



Contents lists available at ASJP (Algerian Scientific Journal Platform)

**Academic Review of social and human studies**

journal homepage: [www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/PresentationRevue/552](http://www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/PresentationRevue/552)



## The Problematic Concept of the Ottoman Caliphate

### إشكالية مفهوم الخلافة العثمانية

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#### Article info:

#### Abstract

#### Article history:

Received : 25-07-2023

Accepted : 21-11-2023

#### Key words:

Ottoman Caliphate,  
Hereditary Monarch.

**Purpose:** The research aims at clarifying the essence of the Ottoman rule depends on the Islamic Sharia. It discusses all provisions of the Rightly Guided Caliphate that were agreed upon by most Muslims. It also traces the Muslims' obligation to obey and pledge allegiance in the case of the hereditary monarch and whether the term Ottoman Caliphate is legally correct.

**Methodology:** The research relies on the descriptive, analytical, historical, and critical methodology by studying historical and jurisprudential sources about the Ottoman Caliphate, analyzing, comparing, and criticizing it, and extracting events, authentic narrations, and rulings agreed upon by many Muslim scholars.

**Findings:** The most important outcome of the subject to clarify the use of the term "caliphate" metaphorically for the Ottoman rule if it fulfills the conditions of the caliphate agreed upon by the public, and that the Ottoman Caliphate has the rights and provisions of the caliphate, and Muslims must pledge obedience and allegiance to it.

**Originality:** The Originality of the research is in showing the significance of the Ottoman Empire, not only in saving the Islamic nation and the Two Holy Mosques in Mecca and Medina from the dangers that beset it, but rather in the importance of its existence to the whole world. Peace prevailed during the Ottoman Empire, and justice was done for the oppressed and the European people.

#### الكلمات المفتاحية: ملخص

الوباء

التعليم عن بعد

التعليم

التحديات.

**أهداف البحث:** يهدف البحث إلى تبيان ماهية الحكم العثماني حسب الشرع الإسلامي، وما ينطبق عليه من أحكام الخلافة الراشدة التي اتفق عليها جمهور المسلمين، وتوضيح حكم التزام المسلمين بالطاعة والبيعة في حالة الملك الوراثي، وهل يصح إطلاق مصطلح «الخلافة العثمانية» شرعاً.

**منهج البحث:** الوصفي التحليلي التاريخي النقدي، وذلك عن طريق دراسة المصادر التاريخية والفقهية حول الخلافة العثمانية وتحليلها ومقارنتها ونقدها واستخلاص الأحداث والروايات الصحيحة والأحكام التي اتفق عليها جمهور علماء المسلمين.

**النتائج:** وأهم ما نتج عن هذه الدراسة؛ صَحّة أن يطلق على الحكم العثمانية مصطلح «الخلافة» مجازاً، ما دامت محققة شروط الخلافة التي اتفق عليها الجمهور، وأن للدولة العثمانية حقوق الخلافة وأحكامها، وواجب على المسلمين الالتزام بالطاعة والبيعة لها.

**أصالة البحث:** تنبع أصالة البحث من أنه يقدم أدلة على أهمية وجود الدولة العثمانية ليس فقط في إنقاذ الأمة الإسلامية والحرمين الشريفين من الأخطار التي أحْدَقَتْ بها، بل في أهمية وجودها للعالم أجمع حيث ساد بوجودها السلم، ونصر المظلوم حتى من الأوروبيين أنفسهم.

## 1. Introduction

The importance of the research is in showing the significance of the Ottoman Empire, not only in saving the Islamic nation and the Two Holy Mosques in Mecca and Medina from the dangers that beset it, but rather in the importance of its existence to the whole world. Peace prevailed during the Ottoman Empire, and justice was done for the oppressed and the European people.

Hence, the research problem is whether the term "Caliphate" given to the Ottoman Empire is a consequence of victory or received the consensus of the Islamic nations. **Hence, the hypotheses of the research are:** What are the reasons for the weakness of the Mamluk state that led to the victory of the Ottomans over them during the reign of Sultan Selim I? Did Sultan Selim and his grandchildren hold the title of Caliph? Does the Ottoman Empire achieve the concept of the Islamic Caliphate? What is the legal ruling achieved by the Ottoman rule of the Islamic world?

### The research aims to

- 1- State the reasons for the weakness of the Mamluk state and the victory of the Ottomans over it.
- 2- Clarify the nature of the Ottomans according to Islamic law.
- 3- Explain the Islamic ruling on the obedience and allegiance of Muslims to the Ottoman Empire.

The research relies on the analytical, descriptive, historical, and critical approach in clarifying the nature of the Ottoman Caliphate, which followed the Abbasids' Caliphate in 1517 AD (923 AH), and what is the Islamic ruling on it, and the consequences of that. The research also gives recommendations to future researchers.

Some previous studies have dealt with the importance of the Ottoman Empire and its rule over the Islamic world, as stated in a letter written by the Grand Vizier "Lutfi Pasha" (d.1562 AD/ 970 AH) entitled "The Salvation of the Nation in the Knowledge of the Imams." Other books that discussed the Ottoman Empire are "A Message in Achieving the Islamic Caliphate and The Virtues Of The Ottoman Caliphate"

by Sheikh Al-Azhar "Hassan Al-Attar"(d.1835 CE /1250 AH) and the book "The Eastern Question" by Mustafa Kamel.

## 1. Mamluk-Ottoman Relations

The relations between the two countries since Ottoman Sultan Murad I (1362-1389 AD) were characterized by friendship. Cairo celebrated the conquest of Constantinople during the days of the Ottoman Sultan, Mohammad Al-Fatih. Still, things did not last, as some differences disturbed the peace between them, the most important of which was the Emirates' issue. Mamluk controlled the southeastern part of Anatolia. The two emirates became "Dhu al-Qadriya" (in the region of Marash and Yozgad) and "Ramadan Ogullari" (the family of Ramadan in the region of Jamqorawa). Under the influence of the Mamluk state, the two emirates were disputed areas between the Ottomans and the Mamluks, especially after both sides harbored dissenting Emirs from the Emirate of Dhu al-Qadriya. Sultan Mohammad Al-Fatih prepared to control Egypt in 1481 AD/ 886 AH, but his sudden death prevented that.

Furthermore, the tension between the two parties continued during the reign of Bayezid II (1481-1512 AD) when his brother Sultan Jem went out and took refuge in Egypt. The Mamluk Sultan welcomed him (as we mentioned earlier). This led to the outbreak of war between the two parties and closed the pilgrimage routes from Anatolia through the Levant for a long time until the Hafsid Emir of Tunisia intervened and reconciled the two. The two parties agreed that the Ottomans and the Emirate of Al Ramadan, under the protection of the Mamluks, would protect the Emirate of Dhu al-Qadriyah. Sultan Bayezid II sent the revenues of the Ottoman endowments in Mecca and Medina to the Mamluk Sultan.

The relationship between the two parties was strengthened when the Portuguese threat appeared, which threatened the coasts of the Arabian Peninsula, most of which were subject to Mamluk's influence. So, the Mamluks began to be friendly with the Ottomans starting in 1502 AD, especially since the Mamluks could not resist the Portuguese fleet. The Portuguese entered a permanent conflict with the Arabs and

Mamluks for control of trade in the Indian Ocean<sup>(1)</sup>. The Portuguese occupied the island of “ Socotra ” in the Gulf of Aden in 1505 AD to cut off trade between the Arab countries and India. They also occupied the island of “ Hormuz “ at the entrance to the Gulf of Basra in 1507 AD and reached the port of Jeddah in the Red Sea. The Mamluks lost their fleet to the Portuguese in the battle of Diu near India in 1509 AD. So, the Mamluk Sultan Qansuh al-Ghauri called for the help of the Ottoman Sultan Bayazid II, who sent the Mamluks military aid consisting of thirty ships and thirty cannons. At the same time, the Portuguese contacted Ismail al-Safavi, suggesting that they attack the Mamluks together.

In 1511 AD, the Ottomans sent other aid to the Mamluks, including four hundred cannons and forty quintals of gunpowder. The documents of Topkapi in Istanbul mentioned the Ottomans sending several sailors to Suez in 1512 AD to build ships. In addition, Egypt depended on the Ottomans to obtain materials Shipbuilding industry. The attention of the Arab world was directed towards the threats of the Portuguese (represented by cutting off the living resources in the Indian Ocean and attempts to seize the Two Holy Mosques), not only towards Qansuh al- Ghuri but also towards the Ottoman Sultan Bayazid II. The Arabs were not afraid - as before - of crusaders coming from the Mediterranean since the advance of the Ottomans in Rumeli. However, the Portuguese in the south sought to control Aden and threatened to seize Mecca and Medina and “extract the bones of the Prophet from his grave.”

However, the friendly relationship between the Ottomans and the Mamluks did not last after the retirement of Bayezid and the accession of his son Sultan Selim I (1512-1520 AD), as tension prevailed between the two countries, especially after the Ottoman-Safavid war<sup>(1)</sup>. The Portuguese tried to win the Safavids over to their side after the failure of their wars inside the Red Sea after the Ottomans helped the Mamluks. So Albuquerque, the ruler of Portuguese

Goa, sent a letter to Shah Ismail Al-Safavi (the founder of the Safavid state in Iran in 1501 AD), in which it stated the following: I appreciate your respect for the Christians living in your country, and I offer you the fleet, soldiers, and weapons to be used against the Turkish fortresses in India, and if you want to invade the Arab countries or attack Mecca, you will find me beside you in the Red Sea in front of Jeddah, or Aden, or in Bahrain, or Qatif, or in Basra, and the Shah will find me next to him along the Persian coast, and I will do everything he wants”<sup>(2)</sup>.

The emergence of the Safavid state in the east was the real threat to the Ottoman Empire. Shah Ismail, who made his Safavid doctrine the doctrine of the state, found many supporters in Anatolia, where he was very influential on the Turkmen Emirs, who were particularly resentful of the financial and administrative measures of the Ottoman central system of sultans Murad II, Mehmed II, and Bayezid II. Sultan Selim (Al-Yawz) realized the seriousness of the matter when he was the crown prince. Once he took over the Sultanate, he stopped European combat operations. He began to move against this great danger, as well as against the Mamluks, who were so weak that they no longer could protect holy places. The Ottomans controlled eastern and southeastern Anatolia on the one hand, put an end to the Safavid danger on the other hand, and expanded and spread towards Azerbaijan and Iraq on the third hand, in addition to controlling the Silk Road between Tabriz and Aleppo.

Meanwhile, Ur and Ba witnessed transformations and great changes as the era of geographical discoveries began. The Portuguese, who discovered the Cape of Good Hope and then reached India, began in 1502, striking one after the other on trading activities of Arabs and the Mamluks, and they reached the Gulf of Basra and the Red Sea. They encircled the Arabian Peninsula and occupied much of its coasts. They became a great danger to the Two Holy Mosques in front of the Mamluks ‘ inability to confront them. All these political, economic, and religious reasons were the direct reasons for the sudden campaign that Sultan

<sup>(1)</sup> Bayat, Fadel Mahdi. 2003. Studies in the History of the Arabs during the Ottoman Era: 1st Edition, Beirut, Dar Al-Madar Al-Islami, p 57-58.

<sup>(1)</sup> Bayat, Studies in the History of the Arabs during the Ottoman Era, p 59.

<sup>(2)</sup> Sallabi, Ali Mohammad. 2011. Ottoman Empire History: 1st Edition, Sidon - Beirut, Al-Asriyyah Library, volume 1, p 259.

Selim started by heading toward Iran and Egypt to unite the Islamic world and protect it from dangers<sup>(1)</sup>.

When the battle of “Caldiran” in 1514 AD broke out between Sultan Selim and Ismail al-Safavi, the Emir of Dhul Qadriya “Alaa al-Dawla” (who sided with the Mamluks) attacked the equipment of the Ottoman army. This caused Sultan Selim to fight him, kill him with his leaders, and appoint his brother,” Shahswar. “Shahswar previously sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire, foreshadowing the outbreak of war between the two parties<sup>(2)</sup>.

After the Battle of Chaldiran, Ismail Safavi allied with the Portuguese and approved their seizure of Hormuz in exchange for his help in conquering Bahrain and their previous pledge to support him against the Ottomans, and the project of the Safavid-Portuguese alliance included the division of the Arab Mashreq between them<sup>(1)</sup>. In the meantime, Shah Ismail the Safavi sent a message to the Mamluk Sultan inviting him to ally with him, fearing that Selim I’s control of Persia would leave the Mamluks alone in the face of the Ottoman expansion<sup>(2)</sup>.

After the fall of Andalusia in 1492 AD/897 AH, some Muslims migrated to North Africa, and the Spanish pursued Muslims there and occupied most of its eastern coasts with the help of the Knights of St. John. Many Muslims resorted to acts of redemption and revenge against the Crusaders in the Mediterranean and asked for the help of the Ottoman Empire. The Portuguese control of Aden, Oman, and all the coasts of the Arabian Gulf in 1517 AD also called on the Ottomans to move towards the region and annex it to them, especially after the cooperation of the Safavids with the Portuguese, with the inability of the Mamluks to fight the Portuguese<sup>(3)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Fadela Research Center, a group of researchers. 2022. Bilad al-Haramayn in Ottoman Documents: Translated by Kamal Khoja, Istanbul, p 7- 9.

<sup>(2)</sup> Bayat, Studies in the History of the Arabs during the Ottoman Era, p 60.

<sup>(1)</sup> Sallabi, Ottoman Empire History, v 1, p 259.

<sup>(2)</sup> Bayat, Studies in the History of the Arabs during the Ottoman Era, p 60.

<sup>(3)</sup> Hassoun, Ali. 2002. History of the Ottoman Empire: 4th Edition, Beirut, Islamic Office, p 59.

It was easy to justify the campaign waged by Selim Yavuz against the Safavids. However, convincing the Islamic world of the legitimacy of his campaign towards an Islamic state that would protect the Two Holy Mosques was fraught with some difficulties. Therefore, the Ottomans returned to their previous experiences, Similar to what they did against the Turkish Empire in Anatolia. They described the influence of the Mamluks as a powerless, authoritarian regime that did not hesitate to practice injustice against its people. Moreover, because the Portuguese threat was the strongest factor to form the legitimate ground for Sultan Selim’s campaign to unify the Islamic world, the slogan of removing the European threat from the Two Holy Mosques and holy places arose. At that time, no country was capable of that except the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the Ottomans adopted a sacred cause, protecting the Islamic world<sup>(1)</sup>. Especially after the Ottomans seized letters between the Mamluks and the Safavids, indicating the existence of cooperation against them. In addition, Sultan al-Ghuri received some of the opponents of Selim I in Egypt, headed by his brother “Ahmad,” and used them to stir up discord against the Ottomans<sup>(2)</sup>.

In addition to the injustice that prevailed throughout the Arab countries from the rule of the Mamluks, the judges of the four schools of thought and delegates in the Levant wrote - with popular support - a petition telling Sultan Selim that people were fed up with the oppression of the Mamluks and called on the Sultan to free them from that injustice. Furthermore, the scholars of Egypt also wrote to Sultan Selim, summoning him to rid them of the Circassians (Mamluks) and their tyranny<sup>(3)</sup>.

The opinion of the scholars of Egypt and the Levant was that annexing their country to the Ottoman Empire would benefit the nation in achieving its goals, unity, and security in the face of the dangers besetting it<sup>(4)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Fadela Research Center, Bilad al-Haramayn in Ottoman Documents, p 8- 9.

<sup>(2)</sup> Sallabi, Ottoman Empire History, v 1, p 260.

<sup>(3)</sup> Harb, Mohammad. 2012. The Ottomans in History and Civilization: 3rd edition, Damascus, Dar Al-Qalam, p 186- 189.

<sup>(4)</sup> Sallabi, Ottoman Empire History, v 1, p 264.



## 2 The Ottoman-Mamluk War

After Sultan Selim finished his war with the Safavids and unified Anatolia with northern Iraq under his control, he began preparing to fight the Mamluk and annex their state. He also rumored to the Mamluks that he was preparing for a second war with the Safavids<sup>(5)</sup>. When their Sultan Qansuh al- Ghuri, the ally of the Safavid Shah, learned of the move, the Ottomans sent an envoy to Sultan Selim, offering to mediate between him and the Safavids for peace. Still, the Sultan refused to receive the messenger and expelled him from his country. The Sultan mobilized his soldiers to eliminate the Mamluk State and advanced his soldiers to the north of the city of Aleppo. Here, al-Ghawri advanced to Aleppo, bringing Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil Ala Allah the Fourth and his judges under the pretext of mediating between the two parties and supporting his Safavid allies. Sultan Selim was not deceived by that, as he knew al-Ghuri's intentions. Upon the arrival of another Mamluk envoy to Sultan Selim's camp, the Sultan shaved the envoy's beard and killed his companions. The Ottoman Sultan used utter statements referring to war, put the envoy on a mule in a humiliating manner, and sent him to his master. Thus, there was no way to avoid that war. That battle took place in Marj Dabiq in 1516 AD near Aleppo. A dispute occurred between the ranks of the Mamluks. Three leaders (Khayerbek of Aleppo, Janberd Al-Ghazali of Hama, and Fakhr al-Din Al-Ma'ani of Lebanon) joined the Ottoman Sultan, who won the war. At the same time, the Mamluk Sultan Qansuh Al- Ghuri was killed<sup>(1)</sup>.

However, the Ottomans honored Al-Ghuri after his death. They buried him on the outskirts of Aleppo. Sultan Salim entered Aleppo, then Damascus, and he was invited into the mosques, and coins were minted in his name as Sultan and Caliph. From the Levant, Sultan Selim sent to "Tuman Bey" (the Mamluk Sultan who succeeded Al-Ghuri) in Cairo, asking him to submit to the Ottomans and pay taxes.

Nevertheless, Tuman Bey killed the Messenger of the Ottoman Sultan, so there was no escape from moving toward Egypt<sup>(2)</sup> and ending the rule of the Mamluks in it. The two armies met near Gaza; the Ottomans were victorious, entered Gaza, headed towards Cairo, and met on its outskirts in "Al- Raydaniyah " in 1517 AD 922 AH. Tuman Bey killed the ottoman minister "Sinan Pasha" thinking he was Sultan Selim. Hence, the Ottoman artillery razed the Mamluk strongholds for eight days, and the Ottomans were victorious and entered Cairo. Tuman fled to Giza, fell captive in their hands, and was hanged on the 21st. Rabi` Al-Awal in 923 AH and the Sultan entered Cairo and was called a Caliph<sup>(1)</sup>.

As for the real reasons that led to the defeat of the Mamluks and the extinction of their state, they are:

- 1- Modern advanced weapons of the Ottomans: Mamluk artillery relied on huge, fixed cannons that did not move, unlike the light Ottoman ones that could be moved in all directions.
- 2- The accuracy of the Ottoman military planning: Although the Ottomans traveled long distances quickly, were fought in the land of their enemy, they were victorious because of good planning.
- 3- As well as the high morale of the Ottomans, on the contrary, of the Mamluks.
- 4- The Ottomans' fair and just social system and the injustice, oppression, and insecurity among the Mamluks<sup>(2)</sup>.

Egyptian scholars considered the day of the conquest of Egypt by the Ottomans a holiday for Egypt and its people. Furthermore, they made the day of the Ottomans' victory over the Europeans a spiritual feast and began mentioning the Turkish Sultans' names in mosques. Everyone was eager to serve the Ottoman Empire. In this way, they wanted the Ottoman rulers to be the spiritual representatives of Islam after they conquered Istanbul, and the prophetic hadith about them was fulfilled<sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(5)</sup> Bayat, Studies in the History of the Arabs during the Ottoman Era, p 61.

<sup>(1)</sup> Hassoun, History of the Ottoman Empire, p 61.

<sup>(1)</sup> Hassoun, History of the Ottoman Empire, p 61.62.

<sup>(2)</sup> Harb, The Ottomans in History and Civilization, p 31- 32.

<sup>(1)</sup> Fadela Research Center, Bilad al-Haramayn in Ottoman Documents, p 9- 10.

Furthermore, when the Sheriff of Mecca, “Barakat bin Mohammad,” learned of the death of Al-Ghuri and his deputy, Tuman Bey, he sought to provide obedience to the Ottoman Sultan. He sent his son “Abu Numay” with the keys to the Kaaba and the sacred relics. So, Sultan Selim approved him as Sharif of the Hijaz and Emir of Mecca and granted him broad powers. Thus, Sultan Selim became the servant of the Two Holy Mosques and Sultan of the Hijaz as well. He allocated many endowments to the Two Holy Mosques, thus strengthening his position in the hearts of Muslims, and the oppressed began to yearn for him.

Likewise, the Mamluk ruler of Yemen, “Iskandar Al-Jarkasi,” sent a messenger to the Ottoman Sultan Selim to offer loyalty. The Sultan approved him in his position, as Yemen was a strategic dimension. It was the key to the Red Sea, and in its safety was the safety of the holy places. Thus, the Ottomans extended their authority over the Red Sea and pushed the Europeans away from it until the eighteenth century<sup>(2)</sup>. In 1520 A.D., Sultan Selim died after he quelled the strife, disciplined the Safavids, provided security for the public, paved the way for Islamic unity, and for his son Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566 AD) to invade Europe<sup>(3)</sup>.

### 3 The Concept of Succession

The position of the Caliphate (Great Imamate) is one of the most important pillars of Islam. The Companions understood the importance of this position, so they chose Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, as the successor of Prophet Mohammad, even before he was buried<sup>(1)</sup>. The Muslim nation agreed on this position as a method of governance that organizes their affairs.

The Caliphate was established due to Muslims’ strong desire and belief to have a unified leader who would strengthen and organize their community<sup>(2)</sup>.

Al-Mawardi defined the Imamate by saying: “The Imamate is established for the succession of Prophethood in guarding the religion and the politics of the world. It is not a privilege for an individual or a class, but it is a job that is performed, and what counts is the performance of these jobs.

Ibn Khaldun defined Imamate as the Mulk or kingship, politics, and Caliphate (succession): The Mulk: the natural one is carrying everyone according to the requirements of purpose and desire.

The politics are to make everyone follow the requirements of rational consideration in bringing worldly interests and repelling harm.

Moreover, the Caliphate is asking everyone to comply with Sharia’s requirements considering their Hereafter and worldly interests; since the conditions of this world are all due to the legislator (Allah) who considers them hereafter interests, it is, in fact, succession from the legislator in guarding this religion and managing the world with it”<sup>(3)</sup>.

The early Muslim rulers were characterized by three titles: Caliph, Commander of the Faithful, and Imam. The Caliphate refers to the leadership of the Muslim state and involves administering the state and applying Sharia. The title of “Imam” is used to differentiate the leadership from prayer. The title “Commander of the Faithful” was first used by Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and is used with the same meaning as “Caliph”<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Hanafi scholar and the Grand Imam “Lutfi Pasha” said in his message, The Salvation of the Ummah in Knowing the Imams: Our scholars, may Allah Almighty have mercy on them, said: What is meant by the authority is the Caliph...and the Caliph is the Imam and who is called the Sultan. What the Sultan in Sharia means is the pledge of allegiance, dominance, and the protection of the status quo.

<sup>(1)</sup> Sallabi, Ottoman Empire History, v 1, p 270.

<sup>(2)</sup> Harb, The Ottomans in History and Civilization, p 32.

<sup>(1)</sup> Attar, Hassan. 2006. A message on achieving the Islamic Caliphate and the virtues of the Ottoman caliphate: investigation by Ahmed Abdullah Najim, 1st edition, Egypt, Dar al-Hidaya, p 5.

<sup>(2)</sup> Sallabi, Ali Mohammad. 2011. Shura in Islam: 1st Edition, Sidon - Beirut, Al-Asriyyah Library, volume 1, p 39.

<sup>(3)</sup> Ibn Khaldun, Abdul Rahman bin Mohammad. 2011. The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar (In the days of the Arabs, the Persians, the Berbers, and their contemporaries with the greatest authority: Part 1, Part 2, 1st floor, Beirut, Dar Ibn Hazm, volume 1, p 143- 144.

<sup>(1)</sup> Kunduz, Ahmed Aq; Ozturk is happy. 2008. The Unknown Ottoman Empire: Istanbul, Scientific Research Endowment, p 226.

What is meant by the imam; is the one who establishes religion fairly. Furthermore, it was said in a prophetic hadith<sup>(\*)</sup>. It is about the succession of a person on behalf of the Prophet Mohammad, with a general leadership in establishing the boundaries of Sharia laws.

The Caliph is authorized to promote good and prevent evil and possess certain qualities, such as dominance, protection of the status quo, establishing religion with justice, promoting good, preventing evil, and being a leader. If these conditions are met, they are considered a Sultan, who can be referred to as the Imam, Caliph, and governor. This is considered mandatory<sup>(2)</sup>.

Ibn Khaldun on the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphate (after the Rashidun era): "The Caliphate transformed into a monarchy, and its original purpose as religion faded. Initially, the Caliphate upheld religious scruples, but later it devolved into tribalism and military power. This change started during the era of Muawiyah and Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam and continued under the rule of their descendants, the Umayyads. The name of the Caliphate remained, but its original meaning was lost, and it became a pure monarchy"<sup>(1)</sup>.

Al-Mawardi and Al-Farra' agreed that Caliphate is permissible by a covenant from a predecessor (such as what Mu'awiyah did by appointing his son Yazid). This matter was unanimously agreed on its validity for two matters... The first: is that Abu Bakr appointed Omar. The second: is that Omar "entrusted it to the people of the Shura,"... so the entrustment with it became unanimous in the validity of the Caliphate. If the Caliph wants to choose a successor, he must choose the worthiest of them...

(\*) "The Imams are from Quraysh". Albani, Mohammad Nasir al-Din. 1988. *Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions*: Supervised by Zuhair Al-Shawish, 3rd edition, Beirut, The Islamic Office, p 534.

(1) Lutfi Pasha, Ibn Abd al-Mu'in al-Albani. 2001. *The salvation of the nation in knowing the imams: investigation by Magda Makhoul*, 1st edition, Cairo, Dar Al-Afaq Al-Arabiya, p 43-44.

(2) Ibn Khaldun, *The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar*, v 1 p 157.

Nevertheless, the dispute was over whether the decision maker's consent was a condition for its convening... The pledge of allegiance is valid, and that consent to it is not a condition for that<sup>(2)</sup>. Al-Mawardi justifies that: "The pledge of allegiance to Omar did not depend on the consent of the Prophet's companions, and because the Imam was entitled to it, his selection for Caliphate was carried out"<sup>(3)</sup>, and this is what Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan did for his son Yazid when he chose him a Caliph after him. Al-Farra' says: "It is permissible to be named a Caliph [metaphorically] for the one to whom the matter was concluded, and he is called the successor of the Messenger of Allah because he succeeded him in his Ummah (Islamic nation)<sup>(4)</sup> and the Abbasids did this as well after they eliminated the Umayyad state (within the rule of the dominant that was approved by the public).

The Ottoman Caliphate constituted the last episode of the great Islamic Caliphate, although the issue of the legitimacy of that Caliphate remained a subject of research<sup>(1)</sup>. Al-Maroudi cites seven conditions of Imamate and Caliphate considered by the public: justice, knowledge, honesty in using senses, physical ability, prioritizing people's interests, courage to protect the country and engage in jihad, and lineage from the Quraysh<sup>(2)</sup>. Al-Mawardi mentions the seventh condition for the Imamate and Caliphate being lineage from the Quraysh and cites a hadith about it. He mentions that there is no consideration for Dirar's deviation, as he made Caliphate permissible for all people, and notes Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq's protest against Ansar's choice to pledge allegiance to Saad bin Ubadah, citing the Prophet's words that Imams should be from Quraysh<sup>(\*)</sup>.

(2) Al-Farra, Abu Ali Mohammad bin Al-Hussein. 1983. *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyyah : Correction and Commentary by Mohammad Hamid al-Faqi*, Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, p 19.

(3) Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Hasan Mohammad ibn Habib. 1978. *Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah and Religious States*: Beirut, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, p 10.

(4) Al-Farra, *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, p 27.

(1) Attar, *A message on achieving the Islamic Caliphate and the virtues of the Ottoman caliphate*, p 5.

(3) Al-Mawardi, *Al-Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah and Religious States*, p 6.

(\*) Albani, *Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions*, p 534. So, Al-Ansar refused the Caliphate based on this hadith, and they said: "From us, Emir, and from you, Emire. They accepted what Al-Siddiq stated and declared: "You are the emires, and we are the ministers." The Prophet said: "Introduce Quraysh, but do not precede them." Albani, *Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions*, p 808

Al-Mawardi says: "There is no doubt with this text for anyone to oppose it"<sup>(4)</sup>.

While Ibn Khaldun talks about the conditions of succession: "As for the conditions for this position, they are four: knowledge, justice, sufficiency, and soundness of the senses, which affect opinion and action, and the fifth condition differed, which is the Qurashi lineage"<sup>(5)</sup>. Furthermore, he says: "As for the Qurashi lineage, it was the consensus of the Prophet companions on the day of the Saqifah on that, and the Quraysh protested against the Ansar when they were about to pledge allegiance to Saeed bin Ubadah on that day, and they said: "From us Emir and you Emire" by stating what the Prophet said: "The Imams should be from Quraysh"<sup>(\*)</sup>, and that the Prophet, commanded us to do good to your benefactor and to overlook your abuser, and if you were eligible for the emirate, Prophet Mohammad would not have asked us to be good with you, so the Ansar retracted their request: "From us is Emire and from you Emire and gave up on choosing Saeed bin Ubadah as a Caliphate. " In the Sahih: "This matter (Caliphate) is in Quraysh," and there is much such evidence.

Ibn Khaldun comments on the condition of the Qureshi lineage in the Caliphate by saying: "The Quraish weakened due to their luxury lifestyle and overspending, leading to their inability to carry the responsibility of Caliphate and being overtaken by the Ajams. Many investigators deny the Qureshi lineage as a condition for Caliphate, providing evidence to support their position"<sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(4)</sup> Al-Mawardi, Al -Ahkam Al-Sultaniyyah and Religious States, p 6.

<sup>(5)</sup> Ibn Khaldun, The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar, v 1 p 146.

<sup>(\*)</sup> Albani, Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions, p 534.

<sup>(1)</sup> Attar, A message on achieving the Islamic Caliphate and the virtues of the Ottoman caliphate, p 5.

<sup>(\*)</sup> Albani, Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions, p 534. So, Al-Ansar refused the Caliphate based on this hadith, and they said: "From us, Emir, and from you, Emire. They accepted what Al-Siddiq stated and declared: "You are the emires, and we are the ministers." The Prophet said: "Introduce Quraysh, but do not precede them." Albani, Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions, p 808

<sup>(1)</sup> Ibn Khaldun, The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar, v 1 p 146.

This condition, about which a lot of disagreement was raised, is " Quraishi," meaning that the Caliph be from Quraish, and it is a condition that was not considered by most of the Hanafi historians and jurists in the Ottoman Empire<sup>(2)</sup>, where the jurists spoke that this condition does not exist and that it cannot be there such a condition in a public institution for Muslims such as the institution of the Caliphate. However, the acceptance of the majority of jurists for this condition caused difficulties in describing the Ottoman Sultans. These jurists rely on the hadith: "The Imams should be from Quraysh"<sup>(\*)</sup>, and the well-known Turkestan Hanafi jurist "Sadr Al-Sharia " (who died in 1346 CE /747 AH ) clarified this issue and opened the way to the Caliphate in front of the Ottoman Sultans when he said: "the conditions that are no longer applicable should be left, and the condition of the Quraishes has been absent in our time and is no longer present"<sup>(1)</sup>.

Ibn Khaldun says Judge Al-Baqillani denied the condition of Qurayshi lineage for imamate when he saw the fading of Qurayshi tribalism and the tyranny of non-Arab kings over Caliphs. He dropped the requirement despite the agreement with the Kharijites. The majority still maintained the requirement of Quraysh for Imamate, even if the Caliph was incapable of managing Muslim affairs. They argued that a lack of sufficiency could negatively impact the knowledge and religious requirements for the position, which goes against consensus<sup>(2)</sup>.

It is reasonable that if the tribalism is gone from Quraysh, then the sufficiency, which is the condition of the Caliphate, is gone, saying that this condition falls contrary to the consensus. Moreover, the fact that sufficiency is a condition is clear because Allah, Glory is to Him, only appointed the Caliph as his

<sup>(2)</sup> Kunduz, The Unknown Ottoman Empir, p 226.

<sup>(1)</sup> Albani, Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions, p 534.

<sup>(1)</sup> Kunduz, The Unknown Ottoman Empir, p 227..

<sup>(2)</sup> Ibn Khaldun, The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar, v 1 p 147.



representative in managing the affairs of people in their interests and turning them away from harm<sup>(3)</sup>. Ibn Khaldun argues that requiring the Qureshi lineage for Caliphate is not limited to the blessing of the Prophet's lineage but was also a tribalism consideration. Quraysh was the elite and the origin of the Modur tribe, and their strong tribalism and pride made the rest of the Arabs recognize and accept their rule. This helped bring stability and agreement in the Muslim community and achieve cohesion, avoiding conflict and division. The Qureshi Caliphate continued in the two states (Umayyads and early Abbasids) until the issue of the Caliphate weakened, and Arab tribalism faded.

Ibn Ishaq mentioned this in the book *Al-Siyar* and others. According to Ibn Khaldun<sup>(1)</sup>, the requirement for the Quraish lineage in Islamic leadership is to prevent disputes arising from their tribalism and dominance. Prophet Mohammad did not specify rulings based on generation, era, or nation but rather to fulfill the sufficiency condition. The Quraysh refers to the presence of tribalism, meaning the leader of the Muslims should come from a strong and influential tribe that people will follow.

According to the public and historians, the Caliphate is divided into two parts: the Prophetic Caliphate or the complete Caliphate, which is defined by the public as the successor of the Prophet in religious and worldly affairs and representation of all Muslims, based on consultation and election (allegiance). The Caliphate was seen to last for 30 years, according to the Prophet's words in Tirmidhi<sup>(\*)</sup>. It is closer to Mulk or kingship and the Sultanate.

(2) Ibn Khaldun, *The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar*, v 1 p 147- 148.

(3) Attar, *A message on achieving the Islamic Caliphate and the virtues of the Ottoman caliphate*, p 31.

(4) Ibn Khaldun, *The Book of Lessons and the Divan of Al-Mubtada and Al-Khabar*, v 1 p 147- 148.

(1) Attar, *A message on achieving the Islamic Caliphate and the virtues of the Ottoman caliphate*, p 5.

(\*) Al-Tirmidhi, Abu Issa Mohammad bin Isa. 1978. *Al-Jami Al-Sahih*: Edited by Ahmed Shaker, Part 1, Edition 2, Cairo, Mustafa Al-Babi and his sons, volume 1, p 503.

The Rightly Guided Caliphate started with the Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. It ended with Al-Hasan Ibn Ali, whose Caliphate lasted six months, and all the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphs were of the second category: metaphorical Caliphs, and so were the Sultans of Banu Ottoman<sup>(2)</sup>.

Some recent references about the Ottoman Empire mentioned the story of Sultan Selim I am entering Cairo, declaring the end of the Abbasid Caliph, Al-Mutawakel Billah the Fourth. Moreover, the latter, in front of a gathering of Muslim scholars from various Islamic countries, surrendered the Caliphate to Sultan Selim I and the family of Osman.” Hence, Al-Mutawakel Billah the Fourth took off the garment of the Caliphate and put it on for Sultan Selim I. Thus, the Caliphate became in the hands of the Turkish Ottoman Sultans after it had been to the Quraish Arabs. Moreover, with the voluntary accession of the Hijaz, Yemen, and other Arab countries to the Ottoman Empire, the unity of Anatolia and the joined Arab countries became more firmly established and embodied spiritual unity. Thus, the Ottoman Sultan combined the description of the Caliph of the Muslims, the ruler of the Roman world, and the great Khagan of the Turks, becoming universal<sup>(1)</sup>.

Another narration says that the Abbasid Caliph was sent with his entourage, sons of former Sultans, scholars, Ibn Qansuh Al-Ghauri, employees, and senior judges by sea from Alexandria to Istanbul. They arrived there before the Sultan, and the Caliph received great respect, but the envy of his cousins incited the Ottoman Sultan, who threw him in the prison of “Yadi” Qila until the death of Sultan Selim I. After that, his son, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, pardoned him and allowed him to return to Egypt after he formally waived his rights to succession and protection of the Two Holy Mosques. The first narration confirms that the abdication of the Caliphate was in Cairo and that Sultan Selim accompanied the Abbasid Caliph upon his return to Istanbul<sup>(2)</sup>.

(2) Kunduz, *The Unknown Ottoman Empir*, p 227- 228.

(1) Fadela Research Center, *Bilad al-Haramayn in Ottoman Documents*, p 10.

(2) Hassoun, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, p 61.62- 63.

The Egyptian historian "Ibn Ayad," a contemporary of Sultan Selim, talked about transferring the Caliphate to Sultan Selim in his book.

However, most contemporary historians of Sultan Selim - led by Ibn Iyas - did not mention the abdication of the Abbasid Caliph to Sultan Selim. It is said that Sultan Selim called himself "Caliph of Allah in the length and breadth of the land" after the Battle of Chaldiran and before heading to the Levant (1514 AD/ 920 AH) Egypt, the annexation of the Hijaz and Yemen<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Sultans of Bani Ottoman used the title "Caliph and Imam of the Muslims" before that incident, starting from the era of Sultan Selim I until Abd Al-Majid Effendi. We give some examples of using the title of Caliph starting with Sultan Selim, as the Sultan was described after the conquest of Aleppo as "Caliph of Allah," as well as in the laws established for the Sanjak of "Salamandra" in 1516 CE/ 922 AH and in the laws of Tripoli, and the Levant in 1519 CE / 925 AH. The Caliph title was mentioned dozens of times in the laws of "Bodin" established during Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent by the jurist Abu Al-Saud Effendi in which he stated: "The Sultan, the son of the Sultan, the Sultan Suleiman Khan, the son of the Sultan Salim Khan, the successor of the Messenger of Allah, the paver of the laws of the Sharia, and the shadow of Allah over all nations, the owner of the Great Imamate, the Sultan of the Sea, and the inheritor of the Great Caliphate, the publisher of the royal laws, the tenth Khagan, the Sultan of the Arabs, the Persians, and the Romans, the protector of the two respected sanctuaries, and the honorable shrines."

Lutfi Pasha, the Grand Vizier of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, tried in his letter titled "The Message of the Nation's Salvation in Knowing the Imams" to give convincing answers to those who questioned the succession of the Ottoman Sultans. Lutfi Pasha is a statesman and a respected Ottoman historian who wrote the first vows to the Ottoman Empire; he was also a contemporary of Sultan Selim<sup>(2)</sup>.

Lutfi Pasha wrote that letter fourteen years after Suliman the Magnificent dismissed him. This is clear from the introduction to the letter after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt in 1517 AD and the end of the Abbasid Caliphate.

A question arose, is it permissible to give Ottoman Sultans the title of Caliph and the greatest Imam? Is it valid that a Caliph leads the Muslims who are not Qureshi? ... <sup>(1)</sup> After Lutfi Pasha reviews all that was mentioned in the books of jurisprudence about the Caliph and the Imam, he concludes that "the greatest Imam is the supreme Sultan under whose authority most of the Muslim countries fall, and to whom Muslims consult whenever there is a dispute, and everything that the Imam should require is available in the Ottomans who promote the religion and guarding the lands of Islam." The Ottoman Caliphs deserve the title of the Imam as "the one who takes the place of the Messenger in establishing the religion "So that all Muslim nations must follow him." The Ottomans are more deserving of the Caliphate because they are "Muslims, promote Islam, fairness, and jihad." People must follow the Ottoman Sultan and agree on his entitlement to that position during strife. The jurisprudential foundations on which Lutfi Pasha based his previous message can be deduced: The Messenger gave the title of Caliph, Imam, and Emir to the Sultan<sup>(\*)</sup> is intended to take advantage of the Quraysh's tribalism to protect Islam. Therefore, this applies to the early days of Islam (when the Arab race was prevalent), and the Ottoman Sultans met all the conditions of the Caliphate. If the Ottoman Sultan had not been followed (in the face of European dangers), Muslims' affairs would not have been organized, and what happened to the Muslims of Andalusia may have happened to them<sup>(2)</sup>.

Historian Ayoub Sabri Pasha commented on the existence of three types of governments: "The first: is the government of the Caliphate or the Imamate, and this type includes every government that is a representative of the Messenger and implements the Sharia. The second: is the political government, and

<sup>(1)</sup> Sallabi, Ottoman Empire History, v 1, p 268.

<sup>(2)</sup> Kunduz, The Unknown Ottoman Empir, p 228.

<sup>(1)</sup> Lutfi, The salvation of the nation in knowing the imams, p 38.

<sup>(\*)</sup> The hadith stating that "the Imams should be from Quraysh". Albani, Sahih Al-Jami Al-Saghir and its additions, p, p 534.

<sup>(2)</sup> Lutfi, The salvation of the nation in knowing the imams, p 32- 34.

this one applies the laws that it sets. Third: the honest government, which is the one that directs matters through injustice and oppression without relying on Sharia or reason,” and he believes that the Ottoman state falls within the first type<sup>(1)</sup>. Mustafa Kamel says in his book: *The Eastern Question*: “ But the truth is that the survival of the Ottoman state is necessary for humans and the nations of the West and the East. Allah wanted to protect humans from destroying each other and from long religious wars by preserving the Ottoman authority. Many European politicians felt that the Ottoman state’s survival was necessary and that its demise would bring about the greatest dangers and ignite fires whose flames would spread over the land in its East and west, north and south”<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Ottoman Sultans had gained a great position among the Muslims and were appropriate to the position of the Caliphate. This happened when the center of the Caliphate in Cairo was “insignificant.” What Sultan Selim did to protect the Islamic nations and rescue the oppressed gained him “moral and material strength and influence, especially after the two Holy Mosques entered under his authority<sup>(3)</sup>. The concept of succession for the Ottoman Sultans was somewhat different from its concept in the Abbasid era since the idea of the Caliphate acquired a new meaning for the Ottomans. This meaning was manifested in securing the pilgrimage routes, protecting the holy places from the Portuguese, defending Islam and Muslims, and placing them under their protection. There is no doubt that Lutfi Pasha described Suliman the Magnificent as the Imam of the Era because he spread the religion through jihad and defended the Two Holy Mosques<sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Kunduz, *The Unknown Ottoman Empir*, p 229.2

<sup>(2)</sup> Kamel, Mustafa. 1898. *The Eastern Question*: 1st Edition, Egypt, Al-Adab Press., p 13- 14.

<sup>(3)</sup> Sallabi, *Ottoman Empire History*, v 1, p 268- 269.

<sup>(1)</sup> Organization of the Islamic Conference, Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture in Istanbul of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. A group of researchers. 2010. *The Ottoman Empire, History and Civilization: Supervising of Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu*, Translated into Arabic by Salih Al-Saadawi, Part 1, Edition 2, Cairo, Al-Shorouk, volume 1, p 34.

This situation prompted the Ottomans to adopt laws and Sharia-based financial systems starting from the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, the Ottomans formally assumed the title of Caliphate for Muslims, especially in times of weakness, to prevent destabilizing their influence in the Islamic world, starting with the treaty that Ahmed III with the ruler of Iran, Ashraf Khan, in 1727 AD. The Ottoman’s adherence to the title of the Caliphate appeared during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid I in the “Kojak Kinarjah” treaty after the Crimean Khanate crisis in 1774 AD with the Russians. In the nineteenth century AD, the issue appeared more clearly, especially in the invitation of Sultan Abdul Hamid II to the Islamic University<sup>(2)</sup>.

Dr. Ali Al-Sallabi summarizes by stating that Sultan Selim and subsequent Sultans of the Ottoman family were not concerned with the title of Caliphate but only regained interest in it after the Ottoman Empire weakened<sup>(3)</sup>.

**Conclusion:** Muslims agreed to the Caliphate post-Prophetic era under certain conditions for unity and security. After the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the election condition changed, and the Caliphate became a hereditary monarchy in the Umayyad and Abbasid eras. The Ottoman Caliphate was associated with protecting holy sites, securing pilgrimage routes, supporting the oppressed, and defending Islam and Muslims from European threats. The Sultans of the Ottoman state only cared about the Caliphate title in times of weakness to maintain their position in the Islamic world (not concerned until after the death of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1566 AD).

Muslims agreed on the position of the Caliphate after the Prophetic era, with certain conditions to maintain unity and security. Caliphate was initially elected but became an absolute hereditary monarchy in Umayyad and Abbasid eras. In the Ottoman era, it was associated with protecting the Two Holy Mosques, pilgrimage routes, supporting the oppressed, and defending Islam and Muslims against European dangers.

<sup>(2)</sup> Organization of the Islamic Conference, Art and Culture in Istanbul of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, v 1, p 35.

<sup>(3)</sup> Sallabi, *Ottoman Empire History*, v 1, p 269.

Ottomans did not care about this title until the death of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1566 AD. The Sultans used the title during times of weakness. The title was transferred from Qureshi Arab Abbasids to Ottoman Turks due to the absence of the sixth condition of Imamate, "courage, help, and protection of Islamic nation," which the Abbasids failed to uphold. The Ottomans, who defended the Islamic nation, earned the title of Sultans of the nation. The denial of the "Qureshi" condition (the seventh condition of the Caliphate) was supported by Hanafi and historians during Ottoman Empire based on Quran verses. Ottomans metaphorically acquired the Caliphate despite lacking interest in the title, and the Islamic nation needed to obey them.

### **Hence, the most important results of this research are**

- 1- The entry of the Ottomans into the Arab World came at a public request to save it and protect the Two Holy Mosques from European invasion after the Mamluks failed to do so.
- 2- The main reason for the fall of the Mamluk State was injustice, oppression, and military coups that led to the deterioration of life in the Levant, Egypt, and the Arabian Peninsula.
- 3- the Ottoman rule is a hereditary monarchy. Still, it is correct to call it a "Caliphate" figuratively, starting with Sultan Selim's entry into Egypt and his protection of the Two Holy Mosques.

### **The Most Important Recommendations**

- 1- It is necessary to find a symbol for the Islamic world to protect it from the dangers surrounding it. We have seen the effect of abolishing the position of the Caliphate on the Ummah and Islamic unity.
- 2- The opinion of the Islamic Ummah must be unified through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation or any umbrella unit that takes the place of the Khalifah position; to face the dangers that threaten the Islamic world.
- 3- Allah honored us in the twenty-first century with the return of Turkey, represented by Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his party. The latter represents the interests of the Turkish state and the Islamic nations.

The Islamic nations must again unite behind Turkey and Erdogan to face its challenges.

### **Conflict of interest**

Authors declares that they have no conflict of interest.

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### **How to cite this article according to the APA method**

Daffer amer (2024), The Problematic Concept of the Ottoman Caliphate, academic review of social and human studies, vol 16, number 01, Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Algeria, pp : 12-24