Titel der Masterarbeit

„Jinn-possession and exorcism in modern Islam
- a rational approach to the irrational“

„Ǧinn-Besessenheit und Exorzismus im modernen Islam
- ein rationaler Zugang zum Irrationalen“

verfasst von

Viktoria Schuh BA

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Betreut von: Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Rüdiger Lohlker
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To the best mother in the world!
“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”

by William Arthur Ward

First of all I want to thank Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Rüdiger Lohlker, who has always been utterly supportive. Without him I would not have been able to be as fast as I was. Thank you, for your patience with me.

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- Orhan Pamuk -

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2. Methodology

“Every discourse, even a poetic or oracular sentence, carries with it a system of rules for producing analogous things and thus an outline of methodology.”

- Jackie Élie Derrida -

In this chapter I will dwell on the approaches undertaken in this thesis and all things associated with it.

I) Languages:
As this thesis is on “jinn-possession” and “Islamic exorcism”, the sources needed and used were respectively are to be found in different languages.
The majority of sources used is written in English, however, some of the information gathered is only to be found in Arabic, German and Spanish.
Latin, classical Greek and (Biblical) Hebrew are also required in the margins.
I will translate everything into English.
Words as jinn for example, will however, be Anglicized respectively Arabicized (as found in the register below).

II) Sources and resources:
Most of the sources I use are available in book format.
The chapter on media’s customary concerning this subject, however, requires – logically - mainly Internet resources.
In general, all sources used here are selected with due care on account of their reliability as well as further factors, such as whether they are suitable for the particular intention of a chapter (as described in the introductions of each chapter).
All authors’ names and titles are spelled the way as stated on the books.

III) Pictures:
Underneath all the pictures used in this thesis the URL is given as to prove the pictures’ origin.
The pictures and photographs utilised answer the purpose of further pictorial respectively graphic explanation beyond the writing.
As the URLs are to be found directly underneath the very pictures, there is, hence, no need for a
separate listing of the pictures’ sources at the very end of this thesis.
Their aesthetic quality is, of course, of secondary importance only, though not totally irrelevant either.

IV) Translation:
As aforementioned, I will translate everything, which is written in languages other than English into English.
Words and short phrases in Arabic will be transcribed and translated. Sentences, such as Qurʾān passages will only be translated, but not transcribed – everything, which is transcribed is transcribed in a “non-Arabic-context”, only – if necessary – the first letter, in case it is a sun letter, is doubled in terms of names of sūras.
Hebrew – wether Ancient respectively Biblical Hebrew or Modern Hebrew – words, phrases etc. will be both, transcribed and translated.
Words, phrases and sentences in Ancient Greek or Latin will be translated only.
Of course, I will follow the original texts respectively phrases etcetera as closely as possible as not to prejudice its very meaning.
Moreover, I used slashes in quotes as to denote a new line was started within the original version.

V) Approach
Every and each chapter (and subchapter) requires a special strategy and approach due to their different intentions. The structure is unambiguous – it starts with an overview, proceeds to the clarification of the nature of jinns, then leads to possession per se and subsequently to exorcism, which I suppose makes sense. A comparison (Christianity and Islam), furthermore a survey of these subjects in the media follow. The final fact-bases part issues possible medical views regarding these topics.
Hence, chapter number three is supposed to explain why I chose this topic for my Master's thesis, what goal(s) I am pursuing etcetera.
Chapter number four shall give overviews of religious approaches to the subjects of possession and exorcism, in order to give credit to where to locate this topic in the first place. This is, a thorough understanding of “terms and attitudes” in respect of possession and exorcism throughout different religious approaches is necessary in order to properly understand where and how to embed the Islamic point of view on this issue.
Chapter number five shall expose the nature of jinns as to clarify why/how/under what circumstances etcetera they are eager to take possession of a Muslim.
Chapter number six is dedicated to the subject of possession within Islam per se, reasoning what the Qurʾān tells us about this issue, who is at risk to fall victim to a jinn-possession and so forth. Chapter number seven is supposed to explain everything “exorcism” entails, such as the very procedure itself, who is entitled to perform it, prophetic medicine etcetera. Therefore it is necessary to rely on very different kind of sources, such as the views of experts, specialised literature and so forth.

Chapter number eight attends to a comparison of Christianity and Islam in terms of possession and exorcism, which is, to my mind at least, utterly interesting. I will therefore dwell on the similarities and the differences regarding possession, the procedure of exorcism etcetera.

In chapter number nine I will dwell on the subjects of jinn-possession and exorcism in the media, as to bring out not the academic view this time, but as to “to carve out” the people’s perceptions and perspective – What is a jinn supposed to look like? What way and how does an expelling proceed exactly? Etcetera.

Chapter number ten will deal with the medical point of view of possession. - What symptoms is a possessed person believed to show? Might they even be based on a disease or diseases? Are there any medical clues, allusions and hints or is there no medical rationalization at all?

The final chapter will be a résumé, summing up my “gained knowledge”.
3. Introduction

“Life is neither good or evil, but only a place for good and evil.“
- Marc Aurel -

This is a general introduction to my Master’s thesis, which will explain why I chose to write about “possession and exorcism within Islam“. I consider it a manifestation of human primal fear and, therefore, essential in understanding Islam and its proponent.

„Furcht ist also die dominierende Komponente von Angst, in Interaktion mit anderen Emotionen wie Kummer, Zorn, Scham, Schuldgefühl und Interesse. Angst in ihrer komplexen Erscheinung löst eine sehr deutliche einschränkende Wirkung auf Wahrnehmung, Denken und Handeln des Individuums aus.“ (engl. “Anxiety, thus, is the dominant component of fear, in interaction with other emotions such as grief, anger, shame, guilt and interest. Fear in its complex appearance triggers a very significantly limiting effect on perception, thought and action of an individual. “)¹

Fear, hence, plays a decisive role in life and is therefore not to be treated lightly.

3.1. Transcendental conceptions

“Worship is transcendent wonder.“
- Thomas Carlyle -

Since the dawn of civilization, the human race has tended to explain the world by differentiating meaning into terms as “the Lord” and “Satan”, ”good” and “evil” or “light” and “darkness”. This was a concept to take over the world as swift as an arrow.

The blame lies with the scapegoat², the “Satan”, the “evil”, the “darkness”, which perpetually tries to prevail us.

However, this is a concept which has to be kept in balance for the sake of harmony.

This ability to focus on something quite as abstract and transcendent as, for example, “good“, was indeed a revolution and a milestone in course of life and therefore in course of history.

On that account archeologists could prove that funeral rites had already been carried out in the

² The term “scapegoat” here is meant in a general sense and not referring to René Girard definition of it.
Palaeolithic period,\(^3\) which is testament to an early belief in “life-after-life“, i.e. conceptions of afterlife of some kind. “Historically, death has been both a personal and a social event. Death produces existential anxiety and fear of the supernatural but also leads to group reorganization and increased cohesiveness. The death system of a society consists of a composite of rituals and beliefs by which the society attempts to cope with death.”\(^4\)

Life was given reason and meaning by this concept, as believing in “good“ and “evil“ automatically led to a conception of afterlife. So we see „good“ and „evil“ and conceptions of afterlife correlate. They are related to each other.

Not only nowadays, in the 21st century, people are eagerly interested in magic, death, possession, religion(s), resurrection and many more.
Looking through the best-seller lists of today, one is observing the rise of „Zombie-literature“ and of related topics. It is the miraculous, the supernatural, the intangible, the paranormal, the inexplicable, which intrigues old and young. Moreover, it does not only intrigue a lot of people, many people still believe in „the paranormal“ – at least partially.\(^5\)

All these above-mentioned, are omnipresent aspects of life.

3.2. Possession(s) and exorcism(s) – a distorted picture

“Possession and exorcism is something that's in every religion and every culture. It's a real primal fear: Is the body a vessel for our spirits? What happens if something else takes over it? Where does the spirit go?“

- Eli Raphael Roth -

The media occupies centre stage in many aspects of our lives and, hence, shapes views and perceptions. “Given the profound impact of modern information technology and the information media on so many other aspects of life, it would be very surprising if they did not influence also the formation of paranormal beliefs.”\(^6\)

\(^4\) Loc. cit.
\(^6\) Ibid., p. 31.
There are many movies on the subject of exorcism, which is evidence for the public interest in this very topic. Films like “The Exorcist”\(^7\), “The Rite”\(^8\), “The Last Exorcism”\(^9\) or “The Last Exorcism, Part II”\(^10\) are crowd-pleasers.

The Catholic exorcism is quite present in the media, even though this is of course a fairly distorted and pretty unrealistic picture.

Especially the above-mentioned movie „The Exorcist“, which is based on a novel of the same name, written by William Peter Blatty, was a great success - the movie was a great success in both, America and Europe.\(^11\)

![The Exorcist Movie Poster](https://static.squarespace.com/static/51b3dcf7e4b051b98eb10de51ce699e6b01b4867051ce61bc486918d49d2f132001080251000s-MPW33750.jpeg)

"Über ein Jahr lang hielt er sich auf der Bestsellerliste der New York Times und verhalf dem katholischen Ritual des Exorzismus in der weitestgehend säkularisierten modernen Lebenswelt zu berühmter Bekanntheit. Auch Nicht-Katholiken haben seit dem Erfolg des Exorzisten eine ungefähre Vorstellung von dem, was Exorzismus bedeutet und wie er praktiziert wird. “ (engl. “For more than a year it was listed on the best-seller list of New York Times and it helped the Catholic ritual of exorcism in the most widely secularized modern world come to infamous renownedness. Also non-Catholics have some notion of what exorcism means and how it is practiced since the

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7 [http://theexorcist.warnerbros.com](http://theexorcist.warnerbros.com) (20.01.2014)
success of the Exorcist.”)\textsuperscript{12}

However, horror movies are (seldom) realistic. Nevertheless, the majority of adults now know of the existence of (Catholic) exorcism in general – and “The Possession”\textsuperscript{13}, a 2012 released horror movie, even deals with Jewish exorcism.

But what about Islamic exorcism?
Hollywood has been negligent of Islamic exorcism – yet.

2008 the movie “Semum”\textsuperscript{14}, a Turkish production, was shot. Director Hasan Karacadağ was shooting for the moon, when he compared “Semum” to “The Exorcist“ during an interview with the online version of international Turkish newspaper “Today’s Zaman”\textsuperscript{15} in January 2008, saying:

“They always say, "Islam and fear? Forget about it. You are a Muslim. You just stir up pity. Muslims are helpless. You just write stories about the headscarf, tears… Just sit and cry… You are helpless. Can Islam and entertainment coexist?" Why not! "The Exorcist" is based on an act by the Catholic Church. The Church plays a significant role in 95 percent of all American horror films and is portrayed as the savior.”\textsuperscript{16}

“Semum” did – against all expectations - not become as famous or popular as the “Exorcist”.

Hence, Islamic possession respectively exorcism is not as familiar to most people as Catholic

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p. 8.
\textsuperscript{13} \url{http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0431021/} (20.01.2014)
\textsuperscript{14} \url{http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1153085/} (20.01.2014)
\textsuperscript{15} \url{http://www.todayszaman.com/home} (20.01.2014)
\textsuperscript{16} \url{http://www.todayszaman.com/news-132303-filmmaker-karacadag-presents-turkeys-first-alien-horror-flick.html} (20.01.2014)
exorcism (and maybe even Jewish exorcism).

Due to this quantity of movies regarding the subject of “possession“, however, one can assume it is a topic of large and deep interest to a great deal of people. Moreover, one may not forget, fear is a manipulative tool applied by the media “with zest”. Faith and fear accomplish probably more than anything else.

3.3. What this is (not) going to be about

“Good things happen when you get your priorities straight.”

- Scott Andrew Caan -

This thesis will approach the little-known topic of „Islamic possession and exorcism“ concerning some of its aspects.

The spiritual, i.e. personal facet of possession will not be one of my priorities of focus, as subjectiveness is difficult – if not impossible - to objectify. Furthermore I will not reflect the topic of Islamic exorcism philosophically, as I am not academically educated in the “art” of philosophy, sticking by the old proverb: “Cobbler, stick to your last!”

Hence, this thesis will cover topics like the attack of an entity and its symptoms, the rite of healing per se i.e. the Islamic “exorcism” itself and possession amongst Muslims nowadays. In addition, I will apply one chapter to not an analogy but a comparison between Islamic and Catholic exorcism in short, where I will try to work out differences and similarities between both of them.

3.4. Intentions

“We have to stop and be humble enough to understand that there is something called mystery.”

- Paul Coelho -

I have been interested in the “mysterious” and its many aspects all my life. It started at a very young age, when I developed interest for Abrahamic religions in tandem with the unseen.
Therefore, for many a long year, one of my centres of interest has been the catholic exorcism – especially its rite.

Now, writing my Master’s thesis in the field of Islamic Studies, I finally have the chance to have a focus on the Islamic way(s) of possession, which is – to me at least - an utterly absorbing, gripping and compelling subject to deal with.

This will be an attempt to fathom how people(s) in cultures, which are shaped by the Islam and its many forms try to cope with the evil, with the fiendish, with the sinister.

Thus, I will assay to comprehend and to represent this topic in a comprehensive approach and analysis, bringing not only the problem of evil possession itself into focus, but also its effects on above-mentioned cultures in this day and age.
4. Terms and attitudes – an overview

“Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning.”

-Marguerite Johnson-

The word “exorcism” is the Latinized version of an old Greek word, on which I will put a finer point later on.

However, we may not be so ignorant as to think only (Judaism and) Christianity know procedures of averting and dispelling evil spirits respectively entities or at least the taking possession of a human host whatsoever.

The possession of an entity – wether this instance is thought to be a positive or a negative one – is a worldwide or rather “culture(s)wide” phenomenon.

Of course, there is a great difference between possession in Haitian Voodoo – which can be both, desirable or bad\(^17\) - for instance and possession/exorcism in an “Abrahamitic environment”. Thus, different attitudes towards this topic(s) go hand in hand with different expressions for it/them.

4.1. Christian sphere of influence

“An exorcism is tantamount to a miracle - an extraordinary intervention of God.”

-Gabriele Nanni-

The word “exorcism” per se, which is known and used in Europe quite often, goes back to Ancient Greece.

Already in the New Testament we find the (Greek) word ἔξορκιζω (engl. to invoke), e.g. in the Gospel according to Mark: "Καὶ ἀναβαίνει εἰς τὸ ὄρος καὶ προσκαλεῖται οὐς ἤθελεν αὐτός, καὶ ἀπῆλθον πρὸς αὐτόν. καὶ ἐποίησεν δώδεκα οὕς καὶ ἀποστόλους ὠνόμασεν ἵνα ὄσιν μετ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔχειν ἕξουσια ἐκβάλειν τὰ δαιμόνια..." (engl. “And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he

appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.”

So this is the origin of our word “exorcism”.
In Spanish the exorcist is called “exorcista”, in German it is “Exorzist” and “exorciste“ is the French word for an exorcist, and so on.

Underneath I will put a finer point to possession and exorcism within the Christian faith in the course of a comparison of the Islamic and the Christian way of handling both these issues. Therefore, I will not dwell on it at this point.

4.2. Judaism

“Hell is empty and all the devils are here.”
- William Shakespeare -

The first/earliest precise “instruction” for an exorcism in Judaism is to be found within the “Book of Tobit”.

There are insinuations in the “First book of Samuel” as part of the Davidic infancy narratives, however, they are not as incisive as those within the „Book of Tobit“, such as for example this verse: “He replied, 'You burn the fish's heart and liver, and their smoke is used in the case of a man or woman plagued by a demon (deriving from gre. δαιμόν) or evil spirit; any such affliction disappears for good, leaving no trace.”

Unfortunately, we do not know assuredly how these exorcisms were called back in the days of the (early) Jewish communities, however, what we know is, that these procedures were quite common amongst the Jews and, moreover, that the Jewish people were said to have a knack for it. “The Christian scholar Origen credits Jews with a special talent for exorcising demons (Against Celsus, 4.12).”

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23 Tb 6:8.
Nowadays, the Jewish exorcism is called גירוש שדים – which is to be read “geruš šedim”. The word גירוש/geruš means “banishment” and שדים/šedim is the plural of “demon” or “ghost”\(^\text{25}\) (not to be confused with דיבוק/Dybbuk – a dead person’s soul!), hence, גירוש שדים - geruš šedim means “banishment of demons/ghosts”.

As we now know, Judaism as well as Christianity, deal fairly negatively with the topic of possession and thus exorcism.

4.3. Islam

“Suffering is a gift. In it is hidden mercy.”
- Jalāl ad-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī -

Amongst “traditional” as well as “modern” Muslims the so called ruqya (see “List of Abbreviations”), which is somewhat quite similar to the “private exorcism” in the tradition of Christianity is quite common; - now available even online\(^\text{26}\).

The regional folk belief in some parts of Egypt even knows two stages of ruqya, however, this is only regional.\(^\text{27}\)

This ruqya is, however, rather a petitionary prayer (arab. دعوة, transcribed da’wa)\(^\text{28}\) than an exorcism the way we know it.

In more serious cases of applied negative magic (arab. سحر, transcribed sihr), a “greater” exorcism has to take place. “However, in Islam the practice of exorcism is recognized as a valid means of treating genuine cases of possession and other ailments resulting from it, if the method conforms to


\(^{25}\) Loc. cit.

\(^{26}\) http://www.roqyaonline.com (08.02.2014)


the Qur’an and Sunnah.”

This is to be compared with the imposition of hands – a popular healing ritual in the West.

This “usual exorcism” - as opposed to the private one – is not as common as the petitionary prayer, which is the actual “exorcism” within Islam, though quite important (just like in Judaism and Christianity).

Concerning the word ruqya itself one finds the same negative connotation as in the other Abrahamic religions. According to the Arabic-English dictionary by Hans Wehr there are quite a lot of words akin to it, as for example: “riqq – quality of condition of being a slave, slavery, bondage”

- some pages later we read: “raqiya a (ragq, ruqīy) - to ascend...[ ]...; to rise...” and “ruqya – spell, charm, magic, incantation.”

This is, the word, which Islamic exorcism - or its proponents – use/s for its procedure of averting an entity comes from the word for ascending, rising etc., which gives it a connotation as negative as in its “fellow Abrahamic religions”.

4.4. Shamanism

“Humans are a part of creation and shamanism is our way of connecting with the whole.”

- Will Adcock -

Of course, not only cultures shaped by Abrahamic religions know about possessions and thus about exorcisms. However, Shamanism – of course there are difference between e.g. Korean and Nepalese shamanism - has a quite different attitude towards possession in general, which differs very much from the approach to possession within Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

“The phenomenon of possession is widespread, but the type of invading entity varies according to the cultural circumstances in which it arises. It is not always negative. Sometimes a possessing entity is helpful, having been called by a ritual to enter a body and then leaving at the conclusion of that ritual.”

31 Ibid., p. 355.
32 Walter, Mariko Namba: An Encyclopedia of World Beliefs, Practices, and Cultures. (Volume I). ABC-
We may not get this mixed up with prophethood of any kind, which is generally considered “good”, as it is “caused” by the prophet’s Lord.

Possession respectively successful channeling (sic!) in shamanism is deemed an important tool in order to communicate with something/someone higher (mainly via trance or dreams) – with an entity wiser than humankind.

Yet, shamanism is also in on evil possession(s) and - as a consequence – knows how to “get rid of” such an evil spirit/ghost/entity. 33

This is, possession, which in Judaism, Christianity and Islam is considered something negative and evil, does not automatically mean harm to the human host in other cultures such as e.g. Shamanism, where it can be implemented deliberately.

4.5. Hinduism

“India is the meeting place of the religions and among these Hinduism alone is by itself a vast and complex thing, not so much a religion as a great diversified and yet subtly unified mass of spiritual thought, realization and aspiration.”

- Aurobindo Ghose -

Nowadays we know there are many varieties of Hinduism, why religious scholars and other experts prefer to talk about hindu-religions instead of using the term “Hinduism”, which might erroneously lead to the impression of a “homogenous hinduism”.

Nevertheless, Hinduism respectively all hindu-religions know – as a matter of course - of possession and exorcism as well.

In today’s India, where the majority of the population follows the “hindu-faith” whatsoever, possession is considered as negative as in above-mentioned Abrahamic traditions. Furthermore, within the tradition of Hinduism an exorcism does not automatically require an “exorcist by training” to perform such a procedure. 34 It may often remain undetected due to the vague commitment to definite symptoms. “The symptom of a possession by a noisome agency, be it deity

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or spirit, is often the misfortune itself, without any other visible signs.”\textsuperscript{35}

Help can be found in the Atharvaveda – scripts, which are said to reveal secrets about magic.\textsuperscript{36}

The entity who occupies its host has to be either enshrined and thus to be politely asked to let go of its victim or to be beaten by a (higher) deity. Often the entity can’t just disappear, but has to be relocated (similar to the tradition in Voodoo).\textsuperscript{37}

This is, Hinduism, or rather its proponents, deals with possession quite the way we know it, considering it – as against Shamanism e.g. - undesirable.

4.6. Voodoo

“The human race is a very, very magical race. We have a magic power of witches and wizards. We're here on this earth to unravel the mystery of this planet. The planet is asking for it.”

- Yoko Ono -

The voodoo-cult, which has its roots in the Western regions of Africa, is probably as heterogenous as “Hinduism”.

Within the voodoo-cult its proponents distinguish between desirable/good possession and undesirable/bad possession.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid., p. 232.
A so-called “desirable possession” lasts for an indefinite period of time, in which the possessed hosts contracts the deity’s gesture, habits etcetera. „Während Voodoo-Vertraute die Geist-«Besessenheit» mit selbstverständlicher Gelassenheit hinnehmen, stellt sie für Außenstehende den wohl spektakulärsten Aspekt des Voodoo dar.” (engl. “While the Voodoo-familiars take spirit-“possession” calmly, for strangers it is the most spectacular aspect of Voodoo.”)\(^{38}\)

A “bad possession”, however, may – but not necessarily – come along with pain and sufferings, which, nevertheless, does not prevent the hosts from enjoying the taking possession and looking forward to the next possession.\(^{39}\)

This is indeed a quite different approach to the topic of possession than the one we are used to, as no Jew, Christian or Muslim would consider being possessed desirable, delightful or even joyful.

4.7. Conclusion to chapter four

> “There is no absolute point of view from which real and ideal can be finally separated and labelled.”
> - Thomas Stearns Eliot -

This is, not every culture respectively cult declares possession per se to be an adverse mischief. Some even consider it helpful and a welcome way to get in touch with ancestors, deities, animal spirits, the universe etcetera.

Ergo, there is often no point in spelling or exorcising such an entity at all.

However, I have pointed out, that the phenomena of possession and exorcism are not bound to – or rather limited to - our well-known Abrahamitic context, but occur everywhere throughout the world. Even as far afield religions/cultures as Hinduism or Shamanism know about it and thus have to cope with it by whatever means. Different religions/cultures have found different ways to handle these things.

For a better understanding it is definitely crucial to have a – even if it can be only a quite superficial and short one at this juncture – overview of the worldwide attitudes towards a topic respectively

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topics like this/these ones in general so as to open up our horizons in respect of such a crucial matter within (all) religious studies.

However, I will later on put a finer point to the comparison of Christian and Islamic possessions and exorcisms in its entireties, in order to shine a light on their similarities as well as differences.

What all the above-mentioned religions/cults have in common is their belief in the possibility of possession. The approach to it, however, varies from desirable to terrifying.
5. Jinns

“An idea, like a ghost, must be spoken to a little before it will explain itself.”
- Charles Dickens -

Jinns (arab. Sg. جن, transcribed jinn; see “List of Abbreviations”) are one of the crucial and basic features of not only academic Islam but also within folk religion and are, thus, even found their way in the famous “One Thousand and One Nights“ (arab. كتاب ألف ليلة وليلة, transcribed kitāb alf laila wa-laila).

The word itself derives from the Arabic verb “jānā”, which means “to conceal”, “to stash”, “to cover”, which makes perfect sense considering the jinns’ endeavours.

Jinns, however, are no “invention” of Islam, but existed within popular religion even before the upcoming of the Islam. This is, indeed, not peculiar at all, as – like I mentioned in the introduction – the belief respectively the faith in a “higher power” is nothing uncommon and no novelty brought to the world by monotheism.

5.1. Why jinns and not unicorns or dwarfs?

“The only objects of practical reason are therefore those of good and evil. For by the former is meant an object necessarily desired according to a principle of reason; by the latter one necessarily shunned, also according to a principle of reason.”
- Immanuel Kant -

In Islam the fear of jinns is omnipresent and ubiquitous. The question is: Why? What makes jinns so dangerous for Muslims? Hence, we have to clarify what jinns are a priori!

“The Djinn, much like humankind, are beings of free will, capable of both good and pure, as well as

evil and malicious deeds.”

Thus, to put it plainly, there is no need to be afraid of all jinns as a general rule, however, there are jinns, which are feared for their powers and their will to use it against humankind.

Still, we have not resolved where they come from.

The Qurʾān supplies the answer in various places:

خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَارِ وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَ مِنْ مَارِجٍ مِنْ نَارٍ
(engl. “He created man from clay like pottery and He created the jinn from a smokeless flame of fire.”)45

However, this is not the only sūra (arab. سورة, transcribed sūra), which provides us with information on the origin of the jinns and their roots.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَّإٍ مَسْبُونٍ وَالْجَانَ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلٍ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمَوَاتِ
(engl. “And we certainly created man out of clay from an altered black mud and we created the jinn before from scorching fire.”)46

Thus, we see, not only the humankind was, according to the Qurʾān, made respectively created by Allāh, but the jinns too. Moreover, we can also discern the humankind being “younger” than the jinns, which is, indeed, a fact of importance.

However, the best comes for last: The title of sūra number 72 is “al-jinn”, divided into 28 ayat (arab. سَخِیَة, transcribed āya), which makes it a rather short sūra. Nevertheless, what do we learn from this sūra, which is dedicated to this topic? Do we obtain any new information by reading it? Indeed, we certainly do!

The first two ayat teach us, that the Qurʾān was not only revealed to the humankind, but to the jinns as well.47 Free will was, however, not only given to humans, but to jinns as well, why jinns could – when the Qurʾān was unbosomed – decide whether to believe in Allāh or not.48 “Some walk the path to God and follow the teaching of not only the Prophet Muhammad, but also Jesus Christ, whose teachings were meant for all sentient beings, not just humanity.”

46 Al-hijr 15:26-27.
49 Ibid., p. 48.
Apart from that, jinns are mentioned in other sūras as well – like for instance in the sūra “an-nās” (arab. الناس, transcribed an-nās, engl. mankind) - but there they only play minor “walk-ons”.

We have learned quite a lot of things.
First of all, the concept of jinns is no novelty within/by Islam, but harks back to the times, when neither monotheism nor monolatry were in sight. - The belief in ghost-like entities causing conditions can already be found as perception within the Sumerian belief-system50.

For another thing we learned jinns were created before the humankind was.
Thirdly, jinns are “equipped” with free will, therefore, could decide whether to obey/follow the Qurʾān and hence Allāh.

Referring to the title of this subchapter: As aforementioned, the belief in jinns, in one way or another, has been part of the cultures, where later on the Islam emerged and thrived. This is, the jinns were adapted to this new conception of monotheism.

5.2. Like jinn, like man?

“Fear is not real. It is a product of thoughts you create. Do not misunderstand me. Danger is very real. But fear is a choice.”
- Will Smith -

The social structure, in which these entities are said to live, are similar to the ones we know from the “Near East”. To be more precise, jinns are believed to live in tribal communities – a social system likewise the tribal community-system we find in part of the Arabic/Muslim area(s) of the world.
In these tribal communities an old respectively wise leader is responsible for his/its clan and the members’ actions. In these communities male jinns are believed to be mischief makers, in comparison to the female jinns (arab. Sg. جنینة, transcribed jinnīya), who protect their families. Consequently, the jinn-world is mirroring ours.

Consequently, unlike angels, jinns can be of either gender and can become very old.51 Peaceful and

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good-natured jinns even drink and eat. Furthermore, before the creation of mankind: “According to the Koran, the jinn worked under his eyes, building palaces and making statues, gardens, ponds, and precious carpets.”

This is, jinns are indeed humanoid respectively anthropomorphic or at least have such human-like features; - which is fairly appropriate, considering, for one thing, in general we cannot pictorially imagine or envisage anything, which does not correlate with our seen reality at all, and for another thing: Is there anything scarier than the concentrated evil, which, as we know, hides in some people’s hearts? Probably not.

However, there is no such thing as a general rule, which makes all jinns evil and malicious, id est dreaded.

“Some jinn are friendly to mankind, and others hostile; some are beautiful, and others, the ‘ifrīt and ghūl (from which the word ghoul derives), are hideous.” - Actually, there are even “neutral” jinns. This type of jinn is commonly called “qarīn” and is reckoned to be neither good nor bad on its own, but only to reflect “its human”, this is, such a jinn only turns evil in case “its human” strays from the right path.

Thus, like everything in life, there are always (at least) two sides.

5.3. Categories of jinns

“I think the supernatural is a catch-all for everything we don’t understand about the vast other parts of life that we cannot perceive.”

- William Shatner -

There is, indeed, no such thing as homogeneity amongst the “jinn-race”. In fact, there are believed to be different types of (what is usually called) jinns according to the Qur’ān: jān (arab. جن, transcribed jān), jinn (arab. جن, transcribed jinn), šaiṭān (arab. الشيطان, transcribed šaiṭān), ‘ifrīt

Within Islamic folk religion there are even more distinctions (- sometimes they are classified by colours as well: green, yellow, blue, black and red).\textsuperscript{56} All of them, obviously, belong to the group of “kāʿinaat fauqa al-ṭabīʿīyya” (engl. lit. supernatural beings).\textsuperscript{57} Even though they are to be subsumed under “supernatural entities”, the Qurʾān states jinns do not “know the unseen” - in contrary to what most people believe jinns to be capable of – in the course of the thirty-fourth sūra “as-sabāʾ” (arab. سبأ, transcribed as-sabāʾ, engl. seven), when King Solomon (arab. سليمان, transcribed Sulaymān; hebr. שְׁלֹמֹה, transcribed Šlomo), who before had the jinns work for him, died: “

\[
\text{“Flâma qâṣûlan ʿalîhi l-ṭawîl mâ dâlûhim ʿalî mawâî. Allî dâbâṭ l-ardîn tâbābîy l-mînsâbîn. Flâma ḥarrî tâbît l-ḡîyân lîn lâ l-kâna yâlâmûn.”}
\]

“(engl. “And when We decreed death for him, nothing showed his death to them save a creeping creature of the earth which gnawed away his staff. And when he fell the jinn saw clearly how, if they had known the Unseen, they would not have continued in despised toil.”)\textsuperscript{58}

\section{5.3.1. Qarîn}

\textit{“Never have a companion that casts you in the shade.”}
- Baltasar Gracián y Morales -

The Qurʾān mentions them as well and describes the so-called “qarīn” in sūra number 43, which is called “az-zukhrūf” (arab. الزخرف, transcribed az-zukhrūf, engl. usually: The Gold Adornments) the following way:

\[
\text{“wâmîn yâqût ʿan râkîr ar-râhîm nûqîṣṣ lîn ʿatîṣṭāna hâfîz lîn ḍârîn.”}
\]

(engl. “And whoever is blinded from remembrance of the Merciful, We appoint a devil for him, and

\textsuperscript{58} As-sabāʾ 34:14.
he is to him a companion/qarīn.”)59

This “guardian angel” is neither good nor bad per se and, hence, not a guardian, but turns bad respectively evil in case “its human” goes astray.

Some Muslims, nevertheless, believe qarīn to be a further type of jinns, however, usually they are believed to be a permanent companion: “In addition to recording angels, Islam also holds that every person has a qarin, a special companion spirit or djinni permanently assigned to a person at birth.”60

The qarīn is born the very same moment “its human” is born, and is therefore his respectively her doppelganger61. In some regions men are reckoned to have a female (arab. قرينة, transcribed qarīna) and women to have a male doppelganger.62 This qarīn is in some areas (primarily in Egypt) also believed to come out in the form or a covetous lover.63

5.3.2. Who is Satan?

“But who prays for Satan? Who, in eighteen centuries, has had the common humanity to pray for the one sinner that needed it most?”

- Mark Twain -

The difference between “Šaiṭān” and “Iblīs” is a trifle vague. But who is the “real” Satan?

The Qur’ān knows more than one term for “the Devil”.

Apart from “šaiṭān” (arab. الشيطان, transcribed šaiṭān), we also find “iblīs” (arab. إبليس, transcribed iblīs) and “’aduw Allāh” (arab. عدو الله, transcribed ‘aduw Allāh, engl. Allāh’s foe). There is a reason for everything. “Iblīs” is a proper noun (without an adequate plural), however, “šaiṭān” is a conglomeration of entities (thus having a plural form: arab. شياطين, transcribed

59 Az-zukhrūf 43:36.
šayāṭin), which were known and worshiped in the age of jāhiliyya (arab. جاهلية, transcribed jāhilīya, engl. days of ignorance).

However, both names are used analogously, having assorted features though.

“Iblīs”, who is also called tāġūt (arab. طاغوت, transcribed ṭāġūt; engl. idol, tempter), is no jinn nevertheless, whereas “šayāṭin” and jinns appear to have similar features. 64

5.4. Jinns in the public eye

“It’s like the Wild West, the Internet. There are no rules.”

- Steven Wright -

What jinns are according to the Qurʾān may differ from the general belief. Jinns have become a significant feature of folk belief and are thus to be found on the internet too and hence, are in public eye.

In America as well as in Great Britain shows like the TV series “Ghost hunters” 65 are celebrating considerable success. Nothing is as normal as the paranormal. The audience loves to learn about the paranormal - or what is mistaken to be supernatural at least.

The amount of shows, series, movies etc. on this subject is tremendous.

Nowadays, children grow up to consider magic, witchcraft and everything supernatural as normal as the need to respire. In earlier times, however, when Christianity was more dominant in everybody’s everyday lives, witchcraft was a taboo issue all over Europe - referring to biblical quotes such as e.g. "מְכַשֵּׁפָה לֹא תְחַיֶּה" / "Maleficos non patieris vivere." (engl. “Thou shall not allow a sorceress to live.”). 66

In this day and age, however, not only Mickey Mouse 67 and Bibi Blocksberg 68 are children’s heroes (who are both accused of glorifying witchery and occultism), but also “Jeannie” 69 in “I Dream of Jeannie” Aladdin 70.

64 Ibid., p. 20.
65 http://www.the-atlantic-paranormal-society.com (23.02.2014)
66 Ex 22:17/18.
67 http://micky.disney.de (25.02.2014)
68 http://www.bibiblocksberg.de (25.02.2014)
69 http://www.barbaraeden.com (25.02.2014)
70 http://www.bcdb.com-cartoons/Walt_Disney_Studios/Television/Disney_s_Aladdin_The_Series/
There is not only a children’s movie called Aladdin, but also an appurtenant animated television series, which are about Aladdin and his friends – one of his closest friends and thus one of the main protagonists is “Genie”, a jinn. “Genie” introduces himself to Aladdin with a song called “Friend Like Me”\(^\text{71}\). A little extract will show the evil jinns’ capability of possessing and harming believers being played down to the fancied “Genie”: “Well, Ali Baba had them forty thieves / Scheherezad-ie had a thousand tales / But, master, you in luck 'cause up your sleeves / You got a brand of magic never fails / You got some power in your corner now / Some heavy ammunition in your camp / You got some punch, pizzazz, yahoo and how / See all you gotta do is rub that lamp”\(^\text{72}\). This funny child-oriented presentation of jinns is indeed fairly different to what jinns still mean to many frightened believers, who live in constant fear of these beings and their powers. However, this movie/TV series points up how inveterate this topic still is. Nowadays, jinns do not only lurk in the shadows of lonely streets, but are also to be found in the new media.

Within seconds youtube finds 132.000 results for “djinn”\(^\text{73}\) and even 368.000 results for “jinn”\(^\text{74}\). The numbers speak for themselves. Apart from “lectures” on the nature of jinns – like for instance the one by the famous German Muslim preacher Pierre Vogel called „Über die Jinn“ (engl. “About the jinns”)\(^\text{75}\) - there are also videos showing “jinns caught on tape”.

\(^{25.02.2014}\)
\(^{71}\) \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99Op1TaXmCw} (25.02.2014)
\(^{72}\) Loc. cit.
\(^{73}\) \url{http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=djinn} (23.02.2014)
\(^{74}\) \url{http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=jinn&sm=3} (23.02.2014)
\(^{75}\) \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jn6lSgCmCY} (23.02.2014)
5.4.1. Jinn on tape

“Modest doubt is called the beacon of the wise.”

- William Shakespeare -

One of my favourites can be found on Youtube searching for “Real JINN Caught on Camera”
where it was uploaded on the 7th of September 2009 by a user called “MOXXZ1990s”, who
appears to have uploaded quite a lot of videos on (Arabic) music.
The video lasts only one minute and twenty-seven seconds, but the the real video showing the
“jinn” starts at 00m16 and ends at 01m03 (aforetime and afterwards self-written texts are
displayed).
The description says “this video came from first source of busines's security camera in Rahat -
palstine. we get the mobile phone and pictured it directly from the security camera's screen. at the
houre 3am..” and has 698 comments.

The range of comments to this video is wide, the reactions vary from sceptical to anxious. Exempli
gratia, a user called Miguel Marques comments this video February 23rd 2004 with these words: “I
think you mispelled "gin" on the video title... As in "drunk guy on gin caught on camera"...
An earlier comment by a user, who calls himself Qaher Al Qoroor on his Youtube-profile
annotated: “I'm scared hhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh / that's a real Jinn wooooooow , it's horriable”.

Not taking the comments, but only the video itself and everything that goes with it into account one
has to say not only the Grammar in the description and the texts within the video itself is poor, but
the resolution as well.

The abovementioned user explains where this poor resolution comes from: The security-camera
“caught” the entity, whereupon one of the securities recorded it with his smart phone and who
zoomed in and out again.
The uploader, however, does not issue what “kind” of jinn this might be, but simply assumes what

76 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7wkrAlZIHM (23.02.2014)
77 http://www.youtube.com/user/MOXXZ1990s?feature=watch (23.02.2014)
78 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7wkrAlZIHM (23.02.2014)
79 http://www.youtube.com/user/awesomeMig (23.02.2014)
80 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7wkrAlZIHM (23.02.2014)
81 http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCmaoQK5j1OdiivysO0fY8A (23.02.2014)
82 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7wkrAlZIHM (23.02.2014)
he caught on camera is a jinn.

This short video, created with “OneTrueMedia”\(^83\), is supposed to show a “jinn” crawling back and forth on all fours on a road in Rahat (arab. راهط, transcribed rāḥat / hebr. רחט, transcribed rahat) – its population is Arabic, but it officially belongs to Israel.

Well, one may doubt it is displaying a supernatural entity, however, it is not my task to verify the video’s credibility respectively its authenticity.

But for all that, it at least shows what people expect jinns to look like. They are said to be ingenious shape-shifters and the most skilful ones amongst them are even believed to be capable of physically transforming themselves into human-like beings.

The alleged entity, moreover, is dressed all in black and seems to be of the male persuasion.

Wether this is simply a human being or a human-like shapeshifting jinn is indubitable beyond my scope, however, what the video definitely testifies is not only the ubiquitous belief in jinns in modern times, but first and foremost what people imagine these beings to look and to act like as well.

5.4.2. Conversation with a jinn on tape

“Reality is wrong. Dreams are for real.”

- Tupac Amaru Shakur -

Another interesting video concerning this topic is to be found under “WARNING!!! SHOCKING LIVE CONVERSATION with JINN (Demon) inside a women(English) – Warning!!!!”\(^84\).

This video was uploaded June the 22\(^{nd}\) 2011 by a user called “TruthinDaTruth”\(^85\). It lasts seven minutes and nine seconds in total and is blocked for comments.

The description says: “!!!WARNING!!! it is scary -This is a Islamic channel taking live calls related to religion. A woman calls and explains how people done black magic to her and there is a demon in her body. She is fighting it out by praying as much as she can..during the conversation twice Jinn

\(^83\) [http://www.onetruemedia.com](http://www.onetruemedia.com) (23.02.2014)

\(^84\) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkwffkJiSYE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkwffkJiSYE) (23.02.2014)

\(^85\) [http://www.youtube.com/user/TruthinDaTruth?feature=watch](http://www.youtube.com/user/TruthinDaTruth?feature=watch) (23.02.2014)
interferes and when woman says she is blocked by this black magic not to go to court against a person, Jinn starts laughing and taking in a creepy voice.. you can easily see the difference between the 2 voices - woman(female voice) Jinn/Demon(male) from 1 person. This is a 100% true video. For more info please go to the website for this show [http://www.roadsid2islam.com/](http://www.roadsid2islam.com/) or the channel [http://www.youtube.com/user/roadside2islam](http://www.youtube.com/user/roadside2islam) and thanks to the admin of this channel for letting me to upload this clip”.

Due to the user’s Grammar one can assume he is definitely not an English native speaker, though his profile does not give any indication of where he is from.

There is neither an introduction nor an ending. Due to his pronunciation one can assume the host, Abubakr Islam (arab. أبو بكر إسلام, transcribed Abū Bakr Islām)87, was raised in the United Kingdom, whereas his guest Abū Muḥammad – apparently an Islamic scholar - is not British. The show is part of an international channel, which is called “ROADSIDE2ISLAM”88.

A woman calls and tells Abū Muḥammad about what had happened to her. The caller is of the opinion a jinn was placed into her body, who now “blocks” her as she puts it. At 1m11/1m12 her voice changes from human to what the user, who uploaded the video, considers jinn-like and she mainly giggles in a lower voice. Abū Muḥammad tries to have a conversation with what he believes to be a jinn. He asks the caller what he (the jinn) is intending to tell Allāh on yaum al-qiyāma (arab. يوم القيامة, transcribed yaum al-qiyāma; engl. Day of Judgement) in his defence for possessing the woman and subsequently tells the jinn to leave her body.

The video ends abruptly.89

The whole video respectively episode can be found on Youtube under “The World Of The Unseen Part 2”90 or on “ROADSIDE2ISLAM”91, however, at the point the first video stops, the caller hung up anyway.

Some may call this video a fake, for others, however, this is part of their reality they have to cope with day by day. The “world of the unseen” plays an important role all over the world and the belief in jinns is still ever-present amongst Muslims across the globe.

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87 [https://twitter.com/roadside2islam](https://twitter.com/roadside2islam) (25.02.2014)
88 [http://roadside2islam.com](http://roadside2islam.com) (23.02.2014)
90 [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxLB961FFAs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxLB961FFAs) (23.02.2014)
5.5. Conclusion to chapter five

“I have come to the conclusion that the most important element in human life is faith.”
- Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald Kennedy -

The world of the jinns is a very shadowy one; which is - as an aside - the main reason for their agelong popularity, as the human race is characterised by its curiosity for the mysterious.

Jinns can be harmful and troublesome, however, not all of them are (considering they were – due to the Qur’ān – created by Allāh and given the chance to follow his path).

Nevertheless, due to folk belief, those who are able to take over a person, are cunning, witty and, most importantly, powerful. These entities are believed to be – barred their undefinable forms - skilful enough to take over a person’s dreams and thoughts, to harm this person and – if the worst comes to the worst – kill their human hosts.

Within the Qur’ān, amongst further passages, an entire chapter (sūrat al-ǧinn; 72) is dedicated to the jinns, which shows how important these entities were and still are. These ideas have been extended within folk belief in course of time.

Nowadays, the jinns are dreaded and feared all over the world.
6. Possession

“The first duty of man is to conquer fear; he must get rid of it, he cannot act till then.”

- Thomas Carlyle -

As much as we know about Christian (and Jewish) possession, as little do we know about their Islamic counterpart.

Unfortunately, the amount of reliable sources is meagre. There are many books on entities, possessions and exorcism in general, which also mention Islam, however, those references usually reach the total of five, maybe ten lines only.

Moreover, there are many books, which cannot be subsumed under “specialist literature” (even though they pretend to be), but rather mix subjective experiences with a dash of mythology, a touch of horror and a pinch of drama.

Nevertheless, “where there’s a will there’s a way”!

6.1. What the Qur’an says

“Books can only reveal us to ourselves, and as often as they do us this service we lay them aside.”

- Henry David Thoreau -

The Qur’an does not talk about the topic of possession per se explicitly. Thus, there is no Qur’an passage describing the instance of possession and its procedure.

Yet, there are a very few verses referring to possession.

In the second sūra (arab. سورة البقرة, transcribed sūra al-baqara, engl. sūra of the cow) for instance, one reads:

الَذِينَ يَبْبَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَيْ يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَُا يَقُومُ الَذِي يَبْتَخَبَطُهُ الشَيْطَانُ مِنَ السُّذَّاجِ ذَلِكَ بِببَأَنَهُُمْ قَالُوا إِنَمَُا الْببَيْعُ مِبثْلُ الرِبَا وَأَحَلَ اللَّهُ الْببَيْعَ وَحَرَمَ الرِبَا فَمَُنْ جَاهَ مُوَعَدٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ مَنْ عَادَ فَببَوُلَأَعَلِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

(engl. “Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, "Trade is [just] like interest." But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition)
from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah. But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.”\textsuperscript{92}

Sūra number 16, called “an-nahl” (engl. the bees), refers to this topic as well (as it cautions against polytheism):

\begin{quote}
إنه ليس له سلطان على الذين آمنوا وعلى ربهم يتركون
\end{quote}

(engl. “Indeed, there is for him no authority over those who have believed and rely upon their Lord.”)\textsuperscript{93}

There are more verses prodding to possession and the possibilities of the evil, such as for instance Ibrāhīm 14:11, Ibrāhīm 14:22 and al-Hijr 15:42.

We see, the Qur’ān does not reveal a lot of information on this matter. The major problem hereof is, that therein only analogies are used, which is, of course, better than nothing, but still not, what we are looking for. Unfortunately, within the Qur’ān there is no single act of mentioning a possession concerning its exact procedure (the procedure of taking over a human) or its consequences respectively effects on a “host”.

6.2. Who is capable of taking over?

“\textit{There are dark shadows on the earth, but its lights are stronger in the contrast.}”

- Charles Dickens -

To this point we have not resolved the question of who/what takes over a person when “demonic possession” is “diagnosed”.

“Unlike all other religions, however (except perhaps Judaism) there is a marked emphasis on the transcendence of God (Allah). This transcendence of the deity has meant that possession by Allah himself does not occur in orthodox Islam.”\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{92} Al-baqara 2:275.
\textsuperscript{93} An-nahl 16:99.
Indeed, unlike Shamanism, exempli gratia, orthodox Islam does not know “divine possession”, however, in contrast, Sufism (arab. تِصَوُّفّ, transcribed tasawwuf) does. “This transcendence of the deity has meant that possession by Allah himself does not occur in orthodox Islam. It does occur, however, in the mystical branch of Islam, the Sufi orders.”95 These possessions are not haphazardly, but connote positively.96 However that may be, divine possession is not the object of this thesis, but jinn-possession only.

As aforementioned, jinns can - in terms of folk belief - also be classed by colours. The “red jinns”, for example, only bring harm to mankind. They commonly assume a reptilian-shape and are said to be guilty of possessions. Black jinns - in the hierarchy of jinns the black jinns are superior to the red ones – are believed to play an important part in rituals of black magic.97

“According to Islamic belief, the evil that exists everywhere is due to corrupt humans and djinn who have turned their backs on Allah. Demons, fairies, ghosts, demonic possession, and even sightings of extraterrestrial aliens are believed to be the work of djinn, or in some cases, spiritually corrupt humans who have joined Iblis. If we take into account the reality of existence of djinn, we can understand the paranormal’s great diversity. Rarely do djinn present their true identity to us. Instead, the enjoy taking on many disguises. Many djinn merely play a harmless game with us for their amusement, but some have a more deadly agenda.”98

All in all, jinns are the ones to possess a human body and soul in case of an “undesired” possession, however, not every jinn is capable of usurping and of taking over.

6.3. Victimology

“Evil requires the sanction of the victim.”
- Alissa Sinowjewna Rosenbaum-

A Protestant theologian once put it this way: „Zunächst sei eine grobe Faustregel zum Thema

95 Ibid., p. 167-168.
96 Ibid., p. 168.
98 Ibid., p. 18.
Besessenheit erwähnt: Wer wirklich besessen ist, weiß es gewöhnlich nicht. Wer erklärt, daß er besessen ist, ist es normalerweise nicht.” (engl. “First of all, a rough rule of thumb about possession shall be mentioned: Who is really possessed, usually does not know it. Who declares to be possessed, usually is not.”)\(^9\) However, many people claim to be possessed and feel relieved after such an exorcism was held.

Jinns, who are experts in deceit and the ones to cast the “evil eye”, enter a person’s body, simplest, when a person is mentally weakened due to a traumatic event and who, thus, becomes an easy prey for jinns.\(^10\)

The female copulatory organ is believed to be exposed to this danger an infinite deal more than any other body orifice, which is the reason why women are believed to fall prey to a jinn more easily than men.\(^11\) This applies to not only to Islam, but is popularly accepted within Judaism and Christianity too.

People using (and as a consequence dominating) jinns for their purposes are also prone to a jinn’s possession, because these supernatural beings are masters of manipulation and illusion and – intrinsically - its pretence, thus, delusion. Such a person an augur, for instance, is, hence, more likely to believe a jinn’s illusions and lies.\(^12\) Exorcists are “favourite targets” as well. “He should be careful not to make a display of his powers before the world, but treasure up in his bosom the knowledge of his acquirements. It is considered very dangerous to his own life for a novice to practice the science of exorcism.”\(^13\)

Beautiful people are threatened as well, as a jinn might fall in love with him/her. Beauty, oh thou art a beastly woefulness!

If the jinn takes over his beloved, the “hostess” will usually not be harmed – unless the person hurts or offends the jinn’s feelings.\(^14\) “Djinn who fall in love with people may enter a person’s body in

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order to be closer to their love. This is not a desirable condition for the person, but in such cases, the djinni will usually not harm the person unless he or she does something to upset or anger them.\textsuperscript{105}

It is, as a consequence, very easy to fall victim to a jinn and to “be taken over”.

6.4. Effects

“If your heart is a volcano, how shall you expect flowers to bloom?”

- Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān\textsuperscript{106} -

“In ancient times, illnesses, afflictions, aberrant behaviour, and misfortune were blamed on demons who were said to have the power to enter the body and take over one’s body and mind. Djinn have this ability too, and the traits of their possession described in the previous chapter can be applied to demons as well.”\textsuperscript{107}

They, thus, enter a person’s body and settle in the afflicted’s brain: “

(engl. “The with magic empowered ġinnī enters the enchanted person where it is stationed in his brain, how the sorcerer commands, next [comes] the impetus on the particular brain cells of the temporal lobe, and with the occurrence in it per matters Allāh knows of, at this the symptoms appear within the enchanted human.”)\textsuperscript{108}

However, I will dwell on the corporal symptoms people believe to experience in course of a possession later on.

Except for poltergeist-phenomena and slight cases of “jinn-badinages”, jinns are, hence, as aforementioned, able of way more than just noise interferences.

Within folk belief, jinns have an easy time possessing respectively taking over people thanks to their undefinable shape or rather form. Hence, they are capable of circulating through one’s blood system and can - by this means – take over a host’s thoughts and dreams.

\textsuperscript{105} Loc. cit.
\textsuperscript{106} Arab. جبران خليل جبران
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., p. 120.
Serious cases of possession are believed to be likely to lead to severe alterations like, for example, convulsions, insomnia, shivering fits, hysteria and behavioural changes respectively problems such as undressing or dancing in public.\textsuperscript{109} Depersonalisation is an other feature of possession.\textsuperscript{110} However, not each and every possession automatically entails such bad and grievous consequences. Especially wives, who are dissatisfied with their husbands, fall prey to a jinn easily, who, as a result, has to be bribed with sweets and jewellery in order to leave his/her/its victim alone respectively to let go of him or her. The ritual performed is called “zār”.\textsuperscript{111} But for all that, this is, by all means, not a typical “exorcism”.

6.5. Conclusion to chapter six

\textit{“Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. The fearful are caught as often as the bold.”}  
- Helen Adams Keller -

All in all, despite the relatively low amount of valid recourses to “Islamic possession”, we have learned quite a lot.

For one thing, the Qur’ān reveals only very little concerning possession per se, for another thing, however, folk belief is fully aware of possession and its threats. The approach of Sufism, however, to this subject is irrelevant in this case.

Due to Islamic popular belief possession is something to be taken seriously and not to be casual about, as it is often accompanied by severe illnesses and/or mental disorders (I will elaborate on this issue later on).

Especially people, who deal respectively associate with jinns frequently, are likely to be deceived by such a being, like Ibn Taymiyyah (arab. ابن تيمية, transcribed Ibn Taimiyya) points out.\textsuperscript{112}

Nevertheless, this can happen to nearly anybody, even if one does not get involved with the paranormal or jinns particularly.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{} 109 Ibid., p. 94-95.
\end{thebibliography}
Victims are mainly people who are weak respectively enfeebled – due to going through traumatic experiences or as a result of some kind of suffering from want and hardship. Beauty or the simple fact of being female increases the vulnerability, too.

All things considered, “possession” poses a serious threat to everybody, who is devout and who believes in it.
7. Exorcism

"Libération n'est pas délivrance"\textsuperscript{113} \\
- Victor-Marie Hugo -

Ruqya is not to be understood analogously to Christian exorcism and not even to the harmless sounding Christian “Prayer of Liberation”. Indeed, the significance of ruqya is way broader and more diversified, as it was/is, for example, an accredited type of treatment against quite a lot of things, however, I will put a finer point to this aspect later on.

In further pursuing this subject I want to mention that the term “exorcism” might be a trifle deceptive, because when it comes to “exorcism” this term is – in Europe and America at least - most often associated with the case of Anneliese Michel and the appertaining rite(s) (and the movie of course), which might lead to a perverted picture, if we do not keep in mind that exorcism ≠ exorcism!

Moreover, I shall mention at this point, that, within folk belief, there is a broad range of forms of treatment encountering possession. Often used alternative medical “therapies” are, for instance, visiting graves of saints, seeing a Šaiḫ, a physician respectively a psychologist or seeing a sorcerer\textsuperscript{114}. These forms of therapy, obviously, are not to be subsumed under exorcism in its traditional meaning.

Anyway, let us now move on and clarify the most important aspects of ruqya.

7.1. Rite

“It's still magic even if you know how it's done.”

- Sir Terence David John Pratchett -

The rite respectively the procedure is not too complicated or complex, but utterly important for

\textsuperscript{113} Engl. “Liberation is not deliverance.”
believers in order to assure everything goes according to plan. The procedure going to plan is, thus, the guarantee for success.

The afflicted has to lay down (or to sit on a chair), while the preferably white (white as the colour, which symbolises innocence and purity in many spheres of culture) dressed expert puts his hand onto the victim’s head. In case the person affected is female, gloves should be worn. Of course an unmarriageable kin (arab. محرم, transcribed mahram) has to be present.115

Next, the hub of the procedure begins by reciting the Qur’an.

“Ruqya – recitation of verses of the Qur’an for treatment of and protection against illness.”116 Reciting the whole of the Qur’an would, indeed, be utterly time-consuming. This is why special passages are read upon the victim – or rather upon the jinn, who is causing discomfort and afflictions.

Sūra number 112, which is called “al-ikhlāṣ” (arab. إخلاص, transcribed al-ikhlaṣ, engl. fidelity), and the last two ones - number 113 (called “al-falaq” [arab. الفلك, transcribed al-falaq, engl. dawn]) and 114 (called “an-nās”) – shall be recited upon a victim of possession. The two latter ones are often mentioned together. Both together are called “al-mu’āwwiḍatān” (arab. المعوذتان, transcribed al-muʿawwiḍatān, in engl. mostly called verses of refuge).

The famous and well-known “Throne verse” (arab. آية الكرسي, transcribed ʾāya al-kursī), which is to be found in the 2nd sūra of the Qur’an, shall be read respectively recited upon a victim of possession in the course of this ritual as well117. It reads as follows:

اللَّهُ لا إِلَهَ إِلَهُ إِلَهَ الْبَارِيِّ الْعَلِيمُ لاَ تَأْخُذُهُ سَنَةً وَلَا نَوْمٌ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ الَّذِي يُقَدِّمُ عَنْهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَمَا خَلْفَهُ وَلَنْ يُحِيطَهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ وَلَيْسَ غَيْبُهُ عَلَيْهِ وَهُوَ الْعَبْدُ الْعَظِيمُ

(engl. “Allāh - there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of existence, neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep, to Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on

the earth; who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission; He knows what is before them and what will be after them, and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not and He is the Most High, the Most Great.”)\(^{118}\)

Sometimes the call to prayer (arab. أذان, transcribed ḏān) is added. Its text is as follows within the Sunnite (arab. سني, transcribed sunn y) context:

الله أكبر / أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله / أشهد أن محمدا رسول الله / حي على الصلاة / حي على الفلاح / الله أكبر / لا إله إلا الله

(engl. “God is greatest, God is greatest/ I bear witness that there is no deity but God/ I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God/ Hasten to worship/ Hasten to success/ God is greatest/ There is no deity but God.”) - Each line has to be said respectively called twice, except for the first line which has to be called four times and the last one, which is only to be heard once.

Moreover, some Shiites (deriving from arab. Sg. الشيعة, transcribed al-šīʿa) additionally drink "holy water" respectively “healing water”, as taking this blessed liquid is considered a cleansing purification ritual\(^{119}\). This form of purification is a common as well as widely used method in many cultures around the globe. Spitting, combined with reciting, is an approved method, too.

Admittedly, the procedure may (and de facto does) vary due to distinctive alternation from one region and, hence, folk belief to another. However, by and large, the expert(s) has/have to stick by these features.

7.2. Who is entitled to perform a ruqya?

“Men are able to trust one another, knowing the exact degree of dishonesty they are entitled to expect.”

- Stephen Butler Leacock -

Now, that we know how such a ritual proceeds in detail, I shall drill down on who is allowed to

\(^{118}\) Al-baqara 2:255.

There are many charlatans charging for the performance of such a ritual, as this kind of service is indeed booming in this day and age.

It is therefore, for a Muslim seeking help, no “piece of cake” to ascertain, wether someone is serious, well-meaning reputable or not. However, this is an important factor for being able to guarantee success.

„Sie (A/N: Muslims) denken, dass das eine Art Zauberei oder magische Riten seien oder dass nur bestimmte Leute Ruqya belesen könne. Das ist nicht korrekt. Jeder gute und gläubige Mensch kann Ruqya belesen. Man kann sich selbst mit Ruqya belesen oder eine andere Person bitten. Diese Person sollte sehr fromm und praktizierender Muslim sein, einen guten Ruf und einen guten Charakter haben, viel islamisches Wissen besitzen und die Ruqya nur auf Arabisch und in verständlicher Weise aussprechen, damit die ursprüngliche Bedeutung nicht verloren geht.” (engl. „They (A/N: Muslims) think that this was some kind of magic or magical rites, or that only certain people could read Ruqya. This is not correct. Every good and faithful man can read Ruqya. One can even read a Ruqya himself or ask another person. This person should be very pious and a practicing Muslim, have a good reputation and a good character, have a lot of Islamic knowledge and pronounce the Ruqya only in Arabic and in an understandable way, so that the original meaning does not get lost.”)\textsuperscript{120}

According to this every layman, who is pious and devotional, item, well informed about the fundamental principles of Islam, is entitled to perform this ritual – including the afflicted person him-/herself.

Hence, there is no need for any kind of expertise outrunning the religious education and literacy every Muslim should possess.

7.2.1. Ruqya by means of mp3-files?

“The future starts today, not tomorrow.”
- John Paul II -

Below (in chapter nine), websites as well as videoclips relating to “possession” and “exorcism” are analysed and discussed. In the course of concerning myself with these Internet resources I have found quite a great number of “ruqya-audio files”. Consequently, the question arises, wether this is type of procedure is expedient respectively convenient.

- To allege an example, Šaḫ al-Albānī discussed this topic in his blog\textsuperscript{121}, as it is of importance and thus urgent in this day and age.

Attached to his website respectively blog is a video upload on January 25\textsuperscript{th} 2013\textsuperscript{122} lasting one minute ans six seconds, which is actually an audio-file. In the course of this dialog in Arabic he gets asked wether it is allowed to perform a ruqya via cassette or not. The whole conversation including his answer is translated into English appropriately and is to be found directly underneath the video. This – by me approved – translated dialog is - for the sake of simplicity – to be read here too:

“Questioner: Is it allowed to perform \textit{ruqya [reciting aayahs/supplications on someone who is poisoned/possessed by Jinn, etc.] through a cassette}?

Al-Albaani: Is it allowed to perform \textit{ruqya} what?

Questioner: … through a cassette ?

Al-Albaani: … through a cassette ?

Questioner: Cassette.

Al-Albaani: … cassette.

Questioner: Yes.

Al-Albaani: Is the \textit{adhaan} allowed? Is the \textit{iqaamah} allowed [through a cassette]? If you are in doubt such that I should answer you [I will], and if you know that the answer is that it is not allowed [to call the \textit{adhaan} or \textit{iqaamah} using a cassette] then the answer is the same [concerning \textit{ruqya}]–it is not allowed.

\textsuperscript{121} \url{http://shaikhalbaani.wordpress.com/2013/01/25/is-it-allowed-to-perform-ruqya-through-a-cassette/} (22.04.2014)

\textsuperscript{122} Loc. cit
For this reason I said on some occasions that I think, and Allaah knows best if the report is true, that sometimes a single [unified] adhaan is played on tape—if this report is true [and people are actually doing that] then I say that I fear a day will come when the people will pray behind a cassette [recording].”

Indeed, Šaiḫ al-Albānī does not approve of this method. Certainly, this does imply “performing” a ruqya via audio-file is, according to him, not legitimate, even though he does not mention this explicitly. His argument is one of analogical conclusion, as Šaiḫ al-Albānī reasons that a ruqya cannot be performed via a cassette, hence, impersonal, as the call to prayer etcetera cannot be played either.

• Šaiḫ al-Albānī , however, is not the only one to consider the application of audio-files and cassettes for this purpose inappropriate. A committee – and many more religious scholars based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (arab. المملكة العربية السعودية, transcribed al-mamlaka al-‘arabiyya as-saʿūdiyya), publishes theological articles on this English-Arabic website.

The article concerning this issue is called “Ten Errors in the Practice of Ruqya”. Paragraph eight states the following: “The issue of playing an audio device with Quran for the sick person for a number of hours, and selecting specific verses about magic, ’Ayn and Jinn to play. Comments: Playing an audio file with Quran or Adhkar does not take the place of Ruqya, because Ruqya is a practice that requires belief and intention while it is being performed and when the afflicted person is being blown upon. This cannot be done using an audio device.”

Therefore, what is sure, is, that the majority of scholars does not approve of this way of performing a ruqya, but insists on piety as key prerequisite for performing a successful ruqya.

123 Loc. cit.
124 http://subulassalaam.com/about.cfm (22.04.2014)
125 http://subulassalaam.com (22.04.2014)
126 http://subulassalaam.com/articles/article.cfm?article_id=149#.U1ZIqV6ehd0 (22.04.2014)
127 Loc. cit. (22.04.2014)
This can only be granted by performing “face-to-face-ruqyas”.

7.3. Ruqya as medical method of treatment

“There is no medicine like hope, no incentive so great, and no tonic so powerful as expectation of something tomorrow.”

- Orison Swett Marden -

In this day and age alternative medical ways of treatment are booming in not only the “Islamic sphere of culture” but all over the world. Germanic New Medicine (particularly in the German-speaking world)\textsuperscript{128}, Faith healing (especially to be found in cultures shaped by Pentecostal movements and Free Churches)\textsuperscript{129} and there is still a great number of alternatives to “mainstream medicine” more, which are spreading as swift as an arrow.

What most of them have in common is their return to “ancient” respectively time-honoured treatment modalities – or their proponents at least pretend these healing rituals derive from age-old wisdom. “Over more than 1,400 years of Islamic history, this quest of knowledge has led to the development of what has been called the “Medicine of the Prophet” (\textit{tibb al-nabi}) or “Prophetic Medicine” (\textit{al-tibb al-nabawi}).”\textsuperscript{130}

Prophetic medicine (arab. طب النبي\textsuperscript{130}, transcribed \textit{al-tibb al-nabawī}) is therefore on the upswing within the Islamic cultural sphere. This concept, however, is indeed no novelty, but is already rooted in the early years of Islam.

“From the time of the revelation of the Qur’an, the Prophet and many of his followers would recite verses of the Qur’an to a sick person as a method of healing. This practice was known as ruqya. The Medicine of the Prophet sees the healing effects of the recitation of the Qur’an to be achieved in two ways: through the meaning of the Qur’an for those who understand it and through the sound of the Arabic words of the Qur’an, even for those who do not understand it.”\textsuperscript{131}

Possession, which necessitates ruqya, causes medical symptoms of all kinds.

\textsuperscript{128} http://www.germanische-heilkunde.at (22.04.2014)
\textsuperscript{131} Ibid., p. 158.
Just as a footnote, this prayer of petition, however, which is characterized by the recitation of important verses of the Qurʾān, is exercised not only in case of possession, but also in case a person believes to be afflicted with ʿayn al-ḥasud (ạrab. عين الحسد, transcribed ʿayn al-ḥasud) which can be cast by a jinn, moreover, jinns can make a human cast the evil eye as well) or sihr in general!
Its area of application covers a wide spectrum.

However, this paper is dealing with jinn-possession and exorcism, thus, “how to get rid of it”, as the focal idea.

Consequently, ruqya is not to be imagined as ritual performed in dark back rooms, but as – nearly – ordinary medical treatment modality in many parts of the world.

As possession can lead to a variety of symptoms (as listed above), ruqya can easily be understood as (alternative) treatment method for Muslims. Alternative medical procedures assume a central significance within the “landscape of medicine”.

7.4. Zār custom

“I have never yet heard of a murderer who was not afraid of a ghost.”

- John Philpot Curran -

Moreover, I shall mention the custom of “zār” at this juncture, as people might confuse it with a “proper exorcism”.

The etymology of this term is – yet – not certain, but might be of Abyssinian origin. It does not only stand for the kind of ceremonies held, but also for all kinds of entities involved.

This kind of ceremonies does actually not serve the purpose of expelling a jinn, but strives after placating a ghost respectively entity, hence, not only jinns are in question, which has taken over an afflicted.\textsuperscript{132}

This thesis is concerned with jinn-possession and exorcism in the traditional sense. Zār-ceremonies are not to be subsumed under “exorcism in the traditional sense”, as, for one thing, the principal aim concerning such ceremonies is not to “get rid of” a jinn, but to appease him/her/it and, for another thing, as zār does not only work for jinns but for all kinds of entities in general.

7.5. Conclusion to chapter seven

„Die jetzige Generation entdeckt immer, was die alte schon vergessen hat.“
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe -

As aforementioned, an Islamic exorcism, which targets to dispel a jinn (not to confuse with “zār”), is not to be compared to a Christian exorcism – and definitely not to these “Hollywood-exorcisms” we all know and love.

Well, of course one can compare the two of them (and I will do exactly this in the following chapter), however, one should not believe they are to be understood analogously – one in Latin, one in Arabic.

Its procedure is uncomplicated and starts off by going directly in medias res, hence, by reciting passages of the Qurʾān upon the possessed person.

The reciting is, of course, the most essential element of the whole process and is supposed to make the jinn acknowledge Allāh as his Lord. Symbolic acts, such as wearing clothes of colours with religious meanings or splashing water at the alleged possessed respectively at the jinn inside the afflicted are important too.

Indeed, ruqya respectively its curativeness covers a wide range of symptoms, as jinns are believed to cause many different afflictions and conditions, ranging from plain headaches to serious incidents such as a dead foetus delivery etcetera.

Whenever a person reckons to be afflicted by a jinn – never mind what kind of symptom he or she might be showing – the victim shall rely on expert hands as a matter of course. The answer to the question “who is an expert” was already given before: Every pious man well-versed in Islamic matters.

At first glance this might seem a little odd, however, the following wisdom is a universal one: “If

133 Engl. "The current generation always discovers, what the old one has already forgotten."
you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and
planted in the sea,’ and it will obey you.”¹³⁴

The Prophet Muḥammad maybe (or rather probably) even knew this Bible passage and many more,
however, the Christians did not come up with this idea either, as it is a lot older than Christianity
itself.

What should be remembered too is, that this form of alternative medical treatment modality is no
invention of the 21st century, but dates back to the time of the Prophet Muḥammad, when a ruqya
was performed as a matter of course.

Nevertheless, all of us have registered this boom on alternative medicine, which is, in this case,
ruqya.

¹³⁴ Lk 17:6.
8. Christianity and Islam – a comparison

„Der Wege sind viele, doch das Ziel ist eins.“135
- Ğalâl ad-Dîn Muḥammad Rûmî -

In this chapter I want to “reveal” the commonalities as well as the differences between the Christian and the Islamic perceptions regarding “possession” and “exorcism”.

Both these religions are premised on the same “Abrahamitic” monotheistic idea of “I Am that I Am” respectively אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶר אֶהְיֶה (transcribed ʾehyeh ʾašer ʾehyeh)136 in permanent battle with his/her/its evil opponent, who is only a little less powerful than the Lord himself – of course this statement might sound as if I theologically put my head above the parapet, however, in the course of this chapter this assertion will start to make sense for the reader.

Moreover, “exorcism” is a word too overused for many people. Thanks to Hollywood, this word wrongfully evokes associations too surreal – little girls rotating their heads 360 degrees and ectoplasm flowing in torrents out of a possessed’s mouth.

This is the reason why most religious scholars – never mind of what faith – exercise avoidance of this word. In the context of Christianity this is, of course, accurate too (as most movies on exorcisms show pseudo-catholic exorcisms).

The Vatican, for example, offers a course for “exorcists-to-be”. This course is called “Course on Exorcism and Prayers of Liberation”137. “Prayer of liberation” sounds way more innocuous and is therefore used more often in theological context nowadays.

8.1. What takes over a human in case of possession

“And those who follow the path of the righteous shall have their reward. And if they fall as Lucifer fell, the flames, the sword!”

- Javert in »Les Misérables« -

I have already stated, that jinns are the ones to take over an afflicted Muslim in the event of a possession, what these jinns are and where they come from.

135 Engl. “The ways may vary, but the goal is one.”
As to assure a proper comparison I now have to dwell on the Christian perspective of things.

In Christianity Satan is – mostly – called Lucifer. This name derives from the Latin words “Lux” and “ferre” and, thus, means “bringing light”. This Latin version, however, deduces from the Hebrew name for Satan: הילל בן שחר (transcribed hêlêl ben šāḥar) – Son of dawn. Of course, this “Son of dawn” is not genuine Christian either, but a mythological figure from an even more ancient period.

The Christian (well, Judeo-Christian) “Light bringer”, however, fell: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.”

This erst so beloved angel fell from heaven respectively was cast out of it for arrogating to himself being as mighty as the Lord. Satan – not exactly being a man’s best friend or a fan of the humankind in general – is, accordingly, capable of taking over and possessing a human and so is, tradition has it, his host.

In sūra number seven (arab. لعراف, transcribed al-Aʿrāf; engl. the heights) a very similar story can be read - of Satan refusing to genuflect in front of Adam. In comparison, however, in Islam is often considered no fallen angel, but a jinn (well, not only some jinn, but the highest one amongst the from Allāh apostatised within hierarchy). This, however, is hotly debated among Islamic theologians.

He is best called Iblīs (his proper name). Wether the name “Iblīs” derives from the Greek “Diabolos” (gre. Διάβολος) still is controversial.

What Christianity and Islam have in common is the answer to the question: ”Who or what is able to

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140 Is 14:12-15.
142 Al-baqara 2:1113.
conquer and subsequently possess a believer?”. The answer is: It is the devil and “his friends”.

Of a surety, there are slight differences in how to understand Satan per se, however, the concepts are quite similar to each other (keeping in mind that the question, wether Iblīs is a jinn or an angel, is - to this day - still unresolved).

8.2. The procedure by comparison

“People are pretty much alike. It's only that our differences are more susceptible to definition than our similarities.”

- Linda Ellerbee -

The Islamic procedure of a ruqya is not determined in its entirety. However, it is the business of the Christian Catholic institution “Vatican” to impose such things.

The Christian tight and time-consuming procedure, which is applied nowadays, goes back to 1614. This formula was extended 1925 and revised 1999.\(^\text{145}\)

It sequentially consists of the following parts:

- Individual part (The exorcist is encouraged to pray, preferably an orison referring to a Bible passage with regard to the apostolic Great Commission [such as Mark 16,15-18 for instance].)
- Opening rituals (He has to wear his “workwear”, sit down and let the priest as well as the attendees cross themselves and the rite itself begins. It is not obligatory, but if desired the exorcist shall bless water.)
- Litany (Everybody has to kneel during the litany. Optionally patrons and/or saints can be added ad libitum.)
- Prayer of the psalm (Which ones to pick rests on the exorcist.), the Gospel reading (preferably John 1,1-14)
- Imposition of hands (The exorcist puts his hands onto the afflicted’s head)
- Confession of faith plus the baptismal promise
- Lord's Prayer
- Sign of the cross (which gets blessed by the exorcist)

• Blowing onto the victim’s face (This is not compulsory, but optional)
• Exorcism formula (intercessory [addressing the Lord] as well as imprecative [addressing the evil inside the afflicted person] subsequently)
• Benediction (well, perhaps only in case of success)
• Closing rituals

There are indeed many resemblances.
It is interesting how many conformities in rite can be found here.
The Islamic rituals may not be as prescribed as the Christian respectively Catholic ones, but the similarities are salient.

For instance, some sort of “blessing” water, which is – as shown - neither obligatory within the Christian nor within the Islamic procedure, can be found in both religions as optional auxiliary for the purpose of additional purification.
Using water in order to cleanse oneself from sin and everything “negative-profane” was already established in Judaism. This was maintained during the rise of Christianity and used for a similar reason: “The Holy Water was to remind the parishioners of their Baptism, which washed away Original Sin.” Thus, water has been of importance in the religious context ever since. Notoriously, the Sumerian Deity Enki was even said to create humanity.

Moreover, what is striking too, is the (Christian) blowing and the (Islamic) spitting. This is supposed to let the Lord work through one’s salvia, keeping the concept of breathing life into someone (hebr. נְשָמַת חֲיוֹם, transcribed nišmat ḥajjîm) in mind: “Then the Lord formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.” This Babylonian and hence even “pre-jewish” concept of breathing life into someone is behind this slightly altered form of the ritual.

Furthermore, the “imposition of hands” occupies, in both procedures, centre stage. The exorcist puts

146 Ibid., p. 89-107.
150 Gen 2:7.
his hands onto the afflicted’s head. This stands to reason in Islam, as the jinn takes hold somewhere inside the encephalic area of memory\textsuperscript{152}. However, where exactly a demon or Satan settles inside a possessed’s body according to Christian belief is - yet - not answered. It seems, though, that these perceptions derive from the same source, which makes perfect sense taking into account, that both religions originate respectively are embedded in the same (or at least similar) region and hence traditions.

In Islam Qurʾān passages are recited upon the possessed. In Christianity similar things are proceeded, such as the Gospel reading, the Lord’s Prayer etcetera.

Hence, both procedures are very much alike and do not differ from each other as much as one might think at first glance: Reciting or reading the Holy Scriptures, putting hands onto the victim’s head, blowing/spitting as to let the Lord work through one’s salvia.

It is indeed quite evident, that there are – despite existing differences in performance - more resemblances than one might think. This certainly derives from the fact, that both religions derive from the same fountainhead and simply have implemented and modified the actual ulterior motive. In addition to this, there is a good case to believe the Prophet Muḥammad knew the Jewish/Christian Holy Scripture(s) very well.

8.3. Handling of this issue in public in the present

\textit{“The public is not to see where power lies, how it shapes policy, and for what ends. Rather, people are to hate and fear one another.”}

\begin{flushright}
- Avram Noam Chomsky -
\end{flushright}

This is indeed a very interesting subject, taking into account, that the the authorities’ conduct does hardly ever go hand in hand with the people’s attitude(s).

I have already brought in examples for the people’s approach to possession and exorcism regarding Islam - on the part of scholars as well as on the part of the “man on the street”.

As part of this comparison I will dwell on the “Christian way” to deal with this issue too. Of course, there is neither a homogenous “Islam” nor a homogenous “Christianity”, however, even though it is

impossible to colour everyone with the same brush, I will do my best to portray things as they really are.

8.3.1. The Church of Rome and the devil

“Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church; it is a goodly Christian weapon.”

- Martin Luther -

We all know: To understand the present we first have to learn about the past. Consequently, I deem it wise to give a short – and thus unfortunately of necessity superficial - historical outline of the Christian handling regarding these issues at this juncture. Since there is no such thing as homogenous “Christian way” (and neither does a homogenous “Islamic way”) and because there has been no differentiation between Catholicism and Protestantism for a long time, I am now going to give the gist of the Christian/Catholic manner.

Of course Jesus did not “invent” the concept of possession or exorcism (we shall never forget Jesus was a Jew), however, was known for performing exorcisms on a regular basis.

“To begin with, there is a disjunct between the various ways Jesus’ involvement in exorcism is portrayed. On the one hand, even though the Synoptic Gospels are not agreed on the precise place of exorcism in his ministry, they portray Jesus not only as spending a great deal of time performing exorcisms – as well as other healings – but also Matthew and Luke further report that he saw his exorcisms encapsulating his mission as no other aspect of his ministry was able.”

153 His disciples and later followers were not only “having a thing” for miracles only, but for exorcisms too, sticking

by the Bible passage: “As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.”\textsuperscript{154}

Later on, in the Middle Ages, exorcisms still were as “popular” as ever within the Christian faith and, thus, amongst Christians. Even though, in those days, not the evil itself or the Lord were addressed, but the sickness\textsuperscript{155}.

In Early Modern Age other questions as whom to address arose – more important ones! “Around 1530, the Spanish Franciscan reformer Pedro Ciruelo wrote: ‘In order to create greater confusion, the devil has invented certain exorcisms quite similar to those used by the Holy Catholic Church against demons who are reluctant to abandon human bodies.’ This observation encapsulates the problem of exorcism for the early modern Catholic church: the devil was the Ape of God, and could hold sway when untutored observation allowed him the opportunity to imitate holiness.”\textsuperscript{156}

In recent years the world was shaken by the negative effects a “Catholic” exorcisms gone wrong. Anneliese Michel is not only a movie character. She was born 1952 and died at the age of 23, suffering from severe epileptic seizures\textsuperscript{157}.

Scientific Medical treatment was not effective. Anneliese Michel, hence, was convinced she was possessed and, accordingly, this “diagnosis” was made by the Jesuit Adolf Rodewyck. In the behalf of the bishop of Würzburg an exorcism was performed - all in all seventy-six sessions were held before Anneliese Michel died of starvation. Both her parents as well as both exorcists were sentenced to many years' imprisonment. Indeed, this tragic case of acting irresponsibly affected not only the Catholic Church but people from every corner of the earth. This very incident had an impact on the Church’s taken view on the handling of exorcisms and related matters.\textsuperscript{158}

In consequence, the German Bishops' Conference convoked a task force to elaborate on the subject in 1979, which, as a consequence, worked out four points. The last one suggests a new draft a

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\textsuperscript{154} Mt. 10:7-8.
“liberation from evil liturgy”. However, the concept was only factored partly into the 1999 revised version. The term “exorcism” per se was – as recommended - not changed into “liberation from evil liturgy” officially.

And nowadays?
Unfortunately, this is a topic no one officially keeps records on – maybe the Vatican does, however, there is no proof or official statement on this topic. Moreover, such sessions are often held at the afflicted’s home – in private and unbeknownst to the body of charge.
What we know is, that this topic is very much in vogue today. There are not only quite a lot of movies on this subject, but also books, written by exorcists (these books are often written not by the exorcists themselves, but by more experienced authors), such as – for instance - “Il diavolo. Un’inchiesta contemporanea” (engl. “The devil. A contemporary investigation”) by Gabriele Amorth, “Exorzismus heute: Der Teufel spricht deutsch” (engl. “Exorcism today: The devil speaks German“) by Marcus Wegner and many more.

The Vatican does not like talking about exorcism today, but it is beyond dispute that exorcism still occupies an important place within in the religious understanding of many Christians.

8.3.2. Public approach(es)

“There is no such thing as public opinion. There is only published opinion.”
- Winston Churchill -

Anneliese Michel is - in a negative sense - a poster child for an exorcism gone wrong within Christianity.
Her dreadful death led to changes in rite, but first and foremost to a changed way of looking at such things in general on the part of the Vatican.
The authority in charge, which is in this case of course the “Holy Mother Church” herself, was, accordingly, obliged to evolve into a more responsible-minded “Body of Christ”. And it did. At least, slightly.

The majority of people respectively of Catholics are dissatisfied with how hierarchically and

159 Ibid., p. 59-62.
160 Ibid., p. 48-52.
patriarchally the whole of the Christendom is led by one single man. Most people reckon we all will live to see many (major-)changes regarding this system and construct, however, this one single man at its head “reigning” over the whole of the oecumene has its advantages too, as the church reacted quite quickly – and homogenous - to the tragic incident of Anneliese Michel. As aforementioned, a task force with the objective of making exorcisms safer, was convoked and formed in a timely manner.\textsuperscript{161}

In Islam, such procedures are well liked too as we know. They do not take place in dark back-rooms, but are thrust into the limelight. It is a topic, which is nowadays and in our culture(s) nothing to scare people away. People speak boldly about it.

The Austrian “migrant-magazine” “biber”\textsuperscript{162} for instance quite recently – only two years ago - published an interview with a doctor as well with an Imām on this very topic.\textsuperscript{163} Both the interviewees do not consider ruqya any bad – in case medical support is claimed in the first place (sic!) - and are of the opinion that it is causing no harm, but can, in some cases, lead to success when scientific medical treatment has failed.

The very same magazine has also released an article entitled “Der Exorzist aus Liesing” (engl. “The exorcist from Liesing”) in March 2012\textsuperscript{164}. This text is about a Viennese, who is a car salesman at daytime and expels jinns every Friday evening\textsuperscript{165}.

All this happens in public – well, not the jinn-summoning and expelling – but discussions about such topics.

The examples given above are indeed representative for the modern approach to possession and exorcism amongst Muslims in Western countries. There is no need to keep these issues under wrap for Muslims here, above all, because the Christian history is full of “magic” itself – just like (nearly) all religions due to liturgy.

Long enough, people, who believed to be possessed were “pigeonholed” as insane – in cultures shaped by Christianity as well as in countries shaped by the Islam. Regardless of whether this is true or not, not taking “thy neighbour” seriously and imputing he or she might be mentally ill – contrary to the afflicted’s beliefs - obviously and justifiably leads to secretive manner. As to find a

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid., p. 59-62.
\textsuperscript{162} http://www.dasbiber.at (03.05.2014)
\textsuperscript{163} http://www.dasbiber.at/content/djinns-nachgefragt-im-akh-und-beim-imam (03.05.2014)
\textsuperscript{164} http://www.dasbiber.at/content/der-exorzist-aus-liesing (03.05.2014)
\textsuperscript{165} Loc. cit.
way to cope with a subject whatsoever, society is constrained to lift the veils of secrecy. And we did.

Moreover, and this is utterly important to my mind, possession and exorcism are no longer only sphere of interest for theologians, but to psychologists, for instance, as well. This is, the understanding of it has undergone modifications. Especially the professional group of psychologists has shown deep interest in these issues.\footnote{Lewis, James R.: \textit{Witchcraft Today – An Encyclopedia of Wiccan and Neopagan Traditions.} ABC-CLIO Publishing: Santa Barbara, 1999. p. 95-96.} However, I will dwell on the medical point of view to these matters later on, when I will devote a separate chapter to this segment.

On balance, today such things are handled quite openly – and all agog with curiosity. These topics are, hence, freeing themselves from the old dust of secretiveness and sneakiness within both faiths - and why?

Referring to the quote above, one has to “praise” journalism for its vanguard role in establishing ruthless candour concerning so many issues, which were kept secret for a long time. Christian exorcisms as well as Islamic exorcisms are discussed freely in this day and age – thanks to many publications, books in common with articles.

8.4. Conclusion to chapter eight

\textit{“We are all alike, on the inside.”}

- Mark Twain -

This was an attempt to compare both these religions, Islam and Christianity, with each other in terms of their handling of possession and exorcism in general, and - as far as I can judge - a prolific one.

There are, on the whole, more resemblances than one might assume in the first place. I could illustrate, that both approaches are very much alike – which, as aforementioned, makes perfect sense taking into account both these religion’s spiritual origins.

In both cases it is the evil to take over. Islam as well as Christianity take the line that it is – basically
- Satan himself who is behind all of this and the question whether Satan is a jinn or not according to Islam is, in this case, only peripheral of importance. However that may be, Satan (within Islam as well as within Christianity) or other inferior vicious entities – in one religion called demons in the other one called jinns – are able to take possession of a person and to, thus, cause a list of resembling symptoms.

Regarding the answer to the question how to get rid of such a being, one can find more resemblances than expected anon. Once more – the Christian procedure provides a compulsory litany whereas Islam proposes to recite certain Qur‘ān passages. Similar approaches. Not to forget the water as well as the spitting respectively blowing (based on the resumption the evil settles somewhere in the head)!

Even the new - relatively - public transparency with these issues is very much alike concerning their opening. Christians as well as Muslims all over the world do not conceal or disclose such cases anymore, but rather – more or less – include the interested public.
9. Current situation respectively representation in the Internet

“Everything changes but change.”
- Israel Zangwill -

Possession and exorcism have been feared and withheld phenomena within most parts of the world since time immemorial. Islamic cultures respectively cultures shaped by Islam do not form an exception in this connection.

However, what definitely has changed, is what people nowadays understand by the terms “possession” and “exorcism”, as today´s and erstwhile´s perceptions are indeed not completely congruent.

This chapter will be dedicated to aforementioned present-day view and their modalities and ways as presented in the media.

9.1. Possession online

“Apparently there is nothing that cannot happen today.”
- Mark Twain -

Today possessions still occur to Muslims respectively amongst Muslims.

“The djinn were cast into a parallel world close to our own. It is said that most went willingly, but some did not.”

What people, thus, imagine a possessed person to act and to look like – or even a jinn him-/herself - and how Muslims suppose to detect a jinn – these issues are the foci of attention in this subchapter.

Let us scrutinize people´s approaches and their manner(s) of representation in nowadays’ most important media, which is, undoubtably, the Internet.

I will therefore separately dwell on their representation and the people´s reactions on webpages and

videos in order to allow a broader range of content.

9.1.1. Possession on the net - webpages

“The Internet has changed everything. We expect to know everything instantly. If you don't understand digital communication, you're at a disadvantage.”

- Robert Parsons -

The amount of webpages on this subject is enormous - which seems legit, considering that people nowadays first consult “Dr. Internet” before consulting a real doctor or theologian of their confidence.
However, not everything written and/or recommended on the web is indeed a wise thing to believe/imitate.

9.1.1.1. www.islam-universe.com

“Information is not knowledge.”

- Albert Einstein -

This site does not only provide information on afore-noted topics, but also administers “first aid” to everybody who is afraid he respectively she might be possessed, which is, of course, a deed of worthy sentiment.

The main colour is black. At the head of the page a picture depicting trees, flowers and a butterfly is placed. The headings are antique pink, whereas the font colour of the continuous text is white. The whole structure respectively the webpage per se is indeed very neatly arranged and hence user-oriented.
This page attempts to appeal serious, reputable, respectable, but – through the layout and the choice of colours etcetera - personal at the same time. They seem to have succeeded in fulfilling their potential. 168

“There are simple ways to know that, but remember don't be paranoid, if you have some psychiatric diseases or other diseases that modern science can't cure, like seeing things or hearing things or

168 http://www.islam-universe.com/Exorcism.html (08.03.2014)
suffering from schizophrenia or epilepsy then you might be possessed; listen to the Quran for an hour or so each day and if you faint or start having nightmares or headaches, then this is a sign that you might be possessed, we recommend that you listen to the following:”¹⁶⁹ A loudspeaker-symbol and a saving-symbol are added.
Clicking on one, an audio file is automatically downloaded, which can be opened via VLC media player. This file is called “Roqya Shar’eyah”. The reciting lasts one hour, 16 minutes and 38 seconds - without intermission.¹⁷⁰

On this webpage one does not only learn how to construe the various signs of jinn-possessed, but one also finds a list of audio files, which shall help to put the jinn to rout – ruqya via audio files is offered.

Under the heading “Before contacting an Exorcist” you also learn how to identify a fraud respectively a sorcerer, which shall – due to this webpage – not be contacted in any case. Only a “proper” exorcist suffices. A reconnaissance video is added. “A video by Saudi Arabia’s Government Agency: "General Presidency Of the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice", talks about sorcery and black magic. It is translated to English. It exposes the evil doings of sorcerers who commit blasphemy to witch people and harm them.”¹⁷¹

Underneath the heading “Exorcism video clips” four pictures are shown, -always two belong to each other, showing sequences of Islamic exorcism. The users can watch the videos -clicking on one of the “Watch”-buttons the video(s) automatically download and open via vlc media player.

At the very bottom of the page there is a list of exorcists from: Jordan, UK, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tanzania, Morocco, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE.¹⁷²

The users orthography is flawless, however, his/her diction does not seem academic, but rather colloquial (which might be his/her intention in point of fact) - which is a good index for the writer’s first language to be English.

¹⁶⁹ Loc. cit.
¹⁷⁰ Loc. cit.
¹⁷¹ Loc. cit.
¹⁷² Loc. cit.
All in all, this page is indeed informative as it is a clever mixture of (biased) information and compassion.

Every Muslim who is afraid he respectively she might be possessed will feel well advised to contact this page.

Whatever one may think about the existence or possibility of possession, this webpage does not do any harm, as it does not advise its visitors to do anything dangerous or hazardous.

The only point of criticism is the following: The owner of this webpage does not recommend its users to consult a doctor as to make sure no physical or psychological ailment underlies the person in question’s symptoms.173

9.1.1.2. www.eshaykh.com

“Whatever advice you give, be short.”

- Horace -

This webpage is a well-known page. It is popular all over the world.

In this website Islamic scholars answer the users’ questions on various subjects, such as family matters, history, oneiromancy, women’s issues etcetera online.

As it is – like aforementioned - an international webpage one cannot demand the users to be fluent in English. This is also the reason why I will not be responsive to the users orthography or diction.174

At first blush, there is no category concerning the issue of possession. However, there is a search option at the head of this webpage. Typing in “possession”, the website finds 194 results within 0.14 seconds.175

At this point I will give some examples (questions plus answers):

- Question: “salamu alaikum mawlana
   I have a question , how can a person tell if someone is possessed ? Because i know a brother that has a little bit of a anger problem but its gotten better , but that thing that bothers me is

173 Loc. cit.
174 http://eshaykh.com (10.03.2014)
175 http://eshaykh.com/?s=possession (10.03.2014)
people say sometimes hes not there , like they are talking to him but he dose not respond at all like hes not even in his body and they have to go and touch him for him to hear them and it seems as if hes having conversations to him self , sometimes his lips move and others they dont but those are the times it seems hes not there so should we take him to a shrink or is this a jinn?”

Answer: “wa `alaykum salam,
Mawlana Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani is praying for him.
It is not jinn possession insha-Allah. Rather he is in a hal, a trance state, which is something people who are attracted to the Divine Presence, known as jadhbah, Divine Attraction. That means he is on the path to beginning stage of sainthood or near-sainthood. In that state leave him be, don’t bother him or try to change him.

Let someone pure, child or elderly pious one, recite on water 7x Fatiha and let him drink it, insha-Allah, to improve.

Taher Siddiqui“176

=> This was posted on June 13, 2011.

The user is concerned about a friend and fears he might be possessed.
The theologian, however, suspects the user´s friend is treading the path of sainthood, as he is absent-minded and “in but not part of this world” anymore.
This is indeed thoroughly interesting. Among the people the fear of being possessed is omnipresent which motivates the user to extrapolate his friend´s behaviour indication for possession. The theologian however, who is well educated in these matters knows better. This shows the mass hysteria is not to be found amongst theologians.

• Question: “Assalamwalaikum
Since i have been married, i have had some breathing problems and other health problems, the main/regular one is that when i am asleep, i stop breathing, i wake up gasping for air, when i do manage to get air, it makes me vomit or cough. Its as though someones puting their hand down my throat and i have to fight them off. Please advise.
Thank you”
Answer: “wa `alaykum salam,
This is a sort of jinn, one of the most dangerous types, Mawlana Shaykh Hisham has informed us, who sits on the chest of human beings and tries to stop their breathing. It has one nostril and it has the ability to stop the breathing of its victim in one nostril but not both.

176 http://eshaykh.com/sufism/possession/ (10.03.2014)
Don’t worry though, you are supported by the mashaykh and it cannot harm you, but the experience is frightening.

Taher Siddiqui“177

=> This was posted on September 9, 2011.

The user describes his breathing problems. He is suffering from sleep apnoea. „Die obstruktive Schlafapnoe zählt zur Gruppe der sogenannten schlafbezogenen Atmungsstörungen,”178

Thus, I consider this “medical/religious outcome” respectively “diagnosis” unprofessional and fairly dangerous! Sleep apnoea is a severe illness which can – under certain conditions – lead to death. This theologian “plays” doctor, which could turn out to be a hazard to the user’s health. “Cobbler, stick to your last!”

Thus, this is definitely not what this web site is ought to do. A theologian should stick to theology just like a physician to medicine.

• Question: “Salamou’alaykoum ya saydi, ya Mawlana, One of my sisters is possessed. She faint often and sometimes the djinn speaks through her. Witchcraft was done with her hair and her blood. She is very weak and she doesn’t have the ability to do zikr or to read Qur’an or to do anything to fight. We ask for prayers and advice. Barakallahou fikoum. Thousand and thousand of thanks. Salam.

Answer: `Alaykum Salam, Get a fresh turmeric stalk, chop it, take a pinch and press it with your right thumb just under the inner anklebone of her left foot. Hold it there and recite x7 Ayatul Kursi and x7 Surat al-Nas. Then take another pinch of turmeric, mix it with water and let her drink it.

Hajj Gibril Haddad”

=> This was posted on May 12, 2012.

The user is solicitous about his respectively her coreligionists, who seems to be ill. The expert gives instructions, which are ought to improve the woman’s condition.

To be honest, the first thing which came to mind was the following well-known biblical quote: “Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in

177 http://eshaykh.com/health-family/breathing-problems/ (10.03.2014)
What the theologian delineates is an act derived from folk belief. No such thing is to be found within the Qurʾān.

This website is, somehow, two-faced, which derives from the fact that there are several different theologians answering the users’ questions (and prayer requests), leading to a conglomeration of similar but still different approaches.

Most responds respectively theologians give religiously reasonable answers, however, some actually seem to overstep their sphere of knowledge.

9.1.1.3. http://shaikhsohail.wordpress.com

“Now, God be praised, that to believing souls gives light in darkness, comfort in despair.”

- William Shakespeare -

This website’s headline is “Islamic Sufism Spirituality”.

Its background colour is – mainly – white. Pastel blue, yellow, pink and green are making a pattern in the back as well.

On the left, the owner states he is no professional Islamic healer respectively scholar, thus not competent to determine whether a case of possession is on hand or not and, moreover, he or she is unequal to – in case of possession – perform a proper exorcism. “As-salāmu ʿalaikum wa-raḥmatu ʾllāhi wa-barakātuhu. I would like to make clear all the visitors of my blog that I am not Rqaqi, Aamil, or Spiritual Healer. Any Raaqi you contact via my blog, know they do not represent this blog or me.

In my knowledge these are few dedicated places where you can get your spiritual healing according to Quran and Sunnah. I can recommend these places as in my knowledge they works according to Quran and Sunnah; but I cannot be made responsible either individually or severally for any untoward incidents.”

However, the owner gives advice though. He respectively she informs the users about “Signs of  

179 Mt. 21:21-22.  
180 http://shaikhsohail.wordpress.com (12.03.2014)  
181 Loc. cit.
Jinn possession“ (posted on January 24, 2011 by “Sohail Shaikh”) 182:

**1.** Feeling a heaviness on the shoulders and/or head or head ache when standing up for salah.

**2.** Feeling a movement (actual movement or like a pulse) or a pain (can be moving pain) or burning (part of the body becoming hot) or pins and needles, numbness, shaking, fear, anxiety when listening to the Quran with ear phones with a loud volume.

**3.** Dislike of reading or listening to Quran, urge to turn it off, or agintated and irritated or angry (opposite of tranquility)

**4.** Anxiety or fear of going to the masjid or feeling uncomfortable in the masjid or getting head aches or during islamic lectures etc.

5. Dislike of azan.

6. Insomnia (either can’t sleep to very late and just before fajr feeling very tired, or broken sleep)

**7.** Nightmares-

Some jinns are black dogs, snakes and lions, rats, carnivorous animals and give birth to the same type of jinns.

Others are flying jinns so u see men flying in the dream, others are earth bound ones but are very ugly so they chase you.

Some take pleasure by causing a person to have a wet dream.

These nightmares will be quite frequent ie. Always seeing one self being chased by a black dog, or a lion, snake or a ugly man.

Seeing a lion caged up.

Seeing a tall bold headed man.

Seeing snakes around you or trying enter the house etc.

Every case is different.

8. Anxiety- Fear of sleeping and fear of dying for no reason. Sometimes at night other times at maghrib time

**9.** Urges or thoughts to jump off bridge or commit suicide or go to the park at maghrib time or at night alone!

**10.** Hearing voices in the head, sometimes a clear distinct voice.

11. Prefering to keep one self away from family and like to alone.

12. Prefer not to have showers or keep one self clean.

13. Uncontrollable or irrational anger.

**14.** Obscene thoughts during salah- pornographic or even kufr things like throwing the Quran.

15. Urge to push people or babies down the stairs.

You will know as soon as you read these signs if they apply to you or not. No need to concentrate and force your self to believe these things apply to you.
The ones with the red astrix * are the ones that need to watch for….
Sihr is almost always accompanied by a jinn possession, so the above signs will apply to sihr too.
The only way to find out for sure is to listen to the sihr verses (2:102, 10:81-82, 20:68-71) with ear phone an a loud volume. If you feel any of the feelings like head ache or pain etc its best to get in touch with a raqi (muslim exorcist) to double check your situation.
To be 100% its best to arrange a ruqya session with a raqi who is known and only uses methods that are strictly according to the Quran and Sunnah.

This is, indeed, a quite lengthy list of symptoms a person might have. Unfortunately, he respectively she does not tell how many of these symptoms have to apply in order to be possessed my a jinn, which makes it difficult to sort out wether someone is possessed.
Nightmares, for instance, can be provoked by eating prior to going to bed and are in general nothing to worry about and “obscene thoughts” are – let us be honest – nothing to worry about from a medical point of view either.

This entry has yet been rated with four out of five stars and has led to 149 responses. Most responses respectively comments are quite desperate and written by people who fear to be possessed. However, one of these responses thinks differently (posted February 2, 2011):

“Assalamu Alaikum,
I beg you to reveal the Islamic source of the information you present here as symptoms of jinn possession. Many of the symptoms you describe are clear signs of mental illness. Please do not make a mockery of Islam by posting such nonsense. The pioneering efforts of scholars like Ibn Sina in the area of mental health are well known. And it is the like of him who rejected the notion that the symptoms of mental illness you describe are caused by demons (jinns). Anyone experiencing some or all of the symptoms here should consult with a doctor and be referred to a psychiatrist.”

This is indeed a very decent and wise answer, as many symptoms may derive from some sort of physical or/and mental ailment or disorder. All the other responds, however, do trust the writer

183 Loc. cit.
186 Loc. cit.
implicitly.

In fairness, it must be said that many people seem to take his/her words seriously as you can tell by going through the comments, however, this webpage should definitely not be taken too seriously. Accordingly, the owner even states he respectively she is no proven expert for this kind of incidence(s).

There is, furthermore, a linked text, which one can reach by clicking a button just above the headline of this “article”. It deals with a decidedly delicate subject: “Child Possession Symptoms”\(^{187}\).

9.1.1.3.1. \[\text{http://shaikhsohail.wordpress.com/2011/01/16/child-possession-symptoms/}\]

“Exaggeration is truth that has lost its temper.”
- Jibrān Khalīl Jibrān\(^{188}\) -

Clicking on this button, nothing but the lead story changes – the “background composition” stays the same.
It was posted by the same user on January 16, 2011.

“1. A child may suddenly develop insomnia or fear of sleeping.
2. Spend excessive time in the toilet.
3. Talking to one self in the mirror.
4. Fear of going upstairs alone.
5. Complains of pains constantly, or moving around.
6. Wakes up in the mornings with head ache
7. Might use vulgar language not in line with the normal personality child.
8. Frequent nightmares of snakes, dogs, animals, things or people chasing them.
9. Strange erratic misbehavior and causes mischief, especially once they know something is wrong they keep repeating it as though something encourages them to do it.
10. Hates/ scared of the masjid and mistreats the Quran.
11. Complains of pain in right leg and stomach (at night mostly).

\(^{187}\) \[\text{http://shaikhsohail.wordpress.com/2011/01/16/child-possession-symptoms/}\] (12.03.2014)
\(^{188}\) Arab. جبران خليل جبران
12. See people/jinns walking around (could be external possession not necessarily internal)
13. Gritting/grinding teeth in the sleep.
14. Nightmares of falling from high place (could be sihr)
15. Pupil dilating at times- abnormally big.
16. Intense dislike of listening to Quran.
17. Extreme anger and unusual strength
18. Obsession with things of sexual nature from very young age- 7 or 8 etc.
19. Claiming to have imaginary friend who has a name- like charlie, samantha, elizabeth, adam etc (can be external)
20. Child constantly wanting to go to the garden at night or hates coming back to the house for no apparent reason.
21. Hearing voices when awake**189

This long list of symptoms, which may be caused by a jinn, is indeed as controversial as this topic in general. However, it is a five-star-rated (four votes so far) article.190

Many of these symptoms appear to sound a little strange to the majority of readers, as – for instance - using bad language or misbehaving (repeatedly) do, in most cases, not have anything to do with anything supernatural at all, but with missing education only. These are earthly but not paranormal problems.

Hitherto, there have only been five comments, which is really little (especially in comparison to the users former article191): one experience report, two questions (plus one answer by the writer), one angered respectively cynic comment.192

All in all, considering both the articles, reading them one automatically realizes the texts´ poor orthography and grammar, which perhaps springs from the writer´s native language not being English.

Furthermore, the writer states he is no Islamic scholar respectively theologian, hence, no expert. However, there are no footnotes either, which leads to the question where the user is receiving his

189 Loc. cit.
190 Loc. cit.
192 http://shaikhsohail.wordpress.com/2011/01/16/child-possession-symptoms/(22.03.2014)
information from? Well, it definitely is not the Qur’ān he is referring to.
The user does not give any kind of rational or reasonable examples, but only lists a lot of
“symptoms”, which usually derive from stress, a lack of manners, or real medical ailments.

9.1.2. Possession on the net – videos

“What is real? How do you define 'real'? If you're talking about what you can feel, what you can
smell, what you can taste and see, then 'real' is simply electrical signals interpreted by your brain.”
- Laurence John Fishburne III as Morpheus -

Under 5.4.1. I have already written about a video which is – by the uploader at least – said to have
cought a jinn on tape and under 5.4.2. I concerned myself with a video on a show, whose caller is
supposed to be possessed.
However, yet, I have not analysed a video showing a Muslim who is believed to be possessed by a
jinn as a main focus.

9.1.2.1. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKqle-4

“Truth is more peculiar than fiction. Life is really a startling place.”
- Mira Nair -

This video was uploaded on July 13, 2010¹⁹³ by a user, who calls himself “LetsReadAndPray”¹⁹⁴. It is
called “Demonic Possession During Muslim Service - Must See..“ and its video description is
only one sentence long: “Can someone explain this behavior to me? Demonic possession is what I
think!”¹⁹⁵

The video lasts fifty-eight seconds in total and it already has 18 comments.¹⁹⁶

It is showing a scene from an Islamic mass - probably Shiitic.
Already at the very beginning of the video the “main protagonist” starts hitting himself whilst
preaching enthusiastically and screaming “yā Allāh“ (engl. Oh Lord) repeatedly.

¹⁹³ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKqle-4 (23.03.2014)
¹⁹⁴ http://www.youtube.com/user/LetsReadAndPray (23.03.2014)
¹⁹⁵ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKqle-4 (23.03.2014)
¹⁹⁶ Loc. cit.
By (approximately) fifteen seconds he throws his sheets up in the air subsequently throws his headdress away in order to hit his face over and over. Only two seconds later an attender tries to stop him, however, by thirty-three seconds he gets up and starts yelling “yā” (for arab. يا حسین, transcribed yā ḥusain, engl. Oh Husain; probably referring to al-Ḥusain b. ʿalī [arab. الحسین بن علی], transcribed al-Ḥusain Ibn ʿalī], son of Alī b. Abī Ṭālib [arab. علي بن أبي طالب, transcribed ʿalī Ibn Abī Ṭālib]). A further attender arrives and tries to help the first one. By fifty seconds both the attenders have already managed to get him off of his chair. Five seconds later the sound breaks off.¹⁹⁷

As aforementioned, there are eighteen comments as a whole. I will pick three particular ones:

- Three weeks ago a user, who calls herself “jasmin simonsen”¹⁹⁸ commented this video with the following words: “thie killt jesus”.¹⁹⁹
  
Well, I have to admit this somehow came out of the blue. However, it reminded me of Sarah Silverman²⁰⁰: “Everybody blames the Jews for... for killing Christ and then the Jews try to pass it off on the Romans. You know, I´m one of the few people that believes that it was the blacks.”²⁰¹

After such a long time of Christian anti-Judaism this is something completely new. “This verse [Matt. 27:25] is often read as implying that all Jews, of Jesus´ time and forever afterward, accept the responsibility and blame for Jesus´ death.”²⁰²

Due to the interesting “artistic” orthography and this amusing but utterly unrelated statement we shall not take her seriously. It is either mere ignorance (confounding Judaism with Islam), or a joke, which lead to writing this comment.

- A user, who called himself “hamadmfd”²⁰³ commented on this video as well, however, this entry already dates back to 2012. He wrote: “by the way I am muslim and I can assure you that this is not Islam, at all. they call themselves muslims, but islam is innocent. we consider them our first enemies. however if you really want to know about islam, you may wach some videos that are explaining it. I

197 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKqle-4 (23.03.2014)
198 http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuYQaA6hEtPrvNX8s4UP5UQ (23.03.2014)
199 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKqle-4 (23.03.2014)
200 http://sarahsilvermanonline.com (23.03.2014)
201 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHfTeaXmsLA (23.03.2014)
203 http://www.youtube.com/user/hamadmfd (23.03.2014)
recommend (Sheik Yusuf Estes with Catholic TV part 1/2) you can just copy what is between the parentheses and paste it in the search area thank you.”

This user obviously does not consider this a video showing a possession, but a fanatic only and links - literally, not technically – advice to his comment.

In comparison to the previous comment, this one is to be taken seriously.

- Five months ago “S Fatima” commented this video writing: “This is so stupid. No one in this video is possessed, he basically just finished telling a story to the crowd of a war, that was taken place in early islam just after the death of Prophet Muhammad, This war separated the muslims because they fought on who would lead the muslim people. It was a very gruesome war and would be related to the holocaust. Thats how bad it was. The reason he is flailing his arms & yelling like that is because he is very very passionately telling this sad sad story.”

This user seems to dislike this video and its content, stating that it is not showing anyone being possessed by a supernatural creature but by joy at a war only – she thus, agrees with “hamadmfd”.

All in all this video indeed appears fairly peculiar, however, whether the preacher is possessed by a jinn (by the way there is no mentioning “jinns” in general in this video respectively its description) is a question, which cannot be answered at this point.

Nevertheless, it is safe to say this video is neither posed nor a fake, considering the camera angle and its poor resolution.

9.1.2.2. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8

“Causarum enim cognitionem eventorum facit.”

- Marcus Tullius Cicero -

This video was posted on May 1st 2013 by a user called “Ruqyah Healing”. It is to be found on

204 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKgJe-4 (23.03.2014)  
205 http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCtSRG1rz6k_vOdglhAFakA (23.03.2014)  
206 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKgJe-4 (23.03.2014)  
207 http://www.youtube.com/user/hamadmfd (23.03.2014)  
208 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKgJe-4 (23.03.2014)  
209 Engl. “Indeed, knowing the causes leads to the realization of results.”  
210 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8 (02.04.2014)  
211 http://www.youtube.com/user/RuqyahHealing (02.04.2014)
Youtube searching for its title “Signs of being affected by Evil Eye, Magic or Jinn”\(^\text{212}\). The text below indicates this video is a sequence and hence part of promotion for a DVD\(^\text{213}\), supporting the “Al-Ansar Islamic Education Centre”\(^\text{214}\) in Essex/Great Britain. The video lasts four minutes and fifty-four seconds altogether.\(^\text{215}\)

This video starts off by repeating the subject, as the line “Signs of being affected” appears in the middle of the screen and disappears six seconds later, while – top left – an internet address\(^\text{216}\) is shown (this is the webpage via which the DVD is distributed). At the bottom of the display one can see the appertaining advertisement for the movie respectively film documentation.

By eight seconds the actual video starts, showing a seemingly Islamic religious scholar sitting on a dark carmine red settee whilst a green emblem respectively icon (www.ruqyah.org) appears at the top on the right.

The scholar commences talking about how to determine whether someone is smitten with the affects of the evil eye until one minute and twenty-seven seconds. He then proceeds to explain how the impact of magic may manifest. By two minutes and forty-two seconds the scholar terminates this issue and goes on to talking about possession.

He then lists symptoms which indicate a victim may be possessed by a jinn: neglect of religious duties (reading the Qur‘ān, saying the prayer [arab. صلاة , transcribed ṣalāt]), having nightmares (of snakes, scorpions, graveyards, blood, falling respectively sinking etcetera), unpleasant body odour (despite frequent body hygiene) and oral malodor, depression, anxiety states (especially during weather conditions including rain or thunder), temper tantrums and at long last feeling emotionally distanced from his or her loved ones.

Right after this the video ends.\(^\text{217}\)

As yet this video has reached 105 comments. As before, I will review three comments, which represent the general consensuses respectively dispositions:

- Many of the users who have so far commented this video ask for help, like, for example, “waryia Jaff”\(^\text{218}\) posting the following lines only two weeks ago: “Asalamu alaekum sheikh all the signs you said I have all of them what I need to do please please please help

\(^\text{212}\) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8) (02.04.2014)
\(^\text{213}\) [http://www.ruqyahandhealing.co.uk/shop/](http://www.ruqyahandhealing.co.uk/shop/) (02.04.2014)
\(^\text{214}\) [http://www.masjidansar.com](http://www.masjidansar.com) (02.04.2014)
\(^\text{215}\) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8) (02.04.2014)
\(^\text{216}\) [http://www.ruqyahandhealing.co.uk](http://www.ruqyahandhealing.co.uk) (02.04.2014)
\(^\text{217}\) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8) (02.04.2014)
\(^\text{218}\) [http://www.youtube.com/user/waryia1984](http://www.youtube.com/user/waryia1984) (02.04.2014)
jazakallah Ho khairan”. 219

Indeed, there is always a reason for watching videos of this kind. Fear respectively worry are main reasons for watching videos on this topic – and, of course, not to forget curiousness.

• ( Nearly) all videos which are somehow concerned with the Islam or Islamic issues seem to attract users writing mischievous comments on not the specific topic itself, but Islam in general. One of these people – at least in this case – is a user, who calls himself “Derek Bayliss” 220.

This mastermind posted two comments, both seven months ago: “go face book islam is a symbol of terrorism see mad muslims doing funny dance to remove Djinn ha ha ha so funny” and before “Did that 30 years ago islam is evil was even proved so in British court 2006 Griffin V the Crown”. 221

Seriatim, the earlier comment seems to refer to Nicholas John Griffin, a politically active (sic!) Holocaust denier and open racist. Nicholas John Griffin is chairman of the “British National Party” (BNP) as well as member of the European Parliament - he was arrested for “inciting racial hatred” in 2004 but acquitted two years later. 222 This politician has an anti-everything-which-is-not-British-attitude. However, this reference does not really explain why the user is of the opinion that the Islam is “evil” but only shows us, that Nicholas John Griffin and his supporters might be considered this way. What the user did thirty years ago is not clear either – punctuation marks would definitely help.

The user’s other comment casts him in a negative light too as “go face book islam is a symbol of terrorism see mad muslims doing funny dance to remove Djinn ha ha ha so funny” 223 shows not only a lack of education but also a want of good breeding.

I chose to discuss this comment(s) here, because it/they also represent a great part of comments. This is not criticism, but an attempted random accusation - with a certain comic element.

• There are also people who like to scrutinise everything in a decent way. One of these people is a user who calls herself “Aliya Mansoor” 224 who commented this video one month ago with these lines: “Assalamu Alaikum / What religious fiqh books and texts talk about evil

219 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8 (02.04.2014)
220 http://www.youtube.com/user/ashwayn (02.04.2014)
221 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8 (02.04.2014)
223 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8 (02.04.2014)
224 http://www.youtube.com/user/aliyam100 (02.04.2014)
eye, its indicators, its remedies etc. and how can you tell if someone is affected by evil eye or physiological/biological symptoms such as frequent urination and chronic fatigue?”

This is definitely one of the politest and most sophisticated comments in the whole of Youtube.

Her Grammar is excellent and her way of expressing is indeed splendid. Her language is, hence, corresponding to her intellectual question.

All in all, the video is showing a sequence of a documentation on the subject(s) of magic (arab. سحر, transcribed siḥr), the evil eye and possession, explained by an Islamic religious scholar respectively Sheikh (arab. شيخ, transcribed šāikh).

Within the video he should have added – to my opinion at least – that, no matter if one has only one or all these listed symptoms, he respectively she should go and see a doctor first as to rule out diseases and ailments in the first place, hence, one should always try to be on the safe side. Admittedly, on the other hand, medicine respectively science, however, is not able to explain everything either.

Concerning the appertaining comments one can see that many people (well, users at least) fear being a victim of the paranormal and thus seek help.

9.1.3. Conclusion

“I like to say magic is the world's second oldest profession, a mystical and often awe-inspiring spectacle that, throughout the ages, has blended superstition, trickery and religion.”

- Christopher Nicholas Sarantakos -

This subject still is a “hot potato” amongst Internet-users and, hence, amongst the world’s population.

In the vastness of the Internet many webpages as well as videos on this topic can be found. A large section of the users seems to be utterly shocked and feels like deer helplessly caught in the

225 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8 (02.04.2014)
226 Loc. cit.
headlights reading about possession – not to mention watching a possible “veritable case”. Curiosity gets the better.

Reactions, however, are utterly divergent and range from derision to dread. Some are intellectual, some are far from somewhat decent.

This is, possession and, as a consequence thereof, the world of the jinns still is a current topic. However, what can definitely be seen is an arcane compound of “scripts-based” Islam and superstition.

Especially the videos respectively their makers show a high ratio of assumptions, which are not grounded on the Qurʾān or the Sunna, but are conglomerations of superstition and popular belief only.

The vast majority of physicians would even suggest plenty of the symptoms are indicatives of stress and maybe even depression.

Thus, what is very interesting at this point is, that most “Islamic believes” and “Islamic rites” are only based on the Islam to the effect that they derive from statements found in the Qurʾān or/and the Sunna, but then were developed to something we would call folk belief, as they sheered off from the sacred Scriptures in order to evolve into their own “spirituality”.

9.2. Exorcism online

“Until it's on the radio or online, it's not real.”

- Paul David Hewson -

All Mosaic religions have resembling ideas of what happens to a victim, when dark forces take over on the quiet by whatever means and they all know what to do and how to get rid of such an “uninvited guest”.

The Islam and its proponents are quite bustling in terms of the Internet. Many Muslims are “busy online-bees”. They are scattered across the globe, but united through the net though.

Because of that, one can see how Muslims all over the world cope with this issue.
9.2.1. Exorcism on the net - webpages

“People are very reluctant to talk about their private lives but then you go to the internet and they're much more open.”
- Paul Coelho -

The amount of webpages related to this topic is as enormous as diverse. Many people seem to seek help in the endless withs of the Internet. Some even set up their own webpage(s), because they like to share their “wisdom” and experiences online.


“Nimium ne crede colori.”227
- Publius Vergilius Maro -

With its background colour being white and its black and straight text this webpage is appearing thoroughly reputable.228
Just as a – metaphorical – footnote, the same operators hold a channel on Youtube229.

Trying to figure out where they are from respectively locating their “base of operation” one reads the following when clicking onto “About Us”: “Ruqya Support is here to provide you guidance, advice and emotional support during your difficult affliction with sihr (witchcraft / black magic / Jinn possession). You may have come to this site because you are afflicted or you suspect that you might be affected by Sihr. Or you may have a family member or a friend who may be afflicted, or you might just be generally interested in the topic and are seeking knowledge.
With Allah’s help, we will be releasing articles and short videos covering the many aspects related to this topic. We focus on providing content that is academic, or ‘fact-based’ which deals with questions like ‘What is sihr or black magic?’ and we will also release videos and articles with practical advice on a more personal basis directed to you based on feedback from experts.”230

It is striking that Arabic keywords such as magic for example are not transcribed with any official

227 Engl. “Do not rely much on the colours.”
228 http://www.ruqyasupport.com (05.04.2014)
229 http://www.youtube.com/user/RuqyaSupport (05.04.2014)
230 http://www.ruqyasupport.com/ruqya-support/ (05.04.2014)
system whatsoever but written as “sihr” only - instead of “siḥr” for instance. No additional characters are used. This does indeed not really emphasize the text talking about being “academic” and “experts”.

Underneath two videos are shown, which are run via Youtube. Both of them are short introductions by two of the co-founders (a young man and a purple pixelated woman claiming to be a victim herself) of this webpage. Both try their best to appear reputable and and serious. I assume – this is only an educated guess – both the co-founders are either from England or from Australia, but definitely not from America.231

However, neither here under “About Us” nor when clicking on “Contact us” one can find an address or a telephone number or the like.

Going back to “Home” one first spots the constantly recurring logo, which is a blue circle and its emanating black mane. Choosing the colour blue is always a brilliant idea. „Bei Blau können keine negativen Gefühle dominieren. Blau ist die Farbe der guten Eigenschaften und des auf Dauer Bewährten. Es wird laut Eva Heller nicht von Leidenschaften beherrscht, sondern von gegenseitigem Verständnis.“ (engl. ”With blue no negative feelings can dominate. Blue is the colour of good qualities and in the long-run-approved. According to Eva Heller it is not governed by passions, but by mutual understanding.”)233 This explains why the colour blue is such a good and appropriate choice.

Underneath a picture appears, which is indeed very interesting, as it recommends taking a test as to learn wether the user is “suffering from possession”. However, this is application is unfortunately inactive.234

Clicking on “Ruqya Treatment” and then on “Getting help”. This side is subsequently subdivided

231 Loc. cit.
232 http://www.ruqyasupport.com/contact-us/ (05.04.2014)
into “Who Can Help?”, “Turn to Allah”, “Advice about Raaqis” and into “Help Yourself”. Again, it is remarkable – in a negative way – how little the operators care for scientificity in spite of claiming to have adopted an academic approach to this topic.

- “Who Can Help?": Here the operators suggest to do everything in the victim’s power, but to finally trust in Allāh. It is, consequently, recommended to see an expert such as a rāqy (engl. healer), an Imām, or anyone else who ranks him-/herself among the “people of correct knowledge” as described by the writers. Books, seminars and even more (re-)sources are provided and recommended.

  Furthermore, thou shalt not have recourse to a magician, his/her amulets, or people working with “good jinns”.

- “Turn to Allah": Of course this is considered the most important measure in battling the jinn. ’Trust in His Mercy’.

- “Advice about Raaqis": Here the writer(s) warn about confusing a magician for a rāqy, what would obviously wreak havoc on the victim. However, one shall not blame a rāqy for one’s reaction to a ruqya.

  Moreover, it is recommended to repeatedly exercise the Islamic petitionary prayer as well as the “guidance prayer” (arab. صلاة الاستخارة, transcribed ṣalāt al-Istikhāra).

- “Help Yourself": “…the best ruqya is the one performed by the afflicted person themselves.” Only putting one’s trust in Allāh – so the writers – helps.

There is, of course, more information provided on this webpage, for example, how to identify a sincere rāqy, how to do a “ruqya bath” (I reckon this is where their scientificity comes in.) and of course there are two different online “ruqya-audio-files” to listen to.

236 Loc. cit.
237 Loc. cit.
238 Ibid. (06.04.2014)
239 http://www.ruqyasupport.com/getting-help/ (06.04.2014)
240 Loc. cit.
242 http://www.ruqyasupport.com/ruqya-bath/ (06.04.2014)
All in all this website might seem to be reputable, “academic” respectively scientifical and serious at first glance, however, it is far apart from its semblance. There is no scientifically recognized method of transcription used and for an “academic” and “fact-based” webpage one sees too little references to, amongst others, the Qurʾān or any other valid resources.

9.2.1.2. http://ruqya.co.za

“To think of shadows is a serious thing.”
- Victor-Marie Hugo -

Let us now travel down South to Africa - to be more precise to South Africa. This website looks very professional and is somehow reminiscent of the CNN-webpage in terms of its layout and its kind of presentation.

Initially, clicking on the field “About Us” it is written as follows: “RuqyaSA is an organization of Raaqis (those that are licensed to practice Ruqya) whom have enjoyed the privilege of studying Ruqya under our honorable Sheikh and mentor, Sheikh Abder Raouf Ben Halimah, Alhamdulillah.”

Once again, no transcription-method was used. However, this webpage was set up by “Raaqis those that are licensed to practice Ruqya”, thus, not by enthusiasts and/or victims only, but by experts in their field.

They blog and have a list of (male as well as female!) healers, based in some of the bigger cities within South Africa. Predominantly, their addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses are quoted.

Of course there are also many articles and videos on this subject, like, for example, a detailed introduction to this issue (including references to the Qurʾān), an utterly long list of symptoms and – and this is remarkable and noteworthy – a list of physical conditions (such as psoriasis,

244 http://edition.cnn.com (06.04.2014)
245 http://ruqya.co.za/about-us/ (06.04.2014)
246 Loc. cit.
247 http://ruqya.co.za/category/blog/ (06.04.2014)
248 http://ruqya.co.za/raaqis/ (06.04.2014)
249 http://ruqya.co.za/what-is-ruqa/ (06.04.2014)
250 http://ruqya.co.za/symptoms/ (06.04.2014)
keloidal scars, hemophilia and so forth) which do not derive from possession²⁵¹!

All in all this webpage appears to be a rather young one, as some of its pages are still under construction (such as the “Treatment Charges”-list²⁵² exempli gratia). It seems the South African approach is a lot more sensible and senseful, considering the fact they are drawing the line to a nicety and, hence, even recommend seeing the doctor, which is – to my mind at least – very responsible-minded.

9.2.1.3. [http://www.ruqyashariyah.org](http://www.ruqyashariyah.org)

“Data is not information, information is not knowledge, knowledge is not understanding, understanding is not wisdom.”

- Clyfford Still -

This webpage was founded 2006 as a Yahoo-Group²⁵³, but was removed to this website²⁵⁴ later on in compliance with what is written under “About”²⁵⁵. “The Ruqya Shariyah site consists of Muslim individuals who voluntarily help those that are affected by Sihr (Black Magic), Mass (Possession) or Al-Ayn (Evil Eye).”²⁵⁶

Like on all websites referring to this topic there are audio files²⁵⁷ available, which shall help performing a ruqya, as well as videos²⁵⁸ to related topics.

The “Forum”²⁵⁹ can only be used by registered members, which makes sense considering the delicateness of this subject.

There is also a list of “healers”²⁶⁰ from England (only).

All in all they do not provide as much information as the South African Side or the one before, but

²⁵³ [https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/RuqyaShariyah/info](https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/RuqyaShariyah/info) (06.04.2014)
²⁵⁴ [http://www.ruqyashariyah.org](http://www.ruqyashariyah.org) (06.04.2014)
²⁵⁵ [http://ruqyashariyah.org/about](http://ruqyashariyah.org/about) (06.04.2014)
²⁵⁶ [http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/about](http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/about) (06.04.2014)
²⁵⁷ [http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/ruqya-mp3](http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/ruqya-mp3) (06.04.2014)
²⁵⁸ [http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/videos](http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/videos) (06.04.2014)
²⁵⁹ [http://ruqyashariyah.org/forum/](http://ruqyashariyah.org/forum/) (06.04.2014)
²⁶⁰ [http://ruqyashariyah.org/raqi-list](http://ruqyashariyah.org/raqi-list) (06.04.2014)
“scratch the surface” only respectively do not acquaint their users entirely.

9.2.2. Exorcism on the net – videos

“You can't put your feet on the ground until you've touched the sky.”
- Paul Auster -

Many Islamic exorcisms (and exorcism-rites in general) are videotaped and uploaded to Youtube in this day and age, as the unbelievable and incredible is enthralling to nearly everybody. Especially Youtube provides a worldwide platform for such issues.

9.2.2.1. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCynMnr_9W0

“Authenticity is key.”
- Timothy Michael Kaine -

This video is called “POSSESSION BY JINN IN THE HEAD RUQYA.BY RAQI ZIED.” and was uploaded on June 7, 2013 by a user, who calls himself “saj muslim The Rugya Services”.

The uploader´s comment on this video is “this video demonstrate how powerful is the quran al kareem.it shows cleareley the patient losing his temper and show a high level of anger,in fact its the type of sihr he have by using a jinn on his head to mess up his life,the brother still having ruqya treatement”.

Even before watching this video, we already know the uploader´s mother tongue is not English (and based on the kind of mistakes he made we can also assume his first language is probably not a Semitic language either).

His username also suggests he probably does these “Rugya Services” - according to him - at regular intervals.

The video lasts four minutes and forty-five seconds in toto. It starts off with a picture of the user

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261 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCynMnr_9W0 (22.03.2014)
262 http://www.youtube.com/user/1day4sure1 (22.03.2014)
263 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCynMnr_9W0 (22.03.2014)
Raqi Zied. Above his picture one reads (in white font): “The Rugya Services, presents: rugya on patient with jinn possession of the head.”

Afterwards the video show – starting at six seconds – a young man in a violet T-shirt sitting on a purple chair by a wooden table. The scholar directly starts reciting the Qurʾān upon the possessed Muslim, while splashing (blessed?) water on him.

By two minutes and eight seconds a banner saying “Now this is not patient, be aware, sudden change of behaviour!!!” pops up above the patient’s head – that’s when he starts laughing in addition to moving his torso in a circle.

By two minutes and sixteen to two minutes and seventeen seconds the “patient” screams. Later on, by two minutes and twenty-four seconds “Now its the patient he remembers nothing” appears beneath the young man.

By two minutes and thirty-four seconds the “exorcist” seems to ask the patient wether his head is already feeling any better. “I ask the patient how does his head feel?” can be read underneath.

Subsequently, the young man describes where exactly he is feeling pain at the very moment and points at his head.

There is a cut by two minutes and fifty-three seconds showing a picture first and stating afterwards “After long Ruqya the hiding jinn manifests warning strong language !!!”.

The second part, thus, starts by two minutes and fifty-eight seconds, when the “exorcist” is literally lying on the patient holding one of his hands/neck/throat down and covering the man’s eyes with his other hand and repeatedly spitting on him, while the young man, who believes to be possessed is attempting to free himself – until both fall of the couch by respectively until three minutes and fifty-nine seconds.

There is a cut at four minutes. The “patient” with the violet shirt sits on one of the purple chairs again and the “exorcist” is squirting him until he holds him down again.

By four minutes and nineteen seconds one reads “For any advice or help please call me: 07852752066 / Find us on Facebook Page The Ruqya Services”. Apropos, thus number is English.

Twenty seconds later the video (not the ruqya itself however) has nearly come to an end, showing a bluish landscape-picture and quoting the Qurʾān (sūra al-aʿrāf 23).

To me, this seems to be a quite authentic video (despite the cutting of course) as it is not as fanciful

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264 Loc. cit.
265 Loc. cit.
266 http://www.beatsihr.com/ruqya-in-uk.html (25.03.2014)
267 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICynMnr_9W0 (22.03.2014)
and, thus, unrealistic (no objects flying around, no too beastly voices etcetera) as many other videos are.


“Publicity, publicity, publicity is the greatest moral factor and force in our public life.”

- József Pulitzer -

The following video attracts attention as a result of its skilled appearance.

It was uploaded February 10th 2014 (recently hence) by a user, who calls himself “Abu Ruqya”269, who can be found on other sides like Facebook270, Webstagram271, Instagram272 and many more as well.

The title of this video is “REAL LIFE EXORCISM: (RARE FOOTAGE) ABU RUQYA”273 and its description is as follows: “A family visited the Abu Ruqya Centre after losing 2 children soon after birth. Thorough medical examinations were performed by doctors, however the reasons of death were still unknown. / Our Senior Islamic Practitioner Abu Ruqya performed Ruqya”274.

The video lasts one minute and thirty-one seconds, but is - despite its short duration - very expressive.

It starts off with a light grey picture being displayed. At the top the viewer reads “Abu-Ruqya - ‘Reforming lives’”. Underneath – utterly artistically and thus skilled – one reads “Black magic? / Evil eye? / Jinn?”, which are draped displaced. Below are some more lines, providing the user contact details: “To book an appointment / Call: 07557677761 / Visit: 474-474 Katherine Road, London E7 8DP”275.

By three seconds the picture is “blurred into the next picture” which shows a female Muslim sitting

269 http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0S3ccdrwxQVLSjcD4giyeQ (12.04.2014)
270 https://www.facebook.com/AbuRuqya123?directed_target_id=0 (12.04.2014)
274 Loc. cit.
275 Loc. cit.
on a chair waving respectively shaking her limbs, while an other female Muslim sits on the side, viewing the spectacle.

A man, probably “Abu Ruqya” is reciting the Qur’ān “upon” the possessed female Muslim via a microphone. Due to the camera movement at eight respectively nine seconds, a further female spectator shown.

By eleven seconds the video gets cut off – the background is black, while the font is white, stating: “True story of a sister... / ‘My life felt like it was never going to be the same... / until the Quran was read upon me’”276 which stops by sixteen seconds.

The camera points at the previous scene again. The possessed woman now utters strange noises in addition to her shaking her limbs.

By twenty-two seconds the video is, again, interrupted for these lines: “‘I lost two sons through black magic. Doctors were left speechless. / One died after one month and another after a few months.’”277

Seven seconds later another lines appears “Cause of death: Unknown!”278 Dramatic and, hence, very efficient.

The video of the possessed Muslim woman is shown again by thirty-three seconds.

By thirty-four seconds the video is stopped again showing the following lines: “‘There was a Christian Jinn living in my stomach, causing harm to my babies’ / ‘My life felt like it was never going to be the same until the Quran was read upon me’”.279

By fifty-two seconds the video is displayed again. The lady in the back is still “as cool as a tree”280.

The possessed lady falls off the chair by one minute and eighteen seconds, while the reciter immediately flies to her side.

The video respectively content is over by one minute and twenty seconds.

Afterwards the video fades out while the lines “Full video coming out soon! / Abu Ruqya Centre”281 can be read.

By one minute and twenty-six seconds a new pictures comes up showing the logo and various contact details are indicated.282

All in all, this video appears to be made by experts. It is a perfect mixture of professionalism and

*276 Loc. cit.
277 Loc. cit.
278 Loc. cit.
279 Loc. cit.
282 Loc. cit.
authenticity victims can identify with. The logo itself looks utterly professional.

The video-parts screening the ruqya appear to be authentic.

Probably due to its recent upload there has only been posted one comment (without any text), which is, hence, not noteworthy.

All in all this video is definitely very good publicity for the centre, as it is not only professional but genuine as well.

9.2.3. Conclusion

“I have come to the conclusion that the most important element in human life is faith.”

- Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald Kennedy -

Exorcism respectively the practice of ruqya in this case is a common and popular topic within the “Islamic Nation” (arb. لَامَةِ الإِسْلَامِيَّة, transcribed al-umma al-islāmiyya), which is actually no surprise at all, considering that our modern society (well, societies rather) is banning religion from politics and thus from state affairs, which directly leads to our modern drama, which manifests itself by a lack of “spiritualism” in everyday life and this is – as we can see - a problem for many – if not for the majority of - people, who, as a result, often seek “the transcendental” whatsoever, in the extreme “outwardly experiencable”:

However, in my opinion, we have to keep something even more substantial in mind: the willingness to trustingly lay one’s faith unto the hands of a Deity.

Hence, trust it is!

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْبَسُ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الَّذِي حَمِّضَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ عَمَّا قَدْ أَفْلَمَ اللَّهُ لِكُلٍّ شَيْءٍ فَخَلَصْ (engl. “And He will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allāh and He is sufficient for him; Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose: Allah has already set for everything a [decreed] extent.”)\(^{283}\)

\(^{283}\) At-ṭalāq 65:3.
This is, humanity has – ever since – sought to rely on a “higher power” whatsoever, who respectively which mankind can confide in and who or which will, in the end, have mercy on those who beg for it.

According to this, the global “Islamic” interest in ruqya is a symbol of the people’s present-day “religious insecurity” and their “involuntary religious indigence” and, simultaneously, their need to restore their faith in Allāh as an obtaining of some sort of credit of trust for the literal “end of the days” respectively yaum al-qiyāma, where the ultimate divine salvation shall be experienced.

9.3. Conclusion to chapter nine

“*But we try to pretend, you see, that the external world exists altogether independently of us.*”

- Alan Wilson Watts -

Taken en masse, given the number of existing webpages and videos and the corresponding comments asking for more information or even for help (of course not all comments are positive, but the majority is), “jinn-possession” as well as “exorcism” are well represented topics on the internet.

The majority of all humankind is interested in the paranormal in general and these issues are, thus, very popular amongst Muslims for reasons I have already declared before.

However, what is troubling me is the great amount of people thinking they might be afflicted respectively possessed by a jinn, which is actually no surprise, given the long lists of symptoms one can find on every and each (relevant) webpage - including quite common discomforts such as having nightmares or problems with one’s spouse (The fault is most often with the wife, who is – due to her being a woman - more easily possessed than her husband.) - but for all that every Muslim who is afraid he or she might be a victim of a jinn should study the sacred writings before surfing the net, as not to fall prey to misinformation spread on the internet. Of course, faith can move mountains, as we all know, however, one should ponder and cogitate before jumping to a conclusion.

Nevertheless, the majority of these webpages and videos (leading via links to sites) respectively their operators try to help the afflicted victims by not only giving them convenient tips, but by inviting them to visit their centres or – if the victim lives abroad – to join a “mass-ruqya” via
The concepts of how possession can be revealed are fairly homogenous, even if they may strike a layman as quite odd.

What is thoroughly interesting as well is, that possession can be banned by not only by reciting the Qurʾān upon a victim hosting a harmful jinn, but by – subsequently - making this jinn accept Muḥammad as Allāh’s messenger and thus by “Islamicising” this former Jewish or Christian jinn.

All in all, what is “eye-catching” the most is the mingling of Qurʾān- and Sunna-based conceptions with folk belief and, moreover, that this conception seems to be widely recognized amongst Muslims throughout the world.
10. Diseases and ailments

“They certainly give very strange names to diseases.”

- Plato -

The list of symptoms indicating a person might be possessed is long – and dangerous. „Die soziale Repräsentation der obsessão (Besessenheit) kann sich in den verschiedensten Symptomen äußern.” (engl. “The social representation of obsessão (obsession) can manifest in a variety of symptoms.”)284

This holds good not only for obsessão and, thus, for Brazil but for all humankind and, hence, for all cultures.

It is indeed quite hard to draw a distinction between a mental illness and possession and this applies not only for physicians respectively psychologists and psychiatrists! Of course, there seems to be no space for entities of any kind within “serious science” at first glance, but this has changes in modern age.

However, especially for sincere Muslims (of course this holds true for Jews, Christians etcetera as well) this thin line is of great importance, but in addition to that, self-perception does in such cases hardly ever go hand in hand with external perception – which reputable psychologist would make “possession” be his or her diagnosis? Even if he respectively she thought this might be the correct diagnosis, it would definitely harm his respectively her reputation to speak his or her mind about it. Accordingly, no respected psychologist would ever make his or her diagnosis “jinn-possession” or the like.

“The ancients believed that insanity was a possession of the devil,-a perversion of the psychical forces through the effects of sin and crime.”285

Well, there are obviously more reasons for a Muslim to fall a victim to a jinn. Not only the “ancients” were of the opinion that the source of such ailments were to be found within the transcendental spheres of the world. The inference, however, that one falls prey to a jinn more easily in course of committing a sin is not far-fetched, given, that, for example, a woman´s genitalia

is eminently vulnerable to a jinn taking over – and many sins are concerned with “reproduction” in terms of Islam and religions in general.

It is not for me to assess whether jinns exist respectively whether concluded they existed – these entities are capable of taking possession of a human. Nevertheless, besides all this conjecturing, it is common ground that the majority of people who infer to be possessed suffers from some sort of condition, but is this possible or simply defamation?

10.1. Symptoms of possession as found in a book

“There’s a big difference between sanity and insanity.”
- Megan Gallagher -

In the previous chapter I showed the various symptoms a possessed person is believed to show at least in part. However, it is well-known to everybody that the Internet is a public domain. Not only experts are allowed respectively able to publish and post their points of views etcetera online, but laymen too. Hence, the Internet as source is to be treated differently, but would be unreasonable using information found on the internet only at least. It is, however, not only an important source, when it comes to limning the “people’s view(s)”, which I have already done before – but this is not my prior intention in this chapter. However, I will, afterwards, add a list of symptoms as found on the internet.

Consequently, let us have a further look on the symptoms - but drawn from a more “reliable” source (However, what a reliable source is, when it comes to such a topic, is another pair of shoes) this time.

"أعراضه:
1- الشروود والذهول والنسبيان الشديد.
2- التخبط في الكلام.
3- شخوص البصر وزيفه.
4- عدم الاستقرار في مكان واحد.
5- عدم الاستمرار في عمل واحد.
6 - عدم الاهتمام بالظهور.

7 - أحيانًا ينطلق هائماً على وجهه لا يدرى أين يذهب، وربما نام في الأماكن المهجرة دون خوف.

In English this list of symptoms is to be translated as follows:

Its symptoms:

1 – Abstraction and absentmindedness and dark oblivion.
2 – Blundering in speech.
3 – Oculogyric crisis and its aberration.
4 – Unsteadiness of location.
5 – Inconstancy of work.
6 – Apathetic look.
7 – Sometimes he goes out aimlessly [and] he does not know where is is going, and may sleep in solitary places without fear.”

There are indeed overlappings with the symptoms propounded on the webpages etcetera I analysed before.

However, this list of symptoms is way shorter. Albeit it should be mentioned, that these signals are more blurredly worded.

10.1.1. Abstraction and absentmindedness and dark oblivion

“Apathy is a sort of living oblivion.”
- Richard Milhous Nixon -

Abstraction and absentmindedness are up against each other, whereas (dark) oblivion does not automatically - from a medical point of view - go hand in hand with either abstraction or absentmindedness or both of these symptoms.

Such being the case, I will now elaborate dark oblivion and abstraction respectively absentmindedness separately, in order to be able to concentrate on all of these symptoms individually.

286 Probably a mistake. It should read بنطلق.
10.1.1.1. Abstraction and absentmindedness

“Trying to suppress or eradicate symptoms on the physical level can be extremely important, but there’s more to healing than that; dealing with psychological, emotional and spiritual issues involved in treating sickness is equally important.”
- Marianne Williamson -

The very first symptoms listed, are abstraction and absentmindedness. They often accompany each other. Attention lapses, hence, absentmindedness and abstraction are definitely nothing to worry about. They are to be understood as nothing but - the clue is in the name – lapses. However, they might be part of a serious clinical picture.

“Technically, attention lapses are taken to be failures of sustained attention.” Of course, absentmindedness and abstraction can – understood as neurovegetative signs - be indications of a major depressive disorder, however, an extensive diagnosis does include other signs and symptoms as well, this is, abstraction and absentmindedness do not automatically portend a mental illness.

Underneath I will put a finer point to epilepsy respectively epileptic seizures, as it is one of the symptoms mentioned below, however, at this point I shall mention that epileptics may suffer from a special form of depression – which might draw a line between these two symptoms: „Epileptiker können unter denselben Formen depressiver Erkrankungen leiden wie nicht epileptische Patienten. Allerdings zeigte eine Literaturanalyse zu depressiven Erkrankungen bei Epilepsie deutlich, dass bei einem signifikanten Anteil dieser Patienten ein atypisches klinisches Bild vorliegt, das sich nicht in die Achse-I-Kategorien (sei es III, III-R oder IV) des Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) einordnen lässt [18]. Man kam zu dem Schluss, dass sich depressive Erkrankungen bei vielen Patienten mit Epilepsie von denjenigen nicht epileptischer Patienten unterscheiden [19, 93].“ (engl. “Epileptics can suffer from the the same forms of depressive disorders as not-epileptic patients. However, a literature review on depressive disorders in conjunction with epilepsy clearly showed

that a significant segment of these patients present an atypical clinical picture, which cannot be assigned to the Axis I categories (whether III, III-R or IV) of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) [18]. It was concluded that depressive disorders in many patients with epilepsy differ from those of not-epileptic patients [19, 93].“)²⁹⁰

Within the religious context these modes of behaviour, however, are understood as signs for possession²⁹¹.

10.1.1.2. Dark oblivion

“The advantage of a bad memory is that one enjoys several times the same good things for the first time.”

- Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche -

Memory respectively its chief defect “dark oblivion” are a common problem amongst all living creatures – apart from elephants of course. This is because memory is such a “knotty” thing and forgetting a form of self-protection.

http://cdn2-b.examiner.com/sites/default/files/styles/image_content_width/hash/0b/2e/136847707_4085_memory.jpg?itok=vXdpd4

„Das Gedächtnis selbst ist hierarchisch organisiert: Aus der ständigen Flut von Reizen filtert das Gehirn zunächst die interessantesten heraus und speist sie erst ins Ultrakurzzeitgedächtnis und dann ins Kurzzeitgedächtnis. Durch Wiederholung, bewusstes Lernen und emotionale Verknüpfungen

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 480.
gelangt die Information ins Langzeitgedächtnis und bleibt dort für Stunden bis Jahrzehnte abrufbar. An jeder Stelle dieses Vorgangs können Schwierigkeiten auftreten. Können die Informationen z.B. nicht mehr aus dem Langzeitgedächtnis abgerufen werden, spricht man von Vergesslichkeit.“ (engl. „The memory itself is hierarchically organised: Out of the permanent flood of stimuli the brain initially filters out the most interesting ones and stores them on the ultra short memory and then on the short-term memory. By repeating, conscious learning and emotional ties information finds its way into long-term memory and it stays there and is kept available for hours up to decades. At every place of this process difficulties may emerge. In case the information, for instance, cannot be accessed from long-term memory anymore, one speaks of obliviousness.”)  

According to this, it is quite easy to intervene and, hence, to interfere in the process of memory respectively of memorising due its pronounced complexity– exempli gratia, employing electric stimuli.

As aforementioned, a jinn is believed to take hold inside the brain´s area responsible for memory and memorising – probably inside the hippocampus, as the in the entorhinal cortex converged information is proceeded here.  

Hence, if someone respectively something is eager to do harm to a person and taking over without destroying his or her physical fitness this is the perfect spot to engage.

10.1.2. Blundering in speech

“The brain is wider than the sky.”
- Emily Elizabeth Dickinson -

At least since “The King´s Speech” we all know what “blundering in speech” is supposed to say: Stuttering.

Stuttering – as well as stammering - can have a variety of different manifestations and many various origins. Where stuttering derives from is yet a mystery to unravel – even though scientists suggest it might be genetically hereditable. However, psychological traumata usually trigger it (or not –

294 http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1504320/ (12.05.2014)
hence, not necessarily, but contingently).

This condition usually already occur in childhood and may persist throughout childhood, unless speech therapy is not begun as early as possible.\textsuperscript{295}

I have already pointed out that (not only) Islam presumes jinns would settle somewhere inside the head in the afflicted’s brain.

Above, I showed how respectively where dark oblivion, abstraction etcetera emerge. Nevertheless, the hippocampus – responsible for memory and memorising – is (technically) not even adjacent to those areas of the brain responsible for language production, since these semantic processes “only” involve the temporal lobe as well as the inferior frontal gyrus (which is part of the frontal lobe).\textsuperscript{296}

This jinn has to be, hence, either quite sized or able to divide itself.

10.1.3. Oculogyric crisis and its aberration

\textit{“The eye altering, alters all.”}

- William Blake -

This symptom - oculogyric crisis - is perhaps – and hopefully - not too common, as it normally either stems from taking neuroleptics or from encephalitis lethargica, - both quite unpleasant things.\textsuperscript{297}

What is striking is the doubling (“and its aberration”). An oculogyric crisis is characterised by a deviation of eyes, hence, an oculogyric crisis is an ocular aberration by definition. Thus, there is no logical medical explanation for this duplication. This can, accordingly, only be explained as something typical for the Arabic language: Two are better than one.


10.1.4. Unsteadiness of location

“I cannot sleep - great joy is as restless as great sorrow.”
- Frances Burney -

This unsteadiness is probably to be understood as hyperactivity. Unsteadiness in terms of location does not – in contrast to popular belief – automatically go hand in hand with an attention deficit disorder.298

However, the question is how restless someone has to be in order to be considered “unsteady”, as there is a big difference between common restlessness (in times of joy or sorrow as above mentioned as part of the quote) and pathological hyperactivity.

Indeed, this symptom would blend in very well with the blundering in speech, as hyperactives often smart under stunted development regarding their expressive language. This is, however, unlikely (unlikely but not impossible) to abruptly emerge in adulthood, but usually already begins in childhood.299

10.1.5. Inconstancy of work

“Constancy is the complement of all other human virtues.”
- Giuseppe Mazzini -

Of course this symptom and the one before (regarding unsteadiness in general) are very much alike. I will not repeat myself hence.

Apparent capriciousness might not be one of the prime virtues, however, it does not necessarily indicate any sort of mental disorder.
So called “job hoppers” are - in some branches - nothing of note anymore. Moreover, there is no gland controlling a person’s propensity for job change, which would make the mention of this symptom a little more explicable.

10.1.6. Apathetic look

“Apathy is one of the characteristic responses of any living organism when it is subjected to stimuli too intense or too complicated to cope with. The cure for apathy is comprehension.”
- John Roderigo Dos Passos -

There are people, who in point of fact simply have little life in them only. Apathy, however, is - contrary to what many believe - not only a feature of puberty at times, but can be a “real” disorder too.

„Das verminderte zielgerichtete Verhalten wird nicht durch eine affektive Störung (z.B. depressive Episode), kognitive (z.B. Amnesie, Delir) oder motorische Defizite (z.B. Paresen, Akinesie) verursacht. Einzelne Symptome einer Apathie können aber parallel zu anderen psychischen Störungen koexistieren. Der Mangel an Motivation und Antrieb wird, wenn er das dominierende klinische Erscheinungsbild darstellt, als Apathie-Syndrom klassifiziert.“ (engl. „The diminished purposeful behaviour is neither caused by an affective disorder (e.g. depressive episode), nor by cognitive (e.g.amnesia, delirium) or motoric deficits (e.g. paresises, akinesia). Some symptoms of apathy, however, might coexist parallel with further mental disorders. The lack in motivation and impetus is, if it poses the dominant clinical presentation, classified as Apathy Syndrome.”)³⁰⁰

Hence, apathy as a mental disorder is a serious recognised psychological respectively emotional condition.

Apathy as a symptom for possession can be explained by the jinn to “suck out” the afflicted’s life in order to replace the victim’s will and soul with the jinn. This process therefore causes the possessed person to feel, well, “empty”.

10.1.7. Sometimes he goes out aimlessly [and] he does not know where is is going, and may sleep in solitary places without fear

"Fear makes us feel our humanity."
- Benjamin Disraeli -

This symptom contains in fact two different ones. For one thing the aimless wandering and for another thing (pathological?) fearlessness.

The directionless roaming is probably related to both, the restlessness and (partly) the apathy as well, respectively a mixture of both these symptoms.

Moreover, jinns, which are usually not be found on broad streets as they dislike technical innovations, are said to either live in the Qâf-mountains (a mythological mountain which was reckoned to be the farthest point on our planet), or beyond the surface, however, they also take up residence in abandoned places like the desert, graveyards, dunghills etc. This is, jinns are believed to favour abandoned and dirty spots to stay at and are thus used to overnight at such places.  

301 So they have nothing to fear but fear itself – and much less bacteria or an attack by a wild animal.

From a medical point of view pathological intrepidity is nothing to be taken lightly, even though it might sound good at first glance. Scientists are – yet – not a hundred percent sure in which cerebral area fear is “produced”. It is supposed to be the Amygdalae (which are inside the above-mentioned temporal lobes) plays the leading role within this process of the emergence of fear.  

302 Within the ICD-10 pathological fearlessness is probably to subsume under F23.9 (“Acute and transient psychotic disorder, unspecified”) 303, as it is paralleled by a loss of the sense of reality. Abandoned places are not necessarily dangerous, but they

303 http://apps.who.int/classifications/icd10/browse/2010/en#F20-F29 (15.05.2014)
can be and who likes to sleep in an exposed surrounding?

Nevertheless, pathological fearlessness remains a mystery, which needs to (and perhaps will) be solved by scientists in the future.

The symptom “Sometimes he goes out aimlessly [and] he does not know where is is going, and may sleep in solitary places without fear” might, notwithstanding, also sounds even worse than it de facto is.

10.1.8. All these symptoms together I

“Coincidence is logical.”
- Hendrik Johannes Cruijff -

… might create the impression of a smorgasbord of shreds of mental disorders. However, this impression is - to some extent – deceptive.

It is particularly significant that many of these symptoms (language, memory and memorising etc) derive from a dysfunction respectively malfunction of the temporal lobe – not to forget the Amygdalae (fear) are to be found within the temporal lobes as well.

To put it straight, jinns are, consequently, most likely believed to settle down within the temporal lobe(s).
This is indeed very interesting, taking into account, that other symptoms could have been chosen respectively been kept under review, symptoms, which have little, less or even nothing to do with this region of the brain. We must then ask ourselves whether this is simply an interesting coincidence, or wether there is more behind it.

To my mind there might be “more behind it”, than a strange coincidence: The temporal lobe(s) often show(s) little resistance to (physical) traumata: “Contusions and hematomas in the temporal lobe
are especially dangerous.”

Under “Victimology” I stated people are believed to fall an easy prey to a jinn especially when they are ailing – due to a mental or physical trauma for instance. These realisings dovetail nicely.

10.2. Symptoms of possession as found on the internet

“No man is happy but by comparison.”

- Thomas Shadwell -

In order to carry out a comparison this subchapter will have a look on symptoms of respectively signs for possession on the internet. Therefore, I will draw information from http://islamqa.info, a webpage available in English, Chinese, Uyghur, French, Spanish, Japanese, Indonesian, Russian, Turkish, Hindi, Arabic and and Urdu. The website is, hence, very international and open to a wide range of people.

This time I will neither use the Arabic nor the English version of the website, as I have already done this often enough, but the Spanish one.

The writer of this fatwā (arabic. فتاوى, transcribed fatwā, engl. legal opinion) number 240 lists six symptoms altogether – one symptom less than in the book:

(There are really Arabic letters randomly scattered within the text.)

“1. Fuertes ataques cuando escucha el Corán o el llamado a la oración.

2. Episodios de pérdida de conocimiento y/o ataques epilépticos, en especial cuando se recita el Corán para la persona poseída.

3. Frecuentes pesadillas mientras duerme.

4. Tendencia a evitar a las personas junto con comportamientos fuera de la norma.

306 http://islamqa.info (16.05.2014)
307 http://islamqa.info/es/240 (16.05.2014)
5. El yinn que lo posey puede hablar cuando se recita el Corán para la persona poseída.

6. Locura, como se establece en el Corán (interpretación del significado): “Los que lucren con la usura saldrán [de sus tumbas el Día del Juicio] como aquel al que Satanás ha poseído dejándolo trastornado. Esto porque dicen que el comercio es igual que la usura; pero Allah permitió el comercio y prohibió la usura.” 2:275

This list of symptoms is to be translated into English in the following way:

1. Intense attacks when he hears the Qur’ān or the call to prayer.

2. Episodes of losing consciousness and/or epileptic attacks, especially when the Qur’ān is recited for the possessed person.

3. Frequent nightmares while sleeping.

4. Tendency to avoid people with demeanour outside the standard.

5. The jinn can speak when the Qur’ān is recited for the possessed person.

6. Lunacy, as stated in the Qur’ān (interpretation of the meaning): “Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say trade is like interest. But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest.” 2:275.308

These symptoms indeed differ to the ones I analysed before and such being the case I will dwell on them.

10.2.1. Intense attacks when he hears the Qur’ān or the call to prayer

“You are attached to what you attack.”

- Robert Joseph Shea -

This symptom seems to derive from experience. The symptoms I dissected before were mainly to ascribe to dysfunctions and disorders. “Intense attacks when he hears the Qur’ān or the call to

308 Loc. cit.
prayer”, by contrast, is not. Of course, one could claim these attacks in response to particular actions etc. might dwell from some sort of mental disorder, however, as the term “intense attacks” does not precise of what kind these attacks are, it is hard to judge, wether they (maybe panic attack?) are serious enough to be called pathological.

This, however, might be linked with other symptoms, found in listings, such as: “Entendre des chuchotements, avoir des idées obsessionnelles ou de visions, sont aussi des indices de possession.” (engl. “Hearing whispering, having ideas - wether they are obsessive or by means of visions - are indications of possession”)

10.2.2. Episodes of losing consciousness and/or epileptic attacks, especially when the Qur’ān is recited for the possessed person

“Epilepsy is a disease in the shadows. Patients are often reluctant to admit their condition - even to close family, friends or co-workers - because there's still a great deal of stigma and mystery surrounding the disease that plagued such historical figures as Julius Caesar, Edgar Allan Poe and Lewis Carroll.”

- Lynda Rae Resnick -

The loss of consciousness perhaps derives from a syncope - a syncope is a circulatory collapse, which usually causes the afflicted to feel dizzy of even to faint.

Apart from muscle contractions, during an epileptic seizure the afflicted usually loses his respectively her consciousness, hence, the author perhaps meant to depict not syncope-based “episodes of losing consciousness”, but passing out, due to an epileptic seizure (which, of course, in the majority of cases comes along with a syncope).

Epilepsy has many causes and forms. The most common form of epilepsy, however, is temporal lobe epilepsy. This kind of epilepsy – even if it sometimes only proceeds slowly - results in complex partial seizures.\textsuperscript{311} “Die partial-komplexen Anfälle im Rahmen von Schläfenlappen-Epilepsien beginnen häufig mit einer (evtl. asymmetrischen) tonischen Erstarrung, die typischerweise von oralem Automatismen (z.B. Schmatzen) gefolgt ist. Es besteht eine deutliche Bewußtseinseinschränkung. Die Anfalldauer beträgt oft über eine Minute, das Anfallsende ist oft unscharf. Häufig kommt es nach dem Anfall zu einer Verwirrtheit und/oder motorischen Unruhen.” (engl. “The complex partial seizures in the context of temporal lobe epilepsies often start with a (possibly asymmetric) tonic paralysis, which is typically followed by oral automatisms (e.g. smacking) is followed. There is a clear impairment of consciousness. The duration of a seizure often is more than one minute, the end of the seizure often is blurred. Often times disorientation and/or motor agitations occur after the attack.”)\textsuperscript{312}

Thinking of movie scenes showing a possessed person a layman could confound an epileptic seizure and possession easily. Again, it’s the temporal lobe(s), which could be the cause of one of the symptoms in terms of possession.

Scientists, yet, know little only about this morbus, which usually does not result in death in case of proper medication, however, can affect motor skills as well as brain functions - if it comes to the worst.

This terrible disease has been associated with possession since the year dot: „All dies führte dazu, die Epilepsie häufig mit solchen übernatürlichen höheren Mächten in Verbindung zu bringen, die der Weltanschauung, der Religion, dem Glauben und dem Aberglauben der Menschen im jeweiligen historischen Zeitabschnitt entsprachen. Dieser vermutete Zusammenhang zwischen „höheren Mächten“ und Epilepsie lässt sich nicht zuletzt an den Namen und Bezeichnungen erkennen, die diese Krankheit im Verlauf der Medizin- und Menschheitsgeschichte erhalten hat: So z.B. „Labasu“ in babylonischer Zeit („Labasu“ war ursprünglich der Name des Dämons, der nach dem Glauben der Babylonier die Epilepsie hervorrief), „hiëra noso“ (die „Heilige Krankheit“) im klassischen Griechenland, „morbus coelestis“ (die „Himmilische Krankheit“) und „morbus deificus“ (die von Gott gemachte Krankheit) im alten Rom.“ (engl. “All this led to often connecting epilepsy with such supernatural higher powers, which corresponded to the worldview, religion, faith and superstition of the people in each historical era. This presumed coherence between “higher powers” and..."

\textsuperscript{312} Ibid., p. 40.
epilepsy can be recognised the names and terms this disease has received in the course of medical-
and human history: For instance, “Labasu” in Babylonian times (“Labasu” was originally the
name of the demon, which caused epilepsy compliant with the belief of the Babylonians), “hiëra
noso” (the “sacred disease”) in Classical Greece, “morbus coelestis” (the “heavenly disease”)
and “morbus deificus” (the God-made disease) in Ancient Rome.”

Indeed, the temporal lobe seems to play a major role in “diagnosing” possession. Moreover, I have
argued that epilepsy has been intertwined with the paranormal relating to religion within living
memory.

10.2.3. Frequent nightmares while sleeping

“Nightmares exist outside of logic, and there's little fun to be had in explanations; they're
antithetical to the poetry of fear.”

- Stephen Edwin King -

Nightmares commonest occur during REM sleep. It is totally normal to have bad dreams every
now and then, having nightmares on a regular basis, however, does most certainly indicate stress
whatsoever. Especially traumata can lead to having nightmares and, as aforementioned, people
who are suffering trauma fall victim to jinns more easily.

Dreams have been one of the sustained interests affecting every and each epoch in all parts of the
world.

However, it's all just (scientific) speculation. „Es gibt im Zusammenhang mit der Geschichte der
Träume und der Erzählungen über sie zumindest für die Kulturwissenschaften noch ein Menge von
unbeantworteten Fragen.“ (engl. „There are, at least for the cultural sciences, a lot of unanswered
questions in the context of the history of dreams and the narratives about them.”) Not only the
cultural sciences, but also the natural sciences still have many mysteries to unravel concerning this
subject.

Affekte und Emotionen als Grundlagen ethischer Wertebildung und Gefährdung in Wissenschaften und
314 McNamara, Patrick: Nightmares – The Science and Solution of Those Frightening Visions During Sleep.
316 Bergmann, Jörg R./Hogreve Wolfram: Der Traum – 100 Jahre nach Freuds Traumdeutung. vdf
Nightmares often occupy an important place within the list of symptoms a possessed person is believed to show.

Especially bad dreams, which include sighting an animal or even being haunted by an animal are utterly common in terms of this issue. This is, because, as aforementioned, jinns are believed to be able to shapeshift and their “favourite shapes” are those of animals. Hence, jinns can shapeshift into dogs, cats, monkeys, scorpions, snails, pigs, geckos and all sorts of insects\footnote{Fartacek, Gebhard: \textit{Unheil durch Dämonen? - Geschichten und Diskurse über das Wirken der Ġinn – Eine sozialanthropologische Spurensuche in Syrien}. Böhlau Publishing: Vienna, 2010. p. 109.}. Especially dogs are often dreamed off. This is, to my mind, no surprise given that dogs can do a lot more harm to a human than a “gecko of netherworld” could.

Nightmares in the context of possession are, consequently, not unusual.

10.2.4. Tendency to avoid people with demeanour outside the standard

\textit{“Human behavior is incredibly pliable, plastic.”}
- Philip George Zimbardo -

This symptom is actually quite hard to grasp in the first place, as all these symptoms – those as found in the book as well as these analysed here – are associated with behavioural patterns outside the norm, such as sleeping in abandoned places, “intense attacks” when listening to someone reciting the Qurʾān etcetera.

So why would a possessed Muslim – intuitively or deliberately? - avoid people displaying unusual behavioural patterns? Unfortunately there are no further explanations to this symptom on the webpage. I did, moreover, not find any proving evidence in neither specialised literature nor on the internet.

It is, due to the lack of information given, impossible to draw a conclusion without falling into speculating.
10.2.5. The jinn can speak when the Qurʾān is recited for the possessed person

“Schizophrenia demons live in my head.”

- Wesley Willis -

This symptom is also one of those, which are – perhaps - drawn from experience, but may arise from a clinical picture too.

“They “come on to the tongue” of a person and speak through them.”

Jinns are said to speak the language of the country they are living in. The answers to the question wether there is a special “jinn-language” vary.

However, sometimes even whole conversations emerge between the jinn and the one expelling him/her/it – in the local language.

There might be a medical explanation for this symptom as well: Dissociative identity disorder.

In movies the schizophrenic usually turns out to be the murderer - due to his respectively her split personality. Well, life is not a movie, however, there is a (tiny) grain of truth behind such representations, but more often than not schizophrenia is “only” accompanied by irrational delusions.

„Schizophrenie, eine Krankheit, die wir vorerst als Einheit behandeln werden, obwohl man ihr nach neuerem Wissen damit nicht gerecht wird, ist vornehmlich durch das Kernsyndrom »Wahn, Sinnestäuschung und Denkstörungen« charakterisiert. Sie tritt in Form dieses Kernsyndroms in allen Ländern und Kulturen auf.“ (engl. “Schizophrenia, a disease, to which we will for now approach as unity, even though according to the latest research thereby one does not do justice to it, is primarily characterised by »delusions, misperception and thought disorders«. In the form of this pith-syndrome it occurs in all countries and cultures.”)  

Accordingly, schizophrenia usually “only” causes the afflicted to labour under illusion and/or delusion.

Nevertheless - extremely unlikely, but nonetheless possible – a sufferer might be afflicted with a

319 http://www.jinndemons.com/answers-to-multiple-questions-03-about-jinn/ (17.05.2014)
320 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9RydPx7F9s (17.05.2014)
dual- or even a multiple personality. Like I said, this is extremely rare, but possible in very rare cases.

Today, scientists, however, have to come to the conclusion that – what was formerly known as schizophrenia or “multiple personality disorder” – is to be distinguished to what is called “dissociative identity disorder” - a disorder nobody seems to understand properly. “Dissociative identity disorder (formerly known as multiple personality disorder), is a baffling, confusing and seemingly bizarre condition.”

Some time ago it was thought schizophrenia was the cause for such a “split”. Nowadays, the majority of researchers prefer to call it dissociative identity disorder, even though some scientists still are of the opinion such a dissociative identity disorder did not exist, but was faked by patients only.

Unfortunately, it is yet not clear, what exactly - in case it even exists – triggers the formation of a second (or even more) personalities. In this instance the crucial question, hence, is: Is it, accordingly, a dissociative identity disorder causing the putative possessed to speak with a different voice respectively in an altered pitch and timbre or is it a jinn?

10.2.6. Lunacy, as stated in the Qur’ān (interpretation of the meaning): “Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say trade is like interest. But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest.” 2:275

“Worry and reasoning are two of Satan's most successful tools. He'll get us started with one negative thought and then sit back and watch us finish ourselves off.”

- Pauline Joyce Meyer -

The term lunacy is quite a broad one. Consequently, what is lunatic and who is, accordingly, lunatic?

Due to the symptom above Satan is capable of “beating” someone “into lunacy” - against this a

323 Ibid., p. 3-4.
Muslim should, hence, be vigilant. For one thing it is interesting only Satan himself is able to “beat” someone into abalienation, as the jinns are believed to be capable of doing the very same – or to express it differently: A jinn-possession might cause the afflicted to become insane. For another thing the in the heading respectively symptom quoted verse does not specify “lunacy” either.

The only thing, which is clearly stated within this Qurʾān passage is, that people, who are lunatic due do Satan’s “ministry” will have a bad state the day Isrāfīl (engl. Raphael) will play his trombone. However, someone who is lunatic, due to jinn-possession might not fear the end of the days.  

Eschatology (arab. الإسخاتولوجيا, transcribed al-iskhātūlūjiyya) of course plays a central role within all religions of the book, which - self-evidently - have been influencing each other for many a long year.

“So intense is the Qurʾānic concern for and insistence on the day to come when all will be held accountable for their faith and their actions, that the ethical teachings contained in the Book must be understood in the light of this reality. Faith in the day of resurrection for the Muslim is his specific affirmation of God’s omnipotence, the recognition of human accountability as a commitment to the divine unicity.”

At this point, I consider it noteworthy, that a lunatic – who goes insane by the dint of the evil - will be refused admission to Paradise (arab. جنة, transcribed janna), which is indeed very revealing and therefore, on behalf of the author, worth issuing this warning. This is the main reason why to beware of the evil and all its modifications and varieties for a Muslim.

All in all, this symptom seems to be a little arbitrarily chosen by the author - at first glance. Neither the degree nor the type of lunacy do occupy centre stage in this case, as it is pointing beyond its meaning. The author rather zeros in on pointing out that one may become insane under the devil’s influence.

Hence, the only decent conclusion for a Muslim, which can be drawn from these lines, is to beware of the evil in all its forms and manifestations in order to be allowed to respectively capable of

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326 Ibid., p. 2.
receiving the ultimate salvific experience, which is to be granted entrance to Paradise in the hereafter.

10.2.7. All these symptoms together II

“The only source of knowledge is experience.”
- Albert Einstein -

… are an interesting cluster respectively seem to be a “mixed bag”.
Most of them are not of medical value, but seem to be described from quite a different point of view and rather appear to derive from experience-based knowledge.

Three out of these six symptoms depict a possessed’s reactions to the Qurʾān and, hence, to Islam per se: Attacks whatsoever as well as fainting respectively having epileptic seizures, induced by listening to Qurʾān-recitations, plus speaking respectively answering when respectively because the Qurʾān (or the call to prayer) is recited/sung upon a possessed person by which the jinn obviously insults the Islam.

Obviously, the medical approach to jinn-possession is not really paramount in this list of symptoms.

It is also worth mentioning that the last symptom (“Lunacy, as stated in the Qurʾān (interpretation of the meaning): “Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say trade is like interest. But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest.” 2:275.”) is a threat wrapped in a symptom.

Yes, of course, lunacy is a symptom, which has to be taken seriously, but having in contemplation that there have already been enough allusions to insanity as part of a cluster of symptoms, it is to be taken granted this “symptom” is rather pointing to the consequences a Muslim will have to face in the end of the days – and this is really interesting, given that this is the only symptom within this list, which does not only explain how to detect someone might be possessed, but which also goes far beyond itself by setting forth the following consequences in case this possession cannot be dissolved.

All in all, this Spanish list of symptoms is fairly “revelatory”. It exposes what kind of symptoms a
Muslim might show in case of a possession, respectively – and this is more probable - how an Islamic Scholar interprets what he believes to see, when a possessed person is brought to him for help. This listing is, hence, based on experience and does not give too much credit to medical details.

The listing centres upon not only the symptoms a Muslim might show, but also on the consequences – if the evil cannot be expelled.

10.3. Conclusion to chapter ten

“I don’t spend a lot of time thinking about scary demons, but I think that there are things in this world that are unexplainable that are mystical or paranormal. The possibility is there, definitely.”

- Katie Dianne Featherston -

This chapter on potential medical backgrounds on possible disease(s) was respectively is indeed a very important and a quite revealing one to my mind.

It has been an issue ever since people claimed to be possessed: Is it real? Or are people, who are claiming such things simply lunatic?

It is, thus, remarkable how many of the symptoms – both listings taken together – derive from dysfunctions, malfunctions and (physical) traumata concerning the temporal lobe(s) and, hence, from endocrine ascendancies. There are many medical reasons, which may cause a change of behaviour by affecting cerebral areas and the lists of symptoms shown here give allusions and “hints” to such a theory.

The majority of symptoms, accordingly, seems to arise from physical deficiencies whatsoever. However, it has to be mentioned that some of them do not have any medical background – at first glance at least – such as “tendency to avoid people with demeanour outside the standard” for example.

The first list seems to be written by a very versed scholar – in terms of medicine. This is shown by the fact that he uses terms as for example “oculogyric crisis”, which is to subsumed under medical jargon and this indicates that the author is probably medically trained or at least very interested in this issue.
In comparison, the second listing of symptoms rather seems to derive from experience and, hence, springs from a different perception. It lacks of medical and/or theological jargon, however, references the Qurʾān many times.

Both these listings show different perspectives concerning this subject and are - as a consequence – very much congenial for the purpose of covering a broad field of approaches.

All in all it can be said that many scientific fields – above all the field of neuropsychiatry – still will be busy to decode the enigma of possession and exorcism for many years to come.
11. Résumé

“I have come to the conclusion, after many years of sometimes sad experience, that you cannot come to any conclusion at all.”
- Victoria Mary Sackville-West -

All in all, this thesis was very revealing and insightful in my book.

It has been shown, that jinns play an essential role within the Islamic dispensation in toto, in both, academic Islam as well as within folk religion. However, there is, of course, a gap between academic Islam and folk religion. The two varieties (well, there are actually more than two trends, but the two mentioned above are the main ones) respectively their proponents occupy themselves a lot with these topics and the paranormal in general.

This is, the concept of the supernatural per se as a whole definitely is no invention of Hollywood, but has existed from time immemorial, as all (Abrahamitic) religions are predicated upon the only spiritually experiencable. The Deity/Deities of all Abrahamic religions is/are on its/their own terms and therefore to be experienced firsthand only by spiritually and accordingly therefore by religious means.

“However we choose to interpret it, this human experience of transcendence has been a fact of life. Not everybody would regard it as divine: Buddhists, as we shall see, would deny that their visions and insights are derived from a supernatural source; they see them as natural to humanity. All major religions, however, would agree that is is impossible to describe this transcendence in normal conceptual language. Monotheists have called this transcendence 'God' but they have hedged this around with important provisos. Jews, for example, are forbidden to pronounce the sacred Name of God and Muslims must not attempt to depict the divine in visual imagery. This discipline is a reminder that the reality that we call 'God' exceeds all human expression.”

The “embodying”, in the most literal sense of the very word, according to that, possession as well as exorcism per se, are therefore thoroughly interesting phenomenons, as it is the corporeal manifestation of the transcendental – both, the evil taking over on one hand and the divine help on

the other hand.

What is striking as well is, that there are more resemblances than differences between Islam and Christianity when it comes to both these subjects. Especially the procedures of expelling the possessing entity are very much alike. They are premised on very similar ideas and perceptions, which explains the resemblances.

The Internet certainly plays a very important role too. To quote the American software developer Mitchell David Kapor “Getting information off the Internet is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant.” - There is “loads and loads” of information out there. The only question is, wether one source can be trust or not.
It shows, however, what Muslims imagine a possessed person to act like etcetera and it moreover shows how and what way exactly Islamic exorcism are proceeded in real life. - There is - naturally - always a difference between information found in specialised literature and its lived mode and the gap is sometimes as wide as a ice crevice is deep.

It was also incredibly interesting to discover the medical substance of the symptoms, which a Muslim is believed to show in case of possession. Who would have thought so? To be perfectly frank, I did not.
However, my research has shown many of the symptoms declared do (!) derive from serious diseases, ailment and injuries concerning the temporal lobe(s), which is, to my mind, of fundamental importance!
Nevertheless, it is not due to me to answer the question, wether such an entity might be capable of causing harm to the said brain region, or wether a relatively high frequency of malfunctions of the temporal lobe(s) made scholars believe this change of behaviour might flow from something paranormal.

All things considered this thesis was a very fruitful one leading to results unexpected and interesting.

I really hope you, whoever you are, enjoyed reading these lines and found this thesis somewhat gripping. Thank you for reading!
12. Bibliography

“When you read a great book, you don't escape from life, you plunge deeper into it.”

- Julian Patrick Barnes -

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- http://ruqyashariyah.org/forum/
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• http://www.masjidansar.com
• http://www.onetriuemedia.com
• http://www.oninstagram.com/profile/aburuqya1
• http://www.roqyaonline.com
• http://www.ruqyahandhealing.co.uk
• http://www.ruqyahandhealing.co.uk/shop/
• http://www.ruqyashariyah.org
• http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/about
• http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/ruqya-mp3
• http://www.ruqyashariyah.org/videos
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/contact-us/
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/getting-help/
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/ruqya-bath/
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/ruqya-support/
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/ruqya-treatment-by-raaqis/
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/survey-check-your-symptoms/
• http://www.ruqyasupport.com/wp-content/Audio-Folder/Treat_yourself_by_yourself_from_Magic.mp3
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• http://www.sonymovies.com/movies/thelastexorcismpartii/discanddigital/
• http://www.sumerian.org/sumlogo.htm
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- http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCmaoQK5j1OdijvvsO0fY8A
- http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtSRG1rz6k_vOdglhAFakA
- http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuYQA6hEtPrvNX8s4UP5UQ
- http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=djinn
- http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=jinn&sm=3
- http://www.youtube.com/user/1day4sure1
- http://www.youtube.com/user/aliyam100
- http://www.youtube.com/user/ashwayn
- http://www.youtube.com/user/awesomeMig
- http://www.youtube.com/user/hamadmfd
- http://www.youtube.com/user/LetsReadAndPray
- http://www.youtube.com/user/MOXXZ1990s?feature=watch
- http://www.youtube.com/user/RuqyahHealing
- http://www.youtube.com/user/RuqyaSupport
- http://www.youtube.com/user/TruthinDaTruth?feature=watch
- http://www.youtube.com/user/waryia1984
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCynMnr_9W0
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jn6lSgCmCY
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87BW-DDrV4I
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=99Op1TaXmCw
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9RydPx7F9s
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkwflkIjSVE
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxLB961FFAs
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHfTeaXmsLA
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oY0daKqIe-4
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7wkrAlZIHM
• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-aN7iChuV8
13. List of abbreviations

“Why is abbreviation such a long word?”

I. Languages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Greek</td>
<td>gre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>arab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>engl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>hebr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Bible

I will only quote books respectively parts of the Bible used within this thesis in alphabetical order. As opposed to this, Qurʾān passages are spelled in full by me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex</td>
<td>Book of Exodus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen</td>
<td>Book of Genesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is</td>
<td>Book of Isaiah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lk</td>
<td>Gospel According to Luke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mk</td>
<td>Gospel According to Mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt</td>
<td>Gospel According to Matthew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tb</td>
<td>Book of Tobit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

328Author unknown.
### III. Anglicized respectively Arabicized (and often used) words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Used Form</th>
<th>In Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>الإسلام (al-islām)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic</td>
<td>إِسْلامِيّ (islāmīy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jinn / Jinns</td>
<td>جَن / جَان (jinn/jān)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qarīn</td>
<td>قَرِين (qarīn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qur'ān</td>
<td>قُرَآن (qur'ān)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruqya</td>
<td>رَقِية (ruqyah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sūra / Sūras</td>
<td>سُورَة / سور (sūra/suwar)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I
Zusammenfassung der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit

In dieser meiner Masterarbeit habe ich mich mit Besessenheit und Exorzismus im Islam bzw. mit vom Islam geprägten Kulturen befasst.

Hierzu war es zuerst von Nöten sich einen Überblick über den Umgang mit diesem Thema zu verschaffen, d.h. wie wird in anderen Kulturen mit diesen Themen umgegangen? Wird Besessenheit immer als so negativ gedeutet, wie in den uns bekannten abrahamitischen Traditionen – so dass ein Exorzismus von Nöten ist?

In der Tat ist dem nicht so. Im Judentum, Christentum und im Islam allerdings ist gegenständliche Thematik negativ konnotiert – mystische Zweige nicht mit inbegriffen.

Ebenso war es unerlässlich sich mit den „Besetzern“ auseinanderzusetzen, welche in diesem Kontext die Ğinnen (arab. Sg. جن, transkribiert ţinn) sind. Es sollte in dieser Phase geklärt werden, weshalb es einem Ğinn möglich ist von einem Gläubigen Besitz zu ergreifen, was die Analyse seiner Natur voraussetzt. Ebenso war es erforderlich sich die Abgrenzung einer solchen Entität zum Teufel im Islam vorzunehmen, die allerdings lediglich – u.a. auf Grund der Tatsache, dass die Natur des Teufels per se schon nicht eindeutig ist - bedingt stattfinden konnte.

Besessenheit bzw. der Vorgang der Inbesitznahme ist im Islam bzw. in den vom Islam geprägten Kulturen gefürchtet. Meine Nachforschungen haben ergeben, dass dies zwar jeden treffen kann, dass Frauen und all jene, die sich „berufsbedingt“ mit diesen Wesenheiten beschäftigen, hingegen besonders gefährdet sind.

Wie sich Besessenheit zeigt oder zeigen mag, wurde in diesem Kapitel ebenso besprochen.


Eine „gewöhnliche“ Austreibung nach islamischem Ritus hingegen mündet meist in Muskelkontraktionen, Wutausbrüchen etc.

In dieser Phase habe ich ergo geklärt, wie ein solcher Ritus vonstatten zu gehen hat um Aussicht auf
Erfolg zu haben, wie es als Teil der „prophetischen Medizin“ verstanden werden muss und weiteres.

Ebenso habe ich mich damit befasst die Ähnlichkeiten, Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen Christentum und Islam dieses Thema betreffend herauszuarbeiten.
Da beide, wie in der Arbeit genauer ausgeführt, auf dem „אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶר אֶהְיֶה“ (transkribiert 'ehyeh 'afer 'ehyeh, deutsch Ich bin der Seiende [Übersetzung laut Septuaginta]) als Grundgedanken fußen, war mit Gemeinsamkeiten und Ähnlichkeiten zu rechnen. Das Ausmaß war allerdings, meines Erachtens nach, erstaunlich. Farbsymbolik, die Bedeutung von Wasser etc. werden in beiden Religionen zwar unterschiedlich interpretiert bzw. umgesetzt, haben allerdings dieselben Grundgedanken und Intentionen.
Unterschiedlich, wenn auch als ähnlich, hat sich die Auffassung dessen, welche Art und Form von Entität von einem Menschen Besitz ergreifen kann, wie auch die auftretenden Symptome und Anzeichen erwiesen.
Der Ritus des Exorzismus weist dieselben Grundideen auf, die jedoch unterschiedlich umgesetzt werden.

Ebenfalls habe ich den Umgang mit Besessenheit und Exorzismus im Internet „unter die Lupe“ genommen, da diese Arbeit ja diese beiden Themen im modernen (sic!) Islam zum Gegenstand hatte.
In diesem Abschnitt habe ich demgemäß Internetseiten und Videos untersucht, die sich mit diesen Bereichen befassen. Ziel war es, das Problem „von innen heraus“ zu beleuchten, da die gegenständlichen Seiten und Videos von Muslimen erstellt wurden, die dieses Thema aus ihrem religiösen Kontext aus beleuchten – wie sieht ein Ǧin aus? Wie verhält sich ein Besessener? Was ist zu tun, im Falle einer eben solchen?

Im 10. Kapitel habe zwei vollkommen unterschiedliche Quellen herangezogen, um die Symptome einer Besessenheit aus Sicht von Muslimen „auseinanderzunehmen“.
Zum einen habe ich eine Liste eines islamischen Gelehrten in einem einschlägigen Buch gefunden, zum anderen eine Symptomliste auf Spanisch aus dem Internet.
Meine Analyse hat gezeigt, dass sich – interessanterweise – viele der Symptome einerseits auf Stressreaktionen zurückführen lassen und andererseits - und dies betrifft sogar die Majorität - die meisten der Symptome durch Fehlfunktionen, teils durch physische Traumata verursacht, bedingt sind. Dies zu deuten steht mir zwar nicht zu, es aber herauszuarbeiten und dementsprechend aufzuzeigen schien mir allerdings wichtig.
Summa summarum befasst sich diese Masterarbeit also mit den miteinander korrespondierenden Themen Besessenheit und Exorzismus im modernen Islam in all seinen Ausformungen.
Appendix II

Curriculum vitae

Personal Data
First and Last Name: Viktoria Schuh
Title: Bachelor of Arts
Place of birth: Vienna
Nationality: Austria
Marital status: single

Training
• February 2013 – ongoing: Master's degree in Islamic Studies at the University of Vienna
• February 2013: Bachelor's degree in Oriental Studies (Arabic & Islamic Studies)
• October 2012 – ongoing: Diploma Studies in Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna
• October 2010 - February 2013: Bachelor of Oriental Studies (Arabic & Islamic Studies) at the University of Vienna
• 2008 – 2009: Attendance of certain lectures/courses at the Institute of Oriental Studies (as special student at the University of Vienna)
• 10/06/2010: Passing the Matura
• 2002 - 2010 Language grammar school, BG Bachgasse, Mödling
• 1998 - 2002 Hans Stur primary school

Language skills
• German: Native language
• English: Fluent
• Arabic: Excellent command
• Latin: Very good working knowledge
• Spanish: Very good command
• Ancient Greek: Good working knowledge
• Hebrew: Basic skills

Work experience
• March 2014 - ongoing: Teacher for English at the VHS Vienna
February 2014 - ongoing: Teacher for Business English at the VHS Vienna
October 2013 - ongoing: Teacher for Arabic at the VHS Vienna
April & June 2014: Teacher for German as a foreign language
14th - 17th April 2014: Teacher for lower secondary school pupils within the framework of the “Together clever in council housing”- project (Vienna 1030)
19th - 30th August 2013: German teacher for secondary school pupils within the framework of the “Together clever in council”- project (Vienna 1030)
WS 2011/2012 - SS 2013: Tutor for “Introduction to the Study of Oriental Studies” (Arabistics / Islamic Studies)
April - October 2012: Writing articles for blogs for “Erste Bank” as well as translation work (German / English)

Language stays
• 22nd of July - 11th of August 2012: Madrid / Spain
• Easter 2009 (2-weeks): Valencia / Spain
• 2004: Leamington Spa / England

Seminars and courses
• 16th - 20th of September 2013: Seminar “Basic Training for course instructors”
• December 2012: Seminar “Fundamentals of systemic coaching”
• 3rd/4th of December 2012: Basic qualification-training for young teachers at the “Center for Teaching and Learning” (CTL) at the University of Vienna
• April 2012: Seminar on "Neuro-pedagogical Learning"
• October 2010: Course in public speaking
• 10th - 11th of April 2010: English Seminar (Business English & Political English)
• Summer 2008: Participation in SOAK am Semmering, course: Philosophy (ethics)
• Summer 2006: Participation in SOAK am Semmering, course: English (Newspaper)

Interests
• Classical music
• History
• Medicine
• Giraffes
• Literature