



# Al-Buhuuth

A BYU Journal of Middle Eastern Studies



Volume 7 • 2023



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A BYU Journal of Middle Eastern Studies

Brigham Young University  
Provo, Utah

# Contents

## As Above, So Below

Austin Ball . . . . . 4

## A Study of the Circassian and Armenian Genocides

Nicholas Arthur Heil . . . . . 15

## The World Cup and Economic Diversity

Sam Ames. . . . . 43

## What Relationships Exist Among Islam, Islamism, and Violence?

Caroline Keel . . . . . 57

## Iran

Lindsay Hafen . . . . . 62

## The Economic Roots of Islamist Support in the Middle East

Ryan Wolff. . . . . 67

## حقيقة صلب المسيح في القرآن

مبحث عن سورة النساء ١٥٧

73 . . . . . كليل دبرمان، تيني ديفس، جيمس فوجل



## As Above, So Below Sympathetic Resonance in the Cosmology of Abu Ma'shar

Austin Ball

Within the worldview of the late antique, medieval, and pre-modern periods of the Middle East, the planets served as intermediaries between the divine will of heaven and the ever-changing earth. Understanding the hidden roles these planets played in the course of world affairs was essential to dynastic rulers who hoped to secure their reign; knowing which properties they transmitted to living souls was useful in the crafts of agriculture, magic, and medicine. Despite the almost ubiquitous condemnation of Islamic religious authorities, the art of astrology remained widely accepted and practiced among both the aristocracy and the peasantry of Islamicate societies.<sup>1</sup>

Among astrologers, Abu Ma'shar was arguably the most influential figure of his era due to his seminal work, *The Greater Introduction to the Science of the Judgements of the Stars*.<sup>2</sup> This treatise was extensively quoted in the writings of every Arabic astrologer following him, and it had a significant impact on European tradition after being translated into Latin in the 12th century. Unlike many of his Arab contemporaries, who incorporated elements from Greek, Pahlavi, and Indian sources, Abu Ma'shar's magnum opus extended beyond the practical aspects of astrology. He attempted to articulate a theory on how the stars actually worked to bring about change in the world. While other astrologers at the Abbasid court were meticulous in accurately calculating the positioning of the planets in their tabulations, they assumed their influence to be axiomatic.

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<sup>1</sup> The Astrologer in Society, Saliba

<sup>2</sup> Ja'far ibn 'Umar ibn Muhammad al-Balkhī, *kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr ila 'ilm aḥkām al-nujūm*, ed. & trans. by Charles Burnett and Keiji Yamamoto, (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

The well-reputed astrologer Masha'allah ibn Athari devoted much of his work to demonstrating the validity of his methods; however, when it came to the power of the heavens, he conceded, "We do not know how this is done, neither do we know its operations, nor how much and until when it does so."<sup>3</sup> This comparative lack of speculation led Richard Lemay to comment in his landmark study of *The Great Introduction* in Latin: "Of all the astrological works of Mash'allah, Zael (Sahl ben Bisr) or Alcabitius (al-Qabisi) . . . we find the Introductorium [The Great Introduction] alone to be of a theoretical nature, all the others having a particular subject and aim."<sup>4</sup>

By contrast, means of astral influence had been a matter of debate for centuries in the Hellenistic tradition. Theories vacillated between variations of either semiological or causal interpretations, which largely corresponded to Neoplatonic and Aristotelian philosophies.<sup>5</sup> Plotinus, for example, rejected the causal power of the stars, limiting them to 'symbolic power.' "We may think of the stars as letters perpetually being inscribed on the heavens," he explains in the *Enneads*, "all teems with symbol, the wise man is the man who in any other thing can read another."<sup>6</sup> From this perspective, change in the world was not induced by an external force; rather, it was immanent in the nature of non-real matter. In contradistinction, Aristotle attributed all change to a 'prime mover,' whose influence spread from the edge of the cosmos into its center—this naturally meant that the heavenly bodies made change in the sublunar realm. Surveying this debate, A.A. Long makes a classical distinction between 'hard astrology,' which claims that heavenly bodies are both signs *and* causes of human affairs, and 'soft' astrology, which regards heavenly bodies only as signs of human affairs without also attributing a causal role to the heavenly bodies.<sup>7</sup>

If we were to evaluate Abu Ma'shar based on these criteria, would his theory look 'hard' or 'soft'; Platonic or Aristotelian? As will be shown, he is thoroughly Aristotelian in method but not necessarily in theory. Abu Ma'shar's methods

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3 Masha'allah, 'On the Knowledge of the Motion of the Orb', in *Works of Sahl and Masha'allah*, ed. Benjamin N. Dykes (Minnesota, MN: Cazimi Press, 2008), 243–99 (244–5).

4 Richard Lemay, *Abu Ma'shar and Latin Aristotelianism in the Twelfth Century: The Recovery of Aristotle's Natural Philosophy through Arabic Astrology* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1962), 45. All further citations of Abu Ma'shar will be drawn from this volume.

5 Liana Saif, *The Arabic Influences on Early Modern Occult Philosophy*, (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015). ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/byu/detail.action?docID=4008630>. 6 Plotinus, *The Enneads*, II:3, 80–1.

6 Plotinus, *The Enneads*, II:3, 80–1.

7 A. Long, "Astrology: Arguments pro and contra," *Science and Speculation: Studies in Hellenistic Theory and Practice*, eds. Jonathan Barnes, Jacques Brunschwig, Myles Burnyeat and Malcolm Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Paris: Editions de la Maison des Science de l'Homme, 1982), 165–193, especially n. 19.

appropriate the methods of Aristotelian science—namely, empirical observation (*tajribah*) and induction (*qiyās*)—in order to construct his rational defense.

This paper reviews the intellectual history leading up to Abu Ma'shar's project from both philosophical and theoretical perspectives. It explains why it is easy to assume that his theory of stellar causation is continuous with the direct contact, or "friction" theories of Aristotle and Al-Kindi. Then, I will demonstrate how Abu Ma'shar actually advocates for a theory of 'sympathetic resonance.' The implications of this discovery are important for intellectual historians, as they indicate a possible connection between Abu Ma'shar and the macrocosm-microcosm theories of Hermeticism in the Arabic world. This paper suggests that Abu Ma'shar drew upon the Hermetic tradition in addition to the Aristotelian to construct his explanation of stellar influence.

Historically, only two English-speaking scholars have undertaken the direct analysis and interpretation of Abu Ma'shar's project in *The Greater Introduction* from a philosophical standpoint, yet neither of them successfully addresses his unusual case for stellar causation. In her 2019 publication, *The Arabic Influences on Early Modern Occult Philosophy*, Liana Saif offers a comprehensive overview of Abu Ma'shar's theoretical enterprise.<sup>8</sup> While she acknowledges Abu Ma'shar's belief in a 'connection' between the celestial and terrestrial spheres, no illustrations or further explication is given.<sup>9</sup> Peter Adamson examines Abu Ma'shar's reliance on the arguments of Al-Kindi in his 2002 article, "Al-Kindi, Abu Ma'shar, and the Philosophical Defense of Astrology," detailing how Mashar appropriates the metaphysics and causal explanations of his former teacher.<sup>10</sup> In the second section, titled "How the stars influence the lower world," Adamson suggests that Abu Ma'shar's understanding of stellar causation is a direct continuation of Al-Kindi's natural philosophy. While I concede that Al-Kindi deeply inspired the arguments and cosmological framework within which Abu Ma'shar worked, I propose that on this particular issue, he diverged from al-Kindi and contributed his own innovation. Rather than agreeing with Al-Kindi's proposition of immediate contact between the celestial and terrestrial spheres, Abu Ma'shar advocated for an unusual model of sympathetic resonance, or action at a distance.

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8 Saif, *Arabic Influence*, 9–27.

9 Notably, Saif emphasizes his particular understanding of the planets as causing the unification of the soul to the body in all living beings (see page 14). This animating role of celestial bodies is oddly overlooked in every other available English work, historical, philosophical, or otherwise. The lack of knowledge on this front should be addressed by further research on the postclassical-Islamic synthesis of Neoplatonism and Aristotelian thought, specifically investigating how this shows up in Abu Ma'shar and other astrologers.

10 Peter Adamson, "Al-Kindi, Abu Ma'shar, and the Philosophical Defense of Astrology" *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales*, Vol. 69, No. 2 (2002), 245–270.



## Suggestions of Direct Stellar Causation

At the outset, it should be noted that Abu Ma'shar differentiates himself from his contemporaries as an astrologer in search of "higher truths." He does this most explicitly by divorcing himself from the theory of the influential classical thinker, Claudius Ptolemy of Alexandria (ca. 100–170 CE). In discussing Ptolemy's book, the *Tetrabiblos*, Abu Ma'shar notes how Ptolemy "maintained that the nature of the moon is humidity because of the sphere's nearness to the earth and its receiving the vapors which rise from it." In regards to the planets, "he maintained that the nature of Saturn is coldness and dryness . . . that the nature of Mars is heat and dryness because of its color's similarity to fire . . . that Jupiter is temperate in mixture because its sphere is between the spheres of Saturn and Mars."<sup>11</sup> Essentially, Ptolemy proposed that the planets transfer their elemental properties onto the earth by their proximity to it, while also receiving these properties by the exact process but in reverse order: the earth offering coolness and moisture; the sun, dryness and heat. Abu Ma'shar does not point out the circularity of this argument, but he does highlight the impossibility of the planets receiving any properties from earth, since they are simply too far away. "Since the highest altitude of the vapors in the air which rise from the earth is two miles, and the nearest distance of the moon from the surface of the Earth is 128,094 miles approximately, how does the vapor of the Earth reach the Moon so that it changes its nature?"<sup>12</sup> Contra Ptolemy, Abu Ma'shar supports the explanations provided by philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition. According to their view, the planets do not possess any elemental properties whatsoever, but are "simple bodies" (*ajram basiṭah*) composed of a "fifth nature" (*ṭabi' khāmis*).<sup>13</sup> Abu Ma'shar later corrects Ptolemy by stating that the effects of the sun and the planets are "found from their action."<sup>14</sup> In this context, he is likely referring to the movement of the planets.

The intellectual provenance of these ideas almost certainly extends from Abu Ma'shar back to Aristotle through the work of his first teacher, Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn 'Ishāq aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ al-Kindī. In the *Fihrist*, Al-Nadīm reports that Abu Ma'shar was originally a scholar of the hadith before being deceived into studying the foreign sciences by Al-Kindī, known as the "philosopher of the Arabs."<sup>15</sup> As previously mentioned, Peter Adamson emphasizes the sections of *The Introduction* where Abu Ma'shar borrows certain methods or concepts from al-Kindī. Charles Burnett also points out the resemblance of certain elements, such as turns of

11 *The Great Introduction*, IV 1.4c

12 *Ibid.* IV 1.5b

13 *Ibid.* IV 1.6b, I 3.2c

14 *Ibid.* IV 1.5a

15 Al-Nadīm, *The Fihrist of Al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, ed. & trans. By Bayard Dodge, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970) 816.

phrase used by Abu Ma'shar, which reflect the styling of al-Kindi.<sup>16</sup> Oddly, Abu Ma'shar never cites Al-Kindi as a source throughout *The Greater Introduction* or any of his other works. Regardless, it will be helpful to briefly contextualize his proposition of a dynamic theory of stellar causation by citing some passages from the works of both Al-Kindi and Aristotle.

In his treatise entitled *On the Proximate Cause*, Al-Kindi starts from the same assumption of a fifth element that constitutes the celestial spheres. If this *aether* is not hot, the only way it could transfer heat, and therefore motion, to the elements beneath it would be through friction. He summarizes his point as follows:

That which is in contact with the last of the elements (referring to the lunar sphere in contact with the nethers of the atmosphere) is not hot, cold, moist, or dry, so the sublunary elements only receive the effect of motion *by being in contact* with the fifth element.<sup>17</sup>

He later clarifies this point in another treatise, *On Moistures and Rain*, where he explains that heat is generated “by the striking and friction of the air caused by their [the spheres’] movement; for it is in the nature of movement to get hot, as can be seen in the striking of pieces of wood, stones, and iron.”<sup>18</sup> This notion of friction can be directly attributed to the writings of Aristotle. In his tract, “On the Heavens,” he teaches:

The warmth and light which proceed from [the planets] are caused by the friction set up in the air by their motion. Movement tends to create fire in wood, stone, and iron; and with even more reason should it have that effect on air, a substance which is closer to fire than these. An example is that of missiles, which as they move are themselves fired so strongly that leaden balls are melted; and if they are fired the surrounding air must be similarly affected. Now while the missiles are heated by reason of their motion in air, which is turned into fire by the agitation produced by their movement, the upper bodies are carried on a moving sphere, so that, though they are not themselves fired, yet the air underneath the sphere of the revolving body is necessarily heated by its motion, and particularly in that part where the sun is attached to it.<sup>19</sup>

From these accounts, the precedent for a friction theory of stellar causation is strong and quite straightforward. It follows that Abu Ma'shar would pick up where they had left off, and indeed, the way he describes the process sounds extremely similar to that of Al-Kindi and Aristotle. In the third chapter of part

16 Charles Burnett, “Agency and Effect in the Astrology of Abu Ma'shar of Balkh,” *Oriens*, Vol. 47, No. ¾ (2019) 348–364.

17 Al-Kindi, *On the Proximate Cause*, P. VI (1); *The Philosophical Works of Al-Kindi*, ed. by Peter Adamson and Peter Pormann (Oxford University Press, 2012).

18 Al-Kindi, *On Moistures and Rain; The Philosophical Works of Al-Kindi*, 142–145.

19 Aristotle, *On the Heavens* Book II, Part 7.



one of *The Introduction*, Abu Ma'shar explains the process through which the stars cause changes to the earth:

For the outermost sphere surrounds this world and moves *over* this world with the stars that are within it, with an eternal circular motion, so that by its constant moving of the stars and by their movement over this world heat results in this terrestrial world *which is connected to them*, and it [the earth] becomes hot.<sup>20</sup>

Adamson interprets this passage to be continuous with what has come before, writing that “the heavens produce their effects by causing friction, since they are actually touching the outside of the lower world.”<sup>21</sup> It can be reasonably assumed that if Abu Ma'shar diligently adheres to the theories and methods of Al-Kindi in all other aspects, this case should be no different. However, Adamson overlooks two crucial points regarding the content of *The Greater Introduction*. First, Abu Ma'shar conspicuously omits the Arabic words for cause (*ʿalal* and *sabab*) in his work; instead, he only ever refers to the stars as indicators (*dalal*) and guides (*hadiya*). Secondly, he actually insists that the heavens and the earth are not in contact with each other, thus making friction is an impossibility within his view. This opens up the possibility of reinterpreting the previous passage, with a focus on the celestial bodies moving above the atmosphere and their connection to the elements in a different way than the mechanistic model proposed by al-Kindi and Aristotle.

## Abu Ma'shar's 'Causation' at a Distance

If Abu Ma'shar excludes the possibility of celestial bodies causing change through direct contact with the world, what type of action does he rely on to maintain the efficacy of astrology as a practice? Every time he refers to the actions of the stars, he consistently uses the verb “to indicate.” However, if we were to interpret this literally, the recurring phrase “by the power of the movement of the stars” (*b-quwwa ḥarakāt al-kawākab*) would become completely meaningless. In the third chapter of part one in his treatise—the same section where he explains the effects of the stars on the world—Abu Ma'shar provides an interpretive key to the rest of the work. Here, he qualifies the connection between the stars and the earth as a special kind of ‘action’ at a distance. Action, for him, seems to present a more general and therefore less contentious term than ‘cause.’

His classification of three types of action becomes sorely confusing without referring to the original Arabic. Translating these terms in a way that accurately conveys their meaning in English is a bit challenging, but for this paper's purposes the words “doing,” “done,” and “resulting from” will be used. “Things (act) in three ways,” Abu Ma'shar explains. “(1) one is the doing (*fi'l*) of the thing,

20 *The Great Introduction*, I 1.3b

21 Adamson, “The Philosophical Defense of Astrology,” 251.

2) the second is what is done (*mafūl*) by that thing, 3) the third is what results (*munfa'il*) from that thing.” He gives examples of the first two forms by comparing a builder’s relationship to a wall, an author’s relationship to a line of script, and fire burning an object. The common denominator in each of these cases is immediate contact between the actor and the receiver. In the last case, he uses the active participle of the seventh form for the same root—*ʔl*—meaning “to do.” Apparently, this unique type of third action represents a change in a thing that results from, or perhaps in response to, the change of another ‘connected’ object. He continues to expound:

What results (*ma infa'ala*) from another thing is different from these first two modes (*ʔal wa maful*). It (the third category) is the movement and change that occur in one thing as a result of something else when the two things (cause and effect) are separated by a certain distance, such as . . . the results in a man’s movement of soul and limbs of the song of a singer skilled in singing, the movement, tremor, consternation, and perplexity in the lover when he sees the beloved, the bashfulness of the beloved when he sees the lover, and the result and attraction in iron as a result of the magnet-stone.<sup>22</sup>

In this third sense of action at a distance, there seems to be a reciprocal resonance between the objects in question. Abu Ma’shar further answers the question of how this relates to the connection between heaven and earth by describing the sympathetic bond between them:

This is because of the power (*quwwa*) in the celestial bodies, which moves, alters, and changes the terrestrial bodies, and the receptivity (*qubūl*) to movement, alteration, and change which is in the terrestrial bodies, because of their natural connection (*ittisāl*) to one another.<sup>23</sup>

The nature of this connection remains mysterious. Through an unidentifiable medium that defies space, there exists a connection between call and response. Using this analogy, Hermann of Carinthia (ca. 1105–1155 CE) perhaps approached the meaning of Abu Ma’shar’s terminology more effectively in his Latin translation of the work than Abu Ma’shar did himself in the Arabic. Hermann uses the verb *ducere* to express the stars leading or guiding, the materials beneath them, instead of using the Latin equivalent of *dalala*, which would be *significare*. It is an apt choice, since a leader does not directly *cause* the motion of the follower, but rather issues a call that is answered. Abu Ma’shar’s account of causation had a significant impact on Hermann, who incorporated many of the astrologer’s ideas into his own cosmological work, *De Essentiis*. In the eighth section of the text, he addresses the phenomenon of sympathetic resonance as observed between musical instruments and relates this to the connection between the higher (heavenly) realm and the lower (earthly) realm:

<sup>22</sup> *The Great Introduction*, I 3.8

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* I 3.6

If such a strength of love exists between the kinds of music belonging to the Different [stringed instruments], so that when one thing is moved another follows it promptly, being brought into the same movements without any difficulty at all, how much firmer is the pact of faith between related species of the Same kind, so that the affects and condition of all secondary species follow the preceding motion of the first and higher species as an inseparable companion!<sup>24</sup>

There is a discernible Platonic influence at work in this passage, especially in his use of the Same and the Different and the kind of soul bond that reaches between beings. Hermann is still working within the framework of Aristotelian cosmology. Therefore, these analogies are appropriately applicable to both celestial entities and earthly beings.<sup>25</sup> He frequently references Abu Ma'shar to validate his own stance on the relationship between heaven and earth.

A fallacy in Abu Ma'shar's reasoning seems to arise at this point. Earlier, he explained that the movement of the stars caused the earth to heat up as a result of their relationship. However, in his explanation of resonance, he does not mention anything about heat. Rather than the celestial bodies' *movement* causing heat in the world, it seems the celestial bodies' *inherent qualities* cause movement in the world. Abu Ma'shar never addresses this, but the simplest solution is that he is merely abbreviating "power of the movement of the celestial bodies" to "power of the celestial bodies," and then skipping the middle term of the quasi-causal equation which follows from celestial motion to terrestrial heating and from there to terrestrial motion. Abu Ma'shar illustrates the second conversion using the concept of viscosity: "when this world becomes hot, it becomes refined [or soft] and moves, and there happens as a result of its movement, change in these bodies from one to another."<sup>26</sup> The important point is that motion of the fifth celestial element generates heat in the world, seemingly originating from within the elements themselves. The analogy of the lover becoming flushed or excited by the appearance and movement of the beloved is once again quite helpful.

## The Possibility of Hermetic Influence in Abu Ma'shar

Reflecting back on the historical context presented in the introduction, it becomes pertinent to ask: why did Abu Ma'shar develop a theory at all, and why did he specifically develop this particular theory?

24 Hermann of Carinthia, *De essentiis*, 68rH, 148–9.

25 Charles Burnett, "Harmonic and Acoustic Theory: Latin and Arabic Ideas of Sympathetic Vibration as the Causes of Effects between Heaven and Earth," in *Sing Aloud Harmonious Spheres: Renaissance Conceptions of Cosmic Harmony*, ed. By Jacomien Prins and Maude Vanhaelen (New York and London: Routledge 2018), 31–43.

26 *The Great Introduction*, I 3.3b

Abu Ma'shar's purpose in deviating from the usual Arabic course of 'practice over theory' is likely informed by his historical situation. By the early 9th century, Islamic religious authorities had come to almost universally condemn the practice of divination using the stars, since it violated the principles of God's absolute power and exclusive knowledge of the future.<sup>27</sup> Theologians often argued that "God has reserved for himself the knowledge of the future to the exception of the angels and the prophets."<sup>28</sup> Any contradiction, even implicit, was considered heresy, and astrologers held a precarious position in society. It was this climate that likely provided the impetus for Abu Ma'shar's apologetic work. In this work, he sought to convince his opponents that astrology was a legitimate science and could coexist with monotheism. In order to satisfy the demands of both the philosophical and religious systems, Abu Ma'shar had to undertake a nuanced redefinition of the causal terms involved. On one hand, as has been mentioned, Aristotle's natural philosophy relied on the concept of causation. It sought to understand the nature of causes by examining their effects. In the *Physics*, he clarified, "the natural way of doing this is to start from the things which are knowable and clear to us and proceed towards those which are clearer and more knowable by nature."<sup>29</sup> Causality in this sense functioned differently from how we understand it today: the peripatetic tradition viewed the process from a paradigm of agency and potency, where the efficient cause of a thing played a participatory role in the generation of its effect. The 'cause' was also creating, compelling, and commanding. On the other hand, how could anyone attribute these powers to anything other than God and not be committing *shirk*? At most, the celestial bodies could serve as signposts indicating God's intent as the ultimate and only cause—anything beyond this would undermine His sovereignty. Abu Ma'shar therefore needed to find a way to ascribe legitimate power to the stars without referring to them as 'causes' in a meaningful sense.

If Abu Ma'shar deviated from Al-Kindi's account of stellar causation in this sense, where else might he have found inspiration? This paper does not wish to imply that he lacked the creativity to come up with the idea on his own. Yet, if contemporary currents of philosophy were to propose a theory of sympathetic resonance, it would be more likely that Abu Ma'shar had come into contact with one of its sources rather than having conjured the notion *ex nihilo*.

From examining the corpus of texts available to him, it is likely that Abu Ma'shar had studied a work called *The Secret of Creation*, compiled sometime in the early 9th century.<sup>30</sup> *The Secret* was a Hermetic text attributed to Apollonius

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27 Saliba

28 Quoted in George Saliba, *A History of Arabic astronomy: planetary theories during the Golden Age of Islam*. (New York University Press, 1980).

29 Aristotle, 'Physics', in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), Bk. I, 315 (184a10–13).

30 Weisser, Ursula, Dietrich, Albert and Spies, Otto. *Das "Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung" von Pseudo-Apollonios von Tyana*, Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 1980.

of Tyana, and it contained a passage that the author claimed to have found in an extraordinary place. Beneath a statue of Hermes in the city of Tyana, Apollonius discovered a secret vault which housed an ancient corpse sitting upon a throne of gold. In that corpse's hands, he saw the Emerald Tablet, the contents of which he transcribed.<sup>31</sup> The text reads:

حق لا شك فيه صحيح  
إن الأعلى من الأسفل والأسفل من الأعلى  
عمل العجائب من واحد

*Truth! That in which there is no doubt!  
That which is above is from that which is below, and that which is below is from that  
which is above, working the miracles of one.*<sup>32</sup>

This document proposes a correspondence or linkage between a realm 'above' and a realm 'below.' These relative place markers have been interpreted in various ways, ranging from pairings of the entire cosmic system and the human body to connections between the celestial and terrestrial worlds.<sup>33</sup> Unfortunately, the only comprehensive study of this text, including a translation and commentary by Ursula Weisser, has not yet been translated into English.<sup>34</sup> Is it possible that Abu Ma'shar drew his inspiration for a sympathetic theory of stellar causation from this text? At this point, it is a matter of speculation. There is one line of evidence that supports the possibility, though.

Kevin Van Bladel directly connects Abu Ma'shar with the Hermetic tradition in his book, *The Arabic Hermes*. Van Bladel claims that the legend of the three Hermes originates from one of Abu Ma'shar's no longer extant works on Persian

31 Florian Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus* (Ithaca; Cornell University Press, 2007) 45–48.

32 Pseudo-Apollonius of Tyana, "كتاب العلل Livre des causes," MS Arabe 2300 (digital scan), National Library of France, Paris.  
Pseudo-Apollonius of Tyana, *Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung und die Darstellung der Natur*, ed. Ursula Weisser (Aleppo: Institute for the History of Arabic Science, University of Aleppo, 1979), 524.

33 Kocku Von Stuckrad, "Astrology III: Middle Ages," *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, edited by W.J. Hanegraaff, et al., BRILL, 2005. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/byu/detail.action?docID=3004029>.

34 Weisser, Ursula, Dietrich, Albert and Spies, Otto. Das "Buch über das Geheimnis der Schöpfung" von Pseudo-Apollonios von Tyana, Berlin, New York: De Gruyter, 1980.

historical astrology, called *The Thousands*.<sup>35</sup> If Abu Ma'shar was involved enough in the literature of Hermes Trismegistus to formulate this apocryphal addition, it is not far-fetched to presume that he had some familiarity with much of the other Arabic Hermetica. Of course, this claim needs to be better substantiated. Further research will be conducted in a future project to investigate which other Hermetic texts were translated, when they were translated, and by whom. If a relationship between Abu Ma'shar and another one of these translators could be found in the historical record, then the possibility of Hermetic influence on his work could be considered more plausible.

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<sup>35</sup> Kevin Van Bladel, *The Arabic Hermes: From Pagan Sage to Prophet of Science*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2009), 122–138.





## **A Study of the Circassian and Armenian Genocides**

### **The Effects of Collective, Intergenerational Trauma on Contemporary Efforts for the Preservation of Minority Ethnic Languages**

*Nicholas Arthur Heil*

#### **Abstract**

This article addresses the possibility of a relationship between large-scale traumatic events such as genocides and modern efforts to preserve ethnic minority languages. It has been accepted in trauma theory that traumatic events of certain magnitudes can often result in collective trauma with strong ties to ethnic identity. Furthermore, this variety of trauma may be transmitted transgenerationally by means of epigenetic variations and socialization. This study seeks to determine if any of the four distinct cases (Circassians, Armenians, Lazi, and Domi) demonstrate the expected symptoms of a community suffering the effects of intergenerational trauma, and if such signs are manifested, how they influence efforts to preserve ethnic minority languages. The results yielded by this study generally supported the supposition that there would be a positive correlation between genocide and motivation to preserve the ethnic language and that intergenerational trauma would be a plausible link describing this relationship. However, it has also become clear that both deeper and more comprehensive research will be necessary to verify this effect and determine the extent of its applicability in diverse environments and circumstances.

#### **Introduction**

It's an unfortunate truth that the history of mankind is filled with abundant examples of the horrific atrocities humanity is capable of perpetrating against their neighbors with a shocking lack of restraint, with instances of genocide ranking chief among them. Some cases of genocide are well-known and receive

near-universal recognition and condemnation such as the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany. Others receive far less attention and are all but forgotten by the history books. Whatever the case may be, it is undeniable that these acts of mass violence leave a deep and lasting impact on the souls of the survivors and their descendants (Hübl; Houck). One brief period of extremely traumatic violence can release a destructive wave of intergenerational trauma influencing the well-being of many generations to come (Bezo and Maggi 87). The psychological implications for descendants of genocide survivors will be the focus of this article as it grapples with the question: after the passage of over a century, how might the acute collective trauma resulting from some of modern history's deadliest genocides affect the motivations and continued efforts of the surviving communities around the world to preserve their respective ethnic minority languages in comparison to other minority ethnic groups which have not faced comparable degrees of targeted violence?

To understand why such a connection might exist, recent research must be considered which has revealed the widespread and damaging effects acute, large-scale traumatic events such as genocides can have on the mental, emotional, and even physical health and stability of survivors, both individually and communally (Houck). These effects are often exacerbated when the trauma is the result of extreme violence perpetrated against a community based on an element of their collective identity such as religion, ethnicity, language, or race (Saul). Collective trauma of the severity initiated by genocide tends to become transgenerational as that massive social disruption gradually morphs into the core of the community's collective memory (Bohleber 347). The symptoms of sufferers of transgenerational trauma can differ markedly from the symptoms of first-generation survivors (Mangassarian 376) and often include increased incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, lower cortisol levels, alcoholism, substance abuse, and damaged familial and societal relationships (Saul). More relevant to this study, however, is the tendency of descendants to feel a deep desire or even a pressing need to understand and come to terms with their community's past, as well as the tendency to resort to the familiar for comfort and security in response to stressors or perceived threats (Mangassarian 375). Thus, trauma of this nature also typically strengthens and fortifies the ethnic identity of the victimized group as a sort of defense mechanism. The wave of patriotism in the United States following the terrorist attacks of 9/11 is an example of this phenomenon which many Americans will easily relate to.

It is this tendency, I believe, that will compel surviving descendants of traumatized communities to exhibit an increased interest in maintaining their cultural and ethnic heritage, including language, even when there is no clear economic or social incentive to do so. Based on this understanding of transgenerational trauma and its effects, I anticipate that contemporary members of ethnolinguistic minorities who have experienced acute and targeted traumatic events will manifest an increased desire and capacity to maintain the language of

their ancestors compared to other similar ethnolinguistic groups that have not experienced comparable traumatic events.

To study this effect, I performed a qualitative analysis of two different, relevant cases: the Circassians and the Western Armenians. Both of these ethnolinguistic groups experienced large-scale, targeted genocides during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I have selected the Lazi and Domi peoples as control groups in this study as neither community has experienced anything comparable to genocide. Although both of these groups have experienced oppression, discrimination, and marginalization in their host nations, there is no prominent example of a traumatic event looming in the collective memories of these groups.

## Background

As several of the ethnolinguistic groups examined in this study may be unfamiliar to the average reader, some background and contextual information is provided below for each group including important factors that may influence or contribute to the results of this qualitative study.

### Tsitsekun: The Circassian Genocide

The Circassians, or the Adyghe as they call themselves, are an ethnolinguistic group traditionally consisting of a historical alliance of twelve major tribes with historical roots in the northeastern Caucasus region adjacent to the Black Sea and the Kuban River dating back approximately five millennia (Shenfield 1; Dweik 48). They neighbored and coexisted with other Caucasian tribes such as the Chechens and Abkhazians. The Circassian nation thrived for thousands of years in the fertile region with a flourishing culture of art, literature, and poetry, including the epic Nart Saga (Colarusso), and was known far and wide both for the skill of its warriors in combat and the beauty of its people, especially its women (Doğan). They speak Circassian, which is typically divided into two separate languages (a distinction many Circassians contest): Adyghe (or West Circassian) and Kabardian (or East Circassian) (Shenfield 7). Some other Circassian languages such as Ubykh existed previously but have unfortunately since gone extinct (Özsoy 151). Most Circassians eventually converted to Sunni Islam during the 18th century (Besleney and Demirci).

When their traditional capital Sochi fell in 1864 at the conclusion of the hundred and one-year-long Russo-Circassian War, Circassia vanished from the map and ceased to exist as an independent entity (Kazemzadeh and Shahrokhi 34). The events known as the Circassian Genocide (or Tsitsekun by Circassians) began near the end of the war as unarmed men, women, and children were systematically rounded up, summarily executed, and buried in mass graves under the direction of Tsar Alexander II (Kazemzadeh and Shahrokhi 25). After full military victory was achieved by the Russians, the majority of the remaining Circassians who would not convert to Christianity were forced into death marches to the Black Sea shore without adequate provisions and deported to the

Ottoman Empire (Shenfield 3). Hundreds of thousands of Circassians were either murdered or died of starvation, drowning, or disease during this brutal act of ethnic cleansing (Shenfield 3–4). Counts vary widely but it's estimated that between 90% and 97% of Circassians who survived the war were deported, perhaps as many as 1,500,000 individuals (Jones 110). The Ottomans only recorded the arrival of approximately one million exiles on their shores, of whom nearly half died of disease and other causes. While Russia claimed only 400,000 Circassians died, the real number is likely much higher, with some estimates putting the total loss of life as high as two million, easily making the Circassian genocide the deadliest genocide of the 19th century and one of the deadliest in human history (Shenfield 4). Today, approximately 90% of Circassians continue to live in exile in a diaspora distributed throughout Turkey, the Levant, and a plethora of Western nations (Bram and Shawwaf), while those who were able to remain in Russia were compelled to convert to Christianity and Russify (Hansen 168). To date, Georgia is the only country in the world that has formally recognized the Circassian Genocide (Bram and Shawwaf; Barry).

### Aghed: The Armenian Genocide

The Armenians have inhabited eastern Anatolia since at least the 6th century BC when the Satrapy of Armenia was established under the Achaemenid Persian Empire (Khatchadourian xv). Beyond that, the origins and earlier history of the Armenians are shrouded with mystery. The Orontid dynasty later established an independent Kingdom of Armenia which reached its peak under the reign of King Tigranes the Great (or Tigranes III) during the first century BC when it controlled territory stretching from the Caucasus down through Lebanon and from the Mediterranean to the Caspian Sea (Maxoudian 160). Armenians historically adhered to Zoroastrianism along with a variety of pagan religions but ultimately became the first state to officially adopt Christianity in 301 AD (Mangassarian 375). Another huge historical and cultural landmark was the invention of the Armenian alphabet by the scholar Mesrop Mashtots in 405 AD, an event that ushered in the Armenian Golden Age (Mangassarian 375). Both the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Armenian alphabet and language have remained major sources of national pride to this day.

Armenians have generally been divided geographically throughout history, with Western Armenians occupying what is now Eastern Turkey and Eastern Armenians living in the Ararat plains centered around Yerevan in modern-day Armenia and parts of Azerbaijan (Karamanian 123–124). These two sides have often been divided politically between competing empires as well, with the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires dominating the West and the East generally ruled by the various iterations of the Persian and Russian Empires (Karamanian 123–124). This geographical and political division eventually caused the language to divide into two dialects known as Western (or Constantinople) Armenian and Eastern (or Yerevan) Armenian (Chahinian and Bakalian 39).

Western Armenians who lived in the Ottoman Empire maintained a protected but submissive status until the late 19th century when the violence began (Mangassarian 373). In the 1890s, Sultan Abdul Hamid II implemented a policy of pan-Arabism, directly resulting in the massacre of as many as 300,000 Armenian Christians along with a significant number of Assyro-Chaldean Christians (Suni). The Adana Massacre followed in 1909 with 25,000 murdered, but this time the killing was not directed by the central government, but rather by local leaders and supporters of the Committee of Union and Progress, a faction of the Young Turks (Der Matossian). Beyond these massacres, Armenians experienced many other forms of oppression. For example, they were banned from bearing arms, testifying in court, or speaking Armenian in public, a crime which bore the punishment of having one's tongue cut out (Mangassarian 373).

The Armenian Genocide, known to the Armenians as the *Aghed* or "catastrophe," began in 1915 midway through World War I amid fears that the Armenians would side with the Russian Empire en masse (Mangassarian 374). The violence was perpetrated primarily by the Committee of Union and Progress and began with the execution of Armenian intellectuals, the burning of churches, and disarmament. What followed was the mass deportation of the overwhelming majority of Western Armenians to the Syrian Desert via death marches (Mangassarian 374). The Armenians, most of whom were unarmed civilians, became victims of rape, drowning, execution, and mutilation, with many also dying from exposure, hunger, or dehydration in the unforgiving environment (Mangassarian 374; Cooper and Akcam 82). There are reports of Ottoman soldiers cutting unborn children from the wombs of their mothers before murdering both (Mangassarian 374). At the same time, similarly horrific crimes against humanity were being perpetrated against Assyro-Chaldeans and other Christian minorities.

The Turkish government claims less than half a million Armenians or about 300,000 died between 1915 and 1920, although it vehemently denies the accusations of genocide ("Q&A"). The numbers are likely two to three times higher, with scholars outside of Turkey estimating between 1 million and 1.5 million Armenian deaths (Cooper and Akcam 82; "Q&A"), not to mention the murders of approximately 300,000 Assyro-Chaldeans and as many as 900,000 Greek Christians. Millions of Western Armenians fled and emigrated mostly throughout the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas, becoming one of the largest diasporas in the world (Cooper and Akcam 83). Very few Western Armenians remain in their ancestral homeland, while around eight million Armenians live abroad throughout the world, mostly Western Armenians (Cohen 48). Turkey along with Azerbaijan and Pakistan still explicitly deny the Armenian Genocide, while the United Nations and 33 nations have formally recognized it, although some only recently ("Countries That Recognize the Armenian Genocide"). The United States for example did not officially recognize the genocide until 2019 (Gingeras).

## The Lazi

The Laz people or Lazi are an ethnolinguistic group native to the eastern part of the Black Sea coastal lowlands in northern Anatolia (Serdar 336). This region, known historically as Lazona or Lazistan (Sarigil 275), lies mostly within modern-day Turkey and partially in Georgia in cities such as Rize, Trabzon, Artvin, and Batumi (Sarigil 269). It is theorized that the Lazi descend from Colchian tribes which settled in the region sometime before the 13th century BC and have inhabited the region ever since (Morritt 99). The name Laz dates back to the Roman conquest of the region in the first century BC (Lawrence 73). They speak Lazuri, a primarily spoken language belonging to the Kartvelian language family and closely related to Georgian, and they have their own unique folk traditions, tales, dances, and music (Akkuş 857; Sarigil 275). The Laz people underwent a process of Islamization between 1580 and the 1800s following the Ottoman conquest of the region (Sarigil 277).

The Laz would become victims of imperial Russia's ambitions in the Caucasus in the 1800s but to a lesser extent than the Circassians and other tribes farther north (Sarigil 277). The Ottoman Empire and Russia frequently engaged in open conflict to secure control of the Caucasus as Russia gradually began to dominate the region (Sarigil 277). When Circassia fell in 1864, Lazistan became vulnerable to invasion (Sarigil 277). In 1878, the Congress of Berlin redrew the Ottoman borders after another disastrous defeat and in so doing gave Russia control of Artvin and Batumi (Sarigil 278). The Russians began a process of ethnic cleansing and forced conversion to orthodox Christianity, causing many Lazi to flee to the Western provinces of Turkey (Sarigil 278). Another wave of immigration was prompted by the Russian invasion of Rize and Trabzon during World War I but these forces withdrew following the Bolshevik revolution (Sarigil 278). The four decades of Russian dominance in eastern Lazistan are still remembered by the Laz and referred to as the "Black times" (Sarigil 278). However, the Lazi also commemorate their salvation and liberation from their oppressors thanks in large part to the Ottomans (Sarigil 278). After the formation of the new Republic of Turkey, Lazi culture and language were suppressed in the new state. Lazuri was banned in schools and the public sphere, Lazuri language newspapers were prohibited, and Lazuri place names were replaced and Turkified (Sarigil 273). The use of the term Lazistan was formally banned in 1926 (Sarigil 273).

## The Domi

The Domi, also known as the Dom people, Domari, or Domvari, are the descendants of an Indic nomadic ethnic group originating from the Indian subcontinent (Nuseibeh 226). This group ultimately immigrated and settled in tent encampments throughout North Africa, the Middle East, and Anatolia (Matras, *Two Domari Legends* 5). Today, the Domi live in communities from Azerbaijan throughout Anatolia and the Levant down through Sudan and as far west as Morocco (Matras, *A Grammar of Domari*). The timing and reasons for their



migration remain unclear, so they are often conflated with the Roma who settled in Europe and Russia and the Lom who ended up in Persia and central Asia, as each of these groups emigrated from India in a comparable timeframe (Herin 2). In fact, all of these groups have been labeled Gypsies by their neighbors, although this term has derogatory connotations and is generally rejected by all of these groups (Nuseibeh 226). Despite these commonalities, it is inaccurate to lump these groups together as they are culturally and linguistically distinct and they all migrated along different routes and at different times (Herin 2). The Domi speak the Indo-Aryan language Domari and have unique traditions and cultures (Matras, *A Grammar of Domari*). Historically, they had a reputation for singing, performing, metalworking, fortune telling, and various kinds of menial work (Matras, *Two Domari Legends* 2).

Over time, most Domi moved to urban centers where they were often compelled to settle in disadvantaged neighborhoods and quarters (Nuseibeh 228). In Jerusalem for example, the British mandate destroyed Domari encampments in the 1940s and forced the people to relocate to the Old City based on rumors they were hiding weapons for Palestinian rebel groups (Matras, *Two Domari Legends* 5). Most Domi have adopted Islam and have attempted to assimilate with their local communities by embracing the local culture, clothing, and language (Nuseibeh 224–225). However, no matter where they live, Domi generally suffer from poverty, neglect, and severe discrimination (Matras, *A Grammar of Domari*). Many older Domi have reported accounts of being beaten and bullied by both teachers and students in school (Nuseibeh 231–232). Discrimination in the workplace is also common and most Arabs refuse to marry Domi (Nuseibeh 232–234).

## Review of Literature

This study required a survey of a wide variety of sources, many of which are only partially related to my thesis. Some of the most important and relevant articles are discussed below.

### “Why Do Minority Languages Persist? The Case of Circassian in Jordan” by Hassan R. Abd-el-Jawad

This article addresses the question: why do minority languages persist? It argues that languages like Circassian persist because of the national identity and emotional connection of the people to the language and their heritage. This work proposes that groups like the Circassians of Jordan value their native language because they were separated from their homeland and each other, and the Circassian languages are a way to bridge these gaps and connect with their past. It points out that even as the languages are in gradual decline, they continue to carry great value even for those who don't speak them well or at all.

### **"Why Minority Languages Persist or Die" by Jacob A. Loewen**

This article investigates patterns of language assimilation in South America to address the question: What motivates people to lose or maintain their language? It argues that direct pressure from speakers of a host or status language such as Spanish often provokes a defensive response which can persist in larger groups. This effect is influenced by the size of the community, the relative proximity of its members, and whether their culture is individual or group oriented. The article provides examples of language groups that resisted direct assimilation efforts from groups such as Spanish missionaries, leading to the adoption of puritan stances against Spanish and even refusal to adopt foreign loanwords into the language. These effects weren't as strong in smaller communities or when assimilation wasn't compelled or coerced.

### **"Cultural Maintenance among the Circassian American Community of New Jersey" by Bader S. Dweik**

This study focuses on the Circassian community of the United States, and more specifically New Jersey, and seeks to determine the extent of cultural maintenance and the main elements of Circassian culture which had survived in the community. The study found that many Circassians, including younger generations, were keenly interested in maintaining certain elements of Circassian culture and that their perception of their ethnic past was centered around the suffering of their ancestors. The vast majority of Circassians in the study exhibited pride in their identity and culture.

### **"Circassian Diaspora in Turkey: Stereotypes, Prejudices and Ethnic Relations" by Ayhan Kaya**

This article among other things discusses a recent ethnic resurgence among the Circassian community in Turkey. It discusses the development of a "community of sentiments" that transcends borders and has allowed Circassians to connect with other members of the diaspora, thanks in large part to modern technological developments. Also, it mentions Circassians have often taken pride in being different and have typically lived in separate, fortress-like communities. This revival is strengthened by the pride Circassians have long felt in their unique heritage and culture.

### **"100 Years of Trauma: The Armenian Genocide and Intergenerational Cultural Trauma" by Selina L. Mangassarian**

This article was an especially valuable resource for my research as it seeks to directly address the issue of intergenerational trauma in the Armenian American community. Mangassarian argues that the first generation of Armenians immediately following the genocide struggled to handle the psychological scars resulting from the violence, but the subsequent generations of Armenians have coped with their intergenerational trauma by working to strengthen and preserve their

culture. She discusses the nature and development of Armenian trauma over time and how it has manifested. She also explains the especially powerful sense of pride many Armenians feel for the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Armenian alphabet. Coping with trauma resulted in a continued interest in preserving these two elements of their culture among others, both in modern-day Armenia and throughout the diaspora.

### Tarih, Travma, ve Kimlik: Ermeni Diasporada Kimlik ve Kimliğin Yeni Nesillere Aktarımı by Ebru Çoban Öztürk

This article identifies the 1915 genocide as the primary unifying element of Armenian identity, especially among the diaspora. Although Armenians throughout the diaspora have adopted hybrid identities through partial assimilation in their host countries, they are able to overcome differences and unify around the issue of genocide and efforts to achieve recognition and justice. The efforts of Armenians to continue maintaining their language and culture and fight for recognition is their response to the collective trauma from the genocide and the persistent pressure of genocide denial.

### "Ethnic Groups at 'Critical Junctures': The Laz and the Kurds" by Zeki Sarıgil

This article is focused on the clear contrast between the Kurds and Lazi ethnic minorities in Turkey. Whereas there has long been a simmering conflict between the Kurds and the Turkish State, no such conflict has ever existed in the case of the Lazi. In fact, ethnonationalism among the Lazi has been nearly nonexistent. Many Lazi leaders claim that they are Turkish first and Lazi second.

### "Strategies of making and unmaking ethnic boundaries: Evidence on the Laz of Turkey" by Ayşe Serdar

According to this article, many Lazi have historically adopted a strategy of assimilation in Turkish society and have sought to leave their Lazi identity behind. Turkish language and identity have been associated with upward mobility and thus have been given preference in the Lazi community, to the extent that parents wouldn't teach Lazuri to their children so they wouldn't speak Turkish with an accent. Recently, there has been some renewed interest in Lazi culture among younger generations, but primarily in elements of their heritage that don't conflict with Turkish such as folk music and dance as opposed to Lazuri for example.

### "The Social Exclusion of the Domari Society of Gypsies in Jerusalem: a story narrated by the women of the tribe" by Rawan Asali Nuseibeh

This article is centered around the contemporary status of the Domi in Jerusalem, especially the women. It discusses the nature of Domi society and its interaction with its Palestinian and Israeli leaders. The Domi generally occupy the lowest economic class in Jerusalem and are disrespected and discriminated

against by both Israelis and Palestinians. For example, intermarriage is rare although there is no apparent social stigma against it among the Domi.

## Theory

As mentioned previously, the question resting at the focal point of my research is the following: After the passage of over a century, how might the acute collective trauma resulting from some of modern history's deadliest genocides affect the motivations and continued efforts of the surviving communities around the world to preserve their respective ethnic minority languages in comparison to other minority ethnic groups which have not faced comparable degrees of targeted violence? At the heart of this question lies the concept of collective trauma and the effects of acute traumatic events such as genocide on the development and perpetuation of national and ethnic identities even after the passage of several generations. In this work, these effects have been examined through the lens of language and language preservation efforts as it has been demonstrated that this factor is strongly correlated with the strength of national and ethnic identity (Eastman 260). This is especially true with regard to the preservation and maintenance of minority languages without official status or state recognition, a condition which is true in the case of each ethnolinguistic minority covered in this article with the obvious exception of Armenians living in the Republic of Armenia itself, who will be excluded from this study for the sake of consistency. For all of these groups, there is generally little to no economic incentive to maintain their ethnic languages, so motivation must typically come from another source.

Over the last several decades, more and more organizations and associations have been established around the goal of protecting and preserving threatened languages and cultural heritage, reflecting a substantial increase in interest in the issue (Watson 412). In spite of this, it is estimated that nearly half of the world's over 7,000 documented languages are endangered, and approximately 1,500 of them are projected to go extinct entirely by the turn of the century, with the culture of their speakers almost invariably being simultaneously lost to the sands of time (Wood). This process is largely the result of rising pressures to assimilate with dominant, majority ethnic groups in response to the rapid globalization experienced worldwide over the last few decades (Tao 36). While not proposing a solution or treatment to this problem (it should go without saying that the primary independent variable of this study, i.e. genocide, should never be resorted to as a cure for language or culture death), this research could provide valuable insight into the factors involved in identity creation and reinforcing the resolve of ethnic minorities to maintain their cultural and linguistic heritage.

Research into collective trauma has revealed that large-scale, traumatic events often lead to increased social cohesion among survivors, as well as increased interest in their ethnic identity (Houck). This is especially true when that ethnic identity is the basis or justification for the traumatic event, in this case, genocide (Houck). This same research has also indicated that severe collective

trauma such as that experienced by survivors of genocide can be passed on to future generations in the form of intergenerational trauma (Houck).

Intergenerational trauma, also known as transgenerational trauma, can be defined as a type of collective trauma experienced by a group of people because of their collective identity which has been transmitted to future generations via social transmission, epigenetic modifications, and/or the effects of stress during childbirth (Ryder). As for the definition of genocide, I refer to the definition found in Article II of the United Nations Genocide Convention:

Genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (*Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*)

## Research Design and Methods

For this project, the cases of the Circassian and Western Armenian communities were taken as treatment groups, as both of these ethnic groups have in common that their ancestors experienced horrific, targeted ethnic violence and genocide in the late 18th and early 19th century. The circumstances for both genocides differ significantly, which provided variation and nuance to the study. In the case of Armenians, I focus primarily on the diaspora, which until recently consisted almost entirely of Western Armenians whose ancestors were most directly impacted by the genocide (Mangassarian 372). The Lazi and Domi ethnolinguistic groups represent two control groups for this article as neither has experienced an event that could be categorized as genocide based on the accepted definition. I should point out that neither of these groups is as spread out globally as the Circassians or Armenians, a variable I was unable to control for in this study as the genocides were the primary cause of the mass emigration and scattering of these two groups. This, however, is not the case for the Lazi and Domi or most other similar ethnic groups. It is also essential to point out that this research does not seek to compare oppressed minorities with unoppressed minorities. One would be hard-pressed to find any ethnic minority in the Middle Eastern region that has not experienced some degree of repression or violence, and the Lazi and Domi are certainly no exception. Rather, this research will make a comparison between ethnolinguistic groups that have and have not experienced an event meeting the United Nations' definition of genocide. There

is some variation between the two control groups in that the Domi remain a largely oppressed minority wherever they live and often keep their ethnic identity secret to stave off discrimination and loss of reputation (Luck). The Lazi on the other hand are currently respected and accepted in the states in which they reside, generally speaking.

I drew from a broad body of literature including psychological research on collective, historical, and intergenerational trauma, articles on linguistic and cultural maintenance, and of course a collection of books, articles, and other scholarly works centered around the experiences and opinions of these ethnolinguistic groups over the course of the last century and a half. It is important to note that with the exception of the Armenians, all of the ethnolinguistic groups studied in this project are heavily under-represented in scholarly research. This turned out to be especially true for the Dom people. Most available studies focus on local communities and segments of diasporas in various cities, countries, and continents, rather than assessing the predicament and perceptions of the diaspora as a whole. Therefore, every available source on the subject was evaluated regardless of country or locale in the hopes of providing a comprehensive picture, but not all limitations could be overcome.

In addition to the qualitative data supplied by the sources, I also gathered quantitative data regarding population size and language proficiency rates. Additionally, there are two different scales used to categorize the status of a language, both of which were taken into consideration. The first was the UNESCO classification, a system with six categories: extinct, critically endangered, severely endangered, definitely endangered, vulnerable, and safe/not endangered (Moseley and Nicolas). Similarly, the EGIDS or the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale ranks languages on a scale from zero to ten according to the following categories: extinct (10), dormant (9), nearly extinct (8b), moribund (8a), shifting (7), threatened (6b), vigorous (6a), developing (5), educational (4), wider communication (3), provincial (2), national (1), and international (0) (Paul). Each language only has one general UNESCO classification whereas each language may have multiple EGIDS scores, one for each country where there is a large enough population and sufficient data about the speakers. Both classifications are reported for each language.

After performing extensive research for each of the four ethnolinguistic groups, the first step was to compile all of the available information and determine whether or not there is evidence to suggest that a particular group is suffering the effects of intergenerational trauma. Based on my research on the topic, I have identified five symptoms or signs that are likely indicative of intergenerational trauma within a community:

1. In-group orientation: those suffering from intergenerational trauma tend to prefer living together with other members of their ethnic group in isolated communities if possible. In-group orientation could be manifested by tendencies to voluntarily clump together with other ethnic group



members or actively find other ways to establish strong social bonds within the ethnic group, sometimes with the help of institutions.

2. Mixed marriages: the rate of mixed or exogamous marriages may be lower in traumatized communities. Such marriages might be actively discouraged or simply rare.
3. Political and social activism: intergenerational trauma can drive groups to experience high levels of political and social activism, especially concerning issues regarding ethnic identity. This sign could manifest in the form of large and frequent protests and demonstrations or the establishment of ethnicity-based institutions devoted to certain political or social causes.
4. Suspicion of out-groups: due to their historic victimization by larger out-groups, those suffering from intergenerational trauma tend to be suspicious of other ethnic groups. This is especially true for descendants of the perpetrators of violence against the in-group.
5. Transnational/diasporic identity: transnational or diasporic identity refers to a national identity that transcends borders. Groups manifesting this trait are generally aware of members of their ethnic group in other parts of the world and the issues they face. They may establish organizations and institutions to enable international cooperation and interaction.

After determining which societies could be experiencing intergenerational trauma, the next step was to determine which groups have worked more actively to preserve their linguistic heritage. This was determined through the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative sources. Furthermore, I searched for evidence linking the motivation for language preservation efforts to international trauma or to the traumatic event itself. I can conclude that my research supports my hypothesis if (1) the two treatment groups, the Circassians and the Western Armenians, manifest all or most of the signs of intergenerational trauma, as well as a relatively high motivation to learn and preserve their respective languages linked to their trauma; and (2) the two control groups, the Lazi and the Domi, manifest few if any of the anticipated symptoms of intergenerational trauma and demonstrate a relatively low motivation to learn and maintain their language in comparison to the treatment groups.

There were several significant limitations to this study. For example, the available research for the ethnic groups I studied was quite limited in many regards and many definitions in the research are fuzzy and vary from one author to the next. Furthermore, there is a clear shortage of verifiable quantitative data about many of these groups partially due to regional restrictions on surveying and census data. All statistics cited in this article should be taken with a large grain of salt. Another issue that must be addressed is that neither of the genocides addressed in this work has received universal recognition. This is among the reasons for the relative dearth of in-depth research on the Circassian Genocide, which has been considered a forgotten genocide thanks to what has been described as “historical amnesia” (Shenfield 7). Other difficulties often arise

while attempting to define a certain group. In the case of the Armenians, the line between Western and Eastern Armenians can be blurry and researchers don't always specify when they are talking about members of one group or the other. The term Circassian can also be used somewhat flexibly to describe a number of different tribes and communities living in the Caucasus prior to the Russian conquest. In many cases, these tribes spoke different dialects and languages and had distinct cultures.

Results

Chart A: Anticipated Signs of Intergenerational Collective Trauma

	Circassians	Western Armenians	Lazi	Domi
In-group orientation	Yes	Yes	No	Some
Mixed marriage	Discouraged	Unusual	Common	Accepted but rare
Political activism	Yes	Yes	No	No
Suspicion of outgroups	Historically	Yes	No	Some
Transnational identity	Yes	Yes	No	No

Chart B: Summary of Language Status

	Circassian Languages	Kabardian	Adyghe	Western Armenian	Lazuri	Domari
Population	5.3 million	1,885,800	605,400	~5 million	103,000	~2.2 million
Speakers	1.5 million	-	-	1,569,580	22,000	280,000
Rate	28%–85%*	<87%**	<91%**	31%–96%#	21%	13%
UNESCO	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Vulnerable	Definitely Endangered	Definitely Endangered	Severely Endangered
EGIDS		Developing (5) - Threatened (6b)	Provincial (2) - Threatened (6b)	Developing (5) - Shifting (7)	Threatened (6b) - Shifting (7)	Threatened (6b) - Nearly Extinct (8b)

\* Higher percentage in Jordan. Other countries in the Middle East likely have high rates as well.

\*\* Rates in Russia. Rates are likely lower in most other countries

# Low end is an estimate, high end is the rate in Turkey. In Ukraine, one of the only countries where ethnic and speaker data was available, the rate is 50%.

## Circassians

It's not at all difficult to demonstrate that contemporary members of the Circassian community remain heavily influenced by the collective trauma induced by the Circassian Genocide of 1864, even after over a century and a half have passed. One relatively recent example of the prominent role it continues to play in the collective consciousness of the Circassian diaspora was the outrage of Circassians around the world surrounding the 2014 Winter Olympics, which took place in Sochi, the traditional capital of what used to be Circassia. During the opening ceremonies, presentations on the region's history made no mention of the Circassians as if they hadn't preexisted Russians in the region by five millennia. To add insult to injury in the eyes of the Circassians, the Olympic Village was built upon what is believed to be a mass grave of Circassians. As one unnamed activist put it, "athletes are skiing on the bones of our ancestors" (Somra and Watson). Emotionally charged protests were a prominent feature throughout the olympiad despite efforts by Russian security forces to quell the activists (Kazemzadeh and Shahrokhi 34–36).

The genocide remains an important issue for Circassians throughout the diaspora. They often associate the event with a deep feeling of loss for the land they still consider their home. Studies of Circassians in Jordan and as far as New Jersey demonstrated that their understanding of the community's history is focused on the suffering of their ancestors during the genocide (Dweik 48). All interviewees in the New Jersey study demonstrated a certain degree of awareness concerning the suffering of their ancestors and recognized May 21st as Circassian Memorial Day (Dweik 48). In addition, 71.5% of the respondents agreed with the statement: "The ongoing suffering from the Diaspora encourages members of the Circassian community to preserve the culture" (Dweik 52). Many Circassians throughout the world associate their identity not only with a sense of pride but also a sense of duty and commitment to preserving their legacy and culture (Abd-el-Jawad 59). This kind of commitment to the past is a symptom commonly associated with intergenerational trauma and is apparent in the Circassian community. Marches at Russian embassies and consulates continue to draw massive crowds every May 21st to commemorate the genocide and demand its recognition (Zhemukhov).

In addition, despite their high degree of integration into many of their new home countries, Circassians have managed to maintain a strong emphasis on community. Historically, Circassians tended to live in relatively isolated communities centered around advisory councils known as *Adyghe Xases*, which have provided a space for Circassians to gather, speak Circassian comfortably, and preserve their culture and identity (Rannut 300; Bram and Shawwaf). Most Circassians are still closely connected to their local Circassian community and consider it a source of comfort and security (Dweik 30). This is true even in countries such as Jordan where Circassians are held in a position of high regard and influence. This degree of in-group orientation decades after their forced emigration from their homeland is another potential symptom of intergenerational trauma.

Based on the available research, there is some evidence to support the idea that many Circassians continue to suffer the effects of intergenerational trauma with the hope that future research will provide more clarity on the matter. Based on the information above, Circassians generally manifest at least four of the anticipated symptoms of intergenerational trauma.

There is also strong evidence that language preservation is an especially important issue for Circassians. Of the respondents in the New Jersey study, 81.5% agreed with the statement that “learning the Circassian language is essential to maintain the Circassian identity” (Dweik 51). A study in Jordan found that the primary motivations for maintaining the Circassian languages were heritage preservation and group identification (Abd-el-Jawad 58). Many Circassian nationalist movements such as those seeking recognition of the Circassian genocide are also involved in language preservation efforts (Bram and Shawwaf). The last few decades have seen a clear increase in these efforts with the formation of the International Circassian Association, which among other things allows for cooperation and coordination between Adyghe Xases throughout the world. In Turkey and Jordan, radio and television channels and time slots have been allocated for the Circassian languages and programming (Bram and Shawwaf). In many Circassian communities, language courses are offered as well as folk dance groups and cooking classes (Bram and Shawwaf; Dweik 49). New technology has allowed the development of a diasporic identity with increased communication and awareness (Aslan 66). Other elements of Circassian identity and culture have also remained strong, such as Adyghe Xabza, the traditional Circassian social code (Dweik 47; Bram and Shawwaf). These languages and cultural preservation efforts have been especially blessed by the patronage of Prince Ali of Jordan (Bram and Shawwaf).

Although the Circassian languages are in decline, this trend is facing stiff resistance on every front. Circassians take pride in their language and although older generations are the most proficient in the language, surprisingly high percentages of the younger generations continue to use the language according to data from Turkey and Jordan (Shenfield 7; Abd-el-Jawad 56–58). Since Circassian has always primarily been a spoken language, most Circassians are unable to read or write it (Abd-el-Jawad 56–58). Both Circassian and its two major dialects, Kabardian and Adyghe, have been classified as Vulnerable by UNESCO classification standards (Moseley and Nicolas). On the EGIDS scale, Kabardian ranged from Developing (5) in Russia to Threatened (6b) in the diaspora, while Adyghe ranged from Provincial (2) in Russia to Dispersed (5\*) in most of the diaspora except for Turkey, where it was categorized as Threatened (6b) (Paul). There are approximately 5.3 million Circassians around the world and it is estimated that 1.5 million can still speak one of the Circassian languages, which is a rate of around 28%, although in some parts of the world, this rate is significantly higher. For example, in Jordan, 85% of Circassians reported being able to speak good or excellent Circassian (Abd-el-Jawad 56–58). The rate is potentially much higher for Kabardian (East Circassian). It is unclear how many of the world’s 1,885,800 Kabardians can still speak the language but roughly 87% of Russia’s Kabardians

still speak the language (Paul). In Russia, about 91% of Adyghe can speak Adyghe (Paul). The data for the rest of the world is less clear but it is estimated there are 605,400 speakers worldwide (Paul).

### Western Armenians

The case of the Western Armenians is essentially a textbook example of intergenerational trauma. The trauma instigated by the horrific events of the Armenian genocide has manifested itself in several ways throughout the large Armenian diaspora. For one, Armenians have typically formed tight-knit communities wherever they immigrated throughout the Middle East, Europe, and North America (Mangassarian 374). Within these communities, the genocide is discussed almost on a daily basis (Mangassarian 375). The children of the genocide often report having nightmares about the stories they've grown up hearing from their parents (Mangassarian 376). Many contemporary Armenians are highly disapproving of food waste due in large part to the suffering and starvation of their ancestors (Mangassarian 376). The persistent and stubborn denial of the genocide by the Turkish state continues to agitate this trauma and stir up strong emotional responses (Cooper and Akcam 83). Armenians often feel as if denial of the genocide is an attack on their own personhood (Mangassarian 377).

Armenian nationalism and patriotism have remained resilient throughout the diaspora and most Armenians are still active in supporting Armenian causes and there is a high degree of political and social activism within the community. Every April 24th (Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day), large crowds of Armenians gather outside Turkish embassies and consulates around the world to protest and demand recognition of the genocide, reparations, and the restoration of their ancestral homeland. Unfortunately, Armenian nationalism has at times taken more violent forms, with terrorist groups such as the Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia targeting Turkish ambassadors, officials, and other institutions primarily during the 70s and 80s (Dugan). Armenians have maintained a strong diasporic and transnational identity rooted in their collective trauma, and many Armenians actively contribute to institutions that support Armenian causes or seek to preserve Armenian linguistic and cultural heritage (Öztürk; Arakelyan 8). Historically, many Armenians disapproved of mixed marriages and were generally suspicious of outgroups, especially Turks (Arakelyan 8). Based on all of this information, Western Armenian communities demonstrate all five anticipated symptoms of intergenerational trauma.

The two primary elements of Armenian identity shared throughout the diaspora as well as the Republic of Armenia are the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Armenian languages and alphabet (Mangassarian 375). There have been consistent and widespread efforts throughout the diaspora to preserve the Armenian language, especially the Western dialect, which is more at risk (Chahinian and Bakalian 37). The Ministry of the Diaspora of the Armenian Republic operates



at least 260 regular Armenian schools and 700 Sunday schools around the globe (Khalapyan and Zorian 103). At the same time, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Armenia has sponsored several language preservation programs, including one that offers preference to diasporans in admissions to educational institutions in Armenia (Arakelyan 10). Many newspapers, periodicals, and other literary publications are available in both dialects of Armenian around the world, although many of these works are starting to be published in other languages as well so as not to alienate younger generations of Armenians (Arakelyan 7–8). Western Armenians have proven very capable of preserving their language over the last century but in recent decades these efforts have struggled under the pressures of assimilation and globalization. In some regions of the diaspora, most notably the Armenian communities in the United States, Armenian is no longer spoken in most Armenian households (Chahinian and Bakalian 43). Most Western Armenians who have immigrated to Armenia have shifted to the Eastern Armenian dialect out of convenience and fear of humiliation (Karamanian 121). However, when Western Armenian was categorized as Definitely Endangered by UNESCO in 2009, efforts were renewed to reverse the trends with some success (Chahinian and Bakalian 37). New electronic and online Armenian courses have been created to support these efforts (Khalapyan and Zorian 104).

In addition to the UNESCO categorization of Definitely Endangered (Moseley and Nicolas), Western Armenian has EGIDS classifications ranging from Developing (5) to Shifting (7) throughout the diaspora (Paul). Of the estimated 5 million Western Armenians, there are approximately 1.6 million native speakers of Western Armenian, which is a rate of around 32% (Paul). Speaker and ethnic data are available for both Ukraine and Turkey, where Western Armenian is used by 50% and 96% of ethnic Armenians respectively (Paul).

## Lazi

The case of the Lazi provides a clear contrast for the two treatment groups. The Lazi have made a concerted effort to fully integrate into Turkish society to the extent that ethnonationalism is notably absent in the community even among Lazi activists (Sarigil 269). For example, Gulay Burhan, the chairperson for the Sima Foundation for People from the East Black Sea Region, stated, “I would like to stress that our objective is to keep the Laz language and culture alive. However, we are definitely against any ethnic nationalism or separatism. The Laz people identify themselves primarily as Turks and secondarily as Laz. They think that they are part of Turkey and they have a strong will to fight for the interests of the country” (Sarigil 270). Other Lazi activists have echoed a similar sentiment, which is that Lazi identity is either equal in significance to their Turkish identity, or even secondary to it (Sarigil 270–271). There have been no efforts for Lazi autonomy or separatism or the formation of Lazi political parties or movements (Sarigil 271). Furthermore, they have actively condemned

other ethnic groups, most notably the Kurds, for their ethnonationalism and separatist ambitions (Sarigil 280).

In fact, throughout the 20th century, many Lazi families in Turkey actively sought to rid themselves of their ethnic identity (Serdar 344). Since non-native speakers of Turkish often experienced discrimination in Turkish schools and workplaces, families often chose not to teach Lazi to their children so they wouldn't have an accent while speaking Turkish (Serdar 344). Many Lazi voluntarily left their ancestral homes to move to urban centers in Western Turkey to find better economic opportunities and education (Serdar 345).

The passive attitude of the Lazi regarding their ethnic identity would not be expected of a culture suffering from intergenerational trauma. Although the Lazi continue to remember the "black times," the events do not inform the actions or motivations of contemporary Lazi and there have been no significant demands for recognition or retribution for the atrocities perpetrated against their ancestors. The Lazi are also less community-oriented than we would expect from a population suffering the effects of intergenerational trauma, as evidenced by their willingness to relocate away from their ancestral homes without relationships with other Lazi (Serdar 345). There seems to be little evidence of widespread intergenerational trauma in the Laz community and they do not seem to manifest any of the five anticipated symptoms of intergenerational trauma.

For the last couple of decades, there has been more of a concerted effort to preserve Lazi cultural and linguistic heritage (Sarigil 270). However, younger generations have been more interested in preserving elements of Lazi culture such as their unique dance and music styles such as horon which are easier to adopt and less likely to conflict with Turkish identity (Serdar 352). There is significantly less enthusiasm regarding the preservation of the Lazuri language although there are some foundations dedicated to this end (Serdar 352). Those who still speak the language have also adopted many Turkish loanwords into their speech (Akkuş 857). UNESCO has classified Lazuri as a Definitely Endangered language and it has been classified as Threatened (6b) in Turkey and Shifting (7) in Georgia by the EGIDS standards (Moreley and Nicolas; Paul). Of the 103,000 Lazi in the world, approximately 22,000 still speak Lazuri, or around 21% (Paul).

## Domari

The unfortunately limited research available regarding the Domari yields little to no evidence of nationalism or strong ethnic pride among the Domari. In fact, many Domi hide their ethnicity to avoid discrimination. They generally try to assimilate with the cultures they live with, although they aren't always successful in this regard. There is no apparent stigma against exogamy and the practice does occur, though usually with outsiders who are also of a lower social class. I could find little evidence of diasporic identity and many Domari don't seem to be very aware of Domari beyond their local communities. One of the major challenges facing researchers trying to study the Domari is figuring out where they

actually are. For example, there is an assumption that there are Domari communities in Iran and Iraq but this has not been verified.

There are no international Domari organizations or foundations as far as I've been able to ascertain and most local Domari organizations are primarily focused on helping Domari make ends meet. These organizations wrestle with challenges such as low literacy rates, discrimination, and health by providing tutoring, training, and sanitation. There are no organized efforts to preserve the Domari language or culture. The available data indicates that the language is primarily spoken by older generations, although Bruno Herin reported that several younger Domaris he encountered in Aleppo seemed quite proficient in the language. Yaron Matras, likely the foremost expert on the Domari community of Israel/Palestine, estimates that only 20% can still speak the language.

According to the UNESCO classification, Domari is considered Extremely Endangered (Moreley and Nicolas). On the EGIDS scale, its categorization ranges from Threatened (6b) to Nearly Extinct (8b) in Israel-Palestine (Paul). In the Ethnologue, data was only available from four countries, so language status could be significantly more complex (Paul). It is estimated that there are approximately 2.2 million Domari scattered throughout the MENA region, of whom only 280,000 or 13% are believed to be proficient in Domari (Moe 1; Paul).

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results of my research have revealed several overt differences between the treatment and control groups of this study. Chart A lists the anticipated signs of intergenerational collective trauma and summarizes how they are manifested among the four ethnic groups studied in this article. Both Western Armenians and Circassians demonstrated all five of these symptoms, although in some cases these symptoms have weakened in more recent decades. For example, mixed marriages have become more common throughout the Armenian diaspora and to a lesser extent among the Circassians, and Circassians are generally not as suspicious of outgroups as they once were. However, in general, the available evidence suggests that both of these communities continue to suffer the effects of intergenerational trauma.

It's unlikely that this is the case for the two control groups: the Lazi and the Domi. The distinction is most apparent in the case of the Lazi, who in general manifest none of the expected indicators. Some of the signs do appear to apply to the Domi, but these effects seem to come from necessity due to external pressures. For example, the Domi in Jerusalem are mostly oriented inward due to discrimination and rejection by both Palestinian and Israeli neighbors. This is also likely the primary cause of the suspicion the Domi feel toward outsiders. Mixed marriages with Arab Palestinians are rare not as a result of Domari attitudes, but rather as a result of the unwillingness of most Palestinians of all but the lowest classes to marry Domaris. In other words, in general, these signs do not appear to

be manifestations of intergenerational trauma, but rather a reaction to contemporary environmental and societal pressures.

Regarding language, both the Circassians and the Armenians have made much more obvious efforts to preserve their language than the Domi and Lazi. My research yielded many examples of international institutions dedicated to preserving the Circassian and Armenian languages and culture worldwide. In both communities, language is strongly associated with their ethnic heritage and identity, and its preservation is seen as a moral responsibility and a way to connect with their past. Despite the powerful pressures of globalization and assimilation and the general lack of economic incentives, efforts are still made to pass these languages on to future generations. I couldn't find much evidence to support the same conclusion for the Lazi and Domi in their respective languages. As far as I could discern, there are no institutions dedicated to preserving either of their languages and the societies seem to be remarkably passive concerning the issue.

Chart B summarizes the status of all four languages in comparison to each other. According to the available data, the percentages of Circassians and Western Armenians who still speak their ethnic language are approximately 28%–91% and 31%–96% respectively depending on the locale; significantly higher than Lazuri and Domari, which are spoken by around 21% and 13% of their respective populations.

In conclusion, the results of this study seem to support the hypothesis that there is a relationship between collective traumatic events such as genocide and efforts to preserve minority ethnic languages due to the effects of intergenerational trauma. The available research revealed that many Armenians and Circassians manifest symptoms that would be expected from people suffering the effects of intergenerational trauma. Both of these groups have been highly motivated to preserve their languages and have been relatively successful. Maintaining the language is perceived as an important duty with the genocides frequently cited as a primary motivation for maintaining the respective languages. The control groups, on the other hand, did not experience genocide or comparable events and as such manifested few signs of intergenerational trauma. Neither group is very active in language preservation efforts. These results correspond with my proposed hypothesis.

While the results of this study seem to support my hypothesis, these results are by no means conclusive. Much more study will be required to verify these results and their applicability in different cases globally. Due to the unfortunately limited availability of relevant research, there is a lot of potential error and ambiguity that can only be resolved through further research and data collection.

Regardless, the results of this research are intriguing with broad implications. The proposed link between intergenerational trauma and language preservation may be observable in a variety of different cases, circumstances, and environments. It could, for example, be applicable to groups such as the Kurds, Assyro-Chaldeans, Jews, and the indigenous populations of the Americas, Africa, and Oceania. This new concept has many possible applications and, after further

research, could contribute greatly to our understanding of the factors involved in minority language preservation.

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## The World Cup and Economic Diversity

### Qatar as a Case Study

*Sam Ames*

In 2010, FIFA shocked the world when it announced that the small Arab gulf country of Qatar would host one of the largest sporting events in the world, the World Cup, in 2022. It seemed unlikely that Qatar would win the nomination, given its very small landmass and population, brutally hot climate, and stiff competition from other countries vying to host the event such as Japan and the US. Qatar, being one of the richest countries in the world, has had little issue with the tremendous economic and financial burdens that come from hosting a major event such as the World Cup, but many wonder why the country would make such an effort to host this sporting event in the first place.

Some experts see Qatar's push to host the 2022 World Cup as one of several initiatives to invite foreign investment by means of advertising itself through sporting events (Plapinger 2022). This tactic is frequently used by countries seeking to boost their legitimacy on the world stage and is most notably true of countries with less-than-favorable corruption or human rights track records. Hosting popular global events ties the popularity of the event to that of the host country, helping to obscure actions or policies that the rest of the world would typically abhor. Human rights aside, Qatar has a particularly dire need to accelerate its intake of foreign investment. Despite being one of the world's richest countries, it suffers from a rather uniform economy; the majority of its GDP is derived from fossil fuel exports, meaning that if anything were to happen that would cause a shock to that industry its economy would be seriously affected. By potentially inviting additional foreign investment via hosting the World Cup, Qatar may have undergone greater economic diversification than it otherwise would have.

This leads us to the chief question that this paper seeks to answer: what effect did Qatar's world cup announcement have on its economic diversity? For this experiment, I intend to use a synthetic control method to determine whether Qatar's economy experienced a significant decrease in its dependence on the petrochemical industry due to the announcement that it would host the 2022 World Cup.

## Data

For this experiment, I use annual country-level panel data from 2000–2019 on the percent of a country's GDP derived from fossil fuel exports. I created this data by combining annual country-level panel data on fossil fuel exports from Trading Economics (Trading Economics n.d.) with corresponding GDP data from the World Bank (World Bank n.d.). Trading Economics is a data analytics organization that compiles historical economic data, and the World Bank is a global NGO focused on facilitating economic development worldwide which also compiles global economic data.

My analysis begins in 2000 because data before this year is hard to obtain and frequently has gaps, which confounds my model. My data ends in 2019 because in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic occurred and biased almost all estimates from that year onwards. The Qatar World Cup was announced in 2010, thus giving approximately ten years for both pre- and post-treatment time periods, which should be an adequate amount of time to establish trends.

In order to explain the economic diversity of major fuel exporting countries, I created a variable which measures the percent of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports. For major fuel exporting countries such as Qatar, which derives 85% of its GDP from said exports, the majority of economic output is determined by the energy sector. Thus, if the percent of GDP derived from this sector goes down, it indicates that other sectors are playing a larger role in economic productivity, meaning that economic diversity is increasing. As such, I use this measure as my primary means of determining economic diversity. I also use GDP and raw fossil fuel export data as secondary dependent variables to test for secondary economic effects from the Qatar World Cup announcement, which are listed in the following sections in addition to my primary dependent variable.

While there are limitations to the data used in this paper, I feel that the information the model provides is sufficient to establish a correlation and demonstrate possible causal effects. It should be noted that the data collected is only relevant to the effects of the announcement of hosting the World Cup itself and is not associated with the after-effects of actually hosting the event in 2022. In addition, potential confounding variables, such as other initiatives by Qatar to create more economic diversity unrelated to the World Cup, were not included as control variables in our model, which certainly creates issues related to omitted variable bias. While this lack of control variables is an obvious flaw, it shouldn't completely diminish the results of our data given that we have enough

data in our pre-treatment time period to establish trends in the dependent variable for all donor countries.

## Identification Strategy

As previously stated, I use a synthetic control method for this experiment in order to determine whether or not the percent of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports, and thus economic diversity, would have been any different had Qatar not announced that it would host the World Cup in 2022. Essentially, by utilizing data from other fossil-fuel exporting countries from a defined pre-treatment period, we are able to create a “synthetic Qatar,” which allows us to compare the changes in Qatar’s percent of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports to a counterfactual Qatar which never announced that it would host the World Cup.

The estimating equation for synthetic control is defined as such:

$$\alpha [\_it^{\wedge}] = Y\_it^{\wedge} - Y [\_it^{\wedge}N]$$

Where  $\alpha [\_it^{\wedge}]$  is the treatment effect for unit  $i$  at time  $t$  defined by the difference between  $Y\_it^{\wedge}$  (the outcome of unit  $i$  at time  $t$  in the presence of treatment) and  $Y [\_it^{\wedge}N]$  (the outcome of unit  $i$  at time  $t$  in the absence of treatment, also known as the counterfactual to  $Y\_it^{\wedge}$ ). In other words,  $Y\_it^{\wedge}$  represents the percent of Qatar’s GDP derived from fossil fuel exports in the years following the announcement it would host the 2022 World Cup, while  $Y [\_it^{\wedge}N]$  represents the same measure over the same time period had the announcement never happened. Obviously, it is not possible for us to know for certain what percent of Qatar’s GDP would have been derived from fossil fuel exports had the announcement never been made as such a version of Qatar does not exist. Since it is not possible to identify an actual counterfactual to  $Y\_it^{\wedge}$  in the real world, we instead calculate a synthetic counterfactual  $Y [\_it^{\wedge}N]$  using a sum of weighted measures from observations, in our case countries, that experienced similar trends in our variable of interest throughout a pre-treatment period. This sum is defined as such (Abadie et al. 2010):

$$Y\_it^{\wedge}N = \sum_{j=x}^J w_j Y\_jt$$

In this equation,  $j$  is the weighted measure of an observation that has an outcome  $Y$  at time  $t$ , is multiplied by its weight  $w$  and then added together with all weighted measures to create our synthetic  $Y\_it^{\wedge}N$  at time  $t$  as a counterfactual to treated observation  $i$ .

The weights of each observation  $j$  are derived by comparing how closely their trends over time during the pre-treatment period fit that of the treatment country, Qatar. In our model, using data from 23 donor countries, we determined the following weighted measures:

Table 1: Unit Weights for Synthetic Qatar

Unit Weights	
Country	Weight
Albania	0
Argentina	0
Azerbaijan	0.023
Bahrain	0.355
Colombia	0
Cote d'Ivoire	0
Croatia	0
Czech Republic	0
Denmark	0
Ecuador	0
Egypt	0
Hungary	0
Indonesia	0
Kazakhstan	0
Malaysia	0
Norway	0
Poland	0
Romania	0
Saudi Arabia	0.622
Thailand	0
Turkey	0
UAE	0
United Kingdom	0

These weights indicate that the percent of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports for Qatar in the pre-treatment period is best reproduced by a sum of measures from Azerbaijan, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia. This sum of measures and

their corresponding weights will thus be used to calculate our synthetic counterfactual during the treatment period.

In order to assume causality with synthetic control, we assume that the synthetic post-treatment trends are equal to the counterfactual trends for the treated unit, that there was no spillover between treatment and control groups, and that there were no anticipation effects from the implementation of the treatment.

The first assumption, that the synthetic post-treatment trends are equal to the counterfactual trends for the treated unit, is hardest to prove and also one that we may have weakest evidence for based on our current model.

Table 2: Dependent Variable Pre-treatment Trends

Pre-treatment trends for % of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports		
Year	Treated	Synthetic
2000	0.446	0.415
2001	0.564	0.356
2002	0.370	0.362
2003	0.518	0.394
2004	0.509	0.424
2005	0.513	0.485
2006	0.502	0.493
2007	0.472	0.487
2008	0.531	0.478
2009	0.437	0.327

As shown in Table 2, the pre-treatment trends for real and synthetic Qatar loosely followed one another, but not exactly, casting some doubt on the fact that the synthetic results would be completely accurate to a true counterfactual Qatar. That being said, given that the trends are somewhat close it seems likely we will be able to obtain estimates that will provide similarly imprecise but nonetheless applicable results.

The second assumption, that there were no spillover effects between treatment and control groups, is similarly somewhat difficult to verify. Our model includes donor countries such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, which are other Arab gulf countries that could have benefitted from the announcement of a World Cup in Qatar without having to go through the trouble of actually

hosting it. It could be that the foreign investment dollars drawn into Qatar by increased attention on the country could have been spread to the region at large. Indeed, Saudi Arabia in particular took full advantage of the World Cup to advertise its tourism industry with major advertisement deals involving famous athletes such as Lionel Messi and Cristiano Renaldo, demonstrating just one way the neighboring countries could have utilized the World Cup in Qatar as a means of diversifying their own economies. Thus, if such a spillover effect were to occur, we would assume that Qatar's World Cup announcement would lead to more economic diversification in surrounding countries, which could lead to a negative bias in the estimation of synthetic Qatar's percent of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports.

There is considerable evidence that there were no anticipation effects preceding the Qatar World Cup announcement, which is our final assumption. Knowledge of Qatar being granted its host country status prior to the announcement would have only been known by top FIFA and Qatari officials; when the nomination was given to Qatar, the global reaction was essentially that of shock given that the country was able to secure the position instead of other countries with a larger footprint in the soccer world. Given the surprise nature of this announcement, we can feel confident that no anticipation effects are at play in our model.

Results

Chart 1: Comparison of Pre- and Post-treatment Trends in Percent of GDP Derived from Fossil Fuel Exports for Real and Synthetic Qatar

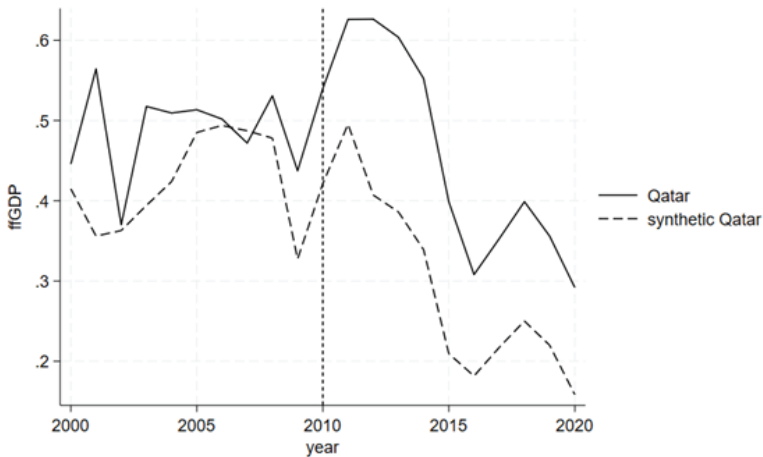




Table 3: Estimated Treatment Effects from Qatar’s World Cup Announcement

Estimated Treatment Effect			
Year	Treatment Effect	P-value	Standardized P-value
2010	0.118	0	0.610
2011	0.131	0	0.739
2012	0.219	0	0.478
2013	0.218	0	0.478
2014	0.213	0	0.391
2015	0.189	0	0.435
2016	0.126	0.043	0.435
2017	0.135	0	0.478
2018	0.149	0	0.522
2019	0.136	0.087	0.609
2020	0.133	0.043	0.609

Chart 1 and Table 3 show us that according to our model, Qatar’s announcement actually had the opposite of our predicted effect on economic diversity, as the percent of GDP derived from fossil fuels was actually larger for real Qatar as compared to synthetic Qatar during the post-treatment time period. However, it should be noted that there is little evidence that these findings are statistically significant; the normal p-values are almost all below 0.05, the standardized p-values are enormous. Standardized p-values are derived by accounting for the closeness of fit of the synthetic pre-treatment trend to the treated pre-treatment trend. Typically, if donor states and the treated state have similar levels of variation in the pre-treatment time period, normal and standardized p-values will be close to the same. In our case, because the donor states have lower variation than the treated state in the pre-treatment period but then the treated state’s variation in the post-treatment period decreases to a level more similar to that of the donor states in the same time period, the standardized p-values are far higher than the normal p-values. In order to determine that our estimates are statistically significant, we would expect both the normal and standardized p-values to be below significant levels. Since the standardized p-values are incredibly large and nowhere near any level of statistical significance, it is likely that our results were caused by random chance and they do not provide evidence in favor of causality.

Chart 2: Qatar Percent of GDP Derived from Fossil Fuel Exports Compared to Donor Countries

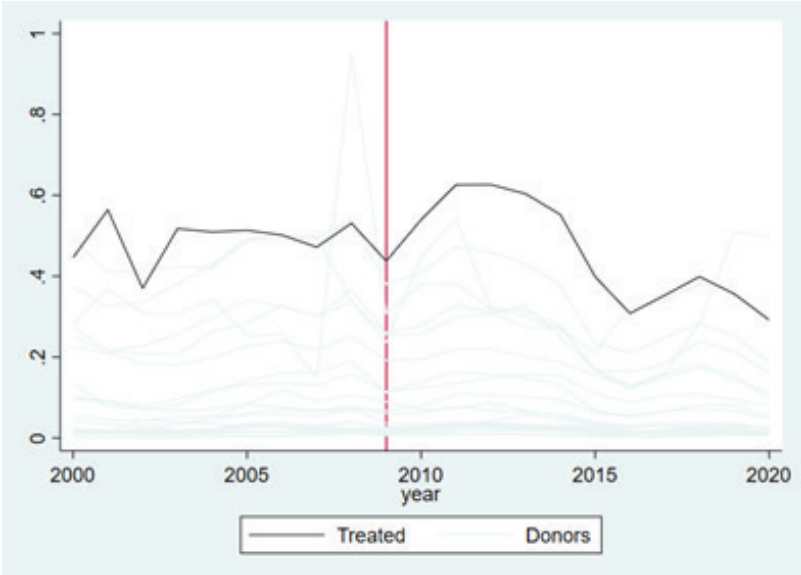


Chart 2 further demonstrates that the trend for percent of GDP derived from fossil fuels in Qatar was always higher than the donor countries in both the pre- and post-treatment periods, and that the changes in this trend in the post-treatment period mimic those of the other donor countries, casting further doubt on whether the treatment led to any significant difference in the trend for Qatar at all, let alone a positive change.

One possible heterogeneous effect that is not accounted for in my model is the gulf diplomatic crisis, which began in 2017. This event led Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other gulf countries to implement a trade embargo on Qatar. However, Chart 2 seems to indicate that this event didn't have much, if any, effect on our dependent variable as Qatar's trends continue to mimic those of the donor countries and as such likely isn't a confounding factor.

Table 4: Unit Weights for Synthetic Qatar's GDP and Fossil Fuel Exports

Unit Weights		
Country	Weights for GDP	Weights for fossil fuel exports
Albania	0	0
Argentina	0.006	0

Azerbaijan	0.375	0.121
Bahrain	0	0
Colombia	0	0
Cote d'Ivoire	0	0
Croatia	0	0
Czech Republic	0	0
Denmark	0	0
Ecuador	0	0
Egypt	0	0
Hungary	0	0
Indonesia	0	0.046
Kazakhstan	0.533	0.767
Malaysia	0	0
Norway	0	0
Poland	0	0
Romania	0.086	0
Saudi Arabia	0	0.052
Thailand	0	0
Turkey	0	0
UAE	0	0.015
United Kingdom	0	0

If we use synthetic control method to test for effects of this announcement on GDP and fossil fuel exports, our model utilizes the weights as listed in Table 3. The distribution of these weights varies from that which is found in Table 1; Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan play a far greater role in both models, while Saudi Arabia and Bahrain are almost entirely omitted.

Chart 3

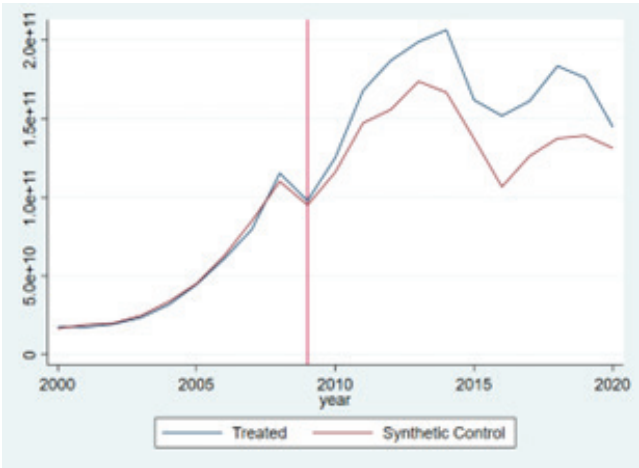


Chart 4

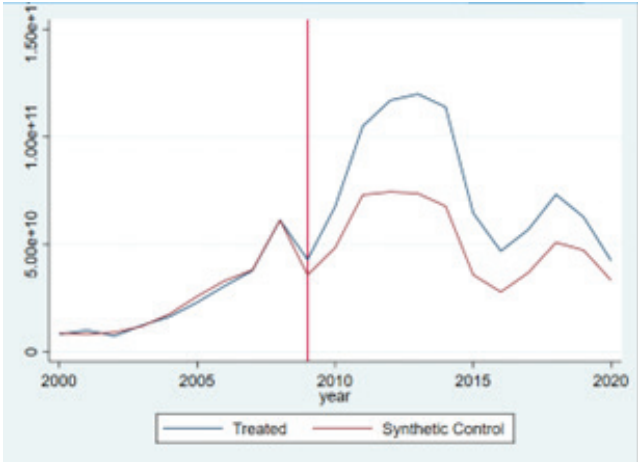


Chart 3 displays the comparison between our treatment and synthetic control estimates for GDP (\$US), and Chart 4 displays the same for fossil fuel exports. Both charts demonstrate a far better fit between the real and synthetic Qatar in the pre-treatment period, then show that the real country experienced a positive difference in the post-treatment period from the synthetic version.

Table 5

Estimated Treatment Effect						
Year	GDP			Fossil fuel exports		
	Treatment Effect (\$US)	P-value	Standardized P-value	Treatment Effect	P-value	Standardized P-value
2010	9.21e <sup>9</sup>	0.609	0.565	1.92e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.087
2011	2.06e <sup>10</sup>	0.609	0.478	3.21e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.174
2012	3.12e <sup>10</sup>	0.522	0.435	4.26e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.087
2013	2.52e <sup>10</sup>	0.522	0.522	4.64e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.174
2014	3.97e <sup>10</sup>	0.522	0.348	4.62e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.130
2015	2.47e <sup>10</sup>	0.609	0.565	2.88e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.130
2016	4.51e <sup>10</sup>	0.522	0.217	1.90e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.174
2017	3.49e <sup>10</sup>	0.565	0.391	2.01e <sup>10</sup>	0.043	0.217
2018	4.60e <sup>10</sup>	0.522	0.348	2.23e <sup>10</sup>	0.087	0.391
2019	3.67e <sup>10</sup>	0.435	0.435	1.55e <sup>10</sup>	0.174	0.565
2020	1.33e <sup>10</sup>	0.826	0.696	9.09e <sup>10</sup>	0.174	0.565

Chart 5

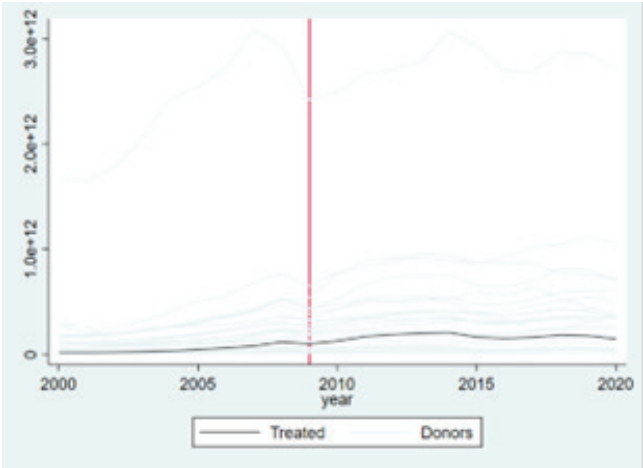


Chart 6

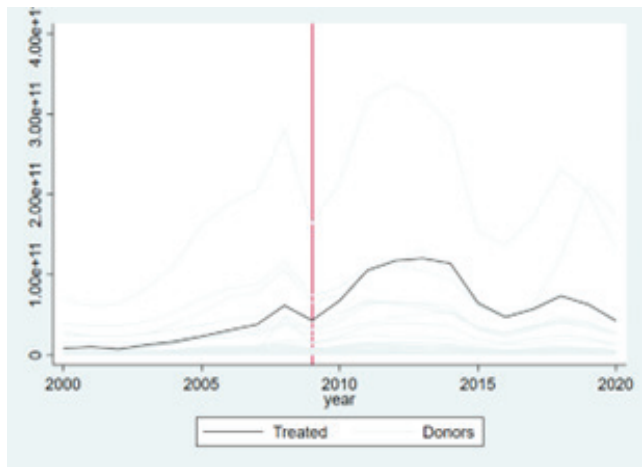


Chart 5 compares Qatar’s GDP trend in the pre- and post-treatment period to that of donor countries over the same period. The chart shows that Qatar’s GDP trend fit well within the trends of the other donor countries, providing further evidence that the World Cup announcement had little to no effect on its GDP. Chart 6 makes the same comparison but for fossil fuel exports. This graph also reflects the post-treatment period trend found in table 5 as we see Qatar’s fossil fuel exports increase beyond the countries which had similar export levels in the pre-treatment period, but not so much that it completely breaks the trend of all other donor countries.

Conclusion

Our models indicate that the announcement that Qatar would host the 2022 World Cup had no significant impact on the country’s GDP, fossil fuel exports, or the percent of GDP derived from fossil fuel exports, thus failing to provide evidence in favor of the argument that such an announcement led to a more diversified or stronger Qatari economy.

Not only is this a reflection of the fact that the announcement alone likely didn’t draw enough interest to the country to generate an increase in foreign investment into the country, it also indicates that if Qatar was vying for the coveted host country nomination as part of a grand scheme to diversify or even grow its economy, this policy maneuver was unsuccessful.

It remains to be seen what the long-term economic effects of Qatar hosting the World Cup will be. The event itself could have a different or more significant effect than the announcement of the event alone. Whatever the effects may be, the sporting footprint the Arab gulf region leaves on the world

continues to grow, as does the relevance of studies which measure their economic impact. With each new sporting event, more data can be utilized which may lead to more precise estimates of such events' effects in the future. Hopefully, future studies will be able to incorporate more precise industry-related data which will lead to better estimations of economic diversity in relevant countries as well.

Should it be determined in future studies that the hosting of major sporting events leads to greater economic growth and diversity, the ramifications for economic development across the globe would be tremendous.

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## What Relationships Exist Among Islam, Islamism, and Violence?

*Caroline Keel*

In recent years, prominent terrorist groups have conducted large attacks in the name of Islam both inside and outside of Muslim-majority countries. These events have encouraged a popular impression in Western countries that Islamist terrorism is more common than other kinds of terrorism, or that Islam is by nature a violent religion and Muslims are consequently violent people. These ideas are common, but are they true? While terrorism and religious violence are a real, potent threat to the safety of individuals and nations, political science research suggests that they are not exclusive to Islam. Furthermore, there are distinct differences between Islam and Islamism and their relationship to violence. Islam is a global religion with origins in the Middle East and serves as a spiritual belief system as well as an identity. Islamism is the active use of Muslim identity or ideas combined with Western radical philosophies as a basis for effecting political or social change, sometimes through violent means (Sadowski 2006, 221–222). As revealed by a review of diverse social and political science literature, Islam ultimately has no unique correlation to violence, whereas Islamism can breed violence because it combines ideology with organization, encouraging intense coalitional commitment and offering an outlet for those already prone to extremism.

While Islamist terror groups such as Islamic State, al-Qaeda, and the Taliban have given the West the impression that Muslim countries and Muslims in general are unusually prone to violence, political science research suggests that this is not the case. In a study of large-scale intrastate political violence, Fish (2010) found no evidence that Muslim countries were more likely to see political violence than non-Muslim countries. Furthermore, intrastate Islamist violence was not disproportionate relative to political violence committed by non-Islamist groups. Although this study has an extremely limited scope, it nevertheless offers

a good comparison between group violence associated with Islamists and group violence associated with non-Islamists. Additionally, Fish notes that homicide rates tend to be low in Muslim-majority states, indicating that Muslims are not more prone to violence on an individual level than other groups are (1330). Similarly, Sadowski (2006) notes in a more qualitative account that in the early 2000s, Muslim involvement in terrorist attacks annually reflected the Muslim share of the population (232), again indicating that Islamist violence is not necessarily more common than non-Islamist terrorism.

Nevertheless, terrorism persists, and it is valuable for specialists, policymakers, and the public to understand why. Other researchers have focused on the motivations for Islamist terrorism, rather than its frequency or location. Litonjua (2009) claims that any religion professing both absolute truth (certitude) and the religion's application to all people (universalism) is prone to co-option by political ideologies, making the issue of religious extremism a broad topic that cannot condemn Islam alone. The risk of extremism is a reality all religions face. In Christianity, for example, extremism has manifested in the Crusades or the Spanish Inquisition, as well as in modern groups like the Westboro Baptist Church or the Catholic-affiliated, nationalist IRA. Additionally, certitude and universalism are qualities that characterize many non-religious institutions. Adherents of many political ideologies feel so strongly that their view is the only right one that they promote that view to others—sometimes violently. One need only look at the events at the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, to see such ideologies in action. In this light, it should come as no surprise that Islamism is as vulnerable to violent extremism as any other ideology.

What about the impact of orthopraxy, or standard religious practices, on support for political violence? At least one research publication has suggested that religious devotion is actually negatively correlated with such support. Ginges (2009) provides a compelling illustration of the difference between Islam and Islamism and their support for violence, citing the coalitional-commitment hypothesis as a primary factor. Coalitional commitment is “religion's ability to enhance commitment to coalitional identities and within-group cooperation or parochial altruism via collective ritual” (224). In short, support for violence is indicated not by personal piety but by institutional loyalty. In a series of small-scale survey-based studies, the authors analyzed prayer and institutional attendance and their correlation with support for religiously motivated suicide attacks in Israel-Palestine, which are “an extreme form of within-group cooperation” (225). Frequency of prayer (including personal) was a good indicator of religious devotion whereas mosque/synagogue attendance was a poor indicator. As indicators of support for suicide attacks, the reverse was true. Intriguingly, prayer nullified the effect of attendance on support (226). The researchers found similar results when they measured extreme attitudes across religions and nationalities. Although many Islamists do not support violence, institutional loyalty minus piety is an indicator of support and a distinguishing factor of violent Islamism. Consequently, suicide attacks are popular with the region-specific Muslim public

and large Islamic movements due to strong institutional loyalty (Sadowski 2006, 232). Ideology and organization are present where the moral guidelines of spirituality are frequently absent, creating an opening for hard-liners to thrive and violence to take root.

As valuable as Ginges' study may be, it fails to explain why not all supporters of violence become perpetrators themselves. It is certain that not every person who views a suicide bomber as a hero chooses to become one. As McCauley and Moskalenko state, "Ideas are not the same as action. . . . The challenge is to explain how only one in a thousand with radical beliefs is involved in radical action" (2016, 5). Sadowski (2006) offers a potential answer: terrorist groups don't breed extremists—they attract them. Accordingly, the "doctrines [of terrorists] do not cause people to be terrorists; rather, potential terrorists seem to select or construct these types of doctrines, even when they are aware of alternative, contradictory positions" (232). This means that not every mosque attendee embraces the reasoning of those whose actions they support. Most people, including religious ones, balance out their dogma with reason and determine that their righteous viewpoint does not justify the use of force. Terrorists do this too. They just reach the opposite conclusion. Drawing on his experience as a Cairo prosecutor who spent years interviewing members of Islamic Jihad, the group that assassinated Anwar Sadat, Amr Abdalla maintains that "the militants are not crazy. . . . In their analysis, a particular narrative of the glorious Islamic past provides a measure of the corruption of their own society. Justice requires whatever violence is necessary to end the present corruption and weakness of their society" (2020, 142). Only individuals who can think like this adopt violence (and many Islamists do not).

Once again, this phenomenon is not restricted to Islamism but extends to secular and religious organizations of all persuasions. McCauley and Moskalenko (2016) juxtapose late nineteenth-century Russian terrorist group People's Will with 1970s anti-war terrorism and modern terrorist groups like al-Qaeda. "The parallels between atheists and religious fanatics, between Russians and Arabs, between terror against one's own government and terror against foreigners" are consistent across time and space (McCauley and Moskalenko 2016, 6). Violent Islamist movements also resemble the tactics, ideologies, and public support of Vietnamese, Tamils, and secular Algerian nationalists (Sadowski 2006, 232). This is strong evidence in favor of the coalitional commitment that helps Islamism succeed as other extremist groups do.

To conclude, Islam and Islamism differ drastically in their relationship to violence. Islam, like any other institution, can be co-opted by political groups with an agenda. Where loyalty to the organization triumphs over loyalty to the faith, violence may enter. Nevertheless, why people cross the line from supporting violence to committing it is not well understood. Some people are simply able to justify violence and ignore conflicting arguments. These rare people are the ones who become terrorists. Overall, Muslims are no more likely than members of any other religion to be violent. In light of these facts, why does the

association of Islam with violence persist? Unlike the sound of “bin Laden” or “al-Baghdadi,” the names of People’s Will terrorists “evoke no emotional reaction. Their crimes, horrible as they were, took place far away and long ago, making it easier to scrutinize, analyze, and perhaps even empathize with them” (McCaulley and Moskalenko 2016, 6). Ultimately, the reason the West sees Islam as only Islamism is because the latter is here, it is now, and it is not us.

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## Iran

### Ambitions, Threats, and Management

*Lindsay Hafen*

## 1. Background

Iran has been a major player in the Middle East since its early history and rise to power during the Persian Empire around 550 BCE. The West became interested in Iran in the early 20th century when the country's vast oil fields were discovered by the British. Virulent Iranian resentment of the West, and particularly the United States, began around 1953 when the CIA instigated a coup to oust the democratically elected Mohammed Mossadegh—Iran's popular nationalist prime minister (de Groot 2020; see also Ghattas 2020). Since then, Iran has singled out the United States as a target for Iranian disgruntlement with the West and all that it represents—eventually coming to be known as “The Great Satan.” The Islamic Revolution of 1979 solidified this role for the United States within Iran, and the ensuing hostage crisis exposed many everyday Americans to Iran and the Middle East for the first time. The Islamic Revolution was unquestionably a pivotal moment in Iranian and Middle Eastern history and of the Middle East. Not only did the revolution fundamentally change the structure of Iran's domestic policies, but it also entirely shifted the trajectory of the nation's foreign policy and regional ambitions. Iran works to promote Shiite causes beyond their borders, competes with Saudi Arabia to be the most influential Muslim country in the region, and often targets the United States in the Middle East.

## 2. Iran's Regional Ambitions and Threats

Shia Islam has maintained Iran as a stronghold for centuries. Following the revolution in 1979, Iran became the undeniable center of Shia authority

and spiritualism. As such, Iran is at the forefront of defending and promoting their brand of revolutionary Shi'ism throughout the Islamic world, particularly in the Middle East. Unfortunately, this pro-Shiite advocacy has often turned violent. Lebanon, for example, has suffered from this doctrine—Hezbollah has caused irreparable damage to Lebanon and Israel since the party's inception. The fracturing of Lebanon's political and social systems enabled Hezbollah to rise to a position of strength more than any other party or political actor in the country (Rabinovich 2019). Additionally, Hezbollah's position in Lebanon allows Iran to have more control over the Arab-Israeli conflict, as Iran provides weapons and financial resources to Hezbollah that counter Israel's and America's efforts to block nuclear development (Rabinovich 2019). Post-revolution, Iran has been one of Israel's primary state adversaries and openly seeks to destroy the Jewish state.

Iran often takes advantage of regional conflicts as a means to spread its influence; one such opportunity that Iran jumped at was the Syrian Civil War. Syria's civil war provided a massive opportunity for Iran to exert its influence in the region. The Assads had been one of Iran's strongest allies in the Middle East, as both regimes are Shiite. Consequently, Iran jumped at the opportunity to support the regime by sending military aid, directing Hezbollah and other Shiite militias to join the fighting, and finally, in 2014, sending their troops into Syria (Rabinovich 2019). Similarly, Iraq's Shiite population has received various forms of support from the Iranian regime. Thus, Iran's vast financial and human resources have a wide reach in the Middle East—despite the economic crisis and other internal quandaries, the regime in Iran is always willing to capitalize on foreign strife to expand its regional influence and support Shiism around the Middle East.

Ultimately, the Iranian regime's regional aspirations are driven by the ideology to support Shiite causes, particularly militant or revolutionary strains, throughout the Middle East. Building relationships with various Shia groups, be it in Syria, Lebanon, or Iraq, assists in Iran's efforts to expand its sphere of influence and enables them to engage in conflicts in the region without a direct threat to their own country.

## 2.1 Conflict and Proxy Wars with Saudi Arabia

To counter Iran's ideology and regional power, Saudi Arabia has risen to be the primary opponent of the Iranian regime. Saudi Arabia is the center of Sunni Islam and holds control over both sects' holiest sites in Mecca and Medina, granting them exceptional power in the region. Combined with vast oil wealth, close ties with the West, and favorable geographical location, Saudi Arabia is perfectly positioned to challenge Iran's regional influence. Naturally, this has pitted the two nations against each other and this "cold war" between the two nations has spilled over into real conflicts throughout the region. As previously explained, Iran has a history of sending aid to Shia-aligned organizations in countries where sectarian conflicts have arisen; Saudi Arabia tends to do the same. One of these instances that received significant amounts of media attention in recent years is

the Yemeni civil war. Ansar Allah, more commonly referred to as the Houthis, is a Shiite militia in Yemen, backed by Iran, that took over Sanaa in 2015. Around that time, the Saudis led a coalition into Yemen to restore President Hadi—this effort proved unsuccessful, and the stagnation in the civil war has caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent memory (Krause and Parker 2020). As Iran and Saudi Arabia are the two strongest nations in the region, they can provide rebels, government forces, and other non-state actors in Yemen with resources to continue fighting with no resolution in sight.

Syria has also been a victim of the proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran since the beginning of its civil war. As previously discussed, Iran has sent militias, money, and other means of support to Assad and his allies within Syria. To counter such advances, Saudi Arabia joined the United States and Western powers in providing aid to anti-government forces and rebel groups in Syria. To the Saudis, the successful destruction of the Syrian regime would weaken Iran's hold on the region and provide footing to weaken Iran's influence on Lebanon and Iraq (Barnes-Dacey 2018). If the Saudis were to achieve that goal, Iran would be debilitated, leaving Saudi Arabia as the Middle East's lone superpower.

Despite this history of competition, China recently brokered somewhat of a peace deal between the two nations. It appears as though this Saudi-Iran deal will include each country pulling back on their funding and military support for various groups in Middle East conflicts, and the countries will reestablish diplomatic ties with one another (Gallagher et al. 2023). In August 2023, the BRICS bloc of developing economies voted to admit Iran and Saudi Arabia, further building bilateral relations between them and challenging the influence of the United States in the region (Acharya et al. 2023). With the United States sidelined, Iran and Saudi Arabia are left as the final competitors to be the superpower of the Middle East, with China as the primary non-Middle Eastern ally.

## 2.2 Iran's Threat to the United States' Operations, Security, and Interests in the Middle East

Some take the opinion that the new deal between China, Iran, and Saudi Arabia is a threat to the United States' interests in the Middle East. There is some credence to this theory: Iran has long sought the end of American influence in the region, and Saudi Arabia has been viewed more negatively by the American public since the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. These three nations' interests do not appear to align with those of the United States.

In addition to the recent deal with China, Iran has increased physical threats against the United States over the last several years. These threats include but are not limited to targeting US officials, the development of nuclear weapons, cyberattacks, and continued terrorism (Seldin 2022). Attacks against the United States have increased under the Biden administration, with 83 attacks against American troops between the beginning of Biden's presidency and the end of March 2023 (Schogol 2023). American officials have expressed concerns that a



lack of retaliation from the United States enables Iran to continue targeting US subjects and putting troops and civilians at risk (Schogol 2023). Since attacks have greatly increased, the United States cannot easily dismiss these claims and must be addressed by the Biden administration or by Congress.

### 3. Solutions and Policy Suggestions

The United States and Iran have a history of cooperation and shared interests, continuing even after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. For example, in the wake of 9/11, Iran willingly shared intelligence about Al-Qaeda and the Taliban with the United States—the president of Iran at the time hoped that this could lead to an improved relationship with the Americans (Ghattas 244). In ISIS, the Americans and Iranians shared a common enemy and worked symbiotically to force ISIS out of Iraq and Syria. These instances show that the United States and Iran are not always opposed to each other and even share interests on occasion. With this in mind, there is more hope for an improved relationship between the countries and hope for a solution to the threat Iran poses to our national security.

One of the primary steps that should be taken to improve the relationship between the US and Iran is for the United States to decrease its military presence in the Middle East. While perhaps an unpopular policy, we can predict that resentment towards America will increase when the military is more involved in the daily lives of those living in the region. Continuing to interfere with Middle East affairs, particularly from a military standpoint, will breed more resentment in future generations. Following this line of action, the United States should cease or significantly decrease the sale of arms and other military equipment to Israel and Saudi Arabia. While this may distance the relationship between Israel and the United States, it would not cut the relationship between them and could be a sign of a good-faith effort on behalf of America to improve relations with Iran. Israel and Saudi Arabia are wealthy enough to find other sources of arms and military equipment that do not come at the expense of peace in the Middle East. In 2019, there was bipartisan support for the cessation of arms to Saudi Arabia (Carney 2019).

The complete removal of the United States' presence in the Middle East would leave a power vacuum that we have already seen consequences of, such as the rise of ISIS early in the last decade. For this reason, the United States could adopt a policy of spreading soft power throughout the region. Instead of sending money with no provisions or control or military resources, the US could invest in technological developments, humanitarian projects, and business ventures. Building these programs would provide a positive association with the United States in Iran and assist in thawing perceptions of America that could one day lead to peace between the two nations.

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## The Economic Roots of Islamist Support in the Middle East

*Ryan Wolff*

Islamism—iterations of Islam designed to intertwine Islamic law and doctrine with legal and political institutions—has experienced waves of popularity and success across the Middle East over the last couple decades. Evidence suggests that Islamism in the Middle East has risen to combat widespread economic hardship, which incentivizes Middle Easterners to replace existing regimes with opposition groups and rearranges social priorities.

Economic hardship generally benefits Islamists, as it angers citizens into supporting opposition parties to show dissatisfaction with incumbents. Unfortunately, most MENA countries struggle economically. For over twenty-five years, youth unemployment rates have been higher in the MENA region than anywhere else worldwide; in 2017, youth unemployment in the region reached 30% (Kabbani 2019). Education hardly improves job outlook for MENA residents, as MENA industries fail to generate enough skilled jobs to employ the region's growing supply of college graduates (Tessler 1997, 95). Even if education improved an individual's chances of finding employment, education rates have crashed throughout the region. Currently, 20% of MENA children do not attend school (UNICEF 2021). In a region where nearly half the population consists of people under the age of twenty-four, competition for education and employment leaves many individuals helpless (UNICEF 2021). Furthermore, as the general population struggles financially, the gap between rich and poor continues to grow. Corruption and connections outweigh talent and work ethic, and a "widespread belief that membership in the country's elite is determined in most instances not by ability, dedication, or service to society, but by personal and political connections—the result of being a system where patronage and clientelism predominate in decisions about public policy and resource allocation" dominates society

(Tessler 1997, 99). Because of this lopsided economic climate, economic opportunity depends almost entirely on situation, leaving prosperity to a cruel game of chance: in Algeria, the son of an agricultural manager is thirty times more likely to attend college than the son of a farm laborer. Even more disheartening, the son of a technocrat or businessman is two hundred eighty-five times more likely to attend college than the son of a farm laborer (Tessler 1997, 100).

As the economic situation in MENA countries worsens, many residents turn to Islamist groups as natural alternatives to secularist governments since Islamists have long opposed the region's Western-backed incumbents. As one Algerian notes:

If you are a young man . . . you only have four choices: you can remain unemployed and celibate because there are no jobs and no apartments to live in; you can work in the black market and risk being arrested; you can try to emigrate to France to sweep the streets of Paris or Marseilles; or you can join the FIS and vote for Islam. (Tessler 1997, 93)

Islamist groups rally mass support by exalting Islam as a universal solution to the economic ailments facing disillusioned MENA residents (Cammett and Luong 2014, 198). In fact, Islamist groups seem to be the only viable and legitimate challengers to current MENA regimes. From Saddam Hussain and Hafez al-Assad's Baathist regimes to Egypt's secular tradition headed by Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak, most modern MENA governments have consisted of secular and nationalist parties seeking to reduce Islam's role in politics. Consequently, Islamist groups have long opposed sitting MENA governments.

The Middle East is replete with evidence that Islamists are the region's main opposition to secular governments. Most strikingly, MENA regimes obsessively crush Islamist dissent with a brutality unknown to other opposition groups, thereby demonstrating their incessant fear of an Islamist uprising. Not only do they restrict and ban domestic Islamist groups, but they also work with Western think tanks and right-wing groups to create international anti-Islamist sentiment (Salem and Hassan 2019). In 2021, for instance, the Egyptian judicial system upheld death sentences for twelve Muslim Brotherhood members for rioting following the removal of President Mohamed Morsi in 2013. During those same riots, secular security forces massacred eight hundred Muslim Brotherhood members (Al Jazeera 2021).

Still, such brutal repression of Islamist movements only reinforces the popular conviction that Islamists represent the opposite of current MENA regimes. In 2007 and 2008, the Egyptian government incarcerated thousands of Muslim Brotherhood members, disqualified most Muslim Brotherhood political candidates from participating in local elections, and outlawed the Brotherhood outright (Trofimov 2009). Following the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, however, the Brotherhood won half the seats in the parliament's lower house, 84% of seats in the parliament's upper house, and the presidency (Laub 2019). In short, Islamists have come to represent a natural and powerful opposition to reigning MENA

leaders, painting themselves as the only political force powerful enough to oppose secular governments. Hence, Islamists tend to gain influence when the populace rejects the government's economic policies. In fact, statistical analyses suggest that incumbent vote share increases with rising economic growth and decreases with rising unemployment (Becher and Donnelly 2013, 974–975). Middle Easterners frustrated with the region's economic failures simply want new economic and political systems that offer them a fair chance at achieving financial security. Ultimately, Islamist groups provide the most united and legitimate challenge to incumbents, so Middle Easterners tend to support these groups.

Economic hardship also increases public support for Islamists by rearranging social priorities—particularly amongst Middle Eastern women. Specifically, high female unemployment rates and large wage gaps between the sexes motivate women to seek financial security through marriage rather than through employment. On average, Middle Eastern women earn 40% less than their male counterparts. In MENA countries like Syria and Iraq, the pay gap stretches as high as 57% and 55%, respectively (World Economic Forum 2018). With such a large wage gap, the Middle East represents the largest regional gender-based pay discrepancy in the world. Furthermore, only 19.77% of the MENA workforce consists of females (World Bank 2021). One statistical survey asserts that both wage gaps between men and women and the log of per capita GDP are statistically significant predictors of fundamentalism among Muslim women (Blaydes 2008, 18). The same study suggests that approximately 70% of Muslim women with little education support Islamic fundamentalism, while a secondary education reduces the probability of a Muslim woman being a fundamentalist by more than 50% (Blaydes 2008, 13).

When women lack economic and educational opportunities, they tend to seek out financial security through marriage, as “the basic avenues to material security for women in the Muslim world are gainful employment [or] marriage to a gainfully employed spouse” (Blaydes 2008, 5). One analysis asserts that marriage rates amongst the bottom 70% of female earners have declined by more than 15 percentage points since 1970, demonstrating that as wages for women have risen over the last half century, women have chosen to get married less frequently (Greenstone and Looney 2012). Another author claims that growing wages for women account for up to 20% of marriage rate decline in the United States, affirming the cross-cultural inverse relationship between women's wages and marriage rates (White 2016). Of course, marriage is its own market with supply and demand. In traditional MENA culture, men prefer fundamentalist wives. For example, one study suggests that approximately 86% of MENA Muslims believe that a wife must always obey her husband (Pew 2013). Other fundamentalist traits that Muslim women willingly adopt to become more “moral” marriage partners include piety, moral conservatism, and modesty—all of which preserve the husband's “family name and reputation” (Blaydes 2008, 5). Moreover, evidence suggests that adopting fundamentalist ideas when entering marriage is not an irrational choice for Muslim women. One statistical analysis shows that, holding

all else constant, women living in a poor Islamist community had 30% less children and were 50% less likely to have a home birth than their female counterparts in a secular sister city (Blaydes 2013, 16).

Thus, “lack of economic opportunity is a stronger predictor of fundamentalist belief systems than socioeconomic class,” as Middle Eastern women with few economic opportunities often adopt fundamentalist loyalties to ensure financial security through marriage (Blaydes 2008, o). Of course, endogeneity plagues this model, as one cannot definitively determine whether women demand fundamentalism and therefore restrict their own economic opportunities or support fundamentalism because of a lack of economic opportunities. Realistically, the relationship probably goes both ways depending on the woman in question; still, a clear correlation between a lack of economic opportunities for women and an increase in female support for Islamic fundamentalism and Islamism exists.

To summarize, the rise of Islamist parties in the Middle East stems largely from economic instability across the region. As Middle Easterners grow increasingly disheartened with the economy, they turn to Islamist parties as the primary opposition to secular incumbents and rearrange social priorities to emphasize fundamentalism among women. Thus, until MENA states can improve the region’s economic situation, the region will likely continue to see growing support for Islamist groups.

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## حقيقة صلب المسيح في القرآن

مبحث عن سورة النساء ١٥٧

كيلب دبرمان، تيني ديفس، جيمس فوغل

وَقَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتَّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا  
(النساء 157)

### الباب الأول – المقدمة

تتناول هذه الآية زعم اليهود أنهم قتلوا عيسى ابن مريم عليه السلام وصلبوه كما يسجّل في الأناجيل المسيحية. يُنكر ذلك في هذه الآية التي تقول إن عيسى لم يُقتل بل لاح لليهود ذلك. وتؤكد الآية أن عيسى المسيح عليه السلام لم يُقتل وكل من يُنكر ذلك ينكر الحق.

لقد أردنا أن ندرس هذه القصة لأنها تختلف عما ورد في الكتاب المقدس، وهو ما نعرفها معرفة جيدة. يوجد سرد في سورة النساء في الآيتين ١٥٦-١٥٧. أردنا تحديداً أن نفهم معنى كلمة "شُبِّهَ" لأنها قد تعني عدة أشياء مهمة لتفسير النص. على سبيل المثال، يمكن أن تعني كلمة "شُبِّهَ" فكرة أن عيسى عليه السلام لم يكن لديه جسد مادي. وقد وجدنا جواب في التفاسير.

بحثنا في مواقع عديدة، مستعملين المكتبة الشاملة والمكتبة الوقفية مصادرها الرئيسية. ومستكشفين المواقع ومضامينها وأوراقها. وقد وجدنا أن المنهج الأكثر فعالية هو وضع السورة بأكملها في شريط البحث والاختيار من بين أسماء المفسرين المطروحة. ووجدنا من خلال هذه الوسيلة أسماء كثيرة، ولكن ما زلنا نريد أن نقرأ أكثر فبحثنا عن بعض الكلمات الجوهرية في السورة. كان ثمة أفكار وتفسيرات من السور في بقية القرآن وليس سورة النساء فحسب، وساعدنا ذلك في

إيجاد أفكار مرتبطة ومفيدة وقارننا بين بعض تلك الأفكار مع سورة النساء. وتاليا جمعنا كل ما اكتشفنا من الأفكار والتفاصيل وربناها في هذا المبحث.

## الباب الثاني – المفردات

عند بداية القول هنا يجب علينا أن نلقي الضوء على بعض الكلمات الجوهرية المفيدة:

شُبَّة – وهذه الكلمة موجودة في القرآن في هذا السياق فقط ولا توجد في أي موضع آخر. لذا كان من الصعب علينا في حدود بحثنا أن نحدد معناها، ولكن يقال في كتاب لسان العرب إن معناها مثل، والمصدر تشبيه بمعنى تمثيل. وبالتالي، يمكننا أن نبذل كلمة "شُبَّة" المستعملة في الآية بهذه الكلمة أخرى "مُؤَلَّل"، فنفهم أن اليهود اعتقدوا أنهم أخذوا عيسى وصلبوه وقتلوه إلا أنه لم يكن كذلك في الواقع.

أَحْتَلُّوا: وهذه الكلمة بمعنى أنه لم يكن توافق بين جميع اليهود على أنهم قد قتلوا الشخص الصحيح.

شَكَّ: وهذه الكلمة تشير إلى أن الذين زعموا قتل عيسى لم يكونوا يعرفون تماماً.

الظَّنَّ – وفي هذا السياق هذه الكلمة بمعنى شك، أو حسب ما ورد في لسان العرب: "يقين إلا أنه ليس بيقين عيان، إنما هو يقين تدبر". ويسلط ذلك التحديد الضوء على معنى الآية، إن اليهود كانوا يعتقدون أنهم قد قتلوا المسيح ولكن ذلك الاعتقاد كان ظناً فقط، أو بعبارة أخرى، ما أتى ذلك الاستنتاج من عيانهم بل من تصورهم.

يَقِينًا – وهذه الكلمة بمعنى "بالتأكيد". ومن المحتمل أن يكون معنى ذلك في الآية أن اليهود لم يقتلوا المسيح متيقنين، بل كانوا في شك، ويعني ذلك أن هذه الجملة القرآنية جاءت لتأكيد الجملة السابقة: مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتَّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ.

## الباب الثالث – التفاسير

تفسير ابن كثير:

أوضح تفسير ابن كثير معنى القصة من خلال قصة أطول مما نقرأه في القرآن. وحسب ما قاله ابن كثير كانت المجموعة التي قبضت على عيسى عليه السلام وكانت تريد قتله قد أرسلها ملك مدينة دمشق. ولكن خطة الملك صارت معروفة لعيسى فوضع خطة لنفسه. قبل وصول عصابة الملك، اختار عيسى عليه السلام شاباً من أتباعه لوظيفة خاصة. كان الشاب سيموت على الصليب بدلا من عيسى. ولو قبل الشب الدور لكان لديه مكان في الجنة رفيقا لعيسى عليه السلام. انتقى

عيسى شاباً وأعطاها الله تعالى شكل عيسى لكي يربك اليهود الذين يريدون موته. ثم جاء اليهود ولما رأى الشاب الذي يشبه عيسى عليه السلام، أخدوه لصلبه. بعد الموت تفاخر اليهود أنهم قتلوا عيسى رغم أن جسده الصحيح لم يكن عالقاً على الصليب.

عند ابن كثير كلمة "شُبَّة" يعني جسد مختلف عن جسد عيسى عليه السلام وأعطى الله تعالى شكلاً جديداً للشاب. وكان يبدو لكل من شهد ذلك الموقف ورآه أن عيسى نفسه عليه السلام مات ولكن في الحقيقة المقتول كان شخصاً آخر.

تفسير ابن عباس:

كتب ابن عباس أن اليهود لم يقتلوا عيسى عليه السلام ولكن كانوا مرتبكين ولم يميزوا بينه وبين شبيهه، واختلفوا في آرائهم عما حدث على الصليب: "وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ فِي قَتْلِهِ" مما نفهم ونعرف من تلك الكلمات، ما كان اليهود متأكدين من أنهم قد قتلوا الإنسان الصحيح. كتب محمد متولي الشعراوي بتفسيره عن نفس الحجة وأضاف تفاصيل أكثر شرحاً عن الطرق التي قد يهرب عيسى فيها، والأنماط التي بُنيت عليها البيوت في عصر عيسى. كان في البيت باب كبير ووراء ذلك كان يقع باب صغير. اقترح أنه على الأرجح أن الله تعالى قد غير شكل عيسى في حين ألقى شكل وجهه الحقيقي على رجل يسمى "تطيانوس". وطرح أن اليهود لم يقتلوا عيسى بل قتلوا تطيانوس بدون وعي.

عودةً إلى قول ابن عباس، فقد قال تعليقاً على قول تعالى "بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ"، إن عيسى رُفِعَ بقوة الله تعالى إلى السماء بعد الصلب المزعوم.

تفسير الطبري:

في تفسير الطبري معلومات أكثر دقةً عن الأحداث المذكورة في النساء ١٥٧. يركز الطبري أولاً على الجزء الأول من الآية وهو: "وَقَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ". وبحسب الطبري، أجمع أهل التأويل على أن اليهود لم يقتلوا عيسى عليه السلام كما زعموا ويبدو أن عيسى ابن مريم لم يموت كما يقال في تقاليد اليهود والمسيحيين. مع ذلك، اختلف المفسرون في "صفة التشبيه"، أي كيفية إخفاء عيسى الحقيقي عن أعين اليهود وتبديل شخص ثانٍ مكانه. يعبر الطبري عن رأيين سائدين، وأولهما أن عيسى عليه السلام كان في بيت مع مجموعة من تلاميذه أو حواريه وأحاط بهم الذين كانوا يريدون أن يقتلوه، وغير الله تعالى أشكال التلاميذ إلى صورة عيسى، فأخذوا واحداً منهم وقتلوه وهم يحسبون أنه عيسى، ولكن في الواقع نجا عيسى الحقيقي من بين أيديهم. ويعود هذا الرأي إلى وهب بن منبه الذي قال إن عيسى كان مع ١٧ من حواريه وألقى عليهم جميعاً صورته. فلما اطلع اليهود عليهم ورأوا أن كل

الناس في البيت يتشابهون هددوهم بقتل الجميع، فسأل عيسى من يريد الجنة فتطوع رجل وأخذوه وصلبوه.

أما الرأي الثاني، فيختلف عن الأول من حيث عدد الأشخاص الذين تحولت أشكالهم إلى صورة عيسى عليه السلام. فيعتقد بعض المفسرين أن عيسى عليه السلام طلب متطوعاً من تلاميذه أن يأخذ مكانه، فتطوع أحد منهم وألقي عليه شبه المسيح، فأخذته اليهود وقتلوه. وقال السدي إن عيسى عليه السلام بعد تحويل الرجل الثاني إلى شكله فصعد إلى السماء مباشرة، فلما أحصى اليهود كل من كانوا في البيت عرفوا أن واحداً لم يكن موجوداً، ومع ذلك صدقوا أن الرجل الذي كان يبدو كأنه عيسى هو فعلاً عيسى. وبناء على ذلك، يقول ابن إسحاق أن اسم المتطوع الذي مات مكان عيسى عليه السلام كان سرجس، ويضيف أيضاً أن بعض المسيحيين اعتقدوا أن الرجل المصلوب كان يودس الخائن الذي ألقى تعالى عليه صورة عيسى.