

IBRAHIM AL-HALABI AND
«THE CONFLUENCE OF THE SEAS» WORK*

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The aim of this article is to study the life, activities and works of one of the outstanding representatives and followers of Hanafi school Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Halabi, the latter's contribution to the spread of the madhab, his connection with the Hanafi school's students, and also to highlight his distinguished works, including his most renowned one, "The Confluence of the Seas", due to which the author became even more popular. Our task is to present the adaptive significance of the work "The Confluence of the Seas" and also to highlight Ibrahim al-Halabi's substantial role in promoting the Hanafi madhab.

The article also discusses the reasons for writing the work "The Confluence of the Seas" and its content. The methodology of the work is based on the method of examination, analytical and historical-comparative methods.

Based on our study we came to the conclusion that the work "The Confluence of the Seas" is widely used by the representatives of the Hanafi madhab, as well as by a number of other madhabs' faqihs (experts of Islamic jurisprudence) so far as a manual and a source for legislative amendments.

Keywords: Hanafi madhab, religious scholar, manuscript, jurisprudence, "The Confluence of the Seas", Muslim Law, prayer issues.

Introduction

This article discusses the practical significance of Ibrahim al-Halabi's "The Confluence of the Seas" work and considers its textual and structural analysis, as well as the adaptation process of the above-mentioned work and its usage by different religious law scholars.

Ibrahim al-Halabi, a descendant of the Hanafi madhab⁴⁰³, a well-known 15th-century Muslim faqih who gained his reputation as the best lawyer of his time due to the work "Multaqa

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⁴⁰³ The founder of the Hanafi madhab is Abu Hanifa or Imam Azam al-Numan ibn Sabit al-Kufi (699-767), who was born in Kufa in a family of Persian origin dealing with a silk trade. Abu Hanifa was the first to classify Muslim law. The peculiarity of Abu Hanifa's method was that he personally constructed his

al-ābḥur” (“The Confluence of the Seas”), which became one of the main manuals of the Hanafi school of law and one of the best works of that time.

Ibrahim ibn al-Halabi, the full name is Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Halabi⁴⁰⁴, was born in 864/1460 in Aleppo and died in 956/1549 in Istanbul. Al-Halabi was originally from Aleppo. He received his primary religious education in his hometown. Along with his basic education, he also attended various classes in Damascus⁴⁰⁵. He studied with a number of prominent scholars, including Burhan al-Ruhawi, Abu Dharr bin al-Hafiz Burhan al-Din bin al-Kuf, and also with the famous scholar Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (911/1505) who was known for his interpretations of the Qur'an and Ḥadīṭ. As a result, Al-Halabi earned a reputation as a leading faqīh in Aleppo. In the late 15th century, he moved to Cairo, the capital of the Mamluk Sultanate, to conduct more in-depth research in the Islamic sciences. His leaving from Syria and departure to Egypt were conditioned by two circumstances. The first was the economic and socio-political situation in Aleppo⁴⁰⁶, and the second was the large number of madrassas (schools) in Egypt, which gained their fame mainly due to the professional qualifications of experts of fiqh, which brought them a large number of followers. Among the most prominent faqīhs of that time was Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, whose real name was Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Muhammad (852/1448), a well-known scholar in the field of ḥadīṭ and jurisprudence, a follower of the Shafi'i religious law school⁴⁰⁷; Wahhab ibn Ahmad ibn Ali (973/1566), a jurist and ḥadīṭ scholar, died in Cairo⁴⁰⁸; Ibn al-Qaraqi, full name is Ibrahim ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Qaraqi (922/1516), Hanafi jurist⁴⁰⁹.

Moreover, Al-Halabi attended al-Azhar's religious classes in Cairo, developing his knowledge of the Hanafi religious law system. During the time spending in Cairo, he studied even more deeply the Qur'anic commentaries, the ḥadīṭs of the Prophet⁴¹⁰, the basics of fiqh⁴¹¹ and Qur'anic readings.

In 1500, Al-Halabi moved to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. It is noteworthy that in the early 16th century, Istanbul was one of the most substantial Islamic and cultural centers, where a number of schools were developing. Among those schools was “Aya Sofia” school founded in 1453.

Muslim scholars were highly respected in Ottoman society. One of those scholars was Al-Halabi, who was distinguished by his scientific qualities, and over time became imam-khatib⁴¹²

judgments and legal orders, issuing fatwas based first on the verses of the Qur'an and then on the ḥadīṭs of the Prophet's Sunnah and his comrades-in-arms.

⁴⁰⁴ Some sources, in particular Al-Suyūṭī, “Al-Taḥadut bī ni‘mat Allah”, p. 70, also add the name of Burhan al-Din, which, however, was the nickname Al-Halabi received in Egypt.

⁴⁰⁵ الأعلام، قاموس تراجم، خير الدين الزركلي، ص. 568.

⁴⁰⁶ At the end of the 15th century, Syria, along with other Arab countries, was invaded by nomadic tribes. As a result, the city of Aleppo was captured and many residents were killed. All this, in turn, led to the deterioration of the country's economic, social and political situation. (See Philip K. Hitti, History of the Arabs - from the earliest times to the present, Macmillan, Tenth Edition, 1970, p. 671).

⁴⁰⁷ معجم تراجم أعلام الفقهاء، يحيى مراد، ص. 171.

⁴⁰⁸ معجم تراجم أعلام الفقهاء، يحيى مراد، ص. 171.

⁴⁰⁹ الأعلام، قاموس تراجم، خير الدين الزركلي، الجزء الأول، ص. 46.

⁴¹⁰ The hadiths (ḥadīṭ) are stories about the various episodes on Prophet Muhammad's life, his words and deeds, which were transmitted in verbal and written form.

Ислам: энциклопедический словарь / отв. ред. С. М. Прозоров. — М. : Наука, ГРВЛ, 1991, С. 262.

⁴¹¹ Fiqh means “deep understanding”, and the term “fiqh” can be interpreted in Armenian as “Islamic law”, “Islamic jurisprudence” or Muslim doctrine on the rules of conduct, that is a Muslim law in its broadest sense. Fiqh literally means an accurate understanding of the essence of intent.

⁴¹² In Islam, the khatīb (Arabic: خطيب) is the person who, during Friday and feasts' prayers, prays in front of the believers gathered in the mosque.

(preacher) of a number of mosques. One of the above-mentioned mosques was the famous “Al-Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih Mosque”⁴¹³.

Having a close relationship with Saadi Halabi⁴¹⁴, a teacher at a number of schools in Istanbul, Al-Halabi became a teacher of the House of Readers (dar al-qurra’)⁴¹⁵, founded by mufti⁴¹⁶ Sa’di Halabi in 1539. He taught at that school until his death. In Istanbul Ibn al-Halabi wrote and published his most famous work “Multaqa al-ābḥur”⁴¹⁷. He was an expert of Arabic sciences, the ways of Qur’an’s reading, commentaries and ḥadīth studies. By getting acquainted with Al-Halabi’s professional activities, one can get an idea of the Islamic intellectual life of that period. Despite the fact that Al-Halabi was a follower of the Hanafi maḏhab, however, he was quite tolerant of other schools and sometimes allowed to perform non-Hanafi rituals, often referring to scholars from other schools. During his career, Al-Halabi created many works⁴¹⁸, including:

1. “Munyat al-Muṣallī wa Ġunyat al-Mubtadī” (“The Desire of the Prayer and the Satisfaction of the Newcomer”) - In the work the author discusses the obligations of prayer, according to the Qur’an and Sunnah, then he gives details on the conditions of the prayer.

2. “Ġunyat al-Mutamallī fī sharḥ Munyat al-Muṣallī” (“Author’s Satisfaction in the Commentary on the Fulfilment of a Prayer”) - the work includes legal issues related to a ritual prayer and is also known as “Halabī kabīr” (“Large Halabi”).

3. “Muxtaṣar Ġunyat al-Mutamallī” (“The Summary of Author’s Satisfaction Work”) - Also known as “Halabī ṣaġīr” (“Little Halabi”) and it is a short summary of the work “Ġunyat al-Mutamallī fī sharḥ Munyat al-Muṣallī”.

4. “Muxtaṣar Ṭabaqat al-Ḥanabīla” (“Summary of Hanbali Classes”) - The work includes information about the authoritative faqīhs of the Hanbali maḏhab.

5. “Muxtaṣar Faṭḥ al-Qadīr” (“Summary of God’s gift work”) - This work is a short version of the work “Faṭḥ al-Qadīr” written by an Egyptian Hanafi faqīh Ibn al-Hamam (1457).

He had also authored a number of messages on various issues of religious doctrine. One of his most famous messages is the “Ni’mat al-dar’a fī naṣrat al-ṣarī’a” (“The Gift of Excuse with the Support of Sharia”), which was straightly directed against Mu’ah al-Din ibn al-’Arabi (1240), his philosophy and his writings. With this message, Ibn al-Halabi became one of the critics of Ibn al-’Arabi’s followers in the Ottoman Empire of that time⁴¹⁹.

The Textual and Structural Analysis of the Work “The Confluence of the Seas”

As mentioned above, Al-Halabi’s most famous work is “Multaqa al-ābḥur” (“The Confluence of the Seas”). The work is short and concise and is written in a simple style. It contains provisions relating to almost all areas of human activity, including provisions on worship, family relations, inheritance, commercial transactions and crimes. Due to its rich content, the book became known by faqīhs as a reference book and was ranked among the regular textbooks of Ottoman schools.

الذهب⁴¹³ تمام ترجمته في الشقائق النعمانية (٢٩٦:٢٩٥)، الكواكب السائرة (٧٧:٢)، والطبقات السنية (١:٢٢٢)، وشذرات (١٠:٤٤٤)، والأعلام (١:٦٦).

⁴¹⁴ Has, Şükrü Selim, “A study of Ibrahim al-Halabi with Special Reference to the Multaqa”, Ph.D. Diss., University of Edinburgh, 1981, p. 7.

⁴¹⁵ The word dār (Arabic: دار) means structure, place, place of residence. In this case, a gathering place for readers.

⁴¹⁶ Muftī (Arabic: مفتي) - a person who gives a fatwa on religious-legal issues.

⁴¹⁷ The publication refers to the manuscript version. In the Ottoman Empire a large number of books were published and distributed in the form of Arabic manuscripts, which continued until the early 19th century.

تحقيق الشيخ وهبي⁴¹⁸ مخطوطة “ملتقى الأبحر”، تأليف العلامة الفقيه إبراهيم بن محمد بن إبراهيم الحلبي المتوفى 956 هـ/1549م، سليمان بن خليل غاوي، ترجمة مؤلف “الملتقى”، الطبعة الثانية، دمشق 1426 هـ/2005م. القسم الأول ص. 419 إعلام النبلاء ٥ : ٥٦٩ وكشف الظنون ٢ : ١٨١٤ والشقائق النعمانية ٢ : ٢٤ ومخطوطات الرياض عن المدينة ٤٨ ومغنيها مجموع رسائل له، كتبت سنة ٩٣١ (الرقم ٥٨٢٣).

According to the author, the basis for the creation of the work was the fact that some people who wanted to get benefit from it, asked him to create such work that would include complete information on the Hanafi Muslim jurisprudence.

In the introduction of the work, the author briefly mentions the main four books on which the work is based. He calls them “four books”. In the Hanafi tradition, they are known as “Al-mutūn al-arba’a”⁴²⁰. These are as follows:

1. “Al-Muxṭaṣar” (“The Summary”) written by Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Kuduri al-Baghdadi (1036)⁴²¹, which contains information on the secondary sources of the Hanafi maḏhab⁴²².

2. “Al-Muxṭār li-l-Fatwa” (“A Separate Version of Legal Order”) authored by Abu al-Fadl Majd al-Din Abdullah ibn Mahmud al-Mausil (1284)⁴²³.

3. “Kanz al-Daqa’iq fi al-Furū’” (“A Treasure of Details of Fiqh’s Secondary Sources”) authored by Hafez al-Din Abu al-Barakat Abdullah ibn Ahmad al-Nasafi (1310)⁴²⁴.

4. “Wiqāyat al-Riwāya fi Masā’il al-Hidāya” (“Protection of the Narration in Matters of Guidance”) authored by Burhan al-Din Mahmud ibn Ubaydullah al-Mahbubi (1312)⁴²⁵.

In addition to the above-mentioned four works, Al-Halabi added two more books which are “Majma’ al-Baḥrayn wa-Multaqā al-Nayyirayn”⁴²⁶ (“Merge of Two Seas and Intersection of Two Illuminators”) by Muzaffar al-Din Ahmad ibn Ali al-Baghdadi, known as Ibn al-Sa’ati (the watchman’s son) (1294) and “Al-Hidāya fi Sharḥ al-Bidāya”⁴²⁷ (“The Right Way to Interpret the Initial Period of Muslim Law”) authored by Burhan al-Din Ali ibn Abu Bakr al-Marghinian (1197)⁴²⁸. Although there are various differences in these sources regarding their style, the details of the information, and all the issues that are presented in them, yet these differences are very insignificant. The author briefly presents the coincidence and inconsistency of the sources with reality⁴²⁹.

In addition, in many cases, the afore cited six books served as a basis for each other. The importance and popularity of these works can be assessed through a number of comments. It should be mentioned that Al-Halabi did not write a new work, but collected various books on fiqh. His narration stands out for its simplicity, which allowed the Arab reader to understand his

⁴²⁰ Al-mutūn āl-ārba’a (المتون الأربعة) – Matn (متن) in Arabic means text, and ārba’a (أربعة) means four.

⁴²¹ The book is also known by the name “Al-kitāb”. It covers all aspects of fiqh, including matters of worship, business transactions, personal relationships, criminal and judicial matters.

⁴²² One of the most famous commentaries on the work is the commentary of Imam Ahmad ibn Muhammad (known as Abi Nasr), which consists of two volumes.

⁴²³ The author was one of the best experts of the main and secondary sources of fiqh of that period. He was born in 599 AH in Mosul. He started practicing law while still living in Kufa. He taught law until the end of his life. He wrote the work during his youth. It is considered one of the four basic books of the Hanafi maḏhab. Compared to other books, it is unique in its simple structure and easier comprehension. Another feature of the book is that in addition to worship, the book covers issues related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, buying and selling. This work, unlike the other books of the Hanafi maḏhab, which mainly focus on the five pillars of Islam, allows the researcher to gain a broader knowledge of Muslim law.

⁴²⁴ The work covers both the basic and secondary principles of fiqh. Many comments and notes were written about the work.

⁴²⁵ The author of the work touches upon all the aspects of fiqh.

⁴²⁶ The work covers all the aspects of Muslim law.

⁴²⁷ The work is a brief commentary on Al-Marginani’s “Al-Bidāyāt al-mubṭadī”, which is based on Al-Kuduri’s “Al-Muxṭaṣar” and Al-Shaybani’s “Al-Jāmi’ al-sāḡir” works.

⁴²⁸ **Has, Şükrü Selim**, “A study of Ibrahim al-Halabi with special reference to the Multaqa”, Ph.D. Diss., University of Edinburgh, 1981, p. 193.

⁴²⁹ The work is not a code. Like all other books on jurisprudence, this work is also an explanatory review of early scholars’ opinions, which states what the law is in case there is an agreement, and what it can become when opinions differ.

thoughts without any difficulty. The conciseness of thought prevails in it, which, however, did not distort the meaning. He used simple words to make profound phrases on fiqh. He had a strong sympathy for Imam Abu Hanifa and “*ṣāhibayn*” (“Two companions”), Abu Yusuf and Muhammad al-Shaybani⁴³⁰, nevertheless, he constantly referred to the Imam's opinion and only in exceptional cases he referred to the views of Hanafi *maḏhabs*’ other members.

Conclusion

Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Halabi was one of the most brilliant followers of Hanafi school. The latter played an essential role in promoting and developing the *maḏhab* which is obviously noted in the large-scale use of his works, in particular “*Multaqa al-ābḥur*” (“The Confluence of the Seas”), not only by Hanafi school representatives, but also by other *faqīhs*. The author divided “*Multaqa al-ābḥur*” exactly as it is divided into the basic books and sources of the Hanafi fiqh. However, there are slight differences between the earlier and later references to some sections. The work is classified according to the classical division of Hanafi law. It consists of chapters, which in their turn are divided into sub-chapters and sections. One of the features of the work is the use of religious and legal terms, which had not been done by Al-Halabi's predecessors.

In 1877, the Civil Code of the Ottoman Empire (*Mejlel*) was published, for which the work “*Multaqa al-ābḥur*” was the direct basis, as it contained many passages directly translated from the above-mentioned work. A 2013 survey conducted by the Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs provides some data about the denominational background of Turkish society. The data indicate that 77.5 percent of Turkish Muslims identify themselves as Hanafi Muslims⁴³¹.

The work consists of 57 chapters. The popularity of the work can be assessed through numerous comments written so far. The main commentators are the teachers in Madrasas, and “*Multaqa al-ābḥur*” is considered as one of the main textbooks used in their teaching process. The book is widely used by both Arabic-speaking and Turkish-speaking societies, which has given priority to a detailed study of fiqh. In addition to the followers of the Hanafi *maḏhab*, the work is widely used by representatives of other *maḏhabs* as a source of legal provisions, given the fact that it covers almost all areas of human relations and contains complete and comprehensive solutions to all issues related to fiqh. It is also noteworthy that in both Muslim and non-Muslim countries of the world there are many manuscripts of the work written at different times. Among those countries is the Republic of Armenia, where seven (7) manuscripts of the same work are kept at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts (*Matenadaran*), some of which have no reference to the date of writing, and the later version was written by Musa al-Shalakhi in 1265 hijri / 1848-49 AD (manuscript No. 806).

Thus, summarizing the above, it can be concluded that the work “The Confluence of the Seas” still has a practical significance in the Muslim world and is applied both by the followers of the Hanafi religious legal school and by the representatives of other religious legal directions.

⁴³⁰ Prominent members of the Hanafi School of Law classified after Abu Hanifa, the founder of the school, and are known as his two companions (*ṣāhibayn*). *Sāhib* (Arabic: صاحب) in Arabic means owner, friend, companion.

⁴³¹ Aydoğan Vatandaş, “Can Turkey be ISIL's next stage”, Today's Zaman Archived 2015-10-25 at the Wayback Machine October 16, 2015. <https://web.archive.org/web/20151025113844/http://www.todayszaman.com/op-ed-can-turkey-be-isils-next-stage-401719.html> [accessed 05.06.2020]

ԻԲՐԱՀԻՄ ԱԼ-ՀԱԼԱԲԻՆ ԵՎ «ԾՈՎԵՐԻ ՄԻԱԾՈՒԼՈՒՄ» ԱՇԽԱՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ

ՎԱՅԵ ՀԱԿՈԲՅԱՆ

*Երևանի պետական համալսարանի արևելագիտության ֆակուլտետի
արաբագիտության ամբիոնի ասիստենտ և ասպիրանտ,
ք. Երևան, Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն*

Սույն հոդվածի նպատակն է ուսումնասիրել սուննի կրոնաիրավական ամենահայտնի դպրոցներից մեկի՝ հանաֆիական ուղղության ակնառու ներկայացուցիչ և հետևորդ Իբրահիմ իբն Մուհամմադ իբն Իբրահիմ ալ-Հալաբիի կյանքը, գործունեությունն ու աշխատությունները, վերջինիս ներդրումը մազհաբի տարածման գործում, նրա ունեցած կապը հանաֆիական դպրոցի սաների հետ, ինչպես նաև անդրադարձ կատարել նրա վաստակաշատ գործերին, այդ թվում՝ ամենահայտնի աշխատություններից մեկին՝ «Ծովերի միաձուլում»-ին, որի շնորհիվ հեղինակն ավելի հանրաճանաչ դարձավ: Մեր խնդիրն է ներկայացնել «Ծովերի միաձուլում» աշխատության ադապտացիոն նշանակությունը, ինչպես նաև ընդգծել Իբրահիմ ալ-Հալաբիի ուրույն դերը հանաֆիական մազհաբի առաջխաղացման գործում:

Հոդվածում անդրադարձ է կատարվում նաև «Ծովերի միաձուլում» աշխատությունը գրելու պատճառներին և բովանդակությանը: Աշխատանքի մեթոդաբանության հիմքում ընկած են քննական, վերլուծական, պատմահամեմատական մեթոդները:

Ուսումնասիրության արդյունքում հանգել ենք այն եզրակացությանը, որ ինչպես հանաֆիական մազհաբի, այնպես էլ այլ մազհաբների ներկայացուցիչների և մի շարք այլ իրավագետների կողմից մինչև այժմ լայնորեն կիրառվում է «Ծովերի միաձուլում» աշխատությունը՝ որպես ուսումնական ձեռնարկ և օրենսդրական լրացումներ կատարելու աղբյուր:

Հիմնաբառեր՝ հանաֆիական մազհաբ, կրոնաիրավագետ, ձեռագիր, իրավագիտություն, «Ծովերի միաձուլում» աշխատություն, մուսուլմանական իրավունք, աղղթբին առնչվող հարցեր:

ИБРАГИМ АЛЬ-ХАЛАБИ И ЕГО ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЕ «СЛИЯНИЕ МОРЕЙ»

ВАГЕ АКОПЯН

ассистент, аспирант

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Целью данной статьи является изучить жизнь, деятельность и труды одного из самых известных представителей суннитских религиозно-правовых школ, выдающегося деятеля и последователя ханафийского мазхаба Ибрагима ибн Мухаммада ибн Ибрагима аль Халаби, его вклад в дело распространения мазхаба, его связи с воспитанниками ханафийской школы, а также затронуть его выдающиеся труды, в том числе, одну из самых известных его работ, «Слияние морей», которая преумножила популярность ее автора.

Наша задача - представить адаптивную значимость произведения «Слияние морей», а также подчеркнуть уникальную роль Ибрагима аль-Халаби в продвижении ханафийского мазхаба.

В статье рассматриваются также предпосылки создания «Слияние морей» и содержание этого произведения. Методология работы основана на исследовательских, аналитических, историко-сравнительных методах.

В результате исследования мы пришли к выводу о том, что и представители ханафийского мазхаба, и последователи других мазхабов, а также ряд юристов по-прежнему широко используют работу «Слияние морей» в качестве учебника и источника дополнений к законодательству.

Ключевые слова: ханафитский мазхаб, религиозный ученый, рукопись, юриспруденция, произведение «Слияние морей», мусульманское право, вопросы молитвы.