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The Presence of the Prophet in Early Modern and Contemporary Islam

VOLUME 2

Heirs of the Prophet: Authority and Power



Edited by

Rachida Chih, David Jordan and Stefan Reichmuth

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The Presence of the Prophet in Early Modern and Contemporary Islam

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Edited by

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M. Şükrü Hanioglu (*Princeton*)

Renata Holod (*University of Pennsylvania*)

Florian Schwarz (*Vienna*)

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Notes on Contributors

Gianfranco Bria

is Adjunct Professor of Islamic Law at the University of Roma “La Sapienza” and Associate Member of the Cetobac in Paris (CNRS–EHESS–Collège de France). His research focuses on the history and anthropology of Balkan Islam. His recent publications include “Post-Socialist Sufi Revival in Albania: Public Marginality or Spiritual Privatisation?”, *Journal of Muslims in Europe* 8/3 (2019), and “Celebrating Sultan Nevruz: Between Theological Debate and Multi-framed Practice in Contemporary Albania”, *Studia Islamica* 115/1 (2020).

Rachida Chih

is a senior researcher at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), Paris. She has done extensive research on the history, literature, and anthropology of Sufism and Sufi orders in early modern and modern Egypt and Morocco. Her most recent published works include *Sufism in Ottoman Egypt: Circulation, Renewal and Authority in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Routledge, 2019) and “The Apogee and Consolidation of Sufi Teachings and Organizational Forms (1453–1683)” in *The Wiley-Blackwell History of Islam and Islamic Civilization* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).

Christoph Günther

leads the junior research group “Jihadism on the Internet: Images and Videos, Their Dissemination and Appropriation” at Mainz University. His research interests include religio-political movements in the modern Middle East, visual cultures and iconography, and the sociology of religion. His most recent publications are the co-edited volume *Jihadi Audiovisuality and Its Entanglements: Meanings, Aesthetics, Appropriations* (EUP, 2020) and “Iconic Socioclasm: Idol-Breaking and the Dawn of a New Social Order”, *International Journal of Communication* 14 (2020).

Gottfried Hagen

is Professor of Turkish Studies at the University of Michigan. He studies Ottoman ways of representing and interpreting the world in space and time (see *Ein osmanischer Geograph bei der Arbeit*, Berlin Schwarz, 2003). He is presently working on a monograph on Ottoman narratives of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Jan-Peter Hartung

is Senior Research Fellow in the ERC-funded project “Private Pieties” at the Institute for Social Anthropology at the University of Göttingen. His research interests include Muslim religiosities in the Indo-Afghan borderland, Muslim intellectual history in the Persianate world since early modernity, the history of concepts, and Islamically grounded ideologies. His publications include *A System of Life: Mawdūdī and the Ideologisation of Islam* (OUP, 2013), as well as “Of Pious Missions and Challenging the Elders: A Genealogy of Radical Egalitarianism in the Pashtun Borderscape”, *Geopolitics* 24/2 (2019).

David Jordan

is coordinator of the German side of the ANR/DFG project team and research associate for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at Ruhr University Bochum. His research focuses on the entanglement of religion and politics in the modern history and contemporary era of the Middle East. Recently, he published “Jaysh rijāl al-ṭarīqa al-naqshbandīya: The Sufi Resistance of the Former Ba’th Party in Iraq”, in *Jihadism Revisited: Rethinking a Well-Known Phenomenon, Volume 2* (Logos, 2019); *State and Sufism in Iraq. Building “Moderate” Islam Under Saddam Husayn* (Routledge 2022, forthcoming).

Soraya Khodamoradi

is a lecturer at Erfurt University. She is a specialist in the field of Islamic studies with a focus on Sufism in Islamicate India. Among her publications are *Sufi Reform in Eighteenth-Century India: Khwaja Mir Dard of Delhi (1721–1785)* (Eb Verlag, 2019) and “Ṭarīqah Muḥammadiyyah as Ṭarīqah Jāmi’ah: Khwajah Mir Dard’s Experience beyond Jamāl and Jalāl”, *Islamic Studies* 51/4 (2012).

Jamal Malik

is Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Erfurt. A member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts, Vienna, and the Fellow Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, he works on Islam in South Asia and Muslims in Europe. He has published widely on Islamic education, religious pluralism, Sufism, and the mobilisation of religion. His most recent monograph is *Islam in South Asia: Revised, Enlarged and Updated Second Edition* (Brill, 2020).

Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen

is Professor of Modern History at Sorbonne Université (Paris). She works on the religious and cultural history of early modern and modern Egypt. Her most recent edited book is *Adab and Modernity: A “Civilising Process”?* (*Sixteenth-Twenty-First Century*) (Brill, 2019).

Alix Philippon

is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Sciences Po Aix. A specialist of Pakistan, her research has mainly focused on the political dimensions of Sufism. She has authored two books on the topic, including *Soufisme et politique au Pakistan* (Karthala, 2011).

Stefan Reichmuth

is a retired professor of Arabic and Islamic studies at Ruhr University Bochum. He conducted extended field work in Sudan and Nigeria and is the principal investigator of the German side of the ANR/DFG project team. His research has focused on the history of Arabic language and literature in Africa, Islamic education, learning, and the sciences, and on transregional scholarly networks in the Islamic world in the early modern and modern periods. Among his recent publications is “Aspects of Prophetic Piety in the Early Modern Period”, *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 178 (July–September 2017).

Martin Riexinger

is Lektor (Associate Professor) for Arabic and Islamic Studies at Aarhus University. His publications include “‘Der Islam begann als Fremder, und als Fremder wird er wiederkehren’: Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhābs Prophetenbiographie *Muḥtaṣar sīrat ar-rasūl* als Programm und Propaganda”, *Welt des Islams* 55 (2015), and *Ṣanāʿullāh Amritsarī (1867–1948) und die Ahl-i Ḥadīs im Punjab unter britischer Herrschaft* (Ergon-Verlag, 2004).

Dilek Sarmis

is a post-doctoral fellow at Ecole des Hautes études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) and lecturer at the University of Strasbourg. She is a specialist in intellectual history and the history of knowledge in the late Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey. Her PhD was devoted to the reception of the French philosopher Henri Bergson in Turkey. She is currently working on the history of social sciences in Turkey and on the place of religious knowledges within them and is coordinator of the French side of the ANR/DFG project team.

Renaud Soler

is a PhD student at Paris Sorbonne Université. His PhD focuses on the historical writing of the life of Muḥammad in the Ottoman Empire during the early modern and modern era. He is the author of *Écrire, initier et transmettre. Identité locale et tradition confrérique dans la Ḥāfiẓiyya Ḥalwatīyya, une confrérie soufie de Moyenne-Égypte (xix^e–xx^e siècles)* (IFAO, 2021) and “Une autre histoire de la civilisation: comment Rifāʿa al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1801–1873) repensa l’histoire de l’Égypte dans les années 1860”, *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 74 (2019).

Jaafar Ben El Haj Soulami

is Professor of Moroccan and Andalusian Studies at the University of Tetuan. His research interests include the literature, heritage, cultural, and intellectual history of the Maghrib and Andalusia from the medieval to the modern period. He is the author of several books, including *al-Mu'taman 'alā abnā' al-zaman, li-Abī l-Barakāt ibn al-Ḥājj al-Sulamī al-Billifīqī al-Andalūsī* (1281–1370) (Manshūrāt Jam'īyyat Tiṭāwin Asmīr, 2018), *Fuṣūl fī naẓariyyat al-adab al-maghribī* (Manshūrāt Jam'īyyat Tiṭāwin Asmīr, 2009), and *al-Uṣṭūra al-maghribiyya* (Manshūrāt Jam'īyyat Tiṭāwin Asmīr, 2003).

Florian Zemmin

is Interim Professor for Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Bern. In 2016, he completed his PhD thesis, which was published as *Modernity in Islamic Tradition: The Concept of "Society" in the Journal al-Manar (Cairo, 1898–1940)* (De Gruyter, 2018). Other publications include the edited volumes *Islam in der Moderne, Moderne im Islam. Eine Festschrift für Reinhard Schulze* (Brill, 2018) and *Working with a Secular Age: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Charles Taylor's Master Narrative* (De Gruyter, 2016).

Introduction

Rachida Chih, David Jordan, and Stefan Reichmuth

This second volume of the *Presence of the Prophet* series engages with the task to analyse the significance of the figure of the Prophet in the early modern and modern periods for questions of power, authority, and individual and collective self-empowerment.¹ This includes rulers, scholars, and activists who have claimed his material or spiritual heritage as leaders or saviours. The chapters of this volume go back to a workshop in Bochum (“The Prophet and the Modern State” – May 2018)² and to a colloquium held in Marrakesh (“The Prophet and His Heritage” – November 2018)³ where they were presented and discussed for the first time.

The historiographical and chronological framework of the collection starts out with the early modern Muslim empires and regional states in the period between approximately 1450 and 1700, followed by a focus on the age of transformations and revolutionary ruptures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It then shifts to the formation of Muslim nation-states and their ideologies since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and finally to the thoroughgoing changes that Muslim states and societies have faced from the late 1970s onwards until the present.

The beliefs, practices, and ideologies connected with the figure of the Prophet generally followed long-term developments and were not automatically subject to the sometimes rapid changes and upheavals of political history. But they nevertheless have remained sensitive to the transformations in the political sphere, and to the crises of conscience, legitimation, and power that often go along with them. In such times of crisis, which may also involve recognised or self-acclaimed inheritors of the Prophetic legacy, it is particularly difficult to maintain a distinction between the time frame of a religious or intellectual “history of Islam”, on the one hand, and that of the political “history

1 The series is the product of a joint French-German research project titled “The Presence of the Prophet: Muhammad in the Mirror of His Community in Early Modern and Modern Islam”. For the website of this joint ANR-DFG project (2017–20), see <https://prophet.hypotheses.org>.

2 <https://prophet.hypotheses.org/the-prophet-and-the-modern-state>.

3 <https://prophet.hypotheses.org/international-conference-presence-of-the-prophet-and-his-heritage-marrakesh-4-7-november-2018>.

of the Muslims”, on the other, and to restrict attention only to one side of the historical process.⁴

The thematic set-up of this volume roughly follows a chronological order. It begins (Part 1) with the role of the Prophet in the imperial piety promulgated by the Ottoman court, and on the Prophetic model and its significance for the revolutionary Islamic movements of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, before and during European commercial and military encroachment. Part 2 explores the social and political role of the descendants of the Prophet in different regional and political contexts. The focus, in Part 3, then shifts to the Prophet and his place in the ideologies and political practice of Muslim nation-states since the early twentieth century. Finally, Part 4 discusses patterns of attachment and reference to the Prophet in processes of social and communal mobilisation and empowerment, and even of attempted state-building, in the contemporary Muslim world. The coverage of the different periods and polities could only remain far from exhaustive, but the reader will find contributions on states and countries as distant as Morocco, Albania, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

Empires and Revolutions

Part 1 highlights a long-term phenomenon of the religious and political sphere which can be traced to the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and remained effective throughout the early modern period. This was the emergence of the Prophet as protector and model for divinely guided rulers and founders of imamates, sultanates, and empires. Marked by the rise of the three large Muslim empires of the Safavids, Ottomans, and Mughals, this period saw dramatic developments taking place both in Europe and in the Muslim world along with an upsurge of eschatological expectations. Shared by Muslims and non-Muslims alike, these have even been labelled as a “millenarian conjuncture” as they affected regions as distant as Portugal and India.⁵ An intensification of the pious attachment to the person of the Prophet, at individual as well as collective levels, can equally be observed in many regions of the Muslim world during that period.⁶ Supported by these widespread messianic sentiments, sultans and emperors set out for conquests of new territories or for the

4 See Laroui, *Islam et histoire*, 51, 69–90, and his critical remarks on this all-too-common historiographical one-sidedness, discussed in Riecken, “Abdallah Laroui”, 395ff.

5 “Conjoncture millénariste”; see Subrahmanyam, “Du Tage au Gange”.

6 Reichmuth, “Aspects of Prophetic Piety”.

reconquest of areas and cities that had for a long time formed part of Christian kingdoms.⁷

These Muslim conquerors who saw their struggles as following the footsteps of the Prophet of Islam presented themselves as renewers of his community and claimed his worldly and spiritual heritage for themselves. In order to reinforce this attachment to the Prophet and to enhance their political legitimation, they encouraged the public veneration of his person and patronised large celebrations of his nativity. In Chapter 1, Gottfried Hagen argues that this cult, under the auspices of the House of Osman, became part of a specific configuration of Islamic religiosity that was centred on the persona of the Prophet. It was mainly informed by literary and calligraphic media (*sīra*, praise poetry, *ḥilye*, *mawlid*) and by rituals like the display and honouring of the Prophet's relics, such as his mantle and his banner. These performances highlighted Prophetic charisma and promoted emotional expressivity. They invoked the presence of the Prophet's person and promised to lead to salvation by means of spiritual immersion rather than by imitative orthopraxy (although the two certainly could never be neatly distinguished). Ottoman religious and historical scholarship can also largely be seen as serving this image of the charismatic Saviour-Prophet.

Considerably informing this political patronage, devotional practices related to the person of the Prophet were strongly framed by the Sufi brotherhoods whose geographical and social expansion was at its peak during the early modern period. Sufis followed the conquering armies as protectors and spiritual advisors to the soldiers and sultans. The Sufi shaykh Āq Shams al-Dīn (Akşemsettin), spiritual master of Mehmed II, predicted to the sultan the fall of Constantinople (1453) and pointed out to him the tomb of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (Eyüp Sultan), companion of the Prophet, in the vicinity of the Byzantine city; this became the place of the famous sanctuary at the Golden Horn, where the Ottoman sultans would henceforth be girded with the sword of Osman.

The Khalwatiyya brotherhood played an important military as well as cultural role in the Ottoman conquest of the Balkans.⁸ Similarly, the Naqshbandiyya of Central Asia extended to northern India and the Deccan in the wake of the rise of the Mughal dynasty.⁹ In Iran, the Safavid dynasty itself emerged from a Sufi *ṭarīqa* (pl. *ṭuruq*) whose founders claimed Prophetic descent and later passed to Shī'ism. In the Maghrib, the alliance and interplay of Sufism and Sharīfism gave birth to the great *zāwiyyas*, some of which would shape the cultural

7 Garcia-Arenal, *Messianism and Puritanical Reform*.

8 Clayer, *Mystiques*.

9 Buehler, "Naqshbandiyya in Tīmūrid India"; Green, *Indian Sufism*.

and political history of this country throughout the early modern period.¹⁰ Particularly, the veneration of the *ashrāf* (sing. *sharīf*) in Morocco was strongly backed by the *ṭuruq* and became institutionalised in the fifteenth century, at the time of a profound weakness of a ruling dynasty facing Christian offensives against the country's ports and cities. As a result, men of God who regarded themselves as invested with the mission of renewing religion rose up to defend the *dār al-islām*. Here, as in the case of the Safavids in Iran, the rise of a new Sharīfian dynasty in the sixteenth century enjoyed strong popular and Sufi support and unfolded in a climate of fervent eschatological expectations.

From North Africa and the Middle East to Central Asia and South Asia, Muslim rulers relied on the patronage of Sufi shaykhs and their brotherhoods for the sake of legitimation and for the establishment of Sunnī Islam in the conquered regions. Along with the erection of mosques, mausoleums, and Sufi centres (*khānqāhs*, *tekkes*, *zāwīyas*), cults of saints of local or translocal significance would frequently develop. Sainthood was often derived from the doctrine of the cosmic reality of the Prophet as a primordial light giving birth to the world, and as an intercessor for his community. He was thought to extend his blessings through the saints, the "Friends of God" (*awliyā' Allāh*), as his spiritual representatives. The Prophetic heritage thus came to be shared in Sufi ideology between Prophetic descent and identification with the Prophet through spiritual realisation of his model; two concepts that remained in a close but tense relationship to each other.¹¹

The cult of the Prophet and of the saints did not go uncontested. The old debates and polemics that centred around the doctrine of Muḥammad's mediation and intercession and the religious practices to which they gave rise had been revived since the fourteenth century, particularly in the circle of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and his followers. They were now resumed with renewed vigour in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Birgilī (or Birgivi) Meḥmed Efendī (d. 1573) and his successors, the Kadizadelis, a puritan and anti-Sufi movement which became highly influential in the Ottoman capital as well as in the provinces, especially in Syria. The Kadizadelis engaged in fierce confrontations with their adversaries, and sometimes physically attacked the Sufis and their *tekkes*.¹² They contested many of the theosophical and mystical doctrines and practices of the time and advocated a return to the historical

10 Berque, *Ulémas, fondateurs, insurgés du Maghreb*; Berque, *Al-Yousi*; Laroui, *Les origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme Marocain*, 137; Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*.

11 Cf. Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*; Berque, *Al-Yousi*, 55ff., 87–93.

12 Chelebi, *Balance of Truth*; Öztürk, "Islamic Orthodoxy"; Zilfi, *Politics of Piety*; Çavuşoğlu, "The Kādizādeli Movement".

model of the Prophet through a strict application of his *sunna*. Following the long tradition of anti-Sufi writings, they denied the claims of the Sufi shaykhs to charismatic authority and called for respect of the sacred texts alone.

The two further contributions to Part 1, which highlight the significance of the Prophetic model for the revolutionary Islamic movements of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, reflect this tense antagonism between the Sufis and their opponents in religious and political life. Enmity against the Sufi veneration of saints and the Prophet found its most radical and exacerbated expression in the Wahhābī movement in Arabia.¹³ Its view of the Prophet and of Islamic history is discussed by Martin Riexinger in Chapter 2 on the summarised biography of the Prophet titled *Mukhtaṣar sīrat al-rasūl* (Short version of the life of the Prophet), written by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792). In his narrative, which is largely based on the *Sīra* of Ibn Hishām, all episodes which illustrate the superhuman nature of the Prophet have been left out; he retains only those which describe him as an ordinary human being who was not free from error (as demonstrated by the famous story of the “Satanic Verses”). Imitation of him therefore had to be restricted to clearly normative matters. The author passes over all the miraculous events connected with the foretold coming, gestation, and birth of the Prophet, thus undermining the whole doctrine of the “Muḥammadan Light” as the principle of creation, one that is celebrated in all the *mawlid* narratives which were so popular at his time. Even the most outstanding event in the traditional accounts of Muḥammad’s life, his heavenly ascension (*mi‘rāj*), is also dealt with only briefly.

The obvious insistence on Muḥammad as an ordinary human being is supposed to clear him of any veneration that would tarnish the sole worship of God alone (i.e. the *tawḥīd al-ulūhīyya*, the central tenet of Wahhābī ideology). This *sīra* can also be read as an ethical and political programme: it is the Muslims who have now succeeded the prophets in their task to educate and coerce mankind whenever it lapses into idolatry (*shirk*), and to lead it back to the path of God by re-enacting the Prophetic model. Riexinger finally brings out the cyclical and basically pessimistic view of human history underlying Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s *Sīra*. It may be added that it appears difficult not to relate this moral pessimism to the turmoil of the author’s lifetime, which had overlapped in his early years with Nādir Shāh’s stunning military incursions into the Ottoman and Mughal empires.

The anti-Sufism of the Wahhābī emirate of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries clearly remained an influential though marginal position in

13 Mouline, *Clerics of Islam*; Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb*; for Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s links to Syrian Kadizadeli scholars, see Currie, “Kadizadeli Ottoman Scholarship”.

its time. In fact, most contemporaneous Islamic reformist and revolutionary movements in the different parts of the Muslim world were strongly shaped by Sufism and by Sufi brotherhoods active in their regions; even if they shared a good deal of their reformist agenda with the Wahhābīs.¹⁴ In Chapter 3, Stefan Reichmuth's comparative overview of these movements highlights the crucial role of their attachment to Prophetic models and proposes to view them as part of a Muslim "Age of Revolutions". They roughly coincided with the revolutionary period in Europe and America but took on their own religious and political dynamics well before being drawn into the confrontation with European – and Chinese – imperial expansion. Reichmuth presents in detail four features, widely shared among them, that illustrate the attachment of these movements to the Prophet. They include a strong reliance on Prophetic *ḥadīth* for their doctrinal positions and their religious practice; an orientation towards Medina and the creation of local memorial landscapes connected with the Prophet and his companions; a programmatic emulation of the Prophet as a source of religious and political mobilisation; and a cultivation of eschatological expectations, including the posing of their leaders as "renewer" (*mujaddid*) or even as the Mahdī. Taken together with their creativity in developing new models of an Islamic political order for their regions, they add to the profile of a Muslim revolutionary age that would exert a lasting impact on the Muslim world of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Prophetic Descent and Authority

In Part 2, the political and social role played by the descendants of the Prophet (*sayyids*, *ashrāf*) in different regions and times is explored by three contributions. Chapter 4, by Jaafar Ben El Haj Soulami, traces out the historical development of the institutionalised body of the Prophetic descendants (*niqābat al-ashrāf*) in the Maghrib. Although the Mālikī scholars of this region were familiar with the legal framework for the *niqāba* as part of the caliphal apparatus, which had been largely shaped by the Shāfi'ī jurist Māwardī (d. 450/1058), the institution did not play any notable role until the Marīnid period, when the status of the *ashrāf* was much enhanced by the sultans. Under the Sharīfian dynasties the apparatus of the *niqāba* was much diversified and brought by

14 See e.g. for the Sufi background and reformist polemics of the *jihād* movement in northern Nigeria, 'Uthmān b. Fūdī, *Bayān wujūb al-hijra*; Hiskett, *Sword of Truth*; for the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlvī in northern India, see Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*; for the Padris of Sumatra, see Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism*.

some of its most energetic rulers under their close supervision. The legal framework was adapted to the needs of the Sharīfian status groups, and the directories of Sharīfian families were updated several times amid larger efforts initiated by the sultans. The later centuries also saw a rise of genealogical and historical studies among the Moroccan scholars, who thus responded to the increasing significance of the *ashrāf* in the country, and to the need for the protection and control of the membership of this prestigious group, which kept its considerable political potential vis-à-vis the royal court. The account shows in an exemplary way the social and political integration of the *ashrāf* into a Muslim polity of the early modern period that was ruled by a Sharīfian dynasty.

In India, in eighteenth-century Delhi, the famous Sufi and poet Mīr Dard (d. 1785), described by Soraya Khodamoradi in Chapter 5, attempted to conceive of a Sharīfian solution to the divisions and sectarian conflicts between Sunnīs and Shīʿīs, which were regaining strength with the decline and decentralisation of the Mughal Empire. Being of Prophetic descent himself and belonging to circles of the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya founded by Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1622), he claimed a revival of the line of the Shīʿī Imams in the person of his father, the founder of a Sufi *ṭarīqa* of his own, which he had called “The Pure Muḥammadan Path” (*Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa*). Dard’s elaborated concept of the *ṭarīqa* of his father, whose authority was to be founded on both genealogical and spiritual links to the Prophet, was offered by him as a model for the reconciliation of Sunnīs and Shīʿīs under this Sufi umbrella. Dard and his father thus posed as bearers of religious renewal and as unifiers of a Muslim community in the grip of a deep political, moral, and religious crisis. Even if this peculiar branch line of the “Muḥammadan Path” clearly remained a road not taken by others, it illustrates the enduring self-concept of prominent *sayyids* who were still able to regard themselves as standing above the sectarian divisions in Islam.

The case of the contemporary “Syndicate of the Descendants of the Prophet” (*niqābat al-ashrāf*) in Egypt, studied by Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen in Chapter 6, describes a very old institution whose recent history is anchored in the construction of the Egyptian state under Muḥammad ʿAlī (1805–48). Dissolved after the revolution in 1953, it was re-established in 1991 and became situated together with the headquarters of al-Azhar (*mashyakhāt al-azhar*) and the state institution responsible for fatwas (*dār al-iftāʾ*) in a set of three modern buildings in neo-Mamluk style, not far from the old centre of Cairo. Its main activity, the verification of Sharīfian genealogies, relies on the established science of genealogy (*ʿilm al-ansāb*). At the same time, it also reinforces the interconnections and the status of a family-oriented Islam in Egypt, which is still strongly territorialised and closely connected with Sufi families and activities.

Its social and religious dimensions locate the *niqāba* outside the bureaucratic and political world to which it belongs at first sight. It is part of an Egyptian Islam that defies globalisation and insists on endangered continuities. It can ultimately be identified as an interpretation of the Prophetic intercession that forms the basis of the very constitution of the *ashraf* as a privileged group – a claim now disputed by Salafism and ignored by a majority of Egyptians.

Modern Nation-States and Ideologies

Part 3 covers a period of profound political change, ranging from the revolution of the Young Turks, the First World War and the end of the Ottoman caliphate to the birth of the Turkish Republic and the Soviet Union, to the independence movements after the Second World War and to the birth of new nation-states.

Some Turkish accounts of Muḥammad's life which appeared in the late nineteenth century had already presented him as a reformer who brought about profound social reforms for the society of his time. By this they attempted to legitimise the reforms initiated by the Ottoman state. Still before the revolution of the Young Turks, the historian Ahmed Refik (d. 1937), trained at the military school, had authored a small work on the military campaigns (*ghazawāt*) of the Prophet (published in 1906). Its four chapters are devoted to his four most important battles, which are illustrated with maps and sketches. Miracle stories are either ignored or minimised in this narrative which portrays the Prophet and the companions as embodiments of all the qualities required for a perfect soldier in a modern army.¹⁵

Representations of the Prophet continued to play an important role in the intellectual debates before and after the First World War. The sacred image of the Prophet that had still prevailed in the nineteenth century gave way under the combined impact of European imperialism and orientalism, to the model of a military and political leader and of a religious and social reformer, which was disseminated by the new printed media and literary genres of the time. Classical accounts of the Prophet were reoriented or rewritten to serve nationalist projects. A famous case was the adaptation of Būṣṣīrī's famous poem in praise of the Prophet, the "Mantle ode" (*Qaṣīdat al-burda*), by the Egyptian poet Aḥmad Shawqī (d. 1930). His version, titled "The way of the mantle" (*Nahj al-burda*), was written in 1910 in a country facing Ottoman decline and British occupation. This poem restructures the *Burda* "into a forceful and eloquent plea for the restoration of the Islamic Ummah based on 'humanistic' concepts

¹⁵ Hagen, "The Prophet Muḥammad".

which he locates in the Classical Arab-Islamic past".¹⁶ It became a huge success, especially in its version which was sung by Umm Kulthūm in post-World War II Egypt.¹⁷

The writing of biographies of the Prophet, which had declined in the nineteenth century, re-emerged in Egypt during the interwar period – but in a complete break with the traditional *sīras*. The aim of these modern biographies was ideological and didactic and was aimed at a broader public. There was no longer any question of miracles or legends, and Muḥammad is presented in them as an ingenious human being responding to the needs of his time. This reorientation also responded to a political and cultural disenchantment with Europe and found its strongest expression in Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's *Ḥayāt Muḥammad* (1935). He attempted to recall the genius of the Prophet in order to reconcile the eternal truths of Islam with human reason and with the changing practical demands of modern society.¹⁸ This trend continued until the 1960s, when 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sharqāwī's *Rasūl al-ḥurriyya* (The messenger of freedom, published 1962) presented the Prophet as a precursor of Nasserist socialism.

The model of Muḥammad as a social and political reformer was also cultivated by Muslim and even Arab Christian Communists who supported the emerging Soviet Union. In Chapter 7, Renaud Soler follows the career of Bandalī Ṣalībā Jawzī (d. 1942), a Palestinian Orthodox Christian who turned towards Marxism and settled as an academic in Baku, keeping his connections with the Arab Middle East throughout his life and continuing to write in Arabic along with Russian. In his magnum opus, *Min tāriḫ al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām* (On the history of the intellectual movements in Islam, printed in Jerusalem in 1928), he outlines his views on the life of the Prophet for an Arab readership by integrating him into his Marxist scheme of dialectical materialism. Here, the Prophet appears as an authentic Arab reformer who tried to reduce the existing inequalities of wealth and the oppression of women in his society, and who fought against tribalism without perceiving or being able to touch at the roots of social disorder. As such he sees him as a forerunner of a future socialist order for the Arab and Muslim world, which was further foreshadowed by the revolts of Bābak and the Ismā'īlīs and Qarmaṭians in 'Abbāsīd times.

In the period after the Second World War, the Prophet was instrumentalised by the nation-states which had emerged in the meantime. They presented him

16 Stetkevych, *The Mantle Odes*, xiv.

17 First sung in 1946; Fakhreddine, "Umm Kulthūm".

18 Haykal, *Ḥayāt Muḥammad*. For a critical account of his description of the Prophet, see Johansen, *Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haikal*, especially 170–86.

as a model and identity founder for their nationalist and pedagogical projects. Even in the most secular of these states a gradual shift towards a strengthening of their Islamic character can be observed since the 1990s, which also touches upon the public status of the figure of the Prophet.

This comes out very clearly in Dilek Sarmis's Chapter 8, on the role of the Prophetic figure in school textbooks and religious education in Turkey. Whereas the figure of the Prophet Muḥammad had been overshadowed by that of Mustafa Kemal, who was associated with the Prophetic role by nationalist intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s, it has markedly increased in visibility in the pedagogical literature since the 1980s. It can be noted that the earlier doctrinal and historical approach to the Prophet has been superseded by his role as a model for citizenship and human exemplarity for the Turkish state. The moral figure of the Prophet became functional for the solution of questions of identity and social conflicts faced by the individual citizen. As an instrument of educational and social engineering, he remains a common identifier for Turkish citizenship. Paradoxically, the moralisation of a modern republican Prophet has also led to a recognition of public rituals connected with his birth (*mawlid*) and to a revival and institutionalisation of *sīra* studies.

In the case of post-Communist Albania studied by Gianfranco Bria in Chapter 9, the celebration of the Prophetic birthday (*mevlud* in Albanian) was gradually integrated into the cultural framework of a secular Albanian nationalism. Already since the late Ottoman period, *mevlud* literature was firmly established as part of the national literary culture. In the interwar period, *mevlud* celebrations had become an important element of public Islamic piety in a pluralist and confessionalised kingdom, and an emotional and performative medium for Muslim religiosity. The radical socialist secularisation that followed this period virtually wiped out the religious practice of the *mevlud* and its literary memory. The post-socialist era, still dominated by a socialist heritage of secular rationalism, has seen a state-sponsored revival of the *mevlud* as a political expression of identity and patriotic belonging to the Albanian nation.

In Chapter 10, Jamal Malik's study of the position of the Prophet in the legal and constitutional framework and its social reality in Pakistan traces the trajectories of laws related to blasphemy in British India, followed by their translation into the Pakistani constitution and penal law against the backdrop of the discussion on the Islamicity of the fledgling state. In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the majority of judgements on this issue have been pronounced against non-Muslims and minorities. The atrocious consequences of the public handling of these laws are exemplified with three cases that have caught the attention of the national and international media: the assassination of the

governor of Punjab in 2011 with the subsequent veneration of his murderer, the lynching of Mashal Khan in early 2017, and the spectacular rise of the religio-political party Tehreek-e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah in late 2017 and 2018. These cases provide some understanding of the struggles between local factions competing for the scarce resources of patronage and public goods, in which the Prophet becomes a major point of reference.

In Chapter 11, David Jordan investigates the changing representation of the Prophet Muhammad in the public discourse of the Iraqi Arab Socialist Baʿth Party from 1943 till 2003, which underwent a striking increase of its religious expression during and after the First Gulf War. Focussing on the role of the Prophetic figure in Baʿthist ideology and politics throughout this period, Jordan argues that, in the core, the Baʿth regime remained committed to its secular principles till the end but gradually increased the incorporation of the Prophetic heritage into the official political language. The turn towards the use of Islamic traditions and motifs by an Arab nationalist regime can be explained as a strategic attempt to take advantage and remain in control of the general Islamic and religious resurgence that could be observed throughout the Islamic world and beyond since the late 1960s. This was a political move that fuelled and promoted this resurgence even further.

Mobilisation, Empowerment, and Social Reform

Part 4 is dedicated to attempts to claim the Prophet for efforts at social and political mobilisation and reform. If his figure was desacralized by reformist religious currents and by nationalist leaders and their parties like those in Iraq, Syria, and Egypt, a resacralization of social and political life set in from the 1970s onwards which spread throughout the Muslim world. The course of the Iranian Revolution (from 1979), the war against Russian occupation in Afghanistan (1979–89), and the breakdown of the Soviet Union (1991) formed the backdrop to a multifaceted process of social Islamisation and for the proliferation of Islamic educational, missionary, and political movements. These were led by Islamic scholars, preachers, intellectuals, and students, who have increased their public recognition and their political weight in many Muslim countries. The Prophet has once more moved to the centre of the efforts of diverse religious actors for social and religious reform and political empowerment, for militant resistance against foreign powers, and for the establishment of an Islamic state in the turmoil of multisided warfare in the Middle East.

The positivist approach to the life and mission of the Prophet already permeated the writings of the early Muslim reformists of the twentieth century.

Florian Zemmin (Chapter 12) explores the construction of the Prophet as an ideal religious and social reformer, which was put forward by the Syrian Islamic intellectual Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935), in his journal *al-Manār* and in his tremendously successful book titled “The Muḥammadan inspiration” (*al-Wahy al-muḥammadī*, first published 1933). Based on a distinction between a true and universal Islamic religion (*al-islām al-dīnī*) and its actual innerworldly manifestations (*al-islām al-dunyawī*), Riḍā attempts to construct Islam as a programme of comprehensive reform in all social and political fields, aiming at the perfection of humans as individuals and collectivities. His representation of a modern Prophet pursued two aims: on the one hand, the emotionally charged figure of the Prophet mediated the salience and practicability of abstract Islamic principles to a wider audience; on the other hand, he served as a role model and lent authority to Riḍā himself, who poses in his writings as a self-styled reformist. Zemmin shows that the debates about religion and modernity and the pedagogical reconstruction of the figures of the prophets as reformist role models were not unique to Islam but can also be found in the contemporary writings of Jewish and Christian intellectuals and theologians. Riḍā’s activist view of the Prophet already foreshadows the concept of an individual moral recovery (*iṣlāḥ fardī*) from contemporary decadence, which would provide the base for a reform of the whole society (*iṣlāḥ jamā’ī*) and for its immunity against imperialist influence, and which was later developed by the Islamist thinker Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966).

Rachida Chih, in Chapter 13, discusses the writings and activities of Shaykh Abdessalem Yassine (‘Abd al-Salām Yāsīn, d. 2012), founder of the so-called Islamist movement “Justice and Spirituality” (*al-‘adl wa-l-iḥsān*) in Morocco, who claimed for himself the title of “reviver of religion” (*mujaddid al-dīn*), predestined to restore the purity of the faith and renew Islamic law. He identified with this role on the basis of his Sharīfian and Sufi legacy and set himself the mission of the moral reconstruction of the Muslim mind. This he saw as a preliminary step that would lead to the building of a society defined by Islam. He also founded his own community (*jamā’a*) as a model for this new society. On the basis of the examination of his major work, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī* (The Prophetic path), Chih analyses Yassine’s concept of the Prophetic heritage. Relying on the memoir of a messianic mysticism that has been identifiable in Morocco since the Middle Ages, which he fused with concepts of activist piety borrowed from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Yassine established himself with this book in the eyes of his followers as an imam predestined to set in motion a great social transformation. This would restore the Islamic community to its original purity by placing it under the direction of an actualised *sunna* of the Prophet.

Alix Philippon's Chapter 14 offers a social movement approach to the Sufi organisation which has been at the centre of the anti-blasphemy campaigns over the recent years in Pakistan (discussed already by Malik in Chapter 10 from a more legal and constitutional perspective). The example used for this are the Barelwis, a Sufi and theological movement originating from nineteenth-century India, which has most loudly proclaimed its love for the Prophet and has posed as a staunch defender of his honour against any attacks. The author describes the figure of the Prophet Muḥammad as a symbolic reference point and an "empty signifier" (Laclau) for the negotiation and structuring of social conflicts, and for the articulation of political claims for collective action. After participating in several political alliances of Islamic groups, the Barelwi activists finally succeeded in taking the lead in the protest against the publication of the (in)famous *Satanic Verses* written by Salman Rushdie. An organisation called "Preservation of the Honour of the Prophetic Message" (Tahaffuz-e Namoos-e Risalat) was founded by them for this purpose. In later times the Barelwis who always struggled for recognition vis-à-vis the other Islamic organised bodies like the Deobandis and the Jama'at al-Islamiyya came to the fore with their calls for a rigorous application of the death penalty for blasphemy. The author describes the background and activities of one of the most active and most successful Barelwi leaders, Pir Afzal Qadri (b. 1953). He is the founder of several religious organisations, and patron of a mass movement, Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP, mentioned above), which has become the main protagonist of these anti-blasphemy campaigns which managed to exert maximum pressure on the Pakistani government and judiciary. It finally took part with considerable success in the nationwide elections of 2018, by this reasserting the position of the Barelwis in the political landscape of Pakistan.

The different uses of Prophetic images by a wide selection of actors in Afghanistan who were involved in the resistance against the Communist regime in Kabul and the Soviet military invasion between 1978 and 1992 are investigated by Jan-Peter Hartung in Chapter 15. His analysis of rare source materials (mainly in Pashto) shows a considerable variation in the uses of the images of the Prophet that were invoked, depending on the social and educational background of these activists. While urbanised Islamist circles emphasised Muḥammad's role as military commander and statesman, those of rural and tribal origins rather stressed his image as the ideal guide to salvation in the hereafter. A closer look into such images in Pashto poetry, classical and contemporary, suggests that both positions seem to have historical antecedents, which reflect distinct ethical frames that are at play in the Pashtun-dominated borderland between Afghanistan and Pakistan. One that resonates well with the urbanised Islamists stresses the princely virtues as an epitome of Pashtunness,

while the other, reflecting the views of more subaltern rural and tribal actors, emphasises equality as the Pashtun social ideal. Islamic ethics, epitomised in the figure of the Prophet, thus articulates in distinct ways with the different social layers of Pashtun society.

The most recent attempt to create an Islamic caliphate built on the Prophetic model was the so-called Islamic State (IS), which was established in northern Iraq and eastern Syria and whose remnants still linger on in scattered groups of fighters in the Syro-Iraqi borderland and in other regions of the Middle East and North and West Africa. In Chapter 16, Christoph Günther, who has analysed the self-expression of the IS (founded 2013) and its predecessors in Iraq after 2003, highlights the role of the Prophet Muḥammad as a major source of self-legitimisation for these and other groups of the Jihādī-Salafī current. He scrutinises several topics and symbols which illustrate the effort of the IS to appropriate the Prophetic aura and presence for its own authority. Via texts and songs (*anāshīd*), and by their highly elaborated propaganda films they frequently refer, directly or indirectly, to the Prophet or to the nascent Muslim community under his leadership. But Günther also argues that, although IS leaders have fiercely claimed to defend pristine Islam and to follow the most exact interpretation of its sources, they hardly engaged intellectually with the *sunna* itself. The figure of the Prophet has been mainly evoked by them for spectacular actions and for their aesthetics of violence in order to equip their own rule with Prophetic power.

If nothing else, the contributions to this volume may serve to illustrate a Weberian truism about the interplay of economic and political developments with religious and cultural phenomena, which may be conditioned by economic and political processes but may also be relevant for them.¹⁹ This interplay includes pious as well as strategic patterns of identification with the Prophet. Each case has, of course, to be observed and closely assessed in order to clarify its specific constellation of factors. Collective attachment to the Prophet and political strategies pursued by leaders, individuals, and groups seem to reinforce each other in several ways in the described case studies, which expose the contradictions and weaknesses of the respective political and legal systems. The Prophet comes out in them as a larger-than-life symbol of sociopolitical representation and identity (Chapter 9), as the model of an

19 Weber, "Objektivität' sozialwissenschaftlicher Erkenntnis", 202–6, defines the interdependencies between economic and cultural phenomena as an object of the social and economic sciences; see also Swedberg and Ageval, *Max Weber Dictionary*, 73; Giddens, "Marx, Weber and the Development of Capitalism", 297. The transfer of this model to political science can be found e.g. with De Grazia, *Political Behavior*, 66, who divides its objects into "politics, the politically relevant, and the politically conditioned".

ideal reformer (Chapter 12) or of a civilised citizen (Chapter 8), as ancestor of the leader and supra-confessional integration figure (Chapter 11), with his honour serving as a rallying cry against internal enemies (Chapters 10 and 14). He may also reinforce princely or egalitarian values in urban or rural settings (Chapter 15), offer a model for a future utopian society under an ideal leader (Chapter 13), or enhance the power of a self-acclaimed caliphate (Chapter 16). In many of these exemplary cases, his presence and authority have been evoked with diverse and sometimes quite innovative forms of communication and in novel organisational settings.

Conclusion

The resurgence of Islam which unfolded since the late 1970s has been such that even states that had pursued a policy of secularisation could not fail to refer to religion in order to legitimise their authority. The Prophet, who had been emptied to a large extent of his spiritual dimension in public and political life, was then invoked again as an eschatological figure. The case study of Iraq (Chapter 11) provides perhaps the most telling example of the radical ideological turn of a secular government towards the revival of the figure of the Prophet as intercessor and saviour since the war against Iran in the 1980s and the humanitarian crisis provoked by the Gulf War in the 1990s, with the president posing as a descendant of the Prophet and accusing Imam Khomeini (himself also a *sayyid*) to be an enemy of Islam.

It appears striking that the actors of the recent Islamic mobilisation movements quite often relate themselves in their identification with the Prophet to the revolutionary Islamic movements of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in their home regions and beyond, whether to those in Arabia, West Africa, or in South and Central Asia (see Chapter 3). Or they revive older patterns of religious doctrine and expectation along Prophetic or Imamic lines, as in the Islamic Republic of Iran or in the case of Morocco (see Chapter 13). Islamological research has often let itself be taken in by this historical self-identification of Islamist actors, without giving sufficient attention to the contemporary challenges that they have been facing together with their societies, and to the unmistakably modern traits of their movements.

But all of the contemporary Islamic movements certainly fit into a general historical trend that can be observed throughout the early modern and modern period. It consists in the growing importance, from late medieval times onwards, of the figure of the Prophet, in learned religious circles as well as in popular piety. This has been supported and encouraged by the political elites

who, from the fifteenth century onwards, made their links with the Prophet a source of legitimation for their own power.

The figure of the Prophet, which throughout history oscillated between human and superhuman dimensions, has been constantly reappropriated under different modes of reference. This can be related to its eschatological quality, which – as argued in the general introduction – not only invites expectations regarding the end of the world but also beliefs in a salvation already unfolding in the present. In imperial times, sultans and emperors displayed their ethical, spiritual, and charismatic links with the Prophet as a source of legitimation and a promise of universal peace and justice (as seen in Chapter 1 for the Ottomans). In the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Prophet was referred to as the founder of the original and authentic Muslim community, and as a model of action. In the times of the nationalist movements and the struggles for independence, he was presented as an ideal head of state, a reformer of his society, a source of law and social order, and even as a guardian of Muslim identity and culture. Therefore, his presence has not diminished, neither with modernity nor with the processes of secularisation which have unfolded in most Muslim countries. The explorative studies of the diverse political representations of the Prophet, which have been collected in this volume, bring out the impact of both secularisation and sacralisation on the Prophetic model. They reveal a process full of tensions between these two poles, and an interaction of pious attachment and strategic ploys, which has emerged with full vigour in the hardening of Sunnī–Shī‘ī relations, and in an increasingly globalised struggle over the control of the image of the Prophet. One can only speculate about the consequences that this political instrumentalisation will have for Prophetic piety itself.

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PART 1

Empires and Revolutions



Pietas Ottomanica

The House of ‘Oṣmān and the Prophet Muḥammad

Gottfried Hagen

The Ottoman chronicler Muṣṭafā Selānikī (d. after 1008/1600) reports under the date of Rabī‘ al-Awwal 996 (1588) that Sultan Murād III issued the following decree:

Tuesday the twelfth of this month is the night when his Excellence the leader of all living beings and pride of all existence – peace be upon him – was born and honoured with his visit and enlightened the courtyard of this world. It behoves us to honour him and show our reverence, so let all the minarets be illuminated, and let *mevlids* be recited in the mosques, and the nation of sinners cry and wail and ask for his intercession, and let them occupy themselves with the recitation of blessings, praises, and benedictions. Just as in the Nights of Reḡā’ib and Berā’t let the illumination of the minarets be customary.¹

With this decree, the birthday of the Prophet which had already been celebrated at the communal level in the Ottoman lands became established as an official holiday of the Ottoman Empire, with a public celebration in one of the imperial mosques. The report constitutes one of the few firm chronological stepping stones in a complex religious-cultural-political manifestation of a distinct relationship between the House of ‘Oṣmān and the Prophet of Islam. Of course, other dynasties can claim a connection the Ottomans cannot: the current royal family of Morocco, as well as their predecessors, the Sa’dī sultans, are direct descendants of the Prophet, as are the Hashemites of Jordan. The

1 Ve sene 996 rebī‘u l-evvelinde sa’ādetlü Pādişāh-ı ‘ālem-penāh ḥazretlerinden tezkire-i hümāyūn çıqub, “On ikinci gice işneyn gicesi, ki Server-i kā’ināt ve mefḥar-ı mevcūdāt – şallā llāhu ‘aleyhi ve-sellem – ḥazretleri dünyāya gelüb arşa-i şahn-ı cihāni teşrif idüb, nūrānī qıldığı gicedür, ta’zīm u iḥtirām eylemek vācibdür, cümle minārelerde qanādil yanub ve cevāmī’ ve mesācidde mevlidler oqunub, günāhkār ümmet yanub yaqılub, şefā’at taleb eyleyüb, şalavāt ve teslimāt ile tesbiḥ ü tehlile iştiḡāl göstersonler ve şehr-i recebde Reḡā’ib gicesi ve şehr-i şa’bānda Berāt gicesi gibi, mināreler qanādil ile münevver olmaq ‘ādet olsun” diyü fermān olundu. Quoted in Karaduman, “The Royal Mawlid Ceremonies”, 18.

Fāṭimids of Egypt, too, derived their claim to the caliphate from their descent from Muḥammad. What we see in the case of the Ottomans, by contrast, is a multifaceted dynamic of beliefs and practices that establish a special spiritual relationship that distinguishes them from all other dynasties, and ultimately – if implicitly – claims the Prophet as protector and symbolic overlord, a kind of dynastic patron saint. This relationship, I will argue, is distinct enough to be given its own label: *pietas Ottomanica*.

The term “*pietas Ottomanica*” is patterned on the title of a seminal study by the Austrian historian Anna Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*, first published in 1959. Coreth identified certain theological ideas and devotional practices of the Catholic baroque as constituting a form of Catholicism that served the exaltation and legitimation of the House of Habsburg.² By postulating an analogous *pietas Ottomanica*, and one specifically centred on the Prophet Muḥammad, I do not intend to raise the question of connectivity, let alone influence between the two phenomena, although the chronological proximity is intriguing. Instead, I follow her in identifying a specific form of piety or religiosity that is oriented towards an imperial dynasty, in a specific historical conjuncture. Different from Coreth’s material much of what I will explicate is manifested in rituals but not theorised in theological writing. My argument is, however, that such a concept of dynastic devotional culture can be helpful for an understanding of Ottoman Islam as an intellectual project, mindful of Moin’s approach to the “performative aspect of Muslim kingship”.³ I conceptualise *pietas Ottomanica* as a subset of a larger complex that one might call “Ottoman Islam”, and will take up the question of how it relates to those practices in the last part of this chapter.

The goal of this study is twofold: to gather evidence of this and related beliefs and practices of Prophet-centred devotions under the auspices of the House of Osman, and to contextualise them historically and socially; and to contribute further to the historicisation of Ottoman Islam with the help of a more analytical vocabulary that pays attention not only to social function, but to philosophical and theological ideas expressed, embedded, implied, or embodied in the texts and practices. Islamic studies have adopted many categorical notions from within the Islamic tradition itself, or have applied categorisations from other religious traditions. Still, researchers seeking to isolate and describe

2 The English translation appeared only recently: Coreth, *Pietas Austriaca*.

3 Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 6. Too frequently Ottoman historians have taken the legitimising function of Islamic practices and norms for granted, and abstained from further analysis (Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, 150, points to the caliphate; Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One*, 269, speaks of the sultans in the Prophet’s footsteps). See, for a more extensive argument, Karateke, “Opium for the Subjects?”.

a specific phenomenon often find themselves at a loss for useful terminology. Seeming dichotomies like Sunnī–Shī‘ī can overlap more often than scholars like to admit;⁴ the opposite of “Sufi” has turned out to be impossible to define;⁵ terms like heterodox have been rightly rejected together with distinctions of high vs “low” Islam in all its variants.⁶ Alternatively, students of religion have resorted to applying concepts that emerged in Christian contexts and explored parallel or comparable phenomena: thus we hear about Islamic Protestantism, Iranian messianism, or Ottoman confessionalisation.⁷ The heuristic value of such comparisons and analogies should not be questioned here. Rather, they illustrate my point that the study of Islam continues to search for an abstract yet precise language with which nuances can be described that define historically specific versions of Islam. Shahab Ahmed’s critique of academic and internal discourses about Islam has recently articulated this problem in poignant form. Yet, where he is primarily concerned with the “outer boundaries”, with “what is Islam?”, and hence also “what is not Islam?”, my question here primarily is: what kind, what form, what hue, or tone of Islam? Or: which kinds of “religiosities” within Islam? I propose that we need to understand and conceptualise better the contrasts and differences not between remote poles (such as Geertz’s case studies of Morocco and Indonesia),⁸ but between adjacent and at times intersecting forms of Islam. Ahmed speaks of “ideas and practices ... such as *exploration, ambiguity, ambivalence, wonder, aestheticization, diffusion, differentiation, polyvalence, relativism, and contradiction*. These component elements, trajectories, and values must be accounted for alongside their counter-components of *prescription, restriction, homogenization, monovalency, orthodoxy, and agreement*.”⁹ Several of these concepts apply directly to our specific case. The challenge is to describe the specifics of the how and why, and to articulate the implicit theology that makes these practices meaningful within Islam. Necessarily, this first attempt will be selective in terms of material included, and tentative in terms of its interpretations and conclusions.

4 Hagen, “Salvation and Suffering”.

5 Strikingly: Radtke, “Warum ist der Sufi orthodox”; see also Knysh, *Sufism*.

6 Moin, *The Millennial Sovereign*, 7; Waardenburg, “Official and Popular Religion”; Shoshan, *Popular Culture*. See also Dressler’s warning against binaries in religious studies in general: Dressler, *Writing Religion*, 220–38.

7 Stremmelaar, “The Islamic Ethic”; Loimeier, “Is There Something like ‘Protestant Islam?’”; Terzioğlu, “Where ‘İlm-i Hâl Meets Catechism”.

8 Geertz, *Islam Observed*.

9 Ahmed, *What Is Islam?*, 303.

1.1 A Record of Ottoman Dynastic Devotions

Let me begin with a phenomenological overview of Ottoman dynastic devotions centred on the Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁰ As noted above, the celebration of the Prophet's birthday (*mevlid*) was officially mandated by Sultan Murād III. His grandson Aḥmed I included the celebration in the foundation deed for his mosque in 1613, and it seems to have been held there ever since the completion of the mosque in 1617.¹¹ The exact form the celebration took is not known, although it is safe to assume that a performance of the canonical *mevlid* poem by Süleymān Çelebi, *Vesiletü n-necāt* (Means to redemption), was central to it. Written in the early fifteenth century, and transmitted in hundreds of variants and thousands of copies, this poem in charming accessible Turkish, but informed by a long tradition of theology and mysticism, is still extolled today.¹² The first more detailed description of an imperial *mevlid* celebration is only furnished by d'Ohsson at the beginning of the nineteenth century, yet historians have usually assumed continuity of the main framework.¹³ D'Ohsson remarks that unlike other rituals he observed as specific to Ottoman religious culture this one was performed by and for the imperial family. He describes a seating arrangement of sultan, palace servants, and 'ulamā' which makes the assembly a mirror of the empire qua imperial household. The ceremony is interrupted several times by the presentation of sweets and sherbet.¹⁴ As a piece of imperial business a letter from the *sharīf* of Mecca about the state of the Holy Sites and the pilgrimage was, according to d'Ohsson, presented in the course of the ceremony.

Süleymān Çelebi's *mevlid* poem was not the only literary representation patronised by the imperial dynasty in that period. Translations of *sīra* literature proliferated in the sixteenth century, as did poetry in his praise, culminating in a poetic masterpiece like Fuḫūlī's "Water *Qaṣīda*" (*şu qaṣīdesi*) and devotional

10 Since I started on this project, the richly documented work by Christiane Gruber has appeared, which contains a chapter on Ottoman devotions: Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One*. I thank her for making this important work available to me.

11 Rüstem, "The Spectacle of Legitimacy", 268; see Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, 516.

12 There is a vast literature, some of it in itself devotional, on this work (Hagen, "Mawlid, Ottoman").

13 d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, 2:358ff.

14 Selānikī recorded severe criticism that the funds of the mosque's endowment were being spent on luxuries to host the imperial elite, leading to the suspension of the *mevlid* in 1599; once reintroduced with the foundation of the Sultan Aḥmed Mosque, the hospitality extended to all those attending (Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan*, 516).

icons like Khāqānī's versified rendering of the Prophet's beauty, *hilye*.¹⁵ Lavishly illustrated works on dynastic history and Islamic and Prophetic history captivated the attention of imperial patrons.¹⁶ Murād III commissioned an illustrated copy of a *sīra* for his son, the future Meḥmed III, apparently building on the same artistic tradition and talent. He chose Muşţafā Đarīr's late fourteenth-century work, which at that time must have had a distinctly archaic ring to it and resonated with its epic heroic and hagiographic themes. In six volumes with 814 miniatures, it was probably the most spectacular project of Ottoman bookmaking of the time.¹⁷

At the time of the establishment of the imperial *mevlid* celebration, the House of 'Osmān already owned an impressive collection of objects connected to the person of the Prophet, several of them with supreme symbolic and ritual value, and the dynasty continued to add to it in the course of the following centuries.¹⁸ Unfortunately, the acquisition of many objects is not documented, or only in spurious and contradictory ways. It is often assumed in the secondary literature that at least the most important ones were seized in the context of the Ottoman conquest of Cairo in 1517, but the reality is more complicated.¹⁹ An early document suggests that a Qur'ān copied by the caliph 'Uthmān (r. 644–56) was gifted by the Mamluks in the fifteenth century, while another appears to have been sent by the viceroy of Egypt, Meḥmed 'Alī, in 1226/1811; other acquisitions date even later.²⁰ Here, we will focus on those objects that became the centre of specific rituals and obtained political significance starting in the late sixteenth century.

Awarding a cloak or mantle of honor (*khil'a*) is an old gesture in the moral economy of patronage in the Middle East. The recipient acknowledges the dominance of the donor, but is also elevated by his favour. A late legend (clearly etiological in character) explains that the poet Ka'b b. Zuhayr (d. 645 or 647) expressed his submission to the Prophet, whom he had previously satirised, in

15 Yeniterzi, *Dīvan şīrinde na't*; Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One*, 253–54; *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (TDVİA), s.v. "Hākānī". A periodisation of Ottoman literature on the prophet is proposed in Hagen, "Sira, Ottoman Turkish".

16 Fetvacı, *Picturing History*.

17 Three of the original volumes are still housed in the Topkapı Palace (Tamındı, *Siyer-i nebi*).

18 See Öz, *Hurka-i Saadet Dairesi*, for an early description of the collection.

19 That later historians attributed more of the collection to the early days of Selīm I's conquest of Egypt in itself reflects a tendency towards a certain kind of religiosity. It is telling that besides d'Ohsson the two authors most actively promoting the veneration of these objects are the traveller and prolific mythographer Evliyā Çelebi, and the historian Fındıklılı Silāhdār Meḥmed Ağa, who due to his office appears to have been in charge of the chamber of relics in his day.

20 Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One*, 273; Aydın, *Hurka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 91.

an ode (*qaşida*) as a poetic gift; the act was acknowledged with a counter-gift, a mantle from the Prophet, which was later acquired by the Umayyad caliphs and passed on through the ‘Abbāsids.²¹ It was this mantle that the Ottomans claimed to have seized in the course of the conquest of Egypt in 1517.²² It accompanied Mehmed III on his campaign against Eger in 1596; some sources attribute the miraculous turnaround of the battle to the sultan’s prayer in front of the mantle, or even to the sultan putting the mantle on.²³ In the seventeenth century prospective sultans went to pray in front of the mantle before their accession to the throne.²⁴ Several had the mantle, in an elaborate case, carried with them at all times. Muştafâ II held on to it as a kind of imperial talisman until his deposition, when he surrendered it to his brother Ahmed III, expressing his wish that it be a blessing.²⁵ Elaborate rituals of visiting the mantle under the full moon of Ramadan evolved since Ahmed III, turning it into a contact relic to be touched (kissed) directly or indirectly, with a kerchief or water that was then distributed.²⁶ Ceremonial regulations from the nineteenth century as well as d’Ohsson describe these rites in much detail.²⁷

While the mantle may in fact have come into Ottoman possession as early as 1517, the most plausible historical account states that the banner of the Prophet, named ‘Uqāb, was brought from Damascus to be taken on campaign against Hungary for the first time in 1593; prior to that, it had accompanied the Syrian pilgrimage caravan to Mecca on a regular basis. In the hands of the Ottomans, however, it assumed a distinctly military symbolism. In 1595, the banner was not returned to Damascus, but kept in Istanbul.²⁸ Its display in the palace yard marked the call for a new military campaign. As it was carried on campaign, being paraded through the streets of Istanbul by the army leaving for, or returning from, the front made it the only relic visible to the populace. On campaign often descendants of the Prophet were gathered around

21 The legend appears outside of the historical tradition proper, as Stetkevych, *The Mantle Odes*, has pointed out.

22 There are contradictory reports if the mantle had been kept in Cairo or was brought from Mecca at that time (*TDVİA*, s.v. “Hırka-i Sa’adet”).

23 These are examples cited by Schmidt, “The Egri Campaign”. One other account speaks of the Prophet’s sword in this way, but none mentions the banner. A double-page miniature in Ta’liqī-zāde’s *Egri Fetḥi Ta’rīkhi* shows the sultan on his way to the battle, with servant carrying the case with the mantle close behind him (Aydn, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 56–57).

24 It is noteworthy that this visit did not involve actually donning the mantle.

25 Vatin and Veinstein, *Le Sérail ébranlé*, 295.

26 Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, 151.

27 Sketches of those ceremonies are shown in Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*; Karateke, *An Ottoman Protocol Register*.

28 Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin saray teşkilatı*, 248–49.

it. The original banner was disintegrating when it came into Ottoman hands, and pieces of it were sewn into three different banners, only one of which was carried on campaign, while the others remained behind in Istanbul, a fact that shows that the inherent blessing of the object was more important than an antiquarian notion of historical integrity.²⁹ More than any other object, the banner became a symbol of government and legitimacy. In several instances, the banner was deliberately displayed to quell unrest among unruly troops. In 1826, it was shown on the pulpit of Sultan Aḥmed Mosque immediately before the loyal troops moved to crush the janissaries. This was the last time the banner was shown in public.³⁰

The banner highlighted the importance of the tomb of Ebū Eyyūb Khālīd el-Anṣārī, the standard bearer of the Prophet, near the Golden Horn.³¹ Eyyūb, as the Turks simply called him, had allegedly died during one of the first Muslim sieges in front of the walls of Constantinople in the seventh century, and had been buried in secrecy. His tomb was “discovered” by the spiritual advisor of Meḥmed II on the eve of the Ottoman conquest in 1453, an important element in the myth of Muslim Constantinople. A pilgrimage to this tomb, in the course of which the sultan was girded with a sword, was added to the complex of rituals of accession to the Ottoman throne with Selīm II in 1566. From Eyyūb’s shrine the sultan returned to the city on horseback and was greeted by the janissaries with a reference to the mythical “Golden Apple” as the site of eschatological conquest. A sword attributed to the Prophet was presented to Sultan Murād III shortly after his accession to the throne in 1574, but it is only with Muṣṭafā II, a century later, that the sword used in the ritual at Eyyūb is identified as that of the Prophet, strengthening the references to early Islam in the making of an Ottoman sultan.³²

Mantle, banner, and sword are frequently referred to as “relics” in modern scholarship, but Gruber’s term “vestiges” (translating Arabic *āthār*) appears more appropriate, leaving the term “relics” to denote bodily relics, such as hair and teeth, and other parts of clothing, such as the Prophet’s sandals. In comparison with the vestiges mentioned above, the ritual significance of the latter did not go beyond demonstrations of reverence in handling and storing

29 Aydın, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 74–85.

30 Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı devletinin saray teşkilatı*, 259–60.

31 Bozkurt, “Mukaddes Emanetlerin Tarihi”, 17, claims that rather than in the palace it was kept in the tomb of Ebū Eyyūb el-Anṣārī until 1730.

32 Vatin and Veinstein, *Le Sérail ébranlé*, 313–15; the source in this case is the Silāhdār, who, as noted, was per his office involved in the keeping of the imperial relics. In a later period, a sword attributed to the eponym of the dynasty, ‘Osmān I, was used instead, indicating the malleability of these rituals.

them. Nor were such relics exclusive to the dynasty, as many members of the elite appeared to have owned such items.³³ The exception were footprints of the Prophet: an impression in the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem marks the earthly starting point for the ascension to heaven (*mi'rāj*). A replica of that impression is found in the collection of the palace.³⁴ Late legends state that the Prophet's foot used to sink into rock surfaces like mud, explaining the existence of many more footprints.³⁵ In fact, several more were acquired by the Ottomans, suggesting that they were not all considered equal. Aḥmed I paid a substantial sum for the impression that had been kept in the mausoleum of Sultan Qā'itbāy in Cairo, to be placed in his own mosque after its completion. A dream, however, compelled him to return it, but before he did so he had an aigrette (*sorguç*) made in its shape, with the verses:

Why should I not wear on my head like a crown/the image of the foot
the Shah of the Prophets//He is the rose in the rose garden of felicity –/O
Aḥmed, always rub your face at the feet of this rose.³⁶

Wearing this aigrette with its representation of the Prophet's footprint on certain holidays and receptions, Aḥmed added not quite a new rite, but certainly a distinct statement about his and his dynasty's special relationship to the Prophet. The poem serves as a commentary on the practice, highlighting its expression of piety and humility.

1.2 Representation: Images and Vestiges

After this survey of Prophet-centred devotions, we can now turn to a number of intersecting structural elements, attitudes, values, and patterns that are shared by these devotions and constitute the characteristics of *pietas Ottomanica*. The observations in this and the following parts depend on detailed documentation of practices, since there is no exegetical discourse surrounding them that could provide direct access to contemporary theorisations, perceptions, or emotions involved.

33 Aydın, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 106.

34 Aydın, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 115.

35 Arnold and Burton-Page, "ḳadam sharīf".

36 Aydın, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 118. The last distich can also be understood as "always pay homage to this rose's pre-eminence".

The assembly of vestiges in the hands of the Ottomans all by itself must have created a powerful sense of the Prophet's immediate and physical presence, which is I argue a pervasive feature of *pietas Ottomanica*. Summarising an argument by Henry Corbin, Carl Ernst has pointed out how a rigorous doctrine of divine transcendence creates a need in the community for a more approachable, palpable intermediary figure, and shown how this place in the systematic logic was in Islam frequently assigned to the Prophet.³⁷ Especially Ibn 'Arabī's school of mysticism has, by proclaiming Muḥammad the "Perfect Man", made him, in Schimmel's words, "the suture between the Divine and the created world", and "the barzakh, the isthmus between the Necessary and contingent existence".³⁸ It is this "intermediate principle" (Schimmel), in its visual and palpable form, to which *pietas Ottomanica* is latching on. The re-presentation of the Prophet – in the sense of "bringing into the present" – first and foremost creates an aura of protection and blessing (*baraka*). We have seen how prayer in the presence of vestiges becomes more efficacious, and how they act as talismans for those carrying them or taking care of them.

We see, however, that the framing of the object at times matters significantly. The palace collection includes a key to the Ka'ba, which according to an enclosed letter was sent to Murād IV by the *sharīf* of Mecca, as a means to ensure victory when Murād IV set out to recapture Baghdad from the Safavids in 1635. Despite the promising symbolism, enhanced by the etymological connection between conquest (*fath*) and key (*miftāḥ*), it appears that this talisman failed to gain the sustained veneration afforded to the other vestiges. While it is said that Murād IV did in fact take it on campaign, it seems to have been separated from the others and recovered only in the nineteenth century.³⁹ If it was the lack of a direct connection to the Prophet, or the unabashed request for a position for the emissary from Mecca, that undercut the attempt to create a new vestige is impossible to decide.

In other instances, the framing involved additional elements which complicate the idea of representation. The Ottoman framing of the Holy Mantle is a case in point: to the degree that it is discussed at all the origin of the mantle is linked to the legend of Ka'b b. Zuhayr and the physical object presented to him by the Prophet, but Ka'b's poem, an icon of classical Arabic poetry, is nowhere present. Instead, the presentation in the Topkapı Palace quotes a different

37 Ernst, "Muḥammad as the Pole of Existence", 132.

38 Schimmel, *And Muhammad Is His Messenger*, 134.

39 According to a second document kept with the key today it was recovered from a mansion in Edirne. One wonders if the neglect on behalf of the Ottomans might not result from unspoken doubts about the authenticity of the object and the story (Aydn, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 162–67).

ode associated with a mantle narrative, that is, the *Qaṣīdat al-burda* of Būṣīrī (d. 1296?). This praise poem for the Prophet in highly complex *badī* style does not mention a mantle at all, but an extraneous legend says that Būṣīrī had been paralysed by a stroke, and woke up restored to health after the Prophet in a dream gave him a mantle. Both the framing narrative and the poem itself can be considered mystical calques on Ka'b's story, shifting the essential motive of repentance and the offer of protection from the political to the spiritual realm. As Stetkevych has argued, Ka'b's legend produced a "relic" (or vestige) as material object, but Būṣīrī's first and foremost created a miracle, and a poem as talisman that could effectuate not only spiritual but physical healing.⁴⁰ However, when the Ottomans decorated the chamber where the Holy Mantle was kept with the opening lines of Būṣīrī's *Burda*, they connected this poetic talisman back to a material object, initially unrelated, and created a new myth that combined the piety at the core of Būṣīrī's mysticism with the political significance of the mantle associated with the caliphate.⁴¹ It is remarkable that the interpretive narratives of Ka'b and Būṣīrī are nowhere quoted, but without their help the entire assembly lacks a coherent meaning.

Representation through objects needs to be juxtaposed with other forms and media, specifically, with imagery, on the one hand, and ritual, on the other. The immediacy that is inherent in a physical vestige sacralized by its place in the actions of the Prophet finds its counterpart in the lively imagination with which the illustrators of Ḍarīr's *Sīyer-i Nebī* grounded the Prophet in realities of everyday life. Sacred aura literally intersects with physical reality in a painting of newborn Muḥammad, shown with a veiled face, being breastfed by his nurse Ḥalima. Others show little Muḥammad in school, or in a brawl with a rival gang of Meccan youngsters.⁴² Later on in the chronology, examples abound of Muḥammad with his daughter and grandchildren in scenes of intimate family life. The Muḥammad of the text is the manifestation of cosmic substance, the *Ḥaqīqa Muḥammadiyya*, but in the pictures, he is also fully human, and directly relatable, in a kind of intimacy and an emotional, one might say sentimental, bond.

The Muḥammad of the *mevlid* initially seems to be very different from that of Ḍarīr's *Sīyer*: the *mevlid* text contains almost no references to the worldly life, but focuses on the advent and initiation of the Prophet, his birth and the ascension (*mi'rāj*).⁴³ But it is doubtful that Murād III and his contemporaries

40 Stetkevych, "From Text to Talisman".

41 Vatin and Veinstein, *Le Sérail ébranlé*, 294–96; more on the caliphate below.

42 Examples in Tanındı, *Sīyer-i nebī*.

43 I take the term "initiation" from Birkeland, *The Legend*.

would have perceived this difference, and would not simply emphasise one or the other aspect depending on context and spiritual need, and would be perfectly capable of thinking those contrasts together, as Shahab Ahmed suggested.⁴⁴ The *mevlid* is of interest here because the ceremony included another instance of re-presentation, in that, according to d'Ohsson, all those present rose when the narrative reached the moment of Muḥammad's birth, thus ritually welcoming the redeemer in their presence, turning what had been a passive reception of a textual performance into a dramatic enactment of the salvific moment of Muḥammad's manifestation on earth and in time.⁴⁵ Many manuscript versions insert at this point a passage that has become known as the "Welcome Chorus" (*Merḥabā bölümü*), with which the worshippers literally greet the arriving Prophet. The passage is certainly not by Süleymān Çelebi, but exactly the fact that this redaction is so persistent shows the ritual importance of creating the sacred time-space of the Prophet's presence.⁴⁶

The modes of re-presenting the Prophet were not static after the crystallisation of *pietas Ottomanica* in the late sixteenth century. The immediacy and intimacy of the illustrations of the *Siyer* was not replicated in later decades or centuries. Instead, more abstract forms took over. On the one hand, we find depictions of items of daily use associated with the Prophet, like a floor mat, prayer rug, and vessels for washing, depicted in works of pious literature.⁴⁷ As such, they appear to continue the notion of the Prophet's human character, and the simplicity of his daily life, but these are not depictions of extant vestiges but imagined objects. In this way, they put more distance between the pious viewer and the object of his devotion than earlier images, or the actual vestiges safeguarded in the palace. On the other hand, a new form of calligraphy emerged at the end of the seventeenth century, adding new dimensions to the question of representing the Prophet. The calligrapher Hāfız 'Osmān (1642–98) is credited with the creation of calligraphic panels that contain as their main text a *ḥadīth* with a description of the Prophet's physical appearance, framed

44 Note that the *mevlid* section in Darīr shows many similarities to Süleymān Çelebi, and may even have been a source of inspiration (Egüz, "Erzurumlu Mustafa Darīr'in Sīretü'n-Nebī'sindeki Türkçe Manzumeler (İnceleme-Metin)", 41–50).

45 d'Ohsson, *Tableau général*, 2:365.

46 Many supposedly scholarly editions of Çelebi's work (e.g. by Necla Pekolcay or Faruk Timurtaş) include this passage, although Ateş, whose edition still sets the standard, has shown that it derives from another *mevlid* work (Ateş, ed., *Süleyman Çelebi*). The parallels with Christian celebrations of Christmas are hard to overlook (Dedes, "Süleyman Çelebi's Mevlid"). Modern performances in Turkey, especially among women, included yet other ways of conjuring the bodily experience of Ḥalīma and the presence of the Prophet (Tapper and Tapper, "The Birth of the Prophet").

47 Gruber, *The Praiseworthy One*, 271.

by other *ḥadīth* and frequently the names of the *rāshidūn* caliphs.⁴⁸ The *ḥilye*, as the text and also the genre is called, visualises the Prophet no longer directly, as a (more or less) veristic image, but through a text, and thus again creates an additional step of abstraction. On the other hand, while images like the illustrations to Ḍarīr were contained in book, and not easily accessible, the *ḥilye* could be made into a tableau and hung on the wall for constant visibility, so that the greater abstraction was accompanied by a much greater presence of the image.

1.3 Representation: Place

To create a presence of the Prophet through image, vestige, or ritual raises the question of space. Does the mythical space-time of the Prophet's presence take the devotee to a "*tempus illud*", as Eliade would call it, and also a "*locus ille*"? The collection of sacred objects in the Ottoman palace includes a number of items distinctly linked to locality, and to the Ka'ba in particular, in addition to the key mentioned above, but it is hard to tell if anything like a ritual location of Mecca or the sacred district crystallised around it. There is no record of any ceremonies linked to these objects that would parallel those involving the vestiges mentioned before.⁴⁹ By contrast, their location within the spatial configuration of Ottoman power carries a great deal of symbolic significance in the late sixteenth century. Succeeding Murād III, one of the great mytho-poets and mystagogues of *pietas Ottomanica*, his son Meḥmed III created a veritable shrine for these objects when he placed them in a suite at the end of the third courtyard of the Topkapı Palace. In the architectural structure of the palace, as demonstrated by Necipoğlu, there is a progression through gates and courtyards to realms of ever higher privacy, secrecy, and sanctity. The suite in question thus is at the very heart, a kind of sanctum sanctorum, originally designated as the sultan's sleeping chamber. This sacred space, resting place of the charismatic person of the sultan (more on that below), now was turned into a kind of chapel for the mantle in particular, decorated with Būṣīrī's *Burda* around the walls and Q 48 in the dome. Necipoğlu may well be right when she speculates that this transformation occurred in response to the

48 Taşkale and Gündüz, *Hilye-i Şerife*.

49 The question of why no Ottoman sultan ever made the pilgrimage to Mecca has puzzled historians (Karateke, "Opium for the Subjects?"), with the aborted plan by 'Osmān II (r. 1622–24) as the possible exception. Without going further into this matter, I suggest that any answer has to take into account the shifting attitudes towards piety and sanctity of the sultans outlined here.

miraculous victory at Haçova in 1596.⁵⁰ The physical vestiges of the Prophet thus took over the space at the centre of the palace, of the imperial government. They claimed the true power of the empire and relegated the sultan, who moved into the harem, to a metaphorical role of vicegerency in the name of the Prophet. Metaphorically speaking, the Prophet at the centre of the palace also eclipsed two earlier sacred figures that served basically as dynastic patron saints, first Shaykh Edebali, father-in-law and source of blessing to ‘Osmān I, and then Eyyüb himself, as the previous link of Constantinople to the Prophet.

1.4 Charisma and Emotion

A second prominent feature of *pietas Ottomanica* besides these types of representation was a validation of charisma, by which I mean, following Max Weber, a (perceived) gift of leadership, power, magic, and heroism, which elevates those who possess it above the common people and legitimates disruptive and revolutionary action.⁵¹ In Sunnī Islam, the Prophet’s charisma was routinised, again in Weber’s terms, through traditionalisation, with the “authority of precedent” created by the leader’s “charismatic creativity in law and administration”.⁵² In Sunnī Islam, strictly speaking, the resulting systematisation has not left much space for charisma as such, but Ottomans were familiar with other manifestations in addition. Like many Turkic dynasties, the Ottomans, too, were believed by their followers to possess a hereditary royal charisma that enabled them to rule, and, while never articulated explicitly, manifests itself in political ritual, prominently in the process of death and accession of sultans.⁵³ On the other hand, a routinisation of Prophetic charisma through Muḥammad’s descendants was not limited to Shī‘ī Islam, but was widely accepted among many Ottomans, evident in the veneration of the *ehl-i beyt*, the family of the Prophet, and in theories that saw a continuation of the sainthood of the Imams through the Sufi orders.⁵⁴ However, there are more specific ways in which charisma was

50 Doubts remain because the miracle itself is missing in so many contemporary sources, so that it is not clear where and when this legend originated (Schmidt, “The Egri Campaign”). Nevertheless, in the exegetical tradition, Q 48 is often connected to the crisis at Ḥudaybiyya, in the sixth year of the hijra, as an example of victory after apparent defeat (Hagen, “Hudaybiyya”).

51 Weber, “Three Types”; Feuchtwang, *Anthropology*, chapter 7, 107–25.

52 Weber, “Three Types”, 9.

53 Vatin and Veinstein, *Le Sérail ébranlé*.

54 Bashir, “Muḥammad in Šūfī Eyes”, shows this for Central Asian early modern hagiographies; some of the same texts were very popular among Ottomans (Hagen, “*Sira*, Ottoman Turkish”).

an essential part of *pietas Ottomanica*. First, the vestiges discussed above can be understood as vessels through which some of the Prophet's charisma was transferred to later holders. As the earlier transmission of Ka'b's mantle to the 'Abbāsīd caliphs shows, it directly functions as imperial insignia indicating a claim to the right to rule. Blessing obtained to the regular visitor of the mantle, but the miracle of a victorious battle brought about by it is more, and could only obtain to a leader who is a charismatic figure himself. But the Ottoman sultans did not limit their charismatic claims to succession to the 'Abbāsīds. As Cornell Fleischer has shown, especially Süleymān I was considered by an inner circle in the palace as a messianic figure, based on esoteric knowledge of divine gifts and the cycles of salvation history.⁵⁵ Süleymān I's grandson Murād III likewise, in his mysterious dream accounts he sent to his spiritual advisor Shaykh Şucā', on many occasions expresses ideas of a messianic identity for himself. Just as much, if not more explicitly, Murād III identified in his dreams, in various ways, with the Prophet. He saw Muḥammad's light transferred to himself, with all his miracles except for prophethood, and he found himself equally beloved by God. In other dreams he was told that he would be a prophet if it were not for Muḥammad being the Seal of Prophethood, and that "God created the world for Muḥammad's sake, Muḥammad for Murād's sake, and Murād for his [God's] sake."⁵⁶ That is to say, Murād III experienced himself as culmination of a cosmic order that had previously manifested itself in Muḥammad. Of course, only the most intimate spiritual confidantes of Süleymān I and Murād III would have been aware of these claims at the time, which were not publicly declared, and would have been unintelligible and even heretic to the uninitiated masses. Yet this tradition of a sacred kingship linked to the Prophet is likely to have continued in some form in subsequent generations.

It is one of the essential features of charisma that it does not bear rules, and Markus Dressler has aptly drawn a distinction between charisma-loyal and scripture-loyal religiosity, which provides a useful analytical lens for us.⁵⁷ *Pietas Ottomanica* in fact displays a striking ambivalence towards the law – as the epitome of scripture-loyalty – that was based on the praxis of the Prophet. The associations with the Prophet examined here all centre on his heroic and spiritual persona rather than the medium of the revelation of the Qur'ān, and even less so the centre of a polity and the source of a legal and social order. The

55 Fleischer, "Seer to the Sultan"; Fleischer, "Ancient Wisdom".

56 Cf. dreams 178, 216, 544, 656, 778, 783, 965, 1427, and others, in Felek, ed., *Kitābū'l-menāmāt*.

57 Dressler, *Die alevitische Religion*, 17–20; it bears mentioning that this distinction is different from older conceptualisations as high vs popular religion, which do not fit the social realities. For a link of Ḍarīr's *Sīyer* to "popular religion", see Shoshan, *Popular Culture*.

essential moments that hold the promise of salvation are his birth, his entry into the world, and the ascension to heaven (*mi'rāj*), which culminated in the encounter with God. It is here that the Prophet received that ultimate gift from God, the right of intercession on the Day of Judgement (*şefā'at*). The hope for intercession is the crucial takeaway from the *mevlid* celebrations; just as the text almost immediately transitions from the narrative of the *mi'rāj* to the Prophet's death, so the *mevlid* becomes an element in rituals of mourning. The Prophet's intercession, however, is not won through punctilious observation of the law. While the law cannot be ignored, its perfect observation is deemed impossible, and every human remains a sinner in need of forgiveness, that is, intercession: this is the meaning encapsulated in the poem's title, "Means to redemption". *Şefā'at* therefore, as based in the Prophet's sacred status, his charisma, appears to sidestep the rational logic of accounting for deeds, and the measuring of reward and punishment inherent in the law. The only way to attain it is the embrace of the sacred persona of the Prophet in love, and to express this love in personal devotion, in the celebration of the Prophet's beauty, and in gratefulness for his role as redeemer.

The expression of love for the Prophet in the most profound, emotional, fervent ways and the hope for salvation feed on each other, and account for the effusive emotionality of *pietas Ottomanica*, which is another characteristic feature.⁵⁸ It is already present in the Shi'ī martyrologies of the sixteenth century, for instance in Fuḫūlī's *Garden of the Felicitous*, or the same author's *qaşīda* in praise of the Prophet, which uses every trope in the book to express the desire for the beloved. It speaks from the sentimental dimension of the illustrations of the *Siyer*, which often juxtapose familial intimacy with high drama, and it suffuses the poetic and narrative works on the Prophet of the time.⁵⁹ My point here is that emotion appears to be the one appropriate response to the display of charisma; more specifically, it is love, desire, as the central emotion of *pietas Ottomanica*, and – as Walter Andrews has shown – of Ottoman Sufism and Ottoman lyrical poetry more generally.

1.5 First Conclusion: The Political Implications of *Pietas Ottomanica*

This is, then, the moment to ask what *pietas Ottomanica* means in the interaction and mutual perception between the sultan, his servants, and his subjects.

58 A comparison with the emotional registers of baroque Christian religiosity, both Catholic and Protestant, is beyond the scope of this chapter, but would be very interesting.

59 Hagen, "Salvation and Suffering".

We are in a position to add nuance and complexity to a replication of the Marxian “opium for the people”.⁶⁰ In fact, the sultans appear in complicated and partly contradictory roles in mediating between the community, on the one hand, and prophetic power and blessing, on the other. Here we find the different intellectual moves that in their multilayered contradictions for Shahab Ahmed together constitute the idea of Islam. Süleymān I’s messianism and Murād III’s claims to a quasi-prophetic, post-prophetic, or meta-prophetic status in a sacred hierarchy separate them entirely from the community of believers; they share in an esoteric mystery that is utterly inaccessible to regular Muslims, who therefore are taught a different, exoteric faith.⁶¹ This polarity between the inspired sultan close to the Divine, and the masses, however, collapses when the sultan himself showcases his humility before the Prophet as the Pride of Creation, expressed so poignantly in Aḥmed I’s aigrette with the Prophet’s footprint. Humility in the veneration of the Prophet thus includes an egalitarian dimension (if we neglect the pitfall of humble pride). The mantle and the sword clearly resonate with familiar insignia of political power, and have thus been interpreted as symbols of the Ottoman claim to the caliphate as the succession of the Prophet’s leadership of the community. Yet, as we have seen, the devotions centred on the Prophet did not typically reference governance and law, *siyāsa* and *ṣarʿ*, that would be enacted by the sultan. As I have shown elsewhere, political decision-making, especially where it included consultation of jurisconsults and legal opinions, only in exceptional cases drew directly on political or military actions of the Prophet as guiding example.⁶² Imperial legitimacy, in other words, to the degree that it was at stake in *pietas Ottomanica*, did not highlight the sultan as divinely sanctioned successor-caliph of Muḥammad, and enforcer of his law, although these aspects clearly mattered in other contexts. Instead, legitimacy here accrued because the sultan modelled pious behaviour vis-à-vis the Prophetic vestiges, and the successes of his rule, manifested in victories on the battlefield, were divine affirmations of his personal piety. At one level, this sultanic piety of humble veneration and love for the Prophet modelled a type of religiosity for more general consumption. Aḥmed I’s order to publicly celebrate the *mevlid* spoke of the duty of the population to do penitence, yet it is hard to see the ritual as a tool for social disciplining as which religion is so frequently interpreted. Aḥmed I did not link penitence to a call for action or reform of mores and attitudes, so it is actually

60 Karateke, “Opium for the Subjects?”.

61 This distinction was captured by early modern Europeans as *religio duplex*: Assmann, *Religio Duplex*.

62 Hagen, “Hudaybiyya”.

deprived of its mobilising potential. Instead, the ruler here helps to facilitate a path to salvation through devotion, turning penitence into quietism. Other paths, however, are blocked for the general population, as the sultan did not assume the role of an impresario for the Prophetic vestiges for the general population, but only shared the privileged access to them with members of his own household. The cult of the mantle remained a ritual of very limited visibility, involving only the innermost circle of the imperial household. Different, for instance, from the *Heiltumsweisungen* of German emperors in the late Middle Ages, ordinary believers would never see the sacred object itself, or even be aware of the ritual that took place.⁶³ Again, however, to the degree that these practices registered outside, they would contribute to the image of personal piety, if not sanctity of the ruling sultans. This piety extended beyond death, as the body of the deceased sultan was washed on a bier outside the shrine of the Holy Mantle, and ‘Abdülhamîd II was buried with one of the kerchiefs that had been used to clean the mantle.⁶⁴ Thus, when considering the public message emerging from *pietas Ottomanica*, the personal dimension should not be underestimated.⁶⁵

1.6 Second Conclusion: *Pietas Ottomanica* in Context

In bringing devotional practices and beliefs centred on the Prophet together in an assumed complex that I termed *pietas Ottomanica* I have naturally been selective, since this specific type of religiosity obviously does not comprise all of Ottoman Islam. I therefore conclude by placing it in that larger context, and highlight some of the tensions and dynamics, and the interpretive possibilities that emerge from them. Given the limitations of space, and the obvious need for further research, all these conclusions have to be considered tentative.

First and foremost, *pietas Ottomanica* needs to be juxtaposed with a rigidly orthopractic religiosity – modelled on the Prophet per his *sunna* – that emerged and was promulgated frequently by men in the milieu of the Naqshbandî Sufi order, but not as a matter of Sufism proper. Its foundational document is Birgivî Meḥmed’s *al-Ṭarîqa al-Muḥammadiyya* together with its

63 A recent and exhaustive study is Bauch, *Divina favente clemencia*.

64 Aydın, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 40–49, contains an eyewitness account of the ceremony by the historian Aḥmed Refîq.

65 Many questions as to the main agents of *pietas Ottomanica* remain to be explored: besides the sultans themselves, servants of the sacred vestiges, like Silaḥdâr Meḥmed Ağa, and spiritual advisors, like Hüdâî, Şucâî, or in later periods Feyzullâh Efendi, need to be considered.

Turkish abridgement, both of which became vehicles for critique of the state and state-condoned practices, and later also for radical activism with the so-called Kadizadeli movement, which Marc Baer labelled a new pietism. The title of Birgivi's catechism invokes the Prophet, but in a way very different from *pietas Ottomanica*, lacking any sense of charisma and representation; one might argue that the catechetical approach precisely negates the mediator with the transcendent, and leaves the individual believer alone with God at the reckoning. How Kadizadeli religiosity, to the degree that there is a coherent type like that, influenced and transformed aspects of *pietas Ottomanica* remains to be studied.⁶⁶ Certainly, subsequent manifestations until the early eighteenth century had a profound impact on Ottoman Islam. The abstraction of the *hilye*, discussed above, was certainly much more palatable to this religiosity than the imagery of the *Siyer*. The increasing military importance of the Holy Mantle and the Banner in the course of the century might also to some degree be influenced by a more sombre and orthopractic tendency.

Rigid Sunnī orthodoxy, however, did not begin with Birgivi. The sixteenth century saw a sustained state campaign against the Shī'ī Qızılbaş, concomitant with other efforts to impose certain Sunnī standards on the Muslim population, such as regular mosque attendance, and to inculcate a minimum of knowledge about doctrine. Recent scholarship has conceptualised these efforts within a framework of Sunnitisation as confession-building, driven by the newly empowered 'ulamā' hierarchy. The question thus arises as to how *pietas Ottomanica* fits with this distinctly scripture-loyal and confession-conscious religiosity. Much remains to be studied here, but it should be stated very clearly that despite *structural* affinities with Shī'ī Islam due to the central role of charisma, *pietas Ottomanica* would have been perceived by all those involved in it as a distinctly Sunnī enterprise, in fact one that contributed to Ottoman superiority over their Safavid (Shī'ī) rivals. Throughout the practices examined here, there is no explicit reference to 'Alī. The intriguing category of metadoxy, which Kafadar once introduced to capture the confessional ambiguities of the frontier religiosity of the early Ottoman period, clearly does not apply at the sectarian level, although arguably it might point to clearly heterodox practices of praying in front of relics and vestiges, which would certainly have been condemned if applied to any other sacred person.⁶⁷

We should also notice that the motive of personal piety and the *pietas Ottomanica* in the religious legitimization of Ottoman rule in general competed

66 There is a rich literature about them, but not much in terms of their religious or pious politics proper.

67 Terzioğlu, "How to Conceptualize Ottoman Sunnitization".

and intersected with other legitimating discourses. Most prominently, an ancient tradition that foregrounded the maintenance of justice as the essence of rulership directly rejected attempts to enact religious norms on the Muslim population, culminating in the motto “The world will not be destroyed by disbelief, but by injustice.”⁶⁸ For adherents of this political understanding, personal piety of the sultan could easily be perceived as distraction at best; counterproductive at worst. On the other hand, *pietas Ottomanica* seems to align well with the broader concept of an Ottoman exceptionalism, which permeated certain strains of political thought over centuries. The exploration of this political theology has begun only recently.⁶⁹

Pietas Ottomanica builds on a notion of an omnitemporal Prophet outside of historical time, which facilitated the identification of sacred objects, or allowed “actual” vestiges of the Prophet and their representations function in similar ritual and talismanic ways. However, Ottomans were quite obviously cognisant of a historical Prophet, whose life and deeds on earth were recorded in books of history, and whose place in the chronology of history was precisely determined. There is another tension here, then, between the sacred persona of the Prophet and the historical figure who was, at least in some sense, limited by the conditions of earthly existence. The use or non-use of his political-military career in the canon of historical memory as political exemplar is one example of this tension playing out.⁷⁰ Another manifests itself in the bitter arguments whether the parents of the Prophet were infidels or not. While the proposition may appear logical, even inescapable from a strictly historical point of view, it was fiercely condemned by others who foregrounded the sacrality of his persona and the primordial character of his creation.⁷¹ The emergence of an all-encompassing sense of historicity was identified by Koselleck as a hallmark of modernity, yet, the tension between a historical and a sacralized Muḥammad certainly continued. The question is if it was ever resolved or even acknowledged in the course of the Ottoman path to modernity. Did Sultan ‘Abdūlmecīd acquire the letter from the Prophet to the Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt, that surfaced in Egypt in 1850 as a historical document, or as a sacred vestige/relic?⁷² The ambiguity continues to this day in the presentation of the shrine of the Holy Mantle in the Topkapı Palace Museum operated by a secular state, with

68 Hagen, “World Order and Legitimacy”.

69 Menchinger, “Free Will”; see also Menchinger, “Dreams of Destiny”.

70 Hagen, “Hudaybiyya”.

71 Dreher, “Une polémique à Istanbul au XVII^e siècle”.

72 Belin, “Lettre a M. Reinaud”; Mirza, “Oral Tradition”, 189–93, 209–13; Aydın, *Hırka-i Saadet Dairesi*, 96–97.

the tension between the historical truth claim and the religious significance shifting back and forth, more recently towards the latter.

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Model, Not Idol

The Recasting of the Image of Muḥammad in Mukhtaṣar sīrat al-rasūl by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792)

Martin Riexinger

Hitherto the academic study of “Wahhābism” – originally a derogatory term that will be used for the sake of convenience – has been primarily based on the study of a number of treatises of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, in particular his *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (Book on God’s unity) and *Kashf al-shubūhāt* (Unveiling of what is unclear). These works had been written under difficult circumstances before Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s alliance with the Āl Su‘ūd resulted in a successful state formation. They are short and allegedly refer primarily to the Qur’ān and *ḥadīth* and relatively little to writings of other scholars. This matter of fact has been used to belittle Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s credentials as scholar, as he allegedly lacked sufficient knowledge of the scholarly tradition apart from the works of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328).¹ This – problematic – image appears not least politically convenient as it allows dismissing violent aspects of Wahhābī teachings as not rooted in the scholarly tradition, if not as “un-Islamic”.

In contrast to his mentioned earlier writings, Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s most extensive work, *Mukhtaṣar sīrat al-rasūl* (Abridgement of the life of the Prophet), hardly attracted attention until 2010, neither in publications on the early history of Wahhābism nor in general works on the biography and veneration of the Prophet. One reason for this might be that Brockelmann wrongly dismissed it as “extract (Auszug) from Ibn Hishām”;² another one that neither state nor religious authorities in the third Saudi state were very eager to publish this text, for reasons to be discussed. The text was first printed in Egypt based on a manuscript of Sulaymān b. Suḥmān with whom Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā had edited the compendium of Wahhābī writings, *Majmū‘at al-tawḥīd* (Collection on God’s unity).³ This edition of the *Mukhtaṣar* was re-edited in

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- 1 On the selection of sources already quoted in these works and in his correspondence, see Riexinger, “Der Islam”, 321130.
 - 2 Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur, Supplementband II (GAL S II)*, 531; ‘Abd al-Malik b. Hishām (d. 833), compiler of the most common abbreviation of the lost *sīra* of Ibn Ishāq.
 - 3 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 236; Boberg, *Ägypten*, 253–57.

Saudi Arabia in 1980. A new edition in 2004 follows that text but contains – in addition to remarks on the *ḥadīth* quotations – a rejection of the affirmation of *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* (the “story of the cranes” or “satanic verses”) by Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb.⁴

The few mentions in academic literature before my own contributions in 2013 and 2015⁵ are, besides Brockelmann, to be found in Chase Robinson’s introduction to Islamic historiography, where he briefly characterises this *sīra* as one example supposed to justify and encourage *jihād*. The other two examples were written by the Almohad authors Ibn Ḥubaysh and Kalāī but Robinson did not realise that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb used the latter as a source for the *Mukhtaṣar*.⁶ In his article on the reception of *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* Shahab Ahmed points out that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb was among the few authors in the later centuries who – against the current – accepted the episode as true. He asserts, however, that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s position differs from the affirmation of Ibn Taymiyya, for whom it served to exemplify his understanding of the prophets’ infallibility (*iṣma*). As will be shown, he therewith misses completely the centrality of this episode in the *Mukhtaṣar* where it is mentioned twice.⁷ Furthermore, it also figures among the six most important episodes of the *sīra*, to which Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb dedicated a short treatise, and will be used here to highlight those episodes that he considered particularly relevant.⁸ Recently the publication of the text by the Islamic State (ISIS, Daesh) has attracted media attention, but this has not yet resulted in academic studies.⁹

In the following it will be demonstrated that the *Mukhtaṣar* was written for the purpose to undermine prophetologic conceptions that were prevalent among Sunnī Muslims in Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s lifetime; ideas which had come to dominate their understanding of the Prophet since the twelfth century. The centrepiece of these conceptions is the idea that Muḥammad and the prophets preceding him possessed certain attributes, which elevated them beyond the status of ordinary humans. In Sufi circles it was furthermore held that God had bestowed on the *awliyā’* properties which reflect those of the prophets on a lower level. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, however, did not write his account as a polemical treatise directly attacking the positions and arguments of specific authors. In the *Mukhtaṣar*, which was like many other works on the life and person of Muḥammad directed at a broader audience than that of the

4 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar* (2004), 24n4.

5 Riexinger, “Rendering Muḥammad Human”; Riexinger, “Der Islam”.

6 Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 123; Riexinger, “Der Islam”, 24–25, 35, 58.

7 Ahmed, “Ibn Taymiyyah”, 117.

8 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, “Sittat mawāḍi’”.

9 Croitoru, “Der Gründer”.

‘*ulamā*’, he works instead with selecting and discarding specific episodes and aspects of the *sīra* in order to refute or emphasise elements that he objects to or considers central. As the main source of inspiration for much of the later devotional literature on Muḥammad, *al-Shifā’ bi-ta’rīf ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā* (The healing through the determination of what the elect is entitled to) by Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ al-Yaḥṣubī (1083–1149) will be used as major reference for these positions, supplemented by some other works as well as by secondary literature.¹⁰ For the clarification of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s position, some other works by him and by the following generation of Wahhābī authors are taken into account. References to other puritan authors shall allow for an assessment of the position of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb within the puritan Sunnī current. As I have elaborated on the sources of the *Mukhtaṣar* in 2015, they are primarily mentioned here where this contributes to the argument.¹¹

2.1 The Structure and Content of the *Mukhtaṣar sīrat al-rasūl*

The most salient aspect of the *Mukhtaṣar* is that the book deals twice with the lifetime of the Prophet but as well with much more than that. It begins with a long prologue covering elements of Islamic myth and history from the creation of Adam until the era of the Mongol invasions. The *sīra* proper starts with the genealogy of Muḥammad and ends with the early ‘Abbāsīd period, but also contains two “flashbacks” to Nūḥ (Noah) and the institutionalisation of polytheism in Mecca, respectively.

2.1.1 *Prophecy in Universal History: The Prologue*

The prologue starts with an introductory paragraph in which Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb praises the “stories of those before and after Muḥammad” (*qīṣas al-awwalīn wa-l-ākhirīn*)¹² as “true armies of God” against which the enemies have no means of defence as they provide an array of examples for how God kept his promise to send messengers to mankind and to punish the disobedient. In addition, he introduces the *ḥadīth* which came to serve as the slogan of Wahhābism: “Islam began as something strange, and as something strange Islam will return as it began” (*bada’a l-islāmu gharīban wa-sa-ya’ūdu gharīban ka-mā bada’a*). Arguably it appears pertinent to translate *āda* as a modal verb

10 Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 135–92; Schöller, *Mohammed*, 114–18.

11 Riexinger, “Der Islam”.

12 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 9; here *ākhirīn* seems to supplement the Qur’ānic *asāṭir al-awwalīn* (Q 6:25); see: Tottoli, *Biblical Prophets*, 13.

with the meaning “to become again”, but as it will become clear in this contribution Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb understands tradition in the sense of a triumphant return into a hostile environment. His understanding conforms to that of earlier reform movements such as the Almohads and that of Salafī and Jihādī circles at present.¹³

Beginning his account of the prophets with Ādam, Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb considers it as most important that, according to Q 7:172, all mankind was drawn out of his back and replied to the question “am I not your Lord?” with “Indeed, we bear witness”. Ādam was then shown the supposed lifetimes of all prophets in the form of candles of different length. When he was told that only sixty years were destined for the lifetime of the prophet Dā‘ūd, he donated him forty of his own one thousand years. This gift, however, he would later stubbornly deny when the angel of death appeared to him: “He forgot, as mankind forgot (its oath), Ādam denied, as they denied.” Nine human generations after him would follow Islam. But then, out of an exaggerated love for the pious (*ghu-luwḥfī l-ḥubb al-ṣāliḥīn*) due to the lack of scholarship, mankind began to commit *shirk* by erecting and adoring statues of them.

The correction of this deviation was to come with Nūḥ, but Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb points out that even after Nūḥ mankind relapsed into *shirk*. God responded by sending other prophets, many of whom are unknown or – as in the case of Ṣāliḥ and Hūd – difficult to locate in time and space. Nūḥ serves here to highlight what the author regards as the essential aspects of prophethood.

Whereas the construction of the Ka‘ba is arguably the most important feat associated with Ibrāhīm in the Islamic tradition, another aspect ranks first in Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s account. For him it seems to be more relevant that in three instances Ibrāhīm consciously did not say the truth according to a report in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: (1) when he simulated an illness before his kin (Q 37:89); (2) when he claimed that it was the largest of idols, and not he, who had destroyed the idols (Q 21:63); and (3) when he presented Sara to the tyrant (*jabbār*) as his sister.¹⁴ Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb then quotes a long *ḥadīth* reported by Ibn ‘Abbās on how Ibrāhīm together with his two sons Iṣḥāq and Ismā‘īl discovered the well of Zamzam, settled in Mecca, and erected the Ka‘ba. God granted to Ibrāhīm that all future prophets would come from his offspring, although all but Muḥammad came from the line of Iṣḥāq, not Ismā‘īl.¹⁵ Notably,

13 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 9; Ibn Tūmart, *Kitāb a‘azz*, 266–67; Yasin, “Powerful Lecture”, 1:18–30 min.; “Salafitische Initiativen”; Riexinger, “Der Islam”, 5–6.

14 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 12–13.

15 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 13–16.

not all major prophets are treated in the prologue, as Mūsā and ʿĪsā obviously could not serve as good examples for the punishment of unbelievers.

From the construction of the Kaʿba Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb proceeds to the introduction of polytheism to Mecca, which he ascribes to ʿAmr b. Luḥayy. Like the people to whom Nūḥ was sent, he acted out of misguided piety. He imported a statue of the god Hubal from Syria, installed it in the Kaʿba, and acquired the role of a priest-king. Meccans never completely abandoned the rites Ibrāhīm had taught but added further ones which the authorities of the day approved of (*istahsana*) as a positive and thus permissible innovation (*bidʿa ḥasana*). The purpose of the anachronistic use of *fiqh* terminology is to equate the idolaters of the past to Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb’s opponents. The new practices also spread throughout the Ḥijāz. He explains the cult of al-Lāt in accordance with a *ḥadīth* as a practice that started with the veneration of the grave of a pilgrim who died on the way home from the *ḥajj*. As a result of such violations of the principle of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* (discussed below) Islam became something strange again.¹⁶

As for the period before Muḥammad’s birth, Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb recounts in detail the idols for which each tribe or clan around Mecca was responsible. He denounces the leaders of the Quraysh who infused innovations (*ibtadaʿū*) into the *ḥajj*-rites, as they considered the standing at mount ʿArafāt (*wuqūf*) not obligatory for the descendants of Ibrāhīm, and ruled that the Kaʿba should be circumambulated with all parts of the body uncovered except for the genitals.¹⁷

Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb then continues with the proofs for the divine message of Muḥammad. The first thing that the Prophet enjoined was the belief in *tawḥīd* and not prayer. Accordingly, he regards the idea that nobody “who acknowledges the direction of prayer” (*ahl al-qibla*) may be denounced as unbeliever as flawed. He asserts on the contrary that Islam has always been met with little responsiveness, and in order to guarantee that Islam remains upright (*yastaqīm*) the believers have to confront those who leave and dishonour this religion with hostility. This reflects most likely the controversy on this issue with Ibn ʿAfāliq, the leading traditional Ḥānbalī scholar on the Peninsula between 1740 and 1745. This is a hint that the text was written in the late 1740s at its earliest.¹⁸

16 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 16–17.

17 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 18–24.

18 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 24–25; the preaching of *tawḥīd* and the admonition against *shirk* are the first two of the “Sittat mawāḍiʿ”, 103–5; for the polemics against those who judge mildly those who do not pray, see: 31, 33, 35, 37; cf. Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-wahhāb*, 49–58, 83–89.

One exception to such general reflections on Muḥammad's prophethood in the prologue is the *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq*, which is used by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb in this instance to illustrate the concept of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*. For him the idea that anybody could possibly act as intercessor between God and man was explicitly refuted by the Qur'ānic verses related to this event.¹⁹ Furthermore, he stresses that true belief outweighs the bonds of kinship,²⁰ and it manifests itself in acts.²¹ Another important, specific point for Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb is that Abū Ṭālib, Muḥammad's uncle and the father of 'Alī, remained an unbeliever until his death and may not expect salvation in spite of his benevolence towards the Prophet and to the first Muslims (Q 9:113). Here he positions himself against the originally Shī'ī opinion that Abū Ṭālib was granted access to paradise. In the time of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, it seems that this idea had reached Sunnī, not least Sufī, circles, a matter that has not yet been studied in depth.²² It is noteworthy that the outstanding anti-Wahhābī author of the mid-nineteenth century Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān wrote a defence of Abū Ṭālib's salvation, titled *Asnā' al-maṭālib fī najāt Abī Ṭālib* (Excelling claims concerning the question whether Abū Ṭālib was saved). It was directed against a treatise by a certain Muḥammad b. Ḥasab Allāh whose opposing views had caused a scandal in Mecca.²³ Throughout this section, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb connects the text again to present issues with the help of an anachronistic language use. Both Meccan Qurayshī and Medinan Jewish opponents of the Prophet are referred to as '*ulamā'*'.

In the discussion of the *ridda*, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb goes into detail regarding the transgressions for which the tribes that gave up Islam after the death of Muḥammad were to blame. He stresses that all of them were punished with death and confiscation of property in case they did not repent. Their treatment at the companions' hands thus belies the assertions of contemporary '*ulamā'*' that Bedouins who do not pray and even deny resurrection may not be persecuted as long as they pronounce the first part of the *shahāda*. Punishment was even meted out against the Banū Ḥānīfa who committed the worst transgressions under the *ridda*, although they prayed and professed the belief in God. But their example is also used to demonstrate that active repentance – in this case their eager participation in *jihād* under the *rāshidūn* – cleanses off the stain of the *ridda*.²⁴

19 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 25–26.

20 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 26–27.

21 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 28.

22 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 25; Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, "Sittat mawāḍi'ī", 106.

23 Rubin, "Abū Ṭālib"; Brockelmann, *GAL S II*, 500–501.

24 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 29–33; Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, "Sittat mawāḍi'ī", 108–10.

Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb then turns to the appearance of extreme deviation in religious thought (*ghuluww*) during the Umayyad and early ‘Abbāsīd periods. In the case of Mukhtār b. Abī ‘Ubayd al-Thaqafī he points out that he prayed and took care that the law was applied in the territories entrusted to him, but when he claimed divine inspiration, the ‘*ulamā*’ unanimously considered him an unbeliever. The same was the case with Ja’d b. Dirham, who had been highly estimated for his orthopraxy and his knowledge, but once he denied certain attributes of God and that God had not taken Ibrāhīm as *walī* and not spoken to Ādam and Mūsā, his pious practice became irrelevant for the assessment of his faith. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb stresses that those who hold such positions are far worse than the Christians and Jews and hence deserve to be burnt alive unless they repent.²⁵

Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb then skips several centuries and points out that the Banū ‘Ubayd (Fāṭimids, ruling in Egypt 969–1171) spread unbelief and hypocrisy while they adhered to the rites of Islam. Therefore, all ‘*ulamā*’ denounced them as unbelievers and rejoiced when Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (r. 1174–93) put an end to their rule. The last example he refers to are the Mongols who began to pray after their mock conversion to Islam but did not accept the *sharī‘a* as a whole. Therefore, some ‘*ulamā*’ opposed them until they were expelled from the realm of the Muslims. Ibn Taymiyya is not mentioned by name, but the hint to his fatwa against the Mongol rulers of Mardin is unmistakable.²⁶

Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb concludes the prologue with the accusation that the ‘*ulamā*’ of his time insist that somebody who says *lā ilāha illā Llāh* may not be called unbeliever, although all the examples to the contrary are to be found in the very books they refer to.²⁷

2.1.2 *The Sīra Proper*

2.1.2.1 Ancestors and Events Shortly before Muḥammad’s Birth

The *sīra* proper is preceded by an account of the campaign of the Aksumite army general Abraha against the Ka’ba, which was protected against the Ethiopian assault by birds throwing stones on the army, thus irritating the war elephants, and the punishment of Abraha with a deadly disease thereafter. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb also mentions Muḥammad’s paternal grandfather, Abū Hāshim ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, his father, ‘Abd Allāh (with special consideration of

25 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 34–35. On Mukhtār al-Thaqafī, see Halm, *Shī‘ism*, 16–18; on Ja’d b. Dirham, see van Ess, *Theologie*, 2:449–58, 4:388–89.

26 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 36–37. On the recent reception of Ibn Taymiyya’s fatwa in Jihādī circles and its importance for them, see Michot, *Muslims*; Said, “Konferenz”.

27 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 38.

his role in the erection of the Ka'ba), and his paternal uncle Abū Ṭālib. His mother, Āmina, seems not to be worthy of consideration.²⁸

2.1.2.2 The Meccan Phase

The conception and birth of the Prophet as well as their circumstances are passed over in a stark contrast to the importance of these aspects in other *sīra* works and in the devotional literature about Muḥammad. Moreover, events usually associated with the childhood of the Prophet, in particular the opening of his thorax by two angels who purified and weighed his heart, are not mentioned. The first event from Muḥammad's life reported is his participation in the mercantile expedition led by Abū Ṭālib to Syria, where they encountered the monk Bahīrā who warned the party to protect Muḥammad from the Jews. It is neither mentioned that he discovered the mark of prophethood between his shoulders, nor that trees and stones expressed their veneration for Muḥammad. The marriage to Khadija and further expeditions to Syria are related. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb then recounts that Muḥammad began to seek reclusion at Ḥirā' because he wanted to come close to God and to distance himself from the detested idolatry.²⁹ Much space is dedicated to the restoration of the Ka'ba. After it had been damaged by a flood or landslide, Muḥammad participated in the rebuilding, and he was the one chosen to put the black stone in its place. One event that shows Muḥammad in a less favourable light is referred to as well: like others, he took his loincloth off to bolster his shoulders while carrying stones. As a result, his genitals became visible which earned him a reprimand by "someone", whereupon his private parts were never again to be exposed to any unbecoming spectator. Regarding this episode he follows Ibn Sa'd as well as Ibn al-Jawzī, but does not specify the person reprimanding Muḥammad, which is mentioned by both as Abū Ṭālib.³⁰

After this episode Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb comes back to Nūḥ as the archetypical prophet, and once more recounts the introduction of paganism in Mecca, apparently in order to contrast it with Muḥammad's prophethood. The generational model of an establishment and decay of Islam is repeated, as are also the etymological legends for the cults of the various gods, to which he provides some additions. It is equally stressed again that the rites of the *dīn Ibrāhīm* were never completely abandoned.³¹

28 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 39–48.

29 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 48–49.

30 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 49–51; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:93–95; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam*, 2:320–27.

31 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 51–56.

The account of the first revelation, based on the report ascribed to ʿĀ'isha, is presented by Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb as a decisive confrontation with paganism. He quotes Ibn Qayyim, who states that Muḥammad was told to address an ever-growing audience, starting from his immediate environment, then extending his call to the Arabs in the vicinity, thereafter to the Arabs as a whole, and finally to both worlds of mankind and jinn. Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb adds that God ordered him to practise *daʿwa* peacefully for ten years, until he allowed him emigration (*hijra*) and to fight against those who fought him, before engendering upon him to fight all those who associate someone else with God.³²

Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb continues by naming those who first responded to Muḥammad's call, without delving into the question of priority. According to him, the Quraysh were first not aware that Muḥammad was proselytising, until they realised that the idols were reviled by Sumayya, the mother of ʿAmmār b. Yāsir, who became the first martyr when Abū Jahl killed her with a lance. When Muḥammad publicly came forth with his *daʿwa* in the fourth year, this led to fighting during which Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ for the first time shed blood in the name of Islam when he beat up one of the *mushrikūn*.³³

By referring to the plight of the first Muslims in the face of Quraysh persecution and to the first emigration to Ethiopia, Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb prepares for the second discussion of the *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* in the text. He insists that the wording came from Satan but was physically uttered by Muḥammad (*alqā ʿalā lisānihi*), upon which the Meccan pagans prostrated. The revocation of the verses then led the Quraysh to intensify the persecution of Muḥammad and the Muslims.³⁴ Thereafter the conversion of ʿUmar, the death of Khadija, and the confirmation of Jewish scholars on the *rūḥ* and the Seven Sleepers are briefly mentioned.³⁵

The splitting of the moon, narrated as the central miracle of confirmation (*muʿjiza*), is treated rather briefly, as responding to the accusation of Muḥammad being a poet and magician. It is followed by elaborations on the relevance of miracles for prophethood, which will be dealt with later.³⁶ As for the stories of *isrāʾ* and *miʾrāj*, Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb further abridged the already short description in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's *Zād al-maʿād*. His presentation thus contrasts already starkly with Ibn Hishām but also with Ibn al-Jawzī, not to speak of later works. He mentions:

32 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 57–58; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Zād*, 1:20.

33 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 59–61.

34 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 62–68; with regard to *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* (63) he follows the wording in Ibn Saʿd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:137.

35 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 68–76.

36 Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 77–82.

1. The nocturnal ride on Burāq
2. Muḥammad leading the prayer of the prophets
3. The encounter with the earlier prophets
4. The vision of the saved in heaven and the damned in hell
5. Mūsā's envy because more members of Muḥammad's *umma* than of his own will enter paradise
6. The view of *al-bayt al-ma'mūr* (Q 52:4) and *sidrat al-muntahā* (Q 53:14)
7. The reduction of the numbers of daily prayers from fifty to five³⁷

After the depiction and discussion of these miracles, which did not impress the Meccans, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb relates the negotiations with the Medinan tribes of the Aws and Khazraj, which led to the *hijra* but also ended a 120-year feud between them, an occasion to stress the pre-eminence of the commitment to Islam over blood ties.³⁸

In the context of the *hijra* two further miracles of the Prophet get mentioned: the blessing of the emaciated sheep of Umm Ma'bad, which then gives milk to Muḥammad, and this Bedouin woman who praised him for it. The author remarks that Umm Ma'bad exalted the Prophet and his physical traits but did not ascribe anything to him that would elevate him beyond the status of an ordinary human. The other miracle is a poem in praise of him, which was heard over Mecca.³⁹ Events mentioned in relation to the arrival and settlement in Medina are the construction of the mosque, the marriage with 'Ā'isha, which in breach of the *jāhiliyya* conventions was concluded in the month Shawwāl, and finally the fraternisation of the *muhājirūn* and *anṣār*, which again brings out the priority of religious over family ties.⁴⁰

2.1.2.3 The Medinan Phase

With the Medinan phase Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb starts to present the course of events in an annalistic style. At the end of each year, he lists eminent persons who passed away during it, a feature that shows the strong formal influence of Ibn al-Jawzī's *al-Muntaẓam fī ta'rīkh al-umam wa-l-muluk* (The well-ordered

37 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 83–84; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Zād*, 1:47–48; cf. Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1:403–8; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam*, 3:25–32; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Wafā'*, 218–24; Qaṣṣallānī, *Mawāhib*, 2:339–98; Vuckovic, *Heavenly Journeys*, 47–72; Schöller, "Biographical Essentialism", 167. "The visited house" and "The lote tree of the outer limit" mentioned under (6) are two enigmatic Qur'ānic terms mostly interpreted as a heavenly correspondent of the Ka'ba and a plant in the highest heaven, respectively, on the basis of the *mi'rāj* traditions.

38 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 84–91.

39 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 94–95.

40 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 98–101; the central importance of the *hijra* is also highlighted by the fact that it is one of the "Sittat mawāḍi'", 106–8.

work on the history of the nations and rulers), one of the major sources of the *Mukhtaṣar*.⁴¹ In this section the thematic scope becomes very narrow: Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb focusses on the military campaigns, the abolition of pagan rites after conquests, and some central revelations. He passes over other aspects, as, for example, Muḥammad’s further marriages and his domestic life. To Muḥammad’s special qualities (*khaṣā’iṣ*) he dedicates a special paragraph. But even in these passages he emphasises his abilities as leader.⁴² Nevertheless two events which are not related to conquests are presented and they must hence be considered to be of central importance for the work in general: the so-called necklace affair, and the conversion of the poet Ka’b b. Zuhayr and his praise of Muḥammad’s military abilities in his famous panegyric *Bānat Su’ād*.⁴³

After listing the first skirmishes Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb mentions how ‘Amr b. al-Ḥaḍramī was killed as the first opponent of Islam.⁴⁴ The battle at Badr is then recounted extensively, with a final narration of a miracle of the Prophet: he threw a handful of sand in direction of the enemies, which was carried by the wind and thoroughly impaired the eyes of those who were touched by it.⁴⁵ The defeat at Uḥud is given equal attention, its unfavourable outcome explained with an intervention of Satan.⁴⁶

Whereas the defeat of the Jewish tribes in Medina is reported without much detail or explanation, the conquest of Mecca has a central position in the work. Muḥammad expresses his disgust at statues of Ibrāhīm and Ismā’il with oracle arrows in the Ka’ba and orders the idols to be smashed. Only after it has been converted into a mosque and Bilāl has called to prayer he enters the building. The description of the purification of the Ka’ba is supplemented by the reports on the expeditions of ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ and Sa’d b. Zayd, respectively, in which they destroyed the idols of Sawā’ and the statue of Manāt and eradicated the cults related to them.⁴⁷ This triumph is, however, followed by the campaign against the Banū Hawāzin who were defeated, accepted Islam, and underlined this by their commitment to prayer. As they soon afterwards (i.e. after Muḥammad’s death) gave up Islam again, the Muslims had for the first time “to taste the bitterness of defeat”.⁴⁸

41 Riexinger, “Der Islam”, 19.

42 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 105–5.

43 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 161–63; Sells and Sells, “*Bānat Su’ād*”.

44 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 106–7.

45 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 108–13.

46 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 115–20.

47 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 140–149.

48 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 149–55.

Another event of central importance is the siege of Ṭā'if and its consequences. As the siege did not lead to a victory for the Muslims, and nor did the Banū Thaqīf see the possibility to resist the Muslims for a long time, they sought negotiations. Muḥammad rejected their proposal because it implied a three-year period during which the cult of al-Lāt should remain permitted. To this episode Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb adds a digression on "the legal aspect of the Ṭā'if campaign", where he describes the pagan cults with a *fiqh* terminology which was used to legitimise the veneration of graves. He asserts that none of the pagans believed that the respective gods had created the world and were sustaining it. Nevertheless, they were adored in imitation to established custom (*taqlīd*). Truth thus was weakened whereas unbelief grew stronger. Such places are, however, never to be tolerated. By alluding to the *ḥadīth* "Islam began as something strange" he concludes stating that groups who eliminate such innovations would time and again turn up.⁴⁹

The account of the Tabūk campaign, the first conquest beyond the limits of the Arabian Peninsula, appears markedly in a less triumphalist way. The widespread disinclination to participate in *jihād* during the summer heat close to the date harvest was reprimanded and overcome by the revelation of Q 9:8. This serves Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb as an occasion to highlight the centrality of *jihād* in Islam.⁵⁰ In his account of the tribal delegations of tribes which arrived in Medina for declaring their submission to Muḥammad and their allegiance to Islam, he mentions the pseudo-prophet Musaylima among those who came along with the Banū Ḥanīfa and claims that he was already at this point in time exposed by Muḥammad.⁵¹

The final illness of Muḥammad and his death, as well as the succession of Abū Bakr after the negotiations at the *saqīfa* (veranda), are rather briefly treated. He stresses that Abū Bakr was acclaimed as caliph because of his ability to uphold the Islamic realm and guarantee the implementation of the Islamic norms. This reflects the theory of Islamic government as presented by Ibn Taymiyya, according to which leadership is legitimised by the ruler's ability to expand the realm of Islam and to reinforce its rules within it.⁵²

2.1.2.4 The *Ridda*

After his narration of the life of the Prophet, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb turns to the topic of the *ridda*, to which he dedicates the largest portion of his work

49 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 155–59.

50 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 164–69.

51 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 170–74.

52 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 174–82.

(30 of 229 pages in the edition used). He starts his account by listing the various forms in which different tribes apostatised, and he stresses once more the necessity to fight apostates until they repent by pronouncing both parts of the *shahāda*, accepting to pray, and to pay *zakāt*. Nevertheless, Abū Bakr had to face appeasers who tried to convince him to show mercy and to wait until everything would calm down again, against which he objected that the duty to wage *jihād* had not ceased with the Prophet's death. Furthermore, he mentions that 'Umar finally convinced Abū Bakr not to participate in the campaigns himself, as his possible death in battle might lead many fighters to defect. A justification of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's retreat to Dir'īyya?⁵³

As source for his account Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb refers to Wāqidi's *Kitāb al-ridda*, which, however, was most likely lost by then. It is extensively referred to by the Almohad historian Ibn Ḥubaysh (504/1111–584/1188) in his *Kitāb al-ghazawāt al-ḍāmīna al-kāfila* and in its abridged version titled *Kitāb al-iktifā' bi-mā taḍammanahu min maghāzī rasūl Allāh wa-maghāzī al-thalātha al-khulafā'*, authored by his pupil Kalā'ī (565/1170–634/1237). The dependence on Kalā'ī is discernible by the order of events, by certain poems, and, most relevant in our context, by the fact that the activities of the pseudo-prophet Musaylima are treated as something that happened during the *ridda* and not during the lifetime of Muḥammad.⁵⁴ Both these Almohad texts share with the *Mukhtaṣar* the intention to justify *jihād* against persons who declare themselves as Muslims, implying that it is permitted to kill them and to confiscate their property.⁵⁵ The adoption of an Almohad text by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb is remarkable as even Ibn Taymiyya abhorred this movement and issued a fatwa condemning Ibn Tūmart's indiscriminate use of violence.⁵⁶

A characteristic trait of the *ridda* narrative is the unrelenting description of the violence meted out to the apostates, including massacres in which whole clans were burnt alive. In the *Mukhtaṣar* these reports are juxtaposed here and in later sections with examples of those who returned to the straight path and in some cases even played an important role in the expansion of Islam. The violence is justified with the fact that the appalling news motivated some tribes to return to Islam.⁵⁷ Details concerning the specific aspects of each tribe's apostasy are only briefly listed, as are details about the

53 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 184–87.

54 Dunlop, "Ibn Ḥubaysh"; Pellat, "al-Kalā'ī". For further details see Riexinger, "Der Islam", 24. On the diverging chronology in Ibn Ḥubaysh's account, see Al Makin, *Representing the Enemy*, 102.

55 Ibn Tūmart, *Kitāb a'azz*, 261–66; Urvoy, "La pensée", 32–33.

56 Laoust, "Une fetwā".

57 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 184–209.

campaigns. A conspicuous exception is the role Musaylima is supposed to have played among the Banū Ḥānīfa. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb narrates in accordance with the Ibn Ḥubaysh/Kalā‘ī tradition that Musaylima used to bless the newborns and to pray for the sick, and that people addressed him with requests for miraculous help. One example is a rich father who saw all his sons die before they came of age. He then asked Musaylima to pray for his two sons to survive. The next day the elder one fell into a well and drowned whereas the newborn was lying in agony. Another example is that a well that Musaylima had blessed became salty immediately.⁵⁸ Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s presentation of Musaylima contrasts with other traditions where Musaylima’s activities are placed in the lifetime of Muḥammad for the first place, and where his thaumaturgical claims are explained by his tribesmen urging him to do “like Muḥammad”.⁵⁹

2.1.2.5 Further Events after the *Ridda*

From the *ridda* Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb proceeds to the ensuing conquests beyond the Arab Peninsula, but in a striking contrast with the campaign against the *ridda* he mentions them rather in passing, as if to convey the message that the internal consolidation of Islam was much more relevant than the external expansion. Both aspects are connected in the mention of the repentant pseudo-prophet Ṭulayḥa, who fell in the *jihād* against the Persian Empire, as one of the important events under the caliphate of ‘Umar.⁶⁰

Accusations of nepotism, which do often explain the opposition to ‘Uthmān, are not repeated by Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb. Instead, he explains the rift among the Muslim community that started under his reign with political dissatisfaction among the Kufans, which was exacerbated by the conspiracies of the converted Jew ‘Abd Allāh b. Saba’. He anachronistically calls the assassins of the third caliph *mujrimūn khārijīyyūn*, and thus anticipates the fragmentation that was to ensue from the following events.⁶¹

According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, ‘Alī came forth with the claim to be caliph after ‘Uthmān’s death, but only after the *ahl al-Badr* had pledged allegiance to him. He thus discounts the Shī‘ī allegation that his claim was based on a designation by Muḥammad. He briefly mentions Mu‘āwiya’s refusal to pledge allegiance to him, implying his intention to revolt. But the account then moves quickly on to the Battle of the Camel, which according to him started after ‘Ā’isha’s emissaries Ṭalḥa and Zubayr had been expelled from Basra and her

58 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 196–98.

59 Riexinger, “Der Islam”, 38–39.

60 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 215–19.

61 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 220–26.

attempt at reconciliation had failed. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb then claims that it was the Khārījites, instigated by ‘Abd Allāh b. Saba’, who were to be found in both camps and who provoked fighting, which without them would not have taken place.⁶² In the context of the battle he mentions another miracle. After ‘Ā’isha’s camel had collapsed, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, who was supposed to guard her, sacrilegiously extended his hand into her howdah, to which she responded saying, “the one to whom belongs this hand violates the *ḥaram* of the Messenger and shall be punished!” to which the malefactor responded, “with the fire of this world or the next world?” upon which she responded, “No, from this world!” whereat his hand was burnt off immediately. Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb then stresses that ‘Alī treated ‘Ā’isha respectfully and let her return to Medina.⁶³

About the Battle of Ṣiffīn he shortly notes only the most important aspects, whereas he dedicates much more attention to one event in its aftermath, that is, the address of ‘Alī’s emissary Ibn ‘Abbās to the Khārījite defectors in their camp at Ḥarūrā’. Being asked which acts of ‘Alī they object to, they responded:

1. The mediation contradicts Q 12:40.
2. Had the opponents been believers, it would have been unlawful to combat them; if they were unbelievers, however, it would have been permitted to persecute them, to take them as prisoners, and to take their property. But ‘Alī allowed neither to take prisoners nor booty.
3. He accepted to abstain from using the title *amīr al-mu’minīn*.

Ibn ‘Abbās responded to (1) that the Qur’ān encourages to mediate in case of marital disputes and the danger of retaliation and to (3) that the Prophet had abstained from using the title *rasūl Allāh* for tactical reasons. To objection (2), which is lacking in many accounts other than Ibn al-Jawzī’s, Ibn ‘Abbās replied that, with ‘Ā’isha, one of the *ummahāt al-mu’minīn* was on the battlefield. Would they, then, enslave their mothers and have intercourse with them? After this argument, all but a few repented.⁶⁴

After this episode Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb briefly mentions the insurrection against ‘Alī by the remaining Khārījites, without naming Nahrawān, and his assassination by Ibn Muljam. Ḥasan is praised for giving up his claim for the caliphate and it is argued that his stance was preferable to that of his father, as he too should have acknowledged that he had a majority against him. Nevertheless, one should not denounce followers of one camp as

62 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 226–27.

63 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 227.

64 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 228–29; Ibn al-Jawzī, *Muntaẓam*, 5:124–25; Riexinger, “Der Islam”, 29–30.

unbelievers – this term should be reserved for the Khārijites – but nonetheless the most praiseworthy are those who abstained from siding with one of them. Ḥusayn's death at Karbalā' is briefly mentioned, as is also the second *fitna*, with regard to which Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb does not express any preferences. Under 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz the community supposedly returned for a brief period to circumstances similar to those under the Rightly Guided Caliphs, whereas with Ja'd b. Dirham somebody claimed for the first time that the Qur'ān was created. According to Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Yazīd b. al-Walīd was the last generally accepted caliph, and the *umma* has never recovered from the split that the third *fitna* (i.e. the overthrow of the Umayyads in 750) had caused.⁶⁵

In the early 'Abbāsīd period, the author discerns all the problems which in future were to haunt the Muslims. As the main culprit he singles out Ma'mūn, who had Greek books translated while true Muslims like Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal were subjected to the *miḥna*. The *Mukhtaṣar* closes with a remark about the decay of scholarship due to becoming text based, a process that had started under Maṣṣūr, when *tafsīr* and *ḥadīth* (Mālik b. Anas, 'Amr al-Awzā'ī, Sufyān al-Thawrī, Ma'mar b. al-Muthannā), *ra'y* (Abū Ḥanīfa), and *maghāzī* (Wāqidī) were written down.⁶⁶ For the question of why Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb finishes the *Mukhtaṣar* with such a rant against the text's own prerequisites I cannot yet offer a satisfying explanation.

2.2 Objectives of the *Mukhtaṣar*

The *Mukhtaṣar* has two interconnected main objectives. For the first, this *sīra* is obviously designed to justify concrete policies of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb and his Āl Su'ūd allies, as well as to ward off criticism of their position. The other objective is to formulate a puritan prophetology which is embedded in a circular (or better undulate) concept of history and supposed to serve as a general legitimisation of the Wahhābī project of religious reform.

2.2.1 *The Justification of Specific Measures*

An iterating topic in the *Mukhtaṣar* is the well-known Wahhābī concept of *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya* and the idea that its violation is to be considered *shirk* amounting to apostasy. This is reflected in many instances where Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb remarks that the *mushrikūn* do not deny the existence of God and his status as the Highest Lord, but that they rather violate his rights by asking

65 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 230–35.

66 Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 235–36.

beings inferior to him for intercession. One prominent example is the double affirmation of *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq*, where the concept of praying for *shafā'a*, held by Muḥammad's Qurashī opponents, is contrasted with Islam. Another one is the digression on the legal content of the campaign against Ṭā'if, where Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb equates the pagan rites and their institutionalisation with anachronistic terms derived from *fiqh* and Sufism, in order to demonstrate how reprehensible the veneration of graves is, leading to the conclusion that such practices are to be abolished immediately.

By choosing Ibn al-Jawzī's version of Ibn 'Abbās's speech to the Khārijites at Ḥārūrā', Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb addresses a legal issue as well. The second objection, that 'Alī did not allow the combatants in the Battle of the Camel to make prisoners and booty, is lacking in most other accounts of the event. Ibn 'Abbās explains this prohibition by alerting to one specific circumstance: with 'Ā'isha, one of the *ummahāt al-mu'minīn*, present on the battlefield, enslaving her, and – implicitly – thereafter having sex with her would be like fornicating one's own mother. The selection seems to have been motivated by the intention to dismiss the use of 'Alī's injunction in the Battle of the Camel as a valid example for one legal objection which was raised against Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb and his allies: the distinction between *jihād*, where prisoners and booty may be taken, and the struggle against Muslim rebels (*bughāt*), who are supposed to be repelled and impeded, but who shall not be persecuted and captured.⁶⁷

2.2.2 *The Transformative Reformulation of Prophetology*

2.2.2.1 Undermining the *Mawlid*-Complex: The Denial of the Prophet's Pre-existence

The insistence on Ādam as the first human and the neglect of the begetting, birth, and childhood of Muḥammad are intimately related. With both, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb tries to undermine the belief in the pre-existence of Muḥammad as a divine light preceding all other creation. This concept is perhaps the most salient aspect of the devotion for the Prophet Muḥammad that began to flourish in the eleventh century. The transmission of the Prophetic light completed with 'Abd Allāh's impregnating of Āmina, as reported in Ibn Hishām, does not imply the concept of Muḥammad's pre-existence, but in the course of the centuries and most likely under the influence of Shī'ī prophetology and imamaology this idea gained ground in Sunnī circles.⁶⁸ The concept has also led

67 Abou El Fadl, *Rebellion*, 34–37.

68 Rubin, "Pre-existence"; Katz, *Birth*, 13–24; Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 157–58; the question of the *nūr muḥammadī* and Muḥammad's pre-existence was a central controversial issue between puritans and Sufis: Riexinger, *Ṣanā'ullāh Amrītsarī*, 243; Preckel, "Islamische

to the development of new rituals. Given that Muḥammad is conceived of as pre-existent, his birthday is worth being commemorated as the manifestation of this light in the earthly world.⁶⁹ The most important expression of these beliefs is therefore the celebration of Muḥammad's birthday, a tradition that emerged among Sunnīs in Syria and the Arabian Peninsula in the late twelfth century, most likely inspired by the state-sponsored celebration under Fāṭimid and/or Twelver Shī'ī practices, although no definite proof for this has been established. The Shī'ī connection was harped upon by Sunnī opponents of the *mawlid*.⁷⁰ In the course of centuries its celebration spread among Muslims in all regions, and it played a particular role in many regions to which Islam came in close connection with Sufism. It was, however, constantly resented by puritans like Ibn Taymiyya who denounced it as *bid'a* together with other place- and time-related rituals apart from Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr.⁷¹

A typical element of *mawlid*-related poetry is the emphasis on the begetting, birth, and childhood of Muḥammad associated with the mentioned variety of ominous signs, whereas his life in the phase of prophethood gets little attention. Related to the denial of Muḥammad's luminal pre-existence are miraculous events linked to his conception like Āmina's pregnancy, during which she saw the city of Bosra, and the idols breaking and the holy flames extinguishing at the moment of his birth.⁷² This selection is thus completely reverted in the *Mukhtaṣar* with its clear focus on revelation and the establishment of a society based on the revealed laws, and its neglect of Muḥammad's childhood.

In addition to the Muḥammadan light, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb refrains from mentioning other characteristics which could suggest that Muḥammad possessed characteristics that transcend those of ordinary humans. When he relates the encounter with the monk Bahirā, he does not mention the mark of prophethood, and also passes over the veneration which the trees and stones in the vicinity allegedly expressed for Muḥammad. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb equally omits the purification and weighing of Muḥammad's heart by two angels, an episode which in Ibn Hishām and many other *sīra* works is associated with the childhood of the Prophet. Tied with this complex is the question of Abū Ṭālib's status as unbeliever. Katz shows that *mawlid* texts tend to ascribe a salvific

Bildungsnetzwerke", 478–83. The question of whether Muḥammad cast a shadow (Yaḥṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 1:731) was very controversial in South Asia but seems not to have been considered relevant among Wahhābīs; on the concept as an expression of psychological essentialism, see Svensson, *Människans Muhammed*.

69 Katz, *Birth*, 13–15, 24–29.

70 Katz, *Birth*, 1–7, 158; Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 301–14.

71 Memon, *Ibn Taimīya's Struggle*; Katz, *Birth*, 153–68; Ukeles, "Sensitive Puritan".

72 Katz, *Birth*, 29–39.

status to personal relationships to Muḥammad and thus consider persons who were attached to him during his childhood as saved.⁷³

The lack of any hints to the effect that Muḥammad and the prophets possessed personal characteristics that set them apart from ordinary humans is a clear response to the ascriptions of such traits, a phenomenon which is not restricted to devotional literature. A very good example is Qādī 'Iyād's assertion that only the physical side of the prophets, including death and decay, is human, whereas their souls and interior (*bawāṭin*) resemble that of the angels, as they have to encounter the angels when revelation occurs, which would exceed the capabilities of ordinary humans.⁷⁴ For Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, only the revelation and his actions are aspects which single out Muḥammad, and therefore deserve to be noted.

The question remains whether this implies that Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb objected to the idea of the Prophetic light, the mark of prophethood, and the purification of the heart as presented by Ibn Hishām, or whether he considered them to be hardly relevant and unsuited for those lacking firm knowledge, who are thus prone to the temptation of *shirk*. An indication tending towards the latter is the *Mukhtaṣar sīrat al-rasūl* written by his son 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb. This more voluminous work lacks the embedding of Muḥammad's life in the universal history of prophethood, but repeats many of the episodes his father had considered particularly important with regard to the ontological status of Muḥammad.⁷⁵ He dwells, however, more extensively upon the childhood of Muḥammad and follows the *sīra* of Ibn Hishām when it comes to the auspicious signs accompanying begetting, pregnancy, and birth, purifying of the heart, and the encounter with Bahīrā, although the space dedicated to Muḥammad before prophethood remains limited in this work as well.⁷⁶ Another indication that Wahhābīs and most probably Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb considered these aspects as not necessarily untrue but of little relevance or potentially dangerous is an ordinance issued after the conquest of Mecca which prohibits the recitation of childhood events from the *sīra* exclusively, without his actions as a prophet.⁷⁷

73 Katz, *Birth*, 123–28.

74 Yaḥṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 2:224–27; Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 164–66: “unirdischer Wesenskern”.

75 Ibn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 23–24 (exposure of the private parts during the rebuilding of the Ka'ba), 93 (*qiṣṣat al-gharānīq*).

76 Ibn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 13–14, 16; as opposed to that he also mentions that Muḥammad's private parts became visible during the reconstruction of the Ka'ba (24) and he affirms *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* as well (93).

77 Ibn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb, “al-Risāla al-thāniya”, 47–48; Margoliouth, “Wahhābiyya”, 187; Katz, *Birth*, 171.

With regard to the neglect of the childhood in the *Mukhtaṣar*, one further aspect deserves to be mentioned. According to Katz the strong role of female figures in this kind of devotional literature might explain the popularity of this genre among women, as it compensates for the lack of female role models in the Islamic tradition in general. Seen in this perspective, Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s narrative has a very “male” focus.⁷⁸

2.2.2.2 Readjusting the Understanding of *‘Iṣma*

‘Iṣma is an attribute which Muslims ascribe to the prophets, and in the Shī‘ī case also to those whom they regard as their legitimate successors. Frequently, the term is translated as “infallibility”, but this choice means siding with one specific understanding of it, which prevailed in Shī‘ī circles from early on. Many Sunnīs, however, objected to such an interpretation, and it became never uncontested among them. Nevertheless, a tendency to understand the term increasingly as being free from sin and error among Sunnīs is unmistakable, and it is a decisive element in the devotion to the Prophet Muḥammad flourishing in Sufi circles. It would, however, be wrong to associate this notion with “popular Islam”, an expression of “lived religion” or a “low tradition” opposed to a more scripture-based “high tradition”. Justifications for this position were formulated by eminent theologians like Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī and by leading *fuqahā’*. The most important example of the latter was articulated by Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ. His emphasis on the complete freedom of the Prophet from error and sin is, however, not derived from Sufism, but from Mālīkī legal scholarship with its emphasis on the Medinan tradition.⁷⁹

The main opponent of this tendency among Sunnī Muslims in the post-classical period was Ibn Taymiyya, who insisted that *‘iṣma* does not preclude that prophets say false things or commit minor sins. The term has to be understood in the sense that God guarantees that falsehood will not prevail, and that the prophets will correct what was untrue, and even repent.⁸⁰ Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb follows Ibn Taymiyya on *‘iṣma* and highlights this position within his choice of episodes from the life of Muḥammad and the other prophets. The most salient example is the affirmation of *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* which appears twice in this work, and also in the shorter “Fī sittat mawāḍi‘ manqūla min sīrat al-nabī” (Six issues reported from the vita of the Prophet). Hence it can be regarded as being of central importance for the overall purpose. Therefore, Shahab Ahmed’s position that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb has diluted Ibn Taymiyya’s

78 Katz, *Birth*, 49–50.

79 Rāzī, *Iṣmat*; Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 183–84.

80 Ahmed, “Ibn Taymiyyah”, 71–78, 86–90, 123.

stance because he lets Satan put the frivolous words on Muḥammad's tongue can be dismissed. With respect to this episode Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb follows Ibn Taymiyya, who discussed and affirmed it in his *Minhāj al-sunna*, and in his special treatise on the topic, which Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb apparently was aware of. In contrast to this opinion, the episode was anathema to Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ, who dismissed it on the basis of the unsoundness of the relevant traditions. In addition, he uses the prophetological circular argument that it cannot be relevant as it contradicts the general image of Muḥammad.⁸¹

Like other ideas of Ibn Taymiyya his position on this event was rediscovered and propagated in the circle of the Kurdish scholar Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (1025/1616–1101/1686), which played a decisive role in the resurfacing of puritan doctrines from the eighteenth century onwards, and in the surge of puritan movements in that period: Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb was a disciple of the Indian scholar Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī, a disciple of Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī's son Abū l-Ṭāhir al-Kūrānī. Ibrāhīm had written a treatise on this subject where he considered the idea that the words were laid on Muḥammad's tongue by Satan.⁸² Presumably that had led to a renewed interest in the issue in the Ḥijāz, as witnessed by the extensive discussion of the episode in the chronicle *Simṭ al-nujūm al-'awālī fi anbā' al-awā'il wa-l-tawālī* (The chain of sublime stars on reports of the first ones and the followers) by the Ḥijāzī historian al-Iṣāmī al-Makkī.⁸³ Nevertheless it is apparent that the affirmation of the *qiṣṣat al-gharānīq* was a minority position in the period when the *Mukhtaṣar* was written. A rare late example from outside this circle is Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī, who in *Ithāf al-sāda al-muttaqīn*, his commentary on Ghazālī's *Iḥyā'*, briefly states that this event happened with reference to Ibn Ḥajar.⁸⁴ In contrast to that, many scholars otherwise inspired by Ibn Taymiyya do not accept the story. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya does not mention it in *Zād al-ma'ād*, neither does Ibn Kathīr when he deals with the life of the Prophet in his *Tārikh*: he explicitly refutes the story with reference to Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ when he elaborates on Q 22:52–54 in his *Tafsīr*.⁸⁵ His position was adopted by Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Shawkānī, an inspiring figure for the puritan Ahl-i Ḥadīth as well as for Rashīd Riḍā, in his *tafsīr*, *Fath al-Qadīr*.⁸⁶ As a consequence Rashīd Riḍā objects strongly to Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's

81 Yaḥṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 2:288–310.

82 Guillaume, "*Lum'at*"; Nafi, "Taṣawwuf"; Nafi, "Teacher".

83 'Iṣāmī, *Simṭ*, 327–31; Guillaume, "*Lum'a*"; Ahmed, "Ibn Taymiyyah", 116; Riexinger, "Der Islam", 42–43.

84 Reichmuth, *Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī*, 293, 305.

85 Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 1987–90.

86 Shawkānī, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 3:628; on the general aspects of his works and the influence on puritan movements, see Haykel, *Revival*; Riexinger, *Ṣanā'ullāh Amritsarī*, 108–21; Preckel, "Islamische Bildungsnetzwerke", 120–33.

affirmation of the episode in a footnote to “Sittat mawāḍīʿ”.⁸⁷ For the strong rejection by the latter and by other followers of Ibn Taymiyya from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards it has to be taken into account that the episode played a major role in Christian polemics against Islam. In the most recent Saudi edition of the *Mukhtaṣar* the editors have added a footnote where they reject the historicity of the episode with reference to Albānī’s criticism of the relevant *ḥadīth* material in his *Naṣb al-majānīq ‘alā qīṣṣat al-gharānīq* (Positioning the catapults in direction of the story of the cranes).⁸⁸

Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s presentation of this episode is clearly motivated by his tendency to distinguish between *tawḥīd* and the demand for intercession. The fact that it is treated as one of the most important topics in his *sīra* ties in with his stress on the merely human essence of Muḥammad. Apart from *qīṣṣat al-gharānīq* two other episodes are supposed to undermine the idea that prophets are completely free from sin, error, or affliction by Satan. Whereas the discussed episode demonstrates that Muḥammad was not protected from satanic interference, even after he had received divine revelations, the story of the restoration of the Ka’ba implies that the Prophet was not yet aware of what is forbidden and licit, and that he could even be reprimanded by one of his pagan contemporaries. Notably, the idea that Muḥammad’s genitals were ever seen by anybody is rejected by Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, for whom all of the prophets were protected against major transgressions even before receiving the divine message.⁸⁹

The intention to readjust the understanding of *‘iṣma* with regard to the prophets in general explains as well the choice of the three instances where Ibrāhīm said factually incorrect things as one of the two relevant aspects from the life of this prophet.

2.2.2.3 Downplaying the Importance of Miracles

Miracles have always been an important element in biographies of the Prophet, as well as in other genres associated with his person. Concomitant with the development of the idea of Muḥammad’s pre-existence and the understanding of *‘iṣma* as complete freedom from error and sin an incremental tendency with regard to miracles ascribed to Muḥammad is undeniable. The little importance attached by Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb to miracles in the *Mukhtaṣar* is therefore one of the salient characteristics of this text.

87 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, “Sittat mawāḍīʿ”, 105n1.

88 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 24n4; Albānī, *Naṣb*.

89 Yaḥṣubī, *al-Shifāʿ*, 1:159, 2:335–39.

Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb wrote the *Mukhtaṣar* in an apparent protest against the exuberance of miracles that characterises later biographies of Muḥammad, although he does of course not deny miracles as expressions of divine omnipotence. A look at the miracles affirmed by him provides some clues as to how he considers their importance. As the central miracle of affirmation (*mu'jiza*) the splitting of the moon is of course mentioned, but rather in passing. So is the *mī'rāj*, which is connected to central elements of the revelation, not least to prayer and Last Judgement. But Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's treatment consists of an abridgement of the already rather short treatment in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's *Zād al-ma'ād*, and thus contrasts markedly with the inflation of reports relating to this event in other biographical accounts and in the *mawlid* poetry, where the ascension serves to illustrate Muḥammad's outstanding qualities.⁹⁰ The divine intervention in the Battle of Badr, and the milk which the emaciated ewe of Umm Ma'bad suddenly could provide, contributed to the success of Muḥammad's prophetic mission. Only the voice praising Muḥammad which could be heard over Mecca at the time of the *hijra* to Medina is a miracle that serves no other purpose than to glorify Muḥammad. Miracles are also mentioned in association with earlier prophets (Nūḥ and the Flood, Ibrāhīm healing the paralysed hand of the tyrant), with the Ka'ba, which was protected against Abraha's army, and with the family of Muḥammad after his death when Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr was punished with the loss of his hand for holding it into 'Ā'isha's howdah.

The selection of miracles does not only differ with regard to number but also with regard to quality from the literature reflecting a devotional attitude to Muḥammad. Many miracles are supposed to glorify Muḥammad, whereas others help to solve concrete problems of the believers, like hunger and sickness, and they are apparently modelled after the miracles of Jesus in the Gospels. Moreover, the miracles are detached from a function related to the success of the prophetic message and they are rather not explained as divine intervention interrupting the ordinary course of matters (*kharq al-'āda*) but as events emanating from the essence of the prophets, which implies the control of the elements or the ability to communicate with animals.⁹¹ In this sense *baraka* is associated with water touched by Muḥammad and even his urine and blood,

90 On the general conception that these two are the most important miracles of Muḥammad, see Gramlich, *Wunder*, 23.

91 Yaḥṣubī, *al-Shifā*, 1:617–35.

substances otherwise impure.⁹² Water emerged from between his fingers,⁹³ he brought forth water with his *baraka* to saturate the believers, and multiplied food for them,⁹⁴ and he made his weakened wet nurse Ḥalīma able to breast-feed again.⁹⁵ He was venerated by and communicated with animals, plants, and minerals, and he was even able to resurrect dead animals.⁹⁶ Ṣāliḥī goes even further than Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ in emphasising the centrality of miracles with regard to Muḥammad by attributing to each single one the same value as to the Qur'ān.⁹⁷

But Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb clarified his stance on the role of miracles in prophecy not only with the help of the selection and omission of material from the tradition. Immediately after mentioning the splitting of the moon, he adds a theological explanation as to why miracles are of so little importance in the life of Muḥammad in comparison to that of the other prophets, and what implications this has for the present. With regard to Q 17:59, which is considered a response to the contemporary opponents' challenge to transform silver to gold or to remove the mountains around Mecca, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb points in particular to the miraculous punishments described in the Qur'ān in which whole nations have perished. With the prophethood of Mūsā and 'Īsā the focus shifted already to repentance and conversion. But with the appearance of Muḥammad there occurred a further shift. He was supported by miracles, but central to his prophethood was the institutionalisation of *jihād* and the ḥadd punishments, two devices which the believers are enjoined to apply for the punishment of the obstinate or for forcing them to repent. Nevertheless, one would be mistaken to consider the attitude of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb and other puritans as a kind of rationalism, as in fact some modernists like Sayyid Aḥmad Khān have done. Miracles as expression of divine omnipotence are possible, and they are to be accepted if attested by the Qur'ān or by sound *ḥadīth*. That the authority of these sources even applies to matters of cosmology led to negative responses to modern science in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁹⁸

92 Yahṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 1:157–59, 249–50.

93 Yahṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 1:550–54.

94 Yahṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 1:555–62.

95 Katz, *Birth*, 41.

96 Yahṣubī, *al-Shifā'*, 1:563–616; Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 105–6, 202, 287–88, 293, 323.

97 Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 296.

98 Riexinger, "How Favourable?"; Riexinger, "Ibn Taymiyya's Worldview"; Tamer, "Curse of Philosophy".

2.3 The Denial of *ʿilm bi-l-ghayb*

One of the few non-military events in the Medinan phase which Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb deems worthy of mention is the so-called necklace affair when ʿĀʾisha lagged behind the campaign and returned to it in the company of Ṣāfwān b. Muʿaṭṭal. In spite of her excuse that she was searching for a necklace she had lost and was discovered by the young companion, who accompanied her to protect her, numerous *ṣaḥāba*, most prominently ʿAlī, accused her of *zinā* and demanded her to be punished accordingly, putting stress on Muḥammad who tried to avoid a decision. According to the standard account, the problem was solved for Muḥammad by the revelation of Q 24:11–26, which in addition to the punishment of adulterers contained the punishment of those who falsely accuse others of *zinā*.⁹⁹

The reason for Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb’s choice of this episode is most likely that Muḥammad’s wavering until the revelation could serve him as argument in another issue puritans had with the devotional attitude of the Prophet. This was the question whether “knowledge of the hidden” (*ʿilm bi-l-ghayb*) was one of the ontological attributes of Muḥammad, against which they maintained that any such knowledge could only result from divine revelation. In a moderate form this idea can be found with Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ: he does not claim that the prophets had full knowledge of worldly affairs as their preoccupations are the hereafter and the rules of the *sharīʿa*,¹⁰⁰ and information of future and past events are described as *ʾijāz*,¹⁰¹ but he claims that the knowledge about the revelation (*sharīʿa*) has been complete from the start¹⁰² as exemplified by neither Ibrāhīm nor Muḥammad ever being in doubt.¹⁰³

Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhāb never elaborated more explicitly on this issue. Other early Wahhābī texts, however, corroborate the impression that the nature of Muhammad’s knowledge was a relevant topic at that time. His son explicitly connects the episode to this question¹⁰⁴ and his grandson ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan insists that Muḥammad was only aware of future events including “the Hour” when God had revealed them to him.¹⁰⁵

99 Schoeler, *Charakter*, 119–70.

100 Yaḥsubī, *al-Shifāʾ*, 2:269–70.

101 Yaḥsubī, *al-Shifāʾ*, 1:518–21.

102 Yaḥsubī, *al-Shifāʾ*, 2:272.

103 Yaḥsubī, *al-Shifāʾ*, 2:231–33, 236–37.

104 Ibn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 279.

105 ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥasan, “Bayān”, 253–54.

2.3.1 *Delegitimisation of the Awliyā'*

Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's attempt to undermine the belief in the special status of Muḥammad implies an attack on the claims of the *awliyā'* whose exalted status is inferior to that of the Prophet, but nonetheless derived from it. By depriving the person of Muḥammad of all superhuman aspects not related to revelation and divine intervention to support it, any claims that would lift the saints out of the flock of ordinary humans is implicitly denied. But Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb does not restrict himself to attacking the concept of sainthood indirectly, as his presentation of Musaylima can be seen as a caricature of what was expected from *awliyā'* and often claimed for them by themselves or at least by their entourage. Whereas it is commonplace that miracles with unintended consequences occur with pseudo-prophets and expose them as liars,¹⁰⁶ Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb deselected a tradition of reports where Musaylima responds to requests to effect miracles "like Muḥammad". Instead, he opted with Kalā'ī for a tradition that does not presuppose that the most remarkable aspect of Muḥammad was that he effected miracles providing relief in worldly matters.

Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's caricature does not aim at "official" Sufi doctrines. Sufi literature treats *karāmāt* in association with secrecy or insecurity of *awliyā'* about their status, whereas brazen self-advertisement is denounced.¹⁰⁷ In contrast it presents a realistic assessment of what the popularity of the *awliyā'* was based on in real life. Miracles of healing were associated with *awliyā'* and considered a reason for visiting graves from early on,¹⁰⁸ and they are an important feature of hagiographic literature.¹⁰⁹

2.4 The Vision of Muḥammad and the Concept of History

The *sīra* never developed into an official discipline within traditional Muslim scholarship, and actually many of the works dedicated to the life and characteristics of the Prophet were written quite late.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, it would be false to downplay the importance of the genre. Biographies of the Prophet are supposed to function as fiction of coherence in the sense of Assmann, that is, a text or narrative supposed to demonstrate the "connection between ... the whole and the parts".¹¹¹ With regard to the function of the *sīra* genre in the

106 Gramlich, *Wunder*, 57.

107 Gramlich, *Wunder*, 60–63.

108 Beránek and Ťupek, *Temptation*, 29, 37–40.

109 Gramlich, *Wunder*, 306–15.

110 Schöller, *Mohammed*, 86–87.

111 Assmann, *Ägypten*, 17–18.

Islamic context this means that the purpose is to explain Muḥammad's role in universal history, usually in a kind of *Heilsgeschichte* (salvation history), in order to make the related norms plausible.¹¹² The targeted audience were not least the laymen who listened to recitations – combined with explanations – from the *sīra* in edifying sessions in mosques. In this respect the *Mukhtaṣar* resembles other biographies of the Prophet, whereas it differs radically with regard to purpose and content of the fiction of coherence.

2.4.1 *Transformative, Not Thaumaturgical*

It can be problematic to identify emic categories in a religious discourse with theoretical concepts from the sociology of religion. In the particular case of this *sīra*-cum-pamphlet, we indeed find Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb juxtaposing two religious attitudes that practically coincide with goals of religious actions that the sociologist of religion Stephen Sharot has labelled as “thaumaturgic” and “transformative”. Whereas with the help of thaumaturgic actions “special dispensation and release are sought from specific ills within a nature and a society whose basic features are not expected to change,” the goal of transformative religious action “is to produce a fundamental or pervasive change in nature, society, and individual being or nonbeing”.¹¹³ Sharot does not consider both functions mutually exclusive; instead he shows that the thaumaturgic and the transformative have in the course of history often been combined in compromises if not syntheses. He does not identify these goals with any specific religions either but rather asks which role these goals play in different religious traditions and how they can be related to elite–laymen relations in these religions. A common feature of the tension between the transformative and the thaumaturgical is the delegation of the thaumaturgical function to beings inferior to the “high gods”, but more susceptible to the supplications and demands of humans as well as to their rewards.¹¹⁴

Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb was far from formulating such a synthesis. In contrast he defines a transformative understanding of Islam as mandate to order society according to the blueprint of the divine law. To this he juxtaposes a misunderstanding of religion as a means to alleviate life. Hence Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb does not only reject the cult of graves and the veneration of saints, because they are directed at beings inferior to God, but objects to such practices because they are based on a faulty assumption about the purpose of religion. He makes this

¹¹² Schölller, *Exegetisches Denken*, 32.

¹¹³ Sharot, *Comparative Sociology*, 36; the other two goals, “nomic” (to maintain the order of the world) and “extrinsic” (non-religious goals), are not relevant in our context.

¹¹⁴ Sharot, *Comparative Sociology*, 247–29.

explicit by quoting Ḥasan al-Baṣrī in the prologue: “belief is not adornment (*tahallin*) and desire (*tamannin*), it weighs heavily on the heart, and deeds bear witness to it.”¹¹⁵ Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb himself repeats again and again that belief manifests itself in correct acts. The correct relation to Muḥammad is thus an obligation. In contrast to this, the devotional attitude to Muḥammad, and the relations to the saints modelled after it, have the character of a deal within an “economy of salvation” where *baraka* is paid for with devotion.¹¹⁶

The *Mukhtaṣar* addresses Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s concern about a misconception regarding the person of Muḥammad on the basis of the corruption of religion. Where Muḥammad should be a model for emulation, he has been transformed into the supreme thaumaturge.¹¹⁷ Miracles, of which only a few are true and relevant according to Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, have overgrown the message. Therefore, he straightens them out of the narrative. His attitude towards miracles is far from Islam-specific but has parallels in other religious traditions, where reformist currents wanted to establish a clear primacy of the transformative over the thaumaturgical aspects by establishing the primacy of the word (“rede”) over the miraculous deeds (“wercke”, “wunderthaten”), as Luther does in his preface to the New Testament.¹¹⁸ This is most aptly illustrated by one episode from the Medinan phase. In a competition between the two poet brothers Muslim Bujayr and pagan Ka’b b. Zuhayr, the latter finally submits, becomes a Muslim, and composes the panegyric on Muḥammad, titled *Bānat Su’ād*. The poem is characterised by the imagery of *jāhiliyya* poetry and emphasises the warrior qualities of Muḥammad. This fits perfectly into Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s concept, who hence quotes numerous lines. No mention, however, is made of the cloak Muḥammad allegedly bestowed on Ka’b. The legend of this cloak implies the transmission of Muḥammad’s *baraka* to privileged believers, and it does not least provide the starting point for Būṣīrī’s *Qaṣīdat al-Burda*, one of the most popular texts glorifying the thaumaturgical Muḥammad.¹¹⁹ The implicit attack on the panegyric, devotional poetry with its strong emotive character can be interpreted as a statement against what Harvey Whitehouse has defined as the imagistic mode of religiosity, which leads to arousal through relatively rare and highly emotive rituals. The mode of religiosity Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s understanding of Islam represents is

115 Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, *Mukhtaṣar*, 28.

116 Katz, *Birth*, 63–103; Svensson, *Människans Muhammed*, 176–93.

117 On this tension, see also Svensson, *Människans Muhammed*, 98–101.

118 Luther, “Vorrede”, 11; I thank my colleague Hans Jørgen Lundager for alerting me to this parallel.

119 Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 320–21: “Der inhaltlich, insbesondere der dogmatische Abstand zwischen beiden Mantelgedichten ist riesig”; Svensson, *Människans Muhammed*, 162–75.

as opposed to that doctrinal, based on routinised, less emotive practices supposed to support the internalisation of norms.¹²⁰

The reduction of the miraculous in the *sīra* has one more function. It is supposed to stress the commonality between Muḥammad and ordinary humans in all matters not related to revelation. It thus also serves the purpose to demonstrate that his actions not related to revelation can be emulated. This aspect has to be seen in connection with Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s concept of history, the final aspect of our discussion.

2.4.2 *Back and Forth, Not a Radical Shift: The Concept of History and the Implicit Mandate for Action*

In his analysis of the veneration of Muḥammad, Tilman Nagel has demonstrated that literature dedicated to the devotion of Muḥammad divides history sharply up in two radical different phases, the darkness before and the “new eon” illuminated by the Muḥammadan light.¹²¹ As opposed to this, the concept of history underlying the *Mukhtaṣar* is quite pessimistic, with a tendency towards the negation of a *Heilsgeschichte*.

The life of Muḥammad is part of a sequence of continuous movements backwards and forwards. Ādam had been instructed in *tawḥīd* but generations later, his descendants succumbed to the veneration of their pious ancestors and established paganism. Nūḥ was the first prophet assigned with the task to call for a return to *tawḥīd*. Divine punishment led to a re-establishment of Islam, which, however, was succeeded by further relapses, only to be corrected by further prophets within a specific regional setting. With Mūsā and ‘Īsā the purpose of divine intervention shifted from punishment to confirmation. With Muḥammad not only prophecy came to an end, but the establishment of the divine order was from now on imposed on the believers, with the example of Muḥammad’s founding of an Islamic society by the means of *jihād* and the *ḥadd* punishments. Muḥammad is not the central purpose of creation in this concept of history, contrary to a common opinion expressed in the unsound but often-quoted *ḥadīth qudsī* “*law lā-ka mā khalaqtu l-aflāka*”.¹²² Instead, he has a function within creation and for the created beings.

That the re-establishment of Islam would constantly become necessary is demonstrated with various examples. Already during Muḥammad’s lifetime the Banū Hawāzin apostatised, and after his death the Muslims had to face

120 Whitehouse, *Arguments*; Katz, *Birth*, 104–23, 128–39; Svensson, *Människans Muhammed*, 264–75.

121 Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 253–54.

122 Nagel, *Allahs Liebling*, 326–27.

the challenge of the large-scale defection known as *ridda*. Thereafter various heretics and pseudo-Muslim rulers appeared but were defeated by scholars and/or military and political leaders. The clue to the interpretation of these examples is delivered by the *ḥadīth* “Islam began as something strange”, which also exists in a longer version, which concludes with a blessing of those who re-establish (*yusliḥūna*) what the people have corrupted from Muḥammad’s *sunna*. By an implicit description of the present times in the framework of the terminology used for the pre-Islamic *jāhiliyya*, Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb’s concept of history emphasises the necessity to follow the model of Muḥammad and to re-establish the divine order.¹²³

And this is the junction where prophetology and the concept of history merge: whereas the clearing of the image of Muḥammad of every superhuman aspect is supposed to demonstrate that this act of emulation is feasible, the description of the present shall highlight that this emulation is urgent.

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123 Thus, the text is an example for the monotheist self-perception as “counter-religion” (*Gegenreligion*) as a radical break with the polytheist past and for the recurrent emergence of puritan movements within monotheist religions which claim to reenact this secession after periods of decay: Assmann, *Mosaische Unterscheidung*, 26, 53; Assmann, *Totale Religion*, 16–17.

- Ibn Kathīr. *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm*, ed. ʿA. al-Ḥ. b. Maḥmūd and M. b. N. Abī Jabal, Cairo, Dār Ṣādir, 2010.
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The Prophet in a Muslim Age of Revolutions (ca. 1775–1850)

Stefan Reichmuth

The period between 1775 and 1850 holds its place in European and American historical consciousness as a time of far-reaching transformations and revolutions that initiated a definite break with the conventional frames of political, religious, and cultural legitimacy. At the same time, this period is connected with the economic and imperial expansion that was to establish European rule over large parts of the world in the course of the nineteenth century.

Whereas this Euro-American “Age of Revolutions”¹ with its political and industrial dimensions continues to be discussed for its lasting heritage and its global repercussions, a striking series of Islamic reformist and revolutionary movements can be found in the same period. Sometimes they originated from the activities of prominent Islamic scholars and Sufi brotherhoods, or emerged in response to growing dissatisfaction with local and regional holders of power. Not infrequently this led to the foundation of new dynasties or even to novel forms of statehood. Examples have been documented for many parts of the Muslim world, in regions as distant as West Africa, South East Asia, and China. What will be presented here is a short overview and exploration of the scholars, brotherhoods, movements, and newly founded states involved in that process. We will indicate the different regional contexts within which they were located, and also the commonalities and connections which they shared despite their far-reaching distances from each other. Many of the early movements were first committed to local religious and sociopolitical changes and transformations before being drawn into the confrontation with European or Chinese imperial expansion. Others were directed from the start against foreign encroachment.

1 The title refers to Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, chapter 3, 86–120; and Armitage and Subrahmanyam, eds, *Age of Revolutions*. See already the seminal monograph published in 1962 by Hobsbawm, *Age of Revolution*.

An intensified attachment to the person and model of the Prophet that often went well beyond common local practice can be found with many of these movements. There are four features of this attachment in particular that will be discussed in the second part of this chapter. The first involves the frequent use of reports on Prophetic sayings and deeds (*aḥādīth*), and their lines of transmission (*asānīd*), often in combination with similar “chains” (*salāsīl*) leading back to early Sufi masters. The second includes an evocation of spatial links associated with the Prophet’s burial place, Medina, and the creation of local memorial landscapes connected with him and his companions. This often contributed to the rise of a local culture of benedictions of the Prophet and to the emergence of a rich poetry in praise of him, in both Arabic and local languages. The third and perhaps most crucial trend reclaimed the Prophet as a model of emulation, and a source of religious and political mobilisation. An orientation that went along with declared attempts to revive and re-establish his *sunna*, to fight blameful innovations (*bidaʿ*), and to imitate his way of life and that of his companions for personal and collective conduct, including an exodus (*hijra*) to escape persecution and *jihād*, and sometimes even the establishment of a caliphate. Tales of encounters with the Prophet in dreams would sometimes confirm the calling. Attention will be finally given to the variegated eschatological claims which were put forward by Muslim leaders and their movements: they included expectation of the approaching end of the world, the appearance of the figure of a renewer of religion (*mujaddid*) at the beginning of the new thirteenth Islamic century, or even the Mahdī. In the Iranian case of the movement of Sayyid ‘Alī Muḥammad the Bāb (1844–50), it finally went beyond the limits of Islam, opening a new Prophetic era. Of course, any attempt at developing common general perspectives for the widely distant regional cases that we will cover here must remain tentative for the moment.

3.1 Islamic Movements and Revolutions and Their Regional and Global Contexts (ca. 1775–1850)

The following short reference list of the Islamic scholars, brotherhoods, and movements involved in cultural and political reform, and of new Islamic polities that were founded by them, is arranged geographically from West to East and followed by a comparative analysis that locates them in the context of the “revolutionary age” as discussed by some prominent global historians. Their different modes of attachments to the Prophet will then be outlined in the second part of this chapter.

- I. West Africa²
 - Kunta-Bakkā’iyya (Qādiriyya) in the Western Sahara and Niger region (ca. 1750–1825)³
 - Imamate of Futa Toro (ca. 1770–1807)⁴
 - Imamate of Futa Jalon (founded 1725, consolidation ca. 1770, Imamate 1725–1896)⁵
 - Ḥamdallāhi Imamate in Masina (1818–64)⁶
 - Islamic movement founded by ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye in the Central Sudan (1774–1817), Sokoto caliphate (1804–1903)⁷
 - *Jihād* movement of the Tijānī leader al-Ḥājj ‘Umar (d. 1864) in Senegambia and the Niger region (since 1849)⁸
- II. North Africa
 - Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Abū Qabrayn (d. 1793) and the spread of the Raḥmāniyya in Kabylia and other parts of Algeria; participation in anti-French rebellions since the 1840s⁹
 - Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815) and the spread of the Tijāniyya;¹⁰ *jihād* of al-Ḥājj ‘Umar in Senegambia (see above)
 - Emirate and *jihād* of ‘Abd al-Qādir (Algeria, 1832–47)¹¹

2 For general overviews of the West African *jihād* movements, see Last, “Reform in West Africa”; Robinson, “Revolutions in the Western Sudan”; Loimeier, *Muslim Societies in Africa*, 108–29.

3 Batran, *Qadiriyya Brotherhood*; Batran, “Kunta”; Willis, “Western Sudan”, 555–65; Brenner, “Concepts of *Ṭarīqa*”; Rebstock, *Maurische Literaturgeschichte*, vol. 1, no. 552, 155–70.

4 Robinson, *Chiefs and Clerics*; Robinson, *Holy War*, 59–71; Ware, *Walking Qur’an*.

5 Boulègue and Suret-Canale, “Western Atlantic Coast”, 522–27; Person, “Atlantic Coast”, 273–79; Sow, ed., *La femme*; Sow, ed., *Chroniques*; Diallo, *Les institutions*; Robinson, *Holy War*, 49–59; Bohas et al., eds, *Islam et bonne gouvernance*.

6 Bâ and Daget, *L’empire Peul du Macina*; Brown, “Caliphate of Hamdullahi”; Oloruntimehin, *Segu Tukolor Empire*; Sanankoua, *Un empire peul*; Robinson, *Holy War*, 77–81, 282–316; Loimeier, *Muslim Societies in Africa*, 122ff.

7 Last, *Sokoto Caliphate*; ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye, *Bayān wujūb al-hijra*; Hiskett, *Sword of Truth*; Usman, ed., *Studies*; Brenner, “Concepts of *Ṭarīqa*”; Adeleye and Stewart, “Sokoto Caliphate”; Hunwick, “Fodiawa”, “Other Members of the Fodiawa and the Wazirs”, in *Arabic Literature*, chapters 2–5, 52–212; Mack and Boyd, *One Woman’s Jihad*.

8 Robinson, *Holy War*; Futi, *Voilà ce qui est arrivé*; Loimeier, *Muslim Societies in Africa*, 119–24.

9 Rinn, *Marabouts et Khouan*, 452–80; Margoliouth, “Raḥmāniyya”; Clancy Smith, *Rebel and Saint*, 33–70, 92–167.

10 Abun-Nasr, *Tijaniyya*; Abun-Nasr, “al-Tidjānī”; Abun-Nasr, “Tidjāniyya”; Robinson, *Holy War*.

11 McDougall, “‘Abd al-Qādir, Amīr”; Bennison, *Jihad*; Chodkiewicz, *Écrits spirituels*; Etienne, *Abdelkader*; Bouyerdene, *Emir Abd El-Kader*.

- Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Sanūsī (d. 1859) and the spread of the Sanūsīyya in the Ḥijāz (1820s), Egypt, Libya, and the Saharan region (since the 1840s)¹²
- III. Arabia and Yemen
 - Wahhābiyya (1744–1818) in Central Arabia, founded by an alliance between the emirs of al-Dir‘iyya and the scholar Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792)¹³
 - Zaydī reformist scholars in Yemen (al-Amīr al-Ṣan‘ānī, d. 1769, al-Shawkānī, d. 1834)¹⁴
 - Sufi brotherhoods founded by the students of Aḥmad b. Idrīs (d. 1837): Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Sanūsī (d. 1859, see above), Muḥammad b. ‘Uthmān al-Mirghanī (d. 1852, Khatmiyya in the Sudan), Muḥammad Majdhūb (d. 1831, Majādhīb in the Sudan), Ibrāhīm al-Rashīd (d. 1874, Rashīdiyya and other offshoots in Sudan, north-east Africa, Middle East)
- IV. Qajar Iran and the Twelver Shī‘a
 - Messianic movement of Sayyid ‘Alī Muḥammad the Bāb (Iran, 1844–50)¹⁵
- V. Russia and the Caucasus
 - Muslim Tatars and Bashkirs during and after the Pugachev Revolt (1773–75) in the Volga region and in Siberia¹⁶
 - Imamates and anti-Russian struggle in the Caucasus (1820–59)¹⁷
- VI. Naqshbandiyya in Central Asia and north-west China
 - Mangit rulers in Bukhārā (Shāh Murād und Emir Ḥaydar, 1785–1826)¹⁸

12 Vikør, “The Sanūsīyya Tradition”; Vikør, *Sufi and Scholar*; Vikør, “Sources for Sanūsī Studies”; Triaud, “al-Sanūsī”; Triaud, “Sanūsīyya”.

13 Rentz, *Birth of the Islamic Reform Movement*; Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb*; Peskes, “Wahhābiyya”; Peskes, “Wahhābiyya and Sufism”; Peskes, ed., *Wahhabism*; Mouline, *Clerics of Islam*; Currie, “Kadizadeli Ottoman Scholarship”; Chapter 2 in this volume.

14 Radtke et al., *The Exoteric Aḥmad Ibn Idrīs*, 19–23; Haykel, *Revival and Reform*; Dallal, *Islam without Europe*; Pink, “Where Does Modernity Begin?”.

15 Amanat, *Resurrection and Renewal*; Amanat, *Iran*, 236–49; MacEoin, “Babism”; MacEoin, *Messiah of Shiraz*; Lawson, *Gnostic Apocalypse*; Eschraghi, *Frühe Šaiḥī- und Bābī-Theologie*. The Bābī movement is mentioned already by Hobsbawm, *Age of Revolution*, 225.

16 Longworth, “Pugachev Revolt”; Peters, *Politische*; Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte*; Frank, *Islamic Historiography*.

17 Gammer, *Muslim Resistance*; Kemper, *Herrschaft*; Kemper, “Daghestani Legal Discourse”; Sidorko, *Dschihad im Kaukasus*.

18 Schefer, *Histoire*; von Kügelgen, *Legitimierung*.

- Khafiyya and Jahriyya Naqshbandīs and their struggles in north-western China (Ma Laichi, d. 1753, Ma Mingxin, d. 1781)¹⁹
- VII. South Asia
 - School of Shāh Walī Allāh (d. 1762) of Delhi and his descendants; *jihād* of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlvī (d. 1831) in northern India²⁰
 - al-Ḥājj Sharī‘at Allāh (d. 1840) and the Farā‘īzī movement in eastern Bengal²¹
- VIII. South East Asia
 - Padri movement and revolt in Sumatra (1803–37)²²
 - Anti-Dutch revolt led by Dipanagara, prince of Yogyakarta, in Java (1825–30)²³

3.2 Transregional Commonalities and Convergences within the “Age of Revolutions”

The remarkable number of new political and religious movements, upheavals, and even revolutions that unfolded in the Muslim world in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries – remarkable for their simultaneity as well as for their local diversity – found the increasing attention of Islamologists, historians of Africa, and also of global historians, since the 1980s. A list of these developments (including those of the later nineteenth century) can already be found in Ira Lapidus’s *History of Islamic Societies* (first ed. 1989).²⁴ Discussions among Islamologists on Sufi and anti-Sufi reformism which arose in the different Muslim regions in connection with the mentioned movements had begun earlier with the debate on “Neo-Sufism” and on Islamic reformism, during which the far-reaching scholarly networks linking the different movements

19 Fletcher, “Naqshbandiyya”; Aubin, “En Islam chinois”; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 64–72, 85–115; Sobieroj, “The Chinese Sufi Wīqāyatullāh”; Sobieroj, “Spiritual Practice”.

20 Rizvi, *Shāh Walī-Allāh*; Baljon, *Religion and Thought*; Hermansen, *Conclusive Argument*; Hermansen, *Shah Wali Allah’s Treatises*; Dallal, *Islam without Europe*; Rizvi, *Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*; Ahmad, *Wahhabi Movement*; Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*.

21 Ahmad Khan, *Fara‘īdi Movement*.

22 van Ronkel, “Inlandsche getuignissen”; Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism*; Suryadi, “Shaikh Daud of Sunur”; Wieringa, “A Tale of Two Cities”; Hadler, “Historiography of Violence”; Zakaria, “Landscapes and Conversions”.

23 Carey, *Prophecy*; Carey, *Destiny*; Florida, *Writing the Past*; Dutton, ed., *Voices of Southeast Asia*, 99–109.

24 Lapidus, *History*, table 16, 566ff. (1st ed.), 517 (3rd ed.).

had already gained attention.²⁵ The Islamic reformist tracks of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which challenged the Sunnī legal schools as much as popular religious culture, were pursued by scholars like Shāh Walī Allāh, Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye, Shawkānī, and Sanūsī well before the impact of Europe on their different home regions. This has been brought once more into sharper focus by the recent works of Ahmad Dallal.²⁶

Global historians like Christopher Bayly, David Armitage, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam have also reflected on the role of the Muslim regions in the “Age of Revolutions”.²⁷ Taking the Seven Years War (1756–63) as their point of departure, Armitage and Subrahmanyam stress the interconnectedness of the economic and political turbulences of this era, which amounted to a threefold revolution in geopolitics, culture, and economics in large parts of the Eurasian world.²⁸ Bayly describes the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries as an age of “converging revolutions”,²⁹ whose roots he traces back to the deformation, decline, or even breakdown of the Muslim empires in Asia, and to the devastating impact of Nadir Shah’s invasion on the Mughal Empire. Historians of Safavid and post-Safavid Iran have argued that his success was based on a veritable military revolution in terms of drill, discipline, and army size, and on novel techniques and strategies in the use of firearms.³⁰ Although this revolution remained unfinished due to Nadir Shah’s death, it led to changes in the balance of power in the Middle East as well as in Central and South Asia. This sparked European competition and warfare in the Indian Ocean region, with far-reaching consequences for both America and Europe itself, contributing to the grave economic crises and the ensuing revolutionary changes of the late eighteenth century. At the same time the legitimacy of the Muslim states was thoroughly sapped, leading to far-reaching efforts by Muslim scholars and religious movements from elite as well as from middle-class and rural strata to redefine the sources of moral, political, and economic order – an observation that could be easily extended to other Muslim regions. For the West

25 For critical overviews of these debates, see Sedgwick, *Saints and Sons*, 9–82; Chih, *Sufism in Ottoman Egypt*, 77–89; Knysh, *New History*, 50ff.

26 Dallal, “Origins”; Dallal, *Islam without Europe*.

27 See Armitage and Subrahmanyam, “Introduction”; Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, 27–120; Bayly, “Age of Revolutions”. Hobsbawm, *Age of Revolution*, 223ff., also discusses “the ferment and expansion of Islam” in the period in question.

28 Armitage and Subrahmanyam, “Introduction”, xviii ff., quoting Darwin, *After Tamerlane*.

29 Bayly, *Birth of the Modern World*, chapter 3, 86–120; see also Travers, “Imperial Revolutions”, 145ff.

30 See for this Axworthy, “The Army of Nader Shah”, building on the works of Rudi Matthee.

African case, the impact of the Atlantic slave trade on Muslim states and societies, and on Muslim religious and political reformism in the region, has been highlighted in a recent comprehensive study by Paul Lovejoy. He describes the emergence of large-scale slave economies in the newly established Islamic states in West Africa. This development is seen by him as a strategic withdrawal from the European commerce of slaves in the Atlantic world that went along with attempts to protect Muslims from enslavement, to restrict the trade to non-Muslim slaves, and to channel a major part of them into the expanding economy of the new Islamic states themselves. But he also demonstrates the repercussions of the Muslim revolutionary movements on the slave communities in America.³¹

The great significance of Sufi movements for many political transformations is particularly notable. The emirate of ‘Abd al-Qādir in Western Algeria (1832–47) sprang from the activities of the Qādiriyya *zāwiya* of his father. The founders of the Tijāniyya and Raḥmāniyya were strongly influenced by the Egyptian Khalwatiyya before establishing their own centres in Algeria and Morocco. The Sanūsiyya originated from an Algerian scholar who underwent Sufi instruction and scholarly training mainly in Morocco, Egypt, and the Hijāz and then built up a followership in Egypt, Libya, and the Sahara. In West Africa the Qādiriyya branch of the Kunta Bakkā’iyya of Tuwāt and Azawad with its leader, Sīdī Mukhtār al-Kuntī (d. 1811), managed to form a far-reaching trans-ethnic network of Sufi allegiances and trade partners under a central leadership which provided a model for later popular – and more militant – movements in the Niger region and further west. Qādirī affiliations were also influential in the Fulbe *jihād* in Futa Toro (Senegal, 1776–1861), Futa Jalon (Ivory Coast, 1725–1896), Ḥamdallāhi (present-day Mali, 1818–62), and especially in the Sokoto caliphate (present-day Nigeria, 1804–1903). The *jihād* of the Tijānī leader al-Ḥājj ‘Umar (d. 1864) equally unfolded in Senegambia: it was based on the spread of the Tijāniyya Sufi order from North Africa to the Saharan and sub-Saharan regions since the early nineteenth century.

In Central Asia, it was the Mangit ruler Shāh Murād (1785–1800), emir of Bukhārā, who thoroughly transformed his state along Islamic lines in close allegiance with the Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya. In China, two branches of the same *ṭarīqa* which were introduced by scholars who had spent some time in the Yemen and Hijāz became enmeshed in the local ethnic conflicts in the north-western provinces (especially Gansu), and in the upheavals that followed the Chinese conquest of Xinjiang (1757–59): the two groups were committed to different forms of *dhikr* (the “silent” [*khaḥfī*] versus the “loud” [*jahrī*])

³¹ Lovejoy, *Jihād in West Africa*, esp. 102ff.

that were widely discussed at the time. They ran into fierce disputes with each other, which finally brought the Jahriyya of Ma Mingxin into violent conflict with the imperial government. The Jahriyya, whose leader was executed in 1781, survived underground and in emigration; they propagated a cult of martyrdom and participated in several other local uprisings well until the end of the empire.

In the Volga region since the late eighteenth century, a similar trend is attested, originating among Tatar scholars and traders and spreading within their extended diaspora. They were also committed to the Naqshbandiyya and, after the Pugachev revolt in which many Tatar peasants and a good number of local scholars had been involved, they responded to the new institutional Islamic framework (with officials recognised by the state) that had been created by Catherine II, with a Sufi and ethical reformism and with intense educational activities.

Further cases of the nineteenth century included the *jihād* states which were formed as polities guided by the *sharīʿa*, in direct reaction to European imperial expansion in Algeria (against France, 1832–41) and in Dāghistān (against Russia, 1818–59). The Sufi allegiances of their leaders remained strong and in Dāghistān even shaped their military organisation. Comparable to the Kunta, the Sufi and trading network of the Sanūsiyya brotherhood (founded in 1832) extended from Libya into the Saharan and sub-Saharan regions, already before it was drawn into the struggle against Italian and French encroachment. A thorough Sufi basis of preaching and mobilisation is documented for Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlvī and Sayyid Ismāʿīl Shahīd (both d. 1831) and their *jihād* movement in northern India, which even after its dispersal remained influential until the Great Mutiny against British rule that finally terminated the remnants of the Mughal Empire (1858–59). A strong Sufi affiliation is also documented for al-Ḥājj Sharīʿat Allāh (1781–1840) in East Bengal, a Qādirī Sufi trained in Mecca, and his struggle against local popular rites and ceremonies which he regarded as *bidʿa*, and against oppressive taxes for the support of Hindu festivals that were exerted on the rural Muslim population by Hindu landlords.

In line with the revival of political thought and “popular claim-making” which, as noted by Bayly,³² was quite common in this age, many of the newly founded movements and polities attempted to introduce novel and quite remarkable forms of statehood and political representation in multi-ethnic and stratified Muslim communities. Their political orders were backed and legitimised by the theological and juridical writings of their leaders. This can be observed for the Fulbe imamates of Futa Jalon and Ḥamdallāhi, which

32 Bayly, “Age of Revolutions”, 213.

developed elaborate institutions of consultation and representation for the different regional and social groups that were attached to their polity. Similar regional and tribal federations subject to *sharī'a* law were established by the imamate of Shāmīl (d. 1871) in the Caucasus, and in the emirate of 'Abd al-Qādir in Algeria. In Central Arabia, the novel type of emirate which was founded in 1744 by the Āl Su'ūd in close partnership with the radical Sunni scholar Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792) remained an influential ideological model for others in later times, well until the present. Whereas it shared the fierce critique of many popular religious customs with other, Sufi-based movements, it was resolutely critical of the Sufi orders and of many core elements of Sufi practice itself.

Even in the context of the Zaydī imamate of the Yemen, a legal framework based on the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* and a thorough critique of the imitation (*taqlīd*) practices within the legal schools was elaborated by Shawkānī, the Chief Qāḍī of Ṣan'ā', apparently with view to the Sunnī majority of its population. He had entertained strong sympathies for Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb before he was alienated from him because of the destructions of Islamic religious sites and the radical treatment of many other Muslims as unbelievers which were propagated and practised by the Wahhābī state.³³

Attempts at the foundation of new caliphate states as all-embracing religio-political institutions are also attested for different regions. A caliphate emerged in the Sokoto state, where it served as an umbrella for a number of emirates covering a vast area of the Central Sudan, with an economic sphere of influence that reached far beyond its political realm. Caliphates of a more utopian character were envisaged by Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlvī for northern India, Afghanistan, and Central Asia, and by Prince Dipanagara of Yogyakarta, who intended to establish himself as a sacred leader of the Muslims in Java and as a protector of their interests vis-à-vis the Dutch.

Several of the movements just mentioned were led or inspired by local scholars who called for an Islamic political and cultural revival. They often denounced a number of deeply rooted religious and cultural customs or oppressive taxes which they declared un-Islamic, and they strongly criticised rulers who supported these practices. At the same time, they can be seen as responding to the political crises which were unfolding in different Muslim regions in consequence of the decline and breakdown of the regional and imperial political order. Many of them were Sufi leaders, like Mukhtār al-Kuntī or Aḥmad b. Idrīs. Disciples of the latter founded several Sufi orders, some of

33 Haykel, *Revival and Reform*; Dallal, *Islam without Europe*.

which became highly influential organisations. A good number of the newly founded polities developed their own patterns of political representation in multi-ethnic Muslim communities that were argued for and legitimised by the theological and juridical writings of their leaders. The establishment of Muslim statehood on this Islamic ideological base often went along with large-scale preaching activities and with the rise of a literary culture in Arabic as well as in local languages.

These examples of Islamic revolutionary and reformist movements and struggles exclude the military and administrative reforms initiated in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt in this period, sometimes rightly labelled as revolutions from the top (occasionally directed even against their own societies), and also the far-reaching changes initiated by the Moroccan and Tunisian rulers in the same period.³⁴ They may suffice here to illustrate both the extension and the strongly religious and often Sufi colouring of the profound sociopolitical changes which coincided with the American and European revolutions, and with European imperial expansion.

The religious character of many of these movements and revolutions in the Muslim regions would at first sight set them apart from the Euro-American revolutions of the period, whose strongly secular character has remained a major reference point for later generations. But it might be worth remembering the great religious revivals whose impact on the American Revolution has been widely recognised,³⁵ and which are also attested elsewhere both among Protestants and Catholics in the early nineteenth century.³⁶ The nationalist movements which emerged in different parts of Europe in the early nineteenth century, and also the early socialists, made frequent use of religious symbols and identities.³⁷ The millenarianism connected with the American

34 For a short overview and critical evaluation of the reforms of Selīm III and Maḥmūd II, see Neumann, "Political and Diplomatic Developments", esp. 60–64; for Muḥammad 'Alī in Egypt, see e.g. Fahmy, "The Era of Muhammad 'Alī Pasha"; for Morocco and Tunisia, see Harrak, "State and Religion"; El Mansour, *Morocco in the Reign of Mawlay Sulayman*; Bennison, *Jihad*; Abun-Nasr, *History of the Maghrib*, 179–87, 239–47, 297–301.

35 Marty, "American Revolution"; Ward, "Evangelical Awakenings"; Brown, "Movements of Christian Awakening"; Hochgeschwender, *Amerikanische Revolution*; Hochgeschwender, *Amerikanische Religion*, esp. 61–76. For Christian religious developments during the "Age of Revolution" in America and Europe, see already chapter 12 of Hobsbawm, *Age of Revolution*, 217–33.

36 Tackett, "French Revolution"; Desan, "French Revolution".

37 See the remarks by Friedrich Engels in his essay "Zur Geschichte des Urchristentums" (written in 1894), 449–54; also Strube, *Sozialismus, Katholizismus und Okkultismus*.

Revolution³⁸ and even with the revolutionary ideology in France³⁹ might lend itself for comparison with the religious eschatological expectations that were equally current at the time among Muslims, Jews, and Christians. It appears therefore justified to treat the remarkably wide range of the mentioned Islamic movements and the novel forms of statehood that were established by them equally as part of the global historical transformations of that period.

3.3 The Significance of the Prophet for Islamic Reformist and Revolutionary Movements: An Attempted Exploration

We now return to the observation, stated at the beginning, that many of the Islamic scholars and movements that we have mentioned propagated a strong commitment to the Prophet and his *sunna* as a base for community building and political legitimacy, and manifest the four features which were already mentioned above and which appear to be central for this orientation. Their leaders had strong roots in their own society and culture; at the same time, they were often looking towards the religious centres of the Muslim world, especially to Medina, for their normative models. Some of them developed novel forms of public preaching and writing in vernacular languages and embarked upon a fight against perceived “blameful innovations” that often led to militant political action. Sufi and anti-Sufi orientations as well as strong eschatological expectations could be found among them. Many of the earlier movements, as we have seen, were first committed to local sociopolitical changes and transformations before being drawn into the struggle with the increasing European expansion. Others were directed from the start against European dominance and occupation.

3.3.1 Ḥadīth and Sufi Transmissions

A renewed and invigorated focus on the study and transmission of the Prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) can be observed in Muslim religious scholarship in various parts of the Muslim world since the second half of the seventeenth century. It gained in momentum in the course of the eighteenth century among scholars in regions as distant as the Maghrib and India, with the Holy

38 Cf., for North America the motto “A New Order for the Ages” (*Novus ordo seclorum*) inscribed on the great seal of the US, Bloch, *Visionary Republic*.

39 Caffiero, “Prophétie, millenium et révolution”, with reference to Starobinski, 1789; Ouzouf, *La Fête révolutionnaire*; and Vovelle, *La mentalité révolutionnaire*; Schlobach, “Fortschritt oder Erlösung”.

Cities of the Ḥijāz emerging as perhaps the most active centres of *ḥadīth* studies.⁴⁰ It has often been stated that the reinvigoration of these studies provided the basis for the Islamic religious and political activism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Khaled El-Rouayheb has recently expressed some doubts over the novelty of this pious interest as well as over its “revivalist” or “reformist” character.⁴¹ The prominent *ḥadīth* scholars of seventeenth-century Ḥijāz, the Maghribīs ʿĪsā al-Thaʿālibī (d. 1669) and Muḥammad b. Sulaymān al-Rūdānī (d. 1683), the Medinan Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Qushāshī (d. 1661), and the Kurdish scholar Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1690) were certainly all-round scholars who combined their interests in the Prophetic tradition with a profound knowledge of logic and the rational sciences and with a strong Sufi orientation. But they trained a whole generation of famous *ḥadīth* scholars of the early eighteenth century like ʿAbd Allāh b. Sālim al-Baṣrī (d. 1721),⁴² Aḥmad al-Nakhlī (d. 1718), Muḥammad b. ʿAqīla (d. 1736), Ḥasan al-ʿUjaymī (d. 1702), Kūrānī’s son Abū Ṭāhir al-Kūrānī (d. 1733), and Abū l-Ḥasan al-Sindī al-Kabīr (d. 1726). Baṣrī, Ibn ʿAqīla, and Sindī produced new editions of Bukhārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* and Ibn Ḥanbal’s *Musnad*, and glosses to the latter book and to most of the canonical collections. Baṣrī’s student Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī (d. 1750) and his own disciples Abū l-Ḥasan al-Sindī al-Ṣaghīr (d. 1773) and Muḥammad Saʿīd Safar (d. 1780) became equally famous. In the course of the eighteenth century, the philological work of *ḥadīth* scholars gave a boost to lexicography, with two large commentaries to Fīrūzābādī’s *Qāmūs* produced by another Moroccan *muḥaddith* in Medina, Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Fāsī (d. 1760), and by his student Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1791), whose commentary, the *Bridal Crown* (*Tāj al-ʿarūs*), which he wrote and finished in Cairo, still remains the largest Arabic lexicon.⁴³ Both Rūdānī and Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib were connected through their teachers to the Zāwiya Dilāʿiyya (in the Middle Atlas in Morocco), which until its destruction in 1668 had been one of the most important political as well as intellectual centres of the Maghrib and whose teaching activities were continued in Fez by its exiled leading scholars.⁴⁴

40 Development and protagonists of *ḥadīth* scholarship in Medina in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are extensively discussed by Ince, “Medina im 12./18. Jahrhundert”, 291–318.

41 El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*, 164ff.

42 On him, see Voll, “ʿAbdallah ibn Salim al-Basrī”.

43 For the role which *ḥadīth* plays in Zabīdī’s *Tāj al-ʿarūs*, see Reichmuth, *World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī*, 229, 233, 250ff., 255.

44 For the Zāwiya Dilāʿiyya and Rūdānī, see El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History*, 150ff., 161; for Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib and his studies with a Dilāʿī scholar in Fez, see Ḥajjī, *al-Zāwiya al-Dilāʿiyya*, 273.

The Moroccan and the Indian scholars played an important role within this “school of *ḥadīth*” in the Ḥijāz. The work and teaching of the scholars from Sind (now Pakistan) were dominated by a strong orientation towards *ḥadīth* also in the legal field. Contrary to the majority opinion within the Ḥanafī school to which they belonged, they resolutely maintained the pre-eminence of *ḥadīth* over the consensus (*ijmāʿ*) in legal questions. With their teaching and writing they exerted a strong influence over the discussions on the authority of the legal schools and their limitations, which were gaining in importance in the Middle East and the Maghrib as well as in India in the course of the eighteenth century. In this respect, neither the reformist outlook of some of the most prominent *ḥadīth* scholars of the Ḥijāz can be denied, nor their crucial influence upon others in different parts of the Muslim world. The great pride which the Medinan scholars took on the achievements of their own generation in the science of *ḥadīth* was expressed by one of them (Muḥammad Saʿīd Safar) in a didactical poem on the relation between the Islamic legal schools and the Prophetic tradition.⁴⁵

A further favourite interest of the *ḥadīth* scholars of those days were the *musalsalāt* traditions, which linked the transmitters by certain acts, utterances, places, or other qualifications, like the famous “*ḥadīth* transmitted first” (*al-ḥadīth al-musalsal bi-l-awwalīyya*), the “*ḥadīth* transmitted with a handshake” (*muṣāfaḥa*), the “*ḥadīth* transmitted on the day of Eid”, among others. Occupation with *musalsalāt* transmissions has a long history in *ḥadīth* scholarship;⁴⁶ it seems, however, that a number of the largest collections of such *musalsalāt* transmissions were produced in the eighteenth century by scholars belonging or related to the *ḥadīth* scholars of the Ḥijāz, like Ibn ʿAqīla, Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib, and also Zabīdī, who commented upon and considerably augmented Ibn ʿAqīla’s collection.⁴⁷ At the same time, it can be observed that the transmission of Sufi *ṭuruq* and their garments (*khiraq*) increasingly followed the pattern of the *ḥadīth*, with collections of Sufi *salāsīl* equally growing since the seventeenth century. Here again, scholars belonging to the Ḥijāz circle of *ḥadīth* scholars seem to have taken the lead.⁴⁸ This trend towards an analogous treatment of *isnād* and Sufi *salāsīl* seems to reflect an enhanced

45 *Risālat al-hudā*, quoted by Ince, “Medina im 12./18. Jahrhundert”, 307.

46 A comprehensive overview of writings in this field is provided by Kattānī, *Fihris al-fahāris*, 1:85–94, 2:655–66, with further references to many of the mentioned works under their title; see also Davidson, “Carrying on the Tradition”, 123–27.

47 Zabīdī, *al-Fawāʿid al-jalīla*; *al-Taʿlīqa al-jalīla*; see Reichmuth, *World of Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī*, 102, 135.

48 See for this Reichmuth, “Quest for Sufi Transmissions”.

pious attitude towards the chain of transmission leading back to the Prophet, both for his utterances and for the Sufi *ṭuruq*.

The influential reformist scholars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in regions as distant as West Africa, Arabia, and South Asia were all related, either directly or through their teachers, to the *ḥadīth* scholars of the Ḥijāz. This is documented in an exemplary way for ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye (d. 1816): his two collections of *isnāds*, a short and a long version of the same material, link him via some teachers who had visited the Ḥijāz and Egypt to two of the prominent figures of the “Ḥijāzī school” of *ḥadīth* scholarship that were already mentioned, that is, Abū l-Ḥasan al-Sindī al-Ṣaghīr and Zabīdī.⁴⁹ They also refer to them for Sufi transmissions. A connection with Zabīdī can also be established later for the father of the emir ‘Abd al-Qādir (for a Sufi *silsila* leading to Ibn ‘Arabī) in Algeria and for some of the teachers of Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Sanūsī in Morocco.⁵⁰ One of the teachers of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1206/1791) during his stay in Medina was Muḥammad Ḥayāt al-Sindī, another central figure of *ḥadīth* scholarship in eighteenth-century Medina.⁵¹

The *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlvī in northern India originated in the school and family of Shāh Walī Allāh in Delhi, who as mentioned had also established links to the *ḥadīth* scholars of Medina (in his case to Abū Ṭāhir al-Kūrānī and to Wafdullāh, the son of Rūdānī)⁵² during his stay in the Ḥijāz. The second leading figure of the movement, Ismā‘īl Shahīd (d. 1831), was himself a grandson of Walī Allāh and was brought up in his tradition, even if he clearly radicalised his own theological stand beyond that school. This certainly supports Dallal’s argument (directed against John Voll and others) that the identification of network relations alone does not explain the ways of thought and action taken by the members of the network, and that the local networks were often more important for scholarly formation than the transregional ones.⁵³ But the centrality of the Ḥijāz school that figures in virtually all the credentials of the important Islamic movements of the time suggests a strong influence of the general pattern of what could be called “*ḥadīth* piety”, which was apparently conveyed by this school. As can be observed in different parts

49 See for this Al-Nagar, “Asānīd of Shehu dan Fodio”; Reichmuth, “Glimpses”, 70, 74ff.; Reichmuth, “Murtaqā al-Zabīdī and the Africans”, 138–41.

50 For ‘Abd al-Qādir, see Chodkiewicz, *Ocean without Shore*, 16; Reichmuth, *World of Murtaqā al-Zabīdī*, 186; for Sanūsī, see Vikør, “Sources”, 7, 23, 35, 40, 42.

51 See for him Voll, “Muḥammad Ḥayyā al-Sindī”; Nafi, “A Teacher of Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb”; Ince, “Medina im 12./18. Jahrhundert”, esp. 292–304, 308–17.

52 See for the latter the blog by Moosa, “Muwaṭṭa’ Roundtable”. I am grateful to Ebrahim Moosa, who drew my attention to this contact.

53 See e.g. Dallal, *Islam without Europe*, 58–63.

of the Muslim world, this form of an enhanced pious attitude to the *ḥadīth* could find both Sufi and anti-Sufi expressions.

3.3.2 *Spatial Links, Historical Memory, and Praise Poetry Connected with the Prophet and the Ḥijāz and with Early Islam*

Although the number of *ḥajj* pilgrims from distant regions outside the Middle East was limited in the period before the nineteenth century, pious attachment to the Prophet in the period under consideration often expressed itself in the context of the pilgrimage theme and of the Holy Cities, which included the use of pictures of the Ḥaramayn as spatial links to the Prophet. These were often part of the manuscripts of the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* prayer book whose widespread popularity is attested by manuscripts dating from the eighteenth century in North and West Africa, the Middle East, and South and South East Asia.⁵⁴ Such pictures were also taken home as pilgrimage souvenirs. One fine example is attested in the so-called *Prayer Book of the Imam Bonjol* (d. 1864). He was one of the militant Padri reformists in Sumatra in the 1820s. The book is now kept in the Leiden University Library. Even if its provenance from this man is now strongly in doubt, it nevertheless offers many insights into the Prophetic piety and the eschatological orientation prevailing in the region in those days.⁵⁵ Besides the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* (dated 1229/1814) it includes a number of separate pictures of the Ḥaram of Medina, the tombs of the Prophet and the first caliphs, the palm trees of Fāṭima, the ceremonial parasol and the flag of the Prophet,⁵⁶ and the dead coming out of their graves at Judgement Day, all in a local style with a highly symbolic iconography, apparently for talismanic use.⁵⁷ Three of them, completely imaginary views of the mosque of the Prophet and his tomb (Figure 3.1) and of his flag (Figure 3.2) and parasol (Figure 3.3), are presented here.

For the Padri movement, the religious standards which they had found at the Holy Cities loomed large in their preaching and argument. An early guide

54 See the list and description of MSS of the *Dalā'il al-khayrāt* from different regions in Witkam, *Vroomheid en activisme*, 137–61, where the oldest MS, originating from Turkey, is dated 1704. Further manuscripts from other regions like Central Asia might certainly be added to this collection.

55 Leiden University Library, M. Or. 1751; for a description of its content, see Wieringa, *Catalogue*, 111–14; Witkam, *Inventory*, 233ff.

56 For Ottoman pious images of the flag of the Prophet dating from the eighteenth century, see the contribution of Tobias Heinzelmann to the first volume of this series.

57 Leiden University Library, Ms. Or. 1751, fols. 107–8, 125–26, 127–28, 129–30; Witkam, "Images of Mecca and Medina", fols. 8, 9; Witkam, "Hajj Manuscripts", fols. 8, 13, 16, 18. For the historical significance of the Prophet's mosque in Medina in general, see Behrens, "Ein Garten des Paradieses".



FIGURE 3.1 Imaginary view of the mosque of the Prophet and his tomb (in Malayan style), from the so-called *Prayer Book of Imam Bonjol* (ca. 1229/1814), Leiden University Library, Ms. Or. 1751, fol. 126

to the Holy Cities in Malay verses, including a strong critique of local Sufi concepts and practices, was written in the 1820s by another reformist scholar of Sumatra during his stay in the Ḥijāz.⁵⁸

Local depictions of the Ḥaram of Medina with the Prophet's tomb are equally attested for Mali and for Ilorin, the capital of the southernmost emirate of the Sokoto caliphate.⁵⁹ The picture sheet (Figure 3.4) most probably dates back to the early nineteenth century and was apparently used for both meditation and prayer and as a charm, in order to secure God's forgiveness and to ensure power and success in life. It depicts the Ḥaram of Medina with the tombs of the Prophet and of the two first caliphs, and the central compound

58 Wieringa, "A Tale of Two Cities".

59 For Mali, see Bravmann, "Fragment of Paradise"; for Ilorin, see Reichmuth, "Literary Culture", 235–39; picture taken in 1987.



FIGURE 3.2 Imaginary view of the flag (*panji-parji*) of the Prophet and of Abū Bakr, from the so-called *Prayer Book of Imam Bonjol* (ca. 1229/1814), Leiden University Library, Ms. Or. 1751, fol. 108

with the imagined houses of his wives and daughters, and of his sons and companions. It also indicates some other important places like the prayer niche, the trees of the Rawḍa, and the palm tree of the Prophet. As in the Sumatran case, the drawing shows highly geometrical forms, which suit its specific visual and spiritual functions.

A *Dāliyya* poem of longing for a visit of Medina and the Prophet and his tomb, which was among the earliest writings of ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye (written already in 1774), and a similar amplified poem in Fulfulde (written in 1805, later



FIGURE 3.3 Imaginary view of the parasol (*payung*) of the Prophet (Muḥammad al-Muṣṭafā) and of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, from the so-called *Prayer Book of Imam Bonjol* (ca. 1229/1814), Leiden University Library, Ms. Or. 1751, fol. 107

translated into Hausa by one of his sons), belonged to the most popular poetic texts in the caliphate.⁶⁰ Nana Asma'u (d. 1864), 'Uthmān's daughter, herself a highly educated and a prolific author in Arabic, Fulfulde, and Hausa, also

60 Hunwick, *Arabic Literature*, 68, no. 51, 108, no. 79: *takhmīs* by his brother 'Abdullāhi; the Fulfulde poem (titled *Ma'ama'are*) in the Hausa translation of his son, with English translation by Graham Furniss in Sperl and Shackle, eds, *Qasida Poetry*, 2:372–87.

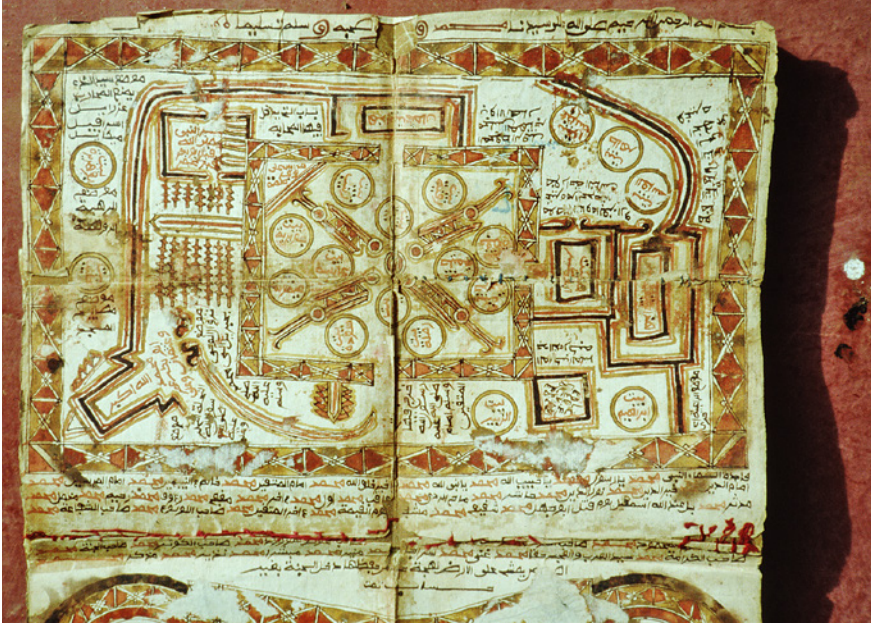


FIGURE 3.4 Medina imagined (Ile Kasandubu, Balogun Fulani Ward, Ilorin, Nigeria): description in Reichmuth, “Literary Culture”, 236–39

composed several poems in praise of the Prophet, expressing her own longing for a visit to him in Medina.⁶¹ Comparing in other poems the eventful career of her father with that of the Prophet, she evoked the image of Sokoto and its community as a second Medina. Poetry in praise of the Prophet in the Fulfulde language, including expressions of longing for Medina, also became popular in Futa Jalon in the early nineteenth century. Deriving its themes and models from an already well-developed tradition of Arabic learning which included famous panegyrics of the Prophet, it became instrumental in linking oral and literary culture within the imamate.⁶²

Attachment to the Prophet also gained a spatial dimension in West Africa: new settlements named Makka, Madīna, or Ṭayba became a significant feature of those parts of the savannah landscape which were affected by the *jihād*

61 See on her especially Mack and Boyd, *One Woman's Jihad*, with a collection of her poems in English translation.

62 For the religious poetry in praise of the Prophet in Popular/Fulfulde and its cultural role in Futa Jalon, see Seydou, “Poésie religieuse”; Sow, ed., *La femme*, 45–55; Bohas et al., eds, *Islam et bonne gouvernance*, 21–26. Apart from Būṣīrī's *Burda* poem, the *Ishrīnyyāt* poems of Fazāzī (d. 1230) and their amplification by Ibn Mahīb (d. 1247) were of particular importance in the Western and Central Sudan.

movements in the Senegal and Niger regions.⁶³ This model could also affect the shape of mosque buildings. One of the oldest Friday mosques in Ilorin, said to have been established by the founder of the Islamic movement in the city, shows a central courtyard between two prayer halls; a design that seems to be unique for mosque buildings in the region. According to the tradition of the imam's family it had been built in imitation of the Prophet's mosque in Medina. As the town became the centre of an exodus (*hijra*) for Muslim slaves from the Yoruba regions, the utopian model of a Medinan community, which we already saw in operation in Sokoto, might have been underlying the shape of this mosque in Ilorin as well.⁶⁴

The spatial and ethnic reorientation which went along with the West African Islamic movements included some efforts by activist scholars to trace their origins to some early Islamic figures and even to the Prophet and his family. 'Uqba b. Nāfi', the companion who had led the major campaigns of Muslim conquest in Ifrīqiyā and in other parts of North Africa, was claimed as an ancestor by the Kunta. They were joined in this by the Fulbe, to whom most of the *jihād* leaders belonged.⁶⁵ Another version of the descent of the Fulbe from Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib was backed by the authority of Zabīdī.⁶⁶ Other local traditions collected in Senegambia in the early nineteenth century related a visit of the Prophet himself to their region – apparently in the course of his celestial journey: he was said to have prayed there and to have left the imprint of his knees on the local rocks.⁶⁷ The emergence of an Islamic identity of the Fulbe as a chosen people, and the reassertion of a special religious status by groups which until then had been living under the conditions of cultural and social marginality, clearly comes out in these statements. In the words of David Robinson, “the Central and Western Sudan were ceasing to be a frontier of the faith; they were entering into the Islamic heartlands.”⁶⁸

A similar development can be found among the Tatars under Russian rule in the Volga region since the late eighteenth century.⁶⁹ In the local historiography of that period, their origins are moved backwards from the Mongol khanates to the ancient Muslim town of Bulghār at the Volga, which had been founded much earlier and whose remains include a number of old Muslim tombs. Its origin was traced back to three visiting companions of the Prophet. The

63 Robinson, *Holy War*, 85.

64 See for this Reichmuth, *Islamische Bildung*, 33ff.; Reichmuth, “A Regional Centre”, 232ff.

65 Robinson, *Holy War*, 81–85.

66 Reichmuth, “Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī and the Africans”, 140.

67 Robinson, *Holy War*, 88ff.

68 Robinson, *Holy War*, 89.

69 See for this Frank, *Islamic Historiography*; Kemper, *Sufis und Gelehrte*, 315–54.

Bulghārī identity, which was now adopted, allowed to circumvent the Mongol past of the defeated khanates and to maintain instead a local sacred Islamic landscape under Russian rule.

In the Chinese case of the Naqshbandiyya groups of the Khafiyya and Jahriyya, introduced to north-western China around the middle of the eighteenth century, the journeys of their founders to the Middle East and their stay in Yemen and in the Ḥijāz became an important element in the memorial culture of their adherents. In the case of the Khafiyya, the founder, Ma Laichi (d. 1753), is linked in a local account⁷⁰ to a prominent Naqshbandī scholar in Mecca, Muhammad Jibuni Ahmad Agelai. This name can probably be identified with Muḥammad b. Aḥmad ‘Aqīla (d. 1737), the Meccan scholar and Sufi who was already mentioned above. For Ma Mingxin (d. 1781), the founder of the rival Jahriyya who reached the Middle East a decade later, a connection to ‘Abd al-Khāliq b. Zayn al-Mizjājī (d. 1740) in Zabīd in Yemen, a Naqshbandī proponent of the “loud *dhikr*”, was already identified by Fletcher on the basis of local narratives.⁷¹ Both Ma Laichi and Ma Mingxin are related to have brought their diverging *dhikr* forms together with some other texts and prayers from their travels, which they had received from their respective Arabian masters. Among those awarded to Ma Laichi was a *Mawlūd* text, whereas Ma Mingxin is said to have brought with him a Persian amplification (Chin. *muhanmaisi*, Ar. *mukhammas*) of Būṣīrī’s famous “Mantle Ode” by Muḥammad Tabādkānī (d. 1486),⁷² which became part of the festival ceremonies and the daily recitation of the Jahriyya followers.⁷³ An orientation towards the Yemen and the Ḥijāz, together with the commemoration of the Prophet in *Mawlūd* and *Burda* recitations thus played a central role in these two branches of the Naqshbandiyya which were established in eighteenth-century China.

3.3.3 *Imitation of the Prophet and Political Mobilisation*

A common denominator of almost all movements discussed here was their advocacy of a revival of the *sunna* and a fierce critique of local Muslim practices which were branded as “blameful innovations” (*bidaʿ*). This could include

70 Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 64ff., see esp. 67n22, from where the transliteration of the name was taken.

71 Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 85ff.; Fletcher, “Naqshbandiyya”, 24–31; for further discussion of the Mizjājī connection, see Sobieroj, “The Chinese Sufi Wiqāyatullāh”, 142, 145ff.

72 On him, see Gross and Urunbaev, “Introductory Essays”, 81ff.

73 For the *Mawlūd* given to Ma Laichi, see Lipman, *Familiar Strangers*, 67n22; for the *muhanmaisi*, said to have been introduced by Ma Minxin, and its use by the Jahriyya, see Sobieroj, *Variance*, 99, 101; Sobieroj, “The Chinese Sufi Wiqāyatullāh”, 142; cf. Aubin, “En Islam chinois”, 555.

social practices related to marriage and entertainment, to the established protocol of royal courts, but also to Sufi ritual and to the veneration of the tombs of Muslim saints. This was already widely discussed among scholars in the Holy Cities, in the Yemen, and in several other regions, where the call for a return to the *sunna* strongly increased in the eighteenth century. The literature produced on this topic by those scholars and by the intellectual leaders of the mentioned movements is abundant.⁷⁴ Several of them, like ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye, his junior brother ‘Abdullāhi and his son Muḥammad Bello in Sokoto, al-Ḥājj ‘Umar al-Fūti in Senegambia and the Niger region, and Ismā‘il Shahīd, can be found reflecting their own career and the course of their movement as a process of imitation of the Prophet which they lay out in their writings. The Wahnābi movement also had its early historians who followed that track, with Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahnāb using his own account of the *sīra* of the Prophet for that purpose.⁷⁵

The changes in the field of popular claim-making and in the search for new regional political and economic orders that were qualified by Bayly as major characteristics of the “Age of Revolutions”⁷⁶ are reflected in the Muslim world in a remarkable number of new forms of regimes that were declared to follow Prophetic and early Islamic models. Several of their founders and leaders were religious scholars themselves and reflected and defended their political opinions and actions in their writings. As mentioned above, they also embarked upon large-scale public preaching activities that developed into mass events in both West Africa and northern India and were a major tool of propagation for their movements in Arabia and Sumatra. The reformists’ critique presented a challenge to Muslim kings and court scholars, to the established legal schools, and to Sufi leaders and their communities, and they finally clashed with the growing European presence in their regions. Increasing confrontation with their adversaries often led to a withdrawal from society, to a militant commitment to an authentic Islamic community, and to the establishment of an Islamic state along imamate or caliphate lines. The experience of the evolving struggles was often framed after the model of the Prophet himself, as a *da‘wa* followed by a struggle against evil rulers and scholars, leading to exodus (*hijra*) and to a final victory for Islam. As elaborated in their writings, *sīra* and *ḥadīth* provided the base for an integrative model of individual and collective

74 For further reference, see the books and articles indicated for each movement in the first part of this chapter.

75 See for the early historians of the Wahnābiyya, Peskes, *Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahnāb*; for Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahnāb’s account of the *sīra* of the Prophet as an interpretation of his own religious and political programme, see Chapter 2 in this volume.

76 Bayly, “Age of Revolutions”, 212ff.

conduct in social affairs, government, and warfare, and for the overcoming of tribal and regional differences.

It was only in the emirate of ‘Abd al-Qādir in Western Algeria and in the imamate in the Caucasus that the struggle against a European power was present from the beginning, whereas it gained in importance later in Eastern Algeria (Raḥmāniyya), in Libya and Chad (Sanūsiyya), Indonesia, and West Africa. It was postponed by Sayyid Aḥmad to a later stage of his *jihād* in northern India, which began with his warfare against the Sikhs. In his final days, he apparently aimed at transforming his authority into a caliphate that would extend beyond northern India and cover Afghanistan and Central Asia.⁷⁷

A khanate structure along stricter Islamic lines can be observed in Bukhārā under the Mangit ruler Shāh Murād. The establishment of a caliphate as an overarching structure of religious representation for the Muslims of the whole of Java was the aim of Dipanagara, the prince of Yogyakarta in Java, in his struggle against the Dutch (the so-called Java War, 1825–30). He can be documented as merging the local traditions and expectations of a future “just ruler” (*ratu adil*) with a caliphate model which combined the claim to succession of the Prophet with a perceived Ottoman model.⁷⁸

In the case of the Arabian Najd, the emerging regime (since 1744) was a novel type of diarchy which rested on a mutual oath of allegiance (*bay‘a*) between the Āl Su‘ūd emirs of Dir‘iyya and Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb and his descendants as leading scholars of the new emirate, whose basic constitutional arrangement continues until the present in Saudi Arabia. The political and economic success of this polity in establishing a viable political and economic order in its region impressed the traveller J. L. Burckhardt who accompanied the Egyptian occupying forces.⁷⁹ Some French revolutionaries, basing themselves on rather dim and indirect information, even compared the “Wahhābī religion” to their own official religious cult, the *Théophilanthropie*.⁸⁰

The Caucasian imamate of Shāmīl was built on a flexible governing structure, with the strong authority of the imam balanced by an increasing group

77 Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*, 197–218.

78 Carey, *Prophecy*, 152, 581, 612, 653, 666, 776, 855; Carey, *Destiny*, 60, 221, 224. He even adopted the name of the Ottoman Sultan ‘Abdülḥamīd I for himself. It should be noted that, whereas the title “God’s Caliph” (*Kalifatullah*) had already been part of the protocol of the rulers of Yogyakarta before, Dipanagara changed it into “Caliph of God’s Prophet” (*Kalifat Rasulullah*), which highlights his attachment to the Prophet and his claim to represent his community.

79 See the description by Burckhardt, *Notes*, 2:95–133, 282–302, 361. He labels their regime as “Muselmán puritanism and Bedouin government” (96).

80 Urvoy, “Le monde musulman”, 42, quoting the French revolutionary politician Abbé Grégoire.

of deputy leaders (*nāʾibs*) representing the different provinces and ethnic military units of the state. Shāmīl himself first signed his letters and documents without any honorific title before turning to “Imam” or “Imam of the Faithful” (*imām al-muʾminīn*), until he finally adopted the caliphal title of “Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-muʾminīn*) after 1845.⁸¹ His strong political authority was defended by scholars supporting his rule against dissidents who criticised his arrogation of powers.⁸² As other Islamic movements of the time, he and his followers linked their eventful course to the life of the Prophet. For Shāmīl himself, a great appreciation of his copy of Ḥalabī’s *Life of the Prophet* (*al-Sira al-ḥalabīyya*) is attested.⁸³

The tribal alliance founded by ‘Abd al-Qādir’s father, the Algerian Qādirī shaykh Muḥyī l-Dīn, in the Mascara region in November 1832 for the organisation of armed resistance against the French also took on the form of a caliphate, with the proclamation of ‘Abd al-Qādir as “Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-muʾminīn*). After the first successes of his military campaigns, the title was recognised in the following year by the Desmichels Treaty, which he concluded with the French in February 1834.⁸⁴ The principal coins that were established for the emerging polity were named *muḥammadiyya*. The Sufi background of its leaders can be gleaned from their design of the officers’ uniform jackets, where the name of the Prophet was written on the left side below the heart (with the name of God on the right side at the level of the breast).⁸⁵

Similar novel solutions for the representation of different ethnic communities and regional groups and for the accommodation of scholarly and military interests can be identified in West Africa: this holds especially for Futa Jalon with its rotating imamate diarchy based on a system of provincial mosque centres,⁸⁶ and for the Sokoto caliphate and its multi-ethnic emirates which were developed out of older city-state traditions.⁸⁷ It included the Dīna caliphate in Masina with its large council of religious scholars that was advising

81 Kemper, *Herrschaft*, 278.

82 Kemper, *Herrschaft*, 392–401.

83 Kemper, *Herrschaft*, 282; for the *Sira ḥalabīyya* and its significance, see the contribution of C. Mayeur-Jaouen to the first volume of this series.

84 Bouyerdene, *Emir Abd El-Kader*, 43, 51, 57.

85 For the *muḥammadiyya* coin and the uniform jackets, see Bouyerdene, *Emir Abd El-Kader*, 57.

86 Robinson, *Holy War*, 52ff. On the constitutional arrangement of the Futa Jalon imamate, and its crisis that was probably settled by the local scholar-poet Tierno Dadou Dalen in the 1840s, see Bohas et al., eds, *Islam et bonne gouvernance*, 21–113.

87 See for this especially Usman, ed., *Studies*; for the ethno-religious constitutional arrangement of the Ilorin emirate, see Reichmuth, “A Regional Centre”; Reichmuth, “A Sacred Community”.

the caliph, running the state, and supervising the local trade and agriculture including the grazing regime of the Fulbe cattle herders.⁸⁸ Many of these newly formed political structures operated in highly literate communities that developed elaborate educational institutions, and they are well documented in local written sources as well as in the oral traditions of their regions. The multitude of newly established regional polities that claimed to be following Prophetic and early Islamic models remain a remarkable feature of the Muslim world during this period. It easily ties in with the struggles that went on for the reshaping of political theory, claim-making, and practice in Europe and America, and that equally included many references to ancient Greek and Roman republican as well as imperial models.

The Padri scholars of Minangkabau (Sumatra) declared to follow the *sunna* practice as witnessed by some of their returning pilgrims in 1803 (i.e. at the beginning of Wahhābī rule over the Ḥijāz). Although clinging to the celebration of the *mawlid* of the Prophet and to their own Sufi practice, they pursued a militant reformist line against the matrilineal communal authorities, against the common disruption of trade routes by highwaymen, and against alcohol and cockfight betting that were widespread at the local marketplaces. They successfully established an expanding network of settlements linked by safe trade routes and placed under the control of their *qāḍīs* and imams as guardians of the Prophetic *sunna* against customary legal practice (*adat*) and its local aristocratic proponents. Their power was based on their own militias that had been originally formed out of their student followers. Profiting from the expanding coffee trade they also lived off the wealth of their opposing neighbours and other enemies through plunder and enslavement. The ensuing civil war raged until the early 1830s when their most powerful leader, Imam Bonjol, formally abandoned that enmity against local *adat* customary practice and sought the cooperation with the old communal authorities in order to forge an alliance for a joint struggle against the growing Dutch competition and encroachment. This, too, was justified on religious grounds with the changed regime and religious practice that had taken place in the meantime in the Ḥijāz itself.⁸⁹

3.3.4 *Eschatological Claims and Expectations*

Various claims of eschatological links with the Prophet are attested for the Islamic revolutionary movements of the period before and after 1800. The

88 Loimeier, *Muslim Societies in Africa*, 122ff.

89 See for this Dobbin, *Islamic Revivalism*; Hadler, "Historiography of Violence"; Zakaria, "Landscapes and Conversions".

meaning of the term “eschatology” is understood here as the expected fulfilment of the divine promise of salvation and reward for the believers at the end of times, and also its proleptic unfolding in the course of history. The latter could be realised for believers by direct vision of the Prophet or by his authentic representation through a religious or political leader as a “renewer” (*mujaddid*) of his message, culminating in the Mahdī, who is said to appear before the end of the world. The turn of the twelfth Islamic century (in the year 1200/1785) in particular was ripe with eschatological expectations.⁹⁰ Reported visions of the Prophet not infrequently came up in the context of Sufi life and practice, in the West African Qādiriyya as well as in the Naqshbandiyya and other *ṭuruq* in the East. Shāh Walī Allāh already related a number of vocational visions experienced during his stay in the Ḥaramayn (1731–32).⁹¹ In the case of Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye in West Africa, and Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd in northern India they became part of the leaders’ own narrative of their divine call to leadership and struggle.⁹² The founders of the Raḥmāniyya and the Tijāniyya equally claimed visionary contact with the Prophet, the first receiving promises of salvation for his community from him, the second being assured of his status as “seal of the saints” (*khatm al-awliyā*) and obtaining authorisation for his litanies (*awrād*) and for his way of Sufi training (*tarbiya*).⁹³ By this immediate link of their founder to the Prophet, the Tijāniyya claimed spiritual superiority over all other Sufis.

The title of a *mujaddid*, a renewer of the religion of the Prophet who according to Prophetic tradition will appear at every turn of a new Islamic century, was claimed and much discussed at the beginning of the thirteenth Islamic century (1200/1785–86). Several scholars and Sufi leaders, like Shāh Walī Allāh and Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, claimed this status for themselves, and it played an important role for ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye.⁹⁴ In the ideology of the Sokoto caliphate this involved specific demands of religious allegiance from the local Islamic communities which formed part of this extended polity. The reformist emir Shāh Murād in Bukhārā was also presented as a *mujaddid* by his learned

90 See e.g. for Sokoto Al-Hajj, “Thirteenth Century”.

91 Baljon, *Religion and Thought*, 6, 15–20, 130.

92 For Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, see Batran, *Qadiriyyah Brotherhood*, 88; for ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye, see Hiskett, *Sword of Truth*, 66; Brenner, “Concepts of *Ṭarīqa*”, 46; for Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, see Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*, 64.

93 For Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Azharī, see Rinn, *Marabouts et Khwouan*, 467; Margoliouth, “Raḥmāniyya”, 399f.; Clancy Smith, *Rebel and Saint*, 39ff.; for Aḥmad al-Tijānī, see Abun-Nasr, “al-Tidjānī”; Abun-Nasr, “Tidjāniyya”, with further references.

94 For Walī Allāh, see Baljon, *Religion and Thought*, 129ff.; for Sīdī al-Mukhtār, Batran, *Qadiriyyah Brotherhood*, 83–89; Brenner, “Concepts of *Ṭarīqa*”, 46; for ‘Uthmān b. Fōdiye, see Last, *Sokoto Caliphate*, lxxxiff.; Brenner, “Concepts of *Ṭarīqa*”, 49; “*Fā’ida ‘azīma*”.

historiographers.⁹⁵ The same epithet has been documented for the contemporary Ottoman reformist sultans Selīm III (1789–1807) and Maḥmūd II (1809–39).⁹⁶

The Maḥdī title was equally brought up for these scholarly and political leaders. There was some hesitation on their part vis-à-vis this highly charged attribute. Ibn Fōdiye finally refused this role and described himself instead as a “fore-runner” of the Maḥdī (Hausa *barden Maḥdī*).⁹⁷ Maḥdī pretenders who rose against the French around the middle of the nineteenth century were supported by the Raḥmāniyya in Eastern Algeria.⁹⁸

A rather specific oscillation between outright Mahdism and attenuated eschatological claims can be found for Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd in northern India. He was presented in his final years by his leading ideologist as a “Maḥdī in-between” (*Maḥdī al-wasaṭ*), who is said to appear after the end of the first half of the time left between the life of the Prophet and the final end of the world.⁹⁹ But many of his adherents remained committed to a fully-fledged Mahdist expectation after the final battle of Balakōt (1831), when he is said to have disappeared without leaving any trace of his body.

Eschatological claims found an equally attentive audience in a period of political and cultural recovery in Qajar Iran in the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁰⁰ In a climate of growing dissatisfaction with the hardening of the Qajar regime and the *uṣūlī* scholarly dominance, the young scholar and trader Sayyid ‘Alī Muḥammad (d. 1852) of Shīrāz gained considerable popularity with a radical challenge to the established patterns of political and religious leadership. He declared to be the sole “gateway” (*bāb*) to the Prophet and to the Maḥdī, later claimed Mahdship for himself, and finally proclaimed to be the initiator of a novel cycle of Prophecy. The year of his proclamation (1260/1844) was the thousandth anniversary of the beginning of the Twelfth Imam’s occultation (260/874). Although at first clinging to the validity of Muḥammad’s Prophetic mission, Sayyid ‘Alī Muḥammad finally announced the end of the rule of the *sharī‘a* and of the Islamic Prophetic cycle, and the beginning of a new era built on his own revealed book. Here, as in many of the other movements which we

95 von Kügelgen, *Legitimierung*, 303–17, 417ff., 459ff.

96 For Selīm III and his Sufi poet and friend Shaykh Ghālib, see Holbrook, *Unreadable Shores of Love*; Yüksel, *Şeyh Galip*, 16. For Maḥmūd II, see the introduction of Shihāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Ālūsī to his Qur’ānic commentary *Rūḥ al-ma‘ānī*, 1:4.

97 Adeleye, “Sifofin Shehu”; Skinner, *Anthology*, 132–36.

98 Clancy Smith, *Rebel and Saint*, 92–124, 168–213.

99 For the concept of the *Maḥdī al-wasaṭ* put forward for Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, see Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*, 222–31.

100 For an overview of this period, see Amanat, *Iran*, chapter 4, 179ff.

have mentioned, the dissatisfaction with the state of the Muslim community and its existing sociopolitical order is hard to assess for its range, but certainly can be sensed. In this spectacular case this was taken beyond the limits of Islam.¹⁰¹ The Bahā'ī offshoot of the Bābīs would later pursue its development towards a separate religion with even more resolve and success.¹⁰²

3.4 Conclusion

We have attempted to offer an overview of religious and political developments in many Muslim regions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that coincided with the European and American “Age of Revolutions” and that fully justify the historiographical extension of that label to the Muslim world. For the establishment of a richer comparative framework for this period, much still remains to be done. Some forms of attachment to the person of the Prophet Muḥammad were highlighted that obviously played a crucial role for the movements presented here and that tie in with the rising significance of Prophetic piety in the course of the early modern period in the Muslim world.¹⁰³ Here, too, much in-depth study of local and regional developments as well as a good deal of comparative research are still required.

The “Muslim Age of Revolutions”, which was outlined here, had its internal dynamics which sprang from the same geopolitical and global economic conditions as its European and American counterparts. The decline of the large Eurasian Muslim empires, which went along in several regions with an irreversible decay of Islamic imperial authority, contributed to it as much as the increasingly entangled developments and crises of the global economy, and the growing networks of Muslim scholarly communication linking widely distant and even remote regions to the Holy Cities and to each other. The view from the more peripheral angles of the Muslim world which was chosen in this presentation perhaps brings this out with fuller clarity. Whether in the case of the Atlantic slave trade, which culminated in this period and included or affected important Muslim regions in West Africa, or of the European economic and military encroachment and competition in South and South East Asia that increased tremendously during the same time, Muslims were actively

101 See for the Bāb and for the development of his doctrine the references mentioned above (note 16).

102 See Cole, “Bahāism i. The Faith”, and the other articles of the “Bahāism” cluster in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*.

103 See for this already Reichmuth, “Aspects of Prophetic Piety”; Mayeur-Jaouen, “À la poursuite de la réforme”, 356ff.

as well as passively involved in these globalising developments. Struggling for an authentic Islamic authority built on recognised Prophetic standards, they were nevertheless closely bound to the specific political and cultural conditions of their respective regions. Their connections with the transnational “revolutionary culture” of European radicalism remained minimal in the period in question.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, these movements often shaped and directed the reaction of the local Muslim population to European economic and political expansion. Their efforts built upon the Prophet and his *sunna* for political legitimation and statehood, for the social and ethical disciplining of the Muslim individual, and for Muslim public culture and regional and historical consciousness in general. With their critique of established Muslim religious and political practice, and their repeated claim of a return to the model of the Prophet and the early Muslim community, they created new political traditions and patterns of reference that have remained significant until the present. Their undeniable impact upon modern Muslim statehood is an equally important task of further research.

The eschatological colouring of the movements which were described here should not blind us to their remarkable attempts to find novel solutions to the political and cultural challenges which their societies were facing in this period. These went far beyond being trapped in cyclical historical and socio-cultural patterns, such as those that were widely ascribed to Islam, even by Marx and Engels, but rather showed attempts to establish a workable balance of Islamic doctrines with local political and social norms.¹⁰⁵ The special case of Bábism in Iran, with its fundamental critique of Islamic authority and with the establishment of a new religion, brings out the great sociocultural tensions and the crisis of religious and political legitimacy, which can be sensed with hindsight also in other parts of the Muslim world, in an age that was highly dynamic and indeed volatile for people in five continents.

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104 For this transnational “revolutionary culture” of European radicalism, see the recent comparative study by Murray-Miller, *Revolutionary Europe*.

105 For Engels and his rather unfavourable comparison of Islam with early Christianity, see his “Zur Geschichte des Urchristentums”, 472; Bousquet, “Marx et Engels se sont-ils intéressés aux questions islamiques?”.

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PART 2

Prophetic Descent and Authority



مفهوم النقابة بين التوجيه الشرعي والضرورة التاريخية في المغرب الأقصى

(The Concept of the *Niqāba* between Legal Norm and Historical Development in Morocco)

Jaafar Ben El Haj Soulami

مُقَدِّمَةٌ 4.1

مَنْ اللَّافِتِ لِلنَّظَرِ، أَنْ نُلَاحِظَ فِي الْمَسِيرَةِ الْعَامَّةِ لِلْبَحْثِ الْعِلْمِيِّ الْعَرَبِيِّ الْمُعَاصِرِ، تَقْصِيرًا فَاضِحًا فِي الدَّرَاسَاتِ النَّسَبِيَّةِ؛ فَالْكَابَةُ فِي عِلْمِ الْأَنْسَابِ، وَوَصَلَ الْمُتَأَخِّرِينَ بِالْمُقَدِّمِينَ، أَمْ رَكَادٌ أَنْ يَضْمَحِلَّ اضْمِحْلَالًا، بِالرَّغْمِ مِنَ الْوَسَائِلِ الْمُتَطَوِّرَةِ فِي عَصْرِنَا الَّتِي يُمَكِّنُ اسْتِغْلَالَهَا لِهَذَا الْوَصْلِ، وَتَحْقِيقُ الْتَرَاثِ النَّسَبِيِّ أَمْرٌ نَادِرٌ قَلِيلٌ، بِالنِّسْبَةِ إِلَى مَا يُحَقِّقُ مِنْ غَيْرِهِ. بَلْ حَتَّى اسْتِمَارُ كُتُبِ الْأَنْسَابِ هَذِهِ فِي الدَّرَاسَاتِ التَّارِيخِيَّةِ وَغَيْرِهَا قَلِيلٌ جَدًّا. وَيَكَادُ نَشْرُكُ كُتُبِ الْأَنْسَابِ مُحَقَّقَةً، يَقْتَصِرُ عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِينَ الشَّيْعَةَ، كَمَا لَوْ أَنَّ الْإِعْتِنَاءَ بِالْأَنْسَابِ وَعَلَيْهَا مِنْ خُصُوصِيَّاتِ الشَّيْعَةِ الْإِمَامِيَّةِ، وَلَا يَعْنِي إِخْوَانَهُمْ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ السُّنِّيِّينَ فِي شَيْءٍ.

أَمَّا فِي الْمَغْرِبِ الْأَقْصَى، فَوَاقِعُ الْحَالِ أَنَّ النُّصُوصَ الْمَنْشُورَةَ مِنَ التَّرَاثِ النَّسَبِيِّ عَلَى يَدِ الْجَامِعِيِّينَ الْمُعَارَبَةِ قَلِيلَةٌ جَدًّا. وَهِيَ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ، أَقَلُّ بِكَثِيرٍ مِمَّا يُنْشَرُ مِنْ كِتَابَاتٍ جَدِيدَةٍ، غَرَضُهَا الْأَوَّلُ الْخَاطِقُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنَ النَّاسِ بِالنِّسْبِ الشَّرِيفِ، أَوْ الْإِسَاءَةِ إِلَى طَائِفَةٍ أُخْرَى بِالطَّعْنِ فِي انْتِسَابِهَا فِي مُقَابِلِ هَذَا التَّقْرِيطِ، نَحْدَ الْغَرِيبِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ سَعْيًا حَثِيثًا إِلَى إِحْيَاءِ هَذَا الْعِلْمِ وَتَدْوِينِ مُسْتَجَدَّاتِهِ، وَإِحْلَالِهِ الْمَكَانَةَ اللَّائِقَةَ بِهِ.

وَقَدْ صَارَ الْآنَ عِلْمُ الْأَنْسَابِ أَوْكَادَ أَنْ يَصِيرَ نِسْبًا مَنْسِيًّا عِنْدَ كَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِنِينَ، بَلْ مَرْفُوضًا أَيْضًا، لِتَوْهْمِهِمْ أَنَّ "الْحَدَاثَةَ" تَقْتَضِي بِالضَّرُورَةِ تَدْمِيرَ الْعُلُومِ الشَّرْعِيَّةِ وَالْآلِيَّةِ، وَالْإِعْرَاضَ عَنِ الْجَوَابِ "المُظْلِمَةَ" - رَعَمُوا - مِنَ التَّرَاثِ، كَعِلْمِ الْأَنْسَابِ، الَّذِي يَقُودُ إِلَى تَأْكِدِ هَيْمَنَةِ فِئَةِ مِنَ النَّاسِ عَلَى فِئَةٍ أُخْرَى، لِجُرْدِ انْتِهَاءِ وَهْمِي - رَعَمُوا - إِلَى نَسَبِ وَهْمِي، وَإِلَى تَأْيِيدِ الْمُجْتَمَعِ الْإِنْسَامِيِّ، وَمَنْعِ قِيَامِ الْمُجْتَمَعِ الْحَدَاثِيِّ، وَالْمُجْتَمَعِ مَا بَعْدَ الْحَدَاثِيِّ. بِنَاءً عَلَى هَذَا، لَا يُعْقَلُ أَنْ نَنْتَظِرَ، فِي الْمَغْرِبِ الْأَقْصَى عَلَى الْأَقْلِ، دِرَاسَاتٍ جَادَةً فِي تَارِيخِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ تَارِيخِيَّةٍ خَطِيرَةٍ، مُؤَسَّسَةِ اجْتِمَاعِيَّةٍ وَثَقَافِيَّةٍ وَسِيَاسِيَّةٍ، وَهِيَ مُؤَسَّسَةُ "التَّقَابَةِ". وَالْحَقُّ أَنَّ مُؤَسَّسَةَ التَّقَابَةِ، تَحْتَاجُ إِلَى دِرَاسَاتٍ عِلْمِيَّةٍ دَقِيقَةٍ، لِتَسِينِ تَارِيخِهَا، وَمَشْرُوعِيَّةٍ تَكْوِينِيَّةٍ، وَكَيْفِيَّةٍ اسْتِغَالِهَا، عِبْرَ الْقُرُونِ، وَعِبْرَ الْبُلْدَانِ وَالْأَقْطَارِ، وَطَبِيعَةِ التَّرَاثِ الَّذِي خَلَقْتَهُ، وَحُجْمِهِ وَقِيَمَتِهِ، وَأَهْمِيَّةِ اسْتِمَارِهِ فِي الدِّرَاسَاتِ التَّارِيخِيَّةِ وَالْأَدَبِيَّةِ وَالْإِنْسَانِيَّةِ، وَأَهْمِيَّتِهِ فِي تَعْمِيقِ الشُّعُورِ بِالوَحْدَةِ بَيْنَ الشُّعُوبِ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ.

4.2 التَّقَابَةُ: مِنَ الْمَدْلُولِ اللَّغْوِيِّ، إِلَى الْمَفْهُومِ الْإِصْطِلَاحِيِّ

إِهْتَمَّ الْعَلَامَةُ شَيْخُ الْعُلُومِ بِالْمَغْرِبِ، أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدِ الْمُرِيِّ التَّطَوِيَانِي (ت 398هـ) بِالْبَحْثِ فِي الْأَصْلِ اللَّغْوِيِّ لِكَلِمَةِ التَّقَابَةِ، قَبْلَ أَنْ تَصِيرَ التَّقَابَةُ "وَلَايَةً" سُلْطَانِيَّةً، فَقَالَ فِي كِتَابِهِ الشَّهِيرِ: "الْأَبْحَاثُ السَّامِيَّةُ فِي الْمَحَاكِمِ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ": "وَلَايَةُ تَقَابَةِ الْأَشْرَافِ: التَّقَابَةُ فِي اللُّغَةِ: الرَّئَاسَةُ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ، وَالتَّقَدُّمُ عَلَيْهِمْ، لِتَعَرُّفِ أَحْوَالِهِمْ، وَالبَحْثِ عَنْ أَخْبَارِهِمْ. قَالَ فِي النِّهَايَةِ: التَّقَابَةُ، كَالْعَرِيفِ بَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ، وَالْمُقَدَّمِ عَلَيْهِمْ: الَّذِي يَتَعَرَّفُ أَخْبَارَهُمْ، وَيُنْقِبُ عَنْ أَحْوَالِهِمْ، أَيِ يُفْتِّشُ؛

وَكَانَ النَّبِيُّ (ص) قَدْ جَعَلَ لَيْلَةَ الْعَقَبَةِ كُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِنَ الْجَمَاعَةِ الَّذِينَ بَايَعُوهُ، تَقِيْبًا عَلَى قَوْمِهِ وَجَمَاعَتِهِ، لِيَأْخُذُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْإِسْلَامَ، وَيَعْرِفُوهُمْ شَرَائِطَهُ. وَكَانُوا اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ تَقِيْبًا؛ كُلُّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ. وَكَانَ عِبَادَةُ بُنِ الصَّامِتِ مِنْهُمْ.

ثُمَّ أُطْلِقَتِ التَّقَابَةُ فِي الْعُرْفِ عَلَى خُطَّةٍ مِنْ بَيْ الْقِيَامِ عَلَى صِيَانَةِ ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ الشَّرِيفَةِ، وَحِفْظِهَا مِنْ دُخُولِ مَنْ لَيْسَ مِنْهَا. وَهِيَ وَلَايَةٌ مُحَدَّثَةٌ. وَأُظُنُّ أَنَّ حَدُوثَهَا كَانَ فِي الدَّوْلَةِ الْعَبَّاسِيَّةِ. وَرُبَّمَا يُؤْخَذُ ذَلِكَ مِنْ كَلَامِ ابْنِ الْعَرَبِيِّ...¹

وَعَلَى كَثْرَةِ مَا فِي التَّرَاثِ الْمَعْرِيِّ الْمَالِكِيِّ مِنْ كُتُبِ الْفِقْهِ وَالتَّوَازِلِ وَالْأَنْسَابِ، فَإِنَّهُ مِنْ اللَّافِتِ لِلنَّظَرِ قَلَّةٌ مَا كَبَّهُ الْفُقَهَاءُ الْمَالِكِيُّ وَالنَّسَابُونَ عَنِ الْمَشْرُوعِيَّةِ الدِّينِيَّةِ لِمُؤَسَّسَةِ التَّقَابَةِ. بَلْ مِنْ اللَّافِتِ لِلنَّظَرِ كَذَلِكَ، وَهُوَ أَعْرَبَ، رُجُوعٌ مَا كَبَّوهُ إِلَى الْفُقَهَاءِ الشَّافِعِيَّةِ، وَلَا سِيَّامًا إِلَى كِتَابِ "الْأَحْكَامِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ"، لِأَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ الْبَغْدَادِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ (ت450هـ). بَلْ لَنَا أَنْ نَقُولَ، إِنَّ مَا كَبَّهُ هَذَا الْفَقِيهُ الشَّافِعِيُّ الرَّائِدُ، قَدْ صَارَ دُسْتُورَ الْفُقَهَاءِ وَالنَّسَابِينَ الْمَعَارِبَةِ.

4.3 النَّصُّ الْمُوَسَّسُ لِلتَّقَابَةِ الشَّرْعِيَّةِ، وَمَلْحُوظَاتُ النَّسَابِينَ وَالْفُقَهَاءِ: "الْأَحْكَامِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ"، لِأَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ الْبَغْدَادِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ، وَ"الْأَحْكَامِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ"، لِأَبِي يَعْلَى الْخَنْبَلِيِّ

عَقَدَ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ الْبَغْدَادِيُّ الشَّافِعِيُّ، الْبَابَ الثَّامِنَ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ، "الْأَحْكَامِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ، وَالْوَلَايَاتِ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ"، لِتَأْصِيلِ مَفْهُومِ التَّقَابَةِ، شُعُورًا مِنْهُ بِأَهْمِيَّةِ هَذِهِ الْمُوَسَّسَةِ فِي الْمُجْتَمَعِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ. وَبِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ انْقِسَامِ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ قَبْلَ زَمَانِهِ إِلَى مَذَاهِبَ فِقْهِيَّةٍ أَرْبَعَةٍ عَلَى الْأَقْلَ، فَإِنَّ مَا كَبَّهُ عَنْ مَفْهُومِ التَّقَابَةِ هَمِينَ عَلَى تَصَوُّرَاتٍ مُعَاَصِرِيهِ، كَأَبِي يَعْلَى الْفَرَّاءِ الْخَنْبَلِيِّ (ت458هـ) وَمَنْ جَاءَ وَابَعْدَهُ، عَلَى اخْتِلَافِ مَذَاهِبِهِمُ الْفِقْهِيَّةِ، فَاعْتَمَدُوا كَلَامَهُ نَصًّا مُؤَسَّسًا، وَلَمْ يُبَالُوا بِتَطْوِيرِ الْخِلَافِ وَتَأْصِيلِهِ فِي مَفْهُومِ التَّقَابَةِ، فَكَانَ نَصَّهُ هَذَا نَصًّا إِجْمَاعِيًّا.

4.3.1 مَبْدَأُ "صِيَانَةِ ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ"، وَحَقُّ الْإِسْتِقْلَالِ الْوِلَايِيِّ

يَقُولُ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ: "وَهَذِهِ النَّقَابَةُ مَوْضُوعَةٌ عَلَى صِيَانَةِ ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ الشَّرِيفَةِ عَنِ وِلَايَةِ مَنْ لَا يُكَافِئُهُمْ فِي النَّسَبِ، وَلَا يُسَاوِيهِمْ فِي الشَّرَفِ، لِيَكُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَحْبَبُ، وَأَمْرُهُ فِيهِمْ أَمْضَى."² إِنَّ مَبْدَأَ "صِيَانَةِ ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ" عَنِ الْخُضُوعِ لِسُلْطَةِ أَجْنَبِيَّةٍ عَنْهُمْ، سُلْطَةٍ مُتَعَالَى عَنْهَا، لِأَنَّهَا رَاجِعَةٌ إِلَى "مَنْ لَا يُكَافِئُهُمْ فِي النَّسَبِ، وَلَا يُسَاوِيهِمْ فِي الشَّرَفِ"، يُقَرَّرُ حَقًّا أَكْتَسَبَهُ الْأَشْرَافُ عَبْرَ التَّارِيخِ، وَاعْتَرَفَ لَهُمْ بِهِ الْمُجْتَمَعُ الْإِسْلَامِيُّ فِي الْقَرْنِ الْخَامِسِ الْهَجْرِيِّ، الْمُتَّارِخِ فِي نَظَرْتِهِ إِلَى الْأَشْرَافِ، بَيْنَ النَّظَرَةِ التَّعْظِيمِيَّةِ لِأَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ، وَالنَّظَرَةِ التَّقْدِيسِيَّةِ لِلشَّيْعَةِ، أَيَّ حَقِّ الْإِسْتِقْلَالِ الْوِلَايِيِّ، الَّذِي يَعْنِي عَدَمَ الْخُضُوعِ لِسُلْطَةِ أَجْنَبِيَّةٍ عَنْهُمْ.

لَمْ يَجِدِ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ، وَهُوَ الْفَقِيهُ الشَّافِعِيُّ، سَنَدًا شَرْعِيًّا لِهَذَا الْمَبْدَأِ، يَنْدُبُ إِلَى تَمْيِيزِ الْأَشْرَافِ عَنِ الْعَامَّةِ فِي الْوِلَايَةِ، إِلَّا هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ الشَّرِيفَ، الَّذِي لَا يَنْصُ صِرَاحَةً عَلَى حَقِّ الْإِسْتِقْلَالِ الْوِلَايِيِّ، أَوْ تَنْظِيمِ النَّقَابَاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا يَدْعُو إِلَى وَصْلِ الْأَرْحَامِ، مَهْمَا يَكُنْ أَصْلُهَا. قَالَ: "وَرُوِيَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ (ص) أَنَّهُ قَالَ: 'اعْرِفُوا أَنْسَابَكُمْ، تَصِلُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ؛ فَإِنَّهُ لَا قُرْبَى بِالرَّحِمِ، إِذَا قُطِعَتْ، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ قَرِيبَةً، وَلَا بُعْدَ بِهَا، إِذَا وَصِلَتْ، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ بَعِيدَةً."³

وَبِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ أَنَّ مَفْهُومَ "صِلَةِ الرَّحِمِ"، الْوَارِدَ فِي هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ وَغَيْرِهِ، وَهُوَ مَفْهُومٌ عَامٌّ، لَا يُسْتَنْجَجُ مِنْهُ بِالضَّرُورَةِ مَفْهُومُ "صِيَانَةِ ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ"، فَقَدْ بَنَى عَلَيْهِ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ مَفْهُومَ "الْإِسْتِقْلَالِ الْوِلَايِيِّ"، دُونَ أَنْ يُكَلِّفَ نَفْسَهُ عَنَاءَ ضَبْطِ مَا هِيَ "ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ"، وَلَا كَيْفَ اسْتَحَقُّوا أَنْ يَصِيرُوا شَرْعًا مِنْ "ذَوِي الْأَنْسَابِ"، فِي كِتَابِ مُخَصَّصٍ لِـ "الْأَحْكَامِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ، وَالْوِلَايَاتِ الدِّيْنِيَّةِ". ثُمَّ بَعْدَمَا قَرَّرَ مَفْهُومَ "الْإِسْتِقْلَالِ الْوِلَايِيِّ"، رَبَطَ مَفْهُومَ "النَّقَابَةِ" بِمَفْهُومِ "الْوِلَايَةِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ"، فَلَا عِلَاقَةَ لِلنَّقَابَةِ عِنْدَهُ بِالشُّورَى، وَلَيْسَ أَمْرٌ

2 الْأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 171.

3 الْأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 171.

الأشرف شورى بينهم، وإنما هي ولاية كسائر الولايات، كالوزارة والحجابه والقضاء، إذ يعني الاستقلال الولائي الاستقلال عن العامة والرعية وسلطتهم فقط، لا عن سلطة الخليفة أو من يقوم مقامه، بل من سلطة الخلافة أو من يمثلها تستمد النقابة سلطتها. قال: "ولاية هذه النقابة تصح من إحدى ثلاث جهات: إما من جهة الخليفة المستولي على كل الأمور: إما من فوض الخليفة إليه تدير الأمور، كوزير التقيوض، وأمير الإقليم، وإما من نقيب عام الولاية، استخلف نقيباً خاصاً الولاية."⁴ وفي جميع الأحوال، ترجع سلطة النقابة ومشروعيتها إلى سلطة الخلافة ومشروعيتها، ومنها تستمد.

4.3.2 النقابة الخاصة والنقابة العامة: النقيب الوجيه، والنقيب الفقيه

لا شك في أن وصول العباسيين إلى السلطة، بشعار "الرضى من آل محمد"، وظهور دول ببنية موازية، كالإدرسية في فاس، والفاطمية في إفريقية ثم القاهرة، وتكاثر الأشرف وفروعهم، وتوزعهم في سائر دار الإسلام، قد جعل واقعهم التاريخي يتطور باستمرار، وجعل النقابة عليهم تتطور أيضاً، فتتقسم إلى قسمين كبيرين: خاصة وعامة، وجعل النقباء صنفين: أحدهما نقيب وجيه، مقامه في أهل بيته كقمام شيخ القبيلة في قبيلته، وثناهما نقيب وجيه فقيه، ومقامه في أهل بيته مقام شيخ القبيلة والقاضي الشرعي أيضاً.

4.3.2.1 النقابة الخاصة

وهي أقدم صنف النقبائين، وأكثرهما تداولاً في التاريخ. لذلك بدأ بها الماوردي، وحدد فيها واجبات النقيب الأصلية، وجعلها "ثني عشر حقاً" وهي واجبات نسبية، وخلفية تربوية، واجتماعية، ونضامنية، وحسبية، ومالية.

4 الأحكام السلطانية: 171.

1. الواجباتُ النَّسَبِيَّةُ: وَهِيَ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَتَدُورُ حَوْلَ "حِفْظِ" النَّسَبِ مِنَ الدَّخْلِ وَالخَارِجِ، وَ"تَمْيِيزِ البُطُونِ"، وَتَقْيِيدِ المَوَالِدِ وَالوَفَايَاتِ.⁵
 2. الواجباتُ الخُلُقِيَّةُ التَّرْبَوِيَّةُ: وَهِيَ أَرْبَعَةٌ وَتَدُورُ حَوْلَ الإِلْتِزَامِ بِـ "الآدَابِ" النَّبِيلَةِ، وَ"التَّرْتِيزِ عَنِ المَكَاَسِبِ الدَّنِيئَةِ"، وَ"الْكَفِّ عَنِ ارْتِكَابِ المَأْثِمِ"، وَ"الْمَنْعِ مِنَ التَّسَلُّطِ عَلَى العَامَّةِ".
 3. الواجباتُ التَّضَامِيَّةُ: وَتَتَضَمَّنُ وَاجِبًا قَضَائِيًّا وَهُوَ الإِعَانَةُ فِي "اسْتِيفَاءِ الحُقُوقِ" مِنَ الأَشْرَافِ وَلَهُمْ، وَوَاجِبًا مَعَاشِيًّا، وَهُوَ النِّيَابَةُ عَنْهُمْ فِي المَطَالَبَةِ بِحُقُوقِهِمْ فِي "سَهْمِ ذَوِي القُرْبَى"،⁶ وَتَدْبِيرِ شَأْنِ أَوْقَافِهِمْ.⁷
 4. الواجباتُ الإِجْتِمَاعِيَّةُ: وَتَقْتَصِرُ عَلَى تَرْوِيحِ البَتِيَّاتِ مِنَ الأَكْفَاءِ، وَمَنْعِهِمْ مِنْ "أَنْ يَتَرَوَّجْنَ إِلاَّ الأَكْفَاءِ".⁸
 5. الواجباتُ التَّأْدِيبِيَّةُ: وَهِيَ وَاسِعَةٌ، إِلاَّ أَنَّهَا مَشْرُوطَةٌ بِعَدَمِ إِقَامَةِ الحُدُودِ، وَعَدَمِ إِسَالَةِ الدِّمَاءِ، وَفِي مُقَابِلِهَا حَقُّ العَفْوِ.⁹
- إِنَّ هَذَا يَعْنِي أَنَّ التَّقَابَةَ الخَاصَّةَ هِيَ دَوْلَةٌ دَاخِلٌ دَوْلَةٌ، أَوْ خِلَافَةٌ دَاخِلٌ خِلَافَةٌ. وَمِثْلَهَا تَكَلَّمَ الفُقَهَاءُ فِي شُرُوطِ الخَلِيفَةِ، تَكَلَّمَ المَاوَرِدِيُّ فِي شُرُوطِ التَّقِيْبِ، فَاشْتَرَطَ فِيهِ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ النُّخْبَةِ. قَالَ: "فَإِذَا أَرَادَ المُوَيِّ أَنْ يُوَيِّ عَلَى الطَّالِبِينَ نَقِيْبًا، أَوْ عَلَى العَبَّاسِيِّينَ نَقِيْبًا، يَخِيْرُ مِنْهُمْ أَجْلَهُمْ بَيْنًا، وَأَكْثَرَهُمْ فَضْلًا، وَأَجْرَلَهُمْ رَأْيًا، فَيُوَيِّ عَلَيْهِمْ، لِيَتَجَمَّعَ فِيهِ شُرُوطُ الرِّيَاسَةِ وَالسِّيَاسَةِ، فَيُسْرِعُوا إِلَى طَاعَتِهِ بِرِيَاسَتِهِ، وَتَسْتَقِيمَ أُمُورُهُمْ بِسِيَاسَتِهِ."¹⁰

5. الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 171-172.

6. الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 172.

7. الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 172، 173.

8. الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 172.

9. الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 172.

10. الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 171.

وَبِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ شَرْطِ التُّخِيَّةِ هَذَا، لَمْ يَشْتَرِطِ شَرْطَ الْعِلْمِ فِي نِقَابَةِ التَّقِيْبِ الْخَاصِّ. قَالَ:
 "فَلَا يَكُونُ الْعِلْمُ مُعْتَبَرًا فِي شُرُوطِهَا"¹¹.

4.3.2.2 النِقَابَةُ الْعَامَّةُ

وَهِيَ أَحَدُ صِنْفِي النِقَابَتَيْنِ، وَأَقْلَهُمَا تَدَاوُلًا فِي التَّارِيخِ. لِذَلِكَ أَخْرَجَهَا وَقَدْ بَيَّنَّ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ
 عُمُومَهَا بِقَوْلِهِ: "وَأَمَّا النِقَابَةُ الْعَامَّةُ، فَعُمُومُهَا أَنْ يُرَدَّ إِلَيْهِ فِي النِقَابَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ، مَعَ مَا قَدَّمْنَا
 مِنْ حُقُوقِ النَّظَرِ، خَمْسَةُ أَشْيَاءَ: أَحَدُهَا: الْحُكْمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيمَا تَنَارَعُوا فِيهِ. وَالثَّانِي: الْوِلَايَةُ عَلَى
 أَيَّتَمِهِمْ فِيمَا مَلَكَوهُ. وَالثَّلَاثُ: إِقَامَةُ الْحَدِّ عَلَيْهِمْ فِيمَا ارْتَكَبُوهُ. وَالرَّابِعُ: تَرْوِجُ الْأَيَّامِ اللَّاتِي
 لَا يَتَعَيَّنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُهُنَّ، أَوْ قَدْ تَعَيَّنُوا فَعَضَلُوهُنَّ. وَالخَامِسُ: إِيقَاعُ الْحَجْرِ عَلَى مَنْ عَتَى مِنْهُمْ
 أَوْ سَفَهَهُ، وَفَكَهُ إِذَا أَفَاقَ وَرَشَدَ."¹²

إِنَّ التَّقِيْبَ الْوَجِيهَ هُنَا يَصِيرُ نَقِيْبًا وَجِيهًا قَاضِيًا، لِأَنَّ كُلَّ وَاجِبَاتِهِ هُنَا هِيَ وَاجِبَاتُ
 الْقَاضِيِ الشَّرْعِيِّ. لِذَلِكَ اشْتَرَطَ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ فِي التَّقِيْبِ صِفَةً زَائِدَةً عَلَى الْوَجَاهَةِ وَالْإِتْمَاءِ
 إِلَى نُحْبَةِ التُّخِيَّةِ، وَهِيَ صِفَةُ الْعِلْمِ. قَالَ: "فَيُعْتَبَرُ حِينَئِذٍ فِي صِحَّةِ نِقَابَتِهِ، وَعَقْدِ وِلَايَتِهِ، أَنْ
 يَكُونَ عَالِمًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْإِجْتِهَادِ، لِيَصِحَّ حُكْمُهُ، وَيَنْفَذَ قَضَاؤُهُ."¹³

4.3.2.3 تَوَارُدُ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ وَأَبِي يَعْلَى الْحَنْبَلِيِّ

إِذَا قَارَنَّا النَّصَّ الْمَوْسَسَ لِمَفْهُومِ النِقَابَةِ وَشُرُوطِهَا عِنْدَ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ، بِالنَّصِّ
 الْمَوْسَسِ عِنْدَ أَبِي يَعْلَى الْحَنْبَلِيِّ،¹⁴ وَهُمَا مُتَعَاصِرَانِ، تَبَيَّنَ لَنَا أَنَّ أَحَدَهُمَا نَقَلَ كَلَامَ الْآخَرِ،
 حَدَوْكَ النَّعْلِ بِالنَّعْلِ. غَيْرَ أَنَّ الْقَرَائِنَ وَالنَّفْسَ مَائِلَةً إِلَى اعْتِبَارِ نَصِّ أَبِي يَعْلَى الْحَنْبَلِيِّ،
 مُتَأَخِّرًا عَنِ نَصِّ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ. وَمَهْمَا يَكُنْ مِنْ أَمْرِ السَّابِقِ وَاللَّاحِقِ، فَإِنْ مَا

11 الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 171.

12 الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 173.

13 الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 173.

14 الأَحْكَامُ السُّلْطَانِيَّةُ: 90-94.

يَجِبُ اسْتِخْلَاصُهُ، هُوَ أَنَّ الْفِقْهَ الشَّافِعِيَّ وَالْحَنَبِيَّ، تَوَاطَا عَلَى الْإِطْلَاقِ عَلَى تَصَوُّرٍ
وَاحِدٍ لِمَفْهُومِ النِّقَابَةِ وَشُرُوطِ التَّقِيْبِ فِي الْقَرْنِ الْخَامِسِ الْهَجْرِيِّ، وَمَثَلًا مَعًا التَّوَجُّهَ
السُّنِّيَّ وَالْفَهْمَ السُّنِّيَّ لَهَا، وَنَابَا مَعًا عَنِ الْفُقَهَاءِ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ فِي التَّفَكِيرِ فِي مَفْهُومِ النِّقَابَةِ، وَلَمْ
يَجْعَلْ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ مَفْهُومَ النِّقَابَةِ مَوْضُوعَ أَيِّ خِلَافٍ فِقْهِيٍّ ذِي بَالٍ.
وَبِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ أَهْمِيَّةِ النِّقَابَةِ الْخَاصَّةِ مِنْهَا وَالْعَامَّةِ، ضَمِنَ الْوَلَايَاتِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ، فَقَدْ سَجَّلَ
الْقَلَقْشَنْدِي (ت821هـ) فِي "صُبْحِ الْأَعْشَى"، أَنَّ هَذِهِ "الْوَلَايَةُ"، هِيَ مِنَ الْوَلَايَاتِ غَيْرِ
الْمَسْؤُولَةِ مُبَاشَرَةً وَدَائِمًا أَمَامَ السُّلْطَانِ، لِذَلِكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِلتَّقِيْبِ، مَهْمَا يَعْلُقُ قَدْرَهُ، مَجْلِسٌ
دَائِمٌ فِي "الْحَضْرَةِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ". قَالَ:

الْصَّنْفُ الثَّانِي مِنْ أَرْبَابِ الْوُضَائِفِ الدِّيْنِيَّةِ: مَنْ لَا مَجْلِسَ لَهُ بِالْحَضْرَةِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ:
... ثُمَّ هَذِهِ مِنْهَا مَا هُوَ مُحْتَصٌّ بِشَخْصٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَمِنْهَا مَا هُوَ عَامٌّ فِي أَشْخَاصٍ.
فَأَمَّا الَّتِي هِيَ مُحْتَصَّةٌ بِشَخْصٍ وَاحِدٍ، فَمِنْهَا نِقَابَةُ الْأَشْرَافِ، وَهِيَ وَطِيفَةٌ شَرِيفَةٌ،
وَمَرْتَبَةٌ نَفِيْسَةٌ: مَوْضُوعُهَا التَّحَدُّثُ عَلَى وَلَدِ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، كَرَّمَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى
وَجْهَهُ، مِنْ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص) وَهُمْ الْمُرَادُ بِالْأَشْرَافِ، فِي الْفَحْصِ عَنِ
أَنْسَابِهِمْ، وَالتَّحَدُّثِ فِي أَقَارِبِهِمْ، وَالْأَخْذِ عَلَى يَدِ الْمُتَعَدِّيِّ مِنْهُمْ، وَمَوْذُوكِ ذَلِكَ وَكَانَ
يُعْبَرُ عَنْهَا فِي زَمَنِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الْمُتَقَدِّمِينَ، بِنِقَابَةِ الطَّالِبِيِّينَ.¹⁵

وَيُظْهِرُ أَنَّ مَا اشْتَرَطَهُ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ فِي التُّبَاءِ، كَانَ مُحْتَرَمًا عَلَى الْعُمُومِ فِي التَّارِيخِ
الْإِسْلَامِيِّ. فَهَذَا الْقَلَقْشَنْدِيُّ، وَهُوَ نَسَابَةٌ، يُقَرِّرُ أَنَّهُ "قَدْ جَرَتْ الْعَادَةُ أَنَّ الَّذِي يَتَوَلَّى
هَذِهِ الْوَطِيفَةَ، أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْ رُءُوسِ الْأَشْرَافِ، وَأَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْ أَرْبَابِ الْأَقْلَامِ."¹⁶

15 صُبْحُ الْأَعْشَى: 38/4.

16 صُبْحُ الْأَعْشَى: 162/11.

4.3.2.4 الفقه التقيي المالكِي وآل البيت: آراء الفقهاء النَّسَّابِين

بالرَّغْمِ مِنْ مَعْرِفَةِ الْعُلَمَاءِ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ بِوُجُودِ نِقَابَاتٍ فِي الْمَشْرِقِ لِلْأَشْرَافِ، لَهَا أَحْكَامُهَا الْوَلَايَةِ، فَإِنَّ حَدِيثَهُمْ عَنْهَا فِي الْغَرْبِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ، هُوَ حَدِيثٌ عَنْ مُؤَسَّسَةِ مَوْجُودَةٍ فِي الْمَشْرِقِ، لَا فِي الْمَغْرِبِ. بَلْ لَمْ يَخُلْ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ "تَبْدِيعِ" الْهُؤُسَسَةِ، مِنْ عَالِمِ مَالِكِيٍّ كَبِيرٍ، جَالَ فِي الْمَشْرِقِ، وَدَخَلَ دَوْلَتَيْهِ الْعَبَّاسِيَّةَ وَالْفَاطِمِيَّةَ، وَرَأَى طَوَائِفَ أَهْلِ السُّنَّةِ وَالشَّيْعَةِ، هُوَ الْقَاضِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ ابْنُ الْعَرَبِيِّ الْمَعَارِفِيُّ الْإِسْبِيلِيَّ (ت543هـ) قَالَ "بِوَأْمَا وَلَايَةُ النِّقَابَةِ، فَهِيَ مُحَدَّثَةٌ أَيْضًا، لِأَنَّهُ لَمَّا كَثُرَتِ الدَّعَاوِي فِي الْأَنْسَابِ الْهَاشِمِيَّةِ، لِاسْتِيلَائِهَا عَلَى الدَّوْلَةِ، نَصَبَ الْوَلَاةَ قَوْمًا يَحْفَظُونَ الْأَنْسَابَ، لِئَلَّا يَدْخُلَ فِيهَا مَنْ لَيْسَ مِنْهَا. ثُمَّ زَادَتْ الْحَالُ فَسَادًا، فَجَعَلُوا إِلَيْهِمْ مَنْ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَرَدَّوهُمْ لِقَاضِيٍّ مِنْهُمْ، لِئَلَّا تَمْتَهِنَهُمُ الْقُضَاةُ مِنْ سَائِرِ الْقَبَائِلِ، وَهُمْ أَشْرَفُ مِنْهُمْ وَهِيَ بَدْعِيَّةٌ تُنَافِي الشَّرْعِيَّةَ"¹⁷

وَإِذَا كَانَ ابْنُ الْعَرَبِيِّ، الْعَالِمُ الْمَالِكِيُّ الشَّهِيرَ، وَقَاضِي إِسْبِيلِيَّةَ، قَدْ سَجَّلَ رَأْيَهُ صَرَاحَةً فِي الْقَرْنِ السَّادِسِ لِلْهِجْرَةِ فِي مَشْرُوعِيَّةِ النِّقَابَةِ، وَذَهَبَ إِلَى تَبْدِيعِ "النِّقَابَةِ الْعَامَّةِ"، وَمُنَافَاتِهَا لِلْمُؤَسَّسَاتِ الشَّرْعِيَّةِ، وَقَدْ كَانَ الْمَغْرِبُ وَالْأَنْدَلُسُ دَوْلَةً وَاحِدَةً، عَلَى عَهْدِ الْمُرَابِطِينَ وَالْمُوَحِّدِينَ، فَإِنَّ ابْنَ خَلْدُونَ (ت808هـ) قَاضِي قُضَاةِ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ فِي مِصْرَ، وَالْحَيَّرَ الْكَبِيرَ فِي الْغَرْبِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ وَتَارِيخِهِ، لَمْ يَكْلِفْ نَفْسَهُ بَعْدَهُ فِي الْقَرْنِ الثَّامِنِ هَذَا الْعَنَاءَ، عَنَاءَ النَّظَرِ فِي مَشْرُوعِيَّةِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ النِّقَابَةِ، مِنْ حَيْثُ الْبَدْعِيَّةِ وَالسُّنِّيَّةِ، كَمَا فَعَلَ ابْنُ الْعَرَبِيِّ. بَلْ نَظَرَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ مَنظُورِهِ "الْعُمْرَانِيَّ" الْوَاقِعِيَّ لِلْأَشْيَاءِ، فَسَجَّلَ مَالَهَا فِي عَصْرِهِ، فِي إِشَارَةٍ قَصِيرَةٍ لَافِتَةٍ لِلنَّظَرِ بِقَصَرِهَا، وَسَجَّلَ الْغَايَةَ الْمَادِيَّةَ وَالْإِجْتِمَاعِيَّةَ وَالسِّيَاسِيَّةَ وَالْمَعَاشِيَّةَ مِنْهَا، وَهِيَ "التَّوَصُّلُ إِلَى الْخِلَافَةِ، أَوْ إِلَى الْحَقِّ فِي بَيْتِ الْمَالِ". قَالَ، بَعْدَ أَنْ فَصَّلَ الْقَوْلَ فِي الْوَلَايَاتِ الشَّرْعِيَّةِ، أَوْ "الْوِظَائِفِ الْخِلَافِيَّةِ"، كَمَا يُسَمِّيهَا: "... هَذَا آخِرُ الْكَلَامِ فِي الْوِظَائِفِ الْخِلَافِيَّةِ. وَبَقِيَتْ مِنْهَا وَظَائِفٌ ذَهَبَتْ بِذَهَابٍ مَا يُنْظَرُ فِيهِ، وَأُخْرَى صَارَتْ سُلْطَانِيَّةً... وَكَذَا نِقَابَةُ الْأَنْسَابِ الَّتِي يُتَوَصَّلُ بِهَا إِلَى الْخِلَافَةِ، أَوْ الْحَقِّ فِي بَيْتِ الْمَالِ، قَدْ

بَطَلَتْ لِدُثُورِ الْخِلَافَةِ وَرُسُومِهَا. وَبِالْجُمْلَةِ، فَقَدْ اِنْدَرَجَتْ رُسُومُ الْخِلَافَةِ وَوُظَائِفُهَا فِي رُسُومِ الْمَلِكِ وَالسِّيَاسَةِ فِي سَائِرِ الدُّوَلِ لِهَذَا الْعَهْدِ. وَاللَّهُ مُصَرِّفُ الْأُمُورِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ.¹⁸ لَمْ يَسْتَنْ ابنُ خَلْدُونِ إِذْنَ مِنْ تَقْرِيرَاتِهِ هَذِهِ بَلَدًا مَغْرِبِيًّا وَلَا مَشْرِقِيًّا. وَيُظْهِرُ أَنَّ دُثُورَ "نِقَابَةِ الْأَنْسَابِ"، كَمَا يُسَمِّيهَا، لِدُثُورِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ الْخِلَافَةِ، كَانَ سَبَبًا عِنْدَهُ فِي شَيْئَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ:

أ. إِهْمَالِ الْحَدِيثِ عَنِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ النِّقَابَةِ، مَا عَدَا تِلْكَ الْإِشَارَةَ الْقَصِيرَةَ.
 ب. تَجَاهُلِ عِلْمِ الْأَنْسَابِ، بِاعْتِبَارِهِ عِلْمًا مُلْحَقًا بِعِلْمِ الْفِقْهِ وَعِلْمِ التَّارِيخِ مَعًا، بِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ أَنَّهُ فَصَّلَ الْكَلَامَ فِي عُلُومٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، شَرِيعِيَّةٍ وَءَالِيَّةٍ وَفَلَسَفِيَّةٍ وَغَيْرِهَا فِي مُقَدِّمَتِهِ، وَبِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ دِفَاعِهِ الْحَارِّ الْمُسْتَمِيتِ عَنِ الْأَدَارِسَةِ، فِي مُقَدِّمَةِ "مُقَدِّمَتِهِ"¹⁹ وَتَقْرِيرِهِ صِحَّةَ نَسَبِهِمْ، بِالْقَوَاعِدِ الشَّرِيعِيَّةِ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ، كَقَاعِدَةِ الْقَوْلِ بِ "مَقَاصِدِ الشَّرِيعَةِ"،²⁰ وَالْقَوْلِ بِأَنَّ "النَّاسَ مُصَدِّقُونَ فِي أَنْسَابِهِمْ"،²¹ وَاسْتِنْتَاجِهِ بَعْدَ إِعْمَالِهِ الْقَوَاعِدِ الشَّرِيعِيَّةِ، وَ"مَقَاصِدِ الشَّرِيعَةِ"، أَنَّ "فِرَاشَ إِدْرِيسَ، طَاهِرٌ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ، وَمُتْرَةٌ عَنِ الرَّجْسِ بِحُكْمِ الْقُرْآنِ. وَمَنْ اعْتَقَدَ خِلَافَ هَذَا، فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِإِثْمِهِ، وَوَجَلَ الْكُفْرَ مِنْ بَابِهِ."²²

وَمِنْ الْغَرِيبِ أَنَّ كُتُبَ "أَدَابِ الْمُلُوكِ"، فِي الْمَغْرِبِ وَالْأَنْدَلُسِ، فِيمَا بَيْنَ ابْنِ الْعَرَبِيِّ وَابْنِ خَلْدُونِ، بَلْ حَتَّى بَعْدَ ابْنِ خَلْدُونِ، تُصَرُّ إِصْرَارًا عَلَى تَجَاهُلِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ النِّقَابَةِ، بِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ تَعَاظُمِ مَرْتَبَةِ الشَّرَفَاءِ فِي الْمَغْرِبِ الْأَقْصَى وَالْأَوْسَطِ، خِلَالَ الْعَصْرِ الْمَرْيَنِيِّ الْعَبْدِ الْوَادِي.²³ فَقَدْ كَتَبَ كَاتِبٌ مَجْهُولٌ، مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَغْرِبِ الْأَقْصَى، وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْقَرْنِ الثَّامِنِ،

18 الْمَقَدِّمَةُ: 637/2.

19 الْمَقَدِّمَةُ: 314/1-317. وَقَدْ سَجَّلَ ابْنُ خَلْدُونِ فِي هَذَا الْمَقَامِ أَنَّ الْحَوِطِيِّينَ هُمْ "نُقَبَاءُ أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ هُنَاكَ... وَلَهُمُ السِّيَادَةُ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْمَغْرِبِ كَافَّةً".

20 الْمَقَدِّمَةُ: 316/1.

21 الْمَقَدِّمَةُ: 317/1.

22 الْمَقَدِّمَةُ: 316/1.

23 أَنْظُرْ فِي هَذَا الصَّدَدِ: مُرَاجَعَاتُ: 79-126، سَبْتَةُ الْإِسْلَامِيَّةِ: 136-140.

”الرسالة الوجيزية، إلى الحضرة العزيزية، في علوم الخلافة“، دون أن يُشير إلى هذه المؤسسة، بالرغم من قوله: ”أما أهل البيت النبوي، فحقهم ظاهر“.²⁴ وكتب ابن رضوان المالقي (ت783هـ) ”الشهب اللامعة، في السياسة النافعة“، وعقد فصلاً لـ ”حُطَطِ الدينية، والعلمية“، دون أن يعبأ بالإشارة إلى النقابة.²⁵ وجرى في نفس المضار بعدهما، وبعد ابن خلدون، أبو عبد الله ابن الأزرَق (ت896هـ) فلم يعبأ كذلك بالحديث عن هذه ”الولاية“.

ومن اللافت للنظر، أن الفقه المالكي التطريي، ليس من شأنه أن يتعرّص عادةً للنقابة ولا للأشراف في كُتبه النظرية، إلا في باب الزكاة، حيث يصطدم التفكير الفقهي المبني على الدليل من القرآن والسنة، والداعي إلى منع أهل البيت من الأكل من ”أوساخ الناس“، حسب التعبير النبوي الشريف، صيانةً لأهل البيت، بالصيرورة التاريخية، حيث تطوّر الواقع، فدعا إلى الاجتهاد في هذا المبدأ، صيانةً للأشراف كذلك. قال ابن جزي الكليُّ الغرناطي (ت741هـ): ”يمنع أهل بيت رسول الله (ص) من الصدقة الواجبة، والتطوع. وقيل: يجوز لهم الوجهان. وقيل: يجوز لهم التطوع خاصة. وقيل: بالعكس. ويجوز أن يكونوا عاملين عليها، خلافاً لقوم. وهم بنو هاشم اتفاقاً. وليس منهم من فوق غالب بن فهر اتفاقاً. وفيما بين ذلك قولان. وفي مواليهم قولان.“²⁶

وقد استقرّ الموقف المالكي على الاجتهاد في الموقف المانع، بسخه بموقف جديد. فقد سجّل الإمام الحطّاب (ت954هـ) جملةً مواقف لعلماء المالكية، نقلها عن معيار الونشريسي، تعليقا على كلام الشيخ خليل، وانفصل ضمناً على نسخ الموقف المالكي القديم بموقف جديد، يقول بأولوية التصديق على الأشراف على غيرهم، بناءً على مراعاة مبدأ الضرورة. قال تعليقا على قول الشيخ خليل، عمدة المذهب المالكي:

24 الرسالة الوجيزية: 83.

25 الشهب اللامعة: 322-346.

26 القوانين الفقهية: III.

”وَعَدَمُ بُؤَةِ لِهَاشِمٍ وَالْمَطْلَبُ ... إِنْ وَقَفْنَا عِنْدَ هَذَا وَشَبِهِهِ، مَاتَ الشُّرَفَاءُ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ هُزَالًا، فَإِنَّ الخُلَفَاءَ قَصَّرُوا فِي هَذَا الزَّمَانِ فِي حُقُوقِهِمْ، وَنِظَامُ بَيْتِ المَالِ وَصَرَفُ مَالِهِ عَلَى مُسْتَحِقِّهِ فَسَدَ. وَالْأَحْسَنُ عِنْدِي أَنْ يُرْتَكَبَ فِي هَذَا أَخْفُ الضَّرَرَيْنِ، وَلَا يُنْظَرُ فِي حَفْدَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص) حَتَّى يَمُوتُوا جُوعًا ... الْمَسْأَلَةُ اخْتَلَفَ العُلَمَاءُ فِيهَا، كَمَا عَلِمْتُمْ. وَالرَّاجِحُ عِنْدِي فِي هَذَا الزَّمَانِ أَنْ يُعْطَى. وَرُبَّمَا كَانَ إِعْطَاؤُهُ أَفْضَلَ مِنْ إِعْطَاءِ غَيْرِهِ. وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ.“²⁷

وَقَدْ اسْتَقَرَّ هَذَا المَوْقِفُ الجَدِيدُ، بَلْ صَارَ جُزْءًا مِنَ الرَّاجِحِ وَمَا جَرَى بِهِ العَمَلُ فِي المَذْهَبِ المَالِكِيِّ، وَبِهِ الفَتْوَى. بَلْ تَطَوَّرَ هَذَا المَوْقِفُ الإِجْتِهَادِيُّ، وَدَخَلَهُ عُنْصُرٌ خُلِقِيٌّ وَرُوحِيٌّ، عَبَّرَ عَنْهُ الشَّيْخُ الطَّالِبُ ابْنُ الحَاجِّ فِي حَاشِيَتِهِ الشَّهِيرَةِ عَلَى مِثَارَةِ فَبَعْدَ اسْتِعْرَاضِ المَوَاقِفِ المُتَعَارِضَةِ، وَإِحَالَتِهِ عَلَى مَوْقِفِ الإِمَامِ الأَبْهَرِيِّ، وَالفَرَضِ وَالتَّطَوُّعِ، وَمَنْ هُمْ ءَالُ البَيْتِ، وَمَتَى يَسْتَحِقُّونَ العَطِيَّةَ، قَالَ: ”وَالعَمَلُ اليَوْمَ بِقَوْلِ الأَبْهَرِيِّ. وَنَقَلَ فِي المِيعَارِ“ عَنِ ابْنِ مَرْزُوقٍ، تَرْجِيحَهُ وَنَحْوَهُ فِي الدُّرَرِ المَكْتُونَةِ لِلهَازِنِيِّ، وَابْنِ نَاجِي فِي ’شَرْحِ المَدْوَنَةِ‘. وَأَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ فِي ’العَمَلِ المُطْلَقِ ...‘ وَفِي ’العَلِمَاتِ الفَاسِيَّةِ ...‘ وَيَبْغِي لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُعْطِيَ لِأَحَدِ الأَشْرَافِ شَيْئًا، أَنْ يَنْوِي بِعَطِيَّتِهِ أَنَّهَا هَدِيَّةٌ لِلسَّرِيفِ، إِجْلَالًا وَتَعْظِيمًا لِلنَّبِيِّ (ص) وَيَكُونُ وَجِلًّا خَائِفًا مِنْ أَنْ يَرُدَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَقْبَلُهُ مِنْهُ. فَإِذَا قَبِلَهَا فَرَحَ هُوَ بِذَلِكَ، وَرَأَى أَنَّ المِنَّةَ لِلسَّرِيفِ عَلَيْهِ، لَا العَكْسَ. وَبِذَلِكَ يُعْظَمُ ثَوَابُهُ.“²⁸

إِنَّ تَوْجِيهَ الفِقْهِ المَالِكِيِّ لِلنَّاسِ إِلَى آدَاءِ الرُّكُوتِ وَالصَّدَقَاتِ وَالهَدَايَا إِلَى أَشْخَاصِ الشُّرَفَاءِ مُبَاشِرَةً، لَا إِلَى نِقَابَاتِهِمْ، وَهُوَ أَقْلُ إِحْرَاجًا لَهُمْ، لَوْ كَانَ، يَعْنِي أَنَّ التَّقَابَاتِ لَمْ تَكُنْ حَاضِرَةً حُضُورًا كَافِيًا فِي وَاقِعِ الحَالِ فِي حِمَايَةِ مَعَاشِ الشُّرَفَاءِ وَكِرَامَتِهِمْ، وَلَا وُجُودَهَا أَوْفَاعِلِيَّتُهَا حَاضِرًا فِي أَذْهَانِ عُلَمَاءِ المَالِكِيَّةِ فِي الغَرْبِ الإِسْلَامِيِّ. وَيُظْهِرُ أَنَّ التَّوَجِيهَاتِ

27 مواهبُ الجليل: 224/3.

28 الحاشية: 61/2.

الْحُلُقِيَّةِ ذَاتِ الْبُعْدِ الصَّوْفِيِّ، لِلشَّيْخِ الطَّالِبِ ابْنِ الْحَاجِّ (ت1273هـ) جَاءَتْ كَذَلِكَ لِتَرْتِقَ فَتَقَاكَانَ مَوْجُودًا بَيْنَ التَّظْرِيَةِ الْفِقْهِيَّةِ وَبَيْنَ الْوَاقِعِ التَّارِيخِيِّ.

وَبِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ عَدَمِ اهْتِبَالِ الْفِقْهِ الْمَالِكِيِّ التَّظْرِيِّ الْمُبَاشِرِ بِالْفِقْهِ التَّقَايِي، فَإِنَّا نَجِدُ هَذَا الْفِقْهَ مَبْثُوثًا فِي صُورَةِ إِشَارَاتٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ فِي كُتُبِ الْأَنْسَابِ وَالتَّارِيخِ. وَهِيَ فِي جُمْلَتِهَا تُصَوِّرُ مَوْقِفَ عُلَمَاءِ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ الْمُتَأَخِّرِينَ مِنَ التَّقَابَةِ، وَتُصَوِّرُهُمْ لِطَبِيعَتِهَا. وَهُوَ مَا يُشْكَلُ فَهْمًا نِقَابِيًّا مُلْحَقًا بِالْفِقْهِ الْمَالِكِيِّ التَّظْرِيِّ، كَمَا الْحَقُّ بِهِ فَقْهُ التَّوَازِلِ وَالْعَمَلِيَّاتِ الْفَاسِيَّةِ وَسِوَاهَا. عَرَفَ الْمُؤَرِّخُ النَّسَابَةُ الْفِقْهِيَّةَ، قَاضِي الْجَمَاعَةِ، الشَّيْخُ الطَّالِبُ ابْنُ الْحَاجِّ (ت1273هـ) التَّقَابَةَ بِقَوْلِهِ: "وَحَاصِلُ التَّقَابَةِ وَلايَةٌ فِي تَعْيِيرِهَا، خَاصًّا، وَخِدْمَةٌ لِأَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ، فِي دَفْعِ الدَّخِيلِ فِيهِمْ."²⁹

وَيُمَثِّلُ هَذَا التَّوَجُّهَ كَذَلِكَ، تَوَجُّهُ الْفُقَهَاءِ النَّسَابِيِّينَ، الْمُؤَرِّخِ النَّسَابَةِ، مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الطَّيِّبِ الْقَادِرِيِّ (ت1187هـ) فِي "نَشْرِ الْمَثَانِي"، إِذْ يَقُولُ عَنِ التَّقَابَةِ: "لِأَنَّ حَاصِلَهَا وَلايَةٌ فِي رَفْعِ الْمُنْكَرِ، خَاصَّةً بِالْإِنْتِسَابِ لِلْجَنَابِ النَّبَوِيِّ، لِئَلَّا يَتِمَّكَنَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ التَّقَوْلِ عَلَى نَسَبِ النَّبِيِّ (ص). وَهِيَ يَصْلُحُ لَهَا كُلُّ مَنْ يَقْدِرُ عَلَى دَفْعِ مَنْ يَدَّعِي الْكُذْبَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ص) مَعَ أَنَّ الْمُدَّعِيَّ لِدَلِّكَ، إِنْ كَانَ كَاذِبًا، فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ. وَيُشْتَرَطُ فِي مَنْ يَتَوَلَّى ذَلِكَ، أَنْ يَكُونَ عَالِمًا بِاصْطِلَاحِ تِلْكَ الْحُطَّةِ، لِأَنَّ الْمُتَوَلِّيَّ عَلَى مَنْ يَدَّعِي أَنَّهُ مِنْ آلِهِ (ص) يَكُونُ كَالْعَبْدِ يُؤَدِّبُ ابْنَ سَيِّدِهِ، فَيَقُومُ بِأَمْرِ سَيِّدِهِ، وَلَا يُهْمَلُ فَضْلُ الْوَالِدِ.

وَمِنَ الْإِصْطِلَاحِ فِي ذَلِكَ، أَنْ يَكُونَ عَالِمًا بِعِلْمِ النَّسَبِ، وَالتَّارِيخِ وَالْوَفِيَّاتِ، وَالْحُطُوطِ وَالْأَشْكَالِ، أَيْ عِلْمَةِ الشُّهُودِ، وَإِصْلَاحِ الْإِشْهَادِ، وَكُتُبِ الْوَثِيقَةِ، وَمَعَانِي الْأَلْفَاظِ، وَالتَّوَازِلِ الَّتِي يُفْتَقَرُ فِيهَا إِلَى التَّوَصُّلِ بِالنَّسَبِ الَّذِي يَدَّعِي إِلَيْهِ، أَوْ مَا يُبْتِغَى النَّفْيَ بِهِ، مَعَ مَعْرِفَةِ شُرُوطِ النَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ... إِلَى غَيْرِ ذَلِكَ مِنَ الشُّرُوطِ الَّتِي يَطُولُ سَرْدُهَا. وَغَالِبُ فِي هَذَا الْوَالِي عَلَى الْعَادَةِ، أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ النَّبَوِيِّ، عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ أَنْفَعًا لِأَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ... فَإِذَا لَمْ يَتَحَقَّقْ هَذَا فِي الْوَالِي الَّذِي هُوَ شَرِيفٌ، ثُمَّ تَحَقَّقَ

فِي غَيْرِهِ مِمَّنْ لَيْسَ بِشَرِيفٍ، فَهُوَ أَحَقُّ بِوِلَايَةِ ذَلِكَ وَالتَّظَرُّ فِي تَعْيِينِ مَنْ يَقُومُ بِذَلِكَ، مِنْ الْأَشْرَافِ أَوْ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ، لِمَنْ وِلَاةُ اللَّهِ أَمْرٌ عِبَادَةٌ. وَلَيْسَ لِلْأَشْرَافِ أَنْ يُعَيِّنُوا مَنْ يَقُومُ بِذَلِكَ، إِلَّا إِذَا أَسْنَدَ التَّظَرُّ لَهُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ، مِنْ وِلَاةِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ.³⁰

لَا شَكَّ فِي أَنَّ تَوَجُّهَ الْقَادِرِيِّ هَذَا يُدَكِّرُنَا بِالتَّصِيفِ الْمُؤَسَّسِ الْغَائِبِ الْحَاضِرِ، أَيِ بِكَلَامِ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ الشَّافِعِيِّ السَّابِقِ. بَيَدَ أَنَّهُ إِذَا أَمَعْنَا التَّظَرُّ، وَجَدْنَا أَنَّ الْقَادِرِيَّ يَشْتَرِطُ فِي التَّقْيِيبِ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ، شَرِيفًا كَانَ أَمْ عَامِيًّا، مَا أَجْمَلَهُ أَوْ أَبْهَمَهُ أَوْ لَمْ يَشْتَرِطْهُ الْمَاوَرِدِيُّ، أَيِ إِنْ الْقَادِرِيَّ يَشْتَرِطُ فِي التَّقْيِيبِ أَنْ يَكُونَ فَقِيهًا مُوثِقًا نَوَازِلًا مُؤَرَّخًا، وَيُقَرَّرُ عَرَفًا مَغْرِبِيًّا جَرَى بِهِ الْعَمَلُ، أَوْ "الِاصْطِلَاحُ"، حَسَبَ تَعْيِيرِهِ. يَشْتَرِطُ كُلَّ هَذِهِ الْكِفَاءَةِ فِي التَّقْيِيبِ. كَمَا وَجَدْنَا الْقَادِرِيَّ لَا يَخْذُلُ عَنْ نِقَابَةِ عَامَّةٍ، وَأُخْرَى خَاصَّةٍ. وَإِنَّمَا هِيَ نِقَابَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ وَكْفَى. وَهُنَا مَكْمُنُ الْإِقْرَاقِ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ. فَكَانَ عُلَمَاءُ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ، مِنْ ابْنِ الْعَرَبِيِّ، فَنَ بَعْدَهُ، لَمْ يَقْبَلُوا فِكْرَةَ النِّقَابَةِ الْعَامَّةِ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَحْسِنُوهَا، لَمَّا كَانَتْ "بِدْعِيَّةً"، بِتَعْيِيرِ ابْنِ الْعَرَبِيِّ.

4.3:3 **أَزْمَةُ النِّقَابَةِ فِي الْمَغْرِبِ الْأَقْصَى وَالتَّبَحُّثُ عَنْ مَشْرُوعِيَّةِ تَارِيخِيَّةِ لِمُؤَسَّسَةِ**

النِّقَابَةِ وَعَنْ نَمُودَجٍ مِثَالِي

لَمْ تَكْتَبِ "النِّقَابَةُ" الْمَغْرِبِيَّةُ تَارِيخَهَا بِنَفْسِهَا فِي عَصْرِ الدُّوَلِ الْمَغْرِبِيَّةِ الْكَبِيرَةِ، بِالرَّغْمِ مِنْ وُجُودِ نِقْبَاءِ ذَوِي مَقَامٍ عَالٍ فِي الْمُجْتَمَعِ الْمَغْرِبِيِّ، وَلَمْ تَسْعَ إِلَى ذَلِكَ، كَمَا يَظْهَرُ مِنْ الْقَرَانِ. بَيَدَ أَنَّ تَعْرُضَ هَذِهِ الْمُؤَسَّسَةِ إِلَى هَرَاتٍ كَبِيرَةٍ، عَلَى عَهْدِ الدَّوَلَتَيْنِ الشَّرِيفَتَيْنِ، السَّعْدِيَّةِ وَالْعُلُوِّيَّةِ، جَعَلَ الْمُؤَرِّخِينَ النَّسَابِينَ، يَخْتَوْنَ عَنْ مَشْرُوعِيَّةِ تَارِيخِيَّةِ لِمُؤَسَّسَةِ النِّقَابَةِ، وَعَنْ نَمُودَجٍ مِثَالِي لَهَا فِي تَارِيخِ الْمَغْرِبِ، لِتَسْتَنِدَ إِلَيْهِ فِي وَاقِعِهَا الْمُتَجَدِّدِ وَالْمَهْزُورِ بِاسْتِمْرَارٍ. يَقُولُ الْقَادِرِيُّ: "وَلَمْ تَزَلِ النِّقَابَةُ فِي بَيْتِ الْجَوِطِيِّينَ فِي الْمَغْرِبِ مِنْ قَدِيمٍ، كَمَا فِي قَضِيَّةِ الشَّرِيفِ الْعِمْرَانِيِّ، مَعَ الْإِمَامِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْمَقْرِيَّ، فِي مَجْلِسِ السُّلْطَانِ أَبِي

عنان، ذكَّرها صاحبُ 'كفاية المحتاج'، وصاحبُ 'نفع الطيب'، وغيرهما، وكفِضتْ عبد الحَقَّ المِريَّيَّ الأصغرَ، إذ بُويعَ للشَّريفِ العِمْرانيِّ. وتداوَلها آخرونَ مِنَ الجُوطيِّينَ أيضاً، وتداوَلها غيرُهُمُ مِنَ أشرافِ العِلْمِ، وأشرافِ سِجِلْهاسَّة، وتداوَلها غيرُهُمُ مِنَ الأشرافِ.³¹ وَيَنْقَلُ الفَقِيهَةُ المُوَرِّخُ النَّقِيبُ، عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ زَيْدَانَ العَلَوِيِّ (ت1365هـ) عَن "قُرَّةِ العُيُونِ، فِي الشَّرْفَاءِ القاطِنِينَ بِالْعُيُونِ"، لِسُلَيْمَانَ الحَوَاتِ (ت1231هـ): "وَكَانَ لِمُلُوكِ بَنِي مَرِينِ، اِعْتِنَاءٌ كَبِيرٌ بِالأَشْرَافِ، مِنَ البَحْثِ عَنَّهُمْ، وَجَمْعِهِمْ مِنَ الأَقْطَارِ المُتَفَرِّقَةِ الأَطْرَافِ، وَضَبْطِ شُعْبِهِمْ، وَحِفْظِ نَسَبِهِمْ فِي كُلِّ بَلَدٍ مِنَ مَمْلَكَتِهِمْ، مَعَ كِتَابِهِ المُحَقِّقِ النِّسْبَةِ مِنْهُمْ فِي دِيوانِ أُعْطِيَتْهُمْ، وإِحْيَاءِ مآثِرِهِمْ، وإِظْهَارِ مَفَاخِرِهِمْ، فَهُمُ الَّذِينَ جَمَعُوا شَمْلَ الأَدَارِسَةِ، وَأَحْيَوْا مَحَلَّ مَعَاهِدِهِمُ الدَّارِسَةَ."³²

وَيَدَهَبُ نَفْسَ المَذْهَبِ مُحَمَّدُ المُرِيرِ (ت1378هـ) فِي قَوْلِهِ "وَلَمْ يَكُنْ اِعْتِبَارُ هَذِهِ الوِلايَةِ وإِعْطَاؤُهَا جَانِبًا مِنَ الوِلايَةِ خَاصًّا بِالمَشْرِقِ. بَلْ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ بِالمَغْرِبِ. فَقَدْ كَانَ السُّلْطَانُ فَمَّنْ دَوْنَهُ يَقُومُ لِلنَّقِيبِ تَعْظِيماً واحْتِراماً."³³

لَقَدْ ظَلَّ التَّمَوِّجُ المِريَّيُّ إِذْنًا أَفْضَلَ تَمَوِّجٍ يُقَدِّمُهُ المُوَرِّخُ النَّسَابَةُ الفَقِيهَةُ فِي القُرُونِ الحَمَسَةِ الأَخِيرَةِ، لِلعِلاقَةِ بَيْنَ الأَشْرَافِ وَالسُّلْطَنَةِ، وَالسُّلْطَانَ وَالنَّقِيبِ، وَلِكِفَاءَةِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ النِّقَابَةِ وَتَرَاهُنِهَا. وَصَارَ هَذَا التَّمَوِّجُ هُوَ التَّمَوِّجُ الذَّهَبِيُّ الَّذِي يَحْطَى بِالإِعْجَابِ وَالإِجْمَاعِ، وَالَّذِي يُرْجَى اسْتِنْسَاخُهُ وَتَقْدِيمُهُ بَدِيلاً عَن واقِعِ ساءِ أَمْرِهِ. بَلْ جَرَى البَحْثُ بِالحَقِّ وَالْباطِلِ عَن عُمُقٍ لِهَذَا التَّمَوِّجِ، وَعَن عُصُورٍ ذَهَبِيَّةٍ، مُجاوِزِ الدَّوْلَةَ المِريَّيَّةَ فِي المَغْرِبِ إِلَى المُرَابِطِينَ وَالْمُوَحِّدِينَ، بَلْ إِلَى دَوْلِ المَشْرِقِ. يَقُولُ ابْنُ زَيْدَانَ، نَاقِلاً بِالوَساطَةِ عَن "مُتَحَفَةِ الحادِي المَطْرِبِ، فِي رَفْعِ نَسَبِ شُرَفَاءِ المَغْرِبِ"، لِأبي القاسِمِ الرِيايَنيِّ (ت1249هـ):

31 نَشْرُ المَثانِي: 2/342.

32 المَنْزَعُ اللَطِيفُ: 245.

33 الأَبْحَاثُ السَّامِيَّةُ: 2/130.

وَكَانَ مَنْصِبُهَا، يَعْنِي النِّقَابَةَ، فِي دَوْلَةِ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ، وَبَنِي الْعَبَّاسِ، يَعْدِلُ مَنْصِبَ الْوِزَارَةِ، وَلَا يَتَّقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعُلَمَاءُ الْعَارِفُونَ بِالْأَنْسَابِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ، وَذَوِي أَنْسَابِهِمْ، الَّذِينَ لَا تَرْضَى هِمْمُهُمُ الطَّمَعُ، وَلَا يَحْتَاجُونَ إِلَى مَا فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ، وَرَأَتْهُمْ مِنْ بَيْتِ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَوْقَ الْكِفَايَةِ، فَكَانَتْ الْأَنْسَابُ مَحْفُوظَةً مِنَ الدُّخْلَاءِ. وَكَذَلِكَ كَانَ شَأْنُ النِّقَابَةِ بِالْمَغْرِبِ أَوْ قَرِيبًا مِنْهُ، أَيَّامَ لِمَتَوْنَةَ وَالْمُوَحِّدِينَ، وَبَنِي مَرِينَ وَالسَّعْدِيِّينَ، إِلَى أَنْ مَاتَ الْمَنْصُورُ مِنْهُمْ، وَاشْتَعَلَ أَوْلَادُهُ بِالْحُرُوبِ عَلَى الْمَلِكِ، فَأَهْمَلُوا أَمْرَ الْأَشْرَافِ وَالنُّقَبَاءِ، بَلْ أَمَرَ الرَّعِيَّةَ كُلَّهَا.³⁴

كَانَ انْهِيَارُ الدَّوْلَةِ السَّعْدِيَّةِ إِذْنًا، بِوَفَاةِ الْمَنْصُورِ السَّعْدِيِّ، مَدْعَاةً إِلَى انْهِيَارِ مُؤَسَّسَةِ النِّقَابَةِ، ذَاتِ الْمَشْرُوعِيَّةِ التَّارِيخِيَّةِ وَالِدِينِيَّةِ الْقَدِيمَةِ، وَذَاتِ الْمَجْدِ الْمُؤْتَلِّ بِصِفِّ أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ الزِّيَابِيِّ، الْمُؤَرِّخِ النَّسَابَةِ، هَذَا الْإِنْهِيَارَ بِقَوْلِهِ:

وَصَارَ يَتَوَلَّى النِّقَابَةَ مَنْ لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ وَلَا مَعْرِفَةَ بِالْأَنْسَابِ. وَصَارَتِ النِّقَابَةُ مَنْصِبًا دُنْيَوِيًّا يُتَوَارَثُ وَلَدًا عَنِ الْوَالِدِ، وَيَتَوَلَّاهُ جَهْلَةٌ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ لَا يَخَافُ اللَّهَ. وَصَارَ النُّقَيْبُ يَجِي مِنْهُ الْمَالُ، وَيَقْبِضُ الْهَدَايَا وَالرِّشَاءَ، وَيُلْحِقُ بِأَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ لَا نَسَبَ لَهُ فِيهِمْ، وَلَا اتِّصَالَ لَهُ بِهِمْ. وَانْتَشَرَ ذَلِكَ فِي الرِّعَايَا، وَعَرَفُوا طُرُقَهُ، وَحَمَرُوا أَسْوَاقَ النُّقَبَاءِ، وَقَرَّبُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ بَعِيدٍ؛ يَدُلُّونَهُمْ بِجِبَالِ الْغُرُورِ، فَسَامَهُ كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ ... وَتَكْتَبُ لَهُمُ النُّقَبَاءُ عَلَى الرُّسُومِ الْمَرْوُورَةِ، وَلَا يَحْتَاجُونَ إِلَى ثُبُوتِ قَاضٍ، وَلَا إِلَى تَصْحِيحِ عُلَمَاءِ. وَصَارَ الْقُضَاةُ إِذَا وَقَفُوا عَلَى رَسْمٍ فِيهِ خَطُّ النُّقَيْبِ أَوْ خِمْتِهِ، أَتْبَنُوهُ، وَلَمْ يَحْشَوْا عَنْهُ فِيهِ، كَأَنَّهُ وَحْيٌ أَوْحِيَ. وَلَا يَتَوَلَّى النِّقَابَةَ الْيَوْمَ إِلَّا اللَّصُوصُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوهَا مَتَجَرًّا وَمَكْسَبًا يَشْتَرُونَهَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَنَاصِبِ السُّلْطَانِيَّةِ، وَيَلْبَسُونَ عَلَى مُلُوكِهِمْ وَكُلِّ مَنْ سَامَهُمْ مِنَ الدُّخْلَاءِ بِئِنَّ بِحَسِّ، بَاعُوهُ.³⁵

34 الْمَنْزَعُ اللَّطِيفُ: 243.

35 الْمَنْزَعُ اللَّطِيفُ: 243.

يَدَ أَنْ وُصُولَ الشُّرَفَاءِ الْعُلَوِيِّينَ إِلَى السُّلْطَنَةِ، كَانَ فِي الْمُقَابِلِ مَدْعَاةً لِتَوْقِيفِ أَرْزَمَةِ التَّقَابَةِ، بَلْ إِلَى «إِحْيَائِهَا» وَتَصْحِيحِ مَسَارِهَا عَلَى يَدِ السُّلْطَانِ الْمَوْلَى إِسْمَاعِيلَ (تد1139هـ) فَنَوَّهَ بِذَلِكَ الْمُؤَرِّخُونَ وَالنَّسَابُونَ. يَقُولُ الشَّيْخُ الطَّالِبُ ابْنُ الْحَاجِّ (تد1273هـ): «وَكَانَ كَأَخِيهِ مَوْلَايَ رَشِيدٍ، يُبَدِئُ بِالْبَحْثِ فِي النَّسَبِ وَيُعِيدُ، مُسْنِدًا النَّظَرَ فِي ذَلِكَ لِلْعُلَمَاءِ وَالْأَتَقِيَاءِ، حَتَّى جَمَعَ رِجَالَ الْمَغْرِبِ، وَرَدَّ كُلَّ فَرْعٍ إِلَى صِنْفِهِ، فَأَنَسَى فِي ذَلِكَ الْمُلُوكَ الْمُتَقَدِّمِينَ، وَأَحْيَى التَّقَابَةَ فِي كُلِّ قَطْرٍ مِنَ الْأَقْطَارِ، وَانْتَهَتْ إِلَيْهِ الرِّيَاسَةُ فِي الدِّينِ وَالدُّنْيَا»³⁶

يُفَصِّلُ أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ الرِّيَابِيُّ هَذَا التَّوَجُّهَ السُّلْطَانِيَّ فِي إِحْيَاءِ التَّقَابَةِ، وَرَدَّ الْإِعْتِبَارَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَنْسَابِ الشَّرِيفَةِ الْمَغْرِبِيَّةِ، بِقَوْلِهِ:

وَاسْتَمَرَّ الْحَالُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، إِلَى أَنْ بُويعَ السُّلْطَانُ الْأَعْظَمُ، مَوْلَانَا إِسْمَاعِيلَ، رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ، فَوَجَدَ أَمْرَ الْأَشْرَافِ مُحْتَمَلًا، وَكَادَتْ الرِّعَايَا أَنْ تَصِيرَ كُلُّهَا أَشْرَافًا... وَأَمَرَ السُّلْطَانُ أَعْيَانَ أَشْرَافِ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ وَعُلَمَاءِهِمْ وَقُضَاةَ الْقَبَائِلِ أَنْ يُعِينُوا مِنْ أَعْيَانِهِمْ شَرِيفًا فَقِيهًا عَالِمًا بِأَنْسَابِ الْأَشْرَافِ وَأُصُولِهِمْ، وَيَقِفُوا مَعَهُ حَتَّى يُمَيِّزُوا الْأَشْرَافَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الدَّعَاوِي مِنْ كُلِّ قَبِيلَةٍ وَكُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ: يَحْضُرُ أَعْيَانُهَا وَذَوُو أَسْنَانِهَا، فَهَمَّ أَعْرَفَ بَيْنَ نَسَبِهِ صَرِيحٍ، بَمَنْ هُوَ دَخِيلٌ. وَكُلُّ مَنْ وَجَدُوهُ مِنَ الدُّخْلَاءِ، أَزَالُوا مَا بِيَدِهِ مِنَ الرُّسُومِ، وَكَبُّوهُ فِي دَقْتَرٍ، وَتَرَكُوا لَهُ رُسُومَهُ وَظَهَائِرَهُ، إِلَى أَنْ طَافُوا عَلَى الْقَبَائِلِ كُلِّهَا، وَعَزَلُوا الْأَشْرَافَ مِنَ الْمُنْتَشِرَةِ... وَتَوَجَّهُوا لِلْسُّلْطَانِ، فَأَطْلَعُوهُ عَلَى دَقْتَرِ الْأَشْرَافِ، وَعَلَى دَقْتَرِ أَهْلِ الدَّعَاوِي... فَأَحْرَقَ السُّلْطَانُ رُسُومَهُمْ... وَجَعَلَ السُّلْطَانُ تَقِيبًا بِنَافَسٍ، وَتَقِيبًا بِمِرْكَاسٍ، وَتَقِيبًا بِمِرْكَاسٍ. وَكَبُرَ التَّقَابَةُ هُوَ الَّذِي يَجِبُ الْعِلْمُ.³⁷

36 رياضُ الْوَرْدِ: 68/1.

37 الْمَنْزَعُ اللَّطِيفُ: 244-243.

كَانَ تَدَخُّلُ السُّلْطَانِ الْمَوْلَى إِسْمَاعِيلَ ذَا فَائِدَةٍ كَبِيرَةٍ لِلتَّقَابَةِ الْمَغْرِبِيَّةِ، إِذْ رَبَطَهَا رَبَطًا وَثِيقًا بِالْمَخْرَنِ الْعَلَوِيِّ، وَأَعَادَ هَيْكَلَتَهَا، مُعْتَمِدًا عَلَى مَبْدَأِ الْجَهْوِيَّةِ وَالتَّرَائِيَّةِ. بِيَدِ أَنْ وَفَاتَهُ خَلَفَتْ أَرْزَمَةٌ طَاحِنَةٌ لَمْ تَقَلَّ مَآسِيهَا عَن وَفَاةِ الْمَنْصُورِ السَّعْدِيِّ وَكَانَ مِنَ الطَّبِيعِيِّ أَنْ تَعَكَّسَ هَذِهِ الْأَرْزَمَةُ عَلَى "التَّقَابَةِ". يَقُولُ أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ الرَّيَابِيُّ، وَاصِفًا الْأَرْزَمَةَ الثَّانِيَةَ:

اسْتَمَرَ الْحَالُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ إِلَى أَنْ مَاتَ السُّلْطَانُ مَوْلَانَا إِسْمَاعِيلَ، وَجَاءَتْ دَوْلُ أَوْلَادِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، وَتَبَدَّلَ أَهْلُ الْمَنَاصِبِ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا فِي دَوْلَتِهِ، وَجَلَسَ غَيْرُهُمْ مِنْ لَا خَبْرَةٍ لَهُ، قَامَ الْمُتَشَرِّفَةُ وَأَهْلُ الدَّعَاوِيِّ، وَكُتِبُوا الرُّسُومَ، وَرَوَّرُوا الشَّجَرَاتِ، وَقَصَدُوا الْمُلُوكَ فِي تَجْدِيدِ مَا كَانَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ... وَطَالَتِ الْمُدَّةُ، مِنْ مَوْتِ مَوْلَايَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، إِلَى بَيْعَةِ سَيِّدِي مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ. وَكَانَ فِي ابْتِدَاءِ أَمْرِهِ يُجَدِّدُ لِمَنْ قَدِمَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا يَرُدُّ أَحَدًا. فَلَمَّا فَرَضَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالْأَعْشَارَ عَلَى الْقَبَائِلِ، وَخَرَجَ عَمَّا لَهَا لِقَبْضِهَا، اسْتَعَاثَ الرَّعَايَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الدَّعَاوِيِّ، وَقَالُوا: كُلُّهَا رَجَعَتْ أَشْرَافًا. بَنُو عَمِنَا يَرْتُونَا وَرَبْرُهُمْ، تَشْرَفُوا عَلَيْنَا.

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَ السُّلْطَانُ ذَلِكَ، انْتَبَهَ مِنْ غَفْلَتِهِ ... وَوَجَّهَ كُتَابَهُ وَخَدَامَهُ، وَأَمَرَهُمْ بِجَمْعِ الْعُلَمَاءِ وَقُضَاةِ الْجَبَلِ وَأَعْيَانِ الْقَبَائِلِ، وَيَحْثُوا عَنْ كُتُبِ الْأَشْرَافِ، فَإِذَا لَمْ يَجِدُوهُ، يَسْتَأْنِفُونَ الْعَمَلَ فِي الْبَحْثِ عَنِ الْمُتَشَرِّفَةِ فِي الْقَبَائِلِ، وَيَطُوفُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ، إِلَى أَنْ يَقِفُوا عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ أَمْرِهِمْ، وَيَنْزِعُوا مَا بِأَيْدِيهِمْ، وَيَدْفَعُوهُمْ لِأَشْيَاحِهِمْ، وَيَجَدِّدُوا كُتُبَ الْعَمَلِ فِي الْبَحْثِ. وَطَافُوا عَلَى الْقَبَائِلِ كُلِّهَا، فَكَانَ إِخْوَانُهُمْ يَفْضَحُونَهُمْ، وَيُخْرِجُونَهُمْ مِنْ بُيُوتِهِمْ، وَيَقُولُونَ: هَاؤُلَاءِ أَبْنَاءُ عَمِنَا؛ صَارُوا أَشْرَافًا، وَحُنُّ كِلَابُهُمْ. فَاقْتَضَحَ أَمْرُهُمْ، وَأَزِيلَ مَا بِأَيْدِيهِمْ مِنَ الرُّسُومِ وَالظَّهَائِرِ الَّتِي جَدَّدُوهَا، وَدَفَعُوا لِأَشْيَاحِ قَبَائِلِهِمْ؛ يَغْرَمُونَ مَعَهُمْ. وَمَنْ وَجَدُوهُ صَرِيحَ النَّسَبِ، كَتَبُوهُ فِي دَفْتَرِ الْقَبِيلَةِ، الَّتِي هُوَ بِهَا. وَبَعْدَ فَرَاغِهِمْ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ، وَقَفُوا عَلَى الْكُتُبِ الْإِسْمَاعِيلِيَّةِ؛ أَنَّهُمْ بِهِ وَرَثَتُهُ نَقِيبِ التَّقَابِ، فَتَوَجَّهُوا بِهِ وَكَبَّشَهُمُ الَّذِي جَدَّدُوا لِلسُّلْطَانِ، فَكُتِبُوا مِنْهُ نُسْحًا وَجَهَّهَا

لِعَمَلِ الْقَبَائِلِ. وَجَعَلَ لِلشُّرَفَاءِ أَشْيَاخَهُمْ، وَلَا يَتَصَرَّفُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَيْخُ الْعَامَّةِ. وَكَلَّفَهُمْ
بِدْفَعِ زَكَاتِهِمْ وَأَعْشَارِهِمْ لِيَدِ أَشْيَاخِهِمْ. وَأَسَقَطَ عَنْهُمْ مَا سِوَاهَا مِنَ الْوِظَائِفِ،
كَالْهَدْيَةِ وَالْمَوْثُونَةِ وَالسُّخْرَةِ وَالْعِمَالَةَ، فَلَا يُعْطُونَ [إِلَّا] مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ. [كَذَا]
وَاسْتَقَامَتِ أحوَالُ الرِّعَايَا طَوَالَ أَيَّامِهِ، وَحَمَدَ أَهْلُ الدَّعَاوِيِّ، وَلَمْ يَبْقَ لَهُمْ ذِكْرٌ وَكُلُّ
مَنْ كَانَ يَأْتِي مِنْهُمْ يُحْرِقُ لَهُ رُسُومَهُ. وَاسْتَمَرَ الْحَالُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، إِلَى أَنْ مَاتَ السُّلْطَانُ
سَيِّدِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، وَبُويعَ وَلَدُهُ الْيَزِيدُ بِجَبَلِ الْعَلَمِ. اهـ. 38

فَكَانَتْ هَذِهِ هِيَ الْأَزْمَةُ الثَّلَاثَةُ الْأَخِيرَةَ. بَيَدِ أَنَّهَا لَمْ تَطُلْ لِقِصْرِ عَهْدِ هَذَا السُّلْطَانِ
(ت 1206هـ) الَّذِي لَمْ تَزِدْ مُدَّتُهُ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ سَنَوَاتٍ، وَلَا جِتْهَادِ خَلْفِهِ، أَسْلَطَانَ الْعَالَمِ، الْمَوْلَى
سُلَيْمَانَ، فِي إِعَادَةِ الْأُمُورِ إِلَى نِصَابِهَا، وَتَصْحِيحِ مَسَارِ النِّقَابَةِ الْمَغْرِبِيَّةِ مِنْ جَدِيدٍ. بَيَدُ أَنَّ
هَذِهِ الْأَزْمَاتِ الثَّلَاثِ فِي عَهْدِ الدَّوْلَةِ الْعَلَوِيَّةِ، كَانَتْ سَبَبًا لِظُهُورِ النَّسَائِنِ الْكِبَارِ،
وَتَكَاثُرِ كُتُبِ الْأَنْسَابِ وَلَا شَكَّ.

وَقَدْ تَبَيَّنَ لَنَا مِنْ خِلَالِ هَذَا الْبَحْثِ، وَاسْتِعْرَاضِ أُصُولِ التَّصَوُّرِ الْفِقْهِيِّ لِمَفْهُومِ
النِّقَابَةِ، مُنْذُ أَنْ كُتِبَ فِي الْأَمْرِ أَبُو الْحَسَنِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ، أَنَّ عُلَمَاءَ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ لَمْ يُؤَسِّسُوا
المَفْهُومَ، وَلَمْ يَسْعَوْا إِلَى تَطْوِيرِهِ إِلَّا فِي الْقُرُونِ الْأَخِيرَةِ، وَأَنَّ مَا يَجُورُ لَنَا أَنْ نُسَمِّيَهُ
”فِقْهًا نِقَابِيًّا“، لَا سَبِيلَ إِلَى التَّمَسُّهِ فِي كُتُبِ الْفِقْهِ الْمَالِكِيِّ النَّظْرِيِّ، وَلَا فِي كُتُبِ النَّوَازِلِ
وَالْعَمَلِيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا يُلْتَمَسُ الْبَحْثُ فِيهِ فِي كِتَابَاتِ الْمُؤَرِّخِينَ الْمَالِكِيَّةِ النَّسَائِنِ، مِنْ أَهْلِ
الْقُرُونِ الْأَخِيرَةِ، وَبِالضَّبْطِ فِي كُتُبِ الْأَنْسَابِ وَمُقَدِّمَاتِهَا عَلَى الْأَخْصَصِ، وَأَنَّ هَاوِلَاءَ قَدْ
قَامُوا بِتَعْدِيلِ خِطَابِ الْمَاوَرِدِيِّ، لِيَصِيرَ أَكْثَرَ تَكْتِيفًا مَعَ الْوَاقِعِ الثَّقَافِيِّ وَالتَّارِيخِيِّ الْمَغْرِبِيِّ،
وَأَنَّ هَذَا الْوَاقِعَ التَّارِيخِيِّ الْمُنَازِمَ بِاسْتِمْرَارٍ، كَانَ دَاعِيًا إِلَى الْبَحْثِ وَالْكِتَابَةِ فِي مَفْهُومِ
النِّقَابَةِ، أَوِ الْفِقْهِ النِّقَابِيِّ، وَفِي تَارِيخِ هَذِهِ الْمَوْسَسَةِ الْقَدِيمَةِ فِي الْغَرْبِ الْإِسْلَامِيِّ، وَلَا سِيَّامَا
الْمَغْرِبِ الْأَقْصَى. وَاللَّهُ الْمَوْقِفُ لِلصَّوَابِ.

4.4 المَصَادِرُ وَالْمَرَاجِعُ

الأحكام السُلْطَانِيَّة، والولاياتُ الدِّيْنِيَّة، لأبي الحَسَن، عَلِيِّ بنِ مُحَمَّدِ البَصْرِيِّ البَغْدَادِيِّ المَآوَرِدِيِّ (ت450هـ)، بِاعْتِنَاءِ خَالِدِ عَبْدِ اللّٰطِيفِ السَّيِّعِ العَلِيِيِّ، دَارُ الكَاتِبِ العَرَبِيِّ، بِيْرُوْت، 1420هـ | 1999م.

الأحكام السُلْطَانِيَّة، لأبي يَعْلَى، مُحَمَّدِ بنِ الحُسَيْنِ الفَرَّاءِ الحَنْبَلِيِّ (ت458هـ)، بِاعْتِنَاءِ مُحَمَّدِ حَامِدِ الفَقِيِّ، دَارُ الكُتُبِ العِلْمِيَّة، بِيْرُوْت، 1421هـ | 2000م.

أحكامُ القُرْآن، لابنِ العَرَبِيِّ المَعَارِفِيِّ (ت543هـ)، تَحْقِيقُ عَلِيِّ مُحَمَّدِ البِجَاوِيِّ، نَشْرُ عَيْسَى البَابِيِّ الحَلَبِيِّ، القَاهِرَة، 1387هـ | 1967م، 4 أجزاء.

الإشراف، عَلَى بَعْضِ مَنْ بِنَاسٍ مِنْ مَشَاهِيرِ الأَشْرَافِ، لأبي عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ، مُحَمَّدِ الطَّالِبِ ابنِ الحَاجِّ السُّلَمِيِّ المَرْدَاسِيِّ الفَاسِيِّ (ت1273هـ)، تَحْقِيقُ جَعْفَرِ ابنِ الحَاجِّ السُّلَمِيِّ، مَنَشُورَاتُ جَمْعِيَّةِ تَطَاوُنَ أُسْمِيرِ، سِلْسِلَةُ تُرَاثِ، 11، تَطَوَانِ، 1425-1424هـ | 2005-2004م، جُزْءَان.

بَدَائِعُ السَّلَكِ، فِي طَبَائِعِ المُلُكِ، لأبي عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ ابنِ الأَزْرَقِ (ت896هـ)، تَحْقِيقُ عَلِيِّ سَامِي النُّشَارِ، مَنَشُورَاتُ وَزَارَةِ الإِعْلَامِ بِالعِرَاقِ، بَغْدَادِ، 1397هـ | 1977م.

حَاشِيَةُ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ، مُحَمَّدِ الطَّالِبِ ابنِ الحَاجِّ السُّلَمِيِّ المَرْدَاسِيِّ الفَاسِيِّ (ت1273هـ)، عَلَى شَرْحِ مِيَّارَةَ، عَلَى المُرْشِدِ المَعِينِ، المَطْبَعَةُ الكُبْرَى الأَمِيرِيَّة، القَاهِرَة، 1319هـ | 1901م، جُزْءَان.

الرِّسَالَةُ الوَجِيزِيَّة، إِلَى الحَضْرَةِ العَزِيزِيَّة، فِي عُلُومِ الخِلَافَةِ، لِموَلَّفٍ مَجْهُولِ، بِاعْتِنَاءِ أَحْمَدَ الدَّعْرَنِيِّ، مَطْبَعَةُ المَعَارِفِ الجَدِيدَةِ، الرِّبَاطِ، 1407هـ | 1987م.

رِیَاضُ الوَرْدِ، فِيمَا اتَّهَمَ إِلَيْهِ هَذَا الجَوْهَرُ الفَرْدِ، لأبي عَبْدِ اللّٰهِ، مُحَمَّدِ الطَّالِبِ ابنِ الحَاجِّ السُّلَمِيِّ المَرْدَاسِيِّ الفَاسِيِّ (ت1273هـ)، تَحْقِيقُ جَعْفَرِ ابنِ الحَاجِّ السُّلَمِيِّ، ج. 1، مَطْبَعَةُ الكَاتِبِ العَرَبِيِّ، دِمَشَقِ، 1413هـ | 1993م، ج. 2، مَنَشُورَاتُ جَمْعِيَّةِ تَطَاوُنَ أُسْمِيرِ، وَكَلِيَّةُ الآدَابِ، تَطَوَانِ، 1420هـ | 1999م.

- سَبَبَةُ الْإِسْلَامِيَّة: دِرَاسَاتٌ فِي التَّارِيخِ الْاِقْتِصَادِيِّ وَالْاِجْتِمَاعِيِّ، لِمُحَمَّدِ الشَّرِيفِ، مَنشوراتُ جَمَعِيَّةِ تَطَاوُنِ أَسْمِيرِ، سِلْسِلَةُ دِرَاسَاتٍ، تَطَوَانِ، 1416هـ\1996م.
- الشُّهُبُ اللَّامِعَةُ، فِي السِّيَاسَةِ النَّافِعَةِ، لِابْنِ رِضْوَانَ الْمَالِقِيِّ (ت783هـ)، تَحْقِيقُ عَلِيِّ سَامِي النَّشَارِ، دَارُ الثَّقَافَةِ، الدَّارُ الْبَيْضَاءُ، 1404هـ\1984م.
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English Summary of Chapter 4

Stefan Reichmuth

Since the inception of the “Syndicate of the Descendants of the Prophet” (*niqābat al-ashrāf*) in the tenth century, this institution was considered as a part of what the Muslim jurists called the “(public) institutions provided by (Islamic) law” (*al-wilāyāt al-shar‘īyya*), that is, the political, administrative, and social institutions of the Islamic state, such as the police, market supervision (*ḥisba*), judiciary, and the administration of religious endowments. It thus belonged to the institutions which fell under the final authority of the caliph. Whenever the Islamic heritage gained in importance for the caliphate, the *ḥisba*, and the judiciary, these institutions became the subject of meticulous reflection, independent jurisprudence, and of a rich literary production. Other institutions were rather neglected, and reflection about them did only sparsely develop; even though they were equally essential to Islamic society, such as the police and the Syndicate of the Descendants of the Prophet.

With respect to the *niqābat al-ashrāf*, we observe that reflection on it was rather developed by Shāfi‘ī jurists than by the other schools of law, which for a long time shared the conceptual framework that had been developed by the Shāfi‘īs. The most influential legal treatise discussing this topic was the famous book written by Abū l-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058), “The Legal Provisions of Rule and of the Islamic Public Institutions” (*al-Aḥkām al-sultāniyya wa-l-wilāyāt al-islāmiyya*), where the legal framework of the *niqābat al-ashrāf* is laid out in chapter 8. The contemporary Ḥanbalī jurist Abū Ya‘lā al-Farrā’ (d. 458/1066) shows a close resemblance to Māwardī’s text in his own *al-Aḥkām al-sultāniyya*. Both works seem to represent the legal consensus which was apparently shared during their time by the different legal schools.

According to Māwardī, the basic principle on which the *niqāba* is founded is the protection of those of noble ancestry from the power of those who do not equal them by descent and nobility. In the fifth Islamic century, Muslim society viewed the descendants of the Prophet either with great esteem (in the case of the Sunnīs), or with outright veneration (in the case of the Shī‘īs), conceding to them the right of institutional independence from any external authority. Māwardī did not find an outright legal proof for this independence and for the establishment of a syndicate; but he referred to a Prophetic *ḥadīth* which called in general terms for the knowledge of one’s ancestry and for the loyalty towards one’s relatives. He established his concept of institutional independence without bothering about any further proof, and connected the

notion of the *niqāba* with the concept of the authority of the ruler (*al-wilāya al-sultāniyya*), from which it depends like the other public authorities. This implies its independence from the interference of the people in general, but not from the caliph from whom its authority is derived, or from his delegated representatives. Its legitimacy thus depends on the power and legitimacy of the caliphate.

In accordance with the development of the position of the *ashrāf* after the emergence of the ‘Abbāsids, the Fāṭimids, and the Idrīsids, Māwardī distinguishes between a “special *niqāba*” (*niqāba khāṣṣa*) with political and supervisory functions, and a “general *niqāba*” (*niqāba ‘amma*) to which legal functions are also added. He defines twelve duties for the first one, which are related to the preservation of Sharīfian descentance, of morals and discipline, and of social cohesion, supervision, and finances. This gave the *niqāba* an autonomous status within the state and made it a political office. The *naqīb* was to be appointed from the group of the *ashrāf* on the basis of his personal qualities and merits. Legal knowledge, however, was not among the preconditions of this office in the case of the “special *niqāba*”, in contrast to the “general” one, where the legal authority of a *qāḍī* was added to its political functions, which required legal competence.

Under Mamlūk rule the importance of the *niqābat al-ashrāf* seems to have diminished, as can be gleaned from its treatment by Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418) in his *Ṣubḥ al-a’shā*, where he mentions that the holder of this office has no direct political responsibility vis-à-vis the sultan and is therefore not included in the council of the ruler. It is reckoned by him under the religious offices, and he mentions both genealogical and supervisory functions for it. He states that it had become established custom that the *naqīb* should be appointed from the leaders of the *ashrāf* (*ru’ūs al-ashrāf*) and that he belong to the scribal class (*arbāb al-aqlām*). The principles otherwise laid down by Māwardī seem to have been generally respected in the course of Islamic history.

Although the scholars of the Maghrib were familiar with the office of the *niqāba* as it existed in the Orient, they do not hint at its existence in their region, and they apparently considered it to be an Eastern innovation that had no basis in the *sharī’a*. This position is expressed by the Mālikī *qāḍī* of Seville, Abū Bakr b. al-‘Arabī (d. 543/1148), who had travelled widely in the ‘Abbāsīd and Fāṭimid realms. Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1405) only mentions it in passing in the context of the offices connected with the caliphate, which for him had become obsolete along with the caliphate itself. That he does not consider its existence either in the East or in the West is evident from his failure to mention it at all, apart from this passing remark, and also from his neglect of the science of genealogy as part of both *fiqh* and history, which is lacking in his otherwise

ample description of the sciences of his time. On the other hand, he staunchly defends the Idrīsids and their authentic descent from the Prophet.

The books on the “counsel of kings” (*ādāb al-mulūk*) which were written in the Maghrib and in Andalus during that period also largely ignore the institution of the *niqāba*, an impression which can be gained from the anonymous work *al-Risāla al-wajīza ilā al-ḥaḍra al-‘azīziyya fī ‘ulūm al-khilāfa*, and from Ibn Riḍwān al-Māliqī (d. 783/1381), *al-Shuḥub al-lāmi‘a fī l-siyāsa al-nāfi‘a*, and, after Ibn Khaldūn, Abū ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Azraq (d. 896/1490).

It can be noted that the juridical treatises of the Mālikī jurists discussed the descendants of the Prophet mostly in the chapters on the *zakāt*, from which it can be seen that theoretical positions and social developments were at odds with each other. Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī al-Gharnāṭī (d. 741/1340), *al-Qawānīn al-fiqhiyya*, records a number of legal opinions with regard to the permissibility of *zakāt* or voluntary donations to the *ahl al-bayt*. Ḥaṭṭāb (d. 954/1547) mentions in his *Mawāhib al-jalīl* (a commentary to Khalīl b. Ishāq’s *Mukhtaṣar*) the old negative view which had formerly prevailed in Mālikī law, and which was giving way to a new one which allowed such donations. It was built on the principle of necessity (*ḍarūra*), as the descendants of the Prophet had become in danger of losing their income after the neglect of their needs by the caliphs and by the decline of the system of the *bayt al-māl*. Under these conditions, a donation to the *ashrāf*, which should be given to them directly, thus had become an act rewarded by God.

References to the *niqāba*, which are lacking in the legal treatises of the Mālikī *madhhab*, can be found scattered across the genealogical and historical literature. Historians and genealogists like Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Qādirī (d. 1187/1773) in his *Nashr al-mathānī*, or al-Ṭālib b. al-Ḥājj (d. 1273/1856) in his *al-Ishrāf*, more explicitly hint at the significance of the *niqāba* for the protection of the purity of the Prophetic descent, which according to them requires broad genealogical, historical, and codicological knowledge. The office should normally be held by a *sharīf* but could be given to a better qualified scholar of non-Sharīfian descent if no sufficiently learned descendant of the Prophet was available. Holders of this office are occasionally mentioned, like the Jūṭī family in Fez and their role in some of the crises and revolts in the period of the Marīnid sultans. Others belonged to the *ashrāf* of Jabal al-‘Alam, or to Sharīfian families from Sijilmāsa and elsewhere. It appears significant that the requirement of legal and historical knowledge is much stressed by Qādirī, and that the distinction between “special” and “general” *niqāba* has been abandoned in Maghribī practice. This then became the new legal position of the Mālikī school in Morocco.

The period of the Marīnid sultanate is described by legal scholars of the last five centuries who are also genealogists and historians as the golden age for the relations between the *ashrāf* and the sultanate and between sultan and *naqīb*. Abū l-Qāsim al-Zayyānī (d. 1249/1833) is quoted with his *Tuḥfat al-ḥādī al-muṭrib* for a description of this glorious office since the days of the Umayyads and the ‘Abbāsids and for its high rank in the Maghrib, which according to him lasted from the time of the Almoravids, Almohads, and Marīnids until the first Sa’dian sultans. It then fell into serious decline in the disturbances which arose after the death of Sultan Aḥmad al-Manṣūr (d. 1012/1603). This led to widespread misappropriation and manipulation of the *niqāba* in the hands of unqualified holders without proper supervision, who for their own benefit awarded Sharīfian titles to claimants without proper verification of their claims.

This lamentable state of affairs, the first of the crises of the *niqāba* office in Morocco, only ended with the rise of the ‘Alawī sultans to power. Zayyānī describes at length the revival and renewal of the *niqāba* by Mawlāy Ismā’īl (1082–1139/1672–1727), who reorganised and thoroughly revised the Sharīfian register after proper verification by qualified scholars and other knowledgeable people. He thus secured his leadership in the religious as well as in the worldly realms. He also appointed new *nuqabā’* in Fez, Meknes, Marrakesh, and Jabal al-‘Alam, where the senior *naqīb* came to reside. By these measures the office was firmly attached to the state apparatus (*makhzan*) of the ‘Alawī court.

A second crisis of the *niqāba* set in after the death of Mawlāy Ismā’īl, with growing misuses of its holders and the issuing of fake documents, which lasted until the rule of Mawlāy Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh (1171–1204/1759–90). After receiving many complaints against the malpractice which had spread even to tribal areas, this sultan thoroughly revised the organisation of the office and of the registers, and he appointed office-holders who were paid by the state, without receiving any other gifts and payments. After a third crisis of the *niqāba* system during the short rule of his son Mawlāy Yazīd (d. 1206–1792), it was stabilised again under his successor, the scholar-sultan Mawlāy Sulaymān (1206–38/1792–1822). By then the three crises of the *niqāba* had led to the emergence of prominent genealogists and of a flourishing genealogical literature in Morocco.

It has become clear by this presentation of the history of the *niqābat al-ashrāf* in Morocco that the Mālikī jurists had been latecomers to this legal field, and had not contributed to its concept, which had been largely shaped by Māwardī. It was only during the last centuries that they came to develop

something like a legal framework for it. This, however, cannot be found either in their legal treatises or in the *nawāzil* literature but in the writings of the Mālikī historians and genealogists of the later centuries. These had to adapt the norms defined by Māwardī to the cultural and historical realities of the Maghrib. It was these realities and their recurring crises which led to the emergence of discussions and writings on the concept and norms of the *niqāba* and on the history of this old institution in the Islamic West, especially in Morocco.

Siyāda and Imamate in Eighteenth-Century India

The Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa and the Sunnī–Shī‘ī Sectarian Conflict

Soraya Khodamoradi

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the central authority of the Indian Mughal Empire was gradually replaced by multiple centres of power and culture, the long-standing debates between the different denominations such as the Sunnīs and the Shī‘īs over their contested Islamic traditions thrived again. Shī‘ī rulers of the newly emerging centres patronised their religious scholars (*‘ulamā’*) and seminaries and helped disseminating Shī‘ī practices and rituals. In response to this development, Sunnīs began to reconsider their relationship with Shī‘ism and produced a considerable number of polemical texts. Sunnī religious revivalists in South Asia even made the discussions about Shī‘ism part of their reform agendas. Outstanding reformers such as Shāh Walī Allāh (d. 1762), Maḥzar Jān-i Jānān (d. 1780), Muḥammad Nāṣir ‘Andalīb (d. 1758), Khwāja Mīr Dard (d. 1785), and Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 1824) engaged with the issue in different ways and for various aims, which ranged from uniting the main Islamic denominations to rebutting the Shī‘ī position altogether.

Among these revivalists, the Sufi reformer Mīr Dard, the theoretician of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa* (“Pure Muḥammadan Path”) founded by his father, ‘Andalīb, paid specific attention to denominational polemics. He propounded the notion of *ṭarīqa wāthīqa* (“trustworthy path”) as a framework for the reconstruction and reinvigoration of the doctrines of *siyāda* (“blood affiliation with the Prophet”) and of the imamate. This was presented by him as a solution for the sectarian and theological conflicts between the Shī‘īs and the Sunnīs. It was also supposed to support his and his father’s authority as descendants of the Prophet and as inheritors of the knowledge transmitted by his cousin and son-in-law ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.

This attempt came at a time when the decline of the imperial power created a dispute over moral and religious authority among different Islamic groups. Focusing on Dard’s texts and employing both conceptual-semantic and contextual-historical methods of analysis, this chapter explores the role of *siyāda* and *imāma* (leadership) in Dard’s philosophy of *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. It searches for the reason behind his insistence to be recognised as a member

of the Prophetic family and his preference for the titles *sayyid* and imam instead of other honorifics such as *walī*, *shaykh*, Sufi, or *‘ālim*. Moreover, it deals with Dard’s prioritising of the principles of *siyāda* and imamate over companionship (*ṣuḥba*) and caliphate (*khilāfa*), since this seems counter-intuitive to his own Sunnī background and Mujaddidī affiliation. Contextualising Dard’s discussions of *siyāda* and imamate within the framework of his *ṭarīqa wāthīqa*, it brings out why his position must be regarded as a considerable change in the Sunnī discourse for the sake of a reconciliation with the Shī’a in early modern India.

5.1 Shī’ī Social and Political Dynamics

With its doctrinal focus on the household of the Prophet and his offspring, and its belief in their infallibility and merit and their right to both worldly leadership and spiritual guidance of the Muslim community (*umma*), the Shī’a gained considerable influence in India during the eighteenth century. In the early 1700s, the emperor Bahādur Shāh’s (r. 1707–12) decision to introduce Shī’ī practices into his court at Delhi signalled a turn of fortunes for the Shī’ī community.¹ As the central authority of the Mughal Empire weakened, Shī’ī notables founded and ruled significant successor states and new centres of power. Bengal was almost independently ruled by Shī’ī governors (known as *nawwābs*), who were appointed by the Mughals from 1701 until the British takeover of 1757. The state of Awadh, whose rulers themselves belonged to a *sayyid* (pl. *sādāt*) family originating from Nishapur, the ancient capital of Khorasan in Iran, made the greatest impact on the development of Shī’ism in the subcontinent.² Hyderabad, the largest princely state in south India, although hardly comparable in this respect with Bengal and Awadh, also had its fair share of Persian and Shī’ī *sayyid* nobles, courtiers, scribes, and poets who were active on the political and cultural scene and at the court alike.

In these new centres of Shī’ī power and culture, sectarian antagonism between the different Islamic currents gained a renewed momentum. This included opposition between Sunnī and Shī’ī communities but also between the traditionalist *akhbārī* and rationalist *uṣūlī* schools among the Shī’īs

1 Nasr, *The Shī’a Revival*, 98.

2 Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 1–3. See also Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shī’ism*, 36–42. Before the eighteenth century, India witnessed Shī’ī-led principalities such as the Bahmanids in Deccan (r. 1347–1526), the Adilshahis in Bijapur until 1686, the Nizamshahis of Ahmadnagar (r. 1490–1633), and Qutbshahis (r. 1512–1687) (Ālemī, “Mulūk-i bahmani”).

themselves.³ Shī'ī rulers promoted their understanding of Islam to legitimise their authority and patronised both the culture and scholarship of the Shī'a learned classes. They encouraged 'ulamā' to challenge their Sunnī counterparts, founded seminaries, and helped to disseminate rituals such as 'Āshūrā' (commemorating the death of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī).⁴ Even under the Āsaf Jāhīs (r. 1724–1948), the Sunnī successors to the Quṭb Shāhīs (r. 1591–1687 in Hyderabad), ministers of the state gave public support to the great Shī'ī shrines and patronised Muḥarram religious festivals.⁵

The *sādāt* rulers of Awadh (1722–1856) were devout Shī'īs who spent huge sums for the construction of mosques and *imāmbārgās*, the latter being congregation halls for the commemoration ceremonies especially during Muḥarram. They were also great patrons of an 'ulamā' class following the rationalist school of jurisprudence and insisting on holding Friday congregational prayers in Lucknow and Faizabad, which spread from there to other towns. Moreover, Iranian merchants in Awadh and their descendants in towns like Murshidabad designated endowments for the promotion of 'azādārī (mourning and lamentation). These measures also attracted many Shī'ī scholars and literati from both India and Iran to these regions. In 1775, Nawab Asaf al-Daula (d. 1797), who initiated the construction of a number of religious buildings like the Asafī Imāmbāra and the Jāmi' Masjid in Lucknow, invited a large number of Shī'ī 'ulamā' to the Awadh court.⁶ Against this backdrop, the leading Shī'ī 'ulamā' of Lucknow grew immensely wealthy as a result of official salaries and the collection and redistribution of *khums* (the religious obligation of paying one-fifth of the wealth acquired from certain sources) and *zakāt* (annual payment according to Islamic law on certain kinds of property). They reached the peak of their influence with the establishment of a Shī'ī judiciary and a large Shī'ī seminary later under Amjad 'Alī Shāh (r. 1842–74).⁷

3 The correspondence between the Akhbārī scholar Mīr Yūsuf 'Alī Astarābādī (d. seventeenth century) and the *uṣūlī* Qāzī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī (d. 1610) is regarded as an indication of the Akhbārī–*uṣūlī* schism in the Indian context. For the correspondence, see Ja'fariyān, "Mukātibat", 2–15. For details on Akhbārī–*uṣūlī* thought and historical development, see Newman, "The Nature of Akhbārī/Uṣūlī Dispute, Part 1"; Newman, "The Nature of Akhbārī/Uṣūlī Dispute, Part 2"; Böwering, "Introduction", 14; Mavani, *Religious Authority*, 12–13, 130; Gleave, *Scripturalist Islam*, 177–90.

4 Rizvi, "Faith Deployed", 12–14; Nasr, *The Shī'a Revival*, 99.

5 Pinault, *The Shī'ites*, 78.

6 Rezavi, "The State, Shī'as and Shi'ism", 44.

7 Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 3.

5.2 Sunnī–Shīʿī Conflicts and Polemics

The domination of Shīʿī *ʿulamāʿ*, landholders, and state officials in cities such as Awadh coincided with a decline of the fortunes of the Sunnī noble class and religious institutions. Sunnī religious leaders saw the Shīʿī ascendancy, among other factors, as a manifestation of Islam’s decline, and hence their demand for Islamic revival and reform included the refutation of Shīʿism.⁸ Disputes and conflicts between Sunnī and Shīʿī factions at the court and in society at large became a recurrent feature of India’s Muslim society during this period.⁹ Bahādur Shāh’s demonstration of pro-Shīʿī tendencies, for instance, led to sectarian conflicts in Lahore. In 1711, his order to add the title *waṣī* (“heir, legate, or the executor of the will of Muḥammad”) to the epithets for Imam ‘Alī during mosque sermons ignited riots provoked by Sunnī theologians.¹⁰ These riots multiplied in Delhi and other north Indian towns throughout the eighteenth century and tensions further intensified following the invasions of Nādir Shāh Afshār (1739–40) and Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī (six times between 1748 and 1762). Similar tensions had already arisen in India since the sixteenth century. Before Bahādur Shāh, his father, Aurangzeb (r. 1658–1707), had held strict orthodox Sunnī views and fought against Shīʿī religious practices. Although he heavily relied on the services of Iranians and other Shīʿīs for military campaigns as well as official and administrative duties, during his reign, Muḥarram processions had been banned and the Shīʿī kingdoms in the Deccan subjugated. The compendium of Ḥanafī Islamic law prepared by Sunnī *ʿulamāʿ* on his orders, the *Fatāwā-yi ʿālamgīriyya* (Alamgir’s fatwas), even proclaimed those Shīʿīs who cursed the first two caliphs as heretics.¹¹

With the resurgence of Shīʿism, and with the rise of the Shīʿī *sayyids* of Bārha, who had become kingmakers during the first phase of Mughal decline, strong anti-Shīʿī polemics emerged in northern India.¹² The major controversial issues between Sunnīs and Shīʿīs, such as the true successorship of the Prophet, were actively debated among both communities with Sunnī religious leaders condemning Shīʿī practices such as Muḥarram processions as excessive. An outstanding example is Shāh Walī Allāh, the erudite Naqshbandī Sufi and scholar, who attempted to develop his own reformulation of Sufism in

8 Nasr, *The Shīʿa Revival*, 99.

9 Rizvi, “Faith Deployed”, 13.

10 Irvine, *Later Mughals*, 130–2.

11 Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 2–6.

12 The name of Bārha applied, from Akbar’s reign onwards, to a community of *sayyids* in possession of a particular group of twelve villages in the Dōʿāb (Muḥaffarnagar district, UP) (see Rizvi, “Bārha Sayyids”).

the context of a broader reform agenda that involved Islamic jurisprudence, Qur'ānic exegesis, *ḥadīth* studies, and theology.¹³

Walī Allāh's preoccupation with the theory of the caliphate, one of the most striking eighteenth-century discussions that challenged the Shī'ī concept of the imamate under the Prophet's progeny, clearly reflects the level of anti-Shī'a polemics among Naqshbandīs at that time. Walī Allāh divides the historical caliphates into three categories: (a) the "special" caliphate (*khilāfa khāṣṣa*), which included the rule of the rightly guided caliphs (632–61), with the addition of the eighth Umayyad caliph 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 720) as an ideal ruler; (b) the "general" caliphate (*'amma*), in which Walī Allāh follows the classical theory of the Shāfi'ī reforming jurist Abū l-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (d. 1058) and regards Mu'āwiya, the first Umayyad caliph, as rightful; and (c) the "tyrannical" caliphate (*jābira*), which cannot be accepted as rightful at all. Walī Allāh believed that the first form of caliphate collapsed because of *fitna* (strife, sedition), which led to the division of the Muslim community under the fourth caliph, 'Alī (d. 660), and to the cessation of *jihād* after the murder of the third caliph, 'Uthmān (d. 656). According to him, the murder of 'Uthmān was the dividing line between the ideal age and the age of anarchy that followed.¹⁴ He declares that Shī'ī Imams cannot be regarded as special caliphs because they did not perform *hijra* (the migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina) and were not among the first companions to accept Islam. Furthermore, they did not have actual power and authority over the Muslim community as the four caliphs did.¹⁵

Walī Allāh's attempts to reconcile the divergent positions among Muslims barely took the Shī'ī doctrine into account. He was steadfast in his defence of the Sunnī positions and his repudiation of Shī'ī views of caliphal succession. In a letter to the king and nobles of his time, he stresses that

strict orders should be issued in all Islamic towns forbidding religious ceremonies publicly practiced by infidels ... On the tenth of Muharram, the Shī'īs should not be allowed to go beyond the bounds of moderation, neither should they be rude nor repeat stupid things [i.e., reciting *tabarrā*].¹⁶

13 Hermansen, trans., *The Conclusive Argument*, xxix; Voll, *Islam*, 58–61; For Shāh Walī Allāh's religious and reformist thought, see Baljon, *Religion and Thought*; Rizvi, *Shah Wali-Allah*; Dallal, "The Origins and Objectives".

14 Ahmad, "An Eighteenth-Century Theory of the Caliphate", 135–40.

15 The requirements of the special caliphate and the description of the *fitna* are elaborated in detail in Walī Allāh, *Izālat al-khafā'*, 85–234, 487–586.

16 Quoted in Rizvi, *Shah Wali-Allah*, 294.

Tabarrā often means the shouting of curses on Satan, but in the Shī'ī context, it refers to the widespread ritualised practice of condemning the first three successors of the Prophet and other figures such as his wife 'Ā'isha and the first Umayyad caliph, Mu'āwiya. Aiming at the dissociation from the enemies of the *ahl-i bayt* (household of the Prophet), this ritual is sometimes followed by the public burning of those figures' effigies in the streets and the bazaar. It is highly resented by many Sunnīs and has time and again provoked sectarian riots and spontaneous violence between Sunnīs and Shī'īs in South Asia.¹⁷

The Naqshbandī reformist Maḏhar Jān-i Jānān, the head of the central Naqshbandī convent (*khānaqāh*) in Delhi from 1747 until his death and the founder of the Shamsiyya-Mazhariyya branch of this order, sought to reduce conflict both among the Sunnī legal schools (*madhāhib*) and between Sunnīs and Shī'īs. Born into a noble family of Afghan origin which served in the Mughal administration, Maḏhar had attended several masters of different brotherhoods but was mostly attracted to the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya. He considered the respect for the companions of the Prophet not as an essential part of faith, and advocated the inclusion of Shī'īs within the fold of Islam due to their confession (*shahāda*) of the unity of God.¹⁸ However, with the renewed prominence of Shī'īs in the court in 1781, Maḏhar, too, allegedly made some derogatory remarks against the public mourning ceremonies for the death of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī and was apparently assassinated by Shī'ī zealots.¹⁹

Another Mujaddidī Sufi thinker and fighter, Sayyid Aḥmad of Rae Bareli (d. 1831), who also called his way *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, pursued a more radical reformist agenda and is best known for his *jihād* against the Sikhs and his advocacy of a version of Islam which was purged of Hindu influence. He also criticised Shī'ī practices, along with the Sufis' belief in the intercession of their masters (*pīrs*). He identified false Sufism, Shī'ism, and errant popular customs as the sources of religious corruption and hence declining Muslim power. According to him the refutation of Shī'ism was a necessary part of the revival of Islamic power in India and it was required for the reform campaign designed to restore Muslim belief and practice to their originally intended condition.²⁰ It should be mentioned that in this time, besides India, other parts of the Islamic world also witnessed the emergence of anti-Shī'ī reformist tendencies. The movement of Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792)

17 Hyder, *Reliving Karbala*, 82.

18 Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya*, 65–66; Friedmann, "Medieval Muslim Views".

19 See Dahnhardt, *Change and Continuity*, 14–41; Umar, "Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan".

20 Nasr, *The Shī'a Revival*, 99–100. For Sayyid Aḥmad's reformist thought and practice, see also Rizvi, *Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz*; Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*.

condemned Shī'ism as part of its efforts to revive and reform Islam. In 1802, Wahhābīs, who considered the veneration of shrines as a form of polytheism and viewed Muslims engaged in these acts as heretics, attacked Karbala and destroyed and plundered the shrine of Ḥusayn b. 'Alī.²¹

5.3 Polemical Literature

In the course of these political and religious tensions, polemical literature was produced in the forms of learned theological treatises, popular polemical tracts, poetic invectives, and satire by both Shī'ī and Sunnī scholars and poets. In the latter part of his life, Walī Allāh wrote two works, *Izālat al-khafā' 'an khilāfat al-khulafā'* (Removing secrecy from the issues concerning the caliphate) and *Qurrat al-'aynayn fī tafḍīl al-shaykhayn* (Delight of the eyes on the superiority of the first two caliphs), which addressed Shī'ī claims concerning the nature of the caliphate and the superiority of 'Alī. Although in his works Walī Allāh refrains from using the word *kāfir* (infidel) in referring to Shī'īs, he claims that the Shī'ī *madhhab* was *bāṭil* (false, void). According to his main argument, the belief in the *'iṣma* (infallibility) of the Twelve Imams is incompatible with the finality of prophethood, even though in his *Tafhīmāt al-ilāhiyya* (Divine instructions) he himself attributes a kind of *'iṣma* – along with the three other qualities of *ḥikma* (wisdom), *wajāha* (prestige, excellence), and *quṭbiyyat-i bāṭiniyya* (the position of a hidden spiritual pivot) – to the Imams.²² In 1731–32, Walī Allāh translated Aḥmad Sirhindī's (d. 1624) *Radd al-rawāfiq* (Refutation of the Shī'īs) into Arabic and added his own foreword to it; it was apparently the main text refuting Shī'ī positions in the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries. Similar polemical issues can also be found in his other writings.²³

Walī Allāh's discussions of Shī'ī ideas and practices were followed by *Tuḥfa-i ithnā 'ashariyya* (The gift to the Twelver Shī'īs), which was written by his son, 'Abd al-'Azīz, in 1789–90. Divided into twelve chapters, representing the number of Shī'ī Imams, the work aims to comprehensively refute Shī'ī beliefs and practices. Aside from the origin of the Shī'ī denomination and its concepts of divinity, prophethood, and jurisprudence, it deals with themes such as the precedence of 'Alī or of the first two caliphs, the cursing of the Prophet's companions, the tradition of 'Umar's denying the Prophet's wish for pen and paper, and

21 Wynbrandt, *A Brief History*, 135.

22 Walī Allāh, *al-Tafhīmāt*, 14.

23 Umar, *Islam in Northern India*, 254.

‘Alī’s several marriages and his judiciousness.²⁴ In his *Sayf Allāh al-maslūl ‘alā mukharribī dīn al-rasūl* (The drawn sword of God against those who destroy the religion of the Prophet), Mīrzā Muḥammad Akhbārī (d. 1816), the jurist, *ḥadīth* scholar, poet, and pillar of the Akhbārī movement in India, was among the first Shī‘īs who attempted to respond to the *Tuḥfa*. Then, Sayyid Dildār ‘Alī (1753–1820), the chief *mujtahid* of the state of Awadh, together with his students wrote a series of treatises in response to it, each of which was devoted to an individual chapter of the *Tuḥfa*; *al-Ṣawārim al-ilāhiyya* (Divine thunderbolts) was thus written in response to its sixth chapter; *Ḥusām al-Islām* (The sword of Islam) was a rebuttal of the fifth chapter; and *Khātimat al-ṣawārim* (The end of thunderbolts) a refutation of the seventh. Sayyid Ḥāmid Ḥusayn (1830–88), a student of Dildār ‘Alī, also published eighteen volumes under the title *‘Abaqāt al-anwār fi imāmat a’immat al-aṭhār* (Fragrant blossoms on the imamate of the pure imams), taking a stance against not only ‘Abd al-‘Azīz but also other Sunnī critics of Shī‘ī positions.²⁵

Shī‘ī–Sunnī polemical texts started to be produced in India centuries before ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and Dildār ‘Alī. Sirhindī wrote his anti-Shī‘ī treatise *Radd al-rawāfiḍ* in 1008/1599–1600. In 1587, Qāḍī Nūr Allāh’s *Maṣā’ib al-nawāṣib* (Calamities of the Sunnīs) was a reply to Mīrzā Makhdūm Sharīf’s (d. 1587) *al-Nawāqiḍ fi l-radd ‘alā l-rawāfiḍ* (Nullifiers on the refutation of Shī‘īs) in Baghdad, which was soon brought to India and circulated there. Qāḍī Nūr Allāh also wrote *al-Ṣawārim al-muḥriqa* (Burning swords) in reply to the *Ṣawā’iq al-muḥriqa fi l-radd ‘alā ahl al-rafd wa-l-ḍalāl wa-l-zandaqa* (The burning thunderbolts in refutation of the people of refusal, error, and heresy) of Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī (d. 1566–67) and *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq* (Realisation of the truth) in 1605 in refutation of Faṭḥullāh Ruzbihān’s *Ibtāl al-nahj al-bāṭil* (Invalidation of the false path) (1503).

5.4 Dard and ‘Andalīb

It is within the above-explained Indian context of Sunnī–Shī‘ī relations – that is, the competition over power during the establishment of new Shī‘ī principalities, the renewed patronage of Shī‘ī rituals and seminaries by certain rulers, and the ensuing sectarian conflict and polemics – that the prominent eighteenth-century mystic of Delhi Khwāja Mīr Dard conceived a doctrine

24 See ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, *Tuḥfa*, 416–537; for the polemic thought of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, see also Rizvi, *Shah ‘Abd al-‘Aziz*.

25 Ṭabāṭabā‘ī, “Mawqif al-shī‘a”, 41, 52.

which was to lead, in his view, beyond the Shī'ī and Sunnī frameworks, a path encompassing both creeds, called in his parlance *ṭarīqa jāmi'a* ("comprehensive way").²⁶

Both Mīr Dard and his father, 'Andalīb, were prominent Sufi theologians, poets, and musicians in Delhi, which was still the centre of the Mughal Empire.²⁷ Moreover, they belonged to the reformist Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī circles. Dard had studied Islamic sciences such as law and *ḥadīth*, though explicitly separating himself and his approach from the traditional '*ulamā'*' and their viewpoints.²⁸ He was the theoretician and exponent of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khāliṣa* initiated by his father, 'Andalīb, who himself was a disciple of one of Sirhindi's immediate descendants, Pīr Muḥammad Zubayr (d. 1740). 'Andalīb was the first Indian to call his Sufi path *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, a designation which, as we have seen, was later used by Sayyid Aḥmad of Rae Bareli.²⁹ In Dard's view, his father was among the saints of the Muslim community who had appeared to renew (*tajdīd*) and revive (*iḥyā'*) the pure religion of God, after it had become contaminated by innovations and the Muslims' deviation from the Prophet's original tradition. For him, 'Andalīb had been sent by God ultimately to proclaim the only way of salvation and the most perfect manifestation of the truth.³⁰

Dard's major contribution, among other works, is his *ʿIlm al-kitāb* (The knowledge of the book). Besides reflecting on a variety of religious and cultural themes and theological, legal, and philosophical debates of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the book contains some idiosyncrasies (such as those related to Shī'ism) which distinguish it from the reform-oriented texts of his contemporaries. Among the latter were works like *Ḥujjatullāh al-bāligha* (The conclusive argument of God) by Walī Allāh and the *Maqāmāt-i Mazḥarī* (Exempla of Mazḥar) of Mīrzā Mazḥar Jān-i Jānān³¹ that was compiled by Shāh Ghulām 'Alī (d. 1824), who at the age of thirteen had associated with Dard in Delhi.³²

26 For details on the *ṭarīqa jāmi'a*, see Khodamoradi, "*Ṭarīqah Muḥammadiyyah*"; Khodamoradi, *Sufi Reform*, 127–62.

27 On Dard as a poet, see Dard, *Urdū dīwān*; Dard, *Dīwān-i fārsī*; Schimmel, *Pain and Grace*, 31, 49; Ziad, "I Transcend Myself".

28 Dard, *Chahār risāla*, 219.

29 Schimmel, *Pain and Grace*, 33. See also Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*; Gaborieau, *Le Mahdi incompris*.

30 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 587.

31 The latter work consists of the letters and Sufi discourses (*malḥūzāt*) of Mīrzā Mazḥar Jān-i Jānān.

32 Storey, *Persian Literature*, 1034.

As an extensive commentary on 111 *wāridāt* written in quatrains,³³ *ʿIlm al-kitāb* is a highly technical theosophical-theological text that highlights several problems of its time. These include discussions over the interpretation of holy scripture (*taʿwīl*) and the distortion of its meaning (*tahrīf*); debates on the authoritative sources of knowledge and faith; and the search for a comprehensive Islamic knowledge. The book also tackles social challenges such as the issue of religious authority, which Dard bases on blood affiliation with the Prophet (*siyāda*), in combination with a spiritual union with him. It also deals with the sectarian conflicts between Sunnīs and Shīʿīs, to which the author dedicates a significant part of his theological discussions, reconstructing the theoretical bases of such denominational differences.

In *ʿIlm al-kitāb*, Dard not only reconsiders some of his forefather's influential teachings, such as Sirhindi's devaluation of the doctrine of the "unity of being" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) and his advocating the notion of the "unity of witnessing" (*waḥdat al-shuhūd*),³⁴ but also makes radical amendments to the Mujaddidī Sufi scholars' mostly hostile approach to Shīʿism. In his reconsideration of Shīʿism, he follows the goals prescribed by his father in the latter's introduction to *Nāla-yi ʿAndalīb*. *Nāla* is a voluminous book of approximately 2,000 folios written in Persian and containing an interpretation of a story that was originally narrated by ʿAndalīb in Hindi over a period of three nights in memory of Pīr Muḥammad Zubayr, who had just died. ʿAndalīb expanded upon this story, adding a number of subplots into the framework of the main narrative, and used the now extensive tale as a way to explain his Muḥammadan Path.³⁵ He also inserted Hindi *dohas* (a genre of Hindi explanatory poetry generally used in epics) into the story and referred to Hindu philosophy and customs.³⁶ In *Nāla*, ʿAndalīb explains the aim of his book as being to propose a path free from all of the uncertainties and problems found in various sects of Islam. He refers to the high curiosity among the younger generation about the truth within the Shīʿī and Sunnī branches of Islam: "Brothers of the path would ask me about issues of the path that came to mind ... Young men would often ask me about the realities of the Sunnī and Shīʿī schools."³⁷ ʿAndalīb tries to establish a plausible framework, that is, the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, for all religious and societal strata and for every aspect of life, as a way applicable for Sunnīs and Shīʿīs, men and women, the elite and folk, with worldly and otherworldly benefits alike.³⁸

33 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 91–96, 473; Dard, *Chahār risāla*, 6.

34 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 3–5.

35 Saghaeeraj, "Muḥammad Nāṣir ʿAndalīb".

36 ʿAndalīb, *Nāla*, 1:789, 813, 882, 2:712, 900.

37 ʿAndalīb, *Nāla*, 1:3.

38 ʿAndalīb, *Nāla*, 1:4. ʿAndalīb deals with Shīʿī imamology in his *Nāla*, 2:583.

5.5 *Sīyāda* and Imamate: Solutions for the Conflict and Polemics

Following his father, Dard's addressees are all types of Muslims, be they traditionalist or rationalist, Sufi or scholar, Shī'ī or Sunnī.³⁹ In contrast to the approach of Walī Allāh, his synthetic attempt does not exclude the Shī'ī doctrine. To include Shī'ism in his own way, Dard utilises, among other subjects, the significant concept of *sīyāda* which is associated with that of the imamate. *Sīyāda* is one of the two main pillars – the second being direct mystical connection with and annihilation in the Prophet (*fanā' fī l-rasūl*) – on the basis of which Dard constructs his ultra-Sunnī-Shī'ī way of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Wāthiqa*. It is in reference to the fundamentals of *sīyāda* and the imamate that Dard called himself a *sayyid*, a member of the Prophetic family and an offspring of the Prophet's daughter Fāṭima,⁴⁰ rather than a saint or shaykh or Sufi (see already above). The first parts of his name, Khwāja and Mīr, refer to this *sayyid* origin from both maternal and paternal sides.⁴¹ In his pure Muḥammadan Path, *sīyāda* retains its function as one of the crucial sources of religious authority.

Dard reconsidered the challenging subject matters between Sunnīs and Shī'īs circulating around the importance of blood affiliation with the Prophet. In his approach to the long-term dispute over the exalted status of the family of the Prophet (*ahl-i bayt*) in Shī'ism and on that of Muḥammad's companions (*ṣaḥāba*) in Sunnī tradition, Dard, despite his Sunnī background, places the progeny of the Prophet at a higher rank than his companions. Using a simile, he likens the Prophet to a tree whose main branches are his progeny, due to their blood relationship with him, whereas the companions are branches cut from other trees and transplanted onto the Prophetic one.⁴² Elaborating on the rank of the *ahl-i bayt*, Dard adds that members of the Prophet's household are joined to Muḥammad both by virtue of being his companions and by being his offspring, therefore encompassing all exterior and interior perfections and virtues.⁴³

Dard also considers his father and himself as belonging to the main branches of the Prophetic tree due to their being *najīb al-ṭarafayn* (highborn through blood affiliation with the Prophet via both parents), thus possessing both exterior and interior perfections. He calls his father "the veritable *sayyid* and most righteous imam, who is the helper of the nation and the religion".⁴⁴

39 Khodamoradi, *Sufi Reform*, 106–9.

40 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 83, 257–58.

41 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 84.

42 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 83.

43 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 257–58.

44 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 648.

Having emphasised the superiority of Muḥammad's progeny over his companions, Dard warns his audience not to consider him as an advocate of *afdaliyya* ("precedency"), a Shī'ī concept referring to the preference of the accomplished and learned for leadership over the unaccomplished and unlearned. *Afdaliyya* is related to the polemical issue of the leader's required characteristics in Islamic theology. According to Shī'ī theologians, an imam has to surpass other Muslims in two aspects in order to obtain the requirements of leadership: (a) his proximity to God and in the level of divine rewards that he enjoys; and (b) the characteristics which relate to human perfection such as bravery and knowledgeability. Thus, according to this point of view, prioritising less learned Muslims over those who are more learned is impossible.⁴⁵ This argument is used in polemics over the caliphate by Shī'īs, who argue that 'Alī was more knowledgeable than the first Sunnī caliphs and therefore the true successor of the Prophet. Sunnī scholars, in turn, consider the *ḥadīth* references that form the basis for the theory of *afdaliyya* as weak or categorise them as fabrications.⁴⁶

Dard argues that, despite his emphasis on the originality of the Prophet's progeny – and consequently the Imams – as the main branches of the tree, they are equal to the companions in terms of their function. To him, both groups, like both types of branches, provide fruit as well as pleasant shade and beauty for the Muslims, and Muslims should only be concerned with these benefits and nothing else. Emphasising that both descendants and companions, whether natural or transplanted, are after all branches of the same tree, he accentuates that the resort (*tawassul*) to each companion and Imam becomes a resort to the Prophet himself.⁴⁷ In this way, Dard stood firm on the comprehensiveness of the pure Muḥammadan Path, without being diverted from his Sunnī position regarding the value and status of the companions. This was his approach to build a bridge between the Shī'ī and Sunnī denominations, which his father had already started to construct in his *Nāla*.

Dard introduces himself as the heir of the *ahl-i bayt* and of the continuous chain of the imamate. He even attributes to himself the revolutionary title of a "missionary imam" (*imām-i dā'ī*), who invites people to the comprehensive pure Muḥammadan Path,⁴⁸ and announces the authority of his way as a hereditary power (*dawlat-i mawrūthī*).⁴⁹ Dard considers the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*

45 See Rāzī, *al-Munqidh*, 2:286; al-Ḥillī, *Kitāb al-maslak*.

46 Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 7:515.

47 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 83, 84, 255–57.

48 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 257–58.

49 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 85.

as the continuity of the imamate and the receptor of the knowledge that has disappeared after the eleventh Imam, al-Ḥasan al-‘Askari (d. 874). This marks its differentiation from the other Mujaddidi currents such as the Mazhariyya and the followers of Walī Allāh, whose genealogy goes back to Abū Bakr and who concentrates on the caliphate rather than the imamate in his discussion of Muslim leadership. Arguing for the inclusion of Shī‘īs in his broad project of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*, Dard interprets and elaborates on a variety of *ḥadīths* such as the *ḥadīth al-thaqalayn* (“*ḥadīth* of the two weighty things”), *ḥadīth al-ghadīr* (“*ḥadīth* of the pond”), and those Prophetic sayings that refer to ‘Alī as the most authentic source of knowledge,⁵⁰ *ḥadīths* that had formed the theological foundations of Shī‘ī theology for centuries. Considering ‘Alī’s knowledge as of the highest order, Dard does not explicitly speak about his role as a source of Islamic law and regulations. However, his frequent uses of the set of the Qur’ān, *ḥadīths*, and the imamate gives the impression that, besides his effort to establish the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* based on the spiritual knowledge of the imamate, he also intended to give some impulses towards a reconsideration of the Sunnī sources of Islamic law. The above-mentioned *ḥadīths*, narrated frequently in Shī‘ī sources and also often mentioned in Sunnī collections (though with some textual variations),⁵¹ had played a crucial role in Sunnī–Shī‘ī disputes for centuries. Several scholars of both communities had continued to reconsider and reinterpret them, while continuously arguing for and against their authenticity.⁵²

One category of *ḥadīths* described by Dard is related to the friendship (*mawadda*) and love (*maḥabba*) of the household of the Prophet,⁵³ for instance: “Whoever does not love ‘Alī is a hypocrite and whoever does not hate him is faithful. And whoever is far from this threshold is far from the city.”⁵⁴ The veneration and love of the *ahl-i bayt* has always been a part of Sunnī

50 The *ḥadīth al-thaqalayn* reads thus: “I [Muḥammad] leave among you two things, and if you strictly adhere to them, you shall never go astray: The Book of Allah and the people of my house (*ahl-i bayt*). I have told you that you will reach me in heaven at the pool [of *al-kawthar*] and I will ask you about how you behaved with those two valuable relics” (Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl*, 1:294). In the *ḥadīth al-ghadīr*, Muḥammad states: “To whomever I am master [‘friend’ in Sunnī interpretation], ‘Alī also is his master.” In volume 7 of *‘Abaqāt al-anwār*, the author discusses this *ḥadīth* and its various narrations by Sunnī scholars. See Mīr Ḥāmid, *‘Abaqāt*, vol. 7.

51 Dard, *‘Ilm*, 255.

52 Among the *ḥadīths* narrated by Dard which are also mentioned by Sunnī *ḥadīth* scholars are (a) “Fāṭima is a part of me, whoever harms her harms me” (Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi‘ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, 4:292–94) and (b) “Alī and I are from one light” (Ibn al-Maghāzili, *Manāqib*, 17).

53 Dard, *‘Ilm*, 259, 260.

54 Dard, *‘Ilm*, 255.

tradition, too, even though it never reached the centrality as in Shī'ī religiosity. In Shī'ism, by contrast, the intense love for the Imams and the household of the Prophet permeates the worldview of believers and influences the structure of their religiosity. Expressing one's love for his descendants through devotion to them, following them, and assisting and protecting them from any harm and distress are among the criteria used to determine the integrity and soundness of one's faith and actions. In other words, it has become a way in which one is able to attain salvation. Numerous *ḥadīths* in early Shī'ī writings highlight this love and list it as a criterion for the validity of one's faith whereas enmity towards the Imams is regarded as a sign of unbelief.⁵⁵ However, there is also a certain consensus among both Sunnīs and Shī'īs that love and respect for Muḥammad and his progeny are mandated by the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition, and several Sunnī *ḥadīth* scholars have narrated *ḥadīths* to that effect.⁵⁶ Emphasising this consensus, Dard, in line with Shī'īs, considers the love of 'Alī as the criterion of faith (*maḥakk-i īmān*), and deviation from it as the sign of hypocrisy and failure.⁵⁷ 'Alī is described by him as the owner of *faqr-i Muḥammadi* ("Muḥammadan poverty"), and a person who is united with the Prophet (*lahū nisbat al-'ayniyya bi-l-rasūl*) and his flesh and blood is the flesh and blood of the Prophet.⁵⁸ Referring to the *ḥadīth* "Fāṭima is a part of me: whoever harms her, harms me", Dard likens the relationship of the *ahl-i bayt* and *sādāt* with the Prophet to the relationship between an individual's limbs and his self. He concludes that the love of the *ahl-i bayt* and the Imams is the love of the Prophet himself, because to love the limbs or individual parts of a person is nothing but to love that person, and to hate them is to hate that person.⁵⁹ He even affirms a kind of *'iṣma* (infallibility) for the *ahl-i bayt* and declares that they are sublime essences (*dhawāt 'aliyyāt*) with a pure and sacred nature. They are absolutely pure in the exterior as God purified (*'aṣama*) them from all sins, and also in the interior, as He protected them from all temptations and unbidden thoughts (*wasāwis wa-hawājis*).⁶⁰

It was, most probably, this unusual attempt by Dard to strongly underline the role of the *ahl-i bayt* and the Imams in his *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* doctrine that earned him criticism from the Sunnī Muslims of his time. Even some of his own followers accused him of an unlawful innovation with his foundation

55 Mavani, *Religious Authority*, 40–1; Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad*, 13.

56 For example, see Sharif, trans., *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1:126.

57 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 255.

58 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 257.

59 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 255.

60 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 83.

of a new way (*ṭarīqa muḥdatha*).⁶¹ They had apparently criticised him for his Shī'ī tendencies and for his sole focus on the degrees and features of the *ahl-i bayt*. In reaction, Dard admits that they are correct and sound, stating that he deals primarily with the *ahl-i bayt* and their excellence but does not dwell upon the virtues and greatness of the companions. He explains, however, that the excellence of Abū Bakr and 'Umar are clearer than the sun, that their bliss (*fuyūḍāt*) which exudes from them has covered the whole world, and that there is thus no need to explain it. Moreover, he continues, most of the Sunnī scholars had stated the greatness and perfection of the companions but had not dealt with the biography of the *ahl-i bayt* to the extent that they deserve.⁶²

I tried to deal with the subject of the *ahl-i bayt* in order to make the Sunnīs respect them and love them, too ... The Sunnīs have not written about their ranks (*maqāmāt*) as much as they deserve.... I speak about the Prophet's progeny to help Sunnīs also to benefit from the grace of proximity to the imamate (*qurb-i imāma*) ... My aim is to quell the fire of prejudice among both Shī'īs and Sunnīs and invite them to join the path of balance (*i'ttidāl*).

Dard continues that his aim is not to prefer one party over the other, as those Shī'īs who believe in precedence (*tafḍīliyyān*) or prejudiced Sunnīs do.⁶³ Although Dard incorporates an important element of Shī'ī belief in his *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* doctrine, he strongly maintains his Sunnī and Ḥanafī foundations, and his definition of the *ahl-i bayt* also includes the Prophet's wives such as 'Ā'isha, a challenging personality to the Shī'ī worldview. However, he emphasises the importance of Fāṭima, 'Alī, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn as the main members of the Prophetic progeny and the possessors of the highest rank among the *ahl-i bayt*, by stressing *ḥadīths* such as "Alī and I are from one light" and "the dearest among my people to me is Fāṭima and the dearest among my *ahl-i bayt* are Ḥasan and Ḥusayn".⁶⁴

Trying to establish a balance between Shī'ī tendencies and Sunnī faith, Dard asserts in his works that there is a differentiation between his own loving attachment to the Prophet's household and that of those Shī'īs whom he calls *rawāfiḍ* ("rejectors", or heretics). The latter is a derogatory term oftentimes used by Sunnīs for Shī'īs who curse the first three caliphs, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and

61 Dard, *Ilm*, 262.

62 Dard, *Ilm*, 256.

63 Dard, *Ilm*, 256.

64 Dard, *Ilm*, 255.

‘Uthmān, in order to express their rejection of them as the legitimate successors of Muḥammad.⁶⁵ The *rawāfiḍ*’s affection, according to Dard’s viewpoint, reflects the “ignorant love” of common people that damages guidance.

It is unlikely that he refers with this derogatory term to Shī’īs in general. In contrast to his Naqshbandī contemporaries Walī Allāh and his son, ‘Abdul ‘Azīz, Dard rarely criticises common Shī’īs and neither denounces nor mentions Shī’ī rituals such as the commemorations of Muḥarram or the *ta’ziya*. Thus, his use of the humiliating term *rawāfiḍ* most probably singles out only those Shī’īs who do not fit into the framework of his *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* that considers both Imams and companions of the Prophet as branches of the same tree of prophethood. His use of this term may also just be a kind of concomitance with the prevailing anti-Shī’a sentiment among Sunnīs of his time. It furthermore points to his invitation of the Shī’īs to adopt his model of the Muḥammadan individual, who has stepped beyond Sunnīs and Shī’īs. That is why he explicitly calls on Shī’īs to join the Muḥammadan Path, with *siyāda* and imamate as central pillars.

It is not only the narrative of love for the *ahl-i bayt* that was underlined by Dard. He also concentrates on the concept of the imamate while remaining in his Sunnī-Ḥanafī-Mujaddidī framework of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. He did so exactly at the time when Walī Allāh was constructing a theory of *khilāfa* (viceregency of the Prophet) in which the era of the first Shī’ī Imam, ‘Alī, was denounced as the age of *fitna* (rebellion). To this end, Dard focuses on other *ḥadīths* which were significant for the question of the imamate as the highest source of knowledge directly revealed from God (*‘ilm-i ladunni*), after the knowledge of prophethood (*nubuwwa*). He mentions, for instance, the *ḥadīth*: “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its threshold.”⁶⁶ With regard to this *ḥadīth*, Dard stresses the role of ‘Alī as the transmitter of knowledge within the lineage of the imamate via Fāṭima’s offspring, notably Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and not via other sons of ‘Alī born from his other wives.⁶⁷ In this way, he differentiates between the *sādāt* of Banī Fāṭima and other ‘Alawī *sādāt* who descended from ‘Alī through his three sons, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafīyya from Khawla bt. Ja’far al-Ḥanafīyya, ‘Abbās from Umm al-Banīn, and ‘Umar from Ṣahbā’ al-Taghlibīyya.

65 Rāzī, *I’tiqādāt*, 59.

66 Shī’īs believe that ‘Alī is the most knowledgeable person after the Prophet. Among Sunnī scholars, Ibn Taymiyya clearly states that nobody from the *ahl al-sunna* agrees with this idea and there is a strong consensus among Sunnī theologians that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar are the most knowledgeable people after the Prophet (Ibn Taymiyya, *Minhāj*, 4:5, see also 7:500–28).

67 Dard, *‘Ilm*, 259ff.

Focusing on the connection between *siyāda* and the imamate, Dard states that the chain of the imamate did not stop with the death of the eleventh Imam but continued via the *siyāda* of the Prophetic offspring which included Dard's father and himself.⁶⁸ Dard even attributes to himself the title of "son of the Imam" when he stresses his own countless titles and beautiful names, such as the knower (*ʿālim*), the light (*nūr*), the hearer (*samīʿ*), the one (*waḥīd*), and the patron (*walī*).⁶⁹

Dard's reference to himself as "son of the Imam" is partly due to his father's title, who was considered by Dard and most probably also by his other disciples as "Imam of the gnostics" (*Imām al-ʿarifīn*). For him, ʿAndalīb was the heir of ʿAlī's knowledge (*wārith-i ʿilm-i murtaḍawī*) and manifested the lights and bounty of the imamate due to his descentance from the Prophet.⁷⁰ Dard emphasises that the imamate continues until the Day of Judgement through those carrying the blood of the Prophet and his progeny.⁷¹ According to him, each era witnesses somebody who is endowed with the grace of the imamate and honoured with the hereditary bliss⁷² that makes Muḥammad reappear through his progeny, until his final reappearance in the Mahdī (the last manifestation and representative of Muḥammad).⁷³ Because of this reappearance, the way in which people treat the *sādāt* of the Muḥammadan Path is considered as their treatment of Muḥammad himself, since the Prophet's progeny are empty of their own identity and carry the real existence of Muḥammad: "Their soul is the soul of Muḥammad; their faith is the faith of Muḥammad; their flesh and skin is the flesh and skin of Muḥammad; their home is the home of Muḥammad; and their time is the time of Muḥammad."⁷⁴

For Dard, God made the *sādāt* the owners of time and gave them his command to call Muslims to the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa*.⁷⁵ They enjoy the specific knowledge of the imamate,⁷⁶ the "divine Muḥammadan knowledge" (*ʿilm-i ilāhī-i muḥammadī*), and the status of the most intimate proximity

68 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 259ff.

69 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 62.

70 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 137.

71 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 259–60, 264, 611, 613.

72 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 257, 260.

73 About the finality of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa* in the time of the Mahdī, see Dard, *ʿIlm*, 85.

74 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 259.

75 Besides reinforcing blood kinship through propounding *siyāda* and the imamate, the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* claims its validity through ʿAndalīb's mystical vision of the second Shīʿī imam, Imam al-Ḥasan (Dard, *ʿIlm*, 85).

76 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 257, 260.

(*qurb-i akhaṣṣ al-khāṣṣ*) granted by God.⁷⁷ Elaborating on what he means by such knowledge, Dard here points to the above-mentioned *ḥadīth* that declares ‘Alī to be the gate or threshold leading to the “city of knowledge” and in this way presents him as a mediator without whom the knowledge of God cannot be achieved.⁷⁸ This *ḥadīth* has been considered by many Sunnī scholars, including Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855), Bukhārī (d. 870), Tirmidhī (d. 892), Ibn Hibban al-Bustī (d. 965), Dhahabī (d. 1348), and Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), to be either weak or fabricated both in transmission and wording.⁷⁹ Dard, however, largely bases his concept of the Muḥammadan knowledge on it, without discussing its diverging status in Sunnī and Shī‘ī theological traditions.

Dard divides knowledge (*‘ilm*) into two categories: (i) intellectual (*‘aqlī*) knowledge, which encompasses the sub-branches of theology, mathematics, and natural sciences; and (ii) divine knowledge, through revelation and inspiration (*ladunnī* or *wahbī*), which is itself divided into the following types: (a) prophecy and (divine) message (*nubuwwa wa-risāla*), both of which are mediated by the angel Gabriel (Jibra‘īl) and cause divine proximity (*taqarrub*). This knowledge is related to the reform of life in this world and in the hereafter (*umūr-i muṣliḥ-i ma‘āsh wa-ma‘ād*) and was completed and finalised by the Prophet Muḥammad; (b) knowledge of the caliphate (*khilāfa*) that was achieved through inspiration (*ilhām*), along with the rightful demand to receive allegiance (*akhdh-i bay‘a*), in the first thirty years after the time of the Prophet. It is also related to the affairs that reform life in both worlds; (c) the knowledge of the perfections of prophethood (*kamālāt-i nubuwwa*), which was again achieved through inspiration by Muslims other than the Prophet’s offspring and began thirty years after the Prophet’s death. It includes issues that reform both lives, as well; (d) the knowledge of the imamate (*imāma*), which was achieved through inspiration but only by the offspring of the Prophet, along with the right of allegiance, after thirty years had passed since the death of the Prophet and also in later times. This, too, conveys the affairs that reform life in both material and spiritual spheres; (e) the knowledge of sainthood (*wilāya*) and its sub-branches of the “unity of being” and the “unity of witnessing” (*waḥdat al-wujūd wa-waḥdat al-shuhūd*); (f) Sufism (*taṣawwuf*); and (g) religion (*dīn*).⁸⁰

77 Dard, *‘ilm*, 610. For divine Muḥammadan knowledge, see Khodamoradi, *Sufi Reform*, 153–60.

78 Dard, *‘ilm*, 255.

79 For the list of Sunnī scholars challenging the authenticity of this *ḥadīth*, see Bin Arḥama, *Takhrīj*, 7–8.

80 Dard, *‘ilm*, 82.

Among these categories, the knowledge which lies in the imamate (*‘ilm-i imāmat*)⁸¹ stands out as a particular wisdom that differs from and is higher than all the others after the knowledge of prophethood. Similar to the knowledge of prophethood, of the caliphate, and of the perfections of prophethood, *‘ilm-i imāmat* pertains to matters that reform life in this world and in the hereafter and culminates in the proximity to the Divine. It shares common elements with the aforementioned types of knowledge such as inspiration and right of allegiance but differs from them through its particularity of being the prerogative of the Prophet’s offspring. It also went along with their rightful demand for allegiance, which set in thirty years after the death of the Prophet with the caliphate of his grandson Ḥasan, to whom many Muslims swore the oath of allegiance after the death of his father, the fourth caliph, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. According to Dard, allegiance to Ḥasan was the starting point for the leadership of the Muslim community by the offspring of the Prophet, that is, the Imams and descendants of Fāṭima. Rejecting the Shī‘ī narrative of *fitna* (sedition) that considers the first three caliphs as usurpers, he explicitly accepts the caliphates of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān. Only for the period after the four rightly guided caliphs Dard reserves both worldly and spiritual leadership, and the position as valid sources of knowledge, to the Imams and descendants of Fāṭima. The Muslims’ allegiance to Ḥasan as the fifth caliph plays a key role in his definition of the knowledge of the imamate. Thus, in Dard’s view, the blood of the Prophet and the knowledge of ‘Alī provide the framework of leadership of the Muslim community with both of them now existing in their purest form in the founders of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa*.

‘Ilm-i imāmat is a knowledge that connects the finality of the prophethood with the continuity of the imamate. According to Dard, the Prophet Muḥammad is a person who has traversed all degrees of perfection to the end, and it is only the Prophet’s bliss and the manifestation of his perfections that have been continuing – and will continue – through his offspring,⁸² who, on their part, encompass all types of perfections and virtue, both exterior and interior.⁸³ Dard insists that his Muḥammadan Path is different from the Mujaddidīs whom he sees in analogy to the Prophet’s friends and companions. The Muḥammadīs, by contrast, represent the very limbs, hands, and feet of Muḥammad. He even asserts that the *“sādāt of the Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya enjoy the ‘total unity’ (‘ayniyyat-i tāmm) and ‘the total annihilation’ (fanā’-i*

81 On the imamate, see Dard, *‘Ilm*, 259.

82 Dard, *‘Ilm*, 257, 263–64.

83 Dard, *‘Ilm*, 257.

atamm) in Muḥammadness”, which is why they are considered special (*khāṣṣ*).⁸⁴ The title *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khāṣṣa*, which Dard uses in reference to his way, illustrates the particularity which makes the mystical experience and rank of the “pure Muḥammadi” (*Muḥammadi-i khāliṣ*) the highest experience related to the Prophet Muḥammad. It differs for him from that of the “perfections of prophethood” (*kamālāt-i nubuwwa*), a significant mystical experience and rank in the Mujaddidiyya that is equal to general prophethood (*nubuwwat-i āmma*).

According to Dard, this rank of the “pure Muḥammadi” belongs to the family of the Prophet in particular, whose members are sublime essences coming into existence through the rays of Muḥammadan light and have the potentiality of Prophetic mission. But he believes that pure Muḥammadness will continue forever and that all Muslims can achieve this stage and enter this *ṭarīqa*. It exists as a potential in each and every Muslim, though its most powerful point will only be achieved in the time of the Mahdī, when the whole world will be enlightened with a unique light of pure Muḥammadness.⁸⁵

Dard declared that knowledge connected with the imamate went into hiding after al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī (the eleventh Shīʿī Imam who died around 874) and was rediscovered in the eighteenth century by his father, ʿAndalīb, who passed its secrets to Dard. Dard himself continued ʿAndalīb’s call for the revitalisation of the religion by descendants of the *aḥl-i bayt*.⁸⁶ His emphasis on the continuity of the Prophetic mission through the imamate, rather than the continuity of *wilāya* (sanctity and spiritual leadership) through Sufi masters, makes Dard’s approach towards the knowledge and genealogy of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* significantly different from that of established Sufism.

5.6 Conclusion

In the sociopolitical conflict and the polemical controversies between Sunnīs and Shīʿīs that were ignited in eighteenth-century India, Dard called for a unity of the two major Muslim denominations on the basis of a theosophical-mystical framework that centred on the principles of the imamate and *siyāda*. He offered a comprehensive doctrine to absorb both Sunnīs and Shīʿīs into his way of the *Muḥammadiyya Wāthiqa* and *Khātima*, “the trustworthy and final Muḥammadness”. Dard strengthened his comprehensive way by considering

84 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 88.

85 Dard, *ʿIlm*, 88, 113–14; Khodamoradi, *Sufi Reform*, 145–47.

86 Ziad, “Quest of the Nightingale”, 242.

both Shī'ī Imams and Muḥammad's companions as branches of the same Prophetic tree, no matter whether they had been "transplanted" onto it or were his real offspring. He then called upon the Muslims only to be concerned about the fruits and benefits which the tree as a whole provided for them. In his interpretation of the *ahl-i bayt* and the imamate which went against his Mujaddidī-Ḥanafī background, Dard attempted to use the widespread appreciation for descent from the Prophet (*siyāda*), a point of agreement between Shī'īs and Sunnīs, as an axis on which both denominations could construct a common Muslim identity and revise their old controversies with a fresh perspective.

Reconsidering *siyāda* and imamate, Dard affirms the right of the Imams and *sādāt* of Banī Fāṭima to lead the Muslim community and their role as the true source of knowledge that was transmitted through the imamate after the rightly guided caliphs. He considers the allegiance of Muslims to Ḥasan's caliphate as the starting point of this leadership. For him the blood of the Prophet and the knowledge of 'Alī as transmitted to the founders of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* besides the centrality of the Prophet Muhammad construct the main structure and pivotal elements of this path. His declaration of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* as a hereditary power (*dawlat-i mawrūthī*) expresses its authenticity, right, and capacity for the leadership of the *umma* via *siyāda*. Furthermore, Dard's affirming of a kind of infallibility of the *ahl-i bayt*, his stress on love for them as the criterion of faith (*maḥakk-i imān*), and his focus on the knowledge of 'Alī embeds key elements of the Shī'ī narrative of the imamate into his doctrine.

Although veneration and respect of the *ahl-i bayt* has always been a part not only of Sufī but also of Sunnī tradition in general, Dard's adaptation of the theory of the imamate is a step further in that respect. He considers himself an Imam, gives priority to the knowledge connected with the imamate, accentuates the figure of 'Alī as the source of such knowledge, and affirms the right of the Imams for the leadership of the Muslim *umma*. He certainly did not have the opportunity to round his concepts and to explain more clearly and in detail how his *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya Khālīṣa* could accommodate the theory of the imamate as the highest source of knowledge. But he was courageous enough to propound such an adaptation at a time when most Sunnī reformists were engaged in anti-Shī'ī polemics and controversies,⁸⁷ vis-à-vis an increasing

87 As exceptions to this, one can find some positive approaches to Shī'ī belief in general by Mazhar Jān-i Jānān and the partial, inconspicuous compromises made by Walī Allāh in affirming *'isma* for Shī'ī Imams (Walī Allāh, *al-Tafhīmāt*, 14). For Mazhar's approach, see Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya*, 65–66; Friedmann, "Medieval Muslim Views".

prominence of the Shī'īs and a decline of Sunnī power in the waning Mughal Empire. Dard's approach clearly stands in opposition to the Sunnī – and particularly Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī – revivalism of his age. This might have been one reason for his isolation, and also for the fact that he was not mentioned in the works of influential contemporaries such as Shāh Walī Allāh and Mazhar Jān-i Jānān.

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Vérification des généalogies (*taḥqīq al-ansāb*) et centralité égyptienne

Le Syndicat des descendants du Prophète (niqābat al-ashrāf) à l'époque contemporaine

Catherine Mayeur-Jaouen

Au Caire, près de la mosquée al-Azhar et du mausolée d'al-Ḥusayn, petit-fils du Prophète, au bord de la voie rapide Ṣalāḥ Sālīm et face aux mausolées de la Cité des morts, se dresse un ensemble harmonieux de trois bâtiments modernes construits dans le style néo-mamelouk¹. Cet ensemble construit au début des années 2000 incarne de façon démonstrative l'islam d'État égyptien : il regroupe le siège central d'al-Azhar (*mashyakhāt al-Azhar*), l'institution d'État chargée de la fatwa (*dār al-iftā'*) et le Syndicat des descendants du Prophète (*niqābat al-ashrāf*). Voilà une inégale trilogie : al-Azhar, nébuleuse d'enseignement islamique plus que millénaire, nationalisée en 1962, reste la grande université islamique, aujourd'hui en proie aux divisions internes et aux défis du salafisme² ; le *dār al-iftā'*, création étatique en 1895 liée à la codification et à la rationalisation du droit musulman, continue à « définir l'islam pour l'État égyptien » selon l'heureuse expression de Skovgaard-Petersen, tout en étant concurrencée par d'innombrables instances et médias³ ; enfin le Syndicat des descendants du Prophète (*niqābat al-ashrāf*) est la réapparition récente, en 1991, d'une très ancienne institution.

1 Je remercie le *naqīb* al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf pour avoir bien voulu me laisser enquêter à la *niqāba*, le docteur Sulaymān, l'ustādh Aḥmad Yaḥyā et tous les membres du Comité de vérification des généalogies pour leur accueil, leur patience et leur gentillesse. Je remercie vivement pour son aide précieuse Aḥmad Maḥmūd Muṣṭafā.

2 Sur al-Azhar au XIX^e siècle, le livre de référence reste celui de Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans* ; à compléter pour la réforme de la fin du XIX^e siècle par Raineau, "Des tableaux noirs à l'ombre du minbar" ; Raineau, "Mendiant et orgueilleuse ?" ; et Falk Gesink, *Islamic Reform and Conservatism*. Sur al-Azhar au XX^e siècle, synthèse pratique avec Luizard, "Al-Azhar, institution sunnite réformée". Voir également Botiveau, "L'université al-Azhar au gré du changement politique". Une importante bibliographie en arabe, récemment éditée par l'université d'al-Azhar elle-même, fait la part belle à la prosopographie : Khafājī et Ṣubḥ, *al-Azhar fī al-ʿām*.

3 Skovgaard-Petersen, *Defining Islam for the Egyptian State*.

Le terme « syndicat », traduction littérale de *niqāba*, ne doit pas prêter à confusion : il ne s'agit pas d'un syndicat professionnel, mais d'une association dont l'histoire récente s'ancre dans la construction de l'État égyptien à partir de Méhémet Ali (1805-48) et dont la tradition revendiquée remonte, par définition, au Prophète et aux débuts de l'islam. Pour être complet, il faudrait ajouter à cet ensemble tripartite deux autres institutions : le ministère des Waqfs, consacré à l'administration des fondations pieuses nationalisées sous Nasser (1956-70), dont le revenu finance mosquées, mausolées, fonctionnaires du religieux, ainsi que le Haut Conseil des confréries soufies (*al-majlis al-a'lā li-l-ṭuruq al-ṣūfiyya*), dont le siège, tout proche de la *niqāba* et de la *mashyakhat al-Azhar*, flanque le mausolée d'al-Ḥusayn. Si al-Azhar, et dans une moindre mesure le Haut Conseil des confréries et le *dār al-iftā'*, ont fait l'objet de travaux de recherche, ce n'est pas le cas de la *niqābat al-ashrāf* égyptienne à l'époque contemporaine, ni en arabe, ni en langues occidentales. L'important livre de Frederick De Jong sur les institutions liées aux confréries soufies dans l'Égypte du XIX^e siècle reste sans équivalent pour les XX^e et XXI^e siècles⁴.

Il est facile de négliger la *niqābat al-ashrāf*, cette institution discrète dont la grande majorité des Égyptiens ignorent jusqu'à l'existence, ou d'en faire une simple émanation de l'islam d'État égyptien depuis le début du XIX^e siècle. La subtile autonomie de la *niqāba* et son activité principale, la vérification des généalogies, lui donnent pourtant un visage *sui generis* qui renvoie à l'implicite, aux liens tacites, à l'histoire locale, à la science de la généalogie (*ilm al-ansāb*), à tout ce que représentent les liens d'un islam de familles en Égypte, encore fortement territorialisé. Mille dimensions sociales et religieuses font échapper la *niqāba* à l'univers bureaucratique et politique auquel elle appartient au prime abord. Comme les autres institutions citées, elle participe d'un islam égyptien qui défie la mondialisation et insiste (en les reformulant) sur les continuités menacées par les mutations trop rapides du présentisme. C'est finalement une interprétation de l'intercession prophétique qui constitue les *ashrāf* en groupe privilégié. Cette prétention, aujourd'hui contestée par le salafisme, est ignorée par une majorité d'Égyptiens.

Après le récit d'une première visite à la *niqāba*, j'étudierai la façon dont on raconte l'histoire de la *niqāba* en Égypte, en comparant le récit usuel – celui des historiens et celui que la *niqāba* donne à voir d'elle-même – avec celui du

4 Il n'y a pas eu d'études récentes du Haut-Conseil des confréries soufies depuis le livre fondamental de De Jong sur le XIX^e siècle, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-linked Institutions*, et les études plus ponctuelles de Luizard, "Le soufisme égyptien contemporain". Signalons une très bonne enquête de Paonessa sur les divisions au sein du Haut Conseil des confréries soufies, et sur les tentatives de créer des partis politiques soufis lors de la révolution de 2011 : "Le rôle des confréries soufies durant les élections législatives de 2011 en Égypte".

naqīb actuel en personne. J'analyserai ensuite la refondation de la *niqāba* en 1991, avant d'examiner le fonctionnement de l'institution, une administration hiérarchique, liée à l'État, mais autonome. Enfin, je verrai de plus près ce qui est au cœur même de la *niqāba* : la vérification des généalogies, en finissant par une dernière visite à la *niqāba*.

6.1 Première visite à la *niqāba* : Aḥmad à la recherche de ses origines

Commençons par une première visite à la *niqāba* pour camper le fonctionnement de l'institution, la façon dont elle se présente aux Égyptiens, et ce que représente la quête du *nasab*. Jeune professeur de français à al-Azhar, Aḥmad est né en 1980. Il a d'abord fait des études religieuses dans le système azharien, avant de poursuivre ses études universitaires en littérature française à l'université al-Azhar. Il sait être un descendant du Prophète (*sharīf*) par sa mère, mais n'en a pas la preuve, c'est-à-dire qu'il n'en possède pas d'attestation écrite⁵. Pour obtenir son attestation de généalogie (*shahādat nasab*), Aḥmad doit nécessairement passer par la *niqāba* où il se rend pour la première fois le 14 septembre 2017. À l'entrée du bâtiment, le contrôle est des plus simples : Aḥmad présente un document d'identité, inscrit son nom sur un registre, précise le motif de la requête. Il monte ensuite directement par l'ascenseur au quatrième étage, pour arriver au cœur de la *niqāba* : le Comité de vérification des généalogies (*lajnat taḥqīq al-ansāb*).

Il n'entre pas tout de suite dans la grande salle où se réunit le Comité : un employé installé à un petit bureau devant l'entrée exerce un filtrage discret mais réel. Pour patienter, un factotum oriente d'abord Aḥmad vers une autre pièce, un autre bureau, où un fonctionnaire d'un certain âge le reçoit dans le décor classique d'une administration égyptienne : un vieux téléphone fixe qui ne sert plus (mais le fonctionnaire manie deux téléphones portables), une grande télévision, une photocopieuse, un ordinateur obsolète, pas de livres, mais des piles de papiers raisonnablement rangées, un cendrier et un Coran posé sur le disque dur de l'ordinateur. Un drapeau égyptien et une calligraphie proclamant que « La justice est la base du pouvoir » (*al-'adl asās al-mulk*) ornent les murs. La conversation pleine de tact des deux hommes s'apparente rapidement à du *name-dropping*, tandis qu'ils échangent des cigarettes en

5 De façon significative, *shahāda* veut dire aussi profession de foi, témoignage ou, plus récemment, diplôme.

commentant la qualité de telle ou telle marque⁶. Apparaissent bientôt des noms de famille, des noms de lieux (tous deux sont originaires du Delta, l'un de Ṭūkh, l'autre de Quwaysna), une mémoire familiale que l'on compare : la famille maternelle d'Aḥmad, issue de Maḥallat Minūf, près de Ṭantā, s'appelle la famille Ḥusayn (*ā'ilat Ḥusayn*). Quant au fonctionnaire, il ne tarde pas à mentionner qu'il descend du syndic des descendants du Prophète (*naqīb al-ashraf*) de la province de Minūfiyya sous le roi Farouk. Après ce premier repérage prudent, les deux interlocuteurs s'autorisent à aller plus loin. Comme le fonctionnaire a au doigt une bague ornée d'une turquoise, comme celles que portent les soufis et les cheikhs de confréries, Aḥmad mentionne l'appartenance de sa mère à la confrérie soufie Naqshbandiyya. Jusqu'à la mort du cheikh Ghūda, de Mīnyat al-Qamḥ, elle le suivait dans les principaux mouleds (fêtes patronales des saints) du Caire, notamment celui de la petite-fille du Prophète, Sayyida Zaynab⁷. Ayant ainsi présenté ses liens avec le monde du soufisme égyptien, Aḥmad obtient immédiatement la réplique de son interlocuteur qui déclare appartenir à la confrérie Rifā'iyya.

C'est au milieu de ces échanges d'informations, distillées avec tact, qu'Aḥmad, ayant bu un thé et fumé sa cigarette, expose finalement son cas. Bien qu'il soit *sharif* par sa mère, il ne possède pas d'attestation du Syndicat. Il sait cependant que ses cousins maternels disposent d'une généalogie attestée (l'expression est : *awlād khāltī munassabūn*) et d'un arbre généalogique (*shajarat al-ā'ila*) qui a déjà été, par le passé, certifié par la *niqāba*. Le fonctionnaire est en mesure de le rassurer : le cas d'Aḥmad est simple et il pourra obtenir rapidement la *shahāda* du moment qu'il se sera d'abord procuré une copie de l'arbre généalogique initial auprès de ses cousins. Une simple photographie pourrait même suffire. Muni de cette preuve essentielle et de documents complémentaires (son certificat de naissance, sa carte d'identité, ce qui permet d'établir le lien avec lesdits cousins), il ne restera plus à Aḥmad qu'à ouvrir un dossier (*malaff*) au Comité de vérification des généalogies. La procédure va toutefois prendre un certain temps, puisqu'il faut que plusieurs membres du Comité, dont le directeur lui-même, contrôlent le dossier, et que tous donnent leur approbation au dossier, avant que ne soit produit le précieux certificat signé par le *naqīb* lui-même. Quand Aḥmad aura la certification désirée, il pourra finalement payer les frais de dossier et d'inscription à la *niqāba*, et

6 Cette liberté de fumer est un indice : fumer est réputé *ḥarām* dans l'Égypte du début du xxi^e siècle, à la suite de fatwas salafistes. La tabagie ordinaire des Égyptiens a donc considérablement régressé, et fumer est presque une prise de position. Deux ans plus tard, en 2019, l'interdiction de fumer est désormais partout affichée dans la *niqāba*.

7 Sur le culte de Sayyida Zaynab à l'époque contemporaine, cf. Abu-Zahra, *The Pure and Powerful*.

obtenir la *shahādat nasab*, un document calligraphié qu'il mettra sous verre, comme le font généralement les *ashrāf* dont la généalogie est reconnue par le Syndicat, et suspendra au mur dans un cadre. Il obtiendra aussi la carte de membre (*biṭāqa*) de la *niqāba*, dont il faudra renouveler chaque année l'abonnement. Il peut aussi acquérir un badge, plutôt une sorte de pin (10 livres en janvier 2018), où le centre, de couleur verte, porte l'inscription *Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*, entouré par une autre inscription (*Niqābat al-sāda al-ashrāf Jumhūriyyat Miṣr al-ʿarabiyya*) : certains membres du Comité portent ce badge à la boutonnière de leur veston⁸.

Obtenir l'attestation de généalogie du Syndicat des descendants du Prophète, c'est prouver ce que l'on est, dans une procédure administrative codifiée où se jouent bien d'autres jeux d'appartenance⁹. La première visite d'Aḥmad aura discrètement exposé, en quelques minutes, les liens qui se tissent autour de la *niqāba* et des descendants du Prophète dans l'Égypte contemporaine : familles, racines locales, confréries soufies, administration bureaucratique, une histoire qui ne tient aucun compte des ruptures et des allégeances politiques, et propose au contraire de renouer de profondes continuités. Renvoyé à sa famille pour les démarches ultérieures, Aḥmad se rend dans le Delta chez ses parents : la conversation familiale prouve que son père aussi est *sharīf*, Aḥmad l'ignorait. Voilà un fait intéressant : du *sharaf* qui représente quelque chose d'important pour la famille maternelle d'Aḥmad, peut-être à cause de ses liens avec le soufisme et de la dévotion pour les *ahl al-bayt*, les Gens de la Maison du Prophète, son père ne fait que peu de cas. Comme des millions d'Égyptiens : parmi les 8 à 10 millions (les estimations données par les membres du Comité varient beaucoup) de descendants supposés du Prophète en Égypte, seuls 80,000 à 100,000 (mêmes oscillations) ont entrepris des démarches administratives pour demander et obtenir la *shahāda* auprès de la *niqāba* : seulement un pour cent des présumés descendants du Prophète sont dûment enregistrés à la *niqāba*, et y font enregistrer leurs enfants. Mon enquête vérifiera assez constamment cette vérité : être descendant du Prophète en Égypte, et plus exactement être reconnu comme tel, n'est pas seulement un statut, une qualité ou une identité, mais un engagement qui vient croiser et corroborer d'autres engagements et d'autres identités. Le *sharaf* est une responsabilité. Aḥmad, qui en est conscient, préférera finalement ne pas établir le fameux certificat et

8 Notons que le terme *al-sāda* (pluriel de *sayyid*) est en Égypte rigoureusement synonyme d'*ashrāf*. Même remarque chez Winter, "The *Ashrāf* and *Niqābat al-Ashrāf*".

9 Grangaud et Michel, eds, *L'identification* ; Oualdi et Amara, eds, *La nationalité dans le monde arabe des années 1830 aux années 1960* ; Jungen et Raymond, eds, *Pratiques d'archives* ; et Jungen, ed., *L'ethnologue et les archives*.

la fameuse carte : mais il aura appris quelque chose sur son identité et sur son histoire familiale.

6.2 Petite histoire de la *niqābat al-ashrāf* en Égypte : récits

Telle qu'elle est généralement résumée par les journalistes ou les historiens, l'histoire institutionnelle de la *niqāba* décrit d'abord le lointain passé d'une institution de l'islam médiéval et ottoman, résumée dans deux articles – aussi remarquables qu'isolés – de Michael Winter¹⁰. Du passé médiéval, l'histoire de la *niqāba* saute directement au début du XIX^e siècle, lorsque la *niqāba* devient une institution de l'État égyptien construit par Méhémet Ali. Et pourtant, malgré les rappels médiévaux et le poids du XIX^e siècle, c'est l'importance de l'époque ottomane qui ressort des enquêtes généalogiques menées par la *niqāba*, comme de l'histoire des grandes familles d'*ashrāf* de l'Égypte contemporaine. Il est significatif que certaines des sources volontiers citées et utilisées par les généalogistes du Comité datent de l'époque ottomane, comme les recueils biographiques du Syrien al-Murādī (m. 1206/1791), notamment son *Silk al-durar fī akhbār al-qarn al-thānī 'ashar*, comme l'œuvre de Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (m. 1206/1791), comme la chronique de l'historien al-Jabartī (m. 1825). Significatif encore que l'actuel directeur du Comité de vérification des *ansāb*, nommé en 2008, le docteur Sulaymān, professeur à l'université de Kafr al-Shaykh, soit justement un historien ottomaniste et l'auteur d'une monographie sur la *niqābat al-ashrāf* à l'époque ottomane.

Cette importance des *ashrāf* à l'époque ottomane n'est donc pas occultée dans le travail de la *niqāba*, mais la vulgate préfère insister, une fois passé le nécessaire rappel médiéval, sur le XIX^e siècle égyptien. Et, de fait, c'est à partir du règne de Méhémet Ali que la *niqāba* joua un rôle politique éminent, sous la houlette des cheikhs Bakrī, en devenant une institution étatique, reconnue officiellement par décret par le khédive 'Abbās Ḥilmī en 1895¹¹. La *niqāba* fut étroitement liée à la dynastie égyptienne des descendants de Méhémet Ali, puis à la monarchie, et en général aux grandes familles qui constituaient les élites religieuses et sociales de la fin du XIX^e siècle et de la première moitié du XX^e siècle. Nombre des représentants des élites, dont le roi Farouk lui-même,

10 Winter, "The *Ashrāf* and *Niqābat al-Ashrāf*"; Winter, "The *Ashrāf* and the *Naqīb al-Ashrāf* in Ottoman Egypt and Syria". Le second article n'ajoute rien au premier quant à l'Égypte, mais étend la description à la Syrie (notamment avec les cas d'Alep et de Jérusalem), d'après les archives ottomanes.

11 D'après l'article bien informé, daté de 2010 et fruit d'une enquête de terrain à la *niqāba*, dû à Charbel, "Egypt's Oldest Surviving Syndicate".

appartenait à la liste des membres de la *niqāba* au moment de la révolution de 1952¹². Belle époque : le docteur Nabīl, l'un des membres du Comité, est professeur d'histoire à l'université de Kafr al-Shaykh. Spécialiste de l'Égypte de l'entre-deux-guerres, il décrit avec regret cette période comme un âge d'or, pour l'Égypte comme pour la *niqāba*.

Si les *ashrāf* égyptiens appartenaient à des classes sociales variées, ce sont les cheikhs azhariens d'envergure et les grands cheikhs soufis qui tinrent le haut du pavé à la *niqāba* au XIX^e et au début du XX^e siècle. Au premier rang, les cheikhs al-Sādāt et les cheikhs Bakrī¹³. Les cheikhs soufis à la tête des grandes familles d'*ashrāf* et descendants de saints devinrent de grands propriétaires terriens lorsque, au milieu du XIX^e siècle, se constituèrent dans l'entourage du khédive de grandes propriétés ; mais la fortune comme la notoriété de ces familles d'*ashrāf* avaient précédé les réformes égyptiennes du XIX^e siècle, et dataient à tout le moins du XVIII^e siècle, grâce à l'*iltizām*, voire remontaient jusqu'à l'époque mamelouke : c'est le cas par exemple des familles al-Qaṣabī et al-Ṣāwī, toutes deux affiliées à la Khalwatiyya, et de la famille Sharnūbi, branche de la Burhamiyya¹⁴. Dans ces « confréries héréditaires » (*turuq wirāthiyya*), se jouent de fortes continuités, caractéristiques des élites religieuses égyptiennes : on est frappé de voir certains de ces noms toujours présents aujourd'hui à al-Azhar, au Haut Conseil des confréries soufies et dans les milieux proches du pouvoir à l'époque du président Moubarak. Jacques Berque, repris par Michael Winter, signalait à propos de Sirs al-Layyān, dans le Delta, que la prolifération numérique du nombre d'*ashrāf* au XX^e siècle avait contribué au déclin de leur poids social, tandis que H. 'Ammar signale à la même époque, dans son village de Haute-Égypte, qu'ils avaient réussi à maintenir, notamment en tant que maires de village (*umda*), des positions stratégiques de pouvoir¹⁵.

12 Charbel, "Egypt's Oldest Surviving Syndicate".

13 Dans son livre de référence, Fred De Jong a rendu compte, d'après les archives des cheikhs Bakrī, du milieu confrérique qui gravitait autour de l'État égyptien. À partir d'al-Jabartī et de 'Alī Pacha Mubārak, et de sa très bonne connaissance d'al-Azhar, Gilbert Delanoue dresse un tableau convergent dans *Moralistes et politiques musulmans*.

14 Nous citons ici des exemples que nous avons pu rencontrer dans nos recherches sur le Delta, mais ils sont également très nombreux en Haute-Égypte. Sur la famille et confrérie Qaṣabiyya, qui mériterait une étude, cf. Mayeur-Jaouen, *Histoire d'un pèlerinage légendaire en islam*, 228-29, 235 ; sur Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī, cf. Mayeur-Jaouen, "The Small World of Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī (1761-1825)" ; enfin, sur les continuités de la famille-confrérie Sharnūbi, Mayeur-Jaouen, "Nasab, Baraka and Land". Sur ces continuités, voir aussi Chih, *Sufism in Ottoman Egypt*.

15 Berque, *Histoire sociale d'un village égyptien*, 62 ; Ammar, *Growing Up in an Egyptian Village*, 47. Cités par Winter, "The Ashrāf and Niqābat al-Ashraf", 28.

Il y eut pourtant rupture lorsque, un an après le coup d'État des Officiers libres de 1952, la *niqāba* fut dissoute en 1953 par le Conseil révolutionnaire, au motif qu'il ne s'agissait pas d'un syndicat professionnel, et qu'il fonctionnait par définition sur une base héréditaire contraire aux principes constitutionnels. La République, proclamée en 1953, avait aboli les titres de noblesse comme pacha ou bey : comment n'eût-elle pas aboli une organisation qui distinguait les *ashrāf* pour en faire une élite ? La révolution ne pouvait les laisser subsister de façon organisée et institutionnelle. La volonté de rupture avec une tradition perçue comme passéiste allait de pair avec la modernité de l'Égypte nassérienne.

Cette histoire faite de grands noms, de hiérarchie et rythmée par l'État égyptien, unie autour des figures des *naqībs*, n'est pas seulement celle qu'ont reconstituée les historiens qui s'y sont intéressés : c'est aussi l'histoire que la *niqāba* donne à voir d'elle-même. Dans l'un des salons d'apparat qui jouxtent le bureau du *naqīb*, est affichée dans un cadre la liste bellement calligraphiée des douze noms de *naqībs* depuis les années 1800 jusqu'à aujourd'hui, avec les dates de leur office à la tête de la *niqāba*. Voici cette liste telle qu'elle est affichée¹⁶ : 'Umar Makram Ḥusayn al-Asyūṭī (de 1208/1792 à 1224/1809) ; Muḥammad Wafā 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Sādāt (de 1224/1809 à 1228/1813) ; Muḥammad Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Dawākhlī (de 1228/1813 à 1231/1816) ; Muḥammad Muḥammad Abū l-Su'ūd al-Bakrī (de 1231/1816 à 1271/1854) ; 'Alī Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Bakrī (de 1271/1854 à 1297/1879) ; 'Abd al-Bāqī 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bakrī (de 1297/1879 à 1309/1891) ; Muḥammad Tawfīq 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bakrī (de 1309/1891 à 1312/1895) ; 'Alī Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Biblāwī (de 1312/1895 à 1323/1905) ; Muḥammad 'Alī Muḥammad al-Biblāwī (de 1323/1905 à 1373/1953) ; Maḥmūd Aḥmad Kāmil Yāsīn al-Rifā'ī (de 1411/1991 à 1415/1994) ; Aḥmad Aḥmad Kāmil Yāsīn al-Rifā'ī (de 1415/1994 à 1429/2008). Et enfin l'actuel *naqīb*, Maḥmūd al-Sharīf, depuis 2008.

16 De Jong propose, quant à lui, une liste des *naqīb al-ashrāf* égyptiens jusqu'à 1911, qui repose à la fois sur des documents d'archives de la famille Bakrī et sur les histoires familiales rédigées par le *naqīb* Muḥammad Tawfīq al-Bakrī (1870-1932), *Bayt al-sādāt al-wafā'iyya*, et Bakrī, *Bayt al-Ṣiddīq*. La liste commence au milieu du XVIII^e siècle avec Muḥammad Abū Hādī al-Sādāt, *naqīb* jusqu'à 1168/1754-55, réputé par al-Jabartī le premier Égyptien à avoir tenu l'office de *naqīb al-ashrāf* avant de devenir cheikh de la Wafā'iyya en 1171/1758. Lui succède comme *naqīb al-ashrāf* Aḥmad b. Ismā'īl al-Sādāt (de 1168/1754-55 à 1176/1762-63), devenu à son tour cheikh de la Wafā'iyya en 1762-63. À la famille des al-Sadat succède celle des al-Bakrī avec Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Bakrī (de 1176/1762-63 à ?), puis Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Bakrī (?-1195/1781), suivi de Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Kabīr (de 1195/1781 à 1196/1782), puis de Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ṣaghīr (de 1196/1782 à 1208/1793) auquel succéda enfin 'Umar Makram, nommé *naqīb* par Méhémet Ali. Cf. De Jong, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-Linked Institutions*, 220-21.

Il y aurait long à dire sur les silences d'une telle liste qui reprend une histoire étatique où tout commence avec Méhémet Ali. La formule est toujours identique, comme dans une chronique : « [Un Tel] a dirigé le Syndicat des descendants du Prophète de telle année à telle année » (*tawallā niqābat al-ashrāf min ām ... ḥattā ām ...*). Seule variante, la liste introduit pour les trois derniers *naqībs*, à partir de la refondation de 1991, la mention : « par exécution du décret de la République égyptienne, numéro 54 de l'année 1991 » (*bi-mūjib al-qarār al-jumhūrī ...*). Les ruptures politiques, l'Expédition d'Égypte (1798-1801) comme la révolution nassérienne (1952), disparaissent presque, ellipses au profit d'une continuité manifestée par la calligraphie et les formulations identiques, d'un *naqīb* à l'autre, même si les années sont données – pour tous – à la fois en calendrier hégirien et en calendrier de l'ère chrétienne (*mīlādī*). La liste s'applique aussi à écarter les comparses et l'âpre rivalité entre les Bakrī et les Wafā. Dans cette liste, ni sujétion ottomane, ni collaboration avec les Français : comme tout commence avec le célèbre 'Umar Makram, héros de la résistance aux Français et indiqué comme le *naqīb* en fonction de 1792 à 1809, on tait le nom de Khalīl al-Bakrī (m. 1223/1809), pourtant nommé *naqīb al-ashrāf* par les Français en 1798 à la place de 'Umar Makram, enfui en Syrie avec Ibrāhīm Bey : Khalīl al-Bakrī fut destitué en 1801 par le pacha turc, et la charge de *naqīb* rendue à 'Umar Makram. La liste tait également le nom de Muḥammad Abū l-Su'ūd al-Bakrī (m. 1227/1812), cousin du précédent, nommé *naqīb* en 1801 par le gouverneur ottoman¹⁷. Quant à Muḥammad Wafā 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Sādāt¹⁸ (de 1809 à 1813) qui profita de la disgrâce de 'Umar Makram pour devenir *naqīb*, la liste en fait un simple successeur : « l'ordre des choses » remplace les luttes féroces pour le pouvoir.

Et lorsque s'affirme le retour de la maison al-Bakrī à la tête de la *niqāba*, rien ne transparaît de l'affirmation du pouvoir autonome de Méhémet Ali contre la Porte, qui se jouait alors : si Muḥammad Muḥammad Abū l-Su'ūd

17 Sur tout ceci Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans*, 1:253-54n91.

18 Il est connu par les historiens, à commencer par son contemporain al-Jabartī, comme Muḥammad Abū l-Anwār al-Sādāt (m. 1813). Al-Jabartī le dépeint "sous les traits d'un homme de religion qui sait admirablement utiliser les avantages de sa position pour acquérir influence, pouvoir et richesse, tout en gardant les dehors respectables qui conviennent aux membres de la classe des 'ulamā' et aux sayyid", Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans*, 1:255. La famille Wafā est aussi une confrérie, la Wafā'iyya, étudiée par McGregor pour l'époque médiévale dans *Sanctity and Mysticism in Medieval Egypt*. S'éteignant, la famille Wafā fut remplacée par la famille des cheikhs Bakrī, étudiée par Adam Sabra dans un livre en préparation, *Aristocracy and Empire: A Family History of Ottoman Egypt (1517-1800)*. Voir Sabra, "Household Sufism in Sixteenth-Century Egypt".

al-Bakrī fut nommé *naqīb al-ashrāf* par celui-ci en 1816, ce fut sans doute pour prévenir la venue d'un *naqīb* envoyé par Istanbul, ou les intrigues d'Alḥmad al-Sadāt pour obtenir un firman d'investiture de la Sublime Porte¹⁹. Les puissants cheikhs al-Bakrī cumulaient la direction de leur propre et puissante famille, la *mashyakha* des confréries soufies et le syndicat des *ashrāf*, ce qui leur permettait de contrôler les revenus des *awqāf al-ashrāf*, et leur enregistrement dans le registre des *ashrāf (daftar al-ashrāf)*²⁰. Le cheikh al-Azhar, Ibrahīm al-Bayjūrī, reconnu en 1847 la suprématie du *naqīb al-ashrāf* sur les loges soufies (*zawāyā*), les lecteurs de Coran et les mausolées de saints²¹. Bref, à partir des années 1850, les cheikhs Bakrī jouissaient d'un pouvoir considérable. Revenons à la liste : au début du xx^e siècle, la liste passe sous silence le second mandat (1903-11) problématique de Muḥammad Tawfiq 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bakrī, interné au Liban pour maladie mentale, pour le remplacer par de fausses continuités. Enfin, au xx^e siècle, après la mention des cheikhs Biblāwī, derniers *naqībs* de la monarchie, la liste saute de 1953 à 1991 pour parvenir sans transition à la refondation de l'ère Moubarak.

À côté de cette liste officielle, dont les silences et les choix sont si parlants, sont accrochés dans le salon d'apparat de la *niqāba*, six grands portraits de *naqībs*. D'abord trois *naqībs* du xix^e siècle : le portrait de 'Umar Makram, au centre, est encadré par les photographies retouchées de Muḥammad al-Biblāwī et de Muḥammad Tawfiq al-Bakrī. On a donc retenu, de tous les cheikhs Bakrī, le dernier, Muḥammad Tawfiq 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bakrī (*naqīb* de 1891 à 1895), peut-être parce qu'il incarnait les espoirs du réformisme musulman appliqué au soufisme. Quant à Muḥammad al-Biblāwī, le dernier *naqīb* de la monarchie égyptienne, c'est peut-être la durée exceptionnellement longue de son mandat comme *naqīb* qui lui vaut cet honneur, ou le fait que les plus âgés des refondeurs de 1991 avaient encore pu le connaître²². Là aussi, la volonté de continuité est manifeste.

Au-dessous figurent les photographies des trois *naqībs* de la refondation : Muḥammad Kāmil Yāsīn, que l'on me présente comme « le cheikh de la totalité de la confrérie Rifā'iyya et le président du Conseil scientifique de la société

19 Sur lui, Delanoue, *Moralistes et politiques musulmans*, 254n191 ; Jabartī, 7 :343-44, 9 :168-69 ; Mubārak, *Khiṭaṭ*, 3 :125 ; Bakrī, *Bayt al-Ṣiddīq*, 44-46.

20 Sur tout ceci, la référence reste De Jong, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-linked Institutions*, 32-33. Désormais, consulter Mughazy et Sabra, *The Merits of the Bakrī Lords. An Anthology*.

21 De Jong, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-linked Institution*, 33-34.

22 Renaud Soler me signale aimablement que Biblāwī (m. 1953) est l'auteur de livres sur l'hégire et sur l'inimitabilité du Coran, parus en 1927 dans un contexte d'affirmation d'un islam menacé par la modernité, Biblāwī, *Tārīkh al-hijra wa-bad' al-islām* ; Biblāwī, *al-Ta'rif bi-l-nabī wa-l-qur'ān al-sharīf*.

Ciba Geigy » (*shaykh ‘umūm al-ṭarīqa al-Rifā‘iyya wa-ra’īs majlis shirkat Sigaygī al-‘ilmī*)²³. À côté, la photographie de son frère Aḥmad Kāmil Yāsīn qui lui succéda à la fois à la *niqāba* et à la tête de la confrérie Rifā‘iyya. La dernière photographie est enfin celle du *naqīb* actuel, al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf, en fonction depuis 2008, issu d’une grande famille d’Akhmim (gouvernorat de Sohag). Les photographies, comme la liste, attestent que la *niqāba* s’inscrit dans une construction historique et un récit institutionnel qui sont ceux de l’État égyptien moderne : tout commence avec Méhémet Ali – le fait du prince – et tout continue en 2008 avec le décret qui nomme le *naqīb* actuel – le fait du prince, toujours, même s’il sanctionne une cooptation et émane désormais de la République arabe d’Égypte. Comme la suppression de la *niqāba* en 1953 est passée sous silence, on en oublierait presque que tout finit avec Nasser.

Il existe un autre récit de l’histoire de la *niqāba* et de ses origines, celui que propose le *naqīb* en personne, où tout commence, non avec Méhémet Ali, ni même exactement avec le Prophète, mais avec les *ahl al-bayt* d’Égypte. À la mi-septembre 2017, al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf accepte aimablement de me recevoir malgré ses obligations (il est vice-président du Parlement) et me narre une histoire « intérieure » de la *niqāba* qui insiste moins sur les ruptures que sur les continuités, moins sur l’institution que sur le rôle religieux, moral et spirituel des *ashrāf*, moins sur l’État égyptien que sur le lien des *ashrāf* avec le Prophète, leurs qualités et la moralité particulière à laquelle les destine leur généalogie²⁴. Le *nasab*, pose fermement le *naqīb*, est un héritage (*wirātha*). Son discours ouvre, en guise de préambule, sur l’unité nationale dont le ferment, y compris dans la bonne entente revendiquée avec les coptes, est profondément celui de l’islam des origines : au rebours du récit généalogique habituel en culture islamique (on prend un individu et on énumère, de fils en père, toute son ascendance : fils de, fils de, etc.), il ne s’agit pas de remonter jusqu’au Prophète, mais de *partir* de ses descendants immédiats. Dans son récit, le *naqīb* commence donc avec les Gens de la Maison (*ahl al-bayt*), rappelle Fāṭima al-Zahrā et sa descendance (*dhurriyya*) via Ḥasan et Ḥusayn.

23 Il s’agissait apparemment de la compagnie pharmaceutique suisse Ciba-Geigy. Peut-être les réductions de médicaments et l’accès à des soins médicaux bon marché proposés par la *niqāba* à ses membres viennent-ils de cette origine.

24 Je transcris ici un entretien téléphonique avec le *naqīb* al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf, le 15 septembre 2017, qui a pris la forme d’une sorte de cours donné dans un arabe littéraire élégant. J’ai ensuite rencontré le *naqīb* deux jours plus tard pour un entretien plus informel, en dialecte égyptien. On trouve le même récit (les passages sur les coptes en moins) dans une vidéo de quatre minutes, où s’exprime le *naqīb*, mise en ligne le 4 juillet 2016 sur *Miṣr al-‘arabiyya*. Notons que la vidéo, en trois ans, n’a recueilli que très peu de vues.

Moment déterminant puisqu'un *sharīf* descend de l'un ou de l'autre, ce qui fait de lui un ḥasanide ou un ḥusaynide. Fille de Fāṭima, petite-fille du Prophète, sœur de Ḥasan et de Ḥusayn, Sayyida Zaynab vint en Égypte en 61/680-81 : à partir de là, dit le *naqīb*, les descendants du Prophète se multiplièrent en Égypte et c'est pour les regrouper que fut fondé, en 247/861-62 le Syndicat des *ashrāf* (*niqābat al-sādāt al-ashrāf*). Comme l'avait remarqué Louis Massignon à propos de la Cité des morts et du culte des *ahl al-bayt*, on n'a pas assez commenté ce rôle prédominant, exorbitant, que les femmes jouent dans l'histoire de l'islam égyptien, et qu'un tel récit pose d'emblée²⁵.

Al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf poursuit ses explications : le premier *naqīb* fut le chef de la famille (*kabīr al-ʿāʾila*), choisi pour sa popularité auprès des *ashrāf* comme auprès des Égyptiens en général, pour sa moralité et pour son instruction religieuse (*tarbiya dīniyya*). La *niqāba* qui était chargée de veiller sur les fondations pieuses des *ashrāf*, avait surtout comme but essentiel de propager l'islam par la *daʿwa*, un islam fondé sur la justice, le juste milieu et l'absence d'extrémisme (*al-iʿtidāl wa-l-wasaṭiyya wa-ghayr al-taṭarruf*). Comme le *naqīb* s'adresse à moi, une Européenne, et que de récents attentats dus à Daesh ont cruellement atteint les coptes égyptiens, il insiste à nouveau sur les bonnes relations qu'a entretenues la *niqāba* avec les coptes à l'époque médiévale. Mais il parle plutôt de « chrétiens » (*masīḥiyyīn*) que de coptes (*aqbāt*), de leur nécessaire entente réciproque, de leurs visites mutuelles à l'occasion des fêtes, et du rôle que devait, que doit toujours jouer, le *naqīb* dans cette bonne entente. Après l'évocation de l'époque médiévale, le *naqīb* ne dit rien de l'époque ottomane ni du XIX^e siècle, devenu anecdotique alors qu'il jouait le premier rôle dans la liste affichée. Quant à la suppression officielle de la *niqāba* en 1953, elle s'apparente d'après le *naqīb* davantage à une invisibilité qu'à une réelle disparition, et ne dura qu'une brève période (*fatra*) liée à la présidence de Nasser. À l'époque nassérienne, selon lui, on continuait à enregistrer les généalogies de certaines familles d'*ashrāf*, dans le petit bureau d'une administration sous contrôle étatique (peut-être au ministère des Waqfs ? ou au ministère de l'Intérieur ?). Toujours selon le *naqīb*, la *niqāba* réapparut de façon officieuse sous Sadate, puis de façon officielle en 1991 sous Moubarak. Le siège en fut d'abord la maison même du *naqīb* fondateur, jusqu'à ce que la *niqāba* déménage en 2003 dans le bâtiment actuel, construit en 2002.

25 La venue de Sayyida Zaynab en Égypte semble légendaire, et l'on n'a pas de traces de vénération du sanctuaire avant le début de l'époque ottomane. Son tombeau existe également à Damas où il est devenu le centre important d'une piété chiite ravivée par la politique de l'Iran, désormais allié à la dynastie alaouite des Assad.

Le récit du *naqīb* insiste résolument sur les continuités de la *niqāba* et de l'histoire des *ashrāf* : Méhémet Ali n'était qu'un jalon dans une histoire ininterrompue ; la révolution nassérienne était un épiphénomène ; la refondation de 1991, un simple retour à la normale ; et la révolution de 2011 a passé, comme passe un vent mauvais. La *niqāba* est toujours là, insensible en apparence à l'écume des jours. Lorsque le *naqīb* me montre sur son téléphone portable sa photographie, prise quelques mois plus tôt, avec le président François Hollande venu en visite en Égypte, c'est pour l'anecdote francophile. Il tient surtout à redire la neutralité politique de la *niqāba* qui lui aura permis de franchir sans encombre les affres de la révolution et des années troublées qui suivirent, puisque la *niqāba* n'aura fermé que deux semaines au début des événements révolutionnaires. Le rôle du *naqīb*, rappelle-t-il, est de grouper tous les *ashrāf*, quelle que soit leur tendance politique, et de conseiller le président dans le sens de la sagesse et du bon sens. Il évoque notamment les conseils de modération qu'il avait donnés au président Frère musulman, Morsi (2012-13), en regrettant que celui-ci ne les ait pas suivis. Malgré les protestations de neutralité politique, pourtant, l'attachement au principe généalogique installe les *ashrāf* dans un camp, celui de la tradition et de l'héritage, non de la révolution et de la rupture. Mais la tradition peut être révolution : c'est sans doute pourquoi certains membres du Comité protestent contre l'ordre social imposé par les nouveaux riches et le pouvoir de l'argent dans un monde néo-libéral. Ils parlent aussi, à mots couverts, contre la dictature (le directeur du Comité a même refusé de voter lors du référendum constitutionnel d'avril 2019, affirmant son affection pour le modèle libéral britannique). La « révolution des Gilets jaunes » en France a suscité de leur part beaucoup d'intérêt, voire de sympathie, tout en déplorant les excès qui, comme dans la révolution de 2011, ont terni le mouvement. Le plus jeune fonctionnaire du Comité, Aḥmad Yūsri, qui a participé à la révolution du 30 juin et à celle du 3 juillet (pour renverser le régime des Frères musulmans) est même militant du parti Ḥizb al-Miṣriyyīn al-Aḥrār fondé par l'homme d'affaires copte Naguib Sawirès en 2011 contre les Frères musulmans, pour combattre la pensée terroriste, notamment sur le Net, et défendre la cause du dialogue des civilisations (*ḥiwār al-ḥaḍārāt*). Pour Aḥmad Yūsri, la *niqāba* est toutefois pleinement autonome : elle marche avec l'État, mais hors de la politique ; elle soutient l'État (*dā'ina li-l-dawla*), joue un rôle national (*lahā dōr waṭanī*) mais ce n'est pas un parti.

Le *naqīb* ne s'aventure pas dans de tels débats : pour lui, l'éthique des *ashrāf* compte davantage que leur histoire événementielle. À son instigation, l'engagement religieux et moral auquel souscrivent les *ashrāf* lorsqu'ils reçoivent leur « carte » figure dans un petit livret (sorte de carnet de famille). Le feuillet d'une page insiste sur les qualités morales que se doit d'observer un descendant

du Prophète. Loin de s'enorgueillir d'une quelconque supériorité sur autrui, le *sharīf* doit – en imitant le Prophète – se rendre digne de sa noble ascendance.

6.3 Au nom de Dieu le Clément le Miséricordieux

Frère Sharīf, [sache] que ton *intisāb* aux Gens de la Maison ne t'accorde aucun privilège par rapport aux autres gens, mais qu'il est un honneur qu'orne la piété en Dieu Très Haut, qui a dit : « En vérité, le plus en honneur d'entre vous auprès de Dieu est le plus pieux » (Q 49 :13).

À toi de prendre exemple sur notre seigneur l'Envoyé de Dieu (la prière et le salut de Dieu soient sur lui). Repens-toi auprès de Dieu chaque jour, car lui (la prière et le salut de Dieu soient sur lui) se repentait cent fois par jour, et priait Dieu en secret et publiquement. Et sache que [recevoir] l'aumône (*ṣadaqa*) n'est pas permis à l'Envoyé de Dieu (la prière et le salut de Dieu soient sur lui), ni aux Gens de sa Maison. À toi d'obéir et d'abonder en prières et œuvres surrogatoires (*nawāfil*) et en travail ('*amal*) dans la vie, car l'islam est religion (*dīn*) et [action dans l']ici-bas (*dunyā*).

Conforme-toi à la bonne nature [du Prophète], car le plus proche de l'Envoyé de Dieu – la prière et le salut de Dieu soient sur lui – est le meilleur en vertus (*akhlāq*). À toi de veiller au lien de famille (*ṣilat al-arḥām*) et à la prière, tandis que les gens dorment.

Sache que ton honneur à porter ce *nasab* t'oblige à être un exemple (*qudwa*) pour autrui, en obéissance et en bonne tenue (*istiqāma*) jusqu'à ce que tu obtiennes le mérite et la position qu'a annoncés l'Envoyé de Dieu (la prière et le salut de Dieu soient sur lui) d'après la version d'Ibn 'Abbās (que Dieu ait pitié d'eux deux) : « Le Prophète a dit : 'Chaque cause (*sabab*) et chaque généalogie (*nasab*) s'interrompent au Jour de la Résurrection, sauf ma cause et ma généalogie' (Ṭabarānī, repris par Haythamī (sic) dans *Majma' al-rawā'id wa-rijālihi*) ». Ces deux récits, l'un institutionnel et politique, l'autre religieux aux accents moralisateurs et finalement eschatologiques, sont construits en miroir, jusqu'à un certain point : à l'importance du territoire égyptien à l'époque médiévale (discours du *naqīb*) répond l'affirmation de l'État égyptien au XIX^e siècle (discours de la *niqāba*), aux *ahl al-bayt* émigrés et vénérés en Égypte, comme Sayyida Zaynab (discours du *naqīb*), répond l'importance des confréries soufies (discours de la *niqāba*), à la famille d'origine, celle du Prophète (le *naqīb*), répondent les grandes familles de ses descendants, à l'époque ottomane et khédiviale (la *niqāba*). Mais qu'ils mettent l'accent sur l'institution ou sur le rôle religieux, quel que soit le choix qu'ils font de la périodisation, les deux récits comprennent chacun des accélérations et des omissions, dans le but commun

d'insister sur la continuité de la *niqāba* et des *ashrāf*. Les deux récits omettent finalement de dire pourquoi et comment la *niqāba* a été refondée en 1991.

6.3.1 1991 : la refondation de la *niqāba* égyptienne, un acte politique à l'époque de la guerre du Golfe

Il faut sans doute comprendre la refondation de la *niqāba* en 1991 comme un aspect de la réhabilitation de la période monarchique entreprise sous Moubarak, au même titre que les dédommagements octroyés aux propriétaires spoliés par les nationalisations de l'époque nassérienne, et que la reconstitution de grandes fortunes foncières, défaisant les lois de réforme agraire.

Indépendamment de ce contexte général, pourquoi refonder la *niqābat al-ashrāf* en 1991 ? Le dr. Sulaymān, directeur du Comité de vérification des *ansāb*, a son hypothèse : c'est la rivalité avec l'Irak qui explique cette refondation. Lors de la guerre du Golfe, au tout début de 1991, Saddam Hussein avait créé une *niqāba* irakienne pour attester son propre *nasab* de descendant du Prophète²⁶ : l'orgueil égyptien fut piqué au vif, et, toujours d'après le docteur Sulaymān, un entourage de conseillers (*mustashārūn*) qui réclamait depuis longtemps au président Moubarak la refondation officielle de la *niqābat al-ashrāf* obtint gain de cause. Rappelons que l'Égypte participait alors à la guerre menée par les alliés sous l'égide de l'ONU, contre l'Irak envahisseur du Koweït : la *niqāba* égyptienne, à peine refondée, se posait donc en rivale de la *niqāba* irakienne, et l'islam égyptien se prévalait du même coup d'une supériorité intrinsèque.

Peut-être cette compétition en matière de légitimité islamique et de leadership sunnite est-elle liée à une rivalité plus complexe encore : le nouveau *naqīb* égyptien, riche homme d'affaires lié au régime Moubarak, était aussi le cheikh de la confrérie Rifā'iyya en Égypte, soit une confrérie d'origine irakienne, dont le fondateur éponyme, Aḥmad al-Rifā'i (m. 578/1182) est précisément enterré en Irak. L'un de ses descendants, 'Alī al-Rifā'i dit Abū l-Shibbāk, est enterré et vénéré au Caire près de la Citadelle, dans un vaste mausolée construit entre 1869 et 1912, en face de la mosquée du sultan Ḥasan. De façon significative, la construction du mausolée était commanditée par la mère du khédivé Ismaïl, Khoshyar Hānem, et le mausolée devint effectivement celui de plusieurs membres de la famille royale, dont le roi Farouk. Mais c'est en l'honneur du saint Rifā'i qui y est enterré qu'est célébrée chaque année une fête, le mouled d'al-Rifā'i. Face à Saddam Hussein qui revendiquait désormais

26 Sur la légitimation islamique de l'Irak de Saddam Hussein, et le lien inattendu entre Rifā'iyya et Baas, voir la thèse toute récente de Jordan, "The Rifā'iyya in 20th-Century Iraq".

son identité de *sharīf* et ses liens avec la Rifā'īyya, l'affirmation égyptienne permettait de rappeler la primauté et la centralité de la *niqābat al-ashrāf* en Égypte, en même temps que la force de la Rifā'īyya égyptienne. À ce début des années 1990, la Rifā'īyya égyptienne vivait une période faste de son histoire, et le mouled d'al-Rifā'ī était à son pinacle, avec de grandes processions, des foules de participants, des tentes de pèlerins, des costumes et des bannières toutes neuves²⁷. Un livre de photographies de mouleds, publié en 1999, atteste de cette particulière splendeur des mouleds Rifā'ī des années 1990 : on y voit le *naqīb al-ashrāf*, enturbanné et drapé de noir, comme il sied à un cheikh rifā'ī, chevaucher lors de la procession vespérale, à la tête d'une foule considérable²⁸. Bref, les cheikhs Aḥmad Kāmil et Muḥammad Kāmil, *naqīb-s* refondateurs, ne dissociaient guère *niqāba* et *ṭarīqa*.

Au moment de la refondation, un Conseil supérieur de la *niqāba* (ou Conseil supérieur des *ashrāf*, *al-majlis al-a'lā li-l-ashrāf*) fut constitué, dont les membres étaient – et sont toujours – de riches hommes d'affaires. Quant aux participants à la réunion de refondation, il s'agissait, me dit-on, des « chefs de familles des *ashrāf* » (*kibār 'ā'ilāt al-ashrāf*). Ce dernier terme revient souvent, à propos de l'établissement des généalogies : sans correspondre à un statut précis, il renvoie à une réalité prégnante de la société égyptienne. Les « élections » de 1991 – *intikhābāt*, c'est le terme employé par mon interlocuteur – furent en fait une cooptation au sein des grandes familles d'*ashrāf*, et c'est ainsi que fut choisi comme *naqīb* Aḥmad Kāmil Yāsīn, cheikh de la confrérie Rifā'īyya en Égypte. La réalité comme les activités de la *niqāba* furent d'abord modestes, avant l'installation dans le nouveau bâtiment en 2003 : le Comité alors dirigé par Aḥmad Yaḥyā ne comptait que trois membres, contre neuf aujourd'hui, et il se tenait dans les bureaux mêmes de la société pharmaceutique dirigée par le *naqīb*.

Le soutien de l'État et son autorisation étaient indispensables à cette refondation, et plusieurs membres influents de la *niqāba* étaient liés au Parti national démocratique alors au pouvoir (le PND), sur un modèle similaire à celui qui liait les cheikhs al-Ṭayyib de Gourna et le PND sous le régime Moubarak²⁹. Depuis 1991, la *niqāba* est donc une institution paraétatique, liée aux milieux de pouvoir et aux milieux d'affaires de l'Égypte de Moubarak. Né vers 1955,

27 En témoignent deux livres : Biegman, *Mouleds, Saints, Sufis : Egypt*, 31 (photographie du mouled Rifā'ī en 1988) ; et Mayeur-Jaouen, *Pèlerinages d'Égypte*.

28 *Mulid! Carnivals of Faith*, photographies de Sherif Sonbol, textes de Tarek Attia, The American University in Cairo Press, 1999 (les pages et les photographies du livre ne sont pas numérotées). Les auteurs du livre n'ont pas identifié le cheikh des confréries rifā'ī comme le *naqīb*.

29 Chih, *Le soufisme au quotidien*.

l'actuel *naqīb* lui-même, issu d'une grande et riche famille d'*ashrāf* de la région d'Akhmim, est député au Parlement égyptien depuis 1990, soit avant même la refondation officielle de la *niqāba*. Devenu *naqīb*, traversant sans dommage les aléas de la révolution de 2011 (grâce à sa neutralité, souligne-t-il lui-même), il est depuis peu vice-président du Parlement (*wakīl awwal li-l-barlamān al-miṣrī*). Sans être élu, il figure sur la liste de noms (*qā'ima*) imposée par le gouvernement. C'est dire si son influence comme *naqīb*, si discrète soit-elle, s'accompagne d'un poids réel dans la nomenclature égyptienne. Le *naqīb* y insiste : le rôle politique qu'il dit jouer « comme un citoyen au service de la nation » (*ka-muwāṭin fi khidmat al-waṭan*) doit être dissocié de son rôle comme *naqīb*, qu'il assimile plutôt à un rôle représentatif et diplomatique. Il représente les *ashrāf* et entretient de bonnes relations avec les institutions religieuses de l'État ou liées à l'État, qu'il énumère ainsi : la *mashyakhāt al-Azhar*, le *dār al-iftā'*, le ministère des Waqfs et la *mashyakhā 'amma* du Haut Conseil des confréries soufies, enfin l'Église égyptienne dans toutes ses composantes (*al-kanīsa al-miṣrīyya fi jamī' al-ṭawā'if*). Nous retrouvons ici les institutions de l'islam d'État évoquées au début de cet article. La mention de l'Église égyptienne est sans doute moins attendue, mais occupe la place qui lui est assignée, éminemment cléricale et subalterne, auprès de l'islam égyptien institutionnalisé.

La *niqābat al-ashrāf* de 1991 prenait donc, près de quarante ans après sa suppression, une visibilité et un rôle nouveau dans l'islam d'État égyptien à l'époque Moubarak.

6.3.2 Ashrāf et soufis

Sa refondation s'accompagnait d'un soutien délibéré aux confréries soufies, ou à certaines d'entre elles plus exactement. C'est même lors d'une réunion au siège de la confrérie soufie Ḥāmidīyya Shādhīyya³⁰ qu'eut lieu le choix du nouveau *naqīb*. On l'a vu lors du récit de la première visite évoquée plus haut, plusieurs des fonctionnaires de la *niqāba* portent des bagues comme on le fait dans le milieu soufi, plus exactement un gros anneau d'argent serti d'une pierre semi-précieuse de couleur. Pourtant, tous les soufis ne sont pas *ashrāf*, et inversement, tous les *ashrāf* ne sont pas nécessairement soufis. Certains sont même hostiles au soufisme, voire salafistes. Mais prévaut, dans les deux univers, la prédominance du lien généalogique (la *ṣila*, souvent invoquée à la *niqāba*), ce qui contribue à les rapprocher : un cheikh soufi est en général le fils d'un autre cheikh soufi (même si ce n'est pas obligatoire), tandis qu'un *sharīf* est, par définition, le fils d'un autre *sharīf*.

30 Sur celle-ci, cf. Gilsenan, *Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt*.

D'autre part, les cheikhs soufis descendent généralement de saints musulmans – lignées héréditaires de la *baraka*, maintes fois décrites par des spécialistes³¹ – tandis que les *ashrāf*, même non soufis, descendent bien souvent, eux aussi, de saints musulmans. C'est la sainteté qui aura permis de « fixer » le *sharaf*. Le directeur du Comité de vérification des *ansāb* me rappelle que les quatre Pôles à l'origine même de la plupart des confréries soufies (du point de vue égyptien), soit Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī, 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, al-Sayyid al-Badawī, et Ibrāhīm al-Disūqī, étaient tous quatre *ashrāf* : il s'agit donc d'une relation naturelle, selon lui, qui va de soi.

Au XIX^e siècle et dans la première moitié du XX^e siècle, comme lors de sa refondation, la *niqāba* était liée aux confréries soufies, on l'a vu, d'un lien constitutif et ancien. Dès l'époque mamelouke, les cheikhs soufis comptaient parmi les notables ruraux, ceux qui allaient précisément s'attacher à un *nasab* et en préserver à la fois le souvenir et la trace matérielle. Au XIX^e siècle, les cheikhs Bakrī présidèrent à la constitution du Haut Conseil des confréries soufies, en même temps qu'ils faisaient office de *naqīb*-s de l'Égypte monarchique, et l'on sait le rôle que le cheikh Tawfiq al-Bakrī, qui fut *naqīb*, joua dans la réforme du soufisme égyptien des années 1900³². Les *ashrāf* de l'entourage de Moubarak, qui militèrent pour la refondation de la *niqāba* en 1991, étaient bien les héritiers de familles illustres dans le monde du soufisme égyptien, et non des *homines novi* : ils surent pourtant se concilier le soutien d'hommes d'affaires qui ne descendaient en rien de ces notables d'antan.

En 1991, non seulement le premier *naqīb* de la nouvelle *niqāba* était le cheikh de la confrérie Rifā'iyya pour toute l'Égypte, mais il veilla à nommer des Rifā'īs aux postes-clés de la *niqāba* : Aḥmad Muḥammad Khalifa à la comptabilité et Aḥmad Yaḥya à la tête du Comité de vérification des généalogies, dont il fut le premier directeur. Ce dernier, diplômé d'une faculté de commerce, travaillait alors en Arabie saoudite. Lorsque le *naqīb* le fit revenir en Égypte pour diriger le Comité, Aḥmad Yaḥyā, de son propre aveu, ignorait tout de la science de la généalogie, mais en devint rapidement, à en juger par son actuelle dextérité à manier les références, à repérer les erreurs de telle encyclopédie, et à lire les manuscrits, un excellent spécialiste. Quelles que soient sa vivacité intellectuelle et son énergie, toujours manifestes près de trente ans après sa nomination, c'est son rang élevé dans la hiérarchie de la Rifā'iyya qui le désignait

31 Parmi les meilleurs ouvrages sur un sujet bien connu, cf. Peskes, *al-Aidarūs und seine Erben* ; et Sedgwick, *Saints and Sons*.

32 Sur ce personnage, De Jong, *Ṭuruq and Ṭuruq-Linked institutions* ; et Mestyān, "al-Bakrī, Muḥammad Tawfiq".

à l'attention d'Aḥmad Kāmil Husayn dont il était le bras droit à la confrérie comme à la *niqāba*.

À la *niqāba*, quelle que soit la prudence affichée en ces temps post-révolutionnaires où le Syndicat a traversé sans encombre le régime des Frères musulmans et la montée des salafistes, le lien privilégié entre monde des confréries soufies et *niqāba* est partout présent, partout visible. On voit affichée sur le palier du quatrième étage une grande photographie où le *naqīb* Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf pose aux côtés du cheikh 'Abd al-Hādī al-Qaṣābī, lui aussi député, cheikh du Haut Conseil des confréries soufies, lors du mouled d'al-Jazūlī en juillet 2011³³. C'est bien un milieu de l'establishment soufi d'État qui a refondé la *niqāba* égyptienne, et qui continue à l'animer.

6.4 Une administration hiérarchique liée à l'État, mais autonome

Liée à l'État égyptien, la *niqāba* est pourtant une administration autonome, avec un budget propre, financé par les cotisations de ses adhérents et par les dons des membres les plus fortunés des milieux d'affaires liés aux *ashrāf*. Elle ressemble à d'autres administrations égyptiennes : elle ferme le vendredi et le samedi, ouvre du dimanche au jeudi de 9 h 30 à 15 h 30 (avec un pic de fréquentation de 11 h à 13 h), modifie ses horaires durant Ramadan. Elle recourt peu au numérique (en fait uniquement pour établir les cartes de membres du Syndicat), s'appuie essentiellement sur des documents manuscrits sur papier, et prône le souci des relations personnelles directes. On ne traite ni par téléphone, ni par quelque site dématérialisé : la quête du *nasab* est affaire de rencontre et de plaidoirie. Le demandeur de *nasab* (qui reste généralement debout) entre dans la salle du Comité pour plaider sa cause lui-même, présenter son dossier, donner des explications et négocier directement avec les membres du Comité (qui restent assis).

De nombreux indices permettent de deviner qu'il s'agit d'une administration autonome, qui rémunère ses propres employés sans le secours de l'État : le bâtiment est très propre, l'accueil soigné, et le travail réel, et même efficace. Ici, pas d'employés fictifs ou de plantons inemployés, pas de bureaux en désordre, de cafétéria improvisée ou de gravats dans un coin. Au quatrième étage, où siège le Comité de vérification des *ansāb*, dans le grand hall où canapés

33 Le cheikh Qaṣābī a joué un rôle politique durant la révolution et sous les Frères, ce que désapprouvent les membres du Comité : selon eux, c'était superficiel, alors que le *naqīb*, en restant au-dessus de la mêlée, s'est montré sage – conforme au modèle de ce que doit être un *sharīf*.

et fauteuils confortables permettent de patienter, sont partout affichés des modèles du certificat-type (la fameuse *shahādat nasab*), pour que les demandeurs aient immédiatement sous les yeux l'objet de leurs désirs. Couloirs et bureaux donnent sur ce hall central, à l'ambiance paisible, où l'on entend souvent la récitation du Coran en fond sonore. Le mobilier est récent et fonctionnel, les fonctionnaires sont souvent en complet-veston et en cravate, parfois en blouson de cuir – cher aux fonctionnaires égyptiens – même si les plus jeunes portent jean et polo. L'un des membres du comité, nubien peut-être, porte *galabeyya* et turban blanc, comme en Haute-Égypte : la majorité des visiteurs en quête de *nasab* sont eux aussi originaires du sud de l'Égypte. Les employés de la *niqāba* comptent fort peu de femmes, et aucune au Comité de vérification des généalogies. Elles sont généralement voilées (mais pas systématiquement), comme il devenu normal depuis des décennies en Égypte dans un milieu musulman et essentiellement masculin. Enfin, si la plupart des employés sont des *ashraf*, ils ne le sont pas nécessairement : choisi pour ses compétences scientifiques par le *naqīb*, le docteur Sulaymān n'est pas *sharif* lui-même, même s'il se trouve que sa femme est *sharifa*.

Le bâtiment compte six étages. Au premier étage, se trouve la salle de prière où se rendent ponctuellement les fonctionnaires pour les prières de midi et de l'après-midi, celles qui coïncident avec les horaires de bureau. Au deuxième étage, se trouve la bibliothèque de la *niqāba*, bien classée : des rayonnages de bois clair, bien éclairés, tapissent les murs de la pièce au centre de laquelle se trouvent des tables couvertes de piles de livres et de dossiers. Les rayonnages portent des étiquettes, désignant les rubriques : *al-ansāb*, *al-a'lām*, *al-fiqh*, *al-tafsīr*, *al-tarājīm* ... Chaque année, deux membres du Comité se rendent à la Foire du Livre du Caire pour acquérir de nouveaux ouvrages sur la science des généalogies, à moins qu'ils ne les photocopient. Au troisième étage travaillent cinq calligraphes qui établissent les certificats de *nasab* et la copie finale de la généalogie. Au cinquième étage, se trouvent des salons de réception, le bureau du *naqīb* et celui de sa secrétaire. Ce bureau d'apparat est meublé de meubles incrustés de nacre, décoré de calligraphies coraniques. S'y trouve la bibliothèque personnelle du *naqīb*, où figure par exemple, en trois volumes, Fathī 'Abd al-Qādir Sulṭān al-Ḥusaynī, *Mawsū'at ansāb Āl al-bayt al-nabawī al-'arabiyya li-tawthīq al-ansāb*, et un livre de Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Qūsī, *Dīwān al-muḥīq al-shafī*. Sur son bureau, trône le porte-plume offert par le ministère saoudien du Commerce et de l'Industrie, branche de Médine. Au sixième et dernier étage enfin, à côté d'une grande salle de réunion, une terrasse domine la ville, ornée d'une petite coupole verte. On y jouit d'une vue imprenable sur Le Caire, la Cité des morts, la falaise désertique (et désormais fort peuplée) du Moqattam et le Jardin d'al-Azhar créé par la Fondation de

l'Agha Khan, juste en face de la *niqāba*. Cette terrasse ne sert guère que pour des invitations officielles.

Redescendons donc au quatrième étage : là siège le Comité de vérification des généalogies, composé de neuf membres, qui se réunit au complet deux jours par semaine, mercredi et jeudi, jours d'affluence maximale. Ceux des membres qui exercent ailleurs un travail rémunéré ne viennent que ces deux jours-là, et sont payés par session, comme le docteur Nabīl et le docteur Sulaymān, directeur du Comité de vérification des généalogies. Les autres jours ouvrables (dimanche, lundi, mardi), ce sont les quelques fonctionnaires permanents – notamment Aḥmad Yaḥyā – qui se contentent de recevoir les dossiers et d'initier ou poursuivre les recherches. Mais ce n'est que le mercredi et le jeudi, lorsque tous ses membres sont réunis, que le Comité peut statuer sur l'acceptation ou le rejet d'une demande de *nasab*. Attention : le paiement n'a lieu qu'après que les neuf membres du Comité de vérification des *ansāb* ont tous validé et authentifié le *nasab*. On y a insisté très souvent auprès de moi. Cette insistance même atteste *a contrario* que nombre de rumeurs ont couru dans le passé, selon lesquelles il suffirait de payer pour se voir octroyer un *nasab* de *sharīf*³⁴. D'après mon observation, la plupart des procédures visent justement à éviter toute tentation de corruption, notamment par la réunion de neuf membres dont chacun doit approuver l'authenticité du *nasab*.

Au même étage que le Comité de vérification des généalogies se trouvent justement les bureaux du service des finances. Un fonctionnaire soufi, diplômé d'une faculté de commerce, s'occupe des paiements des taxes (*rusūm*), du budget, fait payer les abonnements et les carnets, préparés et rangés par piles dans son bureau, qu'il distribue sous enveloppe aux impétrants tout heureux, en leur disant « Félicitations » (*mabrūk*). La somme à payer, sans être excessive, n'est pas négligeable. Les chiffres de 2017, devenus dérisoires avec le flottement de la livre à partir de novembre 2016, n'étaient d'abord pas ridicules : la première inscription au syndicat (*ishtirāk*) coûtait 200 livres pour payer les frais de dossier, puis le renouvellement de l'inscription était de 80 livres par an. En outre, il fallait payer 40 livres pour obtenir le « carnet » (*karnē*), sorte de livret de famille du *sharīf*. Le *sharīf* nouvellement *munassab* devait donc payer 240 livres pour la première année : ces sommes, sans être élevées, n'étaient alors pas négligeables, si l'on considère par exemple que le salaire moyen d'un petit fonctionnaire était de 1,200 livres par mois (chiffre de 2017), et que tout le monde ne gagnait même pas ce salaire de fonctionnaire. Dérisoire pour des gens riches, encore accessible à la petite classe moyenne, le certificat ne le serait pas pour

34 L'article de Jano Charbel fait allusion à ces rumeurs, notamment à propos de Kadhafi : celui-ci qui cherchait par tous les moyens à se voir reconnu comme *sharīf* (un point confirmé par les collègues marocains) aurait payé pour obtenir le certificat.

les plus pauvres, d'autant que chaque adhérent – la plupart des visiteurs de la *niqāba* sont des hommes – paie aussi pour son épouse et ses enfants. Un grand nombre des demandeurs arrivent donc au bureau du Comité avec six ou sept dossiers dans les bras : soit 1,440 ou 1,680 livres à payer par an en perspective (en 2017). En échange, la carte ne donne pas droit à grand-chose de tangible : des réductions dans un réseau de médecins et d'institutions médicales, une éventuelle assistance financière dans certaines régions (Qinā). Il m'arrive de croiser dans l'ascenseur des rares membres réduits à la pauvreté – des veuves avec enfants, notamment – qui viennent, de loin en loin, à la *niqāba*, leur carte de membre à la main, chercher un secours financier auprès de la direction des finances.

L'écrasante majorité des Égyptiens qui viennent faire établir leur *nasab* et leur carte ne cherchent pas un avantage qu'ils ne trouveront pas, mais semblent y chercher plutôt la fierté (*nū' min al-tafakhhur*, me dit-on), le prestige, un sentiment d'appartenance. Pour ceux qui travaillent dans le monde azharien, et en général dans le milieu religieux, être *munassab* est un « plus » incontestable. Pour les mieux insérés et les plus fortunés, la *niqāba* est plutôt un club, comme le serait le Rotary : des habitués viennent saluer chaleureusement les membres du Comité, prennent des nouvelles, en donnent, boivent un thé, repartent pour vaquer à leurs affaires.

Les tarifs ne sont pas les mêmes pour les demandeurs étrangers, nombreux à venir pour faire établir un certificat de *nasab*. Dans leur cas, contrairement aux Égyptiens, on ne se contente pas de copies de l'arbre généalogique, ils doivent présenter un original, et venir en personne – pas moyen d'utiliser un substitut. Les tarifs les concernant sont modulés selon la richesse ou la pauvreté de leur pays. Un Somalien ne paiera pas la même somme qu'un Saoudien, par exemple. Évidemment, il y a des cas compliqués, comme cet Allemand d'origine somalienne que je croise à la *niqāba* : quelle somme doit-il payer ? Dans le cas des Jordaniens, d'après un témoignage recueilli à Amman auprès d'une famille venue demander une *shahādat nasab* à la *niqāba* égyptienne, il en coûte environ 400 dinars jordaniens (soit plus de 500 euros, chiffre de 2018) pour faire établir un certificat, même lorsque l'on dispose déjà d'un arbre généalogique attesté.

6.5 Au cœur de la *niqāba* : la vérification des *ansāb*

Entrons donc dans le cœur de la *niqāba*, le Comité de vérification des *ansāb*. Il se tient dans une vaste pièce, bien éclairée par des néons, où des bureaux arrangés en fer à cheval encadrent la porte d'entrée. Jusqu'à neuf fonctionnaires s'y tiennent : ce sont les membres du fameux Comité, avec parfois quelques

assistants qui vont et viennent, et Ḥasan, le sympathique planton chargé d'approvisionner en boissons les fonctionnaires, éventuellement les visiteurs (thé, café, infusion d'anis : *yansūn*). C'est une administration hiérarchique, mais dont la hiérarchie est duelle, puisque le comité a depuis 2008 deux directeurs qui siègent côte à côte. Le « directeur administratif » du Comité, Aḥmad Yaḥyā, qui est fonctionnaire de la *niqāba* depuis la refondation, partage la direction avec le « directeur scientifique », le docteur Sulaymān, dont l'autorité n'est pas discutée : en cas de litige, c'est lui qui décide. Bien qu'il ne soit pas *sharīf* lui-même (ou peut-être à cause de cette neutralité même), le docteur Sulaymān, professeur à l'université de Kafr al-Shaykh, a été nommé en 2008 par l'actuel *naqīb* pour sa compétence scientifique sur les *ansāb* et les *ashrāf* à l'époque ottomane.

Sur les différents bureaux, s'empilent de façon ordonnée de grands dossiers de couleur verte intitulés : *Demande d'établissement et de révision de la généalogie* (*Ṭalab ithbāt wa-murāja'at nasab*). Le Comité traite une cinquantaine de dossiers par semaine, en moyenne, moins pendant Ramadan, davantage pendant le mouled d'al-Ḥusayn (pèlerinage au mausolée sis juste à côté d'al-Azhar) où affluent au Caire les *ashrāf* de Haute-Égypte qui en profitent pour régler leurs affaires. De nombreux dossiers restent à l'étude, pendant des mois, parfois pendant des années. C'est à travers ces dossiers individuels et nominatifs qu'est traitée la délicate question de savoir si le demandeur est ou non un *sharīf*. On y recueille tous les documents nécessaires à l'authentification du *nasab* : par exemple les certificats de naissance des membres de la famille, des certificats de mariage, la copie d'un ancien arbre généalogique, la photocopie d'une page de livre imprimé où l'on retrouve mentionné tel ancêtre ou telle branche de la famille, enfin des photographies d'identité nécessaires pour établir la carte d'adhésion personnelle et nominative à la *niqāba*. Certains dossiers sont fort volumineux, et la photocopieuse et l'agrafeuse marchent bon train pour aider à remplir le dossier.

Pour devenir *munassab* – quelqu'un dont le *nasab* est établi comme *sharīf* – il faut produire un arbre généalogique (*shajarat al-ā'ila* ou *shajarat al-ansāb*). « C'est la base », me dit-on (*al-asās shajarat al-ansāb*). Idéalement, le demandeur produit devant le Comité l'original, la fameuse *rolla* qu'évoquent plusieurs de mes interlocuteurs, faisant le signe significatif de dérouler un rouleau pour montrer la matérialité de l'archive. À titre d'exemple, Aḥmad Yaḥyā me montre, mis à l'abri dans des sacs en plastique, un rouleau de parchemin (d'époque ottomane ?), rongé par les insectes. Doit-on, à chaque naissance, sortir le précieux document de sa réserve au risque de l'abîmer, et apporter à la *niqāba* cette preuve pour faire de l'enfant un *munassab* ? Le procédé est délicat, dangereux peut-être pour le précieux document. La famille détentrice de l'arbre,

d'ailleurs, y consentira-t-elle ? Eh bien, me dit-on, il suffit de photographier, grâce à un téléphone portable, le précieux arbre généalogique, puis de joindre le certificat de naissance (*shahādat wilāda*) où apparaît celui des parents qui est d'ascendance chérifienne, et de fournir les preuves de sa connexion avec l'arbre en question.

Que l'on procure l'original lui-même ou qu'on le produise sous forme photographiée ou photocopiée, où trouver cet arbre généalogique initial, qui est toujours – d'après mes constatations – une copie ottomane ou une copie datée du XIX^e siècle d'un original plus ancien ? On doit la chercher chez le chef de famille (*kabīr al-ʿāila*), m'explique-t-on, soit le plus âgé, soit le plus expérimenté, soit celui qui a à la fois de la disponibilité et de l'influence, sans doute aussi aisance financière, voire richesse.

À ces considérations s'ajoute la taille de la famille qui peut grouper des milliers de personnes, hommes, femmes et enfants, lorsque la famille est liée à une confrérie soufie héréditaire. C'est le cas des Sharnūbī sur lesquels j'avais enquêté en 2010-13 : dans cette importante famille, l'arbre généalogique initial – enjeu de pouvoir – était détenu dans une branche en particulier, mais un autre membre de la famille, lui-même cheikh soufi d'une autre branche, avait constitué un arbre plus restreint, où figuraient les femmes et les mariages, et l'avait numérisé sur son ordinateur. Et un troisième chef de famille Sharnubī, issu d'une autre branche encore, homme de pouvoir lié au PND, faisait le lien entre ces preuves dispersées et la *niqāba* : « c'est lui qui distribue les cartes », m'avait-on dit alors, au sens propre comme au sens figuré³⁵.

La *niqāba* est en effet une institution centralisée dans un pays bureaucratique, pourtant ramifiée avec des relais locaux (par ville) dans les différents gouvernorats. Au XIX^e siècle, 'Alī Pacha Mubārak raconte comment chaque district ou ville avait son *wakīl al-ashrāf* : la généalogie pourtant ne pouvait être prouvée qu'en écrivant au *naqīb* en personne, assisté de *shāwīsh*, et en demandant une enquête dans les archives des fondations pieuses, et dans celles des gratifications octroyées aux *ashrāf*³⁶. Aujourd'hui, dans la salle du comité, des classeurs étiquetés par gouvernorat contiennent les listes des instances locales, particulièrement actives en Haute-Égypte, surtout dans la région de Qīnā, où le *sharaf* fait écho à des affiliations tribales. Parfois, le Comité entre en relation avec ces instances locales pour obtenir des renseignements sur les familles d'*ashrāf*. Mais c'est au Caire qu'il faut monter pour obtenir la décision administrative finale sur le *sharaf*. Ainsi s'organisent des allées et venues avec la Haute-Égypte : un haut fonctionnaire du ministère de l'enseignement à

35 Mayeur-Jaouen, "Nasab, Baraka and Land".

36 Mubārak, *Khīṭaṭ*, 3 :134. Passage résumé par Winter, "The Ashrāf and Niqābat al-Ashrāf", 19.

Assiout passe visiter le Comité, en ami, car il fait fréquemment la navette entre les deux villes. Il a d'ailleurs deux épouses (ce qui est rare en Égypte), l'une à Assiout, l'autre au Caire. Comme je l'interroge sur ce qui est le plus important, le *sharaf* ou la tribu, il élude : le *sharaf* donne un cadre général ...

On commence donc par l'arbre généalogique et par la différenciation, entre *ḥasanī* et *ḥusaynī*. Ensuite, m'explique Aḥmad Yaḥyā, à partir du « nom de famille » ou assimilé, il faut établir la postérité de cette famille (*ta'qīb al-dhurriyya*). Pour ne pas se perdre, il faut ensuite repérer le '*amūd al-nasab*, littéralement le « pilier du *nasab* », son pivot – c'est-à-dire l'ancêtre ou la figure célèbre dont le *sharaf* est indiscutable. Le terme est important : j'entends souvent, lors des discussions, Aḥmad Yaḥyā interroger le sous-fifre qui présente le dossier d'un demandeur : « Mais quel est le '*amūd al-nasab* ? » Il ne restera plus – mais ça peut être très compliqué – qu'à prouver comment le demandeur se rattache lui-même à ce pivot.

Autre point délicat : les arbres généalogiques arabes s'en tiennent en principe à la loi patrilinéaire et patriarcale, et ne font figurer ni les femmes ni les filles. Un *nasab* chérifien, pourtant, finit toujours par remonter, par définition, à une femme au moins, Fāṭima al-Zahrā', fille du Prophète, de laquelle un *sharīf* descend nécessairement, soit par Ḥasan, soit par Ḥusayn. Durant les dernières années ou décennies, l'apparition des femmes dans les arbres généalogiques semble s'accroître. Peut-être est-elle liée au fait que le *nasab* chérifien devient toujours histoire familiale (une famille d'*ashrāf* en particulier), avec ses alliances matrimoniales et ses cousinages.

À cette volonté de narrer une histoire familiale où apparaissent les filles, voire les épouses, s'ajoute une particularité de la *niqābat al-ashrāf* égyptienne. Si le *nasab* remonte de fils en père en grand-père etc. pour atteindre le Prophète, égrenant des chapelets de « fils de » (*ibn*), il peut aussi remonter de fils en mère en grand-père etc. (et l'on reprend le chapelet de *filis de*). Autrement dit, en Égypte, on peut être *sharīf* de mère comme de père, et la certification de la *niqāba* accepte que l'on soit *sharīf* de mère seulement. Lorsque, comme c'est souvent le cas, on est *sharīf* par ses deux parents, on peut donc se faire établir, si nécessaire, deux arbres généalogiques, mais on ne possède toujours qu'une seule carte. Cette égalité de reconnaissance entre la transmission par le père ou par la mère est une singularité égyptienne, qui faisait déjà objet de débats à l'époque mamelouke et ottomane³⁷. Elle est décrite par les Jordaniens qui n'imaginent pas un tel laxisme : pour eux, c'est la lignée paternelle seule qui compte pour définir l'identité et tracer la généalogie patrilinéaire, et n'est *sharīf* (ou *sharīfa*) que celui ou celle dont le père est *sharīf*. Quant aux Marocains,

37 Winter, "The *Ashrāf* and *Niqābat al-Ashrāf*", 19.

réservés, ils voient dans la fantaisie égyptienne une déviance aberrante ayant cours également en Algérie : « c'est l'école de Tlemcen », me dit un généalogiste marocain avec quelque distance.

6.6 Obstacles et enquêtes

En général, une fois obtenu l'arbre généalogique initial, ou sa copie, et la preuve de son rattachement personnel à cet arbre familial, l'impétrant peut obtenir sa *shahāda* facilement, en un mois environ. Mais l'opération, bien souvent, n'est pas si simple, soit parce que l'impétrant n'a pas accès à l'arbre généalogique initial, ignore même s'il existe, où et chez qui, soit parce que cet arbre s'est perdu dans les hasards des migrations, des guerres, des révolutions.

Il est des cas de trous, parfois au sens littéral : l'arbre généalogique est abîmé, déchiré ou mangé aux vers, abîmé sur la pliure, comporte donc des trous, ou des noms devenus difficiles à déchiffrer : autant de chaînons manquants. Il peut enfin y avoir des lacunes dans la transmission entre l'impétrant d'aujourd'hui, l'arbre généalogique partiel qu'il arrive à reconstituer et la filiation prophétique, hasanite ou husaynite, dont il pense descendre et à laquelle il voudrait se rattacher. Le 1er février 2018, la *doktora* Huwayda 'Allām, une dentiste cairote en pantalon et tunique, d'origine turque précise-t-elle, un petit turban sur la tête, entre accompagnée par son mari dans la salle du Comité où tout le monde la connaît et l'appelle par son nom. Cela fait trois ans qu'elle multiplie les démarches et les recherches. C'est une descendante d'*ashrāf* par son père (ḥasanite) et par sa mère (ḥusaynite), qui elle-même descend d'un aïeul qui fut *naqīb al-ashrāf* à Simbillawayn, un gros bourg du Delta. Soit un membre de ces élites rurales, propriétaires terriens, qui furent en partie ruinés (mais pas tout à fait) par la réforme agraire. Huwayda a photocopié les pages du *Baḥr al-ansāb* qui mentionnent l'aïeul auquel remonte son arbre généalogique, et les a glissées dans son volumineux dossier³⁸. Comment se fait-il qu'elle n'ait pu produire un arbre généalogique complet qui permette d'attester facilement de son origine ? Il y avait une interruption (*inqitā'*) dans la transmission, m'explique un membre du comité, c'est-à-dire qu'il manquait des papiers et des preuves entre une génération et une autre.

38 Il s'agit du *Baḥr al-ansāb* d'al-Najafī, dont le titre complet est *Kitāb baḥr al-ansāb : aw al-Mushajjar al-kashshāf li-uṣūl al-sāda al-ashrāf, al-mushtamil 'alā asmā' wa-uṣūl wa-furū' wa-tawārīkh wa-manāqīb wa-mazārāt wa-wafīyyāt 'umūm al-sāda al-ashrāf fī kāffat biqā' al-arḍ li-Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Amīd al-Dīn 'Alī al-Ḥusaynī al-Najafī*.

Peut-être la rupture de la révolution de 1952 a-t-elle été fatale à l'établissement des attestations nécessaires – les chaînons manquants entre Huwayda et son aïeul. Le père dominicain Josef Dreher, répétant les dires de témoins oculaires, m'a raconté qu'à la révolution nassérienne, des généalogies abandonnées par des grandes familles exilées ou en fuite jonchaient les trottoirs du Caire, étaient vendues au poids du papier par des chiffonniers. Sans doute Huwayda descend-elle d'une de ces familles de notables qui ont perdu leurs papiers, ou qui ont omis de faire enregistrer les naissances au sein de la famille. Ils doivent aujourd'hui renouer le fil de la famille et remplir les cases manquantes. Autre hypothèse : les brouilles familiales, les captations d'héritage, les mariages et remariages fragmentant l'héritage, dérochant les arbres, brouillant claire lignée, filiation et généalogie au hasard des ruptures et des procès.

Plus de trois ans de démarches et de patientes vérifications, en province et au Caire, ont permis à Huwayda, devenue généalogiste, d'accéder enfin à la *shahāda* tant espérée. Sa joie fait plaisir à voir, et chaque membre du Comité (depuis le temps, tout le monde la connaît par son nom) la félicite poliment. Elle m'explique en mots enthousiastes ce que représente cette quête : le lien avec le Prophète, bien sûr, mais aussi la certitude d'avoir reconstitué une partie de son histoire familiale et, désormais, de la connaître.

Tous n'ont pas cette chance. Nadia Naqīb, mon éditrice égyptienne dont le seul nom indique probablement une origine chérifienne, est Palestinienne. Comment prouver cette origine chérifienne quand tous les papiers de famille ont été perdus à jamais en 1948 ? Il ne reste du *sharaf* qu'une *fama sanctitatis* et une nostalgie de déracinés, et il faudrait déployer des efforts pendant des années – et comment enquêter en Israël pour un Palestinien exilé, 70 ans après la Nakba ? – pour pouvoir produire au Comité les preuves tangibles du *sharaf* de la famille Naqīb. Nadia, qui vit au Caire, soupire en pensant à son père âgé, expulsé du Koweït en 1991 (encore des papiers perdus) et qui habite aujourd'hui Oxford : il serait si heureux d'obtenir la *shahādat nasab* pour renouer avec ses origines.

Supposons un autre cas, assez fréquent : le demandeur sait ou croit savoir à quel arbre il se rattache, mais ignore comment prouver de façon certaine son propre lien, lâche et collatéral, avec cet arbre, détenu par de lointains cousins qu'il ne connaît pas. C'est à lui de devenir généalogiste, de rechercher actes de mariage et certificats de naissance, dans un pays où l'état-civil existe depuis 1891 seulement³⁹ et où, l'Égypte restant fidèle au nom en trois parties (*ism thulāthī*), le nom de famille n'existe pas, la plupart du temps. Plus exactement, il existe parfois des *shuhra*-s (noms d'usage), ou des *nisba*-s qui tiennent

39 "Décret concernant l'état-civil".

finalement lieu de « noms de famille » dans les cas de ces familles confrériques comme, justement, les Qaṣabī, les Sharnūbī, les Sharīf d'Akhmim.

Quand bien même le demandeur arrive à produire ces papiers, il peut finalement exister des interpolations et des erreurs de noms, par exemple lorsque l'on emploie des surnoms (*laqab*) qui ne sont pas, pour autant, des noms de familles, ce qui prête à confusion des noms (le redoutable *tashābuh asmā'*), ou des *shuhra*-s (noms d'usage) qui sont distinctes du nom inscrit sur les papiers, l'*ism*. Exemple : Galāl, un paysan en *galabeyya*, arrive au Comité. Le premier membre de la *lajna* auquel il tend ses papiers, homme d'expérience, pointe immédiatement la différence d'un nom – un seul, mais cela suffit pour poser problème – entre la généalogie alléguée (celle qui permettrait de prouver le *sharaf*) et celle que proposent les papiers d'identité. Galāl s'échauffe, donne des explications, souligne que chacun au village connaît cette double identité où la *shuhra*, le nom par lequel on est connu au village, est distincte du nom (*ism*) qui figure sur les papiers d'identité. On consulte le directeur administratif qui, prudent, renvoie l'affaire au directeur scientifique du Comité : lorsqu'il arrivera, il tranchera. Le paysan ressort dans la salle d'attente, maugréant, à moitié rassuré seulement. Ce flottement entre *shuhra* et *ism* est très fréquent en Égypte : le nom dont on se sert dans la vie courante n'est souvent pas celui des papiers administratifs. Un autre problème peut se poser : quand un nom de famille connu, une *shuhra* liée à un saint, est repris et donné comme nom à l'enfant d'un dévot ou d'un disciple, par *baraka*. Exemple : un Jīlānī ou Kīlānī peut être effectivement un descendant du saint ainsi nommé (le grand saint 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, enterré à Bagdad) : ou bien il peut avoir été nommé ainsi par dévotion de ses parents au saint fondateur, sans qu'aucun lien généalogique ne l'y rattache ; ou enfin, sans rapport avec le saint de Bagdad, il peut descendre de gens originaires du Gilan (le nord de l'Iran), comme Sidī 'Abd al-Qādir lui-même. Passent les années, les décennies, les siècles : comment savoir si, dans une généalogie ou un recueil biographique, ce Jīlānī est un descendant, un disciple, un dévot ou un simple originaire ?

Et les membres du Comité recopient et reconstituent toute la journée des généalogies dans de petits cahiers, à l'encre noire, en insérant dans les marges de petits commentaires en rouge, là où apparaît un problème à traiter.

6.7 Dernière visite à la *niqāba* : 'Āṭīf, sa mère, son grand-père et son saint ancêtre

Terminons notre étude comme nous l'avons commencée, par la présentation d'un cas. Cette fois, il s'agit d'une dernière visite à la *niqāba*. Le mercredi 24 avril 2019, 'Āṭīf se présente au Comité pour recueillir enfin les précieuses

signatures. Quinquagénaire, en complet veston et cravate pour ce jour solennel, ‘Āṭif appartient aux classes moyennes provinciales, de niveau plutôt élevé. ‘Āṭif sait qu’il est *sharīf* de père et de mère, et possède tous les papiers nécessaires : il vient de la région de Mansoura, plus exactement du village de Barāmūn, situé au bord du Nil, sur la rive est, où sa famille maternelle est établie depuis des siècles. Sa famille paternelle était déjà une grande famille de la région de Mansoura à la fin du XVII^e siècle. Pour ‘Āṭif, contrairement à la doktora Huwayda ou au paysan Galāl dont le nom est connu au village, mais diffère de celui des papiers, l’affaire est simple, et c’est certain de son triomphe qu’il ne tarde pas à ouvrir son attaché-case rempli de pièces à conviction.

‘Āṭif est d’ailleurs un habitué de la *niqāba* : il a établi pour lui-même en 2016 une *shahādat nasab* d’après sa filiation paternelle, car son père, désormais décédé, était *sharīf*, hasanite, et descendant de Sīdī ‘Abd al-Salām b. Mashīsh (1140-1223). Ce célèbre saint marocain idrisside, enterré dans le Jabal ‘Alam, près de Tétouan et de Ouezzane, fut l’initiateur d’Abū l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (m. 1258), et joua un rôle considérable dans l’histoire du soufisme. Aujourd’hui, ‘Āṭif, fils dévoué, vient faire établir la *shahādat nasab* de sa mère veuve, *sharīfa* également, mais issue d’une tout autre branche, et husaynite. Née en 1936, elle est sans doute trop âgée pour se déplacer au Caire et faire les démarches, d’autant qu’elle appartient à une génération où, à la différence de la dentiste Huwayda, les femmes restaient à la maison. Mais ‘Āṭif a constitué le dossier, produit les pièces justificatives, et a rempli pour sa mère les rubriques suivantes sur la page de couverture du dossier vert, soigneusement numéroté par la *niqāba* :

- nom (Fāṭima al-Sayyid ‘Alī Aḥmad ‘Ashīsh),
- lieu d’habitation (al-Barāmūn, district de Mansoura, gouvernorat de la Daqahliyya),
- nationalité (égyptienne),
- nom de famille (*shuhrat al-usra* : ‘Ashīsh),
- branche de la généalogie chérifienne liée à la généalogie de la famille (*far‘ al-nasab al-sharīf alladhī yattaşilu bi-nasab al-usra* : dans son cas, la réponse est al-Ḥusayn),
- adresse où envoyer une correspondance (la réponse indique simplement le nom du village), un numéro de téléphone,
- renseignements complémentaires ; documents exigés par le Comité (*al-mustanadāt wa-l-istifsārāt al-maṭlūba li-l-lajna*) : la case est restée vide,
- résultat de la recherche du Comité (*natījat baḥth al-lajna*) qui ne peut être qu’acceptation (*qubūl al-ṭalab wa-taḥarrur biṭāqat nasab raqm ...*) ou refus motivé (*rafḍ al-ṭalab bi-sabab ...*). L’espace est encore vide, mais les membres du comité vont signer dans un instant, et ‘Āṭif tremble d’émotion en brandissant les papiers sous le nez du docteur Sulaymān.

À l'intérieur du dossier est agrafée une feuille avec la photographie d'identité de l'impétrante. Il s'agit d'un formulaire sous forme de lettre adressée au *naqīb*, qui demande des renseignements complémentaires :

- nom,
- [originaire] de la famille (*min usra*),
- Lieu actuel (*al-mawṭin al-ḥālī*, elle répond al-Barāmūn),
- lieu d'origine (*al-mawṭin al-aṣlī*, elle répond de même),
- travail (*ʿamal* : réponse *rabbat al-bayt*, maîtresse de maison),
- coordonnées de la pièce d'identité, éventuellement du passeport,
- nationalité (égyptienne),
- noms des fils et des filles (huit cases sont prévues, mais il a fallu en rajouter une à la main, car Fāṭima a eu neuf enfants, quatre fils et cinq filles),
- Le formulaire précise pour finir que l'attestation de généalogie (*biṭāqa nasab*) est une carte de *sharaf* (littéralement : « d'honneur ») (*biṭāqa sharaḥfiyya*), et qu'il est obligatoire de ne pas avoir été jugé pour crime ou meurtre.

Il s'achève par la signature de l'impétrante.

Au bout d'un mois, les démarches de ʿĀṭif pour sa mère sont sur le point d'aboutir, et ce mercredi où il va obtenir les signatures des membres du Comité est pour lui un jour faste. Dès son arrivée, il déploie l'arbre généalogique de sa famille maternelle auprès du docteur Sulaymān, auquel il confie une photocopie de l'arbre, qui restera dans les archives de la *niqāba*. L'original (la *rolla*) a été très manipulé, mais reste lisible : le document daté de Ramadan 1120 de l'hégire (1708-9), comprend un rajout daté de 1215 de l'hégire (1800-1801). Les deux textes ottomans furent alors authentifiés par les signatures de quatre témoins, à Mansoura, dont l'imam de la grande mosquée et le *naqīb al-ashrāf* de Mansoura. Sur le parchemin que tient fièrement ʿĀṭif, les quatre lignes du *nasab* qui ont trait aux ʿAshāyish ont été – *horresco referens* – surlignées au stabilo jaune. Il s'agit d'un passage important, qui interrompt la généalogie pour donner les noms de trois frères et de leurs cousins paternels, dire leur installation à al-Barāmūn (le manuscrit écrit : Barāmūn) et narrer leur constitution en une famille, les ʿAshīsh ou ʿAshāyisha, tous descendants du saint le cheikh al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Raḥman ʿAshīsh. On assiste à la constitution d'une famille « qui compte », à cause du saint ancêtre, à cause de la propriété terrienne, à cause d'un ancrage local ancien. Toutes choses qui sont liées à son origine chérifienne : toutes choses que vient confirmer, en fait, le *sharaf*.

Solidement appuyée sur son arbre généalogique ottoman, au XIX^e siècle, la famille ʿAshīsh vient occuper le devant de la scène, au point que la copie d'un arbre généalogique « à l'européenne » (avec les ramifications dessinées sur le papier, et non une seule liste de noms) restreint de la famille a été jointe au dossier. Cet arbre est à la fois raccourci (il ne remonte pas jusqu'au Prophète, mais seulement jusqu'au saint ancêtre des ʿAshīsh, devenu le *ʿamūd al-nasab*)

et élargi (on prend en compte tous les descendants, filles et garçons, du saint ancêtre). Il a été dressé sur une feuille en 1968 – précisément par al-Sayyid ‘Alī (né en 1898), le grand-père de ‘Āṭif, le propre père de Fāṭima qui, cinq générations après le saint fondateur, figure sur l’arbre aux côtés d’innombrables cousins⁴⁰. Si les épouses n’y figurent pas, les filles sont mentionnées, de même que la mention *sans descendance* et même, pour une sœur d’al-Sayyid ‘Alī : *ne s’est pas mariée*. Il ne s’agit là ni d’une généalogie patrilinéaire, ni d’une suite linéaire, mais d’un arbre complexe, avec les cousins et les alliés. Pour l’origine, après la *basma*, tout en haut de l’arbre, on ne remonte pas au Prophète, ni même à ‘Alī et Fāṭima, à Ḥasan ou Ḥusayn, mais – et cela suffit – au saint ancêtre le saint et le pieux (*al-walī al-ṣāliḥ*) al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-Rahman ‘Ashīsh. Son nom est encadré par deux formules : « Dieu maudit qui entre chez nous sans *nasab* » (*la’ana Llāh al-dākhil fīnā min ghayr nasab*) et à gauche « car, parmi les plus grands mensonges, est celui de l’homme qui se réclame d’un autre père que le sien » (*inna min a’ḡam al-firā an yadda’iya l-rajul ilā ghayr abihī*). Au bas de la page, dans sa longue signature, le grand-père de ‘Āṭif se présente à la fois comme cheikh soufi, comme écrivain et comme ouléma (*katabahā al-faqīr ilā Llāh al-kātib wa-l-faqī al-shaykh al-sayyid ‘Alī Aḥmad ‘Ashīsh*), ajoute la date *mīlādī*, suivi de la date hégirienne, et finalement un titre : arbre des *ashraf* ‘Ashayish de Barāmūn (*mushajjar nasab al-sāda al-ashraf al-‘ashāyisha bi-l-Barāmūn*, al-Manṣūra, al-Daqahliyya). En 1968, à une époque où la *niqāba* avait disparu, où plus personne ne pouvait certifier la chérifienne ascendance de ses petits-enfants et de ses nombreux cousins, le sayyid ‘Alī ‘Ashīsh avait fourni pour plus tard un précieux document, agrafé aujourd’hui dans le dossier de sa dernière fille, Fāṭima, par les soins de son petit-fils ‘Āṭif. Celui-ci a également agrafé le contrat de mariage de ce grand-père, qui se maria en 1915 à Barāmūn selon le rite hanafite (encore une preuve de l’importance de l’époque ottomane pour ces élites des *ashraf*). Produire la copie de ce contrat de mariage n’ajoute rien aux preuves du *sharaf*, mais ce document signé par l’arrière-grand-père maternel et l’arrière-grand-oncle maternel de ‘Āṭif, estampillé des sceaux et des tampons nécessaires, est une preuve supplémentaire de l’importance sociale des ‘Ashāyish à Baramūn. Le *sharaf* va de pair avec une forme de noblesse.

Exultant, ému, ‘Āṭif repart avec le certificat de *nasab* de sa mère, dûment authentifié par les signatures des membres du Comité. De son côté, le Comité a fait une bonne affaire, car le dossier de ‘Āṭif va s’ajouter aux centaines de dossiers traités et archivés chaque année : une nouvelle histoire, de nouveaux

40 Cet espace de cinq générations laisse supposer une fourchette temporelle qui peut aller de 100 à 150 ans. Le saint fondateur de la famille ‘Ashīsh aurait donc vécu au XVIII^e siècle.

noms, de nouveaux échelons – génération après génération – un nouvel éclairage sur une région d'Égypte. C'est avec ce matériel que la *niqāba* fait établir des documents récapitulatifs constamment mis à jour, dont le Comité se sert pour son travail, comme une sorte d'index des « grandes familles » d'*ashrāf* égyptiens, établi en 2018 dans de grands classeurs, par ordre alphabétique des *nisba-s*⁴¹.

Pour finir, le dossier de 'Āṭif présente des caractéristiques que l'on retrouve sans cesse dans les dossiers traités par la *niqāba* : soufisme, ancrage provincial, territoire, terre, notabilité, famille. Il ne s'agissait pas tant de prouver que la mère de 'Āṭif descendait du Prophète (tout al-Barāmūn sait l'origine des 'Ashīsh), mais, par le fait même d'établir le certificat, de faire acte de piété filiale envers une mère âgée, de perpétuer à son tour la longue mémoire d'une sainte famille, de son ancrage local à Barāmūn, du souvenir des hommes et femmes de sa famille – y compris celui qui n'a pas engendré, celle qui n'a pas enfanté, et celle qui ne s'est pas mariée. C'était aussi prouver la notabilité d'une famille en un lieu : voilà ce que signifie, pour 'Āṭif, descendre du Prophète. Après les lointains témoins du XVIII^e siècle et à la suite de son grand-père en 1968, 'Āṭif à son tour aura fait œuvre pie dans la transmission d'une mémoire et d'un *nasab*. Nous continuerons à ignorer pourquoi, fils cadet, il aura joué ce rôle au lieu et place de son frère aîné, devenant ainsi, et jusqu'à sa mort, le *kabīr al-‘ā’ila* : celui qui maîtrise la généalogie et l'histoire de sa famille, celui qui fait le lien avec la *niqābat al-ashrāf*.

6.8 Conclusion

La *niqāba* égyptienne se veut unique au monde : c'est la seule *niqāba*, me dit fièrement le docteur Sulaymān, qui soit à la fois « administration, sanctuaire, bâtiment et dotée de fonctionnaires » (*idāra, haykal, mabnā, muwazzafīn*). Du point de vue de l'État égyptien, cette importance et cette centralité font partie d'un héritage multiséculaire que la construction de l'État khédivial, monarchique et même républicain n'a fait que renforcer. C'est ce qui explique que l'Égypte puisse prodiguer des certificats de *sharaf* selon ses procédures bureaucratiques, méthodiques, et d'après ses archives propres. Et c'est à partir de ce centre que, me disent les gens du Comité, l'on peut échanger des informations pour reconstituer des généalogies, avec d'autres États concernés par la question des *ashrāf*, comme l'Irak, la Jordanie, le Maroc, l'Arabie saoudite et

41 J'ouvre au hasard un classeur et tombe sur la famille Zabīdī, descendante de Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (m. 1791).

même l'Indonésie. Même si chaque pays a son système (*nizām*), comme me le dit prudemment Aḥmad Yaḥyā, « l'Égypte est seule à examiner les arbres », me dit-on fièrement au Comité, la seule à décider non seulement de l'authenticité, mais de savoir s'il s'agit de la branche ḥusaynite ou hasanite.

Ces démarches complexes, parfois coûteuses, et qui ne rapportent rien – à peine un vague prestige, de plus en plus ignoré ou suspecté par les salafistes – maintiennent la conscience de soi des *ashrāf*, plus exactement de ceux pour lesquels il importe encore, toujours, de préserver les arbres, de faire établir la *shahāda*, d'avoir la carte : « Nous sommes une famille », conclut Aḥmad Yaḥyā. Les *ahl al-bayt*, Ḥasan et Ḥusayn, mais aussi Sayyida Zaynab, les quatre *aqtāb* qui étendent leur ombre sur le soufisme égyptien, les saints d'Égypte toujours vénérés, le *'amūd al-nasab* qui a donné un nom à une famille, le mailage quasi-paroissial de terroir, qui seul permet de reconstituer l'histoire d'une famille, les souvenirs d'ancêtres fortunés qui vécurent ici ou là, voici un siècle, ou deux, ou trois : ce sont toutes ces strates, ces étapes, ces niveaux différents de référence et de mémoire qui sont éveillés chaque fois qu'apparaît un arbre généalogique à la *niqāba*. Chaque étape, chaque lien, chaque preuve apportée à la *niqāba* – y compris les preuves inutiles – est une sorte de manifestation de la présence du Prophète hier et aujourd'hui dans ses descendants. C'est un lien toujours recréé, toujours réécrit, et qui, une fois incorporé, doit se manifester dans les qualités spécifiques que les *ashrāf* doivent incarner, selon les membres de la *niqāba*. À la fin, la patiente enquête de vérification du *nasab* redit l'histoire – tout ce temps, ces chaînons et ces étapes qui séparent les *ashrāf* du Prophète – et permet aussi d'en sortir – le Prophète est toujours proche, toujours présent dans ceux de ses descendants qui choisissent de l'être.

6.9 Annexe : Liste des *naqībs* de la *niqābat al-ashrāf* de l'Égypte contemporaine

Muḥammad Abū Hādī al-Sādāt	?-1168/1754-55
Aḥmad b. Ismā'īl al-Sādāt	1168/1754-55-1176/1762-63
Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Bakrī	1176/1762-63-?
Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Bakrī	?-1195/1781
Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Kabīr	1195/1781-1196/1782
Muḥammad al-Bakrī al-Ṣaghīr	1196/1782-1208/1793
'Umar Makram Ḥusayn al-Asyūṭī	1208/1792-1224/1809
Muḥammad Wafā 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Sādāt	1224/1809-1228/1813
Muḥammad Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Dawākhlī	1228/1813-1231/1816

(cont.)

Muḥammad Muḥammad Abū l-Su‘ūd al-Bakrī	1231/1816-1271/1854
‘Alī Muḥammad Muḥammad al-Bakrī	1271/1854-1297/1879
‘Abd al-Bāqī ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bakrī	1297/1879-1309/1891
Muḥammad Tawfiq ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Bakrī	1309/1891-1312/1895
	Second mandat 1903-11 (ce second mandat est occulté de la généalogie officielle qui se poursuit comme ci-dessous) ⁴²
‘Alī Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Biblāwī	1312/1895-1323/1905
Muḥammad ‘Alī Muḥammad al-Biblāwī	1323/1905-1373/1953
Maḥmūd Aḥmad Kāmil Yāsīn al-Rifā‘ī	1411/1991-1415/1994
Aḥmad Aḥmad Kāmil Yāsīn al-Rifā‘ī	1415/1994-1429/2008
al-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-Sharīf	1429/2008-

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PART 3

Modern Nation-States and Ideologies



Le rôle du Prophète dans l'approche marxiste de l'histoire de Bandalī Jawzī (1871-1942)

Min tārikh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fi l-islām (*De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam*)

Renaud Soler

Si j'avais d'abord accueilli son discours par un sourire d'incrédulité, bientôt me revint en mémoire le livre d'Antoni – une histoire de Russie – qui me parut se rouvrir devant moi. Le conte merveilleux que me chantait le vieux, je le suivais dans le livre, et, bien que tout y fût fidèle, le sens en était changé.

MAXIME GORKI, *Confession* (1908)



La *Vie de Jésus*, parue en 1864, comme les articles d'Ernest Renan (1823-72) consacrés à l'islam primitif, sont parsemés d'analogies entre les idées de Jésus ou de Muḥammad, et les idéologies politiques du temps. Jésus « anarchiste », « communiste », à l'origine d'une « immense révolution sociale »¹ ; Muḥammad facteur d'une « révolution profonde »², promoteur d'une « religion naturelle, libérale, sérieuse »³ : simples analogies qui ne sont jamais justifiées, jamais explicitées et toujours lancées comme *en passant*. Dans les années 1880 et 1890, des orientalistes allemands commencèrent à développer des analyses plus précises sur la nature politique de l'islam, comme August Müller (1848-92), dans son histoire de l'islam⁴, et Hubert Grimme (1864-1942), dans une biographie du Prophète où il attribuait explicitement à Muḥammad des idées socialistes⁵. Ces allégations furent discutées et contestées par l'orientaliste néerlandais

1 Renan, *Vie de Jésus*, 196.

2 Renan, « Mahomet et les origines de l'islamisme », 267.

3 Renan, « Mahomet et les origines de l'islamisme », 285.

4 Müller, *Der Islam im Morgen- und Abendland*.

5 Grimme, *Mohammed*.

Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936)⁶ mais attestent du moins d'une évolution importante par rapport à Renan : de vagues analogies ne suffisent plus ; des concepts tels que « communisme » sont dotés, au moins implicitement, d'une définition qui fonde la comparaison. Il n'est plus question de parler de communisme ou de socialisme du Prophète en simple considération de certaines tendances favorables à l'égalité, mais parce que les sources, envisagées selon les méthodes critiques de l'orientalisme, exhibent certains traits caractéristiques du concept, comme le régime de propriété de la terre, la fiscalité ou l'organisation du pouvoir politique. Si l'on ne peut guère qu'acquiescer à une analogie ou la refuser, il est en revanche possible d'assentir ou récuser un argument élaboré sur des références partagées. Dès le début du xx^e siècle, les orientalistes suppléèrent cette approche purement intellectualiste par l'étude des forces, des groupes sociaux, qui déterminèrent l'émergence de l'islam et la carrière prophétique : ce furent, par exemple, les études du jésuite belge Henri Lammens (1862-1937) sur l'Arabie à la veille de l'islam⁷, ou les monumentales *Annali dell' Islām* du prince italien Leone Caetani (1869-1935)⁸.

À partir des années 1950 et 1960, une sociologie de l'islam fondée sur les catégories analytiques du marxisme commença d'être produite par des savants comme Montgomery Watt (1909-2006)⁹ ou Maxime Rodinson (1915-2004), jusqu'à embrasser le problème éminent de l'époque, la décolonisation et l'émergence du Tiers-Monde, c'est-à-dire d'une part penser les rapports entre libération nationale et révolution sociale, d'autre part les stratégies de développement à mettre en œuvre¹⁰. Dans le chemin qui conduisit de l'analogie mondaine de Renan à une approche sociologique de l'islam, un seuil majeur avait déjà été franchi par les orientalistes du début du siècle, qui ne se contentèrent pas d'attribuer à Muḥammad et à d'autres grands protagonistes de l'Islam certaines idées sociales, mais définirent les forces et les groupes sociaux susceptibles de les porter. Le passage de la comparaison anhistorique de concepts politiques, c'est-à-dire de l'histoire des idées, à l'histoire sociale, ou l'approche sociologique de l'islam, fut ainsi largement préparé par l'orientalisme savant. Ce fut ensuite, à partir des années 1920, en Union Soviétique, que des marxistes, qui eux-mêmes n'étaient souvent pas orientalistes, commencèrent de poser systématiquement, à partir des travaux de leurs devanciers

6 Snouck Hurgronje, "Une nouvelle biographie de Mohammed".

7 Lammens, *Le Berceau de l'islam*.

8 Caetani, *Annali dell' Islām*.

9 Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* ; Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*.

10 Rodinson, *Islam et capitalisme* ; Rodinson, *Marxisme et monde musulman*. Voir surtout, dans ce dernier ouvrage, le texte de 1961, "Problématique de l'étude des rapports entre Islam et communisme", 130-80.

bourgeois, le problème de la structure de classes de l'islam¹¹. Les participants prirent et défendirent différentes positions afin de rendre compte de la place de l'islam dans l'histoire des formations économiques qui se succédèrent dans l'histoire de l'humanité, soit selon le schéma du passage du stade primitif au socialisme en passant par l'esclavagisme, le féodalisme et le capitalisme, soit selon celui d'un certain mode de production asiatique spécifique. La description acribique qu'en fait Michael Kemper permet de dégager deux éléments capitaux : les approches étaient généralement essentialistes – et contredisaient paradoxalement la conception marxiste de la religion comme superstructure, qui eût dû empêcher de considérer l'islam *en soi* comme l'idéologie de telle ou telle classe ; de surcroît, une forte corrélation existait avec les enjeux politiques nationaux – la situation des minorités musulmanes soviétiques – et internationaux – les relations de l'Union Soviétique avec l'Orient et l'action de la III^e Internationale, le Komintern, fondée en 1919 – qui finirent par étouffer complètement le débat au début des années 1930.

Nous aimerions adjoindre au concert de voix ressuscitées par Michael Kemper une autre voix à la fois marginale et centrale par ce qu'elle annonce, voix d'un palestinien chrétien orthodoxe rallié au marxisme, Bandalī Ṣalībā Jawzī, ou Panteleymon Krestovič Juze, installé en Russie puis en Azerbaïdjan et qui écrit en arabe et en russe sur des sujets aussi divers que la philosophie islamique, l'histoire des chrétiens d'Orient, de l'islam et de l'Azerbaïdjan et la lexicographie arabe et turque. S'il s'inscrit en plein dans le débat soviétique des années 1920, son œuvre principale, rédigée en arabe mais préparée par des articles en russe, est profondément originale : sa lecture de l'islam n'a rien d'essentialiste, et son objet principal, une histoire du mouvement communiste en islam depuis l'époque du Prophète Muḥammad dans ses dimensions économiques, sociales et politiques. Elle se présente comme une étude du dépérissement passé de la religion en islam, qui se lit tout aussi bien, croyons-nous, comme un plaidoyer pour un futur dépérissement.

7.1 Bandalī Jawzī : une vie de la Palestine ottomane à l'Azerbaïdjan soviétique

Bandalī Ṣalībā al-Jawzī naquit à Jérusalem en 1871 dans une famille orthodoxe qui pouvait se prévaloir d'une origine arabe ghassânide¹². Il fut très jeune laissé

11 Kemper, "The Soviet Discourse" ; Kemper, "Red Orientalism".

12 Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*. Il est la source de Sonn, *Interpreting Islam*, 3-11 ; Sonn, "Bandali al-Jawzi's Min Tarikh". Tamara Sonn donne pourtant la date de naissance de 1872 ; nous

orphelin par la mort de ses parents. Après sept années d'études primaires au couvent orthodoxe d'al-Mušallaba, à Jérusalem, il passa quatre ans au couvent de Kiftīn, modernisé sur le modèle des écoles missionnaires dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle, près de Tripoli du Liban, avant d'achever sa scolarité au séminaire de Nazareth, fondé en 1886 par la Société impériale orthodoxe de Palestine¹³. Le séminaire devait former les enseignants des écoles orthodoxes du Proche-Orient. À l'issue de leur scolarité, dispensée en russe et en arabe, les meilleurs d'entre eux étaient envoyés en Russie¹⁴. C'est ce qu'il advint avec Bandalī Jawzī qui fut envoyé d'abord au Séminaire de Vifanskaya (1889-92), près de Moscou, puis à l'Académie théologique de Moscou (1892-95) et, sur sa demande, à celle de Kazan (1895-96).

Il commença à y enseigner l'arabe à partir de 1896, le français à partir de 1899. L'Académie théologique de Kazan avait été fondée en 1797 pour former les missionnaires destinés à travailler les musulmans de la Volga. En 1854, une division spéciale fut mise en place pour étudier et lutter plus efficacement contre l'islam, qui servit ensuite la politique de christianisation relancée par le tsar Alexandre II (1855-81)¹⁵. Bandalī Jawzī soutint en 1899 une thèse consacrée au mu'tazilisme, qui divisa le corps enseignant en raison de sa mansuétude supposée envers l'islam. Ce serait la raison pour laquelle son avancement fut rapidement bloqué à l'Académie, et à partir de 1916, il commença d'enseigner le droit musulman à la Faculté de droit de l'université de Kazan. Il semble avoir continué son enseignement de l'arabe et du français à l'Académie théologique pendant toute cette période. Il exerça aussi, à partir de 1912 et pendant la Première Guerre mondiale, une fonction de censeur de presse¹⁶.

Kazan était en ce temps un important centre économique et intellectuel. L'université avait été fondée en 1804, et jusqu'au transfert des études orientales à Saint-Pétersbourg en 1854, ce fut même le grand centre de l'orientalisme

préférons la date de Shawqī Abū Khalīl qui a rencontré la famille de Bandalī Jawzī. Les sources russes évoquent 1870 : cf. Kostrjukov et Habibullin, "Pantelejmon Krestovič Žuze" ; Kostrjukov, *Žuze Pantelejmon Krestovin*. Kostrjukov donne la bibliographie des travaux en russe consacrés à Bandalī Jawzī, qui sont nombreux et commencèrent à être produits dès le début du XX^e siècle, puis dans les années 1960-80 et enfin depuis la fin de l'URSS. La thèse elle-même porte surtout sur l'activité d'historien, d'orientaliste et de pédagogue de Bandalī Jawzī et ne s'intéresse guère à ses liens avec le marxisme et les mouvements nationaux des années 1920.

13 Notice "Juze Panteleymon", qui évoque la période 1880-82. Or le séminaire fut fondé par la Société, elle-même fondée en 1882, en 1886 (d'après Stavrou, *Russian Interest*), ce qui pose un problème de chronologie.

14 Hopwood, *Russian Presence*, 143-46.

15 Werth, *At the Margins of Orthodoxy*, 177-99, et surtout 183-92.

16 Kostrjukov et Habibullin, "Pantelejmon Krestovič Žuze", 97.

russe¹⁷. Au début du xx^e siècle, les orientalistes qui demeuraient à Kazan étaient en relation avec les principaux courants de pensée représentés chez les Tatars musulmans. Le jadidisme, né dans le troisième quart du xix^e siècle sous l'égide du Tatar de Crimée Ismail Gasprinski (1851-1914) comme un mouvement de réforme du système éducatif musulman, défendait aussi l'émancipation de la femme, le progrès économique, le renforcement des liens entre les peuples turco-musulmans et la création d'une *koinè* turque¹⁸. La majorité des jadidis prônait plutôt la coopération avec l'Empire tsariste et la participation aux institutions, légitimait les études dans les écoles russes et le travail dans l'administration impériale¹⁹. Il s'agissait donc d'une forme de réformisme musulman comparable, et parfois en rapport, avec celui que l'on trouvait dans d'autres régions du monde musulman. À la suite de la révolution de 1905, ces jadidis se retrouvèrent dans le parti *İttifāk ül-müslimîn*, créé au moment des Congrès musulmans de 1905-1906, à l'initiative des musulmans de Kazan, pour grouper les musulmans de l'Empire. Des mouvements socialisants ou socialistes se développaient à la même époque, principalement à Kazan et à Bakou : une organisation fut créée par les Bolcheviks russes du parti social-démocrate à Kazan ; à Bakou, le parti *Hümmet* fut fondé en 1904 comme branche « nationale » du Parti social-démocrate russe, puis le parti *Müsāvāt* naquit en 1911 de la collaboration entre dirigeants du mouvement national et des socialistes²⁰.

Les travaux préparés à cette époque par Bandalī Jawzī sont remarquables et le rapprochent indéniablement du jadidisme libéral. Sa première œuvre publiée à Kazan en 1898-99 est un manuel de russe pour les enfants arabes²¹. Après la publication de sa thèse, il livra en 1903 un dictionnaire arabe-russe en deux volumes, qui fut d'usage courant jusqu'au milieu du xx^e siècle en URSS²². Ses travaux se partagent ensuite, jusqu'en 1917, entre des études sur l'histoire islamique : en 1903, une traduction de l'ouvrage de l'orientaliste hollandais Wilken sur le matriarcat chez les Arabes et un ouvrage sur le Prophète, *Muḥammad le Mecquois et Muḥammad le Médinois*, des recherches sur le Coran (1914) ; des études sur le christianisme oriental et l'histoire du Liban ;

17 Sur les études orientales à l'université de Kazan au xix^e siècle, avant leur transfert à l'Université de Saint-Petersbourg en 1854, Schimmelpennick van der Oye, "Imperial Roots". Concernant le xx^e siècle, Usmanov, "The Struggle".

18 Lazzarini, "Ġadidism". Ses racines plongent plus profondément dans l'histoire du xviii^e siècle, cf. Dudoignon, "Djadidisme, mirasisme, islamisme".

19 Baldauf, "Jadidism in Central Asia", 80.

20 Bennigsen et Lermecier-Quelquejay, *L'Islam en Union soviétique*, 38-72.

21 Liste des publications in Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 136-42. Nous n'avons malheureusement pas pu mettre la main sur *Muḥammad le Mecquois et Muḥammad le Médinois*.

22 Notice Wikipédia, "Panteleymon Juze" ; Öner, "Kâşgarlı Mahmud".

une réflexion sur *Les Musulmans de Russie et leur avenir* (1917). Ses articles se retrouvent aussi bien dans des revues russes que des revues arabes, dont les deux principales à les publier furent le *Muqataf* et la *Majallat al-kullīyya* de l'Université américaine de Beyrouth. Il aurait contribué à fonder, avec d'autres missionnaires de Kazan, la revue *Mir Islama* (*Le Monde de l'islam*)²³. Bandalī Jawzī ne publiera plus de livres ni d'articles jusqu'en 1923 ; il semble toutefois avoir continué à enseigner et à étudier jusqu'à la soutenance d'un second doctorat en langue arabe en 1921.

Il vécut donc la Révolution de 1917 et la plus grande partie de la guerre civile (1917-21) à Kazan, qui fut l'un des centres majeurs de l'élaboration d'un communisme national adapté à l'islam et susceptible d'être exporté en Orient. Mulla-Nur Vahitov (1885-1918) et Mir Sultan Galiev (1880-1942 ?) jouèrent à partir de 1917 un rôle directeur dans ce mouvement. Les musulmans ralliés de diverses origines, nationalistes, anciens jadidis, pan-turcs et pan-islamistes, firent un temps cause commune avec les bolcheviks pendant la guerre civile ; en même temps, Vahitov et Sultan Galiev entreprirent de jeter les bases d'un mouvement communiste autonome par rapport au bolchévisme russe autour de plusieurs idées-forces : nécessité d'une alliance plus ou moins durable avec la bourgeoisie nationale, inexistence d'un prolétariat tatar, rôle directeur des Tatars dans l'exportation de la révolution en Orient²⁴. En dépit des promesses bolchéviques sur la création d'une République nationale musulmane en mars 1918, les institutions communistes musulmanes furent liquidées pendant l'année 1918. Le nouveau pouvoir put certes empêcher la fondation d'un grand État musulman et communiste autonome, mais l'afflux massif de musulmans dans le parti communiste russe reposa le problème de l'intérieur : les communistes nationaux jouèrent un rôle majeur dans la vie politique et culturelle des régions musulmanes jusqu'en 1923, et encore très important jusqu'aux grandes épurations des partis communistes nationaux à partir de 1928²⁵.

L'Azerbaïdjan connut une évolution politique différente à partir de février 1917, qui conduisit à la proclamation de la République démocratique d'Azerbaïdjan en mai 1918²⁶. Quand Bandalī Jawzī y arriva au début des années 1920,

23 Notice Wikipédia, "Panteleymon Juze". D'après Bennigsen et Lermercier-Quelquejay, *Sultan Galiev*, 62, Sultan Galiev y aurait collaboré avant la Première Guerre mondiale, à une époque où il écrivait beaucoup pour la presse.

24 Bennigsen et Lermercier-Quelquejay, *Sultan Galiev*, 93-94.

25 Bennigsen et Lermercier-Quelquejay, *L'Islam en Union soviétique*, 84-120. Plus de détails dans leurs ouvrages : *Les Mouvements nationaux* et *Sultan Galiev*, ainsi que dans Bennigsen et Wimbush, *Muslim National Communism*.

26 Sur la spécificité de l'Azerbaïdjan, Georgeon, "Note sur le modernisme", mentionne la présence du chiisme, la présence d'une bourgeoisie nationale dominée et d'une puissante minorité arménienne, et l'essor de l'exploitation du pétrole de Bakou.

invité à enseigner dans la nouvelle université fondée en 1919, l'Azerbaïdjan était déjà réoccupé par l'Armée rouge et avait été transformé en République socialiste soviétique depuis avril 1920. Toutefois, il faut noter que le projet d'université était plus ancien : il avait été évoqué dès le premier Congrès des musulmans du Caucase en avril 1917 et fait l'objet d'un accord entre toutes les tendances représentées²⁷. Bandalī Jawzī aurait été invité à Bakou à l'époque de la République indépendante mais serait arrivé pendant les premiers mois de domination soviétique²⁸. Il obtint un doctorat en langue arabe du département de philologie arabe en 1921, avant de devenir, entre 1922 et 1926, le premier doyen de la faculté indépendante d'études orientales (fermée en 1928). Il fut enfin nommé professeur en 1927. Pendant toute la décennie, il joua un rôle actif dans la vie intellectuelle à Bakou en participant notamment à l'organisation du célèbre congrès de turcologie de 1926, aux côtés de Vassili Bartol'd (1869-1930), le grand orientaliste russe d'origine allemande, et à la commission de réforme de l'alphabet cyrillique, pour l'adapter aux langues d'Asie centrale alors écrites en caractères persans²⁹.

Selon Shawqī Abū Khalīl et Tamara Sonn, Bandalī Jawzī connut des problèmes de santé qui l'empêchèrent de travailler entre 1932 et 1937 ; il prit sa retraite en 1938 et mourut à Bakou en 1942. Cela est très improbable : la faculté d'études orientales avait été fermée en 1928 et les intellectuels azerbaïdjanais furent liquidés en quasi-totalité dans les années 1930³⁰. Son propre fils Vladimir Panteleymonovič, qui devint physicien en URSS, fut arrêté en 1937³¹. La notice Wikipédia en azéri consacrée à Bandalī Jawzī indique, en citant sa fille, qu'au retour d'un voyage d'études en Palestine et en Syrie en 1928, il avait été accusé par un certain Bukşin (l'historien et ethnographe Alexander Bukshpan), dans la revue *Bakinskiyraboçy* (*L'Ouvrier de Bakou*), d'être un agent à la solde de l'impérialisme britannique. Il aurait été ensuite arrêté en février 1940, torturé, puis libéré en raison de son âge et sa santé, avant de mourir en 1942³².

27 Altstadt, *The Azerbaijani Turks*, 81 ; Swietochowski, *Russian Azerbaijan*, 148.

28 Notice Wikipédia, "Panteleymon Juze".

29 Sur le développement de l'historiographie azerbaïdjanaise, Türkoğlu, "1917 İhtilali'nden". Nous n'avons pu consulter l'ouvrage d'Aziz Ubeydullin, important historien azerbaïdjanais des années 1920, publié à Bakou en 1930, *10 İl İçerisinde Azerbaycan'da Tarih Etninin İnkısaftı*.

30 Baberowski, *Der Feind*.

31 Kostrjukov et Habibullin, "Pantelejmon Krestovič Žuze", 96.

32 Kostrjukov et Habibullin, "Pantelejmon Krestovič Žuze", 97, mentionnent bien l'arrestation de Bandalī Jawzī mais ne donnent pas de date précise. Comme le suggère Stefan Reichmuth, ce sont peut-être ses origines arabes qui protégèrent Bandalī Jawzī pendant une grande partie des années 1930 des persécutions du pouvoir stalinien contre les élites nationales des différentes républiques soviétiques de l'URSS.

La carrière de Bandalī Jawzī dans les années 1920 se comprend donc en rapport avec la politique soviétique des nationalités et ses relations avec l'islam : d'une part la politique soviétique de lutte contre l'islam, pragmatique entre 1921 et 1927 et de plus en plus affirmée à partir de 1928, consista d'abord à liquider les biens de mainmorte (*waqf*), abolir le droit coutumier et coranique et surtout fermer les écoles confessionnelles, puis à éliminer les dirigeants communistes musulmans et mener une propagande anti-religieuse³³. D'autre part, la politique de contrôle de la vie intellectuelle nationale, que ce soit en Azerbaïdjan ou contre l'orientalisme « bourgeois »³⁴, se fit de plus en plus stricte. Sa production savante reprit en 1923, après les affres de la guerre civile, avec plusieurs articles publiés dans la revue azerbaïdjanaise *Maarif və mədəniyyət* (*Sciences et civilisation*), intitulés « Du mouvement communiste en islam au IX^e siècle » et consacrés au mouvement de Bābak. Shawqī Abū Khalīl y fait référence en évoquant un article de soixante-dix-neuf pages intitulé « De l'histoire du mouvement communiste en islam (*Min tārīkh al-haraka al-shuyū'īyya fī l-islām*) » et publié dans une revue scientifique (*majallat 'ilmīyya*). L'article semble avoir été rédigé en russe ; nous ne disposons pour le moment d'aucune preuve que Bandalī Jawzī écrivait en azéri, même si l'on sait par ailleurs qu'il connaissait le turc et étudiait des sources historiques en cette langue. Un autre article, « Discours sur la personnalité historique de la nation turque », porte sur la place des Turcs dans l'histoire. Si l'on ajoute les traductions d'extraits des historiens musulmans classiques consacrés à l'Azerbaïdjan, pour la plupart restées manuscrites, et une collaboration active, à partir de 1927, à l'*Encyclopédie soviétique de l'Azerbaïdjan* (1941), il appert que Bandalī Jawzī s'intéressa de plus en plus à l'histoire de son pays de résidence, et plus largement du Caucase, sans toutefois rien négliger de l'histoire de l'islam, du christianisme oriental et de l'époque contemporaine : l'ouvrage que nous allons étudier fut publié en 1928, suivi en 1933 d'une traduction en arabe de l'histoire des Ghassanides de Theodor Nöldeke (1836-1930), en collaboration avec Constantin Zurayq (1909-2000)³⁵ ; on note aussi des articles sur l'impôt foncier et la capitation en islam (1931), une trilogie d'articles sur le faux prophète Musaylima, diverses

33 Bennigsen et Lermecier-Quelquejay, *L'Islam en Union soviétique*, 150-55 ; Bobrovnikov, "Contribution".

34 Rodionov, "Profiles under Pressure", 47-57, décrit la position de plus en plus précaire de Vasilii Bartol'd (1869-1930) et Ignatii Krachkovskii (1883-1951), et plus généralement de l'école de Saint-Petersbourg/Léningrad, par rapport aux nouveaux orientalistes prolétariens de Moscou.

35 Nöldeke, *Die ghassânischen Fürsten* ; Jawzī et Zurayq, *Umarā' Ghassān*.

contributions de lexicographie arabe et turque³⁶ et une analyse des relations anglo-égyptiennes (1930).

Ni son biographe palestinien, Shawqī Abū Khalīl, ni sa biographe occidentale, Tamara Sonn, ni la notice de Wikipédia en azéri ne sont très précis sur les affiliations intellectuelles de Bandalī Jawzī. Tamara Sonn a tendance à le rapprocher de Sultan Galiev³⁷ alors que Shawqī Abū Khalīl tend à en faire un chrétien réformiste qui aurait toute sa vie maintenu des liens étroits avec la Palestine³⁸. Pour les rédacteurs de la notice en azéri, Bandalī Jawzī est l'un des pères fondateurs de la culture nationale de l'Azerbaïdjan. Ils n'ont pas complètement tort, mais aucun ne pose le problème dans toute sa largeur.

Bandalī Jāwzī maintint en effet des liens étroits avec la Palestine où il se rendit à plusieurs reprises au cours de sa vie, de même qu'en Égypte, en Syrie, en Irak et en Iran, commissionné par l'université de Kazan ou de Bakou pour acheter des manuscrits orientaux³⁹ ; il fut très proche de la jeunesse nationaliste palestinienne du Club arabe (*al-Muntadā l-'arabī*), ralliée à Faysal pendant la Révolte arabe de 1916 et à l'époque du Royaume arabe de Damas (1920), et entretint sa vie durant une correspondance avec Khalīl al-Sakākīnī (1878-1953), fondateur de la *Madrasa dustūriyya* en 1909, l'une des premières écoles modernes de Palestine, Muḥammad Is'āf al-Nashāshībī (1885-1948) et Jamīl al-Khālīdī (1876-1952)⁴⁰. Pourtant dès 1900, Bandalī Jawzī avait renoncé à rentrer s'installer à Jérusalem, comme en atteste une lettre de sa fille Anastasia adressée à son cousin Naṣrī : alors que son père était rentré pour s'installer à Jérusalem en 1900, en dépit de son mal du pays, il n'avait pas pu supporter l'atmosphère pleine de calomnies et de servitude de la ville⁴¹. Il repartit donc à Kazan où il se maria ; tous ses enfants portèrent par la suite des prénoms russes et firent des études supérieures en URSS, la grande majorité en sciences exactes et jusqu'au niveau du doctorat, et y firent souche. Bandalī Jawzī lui-même écrivit toute sa vie en arabe et en russe ses ouvrages et articles scientifiques. Il porta toujours un intérêt profond à l'histoire du Proche-Orient et au

36 Bandalī Jawzī a en particulier écrit dans *Maarif vā mādāniyyat* un article sur Kāşgarlı Maḥmūd (m. 1102/1105), l'auteur du célèbre *Dīvān Lüghāt ül-türk*. Cf. Öner, "Kāşgarlı Mahmud".

37 Sonn, *Interpreting Islam*, 15-22.

38 Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, passim.

39 De manière générale, les orientalistes russes eurent de plus en plus de mal à voyager en Orient à partir des années 1920, le cas de Bandalī Jawzī est à cet égard original.

40 Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 109-27. Henry Laurens mentionne brièvement Bandalī Jawzī dans *La Question de Palestine*, 424-25, sous le nom fautif et mal vocalisé de Saliba al-Juzi.

41 Cité par Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 98, puis 102 : *kāna ya'tazim an yabqā bayna ahli-hi wa-aşdiqā'ihī, fa-qad balagha al-ḥanīn bihi mablaghan shadīdan, walakinna wālidī, lā yas-tatīr an ya'isha fī jaww malī bi-l-dasā'is wa-l-'ubūdiyya*.

nationalisme arabe, mais il fut aussi, sans conteste, un Russe et un Soviétique assimilé, un Azerbaïdjanais d'adoption. En l'absence de renseignements biographiques plus précis et sans pouvoir pour le moment accéder à l'intégralité de son œuvre, c'est donc par le truchement de son *magnum opus* en arabe, *Min tārīkh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām*⁴² (*De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam*), que nous pouvons reconstruire plus précisément les rapports qu'entretenaient, dans les années 1920, Bandalī Jawzī avec les courants intellectuels et les interprétations de l'histoire de l'islam de son temps : le nationalisme arabe, les diverses formes de réformisme musulman, du jadidisme libéral aux courants socialisants, et les différentes interprétations marxistes de l'islam, des communismes nationaux à l'orientalisme soviétique.

7.2 Une interprétation marxiste de l'histoire islamique

Min tārīkh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām fut publié à Jérusalem en août 1928 par l'imprimerie Bayt al-Maqdis, sous la supervision de Khalīl al-Sakākīnī. Trois cents exemplaires de l'ouvrage furent envoyés au Caire à Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ṭāhīr (1896-1974), le directeur palestinien de la revue al-Shūrā, lui aussi défenseur du nationalisme arabe⁴³. Malgré les suspicions de certains intellectuels arabes, comme Muḥammad Kurd 'Alī (1876-1953), devant les velléités de répandre le communisme qu'ils prêtaient, non sans raison, à l'auteur, l'ouvrage fut rapidement épuisé et reconnu comme une contribution importante à l'histoire de la pensée en islam⁴⁴. La traductrice de l'ouvrage en anglais, Tamara Sonn, le considère comme la première interprétation marxiste de l'islam⁴⁵ : l'ouvrage s'inscrivait en réalité dans le débat soviétique des années 1920 sur la nature de l'islam, il n'était donc pas isolé. Pour elle, Bandalī Jawzī décrit l'islam comme une « réforme sociale en faveur de la fin de l'oppression » ; les Omeyyades puis les Abbassides subvertirent le message originel mais « l'esprit égalitariste de l'islam fut maintenu vivant dans divers mouvements de réformes au cours de l'histoire islamique »⁴⁶. Son objectif ultime aurait

42 Le mot *min* prend ici le même sens que le *zu* allemand dans le titre de Nietzsche *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, qui indique la tentative, la démarche hypothétique sur la provenance, la logique et la valeur des valeurs.

43 Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 105.

44 Sonn, *Interpreting Islam*, 3-11.

45 Sonn, *Interpreting Islam*, 39-52 ; Sonn, "Bandali al-Jawzi's *Min Tarikh*".

46 Sonn, *Interpreting Islam*, 39 : "Jawzi characterizes Islam as a social reform demanding the end of oppression. The exigencies of power politics under the dynastic caliphates,

donc été d' « éveiller le monde musulman à la nature essentielle de l'islam »⁴⁷ et d'établir la « justice sociale fondée sur l'essentielle égalité de tous les hommes devant Dieu »⁴⁸. Bandalī Jawzī se serait donc proposé de suivre « les progrès de cet objectif depuis sa genèse dans le cœur du Prophète jusqu'au temps présent »⁴⁹ pour établir « la compatibilité des valeurs islamiques et socialistes »⁵⁰.

Cette interprétation est à revoir : Bandalī Jawzī exploite, dans *Min tārīkh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām*, la méthode du matérialisme historique pour faire une histoire du communisme en islam, conçu comme un dépérissement de la religion islamique, au point de vue économique (l'évolution de la propriété de la terre, des activités commerciales), social (la position de la femme) et politique (l'organisation du pouvoir), depuis l'époque du Prophète jusqu'au mouvement des Qarmates dont l'histoire est prolongée jusqu'au xv^e siècle. L'objectif ultime est de prouver à ses lecteurs arabes que l'avenir du monde arabe passe par le nationalisme arabe (ou panarabisme) et le socialisme : si le monde arabe a été capable une première fois de sortir de la religion pour construire une préfiguration de la société socialiste chez les Qarmates, il en sera capable une seconde fois à la suite de l'URSS. Il faut signaler encore que l'ouvrage fut surtout réédité dans les années 1970 et au début des années 1980, à l'apogée des mouvements progressistes au Moyen-Orient et juste avant le début de l'extension de l'empire du néolibéralisme autoritaire⁵¹. L'édition que nous utilisons est précédée d'une préface⁵² du grand intellectuel marxiste libanais Ḥusayn Muruwwa (1910-87), écrite trois ans après la publication en 1978 de son œuvre la plus célèbre, *al-Naza'āt al-māddiyya fī l-falsafa al-'arabiyya wa-l-islāmīyya* (Les Tendances matérialistes dans la philosophie arabe et islamique). Bandalī Jawzī y est qualifié de pionnier et précurseur (*rā'id*) car il fut le premier, dans le monde arabe, à associer la méthode

according to his portrayal, vitiated and actually distorted that message, until it was virtually unrecognizable in any practical form. But Islam's egalitarian spirit was kept alive, Jawzi argues, in various reform movements throughout Islamic history."

47 Sonn, "Bandalī al-Jawzī's *Min Tarikh*", 89.

48 Sonn, "Bandalī al-Jawzī's *Min Tarikh*", 90.

49 Sonn, "Bandalī al-Jawzī's *Min Tarikh*", 90.

50 Sonn, "Bandalī al-Jawzī's *Min Tarikh*", 104.

51 Voici les rééditions (cf. Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 136-42) : Damascus, s.e., 1972 ; Jerusalem, Manshūrāt Ṣalāh al-Dīn, 1977 ; Jerusalem, Ittihād al-'Amm li-l-Kuttāb wa-l-Ṣaḥāfiyyīn al-Filistīniyyīn, s.d. ; Beirut (?), Jam'iyyat al-Ṣadāqa al-Filistīniyya al-Sufyātiyya, 1981 ; Dār al-Jalīl, 1982 ; Beirut, Dār al-Rawā'i, s.d.

52 Muruwwa, "Hākadhā naqra' Bandalī Jawzī".

du matérialisme historique et l'étude du patrimoine arabo-musulman⁵³. Il note aussi la prise de position (*inḥiyāz*) de l'auteur en faveur des Qarmates, comme mouvement intellectuel et social⁵⁴, prise de position qui n'entache pas la qualité de la recherche car elle repose sur une argumentation solide et s'explique par l'historicité même de l'œuvre considérée, écrite à une époque où l'application du matérialisme historique à l'histoire de l'islam n'en était qu'à ses prodromes⁵⁵. Pour Ḥusayn Muruwwa, et l'histoire des rééditions tend à le confirmer, il ne faisait aucun doute que Bandalī Jawzī appliqua, bien qu'imparfaitement, le matérialisme historique à l'histoire de l'islam.

L'introduction sert à Bandalī Jawzī pour affirmer l'unicité des lois sociales (*nawāmīs ijtīmā'īyya*)⁵⁶. Il reconnaît aux historiens allemands de la fin du XVIII^e et de la première moitié du XIX^e siècle (Barthold Georg Niebuhr, Leopold von Ranke et Friedrich Christoph Schlosser sont allégués) le mérite d'avoir posé les principes de l'historiographie et des méthodes de la critique historique modernes, mais considère que ces historiens maljugèrent de l'histoire de l'Orient qu'ils ne connaissaient pas ou mal, et furent incapables d'y déceler une évolution (*taṭawwur*) ou la réduisirent à un seul facteur ou une seule cause⁵⁷. Il en est de même chez Renan qui se trompa dans ses textes sur l'islam et les sémites, comme le prouvent à l'évidence la vitalité des mouvements de pensée (*ḥaraka fikriyya*) qui animent aujourd'hui le monde arabe. *A contrario* il se prévaut des vues de Bartol'd : les mêmes lois sociales valent pour l'Orient et pour l'Occident. Bandalī Jawzī en tire plusieurs conséquences importantes. D'abord, il faut écarter la religion comme cause du déclin du monde oriental⁵⁸ ; ce sont l'immigration et les conquêtes par des peuples non civilisés (*mutawahḥisha*) comme les Mongols et les Turcs, les croisades, l'essor de nouveaux centres de civilisation en Europe (*marākiz al-ḥadāra al-jadīda*) et le détournement conséquent des routes commerciales qui en sont les causes réelles, causes matérielles et non idéologiques, mais ce n'est pas tout : si les lois de l'évolution des sociétés sont les mêmes, cela signifie que les sociétés orientales passeront à l'avenir par les mêmes étapes historiques (*marāḥil, adwār*

53 Muruwwa, "Hākadhā naqra' Bandalī Jāwzī", 1 : *Lam yakun qad ittafaqa fi-hi [hādihā l-waqt] li-aḥad min al-bāḥithīn fi l-'ālam al-'arabī an ya'qida mithl hādihā l-ṣila al-dirāsiyya bayna al-manhaj al-māddī al-tārikhī wa-l-turāth al-'arabī – al-islāmī al-fikrī.*

54 Muruwwa, "Hākadhā naqra' Bandalī Jāwzī", 2.

55 Muruwwa, "Hākadhā naqra' Bandalī Jāwzī", 3-4. *Kamā anna mujmal hādihī l-ṣurūf dhātahā lam takun li-takfī li-bāḥith yashuququ ṭariqan bikran ilā mithl hādihā l-naw' min al-kitāba wifqa al-manhaj al-māddī al-tārikhī (4).*

56 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 11-16/52-71. Nous citerons d'abord la version arabe puis la traduction.

57 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 12-13/72.

58 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 16/74 : "Inḥiṭāṭ al-'umrān fi l-bilād al-sharqiyya".

ijtimā'īyya) que les sociétés occidentales. Les mêmes mots répétés viennent parfaire la conclusion, de telle sorte que *Min tārīkh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām* offre un double miroir : d'un côté il montre comment, dans le passé, le monde musulman a pu sortir de la religion pour préfigurer une société socialiste, dont les germes furent perpétués dans les guildes, les confréries soufies, et transmis à l'Occident ; de l'autre, il affirme avec confiance que, bientôt, l'Orient parcourra à nouveau, à l'instar de l'Occident, mais, comme nous le verrons, sans nécessairement passer par le stade du capitalisme, le chemin qui conduit à l'édification du socialisme. Il faut noter que des idées similaires, quoique moins élaborées, avaient été exprimées en 1923 par un couple de communistes tatars, Z. et D. Navshirvanov, dans un article de cinq pages intitulé « Les tendances communistes dans l'histoire de la civilisation musulmane » et publié dans *Novyi Vostok*⁵⁹. Il y aurait un communisme primitif à l'époque du Prophète qui se serait épanoui dans le soufisme, chez les ismaéliens, dans la *futuwwa* anatolienne et dans les guildes de métiers. Les auteurs citent en particulier la révolte de Bedreddīn de Simavna contre les Ottomans en 1415-18 : Bandalī Jawzī reprendra le même exemple en conclusion, dans un passage certainement inspiré par ses devanciers⁶⁰. Pour les deux auteurs, la tâche des historiens n'est pas d'analyser l'histoire de l'Orient à l'aune des références à l'islam éparses chez Marx et Engels, mais de partir des méthodes marxistes pour montrer que l'Orient est sujet aux mêmes lois historiques que l'Occident. Les idées essentielles de l'introduction de Bandalī Jawzī sont là, quoiqu'une inflexion soit particulièrement nette : alors que les Navshirvanov considèrent que le communisme musulman s'exprima par excellence dans le soufisme turco-persan, Bandalī Jawzī entend montrer que ce sont les Arabes qui sont parvenus au stade du communisme en Islam, et expliquer précisément, à partir des sources historiques, comment l'islam y a déperé.

Double miroir et double discours, donc : comme l'atteste la dédicace de l'ouvrage (non reproduite dans la version rééditée de 1981) à la « jeunesse arabe qui se réveille. À ceux qui ont libéré leurs esprits de l'influence des fausses croyances sociales, religieuses et nationales [ou nationalistes ?] ; à ceux dont l'entendement est sain et la conscience éveillée »⁶¹, Bandalī Jawzī écrivait un

59 Kemper, "The Soviet Discourse", 6-8.

60 Le poète communiste turc Nazım Hikmet écrivit lui aussi, en 1936, un long poème consacré à Bedreddīn, intitulé *Simavne Kadısı Oğlu Şeyh Bedreddin Destanı* (Istanbul, Yeni Kitapçı, 1936). La figure de Bedreddīn paraît avoir joué, pour la gauche turque, un rôle stratégique analogue à celui du Prophète Muḥammad dans le monde arabe.

61 Cité par Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 104 : *Ilā l-shabība al-'arabiyya al-nāhiḍa. Ilā lladhīna ḥarrarū 'uqūla-hum min ta'thīr al-khurāfāt al-ijtimā'īyya wa-l-dīniyya wa-l-qawmīyya. Ilā aṣḥāb al-'uqūl al-salīma wa-l-ḍamā'ir al-ḥayya*. Sonn, *Interpreting Islam*, 69, traduit :

texte d'action en arabe, pour des Arabes et d'un point de vue panarabe, d'où la mention des fausses croyances nationales ou nationalistes. Mais en même temps, installé en URSS, à la fin des années 1920 marquées par une vie intellectuelle foisonnante et théâtre de nombreux débats sur la nature de l'islam, il ne fait guère de doute qu'il faille aussi comprendre l'œuvre de Bandalī Jawzī dans ce cadre ; de ce point de vue, *Min tāriḫ al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām* est aussi un plaidoyer pour le communisme national, qui attestait du potentiel révolutionnaire de l'Orient musulman, du refus de toute essentialisation de l'islam et de la nécessité pour l'URSS d'y organiser la résistance à l'impérialisme en soutenant les partis communistes et les mouvements nationaux. En ce sens, Bandalī Jawzī se rapprochait bien du sultangalievisme, bien que le rôle directeur du mouvement fût confié par lui aux Arabes et non aux Tatars.

Le premier chapitre de l'ouvrage, intitulé *usus al-islām al-iqtisādīyya* (« les fondements économiques de l'islam »)⁶² porte sur l'époque et sur la vie du Prophète ; il s'inscrit à la fois dans les débats orientalistes issus du XIX^e siècle, tels la sincérité de Muḥammad ou la situation à La Mecque et Médine à la veille de la naissance de l'islam, et les débats des marxistes des années 1920 – qui n'étaient pas, pour la plupart, des orientalistes professionnels – sur la nature économique de l'islam. Pour Bandalī Jawzī, qui cite des orientalistes comme Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918), Leone Caetani (1869-1935), Henri Lammens (1862-1937), Nöldeke et Bartold, l'islam, plus qu'une idée religieuse, est un phénomène économique et social ; l'histoire de l'islam, par conséquent, s'explique par des raisons historiques, économiques, et non par le zèle religieux ou l'extrémisme (*ta'aṣṣub*) des partis religieux⁶³. Bandalī Jawzī commence par mettre en avant la compréhension intuitive de la situation socio-économique du Hedjaz par le Prophète, qui lui permet de faire avancer sa réforme religieuse.

Il prit conscience de l'origine du dynamisme économique et social qui se produisait, de son temps, à La Mecque, capitale du Hedjaz, et sut comment en profiter et l'employer à ses fins religieuses ou sociales élevées⁶⁴.

“To the reawakening Arab youth ; to those who are liberating their minds from the influence of irrational beliefs *about* social, religious, and national affairs ; to those with healthy understanding and vibrant minds.” Peut-être qu'*about* est de trop et introduit plus d'ambiguïté qu'il n'en lève. Le texte arabe est plus tranchant que la traduction anglaise, quoique non dépourvu de souplesse.

62 Jawzī, *Min tāriḫ*, 17-53/75-91.

63 Jawzī, *Min tāriḫ*, 17/75.

64 Jawzī, *Min tāriḫ*, 18/75 : *Adraka maṣḍar al-ḥaraka al-iqtisādīyya wa-l-ijtimā'īyya al-latī zaharat fī ayyāmihi fī Makka 'āṣimat al-Ḥijāz, wa-'arīfa kayfa yastafīd minhā wa-yusakhkhiruhā li-aghrāḍihi al-sāmīyya al-dīniyya kānat aw al-ijtimā'īyya.*

Certains orientalistes attribuaient le succès de l'islam à la sécheresse et la pauvreté du milieu naturel qui poussèrent les Arabes à conquérir le monde (Caetani), ou plus généralement reconnaissaient que l'islam était un mouvement religieux qui réussit pour des raisons non religieuses (De Goeje). D'où la nécessité, pour Bandalī Jawzī, de mieux connaître le milieu et la société du Hedjaz à la veille de l'Hégire ; pour cela, l'information est empruntée à Henri Lammens⁶⁵. La Mecque est décrite comme un grand centre commercial, avec peu d'activités agricoles et industrielles, et religieux, grâce au pèlerinage et la présence de la Kaaba, dominé par une élite très enrichie par ses activités commerciales excédentaires et la pratique de l'usure. La mention de l'usure est importante : Bandalī Jawzī en déduit la pratique, à grande échelle, de la condamnation coranique (Q 2 :276, 286, 24 :34) et la place au coeur de sa reconstruction de la structure de classes (*ṭabaqa*) binaire de La Mecque. Il fait fond sur l'étude de la terminologie coranique et des poètes préislamiques sensibles au désordre social, tout en intégrant des concepts marxistes contemporains⁶⁶ : une élite dirigeante (le *mala'* de Q 38 :69) de marchands, banquiers (*aṣḥāb al-bunūk*) et gardiens de la Ka'ba domine et vit de l'exploitation de la masse des pauvres (*a'izza* de Q 7), prolétaires (*ṣa'ālīk*)⁶⁷, esclaves et hors-la-loi (*ardhāl* de Q 111). Il n'est pas anodin que cette structure sociale soit comparée par Bandalī Jawzī à celle de Byzance et celle de son propre temps. Dans le débat soviétique des années 1920, Bandalī Jawzī se rapproche des thèses de Reisner (1926) et de Beliaev (1930), des premiers travaux de Klimovitch (1927), qui voyaient dans l'islam un mouvement de petits marchands défavorisés, opposé à l'aristocratie commerçante, financière et religieuse de La Mecque⁶⁸.

La mission de Muḥammad a consisté en une réforme de cet ordre social injuste. Contrairement à ce que l'on peut lire chez des réformistes musulmans

65 Lammens, *Le Berceau de l'islam*.

66 Cf. Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 28/80 : *Alladhī yazhar min muṭāla'at al-Qur'an wa-im'an al-naẓar fi l-mufradāt al-musta'mala hunāk...*

67 Selon Rodionov, "Profiles under Pressure", 47-48, c'est à Bandalī Jawzī (Panteleimon Dzhuze, uniquement qualifié ici de diplômé de l'académie théologique de Kazan) qu'est attribuée la traduction arabe de "prolétaire" par *ṣu'lūk* (pl. *ṣa'ālīk*), d'abord pour une banderole dans un congrès puis dans le slogan "Prolétaires de tous les pays, unissez-vous !", qui figurait sur les premiers billets soviétiques en 1919 (en russe, anglais, allemand, français, italien, anglais, chinois, arabe). L'auteur de l'article, très hostile au régime soviétique, y voit une visée ironique car pour lui, un *ṣu'lūk* est rien moins qu'un brigand ; rien n'est moins sûr : un orientaliste comme Bandalī Jawzī savait que les *ṣa'ālīk* étaient des poètes-brigands de l'époque de la Gentilité, en marge du système tribal, parfois assimilés, depuis le XIX^e siècle, à des proto-socialistes qui prenaient aux riches pour donner aux pauvres. Cf. Azari, "Ṣu'lūk".

68 Kemper, "The Soviet Discourse", passim.

comme Rashīd Riḍā (1865-1935), voire même chez des libéraux comme Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal (1888-1956), tous deux biographes du Prophète, ce n'est pas la corruption morale de la société mecquoise qui appelait un réformateur, mais les conditions sociales et économiques : « la structure sociale de La Mecque à la fin du VI^e siècle prépara une place dans la société pour une personne qui serait dotée de la force et des qualités nécessaires »⁶⁹, comme la sensibilité, la gentillesse, l'intelligence, le sens politique, l'abnégation, la conscience de l'intérêt général et la connaissance du milieu mecquois. La vie du Prophète s'analyse donc selon deux facteurs déterminants : la formation (*mansha'*) et le milieu (*wasaf*). Muḥammad fut un pauvre orphelin : le Coran lui rappelle que la pauvreté est la source même de sa force (Q 44 :2-5) et Bandalī Jawzī fait du niveau de richesse la condition première de la réceptivité à la nouvelle religion. Son activité commerciale au service de la riche veuve Khadīja, qui devint ensuite sa femme, fut l'école de la pratique où il put découvrir la situation sociale de La Mecque, y réfléchir et l'analyser, et chercher des remèdes à ses maux⁷⁰.

Bandalī Jawzī réfute d'une part les historiens européens qui prétendaient que le Prophète était un capitaliste qui défendait les intérêts des riches, d'autre part ceux qui, à l'instar d'Hubert Grimme, faisaient de lui un socialiste ou un communiste. La solution qu'il offre est la suivante :

[Muḥammad] se mit du côté des pauvres et des prolétaires opprimés avec un grand courage, défendit ouvertement leurs intérêts vitaux en s'exposant au danger, indifférent aux conséquences de ses actes, poussé à cela par des facteurs moraux et religieux, plus qu'économiques ou financiers⁷¹.

Muḥammad est un authentique réformateur mais un réformateur inconscient : à lui-même, les causes sociales disparaissent, voilées par les motivations religieuses (*muḥtajiba bi-ḥijāb min al-dīn al-kathīf*)⁷². Voilà la ruse de l'histoire à l'origine de l'islam, et une solution matérialiste au vieux débat orientaliste sur la sincérité du Prophète. Aussi Bandalī Jawzī voit-il, sous l'opposition manifeste

69 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 30/81 : *Al-niḡām al-ijtimā'ī fi Makka a'adda fi awākhir al-'aṣr al-sādis mahallan ijtimā'īyyan li-shakhṣ tawāfarat fihī al-qiwā aw al-ṣifāt al-lāzima.*

70 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 32/81.

71 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 36/83 : *Innahu waqafa fi jānib al-fuqarā' wa-l-ṣa'ālik al-mazlūmīn waq-fata rajul mughāmīr fi l-ḥayāt, wa-dāfa' a jahāran 'an maṣāliḥihim al-ḥayawīyya mu'arriḍan nafsahu li-l-khaṭar wa-ghayr mubālīn bi-'awāqib 'amalīhi madfū'an ilā dhālika bi-'awāmil adabīyya wa-dīnīyya akthar minhu bi-'awāmil iqtisādīyya aw māliyya.*

72 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 36/83.

entre infidèles et croyants, une opposition réelle, économique, entre riches et pauvres : la prédication mecquoise a pour thème principal la confrontation des riches, les riches oncles du Prophète lui-même, Abū Lahab et Mughira (Q 113 :1-3), et les riches Quraysh qui craignaient de voir leurs positions économiques et religieuses dominantes menacées (Q 36 :38 et 22 :6), et la compassion pour les pauvres (Q 26 :14-22). Le problème de l'infidélité et de la conversion à l'islam naquit donc d'une divergence de points de vue sur les réformes nécessaires pour régler les problèmes économiques et sociaux de La Mecque.

L'hostilité de plus en plus violente des Quraysh conduisit à l'Hégire : Muḥammad devint alors un chef politique (*sayyid*, *za'im*, *ra'īs mamlaka wāsi'a*)⁷³ doté du pouvoir de mener des réformes importantes : la destruction des liens claniques de la Gentilité (*ʿaṣabiyyat al-jāhiliyya*), la réalisation des valeurs d'amour, d'égalité et de fraternité, l'amélioration de la condition des pauvres grâce à l'aumône légale, ainsi que d'autres mesures sociales (*sharāʿ ijtimā'iyya*) en faveur des femmes, des esclaves, contre l'infanticide et l'usure⁷⁴. Mais cela ne fait pas de Muḥammad un socialiste : l'aumône légale, la *zakāt*, est une mesure de réduction des écarts de richesse, écrit-il, et non de suppression, comme dans les régimes socialistes aujourd'hui. Plus généralement, Muḥammad conduisit des réformes dont on trouve des analogues à Rome ou à Byzance, sans s'attaquer aux causes des maladies de la société⁷⁵, comme le font les socialistes :

De ce point de vue, il n'y a rien d'incomparable avec les prophètes qui l'ont précédé, plus particulièrement les prophètes d'Israël : il préféra user d'expédients moraux – sauf en de rares occasions – plutôt que de recourir aux mêmes méthodes que certains réformateurs et hommes politiques européens, comme Lénine, chef du communisme russe, ou Mussolini et d'autres⁷⁶.

Le Prophète est donc un prophète, qui croyait réellement agir sur commande de Dieu pour instaurer son ordre sur terre. Nul ne saurait lui faire le grief de ne pas avoir atteint, au VII^e siècle, le même niveau de conscience historique que les socialistes du XX^e siècle. La fin du chapitre est consacrée à réfuter plus particulièrement la thèse selon laquelle Muḥammad avait l'intention d'abolir

73 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 41/86.

74 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 42/86. Sonn traduit de manière erronée *ʿaṣabiyyat al-jāhiliyya* par "ignorant fanaticism".

75 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 42/86 : *Li-tuqṭal kullu jarāthīm al-amrāq al-ijtimā'iyya*.

76 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 44/87.

la propriété privée des terres : pour Bandalī Jawzī, le système tribal arabe suffisait à empêcher la constitution de grands domaines entre les mains d'un seul homme, et la rente foncière était très faible ; il n'y avait donc pas à La Mecque de classe paysanne exploitée par de grands propriétaires terriens, aussi le Prophète ne pensa-t-il pas à abolir la propriété privée⁷⁷. Lorsqu'il fut à Médine, il trouva bien une population de paysans pauvres, sans aristocratie marchande et financière pour l'opprimer, ce qui explique le changement de langage et d'attitude du Prophète dans le Coran, mais les événements politiques conduisirent le Prophète à se montrer conciliant et à passer, au nom de l'amour de ses contribuables et d'intérêts bien compris, des compromis (*tasāhul mutabādal*) avec les Quraysh. Le traité de Ḥudaybiyya (Q 9 :60) inaugure le ralliement massif des Quraysh à l'islam, non pour des raisons religieuses mais politiques et socio-économiques⁷⁸. L'islam en tant que force politique naquit donc d'un compromis entre Muḥammad et l'habile chef de la république mecquoise (*ra'īs jumhūrīyyat Makka al-khabīr al-muḥannak*), Abū Sufyān : au Prophète est reconnue la souveraineté spirituelle et temporelle, les obligations religieuses de la *zakāt* et de la prière, l'abandon des idoles sont acceptés ; en échange, La Mecque reste le centre religieux du nouveau pouvoir politique (*mamlaka, jumhūrīyya rūḥīyya jadīda*), les Quraysh sont intégrés à l'administration et le commerce demeure libre⁷⁹.

L'histoire de l'islam va se poursuivre dans les deux directions frayées à l'époque du Prophète : le message religieux réformiste de Muḥammad à La Mecque est développé par divers groupes sociaux qui le transforment par étapes en véritable doctrine communiste consciente, affranchie de toute dimension religieuse ; quant à la politique médinoise de Muḥammad, poursuivie et parachevée par les dynasties califales, elle conduit à l'oubli rapide de la dimension sociale de l'islam et au renforcement de l'aristocratie fortunée, commerçante et financière, qui avait été, à l'époque mecquoise, la plus vivement combattue. Peut-être était-ce déjà la thèse principale de l'œuvre de jeunesse de Bandalī Jawzī, *Muḥammad le Mecquois et Muḥammad le Médinois*.

77 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 46-48/88-90. D'après Kemper, "The Soviet Discourse", 25-28, Tomara, professeur à l'Université des travailleurs de l'Orient, défendit en 1930 la théorie selon laquelle la base de classe de l'islam était formée des pauvres urbains, paysans appauvris et soumis aux paysans riches qui pratiquaient l'usure, et en concurrence pour les terres avec les nomades. Il interprétait l'apostasie à la suite de la mort du Prophète (*ridda*) comme la tentative des Bédouins de récupérer les terres distribuées par le Prophète aux paysans pauvres.

78 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 49/89.

79 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 52/90.

Dès l'époque des conquêtes, la question sociale passe au second plan ; en même temps, les conditions économiques et sociales déterminent l'apparition de mouvements socialistes et communistes⁸⁰. À l'époque du calife 'Uthmān (644-56) puis à l'époque omeyyade, le système administratif et fiscal est dévoyé au service de l'enrichissement de l'élite arabe, qui constitue de surcroît de grands domaines avec les terres conquises en Égypte et en Irak qu'elle fait exploiter par des paysans pauvres et des esclaves noirs : une classe paysanne exploitée se constitue. Par ailleurs, le calife 'Umar (634-44), qui décide de maintenir l'impôt foncier (*kharāj*) sur les terres des convertis, suscite, en lien avec la *shu'ūbiyya* iranienne, évoquée d'après Ignaz Goldziher (1850-1921), la première opposition nationale au régime califal. Les Abbassides conduisent la même politique économique et financière que les Omeyyades mais réintègrent l'élite persane, supprimant ainsi son potentiel de révolte, tout en continuant à opprimer la classe paysanne et les anciens propriétaires et religieux zoroastriens. Tous les premiers soulèvements contre le régime sont expliqués par le recours à des causes économiques et sociales, là encore voilées par des motivations conscientes d'ordre religieux : « cette coloration [religieuse] n'était rien d'autre qu'un voile léger qui dissimulait des facteurs politiques et économiques, qui sont la raison réelle de ces révoltes »⁸¹. Quant aux changements de politique militaire et coloniale, ils conduisent à la militarisation du pouvoir et à la féodalisation de l'Empire à l'époque abbasside. Dans le débat soviétique, l'islam primitif en vint à être considéré lui-même comme essentiellement féodal autour de 1931-1932, en lien avec la clôture du débat sur le mode de production asiatique et l'appesantissement de la chappe de plomb du stalinisme : la position officielle niait désormais l'existence d'une formation économique spécifique à l'Orient, considéré comme relevant tout uniment du féodalisme, et l'islam devint par conséquent – sans aucune preuve tirée de l'étude des sources – l'idéologie des « seigneurs féodaux » de La Mecque⁸². Bandalī Jawzī est évidemment loin de cette projection rétrospective de la situation abbasside sur l'islam primitif, mais n'en considère pas moins que l'émergence du communisme en islam se produit avec la féodalisation de l'Empire sous les Abbassides, c'est-à-dire sans passer par le stade du capitalisme.

80 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 54-77/92-102. Sonn traduit fautivement le titre du chapitre par "Arab Imperialism and the Vanquished Nation". En arabe, *al-imbarātūriyya al-'arabiyya wa-l-unam al-maghliiba* signifie en fait "L'Empire arabe et les nations vaincues" ; impérialisme se traduit par *imbiryāliyya*.

81 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 74/101 : *Hādhihi al-ṣabgha lam takun illā hijāban shaffāfan yaḥjub mā warā'ahu min al-'awāmil al-siyāsiyya wa-l-iqtisādiyya allatī hiya al-sabab al-ḥaqīqī li-hādhihi al-thawrāt*.

82 Kemper, "The Soviet Discourse", 34-40.

Les trois chapitres suivants décrivent trois mouvements intellectuels en islam dans lesquels le référent religieux est dominant, puis instrumentalisé consciemment, enfin dépassé : c'est la révolte de Bābak et ses idées socialistes (*ta'ālīmuḥu al-ishtirākīyya*), l'ismaélisme et le mouvement qarmate. Rien n'illustre mieux la subtile polysémie du discours de Bandalī Jawzī que le chapitre consacré au mouvement de Bābak. Il naît à la fin du VIII^e siècle en Azerbaïdjan abbasside comme conséquence (*natīja*) du féodalisme, hérité de l'Empire sassanide et issu de la militarisation de l'Empire. Il faut noter qu'à la même époque, Bandalī Jawzī commençait à travailler plus précisément sur les sources de l'histoire de l'Azerbaïdjan à cette période, à les traduire en russe et à écrire sur la capitation et l'impôt foncier en islam⁸³. Cela explique, selon lui, les comparaisons des historiens musulmans avec le mouvement de Mazdak au VI^e siècle : non seulement les deux révoltes sont déterminées par les mêmes conditions économiques et sociales, comparables au Moyen Âge européen et à la Russie jusqu'à l'abolition du servage en 1861, mais attestent de surcroît la transmission des idées socialistes de Mazdak dans la classe paysanne exploitée, indifféremment avant et après la conquête musulmane, puis dans tous les mouvements révolutionnaires de l'islam⁸⁴. Il est intéressant de noter que Bandalī Jawzī reconnaissait parfaitement le potentiel révolutionnaire des campagnes. Le mouvement de Bābak remettait en cause non pas l'islam, la domination arabe ou l'appartenance à la communauté des croyants, mais l'ordre social injuste qui opprimait les classes inférieures à l'intérieur de toutes les communautés de l'Empire. Bābak voulait une société sans classes, sans oppression, sans pauvres ni riches, régie par la justice, la fraternité et l'égalité : c'est la raison pour laquelle Bandalī Jawzī le qualifie de socialiste. Les deux mesures principales, connues seulement d'après des sources adverses proches des milieux califaux, dont l'information provient de la classique *Geschichte der Chalifen* (1848-51) de Gustav Weil (1808-89), auraient été la redistribution des terres, mais sans abolition de la propriété privée, et la libération des femmes⁸⁵. On se souvient que Bandalī Jawzī avait traduit en arabe, en 1903, *Le Matriarcat chez les Arabes*, de l'orientaliste hollandais Wilken, rejoignant par là maints penseurs chrétiens et musulmans d'Orient qui virent dans la condition faite à la femme une des causes majeures du retard de l'Orient. L'échec du mouvement est attribué à des divisions internes mais surtout à l'incapacité, pour ce mouvement iranien, de s'ouvrir franchement aux populations turques et arabes⁸⁶.

83 Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 136-42.

84 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 95/110.

85 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 90-91/108-9.

86 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 116/119-20.

En résumé, Bābak représente la première étape réformiste et nationaliste sur la voie du communisme, dont la base sociale est l'alliance de la paysannerie et des propriétaires zoroastriens exclus du pouvoir.

On se souvient aussi que Bandalī Jawzī avait publié en 1923-1924 dans *Maarif va mādāniyyat* plusieurs articles sous le titre « De l'histoire du mouvement communiste en islam au IX^e siècle », consacrés au mouvement de Bābak. Or l'écrivain azerbaïdjanais Cəfər Cabbarlı (1899-1934), proche du parti nationaliste Mūsavāt, qui avait étudié à la Faculté orientale de l'université de Bakou entre 1924 et 1927 avec Bandalī Jawzī, s'empara de Bābak pour en faire un symbole national dans sa tragédie *Od gəlini* (*La Mariée de feu*, 1928), qui chante la résistance du peuple azerbaïdjanais athée à la conquête musulmane, mais qui fut aussi interprétée comme une critique de la domination soviétique⁸⁷. Il serait intéressant de comparer les articles de 1923-24 avec le chapitre de *Min tārikh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām* : dans ce dernier ouvrage, Bābak est décrit comme le chef d'un mouvement avant tout persan et religieux, simple étape dans un procès historique beaucoup plus large de dépérissement de la religion. Bandalī Jawzī avait par ailleurs considéré les invasions turques et mongoles comme l'une des principales causes du déclin de la civilisation musulmane. Lorsqu'il écrivait pour un public azerbaïdjanais, Bābak, singularisé, pouvait en revanche devenir l'ancrage d'un communisme national, autant que d'une résistance nationale au bolchévisme russe.

Dans la logique de *L'Histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam*, les ismaéliens permettent de franchir une étape supplémentaire dans le dépérissement de l'islam grâce à l'invention d'une organisation adaptée, qui évoque le parti léniniste : pour Bandalī Jawzī, les ismaéliens avaient un véritable programme politique et social qu'ils faisaient passer consciemment pour un programme religieux ; seulement aux degrés supérieurs de l'initiation dans l'organisation découvrait-on sa vraie nature. Autrement dit, les ismaéliens découvrent, pour la première fois, la forme du parti d'avant-garde et l'islam comme idéologie mobilisatrice pour les masses. Les grands principes du mouvement s'opposent terme à terme aux piliers du pouvoir abbasside, l'islam sunnite, la solidarité tribale et le nationalisme chauvin, en mettant en avant des droits égaux pour tous les peuples de l'Empire et une religion rationnelle, sans révélation, intégrée dans un système néoplatonicien⁸⁸. Les buts politiques conscients sont d'abord similaires à ceux des chiïtes : donner le pouvoir aux Alides. Bandalī

87 L'orientaliste soviétique Tamara publia en 1936 à Moscou un ouvrage en russe sur Bābak, que nous n'avons pas pu consulter. Il existe aussi un film éponyme en azéri d'Eldar Quliyev sur Bābak, sorti en 1979.

88 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 130-31/127.

Jawzī prolongera ses réflexions sur le mahdisme quelques années plus tard⁸⁹. Ils deviennent ensuite l'égalité entre les sexes et l'abolition de la propriété privée de la terre, préalable à sa redistribution gratuite. Deux caractéristiques singularisent les ismaéliens par rapport aux mouvements de type Bābak qui les ont précédés. D'abord les fondements scientifiques de leur doctrine :

La différence entre ceux-là [les partis communistes avant l'apparition de l'ismaélisme] et les communistes [les ismaéliens], c'est que les ismaéliens firent reposer leurs revendications sur des principes philosophiques scientifiques et non sur de purs principes moraux, comme le firent les communistes qui les précédèrent⁹⁰.

Ensuite l'internationalisme, écrit en français dans le texte et traduit par *ikhā' haqīqī*, comparé à l'universalisme de l'islam ou du catholicisme. L'internationalisme ismaélien repose sur les exigences de la raison (*maṭālib al-ʿaql al-salīm*) et constitue le premier véritable dépassement du nationalisme en islam, en opposition avec la *shu'ūbiyya* iranienne chauvine (en français dans le texte, traduit par *ʿaṣabiyya qaumiyya*). Il paraît évident que Bandalī Jawzī, à l'unisson des communistes nationaux, prend ici position contre la monopolisation croissante du pouvoir par les bolcheviks russes, et contre la transformation de l'Orient en simple théâtre de la lutte de l'URSS contre ses ennemis capitalistes, manifestée par les conclusions, déjà en retrait par rapport à l'époque de la guerre civile, du Congrès de Bakou en juillet 1920⁹¹ et la ligne pour le moins fluctuante, au gré des intérêts de Moscou, du Komintern⁹². L'utilisation du terme « chauvinisme » fait référence aux *Thèses d'avril* (1917) de Lénine mais aussi à Sultan Galiev qui avait fustigé le « chauvinisme grand-russe », lequel, selon lui, ne faisait que parer des nouveaux atours de la dictature du prolétariat le vieux populisme russe du XIX^e siècle ; il y opposait le concept de nation prolétaire et revendiquait pour les Tatars un rôle directeur dans l'exportation

89 Notons qu'il publie en juin-juillet 1933 dans le *Muqataṭaf*, vol. 83, n°1-2, deux articles intitulés "al-Sufyānī", qui portent sur ce phénomène.

90 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 144/132 : *Al-farq bayna hā'ulā' [al-aḥzāb al-shuyū'īyya qabla zuḥūr al-ismā'īliyya] wa-l-shuyū'īyyīn [al-ismā'īliyya] huwa anna al-ismā'īliyya banū ṭalabahum hādhā 'alā mabādī' falsafīyya 'ilmīyya lā 'alā mabādī' adabīyya maḥḍa kamā fa'al man sabiqahum min al-shuyū'īyya*. La conservation du terme "communistes" suggère peut-être que ce passage provient directement des articles sur le mouvement communiste en islam écrits par Bandalī Jawzī en 1923-24.

91 Cf. les transcriptions des discussions dans Riddell, *To See the Dawn* ; voir aussi *Premier congrès des peuples de l'Orient. Bakou 1920*. Nous ignorons si Bandalī Jawzī assista au congrès de Bakou, où il se trouvait depuis le printemps de la même année.

92 Carrère d'Encausse et Schram, *Le Marxisme et l'Asie* (1853-1964).

de la révolution en Orient⁹³. Bandalī Jawzī opère un nouveau décentrement du monde russo-tatar vers le monde arabe⁹⁴ : pour lui, ce sont les Arabes qui devaient se révolutionner eux-mêmes. Cela le conduisit non pas à revenir à un Prophète idéalisé, mais au contraire, à l'instaurer comme moment inaugural de l'histoire du communisme en islam, encore réformiste et non conscient de lui-même. En résumé, l'ismaélisme invente une organisation adaptée et des revendications vraiment communistes qui reposent sur une doctrine rationaliste et une stratégie internationaliste. Sa base sociale réside dans les nationalités opprimées par les Abbassides, mobilisées par l'avant-garde ismaélienne, grâce au chiisme. Son influence perdura dans la vie intellectuelle chez les « Frères de la sincérité », dans la philosophie et le soufisme, ou encore chez le poète sceptique al-Ma'arrī (m. 449/1057), mais le califat abbaside orthodoxe fut sauvé par les Turcs puis par le déclenchement des croisades.

Le rôle décisif dans le dépérissement de l'islam et sur la voie du communisme en islam fut assumé par les Qarmates de Bahreïn sous la conduite d'Abū Sa'īd al-Jannābī (m. 913/14), qui appela à abandonner la plupart des principes et lois de l'islam pour fonder une république communiste, reposant sur la fraternité entre toutes les races et les religions et le bonheur sur terre, et non plus dans l'au-delà. Le mouvement fut rallié par les citadins, qui ne bénéficiaient pas du système abbaside, et par les bédouins qui abhorraient l'islam et ses pesanteurs. Historiquement, les Qarmates sont associés au chiisme imamite puis ismaélien, mais conquièrent progressivement leur autonomie (*istiqlāl dākhlī*) qui leur permit de fonder un système républicain ou consultatif (*jumhūrī, shūrī*) où les chefs étaient seulement les *primi inter pares*, uns parmi les membres du conseil (*majlis idārī, 'aqdānīyya*)⁹⁵. Cette fois-ci, les comparaisons historiques ne portent plus sur le moyen âge occidental ou la Russie d'avant 1861, mais sur les républiques (populistes) d'Amérique latine et sur l'URSS : le gouvernement de Bahreïn fonctionne comme un soviétique (*ṣūfiyit*) présidé par le fondateur de la République, puis par ses descendants et ses proches collaborateurs. Les Qarmates avaient atteint le même stade que la Russie de la Révolution d'Octobre. L'insistance sur la nature républicaine et consultative du

93 Bennisgen et Lemerrier-Quellejey, *Sultan Galiev*, 191-210 ; Renault, "L'idée du communisme musulman".

94 L'orientation arabe se lit aussi dans la préface de la traduction de l'histoire des Ghassanides de Nöldeke, où les deux traducteurs justifient le choix de l'œuvre par la nécessité de donner un modèle de bonne pratique historiographique aux historiens arabes, et d'éclairer une époque obscure de leur histoire commune. Sur l'historiographie proche-orientale de cette époque, Freitag, *Geschichtsschreibung in Syrien 1920-1990* ; et Havemann, *Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung*.

95 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 192/155.

pouvoir de Bahreïn, le rejet de l'hypothèse oligarchique (comme pour tous les concepts politiques, le mot est en français et traduit par *hukūmat al-aqallīyya al-mustabidda*) malgré la constitution d'une élite dirigeante autour de la famille Jannābī, ne sont certainement pas étrangers aux vicissitudes de la succession de Lénine, mort en 1924, et à la monopolisation du pouvoir par Staline.

Les mesures économiques sont clairement communistes, même si Bandalī Jawzī reconnaît que l'information historique insuffisante ne permet pas d'être assuré de l'abolition de la propriété privée de la terre : ainsi en va-t-il notamment de l'imposition d'un monopole d'État sur le commerce extérieur. Les taxes foncières sont abolies, les impôts frappant les fermiers et cultivateurs diminués et compensés par des taxes sur le commerce et le pèlerinage aux Lieux Saints.

L'existence de la République arabe socialiste à Bahreïn pendant toutes ces années, la préservation de son système original, son rayonnement pendant plus de cinq siècles et le succès économique signalé précédemment, en dépit des difficultés et des nombreux ennemis qui l'environnaient et aspiraient à la détruire et à écraser sa révolution, il n'y a pas de plus grande preuve que ladite République n'était pas seulement construite sur des fondements économiques et sociaux puissants, mais aussi sur des bases morales assurées et des principes éthiques véritables, comme le montre également la vie du groupe et des individus⁹⁶.

Il était nécessaire de réfuter les accusations classiques d'hérésie et de débauche morale dont les historiens musulmans accablaient traditionnellement les Qarmates – et dont, parallèlement, les capitalistes occidentaux usaient sans vergogne contre les mouvements socialistes. Sous la description de Bahreïn transparaît l'URSS des années 1920 : lorsque Bandalī Jawzī décrit comment, lorsque Abū Ṭāhir al-Jannābī (m. 944) se rapprocha des Abbassides, après qu'il eut rompu l'ancienne allégeance aux imposteurs Fatimides, il nie qu'il s'eût agi d'une trahison car, le cas échéant, écrit-il, le gouvernement soviétique, qui avait conclu des traités commerciaux avec certaines nations occidentales

96 Jawzī, *Mīn tārikh*, 200-201/158 : *Inna qiyām al-jumhūriyya al-ʿarabiyya al-ishtirākīyya fī l-Baḥrayn kulla hādhihi al-sinīn al-ṭiwāl wa-ḥifẓ niẓāmihā l-gharīb wa-ta'thīrihi akthar min khamsat ayyāl thumma bulūghahā dhālika al-najāh al-iqtisādī alladhī asharnā ilāyhi sābiqan wa-dhālika mā'a mā kāna yuḥīṭ bihā min al-ṣu'ūbāt wa-ta'addud al-khuṣūm al-mutashawwiqīn ilā haḍmihā wa-l-istilā' ʿalā tharwatihā, la-akbaru dalil ʿala anna al-jumhūriyya al-madhkūra kānat qā'ima laysa faqaṭ ʿalā da'ā'im iqtisādīyya wa-jtimā'īyya qawīyya bal ʿalā usus adabiyya qawīma wa-mabādī' akhlāqīyya ṣaḥīḥa kānat tatajallā fī ḥayāt al-majmū' wa-l-afrād ʿalā l-sawā'.*

(l'Angleterre en mars 1921, l'Allemagne par le traité de Rapallo en avril 1922), serait lui-même en état de trahison envers la révolution, ce qui est bien sûr inconcevable⁹⁷.

Après la sincérité du Prophète et l'utilisation consciente de la religion comme idéologie par les Ismaéliens, les Qarmates communistes représentent l'étape de la sortie de la religion⁹⁸. *De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam* est bien une histoire du dépérissement progressif de l'islam dans des mouvements authentiquement révolutionnaires. Les communistes russes et nationaux eux-mêmes s'étaient posé cette question, dont la réponse la plus fameuse est l'article de Sultan Galiev, publié en 1921, « Méthodes de propagande anti-religieuse parmi les musulmans »⁹⁹. Le bolchevik tatar y mettait l'accent sur la spécificité de l'islam (une religion récente, avec davantage d'éléments sociaux et politiques qu'éthiques et religieux, dont la législation contenait beaucoup de prescriptions positives) et la nécessité de définir des méthodes de propagande adaptées pour la combattre. Il s'agissait d'aborder, de manière générale, le problème avec « prudence et esprit pratique », pour se bien démarquer des méthodes des missionnaires orthodoxes actifs avant 1917¹⁰⁰ ; plus spécifiquement, à chaque peuple devait correspondre une approche adaptée à son niveau économique, social et culturel : ainsi les Tatars sont les plus mûrs pour une propagande anti-religieuse fructueuse, alors que, dans le Turkestan beaucoup plus arriéré, « la campagne anti-religieuse ne peut être menée qu'avec des méthodes employées entre 1905 et 1910 par les *jadids* dans la région de la Volga »¹⁰¹. Les communistes sont donc justifiés d'exprimer leur propagande anti-religieuse soit dans un langage clair, soit, de manière dissimulée, dans un langage réformiste musulman. Bandalī Jawzī montre de même que les Qarmates usèrent parfois de termes religieux mais qu'en réalité,

97 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 203-5/159-60. Bandalī Jawzī se défausse apparemment de toute critique contre l'URSS, mais *a contrario*, ne pourrait-on pas y voir une critique implicite de la succession de Lénine ? Comme 'Ubayd Allāh fut l'Imam du temps, auquel les Qarmates firent allégeance, Lénine fut le meneur de la grande Révolution d'Octobre alors que son successeur, Staline, est vu comme un imposteur.

98 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 207/261.

99 Traduit par Bennigsen et Lermercier-Quelquejay, *Les Mouvements nationaux chez les musulmans de Russie*, 226-38.

100 Sultan Galiev, "Les méthodes de propagande anti-religieuse parmi les musulmans", 229.

101 Sultan Galiev, "Les méthodes de propagande anti-religieuse parmi les musulmans", 237. Sur la propagande anti-religieuse soviétique à partir de la fin des années 1920 et jusqu'au milieu des années 1980, Bobrovnikov, "Contribution". Le recours aux travaux des missionnaires orthodoxes d'avant 1917 et des orientalistes dits "bourgeois", quoique violemment critiqués, associés aux lieux communs de l'athéisme militant de l'entre-deux-guerres puis de la seconde moitié du xx^e siècle, est noté par l'auteur.

ils ne croyaient en aucune religion positive ni principes extérieurs. Leurs idées relevaient d'une pensée (*fikr*) politique et philosophique rationaliste mais pas d'une croyance religieuse (*'aqīda*)¹⁰².

Les Qarmates, en tant qu'Arabes d'un côté, ismaéliens d'un autre côté, étaient encore plus éloignés de la religion et de ses prescriptions extérieures que les communistes de ce temps, puisque leur vraie religion était leur grande revendication sociale, qu'ils vénéraient, et qu'ils croyaient, à la vie et à la mort, en la nécessité de la mettre en application¹⁰³.

Bandalī Jawzī appliqua lui-même ces méthodes subtiles de propagande : voilà pourquoi le « mouvement communiste en islam » des articles de 1923-24, destinés à un lectorat plus avancé sur la voie du communisme, s'est changé en *al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fī l-islām* (« mouvements de pensée en islam ») dans l'ouvrage en arabe, qui font écho aux mouvements de pensée qui animent le monde arabe contemporain. On peut imaginer que dans un contexte « arriéré », Bandalī Jawzī eût pu faire usage de la figure du Prophète pour amener les musulmans vers le communisme ; mais lorsqu'il s'agit d'écrire de l'histoire, il n'hésite pas, en revanche, à lui rendre sa place véritable d'homme de foi qui agissait comme messenger de Dieu, inconscient de l'autonomie des finalités sociales qu'il poursuivait. D'autres changements subtils se glissent dans le texte arabe : par exemple, les conquêtes arabes ne sont pas appelées *fath* (pl. *futūḥ*), littéralement « ouverture » (à l'islam), mais *iḥtilāl*, occupation¹⁰⁴. Les termes choquants, athéisme (*ilḥād*) ou matérialisme (*māddiyya*) ne sont jamais écrits mais toujours suggérés par des périphrases : ainsi les Qarmates sont-ils des « adorateurs de la raison (*'ibādat al-'aql al-salīm*) » plutôt que des athées¹⁰⁵, et les causes réelles des événements, offusquées par un « voile » (*ḥijāb*), comme Dieu dans le Coran (Q 42, 51) et dans la riche imagerie de la poésie spirituelle de l'islam¹⁰⁶. Tout un jeu de correspondances, enfin, permet au lecteur d'envisager la reprise du mouvement communiste en islam : l'époque du Prophète

102 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 207-9/161-62.

103 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 207/161 : *Al-qarāmiṭa, ka-a'rāb min jiha wa-ismā'iliyya min jiha ukhrā, kānū ba'īdīn 'an al-dīn wa-sha'ā'irihī al-khārijīyya bu'd akthar shuyū'yyī hādihā l-'aṣr; idh anna dīnahum al-ḥaqīqī huwa maṭlabuhum al-kabīr al-ijtimā'ī alladhī kānū ya'budūnahū wa-yu'minūn bi-wujūb taḥqīqihī imānan qawīyyan yaḥyawnā li-ajlihi wa-yamūtūn 'alayhi.*

104 Cela n'a pas échappé à Abū Khalīl, *Bandalī Jawzī*, 223. *Iḥtilāl* est utilisé en turc pour traduire « révolution ». Bandalī Jawzī, installé en Azerbaïdjan, avait très certainement ce sens à l'esprit en l'écrivant.

105 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 208/162.

106 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 36/83, 74/101. Peut-être même que la transcription de « soviét » avec l'emphatique, *ṣūfiyyit* et non *sūfiyyit*, comme cela s'est imposé au xx^e siècle, visait-elle à susciter une association d'idées avec le soufisme ? On se souvient que les époux Navshirvanov

correspond à l'état de Byzance et de Rome (stade esclavagiste) ; l'époque abbasside au moyen âge occidental et à la Russie avant 1861 (stade féodal) ; les Qarmates de Bahreïn aux républiques populistes d'Amérique latine et surtout à l'URSS (stade communiste). À l'instar de Sultan Galiev, Bandalī Jawzī considérait vraisemblablement que le monde oriental pourrait passer directement du féodalisme au communisme en faisant l'économie du stade capitaliste.

L'intérêt de Bandalī Jawzī pour les Qarmates vient sans doute de la conjonction dans ce mouvement d'une dimension authentiquement socialiste et d'une dimension authentiquement arabe : le socialisme achevé des Qarmates préfigurait la grande Révolution de 1917 et démontrait aux communistes que le monde arabe allait connaître à l'avenir une nouvelle révolution socialiste ; son arabité démontrait aux moyen-orientaux que le socialisme était profondément ancré dans leur identité arabe, et qu'il était, lui et non une quelconque religion réformée, la clef de la lutte anti-coloniale et du développement économique. *De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam* peut donc se lire à la fois comme un plaidoyer pour une meilleure prise en compte du monde arabe dans la vision du monde soviétique, et comme une contribution à l'érection d'un socialisme panarabe dont la vocation était clairement de devenir athée, quand la solidarité des peuples arabes socialistes se serait substituée à la solidarité de la *umma* où les chrétiens, comme lui-même l'était, demeuraient dans une position ambiguë de subordination.

Le régime des Qarmates de Bahreïn perdura jusqu'au xv^e siècle, malgré des difficultés à partir de la fin du x^e siècle ; Bandalī Jawzī considère que le monde musulman entra en déclin quand l'Occident commença sa renaissance, pour les raisons matérielles évoquées *supra*, contrairement à beaucoup d'orientalistes, et d'intellectuels moyen-orientaux à leur remorque, qui faisaient soit du x^e siècle, soit du xii^e ou du xiii^e siècle (confrontation entre Ghazālī et Averroès conçue comme la défaite de la raison en terre d'islam, chute de Bagdad devant les Mongols en 1258), le début du déclin de l'islam. Quant à Bandalī Jawzī, il tente de montrer en conclusion que, si les Ismaéliens et les Qarmates échouèrent à réaliser le programme socialiste, à cause de leurs divisions internes, des pouvoirs turcs et mongols et des croisades, son esprit a d'une part survécu dans les guildes de métiers (*akhiler, eṣnāf*) et les confréries soufies, en particulier dans l'espace turco-persan, d'autre part été transmis à l'Occident chez les Templiers et dans les guildes professionnelles, chez les franc-maçons ou les jésuites¹⁰⁷. Cette partie du raisonnement est la moins justifiée par un recours aux sources historiques : vraisemblablement à la suite des

avaient mis en avant, dans leur article de 1923, la proximité du communisme avec certains mouvements de révolte soufis.

107 Jawzī, *Min tārikh*, 218-37/167-75.

Navshirvanov, il n'allègue guère que la révolte soufie de Bedreddīn en Anatolie, en 1415-18, et le babisme de la Perse du XIX^e siècle, qui devint ensuite réactionnaire en s'alliant avec les propriétaires terriens lors de la Révolution constitutionnelle ; pourtant cette double translation est nécessaire pour respecter les présupposés de la démonstration de Bandalī Jawzī, que les nations orientales ont donné naissance à un authentique mouvement communiste sans passer par l'étape du capitalisme, et qu'à l'avenir, les Arabes sont, parmi les Orientaux, les mieux à même de conduire les nations de l'Orient vers le socialisme ; entre les deux, il y a le transfert de l'idée communiste d'Orient vers l'Occident. Ce faisant, Bandalī Jawzī achève son histoire de l'islam comme moment historique dans l'invention du communisme : l'islam comme religion assumée par le Prophète et certains mouvements de révolte, comme celui de Bābak, tournée consciemment en idéologie mobilisatrice par une avant-garde ismaélienne, puis dépassée dans une organisation politique et économique authentiquement socialiste par les Qarmates, caractérisé par un gouvernement républicain et consultatif, la propriété collective de la terre, le monopole sur le commerce extérieur et l'égalité des conditions, en particulier entre les deux sexes. Plus qu'un livre sur le communisme *de l'islam*, *De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam* est donc un ouvrage à deux fronts sur le communisme *en islam*, sur l'islam comme étape de l'histoire universelle qui conduit au dépérissement de la religion et à la diffusion mondiale du communisme : l'un regardait vers la Russie, l'autre était tourné vers le Moyen-Orient exploité par l'impérialisme occidental, stade suprême du capitalisme dans la théorie léniniste, et visait sa libération par un socialisme panarabe qui avait de surcroît à conquérir l'hégémonie culturelle face à l'islam, plutôt que de rechercher avec lui des accommodements et des compromis.

7.3 Quel rôle joue donc le Prophète dans *Min tārikh al-ḥarakāt al-fikriyya fi l-islām* ?

Pour Bandalī Jawzī, Muḥammad est un personnage historique qui joue un rôle majeur dans l'inauguration du mouvement communiste en Islam. Au lieu de s'interroger sur la sincérité du Prophète, selon les termes du débat orientaliste du XIX^e siècle, et de chercher à faire le départ entre ce qui relèverait d'une authentique œuvre religieuse et ce qui serait à inscrire au compte d'ambitions politiques, Bandalī Jawzī pose le problème de la mission prophétique dans des termes inspirés par le matérialisme historique, qui rendaient caduque le vieux débat. La carrière prophétique est incompréhensible si l'on considère qu'il était sincère dans son œuvre religieuse, insincère dans sa reconstruction de l'ordre

social et politique, notamment à partir de l'époque médinoise. Muḥammad fut un prophète *stricto sensu*, un homme convaincu d'agir selon les directives qu'il recevait de Dieu et qui concernaient aussi bien la réforme religieuse que la reconstruction d'une société plus juste. Cette distinction même du religieux et du politique est purement analytique, car le Prophète concevait toute la réalité au prisme de l'islam (ou, comme le dit Bandalī Jawzī, « sous un épais voile de religion »). De ce point de vue, la conception de Muḥammad chez Bandalī Jawzī est un truisme : le Prophète était un prophète, en ce sens qu'il se considérait et agissait comme un prophète. Cette banalité méritait pourtant d'être rappelée contre des orientalistes qui avaient eu tendance à attribuer de manière anachronique à Muḥammad des idées politiques et économiques d'un autre temps.

À partir de cette mise au point sur la vie du Prophète, Bandalī Jawzī l'intègre dans son schéma marxiste de l'histoire, qui analyse selon les principes du matérialisme dialectique. Le Prophète ainsi considéré est un réformateur, qui tenta de réduire les inégalités de richesse et l'oppression des femmes, de lutter contre le tribalisme, sans pour autant s'attaquer aux causes profondes des désordres sociaux. Bandalī Jawzī réfute particulièrement que le Prophète aurait eu l'intention d'abolir la propriété privée : au nom de la diffusion de l'islam, le Prophète passa un compromis avec les Quraysh, ce qui montre bien, par ailleurs, que ses conceptions de la réforme économique et sociale étaient assujetties à ses conceptions religieuses. Muḥammad laisse donc un double héritage à sa communauté : Muḥammad le Médinois, son message réformiste ; Muḥammad le Mecquois, son compromis politique avec les Quraysh. L'histoire de l'islam se poursuivra ensuite dans le jeu dialectique de ces deux legs : les mouvements marginaux, décrits comme hérétiques par l'héresiographie proche du pouvoir califal, approfondiront le legs réformiste, qui les conduira à faire advenir par étapes un véritable communisme athée dans l'islam ; les califats omeyyade puis abbasside feront du compromis politique une compromission permanente, qui conduira à renier la dimension sociale de l'islam pour mieux servir les intérêts de l'élite dominante. Dans chacun des deux mouvements, une partie de la mission prophétique est approfondie et portée par étapes à son accomplissement.

Au-delà de l'analyse marxiste que Bandalī Jawzī procure de la vie du Prophète Muḥammad et de son héritage dans l'histoire de l'islam, *De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam* porte aussi trace d'une réflexion sur l'exemplarité et l'utilité du modèle prophétique dans la perspective de la lutte pour l'avènement du communisme. À l'instar de Sultan Galiev dans son article « Méthodes de propagande anti-religieuse parmi les musulmans », Bandalī Jawzī était convaincu de la nécessité d'employer un langage adapté à son interlocuteur

ou son lecteur, pour le conduire progressivement au communisme. Comme il avait fallu plusieurs siècles pour passer du réformisme prophétique au communisme conscient des Qarmates, il fallait prendre le temps d'amener progressivement les musulmans à accepter la vérité du communisme, et, de surcroît, son athéisme. Cela explique le changement de titre entre les articles en russe de 1923, qui mentionnait le « mouvement communiste en islam », et le livre en arabe de 1928, qui n'indiquait plus que « les mouvements de pensée en islam », mais aussi maints choix sémantiques de Bandalī Jawzī dans le corps de son texte. Cette nécessaire adaptation du langage offre aussi la possibilité d'une autre lecture de l'ouvrage, non plus seulement comme une histoire linéaire, écrite d'un point de vue marxiste, du dépérissement de la religion en Islam, mais aussi comme un plaidoyer polyphonique en faveur de l'avènement du communisme, dont chaque chapitre serait adapté à un niveau de compréhension différent, depuis le musulman réformiste jusqu'au communiste athée. Le risque consistait alors à oublier que les premiers chapitres n'étaient que les prodromes des suivants et à les extraire de la marche de l'histoire. *De l'histoire des mouvements de pensée en islam* était écrit selon une perspective marxiste, et donc évolutionniste ; sans cette perspective, il devenait très facile d'abstraire le Prophète de l'histoire et d'en faire un idéal indépassable, au lieu de lui restituer sa double dimension de figure du passé et de modèle dépassé pour certains, à dépasser pour d'autres.

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The Place and Functions of the Figure of the Prophet in Turkish School Textbooks and General Religious Teaching

Citizenship Models and the Legitimisation of the State

Dilek Sarmis

The involvement of the Turkish state in religious teaching has a complex history, shaped by its particular relationship with secularism. The foundation of the Turkish Republic was based on a transfer of the prerogatives of *şeyhülislam* to the institutions of the new republican state, as part of a movement towards institutional secularisation, understood as a transfer to the state of authority over religious affairs. Religious education in public primary and secondary schools already existed at the end of the Ottoman Empire, and was maintained when the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, but its extent varied in the subsequent decades. By the beginning of the 1930s religious instruction had almost disappeared from public schools, but its rehabilitation began at the end of the 1940s, brought about by politicians who used the importance of religion in national culture and its benefits in the forming of citizens to justify its gradual return; its indirect status as an Islamic reference point in the general education system fits in with the nationalistic politics of the Turkish state during and since the 1940s. In recent years, as a result of a movement that began during the early 1980s, courses in religious culture have become generalised throughout public education, both primary and secondary. In this context the place occupied by the Prophet in the disciplines concerned relates not only to his centrality as messenger, historic figure, and receiver of the revelation, but to concepts of republican citizenship.

There is an established and developing literature on the teaching of religion in Turkish schools in general and in contemporary faculties of theology in particular, but some of the changes that have occurred in the last forty years cast a new light on those (nearly) real-time analyses of Turkish secularisation. In this complex history, the centrality of the Prophet remains constant, although it is not always obvious. The authors, theologians, and intellectuals of the republican period maintained their interest in this figure, approached in their writings through the universality of his words and his double nature

as a human being who is also a messenger of God, of the divine, for all other humans. However, specific studies have not yet been dedicated to the place and role of the Prophetic figure in Turkey's public education, and it is certainly possible to ask questions about the manner in which the educational policies of the Turkish state exploit the Prophetic figure, and affect its treatment.

One of the difficulties facing researchers in this field lies in the relative invisibility of the figure of the Prophet in the historiography of religious teaching in republican Turkey. This historiography tends to concentrate on whether the religious education courses offered are optional, supererogatory, or obligatory, and on how such courses are structured in terms of content, timing, evaluation, and curriculum. What is more, the diverse nature of the educational institutions and universities whose courses touch on the figure of the Prophet blurs the overall analysis, because these may be institutions of general public education, or of professional public education (*imam hatip*, schools for imams), or faculties of theology (*ilâhiyat fakülteleri*); their functions and aims do not coincide.

Even within the framework of general public education we are confronted by a fairly varied menu of dedicated disciplines, with courses in the history of Islam (*islâm tarihi dersi*) alongside courses in religious morals and culture (Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi or DKAAB); the distinctions between and respective limits of these courses are often unclear. Recently (and this is unprecedented in the history of the Turkish Republic), a programme of courses on the life of "our" Prophet has been inaugurated (Peygamberimizin Hayatı Dersi); this re-establishes the disciplinary autonomy of the *siyer-i nebî* courses that were an important part of religious teaching in Ottoman *medrese* and faculties of religious theology. Each of these didactic projects is made up of sequences that give details of different historical and doctrinal aspects of religious culture, especially biographical information on the life of the Prophet and information that is implicitly edifying because of his status as a model. Sequences devoted to the Prophet generally relate to courses on the history of Islam, and Muḥammad is treated as a historical and identificatory figure, not as a doctrinal one.

In this chapter we will limit ourselves to general public education and the place of the Prophet therein. The teaching that takes place in structures that are exclusively devoted to religious education (schools for imams and theological faculties) exists within a different framework because of their scientifically and didactically more specific missions and the fact that they are oriented towards professional training: in these instances, the mastering of knowledge on the Prophet is pursued with different aims, in particular that of religious expertise. Nevertheless, we will examine aspects of the history of

such structures; this allows us to contextualise the dynamics of courses on religion within general public education. The logic underpinning the integration of the figure of the Prophet into the Turkish republican national project can, in fact, be understood through the contents of this public teaching, and here it is possible to distinguish three major turning points in the programmes: 1948–49, around 1982–83, and since 2000. The sources on which we drew for this chapter are mainly textbooks, pedagogical programmes, and the texts of laws relating to public education in Turkey (Din dersi, DKAB, Peygamberimizin Hayatı).

Overall, these courses, laws, and programmes emphasise the historicity, humanity, simplicity, and exemplary nature of the Prophet, his life, and its continuing relevance to democratic and republican modernity. However, recently some modifications have been implemented, relating to the legitimisation of commemorations and of the cult of the Prophet, and to a form of autonomisation of religious knowledge (particularly around the *sıra*); during previous decades these notions had become fragmented and diluted as a result of the national republican project.

8.1 Republic and Religion: The Prophet as an Invisible Third Party

We cannot separate the figure of the Prophet and its function in Turkish public education from the political and republican history of Turkish Islam, including state interventionism, as sanctioned by reforms and constitutional choices since 1942 that have had an impact on religion and the teaching of religion. The defeat of the sultan's imperial regime in 1918 led to the occupation of Istanbul by foreign powers and to a war of liberation directed by Mustafa Kemal (subsequently Atatürk), and eventually to the Treaty of Lausanne of 23 July 1923 and the proclamation of the new Turkish Republic on 29 October 1923. This new state instituted a series of reforms that equated revolutionary modernity with state management of religion: the abolition of the caliphate in 1924; the outlawing of the Sufi brotherhoods in 1925; the adoption of a civil code based on the Swiss model in 1926; the instauration of a new penal code; the adoption of the Latin alphabet and Gregorian calendar in 1928. These institutional reforms were accompanied by others that had profound symbolic significance, relating to clothing (banning of the fez, adoption of the Western suit and hat) and to the patronymic.¹

1 A 1934 law obliging each citizen to adopt a Turkish patronymic that would be transmitted to descendants.

During these years the constitution was gradually forged around six concepts, called the “six arrows” (*altı ok*): the first, in 1927, were “republicanism”, “populism”, “nationalism”, and “secularism”; in 1931, “statism” and “revolution” were added. With the adoption of these principles the nation-state acquired teleological principles that upheld the one-party system and the cult of personality organised around “Atatürk”, the father-Turk, a paternal and quasi-divine figure who controlled patronymics and (through the calendar) time itself. The republic very quickly constructed and imposed a historical imaginary: the Institute for Turkish History (Türk Tarih Kurumu), created in 1931, built an ideological and messianic national narrative, borrowed in part from the work of Turkey’s Orientalists; the reference points for this narrative were pre-Islamic, disavowing any historical links with the Ottoman Empire, which had been roundly rejected by this new state. A reform of universities was launched in 1933, reorganising departments and culminating in an extensive purge of teachers from Ottoman times, and the recruitment in their place of lecturers from Germany who were fleeing the Nazi regime (many of them were Jewish). The subject of theology vanished from universities, and intellectuals and teachers in higher education were invited to work in conformity with the ideology of the single party and with the interests of the Kemalist revolution in mind. The structures of religion were also put under the control of the Turkish state. The religious brotherhoods, powerful structures at the heart of Ottoman society and potentially important conduits for political action, were outlawed in 1925, shutting down an alternative source of power that was not under state control. Turkish secularism means, above all, placing religion under control, rather than just transferring it to the private sphere; the republican project had never explicitly supported the disappearance of religion from the sociopolitical arena. The imposition of the Turkish-language call to prayer in 1936, effective until 1950, is itself a mark of the extent to which religion was nationalised. If historiography, along with the imagery around the history of this reforming Turkish history, heavily underlines the movement for secularisation and laicisation in Kemalist Turkey, the fundamental elements of Islamic doctrine and history were nevertheless taken on by the republican state, and the place of the Prophet in religious teaching in schools constitutes one element in this power dynamic.² It is therefore important to conceive of the status of the person of Muḥammad in scholastic programmes not as an element of religious teaching, but rather as a figure who is potentially charged with a republican mission.

2 According to the model of the development of Christianity, put together by Marcel Gauchet, the emphasis on secularisation and laicisation is sometimes wrongly interpreted as a departure from religion.

Textbooks from the early days of the republic insist on the historicity and rationality of the Prophetic figure, superimposing the republican agenda on Islam and reinterpreting the *ḥadīth* in a way that justifies the secular republican regime.³ Abdülbaki Gölpınarlı (1900–1982), historian of Turkish literature and of Sufi brotherhoods, in a book aimed at schoolchildren and in which the Prophetic figure is presented less as the chosen one receiving revelation and more as a reformer and rational legislator whose aim was to improve the lives of men, was to write: *Cumhuriyet devri, hakiki Müslümanlık zamanıdır* (The republican era is the era of true Islam).⁴ Numerous texts in this movement insist on the similarities between the figure of the Prophet as representative of true Islam, and that of Atatürk, founder of modern Turkey and successor to the Prophet inasmuch as he protected his people against “hypocritical devotees”. Gölpınarlı, as an intellectual who was close to Kemalist power, played a major role in unifying Islam and Turkishness in the cultural realm, writing one of the most extensive religious textbooks to be validated by the Ministry of Instruction during 1927–31 for use in primary and village schools. He tells pupils:

The policies of the government of the republic follow the path of the model left by Muḥammad ... while dishonest and fanatical hypocritical devotees attempt to prevent the progress of the nation in order to uphold their private and clan interests. Only Mustafa Kemal has succeeded in [following] Muḥammad’s path.⁵

Apart from his historic role as the founder of Islam, the Prophet is presented as an exceptional moral being who dismantled the caste system and opposed slavery; as for the *ümmet*, the community of believers, its meaning is constructed around a Prophetic figure who incarnates the high values of political and collective reform. This shifting of the classical reference points of Islam, and the Turkish state’s desire to take them over and master them, does not bring about a contestation of the Prophetic figure, but rather its use as a counter-model against religious reaction and superstition, and, along with this,

3 Yusuf Ziya [Yörükkan] (1887–1954), a professor in the faculty of theology, was, in the very early days of the republic, the author of textbooks that were used for religious classes in schools: *Peygamberimiz* (Istanbul, 1926), *Din Dersleri: İman ve İbadet* (Istanbul, 1926), *İslâm Dini* (Istanbul, 1927), *Dinimiz* (Istanbul, 1929).

4 Muallim Abdülbaki, *Cumhuriyet Çocuğunun Din Dersleri*, 1929, reissued: Kaynak, Istanbul, 2005, 48.

5 Muallim Abdülbaki, *Cumhuriyet Çocuğunun Din Dersleri*, 1929, reissued: Kaynak, Istanbul, 2005, 50–51.

its increasingly smooth integration into the Turkish national project.⁶ Adapted to the mission and character of the Turkish nation, the life and words of the Prophet become the justification in the profane world for the model rational and moral republican citizen.

8.2 The Forms of Republican Religious Education

The young Turkish Republic thus brought an end to the autonomy of institutions of religious education but did not ban religious teaching. This can be observed in the schools that trained imams, *imam hatip*. In 1913, Ottoman reforms, put into place as part of a new programme (*ıslah-i medarir nizamnamesi*), brought with them two new schools, the *medreset'ül-vaizin* and *medreset'ül-eimme ve'l-huteba*, both intended to train imams and religious cadres. These were combined in 1919 as *medreset'ül-irşad*.⁷ After the 1924 law of unification of education (*tevhid-i tedrisat kanunu*) the republic maintained this heritage: schools for imams were controlled by the state, but remained open when the *medrese* were closed.⁸ However, they appear to have struggled to attract interest, and were closed for lack of students in 1930. This was probably, in part, because of the ambiguous status of these schools as structures for professional religious training and also for general education, and their difficulties reflect the dynamics of the 1930s, a decade that saw the Turkish state increase its control over national cultural references and over all of the contents of education and instruction.

The reopening and increase in numbers, during the 1950s, of schools for imams coincided with the end of single-party rule and the arrival in power of the Democrat Party (Demokrat Partisi), something that had been anticipated at the instigation of a multi-party system in 1946 by the CHP (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi), some of whose individual deputies proposed initiatives favouring the reintroduction of structures for religious teaching.⁹ In addition, a commission was created by the CHP at this time, motivated in part by its desire to attract the popular conservative vote.¹⁰ Schools for imams offered four years

6 Numerous texts – which are often hagiographical underneath their historian's clothing – underline the recognition of the Prophet's centrality by the chief of the new Turkey: Borak, *Atatürk ve Din*, 17; Karal, *Atatürk'ten Düşünceler*, 65; Gürtaş, *Atatürk ve Din Eğitimi*, 38–39.

7 Tekeli and İlkin, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nda Eğitim ve Bilgi Üretim*; Atay, *Osmanlılarda Yüksek Din Eğitimi*, 308–15.

8 Ayhan, *Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi*, 537.

9 Ayhan, *Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi*, 31–37; Kaymakcan, "Religious Education".

10 Report dating from 10 February 1948, entitled "Din Eğitimi Raporu".

of training at the primary level, and three years of secondary learning. During the subsequent decades, some of these years of training were passed back and forth between primary and secondary levels; this process brought about major modifications to the length of the training periods. In 1971, the part corresponding to primary teaching disappeared altogether because the schools were professionalised, becoming “Professional Lycées” (*meslek liseleri*), with a four-year cursus. Changes to the primary level were made in 1973, when a part of this course was transferred to the secondary level, resulting in an increase of the duration of the overall *imam hatip* training to seven years. In 1997, when eight years of primary education were re-established, the schools for imams were once more limited to the last four years of the secondary-level cursus.¹¹ But since 2012–13, when the levels of schooling were restructured to four-plus-four-plus-four years, primary schooling is once more reduced to four years, thus raising the number of years of training in the *imam hatip* to eight; detractors of this reform argued against this because of the drastic reduction in general teaching for pupils, to four years, after which they were directed towards religious teaching. Despite the fact that these professional schools were formatted and validated by various republican regimes, they did appear to represent a pressure, viewed as being confessional in origin, for an early choice of career.

Faculties of theology faced similar problems and questions during the time of the single party (1923–46). These faculties, which have developed significantly from the 1990s onwards, are descendants of the very first department of *ulum-i aliye-i diniye* (Fundamental Religious Sciences) at the Ottoman University in 1900 (*darülfünun-i şahane*), which was opened in order to remedy the lack of any higher education in religion. Here the teaching lasted four years and was independent of the *medrese*; the contents of the curriculum were at first formed from the traditional religious sciences (*tefsir-i şerif, hadis-i şerif, usul-i hadis, fıkıh, ilm-i kelâm, and tarih-i din-i islam*). In 1908, having become *ulum-i şeriye*, the department added a supplementary series of courses, made up of *ilm-i ahlâk-i şer'iye ve tasavvuf* (Sufism and religious morality), *siyer-i nebevi* (Life of the Prophet), and *tarih-i edyan* (History of religions). Higher education in theology left the university and returned to the ambit of the *medrese* in 1914, under the name of *medresetü'l mütehassısın*, and then, in 1918, of *süleymaniye medresesi*, under the authority of the *şeyhülislam*. In 1924, the shutting down of the *medrese* and the reattachment of religious teaching to the authority of the state and the minister of instruction (*maarif nezareti*) resulted in the creation of a republican faculty of theology, *İlahiyat Fakültesi*, in parallel with that of

11 Peker, *Din ve Ahlâk Eğitimi*, 29.

the schools for imams; this faculty guaranteed three years of higher education in religion.

As with the schools for imams, the faculty of theology, which had lost a large number of students, closed in 1933; religious higher education was reconfigured in a non-university structure, as *İslam İlimleri Tetkik Enstitüsü* (Institute of Research into Islamic Knowledge), but this also closed in 1941 for lack of interest and students. Not long after that, during the seventh party congress of the CHP in 1947, during which the question of religious education was debated, the deputy and former minister of education Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver (1885–1966) used the examples of the Sorbonne, Cambridge, Oxford, and Heidelberg to justify his position in favour of the reintroduction of the teaching of theology.¹² Affirming that these European institutions were ancient *medreses* that had then become universities, he underlined the absence of any rupture between the universities' structure and their religious heritage.¹³ Although the congress highlighted the principle of secularism, it associated with it the protection of religion as an aspect of individual liberty and freedom of conscience, guaranteed by the separation of church and state, because of which religion was considered to form a space in which national culture was protected from foreign attack.¹⁴ This congress provided numerous members of parliament with an opportunity to emphasise (with regret) the marginalisation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Dîyanet*), and to have discussions, based on their own experiences in their respective circumscriptions, about the electoral difficulties brought about when religion was rendered too invisible in the political sphere. To this strategic observation was added an analysis based on a notion of decline in moral values, and on the necessity of offering younger generations a spiritualised citizenship based on their cultural patrimony. Thus, in the various laws and decrees applied during the wave of changes that took place in 1949, the broad formulation of expectations regarding education put the emphasis on national morale, and on each citizen's protection of cultural values (*Türk milletinin milli, ahlâki, insani, manevi ve kültürel değerlerini benimseyen, koruyan ve geliştiren ... yurttaşlar olarak yetiştirmektir* – educating citizens by protecting and developing the national, moral, human, spiritual, and cultural values of Turkish people).¹⁵

This new dynamic, appropriated by the representatives of a party many members of which had militated for an extensive laicisation (the CHP), came

12 See *CHP VII. Kurultayı Tutanağı* [Report of the CHP's seventh convention], 1948.

13 Hamdullah Suphi Tanrıöver, in *CHP VII*, 455.

14 Ayhan, *Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi*, 91ff.

15 Framework law no. 1739, Article 2, relating to National Education.

about after the passage into a multi-party system, and during a period when conservative thought (*muhafazakâr*) was finding a place for itself and the Kemalist revolution was being re-evaluated in milder terms – not as a revolutionary rupture, but as a reformist transition. Religious liberty and morality became favoured themes among magazine chroniclers and writers. Within this framework, the institutional and political contexts of Turkish republican history were associated, and thus determined both the reintroduction of university-level theology and that of religious education in public schools at the primary and secondary levels.

8.3 Religious Education in Textbooks: The Prophet in the Eventful History of the *Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi*

From the time of their creation in 1869, the first Ottoman high schools (*sultâniler*) provided two hours of religious education each week.¹⁶ This continued in 1922, and was confirmed by the law of unification in teaching of 1924, as two hours per week of *Kur'an-ı Kerim ve Din dersleri* at all primary-school levels except for the first year, which was devoted to learning to read and write. In 1926, this was reduced to one hour per week, beginning only from the third year.¹⁷ In 1931, when schools for imams and faculties of theology were losing numbers and relevance, these courses were completely removed from urban schools; they were cut in village schools in 1939. In 1949, there was an important reconfiguration of the 1924 law of the *tevhid-i tedrisat kanunu* (Ministry of National Education's communiqué no. 2414), following the extensive parliamentary debates of 1947–49.¹⁸ Among the results of these debates was a decision to provide optional courses in religion during the fourth and fifth levels of primary education. Linked to the bitter discussions on the necessity for teaching university-level theology, and for a stronger Ministry of Religious Affairs, and situated against the background of the rise of the Democrat Party, this

16 These were created by the 1869 ruling on general instruction (*maârif-i umumîye nizamnamesi*), which also put into place regulations relative to the Ottoman University, *darülfünun*.

17 The reference text in this teaching for all three levels concerned between 1927 and 1931 remained Gölpınarlı, *Cumhuriyet Cocuğunun Din Dersleri*.

18 *MEB Tebliğler Dergisi*, no. 524, 7 February 1949, 153, <http://tebligler.meb.gov.tr/index.php/tuem-sayilar/viewcategory/13-1949>. On 6 April 1949, the Turkish government recognised Article 18 (relating to the freedom of conscience and of religion) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as adopted by the United Nations General Assembly: Gürtaş, *Atatürk ve Din Eğitimi*, 134–35.

decision relied on assertions that moral values could be inculcated through religious training, and that religion was a foundation of common culture, a social glue, and a tool in the fight against Communism. In 1950, one hour of religious teaching became obligatory (communiqué no. 2949), and in 1957 an option to study religion for an hour per week was offered in the first and second years of secondary school (*orta*); this was extended to the third year of secondary education in 1976.¹⁹ In 1982–83, after the 1980 coup d'état that brutally ended a period of political instability, it became compulsory to study religion for two hours each week at this level; the cursus combined the previous lessons in morality (*ahlâk*) and in religion (*din dersi*) under the name Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi (DKAB; Religious and Moral Culture). The semantic and syntactic structure of this title presents religion as an element of culture, and accords a great deal of status to morality (*ahlâk*) as a transverse phenomenon, at once religious and civic. Referring back to a long tradition of disciplines in religious knowledge, this was also a notion supported by republican thinkers in their debates about secular morality and religious morality (*laik ahlâk/dinî ahlâk*); it allowed them to conceive of a single collective and individual spirituality that involved religion, but went beyond it. Thus, the title of the course expressed in a few words the tense and yet quasi-marital dynamic between religious and republican morality.

A contradiction does appear to come into existence with the creation in 1982 of Article 24 of the Turkish constitution, which affirms both religious freedom and freedom of conscience – this does not sit well with the obligatory and state-controlled nature of religious and moral education.²⁰ These circumstances should also be looked at in the light of another state legitimisation of a religious practice, the republican institutionalisation of the cult of the Prophet's birthday (*mevlit*), the official celebration of which was established in 1989.²¹ Interestingly, since 1994 the dates of these celebrations are no longer aligned with the Hijrî calendar, but with the Gregorian version that was adopted by the republic in 1926. The primacy accorded to republican time in these official commemorations around the Prophet's birth is important.

19 MEB *Tebliğler Dergisi*, no. 617, 20 November 1950, 116, <http://tebligler.meb.gov.tr/index.php/tuem-sayilar/viewcategory/14-1950>; Ayhan, *Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi*, 125.

20 Official text available via: www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.2709.pdf, 136.

21 Under the name *Kutlu Doğum haftası* (Holy Week of [the Prophet's] Birth), and in collaboration with the *Mevlit Kandili*, this week of commemorations between 14 and 20 April was created under pressure from Süleyman Hayri Bolay (b. 1937), a spiritualist intellectual of the 1960s who was politically engaged and aimed to consolidate ties between religion and nation. This holy week blends *sohbets*, *ilahi*, and conferences, and claims to be founded on scientific bases (*ilmî*).

Since the 1990s, the organisation of religious teaching has focused increasingly on a few principal axes, pursuing specific objectives. During the 1980s, these were concentrated around doctrines, rituals, religious morality, and the life of the Prophet (*akaid, ibâdet, ahlâk, siyer*).²² Since the end of the 1990s, the content of programmes has been evolving regularly: annual communiqués from the Ministry of National Education (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı – MEB – Tebliğleri) give information about modifications made to programmes, to objectives, and to approved textbook choices.

The importance of compulsory courses in religion has been posited and then confirmed in public education, and implicitly brings with it the necessity for the training of future teachers at the secondary level. Since 1998–99, faculties of theology have been providing a cursus in *İlköğretim Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi öğretmenliği* (programme of training for teachers of religious and moral culture at the primary level). Since that time, the contents of the cursus and of programmes has been updated regularly. It has been specifically organised around fundamental pedagogical sequences (*ünite*) that structure and order the contents of teaching and the timescale within which each subject is addressed, in response to precise objectives: in every year, the Prophet features in one sequence. Important changes were put into place in 1992, and again in 2000, in order to help students adapt to new technologies. Within the descriptions of the general principles that guide the pedagogical adjustments affected in the programmes (*müfredat*) common themes return, such as the importance of cultural patrimony, of good and improved citizenship, and of moral values. From 1982, the idea was to construct a civic morality that conformed to the principles of Atatürk: secularism, national unity, and love of one's neighbour. Among the first sequences put into place at that time can be found "Love for One's Country" (*Vatan Sevgisi*), "Turks and Islam" (*Türkler ve Müslümanlık*), and "Secularism and Islam" (*Laiklik ve İslamlık*). This religious education was intended to offer citizens the tools to participate in a better society, one that was in line with democratic ideals and free of internal contradictions. The combining of courses in morality (compulsory at that time) with the (then optional) courses in religion was another response to the holistic civic approach that had been legitimised by political events around the 12 September 1980 coup d'état, and sanctioned by a fusion between Islam and Turkishness.²³ The approved textbooks of this period are particularly significant: as early as 1984, for example, a section entitled "Islam and Turks"

22 As can be observed in the following text, on which much teaching was based: Sâim Kılavuz et al., *Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi*.

23 Kaymakcan, "Religious Education", 24.

(*İslâmiyet ve Türkler*) combines nationalist and religious discourses.²⁴ Between 1982 and 1992 these general objectives did not evolve very much.²⁵ Within this educational framework, teaching relating to the Prophet was mainly limited to the historic stages of his life (*sîyer*) and his status as messenger, in sequences called *Peygamberimiz ve Din* (Our Prophet and religion), *Peygamberlere inanmak* (Believing in the reality of prophets), and *Kur'an ve Hz. Muhammed* (The Qur'ân and the Prophet Muḥammad). Such teaching was not yet (as it was to become in the 2000s) centred around the Prophet's moral and exemplary functions.

8.4 The Prophet as an Element of Pedagogical, Psychological, and Citizenship Mobilisation

The reform of educational programmes that took place in 2000 (communiqué no. 2517) relied on much more precise classifications of the areas in which public religious education would have an impact: individual, social, collective, moral, cultural, and universal. Within the "individual" element were numerous subcategories: individual liberty and tolerance in religion; the dimension of love; the necessity of knowing what Islam has in common with other religions; the capacity to distinguish between religious obligations and cultural habits (*örf ve adetler*); the ability to differentiate between true religion and superstition; an awareness of the conformity of Islam with science; the importance of being at peace with one's own religion. The emphasis is put on the resolution of an individual's internal and psychological conflicts, as well as of conflicts between the individual and religion, family or social conflicts, and those relating to religion's compatibility with logic and science.

The collective issues identified by these new programmes relate to the importance of familiarity with collective religious rituals and behaviours, and to interreligious tolerance, protection of the environment, and the ways in which social habits may influence religious beliefs. The moral issues at stake have to do with the interiorisation of moral values, and with an awareness of the value of faith and rituals. Finally, this programme identifies cultural issues, such as the capacity to identify the role of religion within the emergence and development of a culture, and the development of a peaceful approach to generational differences. Here again, one can observe the emphasis laid on the supposed benefits brought by scholastically acquired religious culture; for

24 In, for example, Sâim Kılavuz et al., *Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi*, 699ff.

25 Kurt, "1982, 1992 ve 2000", 131.

example, in the resolution of conflict. Finally, the more general issues at stake relate to the capacity to appreciate the universal values of religious conscience and knowledge, and to approach other religions with understanding and tolerance (and on the basis of at least a minimal understanding of their principal specificities). Additionally, the accent placed on the correspondences between Islam and secular, modern, universal values is an important particular in the renewal of these programmes.

The main difference between the programmes of 1982 and 2000 is that the former underlines the contributions of its cursus to historical knowledge and doctrinal mastery and, separately, its support for civic awareness; the latter course of study brings these two dimensions together, justifying them and expanding the scope of the programme, which is presented in terms of psychology, interpersonal relations, and social and pragmatic interests. Within this framework, and in parallel with the continuing importance of the Prophet's life in these courses, the increasing emphasis on his status as an individual, familial, social, and civic model acquires a new relevance. This is a body of acquired education conceived as knowledge applicable to contemporary issues and conforming to contemporary standards around behaviour and social administration; its elaboration was accompanied by the development in Turkey of a cognitive and constructivist pedagogy. In both programmes, the "formatting" of the citizen is fundamental; this follows the path laid out since the very beginning of the republican era, along which there may have been diverse approaches to questions of citizenship and identity, but always with an eye to maintaining the emphasis on civic loyalty, and the correspondence between Islam and the interests of the state. When one looks closely at the developments in the *DKAB* course, it appears increasingly as an emanation of a problem set by the state: that of the social individual interacting with society as a whole, with the political arena, and with Turkishness. In addition to cognitive and pragmatic approaches to religious instruction, the 2000 reform also adds transnational and universal questions to which religious culture is expected to find answers, along with a new willingness to interact and compare with, or measure up to, religious teaching in Europe.

Specifically, the emphasis is here placed on the balance and health of the individual (in body, soul, cleanliness, morality, intelligence, and cultural protection), in terms of "benefits of religion for personal development", of the capacity to "adapt oneself to the religious dimension of social existence", "choosing between justified and false attitudes", "conceptualising the universal dimension of religion", "ridding oneself of politico-religious groups [sects], distancing oneself from them, being able to identify real religion, and avoiding superstition", "being able to understand the cultural dimension of religion

and interiorise it in order to improve it”, and, finally, “identifying religious principles in individual and collective moral attitudes”. One of the important particularities of the programmes in 2000, as compared with the first pedagogical programmes of 1949, lies in the addition of *Toplumsal Görevlerimiz ve Din* (Our social duties and religion):²⁶ this formulation clearly underlines the fact that religion is not treated as an end in itself, but as a tool and condition for the improvement of the nation’s social organisation.

An important indicator of the increasing space accorded to the figure of the Prophet is the appearance in 2000 of a sequence to be used in the final year of primary school, devoted to “The Prophet Muḥammad and Family Life” (*Hz. Muhammed ve aile hayatı*), which was not in the programmes from 1949 to 1992, but has been maintained permanently since 2000 (it is included in the programmes of 2010 and 2018).²⁷ Here it is the human and social dimensions of the Prophet that are discussed, notably his qualities as a father and husband: he is gifted with perfect moral qualities (*merhamet, sabır, şükr, beraberlik*: mercy, patience, gratitude, sociability). He is also a good relative and neighbour, acting justly towards all people, loving his neighbour, and offering assistance with domestic tasks. One of the new functions of the sequence was to legitimise commemorations and devotional practices around the birth of the Prophet (*mevlit*):

Finally, it is right to remember the importance of the Prophet’s birth with regard to what he brought to humanity, and therefore right to justify its celebration (*mevlit kutlamaları*) as an occasion to know him better and to put into practice his fine example (socialisation, visits to family, help for the poor and wretched).²⁸

Elsewhere, the programme for the first year of middle school provides for a unit called “Muḥammad, the Last Prophet” (*Son Peygamber Hz. Muhammed*), within which the pacifying nature and social function of the Prophet are underlined on the basis of biographical elements. However, with the programmes of 2000 it is especially at level eight (third year of middle school) that the figure of the Prophet acquires a radical and transversal dimension as an exemplar: the year’s first sequence is called “The Exemplary Morality of Muḥammad”

26 *MEB Tebliğler Dergisi*, no. 2517, October 2000, and *MEB Tebliğler Dergisi*, no. 936, December 1956.

27 *MEB Tebliğler Dergisi*, no. 937, December 1956; Acar, “İlkoğretim 4. ve 5.,” 73.

28 *MEB Tebliğler Dergisi*, no. 932, December 1956.

(*Hz. Muhammed'in Örnek Ahlâk*); it highlights the Prophet's social and interactional qualities, and his reliability as a model.

If the elements of mastery and doctrine in the teachings of Islam were pre-eminent in the textbooks of the 1980s, from 2000 these began to disappear as the content of teaching was constructed and placed in the curriculum because of its function in the day-to-day life (social, familial, civic) of the student learner. This point can be related to concomitant developments in pedagogy, and to the increasingly detailed specifications for learning at each level, as the programmes were becoming more and more extensive. The Prophet's importance acquired a particular dimension when looked at from a constructivist (*yapılandırmacı*) perspective; this approach gradually came to be preferred by pedagogues in faculties of theology, and modified the preferred outlook of earlier educators, which was a more behaviourist (*davranışçı*) pedagogy, undertaken according to objectives and via conditioning. It is interesting to observe the extent to which religion, which could itself be treated as an issue of mastery and doctrine, is instead imbued with and upheld not only by patriotic and republican ideology, but by deep pedagogical reflection claiming to be centred around the idea of an active learner (*öğrenci merkezli*) and founded on the conceptualisation arrived at by the student her- or himself on the basis of the problems that are addressed and discussed. These various pedagogical options make sense when looked at in the light of the history of Turkish republican education, which, from the beginning, was undertaken from the point of view of developments in pedagogy as a science.²⁹ The pedagogical models and theories used were very much founded on the work of Jean Piaget and John Dewey, and, more recently, on the works of Michael Grimmitt, who proposes a distinction between "learning religion" (*din hakkında öğrenmek*), "learning about religion" (*din hakkında öğrenmek*), and "learning from religion" (*dinden öğrenmek*);³⁰ these distinctions allow him to dissociate public education in religion from ultra-confessional religious instruction.³¹ Since the 2000s, numerous pedagogues and actors within faculties of theology conceive of the DKAB teaching as progressive, structured with specific objectives and stages in mind, and taking into account the personal, different, and relative nature of the individual faced with knowledge and learning. Here learning is intended to occur as autonomous research into solutions to problems (*sorun merkezli*)

29 The theories of John Dewey and Jean Piaget had an impact from the beginnings of the republic; Dewey was consulted in 1924 to provide expertise in the construction of the new Turkey's education system: Sarmis, "Psychologies ottomanes et turques (1860–1930)".

30 Mentioned by Ev, *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Derslerinde Problemler*, 57–58.

31 Grimmitt, *What Can I Do in RE?*; Grimmitt, "Constructivist Pedagogies".

undertaken by the learner, who is placed in a situation of cognitive conflict that the discipline of DKAB appears particularly to incarnate. The defenders of this approach admit that there are risks attached to imposing this cognitive conflict on students, because it may carry with it the invitation to look critically at religious dogmas, but they argue that the globalised context and plural nature of Turkish society require the teaching of religion to be opened up to such pedagogical options.³² This approach, springing from an inclusive and pragmatic pedagogy, also favours the emergence of the Prophet as an absolute moral example. For most ordinary students, the biographical examples and *ḥadīths* about the Prophet's excellent moral conduct favour their interiorisation of the Prophet's example, and rather than embodying inaccessible perfection, he nevertheless remains eminently accessible, because he is human. We also observe that the term *siyer*, which was still used in the 1980s to refer to the part of religious teaching devoted to the Prophet, has completely disappeared as a category of knowledge, now indicating simply sources of information about the Prophet.

During the 2000s, after the negotiations about Turkey becoming part of the European Union, working groups were organised around the reform of school programmes.³³ The result of these was a series of reflections on the role of the teaching of religion in relation to social and communitarian cohesion, and to citizenship. Religion was not perceived as an isolated system of doctrines and values, but as a psychological and social resource. In opposition to the pedagogical paradigm based on the transmission and assimilation of known facts, this approach favours an education that integrates knowledge in a way that is coherent in the context and environment of the student, who, through the adjustments made necessary by cognitive conflict, becomes an actor in her or his own vision of the world and of interactions. These working groups also examined the ways in which European countries teach religion, and their work and research culminated in the organisation of a major symposium in 2001.³⁴ This was succeeded by a series of experiments at the faculty of theology of the Dokuz Eylül University, examining a constructivist style of pedagogy under the overall title of "active education" (*aktif eğitim*); this was then used in educational programmes. This modified the behaviourist approach that had already been adopted in earlier versions of the programme, aiming above all to spread pedagogical practices that put the learner into a confrontation with the real

32 Ev, *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Derslerinde Probleme*, 60.

33 Ev, *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi Derslerinde Probleme*, 31.

34 *Avrupa Birliğine Giriş Sürecinde Türkiye'de Din Eğitimi ve Sorunları Sempozyumu*, Adapazarı, 26–27 May 2001; reports appeared in 2002.

effects of religious knowledge, both on the construction of the individual and on social and collective interactions.

In recent programmes, the DKAB course for middle school years 4 to 8 is constructed and organised around five sequences; as well as one providing general knowledge of Islam, and another focussing on the rituals and pillars of Islam and its social value, there is a sequence devoted specifically to the Prophet, which aims to teach the life of the Prophet and present it as a moral model (*örnek ahlâk*, exemplary morality). Reminders of his historic role in the propagation of Islam are accompanied by an emphasis on his exemplary nature: at this level nothing is taught about the particularities of his theological status. Thus, the programme puts the emphasis on social equality and the struggles against division and injustices founded on race, and even on gender – injustices that the Prophet is reputed to have abolished. The 2018 programmes, which modify those of 2010, offer, in the fourth sequence devoted to the Prophet, *Hız. Muhammed'i Tanıyalım* (Let's get to know Muḥammad, level 4), *Hız. Muhammed ve Aile Hayatı* (The Prophet and family life, level 5), *Hız. Muhammed'in Hayatı* (The life of the Prophet, level 6), *Allah'ın Kulu ve Elçisi: Hız. Muhammed* (The servant and messenger of Allah, level 7), and *Hız. Muhammed'in Örnekliliği* (Muḥammad as exemplar, level 8). Little has changed since 2010, but we do note the addition of verses and prayers that must be learned by the end of each sub-sequence.

At the high school level (years 9–12), the moral and ethical dimension is treated as part of the general message of Islam itself, and not only as part of the message brought by the Prophet. Level 10 also incorporates a group of lessons called *Hız. Muhammed ve gençlik* (The Prophet and young people), using *sūra* 3 (Āl 'Imrān), especially its verse 159; the aim of these lessons is to speak directly to the generation studying them. During 2018–19, the moral content has been expanded at the expense of biographical detail: mercy, patience, gratitude, solidarity (*merhamet, sabir, şükür, beraberlik*). The Prophet's status as moral exemplar takes its place in a fairly extensive range of teaching: Judaism and Christianity are discussed in the final sequence of level 11; level 12 also includes teaching on contemporary religious problems (including medical ethics), Islam in Anatolia, the links between Islam and science, Islamic mysticism (*tasavvuf*, including Alevism and Bektashism, cults and rituals), and, finally, the religions of India and the Far East.³⁵

Overall, the double nature of Muḥammad is always accentuated: he is human, and he is also a Prophet. His status as a model is underlined; the programmes demand thorough knowledge of the Prophet's life, which is

35 Official programmes available via: <https://bit.ly/2SdWQh7>.

approached in a progressive but slightly fragmented way by comparison with the didactic blocks that made up the larger part of 1980s textbooks.³⁶ The lessons in later textbooks are based on precise examples, portraying very general virtue and making the Prophet into the ideal model of an individual, a father, a spouse, and a citizen. In this respect, what is considered important is not the ontological status of the Prophet, but his status as a model.³⁷ The tension visible in these programmes, between factual and doctrinal history, on the one hand, and the pedagogical and psychological structures built around the Prophet as model, on the other, upholds the notion of a pedagogical “return” to the political centrality of the Prophet; in our terms, the exploitation, in dedicated lessons, of the Prophetic model to construct an ideal model citizen is made easier through the use of recent teaching practices of the constructivist type. This pedagogical option allows for the diminishing of any conflict, or even competition, between religious doctrine and the republican environment.

8.5 Is Learning about the Prophet in Turkish National Education Becoming Autonomous ?

Alongside the greater number of religious lessons devoted to the figure of the Prophet in Turkish public education since the beginning of the century, history classes at the secondary level (starting in year 9) contain a sequence called *İslâm Tarihi ve Uygarlığı* (Islamic history and civilisation), including *İslâmiyet'in doğuşu ve Hz. Muhammed Dönemi* (The birth of Islam and times of the Prophet Muḥammad). Since 2017, an additional class devoted entirely to the Prophet (in parallel with the DKAB courses in religious and moral culture) has been added to the four-plus-four-plus-four system that was put into place in 2012. In the *İmam Hatip* this (obligatory) course is called *Siyer dersi*, and in the general education system it is optional, under the name *Hz. Muhammed'in Hayatı* or *Peygamberimizin hayatı* (Life of the Prophet Muḥammad or Life of our Prophet).³⁸ Initially offered at levels 5 and 9 (respectively the first year of middle and of high school), it is now being extended throughout the secondary school programme. Conforming to the above-mentioned tendency to support constructivist theories, official programmes mention among the

36 Sâim Kılavuz et al., *Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi*, 571ff.

37 This was already present in the above-cited textbook from 1985: Sâim Kılavuz et al., *Din Kültürü ve Ahlâk Bilgisi*, 159 and 397, in the “Morality” section.

38 Köse, “Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Tarafından Hazırlanan Peygamberimizin Hayatı ve Siyer”, 108–9.

principles guiding their construction of pedagogical activities the aims of “learning to learn” (*Öğrenmeyi öğrenme*), the development of autonomy and initiative (*İnisiyatif alma ve girişimcilik*), and the inclusion of activities connected with citizenship and social existence (*Sosyal ve vatandaşlıkla ilgili yetkinlikler*).³⁹

During the first cycle (primary and middle school levels), this course has several fundamental objectives:⁴⁰ to explain the notion of a prophet, as well as the particularities of the different prophets (*kavramını ve peygamberlerin özelliklerini açıklaması*); to learn about the environment into which the Prophet was born (*Peygamberimizin doğduğu çevrenin genel özelliklerini tanıması*); to be able to distinguish between his human and prophetic characteristics (*Peygamberimizin beşerî ve nebevi yönlerini fark etmesi*); to understand the Prophetic model in its individual and its collective aspects (*Peygamberimizin örnek kişiliğini bireysel ve toplumsal açılardan kavraması*); to love the Prophet and follow his example (*Peygamberimizi severek kendisine örnek alması*); to understand the notions of *sahaba* (the Prophet’s companions) and their exemplary nature (*Sahabi kavramını ve sahabenin örnekliğini kavraması*); to identify manifestations of love for the Prophet in our culture and civilisation (*Kültür ve medeniyetimizdeki peygamber sevgisinin tezahürlerini fark etmesi*); and to have a holistic understanding of our Prophet’s life (*Peygamberimizin hayatını bütüncül bir yaklaşımla tanıması*). Mostly based on the *hadîth*, the *Sosyal hayatta peygamberimiz* and *Peygamberimizin Örnekliği* sequences are conceived to support the interiorisation and evident nature of the Prophetic model, according to a pedagogical logic that legitimises his centrality on psychological, social, and rational grounds.

We observe that recent programmes at the high school level (years 9–12) claim that the learning in primary and middle schools aims to result in:⁴¹ “the interiorisation [by the pupils] of national and spiritual values, and their transformation into a way of life, that they may contribute as active and productive citizens to the economic, social and cultural development of our country”.⁴² One major evolution that now takes place as pupils progress from

39 Page 4 of the official programmes of 2018. The contents of these programmes are available on the official website of the Ministry of National Education: https://dogm.meb.gov.tr/www/icerik_goruntule.php?KNO=14.

40 For 2018, see page 9 of the programmes cited above.

41 Accessible here: <https://bit.ly/3gRUgHw>.

42 “Liseyi tamamlayan öğrencilerin, ilkokulda ve ortaokulda kazandıkları yetkinlikleri geliştirmek suretiyle, millî ve manevî değerleri benimseyip hayat tarzına dönüştürmüş, üretken ve aktif vatandaşlar olarak yurdumuzun iktisadi, sosyal ve kültürel kalkınmasına katkıda bulunan,” page 1 of the official programmes for 2018.

year 9 through to year 12 thus consists in the passage from general study of the Prophet's life and his importance as example and model, along with study of his many significant roles in Islam (educator, messenger, social reformer, master of warfare), to the study of his role in Turkish social and cultural transitions (*Kültürümüzde Peygamberimiz*); this is a new approach when compared with the DKAB sequences devoted to the Prophet: the Prophet is now presented as a third party and intermediary, allowing one to conceptualise Turkish history and the country's contemporary problems. A pragmatic way of interpreting *ḥadīth* is preferred: from year 2 the sub-sequences accentuate knowledge of the *ḥadīth* and their sources, and ways of using them to interpret contemporary life and its specific problems (*Hadis'ten Hayata*, from *ḥadīth* to life). From this point of view, this course (to date an optional one) is more developed and explicit than the compulsory course that is part of the DKAB. Like the latter, it is supposed to pursue the generic moral objectives of public education ("justice, friendship, honesty, self-mastery, patience, respect, love, responsibility, love for one's nation, altruism"). The writings of the theologian Muḥammad Hamidullah (1908–2002), who worked as an academic in Turkey for a few years, played an important role in the development of these courses.⁴³

Although this cursus proposes a return to the centrality of the Prophet without competing with republican principles, it nevertheless makes some contribution to increasing the autonomy of the discipline of the study of the Prophet. The visibility of the Prophet in these new teaching programmes goes along with a movement to institutionalise research into the life (*sira*) of the Prophet. Interestingly, the return to a form of historical and doctrinal accuracy in the treatment of the figure of the Prophet (through courses focussing on his *sira*) brings about a personal investment, on the part of theologians, in this didactic approach, and thus blurs the lines between public education, controlled by the Ministry of National Education (MEB), and religious teaching, controlled by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The textbooks introduced in 2017 for this course have been widely criticised for lacking precision as to the specificities of the *sira/siyer* genre, as based on a branch of Islamic

43 Muhammad Hamidullah, an important reference point for theology in Turkish universities, was an Indian scholar and university lecturer with degrees in philosophy and literature. Specialising in Muslim jurisprudence and the science of *ḥadīth*, in 1947 he contributed to the composition of the constitution of Pakistan. He translated the Qur'ān into French (*Le Saint Coran: traduction et commentaire de Muhammad Hamidullah avec la collaboration de M. Leturmy*, 1959), wrote a biography of the Prophet Muḥammad (*Le Prophète de l'Islam, sa vie, son œuvre*, 2 vols, 2001), and his work has been translated into many languages; he held a number of university posts in Turkey, and especially, from 1954, at the CNRS in France.

knowledge:⁴⁴ these criticisms occur in the context of an increased interest at universities in the *sira* of the Prophet, which has led to a flourishing literature on the subject, to the organisation of a major scientific congress in 2010, and to workshops (*Siyer Öğretimi Çalıştayları*) on the teaching of the *sira* of the Prophet, organised between 2015 and 2018.⁴⁵ Public education, by including specific disciplinary learning goals on the Prophet, finds itself in a position in which representatives of the norms of doctrinal and religious science have a stake, and opens itself to criticisms that were more easily resisted by the DKAB because of its very strong civic and moral dimension.

8.6 Conclusion: Teaching the Figure of the Prophet – A Tool for the Modern Turkish State as It Evolves

The study of courses on religion in Turkish national education is particularly interesting because the subject engages with a fundamental and emblematic tension that has existed throughout the history of education in republican Turkey. This chapter sought to clarify the role taken on by the figure of the Prophet in a secularised country where the teaching of religion is not based on strict religious instruction. The involvement of public and state institutions in this teaching brings many factors into play, the effect of which is to associate the learning of civic virtues with that of religious culture.

As these courses have evolved since 1949, they have become increasingly structured and the framing of lessons more detailed (sequences, themes, objectives, knowledge to be acquired, sources such as specific *hadiths* and Qur'ānic verses). Sequences on the Prophet were still a single block in 1984; since 2000 these have spread across several areas of study (life, double nature as human and divine, moral example, the good man, usefulness to the nation, usefulness for Turkishness), giving way to an intention for learning to be more interactive and progressive. This is now complemented by a course on the Prophet introduced in 2017 (and still, for the moment, optional); in this the central figure of Islam becomes the pivot of learning about religion, and of learning to apply religion. This allows the appropriation and the embodiment of religious knowledge through an identification object that appears to

44 For the textbooks, see those of Pütkül and Vasif Körpe, *Peygamberimizin Hayatı*; Akkaya et al., *Peygamberimizin Hayatı*; Köse, "Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Tarafından Hazırlanan Peygamberimizin Hayatı ve Siyer".

45 *Türkiye'de Sîret Yazıcılığı Sempozyumu-I*, Istanbul, 16–17 October 2010; reports published in 2012 in Ankara. In 2016, the magazine *Siyer Araştırmaları Dergisi* was also released (first issue appeared 2017) under the auspices of a foundation for the *sira* (Siyer Vakfı, founded by Muhammed Emin Yıldırım).

function efficiently alongside the constructivist developments favoured by some Turkish pedagogues. The importance of the Prophet in these lessons and textbooks is also part of a more general phenomenon visible since the 1980s, when these courses became obligatory: for instance, the appearance of commemorations and of the ritual of the *kutlu doğum* (the holy birth of the Prophet), and the development of a *sıra* literature linked to the literature of mutual aid. Here, the figure of the Prophet nourishes aspirations that may be communitarian or individualist, such as the notion of finding within oneself the tools for salvation. In effect, the figure of the Prophet sets up a stall in the psycho-spiritual marketplace of contemporary Turkey; another manifestation of this is the renewal of Prophetic medicine, *tubb-i nebevi*, which the Ministry of Health has recognised as a gentle alternative form of health care.

Since its beginnings, the DKAB has been a politically and civically engaged form of teaching: transversally constructed with a view to reinforcing national feeling, it exists at the crossroads between social morality and religious knowledge. In this programme, the Prophet is presented less as an absolute authority than as a model for the individual who is supposed to adapt to her or his environment and reach an increasingly pure moral state. The figure of the Prophet functions to make society more cohesive; it is in line with the democratic project, and this is underlined. Muḥammad is presented as the exemplar of the ideal citizen who experiences no contradictions within his environment (in any domain of human interactions – familial, economic, state-related). As discussed at length in the principles that guided the reform of 2000, the main psychological objective for these teaching methods is to arrange individual differences within the collective experience without causing contradictions to emerge. Thus, they become a tool for the civic education of citizens, and the model of the Prophet is a way of digging down to the very roots of Turkish citizenship. The Prophet's religious sacredness here serves a civic pragmatism; Muḥammad is exceptional because of his extreme accessibility, highlighted through universal and up-to-date examples that encourage identification and can be appropriated by any student. He is a pacifying figure, protecting against sectarian detours and compatible with the republican and democratic context. The potency of this Prophetic figure as one with which people may identify – despite the fact that, in the 1930s and 1940s, works dedicated to him risked being banned – is in direct correlation, in the context of Turkish public education, with the neutralisation of his exclusivity and his political centrality.⁴⁶

46 For instance, a book on the Prophet, forbidden by the Kemalist regime in 1938, was written by Ömer Rıza Doğrul (1893–1952), the author of several books on Islam and the Muslim world, and also translator of the Qur'ān.

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The Prophet, His *Mevlud*, and the Building of the Albanian Nation-State

Gianfranco Bria

This chapter aims to explain how the *mevlud* (*mawlid* in Arabic, *mevlit* in Turkish) was linked to processes of nation-state building in Albania. For Albanians the term *mevlud* has various meanings, relating to the birth or birthday of the Prophet, celebratory events connected with his birth, and the artistic forms or genres that evolve along with and accompany these celebrations, such as panegyric poems. The present chapter concerns the latter two meanings, and treats them separately. Its first section analyses how translations into Albanian of the most widespread Turkish *mevlit* text, Süleyman Çelebi's *Vesiletü'n-Necât*, underpinned the process of nation-building after the end of the Ottoman period, and contributed to forming an Islamic national literature and diffusing the Albanian language. Our second section analyses the affirmation of the *mevlud* festival as a symbol of Sunnī Islam during the inter-war period and its subsequent suppression by the Communist regime, which substantially erased the community's memory of the *mevlud* celebrations. Our aim is to understand the incorporation of the Sunnī authorities into national ideologies, and how they in turn use the *mevlud* ritual as a means of legitimising their identity and leadership. The final section of the chapter examines the post-socialist revival of *mevlud* practices, secularised (and nationalised) by Sunnī national authorities and reshaped by foreign actors in a plural religious setting where believers, who are expressing their individual (and by now highly diversified) religiosity, know such traditions only superficially. Our aim is to understand how first socialist secularisation and then Salafist/globalised literalism decultured and alienated this ritual.

9.1 *Mevlud* Translation as a National Issue¹

In the Balkans the public celebration of the *kandili mevlit*,² often following Ottoman ceremonial traditions and practices, was commonly used by ordinary communities to express their religiosity. During private ceremonies, the faithful would sing and read in Turkish, using the text by Süleyman Çelebi, the *Vesîletü'n-Necât* (Path to salvation), or, more rarely, Barzanjî's *mawlid*.³ However, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the weakening of the empire, the *tanzimat* reforms, and the rise of movements for national independence increased the impetus to translate the *mevlit* into other languages.⁴ These translations into native languages contributed to the formation of a recitative style that was less Ottoman and more typically "Balkan". In Bosnia, it became important to form and preserve Bosnian Islam when the Grand Mufti of Sarajevo replaced the Ottoman religious authorities as supreme religious leader of the region. In Albania, the translation of the *mevlud* (as it is called in Albanian) was connected to the complex relationships between nationalism, language, and religious legacies. Albanians were a special case among the ethnic groups of the Ottoman mosaic because of the nature of their written literature and national emancipation. They were divided across different cultural zones in the empire (Muslim, Rum, and Latin *millet*),⁵ and did not possess a unified language or common alphabet. The Albanian language was composed of many dialects, divided into two major groups: *Gegë* (mostly Catholics and Sunnī Muslims) in the north, and *Toskë* (mostly Bektashi Muslims and Orthodox Christians) in the south. The social and linguistic divisions between

1 This section is mostly based on the works of Albanian historians who studied the *mevlud* in the Albanian language.

2 For more on this subject, see Zarccone, *Mevlid Kandili*, 307–20; Schimmel, *Das islamische Jahr*, 64–79; Georgeon, "Le Ramadan"; Nuri, "Bolu ve Muhitinde Kandil"; Chih, "Anthropologie d'une fête musulmane".

3 Ja'far b. Ḥasan al-Barzanjī (1716–64) wrote a *mawlid* text in the seventeenth century in Medina, entitled *'Iqd al-jawhar fī mawlid al-nabī al-azhar* (The jewelled necklace of the resplendent Prophet's birth), which is one of the most sung and widespread *mawlids* in the Arab world. See Chih, "Anthropologie d'une fête musulmane", 183.

4 For a survey about these translations, see Okiç, "Çeşitli Dillerde Mevlidler".

5 Albanians were divided across three denominational groups (Muslims 70 per cent, Orthodox Christians 20 per cent, Catholic Christians 10 per cent); these belonged respectively to the Muslim, Rum, and Latin *millet* (religious communities).

the *Gegë* and the *Toskë*,⁶ the cultural disparities between religious groups,⁷ the absence of an ancient culture, and the massive rate of illiteracy slowed the development of nationalist consciousness (Albanism) until the necessary (re)invention of literary culture and standardisation of the language had occurred: these processes were intrinsically linked throughout many different phases and approaches.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century a number of religious and pious works, many of which were written by Catholics, were translated into Albanian, creating a sort of bridge between the national question and religious practice. This phase of “gestation” preceded the subsequent diffusion of profane texts that contributed to forging the national identity.⁸ Many of these texts were written by, or under the impulse of, the Albanian diaspora (*arbëreshë* minorities) in Italy, Greece, Serbia, Egypt, and Turkey, who were influenced by nationalist ideologies and values.⁹ These literary movements attempting to construct a national consciousness were varied; each group had its own aims, sometimes communicated by foreign actors such as the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹⁰ The question of whether to use the Latin, Greek, or Arabic alphabet led to the formation of a network of “Albanist” intellectuals with very diverse political and cultural objectives.¹¹ In 1878, many of them participated in the establishment of the “League of Prizren” (League for the Defence of the Rights of the Albanian Nation) to promote the “Albanian issue”, the increasing importance of which later brought about the publication of many journals and books in Albanian. The Ottoman authorities attempted to prevent the spread of Albanian ABCs and books, and outlawed the teaching of the language.¹² The levels of participation in the nationalist project among Muslims reflected their ambivalence: among the *Toskë*, the Bektashis, who had been persecuted by the empire since

6 For example, among the *Gegë*, religious divisions were sharper, and illiteracy was quite widespread; among the *Toskë*, the social structures were more nuanced, religious barriers were less rigid, and illiteracy was lower. See Clayer, “Le goût du fruit défendu”, online ed., paras 17–33; Gjinari et al., *Atlasi dialektologjik i gjuhës shqipe*.

7 Each *millet* had a specific educational system, each of which advocated a particular literary culture (Muslim-Arabic; Persian and Turkish; Orthodox-Greek; Catholic-Italian or -Latin), and shaped cultural disparities among Albanian populations.

8 Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, chapter 6: “1876–1896: Du réseau d’albanistes aux réseaux de lecteurs”.

9 Clayer, “Le goût du fruit défendu”, online ed., paras 17–33.

10 The Austro-Hungarian Empire claimed to support the establishment of a principedom in Albania that would have been managed by the Austro-Hungarian authorities; see Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*.

11 Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, 580–625.

12 Clayer, “Le goût du fruit défendu”, online ed., paras 17–33.

1826, actively participated in the nationalist movement because they aspired to become an independent religious community in a new Albanian nation-state: some Bektashis taught the Albanian language in their lodges (*tekke*), distributed Albanian ABCs and books, and supported bands of militias (*çeta*). Among Sunnī Muslims, mostly *Gegë*, nationalist activities were less prevalent, as they wanted to preserve their Turkish-Islamic culture.¹³

Nevertheless, some Muslim “Albanists” carried out the translation and production of religious poems in the service of an Islamic culture that, they hoped, would be more Albanian than Turkish. In this way, they ended up using Islam as a political means for the formation of a Muslim nationalist discourse. The Ottoman authorities, paradoxically, themselves favoured a similar process when they used Islamic ideology to underpin their imperial legitimacy. Some Islamic scholars who studied in Istanbul or other imperial cities wrote poems about the Prophet’s birth that were inspired by the *Vesiletü’n-Necât*, which was the most widespread *mevlud* and was translated in full several times.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Hasan Zyko Kamberi composed the first Albanian language *mevlud*,¹⁴ using Arabic characters.¹⁵ He was a poet belonging to the literary movement called Bejtexhinj (from Turkish: *beYTE* meaning “poem”).¹⁶ According to Robert Elsie, this genre, mostly comprising verses, was strongly influenced by Turkish, Arabic, and Persian literature,¹⁷ from which it borrowed several terms that were then absorbed into standard Albanian.¹⁸ The themes of Kamberi’s writings were mainly religious, in genres ranging from intimate mystical reflection to educational works dedicated to the spread of the Islamic faith – all expressed in the native language and all written using the Arabic alphabet. Kamberi, born in Starje i Kolonjës, a southern village near Mount Grammos, was among the main representatives of Bejtexhinj; among his many works, some were markedly satirical. For his *mevlud* he drew inspiration from Çelebi’s *Vesiletü’n-Necât*, which is made up of 51 octosyllables

13 Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, 580–625.

14 He participated in several military campaigns, some with Ali Pasha Tepelena (1744–1822). He was a dervish in the Bektashi sect and died in his native village at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, we do not have any further information about him.

15 Unfortunately, we do not have further information about the year of publication. See Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 31–34.

16 Elsie, *Albanian Literature*, 291–303.

17 Elsie, “Albanian Literature in the Moslem tradition”, 291–303.

18 According to Elsie, the Islamic mosaic of south-eastern Europe modulated the speculative character of the Bejtexhinj verses: the authority of the Sunnī policies of the sultan, Sufi mysticism (sometimes heterodox), and later, the liberal irredentism of the Bektashis. Cf. Elsie, “The Hybrid Soil of the Balkans”.

in rhymed quatrains, featuring 227 verses altogether, of which 98 are dedicated to the birth of the Prophet and 107 to his ascension into heaven.¹⁹

The second Albanian *mevlud*, also inspired by Çelebi's text, and also using Arabic characters, was written by Ismail Floqi.²⁰ This *mevlud* is divided into three parts: the first describes the birth of the Prophet, the second treats the episodes of *isrā'* and *mi'rāj* (Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven), and the last deals with his death and some posthumous episodes. Floqi's work achieved less notoriety than had Kamberi's *mevlud*, which was also mentioned by Naim Frashëri (1846–1900), the national poet of Albania. However, in 1939 the Islamic Community of Albania published a new version of Floqi's text, using Latin characters.

Hafiz Ali Ulqinaku (1855–1913) composed the first Albanian translation of the *Vesiletü'n-Necât*. He was born in Ulqin, Montenegro, and grew up in Shkodër where he studied at the local madrasa.²¹ After graduating he began teaching in an elementary school, and in 1889 he became the imam of Lezhë. Ulqinaku studied several languages and translated many books into Albanian. He also wrote (in Albanian) a book on Turkism, as well as a Turkish-Albanian dictionary. In 1878, he asked to be allowed to translate the *Vesiletü'n-Necât* into the Albanian language (using Arabic characters), and received the assent of the sultan, who then rejected his version because it was in the Shkodër dialect. He used Rızâ Efendi's (d. 1890) version of the *Vesiletü'n-Necât*,²² which was easily available at the time, for his translation, adapting it to the metrics of the Albanian language. The first edition was published anonymously in Istanbul. Its exact year of publication is not known, although the sources attest it between 1878 and 1881;²³ Ulqinaku probably did not want to be found out by the Ottoman authorities.

Tahir Efendi Popoves (1856–1949) composed a further translation of the *Vesiletü'n-Necât* into Albanian, also using Arabic characters.²⁴ The exact date of publication is not known with certainty, as there is conflicting information about this work, although we know that the place of publication was Istanbul,²⁵ and that it was published with the permission of the Ottoman min-

19 Elsie, *Albanian Literature*, 38–42.

20 He was born in Korça at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, we do not have further information about him (Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 43–54).

21 Luli and Dizdari, *Hafiz Ali Ulqinaku*.

22 Hasan Rızâ Efendi was a Turkish poet and calligrapher, especially famous for his *Mevlit*. Cf. Özcan, "Hasan Rızâ Efendi, Said Paşa İmamı".

23 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 71–82.

24 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 261–69.

25 According to Mid'had Frashëri, this text would have been published in 1890; according to Abdullah Zajimi, it was published in the early twentieth century; according to Jashar

ister of education, at the end of the nineteenth century.²⁶ The distribution of Tahir Popova's version was mostly limited to Kosovo, and several versions of it in Latin characters have been made available since 1951.

The authors of these literary works probably chose to compose them using Arabic characters because Arabic was considered the language of Islam par excellence²⁷ and they wanted to maintain some connection with their Muslim backgrounds. In the same way, they used the Albanian language to signal their affiliation with nationalist aspirations. The combination of Albanian words written using Arabic characters supported their affirmation of a dual Albanian and Muslim identity.²⁸ At the beginning of the twentieth century, the question of which alphabet should be used reflected the Albanians' need for unification and their desire for emancipation. Several congresses took place, and their deliberations demonstrate the evolution of this question. The choice to be made was between the Arabic alphabet, which would have maintained a symbolic connection with the Ottoman Empire, and the Latin alphabet, a token of cultural separation from that empire.²⁹ The Congress of Manastir (14–18 November 1908) was unable to choose a single solution and instead opted for both Arabic and Latin alphabets. In 1909, the Young Turks organised a new congress in Dibra, which pushed for the adoption of the Arabic alphabet.³⁰ However, the use of the Arabic alphabet soon declined and became obsolete in the following years, once Albania declared its independence.³¹ This linguistic and political contention also affected the translation of *mevlud*.

The first Albanian-language *mevlud* written using Latin characters was published in 1900. The author was Hafëz Ali Korçe (1873–1957), one of the most important Islamic activists³² and scholars of the time,³³ who wrote several poems and lyrics about religion and linguistics. His text, originally written in the *Tosk* dialect and later republished in 1909, 1920, and 1944, drew inspiration

Rexhepagiq, this *mevlud* was published in 1873, and then republished in Kosovo in 1905. According to Nehat Krasniqi, Tahir Popova published the text in 1890. See Lumo, "Disa dorëshkrime shqipe", 286–89; Zajmi, "Një vepër shqipe e vjetit 1873", 117; Rexhepagiq, *Razvoj prosvete i školstva Albanske*, 43; Krasniqi, "Mevludet në letërsinë shqiptare me alfabet arab"; Kaleshi, "Mevludi Kod Arbanasa".

26 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 261–69.

27 Bria, "The Case of Albanian as an Islamic Language", 52–72.

28 Vezenkov, "The Albanian language question", 489–522.

29 Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening*, 378–80.

30 Clayer, "Bektachisme et nationalisme albanais", 287–90.

31 Gawrych, *The crescent and the eagle*, 160–170.

32 He was against any form of Islamic reformism, and in favour of the return to an original Islam; see Clayer, "Adapting Islam to Europe".

33 Ismail and Karjagdiu, *Hafiz Ali Korça*.

from the *Vesiletü'n-Necât*.³⁴ In 1909, Hafiz Mani, imam of the Kiras Mosque in Shkodër, decided to propose a version of Ulqinaku's *mevlud* in Arabic characters, in order to support the adoption of the Arabic alphabet and, therefore, the Islamic-Ottoman legacy. In Elbasan city in 1910 Sulejman Efendi produced a reduced version of Ulqinaku's work, in Latin characters to propose a "New Albanist Course".

This linguistic contention persisted after the declaration of Albanian independence in 1912, which brought the question of the relationship between religion, nationalism, and language to the fore.³⁵ Once again, this conflict also had an impact on the linguistic patterns of the *mevlud*. The Albanian nationalism that inspired the independence movement was of a marked secular/ecumenical character, and prioritised linguistic/ethnic identity over religion, although Islam was the majority confession of the country (whose population was 70 per cent Muslim, 20 per cent Orthodox Christian, and 10 per cent Catholic).³⁶ The building of the Albanian nation-state redefined the bases on which legitimacy was founded by the Islamic authorities and their institutional structures in the new territories: the relationship between tradition, modernity, and religion became a vital issue for all Muslims.³⁷ Within Muslim groups three intellectual currents emerged: "Orientalists", called "the Elders" (*Të Vjetër*), who prized continuity with Islam and its cultural background; "Occidentalists", called "the Youth" (*Të Rinjtë*), who called for the rejection of religion, especially of Islam, as a barbaric residual component of natural civil evolution; and the "Neo-Albanians/New Albanians" (*Neoshqiptarët*), who emphasised the importance of Albanian culture and essence beyond any religious division.³⁸

One of the main questions raised by the various currents concerned the nationalisation of the doctrine, terminology, and language of Albanian Islam; this was mostly supported by the "New Albanians", while the "Elders" wanted

34 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 341–52.

35 Clayer, "De la presse institutionnelle à la presse prosélyte".

36 According to Nathalie Clayer, three factors motivated this formative process: the presence of different religious confessions in the country (Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Muslims); the diffusion of positivist ideas among patriots; and, finally, the independence of the Bektashiyya as a religious community. In this way, at least formally, the state rationalised the relationship between the different religious communities according to a secular institutional framework: this approach was adopted from the birth of the Albanian nation, when the High Council of Regence was composed of Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Sunni Muslims, and Bektashis. Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, 703–8; Morozzo della Rocca, *Nazione e religione in Albania (1920–1944)*; Basha, *Islam në Shqipëri gjatë shekujve*, 119–39; Popovic, *L'islam balkanique*.

37 Clayer, "Tasavvuf, Music and Social Change".

38 Clayer, "Tasavvuf, Music and Social Change".

to maintain continuity with the Ottoman past. In 1925, the Kemalist reforms severed Turkey's ties with the former Ottoman regions,³⁹ and this effectively required the nationalisation of Islam outside Turkey, with many doctrinal and literary consequences. Numerous chants (*ilahi*) and religious texts were translated into the new Latin-alphabet Albanian language, or adapted to it. In this context, the translation of a *mevlud* into Latin characters was preferred and became an important occasion for the dissemination of a national ideology and for the legitimisation and consolidation of religious authority. Several religious leaders composed new *mevluds* or translated the work of Çelebi into Albanian in order to underline their reverence for God and for the Albanian nation. In Chicago in 1920, Shefki Hoxha (1900–1981), from Strugë, published a partial translation of the *Vesiletü'n-Necât*;⁴⁰ in 1924, Hafiz Abdullah Zëmbaku (1892–1960) wrote a version of the *mevlud*,⁴¹ first published in Korça,⁴² which was then republished several times.⁴³ Zëmbaku attended courses in the Fatih *madrise*, called *Dar ül-Hilafe*, and he undertook religious studies at the University of Istanbul; in the Ottoman capital he was initiated into the Naqshbandî Sufi path. Starting in 1921, he taught in the *madrise* in Korça and the school in Kuç-Belorta.⁴⁴ Zëmbaku was one of the most prolific Islamic entrepreneurs in interwar Albania, through his publications – some thirty titles, including Qur'ānic commentaries and *ḥadīth* translations – but also via his preaching throughout Albania, and his teaching of Islam and of the Albanian language.⁴⁵ He also wrote a *mevlud* in Albanian, distributing it through his religious and social networks.⁴⁶ Sheh Ahmet Shkodër (1881–1927), a famous Rifā'ī Sufi, also composed an Albanian version of the *mevlud*, which was published in 1922 in Arabic and in 1926 in Latin script.⁴⁷ In 1933, Hafiz Said Ulqinaku of Lezhë prepared a complete version of Ali Ulqinaku's *mevlud*, using the Latin script, which slightly reformulated the original version. In 1934, Hafiz Ibrahim Dalliut wrote a book about the Prophet Muḥammad.⁴⁸

These texts mostly concern religious themes, without dwelling on nationalist values or patriotic epics. Nevertheless, the linguistic reshaping of the

39 About Mustafa Kemal's secular reforms see Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*.

40 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 31–19.

41 Ismail, *Mevludi te shqiptarët manifestim apo ibadet*, 75–82.

42 Sëmbakut, *Mevludi*.

43 It was republished in 1924 and in 1931 in Korça and in 1991 in Michigan. Cf. Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 371–89.

44 Safeti, "Hafiz Abdullah Zëmbaku-Figurë e nderuar e islamizmit në Shqipëri", 3.

45 Clayer, "Transnational Connections".

46 Zëmbaku, *Mevlud Par "Nuri Ahmedija"*.

47 Luli and Bujar, *Jeta dhe veprimtaria e Sheh Ahmed Shkodrës*, 9–29.

48 Zekay, *Zhvillimi i kulturës islame*, 309–12.

Albanian-language *mevlud* blended a Muslim identity into the nationalist project: Islamic authorities nationalised such poems as expressions of an Islamic literary culture that was typically “Albanian”. Furthermore, the circulation of *mevlud* also legitimised Sunnī authority among Muslims who were learning the new standard Albanian language: for them, *mevlud* meant both national identity and divine blessing.

9.2 Official *Mevlud* Celebrations

King Zog,⁴⁹ who came to power in 1925, rationalised and institutionalised the relationship between state and religion, effectively promoting the autonomous constitution of the various Muslim communities (confessionalisation): the Bektashiyya, after having actively participated in the nationalist project, were recognised by the Albanian state as an independent religious community (Bektashis);⁵⁰ the Sunnī community created the Komuniteti Mysliman i Shqipërisë (КМСН; Islamic Community of Albania); the Rifā'iyya, Qādiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, Tijāniyya, and Sa'diyya Sufi brotherhoods formed the Drita Hyjnore (Holy Light) Association; and the Halvetiyya created its own Liga Aleviane (Alevian League).⁵¹

During this period, some reformist ‘*ulamā*’, and the Tijāniyya in Shkodër district, instigated a strong cultural revival within Sunnī institutions; this also refreshed Muslim political and social associations. One of the main aims of the Sunnī community was to standardise and control liturgical and ritual forms of worship, under national rule, for all Muslims. In this way, Muslim authorities were able to shape a nationalist and militant Islam that could engage with the state-building process. For this reason, starting in the 1930s, these authorities called for the adoption of one or more texts of the *mevlud* by the nation’s mosques. Ulqinaku’s text became the most widely used *mevlud* in Shkodër district (northern Albania); while in central-southern areas many Muslim communities adopted Korça’s *mevlud*, or the text by Zëmlaku.

Thus, Sunnī authorities directly proposed the *mevlud* as the main form of veneration of the Prophet, one that allowed Albanians to express their piety in two distinct ways. The first, public, mode, organised and implemented by the

49 Ahmet Lekë Bej Zog (known as Zog I Scanderbeg III, King of the Albanians) was an Albanian politician and soldier, Prime Minister of Albania (1922–24), President of the Albanian Republic (1925–28), and King of Albania (1928–39).

50 Clayer, “Bektachisme et nationalisme albanais”, 287–90.

51 Clayer, “La Kadiriye en Albanie”, 236–40.

religious authorities, provided a specific form of ceremonial veneration during the five holy nights.⁵² The second, mostly relegated to the private sphere, included the chanting of one or more parts of the *mevlud* during family events such as births or funerals.⁵³ The first ritual form was governed and controlled by the Sunnī and Sufi authorities, as the official and public cult of the Prophet; the private singing ritual assumed more intimate traits, sometimes disconnected from official discourse, which reworked the feeling of love and veneration towards the Prophet, and incorporated it into family and communal life.

In Shkodër district, Ulqinaku's *mevlud* was used as part of the celebratory protocol for the five holy nights: the birth of the Prophet, the *Regaib* (the beginning of the pregnancy of the Prophet Muḥammad's mother), the *Miraxhi* (Muḥammad's ascension), the *Beraet* (forgiveness of sins), and the *Kadrit* (the Qur'ān's first appearance to the Prophet Muḥammad);⁵⁴ it was also used for the *Bayrami I vogel* (festival of breaking fast) and the *Bayrami I madhe* (feast of the sacrifice). This protocol included several elements drawn from the Ottoman ceremonial tradition:⁵⁵ during the five sacred nights and the two *bajrams*, it called for candles to be lit in the mosques while some Muslims recited a part of the *mevlud* before the night prayer (*ṣalāt al-‘ishā*).⁵⁶ The celebration of the Prophet's birthday followed a different pattern: the ceremony began with the recitation of a passage from the Qur'ān, followed by official discourse from the organisers and the director of the celebrations, usually the mufti or imam of the mosque. The ceremony continued with the introduction of the *mevlud* prayers, three *salavat* and redemption prayers; then the first piece of the *mevlud* was sung, then three *salavat* and one or two *ilahi*; then the second part of the *mevlud* was sung, then two times three *salavat* and one or two *ilahi*. The third part of the *mevlud* was then sung, followed by three *salavat*, one *ilahi* and the recitation of a part of the Qur'ān or another poem dedicated to the Prophet. The fourth part of the *mevlud* was then sung, followed by three *salavat*, and one or two *ilahi*. Then the fifth part of the *mevlud* closed the ceremony. This could be followed by voluntary recitation of another five or seven verses of the Qur'ān.⁵⁷

In the *madrase* of Shkodër and Tirana, teachers taught these sung *mevlud* recitations to their students, although transmission was otherwise mostly informal or hereditary. This contributed to the creation of a group of singers

52 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 118–21.

53 Krasnici, "Dimensioni Kulturor i mevludit".

54 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 118–26.

55 Bozkurt, "Kandil".

56 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 118–26.

57 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 118–26.

(mostly men) who specialised in this art (*bylbyla të mevludit*) which means ‘Mevlud Nightingales’, especially in the Shkodër district, where Ulqinaku’s *mevlud* was widespread. Among these singers, Hafiz Muhamet Gogoli (1890–?), Hafiz Xhevdet Zylja (1905–92), Hysni Halil Puka (1908–67), and Hafiz Xhemal Sait Çanga (1913–79) were famous for their mastery of *mevlud* recitation.⁵⁸

According to Haxhi Sami Muçej,⁵⁹ domestic celebrations did not follow the same procedures as the public events: only one or two parts of the text were sung at family gatherings, re-elaborating public ritual practice within the private space. For example, in Shkodër, families invited the *bylbyla* to recite the *mevlud* on special occasions such as weddings, births, and funerals; this facilitated the social diffusion of the practice, and of Ulqinaku’s text, in the Shkodër region.⁶⁰ The singing of *mevlud* thus became a medium to recall the Prophet, as an example and pious model par excellence, and a means of intercession with God’s infinite divine mercy. The singing also assumed a beneficial and soteriological value: the *mevlud* was sung to bless a new house, a marriage, a birth, a funeral. Singing in an acoustically sensitive manner was required in order to create and shape a cognitive and emotional space, which inevitably forged the perception of the self. Several testimonies report the emotional involvement of participants during the singing of the *bylbyla*. This practice was the main form of veneration of the Prophet, expressing and embodying piety, and the love felt by the faithful for the Prophet. Families and religious communities tended to sing the version of the *mevlud* that was put forward by their local religious authorities. The text by Ulqinaku was mostly used for Shkodër district; in central-southern Albania, Korça’s text and Zëmlaku’s *mevlud* predominated; several Sufi communities sang Shkodër’s *mevlud*. Thus, the religious authorities succeeded in modulating the religious behaviour of the faithful.

9.3 Communist Secularisation and Post-Socialist Revival

The rise of the Albanian Communist Party, after the Second World War and the end of Italian and German dominion, radically changed institutional structures and religious practices, beginning with gradually increasing attacks against any form of religion. The party leader and dictator, Enver Hoxha,⁶¹ who

58 This information derives from the statements of Haxhi Sami Muçej, who studied and taught at the Shkodër *madrase*. Cf. Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 118.

59 Vehbi, “Parathënie”, 9–10.

60 Vehbi, “Parathënie”, 9–10.

61 Enver Halil Hoxha was an Albanian Communist politician who served as head of the state of Albania from 1944 until his death in 1985; he was the First Secretary of the Party of

studied in France and actively participated in patriotic resistance during the Second World War, claimed to be applying Marxist theories to collectivising the national economy and fully rationalising Albanian culture. In his vision, religious values were mere obstacles to “cultural progress”:⁶² Hoxha aimed to merge the religious and political fields, eradicating any transcendent reference except for the cult of his own personality and the cultural progress of the Albanian nation. Indeed, several scholars assert that Hoxha’s atheism was derived from the secular and positivist patterns of earlier Albanian nationalism.⁶³ In any case, this process of radical secularisation, enforced by a dense network of political and social control, began immediately after the Second World War and gradually eroded religious rituals, and religion itself, in both the public and the private sphere. In January 1949, almost three years after the adoption of the first Communist constitution (which guaranteed freedom of religion), the government issued a far-reaching Decree on Religious Communities. Religious institutions were forbidden to have anything to do with the education of the youth, which was made the exclusive province of the state. All religious communities were prohibited from owning property, and from operating philanthropic and welfare institutions and hospitals. The government also removed the criminal penalties applicable to anyone offending against the guarantee of freedom of religion in the Albanian Criminal Code. In a speech in February 1967 the leader of the Communist Party in Albania encouraged the youth movement nationwide, called Red Guards, to close churches and mosques. On 13 November 1967, decree no. 4337 officially cancelled the legal status of religion. Articles 37, 49, and 55 of the constitution stipulated the state atheism of the country. Decree no. 225 had already ordered the replacement of city and village names having religious origins by Albanian names; ultimately, Decree no. 5339 obliged citizens who had names of religious origin to change their names. Besides these prohibitions, atrocities committed against religious leaders and places were numerous: many priests, imams, and shaykhs were jailed, exiled, or killed as enemies of the nation.⁶⁴ Rituals were forbidden, and practitioners were severely punished by arrest or exile. This environment of fear, which went along with socialist propaganda in the media and positivist indoctrination, erased religious culture and practices almost completely. Many young people were socialised by their anti-religious and positivist education. Government institutions were used to track down

Labour of Albania. He was chairman of the Democratic Front of Albania and commander-in-chief of the armed forces from 1944 until his death. For his biography, see Fevziu, *Enver Hoxha*.

62 Karataş, “State-Sponsored Atheism”.

63 O’Donnell, *A Coming of Age*, 115–20.

64 Frey, “Violations of Freedom of Religion in Albania”.

those people who continued to practise rituals during holy periods such as Ramadan.⁶⁵ Religious texts were banned, Qur'āns were burned, and the owners of religious texts were imprisoned for up to eight years. Under regime repression, the celebration of the *mevlud* also gradually faded: there was no possibility of celebrating it in the mosques, all of which had been closed. Some Albanians tried to sing the *mevlud* in their homes, for the usual celebrations of personal and family events.⁶⁶ The regime's police, however, controlled and repressed any form of worship, especially in urban centres, jailing or exiling the offenders. Here is an account from a sixty-year-old dervish from Korça:

My grandparents used to read the *mevlud* when a child was born, they read a part on a piece of paper ... it was a good thought ... in 1971, we sang to celebrate the birth of my cousin. The day after, my grandfather was arrested and whipped ... I did not hear the *mevlud* anymore.⁶⁷

This brief testimony illustrates how control by the party police worked in Albania. In former Yugoslavia, where the regime's secularisation was less rigorous, some authors published new editions of the *mevlud* texts, especially in Macedonia and the Kosovan region of Prizren.⁶⁸ In Albania, religious memories of the practice of *mevlud* disappeared; essentially, younger people knew nothing or almost nothing about religious practices.

After the implosion of the Albanian regime in 1990, the country set out on a new political and economic course: Albanians had to redefine their identity and rediscover the world after many years of isolation. The end of the ban on religion and of the party's political monopoly opened the way for political and religious pluralism.⁶⁹ On the other hand, people were confused by the sudden and overwhelming impact of capitalism and globalisation; this changed their vision of the world, their own self-perception, and even their conception of time and space. The post-socialist and neo-pluralist secularisation that then occurred favoured the development of individualised and critical attitudes towards the traditional religious authorities that were involved in the institutional reconstruction of religions: the Islamic community of Albania was

65 In many public places, such as schools and factories, forbidden (*ḥarām*) foods (dairy products, meat, etc.) were distributed at these times of fasting. People who refused to eat these foods were denounced. See Frey, "Violations of Freedom of Religion in Albania".

66 Tönnies, "Religious Persecution in Albania".

67 Interview, November 2014, Tirana.

68 See Veliu, *Mevludi Ditëlindja e Muhamedit*; Zejnullah, *Mevlud Sherif ne gjuhën shqip*.

69 Clayer, "God in the 'Land of the Mercedes'".

trying to forge the image of a secular, moderate, and nationalist Islam;⁷⁰ the Bektashis claimed a monopoly on Albanian mysticism,⁷¹ marginalising other Sufi brotherhoods. At the same time, new religious actors (Wahhābīs, Turkish foundations, Iranian networks) also sought to proselytise in, and enrol neophytes from, the newly opened Albanian religious space. According to Nathalie Clayer, the interweaving of these processes created a triple dynamic of revival: one revival from above, by the Albanian religious authorities; one from the outside, through the new religious actors from abroad; and, finally, one from below, through the faithful themselves.⁷² The intertwining of these dynamics and the competition between these actors fragmented a post-socialist religious field that was still controlled by the state and dominated by the secular-nationalist discourses that characterised the public sphere. In this context, some rituals, such as the *zīyāra* (visits to Sufi shrines),⁷³ became a means for individual or communal construction of alternative religiosities, detached from the religion proposed by the official religious authorities.⁷⁴ This created a division between the daily religious behaviour of the faithful and the actions of the religious authorities.⁷⁵

The same dynamic affected the celebrations of *mevlud* in many different ways. By the time of the fall of the regime, the practice had almost disappeared: only the elders were able to sing or recite the *mevlud*, because propaganda and Communist control had interrupted the reproduction of religious memory. The Islamic community of post-Communist Albania tried to rebuild the cult with the help of these elderly custodians of memory and by republishing previously banned texts. Once the mosques were reopened, the Sunnī authorities initially participated in *mevlud* celebrations in Ulqin, Montenegro, in 1992 and in Prizren, Kosovo, in 1993.⁷⁶ In 1995, the Islamic community organised a public recitation of the *mevlud* on the occasion of the *Bayrami i madhe*, during a concert organised in Shkodër, in which the former president of the republic, Sali Berisha, took part.⁷⁷ The concert was performed by nine soloists, six actors, twenty-four orchestral players, and fifty-eight singers. The Secretary of the Islamic Community Sabri Koçi and the Grand Mufti of Shkodër Haxhi Faik

70 Endresen, "Faith, Fatherland or Both?"

71 Clayer, "L'islam balkanique aujourd'hui".

72 Clayer, "God in the 'Land of the Mercedes'".

73 In Albania, *zīyāra* refers to pious visitation: pilgrimage to a holy place, tomb, or shrine that commemorates a Sufi saint.

74 Scigliano and Bria, "Harem".

75 Elbasani and Roy, "Islam in the Post-Communist Balkans".

76 Luli and Dizdari, *Mevludet në gjuhën shqipe*, 118.

77 Muka, "Mbi koncertin festiv të Kurban Bajramit në Shkodër", 4.

Hoxha participated in the event. The organiser was a certain Adnan Muka, who gained the support of two of the surviving *bylbyla*, Xhavit Ujkani and Nazmi Lishi, to replicate the ceremonial they had taken part in during the interwar period. The event was repeated in Shkodër on the occasion of the *Bayrami i vogel*, in 1996.⁷⁸ In 1997, the concert was held in Skopje (Albanian Shkup), Macedonia, following the same procedures and involving the Macedonian Muslim authorities. The organiser of this event was Bahri Aliu, secretary of the madrasa of Skopje, with the help of the Albanian Sunnī authorities.⁷⁹ This concert, like the Kosovar and Montenegrin celebrations, quite clearly evoked the ideal of a brotherhood among all Albanian speakers in Greater Albania (Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro) that had arisen after the Balkan Wars of the 1990s.

The recitation of *mevlud* increasingly became a public and political event, one that affirmed nationalist belonging or conveyed other political messages. From about 2000, such events gradually developed into general meetings and symposia about the political and scientific meaning of the *mevlud*. The boundaries between religious ritual, political meeting, and scientific symposium became blurred, merging scientific intentions, political claims, and spiritual references during the *mevlud* week. This phenomenon, which is sometimes described as a “rationalisation of faith”,⁸⁰ involves the whole religious field (see below, on Bektashis during the *nevrus*). It also highlights the legacy of positivist and socialist ideology, as the rational-scientific framework is supposed to reassure and legitimise both religious and political authorities. For this reason, the *mevlud* of the Prophet was celebrated by politicians, religious leaders, and university professors together, as academic science was still considered to represent “true knowledge” about religion, and the ultimate source of truth. The *mevlud* was almost stripped of its religious significance, instead assuming meanings that were primarily scientific and political; several politicians and religious leaders exploited the event to reaffirm their commitment to reason and to the nation. The singing of *mevlud*, accompanied by children, was used to give an artistic dimension to such events. The apogee of this type of meeting was the Pristina convention in April 2009, at which academic scholars and religious leaders met to discuss the place of the *mevlud* among Albanians.⁸¹ This occasion was used to dwell upon brotherhood among all Albanians, to celebrate *mevlud* as the “highest form of veneration of the Prophet”,⁸² and

78 Muka, “Mbi koncertin festiv të Kurban Bajramit në Shkodër”, 1–2.

79 Dizdari, “Mbresa nga spektakli”, 4.

80 See Clayer, “L’Islam balkanique aujourd’hui”.

81 See Resul, “Fjala Hyrëse”.

82 Fahrush, “Fillet e festimit të Ditëlindjes së Pejgamberit a.s.”.

as the “best literary production of all Albanians”.⁸³ The proceedings of this conference were published a few years later, in order to spread its ecumenical and patriotic message. However, this was not the only editorial initiative connected with the *mevlud*. In order to regain its historical memory, the Islamic community of Albania began strongly to support the writing of biographies of prominent Albanian Islamic scholars, including Korça, who is presented as one of the fathers of Albanian Islam.⁸⁴ Alongside the promotion of a collection of patriotic poetry, the community also advocated the spread of Korça’s *mevlud*, as “an honour for the Albanian nation”.⁸⁵

The anniversary of the Prophet’s birth is at present not much celebrated in the mosques managed by the KMSH. In 2017 and 2018, during the week of the *mevlud*, the imam of the main mosque of Tirana just reminded the faithful of the day of the Prophet’s birth, without organising any particular celebration.⁸⁶ The tradition seems to continue only in Shkodër, albeit with some difficulty; in 2015 and 2016, the Grand Mufti of Shkodër organised candlelight celebrations of the *mevlud*, sung by some *bylbyla* elders, but participation was rather low.⁸⁷ In this field, the success of the KMSH, which has aimed to carve out a place in a public sphere dominated by secular-nationalist discourses, and at the same time to build an image of a patriotic, democratic, and moderate Islam encompassing all Muslim Albanians, has been modest.

9.4 Diversification of Piety

The progressive secularisation of the *mevlud* corresponded to the gradual disappearance of the practice among the faithful, especially after the elders who still remembered the living ritual had passed away. In the 1990s it was possible to find families who still invited the *bylbyla* to sing the *mevlud*, but from the 2000s singers were increasingly difficult to find. In 2014, at the time of the fieldwork for the present chapter, only a few of the mosques performed *mevlud*, and the imam of the main mosque in Tirana said: “Let’s sing the *mevlud* during funerals, and if they ask for it ... we will read a part of Ulqinaku’s *mevlud*.”⁸⁸ In Peshkopia, a young believer who was interviewed while he was returning home from the mosque replied: “I do not know ... Yes, the imam said that

83 Hamiti, *Mevludi*, 121–29.

84 The KMSH organised a symposium to consecrate him in Kavaja in August 2017: see <https://bit.ly/2PyXzbE>.

85 See about him Ismail and Karjagdiu, *Hafiz Ali Korça*.

86 I personally attended the event and collected this information.

87 See www.kbi-bujanoc.com/?m=post&id=1904 and <https://bit.ly/32SXF0P>.

88 Interview, December 2016, Tirana.

yesterday was the anniversary of the Prophet, but I do not know about rituals, celebrations, or anything else.”⁸⁹

Today’s Albanians appear to feel little need to recite the *mevlud*, and some even seem to reject the practice. In the post-socialist period, a number of Arab missionaries have financed the construction of mosques and recruited young Albanians to study in their religious institutes.⁹⁰ Although Wahhābī proselytism has never really caught on among Albanian Muslims, a certain scripturist approach has nevertheless spread to urban and even some rural areas, due to the indoctrination of local imams who studied in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria. These religious leaders, having been ignored by the KMSH, formed the League of Imams in Albania (Lidhja e Hoxhallarëve të Shqipërisë), which has several mosques in the country.⁹¹ According to a statement by the league about the *mevlud*:

love towards him does not mean celebrating his birthday and singing in verse, but accurately implementing his life. Love of the Prophet Muḥammad (*alejhissalatu uesselam*) manifests itself in two main ways: pursuit of his path and resurrection of the Prophetic tradition ... So, if we really want to get out of the serious situation into which Islam has fallen today, to return to authority and to the prestige of that time, we must not corrupt this noble religion with useless celebrations.⁹²

This statement demonstrates the refusal to celebrate the *mevlud* or any other form of veneration linked to the Prophet. A twenty-five-year-old man who regularly attends one of the mosques belonging to the League of Imams, in Rruga Kavaja in Tirana, stated that: “In Islam there are no such things ... simply, we do not do it.”⁹³ Imams use the Qur’ān and the *ḥadīths* of Bukhārī to legitimise their anti-*mevlud* conception, exploiting the discursive authority of Prophetic traditions. The attitude towards the practice of *mevlud* is, however, strongly influenced by an increasing integration, especially of young people, into the virtual *umma*, where they are exposed to Islamic principles and doctrines that are increasingly standardised and homogenised in order to be easily understandable and adaptable to all those who may make use of these online resources.⁹⁴ In this highly dynamic space, the norms and practices of Islam are

89 Interview, December 2016, Peshkopia.

90 See Bria, “L’Islam Balcanico”.

91 Endresen, “Faith, Fatherland or Both?”.

92 Tërniqi, “Profeti Muhamd (A. A.)”.

93 Interview, December 2016, Tirana.

94 Merdjanova, *Rediscovering the Umma*, 54–56.

universalised and formatted through a process of emphasis and negotiation to make them easily available to interconnected individuals,⁹⁵ and there is no longer room for local and more traditional forms of religious culture. This has contributed to the creation of a doctrinal corpus that excludes some rituals, such as *mevlud*, thereby preventing its reinstatement in Albania; instead, the *mevlud* is considered to be merely an ancient tradition, or a corruption of the original Islam.

On the other hand, the Bektashi authorities have tried to encourage the spread of other religious rituals instead, such as the *nevrruz* on 22 March each year.⁹⁶ In the post-socialist period, Bektashi leaders promoted a new national, scientific, and intellectual Bektashi creed.⁹⁷ The statute published in 2000, following the Seventh Congress of the Community, outlined a progressive, humanist, ecumenical, and nationalist Bektashism, which would represent a third way between Christianity and Islam, dedicated to the application of the *sharī'a* and the spread of tolerant Islamic mysticism.⁹⁸ Broadcasting, publications, and the official community magazine, *Ūrtësia* (Wisdom), allowed a partial diffusion of Bektashi ideology and doctrine. Although its leaders set up public events, such as the *nevrruz*, that had a ritual-religious background, these merged Bektashism, scientific communications, national motifs, and the posthumous sanctification of Bektashi holy figures. As quoted in *Urtësia*, the *nevrruz* means the natural spring, and human rebirth against cultural darkness.⁹⁹ It is an organic-biological rebirth: plants and animals flourish anew. It is also a religious rebirth: the *nevrruz* is the birthday of Imam 'Alī in the Ka'ba. Furthermore, the reference to 'Alī favoured collaboration with certain Iranian (Shī'a) para-governmental networks, which subsequently offered cultural and social support.¹⁰⁰ The *nevrruz* thus represents one of the most important religious events of the year for many Albanians, much more than the *mevlud* of the Prophet, whose very existence is now unknown to many people.

95 Cf. Roy, *L'islam mondialisé*, 127–32.

96 It is important to note that since Ottoman times the *nevrruz* had been celebrated by all Albanian *țuruq* to commemorate 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib's birthday.

97 See Clayer, "L'islam balkanique aujourd'hui".

98 *Statuti i Komunitetit Bektashian*, 3.

99 See *Urtësia* 118 (April 2017).

100 From 1995 to 1996, contacts with Shī'a missionaries, who shared the beliefs common between the Shī'īs and the Bektashis, provided Shī'a literature to Bektashi leaders. The Iranian support was linked to a governmental strategy of expansion of political and economic power in the Balkan area. In any case, this link never affected Bektashi confessional and political autonomy. Some Alevi networks also offered support to the Bektashi community, providing icons and images about the family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) that did not ever influence Bektashi goals. Cf. Bria and Mayerà, "The Alide Iconography".

During the celebration of the *nevrüz* in Tirana, a twenty-year-old student said: “I do not know what it [the *mevlud*] is ... My family is Bektashi, we celebrate the two *bajrams* and the *nevrüz* for my grandmother.”¹⁰¹ This statement could have been made by any number of people on the streets of Albania, a country where the recall and reproduction of ritual and doctrinal religious knowledge today seem largely to be only residual. The secularising effect of the Communist regime, and then the doctrinal and cultural flattening brought about by globalisation, have greatly contributed to eroding awareness of the practices around *mevlud*. The Sufi brotherhoods, which elsewhere appear to be among the main promoters of the rite, are substantially marginalised in Albania, by the Bektashi esoteric monopoly and by other competition in the fragmented religious field. Many Albanian Sufi communities decided to join or aspire to the “Bektashi way”, as the main model of Albanian mysticism, and therefore do not celebrate the *mevlud*, instead emphasising the celebration of other festivals such as *nevrüz*¹⁰² and ‘*āshūrā*’. A few Sufis occasionally recite the *mevlud*, but mostly for particular and partisan reasons; for example, Sheh Qemali of the Rifā’iyya, in Tirana, recites the *mevlud* of Shkodër with his disciples, but merely to legitimise his own mystical initiatic chain (*silsila*).¹⁰³

In recent years, foreign actors have initiated a partial revival of the *mevlud* ritual in Albania. In Shkodër, for example, the *madrase* of the КМШН, led by a Turkish Naqshbandī foundation, celebrated the birthday of the Prophet in November 2016,¹⁰⁴ although even in this case the event had a purely political meaning, without providing any sort of religious ritual. The ritual is not celebrated in the other *madrase* of the country, managed by the Gülen foundation,¹⁰⁵ even if the teaching of the *mevlud* text is included in school programmes for educational and pedagogical reasons. At Bedër University, still managed by Gülen networks, students of Islamic theology also study *mevlud*, for similar purposes and as part of literary studies.

In Dürres, however, a Sufi community led by a Syrian shaykh named Hassan proposed the revival of *mevlud* among the local population. Hassan moved

101 Interview, December 2016, Tirana.

102 About Nevruz celebrations in Albania see Bria, “Celebrating Sultan Nevruz”, 355–377.

103 Interview, December 2014, Tirana.

104 The author personally attended the event and collected this information.

105 Muḥammad Fethullah Gülen Hocaefendi (b. 1941) is a Turkish preacher, former imam, writer, and political figure. He is the founder of the Gülen movement (known as Hizmet, meaning service, in Turkish), which is 3–6 million strong in Turkey and has an empire of affiliated banks, media companies, construction companies, and schools, especially those providing primary and secondary education, in Turkey (in which business entities and foundations have been closed down by the Turkish government by the thousands in 2017) and in Africa, Central Asia, the Americas, and Europe.

to Albania after the beginning of the Syrian War, thanks to the support of an Albanian disciple, Saimir Bulku, whom he met in Aleppo. In Dürres, the shaykh, who follows the Rifāʿī path, quickly created a community of disciples from all over Albania who recognise him as representing “authentic Sufism”. He named his community *Dielli i zemrave* (*Shemes El-kulub*, the sun of the heart), and is believed to be a descendant of the Prophet. Hassan thus proposes a Sufism of Arabian origin, tied to a form of veneration of the Prophet that differs from the ‘Alī-oriented piety shared by Albanian and Kosovar Sufi brotherhoods. In this context, in December 2017, the new Sufi community organised *mevlud* celebrations at the International Hotel in Tirana, inviting the population to participate. The event attracted massive participation by the faithful, who listened to the words of the shaykh: “Let us not forget that the Prophet Muḥammad is the heart of Islamic mercy ... everything starts from him. Today is his anniversary, as Muslims we must pray and sing for him.”¹⁰⁶ These words of Hassan gain in importance if we consider that there were no other official *mevlud* celebrations in that year. In his own way, he wanted to assert his position and fill a vacuum in the religious field. In fact, the event included a recitation of Zëmbaku’s *mevlud* by Bulku accompanied by some (mostly elderly) singers. Bulku, as the imam of the main mosque of Dürres, also tries to encourage the recitation of *mevlud* among the faithful: “Few people know the *mevlud* ... I try to propose it because it is beautiful, because my grandparents did so ... if someone calls me for a birth I sing the *mevlud* ... if someone calls me for a funeral I sing the part of the *mevlud* for the funeral.”¹⁰⁷ Bulku therefore recognises how limited the extent of this practice is among today’s Albanians, and tries to widen its appeal. On other occasions he has invited elders to sing the *mevlud* inside the Dürres Mosque: they sang *mevlud* with him from a printed text, as they did not remember the words. Bulku intends to re-establish the veneration of the Prophet, which in Albania has mostly been secularised by the strategies of KMSH or obscured by the ‘Alī-oriented celebrations of the Bektashis.

9.5 Conclusion

This chapter proposed an analysis of *mevlud*, as both a text and a ritual practice, and of its gradual integration into the normative and semantic frameworks of the secular discourses that have dominated in Albanian nationalism. The expression of the *mevlud* in Albanian literary and linguistic patterns

106 The author personally attended the event and collected this information.

107 Interview, May 2018, Dürres.

was part of a process of state- and nation-building whereby Muslim scholars aimed to shape an identity that was equally Albanian and Islamic. The interwar period saw *mevlud* being treated in two distinct ways: as an expression of Sunnī Islamic piety in a pluralist and confessionalised Albania, and as a political symbol of the nation, and the language and literary heritage of its fathers; these different dimensions were used to forge an Albanian Sunnī Islam that was used by the faithful as their main means of venerating the Prophet during this period. This also facilitated the emergence in interwar Albania of the *mevlud* as an emotional and performative medium for Muslim religiosity, a development that was similar to what happened in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the *mevlud* was a crucial expression of Muslim religiosity, especially for women.

However, under post-war Communism radical socialist secularisation virtually wiped out the Albanian people's practical and literary memories of the *mevlud*. The regime's propaganda and control tools affected religious semantics and terminology, suppressing cognitive mnemonic reproduction. In post-socialist times, the legacy of socialist secular rationalism remained highly influential: the *mevlud* was virtually ignored by people who grew up in a secularised and positivist environment. Indeed, the proselytism of Salafī networks, growing integration into the virtual *umma*, and the spread of scripturalist interpretations of Islam have devalued local rituals, and have prevented a resurgence of the *mevlud*. Sunnī authorities eventually reinstated the ritual, but gradually emptied it of religious significance by saturating it with political and rationalist rhetoric, until the rite was almost destroyed. The *mevlud* thus became merely a political ritual for the affirmation of national consciousness, Albanian brotherhood, and democracy. It lost support from the faithful, who prefer to express their religiosity in different ways, sometimes distancing themselves from religious authorities, as with the *ziyāra* festivities. On the other hand, Bektashis claim to embrace Albanian religious piety, and private and public rites (*nevrusz*) that encourage the faithful to express their doctrine. Only the Sufi community in Dürres proposes the celebration of *mevlud* as a festival and means of expression of Islamic devotion: their social impact, however, is minimal.

In this context the substance of the *mevlud* disappeared from the corpus of Prophetic devotions, remaining only as a literary heritage, and as a memory of the Albanian resurgence, something that Sunnī authorities can use to reaffirm their patriotic belonging. The veneration of the Prophet has shifted to other forms and media, and it is often expressed without the mediation of religious experts. Muḥammadan spirituality has thus become internalised by the faithful, who venerate the Prophet according to their own personal and individual

interpretation; on the other hand, the rationalist legacy and the global Salafist format have framed new forms of religiosity that seem to have lost any emotional pattern.

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The Prophet, Law, and Constitution in Pakistani Society

Jamal Malik

The blasphemy laws in Muslim societies have caused a number of problems as they have given much power to the state and also to certain sections of society who have so far been marginalised. Thus, these laws seem to have become a lethal tool for striking back.

Pakistan is among the 15 Islamic countries across the globe where blasphemy laws are enforced. In all these Islamic countries, defiling of the holy Quran, desecration of the Prophet Muhammad and being an atheist are punishable offenses.¹

In fact, Pakistan has the strictest anti-blasphemy laws in the Muslim world.

This chapter will trace the trajectories of laws related to blasphemy in British India, followed by their translation into the Pakistani constitution and penal law against the backdrop of the discussion on the Islamicity of the fledgling state. In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the majority of court judgements on this issue have been pronounced against non-Muslims and minorities. The atrocious consequences of the public handling of these laws will be exemplified with three cases that have caught the media's attention: the assassination of the governor of Punjab in 2011 and the subsequent veneration of his murderer; the lynching of Mashal Khan in early 2017; and the spectacular rise of the religio-political party Labbaik Ya Rasul Allah (Labbaik Yā Rasūl Allāh; Here I am at your service, oh Messenger of God) in late 2017 and 2018.² These cases provide some understanding of the struggles between local factions competing for scarce resources in which the Prophet is the main point of reference.

¹ Sajid, "Blasphemy Laws of Pakistan".

² "*Labbaik*" is the first word of a particular prayer recited by pilgrims at the outset of and throughout their journey; it is basically a positive humble response to a call, but lately it has also developed into a kind of battle cry, in much the same way as the *jihadi* usage of "*Allahu akbar*", as can be seen in the context of the Labbaik Ya Rasul Allah Party in Pakistan.

Though the blasphemy laws have a long genealogy harking back to colonial rule, their translation into street power was already under way in the 1970s, gained political significance since the 1980s, and became a deadly weapon in the twenty-first century.

The sudden hike in the use of the law might indicate an increasingly critical stand vis-à-vis the law itself, as can be seen from the growing number of anti-Islamic statements made by Muslims to be found on the Internet. But the rising number of cases also reflects its growing instrumentalisation by various societal groups for their own purposes:

Majority of blasphemy cases are based on false accusations stemming from property issues or other personal or family vendettas rather than genuine instances of blasphemy and they inevitably lead to mob violence against the entire community.³

In making, promulgating, and implementing laws, the respective roles of the state and the military that hold sway in post-colonial countries like Pakistan are as important as the politicians, who have played dubious roles in that context.

10.1 Blasphemy and the Colonial Legacy

In tracing the blasphemy laws in countries like Pakistan, one certainly stumbles over the British colonial law and order situation in the nineteenth century: shortly after the abatement of the rebellion of 1857, the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was introduced in 1860. It was the brainchild of Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–1859) who, as a member of the Law Commission, had drafted the IPC during his time in Bengal in the 1830s. He had also designed the English Education Act 1835 to produce “a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect”.

The IPC included the promotion of amity between different groups (Section 153-A), proscribing religious offences such as defiling places of worship (Section 295); disturbing religious assemblies (Section 296); trespassing on burial grounds (Section 297); and making utterances that wounding religious feelings (Section 298). These laws were broad in their application across all faiths, originally intended to avoid religious conflicts and to manage the unwieldy religious sentiments between Hindus and Muslims through a “firm adherence to the true principles of toleration”.⁴ Nazir opines that

³ Supreme Court of Pakistan, *Malik Muhammad Mumtaz Qadri v. the State*, 26.

⁴ Macaulay, *A Penal Code*, 49–50. Quoted in Nazir, “A Study”, 37.

Macaulay aimed at fostering “multicultural understanding [and sought to] ring harmony among religious communities and to control religious conflicts”.⁵ The suggested freedom of religious discussion and conversion could no longer be established in the early twentieth century, when religious discussions went beyond criticism, “one of the most volatile and tumultuous period [*sic*] of British Indian history when Hindu[*sic*]-Muslim riots registered unprecedented rise”.⁶

According to *A Historical Overview* of the blasphemy laws, there were only nine major Hindu-Muslim riots over the course of a century and a half (1713–1860). That number increased to more than seventy bloody Hindu–Muslim riots during the next half a century (1860–1927). Most of these riots were sparked by the desecration of holy places of both communities, performance of religious festivals, cow protection, and conversion.⁷ But matters came to a head when Arya Samajist Mahashay Rajpal published *Rangila Rasul* (*Rangilā Rasūl*; lit., “The Colorful Prophet”) in Lahore in 1927.

10.1.1 *Rangila Rasul and Section 295-A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)*

Rangila Rasul was published as an immediate reaction to pamphlets written by Muslims, such as *Sītā kā Chhinālā* (“Sita’s adultery”) which alleged that Sita, wife of Rama, the hero of Ramayana, was a prostitute, and *Unnīswīnī saddī kā Mahārīshī* (“A 19th century Hindu sage”), an attack on Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj. In 1927, almost seven decades after Macaulay’s IPC, the British administration had to introduce more vigorous legislation since Section 153A was not sufficient to prosecute the publisher of *Rangila Rasul*. In reaction, Muslim groups demanded legislation that outlawed all religious insensitivity to Islam. Hence, Section 295-A was added, though it made sure that neither academic expressions nor unintentional offense of religious sentiments would be prosecuted:

Whoever, with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of His Majesty’s subjects, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine or with both.⁸

5 Nazir, “A Study”, 12.

6 Nafees, *Blasphemy Laws*, 13.

7 Nafees, *Blasphemy Laws*, 14–15.

8 Nafees, *Blasphemy Laws*, 13. For a discussion on this booklet and the amendment that followed in the Penal Law, see Nazir, “A Study”, 83–90.

Even with this amendment, however, it could not be proven that the pamphlet was produced with a *deliberate and malicious intention*, thus leaving some Muslims indignant. Eventually in 1929, ‘Ilm al-Din (now popularly known as Ghāzī ‘Ilm al-Dīn Shahīd, the initial honorific meaning “holy warrior” and the latter one meaning “martyr”) killed Mahashay Rajpal for publishing *Rangila Rasul*. He was hanged in 1929.

Yet the issue of blasphemy kept escalating and also affected literary circles when *Angare* (*Angāre*; “Burning Coals”), a collection of Urdu short stories published in 1932, stirred another wave of controversy,⁹ as it broke traditional norms in a religious-patriarchal society, offending various Muslims. *Angare* was banned and until today it has not been republished in Urdu.¹⁰

The issues around the colonial blasphemy laws did not stop, and in 1935 ‘Abd al-Qayyum was hanged for killing a man accused of blasphemy in a court in Karachi. Violence connected with the funeral procession of ‘Abd al-Qayyum resulted in the deaths of more than a hundred men, women, and children. Further riots took place, wherein atrocities were committed amongst Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs during partition in 1947. But, as the late Muslim lawyer Asma Jahangir commented:

both cases are crucial examples, showing how Ilam Din and Abdul Qayum both ... took the law in their own hands, becoming popular figures in subsequent history ... Ilam Din became a role model among many Muslims ... especially in contemporary Pakistan, where believers are urged by Muslim clerics to follow Ilam Din Shaheed, the martyr, by killing those who insult the Holy Prophet.¹¹

10.2 Secular or Muslim Pakistan?

These blasphemy laws resulting from communal riots were to become a heavy legacy with which Pakistan had to deal. Initially it was left to M. A. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, to maintain law and order and to eradicate bribery, corruption, black-marketing, nepotism, and jobbery. Against the background of the Hindu–Muslim problems, in his first Presidential Address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan (11 August 1947), Jinnah called for a secular nation, saying:

9 Nazir, “A Study”, 100–113.

10 Coppola, “The Angare Group”, 57–69; Mahmud, “Angare”.

11 Jahangir and Siddiqui, *From Protection to Exploitation*, 19. Quoted in Nazir, “A Study”, 98.

if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous, we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people.... If you will work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed.... *You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State ...* Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in course of time *Hindus would cease to be Hindus, and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.*¹²

But these clear words were not to be actualised in a post-partition country that was struggling with its identity in the midst of nation-building, political and religious plurality, and reconstruction. Instead, the Objectives Resolution of 1949 was to provide guidelines for making the constitution of the newly born state modelled on a vague ideology and democratic faith of Islam. The constitutional ambiguity and elusiveness with reference to the relation between religion and the state in the wake of contesting normative discussions did leave much room for the accommodation of religion, as the Basic Principles Committee and the Islamic Teachings Board were to advise on matters arising out of the Objectives Resolution which stated that

Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah; Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities [Hindus, Christians, and other non-Muslims] to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures.¹³

The announcement of “individual and collective spheres” to be ordered “in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah” gave plenty of space for religious specialists of sorts to exert their influence on the young state. Members of religio-political parties were of particular importance in pushing their interests through. These included such parties as Jam’iyyat-e ‘Ulama’-ye Pakistan led by Barelwis, the Deobandi Jam’iyyat-e ‘Ulama’-ye Islam, and notably Jama‘at-e Islami, founded

12 Jinnah quoted in Allana, *Pakistan Movement Historical Documents*, 407ff. (emphasis added).

13 The Objectives Resolution can be found at www.infopakistan.pk/constitution-of-pakistan/annex.php.

by A. A. Mawdudi (d. 1979),¹⁴ the doyen of political Islam. With the promulgation of the 1956 Constitution, Pakistan became an “Islamic Republic”, citing the entire part of the Objectives Resolution under Article 2(A). As Islam became the state religion, Islamic authority had to be protected, though there were sizeable non-Muslim minorities, especially in what was then East Pakistan.

10.3 The Advent of the Prophet in Pakistani Law and Constitution

The accommodation of the Objectives Resolution in the 1956 Constitution seemed to have been more of an appeasement of the Muslim League vis-à-vis the Ahrar Party, founded in 1931, who had been busy hereticising the Ahmadis – a millenarian movement from the Punjab, the majority of whom considered their founder, Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (d. 1908), to be a prophet. In order to protect the sanctity of the Prophet Muḥammad, the Ahrar Party together with others established the Majlis-e Tahaffuz-e Khatm-e Nubuwwat (Association for the Protection of the Finality of the Prophethood) in 1949,¹⁵ other Islamic scholars issued fatwas calling Ahmadis apostates (*murtadds*) and published various anti-Ahmadi pamphlets to denigrate them with the aim of inciting Muslims to take the law into their own hands. This resulted in Ahmadi riots during the “Punjab Disturbances of 1953”, which “set a precedent that significantly enhanced the power of Sunni groups pressing for a sectarian construction of ‘the Pakistani’”.¹⁶ East Pakistan also had its own share of communal riots during the 1950s, with brutal killings resulting in nearly 2.1 million Hindus and also Muslims fleeing to West Bengal.¹⁷

The Ahmadi issue in West Pakistan and the anti-Hindu riots in East Pakistan were easy springboards for different political forces to push through their own agendas. Yet Ahmadis were not declared non-Muslims until 1974. The secession of East Pakistan, which became Bangladesh in 1971, had left the remaining (West) Pakistan more or less homogenously Muslim. This was ideologically underlined by the post-1971 narrative that secession was due to the distance of the preceding governments from Islam. This heightened the influence of

14 On these religio-political parties, see Malik, “Jama‘at-e Islami”; Malik, “Jam‘iyat ‘Ulama-e Islam”; Malik, “Jam‘iyat ‘Ulama-e Pakistan”; Malik, “Mawdudi”.

15 On the Ahmadis, see Valentine, *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama‘at*; Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous*; Zaman, *Islam in Pakistan*, 166–78 et passim; and Qasmi, *The Ahmadis*. On the Ahrars, see Awan, *Political Islam*; Kamran, “The Pre-history of Religious Exclusionism”; and Kamran, “Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam”.

16 Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*, 60.

17 Nafees, *Blasphemy Laws*, 28–33.

religious scholars, as was reflected in the enhancement of a body which eventually grew from only an advisory assembly into a Council of Islamic Ideology that found its way into the 1973 Constitution. The Council's might was also displayed in the notorious hereticisation of the Ahmadis. These developments ran parallel to the global resurgence of religion which radically changed the scenario, with the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) playing a pan-Islamic card: hosting the Second Islamic Summit Conference in Lahore in February 1974 and step by step introducing Islamic regulations.

Z. A. Bhutto (prime minister 1971–77) had come under pressure from various sides, notably religious scholars – Deobandis, Barelwis, and Jama'at-e Islami – who challenged his Islamic socialism. Moreover, the Islamic World League declared Ahmadis non-Muslims in April 1974. A clash between Ahmadi and non-Ahmadi students in July 1974 came at the right time,¹⁸ resulting in the declaration that Ahmadis are a non-Muslim minority.¹⁹ Moreover, the Second Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, Article 106, added Ahmadis to the category of other non-Muslims while Article 260(3) introduced the necessity of recognising the finality of the Prophet Muḥammad when defining who can be considered Muslim.²⁰ Though Bhutto's state-approved *takfīr* had opened Pandora's box, up until 1979 there seem to have been no cases against Ahmadis; and similarly, anti-Ahmadi statements were not prosecuted under Section 295-A of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) (*deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings*) and no cases were filed by Muslims against non-Muslims for committing acts of profanity against the Prophet Muḥammad or defiling the Qur'ān. This changed with Zia al-Haqq.

18 For details, see Nazir, "A Study", 184–91.

19 Yet Bhutto seemed not to be in favour of declaring the Ahmadis a minority and pushing them out of state and government institutions, as this was in his view detrimental to the national economy and political stability.

20 Article 106 states: "A person who is not a Muslim and includes a person belonging to the Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist or Parsi community, a person of the Qadiani Group or the Lahori Group who call themselves Ahmadis or any other name of a Bahai, and a person belonging to any of the Scheduled Castes." Article 260(3) reads: "A person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muḥammad (peace be upon him), the last of the prophets, and does not believe in, or recognize as a prophet or religious reformers, any person who claims to be a prophet, in any sense of word and any description whatsoever, after Muḥammad (peace be upon him) or recognizes such a claimant as a Prophet or religious reformer, is not a Muslim for the purposes of the Constitution or law."

10.4 Zia al-Haqq and the Prophet

Against the backdrop of the movement for a “Muḥammadan System” (*Niẓām-e Muṣṭafā*), launched by several right-wing political parties under the banner of the Pakistan National Alliance to contest the PPP, Zia seized power from Bhutto in a bloodless coup on 5 July 1977. Shortly after, he announced the Islamisation of the country, which was driven by his Bhutto-paranoia that vanished only with the execution of the ousted prime minister in April 1979. Thereafter the Ahmadi issue became a major rallying force for Zia’s religious supporters.

Hence, in 1979, Ahmadis could be prosecuted when performing their religious practices, and in the early 1980s, religious conflicts and controversies began to affect religious freedom, though without legal basis. Some voices even questioned the Islamicity of a punishment meted out to an accused for allegedly defiling the Prophet under Section 295-A of the PPC (*deliberate and malicious intention*), suggesting that 295-A did not have enough coercive power. It was in this ambiguous legal space that the Urdu book *Afāqī Ishīmāliyyāt* (English version: “Heavenly Communism”) appeared on the scene. Written by the lawyer Mushtaq Raj and published in Lahore in 1983, the book was distributed free among bar members and contained offensive material against all prophets including Muḥammad and religion was ridiculed. It was banned under 295-A for outraging the feelings of Muslims and religious specialists demanded jurisdiction to apply blasphemy law with full severity. But there was not yet any law against humiliation of the Prophet.²¹

Since early 1984, religio-political parties had been calling for the introduction of the death sentence in cases of apostasy, demanding a complete ban on the publication and distribution of Ahmadi literature; official curbing of the supposed anti-Islamic and anti-national activities of the Ahmadis; prohibition of Ahmadis referring to their places of worship as mosques or their call to prayer as the adhan; and implementation of the death sentence for those who use derogatory language about the Prophet.

These demands were finally met by the Federal Shariat Court (FSC), established in 1980 to “examine and decide the question whether or not any law or provision of law is repugnant to the injunctions of Islam”. In 1984, the court considered punishment of two years and a fine or both as inadequate and repugnant to Islam. It called for the death penalty as the only sufficient

21 Begum, “Defending Prophet’s Integrity”, 34. Due to pressure of religious scholars Mushtaq Raj was detained under Martial Law. Farhad, “Curbing free thought”.

punishment for defiling the name of the Prophet Muḥammad and ruled out pardon – strangely in contradiction to established Hanafi tradition.²²

With reference to Q 8:13 and 4:65,²³ the FSC's definition of blasphemy profiled and extended its semantics quite a bit. Blasphemy was now to include reviling or insulting the Prophet in writing or speech; speaking profanity or contemptuously about him or his family; attacking the Prophet's dignity and honour in an abusive manner; vilifying him or making an ugly face when his name is mentioned; showing enmity or hatred towards him, his family, or his companions; accusing, defaming, or slandering the Prophet and his family; refusing the Prophet's jurisprudence or judgement in any matter; rejecting the *sunna*; disrespect, contempt for, or rejection of the rights of Allah and His Prophet; and rebelling against Allah and His Prophet.²⁴

In reaction to the growing street power of the clergy, the government adopted a justificatory narrative. The official thirty-page booklet *Qadianis: Threat to Islamic Solidarity – Measures to Prohibit Anti-Islamic Activities* asserted that imposing conditions on Ahmadis was due to their anti-Islamic activities and faith being repugnant to Islam; anyone who denied the absolute finality of the Prophet Muḥammad “is not a Muslim for the purpose of the constitution or law”. The pamphlet stated that

The most sinister conspiracy of the Qadianis after the establishment of Pakistan was to turn this newly Islamic state into a Qadiani kingdom subservient to the Qadiani's pay master. The Qadianis had been planning to carve out a Qadiani State from the territories of Pakistan.²⁵

The heretical enemy from within had to be fought. Hence, Ordinance XX of April 1984 prohibited Ahmadis from publicly practising their religion and identifying themselves as Muslims. Although a death sentence for any gesture *even if it is done unintentionally* is, juridically speaking, highly controversial, the demand became law in 1986 by virtue of PPC Section 295-C:

22 Qurayshī, *Nāmūs-e risālat*, 361; Mazhar, “The Untold Story”.

23 Q 8:13: “That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger. And whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger – indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.” Q 4:65: “But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muḥammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission.”

24 Nazir, “A Study”, 226ff.

25 *Qadianis: Threat to Islamic Solidarity*, 24–25. Quoted in Saeed, *Politics of Desecularization*, 166.

Whoever by word, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.

Hindu–Muslim hatred had turned into Muslim–Ahmadi hatred; the politics of de-secularisation went hand in hand with religious identity politics. In 1982, Section 295-C had stipulated the punishment of life imprisonment or a fine, but in 1986, the punishment was changed to “death or life imprisonment”, and on 30 April 1991, the punishment of life imprisonment was turned into “death only”. During Zia al-Haqq’s rule (1977–88), a number of additional laws against blasphemy had been introduced that apparently targeted Ahmadis exclusively.

Meanwhile, the issue had become aggravated to the extent that these most frequently invoked blasphemy laws in the PPC are not bailable offenses. A report by Amnesty International made the following observations:

Introduced in 1986, Section 295-C is the most severe of the blasphemy laws.... First, the vague wording on what constitutes blasphemy against the Prophet Muhammad means that accusations under this law can be made in a wide range of circumstances. Second, as with Section 298-A, this section operates on the basis of strict liability and therefore does not require proof of specific intent by the accused. Establishing intent is essential with all ordinary criminal offences, but the fact that this is not required in order to prove allegations under blasphemy laws leaves the door open for potential further abuse.²⁶

Looking at the increase of blasphemy cases (between 1953 and 2012, approx. 440, including against 258 Muslims [Sunni and Shi’a]; 114 Christians; 57 Ahmadis; and 4 Hindus) and of extra-judicial coercive measures, Amnesty’s assessment seems plausible. In fact, those accused of blasphemy often flee the country, and this is particularly the case because

The blasphemy laws have created an environment in which some people, including complainants and their supporters in blasphemy cases, believe themselves entitled to take the law into their own hands, while the police stand aside. The laws have been used as a cover for perpetrators of mob violence. A striking feature has been the disproportionate number of

²⁶ Amnesty International, “As Good as Dead”, 17.

victims of such vigilantism being from religious minority groups. [The] motives vary, but can include professional rivalry, personal or religious disputes, hostility towards religious minorities, and seeking economic gains such as money and land.²⁷

This mob violence has increased in a spectacular way, as extra-judicial killings and blasphemy accusations go hand in hand and also have institutional requirements: while an accuser must initially register a First Information Report by lodging a complaint at a police station, a key concern regarding police investigations in blasphemy cases is the reliance on fatwas from local clerics on whether the allegations amount to blasphemy. In the current scenario, such fatwas are easily available and enhance the power of religious scholars. The report also observes: “Threats are so high that no one is willing to defend a blasphemy accused, whereas there would be 100 people willing to defend a killer of a blasphemy accused.”²⁸ Mob violence and fear bring us to the first example of how the blasphemy laws have been turned against the state.

10.5 The Making of a *Ghāzī*, Peasant Urbanites, and Popular Culture: Mumtaz Qadri

Mumtaz Qadri (1985–2016) was the elite bodyguard of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer, who had criticised the country’s blasphemy law and had filed a mercy petition for Asia Bibi, a Christian who had been sentenced to death by hanging in 2010.²⁹ Taseer, an anathema to Nawaz Sharif’s governing party, the Muslim League (Nawaz), had called the blasphemy law a “black law”. On 4 January 2011, Qadri shot him with twenty-eight bullets (nearly an entire standard magazine) with his officially issued AK-47 assault rifle at a bazaar in Islamabad, having told his colleagues beforehand what he was going to do and that they should not shoot him but arrest him. After the shooting, Qadri threw his weapon down and put his hands up when one of his colleagues aimed at him. Qadri claimed to have been inspired by a sermon delivered by Barelwi cleric Mufti Muhammad Hanif Qurayshi in Rawalpindi, which incited people to take the law into their own hands, saying that people like Taseer who wished to reform Pakistan’s blasphemy laws were “*wājib al-qatl*”, meaning that killing them is obligatory. Following Taseer’s murder, Pakistan’s only Christian cabinet

²⁷ Amnesty International, “As Good as Dead”, 13.

²⁸ Amnesty International, “As Good as Dead”, 34.

²⁹ Bibi and Tollet, *Blasphemy*.

member, Federal Minister for Minorities Affairs Shahbaz Bhatti, was also assassinated, on 2 March 2011, after having called for Bibi's release.³⁰ In a recording of a sermon that is no longer available on YouTube, Mufti Quraishi declared:

Let them know those who consider Sunnis as cowards that Allah has honoured us with the courage and power to strangulate those involved in blasphemy, to cut out their tongues, and to riddle their bodies with bullets. For this, nobody can arrest us under any law.

The Barelwi cleric regularly preaches in mosques, including in Bradford, UK. Qadri's act was well received by many Muslims in Pakistan and abroad, and he was eventually to become idolised as a *ghāzī*. On his last encounter with Taseer, he explained that he had confronted the governor about his words, who in turn denounced the law in even more provocative terms, which Qadri argued was a "grave and sudden provocation" and that he was fully justified in having killed Taseer.³¹ The court, however, established that this story advanced by the appellant about an exchange of words with Taseer at the place of the occurrence was nothing but an afterthought; Qadri's narrative was an important precondition for becoming a martyr. But already before his trial, Qadri had advanced to become a hero:

Mr. Qadri is a hero in Pakistan. There is at least one mosque named after him, so popular it's due to double in size; people come with their children to see him in jail, and seek his blessings; he releases CDs of himself singing those hauntingly beautiful hymns in praise of the prophet. He is considered a religious hero, a mujahid.

30 Guerin, "Pakistan Minorities Minister Shahbaz Bhatti Shot Dead".

31 Qadri's description was as follows: "On the faithful day, I being [a] member of [the] Elite Force I was deployed as one of the member[s] of [the] Escort Guard of Salman Taseer, the Governor Punjab. In Koh-i-Sar Market, the Governor with another [man] after having lunch in a restaurant walked to his vehicle. In [the] adjoining mosque I went for urinating in the washroom and for making ablution. When I came out with my gun, I came across Salman Taseer. Then I had the occasion to address him, 'your honor being the Governor had remarked about blasphemy law as black law, if so it was unbecoming of you.' Upon this he suddenly shouted and said, 'Not only that it is black law, but also it is my shit.' Being a Muslim I lost control and under grave and suddenly [*sic*] provocation, I pressed the trigger and he lay dead in front of me. I have no repentance and I did it for 'Tahafuz-i-Namooos-i-Rasool'. Salman offered me grave and sudden provocation. I was justified to kill him; kindly see my accompanying written statement U/s 265(F)(5) of Cr. P. C." Quoted in Supreme Court of Pakistan, *Malik Muhammad Mumtaz Qadri v. the State*, 6.

says Taseer's son, recognising that Qadri is the murderer, but he also points out that Qadri is a class victim:

he is really a class hero. In societies like ours, societies with colonial histories, religion provides the front; but what is actually going on is class warfare by other means. When Mr. Qadri's defense gestures to my father's "lifestyle ... character and associated matters", what they are really saying, in thinly coded language, is that he was liberal, educated, Westernized; privileged, in a word. The real danger, of course, is to the liberal state, and its values, which also come to be seen as nothing but the affectations of a godless and deracinated class.... It is no accident that it is among the least educated, most backward sections of our society that God finds his most committed soldiers.³²

After long deliberations, the court considered Qadri's act as "religious vigilantism which may deal a mortal blow to the rule of law in this country where divergent religious interpretations abound and tolerance stands depleted to an alarming level".³³ Qadri was sentenced to death – by a judge who most probably did so only under the condition that he be resettled outside the country after the verdict. Qadri was hanged on 29 February 2016, so that his death anniversary could only take place in leap years.

The nation was visibly divided between supporters of the death sentence, the so-called educated among others, and those opposing the verdict, *inter alia* the underprivileged. The latter, mostly adhering to the Barelwi school of thought, who consider the Prophet Muḥammad a paragon, countered the official statement by mobilising an enormous rally at Qadri's funeral.³⁴

In constructing the martyrdom narrative, Qadri has been placed in line with several *ghāzīs*, from 'Ilm al-Dīn whose legacy is carried on in Pakistan, where parks, hospitals, and roads carry his name, to 'Abd al-Qayyum and their epigones, establishing and complementing a genealogy of holy warriors (Figure 10.1).

Qadri has since become a martyr to millions, who make pilgrimage to a shrine (Figure 10.2) erected in his name by his family in the village Bara Kahu, Islamabad, under the supervision of the Mumtaz Qadri Shaheed Foundation. Giant posters of Qadri emblazon buildings not far from a school, while people flock to his shrine, including and especially from abroad.

32 Quoted in Taseer, "A Murderer".

33 Supreme Court of Pakistan, *Malik Muhammad Mumtaz Qadri v. the State*, 38.

34 See The News, "Historic Gathering"; Boone, "Thousands at Funeral".



FIGURE 10.1 Poster showing various other *ghazis*, such as 'Ilm al-Din, at the shrine of M. Qadri
 PHOTO: ANONYMOUS, MARCH 2018



FIGURE 10.2 Qadri's shrine under construction
 PHOTO: ANONYMOUS, MARCH 2018

According to Qadri's elder brother and acting custodian (*mujāwir*) of the shrine, people from abroad, after landing at Islamabad International Airport, first make their vows at the shrine before proceeding home. This international filial bond goes back to the wider Barelwi network, which is refreshed through the visits of clergymen, such as Qureshi, who is actively working for the cause of Khatm-e Nabuwwat, a Barelwi-dominated organisation dedicated

to upholding not only belief in the finality of the Prophet but also the blasphemy law, and its branches in the UK. Meanwhile, Qadri's *urs* is celebrated every year for three consecutive days, from 28 February to 2 March, thereby overcoming the constraints caused by leap years. The *urs* is a proven way not only to commemorate the death of Qadri, but also to remember and visualise the Prophet. This anamnesis is very popular among the Barelwis, who practise invocative visualisation of the past and remembrance of the Prophet. He is considered an active agent in the world (*ḥāẓir* and *nāẓir*) and becomes a reservoir with the potential to turn *imitatio Muhammadi* into *repraesentatio Muhammadi*, to bring "a bundle of human excellences associated with the Prophet into the present".³⁵ The proselytising wing of the Barelwis, namely, Da'wat-e Islami,³⁶ to which Qadri subscribed, are mostly peasant urbanites,³⁷ struggling with spatial relocation, subsequent social and cultural adjustment in the city, as well as physical and economic adaptation to urban life. In such a situation, they tend to establish their own urban social networks and enclave cultures, but never losing sight of the normative centrality of Prophetic tradition. The sunnatisation of lifeworlds is institutionalised in a system called *Madanī In'āmāt* ("Medina Rewards"), wherein each day Da'wat-e Islami members tally the divine rewards accrued from fulfilling items on a list of seventy-two pious activities. There is even a *Madanī In'āmāt* app.³⁸ In doing so, the common Muslim is raised to the position of and endowed with the responsibility to calling fellow believers to behave in a way worthy of the Prophet. This individual obligation (*fard-e 'ayn*) empowers lay Muslims to push through the Qur'ānic commandment to enjoin good and forbid evil (*al-amr bi-l-ma'rūf wal-nahy 'an al-munkar*). The "commandment to enjoin good and forbid evil" is conflated with resentment based in class differences embodied in heroes such as Qadri. Such resentments can also be traced in the next example, that of Mashal Khan, who was lynched to death on 13 April 2017.

10.6 Mashal Khan and the Charge of Blasphemy

Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) is a newly established educational institution, named after a well-known Pakhtun nationalist leader of Khyber Pakhtunkwa (Pakistan). In 2017, AWKUM became a site of horrifying scenes when a young student was lynched to death amidst shouts of

35 See the illuminating remarks in Brown, "Late Antiquity and Islam", 34ff.

36 Gugler, *Mission Medina*, 100.

37 For this concept, see Simić, *The Peasant Urbanites*.

38 Gugler, "Daily Piety Drills".

“*Allahu akbar*” under allegations of blasphemy. Twenty-five-year-old Mashal Khan, the victim of this inimitably brutal incident, was a student at the Mass Communication department of the university. The mob that brutally murdered him accused him of posting “blasphemous content” online.

On 13 April 2017 rumours spread that Mr Khan had posted blasphemous material online, a crime punishable by death in Pakistan. Hundreds of students and some university staff members marched through the campus searching for him. They broke into his room and dragged him out. Widely circulated mobile phone footage showed him being beaten, stamped on and shot. The crowd continued to attack his body after his death.³⁹

Mashal belonged to a village in Swabi district, an hour’s drive from Mardan University. Born into a poor family, his father, Iqbal Khan, a poet was proud of the numerous trophies and medals Mashal had won and that now adorn his room testify to his brilliance in studies. Mashal’s father described him as a “sufi, a philosopher, a poet and a writer by birth”. He also remembers his son as “a loving person who talked about peace, patience and non-violence”.⁴⁰ Being exposed to the outside world, he was well-versed in Western philosophy. He attributed his prudence to his reading habit, “My mind opened after I started reading,” and went on to say, “I began to understand the root of our problems in Pakistan.”⁴¹ An admirer of Karl Marx, Mashal considered himself a humanist. He also wanted to be known as a liberal Muslim. His vision of Islam was different from many of his fellow students at the university. Several times this difference of opinion would lead him to become involved in heated debates with more conservative students and every time debate turned to threats. He knew the repercussions of questioning conventional religious beliefs publicly, such as stating that the children of Adam and Eve must have lived in incestuous relations in order to guarantee human reproduction. He started carrying prayer beads (*tasbeeh*),⁴² an act apparently motivated by his struggle to change the perception of his peers who saw him as an “atheist”. This, however, did not mean that he would stop articulating his “liberal” unconventional views, which must have upset the clerics who argued that he was legitimising incest.

39 BBC News, “Mashal Khan Case”.

40 BBC Newsnight, “Murder on Campus”.

41 Bezhan, “Pakistani Student’s Views”.

42 BBC Newsnight, “Murder on Campus”.

Mashal was a curious, well-read student, but his taste for reading books did not tame his outspoken and activist nature. “He wanted to expose social injustice,” and he fought with the university administration for students’ rights.⁴³ A few days before his death, students at the university staged a strike against the school’s administration for the redressal of their grievances. In the wake of the students’ protest, he spoke to the Pashto TV channel Khyber. In the course of this interview, he not only highlighted the students’ predicaments regarding high fees and unnecessary delay in the degree awarding process, but he also severely criticised the failure of the university administration to pay any heed to the students’ demands. He furthermore called all of the senior university officials “thieves” (in Pashto, sing. *ghal*)⁴⁴ and criticised some for holding multiple offices, questioning the legality of such a practice. Such controversial behaviour had a cost which he paid for with his life. He was labelled a blasphemer, the last resort for silencing unwanted voices, and here the silencing was carried out not through the justice system, but by an angry mob.

What comes with the mob mentality is that people would not even want to verify [the facts of a case]. Mob psychology overrules common sense. Everything is seen as black and white [and] the most unintelligent with the loudest voice commands the mob.⁴⁵

During their investigation, police determined there was no evidence that Mashal had committed blasphemy. His killing was ruled to have been premeditated murder.⁴⁶ Hence, the case seemed to have a very profane context, as can be derived from an interview of Mashal’s teacher Ziaullah Hamdard, who said that “Mashal’s killing was politically motivated,”⁴⁷ and involved not only students and some teachers, but also members of religio-political parties who aimed at vote-catching in the region, especially Jam’iyyat-e ‘Ulama’-ye Islam and Jama’at-e Islami. “In all 57 people were put on trial in connection with the murder, including fellow student Imran Ali, who knew the victim well and pleaded guilty to shooting him.”⁴⁸ The court of law gave Ali the death sentence. Furthermore, the court handed out life terms to five others for murdering a

43 BBC Newsnight, “Murder on Campus”; Geo News English, “Mashal Khan’s Teacher Apologises”.

44 Seasons TV, “Mashal Khan Last Interview”.

45 Ejaz Akram, professor at Lahore University of Management and Sciences, in Amnesty International, “As Good as Dead”, 43, as cited in Pirzada, “The Price of Blasphemy”.

46 BBC News, “Mashal Khan Case”; BBC Newsnight, “Murder on Campus”.

47 For the interview with Hamdard, see Geo News, “Teacher Says”.

48 BBC News, “Mashal Khan Case”.

student who was falsely accused of blasphemy, twenty-five others were convicted of lesser offenses, and twenty-six people were acquitted. Interestingly, those who were acquitted were not only cordially welcomed by members of the religio-political parties upon their release from detention on 8 February 2018, but they were also given a “hero’s welcome”.⁴⁹

Mashal’s father, Iqbal, was not satisfied with the court’s judgement. He said, “I don’t understand how several people were acquitted despite very clear videos and other evidence.”⁵⁰ The matter of the fact is that in Mashal’s case, several different threads converged: his being extraordinarily bright caused his fellow students to be jealous; his challenging traditional narratives that were a firm part of the local cultural memory triggered widespread rage; and his reformist zeal infuriated various political party members. These different filaments joined together in an unprecedented and emotionally hyper-charged outburst with the view to silence his voice.

Similar cases are abundant, mostly based on false accusations, be they property issues or personal or family vendettas, eventually leading to mob violence.⁵¹ The police are impotent, as one officer stated: “How do you stop a violent mob when you have no protection from the state? To take action, the police need the state’s backing, but the state is weak.”⁵²

Hence, according to the late Asma Jahangir, the blasphemy laws of Pakistan have “controlled and silenced the liberal lobbies” and dissuaded them from religious discourses.⁵³ The issue of the blasphemy laws shows that the country is deeply divided between the privileged “Westernized” and the least educated, who find hope in the Prophetic *sunna*. They are mobilised by religious specialists for assorted interests, a tendency that has gained momentum: from 1927 to 1986, there were only seven blasphemy accusations. But according to statistics collected by the Centre for Social Justice, a Lahore-based advocacy group, at least 1,472 people were charged under Pakistan’s blasphemy laws between 1987 and 2016. Of those, 730 were Muslims and 501 were Ahmadis, while 205 were Christians and 26 were Hindus.

The connection of mob violence and blasphemy laws can also be traced in the case of Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (Tahrīk-e Labbaik Pākistān; TLP), an organisation that was born out of a protest movement supporting Qadri.

49 BBC News, “Mashal Khan Case”; RFE/RL, “Released Suspects”.

50 BBC News, “Mashal Khan Case”.

51 Supreme Court of Pakistan, *Malik Muhammad Mumtaz Qadri v. the State*, 26.

52 Amnesty International, “As Good as Dead”, 51.

53 Jahangir and Siddiqui, *From Protection to Exploitation*, 13.

10.7 Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (Tahrik-e Labbaik Pākistān; TLP)

On 1 August 2015, the wheelchair-bound Barelwi cleric Khadim Hussain Rizvi (b. 1966) founded the Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) with seventy-two of his followers.⁵⁴ It was registered with the Election Commission of Pakistan in May 2016 under the name Tehreek-e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah (Tahrik-e Labbaik Yā Rasūl Allāh, TLYRA).⁵⁵ The Tehreek-e Labbaik rose to fame after the hanging of Qadri, which it states was unjustifiable. It demands the implementation of *shari'ā* law in Pakistan through a gradual legal and political process, blasphemy being a central issue for the party. The TLP's election posters are often emblazoned with photos of Qadri and others who have killed in the name of the Prophet's honour.⁵⁶

The TLP speaks for those Barelwis who are said to have suffered from a sense of victimisation that has been generated by attacks on shrines and Qadri's execution. "They are drawn towards Tehreek-e-LabbaiK Pakistan because of its uncompromising politics of agitation which they see as the only way to attract the attention of the state and have their agenda implemented."⁵⁷ Their chanting with raised arms *Labbaik, labbaik, labbaik yā Rasūl Allāh!* ("We stand, we stand, we stand with you, O Messenger of God!") can be intimidating for outsiders,⁵⁸ but fosters solidarity among the followers.

Hence, with the July 2018 election around the corner, the TLP caused a stir when government authorities changed the words "I solemnly swear" (oath) to "I believe" (declaration) in the Elections Bill 2017. The clause related to a candidate's belief in the finality of the prophethood of Muḥammad was made not applicable to non-Muslim candidates. In November 2017, as a result of a three-week TLP sit-in at the Faizabad Interchange near Islamabad, the government was forced to restore the previous version of the blasphemy law and the Minister for Law and Justice Zahid Hamid had to resign from his post to avoid having a fatwā issued against him.⁵⁹

54 The number seventy-two is highly loaded with many meanings, such as the number of sects or denominations that are doomed to hell; the number of people martyred along with Ḥusayn b. 'Alī at the Battle of Karbala; and the number of *ḥūrīs* (beautiful virgins) each Muslim martyr shall receive as companions in paradise.

55 Khan, "Election Symbol"; Dawn, "Tehreek-i-LabbaiK Pakistan".

56 Hashim, "Tehreek-e-LabbaiK".

57 Kaleem, "The Emergence of Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan".

58 Hashim, "Tehreek-e-LabbaiK".

59 Hashim, "Pakistan Minister Resigns"; Dawn, "List of Demands"; Dawn, "How the Islamabad Protests Happened"; Butt, "Govt-TLP Accord".

Moving on the wave of global populism,⁶⁰ the TLP has become extremely popular in a short time, as can be seen from their extraordinary performance in the by-elections of 2017.⁶¹ This makes it into more than a mere pressure group,⁶² given the fact that the party secured so many votes at polling booths across Pakistan in the general elections in 2018, that it emerged as the fifth largest party in terms of vote count at the national level and the third largest in the most populous province, the Punjab.

When looking at its constituency, the TLP seems to be more a protest movement than a political party. Voters mostly hail from low-income neighbourhoods in large urban clusters and working-class areas – peasant urbanites – but also trading communities that have suffered from the impacts of globalisation.

the weakening of ... civic forums – such as trade unions, grass-roots level political associations and ethnicity-based organisations – is leaving industrial and commercial workers, especially those who have migrated to a big city from elsewhere, with little option but to seek and find support from religious groups formed around neighbourhood mosques and madrasas.⁶³

A jeopardised Prophet comes at the right time and serves to gain political mileage, with religious seminaries and mosques being proven institutions for political campaigning.

At first sight, this exemplifies the clergy's increasing street power. Successfully exploiting the issue of blasphemy, the Barelwis have witnessed a political revival, wherein Khadim Hussain Rizvi⁶⁴ has a major role to play. He is known for his crude language, fiery sermons, and abusive allegations, often in local Punjabi dialect, which are well received by the locals and serve to agitate the audience.

During the campaign at Faizabad Interchange, he lambasted all sorts of politicians, especially the Muslim League government led by Nawaz Sharif, who

60 “In India, the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the rise of UK Independence Party (UKIP) in the UK, and Donald Trump's victory, all point towards the rise of right-wing nationalistic politics, a factor that should be worrisome for everyone. This could be owing to the increasing trend of post-truth politics, whereby political opinions are formed on emotions, religion and nationalism rather than logic.” Mahmood, “13,000 Pakistanis Voted for Far Right Parties”.

61 Hashim, “Pakistan Ruling Party”.

62 Global Village Space, “Is Khadim Hussain Rizvi Preparing for General Elections?”.

63 A political analyst based in Lahore quoted in Kaleem, “The Emergence of Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan”.

64 Ali, “Who Is Khadim Hussain Rizvi?”

had voiced critical words vis-à-vis the powerful military establishment and whose name subsequently appeared in the Panama Papers. It is said that during the sit-in, the TLP was supported by the military, whom Khadim Hussain never criticised while there. In fact, the military is said to have supported the movement, as they distributed money among the demonstrators to motivate them to return to their homes.⁶⁵

Analysts have interpreted this increasing street power as the rise of Barelwi politics and fear that this “could be a double-edged sword for society if mis-handled by the power brokers. Any induction of extremist doctrines and violent groups among them could lead to an additional layer of sectarian-based discord in society.”⁶⁶

However, the looming dreadful sectarian-based discord has in fact been postponed thanks to the blasphemy law, which brings a variety of contesting schools of thought onto one platform. Such is the case of Asiya Noreen, alias Asia Bibi. The Punjabi Christian mother of three children was convicted of blasphemy under Section 295-C of the PPC for allegedly defaming the Prophet and was sentenced to death by hanging in 2010. This verdict was confirmed by the Lahore High Court in October 2014. Back in 2009, Bibi and some Muslim women had a quarrel about fetching water when picking fruit in a field. The Muslim women refused to drink water from the same container as Bibi. The exchange got heated, harking back to issues of purity and impurity: as the majority of Christians in Pakistan are descendants of low-caste Hindus who converted during colonial rule, they are considered untouchables and hence often do menial jobs. Lately, they – like the Ahmadis and other minorities – have become vulnerable to all sorts of assaults, among others, to blasphemy, and many have left the country. In October 2018, the Supreme Court of Pakistan acquitted Bibi based on insufficient evidence.⁶⁷ Khadim Hussain, for whom large rallies have become a potent tool in his ascent as a politician, reacted to Bibi’s acquittal by calling for TLP protests in various cities across Pakistan,⁶⁸ which involved a significant number of like-minded young men. Although Prime Minister Imran Khan issued a strong message to the demonstrators, in an effort to de-radicalise the youth, which was part of the much-talked about and less-implemented National Action Plan (NAP), the government signed a five-point agreement upon which the protesters dispersed peacefully. The

65 Khan, “Why Was Pakistan General Giving Money to Protesters?”.

66 Khan, “Why Was Pakistan General Giving Money to Protesters?”; Suleman, “Institutionalisation of Sufi Islam after 9/11”.

67 See the Supreme Court of Pakistan, the Criminal Appeal No. 39-L of 2015; Shah, “Pakistan Supreme Court”.

68 Geo News, “Asia Bibi’s Acquittal”; Griffiths, “Pakistani Christian Asia Bibi”.

agreement included that the government would allow a review of the petition filed by the respondents in the Bibi case as well as initiate the legal process to place her name on the exit control list (ECL). Moreover, TLP activists arrested during the protests were to be released. In turn, the TLP issued an apology in the event that it hurt anyone's feelings by use of improper words against the state institutions.⁶⁹ Across social media, this agreement was considered a capitulation to a belligerent group. Rumours have since surfaced that Bibi has left the country, and if true, then the TLP and other forces such as the *Muttaḥida Majlis-e Amal* (United Council of Action), a political alliance of Islamist and far-right parties in Pakistan, threatened to join forces, feeling that they had been taken in. In fact, in a public statement issued on 31 October 2018, the leaders of the TLP not only urged its supporters to take to the streets, but they also said that it was obligatory to kill (*wājib al-qatl*) the judges presiding over Bibi's case. Moreover, they asked the generals of Pakistan's army to rebel against the Army Chief. This immediately caused Prime Minister Imran Khan to vow to take stern action against such instigators the very same day in an address to the nation.⁷⁰ In order to end the TLP's nationwide protest, the government and the TLP reached certain terms on 2 November 2018, among others that the government would concede to "initiate the legal process" and place Bibi's name on the ECL.⁷¹

At the same time, while Bibi's lawyer had left the country due to threats to his life,⁷² the government took severe actions against party members on a nationwide scale, eventually charging the two leaders of the TLP, Khadim Hussain and Pir Afzal Qadri, with treason and terrorism on 1 December 2018.⁷³ It is interesting to note that many of the followers of the TLP as well as the Pākistān Sunni Tahrik, a Bareilwi organisation founded in 1990, and its allies distanced themselves from the TLP's protest name. Finally, on 29 January 2019, Pakistan's Supreme Court rejected a challenge to the acquittal of Bibi launched by followers of the TLP.⁷⁴ In spite of disclaimers by the government affirming that the Christian woman is still in the country, it is likely that she has left for a secure place outside Pakistan. Be that as it may, the legal actions taken by the government have done little to resolve the predicaments in a highly fragmented society that led to the ordeals described in the above three cases: Salman Taseer, Mashal Khan, and Asia Bibi.

69 Alam, "Govt, TLP Sign 5-Point Accord"; Butt, "TLP Ends Countrywide Protest".

70 Global Village Space, "PM Khan".

71 Bilal, "Government, TLP Reach Agreement".

72 AFP, "Asia Bibi's Lawyer Leaves Pakistan".

73 Dawn, "TLP Leader Khadim Hussain Rizvi Booked under Sedition".

74 BBC, "Asia Bibi Blasphemy Acquittal Upheld by Pakistan Court".

10.8 Conclusion

The very fact that *sira* – etymologically related to being on a journey – slowly became the generic term for the biography of Muḥammad's life went along with the Prophet having a paradigmatic role in human life and beyond, being the source of authentic law, the sublimation of the sublime, the perfect individual, a moral and aesthetic ideal, educator, military commander, statesman, and ideal ruler, and so on. All these different roles were to be imitated by Muslims – *imitatio Muhammadi* – through a sunnatisation of lifeworlds. The German Orientalist Rudi Paret (d. 1983) in his *Die legendäre Maghāzī-Literatur* asserted that: “In case of emergency, the Muslim might deny his faith, but he would never be willing to utter a word of slander against Muḥammad or to renounce him, even though he were facing death in case of refusal to do so.” And the Canadian W. C. Smith (d. 2000) explained in *Modern Islam in India*: “Muslims will allow attacks on Allah; there are atheists and atheistic publications, and rationalistic societies; but to disparage Muḥammad will provoke from even the most ‘liberal’ sections of the community a fanaticism of blazing vehemence.”⁷⁵ In the light of this Muslim cultural memory, it is no wonder that blasphemy has become a major issue. In an Islamic Republic, this becomes even more dramatic, since, despite the fact that blasphemy laws provide the legal framework for prosecution, many feel honour-bound to take the law into their own hands to defend the Prophet's integrity, as we have seen with the long line of *ghazis* and *shahids*. It is ironic that the laws in Pakistan have a colonial legacy, though in British India “blasphemy” was not used in the “Offences Relating to Religion” as applied in Pakistan. Rather, it was regarded as necessary to protect the religious feelings of diverse religious communities.⁷⁶ But the Objectives Resolution provided ambiguous space between sacred and profane, which gradually – in the wake of the Islamisation drive of the 1970s and 1980s – came to provide allegations of blasphemy with constitutional and judicial power. In a highly fragmented society with multiple contenders competing for scarce resources, the mobilisation of resentments in the name of the Prophet, such as with the TLP, is easy: as the increasing number of blasphemy cases shows, the law is being abused more blatantly by Muslims – mostly peasant urbanites like Qadri and their leaders – against fellow Muslims and minorities to settle scores or silence opponents, as epitomised by the cases of Bibi and Mashal. But in searching out the actual root of these conflicts, one would do well to

75 Paret and Smith are quoted in Schimmel, *And Muhammad Is His Messenger*, 263n4 and 5, respectively.

76 Nazir, “A Study”, 207ff.

consider the causal role of societal factors like poverty and injustice. After all, the problems people are facing are not Islamic per se; they are put into a religious discursive garb, to serve certain aims, just like in neighbouring India with its rising Hindu nationalism. There too, economic changes enhanced competition and conflict, mostly in industrial cities where Muslims' share of the population is relatively high (15–60 per cent). By the end of the 1950s, for example, tensions resulted from economic misery and increasing social disintegration in urban centres. In the more recent past, the number of Hindu–Muslim communal outbreaks has increased from 240 in 1972 to 525 in 1985,⁷⁷ culminating in the riots that immediately followed the destruction of the Babri Masjid as well as later in Gujarat in 2002, leaving around 2,000 dead in the aftermath. Moreover, in September of 2013, on the eve of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiyya Janata Party winning a landslide victory in the 2014 general election, the country witnessed one of its worst riots in Muzaffarnagar. Additionally, 2016 was highly charged with communal tensions throughout the country. More recently, institutions of higher education, whether Muslim or secular, have become targets of nationalist Hindu surveillance. A striking dimension of this communalism is that it has gradually shifted towards rural areas, where in 1985 some 46 per cent and in 1995 more than 50 per cent of the conflicts took place, while in Pakistan religious outbreaks have been mostly initiated by what has been called peasant urbanites in their struggle to adapt physically, psychologically, and economically in an insecure urban setting. Similarly, in Bangladesh, Islamist extremism has increased since 2001 leaving hundreds dead. There the number of religious specialists affiliated with Islamist organisations has risen to prominence. In Pakistan, this has particularly been the case among the erstwhile peaceful Barelwis, who had been complaining of having been neglected during the hot Cold War in Afghanistan. Now, with the US government's "Muslim World Outreach", financed by USAID since 2003 with the aim of supporting Sufis among others as crucial allies in the struggle against violent Islamists, this might well be the case. But the notion of a romanticised Sufism, docile and aloof from politics, is deceptive, as Sufis were generally peaceful but not necessarily pacifists. This sort of policy has backfired, bringing even erstwhile quietist Barelwis to the forefront,⁷⁸ shaking off their role as the underdogs. This might have caused some power-shift in the religious field; yet the province of Pakhtunkhawa – formerly the North-West Frontier Province – is still the stronghold of Jam'iyat-e 'Ulama'-ye Islam and partly of the Jama'at-e

77 Gupta, "Changing Role", 193.

78 For more on growing Barewli radicalism, see Suleman, "Institutionalisation of Sufi Islam after 9/11". See also Malik, "The Sociopolitical Entanglements of Sufism".

Islami, as the case of Mashal has shown. The device for this power-shift seems to be the blasphemy laws providing a powerful weapon in the contest to decide who speaks for the *sunna* of the Prophet.

To give a recent example: the Punjab Tahaffuz-e Bunyad-e Islam Act 2020 makes compulsory the printing of the Prophet's epithet "Seal of the Prophets" and the complimentary phrase "peace be upon him" in conjunction with the appearance of his name. Similarly, objectionable comments about the Prophet, *ahl-e bait* (members of Muhammad's family), the first four Sunni caliphs, *ashāb* (contemporaries of Muhammad) and *ummahāt al-muminīn* (Muhammad's wives) will also be deemed as cognizable offenses by the Directorate General of Public Relations (DGPR). Moreover, some course books for schools are to be censured and banned, although they merely quote from history books and have already been taught for many years.

The biggest concern with this bill, however, seems to be that DGPR will ban publishing or importing any book or text that does not have such titles and complimentary phrases for prophets, companions, etc. Yet most books outside Pakistan do not use these titles and thus cannot be imported anymore. More significant still is the fact that none of the classical Islamic books use these titles or phrases, not even *hadith* books or the Quran itself. It is clear that Sunni – Shia issues will further be heated, and Barelwi – Deobandi problems will get worse. The impracticability of the law is obvious, and it seems that no Islamic scholar has been consulted in that regard, since the law would have tremendous repercussions for the freedom of thought in Pakistan and fuel simmering inter- and intra-religious disputes. Nevertheless, some influential religious scholars have realised how important it is to promote and protect religious freedom, which can help undermine terrorism and enhance national security. Scores of special training programmes are being offered by various institutions to promote the appreciation of other voices, be it on the national⁷⁹ or international level.⁸⁰ However, as long as the real issues like poverty, injustice, and political suppression are not properly solved, all such training programmes will be in vain. Addressing these issues may well be the best solution, if pursued in the appropriate way, to follow the *sunna* understood as an indication of a general direction, open to responsible, contextual, and consensual interpretation.

79 Daily Pakistan Observer, "Ilm-o-Aman Foundation Training Programme".

80 Lapaeva, "The List of Leaders of Religious Confessions/Organizations".

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“So Let Today Be All the Arabs Muḥammad”

The Prophet in the Discourse of the Iraqi Baʿth Party

David Jordan

The Prophet Muḥammad and his religious, political, and socio-cultural heritage have formed central reference points in the construction of legitimacy, authority, and power among Islamic or Islamist movements over centuries. With the emergence of nationalist ideologies in the Islamic world during the early twentieth century, also secular-nationalist, and even socialist political currents adopted and transmuted this Prophetic heritage for new political ends. One of the most successful secular-nationalist currents which heavily relied on the Prophetic role model is the Arab Socialist Baʿth Party founded by the Syrian Greek Orthodox Christian Michel ʿAflaq (1910–89) and others in the 1940s. Originally established in Damascus, the movement successfully seized political power in Syria and Iraq in 1963. In Iraq, the party was soon ousted from the government within a few months but successfully returned to political power in 1968 to rule the country until the US-led occupation in 2003.

Researchers of the Iraqi Baʿth regime’s religious politics have traditionally divided its rule into three periods: the secular 1970s with very few political displays of religiosity, the Baʿth’s “toeing the Islamic line” during the 1980s, and its “deliberate Islamic flag-waving” during the 1990s.¹ Recent scholarship offers contrasting interpretations of this development and debates as to whether the regime fulfilled an ideological U-turn from a staunch secularism to an Arab Islamism,² or whether it did not so much Islamise but expand its ongoing policy to Baʿthise religion and to accelerate the spread of its original Baʿthist interpretation of an Arab Islam.³ Focusing on the role of the Prophetic figure in Baʿthist ideology and politics throughout these periods, this chapter argues that the state gradually increased the incorporation of the religious Prophetic heritage into the official political discourse. This increasing political use of

1 Bengio, *Saddam’s Word*, 176.

2 Baram, “From Militant Secularism to Islamism”; Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*; Baram, “Saddam’s ISIS”; Baram, “Saddam and the Rise of ISIS”.

3 Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein’s Baʿth Party*; Faust, *The Baʿthification of Iraq*; Helfont, *Compulsion in Religion*.

Islamic traditions and motifs can be explained as a tactical reaction to take advantage of and control the general Islamic or religious resurgence that can be observed throughout the Islamic world and beyond since the late 1960s;⁴ a political move that fuelled and promoted this resurgence even further. At the same time, however, this move aimed, in accordance with secular Ba'athist principles, at the prevention of an Islamisation of politics.

From 'Aflaq's original secular ideology in the 1940s to the fall of the Ba'ath regime in 2003, the secular Ba'athist image of the Prophet in the political discourse received an increasingly religious colouring. Initially evoked as a mere historical role model of a revolutionary, the Prophet gradually regained his heavenly message and became, finally, invoked in rather religious terms as intercessor before God, as last source of relief, and as a moral guide for the Ba'ath leadership during the 1990s. This development exemplifies the Ba'athist politicisation of the Prophet and religion, an oft-observed process among national movements which find the need to accommodate their message to the horizons, sentiments, language, and imagery of the populace they wish to mobilise and liberate.⁵ According to Anthony Smith, this process grows out of a national movement's aspiration to form a "sacred communion", which is an imagined but also felt and willed communion of those who assert a moral faith and feel an ancestral affinity, a communion of believers and ideological union of those who share the same values and purposes.

[O]nly when a group of people begin to trace their genealogy back to a specific place, time, and ancestor, and at the same time derive their moral and ideological lineage and destiny from the sacred properties of a community of the faithful, can they begin to imagine themselves as a finite, sovereign, and horizontal political community.⁶

As will be seen throughout this chapter, the Ba'ath Party heavily and successfully relied on all those "sacred properties" alluded to by Smith (i.e. ethnic election, sacred territory, ethno-history, and national sacrifice) in order to create a Ba'athist communion of the faithful based on the Prophet as ultimate source of inspiration.⁷

4 Sedgwick, "Salafism".

5 At the same time, these movements often tend towards a revolutionary atheism and attack the guardians of those ethnic and religious traditions as happened in Ba'athist Iraq. Eventually, according to Smith, "they rarely seek to destroy entirely an older, religious identity in order to build a messianic new one" (Smith, "The 'Sacred' Dimension", 802).

6 Smith, "The 'Sacred' Dimension", 803.

7 Smith, "The 'Sacred' Dimension", 803–10.

Beginning with Ṣaddām Ḥusayn’s presidency in 1979 and his unprecedented personality cult, we also witness the reverse process of a “messianisation of politics, whereby the nation and its leaders are exalted and endowed with religious charisma”, as “derived from older ethno-religious motifs and beliefs ... combined, redirected, and in varying degrees, transformed for new political ends”.⁸ As part of the Ba’th’s religious propaganda during the Iran–Iraq War (1980–88), Ṣaddām became stylised as Prophetic descendant (among other historical role models) and Iraq’s larger than life figure who succeeded and overshadowed the Prophet as ideal, modern leader of the Arab nation. Even though the president’s claim to descent from the Prophet drew on a classical form of religious legitimacy, Lisa Wedeen convincingly reminds us in her study on Ḥafīz al-Asad’s cult in Syria, that a cult such as Ṣaddām’s is more successful in creating obedience and compliance than legitimacy. In her study of Asad’s cult, which was strikingly similar to Ṣaddām’s with all kinds of preposterous and fictitious claims,⁹ she argues that the cult is itself a mechanism or strategy of domination and disciplinary-symbolic power based on public dissimulation.¹⁰ According to this view, Asad’s or Ṣaddām’s cult fails to produce legitimacy among the population in the sense of voluntary normative compliance. The cult’s political merit is rather that it appropriates meaningful narratives in order to inscribe Ṣaddām as an omnipresent, even God-like leader into existing systems of signification.¹¹ With his genealogical link to the Prophet, Ṣaddām clearly relied on the old Islamic tradition of Sharīfism to legitimise himself, but he did more than that as he inscribed his person into this tradition and associated himself essentially with it as the Prophetic descendant par excellence. The Prophet became on this level overshadowed by Ṣaddām rather than the other way around.

8 Smith, “The ‘Sacred’ Dimension”, 799, 810.

9 In Asad’s and Ṣaddām’s cults, both presidents became regularly depicted; for instance, as the all-powerful father, combatant, leader forever, gallant knight, premier pharmacist, or modern-day Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 1). Ṣaddām became additionally identified with all kinds of pre-Islamic and Islamic role models (gods and rulers alike). I do not argue that claims of Sharīfism are preposterous and have no religious and cultural foundation in Iraq. On the contrary, Prophetic descendants abound among all ethnic and sectarian communities in the country and number hundreds of thousands, with whole tribes claiming to be *ashrāf*. Ṣaddām’s claim, too, was not invented out of thin air and certainly not unreasonable in Iraq, but it would still be too much to assume that a majority of Iraqis or even most Ba’thists in fact believed in it and therefore regarded him as legitimate leader.

10 “The people are not required to believe the cult’s fictions, and they do not, but they are required to act *as if they did*” (Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 30).

11 Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination*, 6, 7, 144–45.

In the following, we will revisit the Ba‘th’s political use of the Prophet beginning with Michel ‘Aflaq’s thinking, the Ba‘thist secularism in the 1970s, Ṣaddām’s personality cult during the Iran–Iraq War, and the Ba‘th’s full-scale politicisation of Islam during its Faith Campaign in the 1990s.

11.1 The Prophet as Historical Role Model in Michel ‘Aflaq’s Thinking

When Michel ‘Aflaq formulated his secular nationalist ideology for the later Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party in the 1940s, he heavily drew upon the Prophet Muḥammad and Islam as fundamental and ideal models of inspiration. He did this particularly in his speech *The Memory of the Arab Messenger (Dhikrā al-rasūl al-‘arabī)* delivered in the auditorium of the Syrian University in the spring of 1943.¹² According to the interpretation of Amatzia Baram, ‘Aflaq deliberately created with this and other lectures an ambivalence between, on the one hand, a staunch secularism, occasionally even atheism, and, on the other, the illusion of a deep Islamic religiosity.¹³ Baram views ‘Aflaq’s lectures as “masterpieces of equivocation and deception, masquerading blatant atheism” and including “a call to replace Islam and the Prophet with the modern message and leadership of the Ba‘th Party”.¹⁴ With recourse to Benedict Anderson’s theory of a national movement’s emergence, he finally explains that “‘Aflaq aligned his nationalism with the Islamic religion that he came to marginalize if not destroy”.¹⁵ In this view, ‘Aflaq’s message was essentially blasphemous and therefore “disguised so brilliantly, [and] to be fully understood only by the initiated”.¹⁶ Far from subscribing to the argument that the essence of ‘Aflaq’s message was hidden and aimed at destroying Islam, this section will revisit his ambivalence between secularism and Islam in order to show how he integrated Islam into his vision to mould a new messianic Ba‘thist identity. His use of the Prophetic model indeed created an emotional bond between him and his followers, providing his national movement with a historical basis and continuity.

For ‘Aflaq, the life of the Prophet Muḥammad represented Islam, first and foremost understood as an ideal revolutionary movement that had, for the first time, accomplished to unite the Arab people. He generally distinguished

12 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 50–61.

13 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 27.

14 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 34.

15 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 40.

16 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 34.

between a material and a spiritual dimension of the Arab nation and created a monism which had Arab unity as its origin and its ultimate goal.¹⁷ Reflecting both dimensions, he spoke of Arabism (*‘urūba*) elsewhere also as a body (*jism*) and of Islam as its spirit (*rūḥ*).¹⁸ His ultimate goal of unity (*waḥda*) was in this light not merely related to the material unity of the Arabs but included a higher unity of both the material and the spiritual dimension, of body and spirit. In ‘Aflaq’s interpretation, the Arabs had historically only reached this higher unity (*waḥda ‘uliyā*) in the movement of Islam. This revolutionary movement was not a mere historical episode interpreted in its temporal and spatial context and according to its causes and goals but had a higher spiritual meaning as “a perfect and eternal symbol of the nature of the Arab soul, its rich possibilities, and its genuine orientation. It is therefore right to consider it as a possibility of renewal, [but] always in its spirit, not in its form and its letters.”¹⁹ According to ‘Aflaq, the experience of the Islamic movement also bore “a constant readiness in the Arab nation (*umma*) – if Islam is correctly understood – to rise whenever matter (*mādda*) dominates the spirit (*rūḥ*), and appearance (*mazhar*) the essence (*jawhar*)”.²⁰

By incorporating the Prophet and Islam in his revolutionary vision, ‘Aflaq read Arab nationalism and the Ba‘thist movement as what Anderson called “the expression of a historical tradition of serial continuity”.²¹ “Every great nation, [wrote ‘Aflaq,] in profound connectedness to the eternal concepts of being, desires in the origin of its foundation universal and eternal values. Islam is the best expression to the desire of the Arab nation (*al-umma al-‘arabiyya*) for eternity and universality.”²² In order to realise this historical continuity, ‘Aflaq demanded to revive and relive the historical experience (*tajriba*) of this revolutionary movement, repeating “the fierce and heroic battle (*malḥama*) of Islam with all its chapters of missionary activity, persecution, emigration (*hijra*), war, and victory, to end with a final triumph of truth (*ḥaqq*) and faith (*īmān*)”. ‘Aflaq saw the foundations of all later achievements of Islam in terms of conquests and civilisations already established in the twenty years of Muḥammad’s heavenly mission.²³ “The life of the Messenger” appeared in this nationalist narrative as “the quintessence of the life of the Arabs” per se and could not be understood merely by reason but through real-life experience.

17 Stegagno, “Mišil ‘Aflaq’s Thought”, 159.

18 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 55.

19 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 53.

20 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 52–53.

21 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 195; see also Gellner, *Nations*, 46–48.

22 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 55.

23 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 53.

The Arabs, since the emaciation of the vigour within themselves, that is since hundreds of years, read the Prophetic biography (*sīra*) and recite it, but they do not understand it, for its understanding requires an ultimate degree of boiling excitement in the soul, the utmost of deep feelings and truth they have not yet fulfilled, and an existential attitude which places man face to face with his destiny. They are as far as they could be from that.... Until the present time, the life of the Messenger was looked upon from outside, like a glorious image that exists for us in order to admire and venerate it. We must now begin to see it from inside, so as to live it. Every Arab at the present time is capable of living the life of the Arab Messenger, even if only in the ratio of a pebble to a mountain and a drop to a sea. Naturally, no man, whatever his grandeur amounts to, is capable of achieving what Muḥammad achieved. But it is also natural, that any man, however narrow his capacities are, is capable of being a tiny miniature of Muḥammad, as long as he belongs to that nation (*umma*) which assembled all its forces and bore Muḥammad or, in other words, as long as this man is an individual from among the members of the nation which Muḥammad produced when he concentrated all his forces. In the past, in a single man was summarized the life of his whole nation, and today the whole life of this nation shall in its new awakening become an explication of the life of its great man. Muḥammad was all the Arabs, so let today be all the Arabs Muḥammad.²⁴

At a first glance, this demand to live and emulate the life of Muḥammad as far as possible and to be tiny miniatures of him seems quite similar to the idealisation of the Prophet's and his early community's life among modern Islamic reformists of the Salafiyya movement.²⁵ Yet, 'Aflaq's secular intentions are quite the opposite as his emulation was only concerned with the revolutionary spirit of the Prophet and Islam, not with "its form" or "its letter", that is, not with the content of the Islamic message and religion. 'Aflaq constantly used terms with a clear religious connotation thereby sacralising his ideological programme and creating an ambiguity between secularism and Islam in his texts.²⁶ We find him talking about God, the revelation of the Qur'ān, and the believer in God (*al-mu'min bi-llāh*), about the Arab nation with the Qur'ānic term for the Muslim community, *umma*, and about the Ba'th's eternal mission with the Arabic term for God's heavenly message, *risāla*. Yet, he gave

24 'Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba'th*, 53–54.

25 Merad, "Iṣlāḥ", 145–50, 152.

26 See Reichmuth, "Religion and Language".

those terms his own, new, and secular meanings. Moreover, he was not willing to limit the historical achievement of Arab unity to the Muslim community alone. In his view, perhaps as a non-Muslim, even the polytheists (*mushrikūn*) from the Quraysh were as necessary for the realisation of Islam as its believers, those who fought the Messenger took equal part in the victory of Islam as those who supported him. He buttressed this view with the premises that God Himself had the power to send the Qur’ān down to His Prophet, to let His religion triumph, and to guide all people to it in one single day, but all that took no less than twenty years and could not even be fully accomplished to this day.²⁷ The whole history of the Islamic movement during the twenty years of Muḥammad’s lifetime, with all its protagonists, believers and polytheists alike, had its necessary function for Arabism and Arab unity, not for the spread of Islam as a religion itself.

Analogously, ‘Aflaq demanded from his contemporary Arab Christians to embrace Islam for the sake of Arabism, again not as a religion but as a “national culture”.

[t]he Arab Christians will know, when their nationalism (*qawmiyya*) fully awakens within them and when they recover their genuine (*aṣīl*) nature, that Islam is a national culture (*thaqāfa qawmiyya*). They must be saturated by it until they understand and love it, so that they strive for Islam like their desire for the most precious thing in their Arabism.²⁸

Despite the reduction of Islam to a mere national culture, a notion of God and a certain spirituality still played central roles in this Ba‘thist vision, but mainly to justify the ethnic election and the privileged status of the Arab nation. According to ‘Aflaq, God had the power to reveal Islam at any time throughout tens of centuries and to any nation (*umma*) from among His creatures, yet He revealed it at a specific time and moment, and He particularly chose for it the Arab nation (*al-umma al-‘arabiyya*) and its hero, the Arab Messenger. God chose them in particular for their outstanding virtues and their excellence in order to fulfil the mission of Islam (in Arabic: *tabliḡh risālat al-Islām*).²⁹ Here again, ‘Aflaq played with obvious ambiguities since the Arabic phrase can at the same time have the religious meaning: for the conveyance of the message of Islam. However, he finally turned Muḥammad’s heavenly message into an eternal and progressive Ba‘thist mission to establish a united Arab nation:

27 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 54.

28 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 58.

29 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 54.

Islam was ... an Arab movement, and its meaning was: the renewal of Arabism and its perfection. The language with which it descended was the Arabic language, its perception of things was with the outlook of the Arab mind, the virtues which it fortified were Arab virtues, apparent or latent, and the vices it fought were Arab vices in the course of vanishing. The Muslim at that time was not merely an Arab, but the new, evolved, and completed Arab.... The Muslim was the Arab who put faith in the new religion since he combined the necessary conditions and virtues to understand that this religion represents the awakening (*wathba*) of Arabism (*urūba*) to unity, strength, and progress.³⁰

The image of Muḥammad in ‘Aflaq’s thinking was almost entirely focused on his role as successful revolutionary and statesman. The remaining degree of spirituality or even religiosity in his writings was, as argued by Baram, rather theoretical and ethereal but devoid of any substance.³¹ Islamic rituals and practices were not part of it as can be seen in ‘Aflaq’s following statement:

No one understands us but the believer, the believer in God. Perhaps we are not seen praying with the ones who pray, or fasting with the ones who fast, but we believe in God because we are in urgent need and painful want of Him, our burden is heavy, our path is arduous, and our goal is far.³²

‘Aflaq’s vision of Islam as national culture does obviously not include two of the Islamic religion’s five most important pillars and duties for every Muslim, namely, praying, and fasting during the month of Ramadan.³³ As shown by Baram, we find this attitude also among ‘Aflaq’s disciples such as the Syrian Ba‘thist and born Sunnī Muslim Sāmī al-Jundī, who wrote about his early years in the Ba‘th movement that he and his associates were “strangers to our society ... as rebels we revolted against all old values ... we despised all rituals, devotion, and religions.... We were accused of apostasy (*ilhād*), and this was equally true, despite all that the Ba‘thists later claimed apologetically. We believed in the religious feeling, in the Sufism of the religions (*ṣūfiyyat al-adyān*), in their total human striving; as to the religion of others, we were against it.”³⁴

30 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 54–55.

31 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 29.

32 ‘Aflaq, *Fī sabīl al-Ba‘th*, 60.

33 See Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 29.

34 Jundī, *al-Ba‘th*, 27. My translation of this passage slightly differs from Baram’s since *alḥadnā bi-* is not necessarily “we were atheists with regard to” nor is *ilhād* necessarily “atheism” (Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 34).

Finally, the case of another Iraqi Ba‘thist and born Shī‘ī Muslim, Hānī al-Fukaykī, shows how ‘Aflaq’s instrumentalisation of the Prophetic image indeed generated an emotional excitement among his followers and helped to legitimise his position as their charismatic leader. According to Fukaykī, the early party members viewed ‘Aflaq like a “God with a holy shape” (*ka-ilāh dhī ṣūra qudsiyya*), they felt in front of him as if they experienced the presence of Jesus (*al-masīh*), and ascribed to him a certain Sufi style (*uslūb ṣūfī*). Fukaykī described that, when he read *Dhikrā al-rasūl al-‘arabī*, particularly the slogan “Muḥammad was all the Arabs, so let today be all the Arabs Muḥammad”, how shivering befell him, and coldness spread in his limbs. It was “as if I heard the [Islamic] revelation anew, as if that small cave, *ghār ḥirā’* [where the Prophet had received the revelation], expanded to become the whole of this Arab fatherland, from the [Atlantic] ocean to the Gulf. In my mind appeared the qualities of perfection (*kamāl*), infallibility (*‘iṣma*), loftiness (*shumūkh*), and prophecy (*nubuwwa*) in every Ba‘thist.” In the end, he admitted that, despite his belief in secularism, he found no difference between Arab nationalism and Islam because their eternal mission (*risāla khālida*), “like that of little prophets”, was the resurrection of the Arab nation.³⁵

11.2 The Ba‘thist Politicisation of Muḥammad as Liberator and Revolutionary during the 1970s

From the Ba‘th Party’s political takeover in 1968 to the beginning of Ṣaddām’s presidency in 1979, the new regime in Iraq largely retained ‘Aflaq’s secular image of Muḥammad but merely evoked it during annual official occasions in memory of the Prophet’s birthday (*mawlid al-nabī*) or of his night journey and ascension to heaven (*isrā‘ wa-l-mi‘rāj*). The Ba‘th regime politicised and nationalised these traditional religious events, which were officially organised by the Ministry (*Dīwān*) of *Awqāf*, endowed them with new political significance,³⁶ and turned them into political platforms to promote the fight against imperialism and Zionism in general, and the liberation of Palestine in particular. During official addresses, Ba‘thist politicians oftentimes touched upon the figure and role of the Prophet rather marginally if compared to their elaborations on the Ba‘thist political agenda. The Prophetic image occupied nevertheless a central position in the rhetoric of these nationalised occasions: the birth of the Prophet – in contrast to *laylat al-qadar*, the night of the first Qur’ānic

35 Fukaykī, *Awkār al-hazīma*, 78–79. For a slightly different translation of the same passage, see Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 40.

36 Smith, “The ‘Sacred’ Dimension”, 799.

revelation – was reinterpreted and redefined as the (re)birth of a united Arab nation, and he was mainly evoked as a national hero, liberator, revolutionary, and fierce fighter. This kind of a politicised and nationalised image of the Prophet became part of a general national narrative that aimed at creating a cohesive Arab national identity and engendering a sense of Arab “national self-confidence and exclusivity”.³⁷ It continued its role as source of inspiration for the Ba‘th’s revolutionary cause and offered once more the opportunity to present it as an expression of historical continuity.

Representing the president during these occasions, Ba‘thist politicians referred to the birth of Muḥammad as a “present” and to his delegation (*ba‘th*) as a “revolution”, comparing the ordeal (*miḥna*) of disunity from which the Arab nation had suffered in the pre-Islamic period before and after his birth to its current ordeal imposed by imperialism and Zionism.³⁸ The Prophet’s birthday became in this way “the most honourable day in our national (*qawmī*) history”.³⁹ The daily newspapers covering these events mainly praised the Prophet throughout this decade as a “liberator from tyranny and imperialism”,⁴⁰ “revolutionary” (*thā‘ir*), and as “the eternal human model” (*mathal al-insāniyya al-khālīd*). Elsewhere, he was “the Prophet of fierce struggle” (*nabī al-malḥama*), or “the first model of freedom in the history of humanity”.⁴¹ Dr Ḥusayn Amīn, professor of Islamic history at Baghdad University, wrote in an article:

From the memory of [Muḥammad’s] great birth, we derive determination, strength, and endurance, and from the *jihād* of the great Messenger, we derive the spirit of fight and battle for the realization of the great victory through the liberation of the land of our fathers and ancestors, [i.e. Palestine] the land of the *isrā’* and the *mi‘rāj*.⁴²

During the *mawlid* festivities in Baghdad’s Abū Ḥanīfa Mosque in 1970, the president of the mosque’s association, Nājī Ma‘rūf, praised the Prophet in terms of a modern understanding of freedom and equality:

37 Smith, “The ‘Sacred’ Dimension”, 792.

38 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 8 June 1969, 4, 11. The speaker was minister of state for religious affairs Ḥamad Dallī al-Karbūlī.

39 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 16 May 1970, 3.

40 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 19 May 1970, 3.

41 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 16 May 1970, 3.

42 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 16 May 1970, 3.

The Islam which the Messenger of God (ṣ) preached liberated the slave and made him a respected member of society, he did not despise the black just as the Americans despise the negroes (*zunūj*) today. He did not acknowledge the racist distinction just as Britain does it in South Africa. He did neither deem colour, nor descent, nor wealth or kinship as criteria of distinction of one human against another. He called for consultation (*shūrā*) in government and administration and applied knowledge and reason in all commands without exception. He worked for saving the human from everything which deprives him of his freedom, his respect, and his nobility.⁴³

These words clearly reverberate in the Ba‘th’s own ideological fight against old forms of feudalism, tribalism, racism, regionalism, and backwardness.⁴⁴ These statements provide further instances of how the regime endowed the figure of the Prophet and the religious occasions in his memory with a new political Ba‘thist significance: Muḥammad became a national hero and a model for the Ba‘thist secular, revolutionary, and progressive battle against imperialism and backwardness. The celebration of his birthday and his night journey and ascension to heaven became national ceremonies. The Ba‘thist discourse that served the politicisation of the Prophet during the 1970s can be interpreted as reflecting the attempt to create the Arab nation as a sacred communion in the sense of Smith. This is an imagined but also felt and willed ideological communion of those who feel an ancestral affinity and share the same values and purposes.⁴⁵

11.3 The Messianisation of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn as Prophetic Descendant during the Iran–Iraq War (1980–88)

With the outbreak of the Iran–Iraq War in 1980, the Ba‘th regime’s evocation of the Prophetic figure reached a new level with the start of Ṣaddām’s personality cult. The Prophet retained his ideological role as model and source of inspiration for the liberation against imperialism, now particularly Persian imperialism, but in his role as historical revolutionary who had united the Arabs, he became gradually overshadowed by the new “historical leader” (*al-qā’id*

43 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 19 May 1970, 3.

44 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 20 June 1969, 4.

45 Smith, “The ‘Sacred’ Dimension”, 802–3.

al-tā'rikhī), the new president, Ṣaddām. The president's personality cult had an impact on mainly two policies: first, on nation-building with a project to rewrite Iraqi history (*mashrū' i'ādat kitābat al-tā'rikh*) and second, on the religious war propaganda. The first policy aimed at the remodelling of political identity and the public understanding of the national heritage by integrating histories and myths of Islamic and pre-Islamic civilisations and cultures into a new model for the nation. Famous figures and deities of ancient civilisations such as Sumer, Akkad, and Babylon as well as Islamic caliphs served as role models for Ṣaddām in the public media. He became simultaneously associated with the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, the Sumerian-Akkadian god Tammūz, the second caliph 'Umar, and the 'Abbāsīd caliph al-Manṣūr.⁴⁶

The second policy of the religious war propaganda was initiated in reaction to Ayatollah Khomeynī's call to overthrow the Ba'th regime as enemies of Islam, an accusation which indeed hurt the party as Ṣaddām himself later admitted during an internal meeting.⁴⁷ In 1980, Ṣaddām officially introduced his Prophetic descendancy as an essential part of his biography⁴⁸ in order to counteract Khomeynī's allegations by presenting himself in a noble Prophetic aura, but even more so to inscribe himself into its traditional religious context. It should be noted that the significance of the Prophet was overshadowed by his son-in-law 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and his grandson Ḥusayn in the Ba'thist religious propaganda, since the Iraqi media mainly referred to Ṣaddām on a weekly basis as descendant of the latter two Imams throughout the 1980s. Direct references to the president as descendant of Muḥammad only gained salience in the late 1980s and during the 1990s. The reasons for the preference of the Imams lie in the Ba'th's national narrative and the circumstances of the war. Apparently, the party promoted Arab and local Iraqi heroes for its national identity formation, including 'Alī and Ḥusayn, both of whom are buried in Iraqi soil. The Prophet did not meet this requirement. At the same time, both figures are the most important Imams for the Twelver Shī'a of Iraq's majority community and of Iran's Islamist regime and wider population. Ṣaddām's descendancy served in this way to establish a personal link to his country's saintly ancestors, to address

46 Baram, "Re-inventing Nationalism"; Bengio, *Saddam's Word*, 79–85.

47 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 80.

48 Iskandar, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn*, 18. Ṣaddām did not invent this claim out of thin air. Already his uncle, the governor of Baghdad, Khayr Allāh Ṭīlfāḥ had reinvented their family's and tribe's noble descent for political ends in the late 1960s. Their tribe, the al-Bū Nāṣir from Tikrīt, had claimed to be *ashrāf* since the late Ottoman Empire. The emergence of Ṣaddām's Sharīfian descendancy is analysed in Jordan, *State and Sufism in Iraq*.

Iraq’s Shī‘a population and their spiritual needs, and to draw a national and ethnic demarcation line between the latter and their Persian co-religionists and war enemies. He promoted his Arab, genealogical, and Iraqi claim to the Imams in an attempt to deprive the Iranians of theirs.

In addition to his noble descent, the regime and the media stylised Ṣaddām as a messianic figure and successor of the Prophet in his leading and foundational role for the Arab nation. For this bold move the Ba‘th used the coincidence that the beginning of the war in 1980 fell on the beginning of the fifteenth Islamic century, alluding to the widely accepted Prophetic tradition according to which God will send a descendant of his family to explain and renew the matters of religion at the beginning of each century.⁴⁹ Ṣaddām was similarly imagined as a secular Ba‘thist renewer of Arab liberation and unity. In 1981, a newspaper article with the ‘Aflaq-inspired title *In Memory of the Great Arab Messenger* compared the birth of the Prophet with the birth of the Arab revolution (*mawlid al-thawra al-‘arabiyya*).⁵⁰ An extract of this article reads as follows:

This dear memory today is connected to the beginning of the fifteenth Islamic century, on the one hand, and to the unique victories which the armies of Ṣaddām’s Qādisiyya have realised, on the other. For it gives this historical day additional meanings which grant us the right of the sons who are entitled to trace their ancestry to those glorious forefathers. The victories which the soldiers of Ṣaddām’s Qādisiyya realised against the people of ignorance and the haters among the followers of the deceiver (*dajjāl*) Khomeynī are in fact a historical and inevitable extension of the first Qādisiyya led by Sa‘d [b. Abī Waqqāṣ] against the Persian haughtiness ... Ṣaddām’s Qādisiyya is the revivification of our glorious history and another beginning for the movement of our resurrection and revival in the face of bitter setbacks. It renews in us the firm will and the capability to continue the path of the forefather’s mission (*risāla*) through high ambition and great strength, salvation of the nation (*umma*) from her enemies and those who wish her path every misfortune, and the liberation of her conquered land in Palestine and of every inch which the devils oppress. God willing.⁵¹

49 van Donzel, “Mudjaddid”.

50 *al-Jumhūriyya*, 18 January 1981, 1.

51 *al-Jumhūriyya*, 18 January 1981, 7.

The Ba‘th labelled the Iran–Iraq War as Ṣaddām’s Qādisiyya in analogy to the battle of al-Qādisiyya during the rule of the second caliph, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, between the Muslim conquerors and the Sassanid Persian army in 636.⁵² The regime invented with this label a historical continuity between both conflicts in order to signalise that the Arabs had already once defeated the Persians with the help of God. What is more, the entire history of the Arab nation was depicted as a decline with defeats and fractures including the fall of the ‘Abbāsīd state and the Arabic state in Andalusia until the coming of a new leader at the beginning of this fifteenth Islamic century. As Iraq’s Kurdish Vice President Ṭaha Muḥyī al-Dīn al-Ma‘rūf proclaimed during the official *mawlid* celebrations in the same year: “God entrusted a man who dedicated his whole life to this people and the reinstatement of the *umma*’s history in the most magnificent way. The new Qādisiyya is the Qādisiyya of Ṣaddām Ḥusayn, the hero of national liberation.”⁵³ The central report of the Ninth Regional Party Congress in 1982 even bestowed Ṣaddām with the title “The Leader, the Necessity” (*al-qā’id al-ḍarūra*),⁵⁴ implying nothing less than that his leadership was a predetermined historical necessity for the course of history, as interpreted by the Ba‘th.

By October 1988, two months after the end of this devastating war which Iraq celebrated as a victory, *al-Jumhūrīyya*’s front-page headline announced: “Under the Auspices of the Descendant of the Great Messenger, the President and Leader Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: Iraq Celebrates the Memory of the Birth of the Lord of Created Beings and Seal of the Prophets”.⁵⁵ Over the course of the war, the use of religious metaphors in the Ba‘thist propaganda had considerably increased, and direct references to Muḥammad appeared more frequent in the late 1980s, foreshadowing his central place in the political propaganda of the following decade. A front-page article in *al-Jumhūrīyya* interpreted the perceived victory of the historical leader and Prophetic descendant in this light as a new victory for Muḥammad’s mission to unite the Arabs and his religion:

The brave Iraqis still carry the burden of resistance of their Arab brothers [against the Persian imperialism], as they fought the best *jihād* under the descendant of the Messenger (*rasūl*), the leader and fighter Ṣaddām Ḥusayn.... This victory of the Iraqis was a new victory for the mission (*risāla*) of Muḥammad and his great religion. At the same time, it was

52 See Lewental, “Saddam’s Qadisyyah”.

53 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 18 January 1981, 7.

54 Faust, *The Ba‘thification of Iraq*, 42.

55 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 23 October 1988, 1.

a victory for all Arabs and made them even more resistant than they already had been, and even a victory for all true Muslims irrespective of their communities (*milal*) or sects (*niḥal*).⁵⁶

In the same issue the newspaper printed an interview with the secretary of the Ministry of *Awqāf* and Religious Affairs, Muḥammad Sharīf Aḥmad, who further emphasised Iraq’s sacred territory with a lofty analogy to the Prophet’s city, Medina:

No doubt that Islam became strong, grew, and established his state in Medina but it became prevailing and spread as it moved to Iraq, for Iraq is considered the second capital after Medina for this message [of Islam] (*risāla*) and Iraq became the starting point for the spread of the Islamic message to the world. No doubt that the first state which strongly opposed this message was Khosrow’s (*Kisrā*) empire of the Persians and Magians (*majūs*) who had occupied Iraq. Islam came as a liberator of Iraq and conqueror of the land of the Persians.⁵⁷

This Iraqi national narrative obviously used the image of the whole country of Iraq as the second capital city of Islam with reference to Medina in order to underline Iraq’s and implicitly Ṣaddām’s supreme position as leader of a united Arab nation.

11.4 The Ba‘th’s Faith Campaign (1993–2003): Muḥammad as Intercessor before God

Throughout the 1990s to 2003, the Ba‘thist politicisation of the Prophet and particularly of his lived tradition (*sunna*) reached its climax, which can be explained with the extreme hardships Iraq’s society went through during this period. After Iraq’s disastrous invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and the uprising of fourteen out of eighteen Iraqi provinces against the central government during the following *intifāda* in 1991, the regime was at its weakest point in history. The Iran–Iraq War had left the state overburdened with huge foreign debts, the Second Gulf War had entirely destroyed Iraq’s modern infrastructure, and the implemented UN embargo resulted in a humanitarian crisis with widespread famine, high mortality rates, deterioration of health services, and

56 *al-Jumhūriyya*, 23 October 1988, 1.

57 *al-Jumhūriyya*, 23 October 1988, 4.

a rise of criminality. These crises went along with a general religious revival and the threat of growing radical Sunnī-Wahhābī and Shīrī Islamist groups in Iraqī society during the 1990s.⁵⁸ Under these circumstances, the regime fully resorted to religion, that is, Islam in particular, in order to reinstall order and morality in society, to offer a spiritual way of relief, and to counteract the growing Islamism. This, in turn, should not be interpreted as an Islamisation of the Baʿth regime itself. As shown by recent studies, the regime had, despite its international isolation, successfully established a sufficient degree of control over Iraq's religious landscape, which more than before enabled it to fully employ Islam in politics and to directly spread its own original Baʿthist interpretation of an Arab Islam throughout Iraq.⁵⁹ The spread of this Baʿth-aligned Islam was intended to control and channel the religious resurgence in Iraq.

As argued by Baram, Ṣaddām adopted the claim to the religious status of a *mujaddid* in the early 1990s, that is, a renewer who strove to reverse the prevalent deterioration and corruption of Islam.⁶⁰ He added “*Allāhu akbar*” (God is great) in his own handwriting to the national flag,⁶¹ ‘Aflaq was posthumously converted to Islam,⁶² and by 2002, a party document recorded Ṣaddām's ninety-nine beautiful names alluding to nothing less than the Islamic tradition of God's ninety-nine beautiful names (*asmāʾ Allāh al-ḥusnā*).⁶³ The press presented him still as offspring of ‘Alī and Ḥusayn but references to him as descendant or spring of the Muḥammadan family tree (*ḥafid/nabʿ al-dawḥa al-muḥammadiyya*) became even more frequent.⁶⁴ Most importantly, however, the regime inaugurated its own National Faith Campaign (*al-ḥamla al-īmāniyya al-waṭaniyya*) in 1993, a primarily educational campaign that promoted the study of the Qurʾān and the Prophetic *sunna* to an unprecedented degree on all levels of society. The leading Baʿthist who presided over this campaign and who became the regime's most prominent spokesman in religious terms was Vice Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council ‘Izzat Ibrāhīm al-Dūrī, a well-known Qādirī Sufi.⁶⁵ Throughout this campaign

58 See Rohde, *State-Society Relations*, chapter 3; Faust, *The Baʿthification of Iraq*, 138; Bengio, “Iraq”, 1992; Bengio, “Iraq”, 1995.

59 Helfont, *Compulsion in Religion*, 136–37; see also Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Baʿth Party*, 260; Faust, *The Baʿthification of Iraq*, 131.

60 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 218–21.

61 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 24 January 1991, 1.

62 The conversion of “Aḥmad Michel ‘Aflaq”, as he came to be known, was a recurring theme during the 1990s (*al-Jumhūrīyya*, 24 June 1995, 1; *al-Thawra*, 24 June 2001, 6).

63 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 220.

64 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 8 August 1995, 4; *al-Thawra*, 4 June 2000, 1.

65 *al-Jumhūrīyya*, 17 September 1995, 1, 25 January 1995, 2. See also Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 253–58.

(1993–2003), Dūrī invoked the Prophet during official *mawlid* celebrations less as historical role model and inspiring revolutionary than, in a clearly religious tone, as intercessor before God (*shaft*) and “address of our good fortune” (*ʿunwān saʿādatinā*):

O God, we ask You, while we are in the realm of generosity to remember the birth of the glory of created beings, for Your Prophet and Your beloved, our lord Muḥammad (ṣ), that You bless him and make him attain a praised rank so that he be sitting closest to You among the prophets, as the one with the largest following, as the most influential among them through You in the intercession.... O God, bless him and accept his intercession on behalf of his *umma*, give us new life in accordance with his *sunna*, and enable us to perceive him and to speak with him in this world and the next one.⁶⁶

The party’s newspaper *al-Thawra* identified the Iraqi people under the embargo (in Arabic: *al-ḥiṣār*, the blockade), furthermore, with the Prophet himself, this time, as the first of the besieged (*awwal al-muḥāṣarīn*). The Prophet, according to the article, was almost starving among the people of Abū Ṭālib in his tribe but he remained steadfast and fought hunger and alienation among relatives. Under the aforementioned hardships, the love for the Messenger was now to enjoin similar steadfastness (*ṣabr*) and patience (*muṭāwala*) upon Iraqis.⁶⁷ Once more it is evident how the regime appropriated the Prophetic image in its public political discourse as circumstances seemed to require. ‘Aflaq had called on the Arabs to “be” Muḥammad in their revolutionary fight for a united Arab nation, the Iraqi soldiers had accomplished under the Prophetic descendant Ṣaddām a new victory for Muḥammad’s cause, and now they had to draw spiritual inspiration from the Prophet to endure their suffering.

Aside from all those invocations of different Prophetic images during the Faith Campaign, the Prophet’s heavenly message and his *sunna* were supposed to become, for the first time, central elements of the party members’ moral and religious “immunity” (*ḥiṣāna*). This can be illustrated with the opening of the Higher Ṣaddām Institutes for the Study of the Blessed Qur’ān and the Esteemed Sunna in 1994. These institutes were notably not under the supervision of the Ministry of *Awqāf* and Religious Affairs but became an integral part of the Ba’th Party’s secretariat. Senior party members of all ranks were obliged to study the Qur’ān and the *sunna* of the Prophet in these institutions

66 *al-Jumhūriyya*, 26 May 2002, 6.

67 *al-Thawra*, 9 August 1995, 6.

full-time for a period of six months to two years.⁶⁸ Each course was designed for twenty to thirty participants who graduated with a final exam in form of a written thesis. If party members failed the exam, they were degraded in their rank and even had to fear the loss of their post.⁶⁹ From 1995 onwards, the regime even created national and international platforms in the form of conferences (*nadawāt*) where graduates could present their studies together with religious scholars and shaykhs from Iraq and abroad. One of these was an annual series of conferences on the personality of the Messenger of God held on the occasion of the *mawlid* and attended by high-ranking party officials and by Iraq's leading religious scholars. These events were broadly advertised in the media, and the studies were published afterwards in collective volumes by the Ministry of *Awqāf* and Religious Affairs.⁷⁰ Still in 1982, the regime had purged four leading party officials from the highest political organs explicitly because of their questionable religious attitudes.⁷¹ Now facing the religious resurgence, the leadership had recognised that party principles were not sufficient anymore and deemed it necessary to take the formation of the members' religious immunity into their own hands.

According to Dūrī, the educational course of the Faith Campaign corresponded to the method (*nahj*) and manners (*sulūk*) of Islam since the age of the Messenger of God and was intended to be an antidote against the moral decay of society (usury, exploitation, consummation of alcohol), sectarianism, and radical Islam.⁷² He reminded the party comrades that their education in the mentioned courses was modelled according to the Prophet's teaching of his companions (*ṣaḥāba*) in order to increase their faith and love for the Ba'th's "eternal mission" (*risāla khālida*) and to prepare them for *jihād* against Iraq's enemies.⁷³ During his opening of a Higher Ṣaddām Institute in Mosul in 2001, Dūrī summarised the subjects of the courses as consisting of Qur'an, *ḥadīth*, the foundations of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*), the method of admonition and edification (*tarḥīb wa-targḥīb*), ethics (*akhlāq*), moral excellence (*faḍā'il*), Prophetic biography (*sīra nabawiyya*), literature (*adab*), and poetry (*shi'r*).⁷⁴ Yet, this

68 Baram, *Saddam Husayn and Islam*, 258–60; Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein's Ba'th Party*, 36, 285.

69 Interview with former minister of *awqāf* 'Abd al-Mun'im Aḥmad Ṣāliḥ al-Tikrīti, 12 May 2016.

70 *al-Thawra*, 4 June 2000, 1, 4 June 2002, 6.

71 'Ānī, *Inḥiyār al-'Irāq*, 99–100.

72 *al-Jumhūriyya*, 25 January 1995, 2; *al-Thawra*, 9 July 2000, 4.

73 *al-Thawra*, 8 March 2000, 4.

74 *al-Thawra*, 12 April 2001, 4.

religious education of Ba‘th cadres should not belie the fact that the regime still stuck to its original secular principles and its Ba‘thist understanding of Islam. As Samuel Helfont’s study of internal Ba‘th Party files revealed, the top works of the courses encompassed in fact four early essays by ‘Aflaq including *The Memory of the Arab Messenger*, Ṣaddām’s 1977 speech *A View on Religion and Heritage*, and the Central Report of the Ba‘th Party’s Ninth Regional Congress against the Islamisation of politics held in 1982.⁷⁵ Thus, Ba‘th cadres underwent religious Islamic education but still according to Ba‘thist principles. The Iraqi regime’s outlook on Islam did indeed change from the 1970s to 2003 and Islam as a religion did gain an increasing salience in the official rhetoric and propaganda but the Ba‘th regime did not become an Islamist regime. On the contrary, the gradual and moderate embrace of Islamic values was designed to avoid an Islamisation of politics.

The recently published book *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: umma fī rajul* (Ṣaddām Ḥusayn: A nation in a man, 2013) by a high-ranking Ba‘thist graduate of the Higher Ṣaddām Institute in Baghdad provides us with a glimpse of the kind of Prophetic piety that one could develop in these courses. The author is the former head of Baghdad’s Ba‘th Party branch (*far’*), ‘Iṣām al-Rāwī. He graduated from the institute’s fourth Qur’ān course (*dawra*) in 1999 with a thesis about the mercy (*rahma*) of the Prophet in *ḥadīth* and *sīra*, titled “Mercy: Its True Nature and the Manner in Which One Is Moulded by It”.⁷⁶ His instance shows how Prophetic piety among party members became paradoxically blended with the veneration of Ṣaddām. In the book, ‘Iṣām dedicates a long chapter to the mercy (*rahma*) of Ṣaddām, titled “Mercy and the Manner in Which the Martyr Ṣaddām Ḥusayn Was Moulded by It”.⁷⁷ ‘Iṣām introduces this chapter with a part of his aforementioned thesis and lists page-by-page episodes about the Prophet’s *rahma* from *ḥadīth* and *sīra*, before he presents analogously episodes about Ṣaddām’s *rahma* which he had collected from the latter’s former comrades. Some of those indeed went as far as to describe Ṣaddām as one of the saints or friends of God (*awliyā’ Allāh*). Eventually, ‘Iṣām produced with his book a *sīrat Ṣaddām* which he puts in a lofty analogy to the *sīra* of MuḤammad.

75 Helfont, *Compulsion in Religion*, 190.

76 *al-Rahma ḥaqīqatuhā wa-kayfiyyat al-takhalluq bihā* (Rāwī, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn*, 199–218).

77 *al-Rahma wa-kayf takhallaqa bihā al-shahīd Ṣaddām Ḥusayn* (Rāwī, *Ṣaddām Ḥusayn*, 199–241).

11.5 Conclusion

The analysis above demonstrates the development of quite different images of the Prophet Muḥammad in Baʿthist ideology and its political discourse, from a secular role model in a quasi-religious guise between the 1940s and the 1970s to an increasingly religious succour in the 1980s and 1990s. Initially, Baʿthist ideology absorbed and politicised the historical figure of the Prophet, transforming him into a national hero and founding figure of the Arab nation, turning God's revelation to him into an ethnic election, and his religious message into an eternal mission to unite the Arabs. His birthday, understood as the birth of the Arab nation, was turned into a national feast, and his lifetime came to be revered as an ideal and golden age. Eventually, the sacrifice of Iraqi soldiers during the Iran–Iraq War was interpreted as a sacrifice for Muḥammad's cause. Thus, the Prophet and his heritage served as an indispensable foundation in Baʿthist ideology for the creation of a Baʿthist “sacred community” (in the terms of Smith). The Baʿthists Sāmī al-Jundī and Hānī al-Fukaykī proved that ʿAflaq's use of the Prophetic image could indeed mobilise and arouse an emotional state among his fellows which made them see themselves as little prophets; even if this vision was antagonistic to the prevalent religious tradition. The Baʿthists were against traditional religion and often clashed with its representatives but not to destroy Islam. On the contrary, Baʿthist ideology needed Islam's symbols, rituals, and figures, primarily the Prophet, as a sacred resource for the nation.

Ṣaddām's personality cult, on the other hand, is a case in point for the messianisation of a political leader as the Prophet's alleged descendant and renewer of his historical mission. The president's claim of a Prophetic lineage certainly aimed at endowing him with religious charisma. His claim was not even unreasonable among Iraq's Sunnī and Shīʿī tribal communities where Sharīfism is extremely widespread. Whether most Iraqis in fact believed Ṣaddām to be a descendant of Muḥammad and therefore a legitimate president, however, is secondary in this context. More than legitimising himself with the Prophet, Ṣaddām's cult served to inscribe his person as an omnipresent and historical leader into the tradition of Prophetic descendancy. It was Ṣaddām who coloured the image of the Prophet and thus overshadowed him and equally left his own mark on Sharīfism.

The increasing political use of Islam during the 1980s and especially the 1990s shows how the Baʿth regime adapted the image of the Prophet as circumstances seemed to require. The turn from Muḥammad's historical mission to his heavenly message came as a tactical move in reaction to the severe

hardships endured by Iraqi society under the embargo and the general religious resurgence during the 1990s. The use of religious rhetoric and motifs had already commenced during the Iran–Iraq War and contributed in its turn to the growing religious awareness in society. By the 1990s, the Ba‘th regime realised that this development could not be halted and decided to channel it; for instance, by making the study of Islam even obligatory for its own party cadres. For the first time, Ba‘thists were ordered to study Islam and the *sīra* of the Prophet in order to form a religious immunity (particularly against radical and political Islam) in addition to ‘Aflaq’s ambiguous principles and blended with Ṣaddām’s cult.

The case of the Ba‘th Party, finally, constitutes one example of many similar political movements and indicates how the emergence of the modern nation-state transformed the Prophet and his religious heritage into a cultural repertoire that can serve for various ideological and political ends to date.

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PART 4

Mobilisation, Empowerment, and Social Reform



The Modern Prophet

Rashīd Riḍā's Construction of Muḥammad as Religious and Social Reformer

Florian Zemmin

12.1 Religious Responses to the Questions of Modern Society: The Prophets as Social Reformers

“To my knowledge no attempt has been made in earlier times to survey the social content of the prophetic sermons and to demonstrate it in a special presentation. It is only in recent times that interest has been taken in this subject.”¹ Thus wrote the German Catholic theologian Franz Walter in 1900. At the turn to the twentieth century, interest in the social teachings of prophets was indeed paramount. This is not surprising, since discursive traditions are always actualised in view of contemporary demands; and the Islamic discursive tradition is no exception here.

Under this angle, it is fruitful and enlightening to contextualise the subject matter of this chapter, namely, a modernist view of the Prophet Muḥammad, within non-Islamic responses to questions of modernity. This is of course not the sole possibility to contextualise the subject at hand. The very context of the volume that this chapter is privileged to be part of manifests an equally adequate alternative, namely, to contextualise the modernist view of the Prophet dealt with here within other Islamic views of the Prophet. It should be clear that both options are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary, and that it is indeed a matter of focus and emphasis whether one primarily highlights commonalities and differences within one discursive tradition, as this volume does, or whether one foregrounds common conditions underlying different discursive traditions, as this chapter does.

Consequently, I shall begin by recalling the centrality of social questions in modernity, which prompted the systematic search for societal principles also in religious sources. The following section introduces the journal *al-Manār*, the mouthpiece of Islamic modernism, at the very core of whose programme was the construction of Islam as comprising religious and social reform. This went along with constructing the Prophet Muḥammad as the ideal religious and

¹ Walter, *Die Propheten*, viii.

social reformer, as becomes especially clear from an analysis of a major work by the editor of *al-Manār*, Rashīd Riḍā, namely, his tremendously popular book *al-Wahy al-muḥammadī* from 1933. One reason for this popularity, I suggest, was that the emotionally charged figure of the Prophet and his great appeal within his community helped Riḍā to breach his modernist understanding of Islam to a wider audience. The conclusion will then return to the relation between different discursive traditions and common paradigms and epistemic conditions, elaborating in which sense modernity is primary in Riḍā's modernist view of the Prophet.

Now, a central characteristic of modernity is its demanding answers to the question of how society ought to be organised. Secularist actors grounded their answers to this question in human nature and society alone. Spokespersons of religious traditions shared in many secular premises and views,² but additionally grounded human nature and society in something beyond, in God. Typically, religious teachings for society were posited as superior due to them allegedly providing a firm moral foundation and also due to their alleged universal saliency. From a secular perspective, the social teachings of the prophets are a decidedly modern construction, largely in reaction to a secular position. From the perspective of a believer, in turn, these teachings, whilst of recent interest, had always been there, and it is the secularists who only now arrived at similar insights.

Thus, for example, Georg Stibitz concluded his programmatic article on "The Old Testament Prophets as Social Reformers" published in 1898 by maintaining:

If we now ask what remedy the prophets suggest for social evils, we find the answer to be a *true and living faith in God which works by love toward one's fellow-man....* We have then here writers as early as eight hundred to a thousand years before Christ unanimously demanding as the purifying and plastic power of society the true and unselfish devotion of man to the supreme God, first; and, second, to his fellow-man – a position which has but recently been arrived at by a more or less pronounced evolutionary and scientific method, as the conclusion of Mr. Benjamin Kidd in his *Social Evolution*.³

2 "Secular" in a base sense refers to this-worldly aspects, whereas "secularist" is an explicit, mostly politically relevant position that wants to grant increasing primacy or even exclusivity to this-worldly aspects.

3 Stibitz, "The Old Testament Prophets", 28.

And five years earlier, Charles Kent in his article on “The Social Philosophy of the Royal Prophet Isaiah” had argued that by name alone “social science” is “the contribution of modern thought”, but that the ancient prophets had well addressed the problem of society before, and even in a superior, non-partisan manner.⁴

Rather than positing either a religious or a secularist perspective on society as primary or even superior, I argue that we should view both as articulations and evaluations of a common modern condition. Since this chapter is concerned with the perspective of a religious actor in modernity, it is important to bear in mind that, from an analytical perspective, this religious actor shares in and includes fundamental secular premises, arguments, and also aims.

In order to address the questions of modern society, spokespersons of religious traditions resorted to the foundational sources of their traditions, be it the Bible, the Torah, or the Qurʾān, sharing in what has been called a Protestantisation of religion, alluding to Luther’s credo *sola scriptura*. This trend became so widespread that by 1916 William Bizzell, at the time president of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, observed:⁵

We are in the midst of a *renaissance* in the study of the Old Testament scriptures. The evidence of this fact is to be found in the large number of volumes that are now appearing from the press, dealing with many phases of Jewish literature.... The content of the prophetic literature is rich in suggestiveness and social teaching for an age like our own. The realization of this fact makes it desirable to search out and evaluate this social content. This point of view has given a new significance to the work of the Jewish prophet, and stimulated a new interest in his message to the world.⁶

As in this example, interest in the social teachings of the prophets unsurprisingly often went hand in hand with an interest in and a reconstruction of the personae of the prophets themselves, who were said to not only have brought but also implemented these teachings in an exemplary way.

4 Kent, “The Social Philosophy”, 248.

5 Additional examples of the eminent interest in the social teachings of prophets from the second decade of the twentieth century include: Breasted, “The Earliest Social Prophet”; Herrmann, *Die soziale Predigt der Propheten*; Rauschenbusch, *The Social Principles of Jesus*.

6 Bizzell, *The Social Teachings*, [i] (no page numbers given; this is the first page of the preface).

This was also the case in the intellectual trend of Islamic modernism, whose very programme was to appropriate and reconstruct the Islamic discursive tradition to address the questions of modern society.

12.2 *al-Manār* as an Islamic Response to the Questions of Modern Society

The journal *al-Manār*, which was published from Cairo between 1898 and 1940, is widely acclaimed as the mouthpiece of Islamic modernism, that intellectual trend which aimed at formulating modernity from within the Islamic discursive tradition. *Al-Manār* was founded and edited by Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1935), with the help of his mentor Muḥammad ‘Abduh, the towering figure of modern Islamic thought (1849–1905). The basic aim of *al-Manār* to relate religion and society is succinctly expressed in the most famous subtitle of the journal: “a monthly journal investigating the philosophy of religion and the affairs of society and civilisation” (*majalla shahriyya tabḥath fi falsafat al-dīn wa-shu‘ūn al-ijtimā‘ wa-l-‘umrān*).⁷ The Islamic modernists of *al-Manār* wanted to reform religion from the perspective of societal requirements and at the same time wanted to reform society from a religious perspective. Both the religious and the societal perspective were validated as Islamic; and through the integration of both perspectives in an Islamic discourse, the Islamic modernists transformed Islam into a modern societal religion.

The call for both religious and social reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-dīnī wa-l-ijtimā‘ī*) is omnipresent in *al-Manār*. The social either refers to worldly, secular affairs in a broad sense or it is further distinguished into the societal, the political, the economic, and the military. As is well known, Rashīd Riḍā increasingly stressed a political dimension of Islam, especially after the First World War. The possibility to construct Islam as a comprehensive programme of reform hinged on distinguishing a true universal Islam (*al-iṣlām al-dīnī*) from its actual inner-worldly manifestations (*al-iṣlām al-dunyawī*).⁸ This distinction fuels Riḍā’s criticism of contemporary Muslim practices, including the veneration of the Prophet, as we shall see below. Riḍā depicted himself as a reformer, a *muṣliḥ*,⁹ who wanted to educate his fellow Muslims to detach themselves

7 On the changing subtitles of *al-Manār*, see Zemmin, *Modernity in Islamic Tradition*, 146ff.

8 For this conceptual pair, see Zemmin, *Modernity in Islamic Tradition*, 168ff., 404.

9 Most extensively, if implicitly so, in his fictional dialogue between “the traditionalist and the reformist”, published first as a series of articles in *al-Manār* and then as a book (Riḍā, *Kitāb muḥāwarāt al-muṣliḥ wa-l-muqallid*).

from contingent worldly practices and, as pious, educated, and critical individuals implement the universal reform programme of true Islam. Under this overarching aim, the Prophet Muḥammad was not primarily to be revered as a person, but rather as the first and exemplary *muṣliḥ*, who implemented the reform programme of Islam in a most perfect manner.

This chapter argues that Riḍā constructed the figure of the Prophet to represent an ideal religious and social reformer. While firmly defending the godly truth of Muḥammad's message and also God's support of his actions, Riḍā stressed Muḥammad's – divinely inspired and religiously grounded – attention to inner-worldly matters. Muḥammad thus also became a role model for Riḍā himself, who proclaimed that the ideal modern society ought to be built on the foundation of the true religion, Islam. Certainly, Riḍā stresses that Muḥammad was a most noble and exceptional person, which was also why God chose him to be His last prophet. However, in principle, every Muslim is able, if properly educated, to implement the reform programme of Islam, and it is in this regard that already-educated reformists, like Riḍā himself, but also the '*ulamā*' and rulers do have a special responsibility.

Part of the Islamic reform programme even has to be elaborated by Muslims today, who cannot merely implement Muḥammad's reforming measures in wholesale detail: Riḍā, like basically all Islamic modernists, distinguishes between clear and timeless religious obligations brought by Muḥammad, which must not be altered, and contingent worldly affairs for which the Qur'ān laid down basic principles. The latter were implemented by Muḥammad in the most perfect manner in his time, but might have to manifest themselves differently in the present. Which aspects are considered to be firm obligations and which are subjected to contemporary elaboration is up for debate, and may shift over time. For example, equating the modern concept of democracy with the Qur'ānic concept of *shūrā* may either lead to validating secular politics or to elaborating an Islamic political system. Riḍā most famously elaborated the political dimension of Islam in his book on the Islamic caliphate.¹⁰ Written in 1922, and thus after he had shifted his focus to the Arab world as the aspired centre of Muslim political power, Riḍā stressed Qurayshī descent as a necessary requirement of the caliph.¹¹ It is important to recall that Riḍā retained the distinction between religion and secular politics in his modernised conception

10 Riḍā, *al-Khilāfa aw al-imāma al-'uzmā*.

11 In this, Riḍā differed not only from non-Arab visions of the caliphate (see e.g. Willis, "Debating the Caliphate"), but also from his earlier support for an Ottoman caliph (e.g. Riḍā, "al-Khilāfa wa-l-khulafā' (1)").

of the caliphate,¹² and that, moreover, the Islamic politics advocated by Riḍā, as well as the role of the Prophet in this regard, have to be viewed in the context of his overall programme of Islamic reform.

To this end, I will now turn to Riḍā's programmatic and highly influential work *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* (*The Revelation of Muḥammad*), which was first published in 1933.¹³

12.3 *al-Waḥy al-Muḥammadī*: The Prophet as Religious and Social Reformer

"If Riḍā had written nothing other than *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*, this would have sufficed for him meriting eternal fame."¹⁴ Thus wrote Muḥammad Luqmān in his eulogy on Riḍā, who had passed away in 1935. While such appraisals are generally to be taken with caution, Luqmān did and still does have a point: *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* indeed was a tremendous success, both immediately after its first publication in 1933 and on the longer run. A second, revised edition was issued in 1934 by the press of *al-Manār*,¹⁵ and a third, again revised edition in 1935.¹⁶ Still more impressive is the number of reviews and appraisals of the book. Riḍā, who on one occasion mentions some calling his book a godly inspiration (*ilhām ilāhī*),¹⁷ showed no false humility in this regard. He published dozens of appraisals or reviews, ranging from a few lines to several pages,¹⁸ and also discussed the book extensively in *al-Manār*.¹⁹ According to

12 This is still often overlooked, even though it has been pointed out repeatedly, for example: Kerr, *Islamic Reform*, esp. 157, 210; Tauber, "Three Approaches, One Idea", esp. 190, 197ff.; Tayob, *Religion in Modern Islamic Discourse*, 111.

13 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*.

14 Luqmān, "Muṣāb al-muslimīn", 232.

15 For the introduction and selected parts of that edition, see Riḍā, "Fātiḥat al-ṭab'a al-thāniya"; for a presentation of that second edition, Riḍā, "Taṣdīr *kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*: al-ṭab'a al-thāniya".

16 Presented in Riḍā, "*Kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*: Taṣdīr al-ṭab'a al-thālitha".

17 Riḍā, "Manār al-mujallad al-khāmis wa-l-thalāthīn", 796.

18 A large selection of reviews was collected in the book's third edition (Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*: *Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 15–57). Several of the shorter reviews and appraisals included there, but also additional ones, had previously been published in *al-Manār*, for example: Riḍā, "Taqrīz *kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*"; Riḍā, "Kalimat fi *l-waḥy al-muḥammadī*"; Riḍā, "*Kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī* [collection of reviews]". For more extensive reviews, see Nābulusī, "Taqrīz"; Arslān, "Taqrīz"; Harāwī, "*Kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*".

19 For a critical discussion in conciliatory spirit, to which Riḍā had invited a friend of his, see Bin Yābus, "Taqrīz"; Riḍā, "Intiqād mas'alat al-riqq"; Riḍā, "Kashf baqiyyat al-ālim

Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* was also taught at the Dār al-‘Ulūm, by order of the Egyptian Ministry of Education, and at some schools in Damascus and Beirut.²⁰ Also already in 1935, Riḍā mentions a translation into Urdu and two into Chinese.²¹ What is certain is that a Persian translation appeared in 1939 and a Chinese one in 1946.²² The book was also twice translated into English, once in 1958 (republished in 1960) and once in 1996.²³ Both English translations are of appreciative, non-academic nature. In Arabic, there are at least eight re-editions after the Second World War. I have used the third edition from 1935 as republished in Beirut in 1985.²⁴

The popularity of *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* was primarily due to Riḍā showing the salience of the Prophet and of Islam in modernity, as the bulk of reviews testify to. While Riḍā’s depiction of the Prophet’s personality and life also continues earlier tropes,²⁵ its relevance indeed lies in his construction of Muḥammad as a modern prophet and, as I argue, as the exemplary religious and social reformer.

In the introduction to the book, which was also published as a separate article in *al-Manār*,²⁶ Riḍā addresses both Europeans and those Muslims who have allegedly forgotten true Islam,²⁷ when he states the overarching aim of the book as showing that the Qur’ān contains everything that humans need concerning religious, social, political, economic, and military reform (*min al-iṣlāḥ al-dīnī wa-l-ijtimā’ī wa-l-siyāsī wa-l-mālī wa-l-ḥarbī*).²⁸ Islam thus is, as

al-najdī”. For an extensive polemical response of Riḍā to criticism by a Jesuit, see Riḍā, “Tafnīd i’tirāḍ kātib Jizwītī”. In an antagonist debate between Riḍā and Farīd Wajdī, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* was also a topic: Riḍā, “al-Maṭbū‘at al-munkira fi l-dīn”, 523–28.

20 Riḍā, *Kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*: Taṣḍīr al-ṭab‘a al-thālitha”, 34.

21 Riḍā, *Kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*: Taṣḍīr al-ṭab‘a al-thālitha”, 33.

22 Riḍā, *Vaḥī-yi Muḥammadī*, and Riḍā, [*al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*], respectively.

23 Riḍā, *The Revelation to Muhammad*, and Riḍā, *The Muhammadan Revelation*, respectively.

24 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*: *Thubūt al-nubuwwa*.

25 For some additional aspects, see Seferta, “The Prophethood”.

26 Riḍā, “Muqaddimat *kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*”.

27 Shakīb Arslān, the famous Arab nationalist residing in Switzerland and Riḍā’s friend, even saw Riḍā addressing Europeans only, since Muslims already knew what was presented in this book (Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*: *Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 50). Riḍā objected to this, saying that most Muslims in fact did not know (57); but he still directly addressed the book to Europeans in several instances, not least with the subtitle of the third edition. Riḍā also extensively responded to a Jesuit’s critique of *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* that had been published in the Beirutian Catholic journal *al-Mashriq* (Riḍā, “Tafnīd i’tirāḍ kātib Jizwītī”). He had also engaged Orientalists’ and Christians’ views on Islam and the Prophet already earlier, adducing them as strong proof for the supposed truth of Islam, whenever they shared his views; see, for example, Riḍā, “*Kitāb Marjilyūs*”; Riḍā, “al-Qur’ān wa-najāḥ da‘wat al-nabī”; Riḍā, “Shahādāt min ‘ulamā’ al-Gharb”; see also Ryad, *Islamic Reformism*.

28 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*: *Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 68.

we have said, a comprehensive programme of reform; and belief in the revelation of Muḥammad is the only cure for the deadly spiritual and social poisons (*al-sumūm al-rūḥiyya wa-l-ijtimā'īyya al-qātila*) that threaten the world today.²⁹ Riḍā lists ten goals of the Qur'ān, which nicely illustrate the supposed causal chain from belief in God via individual morals to social and political order.

The starting point and anchor of Riḍā's comprehensive reform programme is belief in God, in judgement and the hereafter, and in good deeds. Establishing this belief, is, according to Riḍā, the first goal of the Qur'ān. The second goal is to explain the nature and function of prophethood. Here, Riḍā stresses that the prophets were mere human beings, chosen to reveal God's mercy upon humankind and not to be revered themselves. Thirdly, the Qur'ān aims at the perfection of humans as individuals and collectivities; to this end, Muḥammad explained that Islam is "the natural religion (*dīn al-fiṭra*), the religion of reason and thought (*al-'aql wa-l-fikr*), of knowledge and wisdom (*al-'ilm wa-l-ḥikma*), of evidence and proof (*al-burhān wa-l-ḥujja*), of the inner being and conscience (*al-ḍamīr wa-l-wijdān*), and of freedom and independence (*al-ḥurriyya wa-l-istiqlāl*)".³⁰ The fourth goal consists of creating unity on various levels and to thereby effect human, social, political, and national reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-insānī al-ijtimā'ī al-siyāsī al-waṭanī*). Fifth, the Qur'ān explains what is obligatory and what is forbidden for humans. Most of this conforms to public interest and reason, Riḍā maintains. It is in the sphere of religious practices (*'ibādāt*) that the Prophet Muḥammad has to be imitated, without any variation. The sixth goal is to explain Islamic government and politics. Goals seven to ten show how Riḍā expands from belief in God to a comprehensive programme of reform: he names as goals of the Qur'ān economic reform, deliverance from the dangers of war, the liberation of women, and the abolishment of slavery.

Looking more closely at the political dimension of the Islamic religion, this is needed, Riḍā argues, because religious, societal, and legal affairs can only be reformed when there is a just, that is, according to him, an Islamic, government. To this end, the Qur'ān established the following basic principles: the people are the source of power, consultation is needed, and the caliph ought to be the ruler. Muḥammad was again the first to implement this reform, which is needed also in this age. Clearly, Riḍā criticises contemporary forms of government, when he claims that

29 Riḍā, *al-Wahy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 92.

30 Riḍā, *al-Wahy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 257.

the rule of the people (*sulṭat al-umma*) as the basic principle (*al-qā'ida al-asāsiyya*) of the Islamic state (*dawlat al-islām*) is the greatest political reform (*a'ẓam iṣlāḥ siyāsī*) brought about by the Qur'ān, in an age when all peoples of the earth were oppressed by governments in their religious and worldly affairs. The first to put this principle into practice was the Prophet of God. In order to serve as an example to those who would come after him, the Prophet never decided a matter of importance to the people without first consulting the people or its representatives. After the Prophet, the rightly guided caliphs did the same.³¹

The Prophet thus is not to be revered as a person, but to be esteemed as having exemplarily implemented the universally valid and rational principles of Islam – this holds true for politics as well as for the other social spheres.

It is under this aim that Riḍā very much stresses that Muḥammad was a mere human being. The argument as such is not novel, but is known from at least two contexts, one being Muslim polemics against alleged contradictions of the Christian doctrine of Jesus being both human and godly, the other being veneration of the marvellous and unrivalled language of the Qur'ān (*ijāz*), going along with stress on Muḥammad allegedly having been illiterate. The emphasis Riḍā places on this aspect is, however, remarkable: *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* in fact originated from Riḍā's comment on Q 10:2,³² which reads: "Have the people been amazed that We revealed [the Qur'ān] to a man from among them?" More importantly, Riḍā elaborates the argument that Muḥammad was a mere human being under the modern paradigm of rationality: he seeks to prove this argument rationally and subsequently adduces it as proof of the rationality of Islam. Riḍā explicitly writes against European psychological explanations of Muḥammad's revelation as mere personal inspiration.³³ His own arguments are rational, scientific, and historical, Riḍā maintains. Thus, he asserts that psychologists, sociologists, and historians have proven that no human being can attain new knowledge through their own efforts after the age of thirty-five. Muḥammad was forty years old when he received the first revelations, and he was caught by surprise himself. Riḍā, then, elaborates the classical argument that Muḥammad was a mere human being, as proof for the rationality and saliency of Islamic teachings and principles.

31 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 289.

32 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 69.

33 In his critical assessment of Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haykal's biography of the Prophet, published in 1935 (Haykal, *Ḥayāt Muḥammad*), Riḍā even says to have written *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* to counter psychological explanations, and criticises Haykal for referring to such explanations (Riḍā, "*Kitāb ḥayāt Muḥammad*").

In line with this, Riḍā names rationality and independence of mind as major character traits of Muḥammad himself, which, in combination with his elevated morals, qualified him as God's last Prophet. All prophets were free of sin, so they could serve as moral and ethical examples, Riḍā maintains.³⁴ And Muḥammad was the most noble human being – he was, as Orientalists have testified to according to Riḍā, “of sound nature (*salīm al-fiṭra*) and perfect intellect (*kāmil al-‘aql*), had noble morals (*karīm al-akhlāq*), was truthful (*ṣādiq*), modest (*‘afīf al-naḥs*), satisfied with little (*qunū‘an bi-l-qalil min al-rizq*), and was not striving for wealth or power (*ghayr ṭamū‘ bi-l-māl wa-lā junūh ilā l-mulk*)”.³⁵ Importantly, when Riḍā adduces the Prophet's character, he does so not in order to venerate the Prophet as such, but rather to underline the supposed principles of Islam, as becomes especially clear from the following sequence: God prepared Muḥammad for his prophethood by “creating him with a perfect nature (*kāmil al-fiṭra*), so that He may send him with the natural religion (*dīn al-fiṭra*), and He created him with a perfectly independent material intellect (*kāmil al-‘aql al-istiqlālī al-hayūlānī*), so that He may send him with the religion of independent reason and of scientific perception (*dīn al-‘aql al-mustaqill wa-l-naẓar al-‘ilmī*), and He perfected him with noble morals (*kammalahu bi-ma‘ālī al-akhlāq*) so that He may send him as the one who completes all noble traits of character (*mutammiman li-makārim al-akhlāq*)”.³⁶

Overall, then, while Riḍā clearly esteemed the personality of the Prophet, this in a sense was merely instrumental for his real concern of showing the truth and applicability of more abstract, universal Islamic principles. In fact, as I shall now argue, while Riḍā had long been critical of popular veneration of the Prophet, he himself resorted to the emotionally charged figure of the Prophet in order to illustrate and mediate his rationalist conception of Islam.

12.4 Emotions and Rationality: The Prophet as Needed Exemplifier of Islamic Principles

In the introduction to the second edition of *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*, Riḍā claims to have been saying the same thing for thirty years, namely, that everything that Muslims need for their reform (*islāh*) can be derived from the Qur‘ān and the practice of the Prophet and his rightly guided successors. However,

34 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 87ff.

35 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 116.

36 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 159.

only few people had reacted to his call before the publication of *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī*, which was such a tremendous success.³⁷

To verify Riḍā's claim to consistency, one may point to a series of thirty-nine lessons on God, prophethood, religion, and society that he published between 1899 and 1903.³⁸ In the lesson on "Muḥammad, the messenger of God and the seal of the prophets", the view of prophets as reformers is already well formulated: Riḍā considers also Jesus to have been a reformer (*muṣliḥ*), but only a partial one, whence the world required another reformer.³⁹ It was upon Muḥammad to bring a universally valid spiritual-societal reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-rūḥī al-ijtimā'ī*),⁴⁰ and Riḍā thinks it proven by history that the Muḥammadan reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-muḥammadī*) is a necessity for all peoples.⁴¹

For this argument, Riḍā refers to Muḥammad 'Abduh's famous *Risālat al-tawḥīd*,⁴² which was a central reference for him also beyond these thirty-nine lessons. In an excerpt from this treatise, published in the first volume of *al-Manār*, the prophets are posited as a rational requirement of society.⁴³ Most fundamentally, in his *Risālat al-tawḥīd*, 'Abduh validated Islam as the one religion that is suitable for modern society because it is fully rational. He does so based on an evolutionist view, arguing that by the time of Muḥammad human capacities had evolved sufficiently for God addressing humans in purely rational terms, sending a message of universal validity. This basic argument was taken up by a quite diverse range of modern Islamic intellectuals. Riḍā, for his part,⁴⁴ would develop 'Abduh's basic defence of the validity and necessity of Islam for modern society into a comprehensive programme of reform, increasingly integrating a political dimension into the alleged essence of Islam. Riḍā also very consistently upheld the alleged rationality of Islam: he even terminologically defined Islam as "the religion of reason (*dīn al-'aql*)",⁴⁵ and argued that the universal principles of Islam mirror reason and human interests to the extent that also non-Muslims may understand and follow them.

37 Riḍā, "Taṣḍīr *kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*: al-Ṭab'a al-thāniya", 754.

38 I here lack the space to list all thirty-nine articles, but shall at least state the first and the last one: Riḍā, "al-Dars al-awwal"; Riḍā, "al-Dars 39".

39 Riḍā, "al-Dars 36", 334.

40 Riḍā, "al-Dars 36", 335.

41 Riḍā, "al-Dars 36", 329.

42 First published in 1897, the book saw many re-editions; for an English translation, see 'Abduh, *The Theology of Unity*.

43 'Abduh, "Waḏīfat al-rusul".

44 While Riḍā was quite successful in depicting himself as the true heir of 'Abduh, this ought to be viewed critically; see Haddad, "'Abduh et ses lecteurs".

45 Riḍā, "al-Islām dīn al-'aql".

One can hardly overstate the centrality of the Qur'ān in Riḍā's modernist construction of Islam as a comprehensive, rationally intelligible programme of reform. It was the Qur'ān that allegedly embodied the essence of the true, universal Islam (*al-islām al-dīnī*). A central contributor to *al-Manār*, Muḥammad Tawfīq Ṣidqī, even programmatically exclaimed that, "Islam is the Qur'ān alone."⁴⁶ The very fact that this claim to exclusivity was criticised also in *al-Manār*⁴⁷ underlines the novelty of this modern, essentialist understanding of Islam, centred on scripture. To Riḍā, the Qur'ān embodied the primary essence of Islam, whereas the Prophet and his successful, pious successors in a secondary sense helped to understand the Qur'ānic message and showed its veracity and applicability. In other words: the Prophet and his faithful companions and successors showed the success resulting from internalising and applying the Islamic message. According to Riḍā, this could and should happen again today, whence he called Muslims to again take heed of true Islamic principles and to, as pious, active, and responsible individuals, construct a proper and successful society.

Speaking both to the centrality of the Qur'ān and the consistency of Riḍā's argument, it is worth pointing out that *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* did not only originate from the commentary on one Qur'ānic verse, as I had mentioned, but was in fact largely based on the *Tafsīr al-manār* and was initially intended as a general summary of it.⁴⁸ The *Tafsīr al-manār* was first serialised in volumes 3 to 34 of Riḍā's journal and then published as a twelve-volume book. Up to Q 4:125, it was based on lessons by 'Abduh, but should overall be considered the work of Riḍā, who edited 'Abduh's lessons and completed the commentary until Q 12.⁴⁹ Expressing the programme of Islamic modernism, the *Tafsīr al-manār* aimed at showing the societal relevance of the Qur'ān, along with its rationality. According to Riḍā, the Qur'ān, which he considers itself to be proven rationally and scientifically, is the only miracle that can be taken as proof for the veracity of Muḥammad's message.⁵⁰

This argument goes hand in hand with Riḍā's longstanding criticism of belief in miracles. Riḍā of course would not deny the miracles effected by Muḥammad as stated in the Qur'ān; but he stresses that these were godly signs against those who opposed Muḥammad, and were never meant as proof to his mission. In a similar vein, Riḍā adduces the quick expansion of Islam as

46 Ṣidqī, "al-Islām huwa al-Qur'ān waḥdahu".

47 Bāz, "al-Dīn kull mā jā'a bi-hi al-rusul".

48 Riḍā, "Taṣḍīr *kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*: al-Ṭab'a al-thāniya", 753.

49 The most extensive study on the *Tafsīr al-manār* is Jomier, *Le Commentaire*.

50 Riḍā, *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī: Thubūt al-nubuwwa*, 93–118, 221–56.

historical proof for the godly origin of Muḥammad's message. God also helped His Prophet in this regard, granting him victory and sending signs to support his prophethood, but it is the historical facts that stand as alleged scientific proof in this age of reason. Riḍā's rationalist criticism of belief in miracles in general can be seen under his overarching aim of detaching religion from unreflected beliefs and social practices, as Richard van Leeuwen showed.⁵¹

In a similar vein, Riḍā criticised other popular socio-religious practices, not least the *mawālid*, festivities on occasion of the birth of a prophet or saint.⁵² *Mawālid* were more widely targeted as irrational and backward in Egypt at the turn to the twentieth century.⁵³ Riḍā very much shared in this trend, devoting a separate section to festivities (*al-mawālid wa-l-mawāsim*) in early volumes of *al-Manār*.⁵⁴ Already in 1898, he criticised the *mawālid* on two lines, again pursuing his aim of reconstructing Islam as a modern, societal religion: comparing *mawālid* with fairs and exhibitions in Europe, Riḍā bemoaned that the *mawālid* are uncivilised and lack the benefits of coming together in society.⁵⁵ Complementarily, he criticised certain practices, like standing up on mentioning of the Prophet's birth, as harmful innovations.⁵⁶ A year later, in 1899, Riḍā, who was pleased to remark that some harmful innovations had recently been prohibited, but still criticised many current practices, sketched his own vision of how the stories (*qiṣaṣ*) read aloud on occasion of the Prophet's birthday should look like: "The stories of the birthday of the Prophet that we hear and see all comprise what is not true (*mā lā yaṣāḥḥ*) and they are void of the most important aspect they must contain, namely, praise (*tanwīh*) of the great reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-'aẓīm*) that occurred in the world through the one whose birthday we celebrate (*ṣāhib al-mawlid*)."⁵⁷

Still dissatisfied with the current state of the *mawlid*, Riḍā in 1917 then wrote his own treatise to commemorate the birth of the Prophet.⁵⁸ This treatise only contains sound *ḥadīths* and narrations, Riḍā maintains. He, however, shifts quickly from the person of Muḥammad to his mission, and foregrounds the

51 van Leeuwen, "Islamic Reformism".

52 A related practice was the visiting of saints' shrines or tombs (van Leeuwen, "Reformist Islam").

53 Schielke, "Hegemonic Encounters".

54 Examples for articles in this section are Riḍā, "Kayfa nantafī' bi-l-mawālid wa-l-mawāsim"; Riḍā, "Qism al-mawālid wa-l-mawāsim".

55 Riḍā, "al-Mawālid aw al-ma'arid".

56 Riḍā, "Munkarāt al-mawālid".

57 Riḍā, "al-Mawlid al-nabawī", 291.

58 The articles serialised in volume 19 of *al-Manār* were not fully identical with the book published later, as Riḍā mentions in the introduction (Riḍā, "Muqaddima li-dhikrā l-mawlid al-nabawī", 31). For Riḍā's response to a critic of his treatise, see Riḍā, "Radd al-Manār".

societal dimension of Islam. The aspired aim of the treatise is precisely what Riḍā had demanded from such stories above, namely, to remember the great reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-‘aẓīm*) that God sent His Prophet with. “The Islamic reform (*al-iṣlāḥ al-iṣlāmī*),” he maintains, “is based on furthering the *iṣlāḥ* of people through the independence of reason and will (*istiqlāl al-‘aql wa-l-irāda*) and the purification of morals (*tahdhīb al-akhlāq*).”⁵⁹

Marion Katz included Riḍā’s treatise in her broader analysis of *mawlid* commemorations, concluding that: “In content, the text is a modernist biography of the Prophet that eliminates most of the supernatural and miraculous elements of the traditional story to emphasize the ethical and social progressiveness of the Prophet’s mission.”⁶⁰ The new style, content, and aim also showed in other reformist treatises on the *mawlid* in the first decades of the twentieth century: “In their determined focus on the Prophet’s mission, its impact on society, and the imperative for individual believers to emulate his example, such [reformist] texts radically de-emphasized the significance of his birth.”⁶¹ In a sense, Riḍā and other reformists tried to rationalise the *mawlid*, introducing also modern notions of bounded individualism and emotional subjectivity.⁶²

At the same time, the *mawlid* and the figure of the Prophet were successful means to emotionally mediate more abstract principles and teachings to a wider populace. An abridged version of Riḍā’s treatise⁶³ – which, notably, was republished in 2007 – replaced the previous story at the official celebrations in Cairo already in 1916.⁶⁴ In the 1930s Riḍā fulfilled ongoing demands, voiced not least from India where his previous treatise had been very popular, to produce additional texts on occasion of the *mawlid*.⁶⁵ Thus, for the *mawlid* of the year 1932, he composed a treatise on the rights of women, using again the Prophet as ideal example for implementing the principles of Islam.⁶⁶ And while *al-Waḥy al-muḥammadī* was not explicitly written for the *mawlid*, it, too, was presented on that very day, as Riḍā highlighted.⁶⁷

One thus may note a certain ambivalence in Riḍā’s view on the figure of the Prophet: on the one hand, he criticised personal veneration of the Prophet

59 Riḍā, “Dhikrā l-mawlid al-nabawī [part 1]”, 415.

60 Katz, *The Birth of the Prophet Muhammad*, 178.

61 Katz, *The Birth of the Prophet Muhammad*, 180.

62 Katz, *The Birth of the Prophet Muhammad*, 209ff.

63 Riḍā, *Mukhtaṣar dhikrā l-mawlid al-nabawī*.

64 Riḍā, “Muqaddima li-dhikrā l-mawlid”, 31.

65 Riḍā, “Dhikrā l-mawlid al-nabawī [part 2]”.

66 Riḍā, “Dhikrā l-mawlid al-nabawī [part 2]”, 131.

67 Riḍā, “Dhikrā l-mawlid al-nabawī [part 2]”, 131; Riḍā, “Taṣdīr *kitāb al-waḥy al-muḥammadī*”, 759.

and very much identified Muḥammad with the message he brought, taking him as the exemplary reformist illustrating the success of the comprehensive programme of Islamic reform, which had to be implemented again today. On the other hand, since the Prophet remained that emotionally charged figure able to integrate his community, Riḍā pushed for venerating a specific image of the Prophet, namely, his own construction of Muḥammad as a religious and social reformer. This ambivalence is no contradiction, but rather results from and bespeaks of Riḍā reconstructing the Islamic discursive tradition under the conditions of modernity.

While the intersecting of classical tropes and novel views is constitutive of this process of reconstruction, in the last consequence it occurs under the primacy of modernity, as I shall suggest in my concluding remarks.

12.5 Conclusion: Modern Religions, Modern Prophets

This chapter was concerned with the view of the Prophet Muḥammad by a most prominent and influential spokesperson of the Islamic discursive tradition in modern times, Rashīd Riḍā. While it should be clear that Riḍā does not stand in for the intellectual trend of Islamic modernism as a whole, the interest in social teachings of Islam is one of those aspects widely shared in modernity. Also the Indian, rather pro-British, and secularist modernist Sayyid Aḥmad Khān, for example, added the English subtitle “The Mohammedan Social Reformer” to his journal *Tahzīb ul-akhlāq*. And today, a blogger may proclaim without much explanation that Muḥammad was “the best social reformer”.⁶⁸

Riḍā’s own construction of the Prophet as a religious and social reformer was intrinsically related to his construction of Islam as a comprehensive programme of reform. He thereby provided an Islamic answer to the primary and continuous question of modernity, namely, on which basis society ought to be organised. Riḍā argued that this basis could only be religion. For he shared in the categorical distinction between religion and the secular, but denied that the secular could be self-sufficient. Put otherwise, he complemented the modern concept of religion as belief with a modern functionalist understanding of religion as a social necessity. On this basis, Riḍā, as the editor of *al-Manār*, the most prominent Islamic journal (*al-majalla al-islāmiyya*) in the Arabic public sphere, provided Islamic answers to all questions pressing in that public sphere, whether religion, economics, gender relations, or politics. After all, this

68 Farooqi, “Prophet Muhammad”.

is the role of the journalist and the public intellectual that Riḍā was.⁶⁹ That said, Riḍā was not only a journalist, but he equally was a *muṣliḥ*, an Islamic reformist. As a journalist and a *muṣliḥ*, Riḍā wanted to publicly educate his fellow Muslims and citizens to become pious, moral, and rational individuals. Only thus would they be able to internalise and implement the reform programme of Islam, the veracity and success of which had allegedly been shown by the first and ideal Islamic *muṣliḥ*, the Prophet Muḥammad.

The fact that Riḍā was both a journalist and a *muṣliḥ* illustrates the complex intersection of classical and novel aspects, of continuity and change that is constitutive of every major actualisation of a discursive tradition. An eminent asset of Talal Asad's conception of Islam as a discursive tradition⁷⁰ was precisely to bring into view both commonalities and differences, both continuities and changes between the manifold articulations of Islam across time and space. The volume of which this chapter is part of very much testifies to this manifoldness. After all, the Prophet Muḥammad is one central element of the Islamic discursive tradition; and it will be fascinating to see both common and differing elements in the varied views on the Prophet brought together here. Since Riḍā very consciously made sure to articulate his modernist arguments from within the Islamic discursive tradition, it follows that many of the tropes and symbols he used are known from earlier instantiations of that tradition. At the same time, Riḍā with his modernist construction of Islam was not simply updating these earlier forms in a new context. While discursive traditions represent a most plausible and insightful category of analysis, individual articulations of one tradition are often more adequately understood by looking beyond that tradition. This, I argue, is the case with Riḍā's modernist construction of the Prophet, concerning which the primacy of modernity comes to the forefront when viewing it together not with earlier articulations of the Islamic discursive tradition, but rather with contemporaneous articulations of other traditions.

As part of his general argument of Islam being the only tradition suitable for and able to sustain modernity, Riḍā himself would of course maintain that Muḥammad was the only prophet combining social and spiritual reform. Muḥammad combined and thereby surpassed the partial reforms of Moses and Jesus, as Riḍā would sometimes add.⁷¹ However, as we have seen already in the introduction, Riḍā actually participated in broader intellectual trends of modernity that reconstructed religious traditions to address the questions of

69 Hamzah, "Muhammad Rashid Ridā"; Skovgaard-Petersen, "Portrait of the Intellectual".

70 First formulated in Asad, *The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam*, 14–17.

71 For example, Riḍā, "al-Dars 36", 333ff.

modern society. An especially widely shared argument was that religious social teachings were superior to secular ones, because they added a firm moral foundation. Take the following argument of an English Christian theologian from 1917: “The principles which the prophets exalted as the standards of social well-being are as valid now as ever they were. For the social problem is not economic alone. At bottom it is moral and religious. So, after our economists have taught us all they can of the science of distribution and the laws that make for wealth and poverty, we must still turn to seers like the prophets of Israel for spiritual enlightenment and guidance, for the quickening of the sense of humanity and God.”⁷²

While basic arguments like this would, then, be elaborated differently in different discursive traditions and across differing sociopolitical contexts, they in a fundamental sense illustrate the primacy of modernity in Riḍā’s appropriation of the Islamic tradition. This is to say: while there is a diachronic continuity of symbols and references within one discursive tradition, these symbols and references are appropriated and actualised under epistemic conditions and according to paradigms common across synchronic discursive traditions. On the former level, we observe many commonalities between Riḍā and Islamic thinkers of earlier times. On the latter level, in turn, Islamic modernism shows greater similarities with Christian or even secular modernism than with pre-modern Islamic intellectual debates. Put otherwise: the framing of “modernist Islam” highlights commonalities within one discursive tradition, while the wording of “Islamic modernism” underlines the common conditions shaping different traditions. It is in the latter sense, foregrounded in this chapter, that modernity is primary in Riḍā’s appropriation of the Islamic tradition, including his construction of the Prophet Muḥammad.

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72 Gordon, “The Prophets”, 283.

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Religious Revival (*tajdīd*) and Politics in Contemporary Morocco

“The Prophetic Path” of Shaykh Abdessalam Yassine (d. 2012)

Rachida Chih

The most popular of the so-called Islamist movements in Morocco, Justice and Spirituality (al-‘Adl wa-l-Iḥsān), was not born out of opposition to Sufism, as was the case for most such theological and political movements in the contemporary Muslim world, which have rejected Sufi practices as reprehensible innovations (*bid‘a*). On the contrary, it was inspired by Islamic spirituality and the Sufi concept of imitation of the Prophet (*ittibā’ al-nabī*) in the interior lives of believers as in their outward acts. The founder of this movement, Shaykh Abdessalam Yassine (d. 2012), laid claim to the earthly heritage of the Prophet, in competition with both Morocco’s monarchy, to which he was openly opposed, and the Sufi brotherhoods from which he sprang and ultimately distanced himself. Unlike the monarchy, Shaykh Yassine does not justify his Prophetic legitimacy by means of *sharaf* genealogy (although he nevertheless remembered to underline the fact that he was also a descendant of the Prophet, in the Idrīsid branch), but because of his exemplary conduct, conforming in every way to the Muḥammadan model. In addition, his mission is different from that of the monarchy, which exercises political power, or that of his original Sufi brotherhood, the Qādiriyya-Būdshīshiyya, which teaches spiritual progression and realisation: Yassine worked towards reform and social justice, which may explain why his teachings have mostly been studied by sociologists or political scientists.¹

Yassine’s ideas were not restricted to the field of politics, in which his positions earned him the status of principal opponent of the monarchy. Above all a man of religion, very heavily influenced by or even impregnated with Sufism, he was a major Muslim thinker of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and author of an important body of work that is much discussed at international conferences. The Qādiriyya-Būdshīshiyya Sufi brotherhood and Justice and

1 Belal, *Le Cheikh et le Calife*; Chekroun, “Islamisme”; Darīf, *Jamā‘at al-‘adl wa l-iḥsān*; El Ayadi, “Abdessalam Yassine”; Lauzière, “Post-Islamism”; Tozy, *Monarchie*; Zeghal, *Les islamistes marocains*.

Spirituality are probably the two largest religious groups in Morocco today. Yassine and the charismatic leader of the Būdshīshīyya, Sīdī Ḥamza (d. 2017), were both taught by the same spiritual master, Sīdī Bel-‘Abbās (d. 1972), Sīdī Ḥamza’s father. Sīdī ‘Abbās’ teachings sprang from the Darqāwiyya, a Sufi brotherhood that was active in Morocco and the west of Algeria during the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth, and whose many branches spread as far as the Near East.² Sīdī Ḥamza and Yassine both described themselves as continuing a model of Islamic tradition that had become classical from the time of the prominent theologian al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111): that of a reviver of religion (*mujaddid al-dīn*), predestined to restore the purity of the faith and renew Islamic law. They identified with this role on the basis of their Sharīfian and spiritual legitimacy. Sīdī Ḥamza did not set himself up in opposition to political power, but built up around his own person a group that claimed to reproduce the spiritual community of the Prophet and his companions. Yassine, on the other hand, was in open conflict with king Hassan II; he set himself the mission of the moral reconstruction of the Muslim mind as a preliminary step that would lead to the building of a society defined by Islam. He also founded his own community as a model for this, his *jamā’a*.³ His theological and metaphysical ideas are sometimes complex, and his books not accessible to all readers. On the basis of our examination of his major work, *The Prophetic Path (al-Minhāj al-nabawī)*, I shall analyse Yassine’s conception of Prophetic heritage in order to show that his predication followed a religious concept and cultural model of messianic mysticism that has been identifiable in Morocco since the Middle Ages: in the eyes of his followers, the very existence of *al-Minhāj al-nabawī* demonstrates and proves that Yassine is the guide (*imām*) predestined to set in motion a great social transformation that will restore the Islamic community to its original purity by placing it under the direction of the Prophet’s *sunna* that is re-actualised.

13.1 Morocco in the Postcolonial Era: Consolidation for the Monarchy and Fragmentation in the Religious Sphere

The growing importance of nationalist reformism during the colonial period (1912–56) brought with it a concomitant increase in power for the Moroccan

2 Chih, “*Shurafā’* and Sufis”. The Darqāwiyya, an offshoot of the Shādhiliyya Sufi path, was founded at the end of the eighteenth century by Mawlāy al-‘Arabī ad-Darqāwī (ca. 1737–1823) in Morocco. Le Tourneau, “Darḳāwa”.

3 Yassine, *The Muslim Mind on Trial*.

monarchy, the sacred aspects of which had been underlined by reformist movements. Nationalist groups campaigned in the press for the colonising powers to show greater respect for the sacred person of the king; in 1933 they instigated the throne celebration, in which urban Moroccans participated in large numbers. Thus king Mohammed v became a symbol of national unity.⁴ Once Morocco had gained its independence, the monarchy consolidated its authoritarian rule in the 1962 Constitution the king gave himself the title “Commander of the Faithful” (*amīr al-muʿminīn*); he weakened the religious sphere by fragmenting it and, as early as 1956, began co-opting the leaders of the nationalist movement into the administration of the state to neutralise them.⁵ Unlike the republics of Algeria, Tunisia, and Turkey, which engaged in a political drive to secularise their societies, Morocco did not see attempts to purge Sufism, but as it emerged from the colonial period the Sufi brotherhoods were nevertheless delegitimised by nationalist reformists; for example, ‘Allāl al-Fāsī (d. 1974), who founded the Istiqlāl (Independence) Party in 1943, spoke very harshly of the brotherhoods.

At the time of independence, the construction of a national narrative that accused the Sufi brotherhoods of collaboration with the colonial power and presented the Sharīfian state as the sole agent of modernisation and of struggle against colonialism meant that the historical role played by Sufis was forgotten.⁶ Yet, the Darqāwiyya (to which ‘Allāl al-Fāsī once belonged) played an active role in the anti-colonial struggle in the north of the country, and its offshoot, the Kattāniyya, was behind one of the first movements for anti-colonial resistance, led by a religious figure with whom Shaykh Yassine identified, Muḥammad al-Kattānī (1873–1910), who died under torture in the royal gaols.⁷ In this unfavourable context the Qādiriyya-Būdshishiyya, whose groundwork had been laid during the colonial period, was founded during the 1960s in the mountains inhabited by the Banī Iznassen Berber tribe in north-western Morocco, near the Algerian border. The Qādirī-Būdshishīs present themselves as a Sufi and saintly lineage, descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad. According to the family’s genealogy, “Qādirī” indicates kinship ties with the great saint of Baghdad, ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (d. 561/1166); as for “Būdshish”, it is a nickname (*laqab*) given to an ancestor who fed the people with a soup

4 Spadola, *The Calls of Islam*.

5 Zeghal, *Les islamistes marocains*, 50.

6 Fāsī, *Ḥadīth al-Maghrib fi l-Mashriq*.

7 Bazzaz, *Forgotten Saints*.

made of cracked wheat (*dashīsha* or *tashīsha*) during a period of famine.⁸ To this reputation for hospitality they soon added one for *jihād*: in 1845, when France and the Sultan of Morocco Mūlay ‘Abd al-Rahmān (r. 1822–1859) signed the Treaty of Maghnia (1845), defining the border between Morocco and Algeria, Sīdī Mukhtār al-Kabīr (d. ca. 1852), the great-great-grandfather of Sīdī Ḥamza, joined Emir ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jazā’irī’s resistance struggle against the French occupation.⁹ The defeat of the emir in 1847 brought a temporary halt to resistance in the north of Morocco; it would be taken up again by the Habriyya branch of the Darqāwiyya at the turn of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ French colonial archives mention the arrest in 1907 of Sīdī Mukhtār’s grandson, also called Sīdī Mukhtār (d. 1914) and nicknamed al-Mujāhid, “the one who carries out the *jihād*”, because he led a long insurrection against the French army, which had entered the country from Oujda on the northern border.¹¹ After his release in 1910, Sīdī Mukhtār al-Mujāhid left his mountain village, Bū Yaḥyā, and settled on the Berkane Plains in Madāgh. His descendants still live there.

Thus, the Būdshīshīyya follows the model of Morocco’s historic *zāwiya*s, places of hospitality and outposts on the frontier of Christian invasion. In 1942, the arrival in the *zāwiya* of a cousin of Sīdī Bel-‘Abbās, Sīdī Bū Madyan Munawwar Būdshīsh (d. 1955), a Sufi who was initiated into both the Tijāniyya and the Darqāwiyya, was a turning point in the family’s history: Sīdī Bū Madyan transformed this local lineage of *shurafā*’ into a Sufi path to spiritual education (*ṭarīqat al-tarbiya*), describing its teaching as a synthesis of the great Moroccan spiritual traditions, of the Qādiriyya by blood (*nasab*), and of the Darqāwiyya and the Tijāniyya by virtue of the initiatic transmission (*mashrab*) that it encompasses, completes, and revivifies.¹² From a remote and isolated spot in the north of the country, this brotherhood would progressively spread across Morocco’s educated and urbanised classes. Among its first disciples two schoolteachers were to become high-profile public personalities: Shaykh Abdessalam Yassine and today’s Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, Aḥmad Tawfiq.

8 Qustās, *Nibrās al-murīd*, 36–37; Ghazālī, *Musāhama*, 68.

9 Qustās, *Nibrās al-murīd*, 35.

10 Founded by Muḥammad al-Habrī (d. 1898), the Darqāwiyya-Habriyya spread mainly in Algeria. Le Tourneau, “Darḳāwa”; Drague, *Esquisse d’histoire religieuse du Maroc*.

11 Berahab, *Zāwiya Būdshīshīyya*.

12 Chih, “*Shurafā*” and Sufis”, 212.

13.2 The Islamic Revival in the 1970s and 1980s

The defeat during the 1960s of ideologies with a socialist orientation, and the struggle against leftist parties, prepared the ground for an Islamic revival across the Muslim world, with the financial support of Saudi Arabia. During the 1970s, Shaykh Yassine left the Būdshīshiyya and established his own reputation by defying King Ḥasan II in a letter entitled “Islam or the flood” (1973). This was an impudent missive, accusing the king of squandering the people’s wealth and calling on him to return to the path of God.¹³ Yassine was then imprisoned in a psychiatric ward; it was alleged that King Ḥasan II could not conceive that any sane man would challenge his authority so brazenly. Yassine was laying the foundations of his movement, which would be registered as an association during the 1980s under the name Justice and Spirituality (this association is tolerated but not recognised).

In 1981, Yassine provided his companions with a practical guide to spiritual improvement and sociopolitical militancy, *The Prophetic Path*, his most important work (mentioned above). Yassine was in and out of prison, with his original Būdshīshiyya brotherhood under suspicion, and Sīdī Ḥamza under house arrest in his *zāwiya* in Madāgh. Meanwhile, the manipulation of public opinion by the monarchy had reached its peak: Ḥasan II organised a vast spectacular call for unity around his sacred person, the Green March of 1975, when thousands of Moroccans from all regions of the kingdom marched peacefully to recover the Moroccan Sahara from Spanish occupation. An extensive media campaign was organised by the king, using the state monopoly on television and radio (which lasted until the 1980s). This allowed him to capture public opinion and manipulate it by disseminating notions of solidarity with an imaginary community that was protected and perpetuated by its king. The monarch reproduced the ritual of allegiance (*bay‘a*) to his person on the scale of an entire country, thanks to new communication technologies that allowed him to erase distance and establish a close and direct relationship with his unique and united people. According to research undertaken by the anthropologist Emilio Spadola among participants in the march, they often felt that to reply to the king’s call was to demonstrate their belonging in the nation, but also to give to the king in the hope of receiving a gift in return; these hopes were never realised.¹⁴

From the beginning of the 1980s the two competing religious groups – the Qādiriyya-Būdshīshiyya and Justice and Spirituality – had begun to implant

13 Yassine, *al-Islām aw al-tūfān*.

14 Spadola, *The Calls of Islam*.

themselves in the new departments of Islamic studies that had been created in state universities from 1979 to compete with the traditional institutions of religious learning (the Qarawīyyīn and Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ḥasaniyya).¹⁵ The political relaxation of the 1990s, and the introduction of new forms of communications media that remained outside of state control, also changed the situation in the religious sphere, allowing for new calls to Islam to appear and compete with the call of the Sharīfian state. Across Morocco there followed an unprecedented expansion for the movements of Shaykh Yassine and of Sīdī Ḥamza, who, no longer under house arrest, was able to travel and to meet freely with his disciples. The Būdshishiyya became embedded among the Moroccan middle and upper-middle classes, and, thanks to networks of Moroccan emigrants, expanded to Europe. The house arrest of Yassine came to an end with the coronation of Mohammed VI in 1999, and he, too, could at last travel around the country. His Justice and Spirituality movement also spread transnationally, through Moroccan emigration to Europe.

13.3 The Politics of Sharīfian Genealogy

Competition around Sharīfian genealogy is part of a long politico-religious tradition in Morocco. However, claiming authority or political legitimacy because of descent from the Prophet is a modern phenomenon: during the Middle Ages only personal charisma and virtues were emphasised. Genealogical literature began to flourish from the fifteenth century, with Ibn Sakkāk's celebrated work *Nuṣṣa mulūk al-Islām* (Advice to Muslim kings), which reminds kings of their duties towards *ashrāf*: the Moroccan historian Halima Ferhat describes this sort of text as making up a "literature of combat", influenced by a militant and often political outlook.¹⁶ The accession to power of the Sa'ḍian dynasty (1549–1659), which instituted a compromise between political and religious authority, was a turning point that historian M. Garcia-Arenal calls "a joining of Sufism with Sharifism" in the symbolic elaboration of power in Morocco.¹⁷ The Sa'ḍīs constantly evoke concepts of *sharīf* and of *jihād* to define their movement, to explain its success, and to establish its legitimacy.¹⁸ The rise of the Sa'ḍīs was closely linked with that of Jazūlism, the most important mystical

15 Tozy, "Le prince, le clerc et l'État", 81–82.

16 Ferhat, "Chérifisme et enjeux du pouvoir".

17 Garcia-Arenal, "La conjonction du soufisme et du sharifisme".

18 Garcia-Arenal, "Mahdī, Murabīṭ, Sharīf", 81.

movement in Morocco in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.¹⁹ The writings of Muḥammad al-Jazūlī (d. 870/1465), with their eschatological bent based on the notion of *sa'āda* (the promise of happiness here below and in the after-life), provided the ideological foundation for the legitimisation of the Sa'dīs, and were exploited to this end by the sultans. The expression *aqtāb al-dawla* (the poles of the state) arose in milieux linked to Jazūlī, meaning that on earth the Sufi acts for the Prophet and, in his absence, becomes his legitimate substitute (*badl*). *Quṭbiyya* signifies concrete power over the world, along with the feeling among men that it is because of the permanent presence and intercession of the saints that the world continues to exist: saints are effectively guarantors of stability in a society that is prey to constant and often violent political change. It was during this period that the great *zāwiya*s that would mark the history of Morocco were born: the *zāwiya* of Iḡigh, the *zāwiya* Nāṣiriyya, the *zāwiya* Sharqāwiyya, and the Wazzāniyya.²⁰ Almost all of them were in some respects messianic, and they also referred constantly to the closely related concept of *tajdid*, renewal of Islam. What is more, this renewal was never distinct from material – or even political – claims, often made at times of crisis during which the stability or integrity of the country was threatened from within or without.²¹

During the same period the concept of a Muḥammadan Path (*Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*) emerged among Sufi and non-Sufi scholars, defined either as a return to the model of the Prophet or as a direct attachment to his person as a way of reaching sainthood. Vincent Cornell attributes to Jazūlī and his disciples a decisive role both in the conceptualisation of the Muḥammadan Path and in its propagation to the rest of the Muslim world via the scholarly and Sufi networks of Medina, thanks to the new Ottoman context.²² The Muḥammadan Path was not an organised Sufi path, but a way of accessing religious knowledge that was specific to Sufis who had approached the Prophet through assiduous prayer on him (*taṣliya*)

until it invades the consciousness to the extent that when he [the reciter] hears his name he trembles, his heart is overwhelmed beholding him, and the visible appearance of the Prophet appears present to the eyes of inner vision (*baṣīra*) during his sleep (*manāman*) or when he is awake (*yaqazatan*). He can then ask him whatever he wants.²³

19 Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*.

20 Laroui, *Les origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain*, 137.

21 Hammoudi, "Aspects de la mobilisation populaire à la campagne", 47.

22 Chih, *Sufism in Ottoman Egypt*, chapter 3.

23 Sanūsī, *al-Salsabil al-ma'īn*, 7.

During the seventeenth century there was a mention in the *Kitāb al-Ibrīz*, which relates the words of the Moroccan Sufi ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dabbāgh (d. 1132/1720), of the omniscience and infallibility (*iṣma*) of the believer who has conformed in his outward behaviour and his inner life (*ma‘nawī*) to the Prophetic model; this places him above theologians and jurists for his knowledge of God and for his continuous interpretation of the law through *fath*, spiritual opening.²⁴ The Sufis’ claim to a Prophetic inheritance through the Muḥammadan Path worked to legitimise the (probably unprecedented) authority they exercised in society. The concept itself was not new, but its amplification in the modern period corresponds to a new geographical expansion of Sufism, and to what was probably the apogee of its implantation in society, encouraged as it was by sultans and emperors.²⁵ The Sufi masters who were at the origin during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of what historians would later call the “Sufi revival” claimed this path for themselves. In the Maghrib from the end of the eighteenth century, it was powerfully expressed in the teachings of Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815); of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 1793), the founder of the Raḥmāniyya in Algeria; of the Moroccan Sufi Aḥmad b. Idrīs (d. 1837), and of his successors who were to make union with the Prophet the aim of their Sufi path. In *Jawāhir al-ma‘ānī* (The jewels of meaning), Aḥmad al-Tijānī informs his disciple ‘Alī Ḥarāzim that although the legislative prophecy is sealed, the Prophet nevertheless continues to guide his community and to send messages through his spiritual heirs. As for Shaykh al-‘Arabī al-Darqāwī (d. 1823), he was considered by his disciples to be a *mujaddid*, reviver of religion in the Maghrib, and the pole of the circumference (*quṭb al-dā‘ira*), because of the tens of thousands of disciples who were affiliated to his Sufi path.²⁶ Below we shall see how Shaykh Yassine’s predication continued in the tradition of this Muḥammadan Path, without naming it.

The overlap between Sharīfism, religious renewal, and Sufism has left an indelible mark on the political and religious history of Morocco, where the resulting outlook is very evident even to the present day. The centre of gravity of the triangle formed by these three religious poles (monarchy – Būdshīshīyya – Jamā‘at al-‘Adl wa-l-Iḥsān) is the issue of the Prophet’s earthly heritage (which means that of the imamate), and the legitimate leadership of the community. Sīdī Ḥamza claimed to be the holder of the Prophet’s secret, or *sirr*, which is the inner knowledge accessible only to God’s elect. The decline of Islam with the passage of time (*fasād al-zamān*) is interpreted by the Būdshīshīs as a decline of the spiritual influx of God’s Messenger; this influx had permeated

24 Radtke, “Ibriziana”.

25 Chih, “The Apogee”.

26 Meftah, “L’initiation dans la Shādhiliyya-Darqāwiyya”.

his community while he was alive and was preserved after his death only by a small circle of pious men elected by God, to whom fell the task of reviving this legacy (*amāna*).²⁷ In his struggle against the Salafis since the attacks of May 2013, “Commander of the Faithful” King Muḥammad VI has supported the Sufi brotherhoods and in particular the Būdshīshīyya, several of whose most eminent members are in the government, including the Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs, Aḥmad Tawfīq, and his cabinet head, Aḥmad Qustās. The aim of the Būdshīshīyya is to support the monarchy’s claim on the sacred realm while strengthening and legitimising its own. Yassine has his own concept of Prophetic heritage (*wirātha*), refusing the king the title of “Commander of the Faithful” and rejecting his claim to religious legitimacy, believing that the king has left the path of God. Yassine ascribes to himself the role of renewer and admonisher, as the Prophet was described in the Qur’ānic verse: “Indeed, We have sent you with the truth as a bringer of good tidings and a warner” (Q 35:24).

I will not present the life and career of Abdessalam Yassine here, because Mohamed Tozy and, later, Malika Zeghal have between them created a fine and carefully researched portrait of the man, touching notably on the moments that contributed to his charisma, his role as censor of the monarchy, and the historical models among Moroccan insurgent Sufis with whom the shaykh identified, such as Yūsī (d. 1102/1691) and Muḥammad al-Kattānī (d. 1910).²⁸ Shaykh Yassine’s social activism and political opposition to the monarchy have also been the object of numerous studies among Moroccan and Western scholars, in whose works may be found descriptions of the organisation of the *jamā’a* and of its activities, often similar to those of the Būdshīshīyya to which Yassine initially belonged: the visit (*zīyāra*) to the guide (*murshid*) in his house in Salé corresponds to the *zīyāra* to Sidī Ḥamza in Madāgh; the structure of the *jamā’a* is based on companionship (*ṣuḥba*), and the ritual is centred on the permanent mention of God’s Names (*dhikr*) and the recitation of daily prayers and litanies. As in the Būdshīshīyya, lessons (*majālis*), camps, and spiritual retreats are organised. Yassine’s book, *The Prophetic Path*, is taught to the members of the *jamā’a* as a religious discipline (*al-fikr al-minhājī*), like the Qur’ān, *ḥadīth*, or *fiqh*.²⁹

27 Qustās, *Nibrās al-murīd*, 36–38; Chih, “*Shurafā’* and Sufis”.

28 Tozy, *Monarchie*, 185–226; Zeghal, *Les islamistes marocains*, chapter 2.

29 Belal, “Mystique et politique chez Abdessalam Yassine et ses adeptes”, 175.

13.4 *The Prophetic Path* as Self-empowerment for Muslim Individuals and Communities

13.4.1 *The Ten Principles of the Prophetic Path*

The Prophetic Path is Shaykh Yassine's most important work because it brings together and synthesises all of the ideas presented in his forty-odd published works.³⁰ It has been studied by many researchers, who have described its structure and principal themes along with their own readings of its contents. Outside of Morocco, the *Minhāj al-nabawī* and the shaykh's other writings have been examined at several international conferences organised by the European Institute for Islamic Sciences and other international Islamic foundations: Istanbul (2012); Brussels (2013); Ukraine (The National University of Ostroh Academy, 2014); University of London (British Association for Islamic Studies Annual Conference, 2015).³¹ After two days of debates and discussion at the Istanbul conference, entitled "The Centrality of the Holy Koran in Abdessalam Yassine's Theory of the Prophetic Method (*al-Minhāj al-nabawī*)", the academics and religious scholars present concluded that Yassine was the renewer in his own time; his *Minhāj* was described as "one of the most prominent and influential revivalist projects in current intellectual Islamic thought". Ten days later, the death of Yassine at the age of eighty-four was announced.

Yassine reminds his readers that *minhāj* is a Qur'anic term (Q 5:48), and that "the Islamic law, the *sharī'a*, comes from the Qur'ān and the *minhāj* from the Prophet's *sunna*".³² He writes that the *minhāj* is the path (*ṭarīq*) of faith (*īmān*) – and of the spiritual struggle against one's ego (*jihād*) in one's relationship with God – a path along which the believer travels (*salaka*) in order to reach spiritual perfection (*ghāyat al-iḥsāniyya*). For Yassine the *minhāj* perfectly expresses the objectives of his text: to translate the Qur'ān and the *sunna* into concrete action (*barnāmijan 'amaliyyan*) in order to overcome the obstacles (*'aqabāt*) of the times.³³ However, the term *minhāj* is traditionally found in the Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) texts that currently flood the market for religious books; it was used by Muslim reformists of the twentieth century, in particular by Ḥasan al-Bannā (d. 1949) who inspired and influenced Yassine; the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood spoke of an Islamic method (*al-minhāj al-islāmī*) containing all aspects of everyday life – spiritual, but

30 <https://yassine.net/en/2013/05/14/list-of-books/>.

31 <https://Yassineconferences.net/quran-conf/en/index/>.

32 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, introduction.

33 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 9.

also social and political. We believe that the use of this term by Yassine and also by the Būdshīshīyya Sufi brotherhood (whose teaching is described as a path of education, *minhāj tarbiya*) reflects the impregnation of Sufism with the influence of a literalist and fundamentalist reformist Islam, which has obliged Sufism to adapt its vocabulary to match the evolution of contemporary Muslim thought. Although Yassine's *al-Minhāj al-nabawī* has ambitions to be a practical work (hence the translation by some of *minhāj* as "method"), it nevertheless contains a great deal of theory, which is expressed in a style and language accessible only to the educated elite – the elite addressed by Yassine in the hope that they might make up his *jamā'a*, his group, which, following the example of the Prophet and his companions, would support Yassine in his mission and propagate his message. During the same period, the guide of the Būdshīshīyya, Sidī Ḥamza, also aimed his predication at the educated elite of the nation, succeeding, with the support of his many close disciples who were teachers or university students, in recruiting numerous followers among the Moroccan bourgeoisie.³⁴

The Moroccan political scientist Mohamed Tozy describes *al-Minhāj* as an original synthesis of Sufi teachings with the political and religious ideas of the Egyptians Ḥasan al-Bannā and Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966), the former being the founder and the latter a prominent theorist of the Muslim Brotherhood. *The Prophetic Path* began to appear in the journal *al-Jamā'a* (sixteen issues between 1979 and 1983), during a period marked by two events that shook the Muslim world: the Iranian Revolution in 1978–79 and the 1981 assassination of the President of Egypt, Anwar al-Sadat, by a member of the radical Egyptian Islamic Jihād. As a result, its first chapters are marked by a militant, anti-imperialist, and anti-Zionist tone, and by reminders of the struggle to be undertaken against all the enemies of Islam: Yassine speaks here of invasion (*ghazw*), of a difficult and obstacle-strewn path (*iqtiḥām al-'aqaba*), of uprising (*qawma*).³⁵ In the second part of the book, he explains his concept of a Prophetic path or method that is entirely contained within the Prophet's saying (*ḥadīth*) on faith (*īmān*): "īmān consists of seventy branches, the best of which is the declaration that there is no god but God and the least of which is the removal of harmful objects from the road, and modesty is a branch of *īmān*."³⁶ However, of these seventy branches, only three are cited, which has led religious scholars to seek the others in the vast *ḥadīth* corpus; the best-known work on this subject is Bayhaqī's (d. 565/1069) *Shu'ab al-īmān*. Yassine rearranged the seventy branches into ten principles (*al-khiṣāl al-'ashar*

34 Chih, "Sufism".

35 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 13.

36 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 35.

wa-shu'ab al-īmān) and from these he derived his model of education (*tarbiya*) to revive the faith. The first three of these principles are the most important, and adherence to them determines the success of the method: (1) companionship and community (*al-ṣuḥba wa-l-jamā'a*); (2) remembrance of God (*dhikr*); (3) sincerity of faith (*ṣidq*) towards one's master and brothers (sincerity of faith has other aspects, of course, among which are faith in God and the unseen, belief in the Last Judgement, and belief in pious visions). The other principles are (4) offering and sacrifice (*badhl*), giving alms and charity to the poor and orphans; (5) knowledge (*'ilm*); (6) good works (*'amal*); (7) and behaviour (*al-samt al-ḥusn*); (8) moderation and discipline (*al-tū'ada*, rejecting violence as the means of achieving any legitimate claims); (9) economy (*al-iqtisād*); (10) dominating the ego (*al-jihād*). This ordering means that it is after the acquisition of good behaviour and deeds and the transformation of one's character that one may then attempt to achieve the continuous striving involved in dominating one's ego. Thus, an Islamic order cannot be reached unless the individual is educated and trained according to a model, *minhāj*, into which all branches of faith are integrated.³⁷

13.4.2 *A Handbook of Ethics*

The Prophetic Path is essentially a handbook of religious ethics, profoundly inspired by Sufism. Even the name of the movement founded by Shaykh Yassine, *Jamā'at al-'Adl wa-l-Iḥsān*, expresses the two distinct registers of his teaching and the intrinsic link that he establishes between spiritual and moral perfection and social justice. This approach is not particularly original, especially in the history of Morocco where religious exhortation and social critique featured side by side in the lives of many of the saints who founded Sufi lineages. Yassine situates himself in the domain of *tarbiya*, education, which is not received from books but acquired through *ādāb* (refinement, good manners, morals), although he does not employ this Sufi term. His approach can be summed up as demanding proper behaviour towards God and His Prophet, oneself, and others. The word *iḥsān*, derived from the Arabic verb *aḥsana*, means to act with benevolence, kindness, and charity towards others. These qualities are engendered through the refinement and embellishment of one's moral character (*ḥusn al-khuluq*) via the battle with one's ego (*nafs*). An untamed *nafs* will pull a man towards evil inclinations and actions (*sū' al-khuluq*). The believer who acts and does good for God's sake alone and not in the expectation of earthly approbation that would flatter his pride, or even in hope of a reward in the afterlife, also does genuine good to those around him.

37 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 113.

The Prophetic path is meant to be practical and progressive; the one who follows it must pass from *islām* to *īmān* and then to *iḥsān*, which, according to the celebrated *ḥadīth* of the angel Jibrīl, is the highest degree of faith: “that you worship God as if you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you”. This method puts divine revelation into practice, rather than relying on argumentation. Yassine’s thinking is often very metaphysical, entirely focussed on intuition, inspiration (*ilhām*), and revelation (*waḥy*). He believes in the invisible world (*ghayb*) and rejects all intellectualism or speculative thinking.³⁸ The Prophetic path is man’s quest within himself for his primordial nature (*fiṭra*) before it was corrupted by the search for rewards in this lowly world, by stubborn, arrogant and impious reason. Some passages of the *Minhāj* in which he rails against the dogmatism of theologians and the formalism of jurists are reminiscent of the writings of Ghazālī, who established the superiority of spiritual intuition over reason, and to whom Yassine compares himself;³⁹ but also of the works of the Moroccan Sufi Ibn Idrīs (mentioned above), among them the *Risālat al-radd ‘alā ahl al-ra’y* (An epistle in reply to the authorities of the legal schools), as studied by Bernd Radtke:

In his treatise, the main points Ibn Idrīs expounds are these: a Muslim has only been commanded to obey God and the Prophet. God is the Qur’ān and the Prophet is the sunna.... In order to understand both categories of scripture the techniques of the schools of jurisprudence are not necessary. What is required is fear of God (*taqwā*), which each Muslim can develop individually.⁴⁰

Yassine defends himself against accusations that he is a political ideologue of the Salafi type:

Which of us is nearer to his prophetic guidance and method, the jurists of ritual cleanliness, its pious observance and general application, or the adherents of political Islam, who meet in session after the call to the afternoon prayer, in order to plan for the Islamic Caliphate, until the sunset prayer is announced while they are heedless of their prayer? Making a mockery of Islam, they would allege that the prayer is an act of worship

38 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 115; Yassine, *The Muslim Mind on Trial*.

39 “Like al-Ghazālī I have found the truth among Sufis, where I realised the limits of Islam as transmitted by the texts. God allowed me to free myself of ignorance, of an inherited Islam that was badly understood, and to put me on the path of truth – He pushed me to seek to know Him.” *L’islam ou le déluge*, 8; cited by Zeghal, *Les islamistes marocains*, 129.

40 Radtke, “The Question of Authority”, 252.

and that what they are doing is also an act of worship ... [such a man's] deeds will not be sanctioned even if he strives with all his wealth and strength to establish an alleged Islamic Caliphate.⁴¹

For Yassine, true *jihād* consists of changing one's way of life and acquiring the habit of devoting oneself to work during the day and to the recitation of the Qur'ān and supererogatory prayers at night – but only during the earlier part of the night, for the believer must get some sleep in order to be able to concentrate on his professional activities during the day, that he may see to his own needs and those of his family. Yassine uses the Sufi concepts of wayfaring and progression, of discipline and the training of the soul, of stages (*maqām*, the highest of which is that of *ihsān*, described as the stage of divine proximity). Yassine calls on the faithful to follow the same path to spiritual improvement as himself, until they reach its perfect realisation. He is therefore himself a model to be imitated, and love for the Prophet is passed on via love for the shaykh. He reminds the faithful that the Prophet was not only a messenger but also a guide and a teacher (Q 62:2), which Yassine means in the sense of a spiritual father: the Prophet felt both the love of a father for his son and the patience of the master towards his disciple. Yassine himself established this kind of paternal relationship with his disciples.⁴² Companionship (*al-ṣuḥba wa-l-jamā'a*) is the first and most important of the ten principles of the Prophetic path (and the keystone of any mystical organisation), so he called his group *al-Jamā'a*. Yassine sets up a rapport of companionship (*ṣuḥba*) between the guide and his disciples, based on the relationship between the Prophet and his companions (*ṣaḥāba*). He writes that the guide must be the object of respectful or reverential fear (*hayba*), as was the Prophet, for the guide is a reminder of God, and God's messenger on earth – submission to a holy (*walī*) and pious (*ṣāliḥ*) guide (*murshid*) is therefore submission to God.⁴³ This relationship is sealed by a pact (*bay'a*). Yassine had a very strong feeling for the group, the community, believing in the solidarity essential to its members as social ties began to disintegrate.

Yassine has been labelled an Islamist, a term popularised during the 1980s by French scholars and used to refer to modern movements that politicise the religious realm: Wahhābīs, Salafīs, Jihādīs, the Muslim Brotherhood, and others. This catch-all term masks the complexity of the different configurations involved. For example, Yassine's position on the status of the Prophet is very

41 Yassine, *The Muslim Mind on Trial*, 29.

42 Yassine, *The Muslim Mind on Trial*, 18.

43 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 123.

distant from what one finds in the writings of the Wahhābī or Salafī tendency. Although Sunnī Islamist groups assume many different forms, they generally have a theoretical link with Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) in common: this Ḥanbalī theologian's ideas, rejecting the sacralisation of the figure of the Prophet and all forms of devotion to his person in accordance with his concept of divine unity (*al-tawḥīd*), were initially recuperated and simplified by Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1206/1791) and the followers of the fundamentalist religious movement he created. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's essential doctrine is contained in his *Book of Divine Unity (Kitāb al-tawḥīd)*; as the title indicates, he develops therein his own concept of the dogma of unity and of the absolute uniqueness of God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe, with its different components (*tawḥīd al-rubūbiyya*, the affirmation of God's omnipotence; *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyya*, the reservation of worship only to God).⁴⁴ He exhorts the reader to return to a pure monotheism and to "devote [himself] to an exclusive worship of God alone without any associate". This therefore excludes the veneration of any being or thing other than God. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb considers the veneration of the Prophet and the belief in his intercession as a form of idolatry (*shirk*) and of impiety (*kufṛ*). In his biography of the Prophet Muḥammad (his own abridged version of the life of the Prophet), entitled *Mukhtaṣar sīrat al-rasūl*, he erases from the most commonly accepted version of the Prophet's life, the *Sīra* by Ibn Hishām, all the episodes that demonstrate the suprahuman nature of the Prophet. Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb retains only the parts of the biography that show the Prophet as an ordinary, sometimes fallible, human being, like all men (mentioning the notorious story of the Satanic Verses as being based on fact), asserting that it is only in this sense that the Prophet may be, and must be, imitated.⁴⁵

13.5 The Continuer of the Prophet's Mission on Earth and the Renewer of His *Sunna*

Shaykh Yassine depicts a Prophet who is close to mankind – because he is human – and simultaneously unlike other people (*basharan lā ka-bashar*) because of his divine election. Those who lowered the status of the Prophet, making of him a simple transmitter whose mission on earth ended once his message was delivered, are called blind and idiotic. In order to enlighten the faithful on the status of the Prophet, sent to bring mercy to the worlds, and

44 Peskes and Ende, "Wahhābiyya"; Mouline, *The Clerics of Islam*.

45 Riexinger, "Rendering Muḥammad Human Again". See also his Chapter 2 in this volume.

on the extraordinary nature of his mission (as Yassine expresses himself in one of his lessons posted on YouTube), he recommends that they read the poem *al-Burda* (The mantle), the best-known poem in praise of the Prophet by the Egyptian Muḥammad al-Buṣīrī (d. 698/1298). This poem about love for the Prophet combines a description of his physical and moral beauty with an account of his birth, his miracles, his celestial ascension, and the quest for his intercession. Yassine thus supports the idea that between his death and his resurrection the Prophet is still alive and communicating with mankind, especially with those who have been directly initiated by him.

In Yassine's conception, the *sunna* may be represented differently according to its varied historical contexts. The Prophetic path is the *sunna* of the Prophet as reactivated by its inheritor, who is able to take into account his own historical time and the necessity of adapting the *sunna* to his time: “‘*Ulamā*’ of the past have debated about the concept of *tajdīd*, and how to recognise the renewer of his time. It is important for us to know the meaning of *tajdīd*: who can renew the religion and how. Renewal receives strength (*mustamid*) from the Prophetic guidance, the Prophetic *sunna*, and the Prophetic method (*hudā, sunna, minhāj*).”⁴⁶ Then Yassine quotes the most famous *ḥadīth* on *tajdīd*, transmitted by Abū Dā’ūd: “At the turn of each century God will send to this community someone who will renew its religion.”⁴⁷

Here we are faced with the figure of the renewer in its Sufi conception, the *tajdīd* being the re-actualisation of the Prophetic model – that is, the *sunna* – in a post-Prophetic context.⁴⁸ Yassine believes in a continual reinterpretation of the divine message (and thus of God’s law) by a person who has conformed to the Prophetic model; thus he expresses the possibility of innovation in Islam in its changing historical contexts. God and His will cannot be known by common mortals; only those who have approached Him through combatting their egos and purifying their souls until they obtain spiritual openness can receive messages from the Prophet enabling them to continue guiding their communities until the end of time. In the second chapter of *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, called *tajdīd al-dīn*, Yassine presents himself as the renewer of the religion of the fifteenth Hijrī century, attributing this title for the fourteenth century to Ḥasan al-Bannā who also came from a Sufi background.

46 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, chapter 2: *Tajdīd al-dīn wa-l-īmān*.

47 Abū Dā’ūd (d. 276/889) was a Persian scholar of Prophetic *ḥadīth* who compiled the third of the six “canonical” *ḥadīth* collections recognised by Sunnī Muslims, the *Sunan Abī Dā’ūd*. Ṣa’īdī, *al-Mujaddidūn fī l-islām*; Voll, “Renewal and Reform”; Lapidus, “Islamic Revival and Modernity”.

48 Pagani, “Renewal before Reformism”.

The degree of *tajdīd* is defined by Yassine as that of the *walāya al-kubrā*. There is a hierarchy among the “friends of God” (*awliyā’ Allāh*), and the *walāya al-kubrā* corresponds to the highest stage, that of spiritual openness (*fath*) and interior vision (*baṣā’ir*): “This is an elevated degree that God through His grace grants to His elect.” The perfection inherited from God (*kamāl al-wirātha*) is not acquired through exoteric science (*‘ilm*), and it is not sought out by the believer: this is a gift of divine grace. The character (*khuluq*) of the person who has the most elevated experience of faith becomes the Qur’an (as ‘Ā’isha described the Prophet). The one who is chosen in this way must work to raise up the community of believers (*qawma al-umma al-islāmīyya*): this is understood to be the meaning of the *qiyām*, “holding oneself upright” before God and in His hands, thanks to a permanent interior *jihād* undertaken in order to allow the Prophetic path to triumph. The *qawma* is the objective and end of the *tarbiya*.

13.6 The Caliphate according to the Prophetic Path (*al-khilāfa ‘alā minhāj al-nubuwwa*)

In the Maghrib, the rhetoric of renewal that is present among all founders of new Sufi orders since the early modern period refers not only to the question of the imamate, but also to the notions of redemption and salvation. On the Jamā’a website (and thus widely available) are postings describing visions granted to disciples of Shaykh Yassine; these visions confirm the shaykh’s status as heir of the Prophet and renewer of his community. In some of them the Prophet himself is seen to approve the contents of the *Minhāj* and to recommend that believers read it, or to accept the orientation of the Guidance Council (*majlis al-irshād*)⁴⁹ of the Jamā’a, or to promise paradise to its followers. In other visions the shaykh himself appears, taking precedence over the four caliphs and imposing himself as the elect of the Prophet in a flash of bright light; the saint’s house in Salé becomes a sacred place. Most of the disciples’ dreams show Yassine in the presence of the Prophet and surrounded by angels. In another vision, the Prophet arrives on a white horse, from which he dismounts, asking Yassine to mount in his place. The Prophet then strikes the horse’s rump and enjoins him to continue on his course.⁵⁰ Some researchers

49 The Executive Council of the Jamā’a entrusted to supervise the activities of the movement. It was founded on the model of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood’s *maktab al-irshād* (leadership bureau).

50 Tozy has examined about sixty of these visions from the Jamā’a website, analysing their political role: Tozy, “L’évolution du champ religieux marocain au défi de la mondialisation”.

have detected a messianic promise in Yassine's predication and the apocalyptic character of his writings ("Islam or the flood"), a promise of the shaykh's arrival and the restoration of the ideal community (his *jamā'a*) on earth before the end of times. In this context, then, one should read Yassine's predication in the light of Morocco's Mahdist tradition, which was begun by Ibn Tūmart (474/1080–524/1130).⁵¹ This Berber from the south of Morocco proclaimed himself Mahdī and, with the support of the Atlas tribes, laid the foundations of the Almohad state (524/1130–668/1269), thus successfully transforming his religious and Prophetic authority into political sovereignty. The messianic dimension of Almohad power is aligned with the Muḥammadan prophecy as far as the origins and beginnings of Islam are concerned: at the end of times, after the Mahdī, the era of the caliphate will begin again. Thus, the first four Almohad caliphs received the title of "Rightly Guided" (*rāshidūn*). The Almohad caliphs were simultaneously imams (infallible religious guides) and caliphs, God's representative on earth (*khalīfa*); they demonstrated a universal ambition to lead the entire Islamic *umma*.⁵² Does Yassine represent the messianic figure of the *khalīfa*, who lays the groundwork for the coming of the "Master of the Hour" (*mūl al-sā'a*), in addition to being a renewer of religion? In the Sunnī tradition the two figures, *mahdī* and *mujaddid*, are often linked. During a lesson taught as part of a spiritual retreat in Salé with his disciples (posted on YouTube), Yassine identifies his role with that of the Prophet who brings a warning. He expresses the spiritual destitution and ignorance about God in which his community finds itself and warns it of the ultimate end of times (*al-sā'a*) and the necessity for good behaviour in this earthly life. The theme of death and the afterlife is omnipresent in his lessons as in his writings: Yassine exhorts men to change their behaviour so that they may arrive at a new order made of "justice and moral and spiritual excellence", in preparation for eternal life. For Yassine, history unfolds in successive stages or reigns, each of which ends in *fitna*, disorder, but thanks to the presence of a category of men sent by God, Islam and the caliphate are cyclically revived in accordance with the Prophetic path (*al-khilāfa 'alā minhāj al-nubuwwa*), ending corruption and re-establishing justice and the universal message of Islam before the end of times. This outlook can indeed be compared to that of messianic Mahdism, which features the re-establishment of the caliphate.⁵³ On the Jamā'a website, Yassine has the titles of guide and renewer (*imām mujaddid*).

51 Chekroun, "Islamisme".

52 Buresi, *Les Almohades*; Garcia-Arenal, *Messianism and Puritanical Reform*.

53 Yassine, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, 19–20.

13.7 Conclusion

Drawing on his best-known work, *al-Minhāj al-nabawī*, this chapter has sought to cast new light on Shaykh Yassine's Sufi itinerary, and on its impact on his thinking and his actions as a man of religion. Within the framework of this collective volume on modern constructions of the Prophet's image, and the co-opting of this image for political ends, the aim was to analyse Yassine's way of representing the Prophet, and his own relationship with God's messenger – a relationship that was intended to serve as an example for every Muslim. *The Prophetic Path*, the publication of which started at the beginning of the 1980s, set out to express a modern revival of Islamic faith and a re-actualisation of the Prophet's *sunna*, presented by one who had achieved the Prophetic model of perfection. Yassine is the heir of a long religious tradition in Morocco, the dogmas and figures of which (especially the *sharif-mahdī*, here interpreted in the sense of *mujaddid*, renovator) are not frozen in time, but alive and dynamic; they have always and continually been reappropriated and remodelled, according to their evolving historical and cultural contexts. Yassine revisits the figure of the *mujaddid* in Islam and introduces into its conception new ideas and forms of language in order to encourage believers into their self-transformation as Muslims, motivated by the notion of *ihsān*, excellence in the adoration of God: in Sufism *ihsān* is the highest degree of religion after submission to Qur'ānic prescriptions (*islām*) and faith in God (*īmān*). Through Yassine's predication the believer discovers his own capacity to transform himself and act on society; thus, Yassine's teaching is also a political project.

Scholars of political science tend to agree that the thinking of Yassine is original because he reconciled mysticism and social (or even political) activism. However, the very term "mysticism", borrowed from the Christian lexicon, is inappropriate because it ignores the entire social dimension of Sufism, and its intrinsic political implications, along with the eminently collective and public aspects of Sufism. Political scientists and sociologists have presented the structure of the Jamā'a, existing in opposition to an individualistic Islam, as a novelty, but even in its formative period Sufism was always a social and collective phenomenon. Since its emergence in the writings of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 285/898), the figure of the saint (*walī*) is a political one; Tirmidhī developed his theory of sanctity (*walāya*) and its relation to prophecy (*nubuwwa*) during a period of weakening of the 'Abbāsīd caliphate, and granted the *walī* prerogatives similar to those of the Prophet from whom he inherited, thus putting him in competition with other religious contenders on the issue of authority (one that is endlessly debated in Islam). With Tirmidhī the *walī* was brought into the religious and historical conscience of Muslims. Subsequently, the notion

of sainthood changed in different historical periods, adapting to social contexts; this allowed the *walī* to adopt socially recognised types of behaviour to respond to the hopes and expectations of his community. Through time, the language of the saint may change, but his practice remains the same: the figure of the saint who chastises a prince, or even competes with him on the issue of the legitimacy of terrestrial powers, is a familiar theme in hagiographic literature. This figure symbolises the tension that has always existed in Islam, between the realities of political power and the powers to which men of religion have laid claim, alongside their aspirations or pretensions to being above political power.⁵⁴

Mercedes Garcia-Arenal has published several pieces of research showing that millenarism and eschatological discourse appear to be inherent to Maghribī Sufism since at least the twelfth century, and that no doctrine of sainthood can be complete if it does not attempt to define political legitimacy. Although Yassine demonstrates his in-depth knowledge of the classics of contemporary Islamic thought (Bannā, Qutb, and Mawdūdī), he also takes on models of sainthood that are socially recognised in the Maghrib specifically, and sees himself in the model offered by the Sufi Muḥammad al-Kattānī, nicknamed the Martyr, who rebelled against two successive sultans. The role that Kattānī attributed to the Sufi shaykh is that of *faqīh mujtahid*, a jurist who exercises *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) in an external as well as an esoteric way. Kattānī affirms that his knowledge of divine law is received either while awake or in a dream state, directly from the Prophet – and that this qualifies him for the role of *mujtahid*. This claim by the Sufis to a superior interpretation of the sacred scriptures defines the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya*. The Kattānīs emerged in Fez in the context of popular discontent and revolts provoked by the profound economic changes taking place in the second half of the nineteenth century. It did not take all that long for the local Kattāniyya to transform itself into a political force capable of mobilising the masses, as it was to do during the revolt of 1907.⁵⁵ During his lifetime Yassine always refused to participate in the political system as defined by the monarchy (although his successors may think differently); nevertheless, Yassine did demonstrate his power to mobilise people in the streets, the university campuses, and in his own association. He also left behind an important body of work and his guidebook, *The Prophetic Path*.

The term “Islamist”, broad and undefined as it may be, is not appropriate to describe Yassine. It is true that he did not call himself a Sufi either – that term had been delegitimised during the construction of Morocco’s national history.

54 Berque, *Ulémas*.

55 Bazzaz, *Forgotten Saints*.

Yet his teachings fit well into the spiritual traditions of his country. These traditions are plural and have brought forth masters with diverse profiles: some were in search of asceticism and retreat from the world, while others engaged with the social and political events of their times, claiming for themselves an earthly authority similar to that of the Prophet within his own community. Observation of the success of Yassine's foundation and that of the Sufi Sīdī Ḥamza (whom his disciples call *mūl al-waqt*, the pole of the era) provides a clear demonstration of the pervasiveness in contemporary Morocco of historical models of "insurgent saints".⁵⁶

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⁵⁶ Berque, *Ulémas*.

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For the Love of Prophet Muḥammad

Religious Devotion and Political Mobilisation among the Barelwis of Pakistan

Alix Philippon

This chapter is based on fieldwork undertaken in Pakistan, during which interviews were conducted, observations noted, and religious literature and journalistic articles collected. I intend to show that, in this country created in the name of Islam, the figure of Prophet Muḥammad has proved efficient in structuring social issues, offering a repertoire to articulate political claims and mobilise for collective action. The Prophet could thus be apprehended as a “symbol” that does not possess a single meaning only, but allows for competing interpretations.¹ The Prophet could also be viewed as an “empty signifier”,² that is efficient in mobilising powerful emotional projections and is left open and ambiguous in its references, thus gaining a mobilising quality. Generally speaking, the Prophet has been a component of identity politics, used by religious groups and individuals to negotiate and articulate their identity. He has also been used as a political resource and instrumentalised as a legitimising tool by both state and non-state actors. I will explore these issues through the lens of the Barelwi movement that has the most loudly claimed its love for the Prophet and defended his honour against any attacks. “We can tolerate anything, but we won’t tolerate anything said against the Prophet, peace be upon him,” is indeed one of the slogans making the rounds among the Barelwi activists mobilised around the blasphemy issue within the new party Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) led by the religious scholar Khadim Hussain Rizvi.³

Mostly overlooked by scholars, the Barelwi theological school was founded in the nineteenth century in India by the Sufi and *‘ālim* Ahmed Reza Khan Barelwi (1856–1921). It is often presented as a form of traditionalist reaction to more reformist movements, namely, the Deobandi and Ahl-e Hadith, critical of some aspects of Sufism. The Barelwis call themselves Ahl-e Sunnat wa-l-Jama‘at (the people of the tradition and of the community of the Prophet). This

1 Braud, *L’émotion en politique*.

2 Laclau, *On Populist Reason*, 232.

3 Kalbe, “Who Is Khadim Hussain Rizvi?”

expression both emphasises the centrality of the Prophet's tradition (*sunna*) in their practices and belief system, and the commitment to the religious majority. It is used by Barelwis to designate those adhering to the religious interpretation of the founder of the movement. But as Usha Sanyal has rightly pointed out, this expression also highlights a "universalist claim linking its pretenders to the Sunnī world beyond the subcontinent";⁴ and a way of denying this link to other Muslims who do not respect the norms of Ahmed Reza. In the framework of Pakistan, the Barelwis generally believe they represent the majority of the population in terms of religious sensibility and as such claim a more prominent position than they have had in both the religious and political fields.

The actors of the Barelwi movement authoritatively appropriate the figure of the Prophet as the main identity symbol and supreme religious authority after God. For Ahmed Reza and his devotees, the Prophet is the first and foremost creation of the universe, the primordial entity possessing superhuman qualities: he is omniscient and has the knowledge of the invisible (*'ilm-e ghaib*); he is omnipresent, composed of a special light (*nur-e muhammadi*), and is also an intercessor with God. Thus, Barelwis are extremely protective of the Prophet, to whom they attribute numerous miracles that are often recalled during the massive celebrations organised to commemorate his birth (*mehfil-e milad*). Such beliefs pertain to polytheism (*shirk*) in the eyes of more reformist actors. The debates revolving around the Prophet and the saints have thus been at the basis of the most widespread religious conflict in Pakistan⁵ and have fuelled sectarianism.⁶ The identification of the enemies of a movement is a key procedure in defining its identity and establishing the *us/them* frontier. In the Barelwi perspective, all the groups perceived as "Wahhābīs" such as the Deobandis and Ahl-e Hadith are excluded from Sunnism.⁷

Barelwis identify themselves as the true "lovers of the Prophet", a quality that they deny to other sects. For Ahmed Reza, the Prophet was so close to God that he had almost replaced the latter as the object of devotion,⁸ and passionate love (*'ishq*) for him became the true centre of Barelwi faith.⁹ "Not making this love your centre is to be lost. When you love the Prophet, and you follow his life, then your heart, your eyes, and your work will be directed towards the

4 Sanyal, *Devotional Islam*, 166.

5 Sherani, "Ulema and Pir in the Politics of Pakistan", 217.

6 The term sectarianism designates confrontational or even violent interactions between different Islamic groups. The confrontations can involve Shī'īs and Sunnīs, but can also oppose Sunnī groups to each other.

7 Sanyal, *Devotional Islam*, 247.

8 Sanyal, *Devotional Islam*, 164.

9 Ahmed, *Nida-e Ahl-e Sunnat*, 29.

good.”¹⁰ In the symbolic universe of the Barelwis, the love for the Prophet is the one stage that leads to the perfect love of God. Practically, it means to scrupulously imitate the life of the Prophet in all domains. In this perspective, living according to the tradition of the Prophet and respecting him bestow spiritual benefits (including *baraka*) upon the believer.¹¹ Love for the Prophet, as the main emotion claimed by the community, could be analysed as an emotional habitus, that is to say, the embodied emotional disposition of a group that is both internalised and enacted through religious training, rituals and literature, social dramas, and emotional repertoires of action. Indeed, the Barelwi movement has succeeded in mobilising religious values and representations centred around the Prophet that have contributed to the construction of a community on the basis of a widely shared minimal code.

After exploring the multiple mobilisations of the Barelwi movement in favour of the Prophet throughout the history of Pakistan, we will in a second part more specifically focus on one Barelwi moral entrepreneur of mobilisation, the scholar and Sufi Pir Afzal Qadri who, after a long career devoted to the Prophet, has recently become one of the leaders of the new TLP party. We will eventually try to analyse the mobilisation of this party that has successfully organised Barelwi support and rank and file around the issue of blasphemy.

14.1 The Prophet MuḤammad at the Heart of the Barelwi Mobilisations

According to Mary Bernstein, “identity” can be much more than just a resource used by a group to sacralise itself in the confrontation with “the other”. It can also be a strategic tool both for the legitimisation of a stigmatised group or for collective action.¹² And the notion of “repertoire of collective action” coined by Charles Tilly can be useful to understand what genres and registers the mobilised groups are going to use to institutionalise their action, express their claims, and celebrate their identity.¹³ Indeed, a tactical repertoire can be used to construct a collective consciousness and identity, thus performing a function that is internal to the group itself, while succeeding in communicating with external targets.¹⁴ Therefore the repertoire can also be the locus of the negotiation of the border between the group and its opponents.

10 Ahmed, *Nida-e Ahl-e Sunnat*, 29.

11 Ahmed, *Nida-e Ahl-e Sunnat*, 38.

12 Bernstein, “Celebration and Suppression”.

13 Tilly, *La France contestée de 1600 à nos jours*.

14 Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements*.

The veneration of the Prophet has notably inspired emotional repertoires of mobilisation, such as the celebration of his birthday (*milad-un nabi*), or the defence of his honour. The latter provide the Barelwis with the means to assert their identity, all the more that the first one is considered to be an innovation by “Wahhābī” groups. Generally speaking, big gatherings or yearly congregations organised by religio-political groups fulfil multiple functions, starting with that of indicating the size and logistic base of each group. They offer to the participants the opportunity to create and strengthen social and solidarity ties.¹⁵ These congregations are used as ideal platforms wherefrom they broadcast their political programmes or strategies and religious messages. A connection between the group’s prestige and that of the Prophet, a bond of honour so to speak, can be established. These gatherings also embody the notion of the *umma* as numerous participants from other Muslim countries can take part in the celebrations.¹⁶ Besides, the month of the birthday of the Prophet (*Rabi‘-ul Awwal*) is marked by multiple spiritual conferences or congregations (*mehfil-e milad*) organised in honour of the Prophet. They often mobilise hundreds of thousands of people during processions that occupy public space. And in the framework of sectarianism plaguing Pakistan, it has taken on a symbolic and political dimension. As a symbol of the love for the Prophet, thus as a symbol of the whole community that is calling on this passionate love, the *milad* aims at strengthening the feeling of belonging to the Ahl-e Sunnat community and to reassert this identity by staging a repertoire of action that is highly controversial in the public arena. Thus, this repertoire of action has widely contributed to the “symbolic construction of the community”.¹⁷

Numerous causes revolving around the Prophet have triggered protests that have gradually become politicised. Throughout the history of Pakistan, many Islamic movements or parties have mobilised in favour of these causes, and sometimes competed about them, but the Barelwis have often organised and taken the lead of these collective actions in order to defend their role model. Created in 1948 immediately after partition to protect and promote Barelwi doctrine and institutions and take part in the political process, the Jamiat-e ‘Ulama-e Pakistan (JUP) has remained the Barelwi actor of reference until the 1980s and has gradually asserted itself inside the Islamist field. If Barelwis are usually perceived as more “tolerant” than other religious trends, their expression within the JUP displays a very orthodox and rigorist religious ideology, as well as a political one that is very similar to other Islamist parties. At the same

15 Shafqat, “From Official Islam to Islamism”, 131.

16 Shafqat, “From Official Islam to Islamism”, 132.

17 Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*.

time, it is linked to Sufi orders and their leaders, who fill the ranks of the party leadership. The JUP has succeeded in using its rituals and worldview to address the masses and gain political and religious supporters.¹⁸

Firstly, Barelwis have mobilised alongside other Islamist groups for the protection of the seal of prophecy (*khatam-e nabuwwat*). In 1953, the Jama'at-e Islami (JI), the Deobandi Jamiat-e 'Ulama-e Islam (JUI), and the JUP led the first anti-Aḥmadiyya movement of Pakistan. The founder of this reformist sect, Ghulām Aḥmad, had declared in 1889 that he was the Messiah, the Mahdī, and the “appearance” (*burūz*) of the Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁹ This last ambiguous claim is often interpreted by critics of the Aḥmadiyya as “reincarnation”, and as an unforgivable breach of the finality of Muḥammad’s prophecy. Furthermore, some Aḥmadīs talk about Ghulām Aḥmad by using the same Arab terms of *rasūl* (messenger) and *nabī* (prophet) that in Islam are reserved for Muḥammad.²⁰ Ghulām Aḥmad and his followers are thus considered as apostates by mainstream Sunnī Muslims. All religious groups demanded that their community be declared non-Muslim and that their members be removed from important administrative and political positions. The presence of Aḥmadīs within the power structure, such as Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, the foreign minister at that time,²¹ was considered as “dangerous to Islamic interests” by the *‘ulamā’*.²² The then president of the Barelwi JUP, Maulana Abul Hasanat Qadiri, became the president of the consultative assembly of the newly created Tahaffuz-e Khatam-e Nubuwwat Tehreek (Movement for the Protection of the Finality of Prophecy).

In 1974, the issue resurfaced in a virulent countrywide movement led by eight Islamic parties demanding the excommunication of the Aḥmadiyya. This new mobilisation for the protection of the finality of prophecy was partly justified by the definition of “Muslim” introduced in the 1973 constitution. The latter is often attributed to the Barelwi leader Shah Ahmed Nurani who tried to limit the political ambitions of the Aḥmadīs,²³ for only Muslims could become president or prime minister of Pakistan. Indeed, as written in the 1973 constitution of Pakistan, “Muslim’ means a person who believes in the unity and oneness of Almighty Allah, in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophecy of Muḥammad (peace be upon him), the last of the Prophets and does not believe in, or recognise as a prophet or religious reformer, any

18 Malik, “The Luminous Nurani”, 43.

19 Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous*; Sèze, “L’Aḥmadiyya en France”, 5.

20 Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous*; Sèze, “L’Aḥmadiyya en France”, 5.

21 Zaman, *Islam in Pakistan*, 170.

22 Shah, *Religion and Politics*, 50.

23 Nurani was the leader of the JUP from 1973 up to his death in 2003.

person who claimed or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muḥammad (peace be upon him).²⁴ Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto eventually gave in to the Islamists' demands. An amendment to the constitution was unanimously voted in the National Assembly that declared the Aḥmadīs to be "non-Muslims".

The concept of *nizam-e mustafa*, the system of the Prophet, is also central in the political thought of Barelwis. This system works as a mythical order originating in the golden age of the beginning of Islam, and it includes more than just worship: it shows the necessity to politicise Islam within the community of believers.²⁵ According to Shah Ahmed Nurani, the *nizam-e mustafa* can solve all the problems of the country and is nothing less than the "destiny" of Pakistan that can prevent secularism from putting down roots.²⁶ It is associated with the idea of equality for all in terms of rights, job, health, or even education, but also with the idea of justice.²⁷ An ideal Islamic welfare state is what is supposed to take shape under the banner of that *nizam-e mustafa*. In the preamble to the JUP constitution, it is one of the two targets of the party, along with the protection of the seal of prophecy. Both are supposed to bring happiness and prosperity to Pakistan. It even gave its name to a massive mobilisation against Bhutto in the 1970s. After he scheduled anticipated elections for March 1977, nine parties who were sitting in the opposition benches formed the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) mostly led by the three main Islamic parties (JI, JUI, JUP).²⁸ The PNA programme called for the establishment of the *nizam-e mustafa*. After Bhutto's party won 155 seats, the PNA, which only got 36 votes, decided to reject the election results on the basis of malpractice. The PNA launched a movement of civilian disobedience throughout the country called Tehreek-e Nizam-e Mustafa. It soon turned into a popular Islamic cause in which the JUP played an important role. Bhutto's policies had led to a general discontent amongst the population. The PNA succeeded in channelling the anger into a credible movement notably thanks to a slogan of devotion to the Prophet that triggered the enthusiasm of the masses.²⁹ Bhutto eventually gave in to the Islamists' demands and started Islamising Pakistani society by banning alcohol, nightclubs, and gambling, before declaring Friday as a weekly holiday (instead of Sunday). He also nominated Zia al-Haqq as chief of army staff. The latter staged a coup, imprisoned Bhutto, and had him sentenced to

24 *Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan* (1973), "Chapter 5 – Interpretation", Accessed 26 September 2021, <http://www.commonlii.org/pk/legis/const/1973/13.html#c5>.

25 Interview with Qari Bahadur Zawat, general secretary of the JUP, Lahore, April 2007.

26 *Nida-e Ahl-e Sunnat*, February 2002, 42.

27 *Constitution of the JUP*, 37.

28 Ahmad, *Jam'iyat 'Ulama-i-Pakistan*, 214–15.

29 Shah, *Religion and Politics*, 229.

death and executed. Thus, the *nizam-e mustafa* movement eventually led to Bhutto's downfall.

The “preservation of the honour of the prophetic message” (*tahaffuz-e namoos-e risalat*) is one of the main causes of the Barelwi movement and a tool of legitimisation against Deobandis.³⁰ An association was created with this name in 1988 by a Barelwi *‘ālim* to lead the protest against the publication of the (in)famous *Satanic Verses* written by Salman Rushdie. From the Barelwi point of view: “Whereas Barelwis have issued numerous fatwas, Deobandis have remained silent.”³¹ Even worse than silence, they have supposedly supported the publication of the book in India in the name of freedom of expression. For Barelwis, whose hearts have been “broken” by that incident, it is a perfect example of the fact Deobandis “don’t have love in their heart for the Prophet”.³² “We are not trying to attract attention, we just want to explain people who are the offenders. It is just *tahaffuz-e namoos-e risalat*.”³³ Thus, one of the main arguments mobilised by Barelwis against Deobandis is that they “insult the Prophet”. It is indeed a recurrent criticism in the Barelwi polemical literature. As they claim to be the “true lovers” of the Prophet, Barelwis feel that whoever insults him also insults them and, conversely, whoever insults them insults him.

As for the issue of blasphemy against the Prophet, the Barelwi groups have all aligned on the Pakistani penal code that was amended in the 1980s under Zia al-Haqq. Article 295c, pertaining to the use of derogatory remarks in respect of the Holy Prophet, and introduced in 1986, states that “Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.” As analysed by Amélie Blom, this article “dramatically shifted the institutionalised ‘rules of emotions’ by authorizing the state to kill its ‘unauthentic’ subject in wider and even more ambiguous situations”.³⁴ Thirty years later, in 2016, the Barelwi Tehreek-e Labbaik will successfully claim that right to kill.

In 1995, during a conference in Lahore of the *tahaffuz-e namoos-e risalat*, numerous Barelwi *pīrs* and *‘ulamā* issued a fatwa stating that the punishment for insulting the Prophet Muḥammad is the death penalty. For them, whoever

30 *Nāmūs* can also be translated as “reputation”, “prestige”, or “dignity”.

31 Zadiri, *Da‘wat-e Inṣāf*, 5.

32 Zadiri, *Da‘wat-e Inṣāf*, 5.

33 Zadiri, *Da‘wat-e Inṣāf*, 5.

34 Blom, “The 2006 Anti-‘Danish Cartoons’ Riot in Lahore”, 84.

does not protest against blasphemy “does not belong to their community”. This is a clear reminder that the boundaries of the Ahl-e Sunnat’s identity are drawn with the love for the Prophet – and hence the hatred for the blasphemer. The latter is considered as an apostate and his or her repentance will not be accepted.³⁵ Hence, “emotions appear to be the mediations through which social integration takes place,”³⁶ whether it is love or hate. In 2000, when General Pervez Musharraf tried to amend the blasphemy law and proposed a change in the procedure for the registration of trials, the pressure of the Islamists forced him to back-pedal. The *tehreek-e tahaffuz-e namoos-e risalat* was thus revived in reaction to Musharraf’s intention. During the demonstrations against the Danish caricatures on 14 February 2006 in Lahore, riots erupted that caused massive disruption and destruction. It was the Barelwi mufti Sarfraz Naeemi who partly organised the demonstration. He was arrested for the violence outbreak and booked on charges of terrorism after three weeks on the run. As analysed by Blom:

Social protests, and even riots, are events which institute a public arena: actors accomplish symbolic performances, enact emotions, claim moral preferences, reaffirm collective identities, and dramatize conflicts between distinct social groups.... This is particularly worth studying in the Pakistani context wherein the public expression of emotions has become, with time, a matter of harsh controversies and the language in which the boundaries between rival sects are commonly drawn.³⁷

In March 2006, a Barelwi congregation reasserted in Karachi that a blasphemer deserved death and signed a fatwa on this specific topic written by Pir Afzal Qadri.³⁸ Barelwi activists distributed pamphlets against the Danish government, calling for a boycott of Danish products, and denouncing the “terrorism” of the caricaturists. This is one of the most prominent Barelwi leaders and arguably one of the most active ‘*ulamā*’ as far as mobilising for the sake of Prophet is concerned. The study of Qadri’s biography (or even hagiography) and his individual career will give us invaluable insights into the emotional culture and habitus of a prominent Barelwi leader whose life and work have been almost entirely devoted to the Prophet of Islam.³⁹

35 *Nida-e Ahl-e Sunnat*, April 1995, 38.

36 Hervieu-Léger and Azria, eds, *Dictionnaire des faits religieux*, 314.

37 Blom, “The 2006 Anti-‘Danish Cartoons’ Riot in Lahore”, 95.

38 Daily Times, “Barelvi Scholars Want Death for Blasphemers”.

39 This document (with no title nor specific date of publication) was given to me by Pir Afzal Qadri when I visited him at his home in Gujrat in May 2009.

14.2 The Barelwi *Pīr* and *Ālim* Afzal Qadri: Portrait of a Moral Entrepreneur of Mobilisations

Pir Afzal Qadri (Figure 14.1) was born 20 January 1953 in the city of Gujrat in Pakistani Punjab. He is the heir of a line of Barelwi Sufis and scholars and has become a “social movement entrepreneur”,⁴⁰ who has mobilised people for different causes revolving around the Prophet Muḥammad. He is indeed a professional activist, with an important political and associational past and present,



FIGURE 14.1 Pir Afzal Qadri, Mararian Sharif, May 2008

40 This notion was introduced by the theoreticians of the school of resources mobilisation John McCarthy and Mayer Zald. They argued that social movements are increasingly professionalised, and characterised by full-time leadership. Grievances do play an important role in social movements, but more important are the entrepreneurial leaders who take the initiative to organise them. See Staggenborg, “Entrepreneurs, Movements”.

who commands important political and religious resources. He is also a “moral entrepreneur” in the sense defined by Howard Becker, that is, an entrepreneur who either “creates norms” or “makes them implemented”. The first type is the “crusader for the reform of mores” who thinks he has a “sacred mission” and is often “imbued with his own virtue”. He is also focused on the “content of laws”.⁴¹ In our case, it is the blasphemy law that is at stake. As we will see, the *pīr* and his coreligionists do not want new laws to be passed, but the existing ones to be fully respected. The *pīr* also enjoys a charismatic authority.

Generally speaking, Barelwi activists venerate their leaders who embody the group's ideals. They inspire love and respect, are a catalyst for commitment, and facilitate the identification of militants with their cause.⁴² Shaped on the model of the brotherhood, each of the Barelwi organisations displays a collective identity that can be encapsulated as an all-exclusive tie of loyalty and an allegiance towards a single authority on whom positive emotions converge. These charismatic leaders act as intermediaries with the Prophet whom they imitate and with whom they identify. Muḥammad is the model of human perfection and embodies the ideal of the Sufi shaykh. The men who have reached spiritual perfection after him have been perceived by their fellow Muslims as role models and exemplars of absolute piety.⁴³ That is very much the case with the most prominent Barelwi leaders who are considered as living saints and as living heirs of the Prophet by their followers. They are believed to have the ability to perform miracles (*karāmāt*). They are perceived by their community of devotees as saviours and heroes. And many of them have tried to preach through their publications. Thus, they are also scholarly saints. Esoteric knowledge and exoteric expertise are often associated in the formula of these leaders' authority. The friends of God (*awliyā' Allāh*) are supposed to combine piety, exemplarity, and authority (as the word *wilāya* suggests with its connotations of power and patronage).⁴⁴

As indicated in his hagiography, Afzal Qadri legitimises his actions by claiming his privileged link with the Prophet Muḥammad. During a Hajj he undertook in 1423 of the Islamic calendar (2002), he visited Medina where he had a spiritual vision of Muḥammad who gave him good news: his Sufi lodge (*khanqah*) in Mararian Sharif, Gujrat, is nothing less than a link with Medina.⁴⁵ It is also the headquarters of the organisation he founded in 1998, Almi Tanzeem

41 Becker, *Outsiders*, 171ff.

42 Philippon, “Le charisme comme ressource émotionnelle du mouvement social”.

43 Matringe, “Pakistan”, 168.

44 Rozenhal, *Islamic Sufism Unbound*, 43.

45 Hagiography of the *pīr* distributed by the ATAS.

Ahl-e Sunnat (ATAS). The aims of the ATAS are to call people to Islam and teach them the path of the Prophet in the Barelwi tradition. But it is also a very sectarian and politicised protest group: Afzal Qadri thinks the secret services (ISI) have beefed up the “Wahhābis” and weakened the Ahl-e Sunnat.⁴⁶ In the eyes of the Barelwis, the Deobandis and Ahl-e Hadith are not real Sunnīs and their spread and influence must be stopped. But the Muslim *umma* also needs to be defended from “Jewish, Christians and other infidels”.⁴⁷ The scholar Arif Jamal called the ATAS a very small yet important Barelwi organisation.⁴⁸ There are not many members in Pakistan (a few thousands), but the ATAS is supposedly present in thirty-six countries. However, its protests are led in a strategic way according to what Donatella della Porta and Mario Diani call the “logics of number”,⁴⁹ trying to give an impression of numerical strength by multiplying marches, demonstrations, petitions, and so forth. The ATAS was almost banned in 2003 because of its sectarian and protest activities. For Afzal Qadri, the Musharraf regime wanted to fulfil the US agenda and turn Pakistan into a secular state. He even issued a fatwa against the then president, which led him to prison: “Any Muslim helping non-Muslims during the war between Muslims and non-Muslims is a *kafir* (infidel) and deserves to die.”⁵⁰ He suggested the army should change his chief and find a new general who would also be a “real Muslim”.

Prior to founding the ATAS, the *pīr* was involved for twenty years in the main religious organisation of the JUP, Jama‘at Ahl-e Sunnat Pakistan (JASP). He first became president of the Punjab province and was then elected secretary general in 1994. Besides his functions within the JASP, Afzal Qadri is also the heir (*sajjada nashin*) of a branch of the Qādiri order. He claims a direct descent from Hazrat Ali, even though he belongs to a Punjabi caste, the Khokar. He succeeded his father, Pir Mohammad Aslam, when the latter passed away in 2004. The brotherhood’s headquarters are also a centre of Islamic teaching founded in 1905 by the *pīr*’s grandfather, Khwaja Mohammad Naek Alam Qadri. He is presented in the *pīr*’s hagiography as a “famous fakir” who had studied in Arabia and taught *ḥadīths*. He also performed miracles (*sahib-e karamat*), was a perfect saint (*wali-e kamil*) and a lover of the Prophet (*ashiq-e rasul*). He was the one to lay the first stone of the Jamia Qadiriyya at the beginning of the twentieth century where he built a mosque and a madrasa (Figure 14.2).

46 Interview with Pir Afzal Qadri, Pindi, May 2008.

47 Interview with Pir Afzal Qadri, Pindi, May 2008.

48 Interview with Arif Jamal, Lahore, April 2007.

49 Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements*, 174.

50 Brochure of the ATAS. See also Jamal, “Politics of Fatwas”.



FIGURE 14.2 Madrasa for boys, Mararian Sharif, May 2008

After Khwaja Mohammad's death, his son and successor, Afzal Qadri's father, built another building devoted to Islamic education. Both an *'ālim* and a *khalifa* of his own father, he also received the *khilafat* from three Gaylānī *pīrs* from Baghdad. Twelve years before passing away, he transferred to Afzal Qadri the responsibility of taking care of his disciples. When I visited the centre in Mararian Sharif in May 2008, 700 girls and boys were being fed for free at the centre.

The girls' madrasa (Figure 14.3), Shari'at Girls College, managed by Afzal Qadri's sister, teaches the *nizam-e mustafa* to girls who are then encouraged to open their own madrasa for girls. Besides the girls' and boys' madrasas, the centre comprises a mosque and a shrine with the graves of Afzal Qadri's father and grandfather (Figure 14.4).

According to his hagiography, Afzal Qadri received religious education from different schools and scholars, including his own father and grandfather, and



FIGURE 14.3 Madrasa for girls, Mararian Sharif, May 2008

started making his first sermons at the age of ten or eleven. Since 1992, he has been in charge of the Friday sermon (*khatib*) at the mosque of Mararian Sharif. He is known for his debates with “the Wahhābī enemies” but also for his spiritual powers. Numerous miracles are attributed to him, notably through dreams, as is so typical in the Barelwi tradition. One such miracle, involving the Prophet, goes as follows: the *khatib* of a nearby mosque in Faizabad, Khwaja Shakir Ahmed Owaisi, fell asleep while Afzal Qadri was giving a conference on the seal of prophecy. The *khatib* did not know such a conference was happening but he saw the Prophet in his dream, surrounded by a big escort. He asked the Prophet where he was going. The Prophet replied: “Don’t you know Pir Afzal Qadri is making a conference on *khatam-e nabuwwat*? That is where I am going.”⁵¹ As a matter of fact, *khatam-e nabuwwat*, the seal of the prophecy,

51 Story narrated in the hagiography of the *pīr*.



FIGURE 14.4 The graves of Pir Afzal Qadri's father and grandfather, Mararian Sharif, May 2008

is one of the many causes the *pīr* has fought for throughout his career. His modes of action mainly include demonstrations, petitions, sit-ins, marches, and fatwas.

According to Afzal Qadri, heresy is a crime punishable by death. In 1990, the *pīr* started mobilising against the Aḥmadīs, by distributing sectarian literature and organising conferences. He claims to have been an inspirational force that led to the conversion of Aḥmadīs and the transformation of Aḥmadī mosques into “Muslim” ones. He has also mobilised in favour of the *nizam-e mustafa*. According to him, Pakistan was created for Muslims and Islam has to be implemented in both private and public life. *Nizam-e mustafa* is perceived as a complete code of life going beyond religion and comprising two main things: the relation with God (private rights) and social relations (public

rights). “Mention any sphere of life and *nizam-e mustafa* has the answer.”⁵² The spirit of the system is to serve humanity and live for others as the Prophet and Sufi saints did. The method advocated by the *pīr* is to first implement it on oneself, before gradually Islamising the whole of society. Under Musharraf, on 19 November 1999, the *pīr* organised a convention on the topic in Islamabad. He protested eighteen days in front of the military headquarters in Pindi to impose the system of the Prophet and numerous activists handed themselves to the law enforcement agencies.⁵³

Afzal Qadri also brought to the fore another issue: that of the destruction of the shrine of the Prophet’s mother in a hill between Medina and Mecca. Barelwis have great respect for her and consider her grave as an important site of pilgrimage where the Prophet used to go and pray. But according to Wahhābī doctrine, the practice of tomb visitation (*ziyāra*) is an act of idolatry (*shirk*). The “Nejdis”⁵⁴ destroyed the grave in March 1999. The *pīr* launched a protest movement against the Saudi government for the grave to be rebuilt. On 14 April 1999, a demonstration of the ATAS comprising thousands of Barelwi demonstrators from different groups (ATAS, JASP, JUP, and others) as well as students from madrasas⁵⁵ was organised in front of the Saudi embassy in Islamabad. A petition was handed, demanding the reconstruction of the grave. The demonstrators threatened to kill Saudi citizens in order to retaliate against the demolition.⁵⁶ The demonstrators also accused the Saudi government not to be Muslim, or even to be “worse than the Jews”.⁵⁷ Letters were sent to ambassadors of Islamic countries to make them aware of the issue. The then prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, was also called to intervene and hundreds of Barelwi ‘*ulamā*’ surrendered themselves to the law enforcement agencies in front of the parliament. The crisis lasted twenty days. Afzal Qadri was finally imprisoned in Pindi in May. According to Arif Jamal, this demonstration in front of the Saudi embassy has become an important step in the “politics of the Ahl-e Sunnat”,⁵⁸ notably because it was the first time that the Pakistani army was accused of being a “sacred cow”, and of supporting the Jihādī groups in Kashmir instead of handling *jihād* itself.⁵⁹

52 Interview with Pir Afzal Qadri, Pindi, May 2008.

53 Jamal, “From Society to Sect”.

54 A Barelwi form to address Wahhābīs, coming from the province of Nejd in Saudi Arabia.

55 Jamal, “More Threads”.

56 Jamal, “More Threads”.

57 Jamal, “More Threads”.

58 Jamal, “From Society to Sect”.

59 Jamal, “More Threads”.

The *pīr* has also consistently fought against any change in the blasphemy law positing that anyone insulting the Prophet deserves to die. In July 1994, under the Bhutto government, the law minister Iqbal Haider announced the amendment of the law. The *pīr* then organised a strike in Gujrat and even issued a fatwa against the minister, stating he deserved the death penalty. Afzal Qadri was then imprisoned for three months. In April 2000, Musharraf also tried to amend the article. The ATAS then organised a massive demonstration in Lahore and clashed with the police. Almost 300 Barelwi *pīrs* and '*ulamā*' were imprisoned. After the Danish cartoons' publications in February 2006, the ATAS organised a new demonstration in a train from Lahore to Pindi but the police arrested 150 activists, including the *pīr*. They were chanting slogans against the government and demanded Musharraf's resignation for his inability to deal with this issue at an international level.⁶⁰ Thus, Afzal Qadri is arguably one of the most experienced Barelwi mobilisers on the blasphemy issue. He has eventually joined the Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) as its patron-in-chief and has been fighting alongside its leader, Khadim Hussain Rizvi, to mobilise people.

14.3 The Tehreek-e Labbaik and the "Moral Crusade"⁶¹ against Blasphemy

The existence of the blasphemy laws in Pakistan is an important institutional setting to take into account. But the laws alone do not explain why the blasphemy issue has triggered such outrage over the past ten years. As we have seen, mobilisations to protect the honour of the Prophet and to fight against any amendments to the blasphemy laws are not new. Barelwi groups, amongst others, have consistently worked on making people aware of these issues. The existence and availability of moral entrepreneurs of mobilisations are another important factor to take into account in explaining the recent success of the mobilisations about blasphemy. Other structural factors are also to be envisaged: the "war on terror" introduced a new "structure of political opportunities", that is to say, resources, institutional configurations, and public policies that have facilitated the development of protest movements.⁶² New structural constraints and openings determined the course and the newfound success of the Barelwi mobilisations. First, the war on terror heightened the fears in

60 Daily Times, "Train March' against Caricature Foiled".

61 Becker, *Outsiders*, 176.

62 Kitschelt, "Political Opportunities", 58.

Pakistan of a secularisation of the country under the influence of the US. The Islamists' hope of implementing the *sharī'a* being constantly frustrated, the blasphemy issue has come to condense all the tensions of Pakistani society.⁶³ It has come to epitomise the endangered Islamic identity of the country. The war on terror also empowered Barelwis and re-legitimised them on the public sphere. Sectarianism between Sunnīs has thus grown increasingly violent.⁶⁴ The Taliban of Pakistan are rooted in the Deobandi movement and promote a version of Islam that can become extremely hostile to the Barelwis. Since 2005, the Sufi shrines have been more specifically targeted by anti-Sufi militants, and such has been the case of Barelwi scholars. The intensification of violence can be partly explained by the fact that the Musharraf regime (1999–2008) has used Sufism to craft an official good version of Islam. This religious policy coincided with (or was an actual answer to) the active efforts from the part of US policymakers to construct a proper “moderate Islam”. Sufism was erected, or even reified, as an “Islam of peace and love”, and presented as an integral part of President General Pervez Musharraf’s “enlightened moderation” and of the “soft face of Pakistan”. This “strategic use of official religious discourse” indeed had fall-outs on the political opportunities structure and the complex processes of identity politics in Pakistan.⁶⁵ The Barelwis, who have been identified as “good Sufis”, have mobilised at the call of the government from 2009 onwards to “save the soul of Pakistan” against creeping “Talibanisation”. After being marginalised for decades, these Barelwi groups sided with the powers that be in quest of material, symbolic, and political resources. The “Salafī” or “Wahhābī” trend being identified with the “bad Islam” to be combated worldwide, Barelwi actors emphasised publicly their identity of “good Sufi Muslims”. They strongly reinforced the anti-Wahhābī narrative and gave more credit to the religious prism of understanding radicalisation or terrorism, emphasising theological factors whereas profane ones might actually be at stake. Many conferences aiming both at denouncing the “Talibanisation” and at reasserting the role of Sufis in the promotion of an Islam of “peace, love, and tolerance” in contemporary Pakistan have thus been organised. Barelwis became the beneficiaries of state patronage after a marginalisation that had lasted for decades. That change in old patterns intensified sectarianism and radicalised religious identities even more.⁶⁶ Each religious movement competes with the other to represent religious values but also to vociferously organise its public defence.

63 Boivin, *Le Pakistan et l'islam*, 63.

64 Philippon, “Sunnis against Sunnis”.

65 Sheline, “Branding Islam”.

66 Philippon, “‘Positive Branding’ and ‘Soft Power’”.

It is as much about piety and religion as about politics. Being entitled to represent the “good Sufi Islam” in Pakistan, the Barelwis mobilised even more stridently as “true lovers of the Prophet” at the risk of blurring the convenient good Muslim/bad Muslim dichotomy. That is notably the case after the murder by a young Barelwi militant of the governor of Punjab Salman Taseer. That incident appears in hindsight as a watershed in the “politics of blasphemy”. Thus, the empowerment and public legitimisation of Sufi actors in a heightened sectarian environment might have paradoxically encouraged the radicalisation of some of them.

Indeed, it is a member of the Barelwi sectarian group Sunnī Tehreek who killed Taseer in January 2011. Taseer wanted to amend the blasphemy laws and publicly supported a young Christian mother accused of blasphemy in 2009 and sentenced to death, named Asia Bibi. He was also accused of committing himself blasphemy, notably by calling the blasphemy law a “black law”. Taseer’s killer and bodyguard, Mumtaz Qadri, instantly shot to fame after the murder. He became a hero and was glorified by large segments of the population and by members of corporations like lawyers. Some of them welcomed Mumtaz Qadri in the tribunal with rose petals and fought to have the honour to defend him in court. This appeared to many observers as a clear sign that the current radicalisation of Pakistani society was not only to be blamed on the Taliban, but paradoxically also on what some might perhaps call an overzealous interpretation of the veneration of Prophet Muḥammad. During a conference in Lahore on “the preservation of the honour of the Prophetic message”, Barelwi leaders warned the supporters of the defunct Taseer that a Mumtaz Qadri would be at every corner of the country to stop such displays of solidarity. “Don’t associate Mumtaz with any terrorist group, they said. He is a true lover of the Holy Prophet (pbuh).”⁶⁷ After his execution in February 2016, Mumtaz Qadri became a martyr before becoming a saint. A Sufi shrine has been erected by his family members above his tomb in Barakahu, near Islamabad, which is gradually becoming the locus of a pilgrimage (Figures 14.5 and 14.6).⁶⁸

But Mumtaz Qadri has also inspired some of his coreligionists, such as Khadim Hussain Rizvi, the leader of the TLP. A traditional *‘ālim* (he is a *hafiz-ul Quran* and a *shaykh-ul hadith*), Rizvi has come to be known in religious circle as “the blasphemy activist”.⁶⁹ Until 2011, he was working for the Punjabi Ministry of Religious Affairs by delivering the Friday sermons in a mosque of the old city of Lahore, close to the big Sufi shrine of Data Sahib.

67 Tanveer, “Taseer Murder”.

68 Observation of the author.

69 Kalbe, “Who Is Khadim Hussain Rizvi?”



FIGURE 14.5 Signpost leading to the shrine of Mumtaz Qadri, represented with four Sufi saints, Barakahu, December 2017



FIGURE 14.6 Shrine of Mumtaz Qadri, Barakahu, December 2017

After Taseer's assassination, he publicly supported Mumtaz Qadri, which led him to prison. He was suspended from his job at the ministry, "started organising support for section 295C of the Pakistan Penal Code ... and travelled the length and breadth of the country for the cause".⁷⁰ He announced the foundation of the Tehreek-e Labbaik Ya Rasool Allah (TLY, later renamed as Tehreek-e Labbaik Pakistan, TLP) in August 2015, during a Barelwi gathering in the city of Karachi.⁷¹ He is as famous for his use of Muhammad Iqbal's poetry as he is for his crude language. And he justifies his vulgarity, violence, and politics by his love for the Prophet.⁷² After Mumtaz Qadri's execution in February 2016, he decided to get into electoral politics. He supported one of his disciples, who was an independent candidate in the important by-elections held in Lahore in September 2017, in the fiefdom of the party then in power, the Pakistan Muslim League Noon (PMLN). The former prime minister Nawaz Sharif had just been dismissed following the Panama Papers scandal. The campaign of the TLP candidate was only focused on the image of Mumtaz Qadri, who was shown victorious on posters after Taseer's assassination. The results of the polls amazed most observers. The candidate obtained more votes than his rivals from mainstream political parties, whether secular like the PPP or religious like the JI. The very same dynamics were to be observed in the by-elections in Peshawar on 26 October, where a TLP candidate was fielded. A few weeks later, in November, Rizvi launched a three-week sit-in (6–27 November) in the capital, Islamabad, and within a short span of time he became a "formidable political leader".⁷³ A few thousand members of the TLP camped just outside Islamabad at Faizabad Interchange. Their aim was to protest against the modification of the clause on the finality of prophecy in the bill on electoral reforms adopted in October 2017. At first sight, no major issue was involved: the members of parliament had simply modified the oath that candidates for elections have to make and where they have to declare that Muhammad is the last prophet. The expression "I solemnly swear" had been transformed into "I solemnly affirm".⁷⁴ The modification was deleted when the "mistake" was noticed. But the protesters did not care: they wanted the people responsible for the amendment to be punished. In their eyes, the incident appeared to be an insult to the Prophet and therefore a blasphemy case. A policeman was killed, and others wounded in the confrontations with armed Barelwi men called by Khaled Ahmed, one of

70 Kalbe, "Who Is Khadim Hussain Rizvi?"

71 Shahid, "If I Curse in Anger, It Is Justified".

72 Shahid, "If I Curse in Anger, It Is Justified".

73 Kalbe, "Who Is Khadim Hussain Rizvi?"

74 Ahmed, "State's Surrender", 26.

the most respected political analysts of Pakistan, a “mostly unemployed under-class of bearded men who clearly enjoyed the outing”.⁷⁵

The mobilisation quickly attracted the attention of the media. Worried articles started to appear in most English newspapers. The author and prominent columnist Zahid Hussain deemed the TLP to be a new phenomenon, more dangerous than other extremist groups in the country because of its “emotional appeal among the less educated populace. The filthy language used by these clerics and the open incitement to violence has made the lives of not only members of minority religious communities but also moderate Muslims more vulnerable to mob violence.”⁷⁶ An international relations professor from the University of Karachi, Moonis Ahmar, in a column in the *Daily Times* asked: “Where is the state?”⁷⁷ He resented the incapacity of the government to implement the rule of law and its weakness in the face of a few thousand protestors. The reaction of the Minister of Interior Ahsan Iqbal, who had just recently survived an assassination attempt by a TLP member, was at first cautious: he deployed the police and then the Punjab Rangers without any success.⁷⁸ The government then turned towards the military institution that chose to play the role of mediator by helping the TLP to be granted most of its demands. Numerous observers analysed the army’s strategy as an attempt to destabilise the government of the Muslim League. In any case, the army’s intervention legitimised the mobilisation. On 27 November, after the army distributed 1,000-rupee bills to the protestors, TLP protestors ended up obtaining what they had asked for: a six-point agreement was notably signed by Pir Afzal Qadri, Khadim Hussain Rizvi, and the interior minister, amongst others, implying the immediate resignation of the law minister, Zahid Hamid.⁷⁹ The protestors were assured that all those who were arrested during the sit-in would be released. The English media were unanimous in condemning the weakness of the government: the *Dawn* editorial of 28 November evoked a “capitulation”. “General Capitulation” was also the title of *Newsline* magazine in December,⁸⁰ and “State Surrender” was that of *Newsweek*. Khalid Ahmed eloquently wrote in his long *Newsweek* article that “the Pakistan that existed before November 27 is no more; Khadim Hussain Rizvi and his followers may well shape the identity of the one that emerges in the days and weeks to come.”⁸¹

75 Ahmed, “State’s Surrender”, 25.

76 Hussain, “The Flames of Bigotry”.

77 Ahmar, “Where Is the State?”

78 Rangers are paramilitary forces ensuring the domestic security of Pakistan.

79 Shahid, “General Capitulation”.

80 Shahid, “General Capitulation”.

81 Ahmed, “State’s Surrender”, 27.

As these few opinions show, the liberal Westernised intelligentsia of Pakistan took stock of the spectacular and worrying way in which the stakes were being raised around the blasphemy issue. This issue is now being brandished as a tool of political legitimisation and as an instrument for the limitation of freedom of expression. But these reactions are not representative of public opinion. Indeed, blasphemy has over the years become a very dear cause to the heart of Pakistanis. TV channels in Urdu have attacked the government for its “crimes against the Prophet of Islam”.⁸² In the political field, the leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e Insaaf and new prime minister since August 2018, Imran Khan, has lauded the military intervention and the success of the mobilisation by indicating that some members of the party were willing to participate.⁸³ A serious poll conducted by Gallup Pakistan, the best poll institute of the country, in January 2018 reveals that public opinion is rather favourable to Khadim Hussain Rizvi.⁸⁴ Forty-one per cent of the 1,646 people interviewed said their opinion of Rizvi was good or very good, 23 per cent bad or really bad, 28 per cent were indifferent, and 8 per cent did not know or did not answer.

In today’s Pakistan, the popularity of movements against blasphemy has thus dramatically risen. As analysed by the anthropologist Paul Rollier,

this article of the Penal code has become for a large part of the Pakistani population a sort of a fetish, the ultimate symbolic and legal guarantee of the Islamic character of Pakistan.... The issue of blasphemy and the popular mobilisations against it have now clearly been co-opted and supported by the state. They have become the vehicles of a certain Pakistani nationalism, however exclusive it is. If the state does not harness these mobilisations, it is its own popular legitimacy that is threatened. So it is impossible for the government to change laws on the matter.⁸⁵

Nothing better illustrates that analysis than the advertisement published in the daily newspaper *The Nation* on 7 January 2018. It portrayed the chief minister of Punjab, Shahbaz Sharif, in a position of prayer (*du‘ā*), by the Dome of Medina, along with the title: “Eternal devotion for the holy Prophet (pbuh). Faith in finality of prophethood. To establish tolerant and harmonious society and revive the Sufi traditions. In the company of great spiritual leaders, famous

82 Ahmed, “State’s Surrender”, 26.

83 Ahmed, “State’s Surrender”, 26.

84 *Gallup Pakistan*, Accessed 26 September 2021, ... <http://gallup.com.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Jan-8-1.pdf>.

85 Rollier, “Sacrilège et politique religieuse au Pakistan”.

scholars and the custodians of prominent shrines,” that is to say, the Barelwis. As Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori would say: “Rulers ... routinely invoke Islamic imagery and ideas to legitimize their rule and to defend themselves against Muslim critics.”⁸⁶

14.4 Conclusion

The reassertion of the Barelwis in the political field appeared to many observers as a possible game changer in the July 2018 general elections. According to the researcher Amir Rana, director of the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies: “The TLY has succeeded where many other Barelwi organisations had failed: it has been able to be considered as a major threat in the next general elections for the mainstream political parties, especially the PMLN.”⁸⁷ In today’s Pakistan, the struggle against blasphemy has indeed become a valid manifesto for elections. As a matter of fact, the TLP successfully mobilised voters (2.2 million) and became the fifth-largest vote-getter in the 2018 general elections (and the third for the province of Punjab). This electoral empowerment of the Barelwis on the national political scene was based primarily on their agenda of protecting the Prophet’s honour and the finality of his prophecy. For some observers, it is the first time in Pakistan’s history that a two-and-a-half-year-old party has succeeded in mobilising such human resources in terms of candidates, both for the provincial and national assemblies’ seats nationwide.⁸⁸ As far as funding their campaign was concerned, TLP leaders managed to benefit from strong social and religious networks comprising thousands of mosques and shrines covering the whole Pakistani territory. These pre-existing networks of solidarity influenced the structure of the mobilisation that has succeeded in capturing them⁸⁹ and also helped the party candidates legitimise their campaign in the eyes of the population. Besides that, TLP leaders have also succeeded in challenging the old doctrinal hegemony which the Deobandis/Salafis have been enjoying since the 1980s. “In fact, their power goes beyond deciding who is and is not a good Muslim: they can simply decide who is not a Muslim and then hang the threat of death upon any head anytime.”⁹⁰ And their street power remains remarkable: the recent acquittal by the Supreme

86 Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, 5.

87 Amir, “The Rise of Barelvis”.

88 Hussain, “New Arrival”, 7.

89 Oberschall, *Social Conflict*.

90 Hussain, “New Arrival”, 7.

Court of Asia Bibi led in November 2018 to the TLP bringing the country to a standstill through massive nationwide demonstrations. The party called for mutiny within the army, threatened to kill the judges, and pushed for Bibi to be hanged. The government met this new threat of the Sufi Islamists with a massive countrywide crackdown on thousands of TLP workers and leaders. The latter have been booked under sedition and terrorism charges. The party appears to be much weaker now, even though both Pir Afzal Qadri and Khadim Hussain Rizvi were finally granted bail by the Lahore High Court in May 2019, a few days after Bibi left Pakistan for Canada.⁹¹

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⁹¹ Haroon, “TLP’s Khadim Rizvi”.

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Taking Lessons from the Prophet in Times of War

Muḥammadan Images during the Afghan Resistance (ca. 1978–92)

Jan-Peter Hartung

On 26 April 1978, the Leninist Khalq faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), led by former journalist Nūr Muḥammad Tarakī (assassinated 1358SH/1979), seized power in a coup against the government of Muḥammad Dāvūd Khān (assassinated 1357SH/1978), euphemistically called the “Ṣawr Revolution”, and established the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.¹ With this, the more than a decade-long tug-of-war between anti-religious leftists and emphatically religious forces in the country had reached a first culmination point. Almost instantly, the PDPA forces started to quell any potential resistance to their regime with brute force, culminating in the massacre of over a thousand villagers in Keṛālah in the north-eastern province of Kunar nearly exactly a year after the coup. The armed resistance to the PDPA regime, which emerged in response,² soon evolved into a complex mesh of traditional ad hoc militias in rural Pashtun communities (*laḫkarūnah*; sing. *laḫkar*), well-organised Islamist organisations of urban³ provenance, and armed outfits with social as well as ideological ties into both of the former. Moreover, this mesh also became almost instantly – although to substantially variant degrees – a pawn in the geopolitical manoeuvrings of numerous governments in the Age of the Cold War, which became even more severe after the Soviet military intervention in the country on Christmas Eve 1979. This invasion, in turn, resulted in the installation of a president more subservient to the interests of the CPSU leadership, as well as a continuous presence of Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan for an entire decade.

1 On the history of the PDPA, see Arnold, *Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism*.

2 See Saharī, *Jihād dar Kunar'hā*, 1–4.

3 The underlying concept of “urbanity” here follows Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, 3:2036, who defined it by ascribing to its modern-type inhabitants “across all social groups an urban ideological unity against the countryside, a unity which even the most modern nuclei in terms of civil function do not escape.... There is disgust and disdain for the ‘villager’, an implicit front against the demands of the countryside” (trans. J. A. Buttigieg).

The resistance which these events triggered was immediately presented as a *jihād*,⁴ thus casting it into an Islamic web of meaning that appealed to the conservative rural religiosity as well as to ideological precepts in the Islamist worldview, and could therefore guarantee a substantial mobilisation of male Afghans of diverse ethnic and socio-economic background.⁵ Unsurprisingly, discussions on the nature of *jihād* and the legal conditions for it figure prominently in the many periodic publications issued by the various carriers of the Resistance in a wide range of languages.⁶ While, perhaps for pragmatic reasons, there appears little disagreement in this matter, this is not so the case in the surprisingly sparse references to the Prophet Muḥammad during that period. I therefore propose that a closer look at these various references will provide insight into the diverse ideological underpinnings of the various factions involved, and allows to finally class them roughly into two major camps: “Islamists”, on the one hand, and what I will call “Frontier Deobandīs”, on the other. Both factions are, of course, ideal-typical:⁷ in reality, they overlapped more often than not, making a clear classification of any given militia challenging. Yet, I claim that my ideal-typical categories still carry some currency, as they reflect also distinct origins, social embeddedness, and frames of reference, ultimately including images of the Prophet.

In the following, I shall first map the various groups involved in the Afghan Resistance, already presenting them along the divide into “Islamists” and “Frontier Deobandīs”. Next, the respective images on the Prophet Muḥammad will be fleshed out, to be followed by an attempt to explain the differences between them in a kind of *longue durée* perspective. I have set the time frame

4 For example, Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥaqqānī, one of the protagonists in this chapter, was reported by his followers to have declared *jihād* already in response to Dāvūd Khān’s own coup d’état in April 1973; see Khān, “Pah Afghānistān ke dā jihād dā lumḥānī ‘amaliyāt”, 19. In this regard, we need to bear in mind the by and large uncritically supportive attitude of Pashtun borderland tribes for the Barakzay monarchy (1826–1973), vis-à-vis competing political forces. See, for example, Khan, “The Pashtoon Resistance”, 67–69.

5 This is based on my own review of almost 2,000 obituaries for (exclusively male) resistance fighters from between 1980 and 1992, published in various periodicals during the Resistance by most of those militias that enjoyed substantial logistic and financial support from the governments of the USA, Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

6 See Fuchs, “Glossy Global Leadership”.

7 While it should go without saying that such categories are necessarily bound to fail an identical representation of complex and contingent empirical entities, the oftentimes rather lax employment of categories such as “Islamist”, which leads to widespread erroneous assumptions that they represent realities in a positivist fashion, suggests otherwise. By emphatically stressing the ideality of my descriptive categories, I wish to explicitly stress that my explanatory approach is a rather typecasting one, which necessarily confines the extent of my own analysis.

1978–92 deliberately, as after the successful overthrowing of the regime of the *Ḥizb-i Vaṭān*, successor to the PDPA, by 1992 the impact of views and argument developed in militant Islamic circles in the MENA region would become more discernible in the wider Hindukush region, thanks to an ever-growing contingent of especially Arab militant exiles to the conveniently hard-to-control region.

15.1 Mapping the Afghan Resistance

For many people in predominantly rural Afghanistan the PDPA coup constituted only the culmination of a process of gentrification of the entire country that was conducted from Kabul. This process can be traced back to the reign of King Amānallāh of the Barakzī tribe within the Durrānī confederation in the early twentieth century, during which the monarch stipulated a programme of modernisation that, after all, remained confined to the larger cities only.⁸ The establishment of the – once again predominantly urban – PDPA regime and the subsequent Soviet invasion in December 1979, finally, offered a legitimate reason for concerted armed resistance.

Those who took up arms in opposition were of very diverse background and driven by variant motivations. Still, at least three clusters of actors can be ideal-typically established which, on the ground, interacted more often than not and begot countless hybrid forms both in terms of organisation as well as underlying inclinations. First are traditionally conservative rural communities, for a long time detached from the various agendas of whoever was in charge in Kabul. The PDPA strategy to develop these regions, many of which in the dominantly tribal Pashtun regions along the foothills of the Hindukush, was to mock the perceived backwardness of its respective population and to see through anti-religious and counter-traditional measures by force of arms. The religiosity in these regions was strongly shaped by forms of subaltern piety,⁹ which

8 See, for example, Askar, “The Will Not to Count”, where he discusses the controversial top-down introduction of administrative core measures during Amānallāh’s reign, such as the population census, the allocation of street names and house numbers, and the related introduction of central services such as the provision of electrical energy and water.

9 I am certainly acknowledging the heavy baggage that this term comes with, from the “classic subalterne” in Gramsci’s *Quaderni del carcere*, via the so-called Subaltern Studies Group of the 1980s and 1990s, which includes also Gayatri Spivak’s seminal, yet controversial, essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988). Still, this term has been deliberately selected as a purely analytical category against the less flexible concept of “(socio-economic) class” to grasp the lower strata of Pashtun society both in the rural as well as urban context. I understood

also included prominently pious visitations of the graves of locally acknowledged saints as well as the belief in the miraculous powers of amulets;¹⁰ their social organisation strongly gender segregated, yet idealised as acephalous.¹¹ Religious authority pivoted primarily on the authority of a Sufi shaykh and his local socio-religious infrastructure, here first and foremost basic education (*tarbiyat*) and feeding the poor (*langar*);¹² their importance for the sociopolitical, however, has been well recognised by the local and imperial powerholders who have subsequently attempted to tie those Sufi *shuyūkh* closer to their own circles, furthering their own respective interests.¹³ Yet, whatever their proclivities towards or against worldly power, it were quite often these local religious dignitaries who would translate distinct political agendas – either those of their political patrons or their own – into rallying innumerable and oftentimes only locally active tribal militias (*laḡkarūnah*) whose objective was

“subaltern” here as a relational one to that of “elite” and entirely context bound: who might be “subaltern” in one constellation can well be “elite” in another. Moreover, and much in line with the current state of discussion of this term (see e.g. Ludden, “A Brief History of Subalternity”, esp. 19ff; Green, “Rethinking the Subaltern”), subalternity does by no means deny voice or agency – in fact, as stated early on by Chakrabarty, “Invitation to a Dialogue”, 376, it reflects “the composite culture of resistance to and acceptance of domination and hierarchy”. This definition appears useful, as it can also account for the fact that subaltern actors buy well into the same coercive framework as elites, and are not immune from elitist tendencies as well.

- 10 For such religious practices, see Marsden, *Living Islam*, esp. 157–92.
- 11 The rather romantic image of Pashtun society as an essentially acephalous one owes much to the otherwise pioneering work of Barth, *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans*, 12 and 104–27, on which the author revised his position somewhat in *Features of Person and Society in Swat*, 121–81. For the issue of all-comprehensive gender segregation in Pashtun rural communities, which already disenchant the myth of acephalousness, see Grima, *Secrets from the Field*.
- 12 See Wieland-Karimi, *Islamische Mystik in Afghanistan*, 147–51 and esp. 161; Caron, “Sufism and Liberation”, 138ff. and 144.
- 13 This insight requires us to employ a modified image of the Sufi shaykh and his sociopolitical integrative potential: at least in the regional context under review, their close- or aloofness from political power led to opposing socio-economic constituencies. Indeed, harsh criticism against *shuyūkh* who have compliably submitted to the pull of political power gave therefore rise to severe criticism by those remaining exclusively dependent on their spiritual capital. This, in fact, had been the case already when Aḡmad Shāh Durrānī (r. 1747–72) tried to tie Pashtun *shuyūkh* of various provenance to his court in Kandahar; a more contemporary case in point is that of Sayyid Amīn al-Ḥasanāt (d. 1379/1960), the Pīr Ṣāḡhib of Mānkī Sharīf some twenty miles east of Nowshera, who would even act in the Pashtun communities as an agent of the first Pakistani government and its military apparatus. See Kākākhel, *Pīr ṣāḡhib-i Mānkī-yi sharīf Sayyid Amīn al-Ḥasanāt*, 99–106.

first and foremost to regain the authority over their communal affairs, including religious ones, from the grips of the imperial central government.¹⁴

The other two ideal-typical clusters are, in fact, those who are in focus of the following exposition, with at least partially similar dismissive views of local beliefs and practices especially in the rural communities as the PDPA and its various Marxist, Leninist, and Maoist ancillaries. The first one, in fact, originated in the very same urban and educational environment as the PDPA, and responded to similar societal problems in an – ostensibly – diametrically opposed fashion: the “Islamists”. In the late 1950s, a first Islamist circle began to form at Kabul University around Ghulām Muḥammad Niyāzī (presumably killed 1398/1978), then professor at the Sharī‘a Faculty, which included later militia commanders Burhān al-Dīn Rabbānī (assassinated 1432/2011), ‘Abd al-Rabb Rasūl Sayyāf (b. 1364/1945) and also, though more loosely, students of engineering Gulbuddīn Hikmatyār (b. 1366/1947) and Aḥmad Shāh Mas‘ūd (assassinated 1422/2001). Niyāzī had embraced Islamist thought during a two-year study trip to Cairo, where he got acquainted with the Jamā‘at al-Ikhwān al-Muslimīn (JIM) during a time of state persecution for the alleged assassination attempt on President Nasser in October 1954.¹⁵ Only a few years later, his principal students Rabbānī and Sayyāf followed suit and earned master’s degrees from al-Azhar in Islamic philosophy and *‘ulūm al-ḥadīth*, respectively.¹⁶ In the following years, especially Rabbānī and the circle of students that formed around him drew systematic inspiration from the thought of early Egyptian Muslim Brethren,¹⁷ while Niyāzī laid the foundations of an Islamist

14 A prominent representative of this cluster within the Afghan Resistance was Malik Muḥammad Zarīn (assassinated 1432/2011), a landowner of the Mashvānī tribe of Binshāhī in Lower Dīr on the Pakistani side of the border with Afghanistan, with property on either side of the borderline. Zarīn entered into coalitions with about everyone deemed useful for achieving his locally and ethnically confined goals. Personal information by a member of a family of *masharān* from Upper Dīr, Bārah Galī (Pakistan), 10 August 2017.

15 See “Yādī az ustad Ghulām Muḥammad Niyāzī mu‘assis-i Nahḏat-i Islāmī dar Afghānistān”, *Miṣāq-i Khūn* 1/2 (1359SH/1401H), 8ff.; “Yādī az ustad pohānid ‘Niyāzī”, *Miṣāq-i Khūn* 1/5 (1360SH/1401H), 13, and 1/6–7 (1360SH/1401H), 12ff.

16 See “Mukhtaṣar zindigī-nāmah-i ustād Burhān al-Dīn Rabbānī – rahbar-i Jam‘iyyat-i Islāmī-yi Afghānistān”, *Miṣāq-i Khūn* 1/2 (1359SH/1401H), 21ff., here 21; also ‘Abd Rabbih, *‘Abd Rabb al-Rasūl Sayyāf*, 24.

17 See, for example, Dr Sayyid Muḥammad Mūsā Tavānā, “Junbish’hā-yi islāmī dar pīch va khamm-i tārikh”, *Miṣāq-i Khūn* 1/4 (1359SH/1401H), 11ff.; 1/5 (1359SH/1401H), 9–12; 1/7 (1360SH), 10ff.; 1/9–10 (1360SH), 15–7; 1/11 (1360SH), 27–30; 1/12 (1360SH), 8–11; 2/1 (1360SH), 8ff.; 2/3 (1360SH), 17ff.; and 2/4 (1360SH), 19–22; Engineer ‘Abd al-Vadūd “Khālīd”: “Ikhwān al-Muslimīn dar masīr-i da‘vat”, *Ḥaqq Pācūn* 2/12–13 (1367SH), 54–56, 2/14–15 (1367SH), 51–54, 2/18 (1368SH), 50–52; “Maṣāhibah-yi kih murshid-i ‘amm-i Jam‘iyyat-i Ikhwān al-Muslimīn pīrāmūn-i jihād-i Afghānistān šurat giriftah ast”, *Ḥaqq Pācūn* 2/8 (1367SH),

jurisprudence in Afghanistan with his principle work *Ma'ākhiz-i Duvvum-i Fiqh-i Islāmī*.¹⁸ This way, Islamist core concepts, such as prominently that of the “Islamic revolution” (*inqilāb-i islāmī*) and the “establishment of the government of divine justice” (*iqāmah-yi hukūmat-i 'adl-i ilāhī*), were introduced to the wider Islamic discourse in pre-communist Afghanistan,¹⁹ but pointed already to a high potential for conflict with the locally established and maintained forms of subaltern religiosity in a rural setting. To the Islamists, the armed resistance to an emphatically anti-religious and oppressive regime offered a golden opportunity to pursue their long-term goal, namely, the establishment of a normatively grounded Islamic polity, which would necessarily clash with the established forms of Muslim religiosity in rural communities throughout Afghanistan.²⁰ Yet, for the sake of argument, I shall confine my further exposition predominantly to Pashtun Islamist circles.

The third ideal-typically construed cluster of (Pashtun) actors in the Afghan Resistance, finally, originates largely in the same milieu as the locally active tribal militias, yet share, at least to an extent, the elitist attitudes of Islamist vis-à-vis local religious beliefs and practices: those who represent what I call “Frontier Deobandiyat”. This reformist current was carried into the “Pashtun borderland”,²¹ and from there further into Afghanistan and Eastern Iran,²² by the anti-colonial agitation of Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan, better known by his epithet “Shaykh al-Hind” (d. 1339/1920), and a circle of students, many of whom natives

6–8. All these and other references to the JIM in the periodicals of the Islamist organisations in the Afghan Resistance defy to an extent the assessment of Fuchs, “Glossy Global Leadership”, 189, that the ideological reference of these organisations to the JIM was less substantial than generally assumed.

18 See Niyāzī, *Ma'ākhiz-i duvvum-i fiqh-i islāmī*, esp. 30–149. Hermeneutically significant, other than Islamist theorists like Abū l-A'lā Mawdūdī, Niyāzī stressed the indispensable importance of the Prophetic *sunna* as enshrined in the six canonical collections of *ḥadīth*. Mawdūdī, in turn, had argued that legal precepts can, and should ideally, be derived exclusively from the Qur'ānic revelation. See Hartung, *A System of Life*, 83–90.

19 See, for example, Rabbānī, *Irshād-i jihād*, 126 (here in a speech delivered to his partisans in Peshawar in April 1983); Rabbānī, *Amūkhtānihāyī*: this transcript of a lengthy speech was first published in 1360SH/1981–82, and was earlier serialised in the JIA-journal *Miṣāq-i Khūn* 1/11 (1360SH), 12–7; 1/9–10 (1360SH), 24–28; 2/1 (1360SH), 12–16; 2/2 (1360SH), 9–11; 2/3 (1360SH), 9–11.

20 The various Islamist organisations within the Afghan Resistance comprised all ethnic, linguistic, and denominational groups in Afghanistan. For a breakdown, see Olesen, *Islam and Politics*, 281–85.

21 An attempt in theoretically sustaining this notion beyond the common angle of international relations is Hartung, “Of Pious Missions”, 3–5.

22 For Afghanistan, see Olesen, *Islam and Politics*, 46 and 107ff.; for south-eastern Iran, see Dudoignon, *The Baluch, Sunnism and the State in Iran*, 3–5 and 149–70.

of the Pashtun borderland with further-reaching connections to local religious authorities.²³ They succeeded in casting a net of *madāris* over the region, its most significant one being the Dār al-‘Ulūm Ḥaqqāniyyah in Akoṛah Khaṭṭak near Peshawar, established in 1947 by ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Akoṛavī (d. 1409/1988), a student of the Shaykh al-Hind’s foremost disciple Ḥusayn Aḥmad Madanī (d. 1377/1957).²⁴ Two Pashtuns from Afghanistan who, in turn, had studied with ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq even before the official inauguration of the Dār al-‘Ulūm would eventually emerge as leading representatives of Frontier Deobandiyyat during the armed resistance against the PDPA regime and its Soviet allies: Muḥammad Yūnus Khālīṣ (d. 1427/2006) and Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥaqqānī (d. 1440/2018).²⁵ Further spiritual nourishment was provided by Pashtun Deobandī scholars who set up shop in Karachi since the late 1970s;²⁶ go-between was Sayyid Shīr ‘Alī Shāh Madanī (d. 1437/2015), one further fellow student of Khālīṣ and Ḥaqqānī.²⁷

Of all these actors, Khālīṣ at least turns out difficult to pin down.²⁸ True to the common image of a highly flexible and pragmatic borderland actor, he defies categorisation as either a clear-cut representative of Frontier Deobandiyyat or Islamism proper, but, in fact, manoeuvred constantly between both poles. Having himself studied in Cairo, it is quite likely that Khālīṣ knew Niyāzī, who had returned from there only a little earlier. While in charge of a religious programme on Kabul Radio, Khālīṣ had his Dari translation of Sayyid Quṭb’s seminal *al-‘Adāla al-ijtimā‘īyya fī l-islām* published,²⁹ to be followed by

23 See Hartung, “The Praiseworthiness of Divine Beauty”, 355–59; Hartung, “Of Pious Missions”, 11–14.

24 See Akoṛavī, *Fatāwā-yi haqqāniyyah*, 1100ff.; Ḥaqqānī, *Savānīh-i shaykh al-ḥadīṣ Ḥaḡrat Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq*, 43–58.

25 See ‘Azīz Allāh, *Də Mawlavī Khālīṣ žvand, fann aw and*, 1ff.; “al-Ḥājj Mawlavī Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥaqqānī lah (al-Naṣīḥah) sarah pah marakah ke: čangah chih malgarī millatūnah də kufri ṭaqatūno tar tāšīr lāndəy dī gadūn hič bīrūnī qawt tah də hevād pah dākḥili chārūkəy”, *Manba‘ al-Jihād* [Pashto] 2/5 (1369SH/1411H), 36–42 and 52, here 41.

26 Karachi had become a major destination for Afghan refugees after the PDPA coup d’état in April 1978; its *dīnī madāris*, predominantly of Deobandī provenance, serving as major sanctuaries for the economically (and also politically) disadvantaged arrivals from Afghanistan. See Gayer, *Karachi*, 163–204; on the systematic political discrimination of Afghan refugees by the Pakistani state authorities, see Alimia, “Performing the Afghanistan-Pakistan Border”.

27 See “al-Sīra al-dhātīyya li-l-shaykh al-Duktūr Shīr ‘Alī Shāh al-Madanī”, in Madanī, *Yād*, 17–19, here 17.

28 The same, in fact, applies to one more important leader in the Resistance, Muḥammad Nabī Muḥammadi (d. 1423/2002), leader of the Ḥarakat-i Inqilāb-i Islāmī. I had to leave him out of this discussion, because at the time of writing in early 2019 I was still lacking the relevant text material.

29 Published as *Sayyid Quṭb: Islām va ‘adālat-i ijtimā‘ī*, 2 vols (Kabul, Anjuman-i tarbiyyat va afkār, 1339SH).

further translations from works of leading figures of the JIM, such as *al-Dīn wa-l-ḥaḍāra al-insāniyya* by Muḥammad al-Bahī (d. 1402/1982).³⁰ While the relationship between Khālīṣ and the Niyāzī circle in Kabul would remain only informal, from about 1968 Khālīṣ would become more formally involved in a similar circle in Jalalabad.³¹ Yet, true to his origins in the socially conservative rural environments of the western Pashtun borderland, Khālīṣ remained at least partly distinct from his Islamist compatriots in the cities.

15.2 The Prophet as Strategist: The Primacy of This World

For Islamically inspired actors, the PDPA regime since April 1978 and the subsequent Soviet invasion in December 1979 offered a legitimate reason to armed resistance. Yet, to the Islamists who grew out of the university campuses of the larger Afghan cities it also offered a chance to pursue their long-term goal, namely, the establishment of a normatively grounded Islamic polity. Consequently, references to the Islamic heritage, prominently including those to the Prophet Muḥammad, were usually made with this objective in view.

Perhaps the bluntest reference in this regard was made in the autumn of 1988 in *Shafaq*, the magazine of the Ḥikmatyār-led Ḥizb-i Islāmī (ḤiI-Ḥ), in which the Prophet was presented as a military strategist only, from whom to learn would be similar than to study, let us say, Carl von Clausewitz (d. 1831). From the references to the punitive expeditions against the (Jewish) Banū Qurayṣa and the Banū Laḥyān, the conquest of Mecca and the military campaign of the early Muslims against the Byzantines at Tabūk,³² author Muḥammad Raḥīm “Kanjār” distilled six tactical principles, which, because of their attribution to the Prophet, were ascribed authoritative status. Yet, the six principles are hardly exceptional: they revolve much around speed and surprise in attack, provided for by the choice of preferably difficult territory and moment of time for striking from an unexpected direction. Perhaps only two principles have wider implications: the first consists in the deliberate concealment of one’s strength and determination, the second in the use of surprise means in military engagement.

30 Published as *Muḥammad al-Bahī: Dīn aw insānī tamaddun* (Kabul, Dawlatī maṭba‘ah, 1351SH).

31 See ‘Azīz Allāh, *Də Mawlavī Khālīṣ žvand, fann aw and*, 27–33; also Ṭalāyī, *Khālīṣ Bābā*, 33–36.

32 See “Khanjar”, Muḥammad Raḥīm: “Də Rasūl Allāh – ṣallā Allāh ‘alayhi wa-sallam – jangī tāktik”, *Shafaq* 2nd series 3/3–4 (1367SH), 33ff. All these events are well attested in the *sīra* and *maghāzī* literature: see, prominently, Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, 2:233–54, 279–81, 389–426, and 515–31; Wāqidi, *al-Maghāzī*, 496–521, 535–37, 780–871, and 985–1002.

Especially the latter had been liberally employed by later militant Jihādī theorists who either developed their thought during their participation in the Afghan Resistance-turned-militancy from around 1987 onwards, or have turned out to be sources of inspiration for increasingly radical militants in the Pashtun borderland. Thus, for example, the Egyptian known, among various aliases, as Sayyid Imām al-Sharīf (b. 1369/1950) highlighted in *al-Umda fi 'idād al-'udda li-l-jihād fi sabīl Allāh*, written during his participation in the Afghan Resistance, the legal permissibility, even commendability, of using civilian non-combatants strategically as protective shields (*tatarrus*),³³ a view that would be further refined by Abū Yaḥyā al-Lībī (killed 1433/2012) during his active time with factions of the Taḥrīk-i ʿĀlibān-i Pākistān (TṬP) in North Waziristan.³⁴ More disturbingly in line with the tactical precept to employ unknown means is a fatwa by Saudi Arabian scholar Nāṣir b. Ḥamad al-Fahd (b. 1388/1968), which would become widely read in Pashtun militant circles,³⁵ and in which he legally justified the employment of weapons of mass destruction by establishing an analogy to the Prophet's own practice. Muḥammad himself was reported to have used innovative technology such as the catapult during the campaign against the people of Ṭā'if,³⁶ ordered the deliberate destruction of an enemy's means of living when having the date palm trees of the Jewish Banū Naḍīr burned down in retaliation for their alleged breaking of the covenant of Medina,³⁷ and had wells of the opposition poisoned and lethal animals, such as scorpions and snakes, employed in warfare.³⁸

For other Pashtun Islamist representatives of the Afghan Resistance, meanwhile, such military strategic considerations appear to have been of lesser importance, and they would address another virulent issue through the prism

33 See Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz, *al-Umda fi 'idād al-'udda*, 30, 33–35, 86ff., 303, 313, 328ff., 357ff., and 372ff. Sayyid Imām's predominant legal reference here is Ibn Qudāma's *al-Mughnī*. See also Fuchs, *Proper Signposts for the Camp*, 83–85; Nedza, "Takfir im militanten Salafismus", 92, 174, and 235 n.63.

34 Lībī's infamous treatise on the subject, released after his escape from US captivity in December 2005, is titled *al-Tatarrus fi l-jihād al-mu'āṣir*. For an analysis of that text, see Brachman and Warius, "Abu Yahya al-Libi's 'Human Shield in Modern Jihad'".

35 The text is included in a widespread collection of Arabic Jihādī primers, named *Haqibat al-mujāhid (II)*, compiled under the aegis of Abū Muḥammad al-Maqdisī (b. 1379/1959), which used to be available on TṬP-affiliated websites for download. Its Urdu translation by Ḥafīz 'Ammār Ṣiddīqī had been published in June 2004 as *Kuffār par 'amm tabāhī musallīḥ karne kī sharṭ ḥaysīyyat* (Lahore, Dār al-Ishā'at al-Islāmiyya).

36 See Fahd, *Risāla fi ḥukm*, 12ff.; compare Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 9:144 (*ḥadīth* 18,119); Majd al-Dīn ibn Taymiyya, *al-Muntaqā fi l-aḥkām al-shar'iyya*, 741 (*aḥādīth* 3,305–7).

37 See Fahd, *Risāla fi ḥukm*, 11ff.; for his references, see 'Asqalānī, *Faṭḥ al-bārī*, 4:154ff.; 'Aynī, *Umdat al-qārī*, 14:375.

38 See Fahd, *Risāla fi ḥukm*, 15–21; for one of his numerous references, see Shāfi'ī, *al-Umm*, 5:591.

of the Prophetic precedent instead: the justification of the leadership claims of the Islamist militias and their respective command. It is somewhat remarkable that this subject was highlighted predominantly in the early days of the Resistance,³⁹ while the only explicit statement in the later years appeared once again in *Ḥaqq Pācūn* of the Ittihad-i Islāmī barā-yi Āzādī-yi Afghānistān (IIAA), led by Sayyāf,⁴⁰ suggesting that at that time they were about the only ones among the militias seeing a need to justify leadership claims in recourse to the Prophet. The argument runs in full conformity with the classical Islamist interpretation of Q 24:55, in which God declares those who believe and work righteous deeds to be His deputies on earth.⁴¹ For the anonymous author of this short article in question, the benchmark for believing and working righteous deeds is the Prophet Muḥammad,⁴² which, so he concludes, had been most comprehensively embraced by the Pashtun *mujāhidīn* in the Afghan Resistance. At the same time, he dissociates their religiously justified leadership claims from mundane rule (*salṭanat*; *vākmānī*), which, so I assume, is implicitly aimed at the PDPA rule as well as the preceding parliamentary system under Muḥammad Davūd Khān and the Barakzay monarchy, with its last representative in Zāhir Shāh (d. 1386SH/2007) then bidding his time in Italian exile.⁴³ Here, too, the author follows standard Islamist rhetoric: while the intentions of even the PDPA cadres may be sound, the foundations on which their intentions rest are not, and such political systems consequently bound to fail. Therefore, following in the footsteps of the politician Muḥammad is the only guarantor for a stable and benevolent sociopolitical framework.

Finally, especially in the later stages of the Resistance, when the *mujāhidīn* made substantial progress not least thanks to US material support, Islamist actors now saw a golden opportunity to target the overall social fabric of Pashtun society which would necessarily clash with the alternative Islamist model of society that was to form the basis of the Islamic state to come. The matter was urgent: after all, it also needed to be determined how to deal with cadres and supporters of the PDPA and its ally, once the victory had been achieved. This, in

39 See, for instance, Sayyid Abū l-Ḥasan [‘Alī] Nadvī, “Də Payghambar – ş – aw siyāsī līdar farq (trans. Faḫl Mawlā “Latūn”), *Shafaq* 1/1 (1358SH), 14ff. and 44.

40 See “Narivāl də payghambar – şallā Allāh ‘alayhi wa-sallam – də uşūlo payravə təh tarbal har vakht nən zyātah arṭiyā laray”, *Ḥaqq Pācūn* 1/1 (1364SH/1406H), 4ff.

41 See here the elaboration of the *khilāfat Allāh*, vis-à-vis the historical *khilāfat rasūl Allāh*, by Mawdūdī as a classical Islamist core author in Hartung, *A System of Life*, 105–10.

42 See also “Kashshāf”, “Də muḥammadi risālat riḫtinūli”, *Ḥaqq Pācūn* 2/14–15 (1378SH), 28ff.

43 It seems that the anonymous author was well aware of the still immense support throughout Afghanistan for Zāhir Shāh and a return to the monarchy, which for many Afghans with no direct personal experience of this further distant past represented an idealised period of relative public security and stability.

fact, is the context of a third Islamist reference to the Prophet, which, however, remained rather implicit in his portrayal as perfect role model.

In the editorial to the first issue of ҲиИ-Ҳ's *Shafaq* magazine, the story of the beginning of Muḥammad's public preaching has been retold, cast here as a challenge of an oppressive aristocratic (*mulūkī*) or ecclesiocratic (*dārānī*) political system, which required upright personalities such as Muḥammad's early companion 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd daring to stand up for their faith in public. Still, the story of the early Islamic *da'wa* is not one of humility and forbearance, but rather of pugnaciousness, especially when it got correlated with contemporary – in this case Soviet – imperialism (*isti'mār*).⁴⁴ The pragmatic sociopolitical culture in the Pashtun borderland was, by inference, blamed for a lax attitude towards political systems other than an Islamic one, which is why steadfast Muslims, that is, those organised in the ҲиИ-Ҳ, need a systematic approach to redress this evil.

More implicit still is the critique of traditional sociopolitical structures in the Pashtun borderland in an article by a certain "Kashshāf", once again published in the Pashto-language *Haqq Pācūn* of Sayyāf's IIAA.⁴⁵ On the surface, the author just narrated the story of the conversation between the Prophet's later companion Mughīra b. Shu'ba with Cyrus, the Patriarch of Alexandria (*al-muqawqis*), on Muḥammad's personality.⁴⁶ Yet, the historical context of the story conveys some meaning with regard to the question of tribal loyalty vis-à-vis commitment to the supra-tribal community of Medina under the leadership of the Prophet. Mughīra namely had travelled to Egypt alongside a delegation of the Banū Mālik of Ṭā'if and, enraged by what he perceived as disrespect towards him, killed them all. When offering a fifth of the booty to the Prophet, Muḥammad rejected it, presumably on the ground that they had not been killed under an Islamic framework, but in inner-tribal rivalry.⁴⁷

Given this wider context, resorting to a Prophetic example may well have served "Kashshāf" and his compatriots in the IIAA to challenge the centrality of tribal social patterns by reading the Prophetic precedence as a sociopolitical revolutionary programme, aiming at superimposing a more inclusive collective identity on the tribal ones prevalent in the Arab Peninsula during the formative period of Islam. This, it can be inferred, is also what would have to be overcome in Afghanistan, in order to, first, succeed in liberating the country

44 See "Jarliyo", "Payghām-i Shafaq", *Shafaq* 1/1 (1358SH), 4–8.

45 See "Kashshāf", "Də muḥammadi risālat riḫtīnūlī", *Haqq Pācūn* 2/14–15 (1378SH), 28ff.

46 A classical reference to this story is Ibn Ḥudayda, *al-Miṣbāh al-mudīf*, 2:120–23.

47 The historical event, having taken place around the time of the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyya, is prominently attested in Wāqidi, *al-Maghāzī*, 962–67; also e.g. Dhahabī, *Sīyar al'ām al-nubalā'*, 3:23ff.

from the grip of the PDPA or its successor and its Soviet allies, and, second, to provide a normatively grounded perspective on nation-building.

The Prophet, however, can hardly be reduced to his role as statesman and leader of a political community. For other significant, though less Islamist, Pashtun actors in the Afghan Resistance the aspect of the Prophet as the soundest spiritual guide on the path to salvation was apparently more crucial than his combat tactics, his supra-tribal societal vision, and his political leadership.

15.3 The Prophet as Guide to Salvation: The Primacy of the Hereafter

Ostentatious, the matter of tribal loyalty vis-à-vis the commitment to the supra-tribal community of believers in Islam was of crucial importance also within the predominantly rural representatives of Frontier Deobandiyat in its militant variety, here prominently the circles around Ḥaqqānī and Khālīṣ. I would even go as far as arguing that for these actors, deeply steeped in the tribal culture of the Pashtun borderland themselves, this issue was of much greater and immediate importance than to the Islamists with their socialisation in the urban and multi-ethnic environments of Kabul, Herat, or Peshawar. Especially those tribally organised ethnic Pashtuns within the Resistance found themselves in a dilemma quite similar to that of the early Muslim community under the leadership of the Prophet Muḥammad when confronted with their meanwhile hostile kinsfolk. Indeed, were the first Muslims not put in a conflict of loyalty when placed in a situation that caused them to militarily confront their own family members? Were not numerous of the *muhājirūn* quite reluctant to go to battle with the Meccans at Badr, as well as at Uḥūd and the trench at Yathrib, and required some persuasion by the Prophet to at least ease that internal conflict?⁴⁸ Consequently, the issue of tribal loyalty and its conflict with the societal vision of the Prophet figured much more prominently in the publications of Frontier Deobandīs.

Yet, and this is a crucial difference to the images of the Prophet invoked by the Islamists, those by the Frontier Deobandīs were almost exclusively related to the early Meccan period in Muḥammad's career, and, thus, revolving rather around his religious mission than his statecraft. Still, this does not imply that the respective images of the Prophet purported by this particular faction within

48 See here the examples of ʿUmayr b. Ḥumām and others, which Muḥammad solved by promising those who would die in action to immediately become martyrs and ascend to the heavens, as narrated in Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, 1:627; see also Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 3:14, 014, *ḥadīth* no. 1, 789; 1509–11, *ḥadīth* no. 1, 901.

the Afghan Resistance was entirely devoid of political allusions. Other than in the cases above, however, he is less presented as military commander and governor over a Muslim polity, but as reformer of the prevalent sociopolitical conditions in the Arab Peninsula. An anonymous author of the *Žāzāy* tribe of Khost, a tribal configuration historically in direct competition with the *Žadrān* to which *Ḥaqqānī* belonged, wrote a lengthy piece in the latter's *Manba' al-Jihād* Pashto journal,⁴⁹ in which he castigated the sociopolitical, economic, and religious constitution of Mecca and the wider *Ḥijāz* prior to the advent of the Prophet.⁵⁰ Very much in line with the extraordinary status which the Prophet enjoyed in the rural Muslim communities of the Pashtun borderland,⁵¹ the author then continues to tell of the auspicious signs around the birth of Muḥammad which would later make it into what Katz calls the “*mawlid* narrative”.⁵² By doing so, he implicitly invoked a simple two-step teleological model of societal development which follows much the binary *jāhiliyya/islām* which became constitutive to Islamist systemic outlines,⁵³ although he goes not as far as establishing a new kind of *jāhiliyya* as antagonistically co-existing with Islam, which is what Islamists were, and are, doing. For him, the miracles surrounding the birth of Muḥammad are sufficient enough an indication that God had sent the ultimate saviour to end all the negative social, political, economic, and spiritual implications once and for all.

Other than the self-confident and urbane Islamists presented here, this is a subaltern voice which is well rooted in the cultural environment of the vast rural areas of the Pashtun borderland. In a terrain where the PDPA and its Soviet allies had patchy control at the best of times only, the adversary included prominently members of the local communities who showed signs of social, political, and religious infidelity. This has two major implications: a sociopolitical one, and a religious one. The first is strongly tied to the socio-economic, and therefore also political, stratification in the Pashtun borderland into what

49 There existed a distinct Arabic journal of the same name, beginning its publication in February 1990 and petering out some time after 1992.

50 See “*Toriyālay Žāzāy*”: “*Də Ḥazrat Muḥammad (s) nikmərghah milād də basharī narəy də najāt aw sa’adat zīray*”, *Manba’ al-Jihād* [Pashto] 2/3–4 (1369SH/1411H), 12–14 and 47.

51 See Hartung, “He’s Just a Man!”, 173–75.

52 See Katz, *The Birth of the Prophet Muḥammad*, 6–62. Interestingly, the fact that *Manba’ al-Jihād* (Pashto) carried such a piece indicates that the relationship of the so-called *Ḥaqqānī* network with Arab volunteers in the later stages of the Afghan Resistance, many of whom would become infamous as beacons of al-Qā’ida and maintain theological and legal positions emphatically close to those of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), was much more complex and ambivalent as currently admitted: see prominently Brown and Ressler, *Fountainhead of Jihad*, 59–127.

53 See Hartung, *A System of Life*, 62–72.

Akbar S. Ahmad calls “seniors” (*masharān*) and “have-nots” (*kasharān*),⁵⁴ while at the same time an illusive image of general equality in Pashtun communities is nourished and perpetuated. The former stratum is usually represented by the ranks of *khān* and *malik*, both distinguished by economic affluence and therefore also in possession of substantial social and political capital. Elsewhere I have argued that much of the religious mobilisation in the Pashtun borderland can be framed along this perpetual conflict between community leaders by virtue of material wealth and subalterns who emphasised their moral superiority instead.⁵⁵ In this claim the representatives of the subaltern ethical paradigm were, and still are, bridging over to the religious implication: against the social reality, in which status is tied to “wealth and progeny” (*māl wa-awlād*), they posit Q 48:14–15 to point out the irrelevance of worldly gains for the passage to eternal bliss in the hereafter. Chief advocates of this view since the early twentieth century have been those associated with “Deobandiyyat”;⁵⁶ and it is consequently maintained by its representatives in the Pashtun borderland. Alongside the socio-economic and political critique articulated by Deobandīs in the region went the standard agenda of religious reform that “Deobandiyyat” in general stood for. In deliberate continuity to the somewhat patronising activities of the early nineteenth-century *Ṭarīqah-yi Muḥammadiyyah* around Sayyid Aḥmad Barelvī and Shāh Ismā‘īl Dihlavī (both killed 1246/1831) in the Pashtun borderland,⁵⁷ this programme pivoted on the eradication of *shirk* and the realignment of religious beliefs and practices with the legal norms of Ḥanafī *fiqh*.

Both the sociopolitical and the religious criticism coincided in the basic assumption that the sociopolitical opportunism of the *masharān* provided for the erosion of apt religious norms, as well as leading the *kasharān*, who depended on them economically, to pay more heed to worldly matters than to the stable road map to salvation that the Qur’ān and the Prophetic *sunna* provide.⁵⁸ This is the starting point for references of the Pashtun Frontier Deobandīs within the Afghan Resistance to the Prophet Muḥammad, and in

54 See Ahmed, *Pukhtun Economy and Society*, 144.

55 See Hartung, “Of Pious Missions”.

56 See Hartung, “Of Pious Missions”; also Hartung, “The Praiseworthiness of Divine Beauty”.

57 See Hartung, “He’s Just a Man!”, 176–87.

58 The sharp division between the followers of economic and political elites and those of a Sufi shaykh uncorrupted by the temptations of political and material power, epitomised in the two distinct social spaces “men’s house” (*hujrah*) and “mosque/*khānaqāh*”, had already been stressed by Barth, *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans*, 52–63 and 71–103. His perhaps most succinct remark in that regard is that “some villagers stay away from the men’s house because they prefer to place exclusive trust in a Saint by joining the group which forms around him.... By creating a centre for instruction and conversation

this framework his *jihād* was never dedicated at enhancing his position as political head of the new Muslim polity or military genius, but as emphatic dissemination of the Qur'ānic message only, consisting first and foremost in the eradication of *shirk* and *kufṛ*.⁵⁹

Yet, adherents to Frontier Deobandiyat were well aware that their respective criticism of the religiosity of those subaltern to them entails necessarily also a critique of the societal elite whose worldliness was clearly seen as the root of the evil.⁶⁰ Because of this more empathetic take on the sociopolitical structures in the Pashtun communities from the bottom up, it does not really surprise that the strategy derived from the Prophetic example was not in the first place military subjugation, but rather an emphatic invitation to reform along Qur'ānic lines (*da'vat*). In an earlier article in the Pashto journal *Manba' al-Jihād*, a certain Mawlānā Bashār stressed that the Prophet had clearly devised a course of action, and, because Muḥammad was portrayed as true enactment of especially the esoteric (*bāṭinī*) Qur'ānic principles, to faithfully follow his approach means to obey God's command. In this context, again, the early Meccan period was invoked, during which the Prophet admonished the "*masharān*" among the Quraysh to forsake their wrong ways and embrace the Qur'ānic message. In this context, the virtues of patience and persistence (*ṣabr*), sincerity (*ikhhlāṣ*), and determination (*ʿazm* and *ḥazm*) became repeatedly stressed,⁶¹ not least by quoting the Prophet from around the time when he was exposed to the hostilities towards him by his fellow Meccans, because of his "publicising the *dīn* of God and calling thereto",⁶² saying: "By God, even if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand on the condition that I abandon this matter, I will never abandon it until either God has made me victorious or I perish therein."⁶³

Khālīṣ went even further: in one of his poems, he tied sociopolitical status, "seniority" (*masharəy*), to religious obedience alone and castigates the boastful attachment to this world, stating that "on the Day of Resurrection, such *mashar* is a sinner", concluding that "who does not walk in the path of God Almighty,

in his house or in the local mosque, the Saint welds these separate devotees into a coordinated group" (56).

59 See Mawlānā "Bashār", "Də Ḥazrat payghambar – ṣallā Allāh 'alayhi wa-sallam – jihādi risālat", *Manba' al-Jihād* [Pashto] 1/4–5 (1367SH/1410H), 11–16.

60 See, for example, "Farmān-i nabavī: Jis se allāh awr jo ilāh se nahīṅ kar milegā", *Nuṣrat al-Jihād* 1/2 (1411/1990), 8ff.

61 See, for example, "Farmān-i nabavī: Awr yah fakhriyyah bāt nahīṅ he", *Nuṣrat al-Jihād* 1/1 (1411/1990), 10 and 16.

62 Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, 1:265.

63 Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya*, 266; quoted in Pashto translation in "Bashār" (see note 59), 14.

a *mashar* he is not / a *mashar* is a *mashar* only if steadfast in the path of God".⁶⁴ What that entails was somewhat elucidated in a series of articles, once more in the Pashto *Manba' al-Jihād*, on a number of events in the Prophet's life, again during the early Meccan period.⁶⁵ All the examples presented in this series suggest that verbal propagation of the correct faith and emphatic calls to observance was indeed the preferred mode of working inside the borderland communities.

Yet, Mawlānā Bashār, in line with his above reading of the Prophet's *sīra*, also allowed for the application of force in two instances: one, whenever words do not yield an insight into the truth, and another whenever the community of believers is under attack itself.⁶⁶ While the latter is common sense in legal deliberations on "defensive *jihād*", the former requires some more consideration, because, after all, one needs to establish the point in time when to hope for the words to sink in is over and force needs to be applied. Here we seem to enter a grey area, because this particular question did not get answered in recourse to the Prophet as role model. In fact, this is the area where *da'vat*-focussed "Deobandī pietism"⁶⁷ appears to overlap with both communal customs of tribal warfare and the above-outlined Islamist attitude towards *jihād*, a tightrope act perhaps most emblematically performed by Khāliṣ.

Besides his prose works, which are seemingly influenced by his readings of Islamist classics, his poetry is more ambiguous. There, Khāliṣ employed a semantic field which resonated well with an Islamist readership, using such Islamist core concepts as "revolution" and "Islamic governance", and reflecting the systemic battle with other political ideologies of the day.⁶⁸ Besides, however, Khāliṣ also spoke to a distinctly Pashtun tribal audience, in which common notions such as the sovereignty of the Pashtun lands or its tradition of stubborn resistance to any form of subjugation are equally invoked as references to distinct acts which, in the cultural context of the Pashtun borderland,

64 Khāliṣ, *Damūnah aw dāne*, 186ff. (*Mashar-tob*), lines 6 and 11ff.; also 'Azīz Allāh, *Də Mawlawi Khāliṣ žvand, fann aw and*, 182.

65 See Abū Hārūn, trans., "Də Rasūl Allāh də žvand las vražay (I): Də Ka'bay dodanay joṛūlo vraž", *Manba' al-Jihād* [Pashto] 3/4 (1370SH), 44–46; "(II): Də rūmbanī vahy vraž", *Manba' al-Jihād* [Pashto] 3/5 (1370SH), 18–21; "(III): Də Rīm də Tāyif vraž", *Manba' al-Jihād* [Pashto] 3/7–8 (1370SH), 46–48. Unfortunately, none of these articles bears any indication from which source and language Abū Hārūn had prepared his translations.

66 See "Bashār" (see note 59), 16.

67 See Hartung, "The Praiseworthiness of Divine Beauty", 359–61.

68 See Khāliṣ, *Damūnah aw dāne*, e.g. 49ff. (*Islām asāsī qānūn*), 61ff. (*Inqilāb*), 84 (*Islām aw soshalezem*), 91 (*Soshalezem aw islām*), 108ff. (*Də Isti'mār nawkarār cōk dī?*), 120ff. (*Də Jihād mawqi' dah*), and 124ff. (*Qur'ānī hukn*).

all necessitate and justify an armed response.⁶⁹ In this, Khālīš's approach coincided somewhat with that of Faḏl Vaḥīd, the "Ḥājjī Šāḥib" of Turangzay (d. 1356/1937) in the Peshawar Valley, an early twentieth-century representative of Frontier Deobandiyat around the "Shaykh al-Hind" Maḥmūd al-Ḥasan.

The Ḥājjī Šāḥib, namely, evolved into a chief enforcer of the sociopolitical changes that resulted from the religiously grounded mission of the Shaykh al-Hind and his circle in the Pashtun borderland. An advocate of the subalterns from whom he emerged, the Ḥājjī Šāḥib challenged the self-serving political tactics of the *masharān* of old and new, and his efforts were consequently met with their resistance. In those cases where these community leaders would choose to ignore his verbal admonitions, the Ḥājjī Šāḥib mustered his own impromptu tribal militias (*laḡkarūnah*) and saw through the rectification of his demands by way of armed force.⁷⁰ Khālīš would follow this model, even though the *masharān* of his time were less those in the rural Pashtun communities, but those having usurped the political power in Kabul. After a long period of only rhetorical confrontation,⁷¹ from 1978 onwards the situation had escalated to the extent that only armed resistance remained an adequate response, to be staged by those whom he called "the clan of the Prophet" (*Nabī khel*), thus again invoking the example of the Prophet Muḥammad as benchmark of religious righteousness.

As we have seen, despite numerous overlaps, the worldviews of the two ideal-typically established main factions among the Pashtun actors within the Afghan Resistance – Islamists and Frontier Deobandis – remained fundamentally distinct, as emblematically expressed in their respective references to the Prophet Muḥammad as role model. Moreover, the example of the Ḥājjī Šāḥib of Turangzay also suggests a historical pattern underlying this distinction. This, in fact, is what is argued here, and in order to substantiate this claim, we need to go quite a bit back in time.

69 See Khālīš, *Damūnah aw dāne*, 169–72 (*Paḡtūn aw ghulāmī*), 180–82 (*Də paḡtano sīmah*), and 197ff. (*Ghadār*). See also Ṭalāyī, *Khālīš Bābā*, 54–61.

70 See Qadir, *Reforming the Pukhtuns*, 28–31 and 39–56. Khan, "The Pashtoon Resistance", 25–28, discusses the British colonial strategies to co-opt local elites in the Pashtun tribal communities, or to even create new ones, which were major instances for the Ḥājjī Šāḥib's oftentimes violent interventions.

71 In the early 1950s, Khālīš was employed by Radio Kabul to run a religious programme; in the mid-1960s he took over the editorship of *Payām-i Ḥaqq*, purportedly the first Islamic magazine in Afghanistan. In both these capacities, as well as in his early prose works, Khālīš aimed at spreading a legally correct understanding of Islam and its necessary implementations in society. See 'Azīz Allāh, *Də Mawlavī Khālīš žvand, fann aw and*, 2ff. and 26ff.

15.4 Antecedents: Two Ethical Paradigms

In order to better understand origins as well as sociopolitical implications of the two distinct ideal-typical images of the Prophet Muḥammad in the Afghan Resistance to the PDPA and the Soviet occupation, it pays to trace back in time the underlying ethnical dispositions which seem to be reflected in them. These dispositions, again, are discussed here as ideal-types, allowing for a much greater variety of them on the ground. Yet, most of them can be ascribed to one of two dominant and opposing ethical outlines which are deeply rooted in Pashtun society: one is an elite-centric ethics, which I shall call “princely ethics”, while the other one is one that reflects more subaltern positions, and will therefore be labelled “subaltern ethics”. Both are, in fact, vividly present in various cultural practices throughout the region, for instance in everyday poetic allusions, proverbs, or impromptu rhymes (*tappay*), thus constituting what Gramsci called historical “traces” of a reflexive sociopolitical identity.⁷²

The emergence of both ethical paradigms is closely linked to the geopolitical situatedness of the “Pashtun borderland” in a kind of *longue durée*, and reflects thus also the position and attitude of borderlanders towards imperial powers, ultimately contributing to the ethnogenesis of the Pashtuns. Originally highly mobile communities who mediated the long-distance trade between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent,⁷³ their eventual settlement in the foothills of the Hindukush was the result of the displacement of marginal communities in the course of imperial expansions in Iran, Central Asia, and India.⁷⁴

Situated at the frontier between empires, they constituted a critical mass for the maintenance of territorial integrity, and as such were of high strategic interest to imperial powerholders. Consequently, these powerholders, such as the Mughal establishment, attempted to create subservient local elites to represent imperial interest in the mountainous borderland, while at the same time finding an administrative category for those largely autonomous communities, to fit them into their imperial framework. The result of such

72 See Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, 2:2376: “The starting point is the consciousness of what one really is, and is ‘knowing thyself’ [*conosci te stesso*] as a product of the historical process to date which has disposed in you an infinity of traces [*un’infinità di tracce*], without leaving an inventory” (trans. J. A. Buttigieg).

73 See Digby, *War-Horse and Elephant*; Gommans, *The Rise of the Indo-Afghan Empire*, 77–83 and 113–43.

74 See, for example, the case of the Yūsufzī kinship grouping, who are reported to have been displaced from the area around Kandahar and pushed to the mountainous region further north, where they are concentrated nowadays, in Mu‘azzam Shāh, *Tavārīkh-i Ḥāfiẓ Raḥmat Khānī*.

external categorisations was an increasingly solid ethnic self-understanding of these communities as “Pashtun”,⁷⁵ yet not, as intended, as a category in the imperial framework of the Mughals, but one of self-confident difference. This was perhaps most emblematically expressed by Khūshhāl Khān Khaṭṭak (d. 1100/1689), formerly a faithful vassal of the Mughal ruler Shāhjahān, who in turn had built up on his father’s strategy to elevate certain tribal communities over others in exchange for their compliance with Mughal imperial interest in the region.⁷⁶ Yet, when Khūshhāl claimed to not having been treated appropriately by Awrangzīb ‘Ālamgīr, Shāhjahān’s successor to the Mughal throne, he reinvented himself as an ardent opponent to the Mughals and a champion of the Pashtuns, stating that “For this state of things, no other resolve can be seen / than that the Mughals be annihilated, or the Pashtuns undone”.⁷⁷

Indeed, Khūshhāl is nowadays regarded by many Pashtuns as core reference for what it means to be “Pashtun”, and his earlier affiliation with the Mughals, to whom “from the very beginning / [he] ha[s] been faithful and loyal”,⁷⁸ rather downplayed. While there is good reason to agree with the view that it took a representative of the tribal elite to establish the language as a literary idiom,⁷⁹ we need to be aware that the perspective is essentially an elitist one that does not negotiate with subaltern voices within the Pashtun linguistic universe. Their alter ego were, and are, rather competing sociopolitical elites, such as the Mughals and, later on, the British colonial establishment, which is not least reflected in the fact that Khūshhāl had chosen Persianate – Mughal – forms of poetic presentation over local Pashtun ones. Of special significance in this regard is Khūshhāl’s *qaṣīdah* “Poetry is the Discharge of Men” (*shī’r ḥayṣ al-rijāl day*), because it comprises all the core themes in this discourse: the relationship between mundane and divine beauty, imperial economy and politics

75 The historiographic process of ethnic distinction began with ‘Abbās Khān Sarvānī’s (d. after 988/1580) account of the reign of Shīr Shāh Sūrī, commissioned by Mughal *pādishāh* Akbar, and was soon supplemented by a genealogical account of imperial chronicler Ni’matallāh Haravī (d. ca. 1040/1630), which rooted the label “Afghan” in a certain – though empirically little sustainable – pedigree. Haravī’s image was soon appropriated by literate representatives of the borderland communities, as indicates the portrayal by Akhūnd Darvīzah (d. 1048/1638), originally from Nangarhar. See Sarvānī, *Tārīkh-i-Sher Shāhī*, 1:2ff.; Haravī, *Ṭabaqāt-i akbarī*; Darvīzah, *Tazkirat al-abrār*, 58–62.

76 This applies very much to the Khaṭṭak, a kinship community that claims the region of Karak as their ancestral territory. See Kākākhel, *Paṣṭānah dā tārīkh pah ranṛā kṣe*, 697–99.

77 Khān Khaṭṭak, *Armaghān-i Khūshhāl*, 19, line 6; see also 16–29.

78 Khān Khaṭṭak, *Armaghān-i Khūshhāl*, 11, line 8.

79 I am most grateful to James Caron (SOAS, University of London) for generously sharing with me his thoughts on this matter.

vis-à-vis communal ones, youthful virility that, nonetheless, requires disciplining and channelling into concerted action within a patriarchal framework.⁸⁰

The princely ethics which emerges from Khūshhāl's versatile poetry pivots on the notion of "honour" (*nang*), cast as the ability to contain the virtue of the female members of one's household (*sharm*). Such constructed honour, in turn, feeds into a hierarchical worldview: to possess honour becomes thus equivalent to high social, political, and economic status. Such a hierarchy, in turn, is inevitable and therefore highly desirable, as Khūshhāl argued in reference to the Prophet Muḥammad, somewhat forecasting above Islamist references of the late twentieth century: "When Muḥammad's time arrived / feared were the Arabs for [their] courage. Success depends on the leader [*sardār*] / and nothing else, know this, my son!"⁸¹

The projected hierarchy does not even stop at the local mechanisms of negotiation and decision-making: even the *jirgah*, oftentimes romantically portrayed as an highly egalitarian local institution, is, besides the little acknowledged exclusion of females, subordinate to the ultimate judgement of a member of the sociopolitical elite.⁸² Needless to stress that Khūshhāl relied less on religious rhetorical figures to sustain such a hierarchical worldview; his shorter *qaṣīdahs* on divine and Prophetic attributes seem to reflect rather his familiarity with prominent literary tropes in Pashtun poetic expression.⁸³

This, in fact, was quite the opposite for the representatives of the other ethical paradigm, that of subaltern authors,⁸⁴ of whom 'Abd al-Raḥmān "Raḥmān Bābā" Mohmand (d. 1123/1711) from a small village near Peshawar appears to be considered the epitome. Indeed, in his verses Raḥmān Bābā stressed qualities oftentimes associated with the Prophetic mission of Muḥammad: mercy (*māhrbānī*, or *raḥmat*), justice (*'adālat*), and equality (*musāvāt*, or *inṣāf*). One's social, and subsequent political, status, in turn, emerges from the ability to embody these qualities: when referring to a *mashar* who, "in parcelling

80 See Khān Khaṭīak, *Armaghān-i Khūshhāl*, 6–12.

81 Khān Khaṭīak, *Armaghān-i Khūshhāl*, 725, lines 3ff.

82 See Khān Khaṭīak, *Dastār'nāmāh*, 93ff.

83 See Khān Khaṭīak, *Dastār'nāmāh*, 2–5; and, for example, Gohar, "Paḫto k̄kī dā na'tiyah shā'irōy irtiqā", 177–211.

84 These subaltern authors coincide with what Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere*, 2:392, 3:1513, and 2283ff., has alternatively called "organic intellectuals" (*intellettuai organici*), "embedded historians" (*storici integrali*), or "community writer" (*pensatori collettivo*), while Caron, "Social Inequality", 1, calls them "peasant intellectuals", in reference to the title of Steven M. Feierman's work on Tanzania from 1990. See also Caron, "Reading the Power". I am grateful to my former colleague Cosimo Zene (London) for his elaboration of Gramsci's concept.

out water [rights] he is not just, even if his hand grips pages of the Book”,⁸⁵ Raḥmān Bābā combined socio-economic critique with religious ethics. Thus, he sustained a trope that, so Ibrāhīm ‘Aṭāyī claims, had already been a major driver for the millenarian movement of Bāyazīd Anṣārī, better known as the “Pīr Roḡān” (d. after 988/1580),⁸⁶ consequently resulting in a barrage of polemical remarks on their subaltern religiosity by privileged members of the Mughal establishment.⁸⁷

Here, it appears that it were authors like the Pīr Roḡān,⁸⁸ and even more so Raḥmān Bābā, who established an almost causal relationship between social, economic, and political egalitarianism, resistance to perceived injustices in all these departments, and “Pashtun-ness”: “Tenant he is, sharecropper he was, he will rise to be Pashtun / even if a cobbler or butcher by origin. Speaking mildly has no effect on him [i.e. the landlord] / since in his heart is neither shame nor *hijāb*.”⁸⁹ Consequently, “Pashtun” can only be whoever resists injustice and maintains a strong social conscience; more still, a “Pashtun” is essentially subaltern.⁹⁰

Both ideal-typical ethic frameworks in the Pashtun-dominated borderland, I content, are one, if not the, reason for perpetual local conflict that can be traced all the way to the level of any given village community. These communities, which emphatically present themselves to the outside as “essentially egalitarian”, are this way divided into those who regard fraternisation with the strong and powerful as primary expression of their ethnicity and, therefore, as commendable, and those who stress just the opposite. Violent expressions

85 Raḥmān Bābā, *Dīvān-i ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Bābā*, 110, lines 13ff.

86 See ‘Aṭāyī, *Də paḡtānāy qabīlo ... qamūs*, 295. This view on the socio-economic constitution of the Peshawar Valley has been taken over by Nichols, *Settling the Frontier*, 21.

87 The most prominent and influential pejorative religious appraisal of the *Rawshānīyyah* was Badā’unī, *Muntakhab al-tavārīkh*, 2:241–43, from which distinct phrases have been adopted verbatim by Haravī, *Ṭabaqāt-i akbarī*, e.g. 2:398. Badā’unī’s polemics, however, including the mock epithet “Pīr of Darkness” (*pīr-i tārik*), were preceded almost immediately by Darvīzah, *Tazkīrat al-abrār*, 3ff.; Darvīzah, *Makhzan al-islām*, 155ff. See also Hartung, “Of Pious Missions”, 7–11.

88 See prominently Anṣārī, *Khayr al-bayān*, 206: “Some involve themselves in the work of farming, or in market-trade, or the herdsman’s trade of cattle [*də karlī yā də bāzar-gānāy yā də povandi-kalāy*], or go as far as servitude to kings, or other professions, for the accumulation of wealth [*māl-gīrd*], whether permissible or dubious, or [even] prohibited”. See also Anṣārī, *Khayr al-bayān*, 414–19.

89 Raḥmān Bābā, *Dīvān-i ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Bābā*, 111, lines 17–20.

90 This results in the frequently observable fact that subaltern behavioural patterns are widely approved of as “Pashtun” regardless of the actual ethnicity of the person in question, while elitist conduct is openly referred to as “Punjabi”.

of this conflict have frequently occurred over time, and still do.⁹¹ Now, if we take this line of argument forward, then the two distinct kinds of references to the Prophet by the leading Pashtun representatives of the Afghan Resistance between roughly 1978 and 1992 follow the same trajectory.

The elitist thinking of the various Islamist organisations, which originated in a culturally and ethnically more diverse urban context, were clearly reflected in their respective images of the Prophet Muḥammad as a warlord and politician, in other words, a member of a societal elite that is therefore axiomatically predestined to lead the community in a top-down fashion. Indeed, it is no surprise that it were the leaders of the various Islamist *tanẓīmāt* who would almost instantly after the ousting of the Soviet army in 1989 and that of the Ḥizb-i Vaṭan-turned-PDPA regime in 1992 assume political top positions, all agreed upon in the so-called Peshawar Peace Accord, in which the claims for the new government of Afghanistan were parcelled out. Burhān al-Dīn Rabbānī served between 1992 and 2001 as president of Afghanistan, Sayyāf as his vice president, Ḥikmatyār between 1993 and 1994, as well as 1996 and 1997, as prime minister, Aḥmad Shāh Mas‘ūd between 1992 and 1993 as minister of defence, and Rabbānī’s Jam‘iyyat-i Islāmī-yi Afghānistān representative in Herat, Ismā‘īl Khān (b. 1365/1946), as governor of Herat Province between 1992 and 1997 and, again, between 2001 and 2004, before being appointed minister of water and energy of the Karzay administration between 2004 and 2013.

On the other end of the spectrum, we find the leaders of militias associated with what I call “Frontier Deobandiyat”, and who stayed at least formally aloof from political offices. Instead, they maintained and expanded their local powerbases, be it in Jalalabad and the wider Nangarhar Province, as was the case for Khālīṣ, or in the Loyah Paktiya region, as for Ḥaqqānī. When the Islamist militias, here first and foremost the Ḥil-Ḥ and Mas‘ūd’s Shūrā-yi Nazār, battled in 1992 without any mercy and consideration for the civilian population of Kabul for mere power and dominance,⁹² they were in a way echoing Khūshḥāl’s poetic emphasis on a manly recklessness in battle as the ultimate expression of status-defining honour. Actors of a conservative rural and descent-conscious background, like Khālīṣ and Ḥaqqānī, stressed more social values of an increasingly romanticised “Pashtun Code of Honour” (*paḫtūnvalī*),⁹³

91 See my respective argument in Hartung, “Of Pious Missions”.

92 See Dorronsoro, “Kabul at War”, 6.

93 This rather loose concept, which has been around for a while as an expression of socially acceptable conduct that may vary according to the respective context, had been embraced by Afghan nationalist intellectuals. A case in point is Qiyām al-Dīn Khādīm (d. 1358SH/1979), leading member of the leftist Viḫ Zalmiyān movement of the late 1940s,

such as hospitality (*melmastiyā*, or *melmah pālanah*), provision of sanctuary (*panāh*), and a willingness to sacrifice for the sake of others (*qurbānī*),⁹⁴ all of which can be derived from a religiously charged notion of “justice”. In fact, the only recently published collection of Khālīš’s poetry indicates a strong emphasis on all these tropes.⁹⁵ Unsurprisingly, these poems read well together with his *na’t* poetry in which the Prophet Muḥammad appears as perfect embodiment of all those social values.⁹⁶

15.5 Conclusion

In hindsight of the looming downfall of the PDPA/Ḥizb-i Waṭan regime and the humiliating defeat of the Soviet army by initially badly equipped Afghan militias, internal conflict within all those groups in what has been called here the Afghan Resistance became increasingly apparent. These contestations among the winning parties ran first and foremost along ethnic and denominational lines. Still, tension also arose within the ethnically Pashtun and denominationally Sunnī groups within the entire Resistance, reflecting, as it has been argued here, two historically developed distinct ethical frameworks that respond to socio-economic and subsequent political particularities in the Pashtun communities along the national border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both frameworks have been embraced by distinct factions within the Pashtun contingent of the Afghan Resistance, reflected in distinct images of the Prophet Muḥammad as emerges from the publications of the various respective groups.

to whom we owe the monograph *Paxtūnvalī* (Kabul, Də paṣto toḷānah 1331SH), the first attempt to enshrine the constituents of *paxtūnvalī* independent from the respective context in which they are applied. In numerous ethnographic studies, however, *paxtūnvalī* has been ascribed a reality which I find difficult to relate to, but which have sustained the romantic image of an all-comprehensive code. See, for instance, Spain, *The Way of the Pathans*; Steul, *Paschtunwali*; Nürzay, *Paṣto aw paxtūnvalī*. A slightly more considerate view is presented by Barth, *Afghanistan og Taliban*, 28–31. For a more detailed critique see Hartung, “A Taliban Legal Discourse on Violence”, 146–53.

- 94 The concept of *qurbānī* is in fact central to the discussion of martyrdom in Deobandī circles in the Frontier, while it is widely absent in the Islamist discussions on the same issue. See, for instance, Mīrzākheḷ, “Də Shahādāt islāmī falsafah”, *Manba’ al-Jihād* [Pashto] 2/9 (1369SH), 10–12; anon.: “Fazāyil-i shahīd”, *Ḥaqq Pācūn* 2/5–6 (1365SH), 7ff.; anon.: “Də Shahīd armān”, *Ḥaqq Pācūn* 2/5–6 (1365SH), 9ff.; cf. anon.: “Shahīd dar islām”, *Mīšāq-i Khūn* 2/2–3 (1366SH/1407H), 108–11.
- 95 See Khālīš, *Damūnah aw dāne*, 104–7 (*Ḥurriyat aw musāvāt*), 154ff. (*Mīnah aw insāniyyat*), 205ff. (*Də bashar də khayr lapārah*), and 218–20 (*Musāvāt*).
- 96 See Khālīš, *Damūnah aw dāne*, 29, 36–42, 144–47, and 203ff.

The first group were ideal-typically cast as “Islamists”, represented predominantly by the organisations led by Gulbuddīn Ḥikmatyār and ‘Abd al-Rabb Rasūl Sayyāf, the second as “Frontier Deobandīs” of the militant variety, personified in the respective groups led by Jalāl al-Dīn Ḥaqqānī and Muḥammad Yūnus Khālīṣ. For the urban and openly elitist Islamists, Muḥammad was conducive as role model of a political and military leader; their references were subsequently on the Medinan phase of the Prophet’s life. The Frontier Deobandīs, in turn, staged themselves as embodiment of rural subalternity, and stressed consequently the image of the Prophet as one who holds fast to the truth, despite seriously adverse circumstances which could have easily cost Muḥammad his own life.

Nonetheless, we need to acknowledge that also the Frontier Deobandīs had an elitist agenda, aiming at redressing widespread religious beliefs and practices in the rural Pashtun communities which they saw not warranted from a textual perspective. As perhaps most severe manifestation of this distinct form of socio-religious elitism would eventually emerge the movement of the Taliban during their reign over the entire Afghanistan between 1996 and 2001, as clearly indicated by their normatively grounded religious decrees. It therefore appears that explicit references to the Prophet Muḥammad as a role model for this or that point to elitist persuasions whatsoever: both, Islamists and Frontier Deobandīs, employed images of the Prophet as benchmark for proper belief and conduct, vis-à-vis a broad range of such beliefs and practices locally acknowledged as conducive for the maintenance of the societal fabric of these communities. As such, the Resistance in which the Islamists and Frontier Deobandīs were both actively involved was, especially in the case of the latter, not exclusively confined to overthrowing an oppressive communist regime and its allies, but also to overcome locally established forms of religiosity for which they saw no textual corroboration.

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*Al-Dawla al-nabawiyya**Appropriating the Prophet's Authority in the Islamic State's Media**Christoph Günther*

Now the caliphate has returned; we ask God the Exalted to ground it on the way of prophethood.

ABŪ MUḤAMMAD AL-ʿADNĀNĪ, *Hādha waʿd Allāh*



Whenever people have referred to the Prophet Muḥammad as a role model, they have “detached” him to a certain degree from his specific historic and socio-religious context, constructing a shell that preserves the essence of the Prophet and that might tell us more about these people and their aspirations than about the historical person that was Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh. The “aura of factuality”¹ created around the Prophet Muḥammad in the manifold domains of Muslim cultural production does not only bolster hierarchical power structures. It even incentivises authorities to cloak themselves in the aura of the past in order to legitimise their present endeavours.

As the above quotation of Abū Muḥammad al-ʿAdnānī, the late spokesperson of the Islamic State, indicates, ideologues of the Islamic State and its predecessors² have used texts, speeches, and audio-visual media to claim the prerogative of interpreting Muḥammad’s biography, his deeds, thoughts, and

1 Geertz, “Religion as a Cultural System”, 90.

2 For the sake of brevity, I use the emic designation “Islamic State” to denote the militant Jihādī-Salafī group that has announced the establishment of an Islamic state (*dawla islāmīyya*) in July 2014/Ramadan 1435. The use of this designation in this chapter encompasses all stages of organisational and denominational evolution, including *al-tawḥīd wa-l-jihād*, *tanẓīm qāʿidat al-jihād fi bilād al-rāfidayn*, *ḥilf al-muṭayyabīn*, *dawlat al-ʿIrāq al-islāmīyya*, and *al-dawla al-islāmīyya fi l-ʿIrāq wa-l-Shām*. Furthermore, I use “ideologues” to designate anyone affiliated with the Islamic State who is involved in conceiving and articulating the group’s world view through various media, reflecting and shaping the standpoint of the group and its interest based on supposedly shared moral and ethical premises.

his personal qualities. They have sought to define the “essence” of the Prophetic model and to classify who truly acts according to the divine ordinances instantiated by him. Such delineation serves to present the situation and mindset of the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions as an analogy to that of the Islamic State’s ideologues and their followers. The paragon that is the Prophet in terms of leadership, morality, and proximity to God is evoked as the foundation for their conceptualisation of how any sphere of life should be organised. Despite their general reliance on the acknowledged canonical compilations of Prophetic traditions,³ their use of *ḥadīth* to present the Prophet as a source of authority and legitimation for Jihādī-Salafī thought and action has received widespread public criticism by a number of Sunnī scholars and laity.⁴

In this chapter, I will trace some ways in which the Islamic State’s ideologues have appropriated and elicited the Prophet as a source of authority to shape a clearly defined collective identity and, at the same time, to justify domination of the territories under their control. For the discussion of the uses of the Prophetic model by the Islamic State vis-à-vis its various international and local audiences, I draw on my previous work on the various sources of authority employed by the Islamic State to substantiate its claim for legitimate domination.⁵ In light of the broad range of appeals to the exceptional achievements and virtues of the Prophet and his companions made by the Islamic State’s ideologues through reference to specific phrases and texts, I argue that Max Weber’s concept of *charismatic domination*, that is, “specific gifts of body and mind that were considered ‘supernatural’ (in the sense that not everybody could have access to them)”, can help to systematically describe the ways in which they employ the Prophet Muḥammad as a paragon of morality, strength, and justice to further their cause.⁶

Appeals to charismatic authority that feed on references to the Prophet and the *ṣaḥāba* can be found in at least three areas of the Islamic State’s self-representations across different media. These include (a) the creation and performative manifestation of its symbolic repertoire, (b) the way the Islamic State frames its leader, the caliph, and (c) the way it portrays its fighters. More specifically, though, they appeal to their fighters’ and (potential) followers’ will to emulate the Prophet. It is hardly surprising, however, that some of the Prophet’s eminent traits endorsed in Muslim traditions that illustrate his outstanding position among his fellow human beings are scarcely addressed in the

3 Boutz et al., “Exploiting”; Fouad, “Zeitgenössische muslimische Kritik am Salafismus”.

4 Ya’qūbī, *Refuting ISIS*; “Open Letter”.

5 Günther and Kaden, “Authority”.

6 Weber, *Economy*, 1112.

Islamic State's media. "Milder" qualities such as mercy, kindness, and forgiveness are underrepresented in favour of others that accentuate the Prophet's role as a warrior and as leader of a small community, which had to reassert itself, in its immediate environment and beyond, against constant social, political, and economic pressure. Attributes such as strength, steadfastness, justice, military success, and asceticism are emphasised instead and play an important role in the way the Islamic State characterises the Prophet as a model for emulation.

16.1 Recreating a Powerful Symbol: The Black Banner

With its black banner (Figure 16.1), the Islamic State established a powerful symbol, which not only had been omnipresent throughout the global media for quite some time, but more importantly serves as a visual expression of its identity and self-conception. The banner's monochrome black-and-white design immediately catches the eye and attention of the beholder.

Many will also recognise the Muslim profession of faith inscribed on the banner, that is, the confession of the unity and uniqueness of God (*lā ilāha illā Allāh*). It is visually separated on the banner from its second part, the confirmation of Muḥammad as a messenger of God (*Muḥammad rasūl Allāh*), written below in a white circle.

Since the black banner functions as an emblem, hence a visual and material manifestation of the Islamic State's ideology and claims for power, its

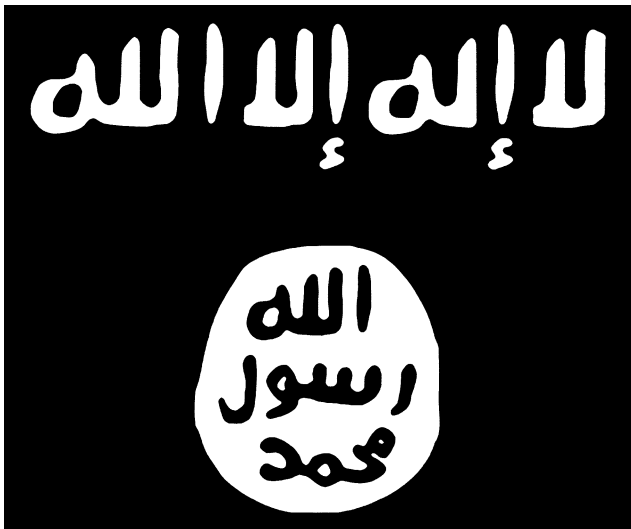


FIGURE 16.1 The black banner of the Islamic State

monochrome design points to the group's clear-cut distinction between believers and unbelievers, a paradigm described in issue 7 of the Islamic State's online magazine *Dabiq* as the "extinction of the grey zone".⁷ The black banner thus conveys clarity and strength by virtue of its robust form and composition. More important, however, is the fact that the Islamic State's ideologues created a pictorial signet that may help to bolster their claims to the spiritual and political inheritance of the Prophet Muḥammad and his companions. Appropriating the affective power of shared Sunnī historical memories of the early Islamic period, the Islamic State's ideologues render the black banner an iconic bridge to an idealised past, hence the visual and material manifestation of their pledge to reform the Muslim community in conformity with divine ordinances. It thus became an indication of their claim to absolute political power, an emblem of their vision of purified "genuine" Sunnī Islam, and an epitome of the extent to which the Islamic State wanted to be seen as the Prophet Muḥammad's spiritual and political heir.

All of these dimensions are encoded in the visual composition of the black banner. Alluding to the early Islamic period, the banner's black colour is at first meant as a reminder of the Prophet's war banners. According to a document released in 2013 under the title *Mashrū'yyat al-rāya fi l-islām* (Legal permissibility of the banner in Islam), "the leader of the faithful issued a decree in consultation with knowledgeable people that the Islamic State's banner shall be black ... and it was decided that it shall be written upon it what had been written on the banner of the Prophet (sas): There is no God but God, Muḥammad is His messenger."⁸ To substantiate this decision, the document's authors quoted *ḥadīth* literature that describes the colour of the Prophet's banner as well as its epigraphy, that is, the *shahāda*. Noticeably, though, quotations that concern the writing on the banner are all drawn from non-canonical *ḥadīth*. Equally, the authors ignored canonical sources that emphasise the variety of colours of the banners carried by the Prophet and his followers during times of war.⁹

One can trace this attempt to develop and establish a notion of absolutely valid truth through conscious reduction of the complex and multilayered Islamic tradition in the self-positioning of the group towards historical uses of black banners. Presenting the Islamic State as a movement dedicated to the purification and reform of the *umma*, choosing a black flag as its emblem was only logical. Its symbolic charge is not only fed by the descriptions of the

7 al-Hayat Media Center, "Dabiq 7", 54–66.

8 "Mashrū'yyat al-rāya".

9 On the variety of colours reportedly used on the banners and flags of the nascent Muslim community under the Prophet's command as well as on a recent critique of the great play that is made of the mythical black banners in the present, see Jābir, "Hawas".

Prophet's war banner, but also by an apocalyptic-messianic *ḥadīth* according to which the revivers of "genuine" Islam "would arise and bear the black flags that would lead them to a final victory against the rule of tyranny and restore justice."¹⁰ Based on this Prophetic tradition, although its authenticity is doubtful, numerous religio-political movements throughout Islamic history have sought to bolster their claims to righteous revolt and true rulership by appropriating the symbolic power of the colour black and of black banners in particular,¹¹ among them the 'Abbāsīd caliphate.¹² Alluding to the memories of this caliphate, of its origin and achievements, the Islamic State's ideologues may have sought to trigger favourable responses among some of their audiences, and to project the various meanings of the black flag and its multiple connotations including notions of Prophetic succession, rebellion, and unification, as well as notions of revenge and the obliteration of dishonouring actions, on the Islamic State, using it for the formation of social identities.¹³ The visual composition of the banner hence reflects claims of the Islamic State coming into an ontological inheritance of the Prophet Muḥammad. As will be detailed below, the Islamic State's ideologues asserted not only such an abstract and indirect relation to Muḥammad, but presented their leader as a descendant of the Prophet. This assertion is expressed on the black banner primarily through the use of the circular form in the lower half, which is meant to resemble the putative seal of the Prophet stamped on letters supposedly written on the Prophet's behalf, which are preserved in the Topkapı Museum, Istanbul.¹⁴ Although the seal is probably a forgery, it is used here to authenticate the Islamic State's claim for power and to symbolically transmit the Prophet's authority onto the Islamic State's leader, Abū Bakr al-Baghḏādī.

Through any of the aforementioned allusions to Islamic history, the movement's ideologues not only seek to link the Islamic State to the Prophet Muḥammad and the early Islamic state but also identify it as part of a continuous strand in Islam that is devoted to reforming the religion, bringing Islam back to its roots and ridding it of all wrongful innovations and misinterpretations. This movement "back to the origins" is also reflected in the design of the typeface in the upper part of the banner: the confession of monotheism is

10 Athamina, "Black Banners", 307.

11 McCants, *ISIS*, 25–29.

12 Sharon, *Black Banners from the East*.

13 On how the Islamic State's ideologues use the creation of knowledge and meaning to engineer social identities, see Günther, *Entrepreneurs of Identity*.

14 On the seal, see Allan and Sourdel, "Khātām, *Khātīm*". On doubts concerning the authenticity of the letters, see Dunlop, "Another 'Prophetic' Letter".

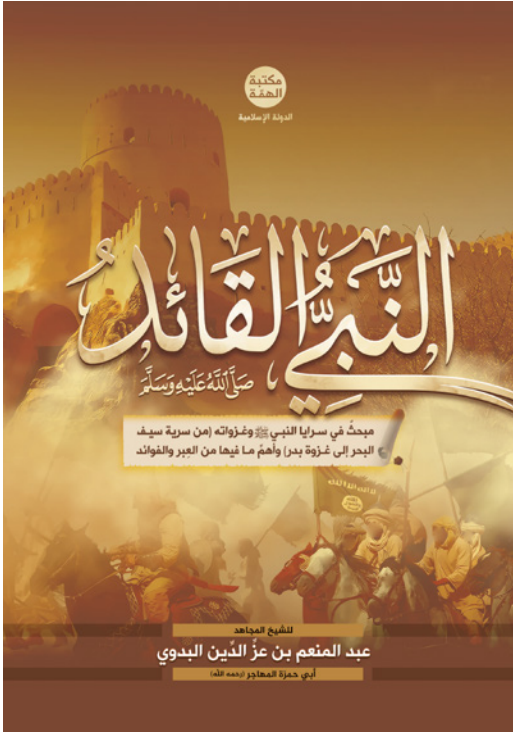


FIGURE 16.2 Frontispiece of Muhājir, *al-Nabī al-qā'id*

written in the Kūfī style and thus in the type of writing in which the Qurʾānic text is presumed to have been first written down as a single compilation.¹⁵

The Islamic State's ideologues hence not only sought to create an official symbol that reflects the identity of the group, but rather an authentic image of the standard of the Prophet, which places its present bearers in a line of continuity. With this banner, its bearers position themselves at the same time as authorities over the definition of the true, pure, authentic Islam. A remarkable and blatantly clear example of this claim can be found on the frontispiece of a document entitled *al-Nabī al-qā'id* (Figure 16.2), which includes, among other things, the above-mentioned treatise on the appearance of the Prophet's flag.¹⁶

15 Witkam and Sukanda-Tessier, "Nuskha". The writing is hence, in contrast to McCants' (*ISIS*, 20–21) suggestion, neither "scrawled" nor is it helpful to focus on the fact that it appears "deliberately ragged, meant to suggest an era before the precision of Photoshop even though the flag was designed on a computer".

16 Republished in 2016 by the group's Maktabat al-Himma, it appears that the 377-page document had been originally compiled by the then "minister of war" (*wazīr al-ḥarb*)

Against the backdrop of the above-described claim for classificatory power whereby the Islamic State's ideologues sought to gain the prerogative of defining the appearance of the Prophet's banner, this cover picture is a remarkable example of how the group visualises the *maghāzī* period. The digital collage not simply depicts an ancient fortress above a pre-modern army of horsemen and foot soldiers with swords, spears, and black standards. The alignment of the horsemen in combination with the observer's perspective and the blurred faces, moreover, allude to miniature paintings in Islamic manuscripts that depict the period after the *hijra* and the battles fought by the Prophet and his companions. In addition, the title and subtitle of the document, which circumscribe the image of the soldiers, rather suggest that this image is an authentic representation of the nascent Muslim community and its war campaigns. Figure 16.2 hence is a remarkable example not only of an appropriation of Islamic visual culture, but also of what Mirzoeff¹⁷ has described as "visuality", that is, the visualisation of history in which power and visual representation intersect, because it highlights an actor's ability to assemble information, images, and ideas so as to picture history and, at the same time, manifest his or her authority. It can therefore be argued that this image has been intended to create an authentic, "true" visualisation of the *maghāzī* and thus helps free what the Islamic State defines to be the design of the Prophet's banner of any criticism, enabling sociopolitical actors to picture and define a sequence of history as "authentic" vis-à-vis their audiences.

Beyond the amalgamation of symbolic meaning apparent in the black flag, it also functions as insigne of the actual authority and power exerted by the Islamic State. When the group seized control of territories in Iraq and Syria, it did not just tear down national flags or the badges of opposition militias but also hoisted the black flag. It was also used in the form of banners, posters, or graffiti for the emblematic demarcation of areas, regions, cities, or buildings, declaring them to be under the power and control of the group. The flag was used in this sense to signal the takeover of official buildings such as courts, police stations, and other governmental facilities to indicate that the hitherto known order had been removed (Figure 16.3). The symbolic meaning of such acts became particularly salient when Islamic State's fighters raised the black flag over the destroyed sand wall of the border between Syria and Iraq, parts of which the group had bulldozed in a media-effective operation.¹⁸ It

of the Islamic State of Iraq, 'Abd al-Mun'im b. 'Izz al-Dīn al-Badawī (alias Abū Ḥamza al-Muhājir) to examine the governing practices of the Prophet.

17 Mirzoeff, "On Visuality", passim; Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look*, 1–2.

18 al-Hayat Media Center, *Sykes Picot*.



FIGURE 16.3 Stills from Islamic State videos

gained wider international attention when images with Islamic State's fighters parading through Mosul with black flags mounted to their vehicles dominated international media for some time in summer 2014. The black banner was also evoked in public speeches to the Islamic State's soldiers, when their commander told them that "the flag of *lā ilāha illā Allāh* will be established with which our Prophet Muḥammad came, with which he broke the Persians and the Romans".¹⁹

ʿAdnānī in January 2014 charged the symbolic content of the black flag even further, when he asserted that "we didn't see since ten years for this blessed banner except assistance, support, and aid from God Almighty, and maybe you felt that by yourselves, since whenever this banner enters God Almighty throws in your heart tranquillity, pride and fortitude, boldness and courage, and throws in the hearts and souls of the people love and veneration for you, as He throws fear [of you] in the souls of your enemies."²⁰

Both quotes indicate that the Islamic State's ideologues see the black flag not merely as a means of representation. Rather, they identify the signifier (the black flag) with the signified (the Islamic State/caliphate) and hence render this sign a constituent of the Islamic State and its identity-building project. For this reason, it can be argued that the black flag transmits the positive characteristics of the Prophet and his companions onto the Islamic State's followers. It thus became a vital element of the charismatic authority that the Islamic State has claimed for itself.

19 al-Maktab al-ʿilāmī li-Wilāyat Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, *Wa-Allāh mutimmu nūrihi*.

20 ʿAdnānī, *Wa-l-rāʿid*.

16.2 Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī: Descendant of the Prophet?

In the perspective of the Islamic State's ideologues and their followers, the removal of regional and local order at the hands of the group's fighters had gone hand in hand with the establishment of a new sociopolitical order, that is, the caliphate. These ideologues have gone at length to substantiate the eligibility and qualification of the group's leader, Ibrāhīm b. 'Awwād al-Badrī (alias Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī alias Khalīfa Ibrāhīm), to guide the entire Muslim community in worldly and spiritual affairs.²¹ Their claim is predominantly bolstered with ideas of traditional authority that rest on what Max Weber termed "an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them",²² hence shaping the legal and organisational architecture of the Islamic State in its self-representation as a "caliphate on the Prophetic way". Nominally elected by the group's *shūrā* council, the Islamic State's ideologues have brought a person to the fore who would embody their conceptualisation of authority and society.²³ However, in order to render Abū Bakr an identification figure for their followers and to create the impression that he would be rightfully invested with caliphal status, the Islamic State's ideologues attributed specific personal qualities to him.

A prominent example for such an attribution can be found in a segment of a speech wherein the group's "official spokesperson" (*al-mutaḥaddith al-rasmī*), 'Adnānī, announced the establishment of the caliphate.

Therefore, the *shūrā* council of the Islamic State studied this matter after the Islamic State – by Allah's grace – gained the essentials necessary for *khilāfa*, which the Muslims are sinful for if they do not try to establish. In light of the fact that the Islamic State has no constraint in terms of religious law or excuse that can justify delaying or neglecting the establishment of the caliphate such that it would not be sinful, the Islamic State – represented by the people of authority (*ahl al-ḥall wa-l-'aqd*), consisting of its senior figures, leaders, and the *shūrā* council – resolved to announce the establishment of the Islamic caliphate, the appointment of a caliph for the Muslims, and the pledge of allegiance to the shaykh, the *mujāhid*, the scholar who practises what he preaches, the worshipper and leader, the brave, the reviver, descendant from the family of the Prophet,

21 Badrī had been killed on 26 October 2019 and was replaced by a widely unknown person with the *kunya* of Abū Ibrāhīm al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī. See Qurashī, *Wa-man awfā*.

22 Weber, *Economy*.

23 See Günther, *Entrepreneurs of Identity*.

the servant of Allah, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Awwād b. Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Badrī al-Hāshimī al-Husaynī al-Qurashī by lineage, al-Sāmarrā’ī by birth and upbringing, al-Baghdādī by residence and scholarship. And he has accepted the pledge of allegiance (*bay‘a*). Thus, he is the imam and caliph for the Muslims everywhere.²⁴

Praising the new leader of the global Muslim community, ‘Adnānī makes it clear that whatever the qualities of the caliph are, they have been determined within, and are guaranteed by, the actions of “people of authority” (i.e. the *ahl al-ḥall wa-l-‘aqd*) who gain their power from the traditional order in which they are embedded.²⁵ Against the backdrop of this firm framework, ‘Adnānī asserts that the *shūrā* council and the *ahl al-ḥall wa-l-‘aqd* have selected an individual who is ascribed charismatic qualification in the sense of what Weber has described “a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities”.²⁶

‘Adnānī then proceeds to name a number of personal qualities of the caliph, several of which are purely personal traits like “the scholar who practises what he preaches” or “the reviver”. It is notable, however, that these qualities are mentioned before the caliph is referred to by name. While this arrangement is in accordance with the literary form of eulogy, the structure of ‘Adnānī’s announcement implies that while the caliph must have these qualities, they still are the qualities of the (office of the) caliph, not the qualities of (the person) Abū Bakr. It is the first form of charismatic authority the Islamic State ascribes to its leader, the “charisma of office”, that is based on “a dissociation of charisma from a particular individual, making it an objective, transferrable entity”.²⁷ In sum, this particular arrangement of attributes not only reflects an appropriation of a specific literary form, but also plays a role in safeguarding the group’s claim for power, because it is, in Weber’s terms, a “routinization” of charisma.²⁸ It lends potential stability to the Islamic State’s rule since it provides a justification to replace the current caliph, should he fail or be killed, without damaging the ruling structure.

24 ‘Adnānī, *Hādha wa’d Allāh*.

25 Still, the members of this eminent circle are not specified in any of the Islamic State’s media. On the *ahl al-ḥall wa-l-‘aqd* in the Islamic State’s self-conception, see Günther, *Ein zweiter Staat im Zweistromland?*, 210–15.

26 Weber, *Economy*, 241.

27 Weber, *Economy*, 248.

28 Weber, *Economy*, 246–54.

The Islamic State's ideologues, however, could not dissociate person and office completely, for they still have referred to features of Abū Bakr that point to him as a specific individual. Besides the above-mentioned *Hādha wa'd Allāh*, 'Adnānī, in another speech already published in 2011, characterises Abū Bakr as "a practising scholar as well as a devout worshipper and *mujāhid*. I saw within him the *'aqīda*, endurance, fearlessness, and aspiration of Abū Muṣ'ab, as well as the tolerance, justice, guidance, and humility of Abū 'Umar, alongside the intelligence, resourcefulness, determination, and patience of Abū Ḥamza."²⁹ 'Adnānī here emphasised that Abū Bakr embodies a combination of the best virtues of his predecessors, hence marking the summit of the group's evolution. In another text, the Bahraini scholar Turkī al-Bin'ālī, who had affiliated himself with the Islamic State in 2013, undertook the task to explain Abū Bakr's qualification in more detail.³⁰ He describes Abū Bakr as a brilliant theologian and emphasises that he "has mastered the ten *qirā'āt* of the Qur'ān", implying that he has acquired a sound knowledge of the holy text and extraordinary proficiency in the theological discipline of reading the Qur'ān.³¹ Also Abū Bakr's insights into the Qur'ānic text qualify him to discover and revive the original and "genuine" meaning of the scripture. These compendia of Abū Bakr's virtues emphasise his eligibility for the office of caliph/imam since they render his personal qualifications in conformity with the requirements set out in the classical texts of Sunnī theorists on statehood. These sought to present the ideal candidate as an emulation of the paragon that was the Prophet Muḥammad in terms of worldly and spiritual leadership.

Another feature that pertains to these prerequisites is the genealogy of the *amīr al-mu'minīn* and caliph. Both 'Adnānī's speech *Hādha wa'd Allāh* and Bin'ālī's text present the "Commander of the Faithful" as a descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad and his grandson Ḥusayn b. 'Alī by an Iraqi lineage.³² Sharīfian descent as criterion for the legitimate authority of the Islamic State's leader had also been claimed for Abū Bakr's predecessor, Abū 'Umar al-Baghdādī. The latter's designation as *amīr al-mu'minīn* after the announcement of the Islamic State of Iraq in late 2006 had received the esteem of key figures of the global Jihādī-Salafī current, emphasising the hereditary charisma embodied by him. Anwar al-Awlākī, an American-born cleric affiliated with al-Qā'ida, published a speech in which he endorsed the fact that "the

29 'Adnānī, *Inna dawla*.

30 Bin'ālī, "Maddū".

31 Paret, "Qirā'a".

32 See Günther, "Al-Qaida in Iraq". In the above-mentioned text Turkī al-Bin'ālī provides a list of Abū Bakr's ancestors (Bin'ālī, "Maddū"). For a thorough critique of the lineage presented in this leaflet, see "Faḍiḥa".

current head of that [Islamic] state being a descendant of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī carries a lot of importance [because] it represents a move of the idea from the theoretical realm to the real world. The idea of establishing the Islamic rule and establishing *khilāfa* on earth now is not anymore talk. It is action.”³³

The presentation of both leaders as descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad points to a second way in which the Islamic State routinises charismatic authority, namely, by framing it as “hereditary charisma”. The charisma of the Prophet as the prime authority is seen as being able to be “transmitted by heredity; thus that it is participated in by the kinsmen of its bearer”.³⁴ Identifying the caliph in this way accounts for respect for the Prophet’s house and places its bearers into a – albeit construed – line of continuity providing legitimation by ascribing the broad range of religious, social, and political meanings of this descent to the Islamic State’s leader. Moreover, this claim is widely recognisable in Iraqī society, for not only the importance of genealogical records had increased since the 1990s, but also the caliph’s tribe, the Bū Badrī, is indisputably recognised to be of Sharīfian descent. With regard to hereditary charisma attributed to the Islamic State’s leaders, a spiritual dimension that draws on popular beliefs around the emanation of *baraka* in the Prophet’s descendants is also apparent, although it is not explicitly addressed by the group’s ideologues. By tracing Abū Bakr’s and Abū ‘Umar’s lineage back to Ḥusayn and the Prophet’s daughter Fāṭima, the Islamic State makes indirect allusions to this beneficent force. Presenting both of its leading figures as being blessed with this spiritual power, it opens up a space for those who apprehend the caliphate as a spiritual mission in the first place and for whom these leaders must be equipped with extraordinary spiritual qualities, which in turn validates their eligibility as political leaders.

The leader’s claim to Sharīfian descent constitutes yet another symbolic bridge between past and present, which was built by the Islamic State’s ideologues seeking to evoke motifs of glory, dignity, pride, and honour through an appropriation of ideas, historical memories, and emotions pertaining to the family of the Prophet. This also feeds into their idealised concept of the caliphate and of their identity-building project. In this sense, it does not matter whether the Islamic State’s leadership circle or their various audiences believed in the genealogical continuity linking Abū Bakr and his predecessor

33 Awlākī, *Hearts and Minds*. This piece of Awlākī’s speech had also been included in one of a series of videos entitled *The Establishment of the Islamic State* in 2013 where the Islamic State’s ideologues saw it fit using this reference to bolster the genealogy they had ascribed to Abū Bakr. See al-‘Iṭṣām, *Iqāma al-dawla*.

34 Weber, *Economy*, 248.

to the Prophet's family. The Islamic State's ideologues in fact provided propositions to which many Sunnī Muslims could potentially relate, and they evoked historical memories and images in the minds of their audiences that were connected with distinct individual and collective emotions.

The Islamic State has thus employed numerous techniques of legitimising the authority of the caliph as an extraordinary, charismatically endowed person while still constraining his authority in the framework of a traditional order marked by divine ordinances. Abū Bakr was seen as indispensable to the Muslim community, because his presence guaranteed the observance of divine ordinances, the validity of certain religious practices, and individual salvation. Although his primary duties reduced his activities to a representative role, the charismatic qualification of both incumbent and office rendered the caliphate symbolically and affectively powerful. Since this sort of authority was much more significant to the Islamic State than the ruler's determination, the movement's ideologues apparently conceptualised the figure of the caliph not as an absolute ruler, but rather as a nominal leader who was nevertheless still seen as the locus of power, because without a caliph there can be no "genuine" Muslim society.

16.3 The Prophetic Way (*minhāj al-nubuwwa*)

The ideological framework of a traditional order is plainest represented in the Islamic State's claim to establish a "caliphate in accordance with the Prophetic way" (*khilāfa 'alā minhāj al-nubuwwa*). Since the announcement of the caliphate in July 2014/Ramadan 1435, the Islamic State had emphasised that the nature of this new order orients itself by "the Prophetic way", hence creates an all-encompassing system that affects all domains of society and individual life.

In this self-characterisation, the Islamic State's ideologues have selected a quote from the *ḥadīth* literature and adopted it as a slogan for their proto-state that helped to bring their thought and action in relation to historical precedent, and to make it appear as the fulfilment of a prophecy.³⁵ The chosen ref-

35 The *ḥadīth* in full is: "Prophethood will remain amongst you for as long as Allah wishes. Then Allah will remove it whenever He wishes to remove it, and there will be a caliphate upon the Prophetic methodology (*minhāj*). It will last for as long as Allah wishes it to last, then Allah will remove it whenever He wishes to remove it. Then there will be an abiding dynasty, and it will remain for as long as Allah wishes it to remain. Then Allah will remove it whenever He wishes to remove it. Then there will be tyrannical [forceful] kingship, and it will remain for as long as Allah wishes it to remain. Then He will remove it whenever He

erence to this tradition helps to bolster the Islamic State's claims for a distinct mode of sociopolitical organisation that is set in contrast to those based on democracy, secularism, and nationalism, among others. In his announcement of the caliphate, 'Adnānī emphasised this motif when he asserted that "nothing remains after the elimination of these borders, the borders of humiliation, and the breaking of the idol, the idol of nationalism, except the caliphate in accordance with the Prophetic way."³⁶ 'Adnānī's statement indicates that this notion was also used in many instances in order to reaffirm the "right" path pursued by the Islamic State, and to dismiss any criticism and attacks from outside as mere proofs of its righteousness.³⁷

The claims to traditional authority associated with the idea of a "caliphate in accordance with the Prophetic way" plays an eminent role in justifying the Islamic State's actions, including the exertion of extreme violence,³⁸ which can be seen in the range of quotations from the *ḥadīth* literature that we find in many of the group's texts, videos, or speeches. This strategy of symbolic enhancement combined with the creation of meaning through media, however, is only apparently a theologically immunised exercise of power, because many quotations come from canonical collections, but some have weak chains of transmission or are selectively shortened and combined to support the Islamic State's cause.³⁹

In its videos in particular, the Islamic State's ideologues sought to convey the impression that its followers would not only quote the Prophet to justify their actions, but would emulate him in doing what they did. As I have argued elsewhere, the leadership of the Islamic State and its predecessors created a symbolic repertoire of concepts, social practices, and forms of cultural production that served to bolster the meaningfulness of their claim to a

wishes to remove it, and then there will be a caliphate upon the Prophetic methodology." See Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 17939. Some clerics, however, consider the *ḥadīth* weak due to its weak *isnād*.

36 'Adnānī, *Hādha wa'd Allāh*.

37 Usāma bin Lādin, in a speech released in 2008, assessed that the foremost reason for the Islamic State of Iraq being attacked and treated with hostility by forces from within and outside of the country lay in the fact that they were closest to the truth and the method of the Prophet, proclaiming the truth and pleasing the Creator.

38 See Mu'assasat al-Furqān, *Alā minhāj*. It is in this 36-minute video compilation which was distributed shortly after the announcement of the caliphate under the title of "*Alā minhāj al-nubuwwa*" that the Islamic State's leadership presented their interpretation of how an Islamic state operates that emulated the Prophet's example. Their focal point was on military operations, conquering territories, retaliation against inner-Islamic enemies, unification with tribal and other rebel forces, and iconoclasm.

39 Boutz et al., "Exploiting".

historical continuity between the Prophet Muḥammad, his followers, and the Islamic State. Publicly visible practices in particular bore many references to the Prophet's role as the political leader of his nascent community. Due to the spatial limitations of this chapter, only one specific example, the oath of allegiance (*bay'ā*), will be discussed here. Other practices related to the exertion of regulatory authority,⁴⁰ like Eid festivities or the administration of *zakāt*,⁴¹ and body practices such as the dying of beard and eye lashes and the cleaning of one's teeth with a *miswāk*, will have to be left out.⁴² In all these cases, the Islamic State implicitly or explicitly refers to the Prophet Muḥammad as a source of inspiration.

In order to demonstrate that its leadership legitimately strives to exercise regulatory authority over the Muslim community, the Islamic State issued many textual and audio-visual publications that demanded an oath of allegiance (*bay'ā*) from all Muslims.⁴³ They sought to revive a practice whereby a person of authority enters into a social contract with the Muslim community and receives legitimation from it in return. They drew on concepts of *bay'ā* that were used by early Muslims who offered a pledge of allegiance to the Prophet Muḥammad and physically touched him during the ceremony, which is interpreted as indicating unity and dedication.⁴⁴ To the best of my knowledge, Abū Ḥamza al-Muhājir, the then "minister of war" of the Islamic State of Iraq, in October 2006 had been the first member of its leadership to announce his loyalty to the newly appointed *amīr al-mu'minīn*, Abū 'Umar, declaring "to listen and obey in hardship and in ease, in pleasure and displeasure even if someone is wrongly favoured over us, and pledging not to dispute the rule of those in authority and that we should speak the truth wherever we are and not to fear those who blame us regarding God".⁴⁵ The Islamic State's ideologues

40 Mu'assasat al-Furqān, *Ṣarḥ al-khilāfa*; Revkin, "Legal Foundations".

41 al-Maktab al-I'lāmī li-Wilāyat Ninawā, *Yawm al-jā'iza*; Mu'assasat al-Furqān, *Wa-āta al-zakāt*.

42 al-Maktab al-I'lāmī li-Wilāyat Ninawā, *Yawm al-jā'iza*.

43 See 'Adnānī, *Hādha wa'd Allāh*.

44 On the origins of *bay'ā*, see Landau-Tasseron, "Religious Foundations"; Tyan, "Bay'a"; Wagemakers, "Concept".

45 Muhājir, *Inna al-ḥukm*. See Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1709. For more *ḥadīths* on "listening and obeying" (*sam' wa-tā'a*), see the references in Wensinck, *Concordance*, 2:540ff (*sam'*, *al-sam' wa-l-tā'a*). *Ḥadīth* collections refer to different occasions on which the Prophet taught his companions how to swear him allegiance, thus recording slight variations in wording, which are also to be found in several of the Islamic State's publications. For instance, a 2009 document quotes a *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet answers a query of his companions by saying: "Swear me allegiance by listening and obeying, with activity and inaction, in what pleases and displeases [you], by commanding good and forbidding wrong." "Khuṭṭa", 29, and *ḥadīth* compilations referred to therein.

hence established a ritualised framework for a recognition of their authority based on the mutual acceptance of a hierarchical social structure embedded in divine ordinances.⁴⁶ In this sense, *bay'a* also affirms the contractual relationship between rulers and their subjects as a basis for individual salvation. Consequently, the Islamic State's ideologues base their calls for the public to show obedience upon Q 4:59 and have frequently invoked a *ḥadīth* according to which any Muslim who dies without being bound by an oath of obedience dies as a pagan (*man māta wa-laysa fī 'unqihī bay'a fa-māta mītan jāhiliyya*).⁴⁷ They have lent this practice public effectiveness and community-building character as a sign of the unity of the Muslim community and sought to emphasise the performative aspects of the *bay'a*, which plays a significant role in the Islamic State's videographic representation of its rule and in attesting its recognition by its subjects.

The audio-visual coverage interprets the people's "general oath" (*bay'at al-āmma*) rather as a form of acclamation than a prerequisite for legitimate authority.⁴⁸ After all it was an elite circle, the *shūrā*, whose members finalised the appointment of the ruler and induced their constituencies to swear loyalty to the caliph. They have nonetheless placed notable emphasis on public performances of such oaths of allegiance in order to reaffirm the acceptance of the Islamic State's rule both on the ground and through various (audio-) visual publications. Several videos of the group depict the staging of such performances in public by showing "ordinary people" applauding and cheering the movement's soldiers or vowing an oath of allegiance to Abū Bakr in public, which in turn can be interpreted as a form of recognition of the Islamic State's authority.⁴⁹ Beyond such allegedly spontaneous offerings of allegiance to the movement, videographic records of the *bay'a* (Figure 16.4) show a highly formalised ceremony and imply that the Islamic State had a great interest in displaying procedural regularity. By this it obviously wanted to support its claim

46 See, among others, Maktabat al-Himma, "Mukhtaṣar"; Azdi, "Muwajjabāt"; Mu'assasat al-Furqān, "I'lām"; also Maktabat al-Himma, "Aḥkām", a leaflet outlining the "Provisions for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Caliphate" (*aḥkām bay'at al-khilāfa*). The flyer was supposedly produced for distribution in the territories controlled by the Islamic State.

47 Q 4:49 reads: "O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you." Kister, "Social", 106, notes that "it is quite in character that this tradition was transmitted by Mu'āwiya". Despite its chain of transmission, the tradition had been included in Muslim's compendium; see Muslim, *Ṣaḥīh*, 4:549; 1851. On variations of the *ḥadīth*, see Wensinck, *Handbook*.

48 Badry, *Beratungsgedanken*, 131–32; Anjum, *Politics*, 120.

49 There are numerous examples showing people – children and adults alike – lauding the Islamic State by pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr. For early instances of individual and collective advocates throughout the region demonstrating their support, see Tamimi, "Bay'ah".



FIGURE 16.4 Stills from Islamic State videos

to regulatory authority, to demonstrate reliability, and to build trust and confidence in its rule. This is particularly obvious in cases where local notables, elders, tribal members, and several dozens of fighters swore the oath of allegiance to Abū Bakr.⁵⁰

16.4 Emulating Muḥammad as a Warrior Prophet

Since its very first public self-definitions, the Islamic State's ideologues have frequently referred to the *maghāzī* period in the earliest years of the *hijra* to describe themselves as a group that emulates the example set by the Prophet and his companions during times of hardship and military confrontation.⁵¹ I will describe in more detail below how they built up and employed such an analogy between the Islamic State and the nascent Muslim community to bolster their self-image as a social-revolutionary vanguard (*ṭalī'a*) whose reformative and missionary impetus is inextricably linked to the formative period of Islam. Moreover, the Islamic State's ideologues appropriated the personality traits of Muḥammad and his companions, ascribing them to the Islamic State's leadership and fighters in particular and thus establishing a symbolic analogy

50 al-Maktab al-I'lāmī li-Wilāyat Nīnawā, *Ashā'ir*; Mu'assasat al-Furqān, *Alā minhāj*.

51 See Zarqāwī, *Risāla*; Zarqāwī, *Hādha bayān*; al-I'tišām, *Iqāma al-dawla*; al-Maktab al-I'lāmī li-Wilāyat al-Baraka, *Sa-yuhzamu l-jam'*.

between the Islamic State and the nascent Muslim community. Equally, they drew on the characteristics of the Prophet's opponents and enemies to brand their own military, religious, social, and political adversaries, hence to locate the Islamic State in a continuing battle between "good" and "evil".

Muhājir, in an audio message that was titled *al-Dawla al-nabawiyya* and released in September 2008/Ramadan 1429, paradigmatically demonstrated the way in which the Islamic State's ideologues have emphasised personality traits of Muḥammad and his early followers with regard to Muḥammad's role as a warrior prophet, and to the hardship endured by the nascent Muslim community. Muhājir dedicated his 1 hour 20 minutes speech to an exploration of the reasons for the perseverance of this community in the earliest years after the *hijra* against great odds. He underlined the scarcity of wealth and resources that had been at the disposal of the Prophet and his companions after their flight from Mecca.

Medina, Muhājir asserts, had not been a safe haven for the nascent Muslim community that needed protection. Their flight rather heralded the start of "a new period of sacrifices in terms of self and money, with a new chapter of poverty, fear, starvation ... [and a life characterised by] fear, dread, periods of attention vis-a-vis their enemies, and alertness throughout all times".⁵² During this period, Muhājir elaborates further, the nascent Islamic State in Medina suffered from poverty and starvation that spared none of its inhabitants who could only prove themselves in these trials because they emulated the traits of the Prophet – "the best, and most honourable, and most courageous" among the people. Beyond his emphasis on Muḥammad as a paragon of steadfastness, he extensively dwells on the *ahl al-ṣuffa*, a group of emigrants from Mecca that, due to a lack of shelter, took refuge under a shed roof at the Prophet's mosque.⁵³ Quoting several *ḥadīths* that underline their asceticism and their willingness to endure material and physical deprivations due to their faith in Islam alone, he presents in detail the distinct traits of these people. The quintessence of his exposition is that the Prophet and his followers were able to build a state without even the most basic things, such as food and drink, and instead perceived their belief in the one God as a source of strength that made them endure any hardship. Muhājir presents these people as role models and calls today's Muslims (and followers of the Islamic State) to follow their path. Their endurance despite the number of hardships distinguished them from other people and likewise, the Islamic State's leadership seeks to appeal to its

52 Muhājir, *al-Dawla al-nabawiyya*.

53 Watt, "Ahl al-Ṣuffa".

(potential) followers, calling upon them to put their wealth, health, and life at risk to distinguish themselves from the majority.

Such a distinction is most explicitly pronounced with regard to the Islamic State's soldiers who are seen as the nucleus of the vanguard that is the Islamic State in its self-description. In order to justify the need for violent action, the Islamic State's ideologues have frequently cited a *ḥadīth* from Ibn Ḥanbal's collection: "The Messenger (peace be upon him) said, 'I was sent with a sword in my hands before the Hour so that God alone would be worshipped without a partner. My sustenance was provided in the shade of my spear (*ju'ila rizqī taḥta zilli rumḥī*). Humiliation and disdain were placed on those who oppose my order. He who imitates a people is one of them.'"⁵⁴ This *ḥadīth*, which is alluded to in several ways throughout the Islamic State's media production,⁵⁵ also helps to reinforce the notion of Muḥammad as a warrior prophet, and Islam as religion of war:

O Muslims, Islam was never for a day the religion of peace. Islam is the religion of war. Your Prophet (pbuh) was dispatched with the sword as a mercy to the creation. He was ordered with war until God is worshipped alone. He (pbuh) said to the polytheists of his people, 'I came to you with slaughter.' He fought both the Arabs and non-Arabs in all their various colours. He himself left to fight and took part in dozens of battles. He never for a day grew tired of war.⁵⁶

It is thus not only by their deeds and convictions that the Islamic State's soldiers follow the example of the Prophet and his companions but also "by their swords, they have repeated the stories of the *ṣaḥāba*".⁵⁷ This notion is alluded to in at least two ways by the Islamic State's ideologues when they emphasise analogies between past and present. First, they frequently refer to the Islamic State as an epitome of *al-ṭā'ifa al-manṣūra/al-ṭā'ifa al-zāhira*, quoting several versions of a *ḥadīth* according to which the Prophet said: "A group of my *umma* continues to fight in the cause of God, defeating their enemy, undeterred by

54 Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, 5667; see also other references in Wensinck, *Concordance*, 2:254 (*rizq*).

55 Boutz et al., "Exploiting", 8; see also al-Maktab al-I'lāmī li-Wilāyat Ḥimṣ, *Taḥta zīlāl*.

56 Baghdādī, *Infirū khifāfan*. The modification of a Qur'ānic verse (Q 21:107: *wa-mā arsalnāka illā raḥmatan li-l-'ālamīn*) by adding "with the sword" (*bi-l-sayf*) with reference to the above-mentioned *ḥadīth* had been used before by the Islamic State's spokesperson 'Adnānī and was subsequently criticised by a number of Muslim clerics in "Open Letter". See Boutz et al., "Exploiting", 18.

57 'Adnānī, *Mā kāna*.

those who are against them, until Judgement Day.”⁵⁸ Second, they present themselves as the force that continues the deeds of the Prophet and his companions during many of the battles (*ghazawāt*) between the nascent Muslim community and their adversaries shortly after the *hijra* such as Ḥamrā’ al-Asad, al-Aḥzāb, al-Qādisiyya, and al-Yarmūk. Although some of these battles are remembered as events from which the Prophet and his companions emerged triumphantly, the traditions still carry memories of a small outnumbered and outpowered Muslim community, which yet deeply trusted their Lord who protected and saved them.

Other battles such as the campaign against Khaybar and the decisive victory at Badr in particular are referred to as overall successful. Not only is the Prophet’s example as being closest to the enemies and being the strongest and most courageous frequently cited as a role model for the Islamic State’s soldiers.⁵⁹ The Battle of Badr is furthermore relevant in justifying the socio-economic strategies of modern rebel warfare, because it allowed the nascent Islamic State to overcome a state of poverty and starvation due to the spoils of war obtained there.⁶⁰ Spoils of war from the wealth of the disbelievers are regarded as “the noblest and most delicious gains” (*ashraf al-kasb ‘alā l-iṭlāq wa-atyabuhā*).⁶¹ Taking the Prophet as an example, the Islamic State’s fighters and leadership should seek their earnings through booty and spoils of war since alms are restricted to be distributed among the needy. Booty is also legalised with reference to the above-mentioned *ḥadīth* according to which the Prophet’s “provision has been placed beneath the shade of my spear”. Following this approach, the Islamic State’s leadership and media apparatus have in many publications emphasised the permissibility of looting and taking spoils of war in accordance with the Prophet’s deeds: “How can a monotheist *mujāhid* not seek for booty when it is clear that the Prophet and most of his companions sought for it, and the hypocrites were stingy with booty?”⁶²

Beyond characteristics that make them sustain in the exertion of violence, the Islamic State’s ideologues have, in numerous texts, speeches, and videos, attributed their soldiers with a range of traits such as patience (*ṣabr*), physical strength, volition, faith (*īmān*), and piety (*taqwā*). Referring to the role model that is the nascent Muslim community during the first years after the *hijra*, they have appealed to these traits in order to define and distinguish the

58 Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1037. Quoted in e.g. Baghdādī, *Ḥaṣād al-sinīn*; Baghdādī, *al-Bunyān al-marṣūṣ*.

59 Baghdādī, *al-‘Izz bi-ṣiyāna*.

60 See Muhājir, *al-Dawla al-nabawīyya*.

61 Muhājir, *al-Dawla al-nabawīyya*.

62 Muhājir, *al-Dawla al-nabawīyya*.

mujāhid from his environment. To make clear what they expect of soldiers who defend “true” Islam based on their faith alone, they appealed to characteristics such as steadfastness (*thabāt*) and endurance despite “afflictions with wounds and losses in people and weaponry”,⁶³ the lack of resources and water “except what the Lord of the earth and the heavens expended upon them [the Prophet and his companions]”,⁶⁴ as well as “the hardship of fear, hunger, and cold”.⁶⁵ These soldiers are warned to humble themselves and are described as being “in a state of *ribāt*, day and night.”⁶⁶ They sleep on the ground and use heaven as a blanket. The heat of the sun strains them in the summer, and their extremities become frozen during winter when they support God’s religion.⁶⁷

What was to be remembered as a glorious history indeed only became such due to the hardships and sacrifices endured by the early Muslim community that had to stand the test imposed on them by God. Likewise, the Islamic State’s ideologues have frequently referred to Q 2:155 to frame any military defeat in terms of a test that God imposes on them so that they could prove the strength of their faith.⁶⁸ Muhājir asserted that

he who seeks a higher level through his faith is not deterred from *jihād* against the enemy by the harm caused by the people of worldly pleasure. This is even when the harm reaches its extreme limits. He is pleased with God’s ruling, fate, and His way that rules over His creation. He frees his heart of desire and truth ignites in his heart and certainty covers it. He never has a preference or puts himself forward before God’s and His Messenger’s hands, for the matter is a matter of belief and disbelief. These are two distinct parts that never meet. Events on the ground only make him more resistant, perseverant, and more certain about the truthful promise because God is the Subduer, the King, and the Overcomer. To Him is the refuge when a calamity strikes and to Him belongs the

63 Zarqāwī, *Hādha bayān*.

64 See Muhājir, *Inna al-ḥukm*. Also quoted in al-I’tišām, *Iqāma al-dawla*.

65 Muhājir, *al-Dawla al-nabawīyya*.

66 Baghdādī, *Risāla*.

67 al-Maktab al-ʿIlāmī li-Wilāyat Ḥims, *Taḥta zīlāl*. In this context, the term *ribāt* refers to the conceptualisation of the Islamic State’s soldiers as warriors fighting on the frontier between (and defending) the abode of Islam (*dār al-islām*) and the abode of disbelief (*dār al-kufr*). On a comprehensive examination of the term, see Chabbi and Rabbat, “Ribāt”.

68 “And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient”.

final return. He warns, gives notice, and gives glad tidings of victory to those who believe in Him, perform *hijra* and *jihād* for His sake, and are patient.⁶⁹

This notion is also apparent in a fighter's statement who directly addresses his fellow Muslims and (potential) followers of the Islamic State in a video, asserting that "you know that the path to paradise is plastered with hardship (*makāriḥ*) and hell is full of desires. And this is the way of the Prophet Muḥammad and of the companions and who followed after them and who followed after them. If you see tribulations (*balā'*) then you know that you are on the way of truth."⁷⁰

16.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented a tentative examination of the appropriation of the Prophet's authority in the Islamic State's media. It used the concept of charismatic authority to show how, beyond the extensive quotation of *ḥadīths*, the Islamic State's ideologues have created an aura of factuality around their symbolic repertoire by interweaving a range of allusions to the figure of the Prophet and reclaiming the spiritual and worldly inheritance of Muḥammad and the *ṣaḥāba*.

I have shown that the Islamic State's ideologues have created the black banner as a signifier of its claim for legitimate authority. This visual sign is enchanted and symbolically loaded through its colour scheme, the typography, the *shahāda*, and the Prophet's signet, hence giving off the charismatic authority of the Prophet in its *statu nascendi* that surrounded his leadership and, at the same time, drawing on historical structures and tradition that helped to "preserve" his charisma.

The Islamic State's ideologues followed the same strategy when they attributed charismatic qualifications to their leader, Abū 'Umar al-Baghdādī, and to his successor, Abū Bakr al-Baghdādī. They played on the sense of loyalty and obligation on which traditions of Muḥammad's prophecy rest and employed the alleged Prophetic descent of both leaders to bolster their claim for legitimate authority. Drawing on Sunnī theories of statehood developed between the tenth and the fourteenth century CE, they have portrayed Abū Bakr in

69 Muhājir, *Ṣadaqa Allāh*.

70 al-Maktab al-'Ilāmī li-Wilāyat Ḥimṣ, *Taḥta zīlāl*.

particular as holding an office that itself transfers charisma, and as a person who is extraordinarily qualified to fulfil the requirements for the caliphate and to emulate the Prophet.

Such emulation of the paragon that is the Prophet in terms of morality and leadership has also been incorporated into social practices on which the Islamic State based its reformatory mission. I have described in more detail one such practice, that is, the oath of allegiance (*bay'a*). In reviving this practice, and by using a formula adopted from the Prophetic tradition, the Islamic State's ideologues not only sought to display procedural regularity in order to support their claim to regulatory authority. They could also count on a framework of knowledge based on which people swearing the *bay'a* recognised that they entered into a social contract guaranteed by loyalty and obligation to the Prophet and his community, and to the attempt to build a coherent Muslim community despite hardships and tribulations.

The Islamic State's ideologues have frequently alluded to such adversities during the *maghāzī* period to create an analogy between the condition of their group and the nascent Muslim community in the first years after the *hijra*. They have highlighted personal qualities of the Prophet and his companions, which have distinguished them from their environment and proved their righteousness, piety, and proximity to God. Moreover, the traits attributed to the early Muslims are likewise attributed to the *mujāhidīn*, so as to encourage them in both exertion of (violent) rule and perseverance in the light of defeat. The constant references of the Islamic State's ideologues to the exemplary figure of the Prophet and an idealised early period of Islam are central epistemes of the group, as is self-location as the only "righteous" representative of divine ordinances. These ideas have an important function, especially against the backdrop of the highly fluctuating and defensive situation of the group in an exceedingly unstable context, as they guarantee the continued existence of the caliphate in virtual space and help to route its potential resurgence elsewhere in the world.

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