

## The Dangers of the Secular Capitalist Society

In recent weeks, the Johnny Depp-Amber Heard defamation trial has been a mainstay in the media, often overshadowing news of other more important events. The immense attention is due to the fact that the judge allowed the court proceedings to be televised live. And as a result, the entire trial is also being put before the court of public opinion. As a result, people across the world consider each side's evidence and scrutinize their statements; in some cases, even acting out the scenes from court.

Hashtags associated with the trial have repeatedly trended across twitter, and Vanity Fair reported that the daytime ratings for Court TV doubled as a result of the trial.

While aspects of the trial and the subsequent attention seem to be incredibly ludicrous, and we may never understand the truth of the matter, it serves to shine a light on the very serious problems that accompany the implementation of a man-made ideology and system.

### Background:

The defamation trial began in April 11, 2022. The Plaintiff Johnny Depp and Defendant Amber Heard, were married from 2015 to 2016, though they were in a relationship since 2012. Depp is suing ex-wife Heard for defamation over an op-ed she penned for the Washington Post in 2018. His point of view is that by presenting herself as a victim of domestic violence, Ms Heard has tarnished his name. Depp told jurors that in reality he was the one who suffered under Ms. Heard's volatile moods and her tendency to bully and abuse him. Ms Heard is portraying him as a controlling and violent man, prone to jealous rages and drug binges, which led to what has been termed "IPV" (Intimate Partner Violence).

Both Johnny Depp and Amber Heard have different versions of the events that occurred around the time that they met, and before and after they got married. They are using different forms of evidence; ranging from text messages to audio recordings and witness testimony to support their chosen narrative, while refuting the one that's been put forth by the other side.

A quick summary of their relationship is that they met when they were making a movie and developed a relationship based on their shared interests and similar backgrounds (they both came from abusive households). Throughout the relationship, both parties consumed varying levels of drug and alcohol.

In the trial, Amber Heard's defense is based on the premise that Johnny Depp ingested hard drugs on a regular basis; which they argue, led to memory loss and temperamental outbursts- which then led to him abusing her. Heard alleges that the abuse started before they married, while they were living together. Johnny Depp denies the abuse allegations, saying she misled him, and showed her true colors once they married by abusing him verbally and physically.

With Western laws of evidence and trial law, it is difficult for the truth to be known as a fact. Each side is presenting evidence which is often subjective; and the lawyers choose which evidence to present. As one viewer stated; what's scary about this trial, is while they are both giving 'testimony under oath' one side is lying and the other side is telling the truth. Which means one of them is slandering the other. (Youtube video)

### Lessons we can learn from this trial:

For those who are trying to apply Islam to the situation and understand it, it's just not possible. In a state built purely upon Islam, this kind of situation would never arise. If there was a case of abuse between spouses, it would never be dealt with in this manner- the Islamic legal procedure is completely different and the court of public opinion would not exist.

But this trial should make us think.

In a day and age, when children and students are aggressively encouraged to adopt secular liberal ideas and concepts, this trial and the events surrounding it shed a light on the dangers of adopting them. This trial gives us an insight into the realities that accompany life under a secular Capitalist system, and how following the rules of their social system does not create harmony in society and in a relationship, and does not protect you. Quite the contrary, it actually creates a range of problems. Problems that aren't just seen here in this particular example, but actually are seen time and time again throughout their society; both inside and outside of their court cases- the examples are numerous.

We, as Muslims, understand that we are sinful for mixing with non-mahram, taking drugs, drinking, lying, slandering, abusing someone verbally and physically, and so much more. The problems between this couple are too many to list, and its events like this that give us a reason to contemplate the *khair* that can be found in Allah's laws, and the dangers of adopting the ideas of this secular capitalist system.

### **Men vs Women: A constant tension in the current system**

Within the current system, there is a constant discussion of gender rights and the battle of men vs women. This discussion has become one of the central themes related to the Johnny Depp-Amber Heard defamation trial.

Did Johnny Depp, a powerful man who had the benefit of fame and money, abuse his wife?

Or is it possible, that Amber Heard was the abuser and Johnny Depp a victim? If so, what impact does this have on the future of the legal system? Will it impact the #MeToo Movement? Or will it become another story in the lesser known #HimToo Movement?

*"Depp has become a hero" amongst the men's rights activists who expound the "evils of feminism." "His trial fits neatly into a tapestry of claims that men are under attack, woven alongside clumsy narratives about false rape accusations and mothers lying to block children from their fathers," Mel says, citing comments in which Depp supporters bemoan our culture's "disproportional focus on female 'suffering'" and call for the destruction of "the believe all women with no evidence narrative."* (Source: [Vox](#))

This showcases the constant confusion within the current system which is based on man-made ideas and laws. If the rights of women are fulfilled, and men are held accountable for their actions, that means that the men are going to become oppressed. And if the men are protected under the law, then the women will be oppressed. Can you see the confusion?

Another issue is that they rely on the idea of precedence in their legal system, so a case like this could have an impact on legal proceedings in the future.

*"If Depp somehow prevails, one can expect similar lawsuits **against** other women who say they've survived abuse" The musician Marilyn Manson has already filed defamation suits against his ex-fiancée, Evan Rachel Wood.* (Source: [WNYC](#))

This is especially significant when you consider how prevalent intimate partner violence is in their system.

- On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men.

- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner. This includes a range of behaviors (e.g. slapping, shoving, pushing) and in some cases might not be considered "domestic violence."

- 1 in 7 women and 1 in 25 men have been injured by an intimate partner. (Source: [NCADV](#))

**What we need to understand...**

The secular Capitalist System would like us to believe that this tension, and the oppression that emerges as a result, is an inevitable part of human life. They have numerous stories and incidents, issues and ideas to back this up.

They have failed to create a society where men and women live in harmony and cooperate with each other, in a way that ensures that both sides are treated fairly. However, their failure does not mean that it is impossible to do so. Quite the contrary, 1400 years of Islamic rule proved that it is possible to create a society where men and women live together and cooperate, where their relationship is not based on a constant struggle, where respect leads to the growth of warmth and companionship.

If secular capitalists accept that this is an issue that is specific to man-made law (and the resulting social and judicial systems) and that it doesn't exist under Islam, they will have to admit to a fundamental flaw within their own system. Their public have come to accept that these tensions exist in society, and it has almost become normalized. As with most of the problems they face, the focus is put on the individual warring couples, as opposed to the system. And so, they are left with a continuous tension between men and women, which goes from one extreme to the next. And this tension, and the resulting consequences for both men and women will continue to exist (and continue to be exploited) for as long as we live under this system.

### **What it comes down to...**

We are living in a world without the protection that the Khilafah (Caliphate) State provides. When we watch the news, and see the persecution that Muslims are facing across the world, we believe that this protection is defensive, linked to army and the military.

But there is another aspect to this protection – that is the protection that's given to citizens on a daily basis, as they live their lives; it's the economic protection, which ensures that citizens have their basic needs provided for; it's social protection, which ensures that every citizen is respected, and that they are all able to live together in harmony; it's the judicial aspect, which ensures that every citizen has their rights protected, no matter their status or gender within society. And the basis of all of this is Allah's laws – not the minds of men, which as we can see time and time again are flawed and result in the creation of more problems than they can solve.

The first layer of protection is a Muslim's Aqeedah (creed) and how it impacts our actions, and the actions of the people around us. As Muslims, we all understand that we are accountable for our actions to Allah and we understand that Allah's laws dictate our actions – what is right, what is wrong. This understanding is strengthened by the education system, the political and judicial system and the way that the society functions.

As a result, we avoid situations where haram is taking place- we do our best not to take place in mixed events, to follow Allah's laws when interacting with the opposite gender. We stay away from Alcohol and drugs, and we think twice before lying or speaking/ raising a hand against another Muslim.

All of this is reinforced by society. Under the Khilafah, haram is not something that is acceptable as it is today. It will not be the norm, so if we commit haram it will be something odd and it will be something that is noticed.

*“On the most basic social level, one's reputation affected the way he was perceived in the community and whether his testimony would be valid in court. Monitoring morality was, therefore, of concern to individuals, and built into both Ottoman codes and the practice of the communities on the ground. Leslie Peirce has found in her study of morality in Ottoman 'Ayntab that most major criminal cases were brought to the court's attention by local residents who assisted the authorities.”* (Source: Elyse Semerdijan “Off the Straight Path, Illicit Sex, Law, and Community in Ottoman Aleppo-Syracuse)

Then, we have the punishment system to ensure that those who don't follow Allah's laws are held accountable.

It is narrated from *Amir Al-Mu'mineen*, Ali (ra) in the drinking of *khamr* who said, 'Verily when he drinks he becomes intoxicated. When he is intoxicated he raves. And when he raves he slanders. And upon the slanderer is eighty lashes.' (Source: Punishment System)

The judiciary will not change its verdict depending on the gender or standing of the person, they will not treat men differently from women, and they will not reach a verdict based on their minds and opinions.

We can find in history practical examples of where the Islamic state, regulated by the Shariah, ensured the justice of men and women.

*"The concept of spousal abuse in American and European law is a fairly new one and cannot be easily translated into legal categories in Islamic law. In many cultures, beating one's wife was deemed acceptable, culturally and sometimes legally. In Islamic law, in both Islamic juridical writings and in the shari'a court records of Aleppo, injuring anyone, whether friend or foe, wife or stranger, was in violation of the law. Cases appeared in the court records in which wives testified to abuse and won their court cases."*

*"Social equity, which was a major concern of the Muslim court, was defined in moral terms, and it demanded that the morality of the weak and underprivileged be accorded no less attention than that attributed to the rich and mighty. As the former undoubtedly saw themselves (and were seen) as equal members of the moral community, the court had to afford them the same kind of treatment it did the latter, if not even more attentively. It was particularly the court's informal and open format that permitted the individual and defenders from within his or her microcommunity to argue their cases and special circumstances from a moral perspective."* (Source: An Introduction to Islamic Law by Wael B.Hallaq)

*Note: Moral means Islam here.*

Due to the lack of understanding of Islam that exists in society today, the depth of the Islamic judicial system is not something that is commonly understood. Every situation has a specific ruling attached to it, and it is only those who study Islam and the legal procedures thoroughly who can understand and implement it.

That is why it is completely and utterly incorrect to say that following the laws of Islam makes you 'backward' or stops progress- quite the contrary.

### **We need a state built purely upon Islam**

In the end, all of this should make us consider how important it is for the Khilafah to return so that Islam can be implemented in its entirety. There are those who argue that Allah's laws can be implemented within this system or that they should be implemented gradually. But as situations such as this shows, that is not and cannot be the case. Islam is an entire system; that impacts every aspect of our lives. We can see the *khair* in that, and we can understand that unless it is implemented in its entirety, people everywhere will continue to be oppressed in one way or another.

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