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The Woman as a Construct: Reconsidering Men's Image of Women in the Arabic-Islamic World—the Case of Seventeenth-Century Cairo

The aim of the present article is to present and discuss a relatively unknown text, which, written in the Sufi environment of early post-Mamluk Cairo, constitutes noteworthy evidence of male patterns of thinking and fantasizing about women. The text is a part of the still unedited manual composed by ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Munāwī (1545–1621) titled *Tadhkirat ūlī al-albāb bi-maʿrifat al-ādāb,* which can be translated as "Memorandum for knowledgeable persons on the rules of [decent] behavior" or, alternatively, "What every knowledgeable Muslim male should know about life."[1] Used as a demonstration model, the text provides a chance to examine the multidimensional context of the way in which the "women's issue" was conceptualized and problematized in the Arabic-Islamic intellectual discourse in the period of the Mamluk-Ottoman transition.[2]

Focused on the culture-specific layer of the problem, the article deals, above all, with a variety of elements, situations, processes, and phenomena determined by, or related to, the Arabic-Islamic aspect of late Mamluk and early Ottoman Cairo. However, since the way men construct their images of women is, at its

[1]The still unedited work survives in a number of copies which are catalogued under different titles in different libraries. For the time being, I have identified three of them. There are two copies in Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmīyah (Bāb al-Khalq branch) in Cairo: the older one, dated 1023/1614–15 and in many places unreadable, is catalogued under 3083 *taṣawwuf;* in the present study it is referred to as "MS Cairo1." The other Dār al-Kutub copy, here referred to as "MS Cairo2," is catalogued under 230 *akhlāq* and is dated 1035/1626 (ref.: *Fihris al-kutub al-ʿarabīyah al-mawjūdah bi-al-Dār li-ghāyat al-sānah 1921* (Cairo, 1342/1924), 1:36; also Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur* (Leiden, 1937), S1:417. I would like to thank Prof. Frédéric Bauden for helping me with identifying Brockelmann's reference with the reference provided in the *Fihris.* The third and most recent copy of al-Munāwī's *Tadhkirah* belongs to Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; in the present study it is referred to as "MS Yale." Catalogued as Landberg MSS 163, it is not dated; according to the library information, it dates back to the nineteenth century. The copies are not identical as far as their contents and composition are concerned.

[2]For a multi-aspect discussion of the transition period which followed the Ottoman conquest of the Mamluk Sultanate see *The Mamluk-Ottoman Transition: Continuity and Change in Egypt and Bilād al-Shām in the Sixteenth Century,* ed. Gül Şen and Stephan Conermann (Bonn, 2017), passim. For a more detailed discussion of al-Munāwī's work in this context: Paulina B. Lewicka, "Challenges of Daily Life in Early-Ottoman Cairo: a Learned Sufi's Perspective: Preliminary Remarks on al-Munāwī's Memorandum on Decent Behavior," in ibid., 59–85.

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early stage, powered by the near-universal mechanism of misogyny, the extra-cultural dimension of al-Munāwī's text is also taken into account here.[3] As a psychological trait, misogyny involves the irrational fear, hatred of, contempt for, and disgust or abhorrence toward, women as an undifferentiated social category. "Visceral and irrational," based on passion, not thought, it is focused exclusively on denouncing and harming women.[4] However, while being an aspect of male psychology, misogyny interacts with culture. On the one hand, it translates into laws, norms, thoughts, and actual behavior and, as such, constitutes a causative force in producing the social-cultural reality. On the other hand, it can be encouraged and intensified by certain social and cultural circumstances[5] typical for a given space-time. Perceived from such a perspective, al-Munāwī's text can be analyzed as an example of the culturally-determined manifestation of an instinctual, near-universal prejudice activated in the shared psychic course of the male of the human species.

ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Munāwī al-Ḥaddādī was a well-educated, high-ranking Egyptian religious scholar of the Shafiʿi *madhhab* who, like many Cairenes of that time,

[3]For a discussion of those features of culture, society, language, behavior, and mind that are common to all humans, their culture notwithstanding see Donald Brown, *Human Universals* (New York, 1991).

[4]David D. Gilmore, *Misogyny: The Male Malady* (Philadelphia, 2001), 13. Defined as an irrational but ubiquitous prejudice stemming "from unresolved inner conflicts in men" (ibid., xii and 14), misogyny is also determined by the mechanisms governing human attitudes to the Other, including "irrational self-hate of one's negative identity and the irrational repudiation of inimical otherness"; Erik H. Erikson, "Autobiographic notes on the identity crisis," *Daedalus* 99, no. 4 (1970): 733, discussed by Patricia Martin Doyle in her "Women and Religion: Psychological and Cultural Implications," in *Religion and Sexism: Images of Woman in the Jewish and Christian Traditions,* ed. Rosemary R. Ruether (New York, 1974), 20. Some scholars link it to an existential need to distance humanity from the natural world and argue that misogynic reactions to feminine nature are at least partly a result of existential concerns associated with the awareness of our vulnerability toward death; see Jamie L. Goldenberg and Tomi-Ann Roberts, "The Beast within the Beauty: An Existential Perspective on the Objectification and Condemnation of Women," in *Handbook of Experimental Existential Psychology,* ed. Jeff Greenberg, Sander L. Koole, and Tom Pyszczynski (New York, London, 2004), 71–85.

[5]David Gilmore argues that "although psychogenic in origin, misogyny is often exacerbated by certain social and cultural conditions, and under special conditions can reach the proportion of a full-blown epidemic. These special conditions include certain forms of patrilineal, patrilocal organization, a certain kinship ideology that favors fraternal solidarity at the expense of the husband-wife bond, the persistence of chronic warfare, feuding or other forms of intergroup violence, religious puritanism or other forms of asceticism such as sexual prudery, unrealistic moral idealism, and certain kinds of domestic arrangements that occur in exogamous preindustrial societies." Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 10.

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was also a Sufi.[6] Born in the mid-sixteenth century, he witnessed the Mamluk-Ottoman transition and participated in processes which the Ottoman occupation of Egypt initiated. Influenced by the cultural capital of both the Mamluk and the Ottoman periods, al-Munāwī's rich literary output constituted, in a way, a record of the waning cultural, intellectual, social, and mental heritage of the Mamluk era as present in early-Ottoman Cairo.

This dual character relates to his *Tadhkirah* in a special way, for this book was much more personal than the almost one hundred others he produced throughout his life.[7] Despite what its Arabic title may suggest, *Tadhkirat ūlī al-albāb bi-maʿrifat al-ādāb* is not an etiquette handbook. Rather, it can be defined as a compendium of fundamental, practical-spiritual knowledge related to a number of everyday issues. At the same time, it includes hints about correct ways of behaving in certain situations. As such, it is an example of educational literature written in sixteenth/seventeenth-century Cairo according to a general model of a multi-topic, religiously inspired compendium set up by Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī in eleventh-century Baghdad.[8]

"Memorandum" consists of an introduction and twelve chapters, which cover various aspects of daily life. The titles of the chapters include: "the rules related to eating and drinking"; "the rules related to dress"; "the rules related to sexual intercourse and sexual potency"; "the rules related to sleeping"; "the rules related to bathing"; "the rules related to child-rearing"; and "the rules related to socializing." One of the chapters is devoted to women. Meaningfully enough, it is titled "On the rules related to relations with a wife and on what pertains to this problem."[9] Very generally speaking, the author features in it a collective profile of women

[6]For more biographical data on ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Munāwī see Lewicka, "Challenges of Daily Life," 59–64, and the references therein.

[7]Al-Munāwī's literary production, somewhat typical for an erudite Islamic theologian, covered quite diverse fields of knowledge. In his case the topics ranged from hadith commentary and Quranic exegesis to philosophy, medicine, and Sufism.

[8]Al-Ghazālī's (ca. 1058–1111) "Rubʿ al-ʿĀdāt" was, in fact, the first comprehensive Arabic-Islamic guide to various questions of daily life and to correct ways of behaving in various situations, a kind of a treatise on "what every Muslim should know on everyday issues" (the topics included table manners, rules of sexual intercourse, of travelling, of isolation, rules related to various kinds of relations with people, the Quranic rule of "ordering good and forbidding evil," etc.). As such, it became a model to follow for many future authors of various works of this kind. Al-Ghazālī, who is mentioned relatively frequently in *Tadhkirah*—even if not so frequently in the chapter under discussion—was for al-Munāwī an important and, in a way, obligatory paragon also for another reason: like al-Munāwī, al-Ghazālī was a Sufi who combined Sunni theology with Sufism; see Abū al-Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* (Cairo, 2005), 432–876.

[9]"Fī ādāb muʿāsharat al-zawjah wa-mutaʿalliqāt dhālika," *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fols. 29a–32b; MS Cairo1, fols. 26a–29a; MS Cairo2, fols. 42a–46a (pp. 81–89 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

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and provides suggestions as to the ways of dealing with them and with the threat they constitute. Following the tradition of justifying assumptions by quoting authorities, al-Munāwī naturally constructed his chapter upon quotations taken predominantly from the Quran and the Sunnah. The Prophet Muḥammad and the caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb are mentioned here most frequently, but among the authorities one can also find ʿAlī, ʿĀʾishah, al-Ḥasan, Abū Bakr, Imam al-Shāfiʿī, and other Islamic classics, Luqmān the Wise included. Interestingly enough, al-Ghazālī's name is mentioned only once, despite the fact that many fragments of the chapter seem to have been taken from al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*—or, more precisely, from its section titled "Etiquette of Cohabitation and What Should Take Place During Marriage, and the Obligations of Husband and Wife," which constitutes chapter three of the "Book on the Manners of Marriage" *(Kitāb ādāb al-nikāḥ).*[10]

The key thoughts which run through the chapter involve the idea that women are intellectually defective *(nāqiṣāt ʿaql),* that they are bad, strange, deceitful, lustful, greedy, and lead men astray. As such, they are dangerous and men should constantly beware of them. Another key message is that men are naturally superior to women and, consequently, have a duty to dominate and control them. These motives are quite often interrelated and involve a cause-and-effect connection between each other, as the information about inferiority, malice, greed, intellectual incompetence, and other annoying traits of women goes hand-in-hand with the statements about appropriate ways of handling them.

The most typical examples of this kind of approach involve sentences such as: "The husband is obligated to be just and polite towards them [i.e., his wives] ... and to tolerate insults from them out of pity for the deficiency of their minds."[11] Or: "It is necessary to follow the path of moderation both in disagreement and in agreement, and to follow the truth in it all, so as to be safe from their [i.e., women's] evil; because their scheming is great, their evil is widespread; their predominant characteristics are ill nature and weakness of mind, and this can-

[10]Which, in turn, is a section of a part titled "Norms of Daily Life" ("Rubʿ al-ʿādāt"). Interestingly enough, al-Munāwī ignored a meaningful fragment of al-Ghazālī's teachings, according to which the husband has the right "to chastise and induce her forcibly to obey" and, if preaching, warning, threatening, and avoiding her all fail, "he should beat her but not excessively, that is, to the point that he would inflict only pain but without breaking a bone or causing her to bleed." Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ,* 488; Engl. transl. in *Book on the Etiquette of Marriage Being the Second Book of the Section on Customs in the Book The Revival of the Religious Sciences by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali,* transl. Madelain Farah, available from: http://www.ghazali.org/works/marriage.htm (accessed August 30, 2017), chapter 3. "Etiquette of Cohabitation," pt. 1. 'Etiquette of cohabitation.'

[11] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 29a; MS Cairo1, fol. 26a; MS Cairo2, fol. 42a (p. 81 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

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not be set straight except through a certain amount of kindness combined with diplomacy."[12]

Interestingly enough, in al-Munāwī's times these tactics seem not to have been a mere theoretical model. Some men apparently followed them in daily life. Such was the case of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī (897–793/1492–1565), the most famous of al-Munāwī's Sufi masters. While obviously taking women's inferiority for granted, the shaykh al-Shaʿrānī seems to have been mindful enough to consider his four wives' feelings and emotions. And, as a head of a polygamous family, he at least tried to supervise his *ḥarīm* with a mixture of kindness and diplomacy rather than with violence or blackmail. "Remarkably sympathetic" (to use Michael Winter's words)[13] towards his wives, he might have been a caring husband. But he was also careful, for example, not to praise any of them in the presence of another, for he knew quite well that "pleasing one of them will anger the other."[14] At the same time, he took care that his wives never approved of, or made friends with, each other, as this sooner or later would backfire.[15]

Today it is impossible to say how popular the attitude practiced by al-Shaʿrānī was. Nevertheless, kindness combined with diplomacy was in fact the only reasonable method to deal with women successfully—at least judging by the convictions expressed in al-Munāwī's text. And it simply could not be otherwise: "women are made of a rib"[16] and they are like a rib: crooked and irreparable; "…If you try to straighten it, you will break it. Leave it alone and enjoy it in spite of its crookedness," the Prophet was reported to have taught.[17] In other words, women's

[12] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 31a; MS Cairo1 (the fragment is not identifiable); MS Cairo2, fol. 43a (p. 83 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[13] Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt: Studies in the Writings of ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Shaʿrānī* (New Brunswick and London, 1982), 292.

[14] Ibid., 295.

[15] Ibid.

[16] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fols. 29b, 30a; MS Cairo1, fol. 28b; MS Cairo2, fols. 43a (p. 83 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript), 45b (p. 88 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[17] See al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ,* 484–85; Engl. transl. in *Book on the Etiquette.* In *Iḥyāʾ* the maxim is introduced not as a hadith but as a *khabar.* The version quoted in *Tadhkirah,* MS Cairo2, fol. 43a (p. 83 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript), is shorter than that transmitted by al-Ghazālī; the version included in *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 29b, is introduced in the form of an anonymous rhyme. The hadith as transmitted in al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* reads: "Treat women with care, for woman was created from a rib, the most crooked part of which is the highest. If you try to straighten it [the rib], you break it and if you leave it, it remains crooked. So treat women carefully." See Denise A. Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life of the Islamic Eve: Menstruation and the Demonization of Motherhood," *Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 3 (1996): 311, and the references therein. Ibn Ḥanbal's version as transmitted in *Musnad* differs slightly: "Women were created from a rib which was not straightened at creation; if you straighten it …" (*Musnad,* 2:497,

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dysfunctional disposition is natural and attempts to improve it make no sense and are doomed to fail. That was exactly why the Prophet did his best to be kind to his women, so much so that he even joked and played with them although in order to do this he had "to lower himself in thoughts and actions to the level of their minds."[18] But the effort was worthwhile, as joking and fun-making "softened their hearts."[19]

Interestingly enough, the Muḥammadan description of woman as created from the man's rib had little to do with the Quranic narrative about the creation. In the Quran both individuals who make the first couple, and who remain unnamed, are created one after the other from one soul *(nafs).*[20] The account about woman having been created from man's rib, borrowed from the Book of Genesis[21] via the Jewish or Christian environment, was inserted into Islamic culture as late as approximately the eighth–ninth century, when the post-Quranic literary and institutional foundations of Islam were being established.[22] In other words, the

as quoted in *Book on the Etiquette,* n. 53. Whatever the spiritual value of the Sunnah, it should be remembered that the six official collections of hadiths were compiled during the ninth century on the basis of oral transmission and, despite the process of authentication to which they were subjected, cannot be considered a trustworthy source of information on seventh-century events, situations, or any other details.

[18] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 29b; MS Cairo1, fol. 26a; MS Cairo2, fol. 42a (p. 81 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[19] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 29b; MS Cairo1, fol. 26a; MS Cairo2, fol. 42a (p. 81 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[20] Quran 4:1; 39:6; the verses are discussed in Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life," 311.

[21] Gen. 2:20–22: "but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man." The Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books. New Revised Standard Version, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America 1989, available at: http://www.allsaintstupelo.com/Bible_NRSV.pdf (accessed August 29, 2017).

[22] While discussing this question, Spellberg argues that "Muslims were active in the selection and synthesis of Jewish and Christian materials within their own emerging Islamic religious tradition. These borrowings were effectively shaped by Muslim scholars in their inexorable march to manufacture meaning from archetypal sacred figures and events"; Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life," 306. Earlier on (p. 305) the same author states that "while borrowing from Jewish and Christian sources may have been officially rejected, assumptions about these materials continued to influence early Islamic written interpretations." Revealing as it is in many aspects, Spellberg's article does not include comments regarding the possible nature of the process of selection and use of Jewish and Christian materials. In fact, many aspects of the sophisticated context of this operation remain unclear. See especially Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early ʿAbbasid Society (2nd–4th/5th–10th c.)* (London, 2005).

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newly constructed tradition ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad words which not only disagreed with the Quranic narrative about creation, but successfully challenged the Quranic revelation.

Endorsed by al-Bukhārī and Ibn Ḥanbal (in both cases referring to the authority of Abū Hurayrah), the Prophet's alleged statement about women having been made of a rib was popularized by the fundamental texts of the subsequent centuries, such as al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* (eleventh–twelfth century), which seems to have been one of al-Munāwī's principal sources.[23] A reference to Eve's Genesis-based beginnings can be also found in a *khabar* included in al-Ṭabarī's *History* (ninth–tenth century), according to which Adam's wife was created from Adam's rib when he was asleep.[24]

Inconsistent as it was with the Quranic account, the Biblical information about the creation of woman/Eve from a rib offered a consistent, convincing, reliable, and, above all, much desired explanation of the reason behind women's "essential" evil, the faultiness of their character and intellect, and their immutable nature.[25] Apparently closer to the male intuition[26] than the Quranic version, with time the concept became an inherent part of the Islamic textual tradition which could thus become a part of the broader monotheistic discourse on women. Meaningfully enough, al-Munāwī's—and Muslims' in general—reading of the account matched the understanding of Christian theologians, who also noticed the significance of the curvature of the bone from which Eve was created.

"These defects can also be noticed in the original shaping of woman, since she was formed from a curved rib, that is, from the rib of the chest that is twisted and contrary, so to speak, to man. From this defect there also arises the fact that since she is an imperfect animal, she is always deceiving, and for this reason she is always deceptive," wrote inquisitors Heinrich Kraemer and Jacob Sprenger in their *Malleus maleficarum* (1487).[27] St. Albert, a thirteenth-century Dominican

[23] See above and nn. 8 and 10.

[24] Anonymous in the Quranic version, in al-Ṭabarī's *History* she is named Ḥawwāʾ, Eve; al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo, n.d.), 1:103; Engl. transl. in Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life," 309. For the discussion of the various Islamic versions of the creation of the first woman see ibid., 309 ff.

[25] As David Gilmore observed, "misogynists are 'essentialists,' positing a stereotypical 'essence' in women, a basic, immutable and evil nature allowing for no individual variation." Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 14.

[26] In the Jungian understanding of the term, i.e., as "perception via the unconscious"; see Carl Gustav Jung, *Psychological Types* (Princeton, 1971), 399.

[27] *Malleus Maleficarum,* I/42B, in Christopher S. Mackay, *The Hammer of Witches: A Complete Translation of the* Malleus Maleficarum (Cambridge, 2009), 165; the fragment is mentioned in Guy Bechtel, *Les quatre femmes de Dieu: La putain, la sorcière, la sainte & Bécassine* (Paris, 2000), 28. Cf. also, for example, *Élévations sur les mystères* (1694–95) by bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, who

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theologian of Cologne, did not mention the rib itself, but he referred to woman as a clumsy by-product of the Creation: "Woman is a misbegotten man and has a faulty and defective nature in comparison to his. Therefore she is unsure in herself. What she cannot get, she seeks to obtain through lying and diabolical deceptions. And so, to put it briefly, one must be on one's guard with every woman, as if she were a poisonous snake and the horned devil.... Thus in evil and perverse doings woman is cleverer, that is, slyer, than man. Her feelings drive woman toward every evil, just as reason impels man toward all good," St. Albert would teach in his *De animalibus.*[28]

In the Jewish tradition, Eve's creation from the rib also explains the imperfect nature of women. While answering a series of questions which people asked him in this regard, Rabbi Joshua explained, for example, that "'Adam was created from the earth, which never stinks, while Eve was created from a bone; if flesh is left for three days without salt, it will immediately stink' [that is why women use perfume: to conceal the stench of flesh]." Or: "'Adam was created from the earth, and if you put a drop of water on it, it immediately absorbs it. Eve was created from a bone; and if you soak a bone in water, even for several days, it will not absorb the water' [consequently, a woman is difficult to appease]."[29]

Against this defective character of women the Muḥammadan tradition recommended a protective measure, which, however, had to be applied skillfully and only on a limited scale. As al-Munāwī's text teaches, diplomacy and kindness should by no means imply yielding to women's views as these were not only useless and irresponsible, but also dangerous. As al-Munāwī put it, "they are [made of] a rib and because of their deficient intellect whoever relies upon their opinion or pays attention to what they say will suffer loss and will regret."[30] "Let no one consider opinions of women or act according to their reasoning, for whoever arranges anything in line with their views or acts in line with their words will lose

maintained that woman was a product of the additional bone of man; Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, *Élévations a Dieu sur tous les mystères de la religion chrétienne* (Paris, 1838), 59; the fragment is mentioned in Bechtel, *Quatre femmes,* 28.

[28] St. Albertus Magnus, *Quaestiones super De animalibus,* Book XV, Q 11, quoted in Stan Goff, *Borderline: Reflections on War, Sex and Church* (Eugene, Oregon, 2015), 67.

[29] Genesis Rabba 17:8, quoted in Tamar Kadari, "Eve: Midrash and Aggadah," in *Jewish Women's Archive: Encyclopedia,* https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/eve-midrash-and-aggadah (accessed August 30, 2017). Cf. the collation of the Haggada as arranged by Louis Ginzberg in 1909 under the title *The Legends of the Jews,* I/1, "Women," available from: http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/loj/ (accessed August 30, 2017).

[30] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 30a; MS Cairo1, fol. 28b; MS Cairo2, fol. 45b (p. 88 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

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his money,"[31] announces Khosrow, the king of Persia,[32] after his beloved slave Shirin made him act like a fool.

In the story about Shirin and Khosrow as quoted by al-Munāwī the otherwise mighty ruler is naïve, innocent, non-assertive, and unable to think on his own; tempted to do something nonsensical, he mindlessly follows the woman's suggestion and, dragged into a tricky situation, he inevitably loses.[33] The tone of the story corresponds, by the way, with the message which can be found in the *1001 Nights* collection, where the main plot of a number of the tales—such as "The Woman who Wanted to Deceive Her Husband," "Women's Wiles," and "The Craft and Malice of Women, or the Tale of the King, His Son, His Concubine, and the Seven Viziers"—is focused on the idea of woman leading man astray. In al-Munāwī's narrative the story of Shirin and Khosrow is presented as an eye-opening illustration of what may befall men, who, disregarding women's deficient intellect and faulty character, follow their opinions. However, neither the story about Shirin and Khosrow nor the tales included in the *Nights* collection are just examples of how popular literature dealt with women's deceitful nature. After all, the idea they communicated resembled that expressed in the narrative of the Fall as featured in Genesis. As such, they transmit a more serious message: men are exposed, and vulnerable, to the fundamental danger posed by females.

[31] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 30b; MS Cairo1, fol. 28b; MS Cairo2, fol. 46a (p. 89 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[32] Khosrow II, the last great king of the Sasanian Empire, reigned from 590 to 628.

[33] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fols. 30a–b; MS Cairo1, fols. 28b–29a; MS Cairo2, fols. 45b–46a (pp. 88–89 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript); the same story is also included in Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd al-Mālikī's *Ḥilyat al-kuramāʾ wa-bahjat al-nudamāʾ,* ed. Al-Sayyid Yūsuf Aḥmad (Beirut, 2010), 131–32. In fact, it is quite possible that both al-Munāwī and Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd al-Mālikī (fifteenth century) copied the story from *Al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk,* which book, attributed to Abū al-Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (eleventh–twelfth centuries), circulated in the Arabic-Islamic world from the second half of the twelfth century, when it was first translated from Persian into Arabic. However, those who read, and copied from, its chapter VII, titled "On women and their good and bad points," could not have known that the entire second part of *Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk,* the chapter on women included, was not the work of al-Ghazālī but some other, as yet unidentified, person. In the present article references to this text will refer to its author as (Pseudo-)al-Ghazālī. For a discussion of the misattribution to al-Ghazālī of the second part of *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* see Patricia Crone, "Did al-Ghazali Write a Mirror for Princes? On the Authorship of *Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk,*" *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 10 (1987): 167–91. Many thanks to Prof. Antonella Ghersetti for turning my attention to Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd al-Mālikī's work and Patricia Crone's arguments regarding the authorship of *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk.* For a discussion of *Ḥilyat al-kuramāʾ* see Antonella Ghersetti, "An Unpublished Anthology of the Mamluk Period on Generosity and Generous Men," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 13, no. 1 (2009): 107–20. For the story of Shirin and Khosrow as presented by (Pseudo-)al-Ghazālī see Abū al-Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Al-Tibr al-masbūk fī naṣīḥat al-mulūk* (Beirut, 1988), 130–1; English translation in F. R. C. Bagley, *Ghazali's Book of Counsel for Kings* (London, 1964), 171–72.

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For man, a woman is a threat—both in everyday space and in the dimension of cosmic transcendence. Strange, mysterious, wicked, deceptive, greedy, and immoral, she not only cleverly manipulates him, deliberately misguides him, bothers him, and provokes quarrels, but also tempts him, makes him lose control over his mind, and draws him away from religion. In short, she is a *fitnah*—anarchy, chaos, and a menace to the unity of the Islamic community.[34] It was not without reason that the Prophet warned the believers: "I am not leaving behind me a more harmful *fitnah* for men than women."[35] "And this is because," as al-Munāwī explains Muḥammad's words, "woman always instructs her husband to do evil and always encourages him to do evil. And the least corruption of hers is that she wants him to love this world so eagerly that he devotes himself to it. And there is no wickedness more harmful than that. This is apart from other things, such as the natural inclination to passionate love, hatred towards the hereafter,[36] looking after children as well as other kinds of disorders and calamities."[37] Therefore, urges al-Munāwī, "it is a duty of an intelligent and conscious man to be on his guard as far as the issue of women is concerned ...; for calamities, ruin, and ordeals/misfortune occur only through women."[38]

Intriguingly enough, al-Munāwī's reluctance regarding females' "natural inclination to passionate love" agrees with what St. Jerome (fourth century) would teach in this respect: "Woman's love in general is accused of ever being insatiable; put it out, it bursts into flame; give it plenty, it is again in need; it enervates a man's mind, and engrosses all thought except for the passion which it feeds."[39] In fact, the natural inclination to love was so alarming because it implied one of the gravest and most destructive aspects of woman's nature, that is her generally unbridled lust. This, fused with satanic powers and deceptiveness, made of her the source of temptation that deprived man of the ability to control himself. Woman

[34] Cf. Nadia M. El-Cheikh, "Describing the Other to Get at the Self: Byzantine Women in Arabic Sources (8th–11th Centuries)," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 40, no. 2 (1997): 240.

[35] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 30b; MS Cairo1 (the fragment is not identifiable); MS Cairo2 (the fragment is not identifiable).

[36] Cf. al-Ghazālī's comment in this respect as expressed in *Iḥyā',* 469: "As for a married man, he is most often driven into the paths of evil by following the whims of his wife and selling his hereafter for this world." Engl. transl. in *Book on the Etiquette,* chapter I. "Advantages and Disadvantages of Marriage," section 'Disadvantages of marriage.'

[37] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 30b; MS Cairo1 (the fragment is not identifiable); MS Cairo2 (the fragment is not identifiable).

[38] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 31b; MS Cairo1, fol. 29a; MS Cairo2, fol. 46a (p. 89 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[39] St. Jerome, *Against Jovinianus,* I/29, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/30091.htm (accessed August 30, 2017).

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was a trap. Woman was the tool of the devil. "You are the blade of my army, you are the locus of my secret, you are my arrow which I will shoot, and I will never miss...,"[40] the devil was supposed to have said when woman was created. So, at least, goes al-Munāwī's narrative, which also includes what seems to be the explanation—however obscure—of this enigmatic quote.

> Looking at women's charms is one of the arrows of the devil. The devil shoots it toward the heart and there is no way to ward it off except by lowering one's eyes and moving away from the shooter; for when he shoots this arrow with a bow of the image [*sic*],[41] and you do not stop in its path, the arrow will miss you; but if you display your heart and make it a target, it will hit you...

This way or another, the devil made females a trap for males:

> ...he creates attractive visions in men's hearts, and tempts men with them, and makes men commit adultery—just like the hunter who prepares his hunting net and provokes the prey to fall in its threads.[42]

The image of the tempting, lustful, devilish woman perversely destroying man's innocence, honesty, and holy peace of mind was not an exclusive obsession of al-Munāwī's. Nor was it limited to educated Sufi males of his time who constituted his spiritual-intellectual milieu and who, most probably, shared his anxieties. The insatiate lust as well as satanic powers and deceptiveness were stressed also in Mamluk-period sources. Probably the best known representative of this kind of thinking is Ibn al-Ḥājj, an uncompromising fourteenth-century Maliki

[40] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 32a; the fragment does not seem to be included in MS Cairo1 or MS Cairo2. "And you are my envoy when I need you" *(wa-anti rasūlī fī ḥājatī)* adds al-Ghazālī, whose version of the maxim differs slightly; according to him, the devil was supposed to have said: "You are half of my army etc." *(anti niṣf jundī).* Al-Ghazālī also explains what "half of [the devil's] army" means: "half of his army is lust and the other half is anger" *(fa-niṣf jundihi al-shahwah wa-niṣf jundihi al-ghaḍab);* see al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ,* 986 ("Kitāb kasr al-shahawāt"). Al-Munāwī quoted the maxim in his *Fayḍ al-qadīr* as well; see ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr sharḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr* (Beirut, 1391/1972), 5:436. Cf. also the version in, for example, al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, *Al-Manhīyāt* (Cairo, n.d.), 129. Cf. also the hadith according to which the Prophet declared: "When a woman approaches, she approaches in the image of the devil ..."; al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ,* 464; Engl. transl. in pt. I, "Advantages and Disadvantages of Marriage," chapter 'Advantages of marriage.'

[41] *"Fa innahu innamā yarmī hadhā al-sahm ʿan qaws al-ṣūrah ..."*

[42] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 32a.

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scholar from Maghreb, who resided in Cairo and for whom the presence of the female body constituted a fundamental threat to the order governing men's world.[43]

The mentality which associated woman with disaster and God's anger made some Muslim thinkers go even further and assign women to the leading role in the apocalyptic literature they produced.[44] The visions which such a literature promoted differed in details. Nonetheless, the general idea underlying the thinking and fantasizing of its authors was that in the waning time of the world women would abound; this, in turn, would cause a disaster in the form of their gaining control of society.[45] The fourteenth/fifteenth-century Cairene theologian Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī was of the opinion that when the world becomes filled with women, knowledge would be forgotten and ignorance would prevail—a vision which, by the way, constituted one of the most frequently mentioned signs of the apocalypse. Al-Nawawī, a thirteenth-century theologian from Syria, linked the possible increase in the number of women with the coming of corruption, and frightened his readers with a vision of the world which, inhabited by shameless women, would be engrossed in fornication.[46] Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Qurṭubī, an Andalusian living in Cairo and al-Nawawī's contemporary, insisted that when the end of time comes, women, overwhelmed by insatiate lust, would force men to fornicate with them, screaming and calling them in.[47]

Interestingly enough, these kinds of visions, having first developed in the minds of religious scholars, at some point started to have a life of their own. The "real" stories into which they transformed confirmed the validity of the theologians' arguments and the actuality of the danger. In the annal devoted to the events of 778/1376, the Cairene chronicler Ibn Iyās (fifteenth–sixteenth century) reported that in both Upper (Ṣaʿīd) and Lower Egypt there were "special districts [*ḥārāt*] for prostitutes and music," or places where adultery, wine drinking, and other abominable things were practiced openly—so much so that if a stranger

[43] Huda Lutfi, "Manners and Customs of Fourteenth-Century Cairene Women: Female Anarchy versus Male Sharʿi Order in Muslim Prescriptive Treatises," in *Women in Middle Eastern History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender,* ed. Nikki R. Keddie and Beth Baron (New Haven, 1999), 100.

[44] For an excellent discussion of the motif of woman as present in Islamic writings referring to the apocalypse see Walid Saleh, "The Woman as a Locus of Apocalyptic Anxiety in Medieval Sunnī Islam," in *Myths, Historical Archetypes and Symbolic Figures in Arabic Literature: Towards a New Hermeneutic Approach,* ed. Angelika Neuwirth, Birgit Embalo, Sebastian Günter, and Maher Jarrar (Stuttgart, 1999), 123–45.

[45] Saleh, "Woman as a Locus," 131.

[46] Ibid., 133, 135–36.

[47] Ibid., 134, 137.

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found himself there by accident, with no intention to commit adultery, prostitutes of the district would catch him and force him to fornicate with them.[48]

The phobias related to the abundance of shameless women, prevalent prostitution, and obligatory, if not forced, fornication, apparently psychogenic in origin, seem to be associated with men's pathological fear of being murdered or otherwise destroyed by female sexual organs and the sexual act itself.[49] Clearly typical for the Arabic-Islamic intellectual discourse of the Mamluk Near East, such fears are not directly expressed in al-Munāwī's text. Nevertheless, they might have been familiar to him and, if so, played a role in shaping his frame of mind.

Be that as it may, the idea of men's exposure and vulnerability to the fundamental danger posed by females permeates the entire chapter. Interestingly enough, its author's convictions, consistent with the narrative of the Fall as offered in the Book of Genesis, harmonize with the direction indicated by its earliest, pre-Islamic interpretations, which insisted that it was the woman who was to be blamed for what had happened—even though man and woman had succumbed to sin together.[50] Presumed guilty and considered the original trespasser, the first woman became the reason behind misfortunes and calamities. "From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die," one could learn from the apocryphal Book of Sirach (ca. 200 to 175 B.C.).[51] "And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner,"[52] St. Paul (d. 64–67) would stress. "You are the devil's gateway; you are she who first violated the forbidden tree and broke the law of God. It was you who coaxed your way around him whom the devil had not the force to attack. With what ease you shattered that image of God: Man! Because of the death you merited, even the Son of God had to die…" wrote Tertullian from Carthage, "the father of Latin theology" (ca. 155–240).[53]

Distant as he was from those authors and from the texts they shared, al-Munāwī himself produced a text which, having constituted a link in the reac-

[48] See Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-zuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr,* ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafá (Wiesbaden-Cairo, 1961–75), 1:2:167 (the annal for 778/1376).

[49] See Gilmore's discussion of such fears among, for example, New Guinean Etoro, Gimi, and Sambia people, Melanesians, Amazonian Tukanoan Indians, and Myanmar Buddhists; Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 30–32, 34–35, 52–53, 63, respectively; also his references in this respect to Greek mythology, 58, and to the expressions used by Bernard of Cluny, Walter Map, and William Shakespeare, 37.

[50] Cf. Bechtel, *Quatre femmes,* 86.

[51] Sirach 25:24.

[52] 1 Timothy 2:14.

[53] Tertullian, *De cultu feminarum,* I/1.2., http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf04/anf04-06.htm#P277_54727 (accessed August 30, 2017). Also quoted in Rosemary Radford Ruether, "Misogynism and Virginal Feminism in the Fathers of the Church," in Ruether, *Religion and Sexism,* 157.

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tion chain initiated by the Biblical image of Eve, associated them in the same discourse community.[54] This is valid also for the account of the way the first woman was punished for her disobedience: "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you,"[55] God communicates to Eve in Genesis. Tertullian, clearly content with the line of the sentence, wanted women to understand God's words properly. He insisted that guilty, punished, and suffering Eve should be identified with her entire gender: "In pain shall you bring forth children, woman, and you shall turn to your husband and he shall rule over you. And do you not know that you are Eve? God's sentence hangs still over all your sex and His punishment weighs down upon you."[56]

The Genesis-based idea of women being punished for disobedience and the negative equation of Eve with all women[57] caught the attention of Muslim theologians, too. Al-Munāwī devotes a significant fragment of his chapter on women to this issue. The fragment, which specifies punishments inflicted by God upon Eve, is much more elaborate than the list recorded in the Bible.

> They say that after Eve had disobeyed God in the Garden He punished the woman with eighteen punishments: menstruation; childbearing; childbirth and being soiled by it; separation from her mother; moving in with a stranger who marries her; no control over her own affairs; the inferior nature of her inheritance and of her testimony, for testimony of two women is worth that of one man; no right to divorce; the requirement of staying at home; covering

[54] Thomas Kuhn used the term "textual community" to refer to epistemological communities with shared texts, interpretations, and beliefs. See entry "Interpretive community" in *Oxford Dictionary of Media and Communication* (Oxford, 2011), 223; also Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the 11th and 12th Centuries* (Princeton, 1983), 80–151, as presented by Maren R. Niehoff, "Did the *Timaeus* create a Textual Community," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 47 (2007): 162.

[55] Gen. 3:16.

[56] Tertullian, *De cultu feminarum,* 1/1.1.

[57] In the Islamic tradition, the negative equation of Eve with all women was authorized by the words ascribed to the Prophet Muḥammad: "Were it not for Ḥawwāʾ [Eve], the female would not deceive her husband." Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ,* 4:161, as discussed in Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life," 311. Cf. also Spellberg's remarks (p. 314) on a statement included in al-Ṭabarī's *Tārīkh:* "Divine condemnation of Eve leads ineluctably to the characterization and punishment of all women: 'If it were not for the misfortune which befell Eve, women on Earth would not menstruate and they would be good-natured and would have easy pregnancies and births.'" Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh,* 1:109. Again, the alleged originator of the hadith was Abū Hurayrah (d. 678), the Prophet's Companion, "who had attested interests in the Torah and the Christian Bible"; Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life," 311.

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> her head; not being allowed to go out without a male guardian; no chance, which men have, to pray on Fridays, and during feasts and funeral processions, and to wage holy war; no permission to lead men or to have authority over them or to judge; no ability to acquire knowledge; and while the [Heavenly] Reward and Pay equals 1000 units, women receive one unit only. And women-whores will be punished with half a punishment [inflicted on] the community on the Day of Judgement.[58]

The list, which remains anonymous, does not seem to have been widely distributed. Apart from al-Munāwī's *Tadhkirah,* it was also quoted in Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd al-Mālikī's *Ḥilyat al-kuramāʾ wa-bahjat al-nudamāʾ,* a Sufi source originating in fifteenth-century Cairo, but the two versions, i.e., Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd's and al-Munāwī's, differ slightly.[59] As is the case with the story of Shirin and Khosrow,[60] it is quite probable that both authors copied the text from (Pseudo-)al-Ghazālī's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk,* which apparently circulated in Cairene Sufi circles.[61]

The text deserves a multi-aspect analysis and interpretation. As this would exceed the scope of this article, I will only refer briefly to one aspect of it—namely, that al-Munāwī (or, more properly, the source he follows) places in one basket elements belonging to categories which at first glance seem unmixable. One of these categories covers aspects of female biology that men universally dislike, abhor, are scared of, or in other ways are disturbed by.[62] The other involves a variety of gender-based discriminative regulations and practices that men imposed on women within the framework of Islamic society. The issue of prostitutes, to which the author points in the end of the list, belongs to yet another category of problems.[63] In the text that al-Munāwī presents all are collectively labeled God's punishments inflicted upon women for the disobedience of Eve.

[58] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fols. 32a–b; MS Cairo1, fol. 28a; MS Cairo2, fol. 44b (p. 86 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[59] Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd al-Mālikī, *Ḥilyat al-kuramāʾ,* 153–54.

[60] See above at n. 33.

[61] See Bagley, *Ghazali's Book,* 164. In the 1964 Beirut edition of *Al-Tibr al-masbūk* the fragment is omitted.

[62] See Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 17–56, passim.

[63] Apart from apparently being an aspect of misogyny (cf. above, n. 49, and the references therein), male anxieties associated with prostitutes found social expression in the regulations of Islamic law that ban prostitution (see Quran 24:33). Together with wine, prostitution constituted an essential part of what medieval Islam generally branded as vice (the category could also include beer, hashish, musical instruments, singers, and sometimes also homosexuality). For the anti-vice campaigns directed against prostitution in the Mamluk sultanate see Paulina B. Lewicka, "Kobieta w społeczeństwie miejskim średniowiecznego Egiptu: Czasy Mameluków, 1250–1517," in *Kobieta w literaturze i kulturze Egiptu,* ed. Katarzyna Pachniak (Warsaw, 2016), 57–59.

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Such an arrangement of the list, intriguingly, brings to mind the pattern already used in Genesis, where out of the threefold punishment to which the first woman is sentenced two elements belong to the category of female biology and woman's role in reproduction, while the remaining one has a social character and involves woman's submission to man. In a way, then, al-Munāwī reproduced the idea which had been verbalized at least two millennia earlier in the grand Biblical narrative and which, in fact, epitomizes the essence of misogyny.[64] Was, however, the list al-Munāwī quoted indeed a literary meme,[65] a reworked, elaborated model originating from Genesis, or was the entire reason-effect/crime-punishment structure a topos, an archetypal pattern associated with the universal "gendered psychosis,"[66] as misogyny was once called? Or was it both?

While commenting on the post-Quranic references to the Genesis-based image of Eve, Denise A. Spellberg noticed that the echoes of Genesis 3:16 as present in al-Ṭabarī's *History* omit a key part of the punishment meted out to women through Eve. "Then He [Allah] said: 'O Ḥawwāʾ, you are the one who beguiled My slave [Adam]. You shall not have a single pregnancy that will not be difficult. When you desire to give birth to what is in your womb, you will quite often be on the verge of death,'" reads al-Ṭabarī's account. Spellberg's conclusion was that "Muslims did not need to turn to Genesis or Jewish and Christian tradition to document male superiority as divinely ordained; they had the Quran to express a similar gender-power relationship: 'Men are in charge of women, because Allah made one of them to excel the other' (Quran 4:34)."[67]

Indeed, al-Ṭabarī's account does not mention women's subordination to men among God's punishments. But the Quran does not present it this way, either. The category covering the major examples of Islamic gender-based discrimination as featured in al-Munāwī's work (and earlier in Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd's *Ḥilyat al-kuramāʾ*) is all the more intriguing in this context—who introduced this analogy (however inconspicuous) to Judeo-Christian tradition into the Islamic discourse and why?

[64]Interestingly enough, contemporary scholarship dealing with misogyny, while making use of these two aspects of the phenomenon, reorganizes their arrangement and presents them as a cause-and-effect relationship. According to contemporary understanding, men's instinctual imperative to exercise superiority over women constitutes a re-enactment of the traumas which seem to stem from unresolved inner conflicts in men (cf. Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 14) that are related to women's role in reproduction. For a survey of psychological and psychoanalytical theories related to the role of the mother in generating women-hating see Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 151–68.

[65]As genes transmit biological information, memes act as units transmitting ideas, behaviors, or styles that spread from person to person within a given culture. While self-replicating through imitation, they modify human behavior and contribute to spreading a given culture pattern. See, above all, Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (Oxford, 1989).

[66]Adam Jukes quoted in Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 14.

[67]Spellberg, "Writing the Unwritten Life," 314.

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Who included the sufferings resulting from gender-based social inequality into the Islamic list of divine punishments inflicted upon women? Was the list included by al-Munāwī's predecessor in his *Ḥilyat al-kuramā'* the invention of its author or did he take it from some earlier source? If so, what was it?

Whatever it was, one cannot resist the impression that by defining the discriminative measures as divine punishments the author of the list projected upon God the responsibility for the way he and other men contributed to the discomforts, humiliation, and distress of women. Quite possibly, he somehow tried to rationalize not only the dissimilarity of the sexes but also the immense asymmetry in male-female relations, and such an explanation could have soothed him somehow—all the more so in that from this perspective women appeared to deserve their miserable fate. Moreover, this fate proved to have been their (i.e., Eve's) own fault and for all their sufferings they could only blame themselves. This way the author of al-Munāwī's source could make certain that contributing to somebody's hardship and humiliation was not only just and legal but, endorsed by the highest authority of all, it proved obligatory and undisputable. True, al-Munāwī was not the original author of this text; but it fitted his way of thinking enough to make him choose it from a broad spectrum of other texts and to include and promote it in his book.

The persistence of the ever-present image of woman as subhuman and evil incarnate could not, and did not, remain neutral. On the contrary, it generated reactions which followed the pattern valid universally wherever discrimination becomes an institutionalized and encouraged norm. It should not be surprising, then, that one projected upon women all one hated and feared; one tended to be increasingly prejudiced and suspicious and to voice accusations and insults. And one was deeply convinced that women naturally deserved degradation, humiliation, and shame.

In his chapter on women al-Munāwī went so far as to introduce an element of dehumanization, otherwise rarely used in Arabic-Islamic literature in reference to humans of inferior status. Nevertheless, the entire last page of the approximately seven-page chapter is dedicated to comparing women to ten kinds of animals, as nothing could illustrate the bad and contemptible features of female nature in a more vivid way.

> Know that women are of ten kinds, and that the feature of each of them resembles a feature of a certain animal. So the first one is like a pig—the only things which she does well are eating, drinking, having a full stomach, and breaking vessels. She is not concerned with where she goes and does not care for anything. She does not think of the hereafter or about the Punishment or Reward. She does

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> nothing to take care of children, to raise them or educate them. She wears dirty clothes and smells bad....[68]

Then he goes on with his list, which includes monkey, dog, viper, donkey, scorpion, mouse, bird, fox, and sheep. None of the comparisons is nice, except that involving a sheep—a woman compared to this animal is useful and full of loving care for her husband, her relatives, her neighbors, and her children:

> ...The second is like a monkey: she cares for wearing colorful clothes, pearls, jewels, and trinkets, and she is proud in front of her companions. And even though she knows she means something to her husband, she nevertheless deceives him. The third one is like a dog: if her husband talks to her, she jumps at his face, shouts at him, quarrels with him, and falls upon him like a dog. And when she notices that his pouch is filled with gold, silver, and coppers, and his house loaded with goods, livestock, grains, and fruits, she becomes fond of him, treats him politely, and says "I am devoted to you." And when his condition is contrary to this, she jumps like a dog at his face, and expels him from his house, and destroys his life with her. The fourth is like a viper: she speaks to her husband softly and, at the same time, she harbors ill will against him and does not wish him well—like a viper with its soft touch and its killing poison. The fifth one is like a she-donkey: when she stops on the bridge she does not move when beaten and remains stubborn, sticking to her opinion and proud of herself. The sixth is like a scorpion. She keeps spreading calumnies and slanders in the houses of neighbors, and listens to what they say so as to use it to sow dissension, enmity, quarrels and strife among them—just like a scorpion which stings wherever it appears. The seventh is like a mouse: she steals wheat from her husband's house, and his means of subsistence, and gives them to *al-ghazzālāt.*[69] The eighth is like a bird: she goes round in circles all day and never stops circulating, and says to her husband, "Where have you been, you don't need me anymore, you love another, and you are not honest with me or tender to me." The ninth is like a fox: as soon as her husband leaves

[68] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 32b; MS Cairo1, fols. 28a–28b; MS Cairo2, fols. 44b–45a (pp. 86–87 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[69] "*... wa-taʿṭīhi lil-ghazzālāt";* I tend to interpret *al-ghazzālāt* as "spinners." However, the meaning of the sentence remains unclear. Bagley's translation of the relevant fragment of (Pseudo-)al-Ghazālī's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk* reads: "She steals barley, wheat, rice and miscellaneous supplies and gives away yarn for spinning." See Bagley, *Ghazali's Book,* 166.

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> his house she eats whatever she sees and sleeps and pretends to be sick. And when her husband comes home she says, "You left me in the house alone and ailing," which she does to start a quarrel. The tenth is like a sheep: she is blessed, and everything coming from her is beneficial; this is a virtuous woman, with a lot of benefits and loving care for her husband, her relatives, her neighbors, and her children.[70]

Judging by its extremely rare occurrence, the text was not popularly known. Again, it is quite probable that al-Munāwī quoted it from (Pseudo-)al-Ghazālī's *Naṣīḥat al-mulūk,* which seems to be the only extant Arabic work to transmit the list.[71] Unlike the story of Shirin and Khosrow and the list of eighteen punishments which God had inflicted upon women for Eve's disobedience, the list of ten animals to which women were compared was not quoted by Ibn Abī al-ʿĪd al-Mālikī in his *Ḥilyat al-kuramāʾ.*

Comparing women (or other humans of inferior status) to animals is not a commonplace feature in premodern Arabic-Islamic literature, but such a motif was used from time to time.[72] Typically enough, the pre-Islamic poets of the sixth century, such as Imruʾ al-Qays, Ṭarafah, or al-Nābighah al-Dhubyānī compared women to gazelles—in praise of their beauty, of course.[73] But some two centuries later a reverse standard appeared. Abū Tammām (eighth–ninth century), an Abbasid-era Arab poet and a Muslim convert born to Christian parents, compared women to a dog, a viper, a hyena, a crocodile, a magpie (thief), and a monkey.[74] Such comparisons are but a few of many sarcastic, women-insulting threads which can be found in his *Kitāb al-ḥamāsah* or, more precisely, in two chapters of the anthology.[75] In fact, it cannot be excluded that Abū Tammām's verses were the original inspiration for the author of the text quoted by al-Munāwī.

[70] *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 32b; MS Cairo1, fols. 28a–28b; MS Cairo2, fols. 44b–45a (pp. 86–87 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript).

[71] However, the fragment is missing from some Arabic editions of *Al-Tibr al-masbūk,* such as that published in Beirut in 1964. For the translation see Bagley, *Ghazali's Book,* 165–66. Cf. also Crone, "Did al-Ghazali Write a Mirror for Princes?," 179.

[72] See Barbara Ostafin's fascinating analysis of Abū Tammām's *Kitāb al-ḥamāsah,* where such comparisons are discussed; Barbara Ostafin, "Piękna czy brzydka? Występna czy cnotliwa? Wybrane wizerunki postaci kobiety w literaturze arabskiej do X w.," in *W kręgu zagadnień świata arabskiego,* ed. Adnan Abbas and Adrianna Maśko (Poznań, 2015), 1–13.

[73] Ibid., 3.

[74] Ibid., 6.

[75] Meaningfully enough, the chapters are titled "Satire" *(Hijāʾ)* and "Condemnation of Women" *(Madhammat al-nisāʾ).*

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Occasionally, women were compared to animals in religious texts, too. As the Prophetic Tradition has it, Muḥammad once compared a virtuous woman to a white crow in order to stress the rarity of the former,[76] while ʿĀʾishah was angered at the notion that women might be religiously unclean, considering that this was equating women with dogs and donkeys.[77] Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, a tenth-century hadith scholar, jurist, and Sufi from Baghdad, used such a device for technical reasons: he compared women to animals (and garments) to explain the institution of polygamy. Just as some people become tired of riding the same kind of animal, he maintained, some men get tired of the same woman. And just as God created four different kinds of riding animals—donkeys, mules, horses, and camels—He created the institution of polygamy, thus allowing men to change women as they would change mounts, because, just as the gaits of donkeys, mules, horses, and camels differ, women, too, differ in bed.[78]

It should probably not be surprising that in their discussions of the subject of women, Christian theologians also used the motif of animals. Peter Damian, an eleventh-century Benedictine monk and Church reformer, called women she-tigers and she-snakes,[79] while bishop Roger de Caen (eleventh–twelfth century) defined them as predatory she-wolves.[80] For Petrus Comestor, a twelfth-century French theological writer and the Chancellor of Notre Dame in Paris, women were annoying animals. Vincent of Beauvais, a thirteenth-century Dominican friar and the author of the *Speculum Maius,* the major medieval encyclopedia, called women mares. For Gilles Bellemère (fifteenth century), women connoted ephemeral flies which die young because of their weak constitution.[81]

While commenting on the approach of the Christian theologians, Guy Bechtel stressed that their emphasis on women's animality was meant to demonstrate that women were men's deadly enemies. Moreover, equating women with ani-

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[76] "A virtuous woman amongst other women is like a white-footed crow [*aʿṣam*] among a hundred crows." *Tadhkirah,* MS Yale, fol. 31a; MS Cairo1 (the fragment is not identifiable); MS Cairo2, fol. 43a (p. 83 according to numbers applied on the sheets of the manuscript); quoted by al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ*, 484; Engl. transl. *Book of the Etiquette,* chapter 3, "Etiquette of Cohabitation," pt. 1. 'Etiquette of cohabitation.'

[77] Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven, 1992), 47.

[78] Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb fī muʿāmalat al-maḥbūb* (Cairo, 1893), 2:244, as discussed by Beatrix Immenkamp, "Marriage and Celibacy in Medieval Islam: A Study of Ghazali's Kitāb Ādāb al-Nikāḥ" (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1994), 118.

[79] Bechtel, *Quatre femmes,* 42.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid., 43.

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mals implied that they were more or less intellectually handicapped.[82] Be that as it may, such a device was certainly not innocent, if only because dehumanization, apart from reflecting disdain for the dehumanized, is one of the central processes in the transformation of ordinary, normal people into indifferent or even wanton perpetrators of evil.[83] In other words, an animalized perception of women involved an insidious mechanism which could, and most probably did, cause a lot of harm—especially so in that in the environment where the inferiority of one social category was an institutionalized norm, dehumanization was probably an inherent element of the language.

One wonders, however, whether—or to what extent—the narrative about the Fall was responsible for such an attitude toward women. In fact, the story about the first man and the first woman as featured in the Book of Genesis proved immensely influential, persuasive, and compelling. Seemingly dating back to the sixth–fifth centuries B.C.E., it not only defined woman's place in Judaism but, from late antiquity on, inspired generations of Christian theologians and ecclesiastical writers. Then, drawn into a constant, never-ending process of recycling of texts, sometime between the eighth and ninth centuries the story entered the Arabic-Islamic textual culture. Replicated, recycled, processed, and referred to by ever new authors, the successive remakes of the Biblical narrative influenced successive circles of readers and listeners. The process was fundamental for the popularization and preservation of the vision of woman as originally offered in the Book of Genesis.

As the author of his "On the rules related to relations with a wife…" al-Munāwī plays an active role in this process. While composing the *adab*-style collection of stories, maxims, statements, and commandments, he follows the tradition practiced by generations of Arabic-Islamic authors who transmitted and replicated knowledge about woman as a weird, faulty, corrupt, wicked, and dreadful kind of creature. It was due to this tradition that the symbolic fundamental of thinking about women, at least among educated people, was uninterruptedly informed by messages included in the Quran, the Sunnah, and other early post-Quranic writings. Such messages, some of which were inspired by the Genesis-based image of Eve, ranged from the Quranic verse 4:34, according to which "men are superior to women on account of the qualities with which God has gifted the one above the

[82]Ibid.; cf. Sarah Shaver Hughes and Brady Hughes, *Women in World History,* vol. 1, *Readings from Prehistory to 1500* (Armonk, New York, 1995), 3, where the authors argue that "women in the premodern, literate historical world lived, often with few civil rights, in societies dominated by men. Many women were sold by their fathers to their husbands, abused by them, and legally considered to have no more intellectual capacity than a child."

[83]See Philip Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil* (New York, 2007), xii.

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other,"[84] to countless sayings ascribed to Muḥammad—such as the one insisting that women are "intellectually and religiously defective."[85] Stories, maxims, and statements credited to other Islamic authorities, as well as anonymous folk tales such as that about Shirin and Khosrow or those included in *1001 Nights,* complemented Muslims' body of knowledge pertaining to the nature of women.

Constantly reverberating in all kinds of narratives, such messages remained inherent elements of religio-social discourse throughout the centuries. And, having permeated the cultural climate and social mood of the community, they accompanied each of its members throughout life, thus contributing to defining one's frame of mind in this respect. As such, they shaped, spread, and preserved the common belief in women's "natural," God-ordained inferiority, evil, and intellectual incompetence, which features were perceived as an indisputable axiom. Women continued thus to be a problem and a threat, both to an individual man and to the entire Islamic community. Like all other members of this community, al-Munāwī, too, had this axiom burned in his mind; moreover, he never knew any alternatives to it.

As an element of the lasting, text-based continuum, al-Munāwī's chapter reveals how hatred and fear of women and contempt towards them as well as norms imposing the lack of symmetry between the sexes were shared between cultures.[86] But, while constituting a part of the cross-cultural grand narrative about woman

[84] "Men are superior to women on account of the qualities with which God has gifted the one above the other, and on account of the outlay they make from their substance for them. Virtuous women are obedient, careful during the husband's absence, because God has of them been careful. But chide those for whose refractoriness you have cause to fear; remove them into beds apart, and scourge them: but if they are obedient to you, then seek not occasion against them: verily, God is High, Great!"; Quran 4:34, transl. by John Medows Rodwell.

[85] *Al-nisāʾ nāqiṣāt ʿaql wa-dīn;* a number of similar hadiths are quoted by Shirley Guthrie, *Arab Women in the Middle Ages: Private Lives and Public Roles* (London, 2001), 162, 163. See also El-Cheikh, "Describing the Other," 240. Cf. a similar line of thought as penned by Kramer and Sprenger in their *Malleus Maleficarum:* "This is clear in the case of the wife of Samson, who, after importuning him greatly to reveal to her the riddle that he had given to his companions, revealed to them what he had said and thus committed deception. It is also clear in connection with the first woman that they have less faith by nature, since in response to the serpent's question as to why they did not eat of every tree in paradise, she said, 'From every . . . lest we may die' [Gen. 3:2–3]. In this she shows that she is doubtful and does not have faith in the words of God. All this is also demonstrated by the etymology of the noun. For the word *'femina'* [the Latin word for woman] is spoken as 'fe' and 'minus,' because she has and keeps less [Latin *'minus'*] faith [Latin *'fidem'*]." *Malleus Maleficarum,* I/42C, in Mackay, *Hammer,* 165; the fragment discussed in Bechtel, *Quatre femmes,* 130.

[86] Cf. the argument of Leila Ahmed, according to whom "the attitudes to women expressed in the urban centers of the Mediterranean Middle East appear to have formed a part of a cultural

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as an intellectually and socially inferior category, the chapter reflects, above all, the frame of mind typical for the Islamic culture within which certain constructs were transmitted from one generation to the next. However, apart from those broad contexts, al-Munāwī's textualized vision also had a very local, specific, tangible dimension.

Learned normative or didactic texts do not tell us directly what was happening on the ground. Nevertheless, they are records of the state of knowledge and mind of their authors as members of certain social groups and, as such, may be indicative of some aspects of the social-cultural reality in which a given group lives.[87] After all, meant for a particular group (or community), they contribute to molding its styles of thought and, in this way, affect the convictions, values, and patterns of behavior that are shared by this group.

In the case of al-Munāwī, the group, or his immediate spiritual-intellectual milieu, comprised, above all, a network of educated males with Sufi inclinations who lived in Cairo in the first hundred years of the Ottoman occupation. It was their texts, their philosophy, their system of values, and their mental habits that informed al-Munāwī's perception of, and attitude towards, the world, women included. The messages included in the *Tadhkirah* were addressed, above all, to readers from this group, to people like al-Munāwī himself: well-educated males, concerned with religion, and in one way or another influenced by Sufism. By promoting among them aversion to—and contempt towards—women, his text stimulated such feelings. In this way it generated and sustained a "hostile imagination," a dangerous psychological construct that, embedded deeply in human minds, makes people hate and harm the Other,[88] which category, in this case, covered humans of the female sex.

In a community whose religious law and social norms promoted denouncing and despising women and, at the same time, encouraged, if not imposed, polygamy,[89] family life must have been a difficult experience, and one's home, filled with stressed, competing wives and concubines, must have been an un-

continuum extending over the territories that had formed part of the Byzantine and Sasanian empires." Ahmed, *Women and Gender,* 68.

[87]As is usually the case with literature—including that of al-Munāwī—the author, having been shaped by and through the culture of his community, produces messages addressed to this community. Consequently, the community to which the author belongs not only influences him, but is also in turn influenced by his texts, which contribute to shaping its styles of thought and, through these, affect not only the culturally specific ideas, but also the patterns of behavior that are shared by its members.

[88]Zimbardo, *Lucifer Effect,* 11, 14. The term is also used by social philosopher Sam Keen, *Faces of the Enemy: Reflections of the Hostile Imagination* (New York, 1986).

[89]Although studies by Yossef Rapoport point, in a way, to the bright side of the situation; see especially his *Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society* (Cambridge, 2005).

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friendly place to stay. In order to avoid or counter various kinds of mental and physical threats they feel from women, men in many cultures establish male-only spaces, structures, associations, rituals, and events that provide them much coveted safety—such as the Japanese island of Okinoshima, gentlemen's clubs in the United Kingdom and the United States, or Melanesian ceremonial men's houses, to name but a few examples. In Cairo such secure, women-free spaces could be found in Sufi *zāwiyah*s and *khānqāh*s, which in the late Mamluk and early Ottoman period were quite numerous in the city.[90] Moreover, many—if not the majority of—Cairenes, ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Munāwī included, were adherents of not one, but several Sufi *ṭarīqah*s,[91] which situation, apart from increasing men's opportunities to prove their piousness, multiplied the number of retreats they could attend. Just as in the cases of many other exclusively male spaces, spending time in Sufi places provided a perfect way to avoid one's home, to escape from challenges which one was not able to face, and to stay away from all kinds of pressures, tensions, animosities, conflicts, and the countless daily traumas which polygamous family life generated for all its members. In other words, among the causes of the immense popularity of Sufism in the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, Cairene males' need to stay away from home and to frequent male-only spaces should not be disregarded, all other spiritual, social, economic, and political reasons for this phenomenon notwithstanding.[92]

[90] The *khānqāh* was introduced to Egypt by Saladin, that is in the beginning of the Ayyubid period. The origins of the *zāwiyah* and the date of its introduction to Egypt remain unknown; see Leonor Fernandes, *The Evolution of a Sufi Institution in Mamluk Egypt: The Khanqah* (Berlin, 1988), 13–16; ʿĀṣim Muḥammad Raziq, *Khanqāwāt al-Ṣūfīyah fī Miṣr fī al-ʿAṣrayn al-Ayyūbī wa-al-Mamlūkī,* 2 vols. (Cairo, 1997); on *khānqāh*s and *zāwiyah*s and the differences between these institutions see also Éric Geoffroy, *Le Soufisme en Égypte et en Syrie sous les derniers Mamelouks et les premieres Ottomans: Orientations spirituelles et enjeux culturelles* (Damascus, 1996), 165–75; Jean-Claude Garcin, "Les soufis dans la ville mamelouke d'Égypte: Histoire du soufisme et histoire global," in *Le développement de soufisme en Égypte a l'époque mamelouke,* ed. Adam Sabra and Richard McGregor (Cairo, 2006), 11–40; and Nathan Hofer, *The Popularisation of Sufism in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt, 1173–1325* (Edinburgh, 2015), 35–102.

[91] For the profile of these *ṭarīqah*s as present in early Ottoman Cairo see Michael Winter, *Egyptian Society under Ottoman Rule* (London and New York, 1992), 133–42; idem, *Society and Religion,* 88–125.

[92] On the popularity of Sufism in early Ottoman Egypt and the impact of the Ottoman occupation on the further spread of it see Winter, *Society and Religion,* 19–20. However, Michael Winter's references to the late Mamluk and post-Mamluk/Ottoman period as one of decadence, stagnation, literary decline, etc., are disputable, particularly in light of recent research tendencies. Cf. also Fernandes, *Evolution,* 2–3, where the reasons behind the Mamluks' encouragement of the development of Sufism are mentioned; and, above all, the comprehensive study of the popularization of Sufism in medieval Egypt by Nathan Hofer, *Popularisation,* passim.

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But the attitude which al-Munāwī's vision reflected did not translate exclusively into the family lives of Cairene Sufis, while the social expression of it was not limited to men's withdrawal into women-free structures. Since male superiority implies, above all, power and control over females and their sexuality, the authorities residing in late Mamluk and early Ottoman Cairo focused on the idea of covering and secluding the woman's body so as to make it invisible. The body was the most dangerous of all the fearsome attributes a woman possessed: being an abode of sin, it threatened the existing social order in a particular way. If left uncontrolled, it was, moreover, not only a potential source of *fitnah,* but could also provoke God's anger and His subsequent punishment in the form of natural disasters and plagues. Hiding women's bodies and making them unseen could increase the chances of averting calamity.[93] The belief in a cause-and-effect connection between women's visibility and natural disasters was especially manifest in fifteenth-century Egypt, where the political-religious authorities decided to fight the recurring waves of plague by demonstrating piousness, which measure implied, above all, banning women from leaving their homes.[94] In this way the authorities demonstrated that they were doing their best to protect the population and, at the same time, pointed out those who were naturally responsible for all the misfortunes. Thus, if the measures taken did not work, it was not the fault of the inaction of those in power but of women as such. During the first years of the Ottoman occupation, decisions banning women from leaving their homes were issued a number of times, albeit for different reasons.[95]

[93]Cf. Saleh, "Woman as a Locus," 139–44. One of the key issues in this respect was to separate women from men because, as some authors maintained, mixing the two constituted "the root of every disaster and evil and one of the major causes of collective punishments from God.... It is the cause of epidemics death and uninterrupted plagues." See Ibn al-Jawzī as quoted in ibid., 144.

[94]The key moment in the history of women's seclusion came in 1437, when the high-ranking judiciaries and theologians assembled at a meeting with sultan Barsbāy (1422–38) in order to decide how to deal with the extremely aggressive recurrence of plague and the deadly harvest it reaped. Having agreed that the phenomenon was caused by the prevalence of adultery and a great number of women who day and night showed up in the streets, the learned shayhks convinced the sultan to absolutely and completely ban women from leaving their homes so as to "stop the spread of the epidemics"; Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʿrifat Duwal al-Mulūk,* ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā (Beirut, 1997), 7:350; see also Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 5:462. Atypically enough, the ban was immediately and zealously implemented: Dawlāt Khūjah, the sadistic *muḥtasib* of Cairo, patrolled the streets together with his assistants and beat the women they caught. Some chroniclers provide details of one or two cases of women for whom the confrontation with the *muḥtasib*'s patrol had tragic consequences; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk,* 7:354; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 2:185–86; Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah,* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn (Beirut, 1992), 14:275–79.

[95]The bans issued in 1518 and 1519 were meant to protect women (as well as slaves and boys) from Turkish troops who apparently practiced abduction on a significant scale; Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,*

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While commenting on "many male medieval [Islamic] jurists'" concern with "the preservation of sexual boundaries and the avoidance of illicit dalliances" Jonathan Berkey once observed that "their fears on this score are often intriguing, and would amply reward a psychological analysis."[96] Indeed, psychoanalytical techniques might prove helpful in explaining al-Munāwī's attitude toward women.[97] Moreover, they might also enhance our understanding of the way this attitude was formed by and through culture.[98] However, psychoanalysis generally cannot be done without very detailed personal data, especially those related to one's emotional growth. We do not have such data for al-Munāwī or any other educated urban males of early Ottoman Egypt whose way of thinking in this respect presumably did not differ much from his.[99]

5:188 (the annal for 923) and 283 (the annal for 924). In 1522 a new announcement was issued: the Ottoman governor and *qāḍī al-ʿaskar* banned women from walking in the streets and riding donkeys assisted by a donkey-driver. Those who violated the new regulations were to be flogged or dragged through the streets of Cairo, their hair tied to a horsetail (Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ,* 5:461–62 [the annal for 928]). While discussing the impact of the ideals of seclusion and invisibility on social reality Leila Ahmed argues that "ideals, even though undercut by economic and functional exigencies, are nevertheless an important and influential component of the system of meanings determining the psychological experience of being for both women and men. In addition to their impact on the real but often intangible domains of psychological experience, they constitute part of the conceptual ground upon which laws relating to marriage, divorce, property and other matters are based; and indeed in the matters of law as well as the social ideal, there are parallels between Byzantine and Islamic legal thought." Ahmed, *Women and Gender,* 27.

[96] Jonathan P. Berkey, "Tradition, Innovation, and the Construction of Knowledge in the Medieval Near East," *Past and Present* 146 (1995): 56.

[97] In fact, attempts to explain misogyny in psychological and psychoanalytical terms have already been undertaken; see, for example, Fatna A. Sabbah, *Woman in the Muslim Unconscious* (New York, 1984); Page duBois, *Sowing the Body: Psychoanalysis and Ancient Representations of Women* (Chicago and London, 1991). For a survey of appropriate theories see Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 151–68, and the references therein.

[98] Robert Golding, "Freud, Psychoanalysis, and Sociology: Some Observations on the Sociological Analysis of the Individual," *The British Journal of Sociology* 33, no. 4 (1982): 545.

[99] Although such simple generalizations are not always permitted, it is very tempting to assume that the educated males of early Ottoman Egypt emerged out of relatively similar style of childrearing and, as such, shared not only collective childhood experiences but also the psychic conflicts resulting from them. Such an assumption would allow us to consider them members of the same psychoclass. The concept of psychoclass is key to the thought of Lloyd deMause, the pioneer of psychohistory. It emerges out of a particular style of childrearing and child abuse at a particular period of a society's development. Another key psychohistorical concept is that of group fantasy, which deMause regards as a mediating force between a psychoclass's collective childhood experiences (and the psychic conflicts emerging therefrom) and the psychoclass's behavior in politics, religion, and other aspects of social life. According to his psychogenic theory of history, it is not "economic class" or "social class" but "psychoclass"—shared childrearing modes—that is the real basis for understanding motivation in history; see Lloyd deMause, *Foun-*

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But culture matters, too, and the inner psychic word of any social individual is far from being free of its impact.[100] Although we know virtually nothing about what he went through as a child, we can still deal with al-Munāwī as a product of the time, place, and community in which he lived, a product of the patterns of culture, norms, values, ideas, stereotypes, symbols, and practices that surrounded him and were instilled in his mind through socialization and the experiences of everyday life. Among all the elements which contributed to forming his mindset and developing his vision of women, the texts he read (which are, in fact, the only hard proof at our disposal) must have played a very special role. After all, his entire chapter is composed of quotations which, since they were taken from authoritative, reliable, convincing sources, circulated within the Arabic-Islamic tradition as undisputable truth. Fundamental for defining the trajectory of Muslims' attitudes, many of these texts—just like those composed by Christian theologians—carried literary memes which, having moved from culture to culture, transmitted the elements of the negative vision of woman taken from outside.[101]

Obviously enough, the role of the Biblical account of Eve in shaping Islamic visions of woman was significant, but within the framework of Mediterranean antiquity this account was by no means unique—it was, after all, consistent with the story of Pandora, who released all the evils of humanity from her jar, as well as with the philosophy of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), whose central idea concerning women was that females existed as natural deformities or imperfect males[102] and that "the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules, and the other is ruled."[103] There were the hostile writings of St. Paul, which,

dations of Psychohistory, II (New York, 1982), available from: http://www.psychohistory.com/htm (accessed August 30, 2017).

[100]However, while arguing that psychoanalysis can enhance our understanding of the way in which the individual is formed by and through culture, Golding stressed that "it also cautions us against making simple generalizations about the impact of culture upon the person, showing that the individual never submits himself unequivocally to its demands and interdicts." (Golding, "Freud," 557). Obviously enough, the psychological mechanisms determining every individual's reaction to the social situation cannot be disregarded if only because, as Golding put it, "the relationship between individual and society is complex, tense and contradictory…" (Golding, "Freud," 547).

[101]As Leila Ahmed argues while commenting on the Islamic stance in this respect, "the attitudes to women expressed in the urban centers of the Mediterranean Middle East appear to have formed a part of a cultural continuum extending over the territories that had formed part of the Byzantine and Sasanian empires." Ahmed, *Women and Gender,* 68.

[102]Aristotle, *Generation of Animals: With an English Translation by A.L. Peck* (London, 1943), II.3.737a; IV.6.775a.

[103]*Aristotle's Politics: Translated by Benjamin Jowett, with Introduction, Analysis and Index by H. W. C. Davis* (Oxford, 1920), I.5.1254b; quoted in Ahmed, *Women and Gender,* 29. For more on the Ancient Greek approach see Ruth Padel, "Women: Model for Possession by Greek Daemons," in

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guided as they were by the Biblical account, were no less affected by Greek philosophers, who had always perceived woman as a source of all problems.[104] The same, by the way, seems to be valid for the statements included in the Book of Sirach: "Any iniquity is small compared to a woman's iniquity; may a sinner's lot befall her!"[105] The philosophies behind the approach typical for ancient and late ancient Middle Eastern cultures, such as the Mesopotamian or Persian, did not, by the way, differ much.[106]

Whether the cross-cultural similarities regarding the negative image of woman resulted from borrowing or developed "accidentally," independent of outside influences, is not always possible to say. Whatever the case, the original reason behind the similarities apparently lies in the shared psychic course of the male of the species.[107] The provenience of the author notwithstanding, he constructed his vision of woman in agreement with certain universal, archetypal patterns that, recorded somewhere in men's collective unconscious,[108] constituted the proto-source of various local, culturally-determined renditions of the master idea.

Images of Women in Antiquity, ed. Averil Cameron and Amélie Kuhrt (Detroit, 1983), 3–19; and Hughes and Hughes, *Women in World History,* essays collected in chapter 5, "Greece: Patriarchal Dominance in Classical Athens," 79–96.

[104] Bechtel, *Quatre femmes,* 33.

[105] Sirach 25:19.

[106] For a survey of the Mesopotamian approach to women see Ahmed, *Women and Gender,* 11–24; also an insightful article on witchcraft in Assyria: Sue Rollin, "Women and Witchcraft in Ancient Assyria," in *Images,* ed. Cameron and Kuhrt, 34–45. For the Sasanian culture see Jenny Rose, "Three Queens, Two Wives, and a Goddess: Roles and Images of Women in Sasanian Iran," in *Women in the Medieval Islamic World,* ed. Gavin R. G. Hambly (New York, 1998), 29–54.

[107] Cf. Gilmore, *Misogyny,* 10.

[108] Cf. Carl Gustav Jung, *The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious* (Princeton, 1981).

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