TITLE OF RESEARCH ARTICLE

Conflicting Electronic Fatwas in Digital Religious Space: Memory, Imagination, and the Dialectics of Past and Present within Electronic Islamic Sects

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Abstract

This study aims to understand and interpret the phenomenon of electronic fatwas, which has become a field of conflict among followers of Islamic sects, linked to the boom of interactive media that has liberated them from time and space. Many of these fatwas have contributed to escalating jurisprudential and doctrinal conflicts among imagined Islamic groups, charged their followers sectarianly, and pushed them to reproduce past disputes and conflicts through imagination and the revival of religious memory within unrestrained virtual reality. This virtual space differs in structure and boundaries from actual reality, especially in terms of the religious meaning and content it provides. Its values, standards, and jurisprudential issues align more with the past than with the present, which is what this article addresses.

1. Introduction:

Zygmunt Bauman, in his book *Ethics in the Age of Liquid Modernity*, notes that the rigidity of the previous era has melted, boundaries have blurred, characteristics have loosened, and ambiguity and similarity have increased, to the point that one can speak of a state of fluidity or dissolution, whether in state boundaries, societal features, individual identity, or cultural characteristics (Bauman, 2016: 11). This statement reflects the profound transformations experienced globally, or in other words: the world has entered an era of identity flux. There is no rigid culture specific to a region; rather, there is a global mixture of cross-border cultures. Religion itself has not been immune, moving

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from books and trusted, agreed-upon sources to social media, inaugurating the cyber era. The fatwa has shifted from a cautious and careful religious practice to a quick, hurried service provided by the "electronic sheikh," consumed instantaneously and sometimes reinterpreted to justify violent behavior against other violent religious behavior. The electronic fatwa has contributed to dividing an already divided religious sphere, helped fragment what was previously cohesive, and subjected the ummah to extremist religious groups, preserving their existence by excluding and attempting to eliminate the other.

It is evident that the weakness and identity wounds of the Arab ummah have been shaped by numerous exclusionary discourses. Today, we witness a violent discourse causing individuals, especially the devout, to live in fear and contradiction. Each group has its ruling or fatwa, its biases and fanaticism, and claims to normative understanding and correct religious interpretation. These religious groups base fatwas on doctrinal and ideological foundations, invoking heritage, reviving it, or relying on independent juristic reasoning devoid of legal expertise. Many operate in a "dreamlike utopia," claiming to reach divine intent by constructing modern Muslim communities under the correct Islamic path while encouraging fragmentation and self-absorption, which intensifies disputes and conflicts. This discourse reflects a superiority complex, conspiracy complex, or attempts to apply Sharia according to their specific understanding. Such religious debate is essentially mobilization, devaluation, and projection of evil onto others through accusations and labeling among Islamic groups.

This raises the following questions: How have electronic fatwas contributed to reproducing conflicts between multiple jurisprudential references in the Islamic world through the crisis of the present? Why have most electronic fatwas become spaces for reimagining past conflicts and doctrines among Islamic sects and groups?

Methodology:

Hypotheses:
A hypothesis is a probable answer or explanatory model imagined by the researcher to respond to the study's questions, which is then verified empirically. We adopt the following hypothesis:

• The spread of Islamic groups and their strong presence on electronic platforms has contributed to the use of electronic fatwas to reproduce conflicts between jurisprudential references concerning Sharia policy and the transfer of past disputes into the present.

Concept Definitions:

Operationalizing concepts helps grasp reality by clarifying terms related to the study:

• **Electronic fatwa:** Fatwas that emerged and spread alongside the boom in interactive and digital media. These are no longer limited by eligibility conditions, time, place, or juristic expertise. They have become part of a consumerist and profitable dynamic, with some sheikhs offering fatwas suited to the religious market, often containing political and doctrinal content competing with official institutional fatwas, with sources often unknown.

• **Jurisprudential references:** The various Islamic movements, schools, and sects that appeared in the past, divided in the present, and whose disputes and jurisprudential battles continue to manifest in contemporary Islamic crises, reproduced in their fatwas and legal rulings, reviving historical conflicts and sectarianism.

• **Conflict:** The state of disputes and shocks among Islamic groups and sects on numerous controversial issues from the early Islamic era to the present, continuously revived using past fatwas, interpretations, and disputes, including disagreements among companions, followers, imams, sects, and jurisprudential schools.

• **Imagining the past:** The attempt by Islamic groups in the digital or electronic sphere to base current disputes on the past verbal conflicts of old Islamic sects, reviving and discussing these past conflicts on electronic platforms via memory and imagination, leading to tension among users and clashes based on past rather than present issues.

• **Philosophy of remembrance:** The act of recalling the past as it was, projecting it onto the present through imagination. Current relations between Islamic sects are governed by disputes from another time. Groups focus on resolving historical conflicts rather than contemporary realities. Imagination revives these disputes, shaping conflicts within digital spaces.

Theoretical Framework:

Every study requires a theoretical approach to guide the researcher. This study adopts Pierre Bourdieu's *Theory of Reproduction*, as fatwas function today as a discursive and educational system reproducing the same conflictual patterns among Islamic jurisprudential references, transferred from reality to electronic platforms, intensifying doctrinal and legal disputes in virtual spaces. Recent fatwas and interpretations have intensified conflicts between

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dynamic and traditional religious identities, represented by Salafism, and new media preachers transitioning from television to new media. This shift is rapid and flexible, moving from state scholars or traditional preachers tied to official institutions to independent global preachers. They have had a remarkable impact in reproducing reality through religious discourse according to their doctrines and beliefs. The Sunni intellect adopts theses incapable of adapting to reality and changing circumstances, relying on interpretation and justification, failing to achieve intellectual and doctrinal stability among Muslims in post-Prophetic disputes among companions, rulers, and the general Muslim population (Al-Wardani, 1424: 20).

Methodology Adopted:

This study uses the **interpretive-analytical method** following Max Weber's interpretive approach, aiming to understand the conceptions and meanings carried by electronic fatwas, which reproduce heritage and are exploited by many Islamic groups and currents. Electronic fatwas are part of the symbols and meanings used to exercise control and reproduce dominance within Islamic societies, especially with the interactive media boom used to mobilize and shape followers around issues often derived from historical Islamic conflicts.

Techniques Used:

Observation was the central technique, supplemented by content analysis of selected electronic fatwas, treating fatwas as religious discourse carrying meanings and connotations that provoke conflict and extremism among Islamic groups on electronic platforms.

Sample:

A purposive sample was selected, including a series of religious fatwas from the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafism, and other groups, along with user comments and responses. Platform users are treated as consumers of religious products that stimulate agitation, with original fatwas intertwined with comments, ultimately leading to clashes among users.

Electronic Fatwas: Beyond Reality Toward the Imaginary

For human consciousness, nothing is ever present simply; everything is imagined (Derron, 1991: 63). Excessive imagination detaches individuals from lived reality, making them belong to worlds known only as ideas or symbols. Influence, freedom, and self-expression allow individuals to defend forgotten or denied values, especially in a wounded and colonized ummah. Everyone agrees that the distant past was better, while the present is frightening and divided. Imagination allows the ummah's revival emotionally before it manifests physically. Sub-national groups within the imagined ummah dream of shedding their fragmentation and restoring a renewed or renewed-old ummah, requiring inspirational figures to move from symbolic and religious memory to practice and reality (Anderson, 2009: 50).

This discourse, absent from official religious institutions, exists on social media, where everyone fights for the ummah's revival—but which ummah? The imagined ummah sees itself as the best community to be generalized while suppressing other sects lacking purity. Media sheikhs, free from sub-national affiliations, aim to establish this ummah in virtual spaces, creating happiness, power, and dominance, attracting millions of unemployed and hopeless youth in the Arab world. Bauman notes in *Liquid Times* that some have the courage to seek the "happy place" in non-space (Bauman, 2017: 110). Media sheikhs, through religious decrees and fatwas, create an old world conceptually but new in execution, enchanting young minds with the idea of a trans-cultural, trans-national ummah.

Despite the ummah being a legitimate project, its globalization has turned it into an anti-local endeavor, with globalization as a cross-cultural trade (Nadervin Peters, 2015: 171), erasing all local distinctions, reviving old conflicts, and giving them meaning through imagination. Media sheikhs from all sects continue reliving difficult historical moments, e.g., the Day of Dar, the Saqifah, and Hussein's death. Each sect reproduces the story with its unique narrative, imagining its history and victories. Symbolic imagination creates meaning when signifiers cannot fully represent presence or meaning (Derron, 1991: 8). Struggle over the past preserves existence in the present and future, employing imagination: the fatwa expresses a group or sect's imagined identity.

There is no "standard fatwa" applicable to all Muslims. Muslims exist today as multiple Islamic sects, each with its tone, based on narratives and group heritage. Social imagination within a sect involves perceived dependency, often religious or sectarian, with millions of unaware individuals never forming a cohesive religious-social group, based on shared past narratives, stories, myths, practices, and conceptions of legitimacy (Bishara, 2018: 64). People recognize affiliations through symbols charged within fatwas, identifying the source and group it represents.

Fatwas are the cornerstone of all religions, representing juristic reasoning guiding scholars to monitor religion through delineating permissible and prohibited acts. All sects and religious groups fortify themselves with fatwas preserved in books and volumes, used to maintain rulings and scholarly interpretations of religious and jurisprudential issues for

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followers across time and space, especially amid evolving religious issues. Fatwas historically relied on divine news and signatures (Ibn al-Qayyim), bound by juristic rules guiding both the mufti and the petitioner, ensuring no harm is done and requiring sufficient juristic competence to interpret, understand, and apply Sharia-based rulings.

When transitioning between sects, fatwas shift from juristic opinion to identity markers. Observing religious practice and following sectarian jurisprudential rulings delineates the sect's existence. Disregarding such fatwas may be viewed as leaving the faith, common in societies with sectarian or religious conflict, where spiritual values can be considered more precious than life itself, e.g., in India (Harris, 2017: 17).

But what is striking is that many Islamic countries remained, until not long ago, without an official mufti function, unlike Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Malaysia, and Indonesia, in addition to countries that reduced the influence of the official mufti and excluded him from the sphere of judiciary and legal legislation, such as Yemen, Tunisia, and Egypt. In fact, influential countries in the Islamic realm remained without an official fatwa plan until the end of the second millennium, such as Algeria, despite Saudi Arabia approving this plan and assigning it to Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah bin Baz in 1993 (Sweilemi, 2016, p. 09). This fatwa vacuum or the decline of the mufti's role in favor of political authority increased the estrangement of the official religious institution. Virtual societies are characterized by a high degree of decentralization and gradually lead to the deconstruction of traditional identity. The deconstruction of identity is not limited to national or ethnic affiliations but extends to personal identity. Today, many identities derive their strength from virtual mediology across the world. However, in Arab societies, religious identities have emerged as the primary transformable element into the new media due to their power in conveying their components and beliefs, alongside their ability to express, recruit, and control followers throughout the Arab nation. The emergence of multiple identities in virtual spaces raises concern, as epistemological analysis of the situation reveals many stakes among identities deeply embedded in intolerant frameworks, due to conflicting standards, values, and orientations. We can further clarify this by linking the virtual mediological space with the recently growing religious identities and the conflicts and mobilizations surrounding them. Today, mediology can be considered a ritual of transition into a group, starting as a communicative network but potentially ending as a sect, nation, or virtual state, whose members believe with certainty in the necessity of transferring it to reality, as it is the only available space. Charles Taylor observes that modern social imaginaries, once they exist, appear to us as the only possible imaginary (Taylor, 2015, p. 28). The virtual framework of some religious identities, which has established many regulations and rules through immersion in the mediological religious field, seeks to form both the self and the collective mind, which adopt its readings and ideas as a form of identification and alignment with its identity, thereby deepening faith in its intellectual framework. Fatwas, whether real or electronic, preserve and venerate rituals, emphasize them, and remind followers of their importance. Ritual is the sole means to prove belonging to the imagined sect before transitioning from the world of symbols to reality. Hence, group rituals are presented as more important than original religious rituals. This is observable, for example, in the Hussaini rituals among the Shia, Alawite rituals, Sufi orders, and Druze rituals, as these rituals are the only link between members of the imagined sect who are not united by a specific place or time, presenting sectarian rituals as worldly festivals and heavenly signs (Rivier, 2015, p. 81). The role of electronic fatwas is to coordinate followers, scattered in reality but united in the world of imagination and symbol, through rituals and ceremonies.

Social Media and the Issue of Liberation from Official Religious Discourse:

Gary R. Bunt states that two elements dominate life in the twenty-first century: Islam and the Internet (Bunt, 2011, p. 419). New social media platforms have provided a system liberated from authoritarian institutions, allowing freer and more confident expression, freeing jurisprudence primarily from rigidity and authority monitoring. However, amidst this, religious identities could not achieve the desired outcomes for many stakes formed previously due to ideological dispersion, prioritization of personal over public interest, and the revival of sectarian images based on doctrinal tendencies, which undermine the public sphere by adhering to a rigid mindset in understanding reality, relying on historical memory rather than common interests. Social media allowed religious debates to resurface and revived outdated fatwas. The disappointment of Muslims in reality led them to engage in online struggles, as no religious activity matches the activity of Islamic sects and groups online. Here, freedom of expression enabled them to reference past knowledge to try to organize the present.

Conflict scenes today are, for example, between two religious manifestations with many followers, particularly on social media. Salafiyyah al-'Ilmiyyah and the Muslim Brotherhood are the most influential groups in the digital world, each striving to dominate the other since their emergence in the Arab arena: the Brotherhood as a protest-oriented movement and the Salafiyyah al-'Ilmiyyah as a traditional purist and pure movement. These identities have become central in the virtual space, relying on religious interpretations to dominate other identities and produce extreme values. The intertwining of religion and politics in Arab societies has led many religious movements to link fatwas expressing their attempts to resolve issues between political systems and religion. Individuals and groups forming the

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social framework use religion in the public sphere, shaping cultural and social structures, adopting electronic fatwas, and interacting intensively with online sheikhs and jurists, who try to build religious identities according to their ideologies. The new mediology allowed interaction with followers of specific jurisprudential fields, either through dissemination or by creating sites for sect members to publish fatwas of their sheikhs and jurists, as a form of da'wah. However, the rulings and provisions are no longer suitable for integration into this world and constructive engagement. Instead, they generate terrorism, backfiring on their creators and Muslims, causing losses and disasters (Harbe, 2010, p. 62). This immense body of religious decrees, imposed through new media, would not have reached us without the excessive use of social media and near-total isolation from reality. Previously, we only received positive content from the Internet, but today there is no boundary between positive and negative, and the influence of social media grows in all forms, positive, negative, and sometimes ambiguous (Gupta & Brooks, 2017, p. 52). Imagining religious sects, affiliating with them, and sacrificing for them remain among the most ambiguous issues.

No one denies today the mobilization carried out by creators of electronic fatwas in producing and shaping chauvinistic religious identities, creating dogmatic truths that imprison individuals and groups, constructing a reality suggesting rigidity and fanaticism across political, social, and cultural levels. This new religious pattern is not systematically justified by sufficient knowledge; rather, it is emotionally charged, stirring religious and doctrinal sentiment toward revolutionary and chauvinistic ends. It operates in a liberatory manner, not requiring justification but rather symbolic and emotional charging, shaping individuals and groups' minds to be unable to think outside the frameworks defined by their collective identity. For example, in Iraqi society, sects and religious fatwas determine everything, controlling legal and political matters. Governance cannot be discussed without referencing the religious authority, which issues sectarian-tinged fatwas to organize political matters. Despite the danger to society and citizenship, society is programmed to act sectarianly, making sectarianism the only means of political movement; thus, every religious sect is purely a political project. There is a correlation between the formation of political sects and religious sects (Azmi Bishara, 2018, p. 65).

Therefore, extremist values are hostage to many electronic fatwas produced by chauvinistic religious movements and identities, encouraging rejection of reality and attempting to escape from it, in isolation chosen as an exile to revive itself. This is observable in many religious groups emancipated from ideological religious institutions, a hallmark of movements with fundamentalist and orthodox orientations. Another aspect is the construction of the religious mind of individuals, with religious faith intertwined with political legitimacy, attempting to enforce religion in the public sphere, whether the governance of the Ahl al-Bayt among the Shia, governance of the righteous predecessors among Salafis, the Brotherhood's governance, or God's rule among ISIS and terrorist groups, by establishing political parties with religious orientation or militant groups adopting violent solutions. This third aspect adopts revolutionary and jihadist Islamic values inherited from external thought, appearing during the caliphate of Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA), emphasizing correction of beliefs and worship, making jihad a primary duty, and demonstrating mobilization capacity, especially in recent periods of tension in Arab regions, where new mediology serves as the primary tool for mass mobilization due to its attraction, especially concerning Islam. In summary, the religiosity of new mediology is divided into three levels, all calling for agitation, tension, and conflict:

1. Doctrinal-religious agitation

2. Political-religious agitation

3. Jihadist-religious agitation

Hence, the vast number of fatwas with extremist values successfully produces a formal, enthusiastic religiosity that can be considered digital, seeking through the immense knowledge it provides to displace cognitive or institutional religiosity and establish digital religiosity, which is irrational, formal, and confined to the virtual space. It does not provide clarification beyond what exists in reality, offering comfort while expressing only formal and emotional religiosity. Through their fatwas and discourse, religious groups objectify and commodify religion, prioritizing the survival and continuity of the imagined sect, even at the expense of the original religion from which they separated, establishing a parallel entity.

Virtual Sects and the Obsession with Conveying Religion and Demonstrating Truth:
Virtual sects are merely reflections of Islamic reality throughout history, where division and fragmentation are central characteristics of divine religions. Many religious texts indicate the inevitability of fragmentation and sectarianism but also point to the "saved sect," considered the only one adhering to true Islam until the end of time. All religious groups have used this discourse to appear and manifest as the elite implied by the text, each relying on specific texts and neglecting others to justify itself. This is reflected in their religious discourse and fatwas, expressing their general orientation and view of others, particularly in the era of new media, which revived all traditional Islamic conflicts and set everyone against everyone in the search for salvation.

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The aim of each group with these mediatic fatwas is to clarify religious truth, rather than simply reforming the political sphere. Any fatwa aiming at religious reform seeks to correct reality (both religious and worldly) enabling individual salvation in the afterlife. Thus, political fatwas are not merely political but have doctrinal purposes, highlighting doctrinal rather than political differences. Each group believes establishing the Sharia state is one of its primary tasks, mobilizing believers in its own way, always combining worldly and spiritual comfort. Hassan al-Banna said: "O brothers, I call you to practical jihad, after verbal preaching, a jihad with cost and sacrifice" (Mohammad Abdo Abu Al-Ala, n.d.: 15).

Political disputes include any conflicts over worldly interests, whether between political entities at the state level or among Islamic groups to achieve worldly Islamic interests (without implying separation between this world and the hereafter), such as conflicts to Islamize the present and restore Islamic life and the rightly guided caliphate. If disputes are driven by doctrinal motives or pursuit of religious-afterlife benefits, they revert to doctrinal disputes (Haitham bin Jawad al-Haddad, 2011: 56). For example, Salafis, insisting on obedience to the ruler and appeasing political authorities, justify their position as seeking public security and averting fitnah from Muslims. Sheikh Raslan's speeches suggested that confrontation with rulers leads to worldly chaos and hereafter loss, referring to the early generations and the pure Islam of revelation, emphasizing that Salafi thought seeks to emulate that era. Abdul Ghani Emad states that Salafism derives from the Salaf, referencing the best eras to emulate and follow, making the past the starting point and reference (Abdul Ghani Emad, 2016, p. 119). Following them is considered the only path to salvation. Salafism as a sect practices exclusionary violence despite the "saved sect" notion present in all Islamic groups, which claim to reinterpret Islam according to time and place variations. Salafis believe they are a continuation of the moment of revelation, recovering its sacredness as if the heavens remain open, and revelation continues to descend as in early Islam.

Each group believes that leniency in fatwas and religious tolerance allows opposing sects to spread their doctrine, revealing the concealed reality of the abundance of fatwas from various Islamic movements, especially regarding Sharia politics. These doctrinal differences manifest more than political differences, as each group seeks to dominate the other. Fatwas during the Arab revolutions reflected an ideological and identity struggle based on doctrine and, to a lesser extent, tribal affiliation. Differences in revolutionary paths—support in some states and opposition in others— result in the current consequences in Arab societies, where fatwas are used more doctrinally than for political reform, as reforms are always flavored by sectarian interpretations of religious texts and their application. When a sect is in conflict with its reality and withdrawn culturally and religiously, social media becomes the alternative ummah. Salafis worldwide use social media to propagate ideas and revive the concerns of the ummah. Unregulated social media enables interaction among Salafis, reviving symbols and giving meaning to their identity, forming virtual worlds alternative to the withdrawn Salafi culture conflicted with all others (Kerais Djilali & Rqad Djilali, 2018: 141), especially the activist current advocating "Islam is the solution," albeit with modernity, secularism, and democracy embedded. Salafiyyah al-'Ilmiyyah and the Muslim Brotherhood thus become two social movements competing for historical control, reflecting the type of struggle described by Alan Touraine: social movements seek to control historical production, resulting in society shaped by conscious struggles over social procedures and conditions (Kate Nash, 2017: 182).

The conflict became apparent with the emergence of mediatic fatwas opposing demonstrations and protests, which many scholars described as early signs of defiance against rulers, especially from Salafi da'wa movements and mainstream groups. All movements conciliatory toward political authority began providing juristic foundations for such events. For instance, Saudi Arabia's "Council of Senior Scholars" issued a fatwa criminalizing the Muslim Brotherhood, warning against affiliation and labeling them as a "deviant terrorist group from Islam," accused of stirring discord and undermining coexistence, calling them "ignorant Islamic communities producing extremist terrorist groups." Numerous fatwas from scholars revolved around political disorder in the Islamic world, circulated via synchronous, asynchronous, and video platforms. The scholarly basis indicated that prohibiting demonstrations, sit-ins, and strikes applies to both objectives and means: prohibited in objectives as they are innovations without basis in religion, and prohibited in means due to their harmful consequences (Global Forum for Moderation, 2011: wasatyea.net).

However, opposing fatwas exist from other currents, such as activist Salafis or the Muslim Brotherhood, calling for protests to overthrow governments, prioritizing religion over personal safety, creating paradoxes in interpreting religious texts. Each group prioritizes what aligns with its political agenda first, then seeks individual salvation. Conflicts between these schools resumed in the unlimited electronic space, with the traditional current adhering to historical interpretations of political jurisprudence, advocating obedience to rulers and governments. Their discourse was not merely political but attacked the beliefs of activist currents, promoting them via new mediology. Meanwhile, activist Salafi fatwas were reality-based, interpreting from reality rather than text, unlike traditionalists who impose text on reality, which often conflicts with the text, especially during crises. Revolutionary jurists were supported by

circumstances (lack of development, unemployment, poverty, ignorance, tyranny) betting on youth adoption of their interpretations, given youth's vulnerability to new and revolutionary ideas.

The new mediology disseminated all religious content, embracing all identities, expanding revolutionary jurisprudence in many Arab societies. Thus, virtual sects transferred what was confined to classical texts or elite scholars into technological universality, reaching humanity and entering religious arenas, transforming ideological fatwas into almost daily dialogue between the jurist and the seeker of salvation and the idea of reviving the ummah. Islamic minds of diverse intellectual orientations still yearn for the ummah and seek the most effective ways to restore and re-represent it, yet the issue of how to achieve restoration deepens the divide between reformists and activists.

Conclusion:

Through this study, it can be said that the electronic fatwas of these religious movements have sparked numerous transformations and changes in our societies, and they have been able to mobilize and direct the masses. The intermingling and blending of religion and politics in Arab societies have pushed many religious movements to link fatwas, which express their attempts to resolve all issues of reality, between political systems and religion. Individuals and groups constituting societal structures rely on employing religion in the public sphere, and on its role in shaping cultural and social structures, to adopt opinions and interpretations of electronic fatwas, and to engage intensively with sheikhs and online jurists who attempted to build and shape religious identities according to their differing ideologies. This led to the adoption of each identity by followers of a particular legal field, which the new mediology allowed to communicate and interact with, reaching the extent of membership in its jurisprudential or doctrinal production, either by publishing it or by creating specialized websites for each identity's followers to disseminate the fatwas of their sheikhs and jurists as a form of da'wa. Each individual adopts it as representing "true Islam" through the ritual of the fatwa, and the method of conveying the sheikh's ideas and sharing them with others, which then becomes the examining sample, scrutinizing every other belief, either judging it as entirely righteous or entirely corrupt.

Ethical Considerations

This study is based on qualitative theoretical analysis and critical interpretation of existing religious, philosophical, and media studies literature. It does not involve human participants, personal data, surveys, interviews, or experimental procedures. Therefore, ethical approval from an institutional review board was not required. The authors affirm that the research was conducted in accordance with internationally recognized standards of academic integrity, including originality, transparency, accurate citation, and responsible scholarly practice.

Author Contributions

Both authors contributed substantially to the conception and development of this study. **Krais Djilali** developed the theoretical framework, conceptualized the themes of memory, imagination, and virtual religious space, and drafted the initial version of the manuscript. **Khaled Hallouz** contributed to the analytical interpretation of electronic fatwas, sectarian discourse, and jurisprudential conflict, as well as to the critical revision and refinement of the manuscript. Both authors reviewed and approved the final version of the article and accept responsibility for its content.

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Conflicting Electronic Fatwas in Digital Religious Space: Memory, Imagination, and the Dialectics of Past and Present within Electronic Islamic Sects
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