

# palermo occasional papers

ISLAMIC HISTORY, DOCTRINES AND SOURCES

التاريخ والعقائد والمصادر الإسلامية

FONDAZIONE PER LE SCIENZE RELIGIOSE

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# CONTENTS

## ARTICLES

- Carmela Baffioni, *The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' between Physics, Metaphysics and Salvation* ..... Pag. 9
- Rosanna Budelli, *The Use of the Ḥadīṭs in the Uns al-munqaṭīn by al-Mu'āfā ibn Ismā'īl (d. 630/1233)* ..... » 29

## NOTES

- Andrea Amato, *Themes and Problems of Islam in the Study of the Crimean Khanate* ..... » 65
- Riccardo Amerigo Vigliermo, *The NAS Server: A Donation of Digital Manuscripts and Printed Books from the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought* ..... » 101

## LETTURA LA PIRA 2023 LA PACE E IL MEDITERRANEO

- Introduction* by Ivana Panzeca ..... » 113
- Welcome addresses* by Alessandro Pajno ..... » 115
- Intervention* by Federica Mogherini ..... » 121

<i>Intervention by Anba Damian</i> .....	Pag. 127
<i>Intervention by Matteo Zuppi</i> .....	» 133
<i>Conclusions by Corrado Lorefice</i> .....	» 141

## REVIEWS

M. Campanini, <i>Maometto: La vita e il messaggio di Muhammad il profeta dell'Islam</i> (Francesca Badini) .....	» 147
--	-------

M. Picchi, <i>L'ombra dei Fratelli: Le Sorelle musulmane nell'Egitto contemporaneo</i> (Adnane Mokrani) .....	» 150
---	-------

NAME INDEX .....	» 155
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## *Articles*





# The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' between Physics, Metaphysics and Salvation

*Carmela Baffioni*

The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' are the authors of the most ancient medieval encyclopaedia of sciences. Many of the 51 (or 52) epistles that constitute their work deal with unequivocally scientific topics. However, metaphysics also plays an important role in them – although one must carefully consider how it should be understood. Since this work is an encyclopaedia, it is easy to find the common denominator in the various disciplines it deals with, which is salvation. That makes the primary sense that must be attributed to the Iḥwān's metaphysics quite unequivocal: that which is beyond the physical. The topic chosen to demonstrate the coexistence of physics and metaphysics in the encyclopaedia is evil. The commentary on the passages from the epistles that are quoted in this article is supplemented with an examination of the verses cited in support of the arguments, which attests to the peculiar *ta'wīl* of the Holy Book operated by the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'. This *ta'wīl* shows that the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' make use of a peculiar elaboration of ancient thought to substantiate their metaphysical conception.

Keywords: Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', Brethren of Purity, Metaphysics in Islam

## 1. Introduction

The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' or Brethren of Purity, as their name is commonly translated, are the authors of one of the most complete medieval encyclopaedias of sciences, antecedent by at least two centuries to the best known in the Latin world. Alexander Neckam (1157–1217) wrote his *De naturis rerum* after 1213; the *De Natura rerum* by Thomas of

\* A first draft of this article was presented at the 34th DOT (Deutscher Orientalistag) held in Berlin on 12–17 September 2022.

Cantimpré (1201–1272) was written between 1225 and 1244; Vincent of Beauvais (ca. 1190–ca. 1274) composed the *Speculum maius* in 1256, and Bartholomaeus Anglicus (ca. 1200–1272) wrote his *Liber de proprietatibus rerum* around 1240.

The encyclopaedia of the Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ is a collection of 52 epistles, divided into four sections: 1) propaedeutic sciences; 2) natural sciences; 3) sciences of the soul; 4) theological sciences. These epistles consist of extremely heterogeneous materials, reworked to represent the entire educational training intended for an élite (initiates), and reflecting Babylonian, Indian, Persian, Jewish, and gnostic influences, with several biblical quotations. The core source is, however, Greek thought.

The most recent research considers that the various epistles were written between the end of the 9th century and the first half of the 10th century.<sup>1</sup> From an ideological point of view, which is also biographical, they are reticent about their commitment if this is not due to the incomplete manuscript tradition or (regarding their alleged Ismailism) to their application of *taqiyya* (dissimulation of one's beliefs for defensive purposes).

Many epistles deal with unequivocally scientific topics, but metaphysics also plays an important role in them, although one must carefully consider how it should be understood. The authors see themselves as a brotherhood (*muʿāṣara*) of sages who are addressing beginners. The common denominator of their encyclopaedia is salvation. This makes the primary sense that must be attributed to their metaphysics quite unequivocal: what is beyond the physical.

## 2. *The Scientific Commitment (Physics)*

I shall discuss a few passages that seem emblematic in order to understand the relationship between physics and metaphysics in the encyclopaedia. The first series of passages is found in the last part of epistle 19 “On Minerals”.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Baffioni, “Ikhwān al-Safāʾ” s.v., in *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. by E.N. Zalta, 2021, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ikhwan-al-safa/> (22 June 2023) and “Gli studi di Alessandro Bausani sugli Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ alla luce delle ricerche recenti”, in *Il retaggio culturale di Alessandro Bausani a un trentennio dalla sua morte*, ed. by C. Lo Jacono, Rome, Bardi Edizioni, 2021, pp. 15–48, esp. 25–31.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *On the Natural Sciences: An Arabic Critical Edition and English Translation of Epistles 15–21*, ed. and trans. by C. Baffioni, New York, Oxford University Press/The

Here the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' refer to their theory that “[...] nature is one of the inspired angels of God, and of His virtuous servants, who do what they are commanded, without disobeying their Lord, *and they stand in awe and reverence of His glory* [part of Qur'an 21:28]” [Text 1].<sup>3</sup>

This is developed in epistle 20 “On the Quiddity of Nature” along lines close to the content of Ismaili thought, as I demonstrated some years ago.<sup>4</sup> The text continues:

Text 2: [...] God [...] has no need, for His acts, of instruments and tools, places and times, or matter and movements, but His act proper to Him – namely, origination, invention, bringing into existence, and making [things] emerge from non-being into being – is according to what we have explained in the epistle “On the Rational Principles and the Spiritual Acts”.<sup>5</sup>

This point is dealt with repeatedly in the encyclopaedia in order to differentiate the divine craftsman from the artisans of the created world. The echoes of Plato's demiurge in his definition of a “wise maker” (*ṣāni' ḥakīm*) notwithstanding, God really does create from nothing.

The title mentioned in Text 2 is missing from the version of the encyclopaedia as we know it. It may refer to epistle 42 “On Opinions and Religions,” where we read:

Text 3: Then they studied human artefacts and found [that] every human craftsman needs six things in his art for his work to be complete thanks to them, namely matter, space, time, motion, tools, and instrument. And [they found that] every natural craftsman [*ṣāni' tabī'ī*, that is, God's agents in the sublunar world] needs four of them, namely matter, space, time, and motion. And they found that every spiritual craftsman [*ṣāni' naḥṣānī*, that is, God's agents in the heavenly world] needs two of them, matter, and motion, and then it became clear to them that the Creator

Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2013, pp. 277–283 for further references and considerations.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 277–278. All Qur'anic translations (given in italics and without inverted commas) are by A. Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an*, Ware, Wordsworth, 2000 (online version at quranyusufali.com).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. Baffioni, “Antecedenti greci nel concetto di ‘natura’ degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'”, in *ENOSIS KAI FILIA. Unione e amicizia: Omaggio a Francesco Romano*, ed. by M. Barbanti, G.R. Giardina and P. Manganaro, Catania, CUECM, 2002, pp. 545–556.

<sup>5</sup> *On the Natural Sciences*, pp. 277–278.

[...] needs none of them, because His act and His work [are] an invention and a beginning without motion nor time nor space nor tools. And this [is] because the first individual that God [...] invented and brought into existence – as a noble, simple [and] spiritual substance, He called “Active Intellect”; then He brought into being, through the mediation of this substance, another substance inferior to it in nobility, [which] is called “Universal Soul”. Then the Universal Soul through the mediation of the Active Intellect began to move Matter first in length, breadth, and depth, and from it the Absolute Body derived. Then from the [Absolute] Body the world of the spheres, the stars and the four fundamental elements were put together [...].<sup>6</sup>

At this point, the mention of the Neo-Platonic hypostases follows. But let us now return to epistle 19: “And know, O my brother, that a group of disputants denied the acts of nature because they ignored the quiddity of nature in itself and did not know that it is one of the angels nearest to God,<sup>7</sup> charged with the organization of His world and with the wellness of His creatures” [Text 4].<sup>8</sup>

This theme is typically a matter of physics: secondary causality is one of the main issues of Aristotle’s *Physics*. But it is immediately resolved in a religious sense: the Neo-Platonic hypostases on which the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’ built their ontological system and which introduce Nature correspond to a hierarchy of spiritual beings, among which are those responsible for natural events.

Then the question of causality shifts to that of evil: what about causes that have negative effects?

Text 5: They linked all natural acts to the Creator [...], be they good or shameful, and be He excellent or evil. Among them there is he who linked what is good to the Creator [...], whereas what is shameful, he linked that to something else. Then they differed about this “something else”, about

<sup>6</sup> Since this epistle has not yet been published in the new series of the Institute of Ismaili Studies, I quote from *Rasā’iḥ Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’ wa Ḥillān al-Wafā’*, ed. by B. al-Bustānī, 4 vols., Beirut, Dār Ṣādir, 1957. Cf. here *ibid.*, vol. III, p. 465, 4–15. Italian trans. in C. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’ “Sulle opinioni e le religioni”*, Napoli, Istituto Universitario Orientale – Dipartimento di Studi e Ricerche su Africa e Paesi Arabi, 1989, pp. 140–141.

<sup>7</sup> The expression *al-malā’ika al-muqarrabūn* is found in Qur’an 4:172 (trans. by Yusuf Ali).

<sup>8</sup> *On the Natural Sciences*, p. 278.

“who it is”. Among them there is he who linked those natural acts to *tawallud* [generation];<sup>9</sup> he who linked them to stars; he who linked them to fortune and chance; he who linked them to the ordinary course [of things]; and he who linked them to satans, but he does not know what satans are. They made all these speeches on account of their ignorance of the quiddity of nature, their scarce knowledge of its acts, and of the acts of the angels of God, charged with the preservation of His world, of the rotation of its spheres, of the journey of their stars, of the generation of its [i.e., of the world’s] animals, of the growth of the plants of His earth, and of the formation of its minerals.<sup>10</sup>

In this context, the aim of the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’ is to assert that

Text 6: [...] the Creator [...] is not in direct contact with bodies by Himself, and does not undertake any act on His own, but commands His angels charged [with acting] and His inspired servants, and they obey what they were commanded, as kings, who are the caliphs of God on His Earth, command their servants and attendants, and their troops, helpers, and subjects, and do not undertake any act by themselves, being too remote [for that]; so God [...] commands, or wills, or wishes, or says, *Be, and it was*,<sup>11</sup> and [pronounces] His saying [...], *And Our command is but a single (act) – like the twinkling of an eye* [Qur’an 54:50], and His saying, *be He blessed and exalted, And your creation or your resurrection is in no wise but as an individual soul* [first part of Qur’an 31:28].

And know, O my brother, that when these acts and works that happen before the eyes of people [...] are linked to the Creator [...], their link is similar to the link of [their] acts to kings, and [it is similar to] when it is said, “The king so-and-so built the town so-and-so”, or “he excavated the river so-and-so”, or “he inhabited the country so-and-so” – as it is said, Alexander the Macedonian built the rampart of Gog and Magog,<sup>12</sup> Solomon, son of David, built the mosque of Āelia [*Iliyā*], Abraham [...] built the Ka’ba [*al-bayt al-ḥarām*], and al-Manṣūr built the “City of Peace”,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> According to Remke Kruk, this term indicates cause and effect without an intermediate point of volition, and the generation of plants and animals directly from inanimate matter. See R. Kruk, “Tawallud” s.v., in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. X, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2000, pp. 378–379.

<sup>10</sup> *On the Natural Sciences*, p. 278.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Qur’an 3:47 and 59; 6:73; 16:40; 19:35; 36:82; 40:68.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Qur’an 18:94–97.

<sup>13</sup> *Madīnat al-salām*, namely, Baghdad, founded in 762 CE.

as [all of that] came to be by their order, agreement, will, wish, and concern, not because they undertook these acts on their own, or were in direct contact with these deeds through their bodies.<sup>14</sup>

Nominally and in terms of responsibility the acts go back to the king – or to God, who is the king of everything – but materially they cannot be attributed to the king, let alone to God. This proves that God is “beyond” creation, in accordance with a principle close to Ismaili doctrines,<sup>15</sup> though in general the Iḥwān al-Şafāʾ initiate the emanative process specifically with God in accordance with Neo-Platonic ideas.

This text, however, makes us doubt the unambiguity of this position. Indeed, we note that the *kun*, the divine command coming from an act of will on God’s part, is introduced here through a quotation from Qur’an 54:50. Here the concept of *ibdāʾ*<sup>16</sup> is exemplified. This term used, albeit not exclusively, in Ismailism, indicates instant origination from nothing. The quotation of Qur’an 54:50 is followed by a quotation from Qur’an 31:28.

In contrast, all the “craftsmen” of the created world (referred to here as angels, prophets and God’s friends and servants) are the material executors of the divine will in their natural and voluntary acts:

Text 7: And so is the rule that governs the relation of the acts of the angels of God, of His prophets, of His friends, and of His servants, be they natural or voluntary. So their link to God [...] is like this, as He mentioned [...] in His saying to His Prophet Muḥammad, the elect [...], *when thou throwest (a handful of dust), it was not thy act, but Allah’s* [Qur’an 8:17, central part]; in His Saying [...], *It is not ye who slew them; it was Allah* [Qur’an 8:17, first part]; in the saying [...], *Do ye then see? – the (human Seed) that ye throw out – Is it ye who create it, or are We the Creator?* [Qur’an 56:58–59]; in His saying [...], *See ye the seed that ye sow in the ground? Is it ye that cause it to grow, or are We the Cause?* [Qur’an 56:63–64] and similar relations in acts, deeds, works, composition, ag-

<sup>14</sup> *On the Natural Sciences*, pp. 279–280.

<sup>15</sup> Along the lines of the negative theology of Dionysius the Aeropagite (flourished 1st century CE), Ismailis consider God to be absolutely unknowable and ineffable. Therefore, they initiate the process that gave rise to the world not with God, but with the Active Intellect variously associated with *ibdāʾ* (see *infra*).

<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, it should be noted that the term occurs only twice in the Qur’an (cf. 2:117 and 6:101).

gregation, combination and separation, generation and corruption, and growth and decline.

When they are linked to God, [...] that link is this way, because God [...] is He who created the agents, the artisans and the manufacturers, as well as acts, be they [of] humans, *ġinns*, satans, or angels and nature. They are all related to God [...] according to the same rule, because they are all His servants, troops, and attendants, whom He created, made grow, established, fortified, taught, guided, ordered, and prohibited. The obedient and the disobedient, the good and the evil, the noble and the defective, the beneficent and the wicked, he who lives in comfort and he who suffers, he who is afflicted and he who is in health, [all of] them God created *in diverse stages*,<sup>17</sup> for the abundance of His knowledge, the effectiveness of His wish, the enforcement of His judgements, and the glory of His might. He, in fact, is not asked about what He does, but they are asked.<sup>18</sup>

God is not only the one who created the various instruments required by the agents. He is also the one who “[...] created the agents, the artisans, and the manufacturers, as well as acts, be they [of] humans, *ġinns*, satans, or angels and nature. They are all related to God [...] according to the same rule because they are all His servants, troops, and attendants” [Text 8].<sup>19</sup>

God’s creation of acts is mentioned here, but I believe that in this context it should not be understood in a similar sense to the Ash‘arite theory of *kasb*:<sup>20</sup> the comparison with “servants and attendants, and their troops, helpers, and subjects” seems unequivocal. Here God “creates” an act in the sense that he wants it to be accomplished.

And it is, the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’ now repeat, precisely their ignorance of what Nature is that leads some people to link acts to the Creator:

<sup>17</sup> Cf. for this expression Qur’an 71:14.

<sup>18</sup> *On the Natural Sciences*, pp. 280–281.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.

<sup>20</sup> According to the theologian Abū al-Ḥasan al-Aš‘arī, the theoriser of Sunni Islam, *kasb* indicates the voluntary acquisition by humans of acts created by God. Through such acquisition, humans become responsible for their actions and thus deserve the divine reward or punishment. This theory was intended to safeguard both human freedom of choice, and the theory that only God can be considered the “creator” (according to Qur’an 37:96, «[...] God has created you and your handiwork!»). See L. Gardet, “Kasb” s.v., in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., vol. IV, Leiden, Brill, 1997, pp. 692–694. According to the most recent studies (see above, note 1), al-Aš‘arī (ca. 260–324/874–936), the eponymous founder of the Aš‘arite school of Islamic theology, should be roughly contemporary with the version of the encyclopaedia as we know it today.

Text 9: And know, O my brother, that a group of disputants, as they did not know what nature is, linked all its acts to the Creator [...], and fell into a strong uncertainty, confusion, and doubts. In fact, as it was clear to them that an act comes only from an agent, but they experienced acts on which they could take up no position [with regard to their causes], they linked them to the Creator [...]. Then they investigated and studied them, and they found some of them to be iniquities and [a sign of] corruption, such as the suffering of children, misfortunes of goods, supremacy of evils, loss of animals, as well as the sufferings, pains, strain, and trial that touch them. They felt disgust at linking them to the Creator [...], so they linked them to *tawallud* according to their allegation; and among them [there was] he, who linked them to fortune and chance,<sup>21</sup> he who linked them to stars, he who linked them to *ġinns* and satans, he who linked them to the Creator [...], and who spoke of gratification and punishment, he who spoke of compensation and prescience, he who spoke of benevolence and conciliation, and other discourses, the explanation of which would be long due to prolixity and [necessity of] verification. They made long discussions on [such acts], and we have explained a part of their speeches in the epistle “On Opinions and Religions”; so learn them from there, if God wishes.<sup>22</sup>

As is explained in the epistle “On Opinions and Religions”, linking acts to the Creator results in even more difficulties when one experiences the negative effects of so many of these acts: and even when one wants to look for the cause in something other than God, the results are certainly not satisfactory.

So far acts have been linked, though in various terms, to natural agents. However, at this point the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’ say:

Text 10: We have already explained that all of these are acts of the particular souls that are all faculties of the heavenly Universal Soul, as their Creator [...] brought it forth, as He recalled by His saying [...], *And your creation or your resurrection is in no wise but as an individual soul* [Qur’an 31:28, first part]. What was good of these acts was linked to the good, safe souls, and what was evil was linked to the evil souls, and upon them punishment and gratification fall, [in terms] of requital and penalty.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> In the discussion of nature as the cause, Aristotle deals with fortune and chance in *Physics* II.4.195b31, and, extensively, in *Physics* II.4–6.

<sup>22</sup> *On the Natural Sciences*, pp. 281–282.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 282.



Good acts are linked to good, safe souls, and evil acts to evil souls. Muslim faith does not allow the identification of God as the cause of evil. Here, as they reaffirm with a new quotation from Qur'an 31:28, the Iḥwān attribute good and evil to human responsibility, or even to the responsibility of creatures in general, and this time they do so in quite a Mu'tazilī manner. Subsequently the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' continue:

Text 11: And know, O my brother [...], that your soul is one of the particular souls, [that] it is one of the faculties of the heavenly Universal Soul, [and that] it cannot stay in itself or separated from her, just as your body is a part of the body of the world, [and that it can stay] neither as a whole nor separated from it. Then, look now at the quality of your acts, deeds, morals, opinions, and knowledge, because your reward and gratification will be according to them, as the messenger of God [...] said, *Indeed, it is your deeds that will be reported to you.* And He said [...], as a confirmation of the speech of His messenger [...], *That man can have nothing but what he strives for; That (the fruit of) his striving will soon come in sight: Then will he be rewarded with a reward complete* [Qur'an 53:39–41].<sup>24</sup>

At this point the discourse turns to eschatology. In this regard I would like to note that the frequent symbolism used for the soul and body, for example the dweller in his house or the craftsman in his workshop, shows that the relationship between the two terms is very close.<sup>25</sup>

This is a first point that reveals to us the close link that exists in the encyclopaedia between physics and metaphysics in the sense of “that which is beyond physics”. The sources we have examined so far concerned an exquisitely physical topic, namely the discussion of secondary causes. However, the answer of the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' is religious: it is based on the doctrine that makes God the principle of the whole but, at the same time, radically distinguishes Him from it. The connection between God and the whole therefore occurs through a hierarchical series of beings. Explicitly, the connection between physics and metaphysics is realised through the action of the Active Intellect and the Universal Soul – that is, with the support of Neo-Platonic doctrines.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 282–283.

<sup>25</sup> A recent verbal communication by Daniel De Smet, however, highlights the way in which among Tayyibis the same symbolism tends to demonstrate the substantial lack of relationship between soul and body.

### 3. *The Religious Commitment (Metaphysics)*

Just as philosophy as a way towards salvation is an imitation of God and implies that the disciple is provided not only with an acute mind but also with a pure heart,<sup>26</sup> the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', like the Ismailis, consider prophetic messages (both esoteric and exoteric, hidden and clear) as the second necessary means for human salvation and happiness.<sup>27</sup> This brings us to the second aspect of the encyclopaedia, its religious commitment. The relationship of physical issues to religion will be illustrated by other passages of the *Rasā'il* linked to the previous ones.

In the texts we have just read there are numerous references, explicit and implicit, to epistle 42. This epistle opens the fourth section, which is devoted to religious and/or metaphysical sciences. The first section of epistle 7 "On the theoretical arts" provides what may be considered the earliest sketch of the layout of the encyclopaedia, and epistle 42 may be considered its second "programmatic" epistle, in that in this treatise the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' rework the classical heritage in religious terms. They deal with several basic ideas of the brotherhood such as the multifaceted epistemological problems, the origin of the world, morals, theodicy, and the imamate.

First, for the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* is the basic element of their system. In this context they deal extensively with eternalism, dualism, and, needless to say, evil, while developing the apologetic aspect of their doctrine:

Text 12: Know that good and evil [are according to four species:] 1) that which is related to the fortunes and misfortunes of the sphere; 2) that which is related to natural events such as generation and corruption and the pains and sufferings which befall animals; 3) that which is related to harmony and conflict, love and hatred which [lie] in the natural dispo-

<sup>26</sup> Through which God will be recognized as the sole and the supreme teacher in knowledge and deeds, as the Holy Book demonstrates. Cf. for example, Qur'an 2:31: "And He taught Adam the names", mentioned in epistle 28 "On the Explanation of Human's Capability to Knowledge", *Rasā'il*, vol. III, p. 18, 14–16 and in epistle 31 "On the Diversity of Languages", *ibid.*, pp. 112, 19 and 141, 13–14; cf. also epistle 23 "On the Composition of the Body", *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 381, 17.

<sup>27</sup> Ismaili philosophical writings show that Ismailism constantly identifies the way to salvation in the knowledge of the letter and spirit of the Holy Book and of the philosophical doctrines of ancient origin, albeit reworked in the light of their religious conceptions.

sition of animals [...]; 4) and that which is related to the souls subject to order and prohibition in the [legal] dispositions imposed on souls concerning happiness and unhappiness in this world and in the hereafter.

Then know that these kinds of goods and evils that we have mentioned [have] causes and reasons whose explanation would be lengthy [...] and yet we mention them in this chapter as much as we need to and say: the goods that are related to the fortunes of the sphere are undoubtedly by God's providence and by His intention. As for the evils that are related to the misfortunes of the sphere, they are accidental [and] not [due] to an intention. An example of this is the radiance of the sun and its rising at a certain time on some place [...] and its concealment [...] at another [time] [...].

As for what happens to some animals and plants because of excessive heat and destructive cold at certain times, moments, and places, that is not for the first [= primary] intention [of God]. And so too [is] the rule of the rains [...] and the rule of all events that accidentally happen to animals, plants, minerals, and the children of man [...].

As for the goods that are related to natural events, that is, the generation of animals, plants, and minerals [...], they are all by the intention of God [...], and by the providence of His favour and outpouring of graces.

As for the evils that are corruption and decay [...], they are accidental with respect to the first intention, but [occur] by the second intention, and that is because those generated beings that are under the sphere of the moon, since it is not possible for their individuals to remain always in the matter in this world, the divine wisdom and the providence of the Lord had the goodness to [ensure] that their stability were in their forms, and that the individuals were always in flux and flow. And an example of this [is] the form of man [...] because in potentiality [there are] unlimited favours and goods that it is not possible for them to come out of potentiality into actuality, and to appear all at once at a single time [...]. And it is already clear [...] that the defect does not come from God [...].

And [there is] also another reason for the causes of evils, because, since the existence of these generated beings began from the most defective and weakest being [...], those roots are called "goods", and so every cause that opposes their attainment of that is called "evil", and is accidental [and] not because of the first intention. And an example of this [is] what has been mentioned above, concerning the question of the sun and the rain. [...]

Then know that the meaning of the wise men's saying, "first intention" and "second intention" [is] that the difference between the two is that what comes directly from the Creator [...] by origination, existention, invention, by permanence, and by completeness, perfection and maturity

and similar qualities is called “first intention”. And the “second intention” is everything that comes due to a defect in matter [...].

As for the explanation of the species of evils [...] we say: the evils that are related to the natural disposition of animals and to what [is] in their natures are of three species: 1) the pains that affect them and no other existing beings; 2) the aversion that [is] in their natural disposition; 3) their acts that [are] due to their own intention and volition [...].

As for the pains that come to their souls because of hunger and thirst, that [...] is by the second intention [...] so that those pains sent to their souls would favour their bodies in their search for food [...]. And those souls would remain [...] defective [...]; and there was placed for them also in the intake of food a pleasure and a desire [...] so that they would not take food that was not good for them [...] so that they would eat and drink as long as nature needs [...]. And all of that [is] by the intention of God [...] and because of the defect that [is] in matter [...] even the pains [come] by the intention, providence and decree of wisdom.

[...] the goods that [are] in the natural disposition of animals [...], that is, intimacy and love, and the evils, that is, hostility, oppression, and violence, [are] also by the second intention [...].

As for the evils that are related to certain acts of animals because of their intention and volition, also among them [are] those that occur because of matter [...] due to the first intention of God [...].

The goods and evils that are related to particular human souls from the point of view of the disposition of the law are of two species: 1) their actions and rendering them responsible for them, and 2) the reward for their actions [...].

[...] they are called “goods” and “evils” from two standpoints: rational and conventional [...]. And the knowledge of these conditions is not in every man’s faculty [...] except after his person has been educated and elevated in sciences and arts. And because of this, every man needs a teacher [...].

Then know that the lawgivers are the teachers [...]. And teachers of the Lawgivers are the angels. And teacher of the angels is the Universal Soul. And her<sup>28</sup> teacher [is] the Active Intellect. And God [...] [is] the master of all things.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> I use the masculine person pronoun in reference to the Active Intellect and the feminine personal pronoun in reference to the Universal Soul intending thereby to emphasise their hypostatic natures in the hierarchy of beings.

<sup>29</sup> *Rasā'il*, vol. III, pp. 474, 3–480, 14, *passim*; cf. Baffioni, *L'Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'*, pp. 150–157, *passim*.

The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' distinguish four kinds of goods and evils: those related to the fortunes and misfortunes of the sphere; those related to natural events; those related to harmony and conflict among animated beings; and those related to souls subject to religious orders and prohibitions.

Goods of every kind are all due to God's intention ("first intention"). Every cause that prevents creatures from attaining perfection is called "evil"; it is accidental and not due to the first intention, but to the "second intention": defect does not come from God.

Everything that comes directly from God on account of first intention is by origination, existention, invention, by permanence, and by completeness, perfection, maturity, and similar qualities. Everything that derives from a defect in matter occurs through second intention.

Religious knowledge, the accomplishment of which depends on human responsibility and allows humankind to be rewarded, is only obtained after the learner has been educated in sciences and arts by a master; Legislators are the masters; and the masters of Legislators are the angels, the teacher of the angels is the Universal Soul, her teacher is the Active Intellect, and God is the teacher of everything. Once again, the onto-cosmological scheme prevails over ethics and eschatology.

In the hierarchical disposition of the universe there are "intermediate" beings to which everything that happens in the world is related. God, as the furthest "first beloved" of Aristotle, is beyond all this, like kings, whose orders are behind everything built during their reigns.

One of the fundamental assertions of epistle 42 is the following:

Text 13: [...] the thesis of the innovation [*ḥudūʿ*] of the world, [that it is] an artefact, and [has] a wise creator, an eternal factor [*ṣāniʿ qadīm*], a benevolent and merciful creator [*ḥāliq*]; and that He has done excellently the accomplishment of His world [...] and He has left absolutely no defects or distortions in it. Indeed, there is not a thing that happens in His world, nor is there any small or momentous event that He did not know before it was [...]. He has [at His disposal] angels [who] are His faithful servants, and the cream of His creation, whom He has disposed for the preservation of His world, and charged with the disposition of His creatures, [who] [...] do what they have been commanded. He has [at His disposal] chosen ones from among the children of Adam, whom [...] He has placed [as] mediators between the angels and His creatures such as the *ḡinns* and men, and [as] His ambassadors; and He has ordained to His servants [various] things [...]. And He has forbidden them [various]

things [...]. And He does not command them anything that they are not capable [of doing], nor do they do anything that He does not know [...] He transforms them state by state, from the most defective to the most complete [...] until the day when they meet Him [...] and He will give them their due in full.<sup>30</sup>

The Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ particularly identify prophets, who believe “[...] that the world is innovated [and] manufactured and [has] a unique cause [that] originated and invented it, which is living, powerful [and] wise” [Text 14].<sup>31</sup>

This view is also shared by “some ancient monotheists” and “ancient wise men”.<sup>32</sup> However, others, despite their belief that the world is made *ex nihilo*, think that it has two eternal causes.<sup>33</sup> Given the world’s evils of generation and corruption, they hold that a single factor will not be able to eliminate them and that another cause becomes necessary as the source of evil. They conclude that “the search for the reason for the emergence of evils in the world is one of the roots of the causes of opposition among the learned in opinions and doctrines” [Text 15].<sup>34</sup>

We also read, however, that:

Text 16: [...] the origin of evils [comes] from matter [...]: we find in the desire of every craftsman that his handiwork be as perfect as possible, and yet sometimes that does not result in that matter and in the matter that is subject to his art except to a certain extent, so he acts in it as far as it is feasible for him, and he works out of it what it offers [him], and [the only relative perfection that results] is not [because of] a weakness on his part, but because of the matter that is defective [and] difficult to accept [his act]. And an example of this [is] that [he who] among us [is] wise, [...] has the desire to teach every science and wisdom in which he excels to his children and pupils, and to make them virtuous wise men like himself as soon as possible, and yet they do not accept that except gradually [...], because of a

<sup>30</sup> *Rasāʾil*, vol. III, pp. 452, 18–453, 10; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ*, pp. 126–127.

<sup>31</sup> *Rasāʾil*, vol. III, p. 461, 6–7; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ*, pp. 136–137.

<sup>32</sup> *Rasāʾil*, vol. III, p. 461, 8; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ*, p. 136.

<sup>33</sup> *Rasāʾil*, vol. III, p. 461, 10; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ*, p. 137.

<sup>34</sup> *Rasāʾil*, vol. III, p. 461, 20–21; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Ṣafāʾ*, p. 137.

lack [located] in them, not because of incapacity in the wise, and the lack in perfection is called “evil”, and evil is nothing other than deprivation of goodness, completeness and perfection [...].

As for those who spoke of the single cause and [of the fact] that [it is] unique [and] eternal, they investigated more subtly than those, [...] and so they saw it was ugly [and] foul [that] the innovation of the world [was due] to two eternal principles [...].<sup>35</sup>

As for matter, it “[is] a simple spiritual substance lacking all qualities, which receives them according to order and arrangement, one after the other, as we have explained in the epistle ‘On Intellectual Principles’” [Text 17].<sup>36</sup>

The passages on the origin of evil (of a metaphysical-religious nature) show that to whichever sphere they belong, good is exclusively and totally ascribable to God and evil is the result of defect and lack. Defect and lack, though variously connoted, constantly bring us back to Plotinus’ conception of evil.

#### 4. *Esoteric ta’wīl of the Encyclopaedia*

The Iḥwān al-Safā’ set conceptions of ancient Neo-Platonism at the service of the theological demands of Islam in both physics and metaphysics.

This can be verified time and again in the encyclopaedia. To give just one example, let us examine this other passage in which God is shown to be different from human craftsmen.

In epistle 40 “On Causes and Effects” we read:

Text 18: Know that the cause of the difficulty in representing the innovation of the world, and how the Creator, honoured by His majesty, originated it from nothing [*min ḡayr ṣay’*], is because of the habit of constantly

<sup>35</sup> *Rasā’il*, vol. III, p. 463, 10–24; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Safā’*, pp. 138–139.

<sup>36</sup> *Rasā’il*, vol. III, p. 469, 24–470, 1; cf. Baffioni, *L’Epistola degli Iḥwān al-Safā’*, p. 146. The text refers to epistle 32 “On the Principles of the Rational Beings According to the Opinions of the Pythagoreans”. See Paul E. Walker’s edition and translation in *Sciences of the Soul and Intellect*, Part I, *An Arabic Critical Edition and English Translation of Epistles 32–36*, ed. and trans. by P.E. Walker et al., New York, Oxford University Press/The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2015.

observing that every artisan makes his artefact from a given matter, in a given space, in a given time, and through given movements and tools. The innovation and the making [*san'a*] of the world, and its origination by the Creator, honoured be His majesty, however, are not like that, but [they were] a bringing of these things, namely, matter, space, time, movements, and tools, out of nothing into existence [*min al-'adam ilā'l-wuġūd*, here and later]. Because of this, the modality of the innovation and the origination of the world [can] not [be easily] conceived of.<sup>37</sup>

This text is particularly relevant because it underlines that creation is an act of *ibdā'*.

The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā', like the *falāsifa* (philosophers mainly influenced by Greek thought), found Neo-Platonic views to be the best explication of the origin of the world by God. Emanatism became the philosophical expression of creation. The various levels of reality down to the three kingdoms of the generated beings (animal, vegetal and mineral) originate continuously through intermediaries from the One. Subsequently, the encyclopaedic structure of the treatises is also explained along these lines. By acquiring all sciences from the lowest to the highest it is possible to attain the common source of everything, the science of God in the double sense of "pertaining to God" and "concerning God". In this sense, the ancient metaphysics (*metà tà physikà*) no longer indicates (following the late antique pattern) what comes after physics but what is beyond it. Rather than a mere foreign source, Neo-Platonism (merged with Neo-Pythagorism) can be considered to be the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā''s proper philosophy. Philosophy as imitation of God continues as the guiding principle of the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā''s system, together with equal emphasis on divine revelation – again like the Ismailis, in its exoteric and esoteric expressions.

Ismailis also widely assumed Neo-Platonic doctrines, but the latter had to be reconciled with God's absolute potency and will. These attributes made creation a voluntary act, whereas emanation is necessary. Therefore, the Ismailis had recourse to *ibdā'*, the philosophical expression of the divine imperative, which as such is voluntary, and set it at the beginning of the process of origination of the world. The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' also combined Neo-Platonic emanation and *ibdā'* in a

<sup>37</sup> See *Sciences of the Soul and Intellect*, Part III, *An Arabic Critical Edition and English Translation of Epistles 39–41*, ed. and trans. by C. Baffioni and I.K. Poonawala, New York, Oxford University Press/The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2017, p. 181.



few passages, reflecting the coexistence in the encyclopaedia of Shii and Ismaili ideas. They achieved their goal of reconciling Greek thought and religion to varying degrees of success.

On the other hand, the importance that the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' attributed to Neo-Platonism in order to underpin their religious conceptions can also be shown by their use and reworking of Qur'anic verses that we find quoted very frequently throughout the encyclopaedia.

This can be seen in Text 10 above, where the acts of the particular souls are reported to the Universal Soul as her faculties. In order to support this doctrine, the first part of Qur'an 31:28 (*And your creation or your resurrection is in no wise but as an individual soul*) is quoted. The majority of the almost forty Qur'anic translations I consulted do not consider this verse worthy of comment.

Let us now look at the comments of some of the less readily available interpretations.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali explains: "God's greatness and infinitude are such that He can create and cherish not only a whole mass, but each individual soul, and He can follow its history and doings until the final Judgment".<sup>38</sup>

Mir Ahmed Ali (on the basis of Ayatollah Agha Pooya's commentary<sup>39</sup>) states: "The passage may mean that the creation and the resurrection of the whole, is as easy as is the creation and the resurrection or the procedure of the creation and the resurrection of the whole, is the same. Qur'an – it may mean that the whole is so well connected with its components that the creation and the resurrection of one part also affects the whole". Mir Ahmed Ali also supplements, after "raising", "(after your death)".<sup>40</sup>

Mālik Ghulam Farid reads the verse as follows: "Your creation and your resurrection are only like *the creation and resurrection of a single soul*". He explains, "The verse signifies that all human beings are subject to the same laws of nature. It also points to the fact that the rise or

<sup>38</sup> *The Glorious Qur'ān*, trans. and comm. by A. Yusuf Ali, Leicester, Islamic Foundation, 1978, p. 1087, note 3617.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *The Holy Qur'ān*, with English translation of the Arabic text and commentary according to the version of the Holy Ahlul-Bait; with special notes from Ayatollah Agha Haji Mirza Mahdi Pooya Yazdi on the philosophical aspects of some of the verses, ed. by S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali, Elmhurst, NY, Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1995, 2nd ed., p. 1227, note 1816; punctuation incorrect in the original text.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1226.

fall of nations and communities is subject to the same laws of nature as is the progress or degradation of individuals”.<sup>41</sup>

George Sale provides this comment: “God being able to produce a million of worlds by the single word *Kun*, i.e., Be, and to raise the dead in general by the single word *Kum*, i.e. Arise”.<sup>42</sup> These words are particularly interesting to me in that they seem to constitute a parallelism between the first and second creation, the one from which everything begins and which produces multiplicity, and the one to which the multiplicity returns. As is made clear by the alliteration of the two imperatives, the second moment is sealed by the *qā'im*, the eschatological saviour, so important in Shii and Ismaili thought.

Let us now return to our texts. Text 11 confirms that in ontological terms each individual soul is a fragment of the Universal Soul. Individual souls cannot exist independently, but after spending part of their existence as inhabitants of the particular bodies to which they are joined, they are destined to be reunited with the Universal Soul – provided, of course, that they deserve salvation.

Another mention of Qur'an 31:28 appears in Text 6. Here it supports a quotation from Qur'an 54:50 where *ibdā'* (and not God) is found at the origin of creation. Despite the intermediaries, therefore, creation is unitary. Qur'an 31:28 seems to confirm such notion, although there are several ontological levels, explained in terms of the king/servant relationship. Such a unitary creation shares a sole starting point: divine will.

Neo-Platonism, therefore, plays in the *Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'* an important role as the link between God and His creatures. At the same time the whole sublunar reality takes its origin from the single Universal Soul. Moreover, still in Text 11, the entire eschatology (and the moral aspect insofar as individual souls are linked to the Universal Soul) becomes the counterpart of the emanatistic ontology of Neo-Platonic origin (the subject of many philosophical texts in Islam, including esoteric ones<sup>43</sup>).

<sup>41</sup> Cf. *The Holy Qur'an*, English trans. and comm. by M.G. Farid, Rabwah, published under the auspices of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Nāṣir Aḥmad by the Oriental and Religious Pub. Corp., 1969, p. 888, note 2315A.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *The Koran: Commonly Called the Alkoran of Mohammed*, trans. into English from the original Arabic; with explanatory notes taken from the most approved commentators; to which is prefixed a preliminary discourse by G. Sale, London, Frederick Warne, s.d., p. 308, note.

<sup>43</sup> From al-Fārābī onwards (d. 339/950), the *falāsifa* took the emanatist model as a starting point to explain the origin of the world. One of the earliest Ismaili thinkers and

The Iḥwān al-Ṣafā'’s interpretations of the Holy Book are seldom in line with Muslim doctrines. From this point of view, the reading of the Qur’an that our authors have in mind might be considered to be the *ta’wīl* (esoteric interpretation) performed in their own encyclopaedia, where God’s Word is continually quoted and commented upon.<sup>44</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

The passages discussed in this article are intended to demonstrate that physics and metaphysics are inseparable in the Ikhwanian system. The concept of philosophy as the knowledge of causes, of Aristotelian origin, evolves into a conception of almost negative theology. The negative effects of causes of any kind are all attributed to lack and deficiency, in accordance with Neo-Platonism. The importance of Neo-Platonism in their system is confirmed by the use and reworking of Qur’anic verses, which attests to the distinctiveness of the religious act *par excellence* of the Iḥwān al-Ṣafā’, namely the *tafsīr* of the holy book.

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missionaries, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Nasafī (d. 332/943), is believed to be the first to introduce Neo-Platonic doctrines into Islam. A particularly original interpretation is that of the Ismaili philosopher and missionary Abū Ya’qūb al-Siġistānī (d. at the end of the 10th/4th century). Further developments from the Farabian model can be found in Avicenna (370–428/980–1037) and in the Ismaili philosopher and missionary Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d. after 411/1020 or 1021).

<sup>44</sup> Cf. C. Baffioni, “Uso e interpretazioni di versetti coranici nell’Ep. 42 degli Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’”, in *Yād-nāma in memoria di Alessandro Bausani*, vol. I, *Islamistica*, ed. by B. Scarcia Amoretti and L. Rostagno, Rome, Università di Roma “La Sapienza” – Dipartimento di Studi Orientali/Bardi Editore, 1991, pp. 57–70 and C. Baffioni, “Les citations coraniques relatives à la science de la nature dans les Épîtres des Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’”, *Mélanges de l’Université Saint-Joseph* 64 (2012), pp. 45–67; G. Gobillot, “L’éthique des Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’ dans son rapport au Coran”, in *Islam: identité et altérité: Hommage à Guy Monnôt, o.p.*, ed. by M.A. Amir-Moezzi, Turnhout, Brepols, 2013, pp. 197–245.



# The Use of the *Ḥadīṡs* in the *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn* by al-Mu'āfā ibn Ismā'īl (d. 630/1233)

*Rosanna Budelli*

This paper analyzes al-Mu'āfā's work entitled *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn*, in order to understand the way in which the author uses and interprets the Prophetic tradition. The book contains a selection of *ḥadīṡs* attributed to Muḥammad and presented as a reference source for the Sufi message that al-Mu'āfā wishes to convey. The topics focus on the ascetic lifestyle that “the servant” should follow, marked by sobriety and detachment from the world. Al-Mu'āfā seldom draws on the canonical collections, while he often quotes *ḥadīṡs* considered “weak” from the point of view of the transmission chain. In this regard, the work reflects the opinion of the Sufis, who consider as reliable also the sayings of the Prophet received from the greatest spiritual masters through inspiration. This represents a new way of understanding *ḥadīṡs*, which entails a broadening of the contents and an interior enhancement that might provide new suggestions for Islamic doctrine and exegesis.

Keywords: *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn*, al-Mu'āfā ibn Ismā'īl, *ḥadīṡs*

## 1. *Introduction*

The full title of the work with which we are here concerned is *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn li-'ibādat rabb-i al-'ālamīn* (The Joy of Ascetics<sup>1</sup> in Worshiping the Lord of the Worlds). This is a collection of *ḥadīṡs* in which believers are urged to practise the virtues dear to the Sufis. In total, it contains 300 short chapters, each of which is divided into

<sup>1</sup> The term which we translate here for brevity as “ascetics” corresponds to the Arabic *munqaṭi'īn*, lit. “detached”, i.e. “those who are ‘detached’ from the world”.

three parts: the first consists of a *ḥadīṭ* on a particular topic, the second includes an anecdote or uplifting story (*ḥikāya*) that corroborates the moral of the *ḥadīṭ*, and the third contains poetic verses on the same theme. The first 50 chapters were edited and translated into Latin by Josef Cohn in 1875.<sup>2</sup>

The text on which this study relies is the one edited by Riḍā Aḥmad Iḡbāriyya, whose complete edition of the *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn* was published in 2006.<sup>3</sup>

The aim of this paper is to analyse al-Mu'āfā's choice of *ḥadīṭs* – most of which are drawn from outside the canonical tradition – via the themes on which the author dwells most, in an attempt to understand his way of interpreting the prophetic tradition and the message he wishes to communicate through it.

## 2. The Author

Although mentioned in major Arabic bio-bibliographical repertories, the author still remains in the shadows. Information about him is rather scarce and repeated from one source to another.<sup>4</sup> His full name

<sup>2</sup> J. Cohn, *Anis al-Munqaṭi'īn/Al-Mu'āfae b. Ismā'il Mausiliensis Kitāb anīs al-munkaṭi'īn*, particula I, inaug. diss. Ratisbon, Vratislavia, Typis Grassii Barthii et Socii, 1875 (text in Arabic and Latin).

<sup>3</sup> Al-Mu'āfā Ibn Ismā'il al-Mawṣili, *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn li-ibādat rabb al-ālamīn*, ed. by Riḍā Aḥmad Iḡbāriyya, 2 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 2006. This edition is based on five different manuscripts and is accompanied by a vast critical apparatus to which I am partly indebted.

<sup>4</sup> The sources that tell us about al-Mu'āfā are in chronological order by their authors' death (CE calendar): Šams al-Dīn al-Dahabī (d. 1348), *Tā'riḥ al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mašābir wa-al-a'lām*, vol. XV, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 2019, p. 400; Šams al-Dīn al-Dahabī, *Tadkirat al-ḥuffāz*, vol. IV, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1954, p. 1456; Šalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥalīl b. Aybak al-Safadī (d. 1363), *Al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, vol. XXV, Beirut, Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāt al-'Arabī, 2000, p. 410; 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. al-Ḥasan al-Isnawī (d. 1370), *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfi'iyya*, vol. II, Baghdad, Maṭba'at al-Iršād, 1971, pp. 450–451; 'Abd al-Wahhāb b. 'Alī al-Subkī (d. 1370), *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfi'iyya al-kubrā*, vol. VIII, Cairo, Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1964, p. 264; Ibn Kaṭīr Ismā'il b. 'Umar (d. 1373), *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfi'iyya*, Benghazi, Dār al-Madār al-Islāmī, 2002; Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Ibn Qāḍī Šahba (d. 1616), *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfi'iyya*, vol. II, Hayderabad, Maṭba'at Maḡlis Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-Uṭmāniyya, 1979, pp. 216–217; Ibn al-'Imād 'Abd al-Ḥayy b. Aḥmad al-Akarī al-Ḥanbalī al-Dimašqī (d. 1623), *Šadarāt al-dahab fi abbār man dahab*, vol. VII, Damascus, Dār Ibn Kaṭīr, 1991, p. 250; Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh Ḥaḡḡī Ḥalīfā

is Abū Muḥammad al-Muʿāfā b. Ismāʿīl b. al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan b. Abī al-Sinān b. Abī al-Faṭḥ Sufyān al-Šaybanī al-Mawšilī al-Šāfiʿī Abū Muḥammad Ġamāl al-Dīn, known as Ibn al-Ḥadaws.

His hometown, Mosul, where he was born in 551/1156, was the seat of a branch of the Zengid dynasty that controlled the region in place of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad. He studied the Qurʾanic sciences and Šāfiʿī law, training as a jurist and practicing the Sufi way at the same time. Sources describe him as a good-looking and elegant man (*ḥasan al-šakl wa-al-malbas*),<sup>5</sup> virtuous (*fāḍil*) and witty (*bārī*).<sup>6</sup> Irreproachable from a religious point of view, he is defined as a “very devout” (*kaṭīr al-ʿibāda*) man and an imam,<sup>7</sup> with a profound “knowledge of doctrine” (*ʿarīf bi-l-madḥab*).<sup>8</sup> Regarding his activity, all biographers use the following three verbs to describe him: he taught (*darrasa*), issued legal responses (*aftā*), and loved intellectual debate (*nāzara*).

He went to Baghdad to study *ḥadīṭs* and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). His most famous teachers were Abū al-Rabiʿ Sulaymān b. Ḥamīs<sup>9</sup> and Muḥammad b. Yūnus ʿImād al-Dīn.<sup>10</sup> He, in turn, taught *ḥadīṭs*, and according to Ḥaġġī Ḥalīfa, he was in Damascus in 1206

(d. 1657), *Kašf al-zunūn ʿan asāmī al-kutub wa-al-funūn*, Istanbul, Wikālat al-Maʿārif, 1941, vol. I, pp. 16, 178, 263, 459, and vol. II, pp. 1947, 1987; ʿUmar Riḍā Kaḥḥāla (d. 1905), *Muġam al-Muʿallifīn*, vol. III, Damascus, Maktabat al-Taraqqī, 1960, p. 895; Ismāʿīl Bašā al-Baġdādī (d. 1920), *Hadyat al-ʿarīfīn*, vol. II, Istanbul, Wikālat al-Maʿārif, 1955, p. 456; C. Brockelmann (d. 1943), *History of the Arabic Written Tradition*, vol. I, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2016, p. 358; suppl. 1, p. 610; Ḥayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī (d. 1976), *Al-Aʿlām: qāmūs tarāġim li-ašbar al-riġāl wa-al-nisāʾ min al-ʿarab wa-al-mustaʿribīn wa-al-mustašriqīn*, vol. VII, Beirut, Dār al-ʿIlm li-l-Malāyīn, 2002, p. 259.

<sup>5</sup> Ibn al-ʿImād, *Šaḍarāt al-dahab fī aḥbār man dahab*, vol. VII, p. 250; Ḍahabī, *Tārīḥ al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mašāḥir wa-al-aʿlām*, vol. XIII, p. 468.

<sup>6</sup> Ibn Kaṭīr, *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfiʿiyya*, p. 755.

<sup>7</sup> Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfiʿiyya*, vol. VIII, p. 374.

<sup>8</sup> Ḍahabī, *Tārīḥ al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mašāḥir wa-al-aʿlām*, vol. XLV, p. 415.

<sup>9</sup> Of him we know that he was the son of the more famous Muḥammad b. Ḥamīs al-Ġaḥanī al-Kaʿbī al-Mawšilī al-Šāfiʿī (d. 552/1157). Like his father, he was a transmitter of *ḥadīṭs* and judge from Mosul. He moved to Baghdad in the year 540 of the hegira, see Šams al-Dīn al-Ḍahabī, *Kitāb siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, vol. XX, Beirut, Muʿassat al-Risāla, 1985, p. 292.

<sup>10</sup> He enjoyed some fame as a jurist in his own time and also received an assignment from the caliph for the dissolution of a marriage through dowry repayment (*ḥulʿ*). He was appointed as a judge in Mosul in 592 of the hegira, where he taught in the local Madrasa Nūriyya. See Ibn Qāḍī Šahba, *Ṭabaqāt al-šāfiʿiyya*, vol. II, pp. 82–83.

also teaching from his book about Qur'anic exegesis in the Šālīhiyya Madrasa.<sup>11</sup> He died in Mosul in 551/1233.

There are about ten works attributed to him, most of which still in manuscript form or lost.<sup>12</sup> Among others, there is a work of Šāfi'i law *al-Kāmil fī al-ḥiḡb* (The Comprehensive Book on Law), which is no longer available, and a voluminous, unedited commentary on the Qur'an entitled *Nihāyat al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (The Utmost Eloquence on Qur'anic commentary).<sup>13</sup>

### 3. The Typology of Ḥadīṡ in the Uns al-munqaṡi'īn

In his introduction to the book, al-Mu'āfā states that he assembled the *ḥadīṡ*s without indicating the chain of transmitters (*isnād*) that usually accompanies them, emphasising the eminently edifying intent of the work.

I have asked God Most High for inspiration to compose this book, which contains 300 reports from God's envoy, peace be upon him, without *isnād*, followed by "wise sayings" (*ḡawā'id*), the best news (*alḡbār*), the most famous stories and the most beautiful poems, with the purpose of being concise and seeking [only] the face of the Almighty and Exalted, so that the one who reads [the book] will benefit from it and the one who approaches it will be guided in the right direction. God alone is asked for support and only He is turned to for guidance.<sup>14</sup>

The *ḥadīṡ*s mentioned here go back, therefore, in most cases, directly to the Prophet; rarely is one of his Companions, his wife 'Ā'īša, or 'Alī mentioned as a transmitter; even more rarely are there two or three transmitters, as in the case of the imam Ġā'far al-Šādiq (d. 148/765),

<sup>11</sup> Ḥalīfā, *Kašf al-ḡunūn*, vol. I, p. 263.

<sup>12</sup> See Iḡbāriyya, "Muqaddima", in al-Mu'āfā, *Uns al-munqaṡi'īn*, vol. I, pp. 147–153.

<sup>13</sup> Brockelmann lists two different *tafsīrs* by the same author, the first entitled *Nihāyat al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, of which two manuscripts are extant, one in the British Museum and the other in Cairo, the second, entitled *Kitāb al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, of which an extant manuscript is located in Istanbul. See C. Brockelmann, *History of Arabic Written Tradition*, vol. I, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2016, p. 358; Iḡbāriyya claims they are the same work, see Iḡbāriyya, "Muqaddima", p. 157.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Mu'āfā, *Uns al-munqaṡi'īn*, vol. I, p. 189. Here and where not otherwise specified, the translations are by the author.



who reported from his father (Muḥammad al-Bāqir) and grandfather (ʿAlī Zayn al-Ābidīn, son of Ḥusayn).<sup>15</sup>

A “collective” transmission chain is found in the *ḥadīṭ* of chapter 139, devoted to the night vigil for supererogatory prayers, in which Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728)<sup>16</sup> states: “Thirty men among the Companions reported that the Prophet said [...]”. Technically, from the *isnād* point of view, this *ḥadīṭ* can be defined as *muʿallaq* (lit. “suspended”, i.e. lacking a transmission chain)<sup>17</sup> or, in some cases, *mursal* (lit. “loose”, “hurried”, “imperfectly transmitted”), referring to the absence of the last link of transmission, whereby one merely goes from a later transmitter to the Prophet.<sup>18</sup>

In *Uns al-munqaṭiʿīn*, the content of the message prevails over the stringent historical consistency of the transmission. In general, the author follows the opinion of the Sufis, who consider as reliable the prophetic traditions transmitted by chains of spiritual masters, or those received directly by the individual master through inspiration. Jonathan Brown describes the meaning of *isnād* for Sufis in the following words:

In one sense, in Sufism the *isnād* of the hadith is all-important, for it establishes the transmission of the Prophet’s teaching, his excellence of character as well as the esoteric knowledge inherited from him and taught by the pious elite. In another sense, however, *isnāds* and their authenticity mean nothing in Sufism – those Sufi masters for whom the door has been opened have been able to access God’s truth directly without the medium of prophecy or Muḥammad’s teachings. For them, truths about the reality of God and man are true whether actually said by the Prophet or phrased in his words.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter 202.

<sup>16</sup> Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is the source of many Sufi *ḥadīṭs*. In most cases, his *ḥadīṭs* lack the last link in the chain of transmission. According to a sentence attributed to him, when one of his *ḥadīṭs* lacks the final name, it means that the name omitted is ‘Alī; see G.H.A. Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Hadith*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 51.

<sup>17</sup> Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ al-Shahrazūrī, *An Introduction to the Science of the Hadith: Kitāb Maʿrifat anwāʾ ʿilm al-ḥadīṭh*, Reading, Garnét Publishing, 2006, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>19</sup> J.A.C. Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad’s Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*, Oxford, Oneworld, 2009, pp. 184–185.

As mentioned above, the *ḥadīths* reported in the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin* are rarely matched in the six canonical collections of Sunni schools. In contrast, al-Muʿāfā often resorts to using traditions considered by experts to be “weak” (*daʿīf*), “counterfeit” (*mawḍūʿ*), or “questionable” (*munkar*). Even when the author draws from “authentic” sources (*ṣaḥīḥ*), the *ḥadīth* is almost always quoted in accordance with new variants or additions (*ziyādāt*).

An initial example of the material assembled by al-Muʿāfā is provided with the following two *ḥadīths*. The work begins, in chapter 1, with a saying from the Prophet introduced generically by the verb *ruwiya* (“it was transmitted”), a locution that usually introduces weak *ḥadīths*:<sup>20</sup>

It was conveyed that God’s envoy, peace be upon him, said: “When God, Almighty and Exalted, created the Garden of Eden He commanded it: ‘Speak to Me!’ And it answered: ‘There is no god but God’. Then He commanded it a second time: ‘Speak to Me!’ And it answered: ‘Believers will prosper!’ He commanded it a third time ‘Speak to me!’ And [the Garden] said: ‘It is forbidden for any miser and hypocrite to enter me’”.<sup>21</sup>

This *ḥadīth* is absent in the canonical sources, but the phrase “Believers will prosper” (*qad aḥḥaba al-muʿminūn*) is the first verse of the Sura of Believers (Q. 23:1) and some Qurʾanic commentators, such as al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1273),<sup>22</sup> al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923)<sup>23</sup> and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505),<sup>24</sup> report a similar *ḥadīth*, on the authority of al-Bayḥaqī (d. 458/1066), which is lacking the third question. For their part, Ṭabarī and Suyūṭī add two more creatures as God’s interlocutors alongside Paradise, namely Adam and the personification of the Torah. Exegetical literature, therefore, also welcomes non-canonical traditions if they are useful in reinforcing the meaning of a verse or clarifying the circumstances of the revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*).

<sup>20</sup> M. Abū Ṣahba, *Kitāb al-wasīṭ fi ʿulūm wa-muṣṭalah al-ḥadīth, bāb ḥukm al-ḥadīth al-daʿīf, riwāyat-an wa-ʿamal-an*, Cairo, Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 1900, p. 277.

<sup>21</sup> Al-Muʿāfā, *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, vol. I, p. 190.

<sup>22</sup> Abū ʿAbd Allāh Al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Ġāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, vol. VI, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2014, p. 69.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn Ġarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī al-musammā Ġāmiʿ al-bayān fi taʾwīl āy al-Qurʾān*, vol. IX, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2014, p. 196.

<sup>24</sup> Ġalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Durr al-mantūr fi al-tafsīr al-maʿrūr*, vol. V, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2015, p. 3.

The last part (i.e. the third question posed to Paradise) is new, and it is an addition that is found in later Sufi literature such as in the work *Kanz al-ʿummāl* (The Treasure Chest of Workers) by ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Muttaqī al-Hindī (d. 975/1567),<sup>25</sup> testifying to a continuity in the transmission of Sufi *ḥadīṭs*.

In terms of content, the personification of Paradise is similar to the personification of Hell found in Q. 50:30, in which God asks Jehenna (*Gabannam*) whether it has reached its maximum capacity and it answers in the negative. Lastly, avarice and hypocrisy are for al-Muʿāfā the most serious human flaws, and he returns to them elsewhere in the work.<sup>26</sup>

The second example can be found in chapter 91, which is devoted to love for the poor and needy (*ḥubb al-fuqarāʾ wa-al-masākīn*), where the author brings together four different traditions into one *ḥadīṭ*:

[I] God's envoy, peace be upon him, said: "For everything there is a key, the key to Heaven is love for the needy. [II] Indeed the poor will enter Heaven 500 years before the rich and have a good time (*yatamattaʿūna*). [III] In Paradise there is a dome of red hyacinth to which the people of Paradise look as the people of the world look to the stars, only a poor prophet (*nabī faqīr*) or a poor believer [or a poor martyr]<sup>27</sup> enters there. Poverty in this world is a source of suffering, in the Hereafter it is a source of joy (*masarra*). [IV] Every prophet has a trade (*ḥirfa*), and my trades are two – those who love both also love me, while those who hate both also hate me – poverty and love for the poor and needy".<sup>28</sup>

Of these four traditions, only the second one is found in Tirmidī's *Sunan*, with a slight variation and without the verb *yatamattaʿūna*.<sup>29</sup> The first *ḥadīṭ* is considered weak by al-Ġurġānī (d. 365/976)<sup>30</sup> and

<sup>25</sup> ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿummāl fi sunan al-aqwāl wa-l-afʿāl*, vol. I, Aleppo, Muʿassasat al-Risāla, 1971, p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> See al-Muʿāfā, *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, chapter 136.

<sup>27</sup> In square brackets, the editor's integration based on the remaining manuscripts.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Muʿāfā, *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, vol. I, p. 465.

<sup>29</sup> Abū ʿĪsā al-Tirmidī, *Kitāb Sunan al-Tirmidī; Abwāb al-zuhd*, vol. IV, Beirut, Dār al-Ġarb al-Islāmī, 1996, p. 172.

<sup>30</sup> See Abū Aḥmad ʿAbd Allāh Ibn ʿAdī al-Ġurġānī, *Al-Kāmil fi duʿāfāʾ al-riġāl*, vol. VIII, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997, p. 112.

counterfeit by Ibn al-Ġawzī (d. 597/1201).<sup>31</sup> The third is not found in *ḥadīth* literature, but is present in the later Sufi tradition, as evidenced by the citation in the work of Abū al-Saʿādāt al-Yāfiʿī, (d. 768/1366).<sup>32</sup> The fourth is reported in al-Ġazālī's *Mukāṣafat al-qulūb* (The Unveiling of Hearts) with a somewhat different conclusion: the two professions of the Sufi are love for the poor and (inner) *ḡhibād*.<sup>33</sup> The last *ḥadīth* is considered “baseless” (*lā aṣla la-hu*) and “questionable” by some modern traditionist scholars.<sup>34</sup> The operation of inserting one tradition in another is called *idrāğ* and falls within the *ʿilal* (pathologies) of the *ḥadīth*.<sup>35</sup>

From the few examples above, one can get an idea of the complex issue of sources in al-Muʿāfa's work: in most cases, these *ḥadīths* are created by the combination of different traditions or reformulated with specific additions or omissions.

#### 4. *The Sufis and the Ḥadīths*

In the introduction to his *Kitāb al-mawḏūʿāt* (Book of Counterfeit *Ḥadīths*), Ibn al-Ġawzī repeatedly attacks popular preachers (*quṣṣās*) and Sufis who make use of uncertain traditions. In his view, the former seek and transmit false *ḥadīths*, with which they lure uneducated believers and inculcate them with untrue beliefs; the latter seek to use the *ḥadīths* to support their extreme practices of fasting and deprivation, which have no basis in Islam.

[...] the preacher relates to the masses questionable *ḥadīths*, by mentioning to them what boasts not the slightest inkling of science (*šamm al-ʿilm*). People leave after learning falsehoods from him, and if a knower contra-

<sup>31</sup> ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Kitāb al-Mawḏūʿāt*, vol. II, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, pp. 327–328.

<sup>32</sup> Abū al-Saʿādāt al-Yāfiʿī, *Ruwağ al-riyāḥin fī ḥikayāt al-šālīḥin*, Damascus, Dār al-Bašāʿir, 1995, p. 41.

<sup>33</sup> Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī, *Mukāṣafat al-qulūb: Al-muqarrib ilā ḥaḍrat ʿallām al-ğuyūb*, Beirut, Dār al-Maʿrifa, 2014, p. 176.

<sup>34</sup> See M. al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-aḥādīth al-ḍaʿīfa wa-l-mawḏūʿa wa-aṭaru-hā al-sayʿ* ʿalā *al-umma*, vol. II, Riyad, Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 1987, p. 40.

<sup>35</sup> Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *A Textbook of Ḥadīth Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification and Criticism of Ḥadīth*, Leicester, The Islamic Foundation, 2009, p. 96.

dicts them, they respond: “We have listened to [a man] who reported news to us (*alḥbarnā*) and conveyed *ḥadīṭs*”. How many people have been corrupted by preachers with counterfeit *ḥadīṭs*! How many faces are yellowed by hunger and how many bear the marks of wandering on their faces! How many are there who forbid themselves what is lawful or leave out what science (*ʿilm*) states, believing that it is necessary to counteract the passions of the soul. How many of their children have died from ascetic privations (*tazāḥbud*) while they are alive! How many neglect their wife without satisfying her rights, and she is like a widow without a husband anymore!<sup>36</sup>

The author also criticises the practice of omitting the weak links in a transmission chain, under the presumption of giving the weak *ḥadīṭ* the authority it lacks.<sup>37</sup>

Many scholars have emphasised the Sufis’ preference for non-canonical *ḥadīṭs* by pointing out that this is the case even when they are experts in the sciences of the traditions.<sup>38</sup> These observations can also be applied to al-Muʿāfā, whose legal training presupposes in-depth knowledge of the second source of Islamic law.

For Sufis, those who have reached a high spiritual level can directly receive a prophetic tradition in two ways: during a veridical dream vision, in which they encounter Muḥammad or one of his Companions, or, during waking, in a kind of ecstasy and inner unveiling.<sup>39</sup> Ḡalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), for example, claims to have met the Prophet in a waking state more than 70 times and upholds this faculty in a *fatwā* contained in his book entitled *al-Ḥāwī li-l-fatāwā*.<sup>40</sup>

This type of *ḥadīṭs* can be transmitted through a chain of Companions (*isnād al-ṣuḥḥā*) parallel to the official one, also called *isnād al-tazkiya*, or *isnād* of purification, formed from the most influential

<sup>36</sup> Ibn al-Ḡawzī, *Kitāb al-Mawḍūʿāt*, vol. I, p. 11.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>38</sup> See the studies of Louis Massignon, Hamid Algar, Lahcen Daäif, and others cited in J. Farrell, “Early ‘Traditionist Sufis’: A Network Analysis”, in *Modern Hadīth Studies: Continuing Debates and New Approaches*, ed. by B. Äbu-Alabbas, M. Dann and C. Melchert, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2020, pp. 70–96, esp. 75–76.

<sup>39</sup> See H. Idri and R. Baru, “The Criticism on Sufi’s Hadīth Narration Methods”, *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 7 (2017), pp. 445–453, esp. 445–446.

<sup>40</sup> Ḡalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Ḥāwī li-l-fatāwā*, vol. II, Beirut, Dār al-kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2019, p. 242.

figures among the Sufis.<sup>41</sup> In his *al-Anwār al-qudsiyya fī bayān qa-wā'id al-ṣūfiyya* (The Holy Lights, on the Explanation of the Fundamental Principles of the Sufis), al-Ša'rānī (d. 973/1565) reports that Ḥasan al-Baṣrī met 'Alī (d. 40/661) and received from him a saying of the Prophet.<sup>42</sup> Then the author reconstructs a chain of transmission from Muḥammad, through 'Alī and Ḥasan al-Baṣrī to himself, via a series of spiritual guides.<sup>43</sup> It is esoteric knowledge communicated to a select few and passed down from master to disciple through the investiture of the *ḥirqa* (the woollen cloak of the Sufis).<sup>44</sup>

### 5. The Themes of the Work

The general structure of the work does not adhere to a consistent theme or a specific order and the author confines himself to collecting *ḥadīths* on various topics, creating a sort of miscellany. The chapter titles are not present in the original text and have been added by the editor in square brackets. The book commences with a dialogue between God and Paradise (chapter 1), followed by counsel on alleviating distress (chapter 2) and on the merits of prayer in Mecca (chapter 3). Subsequently, the text moves from patient (*ṣabr*) to voluntary fasting, the virtues of the first Companions and so forth.

In his lengthy introduction to the critical edition, Iḡbāriyya juxtaposes the *Uns al-munqaṭi'īn* with the extensive Arabic moralising literature of the early centuries.<sup>45</sup> What al-Mu'āfa's work has in com-

<sup>41</sup> Brown, *Hadith*, p. 188.

<sup>42</sup> Abd al-Wahhāb Aḥmad al-Ša'rānī, *Al-Anwār al-qudsiyya fī bayān qawā'id al-ṣūfiyya*, Beirut-Damascus, Dār Šadir-Dār al-Bašā'ir, 2020, pp. 47–55.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 52–53.

<sup>44</sup> See J.S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971, pp. 80, 183–185. The content of these *ḥadīths*, sometimes completely new compared to the official ones, would derive, according to Brown, from what was transmitted overall regarding the behaviour of Muḥammad and his Companions through unofficial channels outside of the sayings and facts that concern the doctrinal or legal questions dear to the canonical tradition. See Brown, *Hadith*, p. 189.

<sup>45</sup> He divides this genre into five different types: moral-intellectual or literary (*al-ablāqī* – *al-'aqlānī*, *al-adabī*), referring to the writings of Ibn al-Muqaffā' (d. 106/756) and al-Ġāhiz (d. 255/869); moral-religious (*al-ablāqī* – *al-dīnī*), that unites the works of Ibn Abī al-Dūnyā (d. 281/894) and Sulaymān al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360/971); worldly and religious literature together (*adab al-dūnya wa al-dīn*), which he ascribes to al-Māwardī (d. 450/1058); moralising-philosophical (*al-ablāqī al-falsafī*), represented by the

mon with all of these books is undoubtedly its pedagogical intent and, in some cases, the list of virtues by which the good Muslim ought to be inspired. In this sense, the genre of the *Makārim al-ahlāq* (The Noblest Customs) composed by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā (d. 281/894) and al-Ṭabarānī (d. 360/971) is the most akin to it, with, at its centre, the *ḥadīṡ*s ordered according to recommended Islamic qualities.

However, because of its eminently Sufi approach, the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin* is more in line with the equally extensive mystical literature that employs the *ḥadīṡ*s in support of Sufi teachings and doctrines. In particular, the genre of *Salwat al-ʿarīfīn* (The Comfort of Those Who Know) should be pointed out here – a title that appears in the works of two different authors, al-Ġazālī (d. 505/1111) and Abū Ḥalaf al-Ṭabarī (d. 470/1077).<sup>46</sup> In addition to the *ḥadīṡ*s, these books always cite a verse from the Qurʾān related to the topic.

The originality of al-Muʿāfāʾs work consists in the choice of themes which the author emphasizes and in the rigid tripartition of each chapter into *ḥadīṡ*, *ḥikāya*, and *šīʿr*. The *ḥikāya* is a brief story featuring another prophet, a Sufi or a Companion (*ṣaḥābī*) but, occasionally, it represents another tradition attributed to Muḥammad, confirming the original meaning of the term *ḥikāya*, also understood as a synonym of *ḥadīṡ*.<sup>47</sup> The final verses are always very short and the source is rarely cited. Compared with the earlier genre of *Salwat al-ʿarīfīn*, explicit Qurʾānic quotations are rare, but there are frequent indirect references to the sacred text.

In terms of content, each chapter is devoted to a virtue to be cultivated or, more rarely, a vice to be abandoned along a rather rigorous ascetic path. The author returns to certain topics several times throughout the work, as if to emphasize their importance.

Among the most frequently recurring themes are chastity and world renunciation (*al-zuhd*), protecting charm (*ruqya*) and invoca-

*Ṭahḍīb al-ahlāq* of Miskawayh (d. 421/1030); finally, he adds the encyclopaedic genre of al-Mubarrad (d. 285/898) and Ibn Qutayba (d. 286/889); *Iḡbāriyya*, *Muqaddima*, pp. 25–114. To Iḡbāriyyaʾs list could be added other *adab* works of the same type as the *Damm al-bawā* by Ibn al-Ġawzī (d. 597/1201) and *al-ʿIqd al-farīd* by Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih al-Andalusī (d. 328/940).

<sup>46</sup> The Shiite al-Ḥusayn b. Ismāʿīl al-Ġurġānī (d. 430/1141) also wrote a book entitled *al-ʿIṭibār wa-salwat al-ʿarīfīn*, based on the *ḥadīṡ*s and themes of asceticism (*zuhd*), renunciation of the world and the Afterlife.

<sup>47</sup> J. Robson, “Ḥadīṡh” s.v., in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, ed. by P. Bearman et al., vol. III, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 1971, pp. 24b–30a, esp. 27a.

tions to God for grace (*da'awāt*), criticism of oppressors (*ẓālimūn*), and exaltation of knowledge/science (*‘ilm*).

## 6. World Renunciation, Chastity, and Women

The oldest collections of *ḥadīths* with a thematic character are those devoted to asceticism, such as the *Kitāb al-zuhd* (The Book on Asceticism) by Zā’ida b. Qudāma Abū al-Salt al-Kūfī (d. 160/778)<sup>48</sup> and the works by the same title of Ibn al-Mubārak (d. 181/797), Wakī b. al-Ġarrāh (d. 196/812) and Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855). The former turns out to be probably more ancient than Mālik’s *al-Muwatta’* (d. 179/795), considered the first general collection of *ḥadīths*.<sup>49</sup> Some of the canonical works, such as the *Ṣaḥīḥ* (The Authentic One) by Muslim (d. 261/875) and the *Sunan* (Traditions, listed in jurisprudential order) by Ibn Māḡa (d. 273/887) also devote a book to this subject.

As attested by ancient Sufi biographers, most of the ascetics or “renunciants” (*zubbād*), as Christofer Melchert calls them,<sup>50</sup> in the very first centuries of Islam were actively engaged in the collection of *ḥadīths*.<sup>51</sup> All these works testify to the presence, at the dawn of Islam, of currents which interpreted the prophetic message in favour of a frugal lifestyle and moral austerity, currents which later became minorities within the movement of traditionists who deal with the collecting and study of the sayings of the Prophet; most of their reports will be

<sup>48</sup> See Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, vol. II, London, Mu’assasat al-Furqān li-l-Turāt al-Islāmī, 2014, p. 88; Ibn Sa’d, *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, vol. V, Beirut, Dār Ṣādir, 2014, p. 306; al-Dahabī, *Sayr a’lām al-nubalā’*, vol. IV, Cairo, Dār al-Ḥadīṭ, 2006, pp. 62–63.

<sup>49</sup> Scholars in the Islamic world consider the *Ṣaḥīfa* by Hammām ibn al-Munabbih (d. d. 101/719), containing 140 *ḥadīths*, as possibly the oldest surviving book of Prophetic traditions, see G.H.A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of canonical ḥadīth*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2007, p. 29b.

<sup>50</sup> C. Melchert, *Hadīth, Piety, and Law: Selected Studies*, Atlanta, Lockwood Press, 2015, p. 140. The scholar says he chose this name at the suggestion of Michael Cooper to avoid the opposition between asceticism and mysticism discussed by Max Weber in his *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978, pp. 544–551.

<sup>51</sup> In the above-mentioned book, Melchert focuses on the *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Sūfiyya* (Generations of Sufis) by al-Sulamī. He later dedicated a new work to these ancient renunciants, see C. Melchert, *Before Sufism: Early Islamic Renunciant Piety*, Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter, 2020.



considered unreliable in light of the rules drawn up by Muslim scholars about the authenticity of *ḥadīṭs*.

The Sufi movement, which established itself in the 10th century, shares with these first fervent Muslims most of their aspirations and a profound interest in the collection and transmission of *ḥadīṭs*.<sup>52</sup>

According to Sufi doctrine, the ideal condition of the “servant” (*ʿabd*) consists in the domination of passions through renunciations and scrupulous “observance” (*waraʿ*) of devotional practices. In the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, this notion constitutes the main thread of the entire work, and there are numerous chapters devoted to detachment from worldly goods (see chapters 67, 161, 201, 268), the exaltation of sober living (chapters 57, 83, 91, 184), the appeal to almsgiving and generosity (chapters 45, 224, 230, 244).

The commendation of poverty, expressed in chapter 91, is among the controversial topics (*ihṭilāf al-ḥadīṭ*) in the *ḥadīṭ* sciences, as discordant opinions are found regarding the sayings attributed to Muḥammad. The scholar Mohammad Kamali reports that a *ḥadīṭ* cited in Ibn Māǧa’s collection arose controversy among scholars over its correct meaning.<sup>53</sup> According to the following tradition, the Prophet is said to have exclaimed: “O my Lord! Help me live as a pauper, let me die as a pauper, and resurrect me among paupers”.<sup>54</sup>

This statement was considered to be in apparent conflict with others that denounced poverty. Kamali cites two *ḥadīṭs* describing poverty as an evil to be avoided: 1) ʿĀiṣa reports: “The Prophet, peace be upon him, prayed to God against the evil of poverty (*fiṭnat al-faqr*)”;

<sup>52</sup> Melchert highlights differences between the two movements, ascetics/renunciants and Sufis, summarised as follows: “Schematically, ascetical piety emphasises obedience to a transcendent God; imposing God’s will on the natural world. Mystical piety, by contrast, is about communion with an immanent God; about finding God revealed in the objects of nature. God can be obeyed at any time, in any place (indeed, must be obeyed at all times and in all places); therefore, the ascetic will pay less regard than the mystic to special times and places. Ascetics characteristically perceive more personality in divinity than mystics, for whom divinity may seem very diffuse. Ascetics tend to be pessimists and may alternate personally between fear and chosenness. Mystics, by contrast, tend to be optimists, confident of abundant grace”, Melchert, *Hadith, Piety, and Law*, p. 120; see also Id., “The Transition from Asceticism to Mysticism at the Middle of the Ninth Century C.E.”, *Studia Islamica* 83 (1996), pp. 51–70.

<sup>53</sup> Kamali, *A Textbook of Ḥadīṭ Studies*, pp. 111–114.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112. See also G. Lecomte, *Le traité des divergences du ḥadīṭ d’Ibn Qutayba (mort en 276/889). Traduction annotée du Kitāb ta’wīl muḥṭalif al-ḥadīṭ*, Damascus, Institut Français de Damas, 1962, p. 5.

2) on another occasion Muḥammad apparently said: “O Lord, I seek refuge in You from unbelief and poverty”.<sup>55</sup> The choice made by Sufis certainly privileges the alternative strand of the prophetic tradition.

In al-Muʿāfā’s view, earthly reality is characterised by the suffering and transience of the human condition, while happiness and fullness of being can only be achieved in the Afterlife. In chapter 96, we read a *ḥadīth qudsī*, in which God speaks to the Prophet through the Angel Gabriel and compares the world to a prison:

The Envoy of God, peace be upon him, said: “God, the Most High, caused the Angel Gabriel, upon him peace, to descend to me in the most beautiful guise in which he ever appeared. [Gabriel] said to me: ‘O Muḥammad, the True One (al-Ḥaqq) greets you and says: I have inspired the world to be transient, restless, oppressive and harsh with My friends (*awliyā*) so that they may love to meet Me, and to be agreeable, easy and comfortable with My enemies so that they may hate to meet Me. Verily, I have made [the world] a prison for friends and a Paradise for enemies (*a’dā*)’”.

The saying does not appear in the canonical collections and indeed is considered questionable by critics.<sup>56</sup> However, the final sentence is also found in Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*, “The world is the prison of the believer (*muʾmin*) and the Paradise of the unbeliever (*kāfir*)”.<sup>57</sup> In the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin* the canonical *ḥadīth* is therefore preceded by a broader premise and the word “believer” is replaced by the typically Sufi term *awliyā* (“saints”, or “friends of God”). This way of proceeding in the construction of a *ḥadīth*, through the expansion of a segment or the replacement of some terms, is very frequent in al-Muʿāfā’s work.

In some cases, the words of a Companion are attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad as we read in chapter 257:

From Ibn ʿUmar, may God be pleased with him: – God’s envoy, peace be upon him, said: “[I] Be like a stranger (*ḡarīb*) in the world or like a wayfarer crossing the road and count yourself among the dead. [II] If you wake up in the morning, you will speak to another self in the evening, and if you come to evening, you will speak to another self in the [following] morning. Take from your health [what benefits you] for sickness, and

<sup>55</sup> Kamali, *A Textbook of Ḥadīth Studies*, pp. 112–113.

<sup>56</sup> See al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-aḥādīth*, vol. II, p. 210.

<sup>57</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb al-zuhd wa-al-raqāʿiq*, 1.

from your youth for old age, from your leisure for work, from your life for death. You do not know what you will be called tomorrow!”

The passage is cited by al-Muʿāfā as a single *ḥadīṡ* referring to the Prophet, while in Wakīʿ b. al-Ġarrāḥ’s *Kitāb al-zuhd* it constitutes two different sayings, the first attributed to the Prophet, and the second referring to his Companion Ibn ʿUmar.<sup>58</sup> A similar tradition also appears in Buḥārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*,<sup>59</sup> but without the phrases “count yourself among the dead” and “You do not know what you will be called tomorrow!”. These two additions, however, are not mere variants, as they convey ancient mystical conceptions with vague reincarnationist overtones.

The concept of the illusory nature of the world is highlighted in chapter 77, where believers are urged to prepare for death:

From Anas b. Mālik, may God be pleased with him: – The Prophet said, “O people, fear God as He deserves to be feared, strive to please Him, be assured that this world will be annihilated, while the Hereafter will remain. Work for what will come after death, as if you were in this world that does not exist, and you will be in the Hereafter that will not cease. O people! Whoever is in the world is as if he were a guest (*ḡayf*) and what he possesses has only been given to him on loan. The guest is a traveller and what has been borrowed must be returned, except that the world is a present accident from which the righteous and the wicked eat, while the Hereafter is true promise in which a capable king reigns. May God have mercy on the man who reflects upon himself and prepares for the grave while the reins are still in [God’s] hand by way of halter, and His rope is drawn over he who will expire, before [man’s] time runs out and his work is interrupted”.

This tradition is drawn from the book *al-Aḥādīṡ al-wadʿāniyya* (The *Ḥadīṡs* of Wadʿān),<sup>60</sup> also known as *al-Arbaʿūn al-wadʿāniyya* (The 40 of Wadʿān) and corresponds to *ḥadīṡ* n. 36 of this short collection. The author, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. ʿUbayd Allāh Wadʿān, was also from Mosul, where he appears to have occupied the office of judge. From

<sup>58</sup> Wakīʿ Ibn al-Ġarrāḥ, *Al-Zuhd; bāb man qāla: ʿudd nafsa-ka fī al-mawtā*, Medina, Maktabat al-Dār, 1984, pp. 231–232.

<sup>59</sup> Buḥārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ, kitāb al-riqāq*, 3.

<sup>60</sup> Wadʿān, *al-Aḥādīṡ al-wadʿāniyya*, text consulted on the site lib.efatwa.ir/45350/1/1# (20 November 2023).

about a century earlier than al-Mu‘āfā (Wad‘ān died in 494/1100),<sup>61</sup> he would follow the same Šāfi‘ī school in matters of law. Al-Mu‘āfā appropriates as many as 22 *ḥadīths* of the 40 in Wad‘ān’s work,<sup>62</sup> quoting these sayings precisely, with the exception of the *isnād* that his predecessor has retained. The *al-Arba‘ūn al-wad‘āniyya* can be considered one of al-Mu‘āfā’s sources, although Muslim scholars of traditions judge this work in a negative light. A harsh verdict is expressed, for example, by Suyūṭī, who, in his *al-Ziyādāt ‘alā al-mawḍū‘āt* (Addenda to the Counterfeit *Ḥadīths*) argues that Wad‘ān manufactured most of his *ḥadīths* and prefixed them with authentic transmission chains.<sup>63</sup> Being jurists, al-Mu‘āfā and Wad‘ān were certainly aware of the distinction between the two planes of evaluation and application of the *ḥadīths*: the legal one, based on canonical texts, and the spiritual one, focused on the Sufi collections. Traditional Sufi literature certainly appears very creative since it implies a new concept of Prophet’s sayings: no longer a historical record of what Muḥammad said and did, but a message that is renewed, thanks to the mediation of Sufi masters.

The perfection and purification of one’s self can only happen with detachment from everything that distracts from the thought of God. This results, in the *Uns al-munqati‘in*, in the exaltation of chastity and the negative portrayal of women as temptresses and allies of the devil. In chapter 7 we read:

‘Alī, may God ennoble his countenance, reports that God’s envoy, peace be upon him, said: “The gaze turned to the beauties of woman is like a poisoned arrow [shot] by Iblīs, may God curse him, whoever turns his gaze away from her, God will reward him with a devotion in which he will find sweetness of heart”.

The quotation is also present in chapter 18 of Ibn al-Ġawzī’s *Ḍamm al-hawā* (The Reprobation of Passion), along with many other *ḥadīths* that convey similar messages.<sup>64</sup> Some Muslim scholars judge the afore-

<sup>61</sup> Al-Dahabī, *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā’*, vol. XIX, Beirut, Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 2021, p. 165.

<sup>62</sup> They are the *ḥadīths* cited by al-Mu‘āfā in the chapters 67, 80, 81, 83, 86, 212, 224, 226, 230, 247, 248, 254, 256, 257, 260, 261, 262, 265, 267, 270, and 272.

<sup>63</sup> Ġalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Ziyādāt ‘alā al-mawḍū‘āt*, vol. II, Riyad, Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif li-l-Našr wa-al-Tawzī‘, 2010, p. 789.

<sup>64</sup> ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn al-Ġawzī, *Ḍamm al-hawā*, Beirut, Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1998, p. 156.

mentioned tradition as weak,<sup>65</sup> proving how inauthentic ḥadīths are used in moralising literature, even by strict purists of the prophetic tradition, such as Ibn al-Ġawzī.

In chapter 182, a saying similar to the previous one is expressed more concisely: “Women are the snares of the devil” (*al-nisāʾ ḥabāʾil al-ṣayṭān*). It is a very popular ḥadīth, even though it does not appear in the canonical collections. However, it is mentioned by al-Ġazālī in the *Iḥyāʾ ulūm al-dīn* (The Revival of Religious Sciences).<sup>66</sup>

Chastity seems to translate, in al-Muʿāfiʾa’s ideal vision, into abstaining from sexual relations, as glimpsed in the following account about the reward in the Afterlife:

Abū Hurayra, may God be pleased with him, reported: – God’s envoy, peace be upon him, said: “The kings of Paradise (*mulūk al-ġanna*) will be all the hirsute and dusty people who, if they asked for an audience in this world, it would not be granted to them, if they asked for the hand of a woman, would not succeed in contracting the marriage (*wa-in ḥaṭabū lam yankahū*), and if they spoke, their words are not be heeded, [but] if the light of each could be distributed among the people of the world, it would encompass them all” [chapter 113].<sup>67</sup>

## 7. Ruqya and the Covenant with God

Of ancient pre-Islamic origin, *ruqya* (“protective charm”), based on the recitation of apotropaic magic incantations, was Islamised through the use of Qurʾanic verses and divine attributes, thanks to the traditions that attest to its use by the Prophet. Islam judges it licit, according to Islamic law, if it addresses God directly, and illicit if it includes invocations to angels and *ġinn* (“genies”). Utterance of a protective charm of the latter type would be considered an instance of the sin of *ṣirk* (“associationism or polytheism”) because it attributes divine powers to those supernatural beings.<sup>68</sup> Another condition for the legitimacy of *ruqya* is

<sup>65</sup> Alī b. Abī Bakr al-Haytamī, *Maḡmaʿ al-zawāʾid wa-manbaʿ al-fawāʾid*, vol. VIII, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2001, pp. 74–75.

<sup>66</sup> Al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ulūm al-dīn*, vol. III, Mecca, Dār al-Minhāġ, 2011, p. 160.

<sup>67</sup> See the variant in Ibn Māġa, *Sunan, zuhd*, 4.

<sup>68</sup> U. Hammed, “Amulets and Talisman Texts in Original Documents: A Papyrologist Answers Five Questions You Always Wanted to Ask”, in *Amulets and Talismans of the Middle East and North Africa in Context: Transmission, Efficacy and Collections*, ed.

its use for beneficial purposes, without prejudice towards anyone. The canonical tradition reports that the Prophet resorted to this practice to ask God for protection against the devil and against other calamities. We read a *ḥadīth* of this type in chapter 10 of *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*:

It was handed down from Ibn ʿAbbās – may God be pleased with him – that the envoy of God, peace be upon him, invoked protection on Ḥasan and Ḥusayn – may God be pleased with both – saying: “I invoke upon you protection with the perfect words of God against the devil (*šayṭān*), the poisonous reptile (*ḥāmma*), and against every evil eye (*ʿayn lāmma*)”.

Another version of this *ḥadīth* is mentioned in Buḥārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*, where Muḥammad traces *ruqya* back to the prophet Abraham, thus providing further legitimacy to this practice:

The envoy of God, peace be upon him, invoked protection on Ḥasan and Ḥusayn saying: “Your father [Abraham] invoked protection with [*ruqya*] on Ishmael and Isaac saying: ‘I invoke protection with God’s perfect words from every demon, poisonous snake, and every evil eye’”.<sup>69</sup>

In this occasion, al-Muʿāfa’s *ḥadīth* omits the first sentence from the Prophet’s statement. According to Muslim scholars, variations with omissions or additions in the field of *ḥadīths* are permissible, as several people may have heard the same *ḥadīth* and some may have forgotten a point remembered by others. However, there are criteria for judging the reliability of the new versions: their content must not affect the integrity of the text, especially in the presence of juridical implications; transmitters must be reliable and trustworthy. When a text adds a new topic, the variant will be considered a new saying.<sup>70</sup>

by M.A. Garcia Probert and P.M. Sijpesteijn, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2022, pp. 221–229, esp. 221. See also T. Fahd, “Ruqya” s.v., in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, vol. VIII, 1995, pp. 619a-620a; Khadher Ahmed, Mohd Anuar Ramli, and Nor Azian Ab Rahman, “Understanding the Use of *Ruqyah* (Healing Method Based on The Qurʾan and Hadith) in the Treatment of Disease: Analysis based on *Fiqh al-Hadith* Al-Imam Al-Bukhari (Pemahaman Terhadap Aspek Penggunaan *Ruqyah* Dalam Rawatan Penyakit: Analisis Berasaskan *Fiqh al-Hadith* Imam Al-Bukhari)”, *Al-Bayān: Journal of Qurʾan and Hadith Studies*, 14/2 (2016), pp. 168–205.

<sup>69</sup> Buḥārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *aḥādīth al-anbiyāʾ*, 5. Other variants in Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan, sunna*, 20; Tirmidī, *Kitāb Sunan, ṭibb*, 6; Ibn Māǧa, *Sunan, ṭibb*, 7.

<sup>70</sup> Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadith Studies*, pp. 137–138.

The author of the *Uns al-munqatiʿin* systematically introduces changes (or conveys changes) to the words attributed to the Prophet, even when they come from collections considered authentic, as in an attempt to appropriate and rework these *ḥadīṭs*.

Linked to the practice of *ruqya* is the theme of *daʿwā* or *duʿāʾ* (“prayer”, “supplication”, “invocation”), used to obtain specific graces. Like *ṣalāt* (“ritual prayer”), *daʿwā* requires purification before its performance (chapter 101) and consists in the repetition of specific divine epithets, such as Yā Ḥannān (O Compassionate), Yā Mannān (O Bountiful), which we read in the *ḥadīṭ* report cited in chapter 22, or by the pronunciation of short formulas (such as *ḥasbī Allāh*, “God is sufficient for me”, for which see chapter 39).

The *daʿwā* is particularly effective when used by those Sufi masters who are endowed with special powers and who are able to grant requests through invocations to God. In the *ḥikāya* of chapter 141, an elderly woman addresses a Sufi master, the *ṣayḥ* Abū Saʿīd al-Qaṣṣāb, asking him to invoke God on her behalf against the abuses of a tyrannical prince (*ẓālim*). Al-Qaṣṣāb directs her to the prophet al-Ḥiḍr, who manifests himself as a good-looking young man wandering around a cemetery. From al-Ḥiḍr the *ṣayḥ* obtains a sort of authorisation to intervene. “It was repugnant for me to shed [the prince’s] blood with my invocation [*daʿwā*] – says the master – so I referred [the matter] to my brother al-Ḥiḍr, peace be upon him, and he confirmed to me the legitimacy of the request”. The prince died when he fell from his horse heading to the woman’s house to rape her daughter.

In chapter 139 al-Muʿāfā mentions the “Prayer of Good” (*ṣalāt al-ḥayr*), which is made up of two suras: the Opening Sura and the Sura of Pure Monotheism (Q. 112), to be recited at certain specific times of the year.

Ḥasan al-Baṣrī affirms, may God have mercy on him: – Thirty Companions reported that the Messenger of God said: “Whoever prays with one hundred *rakʿa*, at night, in the middle of the month of Šaʿbān [alternating] the Opening Sura with [the Sura that begins with] ‘Say, He God is one’,<sup>71</sup> ten times, God will look upon him in seventy glances and will satisfy for him, at every glance, seventy of his needs, the smallest of which is forgiveness. It is called ‘The Prayer of Good’ (*ṣalāt al-ḥayr*). The same goes for the middle of the month of Ramaḍān for those who utter the same prayer”.

<sup>71</sup> *Sūrat al-Iḥlāṣ* (“Sura of Pure Monotheism”, Q. 112:1).

The reference to the two “protective” suras (*al-mu‘awwidatān*), 113 and 114, to which tradition attributes apotropaic powers, is inevitable, precisely as there is a close analogy with the prayer called *al-Istiḥāra* (Prayer to implore good), which is present in Buḥārī’s *Ṣaḥīḥ*.<sup>72</sup> The Sufis seem, in this case, to propose a new rite, based on the popular use of the Qur’an and the *ḥadīths* to complement or replace the previous one. The above-mentioned *ḥadīth* is found reformulated in al-Ġazālī’s *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*.<sup>73</sup>

Al-Mu‘āfā often reports variants also compared to al-Ġazālī’s work, as it is also evident in the *ḥadīth* of chapter 208, with regard to “perfection in religion” (*al-iḥsān fi al-dīn*), where one text constitutes the paraphrasing of the other with a final variant.

The envoy of God, peace be upon him, said: “He who possesses three qualities realizes his faith perfectly: he who, when satisfied is not led to falsehood; when he gets angry, his anger doesn’t lead him away from the truth; *when he can, he forgives*”.

In the *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn* we read:

The faith of a servant is not perfect until the following three qualities are realized in him: when he gets angry, his anger doesn’t drive him off the hook; when he is satisfied, his satisfaction does not lead him to falsehood; *when he can he does not accept what does not belong to him*.<sup>74</sup>

Al-Mu‘āfā never explicitly mentions the work of al-Ġazālī, and we do not know if the variants we find between the two texts were made by the later author or if they belong to different strands of pre-existing traditions. With regard to Sufi *ḥadīths*, it is difficult to speak of proper binding “authorities”, as is the case for canonical *ḥadīths*, because of the multiplicity of sources of inspiration.

A prayer or invocation is also the formula recited during the initiation ceremony. It refers to a covenant (*‘ahd*), alluded to in chapter 162, that the servant can make with God, here on earth.

<sup>72</sup> Buḥārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *da‘awāt*, 48.

<sup>73</sup> Al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*, vol. I, pp. 753–754.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. VIII, p. 580.



God's envoy, peace be upon him, one day said to his Companions: "Is none of you able to make a covenant with God?" We answered: "O envoy of God! What is this covenant?" He replied: "Let each of you say: O my God, Creator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of mystery (*ḡayb*) and of testimony (*ṣābāda*), the Forgiving and the Merciful. O God! I make a covenant with You in this earthly life. You are God, apart from Whom there is no other, unique without associates, and Muḥammad is Your servant and Your envoy. Do not abandon me to myself, for if You leave me to myself, You make me approach evil and distance me from good. I trust only in Your mercy. Let us make a pact to bring the day of Resurrection, and do not delay my Return".<sup>75</sup>

At the conclusion of the *ḥadīṭ*, al-Muʿāfā adds:

Whoever utters [these words], writes them on a white sheet, then imprints on it a seal made of fragrant musk (*misk*) and places it under a support of the Throne. When the Day of Resurrection comes, God the Exalted will say: "I keep the covenant more than anyone else, the covenant that My servant made with Me in the earthly house".

The language al-Muʿāfā uses here is not explicit, and some Qurʾanic references are implied: to the primordial covenant that God established with Man at the moment of creation (Q. 7:172) and the knowledge of "mystery" (*ḡayb*) and "covenant" (*ʿahd*) which is spoken of in the *Sūrat Maryam* (Q. 19:78).

In the Sufi context, the pact or oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*) is what is stipulated between the new member of the brotherhood and his master. Through performance of this rite the *murīd* (aspirant Sufi) submits to the guidance of his *ṣayb* and to his authority. On the same occasion, he receives the Sufi cloak.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> This *ḥadīṭ* is absent in canonical collections, but is cited in the commentary of Q. 19:78 by al-Zamaḥṣārī, *Al-Kaššāf*, vol. III, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2015, p. 250. See also Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ wa-ṭabaqāt al-aṣfiyāʾ*, vol. V, Cairo, al-Maktaba al-Tawfiqiyya, 2015, p. 150.

<sup>76</sup> A reference to the covenant is also found in the aforementioned work by al-Šaʿrānī which contains a chapter entitled "Whether it is proper to grant 'the covenant' to women" (*Idā kāna min al-munāsib manḥ al-ʿahd li-l-marʾa*). The answer is negative because of the resulting promiscuity, al-Šaʿrānī, *Al-Anwār*, pp. 111–112.

## 8. *Opposition to Injustice*

Al-Muʿāfā rarely expresses his thoughts directly, so it is possible to know his ideas only through his choice of *ḥadīths*. A topic that seems to be particularly close to the author's heart is condemnation of the oppressor.

This theme is frequent in the Qur'an, where *ẓulm* ("injustice", "wrong", "oppression") is considered to be among the worst possible flaws. The root *ẓ-l-m* occurs 280 times in the text, including all its derived meanings. In 23 verses, the word *ẓulumāt* (plural of *ẓulma*, "darkness") is cited, understood both in a concrete and metaphorical sense. Johanne Louise Christiansen has dedicated a study to this notion entitled "The Dark Koran: A Semantic Analysis of the Koranic Darkness (*ẓulumāt*) and their Metaphorical Usage", in which she highlights the different nuances associated with this term in the Qur'an. Christiansen begins with the analysis of the contrast between light and darkness, often symbolising the binomial faith/unbelief, and then she delves in the interpretation of darkness as a "mental state" in which individuals may find themselves. Additionally, she explores the positive connotation of *ẓulumāt* as "night" signifying something that "covers" and "protects", thereby resembling the concept of "earth" or a "mother's womb" (Q. 39:6).<sup>77</sup>

The remaining Qur'anic terminology linked to *ẓ-l-m* pertains to "injustice" (*ẓulm*) and what is characterised as "unjust" or "iniquitous" (*ẓālim*) in a broader context. Unjust are associated with the impious and unbelievers who are ungrateful to God (Q. 2:254) and oppress the faithful (Q. 2:114). In the words of God, they will never triumph (Q. 6:21, 135) and they will receive the punishment in Afterlife (Q. 2:165). Also unjust are the liars (Q. 3:94) and those who practice usury (Q. 2:279) or consume the property of orphans in their custody (Q. 4:2,10), but the text also insists on the idea that "whoever commits an injustice wrongs himself" (Q. 2:231; 3:117; 9:70).

In subsequent literature, the meaning of "unjust" in the sense of "oppressor" prevails, even in a political sense. Oppression is also an important topic in *ḥadīth* literature. Buḥārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* contains a "Chapter on the Oppressor" (*Kitāb al-ẓālim*), while the *Sunan* of Muslim

<sup>77</sup> See J.L. Christiansen, "The Dark Koran: A Semantic Analysis of the Koranic Darkness (*ẓulumāt*) and their Metaphorical Usage", *Arabica* 62 (2015), pp. 185–233.

includes a sub-chapter on “The Prohibition of Oppression” (*bāb taḥrīm al-zulm*) in the “Chapter on Piety” (*Kitāb al-birr*). From the latter collection is taken the following ḥadīṡ in which God admonishes his servants saying:

God’s messenger reported: “I heard Gabriel – peace be upon him – say: ‘I heard the Lord of power – glory to Him – say: O servants, I have forbidden oppression to you and Me, so do not oppress each other! O servants, you are the ones who sin night and day, I am the One who forgives your faults and I do not worry about them. Ask for forgiveness and I will grant it to you’”.<sup>78</sup>

The ḥadīṡ, of which we have given only the *incipit*, is incorporated by al-Muʿāfā into his text in full, without alterations, with the exception of the introduction of the Angel Gabriel. In divinely inspired sayings (*ḥadīṡ qudsi*), Gabriel is always mentioned in the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin* as the intermediary between God and the Prophet Muḥammad.

Al-Muʿāfā multiplies his attacks against oppression, blaming fraternisation with the powerful, and warning of the allure that their power can exercise (*man iqtaraba min abwāb al-ṣalāṭīn uftutina*, “Those who approach the doors of the powerful are fascinated [by them]”, chapter 192). The most effective advice for the believer is to stay away from the powerful and to avoid associating with them as much as possible (chapter 226). God is the quintessential enemy of the unrighteous and will not grant an audience with Himself in the Afterlife to the ruler who prevents access to himself to his subjects (chapter 61).

In chapter 155 the author defines the different typologies of unjust man:

The envoy of God said: “Five types of people arouse the wrath of God – if He wants to, He will apply His anger against them already in this world, otherwise, on the Day of Judgment, He will lead them to Hell – [they are]: the prince of a people who takes his due (*ḥaqqā-bu*) from his subjects, but does not do them justice nor remove injustice to them; the leader of a people who demands obedience, but does not behave equally between the weak and the strong; the man who does not order his people

<sup>78</sup> Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ, Taḥrīm al-zulm*, 10, also cited in al-Muʿāfā, *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, chapter 138.

and his son to obey God Most High and does not teach them the content of religion, but speaks according to his passion (*hawā*); the man who hires a worker and does not pay him the agreed wages; the man who treats a woman unfairly with regard to her dowry (*mabr*)”.<sup>79</sup>

This *ḥadīth*, present with slight variations in al-Ġazālī’s *al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (The Molten Gold on the Advice to the Kings)<sup>80</sup> and in *Kabā’ir* (“The Greatest Sins”) by al-Dahabī (d. 748/1347), is considered weak by Muslim scholars.<sup>81</sup>

The following *ḥikāya* contains an anecdote, on the same topic, about Solomon and an ant. One night, while the prophet was sleeping, an ant crawled across his chest, and he grabbed it with his right hand and threw it away. The ant complained about that act of aggression reminding Solomon that one day he too would find himself in the hands of the Lord, who “takes from the oppressor in favour of the oppressed”.<sup>82</sup>

This last theme has to do with Islamic eschatology, whereby God will subtract any positive actions from the balance of the oppressor in order to add them to the good deeds of the oppressed. The same concept is reaffirmed in chapter 108 where the author goes so far as to state with the Prophet: “Whoever wakes up [in the morning] without setting himself up for an injustice against someone is forgiven in what he commits”.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Al-Mu’āfā, *Uns al-munqaṭi’rīn*, vol. II, p. 60. To confirm the popularity of the topic, we recall that al-Ṭabarānī’s *Makārim al-ablāq* devotes four chapters to *ẓulm*. The titles are: “The Advantage of ‘Taking from the Oppressor’s Hand’” (*Faḍl al-ahḍ ‘alā yaday al-ẓālim*), “The Oppressed Who Has Achieved Victory (*Faḍl mā ḡā’a fī faḍl nuṣrat al-maẓlūm*)”; “Concerning Man Who Oppresses a Muslim” (*Fī man ẓalama raḡul-an muslim-an*); “Credit for Raising the Needs of Muslims to the Powerful and Getting them Met” (*Mā ḡā’a fī faḍl raḡ’ ḥawā’iḡ al-muslimīn ilā al-ṣalāṭīn wa-tanḡīzu-hā lahūm*). Also in all of al-Ġazālī’s works cited so far there are chapters against injustice and the oppressor. See, for example, al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*, vol. III, pp. 541–580; *ibid.*, vol. IV, pp. 661–663; Id., *Al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk*, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1988, p. 200; Id., *Mukāšafat al-qulūb*, p. 150; Id., *Salwat al-‘Arifīn*, Cairo, Maktabat Fayḍ, 2013, p. 120.

<sup>80</sup> Al-Ġazālī, *Al-Tibr al-masbūk*, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1988, p. 16.

<sup>81</sup> See Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Dahabī, *Al-Kabā’ir*, ed. by Sayyid Ibrāhīm, Cairo, Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2009, p. 126, note 2.

<sup>82</sup> Al-Mu’āfā, *Uns al-munqaṭi’rīn*, vol. II, p. 61.

<sup>83</sup> This *ḥadīth* is considered weak, see al-Manāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr, šarḥ al-ḡāmi’ al-ṣaḡīr*, vol. VI, Beirut, Dār al-Ma’rifā, p. 66.

Al-Muʿāfā also outlines the correct behaviour of the righteous governor (*al-wālī al-ʿādil*) by correlating his conduct with the behaviour required of his subjects towards him:

The son of ʿAbbās, may God be pleased with both [father and son], transmitted that the envoy of God, peace be upon him, said: “Whoever administers something of the affairs of Muslims, must have good conduct and he will be reciprocated with the gift of their hearts; he must be magnanimous in the right things and will be reciprocated with their love. If instead he will deny himself to the Muslims, God will deny Himself to him and he will be without their affection and without their gratitude. If he supplies [the Muslims] with goods, God will do the same. If he defends the weak against the strong, God will strengthen his power, and if he is just, God Most High will lengthen his life” [chapter 43].

This tradition is absent in the canonical collections, but it is handed down in the subsequent Sufi literature and we find it again in al-Hindī’s *Kanz al-ʿummāl*.<sup>84</sup>

On another occasion, al-Muʿāfā chooses to quote only a fragment of an “authentic” *ḥadīṭ* placing it at the beginning of another *ḥadīṭ* on a similar topic. The saying is:

[I] Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his own flock. [II] Out of ten princes there will be no one who will not be led on the day of the Resurrection with his hand tied around his neck, in ways that his work releases him or tightens him even more [chapter 46].<sup>85</sup>

The content of this *ḥadīṭ* is innovative in comparison with the original sentence recorded by Buḥārī which limits itself to defining the spheres of power and establishing hierarchies:

The prince is a shepherd, a man is the shepherd of his household, a woman is the shepherd in the house of her husband and her children, therefore, each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for your flock.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> Al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿummāl, fī sunan al-aqwāl wa-afʿāl*, vol. VI, Beirut, Muʿassasat al-Risāla, 1985, p. 14.

<sup>85</sup> Al-Muʿāfā, *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, vol. II, p. 327. See also al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿummāl*, vol. VI, p. 24.

<sup>86</sup> Buḥārī records this *ḥadīṭ* in several places in his collections: see Buḥārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ, ḡumʿa*, 11; *ḡanāʿiz*, 32; *waṣāyā*, 5.

It must be said that all these modifications introduced in the work of al-Muʿāfā are never neutral but imply the creation of new sayings attributed to the Prophet that can become a tool for new theological and sociological exegeses.

### 9. *The Superiority of the Wise (ʿālim)*

The *Uns al-munqaṭiʿīn* devotes at least eight chapters to knowledge as a virtue. The term used here is *ʿilm* (“science”, “knowledge”) in the Qurʾanic sense of “knowledge in matters of religion”, from which derives *ʿālim* (“knowledgeable”), in the same field.<sup>87</sup> The use of *fiqh* with the meaning of “intelligence”/“understanding” and, in particular, of “intelligence in religion” (*fiqh fi al-dīn*)<sup>88</sup> is also frequent. The author rarely uses the term *ḥikma* (“knowledge”, “wisdom”) or *maʿrifa* (“knowledge by experience” and “inner or experiential knowledge” of God, translated, in the Sufi context, also as “gnosis”).<sup>89</sup>

One of the most oft-highlighted points by al-Muʿāfā on this subject is the superiority of the *ʿālim* over the simple devotee (*ʿābid*):

[I] The envoy of God, peace be upon him, said: “To whom God wants to give a good thing, He grants him intelligence in religion (*yufaqqih-hu fi al-dīn*) to the one whom He loves and inspires in him His right guidance (*ruṣd*). [II] The superiority of the wise man over the devotee is like the superiority of the moon on the night of a full moon over the remaining stars. Whoever embarks on a path in which he seeks His right guidance, God will lead him on the path to Paradise. Angels place their wings on those who seek knowledge as a mark of satisfaction (*ridʿan*) for what they do. [III] On Judgment Day, those who will be able to intercede will be the prophets, the wise men (*al-ʿulamāʾ*) and the martyrs, while those who are in Heaven and on Earth will ask forgiveness for the wise man (*al-ʿālim*). [IV] God cannot be worshipped with anything better than intelligence in religion” [chapter 216].

<sup>87</sup> In the Qurʾan, science belongs *par excellence* to God, and it is God who grants knowledge to prophets and ordinary men (Q. 27:15–16; 96:4–5).

<sup>88</sup> See the derived form *tafaqqaha* in the Qurʾanic expression *tafaqqaha fi al-dīn*, “to be educated in religion”, (Q. 9:122).

<sup>89</sup> See M. Milani, “Classic Sufism and Gnosis”, in *The Gnostic World*, ed. by G.W. Trompf, G.B. Mikkelsen and J. Johnston, Abingdon, Routledge, 2019, pp. 328–336, esp. 329.

This *ḥadīṭ* is the result of the fusion of four different sayings, of which the first is present in almost all the canonical collections,<sup>90</sup> with the exception of the phrase “and inspires His right guidance”;<sup>91</sup> the second is found in Ibn Māḡa<sup>92</sup> and al-Dārimī<sup>93</sup> with some variants; the third only in Ibn Māḡa;<sup>94</sup> the fourth, considered “weak” by Muslim experts, is present in al-Ġazālī’s *Iḥyā’ ulūm al-dīn*.<sup>95</sup> It should be noted that most of the *ḥadīṭs* that are quoted in the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin* concerning science are found in the first book of al-Ġazālī’s theological *summa*, namely *Kitāb al-ʿilm* (The Book of Science).

Here also the inclusion of details, even of little importance, can bring about more or less significant innovations. In particular, the addition (*ziyāda*) of the phrase “and He inspires His right guidance” reiterates the concept of a direct link between “the one who is loved” (i.e. the Sufi) and God; while in the appendix (the fourth *ḥadīṭ*) it assigns intelligence/understanding in religion (*al-fiqh fī al-dīn*) the highest place in the worship reserved for God.<sup>96</sup>

Although faith is decisive for the salvation of the believer in Islam, al-Muʿāfā insists on the idea that science allows one to enjoy a privileged position with God, as can also be deduced from chapter 64:

It has been reported that the messenger of God, peace be upon him, said: “Gabriel, peace be upon him, came and warned me: ‘O Muḡammad, do not despise the servant to whom God has given knowledge, for God the Exalted honoured him when He taught him science and one wise man (*ʿālim*) is loved by God more than 70 devotees (*ʿābid*)’.”<sup>97</sup>

In the following tradition, the sage is expressly equated with the Prophet Muḡammad, who said: “The superiority of the wise man over

<sup>90</sup> Buhārī, *Ṣaḡīḥ*, *ʿilm*, 10, *ḥums*, 7, *iʿtiṣām*, 10; Muslim, *Ṣaḡīḥ*, *imāra*, 175, *zakāt*, 98, 100; Tirmidī, *Sunan*, *ʿilm*, 4; Ibn Māḡa, *Sunan*, *muqaddima*, 17.

<sup>91</sup> The addition is also found in al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-tarḡīb wa-al-tarḡīb*, vol. I, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2002, p. 50.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Māḡa, *Sunan*, *zuhd*, 47.

<sup>93</sup> Dārimī, *Sunan*, *ʿilm*, 1.

<sup>94</sup> Ibn Māḡa, *Sunan*, *zuhd*, 47.

<sup>95</sup> See ʿAbd Allāh Maḡmūd b. Muḡammad al-Ḥaddād, *Tabḡīḡ aḡḥādīṭ Iḥyā’ ulūm al-dīn li-l-ʿIrāqī wa-al-Subkī wa-al-Zubaydī*, Riyad, Dār al-ʿĀṣima li-l-Naṣr, 1987, pp. 38–39, *ḥadīṭ* n. 29; al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyā’ ulūm al-dīn*, vol. I, p. 26.

<sup>96</sup> Al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyā’ ulūm al-dīn*, vol. I, p. 25. In this edition, the chapter is called *lā ʿibādat bi-ḡayr ʿilm* (There is no Worship Without Knowledge).

<sup>97</sup> Absent in the canonical collections.

the devotee is like my superiority over the lowest among you” (chapter 105).<sup>98</sup>

The knowledge spoken of is that of the divine reality, attained at the culmination of a long ascetic journey. The “servant” (*al-‘abd*, the name by which the author always calls the Sufi) who has reached a high spiritual level needs neither guidance nor instruction.

One day God’s messenger, peace be upon him, said to his Companions: “Who among you wants God to remove his blindness and restore his sight (*baṣar*)? Who among you wants God to grant him the straight path without guidance (*hidāya*). Verily, to him who engages in asceticism (*man zābida*) in this world and reduces his hopes in it, God grants knowledge (*‘ilm*) without teaching (*ta‘līm*) and guides him [in the right direction] without guidance” [chapter 201].

This tradition is also reported in al-Ġazālī’s *Mukāṣafat al-qulūb* where it is attributed to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī.<sup>99</sup> The saying establishes a link between science and asceticism: only those who have renounced the allurements of this world will receive guidance from God and “science”/“knowledge”, without the need to be taught by some other person. Ultimately, the ascetic does not require an intermediary between him and God.

From this point of view, the intellect (*‘aql*), the means *par excellence* of knowledge, is among the human faculties most celebrated by al-Mu‘āfā. It is considered the “measure” of all human acts and consequently the reward in the Afterlife:

‘Ā’iṣā, may God be pleased with her, said: “I asked the envoy of God, peace be upon him: ‘How are people distinguished?’ He replied: ‘From the intellect (*‘aql*), in this world and in the Hereafter’. I asked him: ‘Will people not be rewarded based on their actions?’ He replied: ‘O ‘Ā’iṣā, is it not

<sup>98</sup> Reported in Tirmidī, *Sunan*, *‘ilm*, 19; Ibn Māğā, *Sunan*, *muqaddima*, 17; Dārimī, *Sunan*, *muqaddima*, 32. It is defined as *ğarīb* (“rare”, see *Uns al-munqaṭi‘in*, vol. I, p. 513, note 1). The entire *ḥadīṡ* reads: “Abū Umāmah al-Bāhili, may Allah be pleased with him, reported: – The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: ‘The superiority of the scholar over the worshiper is like my superiority over the lowest among you’. Then, the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: ‘Indeed, Allah, his angels, the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth, even the ant in its hole, and even the fish, invoke blessings upon those who teach people goodness’”.

<sup>99</sup> Al-Ġazālī, *Mukāṣafat al-qulūb*, p. 148.



true that only those who have understanding, work according to the will of God? In the measure (*bi-qadr*) of their intellect, they work and in the measure of their works, they will be rewarded” [chapter 35].<sup>100</sup>

In the following dialogic dramatization, *ʿaql* is personified as a creature who speaks to God:

The messenger of God, peace be upon him, said: “God created the intellect and it was dark (*muḡlim-an*), opened its eyes<sup>101</sup> with His light, and it saw. Then he asked it: ‘Who am I?’ It replied: ‘You are God except whom there is no other’. He ordered it: ‘Come over here!’ And it approached. ‘Now go back’. And it backed away. God said: ‘By My strength and My power, I have not created a creature that I love more than you. Through you I take and through you I give’” [chapter 65].

The experts of the prophetic tradition consider this *ḥadīṡ* to be false (*kaḍīb*) and counterfeit,<sup>102</sup> or questionable.<sup>103</sup> However, it is frequently mentioned in Sufi literature where it is known as *ḥadīṡ al-ʿaql* (the *ḥadīṡ* of the intellect).<sup>104</sup> Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240) mentions it together with the more famous saying regarding the “hidden treasure” (*al-kanz al-maḥfi*) which reads: “I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known. Hence, I created the world so that I would be known”.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>100</sup> It is found with variants in al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, vol. I, p. 137.

<sup>101</sup> In Arabic *kaḥḥala* (literally, “put kohl on his eyes”, i.e. to cure his blindness).

<sup>102</sup> Ibn Taymiyya, *Aḥadīṡ al-quṣṣās*, Beirut, al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1972, p. 57, *ḥadīṡ* n. 6.

<sup>103</sup> Ġalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṡī, *Kitāb al-lāliʾ al-maṣnūʾa fī al-aḥadīṡ al-mawḍūʾa* (The Book of Pearls in Counterfeit Ḥadīṡs), vol. I, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2007, p. 120.

<sup>104</sup> Brown, *Hadith*, p. 194.

<sup>105</sup> It is not found in standard *ḥadīṡ* collections, but it is quoted by Ibn ʿArabī in the *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, cited in Brown, *Hadith*, p. 250. According to Ibn Taymiyya, “It is not from the words of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace), and there is no known *isnād* for it, neither authentic nor weak”; See Ibn Taymiyya, *Aḥadīṡ al-quṣṣās*, Beirut, al-Maktaba al-Islāmiyya, 1985, vol. I, p. 55; al-Zarkaṣī (d. 794/1392), Ibn Ḥaġar (d. 852/1449), al-Suyūṡī and others agree with him. ʿAlī al-Qārī (d. 1014/1605) adds: “But its meaning is correct, deduced from the statement of God, I have not created the *ġinn* and mankind, except to worship Me, i.e., to know Me, as ʿAbbās’s son (may God be pleased with them both) has explained”. All these statements are mentioned by al-ʿĠlūnī, who concludes: “This saying occurs often in the words of the Sufis, who have relied on it and built upon it some of their principles”. Ismāʿīl b. Muḥammad al-ʿĠlūnī, *Kaṣf al-ḥafāʾ*, vol. II, Cairo, Maktabat al-Qudsī, 1932, p. 210.

Knowledge, therefore – or more precisely, divine self-knowledge – constitutes the ultimate meaning of creation for the Sufis. Creatures, including the intellect, are God’s instruments.

#### 10. “Eating the Flesh of One’s Brother”

Despite attempts at improvement, there remains a dark side in man that consists of his flaws, from which he can hardly free himself. The defects most harshly criticised in *Uns al-munqaṭi’in*, after avarice, are backbiting and gossip (*al-ġiba wa-al-namīma*). The Prophet allegedly censured both vices and launched curses against those who have “two faces” and “two tongues”.

It was conveyed on behalf of God’s messenger, peace be upon him, who was informed of two women who were fasting and gossiping about people. The Prophet said: “They fasted from the lawful things and broke their fast with things that were forbidden to them. Cursed be he who has two faces; cursed is he who has two tongues; cursed anyone who sows discord among people; cursed are those who love to gossip (*nammām*) and those who speak badly of others (*mannān*)” [chapter 209].<sup>106</sup>

In the *ḥadīṭ* in chapter 251, the Prophet reproaches some bystanders who were offending a man suffering from a malformation.

Abū Hurayra relates: – A man was with the Prophet, peace be upon him, and when he went away, some present commented: “How crippled this guy is!” The Prophet reproved them: “You have ‘eaten’ your brother and have offended him. Among the things that God revealed to Moses, peace to be upon him, there is: ‘Whoever dies repenting of his slander will be the last to enter Paradise, whoever dies persevering in it will be the first to enter Hell’”.

The expression “eating one’s brother”, which compares backbiting to anthropophagy, is of Qur’anic origin: “O believers, avoid making too many inferences, for a part of inference is sin. Don’t spy on each other

<sup>106</sup> See also al-Ġazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*, vol. V, pp. 387–581, and Id., *Salwa*, pp. 310–312.

and don't gossip about each other. Would any of you eat the flesh of your dead brother? Indeed, you would be horrified!" (Q. 49:12.).

The *ḥadīṭ* cited by al-Muʿāfā is rather rare and is found partially in the later work *Maḡmaʿ al-zawāʿid wa-manbaʿ al-fawāʿid* or "The Collection of Additions and the Sources of Uplifting Stories" by the Sufi Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn al-Hayṭamī (d. 807/1405).<sup>107</sup> The author of this collection aims to bring together all those prophetic traditions which are not contemplated in the six canonical collections, but which are to be found in the further collections that bear the name of *Musnad*, such as those of Ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), of Abū Bakr al-Bazzār (d. 292/905) and Abū Yāʿlā al-Mawṣilī (d. 306/919), in the three collections of *ḥadīṭs* by al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muḡam al-kabīr*, *al-Muḡam al-aṣṣaṭ*, and *al-Muḡam al-ṣaḡīr* (The Major, Middle, and Minor Collections) and in the written additions to these works. In this way, the Sufi tradition takes care to preserve the heritage of the secondary collections of *ḥadīṭs* with their messages and their innovations.

In contrast to the aforementioned faults, virtues such as charity (*al-Iḥsān ilā al-sāʿil*, "Do good to those who ask for it", chapter 160), patience (*ṣabr*), and almsgiving (*ṣadaqa*)<sup>108</sup> are extolled (see chapters 11, 14, 44, 47, 132, 147).

In general, the ideals inspired by the Sufis resemble the evangelical categories expressed in the following *ḥadīṭ* (chapter 49):

The envoy of God, peace be upon him, said: "God, Most High and Exalted, says: 'O servant, I asked you for food and you did not feed Me, I asked you for a drink and you did not quench My thirst, I asked you to cover Me and you did not'. The servant asks: 'And how did this happen?' The True, Full of Glory, will say: 'The hungry, the thirsty, and the naked passed by you without receiving anything of what you have in excess (*fadl*)'".

The passage is a synthesis of the longer *ḥadīṭ* reported by Muslim:

From Abū Hurayra, may God be pleased with him: – The messenger of God, peace be upon him, said: "Almighty God will say on the Day of

<sup>107</sup> Al-Hayṭamī provides two variants without the sentence "you ate your brother". He judges weak this *ḥadīṭ*, see al-Hayṭamī, *Maḡmaʿ al-zawāʿid wa-manbaʿ al-fawāʿid*, vol. XVI, Beirut, Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1967, p. 302. The following lines quoted by al-Muʿāfā come from another source or are an addition by the author.

<sup>108</sup> In a *ḥadīṭ*, the author states that lending (*qird*) is better than almsgiving, see chapter 38.

Resurrection: ‘O son of Adam, I fell ill and you did not visit Me’. He will say: ‘O Lord, how can I visit You? And You are the Lord of the worlds’. He said: ‘Did you not know that my servant So-and-so was sick and you did not go to visit him, and if you had visited him would you have found Me with him? O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you did not give Me food’. He will say: ‘O Lord, and how can I feed You? And You are the Lord of the worlds’, He said: ‘Did you not know that So-and-so my servant asked you for food, but why didn’t you give him food? Did you not know that if you fed him, you would find him with Me? O son of Adam, I gave you a drink but you did not provide for Me’. He said: ‘O Lord, how can I give You a drink? And You are the Lord of the worlds’. He said: ‘My certain servant asked you for a drink, but you did not provide him and if you had quenched his thirst you would have found him with Me’.<sup>109</sup>

In this case, al-Muʿāfā summarises a canonical tradition without major innovations, indeed somewhat reducing its scope. Summarising a *ḥadīth* for didactic purposes is lawful,<sup>110</sup> but the frequent interventions of the author of the *ʿUns al-munqāṭiʿin* in the sayings attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad seem to aim at rewriting even those *ḥadīths* that are considered authentic (*ṣaḥīḥ*).

The work ends with a tradition referring to sleep that can occur during the prostration of prayer (*suḡūd*).

It is handed down that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “When the servant falls asleep during prayer, God is pleased with him with the angels and says: ‘O angels, look at My servant, his spirit is with Me and his body is in front of Me. I testify before you that I have forgiven him’” [chapter 300].<sup>111</sup>

This *ḥadīth*, already present in Ibn Ḥanbal’s *Kitāb al-zuhd*, is reported with the addition of the phrase relating to forgiveness.<sup>112</sup> The text alludes to the “temporary death” referred to in Q. 39 (“Sura of the Thrones”), verse 42, which occurs during sleep: “God welcomes souls

<sup>109</sup> See Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ, birra*, 13.

<sup>110</sup> See Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadīth Studies*, p. 137.

<sup>111</sup> The *ḥadīth* in question is not in the canonical sources, but a variant is found in the *Sunan* of Ibn Ḥanbal.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Kitāb al-zuhd*, Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1999, p. 227, *ḥadīth* n. 1606.

at the time of death and during sleep. He then withholds the one whose death He has decided and postpones the other until an established term”.

Also in this circumstance, the addition by al-Muʿāfā (or by his source) at the end of Ibn Ḥanbal’s *ḥadīṡ* is very significant: God grants the servant daily forgiveness, in the same way as He encounters him daily during sleep.

## 11. Conclusion

The main function of the *ḥadīṡ* in the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin* is to provide, through the words attributed to the Prophet, an effective basis for the Sufi message that al-Muʿāfā intends to communicate. Since the author rarely intervenes in the first person, we can only infer his views indirectly, through the choice and use he makes of the *ḥadīṡ*.

The topics covered focus on the ascetic lifestyle that the “servant” should follow, marked by poverty, chastity, and detachment from the world. The author also dedicates a lot of space to injustice (*ẓulm*) and the defects that need to be got rid of (greed, slander, gossip and so on). These themes are not extraneous to the official Islamic tradition, but they are amplified and highlighted here also thanks to the extensive adoption of spurious *ḥadīṡ*.

Al-Muʿāfā seldom draws from the canonical collections, while he often quotes *ḥadīṡ* considered “weak”, “counterfeit”, or “questionable”, whose sources are not always easy to identify. In many cases, the traditions he cites are agglomerations of fragments from different sources which are modified to compose new units.

In the *Uns al-munqaṭiʿin*, the author systematically introduces changes (or reports changes) to the sayings of the Prophet, even when they come from collections considered authentic, as in an attempt to appropriate and rework them. The changes that the author makes are generally small and consist of the addition or omission of a single sentence, even a short one. However, these operations are never neutral as they aim to emphasize Sufi doctrines or to transmit new interpretations of Muḥammad’s sayings.

Variants in *ḥadīṡ* can also be found between different Sufi traditions, as happens with some sayings reported by al-Muʿāfā and al-Ġazālī. It is not known whether these discrepancies are due to the different strands of traditions from which the two authors draw, or if the

single Sufi feels authorised to intervene autonomously to modify the *ḥadīth*, in the name of direct divine inspiration. In this regard, al-Muʿāfā is in line with the opinion of the Sufis, who consider the sayings of the Prophet received from the greatest spiritual masters (through truthful dreams or revelations in a waking state) to be reliable.

The massive use of modified traditions seems to respond to a specific project by al-Muʿāfā aimed at openly presenting a new way of understanding *ḥadīths*: they are no longer the historical record of what the Prophet said and did, but an instrument that can be renewed creatively, based on the experiences of spiritual masters. They may also provide new insights for a renewal of Islamic doctrine and exegesis.

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## *Notes*





# Themes and Problems of Islam in the Study of the Crimean Khanate

*Andrea Amato*

The purpose of this paper is to present and offer an overview of Islam in Crimea between the 14th and 18th centuries. In those centuries, the Crimean Peninsula was the political and religious centre of the homonymous khanate, formed following the disintegration of the Golden Horde Khanate. Considered to be the last heir to Čingīz Hān's empire, the Crimean Khanate played a primary role in the Black Sea region, becoming a bridge between Eastern Europe and the Ottoman empire. One of Crimean Khanate's main characteristics was that it followed Sunni Islam. Nonetheless, the religious and mystical documents drawn up during the Tatar rule are scarce, as are the contemporary studies on the Tatar Islamic faith. However, the religious and mystical experience of the Crimean Golden Horde and the Tatar Khanate produced an entirely unique institutional and popular Sufism, resulting directly from the conversion to the Islamic faith of the Golden Horde *hāns* and from the close relationships with Mamluk Egypt and the Seljuk sultanate of Rum.

Keywords: Crimean Khanate, Golden Horde, Sufism, Islamisation, Sufi Manuscript

## 1. *Introduction*

Since the 7th century BC, the Crimean Peninsula has experienced an extraordinary variety of cultures, brought about by the encounter (and clash) among peoples of different ethnic groups.<sup>1</sup> Among the various kingdoms and dominions that have succeeded one another in this region, the Tatar-Muslim Khanate played an extremely important

<sup>1</sup> A. Ferrari, *Storia della Crimea: Dall'antichità a oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2022.

role between the 15th and 18th centuries,<sup>2</sup> the effects of which have continued to have an impact on the dynamics of international diplomacy up to the present day.<sup>3</sup> The Tatar people came into contact with the various peoples present in Crimea before the Mongol invasion in the 13th century: from the Armenians to the Genoese and Venetians, with a constant presence of Karaite Jews, and later from the Ottoman Turks to the Russian presence in the 18th century.<sup>4</sup> Crimea was therefore a melting pot of cultures and peoples, until the completion of the Tatar conquest and the subsequent process of political and administrative unification.<sup>5</sup> During the Mongol domination of the Khanate of the Golden Horde in the 13th century, there was a constant process of Islamisation in the territories of the Crimean Peninsula.<sup>6</sup> The spread of the Muslim faith began mainly with the conversion to Islam

<sup>2</sup> On the role of the Crimean Khanate and the Tatar-Muslims, see A. Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1978, which traced the history of this region from the founding of the Khanate up to the Soviet rule.

<sup>3</sup> It is necessary to think of the aftermath of the Crimean War (1853–1856), up to the tensions following Crimea's declaration of independence from Ukraine and the independence referendum held on 16 March 2014. On the crisis in Crimea, see R. Delahunty, "The Crimean Crisis", *University of St. Thomas Journal of Law & Public Policy* 9/1 (2014), pp. 125–187; S. Danylov, "Crimean Tatars National Institutes under the Occupation: The Case of the Muftiyat of Crimea", in *Ukraine after the Euromaidan: Challenges and Hopes*, ed. by V. Stepanenko and Y. Pylinskyi, Bern, Peter Lang, 2015, pp. 193–201.

<sup>4</sup> On the Armenian presence, see A. Osipian, "Armenian Diasporas between the Golden Horde, Rus' and Poland: Long-Distance Trade and Diplomatic Services", in *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe: Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations*, ed. by A.V. Maiorov and R. Hautala, London-New York, Routledge, 2021, pp. 405–424. On the Genoese and Venetian presence, see L. Pubblici, "Genoa and Venice in the Golden Horde: Politics, Trades, and Society", in *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe*, pp. 425–446. On the Jewish presence in Central Asia and the Khazars in particular, see *The World of the Khazars: New Perspectives. Selected Papers from the Jerusalem 1999 International Khazar Colloquium*, ed. by P.B. Golden, H. Ben-Shammai and A. Róna-Tas, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2007. On the Russian conquest of the Crimean Peninsula, see M. Kozelsky, *Christianizing Crimea: Shaping Sacred Space in the Russian Empire and Beyond*, DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> H. Jankowski, *A Historical-Etymological Dictionary of Pre-Russian Habitation Names of the Crimea*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2006.

<sup>6</sup> *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 143 (2018), monographic issue, *La Horde d'Or et l'islamisation des steppes eurasiatiques*, ed. by M. Favereau.

of the Golden Horde *ḥān* Ūzbek (d. 741/1341),<sup>7</sup> with the following promotion of the new faith on the part of the Ghurid dynasty.<sup>8</sup> With the political and administrative weakening of the Golden Horde and its subsequent disintegration, the Crimean Khanate took shape in the 15th century: it considered itself the heir to the previous Khanate and ruled over Crimea and the surrounding regions up to the Russian annexation during the second half of the 18th century.<sup>9</sup> Characterised by the profession of Sunni Islam as the state religion from the first decades of the 14th century, the Crimean Khanate can be considered one of the bridges between Christian Europe and the Ottoman empire.<sup>10</sup> In this context, Sufism played a fundamental role during the Islamisation of the Golden Horde (including the Crimean Peninsula) through the proselytising action carried out by Sufis from Seljuk Anatolia.<sup>11</sup> During the process of Islamisation, Sufism revealed a capacity for an adaptation and absorption of traditions from Mongolian and Turkic cultures, thus permitting a greater spread of *dār al-Islām* in Eurasian regions.<sup>12</sup> In addition to the Sufi missionary action, the Ottoman in-

<sup>7</sup> On Ūzbek Ḥān and the role he played in the Islamisation of Eurasian regions during Mongol rule, see P. Jackson, *The Mongols and the Islamic World: From Conquest to Conversion*, London, Yale University Press, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> The name is derived from Gūgī (d. 624/1227), eldest son of the Mongol conqueror and father of Bātū Ḥān, founder of the Khanate: P.B. Golden, "Tuši. The Türkic Name of Joči", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 55/1–3 (2002), pp. 143–151.

<sup>9</sup> On the fall of the Mongol empire and the formation of the four Khanates, see P. Jackson, "The Dissolution of the Mongol Empire", *Central Asiatic Journal* 22/3–4 (1978), pp. 186–244; D. Morgan, "The Decline and Fall of the Mongol Empire", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 19/4 (2009), pp. 427–437.

<sup>10</sup> On the cultural heterogeneity of Crimea, see M. Kizilov, *Karaites through the Traveler's Eyes: Ethnic History, Traditional Culture and Everyday Life of the Crimean Karaites According to the Descriptions of the Travelers*, New York, Al-Qirqisani Center for the Promotion of Karaite Studies, 2003; A. Eszer, "Neue Forschungen zur Geschichte der II. Krim-Mission der Dominikaner (1635–1665)", *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 41 (1971), pp. 181–240; A.A. Vasiliev, *The Goths in the Crimea*, Cambridge, The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1936; E. Khvalkov, *The Colonies of Genoa in the Black Sea Region: Evolution and Transformation*, New York, Routledge, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> M. Kramarovskiy, "The Crimea and Rum in the 13th–14th Centuries: The Anatolian Diaspora and Urban Culture of Solkhat", *Golden Horde Review* 1 (2016), pp. 55–88.

<sup>12</sup> N. Abdulvaap, "Sufizm i nachal'nyy etap aktivnogo rasprostraneniya islama v Krymu" (Sufism and the Initial Stage of the Active Spread of Islam in Crimea), *Kul'tura Narodov Prichernomor'ya* (Culture of the Peoples of the Black Sea Region) 79 (2006), pp. 140–149.

fluence on the political, administrative and cultural life of the Crimean Khanate, starting with the conquest of the port city of Kefe in the second half of the 15th century, was very significant.<sup>13</sup> The Ottoman empire played a fundamental role in the history of the Crimean Peninsula, also influencing the political and military decisions of the Khanate itself.<sup>14</sup> For a long time, scholars associated the history of Muslim Crimea exclusively with the events of the Ottoman empire. However, although the Ottoman presence was constant and long-lasting, the Tatar Khanate enjoyed a great deal of freedom and autonomy on several levels by virtue of the proclaimed Chingizid heritage, with particular emphasis on the descent of the Crimean Tatar rulers from the Mongol conqueror Čingiz Hān (d. 624/1227).<sup>15</sup>

Considering, therefore, the issue of the Crimean Khanate and its geographical and cultural position between the East and the West,<sup>16</sup> the first part of this paper proposes to present an overview of the historiography of the 20th and 21st centuries to see more clearly the direction of research taken by Turkic, Mongol, and Russian studies since the pioneering research of Vasily Dmitriyevich Smirnov. Moreover, to comprehend the dynamics of the Islamic diffusion in this region better, the second part focuses on the historical-political-economic and religious contextualisation of the Crimean Peninsula between the 15th and 18th centuries. Finally, the third part concentrates on Tatar Islam and its close connection with Sufi mysticism and the Mongol tradition inherited from the Khanate of the Golden Horde.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, special attention is devoted to the fundamental role played by the Sufi brotherhoods in Tatar Crimea between the 14th and 15th centuries and the spread of Islam in Eurasian regions.

<sup>13</sup> A.W. Fisher, "Ottoman Sources for a Study of Kefe Vilayet: The *Maliyeden Müdever* Fond in the Başbakanlık Arşivi in Istanbul", *Cahiers du Monde russe et soviétique* 19/1–2 (1978), pp. 191–205.

<sup>14</sup> H.T. Karateke, "The Peculiar Status of the Crimean Khans in Ottoman Protocol", *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 6/1 (2019), pp. 103–120.

<sup>15</sup> M. Biran, *Chinggis Khan*, Oxford, One World Publications, 2007.

<sup>16</sup> *The Crimean Khanate between East and West (15th–18th Century)*, ed. by D. Klein, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2012.

<sup>17</sup> D. DeWeese, "Shamanization in Central Asia", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 57/3 (2014), pp. 326–363.

## 2. *On the Historiography Relating to the Crimean Khanate*

Historical-linguistic complexity characterises the studies on the Crimean Khanate, posing several questions and problems;<sup>18</sup> first and foremost, the availability of sources necessary in order to understand better the historical, economic and social phenomena of Crimea during the rule of the Golden Horde and the subsequent Khanate.<sup>19</sup> In particular, the trend of Turkic and Russian research studies since the second half of the 19th century has mainly turned its attention to the economic and diplomatic aspects of the Muslim kingdom of the Crimean Tatars.<sup>20</sup> The first scholar to deal with the history of the Tatar peninsula was the Austrian diplomat and orientalist Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall. His study *Geschichte der Chane der Krim unter Osmanischer Herrschaft vom 15. Jahrhundert bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts* focused on the analysis of the state-vassal relationship of the Crimean Khanate with the Ottoman empire.<sup>21</sup> Another fundamental pioneer of the Crimean Khanate research was Smirnov: he influenced contemporary and later research paths with his studies on the relationship between Ottoman empire and Khanate using Ottoman-Turkish sources. According to Smirnov, the control of the Crimean territories was not exercised by the Tatar *hān*, but rather by the Ottoman *sultān*, who is thought to have administered and directed the socio-economic policies of the Khanate just like any other province of the empire.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, the lines of research slowly broke free from nationalis-

<sup>18</sup> F. Turanly, "Problems of Studying the Crimean-Tatar Manuscripts of the Cossack Period on the Ukrainian-Turkish Relations", *Vakaniüvis-Uluslararası Tarih Araştırmaları Dergisi* (Chronicles-International Journal of Historical Research) 2/1 (2017), pp. 218–244.

<sup>19</sup> C. Halperin, "The Missing Golden Horde Chronicles and Historiography in the Mongol Empire", *Mongolian Studies* 23 (2000), pp. 1–15.

<sup>20</sup> Z. Abrahamowicz, "Dokumenty tatarskie i tureckie w zbiorach polskich" (Tatar and Turkish Documents in Polish Collections), *Przeegląd Orientalistyczny* (Oriental Review) 2/10 (1954), pp. 141–148.

<sup>21</sup> Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall's study is the first purely historiographical work on the historical and cultural events of the Tatar-Muslim kingdom, aided by means of diverse sources in a variety of languages, including Arabic and Ottoman Turkish: J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte der Chane der Krim unter Osmanischer Herrschaft*, Vienna, K.K. Hof- und staatsdruckerei, 1856.

<sup>22</sup> V.D. Smirnov, *Krymskoye khanstvo pod verkhovenstvom Otomanskoj Porty do nachala XVIII veka* (Crimean Khanate under the Rule of the Ottoman Porte until the XVIII Century), Moscow, Rubezhi XXI, 2005 (original ed. St. Petersburg, 1887).

tic or cultural preconceptions, focusing mainly on topics such as raids and the slave trade, diplomatic relations with Central Asian and European kingdoms and principalities (especially with the Grand Duchy of Moscow and the following Russian empire and the Polish-Lithuanian confederation),<sup>23</sup> the political-administrative composition of the Crimean Khanate and the question of the real independence of the Tatar kingdom from the Ottoman empire, and, finally, the origin of the Crimean Khanate and the Mongol customs inherited from the Golden Horde Khanate.<sup>24</sup>

Starting from Smirnov's studies, Russian scholars started to investigate Crimea between the Khanate of the Golden Horde and the kingdom of the Girāy clan from the last decades of the 19th century. They focused their interests not only on diplomatic aspects, starting with those with the Ottoman empire and Russia, but also delving into its religious peculiarities, in particular examining the origin and spread of Islam from the time of the conversion of Ūzbek Hān.<sup>25</sup> Between the end of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, scholars of the Tatar Crimea, particularly on the part of Russian academia, also began an initial translation of the numerous documents produced by the Tatar chancellery and addressed to the embassies of

<sup>23</sup> Dariusz Kołodziejczyk has studied the Polish-Lithuanian attempt to build an anti-Islamic alliance with the Buddhist Kalmyks against the Crimean Khanate in 1653. The peculiarity of this alliance attempt, apart from the Christian-Buddhist alliance, lies in the diplomatic letters written by the Polish chancellery: they were in fact written in Turkish with Arabic characters. D. Kołodziejczyk, "Tibet in the Crimea? Polish Embassy to the Kalmyks of 1653 and a Project of an Anti-Muslim Alliance," *Acta Poloniae Historica* 114 (2016), pp. 231–253. On the role played by Kalmyks in the Eurasian steppes, see C. Lemerrier-Quelquejey, "Les Kalmuks de la Volga entre l'Empire russe et l'Empire ottoman sous le règne de Pierre le Grand (d'après les documents des Archives Ottomanes)," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 7/1 (1966), pp. 63–76. F. Turanly, "The Military Cooperation between the Crimean Khanate and the Zaporozhian Host in the Second Quarter of the XVIIth Century," *Shidnoyevropeiskiy Istorichnyi Visnyk* (East European Historical Bulletin) 11 (2019), pp. 39–55.

<sup>24</sup> M. Yaşar and C.J. Oh, "The Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate in the North Caucasus: A Case Study of Ottoman-Crimean Relations in the Mid-Sixteenth Century," *Turkish Historical Review* 9/1 (2018), pp. 86–103.

<sup>25</sup> R. Hautala, "The Islamization of the Jochid and Hulaguid Uluses in Comparison: Points of View from Muslim and Christian Sources," *Golden Horde Review* 6/4 (2018), pp. 676–695; R. Pochekaev, "Incorporation of Islamic Institutions into Political Structure of the Golden Horde and Post-Golden Horde States," *ibid.* 4/1 (2016), pp. 115–127.

the Polish-Lithuanian confederation and Russia between the 16th and 18th centuries.<sup>26</sup> A fundamental contribution to the historiography inherent to the Crimean Khanate thus came from the Russian orientalist Vladimir Syroechkovskii and his study focusing on the figure of Meḥmed Girāy I (d. 929/1523). Specifically, Syroechkovskii turned his research towards the political and diplomatic structure of the Khanate and the power relationship established between the Girāy dynasty and the head of the four leading clans (*qaraçı beys*): from the examination of various sources,<sup>27</sup> he described the influence of the Tatar aristocratic clans on the *ḥān* government.<sup>28</sup> A great deal of research is dedicated to the diplomatic and military relationship between the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman empire, focusing in particular on the possible vassalage status of the Khanate to the Ottoman *sultān*.<sup>29</sup> The research of Alan Fisher, in particular, considered not only diplomatic ties and the possible political subjugation of the Tatar *ḥān* with respect to the Sublime Porte but also the economic and social consequences.<sup>30</sup> Echoing the studies of Fisher, research thus focused on the diplomatic and economic relations between the Tatar Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman empire. Attention was particularly dedicated to slavery, which was considered the main source of income for the Tatar economy. This phenomenon immediately attracted the interest of scholars who saw Tatar incursions and raids as an instrument of oppression of the Christian populations in the regions of Poland, Ukraine and southern Russia, justifying the later annexation of Crimea by Imperial Russia.

<sup>26</sup> *Materialy dlya istorii krymskogo khanstva izvlecheniya po rasporazheniu Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk, iz Moskovskogo Glavnago Arkhiva Ministerstva Inostrannykh* (Materials for the History of the Crimean Khanate Extracted by Order of the Imperial Academy of Sciences from the Moscow Main Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), ed. by H. Faizkhanov and V. Vel'aminov-Zernov, St. Petersburg, 1864.

<sup>27</sup> The scarcity of sources led Syroechkovskii to use Russian and Polish-Lithuanian diplomatic documents concerning the figure of *ḥān* Meḥmed I Girāy.

<sup>28</sup> V. Syroechkovskii, "Mukhammed-Gerai i ego vassaly" (Muhammad-Gerai and his Vassals), *Uchenye zapiski Moskovskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta im. M.V. Lomonosova* (Scientific Notes of Moscow State University Named after. M.V. Lomonosov) 61/2 (1940), pp. 3–71.

<sup>29</sup> See the studies of Barbara Forbes Manz, Halil İnalçik, Alexandre Bennigsen and Alan Fisher, who took up the studies of the Russian Orientalists of the early 20th century.

<sup>30</sup> A. Fisher, "The Ottoman Crimea in the Mid-Seventeenth Century: Some Problems and Preliminary Considerations", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 3–4 (1979–1980), pp. 215–226; Id., "Les rapports entre l'Empire ottoman et la Crimée: L'aspect financier", *Cahiers* 13/3 (1972), pp. 368–381.

More recent studies tend to downplay the figures of this phenomenon, contextualising slavery as a highly widespread activity in all Eurasian regions, excluding the idea that it was an Ottoman or Tatar peculiarity.<sup>31</sup> In his *Muscovy and the Black Sea Slave Trade*, Fisher indicates how Slavic prisoners from the Tatar raids of the Golden Horde and later the Crimean Khanate were sold as slaves not only in *dār al-Islām*, such as the Ottoman empire or Mamluk Egypt, but also in the Christian world, albeit in smaller numbers than in the slave markets of Muslim territories.<sup>32</sup> Starting out from the rediscovery and study of these Tatar manuscripts concerning the *şarī'a* court (*sicil*),<sup>33</sup> scholars, such as Natalia Królikowska-Jedlińska,<sup>34</sup> Ömer Bıyık<sup>35</sup> and Nuri Kavak,<sup>36</sup> produced innovative socio-economic research on the slavery phenomenon. From the analysis of the *daftar* contained in the *sicil* in question, they set up research on the Khanate using a socio-historical and legislative approach.<sup>37</sup> Finally, since the collapse of the Soviet regimes in the 1990s and the subsequent opening of archives and libraries, research on the history of Crimea and the Tatar-Muslim population has found renewed and widespread interest. The access to manuscripts and records has enabled Turkish historians and orientalists to advance research and studies on the Crimean Khanate and its relationship with the Ottoman empire. Researchers such as Ahmed Cihan, Zübeyde Güneş Yağcı and Fehmi Yılmaz, starting with the study of Tatar documents and records, are contributing to a detailed

<sup>31</sup> *Eurasian Slavery, Ransom and Abolition in World History, 1200-1860*, ed. by C. Witzernath, New York, Routledge, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> A. Fisher, "Muscovy and the Black Sea Slave Trade", *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 6/4 (1972), pp. 575–594.

<sup>33</sup> O. Rustemov, "Problems of the Study of the Crimean Court Registers of the 17th–18th Centuries", *Golden Horde Review* 4/3 (2016), pp. 602–615.

<sup>34</sup> N. Królikowska-Jedlińska, *Law and Division of Power in the Crimean Khanate (1532–1774): With Special Reference to the Reign of Murad Giray (1678–1683)*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Ö. Bıyık, *Kırım'ın İdarî ve Sosyo-Ekonomik Tarihi (1600–1774)* (Administrative and Socio-Economic History of Crimea), Istanbul, Ötüken, 2014.

<sup>36</sup> N. Kavak, *Karasu Kazası (1683–1744): Kırım Hanlığı'nda Bir Yerleşme Örneği* (Karasu District [1683–1744]: An Example of Settlement in the Crimean Khanate), Bursa, Öner Yayınevi, 2013.

<sup>37</sup> F. Yaşa, "Desperation, Hopelessness, and Suicide: An Initial Consideration of Self-Murder by Slaves in Seventeenth-Century Crimean Society", *Turkish Historical Review* 9/2 (2018), pp. 198–211, here 199.



understanding of the political, economic, and social life of the Crimean Khanate.<sup>38</sup>

Scholars have turned their attention to several European, Tatar and Ottoman-Turkish manuscript historiographical works, written between the 16th and 18th centuries, where there are references that permit a reconstruction of the spread of Islam in the Crimean Khanate. One of the first European sources was *Tartariae Descriptio* by Martinus Broniovius, printed in Cologne in 1595, which concerned his diplomatic missions carried out in 1575 and 1578–1579 in the Crimean kingdom. An ambassador to the Tatar *hān* in the 1570s, Broniovius describes the preparations and methods for the capture of the Tatars and the subsequent treatment of the slaves.<sup>39</sup>

The Tatar historiography reports the Girāy clan history for an encomiastic purpose and justifies its legitimacy, developing and retracing a genealogy descending directly from Čingiz Hān. These studies refer to the *‘Umdat al-akbār*, written in 1157/1744 in Ottoman Turkish and dedicated to the figure of Girāy Hān ibn Qaplān Girāy (d. 1161/1748) by ‘Abd al-Ġaffār Qirimī (d. second half of 18th century), a Muslim scholar (*‘ālim*) belonging to the Kiyat clan of Crimea in the 18th century. It is a fundamental text for reconstructing the history of the Crimean Khanate up to the reign of the Ottoman *sultān* Maḥmūd I (d. 1168/1754), starting from the narration of Ūzbek Hān’s conversion to Islam, with particular attention to the genealogy of the Girāy clan.<sup>40</sup> In this work, the religious identity of the Tatar Khanate is

<sup>38</sup> A. Cihan and F. Yılmaz, “Kırım Kadi Sicilleri” (Crimean Kadi Registers), *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* (Journal of Islamic Studies) 11 (2004), pp. 131–176; Z.G. Yağci, “Kırım Tereke Defterleri Üzerine Mülâhazalar” (Considerations on Crimean Tereke Books), *Cihannüma Tarih ve Coğrafya Araştırmaları Dergisi* (Cihannüma Journal of History and Geographical Research) 6/2 (2020), pp. 17–45; F. Yılmaz, “On Sekizinci Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Kırım’da Gayrimüslimler” (Non-Muslims in Crimea in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century), *Osmanlı Araştırmaları* (Ottoman Studies) 33 (2009), pp. 237–268.

<sup>39</sup> A new German translation has been proposed: S. Albrecht, M. Herdick and F. Daim, *Im Auftrag des Königs: Ein Gesandtenbericht aus dem Land der Krimtatare. Die Tartariae descriptio des Martinus Broniovius (1579)*, Regensburg, Romisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, 2010. See also the account of a trip to Anatolia and Crimea by the French aristocrat François de Tott: *Memoirs of Baron de Tott: Containing the State of the Turkish Empire and the Crimea, during the Late War with Russia...*, London, G.G.J. And J. Robinson, Pater-Noster-Row, 1785.

<sup>40</sup> U. Şamiloğlu, “*‘Umdat al-akbār* i tyurkskiye povestvovatel’nyye istochniki zolotoordynskogo i pozdnezolotoordynskogo vremeni” (*‘Umdat al-akbār* and the Tur-

treated as a minor element. For his work, Qirimī used various Arabic, Ottoman-Turkish and Persian language sources.<sup>41</sup> These include the *Tārīḥ-i Dūst Sulṭān* by Ütemiṣ Hāġġi, a 16th-century Khwarazmian historian, whose work is fundamental to the study of Central Asian Islamisation following the Mongol invasion.<sup>42</sup> Coeval with the *Tārīḥ-i Dūst Sulṭān* is the *Tārīḥ-i Şāhib Girāy Hān* by Remmal Hoca, a Tatar historian who lived at the court of Şāhib Girāy Hān (d. 958/1551).<sup>43</sup> This text constitutes a fundamental chronicle for the history of the Khanate, as it provides a great deal of detailed information on the military campaigns conducted by Şāhib Girāy Hān, particularly those conducted against Moldavia, Circassia, Russia and the Khanate of Astrakhan. Remmal Hoca provides details on the Tatar army and clans, on the festivities that civil and religious society celebrated in the run-up to a military campaign (public prayers and troop parades) and on the relations between the Crimean *hān* and the *sulṭān* of Constantinople.<sup>44</sup>

nic Narrative Sources for the Golden Horde and the Later Golden Horde), *Zolotoordynskoye obozreniye* (Golden Horde Review) 5/3 (2014), pp. 153–174. The manuscript is kept at the Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi in Istanbul, in the Esad Efendi manuscript collection. A transcription and translation of the text was carried out in 2014 by Derya Derin Paşaoğlu: *‘Abd al-Ġaffār Kırimi, Umdet al-aḥbar*, ed. by D. Derin Paşaoğlu, Kazan, Tatarstan Respublikasynyng Fännär Akademiiyasi, Sh. Märjani isemendäge Tarikh instituty, 2014. On the genealogy of the Tatar *hān* in the *‘Umdat al-aḥbār*, see D. Derin Paşaoğlu, “Genealogy of the Crimean Khans According to ‘Umdet Al-Akhbar’ by Abdulgaffar Kırymi”, *Golden Horde Review* 5/1 (2017), pp. 213–219.

<sup>41</sup> Among the various Arabic sources used by Qirimī there are: al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), al-Mas‘ūdī (d. 345/956), Abū al-Fidā’ (d. 732/1331), Ibn al-Şiḥna (d. 890/1485); in Persian: Firdawsī (d. 411/1020), al-Bayḍawī (d. 719/1319), Şaraf al-Dīn ‘Alī Yazdī (d. 838/1435), Mīrḥwānd (d. 903/1498); in Ottoman Turkish: Neşrī (d. 15th century), Luṭfī Paşa (d. 970/1562), Muştafā ‘Alī (d. 1008/1600), Hezārfenn (d. 1103/1691), in B. Kellner-Heinkele, “Who Was ‘Abdulghaffar el-Qirimi? Some Notes on an 18th Century Crimean Tatar Historian”, *Journal of Asian History* 32/2 (1998), pp. 145–156, here 151.

<sup>42</sup> On ‘Abd al-Ġaffār Kırimi’s use of the *Tārīḥ-i Dūst Sulṭān*, Devin DeWeese states, in his introduction, that ‘Abd al-Ġaffār cites the story of Ütemiṣ Hāġġi among his sources, referring to it as the *Tārīḥ-i Dūst Sulṭān-i Ūzbaki*, but omitting or altering some passages, adding details from further sources: D. DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Tükles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994, pp. 353–354.

<sup>43</sup> R. Hoca, *Tārīḥ-i Şāhib Giray Hān: Histoire de Sahib Giray, Khan de Crimée de 1532 à 1551*, ed. by Ö. Gökbilgin, Ankara, Atatürk Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1973.

<sup>44</sup> V. Ostapchuk, “Crimean Tatar Long-Range Campaigns: The View from Remmal Khoja’s *History of Sahib Gerey Khan*”, in *Warfare in Eastern Europe, 1500–1800*, ed. by B.L. Davies, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2012, pp. 147–172.

Another fundamental text for the study of Islam and Sufism in the Tatar-Mongolian Crimea of the 13th and 14th centuries is the *Qalandarnāma*, compiled during the Golden Horde Islamisation of Uzbek and his successors. Despite the fact that it is the only work that can reveal the dynamics and reflections of the Sunni Islamic faith and Sufism during its spread in the Golden Horde territories, it remains a work largely ignored by research.<sup>45</sup> Studies concerning the *Qalandarnāma* are, in fact, still only just beginning: a translation into Russian was carried out in 2017 by the Usmanov Center for Research on the Golden Horde and Tatar Khanates (Sh. Marjani Institute of History of Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan) in Kazan,<sup>46</sup> while an initial commentary was completed by a group of researchers from the same Usmanov Center.<sup>47</sup> Regarding the study and examination of the Sufi concepts and thoughts expressed within the *Qalandarnāma*, there is a previous work which is very interesting for a further study of this text. This is the *Fuṣṭāṭ al-‘adāla fī qawā‘id al-salṭana*.<sup>48</sup> Written in the Seljuk sultanate of Rum and completed in the last decade of the 13th century, the work written in Persian is attributed to Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Ḥaṭīb (although its actual authorship is still a matter of debate). The *Fuṣṭāṭ al-‘adāla* deals with the Sufi brotherhoods (*turuq*) that were widespread in Anatolia and Central Asia, and which were deemed deviant from the Sunna. A firm condemnation is levelled against the *ṭarīqa* of the *Ġawlāqiyān*, a term used here to refer to the Sufi *qalandars* considered by the author of the *Fuṣṭāṭ al-‘adāla* to be deviant dervishes. A careful study of this work would provide insight into the consideration of the Sufi *turuq* by the Sunni world in the Rum and in the territories subject to the Mongol rule of the Golden Horde, particularly in the Crimean Peninsula, and, above all, would make it possible to compare these

<sup>45</sup> U. Schamiloglu, “Reflections on the Islamic Literature of the Golden Horde: On the Occasion of the Publication of the *Qalandar-nāme*”, *Golden Horde Review* 9/2 (2021), pp. 264–271.

<sup>46</sup> A.B. Qalandar Rūmī, *Qalandar-name: izbrannoe* (Qalandar-name: Omnibus Edition), ed. by I.R. Gibadullin and M.R. Shamsimukhametova, Kazan, Institut Istorii Id. Sh. Mardzhani AN RT, 2017.

<sup>47</sup> I. Mirgaleev et al., *Kommentarii k «Kalandar-name» Abu Bakra Kalandara Rumi* (Comments to “Qalandar-nama” by Abu Bakr Qalandar Rumi), Kazan, Institut Istorii Id. Sh. Mardzhani AN RT, 2017.

<sup>48</sup> Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd al-Ḥaṭīb, *Fuṣṭāṭ al-‘adāla fī qawā‘id al-salṭana*, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Supplement Turc 1120.

considerations with what was conceived and presented within the *Qalandarnāma*.<sup>49</sup>

The analysis and study of the documents produced in the last phase of the Khanate of the Golden Horde and in the history of the Tatar Khanate (especially between the 15th and 16th centuries), are therefore necessary not only to understand Tatar historical and economic events better but also to see in greater depth the penetration of the Islamic faith into the Crimean Peninsula, thus opening up new perspectives of study on this area.<sup>50</sup> The continual contacts and exchanges with the Seljuk sultanate of Rum and, later, with the Ottoman empire highlight how the circulation of religious ideas and concepts influenced the spread and consolidation of the Islamic faith in the Crimean Peninsula, particularly between the 14th and 15th centuries. However, it is also clear that the circumscribed, when not total lack of, interest on the part of research on Muslim Tatars and their fundamental role within the history of Eurasian regions can only be recalibrated through a complete and accurate study of the sources elaborated in the Golden Horde Crimea and the later Khanate, with particular attention to the *Qalandarnāma*. The study of this manuscript is necessary to comprehend more precisely Islam and wandering Sufism in the Eurasian regions under Mongol rule, comparing it with the various historiographical and theological works produced in those regions that came into contact with the Crimean Peninsula.

### 3. *The Historical-Economic Background of the Crimean Khanate (15th–18th Century)*

In order to understand more clearly the peculiar characteristics of the Crimean Khanate it is necessary to consider the history of the Khanate of the Golden Horde as the predecessor and forerunner of the Tatar-Crimean principality and, later, of the history of the Ottoman em-

<sup>49</sup> B. De Nicola, “The *Fuṣṭāṭ al-ʿAdāla*: A Unique Manuscript on the Religious Landscape of Medieval Anatolia”, in *Islamic Literature and Intellectual Life in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Anatolia*, ed. by A.C.S. Peacock and S. Nur Yıldız, Würzburg, Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission, 2016, pp. 49–72.

<sup>50</sup> R. Khakimov, I. Mirgaleev and R. Abyzova, *The History of the Tatars Since Ancient Times*, vol. IV, *Tatar States (15–18th Centuries)*, Kazan, Sh. Marjani Institute of History, 2017.

pire. As far as the Constantinople empire is concerned, there are two research perspectives that may well highlight the latter's relations with the Crimean Khanate: the study of the centralised state apparatus and military organisation and, at the same time, an in-depth study of the relationships between the *eyāletler* and the Ottoman empire.<sup>51</sup> Among the numerous territories and populations under Ottoman control, the Crimean Khanate deserves special attention, considering its particular border position. Crimea was a key point on the various trade routes connecting Europe to the Eurasian steppes.<sup>52</sup> The Khanate relation with the Ottoman empire was different: unlike other kingdoms and principalities (for example, the Principality of Moldavia and Wallachia and the Principality of Transylvania),<sup>53</sup> the Crimean Khanate enjoyed a privileged relationship with the Sublime Porte, which implied a number of advantages, including the right to mint its own coinage<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> The term *eyālet* designates the administrative and territorial subdivision of the Ottoman empire. This term is said to derive from the Arabic *iyāla*, the translation of which is "exercise of power, administration" and, according to Halil İnalçik, came into use from the late 16th century. Previously, two words were used, namely *beglerbegilik* and *wilāyet*: the former properly denoted an administrative division and the latter a governorate in general. See H. İnalçik, *Hicri 835 Tarihi Sûret-i Defter-i Sancak-ı Arvanid* (The Register of Sanjak to Arvanid of the Year 835), Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1954.

<sup>52</sup> On the role played by the Crimean Peninsula along trade routes, see K. Kévonian and M. Cazacu, "La chute de Kefe en 1475 à la lumière de nouveaux documents", *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 17/4 (1976), pp. 495–538; S.P. Karpov, "New Documents on the Relations between the Latins and the Local Populations in the Black Sea Area (1392–1462)", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 49 (1995), pp. 33–41; A. Osipian, "Restraining/Encouraging Violence: Commerce, Diplomacy, and Brigandage on the Steppe Routes between the Ottoman Empire, Poland-Lithuania, and Russia, 1470s–1570s", in *A Global History of Early Modern Violence*, ed. by E. Charters, M. Houllémare and P.H. Wilson, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2020, pp. 124–141.

<sup>53</sup> On the subservient status of these principalities, see P.F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354–1804*, Washington, DC, University of Washington Press, 1977, pp. 113–167.

<sup>54</sup> The coins issued by the Tatar mints bore the *tamga*, the Chingizid symbol of power and sovereignty over the Steppe. The possibility of minting coins was, according to Islamic law, one of the fundamental aspects of recognising the authority of a government or ruler. Russian historian Ilya Zaytsev highlighted its importance in his study of the independence of the Crimean Khanate or its subjugation as a province of the Ottoman empire. See I. Zaytsev, "The Crimean Khanate between Empires: Independence or Submission", in *Empires and Peninsulas: Southeastern Europe between Karlowitz and the Peace of Adrianople, 1699–1829*, ed. by P. Mitev et al., Berlin-Münster, LIT, 2010, pp. 25–28, here 26–27.

and to collect taxes and tributes.<sup>55</sup> Finally, there was the possibility of including the name of the *hān* during the Friday prayer (*ḥuṭba*).<sup>56</sup> The pronouncement of the name of the *hān* during the *ḥuṭba*, recognising his authority, sanctioned the close political and religious understanding that united the Khanate and the Ottoman empire.<sup>57</sup> For the centuries considered here, the fulcrum of secular Islamic power was undoubtedly represented by the Ottoman empire, which had assumed the burden of defending Islam from external attacks and promoting its spread. The recognition of the authority of the Crimean *hān* by the *sultān* of Constantinople demonstrates the extensive autonomy that the Tatar kingdom enjoyed, even though it fell within the sphere of influence of the Ottoman empire. Such special treatment mainly had political-religious causes: firstly, Crimea and its territories experienced a significant diffusion of the Islamic faith, thus being fully included within the *dār al-Islām* since the reign of Üzbek, *hān* of the Golden Horde.<sup>58</sup> Secondly, great importance was attributed to the descendants of the Khanate of Crimea and the Girāy clan, who were considered the direct heirs of Čingīz Hān: this dynasty ruled the Crimean Khanate for over three centuries (1441–1784), and its members considered themselves the sole legitimate heirs of the Mongol empire.<sup>59</sup> The Crimean

<sup>55</sup> On the possibility of the Crimean *hān* being able to collect taxes and tributes, see D.K. Lamprakis, “Because They Are Genghis Khan’s Descendants: The Involvement of the Giray Dynasty in Tax Farming and Allocations of *Timars* in Eighteenth-Century Serfice”, *Turkish Historical Review* 9/3 (2018), pp. 278–321: ample space is dedicated to the emergence of semi-independent lords in the peripheries of the Ottoman empire and the spread of *iltizām* (the contracting out of taxes) and *timar* (land granted by the Sublime Porte whose income resulted as compensation for military service) and the connection of these tax practices with the Crimean *hān*: Fisher, “Les rapports entre l’Empire ottoman et la Crimée”, pp. 371–375.

<sup>56</sup> H. İnalçik, “Power Relationships between Russia, the Crimea, and the Ottoman Empire as Reflected in Titulature”, in *The Middle East and the Balkans under the Ottoman Empire: Essays in Economy and Society*, ed. by H. İnalçik, Bloomington, Indiana University Turkish Studies, 1993, pp. 369–411.

<sup>57</sup> D. Klein, “Negotiating Power in the Crimean Khanate: Notes on Tatar Political Thought and Practice (16th–18th C.)”, in *Political Thought and Practice in the Ottoman Empire. Halcyon Days in Crete IX: A Symposium Held in Rethymno, 9–11 January 2015*, ed. by M. Sariyannis, Rethymno, Crete University Press, 2019, pp. 319–347.

<sup>58</sup> M. Kafalı, *Altın Ördä Hanlığının kuruluş ve yükseliş devirleri* (The Foundation and Rise of the Golden Horde Khanate), Istanbul, İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1976.

<sup>59</sup> There are numerous apologetic works of Tatar-Crimean production concerning the Chingizid lineage of the Girāy dynasty. These include the *‘Umdat al-abyār* by Abd

Peninsula, particularly the northern regions, was an integral part of this kingdom, derived from the division of the Mongol empire into four independent Khanates: the Great Khanate of the Yuan Dynasty (founded in 1271 by Qūblāi Ḥān, grandson of Čingiz Ḥān), the Chagatai Khanate (established by Čagatai Ḥān, second son of the Mongol conqueror), the Ilkhanate of Persia (founded by Hūlāgū Ḥān in 1256) and the Khanate of the Golden Horde.<sup>60</sup>

The founder of the dynasty was Ḥāğğī Girāy, heir to Toqa Tīmūr (the brother of Bātū Ḥān, founder of the Golden Horde with the westward campaign of expansion and conquest launched in 633/1236) and grandson of Čingiz Ḥān.<sup>61</sup> Ḥāğğī Girāy, in exile in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, taking advantage of the dynastic crisis of the Golden Horde and the internal struggles following the death of Edīgū Ḥān (d. 822/1419), founded an independent Khanate in 1442 with the support of the Lithuanian grand dukes. The establishment of this autonomous kingdom in relation to the Khanate of the Golden Horde was also possible thanks to the interest and support of the most important clans of the Tatar Crimea, whose clan leaders were referred to as *qaraçı beys*:<sup>62</sup> the clans of the Şirins, Mangits, Seceuts and Kungrats.<sup>63</sup> The prominence of these four clans was dictated not

al-Ğaffār Qirimī. Picking up on Kołodziejczyk's study of the relationship between the Khanate of Crimea and Poland-Lithuania, in a letter from *ḥān* Meñli I Girāy (d. 921/1515) to the dignitaries of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the friendship linking the two peoples from the reign of Toqa Tīmūr is mentioned, tracing the genealogy back to the Khanate of Meñli I Girāy. See D. Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th–18th Century). A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2011, p. 13, n. 32.

<sup>60</sup> For a general overview and study of the Khanate era in Eurasian regions, see *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia: The Chinggisid Age*, ed. by N. Di Cosmo, A.J. Frank and P.B. Golden, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009. On the political and cultural legacy of the Mongol empire and the radical change it brought about in the conquered and ruled territories, see the remarkable work edited by L. Komaroff, *Beyond the Legacy of Genghis Khan*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2006, which focuses on the cultural aspects (from literature to art inherited from the Mongol experience) especially in Ilkhanid Persia.

<sup>61</sup> Morgan, "The Decline and Fall of the Mongol Empire".

<sup>62</sup> U. Schamiloglu, "The Qaraçı Beys of the Later Golden Horde: Notes on the Organization of the Mongol World Empire", *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 4 (1984), pp. 283–297.

<sup>63</sup> Królikowska-Jedlińska, *Law and Division of Power in the Crimean Khanate*, pp. 97–107.

only by their Mongol origins, but also by their role in the political and military administration of the Khanate:<sup>64</sup> the very appointment of the successor to the *ḥān*, belonging exclusively to the Girāy clan that had the right to inherit the position, had to be ratified by the four *qaraçı beys*, echoing a Mongol custom.<sup>65</sup> However, although the Crimean *ḥān* appeared independent, a *ḥān* might quite frequently be dismissed by the *qaraçı beys* with the tacit consent of the Sublime Porte.<sup>66</sup> The Ottoman *sultān* himself could also confirm or dismiss the Crimean *ḥān*, reflecting his right to intervene in Crimean domestic politics, despite the formal autonomy of the Khanate.

The independence of the Khanate, in point of fact, would remain formally unaltered even when, in 880/1475, the Ottoman *sultān* Mehmed II (d. 886/1481), incorporated the Crimean Khanate into the orbit of the Osmanic empire.<sup>67</sup> The privileged relationship established with the Sublime Porte, however, did not prevent some Crimean

<sup>64</sup> U. Schamiloglu, *Tribal Politics and Social Organization in the Golden Horde*, PhD Diss., New York, Columbia University, 1986.

<sup>65</sup> On the administration of the Crimean Khanate and the role of the clans, see B. Forbes Manz, “The Clans of the Crimean Khanate, 1466–1532”, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 2/3 (1978), pp. 282–309; H. İnalçik, “The Khan and the Tribal Aristocracy: The Crimean Khanate under Sahib Giray I”, in *Eucharisterion: Essays Presented to Omeljan Pritsak on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, vol. III–IV, 1979–1980, pt. 1, Cambridge, Ukrainian Research Institute – Harvard University, 1980, pp. 445–466.

<sup>66</sup> This is how İnalçik describes the election of the *ḥān*, showing how Mongolian customs and Ottoman consensus influenced the appointment: “In the Turkish and Mongol states of the Eurasian steppes, the supreme authority invested in the imperial house (Altan-Urug, of heavenly birth) or in a particular khan from this house was always conceived as being derived from divine will, and no human arrangement could alter it. However, the *ulugh-beg* or *karaçu-beg*, in agreement with other leaders of the tribal confederation, determined who became khan. It appears that even under Ottoman suzerainty, the Crimean tribal confederation tried to continue this practice. A confidential letter sent to Saadet (Sa’adet) Giray in Istanbul just before the elimination of Mehmed Giray I illustrates how the clan leaders chose a new khan. In it, the leader of the tribal aristocracy, who was apparently Bakhtiyār Beg of the Shirins, assured Saadet Giray that the principal begs, mirzas, and oghlans agreed to have him as their khan and ‘they all are united for this purpose and took an oath to die for his cause’”, in İnalçik, “The Khan and the Tribal Aristocracy”, pp. 448–449.

<sup>67</sup> “The fate of the two Turkic-Muslim states in the Crimea was thus intertwined from the very beginning. The Turkish-Tatar alliance was to be one of the most important unions in East European history and can in fact be compared to the Polish-Lithuanian Union in its duration and political significance”, in B.G. Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2001, p. 48.



coastal areas from becoming *de iure* true Ottoman enclaves:<sup>68</sup> one example of this is the city of Kefe, which, since the time of the Genoese government, was the main Black Sea port for the slave trade and which became, after the conquest of Mehmed II,<sup>69</sup> the capital of the administration division (*eyālet*) of Kefe.<sup>70</sup> The diplomatic correspondence exchanged between the courts of the *hān* and the *sultān*, preserved at the Topkapı Sarayı in Istanbul and translated and partially commented on by Alexandre Bennigsen, is fundamental if one seeks to understand the relations between the Khanate and the Sublime Porte.<sup>71</sup> From this correspondence it is possible to deduce the condition of Tatar submission in the power relations established between the two kingdoms: Crimea seems, therefore, to have been a Khanate formally

<sup>68</sup> On the administration of the Ottoman provinces, for Kefe's *eyālet* see Y. Öztürk, *Osmanlı hakimiyetinde Kefe (1475–1600)* (Kefe under Ottoman Rule [1475–1600]), Ankara, Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, 2000. For a comprehensive overview of the administrative structure of the Sublime Porte see *Frontiers of Ottoman Studies: State, Province and the West*, ed. by C. Imber and K. Kiyotaki, London, I.B. Tauris, 2005.

<sup>69</sup> The historiography of the 20th century referred to the Black Sea under the control of the Ottoman empire as *Türk gölü* (Turkish lake). On the implications of this definition, see D. Kołodziejczyk, "Inner Lake or Frontier? The Ottoman Black Sea in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", in *Enjeux politiques, économiques et militaires en mer Noire (XIV<sup>e</sup>–XXI<sup>e</sup> siècles). Études à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu*, ed. by F. Bilici, I. Căndea and A. Popescu, Braïla, Musée de Braïla/Éditions Istros, 2007, pp. 125–139.

<sup>70</sup> On Genoese rule in the Black Sea and the governance of the Crimean coast, see M. Balard, *La Romanie génoise (XII<sup>e</sup>–début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, vol. I, Genoa, Società ligure di storia patria, 1978; Id., "Les Orientaux à Kefe au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle", *Byzantinische Forschungen* 11 (1987), pp. 223–238; Id., "Les controverses politico-religieuses à Kefe (1473–1475)", in *L'Église arménienne entre Grecs et Latins. Fin XI<sup>e</sup>–milieu XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. by I. Augé and G. Dédéyan, Paris, Geuthner, 2009, pp. 183–192. In the case of the *eyālet* of Kefe, this was annexed to the Crimean Khanate only after the Ottoman defeat during the Russo-Turkish war in the last quarter of the 18th century. Halil İnalçik, by transcribing and translating some of the so-called *gümriük bekaya defteri*, that is the customs tax registers in Ottoman-ruled Kefe, enabled Turkic and Russian historiography to improve and effect deeper research on Black Sea trade in the transition from Genoese to Ottoman rule in the 15th century. See H. İnalçik, *Sources and Studies on the Ottoman Black Sea*, vol. I, *The Customs Register of Kefe, 1487–1490*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1996.

<sup>71</sup> The work edited by Bennigsen remains the only critical edition of the above-mentioned correspondence. The study of these documents not only provides insight into the diplomatic relations between the two kingdoms, but also into the military and administrative organisation of the Khanate over the centuries between the foundation of the kingdom and its annexation as a province in Tsarist Russia at the end of the 18th century. *Le Khanat de Crimée dans les Archives du Musée du Palais de Topkapı*, ed. by A. Bennigsen et al., Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter, 1978 (repr. 2019).

independent politically, economically and legislatively but constantly at the service of the Ottoman empire, especially as far as diplomatic and military aspects were concerned, so much so that a condition of protectorate towards the *sultān* is suggested.<sup>72</sup>

From the second half of the 16th century, the Ottoman empire initiated a foreign policy aimed at preserving relations not only politically, but also commercially and militarily, with the Tatar Khanate.<sup>73</sup> The same cannot be said for the kingdoms and principalities that came into contact with the Crimean Khanate, starting with the confederation of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Grand Principality of Moscow (later kingdom), with which the Tatar kingdom forged diplomatic relations aimed at maintaining a political balance and consolidating control over the territories under its rule; yet there were also political and military clashes.<sup>74</sup> There were several times of conflict between the Khanate and the neighbouring kingdoms. Of particular importance were the disagreements with the Kingdom of Russia, which led to the Tatars burning down the suburbs of Moscow in 1571. Russian Turkologists and Ottomanists have devoted ample space to the relations (and clashes) between the Russian and Tatar kingdoms in their research, which is, however, tainted by a prejudice against the Tatar population on account of the slave raids by the Crimean Tatars.

Although from the last quarter of the 15th century (after the creation of the *eyālet* of Kefe)<sup>75</sup> Crimea pursued a foreign policy whose guidelines were dictated by the Sublime Porte, the Khanate had ample room for manoeuvre both politically and militarily: the elective

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127–129.

<sup>73</sup> N. Królikowska, “Sovereignty and Subordination in Crimean-Ottoman Relations (Sixteenth–Eighteenth Centuries)”, in *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. by G. Kármán and L. Kunčević, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2013, pp. 43–65. See also N. Królikowska, “The Law Factor in Ottoman-Crimean Tatar Relations in the Early Modern Period”, in *Law and Empire: Ideas, Practices, Actors*, ed. by J. Duindam *et al.*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2013, pp. 177–195.

<sup>74</sup> That made of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was a confederation born by the Union of Lublin on 4 July 1569. Kołodziejczyk’s work, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, is fundamental. It provides an excellent illustration of the diplomatic relations that existed between the Tatar Khanate and the Polish-Lithuanian confederation.

<sup>75</sup> M. Berindei and G. Veinstein, “La présence ottomane au sud de la Crimée et en mer d’Azov dans la première moitié du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle”, *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 20/3–4 (1979), pp. 389–465.

modalities of the *h̄ān* remained unchanged and were inherited directly from the Mongol practices of the Great Khanate. Moreover, both the sovereign and the Tatar nobles themselves (with the authorisation of the *h̄ān* itself) could organise incursions into neighbouring territories, not only to increase the Khanate's sphere of influence, but also to fuel one of the main sources of revenue: the slave trade.<sup>76</sup>

The issue of the slavery practised by the Crimean Tatars between the 15th and 18th centuries has received wide resonance in studies, particularly in Russian and Ukrainian academia. This interest is mainly related to the raids conducted by the various *qaraçıs* and *h̄ān* against the populations of the kingdoms bordering on the Crimean Khanate. There are several written works devoted to this topic, which, however, stand in continuity with previous research. Among the most recent works, the studies by Królikowska-Jedlińska and Mikhail Kizilov are dedicated to this issue, continuing the line of research started by Alan Fisher and Halil İnalçık on the economic repercussions of the Tatar slave trade along the route from the Eurasian steppes to Istanbul via the Black Sea.<sup>77</sup> New sources were used for this

<sup>76</sup> Numerous studies have been conducted on the extent of this trade, especially by Russian, Ukrainian and Polish academia, this part of the world having been, according to the predominant historiography in these countries, the main victim of Tatar raids and abductions. The proposed estimates are therefore dictated more by the negative judgement towards the Tatar people than by scientific data, especially since 1944, the year of the deportation of the Crimean Tatars to the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic due to Stalin's accusation of collaboration with the Nazi invader. For a better understanding of the issue, see B.G. Williams, "The Crimean Tatar Exile in Central Asia: A Case Study in Group Destruction and Survival", *Central Asian Survey* 17/2 (1988), pp. 285–317. According to the data presented in these works, the numbers of people abducted and resold in the slave market in Kefe and Istanbul would be in the tens of thousands to a million. As Brian G. Williams himself stated: "Although these figures are most probably exaggerated, there can be little doubt that the scale of the slave trade during this period was certainly impressive", *ibid.*, p. 51. Different positions are taken towards the Crimean Tatars and their relationship with the slave trade and trade. In European sources, especially Russian, and chronicles from the 17th and 18th centuries, the Tatars were mainly referred to as a barbaric population, whose main source of income came exclusively from the slave trade. Several studies have refuted this view, showing that the slave market was only one of the economic resources available to the Tatar *h̄ān*.

<sup>77</sup> N. Królikowska-Jedlińska, "Social Status, Living Conditions and Religiosity of Slaves from the Lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Crimean Khanate in the 17th Century", in *Osmanlı Devleti'nde Kolelik. Ticaret, Esaret, Yasam* (Slavery in the Ottoman Empire. Trade, Slavery, Life), ed. by Z.G. Yağcı and F. Yaşa, Istanbul, Tezkire, 2017, pp. 269–296; N. Królikowska-Jedlińska, "The Role of Circassian Slaves in

in-depth study.<sup>78</sup> Kizilov based his research on the chronicles and travel accounts of diplomats, missionaries and ambassadors from different backgrounds, filtering the issue of the Tatar slave trade through the ethical perspectives of Christians, Muslims and Jews. Furthermore, the presence of a guild composed exclusively of Jewish merchants demonstrate that this activity was not the preserve of a single cultural or religious elite.<sup>79</sup>

Królikowska-Jedlińska's studies are based on a new social-historical perspective proposed by the documents of the Islamic court of Khanate. The Polish researcher focused her attention not only and exclusively on the commercial and political aspect of the Tatar slave phenomenon, but on the history of the slaves themselves, investigating their origin, faith and social status.<sup>80</sup> With the resumption and subsequent examination of the Crimean court records (*şer'iyye sicilleri*), Królikowska-Jedlińska highlighted the close connection that tied Tatar-Crimean legislation to Islamic law and the *şarī'a* court.<sup>81</sup> In the wake of the socio-historical studies initiated by Królikowska-Jedlińska and Kizilov, Fırat Yaşa applied Émile Durkheim's reflections on suicide

the Foreign and Domestic Policy of the Crimean Khanate in the Early Modern Period", in *Slaves and Slave Agency in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. by S. Conermann and G. Şen, Göttingen-Bonn, V&R Unipress/Bonn University Press, 2020, pp. 355–372. Mikhail Kizilov specifically analyses the Karaite Jews who settled in Crimea. His studies include: M. Kizilov, "Slave Trade in the Early Modern Crimea from the Perspective of Christian, Muslim and Jewish Sources", *Journal of Early Modern History* 11/1–2 (2007), pp. 1–31; Id., "Slaves, Money Lenders, and Prisoner Guards: The Jews and the Trade in Slaves and Captives in the Crimean Khanate", *Journal of Jewish Studies* 58/2 (2007), pp. 189–210. A. Fisher, "Muscovy and the Black Sea Slave Trade", in Id., *A Precarious Balance: Conflict, Trade and Diplomacy on the Russian-Ottoman Frontier*, Istanbul, The Isis Press, 1999, pp. 27–46. İnalçık, examining the tax records of Keefe, analysed not only the economic impact of the slave trade, but also the importance of this city for the Ottoman economic and military control of the Black Sea: *Sources and Studies on the Ottoman Black Sea*, pp. 110–111.

<sup>78</sup> This refers to the files of the court of the *şarī'a* of the Crimean Khanate, collected in 121 *sicils* and located in fund n. 917 of the Otdel Rukopisey Rossiyskoy Natsionalnoy Biblioteki in St. Petersburg. In the 1920s a photographic copy of the negatives was made and sent to the State Archive of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Of the relevant negatives, only 61 were found; later, a copy of these negatives was sent to the Bilkent University Library in Ankara and the Islamic Research Centre in Istanbul.

<sup>79</sup> Kizilov, "Slave Trade in the Early Modern Crimea", pp. 25–30; Id., "Slaves, Money Lenders, and Prisoner Guards", pp. 4–11.

<sup>80</sup> Królikowska-Jedlińska, "Social Status, Living Conditions and Religiosity", p. 270.

<sup>81</sup> Królikowska-Jedlińska, *Law and Division of Power in the Crimean Khanate*, pp. 17–25; 171–217.

to the case of slaves in the Crimean Khanate. Although hints of suicide are infrequent within the manuscripts, Yaşa proposed a sociological examination of the books (*dafātir*) inherent in the buying and selling of slaves and their death.<sup>82</sup> The aim was not only to focus on studies on Tatar slavery more closely, but also to investigate the history of the Crimean Khanate with a broader perspective than a merely economic one. The slave trade was the basis of one of the most widespread clichés in the Russian and Ukrainian collective imagination concerning the Crimean Tatars: the latter, in spite of a diversified economy and a culture that was affected by both the Ottoman influence and the widespread presence of Sufi brotherhoods, were considered a backward people, constantly looking for slaves for their trade and still bound to the obsolete Mongol customs.<sup>83</sup> A further claim of the Sublime Porte against the Khanate was the request for auxiliary troops to join the Ottoman army. The *hān* was able to oppose this request but risked a possible diplomatic crisis. There were several Ottoman military expeditions in which the Crimean Tatars' cavalry took part. These included participation in the campaigns against the magnates of the Polish-Lithuanian confederation for control of the Principality of Moldavia between 1595 and 1621.<sup>84</sup> A different episode occurred in 1547, after the call to arms by *sultān* Suleymān Kānūnī (d. 974/1566) during the Ottoman-Safavid war. Due to the great expenditure entailed by the Tatar army (it was financed mainly by the spoils of war) and the Safavid empire's affiliation to the *dār al-Islām*, the *hān* Şāhib Girāy refused the Ottoman request, causing a rift in diplomatic relations with the Sublime Porte.<sup>85</sup> The complexity of relations between the various European powers and the Khanate of Crimea was thus a constant theme in Tatar-Crimean history. In particular, the continual wars between the Ottoman and Russian empires from the 16th to the 18th century primarily involved the Khanate for the control over the Black Sea: the

<sup>82</sup> Yaşa, "Desperation, Hopelessness, and Suicide"; Id., "Between Life and Death: Slaves and Violence in Crimean Society in the Last Quarter of 17th Century", *Selçuk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 47 (2019), pp. 433–443.

<sup>83</sup> On the artistic production of Islamic civilisation in Eastern Europe, see *Islamic Art and Architecture in the European Periphery: Crimea, Caucasus, and the Volga-Ural Region*, ed. by B. Kellner-Heinkele, J. Gierlichs and B. Heuer, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2008, pp. 61–133.

<sup>84</sup> Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania*, pp. 111–130.

<sup>85</sup> Ö. Küpeli, "Campaigns of the Crimean Tatars and Ottomans Against Iran", *Golden Horde Review* 2/4 (2014), pp. 226–242.

consequent decline of the slave trade impaired the Khanate's economy.<sup>86</sup> A key role in the economic decline of the Crimean Khanate was then determined by the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699, at the conclusion of the great Austro-Turkish war that led to the Habsburg re-conquest of Ottoman territories in the Hungarian region.<sup>87</sup> In July 1774, these clashes led to the formal (and coveted) Tatar independence granted by the Ottoman empire following the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca:<sup>88</sup> after the defeat of the Sublime Porte during the Russian-Turkish war of 1768–1774, the Crimean Khanate entered *de facto* the Russian empire's sphere of influence.<sup>89</sup> In 1783, due to the lack of support by Empress Catherine II of Russia (d. 1796),<sup>90</sup> resulting from the continual internal conflicts against the last *hān* Şahin Girây (1745–1787),<sup>91</sup> Crimea officially became a Russian province, thus sanctioning the end of the Tatar Khanate.<sup>92</sup>

#### 4. Islam in Crimea and the Role of Sufi Mysticism

The presence of Muslim believers in Eurasian regions is attested as early as the 10th century. Muslim travellers such as Aḥmad ibn Faḍlān<sup>93</sup>

<sup>86</sup> A. Bennigsen and C. Lemerrier-Quellejey, “La Moscovie, l’Empire ottoman et la crise successorale de 1577–1588 dans le Khanat de Crimée”, *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 14/4 (1973), pp. 453–487.

<sup>87</sup> *The Treaties of Carlowitz (1699): Antecedents, Course and Consequences*, ed. by C. Heywood and I. Parvev, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2020.

<sup>88</sup> A. Fisher, “Crimean Separatism in the Ottoman Empire”, in *Nationalism in a Non-National State: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. by W.W. Haddad and W. Ochsenwald, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1977, pp. 57–76.

<sup>89</sup> M. Kizilov, “Administrative Structure of the Crimea Before and after the Russian Annexation of 1783”, *Vostok (Oriens)* 5 (2016), pp. 53–63.

<sup>90</sup> K. O’Neill, *Claiming Crimea: A History of Catherine the Great’s Southern Empire*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2017.

<sup>91</sup> Bennigsen, *Le Khanat de Crimée dans les Archives du Musée du Palais de Topkapi*, pp. 286–293. On the figure of Şahin Girây, see an article by Fisher that originally appeared in the 1967 issue 15/3 of the journal *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* (pp. 341–364): A. Fisher, “Şahin Giray, the Reformer Khan, and the Russian Annexation of the Crimea”, in Id., *Between Russians, Ottomans and Turks: Crimea and Crimean Tatars*, Piscataway-Istanbul, The Isis Press/Gorgias Press, 1998, pp. 93–122.

<sup>92</sup> A. Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea, 1772–1783*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970.

<sup>93</sup> Aḥmad ibn Faḍlān, *Ibn-Fozlan’s und anderer Araber Berichte über die Russen älterer Zeit...*, ed. by C.M. Frähn, St. Petersburg, Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1823.

and Aḥmad ibn Rusta (both d. ca. 10th century)<sup>94</sup> dealt with their encounters with populations that had converted to Islam in their travel chronicles. One example could be the Volga Bulgaria, whom Ibn Faḍlān met during his diplomatic mission on behalf of the Abbasid caliph al-Muqtadir bi-llāh (d. 320/932) and whose customs and traditions he reported. Islam, however, became more widespread in the Eurasian steppes thanks to the conversion of Üzbek Ḥān.<sup>95</sup> Although there are references to the Islamic faith of the Crimean Tatars in various works and studies, research has focused on the historical-economic aspects and relations with the Ottoman empire and less on the religious dimension of the Khanate.<sup>96</sup> Among the travellers and diplomats who came into direct contact with the Muslim population of the Golden Horde Crimea,<sup>97</sup> the figure of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 770/1368), author of a fundamental travel chronicle, stands out.<sup>98</sup> The text in question describes the specific aspects that characterised the Tatar faith and customs, learnt during his journey to Astrakhan with Üzbek Ḥān and his court.<sup>99</sup> In his account, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa points out that in the 14th century the Golden Horde Crimea already represented one of the northern borders of *dār al-Islām*.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Abū ‘Alī ibn Rusta, *Kitāb al-a’lāq al-nafisa*, ed. by M.J. De Goeje, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 1967.

<sup>95</sup> B. Spuler, *Die Golden Horde: Die Mongolen in Russland, 1223–1502*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1965, pp. 85–99; cf. pp. 212–220.

<sup>96</sup> Królikowska-Jedlińska, *Law and Division of Power in the Crimean Khanate*, pp. 171–175.

<sup>97</sup> H. Norris, “Ibn Battuta on Muslims and Christians in the Crimean Peninsula”, *Iran & the Caucasus* 8/1 (2004), pp. 7–14, here 8.

<sup>98</sup> The great medieval Muslim traveller has been compared to Marco Polo for the journey he made between 1325 and 1353 between Morocco and China (on whose visit scholars have raised several criticisms due to the poverty of the account offered) and then returned to his places of origin. His travel narrative (*riḥla*), entitled *Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fī ǧarā’ib al-amṣār wa-‘aǧā’ib al-asfār* (A masterpiece to those who contemplate the wonders of cities and the marvels of travelling), is a valuable source, albeit inaccurate and deficient in certain passages: for instance, the description of the Ḥān palace in 14th-century China does not match those reported by Chinese sources or other travellers. See Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *I viaggi*, ed. and trans. by C.M. Tresso, Turin, Einaudi, 2006, p. 713.

<sup>99</sup> I. Zimonyi, “Ibn Baṭṭūṭa on the First Wife of Özbek Khan”, *Central Asiatic Journal* 49/2 (2005), pp. 303–309.

<sup>100</sup> The author reports the presence in al-Qiram, the Arabic name for the city of Kırım (following the formation of an independent Khanate in Crimea by the Girāy clan, the capital became, from the first half of the 16th century, Bachčisaraj), of several figures from the Muslim legal world who demonstrate the religious liveliness of the peninsula

Given the affiliation of the “hordes” with Mongolian Shamanism and Buddhism,<sup>101</sup> one may wonder which factors led Ūzbek Ḥān to the conversion to Islam and the choice of the Islamic faith as the official religion of the Golden Horde court. An initial conversion had taken place during the reign of Barkā Ḥān (d. 664/1266),<sup>102</sup> but it was only with Ūzbek that Islam officially became the religion of this Khanate.<sup>103</sup> There are several sources contemporary to this time (chronicles of Mamluk, Coptic, Franciscan and Rus’ historiography) in which the conversion of the Mongol *ḥān* is narrated.<sup>104</sup> According to Arab, particularly Mamluk, sources, the Islamisation of the populations under the rule of the Golden Horde Khanate took place either in order to emulate Ūzbek Ḥān or to respect his own will in an attempt to unify his own kingdom also on a religious level. Christian sources, particularly from Rus’, contradicted the former, however: conversion to the Islamic faith in some regions of the Khanate was a slow and gradual process, without any imposition or coercion on the part of the authorities. The Islamisation of the Golden Horde spread slowly over a length of time and was always accompanied by a climate of religious tolerance towards Christian and Buddhist communities. Devin DeWeese’s *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde: Baba Türkles and Conversion to Islam in Historical and Epic Tradition*, based on the examination of different types of sources, is still today the main

at the time of Ūzbek Ḥān: “Ad al-Qiram incontrai il *qādī* più importante della città, un hanafita di nome Shams al-Dīn al-Sāyili; il *qādī* shafiita Kḥiḍr; il giurista e professore ‘Alā al-Dīn al-Āṣī; il *kbatīb* shafiita Abū Bakr che predicava nella moschea del venerdì costruita in questa città da al-Mālik al-Nāṣir; il saggio e devoto *shaykh* Muẓaffar al-Dīn; un bizantino sinceramente convertito all’Islam e un giurista molto rispettato, il pio e devoto *shaykh* Muẓhir al-Dīn. Quanto all’emiro Tuluktumūr, in quei giorni era malato, ma gli rendemmo visita ed egli ci trattò con riguardo e generosità”. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *I viaggi*, pp. 355–356.

<sup>101</sup> J.-P. Roux, *La religion des Turcs et des Mongols*, Paris, Payot, 1984.

<sup>102</sup> In the Mongolian biographical and historical narrative, Barkā was converted by the *kubravī šayḥ* Sayf al-Dīn Bāḥarzī, a disciple of Nağm al-Dīn Kubrā, who will be discussed in the following pages. DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, p. 101.

<sup>103</sup> R. Hautala, “Comparing the Islamisation of the Jochid and Hülegüid *Uluses*: Muslim and Christian Perspectives”, in *La Horde d’Or et l’Islamisation des Steppes Eurasiatiques*, pp. 65–79.

<sup>104</sup> R. Hautala, “Islamization of the Golden Horde During the Özbek Khan’s Rule According to Muslim, Latin, and Rus’ Sources”, in *The Routledge Handbook of the Mongols and Central-Eastern Europe*, pp. 501–512.



reference text for investigating the dynamics of the institutionalisation of Islam in the Golden Horde.<sup>105</sup> Among the sources taken into consideration by DeWeese, the tale of Ūzbek's conversion, linked to the legendary figure of the mystic Bābā Tūklās,<sup>106</sup> found in Ūtemiš Hāġġī's *Tārīḫ-i Dūst Sultān*, is of particular interest.<sup>107</sup> The Tatar ḥān's choice of Islam is based on a miracle by a Muslim intimate friend of Allāh (*walī*), who emerged unscathed from a trial by ordeal in an oven reciting praises to Allāh, while a shaman sorcerer perished in the attempt to pass this religious confrontation.<sup>108</sup> It is also interesting to note that the legends and tales of the Tatar tradition attributed various roles to Bābā Tūklās: islamiser, patron saint, shamanic protector and Sufi preceptor. The study of the Sufi role in the Crimean Peninsula is essential to better understand the process of Islamisation of the Golden Horde. Such historical insight makes it possible to carry out a more accurate examination of the peculiar characteristics of Islam in this region that retained the cultural imprint of the people of the Eurasian steppes and was recorded by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa during his journey to Crimea.<sup>109</sup>

Through a careful examination of the work of 'Abd al-Ġaffār Qirimī, who freely used Ūtemiš Hāġġī's *Tārīḫ-i Dūst Sultān* as one of the sources for his work, omitting or altering several passages, and of the chapter concerning Ūzbek Ḥān's conversion, DeWeese identifies two elements that are not found in the *Tārīḫ-i Dūst Sultān*. Firstly, 'Abd al-Ġaffār Qirimī, drawing up a genealogy from Uzbek historical texts, identified Bābā Tūklās as the sixth-generation ancestor of Edīġū Ḥān, subsequently indicating the role played by Edīġū's descendants in the history of the Tatar Khanate, without any emphasis to this genealogy.<sup>110</sup> In addition to this, 'Abd al-Ġaffār Qirimī pointed very precisely to the names of the four Sufi saints, tracing their figures back to the *pīr* Naġm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221), Sufi mystic and founder of

<sup>105</sup> D. DeWeese, "Islamization in the Mongol Empire", in *The Cambridge History of Inner Asia*, pp. 120–134.

<sup>106</sup> On the etymology of the name Bābā Tūklās, see DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, pp. 323–333.

<sup>107</sup> Ū. Hāġġī, *Tārīḫ-i Dost Sultān*, MS Tashkent, IVAN Uz, Inv. n. 1552/III (*SVR*, I, n. 148).

<sup>108</sup> DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, p. 543.

<sup>109</sup> M.G. Kramarovskiy, "Ibn Battuta about Turkic Islam", *Golden Horde Review* 2/1 (2014), pp. 64–74; I. Mirgaleev, "The Islamization of the Golden Horde: New Data", *ibid.* 4/1 (2016), pp. 89–101.

<sup>110</sup> DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, p. 356.

the *ṭarīqa* of the *Kubrāviyya*, who died during the Mongol conquest of Khwarazm. Besides the famous Bābā Tūklās (*ṣayḥ* Nağīb al-Dīn), are mentioned *ṣayḥ* Aḥmad, *ṣayḥ* Ḥasan Kūrkanī/ Gūrgānī and *ṣayḥ* Mağd al-Dīn Šīrvānī.<sup>111</sup> The latter, considered by ‘Abd al-Gaffār Qirimī to be the eldest and holiest of the four missionaries of this legendary conversion, is also said to have been the ancestor of Sayyid Yahyā Šīrvānī (d. 868/1463), *pīr* of the *ṭarīqa* of the *Ḥalwatiyya* and believed to be the founder of this brotherhood that spread throughout the Ottoman empire, including the Crimean Peninsula.<sup>112</sup> The *Ḥalwatī ṭarīqa* centred its teachings and principles on various ascetic practices such as fasting, meditation and spiritual withdrawal in complete and total seclusion from the brotherhood and the world.<sup>113</sup> According to DeWeese, this line that ran from *ṣayḥ* Mağd al-Dīn Šīrvānī to Sayyid Yahyā Šīrvānī would be nothing more than an attempt by the *Ḥalwatī* brotherhood to lend their *ṭarīqa* even more prestige and notoriety by emphasising its role in the conversion of the Golden Horde *ḥān* and the subsequent spread of the Islamic faith in these regions.<sup>114</sup>

However, different historiographical works connected the conversion of Ūzbek Ḥān and the Mongol Horde to the Sufi activity indicated within the *Sağarat al-atrāk*, an anonymous 16th century text. This work narrates the conversion of the Tatar *ḥān* by Sayyid Ātā, the second caliph of Zangī Ātā, also known as Zangī Bābā, a Sufi saint from Central Asia and from the city of Tashkent. On the figure of Sayyid Ātā, several insights are found in the *Rasaḥāt-i ‘ayn al-ḥayāt*, a *Naqšbandī* biography of Ḥwāğa Ahrār (d. 895/1490), *pīr* of the *Naqšbandī* brotherhood, and his predecessors and completed in the early 16th century. But only in the *Sağarat al-Atrāk* is it possible to find the episode of his missionary activity in the *Dašt-i Qipčaq*, the steppe of Cumania, that is the regions and territories of the Golden Horde, and the conversion of Ūzbek Ḥān to Islam. In spite of Sayyid Ātā’s

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 358–359.

<sup>112</sup> Evliya Çelebi (d. 1096/1685) was a famous Ottoman traveller and writer whose chronicles were preserved in the *Seyāhatnāme* (Book of travels). In one of the chapters dedicated to his journey to the Crimean Khanate, he mentions the presence of *Ḥalwatī* brotherhoods in Kefe. See E. Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme*, vol. VII, Istanbul, Devlet Matbu’ası, 1928, p. 677.

<sup>113</sup> B. Martin, “A Short History of the Khalwatiyya Order of Dervishes”, in *Scholars, Saints and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions since 1500*, ed. by N.R. Keddie, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1972, pp. 275–305.

<sup>114</sup> DeWeese, *Islamization and Native Religion in the Golden Horde*, p. 361.

alleged missionary action, the mythical role of Bābā Tūklās aroused the keenest interest in the traditions of the time, becoming a true legendary figure and rising to the status of the progenitor and spreader of Islam in the lands of the Golden Horde, as well as a Sufi saint and Shamanic protector.<sup>115</sup> Despite the presence of different narratives concerning Ūzbek Ḥān's conversion to the Islamic faith, produced in the centuries following the reign of the Tatar ruler and representing a legendary narrative of the Sufi *pir*, there is no evidence from the period documenting the exact course of the Golden Horde Islamisation. The earliest evidence of Ūzbek's Islamic faith can be found in a passage from the *Tārīḥ-i Banākātī*, that is the history of the world by the Persian poet and historian Abū Sulaymān Banākātī (d. 730/1330) and completed in 1317.<sup>116</sup> Although in the Ilkhanate and the rest of the *dār al-Islām* there was knowledge of the conversion of Ūzbek Ḥān and in the Golden Horde Khanate there were jurists, poets and Sufis, little evidence remains of the Islamic literary production of the court of Ūzbek and his successors. Nevertheless, during the reign of the converted *ḥān* and that of his son and heir Ġānī Bek (d. 758/1357), a Persian *compendium* was compiled and contained a collection of traditions and Sufi knowledge in the form of *matnawī*,<sup>117</sup> entitled *Qalandarnāma*.<sup>118</sup> The manuscript, compiled by the copyist Bāyazīd Ūššāqī al-Samarīnī and completed in 761/1359 or 1360, consists of four hundred *folia* divided into five *daftar*: it contains a total of 852 chapters, with a concluding colophon bearing the copyist's name in red ink.<sup>119</sup> This work, transmitted in a single manuscript, which is a copy of the lost original,<sup>120</sup> is

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>116</sup> A.S. Banākātī, *Tārīḥ-i Banākātī. Rawḍat ūlī al-albāb fī ma'rifat al-tavārīkh va al-ansāb* (History of Benakti: a Kindergarten for Those Who Have Understanding in Knowing Dates and Genealogies), ed. by ed. J. Shi'ār, Tehran, Society of National Monuments of Iran, 1969, p. 397.

<sup>117</sup> The *matnawī* is a particular form of poetry, characterised by rhymed couplets, with the following metrical pattern: AA/BB/CC. *Matnawī* tends to follow a hendecasyllabic pattern, but with no limit on length. The *matnawī* can cover different genres, such as didactic, romantic, spiritual, moral or narrative.

<sup>118</sup> M. Shamsimukhametova, "The Qalandarnāma by Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī", in *La Horde d'Or et l'islamisation des steppes eurasiatiques*, pp. 285-295.

<sup>119</sup> The chapters are titled in red ink and the text in black ink. The first part contains 63 chapters, the second part contains 261 chapters, the third part contains 147 chapters, the fourth part contains 185 chapters and the fifth and final part contains 201 chapters.

<sup>120</sup> Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī, *Qalandar-nāma*, MS Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Inv. n. 11668, *So-*

attributed to Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī, founder of the *ṭarīqa* of the ‘Uṣṣāqiyān and *imām* of al-Qīram, who held a prominent position in the elite of the Golden Horde.<sup>121</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa himself recounted his meeting in al-Qīram with Qalandar Rūmī, pointing to him as the Šāfi‘ī *ḥaṭīb* of the Friday mosque of that city. Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī’s affiliation to Sufism is evident from the very representation the mystic and *imām* makes of himself.<sup>122</sup> The name Qalandar is in fact linked to the *Qalandariyya* current, a particular Sufi movement characterised by nomadism and wandering (*siyāḥa*),<sup>123</sup> celibacy, withdrawal from worldliness and antinomianism (*ibāḥa*).<sup>124</sup> The *qalandar* pursued a life dedicated to poverty, rejected any kind of knowledge derived from studies or from an overly rigid and dogmatic religious and philosophical doctrine, and went so far as to transgress social norms or values.<sup>125</sup> Members of this brotherhood dressed in animal skins, wore earrings and pendants around their necks, arms and genitals, and practised acts of mortification with blades and knives. Various meditation and ascetic exercises were typical of this brotherhood, which would also take on practices typical of Buddhism and Hinduism, including yoga.<sup>126</sup> Some

*branie vostochnykh rukopisci Akademii nauka Uzbekskoi, SSR* (Collection of Oriental Manuscripts of the Academy of Science of the Uzbek SSR), ed. by A. Urumbaev and L. Epifanova, Tashkent, Fan, 1971, pp. 471–474, n. 6705.

<sup>121</sup> Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī called himself *šayḥ al-Islām*, denoting not only a spiritual, but also a political office: he is the only one to have used this title in the Golden Horde: Shamsimukhametova, “The Qalandarnāma by Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī”, pp. 290–291.

<sup>122</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *I viaggi*, p. 356: the Friday Mosque was built by al-Mālik al-Nāṣir (d. 741/1341), *sultān* of Mamluk Egypt. On the intervening relationship between the Golden Horde and the Mamluk sultanate, see M. Yakubovych, “Crimean Scholars in Mamluk Syria (13th–14th Centuries): Careers and Legacy”, in *Golden Horde Review* 6/4 (2018), pp. 719–728.

<sup>123</sup> A. Papas, “Vagrancy and Pilgrimage According to the Sufi Qalandar Path: The Illusions of Anti-Structure”, in *Devotional Islam in Contemporary South Asia: Shrines, Journeys and Wanderers*, ed. by M. Boivin and R. Delage, Paris, Routledge, 2016, pp. 15–30.

<sup>124</sup> T. Erkan, “A Comparative Study on the Qalandar Dervishes in Siyah Qalem’s Paintings with Other Painters’ Pictures and Written Texts”, *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi* 6/25 (2013), pp. 201–214, esp. 206–209.

<sup>125</sup> Å. Dahlén, “The Holy Fool in Medieval Islam: The Qalandariyat of Fakhr al-dīn ‘Arāqī”, *Orientalia Suecana* 53 (2004), pp. 63–81.

<sup>126</sup> C.W. Ernst, “Sufism and Yoga”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 15/1 (2005), pp. 15–43; Id., “The Islamization of Yoga in the ‘Amrtakunda’ Translations”, *ibid.* 13/2 (2003), pp. 199–226.

*qalandar* shaved off their hair, beard, moustache and eyebrows completely to symbolise the death of the mystic and his return to a purity that had been lost:<sup>127</sup> taking up a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muḥammad, “die before you die”, the *qalandar* pursued a path of bodily and spiritual purification, metaphorically “dying” in an attempt to be “reborn” spiritually purer and closer to Allāh.<sup>128</sup> For this reason, antinomianism lay at the core of this Dervish group: by renouncing all the rules or moral values of Muslim society and placing themselves on the most extreme fringes, the *qalandars* freed themselves from any constraint considered false and hypocritical, literally devoting themselves body and soul to Allāh. This nomadic movement, which arose around the year 1000 in Central Asia and Persia, in the regions of Turkestan and Khorasan, in the first centuries of its existence placed itself outside any social framework. It was only from the 13th century onwards, once they had also spread to Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia, that the *qalandars* began to have a systematisation of their *ṭarīqa* thanks to the intervention of the Persian mystic Sayyid Ġamāl al-Dīn Sāviġī.<sup>129</sup> However, the fame and importance of the *Qalandariyya* were recognised well before al-Dīn Sāviġī’s regulation. Although the *qalandars* opposed all forms of worldly study and recognition, their presence left traces in various written testimonies. Various mystical writings described and extolled *Qalandar* asceticism: authors such as Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār (d. 618/1221), Ġalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī (d. 673/1274), Faḥr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ‘Irāqī (d. 688/1289) and Ḥwāġa Šams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfez (d. 792/1389) magnified the pure and intoxicating mysticism of the *qalandars*, who were no longer emphasised in a negative and libertine light, but were positively admired as mystics free from any of the hypocritical chains that bound Muslim society in that time.<sup>130</sup> Despite the fact that the *Qalandariyya* is denoted by a strongly ascetic, antinomistic and rambling character, each *ṭarīqa* of the *qalandars*

<sup>127</sup> L. Ridgeon, “Shaggy or Shaved? The Symbolism of Hair among Persian Qalandar Sufis”, *Iran and the Caucasus* 14/2 (2010), pp. 233–264.

<sup>128</sup> M. Chodkiewicz, “Les Quatre Morts du Soufi”, *Revue de l’histoire des religions* 215/1 (1998), pp. 35–57.

<sup>129</sup> F. Tiddia, “La figura del *qalandar* nella letteratura mistica persiana: L’alterità antinomica tra rifiuto teoretico e ammirazione letteraria nel *Mokbtār-nāme* di ‘Aṭṭār”, *Rivista di studi iranici* 9 (2019), pp. 1–20, esp. 3–6.

<sup>130</sup> J.T.P. De Bruijn, “The *Qalandariyyāt* in Persian Mystical Poetry, from Sanā’ī Onwards”, in *The Heritage of Sufism: The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism (1150–1500)*, vol. II, ed. by L. Lewisohn, Oxford, Oneworld, 1999, pp. 75–86.

freely and differently interpreted the meaning of the movement itself. According to Qalandar Rūmī, for example, those who pursue the asceticism of the *Qalandariyya* must follow the law of the *šārīʿa*, help anyone in need and practise devotional acts in pursuit of the ideal of altruism and spiritual chivalry (*futuwwa*),<sup>131</sup> to be as close as possible to Allāh.<sup>132</sup>

The term Rūmī, on the other hand, is a clear reference to the mystic's origins: indeed, *pīr* Rūmī himself indicates that he was born in Aksaray, in the Seljuk sultanate of Rum.<sup>133</sup> The origin of the *pīr* is indicative of the cultural and religious ferment that characterised Muslim Anatolia between the 12th and 14th centuries: it was precisely from the Rūm that there was a drive towards the spread of the Islamic faith in the Euro-Asiatic lands, particularly from the numerous Sufi brotherhoods present in the region.<sup>134</sup> Within the five *daftar* that make up the *Qalandarnāma*, there are continual references to the Prophet and the *Ḥilāfa al-Rāšida*, thus indicating Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī's affiliation to Sunni Islam. Another topic that characterises this work is the Sufi mysticism and the narration of its mystical figures; many chapters in the book are dedicated to this theme. The main mystical content is love (*ʿišq*), about which the Sufi *pīr* writes numerous chapters and verses. Besides being a religious and mystical compendium, the *Qalandarnāma* should naturally also be considered a historical source. Within the manuscript, there are references to the work of Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī, a chapter focusing on the figure of Čingīz Ḥān (described as a “symbol of divine wrath” but also as an instrument of the divine will to set Islam back on the right path) and several chapters on the Jočhid dynasty, with particular references to Ūzbek Ḥān and his heir, Ġānī Bek.<sup>135</sup> The Islamic component was fundamental for this dynasty, which received significant support for

<sup>131</sup> A.C.S. Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society in Mongol Anatolia*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019, pp. 122–123.

<sup>132</sup> R. Ay, “Sufi Shaykhs and Society in Thirteenth and Fifteenth Century Anatolia: Spiritual Influence and Rivalry”, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 24/1 (2013), pp. 1–24, esp. 4–7.

<sup>133</sup> This was the name given to the regions under the Byzantine empire, particularly the Anatolian peninsula: Kramarovsky, “The Crimea and Rum in the 13th-14th Centuries”, pp. 79–80.

<sup>134</sup> A. Karamustafa, “Origins of Anatolian Sufism”, in *Sufis and Sufism in Ottoman Society: Sources-Doctrine-Rituals-Turuq-Architecture-Literature and Fine Arts-Iconography-Modernism*, ed. by A.Y. Ocak, Ankara, Turkish Historical Society, 2005, pp. 67–95.

<sup>135</sup> D. DeWeese, “*Khāns and Amīrs* in the *Qalandarnāma* of Abū Bakr Rūmī: Praise of the Islamizing Jočhid Elite in a Persian Sufi Work from Fourteenth Century Crimea”, *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 21 (2014–2015), pp. 53–66, esp. 58–60.

its control of power:<sup>136</sup> in the decades preceding Ūzbek's reign, *şayḫs* and Muslim merchants supported the Jochid dynasty, thus permitting a greater spread of Islam.<sup>137</sup>

On the process of Islamisation of the Golden Horde and the production of religious texts related to the court of the Tatar *ḫān*, special attention was paid to the *Nahğ al-fardīs* (The Clear Way to Paradise). This work, consisting of 222 *folia*, was written in ancient Tatar language, in the Golden Horde of 1358 by Maḥmūd ibn 'Alī al-Saray al-Bulğārī al-Qardārī (d. 14th century), and copies are preserved in St. Petersburg, Kazan, Paris and Istanbul.<sup>138</sup> The main part of this text lays down the rules of conduct for a true Muslim, thus providing him with the gateway to heavenly bliss in the next world. These rules are set out in stories and parables, besides referring to various fragments of the Prophet Muḥammad's life (from the *ḥadīṡs* of various Muslim jurists and theologians). Unlike the *Qalandarnāma*, which contains dedications and eulogies to the Golden Horde Khanate, the *Nahğ al-Fardīs* does not present any apologetic intent towards the Tatar rulers. According to Elmira Gadelzyanovna Sayfetdinova's study, this text, characterised by a direct language that can easily be understood, was in fact intended for a popular audience.<sup>139</sup> The *Nahğ al-Fardīs* can thus be considered to be a veritable formulary of information filled with Qur'anic references, following the example of the Prophet and his companions.<sup>140</sup> Another important contribution to Islamic studies in Tatar Crimea after the break-up of the Khanate of the Golden Horde, between the 14th and 18th centuries, comes from Ilya Zaytsev in his "Islam v Krymu v XIV–XVIII vekakh".<sup>141</sup> The Russian

<sup>136</sup> Ay, "Sufi Shaykhs and Society in Thirteenth and Fifteenth Century Anatolia", pp. 13–14.

<sup>137</sup> Mirgaleev, "The Islamization of the Golden Horde: New Data", pp. 95–96.

<sup>138</sup> The most complete manuscript is in Istanbul, at the Süleymaniye Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi, MS 879. Other copies, with some parts missing, are kept at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, MS 1020, two copies at the Library of Kazan State University, MS 3060, MS 60261 and one copy at the Tatar State Humanities Pedagogical University, MS 12100. See A. Şeker, "Nehcū'l-Ferādīs'in Kazan Nüşhası Üzerine", *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2018, pp. 192–196.

<sup>139</sup> E.G. Sayfetdinova, "Sufi Tradition in Spiritual Culture of the Golden Horde", *Golden Horde Review* 1 (2014), pp. 75–78.

<sup>140</sup> I.R. Gibadullin and E.G. Sayfetdinova, "Mahmud al-Bulgari. Nahj Al-Faradis (Ch. III, Sect. 1)", *ibid.* 7/1 (2019), pp. 175–184.

<sup>141</sup> I.V. Zaytsev, "Islam v Krymu v XIV–XVIII vekakh" (Islam in the Crimea in the 14th–18th Centuries), *ibid.* 2 (2015), pp. 103–128.

Turkologist offers here a general overview of the Islamic faith in the Crimean Khanate, emphasising its peculiar aspects. By resorting to various sources,<sup>142</sup> Zaytsev shows how widespread the practice of the Tatar *ḥān* of financing the construction of mosques and *madāris* was, sometimes also subsidised by Crimean women and high dignitaries.<sup>143</sup> The presence and veneration of Sufi saints, combined with pilgrimage to the tombs of the *awliyāʾ*, attest to the importance, within Tatar-Crimean society, of the Muslim faith, as is proved by the constant references to popular and royal devotion connected to these mystical figures.<sup>144</sup> On the importance of saints and mystics within Crimean Tatar-Muslim religious tradition, Nariman Abdulvaap's study on the Islamisation of the Crimean region and the fundamental role played by Sufi brotherhoods and the cult of Muslim pious and saints is of considerable interest. These include Mālik al-Aṣṭar (d. 37/657), companion of the fourth *ḥalīfa* 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, whose tomb is thought to be in Bakhchysarai. It is believed that there are further tombs of Sufi masters, pilgrimage destinations for the Tatar-Muslim population, in the Crimean town.<sup>145</sup>

In Crimea, therefore, the popular cult of the saints and masters of the various Sufi brotherhoods was well established. Furthermore, as we have observed, Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī's membership in the elite of the Golden Horde and his panegyrics to the Tatar Khanate in *Qalandarnāma* denote an institutionalisation of Sufism in Crimean lands. The presence of Sufi *ṭarīqāt* in this territory and their diffusion at the popular and elite level are therefore of particular interest in connection to the question of the Islamisation of Crimea. The close religious and mystical relationship that bound the Tatar-Crimean ter-

<sup>142</sup> V.D. Smirnov, "Arkheologicheskaya ekskursiya v Krym letom 1886" (Archaeological Excursion to Crimea in the Summer of 1886), *Zapiski Vostochnogo otdeleniya Imperatorskogo russkogo arkhologicheskogo obshchestva* (Notes of the Eastern Branch of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society) 1/4 (1886), pp. 273–302; I.M. Voloshinova, "Tekie 'Yeni-dzhami' dervishey-molchal'nikov v Simferopole" (Tekye "Yeni-Jami" of the Silent Dervishes in Simferopol), *Izvestiya Tavricheskoy uchenoy arkhivnoy komissii* (News of the Tauride Scientific Archival Commission), 54 (1918), pp. 356–359.

<sup>143</sup> N. Kançal-Ferrari, "Architectural Monuments of the Period of the Crimean Khanate: State of Research, General Conditions, Problems", in *Islamic Art and Architecture in the European Periphery*, pp. 83–91.

<sup>144</sup> Ī. Gasprinskiy, "Krymskie Azizy" (The Crimean Azizes), St. Petersburg, Izd. Obshchestva russkikh orientalistov, 1913.

<sup>145</sup> Abdulvaap, "Sufizm i nachal'nyy etap aktivnogo rasprostraneniya islama v Krymu".



ritory to Anatolia once again underlines the importance assumed by this peninsula as the main centre of Islam for the Black Sea region.

### 5. *Concluding Remarks*

From the studies so far devoted to the Crimean Khanate, the subject of Tatar Islam, while touched upon in various works and studies, has so far not constituted the central focus of any work based on a properly historical-religious scientific perspective. Ample space has been devoted to the economic and politico-diplomatic aspect of the Tatar Khanate, both because of the great interest of Turkologists and Russologists in the impact the Tatars had on the lives of the Russian, Polish, Ukrainian and Circassian populations, and because of the limited available documentary sources, due to the destruction of the Tatar manuscripts and the dissemination of the surviving documentary corpus in various European and Asian locations.<sup>146</sup> Indeed, the destruction of numerous archives and documents in Crimea during Russian rule in the 19th century and as a result of Nazi bombing during World War II caused the loss of most sources on the Crimean Khanate period. These difficulties were compounded by the late opening of the Ottoman and later Turkish archives and those of the post-Soviet Republics:<sup>147</sup> yet thanks to these, an important advance in research on the Crimean Khanate can be observed, thanks to Russian researchers and to the Institut istorii im. Sh. Mardzhani Akademii nauk Respubliki Tatarstan (Sh. Marjani Institute of History, Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tatarstan), which produced a translation and critical edition of the *Qalandarnāma*.

In order to fill the persistent historiographical gaps, it would be necessary to investigate some central issues concerning the contribution of the Sufi brotherhoods to the spread of Islam in the Crimean

<sup>146</sup> On the dismemberment of Tatar documentary corpora and their dispersal, see M. Jakubowycz, “Skomplikowane Losy Krymskotatarskich Rękopisów” (The Complicated Fate of Crimean Tatar Manuscripts), *Przegląd Tatarski* (Tatar Review) 2 (2019), pp. 9–10.

<sup>147</sup> D. Desaive, “Le Khanat de Crimée dans les Archives ottomanes. Correspondance entre khans de Crimée et padichahs ottomans dans les registres des *nāme-i hūmāyūn*”, *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 13 (1972), pp. 560–583; A. Bennigsen, “Le Khanat de Crimée du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle de la tradition mongole à la suzeraineté ottoman, d’après un document inédit des Archives ottomanes”, *ibid.*, pp. 321–335.

Peninsula and Eurasian regions: in particular the figure of Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī, proceeding precisely from the study of the manuscript attributed to him.<sup>148</sup> Was the Sufi thought and mysticism of the *imām* of al-Qiram able to influence the connotation of the later Islamic faith of the Tatar Khanate? Which role did Qalandar Rūmī play in the conversion of Ūzbek Ḥān? Other junctures that would merit further investigation concern the possible confluence of elements of the Mongolian tradition within the Sufi mysticism of Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī,<sup>149</sup> along with elements that later flowed into the Crimean Islam.<sup>150</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa himself, in his travel account, described the customs and traditions of the Crimean Tatar Muslims as a true cultural link between Mongolian tradition and Islamic faith.<sup>151</sup> Despite the declared affiliation with Sunnism, did not only the Mongol<sup>152</sup> but also the Turkic heritage characterise the Islamic faith of the Girāy Ḥān? In which ways did Sufism contribute to the Islamisation of Crimea in those centuries? Were *Qalandar* thought and practises widespread and followed even after the formation of the Khanate? Furthermore, which relations existed between Crimean and Anatolian Sufi mystical thought? A final aspect that should be considered for a comprehensive analysis of the Tatar Islamic faith consists in the study of the *Ḥanafī* elements that, although already well present in the Golden Horde Crimea visited by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa in the 14th century,<sup>153</sup> through the filter of the Ottoman empire became more widespread and integrated with

<sup>148</sup> Peacock, *Islam, Literature and Society in Mongol Anatolia*, p. 204.

<sup>149</sup> On possible Mongolian elements in Sufism, see *Shamanism and Islam: Sufism, Healing Rituals and Spirits in the Muslim World*, ed. by T. Zarcone and A. Hobart, London-New York, I.B. Tauris, 2013; P. Garrone, *Chamanisme et Islam en Asie Centrale. La baksylyk hier et aujourd'hui*, Paris, Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Jean Maisonneuve successeur, 2000.

<sup>150</sup> D. Kołodziejczyk, “Popytki vosstanovleniya mongol'skoy traditsii v Krymskom khanstve nachala XVII veka: baysa, Tat ve Tavgach” (The Efforts to Reintroduce the Mongol Tradition in the Crimean Khanate at the Beginning of the 17th Century: Baysa, Tat ve Tavgach), *Zolotoordynskoye obozreniye* (Golden Horde Review) 3 (2015), pp. 91–101. A similar study, concerning contacts between Islam and Mongolian shamanism in the Ilkhanate, was proposed by R. Amitai-Preiss, “Sufis and Shamans: Some Remarks on the Islamization of the Mongols in the Ilkhanate”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42/1 (1999), pp. 27–46.

<sup>151</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *I viaggi*, pp. 373–377.

<sup>152</sup> D. Aigle, “Le grand jasaq de Gengis-Khan, l'empire, la culture mongole et la shari'a”, *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 47/1 (2004), pp. 31–79.

<sup>153</sup> Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *I viaggi*, p. 355.

Mongolian customs and into the jurisprudence of the Tatar Khanate.<sup>154</sup> It is thus clear how Islam played a prominent role in the political, cultural and social life of the Golden Horde and the Crimean Khanate. The importance played by the Sufi *ṭarīqāt* in Crimea in these centuries is undeniable: their support for the process of Islamisation of these lands and, later, their unceasing support for the Khanate provided the entrenchment of the Islamic faith. Although several studies on Islam have touched on this issue, some lines of research remain open and entirely unexplored. It is necessary to delve into the dynamics concerning the spread of the Islamic faith in the Crimean Peninsula and the distinctive connotation of Islam in the Tatar Khanate in the decades between its foundation in the 1450s and the Ottoman presence from the end of that same century, whose interference certainly had a significant influence on the Tatar-Crimean Islamic faith.

In conclusion, it is necessary to analyse whether, and to what extent, the *Qalandarnāma* was an effective instrument in the promotion of the position of the *ṭarīqa* of Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī and its presence in the Islamic Black Sea; it is also necessary to understand how this work reflects the thoughts and mysticism that characterised the Sufi brotherhoods in the Crimean Peninsula in the 14th century. The multifaceted nature of the themes found in the manuscript requires us to circumscribe and analyse those chapters that particularly characterise the *Qalandarnāma* from the aspect of its connection with the Tatar-Crimean religious world of the Golden Horde in order to understand not only *pīr* Rūmī's teachings, but also the historical dynamics that led to the writing of this historical, religious, and mystical *compendium* better. Moreover, the relationships and connections among Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī, the Sufism of Crimea and the Golden Horde with the Anatolia of the Seljuk sultanate of Rum and the later *mulūk al-ṭawā'if* will need to be explored, given the same Anatolian origin of the *pīr qalandar* and its possible influence deriving from the numerous Sufi *ṭuruq* present in the Anatolian peninsula, starting with the *Mawlawiyya* brotherhood of Ġalāl al-Dīn Rūmī.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>154</sup> G. Burak, "The Second Formation of Islamic Law: The Post-Mongol Context of the Ottoman Adoption of a School of Law", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55/3 (2013), pp. 579–602.

<sup>155</sup> V. Aktaş, "Islamization of Anatolia and the Effects of Established Sufism (Orders)", *The Anthropologist* 17/1 (1997), pp. 147–115.

There are, therefore, numerous questions that research must address to comprehend more clearly the aspects that characterised a region always distinguished as a crossroads of peoples, thoughts and cultures. Starting with the historiographical acquisitions produced during the 19th and 20th centuries, studies have so far concentrated on well-circumscribed avenues of research, without, however, any in-depth analysis of the religious and cultural aspects of the Khanate. A closer study of the religious dimension of Crimea since the appearance of the Mongol conquerors in the 13th century would also prove crucial to attain deeper insight into the historical, political, and cultural phenomena that characterised the Tatar-Muslim rule of the Girāy's Khanate and the Black Sea regions between the 15th and 18th centuries.

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# The NAS Server: A Donation of Digital Manuscripts and Printed Books from the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought

*Riccardo Amerigo Vigliermo*

The Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought website is a project which aims at gathering all the fundamental texts in Islamic studies and make them available, in the best possible quality, on a reliable and easy-to-research website. A donation of digital manuscripts and printed books from the Prince Ghazi Trust was delivered to FSCIRE and, when we finally “unboxed” this gift, we found a server filled with an incredible amount of data that we here try to break down and quantify, in order to offer an outline of the volume of information it contained, its quality, format, content, and provenience. At the moment, the server has only been accessed and overviewed so, needless to say, a more in-depth analysis still awaits. The results described here reflect a first, general assessment.

Keywords: Digital Manuscripts Donation, Islamic Studies, Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought

At the end of June 2023, a donation arrived at FSCIRE's front door. It was a small and compact black box from a well-known and prestigious institution of the Arabic and Islamic world: the Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur'anic Thought, based in Amman, Jordan. The name was certainly not unknown to FSCIRE and the La Pira Library since the Qur'anic Thought Trust had already contributed items a few years back, especially to the latter, with a gift consisting of 581 GB in digital books from their extensive digital library on Islamic studies ([www.quranic-thought.com](http://www.quranic-thought.com)). For those who have not heard of them, the *waqfiyyāt*

*al-'amīr gāzī lil-fikr al-qur'ānī* is a project which aims to gather all the important texts in Islamic studies, from ancient times to the present, and make them available in the best possible quality on a reliable, easy-to-research site easy, with resources from PDFs to podcasts. Through its free website, the trust aims to make millions of books and tens of thousands of hours of Arabic voice recordings accessible. The Sunni *šāfi'ī waqf* (religious trust) behind the Qur'anic Thought website aims to provide all texts in an impartial, apolitical, and non-fanatical manner while fostering awareness of all four main Sunni Islamic legal schools (*madāhib*) and respecting the others (such as *al-zaydiyya*, *al-ḡa'fariyya*, *al-zāhiriyya* and *al-ibādiyya*). The main goal is to provide all Muslim (but we could possibly add “and non-Muslim”) religious scholars access to the material.

Let us return to the mysterious black box mentioned above. It proved to be a huge server (hereafter NAS) composed of 5 disks of 16 TB declared space each (actually: 14.3 TB), for a total volume of 90 TB (actually: 71.5 TB). After some effort in accessing the content of the donation, we finally “unboxed” the gift and found an incredible amount of data that we here try to break down and quantify, in order to offer an outline of the volume of information, its quality, its format, its content, and provenience. At the moment, the server has been opened for only a few weeks, so, needless to say, a more in-depth analysis still awaits. The results described here reflect an initial general assessment. First of all, it is useful to examine the design of the repositories in graphic form to better understand how the data is organised.

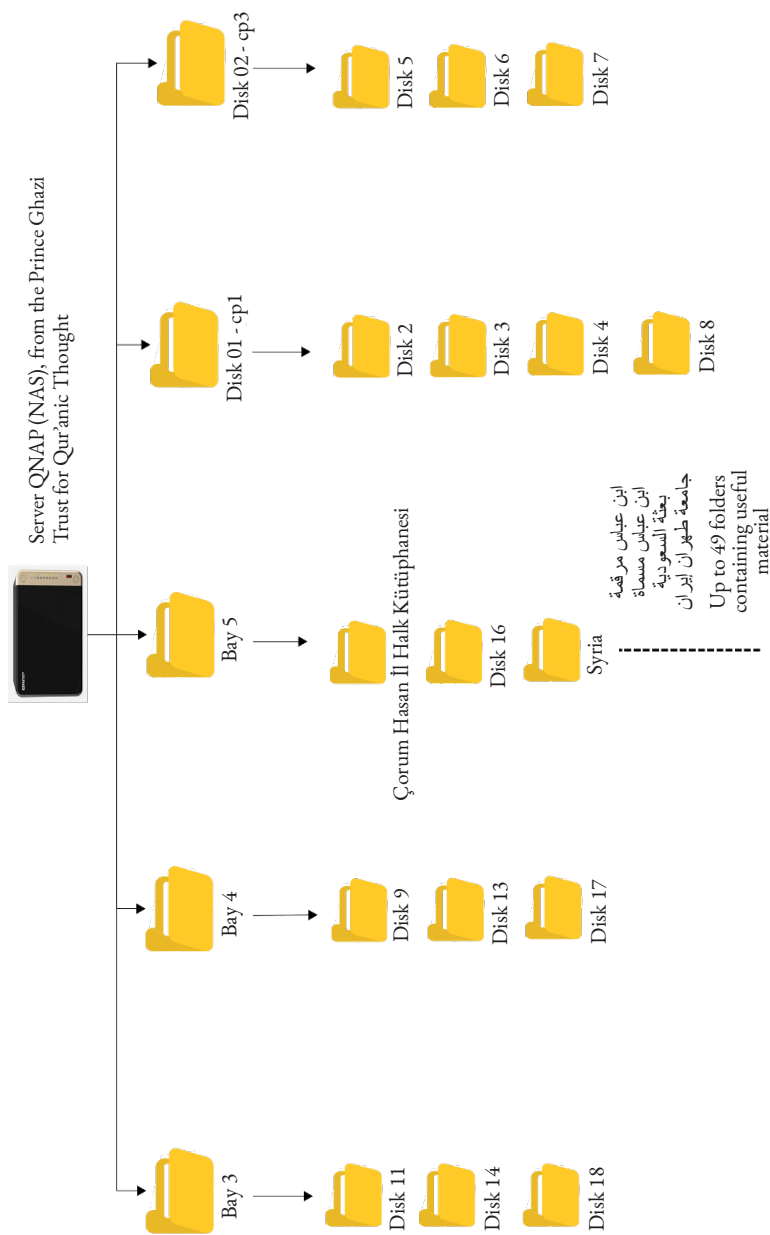


FIG. 1. Diagram of the NAS server.

At first glance, we could see that the total contribution was made up of 7,742,567 files, which took up 65.8 TB of space (85.7% of the total space available on the server). The next task was to determine the number of volumes donated, which is the most pertinent issue for a library. With over 7 million files, this is not an easy job, and we approached the problem by first considering the file types which contained the material. The types were PDF, tiff, and jpg/jpeg, which held the manuscripts, books, articles, and so forth. By analysing the file types by size, we sought to estimate the number of volumes. This material is reported in the following table.

	Total	PDF	TIFF	JPG/JPEG	Other files
Number of files	7,742,567	<b>685,354</b>	334,975	6.407.731	314,507
Over 50MB size	272,345	270,581	1	0	
Occupied space in disk (TB)	65.8	62.4	0.2	2.8	
Min file size (MB)		91.2	0.6	0.4	
Max file size (MB)		128,126.3	68.4	10.6	

This is a remarkable number of PDFs, even though they represent only about 8.9% of the entire number of files, while their massive combined size is around 94.3% of the total space. At the same time, the most common file type is jpg, with nearly ten times the number of the PDFs. This is reasonable, since a single jpg/jpeg is usually only one folio of a manuscript, while a PDF usually contains the whole manuscript. Knowing that scanned manuscripts and printed books vary consistently in file size (the size drops even lower in digitised PDF files of printed books), we can assume that the largest of the digitised PDFs could reach a maximum size of 50 MB. Every file bigger than that threshold measure could be considered a PDF manuscript. We can thus roughly estimate a total number of 270,581 volumes (about 40 % of all PDFs), while the rest (414,773) could be considered a digital PDF version of a printed book, which represents approximately the 60% of all the PDFs. Of course, this method only aimed at a first estimate of



the possible total amount of manuscript volumes and in any case did not preclude a more accurate analysis of the textual content. We can represent the total volume by file type and size as follows.

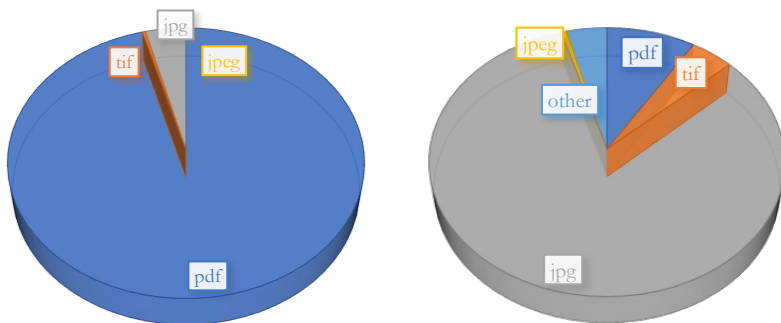


FIG. 2. Total contents by file size (on the left); total contents by file type (on the right).

Even though the total number of files is quite remarkable, some specifications should be made:

1. The category “other” in the pie chart – besides PDF, tiff, jpg, jpeg – are configuration files, with CFG (Generic Configuration fFiles), IDX (InDex file eXTension), DBF (Data Base File), and other configuration extensions. These files are more related to metadata, important for cataloguing, but not particularly meaningful in this preliminary analysis.

2. As discussed above, the number of content files does not equal the number of donated volumes. In some cases, a single manuscript volume could be divided into different PDFs or several tiff or jpg/jpeg images.

3. The presence of double or triple copies could not be excluded *a priori*.

Many other considerations will undoubtedly arise when tackling the folders and the PDF content systematically. First, though, it is worth looking at how the files are stored (see a brief schema in the diagram above). The content is not sorted sequentially, but randomly stored on different hard disks. The files are sorted into folders by source library, institution, private holding, or country. In most cases, Arabic is used for labeling, but there is some use of Latin names and characters (e.g., “Syria” or “Çorum Hasan Paşa İl Halk Kütüphanesi”).

The folders' names show that this collection is an assortment of different ones from around the world (see the world map below) and, more importantly, from ancient institutions that contributed to the development of the Islamic culture. Interestingly, many of the institutions mentioned as donors are prestigious and are not always easily reachable or accessible (such as monasteries, mosques, madrasas). Such a collection is a treasure for the receiving institution and provides potential researchers unique access to difficult-to-find primary sources.

The libraries and institutions reflected in the NAS show broad affiliations, Islamic and non-Islamic, from around the world (the Middle East, Asia, and the West). Some Middle Eastern and Asian institutions are: Istanbul Müftülüğü, Ketabhâne-ye melli-ye Irân, the Zahirîyya Library, the Al-Azhar University Library, the Saint Catherine's Monastery Mount Sinai, al-Maktaba al-Ḥālidiyya, al-Maktaba al-Şihyüniyya, the King Abdul-Aziz Al Saoud Foundation for Islamic Studies and Human Sciences in Casablanca, the University of al-Qarawîyyîn in Fez, the National Libraries of Algeria and Tunisia, the Great Mosque of Şan'â' Library, Dâr al-kutub al-qaţariyya.

Some Western institutions are: the University of Birmingham Library, the Chester Beatty Library, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, University of Leipzig, Freiburg, Berlin and Munich libraries, the University of Granada Library, the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Princeton University Library's Robert Garrett Collection, the UCLA, Harvard and Yale libraries, the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, the University of Belgrade Library.

Contributors are not limited to the aforementioned institutions, but are spread on a rather global scale involving at least thirty-three nations: Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Denmark, Egypt, England, France, Germany, India, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mali, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, USA, Vatican City, Yemen.

These institutions are the actual holders of the materials collected by the Qur'anic Thought Trust in Jordan before the donation to the La Pira Library. Beyond madrasas, monasteries, and universities, there are also political institutions represented, in particular the Turkish parliament (*Büyük Millet Meclisi*) and the Iranian parliament (*Mağles-e şura-ye eślâmî*). Some directories, labelled in Arabic as *ağnabî* (foreign-

er) contain complete “compact” religious studies libraries with folders subdivided into categories and subcategories. Most of this material (books and articles) are PDFs of printed books, mainly in English, and the religious texts extend to those related to Christianity and Judaism, not just Islam. Other similar “compact” libraries are present exclusively in Arabic under names such as *makataba ‘amma* or *kutub muṣawwara murattaba ḥasab al-funūn* and so forth.

Some sources are not physical repositories but virtual ones. Open-archive collections of manuscripts such as *mawqa‘ al-muṣṭafā* ([www.al-mostafa.com](http://www.al-mostafa.com)) and *nusrat al-sunna* ([www.nurahalsunnah.com](http://www.nurahalsunnah.com)) related to the foundation “al-Itqan to maximise the Quran and the Sunna” (*al-itqān li-ta‘zīm al-qur‘ān wa al-sunna*, [www.waqfaletqan.com](http://www.waqfaletqan.com)), are also included in this massive donation. The NAS server is also multilingual. There are manuscripts in Arabic from Turkey and Iran, Persian, Ottoman Turkish, Latin – particularly in PDFs of printed books or articles – and, to a lesser extent, Syriac and Hebrew, representing manuscripts of considerable quality.

This preliminary exploration focused on the description of the server’s numbers, sources as named on the folders, their content and materials. From this overview some important questions arose.

The first concerns the availability of the material, that is, whether scans of the manuscript are already available in open access on the relative websites of their libraries or institutions. This of course varies by library and institution. If we consider, for example, resources in NAS from the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Bibliothèque nationale de France, or the Princeton University Library’s Robert Garrett Collection, these are already consultable online. Other collections are mirrored on other institutional websites, such as al-Maktaba al-Ḥālidiyya, whose manuscript collection is consultable through the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library website. Others, such as the library of the Al-Azhar University Library or the Zahiriyya Library, are accessible through manuscripts repositories on [archive.org](http://archive.org). Conversely, other libraries or institutions, like the Ketabxāneh-ye melli-ye Irān, the National Library of Algeria, or the Monastery of Saint Catherine’s Monastery, for different reasons, do not provide online access to their materials. The Prince Ghazi Trust for Qur’anic Thought, and now the NAS, thus could act as the single location where scholars can access the full range of sources necessary to their research.

Another important concern emerges when considering materials that are not openly available. There may be issues regarding the method

of gathering the material as well as possible copyright and ethical issues related to the reproduction of these artefacts. This cannot be dealt with here, but needs serious attention in the future.

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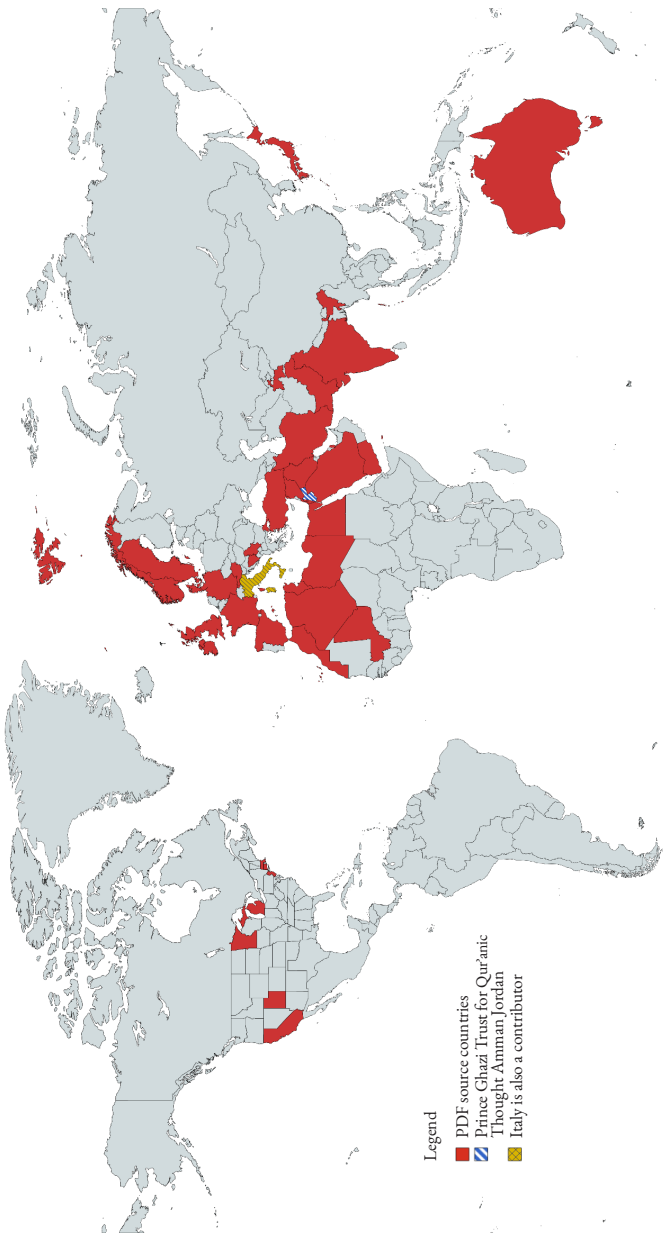


FIG. 3. Plotting the contributions globally.



*Lettura La Pira 2023*  
*La pace e il Mediterraneo*





# Introduction

*Ivana Panzeca*

On 24 February 2023, the first *Lettura La Pira* in the 70-year history of the *Fondazione per le scienze religiose* was held at the Archbishop's Palace in Palermo. On the anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine, the meeting was dedicated to reflection on peace and the Mediterranean. Opening remarks were made by the mayor of Palermo, Prof. Roberto Lagalla, and the president of FSCIRE, Prof. Lwy. Alessandro Pajno. The latter briefly narrated the relevant stages in the history of the Bologna-based foundation, from its origins to the birth of the Palermo branch dedicated to the history and doctrines of Islam. The sister branch's library was named after Giorgio La Pira, for whom "the Mediterranean was, metaphorically, the great Lake Tiberias, a place of exchange and communication, not a border." Prof. Pajno introduced the three eminent personalities who gave voice to the day's theme, Hon. Federica Mogherini, Rector of the College of Europe, His Eminence Anba Damian – bishop of the Coptic Church of Germany and delegate of His Holiness Tawadros II, pope of Alexandria and patriarch of the See of St. Mark – and Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, president of the CEI and archbishop of Bologna.

Hon. Mogherini dedicated the first words of her speech to a commemoration of the war in Ukraine and to all world conflicts, including the forgotten ones, those that are fought outside our continent and that violate human rights, freedom, and democracy. The Mediterranean, Mogherini added, should become a meeting place, a laboratory of excellence to "build peace" and seek to prevent and resolve tensions and crises, the epicenter of rebirth for international cooperation based on shared interests and destinies and the breaking down of cultural borders.

Next, His Eminence Anba Damian emphasized the shared brotherhood with the Catholic Church and common Christianity, evoking Pope Francis' homage to the Coptic Church and its priceless heritage

of martyrs, theologians and holy monks. He also called for the desire for peace and an end to the war clashes and urged all parties involved to embark on the path of negotiations for a meeting of human dignity and mutual respect.

Cardinal Zuppi's opening words were dedicated to Giorgio La Pira, who in 1970 wrote to Pope Paul VI, "the time has come to break down walls and build bridges", calling for the building of solid bonds of cooperation and interreligious dialogue. The Mediterranean basin should become a "great tent of peace", where different children of the common father Abraham can coexist in mutual respect. We must rethink that European miracle that Giorgio La Pira dreamed of, rediscover that common space, now suffering from so many declared and silent conflicts, and "march together" in the desire for peace for the states of the Mare nostrum, that sea, as the Archbishop of Palermo Msgr. Corrado Lorefice recalled in his conclusion, whose scent is perceived by those born in Sicily, that smell dear and familiar also to Giorgio La Pira, "prophet of peace".

## Welcome Addresses by Alessandro Pajno

*President of the Fondazione per le scienze religiose, Bologna-Palermo*

Alla base di questo nostro incontro vi è la prima Lettura La Pira. La presentazione e la piena comprensione di essa suppongono la necessità di spendere qualche parola a proposito della Fondazione per le scienze religiose, della Biblioteca La Pira con sede a Palermo e dello stesso evento cui partecipiamo. Mi fermerò brevemente su questi tre argomenti.

La Fondazione per le scienze religiose trae le proprie origini dall'esperienza e dalla testimonianza di Giuseppe Dossetti, fine giurista, partigiano che ha preso parte alla lotta di liberazione, professore universitario, intellettuale, uomo politico che ha rivestito un ruolo rilevante nelle vicende della Democrazia cristiana – di cui ha ricoperto la carica di vicesegretario – parlamentare, componente dell'assemblea Costituente, candidato a sindaco di Bologna, consigliere comunale, fondatore dell'associazione Civitas Humana e anima della rivista *Cronache sociali*, fondatore di quello che diverrà l'Istituto di scienze religiose di via San Vitale 114 a Bologna, un istituto creato con l'intento di fornire un contributo critico al rinnovamento della consapevolezza ecclesiale e di favorire l'ingresso delle scienze religiose nella dinamica culturale del paese; poi ancora, sacerdote e collaboratore del cardinale Giacomo Lercaro – con il quale prese parte ai lavori del concilio Vaticano II – monaco, uomo di solitudine e di preghiera.

In via San Vitale Dossetti collocò i propri libri dopo l'abbandono della vita politica e iniziò la costruzione di una biblioteca specialistica che costituisse lo strumento per realizzare, con larghezza di vedute e con respiro internazionale, una rigorosa indagine storica, filosofica, teologica, patristica, esegetica, capace di dar vita a una stagione di rinnovamento dell'esperienza cristiana.

La drammatica conclusione dell'episcopato di Lercaro e la scelta di Dossetti per il Medioriente non posero fine all'esperienza di San Vitale,

che conobbe una stagione intensa e profonda di ricerca, di studio e di dialogo, anche internazionale, sotto la guida di Giuseppe Alberigo. L'Istituto di scienze religiose divenne, poi, un'associazione riconosciuta per legge, presieduta da Enzo Bianchi, e acquistò successivamente, per impulso di Beniamino Andreatta che ne fu il primo presidente, la veste giuridica di Fondazione per le scienze religiose.

La Biblioteca Dossetti è attualmente un punto di riferimento per gli studiosi di storia del cristianesimo di tutto il mondo; ogni anno, in genere a dicembre, è realizzata a Bologna una Lettura Dossetti, aperta alla cittadinanza, in occasione della quale importanti studiosi di ogni paese portano il proprio contributo su temi di grande attualità, riguardanti il sapere e l'esperienza religiosa, la riflessione filosofica, politica e istituzionale. La Fondazione, di cui è segretario e direttore scientifico Alberto Melloni, ha continuato il proprio lavoro che registra iniziative diverse nel mondo della cultura, della formazione, della ricerca e della produzione storica multimediale; è sede dell'Alta scuola europea di scienze religiose e, dal 2021, è alla guida di RESILIENCE, infrastruttura europea di scienze religiose e la prima in scienze umane a guida italiana.

L'attività di ricerca della Fondazione non si è fermata alla storia e ai problemi del cristianesimo, ma si è estesa anche alla storia e alle dottrine dell'islam. Il 29 settembre 2017 l'arcivescovo Lorefice, il sindaco di Palermo Leoluca Orlando e il professor Alberto Melloni firmavano a Palazzo Arcivescovile una dichiarazione di intenti per insediare a Palermo la seconda biblioteca della Fondazione, volta a creare un luogo di studio della storia e delle dottrine dell'islam e chiamata a realizzare un'operazione culturale di ampio respiro, riguardante il futuro stesso del Mediterraneo, nel quale si incontrano e convivono le grandi religioni monoteiste.

Per questa impresa non poteva esserci luogo migliore di Palermo: per la storia della città e dell'isola, per la sua vocazione alla pace. Questo convincimento ha avuto autorevolissima conferma nella decisione dell'arcivescovo di ospitare da quattro anni e mezzo un nucleo di ricercatori e bibliotecari a Santa Silvia. Allo stesso modo, non poteva esserci scelta diversa da quella di intestare la biblioteca a Giorgio La Pira, nato a Pozzallo, in Sicilia, ma vissuto a Firenze, di cui diverrà sindaco, il "sindaco santo", testimone del vangelo e profeta dei tempi moderni, campione dell'impegno per la pace; organizzatore a Firenze fra il 1952 e il 1956 di cinque congressi internazionali per la pace, nel 1955 del congresso dei sindaci delle grandi capitali del mondo e dei Colloqui

mediterranei negli anni che vanno dal 1958 al 1963, per riunire i belligeranti del Medioriente e i cristiani, gli ebrei e i musulmani.

Del Mediterraneo La Pira aveva una visione a un tempo autenticamente geopolitica e autenticamente profetica: era per lui la terra degli incontri, pacifici ma anche conflittuali, tra culture, religioni e identità differenti e, nello stesso tempo, il cuore della triplice famiglia di Abramo. Per La Pira il Mediterraneo era, metaforicamente, il grande lago di Tiberiade, un luogo di scambio e di comunicazione, non un confine: un'area ad altissima complessità, ma che unisce e non divide. Non a caso Fernand Braudel indica il Mediterraneo non tanto come uno spazio di conflitti, ma come un luogo "dove tutto si mescola e si ricompone in un'unità originale". Papa Francesco ha definito il Mediterraneo "il mare del meticcio, geograficamente chiuso rispetto agli oceani, ma culturalmente sempre aperto all'incontro, al dialogo e alla reciproca inculturazione".

Comincia così la vicenda della Biblioteca La Pira, che non chiede e non accetta denaro islamico, ma che acquista libri e riceve donazioni per creare quell'ambiente silenzioso e fertile nel quale lo studio delle dottrine, delle istituzioni e delle esperienze degli islam nella loro varietà possa essere seme di pace.

In questi anni quella intitolata a La Pira è divenuta una delle più grandi biblioteche europee, una delle prime tre del settore, con duecentotrentamila volumi cartacei e digitali in tutte le lingue dell'islam. La biblioteca ha selezionato con una procedura concorsuale studiosi e studiosi che dal Friuli, dalla Lombardia, dall'Emilia, dalla Toscana, dal Lazio, dalla Puglia, dalla Gran Bretagna, dalla Tunisia, dall'Iran, dall'Egitto si sono trasferiti a Palermo, mostrando che il Sud può essere un terreno straordinario per l'incontro e l'approfondimento culturale; ha promosso la nascita della LM64, la classe delle lauree magistrali in scienze delle religioni, che per la prima volta in Italia ha riportato lo studio teologico nelle università, grazie a un accordo fra la Facoltà teologica, l'Ateneo palermitano e la stessa Fondazione; ha insediato a Palermo il perno della prima infrastruttura di ricerca, RESILIENCE, che ha preso sede nel mezzogiorno e, grazie alle risorse del PNRR, ha lavorato perché fosse qui destinato un ingente finanziamento per la ricerca umanistica; ha portato a Palermo una parte dell'attività della cattedra Unesco, di cui è titolare Melloni.

Nei progetti della Fondazione c'è anche quello di realizzare una terza biblioteca, una biblioteca dell'ebraismo, con sede a Venezia; sono già in corso le iniziative necessarie per dare corpo a questo disegno.

Dopo anni di silenzio operoso e dopo che il Fondo per il culto ha assegnato una parte del Theresianum del convento di S. Caterina come futura sede della biblioteca, con l'impegno di raccogliere i fondi per i necessari restauri, la Fondazione ha deciso di avviare a Palermo una lettura annuale intitolata a La Pira, che possa contribuire a realizzare la visione del Mediterraneo del sindaco di Firenze: una visione di incontro tra le tre grandi religioni di Abramo, che non può che essere una visione di pace.

Il riferimento a La Pira e al Mediterraneo è, in qualche modo, profetico e risuona, oggi, attuale e concreto; di Mediterraneo e di pace, in tempo di conflitti, è più che necessario parlare. Nel Mediterraneo tre regioni geografiche e tre continenti si connettono in modo inscindibile, sicché parlare della Libia, del Libano, della Siria, della Turchia non significa soltanto parlare del Medioriente, ma dell'Europa, dell'Africa, dell'Asia, anzi del mondo intero, scegliendo come angolazione prospettica quella del Mediterraneo. D'altra parte, parlare della guerra che ferisce l'Europa e dei timori per l'Asia significa riferirsi anche a quel luogo che unisce Europa, Asia e Africa.

La prima Lettura La Pira indica pertanto i tre poli che costituiscono il riferimento del nostro lavoro: nella chiarezza delle diverse responsabilità, la pace, la pace e ancora la pace. La lettura indica anche lo spazio che può consentire di realizzare questo sogno di pace: il Mediterraneo, luogo di incontro, di coabitazione e di scambio e non di confine e di separazione.

Di tutto ciò ci parleranno Federica Mogherini, che della pace è stata interprete come vicepresidente della Commissione europea e di cui oggi è interprete come rettrice del Collegio d'Europa di Bruges, proprio perché la sua esperienza di governo e la sua esperienza accademica la rendono consapevole di quanto la pace, nello spazio del Mediterraneo, dipenda da visioni che si nutrono di conoscenza e di studio; Sua Eminenza Anba Damian, vescovo della chiesa copta di Germania, delegato di Sua Santità Tawadros II, papa di Alessandria e patriarca della Sede di S. Marco, rappresentante di una chiesa che ha dato testimonianza, patendo violenza e seminando perdono; il cardinale Matteo Zuppi, che con pazienza e con determinazione dà voce alla pace in questo tempo in cui il monito di papa Giovanni XXIII di sessanta anni fa – nell'era atomica la guerra giusta non esiste più – sembra risuonare inascoltato.

L'auspicio è che l'incontro di oggi possa nello stesso tempo inaugurare un rapporto fecondo con la città e una nuova stagione che realizzi

nel Mediterraneo la visione profetica di Giorgio La Pira: di colui che ha scelto, per ispirare e raccontare il suo impegno per la pace, il motto di san Paolo, “*spes contra spem*” (Rm 4,18), speranza contro ogni speranza, e che potrebbe oggi essere tradotto, come è stato detto, essere speranza per dare speranza. La speranza è, d’altra parte, come ci ricordava Aldo Moro, “la certezza delle cose future”. È con questo spirito e con umiltà e modestia che, penso, dobbiamo percorrere la strada che abbiamo davanti.





# Intervention by Federica Mogherini

*Rector of the College of Europe*

Parlare di pace nel giorno dell'anniversario dell'inizio della guerra in Ucraina ha un significato speciale. Un anno fa abbiamo scoperto che la guerra, come pensavamo fosse possibile soltanto il secolo scorso, era tornata nel continente europeo, ai nostri confini. Io sono rettrice del Collegio d'Europa, che ha la sua sede principale a Bruges, ma ha un altro campus a Varsavia, in Polonia, vicinissimo al confine della guerra. Questa guerra, che in realtà era già iniziata nel 2014 – considerato che esistono diverse forme di guerra e di aggressione – un anno fa ha sconvolto il nostro continente, violando tutti i principi di legalità internazionale da parte di un membro permanente del consiglio di sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite e di potenza nucleare. Perché dico questo? Perché penso che questa guerra, quella che stiamo vivendo oggi su questo continente europeo, sia diversa da tutte le altre, ma non perché in Europa. Credo sia molto importante che questo sia da noi europei affermato nel resto del mondo, in Africa, Asia e America Latina, soprattutto se poi passiamo a parlare di pace nel Mediterraneo. Questa guerra ha il potenziale di distruggere la credibilità e l'efficacia di un sistema multilaterale già molto minato e di cui abbiamo bisogno, oggi più che mai, proprio perché il potere nel mondo multipolare è più diffuso e frammentato e l'assenza di regole condivise e di luoghi di multilateralismo è, in un mondo multipolare, più pericoloso che mai. Per questo sono convinta che ristabilire il rispetto della sovranità territoriale in Ucraina e della legalità internazionale non è né dovrebbe mai essere – soprattutto da noi europei – prescritto e spiegato come legato al valore degli interessi europei, o quantomeno occidentali. L'interesse per il rispetto internazionale, il restauro dei principi universali e della carta dell'ONU sono le radici che ci fanno sperare, credere, lavorare per la fine della guerra in Ucraina, per la pace in Ucraina e per una pace costruita sul rispetto della carta delle Nazioni Unite. Pace e rispetto della legalità internazionale sono interesse di tutti, e commetteremmo

un errore se li ancorassimo a principi e valori occidentali ed europei. La radice dei principi, dei valori e degli interessi della fine della guerra e della fine di un'aggressione ingiustificabile e non giustificata e il ripristino della sovranità territoriale e della legalità internazionale in Ucraina sono interesse di tutti, e sono raggiungibili e possibili solo con il concorso di tutti.

Sarebbe stato impossibile per me non iniziare questo breve intervento ricordando questo anniversario, che credo sia nella mente di tutti noi. Vedo però un rischio molto importante, motivo per cui oggi parliamo di pace nel Mediterraneo: il rischio che una guerra nel nostro continente ci faccia dimenticare le altre guerre, ci faccia dimenticare la pace. Nel resto del mondo moltissime sono le guerre dimenticate, moltissime sono le crisi mai risolte. Ho vissuto responsabilità istituzionali durante un periodo, dal 2014 al 2019, in cui sembrava che le crisi si moltiplicassero senza che noi riuscissimo a trovare soluzioni a tutte quelle che già esistevano. Dal continente africano, alla Siria, alla Libia, all'Afghanistan, la lista sarebbe molto lunga. Ma anche tutte quelle situazioni nel mondo che forse non definiamo come guerra o conflitto, ma in cui la pace non c'è. Perché la pace non è solo assenza di guerra, di combattimenti, e credo che questo sia uno dei grandi insegnamenti che dobbiamo tenere a mente nel cercare di costruirla, anche dove sembra non esserci guerra, invece non c'è ancora una realizzazione piena della pace.

Tutte quelle situazioni in cui c'è violazione dei diritti umani, c'è assenza di libertà, c'è una democrazia violata o solo formale, anche nel nostro continente, anche nella nostra Unione Europea, laddove i diritti e la democrazia esistono sulla carta, ma non sono pienamente goduti da tutti i cittadini – e non cittadini – che vivono nel nostro continente. È invece oggi più che mai necessario costruire la pace, e anche soltanto affermare di “costruire la pace” in questo nostro tempo, in questi giorni, in queste settimane. Non è una frase che sentiamo spesso, non sono parole che sentiamo spesso, e penso che invece sia più importante che mai ricordarci che non è impossibile, e che il primo passo per farlo è effettivamente parlarne, cercare di trovare comunità locali, comunità nazionali, europee, regionali, internazionali, che possano costruire i mattoni su cui edificare il percorso di una pace giusta e duratura. Credo che oggi questo sia più necessario che mai, non solo per risolvere i conflitti aperti più o meno evidenti o dimenticati che ancora esistono oggi nel mondo, ma anche per prevenire conflitti futuri.

Il Mediterraneo è il laboratorio per eccellenza, utile e cruciale per testare la nostra capacità di costruire la pace e di prevenire e risolvere i conflitti, le guerre o l'assenza di pace. Spesso viene visto come luogo di scontro, di confronto, di crisi, direi quasi l'epicentro: verrà spesso identificato come l'emblema di una concentrazione di crisi concentriche, quasi come se la molteplicità di crisi le rendesse ancora più irrisolvibili, perché non si sa da dove cominciare. Invece ritengo che sia un potenziale luogo d'incontro, di confronto, di rispetto, di conoscenza, di riconoscimento reciproco. Credo che sia, fondamentalmente, una scuola di convivenza e di contaminazione, che ci dice tutto della nostra storia, della nostra filosofia, delle nostre religioni, della nostra cultura, addirittura del nostro linguaggio, del nostro cibo. Qui, in Sicilia, risulta più evidente che in qualsiasi altro luogo.

Oggi il Mediterraneo è percepito non solo come luogo problematico, di difficoltà, di crisi, ma anche come frontiera, che non è più nazionale ma europea. E molto spesso questa è identificata come frontiera fisica, geografica, quasi come se la gestione di un mare comune potesse essere fatta sulla base di un'amministrazione dei confini. A me piace pensare al Mediterraneo come un luogo di frontiera culturale, che non è linea di separazione ma linea d'incontro, che non significa che le nostre identità siano necessariamente mescolate – alcune lo sono, altre no, le differenze ci sono e credo che il punto di partenza per la condivisione di alcuni elementi comuni siano il rispetto e il riconoscimento delle differenze. Sostengo anche che sia fondamentale, in particolare per noi italiani, riconoscere e capire in cosa siamo diversi, in cosa siamo simili, e cosa ci può unire, non solo della nostra storia, ma anche del nostro presente, del nostro futuro. La domanda, che rivolgo innanzitutto a me stessa, è se siamo attrezzati a gestire questa frontiera, e non parlo qui della gestione della frontiera fisica, che non esiste nel mare, ma parlo della gestione della frontiera culturale. Ci conosciamo? Sappiamo chi siamo attorno a questo Mediterraneo? Credo che questo sia il punto di partenza. Siamo pronti a riconoscere, a capire, ad ascoltare, a studiare chi è l'altro, chi sono gli altri, intorno a questo nostro mare? È importante capire cosa condividiamo delle nostre storie, delle nostre radici, ma anche dei nostri interessi, e questo ci lega al nostro passato, al nostro presente e al nostro futuro.

Permettetemi di condividere con voi un piccolo aneddoto personale: mi sono laureata nel 1998 alla Sapienza di Roma, studiavo Scienze politiche ed ero interessata all'islam, mi interessava studiare l'islam politico; ma nel 1998, a Scienze politiche, alla Sapienza, mi veniva detto

che l'islam politico non era un tema da Scienze politiche. Per fortuna trovai una professoressa di Islamistica illuminata, alla facoltà di Lettere, che mi adottò e mi fece fare una tesi sull'islam politico. Per questa tesi dovetti però andare a fare un Erasmus in Francia ad Aix-en-Provence, al Centro di studi per il Mediterraneo; soltanto lì trovai le fonti, i libri di cui avevo bisogno all'epoca, libri che non potevo trovare in Italia. Sono sicura che questo oggi non avverrebbe, anche grazie alla biblioteca e alla Fondazione, però questo succedeva nel 1998, tre anni prima dell'attacco alle Torri Gemelle. Tre anni dopo avremmo parlato solo di islam politico, ma tre anni prima non lo studiavamo nelle nostre facoltà di Scienze politiche. Questo ci dice moltissimo della scarsa attenzione che poniamo spesso a ciò che abbiamo di più vicino, a ciò che abbiamo attorno, quasi a casa, e di quanto sia importante lo studio. Per questo sono così felice di essere rettrice del Collegio d'Europa a Bruges, perché trovo che questo sia un modo diverso dal passato per contribuire alla costruzione delle istituzioni del nostro paese, del nostro continente, alla formazione delle nuove generazioni che poi contribuiranno alla vita istituzionale, politica, economica, culturale del nostro paese e del nostro continente. L'università e la scuola sono fondamentali per gettare basi solide di conoscenza e di comprensione; questo serve alla costruzione della pace, perché la nostra storia ci insegna che il primo seme della guerra è sempre l'ignoranza, il pregiudizio. Quando si conosce qualcosa o qualcuno, è molto più difficile entrare in una situazione di conflitto o di guerra.

Credo che creare questo terreno di ascolto e d'incontro sia necessario per noi nel bacino del Mediterraneo più che per chiunque altro. Perché la geografia non si cambia, ci sono poche cose nella vita che non si possono cambiare: i propri genitori, la storia e la geografia. La geografia non sparisce né cambia, i nostri vicini resteranno i nostri vicini, e l'unico modo per stabilire relazioni costruttive con loro è conoscerli come primo punto di partenza. Ora, come costruire la pace nel nostro Mediterraneo, nel nostro mare comune? Vedo un'opportunità molto grande, e vedo anche un rischio. L'opportunità che vedo è che adesso, rispetto agli anni e ai decenni precedenti, ci sia molta più comprensione diffusa degli interessi condivisi che abbiamo. Che sia nell'ambito dell'ambiente, dell'energia, che sia sulla questione dei flussi migratori, che sia sulla prevenzione e sulla risoluzione dei conflitti, ho l'impressione che le nostre opinioni pubbliche intorno al bacino del Mediterraneo siano più consapevoli di avere un destino comune, cosa che fino a dieci, quindici, vent'anni fa era contestata. C'era un'idea di

separazione, di “posso stare bene da solo a casa mia”. Credo che le molteplici crisi che abbiamo attraversato in questi ultimi anni, a partire anche da quella più recente, dalla pandemia, ci abbiano insegnato che non è possibile stare bene se il nostro vicino non sta bene, perché c’è una condivisione di destini. Questa è un’opportunità enorme, anche per creare un futuro sostenibile insieme, condiviso. Mai come oggi c’è comprensione ampia di questa comunità di interessi, di destini. A volte sottolineare il termine “interessi” appare controverso, perché lo contrapponiamo a “valori”. Io sono convinta che i nostri valori e i nostri interessi coincidano al 100%: non possiamo pensare di promuovere i nostri interessi se non promuovendo i nostri valori e viceversa, altrimenti non sarebbe un futuro – e neanche un presente – sostenibile. La consapevolezza della condivisione dei nostri interessi comuni potrebbe portarci ad affrontare insieme le sfide che stiamo vivendo. Ma vedo anche un rischio, ed è un rischio che non è esente nell’Europa, nell’Italia e nel resto del mondo. Esiste probabilmente una tendenza globale a pensare in termini “transazionali”, parola che in italiano suona molto male; non tanto in termini “cooperativi” (agiamo insieme per avere un risultato che sia positivo per tutti noi, un bene comune), ma in termini, come vengono definiti spesso, “assertivi”. Io ho una mia agenda, io voglio ottenere risultati: o tu mi dai ciò di cui ho bisogno, ciò che voglio, oppure tu non avrai da me ciò che vuoi, ciò di cui hai bisogno. Io credo che questo approccio sia molto controproducente, tendenzialmente pericoloso e basato sulla convinzione che il gioco a somma zero possa produrre vincitori, cosa che nel mondo totalmente interconnesso di oggi è una pura illusione. Non esiste un modo di vincere gli uni contro gli altri, ma soltanto un modo di vincere insieme.

Per concludere, temo che il Mediterraneo possa essere oggi, pericolosamente, la faglia dello scontro, o ancora peggio lo scacchiere del confronto, del conflitto globalizzato – non è un caso che la Russia abbia intensificato anche la presenza militare nel Mediterraneo prima dell’aggressione in Ucraina, dalla Siria alla Libia. Il Mediterraneo può diventare ciò che l’Europa non è più, anche grazie all’Unione Europea, cioè il terreno di scontro dei giochi mondiali, oppure può essere il laboratorio di un tentativo di rinascita della cooperazione internazionale, della politica di relazioni regionali e internazionali fondate sulla condivisione di interessi, sulla condivisione di destini. In fondo l’Unione Europea è nata così, è nata esattamente dalla consapevolezza che fare la pace era più conveniente che fare la guerra. Non c’era niente di idealistico o di naïf nel progetto iniziale, era condivisione di interessi

economici – il carbone e l'acciaio, nulla di meno poetico e idealistico di questo – perché condividere interessi economici avrebbe reso controproducente farsi la guerra a vicenda; ha funzionato, e abbiamo avuto decenni di pace e di sviluppo. Questo, sono convinta, potrebbe funzionare anche per il Mediterraneo.

## Intervention by Anba Damian

*Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Germany and Delegate of His Holiness Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark*

Per me è un grande onore, una gioia spirituale e una benedizione poter essere con voi oggi e potervi parlare. A nome di Sua Santità papa Tawadros II, desidero rivolgere a voi, onorabilissime signore e signori, mie care sorelle e fratelli, un caloroso saluto e ringraziarvi per l'amorevole invito, in particolare il professor Alberto Melloni.

Sua Santità papa Tawadros II avrebbe desiderato essere qui personalmente, tuttavia non gli è stato possibile e se ne rammarica profondamente. Per me è un particolare privilegio poterlo rappresentare in questa occasione ed è con grande trepidazione che sono da voi oggi, per la prima volta nella vita nella vostra meravigliosa città. Mi congratulo vivissimamente con voi in occasione del settantesimo anniversario della Fondazione per le scienze religiose. La fondamentale missione di pace e il notevole impegno della vostra istituzione internazionale sono più importanti e impressionanti che mai: siete mediatori tra nazioni, confessioni e religioni, e costruite importanti ponti ecumenici e di dialogo interreligioso.

Per la pace nel mondo è indispensabile avere un contesto di comprensione reciproca. È importante farsi carico di allentare le più resistenti frontiere attraverso nuove prospettive. Proprio come fece Giorgio La Pira, che operò instancabilmente per il disarmo durante la Guerra fredda e che indicò quale fosse il percorso che la riconciliazione diplomatica avrebbe dovuto intraprendere nei conflitti del secolo scorso in Medio Oriente e in Vietnam. Ha mostrato loro la luce in fondo al tunnel.

Di lui si dice che “ovunque nel mondo vedesse la possibilità di impegnarsi per la pace e la comprensione, cercava di intervenire”. Egli, inoltre, per il suo stile di vita umile e la sua generosa sobrietà, è venerato come “il san Martino del nostro tempo”.

Allo stesso modo, sono felice di essere alla presenza di Sua Emittenza, Reverendissimo cardinale Matteo Maria Zuppi. Ci rivolgiamo

a lei, Eminenza, con la preghiera di trasmettere i nostri più calorosi saluti e auguri di pronta guarigione a Sua Santità papa Francesco, capo della chiesa cattolica romana. Egli gode di un'eccezionale ammirazione presso la chiesa copto-ortodossa e in tutto il mondo. Ama la gente e ama questo mondo ed è contraccambiato a sua volta dalla gente e dal mondo. Come dice un proverbio tedesco, "chi semina amore raccoglierà amore".

Il rapporto amorevole, amichevole, fruttuoso e fraterno delle nostre chiese sorelle ha una lunga tradizione. Dopo l'intronizzazione come capo della chiesa copto-ortodossa nel mondo e 118° patriarca sul trono di san Marco apostolo ed evangelista, Sua Santità papa Tawadros II ha compiuto il suo primo viaggio internazionale a Roma per visitare Sua Santità papa Francesco. Così, quasi dieci anni fa, il 10 maggio 2013, si è recato per una visita di cinque giorni in Vaticano per ricordare l'alleanza ecumenica della nostra fede cristiana e rafforzare l'amicizia copto-cattolica. Entrambi hanno dichiarato che il dialogo comune e l'unità ecclesiale sono decisivi, perché abbiamo più elementi in comune che differenze. Le nostre chiese credono nell'amore di Gesù Cristo, quale nostro Signore e Salvatore, e nei sette santi sacramenti come segno dell'amore di Dio. Insieme hanno ricordato la fraternità solidale scambiatasi tra i loro predecessori, Sua Santità papa Shenuda III e Sua Santità papa Paolo VI nel maggio 1973.

Da quasi mezzo secolo ci facciamo pubblicamente garanti, come fratelli cristiani, dell'amore del prossimo, del perdono e della pace nel mondo. Invece di guardare a ciò che ci divide e ci tiene separati, dobbiamo affinare il nostro sguardo e dirigere i nostri sensi verso ciò che più ci riunisce e su cui, comunemente, ci basiamo – come la nostra fede, il nostro amore e la nostra speranza. Se ci rispettiamo a vicenda, il mondo ci rispetta. Se ci fidiamo, ci capiamo e ci amiamo reciprocamente, in questo mondo godremo di credibilità, fiducia, comprensione e amore.

Noi cristiani copto-ortodossi, in quanto egiziani, eredi diretti dei faraoni e fondatori del monachesimo, grazie alle nostre sante madri e ai nostri padri nei monasteri del deserto egiziano, abbiamo un "patrimonio inestimabile di martiri, teologi, santi monaci e fedeli discepoli di Cristo" per le chiese di tutto il mondo. Con queste parole, Sua Santità papa Francesco ha reso omaggio alla nostra storia.

Siamo molto orgogliosi che la sacra famiglia abbia trovato in Egitto, nella nostra patria, riparo dalla persecuzione di Erode, re e uccisore di bambini. Per oltre tre anni e mezzo fu garantito loro asilo. Così Gesù



Cristo dovette affrontare persecuzioni, fughe ed espulsioni fin dalla sua prima infanzia, ma la sua potenza divina, la sua natura e le sue azioni rimasero caratterizzate dalla pace e dalla misericordia. Non esclude nessuno dalla comunione con Dio e dalla cerchia dei suoi discepoli, aiutava tutti senza giudicare, si rapportava a ciascuno con rispetto, tolleranza e comprensione. Nella Bibbia ci sono innumerevoli esempi della sua bontà di cuore e della sua empatia, era in grado di vedere sempre ciò che gli altri non riuscivano a cogliere. Già da piccolo, benedisse un blocco di pietra esattamente al centro geografico dell'Egitto consacrandolo così come altare (Is 19,19). La sacra famiglia vi rimase per mezzo anno e il monastero di Maria Santa Madre di Dio si trova ancora oggi ad Assiut, noto come Dayr al-Muḥarraḡ, luogo di pace e seconda Gerusalemme.

Gli itinerari e gli antichi rifugi della sacra famiglia rimangono mete di pellegrinaggio molto frequentate. Numerosi fedeli di diverse religioni, come allora Gesù bambino, cercano e trovano pace nei luoghi di culto e nei monasteri copti che vi sono sorti.

La chiesa copta deve la sua fondazione, nel primo secolo, a san Marco evangelista. Intorno al 48 d.C. iniziò, con successo e in modo pacifico, la sua attività missionaria in Egitto e la sua arma più potente non fu la spada, bensì, come da esempio di Gesù Cristo, la carità e la cultura. Per questo, stando a Girolamo, è anche ritenuto il fondatore della scuola catechetica di Alessandria, dove influenti teologi e sacerdoti, nella tarda antichità, appresero l'esegesi biblica e impararono a governare le controversie ecclesiastiche. Il santo apostolo Marco ottenne la corona martirale intorno al 68 d.C. e il rimpatrio delle sue reliquie in Egitto da Venezia avvenne nel 1968, 1.900 anni dopo: una pietra miliare nelle relazioni ecumeniche con la chiesa cattolica romana. La pazienza diplomatica e la dolcezza hanno guidato verso il salutare percorso dell'amicizia. Così è scritto nella prima lettera di san Pietro, capitolo 5, versetto 14: "Salutatevi l'un l'altro con bacio di carità. Pace a voi tutti che siete in Cristo!".

Un altro santo comune è san Paolo di Tebe, considerato il primo eremita al mondo. Va poi menzionato sant'Atanasio di Alessandria, venerato come dottore della chiesa e pioniere della Scuola di Alessandria nel IV secolo. Egli è l'autore della nostra comune professione di fede, che unisce ogni giorno tutti i cristiani del mondo. Difese la nostra fede pagando un prezzo alto: venne bandito dalla sua patria egiziana e visse in esilio per diciassette anni. Questi sono solo due esempi di padri e modelli per le nostre chiese.

Ancora oggi la chiesa copta è celebrata come chiesa dei martiri, perché nessun'altra chiesa al mondo ha sacrificato così tanti martiri come la nostra. Soltanto durante il regno dell'imperatore romano Diocleziano, più di un milione di cristiani furono sacrificati in cinque anni. Questo è il motivo per cui la chiesa copta ha un proprio calendario e il capodanno si celebra l'11 o il 12 settembre di ogni anno.

Anche san Maurizio, capo della legione di Tebe, morì come martire. A quel tempo, l'Egitto era una provincia romana ed era anche il granaio dell'impero. Ai soldati tebani, nei pressi dell'attuale Luxor, fu ordinato di uccidere i loro compagni cristiani e correligionari e di adorare gli idoli, ma Maurizio e i suoi compagni si rifiutarono, non potevano rinnegare la loro fede o le loro convinzioni morali. Secondo il vescovo Eucherio di Lione, intorno al 450 d.C., san Maurizio rispose all'imperatore romano Massimiliano come segue: "Abbiamo giurato fedeltà innanzitutto a Dio. Tu ordini a noi cristiani di perseguitare. Preferiremmo morire piuttosto che uccidere, preferiremmo perire innocentemente, piuttosto che continuare a vivere in preda ai sensi di colpa". A quel punto l'intera legione, complessivamente 6.600 soldati, fu giustiziata.

Ancora oggi, i miei fratelli e le mie sorelle nella fede, sia in patria che in altre parti del mondo, come minoranza religiosa, preferiscono il martirio alla negazione della loro fede cristiana, in umiltà e gratitudine.

Vorrei qui commemorare i ventuno martiri: in un video di propaganda dello Stato islamico, venti cristiani egiziani e un cristiano del Ghana sono stati rapiti in Libia nel febbraio 2015 e brutalmente giustiziati di fronte alla telecamera. Tuttavia, la loro lealtà e la loro fiducia in Dio sono rimaste intatte e fino all'ultimo respiro hanno professato la loro devozione alla fede cristiana, gridando all'unisono: "Signore Gesù!".

In quel contesto, Sua Santità papa Francesco ringraziò Dio per il dono del coraggio dei suoi fratelli cristiani, e lo Spirito Santo "che ha dato loro la forza e la fermezza". Ringraziò i vescovi e i sacerdoti della chiesa copta sorella che li crebbero nella fede, così come le loro madri orgogliose, che "nutrirono i loro figli con la fede".

Oggi, il sangue versato dai martiri è interpretato come seme fertile della chiesa cristiana copta. La loro morte non ha distrutto la nostra fede, ma l'ha rafforzata. Ciò che rimane nella memoria, dopo le apparizioni su internet dei sostenitori del terrorismo, è la fede profondamente radicata dei copti.

Nella nostra santa liturgia, il sacerdote copto augura la pace ai fedeli e al mondo intero per più di cinquanta volte durante le funzioni, che durano diverse ore. Così preghiamo: “Ti supplichiamo e imploriamo la tua bontà, o tu che ami l’umanità. Ricordati, o Signore, della pace. [...] Possa essa vivere da un capo all’altro del mondo. Benedici tutti i popoli e ogni gregge. Fa’ che la pace celeste scenda su tutti i nostri cuori. Sì, concedi la pace al mondo secolare, al presidente, ai soldati, ai governanti, al popolo, ai nostri vicini. Riempi tutti di pace. O Re della pace, concedici la tua pace”.

Dopo che nel 2015 molte chiese copte e istituzioni ecclesiastiche in Egitto vennero date alle fiamme in pochissimo tempo, un ambasciatore della Repubblica araba d’Egitto a Berlino mi disse: “Se (Sua Santità) papa Tawadros II non avesse reagito con tale saggezza, autocontrollo e ragionevolezza di linguaggio (e di modi), non si sarebbe potuta evitare una guerra civile in Egitto”.

Non esistono guerre sante, nessun fine giustifica i mezzi. La violenza crea solo nuovi appetiti di aggressione e predicare odio genera ostilità. È giunto il momento che le chiese sorelle parlino all’unisono, poiché è in gioco la pace di questo mondo. La pace è una delle grazie dello Spirito Santo. Così dice la Sacra Scrittura: “Beati gli operatori di pace, perché saranno chiamati figli e figlie di Dio” (Mt 5,9).

Gli operatori di pace sono chiamati figli di Dio, perché Dio è il re della pace. Chiediamo con una sola voce a Dio di seminare la pace nel nostro mondo. Pace tra Dio e l’uomo, pace di ogni uomo col suo naturale egoismo, pace tra gli uomini, pace nel rapporto con l’ambiente e con il mondo animale. Non esiste una via migliore o un’alternativa alla pace. Pertanto, imploriamo congiuntamente la cessazione degli scontri bellici come atti violenti distruttivi, nonché imploriamo la fine di inutili escalation di odio con provocatorie dimostrazioni di forza. Esortiamo le parti coinvolte a intraprendere la strada del tavolo negoziale, allo scopo di incontrarsi nella dignità umana e nel rispetto reciproco.

Non sono un politico né un giudice, non spetta a me giudicare o condannare. Tuttavia, credo fermamente che nel XXI secolo nulla giustifichi la guerra. Come servitore di Dio, sono un uomo dell’ecumene abitato. Già negli Atti degli apostoli (20,35) è scritto: “Vi è più gioia nel dare che nel ricevere!”. Sia nella mia vita spirituale come vescovo copto sia nella mia vita secolare come medico di formazione, ho visto molto e ho conosciuto e amato le persone, le tradizioni, le culture, i caratteri e le ideologie più diverse. Tuttavia, rimango un umile monaco con profonde radici egiziane.

So che tutti noi, in quanto immagini di Dio, abbiamo lo stesso bisogno e lo stesso obiettivo nel profondo del cuore: una vita dignitosa nell'amore, nella comprensione e nella pace. Anche quando ciò viene nascosto dal manto della violenza, dell'odio e dell'ostilità, possiamo distinguere tra le cause profonde e i sintomi superficiali. L'intolleranza nasce solo dalla mancanza di amore e l'odio dalla mancanza di comprensione. Dobbiamo partire dal seme del frutto che abbiamo il compito di seminare e guardare i nostri figli come creature divine, anziché adulti incompiuti. Siamo noi a determinare il tono della nostra quotidianità, che contribuirà a plasmare la musica del nostro futuro.

Ogni persona deve guardarsi allo specchio ogni giorno e chiedersi: chi sono? Come voglio essere ed essere ricordato? Come posso avere un impatto significativo e duraturo in questo mondo? Cosa posso restituire al mondo e alle persone che lo abitano? Anch'io sono uno spirito imperfetto e inquieto, che non ha paura di essere diverso per rendere il nostro mondo più bello, di essere diverso per rendere il nostro mondo più giusto.

Nel novembre 2022, Sua Santità papa Tawadros II, in occasione del decimo anniversario del suo patriarcato, ha dichiarato che è necessario un ripensamento e un effettivo rinnovamento delle strutture ecclesiastiche all'interno della società, se si intendono impiegare davvero le energie umane. In definitiva, siamo tutti grati per il miracolo della creazione, della vita e della salvezza. Cerchiamo di fissare lo sguardo su quel che c'è di positivo e di annunciare buone notizie, anche quando la realtà può infastidirci e Dio può mettere alla prova la nostra fede: rimaniamo saldi come una roccia su cui si infrangono le onde dell'oceano.

Oggi, in occasione di questa ricorrenza, ripercorriamo assieme la strada che abbiamo percorso e vediamo quali montagne la nostra fede è già stata in grado di smuovere. Solo quando semineremo il seme dell'amore potremo davvero fiorire bene come figli di Dio sul terreno fertile della nostra Madre Terra. A questo proposito, guardiamoci reciprocamente negli occhi, come sorelle e fratelli, nell'amore cristiano.

Vorrei concludere il mio discorso con il versetto biblico del nostro santo profeta Mosè, tratto dal libro dei Numeri, capitolo 6, versetti 24–26, come una santa benedizione per voi e per i vostri cari: “Ti benedica il Signore e ti protegga. Il Signore faccia brillare il Suo volto su di te e ti sia propizio. Il Signore rivolga su di te il Suo volto e ti conceda la pace”.

## Intervention by Matteo Zuppi

*President of the CEI and Archbishop of Bologna*

“È venuto il momento – scriveva il sindaco di Firenze Giorgio La Pira a papa Paolo VI nel febbraio del 1970 – di abbattere i muri e di costruire ponti. È giunto il momento, cioè, di superare qualunque divisione e ogni contrasto fratricida per edificare solidi legami di collaborazione, del dialogo interreligioso. Senza uno sforzo tenace e vigoroso in questa direzione, sarà estremamente difficile, se non impossibile, la costruzione della pace nel Mediterraneo e nel mondo contemporaneo”.

Papa Francesco, riflettendo sul Mediterraneo all’inizio del terzo millennio, disse: “Non è possibile leggere realisticamente tale spazio, se non in dialogo e come un ponte – storico, geografico, umano – tra l’Europa, l’Africa e l’Asia. Si tratta di uno spazio in cui l’assenza di pace ha prodotto molteplici squilibri regionali, mondiali, e la cui pacificazione, attraverso la pratica del dialogo, potrebbe invece contribuire grandemente ad avviare processi di riconciliazione e di pace”.

Come è stato pensato il Mediterraneo in questi anni? Caduto il muro di Berlino, di fatto si è accettato che un altro muro attraversasse il Mare nostrum, che qualche volta, dobbiamo ricordarlo, è diventato *monstrum*, spietato, terribile, per quei tanti, troppi, che vi hanno perso la vita. Non è un crocevia possibile per un’Europa che vuole vivere e vincere la tentazione della sterilità? Le rive, quelle che da sempre avevano rappresentato l’incontro, gli scambi commerciali e culturali, sono diventate improvvisamente distanti. Giorgio La Pira – continua il papa – “ci direbbe che si tratta, per la teologia, di contribuire a costruire su tutto il bacino mediterraneo una ‘grande tenda di pace’, dove possano convivere nel rispetto reciproco i diversi figli del comune padre Abramo”.

Sta scritto nel libro del profeta Geremia al capo 6, versetto 14: “Essi curano alla leggera la piaga del mio popolo; dicono: ‘Pace, pace’, mentre pace non c’è”. Il profeta, come sempre, aiuta a capire quello che viviamo, e i nostri profeti di pace sono oggi le vittime, che tragicamente

ci indicano quello che a loro è mancato, e anche l'urgenza di cercarlo. Il profeta sveglia, scuote, infastidisce, ma apre anche gli occhi per vedere quello che altrimenti sembra lontano, indistinto. Il profeta aiuta ad aprire il cuore e la mente, e a sentire e capire la responsabilità di curare "alla leggera": rapidamente, con fretta, per togliere il problema solo a se stessi, per farsi vedere, per quel diletterismo giocherellone e attento all'apparenza che finisce per essere angosciato e narcisista per i propri feriti. Il profeta ci spinge ad aprire le mani, a stringere quelle degli altri, con cui dobbiamo vivere nella stessa barca, dove ci salviamo solo insieme. Il Mare nostrum ci può aiutare a ritrovare il "noi" di cui facciamo parte. Altrimenti è tragicamente di nessuno, e quindi pericoloso per tutti.

Sulle sue rive corrono conflitti dichiarati e silenti in cui si soffre per la violenza dell'uomo sull'uomo che chiamiamo guerra: la Siria, sulla cui tragedia s'è abbattuto ora il flagello del terremoto, la terra degli israeliani e dei palestinesi, la Libia, meta di chi fugge dalle guerre dell'Africa occidentale e dalle milizie delle sue guerre civili, dove è stato distrutto tutto senza costruire niente.

In questo nostro mare si scaricano, simbolicamente ma anche materialmente, i "rifiuti tossici" di ogni conflitto. Attraverso le sue propaggini d'acqua questo Mare nostrum collega altre terre colpite dalla guerra: lo Yemen, il Tigray, dove gli uccisi si contano a centinaia di migliaia come se non importasse a nessuno, e a nord-est l'Ucraina, dove dal 2014 si combatte una guerra per cui non abbiamo né pianto né prego e dove da un anno esatto è in corso un'invasione ingiustificabile.

E dunque in questo grande popolo di Dio, fatto di uomini e donne che sono fratelli tutti e sorelle tutte, è Dio stesso che si rivolge a noi ammonendoci. "Così dice il Signore: 'Fermatevi nelle strade e guardate, informatevi circa i sentieri del passato, dove sta la strada buona e prendetela, così troverete pace per le vostre anime'. Ma essi risposero: 'Non la prenderemo!' Io ho posto sentinelle presso di voi: 'State attenti al suono della tromba!' Essi hanno risposto: 'Non ci baderemo!' Per questo ascoltate, o popoli, e sappi, o assemblea, ciò che avverrà di loro. Ascolta, o terra! 'Ecco, io mando contro questo popolo la sventura, il frutto dei loro pensieri'" (Ger 6,16-19). Badate bene: non frutto delle loro azioni, ma frutto dei loro pensieri. Quello che circonda questo mare, quello che avvolge questo mondo è il "frutto dei nostri pensieri". E questo invito severo e drammatico della Bibbia ci dice che il problema non è dire "pace, pace", ma fare "pace, pace", coltivare pensieri di pace, relazioni di pace, in questo tempo della guerra, in cui perfino l'incubo atomico torna ad affacciarsi.

Chi ha promosso questo dialogo ha una convinzione che a me sembra giusta: la conoscenza è già costruire la pace. L'intuizione profetica con cui monsignor Lorefice, la chiesa di Palermo, la città e l'Università di Palermo hanno accolto la Biblioteca La Pira nasce da questa convinzione. E, per una decisione del Ministero degli Interni di cui sono grato al Fec (Fondo edifici di culto) e al prefetto, sarà collocata nell'ex Theresianum, proprio nel cuore della città. Una biblioteca che studia la storia e le dottrine degli islam, con il rigore degli specialisti e con la severità di vita imparata settant'anni fa da Giuseppe Dossetti, è un servizio alla pace. Un servizio alla pace che non è automatico o meccanico: non si serve la pace coi privilegi degli intellettuali o degli intellettuali fannulloni, ma se nel cuore di chi studia, lo sforzo dell'intelligenza si salda con un desiderio vero di pace, con un desiderio di comunione con i dimenticati della terra e le vittime dei conflitti.

Si pensi all'importante, direi indispensabile, cammino di sinodalità intrapreso al presente dalla chiesa cattolica. Trovare dunque le risposte adeguate per agire con responsabilità e incisività a livello locale, nella propria città, presuppone "due che marciano insieme", come diceva La Pira, perché nel marciare insieme nasce e cresce un'intelligenza, un pensiero capace di andare incontro alle specifiche esigenze della propria città, praticando quella solidarietà che assume e si fa carico delle povertà, delle sfide, dei dolori, delle angosce, delle speranze. "Andare avanti insieme" non significa appiattare lo specifico contributo di ciascuna comunità religiosa, umana e civile ma sperimentare, come scrive papa Francesco: "Un'unità multiforme che genera nuova vita" (*Fratelli tutti*, 245). È l'unica via possibile per far crescere la pace.

La Pira sognava questo miracolo, e ha avuto il coraggio di dire che "le città non vogliono morire", e che unire le città era un modo per unire le nazioni. Era stato così per l'Europa dove la devastazione della guerra nazista e fascista aveva spinto una generazione a pensare a una cornice politica per disarmarsi reciprocamente nella sicurezza: Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman e Alcide De Gasperi – tre statisti che "si parlavano in tedesco e pensavano in cattolico", come ha scritto Alberto Melloni – avrebbero immaginato questo spazio e fatto diventare la terra che aveva incubato il disastro il più grande esperimento politico degli ultimi millenni. Popoli uniti non in un impero, ma in un'unione che studia come crescere – il lavoro straordinario del Collegio d'Europa è questo e noi benediciamo chi come Federica Mogherini lavora a formare le persone che terranno viva questa unione.

La Pira sognava che questo “miracolo” europeo potesse diventare un miracolo globale: ha perso La Pira? La frequenza, la ferocia, la disseminazione della terza guerra mondiale a capitoli, che rischia di trovare sul fiume Dnepr il suo rilegatore, dice che quella di La Pira era l’utopia di un uomo impolitico, di un mistico illuso? A mio parere proprio il disastro sotto i nostri occhi dice che aveva ragione e che non c’è un’altra via che non sia la via della pace: costruire città capaci di comprendersi, conoscersi, amarsi, perdonarsi è indispensabile. Al proprio interno e fra di loro. In questo le città del Mediterraneo hanno una vocazione comune, che è quella di parlarsi, solidarizzare, scambiarsi comprensione, e darsi consolazione, laddove il sangue scorre a fiumi.

Nella divina liturgia di san Basilio c’è una bellissima preghiera dopo tutti quelli che sono stati ricordati per nome (i patriarchi, i re, i fedeli, i monaci, i morti) che dice “e ricordati tu di tutti quelli che non abbiamo ricordato o perché sono troppi o perché non li amiamo abbastanza”. È questo deficit che ci rende insensibili spiritualmente e per questo politicamente stolti. Leggere questi segni è la cosa che serviva ieri e serve oggi. Penso alla guerra civile che ha insanguinato l’Ucraina fra 2014 e 2021: uno stillicidio di violenza che ci interpellava e alla quale – Federica Mogherini che aveva altissime responsabilità europee lo ricorda meglio di me – gli Stati hanno dato poca importanza, considerando un fatto remoto quello che accadeva. O penso a un momento come quello di gennaio 2011, quando un attentato alla chiesa di Alessandria, sede del trono del papa Tawadros (al quale mando il più fraterno saluto e il più fervido omaggio sperando che possa accettare in futuro il nostro invito), fece decine di morti, commemorati insieme dai cristiani copti, in un gesto di fraternità che commuove.

“Spes contra spem”, La Pira aveva chiaro il senso profondo delle cose e quanto fosse consapevole dei problemi che “l’utopia profetica” presenta. La civiltà mediterranea non è un’isola che sprofonda, poiché la sorreggono – dice La Pira – tre pilastri: Gerusalemme, il senso della storia; Atene, la logica e la bellezza artistica; Roma, il diritto e la politica. Proprio per questo Giorgio La Pira, a partire dagli anni Cinquanta, aveva colto in pieno il ruolo geopolitico dello “spazio mediterraneo” come punto nevralgico della pace mondiale. Da questa sua intuizione presero forma, tra il 1958 e il 1964, i Colloqui mediterranei: quattro incontri internazionali focalizzati inizialmente sul dialogo tra le tre famiglie religiose di Abramo. A noi “costruttori” è affidato il compito di valorizzare il senso della storia, ciò era chiaro nella profezia lapiriana: intessere relazioni di pace, di dialogo, di incontro, di preghiera, di sviluppo, di cultura.



La testimonianza di La Pira contiene alcune proposte ancora oggi attualissime: l'urgenza della misericordia come virtù politica in grado di aprire al futuro; l'importanza di una visione politica e umana che faccia leva sull'appartenenza di tutti alla medesima famiglia umana. La Pira ha dedicato tutta la sua vita alla ricerca di quel dialogo possibile, anche tra realtà contrapposte. Animato da questo spirito, ha allargato il suo sguardo al Mediterraneo, rendendo concreto quel suo desiderio di pace anche per gli Stati del Mare nostrum. Nella visione profetica di La Pira la cultura di ogni popolo deve necessariamente ripensarsi e mettersi in dialogo con le altre, specie nel Mediterraneo; qui si coglie la bellezza intima dell'umano, quella a cui il sindaco di Firenze si è tanto dedicato, connettendola in un dialogo fecondo finalizzato al bene più autentico della persona. Il sindaco della pace, scriveva Paolo VI, "era una persona che aveva senso dei fini, non soltanto dei mezzi da percorrere, ma del dove andare".

Il primo punto di La Pira è la persona: il Mediterraneo ha bisogno che noi ripetiamo a noi stessi e l'un l'altro il valore della persona nella convinzione profonda che un umanesimo che non riconosca la fratellanza mente a se stesso; un ebraismo che si dimentichi della regola d'oro – "ciò che non vuoi ti sia fatto, tu non farlo ad altri; tutto il resto è commento: va e studia" dice il Talmud – è infedele al suo cuore; un islam che non ricordi che il nobile Corano insegna che Dio ci ha fatti perché "gareggiamo nelle opere buone"; e un cristianesimo che non senta che chi si dibatte fra le onde è davvero mio fratello e mia sorella dimostra una spavalderia rispetto al racconto di Matteo 25 che chiama tutti a una verità: ero sotto le macerie e mi avete tirato fuori, ero in mare e mi avete soccorso.

E lasciatemi ringraziare qui le forze armate, le forze dell'ordine e la guardia costiera italiana alle quali si devono la quasi totalità dei salvataggi compiuti in mare, a cui si aggiungono quelli delle organizzazioni alle quali si attribuiscono meriti o colpe che sono minori di quanto gli uni e gli altri credono. Il personalismo sul quale è fiorita un'Europa assai meno religiosa di quanto non si aspettasse La Pira, deve essere la lingua di un Mediterraneo di pace.

Il secondo punto è la storia: questo nostro tempo non è né peggio né meglio di quelli che ci hanno preceduto; non bisogna avere nostalgie né illusioni. È semplicemente il nostro, ed è quello nel quale dobbiamo capire il movimento profondo della storia. Un continente intero come l'Africa si è liberato dalle bandiere coloniali, ma non dallo sfruttamento: è pensabile che sia così ancora per molto tempo? L'idea

di regolare le aspersioni di giustizia fomentando guerre tribali e religiose antiche potrà funzionare a lungo? Non si ritorcerà contro chi l'ha lasciato accadere? A me sembra inevitabile.

E dunque serve intelligenza e prossimità: per questo io spero che questa città sia per l'Europa, per il Mediterraneo, per l'Italia, per la chiesa di cui io sono qui la voce, luogo di intelligenza e prossimità. Una capitale europea del Mediterraneo, una città che faccia valere la sua storia di convivenza e di transizioni – fenici, greci, romani, arabi, normanni, aragonesi, Borboni, piemontesi – può rappresentare un vocabolario e favorire un abbecedario di pace, e anche una lotta contro tutte le mafie – oggi ben presenti in tutto il paese – e una sete di giustizia che è impersonata dalla figura di Rocco Chinnici, Ciaccio Montalto, Boris Giuliano, Ninni Cassarà, Giovanni Falcone, Paolo Borsellino, don Pino Puglisi (e che da noi al Nord è meno presente o forse meno visibile).

Il terzo passo è quello dell'unità del mondo di cui parlava La Pira: ciascuno di noi ha un suo ambito.

La chiesa italiana ha fatto a Bari e a Firenze uno sforzo. La chiesa copta testimonia col suo grande centro Logos ad Amba Bishoi una capacità di dialogo straordinaria. L'ortodossia da Costantinopoli fa arrivare un magistero di pace e rispetto del creato col quale tutti siamo in debito. Al-Azhar ha promosso il dialogo sulla fraternità che ha nutrito anche il papa. Fes, che accoglie oggi gli studiosi della La Pira, insegna un islam sapiente e puro che illumina i cuori alla comprensione. Il patto di Abramo ha mostrato la fecondità del dialogo fra cristiani, ebrei e musulmani. Per le fedi questo è un cantiere aperto in cui nulla è garantito per sempre, ma nulla è intentato.

Mi sporgo però a dire anche un'altra cosa nella quale non ho autorità: c'è un lavoro di scambio che va perseguito anche sul piano teologico. Richiede sforzo di conoscenza e relazioni con le grandi centrali del sapere, come il Collegio d'Europa di Bruges, l'infrastruttura europea di ricerca RESILIENCE che la Fondazione ha voluto insediare a Palermo, e io spero anche il progetto di istituzioni che formino una generazione nuova.

Vorrei concludere citando ancora Geremia, stavolta al capo 29, versetto 11: “Io, infatti, conosco i progetti che ho fatto a vostro riguardo – dice il Signore – progetti di pace e non di sventura, per concedervi un futuro pieno di speranza”. Spesso i vescovi si lamentano della perdita della fede – spesso è soprattutto il “fatturato” vocazionale o sacramentale che sembra flettere. In realtà io penso che noi siamo in un tempo

in cui c'è una grande sete di fede e di fiducia: serve una serietà davanti al nostro tempo, ma come diceva papa Giovanni XXIII, serve anche vedere un nuovo ordine di rapporti umani che avanza e ci viene incontro. Un avvenire e una speranza.

Possano gli sforzi di chi studia, l'intelligenza di chi li sostiene e la bontà di Dio concedercelo.



## Conclusions by Corrado Lorefice

### *Archbishop of Palermo*

Giorgio La Pira nasce a Pozzallo, una comunità cittadina del Mediterraneo, culla della famiglia nata da Abramo. Il primo odore che percepisce chi nasce a Pozzallo o vive a Messina è quello del Mare nostrum, da sempre crocevia di popoli, di culture e di religioni. Ciò rende ragione a La Pira del suo sentirsi cittadino del mondo, appartenente alla città planetaria. È chiaro che non possiamo distinguere il suo impegno amministrativo e politico – nel senso più vero e autentico del termine – da sindaco di Firenze, da quello che lo ha fatto essere, e lo fa continuare a essere, profeta della pace. È chiaro, La Pira non è un esaltato sognatore, bensì un poliedrico *administrator*, un preposto al servizio pratico, intelligente e capace.

Chi vi parla è nato a Ispica, a sei chilometri da Pozzallo, nella stessa provincia e diocesi di La Pira. Sono stato successore di monsignor Matteo Gambuzza, arciprete di Modica, pozzallese e amico fraterno di La Pira. Chi vi parla è vescovo di Palermo. In Sicilia oggi capita anche questo: cristiani, ebrei e musulmani si incontrano di frequente, nel segno dell'amicizia, tra i banchi di una chiesa o sui tappeti di una moschea. Una giovane famiglia di musulmani prende parte al lutto di una famiglia cristiana come parenti diretti. Una chiesa cristiana dedicata a S. Maria del sabato viene donata in comodato dal vescovo di Palermo alla piccola ma vivace comunità ebraica per farne una sinagoga. Una moschea è una chiesa cattolica, a Palermo.

La Pira cristiano, cittadino, politico, amministratore, sempre attento ai bisogni della povera gente, operatore di pace, profeta della famiglia di Abramo e in essa dell'unità dei popoli, lo si può capire solo se lo si abbraccia con uno sguardo d'insieme, olistico. Non lo si può dividere, non lo si può settorializzare.

Don Giuseppe Dossetti, che nel 1987, nel decimo anniversario della morte del suo amico Giorgio La Pira, ne fece una bella pennellata, lo definisce uomo dalla "personalità sovranaturale": perché la perso-

nalità umana di La Pira è essenzialmente, diceva Dossetti, trasfigurata dalla fede, “dalla coscienza sempre vigile e dalle operazioni della grazia”. Non si può comprendere La Pira, di questo era convinto Dossetti, senza entrare nell’“apocalissi del suo profondo”, senza inginocchiarsi nel silenzio della sua interiorità orante. Dalla sua fede e dalla sua preghiera, dalla consuetudine con la parola di Dio e della contemplazione, da un’esuberanza d’essere che, diceva Dossetti, “coniuga e potenzia la sua immaginazione creatrice di figlio della Sicilia”. E da questo scaturiranno tante cose, tra cui i Colloqui mediterranei, per tentare tutte le vie per l’indipendenza per l’Algeria, per la pace in Medioriente, per l’unità della famiglia di Abramo e la concordia delle tre grandi religioni monoteistiche. Per l’adorazione pacifica dell’unico Dio in Gerusalemme.

Questa nota della mediterraneità è iscritta in tutta la personalità di La Pira. Dossetti tra l’altro scriveva: “Fissando lo sguardo più analiticamente sulla sua personalità naturale, occorre soprattutto far emergere, ancora di più di quanto non sia stato finora fatto, che La Pira fu un italiano dell’estremo meridione, un italiano nato e per certi aspetti decisamente formato in mezzo al Mediterraneo, di fronte all’Africa e all’Asia: nonostante l’universalità del suo spirito e nonostante le sue nozze con Firenze, alla quale egli è rimasto meravigliosamente fedele per oltre cinquant’anni. Ma appunto questo matrimonio d’amore e questa lunga appassionata fedeltà rischiano di non far comprendere sino in fondo la sua personalità e di dirottarne l’interpretazione più autentica. Rischia soprattutto di non far ammettere che La Pira ha dato a Firenze inconfondibilmente di più del molto che pure ne ha ricevuto”.

Mi sono dilungato in questa citazione di don Giuseppe Dossetti per un solo motivo: quando sono sopraggiunto qui a Palermo mi sono trovato immediatamente al porto, ad accogliere 1.200 profughi. E ho capito dunque, da lì e in questi anni, che questo mare mi chiedeva qualcosa come vescovo di Palermo. Io sono un indegno successore di un certo cardinale Salvatore Pappalardo, che negli anni che noi conosciamo qui a Palermo viveva il dramma delle strade della città macchiate dal sangue dei martiri della giustizia e della fede. Stamattina mi trovavo a Bagheria, per la marcia verso Casteldaccia: quarant’anni fa tutte le forze, comprese quelle ecclesiali, si unirono per dire no alla mafia, a quel sangue, per dire sì alla non violenza, per un cambiamento di mentalità. E noi su questa strada, oggi, dobbiamo camminare ancora.

Per la mia vicenda biografica mi è stato dato di frequentare Bologna e via San Vitale 114. E per questo nel 2017 è venuta fuori un’idea: perché non fare anche qualcosa qui, a Palermo, sulla sfida che ci pone

il Mediterraneo, sulla sfida della pace, sulla sfida del dialogo interreligioso. Da qui è nata l'idea di una biblioteca, e oggi siamo qui perché chiamati a rispondere a quella che è la responsabilità della storia. In modo particolare, oggi ci è chiesto di riprendere ancora una volta questa via, che mi piace definire la via dell'“irrazionalità della pace”, proprio perché ormai ci hanno convinti della razionalità della guerra. Oggi stiamo dando di nuovo per scontato che la guerra sia razionale, e noi invece abbiamo bisogno di uomini e donne come Giorgio La Pira che dicano: “L'irrazionalità della pace”, la “profezia della pace”. Perché essa non corrisponde ai criteri della ragione umana, ma proprio per questo noi potremmo dire qualcosa d'altro: potremmo dire che è l'unica via.

Permettetemi di finire così: ieri ho presenziato all'inaugurazione dell'anno accademico dell'Università di Palermo, alla quale ha partecipato la presidente della Commissione europea Ursula von der Leyen. Ho gioito, ma ho un rammarico, lo debbo dire: che la presidente non abbia mai pronunciato il termine “pace”. Me ne rammarico perché quello di ieri era un contesto fortemente formativo ed educativo, soprattutto sulla sfida della centralità della Sicilia e di Palermo nel Mediterraneo, e con delle prospettive meravigliose. E ho fatto un po' di memoria: i grandi che dopo la Seconda guerra mondiale ci hanno consegnato il desiderio di un'Europa unita, avevano il coraggio dell'irrazionalità della pace. Anche se costretti per alcuni aspetti, lo abbiamo sentito, da motivi molto concreti, come il carbone, scelsero la via dell'unità e della pace.

La Biblioteca La Pira vuole essere un umile segno che da Palermo siamo capaci ancora di poter dire, “l'irrazionalità della pace”.





## *Reviews*



M. Campanini, *Maometto: La vita e il messaggio di Muhammad il profeta dell'Islam*, Roma, Salerno Editrice, 2020, 260 pp.

The latest monograph published by Massimo Campanini, former professor of History of Islam and Islamic Thought at the University of Trento, reconstructs and analyzes the biography of Muḥammad, the Prophet of Islam. Leaving aside the choice of title, with which even the author is dissatisfied due to the use of the Italianized version of the name Muḥammad, the text is complete and exhaustive, and the interweaving of numerous sources allows the more experienced reader to discover a work full of bibliographical references in various languages, Western and otherwise. Campanini's choice to narrate the Prophet's life in such a way that the Qur'an emerges as the protagonist of the tale is interesting and allows Islam's sacred text to engage in dialogue with other sources, both historical and traditional, confirming and enriching the exposition of the fundamental stages of Muḥammad's biography.

The monograph consists of an introduction, a prologue concerning the sources used, five chapters (specifically: *L'Arabia al tempo di Muhammad*; *Dalla nascita all'Egira: il messaggio a Mecca*; *Dall'egira alla trasfigurazione: il messaggio a Medina*; *Muhammad tra storia e fede*, and *L'eredità politica: lo stato islamico e il califfato*), the themes of which gradually become more and more articulated and complex in their content; finally, the author draws his conclusions.

The introduction presents a comprehensive overview and taxonomy of the best-known biographies of the Prophet: it starts with Andrae, Rodinson, Gabrieli, and Noja, then moves on to Lo Jacono, Donner, Lecker, and Tottoli, and ends with Ramadan and Lings. The three groups of authors, respectively defined by the author as the Old Orientalists, the New Orientalists, and the Believers, complement Campanini's text, which sets itself a particularly difficult goal: to overcome the negative aspects of the previously mentioned approaches, proposing an update and a liberation from the preconceptions belonging to old Orientalism, using the Muslim primary sources that are often insufficiently valued by new Orientalism, and using an approach to the sources that is both critical and historicizing, thus also complementing the biographies produced by Muslims.

Reasoning on the choice of sources, the author emphasizes his position, which is more moderate than that of Euro-Western orientalists, with respect to the use of the *ḥādīṭ*: "La mia posizione è al proposito morbida, poiché riconosco che negli *ḥādīṭ*

emergono pesanti contraddizioni, pur ritenendo che alcuni *ḥādīṭ* siano fededegni. Credo comunque che rispetto al Corano l'importanza degli *ḥādīṭ* debba essere ridimensionata" (p. 16). Campanini's aim is to present Muḥammad from a fresh viewpoint, one that considers all the traditional and historical sources at our disposal and incorporates the positive peculiarities of the methodologies used by the previously mentioned authors: the result is a comprehensive work. Before beginning the first chapter in which he narrates Muḥammad's life, Campanini devotes an initial section of the text, entitled *Prologo sulle fonti*, to a reflection on the sources he has chosen to use, namely the *sīras*, *mağāzī*, Qur'an and Sunna. In these few pages, two important methodological issues are illustrated: the subject of late sources and the correlation between the Qur'an and the Sunna. With regard to late sources, i.e. primary Islamic sources belonging to the second century of the Hiğra, it is interesting to note that the author emphasizes their inhomogeneity and thus questions their veracity. To overcome this historiographical problem, Campanini also chooses to make use of a series of contemporary Muslim texts (such as biographies of the Prophet by Muhammad Husayn Haykal, Ahmed Amin and Tariq Ramadan), which propose an internal reconsideration of the Prophet's life, albeit mainly based on the *sīra* of Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Hišām. Before analysing the geopolitical context of the Prophet's life, Campanini underscores a hermeneutical problem of major importance and proposes a hypothesis that serves to solve it: "Il problema ermeneutico fondamentale consiste nel chiedersi se bisogna leggere il Corano per comprendere la biografia di Muḥammad o viceversa: probabilmente il passaggio è biunivoco" (p. 18). Indeed, the transition is twofold. the prospect of using the Qur'an also as a historical text in order to understand the Prophet's biography even better is certainly interesting.

In the first chapter of the monograph, the author analyses in depth the geopolitical context in which the figure of Muḥammad developed, occasionally inserting into the text some Qur'anic verses that narrate historical facts confirmed by the sources. What emerges is a successful interweaving of history and tradition that convinces the reader of the utility of use of Islam's Holy Book within the narration of the Prophet's life. After an introduction on the so-called "Year of the Elephant", the year of Muḥammad's birth, and on the structuring of Arabian society at the time, Campanini describes in the detail the city of Mecca, dwelling again on the available sources, the importance of trade, the history of the Ka'ba, and Islam's status as an Abrahamic religion.

The second chapter presents abundant information about Muḥammad's life, from childhood to the Hiğra. Campanini mainly uses traditional sources here (although there are few that narrate the early stages of the Prophet's life), analyzing miraculous events, briefly mentioning the status of women at the Prophet's time and place through the figure of Ḥadiġa, his first and beloved wife, and dwelling on the first revelation, which he himself defines as "un momento talmente cruciale che è necessario soffermarvisi diffusamente" (p. 47). The conclusion to the chapter is devoted to an in-depth examination of the political and social issues that arose from the new Revelation and a description of Muḥammad as the new leader, as he was confirmed in Yaṭrib from 0/622.

In the third chapter, Campanini describes the new Muslim community in detail as a "soggetto politico, con un preciso compito etico, perciò, è carismatica" (p. 79). The story continues and is narrated with great clarity and precision: the reader can deduce the importance that Campanini assigns to the new Medina community from the precise details with which he describes the formative steps, the so-called "Constitution of

Medina”, the various battles fought by the Muslim community against enemy clans, and, finally, from the importance he attaches to the explanation of the term *jihād* as resistance. After another mention of the role of women in the Muslim community and the personal history of Muḥammad and his wives, the author focuses on the description of the birth of the pilgrimage ritual, the taking of the Ka’ba and, with less detail, the subsequent military expeditions. Finally, Campanini describes in detail the Farewell Pilgrimage (10/632), which is particularly important for the definition of the rituals and the Farewell Sermon recited by Muḥammad, on which Sunnis and Shiites still differ today. The narrative continues with the Prophet’s death, a brief mention of the theme of miracles and an explanation of Muḥammad’s concept of sanctification.

The last two chapters are undoubtedly the most complex and interesting. The heart of the fourth chapter is, once again, the sources, to which Campanini devotes particular attention throughout the text. According to the author, the problem of using traditional sources, as he has done in the first chapters of the monograph, arises when considering later hagiography and the fact that neither Muḥammad, nor Moses, nor Jesus wrote any autobiography. Campanini tries to come as close as possible to the historical figure of the Prophet, also considering Muḥammad’s testimonies in texts referring to other prophets or, simply, the writings of his contemporaries. Furthermore, the author frames Muḥammad in the Late Antique paradigm, citing Neuwirth, Philoramus and, needless to say, Peter Brown. Lastly, there is a brief reference to the main theories of Euro-American Orientalism that help the inexperienced reader find his way through the variety of theses proposed in recent decades by leading scholars, notably John Wansbrough, Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, from whom Campanini firmly distances himself, endorsing an approach similar to that of the far less skeptical Fred M. Donner.

The last chapter analyses what became of Muslim society after Muḥammad’s death by using the concepts of Islamic state and caliphate. The author focuses on the Prophet’s definition of the state in Medina, divine sovereignty, the laceration of the Islamic community after Muḥammad’s death, and his role as an undisputed authority and charismatic leader, also analyzing the concept of *shūrā*, or consultation. To carry out this analysis, he draws on the contributions of other scholars, such as Patricia Crone, Hamid Eltigani Abdelgadir, Giorgio Vercellin, Hans Kelsen, Mahmud al-Arabi and Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri. Finally, he recounts the internal disputes within the Muslim community from which the split between Sunnis and Shiites originated and relies on the words of Ibn Ḥaldūn to define the link between the Caliphate of the origins and the retrospective utopia.

In conclusion, it can be said that the text is clear and replete with bibliographical references. The discussion concerning sources, which is found throughout the monograph, is particularly interesting and able to stimulate a careful reader and inform anyone approaching the text as a non-expert. The monograph, therefore, envisages that it may be read by a broad reading public as well as by specialists in the field of study. The monograph fits into an already well-trodden line of studies but succeeds in lending a new voice to the debates presented, in which the author moves nimbly, managing to provide as complete and detailed a picture as possible of the Prophet of Islam. There are numerous works, as we have seen, that deal with the same theme as that addressed by Campanini in this text. His aim, however, is to place himself mid-way between the various currents previously mentioned and to use the Qur’an, as far as possible, as a

historical source, capable of providing the scholar with information that complements the narrative proposed by the *sīras*, *mağāzī*, and Sunna.

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M. Picchi, *L'ombra dei Fratelli: Le Sorelle musulmane nell'Egitto contemporaneo*, Lucca, La Vela, 2022, 186 pp.

Margherita Picchi is an External Fellow at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, Department of Religious Studies, a researcher at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, Albert Ludwigs Universität Freiburg, and a former researcher at the Fondazione per le scienze religiose, Palermo. The origin of her book, *L'ombra dei Fratelli: Le Sorelle musulmane nell'Egitto contemporaneo*, is a doctoral thesis that was begun in 2011, at the outset of the Arab spring, and which has been extended and updated, taking into consideration the most recent events and studies. After the 2013 coup and the persecution of the Muslim Brotherhood, the author had to renounce her investigation into oral history and restrict herself to the study of written sources. The pleasant narrative style of this book is the outcome of a mixture of autobiographies and testimonies, both internal and external to the Muslim Brothers (*al-ihwān al-muslimūn*, henceforth MB). With its extensive bibliography (pp. 173–186), it represents the most important results of the international academic debate on the subject, favouring the analyses produced by Egyptian scholars and adding decisive new elements. It is a comprehensive vision that endeavours to see things from within, penetrating the constitutive imagery of the narratives while, at the same time, maintaining a critical viewpoint. It is essential to be aware of our position when considering the experience of others. Picchi reveals a mastery of the subject and an insight that seeks to contextualize before criticizing.

The book is one in a series of gender studies in Islam and in Arab countries, contributing, as Lucia Sorbera writes in her preface, to decolonizing the production of knowledge, that is to say, to looking at the countries studied not so much as areas where theories produced in the West may be applied, but regions where new views are created in order to understand the Middle East and the world better (p. 11). This study will have theoretical implications, just as the pioneer Saba Mahmood (d. 2018) had, and will contribute to critical postcolonial studies.

Women constitute about 30% of MB sympathizers, a percentage that required a review of the stereotype image of women as passive victims of Islamism. From the very outset of the book, the author posed these questions: why should a woman use her own agency to serve in a movement that opposes women's rights? Such female support for MB seems paradoxical, considering that this movement has historically been against the principle of gender equality (p. 16).

The book has a concentric structure that moves from the largest circle to the smallest: the history of Egypt, that of the MB, and finally, the history of the Muslim Sisters (*al-aḥawāt al-muslimāt*, henceforth MS). Other, even wider, circles might be added: the regional and international ones. There are brief mentions of Saudi Arabia and other

Arab and Muslim countries, yet a systematic comparative aspect is missing, which could be the focus of future studies. The Tunisian or Iranian cases, for example, could offer valuable interpretations. However, the comparison between Arab and Western societies, especially the Italian one, is more noticeable in the book. The author criticizes stereotypes and prejudices that are shared not only in the West and which reveal common challenges. They are transcultural phenomena that assume different forms according to the context.

The book is divided into four chapters with a conclusion. The first chapter, *Le donne, lo Stato e gli islamisti*, is a brief history of the women's question in Egypt from the beginning of the 20th century to 2011, showing the forms of exploitation of the women's question as a terrain on which to negotiate the meanings of modernity, identity, nationality and the relationship with the West. Picchi challenges the colonial definition of modernity and feminism, reflected in Orientalist discourse. Women are portrayed as silent victims of a barbaric and oppressive culture, which modern Europe must save through what Leila Ahmed calls "imperial feminism". The hypocrisy of this type of feminism can be seen in the introduction of discriminatory European laws against women left abandoned in their context of origin.

The author also criticizes the "fathers" of Egyptian feminism, including the famous Qāsim Amīn (d. 1908), who saw women as purely relational beings whose rights and duties of citizenship remained subordinate to the maternal role. In that initial phase and until the Second World War, it was difficult to distinguish between "secular" feminism and Islamist activism. At the beginning of the twentieth century, secular feminists, men, and women, often used religious language to legitimize their claims.

At the time of Egyptian president Gamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir (1956–1970), the gender policies implemented by the government promoted some forms of emancipation, with greater access to study and work, but that feminism deserves to be called "state feminism", at the service of a greater control of society. In truth, in the face of oppression, there was no difference between a feminist and a conservative. After the defeat of 1967, the Islamist movement grew enormously, taking advantage of the instrumental and opportunistic policy of the state towards it and of the social gaps opened up after the economic liberalization policy conducted by President Anwar al-Sādāt (1970–1981), which increased poverty.

The governments of Sādāt and Ḥusnī Mubārak (1981–2011) adopted an ambivalent strategy towards the Islamist movement, which associated brutal repression with an increasingly marked search for religious legitimacy. This tactic involved the regime's gradual renunciation of secularism. In this way, since the 1970s, the Islamization of society has reached such dimensions that it can be defined as a "cultural revolution", with a massive return of the veil. At this point, the author might have added external factors, such as the shift of the political and economic leadership of the Arab world towards the rich countries of the Persian Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia, without forgetting the impact of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979.

At the same time, state feminism was strengthened through the so-called "First Lady syndrome", which appeared with Ġihān al-Sādāt and was confirmed with Suzanne Mubārak. However, this type of official feminism introduced some laws in favour of women, the fruit of the extended fieldwork of women's rights activists.

Picchi concludes the chapter by observing that the political debate around the women's question has only marginally concerned Egyptian women in the flesh. In-

stead, these have been represented as functional tools for other purposes in a power game between the state, the traditional religious establishment and the Islamist movements.

The second chapter, *L'ideologia di genere dei Fratelli musulmani*, traces the changes and continuities in the discourse elaborated by the MB for over a century concerning the issue of women's rights and gender relations in the public and private spheres. The author describes the birth and development of the organization from the period of the reign up to the coup of the Free Officers and the three presidents Nāṣir, Sādāt and Mubārak, revealing the diversity and tensions within the movement and its varying relationships with the state, political parties and professional orders.

The chapter begins with an in-depth analysis of *Ayyām min ḥayātī*, written by the founder of the MB, Ḥasan al-Bannā (d. 1949), published in 1940. This brief treatise can be considered the "canon" that guided the ideological and gender politics of the MB in the following decades. The text proposes a complementarian vision of gender relations in which biological and social differences imply different rights and duties. In this system, women are raised so that they can devote themselves to their primary social function, motherhood. Picchi rightly notes that this view was not unique to al-Bannā but was widespread among the Egyptian bourgeoisie and the first generations of feminists. She offers an interesting comparison between Islamic and nineteenth-century European complementarianism. It would be possible to mention the Tunisian debate on the complementarity defended by some members of the Islamist party Nahda, which was superseded in the 2014 Constitution.

When the MB reappeared on the public scene in the early 1970s, the public role of MS experienced an upsurge. We find prominent women writers and media figures who participated in the construction of a new Islamist model of women's liberation, a built-in explicit opposition to the neoliberal model. The author notes the paradoxical aspect of these educated, working women who supported the patriarchal model of the family and motherhood as women's primary role. In this context, the veil became a tool of symbolic importance to publicly declare a woman's Islamic identity and reject the sexualization imposed by Westernized modernism.

The condition of Egyptian women profoundly changed, and the MB themselves were no longer in control of Islamist discourse. The "Islamic awakening", *ṣaḥwa*, in the last quarter of the 20th century, had, in actual fact, seen the development of alternative and competitive forms of Islamist discourse, which can be summarized in two opposing tendencies: neo-Salafism on the one hand, and the "new Islamist intellectuals" on the other, who used the term of middle road, *wasatīyya*, to counter Salafi extremism.

An example of the ideological repositioning within the MB was the 1994 public statement, *The Role of Muslim Women in an Islamic Society*, which represented a significant turning point in the MB's gender ideology. The positions articulated here were reaffirmed in the various documents in which the MB subsequently addressed the women's issues. The document presents essential differences concerning al-Bannā's epistle. Yet these developments did not prevent the MB from opposing pro-female laws such as the *ḥul'* one in 2000, which established the female right to unilateral divorce.

The author concludes the chapter by noting that the crucial transformations that MB's gender ideology underwent during the 20th century do not constitute a linear progression towards increasingly significant moderation. However, they cannot be re-



duced to mere aesthetic emendations aimed at masking an inability to change. The new language of freedom and democracy coexists with illiberal religious concepts.

The third chapter, *Storia delle Sorelle musulmane*, analyses the birth and development of MS from the time of Hasan al-Bannā to the present. It is based mainly on the autobiographical accounts of three militants: *Risāla li-l-mar'a al-muslima*, memoirs of Zaynab al-Ġazālī (d. 2005), *Riḥlati ma'a al-aḥwāt al-muslimāt*, Memoirs of Fāṭima 'Abd al-Hādī, and *Hikāya ma'a al-iḥwān*, a critical analysis of the ex-MS Intiṣār 'Abd al-Mun'im of the MB's gender policies. Narratives constitute a precious source for reconstructing little-known aspects of history. Picchi opts for a humanizing discourse contrasting followers' exaltation and opponents' demonization.

Despite their strong commitment to preaching and social assistance, the MS were excluded from any action or meeting of a political nature. The women's section of the Brotherhood had no autonomy; moreover, the MS were denied any possibility of having a say in the choice of their supervisors. Furthermore, the strict control exercised by the MB management over the women's section prevented the MS from expanding their activities beyond the limits imposed on them from above. The executive committee that supervised its activities consisted entirely of men. This structure prevented the MS from influencing the MB's decision-making bodies, making the women's section a simple appendage of the parent organization, devoid of decision-making power. In this male context, the figure of Zaynab al-Ġazālī is the exception that proves the rule. She was probably the third most important leader after the General Guide Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī and Sayyid Quṭb. Under al-Ġazālī's leadership, the MS played a vital role in ensuring the survival of the underground Brotherhood throughout Nāṣir's rule.

Zaynab al-Ġazālī set an example for the new generation of Islamists in the 1970s. As the new millennium approached, the number of MS's lobbying for recognition of their contributions to the movement and seeking to end the marginalization imposed on them by the Governing Office has steadily increased. The gradual participation of women in political life as candidates in elections and as active participants in electoral campaigns has been noted since the 1990s. Since the 2000s, an ever-growing generation gap has also been reported, manifesting in substantial criticism on the part of young people.

In this context, new demands are being developed, including a reform of the educational programs reserved for activists, which addressed solely "feminine" issues, demanding equality of programs and the introduction of specific courses in order to guarantee adequate training for women to carry out activities. Secondly, it has been proposed to transform the women's section from a mere appendix to an integral part of the movement and to relax the rules on gender segregation so as to allow MB and MS to attend meetings together. Finally, women have asked to be represented in MB decision-making bodies at every level.

The fourth chapter, *Dopo il 25 gennaio*, traces the political events after the Egyptian revolution of January 2011 and offers a reading of the reasons for the rise and then the rapid fall of the MB. In this chapter, the author presents several examples of female antifeminism or a patriarchal attitude expressed in a female voice from the 2011 election campaign, the subsequent parliamentary debate and the draft laws. At the same time, she criticizes the use of gender policies promoted by the MB as evidence of the danger they represent for a modern, democratic society. It is a way of discrediting democratic attempts in the Arab world in favour of a despotic status quo, seen as a "lesser evil" than the MB.

As far as the future of the MB, particularly the MS, is concerned, Picchi is rather pessimistic. The long history of the MB, and in particular the experience of the repression suffered during Nāṣir's era, suggests that the foreseeable increase in women's activities in the movement at the time of the crisis will not correspond to any real improvement in the status of the MS. She predicts that if the MB regained the right to exist on the Egyptian political scene, the MS would probably take a back seat once again. She justifies her point of view by saying that such a repressive climate can only favour the emergence of the most radical currents, which does not promote any liberalization of discourse or practice.

The book concludes with the answer to an essential question: *Un femminismo islamista?* The first answer is that Islamists cannot be called "feminists" because they reject the very name that is often linked to Western contexts. The author finds in the composition of the term "Islamist feminism" a mere contradiction, but at the same time insists on the need to look at the Islamic world and the phenomena related to it not as exotic, distant and strange but within a global context of conservative movements and defenders of the patriarchal system. It is a form of neo-traditionalism that goes beyond political Islam.

Picchi does not confuse "Islamist" and "Islamic" feminism since this broad phenomenon includes liberal and progressive currents. Unlike other European languages, the semantic and conceptual distinction between "Islamic" and "Islamist" is sometimes overlooked in Italian. Regardless of the term's inadequacy, the undeclared feminism of Islamists can be a way of justifying and confirming the increasingly active female participation in the public sphere in conservative patriarchal contexts. The veil, for example, has been a means of emancipation for many women from rural and conservative backgrounds. For them, it is a religious and cultural justification for access to study and work. It is a *de facto* emancipation, limited and hesitant but precisely this. Society, including family structures, is changing come what may, but religious thinking is struggling to adapt slowly. Two steps forward and one step back are being taken in an irreversible march. In my opinion, this reality is more important than titles and names.

In addition to the MS and their political and ideological activism, there is an Islamic religious feminism, which concerns the hermeneutical core of the question, relaxing men's exegetical monopoly. Women and men who challenge traditional interpretations and seek new, fairer forms and ways of religiosity can now be found. This kind of feminism will still have an impact on women Islamists, albeit in quiet and covert ways.

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## Name Index

- ‘Abd al-Ḥādī, Fāṭima 153  
‘Abd al-Mun‘im, Intiṣār 153  
‘Abd al-Nāṣir, Ġamāl 151–154  
Abdulvaap, Nariman 67, 96  
Abraham, patriarch 13, 46, 114, 117–118, 133, 136, 138, 141–142  
Abrahamowicz, Zygmunt 69  
Abu-Alabbas, Belal 37  
Abū Bakr, *khaṭīb* 88  
Abū Dāwūd (Dā‘ūd) Sulaymān ibn al-As‘aṭ ibn Ishāq al-Azdī al-Siġistānī 46  
Abū Hurayra 45, 58–59  
Abū Ṣahba, Muḥammad 34  
Abū Umāma, al-Bāhili 56  
Abū Ya‘lā al-Mawṣili 59  
Abyzova, Rezeda 76  
Adam, first man 18, 21, 34, 60  
Adenauer, Konrad 135  
Agha Pooya, ayatollah 25  
Aḥmad, ṣayḥ 90  
Ahmed, Leila 151  
Aigle, Denise 98  
‘Ā‘īsa, wife of the Prophet 32, 41, 56  
Aktaş, Vahap 99  
Albānī (al-), Muḥammad 36, 42  
Alberigo, Giuseppe 116  
Albrecht, Stefan 73  
Alexander the Macedonian 13  
Algar, Hamid 37  
‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet 32–33, 38, 44, 96  
Al-Mālik al-Nāṣir 88, 92  
Amato, Andrea 65  
Amin, Ahmed 148  
Amīn, Qāsim 151  
Amir-Moezzi, Mohammad Ali 27  
Amitai-Preiss, Reuven 98  
Anas ibn Mālik, 40, 43  
Andrae, Tor 148  
Andreatta, Beniamino 116  
Arabi (al-), Mahmud 149  
Aristotle 12, 16, 21  
Aṣ‘arī (al-), Abū al-Ḥasan 15  
Āṣī (-al), ‘Alā al-Dīn 88  
Athanasius of Alexandria 129  
‘Aṭṭār, Farid al-Dīn 93  
Augé, Isabelle 81  
Avicenna 27  
Ay, Resul 94–95  
Bābā Tūklās 89–91  
Baffioni, Carmela 9–12, 20, 22–24, 27  
Bāḥarzī, Sayf al-Dīn 88  
Bakhtiyār Beg 80  
Banākati, Abū Sulaymān 91  
Bannā (al-), Ḥasan 152–153  
Bāqir (al-), Muḥammad 33  
Barbanti, Maria 11  
Barkā Ḥān 88  
Bartholomaeus Anglicus 10  
Baru, Rohaizan 37  
Basil the Great, saint 136  
Baṣrī (-al), Ḥasan 33, 38, 47, 56  
Bātū Ḥān 67, 79  
Baydāwī (-al), ‘Abd Allāh bin ‘Umar bin Muḥammad bin ‘Alī Abū al-Ḥayr Nāṣir al-Dīn 74  
Bayhaqī (al-), Abū Bakr 34, 55  
Bazzār (al-), Abū Bakr 59

- Bearman, Peri 39  
Bennigsen, Alexandre 71, 81, 86, 97  
Ben-Shammai, Haggai 66  
Berindei, Mihnea 82  
Bianchi, Enzo 116  
Bilici, Faruk 81  
Biran, Michael 68  
Bıyık, Ömer 72  
Boivin, Michel 92  
Borsellino, Paolo 138  
Braudel, Fernand 117  
Brockelmann, Carl 31–32  
Broniovius, Martinus 73  
Brown, Jonathan 33, 38, 57,  
Brown, Peter 149  
Budelli, Rosanna 29  
Buḥārī (al-), Muḥammad 43, 46, 48, 50,  
53, 55  
Burak, Guy 99  
Bustānī (al-), Butrus 12  
Çagatai Ḥān 79  
Campanini, Massimo 147–149  
Cândeia, Ionel 81  
Cassarà, Antonino (Ninni) 138  
Catherine II of Russia 86  
Cazacu, Matei 77  
Çelebi, Evliya 90  
Charters, Erica 77  
Chinnici, Rocco 138  
Chodkiewicz, Michel 93  
Christiansen, Johanne 50  
Cihan, Ahmed 72–73  
Çingiz Ḥān 65, 68, 73, 78–79, 94  
Cohn, Josef 30  
Conermann, Stephan 84  
Cook, Michael 149  
Cooperson, Michael 40  
Crone, Patricia 149  
Daäif, Lahcen 37  
Ḍahabī (al-), Šams al-Dīn 30–31, 44, 52  
Dahlén, Ashk 92  
Daim, Falko 73  
Damian, Anba 113, 118, 127  
Dann, Michael 37  
Danylov, Sergiy 66  
Dārimī (al-), ‘Abd Allāh 55–56  
David, king of Israel 13  
Davies, Brian 74  
De Bruijn, Johannes Thomas Pieter 93  
Dédéyan, Gérard 81  
De Gasperi, Alcide 135  
Delage, Remy 92  
Delahunty, Robert 66  
De Nicola, Bruno 76  
Derin Paşaoglu, Derya 74  
Desaive, Dilek 97  
De Smet, Daniel 17  
De Tott, François 73  
DeWeese, Devin 68, 74, 88–90, 94  
Di Cosmo, Nicola 79  
Dimāšqī (-al), Ibn al-‘Imād ‘Abd al-Ḥayy  
ibn Aḥmad al-‘Akārī al-Ḥanbalī 30  
Diocletian, emperor 130  
Dionysius the Aeropagite 14  
Donner, Fred 147, 149  
Dossetti, Giuseppe 115, 135, 141–142  
Duindam, Jeroen 82  
Dūnyā (-al), Ibn Abī 38–39  
Durkheim, Émile 84  
Edigū Ḥān 79, 89  
Eltigani Abdelgadir, Hamid 149  
Epifanova, Liliia M. 92  
Erkan, Tolga 92  
Ernst, Carl 92  
Eucherius of Lyon 130  
Eszer, Ambrosius 67  
Fahd, Toufic 46  
Faizkhanov, Husayn 71  
Falcone, Giovanni 138  
Fārābī (al-) 26  
Farrell, Jeremy 37  
Favereau, Marie 66  
Ferrari, Aldo  
Firdawsī, Abū al-Qāsim 74  
Fisher, Alan 66, 68, 71–72, 78, 83–84, 86  
Forbes Manz, Barbara 71, 80  
Francis, pope 113, 117, 128, 130, 133, 135  
Frähn, Christian Martin 86  
Frank, Allen 79  
Gabriel, archangel 42, 51, 55  
Gabrieli, Francesco 147  
Ġāḥiẓ (al-), ‘Amr Ibn Baḥr 38

- Gambuzza, Matteo 141  
 Ğānī Bek 91, 94  
 Garcia Probert, Marcela 46  
 Garrone, Patrick 98  
 Gasprinskiy, İsmail 96  
 Ğazālī (al-), Abū Ḥāmid 36, 39, 45, 48, 52, 55–58, 61  
 Ğazālī (al-), Zaynab 153  
 Giardina, Giovanna 11  
 Gibadullin, İsmagil R. 75, 95  
 Gierlichs, Joachim 85  
 Girāy, Girāy Ḥān ibn Qaplān 73  
 Girāy, Ḥāġġī 79  
 Girāy, Meḥmed I 71, 80  
 Girāy, Meñli I 79  
 Girāy, Saadet 80  
 Girāy, Şāhib 74, 85  
 Girāy, Şahin 86  
 Giuliano, Boris Giorgio 138  
 Gobillot, Geneviève 27  
 Gökbilgin, Özalp 74  
 Golden, Peter 66–67, 79  
 Ğüġī, eldest son of Ğingīz Ḥān 67  
 Güneş Yaġci, Zübeyde 72–73, 83  
 Ğurġānī (al-), Abū Aḥmad ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Adī 35  
 Ğurġānī (al-), al-Ḥusayn ibn İsmā‘il 39  
 Ḥaddād (-al), ‘Abd Allāh Maḥmūd ibn Muḥammad 55  
 Haddad, William W. 86  
 Ḥadiġa, wife of the Prophet 148  
 Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Nāşir Aḥmad 26  
 Ḥāfez, Ḥwāġa Şams al-Dīn Muḥammad 93  
 Ḥāġġī Ḥalifa, Muştafā ibn ‘Abd Allāh 30–32  
 Ḥāġġī Luţfī Paşa bin ‘Abd al-Mu‘īn 74  
 Ḥāġġī, Ütemiş 74, 89  
 Halperin, Charles 69  
 Hammed, Ursula 45  
 Hammer-Purgstall, Joseph von 69  
 Ḥasan, ‘Alī’s son 46  
 Ḥasan Kūrkanī (Ġurġānī) 111  
 Ḥaṭīb (al-), Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Maḥmūd 75  
 Haykal, Muhammad Husayn 148  
 Haytamī (al-), Abū al-Ḥasan Nūr al-Dīn 59  
 Haytamī (al-), ‘Alī ibn Abī Bakr 45  
 Hautala Rautala 66, 70, 88  
 Herdick, Michael 73  
 Herod, king 128  
 Heuer, Brigitte 85  
 Heywood, Colin 86  
 Ḥidr (al-) 47  
 Hindī (al-), ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī al-Muttaġī 35, 53  
 Hobart, Angela 98  
 Hoca, Remmal 74  
 Houlemare, Marie 77  
 Huḍaybī (al-), Ḥasan 153  
 Hülāġū Ḥān 79  
 Ḥusayn, ‘Alī’s son 33, 46  
 Ḥusayn Efendi (Hezārfenn) 74  
 Ḥwāġa Aḥrār 90  
 İblis 44  
 Ibn al-Ġawzī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān 36–37, 39, 44–45  
 Ibn al-Mubārak 40  
 Ibn al-Munabbih, Hammām 40  
 Ibn al-Muqaffā’ 38  
 Ibn al-Nadīm 40  
 Ibn al-‘Arabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn 57  
 Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad 87–89, 92, 98  
 Ibn Faḍlān, Aḥmad 86–87  
 Ibn Ḥaġar, al-‘Asqalānī 57  
 Ibn Ḥaldūn 149  
 Ibn Ḥamīs, Abū al-Rabī’ Sulaymān 31  
 Ibn Ḥamīs al-Ġahanī al-Ka’bī al-Mawşili al-Şāfi‘ī, Muḥammad 31  
 Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad 40, 59–61  
 Ibn Hişām 148  
 Ibn İshāq 148  
 Ibn Kaṭīr, İsmā‘il ibn ‘Umar 30  
 Ibn Māġa 40–41, 45–46, 55–56  
 Ibn Qutayba 39  
 Ibn Rusta, Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn ‘Umar 87  
 Ibn Sa’d, Abū ‘Abd Allāh 40  
 Ibn Taymiyya, Taqī ad-Dīn 57  
 Ibn ‘Abbās, Companion of the Prophet 46, 53, 57

- Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih al-Andalusī 39  
Ibn ‘Umar, Companion of the Prophet 42–43  
Ibrāhīm, Sayyid 52  
Idri, Hassan 37  
Igbāriyya, Riḍā Aḥmad 30, 32, 38–39  
‘Iglūnī (al-), Ismā‘il ibn Muḥammad 57  
‘Imād al-Dīn, Muḥammad ibn Yūnus 31  
Imber, Colin 81  
İnalçik, Halil 71, 77–78, 80–81, 83–84  
‘Irāqī, Faḥr al-Dīn Ibrāhīm 93  
Isaac, patriarch 46  
Işfahānī (al-), Abū Nu‘aym 49  
Ishmael, patriarch 46  
Ismā‘il Bāšā al-Baġdādī 31  
Ismā‘il bin ‘Alī bin Maḥmūd al-Mālik al-Mu‘ayyad ‘Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Fidā’ 74  
Isnawī (al-), ‘Abd al-Raḥīm ibn al-Ḥasan 30  
Jabiri (al-), Muhammad Abid 149  
Jackson, Peter 67  
Jakubowycz, Mychajło 97  
Jankowski, Henryk 66  
Jeremiah, prophet 133, 138  
Jerome, saint 129  
Jesus of Nazareth 128–130, 149  
John XXIII, pope 118, 139  
Johnston, Jay 54  
Juynboll, Gualtherūs 33, 40  
Kafālī, Mustafa. 78  
Kaḥḥāla, ‘Umar Riḍā 31  
Kamālī, Mohammad Hashim 36, 41–42, 46, 60  
Kaṅçal-Ferrari, Nicole 96  
Kānūnī, Suleymān 85  
Karamustafa, Ahmet 94  
Karateke, Hakan T. 68  
Kármán, Gábor 82  
Karpov, Sergey Pavlovich 77  
Kavak, Nuri 72  
Keddie, Nikki R. 90  
Kellner-Heinkele, Barbara 74, 85  
Kelsen, Hans 149  
Kévonian, Kéram 77  
Khadher, Ahmad 46  
Khakimov, Rafael 76  
Khidr, *qāḍī* 88  
Khvalkov, Evgeny 67  
Kirmānī (al-), Ḥamīd al-Dīn 27  
Kiyotaki, Keiko 81  
Kizilov, Mikhail 67, 83–84, 86  
Klein, Denise 68, 78  
Kołodziejczyk, Dariusz 70, 79, 81–82, 85, 98  
Komaroff, Linda 79  
Kramarovsky, Mark 67, 89, 94  
Kunčević, Lovro 82  
Küpeli, Özer 85  
Królikowska-Jedlińska, Natalia 72, 79, 82–84, 87  
Kruk, Remke 13  
Kubrā, Naġm al-Dīn 88–89  
Lagalla, Roberto 113  
Lamprakis, Dimitrios K. 78  
La Pira, Giorgio 113–114, 116–119, 127, 133, 135–138, 141–143  
Lecker, Michael 147  
Lecomte, Gérard 41  
Lemercier-Quelquejey, Chantal 70, 86  
Lercaro, Giacomo 115  
Lewisohn, Leonard 93  
Lings, Martin 147  
Lo Jacono, Claudio 10, 147  
Lorefice, Corrado 114, 116, 135, 141  
Mahmood, Saba 150  
Maḥmūd I 73  
Maiorov, Alexander V. 66  
Mālik al-Aštar 96  
Mālik Ghulam Farid 25  
Manāwī (al-), Muḥammad 52  
Manganaro, Paolo 11  
Maṅšūr (al-) 13  
Mark, apostle 113, 127–129  
Martin, Bradford 90  
Massignon, Louis 37  
Mas‘ūdī (-al), Abu al-Ḥasan ‘Alī bin al-Ḥusayn 74  
Maurice, saint 130  
Māwardī (al-), ‘Alī 38  
Mawlānā Mehmet Neşri 74  
Maximilian, emperor 130  
Meḥmed II 80–81

- Melchert, Christofer 37, 40–41  
 Melloni, Alberto 116–117, 127, 135  
 Mikkelsen, Gunner 54  
 Milani, Milad 54  
 Mir Ahmed, Ali 25  
 Mirgaleev, Ilnur 75–76, 89, 95  
 Mīrhwānd, Muḥammad bin Ḥwāndšāh  
     bin Maḥmūd 74  
 Miskawayh, Aḥmad 39  
 Mitev, Plamen 77  
 Mogherini, Federica 113, 118, 121, 135–  
 136  
 Mokrani, Adnane 154  
 Montalto, Giangiacomo Ciaccio 138  
 Morgan, David 67, 79  
 Moro, Aldo 119  
 Moses, prophet 58, 132, 149  
 Mubārak, Ḥusnī 151–152  
 Mubārak, Suzanne 151  
 Mubarrad (al-), Abū al-‘Abbās 39  
 Muḥammad, prophet 14, 29, 32–34, 37–  
 49, 51–54–62, 93–95, 147–149  
 Muḥibb al-Dīn ibn al-Šiḥna 74  
 Muqtadir (al-) bi-llāh 87  
 Muslim Ibn al-Ḥaḡḡāḡ 40, 42, 50–51, 55,  
 59–60  
 Muṣṭafā ‘Alī (Efendi), 74  
 Mu‘āfā (al-) Ibn Ismā‘īl al-Mawṣilī 29–32,  
 34–39, 42–56, 59–62  
 Muẓaffar al-Dīn 88  
 Muzhir al-Dīn 88  
 Naḡīb al-Dīn 90  
 Nasafī (al-), Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad 27  
 Nāṣir (see ‘Abd al-Nāṣir)  
 Neckam, Alexander 9  
 Neuwirth, Angelika 140  
 Noja, Sergio 147  
 Nor Azian, Ab Rahman 46  
 Norris, Harry 87  
 Nur Yıldız, Sara 76  
 Ocak, Ahmet Yaşar 94  
 Ochsenwald, William 86  
 Oh, Chong Jin 70  
 O’Neill, Kelly 86  
 Osipian, Alexander 66, 77  
 Ostapchuk, Victor 74  
 Orlando, Leoluca 116  
 Öztürk, Yücel 81  
 Pajno, Alessandro 113, 115  
 Panzeca, Ivana 113  
 Papas, Alexandre 92  
 Pappalardo, Salvatore 142  
 Parvev, Ivan 86  
 Paul of Tarsus 119  
 Paul of Thebes 129  
 Paul VI, pope 114, 128, 133, 137  
 Peacock, Andrew Charles Spencer 76, 94,  
 98  
 Peter, saint 129  
 Picchi, Margherita 150–154  
 Plato 11  
 Plotinus 23  
 Pochekaev, Roman 70  
 Polo, Marco 87  
 Poonawala, Ismail K. 24  
 Popescu, Anca 81  
 Pubblici, Lorenzo 66  
 Puglisi, Pino 138  
 Pylynskyi, Yaroslav 66  
 Qardārī (al-), Maḥmūd ibn ‘Alī al-Saray  
     al-Bulgārī 95  
 Qārī (al-), ‘Alī 57  
 Qaṣṣāb (al-), Abū Sa‘īd 77  
 Qirimī, ‘Abd al-Ḥaffār 73–74, 78–79,  
 89–90  
 Qūblāi Ḥān 79  
 Qurṭubī (al-), Abū ‘Abd Allāh 34  
 Quṭb, Sayyid 153  
 Ramadan, Tariq 147  
 Ramli, Mohd Anwar 46  
 Ridgeon, Lloyd 93  
 Robson, James 39  
 Rodinson, Maxime 147  
 Rostagno, Lucia 27  
 Róna-Tas, András 66  
 Roux, Jean-Paul 88  
 Rūmī, Abū Bakr Qalandar 75, 91–92, 94,  
 98–99  
 Rūmī, Ḡalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad 93, 99  
 Rustemov, Oleg 72  
 Sādāt (al-), Anwar 151–152  
 Sādāt (al-), Ḡihān 151

- Şādiq (al-), Ğa'far 32  
Şafadī (al-), Şalāh al-Dīn Ḥalīl ibn Aybak 30  
Şahba, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Qāḍī 30–31  
Sale, George 26  
Samarinī (al-), Bāyazīd 'Uşşāqī 91  
Şaraf al-Dīn 'Alī Yazdī 74  
Sāviġi, Sayyid Ğamāl al-Dīn 93  
Sayfedinova, Elmira Gadelzyanovna 95  
Sāyilī (-al), Shams al-Dīn 88  
Sayyid Ātā 90  
Şā'rānī (al-), 'Abd al-Wahhāb Aḥmad 38, 49  
Scarcia Amoretti, Biancamaria 27  
Schamiloglu, Uli 73, 75, 79–80  
Schuman, Robert 135  
Şeker, Ayşe 95  
Şen, Gül 84  
Shahrazūri (al-), Ibn al-Şalāh 33  
Shamsimukhametova, Milyausha 75, 91–92  
Shenuda III, pope of Alexandria 128  
Shi'ār, Ja'far 91  
Siġistānī (al-), Abū Ya'qūb 27  
Sijpesteijn, Petra 46  
Şirvānī, Maġd al-Dīn 90  
Şirvānī, Sayyid Yahyā 90  
Smirnov, Vasily Dmitriyevich 68–70, 96  
Solomon, king 13, 52  
Sorbera, Lucia 150  
Spuler, Bertold 87  
Stalin, Iosif 83  
Stepanenko, Viktor 66  
Subkī (al-), 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn 'Alī 30–31  
Sugar, Peter F. 77  
Sulamī (al-), Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān 40  
Suyūtī (al-), Ğalāl al-Dīn 34, 37, 44, 57  
Syroechkovskii, Vladimir 71  
Ṭabarānī (al-), Sulaymān 38–39, 52, 59  
Ṭabarī (al-), Abū Ḥalaf 39  
Ṭabarī (al-), Ibn Ğarīr 34, 74  
Tawadros II, pope of Alexandria 113, 118, 127–128, 131–132, 136  
Thomas of Cantimpré 9–10  
Tiddia, F. 93  
Tirmidī (al-), Abū 'Īsā 35, 46, 55–56  
Toqa Timūr 79  
Tottoli, Roberto 147  
Tresso, Claudia M. 87  
Trimingham, John Spencer 38  
Trompf, Garry 54  
Tuluktumūr, emir 88  
Turanly, Ferhad 69–70  
Ūzbek Ḥān 67, 70, 73, 75, 78, 87–91, 94–95, 98  
Urunbaev, Asom 92  
Vasiliev, Alexander Alexandrovich 67  
Veinstein, Gilles 82  
Vel'aminov-Zernov, Vladimir 71  
Vercellin, Giorgio 149  
Vigliermo, Riccardo 101  
Vincent of Beauvais, 10  
Voloshinova, I.M. 96  
von der Leyen, Ursula 143  
Wad'ān, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn 'Ubayd Allāh 43–44  
Wakī Ibn al-Ġarrāh 40, 43  
Walker, Paul E. 23  
Wansbrough, John 149  
Williams, Brian G. 80, 83  
Wilson, Peter H. 77  
Witzenrath, Christoph 72  
Yāfi'ī (al-), Abū al-Sa'ādāt 36  
Yaġci, Zübeyde Güneş 72–73, 83  
Yakubovych, Mykhaylo 92  
Yaşa, Firat 72, 83–85  
Yaşar, Murat 70  
Yılmaz, Fehmi 72–73  
Yusuf Ali, Abdullah 11–12, 25  
Za'ida Ibn Qudāma Abū al-Şalt al-Kūfi 40  
Zamaḥşari (al-), Maḥmūd 49  
Zangī Ātā (Zangī Bābā) 90  
Zarcone, Thierry 98  
Zarkaşi (al-), Abū 'Abd Allāh 57  
Zayn al-'Ābidin, 'Alī 33  
Zaytsev, Ilya 77, 95–96  
Zimonyi, István 87  
Zirikli (al-), Ḥayr al-Dīn 31  
Zuppi, Matteo Maria 113–114, 118, 127, 133





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