

- Stausberg, Michael. 2014. "Big Gods in Review: Introducing Ara Norenzayan and his Critics." *Religion* 44(4): 592–608.
- Sørensen, Jesper, and Petersen, Anders Klostergaard. Forthcoming. "Manipulating the Divine: An Introduction" In Jesper Sørensen and Anders Klostergaard Petersen (eds.), *Manipulating the Divine — Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives on Divination and Magic*, (Numen). Leiden: Brill.
- Turchin, Peter. 2016. *Ultrasociety: How 10,000 Years of War Made Humans the Greatest Cooperators on Earth*. Chaplin, CT: Beresta Books.
- Turner, Jonathan H., Alexandra Maryanski, Anders Klostergaard Petersen, and Armin W Geertz. 2018. *The Emergence and Evolution of Religion: By Means of Natural Selection*. (Evolutionary Analysis in the Social Sciences). London: Routledge.
- Vaage, Leif E., and Vincent L. Wimbush. 1999. *Asceticism in the New Testament*. London: Routledge.
- Vögelin, Erich Hermann Wilhelm. 1956. *Order and History. Volume One: Israel and Revelation*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University.
- Vögelin, Erich Hermann Wilhelm 1957. *Order and History. Volume Two: The World of the Polis*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University.
- Vögelin, Erich Hermann Wilhelm 1957. *Order and History. Volume Three: Plato and Aristotle*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University.
- Vögelin, Erich Hermann Wilhelm 1975. *Order and History. Volume Four: The Ecumenic Age*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University.
- Vögelin, Erich Hermann Wilhelm 1987. *Order and History. Volume Five: In Search of Order*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University.
- Weber, Max. 1920. "Zwischenbetrachtung: Theorie der Stufen und Richtungen religiöser Weltablehnung." In Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, Vol. 1, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 536–573.
- Whitehouse, Harvey, Pieter François, Patrick E. Savage, Thomas E. Currie, Kevin C. Feeney, Enrico Cioni, Rosalind Purcell, Robert M. Ross, Jennifer Larson, John Baines, Barend ter Haar, Alan Covey, and Peter Turchin. 2019. "Complex Societies Precede Moralizing Gods Throughout World History," *Letter. Nature* 568, 226–229. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1043-4>.
- Wimbush, Vincent L., and Richard Valantasis (eds.). 1995. *Asceticism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

01 Nisan 2023

MADDE YAYIMLANDIKTA:
SONRA GELEN DOKÜMA:

BRILL

Spatial Expressions of Ascetic Tendencies in the Qur'an

Mette Bjerregaard Mortensen

Aarhus University

mbmo@cas.au.dk

Zind
(230373)

Abstract

In this article, I propose viewing the early Qur'anic movement as an expression of strong ascetic tendencies. More specifically, I suggest seeing aspects of Qur'anic rhetorics as offering a specifically *spatial* expression to broader ascetic tendencies that characterized late antiquity as a whole, and which may be labeled "axial," insofar as they can be traced back to the middle of the first millennium B.C.E., i.e., to the period coined by Karl Jaspers and others as "the Axial Age." In the Qur'an, rhetoric about striving for religious perfection takes on a spatial and horizontal expression, since the soteriological aspirations are formulated, to a certain extent, as a spatial ambition of "going out in the way of God." As I suggest here, spatial imagery constitutes a prevalent theme throughout the Qur'an and, based on an analysis of a number of examples, I argue that this spatial rhetoric indicates ascetic tendencies within the early Qur'anic movement. The Qur'an's articulation of the tension between the believers and the surrounding world, including the tension between the *muhājirūn* (emigrants) and "those who stay behind," is a prevalent theme throughout the text. This suggests that ascetic piety should be enacted spatially. In the last section of the article, I discuss the apparent change in semantics of two Qur'anic terms that suggests the later Islamic exegetical tradition appears to favor an interpretation of these terms that allows for a more settled mentality and "stationary piety."

Keywords

Qur'an – early Islam – asceticism – spatial imagery – prophetic prefiguration – *muhājirūn/hijra* – piety – Axial Age – Sloterdijk – Bellah – Smith