

# Medinaology: Introduction to the Science of al-Madinah al-Munwarah Studies

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**Abstract:** Al-Madinah al-Munawwarah is the second holiest city for Muslims worldwide, after Makkah. It is an ancient city steeped in the past, whose establishment dates back thousands of years. Over the centuries, it has been a hub for influential events connected to the world's narrative in public and Islam in particular. The righteousness of Madinah al-Munawwarah, its immense importance, and its rich history make it crucial to apply new learning or scientific regulations that specialize in everything associated with this religious city. Therefore, Medinaology is the science investigating everything associated with Medina, including spiritual, chronological, doctrinal, monetary, cultural, civilizational, urban, geographical, topographical, and other factors. Given the city of Medina's unique situation and its sanctity from a religious perspective, this place maintains its prestige and preference. Also, the Medinaologist would be the scholar guiding this investigation connected to Medina.

**Keywords:** Islam, Medina, The Prophet Muhammad, Muslims, History, Religion.

## 1. Introduction:

Medina is the holy city for Muslims around the world, to which their hearts turn in their daily prayers. It is an ancient city steeped in history, as its founding dates back thousands of years. Over the centuries, it has been a place for important events linked to the history of the world in general and the history of Islam and Muslims in particular.

Encyclopedia Britannica indicates that Medina is a municipality located in the western region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is the second most sacred city in Islam, after Mecca. It is situated by road about 100 miles (160 km) from the Red Sea and 275 miles (445 km) from Mecca. Medina is about 2,050 feet (625 meters) above sea level on an abundant oasis. It is bordered on the east by an expansive lava area, the domain of which dates from a volcanic eruption in 1207 CE. On the other three flanks, the city is surrounded by arid cliffs that form part of the Hejaz Mountain range. The most elevated of these hills is Mount Uḥud, which advances to more than 2,000 feet (600 meters) beyond the oasis. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Glubb, John Bagot, Abdo, Ass'ad Sulaiman. "Medina". Encyclopedia Britannica, 11 Jun. 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Medina-Saudi-Arabia>. Accessed 22 June 2025.

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Medina occupies a critical position in Islam, and one of its notable characteristics is that the Qur'an was revealed there. Abu al-Qasim al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Habib al-Naysaburi said in his book, *Tanbih 'ala Fadl 'Ulum al-Qur'an*: "Among the most noble sciences of the Qur'an is the knowledge of its revelation, its directions, and the order of what was revealed in Mecca and Medina, what was revealed in Mecca and its ruling was Medinan, what was revealed in Medina and its ruling was Meccan, what was revealed in Mecca to the people of Medina, what was revealed in Medina to the people of Mecca, what resembles a Meccan revelation in a Medinan verse, what resembles a Medinan revelation in a Meccan verse, what was revealed at al-Juhfah, what was revealed in Jerusalem, what was revealed at al-Ta'if, what was revealed at al-Hudaybiyah, what was revealed at night, what was revealed during the day, what was revealed all at once, what was revealed separately, the Medinan verses in the Meccan surahs, the Meccan verses in the Medinan surahs, what was carried from Mecca to Medina, what was carried from Medina to Mecca, what was carried from Medina to Abyssinia, what was revealed in general terms, what was revealed in explanation, what they differed over, some of them saying it was Medinan and some of them Meccan. These are twenty-five aspects. Whoever does not know them and distinguish between them is not permitted to speak about the Book of Allah Almighty."<sup>2</sup>

The holiness of Medina, its immense importance, and its rich history make it essential to lay the foundations for a new science dedicated to everything related to this holy city. Thus, Medinaology is the science that studies everything related to Al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, including religious, chronological, economic, doctrinal, civilizational, cultural, urban, topographical, geographical, and other aspects. Given the city of Medina's position and sanctity from a religious perspective, this area maintains its importance and preference over the rest. Also, Medinaologist, the scholar conducting this study, is affiliated with Al-Madinah al-Munawwarah.

When translating the Arabic word "Al-Madinah" into English, it can be written as Medina or Madinah. Therefore, in this research, I will use both methods to write the city's name, which is the reason for this note.

## 2. Topography of Medina:

Medina is located in the northwestern part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is distinguished by its diverse geography, including mountains, plains, and oases. It covers approximately 149,207 square kilometers and attracts millions of visitors each year from all corners of the world due to its profound religious significance. Medina is home to the Prophet's Mosque (Masjid an-Nabawi), Quba Mosque, and the Qiblatain Mosque. The city is roughly 400 kilometers northeast of Mecca, 150 kilometers from the Red Sea, and 220 kilometers southwest of the port city of Yanbu.<sup>3</sup>

Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj mentions that the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, defined the boundaries of Medina when he said: "Medina is a sanctuary between Ayr and Thawr."<sup>4</sup>

Medina lies between two lava fields: the eastern and western lava fields. The eastern lava field is a long plateau extending east of the city. It contains a group of hills and flat lands. It was named the lava field because a large part of its surface is covered with black

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<sup>2</sup> Abd al-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr, Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH), *Al-Itqan fi Ulum al-Qur'an*," edited by Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim (d. 1401 AH) (The Egyptian General Book Authority, 1394 AH/1974 AD), Vol. 1, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from <https://haj.gov.sa/ar/Al-Madinah-Al-Munawwarah>

<sup>4</sup> Abu al-Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj al-Qushayri al-Naysaburi (206-261 AH), *Sahih Muslim*, edited by Muhammad Fuad Abd al-Baqi [d. 1388 AH] (Cairo: Isa al-Babi al-Halabi Press and Partners, 1374 AH - 1955 AD), Vol. 2, p. 1147.

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volcanic rocks and stones, which make it very hot in the summer. It is called Harrat Waqim, named after a person or a group of giants who settled there, or the word Waqim in the language means 'barrier,' as this lava field assembles a natural barrier that protects the city from the east. It is difficult to walk on it, but some paths can be guarded.<sup>5</sup>

Narrated by Nafi' ibn Jabr: Marwan ibn al-Hakam preached the people, mentioning Mecca, its inhabitants, and its sanctity. Rafi' ibn Khadij called out to him, saying, "Why do I hear you mentioning Mecca, its inhabitants, and its sanctity, but not Medina, its inhabitants, and its sanctity? The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, declared the area between its two lava fields sacred, and this is written on a Khawlani leather scroll. If you wish, I can recite it to you." Marwan remained silent, then said, "I have heard some of that." In the hadith of Abdullah bin Amr bin Uthman on the authority of Rafi', he said: The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: "Indeed, Ibrahim declared Mecca sacred, and I declare what is between its two lava fields sacred." He meant Medina.<sup>6</sup>

Behind Mount Uhud, to its north, lies a small, rounded mountain called Thawr, known to the people of Medina. This mountain, along with the eastern hill of Wa'irah, marks the boundary of the Haram (sanctuary), as has been reported. On the authority of Ka'b ibn Malik, may God be pleased with him, he said: "The Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, declared the trees in Medina to be within a barid (one-day period) of the Haram. He sent me to mark the boundaries of the Haram at the high points of Dhat al-Jaysh, Mushayrib, al-Mujtahir, and Taym." And with his listed narrators to al-Nu'man ibn Abdullah, on the authority of Ka'b ibn Malik, may God be pleased with him, he said: "The Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, sent me to mark the high points of the Haram of Medina. I marked the high points of Dhat al-Jaysh, Mushayrib, the high points of al-Mukhayd, al-Hafya', Dhi al-'Ashirah, and Taym."<sup>7</sup>

As for Dhat al-Jaysh, it is the pass of Thanīyyat al-Hufayrah on the road between Mecca and Medina. As for Mushayrib, it lies between the mountains of Shami Dhat al-Jaysh and the Khala'iq al-Dhabu'ah. As for Ashraf Makhid, it is the Makhid Mountains on the road to Sham. As for al-Hafya, it is in the forest on the Shami side of Medina. As for Dhu al-'Ashirah, it is a pass in al-Hafya. As for Taym, it is a mountain to the east of Medina. All of this is like being a post office within a post office.<sup>8</sup>

It is also reported that the location of the Dome of the Rock today is unknown, nor is its position within the sacred city determined. It is situated between the area west of the city and Makhidh. Makhidh is the mountain to the right of someone coming from the Syrian road as they descend from the mountains to the pool (al-Barakah), a watering place for pilgrims from Syria, also known as the Springs of Hamza. Al-Hafya is north of the forest, and Thawr, as previously mentioned, is a small mountain north of Uhud. Wa'irah

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<sup>5</sup> Dr. Ahmed Al-Khani, *Min Ma'alim wa 'Ahya' al-Madina al-Munawwara* (Eng. Landmarks and Neighborhoods of Medina), Al-Aluka Network, Date Added: 4/1/2016 AD - 23/3/1437 AH, from <https://www.alukah.net/culture/0/96958/%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85-%D9%88%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9/>

<sup>6</sup> Muhammad ibn Futuh ibn Abdullah ibn Futuh ibn Hamid al-Azdi al-Mayurqi al-Hamidi Abu Abdullah ibn Abi Nasr (d. 488 AH), *al-Jam' bayn al-Shāhīhayn al-Bukhari wa Muslim* (Eng. The Collection of the Two Sahihs, al-Bukhari and Muslim), edited by Dr. Ali Hussein al-Bawab, second edition (Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm, 1423 AH - 2002 AD), Vol. 1, pp. 484 – 485.

<sup>7</sup> Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Matari, *Al-T'arīf bima 'Ansāt al-Hijra min Ma'alim dar al-Hijrat* (Eng. Defining the Landmarks of the Abode of Migration that the Hijra has made known), edited by Dr. Sulaiman al-Ruhaili (Riyadh - Saudi Arabia: King Abdulaziz Foundation, 1426 AH - 2005 AD), pp. 182 – 183.

<sup>8</sup> Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Matari, *Al-T'arīf bima 'Ansāt al-Hijra min Ma'alim dar al-Hijrat* (Eng. Defining the Landmarks of the Abode of Migration that the Hijra has made known), pp. 183 – 184.

is east of Thawr, larger than Thawr but smaller than Uhud. Taym is a large mountain east of the city, the furthest point of the sanctuary. 'Ayr is the large mountain on the qibla side of the sacred city.<sup>9</sup>

Dhat al-Jaysh is located in the middle of the desert. The desert is the one pilgrims encounter after entering the state of ihram at Dhu al-Hulayfah and ascending westward. It is the place mentioned in the hadith of Aisha, may God be pleased with her: "Until we reach the desert," or "Dhat al-Jaysh." It was there that the verse regarding tayammum (dry ablution) was revealed. To its north is a large mountain called A'zam, situated on the main road. It is recorded in the history of Medina that whenever lightning flashes over A'zam, rain falls. It is said that a prophet or a righteous man is buried at its summit. It is a large, flat mountain, not very high. When rain falls during the spring, the people of Medina benefit greatly from the abundance of grass and vegetation. To its north is a mountain called Makhid towards the road to Syria. Beyond it, on the Syrian side, is al-Hafya. This is what is known today as the boundary of the Haram (sanctuary), and that name knows it.<sup>10</sup>

Among the important sources on the geography of Medina is the book by Atiq al-Biladi entitled: "A Dictionary of Geographical Landmarks in the Prophet's Biography." In the introduction, the author states that this book was intended as a companion to the book on the Prophet's biography, serving as a reference for its readers in their research on topics they encounter while reading it. He expanded it to include every place mentioned in the Prophet's biography, whether it was mentioned in the pre-Islamic era in connection with the life after the Prophethood, or in the biographies of the Companions and the events they experienced after the death of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, or mentioned in any other way that became part of the pure biography. Many have written on the Prophet's biography, and their writings have ranged from detailed to concise. When he decided to write this book, he had to choose a book on the Prophet's biography from which to draw exclusively, making it the primary reference for enumerating the landmarks mentioned within it. He found that the most widespread and complete of these books, neither tediously long nor terribly brief, is "The Biography of Ibn Hisham," an abridged version of Ibn Ishaq's biography.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. Medina in the Qur'an:

The city of Medina is mentioned in the Qur'an four times as "al-Madinah" (the city): [At-Tawbah: 101], [At-Tawbah: 120], [Al-Ahzab: 60], [Al-Munafiqun: 8]. It is also mentioned once in the Qur'an as "Yathrib". The name Yathrib was used for Medina before it was called "al-Madinah," and it was a common name before the 7th century BCE. Yathrib is mentioned in [Al-Ahzab: 13]. Finally, Medina is mentioned once in the Qur'an as "al-Dar" (the abode) and "al-Iman" (the faith), in [Al-Hashr: 9].<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Matari, *Al-T'arīf bima 'Ansāt al-Hijra min Ma'alim dar al-Hijrat* (Eng. Defining the Landmarks of the Abode of Migration that the Hijra has made known), pp. 185 – 187.

<sup>10</sup> Jamal al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Matari, *Al-T'arīf bima 'Ansāt al-Hijra min Ma'alim dar al-Hijrat* (Eng. Defining the Landmarks of the Abode of Migration that the Hijra has made known), p. 187.

<sup>11</sup> Atiq bin Ghaith bin Zuwair bin Zayer bin Hamoud bin Atiyah bin Saleh Al-Baladi Al-Harbi (d. 1431 AH), *Mu'jam al-Ma'alim al-Jughrafia fi al-Sira al-Nabawia* (End. A Dictionary of Geographical Landmarks in the Prophetic Biography", (Edition: First: Dar Makkah for Publishing and Distribution, Makkah Al-Mukarramah, 1402 AH - 1982 AD), pp. 5 – 6.

<sup>12</sup> Mr. Abdul Samad, *Makkaa al-Mukarama wal-Madina al-Munawara fi al-Qur'an al-Karim* (Eng. Makka and Medina in the Holy Qur'an), Al-Aluka, Date added: 25/5/2023 AD - 5/11/1444 AH. It is available from <https://www.alukah.net/sharia/0/162588/%D9%85%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%85%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A9->

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#### 4. Medina in the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad:

The Prophetic traditions and biography contain numerous hadiths and historical accounts that highlight the importance of Medina. Given that it is the city to which the Prophet of Islam migrated, where he spent the rest of his life, and where he died and was buried.

For example, in Sahih al-Bukhari, which is one of the most important references in the science of Hadith and the Prophetic Sunnah, we read about the virtues of Medina.

Al-Bukhari reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: “The area between the two lava fields of Medina is sacred, as I have declared.” He said: “The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, came to the tribe of Banu Haritha and said: “I see, O Banu Haritha, that you have left the sanctuary.” Then he turned and said: “Rather, you are within it.” Al-Bukhari also narrated on the authority of Saeed bin Yasar, who said: “I heard Abu Hurairah, may God be pleased with him, say: The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: “I was commanded to go to a town that will devour other towns. They call it Yathrib, and it is Medina. It will expel people as the bellows expels the impurities from iron.””<sup>13</sup>

On the authority of Abu Humaid, may Allah be pleased with him, we came with the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, from Tabuk, until we approached Medina, and he said, “This is Taybah (Medina).” On the authority of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said: “Indeed, faith retreats to Medina, just as a snake retreats to its hole.”<sup>14</sup>

#### 5. Medina in Islamic History Sources:

Many books, research papers, and studies have been written about Medina from different perspectives. We can hardly find a book on interpretation, hadith, Islamic history, the Prophet’s biography, and other Islamic sciences that does not address some aspect of life in Medina, its geography, or its history.

Abdul Aziz Al-Juhani mentions that the beginning of the authoring about Medina was in the second half of the second century AH by Muhammad bin Al-Hassan bin Zubala (d. 199 AH) in his book “Akhbar Al-Madina”, then the historical works followed after him, so the book “Harb Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj” and the book “Waq‘at Al-Harrah” appeared by Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Omar Al-Waqidi (d. 207 AH), and the book “Al-Harrah” and the book “Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj” by Abu Ubaidah Muammar bin Al-Muthanna

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<sup>13</sup> Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari al-Ju’fi, Sahih al-Bukhari, edited by Dr. Mustafa Deeb al-Bugha, fifth edition (Damascus: Dar Ibn Kathir, Dar al-Yamamah, 1414 AH - 1993 AD), Vol. 2, pp. 661, 662.

<sup>14</sup> Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ismail al-Bukhari al-Ju’fi, Sahih al-Bukhari, edited by Dr. Mustafa Deeb al-Bugha, Vol. 2, pp. 663, 662. See also Abu Saeed Al-Mufaddal bin Muhammad bin Ibrahim bin Mufaddal bin Saeed bin Amer bin Sharihil Al-Shaabi Al-Kufi then Al-Jundi Al-Muqri’ (d. 308 AH), Faḍa’il al-Madinah (Eng. The Virtues of Medina”, edited by Muhammad Muti’ Al-Hafiz, Ghazwat Badir, First Edition (Damascus: Dar Al-Fikr, 1407).

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(d. 210 AH), then the works of Abu Al-Hassan Ali bin Muhammad Al-Madaini (d. 228 AH), including: “Kitab Al-Madina”, “Qudat Ahl Al-Madina”, and “Hima Al-Madina wa Jibaluha wa Awdiha”, and the two books “Nasab Al-Ansar” and “Nasab Al-Aws” by Abdullah bin Amara; The book is by Ibn al-Qaddah al-Madani al-Ansari (d. before 210 AH), and includes the books “Akhbar al-Madinah al-Nabawiyyah wa Umara’ al-Madinah” by Abu Zayd Umar ibn Shabah al-Numayri (d. 262 AH), “Akhbar al-Madinah,” “Akhbar al-Aws wa al-Khazraj,” and “Nawadir al-Madaniyyin” by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar (d. 265 AH), “Akhbar al-Madinah” by Abu al-Hasan Yahya ibn al-Hasan ibn Ja’far al-Alawi al-Aqiqi (d. 277 AH) – the subject of this treatise – “Al-Ta’rif bima Ansat al-Hijrah min Ma’alim Dar al-Hijrah” by Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Matari (d. 741 AH), “Tahqiq al-Nusrah bi-Talkhis Ma’alim Dar al-Hijrah” by Abu Bakr al-Husayn ibn al-Maraghi (d. 816 AH), and “Kitab Wafa’ al-Wafa’ bi-Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa” by Nur al-Din al-Samhudi (d. 911 AH). Some of these works have been published and edited, while others have had their texts compiled.<sup>15</sup>

Ibn al-Nadim mentioned that Ibn Zubala was a historian and genealogist, and that he had a book called “Akhbar al-Madina” (Eng. News of the City).<sup>16</sup> He is Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Abi al-Hasan, Abu al-Hasan, or, as some say, Abu Abdullah al-Qurashi al-Makhzumi, from Medina. He was one of the chroniclers of Medina and is known as Ibn Zubala. He narrated from Usama ibn Zayd ibn Aslam, Malik, Sulayman ibn Bilal, and al-Darawardi, and he narrated extensively from them in his compilation. He also narrated from Ibn Uyyayna, Musa ibn Yaqub al-Zam’i, and Sulayman ibn Bilal, among others from Medina, some of whom were weak and others unknown. Those who narrated from him include Abu Khaythama Zuhayr ibn Harb, Harun ibn Abdullah al-Hammal, al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Abi Maysara, and others, including Ahmad ibn Salih al-Misri.<sup>17</sup>

Fahim Muhammad Shaltut states that Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ibn Zubala wrote the first book on the history of Medina. There are numerous quotations from al-Samhudi, who died in 911 AH, in his book “Wafa’ al-Wafa’ bi-Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa” (Eng. The Fulfillment of Loyalty Regarding the News of the Abode of the Chosen One), and from other authors. These quotations were compiled by the Orientalist Wüstenfeld nearly a century ago in a book he titled “The History of Medina by Ibn Zubala.” Following this is “The Matter of Medina” by al-Mada’ini Ali ibn Muhammad, which we have not yet found. Then there is “The News of Medina” by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, who died in 256 AH, which we also have not yet found. Finally, there is “The History of Medina” by Ibn Shabah. This last book remained unknown; we knew nothing about it except its title. Brockelmann did not mention any library in the world possessing a copy of it. Our understanding of what was attributed to this book relied primarily on al-Samhudi’s quotations until it became available and circulated several years ago.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Abdul Aziz Awad Salman Al-Juhani, Marwiyat Kitab ‘Akhbar al-Madina [almafqud] li Yahyaa bin al-Hasan al-Alwi al-Aqiqii (890 - 277 AH/ 829 - 890 AD), Jam’ wa Tawthiq wa Dirasat” (Eng. Narrations of the Book Akhbar Al-Madinah [lost] by Yahya bin Al-Hassan Al-Alawi Al-Aqiqi (890 - 277 AH/ 829 - 890 AD), Collection, Documentation and Study,” Master’s Thesis, Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Taibah University, supervised by Professor Yasser Ahmed Nour, First Edition, Madinah Research and Studies Center, 1440 AH - 2018 AD, p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> Ibn al-Nadim [d. 380 AH], Al-Fihrist, (and a valuable supplement has been added to this book that has not been published before today and was among the treasures preserved in the Taymuriyya Library), with an interesting introduction about the life of Ibn al-Nadim and the merit of Al-Fihrist by one of the professors of the Egyptian University [who is Ahmad Amin (d. 1373 AH)] (Egypt: The Great Commercial Library - 1384 AH - 1929 AD), p. 158. See Ibn Zubala, Akhbar Al Madina, compiled, documented and studied by Salah Abdul Aziz bin Surur, Madina Studies Center, 1424 AH. <https://mrcstore.com/ar/%D8%A3%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%AF-%D8%A8%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B3%D9%86-%D8%A8%D9%86-%D8%B2%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9/p1077024961?from=search-bar>

<sup>17</sup> Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, the Egyptian, the Medinan (831-902 AH), al-Tuhfa al-la’ifa fi Tarikh al-Madina al-Sharifa (Eng. The Precious Gift in the History of the Noble City), Center for Research and Studies of Medina, Edition: Vol. 1-6 (First, 1429-1430 AH), Vol. 7-9 (of the second, 1437 AH), Vol. 6, pp. 130 – 131.

<sup>18</sup> Abu Zaid Omar Ibn Shabba Al-Numairi Al-Basri, (173 - 262 AH), Tarikh al-Madina (Eng. The History of Medina), edited by Fahim Muhammad Shaltout [d. 1428 AH], printed at the expense of: Mr. Habib Mahmoud Ahmed (Jeddah: 1399 AH), Vol. 1, p. 13.

Fahim Muhammad Shaltut adds that the book, in the form in which it has reached us, comprises three sections: the first is about the life of the Prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, in Medina. This section is incomplete at both the beginning and the end, and its organization is less coherent than that of similar books. The second section is about Umar ibn al-Khattab's life in Medina, and it, too, is incomplete at both the beginning and the end. The third section is about Uthman ibn Affan's life in Medina, and it, too, is incomplete at both the beginning and the end. All three sections contain omissions, gaps, and inconsistencies ranging from one word to a page, but these are more prevalent in the third section. It is noteworthy that the book does not include a history of the Prophet's successor, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. This leads to one of two hypotheses: either the author included a history of Abu Bakr in his book, but it was lost during the author's ordeal; or he deliberately omitted a history of Abu Bakr because his reign was short, Abu Bakr was preoccupied with the serious event in his time, which distracted him from attending to the urban development of Medina and other worldly matters.<sup>19</sup>

Fahim Muhammad Shaltut clarifies that the first section chronicles the life of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, in Medina from his migration there until his passing. It addresses the urban development of the city, including the establishment of mosques, the allocation of alms, the planning of neighborhoods, the settlement of tribes in specific quarters, the layout of markets and cemeteries, and mentions wells, springs, the city's boundaries, its surrounding mountains and valleys, its water sources and fords, and what the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, protected for the camels of alms and other purposes. In this respect, it is considered the oldest text we have on the history of urban development in the city of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him.<sup>20</sup>

The book contains a wealth of important historical and geographical information about Medina. Among the information it mentions is that Medina has many names. On the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam, said: "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said: "Medina has ten names: it is Medina, Tayyiba, Tabah, Miskinah, Jabbar, Mahburah, Yandud, and Yathrib." He said: "And Abd al-Aziz informed me, on the authority of Ibn Musa, on the authority of Salamah, on the authority of Abdullah ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, who said: "Allah named Medina: the Abode and Faith." On the authority of Abdullah ibn Ja'far, who said: "The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, named Medina Tayyiba." On the authority of Abu Humayd al-Sa'idi, who said: "We went out with the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, in the year of Tabuk. He said: "I am in a hurry, so whoever among you wishes to hasten with me, let him do so." So, he went out, and we went out, until he reached Medina, and he said: "This is Tayyiba." On the authority of Jabir ibn Samurah, may Allah be pleased with him: "They used to say: 'Medina' and 'Yathrib,' so the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: 'Allah named it Tayyiba.'" <sup>21</sup>

Among the important Islamic sources for studying Medina is the book "Kitab Muthir al-'Azm al-Sākin ila Ashraf al-Amakin" (Eng. The Book of the Stimulating Resolve to the Noblest of Places), by Ibn al-Jawzi. In the introduction, Ibn al-Jawzi writes that he longed to visit Makkah before the Hajj. He tried to alleviate this longing by making an intention, but his yearning only intensified upon his return. He realized that frequent visits only increase longing, just as meeting one's beloved only fuels the flames of yearning. Here, he recounts the journey and the virtues of the Ancient House (the Kaaba), though the mere mention heightens this longing. He presents the various stops along the way, mentioning the specific virtues of each place and time, and outlining the prescribed rituals. He embellishes these with excellent hadiths and elegant poetry. He then includes a selection of accounts of Medina and the Prophet's, peace and blessings be upon him, visits, followed by a discussion of the lessons to be learned from the graves. He then presents a selection of

<sup>19</sup> Abu Zaid Omar Ibn Shabba Al-Numairi Al-Basri, *Tarikh al-Madina* (Eng. The History of Medina), Vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>20</sup> Abu Zaid Omar Ibn Shabba Al-Numairi Al-Basri, *Tarikh al-Madina* (Eng. The History of Medina), Vol. 1, p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Abu Zaid Omar Ibn Shabba Al-Numairi Al-Basri, *Tarikh al-Madina* (Eng. The History of Medina), Vol. 1, pp. 163 – 165.

beautiful tombstone inscriptions. He concludes the book with wise sayings containing profound admonitions, making this collection a comprehensive work on the subject he intended.<sup>22</sup>

Among the important Islamic sources for studying the history of Medina is the book “The Precious Pearl in the History of Medina” by Muhibb al-Din Ibn al-Najjar. In the introduction, the author states that when he entered the city of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, and was blessed with a visit, he stayed there. He met with a group of pious, learned, and virtuous people residing there, and they asked him about the virtues and history of Medina. He told them what came to his mind, and they asked him to write it down. He apologized, explaining that memory can be inconsistent and that if his books had been available, he would have compiled a book to satisfy their curiosity. They persisted, saying, “A little is better than a lot, and this city, despite its honor, is devoid of anyone who knows anything about its history. We would like you to leave a good legacy there that will be remembered.” He agreed to their request, hoping for their blessings, to benefit from their prayers, to fulfill the rights of their proximity and companionship, and to seek what is with God Almighty by spreading the virtues of the city of migration and the source of revelation, recounting its history, encouraging people to live there, and urging them to visiting the one buried there, may God bless him and grant him peace. He sought guidance from God and recorded in this book what was possible with God’s help and good guidance and mentioned most of it without a chain of transmission, due to the impossibility of having its originals, and he divided it into eighteen chapters.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps one of the influential books about Medina is the book: “Al-Maghanim Al-Mutaba fi Ma‘alim Tayba” (Eng. The desired Spoils in the Landmarks of Taybah) by Al-Fayruzabadi, the Muslim linguist. In the introduction, Al-Fayruzabadi states: “When I was honored in the year 82 AH to be in the vicinity of the one whom God has honored, I renewed my consideration of what had been written and commented upon regarding the landmarks of the city. I did not find a comprehensive book that gathered the essentials of the history of this noble city. Therefore, I decided to compile a book that would gather what had been scattered throughout the books of earlier scholars, avoiding verbosity and excessive detail.”<sup>24</sup>

Al-Fayruzabadi adds: “rather, I included the core of each chapter, mentioning the noble city, its virtues, and its pleasantness. I then included the sacred mosque, its pulpit, mihrab, pillars, gates, pebbles, dams, and plantings. And it’s open spaces, and the courtyards of the sanctuary and its surroundings, and its heat and its lava fields, and its high places and hills, and its landmarks and its valleys and its ravines. I will fulfill the account of each of the refinements of the wording and the clarification of the meaning, and I will correct its lineage with the correct explanation, until I dispel its obscurity from the darkness of investigation and misinterpretation. I will guide the one who is confused and doubtful to the light of verification, and I will distinguish, by the grace of God the Generous, his error and correctness. I will fill its contents with elegant gems and graceful benefits. I will elevate its discourse with good words, and I will perfume its conclusion with the fragrance of beautiful expression; I call it “The Desired Spoils in the Landmarks of Taybah.”<sup>25</sup>

In the introduction to his book, Al-Fayruzabadi states that it will include the following chapters: Chapter One: On the virtues of the holy pilgrimage, its etiquette, its obligation, its strong recommendation, some of its subtleties and secrets, and urging pilgrims to

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<sup>22</sup> Ibn al-Jawzi, *Kitab Muthir al-‘Azm al-Sākin ila Ashraf al-Amakin*, edited by Marzouq Ali Ibrahim, foreworded by Hammad bin Muhammad Al-Ansari [d. 1418 AH], first edition (Dar Al-Rayah: 1415 AH - 1995 CE), Vol. 1, p. 57.

<sup>23</sup> Muhammad ibn Mahmud ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Najjar (578 - 643 AH), *al-Durra al-Thamina fi ‘Akhbar al-Madinat* (Eng. The Precious Pearl in the History of Medina), edited by Dr. Salah al-Din ibn Abbas Shukr, Edition: First (Saudi Arabia: Medina Research and Studies Center, 1427 AH - 2006 AD), p. 58.

<sup>24</sup> Majd al-Din Muhammad ibn Yaquub al-Fayruzabadi (729-817 AH), *Al-Maghanim al-Mutaba fi Ma‘alim Tabah* (Eng. (Eng. The desired Spoils in the Landmarks of Taybah), first edition, Madinah Research and Studies Center, 1423 AH - 2002 AD., Vol. 1, p. 58.

<sup>25</sup> Majd al-Din Muhammad ibn Yaquub al-Fayruzabadi, *Al-Maghanim al-Mutaba fi Ma‘alim Tabah* (Eng. (Eng. The desired Spoils in the Landmarks of Taybah), Vol. 1, pp. 58 – 59.

be patient with its hardships during their stay. Chapter Two: On the history of the holy city, mentioning its first inhabitants, from the Tubba' and Amalekites, and so on, until God Almighty revealed the Qur'an to His noble Prophet, opening what was closed to it. Chapter Three: On the names of the holy city and their meanings and explaining the derivation of their words from their sources and buildings. Chapter Four: On the Narrated Virtues, and a Mention of the Hadiths and Traditions We Have Narrated Concerning the Virtues of Each of the Aforementioned Places.<sup>26</sup>

According to Al-Fayruzabadi, the book also includes: Chapter Five: On the City's Places, Dwellings, Inns, Heights, Mosques, Monuments, Houses, Palaces, Views, Cemeteries, Farms, Locations, Mountains, Hills, Salt Flats, Sands, Plains, Districts, Works, Courtyards, Huts, Thickets, Plains, Forts, Mounds, Valleys, Clubs, Springs, Conservatories, Canals, Waterwheels, Wells, Rivers, Areas, Distances, Stages, Watering Places, Hills, and Fortresses. Chapter Six: On mentioning a group of people whom we met in Medina, or whom our Medinan elders and others told us they met there, from different classes and varying degrees, including the master saints, the learned imams, the virtuous elders, the great rulers, the reciters of the Qur'an, the noble princes, the righteous worshippers, the distinguished servants, and the trustworthy muezzins, all in alphabetical order.<sup>27</sup>

Among the important Islamic sources in the field of Medina studies is the book by Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, the Egyptian, from Medina (831-902 AH), entitled: *Al-Tuḥfa al-laṭifa fi Tarikh al-Madina al-Sharifa* (Eng. The Precious Gift in the History of the Noble City). In the introduction, the author states that he aimed to describe the conditions of the people of Medina, specifically those distinguished by the additional virtues mentioned, to gain the blessings of those elevated among them and to be granted the divine mercy he mentioned. He did not turn away from them, especially, and included those who deviated from their path. He did not limit himself to these but also mentioned those who resided there from among strangers, even for a year, provided they had studied, narrated hadith, or issued legal rulings in accordance with the approved method and the clear and sound Sunnah. This was so that those who learned from them or followed their path would be well-informed about them and would not need to inquire further or conduct investigations that might not yield such valuable insights.<sup>28</sup>

Al-Sakhawi did not commit to the long-lived people and those after them, as they lived in it and were from its people. Still, he mentioned some of them who did not set foot in its plains and its valleys, or set foot in it with his servants with excessive determination and zeal, who were passionate about doing good to the inhabitants of its soil, and were known for extending the hem of gratitude to those who set foot in its open spaces, hoping that his book, with that, would include the particular and the general, and that it would become like the full moon, and the sea in its vastness.<sup>29</sup>

Al-Sakhawi mentions that he followed al-Taqi al-Fasi, who preserved what others had forgotten, in listing a group of princes and kings who were explicitly designated as rulers of the Two Holy Mosques, even if they had no official position in either. However, he did not include them all, despite their widespread mention and use in writings. Rather, he included a group described as the Mufti of the Two Holy Mosques, or their judge, or their sheikh, despite the inherent possibility of figurative language in such descriptions, even for prominent figures. What motivated him to compile this collection, which is pleasing to the eye and agreeable to the discerning ear,

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<sup>26</sup> Majd al-Din Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Fayruzabadi, *Al-Maghanim al-Mutaba fi Ma'alim Tabah* (Eng. The desired Spoils in the Landmarks of Taybah), Vol. 1, pp. 59 – 61.

<sup>27</sup> Majd al-Din Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Fayruzabadi, *Al-Maghanim al-Mutaba fi Ma'alim Tabah* (Eng. The desired Spoils in the Landmarks of Taybah), Vol. 1, pp. 61 – 62.

<sup>28</sup> Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, *al-Tuḥfa al-laṭifa fi Tarikh al-Madina al-Sharifa* (Eng. The Precious Gift in the History of the Noble City), Vol. 1, pp. 1 – 3.

<sup>29</sup> Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, *al-Tuḥfa al-laṭifa fi Tarikh al-Madina al-Sharifa* (Eng. The Precious Gift in the History of the Noble City), Vol. 1, p. 3.

was his lack of a comprehensive work that would satisfy his thirst for knowledge and dispel ignorance with clear explanations and justifications, despite the pressing need for such a work and the relief it would provide. He found nothing reliable on the subject.<sup>30</sup>

Among the important Islamic sources on the history of Medina is the book (*Wafa' al-Wafa bi-Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa*) by al-Samhudi. In the introduction to the book, al-Samhudi mentions that someone asked him, whose obedience brings gain and whose disobedience brings loss, to abridge his work entitled "*Iqtifa' al-Wafa bi-Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa*," may God's prayers and peace be upon him, and increase his honor and favor with him, with a moderate abridgment that is not excessive. This is even though he was not yet able to complete it with all its sections, because he had adopted the method of comprehensiveness, gathering what was scattered from the meanings of those chapters, summarizing the purposes of all the histories of Medina that he had come across, and adding what the situation required to be added to them, with the occurrence of obstacles, and the succession of distractions and interruptions. So, al-Samhudi agreed to his request; seeing his passion and eagerness for this, and considering what al-Samhudi saw in it—namely, the wealth of information not found in other abridged or even comprehensive works, especially concerning the history of the Sacred Chamber and its magnificent features—he benefited from it firsthand and learned its history with certainty.<sup>31</sup>

Al-Samhudi added that this was due to the construction work carried out during his time, which he will refer to and examine in detail, as it included the renovation of the corners of the Sacred Chamber and the strengthening of the surrounding structure. He had the honor of serving in its reconstruction, avoiding witnessing the dismantling of its foundations, and was privileged to stand in its courtyard, inhale its soil, and have his eyes blessed by its sacred ground and the resting places of the noble bodies. His heart was filled with humility and awe. Indeed, hearts are naturally inclined to be passionate about the history and conditions of this place, as is the nature of every devoted and ardent lover.<sup>32</sup>

## 6. Medina in a Global Context:

Medina holds a paramount of importance in international studies concerning the history of Islam, the Arabs, and the Arabian Peninsula. Given its significance, orientalist, travelers, and Western writers, in particular, have devoted considerable attention to discussing Medina and its importance for centuries.<sup>33</sup>

De Lacy O'Leary clarifies that in the Hijaz are the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, originally, placements on a trade route heading from south to north.<sup>34</sup>

William Gifford Palgrave indicates that the detachment of Solma from 'Aja', is of a length much grander than its breadth, and reaches westward the very neighborhood of Medinah, thus extending out into the access of Hejāz and the great pilgrim route a little above the town where Muhammad lies buried. Now it so happens that the part of the Hajj road, resembling to this opening, is, and always has been more than any other, infested by marauding Bedouins, principally of the Harb tribe, who have often here stopped the entire pilgrim caravans in defiance of their Turkish guard, and who, not content with the treasure captured in Hejāz, often carry a run up

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<sup>30</sup> Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi, *al-Tuḥfa al-laṭifa fī Tarikh al-Madina al-Sharifa* (Eng. *The Precious Gift in the History of the Noble City*), Vol. 1, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup> Ali ibn Abdullah ibn Ahmad al-Hasani al-Shafi'i, Nur al-Din Abu al-Hasan al-Samhudi (d. 911 AH), "*Wafa' al-Wafa' bi-Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa*", first edition (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1419), Vol. 1, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> Al-Samhudi (d. 911 AH), "*Wafa' al-Wafa' bi-Akhbar Dar al-Mustafa*", Vol. 1, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, Harold Fenton Jacob, *Kings of Arabia: The Rise and Set of the Turkish Sovereignty in the Arabian Peninsula* (London: MILLS & BOON LIMITED, 1923), p. 21. It is available from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Kings\\_of\\_Arabia/XM1tAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Kings_of_Arabia/XM1tAAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0)

<sup>34</sup> De Lacy O'Leary, *Arabia Before Muhammad* (London, New York: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., E. P. Dutton & Co., 1927), p. 8. It is available from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Arabia\\_Before\\_Muhammad/QoQNAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Arabia_Before_Muhammad/QoQNAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0)

the very valley which we were now crossing; and it demands all the vigilance and energy of Telal to control their inroads from becoming habitual, and thus interrupting.<sup>35</sup>

It is important to note that the Prophet's migration to Medina gave it its exceptional importance. D. G. Hogarth talks about those days when the Prophet of Islam immigrated from Makkah to Medina. The Prophet had slipped with Abu Bakr through the latter's house into the waste. After three days finished in a cave south of the city, the fugitives got down to the pools of Asfan on the Pilgrim Road; thence, moving northward day after day by sidetracks and hill-paths, they arrived at last to Kuba, in the palm-gardens south of Yathrib, on the 24th of September 622, a date from which all Muslims would reckon time in the ages to come.<sup>36</sup>

Hogarth insists on using the ancient name for Medina, Yathrib. However, the Yathribites, lacking a demanded civic life, envied what their pilgrims saw in Mecca. A movement in favor of Islam started, and after a Pilgrimage accompanied by a dozen converts from the Khazraj, Muhammad was persuaded to send a missionary to their community. A few Meccan Muslims went with him. The new faith sprang up in fresh soil; even some chiefs of the Aus acknowledged and approved of iconoclasm. A year later, Yathrib sent five times as many Muslims to the Meccan Feast, and such good assurances did these offer that enough Meccan families emigrated to revive the apprehensions excited by the Abyssinian secession. Muhammad himself, it was reported, had been invited to Yathrib.<sup>37</sup>

In Medina, the Prophet Muhammad continued his call to Islam. Paul W. Harrison explains some of the teachings of Islam as follows: the corollary to the concept of God is the Arab conception of men. Standing before the great, all-powerful, and inscrutable God, men are on one level absolutely. This conviction of men's fundamental equality runs through the whole Arab system of society and government. It has an impenetrable strength, for at the bottom it is a religious confidence. Men are equal and are bound together by the obligations of mutual helpfulness. To be sure, this conviction is far from being a complete belief in the democratic equality of all men. It is an equality and brotherhood of believers. Outsiders are infidels and outcasts with no rights at all. They and their possessions are the legitimate prey of every believer.<sup>38</sup>

In his voyage to Arabian peninsula, Sir Richard F. Burton indicates that the Masjid Al: Nabawi, or the Prophet's Mosque, is one of the Haramayn, or the "two sanctuaries" of Al Islam, and is the second of the three most respected places of worship in the world; the other two being the Masjid al- Harim at Meccah (connected with Abraham) and the Masjid al-Aksa of Jerusalem (the peculiar place of Solomon). A Hadith or traditional saying of Mohammed asserts, "One prayer in this my Mosque is more effectual than a thousand in other places, save only the Masjid al- Harim." It is therefore the visitor's responsibility, if he stays at Al- Madinah, to pray there the five times per diem, to pass the day in it reading the Qur'an, and the night, if possible, in managing and devotion.<sup>39</sup>

According to Sir Richard F. Burton, visiting the Masjid al-Nabawi and the holy places within it is technically called "Ziyarat" (Visitation). An essential difference is made between this rite and the Hajj or pilgrimage. The latter is mandatory by Koranic order upon

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<sup>35</sup> William Gifford Palgrave, *Personal Narrative of a Year's Journey Through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-63)* (London: Macmillan And Co., 1868), p. 137. It is available from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/A\\_Personal\\_Narrative\\_of\\_a\\_Year\\_s\\_Journey/RKaT37uzieEC?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Personal_Narrative_of_a_Year_s_Journey/RKaT37uzieEC?hl=en&gbpv=0)

<sup>36</sup> D. G. Hogarth, *Arabia* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press 1922), p. 29. It is available from <https://www.google.com/books/edition/Arabia/VuATAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0>

<sup>37</sup> D. G. Hogarth, *Arabia*, pp. 28 – 29.

<sup>38</sup> Paul W. Harrison, M.D., *The Arab at Home* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company Publishers, 1924), p. 213. It is available from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_Arab\\_at\\_Home/w7w2AAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Arab_at_Home/w7w2AAAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0)

<sup>39</sup> Captain Sir Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al- Madinah and Meccah*. In Two Volumes. The Memorial edition of the Works of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton, London: Tylston and Edwards, Mccccxiii), Volume I, pp. 304 – 305. It is available from [https://www.google.com/books/edition/Personal\\_Narrative\\_of\\_a\\_Pilgrimage\\_to\\_Al/wiUyAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Personal_Narrative_of_a_Pilgrimage_to_Al/wiUyAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0)

every Muslim once in his life; the former is only a meritorious action. "Tawaf," or circumambulation of the House of Allah at Mecca, must never be achieved at the Apostle's tomb. This should not be visited in the Ihram or pilgrim dress; men should not kiss it, touch it with the hand, or press the bosom against it, as at the Ka'abah; or rub the face with dust gathered near the sepulcher. On the other hand, to spit upon any part of the Mosque, or to treat it with disdain, is held to be the act of an Infidel.<sup>40</sup>

Sir Richard Burton describes the Masjid al-Nabi as a parallelogram about four hundred and twenty feet in length by three hundred and forty feet in breadth, the long walls being almost north and south. As usual in Al-Islam, it is a building with an immense central area, called Al-Sahn, Al-Hosh, Al-Haswah, or Al-Ramlah, encircled by a peristyle with considerable rows of pillars, like the colonnades of an Italian cloister. The arcades or porticoes are flat-ceilinged, domed above with the small Media Naranja, or half-orange cupola of Spain, and separated into four parts by narrow paths, three or four steps below the level of the pavement. Along the whole inner length of the Northern short wall runs the Majidi Riwak, so named from the then reigning Sultan. The Western long wall is settled by the Riwak of the Rahmah Gate; the Eastern by that of the Bab al-Nisa, the "Women's Entrance".<sup>41</sup>

## 7. Conclusion:

Medina is a holy city for Muslims today, and so it has been throughout history. Therefore, this city is of utmost importance and has an interconnected relationship with the rest of the globe. Thus, this research aimed to establish a new science related to everything connected with Medina.

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<sup>40</sup> Captain Sir Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah*, Vol. 1, pp. 305 – 306.

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