



The Celebration of Mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān (Saint Barsum the Naked) from an Intangible Cultural Heritage Perspective

Raghda Yehia Seddik

Tourism Guidance Department,
Faculty of Tourism and Hotel
Management, Helwan
University

Randa Alaa El-Din Fouad

Tourism Guidance Department and
Heritage and Museum Studies Program,
Faculty of Tourism and Hotel
Management, Helwan University

ARTICLE INFO

Abstract

Keywords:

Mūlid; Sīdī al-ʿIryān;
aspects of celebrations;
intangible cultural
heritage; religious
tolerance; practices;
traditions.

(JAAUTH)

**Vol. 19, No. 2,
(2020),**

PP. 53-72.

The Egyptian community, with its varying background characteristics, has been renowned for its richness in the intangible cultural heritage. Throughout history, religion has been always an integral part of the Egyptians' everyday lives and their intangible cultural heritage at large. It has also played a significant role as a means of connecting people and maintaining political power and social order. The annual celebration of Moulid Sidi Al-Eryan represents one of the most extraordinary Egyptian moulids celebrated by both, Christians and Muslims, and in which the five domains of the intangible cultural heritage are clearly manifested and overlapped. This paper aims at highlighting the most remarkable aspects of celebration associated with Moulid Sidi Al-Eryan. It also focuses on the intangible cultural heritage practices, traditions, rituals and expressions performed by the Christian and Muslim practitioners within the celebration. Moreover, it stresses on the fact that the celebration of Moulid Sidi Al-Eryan exemplifies the shared cultural heritage of Christians and Muslims, religious tolerance, interdependence as partners in the homeland.

Introduction

For centuries, the Egyptian society has been celebrating many traditional festivals principally based on religious faith, local culture and everyday life. Traditional festivals are periodically indigenous recurrent social occasions in which crowds of a whole community are united by cultural, ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical bond and share particular activities and observances (ESFT and UNESCO, 2008). The practice of celebrating annual cyclical festivals is an ancient Egyptian tradition that was present throughout history passing by the Graeco-roman period, Christianity and finally Islam (McPherson, 1941). These celebrations constitute predominantly a religious nature and were devoted to patron deities or local heroes (Kotsori, 2019). It is noteworthy here to mention that some of the ancient Egyptian traditional festivals

continued to be celebrated till nowadays, on different social, religious and cultural backgrounds, such as the celebration of *Sham al-Nasīm* (Smelling the Breeze) and the traditional festival of *Abū Al-Ḥaggāg* in Luxor, while others were camouflaged under Christian and Islamic names (Gadalla, 2016).

Indeed, traditional festivals form an integral part of the Egyptian intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and are amongst the significant cultural values that should be preserved in its original characteristics to be passed to the future (Yenipinar and Yildiz, 2016). Article 2 of the 2003 UNESCO's convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage has proposed five broad domains in which intangible cultural heritage is manifested as: '*oral traditions and expressions including languages as vehicles for intangible cultural heritage; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship*' (UNESCO, 2003). In this respect, festivals are a complex manifestation of ICH that corresponds to a synthesis of performing arts, oral expressions, social practices and compositions of craftsmanship, accentuating the fact that all the five domains are intersected and being inclusive rather than exclusive (UNESCO, 2003). Thus, festivals and its subsequent oral traditions, rituals, social practices, traditional craftsmanship and performing arts are considered the hallmark of the intangible cultural heritage regime and one of the essential tools in UNESCO's toolkit for the safeguarding of cultural practices and expressions (Hafstein, 2018).

With regard to the third domain of ICH, social practices, rituals and festive events are significant habitual activities that form the lives of communities or specific groups and reinforce their identity. Yet, they involve a dazzling variety of forms: worship rites; rites of passage; birth, wedding and funeral rituals; oaths of allegiance; traditional legal systems; traditional games and sports; kinship and ritual kinship ceremonies; settlement patterns; culinary traditions; seasonal ceremonies; practices specific to men or women only; hunting, fishing and gathering practices and many more. Moreover, rituals and festive events often take place at special times and places and remind a community of aspects of its worldview and history (ICH, 2003).

The Egyptian culture and society have always been closely associated with religion and have usually permeated all aspects of life as religion is a key component for cultural consciousness and identity. In this context, Herodotus mentioned repeatedly in his books that the Egyptians are excessively religious beyond all other nations (Hussein, 2010). Historically, the Egyptians' perspective of the world has been influenced by religious beliefs that are evident in almost all of their traditions, social practices and rituals of everyday life. Religious festive events and feasts are considered to be blissful days in most religions (Crawford, 2002). Additionally, they form a significant part of the intangible cultural heritage that will continue to represent the inherited culture of communities in the future, as they have done in the past (Yenipinar and Yildiz, 2016).

In Egypt, various festive events are associated with the birth of prominent religious figures or heroes. The Egyptians have honored these popular religious figures with

annual festivals and even pilgrimage, a vigorous practice that represents both ancient traditions and contemporary concerns. Festivals dedicated to revered Christian saints and Muslim holy masters are held almost every day, attracting millions of believers all over the country (ESFT and UNESCO, 2008). It should be noted that this type of festivals or festive events is better known as *Mūlid* or *Mawlid* in Arabic (Stanton, 2015).

Etymology and A Brief History of *Mūlid*

The current term *mūlid* or *mawlid* is an Arabic word, literally meaning “birth” or “renewed birth-day” (Gadalla, 2016). It is derived from the Arabic word “ولد”, which means to give birth, bear a child or descendant. In contemporary times, *mūlid* is an annual popular religious feast esteeming certain folk saintly figures or holy masters “*Wālī/Awlīyā*” and their devotional aspects. The origin of these festivities is pagan and dates back to the ancient Egyptian tradition of celebrating festivals in honor of the birth of particular deities on specific days (Abdenour, 2007). Although the ostensible aim for any *mūlid* is to imbibe blessings “*baraka*” from the local saints or holy masters in hopes of good fortune, they serve as local affairs with open discussions that provide opportunities for trade, leisure and meeting with friends and family (Richardson and Jacobs, 2013).

Mūlids have a reputation for being carnivalesque and have historically been a source of governing anxieties, occasionally resulting in their repression (Jacob, 2011). In fact, there are hundreds of Coptic and Muslim *mūlids* in Egypt that form a significant inherent of the folk religion, which involves several aspects of personal and social life. It is noteworthy to mention that Muslims and Christians share the same concept of *mūlids*, however, in the Islamic context, *mūlid* refers genuinely to the annual celebration of the birthday of Prophet Mūhammad, while the other is addressed to Virgin Mary or Jesus Christ (ESFT and UNESCO, 2008).

Almost every village and district in Egypt has its venerated saints and holy men, and their festivals or *mūlids* are feted once a year. Sometimes, these *mūlids* are small ones attended by locals and nearby villagers, while others are major *mūlids* attracting attendees with different religious and cultural backgrounds from all over the country (Abdalla, 2018). The permanence of celebrating festivals is apparently related to the annual festivities of the local deities worshiped during the ancient Egyptian times (Abdenour, 2007). The similarities between ancient and present traditions indicate that Coptic and Islamic *mūlids* are pre-Christian and pre-Islamic in origin (Gadalla, 2016).

With the introduction of Christianity in Egypt, in the middle of the 1st century AD, religious festivals and celebrations took a new form known as the feasts of the saints, based on honoring a figure, particularly those who lived during the Roman era, and who carried the holiness character in the collective consciousness of individuals who believed in it. These feasts were celebrated during the 4th - 5th century as inherited retained practices and traditions from Pharaonic times. It was not until the 13th century when *mūlids* were celebrated in today’s full image and common sense (McPherson, 1941).

In Islam, the earliest known *mūlid* is *mūlid al-Nabī*, the birth of the Prophet, shortly known as *al-mūlid* (Stanton, 2015). It was introduced to Egypt during the 13th century by the Shīʿite Fātimīd dynasty, which ruled Egypt from 358 AH/969 AD to 567 AH/1171 AD (Katz, 2007). At that time, the celebration was restricted to the Fātimīd caliph's court and was essentially a court-procession of court-officials. Despite the fact that the Sunnī Muẓaffar al-Dīn Gökburī, brother-in-law of Ayyūbīd sultan Saladin (*Encyclopedia Britannica* 2019, Mawlid), initiated the first public merrymaking celebration of *al-mūlid* in 1207, other Sunnī conservative sects opposed and disapproved the celebration of *al-mūlid* and considered it to be idolatrous and admitted that it is an innovation (*bidʿa*) that is originated centuries after the death of the Prophet (Katz, 2007). It seems that the concept of reveling Islamic *mūlids* is an extension and parallel to the tradition of celebrating Coptic *mūlids* that is possibly resulted from a Christian impact, and adopted by Muslims, during the years of the Crusade successive waves, when both Islamic and Christian cultures influenced each other in many different aspects. The most remarkable feature of the Coptic impact over Islamic *mūlids* is the extravagant entertainments and night-time procession to honor the saints (UNESDOC, 2011).

It should be noted that year 2015 witnessed the birth's celebration of both Jesus Christ by Catholic Christians, on December 25, and Prophet Muḥammad by Muslims, on the 12th day of Rabīʿ al-Awwal, on the same day for the first time in 457 years (Talley, 2015).

The Differences between Coptic and Islamic Concepts of *Mūlids*

Significant structural differences have been noticed highlighting the actual practical effects of both Coptic and Islamic *mūlids* in Egypt. The Christians frequently intermingle with Muslims in their *mūlids*, and vice versa, share some of the social and market functions of their Muslim counterparts and usually celebrate a saint's name-day (Richardson and Jacobs, 2013).

Some of the Coptic *mūlids* correspond to the Julian Calendar, a reform of the Roman Republican calendar established by Julius Caesar, while others rely on the Coptic Solar one that follows the rhythms of seasons and the Nile flood (Mayeur-Jaouen, 2012). As for Islamic *mūlids*, they are regulated by the Lunar Islamic calendar, which is 10 to 11 days shorter than the Solar Calendar (Talley, 2015).

The word *mūlid* is rather more applicable to Islamic celebrations than the Coptic (McPherson, 1941). For the Christians, *mūlids* celebrate the saints' martyrdom as a "rebirth" into eternal life, unlike Muslims, who consider *mūlids* as a commemoration for the real "birthday" of the Prophet, his family or holy masters (Niemann, 2004). Therefore, some of the Christians refused to use the term *mūlid* as they consider it an Islamic term that literally means birthday which contradicts their beliefs. Consequently, they prefer the terms "*iḥtifāl*" (feast) or "*tidhkār*" (commemoration) to refer to their own *mūlids* (Hussein *et al.*, 2010).

On the other hand, Coptic saints are mostly influenced by monastic models or martyrs from the Roman era, while Muslim holy masters are considered heirs to the Prophet Muḥammad and descendants of his family. In comparison, icons and direct relics are

a fundamental feature of the Coptic shrines, but Muslim shrines rarely contain bones or relics for venerated men or women. Besides, other variances have been identified in the Coptic and Islamic *mūlids*, but eventually they are engaged with the same intent, imply lots of secular joys and maintain similar inherited social, religious and cultural practices (Mayeur-Jaouen, 2012).

In this regard, *Mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* (Barsum the Naked) is considered one of the best examples of the Egyptian religious *mūlid* that brought together Christians and Muslims to share many aspects of their personal, religious, cultural and social life.

Saint Barsum the Naked (*Sīdī al-ʿIryān*)

He was born in Cairo in 1257 AD, his father was the scribe of queen Shagar Al-Dūrr, known as (*al-Wagīh* or *al-Mūfadal*), meaning the preferred, and his mother was a descendant from the family of *al-Tabbān*, (Andraous, 2012). During the Mamlūk period, he succeeded in persuading the Mamlūk sultan al-Nāsir Muḥammad to reopen the churches of Cairo after he had ordered their closure in 1301 (Efthymiadis, 2011).

Following the death of his parents, his uncle appropriated his inheritance. In response, Saint Barsum didn't dispute with him, on the contrary, he left everything, then he withdrew outside Cairo, presumably staying on the hills of *al-Muqattam* to live the solitude life following Saint Paul the Hermit, remembering *Jn.2 (2:17)* '*And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what god pleases, will leave forever*' (Voile, 1995).

He abandoned Cairo, for five years, and struggled with the harshness of the summer heat and coldness of winter while wearing a woolen garment. After that, he dwelled in a crypt inside the church of Saint Mercurius in Old Cairo for 20 years, praying and fasting daily, without listlessness (Gabra and Van Loon, 2007). At that time, there was a huge serpent living in this crypt that prevented the people from going down (Fig. 1), when he saw it, he cried loudly: '*O! God, Jesus Christ, son of the living God who gave the healing to the people of Israel who were bitten by snakes when they looked at the copper snake. And now, I am looking to you, you are the one who hanged upon the cross, to give the power to facing this monster*', then, with his hand, he made the sign of the cross against the serpent. Consequently, the serpent succumbed and obeyed him faithfully in the same way as Daniel's lion (Daressy, 1917).

Saint Barsum left the crypt and settled on the roof of the church for 15 years, praying and experiencing asceticism, until his skin became darker than any other hermits (Meinardus, 1970).

During the reign of Sultan Khalīl ibn Qalāwūn, the Church endured extreme persecution, when the Christians were forced to change their white turbans to blue in order to distinguish between them and the Muslims (Gabra and Tkla, 2017). Saint Barsum refused to change his white turban and as a result, he was arrested for his

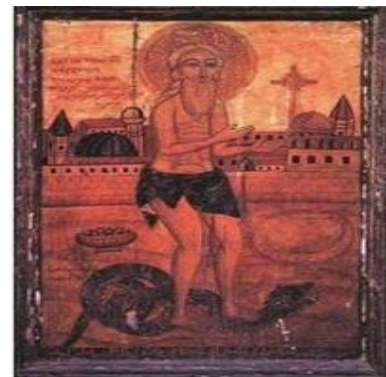


Fig.1. Saint Barsum with the huge serpent who lived in the crypt. (El Gendi, 2011)

deeds (El Gendi, 2011). After his release, he went to the monastery of Saint Mercurius in the region of Shahrān, situated near Tura at Hīlwān, known today as al-Ma^csara (Malaty, 1996) and he never took off his white turban until he died, on 10 September 1317, at the age of 60. Saint Barsum was buried in the monastery of Shahrān, the monastery that carried the name of a Coptic wise man (Gabra, 2017) and later it bore the name of Saint Barsum the Naked (Isidorus, 2002).

Names of Saint Barsum the Naked (*Sīdī al-^cIryān*)

His mother called him Barsum which is a Syriac word, meaning “The son of the Fast”, owing to her delayed pregnancy (Gabra and Takla, 2017). He was also known as “Barsum al-Tabbān” in relevance to the name of his mother’s family (Al Souriany, 1972). Later, he was named Barsum *al-^cIryān* (Barsum the Naked) for probably two main reasons. The first is that he only wore a woolen garment or cloak, following the example of Paul of Thebes, the first Christian hermit known in Arabic as Anba Bola (Mattaos, 1985). The second reason is ascribed to the icon conserved in the church of Saint Mercurius in Old Cairo (Fig. 2), which comprises an inscription read as ‘*Saint Barsum, the naked of vices, and clothed with virtues*’ (Andraous, 2012).

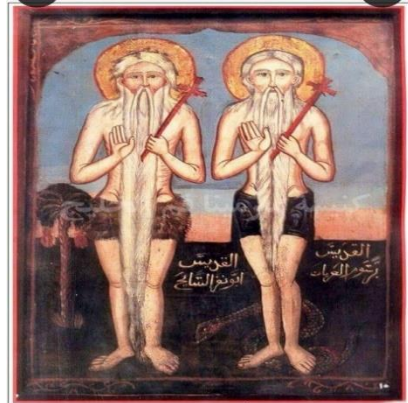


Fig.2. *The icon of Saint Barsum in the church of Saint Mercurius.*

<https://mobile.twitter.com/Anb>

Miracles of Saint Barsum the Naked (*Sīdī al-^cIryān*)

Saint Barsum is renowned for his various miracles among Christians and Muslims as well. For instance, one day a troubled Christian who slew his wife came to Saint Barsum who was aware of the incident before being informed by the man. Accordingly, Saint Barsum brought another man and gave both a jar and asked them to fill it with sea waters. Subsequently, along with the other two men, Saint Barsum went to the slain woman, where he poured the sea waters, conjoined her neck to her body, made the sign of the cross by his hand, and prayed to God to help this woman to revive, and the woman rose again (Basset, 1924).

Another miracle that has been attributed to Saint Barsum is when he resided on the roof of the monastery of Shahrān and people used to come from all around to visit him and get his benediction. One day, the abbot of the monastery got embarrassed, because he hadn’t enough food for all people. Therefore, Saint Barsum asked one of the workers in the kitchen to bring him some soup then he made the cross sign on the soup and asked the worker to mix it with the rest of the soup. The soup then multiplied and was sufficient for all the attendees and everyone ate until they satisfied, and God blessed them all (https://orthodoxwiki.org/Barsoum_El-Erian, September 2020).

On the other side, Muslims believed also in the miracles of Saint Barsum as they saw a resemblance between him and *al-Shaikh Aḥmad al-Rifā^cī*, the founder of the *Rifā^cī*

Sūfī order, in the domestication of snakes, since both had the ability to tame snakes. Moreover, they correlate between him and *al-Sayīd al-Badawī*, known as the “Roof Man”, the founder of the *Badawīya* order who gathered forty disciples around him on the rooftop terraces, as both resided on the rooftops for many years (زيدان، 2013)

The Monastery of Saint Barsum the Naked in Al-Ma^csara

The Caliph ^c*Abed al-^cAzīz Ibn Marawān* (27-86 H./ 685-705 AD.) permitted the construction of two churches in the area of Hilwān. The first church was devoted to the Virgin Mary and was known as the Church of the Servants. The second was a monastery dedicated to Saint Mercurius, the martyr, founded during the Patriarchate of Simon II in 830 AD. and renovated during the patriarchate of Zacharie by Pomen, the monk (395-424 H./1004-1032 AD.) (Isidorus, 2002). This monastery was known in the past as Marcurius, Marcura and Abū Marcura. When Saint Barsum the Naked lived there, it was known as the monastery of Barsuma (Gabra, 2017).

Al-Maqrīzī mentioned that the monastery of Saint Mercurius was built in mud-brick (al-Maqrīzī, 1998). It occupies a surface of twenty hectares preceded by two towers with the main entrance on the eastern side. The monastery consists of an old square-shaped church roofed with a cupola headed by a chapel with a sarcophagus including the relic of Saint Barsum. Several buildings have been recently added to serve the community including a two-floor cathedral, a hospital, an elderly home, an orphanage, a conference center, a nursery, and a modern library. In addition, several ateliers for the handmade craft such as carpets, textiles, icons and mosaic were attached to the monastery and a small factory for manufacturing the ecclesiastic clothes of the monks (El Gendi, 2011).

Inside the monastery, there is the "Trinity" tree, a perennial palm tree that grew in three branches. It was said that the form of the three branches is a miracle of the Holy Trinity. Therefore, it was placed inside an iron fence, fixed with wooden panels and iron columns for its protection. Moreover, it was photographed and printed inside the monastery's library. The triple tree, the snake, and the monastery building always appear in the background of all Saint Barsum's printed pictures, icons and paintings (The Birth of Saint Barsoum, 2017).

Aspects of Celebrating *Mūlid Sīdī al-^cIryān* (Barsum the Naked)

Mūlids are a folkloric phenomenon that represents a significant constituent of the shared Egyptian intangible cultural heritage practices and traditions. They strengthen the belief in saints and holy masters and thus maintaining its continuity to future generations. They are primarily based on relics, actual bodies of the revered saints and holy masters or heritage sites visited by them or witnessed their miracles (McPherson, 1941). Moreover, *mūlids* are considered social occasions that consolidate relations between family and friends, and an appropriate opportunity for marriage. The attendees or celebrants of *mūlids* are typically known as “*Mawaldīya*” in Arabic. They are characterized by a combination of social types, spatial codes and norms. In the celebration of *mūlids*, people walk, but others sit or lie down; some talk, sleep, eat, and drink; others laugh, watch, or do nothing; but all are there together, tied to the *mūlid*-making process (Madoeuf, 2014).

Mūlid Sīdī al-^cIryān is considered one of the most popular *mūlids* in Egypt since it accentuates the unity, religious tolerance and reconciliation between Muslims and Christians as homeland partners. This is based on the participation of both Christians and Muslims in this *mūlid* and its proceedings. It should be noted that some Sufi Muslims refer to Saint Barsum as “*Sīdī Muḥammad al-^cIryān*” because this saint was loved and venerated by Muslims who used to come and visit his church to receive and enjoy his benediction and blessings. Other Muslims believed that he was a Muslim named “Muḥammed”, who used to live with the Christians, and when he died, the Christians buried him and called him Saint Barsum (Faris, 2009).

Mūlid Sīdī al-^cIryān is celebrated at the monastery of Saint Barsum, *Sīdī al-^cIryān*, at al-Ma^csara, near Hilwān. It is an annual *mūlid* that takes place on the 10th of September till the 27th of the same month. This *mūlid* is relatively unique not only for being attended by both Christians and Muslims but also it constitutes different personal, religious, cultural and social practices that highlight many aspects of the intangible cultural heritage domains as follows:

The Ritual of Baptism

Religious traditions are normally presented as elements of the intangible cultural heritage belonging to the domains of ‘*knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe*’ or ‘*social practices, ritual and festive events*’ (UNESCO, 2003). The ritual of holy baptism is the basis of the Christians’ religious traditions, which usually takes place within the course of public worship. This service is somehow associated with the church’s celebrations where the majority of people come together (Jones, 2016).

In that sense, the Orthodox church frequently believes in seven sacraments; however, God's gift of grace is not limited only to these seven sacraments, it extends to the entire mystical and sacramental life of the Church. It should be pointed out that a sacrament is a manner in which God imparts grace to his people, literally meaning a “mystery” (Neslon, 2008). Therefore, these sacraments were instituted by Christ and they included Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, Repentance and Confession, Priesthood, Marriage and Unction (Burmester, 1947).

The rite of baptism, the first of the seven sacraments, is permeated in the history, traditions and rituals of the Coptic churches in Egypt. According to the Bible, the first person to be baptized is Jesus Christ in the 1st century, around 30 AD., and since then the church has been baptizing people (*Jn. 1:16,17*). Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist in the River of Jordan when the holy spirit came upon him like a dove (Mettaous, 1996), anointed him, then assured it after the resurrection when he said to his disciples: ‘*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*’ (*Mt: 28:19-20*).

The word Baptism is originally derived from the Greek word (*βαπτισμός*), which means to “plunge” or to “immerse” (Mcgvckin, 2010). It is a Coptic spiritual rite of sprinkling water on to a person’s forehead or immersing them in water sanctified with oil three times to be purified from all sins, in the name of the holy Trinity, the father,

the son, and the holy spirit. Moreover, it allows the baptized person to achieve the rest of all sacraments in the church (Bulter, 2009).

The ritual of baptism takes place on Sundays, in memory of Christ's resurrection. It typically happens during or after all Mass, thereby representing the promise of resurrection just like Christ (Meinardus, 2002). The Christian attendees of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*, take advantage of this celebration and its blessings to baptize their babies in order to obtain the benediction of Saint Barsum. On this special occasion, the baby is dressed all in white and the mother receives the holy secrets called "*Tanāwul*" during a two-hour prayer. Then, the parents celebrate the baptism of their baby with friends and family as they offer them sweets (2018، مكرم).

On the other side, *mūlids* are considered a prime time for performing the rite of male circumcision. Some of the Muslims, particularly those residing in Hilwān, take advantage of the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* to circumcise their sons to honor and obtain blessing "*baraka*" from the revered holy saint (Beattie, 2005). Special barbers accomplish the circumcision process in nearby tents where boys are screaming and the celebrants are singing: "*يا عريس يا صغير... علقه تفوت ولا حد يموت*" (*Oh young groom... a hit to pass and no one dies*), a sentence that was repeated in the Egyptian puppet operetta known as "*al-Laila al-Kabīra*" (The Big/Grand Night), which deals with the rite of circumcisions that are carried out during *mūlids*. This famous operetta is written by the great Egyptian colloquial poet Salah Jahin and composed by Sayid Mikāwī in the 1960's. It should be noted that "*al-Laila al-Kabīra*" constitutes a significant side of the Egyptian folklore that humorously describes the celebration of the last night of *mūlids* (Atkey, 2019). The play comprises a parade of colorful characters singing and dancing including "*al-Arāgūz*" (Egyptian Puppet), which has been inscribed on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding in 2018 (UNESCO, 2018).

The Icons' Procession

UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage proclaimed that social practices, rituals and festive events that include a wide variety of expressions, physical elements, recitations, songs, dances, special clothing, special food and processions, is one of the five main domains in which the intangible cultural heritage is evidently manifested (UNESCO, 2003). Many worldwide folkloric processions were inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, established in 2008, with the intention of strengthening the community's link to its history and its future and help raise awareness of the importance of intangible cultural heritage as an expression of human creativity and cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2009).



Fig.3. The icons' procession of Mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān. (2020، علام).

In reference to *Mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*, the icons' procession forms a fundamental part of the *moulid's* celebration rituals, like any other Coptic *mūlid* in Egypt. During the *mūlid's* celebration, Saint Barsum's icons roved the monastery in a glorifying procession, after being anointed with the Meron oil, carried by the deacons of the church who hold floral crosses and incenses and move to the sanctuary (Fig. 3). The whole parade is followed by men and women celebrants ululating and cheering saying: “عم يا عريان يا طب / التعبان... عم يا رفاعي يا طب الأفاعي”, (*Uncle, O ʿIryān, O medicine for tiredness ... Uncle, O Rifāʿī, O medicine for snakes*), together with other Christians hymns. Meanwhile, in anticipation of good fortune, the celebrants show their interest in touching and kissing the saint's icons and shrine and imbibing themselves with blessings.



Fig. 4. The icons' procession from the church of Mercurius towards al-Tawḥīd mosque. (2020، علام).

Muslims share with their Christian partners their icons' procession while exclaiming enthusiastically “ممد يا سيدي محمد البرسوم ممد”, (*Help Sir Muḥammad Al-Barsum, Help*) (مصطفى، 2008). Then, the procession heads outside the monastery towards Al-Tawḥīd Mosque (Fig. 4), in a scene that reflects the religious tolerance and coexistence between Muslims and Christians of Egypt (2018، مكرم)


It is worth mentioning that the word “icon” means a religious picture used to represent the image of God. It is derived from the Greek word (εἰκών) that signifies the image. Today, the word icon refers to the devotional paintings of the Orthodox Church representing the images of Christ or any other holy figure, their life, martyrs and miracles. Typically, these icons were executed on wood, or different fabrics fixed on wooden frames with bright colors (2020، حبيب). By historical standards, the first individualized portrait images of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary, and other saints and martyrs appeared during the 4th century. However, Saint Luke the Evangelist, the patron of painters, painted one of the oldest icons of the Virgin Mary while holding the child in 1567 (Hodegitria Icon) and Patriarch Kyrolos I, the 24th Patriarch, is considered to be the first to expose icons on the walls of the Pontifical Seat in 420 AD. (Szerelmey, 1856).

Primarily, paintings have been recognized since the dawn of history as depicted in the Pharaonic tombs and have been continued to appear in the form of frescos throughout the Graeco-Roman era (Wahba, 1993). Furthermore, the idea of celebrating feasts and festivals by a procession dates back to ancient Egypt where people participated in the parade of their deities. The most popular procession was that of the “*Opet*” festival celebrated during the New Kingdom in which the statues of god Amun-Re, his wife Mut, and their son Khonsou went out in a parade, for 2 km., in the Sphinx avenue which connects between al-Karnak temples and Luxor temple (Wilkinson, 2000). Nowadays, *Mūlid* of *Sīdī Abū al Ḥaggāg*, revives the same tradition of celebrating the

Opet festival as the celebrants swag the streets of Luxor while carrying colorful barges symbolizing those of the ancient Egyptian Theban triad (Frankfurter, 1998).

Cross Tattooing

Cross is the principal symbol of Christianity, recalling the crucifixion of Jesus the Christ that represents suffering, defeat, triumph and salvation. It has been acknowledged as the single visual identifier of the Christians' faith and belief. Around 45 Bible verses mentioned the cross and crucifixion including *Jn.* 19:18, 19:25, 19-41, *Mt.* 10:38, 16:24, 27:32, 27:40, *Lk.* 9:23, 14:27, and *Mk.* 8:34, 15:33, and 4:35 (Bible Verses about the Cross). The cross consists of four intersectional lines, two verticals and two horizontal lines. It has several different variants such as the Greek cross, which is represented with four equal lines, and the Latin Cross, with three equally long topmost lines and a much longer bottom (Curl, 2006).

The early Christians did not use the cross as a declared symbol until the 4th century, after Milan Edict in 313 AD. Previously, other symbols were used to identify themselves such as, for instance, the fish symbol "*Ichthys* in Greek" or "ΙΧΘΥΣ", the oldest known Christian symbol (Gabra, 2002). As for the symbol of the cross used by Christians throughout the world, it is the evolution of the ancient Egyptian symbol for life, the "Ankh" , a cross shape with an oval loop on top, which influenced the cross known as the *Crux Ansata*. Another form is the cross known as the monogram of the Christ, which consists of the two letters "χρ" meaning Jesus Christ (Dalton, 1961).

In Egypt, almost 90% of the Christians bear dark blue cross tattoo on the inside of their wrists. This cross is a symbol of identity used by millions of Christians in Egypt. The majority of the Christian children are given the cross tattoo between the age of 2-3 years, as an inherited old cultural and religious tradition performed mainly during holidays and *mūlids* (Fjeldstad, 2008).

During the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*, the celebrants take advantage of this event and paint Coptic symbols and images of saints on their hands, wrists and shoulders. Moreover, tattoo artists give the cross tattoo to the hands and wrists of the celebrants' children. This practice follows the early Christians' tradition during the persecution era when the early Christians marked their children with the cross to guarantee their children's doctrine in case of being killed and the children were raised by pagans (Ries, 1983). Today, this old practice became a tradition for both children and adults who show great interest in making cross tattoos or even tattoos for the revered saints, Virgin Mary and the Christ (2018، مكرم).

Praises and Glorification

According to the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, recitation, chanting and singing are manifested in two domains of the ICH, namely 'performing arts' and 'social practices, rituals and festive events' (UNESCO, 2003).

Praises and glorification are an essential feature of Coptic and Islamic *mūlids* in Egypt. Praises refer to the act of expressing approval or admiration, the offering of grateful homage in words, song, or hymns dedicated to God, while glorification is an

aspect of Christian Soteriology and Christian Eschatology, in which God removes all spiritual defects of the redeemed (Prokuart *et al.*, 2010).

Bible clarifies certain behaviors to glorify the God signified in confessing sins, showing trust in God and conveyance and execution of God's instructions as mentioned in Ps. 50:23 'Those who sacrifice thank offerings honor me, and to the blameless, I will show my salvation' (Bassali, 2005).

The revered saints are praised and glorified just like God. Each saint has his own hymns of praises and glorification performed in the church, and they are particularly sung during the special occasions and *mūlids* (Challis, 1980).

During the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*, the Christian celebrants express their praises and glorification for the saint by gathering around his burial while holding candles and chanting verses related to his memoirs, miracles and martyrdom (Fig. 5). They ask also ask for his intercession and assistance during their expatriation from earth to their final journey in the eternal life (روبير، 2007). Moreover, meditation is raised and prayers animate the crowd in order to bring comfort and pleasure amongst the celebrants (Fig. 6). It should be noted that some Christians believe in the apparitions of Saint *Barsum al-ʿIryān* on his *mūlid*. One of the signs of this appearance is the tremolo of the palm trees in the monastery's garden, thus, the Christians keep chanting all night "هز النخلة يا عريان... هز النخلة يا عريان" (Shake the palm, O ʿIryān; Shake the palm, O ʿIryān), as they believe that the vibration of the palms is an indication of the presence of the saint and the beginning of his appearance (Kamel, 2014). On the other side, Muslim celebrants show their love and reverence for Saint Barsum through lighting candles and chanting to praise and glorify his memory (مصطفى، 1980).

The Fulfillment of Vows

A vow is a solemn promise made to God to perform some good work, e.g. animal sacrifices, paying charity donations, etc..., if God would give some assistance in difficulty (Harrison, 1987). The Bible strictly asserts on paying vows without any delay, 'When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in



Fig.5. The celebrants of the *mūlid* lightening candles in front of Saint Barsum's icon.. (علام، 2020)



Fig. 6. The celebrants of the *mūlid* raise their prayers while gathering around the burial of Saint Barsum. (علام، 2020).

fools; fulfill your vows (Ec. 5:4,5). Hence, the vower must comply with his promise to avoid the scarcity of fear of the guardian (UNESCO and EFST, 2008).

It should be mentioned that the practice of animal sacrifice has been adopted by the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003). Sacrificing of animals is a traditional ritual in Christianity. The symbolism of animal sacrifice in the Bible is a concrete expression of God's righteousness and grace at the same time. Ultimately, animal sacrifices are required as a means for people to atone for their sins and draw themselves closer to their God as the Bible explicitly states in Heb. 9:22 that '*Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness*' (Bell, 2010).

In Coptic *mūlids*, there are different forms of vows that are usually linked with the celebration of the memorial of a saint or martyr. They vary from sacrifice to offerings and donations in order to provide honor and content at the altar inside the church or the monastery (UNESCO and ESFT, 2008).

In this context, the celebrants of *mūlid* of *Sīdī al-ʿIryān* take the opportunity of this occasion to fulfill their vows through sacrificing animals, offering donations for the monastery or poor families, helping in renovating the icons, providing the church with flowers, candles, perfumes and oils needed for perfuming and anointing the relic of the saint, and distributing the *aroma* among the celebrants (2018، مكرم). During the celebration of 2019 *mūlid*, his Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of Saint Mark Episcopate, inaugurated six altars in the cathedral of the monastery of Saint Barsum in the Diocese of Hīlwān (Al-Māwardī, 2019).

Muslims also honor and fulfill their vows during the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* by bringing and lighting candles, sacrificing animals, donating for needy people and doing some charitable acts in order to obtain the saint's spiritual blessings (2007، مصطفى).

Other Aspects of Celebration

Apart from miracles and apparitions that are expected to happen, *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* implies a lot of secular joys and social activities and gatherings. The celebrants of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* come from far villages and nearby districts, with their supplies (Fig. 7), and reside in tents surrounding the monastery (McPherson, 1941). During the celebration, various services take place inside these tents where different types of free food and drinks are served to the celebrants. Additionally, the monastery's monks and nuns provide the poor celebrants with free meals, drinks and first aid. The expenses of these free services, whether inside or outside the monastery, are borne by charity donated by the wealthy to the monastery, fulfillment of vows or voluntary contributions.



Fig. 7. *The influx of mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān 's celebrants with their supplies.* (2020، علام).

On the other side, streets are crowded with thousands of people who have come to pray for the saint's intercession, fulfill their vows and enjoy the recreational activities of the *mūlid*. Amongst the recreational activities and performances is singing and dancing the folkloric stick dance “*al-Taḥṭīb*”, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016 (UNESCO, 2016). Moreover, theatrical and pleasurable shows are presented including a documentary film of the saint's life, a circus with clowns, magicians, knives throwers, snakes and dwarfs dancing, operetta, drummers and music choirs. There are some other entertaining games such as card games, lotteries, fortune tellers, palm readers, etc..., with other merriment activities such as carousels, bumpers, swings and top spins.



Fig. 8. The performing arts during the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*. (علام, 2020).

In addition to the recreational activities, an exhibition is held, during the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*, for the monastery's crafts including clothes, icons, mosaics, handicrafts, carpets, furnishings, gifts and toys. Some merchants take also advantage of the *mūlid*'s celebration and display and sell their goods such as pictures of Saint Barsum, Virgin Mary and other venerated saints (al-Māwardī, 2019).

The manifestations of this year's, 2020, *mūlid* celebrations were restricted to divine masses and evening prayers, while sermons were broadcasted on social media platforms due to COVID-19 pandemic and the need to adhere to all the precautionary measures during the visit, including wearing masks and social distancing. Anba Basanti, bishop of Hilwān and al-Maʿsara, presided over the commencement and the final mass of the *mūlid* along with other bishops as a part of daily spiritual prayers and sermons (Faris, 2020).

It should be mentioned that some of the Egyptian movies and songs have alluded to *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* such as the famous movie “Prince of Darkness”, 2002, by ʿĀdil Imām, and the folkloric song “*mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān*” in 2015, but from a different perspective rather than the religious and cultural context of the *mūlid*.

Conclusion

Admittedly, celebrating any Egyptian *mūlid* is initially inspired by the ancient Egyptian tradition of acknowledging specific festivals in honor of the birth of particular deities on specific days. Today, the practice of reveling *mūlids* forms an integral part of the Egyptian folk religion, which exemplifies diverse aspects of the personal and social life of its practitioners. In this respect, *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* is considered one of the most distinctive Egyptian *mūlids* that is feted by both Christians and Muslims. Its aspects of celebration constitute an exceptional characteristic that

distinguishes the Egyptian intangible cultural heritage, which tends to incorporate its five domains into one, as many of the practices, traditions, and expressions of the intangible cultural heritage are manifested in its celebration. Hence, it serves as a melting pot for a range of intangible cultural heritage practices, traditions and expressions perpetuated in continuity by its Christian and Muslim exponents.

Indeed, the exceptional aspects of the celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* emphasize the shared heritage of both Christianity and Islam, which is fairly represented within its context. It also seems to offer the Christians and Muslims an appropriate occasion to meet and share their representations, practices, traditions and expressions that reinforce the solidarity and identity of the present social groups.

Importantly, the annual celebration of *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* reinforces the feeling of belonging to the different layers of community, Christians and Muslims, suspends norms of social control and perpetuates spiritual, spatial and friendship rites. Besides, the celebration of *mūlid* creates infinite opportunities for the spiritual intercession, the fulfillment of vows and the articulation of new wishes, desires and hopes. It is also a place where diverse miracles and apparitions are expected to happen. Additionally, this *mūlid* represents a vivid example of religious tolerance, national unity and interdependence between Christians and Muslims as partners in the homeland. This emphasizes the concept of the single cultural fabric that constitutes the Egyptian personality with the duality of its Coptic and Islamic religion. Moreover, the public involvement of Christians and Muslims in the *mūlid*'s celebration provides a remarkable space for the inter-religious dialogue within the Egyptian society.

In conclusion, celebrating *mūlid Sīdī al-ʿIryān* is a viable means for both Christians and Muslims to express their devotion, gratitude and appreciation to Saint Barsum the Naked and associate themselves with his life, message and character while sharing their intangible cultural heritage practices, traditions and expression.

Bibliography

- ʿAbdalla, Y.H. (2018). Saints Heritage and the Egyptian Urban Forms Through History. *Resourceedings*, 1 (2):58, 58-74. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331667717_Saints'_Heritage_and_the_Egyptian_Urban_Forms_Through_History, [Retrieved October 06 2020].
- ʿAbdenour, S. (2007). *Egyptian Customs and Festivals*. Cairo: The American University Press, Egypt.
- Al-Maqrīzī (1998). *Al-Khitat al-Maqrīziya*, III. Cairo: Madbouly bookshop, Egypt.
- Al-Souriany, S. (1972). *The Diocese of Hilwān and the Monastery of Saint Barsun the Naked*. Helwan. Coptic Diocese of Hilwān, Egypt.
- Al-Mawārdī, M. (2019). The Celebration of Mawlid Barsoum Al-Arian Activities will Continue for 20 Days. *Albawabah News*. Available at <https://albawabhnews.com/3724192>, [Retrieved September 06 2020].
- Andraous, E. (2012). Al-Qiddis anba Barsum al-ʿAryan. *Encyclopedia of History of Copts of Egypt*. http://www.coptichistory.org/new_page_589.htm, [Retrieved August 31 2020].

- Andraous, E. (2012). Dayr al-anba Barsoum al-Aryan: al-Ma'sara, Halwan. *Encyclopedia of History of Copts of Egypt*. http://www.coptichistory.org/new_page_6770.htm, [Retrieved September 04 2020].
- Atkey, M. (2019). *A Million Miles from Broadway-Musical Theater Beyond New York and London (Revised and Expanded Edition)*. Canada: The Friendly Song Company, Inc.
- Bassali, M. (2005). *Praises: The door to God's presence*. Longwood: Xulon press.
- Basset, R. (1923). Le Synaxaire copte jacobite. V. Les mois de Baounah, Abib, Mésoré et jours complémentaires. *Patrologia Orientalis*, 18 (3), 525-782.
- Beattie, A. (2005). *Cairo: A Cultural History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, J. (2010). *The Bible Answer Book: Over 260 of the Most Frequent Asked Questions*. Naperville: Sourcebooks, Inc.
- Bulter, A.J.B. (2009). *The Ancient Coptic churches of Egypt*. II. North Carolina: Lulu.com press, USA.
- Burmester, O.H.E. (1947). "The Baptismal Rite of the Coptic Church. A Critical Study". *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte*, 11, 27-86
- Challis, N. (1980). "Glorification of Saints in the Orthodox Church". *Jstor*, 7 (1), 239-246.
- Coquin, R.G. (1991). "Barsoum the Naked, Saint". In A. S. Atiya (eds.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, II, (pp. 348-349). New York: Macmillan.
- Coquin, R.G., Martin, S.J.M. (1991). "Dayr Shahrān, Saint". In A. S. Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, III (pp. 862-863). New York: Macmillan.
- Crawford, R. (2002). *What is Religion?*. London-New York: Routledge.
- Crum, W.E. (1907). Barsoum the Naked, *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archeology*, 21, 135-149.
- Curl, J.S. (2006). *A Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dalton, O.M. (1961). *Byzantine art and archeology*. New York: Dover.
- Daressy, M.G. (1917). "Indicateurs topographie du livre des perles enfouies du mystère précieux". *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, 13 (2), 175-230.
- Efthymiadis, S. (2011). *The Ashgate Companion to Byzantine Hagiography: Periods and Places*. (vol. 1). London-New York : Routledge.
- El Gendi, S.S. (2011). "Saint Barsoum le Nu et son monastère à Ma'sara", *Annals of the Faculty of Arts Ain Shams University*, 39, 435-449.
- ESFT (Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions) and UNESCO (2008). *Safeguarding Egyptian Traditional Festivals: Collecting and Documenting Egyptian Festivals*. A national project in cooperation with UNESCO within the framework of the Network of the Traditional Festivals of the Mediterranean "Festivals of the Sun" (UNESCO Mediterranean Program). Available at <http://www.esft.info/Books/Festivals.pdf>, [Retrieved September 07 2020].
- Faris, M. (2009). *Anba Bisanti: Muslims Believe that Anba Barsoum Al-Arian (Muslim)*. Available at www.copts-united.com/Article.php%3FI%3D200%26A%3D7106&prev=search&pto=aue, [Retrieved August 28 2020].
- Faris, M. (2020). Bishop Basanti Presiding Over the Celebrations of Bishop Barsoum, *Youm7*,

Available at <https://www.youm7.com/story/2020/9/10/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%B3%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%89-%D9%8A%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A3%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1/4970682>,

[Retrieved October 20 2020].

- Fjeldstad, A. (2008). "The Cross in the Egyptian Church of Martyrs". In Singh, D. M. (ed.), *Jesus and the Cross: Reflections of Christians from Islamic Contexts* (pp. 121-124). Oxford: Regnum Books International.
- Frankfurter, D. (1998). The pilgrimage and holy space in Late Egypt. *Islamic philosophy, theology, and science*, 134.
- Gabra, G. and Takla, N.H. (2017). *Christianity and Monasticism in Northern Egypt: Beni Suef, Giza, Cairo, and the Nile Delta*. Cairo-New York: The American University in Cairo Press.
- Gabra, G. and Van Loon, J.M. (2007). *The Churches of Egypt from the Journey of the Holy Family to the Present Day*. Cairo-New York: The American University in Cairo Press.
- Gadalla, M. (2016). *Egyptian Mystics: Seekers of the Way*. 2nd Edition. Greensboro: Tehuti Research Foundation.
- Hafstein, V.Tr. (2018). "Intangible Heritage as A Festival; or, Folklorization Revisited". *The Journal of American Folklore*, 131 (520), 127-149.
- Harrison, R.K. (1987). *Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics*. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers.
- <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/The-Cross>.
- https://mobile.twitter.com/Anba_Ermia/status/746301391988211712/photo/1, [Retrieved December 19 2020].
- Hussein, Y., El Gohary A., Gonzalez V. B., Sarnataro, A., Savvopoulos, K., and Vingopoulou, L. (2010). *Sacred Places and Popular Practice in Alexandria*. Egypt: Bibliotheca Alexandrina. Available at <http://www.bibalex.gov.eg/Attachments/Publications/Files/2013032016111942011/SacredPlaces.pdf>, [Retrieved August 04 2020].
- Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). (2003). *Social Practices, Rituals and Festive Events*. Available at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/social-practices-rituals-and-00055>, [Retrieved September 28 2020].
- Isidorus, Bishop. (2002). *Al-Kharīda al-Nafīsa*. II. Cairo: Al-Mahaba Bookshop.
- Jacob, W.C. (2011). *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870-1940*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, UK.
- Jones, S. (2016). *Celebrating Christian Initiation: A Practical Guide to Baptism, Confirmation and Rites for the Christian Journey*. London: SPCK, UK.
- Kamel, M. (2014). *Anba Barsoum Al-Arian and his Famous Monastery in Helwan*. *Copts United*. Available at <https://www.copts-united.com/Article.php?I=2019&A=169446>, [Retrieved October 01 2020].
- Katz, M.H. (2007). *The Birth of Prophet Muhammed: Devotional piety in Sunni Islam*. London and New York: Routledge.

-
- Kotsori, I.S. (2019). “Ancient Festivals and their Cultural Contribution to society”-. *Open Journal for Studies of History*, 2 (1), 19-26. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336710994_Ancient_Festivals_and_Their_Cultural_Contribution_to_Society, [Retrieved September 27 2020].
 - Madoeuf, A. (2014). Mulids of Cairo: Sufi Guilds, Popular Celebrations and the Roller-Coaster Landscape of the Designated City’. In D. Singerman & P. Amar (eds.), *Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture and Urban Space in the New Globalized Middle East* (pp.465-487). Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
 - Malaty, T.Y. (1996). *The Dictionary of the Church Fathers and Its Saints*. Cairo. Anba Ruwais Printing House, Egypt.
 - Mayeur-Jouen, C. (2012). What Do Egypt’s Copts and Muslims Share?. In Albera, B. and Couroucli N. (eds.), *Sharing Sacred Spaces in the Mediterranean: Christians, Muslims and Jews in Shrines and Sanctuaries* (pp. 148-173). Indiana: Indiana University Press.
 - Mcgvckin, J.A. (2010). *The Orthodox Church. An Introduction to its History, Doctrine, and Spiritual Culture*. New York: John Wiely and sons Press.
 - McPherson, J.W. (1941). *The Moulids of Egypt (Egyptian Saint-Days)*. Cairo: Ptd. N. M. Press.
 - Meinardus, Otto F.A. (1970). *Christian Egypt: Faith and Life*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo press.
 - Meinardus, Otto F.A. (2002). *Two thousand years of Christianity*. Cairo-New York: The American University in Cairo Press, Egypt.
 - Mettaous, Bishop. (1996). *The Spirituality of the Rites of the Holy Liturgy in the Coptic Orthodox Church*. Cairo: Saint Mary and Saint Mina Press, Egypt.
 - Mettaous, Bishop. (1985). Al-Difnar. Beni Suef. Lagnat al-Tahrir wa’l-Nashr.
 - Neslon, T. (2008). *The Orthodox Study Bible: Ancient Christianity Speaks to Today’s World*. Elk Grove: Thomas Nelson.
 - Niemann, R. (2004). Moulids in Egypt: A Traditional Phenomena of Ritual, Sociability and Censor. Performance Studies International (PSI) Conference. Singapore, 15-18 June. Available at <http://www.xcult.org/texte/niemann/moulids.html>, [Retrieved September 15 2020]].
 - Richardson, D. and Jacobs, D. (2013). *The Rough Guide to Egypt-Rough Guides*. New York: APA Publications.
 - Ries, J. (1983). Cross. In Eliade, M. (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia of Religion*, IV (pp.155-165). London-New York.
 - Santon, A. (2015). Celebrating Muhammad’s Birthday in the Middle East: Supporting or Complicating Muslims Identity Projects? In Merkel, U. (eds.), *Identity Discourses and Communities in International Events, Festivals and Spectacles* (pp. 192-206). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
 - Szerelmey, N.C. (1856). *The portrait of Jesus Maria Hodegedria painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist, an historical description*. Oxford: Oxford University press.
 - Talley, G. (2015). Jesus and Muhammed Share a Birthday for the First Time in 457 Years. *National Geographic*. Available at <https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2015/12/30/jesus-and-muham-mad-share-a-birthday-for-first-time-in-457-years/>, [Retrieved September 03 2020].

- Tarsitani, S. (2007). The Birth of Saint Barsoum Al-Erian...in the protection of the People and Security. (2017), *Copts Today*. Available at <https://www.coptstoday.com/1229043>, [Retrieved October 21 2020].
- UNESCO. (2003). *Frequently Asked Questions*. Available at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/faq-00021>, [Retrieved October 06 2020].
- UNESCO. (2003). *Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Available at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention#art2>, [Retrieved September 30 2020].
- UNESCO. (2009.) *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Available at <https://ich.unesco.org/doc/src/06859-EN.pdf>, [Retrieved October 15 2020].
- UNESCO. (2018). *Traditional Hand Puppetry*. Available at <https://ich.unesco.org/en/USL/traditional-hand-puppetry-01376>, [Retrieved October 09 2020].
- UNESDOC. (2011). *Cultural Aspects in Christian and Islamic Religion*. UNESCO Regional Office-Beirut and UNESCO Chair of Comparative Religious Studies, Mediation and Dialogue, Saint Joseph University (USJ), Beirut. Available at <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000192020>, [Retrieved September 12 2020].
- Voile, B. (1995). "Barsum le Nu, un Saint copte au Caire à l'époque Mamluke". In D. Aigle (ed.), *Saints Orientaux* (pp. 151-168). Michigan: De Boccard.
- Wahba, Z. (1993). *Icons their history and spiritual significance*. Cairo: St Mark Orthodox Church Press.
- Wilkinson, R.H. (2000). *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt*. New York: Thames and Hudson.
- Yenipinar, U. and Yildiz, E. (2016). Festivals as Cultural Heritage: The Mesir Festival of Manisa. In R. Efe, *Global Issues and Trends in Tourism* (1st ed., p. 323). Palo Alto, CA: St. Kliment Ohridski University Press. Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/310649730Festivals_as_Cultural_Heritage_The_Mesir_Festival_of_Manisa, [Retrieved September 24 2020].

المراجع العربية

- مكرم، القس داوود (٢٠١٨)، الموالد القبطية. دراسة ميدانية في المعتقدات الشعبية. الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، القاهرة.
- حبيب، رءوف (٢٠١٧)، الأيقونات القبطية. مكتبة المحبة، القاهرة.
- زيدان، يوسف (٢٠١٣)، التصوف. نهضة مصر، القاهرة.
- مصطفى، فاروق أحمد (١٩٨٠)، الموالد: دراسة للعادات والتقاليد الشعبية في مصر. الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، القاهرة.
- مصطفى، فاروق أحمد (٢٠٠٨)، الأنثروبولوجيا ودراسة التراث الشعبي. دار المعرفة الجامعية، القاهرة.
- روبر، فارس (٢٠٠٧)، في الفلكلور القبطي. الهيئة العتمة لقصور الثقافة، القاهرة.
- علام، سارة (٢٠٢٠)، زينت الفضيلة بروحانية أصيلة. اليوم السابع. متاح على

<https://www.innfrad.com/News/14/828019/-%D8%B2%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%AA-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%B6%D9%8A%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%B5%D9%8A%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%82%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B7-%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%81%D9%84%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AE%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%89-%D9%86%D9%87%D8%B6%D8%A9>, [الاطلاع سبتمبر ٣٠ ٢٠٢٠].

الاحتفال بمولد سيدى العريان (القديس برسوم العريان) من منظور التراث الثقافى غير المادى

رغدا يحيى صديق راندا علاء الدين فؤاد

قسم الإرشاد السياحي، كلية السياحة وإدارة الفنادق، جامعة حلوان.

المخلص

لقد أدى اختلاف خلفيات وصفات المجتمع المصرى إلى تنوع وإثراء ما يمتلكه من التراث الثقافى غير المادى. فعلى مر العصور، كان الدين يمثل دائما جزءا أساسيا من حياة المصريين وتراثهم الثقافى غير المادى، وأيضا كان له دور مهم فى التواصل بين الناس والحفاظ على استقرار و تشكيل النظام السياسى والاجتماعى. الاحتفال السنوى بمولد سيدى العريان (القديس برسوم العريان) يمثل أحد أهم الاحتفالات الاستثنائية المصرية، حيث يشارك فى الاحتفال الأقباط والمسلمون معا، بالإضافة إلى ذلك يتبدى بوضوح فى هذه الاحتفالات، مجالات التراث غير المادى الخمسة التى حددتها منظمة اليونسكو. وهذه الدراسة تهدف لإلقاء الضوء على مظاهر الاحتفالات بمولد سيدى العريان، وما تتضمنه من ممارسات، عادات، وطقوس يؤديها الأقباط والمسلمون. وكذلك تلقى الضوء على فكرة أن الاحتفال بمولد سيدى العريان يقدم لنا مثلا على التراث الثقافى المشترك بين الأقباط والمسلمين وتأكيد فكرة النسيج الواحد الذى يشكل الهوية المصرية بثنائية دياناتها، بالإضافة إلى التسامح الدينى، والوحدة الوطنية بين شركاء الوطن والترابط فيما بينهم.

معلومات المقالة

الكلمات المفتاحية

مولد؛ سيدى العريان؛ مظاهر الأحتفال؛ التراث الثقافى الغير مادى.

(JAAUTH)

المجلد 19، العدد 2،

(2020)،

ص 72-53.