

## Eponymy in English and Arabic

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### Abstract

Eponymy is the process whereby a word denoting a place, invention, profession, tribe or religion is derived from the proper name such as the District of Columbia which was named after Christfore Columbus and Zayid al-Quraishi who is attributed to the tribe of Quraish. The study is divided into three sections. The first deals with the concept of eponymy in English. Different definitions are surveyed. Categories of eponymy and the formation of eponyms are also discussed in this part. The advantages as well as disadvantages of using eponymy are presented here. The second section tackles the notion of eponymy or nisba as Arab linguists call it. Nisba in Arabic is a predominantly morphological subject. In this section, the categories of eponymy are dealt with along with the ways of forming them. Nisba also has advantages and disadvantages which are introduced in this section too. Similarities and differences between English and Arabic in the concept of eponymy, its categories, formation and advantages and disadvantages is conducted as a final part of this study.

### Eponymy in English

#### 1. Eponymy defined

The term 'eponymy' is derived from the Greek words 'epi' meaning 'upon' and 'oyma' meaning 'name'. (Murray et al, 1961:250)

Crystal (2003:163) defines eponymy within anomastics, a branch of semantics studying the etymology of institutionalized proper names, as the name of a person after whom something such as an invention or a place is named like "biro" and "Sydney".

As a derivational process, Newmark (1988:198) and Fromkin et. al. (2003:98) define eponym as any word that is identical with or derived from a proper name which gives it a related sense. For example "Sandwich" is named after the fourth Earl of Sandwich, who put his food between two slices of bread so that he could eat while he gambled. Crystal (2004:155) considers eponym as a process of forming a new lexeme where names are used in the formation of new lexemes like volt is the inventor of the electric battery.

Eponymy is affixing the name of the scientist to all or part what he has found (Merton, 1973:293) such as 'Reaganomics' (the economic policies of tax cutting and deficit spending) named after Reagan (Maddox, 2009:3).

Harris (2005:29) treats eponymy as one of the figures of speech. According to him is a substitutional process and he defines eponym as substitute for a particular attribute the name of a famous person recognized for that attribute:

1. The man is an Einstein.

Here, the man is substituted with an Einstein because the man has certain features that make him look like an Einstein like (he is smart, intellectual, he has experience...etc.).

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According to Freeman (1997:2), eponymy may be regarded as a subclass of metonymy, a figure of speech in which a name of an attribute of an entity is used in place of the entity itself, such as:

2. He is a real Romeo.

Instead of saying 'he is a very romantic person', the speaker/writer uses the name 'Romeo' because it refers to a well-known character who stands for the romantic side of human beings.

On the surface, the above definitions of eponymy adopt various points of view but basically they show agreement concerning the fact that eponyms are words derived from proper names and are one of many creative ways in which the vocabulary of a language expands.

## 2. Formation of Eponymy

Close and Surry (2003:2) mention that there are ways of forming eponyms, the most common of which is to add an apostrophe ('s) to a name of a person. This is called a "Synthetic genitive", a possessive type like 'Herbert's theory of Formal'. Drickx (2001:18) observes that besides forming terms of this type, which honor persons who first described or reported the things named, the synthetic genitive appears in eponyms based on the name of the person who suffered from, or even died of the conditions or a disease named such as 'Carrion's disease or Pott's fracture' and in terms referring to occupations, classes of persons like 'Gamekeeper's thumb'.

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Until recently, as Swee (2007:2) states, eponyms containing synthetic genitive formed on the pattern: proper noun+ a apostrophe+ s were the most numerous in English. The language is presently undergoing changes in which eponyms of this "possessive type" are being replaced by various constructions. The second construction is the "Substantial adjunct", a proper noun is used as an adjective without changing the form like 'Bell palsy' (idiopathic facial paralysis).

This form is regularly used with compound (hyphenated) proper nouns referring to more than one person (Pellegrini-Stieda disease). It is also nearly standard for eponyms referring to surgical instruments or devices (Kocher clamp), (Levin tube), methods or techniques (Gram stain) as well as terms based on the name of literary characters (Oedipus complex) (Drickx, 2001:19)

In addition, this form is often chosen for proper names ending in 's' (Colles fracture) because many speakers pronounce Colles's exactly like the uninflected (nominative) forms of the nouns. The form may be preferred before words beginning with an 's' or 'z' since the inflectional 's' of 'Looser's zones' tends to be lost in speech (Ibid).

Jespersen (1927: 24) states that it is, however, a "crass blunder" to mistake this substantival adjunct for an "unmarked or null genitive". The difference between Good pasture's Syndrome and Goodpasture Syndrome is not that the inflectional ending of the genitive has been omitted in the latter form but rather a noun in the genitive case has been altogether replaced by an adjective that is identical in form of the nominative case of the corresponding noun.

Another way to construct eponyms is to use a truncated form of the preceding (isolated proper noun, used in place of the substansival adjunct +principle noun): a positive Babinski, to insert a Foley catheter, the one minute Apgar. Although certainly less formal than the full expressions, these abridged terms are widely used at least in speech (Swee,2007:23).

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The capacity to construct a phrase by placing before a noun another noun that assumes an adjectival function without change of form is one of the most distinctive characteristics of the English syntax. When one says "heart attack" and "liver

function", the first words of these phrases are equivalent to the second words and are therefore adjectives (Drickx, 2001:19).

Eponymy can be created by using analytical genitive with the word 'of' such as the syndrome of Sisyphus, characterized by the feeling that teachers experience, inherent in the reiteration of teaching cycles tasks year after, just as Sisyphus had raised time and again the same stone up the mountain (Beeching, 1983:5).

Some eponyms as Murphy (1997:3) states are formed by verb derivation like "to bark". It is derived from the name Robert Bark, and meaning to use every means possible to sabotage, a nominee to a high office or by noun derivation, as Maddox (2009:3) mentions, such as McCarthyism (the practice of accusing people of political disloyalty without evidence; the use of unfair investigation methods to suppress opposition from U.S. senator Joe McCarthy).

Lastly, some eponyms can be created by a formal adjective like Dickwickian Syndrome, a type of breathing difficulty associated with obesity, is named after the portly character called "The fat boy" in Charles Dickens' Pickwick Papers (Boyd and Woodman, 1978:671).

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### 3. Categories of eponymy

Newmark (1988:199) divides eponymy into three categories, those derived from person, places and objects:

#### 3.1. Personal category

In the first category, Newmark (1988: 199) states that an eponym denoting an object usually derives from his/her inventions, discoveries or tribe. Here are some examples:

1. Achaeus: it is a Hebrew tribe. It took the name of a legendary leader (Achaeans)
2. Cardigan: a knitted jacket fastened with buttons, is named after James Brudenall, seventh Earl of Cardigan. (Crystal, 2004:155)
3. Marcel: a hair style characterized by deep regular waves made by a heated curling iron which took its name from Francois Marcel. (Maddox:2009:3)
4. Sturges' rule: a practical rule proposed by Herbert Sturges for the constructing histograms (Fisher and Frank, 1994:126).

#### 2. Geographical eponymy

Some eponyms are based on geographical names. Crystal (2004:155) mentions that lexemes which are derived from place names are often known as (Toponyms) such as:

1. Bikini: the islands where the atom bomb was tested.
2. Hamburger: from Hamburger steak found in Humburg in the 19 century and brought to the U.S. by German immigrants.
3. Jeans: originally from the Italian city of Geneva where the cloth was first made as blue jeans. In old French Geneva had come from Janne and from this came the English form.

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4. China: a short for chinaware, from china-clay used in the manufacture of porcelain originally made in China.

### 3. Object names

Newmark (1988: 200) states that this type is based on commercial brand names. Krause (1997:1) defines an eponym as a general term used to describe from what or whom something derived its name. Therefore propriety eponym could be considered a brand name (product or service mark) which has fallen into general use. So what leads a brand name to become an eponym? For one thing, other brand names of similar nature must exist; but even more importantly, the original product, even if discontinued, still function pronominally. In other words, a specific can be used to designate a class of generic with no loss in meaning. A usual result: lower case transcription of the brand name such as:

1. Kleenex: soft facial tissue.
2. Jeep: compact sport-utility station wagon.
3. Cola: soda pop; color carbonated soft drink.
4. Google: to form a web-based searching engine query (Lipka, 2003:211).
4. Eponymous hero(in)es

Crystal (2004:155) adds another category of eponym based on fictitious names from literature, mythology, and folklore as follows:

1. Shylock: a character in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice.
2. Atlas: Atlas was condemned by Zeus to support the earth on his shoulders.
3. Diana: she was the goddess of the moon, hunt and chastity.
4. Ulysses: he was a hero in the Trojan war.

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### 4. Advantages and disadvantages of Eponyms

In most cases, however, eponymy in every day life serves an essentially practical purpose which is to provide a convenient shorthand expression that allows us to refer to objects or actions that would otherwise require cumbersome description or tedious repetition.

Schmickle (1983: 482) praises eponymy as a neutral term allowing a concept to evolve free of any preconceived notions and he mentions that eponyms may be preferable to descriptive terms because they are usually shorter. Instead of saying Osteodystrophia Chronica deformans hystrophica, one can say Paget's disease.

Some of the greatest scientists such as Harvey are not explicitly named in formal eponyms. Their place in history has hardly suffered. By contrast, probably few today remember Deniges even with his 78 eponyms. Nevertheless, eponyms assure at least a limited temporary measure of credit to many scientists who might otherwise be completely forgotten (Close and Surry, 2003:198).

Another advantage is that eponyms enliven the name of the discoverer. Behind each eponym is a story for a student or practitioner to seek out. Robertson (1972: 221) has called eponymy "one of the last vestiges of the humanism remaining in an increasingly numeralized and computerized society".

Merton (1973:273) mentions that "eponymy is a mnemonic and a commemorative device". Thus, as Swee (2007:21) states, the term eponym is generally understood to mean something which has been named after a person. These eponyms are generally understood to honour the discoverer. The diesel engine is named after the German engineer Rudolf Diesel.

The process leading to eponyms is not an easy achievement nor direct one. Authors with enormous productions such as Thomas A. Edison did not eponymize while minor authors have obtained valuable recognition. Inventors with many inventions are sometimes remembered by the most insignificant of them like Bunsen who invented a simple alcohol lamp used sometimes mainly in chemical labs (Close and Surrey, 2003:198).

Garfield (1983:199) suggests other criticisms of eponymy. Sometimes an eponym is not the correct one like the denomination of America which should be named Columbia. Therefore, the history of every eponym must be traced to reveal who is the real person deserving the reward. But with such an example, the eponym recalls not the real originator (Columbia) but the person who acknowledged the importance of the discovery.

Double and triple eponymy exist when one thing may have more than one eponym like Weil's disease (an infectious disease transmitted by rats) is also known as Fielder's disease and Vasiler's disease (Ibid.).

Another problem is that some eponyms do not refer to the same person. Thus the Pick cell (foam disease), Pick's disease (a neurodegenerative disorder) and Pick's pscricarditis were named after respectively- Ludwig Pick, Arnold Pick and Friedel Pick (Swee, 2007:24).

Furthermore, the correct eponym is quite difficult to assign because many discoveries are in fact multiple discoveries made by several authors at the same time. Hence the "eponym war" started by extreme nationalisms and chauvinisms. One solution is hyphenated eponym with a series of names but the quarrel could be continued over their order.

One the other hand, sometimes a hyphenated eponym is a symptom of longevity because the findings leading to it have been revised and improved by several generations. Certain hyphenated eponyms are of particular interest because it seems quite puzzling how some people come to be partners in a scientific venture (Merton, 1973:199).

Inconsistent usage is another problem with eponyms. For example, some authors mistakenly put a hyphen between the two names of an eponym formed from a single individual's full name as in Austin-Flint. Others omit the hyphen from a double eponym formed from two different last names as in Chediak Higashi (Archer, 1975:234).

In Marxist thought, as Cole (1999:121) reports, eponym is a misconception because it overpraises individualism as a sort of hagiolatry when every realization is a complex and long collective task.

Critics of eponymy also argue that eponyms often memorialize the wrong people. Things are named falsely or wrongly after persons because of their high social status and visibility in a field longer after a particular discovery had been made such as Moller-Barlow disease which was discovered by Glisson about 200 years before Moller (Rolleston, 1973:12).

Additional critiques come from feminist literature because few cases of women being eponymized are found especially in pedagogic science, an exception would be the term Montessorian, in general context referring to Italian pedagogue Moria Montessori (Close and Surry,2003:199).

### Eponymy in Arabic

According to Wahba (1974:147), eponymy in Arabic is the translation of what Arab morphologists call النسبة (Nisba) and an eponym is المنسوب إليه. Hassan (2004:603) defines Nisba as a noun to which a stressed ي- is added such as مُحَمَّد (Muhammad) is eponymized as مُحَمَّدِي. Nisba, al-Ghalayeeni (1962:71) points out, is suffixing of a stressed ي- to a name of a person, tribe, or country to indicate relation, for example from the name هاشِم (Hashim) can be derived the nisba الهاشِمِي (Hashimi) which is used to refer to a well-known Arab tribe. The name to which the ي- is attached is called منسوباً while before it has been so attached, it's called منسوباً إليه. (Ziyad, 2009:1)

Sha'laan (2007:19) defines Nisba as a name derived from a person's trade or profession, place of birth or residence, religion such as مصري (Egyptian) from مصر (Egypt). Wright (1996 : 149) defines Nisba as a "relation adjective" made by adding the termination ي- to the word from which it is derived. A relation adjective is a person or thing associated with the original name. The adjective شمسي (solar) describes a thing connected with شمس (sun).

According to Halpern (2009:1), Nisba is a type of adjective indicating a relation or pertinence such as nationality. The masculine is formed by the addition of the suffix ي- and the feminine by adding ية-. For instance, the nisba of اليابان (Japan) is ياباني and يابانية (Japanese). All grammarians agree that Nisba is made through adding a stressed ي- to a name and should be preceded by a َ (kasra).

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## 2.2 Types of Nisba

According to Arab grammarians such as al-Jamal (2001:2), Oda (1999:12) and Ziyad (2009:1), Nisba falls into three divisions:

### 1. Geographical nisba

This type is derived from the place of residence or birth (Hassan,2004:606). Famous personalities are often distinguished by association with their birthplace or where they were brought up, e.g., باسِم الكربلائي (Basim al-Karbala'i). Some people are known in history primarily by their nisba like the writer of the book 'مفاتيح الجنان' (The Keys to the Gardens) is better known by his geographical nisba as 'عباس القمي' (Abbass al-Qumi) from the city of Qum in Iran.

### 2. Descent Nisba

It is derived from the name of a person's tribe or family lineage (al-Jamal, 2001:1). If one says: هذا رجلٌ تميمي (This man is from the tribe of Tameem.), بني تميم is derived from the name of the person's tribe بني تميم

(The Tameems) (al-Khamaash,2009:1). In يوسف الأيوبي (Yusif al-Ayoobi), the nisba is formed from the family line of أيوب (Ayoob)

### 3. Occupational Nisba

It is created from a person's trade or profession such as: مُحَمَّد الحائك (Muhammad the weaver) (Sha'laan,2007:19). According to al-Jamal (2003:1), the verb form فَعَال (fa'aal) is used to form nisbas denoting handcraftsmanship: حَدَاد for a person whose profession is smithery and نَجَّار for a carpenter.

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### 4. Religion Nisba

This type denotes the person's religious affiliations (Ni'ma, 1973:59): إسلامي, يهودي, and مسيحي for people whose religions are Islam, Judaism, or Christianity respectively.

#### 2.3 Formation of Nisba

There are a number of ways of forming nisbas in which the nouns undergo diverse changes:

#### 1. Nisba of nouns ending in 'تاء التانيث'

The feminine terminations 'ة', 'ية' and 'ية' are omitted when their nisba is formed as in أسكندري (Alexandrian), فاطمي (Fatimi) and مكّي (Meccan) which are formed from إسكندرية (Alexandria), فاطمة (Fatima) and مكة (Mecca) respectively (Ziyad, 2010:3).

#### 2. Nisba of nouns ending in -ي

In the case of nouns that end in the termination -ياء مشددة (ya' with the accentuation mark ّ), the formation of nisba depends on the number of letters. If the -ي is followed by only one letter, the first ي is returned to its original form ا or the second ي is turned into a و such as حيي becomes حيوي. If the -ي is preceded by two letters, the same process will be followed such as عليّ turns into علويّ and نبيّ into نبويّ. But if the -ي comes after more than three letters, the -ي of nisba is replaced by the original -ي as in شافعيّ (Ziyad, 2010:3).

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#### 3. Nisba of nouns ending in -ى

المقصود is a noun which ends with an obligatory -ى or -ا. If the -ى is the third letter, it is changed into a و : عصويّ (a stick). But if the nouns ending -ى have only three letters besides the -ى, two cases are to be distinguished: a- if the second letter has a vowel, the -ى is omitted as in برديّ/بردى, b- if the second letter has no vowel, the -ى may either be omitted or changed into a و as in خبليّ/خبلي (al-Mansoori and al-Kafaji, n.d.;:57). The feminine termination -ى is omitted in nouns that have four letters as in مُنتديّ/مُنْتدى.

#### 4. Nisba of الممدود

Al-Mashri (2011:306) defines الممدود as a noun which ends in اء (alif and hamza). If the ء is original, it will remain as it is such as ابتدائي/ابتداء (Nahar, 2010:260). If the ء refers to feminine, it should be changed into و as in خُنفساء (beetle)/خُنفسائي (Sibawahi, 1975:355). When the ء is sprung from an original radical و or ي- or what is called همزة الإلحاق, it may either remain unchanged or is turned into و such as كِسَاء (garment)/كِسائي-كساوي (al-Farisi, 1981:59).

#### 5. Nisba of المنقوص

Ziyad (2010:5) defines المنقوص as the name which ends in an obligatory ي-. Al-Sayid (2010:319) mentions that if the termination ي- is the third letter, it is transformed into و with a (◌) before ي- as in الشَّجْوِيّ/الشَّجِي. But if the noun has four letters, the final ي- may either be altered to و or be deleted with a (◌) before it as in القاضِيّ/القاضي. Kadijah(2010:225) maintains that if the noun consists of five or more letters, the ي- is elided as in المُهتديّ/المُهتدي.

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#### 6. Nisba of الثلاثي المكسور الوسط

If the noun consists of three letters and the (◌) is under the second letter, the (◌) is transmuted to (◌) as in نَمْرِيّ/نَمْر (Ibn as-Saraaj, 1985:64).

#### 7. Nisba of that which ends in a ي-

When the noun is closed off with ي-, the second ي- is omitted along with its (◌): سيديّ/سيد (As-Sayid, 2010: 326).

#### 8. Nisba of nouns with elided parts

Nouns like أب whose و has been elided is rewritten as أبو when forming its nisba so it becomes أبويّ (Nahar, 2010:262).

#### 9. Nisba of nouns of the forms فَعِيلَة and فَعِيلَة

Nouns formed according to فَعِيلَة such as حَنيفَة lose their ي- and the (◌) is turned into a (◌) so becomes حَنَفِيّ. The noun جُهِينَة follows فَعِيلَة and its nisba is جُهِينِيّ (al-Khamaash, 2010:1).

#### 10. Nisba of nouns of the forms فَعِيل and فَعِيل

In the forms فَعِيل and فَعِيل, the ي- is deleted when the third consonant of the radical is و or ي as in قَصَوِيّ/قَصَوِيّ and عَلِيّ/عَلَوِيّ. Otherwise it will not be changed as عَقِيل/عَقِيلِيّ and سَعِيدِيّ/سَعِيد (Hassan,2004:618).

#### 11. Nisba of dual and plural nouns

Nisba is never formed from the plural but from the singular, for example the dual noun مُحَمَّدَان is formed from the singular مُحَمَّد. So the



nisba is *مُحمَدِيّ* and وزراء (ministers) has to be changed back into the singular *وزير* (minister) in order to form *وزيري* (Ziyad, 2010:8). Plurals such as *أنصار* (supporters) are treated as proper nouns so they make an exception: *أنصاريّ* (Atiya, 2005:120).

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## 12. Nisba of nouns having two letters

A noun with two consonants only such as *كم* (how much?), which ends in a consonant, has two nisba forms: *كَمِيّ / كَمِيّ*. But if the second letter is a *و* or *ي*, as in *لو* (if) and *كي* (to) becomes *لَوِيّ* and *كَيُوِيّ* (al-Ghalaayini, 1962:83).

## 13. Nisba of compound proper nouns

A compound, whether *إسنادي* (propositional) or *مزجي* (contracted), such as *تأبطي* and *بعلبك* form their nisba by omitting the second part: *تأبطيّ / بعلبيّ* (Qabawa, 1988: 240). As for compounds that begin with words like *ابن*, *أم*, *أب* and *ابن إياس*, the nisba is formed by omitting them so *ابن إياس* becomes *إياسيّ*. Words like *عبد المطلب* lose the first part as well as the *ال*: *مطلبيّ*. The word *امرؤ القيس* becomes *أمرئيّ* (al-Khamaash, 2010: 2).

## 14. Nisba without *-يّ*

Sometimes the *-يّ* is not used to indicate nisba. Alternative forms are employed such as *فَعَال* which implies a person who has a certain handcraft like *بزاز* (cloth seller) (al-Ghalaayini, 1962: 83). The forms *فَاعِل*, *فَاعِل*, and *مَفْعِيل* indicate a possessor of something: *كاس* (clothed), *لبس* (wearing clothes), *مِعْطَار* (wearing perfume) and *مِحْضِير* (fast in running) (al-Jamal, 2001: 5).

Finally, there are some exceptions to the above rules of formation of nisba, such as *بصريّ/البصرة*, *دُهْرِيّ/الدَّهْر*, *بحرانيّ/البحرين* and *طائيّ/طيّ*.

## 2. Advantages and disadvantages of Nisba in Arabic

Occasionally, the *-يّ* of Nisba is added to the end of some words just for the purpose of giving them an intensifying force such as the word *أحمر* (red)/ *أحمرِيّ* which also means red (Ryding, 2005:273). Nisba can be employed for expressing dispraise. If a person acts immorally, he is related, through a nisba, to a person known to do so: *هذا الرجلُ يزيديّ*. (This man is yazidi.), i.e., he is as immoral and murderous as Yazid son of Ma'awiya who killed Imam Hussein of Ali ibn abi Talib.

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Conversely, Nisba is useful when we want to praise or commend someone. A generous and hospitable person can be compared to *حاتم الطائيّ* (Hatim at-Taa'i) a pre-Islamic figure in the Arab peninsula reputed for his

generosity and hospitability. So a man who acts like Hatim can be praised: هذا رجلٌ طائيّ (This man is Taa'i.) When it is difficult to distinguish between two men with the same first name, nisba can provide the solution by relating each person. to his tribe such as أحمد الوائليّ (Ahmad al-Waa'li) and أحمد الجعفريّ (Ahmad al-Ja'fari). Sometimes it gets more complicated when two persons happen to have the same first name and tribal nisba, so as a way out a further nisba is supplied to clinch the matter: أحمد الوائليّ (النجفيّ) (Ahmad al-Waa'li an-Najafi) and أحمد الوائليّ (الديوانيّ) (Ahmad al-Waa'li ad-Diwaani). Alternatively, an occupational nisba can be used: العلامة أحمد الوائليّ (Ahmad al-Waa'li the scholar) and الطبيب أحمد الوائليّ (Ahmad al-Waa'li the doctor). On occasions, a person is associated with a noble figure in a way that he becomes known by the nisba of that figure and not by original tribal nisba as happened with سلمان الفارسيّ (Selman al-Farisi), a prominent companion of the holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Because of strong devotion to Islam, Selman came to be called سلمان المُحمديّ (Selman al-Muhammadi). This proves that nisba can be used for the purpose of honoring. In certain cases, misconception shrouds the use of nisba in this sense that one word may have more than one nisba with different meanings. For example, the word عِصَة which means cutting or separation and witchcraft or falsehood. So the nisba for the former is عضوانيّ and for the latter is عضهانيّ (al-Ghalaayini, 1962: 74). Al-Mashri (2011: 203) observes that these various forms of nisba serve to differentiate between the referents a word has such as مدنيّ/مدينيّ/مدينة. The first nisba was used for a resident of the city of Baghdad while the second was used for the prophet Muhammad's city. Many discoveries and inventions in Arab world were overlooked as far as nisba is concerned. For some reasons, ابن حيان (Ibn Hayaan), one of the earliest chemists has never had any nisba for any of the substances he discovered. On the other hand, we find al-Mustansirya University in Baghdad which was named after المُستنصر بالله (al-Mustansir Bi Allah) who was an Abbasid ruler.

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### الملخص

النسبة هي عملية اشتقاق كلمة تدلُّ على مكان, اختراع, حرفة, قبيلة أو ديانة من اسم علم على سبيل المثال سميت منطقة كولومبيا على اسم كريستوفر كولومبوس أو كما في اللغة العربية يقال زيد القُرَيْشيّ نسبةً إلى قريش. تتضمن الدراسة ثلاث أقسام. تناول القسم الأول مفهوم النسبة في اللغة الانجليزية. تم عرض تعريفات مختلفة وأنواع النسبة و صيغها في هذا القسم. المحاسن و المساوئ المتعلقة باستعمال النسبة قدم لها في هذا القسم أيضا. أما القسم الثاني فقد عالج مفهوم النسبة في لغتنا العربية و أنواعها و صيغها المختلفة و محاسنها و مساوئها. خُصص القسم الثالث من الدراسة لعرض أوجه التشابه و الاختلاف بين اللغتين من حيث مفهوم النسبة و أنواعها و صيغها و محاسن و مساوئ استعمالها.