



A Reading In The Book: Articles Of Islamists In Literature And Criticism Second Section (Islamic Literature) By Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi

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Abstract:

The importance of this research paper lies in introducing an important book written by Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi (Islamic Articles on Literature and Criticism), and it focuses on the second section of it, which is concerned with Islamic literature. What is the content of these articles collected by Shorfi? What is the aim of classifying it? The study concluded that the author wanted behind this work to establish the theory of Islamic literature, which believes that there is no contradiction between religion and art, nor between Islamic ethics and literature. Islamic literature is the alternative to the literature of vice, cultural infiltration, and ideological cheating.

Keywords: articles, Islamists, Islamic literature, criticism.

1. Introduction:

There are many books left by Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi, our professor of Algerian literature at the Institute of Arabic Literature and Language at Mentouri University in Constantine in the year (1987-1988), the most important of which is his doctoral dissertation on Algerian national poetry under the supervision of Professor Abdullah Al-Rakibi, and his books that collect articles and writings of prominent figures from the Association of Muslim Scholars Algerians such as Al-Arbi Al-Tabasi, Mubarak Al-Mili, Hamza Boukousha, Muhammad Al-Saeed Al-Zahri, Abu Ya'la Al-Zawawi, and other authors, and among the important books whose texts and articles he collected, and which he arranged and classified, is the Book of (Articles on Islamists in Literature and Criticism) in three parts. Our article will examine the second part of the book to answer some questions: What are these texts and articles classified in the second part about? What does the writer aim to collect, arrange and classify? Who are its authors? What are the sources of its collection? What is the author's addition, and does it stop at the limits of collection only? Therefore, the study aims to answer these questions based on description and analysis.

2. Definition of the book:

(Articles on Islamists in Literature and Criticism), written by Mr. Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi, in three parts, first edition 2009, by (Algerian-Lebanese Company, Algeria/ Dar Ibn Hazm for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Beirut, Lebanon). In it, the author collected a significant collection

of articles and lectures published in magazines and books, the first section of which is devoted to newcomer literature, the second section of which is devoted to Islamic literature, while the third section of it is devoted to Islamic literary criticism. The second section on Islamic literature, which contains 304 pages long begins with an introduction by the author, followed by a collection of articles by Islamic writers in literature and criticism (Islamic Literature Section), numbering thirty-three articles, then three appendices, and finally a summary and index.

3. Studies on the first and third sections of the book:

Professor Ibrahim Lagan wrote an article about the first section of the book, whose articles revolve around (newcomer literature), which was published by (Al-Mayyar Magazine). **(Ibrahim, 2019, pp. 742-753)** He provided a description of the first section of the book, explained the reason for writing it, and the approach of its author, and also reviewed the content of the book. Professor Abdul Karim Tabish wrote an article about the third section of the book, whose articles revolve around (Islamic Literary Criticism), published by (The Arabic Language Journal). **(Abdul Karim, 2022, pp. 757-774)** He reviewed the content of the third section of the book, and provided a reading of the content of the articles classified in it. Professor Zain al-Din Bin Musa also wrote an article about the book published by the Journal of Human Sciences **(al-Din, 2013, pp. 127-142)**, in which he focused on studying the first section of it as well, and his quotes were all from the first section of the book. As for the second part of the book, we did not find anyone writing about it within the limits of our research, and we believe that the study of this book will be completed by introducing the second part of it, and this is what we will undertake in this article.

4. Book content:

4.1 Introduction: (Shorfi, 2009, pp. 5-9)

In the introduction, the writer dealt with the idea (the effect of Islam on the weakness of poetry), and this idea was taken from Ibn Qutaybah through his book (Poetry and Poets), and attributed it to Al-Asma'i (Poetry is a source of trouble that is subject to evil, and if it enters into goodness, it becomes weak. This is Hassan bin Thabit, one of the stallions of pre-Islamic times. When Islam came, his poetry fell out). (Qutaybah, 1982, p. 305) The author discussed this saying, and proved that Al-Marzbani mentioned it in the book (Al-Muwashah) attributed to Al-Asma'i, but in a form that contradicts what Ibn Qutaybah mentioned. Al-Marzbani says, Al-Asma'i said: "The path of poetry if you include it in the chapter of goodness it becomes soft, don't you see that Hassan ibn Thabit was virtuous? In pre-Islamic times and Islam, when his poetry entered the category of goodness, it becomes soft". **(Imran, 1995, p. 81)** Through the second version, Ahmed Al-Rifai refutes the idea of linking Islam with the weakness of Hassan bin Thabit's poetry. The writer also stated Al-Suyuti's opinion in his book (Al-Mizhar): where he describes Al-Asma'i as religious and steadfast, **(Jalal al-Din, no date, p. 404)**, while he describes Ibn Qutaybah as mixing his knowledge with stories about the Kufans that he did not get from trustworthy people. It is very likely that Ibn Qutaybah narrated this opinion on the authority of someone from whom it is not taken. The writer believes that even if we accept the validity of what was narrated on the authority of Al-Asma'i (the weakness of Hassan's poetry in

Islam), this is not enough to say that there is a contradiction between art and religion in general, nor between Islam and poetry in particular, for a number of reasons: Al-Asma'i is not a critic or an imam of thought and religion. Rather, he is a man of language and anecdotes, and what he says about issues of literature and criticism is not an argument.

- Al-Asma'i's opinion is merely a subjective impression and not based on an academic curriculum. He is a man imbued with the non-Islamic Arab vision, and his pre-Islamic narratives are dense, but he was not interested in the narration of hadith or the sciences of the Holy Qur'an.

- It is not possible to rely on Hassan's poetry as a veteran poet in terms of the volume or level of his poetry to determine an intellectual or artistic phenomenon of major cultural dimensions (the judgment remains partial).

- The phenomenon or judgment is limited to Hassan's poetry, and it is not possible to judge the whole from the part or generalize the phenomenon based on the poetry of Hassan bin Thabit.

- The phenomenon was also linked to Hassan due to his personal, psychological and family circumstances, not due to his belief. Ahmed Al-Rifai concludes that the saying (that poetry is a curse that causes evil) is a saying that was fabricated on Al-Asma'i and attributed to him, and thus:

- Religion does not contradict art in general, just as Islam does not contradict poetry.

The weakness of literature in eras of decadence and stagnation is due to a weakness in Islamic culture among the poets and critics of these eras.

- The weakness of Islamic culture and the limitation of freedom of thought and expression in many Arab Islamic countries is the reason why the Arab literary scene is devoid of a poet who occupies people with his beautiful poetry and noble morals.

- The dominance of non-religious culture is the reason for the downfall of modern literature, and the return to the noble values of Islam alone will ensure the emergence of poets like Al-Mutanabbi, Al-Ma'arri, Al-Shabbi, Mufdi, and Muhammad Al-Eid again.

4.2 Articles classified in the book:

1- Abu Al-Ala Maududi: "Our intellectual slavery and its causes", from the book "Us and Western Civilization", pages 9-28.

2- Aoun Al-Sharif Qasim: "Towards a correct understanding of our civilization and the civilization of the West", Doha Magazine, No. 93, October 1973.

3- Muhammad Al-Shoufani (from Rabat): "The Theoretical Basis of Islamic Civilization", Doha Magazine, No. 42, Fourth Year, June 1979.

4- Najeeb Al-Kilani: "The Civilized Face of Islamic Literature", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 18, Jumada Al-Akhirah 1404 AH - 1984 AD.

5- Muhammad Iqbal Arwi (professor of Arabic literature in Morocco): "The Collapse of Civilizations in Islamic Literature", Contemporary Muslim, No. 44, July/September, 1985, page 11.

6- Muhammad Qutb: "Islamic art, its reality and its fields", from The Book of "Islamic Art Methodology book", pages 119-136.

7- Najib Al-Kilani: "The reality of the dispute between art and religion", from the book "Islamic and Literary Doctrines", pages 20-27.

8- Naguib Al-Kilani: "Religion and Art", from the Book of "Islamic and Literary Doctrines", pages 12-19.

- 9- Abu Ali Hassan: "Islamic Literature between Truth and Hope", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 16, February 1982.
- 10- Muhammad Hassan Bregash: "On the sidelines of the dialogue on Islamic literature", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 30, March 1983.
- 11- Abu Ali Hassan: "Islamic literature between the illusions of the fourteenth century and the realities and hopes of the fifteenth century", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 19.
- 12- Muhammad Qutb: "On the Path to Islamic Literature", from The Book of "Islamic Art Methodology", pages 181-183.
- 13- Mamoun Fariz Jarrar: "In Islamic Literature", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 48, September 1984.
- 14- Saleh Adam Bello: "The First Characteristics of Islamic Literature", Al-Ummah Magazine, issue November 25, 1982, pages 17, 18.
- 15- Saleh Adam Bello: "From the issues of Islamic Literature, Literature is the Mirror of Life," Al-Ummah Magazine, No. 50, November 1984.
- 16- Saleh Adam Bello: "From the issues of Islamic literature, Art is an obstacle," Al-Ummah Magazine, No. 49, October 1984.
- 17- Najib Al-Kilani: "Islamic Literature and Sources of irresistible Power", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 24, October 1985.
- 18- Abdul Qadir Abbar: "Strength and Clarity in Islamic Poetry", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 40, Rabi' al-Akhir 1404 AH.
- 19- Abdel Basset Badr: "Islam and the variables of modern Arabic literature", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 60, August 1985.
- 20- Abbas Mahjoub: "The reality of Islamic literature and commitment", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 51, December 1984.
- 21- Abbas Mahjoub: "The Muslim writer and his role in building society", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 22, August 1982.
- 22- Ahmed Orwa: "The role of the Arab writer in building contemporary Arab society", Al-Asala Magazine, No. 7, March/April 1972.
- 23- Jaafar Al-Shahidi: "Poetry's role in the morals of society", Al-Asala Magazine, No. 27, Ramadan/Shawwal 1395 AH.
- 24- Abdul Qadir Abbar: "Muslim worriess in contemporary Islamic poetry", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 48, September 1984.
- 25- Abdel Basset Badr: "Our need for an Islamic literary doctrine", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 61, September 1985.
- 26- A Group of Professors: "Components of Islamic Culture", from "Studies in Islamic Culture", pages 15-18.
- 27- Amir Abdul Aziz: "Characteristics of Islamic Culture", from "Landmarks of Islamic Culture" by Dr. Abdul Karim Othman, pages 91-96.
- 28- Hilmi Muhammad Al-Qaoud: "Thoughts on Islamic Literature", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 71, July 1986.
- 29- Muhammad Yahya Bilahi: "Writers and Preachers", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 66, February 1986.
- 30- Naguib Al-Kilani: "The Qur'anic Story and Islamic Literature", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 56, April 1985.
- 31- Fawzi Saleh: "On the Islamic Novel", Al-Umma Magazine, No. 46, July 1984.

32- Ahmed Shawqi: "Islamic Theater", Manar Al-Islam, No. 9, June 1984.

33- Muhammad Kadhim Al-Zawahiri: "The Qur'an... Theater and Commitment to the Truth", presented by Abu Ali Hassan, Al-Umma Magazine, No. 26, December 1986.

4. 3 Appendices:

The book is accompanied by three appendices:

- Appendix A:

Entitled (Broad outlines of a proposed academic curriculum for teaching Islamic literature in institutes and universities), written by Imad al-Din Khalil, published in Al-Ummah magazine, No. 68, April 1986. The appendix includes a vision of a curriculum or book divided into six sections under each section a collection of chapters, including basic vocabulary about the proposed approach, an open methodology for change, modification, deletion, and addition by Islamic researchers and writers who will be responsible for implementing this approach and preparing this book. It is followed by a comment by Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai in which he believes that this good effort is isolated from the social aspect of the Islamic nation, as literature must be linked to the social life of the Islamic nation. **(Shorfi, 2009, p. 292)**

- Appendix B:

Entitled (Islamic Literature Association), which is a speech by the eminent scholar and great writer Sheikh Abu Al-Hasan Al-Nadawi, President of the Islamic Literature Association, headquartered in Lucknow, India, in which he calls on writers committed to Islam everywhere to belong to this association and to work With their literary production aimed at realizing the theory of Islamic literature, and creating an Islamic literary trend capable of confronting deviant literary trends. Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi comments on this call, saying that it is a hope that Muslims aspire to, but it will only be achieved by overcoming their negative historical heritage and abandoning political differences and narrow partisan differences. **(Shorfi, 2009, p. 294)**

- Appendix C:

Entitled (General Features of the Islamic Literature League) published in Manar Al-Islam Magazine, Issue 6, March 1985. The Appendix explains the reasons and objectives of the League, which include:

- Introducing Islamic writers to each other and establishing cooperation between them.
- Rooting the theory of Islamic literature and achieving the principle of universality in it.
- Rooting the theory of Islamic criticism.
- Drawing a detailed curriculum for modern Islamic literary arts based on Islamic perception.

4. 4 Summary

Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai concludes the book with an abstract stating that the modern Islamic civilizational revival cannot exist in the absence of pioneering Islamic literature, which derives its strength from the pioneering Islamic models in the history of Islamic literature and art, and is based on engaging into the literary arena with creativity and criticism thanks to the young writers from the Islamic nation who were entrusted with it. The mission of committing to just

human causes and serving truth, goodness, justice and benevolence. (Shorfi, 2009, pp. 299-301)

5. Comment:

- The book included thirty-three articles or texts published in a magazine or book.
- Most of the articles were taken from Al-Umma magazine, which numbered nineteen articles.
- Two articles were taken from Doha Magazine, two articles from Al-Asala Magazine, one article from Manar Al-Islam Magazine, and one article from Contemporary Muslim Magazine. The rest of the articles were taken from books, numbering six.
- Al-Rifai chose more than one article for some writers, as Najib al-Kilani's name was repeated in five articles, Saleh Adam Bello in three articles, two articles by Muhammad Qutb, two articles by Abu Ali al-Mawdudi, two articles by Abdul Qadir Abbar, two articles by Abdul Basit Badr, and two articles by Abbas Mahjoub.
- Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai arranged and classified the articles in view of their topics, and in their entirety they establish and rooted for an Islamic literary doctrine through the perceptions of Islamic writers.
- He also commented on some of the opinions of the article writers, and corrected some of the concepts contained in them.
- He documented the quotations contained in the articles, such as Qur'anic verses, graduations of the noble Prophetic hadiths, and the attribution of poetry to its sources.

6. Abstract of two sample articles:

1- "In Islamic Literature", by Mamoun Fariz Jarrar. (Shorfi, 2009, pp. 133-136)

The writer believes that the discussion of Islamic literature is still confined to Islamic magazines, which only those with Islamic thought are willing to read, and that it has not become a widespread and conscious current.

Then he raises a question: Where is the impact of the call for Islamic literature in Arab universities?

He answers that the call to Islamic literature is limited to the book of Sayyid Qutb "The Methodology of Islamic Art", the book of Najib Al-Kilani "Islamism and Literary Schools", and then the articles of Izz al-Din Khalil "Essays on Contemporary Literary Criticism".

The call remained confined to the walls of Arab universities and did not impose itself outside them.

At the end of his article, the author concludes by summarizing his call in the following points:

- Expanding the circle of writing in Islamic literature to include daily newspapers and magazines.
- Paying attention to Islamic literature, studying and criticizing it.
- Breaking the media cordon on Islamic literary activities.
- Developing a concept of Islamic literature and enhancing its existence.
- Drawing lines for Islamic doctrines in literature and criticism to confront the invasion of Western doctrines.
- Harnessing the media to spread Islamic literature.

2- "Our Need for an Islamic Literary Doctrine", by Abdul Basit Badr. (Shorfi, 2009, pp. 220-226)

The writer begins to address the issue - our need for an Islamic literary doctrine - by asking two questions: Do we Muslims need an Islamic literary doctrine? And why? It answers this problem through four axes: the world around us, the contemporary Islamic world, the reality of literature in the world, and the reality of literature in the Islamic world.

The writer sees that the world around us has reached the pinnacle of power and material civilizational progress, but has become morally bankrupt. The causes of wars still exist, and the eastern and western camps are still competing to extend their influence over other nations. They may use military force, but the quiet intellectual invasion remains more dangerous and deadly. In dominating people and placing them in the ranks of subordination.

As for the Islamic world, it is living in a state of fragmentation, weakness, and backwardness as a result of its distance from Islamic values and the corruption of the regimes. The global powers are attacking its wealth on the one hand, and on the other hand they are working to annex it to it by robbing it of all the elements of its Islamic personality, to distort him.

On the other hand, there is a promising Islamic awakening that is trying to repel these attacks and is striving hard to build a modern Islamic entity, preserve the Islamic character, and provide the Muslim individual with Islamic economic, social, political, and artistic theories.

As for the reality of literature in the world, the author of the article believes that world literature is influenced by the spirit of the times and the nature of the civilization from which it emerges. It is also influenced by the many differences between the Eastern and Western blocs and by the conflict existing between them. The literature of the Eastern Bloc is influenced by the socialist realist doctrine, and paints a bright and often false picture of life. Under communism, at the same time, it depicts capitalist life in a dark and unjust manner, and the literature of the Western bloc, although it embodies the anxiety and spiritual alienation of the Western individual, depicts his pride in his civilization and material achievements, mocks communist thought, and laments the stifling of freedoms and the enslavement of peoples, and both (East and West) work To spread his ideas and instill them in other peoples.

Regarding the recent reality of literature in our country, the writer believes that it has returned to its traditional origins thanks to Al-Baroudi and his students, and then the emergence of the Diwan group, which the writer believes was influenced by romantic reality, but preserved its originality from dissolution and loss.

But after them came generations of poets and writers whose Western culture dominated their Arab culture. They immersed themselves in Western literature, denied their Arab-Islamic heritage, and divided into two groups: one that praised the ideas of the Eastern Bloc and strived to embody and establish socialist realism, while the other panted after Western literary doctrines and carried their own artistic tools, values, and perceptions. .

In the face of this situation, and in order to create an Islamic literary doctrine, it is necessary for the Islamic peoples to have a distinct Islamic literature that embodies their personality, stemming from our Islamic faith, expressing our human feelings, and participating in the duty of calling people to God. Let us protect our writers and readers and protect them from running after the Western literary personality and against vanity and Christianization.

7. The comment of Mr. Zain al-Din Bin Musa about the book:

In his article about the book of Professor Ahmed Al-Rifai entitled: "Foundations of the Theory of Islamic Literature and Its Features through the Encyclopedia of Islamic Articles in Literature and Criticism by Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi Al-Jazairi", published in the Journal of Human Sciences, University of Constantine 1. **(al-Din, 2013, pp. 137-138)** Especially the second part of it, Dr. Zain Al-Din Bin Musa concludes that:

The concept of literature in Islam is a vision of faith for the universe and man, and that literature in the Muslim's sense and awareness is one of God's blessings that must be devoted to calling for and caring for goodness.

Islamic literature is a historical fact that imposed itself in the era of the Prophet and the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphate, and a fact present in modern literature that extends to most literary forms, reviving, renewing and directing.

The contradiction between religion and art in general and between literature and Islam in particular is a false claim and an old illusion.

The Islamism of literature does not mean the prevalence of devotional terms in it, but rather it means that the Muslim writer builds his work on the foundations of the Islamic vision of man and the universe and commitment to Islamic values based on spreading goodness and fighting evil.

Therefore, Islamic literature is the indispensable alternative to confront the morals of intellectual hegemony and ideological subordination.

8. Conclusion:

Among the results that we reached after reading the second part of Mr. Ahmed Al-Rifai Shorfi's book, which are in fact the goals that the author wanted behind collecting these articles:

- Islamic literature is a vision of faith for the universe and man that must be devoted to calling for goodness and beauty.
- There is no contradiction between religion and art, nor between Islamic morals and literature.
- Islamic literature is an alternative to the literature of vice, cultural infiltration, and ideological cheating.
- The writers of the articles differed between the Islamic preacher, the journalist, and the professor.
- The articles also differed between newspaper articles and systematic literary studies.

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