

**The Connotations of Fire for Arabs before Islam. In the book Sobh Al-Asha in Writing Ansha For Abi Abbas Al-Qalqashandi Historical Study**

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**Abstract**

In this article, we discuss the connotations of fire among the Arabs before Islam, which was mentioned in the book Subh al-Asha, with a simplified explanation of each type. Likewise, if they expect an army to kindle a fire on their mountain, so that the news will reach their friends, until they include it in their parables: the fire of war is even hotter, and their descriptions of war came to compare it to the redness of fire, and they often use redness to indicate the intensity of their kindness to war, as wars were considered by the Arabs before Islam as an obsession. The individual is required most of his time, and the Arabs used fire as an important and effective means of media during the days of their wars. Fire was the most accessible and easy of media, the most informative and effective, and the fastest to reach among their tribes scattered in the vicinity of the island and its vast deserts, and usually crosses the conclusion of fire among the Arabs before Islam that were produced by their wars. Before Islam, it was their kindling to the fire of war, marking the start of it and surprising the enemy.

**Keywords:** *Connotations, Fire, Arabs before Islam, Book of Sobh Al-Asha in Writing Ansha, Abi Abbas Al-Qalqashandi.*

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## Introduction

The Arabs used fire for various uses according to their need for it in their daily lives, so its names were many and varied according to the purpose. There is a fire for war, another for the guest, and a third for guiding the lost and others, which leads us to a precise organization that the Arabs knew before the mission, so that they were fully aware of the purpose that was lit. The fire was for him without asking about it. Al-Qalqashandi collected in his book *Subh al-Asha* the use of fire by the Arabs, and its different names according to them, to the extent that he collected thirteen types of it.

Therefore, we decided to write a research on this subject, highlighting the biography and life of Al-Qalashandi, the nature of his book, the topics he dealt with, as well as the importance of the book and its scientific material that it included. Some may consider these topics as marginal, and have no value in scientific research. But this opinion is rejected because it leads us to know the encyclopedia that distinguished the author of the aforementioned book, in addition to knowing the conditions of the Arabs before Islam (Ezzat,1973).

Al-Qalqashandi is considered one of the distinguished writers in the ninth century AH who left great traces in various sciences, and these effects are still circulated among researchers to this day for study and investigation.

He is Shihab Al-Din Abu Al-Abbas Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Ahmed bin Abdullah bin Al-Shihab bin Al-Jammal Abi Al-Yaman Al-Ghazari Al-Qalqashandi Al-Shafi'i. Abdullah), or (Ali), and most of the translators of Al-Qalqashandi relied on what Al-Sakhawi brought in writing the brilliant light, and Al-Qalqashandi belongs to an ancient Arab tribe descended from the (Bani Badr) tribe of Fazara, and this is what is clear He himself is in his books, and he said:

((The Banu Badr are from Fazara of our tribe to which we are attributed, and in which we belong, and they have the honor of the Arab countries - Qalyubiya from the Egyptian lands - and their cousins from Banu Badr bin Mazen bin Fazara neighbor them, and each of them has its own country, and still enmity and animosity between them, and the Banu Badr among them leadership, strength and dominance, and the people of our town Qalqshanda from Qalyubia are two sects: the Banu Mazen sect, and the Banu Badr sect)) (Al-Dabbagh,1963).

As for his birth, the sources of al-Qalqashandi's translation did not mention a specific date for it, because they did not agree on the year in which he was born. However, an approximate date can be given through the information provided by some sources, which agreed that the year of his death is (821 AH / 1418 AD), and that His age at the time of his death was sixty-five years, and when sixty-five years are subtracted from 821 AH, his birth will be in 756 AH.

As for the jobs that al-Qalqashandi practiced, they were varied, as he was close to the authorities and held many government positions in Egypt, the most important of which was the Diwan al-Insha, but he moved away from official jobs in his late days, while maintaining his high position in the state and in scientific circles (Al-Dujaili,1966).

As for his book *Subh al-Asha* in the writing of al-Insha, it is an integrated encyclopedia, al-Qalqashandi called it *Subh al-Asha* because it is a guiding light. The rising of the morning light, it is like morning to evening, meaning that whoever does not study this book to infer it, he will not succeed in his task, nor will he excel in his craft, if he does not make it a pioneer and a beacon for him, and this is what al-Qalqashandi mentioned in the introduction to the book: (( I named it *Subh Al-Asha* in writing *Al-Insha*), and this designation is the most appropriate for the content of the book, and for the purpose for which it was written, and it reinforces the opinion that the book's name is (*Subh Al-A'sha* in writing *Al-Insha*) that Al-Qalqashandi when he composed it was intended to provide the author of the composition with all What is necessary for him to carry out his diwanayah mission to the fullest, and his main concern was to write the creation as a job in the Royal Diwans, not (the creation industry) as an ability or as a talent available to any other person outside the Diwan , and what is meant by (creation) is the Diwanayah writing, and it is a Diwan that undertakes from He undertakes huge tasks of organizing public correspondence, incoming and outgoing, and organizing There is no doubt that taking care of such matters requires the writer to be sharp in intelligence, strong observation, and enjoy a great deal of experience, and *Subh Al-Asha's* book on writing the creation is considered one of the best books and works of Al-Qalqashandi, whose authorship was based on Documents, correspondence, royal and dispute books, types of official and diplomatic correspondence, and a large number of books on history, geography, literature, genealogy, jurisprudence, biographies, and others (Al-Hofi,1982).

The book *Sobh Al-Asha* was characterized by a large capacity in its information, in addition to the diversity of this information, and what concerns us here are the topics that dealt with the history of the Arabs before Islam, especially with regard to the topic of research, the semantics of fire among the Arabs before Islam, and we have made a census of the term fire contained in the book of Al-Qalqashandi (Angry1993), We found that he mentioned thirteen fires, which are, respectively:

1. The Arabs used the term “fire of wars” metaphorically when disputes and battles broke out between them, perhaps because they used fire to emphasize the occurrence of war, as if they gathered for war, they smoked during the day, and burned at night to teach their clans and alliances and unite them , and the Arabs used fire as an important and effective means in the day The greatest of their days, and it is the day of Khazazi, if Kulaib bin Rabi’a Al-Taghlibi, who is Kulaib Wael in his tribe, Rabi’ah, directing Al-Saffah bin Amr in front of him, and instructing him when he meets the people ((to lead a fire, a sign that he made between him and him)) If he sees many enemies, let him light two fires. The enemies were many. The butcher, whose name was Salamah bin Khalid, ignited Narin, so Kulaib came in the crowds of Rabia, so they became in Khazzaz, and they fought a fierce battle in which the masses of Yemen were defeated, so the butcher sang with pride in his creation, and the success of his fire for the war in achieving its goal, saying:

And one night, I was kindled in Khazazi,  
and I guided my confused battalions  
You have gone astray from the sky,  
and if the people were not sober, I would count as guides.

The day of Khazazi is considered the first day in which the Arabs of the north were victorious over the Arabs of the south (Angry,1993), and it is mentioned that the reason for setting the fires was that they lit it on Khazaz for three nights and smoked for three days because their tribes did not multiply yet meaning that they took a means of informing those who were dispersed among them to catch up with them. It was common knowledge among them that if they wanted a war, or expected an army, and wanted to gather, they would light them at night on their mountain so that the news would reach their friends, so they would come to them. , and the fastest to reach among their tribes scattered in the vicinity of the island and its vast deserts.

2. The fire of Muzdalifah: It is a fire that was kindled in Muzdalifah from the feelings of the pilgrimage to be seen by those who drove from Arafat at (Al-Nafrah), and the first one who kindled it was Qusay bin Kilab (), it is lit until now, and Al-Qalqashandi intended it during the era of the Prophet and the caliphs after him (Ezz El-Din,1990).
3. The fire of rain: In the first pre-Islamic era, if the rain was retained, they would gather the cows and tie goods and tents in their tails and hocks, and they would climb with them on the rugged mountain, and set fire to them, and they claim that this is one of the reasons rain, and he cited the poet's saying:

I will make you with blazing cows a means for you between God and rain

4. The fire of the alliance: If they wanted to make an oath, they kindled the fire and made the oath with it, mentioning its goodness, and calling for deprivation of its goodness on the one who broke the covenant and dissolved the contract. It is said that the tribes of Murrah bin Awf Al-Dhubyan, allied themselves at a fire, and they approached it until their stuffs (burned them), so it was called the alliance (Al-Mahashi) (), and they were throwing salt and sulfur into the fire, and if you became angry, they said to the alliance, this fire threatens you, they fear him with it until he keeps the covenant A promise and does not swear a lie.

The people of Yemen used to swear by fire, and it is said that it was in the nobles of Yemen, and it was called the Fire of Darwan , and it had a dam. And sulfur, and if it falls into it, it will explode and collapse, so he says: This fire has threatened you, and if he is suspicious, he will eat, and if he is innocent, he will swear (Farroukh,1965).

5. Fire of expulsion: They used to burn it behind someone who was going, and they didn't like it coming back.
6. The fire of war: They would light it if they wanted a war or expected an army, so they would kindle a fire on their mountain so that the news would reach their companions (Hamza,1961).
7. The fire of the two heats: And it was in a sullen country, so if the night was shining a fire shining, and in the day there was high smoke, and perhaps a neck turned out from it and burned those who passed by, so Khalid bin Sinan dug and buried it, and it was a miracle for him.
8. The fire of the coughing: It is raised to the desolate, so he follows it, and the ghouls fall to him, as they claim.

9. Hunting fire: A fire that kindles the antelope and covers it if you look at it.
10. The Lion's Fire: Burn if they fear the lion so that he will flee from them, as it would turn away from the fire, and al-Qalqashandi indicated that it is said that if he sees the fire, a thought occurs to him to repel him on purpose (Kharbotli,2009).
11. The fire of the villages: A fire kindled at night, so that the guests could see it and be guided to it.
12. The fire of the sound (which is the one who was licked): Ignite the one who has been stung if he is bitten, they watch him with it, as well as the wounded if his blood bleeds, and the one who was struck with whips, and the one who was bitten by the dog, and Al-Qalqashandi indicated that the aim of this is so that they do not sleep, so the matter becomes severe for them, and leads them to death.
13. The fire of redemption: The kings were among them if they captured the women of a tribe, the chiefs of them would go out to them for redemption or fear, so they hate to expose the women during the day so that they are exposed, or in the darkness, so the amount of what they kept for themselves from the ranks is hidden, and they kindle fire for their display (Omar,2001).
14. Fire mark: It is the fire with which a man names his camel, so it is said to him: What is the mark of your camel?

Al-Qalqashandi touched on the symbols and signs of Arab fire, the story of a man from Banu al-Anbar who was captured in Banu Handala: and he understood from them that they intended to attack his people, Banu al-Anbar, so he said to Banu Handala: I have a need with my family, and I want a messenger from your people to send him there.” They answered him to that on condition that he address him in his need in their presence, so they brought a man to him at night and the Arabs had kindled its fire, so he turned to what they brought him and said to him: Do you think? He said: I am sane. He said: Look at the sky and its stars, so he looked, then said: Look at the fires The Arabs, and he looked and said to him, “What is more? The stars of the sky or the fires of the Arabs?” He said: “Each of them is a lot.” He said: “If you are wise, then he gave him a handful of sandalwood and a bundle of sand, and a bundle of thorns in it, and he said, ‘Go to my people and give them this bitter melon and these two bundles.’” And tell them to strip my red she-camel, and to leave my camel of leaves, and ask my one-eyed brother to tell you the news. The attendees said: There is nothing in this to deny, go in his need. So he went to Banu Al-Anbar and paid them that and told them the story, and he returned, so he sent the people to his one-eyed brother, so he

came, so they told him The news, he said that he says: The Banu Handala came to you in counting thorns and sand, and that the fires of the Arabs repel the stars of the sky, and he commands you to leave the fat, and They landed in such and such a place, and they did so, and they left at their own time, so Banu Handala became the first among them, and they did not catch any of them.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

It is clear to us through the previous text, al-Qalqashandi, regarding al-Asir’s message, that he avoided detailing or clarifying what al-Asir mentioned to the Messenger, and contented himself with mentioning the story only without comment from the man. Among the lessons that can be learned from this story are the connection of a person to his Arab tribe and the call to even the organized confrontation of the enemy so that they are not taken for granted. Suddenly (Mohamed,1981).

We note that when al-Qalqashandi mentioned this narration, he mentioned the story and did not mention the details of the narration and did not mention who the man was the author of the story. It is noteworthy that al-Qalqashandi frequently uses stories and proverbs to convey his ideas, and the story embodies the concept of sacrifice and defense of the tribe, bravery in battle and unity against the enemy.

There are other types of Arab fire that al-Qalqashandi did not mention, including al-Habaib fire, and it is also called the fire of Abu al-Habib. (Tawfik,2007), Abu al-Habib was a man of the Arabs in the past, a miser who did not ignite a fire at night, for fear of being quoted from it. The firefly, which is a small bird, if it flew at night, it would be thought of as a meteor, and if it flew from bed, if it flew at night, it would be considered sparks, and the fire of treachery (Nicola. (1992).

### **Conclusion**

In this research, we dealt with the implications of fire for the Arabs before Islam, which was mentioned in the book *Subh al-Asha*, with a simplified explanation of each type. Likewise, if they expect an army to kindle a fire on their mountain, so that the news will reach their friends, until they include it in their parables: the fire of war is even hotter, and their descriptions of war came to compare it to the redness of fire, and they often call them red for distress and indicative of their kindling of fire to war, as wars were considered by Arabs

before Islam as an obsession. The individual is required most of his time, and the Arabs used fire as an important and effective means of media during the days of their wars. Fire was the most accessible and easy of media, the most informative and effective, and the fastest to reach among their tribes scattered in the vicinity of the island and its vast deserts. Before Islam, it was their kindling to the fire of war, marking the start of it and surprising the enemy.

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