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# Diplomarbeit

Titel der Diplomarbeit

“Dogs in Islam”

Verfasserin:

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Angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magister der Philosophie (Mag. Phil.)

Wien 2011

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt: A 385

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt: Diplomstudium Arabistik

Betreuer: Univ.- Prof. Dr. Stephan Procházka

# Contents

Preface.....	i
Introduction.....	v
I. Animal Rights, Dogs and Contemporary Discussions.....	1
I.1. Animal Rights Movement and Religions.....	1
I.2. Dogs in Monotheistic Religions and Semitic Geography.....	6
I.3. Dogs by the pre-islamic Arabs.....	10
I.4 The new situation of dogs through the emergence of Islam.....	14
I.5. Contemporary Discussions about Dogs.....	15
II. <i>Qur'ān</i> .....	19
II.1. Animals as <i>Umma</i> .....	21
II.1.2 Anthropocentrism and Man as “ <i>ḥalīfat Allāh fī l-ard</i> ”.....	22
II.2. Dogs in the <i>Qur'ān</i> .....	24
II.3. <i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> and <i>Aṣḥāb al-Kahf</i> .....	25
II.3.1. The Dog and its Name.....	28
II.3.2. The Significance of the Story with respect to Dogs.....	32
II.4. <i>Sūrat al-Mā'ida</i> and <i>min al-ḡawāriḥ mukallibīn</i> .....	36
II.5. <i>Sūrat al-Acrāf</i> and the “panting dog” allegory.....	38
III. <i>Sunna</i> and <i>Hadith</i> Literature.....	40
III.1. The hadiths in Classical Sunnī sources.....	42

III.2. A general critique of “anti-dog” Hadiths.....	57
III.3. A Contemporary Case about a Hadith and the Reliability of Abū Hurayra.....	59
III.4. Defending dogs through the Prophet: The “pro-dog” <i>Hadiths</i> .....	63
IV. <i>Fiqh</i> and <i>Maḍāhib</i> .....	65
IV.1. Dogs: <i>nağis</i> or <i>ṭāhir</i> .....	67
IV.2. Ablution and dogs.....	68
IV.3. Eating dogs, selling dogs and the situation of hunting dogs.....	69
IV.4. al-Faḍl’s ideas on the Islamic Law about Dogs.....	72
V. Literature.....	74
V.1. General Characteristics of <i>adab</i> and Classification of Dogs.....	75
V.2. <i>Ğāḥiḏ</i> and <i>Kitāb al-ḥayawān</i> : “Restoring the dog to its just place” .....	78
V.2.1. Defending the dogs in <i>Kitāb al-ḥayawān</i> .....	79
V.2.2. The problem of Dogs as wild and domesticated Animals.....	82
V.3. <i>Ibn al-Marzubān</i> and <i>The Book of the Superiority of Dogs to Some of Those Who Wear Clothes (Kitāb faḍl al-kilāb ʿalā kaṭīr mimman labisa ṭiyāb)</i> .....	83
V.3.1. Virtues of the dogs.....	86
V.3.2. Bringing evidence from the Prophet and Companions.....	89
V.4. <i>Ṭardīya</i> Poety and the <i>Salūqī</i> .....	91
V.4.1. The Style and Phases of the <i>ṭardīya</i> .....	93
V.4.2. <i>Abū Nuwās</i> and Examples of <i>Salūqī</i> Praise in his Poems.....	94

V.5. <i>Iḥwān aṣ-Ṣafā</i> and <i>The Case of Animals versus Man (Daʿwa I-ḥayawān diḍḍa l-insān ʿinda malik al-ğinn)</i> .....	97
V.5.1. The dogs and their loyalty to Man.....	98
VI. Sufism.....	101
VI.1. <i>The Madman of Laylā</i> and the Dog.....	104
VI.1.1. The significance of the dog and the “holy folly”.....	106
VI.2. Negative allegory: Dogs as <i>nafs al-ammāra</i> .....	109
VII. Dog related stories in Ottoman literature, Turkish anecdotes and folk tales.....	112
VIII. Dog tales in Persian literature.....	116
IX. Conclusion.....	128
Bibliography.....	131
Supplement.....	136

## Preface

My basic motivation for choosing this topic for my Master's thesis was highly personal. This is actually a work that I want to improve and make mature in the future either as a part of my academic career or as a personal hobby. I have always had an emotional connection with dogs and I came to the idea for this topic during the one year I have spent in a small village by the town of Bartın on the Black Sea coast of Turkey, where we grounded a shoe factory with my husband in the year 2005. This one year was one of the 5 years of my overall residency in Turkey in the years 2003-2005 in Ankara, Istanbul and the above mentioned Yenipazar village and 2008-2010 in Göktürk/Kemerburgaz, Istanbul.

During my residence in the Turkish village I was taking care of the street dogs, feeding and sterilizing them. I personally owned five of them and kept them as pets in our factory. There were many other local people that were feeding dogs like me. On the other hand, people were shocked and found it irritable when they learned that I was taking my dogs inside our home when they were sick or when it was very cold. Almost everyone mentioned the hadith that indicates angels don't enter a home where there is a dog in it. The idea of having dogs as pets was regarded as somehow a spoilt western habit. Another thing that struck my attention was that, once in a while there were news in the media about the mass-killings of dogs. A state-appointed mufti or self-appointed imām was declaring that dogs were impure animals and people that were sick of the high dog population in their town or village due to unwanted litters were shooting or poisoning them. I have realized many news in this manner in which Islam was used as a justification and legitimization tool for the dog massacres, which were unfortunately becoming necessary due to irresponsibility and negligence of the local administration in effectively controlling the dog populations. Later on when I came to Vienna to continue my studies, all of my dogs in the village, together with 200 others, were shot by the local administration, which declared that this was necessary due to the potential danger of rabies epidemic. I have realized in a brief visit to the village that the people that were

feeding and helping these poor dogs were quite indifferent to the issue. It seemed obvious to me at that time, the belief that 'dogs are impure anyway' has been encoded in their religious consciousness.

My heart filled with sadness because of the killing of my dogs and the continuously recurring dog massacres in Turkey. I have promised to myself to work voluntarily for animal rights organizations if I ever come back to Turkey again.

During all these heated debates about the dog massacres in the media, I have realized that in some of the programs, articles or pamphlets of animal rights organizations, it was mentioned that in Islam none of Allah's creation has been cursed in any way. Some of them were stating that the believer's relation to animals must be based on respect (*'amara llāhu rifqa bi l-ḥayawāni*) and that God promised a reward for any good done to a living creature and that cruelty against animals contradicts with the Qur'ānic view that all animals form communities just like human beings. These arguments were supported with the pro-dog hadiths specifically in relation to dog abuse. Here I have realized that though animal rights activists in Muslim countries were engaging and drawing upon a completely secular, modern and western animal rights discourse, they felt the need to use some standard Islamic arguments to communicate with the more conservative public.

I hope that exploring the rich diversity of ideas on dogs that has always been present throughout the Islamic history will challenge the well-accepted notion of impurity and baseness of dogs. I am hoping to improve my work in the future with the very obvious personal goal of being somehow helpful to dogs in the Muslim world in this manner. Nevertheless, I am well aware of the fact that as a Czech Master's student of Islamic Sciences at the Vienna University, I am not a suitable candidate to challenge the conservative Muslims mode of thinking on the subject. Plus, it would be naïve to suppose that putting forth some arguments through the classical Islamic texts might cause a shift in the long-established individual beliefs and social norms. In my opinion, the beliefs and practices of Muslims have been shaped more like by cultural, historical

and geographical conditions, rather than through purely authoritative Islamic sources. In case one might argue that the negative attitude towards dogs has a purely textual background, my study will try to show that there are ample sources and interpretations in the Islamic history which might justify different opinions on the subject. However, as I will also imply throughout my study, this negative attitude towards dogs has more like social, geographical and cultural reasons going back to the pre-Islamic times.

However, my experience in Turkey has made me realize two things. The first was the way environmental and animal rights movements adopted the dominant western discourse in the field. Second was the effort of the intellectuals of the new generation trying to reinvent the richness and complexity of their own intellectual tradition. Islamic civilization is for sure one of the most crowning achievements of humankind and there is still a rich intellectual heritage waiting to be rediscovered. In my work I hope to demonstrate that this Islamic heritage possesses much resources to extend moral considerability to nature and animals. The audience to my future work, I hope, will be more likely the people that try to reinvent and reinterpret their Islamic intellectual history in parallel to the new influences and emerging global concerns which are advocated mostly in the West. I believe only this kind of a synthesis may bring a large-scale attitude shift in Muslim societies. According to my experiences in Turkey, for the vast majority of people only an argument based on the sources of a religious tradition will be convincing when the subject is the purity and rights of the dogs. And finally it is among those people with a special sensitivity for dogs who, I hope, might be the audience of my work when I can mature my subject to the necessary level. This master's thesis is well intended to supply ample historical resources from the Islamic heritage to the new Muslim intellectuals who not only are driven by the global concerns about environmental and animal rights but also possess the necessary channels to communicate with the traditional Muslim masses.

I would consider myself extremely happy if one day my work can help the creation of a serious discussion atmosphere on the subject and be of help to a few dogs in Muslim countries.

I single-mindedly want to devote my work to Professor Procházka. Although I had to give two long intervals to my studies due to my health conditions, residence in Turkey, pregnancy and the birth of my twins, he encouraged me to continue writing this thesis with his kind attention. For this, I will always be grateful to him.



# Introduction

Dogs occupy a unique position in the realm of species as being the first animal to be domesticated in the history of the humankind. They have been bred and trained through thousands of years for different kinds of purposes such as protection, guiding, shepherding, and companionship. Dogs are social animals and their natural instincts have endowed them with the capacity to demonstrate loyalty and devotion to their owners. Although the companionship between humans and dogs is such an old phenomenon, it is mostly in the modern times that dogs are owned as pets rather than for their utility. Especially, in Western societies the characteristics of loyalty, friendship, and affection have earned dogs an important position and many dog owners, like me, view their pets as full-fledged members of their families.

On the other hand, this first friend of the human race has also been a victim of much myth, prejudice and superstitions throughout the history. In many cultures throughout various periods of time they have been haunted not only because they have caused the spread of specific dog-related diseases but also because they were accepted as being bad omens and evil spirits.

It is a well-known stereotype that Muslims usually have a negative view of dogs. Traditionally, dogs have been seen as impure, and there are many references to it in the Sunna literature and the Islamic legal tradition. Due to this negative view, dogs are held in low esteem in the Muslim countries, and it is extremely uncommon to keep dogs as pets in their culture. Furthermore, nowadays this religious perception is occasionally used to justify the abuse and neglect of dogs in Muslim countries.

The basic aim of this Master's thesis is to present a historical and conceptual framework for the relationship between Islam and dogs. As such, the primary focus of my work is to analyze and understand what the stereotype that declares dogs to be impure in Islam really means. I will be searching the historical circumstances and precedents that led to

this negative view. I will present a historical survey of basic texts about dogs in the Islamic literature. In this general survey I will be following a chronicle sequence.

As my work will try to show, it cannot be claimed that there is a unified and monolithic understanding of dogs in the history of Islamic literature. I will try to prove that in this subject it is an unjustifiable partisan stand to single out a negative view as uniquely authoritative and normative in Islam. Obviously, while my study will comb through the Islamic literature, it will concentrate on the texts that are more positive rather than the opposite in their stance towards dogs. The negative mentions on the dogs are mostly hadiths that are attributed to the Prophet and the legal discourse built on the foundation of those hadiths. My study will show that in the rich complexity of the hadith - and legal (*fiqh*) literatures, one may also find other points of view. Furthermore, it will focus on the Qur'ān, adab- and Ṣūfī literatures which were much more compassionate and favorable to dogs. It is a well-known cliché that authority in Islam relies solely on the Divine Revelation.

For my citations from the Qur'ān, I will predominantly use the Message of the Qur'ān of Muhammad Asad due to its valuable footnotes from classical *tafsīr*-literature. All the hadiths that I will cite from are the searchable hadith database of the University of Southern California.<sup>1</sup> My analysis of the hadith- and fiqh literatures will limit itself to the mainstream Sunnī Islam, which is constructed historically by the works of the four major law schools in the Classical period. The Shi'ite interpretation of Islam on the subject will be briefly exemplified as a source of some of the contemporary discussions.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/search.html>

# I. Animal Rights, Dogs and Contemporary Discussions

## I.1. Animal Rights Movement and Religions

Both the content as well as the basic motivation of this study are actually closely interrelated with the rise and the maturity of animal rights and animal liberation movements in the modern world. As animals began to be treated in a more respectful manner and their rights became protected by law, the Muslim world started to be more and more under pressure of the Western critics due to the situation of animals in their respective countries. Most of the contemporary discussions on the subject started as a response from Muslim thinkers to the critiques made by the animal rights activists influenced by the recent western discourse on the subject-matter.

Below there is a description of an animal market in Cairo from the eyes of a Westerner:

Es gibt eine Abteilung nur für Hunde und Katzen auf dem Markt. Schwer zu verstehen für mich. Besonders was die Hunde angeht, die im Islam als unrein gelten. Die Stadt ist voll von streunenden Hunden und Katzen. An vielen Plätzen waren sie abends von den Touristen gefüttert. Wenn die ausländischen Gäste schlafen, hat die heile Welt ein Ende. Nachts machen Spezialeinheiten der Polizei Jagd auf herrenlose Vierbeiner. Es ist eine bittere Notwendigkeit werde ich später aufgeklärt. Viele von ihnen haben die Staupe, die Tollwut oder andere Krankheiten, die sich nicht ausbreiten dürfen.<sup>2</sup>

In another report by the volunteers of SPARE (Cairo's Society for the Protection of Animal Rights), there are the following anecdotes about young boys trying to harm the street dogs.

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<sup>2</sup> Schmidt, Wolf-Rüdiger: *Geliebte und andere Tiere in Judentum, Christentum und Islam*, p.138

One boy, asked why he is doing this, replied, "Because the imam in the mosque said that the dogs are impure." Another, caught trying to drown a puppy in a canal, explained, "We heard in the mosque that the dogs are dirty."<sup>3</sup>

However, it shall be wrong to associate the comparatively worse conditions of animals in the Muslim world with Islam. The rise of animal rights and its protection by law is a truly modern phenomenon. However, there were times in the past when the general situation of the animals was much better in Muslim countries. Foltz mentions this fact as follows:

In better times, historically, non-human animals in Muslim societies benefited from protections and services that filled European visitors with astonishment. Already in the sixteenth century the French essayist Michel de Montaigne noted that "The Turks have alms and hospitals for animals." These institutions, which were funded through religious endowments (*waqf*), would have appeared to most Europeans of the time as a frivolous waste of public resources.<sup>4</sup>

Regarding to the potential reasons for the decreasing level of sensitivity towards animals and their rights, Foltz further makes the following statement.

It is perhaps natural to have little outrage left over the abuse of livestock, the torture of laboratory specimens, or the extinction of species, when so much is consumed by the murder of civilians, the denial of democratic process, and the deprivation of basic human rights, the sources of which are both external and internal to Muslim societies.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p.129

<sup>4</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 5

<sup>5</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 5

A similar point with a different perspective is made by Schmidt in the following quotation:

Das mangelnde Bewusstsein den Tieren gegenüber, wie es in den Handlungsweisen vieler Muslime täglich zum Ausdruck kommt, hat nichts mit dem ursprünglichen Islam, aber viel mit der Lebenssituation der Menschen zu tun. Armut und rapides Bevölkerungswachstum einerseits und zunehmende Industrialisierung und Konsumorientierung andererseits führen zu raschem Traditions- und Werteverlust, der besonders die sozial Schwachen tangiert. "Die Muslime bauen heute eine Umwelt um sich auf, in welcher der Glaube nur fehl am Platze scheinen kann, das Gebet überflüssig und die Shariah eine Unbequemlichkeit," klagt der Muslim Charles Le Gai Eaton. Das Leiden der Tiere und die geistige, soziale und ökonomische Situation der Menschen aber sind eng miteinander verknüpft. Wer unter dem Existenzminimum lebt, dessen Alltag ist geprägt von der Sorge um das Notwendigste – der Tierschutz gehört nicht dazu.<sup>6</sup>

I personally believe that the economic conditions of the people are much more influential on the way they treat animals than the religious instructions. Historically, it seems obvious that the situation of the animals in Muslim countries deteriorated in parallel to the overall situation of their civilization. A rather interesting statement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was made by the famous orientalist Edward Lane in Egypt. After pointing out that the traditional kindness of the local people in Egypt is beginning to disappear, he noted that he was "...inclined to think that the conduct of Europeans has greatly conduced to produce this effect, for I do not remember to have seen acts of cruelty to dumb animals except in places where Franks [that is, Europeans] either reside or are frequent visitors."<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Schmidt, Wolf-Rüdiger: *Geliebte und andere Tiere in Judentum, Christentum und Islam*, p. 152

<sup>7</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 5

As the situation of the animals does not have much to do with the Islamic teaching, it wouldl also be wrong to credit Christianity for the rise of animal rights movement in the West. In regard to the effects of religions on the welfare of animals the following is written in a reference book on the subject:

Historically, Christianity has not had a good track when it comes either to words or deeds directed to the welfare of animals. Theologian John Cobb, reflecting on Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, goes as far as to say that none of these "has a record quite as bad as Christianity." If so, Christians with emerging moral concern for animals can only be embarrassed, and a bit envious of those religious traditions that have perhaps seen things more clearly than those of us within the Christian tradition.<sup>8</sup>

Afterwards the author differentiates Jainism, Hinduism, and Buddhism on one side (with their completely different world-view towards animals) and the semitic religions on the other side. Finally, after summarizing Islam's attitude towards animals, the author cites Regenstein's following comment:

Alas, as with Christianity, Judaism, and others of the world's major religions, most present-day Moslems largely ignore or are unaware of their great Islamic tradition of reverence for animals and nature."<sup>9</sup>

In terms of theological standview, "mainstream Islam posits that non-human animals have souls, even if they are not eternal. This can be favorably contrasted with Christian position, which states categorically (though arbitrarily and without evidence) that souls belong to humans alone."<sup>10</sup> Foltz mentions that an-Nazzām - who was the teacher of

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<sup>8</sup> Wennberg, Robert N.: *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe*, p. 288.

<sup>9</sup> Wennberg, Robert N.: *God, Humans, and Animals: An Invitation to Enlarge Our Moral Universe*, p. 288. (Although the book is regarded as a reference on world religions and animals, it mistakenly introduces four famous hadiths of Prophet Muhammad on the subject as "In the Qur'ān, Muhammad declares".)

<sup>10</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 6

al-Ġāhiz, whose work I will be analyzing in depth, claimed that all animals would actually go to heaven.<sup>11</sup>

The following quotation lists the obligations of man towards his domestic animals as it is written by the legal scholar ʿIzz ad-dīn b. ʿAbd as-Salām, in his *Qawā'id al-aḥkām fī maṣāliḥ al-anʿām* (Rules for Judgement in the Case of Living Beings). The text clearly shows the perfection of the approach to the animal rights by Islamic Legal Tradition in the 13<sup>th</sup> century:

He should spend [time, money or effort] on it, even if the animal is aged or diseased in such a way that no benefit is expected from it. His spending should be equal to that on a similar animal useful to him.

He should not overburden it.

He should not place with it anything that might cause it harm, whether of the same kind or a different species.

He should kill it properly and with consideration; he should not cut their skin or bones until their bodies have become cold and their life has passed fully away.

He should not kill their young within their sight.

He should give them different resting shelters and watering places which should be cleaned regularly.

He should put male and female in the same place during their mating season. –

He should not hunt a wild animal with a tool that breaks bones, rendering it unlawful for eating.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 7

<sup>12</sup> quoted after: Waldau, Paul & Patton, Kimberley: *A communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics*, p. 152

Waldau adds the following note on the subject:

The legal category of water rights extends to animals through the law of "the right of thirst" (haqq al-shurb). A Qur'anic basis can be found in the verse, "It is the she-camel of Allah, so let her drink!" It has been noted with some irony that Classical Islamic law accords non-human animals greater access to water than do the "modern" laws of United States.<sup>13</sup>

As it can be seen in many discussions on the topic, the typical Muslim reaction to the subject of animal rights is a defensive one, where the intellectuals proudly give examples from their religious sources and history. Muslims, of course, have the right to be proud of their heritage in this manner. As Foltz puts it in rather bold terms, "taking the long view of history, an average non-human animal might well have preferred to live among Muslims than among Christians. Christian theology has been particularly hard on non-human animals.<sup>14</sup> However, the emerging sensitivity towards animal rights is particularly related to modernity, rather than religions. And irrespective of religious affiliations, it shall be regarded as the emergence of a global consciousness on behalf of the creatures other than us.

## **I.2. Dogs in Monotheistic Religions and Semitic geography**

The popular Muslim aversion to dogs is an all-well-known stereotype. However, to understand this tendency as something exclusively related to Islam in general would be a narrow view indeed. Essentially, there has always been an unfavourable attitude towards dogs among the Semitic peoples well much before the rise of Islam and the

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<sup>13</sup> Waldau, Paul & Patton, Kimberley: *A communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics*, p. 152

<sup>14</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 5



Muslim Arabs inherited heavily from it. References to dogs in the rabbinic tradition were generally negative. In Semitic cultures, the term 'dog' ( $\sqrt{\text{klb}}$ ) has a pejorative meaning and is exercised as a bitter insult, as it is in many other cultures.

Indeed, the overall Semitic approach to the dogs shall be considered in the light of the geographical conditions of these people. Assuming that they lived in a harsh climate and confined place with a critical scarcity of water, they were always open to the threats of rabies and various diseases that might spread to them through dogs, which were eating unclean matter all the time. Walter Houston writes as follows:

...On the other hand, two domestic or semi-domestic creatures found themselves lined up with the wild beasts, principally because of their diet. The dog was the universal scavenger, a consumer of blood, dead flesh, and dubious things, and references to it in the Hebrew Bible are consistently unfavourable; its name is an all-purpose insult. It was indispensable in the absence of modern waste-disposal systems, and yet it was despised for doing what it was needed for.<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, rabies (*dā'u l-kalabi*) and related symptoms (*'a<sup>cr</sup>rāḡ*) such as hydrophobia were a challenging mystery for the minds of those people due to lack of medical knowledge. Assuming that water is associated with a protection against supernatural powers such as demons, the rabies was understood as something related to evil spirits. One of the basic cultural heritages dating back to the pre-Islamic times was that dogs were regarded as demonic beings belonging to the category of evil spirits (*min al-ḡinn wa l-ḥinn*).<sup>16</sup> Further it was believed that along with cats, dogs possess the evil eye.<sup>17</sup> The following is written in the Encyclopedia of Islam on the subject:

Rabies (*dā' al-kalab*) was widespread in Arab countries from the earliest days because of the hordes of pariah packs transmitting the virus. For a long time, a

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<sup>15</sup> Linzey, Andrew & Yamamoto, Dorothy: *Animals on the Agenda*, p. 22.

<sup>16</sup> *EI<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. IV, 489, s.v. Kalb

<sup>17</sup> *EI<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. III, s.v. Ḥayawān

man smitten with the disease (*kalib, mahlūb*) was considered as one possessed by *djunūn* and treated accordingly by methods designed more for exorcism than therapy.....The clinical symptoms of rabies (*al-kalab*), especially hydrophobia, were known precisely; al-Ġāhiz describes them and, after him, so do Ibn Kušāġim (*Mašāyid*, Baġdād 1954, 138-9), al-Ķazwīnī and al-Damīrī (s.v. *kalb*).<sup>18</sup>

As a result, dogs have been avoided as much as possible as potential carriers of virus like rabies and periodic destruction of these animals may have been the only effective way in reducing the incidence of rabies. This obviously had an impact on the religious culture of these people. There are many terms and proverbs that reflect this attitude towards dogs. For example, Dols writes that still in Persia, there is the term 'dog-bitten', which implies pain, madness and suffering.<sup>19</sup>

Similarly the following proverb can be found in the famous *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* of al-Ġāhiz:

Rabid dogs were well known to the Arabs, for there are numerous stories of dogs attacking their masters - rabies presumably being the cause - to the extent that we find the proverb: 'Fatten up your dog and he will eat you!'

Rabies gets a lot of attention in the Arabic literature and the causes and symptoms are described at the beginning of Volume II of the *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*.<sup>20</sup>

The proverb (*maṭal*) mentioned in the citation above is widely known and is mentioned by al-Ġāhiz in the first volume of his *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*:

*sammin kalbaka ya'kuluka*<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *El<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. IV, s.v. *Kalb*

<sup>19</sup> Dols, Michael W.: *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*, p. 88.

<sup>20</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxx

<sup>21</sup> al-Ġāhiz, ʿAmr Ibn Baḥr: *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, Vol I, p. 125

al-Ğāḥiẓ writes in his *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* about hydrophobia, which is one of the symptoms of rabies (*‘aṣrāḍu dā’i l-kalabi*) as follows:

*‘aḍḍahū l-kalbu l-kalibu wa-kāna yaṣṭaṣu wa-yaṭlubu l-mā’a bi-‘aṣaddi ṭ-ṭalabi fa-‘idā ‘uṭiyahu bihī ṣāḥa ‘inda l-mu‘āyanati: lā, lā ‘urīdu.*

and similarly

*‘annahū yaṣṭaṣu ‘aṣaddu l-‘aṭṣi wa-yaṭlubu l-mā’a ‘aṣadda ṭ-ṭalabi fa-‘idā ‘uṭiyahu bihī haraba minhu ‘aṣadda l-harabi.<sup>22</sup>*

A cure recommended here, and incidentally elsewhere too, is to drink the blood of kings! (Hayawan II 5)

Dangerous dogs, as Ğāḥiẓ plainly asserts, are in no way different from wild animals which Muslims were enjoined to kill.<sup>23</sup>

The mentions of the blood of the kings being the only effective cure of rabies (*dā’ al-kalab*) can be found in volume two of the *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*. al-Ğāḥiẓ writes:

*‘inna dimā’a l-mulūki ṣifā’un min dā’i l-kalabi<sup>24</sup>*

and similarly

*‘anna dimā’a l-‘aṣrāfi wa l-mulūki taṣfī min ‘aḍḍati l-kalbi l-kalibi<sup>25</sup>*

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<sup>22</sup> al-Ğāḥiẓ, ‘Amr Ibn Baḥr: *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, Vol II, p. 264

<sup>23</sup> Smith, G.R. & ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxx.

<sup>24</sup> al-Ğāḥiẓ, ‘Amr Ibn Baḥr: *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, Vol II, p. 260

<sup>25</sup> al-Ğāḥiẓ, ‘Amr Ibn Baḥr: *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, Vol II, p. 261

Therefore it is necessary to mention that to some extent the Muslim aversion towards dogs predates Islam and is related to the well-recognized domestic danger of rabies.

### I.3. Dogs by the pre-islamic Arabs

There used to be many cruel acts performed on animals before the rise of Islam. Practices such as branding and disfiguration of animals, were being performed as a part of the pagan rituals. The fat of a sheep's tail and that of the camel's hump were favored parts. Such parts were being cut off while the animals were kept alive. Muhammad specifically forbade these cruel practices of the pre-Islamic Arabs by, for example, forbidding the parts cut off of an animal while still alive as carrion, which is forbidden (*ḥarām*) for consumption. This should have led to improvement of the treatment of animals by Muslims.

Although we don't have any written sources on the subject from the pre-islamic times, it is well known that Arabs had animal cults and among other animal names, there was a tribe called Banū Kalb<sup>26</sup> and many other dog-related names, such as Kalb, Kalba, Kilāb, Kulayb, etc., were commonly used, for their symbolic meaning for strength and fear. One of the forefathers of the Prophet was called Kilāb ibn Murra. al-Damīrī writes in his *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*:

*wa-kilābuni smu rağulin min 'ağdādi n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu °anhu wa-sallama  
wa-huwa kilābuni bnu murrata bni ka°bi bni lu°ayyi bni ġālibi bni fahri bni māliki  
bni n-nađari bni kinānata bni ḥazīmata bni madrakata bni 'ilyāsa bni muđari bni  
nizāri bni ma°din bni °adnāna.<sup>27</sup>*

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<sup>26</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 13.

<sup>27</sup> al-Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*, p.145

There are many dog-related proverbs in Arabic, giving the canines both positive and negative attributes. A whole section of the *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* of al-Ġāḥiẓ as well as the *Ḥayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā* of ad-Damīrī is devoted to this kind of dog-related proverbs. Arabic proverbs are abundant in number. Many Arabic dictionaries of Arabic proverbs do exist. Each tribe in the pre-Islamic Arabia had their own dialect, including their own words, figures of speech as well as proverbs. The pre-Islamic Arab tribal dialects differed greatly from one another, to that extent that an old-arabic poetic language had to be used as a over-regional Coiné for the intertribal communication. As it is true that the great number of synonyms in the Classic Arabic language goes back to the dialectal differences. The same can be said about the abundance of the proverbs. Arabic philologists were interested in the old dialects, the main reason for this were the variant Qur’ān lections. They, however, made only rather unprecise entries in the National Grammar books, which made the later codification of the data difficult.

Among the positive dog-related proverbs can be found:

*‘awfā (loyal) mina l-kalb*

*‘ālafu (pleasant, loving) mina l-kalb*

*‘abṣaru (observant) mina l-kalb*

*‘ağša<sup>cu</sup> (determined) mina l-kalb*

*‘aškaru (thankful) mina l-kalb*

*‘ašğa<sup>cu</sup> (brave) min kalbin*

*‘aḥrasu (watchful) min kalbin*

*‘aṭwa<sup>cu</sup> (obedient) min kalbin*

*‘ahwamu (undemanding, modest) min kilābi l-ḥarra<sup>28</sup>*

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<sup>28</sup> ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān, ‘Afīf: *Qāmūs al-amṭāl al-‘arabiya t-turātīya*

Some of the negative dog-related proverbs can be found:

*‘abḥalu min al-kalb °alā ġīfa (greedier than a dog on carcass)*

*‘abwalu min al-kalb (has more children than a dog)*

*‘afḥašu (obscene, lewd) min kalbin*

*‘alamu (contemptuous) min kalbin °alā °irqin*

*‘ankadu (imical) min kalbin ‘aḥaṣṣ*

*‘anham (ravenous) min kalbin*

*‘aḥabbu ahli l-kalbi ‘ilayhi z-zā°inu*

or similarly

*‘aḥabbu ‘ahli l-kalbi ‘ilayhi ḥāniqihū (Even the best of dogs is a traitor of its own kind)*

*‘iṣna°i l-ma°rūfa wa law ‘ilā kalb (Do not ask return for good deeds, just throw them away to dogs...)*

*‘asra°u min kalbin °alā wulūġihī (faster than a dog to lick)*

*‘asra°u min laḥsati l-kalbi ‘anfahū (faster than a dog licks its nose)<sup>29</sup>*

From these examples we can deduce that proverbs, be it positive or negative, are primarily used to describe the human beings rather than the dogs themselves and serve therefore only as a mere linguistic tool. However, they do give us an idea about what the old Arabs, but also the Arabs today, hold of dogs.

As mentioned before dogs were generally despised by the pre-islamic Arabs as a base creature and associated with the evil eye. However, this cannot be generalized as an overall attitude of Arabs towards dogs.

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<sup>29</sup> °Abd ar-Raḥmān, °Afīf: *Qāmūs al-amṭāl al-°arabīya t-turātīya*

The nomadic people benefited from dogs for several purposes such as protection and watching over the herds. Therefore, the nomadic bedouin Arabs had a higher esteem of dogs due to their usefulness to them. It shall also be remembered that, in comparison to the dogs in the cities, the dogs in the nomadic settlements had a lesser incidence of having the rabies virus. In his *Kitāb al-ḥayawān*, al-Ġāḥiẓ says that: “If you were to visit every single bedouin tent in the world, looking for one which did not contain one dog or more, you would not find it! Thus were the bedouin before and after Islam.”<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the protection purposes (*ḥirāsa*), dogs played also an important role in hunting (*ṣayd*) by the Arabs. Smith and °Abd al-Ḥalīm mention this reality in the context of pre-Islamic poetry:

Pre-Islamic poetry speaks predominantly of the hound. The hound of pre-Islamic poetry undoubtedly belonged to the bedouin hunter and lived with him and his family in the desert areas of the Arabian Peninsula. Here the relationship was close one and, we suggest, much like that still found among the saluki-keeping bedouins in the area to this day. The hound's importance to the very existence of the family and tribal unit as a meat provider cannot be overemphasised, for hawking was all but unknown at this time.<sup>31</sup>

However, still the predominant idea that occupied and shaped the mind of the more settled Arabs was for sure that of dirtiness (*nağāsa*) of dogs and the threat they possess as a potential carriers of rabies.

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<sup>30</sup> quoted after: Smith, G.R. & °Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxvii.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, G.R. & °Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxvii.

## I.4 The new situation of dogs through the emergence of Islam

With the advent of Islam a completely new situation began and an introduction of teachings which covered the different aspects of dogs. Two factors had a decisive role in this change.

As we will see, the Qur'ān speaks of dogs mostly in a positive manner in three brief verses (*āyāt*). In one of them a dog was honored as the loyal watcher of the sleepers of the cave, in another verse the Qur'ān mentioned that it was in favor of the training of dogs for the hunting purposes. Finally, in a rather negative manner an allegory was made between the behavior of a dog and that of an unbeliever. However, these three brief mentions of dogs in the Qur'ān were not sufficient to shape the minds of the society about the matter and it was the relevant sections of the Traditions of the Prophet that responded the rest of the questions and concerns. Therefore, as we will see, the Sunna literature became the first decisive factor in shaping the minds of Muslims about the dogs in a negative way. Almost all of the unfavourable dicta on dogs in the Islamic history, and specifically in Sunnī and Šī'ī legal schools, have always been built upon the hadiths. Contemporary Islamic discussions and forums about the purity (*ṭahāra*) and impurity (*nağāsa*) of dogs – either in the academy and madrasas or in the media and internet forums - are revolving to a large extend on the reliability of these hadith reports.

The second decisive point is the high demand of Islam from its believers in terms of hygiene and cleanliness. The Muslims have to pray five times a day and had to obey strict rules of ablution (*wūḍū'*) before their prayers. This put another barrier between observing Muslims and the city dogs specifically, which were already labelled as the carrier of dirt (*ḥabaṭ*) and viruses. There have been hundreds of pages written in the *fiqh* books solely on this subject.



## I.5. Contemporary Discussions about Dogs

One of the most important and heated discussions is about the keeping of dogs as pets since traditional Muslim attitudes differ markedly from those in the western societies on the subject. The topic is also a matter of controversy among the Muslims themselves. A search in Google or Youtube will show that there are hundreds of articles written and videos uploaded on the subject.

According to Reuters report on June 19, 2010, due to a fatwā by the Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem, police can actually stop and fine the people who walk their dogs in public parks or carry them in their cars. In the report the Ayatollah is quoted by the Javan daily that "friendship with dogs is a blind imitation of the West" and, "there are lots of people in the West who love their dogs more than their wives and children."<sup>32</sup>

In his article on the subject, Foltz makes the following interesting remark from Pakistan:

In more recent times, General Parwez Musharraf, the US-supported President-dictator of Pakistan, has made televised speeches while holding a small dog in his arms. Commentators have suggested that such images are intended largely as a coded provocation aimed at Musharraf's domestic Islamist opposition.<sup>33</sup>

Still we see in the following ironic story about an Arab in the post-9/11 US to see how effective a dog-pet can be in overcoming cultural prejudices and discrimination against Muslims.

In a rather interesting online article, Egyptian television producer Aḥmad Ṭarwāt describes his experience of having a puppy in the post 9/11 environment. He mentions that "owning a canine can be a powerful means of overcoming cultural prejudice" and describes his dog as "post 9/11 homeland-security blanket." According to him, it is due

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE65I0M220100619>

<sup>33</sup> Waldau, Paul & Patton, Kimberley: *A communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics*, p. 132

to his dog that, "strangers who used to skillfully avoid the eye-contact now wanted to engage me (him) in a warm conversation."<sup>34</sup>

Keeping dogs as pets might be regarded as a trivial topic of discussion among the Muslims, but as my own experience has also shown in Turkey, it is just the opposite. This topic always creates much more controversy and heated discussions in comparison to seemingly more essential discussion topics.

The last example from the contemporary discussions, which I want to mention, is about El Faḍl's arguments against a conservative juristic organization in Egypt. The details of this discussion are rather important and they will be analyzed in detail both in hadith and law sections of my work.

Hālid Abū al-Faḍl is one of the most important, influential, and controversial Islamic thinkers of our time. In addition to his formal madrasa training in his home-towns in Kuwait and in Egypt, he holds degrees from the Yale University, the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton. At the moment, he is a Professor of Law at the UCLA School of Law. El Fadl is at the center of the debates about dogs in fiqh and hadith. The following lines are from an interview made with him in Los Angeles Times:

...After a lengthy process of textual research and prayer for divine guidance, he concluded that reports against dogs were passed on through questionable chains of transmissions, or contradicted by more favorable reports--for instance, one story of Muhammad praying with his dogs playing nearby...Some reports against dogs bear uncanny similarities to Arab folklore, Abou El Fadl says, leading him to suspect that someone took the tales and attributed them to the prophet... As Abou El Fadl speaks, Honey snoozes near his side. The yellow cockerspaniel mix was abandoned by its owners and was cowering in the corner of an animal

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<sup>34</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 141

shelter, dirty and racked by seizures, when the scholar and his wife rescued him...They also rescued Baby, a black shepherd a day away from being killed, and Calbee, an abused dog who smelled of garbage for a year and still feels secure only when curled up inside a plastic laundry basket..."Dogs represent my rebellion against ignorance about the basis of actual historical law," Abou El Fadl says. "They are a symbol of the irrationality of our tradition, the privileging of law over humaneness."<sup>35</sup>

The textual research of Hälid Abū al-Faḍl to see to what extent the Muslim anti-dog views were supported by the Islamic sources bear some interesting results, some of which are published in his books and which will be cited in detail in the coming sections of my work. As Abū al-Faḍl determined that the hadiths used to justify aversion to dogs were highly questionable and perhaps spurious and found evidence from classical law books to support his position as a dog lover, the reaction from the conservatives was tremendous leading even to death threats. Foltz made the following interesting remark on the issue:

While Abou El-Fadl has become under fire from Muslim extremists for his revisionist (and worse, textually supported!) views on gender relations, politics, and other issues, nothing raised the ire of his fundamentalist detractors more than his love of dogs.<sup>36</sup>

Another example of contemporary discussions about dogs in Islam can be given from Turkey. Hüseyin Hatemi is a professor at the Faculty of Law of the Istanbul University. He is a famous and well-respected thinker on the subjects of Islam and Islamic law. As an animal lover, he has given many sermons and made numerous television appearances on the subject of animals and dogs in Islam. He also had many articles published in the widely circulated national *Yeni Şafak* newspaper, for which he worked a

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<sup>35</sup> <http://scholarofthehouse.net/batlosantimj.html>

<sup>36</sup> Waldau, Paul & Patton, Kimberley: *A communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics*, p. 142

columnist for many years. This way he helped many animal's rights organizations to justify their cause from an Islamic standview.<sup>37</sup>

In 2000, he had a rather interesting polemic with the famous Turkish novelist Orhan Pamuk about the dogs. As a reaction to an article in a Turkish national newspaper, the Hürriyet, in which Orhan Pamuk said after getting bitten by a street dog in the central Maçka Park:

“Öteki Renkler' adlı kitabımda, hayvanlar hakkında sevgi dolu sözler sarfetmişim. Galiba artık onları sevmiyorum.”

“In my book called ‘Other colours,’ I used words filled with love while mentioning animals. I guess I don't like them anymore.”

Hüseyin Hatemi commented the incident as follows:

Osmanlı'nın son döneminde, köpekleri çok sevdiği için ‘Köpekçi Hasan Baba’ diye anılan bir ermiş yaşamış. Fatih Camii'nin bahçesinde yüzlerce köpek beslermiş. Bu köpeklere, asker disipliniyle yemek yedirirmiş. Başkasının yemeğine saldıran köpeğe, ‘Üç gün gözüme gözükmeye’ diye emir verirmiş. Köpekçi Hasan, sorunları olan insanların da dert babasıymış. Bir problemi olanları, bir somun ekmek aldırıp, surların altında beslediği köpeklerin yanına götürürmüş. Ekmeği köpeğe veren problemlili kişiye, ‘Öp bakayım köpeğin elini’ dermiş. Köpeğin elini öpen kişinin bütün sorunları hallolurmuş. Orhan Pamuk ve Hıncal Uluç'u, Köpekçi Hasan Baba'ya havale ediyorum’.<sup>38</sup>

In the last period of the Ottoman era lived a saint commemorated as “Dog-handler Father Hasan” for his love of dogs. He was feeding hundreds of dogs in the garden of the Fatih mosque. He kept the dogs on a very tight and strict feeding schedule. He reprimanded each dog that tried to grasp another dogs food and ordered it to stay away from him for three days. Dog-handler Hasan

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<sup>37</sup> A typical article he wrote against the massive killing of dogs in Ankara can be found in <http://yenisafak.com.tr/arsiv/2006/MART/16/hhatemi.html>

<sup>38</sup><http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2000/12/05/268013.asp>

was not only fathering the dogs but also troubled people's problems. He made the worried people buy a loaf of bread and took them to the dogs he fed under the mosque walls. He used to say to every troubled person who gave a piece of bread to one of the dogs: "Let me see you kiss the dog's hand." Whoever kissed the dog's paw his problems would be solved. I am transferring Orhan Pamuk and Hıncal Uluç to "Dog-handler Father Hasan."

Interestingly, this article made the well forgotten Ottoman Şūfī Master Köpekçi Hasan Baba, a matter of interest for the public.<sup>39</sup>

## II. Qur'ān

The Qur'ān has always been the unique source that shaped the identity and world-view of Muslims throughout the history. As I will examine in the literature section of my thesis, the approach of the Qur'ān to the relationship between animals and man has been the most decisive factor in shaping the literature about animals.

The Qur'ān regards the whole creation (*halq*) as signs (*āyāt*) for the man, which will invite him to believe and submit to one true God (*allāh*). This approach is felt throughout the verses that mention the nature of animals. Animals are not only miraculous signs (*āyāt*) pointing to the existence of an ultimate and unique creator of the universe as such, but also are, for the benefits they provide for the human beings, the reason for man to praise Allāh (Q2/29) "It is he who has created for you all that is on earth." No animal can therefore be cursed in any way.

There are approximately two hundred passages in the Qur'ān where various animals are mentioned. Interestingly, however, as Herbert Eisenstein mentions, the word

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<sup>39</sup> Brief information on "Köpekçi Hasan Baba" can be found in the following web page: Meral Olcay, Köpekçi Hasan Baba, 02.12.2007 <<http://www.fatihbelediyesiyedikulehayvanbarinagi.com/kose-yazarlari/meral-olcay/kopekci-hasan-baba/>>

*ḥayawān* is used there only once and it does not refer to animals as such, but to the life after death instead:

“The qur’ānic term for animal in general and the land animal in particular is *dābba* with 18 occurrences (pl. *dawābb*), although this word is not typically used in this sense in medieval Arabic works on zoology.<sup>40</sup>

Although the matter of animals is not a major theme in the Qur’ān and is not systematized in any way, in addition to the numerous verses about them, there are also qur’ānic chapters’ (*sūra*) titles which are named after animals, which is a prove that animals are an important part of the creation Allahs. These can be summarized as follows:

Abgesehen von Sure 8 (al-An’ām, "das Vieh", mekkanisch, vgl. oben zur Schöpfung) sind fünf Suren nach Tieren bekannt, in denen diese eine Rolle nicht zuletzt in Erzählungen und Berichten spielen: Sure 2 (al-Baqara, "die Kuh", medinensisch): Auf Befehl Gottes und auf Geheiss Mūsā's (Moses') schlachten die Israeliten eine Kuh, die hier bechrieben ist (Q 2,67-71); Sure 16 (an-Naḥl, "die Bienen"), diese und alle weiteren nach Tieren benannten Suren sind mekkanisch): Der Herr gibt der Biene ein, Häuser zu bauen etc., aus dem Leib der Bienen kommt ein für die Menschen heilsames Getränk (Q 16,68-69); Sure 27 (an-Naml, "die Ameisen"): Eine Ameise im Wādī an-Naml (im Jemen) warnt die anderen Ameisen vor einer eventuellen Unbedachtsamkeit Sulaimān's (Salomo's) (Q 27,18; darauf folgt die Erzählung vom Wiedehopf, vgl.unten); Sure 29 (al-‘Ankabūt, "die Spinne"): Wer sich einen anderen Freund als Gott nimmt, ist einer Spinne zu vergleichen, die das schwächste Haus hat (Q 29,41); Sure 105 (al-Fīl, "der Elefant"): eine Anspielung auf den Kriegszug des abessinischen Feldherrn Abraha auf der Arabischen Halbinsel im Jahre 570 n.Chr., mit

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<sup>40</sup> EQ, Vol. I, s.v. Animal Life

Elefanten gegen Mekka, wobei Scharen von Vögeln (die *ṭair abābīl*) die Angreifer mit Steinen bewerfen (Q 105,1 und 3-4).<sup>41</sup>

## II.1. Animals as *Umma*

The Imām al-Maṣrī states in his video made for the PETA and IAAPEA (the International Organization Against Painful Experiments on Animals): “The Qur’ān lays an unavoidable responsibility on Muslims for the care of animals and a great emphasis on the welfare of all fellow man’s creatures on earth..... The Qur’ān and the *sunna n-nabawīya* are full of hints and references for the responsibility of muslims for compassion to animals and their well-being. Many of the aḥādīṭ call for compassion to animals and our juristic rules are quite explicit when they are applied to our behavior towards animals. So we have to ask ourselves the question ‘why is there still so much cruelty to animals?’.”<sup>42</sup>

One of the most fascinating points made by the Qur’ān in this regard has been the description of animal categories as *umma*. The word *umma* is used in the Qur’ān as community, specifically most of the time, however, the Islamic community (*‘ummatu l-mu’minīna*). The following 38<sup>th</sup> verse of the *al-An‘ām* sūra (Q 6), however, describes also animals as communities of their own apart from their relation to man.

Q 6/38...all the creatures that crawl on the earth and those who fly with their wings are communities like yourselves - We have left nothing out of the Book - and in the end they will be gathered to their Lord<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Einführung in die Arabische Zoographie: Das tierkundliche Wissen in der arabisch-islamischen Literatur*, p. 14

<sup>42</sup> [www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=creatures-of-god&player=wm](http://www.petatv.com/tvpopup/video.asp?video=creatures-of-god&player=wm)

<sup>43</sup> *The Qur’ān: A new translation* by M. A. S. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm, p. 82.

Q 6/38 *wa-mā min dābbatin fī l-'arḍi wa-lā ṭā'irin yaṭīru bi-ğanāḥayhi 'illā 'umamun 'amṭālukum mā farratnā fī l-kitābi min šay'in ṭumma 'ilā rabbihim yuḥšarūna*

In 68<sup>th</sup> āya of the an-Naḥl sūra (Q16), God interacts directly with the bees and reveals to them their unique work:

Q 16/68 “And your Lord inspired the bee, saying, ‘Build yourselves houses in mountains and trees and what people construct.’”<sup>44</sup>

Q 16/68 *wa-'awḥā rabbuka 'ilā n-naḥli 'ani ttaḥiḍī mina l-ğabali buyūtan wa-mina š-šağari wa-mimmā ya'rišūna*

These and similar verses in the *Qur'ān* show that animals have a value of their own regardless of man and their existence shall be respected and contemplated upon by Muslims. However, on the other side *Qur'an* makes a distinction between man and animals by giving man a privileged status over the whole existence.

## II.1.2. Anthropocentrism and Man as “*ḥalīfatu llāhi fī l-'arḍi*”

Within the hierarchy of Creation, Muslims see humans as occupying a special and privileged status, as they are defined as “*ḥalīfatu llāhi fī l-'arḍi*” or “Gods representative on earth” by the *Qur'ān*. They are granted by God to act on His behalf in order to realize His will and this responsibility grants them authority over the other creatures of God. Schmidt explains this concept as follows:

Als *khalifa* hat der Mensch im Sinne und im Auftrag seines Herrn zu handeln. Seine Aufgabe ist es, die Schöpfung zu verwalten und zu bewahren und sich

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<sup>44</sup>*The Qur'ān: A new translation by M. A. S. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm, p. 170.*



seines Amtes würdig zu erweisen. Er darf sich keinesfalls anmassen, Herrscher und Besitzer seiner Umwelt, z.B. der Tiere, zu sein, denn er steht nicht ausserhalb der Schöpfung, sondern ist Teil von ihr. Unter diesem Aspekt unterscheidet ihn nichts von den Tieren. Ebenso wie sie ist der Mensch im allem, was er tut, vollkommen abhängig von Gott.... Sein Khalifat auf Erden wird somit zu einer schweren Aufgabe, zu einer Bewährungsprobe, der er sich, ob er will oder nicht, stellen muss. Zu dieser Bewährungsprobe zählt auch sein Verhalten zu den Tieren.<sup>45</sup>

In its relation to animals, a Muslim shall know that he is granted a privilege (as described by the term *ḥayawān al-nāṭiq*), but shall always remember that this privilege brings with itself a responsibility towards them. As the *ḥalīfa* of God in the world, he shall watch over their rights rather than exploiting them for their means.

In Q 2/29 is written: “It is he who has created for you all that is on earth....” (*wa-huwa llaḍī ḥalaqa lakum mā fī l-‘arḍi ḡamī’an...*) meaning for the benefit of men. It thus becomes the humankind’s duty to protect, employ with dignity, and promote the well-being of any animal in its care. In this way the humankind is expressing its thankfulness to Allah for his blessings in a practical manner.

In Q 4/36 humans are advised to do good to”....what your right hands own....” (*...wa-mā malakat ‘aymānukum...*) According to the commentator ar-Rāzī, this verse refers to all those who have no civil rights, including animals.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the verse lays down the duty of being good towards animals. Every animal has been created for a purpose. It is a duty for every human being to respect creation (*ḥalq*) Allah’s, otherwise they will be accounted for any act of ill-treatment on the Day of Judgement (*yawmu l-qiyāma*).

All the verses about nature, animals and humans being God’s representatives on Earth clearly point out to an anthropocentric view of the universe in the Qur’ān. Eisenstein describes this anthropocentric understanding in Qur’ān as follows:

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<sup>45</sup> Schmidt, Wolf-Rüdiger: *Geliebte und andere Tiere in Judentum, Christentum und Islam*, p. 136

<sup>46</sup> ar-Rāzī: *al-Faḥr ad-Dīn: at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Band 4, p. 77,78

The qur'ānic view of animals created the Islamic tendency toward anthropocentrism. According to this viewpoint, animals are beholden to humankind in principle and must be seen in relation to men. Therefore, the animal's right to exist is based on its coexistence with men. As a consequence, pets were not considered fit companions for humans, and they were not portrayed as such in either the Qur'ān or in later Arabic literature.<sup>47</sup>

The concept of animals and their rights are essentially revolving around the orbit of these key Qur'ānic concepts. In this sense a typical and well-described traditional Islamic approach to the rights of animals can be found in the following quote from 20th century Muslim theologian, Mawdūdī:

God has honored man with authority over His countless creatures. Everything has been harnessed for him. He has been endowed with the power to subdue them and make them serve his objectives. This superior position gives man an authority over them and he enjoys the right to use them as he likes. But that does not mean that God has given him unbridled liberty. Islam says that all the creation has certain rights upon man. They are: he should not waste them on fruitless venture nor should he unnecessarily hurt or harm them. When he uses them for his service he should cause them the least possible harm, and should employ the best and the least injurious methods of using them.<sup>48</sup>

## II.2. Dogs in the Qur'ān

The Qur'ān mentioned dogs in three different sūras. First, in Sūra al-Kahf (Q 18), a dog is honored as the loyal watcher of the sleepers of the cave. Second, dogs are mentioned as '*min al-ḡawāriḥ mukallibīn*' or as 'beasts that can be trained as hounds' in

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<sup>47</sup> EQ, Vol. I, s.v. Animal Life

<sup>48</sup> Maṣrī, al-Ḥāfiẓ Baṣīr Aḥmad: Animal Welfare in Islam, p. 50.

Sūra al-Mā'ida (Q 5) where it is seen that Qur'ān is in favor of the training of dogs, or other animals that can be trained as hounds, for the hunting purposes. Finally, in a rather negative manner an allegory is made between the behavior of a dog and that of an unbeliever in Sūra al-A'rāf (Q 7). In this section, these verses will be analyzed in depth to figure out the Qur'ānic perception of the dogs.

### **II.3. Sūrat al-Kahf and Aṣḥāb al-Kahf**

The story of Men of the Cave passes in the Sūrat al-Kahf and it gives the chapter its title. The story is generally accepted to be about a group of young Christians (Seven Sleepers of Ephesus as they are usually called) and their dog who took refuge in a cave in order to cling to their monotheistic belief. They were put into a sleep-like state by God and miraculously woke up some hundreds of years later. As they woke up and one of them went to town to buy some food, they realized that they have been asleep for many years, although they were under the impression that they have actually slept only for a day or so. The story continues with the arguments among the people as to their numbers and whether they shall build a place of worship by the cave in their memory. Finally, God orders Muslims not to dispute with others about their numbers and assures them that the real knowledge about it solely resides by Him alone.

The story mentions a dog along with a group of young people and it does not give any information about its name. There are two references to the dog. The first one, which is in the 18<sup>th</sup> verse of the chapter (Q 18/18), follows as below:

(Q18/18) *wa-taḥsabuhum 'ayqāzan wa-hum ruqūdun wa-nuqallibuhum dāta l-yamīni wa- dāta š-šimāli wa-kalbihum bāsiṭun dirā'ayhi bi-l-waṣḍi lawi ṭṭala'atā alayhim la-wallayta minhum firāran wa-la-muli'ta minhum ru'ban*

(Q18/18) And thou wouldst have thought that they were awake, whereas they lay asleep. And We caused them to turn over repeatedly, now to the right, now to

the left; and their dog [lay] on the threshold, its forepaws outstretched. Hadst thou come upon them [unprepared], thou wouldst surely have been filled with awe of them.<sup>49</sup>

The second reference to the dog is made in regard to the dispute about their number. Interestingly, although the number of the young people is left unclear, the dog is being mentioned repeatedly throughout the *āya* as one of them.

(Q 18/22) *sa-yaqūlūna ṭalāṭatun rābi<sup>c</sup>uhum kalbuhum wa-yaqūlūna ḥamsatun wa-sādisuhum kalbuhum raḡman bi-l-ḡaybi wa-yaqūlūna sab<sup>c</sup>atun wa-ṭāminuhum kalbuhum qul rabbī 'a<sup>c</sup>lamu bi-<sup>c</sup>iddatihim mā ya<sup>c</sup>lamuhum 'illā qalīlun fa-lā tumāri fihim 'illā mirā'an ṭāḥīran wa-lā tastafti fihim minhum aḥadan*

(Q18/22) [And in times to come] some will say, "[They were] three, the fourth of them being their dog," while others will say, "Five, with their dog as the sixth of them" - idly guessing at something of which they can have no knowledge - and [so on, until] some will say, "[They were] seven, the eighth of them being their dog." Say: "My Sustainer knows best how many they were. None but a few have any [real] knowledge of them. Hence, do not argue about them otherwise than by way of an obvious argument, and do not ask any of those [story-tellers] to enlighten thee about them."<sup>50</sup>

The Sleepers of the Cave are mostly understood as a reference to an old Christian, even pre-Christian or Jewish legend and the young people are prevalantly related to the 'Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.' Many interpretations and explanations of the Qur'ānic verses (Q18/9-24) have been made. Numerous references to the legend can be found in many a scholarly work. Scholars do not have a unique opinion on the story at all. Their viewpoints do not concur in the number of the Sleepers, nor in the quantity of the years they spent in the sleep-like state, nor in the geographical location of the cave, or

<sup>49</sup> Asad, Muḥammad: *The Message of the Qur'ān*, p. 441.

<sup>50</sup> Asad, Muḥammad: *The Message of the Qur'ān*, p. 442.

even in the name of the dog. What perplexes scholars the most is the way how the dog appeared in the Muslim version of this old story and what's more in the Qur'ān itself. Wolfram Waldner writes the following in his rather interesting article:

“Schon die Zahl der Schläfer ist Zweifelhaft. Waren es acht wie die älteste Quelle berichtet, oder doch nur die sieben, die der Legende ihren Namen gegeben haben, oder gar nur drei oder fünf? Und befand sich die Höhle in der Nähe von Ephesus (wie die Mehrzahl der Überlieferer meint)? Oder doch eher in der Nähe von Taiz, wie Niebuhr im Jemen erzählt wurde? Und wie lange waren die Schläfer in der Höhle? 443 Jahre? 372 Jahre? 309 Jahre? 300 Jahre und 9 Monate und 9 Tage? Oder nur knapp 200 Jahre? Am meisten Tinte wurde wohl über die Frage vergossen, ob die erste Fassung der Legende in griechischer oder in aramäischen Sprache verfasst gewesen ist.“<sup>51</sup>

There are some interpretations arguing that the story is purely symbolic and has a didactic value. In his translation, Muḥammad Asad devoted a long section to the issue. He writes the following in a rather general interpretation of the story.

The Surah - revealed immediately before an-Naḥl ("The Bee"), i.e., in the last year of the Mecca period - is almost entirely devoted to a series of parables or allegories built around the theme of faith in God versus an undue attachment to the life of this world...The story of the Men of the Cave - from which the surah the life of this takes its title - illustrates (in verses 13-20) the principle of world-abandonment for the sake of faith, and is deepened into an allegory of death, resurrection and spiritual awakening.<sup>52</sup>

After remarking that the Christian formulation of this legend is a later development of a much older tradition that goes even back to pre-Christian and Jewish sources,

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<sup>51</sup> Bobzin, Hartmut and Jastrow, Otto: *Studien zur Semitistik und Arabistik : Festschrift für Hartmut Bobzin zum 60. Geburtstag*, p.423-424

<sup>52</sup> Asad, Muḥammad: *The Message of the Qur'ān* , p. 437.

Muhammad Asad criticizes the classical commentators since they relied purely on the Christian legend to interpret this Qur'ānic reference to the Men of the Cave. Finally, he concludes his notes on the āya as follows:

But whatever the source of this legend, and irrespective of whether it is of Jewish or Christian origin, the fact remains that it is used in the Qur'an in a purely parabolic sense: namely, as an illustration of God's power to bring about death (or "sleep") and resurrection (or "awakening"); and, secondly, as an allegory of the piety that induces men to abandon a wicked or frivolous world in order to keep their faith unsullied, and of God's recognition of that faith by His bestowal of a spritual awakening which transcends time and death.<sup>53</sup>

### II.3.1. The Dog and its Name

The Qur'ān does not give any information either about the name of the dog or does it describe him in detail. However, the story deliberately insists on the existence of the dog in the controversy about the number of the young people and this makes the dog one of the most important elements of the story. Therefore, a considerable amount of literature developed afterwards debating on what the name of the dog was and what it looked like.

Kandler mentions that in addition to the widely recognized name of Qiṭmīr, most frequently attributed to the dog, it has also been named as Ḥimrān, Qanṭūrīya, Taḡna and Quṭmūr.<sup>54</sup> In regard to the description of the dog, there is a section in Qiṣṣas al-Anbiyā' where the Prophet himself gives a description of the dog's outward appearance:

Muhammad selbst habe geäußert, der Hund habe Qaṭmīr geheissen und sei schwarzgefleckt gewesen. Er soll wie ein Panther gefleckt oder gelblich, von

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<sup>53</sup> Asad, Muḥammad: The Message of the Qur'ān, p. 439.

<sup>54</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Die Bedeutung der Siebenschläfer (Aṣḥāb al-kahf) im Islam. Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p. 56

intensive Rot oder weiss wie der Schnee gewesen sei; auch wie die Farbe des Katzen- oder Fuchsfells oder wie die Farbe des Himmels soll das Fell des Hundes gewesen sein. Bei al-Kisā'ī heisst es, dass der Hund weder lang noch kurz gewesen sei. Sein Bauch sei weiss, der übrige Körper schwarz gewesen. Der Kopf hatte eine gelbbraune Färbung gehabt . Der Schwanz sei schwarz, die Ohren rotbraun, die Augen wiederum Schwarz gewesen. Das Fell war glatt.<sup>55</sup>

In regard to the name of the dog, some commentators have argued that it is already given in the Sūra itself. In ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm's translation of the Qur'ān a footnote can be found in the 9<sup>th</sup> āya:

(Q18/9) "[Prophet], do you find the Companions in the Cave and al-Raqīm so wonderful, among all Our other signs?"<sup>56</sup>

(Q18/9) *'am ḥasibta 'anna 'aṣḥāba l-kaḥfi wa-r-raqīm kānū min 'āyātina ʿaḡaban*

Various meanings have been attached to the word ar-Raqīm in the Qur'ān interpretations. The central problem of the ninth verse (Q18/9) is the search for the meaning of the term of *'ar-Raqīm'*. Qur'ān commentators' explanations of the term vary greatly from one another. Some of the *tafsīr*-literature claims that the word *'ar-Raqīm'* signifies the name of the young peoples' dog. Other interpretations state that the word *'ar-Raqīm'* stands for "the name of the mountain in which the cave was situated, or an inscription bearing their names."<sup>57</sup> Ibn ʿAbbās, the paternal cousin of the Prophet who was considered as the most knowledgeable of the Companions in *tafsīr*, was so perplexed by the term that exclaimed: "Was weiss ich, was *ar-Raqīm* ist? Ist es ein

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<sup>55</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Die Bedeutung der Siebenschläfer (Aṣḥāb al-kaḥf) im Islam: Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p. 56

<sup>56</sup> *The Qur'ān*: A new translation by M.A.S. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, p. 183.

<sup>57</sup> *The Qur'ān*: A new translation by M.A.S. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, p. 183.

Buch oder ein Gebäude?“<sup>58</sup> Kandler provides in his book a well-arranged summary of ideas of the most significant *tafsīr* authors on the meaning of the term:

Dass der Begriff *ar-Raqīm* nicht eindeutig ist beweisen auch die Erläuterungen in den *tafāsīr*. So führt aṭ-Ṭabarī den *ḥadīṡ an*, nach der *ar-Raqīm* den Name eines Dorfes oder Tales sei. Al-Bayḍāwī erweitert die Aussage noch, in dem er sagt *ar-Raqīm* sei, <<der Name des Berges..., des Tales, in dem ihre (der Siebenschläfer) Höhle lag, der Name ihres Dorfes oder ihres Hundes.>>.....Die am häufigsten geäußerte Ansicht ist, dass *ar-Raqīm* ein Schriftstück bezeichne, das sich bei der Höhle befand und auf dem die Geschichte der Siebenschläfer niedergeschrieben war.....Anders ist die mystische Deutung von Ibn ʿArabī.....der Mystiker spekuliert über die Bedeutung von *ar-Raqīm*, wenn er sagt, dass man es bezüglich der physisch-<geographischen> Welt für ein Tal und bezüglich der <<tierischen Seele>> für den Namen des Hundes halt.....<sup>59</sup>

It was for the first time in the Qur’ān that the dog was mentioned as a guardian of the Sleepers of the Cave. This brings the Islamic legend a motive by which it significantly differs from the Christian and model.

Waldner writes about this difference in his article:

“Was hat es mit diesem Hund auf sich und wie kommt dieses bei den Muslimen sonst nicht sonderlich beliebte Tier in eine der bekanntesten Legenden, die dem Christentum und dem Islam gemeinsam sind, und hat sogar ein beachtliches Eigenleben entwickelt?.....Bisher hat man meist angenommen, der Hund

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<sup>58</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Die Bedeutung der Siebenschläfer (Aṣḥāb al-kahf) im Islam: Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p.20

<sup>59</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Die Bedeutung der Siebenschläfer (Aṣḥāb al-kahf) im Islam: Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p.20,21



stamme aus einer früheren christlichen Überlieferung und sei mit dieser von Muhammad in den Koran aufgenommen worden. Diese Auffassung stützt sich freiwillig auf eine einzige Quelle.....Weder ist sicher, dass bei Theodosius wirklich von einem Hund die Rede ist, noch, dass der Hund im Koran überhaupt aus einer christlichen Überlieferung stammt. Auffallend ist zunächst, dass in den übrigen – sehr umfangreichen – christlichen Überlieferung der Hund überhaupt nicht vorkommt.....Jakob von Sarug, der an anderer Stelle die Siebenschläfer mit einer von Wölfen bedrohten Schafherde vergleicht ..... dort kommt aber nur ein ... Wächter oder Engel vor, der von Gott herabgesandt wurde, um die sieben Jünglinge zu bewachen. Auch in den unzähligen Varianten der mittelalterlichen christlichen Überlieferung taucht niemals ein Hund auf..... Esrt bei Goethe und Rückert wird ein Hund erwähnt – aber dort kommt er zweifelfrei aus der muslimischen Überlieferung.”<sup>60</sup>

Waldner offers a rather curious explanation for the appearance of the dog in the Sūrat al-Kahf:

Wie kommt es, dass der Hund gleich viermal in dem Bericht in Sure 18 erwähnt wird? Oder gar fünfmal? Den möglicherweise ist mit ar-Raqim in Vers 8 (*aṣḥāb al-kahf wa-r-Raqīm*) der Hund gemeint. .... Es gibt dafür eine sehr einfache, fast banale Erklärung: *kalbuhum* ist einfach ein Schreibfehler; richtig muss es *kāli’uhum* sein, also “ihr Wächter” heißen. In einem unpunktierten und unvokalisierten Konsonantentext bleibt diese Änderung des koranischen Textes marginal.....Die Koranerklärer und die muslimische Überlieferung überhaupt haben an dem Hund und der Tatsache, dass er gleichberechtigt mit den Menschen unter die Höhlenbewohner gezählt wird, keinerlei Anstoss genommen.

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<sup>60</sup> Bobzin, Hartmut and Jastrow, Otto: *Studien zur Semitistik und Arabistik : Festschrift für Hartmut Bobzin zum 60. Geburtstag*, p.424-25

Nachdem er nur einmal zur Erzählung gehörte, bekam er eine Geschichte und wurde von den Erklärern der Stelle genau beschrieben”.<sup>61</sup>

Kandler too is a protagonist of the fallible variant reading theory and offers his commentary of the topic:

Zwei unterschiedlichen Ansichten äusserten die Exegeten auch bezüglich des Hundes, der vor dem Eingang schlief. Der Hund war der Begleiter des Hirten, der sich als Siebter den Gefährten anschloss oder den Sieben zugerechnet wurde. Als er den Männern folgte, liess Gott ihn sprechen, wobei er sagte << Ich liebe die, die Freunde Gottes sind. Denn ihr sollt schlafen (während) ich < euch > bewache....>> Die Vertreter dieser Ansicht lesen *kālib-* statt wie im Koran *kalbuhum*. Dies bedeutet Meuteführer. De Goeje sieht dagegen keinen zwingenden Grund für diese Leseart. Er glaubt, dass ihre Vertreter von der syrischen Fassung Jacob von Sarugs beeinflusst gewesen seien. Dieser berichtet von einem Engel, der die Schläfer bewachte, ähnlich wie ein Meuteführer. Huber äussert die für mich einleuchtendste Ansicht, dass die Form *kālibuhum* ein Lesefehler sei und in Wirklichkeit *kāli’uhum* gemeint gewesen sei. Dies bedeutet <<ihr Bewacher>> und korrespondiert mit Jakob von Sarugs Ausdruck <<vigil>>.<sup>62</sup>

### II.3.2. The Significance of the Story with respect to Dogs

What occupied the minds of the Qur’ān commentators more than the name and the physical qualities of the dog was the extent and the nature of the relationship between

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<sup>61</sup> Bobzin, Hartmut and Jastrow, Otto: *Studien zur Semitistik und Arabistik : Festschrift für Hartmut Bobzin zum 60. Geburtstag*, p.426-28

<sup>62</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Die Bedeutung der Siebenschläfer (Aṣḥāb al-kaḥf) im Islam: Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p.36

the young people and the dog. As Smith and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm mention, a striking point about the story of the Companions of the Cave is that, although the āya does not clarify the number of the companions and focuses on a controversy about it, it is consistent that their dog is to be counted as one of them.<sup>63</sup>

As it will be seen in the coming passages in the Sufism section of my study, the dog of the Men of the Cave - which most of the time was called Qiṭmīr - has always been a great motive of the Islamic literature ever after the Qurʾān. Muslims never forgot the emotional attachment of Qiṭmīr to the pious young people and glorified him in many various masterpieces of the Islamic literature. He is specifically praised as the symbol of loyalty and protectiveness. At this point, I will cite only one example from the literature, where the good qualities of Qiṭmīr are presented as something which is possessed by the whole canine race. Further references to this topic are made in the Sufism section of my work.

It is reported that a Sufi once challenged the Sufi master, Shaykh Naseho'd-Din, on the subject of his pet dog, Qetmir, asking why he was so attached to it and enumerating the faults of dogs. The shaikh replied that he loved the dog because of its capacity for friendship with God, because it knew friend from foe and because it could distinguish between a lover and a repudiator of God. The Sufi said, "I do not agree. This is impossible." The shaikh replied, "These are the qualities that the dog of the Companions of the Cave possessed. Dogs have always had these qualities. They are no different today from what they were then." The Sufi asked how this could be proven. The shaikh replied, "It is simple. If you were to offer him the tastiest of morsels he would refuse them, whereas if I offer him but a dry crust from my hand, he will accept." Upon hearing this, the Sufi took out two dirhams and ordered the finest food to be brought and placed before Qetmir. By God's might, the dog gave it no more than a sniff and turned away, taking no further notice of it. The shaikh then produced an old crust and

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<sup>63</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxix.

presented it to Qetmir, who snapped it up with the utmost eagerness and devoured it completely. At this, the Sufi abandoned his pride and spite, exercised devotion, and became detached from the world. Shaikh Naseho'd-Din bestowed his cloak upon the Sufi who later became a disciple of Hosamo'd-Din Chalabi.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to its loyalty, many references are made to the dog's protective nature as it watched over the sleepers on the threshold of the cave. Further, as Kandler puts it, there is parallelity between the main theme of the story and the role of the dog as a guardian and protector:

Die Vorstellung des Hundes als Wächter ist ein altes Motiv, das schnell seine Verbreitung gefunden hat. Der Hund als Wächter war den Bewohnern des Orients nicht fremd. Er fand als besondere Figur seinen Platz insbesondere in der Mythologie. Vielen Völkern galt er als Symbol der Auferstehung von Seele und Körper, was gerade in der Siebenschläferlegende das zentrale Problem ist.<sup>65</sup>

At the same time Qiṭmīr became a matter of controversy among scholars due to legal matters and the overall negative perception of the dogs. Although the dog is accepted as an unclean (*nağis*) animal in the mainstream *fiqh*, it is presented in the story as a holy animal and a good companion of the Sleepers of the Cave. Some of the scholars attributed human-like characteristics to the dog to the extent of claiming that he is a reincarnation of a human being or that he became a human being by time. Al-Bayḍāwī states that the dog was given the gift of speech while aṭ-Ṭabarī believes him to be the reincarnation of a human being, a view that tallies with the Ismā'īlī belief that Qiṭmīr's dog-like exterior hid the huntsman (*mukallib*) Salmān.<sup>66</sup> A similar perspective is found in the lines of Sa'dī's masterpiece *Gulistān*:

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<sup>64</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. xii

<sup>65</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p. 55

<sup>66</sup> *El<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. IV, s.v. kalb

For a few days the dog of the companions of the Cave.

Followed the virtuous and so became human. (Golestan, 82)<sup>67</sup>

Also Ibn al-<sup>c</sup>Arabī offered an interesting comment on the story, and Kandler writes:

Für Ibn ‘Arabī ist der Hund mit seinem ausgestreckten Beinen die menschliche Seele, die all ihre menschlichen Fähigkeiten und Begierden aufgegeben hat. Besondere Bedeutung haben die Gliedmassen des Hundes. Der rechte Lauf sei die Wut, “die bezüglich der Forderung des Herzens starker, edler und vermögender als die linke ist.”<sup>68</sup>

The second question that occupied the minds of Muslim scholars was a rather legal one. According to the widely known hadith attributed to the Prophet, it is believed that an angel will not enter a house, in which there is a dog in it. However, the Qur’ān depicts the dog being near the sleepers of the cave stretching out his paws on the threshold (*bāsiṭun dirā‘ayhi bi-l-wasīdi*). Some commentators wrote as follows:

Der Hund solle ausserhalb des Eingangs gelegen haben, “weil der Engel (Gabriel) in kein Haus ging, in dem ein Hund war.” Doch obwohl der Hund ein unreines Tier ist, ging die Heilswirkung der Siebenschläfer auf ihn über. Diese Heilwirkung erhält er wie die Gefährten durch den Schlaf. “Und dies ist der Gewinn aus der Freundschaft zu den Besten (den Siebenschläfern). Und deshalb gibt es von dem Hund eine Erwähnung.” Nach verschiedenen Aussagen sei der Hund der Jagdhund der Siebenschläfer oder der frühere Koch des Königs gewesen, der nun den Siebenschläfern diene.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 65

<sup>68</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p. 36.

<sup>69</sup> Kandler, Hermann: *Untersuchungen zu Legende und Kult in Schriftum, Religion und Volksglauben unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siebenschläfer-Wallfahrt*, p. 36.

In some other approaches to the story the young people try to behave to the dog in accordance with the laws of religion, but learn afterwards the miraculous nature of the dog:

It is said to follow their religion, and in one common tradition, the men try to drive the dog away, but it miraculously speaks, telling them that it is the most beloved of God and will watch over them. The fact of its presence among them is proof of its exalted status, and it will be the only dog to enter paradise (q.v.). L. Massignon cites Ismā'īlī explanations in which the dog is the spiritual instructor of the Sleepers or Salmān Pāk, accompanying the Seven Imams (Les sept dormants, 72-3). In other versions the dog is a human or the reincarnation of a human, or some other animal. There seems to have been a desire to see it as a human, perhaps as the owner of the dog, and a variant reading to this effect is attributed to Ġa'far al-Şādiq (d. 148/765; *kālibuhum* instead of *kalbuhum*), but as pointed out by al-Ṭūsī (d. 459/1066), this variant is difficult to reconcile with “stretching its paws/arms on the threshold” (Ṭibyān, v, 30).<sup>70</sup>

#### II.4. Sūrat al-Mā'ida and *mina l-ğawāriḥ mukallibīn*

The verses in Sūrat al-Mā'ida regulate the Qur'ānic conception of animals in regard to hunting. As Muhammad Asad mentions in his footnote to the āya, the term '*mukallib*' in '*mina l-ğawāriḥ al-mukallibīn*,' *mukallib* signifies "trained like a [hunting] dog"<sup>71</sup>, and can mostly be applied to every animal used for hunting - a hound, a falcon, a cheetah, etc, which can be trained."

Q5/4 *yas'lūnaka māḍā 'uḥilla lakum qul 'uḥilla lakumu ṭ-ṭayyibātu wa-mā ᵉallamtum mina l-ğawāriḥi mukallibīna tuᵉallimūnahunna mim mā ᵉallamakumu*

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<sup>70</sup> EQ, Vol. I, s.v. dog

<sup>71</sup> EQ, Vol. I, s.v. dog

*llāhu fa-kulū mimmā 'amsakna ʿalaykum wa-dkurū sma llāhi ʿalayhi wa-ttaqū  
llāha sarīʿu l-ḥisābi*

(Q5/4) They will ask thee as to what is lawful to them. Say: "lawful to you are all the good things of life." And as for those hunting animals which you train by imparting to them something of the knowledge that God has imparted to yourselves - eat of what they seize for you, but mention God's name over it, and remain conscious of God: verily, God is swift in reckoning.<sup>72</sup>

It is mentioned in the Encyclopedia of Qur'ān that the specific occasion in the āya about the dogs was an order from the Prophet to kill all the dogs in Medina due to the belief that angels reject to enter a house with a dog in it.<sup>73</sup>

The āya effectively settles the issue of hunting (*ṣayd*) and of hunting animals. The value attached to dogs in terms of hunting animals and the legal aspects of the issue in terms of hunting will be analyzed in depth in the 'Legal' section of my work.

Finally, a rather interesting commentary on the āya was made from a Ṣūfī point of view which goes as follows:

...Two conclusions may be drawn from this second quotation. The first is that in Islam and Sufism, knowledge and training are so important that even a trained dog is considered a respected model, being of some value as opposed to an untrained dog which is regarded as having no value.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Asad, Muḥammad: *The Message of the Qur'ān*, p. 141.

<sup>73</sup> *EQ*, Vol. I, s.v. dog

<sup>74</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.xii.

## II.5. *Sūrat al-Aʿrāf* and the “panting dog” allegory

It is in the *Sūrat al-Aʿrāf* (Q 7) where the attitudes of unbelievers were likened to that of a panting dog, we see a negativity in the Qurʾān’s approach to dogs. However, it shall be mentioned that this pejorative meaning attached to animal when compared to man is typical to Qurʾānic allegories. Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān mentions this as follows:

As for the comparison of men with animals or the metaphorical use of animals in the Qurʾān, it is worth noting that negativity and deprecation predominate.<sup>75</sup>

Below is the translation of the verses 174 to 178 by Asad:

Q 7/174-178

174 *wa-ka-dālika nufaṣṣilu l-ʾāyāti wa-laʿallahum yarǧiʿūna*

175 *wa-tlu ʿalayhim nabāʾ ilaḍī ʾātaynāhu ʾāyātīnā fa-nsalaḥa minhā fa-ʾatbaʿahū  
š-šayṭānu fa-kāna min ʾal-ǧāwīna*

176 *wa-law šīnā la-rafaʿnāhu bihā wa-lākinnahū ʾaḥlada ʾilā l-ʾarḍi wa-ttabaʿa  
Hawāhu fa-maṭaluhū ka-maṭali l-kalbi ʾin taḥmil ʿalayhi yalḥaṭ ʾaw tatrūkhū  
yalḥaṭ dālika maṭalu l-qawmi ilaḍīna kaḍḍabū bi-ʾāyātīnā fa-qṣuṣi l-qaṣaṣa  
laʿallahum yatafakkarūna*

177 *sāʾa maṭalani l-qawmu ilaḍīna kaḍḍabū bi-ʾāyātīnā wa-ʾanfusahum kānū  
yaẓlimūna*

178 *man yahdi llāhu fa-huwa l-muḥtaḍī wa-man yuḍlil fa-ʾulāʾikahumu l-ḥāsirūna*

(174) And thus clearly do We spell out these messages; and [We do it] so that they [who have sinned] might return [unto Us]. (175) And tell them what happens to him to whom We vouchsafe Our messages and who then discards them: Satan catches up with him, and he strays, like so many others, into grievous

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<sup>75</sup> EQ. Vol. I, s.v. Animal life



error. (176) Now had We so willed, We could indeed have exalted him by means of those [messages]: but he always clung to the earth and followed but his own desires. Thus, his parable is that of an [excited] dog: if thou approach him threateningly, he will pant with his tongue lolling; and if thou leave him alone, he will pant with his tongue lolling. Such is the parable of those who are bent on giving the lie to Our messages. Tell [them], then, this story, so that they might take thought.<sup>76</sup>

Further Asad further explains - in his footnote - what is implied about the people that gives lie to God's messages by likening them to a panting dog as follows:

Because his attitudes are influenced only by what his earth-bound desires represent to him as immediate "advantages" or "disadvantages", the type of man alluded in this passage is always - whatever the outward circumstances - a prey to a conflict between his reason and his base urges and, thus, to inner disquiet and imaginary fears, and cannot attain to that peace of mind which a believer achieves through his faith.<sup>77</sup>

A final remark shall be made on the *āya*. Although many commentators of the Qur'ān were naturally inclined to interpret the mention of dog in a rather negative way such as stating the baseness of it, it doesn't necessarily need to be understood in this manner. Al-Ġāhiẓ for example mentions that in the comparison between the dog and the unbeliever, the *āya* is critical of the person rather than the dog.<sup>78</sup> However as we will see more in the 'Sufism' section of this study, the *āya* was understood in a predominantly negative way in regard to dogs, and many Ṣūfīs used the dog-metaphor in relation to the base '*nafs*' of man.

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<sup>76</sup> Asad, Muḥammad: *The Message of the Qur'ān*, p. 230.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.230.

<sup>78</sup> Smith, G.R. & 'Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxxix.

### III. Sunna and Hadith Literature

Although the hadiths are not regarded divine like the word of God by the Muslims, for many they are, as influential as the Qur'ān itself, not only as a secondary source of inspiration, but also as a device to understand the Qur'ān itself. However, in contrast to the Qur'ān, the hadith literature developed over a long period of time and through a rather long chain of transmitters. From the beginning on the Sunna and the Šīc'a factions of Islam developed their own corpus of hadith collections. When there was a sheer volume of hadiths, Muslims were also challenged to find out what might have been really said by the Prophet and what might have been fabricated in his name. Since hadiths are not divinely protected by God, as it is believed for the Qur'ān, the history of the hadiths and the hadith criticism has a rather contested and controversial nature. Muslims tried to solve the problem by developing a hadith science (*ilm 'al-ḥadīth*) to find out which the reliable hadiths (*ṣaḥīḥ*) were. However, as we will see on the example of dogs, it is seen even nowadays that Muslims with different ideas try to find hadiths that secure a prophetic ground for their own points of view. Since there is an enormous volume of available hadiths for both sides of the argument, and many differing ideas as to which sources shall be accepted as reliable, it is even possible sometimes to justify two completely opposite views with hadiths.

In this sense, the generally accepted negative attitude towards dogs in the mainstream Sunnī Hadith literature had a decisive role on the fate of dogs in the Muslim countries; and the arguments about dogs mainly revolved around the subject of the reliability of these hadiths. Both Sunnī and Šīc'ī legal traditions and the major law schools derive their basic attitudes towards dogs basically from differing sources of negative hadiths about dogs. The scholars that had a rather pro-dog stance either argued against the reliability of these hadiths or put some pro-dog hadiths forth to counterbalance the assault.

In this section, I will, to begin with, list the dog hadiths from the mainstream classical sources of Sunnī Islam, namely from *Ṣaḥīḥ Buḥārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*. I will provide some of the most important hadiths with their original Arabic version. Although there are some other sources such as *Mālik's al-Muwaṭṭa'*, many of the reports within different sources are the same or repetitive with minor differences. These similar reports are avoided on purpose, on the other hand some critical hadiths are put forth in differing versions.

The most critical remark in the hadiths, in regard to my subject, is the one which states that during a visit to Prophet to deliver a revelation, Gabriel went away finding that there was a puppy in the room. This report firmly established the notion that - angels will not enter a home if there is a dog in it - in the collective consciousness of Muslims. The second important one is the often repeated hadith, which states that the company of dogs takes away a portion of a Muslim's good deeds. Finally comes the rather critical report, which says that a dog or a woman passing in front of a Muslim man praying will nullify his prayers. This hadith, in its many different variations, has particularly been a matter of controversy for Muslims. It can be seen in sources such as *Ṣaḥīḥ Buḥārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, that the prophet's wife ʿĀ'īṣa criticized these hadiths and this fact has been held against the reliability of Abū Hurayra in general. The selected hadiths below draw a general picture of the mainstream Sunnī hadith sources on the issue. As I have mentioned in my introduction, all the hadiths are taken from the searchable hadith database of the University of Southern California.<sup>79</sup>

In the second part of this section, I will also provide examples from the critics of these hadiths, arguments about the role of Abū Hurayra in the development of anti-dog stance, and present some of the pro-dog hadiths.

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<sup>79</sup><http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/search.html>

Finally, I will cite heavily from al-Faḍl, who had a long and debated argument with the conservative Muslim clerics as to the authoritativeness and reliability of their hadith-remarks on dogs.

### III.1. The ḥadīths in Classical Sunnī sources

#### From Ṣaḥīḥ Buhārī;

*Volume 1, Book 4, Number 172:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

Allah's Apostle said, "If a dog drinks from the utensil of anyone of you it is essential to wash it seven times."

*ḥaddaṭanā ʿabdu llāhi bnu yūsufa ʿan mālikin, ʿan ʿabī z-zanādi, ʿani l-ʿaʿraǧi, ʿan ʿabī hurayrata: ʿanna rasūla llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama qāla:*

*((ʿidā šariba l-kalbu fī ʿināʿi ʿaḥadikum fa-l-yaǧsilhu sabʿan))*

*Volume 1, Book 4, Number 173:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

The Prophet said, "A man saw a dog eating mud from (the severity of) thirst. So, that man took a shoe (and filled it) with water and kept on pouring the water for the dog till it quenched its thirst. So Allah approved of his deed and made him to enter Paradise."

*ḥaddaṭanā ʿiṣḥāqu qāla: ʿaḥbaranā ʿabdu ṣ-ṣamadi qāla: ḥaddaṭanā ʿabdu r-raḥmāni bnu ʿabdi llāhi bni dīnārin qāla: samiʿtu ʿabī, ʿan ʿabī ṣāliḥin, ʿan ʿabī hurayrata ʿani n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama:*

*((‘anna rağulan ra’ā kalban ya’kulu t-turā mina l-‘aṭaši, fa-‘aḥada r-rağulu ḥuffahū fa-ğāla yağrifu lahū bihī ḥattā ‘arwāhu fa-šakara llāhu lahū fa-‘adḥalahū l-ğannata.))*

*Volume 1, Book 4, Number 174:*

And narrated Hamza b. ‘Abdullāh: My father said. "During the lifetime of Allah's Apostle, the dogs used to urinate, and pass through the mosques (come and go), nevertheless they never used to sprinkle water on it (urine of the dog.)"

*wa-qāla ‘aḥmadu bnu šabībin: ḥaddaṭanā ‘abī ‘an yūsufa, ‘ani bni šihābin qāla: ḥaddaṭanī ḥamzatu bnu ‘abdi llāhi ‘an ‘abīhi qāla:*

*((kānati l-kilābu [tabūlu wa-] tuqbilu wa-tudbiru fī l-masğidi fī zamāni rasūli llāhi ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama fa-lam yakūnū yaruššūna šay’an min dālika.))*

*Book 4, Number 175:*

Narrated ‘Adī b. Ḥātim:

I asked the Prophet (about the hunting dogs) and he replied, "If you let loose (with Allah's name) your tamed dog after a game and it hunts it, you may eat it, but if the dog eats of (that game) then do not eat it because the dog has hunted it for itself." I further said, "Sometimes I send my dog for hunting and find another dog with it. He said, "Do not eat the game for you have mentioned Allah's name only on sending your dog and not the other dog."

*ḥaddaṭanā ḥafṣu bnu ‘umara qāla: ḥaddaṭanā šu‘batu ‘ani bni ‘abī s-safari ‘ani š-ša‘bīyi ‘an ‘adīyi bni ḥātimin qāla: sa’altu n-nabīya ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama fa-qāla:*

*((‘idā ‘arsalta kalbaka l-mu‘allama fa-qatala fa-kul, wa ‘idā ‘akala fa-lā ta’kul fa-‘innamā ‘amsaka ‘alā nafsihī)), qultu: ‘ursilu kalbī fa-‘ağidu ma‘hū kalban ‘āḥara? qāla: ((fa-lā ta’kul, fa-‘innamā sammayta ‘alā kalbika wa-lam tusammi ‘alā kalbin ‘āḥara)).*

*Volume 1, Book 9, Number 490:*

Narrated 'A'īša:

The things which annul the prayers were mentioned before me. They said, "Prayer is annulled by a dog, a donkey and a woman (if they pass in front of the praying people)." I said, "You have made us (i.e. women) dogs. I saw the Prophet praying while I used to lie in my bed between him and the Qibla. Whenever I was in need of something, I would slip away. For I disliked to face him."

*ḥaddaṭanā 'ismā'īlu bnu ḥalīlīn: ḥaddaṭanā 'alīyu bnu mushirīn 'ani l-'a'maši 'an muslimīn 'an masrūqīn 'an 'ā'išata 'annahū dukira 'indahā mā yaqṭa'u ṣ-ṣalāta fa-qālū: yaqṭa'uhā l-kalbu wa-l-ḥimāru wa-l-mar'atu, qālat: laqad ġa'altumūnā kilāban, la-qad ra'aytu n-nabīya ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallama yuṣallī wa-'innī la-baynahū wa-bayna l-qiblati wa-'anā muḍṭaġi'atun 'alā s-sarīri fa-takūnu lī l-ḥāġatu wa-'akrahu 'an 'astaqbilahū fa-nsallu 'insilālan.*

*Volume 3, Book 29, Number 54:*

Narrated Hafṣa:

Allah's Apostle said, "It is not sinful (of a Muhrim) to kill five kinds of animals, namely: the crow, the kite, the mouse, the scorpion and the rabid dog."

*Volume 3, Book 34, Number 270:*

Narrated 'Adī b. Ḥātim:

.....I asked Allah's Apostle about al-Mi'rāḍ (i.e. a sharp-edged piece of wood or a piece of wood provided with a piece of iron used for hunting). He replied, "If the game is hit by its sharp edge, eat it, and if it is hit by its broad side, do not eat it, for it has been beaten to death." I asked, "O Allah's Apostle! I release my dog by the name of Allah and find with it at the game, another dog on which I have not mentioned the name of Allah, and I do not know which one of them caught the game." Allah's

Apostle said (to him), 'Don't eat it as you have mentioned the name of Allah on your dog and not on the other dog.'

*ḥaddaṭanā ‘ādamu ḥaddaṭanā šu‘batu ‘an ‘abdi llāhi bni ‘abī s-safari ‘ani š-ša‘bīyi ‘an ‘ādīyi bni ḥātimin qāla:*

*.....qultu: ‘innī ‘ursilu kalbī ‘ağidu ma‘hū kalban ‘āḥara lā ‘adri ‘ayyuhumā ‘aḥaḍahū fa-qāla: ((lā ta’kul fa- ‘innamā sammayta ‘alā kalbika wa-lam tusammi ‘alā ġayrihī.))*

*wa-sa’altuhū ‘an šaydi l-mi‘rāḍi fa-qāla: ((‘idā ‘aṣabta bi-ḥaddihī fa- kul wa-‘idā ‘aṣabta bi-‘arḍihī fa-qatala fa-‘innahū waqīḍun fa-lā ta’kul.))*

*Volume 3, Book 34, Number 299:*

Narrated ‘Awn b. Abū Ğuḥayfa:

My father bought a slave who practiced the profession of cupping. (My father broke the slave's instruments of cupping). I asked my father why he had done so. He replied, "The Prophet forbade the acceptance of the price of a dog or blood, and also forbade the profession of tattooing, getting tattooed and receiving or giving Ribā' (usury), and cursed the picture-makers."

*ḥaddaṭanā ḥağğāğū bnu minhālin: ḥaddaṭanā šu‘batu qāla: ‘aḥbaranī ‘awnu bnu ‘abī ġuḥayfati qāla: ra’aytu ‘abī štarā ḥuğğāman fa-‘amara bi-maḥāğimihī fa-kusirat fa-sa’altuhū ‘an ḍālika fa-qāla: ‘inna rasūla llāhi šallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama nahiya ‘an ṭamani d-dami wa-ṭamani l-kalbi wa-kasbi l-‘amati wa-la‘ana l-wāšimata wa-l-mustawšimata wa-‘ākila r-ribā wa-mūkilahū wa-la‘ana l-muṣawwira.*

*Volume 3, Book 34, Number 439:*

Narrated Abū Mas'ūd al-Anṣārī:

Allah's Apostle forbade taking the price of a dog, money earned by prostitution and the earnings of a soothsayer.

*ḥaddaṭanā qutaybatu bnu sa'īdin °an mālikin °ani bni šihābin °an 'abī bakri bni °abdi r-raḥmāni bni l-ḥārīṭi bni ḥišāmin °an 'abī mas'ūdi l-'anṣārīyi raḍiya llāhu °anhū : 'anna rasūla llāhi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama nahiya °an ṭamani l-kalbi wa-mahri l-baḡīyi wa-ḥulwāni l-kāhini.*

*Volume 3, Book 39, Number 515:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

Allah's Apostle said, "Whoever keeps a dog, one Qirāt of the reward of his good deeds is deducted daily, unless the dog is used for guarding a farm or cattle." Abū Hurayra (in another narration) said from the Prophet, "unless it is used for guarding sheep or farms, or for hunting."

Narrated Abū Hāzim from Abū Hurayra: The Prophet said, "A dog for guarding cattle or for hunting."

*ḥaddaṭanā mu'āḍu bnu faḍālata: ḥaddaṭanā hišāmun °an yaḥyā bni 'abī kaṭīrin °an 'abī salamata °an 'abī hurayrata raḍiya llāhu °anhū qāla: qāla rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama:*

*((Man 'amsaka kalban fa-'innahū yanquṣu kulla yawmin min °amalihī qīrāṭun 'illā kalba ḥarṭin 'aw māšiyatin.))*

*qāla bnu sīrayna wa-'abū ṣāliḥin °an 'abū hurayrata raḍiya llāhu °anhū °ani n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama: ((illā kalba ḡanami 'aw ḥarṭin 'aw ṣaydin)).*

*wa-qāla 'abū ḥāzimin °an 'abī hurayrata °ani n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama: ((kalba māšiyatin 'aw ṣaydin)).*



*Volume 3, Book 39, Number 516:*

Narrated as-Sā'ib b. Yazīd:

Abū Sufyān bin Abū Zuhayr, a man from Azd Šanū'a and one of the companions of the Prophet said, "I heard Allah's Apostle saying, 'If one keeps a dog which is meant for guarding neither a farm nor cattle, one Qirāt of the reward of his good deeds is deducted daily.'" I said, "Did you hear this from Allah's Apostle?" He said, "Yes, by the Lord of this Mosque."

*ḥaddaṭanā ʿabdu llāhi bnu yūsufa: ʿaḥbaranā mālikun ʿan yazīda bni ḥuṣayfata: ʿanna s-sāʿiba bna yazīda ḥaddaṭahū: ʿannahū samiʿa sufyāna bna ʿabī zuhayrin – raḡulun min ʿazdi šanūʿata wa-kāna min ʿaṣḥābi n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama:*

*qāla samiʿtu n-nabīya ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama yaqūlu: ((mani qṭanā kalban lā yuḡnī ʿanhū zarʿan wa-lā ḍarʿan naqaṣa kulla yawmin min ʿamaliḥī qīrāṭun)).*

*qultu: ʿanta samiʿta ḥādā min rasūli llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama? Qāla: ʿay wa-rabbi ḥādā l-masḡidi*

*Volume 3, Book 40, Number 551:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

Allah's Apostle said, "While a man was walking he felt thirsty and went down a well and drank water from it. On coming out of it, he saw a dog panting and eating mud because of excessive thirst. The man said, 'This (dog) is suffering from the same problem as that of mine. So he (went down the well), filled his shoe with water, caught hold of it with his teeth and climbed up and watered the dog. Allah thanked him for his (good) deed and forgave him.'" The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Is there a reward for us in serving (the) animals?" He replied, "Yes, there is a reward for serving any animate."

*Volume 4, Book 54, Number 448:*

Narrated Abū Ṭalḥa:

I heard Allah's Apostle saying; "Angels (of Mercy) do not enter a house wherein there is a dog or a picture of a living creature (a human being or an animal)."

*ḥaddaṭanā bnu maqātilin: ‘aḥbaranā ‘abdu llāhi: ‘aḥbaranā ma‘marun ‘ani z-zuhrīyi ‘an ‘ubaydi llāhi bni ‘abdi llāhi ‘annahū sami‘a bna ‘abbāsin raḍiya llāhu ‘anhumā yaqūlu: sami‘tu ‘abā ṭalḥata yaqūlu: sami‘tu rasūla llāhi ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama yaqūlu: ((lā tadḥulu l-malā’ikatu baytan fīhi kalbun wa-lā ṣūratu tamāṭila)).*

*Volume 4, Book 54, Number 450:*

Narrated Sālim's father:

Once Gabriel promised the Prophet (that he would visit him, but Gabriel did not come) and later on he said, "We, angels, do not enter a house which contains a picture or a dog."

*ḥaddaṭanā yaḥyā bnu sulaymāna qāla: ḥaddaṭanī bnu wahbin qāla: ḥaddaṭanī ‘amrū ‘an sālīmin ‘an ‘abīhi qāla: wa‘ada n-nabīya ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama ḡibrīlu fa-qāla: ((‘innā lā nadḥulu baytan fīhi ṣūratun wa-lā kalbun.))*

*Volume 4, Book 54, Number 538:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

Allah's Apostle said, "A prostitute was forgiven by Allah, because, passing by a panting dog near a well and seeing that the dog was about to die of thirst, she took off her shoe, and tying it with her head-cover she drew out some water for it. So, Allah forgave her because of that."

*ḥaddaṭanā ‘abū bakri bnu ‘abī šaybatin ḥaddaṭanā ‘abū ḥālidi l-‘aḥmari °an hišāmin °an muḥammadin °an ‘abī hurayrata °ani n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama:*

*((‘anna mra’atan baġīyan ra’at kalban fī yawmin ḥārrin yaṭīfu bi-bi’rin qad ‘adla°a lisānahū mina l-°aṭaši fa-naza°at lahū bi-mawqihā fa-ġadda lahā)).*

*Volume 4, Book 54, Number 541:*

Narrated Abdullāh b. Dīnār:

Allah's Apostle said, "If somebody keeps a dog, he loses one Qirāt (of the reward) of his good deeds every day, except if he keeps it for the purpose of agriculture or for the protection of livestock."

*ḥaddaṭanā mūsā bnu ‘ismā°īla ḥaddaṭanā °abdu l-°azīzi bnu muslimin ḥaddaṭanā °abdu llāhi bnu dīnārin qāla: sami°tu bna °umara raḍiya llāhu °anhumā °ani n-nabīyi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama qāla: ((mani qtanā kalban laysa bi-kalbi māšiyatin ‘aw ḍāriyatin naqāsa kulla yawmin min °amalihī qirātāni)).*

*Volume 4, Book 56, Number 673:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

The Prophet said, "While a dog was going round a well and was about to die of thirst, an Israeli prostitute saw it and took off her shoe and watered it. So Allah forgave her because of that good deed."

*ḥaddaṭanā l-ḥasanu bnu š-šabbāhi ḥaddaṭanā ‘iṣḥāqu l-‘azraqu ḥaddaṭanā °awfun °ani l-ḥasani wa-bni sīrīna °an ‘abī hurayrata raḍiya llāhu °anhū °an rasūli llāhi ṣallā llāhu °alayhi wa-sallama qāla: ((ġufira li-mra’atin mūmisatin marrat bi-kalbin °alā ra’si rakīyi yalḥaṭu qāla: kāda yaqtuluhū l-°aṭašu fa-naza°at ḥuffahā fa-‘awṭaqathū bi-ḥimārihā fa-naza°at lahū mina l-mā’l fa-ġufira lahā bi-ḍālika)).*

*Volume 7, Book 72, Number 843:*

Narrated Sālim's father:

Once Gabriel promised to visit the Prophet but he delayed and the Prophet got worried about that. At last he came out and found Gabriel and complained to him of his grief (for his delay). Gabriel said to him, "We do not enter a place in which there is a picture or a dog."

*Volume 8, Book 73, Number 38:*

Narrated Abū Hurayra:

Allah's Apostle said, "While a man was walking on a road, he became very thirsty. Then he came across a well, got down into it, drank (of its water) and then came out. Meanwhile he saw a dog panting and licking mud because of excessive thirst. The man said to himself: "This dog is suffering from the same state of thirst as I did." So he went down the well (again) and filled his shoe (with water) and held it in his mouth and watered the dog. Allah thanked him for that deed and forgave him." The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Is there a reward for us in serving the animals?" He said, "(Yes) There is a reward for serving any animal (living being)."

*ḥaddaṭanā qutaybatu bnu saʿīdin ʿan mālikin bni ʿanasi fimā qaraʿa ʿalayhi ʿan sammī mawlā ʿabī bakra ʿan ʿabī ṣāliḥi s-sammāni ʿan ʿabī hurayrata ʿan rasūla llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama qāla:*

*baynamā raḡulun yamšī bi-ṭarīqini štadda l-ʿaṭašu fa-waḡada biʿran fa-nazala fihā fa-šaraba ṭumma ḥaraḡa fa-ʿiḡā kalbun yalhaṭu yaʿkulu t-turā mina l-ʿaṭaši fa-qāla r-raḡulu la-qad balaḡa hāḡā l-kalbu mina l-ʿaṭaši miṭla llaḡī kāna balaḡa minnī fa-nazala l-biʿra fa-malaʿa ḥuffahū māʿan ṭumma ʿamsakahū fihi ḥattā raqiya fa-saqā l-kalba fa-šakara llāhu lahū fa-ḡafira lahū qālū yā rasūlu llāhi wa-ʿin lanā fī hāḡihī l-bahāʿimi li-ʿaḡran fa-qāla li-kulli kabdin ruṭbatu ʿaḡrin.*

## From Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim:

*Book 002, Number 0551:*

Ibn Mughaffal reported: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) ordered killing of the dogs, and then said: What about them, i. e. about other dogs? And then granted concession (to keep) the dog for hunting and the dog for (the security) of the herd, and said: When the dog licks the utensil, wash it seven times, and rub it with earth the eighth time.

*wa- ḥaddaṭanā ʿubaydu llāhi bnu muʿāḍin ḥaddaṭanā ʿabī ḥaddaṭanā šuʿbatu ʿan ʿabī t-tayyāḥi samiʿa muṭarrifa bna ʿabdi llāhi yuḥaddiṭu ʿani bni l-muḡaffali qāla: ʿamara rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama bi-qatli l-kilābi ṭumma qāla: (( mā bāluhum wa-bālu l-kilābi?)) ṭumma rahḥaṣa fī kalbi ṣ-ṣaydi wa-kalbi l-ḡanami wa-qāla: ((ʿidā walaḡa l-kalbu fī l-ʿināʿi fa-ḡsilūhu sabʿa marrātin wa-ʿaffirūhu ṭ-ṭāminata fī t-turābi)).*

*Book 004, Number 1014:*

Narrated Abū Ḡuhayfa

Abū Ḡuhayfa reported it on the authority of his father: I came to the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) in Mecca and he was (at that time) at al-Abṭaḥ in a red leather tent. And Bilāl stepped out with ablution water for him. (And what was left out of that water) some of them got it (whereas others could not get it) and (those who got it) rubbed themselves with it. Then the Apostle of Allah (may peace be upon him) stepped out with a red mantle on him and I was catching a glimpse of the whiteness of his shanks. The narrator said: He (the Holy Prophet) performed the ablution. And Bilāl pronounced Aḍān and I followed his mouth (as he turned) this side and that as he said on the right and the left: "Come to prayer, come to success." 'A spear was then fixed for him (on the ground). He stepped forward and said two rak'ahs of zuhr, while there passed in front of him a donkey and a dog, and these were not checked. He then said

two rak'ahs of the ʿasr prayer, and he then continued saying two rak'ahs till he came back to Medina.

*ḥaddaṭanā ‘abū bakri bnu ‘abī šaybata wa-zuhayru bnu ḥarbin ḡamīʿan ʿan wakīʿin qāla zuhayrun ḥaddaṭanā wakīʿun ḥaddaṭanā sufyanu ḥaddaṭanā ʿawnu bnu ‘abī ḡuḥayfata ʿan ‘abīhi qāla:*

*‘ataytu n-nabīya ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama bi-makkati wa-huwa bi-l-‘abṭaḥi fi qubbatin lahū ḥamrā’a min ‘adamin. qāla: fa-ḥaraḡa bilālun bi-wuḡū’ihī fa-man nā’ilin wa-nāḡiḥin. qāla:fa-ḥaraḡa n-nabīyu ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama ʿalayhi ḥullatun ḥamrā’u ka-‘annī ‘anzuru ‘ilā bayāḡi sāqayhi. qāla: fa-tawaḡḡa’a wa-‘aḡḡana bilālun. qāla: fa-ḡaʿaltu ‘atatabbaʿu fāhu hā-hunā wa-hā-hunā, yaqūlu: yamīnan wa-šimālan, yaqūlu: ḡayya ʿalā ṣ-ṣalāti ḡayya ʿalā l-fallāḡi. qāla: ṭumma rukizat lahū ʿanzatun, fa-taḡḡadama fa-ṣallā z-zuhra rakʿatayni, yamurru bayna yadayhi l-ḡimāru wa-l-kalbu, lā yumnaʿu, ṭumma ṣallā l-ʿaṣra rakʿatayni, ṭumma lam yazil yuṣallī rakʿatayni ḡattā raḡaʿa ‘ilā l-madīnati.*

*Book 004, Number 1032:*

Abū Ḍarr reported: The Messenger of 'Allah (may peace be upon him) said: When any one of you stands for prayer and there is a thing before him equal to the back of the saddle that covers him and in case there is not before him (a thing) equal to the back of the saddle, his prayer would be cut off by (passing of an) ass, woman, and black Dog. I said: O Abū Ḍarr, what feature is there in a black dog which distinguishes it from the red dog and the yellow dog? He said: O, son of my brother, I asked the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) as you are asking me, and he said: The black dog is a devil.

*ḥaddaṭanā ‘abū bakri bnu ‘abī šaybata ḥaddaṭanā ‘ismāʿīlu bnu ʿulayyata: wa-ḥaddaṭanī zuhayru bnu ḥarbin ḥaddaṭanā ‘ismāʿīlu bnu ‘ibrāḡīma ʿan yūsufa ʿan ḡumaydi bni hilālin ʿan ʿabdi llāhi bni ṣ-ṣāmitiʿan ‘abī ḡarrin qāla: qāla rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama: ((‘idā qāma ‘aḡadukum yuṣallī fa-‘innahū yasturuhū ‘idā kāna*

*bayna yadayhi miṭlu ‘āḥarihī r-rahli fa-‘idā lam yakunbayna yadayhimiṭlu ‘āḥarihīr-rahli fa-‘innahū yaqṭa<sup>u</sup> ṣalātahū l-ḥimāruwa-l-mar’atu wa-l-kalbu l-‘aswadu*)).

*qultu yā ‘abā ḍarrin! mā bālu l-kilābi l-‘aswadi mina l-kalbi l-‘aḥmari mina l-kalbi l-‘aṣfari? qāla yā bna ‘aḥī! sa’altu rasūla llāhi ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama kamā sa’altanī fa-qāla: ((‘al-kalbu l-‘aswadu ṣayṭānun)).*

*Book 010, Number 3811:*

‘Abdullāh (b.‘Umar) (Allah be pleased with them) reported: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) ordered the killing of dogs and we would send (men) in Medina and its corners and we did not spare any dog that we did not kill, so much so that we killed the dog that accompanied the wet she-camel belonging to the people of the desert.

*wa- ḥaddaṭanī ḥumaydu bnu mas‘adata ḥaddaṭanā ‘ismā‘īlu wa-huwa bnu ‘umayyata ‘an nāfi‘in ‘an ‘abdi llāhi bni ‘umara qāla: kāna rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama ya’muru bi-qatli l-kilābi fa-tatabba‘tu fī l-madīnati wa-‘aṭrāfihā fa-lā nada<sup>u</sup> kalban ‘illā qatalnāhu ḥattā ‘innā la-naqṭulu kalba l-murayyati min ‘ahli l-bādiyati yatba‘uhā.*

*Book 010, Number 3813:*

Abū Zubayr heard Ḡābir b. ‘Abdullāh (Allah be pleased with him) saying: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) ordered us to kill dogs, and we carried out this order so much so that we also kill the dog coming with a woman from the desert. Then Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) forbade their killing. He (the Holy Prophet further) said: It is your duty to kill the jet-black (dog) having two spots (on the eyes) (*zabībatāni, nuqṭatāni*), for it is a devil.

*ḥaddaṭanā muḥammadu bnu ‘aḥmada bni ‘abī ḥalfin ḥaddaṭanā rawḥun, wa- ḥaddaṭanī ‘ishāqu bnu manṣūrīn: ‘aḥbaranā rawḥu bnu ‘ubbādata: ḥaddaṭanā bnu ḡurayḡin:*

*‘aḥḥbaranī ‘abū z-zubayri ‘annahū sami‘a ḡābira bna ‘abdi llāhi yaqūlu: ‘amaranā rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama bi-qatli l-kilābi ḥattā ‘inna l-mar’ata taqdamu mina l-bādiyati bi-kalbihā fa-naqtuluhū tumma nahā n-nabīyu ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama ‘an qatlihā. wa-qāla: ((‘alaykum bi-l-‘aswadi l-bahīmi dī nuqṭatayni fa-‘innahū ṣayṭānun)).*

*Book 010, Number 3814:*

Ibn Mughaffal reported: Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) ordered the killing of dogs and then said: what is the trouble with them (the people of Medina)? How dogs are nuisance to them (the citizens of Medina)? He then permitted keeping of dogs for hunting and (the protection of) herds. In the hadith transmitted on the authority of Yahyā, he (the Holy Prophet) permitted the keeping of dogs for (the protection of) herds, for hunting and (the protection of) cultivated land.

*wa-ḥaddaṭanā ‘ubaydu llāhi bnu mu‘āḍin ḥaddaṭanā ‘abī ḥaddaṭanā šu‘batu ‘an ‘abī t-tayyāhi sami‘a muṭarrifa bna ‘abdi llāhi yuḥaddiṭu ‘ani bni l-muḡaffali qāla: ‘amara rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ‘alayhi wa-sallama bi-qatli l-kilābi tumma qāla: (( mā bāluhum wa-bālu l-kilābi?)) tumma raḥḥaṣa fī kalbi ṣ-ṣaydi wa-kalbi l-ḡanami*

*Book 024, Number 5248:*

Maymūna reported that one morning Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) was silent with grief. Maymūna said: Allah's Messenger, I find a change in your mood today. Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: Gabriel had promised me that he would meet me tonight, but he did not meet me. By Allah, he never broke his promises, and Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) spent the day in this sad (mood). Then it occurred to him that there had been a puppy under their cot. He commanded and it was turned out. He then took some water in his hand and sprinkled it at that place. When it was evening Gabriel met him and he said to him: you promised me that you would meet me the previous night. He said: Yes, but we do not enter a house in



which there is a dog or a picture. Then on that very morning he commanded the killing of the dogs until he announced that the dog kept for the orchards should also be killed, but he spared the dog meant for the protection of extensive fields (or big gardens).

*ḥaddaṭanī ḥarmalatu bnu yaḥyā ‘aḥbaranā bnu wahbin ‘aḥbaranā yūsufu ʿani bni šihābin ʿani bni s-sabbāqi ‘anna ʿabda llāhi bna ʿabbāsin qāla: ‘aḥbaratnī maymūnatu ‘anna rasūla llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama ‘aṣbaḥa yawman wāḡiman fa-qālat maymūnatu: yā rasūla llāhi! la-qadi stankartu hay’ataka munḍu l-yawmi qāla rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama: ((‘inna ḡibrīla kāna waʿadanī ‘an yalqānī l-laylata, fa-yalqānī, ‘ama wa-llāhi! mā ‘aḥlafanī)) qāla: fa-ḡalla rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama yawmahū ḍālika ʿalā ḍālika ṭumma waqqa fī nafsihī ḡirū kalbin taḥta fustāṭin lanā fa-‘amara bihī fa-‘uḥriḡa ṭumma ‘aḥaḍa bi-yadihī mā’an fa-naḍaḥa makānahū fa-lammā ‘amsā laqiyahū ḡibrīlu ʿalayhi s-salāmu fa-qāla lahū: ((qad kunta wa-ʿadtanī ‘an talqānī l-bāriḡata)) qāla: ‘aḡal, wa-lākinnā lā nadḡulu baytan fīhi kalbun wa-lā ṣūratun fa-‘aṣbaḥa rasūlu llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama yawma’iḡin, fa-‘amara bi-qatli l-kilābi ḡattā ‘innahū ya’muru bi-qatli kalbi l-ḡā’iṡi ṣ-ṣaḡīri wa-yatruku kalba l-ḡā’iṡi l-kabīri.*

*Book 024, Number 5277:*

Abū Hurayra reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: Angels do not accompany the travellers who have with them a dog and a bell.

## From Sunan Abī Dāwūd;

*Book 2, Number 0703:*

Narrated ʿAbdullāh ibn Abbās:

Qatādah said: I heard Ġābir ibn Zayd who reported on the authority of Ibn Abbās; and Šuʿba reported the Prophet (peace be upon him) as saying: A menstruating woman and a dog cut off the prayer.

*ḥaddaṭanā musaddadun ḥaddaṭanā yaḥyā ʿan šuʿbata ḥaddaṭanā qatādatu qāla: samiʿtu ġābira bna zaydin yuḥaddiṭu ʿani bni ʿabbāsin rafaʿahū šuʿbatu qāla: ((yaqṭaʿu ṣ-ṣalāta l-marʿatu l-ḥāʾiḍu wa-l-kalbu.))*

*Book 2, Number 0704:*

Narrated ʿAbdullāh ibn Abbās:

Ikrimah reported on the authority of Ibn Abbās, saying: I think the Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) said: When one of you prays without a *sutra*, a dog, an ass, a pig, a Jew, a Magian, and a woman cut off his prayer, but it will suffice if they pass in front of him at a distance of over a stone's throw.

*ḥaddaṭanā muḥammadu bnu ʿismāʿīla l-baṣrīyu ḥaddaṭanā muʿādun ḥaddaṭanā hišāmūn ʿan yaḥyā ʿan ʿikrimata ʿani bni ʿabbāsin qāla: ʿaḥsabuhū ʿan rasūli llāhi ṣallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama qāla: ((ʿidā ṣallā ʿaḥadukum ʿilā ġayri sutratin fa-ʿinnahū yaqṭaʿu ṣalātahū l-kalbu wa-l-ḥimāru wa-l-ḥinzīru wa-l-yahūdīyu wa-l-maġūsīyuwa-l-marʿatuʿwa-yuġzīʿu ʿanhū ʿidā marrū bayna yadayhi ʿalā qaḍfatin bi-ḥaġarin)).*

## III.2. A general critique of the “anti-dog” Hadiths

The anti-dog hadiths have always created arguments and controversies throughout the Muslim history. We find it even dating back to al-Ġāhiz that there are statements about some hadiths' lack of clarity and reliability. The two hadiths, which troubled many an Islamic scholar, were the tradition about the evilness of black dogs and about the extermination of all dogs. We know that the superstition about black dogs is not inclusive only to the Arabic culture. Throughout the history there have been many communities that discriminated specifically the black dogs and held them related to omens, evil spirits, or bad luck.

In regard to hadiths about black dogs, we find the following statements in Smith's and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm's work :

It is interesting that both Jahiz and Ibn Qutaybah quote '...for the voracious among dogs are the blackest'. This is perhaps significant in the explanation of the Tradition: 'The black dog is a devil'. It may be too, Jahiz suggests, (Hayawan, I, 305) the narrator of the Tradition had only heard the end of the Prophet's words and had missed the true context.<sup>80</sup>

Further in regard to the killing of all dogs, many scholars mentioned that the hadith shall not be used out of its context in the sense that the Prophet's command to kill dogs refers to a very specific period in time. There is the following note in the Encyclopedia of Islam.

It is also obvious why the Prophet, faced with the problem of a plague of stray dogs in Medina in his day, at first took the implacable decision to exterminate “all dogs” (according to the ḥadīths), and then, mitigating his decree because the

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<sup>80</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes' by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxx.

canine race were a race of Allāh's creatures (*inna-hā umma min al-umam*) and because man needed certain categories of dog...<sup>81</sup>

Some scholars even mentioned that the hadith is actually fabricated in a later time than the Prophet's in order to deal more effectively with a rabies epidemic in Medina. Al-Faḍl writes the following:

...some of these (anti-dog) traditions were reported in Tirmidhī, the Muwatta' of Mālik, al-Nisā'ī, and Muslim and some variants in Bukhārī. But I researched their authenticity and there is no consensus on the matter. All the traditions are of singular transmissions, most were declared weak or apocryphal - for instance, the tradition about the slaughtering of dogs, a number of schools found that it was invented at a time of a rabies plague in Medina. In fact, the traditions mandating the killing of dogs were the most troubling for jurists. We find in discussions by Ibn al-ʿArabī in his 'Arīdat al-Aḥwadhī, in Nayl al-Awtār, and in Nawawī's Commentary on Muslim that the vast majority of jurists rejected the traditions mandating the killing of the dogs as pure fabrications because they reasoned, such behaviour would be wasteful of life.<sup>82</sup>

Al-Faḍl is probably one of the most influential Islamic thinkers that question the authoritativeness and reliability of hadiths in establishing the norms of religion not only in the matter of dogs, but also in a wide spectrum of subjects. Throughout the history similar discussions have been led among Muslims, however, it is probably the first time that these discussions became so heated, for the nowadays-Muslims feel the urge to reinterpret their religion as they are challenged by modernity. The following lines briefly explain al-Faḍl's standpoint on the issue:

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<sup>81</sup> *El<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. IV, s.v. kalb

<sup>82</sup> al-Faḍl, Ḥālid Abū: *The search for Beauty in Islam*, p. 322.

The Sunnah, however, is a different matter. There is already a substantial literature on hadith criticism written by Muslim scholars. As discussed above, the history of the traditions of the Prophet and the Companions as narrated by Muslim scholars is far more complex and contested than the history of the Qur'ān. Furthermore, Muslim dogma does not assert that the hadith literature is immutable or Divinely protected from the possibility of corruption.<sup>83</sup>

In the 80th chapter of his book “The Search for Beauty in Islam”, Abū al-Faḍl discusses a conservative Saudi šayḥ's fatwā on dogs through an imagined conference of Muslim intellectuals from the past and says the following about the hadith concerning the angels:

...we find that the tradition about the angels not entering the home of a dog keeper has been seriously questioned and doubted in several sources such as Tuḥfat al-Aḥwadhī. Many of the commentaries on hadith have pointed out that these traditions conflict with stronger traditions; other sources argued that these traditions are inconsistent with the principles of Islam...<sup>84</sup>

### **III.3. A Contemporary Case about a Hadith and the Reliability of Abū Hurayra**

As I have mentioned before, specific hadiths about dogs are always in the center of discussions about them. A search in the internet will clearly show that Muslim defenders of dogs always question the reliability of these hadiths and state that they are fabricated in accordance with the social urges and political reasons. On the more scholarly level a very good example for such a discussion will be the response given by al-Faḍl to a

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<sup>83</sup> al-Faḍl, Hālīd Abū: *Speaking in God's Name*, p. 105.

<sup>84</sup> al-Faḍl, Hālīd Abū: *The search for Beauty in Islam*, p. 322.

fatwā issued by a conservative jurist organization in Cairo (C.R.L.O). The fatwā typically represents the mainstream attitude with full confidence in the authenticity and the authoritativeness of the hadiths in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. The fatwā issues as follows:

Question:...does a woman invalidate a man's prayer if she passes in front of him while he is praying either individually, or following the imam in the Grand Mosque in Mecca?...

Fatwa:...As for the woman invalidating a man's prayer, it is established in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, in a hadith narrated by Abū Dharr that the Prophet (S) said, "The prayer of a Muslim make is broken if a woman, a donkey, or a black dog crosses in front of him within the span of a camel's saddle." So, if a woman passes between a worshipper and his sutrah, or between him and the place where he prostrates if he has no sutrah, his prayer is voided and must be redone, even if he is almost finished.<sup>85</sup>

Al-Faḍl's response to this fatwā is a very good manifestation of a critique of the reliability of a hadith by the use of Islamic sources. Though a very long quote, I deem it quite necessary with respect to overall structure of my work.

The tradition by Abū Hurayrah asserting that mounts, black dogs, and women invalidate the prayer of men is a good starting point for illustrating this issue, and so I will examine some of the circumstances surrounding this report. Interestingly, there are many existing versions of this report; the various versions are ascribed to transmissions by Abū Hurayrah, as well as Ibn 'Abbās and Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī. The one element common to all versions is the inclusion of social undesirables in the possible list of things that could invalidate a prayer. For instance, one version, reportedly narrated by Ibn 'Abbās, asserts that it is pigs, black dogs, donkeys, and women that invalidate a man's prayer. Some versions claim that all dogs, not just black, and only menstruating women, not all women,

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<sup>85</sup> al-Faḍl, Hālīd Abū: *Speaking in God's Name*, p. 273.

invalidate prayers. Other versions add Manicheans, unbelievers, and Jews, for good measure, to the list of invalidators. Clearly, this was a tradition that served as a receptacle for social condemnation, and the hurling of bigoted insults. Importantly, various historical reports assert that this tradition faced considerable opposition in early Islam. A large number of reports state that ʿĀ'ishah, in particular, took offense - when informed that Abū Hurayrah was circulating this report, she exclaimed, "God confound you! You have made women the same as dogs and donkeys!" In another transmission, ʿĀ'ishah reportedly responded, "You have made women like the worst of animals! By God, I used to lie down in front of the Prophet, while on my menstrual cycle, as he continued to pray." Umm Salamah, the Prophet's wife, confirmed ʿĀ'isha's report, and recounted that they would be on their menstrual period and they would either pass or lay down in front of the Prophet as he prayed, and the Prophet never made mention of any such rule. Furthermore, ʿAli and Ibn ʿUmar rejected the various versions of the tradition and contended that none of the categories mentioned above could invalidate a Muslim's prayers. Other reports add that Ibn ʿAbbās, the same person to whom one of the above versions is attributed, and other Companions, narrated that on several occasions, donkeys passed in front of the Prophet, and a dog played around the Prophet as he continued to pray. Ibn ʿAbbās adds that no one thought that donkeys or dogs affected the validity of prayers, and the Prophet never stated that they did either. Importantly, as far as the activities of the early interpretive communities are concerned, they reflect a general lack of confidence in all the versions of this tradition. For instance, early scholars disagreed on the authenticity of Abū Hurayrah's tradition, and its alternative versions. Some argued that the tradition is weak, others said it was fabricated, and still others claimed it is authentic, but that it was later abrogated by the Prophet. The jurists al-Shāfiʿī, al-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfah, and Mālik b. Anas did not rely on the tradition, and held that nothing that could pass in front of a praying person invalidates his or her prayers...The appearance of Abū Hurayrah in the reports, considering his background, adds another level of indeterminacy about the authorial enterprise. It is very likely, if not very probable, that this was a social

debate in which the memory of the Prophet was co-opted, redacted, and at times, invented...Considering the many ambiguities, suspicions, and doubts surrounding the authorial enterprise, it is irresponsible, and perhaps dishonest, to use the dog, donkey, and women tradition in the fashion which the C.R.L.O uses it.<sup>86</sup>

As it can be seen in the narration of hadiths above, almost all of the tradition demeaning to dogs are reported, directly or indirectly, by Abū Hurayra. Another major point of the anti-dog hadith critics is that Abū Hurayra has been a rather controversial person in early Islamic history. Interestingly, many sources in the internet also mention his love of cats – referring also to his name - and his personal hatred towards dogs. Below is the al-Faḍl's argument on Abū Hurayra:

The basic criticism directed at him is that he was a late convert to Islam who became a Muslim only three years before the Prophet's death. Nevertheless, Abū Hurayrah transmitted more traditions attributed to the Prophet than most of the Companions who lived with the prophet for as much as twenty years. Furthermore, compared to some Companions such as Abū Bakr, °Umar, °Ali, or Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, he does not seem to have been particularly close to the Prophet. As a result, there are a large number of reports asserting that several Companions such as °Ā'ishah, °Umar, and °Ali severely criticized Abū Hurayrah for transmitting so many reports. Abū Hurayrah's contemporaneous detractors objected to the fact that Abū Hurayrah was a late convert, and transmitted many traditions that contradicted the transmissions of more notable Companions...For instance in one such report, °Ā'ishah called upon Abū Hurayrah to come to see her, and she told him, "Abū Hurayrah! What are these reports from the Prophet that we keep hearing that you transmit to the people! Tell me, did you hear anything other than we heard, did you see anything other than what we observed?"...In a similar report, Abū Hurayrah would consistently say, "My close companion (khalīlī - i.e. the Prophet) told me such-and-such, and my close

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<sup>86</sup> al-Faḍl, Hālid Abū: Speaking in God's Name, p. 226.



companion did such-and-such." ʿAli confronted Abū Hurayrah and said, "Abū Hurayrah, since when was the Prophet your close companion!"...Other reports asserted that Abū Hurayrah would contradict himself, or that he was corrected by other Companions such as Zubayr and ʿUmar. In fact, ʿUmar reportedly threatened to punish him if he did not refrain from transmitting traditions. In one report, ʿUmar told Abū Hurayrah, "If you don't stop transmitting hadith from the Prophet, I will exile you."...Other reports mention that Abū Hurayrah was knowledgeable in the Talmud and that many of his transmissions correlated with Jewish mythology and lore.<sup>87</sup>

### **III.4. Defending dogs through the Prophet: The “pro-dog” *Hadiths***

In contrast to the anti-dog hadiths, there is a bunch of pro-dog hadiths, which were always referenced in these arguments. As it will be seen in the Literature section of my work, as early as Ibn al-Marzubān (d.921), the Muslim dog defender mentioned these pro-dog hadiths to counterbalance the argument against dogs.

Some of these hadiths are rather famous with a high credibility such as the ones cited above, in which a prostitute, and in some narrations a sinning man, who had seen a thirsty dog hanging about a well and has given it water to drink, is forgiven only because of this act. This hadith is recorded in many sources, including Ṣaḥīḥ Buḥārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, with minor differences.

There are many more hadiths that are in favor of dogs, although they do not come from as famous and as credible sources as Buḥārī or Muslim. Al-Faḍl mentions some of these hadiths:

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<sup>87</sup> al-Faḍl, Hālīd Abū: Speaking in God's Name, p. 216.

Despite the attribution to the Prophet of a large number of tradition hostile to dogs, we know from a large number of sources such as Ibn Hajar al-'Asqlani in his commentary on Bukhari, from al-Mubarakafuri in his commentary on Tirmidhi, and al-Nawawi in his commentary on Muslim, there are several reports indicating that the Prophet's young cousins, and some of the companions owned puppies. Other reports indicate that the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him, prayed while a dog played in his vicinity. In addition, there is considerable historical evidence that dogs roamed freely in Medina and even entered the Prophet's mosque. In another report, the prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, warned his companions against evicting a dog weaning her puppies from her chosen spot. In other words, the prophet taught that if a dog is found weaning her puppies, people should not disturb her. In one report, it is transmitted that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, changed the course of his marching troops in order to avoid disturbing a pair of dogs and their puppies...These various reports are in clear tension with reports prohibiting the ownership of dogs or reports that de-value the moral worth of dogs."<sup>88</sup>

The last hadith mentioned about the army and the puppies is a rather interesting anecdote, since such a great sensitivity is shown by the Prophet not to bother a litter of puppies during such a critical expedition. Ṭāriq Ramaḍān mentions this report in his biographical work about the Prophet, so does also William Montgomery Watt, and makes the following comment about the significance of this gesture.

On the way, he also asked a Muslim to see to it that a litter of puppies that he saw on the roadside were not trampled by the Muslim army; he thereby expressed his care for life, of whatever sort, and even though the survival of a few dogs might have seemed trifling to the Muslims at that particular time, he was keen to protect the puppies from the soldiers' recklessness....<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> al-Faḍl, Ḥālīd Abū: *The Search for Beauty in Islam*, p. 325.

<sup>89</sup> Ramaḍān, Ṭāriq: *The Messenger: The Meanings of the Life of Muhammad*, p. 175.

Finally, another report that strengthens the Muslim dog defenders is that one of the prophet's wives owned a dog and brought her dog along on the pilgrimage to Mecca to guard her baggage. Prophet's wife felt really sorry when she heard about the death of her dog by the bedouin tribe, with whom it stayed with otherwise.<sup>90</sup>

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#### **IV. *Fiqh* and *Madāhib***

In parallel to the Qur'ān's approach to the man-animal relationship, *fiqh* systematizes the laws about animals in regard to their use by man. Animals are discussed in *fiqh* primarily in relation to diet rules such as *ḥarām* or *ḥalāl*, how they shall be hunted and slaughtered, and how they shall be traded and calculated in *zakāt*. The issue of dogs is specifically treated under these basic titles in addition to the important subject of their cleanliness (*ṭahāra*).

As there are no specific instructions on these matters in the Qur'ān besides the hunting mention, the Sunnī legal discourse borrowed a heavily negative view of dogs from the relevant mainstream hadiths. As still in many Muslim countries *šarī'a*, derived from the Islamic legal teaching, designates the rules and regulations of Muslims lives, such a negative view of dogs in the *šarī'a* probably worsened the social status of the dogs even more.

The foremost general attitude of *fiqh* in approaching the issue is to classify the dogs according to their usefulness to man. As such the trained dogs, as mentioned in the Qur'ān, that are used for hunting, guarding, or sheeping are treated exclusively. The following words of °Alī and the comment following it very typically resemble this point of view:

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<sup>90</sup> Smith, G.R. & °Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 15

Ali has said: "Amongst dogs, good is found only in the hunting and sheep dogs." The following can be said of the Islamic Law's attitude to the dog. The dog was accepted as lawful, particularly on the account of his ability to guard and to hunt. On the other hand in classical fiqh, keeping dogs in the house as pets have always been regarded out of question.<sup>91</sup>

The dogs that were regarded as useful were given specific names in the technical legal discourse of the fiqh. In accordance to their superior status, people were allowed to own and trade such dogs. Encyclopedia of Islam explains the overall legal approach as follows:

Freed from the Prophet's condemnation were all useful dogs who obeyed a master, i.e., trained hunting dogs (*kalb al-ṣayd*, *ḍāri*, pl. *ḍāwārī*) and watchdogs, whether they guarded houses (*kalb al-dūr*), alleys (*kalb al-darb*), flocks (*kalb al-ḍarʿ*, *kalb al-rāʿī*, *kalb al-ghanam*), or crops and vineyards (*kalb al-zarʿ*). In the general opinion of the doctors of law and jurist-consults it was permitted to possess, maintain (*iktināʿ*), buy, sell and bequeath such dogs, even black ones so long as their use could be justified. In addition, one who killed one of these dogs had to recompense the owner (*kālib*) at the rate of forty dirhams for a hunting dog, one ewe for a sheep-dog, one *faraḳ* (= 16 *raṭīs*) of wheat for a crop-guarding dog and one *faraḳ* of good earth for a house watchdog.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View, p. xi.

<sup>92</sup> *EI<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. IV, s.v. kalb

## IV.1. Dogs: *nağis* or *ṭāḥir*

The very basic controversy about Islamic law with regard to dogs was about their cleanliness and purity. It was the Šāfi'ī doctrine, as systematised by an-Nawawī, that first labeled dogs as *nağis*. *Nağis* is the opposite of *ṭāḥir* and it practically means impure. Such a notion practically exists in Judaism, but it is not mentioned at all in the Qur'ān.<sup>93</sup> In the same manner, some jurists stated that the water from which dogs drink is also impure.<sup>94</sup>

On the other hand, not all law schools adhered to this interpretation of the Šāfi'ī doctrine. In the next sections of this chapter, there is a long discussion of al-Faḍl against the notion of impurity of dogs. Interestingly, however, a recent publication of a manuscript shows us that the discussion on the subject has a rather long history. Smith and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm write the following.

In any case this legal description of the dog's ritual uncleanness is not universal and it did become one of the differences of legal opinion in Islamic law (ikhtilaf) between the orthodox schools of law (madhahib). For instance the Maliki school appears to have been ready to accept the ritual cleanliness of the dog, whereas the Shafi'is were not. The point has just been highlighted by the recent publication of an Arabic manuscript preserved by the University of Leeds, entitled *al-Mas'alah al-khilafiyah fi taharat al-kalb wa-nafasatihi bayn al-Shafi'iyyah wa-'l-Malikiyyah*. The work is in three parts, the first being a list of eight reasons advanced by the Maliki lawyer, 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Ujhuri, who died in 1066/1656, an Azharite from Egypt, for regarding the dog as ritually clean; the second a refutation of these by an unknown Shafi'i and the third response by al-Ujhuri, powerfully refuting the Shafi'i's own refutations and insisting on the

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<sup>93</sup> *El*<sup>2</sup>, Vol. VII, s.v. *nağis*

<sup>94</sup> *El*<sup>2</sup>, Vol IV, s.v. *kalb*

cleanliness of the dog. It is in any case interesting to note that the chain of authorities of Fadl contains a judge and a jurist!<sup>95</sup>

## IV.2. Ablution and dogs

In addition to the general notion of purity and impurity, another major problem for the Muslims concerning the dog was specifically the question of prayer and ritual purity. Muslims have to pray five times a day and they shall also adhere to strict rules of ablution and hygiene. Among the conditions for the validity of the prayer is not only that of the ritual ablution, but also the cleanliness of the place of prayer itself. The hardship of maintaining the obligatory ritual purity in the presence of dogs have been such a nuisance for the Muslims that there have been jokes invented on the matter:

"According to some schools of law, if a Muslim is touched by dog saliva, s/he must wash the "affected area" seven times before being considered pure again. There is a joke about a pious man who is rushing to the mosque after hearing the prayer call. It has been raining, and a stray dog steps in a puddle and splashes him. Realizing he has no time to return home and change, the man looks the other way and says, "God willing, it's a goat."<sup>96</sup>

Further, it shall be remembered that there has always been a thread of traditional approach, which holds to a superstitious belief that dogs - specifically black ones - are demonic emanations and carry evil characteristics. As for those law schools that take caution against dogs to the extreme in terms of ablution, this belief might have an effect in explaining the reason. As Zwemer writes:

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<sup>95</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxx.

<sup>96</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 131.

In the preparation of the five daily prayers, especially in the process of ablution - the object of the Moslem seems to be to free himself from everything that has connection with supernatural powers or demons as opposed to the worship of the one true God. That is the reason for its supreme importance."<sup>97</sup>

As it is well supported by hadiths that ablution is more than a physical cleaning, the extreme reactions to the dogs in terms of ablution might be due to their association with evil spirits by some traditions.

### **IV.3. Eating dogs, selling dogs and the situation of hunting dogs**

Although there are differences of opinions as to the purity of dogs and ablution among the four major law schools, they anonymously agree that the meat of the dog is ḥarām. Encyclopedia of Islam summarized the dietary laws of Islam about animals as follows:

The prohibition on eating some animals (e.g., bees, ants, frogs, and hoopoe birds) is linked to favourable accounts of them in the Qur'ān and its exegesis. Many authorities do not permit the eating of lizards, certain snakes, and vermin of any type. Ḥanafī and Shī'ī jurists do not allow the eating of domesticated donkeys and mules, while Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767) considers the eating of horse meat reprehensible. Shāfi'īs and Ḥanbalīs permit the eating of horse meat, while all schools but the Ḥanbalīs prohibit the eating of domesticated ass. The eating of dogs and cats is forbidden.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Zwemer, Samuel M.: *Influence of Animism on Islam: An Account of Popular Superstitions*, p. 45.

<sup>98</sup> *EI<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. III, s.v. ḥayawān

The question of trade of dogs was also settled firmly in the hadiths. As we have seen there are a couple of hadiths from various sources that clearly forbid the trade of dogs. The following quotation explains which animals were allowed to trade (*bayʿ, tiġāra*):

A series of articles are excluded by Tradition from buying and selling: firstly, all that is not one's own property (Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, ii, 189, 190); and secondly, those articles the use of which is forbidden or which are considered unclean - wine, swine, dogs, cats, idols (*aṣnām*) and *mayta* [q.v.] and also water; water according to a tradition is one of the three things which are *res communes*, the price of which is *ḥarām* (Ibn Māḍja, *Ruhūn, bāb 16*).<sup>99</sup>

However, as it was mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the trained dogs which are useful to man were usually exempted from this law, and were traded freely.

Another question that was addressed by the law schools was the issue of hunting (*ṣayd*) and of dog as a hunting animal. The problem was partly addressed in the qur'ānic verse, in which it was allowed for Muslims to use trained dogs to hunt. (Q 5/4) Further, as we have seen, hadiths settled the question of hunting through animals in a rather detailed way. Muslims have to pronounce the basmala over the animals in order to make their meat ḥalāl to themselves. The law schools again didn't differ much in their approach and the tradition of hunting with dogs, specifically salūqīs, was save.

The answer to this was that the hunter should pronounce the basmalah, 'In the name of God', over the hound as he was slipped after the quarry. Providing the latter was run down by the hunter's own hound or hounds and they had made no attempt to eat or mutilate the game, it was lawful to eat it.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> *El<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. X, s.v. tiġāra

<sup>100</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxix.



There were, however, many debates conducted on the issue, whether the term mukallib can really be applied to animals other than dogs, and whereas other animals are capable of being trained as efficiently as a dog can be, what the term being trained (*mukallib*) really means, and what the prerequisites for being trained really are. A discourse on this can be found in the book '*Bidāyat al-Muğtaḥid wa-Niḥāyat al-Muqtaṣid The Distinguished Jurist's Primer.*' transl. Nyazee, a legal work of the great scholar Ibn Rušd:

The reason for disagreement on this topic is based upon two factors. The first is the analogy for all predatory animals and birds of prey from the case of the dog, because it is believed that the text has permitted it for dogs, that is, in the words of the Exalted, "and those ḡawāriḡ (beasts and birds of prey) which ye have trained as hounds are trained, teaching them what Allah taught you" unless it is interpreted to mean that the word mukallibīn (in the verse) is derived from pouncing of the predatory animals, and not from the meaning of the word dog. This is indicated by the generality of the word al-ḡawāriḡ used for predatory animals and birds of prey in the verse. On the basis of this reason for disagreement is the equivocality of the word mukallibīn. The second reason is about the stipulation of catching that it (the animal) should catch for its master. Those who maintained that an analogy for the remaining animals is not to be drawn from the dog, and that the word mukallibīn is derived from the word meaning "dog", and not from any other term, or that catching can only be achieved by the dog, that is, for its master (and on his bidding), and that this is a condition, said that hunting is not to be undertaken with any other predatory animal except a dog. Those who made an analogy for all predatory animals drawn from the dog, and did not stipulate in the act of catching the condition that it be on the bidding of the master, said that hunting with all other predatory

animals and birds of prey is permitted as long as they are amenable to training.”<sup>101</sup>

The verse Q5/4 does not exclude any kinds of dogs from hunting. However, some jurist based upon ‘the command of the Prophet to kill jet-black dogs’ by means of analogy (*qiyās*) came to the conclusion that game hunted by black dogs is prohibited for consumption. Among the group of jurists who disagreed with the use of black canines for hunting (*ṣayd*), were namely Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Qatāda, and an-Naḥāṭī. The majority of legal scholars, however, did permit the game hunted down by jet-black dogs, as long as they were trained to do so and did their job well.

#### **IV.4. al-Faḍl’s ideas on the Islamic Law about Dogs**

Just as I have done in the hadith section of my work, I want to end this section with a lengthy quotation of al-Faḍl where he describes different law schools’ approaches to the issue. The explanations are given as part of an argument in an imaginary *maḡlis* of Islamic law students. al-Faḍl distinguishes between two different approaches to the issue, which he calls no ‘rational basis approach’ and ‘rational basis approach’. No rational basis approach summarizes the commonplace point of view in the traditional *fiqh*:

...This seems to be the exact conclusion Ibn Ruṣd, the grandson, in his *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* and Ibn Taymiyya in his *Fatawa* had reached. The jurists focused on the issue of purity or ritual impurity, and they particularly focused on whether there is a rational basis for the avowed impurity of dogs...As we find in the *Mudawwana* and *al-Bada'i'* by al-Kasani, a considerable number of jurists asserted that there is no rational basis for the impurity of the dogs - like pigs,

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<sup>101</sup> Ibn Ruṣd: *Bidāyat al-Muḡtaḥid wa-Nihāyat al-Muqtaṣid. The Distinguished Jurist’s Primer*, p. 552

dogs must be considered impure simply as a matter of deference to the religious texts. Consequently, these jurists allowed the ownership of dogs only for the purpose of serving human needs, such as herding, farming, hunting, protection, or because of blindness. But they prohibited the ownership of dogs for frivolous reasons, such as companionship, enjoying their appearance, out of a desire to show off. Although these jurists held that there was no rational basis for the prohibition, some of these jurists still rationalized this determination by arguing that dogs endanger the safety of the neighbors and travellers. Some of the jurists that adopted the no rational basis approach did not focus on the issue of ownership, rather they focused on the cleanliness of the owner of the dogs. In short, they asserted that a Muslim may own a dog for whatever purpose as long as they keep the dog away from the area in which they pray and worship.<sup>102</sup>

Afterwards al-Faḍl moves to the ideas of what he calls 'rational basis approach' and says the following:

As reported by a large number of sources including Ibn Rushd, the grandson, al-Dardir, and al-Sawi, a considerable number of jurists particularly, but not exclusively, from the Maliki school of thought, reasoned as follows: Everything found in nature is presumed to be pure unless proven otherwise, either through experience or text. Establishing that all the hadith we already discussed are not of sufficient reliability or authenticity so as to overcome the presumption of purity, they argued that dogs are pure animals. Accordingly, as reported in sources such as al-Munif the author of al-Fatawa al-Khayriyya; al-Qarafi in al-Dhakhira, Ibn Nujaym in al-Bahr al-Ra'iq, Ibn Qudama in al-Mughni, Ibn Hazm in al-Muhalla, several jurists maintained that dogs do not void a Muslim's prayer or ritual purity. In other words, that dogs and their saliva are pure. We are informed by Ibn Rushd, the grandfather, in Muqaddimat al-Mumahhidat that other jurists argued that the command mandating that a vessel be washed a number of times was intended as a precautionary health measure. These jurists argued that the

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<sup>102</sup> al-Faḍl, Hālid Abū: *The Search for Beauty in Islam*, p.327.

Prophet's tradition on this issue was intended to apply only to dogs at risk of being infected by the rabies virus. Hence, if a dog is not a possible carrier of rabies, it is presumed to be pure, and therefore, there is no problem with owning or coming into contact with such a dog. As mentioned by Ibn al-'Arabī in his 'Arida, a number of jurists, building upon this logic, reasoned that rural dogs are pure, while urban dogs are impure because urban dogs often consume garbage or trash. Another group of jurists argued that the purity of dogs turns on their domesticity - domestic dogs are considered pure because human beings feed and clean them, while dogs that live in the wild or on the streets of a city could be carriers of disease, and therefore, they are considered impure. The point is, Shaykh, that for those who adopted the rational basis approach, as long as the cleanliness of the dog could be insured, they saw no problem as to the ownership of dogs.<sup>103</sup>

## V. Literature

Another major discipline of the Islamic literature where dogs were discussed in depth was what might be called as adab in Arabic. Within this category there will be a variety of literature works with different styles and purposes. These works as well include the semi-scientific attitudes towards dogs in the fields of philosophy, poetry, zoology and veterinary medicine. There will be a considerable part on the famous work of al-Ġāhiz, the *Book of Animals* or *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, and on the remarkable work of Ibn al-Marzubān named *The Book of the Superiority of Dogs over Some of Those Who Wear Clothes* or *Kitāb faḍl al-kilāb ʿalā kaṭīr mimman labisa ṭiyāb*. Further, there will be a rather detailed section on the tarḍīya poetry and the saluqī dogs. Finally, a brief description of *Iḥwān as-Safā*'s famous work, *The Case of Animals versus Man before the King of Jinn* (*Daʿwa I-ḥayawān diḍḍa l-insān ʿinda malik al-ġinn*), will be made in which there are brief but rather interesting anecdotes about dogs.

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<sup>103</sup> al-Faḍl, Ḥālid Abū: *The Search for Beauty in Islam*, p.328.

## V.1. General Characteristics of *adab* and Classification of Dogs

Although these works are quite different from each other in style and purpose, there is one common ground among all. This common ground is effectively an influence of the Qur'ān and its approach to the animals. As it has been mentioned before, animals in the Qur'ān are frequently mentioned as *āyāt* of God and his magnificence upon which all Muslims shall contemplate. In that sense even the books that laid the foundations of the Arab zoological literature have a tenure of this critical approach. Probably the best example to be given on the subject is the al-Ġāḥiẓ's *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, which is one of the greatest pieces of Arabic literature and a comprehensive and detailed zoological catalogue influenced by the works of Aristoteles. The style and the aim of the *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, inspired by the Qur'ānic teachings, is primarily about presenting the the magnificence of God through analyzing some of His grand *āyāt*, the animals. In this manner Eisenstein makes the following remark about the *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*:

"Solche Inhalte gibt auch das tierkundliche Buch der Araber schlechtin wieder: das "Buch der Tiere" (*Kitāb al-ḥayawān*) von al-Ġāḥiẓ (m. 868/9), das die Standardquelle für spätere Autoren auf tierkundlichem Gebiet werden sollte. Der Zweck dieses unsystematisch angelegten, umfangreichen Werks ist aber nicht eigentlich das Studium der Tierarten, sondern der Beweis für die Existenz des Schöpfers aus seiner Schöpfung, sowie der Beweis, dass Gott nichts völlig Unnützes geschaffen hat. Um dies zu erreichen, gibt der Autor die vielfältigsten Nachrichten über Tiere wieder - und in diesem Sinne zählt al-Ġāḥiẓ' Buch eher zur Gattung der Adab-Werke (when auch mit theologischer Implikation)."<sup>104</sup>

In addition to this stylistic matter, another common feature of the Islamic literature on animals is the frequent use of allegories about animals used in explaining the human

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<sup>104</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Tierkündlichen Mitteilungen in der Klassischen Arabischen Literatur* (in *Der Orientalische Mensch und Seine Beziehungen zur Umwelt*), p. 429.

motives. Still again this style is also an inheritance from the Qur'ān, where there are quite many allegories made on animals and man used in a didactic manner. Foltz mentions this point as follows:

Islamic philosophers and mystics have often used non-human animals in their writings. Almost invariably, however, animal figures are employed as symbols for particular human traits, or are entirely anthropomorphized actors in human-type dramas. In other words, even where non-human animals appear, the real message is about humans.<sup>105</sup>

Finally, another interesting point specifically in more zoology-oriented works is about the classification of dogs. It is here again that a big influence of the Qur'ānic approach to animals can be felt. As there are many verses in the Qur'ān where animals are mentioned in regard to their usefulness and benefits to man, the Arab zoologists are also inclined to classify them in regard to their relation and usefulness to man in a rather anthropocentric manner. As Eisenstein mentions:

Die Klassifizierung der Säugetiere als der wichtigsten den Menschen umgebenden Tiere zeigt wiederum deutlich, dass nicht das Tier als solches im Mittelpunkt des Interesses stand, sondern lediglich in seiner Bedeutung für den Menschen und seiner Verwendungsmöglichkeit durch ihn gesehen wurde, somit nicht eigentlich Gegenstand wissenschaftlicher Forschung werden konnte.<sup>106</sup>

Concerning the dogs, their classification was a rather complicated and controversial issue for Muslim scholars. One of the most important criteria for the classification was whether the animal is wild or domesticated. As it will be seen in some of the works that will be studied, it has been a point of interest and amazement for Arab writers that dogs with their various characteristics can actually be regarded both as a wild animal and/or a domesticated one. The same trend is also present in more systematic works of the

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<sup>105</sup> Waldau, Paul & Patton, Kimberley: *A communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science & Ethics*, p. 153.

<sup>106</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Die Systematik der Säugetiere in Mittelalterlichen Arabischen Quellen*, p. 92

Arabic literature. As Eisenstein shows in his work on the systematization of animals in the Arabic sources of the Middle Ages, Arabic writers were quite confused in finding the right category for dogs. In a comparative study of three important sources written by al-Qazwīnī, an-Nuwayrī and al-Qalqašandī, this problem can clearly be observed. The cosmography of al-Qazwīnī classifies dogs as 'wild animals.' Although he uses the term *sibā*<sup>o</sup> for dogs, which in fact means 'beasts of prey,' he explicitly puts them into the category of wild animals. The Encyclopedia of an-Nuwayrī classifies dogs as 'beasts of prey' (*sibā*<sup>o</sup>). Finally, the late al-Qalqašandī describes them in his Encyclopedia as 'wild and hunting animals' (*ḡalīl al-waḥš wa-karīm al-ṣuyūḍihī*).<sup>107</sup>

The last point of discussion to be mentioned in the section of the classification of dogs is the specific canine breed of salūqīs. The salūqīs have always enjoyed a special and privileged status among the canine race not only in the Arabian Peninsula. They were regarded as noble animals in contrast to the generally perceived baseness of dogs. There are numerous sources from which we acquire a lot of information about the salūqīs, while the other dog breeds were heavily ignored up until al-Ġāḥiẓ's (d.868) *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*. The following quotation from the Encyclopedia of Islam mentions this reality and lists the major dog breeds that were encountered by the Arabs.

In any case, we may be grateful to al-Djāḥiẓ for not having contented himself with an apology for one type of hound, the "Saluki" (salūḳī [q.v.]) harrier, the noble hunter (‘itāk) which was all that poets and writers on the hunt before and after al-Djāḥiẓ could do. Thanks to him, although we cannot speak of breeds, we are nevertheless able to distinguish the most common dogs of his day. Apart from the Saluki, there were the Kurdish sheep-dog (kurdī), a large animal introduced into Turkey in the 6th/12th century by the Kurds, probably the fore-runner of the Hungarian herd-dog, the Kuwatz. Since it had a keen sense of smell, the Kurdish sheep-dog was also used to track game and, when mated with a Saluki, produced a "cross" (kḥilāsī) with the qualities of both its parents....Among the smaller breeds, al-Djāḥiẓ mentions a basset sheep-dog, the zi' nī/zīnī, which is

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<sup>107</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Die Systematik der Säugetiere in Mittelalterlichen Arabischen Quellen*, p. 86,87,88

reminiscent of the Hungarian Puli and Pumi. He also mentions the *ḳalaṭī*, the “stocky dog”, which seems to belong to the same type as the Pomeranian, and the *ṣīnī*, “the Chinese”, which corresponds to the pug or Pekinese.<sup>108</sup>

## **V.2. *al-Ġāḥiḏ* and *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*: “Restoring the dog to its just place”**

As François Viré mentions in his article on dogs in the Encyclopedia of Islam, it was al-Ġāḥiḏ, with his grand work *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*, who restored the dog to its just place in the Muslim society.<sup>109</sup>

There is quite a deal of material about the dogs in the treatise. Interestingly, al-Ġāḥiḏ makes the introduction to his remarkable work through a discussion about the dogs. As an answer given to the debate, he writes the following, while at the same time giving an overall picture of how dogs were viewed in the Muslim society at the time.

You have asked yourself what merit can be claimed by the dog, possessed as he is by a vile core, a mean nature, despised as he is and held in such low esteem. One finds in him so few qualities and so many bad sides, that all people are unanimous in finding him vulgar and despicable; all these traits have become proverbial, with his well-deserved reputation of being unable to raise himself to the level of impetuous attacks by wild beasts, of their aptitude for self-defense and of resisting the enemy with dignity, incapable of attaining their level of savagery and lack of pity, while at the same time lacking the mild, peaceful character of the herbivores. The dog is incapable of knowing where his interest lies and acting accordingly, for unlike the ferocious beasts his temperament lacks

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<sup>108</sup> *EJ<sup>2</sup>*, Volume IV, s.v. kalb

<sup>109</sup> *EJ<sup>2</sup>*, Volume IV, s.v. kalb



the instinct for self-preservation as well as their ingenuity, their survival tricks, and their ability to recognize appropriate hiding places."<sup>110</sup>

The work typically manifests the religious character and style found in the books on natural sciences. Al-Ġāhiz makes detailed observations about dogs and their ecology and shares anecdotes and tales about them. As Smith and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm mention the work “provides a balanced picture of the dog, where statements both against him and in his favor are made.”<sup>111</sup>

It is true that *Ṣāhib al-kalb*, the dog protagonist in the dispute, is well able to defend man's best friend and illustrate his excellence and superiority over the cock.

### **V.2.1. Defending the dogs in *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān***

The most important section of the treatise with respect to dogs is depicted as a dispute between two people. *Ṣāhib al-kalb* defends the dog against *ṣāhib ad-dīk*, and tries to prove the excellence and superiority of dogs over the cock. The narration of the dispute actually reflects a specific literary style, called “merits and faults”. The information about this literary tradition and the way it is used in the *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* is given as follows in the Encyclopedia of Islam:

“merits and faults”, a literary genre which developed in the course of the first centuries of the Islamic period, having originated within the Arabo-Muslim cultural heritage...The desire to illustrate and popularise his relativist conception of good and evil induces him to prepare, on the basis of the controversies of his time, a

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<sup>110</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 135

<sup>111</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxxi

fairly long literary text where there is discussion of the merits and faults of the cock and the dog (maḥāsīn al-dīk wa-masāwīh, wa-manāfi' al-kalb wa-maḍārruh). This is presented to the reader in the form of a debate between two highly distinguished Mu'tazilis. One of them (al-Nazzām [q.v.]) favours and defends the cock (ṣāhib al-dīk), while the other (Ma'bad [q.v.]) favours and defends the dog (ṣāhib al-kalb); both are vehemently criticised by a certain accuser (ʿā'ib) who also censures the two animals and enumerates their vices.<sup>112</sup>

It shall indeed be accepted as a matter of great significance that al-Ġāḥiẓ gives a strong support for the dog as a leading Muslim theologian and scholar of his time. As Smith and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm mention, he himself indeed anticipated the objections that would be addressed to him for dealing for such a trivial task of defending the dogs and he wrote the following:

You should know too that, in spite of his lower status, if there is in the dog the marvels of God's organization (tadbir), embracing favour and superior wisdom, just as there is in man for whom God has created the heaven and the earth and what is in between them, the dog is more worthy of being reflected upon than man'. Judges, jurists, rulers, ascetics etc. have all refrained from forbidding the keeping of dogs by people who would obey them at all times, he states. It is difficult to maintain that they would have persistently remained silent, if such a practice were objectionable. The case has never been heard of a witness whose trustworthiness has been questioned and his testimony rejected in court because he kept a dog.<sup>113</sup>

The following lines perfectly manifest al-Ġāḥiẓ's conception of dogs and his will to convince his audience about their merits:

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<sup>112</sup> *EP*<sup>2</sup>, Vol. V, s.v. merits and faults

<sup>113</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxx

You should know - may God exalt you! - that a dog is more affectionate towards his master than a father towards his son or one blood brother towards another. He guards his master and protects his household, whether the master is present or absent, whether he is sleeping or awake. The dog does not shrink from this task, even if he is treated harshly. He does not let people down, even if they let him down (al-Ġāḥiẓ's Kitāb al-Ḥayawān, II, 173)<sup>114</sup>

In another part of the treatise, al-Ġāḥiẓ also tells an anecdote where dogs are praised to be similar to horses in character. It shall of course be kept in mind that in contrast to dogs, horses as well as camels were highly respected and adored animals and they were associated with *baraka* (blessing). The anecdote is a clear challenge to the audience since it adheres the same characteristic properties to dogs and horses.

Muslim b. Amr sent one of his cousins to Syria to buy him a horse. The cousin, who was a hunter, replied, "I don't know anything about horses." "But you know about the dogs..." "Of course!" "Well, all the qualities you look in a dog for, just look for them in the horse you are going to choose." The cousin returned with a mount such that one comparable could not be found among the Arabs."<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Smith, G.R. & <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 8

<sup>115</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p.136

## V.2.2. The problem of Dogs as wild and domesticated Animals

As it was mentioned previously the problem of classification of dogs with regard to their domesticity and wildness was always a vibrant theme throughout the Islamic literature on the subject. We find the following remark in *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān* on the issue:

Zu den nur gezähmt, nicht aber wild vorkommenden Tieren zählt der Hund, obwohl er ein Raubtier ist; nur tollwütige Hunde verwildern. Was aber die Hyänen, Wölfe, Löwen, Panther, Tiger, Füchse und Schakale anbelangt, so sind sie alle wild.” [VI,24] <sup>116</sup>

In parallel to the different approaches in the classification of dogs and the amazement from its double character, there is an interesting bedouin story in al-Ġāḥiẓ’s *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*. Al-Ġāḥiẓ first attributes the following words to ‘Umar b. al-Ḥattāb at the beginning of the 46th section where he discusses the wild and domesticated animals:

'Umar b. Al-Khattab - may God be pleased with him! - said: Those who have no sound judgement say that the dog is a wild predator. If that were so, the dog would not have been domesticated by man, would not have shunned wild predators, would not have avoided thickets, would not have settled in houses, would not have developed an aversion for deserts, would not have shunned waste lands nor would he have grown used to sitting around with people and being in their homes. This clearly is the case, for the dog takes no pleasure in sleeping and lying around on the ground. Nor does he see a carpet or a cushion without getting on it and stretching out. There is no clean, dignified place accessible to him to which he would not make his way. You can see a dog

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<sup>116</sup> quoted after: al-Ġāḥiẓ, ‘Amr Ibn Baḥr : *Arabische Geisteswelt. Ausgewählte und Übersetzte Texte von al-Ġāḥiẓ*, p. 279.

always choosing the best spots in the majlis and the places which are specially kept by his master. (Kitāb al-Ḥayawān, I, 260)<sup>117</sup>

Afterwards al-Ġāḥiẓ continues with the following interesting bedouin story:

"Ein Beduine hatte einen jungen Wolf aufgezogen, bis er herangewachsen war, weil er glaubte, dass er ihm nützlicher sein könnte als ein Hund und die Herde besser verteidigen würde. Als das Tier aber einigermaßen stark geworden war, sprang es ein Schaf an, biss ihm die Kehle durch, wie es Wölfe zu tun pflegen, und frass dann ein Stück davon. Als der Mann den Schaden, den es angerichtet hatte, gewahr wurde, sagte er:...Du hast mein Schäfchen gefressen, obwohl du doch unter uns aufgewachsen bist!...Wer hat dir mitgeteilt, dass dein Vater ein Wolf gewesen ist?"<sup>118</sup>

### **V.3. Ibn al-Marzubān and the Book of the Superiority of Dogs to Some of Those Who Wear Clothes (Kitāb faḍl al-kilāb ʿalā kaṭīr mimman labisa ṭiyāb)**

If it was al-Ġāḥiẓ that 'restored the dog to its just place in Muslim society' with the attention he exercised on dogs in his seminal work *Kitāb al-Ḥayawān*. Yet, it was Ibn al-Marzubān's work *Kitāb faḍl al-kilāb ʿalā kaṭīr mimman labisa ṭiyāb* that was first to be dedicated exclusively to dogs and its good qualities.

Indeed Ibn al-Marzubān wrote the book about the social conditions of his society as well as the dogs. The dogs and their qualities are used as a symbolic device to criticize the

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<sup>117</sup>Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 15

<sup>118</sup>quoted after: Pellat, Charles : *Arabische Geisteswelt. Ausgewählte und Übersetzte Texte von al-Ġāḥiẓ*, p. 279

decreasing level of personal qualities in his community. Smith and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm make this important remark in the introduction to their translation of his book:

Desert life with all its isolation, hardship and the need to be constantly on the move demanded of its people absolute mutual trust and confidence within the tribal unit...For the political and economic situation in the Abbasid empire at the time must have increased the feeling of nostalgia among its population and certainly not the least among the inhabitants of Iraq<sup>119</sup>...

Throughout the treatise, the reader's attention is drawn to the contrast between the decreasing moral qualities of the society in contrast to the good qualities of dogs, such as loyalty that remains rather consistent. Actually the book starts with a conversation of Ibn al-Marzubān and a friend of his, who complains about this moral decline in their community.

His friend first remarked that people no longer had genuine affection for one another and that the standard of their morals has fallen. Ibn al-Marzuban expresses agreement with this remark and begins to quote at length from poetry to illustrate the point. His friend also asked him to 'collect what has been said concerning the superiority of the dog over wicked friends, including all his praiseworthy qualities, whether hidden or evident' and Ibn al-Marzuban said that he had collected enough to make the position clear...<sup>120</sup>

After this introduction Ibn al-Marzubān shares with the reader what he compiled and collected. The following quotation perfectly represents the nostalgia felt for the time of the Prophet and Ibn al-Marzubān's pessimistic view of the moral qualities of man in his time.

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<sup>119</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. x

<sup>120</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xiv

You have been talking - may God exalt you! - about the times we are living in and the fact that people no longer have genuine affection for one another, also about the low standart of their morals and their base nature. You mentioned too that he who is searching for a decent friend has the longest journey! The man seeking a friend who he feels sure will not let him down and whose frienship will be an everlasting joy is like the perplexed traveller who, the more he tires himself, the further he is from his destination. The situation is exactly as you have described it...Indeed, it was related that Abu Dharr al-Ghifari - may God be pleased with him! - said: People used to be leaves without thorns; but today they have become thorns without leaves! It has also been said: When our friends made many promises and apologized excessively, we were afraid that their promises were not free from lies, nor their apologies from exaggeration. The day has gone when you could find a person making genuine promises, and those who apologise for their mistakes are no more.<sup>121</sup>

In a similar way, Ibn al-Marzubān cites the following poem which makes his views quite clear.

Gone are those real people; they have gone off on their own  
We are left behind amongst the worst kinds of apes!  
Among people who look like people,  
but, when they are put to test, turn out to be not people!<sup>122</sup>

In a very similar way, the same nostalgia and disappointment with society can be felt even in the great jurist's Imām aš-Šafi'ī's poetry. As he writes in his *Dīwān aš-Šāfi'ī*:

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<sup>121</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 1

<sup>122</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 2

al-ḥalqu laysa bi-hādin

layta l-kilāba lanā kānat muwāḡiratan wa-laytanā lā narā mimmā narā  
aḥada(n)

‘inna l-kilāba li-tahdī fī mawāṭīnihā wa-l-ḥalqu laysa bi-hādin šarruhum  
abada(n)

fa-hrub bi-nafsika wa-sta’nis bi-waḥdatihā tabqa sa‘īdan ‘idā mā kunta  
munfarida(n)

The mankind is not on the right path

If only dogs were our neighbors and I wish we wouldn't see any of whom  
we (usually) see

For dogs follow the right path in their own lands yet the mankind is not on  
the right path, their wickedness never!

Therefore flee into yourself and stay calm in its unity and so stay happy  
even if you are not isolated.<sup>123</sup>

### V.3.1. Virtues of the dogs

According to Ibn al-Marzubān, in contrast to man and his decreasing level of moral qualities, dogs have always been consistent in their superior qualities such as being a loyal friend, an able hunter and a trustworthy guardian. Eisenstein summarizes the general attitude towards the dogs in the treatise as follows:

Es handelt sich hierbei um eine Sammlung von Gedichten, kurzen Erzählungen, Berichten oder auch nur Aussprüchen einzelner Personen über den Hund, mit dem Grundtenor, dass der Hund immer der loyale Freund des Menschen bleibt,

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<sup>123</sup> aš-Šāfi‘ī, *Dīwān Imām aš-Šāfi‘ī*, p.62



dem dieser in seiner Niedertracht gegenübersteht. Der Hund ist Wächter, Beschützer und Jäger; er ist liebevoll zu seinem Herrn als ein Vater zu seinem Sohn oder ein Blutbruder zum anderen. Unter den Vorzügen des Hundes führt Ibn al-Marzubān auf, dass Hunde – wie auch Katzen – ihren Herrn kennen, auf Namen hören, ihre Häuser kennen und auch dorthin finden, ihrem Herrn ins Augenblicken und mit ihm oder seinen Kindern spielen, ohne sie zu verletzen.<sup>124</sup>

The following lines are from a translation of the treatise made by Smith and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm:

The dog - may God support you ! - has many advantages which outweigh his disadvantages. Indeed the former far outnumber the later. Judges, jurists, the pious, governors and ascetics - all those who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong - have no objection to keeping dogs. Moreover, they see dogs in the palaces of kings. If they had known that this were frowned upon, they would have said so and would have forbidden the keeping of dogs. Indeed they hold the view that, if anyone kills a dog, he should be punished for this. Anyone who ordered dogs to be killed in the past, did so only for a specific reason; dogs in general are another matter altogether.<sup>125</sup>

When it is considered that the term 'dog' has a pejorative meaning and is used as a bitter insult by the Arabs, one can realize that the title of the book as well its content is rather shocking. Throughout his treatise Ibn al-Marzubān tries to benefit from every historical record and anecdote to challenge the readers' notion of the dogs. Smith and Abdel Haleem mention in the introduction to their translation that, actually "the dog without doubt has certain qualities which are spurned in man according to an Arab concept of dignity." They further cite part of a poem, which was written by ʿAlī ibn al-

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<sup>124</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Einführung in die Arabische Zoographie: Das tierkundliche Wissen in der arabisch-islamischen Literatur*, p. 33.

<sup>125</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p.14

Ĝahm and can be found in his *Dīwān ʿalī ibn al-ġahm*, in which a ruler's loyalty to his friends is praised by likening him to a dog: "*anta ka-l-kalbi fi ḥifāẓika li-l-wuddi wa-ka-l-taysi fi qirāʿi l-ḥuṭūbi...*"<sup>126</sup> You are like a dog in maintaining a loyal friendship and like a he-goat in confronting difficulties."<sup>127</sup>

ʿAlī ibn al-Ĝahm praises dogs further in his work:

*ʿuṣīka ḥayran bihī faʿin lahū šaġīyatan, lā ʿazālu ʿaḥmaduhā  
yadullu ḍayfī ʿalayya fī ġasaqi l-layli.*<sup>128</sup>

He makes you take care of it, for he has a character, I don't stop praising it  
It leads my guest to me when the night falls.

Further, it shall be mentioned that, Ibn al-Marzubān does not use the dogs for the sole reason of strengthening his case about the moral decay of man. The following lines from the treatise clearly give the feeling that the writer actually has a personal relation and affection for the dogs.

...Amongst the dog's virtues is that he comes and faces his master, looking him in the eye, and that he loves his master and comes right up close to him. Sometimes the dog even plays with his master and with his master's children by biting them playfully without hurting them or leaving any mark on them, although he has these canine teeth which would certainly leave a mark, were he to plunge them into a tree.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> al-Ĝahm, ʿAlī Ibn: *Dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-ġahm*, p.11

<sup>127</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxxiii

<sup>128</sup> al-Ĝahm, ʿAlī Ibn: *Dīwān ʿAlī ibn al-ġahm*, p.11

<sup>129</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 16

In Ibn al-Marzubān's work *Kitāb faḍl al-kilāb ʿalā kaṭīr mimman labisa ṭiyāb*, we also come along a beautiful example of ṭardīya-poetry (*šīʿr aṭ-ṭard*). The *ṭardīyāt* will be studied in depth in the next section. However, the following poem of the famous *ṭardīyāt* poet Abū Nuwās will be given in this section as it occupies an important place in the general structure of Ibn al-Marzubān's *Faḍl al-kilāb*:

I will sing the praises of a hound whose owners'  
good fortune is assured by his strenuous effort.  
All the good things they have come from him;  
his master is always his slave.  
At night the master brings him nearest to his bed:  
if he is uncovered, his master puts on him his own coat.  
He has a blaze and his legs are white;  
his excellent conformation is pleasing to the eye.  
What fine jaws he has! What a fine muzzle!  
Gazelles are really in trouble when he is hunting!  
What a fine hound you are, without equal!<sup>130</sup>

### **V.3.2. Bringing evidence from the Prophet and Companions**

As it has been analyzed in depth in the Hadiths section of my work, the main battleground between the anti-dog and pro-dog stances has always been the Sunna literature. Almost all of the negative evidence against dogs are brought forth from hadith literature and the main tenets of Islamic law are grounded on these hadiths. However, the pro-dog Muslims also found a prophetic base for their arguments due to the enormous size and complexity of the hadith literature.

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<sup>130</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 13

To give weight of authority to his theme Ibn al-Marzubān begins the second part of the book, Man's best friend, by quoting anecdotes from the life of the Prophet (although some of these quotations are not found in the collections of sound traditions), his Companions and other well-known figures in Islam.<sup>131</sup> The following anecdote is about the heavily quoted one about Maymūna; Prophet's wife that actually owned a dog herself.

It is related that Maymunah, the wife of the Prophet - may God bless him and grant him peace! - had a dog called Mismar. When she went on pilgrimage, she took him with her, so no one dared to approach her baggage with Mismar around. When she returned, she left him with Banu Jadilah and paid for his keep. When he died, she was told of his death and wept for him, saying: I am grieved to lose Mismar!<sup>132</sup>

In another quotation, Ibn al-Marzubān tells an anecdote about ʿUmar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb, a well respected figure for Sunnī Muslims.

Once 'Umar b. Al-Khattab - may God be pleased with him! - saw a bedoin driving a dog along. He asked: What have you got there? The bedoin replied: O Commander of the Faithful, what a good companion he is! If I give him something, he is grateful. If I deprive him, he is patient. 'Umar said: What a good friend! Keep hold of him! On another occasion Ibn 'Umar saw a dog with a bedoin and said to him: What do you have there? The bedoin replied: He who is grateful to me and keeps my secrets. Ibn 'Umar said: Then take good care of your friend!<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xvi

<sup>132</sup> Smith, G.R. & , ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 15

<sup>133</sup> Smith, G.R. & ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. 8

## V.4. *Ṭardīya*-Poetry and the *Saluqī*

*Ṭardīyāt* is a poetic genre in Arabic literature that concentrates on the oryx hunting scenes of the pre-Islamic times as its main theme. In Cambridge history of Arabic Literature, there is the following information about the origins of the *ṭardīya* genre.

Perhaps one of the first types of poetry to have emerged from the framework of the polythematic qasidah as an independent genre - a process often held to mark the beginning of the development of "modern" poetry - was the hunting-poem or *tardiyyah*...Pre-Islamic poetry, stereotyped as it undoubtedly is, nevertheless records ample vivid descriptions of the oryx hunt, and it is in such poetry that we must look in order to find the origins of the hunting-poems of the late Umayyad and 'Abbasid eras...In pre-Islamic poetic descriptions of the oryx hunt, victory went frequently to the huntsman and his faithful accomplices, his *saluki* (*saluqi*) hounds.<sup>134</sup>

In all poems there is a section dedicated to physical description and adoration of the hunting animals. The hunting animals mentioned are dogs (*saluqīs* specifically), falcons, goshawks and cheetahs. However, as Smith and °Abd al-Ḥalīm have analyzed, the dogs have a priority over the other hunter animals.

The hound clearly holds pride of place, however. Abu Nuwas, of his 55 poems of the chase, describes hunting with hounds on 27 occasions. Ibn al-Mu'tazz, with a smaller percentage, still prefers the hound in 13 out of 39 *tardiyyat*, thus making him much the commonest hunter.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> *The Cambridge history of Arabic Literature: 'Abbasid belles-lettres*, p. 167

<sup>135</sup> Smith, G.R. & °Abd al-Ḥalīm, M.A.S.: *The Book of 'The Superiority of Dogs over many of Those who wear Clothes'* by Ibn al-Marzubān, p. xxxii

The *salūqīs* have always been adored and respected by the Arabs. The *salūqī* had such a privilege over the other canine breeds that it is almost as if the Arab mind placed the *salūqīs* into another animal category, while the other breeds remained despised. There is a detail about the origin of the *salūqī* and its name in Eisenstein's book on Arabic zoography. Briefly he mentions the following about the breed and its name:

Unter den üblicherweise verwendeten Jagdtieren Hund (kalb), Gepard (fahd) und Beizvögeln (ḡawāriḥ) nimmt der erstere eine besondere Stellung ein, da er auch Wach-, Schutzfunktion ausübt, eigentlich aber als unreines Tier zu gelten hat. Der eigentliche Jagdhund ist der *salūqī*, der üblicherweise zum Aufstöbern des Wildes und als Hilfe für die Beizvögel verwendet wird. Die Etymologie des *salūqī* (frühere Formen von *sulāq* und *sulāqī*) weist auf ein (vielleicht das irakische Seleucia (*Salūqīya*) hin und ist – entgegen häufig vertretener Meinung – wahrscheinlich nicht auf den Jemen oder das *Sulāq* westlich des Kaspischen Meeres zurückzuführen. In der Zeit der Kreuzzüge, ab den 6./12.Jahrhundert, werden die Muslime mit einem Hund aus Europa bekannt (einer Art Bracke?), der in der Folge arab.*zaḡārī* u.ä. genannt wird. Wie Menschen, Pferde, Kamele, Maultiere führen auch Hunde Namen; solche sind schon aus vorislamischer Zeit bekannt: Sa<sup>c</sup>d, Mas<sup>c</sup>ūd oder Anīs.<sup>136</sup>

Concerning the origin of the name of the *salūqīs*, one Syrian lady gave me a very interesting explanation. Her opinion was that the word *salūqī* is a linguistic compound of two verbs: *yastallī* (*'istallā*, X.root) and *yulqī* (*'alqā*, IV.root). She stated: "*ismuhū salūqī li-'annahū yastallī wa-yulqī.*"

Further Eisenstein gives the following information about the hunting technique of the Arabs and the role the *salūqīs* play in the action.

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<sup>136</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Einführung in die Arabische Zoographie: Das tierkundliche Wissen in der arabisch-islamischen Literatur*. Berlin, p. 209.

These Oriental hounds usually were used in combination with hawks and falcons (cf. Allen 1980: index, illustration p.104). The hound chases the quarry, preventing it from taking cover, and this enables the hawk to gain it. Hawks in combination with hounds are trained especially to hunt hares, gazelles and also oryx antilopes. A characteristic feature of greyhounds as well as the saluqi is hunting by sight and not by scent.<sup>137</sup>

### V.4.1. The Style and Phases of the *Ṭardīyāt*

*Ṭardīyāt* generally fall into specific structures which can be classified into three main phases. G. Rex Smith mentions this as follows:

The way is now open for the poet to launch into a physical description of his hunting-animal, its prowess on the hunting-field and the dread it inspires in the quarry, etc. He may devote some space to an actual happening at the hunt, e.g. the kill, which may be presented in very actual happening at the hunt, e.g. the kill, which may be presented very graphic, not to say bloody, terms, and he may end this second phase of the poem with a mention of the number of the quarry taken. There may be a brief third phase, which, if it is included at all, is a reference to the preparation and cooking of the meat after a successful day in the field.<sup>138</sup>

In the poem below, which belongs to the most famous *ṭardīya*-poet Abū Nuwās, a good illustration of the mentioned phases can be found:

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<sup>137</sup> Eisenstein, Herbert: *Some Etymological and Semantic Remarks on the Lexeme Zağārī* (in *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Lexicology and Lexicography*), p.129

<sup>138</sup> *The Cambridge history of Arabic Literature: 'Abbasid belles-letres*, p. 172

phase one

Oft I go forth in the early morning, with the birds still in their nests and their voices not yet joined to the dawn chorus,

phase two

With hound in a cheerful mood, their collars on, [all] reckoning the oryx as part of their rations.

Their sunken eyes have taken the place of plump ones.....

[All this] to separate the hare from its life. The hound's life lies in the death of the hare.....

phase three

So that you can see the cooking-pot in its place, [surrounded by] numerous guests.<sup>139</sup>

## V.4.2. *Abū Nuwās* and Examples of *Salūqī* Praise in his Poems

Abū Nuwās is usually accepted as the most influential poet of this literary genre. Below are the three examples of some of his *ṭardīyāt*, where the *salūqī* dogs are the main theme. It gives a clear picture to what extent this specific dog breed was being praised and adored by the Arab hunters. The first line is quoted in Arabic in order to give the readers some idea about the original style of the poem:

1 *'anʿatu kalban ʿahlahū fī kiddihī*                      *qad saʿidat ġudūduhum bi-ġaddihī*

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<sup>139</sup> *The Cambridge history of Arabic Literature: 'Abbasid belles-letres*, p. 172-173



I will sing the praises of a hound whose owners' good is assured by his tremendous effort.

All the good things they have come from him; all the assistance they have come from him.

His master is always like a slave to him; at night he brings him nearest to his bad.

If he is uncovered, his master puts on him his own coat.

He has a blaze and his legs are white.

His excellent conformation is pleasing to the eye; also the receding corners of his mouth and his long muzzle.

Gazelles are really in trouble when he is hunting; he relishes his hard-running attacks on them,

Hunting them down, twenty [of them], in his headlong course!

What a fine hound you are, without equal! (Abū Nuwās, *Diwān*, II, 179)

2 *'anʿatu kalban laysa bi-l-masbūqi*                      *muṭahhaman yağrī ʿalā l-ʿurūqi*

I will sing the praise of a hound who cannot be outstripped, of perfect conformation, he courses over all types of terrain.

He was brought by kings from Salūq, as if on a long, flexible leash.

When he charges forward like someone who cannot be deterred, coursing over plain and wide, wind-blown deserts

A hare, jinking and obstinate, like a lad of a tribe chasing around playing the game of *dabbuq*;

And curing by his hunting the passion of him afflicted by it.

Even if the qurray were to pass beyond the 'Ayyūq star,

He would bring it down, bloody at the throat; this is his most solemn duty

Towards every man of the chase sustained by him. (Ibid., 180)

3 'a°dattu kalban li-ṭ-ṭirādi salṭā      idā ḡadā man nahama ashaṭṭā

I preferred a hound for the chase, long in body (when he comes forth in the morning, the hungry lick their lips),

Bedecked in collars and hemp ropes.

He is like a saker when he stoops, or the flame of a fire fed with naphtha.

He is beauty [itself], noble of pedigree; you can see his jaws marked out in a line;

Also cheeks with little flesh and soft whiskers; all this and his flanks when he stretches forward to move,

You suggested, are two sandal straps, excellently fashioned, cut of Ṭā'if leather and slit length-ways.

When slipped suddenly, he rips his hairless, stony-black paws.

With his claws he tears his ears to pieces; you would imagine they drew no blood from their incisions.

[The paws] hit the ground only at times.

He speeds away from the cry of a sandgrouse, taking the measure of the mottled dessert jack hares.

They find him an unjust judge, breaking bones and rending skin

(As the manufacturer tears *sabir* and *qutb* garments) when good, wholesome food is mixed with the dust.

Praise be to God for what He has provided! (Ibid, 185)<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> *The Cambridge history of Arabic Literature: 'Abbasid belles-lettres*, p. 178-179

## **V.5. *Iḥwān aṣ-Ṣafā'* and *The Case of Animals versus Man* (*Daʿwa l-ḥayawān diḍḍa l-insān ʿinda malik al-ǧinn*)**

'*The Case of Animals versus Man*' is a remarkable story written by *Iḥwān aṣ-Ṣafā'* about the nature of relationship between man and animals. The text has also recently been a focus of attention due to the moral lesson it gives in terms of environmental awareness. In his introduction to an adaptation and translation of this story, Ḥusayn Naṣr writes the following:

The essential message of this wonderful tale negates completely that the concept of man based on hubris and pride which enables modern human beings to utilize, dominate and destroy other species always with the pretext of fulfilling so-called human needs, making the rights of man over other creatures absolute... What is most significant in this treatise is that all the arguments brought up by man to justify his domination and abuse of animals are countered and negated by various animals as they defend their case before the king of the jinn. There remains but one reason for man's superiority that the animals cannot refute and that is the possibility of a number among men to attain sanctity and therefore to be able to act as the channel of the grace for the rest of God's creation.<sup>141</sup>

As mentioned above, the story is constructed around the notion of a trial between the human's argument claiming uniqueness in creation and therefore superiority over animals and animals' various counter-arguments against this claim. The case starts with the King of the Ğinn asking the representatives of man to justify their claim that all animals are their slaves. Interestingly, throughout the showcase, it is the representatives of the animals that come up with a more rational attitude. They also gain an emotional superiority in the discussion by putting forth the maltreatment they had received at the hands of the man. The case gives the reader the idea that, even if it

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<sup>141</sup> Laytner, Anson & Bridge, Dan: *The Animals' Lawsuit Against Humanity: A Modern Adaptation of an Ancient Animal Rights Tale*, p. xiii

is the animals that have more rational and moral arguments, there is still ground for human's to claim their position as in the end it is the sole exception in creation that doesn't have a fixed, pre-determined role. There is an obvious reference here to the Qur'ānic statement that man only has the capacity to function as the *ḥalīfatu llāhi fī l-'arḍi* (God's representative on earth). The final part of the story is the most important one as the tension increases till that point as to what the decision of the king of the Ğinn might be. Foltz gives a very nice summary of this ending as follows:

But the persuasiveness through which the reader is made sympathetic to the animals' view only makes the culminating scene more shocking: the King of the Jinn, in the end, decides in favour of the humans, basing his judgement on nothing more than the capricious, unproven, and contested premise that humans alone can have eternal life.<sup>142</sup>

### **V.5.1. The dogs and their loyalty to Man**

With respect to the subject of dogs, the story contains a short, but rather interesting remark. The subject at hand is the close relation of the dogs with man and the council of animals' reluctance to grant responsibility to dogs against man fearing the treacherous association between them. As informed by Encyclopedia of Islam, the subject of domesticity of dogs has attracted the attention of Iḥwān aṣ-Ṣafā in the even earlier times. The following is mentioned about it.

In the 4th/10th century, the "Brothers of Purity" (Iḥwān al-Ṣafā' [q.v]), as a part of their indictment of the cat, proposed in one of their Epistles (Rasā'il, ii, 247), a curious, but very logical explanation of the domesticity of the cat and the dog, which attach themselves to mankind as a means of ensuring their subsistence.

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<sup>142</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 52

The phenomenon dates back to the time of the murder of Abel (Hābīl) by his brother Cain (Qābīl); this was followed by a fratricidal struggle between the two lines, and the descendents of Cain, gaining the upper hand, set about the systematic slaughter of all the livestock of the vanquished, sheep and cattle as well as camels and horses. For a long time they feasted on these beasts, and this resulted in an accumulation of carcasses which attracted hordes of wild dogs and cats, competing over this abundant and easy source of food; henceforward, they remained close to men, whose discarded material was sufficient to satisfy their daily needs. This interpretation is not devoid of reason, since scholars of prehistoric times have shown that since the Neolithic period, there has been a symbiosis between man and certain species of animal, including the dog, which were soon domesticated, becoming accustomed to a reliable source of sustenance and to protection from their enemies.<sup>143</sup>

In the story, the objection to the dog is raised by the representative of the council of hunter species, which happens to be a bear. In a reply to the King of the Ğinn's question about why dogs, cats and mice held themselves close to human beings, the representative of the animals answers as follows.

Nun sprach der Bär: "Sehr wohl, o König! Was die Hunde in die Nachbarschaft der Menschen gerufen und zum Umgang mit ihnen veranlasst hat, ist die Ähnlichkeit der Naturanlagen und die Artverwandtschaft der Charaktere, auch was sich bei ihnen fand an begehrenswerten und genussreichen Speisen und Getränken; und ferner die in ihrer Natur liegende Begierde und Fresssucht, die Gemeinheit und der Geiz, und was es ähnlichen tadelnswerten Zügen gibt, die man beim Geschlechte Adams findet, die aber den wilden Tieren ferne liegen. Die Hunde fressen nämlich faules Fleisch, Kadaver und Geschlachtetes, sie fressen es getrocknet, gekocht und gebraten, gesalzenes und frisches, gutes und schlechtes. Sie fressen auch Früchte und Gemüse, Brot, frische und saure Milch, Käse und Butter, Sirup und Sesamöl, Zuckerwerk und Honig, Getreidebrei,

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<sup>143</sup> *El<sup>2</sup>*, Vol. 9, s.v. sinnawr

in Essig Eingelegtes, und Ähnliches mehr von den Speisearten der Kinder Adams, welche die meisten der wilden Tiere weder fressen noch kennen. Bei all diesem sind sie von solch einer Begierde und Fresssucht, von Gemeinheit und Geiz beherrscht, dass es ihnen nicht möglich ist, eines von den wilden Tieren in ein Dorf oder eine Stadt hereinkommen zu lassen, aus Furcht davor, dass dieses ihnen etwas von dem, was sich dort befindet, streitig machen könnte."<sup>144</sup>

Afterwards the bear continues his explanation and in the meanwhile mentions in a rather insulting way that the man and dog are close to each other since they share the same characteristics.

"Manchmal kommt nämlich einer von den Schakalen oder Füchsen bei Nacht in eine Stadt hinein, um von dort ein Huhn, einen Hahn oder eine Katze zu entwenden oder einen hingeworfenen Leichnam, ein Stück Aas oder eine verdorbene Frucht wegzuschleppen. Dann kannst du sehen, wie die Hunde ihn angreifen, ihn hetzen und aus der Stadt fortjagen. Bei alledem sieht man bei ihnen auch Niedrigkeit und Unterwürfigkeit, Armseligkeit, Verächtlichkeit und Begier. Wann immer sie nämlich in den Händen der Adamskinder, Männern wie Frauen und Kindern, einen Brotlaib oder ein Stückchen, eine Frucht oder einen Bissen sehen, wie begehren sie dann danach, wie folgen sie ihnen nach und wedeln mit der Schwanze, bewegen den Kopf und richten ganz scharf den Blick auf seine Augen, bis einer von ihnen sich schämt und es ihm hinwirft! Dann siehst du, wie sie geschwind dorthin laufen und es eilig ergreifen, aus Angst davor, dass ihnen jemand zuvorkommen könnte. Alle diese tadelnswerten Charakterzüge sind sowohl in der Menschen als auch in den Hunden vorhanden, und so war es die Verwandtschaft der Charaktere und die Ähnlichkeit der Naturanlagen, die sie veranlasste, sich von den Kindern ihrer Gattung unter den

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<sup>144</sup> Giese, Alma: *Ichwan as-Safa: Mensch und Tier vor dem König der Dschinnen*, p. 52-53.

wilden Tieren zu trennen, sich mit den Menschen anzufreunden und jenen als Helfer gegen die Kinder ihrer eigenen Gattung zu dienen."<sup>145</sup>

During the trial preparations, the council of hunter species comes to the conclusion that, the dogs shall be excluded from the council against the risk of a treacherous association with man. Indeed, although stated from the narrative of an insulting bear, the story has a very artistic and creative way to express the relationship of dogs to man as a loyal friend from the animal world.

## VI. Sufism

Finally, my study will analyze some of the Şūfī texts on the subject. It can actually be stated that, in general, Sufism always had a much more compassionate, forgiving and flexible attitude towards others, in addition to dogs, in comparison to the more strict mainstream legal tradition. In his comprehensive book about the dogs in Şūfī literature, Nurbaksh maintains that "the first group of people to react against society's injustice towards the dog were the Şūfī, who strove to show people that the dog possessed virtuous qualities, qualities which many human beings, regarding themselves as the noblest of God's creatures, lacked."<sup>146</sup>

This general notion of the Şūfīs being more kind and compassionate to the dogs is well manifested in a story in *Ilāhī-nāma*. In the story a dog was struck badly by a Şūfī by the roadside and its paw was wounded heavily. The dog became crippled and went to a Şūfī master Abū Saʿīd to complain about the cruelty it witnessed. Abū Saʿīd brings the Şūfī before the dog and the following conversation between three of them occurs:

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<sup>145</sup> Giese, Alma: *Ichwan as-Safa: Mensch und Tier vor dem König der Dschinnen*, p. 53

<sup>146</sup> Nurbaksh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.4

Abu Sa'id said, "O impure man, how could anyone be so cruel to such a helpless creature? You have smashed the dog's paw and crippled it, making it so helpless that it has collapsed." "O master," said the Sufi, "it was not my fault, but the dog's. Since he had made my clothes ritually impure, I hit him with my staff with good reason." At this, the dog became visibly disturbed, whining in protest. Abu Sa'id then said to the dog, "By my soul, I will give you whatever makes you happy in order to make up for this. Tell me what to do now; do not leave it to the Day of Judgement. If you prefer that I deal with this man, I shall punish him on your account. I do not want you to be angry; I want you to be content." The dog then said, "O peerless one! When I saw that this man was wearing Sufi clothes, I felt sure that he would not hurt me. Little did I know that my paw would be crushed! If it had been someone who dresses in ordinary clothes coming along the road, I would have kept well away from him. But because I saw him in the Sufi dress I felt confident. I was not aware of the full situation. If you are going to punish him, then do it now and strip him of the Sufi garment of kindness so that we may be forewarned of his evil, for I have never seen such a harm done by a Sufi. Strip him of the Sufi cloak; that will be the punishment enough for him till the Day of Judgement."<sup>147</sup>

Indeed, the positive references attributed to dogs are completely parallel to the qualities that are highly praised in the Şūfī culture such as loyalty, gratitude, obedience, modesty, and being protective of friends. Similarly Şūfīs attached a special meaning to the poverty and wretchedness of the dog, and expressed that their situation is exactly the same in the lane of the beloved, God. The following quotation attributed to ʿAlī explains perfectly the Şūfī point of view with respect to dogs. ʿAlī is probably the most influential figure for the Şūfīs after the Prophet Muḥammad and he is reported to have said the following:

Happy is the one who leads the life of a dog! For the dog has ten characteristics which every believer should possess. First, the dog has no status among

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<sup>147</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 69



creatures; second, the dog is a pauper having no worldly goods; third, the entire earth is his resting place; fourth, the dog goes hungry most of the time; fifth, the dog will not leave his master's door even after having received a hundred lashes; sixth, he protects his master and his friend, and when someone approaches he will attack the foe and let the friend pass; seventh, he guards his master by night, never sleeping; eighth, he performs most of his duties silently; ninth, he is content with whatever his master gives him; and tenth, when he dies, he leaves no inheritance.<sup>148</sup>

In his book, 'Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View' Javad Nurbakhsh chronicles all the anecdotes he found on dogs in the Şūfī literature. Among many of them, I want to cite one more, which is a rather famous anecdote about the famous Şūfī master, Bayazid:

One day Abu Yazid was proceeding along the way when presently a dog ran alongside him. Abu Yazid drew in his skirt..."If I am dry," said the dog, "no damage has been done. If I am wet, seven waters and earths will make peace between us. But if you draw your skirt to yourself like a Pharisee, you will not become clean, not though you bathe in seven oceans."

"You are unclean outwardly," commented Abu Yazid. "I am inwardly unclean. Come, let us work together, that through our united efforts we may both become clean."

"You are not fit to travel with me and be my partner," the dog replied. "For I am rejected of all men, whereas you are accepted of men. Whoever encounters me throws a stone at me; whoever encounters you greets you as King of the Gnostics. I never store up a single bone for the morrow; you have a whole barrel of wheat for the morrow."..."I am not fit to travel along with a dog," said Abu Yazid. "How then shall I travel along with the Eternal and Everlasting One? Glory

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<sup>148</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.xi

be to that God, who educates the best of creatures by the means of the least of creatures!"<sup>149</sup>

## VI.1. *The Madman of Laylā and the Dog*

In the Ṣūfī literature, as well as the disciplines of the Islamic literature, the memory of Qiṭmīr, the dog of the Sleepers of the Cave, was highly respected and mentioned in many sources. As the subject was studied in detail, I want to show only one example from ar-Rumī's masterpiece al-Maṭnawī:

Wolf and bear and lion know what love is:

He that is blind to love is inferior to a dog!

If the dog had not a vein of love,

How would the dog of the Cave have sought to win the heart of the Seven Sleepers?<sup>150</sup>

On the other hand, if we leave Qiṭmīr aside, probably the most famous single dog in the history of Islamic literature is the dog of, "the Madman of Laylā." Maḡnūn is the name given to the hero of a famous oriental love legend dating back as far as to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The words of Maḡnūn to the dog that was watching over the house of Laylā has been a true emotional inspiration for hundreds of years. It was repeated continuously in the subject of love and has been depicted in many paintings. There are numerous differing versions of the conversation of Maḡnūn and Laylā's dog, from which I will cite only two of them. In Nurbakhsh's book on the subject, the following lines are taken from a version of the story.

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<sup>149</sup> Arberry, A.J.: *Muslim Saints and Mystics: Episodes from the Tadhkirat al-Auliya'* ("Memorial of the Saints") by Farīd ad-Dīn ʿAṭṭār, p. 119

<sup>150</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 80

When Majnun saw the dog's appearance, he ran over to it, with tears streaming forth. He fell, like a shadow, at its feet, kissing the ground beneath them. He wiped its paws with the moisture of his eyes and spread smooth pebbles as a bed for it. He made his lap a pillow for its head, sheltering it in the shade of his kindness. He washed its sores with the tears of his eyes and soothed the itching of its body with a gentle hand. He brushed the dust from its head and face and drove the flies from its back and flanks. When he had finished his comforting the dog, he began to speak in a caressing tone: "O you with the collar of fidelity and before whom lions have prostrated. You are better than a man in terms of fidelity and more intimate with the Way than most. If you eat once from someone's hand, a hundred stones will not make you turn your back on him. Your work is to keep watch by night, and your practice to tend the sheep by day. You make the thief lose his taste for his trade and imprison the wolf in your lion-like claws. Your bark frightens away night-travelers, while guards are frozen in fear. On the battlefield of the righteous, one hair of yours is equal to that of a thousand armed men. When you charge in courageously, your lion-like boldness makes an armed man less than a dog... Many who have lost their way in the dark of the night have been guided to their home by the sound of your bark. For someone lost at night, your bark is like the warm strains of an organ; and because it comes from Lailā's lane, it relieves the burdens of the soul."<sup>151</sup>

A second narrative of this part of the story can be found in Rūmī's *Maṭnawī*.

Majnun was once seen petting a dog and kissing it, melting with fondness before it; he was pacing round it, stooping humbly in circumambulation, exacty like a pilgrim round the Ka'ba. He kissed the dog's head and paws and navel; and he gave it.

"It is the dog of blessed countenance, the dog of my cave. It is the sharer of my grief and woe. The dust of the paws of the dog who has become the resident of

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<sup>151</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 51

her lane is better than mighty lions. How should I give a single hair of that dog who stays in her lane to the lions. How should I give a single hair of that dog who stays in her lane to the lions? Oh, since the lions are devoted slaves to her dogs, there is no possibility of speaking further. Silence, and farewell!" If you pass beyond form, o friends, it is Paradise and rose-gardens within rose-gardens. (MM I 567-578)<sup>152</sup>

### **VI.1.1. The significance of the dog and the “holy folly”**

Although the words of Mağnūn to the dog are really touching, some commented that the story, in fact, does not praise the dog. Rather the dog here is used as a shock narrative device. The mentality in this argument is simply that Mağnūn was so mad that he even befriended a dog. Similar interpretations have also been made of the hadith about the prostitute and the thirsty dog. It was mentioned that the hadith shows that God's mercy is so great that he forgives a prostitute for helping even a dog. Foltz's following arguments are a typical expression of this approach:

Though Majnun's elegy to dogs is touching, we should remember that he is considered in popular Muslim culture to be the very archetype of a crazy person.<sup>153</sup>

If the dog possesses more importance than most humans, it is nevertheless from a human, his mistress Layla, that this importance derives. Once again, the elevation of a lowly animal to an exalted station seems to be primarily a narrative device.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 53

<sup>153</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p.134

<sup>154</sup> Foltz, Richard C.: *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*, p. 75

The argument seems quite convincing. Indeed, one can argue that among other animals Mağnūn became companion with in the wild nature, the dog might symbolize such a meaning. However, I believe that the dog is chosen in the story not only to be used as a narrative device with respect to its baseness. The story of Mağnūn is a mystical one and his being friend with a dog complies perfectly with the general notion of dogs in the Şūfī literature. Further, the meaning attributed to the madness shall also be analyzed from a Şūfī point of view, which means it shall not necessarily be deemed as a failure or misfortune.

Al-Huğwīrī mentions that the gnosis of God was of two kinds - cognitive and intuitive. The rationalists of his time had argued that knowledge was intellectual and only a reasonable person (*‘aqlī*) could possess it. But for al-Huğwīrī this doctrine was disproved by the fact that the madmen in the Muslim society were deemed to have gnosis, as were also children, who were not reasonable.

The sole cause of human gnosis is God's grace and favour. On the basis of such reasoning, there developed within Islam a strong tradition of 'holy folly'; indeed, it became the primary goal of the sufis. The Muslim 'holy folly' represents the mystical type of madness - the direct rapport with God and the subsequent benefits of divine wisdom - more than the conscious concealment of one's spirituality from the unholy world that is found to predominate among the 'fools for Christ's sake'. Perhaps this was because the mystical goal was more accessible in Islam than in Christianity...Thus, both feigned and actual madness 'for God's sake' became recognized forms of Muslim spirituality.<sup>155</sup>

Further, it can also be seen in the quotations from two different books, Maṭnawī and Muṣṭabatnāma, that there is also an element of praise to dog regardless of its perceived low status among animals. In one of the most famous versions of the Laylā and Mağnūn story, written by an-Nizāmī, we even see a small story that is slightly related to the main

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<sup>155</sup> Dols, Michael W.: *Majnun: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*, p.379

theme. In the story, an-Nizāmī praises the loyalty of the dogs and compares them with that of human beings. In 26th chapter of his Book, he begins by asking if the animals are an echo of human beings or not and replies himself that 'they are what we make of them.' The small story is about a king in Marw, his young advisors and the king's dogs. The king has some wild dogs that are like 'chained demons'. Whenever some subject of his falls out of his favour, they are thrown out to these wild dogs to be punished. The dogs are so wild that they will tear down any poor victim. The young advisor of the king starts feeding the wild dogs secretly being afraid that he might be punished the same way. One day his assumption that the king's favour might be unpredictable proves to be correct and, without any particular reason, he is thrown into the cage of wild dogs. Nizāmī continues as follows:

But what did these monsters do? Human beings might be ungrateful; not so wild dogs! When they recognized their friend, who was unable to move, they gathered round him, wagging their tails and licking his face and hands lovingly to show their affection. Then they crouched around him like sentinels, ready to defend him against his enemies and to protect him from danger. Nothing could tempt them away."<sup>156</sup>

The king's subjects do not tell him what happened because of their fear. In the meantime, the king regrets that he sent his young advisor to death and orders his courtiers to investigate how he died. As to solve the question at hand, the courtiers represented the young advisor as an angel that performed a miracle at the cage of the monsters. The king in return brings him back from the cage, asks for his forgiveness and embraces him. The young advisor intelligently explains the real story to king and tells him the following:

You see, your dogs became fond of me and saved my life for a few chunks of meat. And you, my king? You know quite well that I have served you loyally ever

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<sup>156</sup> Nizāmī Ganḡawī, Ilyās Ibn Yūsuf: *The Story of Layla and Majnun*. transl. Gelpke, p.140

since I was a boy - for the long years! Yet, just because I once annoyed you, you intended to destroy me, and wanted your hounds to tear me into pieces. Who, then, is a better friend, you or your dogs? Who deserves confidence and respect, you or the dogs?<sup>157</sup>

The story ends with a typical reference to the *nafs* and a dog allegory where the king derives the necessary lesson from the event.

Thus he spoke, with great daring. But this time the king was not angry. He accepted this experience as a sign and a lesson, however bitter the dose. In the future he left the dogs to themselves and no longer threw men into their cage to be devoured; instead he tamed the beast in his own soul.<sup>158</sup>

Afterwards an-Nizāmī relates the story to the situation of Mağnūn. The animals around Mağnūn were loyal to him just like they were to the young advisor of the king. On the other hand Mağnūn was behaving nicely to them due to his goodness - rather than fear - in contrast to the young advisor.

## VI.2. Negative allegory: Dogs as *nafs al-‘ammāra*

As I have analyzed in the relevant section of my work, in Q 7/176, the behaviours of a non-believer and a panting dog were likened to each other. This āya, supported by the effect of reflections of the widely held negative social mores about dogs, leads to the famous allegory between dogs and *nafs* in the Ṣūfī literature. The following passages will further show how in some writings the Ṣūfīs were specifically influenced by this āya. Nurbakhsh mentions this as follows:

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<sup>157</sup> :Nizāmī , Ilyās Ibn Yūsuf: *The Story of Layla and Majnun*. transl. Gelpke, p.142

<sup>158</sup> :Nizāmī , Ilyās Ibn Yūsuf: *The Story of Layla and Majnun*. transl. Gelpke, p.143

In Sufi literature, the commanding soul (*nafs-e ammara*) has been likened to a dog. This association is prompted by the Koranic verse: "And had We willed, We could have raised him by their means, but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust. Therefore his likeness is as the likeness of a dog; if thou attackest him he panteth with his tounge out, and if thou leavest him he panteth with his tounge out." (VII: 176)...From this point of view, the commanding *nafs* is like a stray dog, creating trouble, being ready to bite, whether one attacks it or leaves it alone. Alternatively, the commanding *nafs* can be compared to a stray dog concerning its irascible and savage qualities and many of its inclinations. In their writings, gnostics have compared the commanding *nafs* to a dog with this aspect in mind.<sup>159</sup>

*Nafs* and specifically *nafs al-'ammāra* (commanding soul) is a widely used technical term in *Ṣūfī* literature. Annemarie Schimmel explains the term and its significance as follows:

Das Vorwärtsschreiten auf dem Pfade, das von Reue und Enthaltbarkeit eingeleitet wird, besteht aus ständigem Kampf gegen die *nafs*, die 'Seele', das niedere Selbst, die niedrigen Triebe oder das, was wir im biblischen Sinne als 'das Fleisch' übersetzen können. Der Gläubige war im Koran ermahnt worden, "den Ort seines Herrn zu fürchten und die *nafs* an der Lust zu hindern" (Sura 79/40). Denn die *nafs* ist die Ursache für tadelnswerte Handlungen, Sünden und niedere Eigenschaften, und der Kampf mit ihr wird von den Sufis als der 'Grössere Heilige Krieg' bezeichnet, den "der schlimmste Feind, den ihr habt, ist (die *nafs*) zwischen euren Seiten", wie das hadith sagt (L 12). Der koranische Ausdruck *an-nafs al-ammāra bi's-sū'*, 'die Seele, die zum Übel aneifert' (Sura

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<sup>159</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 75



12/53), ist der Ausgangspunkt für den Weg der Läuterung, wie er von den Sufis entwickelt wurde.<sup>160</sup>

The following lines of the famous Muṣībatnāma serve as a perfect example of the allegory.

You have fallen low because of the miserable dog of a nafs; you have become drowned in pollution. That dog of hell which you've heard about sleeps within you, and you are blissfully unaware. Whatever you feed this fire-eating dog of hell, it devours with relish. You may be sure that tomorrow this dog of a nafs will raise its head up out of hell as your enemy. This nafs is your enemy, worse than a dog; how long will you nourish this dog, O ignorant one! (MN 182)<sup>161</sup>

In an anecdote narrated in Taḍkirat al-'Awliyā', the legendary Ṣūfī master al-Ḥallāğ comes to visit Abū 'Abdullāh Toruğbodi together with his two black dogs while the master is dining with his disciplines. The master gives his place to al-Ḥallāğ and he sits down with his dogs to the meal. Immediately after al-Ḥallāğ feeds his dogs, eats himself and leaves the dining, the disciples return to the Ṣūfī master Toruğbodi and complain as follows:

O master, what is happening that you let a dog sit in your place and send us to welcome such a person, throwing the entire company to ritual impurity?<sup>162</sup>

The reply of the master is a perfect manifestation of *nafs* and dog analogy in the Ṣūfī literature. The master replies:

Indeed Hallaj's dog is a servant. It runs after him and remains beside him, while our dog lies within us; and we run after it. There is world of difference between

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<sup>160</sup> Schimmel, Annemarie: *Mystische Dimensionen des Islam: Die Geschichte des Sufismus*, p. 166

<sup>161</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 77

<sup>162</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 9

those who follow their dog and those whose dog follows them. Hallaj's dog can be seen outwardly, while yours remains hidden within you. That is a thousand times worse." Their master concluded by saying, "Hallaj will be the king of creation, whether he has a dog or not. He will be granted success." (TA 556)<sup>163</sup>

## VII. Dog related stories in Ottoman literature, Turkish anecdotes and folk tales

The Sarajevo-born Muḥammed Nergisī (d.1635) was a pre-eminent Ottoman prose stylist and who was for two hundred years recognized as the master of the Ottoman inṣā-prose<sup>164</sup>, depicts a emotional story of a dog being wrongfully put to death by his master for only a minor mischief in his main piece Hamse (Hamse-i Nergisī).The popularity of the author decreased, however, after the overladen style of the inṣā prose was overrun by the simpler and more Turkish penmanship in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The Hamse is made up of five thematically independent sections with numerous lyrical additions in Turkish, Arabic and Persian languages. In the fifth section of Hamse, which comprises stories with the main theme regret, Nergisī depicts this story. From the affectionate manner in which the author describes the suffering and sorrow of the poor dog, the reader realizes that Nergisī was a true animal lover.<sup>165</sup> The story tells about a dog who made himself a home in a stable of a pious man. In the daytime the dog accompanied the sheep through the fields, at night he barked loudly protecting the house. One day he could not resist stealing a few pieces of fruit from the well-protected garden of his master. For this mischief, his master told his servant to kill the dog. And here can the reader detect the understanding and empathy with which Nergisī describes the dog's feelings:

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<sup>163</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 9

<sup>164</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, Vol. 8. s.v. Nergisī

<sup>165</sup> Procházka-Eisl, Gisela: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies XXVIII: Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p. 172

„...Doch er ging auf irgendwie so traurige Weise mit, als ob er wüste, dass es zum Erscheinungsort seines eigenen Verderbens ginge. Dreimal schaute er sich mit traurigen Blicken nach mir um, gerade als ob er mittels seine Körpersprache Hilfe suchte und sich mit der Hoffnung auf Vergebung für seinem Ausrutscher entschuldigen wollte. Ja, beim dritten Mal war es sogar so, dass er am Fusse eines Baumes geraume Zeit unschlüssig stehen blieb, und ein sehnsüchtiger Blick brachte in seinem Gesicht einem verzweifelten Ausdruck hervor. Als er jedoch in meinem zornigen Gesicht die Entschlossenheit zur Strafe sah, verlor er die Hoffnung auf die Möglichkeit von Erbarmen und verschob das Einfordern von Verzeihung auf den Morgen der Auferstehung.“<sup>166</sup>

The dog was mercilessly killed. The now former master of the dog didn't feel guilt nor did he fear God's wrath for the unforgivable sin he has begone. However, God forced him to regret his bad deed by revealing him a lively dream. The protagonist found himself at the scene of the Last Judgement. Nergisi depicted it as: "Nun, im Angesicht des wahren Gerechten, wo König und Bettler, Mensch und Tier gleich sind....."<sup>167</sup>

What makes the story so remarkably extraordinary is the fact that the dog plays an active role as an eloquent speaker at the scene of the Last Judgement seeking justice before God, which also grants it to him. The merciless man is punished by the Almighty. However, only half of his good deeds are erased since he did not murder the dog with his own hands. Yet this mild punishment, which does not "hurt" in the worldly life, is made up with an instant additional bodily punishment of transforming the wrong-doer into a tree, which is then physically cut in half. This whole story is wrapped up into a dream in order to ease the absurdity of the depicted plot.

Another genre in which dog-related stories appear are Turkish anecdotes (*leğā'if*). In comparison to religiously motivated or didactically moralistic texts, in which dogs often take up the part of the main character and are attributed human qualities through

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<sup>166</sup> Procházka-Eisl, Gisela: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies XXVIII: Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p. 169

<sup>167</sup> Procházka-Eisl, Gisela: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies XXVIII: Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p. 170

personification, in the *leṭā'if* dogs appear only in minor supporting roles and therefore are never personified.<sup>168</sup>

A humoristic Turkish anecdote which depicts a man who loved his dog so much that when the animal died he buried him with all the glory of a traditional Muslim funeral. More over he had a feast organized and gave provisions out from it to the poor, just as it is conventionally done in the case of death of a beloved human. However, the neighbors of the man were not pleased with his conduct and the man, as a result of this conduct, was brought to court to face the *qāḍī*. However, the man is smart and bribes the *qāḍī* in a very cute and intelligent way. He informs the *qāḍī*, that the dog bequeathed a large financial sum to him in his will. On the spur of the moment the *qāḍī* sides with the alleged man. This anecdote, written in an informal likable language, shows the reader that people who treated their dogs as full-fledged family members did exist in spite of the presumed impurity of the animal.

Bir adamın pek ziyade sevdiği bir köpeği varmış, ölmüş. Herif pek kederlenmiş, ölüyü bir insan gibi bezlere sarıpdfenetmiş, üstelik bir de yemek pişirtip fukaraya dağıtmış.

Komşular bu hali hoş görmemişler, birçok ilâvelerle gidip kadiya şikayet etmişler. Kadı hiddetlenmiş, mübaşiri yollayıp herifi getirtmiş ve bağırmiş:

-Bre nâdan, nedir bu ettiğin? Eshabi Kehf köpeğine, Üzeyir peygamber eşeğine bu hizmeti etmemiştir. Sen bir Zındıksın!

Herif bakmış vaziyet fena. Taassup elinde harap olacak. Mazlûm bir eda ile cevap vermiş:

- Efendim, kerem ediniz. Bu kopek ötekilere benzemezdi. İyiliği pek severdi. Hatta malından zatiâlinize iki yüz akça vasiyet etti. Eğer izniniz olursa gidip akçaları getireyim ve vasiyetini yerine getireyim.

Kadı iki yüz akçayı işitince davacılara dönüp :

-Allah Allah, işte insanlar böyledir. Sahibi nimet olanları çekemezler. Bu müslümanın hakkında neler söylemediler. Şimdi dedikoduyu bırakalım da

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<sup>168</sup> Procházka-Eisl, Gisela: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies XXVIII: Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p. 173

vazifemizi görelim. Müteveffanın cenazesinde bulunamadık, bari matemini tutalım.

Demiş. Herif gidip iki yüz akçayı muhtevi keseyi getirmiş. Kadiya:

-İşte Çomar bendenizin parası.

Diyince, kadı atılarak şöyle tashih etmiş:

-Esağfurullah efendim, Çomar dostumuzun!<sup>169</sup>

Yet another genre in which dog-related stories and the motives such as a speaking dog can be found are Turkish and Persian folk tales. Although dogs are in no case as widely represented in this literary genre as other animal species, such as fox or wolf, they are presented as animals which have feelings and react human-like. Dogs appreciate good treatment and punish any ill-treatment.

So rächt sich in einem Märchen ein Hund für einem Tritt, den ihm ein Mann versetzt, indem er dessen Geheimnis ausplaudert und ihn dadurch indirekt –aber durchaus vorsätzlich- um sein Liebesglück bringt. Ein anderes Märchen erzählt von einem Hund, der sich für die gute Behandlung bedankt, indem er ihr Reichtümer zukommen lässt.<sup>170</sup>

Further motives involving a dog found in the folk tales are: a dog thanking for a good treatment with a reward, a dog revenging ill-treatment with blabbling out the transgressors innermost secret, or that of a dog being wrongfully killed by his master and the bitter regret that follows the recognition of his mistake. Motives found in religious and didactic moralizing literatures vary from those occurring in the folks tales and they are: a killing or torture of a dog which brings God's wrath and punishment or

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<sup>169</sup> Zaparta: *Seçme Lâtifeler – Nükteler*, p 3,4

<sup>170</sup> Procházka-Eisl, Gisela: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies XXVIII: Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p. 173-4

the quenching of the thirst of a dog that brings reward from God in the form of mitigation of sins.<sup>171</sup>

## VIII. Dog tales in Persian literature

Many acclaimed and celebrated Persian writers, mainly of Şūfī character, made numerous dog-related mentions in their works of great importance to this work. They mainly celebrate the praise-worthy qualities of the canine breed such as loyalty, self-sacrifice, patience, perseverance and gratitude which are the standard recommended character traits to a any Muslim or Şūfī, who then spends a lifetime striving after these qualities. Humans are compared with dogs in order to exentuate the gratitude of dogs to the thanklessness of the materialistic human race. Another kind of dog-related mentions is rather negative and it refers to the *nafs* (*nafs al-ammāra*), the human ego, which compared to a stray dog, creating trouble, being ready to bite, whether one attacks it or leaves it alone (Q 18). This section will limit itself to analyzing four Persian writers and the dog-related tales in their works.

The first author to be mentioned is Abū Muḥammad Muşliḥ ad-Dīn bin ʿAbdallāh Şīrāzī (1184 - 1283/1291?), better known by his pen-name as Saʿdī, who was one of the major Persian poets of the medieval period. Still widely quoted, and recited by Iranian school-children, he is recognized not only for the quality of his writing, but also for the depth of his social thoughts. A native of Şīrāz, his father died when he was an infant. Saʿdī experienced a youth of poverty and hardship, and left his native town at a young age for Baghdad to pursue a better education. As a young man he attended the famous Nizāmīya center of knowledge. His best known works are *Bustān* (The Orchard) and *Gulistān* (The Rose Garden).

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<sup>171</sup>Procházka-Eisl, Gisela: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies XXVIII: Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p. 176-7

In his remarkable work *Bustān*, composed in verse and comprising stories pertinently illustrating the avowed virtues recommended to Muslims, such as modesty, justice, contentment and liberality, as well as reflections on the comportment of Ṣūfīs and their ecstatic practices, Saʿdī among many other similar dog-related tales depicts this touching story:

I have heard that Jonaid once saw a dog on the plain of San'ā', its teeth for tearing prey having fallen out. Its claws, having once had the power to seize lions, were now useless, like those of a feeble old fox. Once it had chased deer and mountain sheep; now it took kicks from the mountain sheep. Seeing it wretched, beaten and bruised, Jonaid gave it half his provisions. Jonaid broke down and wept, saying, "Who knows which of us is better? It would seem that today I am the better, but God knows what fate has planned for me! If the foot of my faith does not slip, I may earn the crown of God's forgiveness for my head. If I do not keep the dress of gnosis on, I shall be lower than many a dog. For all the bad name that the dog has been given, when it dies, it will not go to hell." The way of the path Sa'dī, is this: The men of the Path did not see themselves as great. They were more exalted than the angels because they considered themselves no better than dogs. (B 328)<sup>172</sup>

In the equally renowned work *Gulistān*, composed mainly in prose containing stories and personal anecdotes interspersed with a variety of short poems, containing aphorisms, advice, and humorous reflections, Saʿdī displays a profound awareness of the absurdity of human existence. The fate of those who depend on the fluctuating moods of rulers is contrasted with the freedom of the Ṣūfīs. He distinguishes between the spiritual and the practical or mundane aspects of life. In this notable work, Saʿdī presents the reader with a mention of the dog of the Aṣḥāb al-kaḥf (Q 18), which

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<sup>172</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.38

through experiencing love became a gnostic and acquired human nature, as cited on the page 47 of this work.<sup>173</sup>

Ġalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Balḥī, also known as Ġalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī, and popularly known as Mawlānā , was a 13th-century Persian Muslim poet of Tajik origin, jurist, theologian, and Ṣūfī mystic. He is worth to be portrayed here due to the numerous and remarkable dog-related stories he has noted down in his works. Rūmī's family migrated westwards due to the politically unstable situation in Ḥūrasān, or fear of the impending Mongol invasion. They settled eventually in the Anatolian city of Konya in present-day Turkey. This was where he lived most of his life, his works profoundly affected the culture of the area. He was buried in Konya and his shrine became a place of pilgrimage. Rūmī's works are written in the New Persian language. Their importance is considered to transcend national and ethnic borders. His poetry has influenced Persian literature as well as Urdu, Panḡābī and other Pakistani languages written in Arabo-Persian script.<sup>174</sup>

One of the major works of Rūmī is undisputedly the *Maṭnawī-ye maṣnawī*. It is a poetic work written in Persian consisting of six volumes. It contains fables, scenes from everyday life, Qur'ānic revelations and exegesis, metaphysics, and anecdotes and stories that largely derive from the Qur'ān and ḥadīṭ. The main theme and the ultimate aim for Rūmī was unquestionably the *tawḥīd*, the re-union with God. Since dignity of life is an important element on the path to *tawḥīd*, Rūmī also depicts many dog-related stories in the *Maṭnawī*, for dogs are frequently seen as the very representatives of this quality.

An example of a dog experiencing love, becoming a Gnostic, and acquiring a human temperament is the dog of the Companions of the Cave (Q18), as described by Rūmī in the *Maṭnawī*. The tale bears a great similarity to the mention of Saḥdī in *Gulistān*:

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<sup>173</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.65

<sup>174</sup> E<sup>2</sup>, Vol.II s.v. *Ḍjalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī*



When the dog has become wise, he marches briskly; when the dog has become a Gnostic he becomes as the Men of the Cave. (MM II 2364)<sup>175</sup>

The Şūfīs have used in their writings the dog's capacity to be trained as an example to be followed by other Şūfīs. The subsequent passages will illustrate this parallel.

The following passage is a good example of this:

When a dog has learned the knowledge imparted to him, he has escaped from error; he hunts only lawful prey in the bush. (MM II 2363)<sup>176</sup>

Tales of Şūfīs praising the virtuous qualities of dogs are abundantly demonstrated in the *Maṭnawī*:

If humanity means merely to have human form, Moḥammad and his antagonist Abu Jahl would be just the same. Moḥammad and Abu Jahl both went to the idol-temple but there's a world of difference between the former's entry therein and that of the latter. Abu Jahl bowed to the idols as an idol worshipper while idols bowed to Moḥammad. The portrait of Adam looks like Adam; see from the pictured form what thing in it is wanting. The soul is wanting in that lifeless form: go seek that rare jewel! The heads of all the lions in the world were laid low when God bestowed favor on the dog of the Companions of the Cave. What does it matter if that dog had such a despised appearance, if its soul was plunged in the ocean of light? The pen itself does not contain the description of outward forms. It is only when written that the qualities of words like learned and just may be

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<sup>175</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.66

<sup>176</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.61

distinguished; the qualities of learning and justice are spiritual essences which you will not find in any place. (MM I 1019-1025) <sup>177</sup>

Another tale describing the gratitude of dogs contrasted by the thanklessness of the human race taken from the *Maṭnawī* is:

God bestowed upon the men of Sabā much ease, myriads of castles, palaces and orchards. But those ill-humored ones rendered no thanks for that bounty; in fidelity they were less than dogs. When a dog is given piece of bread from a particular house, he will give his allegiance to that house. He will become the watcher and guardian of that door, even though violence and ill-treatment befall him. Still he will not budge from that door; he would consider it ingratitude to prefer another. Again, if a strange dog comes by day or night to a quarter of the town, the dogs there will at once teach him a lesson, saying, “Begone to the place that is your first lodging: indeptness for that kindness is the heart’s pledge, which it must redeem.” They will bite him, saying, “Return to your place, do not leave the dept of that kindness unpaid any longer.” From the door of the friend and from the hand of the people of heart, how much have you drunk the water of life, and your eyes were opened! Then how much have you fed your spirit with the food of mystical intoxication, ecstasy and selflessness at the door of the people of heart? Then, through greed, you abandoned that door, and now because of your deceit you are going round to every shop. (MM III 285-95) <sup>178</sup>

A remarkable story of a man who gets severely scolded by a beggar for refusing to share bread with his dog who therefore finds himself on the verge of death is also pictured in the *Maṭnawī*:

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<sup>177</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.48

<sup>178</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.58

A dog was dying, and its owner, a Bedouin was sobbing, shedding tears, and crying in sorrow. “What am I to do with myself? What is to be done? Henceforth, how can I live without you?” A beggar passed by and asked: “What is this sobbing? For whom is your mourning and lamentation? The Bedouin replied: “There was in my possession a dog of excellent disposition. But look now, he is dying on the road. He hunted for me by day and kept watch by night; he was a lion, my servant, not a dog. He was keen-eyed and good at catching my enemies and driving off thieves. He was good-natured, faithful and kind.” The beggar asked, what ails him? Has he been wounded? The Bedouin replied: “Ravenous hunger has made him so lamentable.” “Show some patience,” said the beggar, “in bearing this pain and anguish; the grace of God bestows a recompense on those who are patient.” Then he asked the Bedouin: “O noble chief, what is this full bag in your hand?” The Bedouin replied, “Food left over from last night, which I am taking along to nourish myself.” “Why don’t you give some to the dog?” asked the beggar. “I have not love and liberality to this extent,” replied the Bedouin. “Bread cannot be obtained by a traveler on the road without money, but water from my eyes costs nothing.” At this the beggar cried, “Shame on you, O water-skin full of wind! For in your opinion a crust of bread is better than tears.” (MM V 477-487) <sup>179</sup>

Yet another author to make many remarks to dogs in his works was Nūr ad-Dīn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān Ğāmī (1414 –1492). He is deemed one of the greatest Persian poets of the 15th century as well as one of the last great Ṣūfī poets. Ğāmī was born in a village near Ğam, then Hūrasān, now located in Ghor Province of Afghanistan. He was a follower of the Naqšabandī Ṣūfī Order. In his role as Ṣūfī šayḥ, Ğāmī expounded a number of teachings regarding following the Ṣūfī path. In his view, love for the Prophet Muḥammad was the fundamental stepping stone for starting on the spiritual journey. His works

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<sup>179</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.43

range from prose to poetry, and from the mundane to the religious. Among the eighty-seven books that he wrote, the most famous are *Haft Awrang (Seven Thrones)*, his major poetical work, *Nafahāt al-Uns (Breaths of Fellowship)*, *Bahāristān (Abode of Spring)*, and *Diwān-e kāmel-e Jāmi (Diwan)*.<sup>180</sup>

In his work *Nafahāt al-Uns (Breaths of Fellowship)*, which concentrates on the biographies of Ṣūfī saints, he depicts among others this dog-related story:

Abu Sho'aib Moqanna, known for his righteousness, was a resident of Egypt and a contemporary of Abu Sa'id Kharrāz. He had undertaken seventy pilgrimages on foot beginning each journey by donning the eḥrām at the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and ending in Tabuk (on the Arabian Peninsula) with trust-in-God. It is said that on the last Pilgrimage he saw a dog panting with thirst in the desert. He called out to anyone willing to buy the merit of seventy Pilgrimages with a drink of water. Finding a purchaser, he gave the water to the dog, saying, „This is better than all my Pilgrimages for the Prophet has said, „For every warm-blooded creature that one serves there is a reward.(NfO 77)“<sup>181</sup>

All stories describing the quenching of the thirst of a dehydrated or thirsty dog, being deed of merit are based on a specific ḥadīṭ. Buḥārī reports in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that a man quenched a dog's thirst by fetching him some water out of a well with his shoe. All the sins of this man were annulled by God because of this very act of compassion. A similar ḥadīṭ can be found in Muslim's compilation whose main protagonist is a prostitute. Corresponding story is depicted by Ḥaṭṭār in his *Ilāhīnāma*.<sup>182</sup> A slightly varified version of this ḥadīṭ-based narration can also be found in Manāqib of Kermānī.<sup>183</sup> Yet another story can be found in Sa'ādīs *Bustān (The Rose garden)*.

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<sup>180</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, Vol. II *Djāmī*

<sup>181</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.14

<sup>182</sup> Quoted after: Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.29

<sup>183</sup> Quoted after: Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.18

The last writer to be analyzed here is Abū Ḥamīd bin Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm (1145-46–1221), better known by his pen-names Farīd ad-Dīn and °Attār, which he took from his occupation of the pharmacist. He was a Persian Muslim poet, theoretician of Sufism, and hagiographer from Nīšāpūr. He left an everlasting influence on Persian poetry as well as Sufism. °Attār reached an age of over seventy and died a violent death in the massacre which the Mongols inflicted on Nīšāpūr, where his mausoleum is located. The thought-world depicted in °Attār’s works reflects the whole evolution of the Ṣūfī movement. Commencing with the idea that the body-bound soul’s awaited release and return to its source in the other world can be experienced during the worldly life in mystic union.<sup>184</sup>

Various mentions of canines can be found in some of °Attār’s numerous works, such as in the *Manṭiq aṭ-Ṭayr* (The Conference of the Birds), *Asrār-nāma* (The Book of Secrets), *Muṣibat-nāma* (The Book of Affliction), *Ilāhīnāma* (The Book of God) and the *Tadkirat al-Awliyā’*. This paper will limit itself to presenting examples of dog-related stories from four of the above mentioned pieces of work, and namely the *Manṭiq aṭ-Ṭayr*, *Ilāhīnāma*, *Muṣibat-nāma* and the *Tadkirat al-Awliyā’*.

*Tadkirat al-Awliyā’*, °Attār’s only known prose work, is a biography of Muslim saints and mystics. Dog stories do appear in this work since the good qualities ascribed to the canine breed such as loyalty, dignity, fidelity, perseverance, bravery, patience, gratitude, self-sacrifice, service among many others are the very attributes Ṣūfīs and ‘awliyā’ strive after. In this work a remarkable mention of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī being measured with a dog in order to establish who is the better of the two:

When Ḥasan Baṣri saw a dog one day, he exclaimed, “O lord, accept me as a dog, like this one!” Someone asked him, “Which is the better, you or the dog?”

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<sup>184</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, Vol.I s.v. °Attār

Ḥasan replied, “If I am spared God’s torment, then I am the better; if not, by God’s might, he is better than a hundred like me! (TA 41)”<sup>185</sup>

A story similar in nature to the previous one demonstrating dignity and the extermination of ego can be found in the *Tadkirat al-Awliyā’* as well as in the *Muṣibatnāma*:

It is related that Bayazid was out walking one day when a dog fell in beside him. The master pulled the hem of his robe away from the dog. The dog exclaimed, “If I am dry and touch you, there is no difficulty between us, and if I am wet and touch you, the ritual purification will cleanse you. But if you wrap your cloak around your ‘self’(nafs), not even ablution will make you pure.” Bayāzid replied to the dog, “You are outwardly impure and I inwardly. Come let us put the two together so that the combination will bring purity to both of us.”The dog then said, “You are not worthy of my companionship, for I am rejected by mankind while you are accepted. Stones are thrown at me while you are greeted as the ‘Monarch of the Gnostics.’ I never leave so much as a bone for tomorrow but you have a whole crock of wheat stored up.” Bayāzid replied, “If I am not a worthy companion to a dog, how can I accompany the Eternal? Glory be to God Who cultivates the finest of creation through the basest thereof! (TA 172, MN 314)”<sup>186</sup>

A remarkable tale can be found in *Muṣibatnāma* ( 137/p.33) in which God sends a dog to a spiritual leader as one of His very own after the ṣayḥ’s request from God to bestow upon him a guest for the upcoming morning. He prepared a banquet and kept looking in all directions but could see nothing else but a helpless dog coming down the road and drove him away. Only when God revealed to him the true identity of his the dog, the

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<sup>185</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p. 8

<sup>186</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.6

man realized how self-confounded he was and apologized to ‘his guest’. The story continues with the dog giving the man a moralizing lesson: “O man of the path, you asked for a guest, but first you should have asked for insight from God.....” As Procházka-Eisl explains in her apposite article, the occurrence of the dream in such stories takes up the function of easing the absurdity of the plot.<sup>187</sup>

Dog-related stories can also be detected in the extraordinary work of ʿAṭṭār *Manṭiq at-Ṭayr* (*The Conference of the Birds*). This work presents a story about the birds of the world, led by hoopoe, set forth in search of their king, Simurgh. Their quest takes them through seven valleys (Valley of Quest, Valley of Love, Valley of Understanding, Valley of Independence and Detachment, Valley of Unity, Valley of Astonishment and Bewilderment, Valley of Deprivation and Death). They are assailed by many difficulties on the way and undergo many a trial. Only thirty birds reach the abode of Simurgh only to find out that they themselves are the *si* (thirty) *murgh* (bird), lost in the sea of God’s existence.

In *Manṭiq at-Ṭayr* ʿAṭṭār refers to dogs mainly in the negative sense of the commanding soul, the dog-like *nafs* (*nafs-e ammāra*). In the author’s words, the *nafs* is as a “misguided dog”, “a dog dressed up and coved with precious gems, which needs to be tamed and won over”, in order to follow steadfast the Path. The same can be said about the numerous dog-related mentions in Ğāmī’s *Haft Awrang* (Seven Thrones). A good example of such negative referral from the *Manṭiq at-Ṭayr* is the following section:

The heart is ever a mounted huntsman in the country of the body and this dog-like *nafs* its companion day and night. No matter how fast the huntsman gallops, the dog keeps up beside him in the hunt. Whoever has the manliness to bring this dog to heel can lasso a lion in both the worlds. No man can measure up to the dust under the feet of one who subjugates this dog. Even the dust on one

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<sup>187</sup> Procházka-Eisl: *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* XXVIII: *Gerechtigkeit für einen Hund*, p.177

who performs the rare feat of putting this dog on leash is more precious than the blood of the others. (MT 111)<sup>188</sup>

One of the poetic works of ʿAṭṭār, the *Ilāhīnāma* (The Book of God), bears some similarities with *Manṭiq at-Ṭayr*. The story is about a sovereign who is confronted with the materialistic and worldly demands of his six sons. The king tries to portray the transient and pointless desires of his six sons by retelling them a large number of spiritual stories. This rather well-known dog-related story is depicted in this famous piece of work:

Ma’shuq Ṭusi once absentmindedly wandered out onto the road at the hottest part of the day. A dog came along the road in his direction and Ma’shuq, without thinking, suddenly threw a stone at it. A horseman, dressed in green and with radiant face, saw this and rode up to him. He gave Ma’shuq a lash with his whip and cried, “Hey there, heedless one! You don’t know at whom you are throwing stones. In origin you are no different from this dog. After all, you are both cast from the same mold; how then can you consider him less than you? Since you are equally subject to God’s power, there is no point in seeking to dominate him. Dogs are hidden behind the veil, O friend. If your reflection is pure, see beyond the flesh, where, despite an unappealing exterior, the dog is exalted in attributes. Though his outward appearance would seem to deny it, he partakes of many mysteries. (EN 46)<sup>189</sup>

Another famous dog-story from the *Ilāhīnāma* of ʿAṭṭār is the one of a Ṣūfī who struck a dog suddenly by the roadside with a staff. His paw was badly wounded. The dog

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<sup>188</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.78

<sup>189</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.24-25



complained to the šayḥ Abū Saʿīd, who rebuked the Ṣūfī for his cruel act and labelled him as impure. The man tried to talk his way out by blaming the dog for making his clothes ritually impure, which was a good reason for hitting him. Abū Saʿīd apologetically tries to make up for the incident to the dog and render him content again. The dog carried on lamenting that the Ṣūfī broke an unwritten rule: “When I saw that this man was wearing Sufi clothes, I felt sure that he would not hurt me.....If it had been someone dressed in ordinary clothes coming along the way, I would have kept well away from him.....If you are going to punish him, then do it now and strip him of his Sufi cloak; that will be punishment enough for him till the Day of Judgement.” The author emphasizes here the necessity of humans to be humble as well as the fact that they are no better than any other creature of God, as he also does in his *Ilāhīnāma*: “Since God’s purpose has not been revealed, do not value yourself by so much as a hair more than a dog. Though the dog lives in the dust of the earth, his origins are the same as yours.”<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Nurbakhsh, Javad: *Dogs: From the Sufi Point of View*, p.24

## IX. Conclusion

Muslims strive to discover the Divine Will but no one has the authority to lay an exclusive claim to it. As it is frequently mentioned that there is 'no church' in the Sunnī Islam in the sense that no person or institution can claim to represent God's divine will. Although this dogma is firmly set in theory, in many Islamic discussion topics it can be observed that the subject at stake is practically closed to any interpretation. The place of dogs in Islam is one of these lively discussion topics where many Muslims hold a negative view of dogs and base their view on traditions and classical *fiqh* built mainly upon them. However, in my study I tried to show that in this topic as well as many others there has been a great complexity of doctrines and diversity of opinions. Mainly the disputations promoted by the supporters of dogs based their arguments on the authenticity of the hadith literature on the subject. Many gave the positive references in the Qur'ān as a strong indication of a general misunderstanding about the dogs. While there were legal controversies among various law schools about diverse rules concerning the dogs, Ṣūfī literature mostly welcomed this marginalized creature of God.

The future of discussions about the place of dogs in Islam and Muslim societies is absolutely in parallel to the questions faced by Muslims when challenged by the demands of modernity. As the "gates of ijtihād" had irrevocably been closed in the Sunnī law, it no more provides the realistic answers to the needs of today's Muslims. Nowadays, the hygienic conditions are much different than in the past and many Muslims actually want to keep dogs as pets solely for the reasons of emotional support or companionship. Similarly, under the influence and pressure of modern animal rights understanding, they do not want dogs to be killed in the streets just because they are labeled as dirty creatures by some religious authority. As my study tried to prove, there are, in fact, ample resources in the Islamic history to provide religious justification for such needs and causes.

In the old arguments, both the Mālikī law school, which did not classify dogs as ritually unclean in contrast to the other major law schools, and Ibn al-Marzubān, declaring dogs to be pure animals, were putting forth the favorable mentions of dogs in the Qur'ān and the pro-dog examples from the Sunna literature against the anti-dog hadiths. In the modern times, not much has changed. Today Hālid Abū al-Faḍl from Egypt is searching through the classical Sunnah literature to argue against the conservative anti-dog jurists or Hüseyn Hatemi from Turkey is citing the pro-dog hadiths in his daily articles in a national newspaper (Yaşam) to oppose the frequently occurring brutalities against dogs. Since there is a sheer volume of available hadiths for both sides of the argument, it is possible to argue the prophetic basis for almost any position. Both sides are ranking the importance of the given hadiths in such a way as to justify their point of view. Interestingly, almost all anti-dog hadiths go back to Abū Hurayra, and the pro-dog jurists always strengthen their position by targeting his credibility. As I cited from al-Faḍl in my work, Abū Hurayra has been a rather controversial figure in the Islamic history and has disputed on many occasions with the important Muslim figures of his time, such as A'īša, °Umar and °Alī, due to his transmissions. Some early jurists had refused to rely on the transmissions or legal opinions of Abū Hurayra and had rejected some of his dog-related hadiths.

As it is widely mentioned, 'there is no church in Islam' in the sense that no person, or set of persons, can actually claim to represent God's Divine authority. This is one of the most important challenges of the modern Muslims. This dogma theoretically means everybody has accessibility to God's truth and can argue for his position as much as he can support it with textual materials. Therefore, there is actually a way to make a case for dogs in Islam as al-Faḍl has successfully done. However, in practice many dogmas, such as the impurity of dogs or that they shall be killed, might be defended by conservative jurists with an absolute conviction as if it is written in the Qur'ān. The questions of legitimacy and authority or simply put, who can speak in the name of Islam, is a rather critical and complex matter and it was definitely beyond the borders of this work and the capacity of its author. Further, it is a matter of another discussion to what extent religious arguments indeed can have an effect on changing the beliefs and

mentality of hundreds of years of cultural convictions. Nevertheless, I am glad to have chosen this topic for my Master's thesis and deepen my knowledge on the subject.

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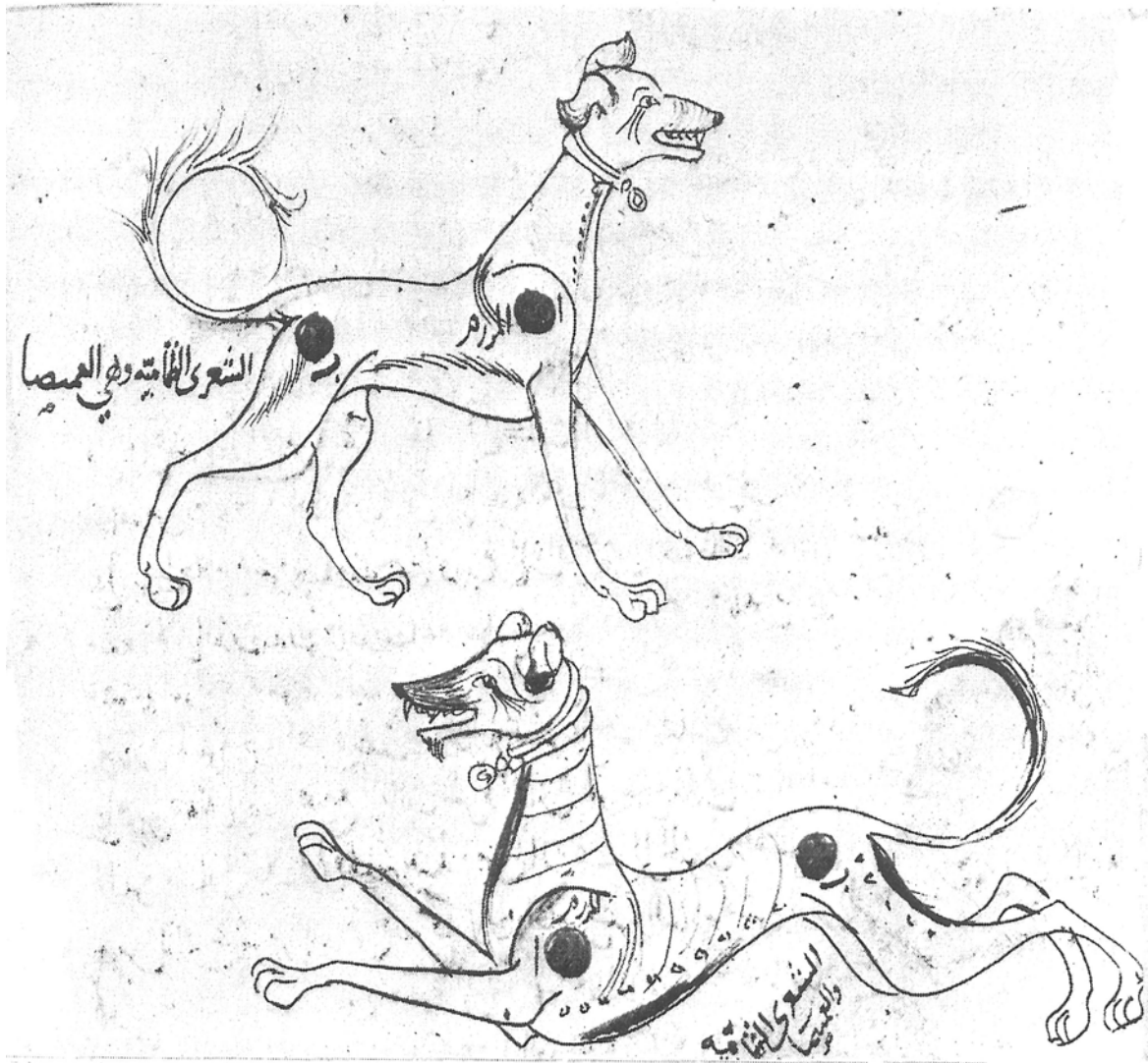
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## Supplement:

1. Two Salūqī, the lower one with cropped ears. *Šuwar al-kawākib* of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān aṣ-Šūfī. 14<sup>th</sup> century Arabic. (Or. 5323, F 72a., MS, British Library, London)



2. Dog greeting his master. *Miftāḥ al-Fuzalā'* of Šādiyābādī, 16<sup>th</sup> century Persian. (Or. 3299, f 128a., MS, British Library)



3. A thirsty dog being given water by a man in the desert, illustrating a story in the *Bustān* of Saʿdī, contained in a larger manuscript of the *Kulliyāt* of Saʿdī, dated 1566. The miniatures in this manuscript are done in the Šīrāzī Safavid style. (Add. 24944, f. 37a, British Library, London)



4. Mağnūn fondling Laylā's dog in the desert, when visited by an old man whom his father has sent. This is an illustration from Nizām's Maṭnawī Laylā wa-Mağnūn which is contained within a larger manuscript, Hamsa dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century Safavid period, done in the Qazwīnī style (Or.11326, f.11b, British Library., London)





گفت ای گلستانه از دنا پویشیه  
 خادق اش ز نانی نام  
 کلمش بر او است بوق و از دم  
 کلمش بر او است بوق و از دم  
 کلمش بر او است بوق و از دم  
 کلمش بر او است بوق و از دم

هم نام گلستان طلال قورده  
 هم خورده خود طلال کرده  
 کرده زنده حلال خواری  
 با هم خوش حلال خواری  
 جانست ز طلال خوار کیست  
 داسود کیت حرام پوست  
 بیلی بیخفتن از شبابت  
 سیداری عین عین خویش

خیم یافته در تهی کش راه  
 از دم دهنش فراز ماند  
 سر تا قدش جراحی دریش  
 بی نعت کلوی لقمه خوشش

شته شکش همه تهیگاه  
 دندانش ز خنده باز ماند  
 شوایان بزبان جرحت خوشش  
 پسیدن دست و پای کارش



دیناک نزان نطاشدی  
 کانی نظیر ز جبهه مردم  
 غیب دل از جفاک است  
 در قشش بر پیکر است  
 نای و کلو شمشیر است  
 از بی کسری بدل نم است  
 سلکن گنم اول دل پر است  
 کاش باشد بسک در خون  
 در نیمه نیم ز سکواری  
 گنای ترا بگسک  
 نام تو نصیب کردن دل  
 کوه مار نیم بگردن دل  
 نقل تو بدل خاک زدم  
 ز یاد تو یادگار زدم  
 ز یاد تو یادگار زدم  
 ز یاد تو یادگار زدم

خوشیان که ز خوشش گیرند  
 کوشند اگر چه در جد ای  
 بنمای رخ این چه روی تاست  
 کربنگری این تن خواهم  
 از خواب تو در بر اوران تاست

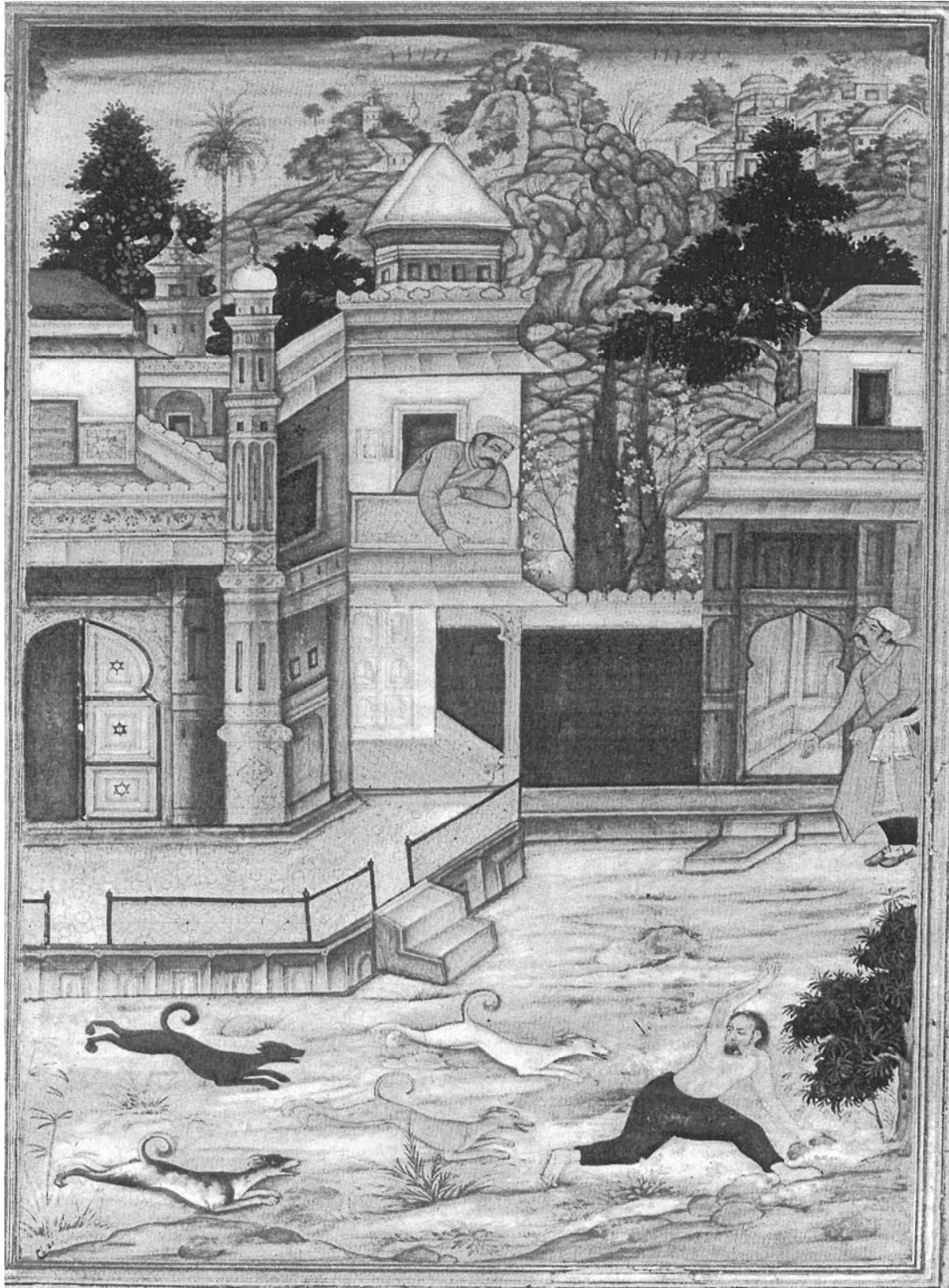
لختی کبکشش دیده کردند  
 زمینان نبرند آشنای  
 پیدار شوای چه دیر خواست  
 باری رخ خود نما بخواهم  
 خوش خفت تو با بر اوران

5. Dog protecting Laylā's camp. Hamsa of Nizāmī. 949-53 A.D., 1539-43 Persian, (Or  
2265, f 157b, MS, British Library, London



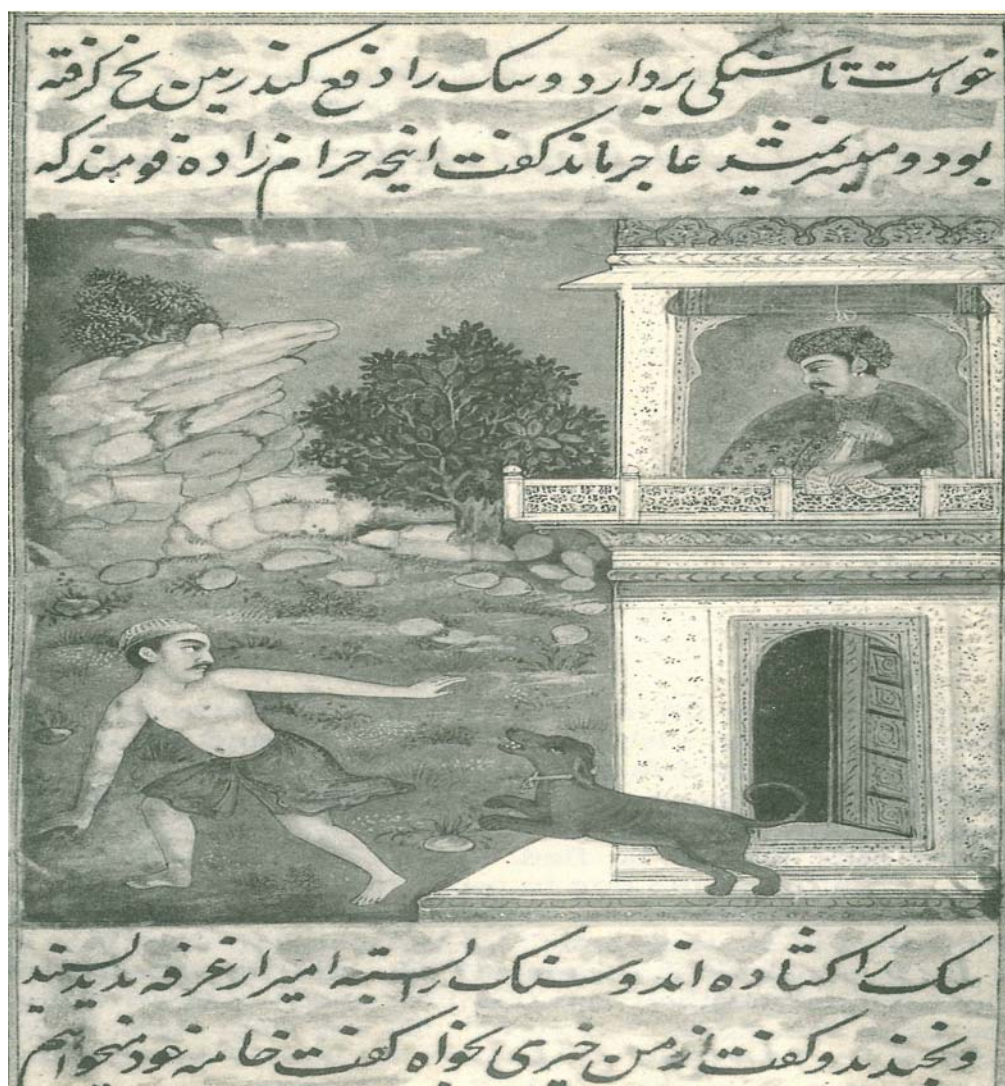
6. Intruder repelled by dogs. *Gulistān* of Saʿdī. 975 A.D. 1567 Persian, (Or 5302, f 76b, British Library, London)





7. An illustration for a tale from the *Gulistān* by Saʿdī about a poet who visits the house of a band of robbers, hoping to be given a few dirhams for his verses. The owner of the house was not happy with his poem. He had the poet stripped of his robe and sent on his way. The owner's dog chased after him as he fled. The poet tried to pick up a stone

to throw at the dog in order to hinder its pursuit but he found the stones frozen to the ground. The poet cried out: "What kind of bastards are these who let their dogs free but tie their stones to the ground?" His host on hearing the poet's remark laughed and told him to ask a favor of him. The poet answered: "I only ask for my own cloak." The style of the miniature is Mughal. It dates from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Or. 349, f.86b, British Library, London)



8. Two Salūqī puppies. *al-Hayawān* of al-Ġāḥiẓ. Undated Arabic. Bibliotheca Ambrosiana MS, Ar. A.F. D 140, f 23 b



9. Illustration found in a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale with the caption The Book of Laylā and Maġnūn by šayḥ Nizāmī; Maġnūn in chains led to Laylā's tent by the beggarwoman:



او خسته سازید مدام آن بد و رسن در و همه بست بی شرکت من تراست برآ	کاش شده و پستمند مدام زان یار بداشتم زمان و هر چه آن هم یاد زینسنگان	برین ما ازین رفیق کبریا شد شاد بدین چشمتاری انجا و کجاست کجا خوی می رود ز پسنگردن را	کسین سپید و طناب نغز خون نیکو چسبن شکاری نیکردا نم برده سبای نخواست بر نیک کردن او را
--	--	---	--



وز خیل کجیل می و آید کبر است مرا کند و دل منازه سرود پر کشیدی	می بست و ز بند می بایست خندید کسی که بود چنان چون بر دژ محمد رسیدی	کبر است کی کی بخندید ز نخر سپا و غل کردن	مر جا که رسیدم که آن دید او داد در رضا زخم خورد
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10. Illustration found in a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale with the caption The Book of Laylā and Maġnūn by šayḥ Nizāmī



11. Two young men come upon an old man sitting among a pack of scavenging dogs. The couplet at the top of the picture describes the interaction between one young man and the old man:

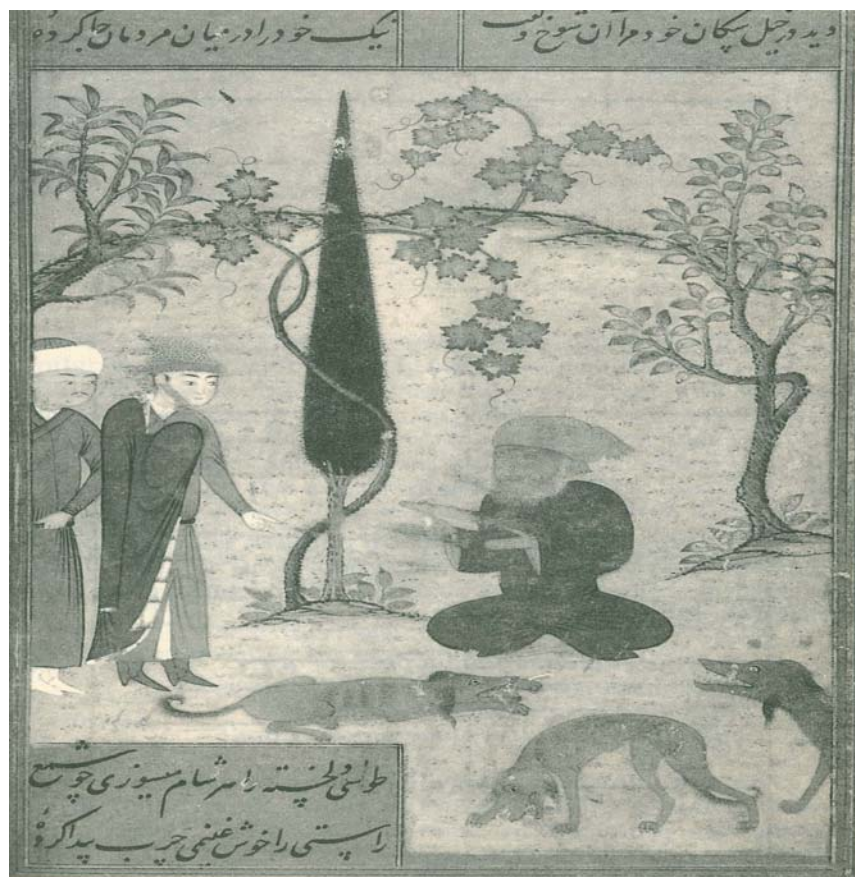
*Seeing me seated among a pack of dogs*

*That flipperent sweetheart sneered and said:*

*How fine at last you have managed*

*To find yourself a place among men*

This is an illustration for a ġazal by °Abdullāh Tūsī who was a native of Hūrasān (d. 1490). It is found in an anthology produced in Šīrvān (Shmakha), done in the northern provincial Timurid style and dated 1468. (Add. 16561, f. 85b, B.L. London)





12. A group of dogs with their keeper from a miniature in the *Nafahāt al-uns* by Ğāmī, illustrating a story about Nağm ad-Dīn Kubrā, copied from Akbar at Agra, dated 1605, and signed by Madhu (Or. 1362, f.263a, B.L., London)



13. Portrayal of dogs in Kalīla and Dimna, Selçuk period, 13<sup>th</sup> century, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, İstanbul





14. Laylā's dog recognizes Maġnūn, copy of a manuscript of *Laylā and Maġnūn* written around 1560 in Buġhārā, nowadays Uzbekistan; Musée du Louvre, Paris, France









16. Sultan Beyazıt I. hunting with dogs in Yenişehir, Bursa. *Hünernâme*, Ottoman, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, İstanbul, Turkey



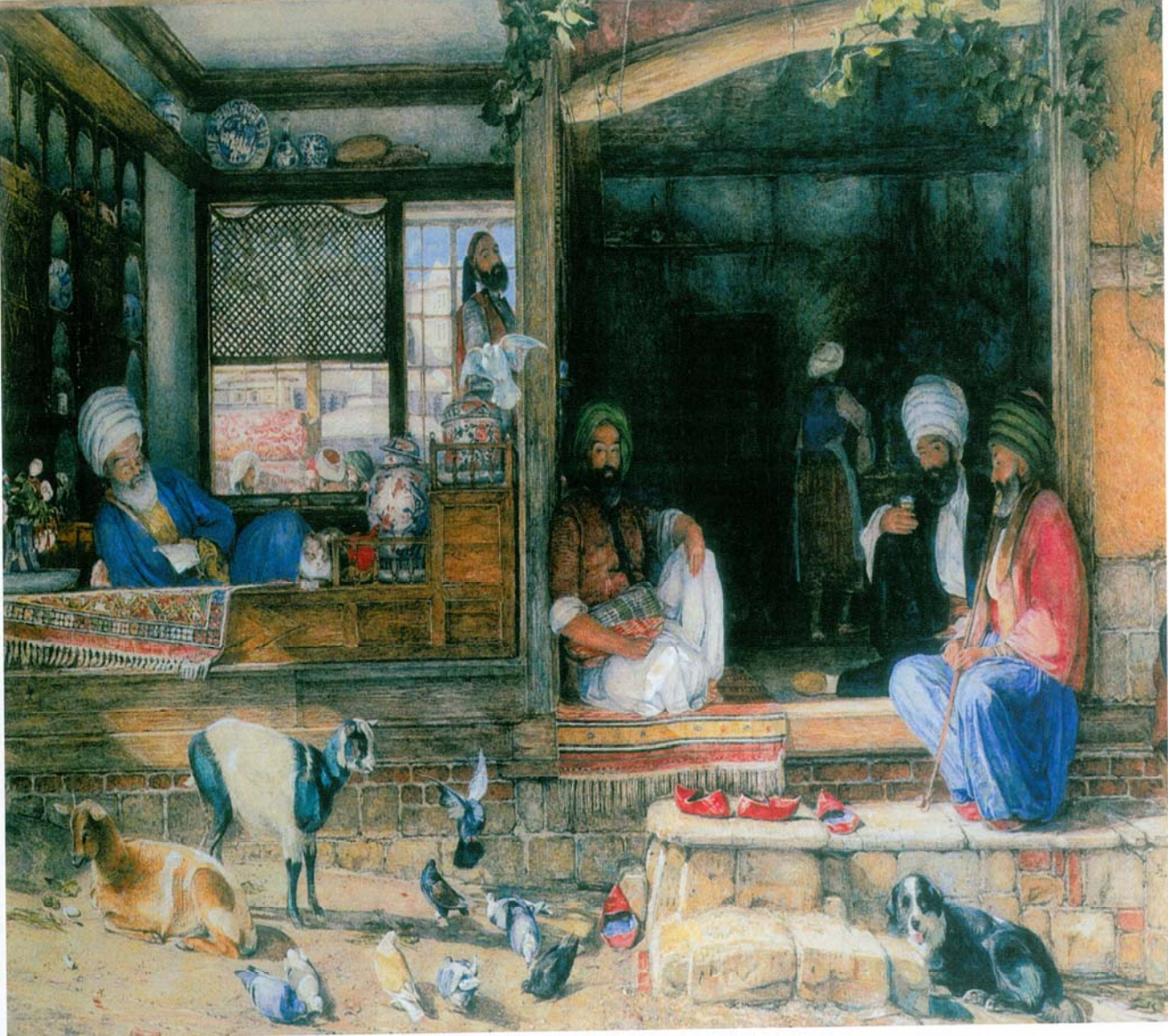


17. Passers-by and stray dogs on the Galata Köprüsü, Fritz Ludwig von Dardel, Private Collection





18. Kebapçı in Üsküdar, John Frederick Lewis, 1858, Private Collection



# Zusammenfassung

Es ist ein bekanntes Klischee, dass die Muslime üblicherweise eine negative Einstellung zu Hunden haben. Traditionell waren die Hunde als unrein betrachtet, und es gibt viele Verweise auf sie in der Sunna Literatur und in der islamischen Rechtstradition. Aufgrund dieser negativen Einstellung erhielten Hunde nur geringe Wertschätzung in den muslimischen Ländern, und es ist äußerst ungewöhnlich, dass Hunde als Haustiere gehalten werden.

Ferner werden heutzutage diese religiöse Wahrnehmungen gelegentlich verwendet, um den Missbrauch und die Verwahrlosung von Hunden in muslimischen Ländern rechtfertigen.

Das grundlegende Ziel dieser Diplomarbeit ist es, einen historischen und begrifflichen Rahmen für die Beziehungen zwischen dem Islam und den Hunden zu präsentieren. Als solcher ist der primäre Fokus meiner Arbeit die Analyse und das Verstehen, in welchem Ausmass Hunde im Islam für unrein erklärt werden wirklich bedeutet. Ich habe die historischen Umstände und Präzedenzfälle, die zu dieser negativen Sicht führten, analysiert.

Ich habe einen historischen Übersicht von grundlegenden Texten über Hunde in der islamischen Literatur präsentiert.

Es kann nicht behauptet werden, dass es ein einheitliches und monolithisches Verständnis von Hunden in der Geschichte der islamischen Literatur gibt. Ich habe mich bemüht zu zeigen, dass es eine ungerechtfertigte Stellungnahme wäre, die negative Anschauung als die ausschliesslich autoritative und normative im Islam zu spezifizieren.

Weil meine Studie die islamische Literatur zur Basis hat, habe ich mich eher auf die positive Texte, und nicht auf die negative, konzentriert. Die negativen Erwähnungen von Hunden sind meist Hadithe, die dem Propheten und dem juristischen Diskurs, der auf der Grundlage dieser Hadithe fusst, zugeschrieben werden. Meine Studie zeigt, dass in

der komplexen hadith- und fiqh-Literatur auch andere Sichtweisen von Hunden entdeckt werden können. Darüber hinaus hat sich die Studie auf den Koran, Adab- und Şūfī Literatur, die viel mehr Mitgefühl und Erbarmen für dem Hund empfunden haben, konzentriert.

Was die modernen Argumente betrifft, sind es vor allem die Disputationen der Hundeliebhaber, die ihre Argumentation auf die Authentizität der Hadith-Literatur stützen. Viele gaben die positiven Referenzen im Koran als ein starkes Indiz für ein allgemeines Missverständnis über die Hunde im Islam an. Es gab zwar rechtliche Auseinandersetzungen zwischen den verschiedenen Rechtsschulen über diverse Regeln für die Hunde, doch die Şūfī Literatur ging meist diesem marginalisierten Geschöpf Gottes entgegen. Diese Pro-Hund Argumente werden im Detail in meiner Arbeit untersucht.

Sowohl der Inhalt als auch die grundlegende Motivation dieser Studie sind tatsächlich eng verknüpft mit dem Aufstieg der Tierrecht- und der Tierschutzbewegungen in der modernen Welt. Da die Tiere auf einer respektvolleren Weise behandelt werden und ihre Rechte durch das Gesetz geschützt sind, befand sich die muslimische Welt unter zunehmendem Druck der westlichen Kritiker aufgrund der Situation der Tiere in ihren jeweiligen Ländern. Die meisten der zeitgenössischen Diskussionen zu diesem Thema begannen als Antwort der muslimischen Denker auf die Kritik der Aktivisten für Tierrechte, die durch den jüngsten westlichen Diskurs zum Thema beeinflusst wurden.

Im gleichen Sinne war ich aufgrund meiner Erfahrungen während meines 5-jährigen Aufenthalts in der Türkei persönlich motiviert.

# Curriculum Vitae

## Personal Data:

Surname: Subasi  
Maiden Name: Strynclova  
Given name: Vera  
Date of birth: 18.09.1979  
Citizenship: Czech  
Marital Status: Married  
Children: 2  
Languages: Czech (native), English (fluent), Turkish (fluent), German, Arabic, Slovakian, French

## Education, Practical Training and Employment

1995-1997 - White Bear High School, White Bear Lake, Minnesota, USA  
1997-1998 – Whitianga High School, Whitianga, New Zealand  
Since 1999 – Arabic Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria  
2001 - Erasmus Semester at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium  
2002-2003 - Illness  
2003 – 2006 – Residence in Turkey (Ankara, Istanbul, Amasra)  
2003-2004 – University of Ankara, Tömer – University Turkish Courses  
2004-2006 – work for Akasya Shoe-factory and Önder Ltd. Marketing company as interpreter, translator, foreign correspondence, administrative work  
2006-2008 – Arabic Studies, University of Vienna  
- work as sworn interpreter and translator in Turkish- Czech and Czech-Turkish languages for the Czech Republic  
2006 (July, August, September) – University of Damascus, Standard Arabic Language Courses, Higher Institute of Languages  
2008-2010 – Residence in Istanbul, Turkey and mother-leave