1. Preliminary framework

1.1. Geographical context

1.1.1. al-Andalus

The term al-Andalus probably[28] derives from the name of the Vandals, a Germanic tribe which, before crossing the narrow strait into North Africa, had occupied and overrun the southern part of the Iberian Peninsula between 409 and 429 CE, giving it the name Vandalusia or Vandalia.[29] In Ibn Ḥawqal's (d. 367 H/977 CE) great work of geography, *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik,* al-Andalus appears as an island connected to the land of apostasy (*bilād al-kufr*) on the Frankish side (*nāḥiyat ifranja*).[30] In the eyes of al-Zuhrī (d. btw. 541 H/1154 CE and 556 H/1161 CE), al-Andalus covered the area that was conquered by the Muslims. In fact, expansion stopped at the mountain *jabal Aṭrayijarsh*, an approximate representation of the Asturian mountains, which he assimilates into the Pyrenees and which he specifies separates the country of al-Andalus from the country of the Franks (*bilād al-ifranj*).[31] Ibn ʿIdhārī (d. 695 H/1296 CE) describes it as an island reclining on firm ground (*jazīra murakkana*), with three extremities resembling a triangle.[32] According to the geographical compendium

28 Al-Andalus is also hypothetically connected with two other terms. The first hypothesis was supported by Vallvé, who asserts that al-Andalus is an Arabised form of the word *Atlantis* (*Atlanticum* in Greek). On the other hand, Halm proposes that the Visigothic word, *Landahlauts* (*Cothica Sors* or the "lot lands"), could explain the name. See Vallvé 1986, 56; Halm 1989, 259. Bossong provides an etymological study on the origin of the term al-Andalus and suggests a pre-Indo-European origin. See Bossong 2002, 149–64.

29 Shaw 2010, 24; Carr 2005, 24–25. Arguing that the period was too short to attribute their name Vandals to the land, Dozy claims that the Vandals boarded ships headed for Africa to a place nowadays called Tarifa (derived from the name of Abū Zurʿa Ṭarīf Ibn Mālik [d. 124 H/741 CE]) and most likely gave the name Vandalusia to the port of this city. Consequently, when the Arabs reached Tarifa and found that it was called Vandalusia, they used this name for the entire conquered territory. This version was adopted by the *EI*[1]. See Dozy 1881, 301–3; Lévi-Provençal 1950, I, 71–73.

30 Ibn Ḥawqal, *al-Masālik* (1873), 42.

31 al-Zuhrī, *Jughrāfiya* (n.d.), 77, 80.

32 Ibn ʿIdhārī, *al-Bayān* (2013), II, 5.

Nuzhat al-mushtāq fī 'ikhtirāq al-āfāq, written by al-Idrīsī (d. 560 H/1165 CE), al-Andalus belonged to the fourth climate,[33] and its triangular shape, surrounded by the Mediterranean (*al-baḥr al-shāmī*)[34] and the Atlantic (*al-baḥr al-muẓlim*), meant that it was classified as an island.[35]

In broad terms, al-Andalus is used to designate the Iberian territories under Muslim rule. However, its geographical borders undoubtedly depended on the political landscape, and thus it was subject to change and gradually decreased in size until it was limited to the Nasrid Kingdom of Granada.[36]

1.1.2. al-Maghrib

Geographers and historians differ on the definition of the term al-Maghrib, giving it diverse geographical dimensions. Semantically, al-Maghrib (the West) is opposed to al-Mashriq (the East).[37] From its original meaning, indicating the place of the sunset,[38] during the period of the *al-fitna al-kubrā,*[39] it designated the western part of the Islamic world, which at

33 Al-Idrīsī divides the terrestrial sphere according to latitude into seven parallel climates (*aqālīm*). See al-Idrīsī, *Nuzhat al-mushtāq* (2002), I, 8–9.

34 This name is linked to *bilād al-shām*, "greater Syria"; it was also called *baḥr al-rūm*.

35 He asserts that al-Andalus is located very close to al-Maghrib and consequently considers it a natural extension (*imtidād ṭabīʿī*). Ibid., II, 525.

36 This was established in 1230 CE and conquered by the Christians in 1492 CE. Aillet highlights the loss of the territorial unit after the final collapse of the caliphate in 1031 CE. See Aillet 2006, 1–9. For more details about the borders of the last Andalusi territories, see García Fernández 1987; García Porras 2014, 73.

37 This extended from Egypt through the Levant (*al-shām*), the Arabian peninsula (*al-jazīra al-ʿarabiyya*), upper Mesopotamia (*al-jazīra al-furātiyya*), Iraq, Khorasan, Transoxiana (*bilād mā warāʾa al-nahr*), Persia (*bilād fāris*), western Iran (*iqlīm al-jibāl)*, Sindh, Sistan (*sijistān*) and Daylam (*bilād al-daylam*). Although Egypt is situated in the middle, thus playing the role of a connecting boundary and sharing cultural, political, historical and ethical characteristics with both parts, it is generally considered to belong to the Mashriq. See Ibn Ḥawqal, *Ṣūra* (1992), 304; al-Jabrānī 2016, 42.

38 Saʿdūn 1988, 19.

39 Also known as the *al-fitna al-ʾūlā*. The grievances and dissatisfaction relating to the alleged wrongdoings and the religious, military, political and financial policies of the third caliph, ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (d. 35 H/656 CE), led to a rebellion and his violent assassination. The *fitna* had a negative impact on Islamic history since it shifted the Muslim preoccupation from expansion and conquest to fighting among each other and led to the beginning of a sectarian conflict between them. It also ended with the era of the *rāshidūn* Caliphate and the beginning of the establishment of the Umayyad state and the emergence of dynastic succession. For further information on the *fitna,*

that time comprised Egypt, its surroundings and the Levant.[40] The western part of the Islamic world was considered a homogenous cultural entity that extended from Barqa in present Libya to the Atlantic,[41] and its designation changed from *Ifrīqiya*[42] to al-Maghrib only after the Muslim conquest, given that with the expansion of Islam towards the west and the conquest of al-Andalus, the term *Ifrīqiya* was decreasingly used,[43] and was replaced by al-Maghrib.[44] Nevertheless, *Ifrīqiya* remained the name for a part of al-Maghrib.

Considering al-Andalus as the natural extension of al-Maghrib, which influences and is influenced by the events happening there,[45] al-Idrīsī notes that Algeciras (*al-jazīra al-khaḍrā'*) and Ceuta (*Sabta*) were separated by the narrow strait of Gibraltar,[46] historically known as *baḥr al-zuqāq*.[47] Whereas in Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī's (d. 626 H/1229 CE) *Mu'jam al-buldān,*[48] al-Maghrib includes al-Andalus and the space between Milyāna[49] and the Sūs chain of mountains,[50] in *al-Miqbās*,[51] it includes all the lands west of the Nile bank from Alexandria to Salé.[52] It is interesting to note that Ibn

its background, the deepening of the crisis and the death of 'Uthmān, see Madelung 1997, 78–140.

40 Monès 2003, 24; Laqbāl 1951, 14.

41 Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayān* (2013), I, 26.

42 Ignoring the ancient origin of the name, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad Ibn Abī Dīnār (d. 1102 H/1690 CE) discusses the origin of this appellation and proposes some explanations, for example, it was called *Ifrīqiya* because it separated (*farraqat*) al-Maghrib from al-Mashriq. He suggests that it might have been given the name of the son of Fārūq b. Miṣrāyim, or the name of Afrīqish, the son of Dhū-l-Qarnayn (he of the two horns). Ibn Abī Dīnār, *al-Mu'nis* (1869), 15.

43 Until it covered the region with al-Qayrawān as its centre. See al-Ḥarīrī 1987, 12; Ibn Abī Dīnār, *al-Mu'nis* (1869), 15.

44 al-Ḥarīrī 1987, 12.

45 al-Idrīsī, *Nuzha* (2002), II, 525.

46 This name originates from the Arabic term *jabal Ṭāriq* after the expedition of the governor of Tangiers, Ṭāriq Ibn Ziyād (d. 101 H/720 CE), in 711 CE to the Iberian Peninsula. See Jackson, 1990, 22. López de Ayala recognised the previous and ancient names of the mountain. López de Ayala 1782, I, 2–6.

47 *Al-zuqāq* literally means the narrow alley. *Baḥr al-zuqāq* refers to the strait that connects the Mediterranean to the Atlantic Ocean.

48 Al-Ḥamawī, *Mu'jam* (1995), V, 161.

49 A town in north-western Algeria that is considered the border of Ifrīqiya.

50 This is located in the Sūs, which is a region in mid-southern Morocco bordered by the High Atlas in the north, the Anti-Atlas in the east and south and the Atlantic in the west.

51 Ibn 'Idhārī, *al-Bayān* (2013), I, 26.

52 A town in north-western Morocco.

Ḥawqal considers the Mediterranean (*baḥr al-rūm*) as dividing al-Maghrib into two banks:[53] the eastern bank ranging from Egypt to Tangiers, and the western bank, which includes the *jazīrat al-Andalus*.[54] Admittedly, al-Maghrib covered a vast area, which resulted in historians and geographers dividing it into regions: *iqlīm* Barca and Ṭarāblus,[55] followed by Ifrīqiya,[56] al-Maghrib *al-awsaṭ*,[57] al-Maghrib *al-aqṣā*[58] and finally *iqlīm al-Sūs*.[59]

However, despite these differing views, the majority of geographers and historians came to the consensus that al-Maghrib is the term for "the Islamic lands extended from western Egypt until the Atlantic, including al-Andalus. Considering the existence of *al-maghrib al-ifrīqī* and *al-maghrib al-andalusī*, the term Maghrib or Maghribi includes, indeed, al-Andalus and its inhabitants."[60] In this regard, Lazhar insists that the term al-Maghrib is continuously changing and its connotation varies through time and

53 Into two halves (*niṣfayn*).

54 Ibn Ḥawqal, *al-Masālik* (1873), 41.

55 The present Cyrenaica and Tripoli. These two *aqālīm* were politically separated because Barca was generally dependent on Egypt while Tripoli was more closely oriented to Ifrīqiya. See Ḥammouda 2007, 187.

56 Called *al-Maghrib al-adnā* (lower). This extends from western Tripoli to *Bijāya* (Béjaïa, Bougie) or *Milyāna* and had Kairouan as its capital during Aghlabid rule. The capital then moved to al-Mahdiyya in the Fatimid Caliphate and finally to Tunis during the Hafsid dynasty. See al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam* (1995), I, 228; al-Zuhrī, *Kitāb al-jughrāfiya* (n.d.), 106–22; al-ʿAbbādī n.d., 10

57 This covers the area between the Chelif River in present-day Algeria and the Moulouya River and the mountains of Taza in Morocco. See al-Ḥarīrī 1987, 11–12.

58 This includes everything between the Moulouya River and the Atlantic. See al-Sallāwī, *al-Istiqṣā* (1997), I, 127.

59 This is the mid-south-western area of the current Morocco and is limited by the High Atlas and Anti-Atlas ranges and the river *al-Sūs*. It is also divided into two regions: the *Sūs al-aqṣā*, which includes the ranges of the Atlas, Taroudant and Tafilalt, and the *al-Sūs al-adnā*, which contains the northern area of present-day Marrakesh. See al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam* (1995), III, 280–81.

60 al-ʿAbbādī (n.d.), 10. In this regard, Maimonides (d. 600 H/1204 CE), the exiled Jewish Andalusi philosopher, physician and legal scholar, had always used the expression *ʿindanā fī-l-Maghrib* ("*chez nous* in al-Maghrib"), believing that al-Andalus was a part of al-Maghrib, together forming the same *Kulturkreis*. See Kraemer 1999, 40. "Joshua Blau explains that whenever Maimonides speaks of our place in the Maghrib, he uses it in the broad sense to include Spain." Kraemer 1991, 8. Moreover, the traveller Ibn Jubayr (d. 614 H/1217 CE) refers to his place of birth, al-Andalus, as part of al-Maghrib. See López Lázaro 2013, 261–63. In addition, the geographer and historian Abū Ḥāmid al-Gharnāṭī (d. 565 H/1161 CE) includes al-Andalus in al-Maghrib and always used the expressions used in al-Maghrib (*wa-kāna lanā fī-l-Maghrib*). See al-Gharnāṭī, *Tuḥfa* (1993), 106.

space.[61] In addition, he argues that the definition was subject to historical, geographical, cultural, political and even ethnological criteria. This has led to the objectification of this qualification.[62]

1.1.3. *al-Maghrib/al-Gharb al-islāmī*

Understanding the geographical and historiographical meanings of the terms al-Andalus and al-Maghrib does not allow us to overcome the ambiguity of a frequently used term in this study: the "Islamic West". To clarify this, one must go back to the dichotomous Arabic differentiation between *al-Maghrib al-islāmī* and *al-gharb al-islāmī*.[63] Djaït argues that the Islamic world is divided into three main parts: the heart/centre, which embraces the Arabian peninsula; the Levant and Iraq, where the *da'wa*[64] originated and where the first, second and third caliphates were established; and the two wings comprising the Islamic West, which starts in Egypt and continues until the Atlantic, and the Islamic East, which extends across Khorasan and Transoxiana until the borders with China (*tukhūm al-ṣīn*).[65] *Al-gharb al-islāmī* joins western Sudan and its tropical and orbital surroundings[66] with the African Sahara,[67] al-Maghrib, al-Andalus and, finally,

61 Lazhar 2015, 50.

62 Ibid.

63 Etymologically, the term *gharb* means west, and *maghrib* signifies the place of sunset. Grammatically, both words represent the gerund of the verb with the triconsonantal root *gh-r-b*, which could also be the root of the adjective *gharīb* (foreign, unusual). This accentuates the idea of the gravitational centre in the quadrilateral of Arabia, Iraq, Syria and Egypt, with the Islamic West being foreign and having the status of an annexed periphery. This aspect will be examined in more detail.

64 This literally means to invite; it is often used to describe the act of attempting to convert people to Islam by sharing the faith.

65 Djaït 2004, 8.

66 Western Sudan covers the whole area reaching from the Sahel and the Sudanian savanna, across the basin of Lake Chad to the Atlantic. Basing his work on both Arabic and African sources, Cuoq reconstructs the history of the infiltration of Islam into western Africa and how it put down its roots at the beginning of the eleventh century CE in a deeply acculturated milieu, in the heart of the exchange and meeting zone between white and black Africa. See Cuoq 1984.

67 This is the area between the Atlantic and the Red Sea, which includes the Atlas Mountains and the Nile Valley in Egypt and Sudan and excludes the northern African region along the Mediterranean.

the mid-western basin of the Mediterranean.[68] This implies that *al-Maghrib al-islāmī* is part and parcel of the vast area of the Islamic West (*al-gharb al-islāmī*). In the twentieth century, the French historian Braudel attributed a new name to *al-gharb al-islāmī* which was *l'Occident Musulman*.[69] In this study, the term Islamic West is used to cover only the case study area, i.e., al-Andalus and al-Maghrib.[70]

1.2. Historical context (eleventh and twelfth centuries)

The Caliphate of Cordoba was abolished in 422 H/1031 CE. After much violence, the unitary Muslim power disappeared from the peninsula to make way for a more fragmented power. The civil war (*fitna*) caused a division of the Umayyad state into a mosaic of petty states usually called, albeit inaccurately, taifas (*al-ṭawā'if*). Henceforth began the fourth period of the history of al-Andalus. Ethnically, there were three antagonistic categories of taifas: those of Andalusi origin (ruled by Arabs or *muwalladūn*), those of Berber origin, and those of Slav origin, also known as *al-ṣaqāliba*.[71] Rivalries, divisions, inter-taifa wars and economic deterioration resulted in the retreat of the Muslim forces and the expansion of the Christian kingdoms of the northern peninsula, thus initiating the *Reconquista*.[72] Toledo fell into the hands of the king of Castile and Leon, Alfonso VI (d. 1109 CE), in 477 H/1085 CE. The status quo was increasingly challenged in areas bordering on the Christian lands and the idea of restoring the integrity of Christian Hispania urged the factional chiefs to ask for help from the Almoravid[73]

68 This comprises the Balearics, Sardinia, Qawṣara (present-day Pantelleria), Sicily, Malta and the island of Qarsaqa (probably present-day Kerkennah). More details can be found in Monès 2000, 23.

69 "Le monde musulman a son Orient et son Occident", Braudel 1969, 172.

70 Present-day Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

71 Terrasse 1966, 190–91; Imamuddin 1969, 135–55; Viguera Molíns 1994, 39–121. A detailed ethnical and geographical study on the distribution of the taifas can be found in Clément 1993, 197–206.

72 It is important to highlight the chronological coincidences of the political crises in the whole Islamic West. For instance, the years between 411 H/1020 CE and 431 H/1040 CE saw the collapse of the Kalbite state in Sicily and the political parcelling of the island that was the prelude of the Norman invasion. Additionally, Ifrīqiya experienced political turmoil caused by the Hilali invasion that destroyed the political stability of the Zīrid state of al-Mahdiyya. See Guichard and Soravia 2007, 107–9.

73 This word is derived from the Arabic name *al-murābiṭ* (warrior residing in a *ribāṭ*, a fortress on the border with enemy territory). They were also known as *al-mu-*

official power, which succeeded in unifying western Maghrib. The ruler of *al-murābiṭūn*, Yūsuf Ibn Tāshufīn (d. 500 H/1106 CE), crossed to the peninsula with many Berber soldiers in 479 H/1086 CE. Combining his forces with those of the Andalusi chiefs and kings, he met Alfonso VI in the battle of Sagrajas (*Maʿrakat al-zallāqa*) on *Rajab* 12 of the year 479 H (23 October 1086 CE),[74] where he defeated and inflicted severe injuries on the king.

> The troops of Alfonso, accustomed to attacking and breaking in a decisive assault any resistance by weak and frightened kings of taifas, heavily armed, crossed the three miles that separated them from the enemy, and it seems that they won an initial success, falling on the Andalusis … but that the assault was then slowed down not only by the fatigue of the race and the weight of the weapons, but also by the defenses of the Muslim camp, the combativeness of the Almoravids and the number of the enemies … As Yūsuf had many more forces than the Christians … he executed the classic movement of envelopment, so usual among the Maghribis, and gave the assault of the camp of Alfonso. This manoeuvre proved decisive; the Christian soldiers, who were fighting with great courage, retreated, and Alfonso was wounded in the battle or when opening a path for retreat.[75]

Ibn Tāshufīn had noted the corruption of the kings of the taifas and was thus wary of supporting and helping them. Under these circumstances, he was determined to bring an end to the taifas and attacked al-Andalus in 483 H/1090 CE, unifying the *al-jāratayn al-ʿudwatayn*.[76] Seen as the "new

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laththamūn (the muffled ones), as they were in the habit of covering the lower part of their faces. Opinions differ as to their origin: "Some say that they belonged to the Ḥimyarite tribe which had migrated during the reign of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq from Yemen to Syria and then from there migrated to al-Maghrib; others maintain that they descended from the Ṣinhājah tribe of the Berbers." See Imamuddin 1969, 156; Fierro 2012, https://ebookcentral-1proquest-1com-100f089co1a82.emedien3.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lib/subhh/reader.action?docID=5266097 accessed 28 May 2019.

74 al-Marrākushī, *al-Muʿjib* (1949), 132–35.

75 Guichard; Soravia 2007, 122. This passage is my own translation.

76 Once he had conquered al-Andalus, Ibn Tāshufīn sent a message to the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustaẓhir (d. 512 H/1118 CE) with two of the most eminent *shuyūkh* of Seville, ʿAbd Allāh Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 493 H/1099 CE) and his son Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 549 H/1148 CE), asking for official recognition of his authority and a declaration of his allegiance (*bayʿa*). Once he had been granted the caliphal rescript dated 491 H/1097 CE, he assumed the honorary title (*laqab*) of *amīr al-muslimīn* (prince of the Muslims). It is important to note that with the Almoravid conquest of

people of Islam" in the eyes of Garcin,[77] the Almoravid dynasty, followed by the Almohad dynasty, "led the way to Western emancipation from the Eastern Arab Matrix".[78] The Almoravid period was that in which Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī and Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ were born, grew up, were educated and occupied the posts of *qāḍīs*.[79] Both saw their empire at its apogee. However, they both saw its gradual struggle and degradation and how its "greatness was overshadowed by the lustre of the Almohads".[80] The Almohad attack on the capital Marrakesh in 540 H/1147 CE marked the beginning of the fall of the Almoravid dynasty. Disenchantment with the religio-political system, corruption, the extortion to which the Jews were subjected, etc., were among other factors that hastened the rebellion against the Almoravids in al-Andalus and facilitated the intervention and conquest by the Almohads in 541 H/1148 CE.

Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad Ibn Tūmart[81] (d. 524 H/1130 CE) was a religious reformer from the Maṣmūda tribe. After coming back from his *riḥla* to the Mashriq,[82] he started working on a religious reform based on the principle of forbidding wrong and commanding right (*al-nahy ʿan al-munkar wa-l-amr bi-l-maʿrūf*) in order to transform the world and inspire a new era of Islamic commitment. Almohad is a Spanish form of

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the peninsula, a new period of North African intervention in Andalusi affairs began, which continued with the Almohads. This period was characterised by imposing a centralised state from al-Maghrib. The political unification between al-Maghrib and al-Andalus linked the economic, social and cultural bridges between the two banks of the strait and contributed to a continuous and fluid interaction between the nations. Lévi-Provençal 1955, 269; Abun-Nasr 1987, 83.

77 Garcin 1995, 119–205.

78 Buresi 2018, 151.

79 It is noteworthy to point out the emergence of a religious elite in in the sixth century H/twelfth century CE "who seized power, as they had in Seville or in Granada. This was only possible because their power had been asserted under the reign of the Almoravids". Ibid., 158.

80 Abun-Nasr 1987, 87.

81 In the Berber social and geographic context, it is important to stress where Ibn Tūmart was born, and the small village of Igīlīz, located in the Anti-Atlas near to the river Sūs on the edge of its valley, shaped the character of the leader. For more information on the location and the importance of this village, see Fromherz 2005, 175–90 and Staëvel & Fili 2006, 153–94.

82 He started his journey to Cordoba in 501 H/1106 CE, then proceeded to Egypt. From there, he joined the pilgrimage to Mecca. Afterwards, he went to Baghdad in 510 H/1115 CE and took four years to return to his homeland. He owed his formation in philosophy and jurisprudence to Abū Bakr al-Ṭurṭūshī (d. 520 H/1126 CE) and Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505 H/1111 CE). Al-Marrākushī, *al-Muʿjib* (1949), 178–80.

al-muwaḥḥid (the one who believes that there is only one God), which was the fundamental article of the Islamic faith. The adherents of this doctrine were called *al-muwaḥḥidūn* (the unitarians) in Arabic.[83] Like their leader Ibn Tūmart, they believed in restoring the purity of the faith and reformulating Islamic law, especially since, in their view, the previous empire was characterised by general corruption and the detachment and remoteness of the people from the prophetic traditions and the straight path (*al-ṭarīq al-mustaqīm*).[84] To show their determination to break totally and immediately with the past, the Almohads introduced radical and strict changes into the religio-political context, for example, by destroying the ornaments of the mosques. They purified these in order to return them to their roots and the simplicity of the prophet's era. In addition, they intended to correct the prayer direction (*al-qibla*).[85] Moreover, they forced Jews and Christians to convert, mistrusted the Mālikī jurists and replaced the previous judges and *fuqahā'* with new, supposedly more loyal judges.[86] In 516 H/1122 CE, Ibn Tūmart proclaimed himself the awaited *Mahdī*, or Messiah (*al-imām al-maʿṣūm al-mahdī al-maʿlūm*). Under all these circumstances, Ibn al-ʿArabī and Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ lived their last years, and had no choice but to show loyalty and obedience (*al-walā' wa-l-ṭāʿa*) to the new empire. They also witnessed how Almohadism tried to mould, shake and fracture the Andalusi identity and cause instability in both al-Maghrib and al-Andalus.

1.3. Embryological context

1.3.1. Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions dealing with the prenatal life

A brief survey of the verses and ḥadīths dealing with the creation and prenatal development might be important in this contextualising part.

83 Fierro insists that some sources consider it more probable that the original name of the movement was *al-mu'minūn* (the believers) rather than *al-muwaḥḥidūn*. Fierro 2000, 134.

84 Ibn Tūmart accused the Almoravid jurists of an abusive use of the Mālikī secondary books (*kutub al-furūʿ*), rather than going back to the Qur'an and *Sunnah*. Abnun-Nasr 1987, 88–89.

85 Ibid., 132–33.

86 Ibid., 134.

Considered God's speech (*kalām allāh*) in Muslim dogma,[87] the Qur'an refers to the prenatal life discursively in many instances. The water (*mā'*) appears as the first element in the creation of the first human being, and it is depicted in Q 25:54: "*And He is the One Who creates human beings from a [humble] liquid, then establishes for them bonds of kinship and marriage. For your Lord is Most Capable.*" It also appears in Q 86:5–7: "*Let people then consider what they were created from! They were created from a spurting fluid, stemming from between the backbone and the ribcage.*" The second essential element for the creation of Adam[88] and humankind after him is the dust (*turāb*):

- *Indeed, the example of Jesus in the sight of God is like that of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, "Be!" And he was!* (Q 3:59)
- *O people! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then [consider that] indeed, We [i.e., God] created you from dust, then from a semen drop, then from a clinging clot, then from a lump of flesh, formed and unformed, that We may show you. And We settle in the wombs whom We will for a specified term, then We bring you out as a child, and then [We develop you] that you may reach your [time of] maturity. And among you is he who is taken in [early] death, and among you is he who is returned to the most decrepit [old] age so that he knows, after [once having] knowledge, nothing. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and swells and grows [something] of every beautiful kind.* (Q 22:5)
- *One of His signs is that He created you from dust, then – behold! – you are human beings spreading over the earth.* (Q 30:20)
- *And it is God who created you from dust, then developed you from a sperm-drop, then made you into pairs. No female ever conceives or delivers without His knowledge. And no one's life is made long or cut short but is written in a Record. That is certainly easy for God.* (Q 35:11)
- *He is the One Who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then developed you into a clinging clot, then He brings you forth as infants, so that you may reach your prime, and become old – though some of you [may] die sooner – reaching an appointed time, so perhaps you may understand Allāh's power.* (Q 40:67)

87 See Martin, *EI*^{3}, http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_24418 accessed 30 April 2024.

88 For further information about the creation of Adam, see Chabbi 2019, 137–61; O'Shaughnessy 1971, 131–49; Castillo Castillo 1978–79, 131–48; Monnot 1994, 19–29.

The Qur'an then describes the rudimentary stages of Adam and humankind's creation, which starts with clay (*ṭīn*)[89] or sticky clay (*ṭīn lāzib*),[90] that develops into black mud (*ḥama' masnūn*) and potter's clay (*ṣalṣāl*):

- *Who has perfected everything He created. And He originated the creation of humankind from clay.* (Q 32:6)
- *Your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to create a human being from clay."* (Q 38:71)
- *So, ask them which is harder to create: them or other marvels of Our creation? Indeed, We created them from sticky clay.* (Q 37:11)
- *When your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to create a human being from sounding clay moulded from black mud."* (Q 15:28)

The embryogenesis – being the tripartite *nuṭfa-ʿalaqa-muḍgha*[91] followed by the stages of bones, flesh, and another creature, or having them separately – is further reflected in other Qur'anic passages, including:

- *He created the human being from a drop of fluid, yet he becomes an open adversary.* (Q 16:4)
- *His [believing] companion replied, while conversing with him, "Do you disbelieve in the One Who created you from dust, then [developed you] from a sperm-drop, then formed you into a man?"* (Q 18:38)
- Q 22:5
- *And indeed, We created humankind from an extract of clay, then placed each [human] as a sperm-drop in a secure place, then We developed the drop into a clinging clot, then developed the clot into a lump of flesh, then developed the lump into bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, then We brought it into being as a new creation. So, Blessed is God, the Best of Creators.* (Q 23:12–14)
- Q 35:11
- *Do people not see that We have created them from a sperm drop, then – behold! – they openly challenge [Us]?* (Q 36:77)

89 Being the mixture between the water and the dust. Further explanation can be found in Kueny 2013, 236–37.

90 Ibid., n. 9, 237.

91 The term *nuṭfa* is most often mentioned in the Qur'an. It appears twelve times: Q 16:4, Q 18:37, Q 22:5, Q 23:13–14, Q 35:11, Q 36:77, Q 40:67, Q 75:37, Q 76:2 and Q 80:19. Yet, *ʿalaqa* or *ʿalaq* appear six times in Q 4:129, Q 22:5, Q 23:14, Q 40:67, Q 75:38 and Q 96:2, and *muḍgha* is mentioned twice in Q 22:5 and Q 23:14. See Fortier 2001, 109–10.

– *He created you from a single soul, then from it He made its mate. And He produced for you four pairs of cattle. He creates you in the wombs of your mothers [in stages], one development after another, in three layers of darkness. That is Allah – your Lord! All authority belongs to Him. There is no God except Him. How can you then be turned away?* (Q 39:6)
– Q 40:67
– *And He created the pairs – males and females – from a sperm drop when it is emitted.* (Q 53:45–46)
– *Were they not [once] a sperm drop emitted? Then they became a clinging clot, then He developed and perfected their form.* (Q 75:37–38)
– *We created humans from a drop of mixed fluids, in order to test them, so We made them hear and see.* (Q 76:2)
– *From what did He create him? From a sperm drop, He created and enabled him.* (Q 80:18–19)

One of the key references in understanding the embryological chronological order is the prophetic tradition transmitted by Ibn Masʿūd, also known as the ensoulment ḥadīth (*ḥadīth nafkh al-rūḥ*).[92] There is consensus among the Muslim scholars about the authenticity of this ḥadīth, and its presence in all the canonical ḥadīth collections proves this.[93] It reads as follows:

> ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd said: the Messenger of God narrated to us, and he is the truthful and trusted one: "Indeed the creation of one of you is gathered inside his mother's womb in forty days. Then, for a similar period, he is a clot (*ʿalaqa*). Then, for a similar period (*mithl dhalik*), he is a piece of flesh (*muḍgha*). Then, God sends the angel to him to blow the soul into him, and [the angel] is ordered to write four [things]: his livelihood, his death, his deeds, his fortune and misfortune. By Him,

92 One should take into consideration that this denomination was likely spread after the second century H/eighth century CE, since the ensoulment in itself did not appear in all the variants, which supposes that the idea of the ensoulment was probably added to the main ḥadīth during second century H/eighth century CE. See Ibn ʿAsākir, *Muʿjam* (2000), I, 235; al-Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ* (1994), IX, 484.

93 In al-Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* in *Kitāb al-qadar (bāb fī-l-qadar)*, *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (*bāb qawluhu taʿālā wa-laqad sabaqat kalimatunā …*) and *Kitāb bad' al-khalq* (*bāb dhikr al-malā'ika*). One must remember that the version in *Kitāb al-qadar* lacks the ensoulment. In Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ,* in *Kitāb al-qadar (bāb kayfiyyat khalq al-ādamī …)*, in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd, *Kitāb al-sunna* (*bāb al-qadar)*, in the *Sunan* of al-Nasā'ī in *Kitāb al-tafsīr* (*bāb qawluhu taʿālā fa-minhum shaqiy wa-saʿīd*) and in Ibn Māja's *Sunan* in *bāb fī-l-qadar,* and, finally, in *Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī.*

> besides Whom there is no god, one amongst you acts like the people deserving paradise until between him and paradise there remains but the distance of a cubit (*dhirāʿ*), when suddenly the writing of destiny overcomes him and he is sealed off with the deeds of denizens of Hell and thus enters Hell, and another one acts in the way of the denizens of Hell, until there remains between him and Hell a distance of a cubit that the writing of destiny overcomes him and then he begins to act like the people of Paradise and enters it."

Another pivotal prophetic tradition that generated debates about the beginning of human life is the ḥadīth transmitted by Ḥudhayfa Ibn Asīd. It appears in Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* in the book of destiny (*Kitāb al-qadar*):

> Ḥudhayfa PCL Ibn Wahb: ʿĀmir b. Wāthila heard Ibn Masʿūd say: "The wretched is the one who is wretched in the womb of his mother and the blessed is the one who has been promised otherwise." [ʿĀmir] then met a man from the companions of the messenger of God, called Ḥuhayfa Ibn Asīd al-Ghifārī, and told him this from what Ibn Masʿūd had said adding: How is a man wretched without having acted? So, the man [Ḥudhayfa] said: Are you surprised by this? I heard the messenger of God say: "When the semen (*nuṭfa*) has passed forty-two nights God sends an angel to it and he forms it and creates his ability to hear and see and his skin, flesh and bones. And then says: oh Lord, would he be male or female? And your God decides as He desires and the angel then writes down that also and then says: oh Lord, what about his death? And your God decides as He likes it, and the angel writes it down. Then he says: oh God, what about his livelihood? And then God decides as He likes and the angel writes it down, and then the angel gets out with his scroll of destiny in his hand, and nothing is added to it, and nothing is subtracted from it."

1.3.2. The embryo in ancient Greek medicine

Two traditions on generation emerged from ancient Greek medical sources that were the subject of scholarly debate for many centuries: the two contradictory Hippocratic and Aristotelian theories. The Hippocratic treatises maintain that both male and female produce seeds/semen that contribute

equally to the generation of the embryo.[94] *On Generation* argues that the seed comes from all the parts of the body, which explains the likeness that can be physically passed from the parents' bodies to the baby's.[95] The mother's role in determining the sex of the embryo was, in effect, neglected and undervalued until the era of the Hippocratic treatises, in which the female semen was finally recognised as an active element in the process of generation and in determining the sex of the embryo, depending on its *enkrateia*[96] or domination in terms of quantity.[97]

Yet, this Hippocratic theory was challenged by Aristotle, who was the major advocate of the one-seed theory, which proposes that the semen comes from all parts of the body of both parents and, as such, moves into all parts of the child's body, explaining, in particular, the resemblance between the parents and their children. The Aristotelian theory rejects that the sperm is not each of these parts in action "but in potency either by virtue of its material mass or because it possesses in itself a certain power".[98] Aristotle attributes the power of the sperm first to the fact that it is a nourishment residue, just like the blood. Yet the sperm is a blood that has been concocted. At this point, it differs from menstrual blood: the latter is also a nourishment residue, but it has not been concocted.[99] Therefore, on its own, menstrual blood cannot generate until it is developed and transformed by the sperm.[100] For this, it is only the power of the male's sperm that contributes to the formation of the embryo, since it acts efficiently and not materially:

> The contribution which the female makes to generation [of a foetus] is the *matter* used therein, this is to be found in the substance constituting

94 Known as the two-seeds theory.
95 *On Generation*, 3.
96 ἐγκράτεια in Greek means power over something.
97 Gherchanoc 2015, 2.
98 Aristotle, *GA*, I 19, 726b 17–19, 727a, 26–28; *GA*, 729a, 10–11. See also Roux 2009, 307–22; Boylan 1984, 92–110.
99 Ibid., 726b 9–12.
100 Ibid., I 20, 728a 26–27. This interpretation underlines the superiority of the semen of the man in procreation. This belief in the man's semen being the prime determinant in conception made it difficult for followers to allow the semen's destruction during the withdrawal. Additional information about the two theories can be found in Darovskikh 2017, 95–116; Horowitz 1976, 186–213; Boylan 1984, 83–112; Henry 2005, 1–42; Needham 1959, 31–60.

> the menstrual fluid … the man provides the "form" and "the principle of movement", the female provides the body, in other words, the material.[101]

Centuries later, Galen draws from both the Hippocratic and Aristotelian theories, asserting the two-seeds theory and at the same time holding that blood is the origin of semen, and that the male's seed is perfected and stronger. Boylan explains that Galen acknowledges that his views on sperma are influenced by the "Hippocratic and Aristotelian natural systems". According to Galen, both the male and female produce seeds. Hence, "he accepts this Hippocratic dictum, but instead of connecting it overtly to a pangenetic theory or linking it to the narrow, as the Hippocratic writers do, Galen follows Aristotle in making the blood the origin of the seed."[102]

In sum, these three Greek medical theories, mainly the Hippocratic and Galenic and, to a lesser degree, the Aristotelian, are essential in understanding the medieval Islamic embryological discourse.

101 Ibid., I 19, 727b 30–34.
102 Boylan 1986, 57.