض الآثار التي ترتبت عنه.

وفي ضوء ذلك، يمكن القول إن حادثة الإحراق تُشكّل جُزئية مهمة في مرحلة جمع القرآن في العهد العثماني. وهي واقعة تقتضي غلبة الظنّ بثبوتها نظرًا لما نلاحظ من دليل تواطؤ المصادر الإسلامية المتنوعة على ذكرها، من كتب التاريخ، والحديث، وعلوم القرآن، والتفسير، وغيرها.

وكان من الأمور التي نلاحظها في هذه المصادر أن أغلب الروايات التي وردت فيها حول الإحراق جاءت من طريق صحابي واحد هو أنس بن مالك رضي الله عنه. كما نلاحظ أثناء ذلك رواية أخرى غير الحرق من التمزيق والتشقيق والدّفن، إلّا أن أكثر الروايات تفيد أن ما وقع كان إحراقًا بالنار.

أما دواعي الإحراق فيبدو أن أفضل وسيلة لفهمها، وإدراك حقيقة ما وقع عليه الحرق، يتمثل في

52 إمام الحرمين عبد الملك بن عبد الله الجويني، غياث الأمم في التياث الظلم، تحقيق: عبد العظيم الديب. (مكتبة إمام الحرمين، ط2، 1401هـ)، ص216.

53 نقلًا عن: ابن بطّال أبو الحسن علي بن خلف، شرح صحيح البخاري. مصدر سابق، ج10، ص226.

54 أبو بكر السّجستاني، المصاحف. مصدر سابق، ص94.

55 المصدر السابق، الصفحة نفسها، وص102.

56 بدر الدين محمد بن عبد الله الزّركشي، البرهان في علوم القرآن. مصدر سابق، ج1، ص238.



الرجوع إلى سياق جمع القرآن في عهد عثمان. وهذا السياق يوفّر أن يكون سبب الإحراق هو تقييد الاختلافات التي كانت موجودة في قراءات القرآن. وذلك بتوظيف ما يمكن تسميته - بتعبير الأصوليين - بقاعدة اعتبار المأل، من خلال إتلاف النسخ التي كانت - في حال بقائها - ستؤدي مستقبلاً إلى اختلاطها بالمصحف الأم، ممّا قد يؤدي إلى حدوث المشكلة مرة أخرى. وهذا ما جعل عملية الإحراق تستهدف ما كان سبباً في حدوث الاختلاف، وهو ما سيندرج تحت واحد من العناصر الأربعة: المنسوخ، والمختلط بالتفسير، والشاذ، وما كان بغير لغة قریش.

وقد لاحظنا من خلال ذلك أنّ إحراق المصاحف كان عملاً غير مسبوق في التاريخ الإسلامي، ولكنّه وقع باجتهاد عثمان - رضي الله عنه - فأجمع الصحابة على رأيه لما فيه من مصلحة الأمة الإسلامية. وكانت هذه الحادثة قد تركت آثاراً كثيرة في التاريخ الإسلامي، منها آثار قرآنية تتجلى في تحقيق ما كان مقصوداً من الحرق، ومنها آثار فقهية تتمثل في شرعية حرق أجزاء من القرآن أو الكتب العلمية إذا دعت الضرورة إليه، كما أنّ لها آثاراً سياسية تلخص في جواز تدخل الحاكم واجتهاده - إن كان مؤهلاً - في الشؤون الدينية ممّا يعود بالنفع على الأمة. وقد سنّ سيّدنا عثمان بهذا الاجتهاد سنّة تبعه فيها بعض الولاة، مثلما فعل مروان مع مصحف سيدتنا حفصة رضي الله عنها.

هذا، وتبقى حادثة الإحراق جزئية مهمة في تاريخ القرآن، بحيث لا يمكن - الآن - الحديث عن جمع القرآن في عهد عثمان بمعزل عنها. ولها آثار متعددة الجوانب في التاريخ الإسلامي بشكل عام، كما لها علاقة قوية ببعض موضوعات الدراسات القرآنية اليوم؛ إذ إنّ المخطوطات القرآنية التي يتم اكتشافها اليوم من حين إلى آخر لا يمكن دراستها - دراسة جادة - بمعزل عن هذه الحادثة. ومن جهة أخرى تحيل هذه المسألة إلى دراسة بعض القضايا التي تثار في السنة النبوية، مثل دعوى إحراق أبي بكر وعمر - رضي الله عنهما - للأحاديث الشريفة. وذلك للنظر في مدى ثبوتها، واكتشاف مدى ترابطها - إن ثبتت - بقضية حرق المصاحف. ويدلّ هذا كلّ على أهمية هذه الجزئية وعدم بساطتها. والله تعالى وراء القصد، وهو على ما نقول وكيل.

عبد الأحد مصطفى عبد الرحمن لو

عبد الأحد لو، كاتب وباحث في الفكر الإسلامي، ومهتم بأسئلة النهضة الإنسانية وقضايا الفكر المعاصر. حصل على درجة ماجستير الآداب في الدراسات الإسلامية، تخصص في الدراسات القرآنية المعاصرة، من كلية الدراسات الإسلامية بجامعة حمد بن خليفة (دفعه 2021 م). وحصل أيضا على شهادة العالمية في التعليم العتيق من جامعة القرويين بفاس، المملكة المغربية. كما درس العلوم الإسلامية واللغة العربية في موريتانيا والسنغال. عضو نشط في العديد من الجمعيات الثقافية والاجتماعية، بما في ذلك الاتحاد الدولي للغة العربية.

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