

Variorum Collected Studies

STUDIES ON THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD AND THE DAWN OF ISLAM

**IDOL WORSHIPPERS, CHRISTIANS AND JEWS IN
PRE- AND EARLY ISLAM**

Michael Lecker



Studies on the Life of Muhammad and the Dawn of Islam

This volume includes 20 articles published between 1994 and 2020 on the subject of Muḥammad and the history of early Islam, covered in five sections: Arabia on the Eve of Islam, Muḥammad at Medina, Muḥammad and the Jews, Muḥammad ibn Ishāq and the *sīra* and studies on early Islamic literature.

The book focuses on a variety of historical questions, from the presumed Ghasanid/Byzantine involvement in the hijra to Muḥammad's treaties with the main Jewish tribes of Yathrib/Medina. Predilection for detail, especially in the realms of genealogy and geography, is a salient characteristic of Lecker's research, which in recent years has been increasingly based on digitized text repositories. Many of the articles deal with the social and economic environment of early Islam, which is vital for the study of Muḥammad's biography. They are conceived of as building blocks in a future critical biography of the Arabian prophet.

Studies on the Life of Muhammad and the Dawn of Islam will appeal to those interested in the history of pre- and early Islam, with an emphasis on Muḥammad's life and his relations with the Jews of Arabia.

Michael Lecker is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Arabic Language and Literature of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has published extensively on pre- and early Islamic history, the biography of the Prophet Muḥammad and the Jews of the Arabian Peninsula.

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Michael Lecker

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P R E F A C E

It is a privilege to be able to return to the 20 articles of different lengths included in this volume, two of which were published almost three decades ago. I am grateful to Routledge, and to Michael Greenwood in particular, for making this possible.

In the third year of my undergraduate studies (1974) I took part in Moshe Gil's seminar at the Tel Aviv University. My seminar paper was entitled "The war against the Banū Qurayṣa". It so happened that Gil's article on the so-called "Constitution of Medina" appeared in the same year ("The constitution of Medina: A reconsideration", *Israel Oriental Studies* 4 [1974], 44–66). I was not convinced by his general concept and by some of his arguments, and it was only natural that much of my PhD thesis, which was written under the supervision of M.J. Kister, was dedicated to the "Constitution". Now an ageing professor is not supposed to refer to his PhD thesis of four decades ago; but looking back I realize how fortunate I was in those formative years of mine. I must add that Kister did not like the subtitle of my article "Muḥammad at Medina: A geographical approach" which originated as a chapter in the thesis; but he never imposed his opinion on us, his students. Geography does make a difference, and the map of Muḥammad's Medina (p. 38 in this volume) is vital for understanding much of his politics and tactics.

Philology is by no means the mainstream methodology in the study of early Islam, although philologists are less looked down upon these days. The late seventies and early eighties of the twentieth century were dangerous times for old-fashioned students of early Islam such as myself. Our background did not prepare us to struggle with the wave of new ideas of that period. Times have changed, and the promise of primary sources in the study of Muḥammad's life and time is now more widely acknowledged.

The English style, especially in the earlier articles, has been somewhat improved. More substantial corrections and additions appear (mostly in the footnotes) between square brackets and are preceded by the word "ADD".

ABBREVIATIONS

- BSOAS
Caskel *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
W. Caskel u. Gert Strenziok, *Ġamharat an-nasab: Das genealogische Werk des Hišām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī*, Leiden: Brill, 2 vols.
- EP² *Encyclopaedia of Islam*²
- EP³ *Encyclopaedia of Islam*³
- EQ *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*
- GAS F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, Leiden: Brill, 1967 ff.
- Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Istīʿāb* *al-Istīʿāb fī maʿrifat al-aṣḥāb*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī, Cairo: Maktabat Nahḍat Miṣr, n. d.
- Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar* Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb, *al-Muḥabbar*, ed. Ilse Lichtenstaedter, Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniyya, 1361/1942. Reprint Beirut: al-Maktab al-Tijārī, n. d.
- Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq* *Kitāb al-munammaq fī akhbār Quraysh*, ed. Khūrshīd Aḥmad Fāriq, Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1405/1985.
- Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba* Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī, Cairo: Dār Nahḍat Miṣr, 1392/1972.
- Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-ʿArab* ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Hārūn, Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1382/1962.
- Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī and ʿAbd al-Ḥafīẓ Shalabī, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1355/1936. Reprint Beirut: Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1391/1971.
- Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* *K. Sīrat Rasūl Allāh: Das Leben Mohammeds nach Mohammed ibn Ishak bearbeitet von Abd el-Malik ibn Hishām*, ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, Göttingen: Dieterische Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1858–60.
- (Wüstenfeld)
- Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār* Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Istibṣār fī nasab al-ṣaḥāba mina l-anṣār*, ed. ʿAlī Nuwayhid, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1392/1972.

ABBREVIATIONS

- Ibn Qutayba, *Ma‘ārif* ed. Tharwat ‘Ukāsha, Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1969.
IOS *Israel Oriental Studies*
JAOS *Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JESHO *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JRAS *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*
JSAI *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*
JSS *Journal of Semitic Studies*
 Kister, Variorum I M.J. Kister, *Studies in Jāhiliyya and Early Islam*, London: Variorum, 1980.
 Kister, Variorum II *Society and Religion from Jāhiliyya to Islam*, Aldershot: Variorum, 1990.
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 Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh* ed. Évariste Lévi-Provençal, Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1953.
 Samhūdī, *Wafā’* al-Samhūdī, *Wafā’ al-wafā bi-akhbār dār al-muṣṭafā*, ed. Qāsim al-Sāmarrā’ī, London-Jedda: al-Furqān, 1422/2001.
SI *Studia Islamica*
 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh* *Ta’rīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M.J. de Goeje et alii, Leiden, 1879-1901. 15 vols.
TMD Ibn ‘Asākir, *Ta’rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. ‘Umar ibn Gharāma al-‘Amrawī, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1415/1995-1419/1998. 80 vols.
 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī* *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, ed. M. Jones, London: Oxford University Press, 1966. 3 vols.
ZDMG *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*

Part 1

ARABIA ON THE EVE OF
ISLAM



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PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA

C. Robinson (ed.), *The New Cambridge History of Islam. I: The Formation of the Islamic World Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, 153–70

Tribal historiography

The literary sources in Arabic dealing with pre-Islamic Arabia are copious but rarely give direct answers to questions which are of interest to modern research. Still, the following had to be based on these sources since Arabian archaeology is only emerging; one hopes that significant Arabian pre-Islamic sites incur no damage before they are excavated.

Arabian society was tribal and included nomadic, semi-nomadic and settled populations. The settled populations had genealogies similar to those of the nomads and semi-nomads, identifying them as either “northern” or “southern” through the identity of their presumed eponyms. Not only did genealogy define the individual tribe, it also recorded its links with other tribes within families of tribes or tribal federations, each including several or many tribes. Muḥammad’s tribe, Quraysh, for example, was part of the Kināna, and hence the other tribes of the Kināna were its closest relatives. The settled populations, which probably included more people than the nomadic and the semi-nomadic populations put together, do not receive a proportionate share in the literary sources because the limelights are typically on the nomads, more precisely on their military activities, no matter how insignificant. Tribal informants focused on the military activities since the performance of town dwellers in the realms of trade and agriculture was less spectacular, and hence less contributive to tribal solidarity.

After the Islamic Conquests the tribes underwent significant changes, but they preserved their genealogy and their rich oral heritage that was inseparable from the genealogy. The amount of the materials that were transmitted and preserved was naturally affected by the size and political influence of the individual tribes. It stands to reason, however, that tribes that lived in or around the main centres of intellectual endeavour, such as Baṣra and Kūfa, stood a better chance

of having their heritage recorded when oral accounts became written literary history. Regarding the time of Muḥammad, the coverage of individual tribes was uneven since it was also affected by their role at that time. Tribes such as Ghifār, Muzayna, Juhayna and others roaming around Mecca and Medina (pre-Islamic Yathrib)¹ are better known to us than much stronger tribes such as Asad and Ghaṭafān, simply because the former played a more central role in Muḥammad's history.

The attention given in the literature to the military activities of the nomads led to an unrealistic and unbalanced perception of pre-Islamic Arabian society. While Mecca and Medina are described in much detail, many other settlements which were perhaps larger, wealthier and more populous than these two towns, such as Ḥajr (present-day Riyadh) that was the central settlement in the Yamāna area, are hardly taken into account in scholarly descriptions of pre-Islamic Arabia.

Much of the source material regarding Arabia goes back to tribal genealogists, each of whom specialized in a specific tribe or group of tribes. The tribal genealogists also mastered the tribal history and poetry, because they were both extensions of the genealogical information. Let us take for example the Taghlib. Al-Akhzar ibn Suḥayma was an early Taghlibī genealogist who transmitted part of the information on his tribe later incorporated in the genealogy books. Between the early genealogists and the philologists of the second/eighth century there were intermediaries who usually remained unidentified. But expertise in Taghlibī genealogy and tribal history was not an exclusive Taghlibī domain. The most famous genealogist and philologist of early Islam, Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 204/819), learned about Taghlibī matters from Abū Ra'shan Khirāsh ibn Ismā'īl of the 'Ijl tribe who compiled a monograph about the tribal federation of Rabī'a that included both his own tribe, the 'Ijl, and the Taghlib. Khirāsh also reported about a battle that took place in early Islam (namely the Battle of Ṣiffīn, 37/657), which indicates that his scholarly interests covered both the pre- and early Islamic periods. Indeed, tribal genealogists – and in their wake Muslim philologists whose scope was much wider – considered the pre- and early Islamic history of the tribes as an uninterrupted whole.

The members of each tribe shared a notion of common descent from the same eponym. The eponyms in their turn were interconnected by an intricate network of family links that defined the tribal system across Arabia; tribal alliances were often concluded along genealogical lines. From time to time, genealogy fluctuated according to changing military, political and ecological circumstances. There were prestigious and famous lineages beside less prestigious ones. For example, detailed information about the Banū Zurāra, a leading family of the Tamīm, is included in a dialogue between a member of this family and an old man that lived

1 Both the tribes and their territories are referred to by the Arabic term *bādiya*; one speaks of the *bādiya* of such-and-such settlement.

in the south-eastern corner of Arabia but nevertheless had an impressive command of the intricacies of Tamīmī genealogy.²

By definition, tribal informants were biased and acted in an atmosphere of inter-tribal competition or even hostility. The formal state of truce that followed the tribes' conversion to Islam generally stopped their resort to violence. But polemics and friction, especially in the garrison cities of Iraq, were often intensified.

The bias of tribal informants must be taken into account and lead to greater prudence in using their reports. It can be demonstrated by the intertribal polemics surrounding the Arab bow of Tamīm's illustrious pre-Islamic leader Ḥājib ibn Zurāra, which holds a place of honour in Tamīm's pre-Islamic history. During a severe drought Ḥājib asked for Khusro's permission to graze his tribe's herds on the fringes of the sown land in south-western Iraq. As a guarantee of good conduct Ḥājib pledged his bow, an unsophisticated item which nonetheless acquired great value through the eminence and authority of its owner. The Tamīm were very proud of this pledge, which showed the Sassanian emperor adopting their tribal values. Tamīm's adversaries in their turn attempted to belittle the importance of the gesture. "Had they not been in my opinion of less value than the bow, I would not have taken it", the emperor is made to say,³ as if explaining why he did not take Tamīmī hostages instead of a worthless bow. Other anti-Tamīmī informants downgraded the authority with whom Ḥājib had negotiated. One version mentions Iyās ibn Qabīša al-Ṭā'ī who was "Khusro's governor in charge of Ḥīra and the Arabs in its vicinity"; while other versions mention "the head of the *asāwira*, or heavy cavalry, charged with guarding the border between the Arabs and the Persians"⁴ and "one of Khusro's *marzubāns*", or one of his (military, but also civil) governors.⁵ Obviously, tribal polemicists were at work here, and they were anything but innocent.

Yet another example of tribal bias relates to Muḥammad's tribe, Quraysh, which was considered "northern" from the genealogical point of view; unsurprisingly, many sources reveal a pro-Qurashī bias. Regarding the takeover of the Ka'ba in Mecca by Muḥammad's ancestor, Quṣayy, it is reported that a member of the Khuzā'a tribe which is usually considered a "southern" tribe sold the Ka'ba to Quṣayy. As usual, there are several versions regarding the mode of the takeover. However, the specific sale version that concerns us here did not come from an impartial party: it was reportedly promulgated by people fanatically hostile to the

2 Abū l-Baqā' Hibat Allāh al-Hillī, *al-Manāqib al-mazyadiyya*, ed. Šāliḥ Mūsā Darādika and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Khrīsāt, 'Ammān: Maktabat al-Risāla al-Ḥadītha, 1404/1984, 1: 353. The late Ḥamad al-Jāsir wrote a monograph entitled *Bāhila al-qabīla l-muftarā 'alayhā*, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1410/1989. Tribal genealogies remain a delicate matter in contemporary Saudi Arabia.

3 Abū Maṣṣūr al-Tha'ālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb fī l-mudāf wa-l-mansūb*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo: Dār Nahḍat Miṣr, 1965, 626.

4 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, MS Süleymanie Kütüphanesi, Reisülküttap Mustafa Efendi, 597, 598, 960a.

5 Abū l-Baqā', *al-Manāqib al-mazyadiyya*, 1: 61.

“southern” tribes.⁶ The Khuzā‘a did not remain indifferent to this hostile description of a crucial chapter in their tribal history: the historian Wāqidī (d. 207/822) concludes a variant of this version with the statement that it was denied by the elders of the Khuzā‘a.⁷

The nomadic and settled populations

Pre-Islamic Arabia was not lawless or wild since an unwritten legal code controlled the life of its people. The law of talion and various security arrangements protected the lives of tribesmen outside their tribal territories.

The boundaries of these territories were generally acknowledged; tribesmen were supposed to know when they left the territories belonging to their tribes. But just like tribal genealogies, tribal boundaries fluctuated to reflect changing circumstances on the ground. A tribe’s territory often included enclaves belonging to other tribes, which necessitated cooperation between the tribes involved; indeed, such enclaves could only survive where a clear legal code prevailed.

Although the number of literate people was limited even in the settlements, resort to written documents during the conclusion of alliances and transactions was common.⁸ The so-called Constitution of Medina concluded by Muḥammad shortly after the hijra shows that complex legal documents and legal terminology in Arabic had existed in Arabia before the advent of Islam.

The genealogical variegation of the settled populations was probably greater than that of the nomads; indeed, one expects the population of a settlement to include several or many tribes. This was the case with the Christian tribal groups living in Ḥīra, collectively referred to as al-‘Ibād, that preserved their original tribal affiliations. Pre-Islamic Medina provides further evidence of this: several towns in the Medina area were inhabited by *jummā‘*, or groups from various tribes. “The people of Zuhra” (*ahl Zuhra*) and “the people of Zubāla”, to give but two examples of such towns, were described as *jummā‘*.⁹

The crucial relationship between the nomadic and settled populations across Arabia took many forms. Due to the size of their territory and their mill-stone-like roaming around their grazing grounds and water places, the Tamīm were one of the so-called “mill-stones of the Arabs” (*arḥā‘ al-‘arab*).¹⁰

6 Al-Wazīr al-Maghribī, *al-Īnās fī ‘ilm al-ansāb*, bound with Ibn Ḥabīb, *Mukhtalif al-qabā‘il wa-mu‘talifuhā*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir, Riyadh: al-Nādī al-Adabī, 1980, 114: *fa-yaqūlul-muta‘aṣṣibūna ‘alā l-Yamāniyya inna Quṣayyan shtarā l-miftāh*.

7 Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Fāsī, *Shifā‘ al-gharām bi-akḥbār al-balad al-ḥarām*, ed. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Salām Tadmurī, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1985, 2: 87.

8 Cf. M. Lecker, “A pre-Islamic endowment deed in Arabic regarding al-Waḥīda in the Ḥijāz”, in Lecker, *Variorum* II, no. IV.

9 Samhūdī, *Wafā‘*, 1: 306–8.

10 Ibn Sa‘īd al-Andalusī, *Nashwat al-‘arab bi-ta‘rīkh jāhiliyyat al-‘arab*, ed. Naṣrat ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, ‘Ammān: Maktabat al-Aqṣā, 1982, 1: 415.

But even the powerful Tamīmīs were vulnerable to outside pressure since they had to rely on the settlements for part of their subsistence. Their massacre in the battle of Yawm al-Mushaqqar could only take place because of their annual visit to Hajar on the coast of the Persian Gulf in order to receive their provisions.¹¹

Sometimes the nomads roaming around a certain settlement and the people of the settlement belonged to the same tribe. The third/ninth century geographer ‘Arrām al-Sulamī’s description of the Suwāriqiyya stronghold south-east of Medina is generally true for pre-Islamic times as well. He says that Suwāriqiyya belonged to the Sulaym tribe alone and that each of the Sulamīs had a share in it. It had fields, dates and other kinds of fruit. The Sulamīs born in Suwāriqiyya lived there, while the others were *bādiya* and roamed around it, supplying food along the pilgrim roads as far as Ḍariyya seven days’ journey from Suwāriqiyya.¹² In other words, the Sulamī farmers of Suwāriqiyya tilled the land and tended the irrigation systems, while the Sulamī nomads tended the beasts – above all the camels, which require extensive grazing grounds and hence cannot be raised in significant numbers by farmers.

The biography of Muḥammad provides further evidence of the cooperation between the nomadic and settled populations. When the Jewish Naḍīr were expelled from Medina several years after the hijra, they hired hundreds of camels from a nomadic tribe roaming the vicinity of Medina; in normal circumstances these nomads would be transporting goods on behalf of the Naḍīr. When the people of Khaybar cut off the fruit of their palm trees, the nomads would arrive with their camels and carry it for them to the villages, one camel load after the other (*‘urwa bi-‘urwa*, literally: one loop of the camel load after the other). The nomads would sell the fruit, keeping for themselves half of the return.¹³

In the battlefield, nomads fought against other nomads, while settled people fought against other settled people. A verse by the Prophet’s Companion, the poet Hassān ibn Thābit (who was of the Khazraj, a “southern” tribe) demonstrates this:

11 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 985: “This was close to the days of the *luqāt* [the picking up of dates from the stumps of the branches of palm-trees after the cutting off of the dates]. The Tamīm used to go at that time to Hajar to get provisions and collect the dates left on the trees (*li-l-mīra wa-l-luqāt*)”. Hajar was the largest date producing oasis in northern Arabia. On the connection between *al-mīra wa-l-kayl*, or provisions, and obedience, see M.J. Kister, “al-Ḥīra: Some notes on its relations with Arabia”, *Arabica* 15 (1968), 168. The Bedouin who came to Yamāma in the holy months (in which no warfare took place) in order to get provisions were called *al-sawāqīt*; Abū ‘Ubayda Ma’mar ibn al-Muthannā, *al-Dībāj*, ed. al-Jarbū’ and al-‘Uthaymīn, Cairo: al-Khānjī, 1991, 53: *wa-kāna l-sawāqīt min qabā’il shattā’ li-summū sawāqīt li-annahum kānū ya’tūna l-Yamāma fī l-ashhur al-ḥurum li-l-tamr wa-l-zar’*. At the time of the Prophet, when a certain Tamīmī came to Hajar in the holy month of Rajab in order to get provisions for his family (*yamīru ahlahu min Hajar*, i.e. as he used to do every year), his wife escaped from him; see e.g. Majd al-Dīn Ibn al-Athīr, *Manāil al-ṭālib fī sharḥ ṭiwāl al-gharā’ib*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī, Mecca: Jāmi’at Umm al-Qurā, 1983, 495–6.

12 ‘Arrām al-Sulamī, “Asmā’ jibāl Tihāma”, in ‘Abd al-Salām Hārūn (ed.), *Nawādir al-makḥṭūṭāt*, II, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1973, 431–2; Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-buldān*, s.v. al-Suwāriqiyya.

13 Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 2: 35.

Our settled men spare us the village dwellers/while our Bedouin spare us the Bedouin of the Ma‘add [i.e. the “northern” tribes].¹⁴

During the *ridda* wars that followed Muḥammad’s death there was a dispute within the Muslim army in Yamāma between settled (*ahl al-qurā*, including the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār) and the nomads (*ahl al-bādiya/al-bawādī*), with each accusing the other of cowardice. The settled people claimed that they knew better how to fight against their likes, while the nomads said that the settled people were not good fighters and did not know what war was.¹⁵

The military aspect was dominant in the relationship between the settled and the nomads, as shown by accounts dealing with Muḥammad and his Companions. Friendly nomads were considered Muḥammad’s *bādiya*, with reference to their military role. Two tribes living near Medina once asked for Muḥammad’s permission to build for themselves a mosque in Medina similar to the mosques of other tribes. But he told them that his mosque was also their mosque, that they were his *bādiya* while he was their *hādiira* – or their settled counterpart (literally: “people dwelling by waters”) – and that they should provide him with succour when called upon to do so.¹⁶ The hijra of one of the *bādiya* meant that he had to provide succour when called upon to do so (*an yujība idhā du‘iya*) and to obey orders.¹⁷ A “good” Bedouin differed from a “bad” one in that the former provided military aid. When ‘Ā’isha mentioned certain Bedouin, pejoratively calling them *a‘rāb*, Muḥammad corrected her: they are not *a‘rāb* but our *bādiya*, while we are their *hādiira*; when summoned, they provide us with succour.¹⁸ A fuller version of this tradition makes it clear that the commitment to give succour was reciprocal.¹⁹

With regard to the relationship between the nomadic and settled populations the question of ascendancy arises. The conquest of settlements by nomads²⁰ must have been rare because the latter did not wish to become farmers. But Muḥammad’s history shows that in the major military confrontations of his time the initiative was in the hands of his Qurashī enemies and later in those of Muḥammad himself; this suggests that the ascendancy belonged to the settled people. Let us take for example the military activity of the Sulaym at that time: first they fought with Quraysh

14 Ḥassān ibn Thābit, *Dīwān*, ed. W. ‘Arafat, London: Luzac, 1971, 1: 462, no. 287: *maḥāḍirunā yakfūnanā sākina l-qurā / wa-a‘rābunā yakfūnanā man tama‘dadā*.

15 Ṭabarī, *Ta‘rīkh*, 1: 1946, 1947.

16 Ibn Shabba, *Ta‘rīkh al-madīna al-munawwara*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt, n. p., [1399/1979]; reprint Beirut, 1990, 1: 78.

17 Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, ed. Muḥammad Khalīl Harrās, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1976, 280, no. 538.

18 *Ibid.*, no. 539.

19 Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Maṭālib al-‘āliya bi-zawā‘id al-masānīd al-thamāniya*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-A‘zamī, Kuwait: Idārat al-Shu‘ūn al-Islāmiyya, 1973, 4: 144, no. 4185.

20 Cf. M.J. Kister, “On the wife of the goldsmith from Fadak and her progeny”, *Le Muséon* 92 (1979), 321–30; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* II, no. V.

against Muḥammad, then they fought with Muḥammad against Quraysh.²¹ In both cases the initiative was not theirs, and the same is true of the *ridḍa* wars and the Conquests.

Closely linked to the question of ascendancy is that of the food allocations granted by the settled people to the nomads. At first glance they appear to indicate the ascendancy of the latter, but this was not the case. The people of Medina granted an annual share of their date produce to the strong tribal leader of the 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'ṣa'a, Abū Barā' 'Āmir ibn Mālik (nicknamed *mulā'ib al-asinna*, or the one playing with spears). He received from them annually a certain amount (*kayla*) of dates in return for a guarantee of safe conduct for the Medinans traveling in Najd.²² While protecting the lives and goods of these Medinans, the grant did not give the nomadic Banū 'Āmir ascendancy over the settled Medinans. This state of affairs remains unchanged when other terms are employed in similar context. In connection with the conquest (or rather temporary takeover) of Fadak by the nomadic Kalb around 570 C.E. it is reported that the Kalbī leader involved was entitled to a pay (*ja'āla*) from the people of Fadak. A *ja'āla* is a payment for services such as the return of a missing camel or a fugitive slave. The Tamīm transported Khusro's caravan from Yamāma to the Yemen in return for a *ja'āla*, and the Kalb may well have earned their *ja'āla* for providing similar services. Also, the leader of the Fazāra tribe, 'Uyayna ibn Ḥiṣn, received an annual grant from the date produce of Medina. The term used in his case, *itāwa*, sometimes means a tribute or tax. But here it designates an annual grant in kind to a nomadic leader, similar to those referred to by the terms *kayla* and *ja'āla*.

Medina and the other settlements could afford to grant part of their huge surplus of dates to the leaders of large nomadic tribes in order to secure their goodwill. The size of the grants must have varied according to the harvest and the changing political circumstances on the ground; but even where they amounted to a sizeable part of the annual produce they did not indicate nomadic ascendancy.

Idol worship

The pre-Islamic Arabs were united by their love of poetry; many of them could probably appreciate the artistic value of the poems recited during major tribal gatherings, for example at the 'Ukāz fare, not far from Ṭā'if. In their daily life, however, they spoke a large number of dialects. Many of them acknowledged the sanctity of the Ka'ba in Mecca and made pilgrimage to it, travelling under the protection of the holy months during which all hostilities ceased. The Arab idol worshippers were polytheists, but they also believed in a High God called Allāh whose house was in the Ka'ba and who had supremacy over their tribal deities.

21 M. Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1989, 136–7.

22 Ḥassān ibn Thābit, *Dīwān*, 2: 176. The term *kayla* is derived from the root *k.y.l.* which denotes a measure of capacity. See p. 96 in this volume.

Despite the diversity in the forms of idol worship, on the whole it was a common characteristic of pre-Islamic Arabian society. In the centuries preceding the advent of Islam Christianity and Judaism were competing with each other for the hearts of the Yemenite polytheists. Medina had a large Jewish population, while Yamāma and eastern Arabia had a large Christian one. Christianity, and to a lesser extent Judaism, penetrated several nomadic tribes. The celebrated *ḥanīfs*, ascetic seekers of true religion who abandoned idol worship, were probably few; moreover, the identification of some of them as *ḥanīfs* is questionable. Several early Tamīmī converts to Islam were former Zoroastrians. However, on the eve of Islam idol worship prevailed, with the prominent exception of the Yemen, considered by medieval Muslim historians to have been predominantly Jewish.

Idols of every shape and material were ubiquitous, and their worship showed no signs of decline. Many conversion stories regarding both former custodians of idols and ordinary worshippers specifically refer to a shift from idol worship to Islam.

The most common deity was the household idol. Several conversion accounts that prove the proliferation of household idols in Mecca are associated with its conquest by Muḥammad (8/630). Wāqidī adduces legendary accounts about the destruction of household idols. While the accounts aim at establishing the Islamic credentials of their protagonists, the background details are credible. One account has it that after the conquest of Mecca, Muḥammad's announcer ordered the destruction of every idol found in the houses. So whenever 'Ikrima ibn Abī Jahl (who belonged to the Qurashī branch Makhzūm) heard of an idol in one of the houses of Quraysh, he went there in order to smash it; it is specifically stated in this context that every Qurashī in Mecca had an idol in his house. In Wāqidī's account we find that the announcer proclaimed that every idol had to be destroyed or burnt and that it was forbidden to sell them (i.e. sell wooden idols to be used as firewood). The informant himself saw the idols being carried around Mecca (i.e. by peddlers); the Bedouin used to buy them and take them to their tents. Every Qurashī, we are told, had an idol in his house. He stroked it whenever he entered or left the house to draw a blessing from it.

Yet another account in the same source has it that when Hind bint 'Utba (the mother of the future Umayyad caliph Mu'āwiya) embraced Islam, she started striking an idol in her house with an adze, cutting oblong pieces from it.²³ She probably destroyed her wooden idol using the very tool with which it had been carved. The authors of the legendary accounts about 'Ikrima and Hind sought to emphasize the zeal of these new converts, but the background information is accurate: idols were found in all Meccan households.

In Medina, which was in many ways different from Mecca, idols were associated with various levels of the tribal organization. A house idol made of wood was an obstacle for Abū Ṭalḥa of the Khazraj when he proposed to his future

23 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 870–1.

wife. She refused to marry “one who worshipped a stone which did neither harm nor good and a piece of wood hewed for him by a carpenter”.²⁴ Several young Medinans from both of the dominant Arab tribes of Medina, the Aws and Khazraj, smashed the idols found among their fellow tribesmen. Here too household idols were the most common form of idol worship. We have some evidence about the attributes of one of the Medinan household idols. Before one of them was destroyed with an adze, it had to be brought down, which indicates that it had been placed in an elevated place such as a shelf; the same idol had a veil hung over it.

One level up from the household idols we find those belonging to noblemen. Every nobleman in Medina owned an idol that had a name of its own. In addition, *baṭns*, or small tribal groups, had idols which, similarly, had names. The *baṭn*'s idol was placed in a sanctuary (*bayt*) and belonged to the whole *baṭn* (*li-jamā'at al-baṭn*). Sacrifices were offered to it. One level above the *baṭns* in the tribal system of Medina stood the major subdivisions of the Aws and Khazraj. Evidence has so far emerged regarding the idol of one such subdivision: the Banū l-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj had an idol called Huzam that was placed in their *majlis*, or place of assembly, similarly called Huzam. One assumes that sacrifices were also offered to Huzam, since sacrifices were offered to the lower-level idols of the *baṭns*. The idol al-Khamīs was worshipped by the Khazraj,²⁵ while al-Sa'īda, which was located on Mt. Uḥūd north of Medina, was worshipped, among others, by the Azd – no doubt including the Aws and Khazraj, which belonged to the Azd.²⁶ At the top of the hierarchy of the idols worshipped by the Aws and Khazraj stood Manāt. A descendant of Muḥammad's Companion Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda reports that Sa'd's grandfather annually donated ten slaughter camels to Manāt. Sa'd's father followed suit, and so did Sa'd himself before his conversion to Islam. Sa'd's son, Qays, donated the same number of camels to the Ka'ba.²⁷ The report is not concerned with idol worship as such but with generosity, prestige and tribal leadership. Sa'd's donation of sacrifice camels to Manāt before his conversion to Islam shows that its cult continued to the very advent of Islam.

Household idols were ubiquitous in Medina, as they were in Mecca; noblemen, *baṭns* and major Aws and Khazraj subdivisions had idols. The Khazraj as a whole worshipped a special idol; the Aws and Khazraj were among the worshippers of another, and they were still worshipping their main idol, Manāt, when Muḥammad appeared. All this does not indicate a decline in idol worship.

Expressing his opinion about the influence of monotheism on the Arabs before Islam, Ibn Ishāq says that “it was merely superficial; the Arabs were illiterate and what they heard from Jews and Christians had no effect on their lives”. With regard to idol worship his statement is trustworthy.

24 Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir-Dār Bayrūt, 1960–68, 8: 425–6.

25 Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 1085.

26 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 316–17.

27 Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 2: 595.

Foreign powers

Pre-Islamic Arabia and its tribes were not isolated from the great empires of Byzantium and Persia, with the latter probably playing a more significant role. The Byzantine emperor, for example, is said to have been instrumental in the takeover of Mecca from the Khuzā'a tribe by Muḥammad's ancestor Quṣayy.²⁸

The Byzantines and Sassanians conducted their Arabian affairs through their respective Arab buffer kingdoms, Ghassān and Ḥīra. The king of Ḥīra appointed governors to the frontiers from Iraq to Baḥrayn, each of whom ruled together with a Bedouin leader who was in fact his subordinate.²⁹

The same pattern was found in 'Umān: a treaty between the Sassanians and the Julandā family concluded in the second half of the sixth century stipulated that the Sassanians were entitled to station with the "kings" of the Azd four thousand men including *marzubāns* (military, but also civil, governors) and *asāwira* (heavy cavalry), and an *'āmil* or official. The Sassanians were stationed in the coastal regions, while the Azd were "kings" in the mountains, in the deserts and in the other areas surrounding 'Umān.³⁰ In other words, authority was divided between the Arabs and the Sassanians along geographical lines.

In Baḥrayn there was an Arab governor, with a Sassanian superior. Al-Mundhir ibn Sāwā al-Tamīmī is said to have been the governor of Baḥrayn. But the historian Balādhuṛī (d. 279/892) draws a clear line at this point between Sassanians and Arabs:

The land of Baḥrayn is part of the Persian kingdom and there were in it many Arabs from the tribes of 'Abd al-Qays, Bakr ibn Wā'il and Tamīm living in its *bādiya*. At the time of the Prophet, al-Mundhir ibn Sāwā was in charge of the Arabs living there on behalf of the Persians.³¹

At the same time Baḥrayn had a Sassanian governor who was al-Mundhir's superior, namely Sībukht, the *marzubān* of Hajar.³² On the eve of Islam the Yemen was under direct Sassanian control.

Roughly to the middle of the sixth century Medina was controlled by a *marzubān* whose seat was in al-Zāra on the coast of the Persian Gulf. The Jewish tribes Naḍīr and Qurayza were "kings" and exacted tribute from the Aws and Khazraj on behalf of

28 Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, 640–1; quoted in M.J. Kister, "Mecca and the tribes of Arabia", in M. Sharon (ed.), *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honour of David Ayalon*, Jerusalem: Cana and Leiden: Brill, 1986, 50; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* II, no. II. Cf. 'Uthmān ibn al-Ḥuwayrith's attempt to gain control of Mecca on behalf of the Byzantine emperor; Kister, "al-Ḥīra", 154. See also p. 20 in this volume.

29 Abū l-Baqā', *al-Manāqib al-Mazyadiyya*, 2: 369.

30 J.C. Wilkinson, "Arab-Persian land relationships in late Sasānid Oman", *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 3 (1973), 41, 44–7.

31 Al-Balādhuṛī, *Futūḥ*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 78: *wa-kāna 'alā l-'arab bihā min qibal al-furs*.

32 His name and title appear in connection with a letter allegedly sent by the Prophet to both al-Mundhir ibn Sāwā and Sībukht *marzubān* Hajar, calling upon them to embrace Islam or pay the poll-tax.

the Sassanians. In the last quarter of the sixth century the king of Ḥīra, al-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir, declared a member of the Khazraj, ‘Amr ibn al-Īnāba, king of Medina or of the Ḥijāz.³³ At that time the Jews were no longer “kings” and tribute collectors but tribute payers. ‘Amr’s appointment shows that Sassanian control in western Arabia continued in the latter half of the sixth century. Sassanian control there is also associated with al-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir’s father, al-Mundhir III (ca. 504–54): the Sassanian emperor Khusro I Anūshirwān (r. 531–79) made him king of the Arabs living between ‘Umān, Baḥrayn and Yamāma to Ṭā’if and the rest of the Ḥijāz.³⁴

Caravan trade was often behind the cooperation between certain nomadic tribes and the Sassanians. The Sulaym and the Hawāzin used to conclude pacts with the kings of Ḥīra, transport the kings’ merchandise and sell it for them at the fare of ‘Ukāz, among others.³⁵ With regard to the previously mentioned battle of Yawm al-Mushaqqar it is reported that Khusro’s caravan, having travelled from Ctesiphon via Ḥīra, was escorted by the Tamīm from Yamāma to the Yemen.

The evidence regarding military cooperation (or indeed any other form of cooperation) between the tribes and the courts of Ctesiphon and Ḥīra reveals a certain tension between the wish to praise the tribe’s military exploits – even those carried out in the service of a foreign power – and the claim of independence from the same power; tribal historiography attempted to distance the tribes from the influence of the courts, while at the same time boasting of the close contacts between them.

Many Arabs probably saw the local representatives of the great power from behind bars: the kings of Ḥīra practised widespread incarceration as punishment and as a means of pressure. There were jails or incarceration camps at al-Quṭqūṭāna in south-western Iraq and at Ḥīra itself.³⁶

The Tamīm, the Taghlib and others took part in the institution of *ridāfa* (viceroyship) to the king of Ḥīra, which was essential in establishing Ḥīra’s control over the tribes. The ceremonial and material privileges associated with it (perhaps exaggerated by the tribal informants) helped in buying off potentially dangerous tribes. Through trade, military cooperation and diplomacy Arab tribal leaders and merchants became acquainted with the courts of the buffer kingdoms and the great empires.

Mecca: trade and agriculture

Mecca and Medina, thanks to their association with the history of the Prophet Muḥammad and the rise of Islam, are better known to us than many other settlements in Arabia that may well have been larger, wealthier and more populous.

33 Kister, “al-Ḥīra”, 147–9; Lecker, *Variorum II*, index. It would seem that at that time Medina was no longer controlled from al-Zāra but directly from Ḥīra.

34 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 958–9.

35 Abū l-Baqā’, *al-Manāqib al-Mazyadiyya*, 2: 375.

36 Abū Ḥātim al-Sijistānī, *Al-Mu‘ammarūn*, bound with *Al-Waṣāyā* by the same author, ed. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im ‘Āmir, Cairo: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyya, 1961, 20–2. ‘Adī ibn Zayd was jailed at al-Ṣinnayn; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 1023. A poet who lived in the transition period between Jāhiliyya and Islam (*mukhadram*) was jailed by the Sassanians at al-Mushaqqar; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 2: 513.

Mecca and its dominant tribe, Quraysh, reveal a high degree of internal cohesion, but Mecca's stability was in fact based on the preservation of a balance of power between two rival alliances of Quraysh rather than on any sense of tribal solidarity. As one can expect, in accounts of Mecca's pre-Islamic history – for example concerning the establishment of its international caravan trade – the Prophet's ancestors receive more credit than is due to them. In any case, Meccan trade was not a myth, but was Mecca's main source of revenue, regardless of the items and the income involved. In Arabian terms Mecca was a major trade centre, although it is impossible to establish whether or not it was the largest of its kind in Arabia.

Crossing evidence shows that the Prophet himself had been a merchant before receiving his first revelation. Trade partnerships were a significant aspect of the economic cooperation between Quraysh and the tribe controlling Ṭā'if, the Thaqīf. Reportedly, the Qurashī Abū Sufyān and the Thaqafī Ghaylān ibn Salama traded with Persia, accompanied by a group of people from both tribes.³⁷ Both partners were Muḥammad's contemporaries.

In addition to trade, the entrepreneurial Qurashīs invested in agriculture. Since conditions in Mecca itself were uninviting for agriculture, they looked for opportunities elsewhere. It can be argued that the Qurashī expansion in Arabia preceded the advent of Islam.

There is a legendary story about the death of Ḥarb ibn Umayya, the father of the previously mentioned Abū Sufyān and the grandfather of the caliph Mu'āwiya. He was reportedly killed by the *jinn* at al-Qurayya north-west of Mecca, since together with a local partner he disturbed the *jinn* or killed one of them by mistake. This occurred while they were clearing a thicket in order to prepare the land for cultivation. The story probably owes its preservation to the legendary elements, but the background details are no doubt factual.³⁸ There is rich evidence of pre-Islamic Qurashī involvement in agriculture in Ṭā'if, the town that supplied (and still supplies) most of Mecca's demand for fruit;³⁹ hence its appellation *bustān al-ḥaram*, or the orchard of the sacred territory of Mecca.⁴⁰ Side by side with the locals who cultivated small tracts of land, Qurashī entrepreneurs developed large estates in the valleys of Ṭā'if before the advent of Islam. Many Bedouin of the Qays 'Aylān and other tribes earned their living by transporting Ṭā'if products to Mecca. At Nakhla north-east of Mecca a caravan carrying wine, tanned skins and raisins⁴¹ on its way from Ṭā'if to Mecca was attacked shortly after the hijra by the Prophet's Companions.

37 Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī, *Al-Awā'il*, ed. Muḥammad al-Miṣrī and Walīd Qaṣṣāb, Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1975, 2: 228.

38 After the hijra it was one of Muḥammad's Companions, Ṭalḥa, who introduced the sowing of wheat in Medina, while another Companion, 'Abdallāh ibn 'Āmir, was famous for his talent for discovering water sources.

39 Al-Ḥimyarī, *Al-Rawḍ al-mi'tār fi khabar al-aqtār*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān, 1975, 379a.

40 Al-Fākīhī, *Akhbār Makka*, ed. 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Duḥaysh, Mecca: Maktabat wa-Maṭba'at al-Nahḍa al-Ḥadītha, 1987, 3: 206.

41 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 1: 16.

The best known and perhaps the largest Qurashī property in the vicinity of Ṭāʾif is al-Waḥṭ which is located in the valley of Wajj. The father of the Prophet's Companion ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ owned this estate before Islam. ʿAmr further developed it by raising the shoots of many thousands of grape-vines on pieces of wood made to support them.⁴²

Numerous other Qurashīs owned estates near Ṭāʾif. They included, among others, Abū Sufyān, ʿUtba and Shayba sons of Rabīʿa ibn ʿAbd Shams, the Prophet's uncle al-ʿAbbās and al-Walīd ibn al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra (the brother of the famous general Khālīd ibn al-Walīd).

The Muslim Conquests in Palestine and elsewhere are unlikely to have been accompanied by large-scale devastation of agricultural land and facilities, since ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ and the other Qurashī generals had previous experience with agriculture and appreciated the economic value of cultivated land.

Medina: a precarious balance

The cluster of towns or villages known before Islam as Yathrib was called after the town of Yathrib on its north-western side. Under Islam the cluster became known as al-Madīna. Major political and military upheavals preceding the hijra contributed to Muḥammad's success there in ways that are not yet fully clear.

Medina's large Jewish population was dispersed in both the Sāfila – or Lower Medina in the north – and the ʿĀliya, or Upper Medina in the south. The Qurayza and Naḍīr are said to have inhabited the ʿĀliya, while a third large tribe, the Qaynuqāʿ, lived in the Sāfila. But the Naḍīr probably owned estates outside the ʿĀliya as well: the town of Zuhra is defined as the town of the Naḍīr (*qaryat banī l-naḍīr*); moreover, one of their notables, Kaʿb ibn al-Ashraf, owned land in al-Jurf north-west of Medina, at the upper part of the ʿAqīq valley.⁴³

The oldest stratum in the Arab population of Medina was made up of members of the Balī and of other tribes, many of whom converted to Judaism. The Aws and Khazraj, who settled in Medina at a later stage, became known under Islam by the honorific appellation al-Anṣār (the helpers). Unlike the earlier Arab settlers, most of the Aws and Khazraj remained idol worshippers. When the Aws and Khazraj settled in Medina, their position vis-à-vis the Jewish tribes was weak. But gradually they gained strength, built fortresses and planted date orchards. The Anṣār were ridiculed by other tribes for their initial subjection by the Jews, particularly with regard to the Arab Jewish king al-Fityawn, “the owner of Zuhra” (*ṣāhib Zuhra*),⁴⁴ who reportedly practised the *ius prima noctis* on the Arab women. No wonder that al-Fityawn figures prominently in Anṣārī apologetic historiography. Admitting their initial weakness, they claimed that it came to an end with the killing of al-Fityawn by a member of the Khazraj; from that moment onwards the

42 Fākihī, *Akhbār Makka*, 3: 205 (read *arrasha* instead of *gharasa*); Yāqūt, *Buldān*, s.v. al-Waḥṭ.

43 In due course Muḥammad himself owned agricultural land in al-Jurf.

44 Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1927–74, 3: 40.

Jews were at the mercy of their former clients. However, Anṣārī historiography should be taken with a grain of salt. The Jews suffered a setback, or the Khazrajī ‘Amr ibn al-Iṭnāba would not have become the king of Yathrib in the last quarter of the sixth century. But by the advent of Islam the main Jewish tribes Naḍīr and Qurayza regained their power, as is shown by their victory at the Battle of Bu‘āth (615 or 617), together with their Awsī allies, over the powerful Khazraj.

‘Amr ibn al-Iṭnāba and al-Fityawn were not the only kings in Medina before Islam. Several generations before Islam there lived there a king called Ama ibn Ḥarām of the Khazraj subdivision called Salima whose powers included the confiscation and redistribution of agricultural land.

On the eve of Islam a member of the Khazraj, ‘Abdallāh ibn Ubayy, was nearly crowned. Mas‘ūdī reports: “The Khazraj were superior to the Aws shortly before the advent of Islam and intended to crown ‘Abdallāh ibn Ubayy ibn Salūl al-Khazrajī. This coincided with the arrival of the Prophet and his kingship ceased to exist.”⁴⁵

Ibn Ubayy did not fight against the Jewish-Awsī coalition at Bu‘āth, where his tribe, the Khazraj, was defeated. After Bu‘āth he was the strongest leader among the Khazraj, and he showed great diplomatic skill in re-establishing the system of alliances that had existed before Bu‘āth. In this system the Naḍīr were allied with the Khazraj,⁴⁶ while the Qurayza were allied with the Aws. At the time of the hijra the Naḍīr and Qurayza were the main owners of fortresses and weapons in Medina, which made them the dominant power there.

45 Quoted in Ibn Sa‘īd, *Nashwat al-ṭarab*, 1: 190.

46 Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 387–8, provides valuable evidence on the aftermath of Bu‘āth.

THE MONOTHEISTIC COUSINS OF MUḤAMMAD'S WIFE KHADĪJA¹

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The genealogical literature, among other types of Islamic literature, preserves rich evidence about the Quraysh tribe that for several centuries held supremacy in Islam. Tribe members were usually responsible for the preservation of genealogical information, and the Quraysh were no exception. Although the genealogical literature is not free of differences and disputes, wives, children and other family members were not invented.

Naturally the years that preceded Muḥammad's Call to prophethood have received less scholarly attention than those that followed it. Khadīja played a major role in Muḥammad's life. He was around 25 years old when he married her,² while she was several years – not many years – older than him. They were married for 24 or 25 years³ until her death several years before the hijra.⁴ The sources on Muḥammad's life are quite generous concerning Khadīja's role in the early stage of the Call.⁵

Muḥammad and Khadīja descended from Quṣayy ibn Kilāb. Khadīja's paternal aunt, Umm Ḥabīb, was Muḥammad's great grandmother, being the grandmother of Muḥammad's mother Āmina.⁶ More importantly, three paternal uncles and one paternal aunt of Khadīja were born by Muḥammad's great aunt, Khālidā bint Hāshim (ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy, nicknamed *qubbat al-dībāj* or "the dome of brocade") who was the sister of Muḥammad's grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. The uncles were Nawfal, Ḥabīb – both of whom were killed in the Fijār war – and Ṣayfī, sons of

1 The article is dedicated to Professor Uri Rubin on the occasion of his retirement. The main points were presented on 4 December 2012 in the Tel Aviv University during a colloquium held in his honour.

2 Other versions concerning his age at marriage have 21, 23, 29, 30 and 37; M.J. Kister, "The sons of Khadīja", *JSAI* 16 (1993), 59–95, reprinted in U. Rubin (ed.), *The Life of Muḥammad*, Aldershot: Variorum, 1998, 57–93, at 66–9, 85.

3 Kister, "The sons of Khadīja", 80, 85.

4 The sources mention 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 years before the hijra; Kister, "The sons of Khadīja", 83–4.

5 Kister, "The sons of Khadīja"; *EQ*, s.v. Khadīja (B.F. Stowasser); *EP*, s.v. Khādīja (W.M. Watt).

6 Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 206–7.

Asad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā. The aunt’s name was Ruqayya.⁷ (Ḥabīb’s son, Tuwayt, is discussed later in detail.)

The links between the two families continued in the generation of Muḥammad and Khadīja. The son of Khadīja’s sister Hāla, Abū l-‘Āṣ ibn al-Rabī‘ (ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā ibn ‘Abd Shams) married his maternal cousin Zaynab, daughter of Muḥammad and Khadīja.⁸ Another nephew of Khadīja, al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām (ibn Khuwaylid ibn Asad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā) was one of Muḥammad’s closest Companions. Al-Zubayr was also Muḥammad’s paternal cousin, being the son of Muḥammad’s paternal aunt Ṣafīyya bint ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib. Al-Zubayr’s brother al-Sā’ib who was also Ṣafīyya’s son participated in the battle of Uḥud on Muḥammad’s side.⁹ Two half-brothers of al-Zubayr and al-Sā’ib who were born by another woman sided with Muḥammad’s enemies: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (formerly known as ‘Abd al-Ka’ba) and ‘Abdallāh, sons of al-‘Awwām ibn Khuwaylid, fought at Badr with the pagans and the latter was killed there.¹⁰

Khadīja’s Christian cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal

Khadīja had fourteen paternal uncles¹¹ and many paternal cousins. Khadīja’s Christian cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal is famous in Islamic historiography. His Christian faith, his literacy and his erudition were vital in establishing that Muḥammad was a true prophet, and he figures prominently in the famous account of Muḥammad’s first revelation. In this context we are told that Waraqa was literate in ‘*ibrāniyya* or Hebrew. A variant reading has ‘*arabiyya* or Arabic instead of ‘*ibrāniyya*, but the latter seems to be *lectio difficilior*. His knowledge of the scriptures is emphasized, albeit in rather ambiguous terms.¹² Admittedly, Syriac was the scripture language of the Christian Arabs in Muḥammad’s lifetime,¹³ but it does not follow that ‘*ibrāniyya* in Waraqa’s case should be

- 7 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1417/1996, 30. Ruqayya is mentioned e.g. in Muṣ’ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 207. She was the grandmother of al-Ḥakam ibn Abī l-‘Āṣ on the mother side. Al-Ḥakam fathered the caliph Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam.
- 8 Muṣ’ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 230–1.
- 9 Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba fī ma’rifat al-ṣahāba*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu’awwad and ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1415/1994, 2: 397–8; *TMD*, 18: 340. Al-Sā’ib was much younger than al-Zubayr: when the latter embraced Islam, the former was still a child; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 44.
- 10 Muṣ’ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 235; *TMD*, 35: 233–4. Incidentally, one of Khadīja’s brothers, Nawfal ibn Khuwaylid, was also killed at Badr while fighting against Muḥammad; Muṣ’ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 230. However, Nawfal’s son al-Aswad was among the Muslims who emigrated to Ethiopia in the second emigration. He came to Medina after Muḥammad’s arrival there; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 63.
- 11 Caskeel, 1, no. 19.
- 12 S.H. Griffith, “The Gospel in Arabic: An inquiry into its appearance in the first Abbasid century”, *Oriens Christianus* 69 (1985), 126–67, at 144–9. The variant runs as follows: *wa-kāna yaktubu l-kūtāba l-‘ibrāniyya fa-yaktubu mina l-ijnīl bi-l-‘ibrāniyya mā shā’a llāhu an yaktuba*. H. Motzki (*EQ*, s.v. Nāmūs) believes that the variant “Hebrew” is a transmission error.
- 13 Griffith, “The Gospel in Arabic”, 146–8.

interpreted as Syriac. Waraqa's monotheistic credentials that are called for in connection with MuḤammad's first revelation are better served by the claim – regardless of its historicity – that he knew Hebrew, a language which most Christians at that time did not know. The assumption that *'ibrāniyya* is used here in the sense of Hebrew is supported by the reference to Moses: according to Waraqa, MuḤammad's revelation was “*al-Nāmūs* (the revealed law, or the angel Gabriel) that had been sent down to Moses”.¹⁴ Reportedly, God spoke to Moses in *'ibrāniyya* and to MuḤammad in *'arabiyya*.¹⁵ The mention of Hebrew can also be linked to the assertion that before becoming a Christian, Waraqa had been Jewish. For this reason, we are told, he referred to Moses and not to Jesus, although Jesus was (chronologically) closer to him than Moses, and although Waraqa was himself a Christian. Alternatively, he may have mentioned Moses because his Law is unanimously accepted and abrogated what preceded it, while the Law of Jesus is complimenting and confirming the Law of Moses, not abrogating it.¹⁶

It is said that Khadīja was supposed to marry Waraqa: when she was still a bachelor, she was “mentioned” to him (as a potential bride).¹⁷ This should possibly be linked to the allegation that Waraqa's sister offered herself to MuḤammad's father 'Abdallāh. She had seen in him the light that disappeared after his intercourse with MuḤammad's mother Āmina and was later transferred to MuḤammad.¹⁸ Incidentally, Waraqa's sister is supposed to have been literate.¹⁹

Waraqa was not survived by living offspring (*fa-lam yu 'qib*),²⁰ but some of his family members played a minor political role. His brother 'Adī owned a court in the Balāt of Medina (an area paved with stone) between the Prophet's mosque and the market. Like many other Qurashīs, 'Adī was literate – and so was his

14 U. Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The Life of MuḤammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims*, Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1995, 107; *EQ*, s.v. Nāmūs (H. Motzki).

15 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Īmān*, ed. al-Albānī, Amman: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1416/1996, 80.

16 Al-Ḥalabī, *al-Sīra al-Ḥalabiyya (Insān al-'uyūn fī sīrat al-amīn al-ma'mūn)*, printed together with Dahlān, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya wa-l-āthār al-MuḤammadiyya*, reprint Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya al-Kubrā, 1382/1962, 1: 263–4.

17 Kister, “The sons of Khadīja”, 60.

18 See e.g. Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1: 164; U. Rubin, “Pre-existence and light: Aspects of the concept of *nūr MuḤammad*”, *IOS* 5 (1975), 62–119, reprinted in idem, *MuḤammad the Prophet and Arabia*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011, no. IV, at 83–4. Ch. Robinson (*EP*, s.v. Warāka b. Nawfal) correctly links the claim that Khadīja was “mentioned” to Waraqa to the traditionists' occasional sensitivity about their relations: it is stated that her visit to Waraqa after MuḤammad's first revelation was her first visit to him, *wa-hiya awal marra atathu*; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 1: 195; Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 110. A lengthy discussion of Waraqa is expected in the next volume of Shahīd's series *Byzantium and the Arabs*; I. Shahīd, “Islam and *Oriens Christianus*: Makka 610–622 A.D.”, in E. Grypeou, M. Swanson and D. Thomas (eds.), *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with early Islam*, Leiden: Brill, 2006, 9–31, at 13.

19 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1, ed. MuḤammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1959, 81: *wa-kānat tanẓuru fī l-kutub*. The source is Wāqidi who calls her Qutayla.

20 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh wa-akhbāruhā*, ed. 'Abbās Hānī al-Jarrākh, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 2010, 1: 251.

wife who was also of the Asad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā clan.²¹ ‘Adī was governor of Ḥaḍramawt under the caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb or the caliph ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān.²² The offspring of Warāqa’s other brother, Ṣafwān, had close links with the Marwānids: Ṣafwān’s daughter Busra was a “maternal aunt” of Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam.²³ Marwān transmitted hadith from Busra and married her granddaughter (‘Ā’isha bint Mu‘āwiya ibn al-Mughīra ibn Abī l-‘Āṣ ibn Umayya ibn ‘Abd Shams ibn ‘Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy) who gave birth to the future caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān.²⁴

Warāqa and ‘Uthmān ibn al-Ḥuwayrith were among the four Qurashīs said to have abandoned idol worship on the eve of Islam in search of true religion.²⁵ The fact that they were cousins cannot be accidental. In any case, there is no reason to assume that the rest of the Asad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā abandoned idol worship.²⁶

‘Uthmān ibn al-Ḥuwayrith and the Byzantine connection

Unlike Warāqa, Khadija’s other Christian cousin, ‘Uthmān ibn al-Ḥuwayrith, was involved in politics,²⁷ and his faith was associated with his attempt to control Mecca with Byzantine backing. His mother was probably Ethiopian,²⁸ i.e. Christian. Muḥammad who was his younger contemporary was witness to this attempt.

- 21 He sent her a letter asking her to come to him; al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 256–7; Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 209. She was the daughter of Abū l-Bakhtarī ibn Hāshim ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Asad. In other words, she was the granddaughter of Khadija’s cousin Hāshim. Her father was killed at Badr as a pagan; Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 213–14. On the Balāt see e.g. al-Fīrūzābādī, *al-Maghānim al-muṭāba fī ma‘ālim Ṭāba*, ed. Hamad al-Jāsir, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1389/1969, 64.
- 22 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 256; Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 209.
- 23 Ibn Abī ‘Āsim, *al-Āḥād wa-l-mathānī*, ed. Bāsīm Fayṣal al-Jawābira, Riyadh: Dār al-Rāya, 1411/1991, 6: 43.
- 24 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 255–6.
- 25 The other two were Zayd ibn ‘Amr ibn Nufayl and ‘Ubaydallāh ibn Jaḥsh; *TMD*, 19: 494–5. In fact ‘Ubaydallāh was not a Qurashī but a client of Quraysh from the Asad ibn Khuzayma tribe.
- 26 In connection with the destruction of the idol al-‘Uzzā by Khālīd ibn al-Walīd it is reported that it belonged to a tribal group of the Sulaym tribe whose members were the *ḥulafā’* (clients) of the Banū Hāshim; but the Asad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā claimed that the idol belonged to them; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 1648. Perhaps they associated it with the theophoric name ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā. On al-‘Uzzā see Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1989, 37–42.
- 27 He is described as “one who used to compose satirical verses against the Quraysh” (*kāna hajjā’an li-Quraysh*); Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1407/1986, 75. On ‘Uthmān’s politics see H. Lammens, “La Mecque à la veille de l’hégire”, *Mélanges de l’Université Saint Joseph*, 9 (1924) 97–432, at 366–75; W.M. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953, 15–16; R. Simon, *Meccan Trade and Islam: Problems of Origin and Structure*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1989, 68.
- 28 He is listed among the *abnā’ al-Ḥabashiyyāt*; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 400; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 307. According to Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 209, his mother was Tumāḍir bint ‘Umayr, a freeborn woman from Quraysh, more precisely from the Jumāḥ. *TMD*, 38: 332 says that she gave her husband two sons, ‘Uthmān and al-Muṭṭalib. But the less favourable version is more trustworthy.

‘Uthmān’s attempt to control Mecca took place during the two and a half decades of MuḤammad’s marriage to Khadīja, or perhaps on the eve of the hijra after her death. ‘Uthmān’s main opponent, Abū Zam‘a, was also MuḤammad’s opponent when the latter was still in Mecca. Abū Zam‘a may have been too old to fight in the battle of Badr. But two of his sons, namely his firstborn Zam‘a and ‘Aqīl, in addition to Zam‘a’s son al-Ḥārith, were killed at Badr while fighting against MuḤammad.²⁹ Also ‘Uthmān’s son al-Ḥārith fought against MuḤammad at Badr and was taken captive.³⁰ ‘Uthmān was the boon companion of Shayba ibn Rabī‘a ibn ‘Abd Shams who was killed at Badr fighting against MuḤammad.³¹ Shayba was among the few Qurashīs (*nafar yasīr*) who adopted Christianity.³² One assumes that the boon companions were more or less of the same age. Verses by ‘Uthmān criticize family members who failed to support him. They were Khadīja’s brothers ‘Adī and Nawfal and her cousins Abū Hishām Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām and Tuwayt ibn Ḥabīb (on whom see more later).³³ As has already been mentioned (earlier, n. 10), Nawfal was MuḤammad’s enemy. All these details confirm that ‘Uthmān’s Byzantine affair occurred during MuḤammad’s long marriage to Khadīja or shortly after her death.³⁴

Naturally, ‘Uthmān’s history was of great interest for the Asad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā clan. A member of the clan, al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, compiled a book on the genealogy of the Quraysh (*Jamharat nasab Quraysh wa-akhbāruhā*). It deals with the Asad clan in great detail and includes several accounts about ‘Uthmān. Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār descended from Khadīja’s cousin al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām. An account of al-Zubayr’s son ‘Urwa has the following:

‘Uthmān who was among the most clever and intelligent Qurashīs desired to become the king of Quraysh (*an yamlīka Qurayshan*). He headed for

29 Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 218–19.

30 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5: 74.

31 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 175. Al-Māwardī claimed that Qur‘ān 24, 40 “And to whomsoever God assigns no light, no light has he” (trans. Arberry) was revealed regarding Shayba ibn Rabī‘a who became a monk in the Jāhiliyya, wore woolen clothes, searched for the true religion and rejected Islam (*wa-kāna yatarahhabu fī l-jāhiliyya wa-yalbasu l-ṣūf wa-yaṭlubu l-dīn fa-kaṣara fī l-islām*). Muqātil ibn Sulaymān argued that the verse was revealed regarding Shayba’s brother ‘Utba ibn Rabī‘a who sought the true religion in the Jāhiliyya and wore hair-cloth (*kāna yaltamisū l-dīn fī l-jāhiliyya wa-labisa l-musūh*); al-Qurtubī, *Tafsīr (al-Jāmi‘ li-aḥkām al-qur‘ān)*³, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1387/1967 (reprint), 12: 286.

32 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘Arab*, 491.

33 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 261; Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 210–11.

34 Khadīja’s paternal uncle ‘Amr ibn Asad is supposed (according to one version) to have given her to MuḤammad in marriage; Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 207. This is supposed to have taken place before her other uncles were born; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, 74: *wa-lam yakun li-Asad yawma idhin li-ṣulbihi walad ḡayruhu*. (This version assumes that her father was dead at that time.) If this is true, ‘Uthmān’s father Ḥuwayrith and his other brothers were not yet born when MuḤammad married Khadīja. But considering the details adduced earlier this is highly unlikely.

the Byzantine emperor, having become aware of their [Quraysh's] need for him [i.e. for the emperor] and of their trade in his land. He mentioned Mecca to him [to the emperor] and aroused his appetite for it. He said: It will extend your kingdom, just as the Sassanian emperor became the king of (*malaka*) Ṣan'ā' [i.e. extending his own kingdom]. He [the emperor] made him their king and wrote for him a letter addressed to them.

Then 'Uthmān demanded from the Quraysh (obviously from the Qurashī households) a tribute including a bag of *qaraq* leaves (used for tanning hides), a skin with clarified butter and an untanned skin (*ihāb*). These were to be sent to the emperor. The Quraysh decided to bind a diadem on his head (*an ya'qidū 'alā ra'sihi l-tāj*), but Allāh sent against 'Uthmān his cousin Abū Zam'a al-Aswad ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn Asad who made the Quraysh change their minds.³⁵ While the leather items mentioned in this account no doubt reflect a significant aspect of Mecca's trade with Byzantium,³⁶ other accounts that mention customs dues (see what follows) probably make more sense in this context.

Some accounts mention the religious aspect of 'Uthmān's relationship with the Byzantines – 'Uthmān's own conversion to Christianity and his promise to convert the Quraysh – while this account refers to trade interests. The 'Uthmān affair followed the Sassanian invasion of the Yemen and the Byzantines needed a reliable ally on the trade route to the Yemen.³⁷

A descendant of 'Uthmān's cousin Zuhayr ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Asad, quoted by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, reports that when he made 'Uthmān king, the emperor sent him on a she-mule with a golden saddle,³⁸ which appears to refer to the Byzantine Imperial postal service.³⁹

35 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 257; TMD, 38: 332–3. Abū Zam'a was the staunchest person in resisting his plan (*kāna ashadd al-nās fī ibṭāl amr ibn 'ammīhi 'Uthmān ibn al-Ḥuwayrith*); Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-arab*, 118. In Caskel, 1, no. 19 read Zam'a instead of Zama'a. Abū Zam'a was a prominent merchant; G.W. Heck, "Arabia without spices": An alternative hypothesis", *JAOs* 123 (2003), 547–76, at 553. Heck says (ibid., 549) that "Ibn Ḥabīb relates that the would-be Ḥijāzī king 'Uthmān ibn Ḥuwayrith al-Asadī al-Qurashī contracted a commercial pact to send spices to the Byzantines". I failed to find this detail in Ibn Ḥabīb's *Muḥabbar* that is quoted later in Heck's article. See also ibid., 559; Kh. 'Athamina, "The tribal kings in pre-Islamic Arabia: A study of the epithet *malik* or *dhū al-tāj* in early Arabic traditions", *al-Qanṭara* 19 (1998), 19–37, at 35.

36 P. Crone, "Quraysh and the Roman army: Making sense of the Meccan leather trade", *BSOAS* 70 (2007), 63–88, at 64; idem, *Meccan trade and the rise of Islam*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, 98–101; Heck, "Arabia without spices", at 568–9. Incidentally, Heck mentions Abū Sufyān and Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī as prominent Meccan leather merchants; but Ayyūb lived in Baṣra in the first half of the eighth century C.E.

37 Simon, *Meccan Trade*, 68 refers to it as incense route.

38 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 257–8. See also Abū l-Baqā' Hibat Allāh al-Ḥillī, *al-Manāqib al-mazydiyya*, ed. Šāliḥ Mūsā Darādika and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Khriṣāt, Amman: Maktabat al-Risāla al-Ḥadītha, 1404/1984, 1: 64–5: the emperor's stamp was golden.

39 This seems to be confirmed by one of Waraqa's verses bewailing 'Uthmān's death through poisoning by 'Amr ibn Jafna al-Ghassānī (see below): he was transported by the Byzantine postal system risking

An account on the same topic by yet another informant from the Asad clan is similarly quoted by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār. The informant's *nisba* or relative adjective, al-Ḥizāmī, indicates that he descended from another cousin of 'Uthmān, namely the previously mentioned Abū Hishām Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām ibn Asad. (Abū Zam'a) al-Aswad ibn al-Muṭṭalib foiled Quraysh's attempt to crown 'Uthmān, arguing that the Quraysh were *laqāh* (i.e. they did not submit to kings⁴⁰) and were not to be ruled by a king (*inna Qurayshan laqāh lā tumlaku*).⁴¹ 'Uthmān had headed for the Byzantine emperor so that the latter would make him king of the Quraysh. Qurashī merchants who were in Syria (i.e. those who were to yield to 'Uthmān's authority) plotted with 'Amr ibn Jafna (see later) who made the emperor's translator distort 'Uthmān's address to the emperor. Thanks to an Arab in the emperor's entourage 'Uthmān realized what went wrong and contrived to have another translator. The emperor ordered 'Amr ibn Jafna to arrest on 'Uthmān's behalf every merchant of the Quraysh whom he ('Uthmān) wished to arrest. Abū Uḥayḥa (Sa'īd ibn al-Āṣ ibn Umayya ibn 'Abd Shams) and his nephew (his sister's son; instead of *ibn akhīhi*, read: *ibn ukhtīhi*) Abū Dhi'b were arrested in Syria and the latter died in jail. 'Amr ibn Jafna poisoned 'Uthmān who died in Syria. Abū Uḥayḥa was ransomed by the 'Abd Shams despite opposition from his paternal cousin Musāfir (ibn Abī 'Amr ibn Umayya ibn 'Abd Shams). Musāfir suggested that instead of ransoming an old man, the Quraysh should use the money to marry off some of their young men. On the question of ransom verses were exchanged between Abū Uḥayḥa and Musāfir which al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār omitted, applying self-censorship.⁴²

The religious aspect of the affair figures in another genealogical treatise about the Quraysh, namely *Nasab Quraysh* by Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī who was al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār's paternal uncle. 'Uthmān asked the Byzantine emperor to make him the king of Quraysh (*an yumallikahu 'alā Quraysh*) and promised to make them convert to Christianity and submit to the emperor's authority. The emperor equipped him with a letter of appointment sealed with gold. The Quraysh feared the emperor and intended to submit to his authority, but when the people were

his life (*rakiba l-barīda mukhāṭiran 'an nafsihi . . .*); al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 255. The preposition 'an here is unusual. *Khāṭara bi-nafsihi* means "he caused himself to be on the brink of destruction or of attaining kingship". Cf. A. Silverstein, *Postal systems in the pre-modern Islamic world*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, 47. The Qurashī Abū Qays ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Zuhra, nicknamed *rākīb al-barīd*, had contacts with the kings of Iraq and Shām and one of them sent him once on the Imperial postal service; see al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 79.

40 See on the term M.J. Kister, "al-Ḥīra: Some notes on its relations with Arabia", *Arabica* 15 (1968), 143–69, reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* I, no. III, at 150, 153, 154 (where the 'Uthmān affair is referred to). Kister, "Mecca and Tamīm (aspects of their tribal relations)", *JESHO* 8 (1965), 63–113, reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* I, no. I, at 140 n. 1 refers in the same context to the fierce reaction of the Meccans when their independence was threatened.

41 This account is a summary of the affair followed by a detailed account.

42 *Kāna bayna Sa'īd wa-bayna Musāfir fī dhālika mina l-shi'r mā akrahu dhikrahu*; al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 258–9.

circumambulating the Ka'ba, Abū Zam'a cried out that the Quraysh were *laqāh*, they were neither kings nor submitted to kings (*inna Qurayshan laqāh lā tamliku wa-lā tumlaku*), which led the Quraysh to foil 'Uthmān's plan.⁴³ Elsewhere we are told that 'Uthmān wanted to become king of Quraysh on behalf of the Byzantine emperor (*arāda l-tamalluk 'alā Quraysh min qibal qaysar*) but faced opposition. He returned to Syria and jailed the Qurashīs whom he found there, including Abū Uḥayḥa. The Quraysh plotted with 'Amr ibn Jafna al-Ghassānī to have 'Uthmān poisoned and consequently the latter died in Syria.⁴⁴

'Amr ibn Jafna whom one source describes as *malik 'arab al-Shām*⁴⁵ is identified elsewhere as 'Amr ibn Abī Shamir, the brother of the Ghassānid king al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Shamir.⁴⁶ The identification is possible, since al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Shamir was also referred to as Ibn Jafna al-Ghassānī.⁴⁷ Al-Ḥārith was Muḥammad's contemporary,⁴⁸ and the same applies to his presumed brother 'Amr. Whatever 'Amr ibn Jafna's position and rank, he must have been located somewhere along the trade route between the Ḥijāz and Syria.

Perhaps the Byzantines granted 'Uthmān an honorary title: he was nicknamed *al-biṭrīq* (the Arabicized form of the Latin *Patricius*), which the dictionaries define as a Byzantine commander or potentate (*al-qā'id; al-'aẓīm mina l-rūm*). The Ghassānid king al-Ḥārith ibn Jabala was honoured with this title in *ca.* 540 A.D., and the same is true of his son and successor, al-Mundhir, *ca.* 570 A.D.⁴⁹ Elsewhere al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār states that the emperor crowned 'Uthmān and put him in charge of Mecca (*anna qaysar kāna qad tawwaja 'Uthmān wa-wallāhu amr Makka*). He was rejected by the Meccans and particularly by (Abū Zam'a) al-Aswad, was referred to as *al-biṭrīq* and was poisoned by king 'Amr ibn Jafna in Syria.⁵⁰

43 Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 209–10. Instead of *fa-'itasa'at Quraysh 'alā kalāmihī*, read probably: *fa-'itasaqat . . .* as in *TMD*, 38: 334.

44 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 118.

45 Ibn Sa'īd al-Andalusī, *Nashwat al-ṭarab bi-ta'rīkh jāhiliyyat al-'arab*, ed. Naṣrat 'Abd al-Rahmān, Amman: Maktabat al-Aqṣā, 1982, 1: 350.

46 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 158. The name 'Amr is confirmed by Warāqa's verses; *ibid.*, 157–8. Al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Shamir al-Ghassānī or al-Jafnī is also referred to as *ṣāhib al-Jawlān*; *TMD*, 16: 282.

47 *TMD*, 17: 231.

48 He died in 8/630 having converted to Islam following a letter from Muḥammad. He was replaced by the last king of Ghassān, Jabala ibn al-Ayham; see e.g. *TMD*, 57: 366–8. Incidentally, 'Amr ibn Jafna (ibn 'Amr Muzayqiyā') was also the name of the first Ghassānid king.

49 *EP*, s.v. *Biṭrīk* (I. Kawar [Shahīd]). Abū l-Baqā' lumps together Quraysh's intention to crown 'Uthmān in Mecca and the intention of the Aws and Khazraj to crown Ibn Ubayy in Medina; Abū l-Baqā', *al-Manāqib al-Mazyadiyya*, 1: 67. It is true that Usayd ibn Ḥudayr of the Aws is supposed to have told Muḥammad that they (i.e. the Aws and Khazraj) used to arrange for Ibn Ubayy the jewels for his crown (*la-nunazzimu lahu l-kharaz li-nutawwijahu bihi*); *ibid.*, 64. But elsewhere ("King Ibn Ubayy and the *quṣṣās*", in H. Berg (ed.), *Methods and Theories in the Study of Islamic Origins*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum II*, no. II, 29–71, at 55–6) it is argued that Ibn Ubayy was to be made the king of the Khazraj alone.

50 Suhaylī, *al-Rawḍ al-unuf*, ed. Ṭahā 'Abd al-Rā'ūf Sa'd, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1391/1971, 1: 255, quoting al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār.

Almost devoid of politics is an account by 'Urwa ibn al-Zubayr (who has already been quoted earlier) regarding the four Qurashīs who abandoned idol worship. They were part of a small group (*naḡar*) that met at the annual festival dedicated to an unspecified idol. At night they found the idol thrown down upon its face. They reinstated it but it collapsed time and again. It was 'Uthmān who realized that a momentous event had taken place; indeed, Muḡammad was born that night. When the four reinstated the idol, a mysterious voice declared from within it the idols' demise following Muḡammad's birth. The rest of the account regarding the quest of the four for the *Hanīfiyya*, the religion of Abraham (in which no special role is given to 'Uthmān) is more or less familiar from other sources. Waraqa embraced Christianity "and read the holy books until he became erudite". 'Uthmān went to the Byzantine emperor, embraced Christianity and gained from the emperor an honourable rank (or: he was held by him in great esteem, *wa-ḡasunat manzilatuḡu 'indahū*). Zayd ibn 'Amr was prevented from leaving Mecca but left afterwards. He went to Raḡqa where a monk informed him that nobody could guide him to the religion he was looking for and that a prophet holding the *Hanīfiyya* religion was about to appear in Zayd's own land. On his way back to Mecca the Lakhm attacked (*fa-ḡḡarat 'alayḡi*) and killed him. 'Ubaydallāḡ ibn Jaḡsh stayed in Mecca and then immigrated to Ethiopia with other Muslims. There he embraced Christianity and died a Christian.⁵¹

Ibn ḡabīb's *Kitāb al-munammaḡ* has a composite account of the affair which he quotes from Hishām (ibn Muḡammad), i.e. Ibn al-Kalbī, from Abū 'Amr al-Shaybānī and from other, unspecified, sources.⁵² It was the king of Shām Ibn Jafna who provided 'Uthmān with a letter making him king of Quraysh and imposing a toll (*kḡarj*) on each clan. The Quraysh rejected it and some of them went to Ibn Jafna to complain that 'Uthmān was light-witted (*saḡīḡ*). Ibn Jafna expelled him (i.e. from Mecca; in other words, according to this account, 'Uthmān had been in power for some time). 'Uthmān headed for the Byzantine emperor. But Ibn Jafna employed the emperor's gate-keeper and his translator to block 'Uthmān's access to the emperor. An Arab who was teaching the Byzantines literacy (i.e. probably in Greek) advised him on how to make the emperor listen to him. He informed the emperor that he had asked Ibn Jafna to give him

51 *TMD*, 38: 336–7. The unspecified idol may have belonged to the descendants of Quḡayy rather than to the Quraysh as a whole; cf. *ibid.*, 337 (the mysterious voice addressed *āl Quḡayy*).

52 On Abū 'Amr see *EP*, s.v. al-Shaybānī, Abū 'Amr (K. Versteegh). M. Hamidullah, "Two christians of the pre-Islamic Mecca: 'Uthmān ibn al-Huwairith and Waraḡah ibn Naufal", *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 6 (1958), 97–103, is made mainly of an English translation of the *Munammaḡ* account. On Christian converts in Mecca and Medina see also R. Osman, "Pre-Islamic Arab converts to Christianity in Mecca and Medina: An investigation into the Arabic sources", *Muslim World* 95 (2005), 67–80. Instead of al-Rabbāb ibn al-Barā' al-Shannī (71) read: Ri'āb ibn al-Barā' al-Shannī. See on him *EP*, s.v. Fatra (Ch. Pellat). Ri'āb does not belong here because he was not a Meccan. Osman assumes that the nickname *ḡhasīl al-malā'ika* belongs to Abū 'Āmir al-Rāhib, but in fact it belongs to his son ḡanzala. He appears as "ḡantala" on p. 72. Abū 'Āmir is identical to Abū Hanehala (read ḡanzala) *ḡhasīl al-malā'ika* mentioned on p. 74.

power over his tribe so that he would impose on them the emperor's religion (*an yaj'ala lī 'alā qawmī sulṭānan fa-aqtasirahum 'alā dīnika*). But some tribesmen bribed Ibn Jafna who expelled him. 'Uthmān repeated to the emperor his offer to impose on the Arabs the emperor's religion (*qasartu laka l-'arab ḥattā yakūnū 'alā dīnika*). The emperor released him from Ibn Jafna's authority. He also provided him with a letter carrying his stamp and a mule with a golden saddle. Ibn Jafna allowed him to jail fellow Qurashīs who were in Syria, so he jailed (Abū Uḥayḥa) Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ and Abū Dhi'b who died (i.e. the latter) in captivity. Many said that Ibn Jafna poisoned 'Uthmān because he envied him and thought that he was going to take his place. Waraqa bewailed 'Uthmān in verses threatening Ibn Jafna with retaliation. The latter demanded that Waraqa's tribe extradite him, threatening to capture a hostage from among them in order to secure the extradition. Waraqa fled to the land of Ṭayyī' and then to Baḥrayn. Finally, he managed to obtain from the king a guarantee of security, thanks to the advice of a Christian in Baḥrayn. From that day onwards "the Christian faith entered his heart". Once Waraqa returned to Mecca and the Quraysh were safe from Ibn Jafna's wrath, the 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy clan demanded blood money for Abū Dhi'b (whose father was of the 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy). Abū Uḥayḥa gave the 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy his son Abān as a pledge that the death of his nephew Abū Dhi'b would not remain uncompensated. But some of Quṣayy's other descendants opposed him, including Abū Zam'a who argued that they were not to be held responsible for a death that occurred in a king's jail in Syria.⁵³ Both the 'Abd Shams (ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy) to whom Abū Uḥayḥa belonged and the Asad (ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā ibn Quṣayy) descended from Quṣayy and shared the rights and duties associated with blood money.⁵⁴

According to Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, Abū Uḥayḥa instigated both the 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy (the clan of Abū Dhi'b's father) and the Umayya (ibn 'Abd Shams, the clan of his own sister who was Abū Dhi'b's mother) to demand the blood money from the Asad, but the Umayya gave up. Abū Uḥayḥa handed his son Abān over to the 'Āmir in order to establish firmly the demand for blood money from the Asad, because at that time the call for war of the Quṣayy was unified and blood money was to be paid by all of them (*li-yuḥaqqiqa bi-dhālika 'alā banī Asad dam Abī Dhi'b li-anna da'wata banī Quṣayy yawma'idhin wāḥida wa-l-'aql 'alayhim jamī'an*). The 'Āmir were prepared to receive from the Asad an oath (this is a reference to the practice of *qasāma*⁵⁵), but the latter refused and the 'Āmir pre-

53 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 154–60. Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 210 has the following version of 'Uthmān's words to the emperor: *aḥmiluhum 'alā dīnika fa-yadkhalūna fī ṭā'atika*.

54 Abū Dhi'b was the ancestor of the famous *faqīh* Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn al-Mughīra ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Dhi'b. He was known as Ibn Abī Dhi'b for the sake of clarity: Abū Dhi'b was a rare *kunya*, and hence it identified his famous descendant far better than any of the common names found in his pedigree. Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī is another example of the same practice, Shihāb being his great-great-grandfather, not his father or grandfather.

55 About which see P. Crone, "The *qasāma*", *JSAI* 4 (1984), 153–201.

pared for war. However, the advent of Islam and the war between the Prophet and Quraysh diverted them from it.⁵⁶

The terms *jizya*, *darība* and *kharj* describe the toll that was imposed, or was to be imposed, on the Quraysh. According to Wāqidī and other, unspecified, sources that are quoted by al-Balādhurī, 'Uthmān offered the emperor a *jizya* to be imposed on the Quraysh on behalf of the emperor, that would be paid every year upon their arrival in Syria with their merchandise (*innī dārib li-l-malik 'alā Quraysh jizya yu'addūnahā kull 'ām idhā waradū l-Shām bi-tijārātihim*). Having returned to Mecca, he informed the Quraysh and others that the emperor had ordered that a toll (*darība* and *kharj*) be imposed on them, or else he would prevent them from trading in Syria. The Quraysh were fiercely opposed to this. Most outspoken were Abū Uḥayḥa and al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra (the latter was of the Makhzūm clan). When Abū Uḥayḥa came to Syria together with his nephew Abū Dhi'b, 'Uthmān brought about their arrest since they were those who instigated the Quraysh to reject what they had already agreed to, i.e. the toll (*jizya* and *darība*). When al-Walīd ibn al-Mughīra and others came to Syria, they were also arrested. After Abū Dhi'b had died in jail, 'Uthmān interceded with the emperor for the others and consequently they were released.⁵⁷

Assuming that the toll referred to by different terms was to be imposed on trade, it should be interpreted as customs dues. There can be no doubt about their existence. In connection with the shipwreck that provided the materials for the rebuilding of the Ka'ba several years before the Call, it is reported that the merchants that were onboard were allowed to sell their goods in Mecca free of customs dues. Usually, we are told, the Quraysh levied customs dues from the Byzantine merchants that traded in Mecca, while the Byzantines levied such dues from the Qurashī merchants that entered their territory.⁵⁸

The accounts of the 'Uthmān affair are not free of conflicts and contradictions. But the basic framework common to all of them shows that Khadīja's paternal cousin was involved in a Byzantine/Ghassānid attempt to control Mecca at some time during Muḥammad's marriage to Khadīja or on the eve of the hijra when she was no longer alive.

56 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 260–1; *TMD*, 38: 334–6.

57 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 74–5 (instead of Abū Dhi'b "Abū Dhu'ayb" was printed twice).

58 Al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makka wa-mā jā'a fihā mina l-āthār*, ed. Rushdī Malḥas, Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, n. d., 1: 160: *wa-adhinū li-ahliahā an yadkhulū Makka fa-yabī'ūna mā ma'ahum min matā'ihim 'alā an lā ya'shurūhum. Wa-kānū ya'shurūna man dakhalahā min tujjār al-Rūm kamā kānat al-Rūm ta'shuru man dakhala minhum bilādahā*. The account is quoted in Simon, *Meccan trade*, 68 according to whom the verb *'ashara* refers to tithe. But clearly customs dues (the despised term *maks* was often replaced by various euphemisms) levied on goods are meant here. The founder of pre-Muḥammadan Mecca, Quṣayy, levied customs dues (*ya'shuru*) from non-Meccan pilgrims entering Mecca; Lecker, "Were customs dues levied at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad", *al-Qanṭara* 22 (2001), 19–43, reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum II*, no. VII, at 25.

The Jewish mother of Khadija's cousin Tuwayt ibn Ḥabīb

Let us turn to a paternal cousin of Khadija who was born by a Jewish slave girl and might also have been a monotheist, namely Tuwayt ibn Ḥabīb ibn Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā. Tuwayt means "small mulberry"⁵⁹ and it seems to have been his nickname rather than his name.⁶⁰ He is listed among the Qurashīs who were born by Jewish mothers, and his mother is said to have been of the *yahūd al-anṣār*.⁶¹ However, this statement is problematic. The expression *yahūd al-anṣār* means either "the Anṣār who were Jewish", or "the Jews of the Anṣār" in the sense of the Jews who were clients of the Anṣār. The reference to the Anṣār is of course anachronistic, since Tuwayt (whose father was killed in the Fijār war) was born before the advent of Islam. However, it is not at all certain that the expression *ummuhu min yahūd al-anṣār* is in place, since it may have been duplicated through a scribal error. The expression appears in the list of the sons of Jewish mothers twice, first with regard to 'Amr ibn Qudāma and immediately afterwards with regard to Tuwayt.⁶² 'Amr ibn Qudāma ibn Maz'ūn al-Jumaḥī who appears in the list just before Tuwayt was Qudāma's firstborn son. Qudāma was the governor of Baḥrayn under the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb who was Qudāma's brother-in-law.⁶³ While most sources refer to this son as 'Amr, some call him 'Umar: Qudāma's *kunya* was either Abū 'Amr or Abū 'Umar. Qudāma died in 36/656 aged 68.⁶⁴ The mother of Qudāma's children 'Amr (or 'Umar, as he is called in this report) and Fāṭima was by no means of the *yahūd al-anṣār*, but a Qurashī from the 'Abd Shams family, namely Hind bint al-Walīd ibn 'Utba ibn Rabī'a ibn 'Abd Shams.⁶⁵ It turns out that with regard to these two children of Qudāma *umm* does not mean mother but grandmother. The clue is provided by Hind's brother 'Āṣim who is listed among the sons of Jewish mothers.⁶⁶ (His sister Hind is not listed since it is a male-only list.) The mother of both of them was from the Anṣār (more precisely, from the *yahūd al-anṣār*): Hind bint Jarwal ibn Mālik ibn 'Amr ibn 'Azīz ibn Mālik ibn 'Awf ibn 'Amr ibn 'Awf ibn al-Aws.⁶⁷ 'Āṣim lost both his father, al-Walīd ibn 'Utba, and his grandfather, 'Utba ibn Rabī'a, in the battle of Badr where they fought against Muḥammad. He grew up in Mecca and was roughly eight years old at the time of Ḥajjat al-Wadā', or the pilgrimage

59 Cf. Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishṭiqāq* 3, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn, Cairo: al-Khānjī, n.d., 95.

60 Tuwayt was the nickname of the Yamāmī poet 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Salūlī; Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 23: 169.

61 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 403.

62 Perhaps the expression appeared at the end of the line and the scribe copied it twice.

63 Qudāma was married to 'Umar's sister Ṣafīyya bint al-Khaṭṭāb; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 401. On the other hand, 'Umar was married to Qudāma's sister Zaynab bint Maz'ūn; *ibid.*, 265.

64 Al-Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā'*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1416/1996, 2: 370–1.

65 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 401.

66 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 403.

67 Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 153–4. In addition to Qudāma, Hind bint Jarwal was also married at some time to al-Muhājir ibn Abī Umayya.

of farewell (10/632).⁶⁸ This means that he was born more or less at the time of the battle of Badr. As has already been mentioned, Shayba ibn Rabī'a ibn 'Abd Shams was a Christian. His nephew, al-Walīd ibn 'Utba, married a Jewish woman from Medina, probably around the time of the hijra. One wonders if this marriage was a political one.

Hind bint Jarwal belonged to the Aws, more precisely to the 'Amr ibn 'Awf branch that lived in the town of Qubā' in Upper Medina. Her father's pedigree indicates that his subdivision within the 'Amr ibn 'Awf was the 'Azīz. If Jarwal's daughter Hind was Jewish, one assumes that this was also true of her father. Jarwal's other "claim to fame" in the genealogical literature is the fact that his son Zurāra was among those who rebelled against the caliph 'Uthmān; consequently Zurāra's court was demolished as an act of retaliation.⁶⁹ There is also another version regarding 'Āṣim's origin that is less trustworthy. Al-Walīd ibn 'Utba's sister Hind claimed that 'Āṣim was al-Walīd's son, and Mu'āwiya appointed him for a short time as the governor of Medina.⁷⁰ The context suggests that the appointment was the outcome of Hind's claim. In any case, it appears that 'Āṣim's role in the Umayyad state earned him the doubt cast on his origin.

The woman of the *yahūd al-anṣār* that belonged to the Aws shows that the expression means "the Anṣār who were Jewish". Also Mālik ibn al-Ṣayf "the fat rabbi" (*al-ḥabr al-samīn*) who was involved in polemics with Muḥammad was of the *yahūd al-anṣār*.⁷¹ Mālik ibn al-Ṣayf is sometimes called – probably more accurately – Mālik ibn al-Ḍayf.⁷² There are conflicting statements concerning his tribal affiliation. Mālik ibn al-Ḍayf (printed: al-Ṣayf) is said to have been from the Qurayza,⁷³ while a list of Muḥammad's enemies includes among the Qaynuqā' 'Abdallāh ibn Ṣayf (*sic* according to Ibn Ishāq, while Ibn Hishām has: Ḍayf) and Mālik ibn Ṣayf (Ibn Hishām: Ḍayf).⁷⁴ Obviously, the two were brothers. However, the most detailed – and hence most accurate – statement regarding the tribal affiliation of the two brothers links them to the Arab-Jewish king al-Fityawn. The

68 Ibn Hajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 575.

69 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 334. Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 301 has it that Zurāra ibn Jarwal rebelled and his court was demolished. Zurāra's court that was burnt down by Busr was in the market (i.e. the main market of Medina at that time); *TMD*, 10: 151 (read Jarwal instead of Ḥayrūn).

70 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. al-'Azam, Damascus: Dār al-Yaqza al-'Arabiyya, 1997–2002, 7: 705: *fa-'dda'at Hind bint 'Utba rajulan yuqālu lahu 'Āṣim annahu ibnuhu fa-wallāhu Mu'āwiya l-Madīna yasīran*.

71 Al-Tha'labī, *Tafsīr (al-Kashf wa-l-bayān fī tafsīr al-qur'ān)*, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1425/2004, 2: 554, on Qur'ān 6, 91.

72 Mālik ibn al-Ḍayf al-Yahūdī is also mentioned in the context of polemics with Imru' al-Qays ibn 'Ābis al-Kindī (printed: al-K.t.mī); Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, ed. Aḥmad Farīd, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1424/2003, 3: 426. On Imru' al-Qays ibn 'Ābis see Lecker, "Kinda on the eve of Islam and during the *ridda*", *JRAS* (1994), 333–56, reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum I*, no. XV, 339–40. The polemics between a Yemenite Companion of Muḥammad and a Jew in Medina are most intriguing.

73 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr (Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-qur'ān)*, ed. Aḥmad 'Abd al-Rāziq al-Bakrī *et alii*, Cairo: Dār al-Salām, 1425/2005, 4: 3258, on Qur'ān 6, 92.

74 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 161.

king's grandson al-Ḍayf ibn al-Aḥmar ibn al-Fiṭyawn had three sons, 'Abdallāh, Mālik and Ghālib.⁷⁵ Mālik ibn al-Ḍayf was of the *yahūd al-anṣār* or "the Anṣār who were Jewish".

However, this analysis of the expression *yahūd al-anṣār* is probably irrelevant to Khadīja's cousin Tuwayt. First, the expression may have been duplicated due to a scribal error. Second, there is a less flattering – and hence more trustworthy – claim regarding the identity of Tuwayt's mother, namely that she was a slave girl called Majd who belonged to Muḥammad's uncle 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.⁷⁶ Assuming that Tuwayt's mother was a slave girl, one wonders what Tuwayt's legal status was when he was born and whether his mother remained the property of 'Abbās after giving birth to Tuwayt. In any case, the link with a slave girl was not marriage. Tuwayt was a Jew according to Jewish law, but there is no evidence linking him to Judaism. Still, he merits mention here since he was Khadīja's paternal cousin.

In this context it is noteworthy that Tuwayt's father Ḥabīb – and before him Ḥabīb's father Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā (who was Khadīja's grandfather) – were married to a woman from Medina. Al-Ṣa'ba bint Khālid ibn Ṣu'l had been Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā's wife, and Ḥabīb married her after his father's death. This type of marriage, *nikāh al-maqt* or "the hateful marriage"⁷⁷ was forbidden in Islam. Al-Ṣa'ba was from the Aws, more precisely from the 'Amr ibn 'Awf branch. Her father's pedigree shows that he belonged to the Ḍubay'a subdivision of the 'Amr ibn 'Awf. Al-Ṣa'ba bore Asad his sons Tālib and Ṭulayb who were killed in the Fijār war.⁷⁸ As has already been mentioned, Ḥabīb and his brothers Nawfal and Ṣayfī were the sons of Muḥammad's great aunt Khālidā bint Hāshim ibn 'Abd Manāf. It is not known whether al-Ṣa'ba bore Ḥabīb any children.

Tuwayt's daughter al-Ḥawlā' ("the squint-eyed" which was her nickname rather than her name) to whom acts of devotion are ascribed⁷⁹ is of interest for us.

75 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab Ma'add wa-l-yaman al-kabīr*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-'Arabiyya, 1408/1988, 1: 436.

76 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, 75; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 68. It is true that slave girls were often freeborn girls and women that were captured in a raid and sold into slavery; cf. M.J. Kister, "On the wife of the goldsmith from Fadak and her progeny", *Le Muséon* 92 (1979), 321–30. But it is highly unlikely that a slave girl from the 'Amr ibn 'Awf lived in Mecca unransomed by her tribe.

77 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 262; Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 211 (printed Ṭufayl instead of Ṣu'l).

78 Al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā' al-asmā' bi-mā li-l-nabī mina l-aḥwāl wa-l-amwāl wa-l-ḥafada wa-l-matā'*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Namīsī, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1420/1999, 6: 192 (she also bore him a son called Khālid); Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, 69 (Khālid's mother was a slave girl; al-Ṣa'ba's pedigree is corrupt). The claim that al-Ṣa'ba was of the Jahjabā is less accurate; Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 207 (her grandfather is called here Ṣuql). Tālib and Ṭuwaylib (*sic*) sons of Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā who were killed in the Fijār war were born by a woman from the Aws, while Khālid was born by a slave girl; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 30.

79 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, 1: 262–3; Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 211.

While there is no evidence of a link between Muḥammad and Tuwayt, al-Ḥawlā' is said to have been a frequent visitor to Muḥammad and Khadīja. Years later Muḥammad welcomed al-Ḥawlā' warmly when she visited him in Medina. When 'Ā'isha criticized him for the warm welcome, he explained that when he had been married to Khadīja, al-Ḥawlā' used to visit them.⁸⁰

Some of Tuwayt's offspring lived in Egypt. His son 'Adī was killed fighting against the Umayyads in the battle of the Ḥarra.⁸¹ Tuwayt had a son called 'Abdallāh⁸² and another son called 'Aṭā' whose son 'Uthmān was a member of the Medinan delegation to the caliph Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya.⁸³ 'Aṭā' who lived in Egypt was nicknamed *Ibn al-Sawdā'*, presumably because his mother was a slave girl.⁸⁴ Finally, Tuwayt's son Dhu'ayb was reportedly a Companion of Muḥammad.⁸⁵ Tuwayt's descendants were referred to – in a pejorative context – as al-Tuwaytāt. Muḥammad's cousin 'Abdallāh ibn 'Abbās⁸⁶ (whose father owned the Jewish slave girl Majd) complained that in the handing out of the annual allowance ('*aṭā'*) the anti-caliph Ibn al-Zubayr gave precedence to members of his own clan, the Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā. Ibn al-Zubayr began with the Banū Asad and continued with Ibn 'Abbās and the rest of the Banū Hāshim. As Ibn 'Abbās bitterly put it, Ibn al-Zubayr gave precedence over him (*qaddama 'alayya*) to small subgroups of the Asad (the Ḥumaydāt, the Tuwaytāt and the Usāmāt). When the Umayyad regime was reinstated following Ibn al-Zubayr's defeat, 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān changed the order: he handed out the annual allowance to the Banū 'Abd Shams, then to the Banū Hāshim, the Banū al-Muṭṭalib ibn 'Abd Manāf and the Banū Nawfal ibn 'Abd Manāf. Once he finished with the Banū 'Abd Manāf, he handed it out to the Banū I-Ḥārith ibn Fihr, and finally to the Banū Asad. 'Abd al-Malik declared: "I shall give precedence over them [i.e. over the Asad] to the farthest clan of the Quraysh" (i.e. in genealogical terms, *la-uqaddimanna 'alayhim ab 'ad baṭn min Quraysh*).⁸⁷

80 Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghāba*, 7: 76–7.

81 Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Siyāha wa-l-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1968, 1: 295.

82 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, 75.

83 He showed the caliph scars caused by flogging ordered by al-Walīd ibn 'Utba ibn Abī Sufyān (the caliph's paternal cousin and his governor in Medina); *TMD*, 26: 258–9. Elsewhere we are told that 'Uthmān who was a rich man was flogged by 'Amr ibn al-Zubayr (the rebel caliph's brother and enemy who officiated as *shurṭa* chief for al-Walīd ibn 'Utba); al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 68.

84 See an entry on 'Aṭā' in Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 4: 505–6.

85 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 2: 421, where he is erroneously called Dhu'ayb ibn Ḥabīb ibn Tuwayt. Ibn Shabba's *Akhbār al-Madīna* is the only authority quoted in support of his claim to Companion status. He owned a court in Medina, more precisely in the Muṣallā near the market that was still held by his offspring at the time of Ibn Shabba's informant (Abū Ghassān al-Madanī).

86 On whom see now *EI3*, s.v. 'Abdallāh b. 'Abbās (Cl. Gilliot).

87 Al-Ḥāzīmī, *'Ujālat al-mubtadī wa-fuḍālat al-muntahī fī l-nasab*, ed. 'Abdallāh Kannūn, Cairo: al-Hay'a al-'Āmma li-Shu'ūn al-Maṭābī' al-Amīriyya, 1384/1965, 50, s.v. al-Ḥumaydī. Tuwayt is said here erroneously to have been the son of al-Ḥārith ibn Asad instead of Ḥabīb ibn Asad. Regarding the Usāmāt we are told elsewhere that they were the descendants of Usāma ibn Zuhayr

Conclusions

Two of Khadīja's many paternal cousins were Christians, and a third was born by a Jewish slave girl who was the property of Muḥammad's uncle 'Abbās. Considering Muḥammad's long marriage to Khadīja that lasted for a quarter of a century, her monotheistic cousins belong to Muḥammad's spiritual environment before the Call.

One of the Christian cousins, 'Uthmān ibn al-Huwayrith, figures prominently in the tribal history of their clan, the Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā. The Asad, who descended from Quṣayy ibn Kilāb, enjoyed a high degree of political prominence within the Quraysh tribe.⁸⁸ They no doubt considered themselves eligible to rule: Ibn al-Zubayr's rebellion was probably the most severe challenge that the Umayyads faced. The rebellion was a highlight in the tribal history of the Asad, and the same is true of 'Uthmān's attempt to control Mecca before the hijra. The Asad also remembered that it was no other than 'Uthmān's cousin Abū Zam'a who foiled his attempt.

The internal struggle within the Quraysh was fierce even when it did not come to bloodshed,⁸⁹ and historiography was yet another battlefield. The memory of Khadīja, 'Uthmān ibn al-Huwayrith and Ibn al-Zubayr was cherished and cultivated by the Asad clan and should be evaluated and studied with a critical eye. Most telling in this context is an account about 'Uthmān's poisoning at the hands of the Banū Jafna. Chastised for losing both his kingship and his life, 'Uthmān answered: "Does anyone escape death? Death while being a king is better than [death] while being one of the ignoble, the impotent and the redundant".⁹⁰

The differences and contradictions in the accounts about 'Uthmān's Byzantine affair are rather natural since they go back to different informants. It is not certain that 'Uthmān's control of Mecca was foiled before it even started, and he may have controlled it for some time before being expelled. One source has it that he demanded from the Quraysh a tribute in the form of *qaraz* leaves (used for

ibn al-Hārith ibn Asad. This Usāma is not found in Caskel, 1, no. 19. For a disparaging saying concerning "the Ḥumaydāt and Tuwaytāt" see al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 61–2. The ancestor of the Ḥumaydāt, Ḥumayd ibn Zuhayr ibn al-Hārith ibn Asad, is said to have been in charge of the *rifāda* or the contribution made by the Quraysh towards the purchase of food for the pilgrims (i.e. wheat and raisins that were used to prepare the beverage called *nabīdh*); Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 212: *za'amū anna l-rifāda kānat fī yadihi*. But the claim was probably made by the Banū Asad or, more specifically, by his offspring.

88 One of them, al-Aswad ibn Abī l-Bakhtarī (ibn Hāshim ibn al-Hārith ibn Asad) was chosen to lead the prayer in Medina during the war between 'Alī and Mu'āwiya; Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 214. Al-Aswad's father and sister were mentioned earlier, n. 21.

89 Cf. the technique of *takaththur* employed by Mu'āwiya; Kister, "The battle of the Harra", in M. Rosen-Ayalon (ed.), *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1977, 44; idem, "Some reports concerning al-Tā'if", *JSAI* 1 (1979): 1–18, reprinted in Kister, *Variorum I*, no. XI, at 14.

90 Ibn Sa'īd al-Andalusī, *Nashwat al-ṭarab*, 1: 351: *wa-la'an amūta wa-smī fī asmā' al-mulūk khayr min an yakūna fī asmā' ahl al-lu'm wa-l-'ajz wa-l-fuḍūl*.

tanning hides), clarified butter and untanned skin (*ihāb*), but the other sources mention customs dues. 'Uthmān's conversion to Christianity had a clear political dimension, being connected to his attempt to gain control of the Quraysh with the backing of the Byzantine Empire.⁹¹

The 'Uthmān affair took place during MuḤammad's long marriage to Khadīja or on the eve of the hijra, when she was no longer alive: reportedly, fighting between the 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy and the Asad (or the Quṣayy) was only prevented by the advent of Islam and the war between the Prophet and the Quraysh.

MuḤammad did not need 'Uthmān's experience to know that he could not rely on his own family for support. One wonders if he also drew political conclusions from 'Uthmān's affair, namely that in order to rise to ascendancy he needed the backing of a "superpower" and that he could not obtain political power (or spread his own version of monotheism) in his own hometown.⁹²

91 Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 16, summing up the 'Uthmān affair, says: "MuḤammad grew to maturity in a world in which high finance and international politics were inextricably mixed up". One could add to it religion as well.

92 See no. 3 in this volume.



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Part 2

MUḤAMMAD AT MEDINA



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WERE THE GHASSĀNIDS AND THE BYZANTINES BEHIND MUḤAMMAD'S HIJRA?¹

D. Genequand and C.J. Robin (eds.), *Les Jafnides, des rois arabes au service de Byzance (Vie siècle de l'ère chrétienne)*, Paris: De Boccard, 2015, 268–86

On 5 April 622, after several years of preparations, Heraclius set out on his campaign to regain the vast Byzantine territories that were under Sassanian occupation. In June 622 the 'Aqaba meeting between Muḥammad and representatives of the Medinan tribes Khazraj and Aws – or the Anṣār – took place, and towards the end of September of the same year the hijra occurred. These events were perhaps linked. In other words, the Ghassānids and the Byzantines may have encouraged the Medinan Anṣār to accept Muḥammad in their midst. The Byzantines were interested in creating a friendly political entity in Medina, while the Khazraj (who were supported by some of the Aws) were interested in the rich land and water resources of the Jews in Upper Medina (al-‘Āliya) which they had attempted to conquer several years earlier.

The goal of the Khazraj in the Battle of Bu‘āth (ca. 617)

In order to understand the motives of the Khazraj we have to go back to the Battle of Bu‘āth that was the last battle between the Khazraj and the Aws – or rather between the Khazraj and the Jewish tribes who were supported by the Aws as auxiliaries. The precise date of the battle is unknown, but the most common version dates it to 617 C.E., some five years before the hijra.² The Aws were weaker than

1 The revised argument was presented at the colloquium “From Jāhiliyya to Islam” (Jerusalem, July 2009). I am indebted to Patricia Crone for her comments on a draft of this study.

For a recent discussion of the 'Aqaba meeting see M. Yazigi, “‘Alī, Muḥammad and the *anṣār*: the issue of succession”, *JSS* 53 (2008), 279–303, at 292–8, who also discusses earlier – and much disputed – meetings between Muḥammad and the Anṣār. Note that ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib’s wife Nutayla bint Janāb was not of the Khazraj but of the Namir ibn Qāsiṭ; Ibn Hazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab*, 301. Muḥammad’s special relationship with the Najjār is reflected in various details of his life after the hijra, which does not necessarily affect Yazigi’s main argument.

2 Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 388, for example, says that it took place five years before the hijra, perhaps giving precedence to Zayd ibn Thābit’s testimony on this matter; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 10: 30.



The roads and the green areas reflect the current situation

Figure 3.1 Pre- and Early Islamic Yathrib (Medina)

the Khazraj; moreover, not all of the former took part in the battle.³ The Khazraj were weakened by the absence of ‘Abdallāh ibn Ubayy, possibly the strongest

A somewhat less frequently quoted version has it that it took place six years before the hijra. The latter version is mentioned in connection with Ḥuḍayr ibn Simāk (the father of Uṣayd ibn Ḥuḍayr, on whom see more later), the commander of the Aws in the Battle of Bu ‘āth; see e.g. *TMD*, 9: 79.

3 The Ḥāritha subdivision of the Nabī branch did not participate; *EP*, s.v. “Bu ‘āth” (C.E. Bosworth).

leader among them. They were led by 'Amr ibn al-Nu'mān of the Bayāḍa subdivision. On his deathbed the father of the eponyms of the Bayāḍa and of their brothers Zurayq, 'Āmir ibn Zurayq ibn 'Abd Ḥāritha, reportedly instructed Bayāḍa to persevere in battle and fight valiantly.⁴ 'Amr ibn al-Nu'mān al-Bayāḍī⁵ who was later killed in the battle stated the war goal in unambiguous terms:

'Āmir⁶ settled you in a miserable place between saline and arid land. I swear by Allāh that I shall not have intercourse with a woman until I settle you in the lands of the Banū Qurayza and Naḍīr on sweet water and fine palm dates.⁷

This is how the tribal tradition of the Khazraj remembered the war goal. The garb is literary, but 'Amr's utterance must have been based on fact. The Bayāḍa did live near a *sabakha* or saline land⁸ and there is ample evidence regarding the excellent orchards and water resources of Naḍīr and Qurayza in Upper Medina. Several years later, at the time of the 'Aqaba meeting, the goal of the Khazraj remained unchanged. They could not achieve it without outside help.

The dominant role of the Khazraj at the 'Aqaba meeting (June 622)

The 'Aqaba meeting was held during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca that was attended by several hundred Medinans. Reportedly those of them who

4 *Awṣā ibnahu Bayāḍa bi-l-ṣabr fī l-ḥurūb wa-shiddat al-ba's*; Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 371. The Bayāḍa and the Zurayq from the Khazraj and the Ḥafṣa from the Aws were the slowest among the Khazraj and Aws to retreat and the fastest to attack: *abta 'uhum farra wa-asra 'uhum karra*; in every battle between the Khazraj and Aws the three clans had a clear advantage (*faḍl bayyin*) over the others; Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 371–2. Before Islam the warriors among the descendants of Mālik ibn Ghadhb – excluding the Zurayq – numbered one thousand; Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 373. The Bayāḍa were the main component of the Mālik ibn Ghadhb. The number is perhaps unreliable, but it gives one an idea of Bayāḍa's military strength before Islam.

5 Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 17: 119. A more detailed pedigree appears in Ibn Durayd, *Kitāb al-ishtiqāq*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Ḥārūn, Cairo: al-Khānjī, 1378/1958, 460: 'Amr ibn al-Nu'mān ibn Kalada ibn 'Amr ibn Umayya ibn 'Āmir ibn Bayāḍa; 'Amr's son al-Nu'mān carried the banner (*rāya*) of the Muslims in the Battle of Uḥūd. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 357.

6 I.e. the previously mentioned 'Āmir ibn Zurayq ibn 'Abd Ḥāritha, the father of Zurayq and Bayāḍa; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 356; Caskel, 1, no. 192.

7 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, 17: 119: *inna 'Āmiran anzalakum manzil sū' bayna sabakha wa-mafāza wa-innahu wa-llāhi lā yamassu ra'sī ghusl ḥattā unzilakum manzil banī Qurayza wa-l-Naḍīr 'alā 'adhb al-mā' wa-karīm al-nakhl*. For a slightly different wording see Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1, 386: *inna Bayāḍa ibn 'Amr [read: 'Āmir] anzalakum manzil sū' wa-llāhi lā yamassu ra'sī ghuslan [read: ghuslan] ḥattā unzilakum manzil banī Qurayza wa-l-Naḍīr wa-aqtula ruhunahum, wa-kāna lahum ghizār al-miyāh wa-kirām al-nakhl*.

8 Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 370: . . . *fī adnā buyūt banī Bayāḍa mim mā yalī l-sabakha*.

concluded with Muḥammad the agreement that paved the way to the hijra numbered 70-odd persons,⁹ some of whom had already converted to Islam. They were led by al-Barā' ibn Ma'rūr who belonged to the Khazraj, more precisely to a subdivision of the Salima branch called 'Ubayd ibn 'Adī. On behalf of the other participants al-Barā' undertook to protect Muḥammad as they would protect their own wives.¹⁰ Al-Barā'’s role is probably historical, since according to the list of participants, the Salima were the largest Khazrajī branch attending the meeting. The list still awaits a thorough investigation, but it gives one an idea of the relative size of the participating groups. Reportedly no fewer than 28 members of the Salima were among the 70-odd participants, which makes them by far the largest group. Besides, al-Barā' was a tribal leader (*raǰul sharīf*) and as such he owned both a “leader’s idol” called al-Dībāj and a tower-house (*uṭum*).¹¹

The Khazraj played the leading role at the 'Aqaba meeting. Of the 70-odd participants only 11 (or 12, according to one version) belonged to the Aws, while the others belonged to the Khazraj.¹² Twelve of the participants from both tribes were appointed *naqībs* (Arabic: *nuqabā'*) or tribal leaders that guaranteed the conversion to Islam of their fellow tribesmen. Three of the *naqībs* were from the Aws, while nine were from the Khazraj. Differences about the list do not affect the general picture concerning the roles of the Khazraj and the Aws. Throughout his Medinan period Muḥammad received from the Khazraj far more support than

- 9 The number should not be taken literally: seventy of the Anṣār were reportedly killed in each of the following battles: Uḥud, Bī'r Ma'ūna, Yamāma and Jisr Abī 'Ubayd; L.I. Conrad, “Seven and the *tasbī'*: On the implications of numerical symbolism for the study of medieval Islamic history”, *JESHO* 31 (1988), 42–73, at 52.
- 10 Maqrīzī, *Imtā' al-asmā'*, 1, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākīr, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'līf wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Naṣr, 1941, 35–6: . . . *wa-za'imuhum al-Barā' ibn Ma'rūr . . . fa-akhadha l-Barā' ibn Ma'rūr bi-yad rasūl allāh wa-qāla wa-'lladhī ba'athaka bi-l-ḥaqq la-namna'annaka mimma namna'u minhu uzuranā fa-bāyi'nā yā rasūl allāh fa-naḥnu wa-'llāhi ahl al-ḥarb*. Naturally none other than the Salima were behind the claim that al-Barā' was the first to shake Muḥammad's hand at that meeting; see Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 309: *wa-huwa lladhī yaz'umu banū Salima annahu awwal man ḍaraba 'alā yad rasūl allāh wa-sharaṭa lahu wa-'shtarāṭa 'alayhi*. At this point we find Abū l-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihān's intervention regarding the *ḥibāl*; cf. Lecker, “*Yahūd/uhūd*: A variant reading in the story of the 'Aqaba meeting”, *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), 169–84.
- 11 Lecker, “Idol worship in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, *Le Muséon* 106 (1993), 331–46, at 336, 338. Instead of al-Ashnaq (338), read: al-Ashnaf; Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 363. The Salima lived in the north-west of the cluster of towns that was still called at that time Yathrib after one of these towns (see map on p. 38).
- 12 A detailed study of the list is not undertaken here. But it should be remarked that al-Kalbī replaced Nuḥayr ibn al-Haytham of the Ḥāritha with Sa'd ibn Zayd of the 'Abd al-Ashhal (i.e. the change was within the Nabīṭ branch of the Aws) and that another participant is added, bringing the total number of participants from the Aws to 12: Qatāda ibn al-Nu'mān of the Ḍafar; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1959, 240–2. The Ḍafar too belonged to the Nabīṭ.

he received from the Aws. Suffice it to mention that before the Battle of the Ditch and the massacre of the Qurayza that followed it, three out of the five branches of the Aws, namely those of the Aws Allāh group that lived in the eastern side of Upper Medina, were not Muslim.¹³ There was opposition to Muḥammad among the Khazraj too, but in general the Khazraj embraced Islam at an early stage of Muḥammad's activity in Medina.

The three Aws Allāh branches were not represented at the 'Aqaba meeting. According to Ibn Hishām, six of the eleven participants who belonged to the Aws were from the Nabīt branch, while five belonged to the 'Amr ibn 'Awf branch. The territories of these two branches were remote from each other: the Nabīt lived in northern Medina or rather in the north of Lower Medina (Sāfila), their northernmost subdivision being the Hāritha. The 'Amr ibn 'Awf lived in southern Medina, more precisely in the town of Qubā' in the western side of Upper Medina.

The participants from the Aws were not central figures in their tribe with the exception of Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr who was the *naqīb* of the 'Abd al-Ashhal.¹⁴ His father Ḥuḍayr was in command of the Aws in the Battle of Bu'āth. Usayd's mother – according to the less flattering, and hence more reliable version regarding her pedigree – belonged to the Jewish tribe Za'ūrā'.¹⁵

Two more participants are listed as members of the 'Abd al-Ashhal. Both lived in Rātij close to the territory of the 'Abd al-Ashhal. One of them, Salama ibn Salāma, was of the Za'ūrā' as is shown by his pedigree.¹⁶ The other was Abū l-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihān, said to be a client of the 'Abd al-Ashhal from the Balī tribe, one of the tribes of the Quḍā'a federation,¹⁷ who according to some was a

13 An apologetic account protecting the image of the Aws Allāh leader Abū Qays has it that he had intended to convert to Islam but changed his mind as a result of a sarcastic remark by 'Abdallāh ibn Ubayy (of the Khazraj, more precisely the Ḥublā subdivision of the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj branch): "By God, you are tired of [literally: you hated] fighting the Khazraj" (*karihta ḥarb al-Khazraj*); Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, 158–9.

14 Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 404.

15 According to Wāqidī, she descended from Zayd ibn 'Abd al-Ashhal, while according to Ibn al-Qaddāh (on whom see *GAS*, 1: 268), she descended from Za'ūrā' ibn 'Abd al-Ashhal – in the latter version the Za'ūrā' are assimilated into the 'Abd al-Ashhal; *TMD*, 9: 79; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 3: 247. It is no accident that Usayd, one of the literate Medinans who were educated at the Jewish *Bayt al-Midrās* (Lecker, "Zayd b. Thābit, 'a Jew with two sidelocks': Judaism and literacy in pre-Islamic Medina [Yathrib]", *JNES* 56 [1997], 259–73, at 265–6, 268, 271), and 'Abbād ibn Bishr who was from the Za'ūrā' (Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 611) inquired Muḥammad about intercourse with menstruating women which is forbidden by Jewish Law; see Khaṭṭābī, *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm Ibrāhīm al-'Azbāwī, Mecca: Jāmi'at Umm al-Qurā, 1402/1982–1403/1983, 3: 27: . . . *atayā rasūl allāh fa-'sta'dhanāhu fī ityān al-nisā' fī l-mahīd khilāfan li-l-yahūd*.

16 Salama ibn Salāma ibn Waqsh ibn Zughba ibn Za'ūrā' ibn 'Abd al-Ashhal.

17 The presence of members of the Balī tribe at the 'Aqaba meeting (other tribe members will be mentioned later) may be significant for us: parts of the Balī living in northern Arabia, and other tribes of the Quḍā'a federation living in the same area, were allied with the Byzantines;

naqīb.¹⁸ His legal status and his role as *naqīb* are in fact linked. Abū l-Haytham is said elsewhere to have belonged to the Za‘ūrā’ “the brothers of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal”,¹⁹ in which case he was not a client but a full-fledged member of the Aws, more precisely the Nabīt branch. The claim that Abū l-Haytham’s father, al-Tayyihān ibn Mālik ibn ‘Atīk, descended from Za‘ūrā’ ibn Jusham goes back to Abū l-Haytham’s children. Their claim was supported by al-Kalbī, and Balādhurī pronounced it “more correct”.²⁰ However, four of the historians quoted in Abū l-Haytham’s entry in Ibn Sa‘d’s biographical dictionary stated that Abū l-Haytham was a client (*ḥalīf*) of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal from the Balī. Their statement is reliable: a flattering family claim should be rejected when it contradicts a less flattering one made by another source. The dissenting voice was that of Ibn al-Qaddāh (‘Abdallāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Umāra, or Ibn ‘Umāra), according to whom Abū l-Haytham was a full-fledged member of the Aws (*mina l-Aws min anfusihim*). He also provided Abū l-Haytham with a pedigree going back to the Nabīt; his mother who also bore his brother ‘Ubayd/‘Atīk was of the Za‘ūrā’ ibn Jusham, the brothers of ‘Abd al-Ashhal ibn Jusham.²¹

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- M.J. Kister, “Ḳuḏā‘a”, in Kister, *Variorum* III, no. III, 9: “The expedition against the Balī sent out in 8 A.H. was intended to gain their allegiance and their assistance for the Muslim community. It was essential for the latter to secure the co-operation of the Balī who dwelt in the northern regions of the Arabian Peninsula and controlled the road to Mecca and Medina, several of their members also being in the service of the Byzantine army: the commander of the troop which fought the Muslim force at Mu‘ta was a Balawī. It was a shrewd decision by the Prophet to appoint ‘Amr ibn al-‘Ās, whose mother was from the Balī, as commander of the Muslim force”.
- 18 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 3: 448, argues that there was unanimity about this: *wa-huwa aḥad al-nuqabā’ al-ithnay ‘ashara ajma‘ū [sic] ‘alā dhālika kulluhum*. Wāqidi and others said that Abū l-Haytham’s brother ‘Ubayd/‘Atīk was one of the 70 Anṣār who took part in the ‘Aqaba meeting; Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 449. Ibn Hishām does not list Abū l-Haytham as a *naqīb*, while Balādhurī says that he was one, probably relying on the testimony of Abū l-Haytham’s offspring; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 240; Maqrīzī, *Imtā’*, 37. Elsewhere we find the full-fledged member of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf, Rifā‘a ibn ‘Abd al-Mundhir and their client Abū l-Haytham competing (in the literary sense) for the position of the third *naqīb* of the Aws. In Samhūdī’s opinion, if Abū l-Haytham was a *naqīb*, this would make him the second *naqīb* of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal “since he was one of them [i.e. he was not their client] as the experts [the *ahl al-‘ilm* mentioned earlier in Samhūdī’s text] have stated” (*fa-innahu minhum wa-qad ṣarraḥū bihi*); Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 404.
- 19 Ibid. For Za‘ūrā’ said to be a *baṭn* or subdivision alongside the other subdivisions of the Nabīt see Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab*, 338, who adds that they are the people of Rātij: *wa-hum ahl Rātij*. This should not be taken to mean that they were the only inhabitants of Rātij, because we know from other sources of other inhabitants of Rātij. For Za‘ūrā’ ibn Jusham, the brother of ‘Abd al-Ashhal ibn Jusham, see e.g. Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab*, 340; also *ibid.*, 471, where the Za‘ūrā’ are assimilated into the ‘Abd al-Ashhal: one of the *buṭūn* or subdivisions of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal was Banū Waqsh ibn Zughba ibn Za‘ūrā’ ibn ‘Abd al-Ashhal.
- 20 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 240.
- 21 Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 447–9. Abū l-Haytham’s alleged utterance (*ibid.*, 447: *law infalaqat ‘anni rawtha la-‘ntasabtu ilayhā, maḥyāya wa-mamāti li-bani ‘Abd al-Ashhal*) speaks for itself: a full-fledged member of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal was in no need of such statement. But admittedly it may reflect a change in his affiliation that took place during his lifetime.

The dispute over Abū l-Haytham's origin and that of his brother continued in later periods.²² In the section of his genealogy book dealing with the Za'ūrā' Ibn Ḥazm mentions several prominent tribe members, including Abū l-Haytham who is said to have taken part both in the 'Aqaba meeting, in which he was a *naqīb*, and in the Battle of Badr. Ibn Ḥazm also mentions a brother of Abū l-Haytham. "It was said that they were both clients of the Anṣār from the Quḍā'a. But this is no doubt wrong because none of the *naqībs* was a client; they were all full-fledged members of their tribes".²³

There are conflicting statements regarding the genealogy of the Za'ūrā' which may reflect shifts in their affiliation; after all, genealogy adapts to changing circumstances on the ground. However, Za'ūrā' is a rare case of a real Jewish name among the names of Arabian Jewish tribes and individuals and it has a definitely Jewish-Aramaic form.²⁴ It is unlikely that there was in Medina another group called Za'ūrā', which leads to the conclusion that MuḤammad's Companions whose pedigrees included the name Za'ūrā' belonged to this Jewish tribe.

There are also conflicting reports regarding Za'ūrā''s territory which may reflect different stages in their settlement; tribal groups in Medina sometimes moved from one place to another.²⁵ The Za'ūrā' are known to have lived near Mashraba Umm Ibrāhīm (see map),²⁶ but when MuḤammad came to Medina, they were probably living in Rātij. Ibn Ḥazm remarks – probably with regard to the eve of Islam and the early Islamic period – that the Za'ūrā' were the people of Rātij.²⁷

The shift in the tribal affiliation of the Za'ūrā' is reflected in a remark made by Samhūdī in the chapter on the *manāzil* or tribal territories of the Anṣār. He concludes the description of the *manāzil* of the subdivisions (*buṭūn*) of the Nabīt branch with Ibn Ḥazm's claim that the Za'ūrā' were one of the Nabīt subdivisions

22 Its background could have been the controversy over the number of MuḤammad's Companions in the respective camps of 'Alī and Mu'āwiya: some claimed that he died in Ṣiffīn fighting alongside 'Alī; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 448–9.

23 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 340 (Za'ūrā' ibn Jusham ibn al-Ḥārith, the brothers of the Banū 'Abd al-Ashhal ibn Jusham ibn al-Ḥārith): *qila innahumā ḥalīfāni li-l-Anṣār min Quḍā'a wa-hādihā khaṭa' bi-lā shakk liannahū lam yakun aḥad mina l-nuqabā' ḥalīfan wa-innamā kāna l-nuqabā' mina l-ṣamīm al-ṣarīḥ*. The text preceding this comment is garbled and includes two versions regarding the brother's name, 'Atīk and 'Ubayd, as if they were names of two different persons. For an entry on 'Ubayd/'Atīk see Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 449.

24 Th. Nöldeke, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Poesie der alten Araber*, Hannover, 1864, 55–6 (the name has "ein entschieden Jüdisch-Aramäisches Gepräge").

25 See later the case of the Shuṭayba.

26 Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 305 (in the list of the Jewish tribes of Medina): *wa-minhā banū Za'ūrā' inda Mashraba Umm Ibrāhīm*. Samhūdī adds that they were the owners of the tower-house (*uṭum*) near the Mashraba. For an attempt to identify this tower-house with ruins north of the Mashraba see *ibid.*, 3: 176.

27 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 338: *wa-hum ahl Rātij*. Admittedly, the possibility that the Za'ūrā' split, with some of them remaining near the Mashraba, cannot be ruled out.

and the brothers of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal. Samhūdī says that Ibn Zabāla did not mention the Za‘ūrā’ among these subdivisions or indeed among the subdivisions of the Anṣār.²⁸ Samhūdī does not explain why this is so. But of course the mention of the Za‘ūrā’ among the Anṣār would have been superfluous since Ibn Zabāla included them in the list of Jewish tribes.

Abū l-Haytham lived in Rātij: he was the owner of Bi‘r Jāsīm or Jāsūm in Rātij which is mentioned in connection with the mosque of Rātij. Muḥammad reportedly prayed in Abū l-Haytham’s orchard (i.e. the orchard irrigated by Bi‘r Jāsīm).²⁹

As to the three participants from the Ḥāritha, Ḥayr ibn Rāfi‘ and Nuḥayr ibn al-Haytham were full-fledged members of the Ḥāritha,³⁰ while Abū Burda ibn Niḡār was a client of the Ḥāritha from the Balī.

Among the participants from ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf we find Sa‘d ibn Khaythama who is said to have been one of the two *naqībs* of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf. In fact he did not belong to the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf but to the Banū l-Salm that split from the Aws Allāh group and moved to Qubā’, the town of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf.³¹ Two other persons were full-fledged members of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf: Rifā‘a ibn ‘Abd al-Mundhir of the Umayya ibn Zayd subdivision who was their other *naqīb*³² and ‘Abdallāh ibn Jubayr of the Tha‘laba subdivision. The other two participants from the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf were clients from the Balī, namely Ma‘n ibn ‘Adī and ‘Uwaym ibn Sā‘ida. More precisely, the latter belonged to the Ḥishna tribe; one of his fathers converted to Judaism in Taymā’ in northern Arabia.³³

At that time support for Muḥammad in Qubā’ was limited since the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf were divided with regard to him. Upon his arrival at Medina Muḥammad (together with some of his Companions) settled in Qubā’. But shortly afterwards he was forced to leave it and move to Lower Medina because during the night impudent unspecified persons from the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf pelted with stones the house in which he stayed.³⁴

While support for Muḥammad in Qubā’ in the western side of Upper Medina was limited, the eastern side of Upper Medina that was inhabited by the Jewish tribes and the Aws Allāh group remained a bastion of opposition to Muḥammad for at least half of his Medinan period. At the same time the Nabīṭ

28 Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 347.

29 Ibid., 3: 225.

30 More precisely, the latter was of the Majda‘a ibn Ḥāritha as is shown by his pedigree. Some called him Buhayr.

31 Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and pagans*, 28–31. The claim that he was a *naqīb* was made by his family, while others replaced him with Rifā‘a ibn ‘Abd al-Mundhir; *ibid.*, 29, n. 27.

32 Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 404, who calls him Rifā‘a ibn al-Mundhir.

33 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 305–6; Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and pagans*, 63–7.

34 Ya‘qūbī, *Ta‘rīkh*, ed. M.Th. Houtsma, Leiden: Brill, 1969, 2: 41: . . . *fa-makatha ayyāman thumma kāna sufahā’ banī ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf wa-munāfiqūhum yarjumūnahu fī l-layl, fa-lammā ra‘ā dhālika qāla mā hādihā l-jiwār fa-rtahala ‘anhum.*

who lived in northern Medina were rather unflinching in their support; they appear to have been Muḥammad's closest allies among the Aws throughout the Medinan period.

In sum, the members and clients of the Aws who participated in the 'Aqaba meeting lived in northern Medina and in Qubā'. In any case, the credit for the 'Aqaba meeting mainly belongs to the Khazraj.

The links between the Khazraj and Ghassān

Having established that the Khazraj played the leading role at the 'Aqaba meeting, let us explore the evidence regarding links between them and the Ghassānids. It is found in the genealogical literature that is often neglected in modern research although it can contribute to our understanding of Muḥammad's life and time.³⁵ The genealogy books occasionally take account of splinters of tribes regardless of their size. This is particularly true in the case of the Anṣār whose tribes are described in much detail.

It is sometimes claimed that both the Khazraj and the Aws were Ghassānid, in other words that they were among the tribes that formed the tribal alliance called Ghassān. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, for example, says that all of the Khazraj and the Aws are Ghassānid with the exception of two clans, one from the Aws and the other from the Khazraj, which lived in 'Umān and belonged to the Azd.³⁶ However, according to the generally held view, the Anṣār were not part of the Ghassānid alliance.

The genealogical literature reveals that before Islam certain tribal groups from the Khazraj immigrated from Medina to the Shām (Syria), and in one case a group immigrated from the Shām to Medina and joined the Khazraj. No such links between the Aws and Ghassān could be found.

The Khazraj were divided into five branches³⁷ at least three of which were linked to Ghassān, namely the Banū l-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj, the Banū Zurayq (who

35 For example, why did Bashīr ibn Sa'd of the Khazraj support Quraysh's claim to exclusivity in power at Saqīfat Banī Sā'ida, against his fellow Khazrajī Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda? Because Quraysh's candidate and future caliph Abū Bakr had married into Bashīr's tribal group, the Mālik al-Agharr; see *EI*³, s.v. Bashīr b. Sa'd (M. Lecker).

36 See e.g. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Inbāh 'alā qabā'il al-ruwāt*, Cairo: al-Qudsi, 1350/1931 (bound with *al-Qaṣd wa-l-amam* by the same author), 106: *wa-kull al-Aws wa-l-Khazraj Ghassānī illā mā kāna minhum bi-'Umān mina l-Aws, banū 'Āmir ibn al-Nabī ibn Mālik ibn al-Aws, wa-mina l-Khazraj banū l-Sā'ib ibn Qaṭan ibn 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj, fa-hā'ulā'i mina l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj Azdiyyūna bi-'Umān*. The Banū l-Sā'ib appear in Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 353: the descendants of al-Sā'ib were in 'Umān, and hence they did not belong to the Anṣār. See the 'Āmir ibn al-Nabī in Caskel, 1, no. 179. For verses about the alleged Ghassānid affiliation of the Anṣār see e.g. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Inbāh*, 107–8. For the opposite claim, according to which the Khazraj and the Aws were not of Ghassān, see Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 331.

37 *EI*², s.v. al-Khazraj (M.W. Watt).

descended from Jusham ibn al-Khazraj) and the Banū l-Najjār (who descended from ‘Amr ibn al-Khazraj).

The Banū l-Ḥārith were divided into six subdivisions, no less than three of which were linked to Ghassān in one way or another. Jardash ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj adopted a Ghassānid genealogy.³⁸ Obviously, although the Jardash were assimilated into Ghassān, the genealogists remembered their former affiliation to al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj.

We now turn to the offspring of another son of al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj whose name was al-Khazraj: the Banu ‘Āmir ibn Tha‘laba (ibn Ka‘b ibn al-Khazraj ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj) and their “uncles”, the Banu ‘Adī ibn Ka‘b (ibn al-Khazraj ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj)³⁹ went with Ghassān to the Shām in the *Jāhiliyya*, “and they are all there” except two men from the Banū ‘Adī ibn Ka‘b. The two who lived in Medina were Abū l-Dardā’ who was a *naqīb* at the ‘Aqaba meeting and his uncle, Subay‘ ibn Qays.⁴⁰ One assumes that the communications channels between the *naqīb* Abū l-Dardā’ and his Ghassānid relatives in the Shām were open. No wonder that Abū l-Dardā’ was familiar with building techniques practised in the Shām: when Muḥammad wanted to build his mosque in Medina, Abū l-Dardā’ and another member of the Banū l-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj, namely ‘Abdallāh ibn Rawāḥa (who descended from ‘Āmir’s brother Mālik al-Agharr) suggested that it be built “in the style of building that was common in the Shām” and that the task be divided among the Anṣār.⁴¹ Presumably they had in mind a church.

A member of the ‘Adī ibn Ka‘b who lived in the Abbasid period was still referred to as al-Ghassānī: it is reported that the ‘Adī ibn Ka‘b went (before the advent of Islam) to the Shām; one of them was ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Utba al-Ghassānī.⁴² ‘Āṣim was a

38 *Dakhala fī Ghassān*; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘Arab*, 361; Caskel, 1, no. 188; 2: 258 (Zweig der Ḥazraḡ; den Gassān in Syrien angeschlossen).

39 They were their uncles in the sense that their eponym ‘Adī was the brother of ‘Āmir’s father, Tha‘laba; Caskel, 1, no. 188.

40 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘Arab*, 362–3: *sārat ‘Āmir ilā l-Shām ma‘a Ghassān wa-sāra aydan ‘ammuhā ‘Adī ibn Ka‘b ibn al-Khazraj ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj ilā l-Shām ma‘a Ghassān fa-hum kulluhum hunālika illā anna rajulayni min banī ‘Adī kānā bi-l-Madīna wa-humā Abū l-Dardā’ . . . naqīb . . . wa-Subay‘ ibn Qays . . .* Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab*, 1: 404, says about the ‘Āmir: *sāru ilā l-Shām ma‘a Ghassān fī l-jāhiliyya*. Subay‘ ibn Qays (there are different versions concerning his grandfather’s name) appears in the Companion dictionaries together with his brother ‘Abbād. See e.g. Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 533 (this is the only source that calls Subay‘’s brother ‘Ubāda instead of ‘Abbād). These paternal uncles of Abū l-Dardā’ are said to have fought in the Battle of Badr. A third brother called Zayd was not a Badrī.

41 *Alā bunyān al-Shām naqsimu dhālika ‘alā l-Anṣār*; Ibn Rusta, *al-A‘lāq al-naḥḥiyya*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1982, 66.

42 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Inbāh*, 106–7: *wa-qad shadhaha ‘ani l-Khazraj qabīl min qabā’ilihā kānat dāruhum al-Shām fa-hum Ghassāniyyūna wa-laysū fī l-Anṣār illā rajulayni minhum kānā bi-l-Madīna fa-aslamā wa-naṣarā ma‘a qawmihimā mina l-Anṣār aḥaduhumā Abū l-Dardā’ wa-ammā l-qabīl naḥḥiyya fī Ghassānī . . . wa-minhum ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Utba al-Ghassānī*.

contemporary of the poet Salm al-Khāsir (d. 186/802) whose panegyric for 'Āsim includes a reference to Ghassān.⁴³ 'Āsim's grandson Abū l-Samrā' al-Ghassānī accompanied 'Abdallāh ibn Ṭāhir (d. 230/844) when Ma'mūn appointed the latter as the governor of Egypt.⁴⁴

The genealogists provide details about the internal division of the 'Adī ibn Ka'b regardless of the fact that they lived in the Shām: the descendants of his son 'Āmir ibn 'Adī were divided into two groups, *al-aṣiḥḥā* or "the sound ones" that included three subdivisions, and *al-aḥlāf* or "the confederates" that included four subdivisions; presumably the latter were less prestigious than the former. But it is stressed that none of these subdivisions of the 'Adī – or rather of the 'Āmir ibn 'Adī – were entitled to be called Anṣār.⁴⁵

The details about yet another son of al-Hārith ibn al-Khazraj, namely Ṣakhr ibn al-Hārith, are also relevant for us here. None of Ṣakhr's offspring was an Anṣārī since they had left for the Shām (i.e. before the hijra).⁴⁶

We now turn to another branch of the Khazraj known to have had contacts with Ghassān, namely the Jusham ibn al-Khazraj, among whom we find a clan that immigrated to the Shām.⁴⁷ The Jusham branch was made of the Zurayq and the Bayāḍa. A subdivision of the former, the Banū 'Awf ibn Zurayq, left Medina for the Shām shortly before the advent of Islam "and they assert that there are there [i.e. in the Shām] people from among them".⁴⁸ In the Shām they were probably associated with Ghassān, as is shown by a case of a disputed bequest brought before the caliph 'Umar: an orchard in Medina called Bi'r Jusham⁴⁹ belonged to a young boy from Ghassān whose inheritor(s) lived in the Shām. But the boy also had a female paternal cousin in Medina, namely a woman of the Banū Zurayq.⁵⁰

43 Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 21, ed. R. Brünnow, Leiden: Brill, 1888, 115–16: *al-jūdu fī Qaḥṭānin, mā baqiyat Ghassānu*. On Salm see *EP*, s.v. Salm b. 'Amr al-Khāsir (G.J.H. van Gelder).

44 *TMD*, 8: 179–80. On 'Abdallāh ibn Ṭāhir see *EP*, s.v. (M. Marin).

45 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 363: *laysa aḥad minhum mina l-Anṣār ḥāshā man dhakarnā fa-qaṭ*. In Caskel, 1, no. 188, there is a slight discrepancy: the *aḥlāf* and *aṣiḥḥā* subdivisions are presented as descendants of 'Amīra ibn 'Adī, while in fact they descended from his brother 'Āmir ibn 'Adī.

46 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab Ma'add wa-l-yaman al-kabīr*, ed. Nāji Ḥasan, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-'Arabiyya, 1408/1988, 1: 404, says about the Ṣakhr: *lam yaṣur minhum aḥad, sārū ilā l-Shām*.

47 Caskel, 1, nos. 190, 192.

48 Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 371: *wa-kharajat banū 'Awf ibn Zurayq qubayl al-islām ilā l-Shām fa-yaz'umūna anna hunāka nāsan minhum*.

49 It was possibly one of the estates (*amwāl*) of al-Jurf; Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 4: 208.

50 *Ibid.*, 137, quoting from Mālik's *Muwatta'* a report going back to 'Amr ibn Sulaym al-Zuraqī whose mother was the beneficiary of 'Umar's ruling: *inna hunā gḥulāman yafā'an lam yaḥtalim min Ghassān wa-wārithuhu bi-l-Shām wa-huwa dhū māl wa-laysa lahu ḥā hunā illā ibnat 'amm lahu*. 'Umar ordered that the boy bequeath his property, namely Bi'r Jusham, to his cousin and it was sold for thirty thousand *dirham*. Samhūdī remarks that the account is corroborated by Abū

Still within the Jusham ibn al-Khazraj we find another clan that “went with Ghassān to the Shām”. They were the Banū l-Ḥismā (ibn Mālik ibn Ghaḍb ibn Jusham ibn al-Khazraj).⁵¹ A remote relative of the Banū l-Ḥismā was Abū Jubayla, the Ghassānid king whom Mālik ibn al-‘Ajlān reportedly brought to Medina in order to fight the Jews.⁵²

We now arrive at the third Khazraj branch that was associated with Ghassān, namely the ‘Amr ibn al-Khazraj, more precisely the Najjār. Here we find a case of immigration in the opposite direction: among the Najjār there was a family (*ahl bayt*) from Ghassān, more precisely from the Banū l-Muḥarriq (or al-Ḥārith al-Muḥarriq).⁵³ This connection with Ghassān is significant because of Muḥammad’s family relations with the Najjār: his grandfather’s mother Salmā was one of them. Incidentally, Salmā was a relative of Sawda whom Muḥammad married several months before the hijra⁵⁴ in a move meant to strengthen his link with the Najjār, and through them with the Khazraj as a whole. The Ghassānid family that lived among the Najjār may have been Jewish: as we shall see, there were in Medina other descendants of al-Ḥārith al-Muḥarriq, namely the Tha‘laba ibn al-Fityawn, who were Jewish.

These dissociated snippets of information regarding links between the Khazraj and Ghassān are reliable. The communications channels between the Khazraj and Ghassān were open, and hence the assumption that the latter played a role at the ‘Aqaba meeting is not far-fetched.

Ghassān in the *umma* agreement (ca. 623 C.E.)

The *umma* agreement (or the so-called “Constitution of Medina”) provides independent evidence that Ghassānid tribal groups cooperated with Muḥammad after his arrival at Medina. The agreement is included in Muḥammad’s biography

Jubayla’s pedigree (see what follows), according to which he was the son of ‘Abdallāh ibn Ḥabīb (etc.) – in other words, a relative of the Zurayq: *fā-yata ‘ayyadu bihi mā sabāqa*.

51 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab*, 1: 419, has al-Ḥismī, while Caskeel, 1, no. 192, has al-Ḥismā.

52 Abū Jubayla ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn Ḥabīb ibn ‘Abd Ḥāritha ibn Mālik ibn Ghaḍb ibn Jusham ibn al-Khazraj; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab*, 356, has *li-qatīl* where one expects *li-qitāl*; Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 4: 137; 1: 329, quoting Ibn Ḥazm. Samhūdī remarks that Abū Jubayla’s Khazrajī pedigree is doubtful because none of the Khazraj clans was of Ghassān, and that the widely accepted version regarding his descent shows him to have been one of the Jafna: *wa-fīhi naẓar idh laysa min buṭūn al-Khazraj Ghassānī*. See also Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 327: *wa-qāla ba‘ḍuhum kāna Abū Jubayla min wuld Jafna ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Amir qad aṣāba mulkan bi-l-Shām wa-sharafan*. However, Abū Jubayla’s slightly obscure pedigree is far more trustworthy than the one that makes him a member of the kingly family Jafna. There is no doubt that Abū Jubayla was an historical figure, but a thorough discussion of him cannot be undertaken here.

53 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Inbāh*, 107: *wa-min Ghassān banū Muḥarriq wa-huwa l-Ḥārith ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Amir minhum ahl bayt fi l-Anṣār fi banī l-Najjār*. No chronology is given, but the account probably relates to the eve of Islam.

54 *Qabla l-hijra bi-ashhur*; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1: 407. See in more detail later, no. 4.

among the events of the first year after the hijra. We are concerned here with the list of participants found in the latter part of the agreement that holds a treaty with certain Jewish groups and several non-Jewish ones that were associated with these groups.

28. The Jews of Banū 'Awf are secure from the *mu'minūn*. The Jews have their religion and the *muslimūn* have theirs. [This applies to] their allies and their persons. But whoever acts unjustly and sins will only destroy himself and his agnates.
29. The Jews of the Banū l-Najjār have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf.
30. The Jews of Banū l-Hārith have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf.
31. The Jews of Banū Sā'ida have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf.
32. The Jews of Banū Jusham have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf.
33. The Jews of Banū l-Aws have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf.
34. The Jews of **Banū Tha'laba** have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf. But whoever acts unjustly and sins will only destroy himself and his agnates.
35. The **Jafna** are a tribal group of the Tha'laba and are on a par with them.
36. The **Banū l-Shuṭayba** have the same [rights] as the Jews of Banū 'Awf.

28–32 refer to the Khazraj, while 33 refers to the Aws. The three groups that concern us here are in 34–36. The Tha'laba were Jewish, as is explicitly stated, while the Jafna and the Shuṭayba were non-Jewish clans associated with the Jews. All three groups were Ghassānid. The Tha'laba (or Tha'laba ibn al-Fiṭyawn, as they are often referred to) were of the Azd branch al-Hārith al-Muḥarriq that was among the components of the Ghassānid tribal alliance. The Tha'laba ibn al-Fiṭyawn lived in the town of Zuhra (see map) and were no doubt identical with the Banū Tha'laba from Ghassān who fought in the Battle of Bu'āth alongside the alliance of the Naḍīr, the Qurayza and the Aws. Their participation in the *umma* agreement shows that after the hijra they were in Muḥammad's camp.⁵⁵ There is nothing unusual about the existence of Jewish Ghassānids: Ghassān was a tribal alliance, not a religious one, and hence a Ghassānid could be a Christian, a Jew or an idol worshipper, as most of them presumably were on the eve of Islam.⁵⁶

55 Also the previously mentioned Jewish tribe Za'ūrā' who were "from Ghassān" fought alongside the Jews and the Aws in the Battle of Bu'āth; Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina': Muḥammad's First Legal Document*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2004, 76–7: *wa-dakhalat ma'ahum qabā'il min ahl al-Madīna minhum banū Tha'laba wa-hum min Ghassān wa-banū Za'ūrā' wa-hum min Ghassān*.

56 For Ghassānids who converted to Judaism see Lecker, "Judaism among Kinda and the *rida* of Kinda", *JAOS* 115 (1995), 635–50, at 635. The Jewish king of Taymā' al-Samaw'al ibn 'Ādiyā'

The non-Jewish Jafna (35) were not identical to the ruling house of Ghassān but clients of Jafnī descent who lived in Rātij.⁵⁷

Finally, also the Shuṭayba were a tribal group from Ghassān.⁵⁸ Like the Jafna, they lived in Rātij where they settled after having lived in two other places in the area of Medina. After they had arrived from the Shām, they settled in Mayṭān which did not agree with them. They shifted to a place close to Judhmān, and finally settled in Rātij, becoming one of the three tribes that inhabited it.⁵⁹ When Muḥammad came to Medina, they were probably in Rātij.⁶⁰

The participation of three Ghassānid groups in the *umma* agreement indicates that shortly after his arrival at Medina Muḥammad was backed by the Ghassānids – and by their Byzantine overlords.

Were the Ghassānids and the Byzantines behind Muḥammad's hijra?

The Khazraj who were dominant at the 'Aqaba meeting were still interested in the land and water resources of Upper Medina. However, the Khazraj and Aws were “southern” tribes according to the Arab genealogical theory, and hence Muḥammad, being a member of the Quraysh that was a “northern” tribe was

was referred to as al-Ghassānī; Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbīh wa-l-ishrāf*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1894, 243, quoting Abū 'Ubayda's *al-Dībāj*; but the parallel text in Abū 'Ubayda, *al-Dībāj*, ed. 'Abdallāh ibn Sulaymān al-Jarbū' and 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Sulaymān al-'Uthaymīn, Cairo: Khānjī, 1411/1991, 46, does not include the word “al-Ghassānī”. For a detailed pedigree of Samaw'al see Mas'ūdī, *Tanbīh*, 258. Al-Samaw'al's son Shurayḥ was also referred to as al-Ghassānī; Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 9: 118. On al-Samaw'al see *EP*, s.v. al-Samaw'al b. 'Adiyā (Th. Bauer).

57 More precisely, they descended from 'Ulba ibn Jafna; Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina'*, 85; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 446: the 'Ulba ibn Jafna were clients from Ghassān who lived in Rātij and falsely claimed descent from the Anṣār: *wa-qad inqarada aydan wuld 'Amr ibn Jusham ibn al-Hārith ibn al-Khazraj mundhu zamān ṭawīl wa-hum ahl Rātij illā anna fī ahl Rātij qawman min Ghassān min wuld 'Ulba ibn Jafna ḥulafā'ahum, āl Abī Sa'īd . . . wa-yadda'ūna . . .* Abū l-Haytham's brother was married to a descendant of 'Ulba ibn Jafna al-Ghassānī who bore him two sons; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 449.

58 Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina'*, 80, n.: *ḥayy min Ghassān*.

59 Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 382–3, quoting what Ibn Zabāla said at the end of his discussion of the *manāzil* or tribal territories of the Anṣār: *wa-nazala banū l-Sh.z.ya* [read: *al-Shuṭayba*] *ḥīna qadimū mina l-Shām Mayṭān fa-lam yuwāfiqhum fa-taḥawwalū qarīban min Judhmān thumma taḥawwalū fa-nazalū bi-Rātij fa-hum iḥdā qabā'il Rātij al-thalāth*; Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina'*, 85. Also in Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 3: 225, instead of al-Sh.z.ya. read: al-Shuṭayba.

60 [ADD. A glaring error of mine is repeated several times. Rātij is in northern Medina, and hence the Shuṭayba should probably not be associated with the place name al-Shuṭayba; it follows that the Shuṭayba never lived near Muḥammad's *ṣadaqāt* or charitable endowments; cf. Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina'*, 85–6. The place name al-Shuṭayba belongs to the orchard (*māl*) of one Ibn 'Utba and had previously belonged to the Qurayza; see Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 3: 349; 4: 146–7, s.vv. Bi'r Fajjār and Bi'r Mīdrā (both were wells of Qurayza); 4: 339, s.v. al-Shuṭayba].

not their natural ally.⁶¹ Moreover, Muḥammad had been preaching in Mecca and its vicinity for years and the Khazraj and the Aws must have known about him long before the 'Aqaba meeting. What made them accept him in the summer of 622, shortly after the beginning of Heraclius' campaign against the Sassanians?

Islamic historiography cannot be expected to give a satisfactory answer to this question. Being a "tribalography" rather than a historiography it gives precedence to the role of individuals and their tribes, neglecting the general state of affairs at any given time and often adopting a spiritual viewpoint rather than a political one. The Khazraj who had been defeated in the Battle of Bu'āth were the dominant party at the 'Aqaba meeting. They were linked to the Ghassānids, and Ghassānid groups participated in the *umma* agreement that was concluded shortly after the hijra. All this suggests that the Ghassānids – and indirectly their Byzantine overlords – intervened with the Khazraj and their collaborators from the Aws on behalf of Muḥammad and convinced them to provide him with a safe haven. Such a move would not have been atypical of Heraclius' tactics⁶² and the Byzantine/Ghassānid cause would have been served by the destabilization of Medina and the replacement of the Jews, longtime allies of the Sassanians, with a political entity friendly to Byzantium.

One must bear in mind that several years earlier the Jews had played an active role in the Sassanian takeover of most of the Byzantine territories, including Palestine.⁶³ In addition, Palestine and the Hījāz had a common border (in the vicinity of Wadi l-Qurā),⁶⁴ and it follows that the struggle between the superpowers of the time must have had an immediate impact on Arabian politics.⁶⁵

61 A Jewish poetess from Medina who was hostile to Muḥammad and was later assassinated mentioned in her satirical verses that he was not of the "southern" tribes Murād or Madhḥij; Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 1: 172.

62 W.E. Kaegi, *Heraclius Emperor of Byzantium*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 302, lists among the skills that gave Heraclius the victory over the Sassanians espionage, subversion, luring a key Persian general (Shahrbarāz) to desert, the spreading of false information and covert diplomacy.

63 For the role of the Jews in the Sassanian conquests in Byzantium, including Jerusalem, see M. Avi-Yonah, *The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule*, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1984, 259–68; J. Neusner, *A History of the Jews in Babylonia*, 5, Leiden: Brill, 1970, 114, 122–3; P. Schäfer, *The History of the Jews in the Greco-Roman World*, London and New York: Routledge, 2003, 190–3.

64 H. Lammens, "L'ancienne frontière entre la Syrie et le Hīgāz: Notes de géographie historique", in *L'Arabie occidentale avant l'Hégire*, Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1928, 295–331, especially 315–16, 325, 330; Lecker, "Biographical notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī", *JSS* 41 (1996), 21–63, at 52, 58–61.

65 Cf. P. Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, 250, who makes the general statement that "it is at all events the impact of Byzantium and Persia on Arabia that ought to be at the forefront of research on the rise of the new religion, not Meccan trade". Pre-Islamic Arabian trade in general, and Meccan trade in particular, still await

The beginning of the Byzantine campaign against the Sassanians provided the Khazraj with propitious international circumstances for a new attempt to conquer Upper Medina. Ironically, within several years their war goal in the Battle of Bu'āth was achieved – by Muḥammad.⁶⁶

a thorough discussion. See now Crone, “Quraysh and the Roman army: Making sense of the Meccan leather trade”, *BSOAS* 70 (2007), 63–88.

66 It can be said that Heraclius' fortunes in his war against the Sassanians since 622 coincided with those of Muḥammad in his takeover of Medina and of large parts of Arabia. The coincidence did not escape several scholars; e.g. F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte der Spätantike*, Frankfurt a.M.: V. Klostermann, 1957, 157–63 (“Mohammed und Heraklios”) who quote earlier scholars. Altheim and Stiehl's conclusions regarding various points of detail cannot however be accepted; cf., for example, M.J. Kister, “al-Ḥīra: Some notes on its relations with Arabia”, *Arabica* 15 (1968) 143–69. Acknowledgement of the presumed Ghassānid/Byzantine role in the 'Aqaba meeting is perhaps reflected in the Muslim sympathy towards the Byzantines. See e.g. Kister, “al-Ḥīra”, 143–4: “According to the commentaries of Qur'ān, XXX, 1–2, the sympathies of the unbelievers of Mecca were with the Persians whereas the Muslim community inclined towards the Byzantines. The victories of the Byzantines, it is stressed, coincided with the victories of the Prophet”. In addition, Muslim sources “present Heraclius as the possessor of the qualities of the ideal ruler. He is presented as a paragon of personal and imperial virtues. It was Heraclius, the shrewd and clever Byzantine leader, endowed with the qualities of leadership, courage, honesty, piety, justice, and magnanimity who was bound to recognize the prophetic signs attached to the personality of Muḥammad”; N.M. El-Cheikh, “Muḥammad and Heraclius: A study of legitimacy”, *SI* 89 (1999), 5–21.

GENEALOGY AND POLITICS

Muḥammad's family links with the Khazraj

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In June 622, some three months before the hijra, Muḥammad concluded, at the 'Aqaba of Minā near Mecca, an agreement with some 70 members of the Aws and Khazraj tribes who came from their hometown Yathrib (Medina) for the annual pilgrimage. Towards the end of September of the same year Muḥammad arrived at Medina where he was to spend the last decade of his life at the head of a new political entity.

Among the Medinan participants at the 'Aqaba meeting there were 11 from the Aws and 62 from the Khazraj, including 11 members of a branch of the Khazraj called Najjār that had – as we shall see – a special relationship with Muḥammad. The testimony of the lists may not be generally accepted, but the figures give us a clear idea of the level of Khazrajī support for Muḥammad even before he arrived at Medina. The same level of Khazrajī participation is reflected in other major events of Muḥammad's early Medinan period. In the Battle of Badr (2/624) there were 63 participants from the Aws and 175 from the Khazraj, 56 of whom were from the Najjār.¹ Among the 14 Muslims killed in Badr there were 2 from the Aws and 6 from the Khazraj, three of whom were from the Najjār.² In the Battle of Uḥud (3/625) the Muslims had around 70 casualties, 20 of whom were from the Aws and the rest from the Khazraj, including 12 from the Najjār.³

Initially, support for Muḥammad among the Aws was limited because three branches of the Aws did not convert to Islam for about half of his Medinan decade. These branches belonged to the Aws Allāh (or Aws Manāt)⁴ group that inhabited south-eastern Medina, i.e. the eastern part of Upper Medina (*'Āliya*). The Aws

1 *El*², s.v. al-Anṣār (M.W. Watt); Yazigi, “‘Alī, Muḥammad and the *anṣār*: The Issue of Succession”, *JSS* 53 (2008), 279–303, at 293.

2 Wāqidi, *Maḡhāzī*, 1: 145–6.

3 See, for example, *ibid.*, 1: 300–7.

4 Abū l-Faraj al-Isfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 17: 123; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-ta'rikh*, Beirut: Dar Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1385/1965–1386/1966, 1: 676 (*yawm Mu'abbis wa-Mudarris*).

Allāh only converted to Islam after the Battle of the Ditch (c. 5/627) and hence were absent from the earlier battles.⁵ Prior to their conversion Muḥammad exerted great influence upon the Khazraj who lived in Lower Medina (*Sāfīla*) and upon the Aws branches who lived in the western part of Upper Medina (i.e. in Qubā') and in Lower Medina. But he had no foothold in the eastern part of Upper Medina.

In what follows three women are discussed in detail: a slave girl who gave birth to two of Muḥammad's great-uncles, his grandfather's mother Salmā who was from the Najjār and Muḥammad's wife Sawda whose mother was Salmā's niece.

The mother of Muḥammad's paternal great-uncles Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī

Muḥammad's great-grandfather, Hāshim, had, among other children, two sons called Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī whose mother is of some interest for us in the context of the links between Muḥammad's family and the Khazraj.

Abū Ṣayfī's line of descent was discontinued (*inqaraḍa nasluhu*) but for the offspring of his daughter Ruqayqa, while Ṣayfī died at a young age (*daraja saḡhīran*). The genealogist al-Kalbī reports that Abū Ṣayfī had a son called al-Ḍaḥḥāk (see later, n. 7) and a daughter called Ruqayqa who gave birth to Makhrama ibn Nawfal al-Zuhri. Others claim that Abū Ṣayfī had three children: two sons, Ṣayfī and 'Amr, and a daughter. He gave Ṣayfī his own name (i.e. without "Abū") and called 'Amr after his (Abū Ṣayfī's) father, Hāshim – Hāshim was a nickname, while his name was 'Amr. The mother of the two sons was from the Kināna tribal federation. The girl's name was Ruqayqa and her mother belonged to the 'Abd al-Dār branch of Quraysh. Ruqayqa married Nawfal ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Zuhra (whom she bore the previously mentioned Makhrama). The two sons were not survived by living offspring.⁶

Reportedly the mother of Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī was Hind bint 'Amr ibn Tha'laba ibn al-Khazraj;⁷ or Hind bint 'Amr ibn Tha'laba from the Banū 'Awf

5 Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, 19–49.

6 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1398/1978, 314 (printed wrongly Ruqayya instead of Ruqayqa; Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 1: 16 has the same error). Beside Makhrama, Ruqayqa also gave Nawfal two other sons, Ṣafwān and Umayya; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 8: 222. Hāshim's name was 'Amr; *ibid.*, 1: 55. Cf. Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishtiqāq*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn, Cairo: al-Khānjī, 1378/1958, 69: some claimed (*za'amū*) that Abū Ṣayfī's name was 'Abd 'Amr.

7 Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rikh*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1379/1960, 1: 244. Ṣayfī is said to have attended the conclusion of the alliance between 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and the Khuzā'a tribe; Ibn Durayd, *Ishtiqāq*, 69. But another source tells us more accurately that al-Ḍaḥḥāk and 'Amr sons of Ṣayfī (read: Abū Ṣayfī) attended the conclusion of the alliance; Ḥassān ibn Thābit, *Dīwān*, 2: 17; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 87. Lecker, "A note on early marriage links between Qurashīs and Jewish women", *JSAI* 10 (1987), 17–39, at 35 says that they were Ṣayfī's sons, but as we have seen Ṣayfī died at a young age. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 85 mentions correctly al-Ḍaḥḥāk and 'Amr sons of Abū Ṣayfī ibn Hāshim. 'Amr ibn Abī Ṣayfī is also mentioned in Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 14; Muqātil ibn Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, ed. Aḥmad Farīd, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1424/2003, 3: 347 (read: 'Amr ibn Abī Ṣayfī, instead of Abī 'Amr ibn Ṣayfī).

ibn al-Khazraj, a branch of the Khazraj;⁸ or Hind bint ‘Amr ibn Tha‘laba ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Mālik ibn Sālim in Ghanm ibn ‘Awf ibn al-Khazraj. According to these pedigrees, she was a freeborn woman from the Khazraj branch called ‘Awf ibn al-Khazraj.⁹

Hind also gave Hāshim’s brother, al-Muṭṭalib, two children, Makhrama and Abū Ruhm.¹⁰ Some say that she bore Hāshim a boy, Abū Ṣayfī, and a girl, Ḥayya;¹¹ but the genealogists (*ahl al-nasab*) state that Ḥayya’s mother was from the Thaḳīf tribe.¹²

A less flattering version concerning the mother of Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī has it that she was not a freeborn woman: “It is said that Abū Ṣayfī’s mother was a slave mother” (*umm walad*, i.e. a slave girl who bore her master a child).¹³ This statement should be linked to the list of men from Quraysh who were born by Jewish mothers. The list includes Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī together with one of their two previously mentioned half-brothers from the mother’s side, namely Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib. Reportedly their mother was from the people of Khaybar.¹⁴ This is probably a reference to a Jewish woman taken captive in Khaybar and sold into slavery.

The existence of a list of Qurashīs born by Jewish mothers calls for an explanation. Muḥammad’s tribe Quraysh, the leading tribe of Islam, understandably attracted the attention of the genealogists. There are also other lists of Qurashīs whose mothers were of a non-Arab origin. In most cases the mothers in question were slave girls. Originally such lists belonged to a genre of the genealogical literature dedicated to *mathālib* or vices, be they genealogical or otherwise. Ibn al-Kalbī’s *Kitāb al-mathālib* or *The Book of Vices* has a list of Qurashīs born by Ethiopian mothers, followed by a list of prominent men from other tribes born by Ethiopian mothers. It also has lists of Qurashīs born by Christian, Sindī and “Nabataean” mothers. Finally, Ibn al-Kalbī has a list of the Qurashīs whose mothers were Jewish.¹⁵ This is where the account about the Jewish mother of Ṣayfī,

8 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1407/1986, 27–8.

9 In this context we are told that Abū Ṣayfī was Hāshim’s firstborn; Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 79–80. However, this claim is problematic because Hāshim’s *kunya* or agnomen is supposed to have been Abū Yazīd, or Abū Asad (ibid., 1: 80) or Abū Naḍla; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3: 313.

10 Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 16 (Hind bint ‘Amr ibn Tha‘laba ibn al-Khazraj); ibid., 92 (Hind bint ‘Amr ibn Tha‘laba ibn Salūl ibn al-Khazraj). Ḥassān ibn Thābit, *Dīwān*, 2: 280 has this pedigree: Hind bint ‘Amr ibn Tha‘laba ibn Salūl ibn Mālik ibn Qays ibn ‘Abd ibn ‘Awf ibn al-Khazraj.

11 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1: 113.

12 Suhaylī, *al-Rawḍ al-unuf*, ed. Ṭāhā ‘Abd al-Ra‘ūf Sa’d, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1391/1971, 1: 130 (Jahl bint Ḥabīb al-Thaḳafīyya).

13 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1959, 87. The following is based on – and occasionally updates – the discussion of the mother’s identity in Lecker, “A note on early marriage links”, 29–36.

14 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 402–3: *wākhidha* (read perhaps: *wāhida*) *min ahl Khaybar*.

15 Many years ago I read a relatively recent manuscript of Ibn al-Kalbī’s book at the Egyptian Dār al-Kutub (MS 20247). Ibn al-Kalbī is the source of the account found in Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1:

Abū Ṣayfī and their half-brother Makhrama comes from. But elsewhere in Ibn al-Kalbī's *Mathālib* there is yet another version which is even less flattering concerning the woman's identity (one assumes that it originated with another informant of Ibn al-Kalbī): the mother's name was 'Aqīla. She had been taken captive in Fadak and was sold into slavery.¹⁶

As we have just seen, some claim that the woman was a freeborn woman from the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj. Abū 'Ubayda's *Kitāb al-mathālib* has it that Makhrama was a half-brother of Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī. Their mother was Ḥayya, a black slave girl belonging to Mālik or 'Amr ibn Salūl, the paternal uncle of Muḥammad's enemy 'Abdallāh ibn Ubayy ibn Salūl (from the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj). She was bought at the market of Ḥubāsha which belonged to the Jewish tribe Qaynuqā'.¹⁷

Obviously, the *Vices* books are not archives. But it appears that with regard to her legal status we should opt for the less flattering version. Satirical verses by Ḥassān ibn Thābit attack the half-brothers Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib and Abū Ṣayfī ibn Hāshim whose mother was called 'Aqīla. On margin of one of the manuscripts of the *Dīwān* we find that the claim that she was a freeborn woman from the Khazraj goes back to her offspring.¹⁸

Abū Ṣayfī's offspring included experts on genealogy who were naturally interested in presenting his mother in the best possible light. Ruqayqa bint Abī Ṣayfī who was born more or less at the same time as Muḥammad's grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib (she was *lidat* 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib) was one of Muḥammad's Companions.¹⁹ She was a young girl (*jāriya*) when her great uncle al-Muṭṭalib brought her paternal uncle 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib from Medina (where he had been raised for several years by his mother Salmā, on whom see more later).²⁰ When 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib died, Ruqayqa's son Makhrama was almost 20.²¹ Ruqayqa's father Abū Ṣayfī was probably an adult when his father Hāshim married 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's mother Salmā.

79–80 about Hāshim's offspring in which Abū Ṣayfī, Ṣayfī and their half-brother Makhrama are mentioned. But in this account their mother was the freeborn Hind.

16 *Wa-ammā 'Aqīla fa-hiya umm Abī Ṣayfī ibn Hāshim wa-Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib fa-innahā yahūdiyya min ahl Fadak subiyat fa-sārat li-Salūl ibn Mālik ibn Qays ibn al-Khazraj wa-waladat lahu 'Abd Salūl wa-aqāmū 'indahu thumma dda 'āhumā abawāhumā hīna kaburā wa-kānat lahā rāya bi-Dhī l-Majāz wa-kāna abūhā ḥaddādan bi-Fadak.* The chapter quoted here is entitled *tas-miyat dhawāt al-rāyāt wa-ummahāuhunna wa-man waladna.*

17 Yāqūt, *Mu jam al-buldān*, s.v. Ḥubāsha.

18 Ḥassān ibn Thābit, *Dīwān*, ed. W. 'Arafat, London: Luzac, 1971, 1: 380 (*idhā dhukirat 'Aqīlata bi-l-makhzāt* etc.), 2: 280 ('*Aqīla ummuhumā jamī'an wa-wulduhā yansibūnahā ilā l-Khazraj*).

There is a record of a freeborn Jewish 'Aqīla, namely 'Aqīla bint Abī l-Ḥuqayq, the mother of the Naḍīr leader Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf al-Tā'i, Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 284.

19 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 89; Ibn Hajar *Iṣāba*, 8: 646–7.

20 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 51 (printed: Ruqayqa bint Ṣayfī instead of Ruqayqa bint Abī Ṣayfī). She was older (*asann*) than 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib but the age difference appears to have been small.

21 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 84.

Makhrama was Muḥammad's Companion and an expert on genealogy.²² His son al-Miswar ibn Makhrama who was similarly considered Muḥammad's Companion²³ was an expert on Qurashī matters (i.e. genealogy, history etc.).²⁴

The claim that she was freeborn made it into in the mainstream genealogical literature. But her offspring, with whom this claim originated, could not make the other claims regarding her – or Ḥassān's verses – disappear as long as others were interested in preserving them. In all probability the family's claim should be rejected. She was a slave girl linked in one way or another to the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj branch of the Khazraj.

This kind of discussion is uncommon in the scholarship on Muḥammad's life, and historians of early Islam may wonder what point there is in studying genealogy in such detail. The answer is that genealogy is indispensable in the study of a tribal society, and in this case it contributes to a better understanding of Muḥammad's politics.

Whatever the identity of this slave mother, one thing is certain: Hāshim and his brother al-Muṭṭalib had some link with Medina many years before Hāshim's marriage to Salmā. They were merchants and probably passed through Medina on a regular basis on their way to Palestine and Syria. As is well known, Hāshim died in Gaza.

The following two cases are admittedly more relevant in connection with Muḥammad's success in Medina, more specifically his acceptance by the Khazraj.

Salmā, the mother of Muḥammad's grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib

Many years after the birth of Ṣayfī and Abū Ṣayfī, Hāshim married in Medina Salmā bint 'Amr who bore him the Prophet's grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.²⁵ She belonged to the Najjār, more precisely, to a subdivision of the Najjār called 'Adī ibn al-Najjār. There is no dispute whatsoever regarding her pedigree or her status as a freeborn woman.

The account of her marriage to Hāshim exists in several versions that share the same basic framework. The following version is but one of them. Hāshim used to travel to Syria (Shām) for his trade. Whenever he passed through Medina, he

22 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 6: 50. He was also an expert on *ayyām Quraysh* or the battles of the Quraysh; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 3: 1380.

23 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 6: 119–20.

24 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1400/1979, 81 (*wa-kāna l-Miswar 'āliman bi-umūr Quraysh*). Al-Miswar reported that his grandmother Ruqayqa saved Muḥammad's life by warning him that the Quraysh were plotting to assassinate him, and consequently it was 'Alī who slept in Muḥammad's bed; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 223.

25 Lecker, "A note on early marriage links", 28–9. Umm al-Mundhir Salmā bint Qays of the 'Adī ibn al-Najjār was referred to as "one of the maternal aunts of the Messenger of Allāh"; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 422.

would alight with Salmā's father since he was a friend of both her father and her grandfather. Salmā bore him 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib and a daughter whose name is disputed: she was either Ruqayya or al-Shifā'. Reportedly this daughter (Ruqayya is specifically mentioned) died when she was still a child.²⁶

Due to the significance of this marriage for the Najjār there are details of Salmā's mother and grandmother who were from another subdivision of the Najjār. While Salmā was of the 'Adī ibn al-Najjār subdivision, her mother was from the Māzin ibn al-Najjār subdivision.²⁷ Salmā's paternal cousin, Umm Burda bint al-Mundhir (ibn Zayd ibn Labīd ibn Khidāsh) was married to a man of the Māzin. According to some, Umm Burda was the foster mother of the Prophet's son Ibrāhīm, the son of the Copt slave girl Māriya, whom Umm Burda suckled amidst the Māzin.²⁸ So while the whole of the Khazraj tribe could claim "to have born Muḥammad", this is particularly true of the Najjār.

'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's "maternal uncles", the Najjār, are supposed to have come to his rescue in Mecca with a strong force after his paternal uncle Nawfal had unjustly seized his land.²⁹ The caliph Abū Bakr is supposed to have told the story of the hijra to an Anṣārī. With regard to Muḥammad's arrival at Medina accompanied by Abū Bakr himself, the latter alleged that they arrived at night and that the people were struggling to lodge them. But Muḥammad had no scruples and said: "Tonight I shall stay with the Banū l-Najjār, the maternal uncles of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, as a tribute to them".³⁰

As has already been mentioned, the Khazraj as a whole could claim "to have born Muḥammad". Muḥammad's enemy 'Abdallāh ibn Ubayy was from the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj branch. Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda (who belonged to another branch of the Khazraj) allegedly interceded with Muḥammad for Ibn Ubayy, saying, "He [Ibn Ubayy] is your maternal uncle".³¹

26 Ibid., 1: 79 (*wa-hiya jāriya lam tabruz*). See also Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, 1: 244; Lecker, "A note on early marriage links", 29 ('Abd al-Muṭṭalib and al-Shifā').

27 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1: 113; Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 15. This was one of the virtues (*faḍā'il*) of the Māzin.

28 Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 41–2. See her correct pedigree in Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 136. Her husband, al-Barā' ibn Aws, was of the Māzin; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 85. According to Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 136, al-Barā' was of the 'Adī ibn al-Najjār, and one wonders whether there was a shift in the affiliation of his tribal group.

29 The 'Adī, Dīnār, Māzin and Mālik subdivisions of the Najjār are specifically mentioned in a relevant apocryphal verse of poetry; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 69–70. Another apocryphal verse mentions an idol called al-Khamīs that was worshipped by both the Khazraj and the Sulaym; Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1989, 99; Lecker, "Was Arabian idol worship declining on the eve of Islam?", in *Variation II*, no. III, 33. See also *EP*, s.v. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib b. Hāshim (U. Rubin). In Yazigi, "'Alī, Muḥammad and the *anṣār*", 284 the word *wa-l-khamīs* that refers to this idol is not translated. In *ibid.*, 285 read Banū 'Amr ibn 'Awf instead of Banū 'Awf.

30 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4: 366 (*ukrimuhum bi-dhālika*).

31 This rare variant of the account is found in 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm 'Uthmān, Beirut: Dār al-'Arabiyya, 1966–68, 2: 492 (*la-qad ji'ta wa-innā la-najma'u l-kharaz li-na'qida 'alā ra'sihi l-tāj wa-anta aḥaqq man 'afā 'anhu li-annahu khāluka*).

In one case the prestige related to Hāshim's marriage with Salmā extended beyond the Khazraj. Salmā's sister Laylā gave birth to Suwayd ibn al-Ṣāmit of the Aws, more precisely of the 'Amr ibn 'Awf branch, which made Suwayd a maternal cousin (*ibn khāla*) of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib.³² But on the whole the Aws could not claim a strong family link with Muḥammad and his family.

Sawda, the daughter of Salmā's niece, marries Muḥammad shortly before the hijra

Let us turn to Muḥammad's marriage to Sawda bint Zam'a which in all probability took place shortly before the hijra and formed a well-calculated move of Muḥammad aimed at reinforcing his family link with the Najjār and with the Khazraj in general. The crucial detail is the identity of Sawda's mother who was from the Najjār. Moreover, the mother was Salmā's niece.

The chronology of the marriage was disputed, mainly because the prestige of 'Ā'isha, Sawda's formidable (literary) adversary, was at stake. 'Ā'isha, who was much younger than Sawda, is often quoted in the accounts about Sawda. In the literature, as in real life, Sawda was no match for 'Ā'isha. Both were Muḥammad's first wives after the death of Khadīja who bore him all his children with the exception of the previously mentioned Ibrāhīm. Khadīja died in Ramaḍān (the ninth month of the Arabian year) of the tenth year following Muḥammad's first revelation or *nubuwwa*, roughly three years before the hijra.³³ One account dates her death to the tenth of Ramaḍān, three years before the hijra.³⁴

Sawda was a widow. Her deceased husband, al-Sakrān ibn 'Amr ibn 'Abd Shams, was the paternal cousin of Sawda's father, Zam'a ibn Qays ibn 'Abd Shams.³⁵ Both of them belonged to the Quraysh branch of 'Āmir ibn Lu'ayy. Her husband's brother, Suhayl ibn 'Amr, was a leading political figure. Sawda bore al-Sakrān a son named 'Abdallāh.³⁶ Perhaps she also bore him another son named al-Aswad, since her *kunya* or agnomen is said to have been Umm al-Aswad.³⁷

Sawda and her husband took part in the second pre-hijra emigration of Muslims from Mecca to Ethiopia. Her husband is said to have died in Mecca before

[ADD. Concerning the *tāj* see Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the *quṣṣās*", in H. Berg (ed.), *Methods and Theories in the Study of Islamic Origins*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, 29–71, at 57–65; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum II*, no. II.]

32 Ibn Qudāma, *Istīḥṣār*, 327. More precisely, Suwayd belonged to the Ḥabīb subdivision of the 'Amr ibn 'Awf.

33 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 18–19; *TMD*, 3: 194. The source is Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām who was Khadīja's nephew.

34 Ibid.

35 Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā'*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1416/1996, 2: 613 says inaccurately that al-Sakrān was Sawda's paternal cousin.

36 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4: 204. Khargūshī, *Sharaf al-muṣṭafā*, 3: 247 says about al-Sakrān: *fa-māta wa-lam yu'qib*, he died and left no offspring; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, 133, 284.

37 Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā'*, 2: 613.

the hijra,³⁸ but according to some, he died in Ethiopia.³⁹ When Sawda was free of her marriage (*halla*t), Muḥammad proposed to her and her brother-in-law gave her to him in marriage.⁴⁰ Another account brings ‘Ā’isha into the story: he married Sawda in Ramaḍān of the tenth year of the *nubuwwa*, after Khadija’s death and before Muḥammad’s marriage to ‘Ā’isha,⁴¹ or the marriage to Sawda took place several days after Khadija’s death – she was the first woman he married after the *nubuwwa*;⁴² or Muḥammad married ‘Ā’isha one month after his marriage to Sawda;⁴³ or he married Sawda one year after Khadija’s death, four years before the hijra. He married the six-year-old ‘Ā’isha two years before the hijra. He consummated the marriage to ‘Ā’isha in Medina in the first year after the hijra, when she was nine.⁴⁴

For several decades after Muḥammad’s death ‘Ā’isha, the only maiden whom Muḥammad ever married, was a prominent public and political figure, well placed to influence part of the accounts about her in the emerging Islamic historiography. Some argued that Muḥammad married ‘Ā’isha before Sawda, but according to most of the early authorities, he married Sawda first.⁴⁵ The claim that he married ‘Ā’isha first can be traced back to two authorities: ‘Abdallāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Aqīl and Zuhri.⁴⁶ ‘Abdallāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Aqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. after 140/757) was the grandson of ‘Alī’s brother ‘Aqīl and a grandson of ‘Alī himself:

38 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 7–8.

39 His name was Ḥāṭib ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd Shams; Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 4: 204 (Mūsā ibn ‘Uqba and Abū Ma’shar vs. Ibn Ishāq and Wāqidi who said that he died in Mecca).

40 G.H. Stern, *Marriage in Early Islam*, London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1939, 34 argues on the basis of one version of the story that she “seems to have had her independence of choice” and that “she had the right of the disposal of her person”.

41 Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 53.

42 Dimyāṭī, *Nisā’ rasūl allāh wa-awlādūhu wa-man sālafahu min Quraysh wa-hulafā’ihim wa-ghayrihim*, ed. Fahmī Sa’d, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1409/1989, 42 (*ba’da mawt Khadija raḍiya llāh ‘anhā bi-ayyām*).

43 Ibid., 45; Maqrīzī, *Imtā’ al-asmā’ bi-mā li-l-nabī mina l-aḥwāl wa-l-amwāl wa-l-ḥafada wa-l-matā’*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Namīsī, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1420/1999, 6: 42.

44 Abū ‘Ubayda Ma’mar ibn al-Muthannā, *Azwāj al-nabī wa-awlādūhu*, ed. Yūsuf ‘Alī Badīwī, Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Tarbiya, 1410/1990, 61–3.

45 This was the opinion of, among others, Ibn Ishāq, Qatāda (ibn Di’āma), Abū ‘Ubayda Ma’mar ibn al-Muthannā, Ibn Qutayba and Zuhri – in the version going back to his student ‘Uqayl ibn Khālīd al-Aylī (d. ca. 142/759).

46 In the version going back to his student Yūnus ibn Yazīd al-Aylī; Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba fī ma’rifat al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu’awwad and ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1415/1994, 7: 157–8; Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā’*, 2: 613 (in the latter source read *wa-qālahu ‘Uqayl*, instead of *wa-qāla ‘Uqayl*). On ‘Uqayl see Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 20: 242–5. ‘Uqayl, a *mawlā* of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān’s family, was at some time a *shurtī*; Lecker, “Biographical notes on Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri”, *JSS* 41 (1996), 21–63, at 26–7. It may be a coincidence, but the two conflicting claims ascribed to Zuhri reached us through two students of his who lived in Ayla. Moreover, both Yūnus and ‘Uqayl counted among their teachers ‘Ā’isha’s nephew, al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr, and Hishām ibn ‘Urwa ibn al-Zubayr whose grandfather was ‘Ā’isha’s brother-in-law. See on the two scholars P.M. Cobb, “Scholars and society in early Islamic Ayla”, *JESHO* 38 (1995), 418–28, at 422–5, 427.

‘Abdallāh’s mother Zaynab was ‘Alī’s daughter.⁴⁷ It follows that ‘Abdallāh was not the most likely advocate of the claim that Muḥammad married ‘Ā’isha before Sawda, considering ‘Ā’isha’s troubled relationship with ‘Alī. Obviously, there is more to it than meets the eye.

Yūnus ibn Yazīd al-Aylī (d. ca. 159/776)⁴⁸ has this order of Muḥammad’s marriages which he quotes from Zuhri, from Abū Umāma ibn Sahl ibn Ḥunayf, from his father Sahl ibn Ḥunayf: ‘Ā’isha, whom Muḥammad married when he was still in Mecca, then Ḥafṣa daughter of ‘Umar whom he married in Medina, then Sawda etc.⁴⁹ In other words, Sawda’s marriage and all of Muḥammad’s marriages that followed it took place in Medina. Here again an unexpected advocate supports ‘Ā’isha’s precedence to Sawda: Sahl ibn Ḥunayf to whom the account is traced back was one of ‘Alī’s most prominent supporters among the Anṣār.

In this chronological encounter ‘Ā’isha’s position is inferior to Sawda’s because consummation of the former’s marriage could not have taken place when she was six or seven years old. Hence another stage had to be invented by her advocates, namely the arrangement of the marriage in Mecca and its consummation in Medina when ‘Ā’isha was nine years old.⁵⁰

The most detailed account in ‘Ā’isha’s favour goes back to ‘Ā’isha herself – or purports to go back to her – and resembles a theatrical piece replete with dialogues. A major role in it is assigned to Khawla bint Ḥakīm of the Sulaym tribe, more precisely of the Sulaym branch called Dhakwān. (Khawla counted as one of the “maternal aunts of the Prophet”⁵¹ with reference to the women from the Sulaym tribe that appear in Muḥammad’s maternal pedigree.⁵²) In this account the initiative to find a new wife after Khadīja’s death was Khawla’s. She suggested that he marry both a maiden, namely ‘Ā’isha, and a woman that had been married before, namely Sawda. ‘Ā’isha’s father, Abū Bakr, and Sawda’s elderly father gave Muḥammad their daughters in marriage. After the hijra Abū Bakr and his family lived in al-Sunḥ among the Ḥārith branch of the Khazraj and it was there that the marriage to ‘Ā’isha was consummated.⁵³

Regarding the place of consummation there is an alternative account replacing al-Sunḥ with the territory of the Najjār, close to Muḥammad’s mosque. It is

47 On ‘Abdallāh see Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 16: 78–85.

48 A *mawlā* of Mu’āwiya; *ibid.*, 32: 551–8.

49 Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-kabīr*, ed. Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salāfi, Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyya, 1405/1985, 6: 85–6; *TMD*, 3: 168–9. Ṣāliḥī, *Kitāb azwāj al-nabī llātī dakhala bihinna aw ‘aqada ‘alayhinna aw khaṭabahunna wa-ba’ḍ faḍā’ilihinna*, ed. Muḥammad Niẓām al-Dīn al-Futayyih, Medina and Damascus, 1413/1992, 175 rejects the claim that he married Sawda in Medina, stating that it was ‘Ā’isha whom Muḥammad married in Medina, not Sawda.

50 M.W. Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956, 396 states that the marriage to ‘Ā’isha took place in 1/623 when she was nine. Obviously, he did not consider the alleged arrangement of the marriage in Mecca as its starting point.

51 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, Cairo: al-Maṭba’a al-Maymaniyya, 1313/1895, reprint Beirut, 6: 409.

52 Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym*, 112–16.

53 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 1768–70; *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, 9, translated and annotated by I.K. Poonawala, New York: State University of New York Press, 1990, 129–31; Ṣāliḥī, *Azwāj al-nabī*, 83.

linked to the arrival at Medina of the members of Abū Bakr's household, including 'Ā'isha. They were led by 'Ā'isha's brother 'Abdallāh and put up in a room (*bayt*) belonging to Hāritha ibn al-Nu'mān⁵⁴ of the Najjār. In one of these rooms which was to become 'Ā'isha's room her marriage to Muḥammad was consummated several days after her arrival at Medina.⁵⁵

Another account has it that when Muḥammad was living in the house of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī of the Najjār, he sent envoys to Mecca to fetch his daughters, as well as Sawda and the woman that had been his wet nurse. On their way to Medina they were joined by Abū Bakr's wife, together with 'Ā'isha and her sister Asmā' (al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām's wife). They arrived at Medina when Muḥammad was building his mosque and 'Ā'isha was lodged in a room belonging to Hāritha ibn al-Nu'mān.⁵⁶

This account leaves out a short interim phase which is included in the detailed account about the journey to Medina. When 'Ā'isha arrived at Medina, she stayed with her father. At that time Muḥammad was building his mosque and the rooms surrounding it in which he placed his family. The marriage with 'Ā'isha was consummated several days later upon the initiative of her father, Abū Bakr, who contributed the dowry. Consummation took place in 'Ā'isha's room near the mosque, the very room in which Muḥammad passed away some ten years later. Muḥammad's marriage to Sawda was also consummated in one of these rooms.⁵⁷

Sawda does not figure at all in an account going back to Hishām ibn 'Urwa, from his father, from 'Ā'isha herself: "The Messenger of Allāh married me three years after [the death of] Khadīja".⁵⁸ The same is true of an account that suggests that in the Umayyad period the order of Muḥammad's marriages was a political issue. The caliph 'Abd al-Malik (r. 65/685–86/705) sent 'Urwa ibn al-Zubayr (d. 94/713) a letter inquiring about the date of Khadīja's death. 'Urwa replied that she had died roughly three years before Muḥammad left Mecca. He added that Muḥammad married 'Ā'isha upon Khadīja's death (*mutawaffā Khadīja*). Muḥammad had seen 'Ā'isha twice in a dream and each time a mysterious voice told him, "This is your wife". At that time 'Ā'isha was six years old. He consummated their marriage after his arrival at Medina, when she was nine years old.⁵⁹ Presumably, the caliph also asked 'Urwa about 'Ā'isha. 'Urwa was a recognized

54 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 237–8.

55 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 414 (*fa-qadimnā l-Madīna wa-l-masjid yubnā wa-abyāt ḥawlahu fa-makathnā ayyāman* . . .).

56 Dimyāḥī, *Nisā' rasūl allāh*, 46. Muḥammad lived in Abū Ayyūb's house for seven months; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 237.

57 Ibid., 8: 62–3. Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 284 argues reasonably that "[i]n view of 'Ā'ishah's youth she may well have remained with her mother for some time".

58 *TMD*, 3: 198–9.

59 Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, 1: 1770. The reference to a dream is confirmed by Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 64 where Muḥammad tells 'Ā'isha: *urūṭuki fī l-manām marratayni* etc. The translation of the passage in *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, 9: 131 should be corrected accordingly.

authority concerning 'Ā'isha who was his maternal aunt. As has already been mentioned, 'Ā'isha's sister Asmā' was married to 'Urwa's father al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwām. She bore him eight children, including 'Urwa.⁶⁰

Elsewhere we are told that Muḥammad married Sawda when she became free of her former marriage (*ḥallat*), after the marriage to 'Ā'isha had been agreed upon in the tenth or eighth year of the *nubuwwa*.⁶¹ No matter how early one dated the marriage to Sawda, there was always room for giving 'Ā'isha priority.

Other accounts similarly synchronize the marriage to 'Ā'isha with Khadija's death. The marriage occurred three years before the hijra, in the month of Shawwāl (the tenth month of the Arabian year) of the tenth year of the *nubuwwa*. It was consummated in Shawwāl, eight months after the hijra. 'Ā'isha was married when she was six, while consummation took place when she was nine;⁶² or consummation was seven months after Muḥammad's arrival at Medina;⁶³ or Muḥammad married 'Ā'isha in Shawwāl of the tenth year of the *nubuwwa*, three years before the hijra, and consummation was in Medina in Shawwāl, eighteen months after the hijra;⁶⁴ or consummation was in Shawwāl, one year after the hijra;⁶⁵ or the marriage to 'Ā'isha took place two or three years before the hijra, before the marriage to Sawda or – according to others – after it,⁶⁶ but was only consummated in Shawwāl of 2 A.H./April, 624 C.E. after the Battle of Badr.⁶⁷

Students of early Islam are accustomed to labyrinths of this kind. One cannot get a straightforward answer to the simplest of questions. But when the wives' prestige and political interests were at stake, not to mention the limitations of human memory, the unavoidable outcome was many conflicting claims. In any case, this is the state of the source material with which one struggles.

Let us return to Sawda. One source has it that she was taking care of Muḥammad's child.⁶⁸ It could be argued that this is why he married her in the first place. However, the context of the account about her role as child minder is not her marriage to Muḥammad but the latter's intention to divorce her (see more later), which

60 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 100.

61 Šāliḥī, *Azwāj al-nabī*, 174.

62 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 410.

63 Khargūshī, *Sharaf al-muṣṭafā*, ed. Nabīl Āl Bā'alawī, Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyya, 1424/2003, 3: 247.

64 Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *al-Muntakhab min kitāb azwāj al-nabī*, ed. Sukayna al-Shihābī, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1403/1983, 35. This is preceded by an account that seems to be unique regarding the gifts of food that the Anṣār brought at the consummation of the marriage. See also Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 466 (eight, nine, eighteen months).

65 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 81.

66 Yāsīn ibn Khayr Allāh al-'Umarī, *al-Rawḍa al-fayḥā' fī tawārīkh al-nisā'*, ed. 'Imād 'Alī Ḥamza, Beirut: al-Dār al-'Ālamiyya li-l-Ṭibā'a wa-l-Naṣr, 1407/1987, 205.

67 *Ibid.*, 204. The author (d. after 1232/1817) quotes on this his own *Kitāb al-Durr al-maknūn fī ma'āthir al-māḍī min al-qurūn* (or *al-Durr al-maknūn fī ta'rīkh al-qurūn*).

68 Or children, Arabic: *walad*; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 80 (*wa-kānat ḥāḍinat waladihi*).

suggests that this may have been her role after he had agreed to keep her. At that time there was only one young child in Muḥammad's household, namely Ibrāhīm.⁶⁹

Muḥammad's marriage to Sawda was politically motivated.⁷⁰ This sounds like Islamic apologetic addressing the polemics regarding the number of Muḥammad's wives. But in this case the argument is sound: he married her as part of his preparations for the hijra.⁷¹ There are three arguments in favour of this assumption: when they married, Sawda was probably in her forties; her mother was Salmā's niece; and the marriage must have taken place several months before the hijra.

Sawda's age at marriage can roughly be gauged. Her death date is disputed. According to some, she died more than a decade after Muḥammad's passing, while others claim that she died more than four decades after his passing. Although the latter date is reported by the prominent historian Wāqidi, it must be rejected. At some stage she "grew old" (*asannat*) and Muḥammad intended to divorce her. Their marriage only survived after a new arrangement had been agreed upon: she declared that she had no interest in marital life and assigned "her day and night" to 'Ā'isha.⁷² Elsewhere we are told that Sawda was an elderly woman (*musinna*) and

69 Ibrāhīm was born in Dhū l-Hijja, 8 [March, 630]; Maqrīzī, *Imtā' al-asmā'*, 5: 335; or he died aged eighteen months in Dhū l-Hijja, 8 A.H.; *ibid.*, 338; or he was born in Dhū l-Hijja, 8 A.H. and died in 10 A.H.; *ibid.* Incidentally, Sawda and another wife of Muḥammad, Umm Salama, are said to have washed the body of Muḥammad's daughter Zaynab when she died in 8 A.H.; Maqrīzī, *Imtā' al-asmā'*, 5: 343.

70 Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 287: "All Muḥammad's own marriages can be seen to have a tendency to promote friendly relations in the political sphere. Khadija brought him wealth, and the beginnings of influence in Meccan politics. In the case of Sawda, whom he married at Mecca, the chief aim may have been to provide for the widow of a faithful Muslim". But there is more to the marriage to Sawda precisely along the lines drawn here by Watt.

71 Cf. Yazigi, "'Alī, Muḥammad and the *anṣār*", 286: "In their own generation, as well as in their respective fathers' generation, neither Muḥammad nor his cousin 'Alī seem to have cemented their kinship bond with either the Aws or the Khazraj in any other capacity than through their great grandfather Hāshim's and grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim's above-mentioned marriages". Sawda's marriage does not conform to her observation. Besides, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's marriage to 'Abbās ibn 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib's mother Nutayla bint Janāb (*ibid.*, 286–8) is irrelevant here since she belonged to the Namir ibn Qāsiṭ tribe. I hasten to add that this and other comments regarding Yazigi's article relate to points of detail and have no effect on her main argument which is sound and well-founded.

72 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 53–4 (she is supposed to have told him: *wa-qad kabirtu wa-lā ḥāja lī fī l-rijāl*). Sawda was a tall woman; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 175. She had a sense of humour; Kattānī, *Nizām al-ḥukūma al-nabawiyya al-musammā al-tarātīb al-idāriyya*, (Rabat), reprint Beirut, n. d., 1: 38. She is also said to have been heavy and sluggish (*thaqīla thabiṭa*); Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 56. But the adjective *thaqīla* could also refer to her hearing, i.e. she was slightly deaf: *wa-kāna fī udhunihā thiḡal*; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 407. Sawda was also described as "terribly fat"; Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu'jam al-kabīr*, 24: 33 (*imra'a jasīma yufzi'u l-nās jismuhā*). She was no competition to Muḥammad's younger wives 'Ā'isha and Ḥafsa, and hence the account of the practical joke

that Muḥammad intended to divorce her some eight years after the hijra.⁷³ It is not clear why Wāqidī rejects the claim that she was the first of Muḥammad’s wives to pass away after him, dating her death instead to 54/674.⁷⁴ But if she “grew old” in Muḥammad’s lifetime, she could not have died 46 years later. Hence, we should follow most of the sources, according to which she died at the end of ‘Umar’s caliphate.⁷⁵ One source dates her death to 23/644 and reports that the caliph ‘Umar (not long before his own demise) led the prayer at her funeral. Another source dates her death to the reign of the caliph ‘Uthmān and says that she was around 80 years old.⁷⁶ Let us assume that she died aged eighty at the very end of ‘Uthmān’s reign (35/656). In this case Muḥammad intended to divorce her 27 years earlier, when she was 53 years old and he married her when she was in her forties.⁷⁷ This probably rules out the wish for offspring as the background of the marriage.

Genealogy provides a better explanation of this marriage. Sawda’s mother al-Shamūs⁷⁸ was Salmā’s niece, as we realize when we compare her father’s pedigree with Salmā’s pedigree: al-Shamūs’s father was Qays ibn ‘Amr ibn Zayd ibn Labīd ibn Khidāsh.⁷⁹ Salmā’s father was ‘Amr ibn Zayd ibn Labīd ibn Khidāsh.⁸⁰ Sawda is sometimes called Sawda al-Yamāniyya or the Yemenite⁸¹ with reference to the Yemenite origin of her mother: the Khazraj (and the Aws) belonged to the tribe of Azd, and hence they were of Yemenite origin both genealogically and geographically.

Muḥammad’s marriage to a close relative of his grandfather’s mother aimed at strengthening his existing bond with the Najjār subdivision to which she belonged – the ‘Adī ibn al-Najjār – and with the Najjār and the Khazraj at large. Unsurprisingly, Sawda was in contact with her mother’s kin. At the background of a humorous though somewhat awkward exchange between her and Muḥammad we

played on her by the two young women should be read *cum grano salis*; see e.g. Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba*, s.v. Khulaysa jāriyat Ḥaḥṣa, 7: 88 (they frightened her by telling her that the antichrist had appeared, *kharaja l-a‘war al-dajjāl*); Tabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 24: 278 (*kharaja l-a‘war*).

73 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 407.

74 Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 55.

75 Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā’*, 2: 613.

76 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 407–8. See also Yāsīn al-‘Umarī, *al-Rawḍa al-fayḥā’*, 203: she died at the end of ‘Umar’s caliphate.

77 Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 395 suggests that she was about 30, adding a question mark.

78 Al-Shamūs was not only married to Sawda’s father but also – either before or after him – to a paternal cousin of both her father and her husband, namely ‘Abd ibn Waqdān ibn ‘Abd Shams whom she bore a boy; Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 422.

79 Ibid.

80 Dimiyātī, *Akhbār qabā’il al-Khazraj*, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Baytī, Medina: al-Jāmi‘a al-Islāmiyya, 1429/2008, 1: 427. Ṣāliḥī, *Azwāj al-nabī*, 173 remarks that al-Shamūs was the niece (*bint akh*) of Salmā; see also Dimiyātī, *Nisā’ rasūl allāh*, 42. The family link between Sawda and Salmā is mentioned in another context on p. 48 in this volume. Sometimes two of the names in al-Shamūs’s pedigree are erroneously put in reversed order: al-Shamūs bint Qays ibn Zayd ibn ‘Amr ibn Labīd ibn Khidāsh; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 79; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1: 407.

81 Abū Ya‘lā al-Mawṣilī, *Musnad*, ed. Ḥusayn Salīm Asad, Damascus: Dār al-Ma‘mūn, 1404/1984–1414/1994, 13: 89.

learn that she visited the mourning family of two brothers from the Najjār who had been killed in the Battle of Badr.⁸²

This politically motivated marriage to Sawda must have taken place shortly before the hijra. Muḥammad's contacts with the Anṣār may have started several years before the hijra, but the concrete details were only agreed upon at the 'Aqaba meeting some three months before the hijra. Hence the statement that the marriage to Sawda took place several months before the hijra (*qabla l-hijra bi-ashhur*)⁸³ appears to be the most trustworthy statement on this vexed chronological matter.

Two of Muḥammad's great-uncles were born by a slave girl who was probably Jewish and may have been bought from a Khazrajī slave merchant; his grandfather was born in Medina by a freeborn woman of the Najjār (Khazraj), and his marriage to a woman whose mother was the niece of his grandfather's mother probably took place shortly before the hijra.

After a short stay in the town of Qubā' in Upper Medina, Muḥammad descended to Lower Medina where he settled in the house of Abū Ayyūb, a member of the Najjār. Upon the death of the *naqīb* or head of the Najjār, As'ad ibn Zurāra, Muḥammad himself replaced him, becoming the head of his "maternal uncles".⁸⁴ Many more details relating to Muḥammad's Medinan period indicate his close association with the Najjār and with the Khazraj in general.

82 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 299. She blamed her former brother-in-law Suhayl ibn 'Amr who was tied up in her room for going into captivity at Badr instead of fighting to death. She failed to notice that Muḥammad was also in the room. The informant is a member of the Najjār who quotes Sawda in first person.

83 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 1: 407 (who adds that she was the first woman he had intercourse with in Medina, *fa-kānat awwal imra'a waṭi' ahā bi-l-Madīna*).

84 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 154.

THE EMIGRATION OF ‘UTBA IBN ABĪ WAQQĀS

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This short article deals with the emigration of ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqās (or ‘Utba ibn Mālik), a member of the Quraysh subdivision named Banū Zuhra, from Mecca to Medina, which occurred several years before the hijra of the Prophet Muḥammad and his Companions.¹ ‘Utba’s famous brother, Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās, belonged to the inner circle of Companions which surrounded the Prophet Muḥammad from early on in his career. ‘Utba, by contrast, fought against the Prophet at Uḥud and probably died a pagan.²

- 1 I discussed this issue briefly in my doctoral thesis, *On the Prophet Muḥammad’s Activity in Medina*, Jerusalem, 1982, 33. However, I wrongly identified ‘Utba’s court in Qubā (see later mention) in the ‘Āliya or Upper Medina with the court which he may have owned in the Balāt, i.e. in the Sāfila or Lower Medina.
- 2 On ‘Utba’s role in the Battle of Uḥud see e.g. Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 1: 243–5, 248. See also Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1407/1986, 77: ‘Utba’s son, Nāfi’, and ‘Utba himself, fought at Uḥud alongside the unbelievers, then Nāfi’ converted to Islam. According to Ibn Qudāma, *al-Tabyīn fī ansāb al-Qurashiyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Nāyif al-Dulaymī, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1408/1988, 291, Nāfi’ embraced Islam upon the conquest of Mecca. For a dispute about ‘Utba’s Companion status, see al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn fī ta’rikh al-balad al-amīn*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Fiḳī, Fu’ād Sayyid and Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāhī, Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1378/1958–1388/1969, 6: 12; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 5: 259–60. In Ibn Qudāma, *Tabyīn*, 289, al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, probably quoting family circles, says that ‘Utba converted to Islam: *aslama ‘Utba wa-māta fī l-islām wa-awṣā ilā akhīhi Sa’d*, “‘Utba embraced Islam, died under Islam, and appointed his brother, Sa’d, as his trustee”, viz., regarding a child of ‘Utba born by a slave girl of another man. On margin of one of the *Tabyīn* manuscripts a scribe, having compared this phrase with the relevant passage in al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār’s *Jamharat nasab Quraysh* (see below), implies that Ibn Qudāma altered a neutral statement made by al-Zubayr, i.e. *māta ‘Utba fī l-islām*, into *aslama ‘Utba wa-māta fī l-islām*. However, it seems more likely that Ibn Qudāma quoted a statement made by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār elsewhere. See another example of a family claim in al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, MS Süleymanīe Kütüphanesi (Reisülküttap Mustafa Efendi), 597/598, 828: having quoted the claim that ‘Utba died shortly after the Battle of Uḥud as a result of the Prophet’s curse, al-Balādhurī quotes a counterclaim to the effect that ‘Utba converted to Islam upon the conquest of Mecca: *wa-qāla qawm: aslama fī l-fath wa-māta ba’d a l-fath*. Al-Balādhurī, who prefers the former claim, remarks: *wa-mawtuhu qabla l-fath athbatu*.

Several years before the hijra, part of the Aws tribe attempted to form an alliance with the Quraysh of Mecca.³ A passage concluding one of the reports about the aftermath of this obscure affair concerns us here:

Then this alliance between the Quraysh and the Aws was severed, but for what existed between ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāṣ al-Zuhrī and ‘Utba ibn al-Mundhir ibn Uḥayḥa ibn al-Julāḥ.⁴ This specific alliance persisted and ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāṣ acquired a court in Qubā in which he often stayed. It is the court built in gypsum behind the Ghars Well to the right (*thumma nqaṭa ‘a hādḥā l-ḥilf bayna Quraysh wa-l-Aws illā mā kāna bayna ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāṣ al-Zuhrī wa-bayna ‘Utba ibn al-Mundhir ibn Uḥayḥa ibn al-Julāḥ, fa-innahu thabata dhālika l-ḥilf, fa-‘takhadha ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāṣ dāran bi-Qubā fa-kāna yanziluhā wa-yakūnu fihā, wa-hiya l-dār illatī khalfā bi-r Ghars ‘alā l-yamīn al-mabniyya bi-l-qaṣṣa*).⁵

In Ibn Sa‘d’s (d. 230/845) biographical dictionary we find an account about ‘Utba which is totally independent of the former one and appears in another

(Indeed, the hadith immediately following in al-Balādhurī suggests that ‘Utba died prior to the conquest of Mecca.) The existence of the counterclaim, presumably going back to a family tradition, is nevertheless noteworthy. The same family circles may have been behind the listing of ‘Utba’s daughter, Umm Ḥakīm, among the women who emigrated from Mecca to Medina, the *Muhājirāt*; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Istī‘āb*, 4: 1933.

- 3 M.J. Kister, “On strangers and allies in Mecca”, *JSAI* 13 (1990), 113–54, at 142–3. Also J. Wellhausen, *Medina vor dem Islam*, Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1889 (Skizzen und Vorarbeiten, 4), 32–3.
- 4 I could not find any details about him. Perhaps he was the son of al-Mundhir [ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Uqba] ibn Uḥayḥa ibn al-Julāḥ. The latter fought at Badr; see Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 1: 160 (the remark which then follows, *wa-laysa lahu ‘aqib*, does not mean that he never begot a son but that “there was no male offspring remaining to him”; see Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v., ‘*aqib*); Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 3: 473; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 315. For an indirect family link between Uḥayḥa ibn al-Julāḥ and the Prophet, see M. Lecker, “A note on early marriage links between Qurashīs and Jewish women”, *JSAI* 10 (1987), 17–39, at 28.
- 5 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 268. On Bi’r Ghars see the geographical dictionaries of Yāqūt (*Mu jam al-buldān*) and al-Bakrī (*Mu jam mā ista jam*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta’līf wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1364/1945–1371/1951), s.v. Ghars; Samḥūdī, *Wafā’*, 3: 389–92; al-Firūzābādī, *al-Maghānim al-muṭāba fī mā ‘ālim Ṭāba*, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1389/1969, 46–7 (where the well is called Ghurs, al-Aghras and Ghars); also Ibn Shabba, *Ta’rīkh al-Madīna al-munawwara*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt, n. p., [1399/1979], 1: 161–2 (al-Aghras, al-Ghars). Uḥayḥa was a member of the Ḥajhabā, a branch of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf (Aws). On the territory of Ḥajhabā see M. Lecker, “On the markets of Medina (Yathrib) in pre-Islamic and early Islamic times”, *JSAI* 8 (1986) 133–47, at 134–6; M. Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, Ch. III. There is yet another indication of a link between ‘Utba and the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf in whose midst he settled: ‘Utba’s daughter, Umm Kulthūm, married Sahl ibn Ḥunayf of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf (more precisely, of the Ḥanash branch). She bore him a son called Sa‘d. If indeed Sahl’s *kunya* was Abū Sa‘d (there are at least four more versions concerning his *kunya*; Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 471; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 320–1), this may suggest that Sahl married her before the hijra.

context. It is quoted from Wāqidī ← Abū Bakr ibn Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad ← his father:

When Sa'd and 'Umayr sons of Abū Waqqāš emigrated from Mecca to Medina, they stayed in a house (*manzil*) belonging to their brother, 'Utba ibn Abī Waqqāš, which he had built in the [territory of the] Banū 'Amr ibn 'Awf, and in a palm-orchard belonging to him. 'Utba shed blood in Mecca. He fled and resided among the Banū 'Amr ibn 'Awf. This was before [the Battle of] Bu'āth (. . . *nazalā fī manzil li-akhīhimā . . . kāna banāhu fī Banī 'Amr ibn 'Awf wa-ḥā'it lahu wa-kāna 'Utba ašāba daman bi-Makka fa-haraba fa-nazala fī Banī 'Amr ibn 'Awf, wa-dhālika qabla Bu'āth*).⁶

Wāqidī (d. 207/823) in his *Maghāzī* quotes the same Abū Bakr ibn Ismā'īl.⁷ One is not surprised to find that Abū Bakr, who certainly lived in Medina, was the great-grandson of Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāš, as is shown by his pedigree: Abū Bakr ibn Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāš.⁸ One expects to find the fingerprints of Abū Bakr and other scholars who belonged to the same family in the huge corpus, or rather cycle of accounts, dedicated in early Islamic historiography to Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāš.

While acknowledging that 'Utba owned a house in Medina before the hijra, the report just quoted suggests a different reason for his emigration from Mecca to Medina. It was not an alliance with a Medinan which brought him there, but the need to flee from Mecca, having shed the blood of a fellow Qurashī.⁹ The latter version, coming from a family member, seems suspicious. In any case, the two independent reports quoted earlier, while at variance concerning the precise circumstances of 'Utba's emigration, agree that he emigrated from Mecca to Medina before the beginning of the Islamic era.

We have yet another version concerning the circumstances of 'Utba's arrival at Medina. It goes back to al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār (d. 256/870) ← his father, who wrote to him from Baghdad:

'Utba ibn Abī Waqqāš set out [from Mecca] heading to Syria. [When he arrived at Medina,] he found the Aws and the Khazraj fighting each

6 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 139.

7 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, index, s.v. Abū Bakr ibn Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad.

8 See an entry on his father, Ismā'īl, in Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, Hyderabad, 1325/1907, 1: 329. One of Ismā'īl's students was the famous al-Zuhrī.

9 See also Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 263: *kāna ašāba dimā'an* (read: *daman*) *fī Quraysh fa-'ntaqala ilā l-Madīna qabla l-hijra, fa-'ttakhadha bihā manzilan wa-mālan*, "he shed the blood of a man from the Quraysh, migrated to Medina before the hijra and acquired in it a house and an orchard". In Medinan usage, *māl* means cultivated land: *fa-inna ahl al-Madīna yusammūna l-arḍina amwālan*; Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, ed. Muḥammad Khalīl Harrās, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1396/1976, 506, no. 113. See also al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh*, MS Bodley, Marsh 384, 93b: *kāna ašāba daman fī Quraysh fa-'ntaqala ilā l-Madīna qabla l-hijra wa-'ttakhadha biha manzilan wa-mālan*.

other at Bu‘āth. He said: “I hate to pass by a war without fighting in it”, and fought with the Aws against the Khazraj (*wa-kataba ilayya abī min Baghdād yaqūlu inna ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāš kharaja yurīdu l-Shām [fa-] sādafa l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj taqtatilu bi-Bu ‘āth, fa-qāla: akrahu an amurra bi-ḥarb bayna qawm fa-lā uqātīla fihā, fa-qātala l-Khazraj ma ‘a l-Aws. Wa-māta ‘Utba fī l-islām wa-awṣā ilā Sa ‘d ibn Abī Waqqāš*).¹⁰

While it seems unlikely that ‘Utba’s settlement in Medina was accidental, his fighting with the Aws at Bu‘āth may be historical because it combines well with ‘Utba’s reported alliance with a member of the Aws subdivision called ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf and his settlement in Qubā’, the village¹¹ of the ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf. The arrival at Medina before the Battle of Bu‘āth appears both in this account and in the one about ‘Utba’s flight from Mecca.¹²

In sum, there are three conflicting versions about the circumstances of the pre-hijra emigration of ‘Utba ibn Abī Waqqāš al-Zuhrī from Mecca to Medina. The alliance version seems to be the most credible one. The shedding of blood version, which suspiciously omits the victim’s name, is less convincing. The arrival-by-accident version is the least credible one.

We know about the Quraysh tribe far more than we do about any other Arabian tribe. Admittedly, much of what Ibn al-Kalbī, Ibn Sa‘d and the other historians tell us about the Qurashīs originated with direct descendants of the protagonists or other family members. The family’s role in early Islamic historiography is often hidden from us due to insufficient detail in the *isnāds*. However, as ‘Utba’s case shows, the abundance of source-material often provides us with “playing cards” research can work with.

10 Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, loc. cit. The passage is quoted in al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 6: 13 (where *fa-qutīla bi-Bu ‘āth* should be replaced by *taqtatilu bi-Bu ‘āth*).

11 [ADD. More precisely, town.]

12 See also the order of events according to an independent report dealing with the attempt of the Aws to form an alliance with the Quraysh (cf. earlier, n. 3). A few young men of the ‘Abd al-Ashhal (a subdivision of the Aws) came to Mecca, seeking to form an alliance with the Quraysh against the Khazraj (“*yaltamisūna l-hilf min Quraysh ‘alā qawmihim mina l-Khazraj . . .* against their own people, more specifically, the Khazraj”). On that occasion they allegedly met the Prophet. After their return to Medina the Battle of Bu‘āth between the Aws and the Khazraj took place; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 69.

DID THE QURAYSH CONCLUDE A TREATY WITH THE ANṢĀR PRIOR TO THE HIJRA?¹

H. Motzki (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources*, Leiden: Brill, 2000, 157–69

I

Let us start with a passage from W.M. Watt’s biography of the Prophet which represents what he correctly calls the “standard traditional account”:

For the pilgrimage of 622 a party of Muslims, seventy-three men and two women, went to Mecca, met Muḥammad secretly by night at al-‘Aqabah and took an oath not merely to obey Muḥammad but to fight for him – the Pledge of War, *bay‘at al-ḥarb*. Muḥammad’s uncle ‘Abbās was present² to see that the responsibilities of Hāshim to Muḥammad were genuinely shouldered by the Aws and the Khazraj. Muḥammad asked for twelve representatives (*nuqabā’*) to be appointed, and that was done. The Quraysh got word of the negotiations, which appeared to them hostile, and questioned some of the pagan Medinans, who answered in good faith that there was no truth in the report. Muḥammad now began encouraging his followers to go to Medina – Abū Salamah is even said to have gone before the Pledge

1 I am indebted to Harald Motzki and Kees Versteegh for the invitation to participate in the workshop. Also to Harald Motzki and several other participants for their comments on the draft. The final version of this chapter includes several improvements suggested by Michael Cook.

2 Cf. Th. Nöldeke’s scepticism at this point, in his “Die Tradition über das Leben Muhammeds”, *Der Islam* 5 (1914), 160–70, at 165. At an earlier period Nöldeke ascribed to this report more credibility; see his “Zur tendenziösen Gestaltung der Urgeschichte des Islām’s”, *ZDMG* 52 (1898), 16–33, at 23; also F. Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammeds*², trans. Hans Heinrich Schaeder, Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1930, reprint Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1955, 187 (originally written shortly after Nöldeke’s earlier article). See on this matter M.J. Kister, “Notes on the papyrus account of the ‘Aqaba meeting”, *Le Muséon* 76 (1963), 403–17, at 406–11.

of al-‘Aqabah – and eventually there were about seventy of them there, including Muḥammad himself.³

But why was the hijra of Muḥammad and his Companions postponed for several months? After all, he could have gone to Medina together with the Anṣār during the sacred month of Dhū l-Hijja in which all forms of warfare were forbidden.

According to the dominant Ibn Ishāq/Ibn Hishām version of the ‘Aqaba meeting, immediately after the Anṣār’s pledge of allegiance the devil (*al-shayṭān*) or the enemy of God divulged the secret of the treaty between the Prophet and the Anṣār. The Prophet threatened to deal with him later and ordered the Anṣār to disperse quietly and return to their temporary dwellings. At this point one of the Anṣār, al-‘Abbās ibn ‘Ubāda ibn Naḍla (of the ‘Awf ibn al-Khazraj),⁴ offered to launch a morning attack on the people of Minā⁵ (i.e. the pilgrims from different tribes who were preparing to leave the holy precincts and return to their territories). The Prophet turned the offer down, saying: “We were not ordered [by God] to do it” (*lam nu‘mar bi-dhālika*). Then the Prophet repeated his order that the Anṣār return to their dwelling places.⁶ A version of this report found in a Shī‘ite source makes the Prophet’s non-belligerent approach even more pronounced: upon hearing the news from the invisible informant, the Quraysh were mobilized.⁷

Some versions of this report include the following significant exchange between the Anṣār and the Prophet:

Then they said to the Messenger of God: “Would you leave with us?” He said: “I was not ordered to do so” (*mā umirtu bihi*).⁸

This conversation which is not found in Ibn Hishām and Ṭabarī appears immediately after ‘Abdallāh ibn Ubayy’s questioning by the Quraysh regarding the alliance between Muḥammad and the Anṣār. (It is reported that Ibn Ubayy knew nothing since he was not part of it.)

3 W.M. Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953, 145.

4 More precisely, of Sālim ibn ‘Awf ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf ibn al-Khazraj; Ibn Hajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 630–1; Ibn Qudāma, *Istīṣṣār*, 196 (who omits his father’s name, calling him al-‘Abbās ibn Naḍla).

5 The ‘Aqaba in which the meeting took place was ‘Aqabat Minā; see my “*Yahūd/‘Uhūd*: A variant reading in the story of the ‘Aqaba meeting”, *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), 169–84, at 169.

6 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 90; Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 1223.

7 *Wa-hājat Quraysh fa-aqbalū bi-l-silāḥ*; Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, Tehran, 1376–94/1956–74, 19: 48. The mobilization motive is further developed in the *Bihār* which gives Ḥamza and ‘Alī a role in repelling the Quraysh. In Ibn Ishāq/Ibn Hishām’s version the Quraysh only come in the morning to enquire about the goings-on.

8 Diyārbakrī, *Ta’rīkh al-khamīs*, Cairo: al-Matba‘a al-Wahbiyya, 1283/1866, reprint Beirut, n. d., 1: 319; Marāghī (d. 816/1413), *Tahqīq al-nuṣra bi-talkhīṣ ma‘ālim dār al-hijra*, MS Br. Lib. Or. 3615, 14a.

II

Two sources place after this approach by the Anṣār a passage which is far more at variance with the traditional story of the 'Aqaba meeting and its aftermath. We begin with the text (Appendix I) found in the biography of the Prophet compiled in the tenth/sixteenth century by al-Diyārbakrī (d. 990/1582).⁹ The compiler is quoting from a monograph written some four and a half centuries before his time by the Andalusian Razīn ibn Mu'āwiya (d. 524/1129, or 535/1140).¹⁰ The passage is probably from Razīn's history of Medina entitled *Akhbār dār al-hijra*.¹¹ It explains Muḥammad's stay in Mecca after the 'Aqaba meeting in mundane rather than theological terms, taking us from the domain of divine providence to that of politics:

Razīn reported: And it was said that there was a dispute between the Quraysh and the Anṣār because of the Prophet's [imminent] departure with them [i.e. with the latter]. Then the Quraysh took fright [literally: fear was cast by God into the hearts of the Quraysh,¹² i.e. they backed off because they feared the consequences of a military confrontation with the Anṣār], and said: "[We agree to his departure, on condition that] he would only leave with you¹³ during a [normal] month [i.e. not during a sacred month], or the Bedouin would say that you gained ascendancy over us".¹⁴

The Anṣār said: "The authority regarding this matter is in the hands of the Messenger of God and we shall obey his command". God brought down to His Messenger [the following verse]: "And if they want to trick you, then God is sufficient for you",¹⁵ i.e. if the pagans of Quraysh want to deceive you, then God will cause His trials to befall them. And the Anṣār left for Medina.¹⁶

9 Diyārbakrī, *Khamīs*, 1: 319 (the biography is followed by a general history).

10 See *EF*, s.v. (M. Fierro).

11 Ḥamad al-Jāsir, "Mu'allafāt fī ta'rīkh al-Madīna", no. 4, *al-'Arab* 4/v (1970), 385–8, 465–8, at 388, mentions that Razīn's history of Medina is often quoted by the later historian of Medina, al-Marāghī. The same is true of Samhūdī's *Wafā' al-wafā'* which quotes many passages taken from Razīn's monograph.

12 Cf. the hadith: *nuṣirtu bi l-ru'b masīrat shahr*, e.g. in Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-ḥadīth wa l-athar*, ed. Ṭāhir Aḥmad al-Zāwī and Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāhī, Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Islāmiyya, 1385/1965, s.v. *r: b.*, 2: 233.

13 The preposition *ma'akum* is noteworthy. It is as if the Anṣār were expected to stay in Mecca until the Prophet's departure. Cf. later, p. 77.

14 One expects here the preposition 'alā: *bi-annakum ghalabtumūnā 'alayhi*. See Appendix II.

15 Qur'ān 8, 62. The context is given in the preceding verse: "And if they incline to peace, do also incline to it, and put your confidence in God, for He hears and knows".

16 See also Marāghī, *Tahqīq al-nuṣra*, 14a, who omits Razīn's name and adds that the Anṣār (or rather the Medinans, not all of whom could be called Anṣār at that stage) who took part in the pilgrimage that year numbered 500. See also Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 221. Interestingly, some 500 of the Anṣār are said to have received the Prophet upon his arrival at Medina; Bukhārī, *al-Ta'rīkh al-awsaṭ*, ed. Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Luḥayḍān, Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣumay'ī, 1418/1998, 1: 78. For Razīn's text, see also Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 1: 408.

Although the text is rather elusive at this point, it seems that the heavenly protection from the perfidious Quraysh implies permission to enter into a potentially dangerous accord with them.

It is not impossible to discern suspected *topoi* in the text, such as the fear cast into the hearts of the pagan Quraysh (implying that they agreed to terms more favourable to the Muslims than to themselves) and their concern about their political and military prestige among the Bedouin. But I believe that they all belong to the literary garb of this report rather than to its historical core.

III

The second fragment (Appendix II) is taken from *al-Sīra al-Shāmiyya*, a biography of the Prophet compiled in the tenth/sixteenth century by al-Šāliḥī (d. 942/1535–36). The compiler interrupts the common story of the ‘Aqaba meeting in order to incorporate a new text. In it we are told that the Quraysh proposed to give the Prophet and his followers safe conduct three months later. Again we realize that beside the dominant and almost ubiquitous version of the ‘Aqaba meeting, a substantially different account was circulating in Islamic historiography:

Sulaymān ibn Ṭarkhān mentioned in his *Kitāb al-siyar* that upon the conversion to Islam of those of the Anṣār who converted, Iblīs¹⁷ – may God’s curse be upon him – shrieked, making him [= the Prophet] distinct¹⁸ among the pilgrims: “If you have an interest in Muḥammad, then come to him at such-and-such place, since those who live in Yathrib concluded an alliance with him”. He [= the compiler] said: “And Gabriel descended but none of the people saw him”. The assembly of the Quraysh gathered upon Iblīs’s shriek. Matters between the [Qurashī] pagans and the Anṣār became grave to the point that fighting between them nearly broke out. Abū Jahl regarded fighting in those [sacred] days with aversion. He said: “O company of the Aws and Khazraj, you are our brothers¹⁹ and you have entered into a weighty matter – you want to forcibly take away one of us”. Ḥāritha ibn al-Nu‘mān told him: “Yes, and in spite of your objection, too. By God, had we known that it was the Messenger of God’s command that we take you with us as well, we would do so”. Abū Jahl said: “We propose that after three months we shall allow any of Muḥammad’s Companions wishing to join you to do so, and we shall give you a compact that will satisfy both you and Muḥammad, prescribing that we shall not withhold him after that”. The Anṣār said: “Yes, if the Messenger of

17 See *EP*², s.v. (A.J. Wensinck – L. Gardet).

18 Instead of *bi-banīhi*, I propose to read: *yubīnuhu* or *yubayyinuhu*. However, the text is not smooth.

19 One expects here *akhwālunā* instead of *ikhwānunā*. Cf. my “The death of the prophet Muḥammad’s father: Did Wāqidi invent some of the evidence?”, *ZDMG* 145 (1995), 9–27, at 14 and *passim*.

God is satisfied [with this]”. And he [= the compiler] mentioned the [rest of the] story.²⁰

Şāliḥī copied this report from the biography of the Prophet compiled eight centuries before his own time by Abū l-Mu‘tamir Sulaymān ibn Ṭarkhān al-Taymī (d. 143/761). Al-Taymī was the Baṣran *mawlā*²¹ and ascetic²² who for 40 years officiated as the *imām* of the Great Mosque of Baṣra.²³ The biography was quoted by Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (d. 795/1392)²⁴ and was still available to Şāliḥī more than a century later.²⁵

For some reason Şāliḥī chose to discontinue his quotation from Ibn Ṭarkhān’s biography of the Prophet. Since no fighting broke out between the Quraysh and the Anşār, and since the Prophet stayed in Mecca and did not depart with his new allies, we can assume that the Prophet’s reply was positive.

Obviously, this is not a colourless account of the event but a literary piece meant to entertain both listeners and readers. This is above all evident in the dialogue

20 Şāliḥī, *al-Sīra al-Shāmiyya*, 3: 284–5. See also the more recent edition by ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu‘awwad, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1414/1993, 3: 206.

21 The *nisba* al-Taymī goes back to the fact that he lived among the Taym; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 12: 5.

22 Abū Nu‘aym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyā’*, Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Sa‘āda, n. d., reprint Beirut, 1387/1967, 3: 27–7.

23 See, for example, Dhahabī, *Siyar a‘lām al-nubalā’*, ed. Shu‘ayb al-‘Arnawūṭ *et alii*, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401–9/1981–88, 6: 200.

24 See his *Fath al-bārī sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Maḥmūd ibn Sha‘bān ibn ‘Abd al-Maqṣūd *et alii*, Medina: Maktabat al-Ghurabā’ al-Athariyya, 1417/1996, 2: 212 (*wa-ḥi kitāb al-sīra li-Sulaymān al-Taymī*).

25 In other words, it was extant at least five centuries after al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071) received its *ijāza* in Damascus; cf. J. van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1991–95, 2: 368; *GAS*, 1: 285; M. Jarrar, *Die Prophetenbiographie im islamischen Spanien*, Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1989, 77–81. For Sulaymān’s Shī‘ite sympathies see also Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 12: 9 (*wa-kāna Sulaymān mā‘ilan ilā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*); *TMD*, 42: 531 = Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar ta‘rīkh Dimashq li-Ibn ‘Asākir*, ed. Rūḥiyya al-Naḥḥās *et alii*, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1404–9/1984–89, 18: 81 (the text is not smooth). These sympathies are confirmed by the fragment preserved in Mughaltay, *al-Zahr al-bāsim fī sīrati Abī l-qāsim*, MS Leiden Or. 370, II, 188a, regarding the respective roles of Abū Bakr and ‘Alī in Muḥammad’s hijra; see M.J. Kister, “On the papyrus of Wahb b. Munabbih”, *BSOAS* 37 (1974), 545–71, at 565–6 (*wa-ḥi Siyar Abī l-Mu‘tamir Sulaymān al-Taymī: aqbalā Abū Bakr ḥattā sa‘ala ‘Alīyyan ‘an al-nabī fa-qāla: in kānat laka bihi ḥāja fa-‘lqahu bi-ghār Thawr*). The *Siyar* of Sulaymān ibn Ṭarkhān is presumably identical to his *Maghāzī*, mentioned in *GAS*, 1: 285–6. Sulaymān’s son, al-Mu‘tamir (d. 187/803), transmitted the whole *sīra* compiled by his father to Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā (d. in Baṣra in 245/859); see M. Muranyi, “Ibn Ishāq’s *Kitāb al-maghāzī* in der Riwāya von Yūnus b. Bukair: Bemerkungen zur frühen Überlieferungsgeschichte”, *JSAI* 14 (1991), 214–75, at 225. For entries on al-Mu‘tamir and Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā, see Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 28: 250–6 and 25: 581–3, respectively. (Jarrar, *Die Prophetenbiographie*, 79, suspects that the creator of the book ascribed to Sulaymān was either al-Mu‘tamir or Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā.) For two reports going back to Sulaymān (through his son al-Mu‘tamir), probably taken from his biography of the Prophet, see Abū Nu‘aym, *Dalā’il al-nubuwwa*², ed. Muḥammad Rawwās Qal‘ajī and ‘Abd al-Barr ‘Abbās, Beirut: Dār al-Nafā’is, 1406/1986, 176–7, 199.

between the defiant Ḥāritha and the cool-headed Abū Jahl. But the literary garb adorns a framework of a presumed historical fact, namely, the negotiations and treaty immediately after the ‘Aqaba meeting.

IV

The third text (Appendix III) is found in a small monograph compiled by the historian of the Yemenite town Zabīd, Ibn al-Dayba‘ (d. 944/1537)²⁶ who was a contemporary of Ṣāliḥī (they both preceded Diyārbakrī by half a century). In Ibn al-Dayba‘’s book we read the following:

When the Quraysh found out about what the Aws and Khazraj had done, his [= the Prophet’s] closest cousins²⁷ came to them [= to the Aws and Khazraj]. Among them [i.e. among the former] were Abū Jahl,²⁸ ‘Utba [b. Rabī‘a al-Umawī], Abū Sufyān, Shayba [b. Rabī‘a al-Umawī, ‘Utba’s brother], Ubayy [b. Khalaf al-Jumaḥī], Umayya [b. Khalaf al-Jumaḥī, Ubayy’s brother], Suhayl [b. ‘Amr al-‘Āmirī], Nubayh [b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Sahmī], Munabbih [b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Sahmī, Nubayh’s brother], al-Naḍr ibn al-Ḥārith [al-‘Abdarī] and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ [al-Sahmī]. They told them: “O people of Yathrib, we have a better claim to him²⁹ than you, since we are his kin and flesh”. The Aws and Khazraj told them: “Not at all, our claim to him is better than yours, because we both worship one god”. When the Quraysh realized that their zeal was sincere and their resolution firm, they feared the outbreak of violence and put them off with that which is best³⁰ [i.e. peacefully]. They said: “Leave him to us [for a while], and we undertake to grant him security and protection. We shall treat him and those who follow him favourably, and those of them [i.e. of his followers] who want to join you we shall not prevent from doing so” – they meant the Muhājirūn. The Aws and Khazraj disliked it, [but] the Messenger of God said: “Accept their request, O people of the Aws and Khazraj, since God attains his purpose³¹ and fulfils his promise”. They said: “Will you be satisfied if we do so, O Messenger of God?” He said: “Yes”. They said: “Then we hear and obey”. And they concluded a nonbelligerency treaty for four months, then they returned to Yathrib. When they dispersed, the Quraysh intended treachery. But God, may He be exalted, protected His prophet from their evil and he [= the Prophet]

26 On whom see *EP*, s.v. (C. van Arendonk – G. Rentz).

27 One expects here: his fellow tribesmen.

28 Whom we have already met in Appendix II.

29 The preposition *bihi* is from Ālūsī, *Bulūgh al-arab fī ma‘rifat al-ḥwāl al-‘arab*, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Rahmāniyya, 1342/1924–1343/1925, 1: 190 (quoting the *Nashr al-mahāsīn*).

30 Cf., for example, Qur’ān 41, 34.

31 Qur’ān 65, 3.

left Mecca with the revelation which was sent down to him, in a state of fear and on his guard until he arrived at Medina, because of God's decree to him to do so.³²

V

There are obvious differences among the reports under discussion, none of which is a verbatim reflection of the episode they purport to describe. By far the crucial matter is the treaty. Now while the first report alludes to an understanding with regard to the postponement of the Prophet's departure, the second mentions a three months period after which the Companions, followed by the Prophet himself, will be allowed to emigrate. The third report speaks of a delayed departure of the Prophet and his Companions and refers to a four months truce. Differences in Islamic historiography come as no surprise, given its nature and emergence.³³ Yet there is a significant common denominator: at the initiative of the pragmatic Quraysh, the departure of the Prophet and his Companions was postponed for several months. The delay prevented a military confrontation between the Quraysh and the Anṣār, while at the same time safeguarding the unhindered emigration of the Prophet and his Companions.

Assuming that there was a treaty between the Quraysh and the Anṣār, how are we to interpret the reported attempt to harm the Anṣār on their way back from the pilgrimage? Did the Quraysh act treacherously?³⁴ Were the alleged perpetrators Qurashīs who were opposed to the treaty?³⁵ Was the report invented in order to glorify the two Anṣār involved?³⁶

In the context of the said treaty a special category of Muhājirūn should be mentioned, namely, Anṣār who were also entitled to be called Muhājirūn. Ibn Sa'd lists four men belonging to this category: Dhakwān ibn 'Abd Qays (of the Zurayq – Khazraj), 'Uqba ibn Wahb ibn Kalada (a Ghaṭafānī *ḥalīf* of the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj, more precisely of the Banū l-Ḥublā³⁷), the previously mentioned al-'Abbās ibn 'Ubāda ibn Naḍla of the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj³⁸ and Ziyād ibn Labīd (of the Bayāda – Khazraj). After the 'Aqaba meeting they reportedly returned to

32 Ibn al-Dayba', *Nashr al-maḥāsīn al-yamāniyya fī khaṣā'ish al-Yaman wa-nasab al-Qaḥṭāniyya*, ed. Aḥmad Rātīb Ḥamūsh, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1413/1992, 173–6.

33 Cf. M. Lecker, "The Death".

34 Appendix III; also Samhūdī, *Waḥā'ī*, 1: 408: *wa-qīla inna Qurayshan badā lahum fa-kharajū fī āthārihim fa-adrakū minhum rajulayni kānā takhallafā fī amr*, etc.

35 However, the chief aggressor, Suhayl ibn 'Amr (Ibn Hishām, *Ṣira*, 2: 93), is listed in Appendix III among the Qurashīs who approached the Anṣār.

36 It is noteworthy that both Sa'd ibn 'Ubāda and al-Mundhir ibn 'Amr were of the Sā'ida (Khazraj), albeit of different subdivisions; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 93 and 101, respectively. In one source Sa'd is replaced by al-'Abbās ibn 'Ubāda; Samhūdī, *Waḥā'ī*, 1: 408, which suggests a *faḍā'il* contest between the two.

37 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 4: 528; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 187; mentioned in Buhl, *Leben*, 188, n. 155.

38 Mentioned earlier, n. 6.

Medina with the rest of the Anṣār. When the first Muhājirūn arrived at Qubā', they set out to the Prophet in Mecca and participated in the hijra of his Companions.³⁹ A fifth Anṣārī reportedly entitled to the same status was Rifā'a ibn 'Amr ibn Zayd (of the 'Awf ibn al-Khazraj, more precisely of the Banū l-Ḥublā⁴⁰) who set out to join the Prophet and returned to Medina as a Muhājir.⁴¹

According to other reports which refer to three of the five men mentioned earlier, they stayed in Mecca between the 'Aqaba meeting and the hijra. It is mentioned that 'Uqba ibn Wahb came to the Prophet and stayed with him in Mecca until the hijra,⁴² and there are similar reports regarding Ziyād ibn Labīd⁴³ and al-'Abbās ibn 'Ubāda.⁴⁴

The reports on a treaty between the Quraysh and the Anṣār which preceded the hijra seem to be rare. This impression could, however, be misleading, since it is only based on the small part of Islamic historiography which has survived to our time.⁴⁵ In any case, assuming that they are indeed rare, we have to deduce that the Prophet's biographers gave precedence to reports portraying a persecuted prophet. Their motivation was probably pious: the humbler the Prophet's starting point, the greater God's grace and deliverance.⁴⁶ Besides, stories of humiliation and danger are more effective than ones of political expediency.

The reports quoted earlier demonstrate the importance of late biographies of the Prophet which are outside what is now widely considered as the mainstream of the *sīra* literature.⁴⁷ A voluntary limitation of the scope of sources used in Islamic

39 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 226. Dhakwān participated in the first and second 'Aqaba meetings. Then (i.e. having returned to Medina) he travelled from Medina to Mecca and was with the Prophet until the hijra; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 171.

40 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 2: 493; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 186 (where his pedigree is abridged).

41 Fākihī, *Akhbār Makka*, ed. 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Duḥaysh, Mecca: Maktabat wa-Maṭba'at al-Nahḍa al-Ḥadītha, 1407/1987, 4: 245 (who only mentions in this category Rifā'a and al-'Abbās ibn 'Ubāda).

42 Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 187; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 4: 528.

43 Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 176.

44 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 631; Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 196.

45 Most of the works mentioned in Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* and Ḥājīj Khalīfa's *Kashf al-zunūn* were lost; G. Makdisī, "Hanbalite Islam", in M.L. Swartz (trans. and ed.), *Studies on Islam*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, 216–64, at 217.

46 The circumstances of the hijra are closely related to the interpretation of the term hijra. Buhl, *Leben*, 196 correctly remarks that hijra does not mean "Flucht" but "Bruch, Auflösung einer früheren Verbindung". See also C.H. Becker, *Islamstudien. Vom Werden und Wesen der islamischen Welt*, I, Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1924, 340 ("eine innerlich bedingte, freiwillige Auswanderung"). Becker adds that the reports on the suffering and dangers to which the Prophet was exposed before and during the hijra are exaggerated, "um dem Propheten den Ruhm eines Märtyrers für Gottes Sache zu verschaffen".

47 In the words of M.J. Kister, the late compilations "contain a great number of early Traditions derived from lost or hitherto unpublished compilations". He continues: "Some Traditions, including early ones, were apparently omitted in the generally accepted *Sīra* compilations, faded into oblivion, but reappeared in these late compilations"; see his "The *Sīra* literature", in A.F.L. Beeston *et alii* (eds.), *Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

research deprives one of rich and at times crucial source material. Several centuries ago scholars in Damascus, Cairo and elsewhere in the Muslim world were still copying into their own compilations extracts from old books, some of them dating back to the dawn of Islamic historiography. (Needless to say, we must not equate “early” with “historical” or “true”.)

To conclude, the study deals with the aftermath of the ‘Aqaba meeting which took place several months before the hijra. Three biographies of the Prophet compiled in the tenth/sixteenth century include reports, no doubt copied from earlier biographies, which mention or allude to a treaty between the Quraysh and the Anṣār. These reports may have been suppressed in the mainstream *sīra* literature which preferred a persecuted and humiliated prophet to one whose road to Medina was paved by political compromise.

1983, 352–67, at 366, 367. For the importance of late compilations (Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Sayyid al-Nās) as a source of primary materials from historians earlier than Ibn Ishāq, see A.A. Duri, *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs*, ed. and trans. L.I. Conrad, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, 8.

R. Paret reported (*Arabistik und Islamkunde an deutschen Universitäten*, Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1966, 10) that Gustav Weil (1808–89) used for his biography of Muḥammad “alle ihm irgendwie erreichbaren Quellen” and that Weil made a special trip to Gotha in order to look for relevant manuscripts at the Herzoglichen Bibliothek. There he found Diyārbakrī’s *Khamīs* (quoted earlier in this chapter) and the *Sīra Ḥalabiyya* which, although they were only compiled in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, included rich and old source material. Buhl (*Leben*, 371) was suspicious of the later biographies of the Prophet (he listed authors who lived in the 14th, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) and was confident that the early sources contained the most important reports which were in existence at their time. Watt was of the same opinion. Having mentioned Ibn Hishām, Ṭabarī, Wāqidī and Ibn Sa’d, he said: “There are later Muslim biographers of Muḥammad but none appears to have had access to any important primary sources other than those used by the above-mentioned writers”; see his *Muhammad at Mecca*, xii.

APPENDIX I

قال رزين: وقد قيل وقع بين قريش والانصار كلام في سبب خروج النبي معهم ثم القي الرعب في قلوب قريش فقالوا: ليس يخرج معكم الا في بعض اشهر السنة ولا تتحدث العرب بانكم غلبتمونا. فقالت الأنصار: الامر في ذلك لرسول الله ونحن سامعون لامره فانزل الله على رسوله: وان يريدوا ان يخذعوك فان حسبك الله أي ان كان كفار قريش يريدون المكر بك فسيمكر الله بهم فانصرف الأنصار الى المدينة.

APPENDIX II

وذكر سليمان بن طرخان التيمي في كتاب السير له ان ابليس لعنه الله لما اسلم من اسلم من الأنصار صاح ببنيه [sic] بين الحاج: ان كان لكم بمحمد حاجة فاتوه بمكان كذا وكذا فقد حاله الذين يسكنون بئرب. قال: ونزل جبريل فلم يبصره من القوم احد واجتمع المأ من قریش عند صرخة ابليس فعظم الامر بين المشركين والانصار حتى كاد ان يكون بينهم قتال ثم ان أبا جهل كره القتال في تلك الأيام فقال: يا معشر الاوس والخزرج انتم إخواننا وقد اتيتم امرا عظيما تريدون ان تغلبونا على صاحبنا فقال له حارثة بن النعمان: نعم وانفك راغم والله لو نعلم انه من امر رسول الله ان نخرجك أيضا لخرجناك فقال أبو جهل: نعرض عليكم ان نلحق بكم من أصحاب محمد من شاء بعد ثلاثة اشهر ونعطيكم ميثاقا ترضون به انتم ومحمد لا نحسبه بعد ذلك فقالت الأنصار: نعم اذا رضي رسول الله فذكر الحديث.

APPENDIX III

فلما رأّت قريش ما كان من فعل الأوس والخزرج جاءت إليهم بنو عمه الأقربين [sic] منهم أبو جهل وعتبة وأبو سفيان وشيبة وأبيّ وأمّية وسهيل ونبيه ومنبه والنضر بن الحارث وعمرو بن العاص فقالوا لهم: يا أهل يثرب، إنا أولى منكم [به] لأننا صلّته ولحمته. فقال [sic] لهم الأوس والخزرج: بل نحن أولى به منكم لأننا وإياه نعيد ربا واحدا. فلما رأّت قريش منهم صدق الهمة وقوة العزم خافوا حدوث الشر، فدافعواهم بالتي هي أحسن وقالوا: خلّوا بيننا وبينه على أن له الأمان والذمام فلا يعرض له إلا الخير [sic]، ولا لمن تبعه، ومن أحب منهم أن يلحق بكم لم نمنعه، يريدون بذلك المهاجرين. فكرهت الأوس والخزرج فقال رسول الله: أجيئوهم يا معشر الأوس والخزرج، فإن الله بالغ أمره ومنجز وعده فقالوا: تطيب عن نفسك [sic] يا رسول الله أن نفعل ذلك؟ قال: نعم، قالوا: فالسمع والطاعة وضربوا بينهم أجلا أربعة أشهر ثم رجعوا إلى يثرب. فلما افترقوا همت قريش بالغدر فكفى الله تعالى نبيه شرهم، وخرج من مكة بالوحي الذي أنزل عليه، خائفا يترقب حتى ورد المدينة عن أمر الله له بذلك .

Part 3

MUḤAMMAD AND THE JEWS



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ABŪ MĀLIK ‘ABDALLĀH B. SĀM OF KINDA, A JEWISH CONVERT TO ISLAM¹

Der Islam 71 (1994), 280–82

The Kindite convert was Abū Mālik ‘Abdallāh ibn Sām. His son, Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik al-Qurazī al-Madanī, was born in the time of the Prophet. (Consequently, his entitlement to Companion-status was disputed.)

[ADD. Tha‘laba’s role (or alleged role) in Rayḥāna’s conversion (or rather her alleged conversion) to Islam suggests that at the time of the Qurayza massacre he was a young boy, not a baby or a toddler. See Lecker, “The itinerant Judaeo-Muslim preacher Abū Rayḥāna and his daughter, Muḥammad’s concubine Rayḥāna” (forthcoming, *JAOS*). Hence, he was likely born several years before the hijra.]

The *nisba* al-Qurazī points to the tribe to which the Kindite emigrant and his family were attached.² Tha‘laba transmitted hadith from prominent figures such as ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Umar. Tha‘laba’s son Mālik (or Abū Mālik) transmitted hadith from him and so did the famous Zuhri. Tha‘laba was “the imām of the Banū Qurayza”, an office he held from his youth to his death.³ This probably means that he was the imām of “the mosque of the Banū Qurayza”,⁴ i.e. he led in prayer a congregation made of those who for whatever reason were not executed with the rest of the tribe.

1 Cf. M. Lecker, “The bewitching of the Prophet Muḥammad by the Jews: A note à propos ‘Abd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb’s *Mukhtaṣar fī l-ḥibb*”, *al-Qanṭara* 13 (1992), 561–9.

2 More precisely, they were attached to Qurayza’s “brothers”, the Banū Hadl. But this does not concern us here.

3 Sam‘ānī, *al-Ansāb*, ed. ‘Abdallāh ‘Umar al-Bārūdī, Beirut: Dār al-Jinān, 1408/1988, s.v. al-Qurazī, 4: 475; al-Bukhārī, *al-Ta’rīkh al-kabīr*, ed. Hyderabad, reprint Beirut, 2: 174; Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 5: 79; *Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Istī‘āb*, 1: 212; Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghāba fī ma’rifat al-ṣaḥāba*, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Wahbiyya, 1280/1863, 1: 245; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 1: 407; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, Hyderabad, 1325–27/1907–1909, 2: 25 (*wa-kāna Tha‘laba ya’ummu banī Qurayza ghulāman*). Some called Tha‘laba’s son: Abū Mālik (instead of Mālik); *ibid*.

4 Cf. M. Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina: A geographical approach”, *JSAI* 6 (1985), 35; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum I*, no. VIII.

“The mosque⁵ of the Banū Qurayza” was located in the former territory of Qurayza, in a site consecrated by the Prophet during the siege of Qurayza. According to Samhūdī, it was identical with the unspecified mosque in which Sa’d ibn Mu’ādh gave his famous ruling concerning the fate of the Banū Qurayza.⁶

It is reported that Tha’laba survived the massacre of Qurayza because he had not yet reached the age of puberty.⁷ This is probably incorrect, since Tha’laba’s father, who was of course an adult at that time, survived too⁸ (i.e. together with his household, including Tha’laba). In other words, this was not simply a case of a boy who was below the age of puberty. Tha’laba had a brother called ‘Uqba who also survived the massacre: Tha’laba’s nephew Muḥammad ibn ‘Uqba ibn Abī Mālik transmitted hadith from his uncle.⁹ ‘Uqba was also a transmitter of hadith: his previously mentioned son, Muḥammad, transmitted from him.¹⁰

We return now to Tha’laba’s father, the Kindite emigrant Abū Mālik ‘Abdallāh ibn Sām – the name ‘Abdallāh was presumably given to him upon his conversion to Islam. As an explanation of the fact that Abū Mālik survived the massacre of Qurayza it is reported that he converted to Islam. But this is not enough; after all, the option of conversion to Islam was available to all Qurayzites (as well as to their clients) and almost all of them

[ADD. This is far from being certain. There is evidence that the Qurayzite survivors preserved their tribal identity under Islam, which may suggest that their number was not small. Cf. the expression *wa-da’ watum ft Qurayza*, e.g. in Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 417. I hope to study this in detail elsewhere.]

staunchly rejected it.¹¹ Further details on Abū Mālik shed light on this matter.

Mālik came from the Yemen and said: “We [plural] are of Kinda, and our religion is Jewish”. He married a daughter of Ibn Sa’ya of the Banū Qurayza, became their client and hence was called al-Qurazī.¹²

5 Or rather: “the place of prayer”.

6 Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 3: 173. He makes this remark with reference to the apologetic and improbable claim of Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī (in the *Ṣaḥīḥayn*), that the Banū Qurayza agreed in advance to accept Sa’d’s ruling concerning their fate (*nazala ahl Qurayza ‘alā ḥukm Sa’d ibn Mu’ādh*).

7 Muṣ’ab al-Zubayrī, e.g. in Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba*, 1: 245, says that his case was similar to that of ‘Āṭīyya al-Qurazī (*sinnuhu sinn ‘Āṭīyya al-Qurazī wa-qīṣṣatuhu ka-qīṣṣatihi turikā jamī’an fa-lam yuqṭalā*).

8 Therefore we have some information about the father, while the name of ‘Āṭīyya’s father and his pedigree are unknown; see e.g. Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba*, 3: 413 (*wa-la yu’rafu lahu nasab*).

9 Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, 2: 25; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 1: 407.

10 *Tahdhīb*, 9: 346 (in addition to his father and uncle, Muḥammad also transmitted the hadith of central figures such as Mu’āwiya, Abū Hurayra, Ibn ‘Abbās and ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib’s sister Umm Hānī’).

11 M.J. Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayza: A re-examination of a tradition”, *JSAI* 8 (1986), 61–96. Cf. M. Lecker, “On Arabs of the Banū Kilāb executed together with the Jewish Banū Qurayza”, *JSAI* 19 (1995), 66–72.

12 Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 5: 79 (*wa-qadima Abū Mālik mina l-Yaman fa-qāla: nahnu min Kinda ‘alā dīn yahūd. Fa-tazawwaja ilā ibn*

The name of Abū Mālik's father-in-law, Ibn Saʿya, provides the missing link we are looking for. It could be either Thaʿlaba ibn Saʿya or Asīd ibn Saʿya, [ADD. Thaʿlaba ibn Saʿya should be given precedence, assuming that Thaʿlaba ibn Abī Mālik was called after his presumed maternal grandfather.] but this is quite immaterial: both of them, together with an uncle [ADD. Asad may have been the paternal cousin of the two or their nephew; see no. 11 in this volume.] called Asad ibn ʿUbayd and a fourth person called ʿAmr ibn Suʿdā, escaped from the besieged castle of Qurayza and survived the massacre.¹³ Obviously, the survival of Abū Mālik (and his household) was connected to the survival of his father-in-law Ibn Saʿya. This small group crossed the lines to the Muslim side and converted to Islam. Abū Mālik's sons, Thaʿlaba and ʿUqba, may well have been below the age of puberty, but their survival should be linked to that of their father.¹⁴

This short note is based almost exclusively on information extracted from the Islamic biographical literature. The compilers of the biographical dictionaries were interested in the Prophet's Companions and in the hadith transmitters, but their information has been employed in the reconstruction of the history of a Jewish Yemenite family.

Saʿya wa-ḥālafahum fa-qīla l-Qurayzī). See also Ibn al-Athīr, *Usd al-ghāba*, 5: 289 (*wa-tazawwaja mraʿa min Banī Qurayza fa-nusiba ilayhim*); Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 7: 357 (. . . *fa-ntasaba fihim*); *ibid.*, 1: 407 (. . . *fa-urifa bihim*). Ibn Ḥajar assumes wrongly that Abū Mālik was executed with the Qurayza; *ibid.* (*wa-man yuqṭalu abūhu bi-Qurayza* etc.). Cf. Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Istīʿāb*, 1: 212 (after Abū Mālik had arrived from the Yemen, [*wa*]-*nazala fī Banī Qurayza fa-nusiba ilayhim wa-lam yakun minhum fa-aslama*). When we are told that Thaʿlaba is *ḥalīf al-Anṣār* (*Tahdhīb*, 2: 25), this means that following Qurayza's disappearance he became a client of one of the Anṣār clans.

13 Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 503f (vocalised: Usayd, Saʿiyya). For the reading Asīd see Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, ed. al-Yamānī, Hyderabad, 1381/1962, 1: 53.

14 Abū Mālik ʿAbdallāh ibn Sām was still alive in the time of ʿUmar; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 7: 357: his son Thaʿlaba reports that Abū Mālik was one of the *aḥbār* (erroneously printed: *ajṇād*) summoned by ʿUmar; M.J. Kister, "Ḥaddithū ʿan banī isrāʾīla wa-la ḥaraja", *IOS* 2 (1972), 228.

WERE THE JEWISH TRIBES IN ARABIA CLIENTS OF ARAB TRIBES?

M. Bernards and J. Nawas (eds.), *Patronate and Patronage in Early and Classical Islam*, Leiden: Brill, 2005, 50–69

The assumption that whole Jewish tribes in Arabia were clients of their Arab neighbours is an essential element in a recent discussion on the origins of the *walā*’ institution in Islam:¹

The Islamic institution of *walā*’ is generally assumed to be of Arabian origin (cf. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, i, ch. 3; J. Juda, *Die sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Aspekte der Mawālī in frühislamischer Zeit*, Tübingen 1983), but this is scarcely correct. Leaving aside foreign merchants and colonists under imperial protection, the non-Arab population of pre-Islamic Arabia consisted of Jews, slaves and freedmen of African and Middle Eastern extraction, half-bred descendants of colonists, and presumably also ethnic and occupational pariah groups of the type attested in modern times (Qawāwila, Bayādir, Şullubīs etc.). There is no reason to doubt that all were known as *mawālī* in the sense of “kinsmen”, in so far as they were free and came under Arab protection (cf. the modern use of the word *akh* “brother”), but the question is, what this implied. Are we to take it that all non-Arabs were individually assigned to Arab patrons and acquired partial membership of Arab tribes through them, having no social organisation of their own? Or did they form social groups of their own, so that they were collectively placed under the protection of Arab tribes in which they acquired no membership at all, merely becoming their satellites? The first solution is that enshrined in Islamic *walā*’, but it is the second which is attested for Arabia.

Thus it is well known that the Jews of Arabia formed tribal groups of their own. In fact, Jewish tribes were sometimes strong enough to escape Arab protection altogether (and thus also the status of *mawālī*). But this was hardly the common pattern. The Jews of Fadak, for example, paid

1 *EI*², s.v. *mawālī* (P. Crone).

protection money to Kalb (M.J. Kister, “On the wife of the goldsmith from Fadak and her progeny”, *Le Muséon*, xcii [1979], 321); the Jews of Wādī l-Qurā similarly paid what would nowadays be known as *khuwwa* to Arab overlords (al-Bakrī, *Mu‘jam mā ista‘jam*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen 1876–77, i, 30); and those of Yathrib were reduced to client status by the Aws and Khazraj some time before the rise of Islam (J. Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, iv, Berlin 1889, 7ff.). Naturally, client status weakened the tribal organisation of the Jews; the same is true of modern pariah groups. But the Jewish tribes were not dissolved, nor were the Jews assigned to individual patrons: clientage was a relationship between groups. Similarly, the Arabized descendants of the Persian workmen and prostitutes of Hajar clearly formed a quasi-tribal group of their own under ‘Abdī protection, for all that they adopted the *nisba* of their protectors (al-Ṭabarī, i, 986).

This chapter aims at establishing that on the eve of Islam the Jewish tribes of Yathrib (henceforward: Medina, even with reference to pre-Islamic times) and those of Fadak and Wādī l-Qurā were not clients of Arab tribes and hence are irrelevant to the discussion of the origins of the *walā’* system in Islam.

The Jews of Medina on the eve of the hijra

Let us start with the status of the Jews of Medina at two points in time, namely when Muḥammad arrived there and some 70 years earlier. A passage in Wāqidi assumed by J. Wellhausen and others to reflect the Jews’ subordination by the Arabs is in fact garbled; in its correct form it states the opposite, namely that when Muḥammad came to Medina, the Jews were the strongest element in its population.²

With regard to the two main tribes, the Naḍīr and Qurayza, this can be corroborated by the evidence on their strong fortifications in Upper Medina or the ‘Āliya.³ Roughly to the middle of the sixth century C.E., the Naḍīr and Qurayza were “kings” operating under the Sassanians. In the last quarter of the sixth century Medina had an Arab king of the Khazraj appointed by the king of al-Ḥīra, which indicates that at that specific time the Naḍīr and Qurayza were not the dominant power in Medina.⁴

In general, the study of pre-Islamic Medina is fraught with difficulties because of the tendentious and apologetic nature of Anṣārī historiography. The tribal informants of the Anṣār were emotionally involved in the pre-Islamic history of their

2 M. Lecker, “Wāqidi’s account on the status of the Jews of Medina: A study of a combined report”, *JNES* 54 (1995), 15–32.

3 Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, 10–15.

4 Lecker, “The levying of taxes for the Sassanians in Pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)”, *JSAI* 27 (2002), 109–26; reprinted Lecker, *Variorum* II, no. I.

tribes; after all, the tribal society in which they operated was an extension of the pre-Islamic one. Consequently their accounts not only preserved for posterity the memory of past events, but also defended the reputation of their tribes. One should not expect their approach to have been impartial or academic, and hence their reports must not be taken at face value. This will be demonstrated by accounts on two events which took place in Medina in the decades leading to Islam, two events to which we now turn.

The aftermath of the Fiṭyawn affair

Al-Fiṭyawn was a quasi-legendary Jewish king who reportedly used to deflower the brides of Medina before they were delivered to their lawful husbands. The tententious report in the *Aghānī* (XIX, 97) on the aftermath of his affair is sometimes quoted in the secondary literature as if it came from an unprejudiced historian. For example, P. Crone wrote:

Reputedly lords and masters of both Yathrib and its Arab immigrants at first, they [the Jews – M. L.] were defeated by the Arab tribes some time before the rise of Islam and reduced to client status. This did undermine their internal organization. On their defeat, we are told, “the Jews were weakened and lost their capacity to defend themselves; they were very afraid, so whenever a member of the Aws and Khazraj provoked them by [doing] something which they disliked, they would no longer go to one another as they had done in the past; rather, [every] Jew would go to the protectors among whom he lived (*jīrānihi lladhīna huwa bayna aḥurihim*) and say, “we are your *protégés* and clients (*jīrānukum wa-mawālīkum*)”; for every Jewish family (*qawm*) had sought refuge with a clan (*baṭn*) of the Aws or the Khazraj, seeking strength from them”. Defeat thus destroyed the tribal cohesion of the Jews who, unable to take joint action against the victors, were forced to seek protection from them; and apparently it reduced them to tenants too.⁵

5 P. Crone, *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law: The Origins of the Islamic Patronate*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, 56; idem, *EL*, s.v. *mawlā*, 875a. Al-Bakrī (*al-Mamālik wa-l-masālik*, MS Nur Osmaniye 3034, 242b; ed. A.P. Van Leeuwen and A. Ferre, Tunis, 1992, 1: 416–17, nos. 700–1; *Jazīrat al-‘arab min kitāb al-mamālik wa-l-masālik li-Abī ‘Ubayd al-Bakrī*, ed. ‘Abdallāh Yūsuf al-Ghunaym, Kuwait: Dhāt al-Salāsīl, 1397/1977, 94–5) says that following the actions of Abū Jubayla (who according to some helped the Arabs overcome the Jews), the Aws and Khazraj became strong, took the lands of the Jews and were dispersed in the ‘Āliya of Medina. Only a small portion of the Jews remained, namely those who were prepared to live in humility and were content with ignominy (*fa-lammā fa‘ala dhālika ‘azzat al-Aws wa-l-Khazraj wa-ghalabat ‘alā diyārihim, wa-tafarraḡat al-Aws wa-l-Khazraj fi ‘āliyat al-Madīna fa-lam yabqa mina l-yahūd illā aqalluhum mimman aqāma ‘alā l-hūn wa-raḡiya bi-l-ṣaḡhar*; the term *ṣaḡhār* is probably inspired by Qur‘ān 9, 29). Ya‘qūbī (in whose report the Jews were subdued by one of *mulūk al-Yaman*) is more restrained: the position of the Aws and Khazraj was improved, they planted palm-trees and

Also Wensinck and Serjeant regarded the *Aghānī* report as an accurate account on the status of the Jews of Medina – viz. all of them – on the eve of Islam. Wensinck wrote:

From this moment until the time of Muḥammad the Banū Qaylah [i.e. the Aws and Khazraj – M. L.] ruled Medina and were known in Arabia as *mawālī al-yahūd, patroni Judaeorum*.

Serjeant argued:

The *Aghānī* (XIX, 97) makes it clear that whatever position the Jews had held in former times, they had lost status and their power to defend themselves had diminished (*dhallū wa-qalla mtinā'uhum*), and by the immediately pre-Islamic era they were under the protection of the Arab tribes. . . . This loss of status followed after a slaughter of the Jews by Mālik ibn al-‘Ajlān of Khazraj.⁶

Watt struck a more cautious tone:

It is commonly suggested that the Aws and the Khazraj became rulers of Yathrib with all the Jews in subjection to them; but the sources do not support such a view.⁷

A sober approach was also adopted by F. Altheim and R. Stiehl who observed that the battle of Bu‘āth which took place several years before the hijra gave renewed

built houses; Ya‘qūbī, *Ta‘rīkh*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1379/1960, 1: 204 (*fa-ṣaluḥat ḥāl al-Aws wa-l-Khazraj wa-gharasū* [printed: *wa-gh.r.s.*] *l-nakhl wa-anṣha’ū l-manāzil*).

6 A.J. Wensinck, *Muhammad and the Jews of Medina, with an Excursus: Muhammad’s Constitution of Medina*, by Julius Wellhausen, trans. and ed. W.H. Behn, Freiburg im Breisgau: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1975, 25; R.B. Serjeant, “The *sunnaḥ jāmi‘ah*, pacts with the Yathrib Jews, and the *Tahrīm* of Yathrib: Analysis and translation of the documents comprised in the so-called ‘constitution of Medina’”, *BSOAS* 41 (1978), 1–42, at 3. Beside the *Aghānī* report, Serjeant (2) also refers to Wāqidi’s report discussed in Lecker, “Wāqidi’s account on the status of the Jews of Medina: A study of a combined report”, *JNES* 54 (1995), 15–32. See also G. Levi della Vida, “Pre-Islamic Arabia”, in Nabih Amin Faris (ed.), *The Arab Heritage*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944, 25–57, at 51: “An example of a city which after a period of independence was obliged to yield to the nomads is afforded by Yathrib (the later Medina), a rich oasis in Hejaz where some Jewish tribes had settled, only later to fall under the control of two Bedouin tribes which occupied the town and reduced the old inhabitants to the condition of tributaries”.

7 W.M. Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1956, 193. In a footnote he adds: “The general impression is that the Jews were independent”. See also idem, *ET*, s.v. al-Madīna, 995: “It is sometimes said that the Jews now became subject to these Arabs [= the Aws and Khazraj – M. L.]. This is not borne out, however, by the historical accounts of the period up to 5/627. The main Jewish groups, though doubtless now weaker than the Arabs, retained a measure of independence and continued to occupy some of the best lands”.

significance to the Qurayza and Naḍīr, and hence Muḥammad included them in the treaty (i.e. the so-called Constitution of Medina) concluded before Badr in which he incorporated the whole population of Medina.⁸

The Fityawn affair should be dated to the second half of the sixth century C.E., roughly three generations before the hijra. This chronology is based on the fact that the Arab protagonist of this affair, Mālik ibn al-‘Ajlān who killed the Jewish king was the great-grandfather of two Companions of the Prophet.⁹

For the apologetic Anṣārī historiography, the affair was a watershed in the history of pre-Islamic Medina, separating an era of Jewish domination from an era of Arab domination; the slaughter carried out at that time by a foreign prince turned the Jews into underlings and punished them for the sexual excesses of their corrupt king. Rather than setting forth a process of gradual decline in the power of the Jews, tribal tradition adopted a simplistic concept in which Jewish domination came to an abrupt end.

The Fityawn affair no doubt weakened the Jews, including the Naḍīr and Qurayza. But whatever effects it had in the short run, by the time of the hijra the main Jewish tribes restored their power. Ya‘qūbī reports on an attempt by the Anṣār on the eve of the hijra to seal an alliance with Quraysh. It was motivated by the fact that “the Naḍīr, the Qurayza and other Jews became emboldened against them” (*ijtara’at ‘alayhim*).¹⁰

In sum, when it is reported that “the Jews were weakened and lost their capacity to defend themselves”, this could only be true of some of them, certainly not of the main tribes. This exaggerated statement represents the tendentious and apologetic approach of Anṣārī informants.

8 F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte der Spätantike*, Frankfurt a.M.: V. Klostermann, 1957, 160: “Das Treffen von Bu‘āt hatte aber Quraiza und al-Naḍīr neue Bedeutung gegeben, und Mohammed nahm die Juden Medinas in den Bruderbund auf, in dem er, noch vor der Schlacht bei Badr, die ganze Stadt zusammenschloss”. (For a discussion of the Jewish participation in this treaty see now Lecker, *The ‘Constitution of Medina’: Muḥammad’s First Legal Document*, Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2004). Watt, *Medina*, 195, remarks that in the story of Bu‘āth the Naḍīr and Qurayza “seem to be acting as sovereign bodies, making alliances with Arab clans as equals, not politically subordinate to any of them, but perhaps tending to become relatively weaker” (this is a reference to the hostages handed over by the Jews to the Khazraj prior to the battle).

9 Ibn Kalbī, *Nasab Ma‘add wa-l-yaman al-kabīr*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1408/1988, 1: 415; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘Arab*, 353–4. The statement that Mālik was in command of the Khazraj in the battle of Bu‘āth is erroneous; cf. Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Būlāq, 1285/1868, 15: 161–5; J. Wellhausen, *Medina vor dem Islam*, Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1889 (Skizzen und Vorarbeiten, 4), 7.

10 Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rīkh*, 2: 37. Ya‘qūbī also reports of a later Anṣārī attempt to make an alliance with the Thaqīf.

[ADD. The Anṣār’s invitation to the Prophet at the ‘Aqaba meeting did not come from a position of power; to the contrary, they reportedly hoped to be unified and strengthened by him; *ibid.*, 38: *wa-la ‘alla llāh an yajma’anā bika wa-yajma’a dhāt bayninā fa-lā yakūnu aḥad a’azz minnā.*]

The battle of Ḥusayka

The ways of Anṣārī historiography can also be demonstrated by the reports on the small-scale battle between the Salima (a subdivision of the Khazraj) and the Jews living in the Ḥusayka village in the north of Medina. At the nucleus of these reports there is historical fact: on the eve of Islam certain Jewish tribes – not including the main ones living in the ‘Āliya – were losing ground to their Arab neighbours. But we are essentially concerned here with the way in which the battle was described in Anṣārī historiography. The reports naturally come from the interested party itself, namely the Salima. They claimed that a proper review of their troops had been carried out before the battle, precisely where the Muslim warriors of Badr were later reviewed on their way to the battlefield. This was a good omen: the Salima implied that the victory of Badr had been heralded by their own victory at Ḥusayka. According to the tribal report, the battle was anything but small. After the review,

we [the Salima] marched on the Jews of Ḥusayka who were the strongest Jewish group at that time [!] and destroyed them [literally: we killed them in whichever way we wanted]. Since then and to this very day all of the Jews [!] were subordinate to us (. . . *wa-hum a‘azz yahūd kānū yawma ‘idhin fa-qatalnāhum kayfa shi’nā fa-dhallat lanā sā’ir yahūd ilā l-yawm*).

Samhūdī adduces verses by a poet whose identity is not specified – in fact it is Ka‘b ibn Mālīk of the Salima:

We have attacked them in the morning at the foot of the mountain on the day of Ḥusayka/with the wide swords of Buṣrā and the well-straightened brown spears

No one of them stood up to fight us/and they did not carp at us on the day we drove them away.¹¹

11 Samhūdī, *Waḥā’*, 4: 239, s.v. Ḥusayka: *ṣabaḥnāhum bi-l-saḥḥi yawma Ḥusaykatin / ṣaḥā’iḥa Buṣrā wa-l-Rudayniyyata l-sumrā; fa-mā qāma minhum qā’imun li-qirā’inā / wa-lā nāhabūnā yawma nazjuruhum zajrā*; Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina: A geographical approach”, *JSAI* 6 (1985), 39–40; H.Z. Hirschberg, *Yisra’el be-‘arav*, Tel-Aviv: Mossad Bialik, 1946, 127–8; Wāqidi, *Maḡhāzī*, 1: 23–4; al-Firūzābādī, *al-Maḡhānim al-muṭāba fi ma’ālim Ṭāba*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1389/1969, s.v. = Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-buldān*, s.v.; Naṣr al-Iskandarī, *al-Amkina wa-l-miyāh wa-l-jibāl wa-l-āthār*, MS Br. Lib. Add. 23,603, 54b; Ibn Shabba, *Ta’riḫ al-Madīna al-munawwara*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt, n. p., [1399/1979], 1: 158 (instead of *yā bunayya, innā ‘turidnā hāhunā bi-l-Suqyā ḥattā qābalnā l-yahūd bi-Ḥusayka*, read: . . . *ḥīna qātalnā . . .*). For the reading *ṣabaḥnāhum* see Ḥamad al-Jāsir’s comments on Shaltūt’s edition, “Qirā’a sarī’a fi kitāb Ta’riḫ al-Madīna li-Ibn Shabba”, *al-‘Arab* 18 (1983–84), 314. On the swords in question see F.W. Schwarzlose, *Die Waffen der alten Araber aus ihren Dichtern dargestellt*, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1886, 131, 218. In an elegy on ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Quṣayy’s offspring are likened to *al-Rudayniyya l-sumr*; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1: 185 (trans. A. Guillaume, *The Life*

The expulsion of the Jews of Ḥusayka which was a local event was connected to the Prophet's obtaining of a foothold or "territorial basis" in Medina.¹²

While some of the Jewish clans in Lower Medina or the Sāfila were giving way to military pressure from their Arab neighbours, those living in Upper Medina or the 'Āliya were only marginally affected. Hence the claims of the Salima should be taken with a pinch of salt.

Anti-Anṣārī polemics

Political and intertribal polemics form the context of the apologetic and exaggerated statements made by the Anṣār with regard to their pre-Islamic history. Regardless of their actual political and military weight, the Anṣār drew fire from their adversaries.

The weakness of the Aws and Khazraj vis-à-vis the Jews when the former settled in Medina, and in particular the excesses of Fityawn, were used against the Anṣār in intertribal polemics. This already began as early as the first century of Islam: Rawḥ ibn Zinbā' al-Judhāmī (84/703)¹³ mentioned Fityawn in order to tease his Anṣārī wife.¹⁴

Considering the predominantly negative image of the Jews in the early Islamic period, the claim that the Anṣār were of Jewish stock was meant to revile them. According to Ibn Ishāq, the Aws and Khazraj descended from four hundred scholars of the Children of Israel whom the Ḥimyarī king Tubba' settled in Medina; a late compilation describes the said genealogy of the Anṣār as a result of a Jewish plot.¹⁵

The military activity of a tribe was always a central component of its remembered history, and the Aws and Khazraj were no exception. The Qurashī scholar al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, quoting his uncle Muṣ'ab ibn al-Zubayr, said that with the exception of the battle of Bu 'āth, the pre-Islamic wars between the Aws and Khazraj were merely stone-throwing and fighting with clubs.¹⁶ The distinguished Qurashī scholars who descended from 'Abdallāh ibn al-Zubayr¹⁷ should have

of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq's Sirat Rasūl Allāh, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955, 77: "like very spears"). For other attestations of this combination see e.g. Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā ista'jam*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saqqā, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'lif wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1364/1945–1371/1951, 4: 1265, s.v. Manbij; *Aghānī*, 10: 34. For *ṣa'da* (or spear) *Rudayniyya* see Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya fī l-ta'rīkh*, Cairo: Maṭba'at l-Sa'āda, al-Maṭba'a al-Salafiyya and Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1351/1932–1358/1939, 2: 355.

12 Lecker, "Muḥammad at Medina", 29–30, 39–42; idem, *The Constitution of Medina*, Index.

13 *EP*², s.v. (G.R. Hawting); I. Hasson, "Le chef judhāmīte Rawḥ ibn Zinbā'", *SI* 77 (1993), 95–122.

14 She was the daughter of al-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr al-Anṣārī; al-Bakrī, *Simḥ al-la'ālī fī sharḥ amālī l-Qālī*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Maymanī, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'lif wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1354/1936, 1: 179; *Aghānī*, 8: 139 (where the verses are ascribed to a cousin of Rawḥ); al-Jāhīz, *Rasā'il*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām Hārūn, Cairo: al-Khānjī, 1384/1964–1399/1979, 2: 359 (*Kitāb al-bighāl*).

15 See M. J. Kister, "'Haddithū 'an banī isrā'īla wa-la ḥaraja'", *JOS* 2 (1972), 215–39, at 233.

16 Wellhausen, *Medina vor dem Islam*, 30=*Aghānī*, 2: 162.

17 *EP*², s.v. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Zubayr (H.A.R. Gibb).

known better: they were born in Medina where their family lived and prospered since the time of Muḥammad.¹⁸

An apocryphal dialog between Muḥammad and the Anṣār allegedly took place at Ḥunayn following Anṣārī complaints over the division of spoils. The Prophet addressed them with the following rhetorical question: “Had I not come to you when you were not riding horses and [only later] you began riding them?” They humbly replied: “You came to us when we were subordinate and few, and God strengthened us through you”.¹⁹ A common polemical technique is used here: one party endorses the claim of another. Admittedly, there were not many horses in pre-Islamic Medina since its agriculturalists employed less delicate beasts. But the supposed exchange between the Prophet and the Anṣār was polemical and aimed at undermining their prestige.

The Anṣārī point of view is demonstrated, for example, by Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubāda²⁰ who is supposed to have given at Ḥunayn the following answer: “The Arabs know that there is no tribe more capable of defending its families and property (*amna’ li-mā warā’ zuḥūrihim*) than us”.²¹ At the ‘Aqaba meeting (622 C.E.) al-Barā’ ibn Ma‘rūr²² supposedly told the Prophet: “[W]e shall defend you as we shall defend our womenfolk . . . for we are men of war and men of coats of mail which we inherited from father to son”.²³ The pre-Islamic history of the Anṣār was, as we are told elsewhere, one of defiance, not of submission: the Anṣār alighted on the fringes of Medina (*khārīj al-Madīna*), then they became strong enough to expel the Jews from it and alight inside it, while the Jews were pushed to the fringes.²⁴ The Anṣār “who have the strongest hearts and the noblest ambitions” never paid tribute (*itāwa*)²⁵ to any of the kings.²⁶

18 *GAS*, 1: 271f, 317f.

19 *Wa-ji’tanā yā rasūl allāh wa-naḥnu adhillā qalīlūna fa-a’azzanā allāh bika*; *Aghānī*, 13: 67–8.

20 *EI*², s.v. (W.M. Watt).

21 Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr (Jāmi’ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-qur’ān)*, Būlāq, 1321/1903–1330/1912, 10: 71. Cf. the commentaries of Qur’ān 42, 23: *ibid.*, 25: 16; al-Qurtubī, *Tafsīr (al-Jāmi’ li-ahkām al-qur’ān*³), Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1387/1967, 16: 24.

22 *EI*², s.v. (K.V. Zettersteen).

23 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 1220.

24 Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 17.

25 Cf. *EI*², s.v. (Cl. Cahen); later, p. 101.

26 *Wa-hum a’azz al-nās anfansan wa-ashrafuhum himaman lam yu’addū itāwa qaṭṭu ilā aḥad minā l-mulūk*; Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī, *al-Iqd al-farīd*, ed. Aḥmad Amīn, Aḥmad al-Zayn and Ibrāhīm al-Ibyārī, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta’līf wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1359/1940–1372/1953, 3: 334. The Anṣār were a branch of the Azd; for the boastful tribal tradition of another branch of the Azd in connection with its settlement in ‘Umān, see Anonymous, *Kaṣf al-ghumma al-jāmi’ li-akhbār al-umma*, ed. Aḥmad ‘Ubaydalī, Nicosia: Dalmūn li-l-Nashr, 1405/1985, 211f (quoting al-Kalbī). For a most outspoken pro-Anṣārī bias (and pro-Yemenī bias in general), see al-Hamdanī, *Kitāb qaṣīdat al-dāmigha*, ed. Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Akwa’, Cairo: Maṭba‘at al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1384/1964, 218f, who also deals with the status of the Aws and Khazraj. E.g. 221: *wa-lam tujāwir al-Aws wa-l-Khazraj aḥadan illā wa-dāna lahā, kānat Muzayna wa-Ghifār wa-ghayruhumā min qabā’il Nizār lahum shibh al-jira wa-adhallū Qurayza wa-l-Naḍīr fa-kānū lahum khawalan* (“and they became their slaves”). On the *Dāmigha* cf. A. El-Shami and R.B. Serjeant, “Regional

Such claims and counter-claims are at the background of the reports on the state of affairs in pre-Islamic Medina. The claims should be carefully weighed against more solid evidence.

The nomad's share in the annual crop

Grants in kind made to various Arab tribes were adduced as evidence that the bestowers were clients of the receivers:

The Jews of Fadak, for example, paid protection money to Kalb . . . the Jews of Wādī l-Qurā similarly paid what would nowadays be known as *khuwwa* to Arab overlords . . . and those of Yathrib were reduced to client status by the Aws and Khazraj (see earlier, p. 88-9).

I submit that these grants did not entail client status. Each settlement had an intricate network of relationships with different tribes, close and remote. These relationships should not be lumped together since there were different kinds of tribes and consequently different relationships. Medina had close links with strong tribes such as the 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'ṣa'a and the Ghaṭafān and occasional contacts with the Tamīm who lived in eastern Arabia. It also had very close ties with relatively small tribes such as the Juhayna, Ghifār, Aslam, Khuzā'a and Ashja' whose territories were one to three days' journey from Medina. The small tribes were dependent on Medina, had military alliances with one of its tribes, provided various services to the people of Medina and in general posed a negligible military threat. The large tribes could be dangerous and had to be bought off. The examples regarding Medina which are given later relate to the 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'ṣa'a and the Ghaṭafān.

At the time of Muḥammad four of the relatively small tribes, namely the Aslam, Ghifār, Muzayna and Juhayna (or certain groups among them) were assigned the same tax collector, Ka'b ibn Mālīk al-Anṣārī,²⁷ their taxes reached Abū Bakr after Muḥammad's death. Among the small tribes which remained loyal to Medina after his death we also find the Ka'b of Khuzā'a whose tax collector was Bishr ibn Suḃfān al-Ka'bī, and the Ashja' whose tax collector was Mas'ūd ibn Rukhayla al-Ashja'ī.²⁸

The kayla of Abū Barā'

Medina granted an annual share of its produce of dates to the strong leader of the 'Āmir ibn Ṣa'ṣa'a, Abū Barā' 'Āmir ibn Mālīk (nicknamed *mulā'ib al-asinna* or "the one who plays with spears"). He received from the people of Medina (viz.

literature: The Yemen", in J. Ashtiany *et al.* (eds.), *Abbasid Belles-Lettres*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, 448.

27 Whose verses were quoted earlier, p. 93.

28 Al-Diyārbakrī, *Ta'rīkh al-khamīs*, Cairo: al-Matba'a al-Wahbiyya, 1283/1866, 2: 203.

from all of them, not only from the Jews) a *kayla* of dates, namely an annual grant, in return for a safe conduct given to the Medinans traveling in Najd.²⁹

The term *kayla* is derived from the root *k.y.l.* which denotes a measure of capacity.³⁰ Abū Barā'’s *kayla* protected the people of Medina when they travelled in Najd; it did not render them the clients of Abū Barā' or his tribe.

The ja'āla of Fadak

In connection with the conquest (or rather temporary takeover) of Fadak by the Kalb around 570 C.E. it is reported that the tribal leader of the Kalb, al-Ḥārith ibn Ḥiṣn nicknamed al-Ḥarshā, was entitled to a *ja'āla* from the people of Fadak. According to M.J. Kister, al-Ḥārith “had the right to the pay (*ja'āla*) imposed on the people of Fadak”.³¹ This is a most unusual case of a settlement subdued by a nomadic tribe.³²

- 29 *Wa-kāna li-‘Āmir ibn Mālik min ahl Yathrib kayla min tumrānihim ‘alā anna man ṭala‘a Najdan minhum fa-huwa fī khafārat ‘Āmir ibn Mālik*; Ḥassān ibn Thābit, *Dīwān*, ed. W. ‘Arafat, London: Luzac, 1971, 2: 176; quoted in Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1989, 106 (in n. 34, read *kayla* instead of *kīla*). This arrangement is of crucial importance in connection with the battle of Bi‘r Ma‘ūna. Cf. Caskeel, 2: 160, who says about ‘Āmir that he came to Medina at the beginning of 4/625 “zu unbekanntem Zwecke. . . Er verpflichtete sich dort, den Muslimen Schutz zu gewähren, wir kennen aber weder den Grund noch den Umfang dieser Verpflichtung”. On the safe conduct offered by Abū Barā' to the Companions of the Prophet cf. M.J. Kister, “The expedition of Bi‘r Ma‘ūna”, in G. Maqdisi (ed.), *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of H.A.R. Gibb*, Leiden: Brill, 1965, 337–57, at 337–8, 355–7. Cf. also *EP*², s.v. Bi‘r Ma‘ūna (C.E. Bosworth); *EP*³, s.v. (M. Lecker).
- 30 On the way in which the Medinans used to measure dates see *Lisān al-‘Arab*, s.v. *k.y.l.* In another context it is reported that the *kayla* of the family of caliph ‘Umar, or the food quantity assigned to it, was overlooked by ‘Umar’s *mawlā*, Mālik ibn ‘Iyād; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 6: 274–5, no. 8362 (*wallāhu ‘Umar kaylat ‘iyāl ‘Umar fa-lammā qadima ‘Uthmān wallāhu l-qasm, fa-summiya Mālik al-Dār*). According to ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī, Mālik was ‘Umar’s storekeeper (*kāna . . . khāzinan li-‘Umar*).
- 31 M.J. Kister, “On the wife of the goldsmith from Fadak and her progeny”, *Le Muséon* 92 (1979), 321–30, at 321. Kister (330) linked the conquest of Fadak to the decline in the power of the Jews of Medina. He argued that the payment by Fadak of “some tribute” indicated “that the power of the Jewish agricultural settlements in that period, the end of the third quarter of the sixth century, began to decrease”. Kister refers to Abū l-Baqā’, *al-Manāqib al-Mazydiyya*, MS Br. Mus., Add 23,296, 72b–3b = ed. Ṣāliḥ Mūsā Darādika and Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir Khriṣāt, Amman: Maktabat al-Risāla al-Ḥadītha, 1404/1984, 1: 287 (*al-Ḥārith ibn Ḥiṣn ibn ḌamḌam ibn ‘Ādī ibn Janāb al-Kalbī al-ma‘rūf bi-l-Ḥarshā, kānat lahu ja‘āla ‘alā ahl Fadak fa-dafa‘ūhu ‘anhā fa-aghāra ‘alayhim . . .*).
- 32 *Al-Ḥārith wa-huwa l-Ḥarshā wa-qad ra‘asa wa-ṣāra lahu saby Fadak hīna ftataḥahā [sic] Kalb fī l-jāhiliyya*; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Nasab Ma‘add*, 2: 562 (quoted by Kister from the MS). See also Ḥamad al-Jāsir, *Fīshimāl gharb al-jazīra (nuṣūṣ, mushāhadāt, inṭibā‘āt)*, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1401/1981, 297, quoting Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yahyā al-Yamānī, Hyderabad: Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyya, 1381/1962, 2: 433. Obviously, the Kalb did not settle in Fadak following their victory. The *raison d’être* of the reports on Fadak is the fact that a Jewess captured by the Kalb in Fadak later gave birth to the last king of al-Ḥīra, al-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir.

Now *j(a/i/u) 'āla* does not mean a tribute but a payment for services such as the return of a missing camel or a fugitive slave. *Ja 'ālat al-gharaq* is the reward of one who dives to rescue a person or some goods.³³ In the story of Joseph a *ja 'āla* was promised to his brothers for returning the gold or silver cup (which also served Joseph as an official measure, *siqāya*, *ṣuwā' al-malik*) planted in Binyāmīn's³⁴ effects.³⁵ A man gave a *ja 'āla* to caliph Sulaymān ibn 'Abd al-Malik's eunuch in return for private audience with the caliph.³⁶ In the context of the eunuch *ja 'āla* may also be rendered "bribes".

Most relevant for us here is an account relating to pre-Islamic Arabia: in Ibn al-Kalbī's missing book *Kitāb Hammād al-Rāwiya* it is supposedly reported with regard to Yawm al-Ṣafqa that Khusro's caravan, having travelled from Madā'in via al-Ḥīra and Yamāma, was transported by the Sa'd (of the Tamīm) from the boundaries of the Ḥanīfa territory to the Yemen in return for a *ja 'āla*.³⁷ The Kalb may well have earned the *ja 'āla* in return for similar services. Fadak's *ja 'āla* is comparable to Medina's *kayla*.

Another term relevant for us here is *'ulfā* or the share of the harvest given to a guard or a friend. The Banū l-Sharīd of the Sulaym were entitled to an *'ulfā* from every harvest of barley reaped by the agriculturalists of the Iran settlement.³⁸

33 *Mā yuj'alu li-man yaghūsu 'alā maṭā' aw insān ghariqa fī l-mā'*; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Fā'iq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth*, ed. 'Alī Muhammad al-Bijāwī and Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo: 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1971, 1: 174, s.v. *th.m.n.* In connection with 'Abdallāh ibn 'Atīk's raid against Abū Rāfi' Sallām ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq in Khaybar (see now H. Motzki, "The murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq: On the origin and reliability of some Maghāzī-reports", in idem [ed.], *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources*, Leiden: Brill, 2000, 170–239), it is reported that the latter offered the Ghaṭafān and the idol worshippers living around him (i.e. in the area surrounding Khaybar) *al-ju'l al-'azīm* in return for their fighting against the Prophet; al-Maqrīzī, *Imtā' al-asmā' bi-mā li-l-rasūl mina l-anbā' wa-l-amwāl wa-l-hafada wa-l-maṭā'*, 1, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shakir, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'lif wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1941, 186. Cf. M. Bonner, "Ja 'ā'il and holy war in early Islam", *Der Islam* 68 (1991), 45–64. At 46, n. 8, Bonner has *ji 'āla* in the sense of "protection money" much like modern Arabian *khuwwa*", for which sense he quotes Crone, *Roman, Provincial and Islamic Law*, 56n, who in turn refers to Kister's study on Fadak. See similarly in M. Bonner, *Aristocratic Violence and Holy War: Studies in the Jihad and the Arab-Byzantine Frontier*, New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1996, 14, n. 7. At the beginning of the *ridda*, 'Uyayna ibn Ḥiṣn and al-Aqra' ibn Ḥābis demanded a *ju'l* in return for the protection of Medina from the menacing Bedouin under their command. The prominent Muslims who supported their demand suggested that they receive a *tu'ma*; al-Diyārbakrī, *Ta'rīkh al-khamīs*, 2: 202.

34 See *EL*², s.v. (A.J. Wensinck and G. Vajda).

35 Ibn Kathīr, *Bidāya*, 1: 213.

36 *TMD*, 68: 176. *Ja 'āla* could also mean the wages of a prostitute (*qaḥba*); *Aghānī*, 13: 84. In the context of the eunuch *ja 'āla* may also be rendered "bribes".

37 *Aghānī*, 16: 79.

38 Ḥamad al-Jāsir, *Abū 'Alī al-Hajarī wa-abḥāthuhu fī taḥdīd al-mawāḍi'*, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1388/1968, 189: *al-'ulfā* . . . *an yaj'ala* [note the verb] *l-insān 'inda ṣarām sha'rihi wa-jazz qaḍbihi li-khafir aw li-ṣadiq shay'an yu'īhi iyyāhu. Wa-li-banī l-Sharīd min banī Sulaym 'alā zurrā' Iran 'ulfā 'inda ḥaṣād kull sha'ir ilā l-yawm*; quoted in Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym*, 225. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, has under *al-'alfā*: "What a man assigns, on the occasion of the reaping of his barley, to a guardian [thereof] from the birds, or to a friend" (*Tāj al-'arūs*, quoting Hajarī).

The nomads' grants are referred to by different terms (*kayla*, *ja'āla*, *'ulfā*). The terms, the crops and the tribes varied, but in all three cases mentioned earlier we have an annual grant in kind made by the settled to the nomads at harvest-time. The grant can best be conceived of as a playing card in the game of Arabian politics. It should not lead to the conclusion that the settled, be they Jewish, Christian or idol worshippers, were the clients of the nomads.

The tu'ma or ukl of Wādī l-Qurā

In Wādī l-Qurā³⁹ there was another type of relationship between the settled and their tribal neighbours who may well have engaged in agriculture themselves. The Jewish inhabitants of the settlement had a treaty with the 'Udhra (a tribe of the Quḍā'a federation) which had nothing to do with the religion of the former. The treaty secured for the 'Udhra a portion of the annual crop of Wādī l-Qurā (the terms used are *tu'ma* and *uk[u]l*) in return for their driving away from Wādī l-Qurā the Balī (another tribe of the Quḍā'a) and other tribes.⁴⁰ So this specific case was not connected to safe conduct but to the protection of the settlement itself. The 'Udhra were in immediate proximity to the settlement, while the large nomadic tribes which received the *kayla/ja'āla/'ulfā* were roaming vast territories and only came closer to the settlements in the summer time, when water supply became scarce. Consequently, 'Udhra's share in the crops which amounted to one-third must have been larger than the one allotted to the nomadic tribes. In any case, 'Udhra's share does not point to its ascendancy over the settled population of Wādī l-Qurā.

The advent of Islam improved 'Udhra's position. Before Islam, the remaining two-thirds of the annual harvest remained in the hands of the Jewish cultivators. When Muḥammad conquered Wādī l-Qurā, he took half of the Jews' share, i.e. one-third of the total, while the Jews kept one-third to themselves. When the Jews were expelled by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, they received in cash the estimated value of their share, namely 90,000 dinars. 'Umar then offered the 'Udhra an additional sixth of the crops in return for one-sixth of the value, i.e. 45,000 dinars. They accepted his offer, becoming the owners of half (one-third and one-sixth) of Wādī l-Qurā's produce.⁴¹

39 *EP*², s.v. Wādī l-Qurā (M. Lecker).

40 *Wa-kāna lahum fihā* [i.e. in Wādī l-Qurā] *'alā l-yahūd tu'ma wa-ukl fī kull 'ām wa-mana'ūhā lahum mina l-'arab wa-dafa'ū 'anhā qabā'il Balī ibn 'Amr ibn l-Ḥāf ibn Quḍā'a wa-ghayrahum mina l-qabā'il*; Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā ista'jam*, 1: 43; see similarly Yāqūt, *Buldān*, s.v. al-Qurā, quoting Abū 'Ubaydallāh al-Sakūnī. See also *EP*², s.v. Quḍā'a (M.J. Kister), at 317b; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum III*, no. III, 7.

41 One-third of the remaining half was included in the charitable endowments or *ṣadaqāt* of the Prophet, while one-sixth of the same half belonged to all the Muslims; al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām al-sulṭāniyya wa-l-wilāyāt al-dīniyya*, ed. Aḥmad Mubārak al-Baghdādī, Kuwait: Maktabat Dār Ibn Qutayba, 1409/1989, 219 (read instead of *wādī l-qarya: Wādī l-Qurā*); idem, *Les statuts*

Some comparative material on the relationship between settled and nomads is linked to al-Suwāriqiyya, the central settlement in the land of the Sulaym. The settlement belonged to the Sulaym alone and “every Sulamī had a share in it”. The following passage found in a geographical treatise by ‘Arrām al-Sulamī (fl. third/ninth century) probably relates to his own time, but it can shed some light on conditions in pre-Islamic Arabia:

They [i.e. the Sulamīs] are *bādiya*, except those born in it [i.e. in al-Suwāriqiyya] who live there. The others roam around it and supply food along the two pilgrim roads, namely the road of the Ḥijāz and the road of Najd. The limit is Ḍariyya which is the border point, seven days’ journey [from al-Suwāriqiyya].⁴²

In this case the settled and the nomads belonged to the same tribe. The farmers used their expertise to till the land, while the nomads took care of the beasts, above all the camels which require extensive grazing grounds and hence cannot be pastured by the farmers. The produce of al-Suwāriqiyya was transported on camelback and was sold to the pilgrims in their stations as far as Ḍariyya seven days’ journey from al-Suwāriqiyya.

This cooperation between the settled and the nomads among the Sulaym is comparable to the pre-Islamic one between the Jewish settlement Khaybar and its nomadic neighbours, who for a large fee transported and sold Khaybar’s surplus of dates. During the building of his mosque in Medina Muḥammad himself reportedly carried bricks, reciting two *rajaz* verses. The first of these verses is:

I would rather carry this load [of bricks] than the [fruit] load of Khaybar
 This, our Lord, is purer and more moral (*hādhā l-ḥimāl lā ḥimāl*
Khaybar/hādhā abarr rabbanā wa-aṭhar)

It is explained on the authority of al-Zuhrī (d. 124/142) that when the Jews cut off the fruit of their palm trees, the nomads would come to them with their camels and carry it for them to the villages, one camel load after the other (*‘urwa bi-‘urwa*, literally,

gouvernementaux, trans. E. Fagnan, Alger: Typographie Adolphe Jourdan, 1915, 362; idem, *The Ordinances of Government*, trans. Wafaa H. Wahba, London: Garnet, 1996, 187.

42 ‘Arrām al-Sulamī, *Asmā’ jibāl Tihāma*, in *Nawādir al-makḥḥūqāt*², ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Ḥārūn, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1393/1973, 2: 431–2; the variants between square brackets are from Yāqūt, *Buldān*, s.v. al-Suwāriqiyya: *al-Suwāriqiyya . . . li-banī Sulaym khāṣṣa wa-li-kull [add. min] banī Sulaym minhā [fihā] shay’ . . . wa-hum bādiya illā man wulida bihā fa-innahum fānūna [thabitūna; lectio faciliior] fihā wa-l-ākharūna bādūna ḥawālayhā wa-yamīrūna ṭarīq al-Ḥijāz wa-Najd fī ṭarīqay al-ḥajj. wa-l-ḥadd [wa-ilā ḥadd] Ḍariyya wa-ilayhā yantahī ḥadduhum ‘alā sab’ marāḥil*; quoted in Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym*, 222. Cf. Bakrī, *Mu‘jam mā ista‘jam*, 1: 100, where there is no reference to trade: *al-Suwāriqiyya . . . wa-ḥadduhā yantahī ilā Ḍariyya*. Also the journey from Ḍariyya to Medina took seven days; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 2: 78.

“one loop of the camel load after the other”). They would sell (the fruit), keeping to themselves half of the return.⁴³ Precisely like the people of al-Suwāriqiyya under Islam, the Jews of Khaybar did not have camels of their own and hence the surplus of their produce was transported for them by the nomads; the latter were not mere carriers but also handled the transactions on behalf of the Jewish growers.⁴⁴

‘Uyayna’s itāwa

During the siege of Medina (or the battle of the Khandaq, 5/627) Muḥammad is supposed to have promised ‘Uyayna ibn Ḥiṣn and al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Awf, the respective leaders of the Fazāra and Murra tribes (both of which belonged to the Ghaṭafān federation) one-third of Medina’s produce of dates. In return, the two were to retreat and to induce the other nomads to abstain from fighting (*tarji ‘āni bi-man ma‘akum [sic] wa-tukhadhdhilāni bayna l-a‘rāb*). They demanded one-half of the produce but finally settled for a third. However, Anṣārī opposition called the deal off. The leaders of the Anṣār told the Prophet that before Islam the Bedouin wretches (literally: ‘*ilhiz*-eaters, ‘*ilhiz* being a dish eaten at times of famine which was made of camel-hair mixed with blood) could not have had one single date unless they purchased it or were offered it as guests (*bi-shiran aw qiran*).⁴⁵ The fiery speeches of the Anṣārī leaders are a fine example of Anṣārī historiography; whether they reflect historical fact is another matter altogether. Elsewhere there is evidence that ‘Uyayna received an annual *itāwa* from the date produce of Medina (again there is no specific mention of the Jews). The report on ‘Uyayna’s *itāwa* merits trust because it is at the background of an account which is critical of ‘Uyayna. He is said to have ridden to Medina (the wording seems to suggest that he was in a hurry) to collect his annual *itāwa*, rather than mediate in an internal strife among the Dhubyān (another tribe of the Ghaṭafān federation).⁴⁶

43 *Kānat yahūd idhā šaramat nakhlahā jā’athum al-a‘rāb bi-rakā’ibihim fa-yahmilūna lahum ‘urwa bi-‘urwa ilā l-qurā fa-yabī’ūna, yakūnu li-hādhā [sic] niṣf al-thaman wa-li-hā’ulā’i niṣfuhu*; Samhūdī, *Waqā’*, 2: 35. Cf. M. Gil, “The origin of the Jews of Yathrib”, *JSAI* 4 (1984), 203–24, at 204. Ibn Ḥajar, *Muqaddimat fath al-bārī sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Būlāq, 1301/1884, 106, explains the Prophet’s words by saying that in the Afterlife these building stones [i.e. the previously mentioned bricks] are better than the dates carried from Khaybar.

44 The mention of bricks indicates that this was not the mosque which the Prophet built shortly after the hijra with palm boughs stripped off; cf. M.J. Kister, “A booth like the booth of Moses”, *BSOAS* 25 (1962), 150–5. Rather, it was the mosque which according to one source was built of bricks four years after the hijra. Alternatively it is reported that this second stage in the building took place after the conquest of Khaybar (7/628); al-Suyūṭī, *al-Hujaj al-mubīna fī l-tafḍīl bayna Makka wa-l-Madīna*, ed. ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad al-Darwīsh, Damascus and Beirut: al-Yamāma, 1405/1985, 52.

45 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 477–8. On ‘*ilhiz* see *Lisān al-‘Arab*, s.v.; M.J. Kister, “O God, tighten Thy grip on Muḍar”, *JESHO* 24 (1981), 242–73, at 246–7.

46 *Wa-yuqālu innahu kānat lahu itāwa ‘alā ahl Yathrib ya’khdhuhā fī kull ‘ām . . .* Ibn Shabba, *Medina*, 2: 538–9. A verse included in this report specifically refers to dates.

In this context *itāwa* does not mean a tribute or tax but an annual grant in kind made to a nomadic leader, precisely like the previously mentioned *kayla* and *ja'āla*. The size of this and similar grants appears to have been humble. Medina and the other settlements had a huge surplus of dates and hence could afford to grant part of it to the leaders of large nomadic tribes in order to secure their good will. The size of the grants presumably varied according to the harvest and the political situation; but even if they were to amount to one-third or one-half of the annual produce, this would not make the inhabitants of the settlements, be they Jews or Arabs, clients of the nomadic beneficiaries.

DID MUḤAMMAD CONCLUDE TREATIES WITH THE JEWISH TRIBES NAḌĪR, QURAYZA AND QAYNUQĀ‘ ?¹

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For obvious reasons, the encounter between the Prophet Muḥammad and the Jewish tribes of Medina continues to attract scholarly attention. On the popular level it is still alive in the minds of contemporary Muslims, some of whom are inspired by Muḥammad’s brilliant military successes.

Two decades ago, Moshe Gil published in this journal an article which looked into the position of the Jews according to the most important document preserved from Muḥammad’s time, namely the *‘ahd al-umma* or “The Constitution of Medina”.² Some of the relevant evidence is scrutinized in the following pages, much in the footsteps of Professor Gil’s pioneering study.³

1. Most detailed and important evidence is a report (which belongs to the type of *dalā‘il al-nubuwwa* or “proofs of Muḥammad’s prophethood”) by Abū ‘Alī al-Faḍl ibn al-Ḥasan al-Ṭabrisī (d. ca. 550/1155).⁴ He says that the Jews of the Qurayza, Naḍīr and Qaynuqā‘ (i.e. their leaders) went to Muḥammad. Unwilling to embrace Islam, they proposed a truce (*hudna*), the provisions of which were as follows: they would neither take Muḥammad’s side nor act against him, and they

1 I am indebted to the editors of this volume, David Wasserstein and Uri Rubin, for commenting on an earlier draft of this chapter.

2 M. Gil, “The constitution of Medina: A reconsideration”, *IOS* 4 (1974), 44–66.

3 The sources quoted later are often late, because few early sources survived; quotations from lost sources partially make up for the loss; cf. M. Lecker, “The death of the Prophet Muḥammad’s father: Did Wāqidi invent some of the evidence?”, *ZDMG* 145 (1995), 9–27, at 16–20.

4 C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur, Supplementbände*, Leiden: Brill, 1937–42, I: 708–9; Gil, “Constitution”, 59, n. 108=Ṭabrisī, *I‘lām al-warā‘*, Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, 1985, 99–100 (=45–6 of the lithograph, [Tehran] 1312/1895 used by Gil), quoting ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Hāshim al-Qummī who fl. in the second half of the third century A.H. and the first half of the fourth; M.M. Bar-Asher, *Studies in Early Imāmī-Shī‘ī Qur’ān Exegesis (third-fourth/ninth-tenth Centuries)* (in Hebrew), Ph.D. dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1981, 40–1; cf. *GAS* I: 45–6. Gil sums up this report in a footnote as follows: “The Jews come to the Prophet requesting a *hudna* [= truce], then he wrote them a *kitāb*”.

would not assist anyone against him. For his part, Muḥammad would not attack any of them or their friends. This truce was to remain in force until the Jews saw what evolved between Muḥammad and his tribe (i.e. the Quraysh).⁵ The proposed provisions of this temporary agreement do not exceed a reciprocal *amān* or guarantee of security.⁶ However, the following passages in Ṭabrisī's report which purport to relate the actual contents of the treaty (or treaties) are problematic because of the unusual detail they include regarding the Jews' undertaking not to harm Muḥammad or his Companions and because they include what appears to be an uncommon sanctions clause.

The treaty with the Jews reportedly stipulated that they would not aid an enemy against Muḥammad or his Companions in speech or action or by providing this enemy with weapons or horses. Neither secretly nor openly, at night or in daylight, were the Jews to give aid to the enemies of the Prophet. God is witness to their fulfilment of the treaty. If they fail to carry out the terms of the agreement, Muḥammad would be at liberty to kill them, enslave their women and children and take their property. Muḥammad wrote separate documents addressed to each tribe (*wa-kataba li-kull qabīla minhum kitāban 'alā ḥida*).⁷ Ḥuyayy ibn Akḥṭab signed on behalf of the Naḍīr,⁸ Ka'b ibn Asad signed on

5 The duration of Muḥammad's treaty with Hilāl ibn 'Uwaymir al-Aslamī was stated in an expression which, according to M.J. Kister, "The massacre of the Banū Qurayza: A re-examination of a tradition", *JSAI* 8 (1986), 61–96; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* II, no. VIII], 84, n. 83, is "slightly enigmatic": *ḥattā yarā wa-yurā*. Kister remarks that it is so vowelled in the text and renders, "until he would consider (the matter) and things would be considered". However, the reading *ḥattā tarā wa-narā*, "until you and us reconsider our positions" seems to be smoother. Cf. al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 4/ii, ed. M. Schloessinger, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1938, 13: *kuffa ḥattā nanzurā wa-tanzurū wa-narā wa-taraw*.

[ADD. Formulae of neutrality can also be found, for example, in the Prophet's non-belligerency treaty with the Banū Mudlij who were the *ḥulafā'* of the Prophet. Ya' qūbī, *Ta'rikh*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1379/1960, 2: 73. They reportedly said: *lasnā 'alayka wa-lasnā ma'aka*. Also *ibid.*, regarding the Banū Ḍamra who said: *lā nuḥāribuhu wa-lā nusālimuhu wa-lā nuṣaddiquhu wa-lā nukadhdhibuhu*. Cf. Juhayna's request from the Prophet to conclude a treaty with them: *fa-awthiq lanā ḥattā na'manaka wa-ta'mananā*; *EP*, s.v. Kuḍā'a (M.J. Kister), 315b–16a.]

6 [ADD. See the report on the Naḍīr in Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1419/1998, 8: 86: *kāna rasūl allāh lammā qadīma l-Madīna ḥadanahum wa-a'fāhum 'ahdan wa-dhimmatan 'alā an lā yuqātilahum wa-lā yuqātilūhu*. Cf. al-Baghawī, *Tafsīr (Ma'ālim al-tanzīl)*, ed. al-Namir, Ḍamīriyya and al-Ḥarsh, Riyadh: Dār Tayba, 1417/1997, 8: 64 (*sūrat al-ḥashr*): *qāla l-mufasssīrūna: nazalat ḥādhihi l-sūra fī banī l-Naḍīr wa-dhālika anna l-nabī dakhala l-Madīna fa-ṣālahathu banū l-Naḍīr 'alā an lā yuqātilūhu wa-lā yuqātilū ma'ahu*. See on this report Rubin, "The assassination of Ka'b b. al-Ashraf", 67f. *Lammā qadīma*, i.e. shortly after his arrival, see the Juhayna delegation; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 333.]

7 [ADD. Even smaller tribes had treaties of their own; see M. Lecker, "Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān and 'Ammār b. Yāsir, Jewish converts to Islam", *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 11 (1993), 149–61, at 160–1; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. V.]

8 At this point Ṭabrisī digresses to describe an alleged conversation between Ḥuyayy and his brothers, Judayy and Abū Yāsir.

[ADD. Ḥuyayy confirms that Muḥammad is the prophet mentioned in the Torah and the one whose appearance was foretold by their scholars. Nevertheless, he vows to remain his enemy for

behalf of the Qurayza and Mukhayrīq signed on behalf of the Qaynuqā'.⁹ The mention of Ḥuyayy and Mukhayrīq as the respective signatories of the Naḍīr and Qaynuqā' is of special interest although for the time being it cannot be corroborated by other evidence.¹⁰

As to Ka'b ibn Asad, he is known from elsewhere as "the owner [i.e. signatory] of the treaty of the Qurayza which was breached in the Year of the Combined Forces" [i.e. the *aḥzāb* or the parties which fought against Muḥammad in the Battle of the Ditch].¹¹

2. A report by al-Mawṣilī on the same topic belongs to the category of *awā'il*.¹²

ever because prophecy was transferred from the children of Isaac to those of Ishmael. Note that one report (e.g. Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-bārī bi-sharḥ ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifā, 1390/1970, 7: 275) speaks favourably of Abū Yāsir, while elsewhere he is counted among Muḥammad's enemies; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 160 (Ḥuyayy, Abū Yāsir and Judayy).]

9 [ADD. At this point there is another digression: Mukhayrīq was the richest man among the Qaynuqā' and had more orchards than any of them; cf. M. Lecker, "Muḥammad at Medina", 37. He called upon his tribe to believe in Muḥammad, and by so doing "acquire the two books" (i.e. the Torah and the Qur'ān), which they refused to do.]

10 [ADD. Ḥuyayy was certainly one of Naḍīr's leaders. See e.g. Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 519: Ḥuyayy was the *sayyid* of the settled and the nomads and the *sayyid* of both tribes (*sayyid al-ḥāḍir wa-l-bādī sayyid al-ḥayyayni kilayhimā*, i.e. Naḍīr and Qurayza). He provided them with mounting-beasts in war and fed them in times of draught (*yaḥmiluhum fī l-ḥarb wa-yu'imuḥum fī l-maḥl*). Elsewhere Ḥuyayy is called king: "the Prophet conquered Khaybar and married their king's daughter" (i.e. Ṣafiyya bint Ḥuyayy); Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 705.

Elsewhere Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf is mentioned as the leader who concluded a treaty with Muḥammad on behalf of Naḍīr, according to which he was not to aid anyone against Muḥammad. He betrayed Muḥammad and reviled (*sabba*) him and his Companions; Aḥmad Zaynī Dahlan, *al-Sīra al-nabawiyya wa-l-āthār al-Muḥammadiyya*, on margin of *al-Sīra al-Ḥalabiyya*, reprint Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya al-Kubrā, 1382/1962, 2: 12. Cf. U. Rubin, "The Assassination of Ka'b b. al-Ashraf", *Oriens* 32 (1990), 65–71, at 66. This however could relate to a later stage in Naḍīr's relationship with Muḥammad.]

11 *Ṣāhib 'aqd banī Qurayza lladhī nuqida 'ām al-aḥzāb*; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 2: 162. Also Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 455: *wa-kāna Ka'b ṣāhib 'aqd banī Qurayza wa-'ahdhā*; *ibid.*, 1: 368, 369, 2: 456.

[ADD. The Qurayza undertook to keep the peace with the Prophet and never help anybody against him; al-Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Tathbīt dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, ed. 'Abd al-Karīm 'Uthmān, Beirut: Dār al-'Arabiyya, 1966–68, 2: 449: *wa-jā'a Ḥuyayy ibn Akḥṭab al-yahūdī al-Naḍārī ilā banī Qurayza mina l-yahūd, wa-kānū qad 'āhadū rasūl allāh an yusālimūhu wa-lā yu'īnū aḥadan 'alayhi abadan wa-katabū baynahum wa-baynahu bi-dhālika kitāban*; *Lisān al-'Arab*, s.v. *w.d.*: *wa-kāna Ka'b al-Quraẓī muwādi'an li-rasūl allāh*; al-Kalā'ī, *al-Iktifā' bi-mā taḍammanahu min maghāzī rasūl allāh wa-l-thalātha l-khulafā'*, ed. Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn 'Izz al-Dīn 'Alī, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1417/1997, II, 122: *wa-kharaja 'aduww allāh Ḥuyayy ibn Akḥṭab ḥattā atā Ka'b ibn Asad ṣāhib 'aqd Qurayza wa-'ahdihim, wa-kāna qad wāda'a rasūl allāh 'alā qawmihi* ("on behalf of his tribe"; cf. the treaty of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib with the Khuzā'a: *taḥālafū . . . ḥilfan jāmi'an ghayr mufarriq, al-ashyākh 'alā l-ashyākh wa-l-aṣghir alā l-aṣghir wa-l-shāhid 'alā l-ghā'ib*; Muḥammad Hamīdullāh, *Majmū'at al-wathā'iq al-siyāsiyya*, Beirut: Dār al-Nafā'is, 1405/1985, 274, no. 171) *wa-'āqadahu 'alā dhālika wa-'āhadahu*].

12 See *EI*², s.v. (F. Rosenthal).

The first treaty which the Messenger of God concluded with the Jews of Medina took place when he concluded a truce with the Naḍīr, Qurayza, and Qaynuqā' in Medina, stipulating that they refrain from supporting the pagans and help the Muslims. This was the first of his treaties [i.e. with the Jews].¹³

3. The Prophet concluded a treaty (*'ahada*) with the Qaynuqā' which was identical to his treaty with the Qurayza (literally: "like the Banū Qurayza") and the Naḍīr, namely, that they would neither fight him nor assist (*yuḏāhirū*) his enemy against him.¹⁴

4. Three kinds of stances were adopted by different groups towards the Prophet after the hijra.¹⁵

One group concluded a *muwāda'a* or non-belligerency treaty with the Prophet, prescribing that they were neither to fight him nor rally (*yu'allibū*) his enemies against him, i.e. that its members would not support his enemy. This group was made up of the three Jewish tribes (*ṭawā'if*) Qurayza, Naḍīr and Qaynuqā'. The second group included the Quraysh and others who fought against the Prophet and acted with hostility towards him (*wa-naṣabū lahu l-'adawa*). The third group included those who left him unmolested (*tārakūhu*) and anticipated the outcome of his affair (*mā ya'ūlu ilayhi amruhu*). The last-mentioned category included the Bedouin tribes (*ṭawā'if*). Some of them, e.g. the Khuzā'a, desired his appearance at heart (*man kāna yuḥibbu zuḥūrahu fī l-bāṭin*), while others, such as the Bakr, wanted the opposite. Yet others among them [i.e. among the people of the third category], the *munāfiqūn*, pretended to be on Muḥammad's side while in fact backing his enemy.¹⁶

13 Cf. Gil, "Constitution", 59, n. 108, quoting al-Mawṣilī, *Ghāyat al-wasā'il ilā ma'rifat al-awā'il*, MS Cambridge, Or. Qq 33, fol. 160: *awwal 'ahd 'ahidahu rasūl allāh li-yahūd al-Madīna kāna lammā wāda'a banī l-Naḍīr wa-banī Qurayza wa-banī Qaynuqā' bi-l-Madīna li-yakuffū 'an ma'ūnat al-mushrikīna wa-yakūnū 'awnan li-l-muslimīna. Wa-kāna dhālika awwal 'uhūdihī.*

14 Fā'id ibn al-Mubārak, *Mawrid al-ḡam'ān*, MS *Kılıç Ali* 766, I, 225b. Regarding the use of the verb *ḏāhara* cf. e.g. Qur'ān 33, 26.

15 [ADD. This corresponds to the "Systematisierung" discussed by A. Noth, *Quellenkritische Studien zu Themen, Formen und Tendenzen frühislamischer Geschichtsüberlieferung*, Bonn: Selbstverlag des Orientalischen Seminars der Universität, 1973, 174f, especially the three groups of *murtaddūn*, 176 = Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, 128f; A. Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, Second Edition, in Collaboration with L.I. Conrad, trans. M. Bonner, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994, 195f, esp. 199.]

16 'Alī al-Qārī, *Sayr al-bushrā fī l-sīyar al-kubrā*, MS Süleymaniye 836, 80a.

[ADD. *Allaba* means "to rally one's allies at war"; see (in the context of the Battle of the Ditch) Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 442: *wa-akhadhat Quraysh fī l-jihaz wa-sayyarat fī l-'arab tad'uhum ilā naṣrihā, wa-allabū aḥābīshahum wa-man tabī'ahum*. See also Naqā'id Jarīr *wa-l-Farazdaq*, ed. A.A. Bevan, Leiden: Brill, 1905–12, reprint Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, n. d., 1: 230: *fa-lammā nqadat waq'at Rahraḥān jama'a Laqīṭ ibn Zurāra li-banī 'Amīr wa-allaba 'alayhim*. Also al-Harawī, *al-Gharībayni*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāhī, Cairo: al-Majlis al-A'lā li-l-Shu'ūn

5. The Prophet wrote a treaty of security (*kitāb amn*) between himself and the three main Jewish tribes.¹⁷

[ADD. *Amn/amān* is the main component, and hence often the equivalent, of a non-belligerency treaty.]

6. An obligation of the Jews to provide military support to the Muslims which is of course more binding than an obligation not to help against them (cf. no. 2 earlier) also appears in an eloquent speech ascribed to ‘Amr ibn Su‘dā, a member of the Qurayza (or rather of their brother-tribe, the Hadl) who left the besieged fortress of the Qurayza unharmed on the eve of their surrender. ‘Amr accused his fellow-tribesmen of breaking their treaty with the Prophet, referring to their undertaking not to support his enemy, and to assist the Prophet against a force taking him by surprise (*allā tanṣurū ‘alayhi aḥadan min ‘aduwwihi wa-an tanṣurūhu mimman dahamahu*).¹⁸ While the speech is no doubt apocryphal, the treaty of the Qurayza may have included a clause on succour against an attacking enemy. However, perhaps the treaty in question did not belong to the period immediately following the Prophet’s hijra.¹⁹

7. Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b al-Qurazī (d. ca. 118/736),²⁰ whose father survived the Qurayza massacre because he had not reached the age of puberty, became a famous Muslim scholar and was interested, among other topics, in the history of the Arabian Jews. In the context of the Prophet’s expedition against the Qaynuqā’ he provides further details on the agreements between the Prophet and the Jews which he dates to the period immediately following the hijra: When the Prophet arrived at Medina, all the Jews concluded with him a non-belligerency treaty (*wāda ‘athu yahūd kulluhā*).²¹

al-Islāmiyya, 1390/1970, 1: 64: *wa-yuqālu banū fulān ilb ‘alā banī fulān idhā kānū yadan wāḥida wa-qad ta‘allabū ay tajamma ‘ū*. Another version of the *Sayr al-bushrā* report (in Ibn Ḥajar, *Fath al-bārī*, 7: 253) has *yumālī ‘ū* instead of *yu‘allibū*.]

17 Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Zād al-ma‘ād fī hady khayr al-‘ibād*, on margin of Zurqānī, *Sharḥ ‘alā al-mawāhib al-laduniyya*, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Azhariyya, 1329/1911, 3: 388.

[ADD. *Fa-šālaḥa yahūd al-Madīna wa-kataba baynahum wa-baynahu kitāb amn wa-kānū thalāth ṭawā‘if ḥawla l-Madīna*. Another record in the same source, which is in fact a variant of the above *Sayr al-bushrā* report (earlier, p. 106, no. 4), specifically mentions the *amān* granted to the life and property of the Jews; *Ibn al-Qayyim, Zād al-ma‘ād*, 3: 387: *fa-lammā qadima l-nabī l-Madīna šāra l-kuffār ma‘ahu thalāthat aqsām: qism šālahahum wa-wāda‘ahum ‘alā an lā yuḥāribūhu wa-lā yuḏāhirū ‘alayhi wa-lā yuwālū* [read: *yumālī ‘ū?*] *‘alayhi ‘aduwwahu, wa-hum ‘alā kufrihim, āminūna ‘alā dim‘ihim wa-amwālihim*.]

18 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 503–4.

19 Cf. Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayza”, 82–3.

20 Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 26: 340–8; *GAS*, 1: 32.

21 Gil translates: “all the Jews met him”; Gil, “Constitution”, 58; Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 1: 176. Cf. Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī, *al-Awā‘il*, ed. Muḥammad al-Miṣrī and Walīd Qaṣṣāb, Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1975, 1: 188, quoting Wāqidī: *wāda ‘athu l-yahūd kulluhā*; al-Sarakhsī, *Sharḥ kitāb al-siyar al-kabīr li-Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī*, 5, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Aḥmad, Cairo: Ma‘had al-Makhtūṭāt, 1972, 1690, quoting Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b: *wāda ‘athu yahūdihā kulluhā*.

[ADD. A similar report is transmitted by Ibn Ishāq who quotes two early authorities, ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar ibn Qaṭāda and ‘Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr:²² *anna rasūl allāh lammā qadima l-Madīna wāda ‘athu l-yahūd wa-kataba ‘anhu wa-‘anhum [sic] kitāban wa-alḥaqa kull qawm bi-ḥulafā’ihim*²³ *wa-sharaṭa ‘alayhim fīmā sharaṭa an lā yuḏāhirū ‘alayhi aḥadan.*]

This short report places the *muwāda‘a* treaty shortly after the Prophet’s arrival at Medina. The Prophet, we are told, “attached” each (Jewish) tribe to its allies or clients.

It is doubtful that the word *ḥulafā’* in this passage means allies (cf. Gil’s translation, “He confirmed the alliances between the Jews and each tribe”). A parallel passage concerning the status of al-Akhnas ibn Sharīq among the Quraysh suggests that our source has in mind clients – al-Akhnas was a *ḥalīf mulḥaq* among the Zuhra branch of Quraysh – and therefore was called *zanīm*.²⁴ For our purposes it is immaterial whether or not the verse was indeed revealed concerning al-Akhnas. The passage shows that *mulḥaq* is a synonym (or near-synonym) of *ḥalīf* in the sense of client. The passage speaks of Jewish tribes in clientage status of other tribes (obviously Arab tribes) and of the Prophet’s confirmation of this clientage. The wording implies that *all* the Jews of Medina were in the status of clients, but we know from other sources that this was only the case with regard to some of them.

Finally, it cites one clause from the Jews’ obligations according to this treaty (a treaty normally stipulates the rights of both sides): not to help anyone (*aḥadan*; variant: “an enemy”, *aduwwan*) against the Prophet.

8. Gil also cites the following report from Wāqidi: “When the Prophet arrived (in Medina) he reached an agreement with the Qurayza and Naḏīr and the other Jews in Medina that some of them should help him if he were attacked, while maintaining their former ties (*ma ‘āqil*) with the Aws and Khazraj”. However, in the source which he quotes there are two separate records: one speaks of a treaty which confirmed the Jews’ neutrality (*wa-kāna rasūl allāh ḥīna qadima ṣālaḥa Qurayza wa-l-Naḏīr wa-man bi-l-Madīna mina l-yahūd allā yakūnū ma ‘ahu wa-lā ‘alayhi*, “and the Messenger of God, when he arrived [at Medina], made a treaty with the Qurayza, the Naḏīr and the other Jews of Medina, prescribing that they would

22 ‘Āṣim died in 120/738; *GAS*, 1: 279–80; ‘Abdallāh died in 130/748 or 135/753; *GAS*, 1: 284. It is quoted from Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *al-Durar fī kḥiṣār al-maghāzī wa-l-siyar*, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1404/1984, 150.

23 *Wa-ja‘ala baynahu wa-baynahum amānan* is missing.

24 “One adopted among a people to whom he does not belong”; Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. See Ibn Ishāq’s interpretation (a *sabab nuzūl*) on Qur’ān 68, 13 in Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr*, 18: 235.

For *ilhāq* which is the equivalent of *idkḥāl* in the sense of the inclusion (of foreigners) in the tribal genealogy see Tabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 986. W.M. Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956, 196 translated the passage in Wāqidi beginning with *wa-alḥaqa*: “joined each clan to its confederates (sc. of the Anṣār)”, which he quotes as evidence that the Jews were merely mentioned in the Prophet’s agreement with the Anṣār (i.e. in the so-called Constitution) and did not have a formal document of their own.

neither be with nor against him”. The other record refers to their obligation to provide military aid, while confirming their former agreements regarding the payment of blood-wit with the Aws and Khazraj (*wa-yuqālu: ṣālahahum ‘alā an yanṣurūhu mimman dahamahu minhum wa-yuqīmū ‘alā ma ‘āqilīhim al-ūlā llatī bayna l-Aws wa-l-Khazraj*).²⁵ Gil seems to have skipped the phrase *allā yakūnū ma ‘ahu wa-lā ‘alayhi*; “some of them” in his translation is presumably the rendering of the unsmooth preposition *minhum* in the phrase *mimman dahamahu minhum*. It could be understood to indicate that the Jews undertook to aid the Prophet against *any of them* who might attack him unexpectedly; but a variant version with *min ‘aduwwīhi* instead of *minhum* probably includes the correct reading.²⁶

9. Gil writes:

The *sīra ḥalabīya* says that the Prophet wrote a book between the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār in which he addressed (*da ‘ā*) the Jews . . . and made a treaty with them, that he would not fight nor harm them, and they should not help his opponents; if he were attacked, they should assist him. He also made an agreement with them establishing their rights of religion and property.²⁷

In fact, the text is not from the *Sīra Ḥalabīyya* but from Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān’s (d. 1304/1887) *al-Sīra al-nabawīyya wa-l-āthār al-Muḥammadiyya* printed on margin of the *Sīra Ḥalabīyya*. Daḥlān’s text includes the corrupt verb *wa-da ‘ā* rendered by Gil as “he addressed”. But this is obviously a scribal error. Read: *wāda ‘a*, “he concluded a treaty of non-belligerency”.

There is more to be said about the text in point, which is transliterated below in three distinct passages:

wa-kataba rasūl allāh kitāban bayna l-muhājirīna wa-l-anṣār wa-da ‘ā
[read: *wāda ‘a*] *fīhi yahūd /*

banī Qaynuqā’ wa-banī Qurayza wa-banī l-Naḍīr wa-ṣālahahum
‘alā tark al-ḥarb wa-l-adhā, an lā yuḥāribahum wa-lā yu’dhiyahum
wa-an lā yu’īnū ‘alayhi aḥadan, wa-annahū in dahamahu biha ‘aduww
yanṣurūhu /

wa-‘āhadahum wa-aqarrahum ‘alā dīnihim wa-amwālihīm.

25 Gil, “Constitution”, 59 (“and it is said: he made with them a treaty prescribing that they would aid him against any of them who would suddenly attack him, and that they would keep their former ties regarding blood-wit between the Aws and Khazraj”); Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 454.

26 Zurqānī, *Sharḥ ‘alā l-mawāhib al-laduniyya*, 1: 456: *wa-qīla: ‘alā an lā yakūnū ma ‘ahu wa-lā ‘alayhi, wa-qīla: ‘alā an yanṣurūhu mimman dahamahu min ‘aduwwīhi*. See also Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 1359: *wa-kāna qad wāda ‘a ḥīna qadīma l-Madīna yahūdāhā ‘alā an lā yu’īnū ‘alayhi aḥadan wa-annahū in dahamahu bihā ‘aduww naṣarūhu*.

27 Gil, “Constitution”, 59.

And the Messenger of God wrote a document between the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār in which he concluded a treaty of non-belligerency with the Jews /

Banū Qaynuqā‘, Banū Qurayza and Banū l-Naḍīr, and he made peace with them on the condition that they [i.e. both parties] would give up war-like activities and molestation, he would neither fight against them nor harm them and they would not aid anyone against him, and if an enemy suddenly attacked him in it [i.e. in Medina], they would assist him /

and he made a pact with them and permitted them to hold on to their religion and estates.

A comparison between Daḥlān’s text and Ibn Ishāq’s introduction to the ‘*ahd al-umma*’ or the “Constitution of Medina” shows that Daḥlān took the opening and concluding passages from Ibn Ishāq:

wa-kataba rasūl allāh kitāban bayna l-muhājirīna wa-l-anṣār wāda ‘a fīhi yahūd /

wa-‘āhadahum wa-aqarrahum ‘alā dīnīhim wa-amwālihim.

The middle passage from *banī Qaynuqā‘* to *yanṣurūhu* was incorporated by Daḥlān between the fragments taken from Ibn Ishāq without any comment whatsoever.²⁸

The interpolation perhaps indicates that Daḥlān assumed the treaties with the main Jewish tribes and the ‘*ahd al-umma*’ to be two sides of the same coin. This – in my opinion wrong – assumption which is common in Islamicist research²⁹ should be discarded: the Naḍīr and Qurayza were not part of the ‘*ahd al-umma*’ and the same is probably true for the Qaynuqā‘.³⁰

28 [ADD. The same text appears in the *Sīra Ḥalabiyya* where it is appropriately separated from Ibn Ishāq’s words by the word *ay*: *wāda ‘a fīhi yahūd, ay Banī Qaynuqā‘ . . . ay ṣālahahum ‘alā tark al-ḥarb wa-l-adhā . . . ay an lā yuḥāribahum . . . Sīra Ḥalabiyya*, 2: 90. *Ay* in the *Sīra Ḥalabiyya* precedes short additions from the *Sīra Shāmiyya*; see *ibid.*, 1: 3. Daḥlān omitted the three *ays*, creating the impression of a cohesive passage. We have here Ibn Ishāq’s introduction with three interpretive sentences related to *wāda ‘a fīhi yahūd*: the first refers to *yahūd* and the other two refer to *wāda ‘a*.]

29 See e.g. J. Wellhausen, *Medina vor dem Islam*, Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1889 (Skizzen und Vorarbeiten, 4), 73–4; A.J. Wensinck, *Muhammad and the Jews of Medina*, with an excursus: Muhammad’s Constitution of Medina, by J. Wellhausen, trans. and ed. W. Behn, Freiburg im Breisgau 1975 (= *Mohammed en de Joden te Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 1908), 61–4, 68; Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 196–7; Gil, “Constitution”, 58–60; R.B. Serjeant, “The *sunnah jāmi‘ah* . . .”, *BSOAS* 41 (1978), 1–42, *passim*. Cf. however U. Rubin, “The ‘constitution of Medina’: Some notes”, *SI* 62 (1985), 5–23, at 6, 9, 10; A. Goto, “The constitution of Medina”, *Orient* (Report of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan) 18 (1982), 1–17.

30 I have studied the Jewish participation in this treaty in my PhD dissertation (*On the Prophet Muḥammad’s activity in Medina* [in Hebrew], Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1982) and hope to publish a revised version of my findings.

[ADD. The “Constitution” did not include the main Jewish tribes, and the evidence about treaties with these and other Jewish tribes should be detached from the evidence on the “Constitution”.]

[ADD. 10. Yet another text employed by Gil reveals an affinity to Ibn Ishāq’s introduction to the *‘ahd al-umma*. It is taken from al-Muṭahhar ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, and in Gil’s rendering it reads as follows: “He wrote them a *kitāb*, appeased them, established their religious rights, promised not to destroy them nor show them enmity; but they had to help him if he were attacked and refrain from assisting his enemies”.³¹ As has already been mentioned, *wāda ‘a* means “he concluded a non-belligerency treaty”, rather than “he appeased them”. Instead of “promised not to destroy them nor show them enmity” (*wa-sharaṭa lahum an lā yahījahum wa-lā yubādi’ahum*), read: “He undertook not to provoke them nor start war against them”.]

[ADD. 11. On margin of the Ibn Ṣā’id/Ibn Ṣayyād affair there is another reference to the treaty with the Jews. Medieval scholars struggled with the problem of Muḥammad’s tolerance regarding the young rival prophet. Their answer: there was a treaty with the Jews.³²]

The passages discussed earlier reflect the unanimity of Muslim scholars regarding the first stage in Muḥammad’s relationship with the main Jewish tribes of Medina in the period following the hijra. What do we make of this unanimity? According to Gil, the evidence does not reflect historical fact:

It seems obvious that the position of the Muslim sources is that there was a treaty between the Jews and the Prophet; they took upon themselves certain obligations, which they broke; thus their later fate is explained as a *suum cuique* [to each what he deserves – M. L.].³³

[ADD. See M. Lecker, *The ‘Constitution of Medina’: Muḥammad’s First Legal Document*, Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2004].

31 Muṭahhar ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī, *al-Bad’ wa-l-ta’rikh*, ed. Cl. Huart, Paris, 1899–1919, reprint Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthannā, n. d., 4: 179: *wa-kataba kitāban wāda ‘a fīhi l-yahūd wa-aqarrahum ‘alā dīnīhim wa-sharaṭa lahum an lā yahījahum wa-lā yubābiyahum (sic) wa-sharaṭa ‘alayhim an yaṣṣurūhu mimman dahamahu wa-lā yuṣāhirū ‘alayhi ‘aduwwan*.

32 E.g. al-Khaṭṭābī, *Ma’ālim al-sunan*, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām ‘Abd al-Shāfi Muḥammad, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1411/1991, 4: 323: *wa-‘lladhī ‘indī anna hādhihi l-qīṣṣa innamā jarat ma’ahu ayyām muḥādanat rasūl allāh al-yahūd wa-ḥulafā’ahum wa-dhālīka annahu ba’da maqdamīhi l-Madīna kataba baynahu wa-bayna l-yahūd kitāban ṣālahahum fīhi ‘alā an lā yuhājū wa-an yutrakū ‘alā amrihim wa-kāna Ibn Ṣayyād minhum aw dakhīlan fī jumlatihim*.

33 Cf. N.A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979, 14–5, according to whom a treaty between the Qurayza leader Ka’b ibn Asad and Muḥammad “seems doubtful . . . and is probably the invention of later Muslim writers who wished to justify the harsh punishment that was meted out to the Qurayza”.

Gil also argues that:

It is therefore as an obvious alibi that Muslim sources have developed a tradition about a treaty between Muḥammad and the Jews, be it this document [= the *'ahd al-umma*] or a lost one, as presumed by some modern scholars.³⁴

I wish to argue that Gil's suspicions are unwarranted. While it is true that the chapters in Muḥammad's biography which deal with his struggle against the Jewish tribes of Medina are often apologetic, particularly when they deal with the circumstances in which hostilities broke out, on the whole the evidence about the conclusion of treaties shortly after the hijra – regardless of what happened later – is reliable.

My suggestion is based on two main arguments, one of which is source-critical and the other historical. First, the weight of the evidence is overwhelming, the more so since the sources are sometimes at variance concerning the contents of the treaties beyond the reciprocal guarantee of security. Paradoxically, their differences strengthen their claim for historical veracity when they agree.³⁵ It can be said that the richness and complexity of Islamic historiography which speaks to us in many different voices simultaneously excludes the presumed plot. Second, the assumption that there was no treaty with the Jews does not relate to the state of affairs in Medina shortly after the hijra. At that time the main Jewish tribes were still the strongest element in its population both militarily³⁶ and economically.³⁷ In order to establish himself, Muḥammad was bound to conclude a series of non-belligerency treaties with the Jewish tribes; it was not a matter of tolerance but of expediency. In sum, this short-lived honeymoon in Muḥammad's relations with the Jews of Medina, before he secured his position there, is a solid historical fact.

34 Cf. Gil, "Constitution", 59, 65.

35 M. Lecker, "Wāqidī's account on the status of the Jews of Medina: A study of a combined report", *JNES* 54 (1995), 15–32, at 28–9.

36 *Ibid.*; idem, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, 10–15.

37 Cf. M.J. Kister, "The market of the Prophet", *JESHO* 8 (1965), 272–6; reprinted, with additional notes, in Kister, *Variorum I*, no. IX.

THE ASSASSINATION OF THE JEWISH MERCHANT IBN SUNAYNA ACCORDING TO AN AUTHENTIC FAMILY ACCOUNT¹

N. Boekhoff-van der Voort, K. Versteegh and J. Wagemakers (eds.), *The Transmission and Dynamics of the Textual Sources of Islam: Essays in Honour of Harald Motzki*, Leiden: Brill, 2011, 181–95

Although no detail relating to Muḥammad’s life and time is insignificant, the present study is admittedly dedicated to a rather marginal event that took place during Muḥammad’s Medinan period, namely the assassination of the Jewish merchant Ibn Sunayna. However, the analysis of the accounts about the assassination which are family accounts can help us identify and analyse similar accounts found in Muḥammad’s biography, among other sources. Family accounts are often hard to identify as such due to the omission of *isnāds*, or chains of transmission, which was common among compilers wishing to save time and space; after all, although historiography often figures in legal context, its compilers were relatively lax with regard to the rules of transmission adopted by the lawyers.

The words “Ibn Ishāq said” precede many accounts in in Muḥammad’s biography by Ibn Hishām that is based on Ibn Ishāq’s earlier biography, as well as in many other sources. The words create the wrong impression that the texts that follow them are judicious statements of an experienced and balanced historian.

¹ See H. Motzki’s study about the murder of another Jewish merchant that took place in Khaybar: “The murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq: On the origin and reliability of some *Maghāzī*-reports”, in idem (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources*, Leiden: Brill, 2000, 170–239. The emphasis in this study is on the presumably central place of family accounts in Muḥammad’s biography. Motzki refers to families several times in his article. Most relevant for us here is his observation (220) that every participant in the Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq affair narrated his own version of the events. It was later transmitted by his descendants and friends, becoming part of the “tribal memory” of the Khazraj branch involved in the expedition, namely the Salima.

Family *isnāds* are a major issue with regard to the hadith, especially in the legal sphere which does not concern us here. See e.g. H. Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools*, Leiden: Brill, 2002, 132–6, 149.

This is not the case. The text are not Ibn Ishāq's but go back to his teachers who were either earlier compilers of accounts or – in the case of family accounts – the Companions whose activities are recorded in them or their relatives or *mawālī* (manumitted slaves). Family accounts included in Muḥammad's biography are part of the general Islamic heritage, which does not render them significant for the study of Muḥammad's life. They should be studied for what they are, namely auto-biographical or pseudo-auto-biographical accounts. They are by definition indifferent to competing family accounts, as well as to chronology, the sequence of events, and sometimes even to Muḥammad's image. Family accounts often focus on trivial matters, distracting us from the essential facts of Muḥammad's life. They introduce into Muḥammad's biography a multitude of unnecessary details that do not bring us closer to Muḥammad's "real history" which remains to be discovered by hard work and by focusing on what really matters rather than on trivia. Family accounts are however a true reflection of the society in which Muḥammad's biography came into being, with its preoccupations, tensions and sensitivities.

The following study is dedicated to an account about the assassination of the Jewish merchant Ibn Sunayna.² He was one of the *Yahūd Banī Ḥāritha* or "the Jews of the Banū Ḥāritha". In this case the expression means that he was a client of the Ḥāritha,³ a subdivision of the Nabī branch of the Aws living in northern Medina. More specifically, Ibn Sunayna was the client of Ḥuwayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd of the Ḥāritha – or rather of the Majda'a subdivision of the Ḥāritha.⁴ The relevant chapter in Ibn Hishām's biography of Muḥammad runs as follows (see Appendix I):

Ibn Ishāq said: The Apostle of Allāh said: "Kill every Jew you can lay your hands on (*man zaḡfirtum bihi min rijāl yahūd fa- 'qtulūhu*)".⁵ Thereupon Muḥayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd – Ibn Hishām said: Muḥayṣṣa, while some

2 In M. Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina': Muḥammad's First Legal Document*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2004, 70, it is said that he embraced Islam and that the epithet al-Yahūdī in his case means "the former Jew". I now realize that I was misled by a corrupt text. Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 1: 191–2, says about Ibn Sunayna: *wa-kāna ḥalīfan li-Ḥuwayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd qad aslama*; but the words *qad aslama* are misplaced and refer in fact to Muḥayṣṣa, not to Ibn Sunayna; see Sarakhsī, *Sharḥ kitāb al-siyar al-kabīr li-Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, Cairo: Ma'had al-Makhtūṭāt, 1957–60, 1: 276: *wa-kāna ḥalīfan li-Ḥuwayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd wa-kāna akhūhu Muḥayṣṣa qad aslama*.

3 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1959, 285, in the list of Jewish leaders (*'uzamā' yahūd*) has Abū Sunayna, adding that he was from the Ḥāritha ibn al-Ḥārith. In fact he was their client or rather the client of one of them. Cf. P. Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987, 140, n. 36 (Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 1: 486, does not mention Ibn Sunayna).

4 For the genealogy of the Majda'a see Caskel, 2, no. 180.

5 Sarakhsī, *Sharḥ*, 1: 275, explains that this was a far-sighted measure meant to prevent the Jews from gathering to discuss what had happened [i.e. the assassination of Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, see below] and make plans: *wa-innamā qāla dhālika li-'allā yatajamma 'ū fī kull mawd' li-l-taḥadduth bi-mā jarā wa-l-tadbīr fīhi wa-hādhā mina l-ḥazm wa-l-siyāsa*.

said: Muḥayyiṣa⁶ – ibn Mas‘ūd ibn Ka‘b ibn ‘Āmir ibn ‘Adī ibn Majda‘a ibn Ḥāritha ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj ibn ‘Amr ibn Mālīk ibn al-Aws, attacked and killed Ibn Sunayna – Ibn Hishām said: some say: Ibn Subayna – one of the Jewish merchants that used to associate and do business with them. At that time [Muḥayyṣa’s brother] Ḥuwayṣṣa ibn Mas‘ūd was not yet a Muslim; he was older than Muḥayyṣa. When he [Muḥayyṣa] killed him, Ḥuwayṣṣa started beating him, saying: “You enemy of Allāh, did you kill him? By Allāh, much of the fat on your belly is from his money!” Muḥayyṣa [becoming at this point the narrator] said: “I said [to Ḥuwayṣṣa]: by Allāh, had he who ordered me to kill him ordered me to kill you, I would have beheaded you”. He [still Muḥayyṣa] said: “By Allāh, this was the beginning of Ḥuwayṣṣa’s conversion to Islam. He [Ḥuwayṣṣa] said: “By Allāh, had Muḥammad ordered you to kill me you would have killed me?” He [Muḥayyṣa] said: “Yes, by Allāh, had he ordered me to behead you, I would have cut your head off”. He [Ḥuwayṣṣa] said: “By Allāh, a religion (*dīn*) that brought you that far is amazing”. And Ḥuwayṣṣa converted to Islam.

Ibn Ishāq said: This story was transmitted to me by a *mawlā* of the Banū Ḥāritha, from Muḥayyṣa’s daughter, from her father Muḥayyṣa. Muḥayyṣa composed about this [event the following verses]:

My mother’s son blames [me, but] had I been ordered to kill him, I would have struck his nape with a white and cutting [sword]

A well polished blade [white] like salt, whenever I point it, it does not let me down

It would not please me to kill you voluntarily, not even if we [i.e. our family or tribe] were to receive in return what lies between Buṣrā (Bostra) and Ma’rib [i.e. the whole of Arabia].⁷

The *mawlā* of the Banū Ḥāritha

Ibn Ishāq tells us towards the end of the account that he received it from a *mawlā* of the Banū Ḥāritha, from Muḥayyṣa’s daughter, from her father Muḥayyṣa. Since Muḥayyṣa and his brother Ḥuwayṣṣa were from the Ḥāritha, it comes as no surprise that the *mawlā* of the Ḥāritha whose name is not given transmitted the account. In any case, this *mawlā* was not the *mawlā* of all of them, but of a specific person from among them. For example, Abū Ṭayba *al-Ḥajjām* or the cupper who

6 For the vocalization of the names see Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 27: 313, the brothers’ names could be written both with and without a *shadda* on the *yā*, i.e. Muḥayyiṣa/Muḥayyṣa and Ḥuwayyiṣa/Ḥuwayṣṣa.

[ADD. The original article had Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab* instead of Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*.]

7 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 553–4.

used to cup Muḥammad is said to have been the *mawlā* of the Banū Ḥāritha, more specifically (*thumma*) of Muḥayṣṣa.⁸

Ibn Ishāq's unnamed teacher was probably Bushayr ibn Yasār the *mawlā* of the Ḥāritha.⁹ Bushayr is known to have transmitted hadith from Muḥayṣṣa's daughter (see more later) and Ibn Ishāq received from him another account concerning the Ḥāritha. It deals with the murder in Khaybar of 'Abdallāh ibn Sahl ibn Ka'b who was the paternal cousin of Muḥayṣṣa and Ḥuwayṣṣa. The original informant behind the latter account is Sahl ibn Abī Ḥathma (from the Majda'a) and it reached Ibn Ishāq through both Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī and Bushayr ibn Yasār the *mawlā* of the Ḥāritha.¹⁰ Bushayr transmitted to Ibn Ishāq a hadith about the previously mentioned Abū Ṭayba *al-Ḥajjām* which he had received from Muḥayṣṣa's great-grandson.¹¹

It must be remarked though that elsewhere Ibn Ishāq is said to have received the account from Thawr ibn Zayd, from 'Ikrima, from Ibn 'Abbās.¹² Another source has it that Ibn Ishāq's source was a *mawlā* of Zayd ibn Thābit who received the account from Muḥayṣṣa's daughter.¹³ The identity of the *mawlā* in question is disclosed in a gloss found in the chain of transmitters attached to our family account: Yūnus

- 8 Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba fī ma'rifat al-ṣaḥāba*, Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-Wahbiyya, 1280/1863, 5: 236. His identity is known because of a legal question linked to him.
- 9 An account transmitted by a close *mawlā* can still be considered a family account; cf. N. Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, II, "Qur'ānic Commentary and Tradition", Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967, 36 (who speaks of intimate *mawālī* and family *isnāds*). But Abbott's focus is on mainstream hadith transmitted by central figures which are a far cry from the account studied in terms of style, contents and significance. The presence of unknown persons which is anathema in mainstream hadith is quite common and acceptable in family accounts.
- 10 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 777. Bushayr ibn Yasār al-Madanī the *mawlā* of the Anṣār transmitted, among others, from Muḥayṣṣa and Sahl ibn Abī Ḥathma. Muḥammad ibn Ishāq, among others, transmitted from him; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, IV, 187–8. In al-Fasawī, *Kitāb al-ma'rifa wa-l-ta'rīkh*, ed. Akram Diyā' al-'Umarī, Medina: Maktabat al-Dār, 1410/1990, 2: 772–3, Bushayr ibn Yasār reports about the murder of 'Abdallāh ibn Sahl in Khaybar on the authority of Rāfi' ibn Khadhīj (of the Ḥāritha though not of the Majda'a) and of Sahl ibn Abī Ḥathma. Bushayr is called *mawlā l-Anṣār* (772) and *mawlā banī Ḥāritha* (773, 774). A son of Sahl ibn Abī Ḥathma called Muḥammad transmitted from Muḥayṣṣa a hadith concerning the revenue (*kharāj*) of the latter's slave, the cupper Abū Ṭayba; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 4: 1464. The same Muḥammad is said to have transmitted hadith from Ḥuwayṣṣa too, as did Muḥayṣṣa's grandson Ḥarām ibn Sa'd ibn Muḥayṣṣa; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 1: 409.
- 11 Sā'ida ibn Ḥarām ibn Sa'd ibn Muḥayyīṣa; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 2: 566.
- 12 *Wa-lahu khabar 'ajīb fī l-maghāzī dhakarahu Ibn Ishāq 'an Thawr ibn Zayd 'an 'Ikrima 'an Ibn 'Abbās*; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 4: 1463, s.v. Muḥayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd. Also Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 243–4, quotes the Muḥayṣṣa account from Ibn 'Abbās: *lammā qutila Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf wa-qāla* (read: *qāla*) *rasūl allāh: man zafirtum bihi min rijāl yahūd fa-'qtuluhu*. . . . See an entry on Thawr ibn Zayd in Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 4: 416–17.
- 13 Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Ṣarim al-maslūl 'alā shātim al-rasūl*, ed. 'Iṣām Fāris al-Ḥarastānī and Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Zaghālī, Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1414/1994, 96; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Aḥkām ahl al-dhimma*, ed. Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ, Damascus: Maṭba'at Jāmi'at Dimashq, 1381/1961, II, 867. Also Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 35: 397–8, s.v. Ibnat Muḥayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd: she transmitted from her father the *man zafirtum* hadith which Ibn Ishāq transmitted on her authority via a *mawlā* of Zayd ibn Thābit.

ibn Bukayr, from Ibn Ishāq, from the *mawlā* of Zayd ibn Thābit – his name was Muḥammad ibn Abī Muḥammad – from Muḥayṣṣa’s daughter, from her father.¹⁴

The chain of transmitters that goes back to Ibn ‘Abbās looks suspicious: Muḥayṣṣa’s role as the protagonist and the style identify it as an authentic family account going back to Muḥayṣṣa or to his offspring.

Muḥayṣṣa’s daughter

The family had preserved the account for several decades before it reached Ibn Ishāq. Muḥayṣṣa’s daughter was the link between her father and the *mawlā* of the Ḥāritha who transmitted the account to Ibn Ishāq. A Companion survived by children who engaged in hadith stood a good chance of being remembered by posterity.

It is perhaps relevant in the context of the assassination that Muḥayṣṣa’s family had marriage links with the Salima branch of the Khazraj – indeed, the territories of the Ḥāritha and the Salima were close in the north of Medina.¹⁵ Muḥayṣṣa’s father Mas‘ūd was married to a woman of the Salima who bore him several if not all of his children.¹⁶ On the eve of Islam Muḥayṣṣa, Ḥuwayṣṣa and a third brother called al-Aḥwas¹⁷ were involved in the assassination of the poet Qays ibn al-Khaṭīm of the Zafar (who like the Ḥāritha were a subdivision of the Nabīṭ branch of the Aws). The Salima were the “maternal uncles” of the three brothers who assassinated Qays for his role in the Battle of Bu‘āth several years before the hijra. The brothers shot him from the top of their tower-house as he was passing by on his daily visit to his orchard (*māl*) in al-Shawṭ.¹⁸ Muḥayṣṣa was married to a woman of the Salima,¹⁹ and the same is true of his son Ḥarām.²⁰

14 Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba*, 2: 66: *anna rasūl allāh qāla ba‘da qatl Ka‘b ibn al-Ashraf: man zafirtum bihi min yahūd fa-‘qtulūhu*. The abridged account of the assassination in Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī l-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya al-Kubrā, 1369/1950–1370/1951, 3: 212, mentions as Ibn Ishāq’s source an unnamed *mawlā* of Zayd ibn Thābit. But in the preceding account that deals with the Qaynuqā’ (211) one of Ibn Ishāq’s two sources is Muḥammad ibn Abī Muḥammad the *mawlā* of Zayd ibn Thābit; hence it stands to reason that our account goes back to him as well. See an entry on Muḥammad in Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 26: 382–3 (Ibn Ishāq transmitted his hadith).

15 Note that Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 27: 313, calls Muḥayṣṣa: al-Khazrajī. This may reflect a change in the affiliation of the Ḥāritha or of the Majda‘a.

16 She was Idām bint al-Jamūḥ, the sister of ‘Amr ibn al-Jamūḥ who was killed at Uḥud; Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 396 (the children are not mentioned here). Idām bint al-Jamūḥ was the mother of Salāma bint Mas‘ūd and of her brothers Muḥayṣṣa, Ḥuwayṣṣa and al-Aḥwas; Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 334.

17 See his entry e.g. in Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 1: 34.

18 Ibn Ḥamdūn, *al-Tadhkira al-Ḥamdūniyya*, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās and Bakr ‘Abbās, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1996, 7: 380–1.

19 Hind bint ‘Amr ibn al-Jamūḥ, who bore him his sons Ḥarām, Dihya and al-Rabī‘; Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 8: 396.

20 Umm Ḥibbān bint ‘Āmir; *ibid.*, 8: 395. Muḥayṣṣa’s other sons were Muknif, Tha‘laba, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and Shu‘ayb; Mughaltay, *Ikmāl tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā’ al-rijāl*, ed. ‘Ādil ibn Muḥammad and Usāma ibn Ibrāhīm, Cairo: al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha, 1422/2001, 11: 104, quoting Ibn Sa‘d.

Those who transmitted hadith from Muḥayṣṣa included his firstborn son Sa‘d, his grandson Ḥarām ibn Sa‘d, the unspecified daughter, Bushayr ibn Yasār, Muḥammad ibn Ziyād al-Jumāḥī and Abū ‘Ufayr Muḥammad ibn Sahl ibn Abī Ḥathma of the Ḥāritha (Majda‘a).²¹ Abū ‘Ufayr was married to Muḥayṣṣa’s granddaughter, ‘Afrā’ bint Diḥya ibn Muḥayṣṣa, who bore him several children.²²

There is no room for mercy in the battlefield of early Islamic literature and even Muḥayṣṣa’s brother Huwayṣṣa is not spared: Muḥayṣṣa is glorified by contrasting his conduct with that of Huwayṣṣa who was slow to embrace Islam and was only convinced to convert when he realized that his own life might be in danger due to his younger brother’s zeal. Who else would glorify Muḥayṣṣa other than Muḥayṣṣa himself or his descendants?

Muḥayṣṣa

The account purports to originate with Muḥayṣṣa himself, but there is no way of substantiating it. In any case, it is an authentic family account whether it goes back to Muḥayṣṣa, to one of his children or to another relative of his.

The assassination of Ibn Sunayna was Muḥayṣṣa’s main claim to fame.²³ The latter was not a famous warrior or a close associate of Muḥammad, and hence his offspring had to make sure he did not forfeit his moment of glory. They were less concerned with history per se, or with chronology, or even with Muḥammad’s image, and therefore the account is free of apologetics. Unlike other events in Muḥammad’s biography that involve the assassination of Jews or attacks on this or that Jewish tribe, in this case there is no reference to any wrongdoing on the victim’s part. From the family’s point of view, it would have been better had Muḥammad given Muḥayṣṣa a direct order to kill Ibn Sunayna. But obviously there was no such order to kill their client, and hence it is only claimed that Muḥayṣṣa acted upon Muḥammad’s general order to kill all the Jews. Now did Muḥammad really order to kill all the Jews, regardless of their attitude towards him, i.e. even those who concluded non-belligerency treaties with him or supported him in one

21 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 27: 313 (Muḥayṣṣa’s *kunya* was Abū Sa‘d).

22 Ibn Sa‘d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 5: 281. See an entry on Muḥammad ibn Sahl in *TMD*, 53: 156–61 (he transmitted hadith, among others, both from his wife’s grandfather Muḥayṣṣa and from the latter’s grandson Sa‘d ibn Ḥarām ibn Muḥayṣṣa; Ibn Ishāq is counted among those who transmitted his hadith).

[ADD. Among Muḥayṣṣa’s children we find a daughter called Umāma whose mother was Hind bint Rabī‘a ibn Ma‘qil from the Banū Sulaym, more specifically the Banū Nāḍira ibn Khufāf; Ibn Sa‘d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad ‘Umar, Cairo: Khānjī, 1421/2001, 4: 285. She was perhaps *ibnat Muḥayṣṣa* mentioned earlier. The ambiguity regarding the daughter’s name was not of concern for compilers of family traditions, regardless of their dubious historical value. The criteria adopted in the spheres of “serious” hadith such as is used in legal context are irrelevant in the types of Islamic literature which the lawyers considered “light”.]

23 Much more than the surrender of Fadak (see later mention) where the family’s account is not generally accepted.

way or another? This highly unlikely. Only a calculated and composed person could have accomplished what Muḥammad managed to accomplish during his decade in Medina. But one does not expect family accounts to be responsible or balanced. What is more, the alleged order does not take into account Muḥammad's own image.²⁴

The family's goal was to present Muḥayṣṣa's act in the best possible light. The more innocent the victim, the more praiseworthy the act. It was an act of devotion and loyalty free of personal interest. Quite to the contrary: Muḥayṣṣa was acting against his own interest (and that of his brother) by killing a business partner and benefactor.²⁵

Many accounts in Muḥammad's biography should be classified as family accounts. Their correct classification should bear upon their employment in the critical research on Muḥammad's life.

An alternative setting for the brothers' conversation

An alternative setting links the brothers' conversation to the massacre of the Jewish tribe Qurayza (see Appendix II). Ibn Hishām's source in this case is Abū 'Ubayda (Ma' mar ibn al-Muthannā) who quotes one Abū 'Amr al-Madanī.²⁶ The Qurayza were the allies of the Aws. Hence the members of the rival tribe Khazraj were elated when the Qurayza were being massacred, while the Aws were gloomy. Muḥammad suspected that the reason was the latter's alliance with the Qurayza and decided to do something about it. At that moment only 12 men of the Qurayza were still alive, so he handed them over to the Aws to be killed by them. Each of the remaining Qurayzīs was given to two persons from the Aws, one of whom had to hit him with a sword, while the other had to dispatch him. Ka'b ibn Yahūdihā was handed over to Muḥayṣṣa and to Abū Burda ibn Niyār, a client (*ḥalīf*) of the Hāritha from the Balī tribe.²⁷ The conversation between the two brothers (the wording of which is slightly different) took place after Ka'b's execution.

We shall never know the circumstances in which the brothers' conversation took place – or indeed if it ever took place. In any case, regardless of its obvious artistic qualities and didactic merits, the conversation is not a matter of great

24 Cf. the glorification of Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl at Muḥammad's expense in *EI*², s.v. (M. Lecker).

25 Note the gloss that follows the mention of Muḥayṣṣa's fat belly in Sarakhsī, *Sharḥ*, 1: 276: *li-annahu kāna yunfiqū 'alayhimā*, "because he [Ibn Sunayna] used to support them (financially)".

26 For a quotation of Abū 'Ubayda from Abū 'Amr al-Madanī see Abū 'Ubayda, *al-Dībāj*, ed. 'Abdallāh ibn Sulaymān al-Jarbū' and 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Sulaymān al-'Uthaymīn, Cairo: Khānjī, 1411/1991, 86 (Abū 'Amr al-Madanī listed among the *buyūtāt al-'arab fī l-jāhiliyya*, or the leading families of the Arabs in "the Age of Ignorance", also the Banū l-Dayyān of the Hārith ibn Ka'b).

27 Ibn Hishām, *Sira* (Wüstenfeld), 554–5. Abū Burda and Muḥayṣṣa change roles in Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 515.

historical significance. A critical biography of Muḥammad cannot be based on such materials.

Wāqidī's combined report about Ka' b ibn al-Ashraf

Ibn Hishām's placing of Ibn Sunayna's assassination after that of the Naḍīr leader Ka' b ibn al-Ashraf suggests a sequence of events. In Wāqidī (see Appendix III) the account is part of the Combined Report on the assassination of the Naḍīr leader Ka' b ibn al-Ashraf who, unlike the client Ibn Sunayna, was a major figure in Medinan politics. In Wāqidī's report the two assassinations are linked in yet another way. Following Ka' b's death-cry in the dead of the night torches were lit on every tower-house (*uṭum*) of the Jews. Ibn Sunayna who lived three miles from the site of the assassination miraculously heard the cry. He said: "I smell blood spilled in Yathrib".²⁸ It was a bad omen: his own blood was soon to be spilled. The sequence of events is much clearer in Wāqidī than it is in Ibn Hishām thanks to a bridging sentence probably contributed by Wāqidī himself. It specifies that Muḥammad's order to kill every Jew was given in the morning that followed Ka' b's death (*fa-lammā aṣbaḥa rasūl allāh mina l-layla llatī qutila fihā ibn al-Ashraf*). According to Wāqidī, the Jews were terrified and none of their prominent men left his home.²⁹ The mention of prominent men that probably goes back to Wāqidī himself is apologetic. The Arabic word *rijāl* means both "men" and "prominent men", and Wāqidī "corrects" here the somewhat unflattering (and probably fictitious) claim of the family account that Muḥammad gave an order to kill all the Jews – a claim that went uncensored into his biography.³⁰

Muḥayyssa's alleged role in the surrender of Fadak

The family's fingerprints are also evident in several accounts dealing with the surrender of the Jewish settlement Fadak regarding which there are conflicting claims. Muḥayyssa is the protagonist in Wāqidī's account on this matter. When Muḥammad was approaching Fadak, he sent Muḥayyssa to call upon its people to embrace Islam and to threaten them with a raid similar to that which Muḥammad had carried out in Khaybar. At this point in Wāqidī's account Muḥayyssa takes over as the narrator (this is possibly a characteristic of family accounts). He reports that he spent in Fadak two days, while its people were contemplating whether or not to

28 Ibid., 1: 190: *innī la-qaidu rih dam bi-Yathrib masfūh*. Ka' b's cry and the lighting of torches appear in Ibn Hishām, *Sira* (Wüstenfeld), 552, but not Ibn Sunayna's reaction. Cf. regarding the distance Sarakhsī, *Sharh*, 1: 275: *wa-dhakara fī l-maghāzī annahu kāna baynahu wa-bayna dhālika l-mawḍi' miqdār farsakh*. A distance of one *parasang* or roughly 6 km. conforms to the geographical situation.

29 *Fa-lammā aṣbaḥa rasūl allāh mina l-layla llatī qutila fihā Ibn al-Ashraf qāla rasūl allāh: man zafirtum bihi min rijāl al-yahūd fa-'qtulūhu fa-khāfat al-yahūd fa-lam yaṭlu' 'azīm min 'uzamā' ihim wa-lam yantiqū wa-khāfū an yubayyatū kamā buyyita Ibn al-Ashraf*; Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 1: 191.

30 For a similar apologetic attitude of Wāqidī see no. 12 in this volume.

negotiate their surrender, since they anticipated that the heroes of Khaybar would gain the upper hand over Muḥammad. However, after Muḥammad's first victory in Khaybar their morale was shaken and they offered Muḥayṣṣa the jewels of their womenfolk so that he would not disclose to Muḥammad what they had said. Muḥayṣṣa rejected the bribe and told Muḥammad everything. Muḥayṣṣa brought with him a group of Jews led by Yūsha' ibn Nūn who concluded with Muḥammad an agreement of surrender.³¹ Wāqidī does not mention his sources, but the credit given to Muḥayṣṣa as the one who brokered Fadak's surrender and the fact that Muḥayṣṣa speaks in his own voice indicate that this is yet another family account going back to his offspring.

Muḥayṣṣa (or perhaps it was Ḥuwayṣṣa) plays a role in yet another account that should be considered a family account although the family only transmitted it. The source is reportedly a Bedouin who participated in the conquest of Khaybar, Ḥusayl ibn Khārīja al-Ashja'ī, who transmitted it to Ma'n ibn Ḥawiyya, who in his turn transmitted it to his nephew, Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥuwayṣṣa al-Ḥārithī.³² Ibrāhīm must have been a descendant of the Companion Ḥuwayṣṣa after whom Ibrāhīm's father was called.

The family's role in linking Muḥayṣṣa to Fadak's surrender is also evident in the account about Muḥayṣṣa share in Khaybar's spoils. The source is no other than Muḥayṣṣa's son Muknif al-Ḥārithī "who was numbered among (*yu'addu ft*) the people of Medina": 'Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr [ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Amr] ibn Ḥazm, one of Ibn Ishāq's teachers, reported on Muknif's authority that Muḥammad gave Muḥayṣṣa 30 camel loads of barley and 30 camel loads of dates.³³

31 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 706–7. According to Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 29, Muḥammad sent Muḥayṣṣa to Fadak when he left Khaybar (*munṣarafahu min Khaybar*). Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Fadak, says: *ba'atha rasūl allāh ba'da munṣarafihi min Khaybar ilā arḍ Fadak Muḥayṣṣa ibn Mas'ūd wa-ra'īs Fadak yawma 'idhin Yūsha' ibn Nūn al-Yahūdī fa-wajaadahum mar'ūbīna khā'ifīna limā balaghahum min akhdh Khaybar fa-sālahūhu*. In Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbīh wa-l-ishrāf*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1894, 264, Muḥayṣṣa's mission to Fadak is a military expedition (*sariyya*).

32 Ibn Shabba, *Akhbār al-Madīna*, ed. Dandal and Bayān, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1417/1996, 1: 121, quoting Muḥammad ibn Yahyā (Abū Ghassān al-Madanī), from 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn 'Imrān (al-Zuhrī), from Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥuwayṣṣa al-Ḥārithī, from his maternal uncle Ma'n ibn Ḥawiyya (printed: Juwayya), from Ḥusayl ibn Khārīja, has: *ba'atha yahūd Fadak ilā rasūl allāh hīna ftataḥa Khaybar: a'īnā l-amān minka wa-hiya laka fa-ba'atha ilayhim Muḥayṣṣa ibn* (read: *abā?*) *Ḥarām fa-qabaḍahā li-l-nabī fa-kānat lahu khāṣṣa*. But since Ibrāhīm was a descendant of Ḥuwayṣṣa (see later mention) and not of Muḥayṣṣa, one is tempted to follow the quotation from Ibn Shabba in Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 2: 75–6: *fa-ba'atha ilayhim Ḥuwayṣṣa fa-qabaḍahā*. This may be a literary dispute between the descendants of the two brothers.

33 Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 4: 1483, s.v. Muknif al-Ḥārithī. In Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, ed. 'Abd al-Mu'tī Qal'ajī, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1405/1985, 4: 236–7, Ibn Ishāq received from an unspecified son of Muḥammad ibn Maslama (Majda'a), quoting the elders of his family (*'amman adraha min ahlihi*), and from 'Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr [ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Amr] ibn Ḥazm, the report about Muḥammad's grants from the agricultural produce of Khaybar.

[ADD. They included the grants of those who mediated between Muḥammad and the people of Fadak, of whom only Muḥayṣṣa is mentioned by name. The family's claim may be exaggerated,

In sum, the accounts on Muḥayṣṣa's role at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad go back to his offspring. This crucial fact is usually disguised due to the common omission of the chains of transmitters in Muḥammad's biography and elsewhere in Islamic historiography. The words "Ibn Ishāq said" merely mean that Ibn Ishāq transmitted – and sometimes also edited – other peoples' accounts.

Authentic family accounts are of dubious historical value: even when they do not deal with trivial matters, they are partial and indifferent to competing family accounts, as well as to chronology and in certain cases even to Muḥammad's image. Their correct classification is vital in the critical research on Muḥammad's life and time.

because in a list of these grants (*tu'am*; cf. *Der Islam* 81 [2004], 154–5) we find that Muḥayṣṣa only received 30 camel loads (probably of dates); Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 695].

[ADD. This is not necessarily the way in which Fadak surrendered to Muḥammad. Other sources fail to mention Muḥayṣṣa in this context. Fadak surrendered to Muḥammad after the conquest of Khaybar. Fadak's messengers came to Muḥammad in Khaybar, or in Ṭā'if, or in Medina; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 776].

APPENDIX I

Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 553–54

قال ابن إسحاق: وقال رسول الله صلعم: من ظفرت به من رجال يهود فاقتلوه فوثب محبيصة بن مسعود (قال ابن هشام: محبيصة³⁴ ويقال: محبيصة بن مسعود بن كعب ابن عامر بن عدي بن مجدعة بن حارثة بن الحارث بن الخزرج بن عمرو بن مالك ابن الأوس) على ابن سُنَيْبَةَ (قال ابن هشام: ويقال ابن سُنَيْبَةَ) رجل من تجار يهود كان يلابسهم ويبياعهم فقتله وكان حويصة بن مسعود إذ ذاك لم يسلم وكان أسن من محبيصة فلما قتله جعل حويصة يضربه ويقول: أي عدو الله أقتلته أما والله لرب شخم في بطنك من ماله قال محبيصة: فقلت: والله لقد أمرني بقتله من لو أمرني بقتلك لضربت عنقك قال: فوالله إن كان لأول إسلام حويصة قال: أوله لو أمرك محمد بقتلي لقتلتني؟ قال: نعم والله لو أمرني بضرب عنقك لضربتها قال: والله إن ديناً بلغ بك هذا لعجب فأسلم حويصة.

قال ابن إسحاق: حدثني هذا الحديث مولى لبني حارثة عن ابنة محبيصة عن أبيها محبيصة. فقال محبيصة في ذلك:

لَطَبَقْتُ ذِفْرَاهُ بِأَبْيَضٍ قَاضِبٍ	يَلُومُ ابْنَ أُمِّي لَوْ أَمَرْتُ بِقَتْلِهِ
مَتَى مَا أَصَوَّبَهُ فَلَيسَ بِكَادِبٍ	حَسَامٍ كُلُّونِ الْمَلْحِ أَخْلِصَ صَفْلُهُ
وَأَنَّ لَنَا مَا بَيْنَ بُصْرَى وَمَأْرَبِ	وَمَا سَرَّنِي أَنِّي قَتَلْتُكَ طَائِعاً

APPENDIX II

An alternative setting of the brothers' conversation, Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 554–55

قال ابن هشام: وحدثني أبو عبيدة عن أبي عمرو المدني قال: لما ظفر رسول الله صلعم ببني قريظة أخذ منهم نحواً من أربعمائة رجل من اليهود وكانوا حلفاء الأوس على الخزرج فأمر رسول الله صلعم بأن تضرب أعناقهم فجعلت الخزرج تضرب أعناقهم ويسرُّهم ذلك فنظر رسول الله صلعم إلى الخزرج ووجوههم مستبشرةً ونظر إلى الأوس فلم ير ذلك فيهم فظن أن ذلك للحلف الذي بين الأوس وبين بني قريظة ولم يكن بقي من بني قريظة إلا اثنا عشر رجلاً فدفعهم إلى الأوس فدفع إلى كل رجلين من الأوس رجلاً من بني قريظة وقال: لِيَضْرِبْ فُلَانٌ وَلِيُدْفَقْ فُلَانٌ فَمَنْ دَفَعَ إِلَيْهِمْ كَعْبَ بْنَ يَهُودَا وَكَانَ عَظِيمًا فِي بَنِي قَرِيظَةَ فَدَفَعَهُ إِلَى مَحِيصَةَ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ وَإِلَى أَبِي بَرْدَةَ بْنِ نِيَارٍ . . . وَقَالَ لِيَضْرِبَهُ مَحِيصَةُ وَلِيُدْفَقْ عَلَيْهِ أَبُو بَرْدَةَ فَضْرِبَهُ مَحِيصَةُ ضَرْبَةً لَمْ تَقْطَعْ وَذَفَفَ أَبُو بَرْدَةَ فَأَجْهَزَ عَلَيْهِ فَقَالَ حَوَيْصَةُ وَكَانَ كَافِرًا لِأَخِيهِ مَحِيصَةَ: أَقْتَلْتَ كَعْبَ بْنَ يَهُودَا؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ فَقَالَ حَوَيْصَةُ: أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَرُبِّ شَحْمٍ قَدْ نَبَتَ فِي بَطْنِكَ مِنْ مَالِهِ إِنَّكَ لِلنَّيْمِ فَقَالَ لَهُ مَحِيصَةُ: لَقَدْ أَمَرَنِي بِقَتْلِهِ مِنْ لَوْ أَمَرَنِي بِقَتْلِكَ لَقَتَلْتُكَ فَعَجِبَ مِنْ قَوْلِهِ ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ عَنْهُ مَتَعَجِبًا فَذَكَرُوا أَنَّهُ جَعَلَ يَنْتَقِظُ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَيَعْجَبُ مِنْ قَوْلِ أَخِيهِ مَحِيصَةَ حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ وَهُوَ يَقُولُ: وَاللَّهِ إِنْ هَذَا أَدِينٌ ثُمَّ أَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَسْلَمَ فَقَالَ مَحِيصَةُ فِي ذَلِكَ آيَاتًا قَدْ كَتَبْنَاهَا.

APPENDIX III

Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 1: 189–90, 191–92

. . . قال محمد بن مسلمة: فذكرت مغولاً معي كان في سيفي فانتزعته فوضعتة في سُرته ثم تحاملت عليه فقططته حتى انتهى إلى عانته فصاح عدو الله صيحة ما بقي أطم من أطام يهود إلا قد أوقدت عليه نار. فقال ابن سنيينة يهودي من يهود بني حارثة وبينهما ثلاثة أميال: إني لأجد ريح دم بيثرب مسفوح. . . قالوا: فلما أصبح رسول الله صلعم من الليلة التي قتل فيها ابن الأشرف قال رسول الله صلعم: من ظفرت به من رجال اليهود فاقتلوه فحافت اليهود فلم يطلع عظيم من عظمائهم ولم ينطقوا وخافوا أن يبيتوا كما بيّت ابن الأشرف.

وكان ابن سنيينة من يهود بني حارثة وكان حليفاً لحويصة بن مسعود قد أسلم (!) فعدا محيصة على ابن سنيينة فقتله فجعل حويصة يضرب محيصة وكان أسنّ منه يقول: أي عدو الله أقتلته؟ أما والله لربّ شحم في بطنك من ماله! فقال محيصة: والله لو أمرني بقتلك الذي أمرني بقتله لقتلتك. قال: والله لو أمرك محمد أن تقتلني لقتلنتي؟ قال: نعم. قال حويصة: والله إن ديناً يبلغ هذا لدين مُعجب فأسلم حويصة يومئذ فقال محيصة وهي ثبت لم أر أحداً يدفعها يقول:

لطبقت ذفراه بأبيض قاضب
متى ما تصوبه فليس بكاذب
ولو³⁵ أن لي ما بين بصرى ومأرب

يلوم ابن أمي لو أمرت بقتله
حسام كلون الملح أخلص صقله
وما سرنى أني قتلتك طائعاً

35 In Alfred von Kremer's edition (*History of Muhammad's Campaigns*, Calcutta: J. Thomas, 1856), 191, we find: *wa-lā*. But J. Wellhausen, *Muhammed in Medina. Das ist Vakiḍi's Kitab alMaghazi in verkürzter deutscher Wiedergabe*, Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1882, 98, n. 2, has: *wa-law*.

WERE THERE FEMALE
RELATIVES OF THE
PROPHET MUḤAMMAD
AMONG THE BESIEGED
QURAYZA? ¹

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Muḥammad’s victory over the Jewish tribe Qurayza was a major turning point in his struggle for control of Medina, and it was remembered by all those who witnessed it.² The victory was of great interest to informants and compilers in the first Islamic century. As one can expect, some of the informants were descendants of survivors from the Qurayza massacre. It should be added that from the literary point of view, the chapter about the Qurayza in Muḥammad’s medieval biography (*sīra*) is arguably one of the best.

The informants and compilers were not necessarily interested in telling us “what really happened” but often had other goals, such as proving the veracity of Muḥammad’s mission, glorifying a certain companion of Muḥammad, protecting the reputation of another – or simply telling a good story while preserving it for posterity. Still, the background information in their accounts about the war on the Qurayza is more than enough for reconstructing its basic outline, though the possibility cannot be ruled out that significant or even crucial facts were overlooked or censored. Further research, mainly based on non-*sīra* sources, is bound to lead to new conclusions about the war and its aftermath. After all, many vital details about Medina and its people were preserved outside the *sīra* literature, e.g. in Samhūdī’s

1 A draft of this chapter was presented in 2003 at the Ninth “From Jāhiliyya to Islam” colloquium at the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University. For a genealogical chart of the two sisters discussed here see later, p. 135.

2 Cf. W.M. Watt, “The condemnation of the Jews of Banū Qurayzah”, *Muslim World* 42 (1952), 160–71; M.J. Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayza: A re-examination of a tradition”, *JSAI* 8 (1986), 61–96; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* II, no. VIII; available at www.kister.huji.ac.il; M. Lecker, “On Arabs of the Banū Kilāb executed together with the Jewish Banū Qurayza”, *JSAI* 19 (1995), 66–72; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. X.

history of Medina, *Wafā' al-wafā bi-akhbār dār al-muṣṭafā*, which is a mine of information almost unexplored in modern scholarship.³

The episodes in Muḥammad's medieval biographies came into being as separate stories, later to be woven into a rather untidy fabric. Our starting point is one such episode. Ibn Hishām (who received Ibn Ishāq's *sīra* via Ziyād al-Bakkā'ī) has this account about the survival of three men from the Qurayza – more precisely, they belonged to a tribal group called Hadl (see the Arabic text in Appendix I):

Ibn Ishāq said: 'Āṣim ibn 'Umar ibn Qatāda transmitted to me on the authority of a *shaykh* of the Banū Qurayza what follows. He [the *shaykh*, turning to 'Āṣim] said, Do you know the reason for the conversion to Islam of Tha'labā ibn Sa'ya, [his brother] Asīd ibn Sa'ya and Asad ibn 'Ubayd – [a gloss] a group from the Banū Hadl, the brothers of the Qurayza who had been their clients in the *Jāhiliyya* [i.e. the three men had been the clients of the Qurayza] and then became their masters under Islam (*kānū ma'ahum fī jāhiliyyatihim thumma kānū sādatahum fī l-islām*) [end of gloss]? I ['Āṣim] said, No. He said, A Jew from Palestine (Shām) called Ibn al-Hayyabān came to us several years before the advent of Islam and dwelt among us. We have never seen a non-Muslim [literally, one who does not pray the five daily prayers; it is anachronistic as a reference to a person who died before Islam] better than him. He stayed with us. At the time of drought we used to say to him, Go out, Ibn al-Hayyabān [with us] and pray for rain. He said, No, unless you give alms before you go out. We would say to him, How much? And he would say, One *ṣā'* [ca. 2.5 litres] of dates or two *mudds* [ca. 1.3 litres] of barley. We would duly grant them, and then he would lead us to the outward side of our *ḥarra* [stony volcanic tract] and pray for rain on our behalf. By Allāh, hardly had he left his place when a cloud passed and it rained. He did it more than once or twice or thrice. When he was about to die among us he said, O Jews, what do you think made me leave a land of wine and bread and come to a land of hardship and hunger? We said, You know better. He said, I only came to this town expecting the emergence of a prophet whose time was at hand. This town is where he will migrate, and I was hoping that he would be sent [in my time], so that I would follow him. His time is at hand, do not let anyone get to him before you, O Jews.

3 But see now H. Munt, *The Holy City of Medina: Sacred Space in Early Islamic Arabia*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Unfortunately, Ibtisām 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-Suwaylim's doctoral thesis at King Saud University, *al-Samhūdī manhajuhu wa-mawāriduhu fī kitābātihī al-ta' rīkhiyya*, is not available to me. The M.A. thesis of Hudā Muḥammad Sa'īd Sindī, *Mawārid al-Samhūdī wa-manhajuhu al-ta' rīkhī fī kitābīhi wafā' al-wafā bi-akhbār dār al-muṣṭafā*, Mecca: Jāmi'at Umm al-Qurā, 1420/1999, is accessible online. However, its bibliography only includes sources and research written in Arabic.

Indeed, he will be sent to shed blood and to take captive the women and children of those who oppose him. Let that not keep you back from him.

When the Messenger of Allāh was sent and [in due course] besieged the Qurayza, those young men (*fiṭya*) – they were [read: we were] youths (*wa-kānū* [read: *wa-kunnā*] *shabāban aḥdāthan*) – said, O Banū Qurayza, by Allāh, this is the prophet whom Ibn al-Hayyabān commanded you [to follow]. They [Qurayza] said, He is not. They [the Hadlīs] said, Of course he is. By Allāh, it is him, according to his description (*bi-ṣifatihi*). So they came down [from the besieged fortress of the Qurayza], converted to Islam and saved their lives, their orchards, and their families (*wa-aḥrazū dimā`ahum wa-amwālahum wa-aḥlihim*).⁴

Elsewhere we are told that Ibn al-Hayyabān’s *kunya* was Abū ‘Umayr and he is coupled with one Ibn Ḥirāsh. They were the most learned among the Jews and came from Jerusalem (or Palestine, *Bayt al-Maqdis*) anticipating Muḥammad’s mission. But they died as Jews and were buried in the *ḥarra*.⁵

The three Jews were not from the Qurayza but from Qurayza’s “brothers”, the Hadl. According to the gloss, after the advent of Islam they were no longer “with” (*ma`a*) the Qurayza, but became their masters (*sāda*). Since the preposition *ma`a* is in this case juxtaposed with *sāda*, implying thus the opposite, it seems to convey Hadl’s inferior status as Qurayza’s clients.⁶ (The comment regarding Hadl’s status vis-à-vis the Qurayza is but the tip of an iceberg with regard to Qurayza’s *Fortleben*.)

The three are described as *fiṭya*, which in this context means men in the prime of their life, rather than youths or young men. The word *fiṭya* is followed by a problematic gloss, *wa-kānū shabāban aḥdāthan*, “they were youths”. However, we already know that the three had orchards (*amwāl*) and families; one source points out that by converting, the two brothers saved their young children.⁷ The two brothers, who are said to have died at the time of Muḥammad,⁸ were old enough to confront their tribe on the question of whether or not Muḥammad was

4 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1: 226–8.

5 Bayhaqī, *Dalā`il al-nubuwwa*, ed. ‘Abd al-Mu`īn Qal`ajī, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1405/1985, 3: 362.

6 M. Lecker, “The conversion of Ḥimyar to Judaism and the Jewish Banū Hadl of Medina”, *Die Welt des Orients* 26 (1995), 129–36; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum I*, no. XIII; see especially 133. According to Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 3: 249, they were neither from the Qurayza nor from the Naḍīr – they were their cousins, their genealogy being “higher than that” (*laysū min banī Qurayza wa-lā l-Naḍīr; nasabuhum fawqa dhālika, hum banū ‘ammi l-qawm*). This reveals the genealogical convention or fiction behind Hadl’s association with the brother tribes of Qurayza and Naḍīr: Hadl’s eponymous father was the brother of the eponymous father of Qurayza and Naḍīr.

7 *Fa-aslama Tha`alaba wa-Asīd ibn* [read: *ibnā*] *Sa`ya fa-aḥraza lahumā islāmuhumā amwālahumā wa-awlādahumā l-ṣighār*; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār min asrār muntaqā l-akḥbār*, ed. Mu`awwaḍ and al-Mawjūd, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-‘Arabī, 1420/2000, 5: 79 (*bāb: anna l-ḥarbī idhā aslama qabla l-quḍra`alayhi aḥraza amwālahu*, “Chapter: If the enemy adopts Islam before being vanquished, he keeps his property [or orchards]”).

8 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Istī`āb*, 1: 97, 211, quoting al-Bukhārī.

the anticipated prophet. One also wonders why a common word such as *fitya* needs a gloss in the first place. A better variant reading, *wa-kunnā* (instead of *wa-kānū*) *shabāban ahdāthan*, “we were youths”,⁹ relates to the informant, i.e. the *shaykh* from Qurayza who refers to his relatives or friends. As will be argued, the *shaykh* was Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik, the grandson of Tha‘laba ibn Sa‘ya (the son of the latter’s daughter). Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik is said to have seen the Prophet (*wa-lahu ru‘ya*, a lesser category compared to *ṣuḥba*) and to have transmitted hadith on the Prophet’s authority.¹⁰ He had obvious reasons for presenting himself as a *shābb*, “youth” – that is, to have had a real recollection of the Prophet – although he may well have been a toddler or even a baby when the Qurayza surrendered.¹¹

The third Jewish convert, Asad ibn ‘Ubayd, is said to have been the paternal cousin of the two brothers.¹² But he may have been their nephew: Asad’s grandfather Sa‘ya was perhaps identical with the Sa‘ya who fathered Tha‘laba and Asīd.¹³

The identification of the *shaykh* from the Qurayza who was ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar’s source with Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik is based on the fact that an account along the same lines found in al-Wāqidi’s *Maghāzī* goes back to Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik (see Appendix II). Wāqidi’s account has it that the three men addressed the Qurayza, saying that Muḥammad was the Messenger of Allāh who had been described by their (Qurayza’s) learned men and those of the Naḍīr – Ḥuyayy ibn Akḥṭab from the latter tribe is specifically mentioned; also, Jubayr ibn al-Hayyabān, the most truthful man, when he was on his deathbed, described the Messenger. But the Qurayza refused to part with the Torah, hence the three came down in the night that preceded Qurayza’s surrender, saving themselves, their families and their orchards (*amwāl*).¹⁴ Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik transmitted the account to Muḥammad ibn ‘Uqba (ibn Abī Mālik), Tha‘laba’s nephew, who transmitted had-

9 Al-Kalā‘ī, *al-Iktifā’ bi-mā taḍammanahu min maghāzī rasūl allāh wa-l-thalātha l-khulafā’*, ed. Muḥammad Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Alī, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1417/1997, 1: 182.

10 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 4: 397.

11 An independent abridged version of this account going back to Abū Sufyān *mawlā* Ibn Abī Aḥmad (but probably originating with the same Qurazī informant) has *kānū fityānan shabāban*; Ibn Sa‘d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. ‘Alī Muḥammad ‘Umar, Cairo: Khānjī, 1421/2001, 5: 396, no. 1025, s.v. Asad ibn ‘Ubayd al-Qurazī. Regarding Tha‘laba’s age see earlier, p. 85.

12 Ibn Sa‘d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* (Khānjī), 5: 396.

13 The name of Asad’s grandfather appears in an entry on Asad’s wife, Umāma. According to some, Umāma (who at some stage was married to Muḥammad ibn Maslama’s brother, Maḥmūd, who was killed in Khaybar) gave birth to Asad’s son, ‘Alī ibn Asad ibn ‘Ubayd *ibn Sa‘ya* al-Ḥadlī. (According to others, ‘Alī’s mother was Umāma’s paternal cousin Umm ‘Alī; anyway we are only interested in the grandfather’s name.) One is not surprised by Asad’s marriage to a woman from the (former) Jewish tribe Za‘ūrā’; M. Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina: A geographical approach”, *JSAI* 6 (1985), 29–62, at 44–8; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. VIII and index, s.v.; Lecker, *Variorum* II, index, s.v.

14 Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 503, quoting Ṣāliḥ ibn Ja‘far, from Muḥammad ibn ‘Uqba, from Tha‘laba ibn Abī Mālik; Ibn Sa‘d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* (Khānjī), 5: 395, no. 1023, s.v. Tha‘laba wa-Asīd ibn Sa‘ya al-Qurazīyāni.

ith on his uncle's authority.¹⁵ Wāqidī's direct source who received the account from Muḥammad ibn 'Uqba was one Ṣāliḥ ibn Ja'far whose identity could not be established. Nonetheless, this Ṣāliḥ was no doubt interested in the history of the Jews of Medina and was probably identical with Ṣāliḥ ibn Ja'far in whose court (*dār*) one of the tower-houses of the Jews was located.¹⁶ Wāqidī quotes Ṣāliḥ twice with reference to the Khandaq/Qurayza affair. In both cases Ṣāliḥ's source is Muḥammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazī. The latter of Ṣāliḥ's two reports concerns the stratagem employed by the Naḍir leader, Huyayy ibn Akḥṭab, to convince the Qurayza leader, Ka'b ibn Asad, to break his treaty with Muḥammad.¹⁷ Wāqidī also received from Ṣāliḥ a report – again going back to Muḥammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazī – concerning Rayḥāna, Muḥammad's Jewish wife or mistress.¹⁸

With regard to the reason why the three Qurazīs and their families were spared, the sources quoted earlier agree that they converted to Islam after having realized that Muḥammad was the anticipated prophet. However, a rare passage in a non-*sīra* source tells us another story altogether. In his *Kitāb al-mathālib* (Book of Vices) Ibn al-Kalbī (MS Dār al-Kutub¹⁹) quotes from his father (al-Kalbī) and from Muḥammad ibn Ishāq a list of Qurashī women who married non-Qurashī husbands. The list includes the following entry: *wa-kānat 'Ātika wa-Sukhayla ibnatā 'Ubayda ibn al-Hārith ibn 'Abd [!] al-Muṭṭalib 'inda Tha'laba wa-Asīd ibnay Sa'ya min banī Qurayza*“‘Ātika and Sukhayla, the daughters of 'Ubayda ibn al-Hārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib [the word “‘Abd” is erroneous, see later mention] were respectively married to Tha'laba and Asīd, sons of Sa'ya from the Qurayza”). The entry is placed between one on Umm Abān bint 'Utba ibn Abī Lahab – whose hus-

15 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 26: 121–3.

16 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Hibra; M. Lecker, “Muḥammad at Medina”, 38, n. 75; idem, *Muḥammad ve-hayyehudim*² [*Muḥammad and the Jews*], Jerusalem: Ben Zvi, 2014, n. 136 (in Hebrew).

17 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 460, 485–6.

18 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 7: 659, s.v. Rayḥāna bint Sham'un.

[ADD. According to Lecker, “The itinerant Judaeo-Muslim preacher Abū Rayḥāna and his daughter, Muḥammad's concubine Rayḥāna” (forthcoming), she was Muḥammad's concubine].

19 My notes from the manuscript were taken at the Dār al-Kutub in the summer of 1984. Only one of the two copies of the manuscript, the more recent one, was available to me; see *GAS*, 1: 270; J. Sadan, “Kings and craftsmen: A pattern of contrasts: On the history of a mediaeval Arabic humoristic Form”, part two, *SI* 62 (1985), 89–120, at 120; G. Monnot, “Un inédit de Dar al-Kotob: le 'Kitab al-mathālib' d'Ibn al-Kalbī”, *Mélanges de l'Institut dominicain d'études orientales du Caire* 13 (1977), 315–21; Muḥsin Ghayyād 'Ujayl, “Makḥṭūṭat kitāb al-mathālib li-Ibn al-Kalbī”, *Majallat Majma' al-Lughā al-'Arabīyya al-Urdunnī* 22 (1998), 191–212. I am unaware of an edition of this book.

I wish to thank the authorities of the Dār al-Kutub for their kind permission to work there. Also the then director of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo, Shim'on Shamir, for his support. A short note on the rare passage appeared in *Bulletin of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo* 4 (Summer 1984).

[ADD. On *mathālib* see also *EP*, s.v. “*Mathālib*” (Ch. Pellat). A search for the term “*mathālib*” in URL www.jstor.org (9/11/2022) retrieved more than 30 results. A search for the same term in URL search.proquest.com retrieved more than a hundred.]

band was a Ghassānī client of Quraysh living in Mecca – and another on ‘Ubayda’s niece, Umm ‘Amra bint Abī Sufyān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib, whose husband, a member of the Khuzāʿa tribe, was ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb’s governor in Mecca. In his *Jamharat al-nasab* Ibn al-Kalbī has a section on the *mughtaribāt*, “Qurashī women who married non-Qurashī husbands”, who descended from Muḥammad’s great-grandfather, Hāshim ibn ‘Abd Manāf.²⁰ Sukhayla and ‘Ātika are not on this list since they descended from Hāshim’s brother, al-Muṭṭalib ibn ‘Abd Manāf. Marriages between Qurashī men and non-Arab women were also considered *mathālib* or vices: genealogists kept records of Qurashīs born by non-Arab women, whether Jewish, Christian, Ethiopian, “Nabataean” or Sindī.²¹

Sukhayla and ‘Ātika

It is unknown when the marriages of the two sisters to the two brothers took place, and one could argue that they took place after Qurayza’s surrender, in which case they are irrelevant for us here. The marriages could also have been severed by divorce prior to Qurayza’s surrender. But if we are to choose between a last-minute conversion and marriage bonds, the latter should be given priority. In other words, in the most likely scenario the marriages of the two sisters to their Jewish husbands were in place during Qurayza’s siege and they account for their rescue along with their relative. Put differently, the Prophet Muḥammad had relatives in the besieged fortress of the Qurayza, namely two female third cousins who lived there with their husbands and children. One assumes that the women were not idol worshippers but converts to Judaism.²² Earlier links with Jews in this family (see later mention) indicate a pattern and reinforce the trustworthiness of the *Kitāb al-mathālib* account.

The father of Sukhayla and ‘Ātika was ‘Ubayda ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib. As has already been mentioned, the word “‘Abd” in his grandfather’s name is an error. As a matter of fact, Muḥammad did have a paternal uncle called al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib – he was ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib’s eldest son, and hence the latter’s *kunya* Abū l-Ḥārith. But al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib did not have a son called ‘Ubayda,²³ while his paternal cousin, al-Ḥārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib, did have a son called ‘Ubayda. Moreover, ‘Ubayda is known to have fathered a daughter named Sukhayla. He had seven sons and three daughters (Khadija, Sukhayla and

20 Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-‘Arabiyya, 1407/1986, 302–7.

21 M. Lecker, “A note on early marriage links between Qurashīs and Jewish women”, *JSAI* 10 (1987), 17–39, at 18–19; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. II.

22 Cf. now H. Mazuz, *The Religious and Spiritual Life of the Jews of Medina*, Leiden: Brill, 2014, 44–6.

23 Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 18 (l. 3), 85–9, lists six sons and one daughter of this paternal uncle. See also al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 3, ed. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dūrī, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1398/1978, 294–303; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘Arab*, 70–1; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamharat al-nasab*, 35–6.

Şafīyya)²⁴ or six sons and four daughters (Rayṭa, Khadīja, Sukhayla and Şafīyya). The mothers of all of them were slave girls (*li-ummahāt awlād shattā*).²⁵ The difference in the numbers of sons and daughters goes back to variation concerning one of the names: the former list has a son called Rabī‘a, while the latter has a daughter called Rayṭa. Sukhayla was named after ‘Ubayda’s mother whose name was also Sukhayla. Unfortunately, no list mentions Sukhayla’s sister ‘Ātika. But lists often have lacunae, and Sukhayla stood a better chance of being remembered because she also appears in an account with a legal aspect about an expensive wool or silk garment (*mirṭ*) which her second husband, ‘Amr ibn Umayya al-Ḍamrī, bought for her.²⁶

‘Ubayda was one of the first Muslims. He was ten years older than Muḥammad and immigrated to Medina together with his two younger brothers, al-Ṭufayl and al-Ḥuşayn.²⁷ Al-Ṭufayl was married to Zaynab bint Khuzayma. When he divorced her, she married ‘Ubayda, and after his death she married the Prophet.²⁸ At 63 ‘Ubayda was the oldest Muslim warrior in the Battle of Badr. He was fatally wounded and died on the way back to Medina.²⁹ His age upon death means that he was born *ca.* 561 C.E. His brother al-Ṭufayl who was much younger than him died in 32/653 aged 70,³⁰ which means that he was born *ca.* 583 C.E. Their brother al-Ḥuşayn died in 32/653, several months after al-Ṭufayl,³¹ and must have been more or less of the same age.

Sukhayla and ‘Ātika (whose mothers were slave girls, as were the mothers of ‘Ubayda’s other children) could have been born as early as the 580s C.E., when ‘Ubayda was in his 20s. But this date is too early, because in the 640s Sukhayla still bore her second husband, ‘Amr ibn Umayya al-Ḍamrī, several children.³² Their son Ja‘far was not ‘Amr’s firstborn son,³³ but he was the best known one and was nicknamed *al-faqīh*, “the man of knowledge”.³⁴ Ja‘far who died in 95/714³⁵

24 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1996, 3.

25 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 3: 50. In Muş‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 93–4, al-Ḥārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib’s wife who bore him ‘Ubayda, among others, is Shuhayla (!) bint Khuzā‘ī of the Thaḳīf. Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 459–60 (in the section on *al-munjibāt mina l-nisā*, “the women who gave birth to noble sons”), lists no fewer than 14 sons whom Sukhayla bore al-Ḥārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib (here he is again erroneously called al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib).

26 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 7: 693–4; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Istī‘āb*, 4: 1859–60.

27 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5: 2–3.

28 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 8: 115. However, Wāqidī (quoted in al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5: 3) denied that Zaynab was married to ‘Ubayda.

29 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, *Istī‘āb*, 3: 1020–1.

30 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 5: 5.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 4: 248: *fa-waladat lahu nafaran*.

33 ‘Amr’s *kunya* was Abū Umayya; *ibid*.

34 Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. al-‘Azam, Damascus: Dār al-Yaqza al-‘Arabiyya, 1997–2002, 10: 48.

35 Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī, *Kitāb al-thiqāt*, Hyderabad: Dā‘irat al-Ma‘ārif al-Islāmiyya, 1403/1983; reprint Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 1415/1995, 4: 104.

was no doubt born around 645 C.E.: he was the foster brother of the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān³⁶ who was born in 23/644 or 26/647.³⁷ If we assume, for example, that Sukhayla gave birth to Ja‘far when she was 35 years old, it leads to *ca.* 610 C.E. as her birth year. In this case she would have been about 17 years old in 627 C.E. when the Qurayza were vanquished (and the same may more or less apply to her sister ‘Ātika). Sukhayla’s Jewish children were half-brothers of the children she bore her second husband.³⁸ Thanks to ‘Amr’s marriage to Sukhayla his descendants were incorporated in (or “entered”) the Quraysh tribe without an alliance.³⁹

The great-grandfather of Sukhayla and ‘Ātika, al-Muṭṭalib ibn ‘Abd Manāf, had two sons, Makhrama and Abū Ruhm, whose mother was Jewish. (The same woman bore al-Muṭṭalib’s brother, Hāshim ibn ‘Abd Manāf, two sons.) Moreover, also Qays ibn Makhrama’s mother was Jewish.⁴⁰ It is no coincidence that Qays bought Yasār, the Jewish grandfather of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq *ṣāhib al-maghāzī*, after he had been captured at ‘Ayn al-Tamr.⁴¹

The pre-Islamic marriages of Sukhayla and ‘Ātika are but two items in the intricate network of pre-Islamic links between Mecca and Medina.⁴² The growing interest in prosopography and genealogy is bound to lead to a thorough examination of these links which played a crucial role in world history.

36 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 5: 67–8.

37 *TMD*, 27: 117.

38 Abū l-Yaqzān (*al-Nassāba*, d. 190/806; Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, ed. Ihsān ‘Abbās, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1993, 3: 1342) remarks that ‘Ubayda was not survived by living offspring; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 5: 3 (*wa-lā ‘aqib li-‘Ubayda*). This remark seems to relate to male offspring.

39 Beside a marriage link, other channels of “entrance” included friendship, nearness of kin, a covenant of protection and a link with a manumitted slave (*man dakhala fī Quraysh fī l-islām bi-ghayr hilf illā bi-ṣihr aw bi-ṣadāqa aw bi-raḥīm aw bi-jiwār aw walā’*). ‘Amr’s descendants were among those who “entered” the Banū ‘Abd Shams (*sic*). They “entered” the Banū Umayya (ibn ‘Abd Shams) through ‘Amr’s marriage to Sukhayla bint ‘Ubayda ibn al-Hārith ibn al-Muṭṭalib; Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 249 (instead of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, read: al-Muṭṭalib); cf. M.J. Kister, “On strangers and allies in Mecca”, *JSAI* 13 (1990), 113–54; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* III, no. I, at 141.

40 M. Lecker, “A note on early marriage links”, 24, 34. For a fuller discussion of Makhrama’s mother see no. 4 in this volume.

41 See no. 14 in this volume, at pp. 298–300.

42 See also M. Lecker, “The Median wives of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and his brother, Zayd”, *Oriens* 36 (2001), 242–7 (Festschrift F. Rosenthal); reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* II, no. VIII.

APPENDIX I

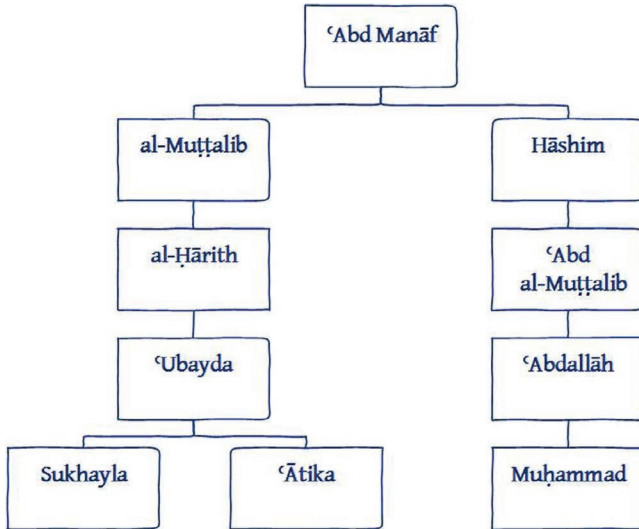
Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 1: 226–28

قال ابن إسحاق وحدثني عاصم بن عمر بن قتادة عن شيخ من بني قريظة قال لي هل تدري عمّ كان إسلام ثعلبة بن سعية وأسيد بن سعية وأسد بن عبيد – نفر من بني هذل إخوة بني قريظة كانوا معهم في جاهليتهم ثم كانوا سادتهم في الإسلام؟ قال قلت لا والله قال فإن رجلا من يهود من أهل الشام يقال له ابن الهيثبان قدم علينا قبيل الإسلام بسنين فحل بين أظهرنا لا والله ما رأينا رجلا قط لا يصلي الخمس أفضل منه فأقام عندنا فكنّا إذا قحط عنا المطر قلنا له اخرج يا ابن الهيثبان فاستسقى لنا فيقول لا والله حتى تقدّموا بين يدي مخرجكم صدقة فنقول له كم فيقول صاعا من تمر أو مدين من شعير قال فنخرجها ثم يخرج بنا إلى ظاهر حرّتنا فيستسقي الله لنا فوالله ما يبرح مجلسه حتى يمرّ السحاب وتُسقى قد فعل ذلك غير مرة ولا مرتين ولا ثلاثا قال ثم حضرته الوفاة عندنا فلما عرف أنه ميّت قال يا معشر يهود ما ترونه أخرجني من أرض الخمر والخمير إلى أرض البؤس والجوع قال قلنا إنك أعلم قال فإني إنما قدمت هذه البلدة أتوكف خروج نبيّ قد أظللّ زمانه وهذه البلدة مهاجرة فكنت أرجو أن يبعث فأتبعه وقد أظلم زمانه فلا تُسبِقنّ إليه يا معشر يهود فإنه يُبعث بسفك الدماء وسبي الذراريّ والنساء ممن خالفه فلا يمنعكم ذلك منه فلما بعث رسول الله صلعم وحاصر بني قريظة قال هؤلاء الفتية وكانوا شبابا أحداثا يا بني قريظة والله إنه للنبي الذي كان عهد إليكم فيه ابن الهيثبان قالوا ليس به قالوا بلّى والله إنه لهو بصفته ثم نزلوا وأسلموا وأحرزوا دماءهم وأموالهم وأهلهم.

APPENDIX II

Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 503. The variants between square brackets are from Ibn Sa‘d, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* (Khānjī), 5: 395

فحدثني صالح بن جعفر عن محمد بن عقبة عن ثعلبة بن أبي مالك قال قال ثعلبة وأسيد ابنا سعية وأسد بن عبيد [بن] عمهم يا معشر بني قريظة والله إنكم لتعلمون أنه رسول الله وأن [وأنه] صفته عندنا حدثنا بها علماؤنا و علماء بني النضير [حدثنا بها علماؤنا بنو النضير] هذا أولهم – يعني حيي بن أخطب – مع جبير [خبر] بن [ابن] الهيثبان أصدق الناس عندنا هو خبرنا بصفته عند موته قالوا لا نفارق التوراة فلما رأى هؤلاء نفر إباءهم نزلوا في الليلة التي في صباحها نزلت [بنو] قريظة فأسلموا فأمنوا على أنفسهم وأهلهم وأموالهم.



WĀQIDĪ (D. 822) VS. ZUHRĪ (D. 742)

The fate of the Jewish Banū Abī l-Ḥuqayq^{1,2}

C.J. Robin (ed.), *Le judaïsme de l'Arabie antique: Actes du Colloque de Jérusalem (février 2006)*, Paris: Brepols, 2015, 495–509

The conflict between Muḥammad and the Jews of Medina was attractive for the informants and compilers who created Muḥammad's biography. The drama was a real one: within several years Muḥammad rose from a humble starting point and became the strongest leader in Medina and probably the biggest land owner there. The following study is about historical apologetic that belongs to the social and political context of Muḥammad's biography in its formative stage. It looks into different versions regarding an episode that took place during the conquest of Khaybar. Differences in Islamic historiography are widespread and are often considered a menace, but they are a blessing when they reflect the sensitivities of early Islamic society. Valid historical evidence that is incongruous with the common story of a given event was sometimes pushed to the margins of historiography because it was regarded inconvenient. Admittedly, there is no simple rule of thumb for telling a valid piece of evidence from a fake one, and much of what we read is no doubt useless for the historian.³

Wāqidī's account about Khaybar

Wāqidī's (d. 822) account of Muḥammad's conquest of Khaybar is long and detailed, reflecting the immense interest of later generations in this crucial event. The text translated later – for the Arabic original see Appendix no. 1 – covers the

1 Cf. H. Motzki, "The murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq: On the origin and reliability of some *Maghāzī*-reports", in idem (ed.), *The Biography of Muḥammad: The Issue of the Sources*, Leiden: Brill, 2000, 170–239.

2 The Khazrajīs involved in the murder were allied with the Naḍir; M. Lecker, "King Ibn Ubayy and the *quṣṣās*", in H. Berg (ed.), *Methods and Theories in the Study of Islamic Origins*, Leiden: Brill, 2003, reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* II, no. II, 29–71, at 43–4.

3 For example, when we are told that Kināna's father, al-Rabī' ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq, belonged to the Qurayza; Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 22: 128. Also Abū Rāfi' Sallām is sometimes called al-Quraẓī; Motzki, "The murder of Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq", 225. (According to some, Abū Rāfi' 's name was 'Abdallāh; *ibid.*, 224, 225, n. 138).

episode studied here. The passages that concern us most appear in bold face here and in the Appendix:

They said: Kināna ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq⁴ sent this message to the Messenger of God: “Should I descend [from the castle] and negotiate with you?” The Messenger of God said: “Yes”. So Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq descended and made an agreement with the Messenger of God. It stipulated that the warriors in their castles be spared, that their children (*dhurriyya*) [and obviously their wives as well] be left with them unharmed, that they leave Khaybar and its vicinity with their children [and wives] and do not interpose between the Messenger of God and their orchards or land. [Also included in the agreement were] their gold, silver, horses, weapons and linen [that were to be taken from them] with the exception of the clothes that one wears. The Messenger of God said: “The *dhimma* [i.e. responsibility, guarantee of protection] of God and His Messenger is clear of you if you hide anything from me”. He [Kināna] made an agreement with him regarding this. The Messenger of God sent a person to seize the orchards and [this person] seized them first thing first. He [Muḥammad] dispatched a person to collect the goods and weapons and seized them too. He found one hundred coats of mail, four hundred swords, one thousand spears and five hundred Arab arches including the quivers. The Messenger of God asked Kināna ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq about the treasure of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family – that is to say jewels⁵ belonging to them which were kept in a [bag made of a] camel’s hide. It belonged to the worst of them and was called after him.⁶ Sometimes, when a marriage took place in Mecca, someone would come to them and the jewels would be borrowed for a month and remain among them [the Meccans]. These jewels used to be transferred from one elder of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family to the other. He [Kināna] said: “Abū l-Qāsim,⁷ we have exhausted it in our war and nothing was left of it. We have kept it (?)⁸ for a day like this, but the war and the sending for warriors [from among the Bedouin allies] left nothing of it”. Both of them⁹ swore to it, took solemn vows and made a great effort [to convince Muḥammad that this was so]. The Messenger

4 The omission of the name of one’s father is common in the sources.

5 Instead of *wa-ḥuliyyun* read *ay ḥuliyyun* (a gloss).

6 *Kāna li-sharrihim yu’rafu bihi*. I.e. it was known as “the treasure of so-and-so”. (This still belongs to the gloss.) Huyayy ibn Akḥṭab is often associated with the treasure, but he was not a member of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family.

7 He addressed Muḥammad politely, using his *kunya* or agnomen.

8 *Wa-kunnā narfa’ uhu*.

9 Due to Wāqidī’s untidy editing it is only at this point that we find out that Muḥammad was negotiating with two persons rather than one. As we shall see, the other person was Kināna’s brother, Huyayy. Later Wāqidī refers to “the other son of Abū l-Ḥuqayq” without naming him. Elsewhere Kināna’s brother involved in this episode is called al-Rabī’; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut:

of God told them: “The *dhimma* of God and His Messenger is clear of you if it is with you?” Both of them said: “Yes”. Then the Messenger of God said: “And [if it is found with you,] would it be lawful for me to take the orchards of both of you and spill your blood, and you will have no *dhimma*?” They said: “Yes”. He [Muḥammad] asked the following persons to bear witness to the [agreement with the] two: Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Alī, al-Zubayr [ibn al-‘Awwām], may God be pleased with them, and ten from among the Jews. One of the Jews rose and said to Kināna ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq: “If you have what Muḥammad seeks, or you know about it, let him know, because (if you do,) you will be given a guarantee for your life. Otherwise, by God, he will obtain it [the treasure] – after all, he has found out about other matters in ways unknown to us”. Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq repelled him roughly and the Jew went aside and sat down.

Then the Messenger of God asked Tha‘laba ibn Sallām ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq who was feeble-minded about the treasure of the two (*sic*), and he said: “I do not know, but I used to see Kināna every morning walking around this ruin – he pointed out a certain ruin – and if there is something he buried, it is in it”. When the Messenger of God took al-Naṭāt, Kināna ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq was sure about the [imminent] disaster – and the people of al-Naṭāt had been overcome [by terror]. So he took the camel’s hide with their jewels in it and dug for it at night a hole in a ruin so that nobody would see him. Then he levelled the earth above it, in al-Katība. This is the ruin which Tha‘laba saw him walking around every morning. He [Muḥammad] sent al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām and a group of Muslims with Tha‘laba to that ruin. He [al-Zubayr] dug in the place which Tha‘laba had shown him and extracted that treasure from it [i.e. from the hole]. Some said that God, to Him belong glory and power, guided His Messenger to that treasure. When the treasure was unearthed, the Messenger of God ordered al-Zubayr to torture Kināna ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq in order to extract everything he had. Al-Zubayr tortured him until he pierced his interior with a piece of stick that is used for producing fire, with which he made a hole in his chest. Then the Messenger of God ordered him [al-Zubayr] to hand him [Kināna] over to Muḥammad ibn Maslama to be slain in retaliation for the latter’s brother, and Muḥammad ibn Maslama killed him. He [Muḥammad] had ordered the torturing of the other son of Abū l-Ḥuqayq, then he was handed over to the agnates of Bishr ibn al-Barā’ and slain in retaliation for him [i.e. for Bishr]. Some said that he [Muḥammad] ordered his execution. Because of this [i.e. the

Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 2: 112. But the text must be garbled, since al-Rabī’ is said to have been both his brother and paternal cousin (!).

hiding of the treasure] the Messenger of God considered lawful the seizure of the orchards belonging to the two and the enslavement of their children [and wives].

Khālīd ibn Rabīʿ¹⁰ ibn Abī Hilāl reported to me [the following] on the authority of Hilāl ibn Usāma, on the authority of one who looked at the contents of the camel's hide in front of the Messenger of God when it was brought to him. Most of it was gold bracelets, gold armllets, gold anklets, gold earrings, necklaces of gem and emerald, gold rings and rings without stones made of the onyx of Zafār inlaid with gold. The Messenger of God saw a string of gems and gave it to a female member of his family, either 'Ā'isha or one of his daughters, and she left. Shortly afterwards she scattered it [i.e. the money she received for it] among the poor and the widows. Abū l-Shaḥm¹¹ bought a minute particle of it. In the evening, when the Messenger of God went to bed, he could not sleep. At daybreak he went to 'Ā'isha – it was not her night [i.e. Muḥammad had been with another wife] – or to his daughter, and said: “Give me back the string because neither me nor you have any right to it”. She informed him of what she had done with it and he praised God and left. Ṣafīyya bint Ḥuyayy used to say: “That string belonged to Kināna's daughter” [i.e. Ṣafīyya's step-daughter].¹²

Wāqīdī's combined report

The informants behind the expression “they said” (*qālū*) at the beginning of the text translated earlier are among the 26 informants mentioned by Wāqīdī at the beginning of his chapter on Khaybar. Wāqīdī says: “Each of them transmitted to me part of the story, and some of them knew about it more than others”. There were also other informants who transmitted to Wāqīdī reports on the same subject and he wrote down what they (i.e. both the specified and the unspecified informants) transmitted to him.¹³

10 Printed: ibn al-Rabīʿa. The omission of the definite article is confirmed by a passage on another matter quoted from Wāqīdī ← Khālīd ibn Rabīʿa ibn Abī Hilāl, in Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 5: 229.

11 This pejorative nickname (*shaḥm* means fat) belonged to a Jewish merchant who lived in Medina. After the conquest of Khaybar he redeemed a female relative of his that had been taken captive; Wāqīdī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 634–5.

12 Wāqīdī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 671–3.

13 Wāqīdī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 633: *fa-kull qad ḥaddathanī min ḥadīth Khaybar bi-tā'ifa wa-ba'duhum aw'ā lahu min ba'd wa-ghayr hā'ulā'i l-musammayna (!) qad ḥaddathanī min ḥadīth Khaybar fa-katabtu mā ḥaddathūnī*. Cf. Lecker, “Wāqīdī's account on the status of the Jews of Medina: A study of a combined report”, *JNES* 54 (1995), 15–32, at 16, 19, n. 20 and passim; reprinted in U. Rubin (ed.), *The Life of Muḥammad*, Aldershot: Variorum, 1998, 23–40; also reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. VII.

While the backbone of Wāqidī's chapter includes the reports of the 26 informants that are mentioned by name, at times Wāqidī interrupts sections of the story starting with *qālū* – *qālū*-type accounts – to adduce an additional report. Usually the informant behind the additional report is not one of the 26 informants mentioned by name, but sometimes he is one of them.¹⁴ Wāqidī's *qālū*-type accounts deal with the following questions:

1. Who killed the Jew al-Ḥārith Abū Zaynab?¹⁵ A *qālū*-type account has: 'Alī. Ibn Abī Sabra (one of the 26) has, in two different reports: Abū Dujāna al-Anṣārī of the Sā'ida (Khazraj).
2. Who killed the Jewish warrior Marḥab? According to a *qālū*-type account beginning with *wa-qāla Abū Rāfi'* (655), it was 'Alī. Muḥammad ibn Maslama al-Anṣārī cut off Marḥab's two legs and left him bleeding, on purpose. 'Alī who was passing by amputated his head (656). But according to Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl and Zakariyyā ibn Zayd (both of whom are not among the 26), it was Muḥammad ibn Maslama who killed Marḥab (656–57).
3. Did the Muslim besiegers at Khaybar consume horse meat? A *qālū*-type account that starts with *kāna Abū Ruhm al-Ghifārī yuḥaddithu qāla*, "Abū Ruhm al-Ghifārī used to say", has it that at Khaybar Muḥammad prohibited the meat of domestic asses and beasts of prey. Two reports of Ibn Abī Sabra (who has just been mentioned as one of the 26) on the consumption of horse meat at Khaybar (661) provide an extension to Abū Ruhm's report. Then follows a report of Thawr ibn Yazīd (not among the 26) according to which at Khaybar Muḥammad prohibited the meat of domestic asses, horses and mules. This report, which contradicts Ibn Abī Sabra's reports, is rejected by Wāqidī: the alleged authority mentioned in it is Khālīd ibn al-Walīd who did not participate in the expedition of Khaybar. Wāqidī then starts a *qālū*-type account with the words *wa-kāna Ibn al-Akwa' yaqūlu*, "Ibn al-Akwa' used to say" (661).

This is followed by several reports (662–70) about events that preceded the fighting in the Katība area of Khaybar. They deal mainly with the castle (*ḥiṣn*) of al-Ṣa'b ibn Mu'adh. The informants are Khālīd ibn Ilyās (not among the 26), Ibn Abī Sabra, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn Ja'far, Ibrāhīm ibn Ja'far and 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr (all of whom are among the 26) and Mūsā ibn 'Umar

14 Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl and Zakariyyā ibn Zayd (Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 656) are not on the list of informants. Mujammī' ibn Ya'qūb (656–7) is erroneously mentioned among the 26 informants as Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb. The following are not among the 26 informants: Thawr ibn Yazīd (661), Khālīd ibn Ilyās (662), Mūsā ibn 'Umar al-Ḥārithī (667), Khālīd ibn Rabī'a ibn Abī Hilāl (673), 'Abd al-Salām ibn Mūsā ibn Jubayr (686), 'Abdallāh ibn Abī Yaḥyā (686), 'Abdallāh ibn Nūḥ (692), 'Abdallāh ibn 'Awn (692), Mūsā ibn Ya'qūb (694), Muṣ'ab ibn Thābit (697) and Shu'ayb ibn Talḥa (698).

15 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 654–5 (printed erroneously: Abū Marḥab instead of Abū Zaynab).

al-Ḥārithī (who is not). Presumably, the additional reports did not enter a *qālū*-type account because they lacked confirmation from at least one more informant.

At this point Wāqidī (670) starts the *qālū*-type accounts that were partly translated earlier and relate to the fate of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family. The first account is interrupted by a conversation between Wāqidī and one of the 26 informants, namely Ibrāhīm ibn Jaʿfar. Wāqidī mentioned to him that 500 Arab arches were found in al-Katība, and Ibrāhīm told him how through divine providence Kināna [ibn al-Rabīʿ] ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq, a brilliant archer, was not able to shoot during the siege because of a shudder. Kināna also instructed the other archers not to shoot. After 14 days under siege he began negotiating with Muḥammad the terms of surrender. Finally, Ibrāhīm added these comments: “These arches and weapons belonged to the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family as a whole (?). They used to lend them to the Arabs, and the jewels too they used to lend to the Arabs”. Then he said: “They were the worst Jews of Yathrib”.¹⁶ Then follow the accounts translated earlier. Wāqidī’s *qālū*-type accounts form a Combined Report which he created from materials received from various informants. The details included in them probably go back to more than one informant.

Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī’s account

We now arrive at Zuhrī’s (d. 742) version of the encounter between Muḥammad and Ṣafīyya’s husband, Kināna. Zuhrī died eighty years before Wāqidī and there can be no doubt that the former’s report was before the latter when he prepared his Combined Report on the conquest of Khaybar (see Appendix no. 4). As we shall see, Wāqidī presents the encounter in milder terms, which is illuminating with regard to the character and function of Combined Reports. Zuhrī’s account as preserved in Ibn Shabba’s *History of Medina*¹⁷ was transmitted by his pupil Maʿmar ibn Rāshid who is one of Wāqidī’s 26 informants (633). It differs from Wāqidī’s *qālū*-type account in several points, two of which (nos. 5 and 6) are crucial:

Ibn Shihāb said: The Messenger of God inquired Kināna ibn al-Rabīʿ ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq about a treasure that was the asset of Abū l-Ḥuqayq. Their elders were in charge of it and it was transferred from one elder to another. That asset was called “the camel’s hide”. Together with Kināna, he [Muḥammad] also inquired [Kināna’s brother] Ḥuyayy ibn al-Rabīʿ

16 *Qāla Abū ʿAbdillāh qultu li-Ibrāhīm ibn Jaʿfar wujida fī l-Katība khamsumi ʿat qaws ʿarabiyya . . . qāla Ibrāhīm tilka l-qisiyyu wa-l-silāh innamā kāna li-āl Abī l-Ḥuqayq jamāʿa yu ʿrūnahu l-ʿarab wa-l-ḥuliyyu yu ʿrūnahu l-ʿarab thumma yaqūlu kānū sharr yahūd Yathrib.* The text is not smooth.

17 Ibn Shabba, *Taʾrīkh al-Madīna*, ed. Fahīm Muḥammad Shaltūt, n. p., [1399/1979]; reprint Beirut, 1410/1990, 2: 466–7. For the Arabic text see Appendix no. 2.

ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq. Both of them said: “We have exhausted it in the war and nothing was left of it”. They swore to it before him. He said: “The *dhimma* of God and His Messenger is clear of you if it is with you”, or something to this effect. They said: “Yes”. He asked others to bear witness. Then the Messenger of God ordered al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām to torture Kināna, which he did until he pierced his interior. However, he [Kināna] did not confess to anything. I do not know whether or not Ḥuyayy was tortured. Then the Messenger of God inquired about that treasure a young man of them called Tha‘laba who appeared to be feeble-minded, and he said: “I do not know about it. But I used to see Kināna every morning walking around this ruin, and if there is anything, it is in it”. The Messenger of God sent people to the ruin and they found the treasure in it. It was brought to him and he ordered to kill both of them. He handed Kināna over to Muḥammad ibn Maslama who killed him in retaliation for his brother, Maḥmūd ibn Maslama – some said that Kināna had killed Maḥmūd. The Messenger of God enslaved the family (*āl*) of Abū l-Ḥuqayq [i.e. the women and children] in keeping with their own commitment, as well as Ṣafīyya, because of her relation to them. To the best of my knowledge, apart from these two [i.e. the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family and Ṣafīyya] he did not enslave any of the people of Khaybar.¹⁸

There are differences between Wāqidī’s *qālū*-type account and Zuhri’s account:

1. Zuhri is uncertain about the precise wording of Muḥammad’s threat, while Wāqidī does not express doubts about it.
2. Zuhri is uncertain about the torturing of Kināna’s brother Ḥuyayy, while Wāqidī states that “the other son of Abū l-Ḥuqayq” was tortured.
3. Zuhri speaks from the outset of two brothers, Kināna and Ḥuyayy. In Wāqidī’s account it is Kināna who claims that the treasure was exhausted in the war, although the three verbs that follow are in dual form (*wa-ḥalaḥāfā*, *wa-wakkadā*, *wa-’jtahadā*).
4. Wāqidī calls the feeble-minded man Tha‘laba ibn Sallām ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq, which makes him the son of Abū Rāfi‘ Sallām ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq and the cousin of Kināna ibn al-Rabi‘ ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq.¹⁹ Zuhri mentions a feeble-minded young man “from among them” (*ghulām minhum*) called Tha‘laba,

18 The text in Appendix no. 3 that is quoted from Mūsā ibn ‘Uqba’s lost *Maghāzī* (Bayhaqī, *Dalā’il al-nubuwwa*, ed. ‘Abd al-Mu‘ṭī Qal‘ajī, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1405/1985, 4: 233) no doubt goes back to Zuhri.

19 See also the conversation between this feeble-minded Tha‘laba and ‘Uyayna in Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 676 (*wa-kānū yaqūlūna innahu ḍa’īf al-‘aql mukhtaliṭ*).

- i.e. from the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family.²⁰ But Bayhaqī (see Appendix no. 3) has “a slave called Tha‘laba that belonged to both of them” (*ghulām lahumā*).
5. According to Zuhri, al-Zubayr had tortured Kināna even before the search for the treasure began, while according to Wāqidī he was only tortured after the treasure had been found.
 6. According to Zuhri, Muḥammad enslaved the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family (i.e. its women and children), in addition to Ṣafīyya. He adds that to the best of his knowledge, Muḥammad did not enslave anyone else in Khaybar. According to Wāqidī, Muḥammad only enslaved the children (and wives) of the two brothers.

Widespread reports have it that when the booty of Khaybar was distributed, Ṣafīyya became the property of the handsome Diḥya al-Kalbī. The Prophet took her from him, giving him in return seven slaves (i.e. women or children) or, according to another version, two female paternal cousins of Ṣafīyya.²¹ The latter version belongs to Ibn Ishāq who adds that female captives from Khaybar (i.e. young girls and women) scattered among the Muslims.²² But according to yet another version, Diḥya received from Muḥammad Ṣafīyya’s sister-in-law.²³ The enslavement of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family, i.e. its women and children, is congruous with the reported scattering of the female captives among the Muslims: in order to scatter, their number had to be considerable. Although Zuhri says nothing about the fate of the men, obviously the enslavement of the women and children indicates that the men had been executed. Their execution is presumably reflected in the following eschatological utterance ascribed to Abū Rāfi‘ Sallām ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq. Two leaders of the Ghaṭafān, ‘Uyayna of the Fazāra and al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Awf of the Murra, are supposed to have discussed the policies of their respective tribes towards Muḥammad. The latter claimed that Abū Rāfi‘ had disclosed to him confidentially that the Prophet would conquer the whole world, adding that he would inflict on the Jews two massacres (*wa-lanā minhu dhabḥāni*), one in Yathrib and another in Khaybar.²⁴ One assumes that the famous massacre of the Qurayza and the little known one of the Banū Abī l-Ḥuqayq are meant here.

It is not clear exactly how many men of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family were killed, but Kināna and Ḥuyayy must have had brothers, uncles and nephews. In other words, the gap between the respective versions of Zuhri and Wāqidī was significant. We cannot expect to find rich evidence about the family members that

20 Ibn Shabba’s editor added here: ibn Sallām ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq.

21 Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt, *Ta’rikh*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Siyāḥa wa-l-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1968, 1: 51.

22 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, 3: 345: *wa-fashat al-sabāyā min Khaybar fī l-muslimīna*.

23 Ḥalabī, *Insān al-‘uyūn fī sīrat al-amīn al-ma’mūn (al-Sīra al-Ḥalabīyya)*, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Azhariyya, 1320/1902, 3: 43 (quoting *al-Umm* by al-Shāfi‘ī, who in his turn quotes *Sīrat al-Wāqidī*).

24 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 677.

were not directly involved in the war against Muḥammad. In any case, the list of Muḥammad's Jewish enemies includes four sons of Abū l-Ḥuqayq: Kināna, Rabī', Rāfi' and Abū Rāfi' Sallām.²⁵ A fifth brother, Ma'bad, was the father of Rabī' ibn Ma'bad ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq who was a hadith transmitter.²⁶ Presumably, Ma'bad had not yet reached the age of puberty when Khaybar was conquered, and hence he was enslaved and raised as a Muslim. A widespread account has it that an unspecified member of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family protested against the expulsion of the Jews of Khaybar by the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. 'Umar reminded the Jew of a conversation that had taken place between the latter and Muḥammad in which Muḥammad anticipated the Jew's expulsion from Khaybar.²⁷ On the basis of this report one could argue that a grown-up member of the family²⁸ that survived the massacre was still living in Khaybar some 13 years after its conquest. But it appears that the report is yet another apologetic attempt to justify 'Umar's expulsion of the Jews of Khaybar²⁹ and that the unspecified member of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family never existed.

A report going back to Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767) and another going back to Maymūn ibn Mihrān (d. 117/735) are relevant for us here. The former quotes an unspecified authority from Medina:

The Prophet made an agreement with the Banū Abī l-Ḥuqayq that they would not hide from him a treasure. They hid it, and hence he deemed the spilling of their blood lawful.

The latter says:

The people of Khaybar received a guarantee of security for themselves and their children [and wives]. In return, Muḥammad had the right to take everything that their castle contained. There was in the castle a family³⁰ whose members were fierce in their opposition to the Messenger of God

25 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 1, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1959, 284. We also know of a sister called 'Aqīla: having mentioned the four brothers, the same source adds Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf al-Ṭā'ī from the Banū Nabhān branch of Ṭayyi'. He was a *ḥalīf* of the Naḍir and the son of 'Aqīla bint Abī l-Ḥuqayq.

26 He transmitted from Ibn 'Umar a hadith concerning *zakāt*; Bukhārī, *al-Ta'rikh al-kabūr*, Hyderabad 1941, 2/i, 269–70. This was reported by another hadith transmitter of Jewish origin, namely Yazīd ibn Ziyād al-Quraṣī.

27 See e.g. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1378/1958; reprint Beirut, n. d., 3: 252.

28 Note that another version of the same report only identifies the Jew as “one of their leaders” (*ra'īs min ru'asā'ihim*); see e.g. Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madīna*, 1: 176.

29 Cf. M.J. Kister, “Social and religious concepts of authority in Islam”, *JSAI* 18 (1994), 84–127, at 92–4; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* III, no. V.

30 *Ahl bayt*; rather an *'āqila* or *'aṣaba*, i.e. a blood-vengeance group formed by the relations on the father's side; see Lecker, *The 'Constitution of Medina': Muḥammad's First Legal Document*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2004, 148–9.

(*fthim shidda 'alā rasūl allāh*). He said to them: "I know about your animosity to God and His Messenger, but it will not prevent me from granting you what I have granted your friends. You have pledged that if you hide anything, the spilling of your blood will be made lawful for me. What happened to your (precious) vessels (*āniya*)"? They said: "We have expended them in our war". So upon his orders his Companions came to the place where they [the vessels] were [buried] and dug them out. Then he beheaded them.³¹

A slightly more detailed version of this report makes it clear that the family in question was the Banū Abī l-Ḥuqayq.³² Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1372) says, commenting on the report about the agreement between Muḥammad and Ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq, that as punishment for concealing the treasure several members (*tā'ifa*) of the Abū l-Ḥuqayq family were executed.³³

Finally, the massacre of the Banū Abī l-Ḥuqayq is a background detail in the story of al-Ḥajjāj ibn 'Ilāṭ of the Sulaym tribe who had managed, shortly after the conquest of Khaybar, to collect money owed him by certain Meccans before they found out about Muḥammad's victory. He told the Meccans that Muḥammad had been defeated by the Jews, while telling Muḥammad's uncle 'Abbās the truth. According to Wāqidi, he informed 'Abbās that Muḥammad had married the daughter of Ḥuyayy ibn Akḥṭab (i.e. Ṣafiyya) and had killed Ibn (read: Banū)³⁴ Abī l-Ḥuqayq. Several days later 'Abbās broke the news to the Meccans:

He [Muḥammad] conquered Khaybar, married the daughter of their king Ḥuyayy ibn Akḥṭab and beheaded the Banū Abī l-Ḥuqayq, the fair and generous ones whom you considered the chiefs of the Naḍīr of Yathrib [and Khaybar].³⁵

The massacre is a trustworthy background detail in this story that has two protagonists: the Bedouin al-Ḥajjāj, who misled the Meccans, and Muḥammad's uncle

31 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 27.

32 Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, ed. Muḥammad Khalīl Harrās, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1396/1976, 216, no. 458.

33 Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, Cairo: Maṭba'at l-Sa'āda, al-Maṭba'at al-Salafiyya and Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1351/1932–1358/1939; reprint Beirut, 1974, 4: 199: *qultu: wa-li-hādihā lammā katamū wa-kadhabū wa-akhḥaw dhālika l-mask lladhī kāna fihī amwāl jazīla tabayyana annahu lā 'ahd lahum fa-qatala ibnay* (read: *ibn*) *Abī l-Ḥuqayq wa-tā'ifa min ahlihi bi-sabab naqd al-'uhūd minhum wa-l-mawāthiq*.

34 That instead of *ibn* (singular) we should read *banū* (plural) is shown by the parallel passage found in Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, 4: 270: *wa-qatala banī Abī l-Ḥuqayq*.

35 *Wa-ḍaraba a'nāq Banī Abī l-Ḥuqayq al-bīd al-ji'ād lladhīna ra'aytumūhum sādāt al-Naḍīr min Yathrib*; Wāqidi, *Maghāzī*, 2: 704–5. On 704 read *wa-qatala* instead of *wa-qutila*. In Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqāt*, 4: 270 we find after the words *min Yathrib: wa-Khaybar*.

‘Abbās who was reportedly loyal to Muḥammad while still living in Mecca among the pagans.

The study of the fate of this leading Jewish family from the Ḥijāz is at the same time a study of Islamic historical apologetic.³⁶ Wāqidi’s Combined Report³⁷ presents a relatively mild version of the episode discussed here: Ṣafīyya’s husband Kināna was only tortured after he had been found to be a liar, and only the wives and children of Kināna and of one of his brothers were enslaved, rather than the wives and children of the whole family. In sum, when we study the literature about Muḥammad’s life, not only modern sensitivities³⁸ but also medieval ones should be taken into account.

36 In the entry on Ṣafīyya in Ibn Kathīr’s general history we find that her husband was killed in battle and that he was her paternal cousin; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, 8: 46 (*qutila fī l-ma’raka*). Both details are nonsense and the former is also apologetic. In another general history we are told that Kināna was killed in a raid led by Muḥammad ibn Maslama; Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406), *Ta’rīkh*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1401/1981, 2: 351: *thumma kharaja ilā Khaybar ba’da l-Ḥudaybiyya sanat sitt fa-ḥāsarahum wa-ftatahahā ‘amwa wa-daraba riqāb al-yahūd wa-sabā nisā’ahum wa-kāna (sic) fī l-saby Ṣafīyya bint Huyayy ibn Akḥṭab wa-kāna abūhā qutila ma’a Banī Qurayza wa-kānat taḥta Kināna ibn al-Rabī’ ibn Abī l-Ḥuqayq wa-qatalahu Muḥammad ibn Maslama ghazāhu mina l-Madīna bi-amr rasūl allāh fī sittat nafar fa-bayyatahu, fa-lammā ftuḥat Khaybar ṣṭafāhā rasūl allāh li-naḥsihi.*

37 Appendix no. 4 demonstrates Wāqidi’s editorial work.

38 M.J. Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayza: A re-examination of a tradition”, *JSAI* 8 (1986), 61–96; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum II*, 1990, no. VIII.

APPENDIX 1

Part of the story of Khaybar in Wāqidi,
Maghāzī, 2: 671–73. The text discussed
here is printed in bold face

قالوا: وأرسل كنانة بن أبي الحقيق إلى رسول الله: أنزل فأكلمك؟ فقال رسول الله نعم. قال فنزل ابن أبي الحقيق فصالح رسول الله على حفن دماء من في حصونهم من المقاتلة وترك الذرية لهم ويخرجون من خيبر وأرضها بذرائعهم ويُخْلَوْنَ بين رسول الله وبين ما كان لهم من مال أو أرض وعلى الصفرَاء والبيضاء والكراع والحلقة وعلى البزْ إلا ثوباً على ظهر إنسان فقال رسول الله وبرئت منكم ذمة الله وذمة رسوله إن كنتموني شيئاً فصالحه على ذلك وأرسل رسول الله إلى الأموال فقبضها الأول فالأول وبعث إلى المتاع والحلقة فقبضها فوجد من الدروع مائة درع ومن السيوف أربعمئة سيف وألف رمح وخمسائة قوس عربية بجعابها.

فَسَأَلَ رسول الله كنانة بن أبي الحقيق عن كنز آل أبي الحقيق وَخَلِيٍّ مِنْ حَلِيْبِهِمْ كَانَ يَكُونُ فِي مَسْكِ الْجَمَلِ كَانَ لَشُرْهِمْ [في الأصل: لسرهم، وفي المطبوع: أسراهم] يَعْرِفُ بِهِ، وَكَانَ الْعَرَسُ يَكُونُ بِمَكَّةَ فَيُقَدَّمُ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَسْتَعَارُ ذَلِكَ الْحَلِيَّ الشَّهْرَ فَيَكُونُ فِيهِمْ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ الْحَلِيَّ يَكُونُ عِنْدَ الْأَكَابِرِ فَالْأَكَابِرُ مِنْ آلِ أَبِي الْحَقِيقِ. فَقَالَ يَا أَبَا الْقَاسِمِ أَنْفَقْتَاهُ فِي حَرْبِنَا فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَكُنَّا نَرْفَعُهُ لِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْيَوْمِ فَلَمْ تَبْقَ الْحَرْبُ وَاسْتَنْصَرَ الرَّجَالَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ شَيْئاً وَحَلَفَا عَلَى ذَلِكَ فَوَكَّدَا الْأَيْمَانَ وَاجْتَهَدَا فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَهُمَا بَرِئْتُمْ مَنكُمَا ذِمَّةُ اللَّهِ وَذِمَّةُ رَسُولِهِ إِنْ كَانَ عِنْدَكُمَا قَالَا نَعَمْ ثُمَّ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكُلَّ مَا أَخَذْتُمْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِكُمَا وَأَصَبْتُمْ مِنْ دِمَائِكُمَا فَهُوَ حِلٌّ لِي وَلَا ذِمَّةٌ لَكُمَا قَالَا نَعَمْ وَأَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَبَا بَكْرٍ وَعَمْرٌ وَعَلِيٌّ وَالزُّبَيْرُ رِضْوَانُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَعَشْرَةٌ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ. فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ إِلَى كِنَانَةَ بْنِ أَبِي الْحَقِيقِ فَقَالَ إِنْ كَانَ عِنْدَكَ مَا يَطْلُبُ مِنْكَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَوْ تَعْلَمُ عِلْمَهُ فَأَعْلِمَهُ فَإِنَّكَ تَأْمَنُ عَلَى دِمَكِ وَإِلَّا فَوَاللَّهِ لَيُظْهِرَنَّ عَلَيْهِ قَدْ أَطَّلَعَ عَلَى غَيْرِ ذَلِكَ بِمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْهُ فزيره ابن أبي الحقيق ففتحنى اليهودي ففعد. ثم سأل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثعلبة بن سلام ابن أبي الحقيق – وكان رجلاً ضعيفاً – عن كنزهما فقال: ليس لي علم غير أنني قد كنت أرى كنانة كل غداة يطوف بهذه الخربة – قال وأشار إلى خربة – فإن كان شيئاً دفنه فهو فيها. وكان كنانة بن أبي الحقيق لما ظهر رسول الله على النطاة أيقن بالهلكة – وكان أهل النطاة أخذهم [الرعب] – فذهب بمسك الجمال فيه حليهم فحفر له في خربة ليلاً ولا يراه أحد ثم سوى عليه التراب بالكتيبة وهي الخربة التي رآه ثعلبة يدور بها كل غداة فأرسل مع ثعلبة الزبير بن العوام ونفراً من المسلمين إلى تلك الخربة فحفر حيث أراه ثعلبة فاستخرج منه ذلك الكنز ويقال إن الله عز وجل دل رسول الله على ذلك الكنز. فلما أخرج الكنز أمر رسول الله الزبير أن يعذب كنانة بن أبي الحقيق حتى يستخرج كل ما عنده فعذبه الزبير حتى جافه [في المطبوع: جاءه] بزبد [في الأصل: يريد] يقدحه في صدره ثم أمره رسول الله أن يدفعه إلى محمد بن مسلمة يقتله بأخيه فقتله محمد بن مسلمة وأمر بابن أبي الحقيق الآخر فعذب ثم ذفع إلى ولادة بشر بن البراء فقتل به ويقال ضرب عنقه واستحل رسول الله بذلك أموالهما وسبى ذرائعهما.

فحدثني خالد بن ربيعة [في المطبوع: الربيعه] بن أبي هلال عن هلال بن أسامة عن نظر إلى ما في مسك الجمال بين يدي رسول الله حين أتى به فإذا جُلَّهُ أسورة الذهب ودماليج الذهب وخلائل الذهب

وقرّطه الذهب ونُظّم من جوهر ورُزْمُود وخواتم ذهب وفتح بجزع ظفار مجرّع بالذهب ورأى رسول الله نظاماً من جوهر فأعطاه بعض أهله إما عائشة أو إحدى بناته فانصرفت فلم تمكث إلا ساعة من نهار حتى فرقت في أهل الحاجة والأرامل فاشتري أبو الشخم ذرة منها. فلما أمسى رسول الله وصار إلى فراشه لم يبق فغدا في السحر حتى أتى عائشة ولم تكن ليلتها أو بنته فقال رُدي علي النظام فإنه ليس لي ولا لك فيه حق فخبرتة كيف صنعت به فحمد الله وانصرف. وكانت صافية بنت حبي تقول كان ذلك النظام لبنت كنانة.

APPENDIX 2

‘Umar ibn Shabba, *Akhbār al-Madīna*,
2: 466–67, quoting Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī

قال ابن شهاب سأل رسول الله كنانة بن [زيادة في المطبوع: أبي] الربيع بن أبي الحقيق عن كنز كان من مال أبي الحقيق كان يليه الأكبر فالأكبر منهم فسُمي ذلك المال مسك الجمل. وسأل مع كنانة حُيي بن الربيع بن أبي الحقيق فقالا أنفقناه في الحرب فلم يبق منه شيء وحلفا له على ذلك فقال برئت منكما ذمة الله وذمة رسوله إن كان عندكما أو قال نحو هذا من القول قالوا نعم فأشهد عليهما. ثم أمر الزبير بن العوام أن يعذب كنانة فعذبه حتى أجافه [في المطبوع: أخافه] فلم يعترف بشيء فلا أدري أعذب حيي أم لا. ثم إن رسول الله سأل عن ذلك الكنز غلاما منهم يقال له ثعلبة [زيادة في المطبوع: بن سلام بن أبي الحقيق] وكان كالضعيف فقال ليس لي به علم غير أنني كنت أرى كنانة يطوف كل غداة بهذه الخربة فإن كان شيء فهو فيها فأرسل رسول الله إلى تلك الخربة فوجدوا فيها ذلك الكنز فأتي به فأمر بقتلهما ودفع كنانة إلى محمد بن مسلمة فقتله بأخيه محمود بن مسلمة وقيل كنانة قتل محمودا وسبي رسول الله آل أبي الحقيق بما كانوا أعطوا من أنفسهم وصفية بمكانها منهم ولم يسب أحد[1] من أهل خيبر غيرهما فيما نعلم.

APPENDIX 3

Bayhaqī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, 4: 233

وذكر موسى بن عقبة في المغازي هذه القصة بمعنى ما روينا إلا أنه ذكر في قصة الكنز أن النبي سأل كنانة بن الربيع بن أبي الحقيق عن ذلك وسأل مع كنانة حيي بن الربيع بن أبي الحقيق فقالا انفقناه في الحرب ولم يبق منه شيء وحلفا له على ذلك فقال رسول الله برئت منكما ذمة الله وذمة رسوله إن كان عندكما أو قال نحو من هذا القول فقالا نعم فأشهد عليهم ثم أمر الزبير بن العوام أن يعذب كنانة فعذبه حتى جافه [في المطبوع: خافه] فلم يعترف بشيء ولا ندري أعذب حيي أو لا ثم إن رسول الله سأل عن ذلك الكنز غلاما لهما يقال له ثعلبة كان كالضعيف فقال ليس لي علم به غير أنني قد كنت أرى كنانة يطوف كل غداة بهذه الخربة فإن كان في شيء فهو فيها فأرسل رسول الله إلى تلك الخربة فوجدوا فيها ذلك الكنز فأتي به وذكر قصة صافية.

APPENDIX 4

Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 2: 671–73

Zuhrī's text which is quoted from Ibn Shabba, *Ta'rikh al-Madīna*, was added between square brackets. Wāqidī's additions that are taken from other sources are in bold face.

فسأل رسول الله كنانة بن أبي الحقيق عن كنز آل أبي الحقيق وحلي من حليهم كان يكون في مسك الجمل كان لشهرهم يعرف به وكان العرس يكون بمكة فيقدم عليهم فيستعار ذلك الحلي الشهر فيكون فيهم وكان ذلك الحلي يكون عند الأكبر فالأكابر من آل أبي الحقيق [سأل رسول الله كنانة بن الربيع بن أبي الحقيق عن كنز كان من مال أبي الحقيق كان يليه الأكبر فالأكابر منهم فسمي ذلك المال مسك الجمل]

فقال يا أبا القاسم أنفقتاه في حربنا فلم يبق منه شيء وكنا نرفعه لمثل هذا اليوم فلم تبق الحرب واستتصار الرجال من ذلك شيئاً [وسأل مع كنانة حبي بن الربيع بن أبي الحقيق فقال أنفقتاه في الحرب فلم يبق منه شيء] وحلفا على ذلك

فوكدا الأيمان واجتهدا

فقال رسول الله لهما برئت منكما ذمة الله وذمة رسوله إن كان عندكما **قالا نعم ثم قال رسول الله وكل ما أخذت من أموالكما وأصبت من دمانكما فهو جل لي ولا ذمة لكما** قالوا نعم وأشهد عليهما [وحلفا له على ذلك فقال برئت منكما ذمة الله وذمة رسوله إن كان عندكما أو قال نحو هذا من القول قالوا نعم فأشهد عليهما]

رسول الله أبا بكر وعمر وعلياً والزبير رضوان الله عليهم وعشرة من اليهود. فقام رجل من اليهود إلى كنانة بن أبي الحقيق فقال إن كان عندك ما يطلب منك محمد أو تعلم علمه فأعلمه فإنك تأمن على دمك وإلا فوالله ليظهرن عليه قد أطلع على غير ذلك بما لم نعلمه فزبره ابن أبي الحقيق ففتح اليهودي فقعد.

ثم سأل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ثعلبة بن سلام بن أبي الحقيق وكان رجلاً ضعيفاً عن كنزهما فقال: ليس لي علم غير أني قد كنت أرى كنانة كل غداة يطوف بهذه الخربة – قال وأشار إلى خربة – فإن كان شيئاً دفنه فهو فيها.

وكان كنانة بن أبي الحقيق لما ظهر رسول الله على النطاة أيقن بالهلكة وكان أهل النطاة أخذهم [الربيع] فذهب بمسك الجمل فيه حليهم فحفر له في خربة ليلاً ولا يراه أحد ثم سوى عليه التراب بالكتيبة وهي الخربة التي رآه ثعلبة يدور بها كل غداة. فأرسل مع ثعلبة الزبير بن العوام ونفراً من المسلمين إلى تلك الخربة فحفر حيث أراه ثعلبة فاستخرج منه ذلك الكنز ويقال إن الله عزّ وجلّ دلّ رسول الله على ذلك الكنز.

فلما أخرج الكنز أمر رسول الله الزبير أن يعذب كنانة بن أبي الحقيق حتى يستخرج كل ما عنده فعذبه الزبير حتى جافه بزند يقده في صدره ثم أمره رسول الله أن يدفعه إلى محمد بن مسلمة يقتله بأخيه فقتله محمد بن مسلمة وأمر بابن أبي الحقيق الآخر فعذب ثم دُفع إلى ولادة بشر بن البراء فقتل به ويقال ضرب عنقه واستحل رسول الله بذلك أموالهما وسبى ذراريهما.

[ثم أمر الزبير بن العوام أن يعذب كنانة فعذبه حتى أجافه فلم يعترف بشيء فلا أدري أعذب حيي أم لا ثم إن رسول الله سأل عن ذلك الكنز غلاما منهم يقال له ثعلبة وكان كالضعيف فقال ليس لي به علم غير أنني كنت أرى كنانة يطوف كل غداة بهذه الخربة فإن كان شيء فهو فيها. فأرسل رسول الله إلى تلك الخربة فوجدوا فيها ذلك الكنز فأتي به فأمر بقتلهما ودفع كنانة إلى محمد بن مسلمة فقتله بأخيه محمود بن مسلمة وقيل كنانة قتل محمودا وسبى رسول الله آل أبي الحقيق بما كانوا أعطوا من أنفسهم وصفيه بمكانها منهم ولم يسب أحدا من أهل خيبر غيرهما فيما نعلم].

Part 4

MUḤAMMAD IBN IṢḤĀQ AND
THE SĪRA



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MUḤAMMAD IBN ISHĀQ
 ṢĀḤIB AL-SĪRA/ṢĀḤIB
 AL-MAGHĀZĪ

Encyclopaedia of Islam³

Abū ‘Abdallāh or Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Ishāq (d. ca. 151/768) *ṣāḥib al-sīra/ṣāḥib al-maghāzī* (the compiler of the monograph on the Prophet’s biography/battles) compiled the most widespread mediaeval biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, known to us mainly through the abridged and censored version prepared by Ibn Hishām (d. 218/833).

Ibn Ishāq was a *mawlā*, being a descendant of a manumitted slave. His grandfather Yasār was among a group of Jewish boys taken captive in a village called Nuqayra near ‘Ayn al-Tamr (modern Shithātha, some 50 kilometres west of Karbalā’) during the caliphate of Abū Bakr (r. 11/632–13/634). Ibn Ishāq’s paternal uncles Mūsa and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, and his brothers Abū Bakr and ‘Umar (d. 154/771) transmitted hadith. His father-cum-teacher Ishāq provided him with written materials (*kutub*) concerning the *maghāzī* (the Prophet’s battles) and other topics, which Ibn Ishāq transmitted on his father’s authority (*kutub Ibn Ishāq ‘an abīhi fī l-maghāzī wa-ghayrihā*).¹ Ibn Ishāq followed his father’s lax attitude to the

1 [ADD. S.W. Anthony, *Muhammad and the Empires of Faith: The Making of the Prophet of Islam*, Oakland: The University of California Press, 2020, 167, n. 203 wrote: “Lecker has unfortunately misread a passage from al-Dhahabī’s *Siyar* [*a’lām al-nubalā’*] which he takes as mentioning the books of Ibn Ishāq’s father. The passage from al-Dhahabī’s *Siyar* cites the Medinan scholar Ibrāhīm ibn Mundhir, who states: ‘[Ismā’īl ibn Abī Uways] brought me the books of Ibn Ishāq transmitted on the authority of his father on the expeditions [of the Prophet] and other topics, and I excerpted many traditions from them [*akhraja ilayya kutuba Ibn Ishāq ‘an abīhi fī l-maghāzī wa-ghayrihā fa-intakhabtu minhā kathīran*]’”. Pace Lecker, the phrase ‘transmitted on the authority of his father [*‘an abīhi*]’ refers not to Ibn Ishāq’s father but, rather, to the father of Ismā’īl, Abū Uways al-Madanī (d. 169/785–86), who studied Ibn Ishāq’s *Maghāzī* in Medina”.

The passage deals with the dispute between Mālik ibn Anas and Ibn Ishāq and it refers to the *kutub* which Ibn Ishāq transmitted on the authority of his – Ibn Ishāq’s – father. Dhahabī’s text has some lacunae:

قَالَ: وَقَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ الْمُنْذِرِ: حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُ بْنُ عُثْمَانَ أَنَّ الزُّهْرِيَّ كَانَ تَلَقَّفَ الْمَغَارِيَّ مِنْ ابْنِ إِسْحَاقَ فِيمَا يُحَدِّثُهُ عَنْ عَاصِمِ بْنِ عَمْرِ، وَالَّذِي يَنْكَرُ عَنْ مَالِكٍ فِي ابْنِ إِسْحَاقَ لَا يَكَادُ يَنْبَيِّنُ، وَكَانَ إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أَبِي أُوَيْسٍ مِنْ أَتْبَاعِ مَنْ رَأَيْنَا لِمَالِكٍ، أَخْرَجَ إِلَيَّ كُتُبَ ابْنِ إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ فِي الْمَغَارِي وَغَيْرِهَا، فَانْتَخَبْتُ مِنْهَا كَثِيرًا.

mention of his immediate informants – this was common practice in his father’s generation and remained common practice in certain types of Islamic literature, including historiography. Instead of the informant’s name we find “men from Banū so-and-so”, sometimes followed by the name of a specific earlier informant (e.g. *qāla/‘an Ibn Ishāq/Muḥammad ibn Ishāq: wa-ḥaddathanī abī/wālidī Ishāq ibn Yasār; ‘an rijāl min banī Māzin ibn al-Najjār/‘an ba’ḍ banī Māzin, ‘an Abī Dāwud al-Māzinī*).

In other cases there is no mention of an earlier informant (e.g. *wa-‘an Ibn Ishāq qāla ḥaddathanī wālidī Ishāq ibn Yasār ‘an rijāl min banī Salima; and ḥaddathanā Ibn Ishāq qāla ḥaddathanī wālidī Ishāq ibn Yasār ‘an rijāl min banī Sa’d ibn Bakr*). Another important teacher of Ibn Ishāq, ‘Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr (d. 130/748 or 135/753), quotes an unspecified informant, who in turn names his informant (*qāla Ibn Ishāq: wa-ḥaddathanī ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakr ‘an ba’ḍ banī Sā’ida ‘an Abī Usayd Mālik ibn Rabī’a*).

In addition to his father, two of Ibn Ishāq’s many teachers and informants merit special mention for their role in the history of Islamic literature, namely Abān ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (d. between 101/720 and 105/724; he was the son of the third rightly-guided caliph) and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742). The *Muwaffaqiyyāt* (by al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār, d. 256/870) has a fictitious anecdote from an Anṣārī source censuring the Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (r. 65/685–86/705) for his alleged disregard of Muḥammad’s biography, motivated by narrow political concerns. The other protagonist of the anecdote, which is placed in 82/701, is the 28-year-old heir apparent, Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik. Sulaymān asked Abān to write down for him the *siyar* and *maghāzī* of the Prophet Muḥammad, only to find out – so the anecdote goes – that Abān had a collated copy of a *siyar* and *maghāzī* book which he had received from a trustworthy source (*hiya ‘indī qad akhadhtuhā muṣaḥḥaha mimman athiqu bihi*). That the book existed seems credible: it provides the backdrop for the fictitious anecdote, and it is there to lend it credibility. Abān’s book, regardless of its content, form and readership, must have had an impact on his pupil’s work.

A fuller text can be found in al-Zayla‘ī, *Naṣb al-rāya li-aḥādīth al-hidāya*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Awwāma, 4: 416 (available at <https://ia601200.us.archive.org/31/items/FPnrahnrh/nrah4.pdf>; accessed 22.2.23):

وَقَالَ لِي إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ الْمُنْذِرِ: حَدَّثَنَا عَمْرُ بْنُ عُثْمَانَ أَنَّ الرَّهْرِيَّ كَانَ يَتَلَقَّفُ الْمَغَارِيَّ مِنْ ابْنِ إِسْحَاقَ، فِيمَا يُحَدِّثُهُ عَنْ عَاصِمِ بْنِ عَمْرِ بْنِ قَتَادَةَ، وَالَّذِي يُذَكِّرُ عَنْ مَالِكٍ فِي ابْنِ إِسْحَاقَ لَا يَكَادُ يَنْتَبِهُنَّ، وَكَانَ إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ أَبِي أُوَيْسٍ يَقُولُ: أَخْرَجَ إِلَيَّ مَالِكٌ كُتُبَ ابْنِ إِسْحَاقَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ فِي الْمَغَارِيِّ، وَغَيْرِهَا. فَانْتَخَبْتُ مِنْهَا كَثِيرًا.

Ismā‘īl ibn Abī Uways was not only a loyal follower of Mālik as is reported here but also Mālik’s nephew (his sister’s son), and hence one whose testimony regarding Mālik was beyond suspicion. He reported that Mālik offered him (“took out” for him) Ibn Ishāq’s *kutub* which he (Ibn Ishāq) transmitted on the authority of his (Ibn Ishāq’s) father, and he (Ismā‘īl) quoted (“chose”) from them (from the *kutub*) many materials. The context is Mālik’s well-known bad opinion of Ibn Ishāq. In reality, Mālik kept at home Ibn Ishāq’s *kutub* . . .

I hasten to add that my statement is open to criticism on another front. One could argue that it is far from certain that Ibn Ishāq’s father transmitted to his famous son written records. In any case, this is a possible interpretation of the text, one which I am inclined to adopt.]

Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī and Ibn Ishāq had mutual respect for each other, despite the age difference and the huge gap in social status. Yet another fictitious anecdote has it that Zuhrī complained to Ibn Ishāq about the latter's tardiness (*fa- 'stabṭa'ahu*). Ibn Ishāq replied: "Can anyone reach you with that doorkeeper of yours?" Zuhrī instructed the doorkeeper to let the young man in without delay. The existence of the doorkeeper as a character in this anecdote is trustworthy. Zuhrī's literary contribution to the field of *maghāzī* is of special interest for us here. According to al-Darāwardī (d. 187/803), who both taught Ibn Ishāq and learned from him, Zuhrī's *sīra* was the first to be compiled in Islam (*awwal sīra ullifāt fī l-islām*). Suhaylī (in *al-Rawḍ al-unuf*) quotes Zuhrī's *siyar* (pl. of *sīra*) with regard to Muḥammad's marriage to Khadīja (*dhakara l-Zuhrī fī siyarihi*). Several sources quote from, or refer to, *Kitāb al-Zuhrī*. There is of course more than one way to interpret this phrase; but when the quotations and references are linked to Muḥammad and his time, they may well relate to Zuhrī's *siyar* book quoted by Suhaylī. There are several attestations of it in the literature. For example, a compiler of a dictionary dedicated to Muḥammad's Companions (Abū l-Qāsim al-Baghawī, d. 317/929) rejects the alleged participation of a certain slave in the battle of Badr, citing *Kitāb al-Zuhrī* and *Kitāb Ibn Ishāq*, both of which do not include the slave in the list of Badrīs (*wa-laysa lahu dhikr fīman shahida Badran fī kitāb al-Zuhrī wa-lā fī kitāb Ibn Ishāq*). Another compiler of a Companion dictionary (Abū Nu'aym al-Iṣfahānī, d. 430/1039) rejects the claim that a certain Anṣārī participated at the 'Aqaba meeting and in the battle of Badr, on the grounds that he is not listed among the 'Aqabīs and Badrīs in *Kitāb al-Zuhrī* and in Ibn Ishāq[']s book] (*wa-lam ara lahu dhikran fī kitāb al-Zuhrī wa-lā Ibn Ishāq fī l-'Aqaba wa-Badr*). These quotations indicate that Zuhrī's book included lists of 'Aqabīs and Badrīs. Such lists were among the most sensitive social and political topics in Muḥammad's biography – those mentioned in them had a secure place in history. *Kitāb al-Zuhrī* also included the beginning of revelation (*wa-fī kitāb al-Zuhrī anna rasūl allāh lammā atāhu l-waḥy*), and it probably did not end with the Prophet's death but continued into the *ridda* wars (*wa-fī kitāb al-Zuhrī: thumma laḥiqū aṣḥāb Ṭulayḥa*). Whatever its content, form and readership, Zuhrī's book must have had an impact on Ibn Ishāq's work.

Ibn Ishāq travelled to Alexandria in 115/733, where he taught and learned for several years. He returned to Medina, and sometime after the Abbasid revolution (132/750) joined the caliph Maṣṣūr in Hāshimiyya (also called Hāshimiyyat al-Kūfa), between Kūfa and Ḥīra, where Maṣṣūr's citadel (*madīna*, including *qaṣr al-imāra*) was located. This took place after Maṣṣūr's accession (136/754). Sometime later, but not before 142/759, he was sent to 'Abbās ibn Muḥammad, Maṣṣūr's brother who was his governor in the Jazīra and the Thughūr (the Byzantine frontier province) between 142/759–155/772.) One assumes that the intellectual who was in his late fifties or his sixties was not sent there as a warrior; in the war zone of Thughūr he could best contribute to the war effort as a "morale officer", and his *maghāzī* could be a source of inspiration for both command and

troops. Subsequently Ibn Ishāq became the tutor of the heir apparent Mahdī in Rayy. He spent his last years in Baghdad.

In an account which is panegyric rather than history Mas‘ūdī (d. 345/956) implies – in somewhat vague terms – that the caliph Manṣūr (r. 136/754–158/775) was associated with the creation of Ibn Ishāq’s biography of Muḥammad: “In his time Muḥammad ibn Ishāq composed (*wada‘a*) *Kitāb al-maghāzī wa-l-siyar wa-akhbār al-mubtada’*”; before that they had not been collected, known or arranged systematically” (*wa-lam takun qabla dhālika majmū‘a wa-lā ma rūfa wa-lā muṣannafa*). It is not clear what the caliph’s book included. However, Ibn Ishāq’s *maghāzī* had existed in book form well before his departure from his hometown Medina. This fact is at the background of a boastful statement made by his disciple Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d (d. 184/800), whose recension of Ibn Ishāq’s book came into being in Medina: “Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ‘undid’ the *maghāzī* three times, and I observed and witnessed all of this” (*naqaḍa Muḥammad ibn Ishāq l-maghāziya thalāth marrāt, kullu dhālika ashhaduhu wa-aḥḍuruhu*). Ibrāhīm was actually claiming that his recension was most accurate, since he had had several opportunities to correct it, weed out its errors and bring it as close as possible to Ibn Ishāq’s original.

Bibliography

Regarding the quotations from the primary sources the reader is referred to *al-Maktaba al-shāmila* (<http://shamela.ws>); *EP*², s.v. Ibn Ishāq (J.M.B. Jones); *EP*³, s.v. Biography of the Prophet (W. Raven); R. Sellheim, “Prophet, Chalif und Geschichte. Die Muhammed-Biographie des Ibn Ishāq”, *Oriens* 18/19 (1965/1966), 33–91; J. Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and Their Authors*, ed. L.I. Conrad, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002; Gregor Schoeler, *The Biography of Muḥammad: Nature and Authenticity*, New York and London: Routledge, 2011.

MUḤAMMAD B. ISḤĀQ ṢĀḤĪB
AL-MAGHĀZĪ

Was his grandfather Jewish?¹

A. Rippin and R. Tottoli (eds.), *Books and Written Culture of Islamic World. Studies Presented to Claude Gilliot on the Occasion of His 75th Birthday*, Leiden: Brill, 2015, 26–38

The synagogue at Nuqayra

It is widely assumed that Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq (d. ca. 151/768), the famous compiler of the first extant biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, was of Christian descent. J. Horovitz, for example, wrote:

His grandfather Yasār, probably a Christian Arab, was, at the taking of ‘Ayn al-Tamr in Iraq in the year AH 12, sent with other prisoners to Medina and became a slave in the possession of the family of Qays ibn Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib, by whom he was set free after his conversion to Islam.²

Indeed, according to Sayf ibn ‘Umar as quoted by Ṭabarī in his *History*, Khālīd ibn al-Walīd found 40 boys (*ghulām*) in their *bī‘a* or church (i.e. at ‘Ayn al-Tamr) where they were studying the *injīl* or the Gospel. They were behind a locked door which Khālīd broke down in order to release them (*‘alayhim bāb mughlaq fa-kasarahu ‘anhum*). The boys told Khālīd that they were hostages

1 The outline of the argument has been presented in a colloquium held at The Hebrew University on 27 March 2012.

2 J. Horovitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and Their Authors*, L.I. Conrad (ed.), Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002, 76. J. Fück, *Muḥammad ibn Ishaq*, Frankfurt a.M., 1925, 27, n. 2 mentions both versions regarding the place in which Yasār was taken captive, namely a church and a synagogue. J. M. B. Jones (*EP*, s.v. Ibn Isḥāq) does not refer to the grandfather’s religion. This is also the case with R. Sellheim, “Prophet, Chalif und Geschichte. Die Muhammed-Biographie des Ibn Ishaq”, *Oriens*, 18–19 (1967), 33–91, at 34, and A. Guillaume in his introduction to the English translation of the *sīra*: *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq’s Sirat Rasūl Allāh*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955, reprint Lahore and Karachi, 1974, xiii.

(*ruhun*) and were divided among the finest Muslim warriors (*ahl al-balāʿ*). Several names of captives were preserved – naturally the most prominent ones or those whose descendants became prominent stood a better chance of being remembered. Among those listed by Sayf we find, for example, Ḥumrān ibn Abān and Sīrīn (on both see more later). Yasār is not on this specific list which concludes with Ibn Ukht al-Namir.³ But a partial parallel text found in Ibn al-Jawzī’s *Muntaẓam* has, after Ibn Ukht al-Namir: Yasār, the *mawlā* or manumitted slave of Qays ibn Makhrama.⁴ Ibn al-Jawzī’s account on ‘Ayn al-Tamr is a summary of Ṭabarī’s account, and it is unlikely that the former added Yasār’s name. The name belongs in Sayf’s original account and for some reason was omitted by Ṭabarī or by a copyist.⁵

The mention of the Gospel indicates that the *bīʿa* was a church and not a synagogue. Indeed, the expression *bīʿat al-naṣārā* is more common in the sources than the expression *bīʿat al-yahūd*. However, in what follows it will become clear that the boys were taken captive in a synagogue and that they were circumcised. In other words, they were Jews.

Yasār also appears in al-Balādhurī’s account about the boys captured in a *kanīsa* at ‘Ayn al-Tamr (*wa-wajada fī kanīsa hunāka jamāʿa sabāhum*). Like the word *bīʿa*, *kanīsa* can mean either a church or a synagogue,⁶ and al-Balādhurī does not mention the Gospel. Al-Balādhurī lists, among others, Ḥumrān, Sīrīn and Yasār, the grandfather of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq *ṣāhib al-sīra* (the compiler of the *sīra*) who was the *mawlā* or manumitted slave of Qays ibn Makhrama. Al-Balādhurī also has another account with an alternative location of the *kanīsa*: according to some, Khālīd made an agreement with the people of the ‘Ayn al-Tamr castle (in other words, it was not taken by force) and the captives were found in a *kanīsa* somewhere in the district (*bi-baʿd al-tassūj*).⁷

3 Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 1: 2064. According to Conrad, Sayf omitted Yasār’s name from the list of captives “out of a disinclination to acknowledge the eminence of his predecessor from Medina”; L.I. Conrad, “The *mawālī* and early Arabic historiography”, in M. Bernards and J. Nawas (eds.), *Patronage and Patronage in Early and Classical Islam*, Leiden: Brill, 2005, 370–425, at 370–1. (Reference by Joseph Witzum.) Conrad (ibid., 370, n. 1) says that the boys locked themselves in, but it appears that they were held as prisoners. H. R. Idris, “Réflexions sur ibn ishāq”, *SI* 17 (1962), 23–35, at 23 assumed that Ibn Ishāq’s grandfather was either a Persian or of Iranian origin.

4 Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī taʾrīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam*, ed. M. ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Atā and M. ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1412/1992, 4: 107.

5 The number forty is of course typological. Two instances will suffice: Pharaoh sent 40 boys (*ghulām*) from the Children of Israel to Faramā to be instructed in witchcraft (*sihr*); Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr fī l-tafsīr bi-l-maʾthūr*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1414/1993, 5: 587 (printed: *bi-l-ʿawmā*). Before the battle of Buʾāth the Khazraj received from the Jews 40 boys (*ghulām*) as hostages; Samhūdī, *Wafāʿ*, 1: 384.

6 *El*², s.v. *Kanīsa* (G. Troupeau).

7 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 247, 248. The district in question is the *tassūj* of ‘Ayn al-Tamr which was part of *Istān al-Bihqubādh al-Aʿlā*; Ibn Khurrādādhbih, *Kitāb al-masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1889, 8; M.G. Morony, “Continuity and change in the administrative geography of late Sasanian and early Islamic al-ʿIrāq”, *Journal of Persian Studies* 20 (1982), 1–49, at 25–7.

The statement that Yasār was among the boys taken captive at ‘Ayn al-Tamr was transmitted by his famous grandson, Muḥammad ibn Ishāq. His account, as quoted by al-Ṭabarī, mentions neither church nor hostages. The many captives taken at ‘Ayn al-Tamr and sent to the caliph Abū Bakr included the children of the warriors whom Khusro had stationed there. One of the captives was Muḥammad ibn Ishāq’s grandfather Yasār. (Ibn Ishāq speaks of himself in the third person.) But the wording, which is somewhat obscure, does not suggest that Yasār was a warrior’s son: “He took from ‘Ayn al-Tamr and from the children of the warriors stationed there many captives and sent them to Abū Bakr. Among those captives were” (*wa-sabā min ‘Ayn al-Tamr wa-min abnā’ tilka l-murābiṭa sabāyā kathīra fa-ba ‘atha bihā ilā Abī Bakr, fa-kāna min tilka l-sabāyā*). While we have here neither *kanīsa* nor hostages, nothing in this account contradicts the claim that Yasār belonged to a special category of young captives.

In his *History of Damascus* Ibn ‘Asākir adduces two consecutive accounts going back to Ibn Ishāq through Abū Ḥudhayfa Ishāq ibn Bishr (d. 206/821).⁸ Yasār only appears in the first account which runs along the lines of one of Ṭabarī’s two accounts. However, Ibn ‘Asākir does not refer to sons of warriors (Ṭabarī: *abnā’ tilka l-murābiṭa*; Ibn ‘Asākir: *wa-sabā min ‘Ayn al-Tamr basharan kathīran fa-ba ‘atha bihim ilā Abī Bakr*). Ibn ‘Asākir’s second account adds a few more names, not including our Yasār (while including another Yasār, the *mawlā* of Ubayy ibn Ka’b and the father of al-Ḥasan ibn Abī l-Ḥasan al-Baṣṭī).⁹ More importantly, the latter account identifies the synagogue’s location:

Among them (*kāna fihim*) were [three names]. . . . They [i.e. the Muslim warriors] found in the synagogue (*kanīsat al-yahūd*) boys (*ṣibyān*) instructed in literacy, namely in one of the villages of ‘Ayn al-Tamr called Nuqayra. Among them was Ḥumrān ibn Abān the *mawlā* of ‘Uthmān.¹⁰

Kanīsat al-yahūd at Nuqayra corresponds to the *kanīsa* “somewhere in the district” (*bi-ba ‘d al-ṭassūj*) mentioned by Balādhurī. Sayf ibn ‘Umar’s *bī‘a* in which the Gospel was studied is incongruous with the mention of the synagogue and the evidence that the boys were circumcised (see later mention). The only name linked to the Nuqayra synagogue appears to be Ḥumrān. One assumes that he was

8 The compiler of *Mubtada’ al-dunyā wa-qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā’*, *GAS*, 1: 294. The MS of this book is quoted in M.J. Kister, “‘And he was born circumcised . . .’: Some notes on circumcision in *ḥadīth*”, *Oriens* 34 (1994), 10–30, at 10, 11, 21. Available at www.kister.huji.ac.il.

9 His original name was Pērōz; *EP*, s.v. al-Ḥasan al-Baṣṭī (G. Ritter). One assumes that the name Yasār – in early Islam it was a typical name of a slave – was given to the different Yasārs upon their enslavement. Cf. M. J. Kister, “Call yourselves by graceful names”, in *Lectures in Memory of Professor Martin M. Plessner*, Jerusalem: The Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1975, reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* II, no. XII, 19.

10 *Wa-wajadū fī kanīsat al-yahūd ṣibyānan yata’allamūna l-kitāba fī qarya min qurā’ ‘Ayn al-Tamr yuqālu lahā Nuqayra TMD*, 2: 87–8. Yāqūt has *kanīsa* instead of *kanīsat al-yahūd*; Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-buldān*, s.v. Nuqayra. (In the entry itself the place is called al-Nuqayra.)

singled out because he became an eminent political figure, while the other captives only became famous through their offspring.

Yet another account of Ibn Ishāq that goes back to Ṣāliḥ ibn Kaysān (d. after 140/757)¹¹ mentions some of those taken captive at ‘Ayn al-Tamr, including Ḥumrān, Sīrīn and Yasār.¹²

The following account that appears in the entry on Ḥumrān in the *History of Damascus* goes back to Ibn Abī Khaythama ← Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī. Although Yasār is not mentioned, it is relevant for us because it confirms that Ḥumrān was a Jew and that the *kanīsa* was a synagogue:

Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn [or rather his father] is from ‘Ayn al-Tamr, [more precisely, he is] of those taken captive by Khālīd ibn al-Walīd. Khālīd ibn al-Walīd found in it forty circumcised (*m.kh.t.nīna*) boys. He disapproved of them (or: he did not recognize them, *fa-ankarahum*), but they said: We used to belong to a kingdom (? *innā kunnā ahl mamlaka*). He divided them among the people. Sīrīn was one of them. Anas [b. Mālīk who was his owner] drafted with him a manumission contract (*kātabahu*) following which he was manumitted. Also Ḥumrān ibn Abān was one of them. He used to be called Ibn Abbā, but his sons said: Ibn Abān.¹³

The obscure phrase *ahl mamlaka* seems to relate to the hostages (*ruhun*) mentioned earlier. *Mamlakat Fāris* or the Persian Empire is meant here.¹⁴

Instead of *m.kh.t.nīna* or circumcised, read: *mukhtatinīna* in the eighth form (a haplology of one of the *tā*’s occurred).¹⁵ Some versions of this account have

11 Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 13: 79–84.

12 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 6: 707–8, s.v. Yasār al-Muṭṭalibī. In *TMD*, 9: 178–9 read instead of Abī Ishāq: Ibn Ishāq.

13 *TMD*, 15: 175. See also Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 7: 303 where the crucial word is vocalized *mukhattanīna*.

14 When Khusro II Parvez came to power, he made Iyās ibn Qabīṣa al-Ṭā’ī king of Ḥīra and granted him (*aṭ’ amahu*) ‘Ayn al-Tamr and 80 villages on the fringes of the Sawād, including Aqsās Mālīk; Abū l-Baqā’ Hibat Allāh al-Ḥillī, *al-Manāqib al-mazyadiyya*, ed. Ṣāliḥ Mūsā Darādika and Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir Khrīsāt, Amman: Maktabat al-Risāla al-Ḥadītha, 1404/1984, 2: 502 (in a verse Iyās is referred to as *rabb al-‘Ayn* or the Lord of ‘Ayn al-Tamr); M.J. Kister, “al-Ḥīra: Some notes on its relations with Arabia”, *Arabica* 15 (1968), 143–69, reprinted in Kister, *Variorum I*, no. III, 152. Elsewhere he is said to have been Khusro’s governor at ‘Ayn al-Tamr and its environs whose authority extended to Ḥīra; Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aḡḡānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 24: 60. The wording (*wa-kāna ‘āmilahu ‘alā ‘Ayn al-Tamr wa-mā wālāhā ilā l-Ḥīra*) seems to suggest that his authority did not include Ḥīra itself. Iyās had a brother at ‘Ayn al-Tamr; *ibid.*, 75. He is also said to have died there; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma‘ārif*, 650. As to the number 80, it may be typological: Qays ibn Mas‘ūd received from Khusro al-Ubulla and eighty of its villages; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Muḥabbar*, 253. In administrative terms ‘Ayn al-Tamr and al-Ubulla were both centres of districts and seats of governors.

15 The correct reading is found in Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1968–72, 4: 181, who says about Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn’s father that Khālīd ibn al-Walīd took him captive *fi arba’īna ghulāman mukhtatinīna*. Variants: *m.kh.th.y.n.* and *m.ḥ.n.th.y.n.*

*mukhtaḫfīna*¹⁶ or hiding away. But this variant – which is absolutely fitting in the context of war – should be rejected as *lectio faciliior*. There is no mention in this case of a *kanīsa/bī'a* or of study of any kind.¹⁷

There is yet another source that specifically mentions a synagogue. According to Ya'qūbī, after the battle of 'Ayn al-Tamr Khālid defeated a troop of the Taghlib tribe and sent many captives from among them to Medina. Then he sent troops to the synagogue (*kanīsat al-yahūd*) and took captive 20 boys (*ghulām*). He proceeded to Anbār and crossed the desert to Syria.¹⁸

Surprisingly, one account speaks of Arab hostages:

In the *kanīsa* of 'Ayn al-Tamr Khālid ibn al-Walīd found the Arab boys (*al-ghilma mina l-'arab*) who were Khusro's hostages (*ruhun fī yad kīsrā*). They [i.e. their descendants] are dispersed in Syria and Iraq. Among them were the grandfather (*jadd*) of the learned genealogist al-Kalbī, the grandfather of the grammarian Ibn Abī Ishāq al-Ḥaḍramī and the grandfather of *ṣāhib al-maghāzī* (the compiler of the *maghāzī*)¹⁹ Muḥammad ibn Ishāq. Also among the captives of 'Ayn al-Tamr were [the fathers of] al-Ḥasan ibn Abī l-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn, the *mawlās* of Jamīla bint Abī Quṭba al-Anṣāriyya.²⁰

The kings of Ḥīra did take young hostages (*rahā'in*) from among the Bedouin tribes to secure their obedience and good conduct.²¹ But we are only concerned here with

[ADD. The correction seems to be unnecessary since there is evidence of the second form *mukhattanīn*. See e.g. Ibn Maẓmūn Muḥammad ibn al-Mubārak, *Muntahā l-ḥalab min ash'ār al-'arab*, ed. Muḥammad Nabīl Ṭurayfī, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1999, 5: 304: . . . *ghayr mukhattanāt*) *i*; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Nihāya fī l-ḥitan wa-l-malāḥim*, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad 'Abd al-'Azīz, Cairo: Dār al-Turāth al-Islāmī, n.d. 1: 288: *yaqūmu l-nās min qubūrihim ḥuḫūṭ 'urāt ghurlan ay ghayr m.kh.t.nīn.*]

16 E.g. al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rīkh Baghdād*, ed. B.'A. Ma'rūf, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1422/2001, 3: 284.

17 Perhaps because Sīrīn was an artisan, more precisely a maker of copper cooking pots who came from his hometown Jarjarāyā to 'Ayn al-Tamr to practise his craft; *ibid*. However, it is not at all certain that he was taken captive at 'Ayn al-Tamr. According to some, he belonged to the captives of the Maysān region; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 4: 181.

18 Ya'qūbī, *Ta'rīkh*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1379/1960, 2: 133.

19 A. Elad, "The beginnings of historical writing by the Arabs: The earliest Syrian writers on the Arab conquests", *JSAI* 28 (2003), 65–152, at 107.

20 Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā ista'jam*, ed. M. al-Saqqā, Cairo: Lajnat al-Ta'līf wa-l-Tarjama wa-l-Nashr, 1364/1945–1371/1951, reprint Beirut, n. d., 1: 319, s.v. ('Ayn) al-Tamr. Jamīla who was Anas ibn Mālik's wife belonged to the Sawād, a subdivision of the Salima (Khazraj); Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 360.

21 Kister, "al-Ḥīra", 166–7; Abū l-Baqā', *al-Manāqib al-mazyadiyya*, 1: 107. Ibn al-Kalbī compiled a monograph (now lost) about Khusro's Arab hostages; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1993, 6: 2780: *Kitāb akhdh kīsrā rahn al-'arab*. A passage that may well have belonged to it concerns the poet Laqīṭ ibn Ma'bad (or ibn Ma'mar) al-Iyādī who was Khusro's hostage (*kāna fī rahn kīsrā*) and wrote to his tribe to warn them of an imminent attack; Ibn

Yasār, whose non-Arab origin is beyond doubt. His grandson Ibn Ishāq is said to have been a Persian *mawla*,²² and his foreign roots are probably behind his incompetence with regard to poetry.²³ Ḥumrān claimed Arab descent (see later). Had he been an Arab, there would have been no need to make false claims regarding his genealogy.

Ḥumrān ibn Abān, formerly known as Ṭuwayd ibn Abbā

Further details concerning Ḥumrān's Jewish origin belong here. Al-Musayyab ibn Najba al-Fazārī who took him captive at 'Ayn al-Tamr found that he was circumcised – he was in fact a Jew called Ṭuwayd. He was bought for 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān who manumitted him and made him his secretary.²⁴

Ḥumrān, who died in the seventies of the first Islamic century, was reportedly born “at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad”.²⁵ Assuming that the expression “at the time of the Prophet Muḥammad” refers to the post-hijra period, we can deduce that when he was captured at the beginning of Abū Bakr's caliphate, he was under 12 years old. (This may be more or less true of the other boys captured with him.)

As has already been mentioned, Ḥumrān's father had an Aramaic name, Abbā, but Ḥumrān's sons claimed that their grandfather had an Arab name, Abān.²⁶ They also claimed descent from the Namir ibn Qāsiṭ tribe.²⁷ Ḥumrān himself is

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- al-Kalbī, *Nasab Ma'add wa-l-yaman al-kabīr*, ed. Nājī Hasan, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-'Arabiyya, 1408/1988, 1: 126–7. Cf. Ibn Qutayba, *al-Shi'r wa-l-shu'arā'*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1386/1966, 1: 199–201 (Laqīṭ ibn Ma'mar).
- 22 Fasawī, *al-Ma'rifa wa-l-ta'rīkh*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umarī, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981, 2: 742.
- 23 For a biting criticism of his uncritical treatment of poetry in the *sīra* see Jumāhī, *Ṭabaqāt fuḥūl al-shu'arā'*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākir, Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Madānī, 1394/1974, 1: 7–8. His Arabic skills may well have been wanting too. *TMD*, 24: 243 quotes 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Bashīr al-Shaybānī's statement that he corrected the grammar of Ibn Ishāq's “books” (*anā aslaḥtu i'rāb kutub Muḥammad ibn Ishāq*). This Damascene scholar transmitted the *maghāzī* on the authority of Ibn Ishāq; Ibn Ḥibbān, *al-Thiqāt*, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1403/1983, reprint Beirut, 1415/1995, 8: 373. The “books” in question were the copies he prepared for himself during his sessions with Ibn Ishāq. 'Abd al-Raḥmān was described as *ṣāhib al-maghāzī 'an ibn Ishāq*, i.e. he owned a recension of Ibn Ishāq's *maghāzī*.
- 24 Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, 435–6. Considering his non-Arab descent one is surprised to find that his grandfather's name was 'Abd 'Amr. But this typically Arab name appears to have been part of the claim of Arab descent. M. Gil, *Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages*, trans. D. Strassler, Leiden: Brill, 2004, 294, no. 175 says about Ḥumrān that he “was one of the four [?] boys forcefully held by the Christians in the church at 'Ayn Tamr in order to teach them Christianity”. Incidentally, the *Lisān al-'Arab*, s.v. *t.w.d.*, records the name Ṭawd (“mountain”) and its diminutive form Ṭuwayd (“small mountain”) as Arab names. One wonders if al-Musayyab actually captured Ḥumrān or – what seems more likely – received him when the boys were divided among the finest warriors; see an entry on al-Musayyab, who fought on 'Alī's side in his wars, in Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 6: 216.
- 25 Sakhāwī, *al-Tuḥfa al-laṭīfa fī ta'rīkh al-madīna al-sharīfa*, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1414/1993, 1: 305.
- 26 *TMD*, 15: 175: *wa-innamā kāna ibn Abbā fa-qāla banūhu ibn Abān*.
- 27 Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 7: 303: *wa-'dda 'ā waladuhu fī l-Namir ibn Qāsiṭ*. It was one of the Rabī'a tribes; *EP*, s.v. al-Namir b. Qāsiṭ (M. Lecker). In Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 247 he is called Ḥumrān ibn Abān ibn Khālid al-Namarī (printed: al-Tamrī); in Jāhiz, *Kitāb al-burṣān wa-'urjān*

supposed to have made the same claim. The Umayyad governor in Iraq, Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf, threatened that if Ḥumrān claimed to be of Arab descent and did not reveal that his father's name was Abbā, he would cut his head off.²⁸ Obviously, Ḥumrān was still an influential political figure when these threats were made.²⁹

Yet another anecdote – regardless of whether or not it is historical – is based on Ḥumrān's Jewish origin. A leading political figure is said to have addressed him with the following words: “You son of a Jewess, you are nothing but a Persian/foreign farmer (*‘ilj nabaṭī*) taken captive at ‘Ayn al-Tamr, and your father's name was Abbā”.³⁰

The great-grandfather Khiyār/Kūthān

According to some, Ibn Ishāq's great-grandfather who is often referred to as Khiyār was called Kūthān (or Kūtān).³¹ Kūthān is not an Arab name, and indeed if Yasār was a first-generation Muslim, one would expect a foreign name rather than an Arab one. Perhaps the foreign name Kūthān was replaced by his descendants with the Arab name Khiyār.

There is yet another difficulty regarding the great-grandfather. Two prominent authorities on genealogy, Haytham ibn ‘Adī and Madā’ inī, report that Khiyār was Qays ibn Makhrama's slave.³² But elsewhere Madā’ inī is quoted as saying that Yasār (and not his father Khiyār), a slave of Qays ibn Makhrama, was among the 40 (boys) taken captive by Khālīd ibn al-Walīd at ‘Ayn al-Tamr when its inhabitants capitulated without condition (*nazalū ‘alā ḥukmihi*).³³ That Madā’ inī did not reject the ‘Ayn

wa-l-‘umyān wa-l-ḥulān, ed. ‘Abd al-Salām Hārūn, Baghdad: Dār al-Rashīd, 1982, 553, instead of al-N.m.y.rī, read: al-Namarī.

- 28 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 7/i, ed. R. Baalbaki, Beirut, 1417/1997, 293 (printed erroneously Ubayy). Ḥajjāj's threats notwithstanding, Ḥumrān married an Arab woman from the Sa’d (a subdivision of the Tamīm) and his children had Arab wives: *wa-tazawwaja wulduhu fi l-‘arab*; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma‘ārif*, 436.
- 29 Ḥumrān's biography demonstrates that the road to fame and wealth was open for captives of war who embraced Islam, regardless of their origin. The young boy's mother tongue was probably Aramaic, but the border areas of Iraq were inhabited by Arabs and frequented by Arab traders, and he may have acquired some knowledge of Arabic even before his capture. ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb used to call ‘Ayn al-Tamr, probably with reference to its Arab inhabitants, *qaryat al-‘Arab* or the town of the Arabs; Fasawī, *al-Ma‘rifat wa-l-ta‘rīkh*, 3: 298 (the events of 14 A.H.).
- 30 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 4/i, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās, Stuttgart, 1400/1979, 470 (printed ‘.m.y.). The speaker is Muṣ‘ab ibn al-Zubayr. *Naqā‘id Jarīr wa-l-Farazdaq*, ed. A.A. Bevan, Leiden: Brill, 1905–12, reprint Beirut, n. d., 2: 751 has *yā ibn al-fā‘ila* instead of *yā ibn al-yahūdīyya*.
- 31 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 24: 405–6; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādādī, *Ta‘rīkh Baghdād*, 2: 9.
- 32 Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Y. al-Yamānī, Hyderabad, 1381/1962–1386/1967, 2: 43: *wa-kāna Khiyār li-Qays ibn Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn ‘Abd Manāf. qālahu l-Haytham ibn ‘Adī wa-l-Madā’ inī*.
- 33 Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt, *Ta‘rīkh*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Damascus: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa wa-l-Siyāha wa-l-Irshād al-Qawmī, 1968, 1: 102, quoting Abū ‘Ubayda and ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad (al-Madā’ inī).

al-Tamr story is also shown by an account regarding Ḥumrān.³⁴ It appears that confusion occurred between the names Yasār and Khiyār which in the Arabic script are rather similar, especially when they are stripped of their diacritical points.

Finally, the *Tāj al-‘arūs* dictionary has it that the Prophet Muḥammad stroked the head of our Yasār³⁵ (as a blessing). But the *Tāj al-‘arūs* that lists many persons called Yasār confuses between our Yasār and Yasār ibn Uzayhir al-Juhanī who claimed that Muḥammad had stroked his head.³⁶ Ibn Ḥajar does have an entry on our Yasār in his Companion dictionary, but it is in the third category (*al-qism al-thālith*) of alleged Companions. This category is dedicated to those who are not entitled to Companion status, namely those who lived at the time of Muḥammad but there is no evidence that they met or saw him. Regarding those included in this category there is unanimity, Ibn Ḥajar says, that they were not Muḥammad’s Companions.³⁷

Another Yasār from ‘Ayn al-Tamr appears in Qur’ān commentaries in connection with the accusation of Muḥammad’s Meccan detractors that he received his knowledge from human beings (*yu‘allimuhu bashar*, “a certain mortal is teaching him”, Qur’ān 16, 103).³⁸ Yasār and Jabr (variant: Khayr), two Christian slaves from ‘Ayn al-Tamr, were employed as sword sharpeners in Mecca. They were reading a book belonging to them – according to some, the Torah and the Psalms; according to others, the Torah alone. Muḥammad used to listen to their reading, and the pagans said that he learned from them.³⁹ But this Yasār is irrelevant for us here since he was in Mecca before the hijra.

The *walā’* link with Qays ibn Makhrama and the Jewish connection

Ishāq ibn Yasār was the *mawlā* of Qays ibn Makhrama⁴⁰ or of his son Muḥammad ibn Qays⁴¹ who inherited the *walā’*. In other words, Yasār was Qays’s *mawlā*, while Yasār’s son Ishāq was the *mawlā* of Qays’s son Muḥammad. But usually the *walā’* link is said to have belonged to Qays. Ishāq’s brother, Mūsā ibn Yasār, was Qays’s *mawlā*.⁴² Also Ibn Ishāq himself, who lived two generations after the formation of

34 According to Madā’inī and others, Ḥumrān who was from the captives of ‘Ayn al-Tamr claimed descent from the Namir ibn Qāsiṭ tribe and was consequently threatened by Ḥajjāj; Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, 7/i, 293.

35 Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘arūs*, ed. ‘A. Shīrī, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1414/1994, 7: 637, s.v. *y.s.r.*: *wa-Yasār jadd Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ṣāhib al-sīra masaḥa l-nabī ra’sahu*.

36 His daughter ‘Amra added that her father’s hair never grayed; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 6: 678.

37 Ibid., 707–8, s.v. Yasār al-Muṭṭalibī; 1: 4–5.

38 Cf. *EQ*, s.v. Informants (C. Gilliot).

39 Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr*³ (*al-Jāmi‘ li-aḥkām al-qur’ān*), Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1387/1967 (reprint), 10: 178.

40 Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā: al-qism al-mutammim li-tābi‘ī ahl al-Madīna wa-man ba’dahum*, ed. Ziyād Muḥammad Maṣṣūr, Medina: Maktabat al-‘Ulūm wa-l-Ḥikam, 1408/1987, 154. Some said that Yasār was the *mawlā* of ‘Abdallāh ibn Qays ibn Makhrama; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, 2: 9. The source is the genealogist Muṣ’ab (ibn ‘Abdallāh) al-Zubayrī.

41 Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 2: 495.

42 Ibn Ḥibbān, *Thiqāt*, 5: 404.

the *walā`* with Qays, was Qays's *mawlā*,⁴³ and the same is true of his brother 'Umar ibn Ishāq.⁴⁴ The *nisbas* or relative adjectives al-Makhramī and al-Muṭṭalibī that are attached to Ibn Ishāq and to his family members (after Qays's father Makhrama and Qays's grandfather al-Muṭṭalib) were preferred to the *nisba* al-Qaysī in order to avoid confusion with the Qays 'Aylān tribal federation. Ibn Ishāq's father and his paternal uncles Mūsā and 'Abd al-Raḥmān were *mawālī Makhrama*,⁴⁵ and Ishāq ibn Yasār was also referred to as *mawlā āl Makhrama*.⁴⁶ Ibn Ishāq was *mawlā āl Qays ibn Makhrama*⁴⁷ or, as has already been mentioned, *mawlā Qays ibn Makhrama*.⁴⁸ While the *walā`* link is often called after its initiator, Qays ibn Makhrama, reference to Qays's family members was also considered appropriate.

But why did Qays ibn Makhrama choose to buy the young slave? We seem to have an answer. Both Qays and his father Makhrama appear on the list of the prominent persons who were born by Jewish mothers.⁴⁹ According to Jewish Law, they were both Jews, but this does not necessarily mean that they considered themselves as such. Still, a feeling of solidarity with the plight of the young slaves might have motivated Qays to buy the young slave and give him a chance to integrate into the emerging Muslim society.

Conclusions

Ibn Ishāq's grandfather Yasār was Jewish. He belonged to a group of circumcised boys taken captive at the beginning of Abū Bakr's caliphate in the synagogue of Nuqayra near 'Ayn al-Tamr. 'Ayn al-Tamr was some 100 km as the crow flies from Pumbedita (Anbār, near the present day al-Fallūja). It was some 90 km as the crow flies from Sūrā (near the present day al-Ḥilla), which was the other major centre

43 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 7: 321.

44 Ibn Hibbān, *Thiqāt*, 7: 167.

45 Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, 1: 315. There was a third uncle called Ṣadaqa ibn Yasār; Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥ al-mushtabih*, ed. Muḥammad Na'im al-'Araqūsī, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1407/1986–1414/1993, 1: 517.

46 He used to pass by the *bazzāzūn* or the cloth merchants and tell them to stick to their trade because their father Abraham was a cloth merchant; Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Iṣlāḥ al-māl*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Quḍāt, al-Manṣūra, 1410/1990, 260–1.

47 Ibn al-Athīr, *Uṣd al-ghāba*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwad and 'Adil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1415/1994, 5: 37, s.v. Mālik Ibn 'Awf al-Ashja'ī. Also *mawlan li-banī Qays ibn Makhrama*; Mu'arrij al-Sadūsī, *Hadhf min nasab Quraysh*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Jadīd, 1396/1976, 27.

48 Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 2122. The source is Ibn Ishāq himself. Some said that Ibn Ishāq was the *mawlā* of Makhrama ibn Nawfal ibn 'Abd Manāf ibn Zuhra ibn Kilāb; Khalīfa ibn Khayyāṭ, *Ṭabaqāt*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umarī, Riyadh: Dār Ṭayba, 1402/1982, 271. But this is the result of confusion between Makhrama ibn Nawfal, a Qurashī from the Zuhra clan, and Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib.

49 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Munammaq*, 402; Lecker, "A note on early marriage links between Qurashīs and Jewish women", *JSAI* 10 (1987), 17–39, reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. II, at 24, 34–5. For a fuller discussion of Makhrama's mother see no. 4 in this volume. *Ibn al-Yahūdīyya* has always been a slanderous expression.

of Jewish learning in Iraq.⁵⁰ Yasār was sold to Qays ibn Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib who was a remote relative of the Prophet Muḥammad. Qays's mother and his grandmother on his father's side were Jewish, which may have been behind his purchase of the young slave.

50 A. Oppenheimer, in collaboration with B. Isaac and M. Lecker, *Babylonia Judaica in the Talmudic Period*, Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1983, 362–4, 417–18.

WHEN DID IBN ISHĀQ COMPOSE HIS *MAGHĀZĪ*?¹

Petra M. Sijpesteijn and Camilla Adang (eds.), *Islam at 250: Studies in Memory of G.H.A. Juynboll*, Brill 2020, 150–162

It is widely assumed that Ibn Ishāq (d. 150–159/761–770) wrote Muḥammad’s biography at the behest of the second Abbasid caliph Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr (r. 136/754–158/775).

Wim Raven wrote:

Pivotal in the biographical literature is Muḥammad ibn Ishāq. . . . After having left his native Medina for Iraq, he was asked by the caliph al-Manṣūr . . . to write an all-encompassing history . . . Ibn Ishāq did not merely collect materials; he composed a structured work, arranged sometimes chronologically and sometimes by subject matter.²

Gregor Schoeler wrote:

It was only at al-Manṣūr’s behest that he recorded his collection in his exhaustive syngrammatic historical work, the *Kitāb al-kabīr* (or *Kitāb as-sīrah* or *Kitāb al-maġāzī* in the broader sense). We cannot exclude the (never explicitly documented) possibility that Ibn Ishāq had already redacted parts of his collections . . . as a coherent narration and transmitted the material in this form before the intervention of the caliph. But we can establish on the basis of our sources that,

1 The argument was presented in SOAS on the 10th of April 2015 at a workshop held in honour of Gerald Hawting. I am indebted to Michael Cook for giving me the green light. Also to Joseph Witzum for helpful comments on the draft.

2 *Et*³, s.v. Biography of the Prophet (W. Raven). According to Raven, “Ibn Hishām’s selections” were the first *sīra* text to be transmitted in a fixed form. See also M.Q. Zaman, *Religion and Politics under the Early ‘Abbāsids: The Emergence of the Proto-Sunnī Elite*, Leiden: Brill, 1997, 157: “Ibn Ishāq (d. 150/767) had written his *Sīra* of the Prophet under the patronage of al-Manṣūr”.

before the redaction for the court, the *publication* of his material was restricted to his personal lectures, whereas he now, for the first time, produced a proper book for use by lay people (albeit only a small court circle).³

Recently Sean Anthony has written:

Although he hailed from Medina, Ibn Ishāq compiled and transmitted his works, in particular his works on the Prophet’s biography, exclusively in Iraq (Ḥīra, Baghdad), the Jazīra (Ḥarrān), and Rayy, due to, on the one hand, the networks of patronage he enjoyed there from the Abbasids and, on the other, the controversies surrounding him in his native Medina.⁴

A century ago Josef Horowitz took a close look at the evidence:

That Ibn Ishāq wrote his *Kitāb al-maghāzī* for the caliph . . . cannot anyhow mean that he composed it on a commission from the caliph. The list of authorities cited by him, of itself, shows that he had composed his material principally on the basis of the traditions collected by him in Medina, as well as on the basis of those that he had collected in Egypt; on the other hand, he nowhere names the authorities of Iraq. *The work was obviously completed when Ibn Ishāq left the city of his fathers* [italics added – M. L.] and we know also a Medinan who passes on the work of Ibn Ishāq: Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d (d. 184[800]). It may still, none the less, be supposed that Ibn Ishāq undertook some supplementary alterations in his work for love of the caliph, or that he suppressed passages that he feared might be displeasing to the caliph.⁵

Ibn Sa‘d’s account of the course of Ibn Ishāq’s life

Because there is a gap at this point in the Leiden edition of Ibn Sa‘d’s (d. 230/845) famous biographical dictionary, Horowitz had no access to Ibn Ishāq’s fuller entry,⁶ and he could not quote it in support of his argument about the early composition

3 G. Schoeler, *The Biography of Muḥammad: Nature and Authenticity*, New York and London: Routledge, 2011, 29.

4 S. Anthony, “Muḥammad, Menāḥem, and the paraclete: New light on Ibn Ishāq’s (d. 150/767) Arabic version of John 15:23–16:1”, *BSOAS* 79 (2016), 255–78, at 264.

5 J. Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and Their Authors*, ed. L.I. Conrad, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002, 79–80.

6 See on this gap Schoeler, *Biography*, 153, n. 118.

of Muḥammad's biography. (Appendices I and II include the abridged entry which was available to Horovitz, followed by the fuller entry available to us now.)

Ibn Sa'd was well-placed to obtain reliable information about Ibn Ishāq. First, they belonged to the same social network of *mawālī* associated with the Abbasid court. Second, one of Ibn Sa'd's informants was a son of Ibn Ishāq.

Ibn Ishāq's association with the Abbasid court is well known, as is the fact that Ibn Sa'd was a *mawlā* of the Banū Hāshim (for more details see Appendix III). Ibn Sa'd was Wāqidī's (d. 207/822) secretary, perhaps in the latter's capacity as *qadi* in the Abbasid capital Baghdad. Just like Ibn Ishāq, who was born some 50 years earlier, Wāqidī left Medina to join the Abbasids. In his entry on Ibn Ishāq, Ibn Sa'd quotes a son of Ibn Ishāq whose name is not mentioned. The son told Ibn Sa'd that his father had died in Baghdad in 150/767 and had been buried in Maqābir al-Khayzurān.⁷ Ibn Sa'd remarked however that according to other learned men (*'ulamā'*⁸), Ibn Ishāq died in 151/768. Ibn Ishāq's son may well have provided Ibn Sa'd with other details about his father.

The passages of the fuller entry in Ibn Sa'd's biographical dictionary that concern us in connection with the composition of the *maghāzī* are the following:

Ibn Ishāq was the first who collected (*jama'a*) and compiled (*allafā*) the *maghāzī* of the Messenger of God. . . . He left Medina early (*qadīman*), and hence none of them [i.e. the Medinans] except Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'd had transmitted from him. Muḥammad ibn Ishāq was with 'Abbās ibn Muḥammad in the Jazīra. Beforehand he had gone (*wa-kāna atā*) to Abū Ja'far in Ḥīra and had written for him (*kataba lahu*) the *maghāzī*. For this reason the people of Kūfa learned ["heard"] from him, and the people of the Jazīra also learned ["heard"] from him when he was with 'Abbās ibn Muḥammad. He also came to Rayy, and [hence] the people of Rayy too learned ["heard"] from him. Consequently, his transmitters from these places are more numerous than the people of Medina who transmitted from him.

The arrangement of Ibn Ishāq's itinerary is somewhat confusing, because the Jazīra appears before Ḥīra, although Ibn Ishāq went first to Ḥīra. The confusion was probably caused by poor editorial work on Ibn Sa'd's part. This is also evident in the inconsistency regarding Ibn Ishāq's Medinan transmitters.

7 Al-Khayzurān, the mother of Hārūn al-Rashīd and al-Hādī, was buried in the cemetery named after her. It is today in the A'zamiyya quarter in east Baghdad; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā: al-qism al-mutammim li-tābi'ī ahl al-Madīna wa-man ba'dahum*, ed. Ziyād Muḥammad Manṣūr, Medina: Maktabat al-'Ulūm wa-l-Ḥikam, 1408/1987, 402, n. 5.

8 I.e. Ibn Ishāq's son was probably an *'ālim* himself, which is hardly surprising given his family background.

On the one hand, we are told that Ibn Ishāq left Medina “early”, and hence only one Medinan, namely Ibrāhīm ibn Sa’d, transmitted from him. On the other hand, having told us about Ibn Ishāq’s journeys, Ibn Sa’d concludes that consequently his transmitters from the places he visited were more numerous than the Medinans who transmitted from him. In fact there were several Medinan transmitters.⁹ However, Ibrāhīm, who was a wealthy man, possibly owned the only full recension of Ibn Ishāq’s *maghāzī*. One has to bear in mind that the production of a complete copy of a book – especially one that was transmitted piecemeal over many sessions – involved a major investment of time and money.

The course of Ibn Ishāq’s life as outlined by Ibn Sa’d is significant because the entry, for all its weaknesses, is arranged chronologically (as one would expect in a biographical dictionary). First Ibn Sa’d mentions Ibn Ishāq’s collection (of accounts) and his compiling of the *maghāzī*. Then he mentions some of Ibn Ishāq’s sources – those listed, namely ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar ibn Qatāda (d. ca. 120/738), Yazīd ibn Rūmān (d. 130/748), Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm [ibn al-Ḥārith al-Taymī] (d. 120/738) and Fāṭima bt. al-Mundhir ibn al-Zubayr – were Medinans, as has already been noticed by Horovitz. Then comes Ibn Ishāq’s early departure from Medina (*qadīman*). Ibn Sa’d does not mention Ibn Ishāq’s journey to Egypt in 115/733,¹⁰ following which he returned to Medina. Then there are journeys to Ḥīra (after al-Manṣūr’s accession in 136/754), to ‘Abbās ibn Muḥammad (d. 186/802) in the Jazīra (not before 142/759, the year of ‘Abbās’s appointment as governor),¹¹ to Rayy and finally death and burial in Baghdad.

Ibn Sa’d’s outline, which places the composition of the *maghāzī* before the departure from Medina, is trustworthy precisely because it is at the background of the entry – it is taken for granted. Ibn Sa’d’s focus is not on the date of composition, but on Ibn Ishāq’s activity as a *muḥaddith* and the opinions of other scholars regarding his reliability.

Ibn Ishāq’s “undoings”

More support for Ibn Ishāq’s composition of the *maghāzī* prior to his departure from Medina is gained from a boastful statement attributed to his above

9 Muṭā’ al-Ṭarābīshī, *Ruwāt Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Yasār fī l-maghāzī wa-l-siyar wa-sā’ir al-marwiyyāt*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-Mu’āṣir and Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1414/1994, 67 defines Ibrāhīm as *al-madanī al-ashḥar fī aṣḥāb ibn Ishāq al-madaniyyīna*. He counted more than ten Medinans who transmitted from Ibn Ishāq; *ibid.*, 72. Ibn Sa’d’s statement that Ibn Ishāq was the first to write a biography of Muḥammad is problematic but cannot be discussed here.

10 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 24: 424.

11 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3: 141. The source is Wāqidi. ‘Abbās remained in office until his dismissal in 155/772; *ibid.*, 374. In the same year Mūsā ibn Ka’b was appointed *‘alā ḥarb al-jazīra wa-kharājihā*; *ibid.*, 375.

mentioned disciple, Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d.¹² Ibrāhīm’s son, Ya‘qūb (d. 208/823), unsuspectingly told Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) about the following saying of his father: “Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ‘undid’ the *maghāzī* three times, and I observed and witnessed all of this” (*naqaḍa Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-maghāziya thalāth marrāt, kull dhālika ashhaduhu wa-aḥḍuruhu*).¹³ According to Lane’s *Arabic-English Lexicon*, *naqaḍa* means, inter alia, he undid it, unwove it, rendered it uncompact, unsound or unfirm, after having made it compact, sound or firm; – namely a building/structure/rope/cord/silk/flax/cloth. *Naqaḍa al-binā’ min ghayr hadm* means he took to pieces the building without demolishing or destroying it.

It is worth emphasizing that Ibn Ishāq himself, and not one of his disciples, was responsible for the composition of all four versions of the book – the fourth version was the one created when he “undid” the third. One assumes that several months or even years elapsed between one “undoing” and another, and it follows that the book had been composed long before Ibn Ishāq left Medina.

Ibrāhīm did not mean to criticise his venerated teacher – the background of his statement is the competition with other recensions of Ibn Ishāq’s book. His recension was the earliest one, and naturally the later the recension, the better it reflected Ibn Ishāq’s most up-to-date version. The “undoings” supported Ibrāhīm’s claim for the accuracy of his recension: he repeatedly learned Ibn Ishāq’s book, while the latter was revising it. In other words, he had several opportunities to correct his recension and weed out its errors. Indeed, ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī’s (d. 239/853) comments that “none of the books transmitted from Ibn Ishāq is more accurate (*aṣaḥh*) than the book[s; i.e. recensions] of Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d and Hārūn al-Shāmī”. Regarding the latter’s recension ‘Alī remarks: “This is so because Ibn Ishāq dictated to Hārūn from his own book”.¹⁴

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal rather cynically used Ibrāhīm’s statement out of context in order to cast doubt on Ibn Ishāq’s reliability as a *muḥaddith*. Another version of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal’s verdict has a five-point appraisal of Ibn Ishāq, one of which is his “undoings”. Aḥmad starts with a general positive evaluation, immediately followed by four reservations: “His hadith transmission is fine (*huwa ḥasan al-ḥadīth*), but when he combined [in one report hadith he had received] from two men (*jama‘a ‘an rajulayn*)”. At this point Aḥmad paused. But his interlocutor insisted, so Aḥmad went on: “He transmitted hadith from al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) and from another person, ascribing the hadith of one

12 Ṭarābīshī, *Ruwāt*, 66–104 begins his discussion of Ibn Ishāq’s transmitters with Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d and dedicates to him and to his recension a comprehensive study.

13 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-‘Ilal wa-ma‘rifat al-rijāl riwāyat ibnihi ‘Abdillāh*, ed. Waṣī Allāh ibn Muḥammad ‘Abbās, Riyadh: Dār al-Khānī, 1422/2001, 3: 436. A version found in another edition of the same book by the same editor (Bombay: al-Dār al-Salafiyya, 1408/1988), 55 has it that besides “undoing” the *maghāzī*, Ibn Ishāq also changed them: *qāla Ya‘qūb: sami‘tu abī yaqūlu: sami‘tu l-maghāziya minhu thalāth marrāt yanquḍuhā* [printed: *yanquṣuhā*] *wa-yughayyiruhā*.

14 Ṭarābīshī, *Ruwāt*, 232. Hārūn was Ibn Ishāq’s *kātib* and disciple; *ibid.*, 231–4.

of them to the other”. This looks like two different accusations. In any case, Aḥmad rejected the practice of creating Combined Reports, which was common in historiography but was anathema in the realm of legal hadith. The second reservation is the one discussed here: Ya‘qūb [Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d’s son] said: “I heard my father say: I learned [‘heard’] from him the *maghāzī* three times, [since] he used to undo and change them”. Aḥmad continued: “Mālik [b. Anas] (d. 179/796) said with reference to him [Ibn Ishāq]: ‘He was a liar’ (*dajjāl*)”. Aḥmad concluded his appraisal with a comment of his own: “Muḥammad ibn Ishāq came to Baghdad and was indiscriminate in his choice of informants. He would quote (*yahkī*) from al-Kalbī (d. 146/763) and others [i.e. similarly untrustworthy scholars]”.¹⁵

Aḥmad sensibly expects a reliable *muḥaddith* to keep repeating precisely the same hadith under all circumstances. Still, he was aware of the fact that Ibn Ishāq’s work on *maghāzī* (unlike Ibn Ishāq’s work on legal hadith) did not require the highest standards of transmission. Elsewhere we read that when Aḥmad was asked about Ibn Ishāq, he stated that people wrote “these hadiths” from him – meaning “*maghāzī* and the like”. In legal matters, Aḥmad explained, standards were much higher: “When something comes to you which concerns what is lawful and forbidden, we want people who are like this”, and he drew together the fingers of both hands except for the thumb.¹⁶ His gesture was meant to convey uncompromising firmness. In other words, Aḥmad acknowledged that in “genres” other than legal hadith lower standards were adequate.

In the background of Ibrāhīm’s statement there must have been an undisputed fact, namely the existence of Ibn Ishāq’s book which predated his departure from Medina. This is the premise of his claim for the accuracy of his recension. Owners of other recensions of Ibn Ishāq’s book vouched for the accuracy of their recensions with reference to the method by which they received them from Ibn Ishāq, with two of them claiming to have received their recensions twice.¹⁷

Presumably Ibn Ishāq’s work acquired book form early on in his career.¹⁸ But the version that emerged from the Medinan “undoings” was not the end of the

15 *Min kalām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal fī ‘ilal al-ḥadīth wa-ma‘rifat al-rijāl*, ed. Ṣubḥī al-Badrī al-Sāmarrā’ī, Riyadh: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 1409, 49. A cursory check shows that Ibn Ishāq quotes al-Kalbī referring to him both by his *nisba* al-Kalbī and by his *kunya* Abū l-Naḍr. Cf. H. Munt, “Writing the history of an Arabian holy city: Ibn Zabāla and the first local history of Medina”, *Arabica* 59 (2012), 1–34, at 17–18.

16 M. Lecker, “Wāqidi’s account on the status of the Jews of Medina: A study of a combined report”, *JNES* 54 (1995), 15–32, at 23–4.

17 Schoeler, *Biography*, 28, 32.

18 Cf. Amikam Elad, “The beginnings of historical writing by the Arabs: The earliest Syrian writers on the Arab conquests”, *JSAI* 28 (2003), 65–152, esp. 116–28. The rich textual evidence in this fundamental and inspiring article is new to the research literature. Cf. also idem, “Community of believers of ‘holy men’ and ‘saints’ or community of Muslims? The rise and development of early

road for the book, which continued to evolve (due to new evidence, new analysis or new political circumstances). As long as Ibn Ishāq was alive there was probably no “conclusively edited copy”. At different stages of his life Ibn Ishāq taught different versions of it. The recensions of his disciples were “reports of work in progress” or milestones along Ibn Ishāq’s lifetime project on the life of Muḥammad.

The role of the Abbasid court

The Abbasids were not indifferent to the way in which the biography of Muḥammad was taught, especially with regard to the problematic role of his uncle and their ancestor, ‘Abbās (d. 32/653). Their close ties with Ibn Ishāq, Wāqidī, Ibn Sa’d and other players in the field of historiography were no accident. The same is true for their relationship with Ibrāhīm ibn Sa’d, for which we have both factual evidence and anecdotes. Anecdotes are useful because of the reliable background information they contain. Sometimes they provide an insight into the boundaries of tolerance in early Islamic literature.

As a great-grandson of Muḥammad’s companion ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf (d. 32/653), Ibrāhīm ibn Sa’d was a member of a rich and influential family from the Zuhra branch of Quraysh. He had lived in Medina and later moved to Baghdad, where he was put in charge of the treasury (*bayt al-māl*). So far the factual evidence; the following is anecdotal. Ibrāhīm was a free spirit: he loved music and is said to have issued a *fatwā* sanctioning it. When one of the *aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth* came to learn from him the hadith of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī, he heard him singing and vowed never to learn from him. Without hesitation Ibrāhīm pledged that as long as he was in Baghdad, he would not transmit a single hadith unless he sang beforehand. When Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170/786–193/809) asked Ibrāhīm about a certain hadith, the latter required that an oud be brought to him, which the caliph found amusing. Hārūn al-Rashīd was even more amused by a story which Ibrāhīm told him on the authority of his father, Sa’d (d. ca. 125¹⁹), about how Mālik ibn Anas had clumsily tried his hand at making music.²⁰

Obviously, Ibrāhīm belonged to the caliph’s inner circle. It also appears that Mālik, a bitter adversary of Ibrāhīm’s teacher Ibn Ishāq, was unpopular in Hārūn’s court. It may be relevant for us here that just like Ibn Ishāq, Ibrāhīm’s father cast

Muslim Historiography”, *JSS* 47 (2002), 241–308, at 267–78. On p. 268, n. 63 of the latter article Elad quotes M.J. Kister, “The *Sīra* literature”, in A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant and G. Rex Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 352–67, at 352: “*Sīra* literature . . . came into being in the period following the death of the Prophet. It developed in the first half of the first century of the *hijrah* and by the end of that century the first full-length literary compilations were produced”.

19 *TMD*, 20: 208–9.

20 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta’rīkh Baghdād*, ed. Bashshār ‘Awwād Ma’rūf, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1422/2001, 6: 606.

doubt on Mālik's claim to be a freeborn Arab.²¹ The father was himself an influential figure in the Abbasid administration. He was the *shurṭa* chief and then he officiated several times as qadi of Medina.²² The governors employed him as a tax collector (*a'māl al-ṣadaqāt*).²³

Here belong two dubious accounts which link the Abbasids to the creation of Ibn Ishāq's biography. One account gives the credit to the caliph al-Mahdī (r. 158/775–169/785) – but this is impossible, since al-Mahdī only ascended the throne several years after Ibn Ishāq's death. Allegedly the caliph demanded that Ibn Ishāq compose for his (the caliph's) son a book covering the history of the world from its creation to their own time. The book that ensued was too large, so the caliph demanded a summary “which is this abridged book”. The large book was stored in the treasury.²⁴ The glaring error regarding the caliph's identity casts doubt on the account's reliability as a whole.

The other account is included in a passage from al-Mas'ūdī's (d. 345/956) *Murūj al-dhahab* which, while praising the endeavours of the intellectual caliph al-Manṣūr, implies that he was somehow associated with the creation of Ibn Ishāq's book:

In his days Ibn Ishāq composed (*waḍa'a*) the book[s, read *kutub* instead of *kitāb* – or rather the sections of a modular “history” book which also existed as independent books] of *maghāzī*, *siyar* and *akhbār al-mubtada'* which had neither been collected beforehand, nor known nor classified (*wa-lam takun qabla dhālika majmū'a wa-lā ma'rūfa wa-lā muṣannafa*).²⁵

- 21 M.J. Kister, “The massacre of the Banū Qurayza: A re-examination of a tradition”, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 8 (1986), 61–96, at 77. Mālik wanted to be a singer, but his mother told him that nobody listened to a singer with an ugly face. She advised him to turn to the field of *fiqh*, where an ugly face made no difference; I. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M. Stern, trans. C.R. Barber and S.M. Stern, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1967–71, 2: 82, n. 2; Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 4: 222. See also Abū al-'Alā' al-Ma'arrī, *Risālat al-ghufrān*, ed. Bint al-Shāṭi', Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1950, 501. Mālik was bald (*aṣla'*); Ibn Farḥūn al-Mālikī, *al-Dībāj al-mudhahhab fī ma'rīfat a'yān 'ulamā' al-madhhab*, ed. Ma'mūn al-Jannān, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1417/1996, 59. Sa'd did not transmit hadith in Medina, and therefore its people, including Mālik, did not write his hadith; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 10: 244.
- 22 *TMD*, 20: 206. He is sometimes referred to in *isnāds* as Sa'd ibn Ibrāhīm al-qāḍī. See e.g. Dhahabī, *Siyar al-lām al-nubalā'*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arnāwūṭ *et alii*, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981–1409/1988, 4: 293. He was *qāḍī* of Medina at the time of Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq; Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 10: 241. See the entry on Qāsim in *ibid.*, 23: 427–36.
- 23 *TMD*, 20: 210.
- 24 Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'rikh Baghdād*, 2: 16. Al-Khaṭīb suggests (*ibid.*, 8) that al-Mahdī should be replaced by al-Manṣūr. Al-Mahdī's return from Rayy in 151/768 (Fasawī, *al-Ma'rifa wa-l-ta'rikh*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umarī, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981, 1: 137) more or less coincided with Ibn Ishāq's death.
- 25 Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. Ch. Pellat, Beirut: al-Jāmi'a al-Lubnāniyya, 1966–79, 5: 211, no. 3446.

The passage as a whole is more panegyric than history. Ibn Ishāq may well have produced a book for the caliphal library, but it was merely a copy (or rather a revised copy) of a book he had composed long before he arrived at the Abbasid court. The caliphal copy must have been more elegant than all of the recensions, past or future. It also had another advantage: since its production was overseen by Ibn Ishāq himself, it was free of the additions which Ibn Ishāq's disciples attached to their recensions. In this sense it continued the line of the versions that came out of the Medinan "undoings".

APPENDIX I

Ibn Sa'd's abridged entry on Ibn Ishāq

Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Sādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 7: 321–22; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, 7/ii, ed. Eduard Sachau, Leiden: Brill, 1918, 67:

The passage in bold includes the list of those who transmitted hadith from Ibn Ishāq, including Ibrāhīm ibn Sa'd. It is missing in the fuller entry (Appendix II) because of a scribal error: the passage begins with *wa-kāna* and the scribe's eye strayed to the following occurrence of *wa-kāna*:

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ بَسَارٍ مَوْلَى قَبِيصِ بْنِ مَحْرَمَةَ بْنِ الْمُطَّلِبِ بْنِ عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ بْنِ قُصَيٍّ، وَيُكْنَى مُحَمَّدُ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، وَكَانَ جَدُّهُ بَسَارٌ مِنْ سَبْيِ عَيْنِ النَّمْرِ، وَكَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ ثَقَفًا، وَقَدْ رَوَى النَّاسُ عَنْهُ، رَوَى عَنْهُ النَّوْرِيُّ، وَشُعْبَةُ، وَسُفْيَانُ بْنُ عُيَيْنَةَ، وَيَزِيدُ بْنُ زُرَيْعٍ، وَإِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ عَلِيَّةَ، وَيَزِيدُ بْنُ هَارُونَ، وَيَعْلَى وَمُحَمَّدُ ابْنَا عُبَيْدٍ، وَعَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ نُمَيْرٍ، وَغَيْرُهُمْ، وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ تَكَلَّمَ فِيهِ، وَكَانَ خَرَجَ مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ قَدِيمًا، فَأَتَى الْكُوفَةَ وَالْجَزِيرَةَ وَالرَّيَّ وَبَعْدَادَ، فَأَقَامَ بِهَا حَتَّى مَاتَ فِي سَنَةِ إِحْدَى وَخَمْسِينَ وَمِائَةٍ، وَدُفِنَ فِي مَقَابِرِ الْخَيْرَانَ.

APPENDIX II

Ibn Sa'd's fuller entry on Ibn Ishāq

Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā: al-qism al-mutammim li-tābi' ahl al-Madīna wa-man ba'dahum*, ed. Ziyād Muḥammad Maṣṣūr, Medina: Maktabat al-'Ulūm wa-l-Hikam, 1408/1987, 400–402; Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar, Cairo: Khānjī, 1421/2001, 7: 552–53; <http://shamela.ws/rep.php/book/1126>:

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ يَسَارٍ مَوْلَى قَيْسِ بْنِ مَخْرَمَةَ بْنِ الْمُطَّلِبِ بْنِ عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ بْنِ فُصَيٍّ وَبُكْنَى أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، وَكَانَ جَدُّهُ يَسَارٌ مِنْ سَنِي عَيْنِ النَّمْرِ. وَكَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ جَمَعَ مَغَازِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَلْفَهَا. وَكَانَ يَرْوِي عَنْ عَاصِمِ بْنِ عُمَرَ بْنِ قَتَادَةَ، وَيَزِيدَ بْنِ رُومَانَ، وَمُحَمَّدَ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَغَيْرِهِمْ. وَيَرْوِي عَنْ فَاطِمَةَ بِنْتِ الْمُنْذِرِ بْنِ الرَّبِيعِ، وَكَانَتْ امْرَأَةً هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ هِشَامًا، فَقَالَ: هُوَ كَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَيَّ امْرَأَتِي! كَأَنَّهُ أَنْكَرَ ذَلِكَ. وَخَرَجَ مِنَ الْمَدِينَةِ قَدِيمًا، فَلَمْ يَزُجْ عَنْهُ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ابْنِ سَعْدٍ. وَكَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ مَعَ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بِالْحَزْرَةِ. وَكَانَ أَتَى أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ بِالْحَزْرَةِ فَكَتَبَ لَهُ الْمَغَازِي، فَسَمِعَ مِنْهُ أَهْلُ الْكُوفَةِ بِذَلِكَ السَّبَبِ. وَسَمِعَ مِنْهُ أَهْلُ الْحَزْرَةِ جِئِينَ كَانُوا مَعَ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، وَأَتَى الرَّيَّ فَسَمِعَ مِنْهُ أَهْلُ الرَّيِّ. فَزَوَّاتُهُ مِنْ هَوْلَاءِ الْبُلْدَانِ أَكْثَرُ مِمَّنْ رَوَى عَنْهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ. وَأَتَى بَعْدَادَ. فَأَخْبَرَنِي ابْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ إِسْحَاقَ، قَالَ: مَاتَ بَعْدَادَ سَنَةَ خَمْسِينَ وَمِائَةٍ، وَدُفِنَ فِي مَقَابِرِ الْخَيْرِزَانَ وَقَالَ غَيْرُهُ مِنَ الْعُلَمَاءِ: تُوُفِّيَ مُحَمَّدٌ بْنُ إِسْحَاقَ سَنَةَ إِحْدَى وَخَمْسِينَ وَمِائَةٍ. وَكَانَ كَثِيرَ الْحَدِيثِ، وَقَدْ كَتَبَتْ عَنْهُ الْعُلَمَاءُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَسْتَضَعِفُهُ.

APPENDIX III

Ibn Sa‘d’s *walā’*

The original owner of Ibn Sa‘d’s *walā’* was al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Ubaydallāh ibn al-‘Abbās (d. 140/757 or 141/758).²⁶ Al-Ḥusayn was one of Ibn Ishāq’s many informants.²⁷ Ibn Ishāq quoted from him, for example, the account of the alleged secret conversion to Islam of ‘Abbās, his wife and his slave Abū Rāfi‘ who was the supposed source of the account (*kuntu ghulāman li-l-‘Abbās*).

The Abbasid caliphs descended from ‘Ubaydallāh’s brother ‘Abdallāh. Through his *walā’* Ibn Sa‘d had an even closer link with the ruling line of the Banū Hāshim. Al-Ḥusayn’s son, ‘Abdallāh, who presumably inherited Ibn Sa‘d’s *walā’*, was married to a member of the ruling line, namely Umm ‘Īsā *al-sughrā* (i.e. the younger of the two sisters each of whom was called Umm ‘Īsā) bint ‘Alī ibn ‘Abdallāh ibn al-‘Abbās. They had no children and when he died, she received his inheritance together with his *aṣaba* or male relations. Umm ‘Īsā’s brother Muḥammad was “the father of the caliphs” (*abū al-khalā’if*).²⁸

P. S.

After the chapter had been submitted for publication I came across the accurate observations of C. Brockelmann in his *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur (GAL)*; for the English translation see now C. Brockelmann, *History of the Arabic Written Tradition*, Leiden: Brill, 2016–18, Supplement, 1: 202:

He studied *ḥadīth*, and completed his learning in Egypt in 115/733. In his home country he completed his biography of the Prophet, which is therefore wholly based on the Medinan tradition. . . . He presented a copy of his work to the caliph al-Manṣūr in al-Hāshimiyya.

26 *EP*, s.v. Ibn Sa‘d (J.W. Fück); Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 25: 258; Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 5: 315.

27 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 6: 384.

28 Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 29–30; Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 5: 313.

In a footnote Brockelmann remarked: “The report in al-Khaṭīb [al-Baghdādī, *Ta`rīkh Baghdād*, 2: 16–17 – the report in question is not discussed in this chapter] . . . that he wrote this work on the order of the caliph for the crown prince al-Mahdī, before later abbreviating it, must be a myth”.

NOTES ABOUT CENSORSHIP AND SELF-CENSORSHIP IN THE BIOGRAPHY OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD¹

al-Qanṭara 35 (2014), 233–54

The most popular medieval biography of the Prophet MuḤammad was compiled by Ibn Ishāq (d. *ca.* 151/768) and is known to us through its epitome by Ibn Hishām (d. *ca.* 218/833). As a history book it is not free of weaknesses, among them editorial practices. The following article deals with rather elusive editorial practices, namely censorship and self-censorship. Both deprive us of certain details or accounts – unless they can be found elsewhere in the vast Islamic literature. But at the same time censorship and self-censorship reveal the attitudes of those who applied them and shed some light on the social and political context in which MuḤammad’s biography emerged. The biography was a product of its time, and as such it reflected the concerns and sensitivities of MuḤammad’s companions, their descendants and all those who contributed to its compilation.

The first case to be discussed is one of self-censorship. It relates to an act of disobedience to MuḤammad. The account about it survived, but the identity of the two perpetrators was not disclosed to Ibn Ishāq and remained secret, no doubt in order to spare their families the embarrassment. The other two cases represent two different categories of the materials that Ibn Hishām expunged from the biography due to the censorship he applied to Ibn Ishāq’s biography of MuḤammad. One of the two censored accounts implies that before his Mission, MuḤammad was an idol worshipper, while the other relates to a harlot in pre-Islamic Yathrib (Medina) whose *jinnī* announced the advent of MuḤammad’s Mission.

The two who disobeyed MuḤammad

The following act of disobedience to MuḤammad occurred during the Tabūk expedition (9/630):²

1 I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for his thorough commentary.

2 The account discussed here did not escape Josef Horowitz: see J. Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their Authors*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002, 44.

When the Messenger of Allāh passed al-Ḥijr, he alighted in it and the men got water from its well. When they returned in the evening, the Messenger of Allāh said, “Do not drink any of its water nor use it for ablution. If you have used any of it to prepare dough, then feed it to the camels and eat none of it. Let none of you go out at night alone without a companion”. The men did as they had been told, except two men of the Banū Sā‘ida: one went out to relieve himself, and the other to look for a camel of his. The one who went to relieve himself was choked where he was relieving himself and the one who went to look for a camel of his was carried away by the wind which cast him on the two mountains of Ṭayyi’. The Messenger of Allāh was told of this and said, “Have I not forbidden you to go out without a companion”? Then he prayed for the man who was choked where he was relieving himself and he recovered; the other who landed in the two mountains of Ṭayyi’ was delivered to the Messenger of Allāh by the Ṭayyi’ as a gift when he came to Medina. The story about the two men comes from ‘Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr, from ‘Abbās ibn Sahl ibn Sa‘d al-Sā‘idī. ‘Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr told me that ‘Abbās had revealed to him the names of the two men but he [‘Abbās] asked that they be kept secret, so ‘Abdallāh refused to tell me their names.³

Ibn Ishāq’s immediate informant, ‘Abdallāh ibn Abī Bakr (d. 130/748 or 135/753),⁴ belonged to the Khazraj, more precisely to the Najjār branch of the Khazraj.⁵ ‘Abdallāh received the account from ‘Abbās ibn Sahl ibn Sa‘d (d. ca. 120/738), who belonged to the Sā‘ida branch of the Khazraj. The two unspecified protagonists of the account were also from the Sā‘ida, which explains why ‘Abbās asked ‘Abdallāh not to disclose their identity: he spared the perpetrators’ offspring the embarrassment.

Further details about the account are relevant for us here. ‘Abbās ibn Sahl ibn Sa‘d al-Sā‘idī probably received it from a close relative of his. A variant found in Wāqidī’s *Kitāb al-maghāzī* links it to another event that is similarly related to the Tabūk expedition.⁶ It concerns a woman’s orchard in Wādī l-Qurā which Muḥammad and his companions visited on their way to Tabūk. Muḥammad’s companion Abū Ḥumayd al-Sā‘idī⁷ transmitted to ‘Abbās the account about the

3 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 898–9; below, Appendix I; A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq’s Sīrat Rasūl Allāh*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955; reprint Lahore and Karachi, 1974, 605.

4 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā: al-qism al-mutammim li-tābi‘i ahl al-Madīna wa-man ba‘dahum*, ed. Ziyād Muḥammad Maṣṣūr, Medina: Maktabat al-‘Ulūm wa-l-Ḥikam, 1408/1987, 283; *GAS*, 1: 284; Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet*, Index.

5 Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab*, 348.

6 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 3: 1005–6; later, Appendix II.

7 There are several versions concerning his name, probably because he was better known through his agnomen Abū Ḥumayd than through his own name and that of his father.

orchard,⁸ and one assumes that he also transmitted to him the account about the disobedience discussed here. ‘Abbās must have had a special interest in the Tabūk expedition because his father, Sahl ibn Sa‘d, had participated in it. According to Sahl’s own testimony, he was then the youngest participant (*kuntu aṣghar aṣḥābī*). Muḥammad prohibited the drinking of the water but allowed the warriors to feed the camels with dough paste that had been prepared with this water before he gave his order. The emaciated camels that Sahl fed that dough became the weakest in the herd.⁹

The companion Abū Ḥumayd al-Sā‘idī who died at the end of Mu‘āwiya’s reign (41/661–60/680 C.E.) or the beginning of Yazīd I’s reign (60/680–64/683 C.E.)¹⁰ is said to have been Sahl’s paternal uncle. While their precise family link cannot be established with any certainty, we may assume that they were closely related and that the two who disobeyed Muḥammad were not only fellow Sā‘idīs but also their family members.

We turn now to the two cases of editorial censorship applied by Ibn Hishām in his epitome of Ibn Ishāq’s biography of Muḥammad. The relevant accounts are found in the recension (i.e. version or textual tradition,¹¹ Arabic: *riwāya*) of Yūnus ibn Bukayr (d. 199/815). Part of Ibn Bukayr’s recension is available to us through fragments published independently by Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh in 1976 and by Suhayl Zakkār in 1978. Each of the two editions includes two fragments found in the Qarawīyyīn library in Fez and a single fragment found in the Zāhiriyya library in Damascus. While the two fragments belong to Ibn Bukayr’s recension, the single fragment belongs to that of Muḥammad ibn Salama (d. 192/807). The Qarawīyyīn fragments, unlike the Zāhiriyya one, are not homogeneous and include many items from authorities other than Ibn Ishāq.¹² The two fragments

- 8 See e.g. Ibn Zanjawayh, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, ed. Shākir Dhīb Fayyād, Riyadh: King Faisal Center, 1406/1986, 3: 1076–7, no. 2001; below, Appendix III. In Muslim’s *Ṣaḥīḥ* the account is combined with several other accounts revolving around the Tabūk expedition. Again the *isnād* includes ‘Abbās ibn Sahl ← Abū Ḥumayd, which is the part that concerns us here; Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. Muḥammad Fu‘ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī, Cairo: ‘Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1374/1955–1375/1956; reprint Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 4: 1785–6 (*Kitāb al-faḍā’il*, no. 11); below, Appendix IV.
- 9 Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 3: 1007. When Muḥammad died, Sahl was fifteen years old; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 200.
- 10 See e.g. Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 7: 94–5.
- 11 The term “textual tradition” was used by J.M.B. Jones, “The *Maghāzī* literature”, in A.F.L. Beeston, T.M. Johnstone, R.B. Serjeant and G.R. Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 346. He used it side by side with the term “recension”. Jones used the term “version” with reference to Ibn Hishām: “Ibn Hishām’s version of the text”.
- 12 Out of 473 articles in Ḥamīdullāh’s edition some 180 go back to sources other than Ibn Ishāq; M. Muranyi, “Ibn Ishāq’s *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* in der *Riwāya* von Yūnus b. Bukayr: Bemerkungen zur frühen Überlieferungsgeschichte”, *JSAI* 14 (1991), 214–75, at 218. Suhaylī quoted Ibn Bukayr’s version 52 times, but only 15 of his references are found in the edited fragments; M. Jarrar, *Die*

also include accounts that are not linked to Muḥammad's biography, such as those concerning the marriages of 'Alī's daughters Umm Kulthūm and Zaynab.¹³ However, such accounts probably existed in other recensions of Ibn Ishāq's biography as well.¹⁴ Alfred Guillaume observed regarding the Qarawīyyīn manuscript: "The importance of this manuscript lies in those passages which restore to us material that Ibn Hishām omitted from his text for the reasons which he has given in his Introduction to his edition" (see later mention).¹⁵ Sadun Mahmud al-Samuk pointed out the manuscript's unorthodox approach regarding Muḥammad's life before the Mission.¹⁶

The differences in Ibn Ishāq's recensions notwithstanding, one assumes that the two problematic accounts from Ibn Bukayr's recension that are discussed here were also included in Ziyād al-Bakkā'ī's (d. 183/799) recension on which Ibn Hishām based his epitome. Ibn Hishām stated that in certain cases he had applied

Prophetenbiographie im islamischen Spanien: Ein Beitrag zur Überlieferungs- und Redaktionsgeschichte, Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 1989, 207–8. Ibn Bukayr was himself a compiler of a *Maghāzī* book; *ibid.*, *passim*. G. Schoeler, *Charakter und Authentie der muslimischen Überlieferung über das Leben Mohammeds*, Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1996, 50–1 suggested that this type of transmitter/author (Überlieferer/Verfasser) be referred to as adaptor (Bearbeiter). See also *idem*, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam from the Aural to the Read*, in collaboration with and translated by Shawkat M. Toorawa, Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2009, 77. Surprisingly, Ibn Ishāq, *Sīrat Ibn Ishāq al-musammāt bi-kitāb al-mubtada' wa-l-mab'ūth wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Muhammad Ḥamīdullāh, n. p.: Ma'had al-Dirāsāt wa-l-Abḥāth li-l-Ta'rib, 1396/1976, 1 starts with the following *isnād*: *qāla Abū Muḥammad 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hishām hādihā kitāb sīrat rasūl allāh ṣallā llāhu 'alayhi wa-sallama*. But the *isnād* and the following passage which concerns Muḥammad's pedigree are missing in Zakkār's edition and probably do not belong to the manuscript to which they were attached. It should be added that a comparison between the Fez manuscript and Ibn Hishām's book has also been carried out by 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Dūrī in his *Dirāsa fi sīrat al-nabī wa-mu'allifihā ibn ishāq*, Baghdad: Maṭba'at al-'Ānī, 1965. The book is unavailable to me.

- 13 A. Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, JSS, Monograph No. 1, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960, 50–2.
- 14 Al-Bakkā'ī's full recension included Ibn Ishāq's *Kitāb al-khulafā'*; S.M. al-Samuk, *Die historischen Überlieferungen nach Ibn Ishāq. Eine synoptische Untersuchung*, Dissertation, Frankfurt a. M., 1978, 85, n. 4.
- 15 Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 10. Cf. *EQ*, s.v. *Sīra* and the *Qur'ān* (W. Raven), 33: "Ibn Hishām made judgments about the theological 'purity' in the texts he selected and left out passages that he found offensive. . . . Two striking stories that Ibn Hishām had not included are those about Muḥammad's intended suicide (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 1: 1147) and the 'satanic verses'; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, 1: 1192–6). But Ṭabarī's text relating to the intended suicide is not from Ibn Ishāq. On the topics of suicide and the "Satanic Verses" see U. Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: The Life of Muhammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995, 113–14 and 156–66, respectively.
- 16 Al-Samuk, *Die historischen Überlieferungen nach Ibn Ishāq*, 97–8: "Muḥammad wird . . . besonders für die Zeit vor seiner Berufung – mit den nach Ibn Ishāq wiedergegebenen Überlieferungen sehr menschlich beschrieben, hier ist der Prophet nicht schon in Mekka – wie nach vielen anderen Quellen – als ein Mensch mit übernatürlichen Eigenschaften dargestellt". Also *ibid.*, 159: "Das Bild des Propheten vor seiner Berufung wird hier in den Überlieferungen Ibn Ishāq's nicht 'überhöht' gezeichnet oder legendär verklärt, es finden sich im Gegenteil Berichte, die von anderen Überlieferern – wohl aus Gottesfurcht – fortgelassen worden waren".

ensorship. The first paragraph in his epitome purports to provide the pedigree of Muḥammad going back to Adam, while the second paragraph reads as follows:

I begin this book, Allāh willing, with the mention of Ishmael son of Abraham and those of his offspring who bore the Messenger of Allāh and their descendants, first things first, from Ishmael to the Messenger of Allāh. [I also mention] their story to the extent that it is available, leaving out the other offspring of Ishmael for the sake of brevity until [I arrive at] the account of the biography of the Messenger of Allāh, leaving out some of what Ibn Ishāq mentioned in this book. To wit, matters in which the Messenger of Allāh is not mentioned, [matters] concerning which no Qurʾān verses were revealed, and those that are not the cause, the explanation or the proof of something in this book. The reason is the above-mentioned wish for brevity. [Also left out are] verses which he [Ibn Ishāq] mentioned but none of the connoisseurs of poetry I met was acquainted with, things that are either disgraceful to talk about (*yashnu ʿu l-ḥadīth bihi*), or such that may distress certain people (*yasū ʿu ba ʿd al-nās dhikruhu*), or such that were not confirmed to us by al-Bakkāʿī. Allāh willing, I shall fully adduce all the rest within the limits of the available transmission and knowledge.¹⁷

Two of the previously mentioned categories clearly indicate censorship, namely the disgraceful and distressing matters. Johann Fück recorded Ibn Hishām’s own reports regarding the omission of improper verses and verses which assault the Prophet. Fück correctly included the verses in the category of things that are disgraceful to talk about. He also included in the same category the affair of the Satanic Verses (or “the Gharānīq episode” as he called it). As to the second category, that of things which may distress certain people, Fück referred to Ibn Hishām’s omission of the account about the capture of Muḥammad’s uncle ‘Abbās in the battle of Badr.¹⁸

17 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 4; below, Appendix V; Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad*, 3, 691.

18 J. Fück, *Muhammad ibn Ishaq: Literarhistorische Untersuchungen*, Frankfurt am Main, 1925, 35: “anstößige Stellen; solche, die einige Menschen verletzen könnten”. The verses of the former category are improper verses omitted by Ibn Hishām according to his own statement: Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 170, line 3; 274, line 18; 523, line 13, 524, line 9, 572, line 15, 581, line 16, 644, line 9, 939, line 4; also verses in which the Prophet is attacked, such as 532, line 16. In 517, line 20 Ibn Hishām changed an insulting word (in fact he changed two words). See also Horowitz, *The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet*, 81 (“besides allegations whereof the mention was malicious, or likely to be disagreeable to certain people”); Schoeler, *Charakter und Authentie*, 50; idem, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam*, 77 (“indecent passages; passages that might be injurious to certain individuals”); al-Samuk, *Die historischen Überlieferungen nach Ibn Ishāq*, 157: “Dinge und Ereignisse, von denen zu berichten hässlich ist, oder die andere Menschen verletzen könnten”. Th. Nöldeke, “Die Tradition über das Leben Muhammeds”, *Der Islam* 5 (1914), 160–70, at 166, n. 2 has already noticed Ibn Hishām’s occasional omission of verses of both the Muslims and their opponents. Regarding ‘Abbās’s capture in Badr, see *ibid.*, 167–8.

Other examples of accounts and problematic expressions that were expunged by Ibn Hishām can be mentioned briefly. Muḥammad, when he was still a young shepherd, intended to obtain illicit sexual pleasure, but Allāh protected him from it.¹⁹ During the lapse of revelation (*fatrat al-waḥy*) Muḥammad said to himself: “I am afraid my associate [i.e. the angel] has become hateful of me (*qalānī*) and has deserted me (*wadda ‘anī*)”.²⁰ A subtler case of censorship concerns Muḥammad’s worship of idols (on which see more later). In a passage summarizing Muḥammad’s early years with his uncle Abū Ṭālib we find that he grew up protected by Allāh from the filth of the *Jāhiliyya* and its vices, “while he was still following the religion of his tribe” (*wa-huwa ‘alā dīn qawmihi*). Ibn Hishām adduced this account without this crucial statement.²¹ This very expression, *wa-huwa ‘alā dīn qawmihi*, appears in an account about Muḥammad’s *wuqūf* in Mt. ‘Arafāt which is found in Ibn Hishām with a less problematic phrasing: *qabla an yanzila ‘alayhi l-waḥy* or before the revelation.²² Yet another small editorial change by Ibn Hishām can be added. Al-Samuk noticed the difference between Ibn Bukayr and Ibn Hishām regarding ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib’s action upon Muḥammad’s birth. The former said that ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib took the newborn child to the idol Hubal inside the Ka‘ba (*fa-adkhalahu ‘alā Hubal fi jawf al-Ka‘ba*), while the latter omitted Hubal’s mention: ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib merely took the child to the Ka‘ba (*fa-dakhala bihi l-Ka‘ba*).²³ Other cases of Ibn Hishām’s censorship include the previously mentioned account on the “Satanic Verses” (Ibn Ishāq’s account does not include the “Satanic Verses” themselves);²⁴ and an account about the evil eye with which Muḥammad was inflicted (*tuṣībuhu l-‘ayn*) in Mecca before and after the revelation.²⁵ Also an account about the rumours that Muḥammad’s son Ibrāhīm was fathered by a

A remark about technology can be made at this point. In order to trace Ibn Hishām’s omissions of verses which he considered as improper one can nowadays employ an electronic version of his book (using the Internet, or electronic text repositories such as *al-Maktaba al-shāmila*) and look for the Arabic verb *aqdha ‘a*, “to revile, vilify” that appears eight times, and for its feminine form *aqdha ‘at* that appears once. But of course Fück has already pointed out these verses.

- 19 Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 86–7; Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 58–9, no. 57; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1398/1978, 79–80.
- 20 Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 116–17; Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 115, no. 166; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 135.
- 21 Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 87, 89; Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 57, no. 54; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 78; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 117.
- 22 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 76, no. 92; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 98; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 129. Cf. Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 88–9 (who may have overlooked Ibn Hishām’s account). Rubin adduced from other sources several alternatives to the problematic phrase.
- 23 Al-Samuk, *Die historischen Überlieferungen nach Ibn Ishāq*, 95; Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 22, no. 28; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 45; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 103.
- 24 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 157–8, no. 219; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 177–8; Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 38–9; *EQ*, s.v. Satanic Verses (Sh. Ahmed).
- 25 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 104, no. 143; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 124; Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 29, 59.

cousin of the child's mother, Māriya the Copt. 'Alī was ordered to kill the cousin if he found him with her. But the cousin managed to prove that he was gelded, thereby saving his life.²⁶ Finally, an account about 'Umāra ibn al-Walīd's overtures to 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ's wife, followed by 'Amr's terrible revenge.²⁷

Muḥammad and the holy man

The following account (Ibn Bukayr ← Ibn Ishāq) is missing in Ibn Hishām's epitome because it concerns a thing that is, according to Ibn Hishām, disgraceful to talk about. It describes a meeting between Muḥammad – accompanied by his adopted son Zayd ibn Ḥāritha – and the *ḥanīf* or “seeker of true religion” Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl:²⁸

Aḥmad [ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Uṭāridī] ← Yūnus ← Ibn Ishāq: It was transmitted to me that the Messenger of Allāh said referring to Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl, He was the first to blame me for worshipping idols and forbade me to worship them.²⁹ I had come from Ṭā'if with Zayd ibn Ḥāritha and passed by Zayd ibn 'Amr while he was in Upper Mecca (*a lā Makka*).³⁰ The Quraysh had rendered him notorious for abandoning their religion, until he went forth from among them and lived in Upper Mecca. I sat near him with a leather bag (*sufra*) carried by Zayd ibn Ḥāritha that contained meat from our sacrifices to our deities. I offered it to him – at that time I was a young lad (*ghulām shābb*)³¹ – and said, Have some of this food, uncle. He said, Nephew, perhaps it is from the animals

26 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 252, no. 412; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 271.

27 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 148–50, no. 211; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 167–70; Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 36–7.

28 See his long entry in *TMD*, 19: 493–516. See also Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 47–8, 77–81, 88. Rubin discussed various aspects relating to the versions of Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl's meeting with Muḥammad. The evidence regarding Zayd is unique and calls for a separate analysis.

29 The partial parallel text in al-Rabī' ibn Ḥabīb al-Azdī al-Baṣṭī, *al-Jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ musnad al-imām al-Rabī' ibn Ḥabīb*, ed. Muḥammad Idrīs and 'Āshūr ibn Yūsuf, Beirut: Dār al-Ḥikma and 'Umān: Maktabat al-Istiḳāma, 1415/1995, 44 is even more explicit at this point due to the addition of one word: *'āba 'alayya 'ibādat al-aṣnām*; see later, Appendix VI. The contemporary editors of this *Musnad*, unwilling to accept the account at face value, denied that Muḥammad had taken part in his tribe's idol worship: *qawluhu 'āba 'alayya bi-tashdīd al-yā' ay dhakara 'ayb dhālika 'indī walam yakun danā mina l-aṣnām shay'an wa-lā dhabāḥa 'alayhā wa-lākin kāna qawmuhu yaf'alūna dhālika fa-zanna Zayd ibn 'Amr anna l-sīra wāḥida wa-dhālika qabla l-nubuwwa fa-li-hādhā dhakara 'aybahā 'indahu wa-huwa ṣl'm lam yazal musaddadan muwaffaqan*.

30 The place is also called al-Ma'lāt. Cf. Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 27: “on a high ground above Mecca”. The borders of al-Ma'lāt and al-Masfala are defined in al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makka wa-mā jā'a fihā mina l-āthār*, ed. Rushdī Malḥas, Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, n. d., II, 266. Mt. Ḥirā' is in A'lā Makka; *TMD*, 19: 495. Incidentally, according to some, Zayd was buried at the bottom of Mt. Ḥirā'; *TMD*, 19: 516.

31 This indicates that the event is supposed to have taken place many years before the Mission.

that you sacrifice to your idols? I said, Yes. He said, Nephew, had you asked ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib’s daughters [i.e. Muḥammad’s paternal aunts³²], they would have told you that I never eat of these sacrifices and do not need them. Then he denigrated the idols and those who worshipped them and sacrificed to them. He said, They are nothing but falsehood and do neither harm nor good, or words to that effect. The Messenger of Allāh said, After that I never stroked any of the idols (to draw blessing from it), having become aware of them,³³ nor did I sacrifice to them until Allāh to Him belongs glory and power honoured me with his Mission.³⁴

Half a century ago Guillaume correctly described the account as one of outstanding importance and added that it had been expunged from Ibn Hishām’s recension. He also remarked that “[i]t is the only extant evidence of the influence of a monotheist on Muhammad by way of admonition”,³⁵ implying that it is factual. But it appears – and further research on this matter is needed – that those who were interested in glorifying the holy man, above all his descendants, were prepared to achieve their goal, so to speak, at Muḥammad’s expense.

Medieval scholars considered the account problematic. Al-Ḥarbī (d. 285/898) expressed unease about the reports that Muḥammad had consumed the meat of animals sacrificed to an idol. Perhaps Zayd ibn Hāritha sacrificed the animal at his own initiative, or Zayd innocently slaughtered it where an idol happened to be located. Allāh forbid, al-Ḥarbī said, that we should adopt the outward meaning of the account.³⁶ Suhaylī (d. 581/1185) wondered how Allāh guided Zayd to refrain from eating what had been sacrificed to idols, while Muḥammad had the better right to such guidance.³⁷ There is perhaps evidence of contemporary censor-

32 The mention of the aunts is yet another indication of Muḥammad’s young age. The tone is rather offensive.

33 The phrase *‘alā ma ‘rifa bihā* is obscure.

34 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 98, no. 133; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 118. The text and its omission by Ibn Hishām were discussed in Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder*, 79–81. See the parallel text in *TMD*, 19: 507; later, Appendix VII.

35 Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 27–8, 59.

36 *Fa-ammā ḡāhir mā jā ‘a bihi l-ḥadīth fa-ma ‘ādḥ allāh*; al-Ḥarbī, *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, ed. Sulaymān ibn Ibrāhīm al-‘Āyid, Mecca: Jāmi‘at Umm al-Qurā, 1405/1985, s.v. *n.ṣ.b.*, 2: 791–2. Dhahabī, *Siyar al-‘alām al-nubalā’*, ed. Shu‘ayb al-Arnāwūṭ *et alii*, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981–1409/1988, 1: 127 denied that Zayd had followed Ibrāhīm’s *sharī‘a* properly or met someone who could initiate him into it: *wa-qāla llahumma innī ‘alā dīn Ibrāhīm, wa-lākin lam yazfar bi-sharī‘at Ibrāhīm ‘alayhi l-salām kamā yanbaghī wa-lā ra ‘ā man yūqifuhu ‘alayhā*. Dhahabī also argued (130–1) that Muḥammad had eaten the sacrifices of his tribe before the first revelation, when it was still permitted, exactly as wine had been lawful before it was forbidden.

37 Suhaylī, *al-Rawḍ al-unuf*, ed. Ṭāhā ‘Abd al-Rā‘ūf Sa‘d, Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyāt al-Azhariyya, 1391/1971, 1: 256; Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 27–8. M.J. Kister, “‘A bag of meat’: A study of an early *ḥadīth*”, *BSOAS* 33 (1970), 267–75; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* I, no. VI, at 274–5 concluded that the discussion concerned “the essential problem of the *‘isma* of the Prophet before he was granted prophethood. The main effort of the Muslim scholars was to prove that the Prophet did not eat meat slaughtered for idols, nor did he slaughter it, as he was

ship regarding this matter. In the manuscript of al-Khargūshī's *Sharaf al-muṣṭafā* quoted by M. J. Kister we find Zayd ibn Ḥāritha's following statement: "The Prophet slaughtered a ewe for a certain idol; then he roasted it and carried it with him".³⁸ The printed edition of this book has a milder version, according to which it was not Muḥammad who roasted the ewe but his companions.³⁹

The harlot from Yathrib and her *jinnī*

The following account (Ibn Bukayr ← Ibn Ishāq) was expunged by Ibn Hishām's epitome because it concerns a thing that may, according to Ibn Hishām, distress certain people:

Aḥmad [ibn 'Abd al-Jabbār al-'Uṭāridī] ← Yūnus ← Ibn Ishāq: The Anṣār used to say about what they would hear from the Jews concerning the Messenger of Allāh: The first mention [of the Mission] in Medina before the Mission of the Messenger of Allāh was this: Fāṭima mother of al-Nu'mān ibn 'Amr of the Banū l-Najjār was one of the harlots (*baghāyā*) of the *Jāhiliyya*. She had a *jinnī* (*tābi*) and used to say that whenever he came to her, he would storm (*iqṭaḥama*) into the room in which she was, regardless of the others who were in it [for whom he was invisible].⁴⁰ [This went on] until he came to her one day, collapsed on the wall and did not do what he usually did [i.e. have intercourse with her]. She said to him, What's the matter with you today? He said, A prophet was sent prohibiting harlotry.⁴¹

The *jinnī*'s admission of defeat means that the prohibition of harlotry went into force with immediate effect, and hence he could no longer continue his former

granted immunity from sin before he received prophethood". Kister (275) remarked regarding a detailed account in the same vein found in al-Khargūshī's *Sharaf al-muṣṭafā*: "The tradition of al-Khargūshī based on the idea that the Prophet had no *'iṣma* before his Mission belongs to the earliest layer of hadith – traditions which fell later into oblivion or were re-shaped or expunged". See al-Khargūshī, *Sharaf al-muṣṭafā*, ed. Nabīl Āl Bā'alawī, Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyya, 1424/2003, 1: 455–60, no. 174.

38 Kister, "A bag of meat": A study of an early *ḥadīth*", 270, quoting MS British Museum 3014: *dhabaḥa rasūl allāh shātan li-nuṣub mina l-anṣāb, qāla: thumma shawāhā fa-ḥtamalahā ma'au*.

39 Al-Khargūshī, *Sharaf al-muṣṭafā*, 1: 456–7: *kharaja bl-nabī wa-huwa murdiḥī ilā nuṣub mina l-anṣāb fa-dhabaḥnā lahu shātan fa-andajnahā*. The edition is based on "three copies from remote countries"; *ibid.*, 1: 6.

40 Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 26: "[W]henver he came to her, the house became intensely dark to those who were in it". Guillaume opted for the reading *iftaḥama* instead of *iqṭaḥama*, although he admitted that the former could not be found in the lexicons.

41 Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 92, no. 122; Ibn Ishāq, *Kitāb al-siyar wa-l-maghāzī*, ed. Zakkār, 113; Guillaume, *New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 25–6; below, Appendix VIII. T. Khalīdī, *Arabic Historical thought in the Classical Period*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 37 may have overlooked the fact that Fāṭima's companion was a *jinnī*.

way of life. The story shows that in pre-Islamic Medina a love affair between a *jinnī* male and a woman was not unthinkable. Obviously, the woman in question gained special spiritual powers through her *jinnī*.⁴² The account was included in Ibn Ishāq's biography of Muḥammad not because of the light it sheds on pre-Islamic Medinan society but because it belongs to the *dalā'il al-nubuwwa* or the proofs of Muḥammad's prophethood. More specifically, it belongs to the *dalā'il* subgroup that includes testimonies of *jinnīs* who realized, through the loss of their special status and powers, that the world had changed for good.

Fāṭima's occupation is a background detail, and as such it is trustworthy. Her pedigree is found in an entry about her son, al-Nu'(ay)mān ibn 'Amr: Fāṭima bint 'Amr ibn 'Aṭiyya ibn Khansā' ibn Mabdhūl ibn 'Amr. The pedigree shows that she belonged to the Najjār branch of the Khazraj, more precisely to the Māzin ibn al-Najjār subsection.⁴³ Her husband belonged to another subsection of the Najjār, namely the Ghanm ibn Mālik ibn al-Najjār. His pedigree is: 'Amr ibn Rifā'a ibn al-Hārith ibn Sawād ibn Ghanm ibn Mālik ibn al-Najjār. Their son al-Nu'(ay)mān was a companion of Muḥammad with a penchant for practical jokes and a drinking problem.⁴⁴

There are two other versions regarding the harlot's identity. While confirming that she was from the Najjār, they offer no pedigree and probably aim at obscuring her identity so as to protect her family's reputation. One source calls her Fukayha of the Najjār,⁴⁵ while another source, which similarly states her Najjārī affiliation, calls her Fāṭima bint al-Nu'mān.⁴⁶ According to Suhaylī, the woman was referred to as Fāṭima bint al-Nu'mān in a recension of Ibn Ishāq's biography other

42 *Jinnī* females were said to have married humans: 'Amr ibn Yarbū' ibn Ḥanzala of the Tamīm had a *jinnī* wife; J. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1897. Reprint Berlin: de Gruyter, 1961, 154. In *ibid.*, n. 1, with regard to the kidnapping of Sinān ibn Abī Hāritha by the *jinn* to be used as "stallion", there is a misprint: read *istafhalathu* instead of *istafalahathu*; see. e.g. *TMD*, 16: 338–9.

43 Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 3: 493.

44 *Ibid.*, 493–4. When he was drunk, he killed a fellow member of the Najjār; *TMD*, 62: 148. It may be of interest that he had nine children born by different slave girls and only one born by a freeborn woman; Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 493. One or two years before Muḥammad's death al-Nu'(ay)mān reached Buṣrā with Abū Bakr and another Qurashī named Suwaybiṭ on a trading mission, which is why Ibn 'Asākir (*TMD*, 62: 139–49) included him in his book. For entries on Suwaybiṭ see e.g. Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar ta'rīkh Dimashq li-Ibn 'Asākir*, ed. Rūhiyya al-Naḥḥās *et alii*, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1404/1984–1409/1989, 10: 213–14; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, s.v., 3: 222–3. Guillaume argued (*New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, 25, n. 3) that the harlot's son was a Jew who was hostile to Muḥammad. He concluded (*ibid.*, 26) that Jews were regarded as members of the Najjār, the tribe of the prophet's maternal relations. But the Jew al-Nu'mān ibn 'Amr belonged to the Qaynuqā'; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 352, 383.

45 Khalīfa ibn Khayyāt, *Ṭabaqāt*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umarī, Riyadh: Dār Ṭayba, 1402/1982, 87.

46 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 167; later, Appendix IX. Ibn Sa'd quotes a series of *dalā'il al-nubuwwa* accounts, including this one, from 'Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Madā'inī. Three of al-Madā'inī's accounts go back to 'Alī ibn Mujāhid who at some time officiated as the qadi of Rayy. According to some, he had a bad reputation as a hadith transmitter and compiled a book entitled *Kitāb al-maghāzī*; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 21: 117–20. Two of the three accounts go back to Muḥammad ibn Ishāq. See

than al-Bakkā'ī's.⁴⁷ Beside the woman's name there are several other differences between the text which Suhaylī quoted from the unspecified recension of Ibn Ishāq and Ibn Bukayr's text. This shows that at least two recensions of Ibn Ishāq's biography contained this account.

Harlotry must have been common in pre-Islamic Arabia, especially in connection with its markets and fairs. But the case of Fāṭima is of special interest, because harlots were usually slave girls, not freeborn women.⁴⁸

A similar account of a *jinnī* relates to an unspecified woman in Mecca who belonged to the Asad ibn 'Abd al-'Uzzā branch of the Quraysh tribe. Her *jinnī* informed her of an unbearable grave matter that had occurred, namely that Aḥmad (i.e. Muḥammad) had prohibited harlotry. When Allāh brought Islam, they (i.e. the *jinnīs*) were barred from eavesdropping,⁴⁹ i.e. they could no longer listen and uncover the goings on in Heaven.⁵⁰

Ibn Ishāq's account about the harlot from Yathrib/Medina could indeed distress certain people, i.e. her direct descendants and her other family members.

According to an account found in Abū l-'Arab's *Kitāb al-miḥan*, Ibn Ishāq was flogged twice by the governor of Medina for disclosing faults in the genealogy of his fellow Medinans: "He was an expert on genealogy and no family in Medina was spared the faults that he discovered in its genealogy. Hence the people of Medina treated him with hostility". The governor of Medina had him flogged once, but he did not give up his genealogical research and was flogged again.⁵¹ Ibn Ishāq comes through as a man who did not shy away from treading on peoples' toes and had no fear of the Umayyad governor. Ibn Ishāq's character and, as it were, his origin – his grandfather was Jewish⁵² – are comparable to those of another famous *mawlā*, namely Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar ibn al-Muthannā (d. 210/825) who was also

also al-Damīrī, *Hayāt al-ḥayawān al-kubrā*, Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1389/1969, 1: 294; later, Appendix X.

47 Suhaylī, *Rawḍ*, 1: 239; below, Appendix XI. The story of Fāṭima bint al-Nu'mān is also found in Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Wafā bi-aḥwāl al-muṣṭafā*, ed. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Wāḥid, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1386/1966, 154 where it is preceded by an account along the same lines (← Jābir) in which the woman's name and tribal affiliation are unspecified and the *jinnī* has the form of a bird.

48 Cf. the so-called "harlots of Ḥaḍramawt". Upon hearing of Muḥammad's death, twenty-odd harlots (*baḡhāyā*) emulated six women from the Kinda and Ḥaḍramawt who rejoiced, dying their hands with henna and playing on tambourines. A parallel text refers to these women as singing girls (*qiyān*) from the Kinda and prostitutes ('*awāhir*) from the Ḥaḍramawt who dyed their hands, exposed their charms and played on tambourines. In fact they were respectable women of various Kindite and Ḥaḍramite clans; M. Lecker, "Judaism among Kinda and the *ridda* of Kinda", *JAOS* 115 (1995), 635–50; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum* I, no. XIV, at 646–9.

49 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1: 167; later, Appendix XII.

50 *EQ*, s.v. Jinn (J. Chabbi).

51 Abū l-'Arab al-Tamīmī, *Kitāb al-miḥan*², ed. Yaḥyā Wahīb al-Jabbūrī, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1403/1983, 377–8.

52 See no. 14 in this volume.

of Jewish descent. The latter made himself extremely unpopular by specializing, among other topics, in *mathālib* or “faults”, often those linked to genealogy.⁵³

Ibn Hishām, who must have been a more conventional person, omitted many of his predecessor’s materials, which probably contributed to the popularity of his epitome. Beside improper verses he also expunged details and accounts that were incongruous with Muḥammad’s image or could offend the offspring of Muḥammad’s companions. Censorship and self-censorship applied in Ibn Ishāq’s biography of Muḥammad and in its epitome belong to the social and political context of both books.

53 M. Lecker, “Biographical notes on Abū ‘Ubayda Ma‘mar b. al-Muthannā”, *SI* 81 (1995), 71–100; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum I*, no. XVIII.

APPENDIX I

Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 898–99

قال ابن اسحاق وقد كان رسول الله صلعم حين مر بالججر نزلها واستقى الناس من بئرها فلما راحوا قال رسول الله صلعم لا تشربوا من مائها شيئا ولا تتوضؤوا منه للصلاة وما كان من عجين عجنتموه فاعلفوه الإبل ولا تأكلوا منه شيئا ولا يخرجن أحد منكم الليلة إلا ومعه صاحب له ففعل الناس ما أمرهم به رسول الله صلعم إلا أن رجلين من بني ساعدة خرج أحدهما لحاجته وخرج الآخر في طلب بعير له فأما الذي ذهب لحاجته فإنه خُنق على مذهبه وأما الذي ذهب في طلب بعيره فاحتلمته الريح حتى طرحته بجبلي طيء فأخبر بذلك رسول الله صلعم فقال ألم أنهكم أن يخرج منكم أحد إلا ومعه صاحبه ثم دعا للذي أصيب على مذهبه فشفى وأما الآخر الذي وقع بجبلي طيء فإن طينا أهدته لرسول الله صلعم حين قدم⁵⁴ المدينة.

والحديث عن الرجلين عن عبد الله بن أبي بكر عن عباس بن سهل بن سعد الساعدي وقد حدثني عبد الله ابن أبي بكر أن قد سمى له العباس الرجلين ولكنه استودعه إياهما فأبى عبد الله أن يسميهما لي.

APPENDIX II

Wāqidī, *Maghāzī*, 3: 1005–1006

قال أبو حُميد الساعدي خرجنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى تبوك فلما جننا وادي القرى مررنا على حديقة لامرأة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احرصوها فحرصها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وحرصناها معه عشرة أوساق ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احفظي ما خرج منها حتى نرجع إليك.

فلما أمسينا بالججر قال إنها ستهبّ الليلة ريح شديدة فلا يقوم أحد منكم إلا مع صاحبه ومن كان له بغير فليوثق عقله قال فهاجت ريح شديدة ولم يبق أحد إلا مع صاحبه إلا رجلين من بني ساعدة خرج أحدهما لحاجته وخرج الآخر في طلب بغيره فأما الذي ذهب لحاجته فإنه خُنق على مذهبه وأما الذي ذهب في طلب بغيره فاحتلمته الريح فطرحته بجبلي طيء فأخبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خبرهما فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ألم أنحكم أن يخرج رجل إلا ومعه صاحب له ثم دعا الذي (!) أصيب على مذهبه فشفي وأما الآخر الذي وقع بجبلي طيء فإن طينًا أهدته للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حين قدم المدينة.

APPENDIX III

Ibn Zanjawayh, *Amwāl*, 3: 1076–77, no. 2001

أخبرنا حميد أنا ابن أبي أويس أنا أخي عن سليمان بن بلال عن عمرو بن يحيى المازني عن عباس بن سهل الساعدي عن أبي حميد صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خرج إلى تبوك قال أبو حميد وخرجنا معه فلما جئنا الوادي مررنا على حديقة لامرأة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احرصوها فحرصناها وحرصها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عشرة أوسق ثم قال لها احتفظي بما يخرج منها حتى نرجع إليك فلما رجعنا مررنا على المرأة فسألها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عما خرج من حديقتها فقالت خرج منها عشرة أوسق.

APPENDIX IV

Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, 4: 1785–86 (*Kitāb al-faḍā'il*, no. 11)

حدثنا عبد الله بن مسلمة بن قعنب حدثنا سليمان بن بلال عن عمرو بن يحيى عن عباس بن سهل بن سعد الساعدي عن أبي حميد قال خرجنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم غزوة تبوك فأتينا وادي القرى على حديقة لامرأة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم احرصوها فحرصناها وحرصها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عشرة أوسق وقال أحصيتها حتى نرجع إليك إن شاء الله وانطلقنا حتى قدمنا تبوك فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ستهب عليكم الليلة ريح شديدة فلا يقم فيها أحد منكم فمن كان له بغير فليشد عقاله فهبت ريح شديدة فقام رجل فحملته الريح حتى ألقتة بجبلي طيء وجاء رسول ابن العلماء صاحب أيلة إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بكتاب وأهدى له بغلة بيضاء فكتب إليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأهدى له بردا ثم أقبلنا حتى قدمنا وادي القرى فسأل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم المرأة عن حديقتها كم بلغ ثمرها فقالت عشرة أوسق.

APPENDIX V

Ibn Hishām, *Sīra* (Wüstenfeld), 4

وأنا إن شاء الله مبتدئ هذا الكتاب بذكر إسماعيل بن إبراهيم ومن ولد رسول الله صلعم من ولده وأولادهم لأصلابهم الأول فالأول من إسماعيل إلى رسول الله صلعم وما يعرض من حديثهم وتارك ذكر غيرهم من ولد إسماعيل على هذه الجهة للاختصار إلى حديث سيرة رسول الله صلعم وتارك بعض ما ذكره ابن إسحاق في هذا الكتاب مما ليس لرسول الله صلعم فيه ذكر وما نزل فيه من القرآن شيء وليس سببا لشيء من هذا الكتاب ولا تفسيراً له ولا شاهداً عليه لما ذكرت من الاختصار وأشعاراً ذكرها لم أر أحداً من أهل العلم بالشعر يعرفها وأشياء بعضها يشنع الحديث به وبعضٌ يسوء بعضَ الناس ذكره وبعضٌ لم يقر لنا البكائي بروايته ومستقص إن شاء الله تعالى ما سوى ذلك بمبلغ الرواية له والعلم به.

APPENDIX VI

Al-Rabīʿ ibn Ḥabīb, *Musnad*, 44

قال الربيع قال أبو عبيدة⁵⁵ بلغني عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال إن كان زيد بن عمرو لأول من عاب علي عبادة الأصنام والذبح عليها وذلك أنني أقبلت من الطائف ومعني زيد بن حارثة ومعنا خبز ولحم وكانت قريش أدت زيد بن عمرو حتى خرج من بين أظهرنا فمررت به وعرضت عليه السفارة فقال يا ابن أخي أنتم تذبحون على أصنامكم هذه فقلت نعم فقال لا أكلها ثم عاب الأصنام والأوثان ومن يطعمها ومن يدنو منها⁵⁶ قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم والله ما دنوت من الأصنام شيئا حتى أكرمني الله بالنبوة.

55 I.e. Abū ʿUbayda Muslim ibn Abī Karīma al-Tamīmī. See on him E. Francesca, “The formation and early development of the Ibādī *madhhab*”, *JSAI* 28 (2003), 260–772, at 262, n. 13; *EQ*. s.v. Khārijīs (E. Francesca).

56 Kister, “A bag of meat’: A study of an early *ḥadīth*”, 270: “approached them with reverence”.

APPENDIX VII

Ibn 'Asākir, *Dimashq*, 19: 507

نا أحمد نا يونس عن ابن إسحاق قال فحدثت أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال وهو يحدث عن زيد ابن عمرو إن كان لأول من عاب عليَّ الأوثان ونهاني عنها أقبلت من الطائف ومعني زيد بن حارثة حتى مررت بزيد بن عمرو بن نفيل وهو بأعلى مكة وكانت قريش قد شهرته بفراق دينها حتى خرج من بين أظهرهم وكان بأعلى مكة فجلست إليه ومعني سفرة لي فيها لحم يحملها زيد بن حارثة من ذبائحنا على أصنامنا فقربتنا له وأنا غلام شاب فقلت كل من هذا الطعام أي عم قال فلعلها أي ابن أخي من ذبائحكم هذه التي تذبحون لأوثانكم فقلت نعم فقال أما إنك يا ابن أخي لو سألت بنات عبد المطلب لأخبرنك أنني لا أكل هذه الذبائح فلا حاجة لي بها ثم عاب الأوثان ومن يعيدها ويذبح لها وقال إنما هي باطل لا تضر ولا تنفع أو كما قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فما تمسحت بوثن منها بعد ذلك على معرفة بها ولا ذبحت لها حتى أكرمني الله تعالى برسالته صلى الله عليه وسلم.

APPENDIX VIII

Ibn Ishāq, *Sīra*, ed. Ḥamīdullāh, 92, no. 122

حدثنا أحمد نا يونس عن ابن إسحاق قال وكان هذا الحي من الأنصار يتحدثون مما كانوا يسمعون من يهود من ذكر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن أول ذكر وقع بالمدينة قبل مبعث رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن فاطمة أم النعمان بن عمرو أخي بني النجار وكانت من بغايا الجاهلية وكان لها تابع فكانت تحدث أنه كان إذا جاءها اقتحم البيت الذي هي فيه اقتحاما على من فيه حتى جاءها يوما فوقع على الجدار ولم يصنع كما كان يصنع فقالت له ما لك اليوم قال بعث نبي بتحريم الزنا.

APPENDIX IX

Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 1: 167

أخبرنا علي بن محمد عن علي بن مجاهد عن محمد بن إسحاق عن عاصم بن عمر بن قتادة عن علي بن حسين قال كانت امرأة في بني النجار يقال لها فاطمة بنت النعمان كان لها تابع من الجن فكان يأتيها فأتاها حين هاجر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فانقض على الحائط فقالت ما لك لم تأت كما كنت تأتي قال قد جاء النبي الذي يحرم الزنا والخمر.

APPENDIX X

al-Damīrī, *Ḥayāt al-Ḥayawān*, 1: 294

وفيه أيضا أن فاطمة بنت النعمان النجارية قالت قد كان لي تابع من الجن فكان إذا جاء اقتحم البيت الذي أنا فيه اقتحاما فجاءني يوما فوقف على الجدار ولم يصنع كما كان يصنع فقلت ما بالك لم تصنع ما كنت تصنع صنيعك قبل فقال إنه قد بعث اليوم نبي يحرم الزنا.

APPENDIX XI

Suhaylī, *Rawḍ*, 1: 239

وفي غير رواية البكائي عن ابن إسحق أن فاطمة بنت النعمان النجارية كان لها تابع من الجن وكان إذا جاءها اقتحم عليها في بيتها فلما كان في أول البعث أتاها فقعد على حائط الدار ولم يدخل فقالت له لم لا تدخل فقال قد بعث نبي بتحريم الزنا فذلك أول ما ذكر النبي صلعم بالمدينة.

APPENDIX XII

Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 1: 167

أخبرنا علي بن محمد عن عبد الله بن محمد القرشي من بني أسد بن عبد العزى عن الزهري قال كان الوحي يستمع وكان لامرأة من بني أسد تابع فأتاها يوماً وهو يصيح جاء أمر لا يطاق أحمد حرم الزنا فلما جاء الله بالإسلام منعوا الاستماع.



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Part 5

STUDIES ON EARLY ISLAMIC
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THE JEWISH REACTION TO THE ISLAMIC CONQUESTS

V. Krech and M. Steinicke (eds.), *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions, and Comparative Perspectives*, Leiden: Brill, 2011, 177–90

Early Jewish converts to Islam

Muḥammad's Companion Mu'ādh ibn Jabal who was probably a former Jew¹ officiated towards the death of the Prophet Muḥammad as the governor of Janad in central Yemen. At that time most of the inhabitants of Janad and of the rest of the Yemen were Jewish. Mu'ādh led a mass conversion of Jews at the mosque of Janad on the first Friday of Rajab (the seventh month of the Islamic year) which was later commemorated by an annual visit to that mosque.² Muḥammad's own success among the members of the Jewish tribes of Medina was far less spectacular, since only a handful of them embraced Islam. We probably know about these converts because those who embraced Islam from among "the people of a sacred book" (*ahl al-kitāb*) play a role in anti-Jewish and anti-Christian polemics by providing "proofs that Muḥammad was a true prophet". Such a role is played, for example, by 'Abdallāh ibn Salām who was the most famous Jewish convert at the

1 M. Lecker, "Zayd b. Thābit, 'a Jew with two sidelocks': Judaism and literacy in pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)", *JNES* 56 (1997), 259–73, at 269, no. 17; cf. Josef van Ess, "Die Pest von Emmaus: Theologie und Geschichte in der Frühzeit des Islams", *Oriens* 36 (2001), 248–67, at 264.

2 Mu'ādh brought a letter from Muḥammad to the dominant group among the Sakāsik tribe, the Banū l-Aswad, who were the inhabitants of the Janad region. His sermon on the first Friday of Rajab was attended by former Jews from this tribe who had already converted to Islam before his arrival. Among them there was a group of Jews who questioned him about the keys of Paradise. He not only gave them the right answer but also told them that Muḥammad had anticipated their question, and hence they converted to Islam. Miraculously every year it rains on that Friday or on the Thursday that precedes it; Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Janadī, *al-Sulūk fī ṭabaqāt al-'ulamā' wa-l-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Akwa' al-Ḥiwālī, Ṣan'ā': Maktabat al-Irshād, 1414/1993–1416/1995, 1: 81–2; M. Lecker, "Judaism among Kinda and the *rida* of Kinda", *JAOS* 115 (1995), 635–50, at 638–9.

time of Muḥammad.³ The latter reportedly expressed his resignation with regard to the small number of converts to Islam among the Jews of Medina: “Had ten Jews followed me, every single Jew on earth would have followed me”, he said.⁴ In another version of his utterance the ten Jews that should serve as an example for the rest of the Jews are learned men (*aḥbār*) rather than ordinary people.⁵ Muḥammad and the Jews he encountered in Medina were on a collision course from the outset.⁶ The war against them ended with Muḥammad’s total victory, but it still haunts Jewish-Muslim relations due to the image of the Jewish “enemies of Allāh” as it comes through in Muḥammad’s biography.

The trials and tribulations of the Conquests

Rape, enslavement and corvée usually accompany conquests, and the Islamic Conquests of the seventh century were no exception. Some comparative evidence can be found in connection with an internal Muslim war that took place some half a century after Muḥammad’s death, namely the conquest of Medina by the Umayyad army following the Battle of the Ḥarra in 683 C.E. Nine months later “the children of the Ḥarra” were born to raped Muslim women of Muḥammad’s

- 3 His tribal affiliation and the time of his conversion were disputed. Regarding both we should opt for the less flattering version: he did not belong to the main Jewish tribe Qaynuqā’ but to the marginal tribe Zaydallāt, and he embraced Islam some two years before Muḥammad’s death, not around the time of the hijra; M. Lecker, *The ‘Constitution of Medina’: Muḥammad’s First Legal Document*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 2004, 63–6. I have recently realized that many years ago J. Horowitz had arrived at more or less the same conclusions; see the entries about the famous convert in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, online edition (where Horowitz argues that his family was under the protection of the Zaydallāt), and in *EP*² (where he argues that the version regarding the later conversion date “is worthy of more credence”).
- 4 See Suhaylī, *al-Rawḍ al-unuf*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Wakīl, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1387/1967–1390/1970, 4: 409–10 (*islām ‘Abdillāh ibn Salām*), who claims that only two Jews converted to Islam at the time of Muḥammad (*law ittaba’anī ‘ashara mina l-yahūd lam yabqa fī l-arḍ yahūdī illā ttaba’anī*). The Jewish convert Ka’b al-Aḥbār claimed (on the basis of Qur’ān 5, 12) that the required number of Jewish converts was twelve, which brought about a harmonizing version: both claims are correct, Muḥammad meant ten converts in addition to the previously mentioned two.
- 5 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, Cairo: al-Maṭba’a al-Maymaniyya, 1313/1895, reprint Beirut, 2: 346 (*law āmana bī ‘ashara min aḥbār al-yahūd la-āmana bī kull yahūdī ‘alā wajh al-arḍ*). The word *aḥbār* forms part of the nickname of the previously mentioned convert Ka’b al-Aḥbār who converted to Islam at the time of the second caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb; see e.g. his entry in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. In S. Stroumsa, “On Jewish intellectual converts to Islam in the early Middle Ages”, *Pe’anim* 42 (1990), 61–75, at 63 (Hebrew); and in idem, “On Jewish intellectuals who converted in the early middle ages”, in D. Frank (ed.), *The Jews of Medieval Islam: Community, Society and Identity: Proceedings of an International Conference held by the Institute of Jewish Studies, University College, London 1992*, Leiden: Brill, 1995, 179–97, at 182, his name was misprinted as Ka’b al-Akhbār (and he was not the first Jew who converted to Islam).
- 6 [ADD. The statement regarding Muḥammad’s relations with the Jews will have to be revised once we have a better picture of the Jewish support for Muḥammad at various stages of his Medinan period, especially shortly after the hijra.]

own tribe, Quraysh and of the Anṣār or the Arab tribes of Medina.⁷ The reports about the atrocities committed by the Umayyad army are undeniably anti-Umayyad⁸ and probably exaggerated, but they give one an idea of what conquests were like at that time. One assumes that for an unknown number of years or perhaps decades following the Conquests non-Muslim local communities of all denominations were in a precarious situation, especially where their rights were not safeguarded by capitulation treaties.

Enslavement was a major threat. Men – often belonging to the higher levels of society – were captured and sent to agricultural estates in Arabia and elsewhere. In the intertribal wars before Islam and at the time of Muḥammad the victors were often selective and only took captive those deemed likely to be ransomed by their relatives. Since many of the foreign slaves were not born into slavery, assassinations of Muslim slave owners by their slaves were not uncommon.⁹ Enormous deals regarding the sale of slaves were concluded between members of the Qurashī elite. For example, two prominent Qurashīs bought slaves from the second caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 634–44) in a transaction that may well have included thousands of slaves.¹⁰ The fourth caliph ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (r. 656–61) manumitted slaves on condition that they work on his estate for six years.¹¹ During ‘Alī’s caliphate Muḥammad’s Companion Abū Ayyūb had demanded from the governor of Baṣra, Ibn ‘Abbās, eight slaves to cultivate his land and received many more.¹² The Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 685–705) sent Byzantine slaves to his estates in Yamāma (near present-day Riyadh). They rebelled and were killed by local tribesmen.¹³ References to slaves employed on estates, for

7 The battle received its name from the *ḥarra* or volcanic hill east of Medina. See “al-Ḥarra”, *EP*, s.v. (L. Vecchia Vaglieri); M.J. Kister, “The battle of the Ḥarra”, in M. Rosen-Ayalon (ed.), *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1977, 33–49. For *awlād al-Ḥarra* see Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 257. Reportedly the raped women that gave birth to children numbered 1,000; *ibid.*, 259; or 800; Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-buldān*, s.v. Harrat Wāqim.

8 A woman of Quraysh who was circumambulating the Ka’ba suddenly hugged and kissed a black man whom she met. She explained to a shocked onlooker that it was her son: she had been raped by his father during the Battle of the Ḥarra; Samhūdī, *Wafā’*, 1: 260.

9 For example, Sa’īd the son of the third caliph ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān conquered Samarqand and was governor of Khurāsān under the caliph Mu’āwiya. After Mu’āwiya’s death he returned to Medina and was murdered by his Soghdian slaves; *TMD*, 21: 227. Elsewhere we read that having been dismissed by Mu’āwiya from the governorship of Khurāsān, Sa’īd brought with him to Medina young Soghdian hostages (*min awlād al-Ṣughd*) whom he assigned to an estate as agricultural labourers. One day they closed the estate’s gate, murdered him and committed suicide as the pursuit after them was taking place; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma’ārif*, 202 (*fa-alqāhum fī arḍ ya ‘malūna lahu fihā bi-l-masāhī*, “he assigned them to an estate to work for him with shovels”). They may well have belonged to aristocratic families.

10 M. Lecker, “Biographical notes on Abū ‘Ubayda Ma’mar b. al-Muthannā”, *SI* 81 (1995), 71–100, at 78–9.

11 Ibn Shabba, *Akhbār al-Madīna*, ed. Dandal and Bayān, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1417/1996, 1: 141.

12 He received 40 or, according to another version, 20; Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 16: 54–5.

13 Namely, the Banū Qays ibn Ḥanzāla of the Tamīm; M.J. Kister, “The social and political implications of three traditions in the Kitāb al-Kharāj of Yahya b. Adam”, *JESHO* 3 (1960), 326–34, at

example in digging underground irrigation aqueducts, could easily be multiplied. One thing is certain: many thousands of non-Arab slaves captured during the Conquests worked on agricultural estates and elsewhere. Small communities of Jews, Christians and others could have been depleted of all their young men.

Women and children of male slaves and of those killed in the Conquests were sold into slavery. When Caesarea was conquered, 4,000 slaves (or “heads”, as they are sometimes referred to) were captured. They had been sent to the caliph ‘Umar in Medina and alighted in the Jurf plain north-west of Medina before being distributed by the caliph among orphans of the Anṣār. Other slaves from the same shipment – presumably young literate boys – were employed as clerks in the emerging state apparatus.¹⁴ Figures are notoriously inaccurate, but the fact that the slaves alighted at the Jurf plain suggests that they were numerous, since the plain was used by troops setting out from Medina before proceeding to the battlefields.¹⁵ A slave’s life did not agree with everyone: ‘Umar’s predecessor Abū Bakr (r. 632–34) had given two slave girls from an earlier shipment to the daughters of a prominent Companion of Muḥammad, but both slave girls died. ‘Umar replaced them with slave girls from the Caesarea shipment.¹⁶

Several accounts link the previously mentioned Jewish convert, ‘Abdallāh ibn Salām, to the ransoming of Jewish female captives by the Exilarch, or the head of the Jews in exile. Polemics, rather than an interest in the Exilarchate, are behind the preservation of the following accounts in Muslim sources. ‘Abdallāh reportedly paid 700 dirham for an old female (‘*ajūz*) Jewish slave from Balanjar, the then capital city of the Khazars in the northern Caucasus. The wording of the account that tells us about it suggests that he was there with the Muslim army. On his way back he met the Exilarch who was prepared to pay for the old woman 1,400 dirham, while ‘Abdallāh demanded 4,000. The Exilarch only paid the full amount after ‘Abdallāh had whispered in his ear a verse of the Torah that reportedly made

334, quoting Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*; VII/1, ed. Ramzi Baalbaki, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1417/1997, 9. Kister also adduces evidence regarding the employment of black slaves on estates belonging to two prominent Qurashīs, ‘Abdallāh ibn ‘Āmir and ‘Abdallāh ibn al-Zubayr. He discusses a tradition according to which Muḥammad preferred dates from trees watered by rainfall to ones from irrigated trees, because the former were grown without causing suffering to hungry and naked slaves.

14 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 142 (*wa-ja’ala ba’dahum fi l-kitāb wa-l-a’māl li-l-muslimīna*). In the early days of Islam there was an acute shortage in literate people, and hence non-Muslim scribes were even employed in preparing copies of the Qur’ān. A Christian from Ḥīra charged ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn Abī Laylā (d. 83/702) 70 *dirham* for a copy of the Qur’ān. The Christians of Ḥīra, or the *‘Ibād*, were first hired by the Muslims to prepare copies of the Qur’ān, and later they copied Qur’āns and sold them on their own initiative; they were the first to trade in Qur’āns; Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī, *Kitāb al-maṣāḥif*, ed. A. Jeffery, Leiden: Brill, 1937, 171.

15 Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 2: 31; Ibn Sa’d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 2: 248–9.

16 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 142. The Companion in question was Abū Umāma As’ad ibn Zurāra from the Khazraj/Najjār who had made Muḥammad a custodian of his daughters. The deceased slave girls (singular: *khādim*) were captured in ‘Ayn al-Tamr.

it incumbent upon Jews to release prisoners. Finally, ‘Abdallāh only took 2,000 dirham and returned the remaining 2,000 to the Exilarch.¹⁷ The polemical anti-Jewish point is slightly disguised in this account. A succinct account along the same lines has it that the Exilarch only ransomed Jewish female slaves who had not been raped by the Arabs. The Exilarch had to be reminded of the Torah command that all the female captives should be ransomed (*fa-fādūhunna kullahunna*). When the Exilarch intended to deviate from the sacred law of the Torah regarding the ransoming of captives, ‘Abdallāh ibn Salām, who was well versed in the Torah, guided him to the truth. The implication is clear: the Jews also turned their backs on the Torah’s command that they follow the future prophet Muḥammad when he is sent to mankind. Another account on the same topic is a philologist’s feast because of its wealth of detail. It is doubtful that the anecdote it describes is historical, but the preference given to the ransoming of Jewish women who had not been raped – a background detail – must be historical. This account has it that after the Muslim conquest of Nihāwand the Exilarch ransomed Jewish female slaves. A Muslim who had captured a young attractive Jewess asked ‘Abdallāh ibn Salām to broker for him a good deal with the Exilarch. The latter inquired the girl through an interpreter (who probably translated from Aramaic to Persian) whether her captor had raped her. ‘Abdallāh who understood the Exilarch’s words objected, claiming that according to the Exilarch’s sacred book [i.e. the Torah] such a question was forbidden. Following an angry exchange with the Exilarch (‘Abdallāh argued that he knew the Exilarch’s book better than the Exilarch himself), ‘Abdallāh accepted the latter’s invitation to visit him, hoping to convert him to Islam. For three days ‘Abdallāh was reciting the Torah to the Exilarch, while the latter kept weeping: “How shall I deal with the Jews”, he asked. In other words, he was worried about the Jews’ reaction if he converted to Islam. Finally, “he was overcome by misery”, i.e. he remained Jewish.¹⁸ The polemical point is evident; still, we gain a glimpse of the state of many women (and small children) in the conquered towns and villages.

As to *corvée*, the Muslims were following time-old practices.¹⁹ Local people were employed as guides and led the Muslims from their own town to the next

17 Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, ed. Aḥmad Faṭḥī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ḥijāzī, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1427/2006, 1: 146, no. 865. The supposed Torah verse says: “Every slave of the Children of Israel you should buy and manumit [what follows in bold face belongs to Qur’ān 2, 85]. **And if they come to you as captives, ransom them since it is forbidden for you to banish them**” (*innaka lā tajidu mamlūkan fī banī isrā’īl illā shtaraytahu fa-a’taqtaqhu wa-in ya’tūkum usarā tufādūhum wa-huwa muḥarramun ‘alaykum ikhrājūhum*). The relevance of the anecdote to the Qur’ān and its interpretation is questionable, but the Jewish captive from Balanjar and the meeting between the famous convert from Medina and the Exilarch may be historical.

18 Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *al-Maṭālib al-‘āliya bi-zawā’id al-masānīd al-thamāniya*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-‘Azamī, Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifā, 1407/1987, 4: 31–2.

19 The Byzantines would capture foreigners that arrived at their towns and employ them in the reconstruction of churches; I. Hasson, “Le chef judhāmite Rawḥ ibn Zinbā’”, *SI* 77 (1993), 95–122, at 101, n. 23.

one.²⁰ They also served as manual workers, building and maintaining roads and bridges.²¹

Rape, enslavement and corvée belong to the period that immediately followed the Conquests. But the inferior legal status of the *dhimmī*, or the “protected person”, shared by Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians was permanent. Qur’anic law prescribed that the payment of tax (*jizya* in this context usually means poll-tax) be carried out in a fashion that was humiliating for the payer.²² Humiliation had nothing to do with the treasury; it was ideological, and hence not subject to pragmatism or tolerance. In the Islamic state non-Muslims were constitutionally humiliated regardless of their wealth or social status.²³ The *dhimmīs* are comparable to the clients or protected neighbours of pre-Islamic tribal society, since even a rich and otherwise respectable client was legally inferior to any full-fledged member of the tribe.²⁴ Some claimed that the humiliation also extended to the land tax paid by non-Muslims. A Muslim who bought land from a *dhimmī* and undertook to pay the tax (*jizya*) due from it was inflicted by the humiliation (*dhull*, *ṣaghār*) attached to it.

Competition and urbanization

The foreign slaves employed on Muslim estates were but one aspect of a major early Islamic trend of investment in agriculture that posed a serious threat to the very livelihood of *dhimmī* farmers, be they Jewish, Christian or Zoroastrian. Members of the Quraysh tribe had been involved in agricultural projects outside

20 ‘Abd al-Razzāq, *Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Rahmān al-A‘zamī, Beirut: al-Majlis al-‘Ilmī, 1390/1970–1392/1972, 5: 279 (*hal kuntum tusakkkhirūna l-‘ajam? qāla: kunnā nusakkkhiruhum min qarya ilā qarya yadullūnā [‘alā] l-ṭarīq thumma nukhallīhim*).

21 See for example the capitulation treaty of Edessa (al-Ruhā, modern Şanlıurfa); Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 174 (*wa-‘alaykum irshād al-dāll wa-islāḥ al-jusūr wa-l-ṭuruq*). See also J.B. Simonsen, *Studies in the Genesis and Early Development of the Caliphal Taxation System*, Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1988, 127: “Conscripted labour was rapidly introduced to provide canals, roads, ships for the new Arab fleet, and for the building of mosques, palaces, etc.”; idem, “Muhammad’s letters”, in K. von Folsach *et alii* (eds.), *From Handaxe to Khan: Essays Presented to Peder Mortensen on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2004, 215–23, at 220.

22 U. Rubin, “Qur’ān and poetry: More data concerning the Qur’anic *jizya* verse (*‘an yadin*)”, *JSAI* 31 (2006), 139–46. See e.g. the capitulation treaty of Tbilisi (. . . *‘alā iqrār bi-l-ṣaghār wa-l-jizya*); Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 201. Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 2675, has a slightly different version of this expression (*‘alā l-iqrār bi-ṣaghār al-jizya*). Cf. *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, XIV, trans. G. Rex-Smith, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994, 46: “with the imposition of a small tribute”. But *ṣaghār* in this context refers to the humiliation which is the permanent condition of the *dhimmī*; see *EQ*, s.v. Poll tax (P.L. Heck).

23 According to Shī‘ite experts on Islamic law, there is nothing wrong in looking at women from “the people of a sacred book” (*aḥl al-kitāb*) and at their hair because their status is that of slave girls (*imā’*); however, this permission excludes suspicious aims or pleasure; al-Bahrānī, *al-Ḥadā’iq al-nādira fī aḥkam al-‘itra al-tāhira*, Beirut: Dār al-Aḍwā’, 1405/1985–1414/1993, 23: 58–9.

24 Akhnas ibn Sharīq who was a client of Quraysh could not grant security that was binding for the Qurashīs “of pure lineage”; M. Lecker, *The ‘Constitution of Medina’*, 116.

Mecca even before the advent of Islam, and their intensive activity in this field in the early Islamic period was an extension of their pre-Islamic endeavours. The Prophet Muḥammad and the four so-called “Rightly-Guided” caliphs (*rāshidūn*) owned large estates in Medina and elsewhere in northern Arabia that yielded huge revenues. The same is true of many prominent members of early Islamic society. The creation of estates continued under the Umayyads, and it can be shown that land ownership was sometimes taken into account in the appointment of governors to certain provinces. It is true that the purchase of *dhimmī* land by Muslims was frowned upon by both the doctors of Islamic law and the treasury, since the tax paid for Muslim land was much lower than that paid for *dhimmī* land. However, while the doctors of law engaged in legal disputes, large tracts of arable lands changed hands in Iraq and elsewhere. The difference in taxation between *dhimmī* land and Muslim land meant that the *dhimmī* farmers suffered from disadvantage when competing with the Muslim land owners.

The pricing of agricultural produce was but one aspect of a presumed marketing problem encountered by *dhimmī* farmers. Their access to markets controlled by Muslims could have been restricted when they competed with a governor or another influential figure who wanted to sell his own produce first. Suffice it to mention that one of Muḥammad’s Companions, al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām, owned in Baṣra not only a market but also agricultural lands allotted to him by the state (*khiṭa*).²⁵

Assistance to the conquest army put in context

The sad outcome of the first encounter between Judaism and Islam at the time of Muḥammad and the expulsion of many Jews from Arabia, most notably from Khaybar in northern Arabia, by the second caliph ‘Umar (that actually took place after the Conquests had begun) were no secret for the Jews who lived in Palestine, Iraq and elsewhere. But for all their sympathy for the fate of their Arabian brothers, life went on and events in Arabia could not have had a lasting effect on their attitude to the advancing conquest army. Besides, one must take into account that for many Jews living in Palestine and Syria, the Conquests, for all the trials and tribulations that accompanied them, brought an end to terrible Byzantine oppression, not to mention the disruption of the Byzantine-Sassanian wars.²⁶ Hence it is not unreasonable to expect that Jews would assist the conquest army. Intelligence,

25 Ya’ qūbī, *Mushākalat al-nās li-zamānihim*, 13 (*fa-banā l-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām dārahu l-mashhūra bi-l-Baṣra wa-jihā l-aswāq wa-l-tijārāt . . . wa-taraka . . . wa-khiṭaṭan bi-Miṣr wa-l-Iskandariyya wa-l-Kūfa wa-l-Baṣra*). Cf. *EP*, s.v. *khiṭa* (“a term used of the lands allotted to tribal groups and individuals in the garrison cities founded by the Arabs at the time of the conquests”).

26 For Jewish eschatology in the context of the Conquests (“the secrets that were revealed to R. Shim’on bar Yoḥai when he was hiding in a cave”) cf. Bernard Lewis, “An apocalyptic vision of Islamic history”, *BSOAS* 13 (1950), 308–38; R.G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997, 308–12.

for example, can be a decisive factor in the takeover of a besieged town or in finding a convenient ford across a river.²⁷ It is impossible to obtain an accurate picture of the Jewish military contribution during the Conquests and immediately after them. Still, it is noteworthy that upon the conquest of Tripoli (Lebanon) the then governor of Syria, Mu'āwiya, stationed in its citadel a Jewish troop.²⁸ The members of this troop that came from the Urdunn province are supposed to have been Tripoli's only inhabitants for several decades.²⁹ In other words, for several decades they were the only representatives of the Muslim state in Tripoli (that was also inhabited by Byzantines and others). It can be said that the role of Jews as garrisons in Spanish towns after the Muslim conquest of Spain³⁰ had a prominent precedent in Tripoli.

It should be taken into account that the evidence regarding the assistance of the local population to the Muslim conquest army was not preserved only to educate later generations but also to legitimize the purchase of land from members of communities that provided assistance in one form or another. These communities were granted capitulation treaties which secured for them an improved legal status compared to that of communities that were conquered without such treaties. The former had the right to sell their land to Muslims, while the land of the latter was to remain an asset of future Muslim generations. Farsighted statesmen refrained from dividing the land of the latter category as spoils, and it is sometimes put on a par with *waqf* – or charitable endowment – that cannot be sold or given away as a gift.³¹

- 27 Regarding the possible Jewish participation in the Arab armies see also Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, 528–9; S. Leder, “The attitude of the population, especially the Jews, towards the Arab-Islamic conquest of Bilād al-Shām and the question of their role therein”, *Die Welt des Orients* 18 (1987) 64–71.
- 28 Qudāma ibn Ja'far, *Kitāb al-kharāj wa-ṣinā'at al-kitāba*, ed. Muḥammad Husayn al-Zabīdī, Baghdad: Dār al-Rashīd, 1981, 296 (*jamā'a mina l-yahūd*). Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 127, has at this point “a large troop” (*jamā'a kabīra*).
- 29 Ibn 'Asākir, *TMD*, 21: 356. The Muslims trusted the Jews since the latter were unlikely to betray them and cooperate with the Byzantine enemies. See also M. Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099*, trans. E. Broido, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, 58: “Mu'āwiya then placed a large number of Jews from al-Urdunn, that is, the north of Palestine, in the city's citadel”; but clearly a troop is meant here rather than civilians. F.M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981, 247, has it that Mu'āwiya settled Tripoli with Jews, “[p]erhaps because Jews were excluded from other Syrian towns, e.g. Jerusalem”. But the Jews in question formed a non-Arab unit employed as garrison. The emerging Muslim Imperial army included, among others, many Persians. Regarding the stationing of Persian garrisons by the caliph Mu'āwiya see e.g. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 117 (again the term *jamā'a*, or troop, is used; the Persians included *asāwira*, or heavy cavalry, from Baṣra and Kūfa; and one of their *quwwād*, or commanders, is mentioned by name).
- 30 N.A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979, 23–4; N. Roth, “The Jews and the Muslim conquest of Spain”, *Jewish Social Studies* 38 (1976), 145–58.
- 31 The person in charge of the *kharāj* or land tax in the Urdunn province at the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz asked the caliph about land of *Ahl al-dhimma* found in the hands of Muslims (in other

However, the sale of *dhimmī* land to Muslims, be they owners of large estates or small farmers, no doubt took place regardless of the status of the land and new realities were constantly created on the ground. Some proponents of *jihād* wished that all Arabs remain warriors and were probably opposed to each and every land transaction; but in general the purchase of land from *dhimmīs* who had capitulation treaties was deemed legitimate.

Religious edifices

Symbolic value was attached to the takeover of places of worship belonging to defeated communities, be they sites of idol worship in Arabia or churches and synagogues outside Arabia. Central edifices, especially those located in prominent places such as hilltops or town centres, were more at risk than marginal ones for both ideological and practical reasons.

A case in point is the central church of Damascus or *kanīsat Yūḥannā* for which we have detailed evidence. Fifteen Damascene churches and synagogues, among them *kanīsat al-yahūd*, or the synagogue of the Jews – out of dozens of churches and synagogues that existed in Damascus at that time – remained Christian or Jewish property through their listing in the capitulation treaty of Damascus³² that later served as a point of reference. When the Christians brought a dispute with an Arab dignitary over the ownership of a church before the caliph ‘Umar II (‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, r. 717–20), the caliph told the dignitary that if the church was one of the 15 churches included in the treaty, he had no right to it.³³ ‘Umar II was also involved in the dispute over another church, “the church of Banū Naṣr” who had received it from the caliph Mu‘āwiya. ‘Umar II expelled the Banū Naṣr from it and returned it to the Christians. However, as was the case with other reforms of ‘Umar II, when Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 720–24) ascended the throne, he returned the church to the Banū Naṣr.³⁴

Beside the synagogue near al-Ḥayr that was included in the capitulation treaty, the Damascene Jews had another synagogue in Darb al-Balāgha that was not included in it and hence became a mosque.³⁵ As to the central church *kanīsat Yūḥannā*, half of it was included in the treaty and remained in Christian hands, while the other half became the central or Friday Mosque of Damascus. However,

words, land purchased by the latter from the former). He was ordered to prevent such transactions because the land was considered *waqf* or charitable endowment; Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 2: 199.

32 Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 2: 353–7.

33 *Ibid.*, 2: 354. The dignitary in question was Ḥassān ibn Mālik al-Kalbī who was the governor of Filastīn under the caliphs Mu‘āwiya and Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiya.

34 *Ibid.* (printed *kanīsat ibn Naṣr*; but the variant reading *kanīsat banī Naṣr* is better).

35 Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 2: 357 (*wa-kanīsat al-yahūd ‘inda l-Khayr* [read: al-Ḥayr] *bāqīya wa-qad kānat lahum kanīsa ukhrā fi Darb al-Balāgha lā dhikr lahā fi kitāb al-ṣulḥ ju‘ilat masjidan*). For the place name al-Ḥayr see Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 40: 468. See also Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 2: 297; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, Beirut: Dar Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1412/1992–1413/1993, 7: 27 (who reports about the destruction in 717/1317–8 of a synagogue built in the Islamic period).

several decades later the caliph al-Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 705–15) demolished the church and joined it to the Friday Mosque.³⁶

It is noteworthy that the task of demolishing the Christian half was given to the Jews – the Umayyads were probably interested in straining the relations between the Jewish and Christian communities. The official who enlisted the Jews for this task was the one in charge of land tax (*kharāj*), which indicates that the demolition was imposed on the Jews as a kind of corvée labour.³⁷ It appears that ‘Umar II’s returning of churches to their original owners was part of a bigger scheme: when the Christians complained to ‘Umar II about al-Walīd’s confiscation of their church, ‘Umar ordered that this wrong be remedied. But the Muslims of Damascus, including prominent jurists (*fuqahā*), protested and struck a deal with the Christians: all the churches of the Ghūṭa, or the Damascus hinterland, that had been taken from them forcibly (*‘anwa*) will be returned to them in return for dropping their claim to the church of Yūḥannā, or their half of the Friday Mosque. ‘Umar II ratified the deal.³⁸ The churches that were taken from them forcibly were those listed in the capitulation treaty. As we have just seen, ‘Umar II returned two of them to their legitimate owners. However, his time in office was short.

In sum, during the Conquests many Damascene churches and synagogues became Muslim property. But even those included in the capitulation treaty were not immune from confiscation.³⁹

Leaders and state officials

Two specific *dhimmi* groups were spared the hardships of the Conquests due to the pragmatic and realistic policy of the new regime. First, the leaders of the religious communities preserved their status. The Arabs could not and would not intervene in the daily life of the non-Muslim communities that kept their autonomy and leadership. Through the existing leadership the communities were controlled

36 Abū ‘Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām (d. 224/839) had been shown the place of the church of Damascus before it was demolished and included in the mosque; see his *al-Nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh fī l-qur’ān al-‘azīz*, ed. Muḥammad ibn Šāliḥ al-Mudayfir, Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1411/1990, 287–8, no. 525, who also reports that the previously mentioned Jewish convert Ka‘b al-Aḥbār anticipated (in an eschatological context) the destruction of the church of Damascus and the building of a mosque on its site.

37 Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 65: 134 (he was Yazīd ibn Tamīm ibn Ḥujr al-Sulamī, the *mawlā* or freedman of the secretary [*kātib*] ‘Ubaydallāh ibn Naṣr ibn al-Ḥajjāj ibn ‘Ilāṭ al-Sulamī). See also Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 125 (where the identity of the labourers and the demolition experts [*al-fa‘ala wa-l-naqqāḍīna*] employed by al-Walīd is not specified).

38 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 125–6.

39 It is noteworthy that new churches (and probably new synagogues) were built after the Conquests, The Christian Sarja or Sarjūn (Sergius) who was a secretary (*kātib*) under Mu‘āwiya and later caliphs had a church built for him after the Muslim conquest of Damascus. Later Mu‘āwiya “received his conversion to Islam”, but the church remained; Ibn ‘Asākir, *TMD*, 20: 161. His conversion at the hands of Mu‘āwiya made him a *mawlā islām* of Mu‘āwiya rather than his freedman. About Sarjūn see also Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, Index. One assumes that the church served relatives of his who remained Christians.

effectively.⁴⁰ Second, *dhimmī* state officials kept their posts. The Muslims preserved the taxation systems of the Sassanians and Byzantines in their respective original languages, and hence the members of the former administrations remained in their employ, be they Jewish, Christian or Zoroastrian. The conquerors were a minority in the new territories, and there was of course the language barrier. The heyday of the *dhimmī* clerks continued to the Arabization of the state apparatus under the caliph ‘Abd al-Malik, but one assumes that even after that time these clerks remained the backbone of the administration.⁴¹ The several decades that elapsed since the Conquests allowed them to acquire whatever Arabic proficiency that was needed to run a taxation ledger.

In any case, *dhimmīs* from all communities were only tolerated as long as they knew their place in the hierarchy of power and had no political or military aspirations.

The Conquests brought most of the world Jewry under the rule of Islam. Jewish farmers struggling for their livelihood were pushed to the new garrison cities. At the same time, urbanization opened new horizons for two Jewish elites: the international traders and the intellectuals. Custom dues paid by *dhimmīs* were much higher than those paid by Muslims, but few restrictions were imposed on their trade and the Conquests created for them a huge market. Intellectuals continuing a time-old tradition of learning used the Arabic language in Hebrew script to create some of the cornerstones of the Jewish library for all time.

40 J.B. Simonsen, “Mecca and Medina: Arab city-states or Arab caravan-cities”, in M.H. Hansen (ed.), *A Comparative Study of Thirty City-State Cultures: An Investigation*, Copenhagen: Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2000, 241–50, at 246, argues that the policy of non-intervention was an old Arabian tradition: in Muḥammad’s agreements with tribes and cities in Arabia one notices “a complete lack of political control *vis-à-vis* the tribes and cities on the peninsula on the part of Medina. In this way Medina continued the policy of its predecessor Mecca. The same policy was followed when Medina organised the conquests after Muḥammad’s death in 632. The expansion was successful, but the administrative system established in the conquered areas was founded solely on the experience of the caravan-city. Medina never tried to control the conquered areas directly. In Syria, Iraq and Egypt the administration was left to the local upper class, and their autonomy was extensive. In the early caliphate the central administration never interfered with local administration. If the tax-demands were met, the caliphate left matters entirely to the local administration”. See also *idem*, *Studies in the Genesis*, 127.

41 One must bear in mind that it was easier for the governor to discipline or even put to death a non-Arab clerk who did not have the backing of a tribe.

WA-BI-RĀDHĀN MĀ
BI-RĀDHĀN . . .

The landed property of ‘Abdallāh ibn Mas‘ūd¹

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‘Abdallāh ibn Mas‘ūd (henceforward: Ibn Mas‘ūd) is a genuine representative of the social and political revolution brought about by the Prophet Muḥammad. He died in 32/653.² According to a family member (his brother’s grandson), he was at that time 63-years-old.³ His humble origin notwithstanding, he reached the highest level of the early Islamic administration and accumulated great wealth.⁴ His offspring included leading members of society, one of whom was the historian al-Mas‘ūdī.⁵

What follows deals with Ibn Mas‘ūd’s landed properties, most of which were in south-western Iraq, more specifically in the Kūfa-Ḥīra-Najaf-Qādisiyya area. The study of land ownership puts us, so to speak, on firm ground.⁶ It also immunizes us against reading hagiography as if it were historiography and averts unrealistic perceptions regarding the leading figures of the turbulent first decades of Islam. As one might expect, the upheavals of that period

1 A draft of this study was presented at the “From Jāhiliyya to Islam” colloquium, Jerusalem, June 2012.

2 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 3: 160.

3 *TMD*, 33: 190.

4 M.G. Morony, “Landholding in seventh-century Iraq: Late Sasanian and early Islamic patterns”, in A.L. Udovitch (ed.), *The Islamic Middle East 700–1900: Studies in Economic and Social History*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1981, 158, says that Ibn Mas‘ūd and others who received grants of land from ‘Uthmān (on which see more later) were members of the Arab pre-Islamic tribal aristocracy. But this does not apply to Ibn Mas‘ūd, Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt and ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir who were among the beneficiaries.

5 Ibn Mas‘ūd’s brothers ‘Utba and ‘Umayy were also prominent. Half of the chapter on the Hudhayl tribe in Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘arab*, 196–8 is dedicated to the three brothers and their descendants.

6 Cf. M.J. Kister, “Land property and *Jihād*”, *JESHO* 34, 1991, 270–311; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum III*, no. IV; (available at www.kister.huji.ac.il); H. Munt, “Caliphal estates and properties around Medina in the Umayyad Period”, in A. Delattre, M. Legendre and P. Sijpesteijn (eds.), *Authority and Control in the Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th–10th Century)*, Leiden: Brill, 2018, 432–63.

brought about a major transfer of land titles to leading members of the emerging Muslim elite. Revenues from landed property (and from various economic ventures) provided Ṭalḥa and Zubayr, among others, with the means to wage expensive, internecine wars. Many trustworthy facts can be extracted from the “mountain of material”⁷ available to us in the primary sources. Such facts are usually detached from any biased and conflicting claims that are often found in the sources. They contribute to a better understanding of early Islamic history, while shedding light on the social and political tensions created by the unequal division of wealth.

wa-bi-Rādhān mā bi-Rādhān

Rādhān figures prominently in an article published in 1974 by Moshe Gil about the network of Jewish merchants called the Rādhānites (in Arabic: al-Rādhāniyya).⁸ The last section of his article (314–22) deals with their provenance. According to Gil’s convincing argument, the name Rādhāniyya goes back to a place called Rādhān. He refers to the Rādhān(ān/yn/āt) region east of the Tigris, not far from Baghdad. However, as we shall see, there was another Rādhān, near Kūfa, which is hidden away in Gil’s own evidence. Whether the Rādhānite merchants came from the Kūfan Rādhān remains an open question.

Let us begin with an utterance which Gil attributes to the Prophet Muḥammad, although its latter part goes back to Ibn Mas‘ūd. According to Gil:

Rādhān was even a symbol of fertile soil in the conquered countries. A tradition ascribed to the Prophet warns the believers against coveting property and lands for the desires of the world: “what is in al-Madīna is in al-Madīna and what is in Rādhān is in Rādhān”.⁹

Gil comments on this, saying:

Later Muslim traditionalists interpreted this tradition in a different way, explaining that it referred to a place called Rādhān, in the vicinity of al-Madīna, thus Sam‘ānī, *Ansāb* . . . Samhūdī, *Wafā’* . . . who cites al-Majd, who is al-Fīrūzābādī . . . but it is not extant in his *Qāmūs*; the source of the idea that Rādhān is near al-Madīna can only be in the above-mentioned tradition, otherwise Samhūdī, who lived in al-Madīna, would have known about it and told about it.

7 Borrowed from B. Sadeghi and U. Bergmann, “The codex of a companion of the Prophet and the Qur’ān of the Prophet”, *Arabica* 57 (2010), 416.

8 M. Gil, “The Rādhānite merchants and the land of Rādhān”, *JESHO* 17 (1974), 299–328.

9 Idem, *Jews in Islamic Countries in the Middle Ages*, trans. D. Strassler, Leiden: Brill, 2004, 631. Also Gil, “The Rādhānite merchants”, 316, n. 85.

The tradition in question that exists in several versions is made of two parts. In the first part, Ibn Mas'ūd quotes Muḥammad's utterance prohibiting the ownership of an estate for fear that it might whet its owner's appetite for this world (*lā tattakhidhū l-ḡay'a fa-targhabū fī l-dunyā*). In the second part, Ibn Mas'ūd apologetically points to his own estates in Rādhān and in Medina: *wa-bi-Rādhān mā bi-Rādhān wa-bi-l-Madīna mā bi-l-Madīna*.¹⁰ However, there was no Rādhān near Medina.¹¹ Fīrūzābādī's book which is quoted by Samhūdī is not the former's *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* but his *al-Maghānim al-muṭāba fī ma'ālim Ṭāba*.¹² In addition, contrary to Nawawī's opinion (see later mention), Ibn Mas'ūd's saying *wa-bi-Rādhān mā bi-Rādhān wa-bi-l-Madīna mā bi-l-Madīna* does not turn Rādhān into "a symbol of fertile soil in the conquered countries" but reflects, as has already been mentioned, Ibn Mas'ūd's contrition. Samhūdī (d. 911/1505) does have an entry on Rādhān in the geographical section of his *Wafā' al-wafā bi-akhbār dār al-muṣṭafā*.¹³ He quotes in it Majd al-Dīn al-Fīrūzābādī's (d. 817/1415) entry on Rādhān. In the same entry he also quotes Nawawī's commentary (the quotation is from Nawawī's *Tahdhīb al-asmā'* – in this case it is quoted without attribution; however, Samhūdī often quotes Nawawī with proper acknowledgement), according to which Ibn Mas'ūd's words have nothing to do with ownership of estates in these places. According to Nawawī, ownership of an estate is prohibited, "especially if you own an estate in Rādhān or in Medina. Ibn Mas'ūd singled them out for their great value and for the people's desire for them" (*khaṣṣahumā li-naḡāsatihimā wa-kathrat al-raghba fihimā*).¹⁴ However, this is not a general statement but a regretful reference by Ibn Mas'ūd to his own non-compliance with Muḥammad's ruling.

In another version of Muḥammad's statement, he prohibited the abundance of children and property (*nahā rasūl allāh 'an al-tabaqqur fī l-ahl wa-l-māl*).

- 10 Modern technology allows us to trace the versions of the tradition by searching for the Arabic word *wa-bi-Rādhān*. In *al-Maktaba al-shāmila*, for example, there are 29 occurrences in primary sources. Most of the evidence used in this chapter can be traced by using one or more digitized text repository, often with more parallel sources. In some cases the books were unavailable to me and I had to rely on a digitized source.
- 11 Ḥamad al-Jāsir reached the same conclusion: there was no explicit evidence for the existence of Rādhān in Medina. He argued convincingly that it goes back to the attribution of al-Walīd ibn Kathīr ibn Sinān al-Muzanī, who was originally a Medinan, to Rādhān in Iraq; Naṣr al-Iskandarī, *al-Amkina wa-l-miyāh wa-l-jibāl wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir, Riyadh: Markaz al-Malik Fayṣal, 1425/2004, 1: 538, n. 3. However, al-Jāsir had in mind the famous Rādhān east of Baghdad, while in fact al-Walīd is linked to the other Rādhān near Kūfa (see more later).
- 12 The existing edition in one volume only includes the geographical part: Majd al-Dīn al-Fīrūzābādī, *al-Maghānim al-muṭāba fī ma'ālim Ṭāba*, ed. Ḥamad al-Jāsir, Riyadh: al-Yamāma, 1389/1969. [ADD. al-Fīrūzābādī, *al-Maghānim al-muṭāba fī ma'ālim Ṭāba*, ed. Ḥabīb Maḡmūd Aḡmad, Medina: Markaz Buḡūth wa-Dirāsāt al-Madīna al-Munawwara, 1423/2002, 2: 802–3. The book is included in *al-Maktaba al-shāmila*. 3 vols.]
- 13 Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, 4: 284: *Rādhān qarya bi-nawāḡhī l-Madīna, qālahu l-Majd*. Rādhān is also mentioned in the abridged version of Samhūdī's book entitled *Khulāṣat al-wafā'*: *Rādhān: qāla Yāqūt min nawāḡhī l-Madīna laḡā dhikr fī ḡadīth ibn Mas'ūd*.
- 14 Nawawī, *Tahdhīb al-asmā'*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1416/1996, 3: 124 has a garbled text for an obvious reason: *bi-Rādhān bi-l-Madīna mā bi-l-Madīna*.

More significantly, according to a variant of this version, Ibn Mas‘ūd reacted by referring to the three families (i.e. households) he had: one in Medina, one in Rādhān and one in “so-and-so” (*inna lī thalāthat ahlīna, ahl bi-l-Madīna wa-ahl bi-Rādhān wa-ahl bi-kadhā*).¹⁵ One assumes that most of the time he lived in Kūfa as an absentee landlord. The place name hidden under “so-and-so” may have been censored (because involved something embarrassing?). Ibn Mas‘ūd’s offspring lived in Kūfa (*wa-‘aqibuhu bi-l-Kūfa*),¹⁶ but there was nothing embarrassing about Kūfa where Ibn Mas‘ūd owned two courts (see later mention).

Regardless of whether or not Ibn Mas‘ūd actually said these words, those who quoted them (or put them in his mouth) must have related them to well-known facts. Only a person who actually owned plenty of landed property – and had several households – could have uttered them. While Ibn Mas‘ūd’s disciples were no doubt more interested in their teacher’s state of mind than in social history, we may use their reminiscences out of their original context.

The hadith transmitter al-Walīd ibn Kathīr ibn Sinān (see earlier, n. 11), whose *floruit* dates to the latter half of the second/eighth century, leads us to evidence regarding Ibn Mas‘ūd’s Rādhān. In addition to the tribal *nisba* al-Muzanī (after the Muzayna tribe), al-Walīd had two non-tribal *nisbas*, namely al-Madanī and al-Rādhānī. The fact that he lived in Kūfa¹⁷ – some refer to him as al-Kūfī¹⁸ – is linked to the *nisba* al-Rādhānī. Actually he did not live inside Kūfa but just outside of it (*kāna yaskunu khārijan mina l-Kūfa*). Ibn Ḥajar says that after having quoted Muḥammad’s instruction, Ibn Mas‘ūd admitted his own blunder (*istadraka ‘alā nafsihi*), referring to his two estates in Medina and in Rādhān and his two families, one in Kūfa and the other in Rādhān. More significantly, Ibn Ḥajar adds that Rādhān is a place on the outskirts of Kūfa (*makān khārij al-Kūfa*).¹⁹ A place located *khārijan mina l-Kūfa/khārij al-Kūfa* must have been just outside of Kūfa. These phrases also suggest another place near Kūfa, namely al-Nukhayla, which

15 Shāshī, *Musnad*, ed. al-Maḥallāwī, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1433/2012, 278; Shāshī, *Musnad*, ed. al-Maḥfūz al-Raḥmān Zayn Allāh, Medina: Maktabat al-‘Ulūm wa-l-Ḥikam, 1410/1989–1414/1993, 2: 244.

16 *TMD*, 33: 61.

17 This is stated in Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 31: 71 (*sakana l-Kūfa*). Sam‘ānī, *al-Ansāb*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā, Beirut: Dār al-Jinān, 1419/1998, 3: 22, s.v. al-Rādhānī, indicates that he was from (the alleged) Rādhān al-Madīna. He was followed by Yāqūt, s.v. Rādhān – an entry which mainly deals with the better-known Rādhān, more precisely the Rādhān al-‘Alā and Rādhān al-Asfāl districts near Baghdad.

18 Ibn Naṣīr al-Dīn, *Tawḍīḥ al-mushtabih*, ed. Muḥammad Na‘īm al-‘Araqsūsī, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1407/1986–1414/1993, 4: 88 (*al-Muzanī al-Madanī thumma l-Kūfī*).

19 *Ma‘nā l-ḥadīth anna Ibn Mas‘ūd ḥaddatha ‘an al-nabī bi-l-nahy ‘an al-tawassu‘ wa-‘an ittikhādh al-ḍiyya’ thumma lammā faragha l-ḥadīth stadraka ‘alā nafsihi wa-ashāra ilā annahu itakhadha ḍay‘atayni ihdāhumā bi-l-Madīna wa-l-ukhrā bi-Rādhān wa-‘itakhadha ahlayni ahl bi-l-Kūfa wa-ahl bi-Rādhān wa-Rādhān . . . makān khārij al-Kūfa*; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tā’jīl al-manfa‘a bi-zawā‘id rijāl al-a‘imma al-arba‘a*, ed. Ikrām Allāh Imdād al-Ḥaqq, Beirut: Dār al-Bashā‘ir al-Islāmiyya, 1416/1996, 2: 443–4.

was *khārijan mina l-Kūfa*²⁰ or just outside of it. Once you passed al-Nukhayla, you could see the houses of Kūfa.²¹ When Mu‘āwiya arrived in Kūfa (accompanied by Syrian spiritual functionaries, i.e. *quṣṣāš* and *qurrā’*) to negotiate with al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī the latter’s relinquishing of his claim to rule, he encamped between al-Nukhayla and the Kūfan *dār al-rizq*²² or the storehouse of provisions near the Kūfa bridge. If the Rādhān of Ibn Mas‘ūd and of al-Walīd ibn Kathīr were just outside of Kūfa, the place name may have disappeared or nearly so, because Kūfa expanded and swallowed it.

Ibn Mas‘ūd’s four courts, two in Kūfa and two in Medina

The courts belong in the discussion of Ibn Mas‘ūd’s landed property, although they are probably unrelated to his utterance *wa-bi-Rādhān mā bi-Rādhān wa-bi-l-Madīna mā bi-l-Madīna*, which relates to agricultural land. This is shown by a variant of the *tabaqqur* version that refers to his date palms in Yathrib (Medina) and in Rādhān.²³

In Kūfa, Ibn Mas‘ūd owned two courts.²⁴ When ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb sent him to Kūfa to serve as mentor and official (*mu‘alliman wa-wazīran*), he built a court for himself near the Friday Mosque.²⁵ A moralistic account has it that Ibn Mas‘ūd invited ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir (the then governor of Kūfa) to look at it. ‘Ammār praised its solidity (*banayta shadīdan*) but poured cold water on Ibn Mas‘ūd’s enthusiasm, telling him that he would die soon.²⁶ Ibn Mas‘ūd’s other court in Kūfa was in a place that was later called al-Ramāda, amidst his tribe, the Hudhayl.²⁷ It must have

20 Ibn Abī l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ nahj al-balāgha*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo: ‘Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1378/1959, 3: 201.

21 Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 1: 3345.

22 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. Muḥammad Bāqir al-Maḥmūdī, Beirut: Dār al-Ta‘ārif li-l-Maṭbū‘āt, 1397/1977, 3: 42.

23 *Fa-mā bāl nakhl Yathrib* [one expects here: *bi-Yathrib*] *wa-nakhl bi-Rādhān*; Būṣīrī, *Ithāf al-khiyara al-mahara bi-zawā’id al-masānīd al-‘ashara*, Riyadh: Dār al-Waṭan li-l-Nashr, 1420/1999, 7: 438. Quoted from an electronic source.

24 Theoretically one of these courts could be identical with his estate in Rādhān. But this assumption is probably farfetched because he had sharecroppers in Rādhān.

25 *Fa-qadima l-Kūfa wa-nazalahā wa-’btanā bihā dāran ilā jānib al-masjid*; Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 6: 93. His famous court in Kūfa (*fa-dārihu bi-l-Kūfa dār mashhūra*; *TMD*, 33: 61) must have been this one. The other owners of courts near the mosque were Ṭalḥa ibn ‘Ubaydallāh and ‘Amr ibn Hurayth; Ya‘qūbī, *Buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1892, 310 (*wa-’khtaṭṭa . . . l-dūr ḥawla l-masjid*).

26 Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif, 1959, 1: 165. The rare variant *mu’adhdhinan wa-wazīran* in Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-buldān*, ed. Yūsuf al-Ḥādī, Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1416/1996, 202, is supported by the alleged dispute over prestige between Kūfa and Baṣra: the former mentioned that its *mu’adhdhin* was Ibn Mas‘ūd. Still, *mu’allim* is probably the correct reading; cf. Mas‘ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. Ch. Pellat, Beirut: al-Jāmi‘a al-Lubnāniyya, 1966–79, 3: 77, n. 1583: ‘Umar appointed Ibn Mas‘ūd on *bayt al-māl* in addition to another task: *wa-amarahu an yu’allima l-nās al-qur’ān wa-yufaqqihahum fī l-dīn*.

27 His offices did not interfere with his tribal solidarity: the alienation between him and the caliph ‘Uthmān led to an alienation with the Hudhayl; Mas‘ūdī, *Murūj*, 3: 82, n. 1591 (. . . wa-’nhirāf

been a spacious court, since it provided quarters for people from outside Kūfa when the area around the Friday Mosque was too small to accommodate them.²⁸

Ibn Mas‘ūd’s home (*manzil*) was in the place called today al-Ramāda, between the [territory of the] Thaqīf and the oil sellers. It was too far for him [from the centre, i.e. the Friday Mosque], so he asked for [the caliph’s] permission to take over land for his court [near the mosque], saying, I am a guest of the Muslims (*fa-’sta’dhana fī mawḍi’ dārihi wa-qāla anā min aḍyāf al-muslimīna*). He lived in his court and turned his [former] court into a boarding place for guests (*dār al-ḍiyāfa*). The guests lived in his court in [the territory of the] Hudhayl when the area around the mosque was too small to accommodate them.²⁹

There is no indication that when he made his court available for guests, he relinquished its ownership.

Ibn Mas‘ūd also had two courts in Medina. One of them was built at the time of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, who gave it his blessing.³⁰ Ibn Mas‘ūd’s court was called *dār al-qurrā’* and touched upon the Prophet’s Mosque. When ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz enlarged the mosque at the time of the caliph al-Walīd ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, part of Ibn Mas‘ūd’s court (together with several other courts) was incorporated in it. The remaining part of the court was included in the Prophet’s Mosque in a later enlargement carried out by the Abbasid caliph al-Mahdī.³¹ Ibn Mas‘ūd’s other Medinan court was near the market, as we learn from the description of the building in which the caliph Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik incorporated the market.³²

An estate in the Saylahīn district “on the way to Qādisiyya”

Let us return to Ibn Mas‘ūd’s landed property in south-western Iraq. He owned an estate on the way to Qādisiyya. This famous Qādisiyya – or Qādisiyyat al-Kūfa – was the south-western boundary of Iraq.³³ Alternatively, al-‘Udhayb, several miles south-west of Qādisiyya is sometimes identified as the boundary of Iraq’s

Hudhayl’ an ‘Uthmān min ajlihi). He also had the backing of the Zuhra clan from Quraysh because he was one of their clients (*aḥlāf*); *ibid.*, 3: 88, n. 1602.

28 *Wa-kāna manzil ‘Abdillāh ibn Mas‘ūd fī Hudhayl fī mawḍi’ al-Ramāda fa-nazala mawḍi’ dārihi wa-taraka dārahu dār al-ḍiyāfa wa-kāna l-aḍyāf yanzilūna dārahu fī Hudhayl idhā ḍāqa ‘alayhim mā ḥawla l-masjid*; Ṭabarī, *Ta’ rīkh*, 1: 2842.

29 Māliqī, *al-Tamhīd wa-l-bayān fī maqāt al-shahīd ‘Uthmān*, ed. Maḥmūd Yūsuf Zāyid, al-Dawḥa, 1405/1985, 46.

30 *TMD*, 33: 150.

31 One of these courts belonged to ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir; Samhūdī, *Waḥā’*, 2: 267, 295.

32 Samhūdī, *Waḥā’*, 3: 85.

33 Iṣṭakhrī, *Masālik al-mamālik*², ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1927, 39.

agricultural area (Sawād),³⁴ more precisely the Sawād al-Kūfa³⁵ or the agricultural land included in Kūfa's jurisdiction.

After the Friday prayers (in Kūfa), Ibn Mas'ūd went to his estate en route to Qādisiyya (*fa-rakiba . . . ilā ḡay'a lahu dūna l-Qādisiyya*). On his way there he prayed two *rak'as* at Nahr al-Ḥīra. He may have prayed at *qanṭarat al-Ḥīra* (i.e. the bridge built over the Ḥīra irrigation canal) which is mentioned elsewhere as the place where Ibn Mas'ūd prayed two *rak'as* when he was on the way to Mecca. Both accounts about his prayers are linked to Ibn Mas'ūd's *mawlā* or manumitted slave 'Umayr Abū 'Imrān. Reportedly 'Imrān's mother was Ibn Mas'ūd's slave girl or concubine (*surriyya*) who was living with her son, the manumitted slave 'Umayr.³⁶ The estate in question was near the main road (and the produce could be sold to travellers as they were starting their journey to the Arabian Peninsula). This same estate (*aqbala 'Abdullāh min ḡay'atihi llatī dūna l-Qādisiyya*) appears – again in a legal context – in connection with the question of whether or not pilgrims on their way to Mecca may utter the *talbiya* (“Here I am”, the pilgrims' repeated invocation) before entering the state of *iḥrām*.³⁷ In this case Ibn Mas'ūd was reportedly going in the opposite direction, namely from his estate on the way to Qādisiyya to Kūfa, when he met at Najaf people uttering the *talbiya*. Nahr al-Ḥīra of the former account is replaced here by Najaf. According to another account, Ibn Mas'ūd met the people who were uttering the *talbiya* at al-Sāliḥīn.³⁸ This form of the place name (al-Sāliḥīn means literally “the defecators”) must have been created by popular etymology. Other forms of the place name are al-Sālahīn and al-Saylahīn, which is the most common one (and is given precedence henceforth). After the assassination of the caliph 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ūd, among other wealthy Kūfans, gave up his annual salary (*'atā'*) and bought an estate in Rādhān. When Ibn Mas'ūd died, his bequest included 90,000 *mithqāl* (of gold or silver), slaves, goods (*'urūd*) and livestock in al-Saylahīn.³⁹ The text is somewhat ambiguous, but it appears that not only the livestock but also the slaves and the goods were in Saylahīn. In other words, Ibn Mas'ūd had an estate in Rādhān and another in Saylahīn.

Saylahīn, Ḥīra and Kūfa are combined in an account of Ibn Mas'ūd's journey from Saylahīn (called here Sālahīn) to Kūfa. He was accompanied (*fa-ṣaḥibahu*)

34 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. al-'Udhayb; P.G. Forand, “The status of the land and inhabitants in the Sawād during the first two centuries of Islām”, *JESHO* 14 (1971), 26. It was the actual entrance point into the sown; Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, 3: 55, n. 1538 (*'alā fam al-barr wa-ṭaraf al-Sawād mimma yalī l-Qādisiyya*).

35 Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, 566.

36 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 6: 209 (*mawlā . . . 'atāqa*).

37 Ibn Taymiyya, *Sharḥ al-'umda fī l-fiqh*, ed. al-'Utayshān, Riyadh: Maktabat al-'Ubakyān, 1413/1993, 2: 616. Quoted from an electronic text.

38 Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1414/1994, 5: 63 (*ruwiya anna Ibn Mas'ūd laḡiya rukbānan bi-l-sāḥil [!] muḥrimīna fa-labbaw wa-labbā Ibn Mas'ūd wa-huwa dākhil al-Kūfa*).

39 *TMD*, 33: 185. Reportedly young Ibn Mas'ūd was a shepherd in the service of 'Uqba ibn Abī Mu'ayy; Fasawī, *Kitāb al-ma'rifa wa-l-ta'rīkh*, ed. Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umarī, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981, 1: 245. Cf. Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 160 (he left 90,000 *dirham*).

by *dahāqīn* from Ḥīra, i.e. “landed aristocrats”/village or town chiefs. At the entrance to Kūfa they took another route, and to the astonishment of his companion (‘Alqama ibn Qays al-Nakhaṭī⁴⁰) Ibn Mas‘ūd saluted the infidels (*fa-atba‘ahum al-salām*).⁴¹ The legal question involved here is whether or not it was legitimate to salute them. However, we are only interested in the place names. At this point it should be remarked that as often happens with place names⁴² (including that of Rādhān), there was another Saylaḥīn in Iraq, namely between Baghdad and Anbār (present-day Fallūja). The latter Saylaḥīn was four *farsakhs* (c. 24 km) from Baghdad and eight *farsakhs* (c. 48 km) from Anbār.⁴³

We return now to the south-western Saylaḥīn. Several decades before the Conquests, Khusro granted the *rustāq* or rural area of Saylaḥīn, among other estates, to the king of Ḥīra, al-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir. He also granted him an estate that was later called after its Muslim owners Qatā‘i‘ Banī Ṭalḥa or the estates of Ṭalḥa ibn ‘Ubaydallāh’s children. Sanām Ṭabāq, later called Ṭabāq al-Sālim, was also among Khusro’s grants. The Saylaḥīn rural area west of Furāt Nistar included (i.e. in a certain administrative division) two canals: Nahr Yūsuf and Nahr al-Ṣinnayn.⁴⁴ (It will presently be argued that Saylaḥīn was also called al-Nahrayn after these two canals.) The details concerning Khusro’s grant indicate that Ibn Mas‘ūd’s estate in Saylaḥīn was originally part of the Sassanian crown domains (categorized under Islam as *ṣawāfi* lands). Al-Ṣinnayn, which had an irrigation canal and grain fields (*mazāri‘*), was among the places (*manāzil*) owned by the king of Ḥīra, al-Mundhir. The caliph ‘Uthmān reportedly sold it to Ṭalḥa ibn ‘Ubaydallāh.⁴⁵ It was probably identical with the previously mentioned Qatā‘i‘ Banī Ṭalḥa and the Nashāstaj (see later mention).

40 See e.g. Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 20: 300–8.

41 Ibn Abi Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, ed. al-Jum‘a and al-Luḥaydān, Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1425/2004, 8: 470–1 (*Kiṭāb al-adab: fi l-salām ‘alā ahl al-dhimma wa-man qāla li-l-ṣuḥba haqq*).

42 Cf. Yāqūt, *al-Muṣṭarīq wa‘an wa-l-muṣṭarīq ṣuq‘an*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen, 1846.

43 Qudāma ibn Ja‘far, *al-Kharāj wa-ṣinā‘at al-kitāba*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Zubaydī, Baghdad: Dār al-Rashīd, 1981, 115. Or perhaps Saylaḥīn was three *farsakhs* from Baghdad; Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-tiwāl*, ed. ‘Iṣām Muḥammad al-Ḥājj ‘Alī, Beirut: al-‘Ilmiyya, 1421/2001, 570. Al-Saylaḥīn near Baghdad was the hometown of the hadith transmitter Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā ibn Ishāq al-Bajalī al-Saylaḥīnī or al-Saylaḥūnī or al-Sālaḥīnī (d. in Baghdad 210/825); Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 31: 195–8. According to Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, s.v. Sāliḥīn, the common people (*al-‘amma*) called the place Sāliḥīn. Both forms, he says, are wrong, the correct name being al-Saylaḥīn. Yāqūt, who defines Abū Zakariyyā al-Bajalī’s hometown as *qarya bi-Baghdād*, refers here to s.v. Saylaḥūn, which includes rich evidence pointing to the Saylaḥīn near Qādisiyya. Yāqūt concludes by stating that between this area and Baghdad there were three *farsakhs* (!).

44 Abū l-Baqā‘ Hibat Allāh, *al-Manāqib al-mazyadiyya*, ed. Šāliḥ Mūsā Darādika and Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir Khriṣāt, Amman: Maktabat al-Risāla al-Ḥadītha, 1404/1984, 1: 500–1; M.J. Kister, “Al-Ḥīra: Some notes on its relations with Arabia”, *Arabica* 15 (1968), 152; reprinted in Kister, *Variorum* I, no. III.

45 Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, s.v. al-Ṣinnayn. Yāqūt does not adduce the famous sale document, although it was mentioned by the *muḥaddithūn*, because the text is unsound (*wajadu nuskhatahu saqīma fa-lam anqulhu*). M.G. Morony, “Continuity and change in the administrative geography of late Sasanian and early Islamic al-Iraq”, *Iran* 20 (1982), 28 has it that ‘Uthmān purchased from

Ibn Mas'ūd had a special arrangement with the previous owner of the *kharāj* land he owned: the latter spared him the payment of the *kharāj* tax and the cultivation of the land.⁴⁶ Ibn Mas'ūd's division of the crop was confirmed by Providence. In a story ascribed to Ibn Mas'ūd himself, a mysterious voice inside a rain cloud (*anāna*) guided it to a field of a certain righteous man. The cloud burst above the man's field because of his just division of the crop: one-third went back to the land (i.e. to the sharecropper), one-third went to alms and the remaining third went to his family. The source of this account, Masrūq ibn al-Ajda' al-Hamdānī, reported that Ibn Mas'ūd would send him every year to his land in Rādhān (i.e. when the crop was gathered), where he would follow the same practice in the division of the crop.⁴⁷

In a parallel account there are two alternative place names: Masrūq concluded the story of the righteous man by reporting that Ibn Mas'ūd sent him (i.e. Masrūq) to his land in Zabārā – or, according to another source, to Saylahīn (al-Sāl(a/i)hīn).⁴⁸ Qanṭarat Zabārā or the Zabārā bridge was just outside of Kūfa,⁴⁹ and the place that gave the bridge its name was on the eastern side of

Talḥa a farm in al-Ṣinnayn. But Yāqūt (s.v.) says that 'Uthmān sold it to Talḥa (not the other way round; *balad . . . bā'ahu 'Uthmān . . . min Talḥa*). Al-Mundhir's son, the king of Ḥīra al-Nu'mān ibn al-Mundhir, jailed 'Adī ibn Zayd in al-Ṣinnayn; Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 1023; M. Lecker, "Tribes in pre- and early Islamic Arabia", in Lecker, *Variorum* II, no. XI, 72. At an early stage of the Conquests, Muslim raiders on their way to attack Ḥīra crossed the bridge over the Saylahīn canal and attacked a marriage procession heading to al-Ṣinnayn. The lord of al-Ṣinnayn (*ṣāhib al-Ṣinnayn*), who was a Persian nobleman, was expecting his bride, who was the daughter of *Marzbān al-Ḥīra Azādhib*; Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 2232–3; Morony, "Continuity and change", 28.

- 46 He said: *anā akfika i 'ṭā' kharājihā wa-l-qiyām 'alayhā*; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Ta'riḫ Baghdad*, ed. Bashshār 'Awwād Ma'rūf, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1422/2001, 1: 313; Morony, "Landholding", 139–40, 153 (Ibn Mas'ūd bought the land offered to him by the *dihqān*, provided that the latter would continue paying the *kharāj*); M.G. Morony, "The effects of the Muslim conquest on the Persian population of Iraq", *Iran* 14 (1976), 56. Ibn Mas'ūd, al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī and Abū Hurayra had fields (*mazāri'*) in the Sawād for which they paid the *kharāj*; Ibn 'Abbās had fields in the Sawād, among other places; al-Shaybānī, *al-Kasb*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Damascus: Ḥarṣūnī, 1400/1980, 64.
- 47 Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Kitāb al-hawāṭif*, ed. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā, Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyya, 1413/1993, 25.
- 48 Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, *Kitāb al-kharāj*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, Cairo: al-Salafiyya, 1384/1964, 75–6. Exactly as there was another Saylahīn between Baghdad and Anbār, there was also another Zabārā between Baghdad and Anbār. Moreover, both places are linked to 'Aqr Qūf and were at a distance of several kilometers from each other: Saylahīn was close to it (*qarība min tall 'Aqr Qūf*); Sam'ānī, *Ansāb*, 3: 223, s.v. al-Sālahīnī; and the small irrigation canal (*nuḥayr*) called Zabārā was one *farsakh* "above" 'Aqr Qūf (*fawq al-tall al-ma'rūf bi-'Aqr Qūf bi-farsakh*); Mas'ūdī, *al-Tanbīh wa-l-ishrāf*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1894, 382. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik al-Hamdānī, *Takmilat ta'riḫ al-Ṭabarī*, ed. Kan'ān, Beirut: al-Maṭba'a al-Kāthūlikiyya, 1958, 53–4 mentions a distance of two *farsakhs* (*fa-nazala 'alā qanṭarat al-nahr al-ma'rūf bi-Zabārā bi-nāhiyat 'Aqr Qūf 'alā farsakhayni*). In fact the distance of two *farsakhs* was between Zabārā and Baghdad (*nahr Zabārā 'alā farsakhayni min Baghdad 'inda 'Aqr Qūf*); Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī l-ta'riḫ*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1385/1965–1386/1966, 8: 172.
- 49 Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 2: 1071. See also Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1345/1927–1394/1974, 14: 248: *qanṭarat al-Kūfa llatī bi-Zabāra* (written with *tā' marbūta*).

the Euphrates.⁵⁰ Ibn Mas‘ūd may have owned an estate in Zabārā as well. One account has it that the Kūfan Abū Wā’il Shaqīq ibn Salama was sent by Ibn Mas‘ūd to an unnamed village (i.e. a village-estate) of his.⁵¹

Some comments on Ibn Mas‘ūd’s neighbours will be in place. The Qatā’i‘ Banī Ṭalḥa, previously known as al-Nashāstaj (or al-Nashāstak), were near Saylaḥīn and Qaryat Hurmuz: Mūsā, son of Ṭalḥa ibn ‘Ubaydallāh, reported that Ibn Mas‘ūd and Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ – the latter received from the caliph ‘Uthmān Qaryat Hurmuz – were his neighbours and used to lease their land for one-third or one-fourth of the crop. Mūsā’s land, al-Nashāstaj, was granted by the caliph ‘Uthmān to his father Ṭalḥa.⁵² Ṭalḥa tried to purchase al-Nashāstaj, also called Nashāstaj Banī Ṭalḥa, “the one that is near Saylaḥīn”, at the time of the caliph ‘Umar. He told the caliph of the wonderful land he bought (*arḍ mu’jiba*). The latter asked him ironically whether he had bought it from the people of Kūfa or from the people of Qādisiyya (i.e. all the warriors who were entitled to a share in the conquered land). ‘Umar declared the acquisition void because the land was considered *fay’* or communal property (i.e. to be preserved for future generations, as opposed to *ghanīma*, real booty).⁵³ Initially, we are told, ‘Umar intended to divide the land of the Sawād among the warriors. But when a census showed that each warrior was to receive three *fallāḥīn*, he gave up his intention, reportedly adopting ‘Alī’s advice. ‘Umar sent to Iraq ‘Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf, who imposed on the *fallāḥīn* 48, 24 and 12 *dirhams* annually, according to their wealth.⁵⁴ Under the caliph ‘Uthmān the obstacles were removed when he succumbed to pressure from a small circle of influential figures, including state officials. A pro-‘Uthmān apologetic account has it that the influential figures demanded to be compensated for land they had left behind in the Hijāz and Tihāma, whereby ‘Uthmān would grant them land in Kūfa and Baṣra.⁵⁵

Al-Nahrayn and al-Saylaḥīn

Al-Nahrayn is yet another place name linked to Ibn Mas‘ūd. An account about ‘Uthmān’s grants going back to the previously mentioned Mūsā ibn Ṭalḥa exists in several versions, two of which concern us here:

50 There was a water course (*majrā nahr*) between Zabāra (with *tā’ marbūta*) and Kūfa; al-Qurtubī, *Tafsīr*³ (*al-Jāmi’ li-ahkām al-qur’ān*), Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1387/1967, reprint, 18: 104. Perhaps the water course in question was the western branch of the Euphrates.

51 Shaqīq: *ba’athanī Ibn Mas‘ūd ilā qarya lahu*; *TMD*, 33: 167. The righteous man of the previous account is identified in this account as one of the Children of Israel.

52 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1863–66, 273–4.

53 *TMD*, 2: 192.

54 *Ibid.*, 2: 193.

55 Cf. M. Hinds, *Studies in Early Islamic History*, Princeton: Darwin Press, 1996, 18–19, also published as “Kūfan political alignments and their background in the mid-seventh century A.D.”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2 (1971), 359–60; A. Noth, “Eine Standortbestimmung der Expansion (*Futūḥ*) unter den ersten Kalifen (Analyse von Ṭabarī I, 2854–2856)”, *Asiatische Studien* 43 (1989), 120–36; W. Madelung, *The Succession to Muḥammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 83, n. 19, 84, n. 21.

1. 'Uthmān granted Ibn Mas'ūd al-Nahrayn, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās – Qaryat Hurmuz; 'Ammār ibn Yāsir – Istīniyā, and Khabbāb ibn al-Aratt – Ṣa'nabā. Mūsā referred to the practice of Ibn Mas'ūd and Sa'd, who were his neighbours (*fa-kilā jārāyya*), of leasing their land for one-third or one-fourth of the crop.⁵⁶
2. Another version states more accurately that Ibn Mas'ūd received from 'Uthmān an estate in al-Nahrayn (i.e. not the whole of al-Nahrayn). All the recipients of estates were Mūsā's neighbours (*fa-kullun jārūn*), and two of them, Ibn Mas'ūd and Sa'd, were leasing their land for a third or a fourth of the crop.⁵⁷

The region of al-Nahrayn was one of the very first regions conquered by the Muslims in Iraq. Following a Muslim raid on al-Nahrayn, the raiders were surrounded by the Sassanians between al-Nahrayn and Iṣṭīmiyā⁵⁸ (probably identical to the previously mentioned Istīniyā). Later, Khālīd ibn al-Walīd sent financial officers (*'ummāl al-kharāj*; they were supposed to collect *jizya* – the terms seem to be used indiscriminately) to the following regions: one was sent to the upper part of the administrative unit (*a'lā l-'amal*) at Falālīj, one to Bāniqyā and Basmā, one (Bashīr ibn al-Khaṣāsiyya) to al-Nahrayn, where he settled in al-Kuwayfa (“the small Kūfa”) in Bānabūrā (i.e. in the area of Ḥīra⁵⁹), one to Nistar (probably identical to the previously mentioned Furāt Nistar) and finally one to Rūdhmistān.⁶⁰ Saylahīn is not listed, although it was no doubt close to Nistar and Rūdhmistān: these three districts were in the Lower Bihqubādh.⁶¹ Our al-Nahrayn was at the edge of the “tongue of land” inserted into the countryside on which Kūfa and earlier Ḥīra were located.⁶² The “tongue” is identical to *zahr al-Kūfa*, or the elevated tract of land outside Kūfa that extended from al-Nahrayn to 'Ayn Banī l-Ḥadhhdhā'. The part of it that was close to the Euphrates was called al-Milṭāt, while the other part that was close to the Ṭaff (the oases region bordering on the desert) was called al-Nijāf⁶³ (plural form of Najaf). Elsewhere, al-Milṭāt is defined as the area between Kūfa and Ḥīra.⁶⁴ Obviously, al-Nahrayn was at the Najaf/

56 Ibn Shabba, *Ta'riḫ al-Madīna*, ed. Dandal and Bayān, Beirut: al-'Ilmiyya, 1417/1996, 2: 133.

57 Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-kharāj*, Cairo: al-Maṭba'a al-Salafiyya, 1352/1933, 62. Instead of Ṣan'ā', read: Ṣa'nabā; instead of Qaryat Hurmuzān, read: Qaryat Hurmuz.

58 Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 2259.

59 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. Bānabūrā (*nāhiya bi-l-Ḥīra*). See also Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fi funūn al-adab*, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1923–98, 25: 189.

60 Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 2051–2.

61 Morony, “Continuity and change”, 27.

62 *Lisān al-barr lladhī adla'ahu fi l-rif wa-'alayhi l-Kūfa l-yawm wa-l-Ḥīra qabla l-yawm*; Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 2419.

63 Ṭabarī, *Ta'riḫ*, 1: 2485 (instead of *al-tīn* read probably: al-Ṭaff). For al-Ṭaff see Morony, “Continuity and change”, 28. Cf. *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, 13, trans. G.H.A. Juynboll, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989, 65. The reading “al-Ḥadhhdhā” may not be reliable.

64 See, for example, Ibn Khurrādādhbih, *al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, Leiden: Brill, 1889, 8.

Nijāf end. Our al-Nahrayn must not be confused with another al-Nahrayn which was farther north, in al-Bihqubādh al-A‘lā or the Upper Bihqubādh.⁶⁵ The Upper Bihqubādh was separated from the Lower Bihqubādh, in which our al-Nahrayn was located, by the Middle Bihqubādh. The northern al-Nahrayn is therefore irrelevant for us here.⁶⁶

Al-Nahrayn or “the two canals” may well have been the old name of Saylaḥīn which, as has already been mentioned, included two canals, Nahr Yūsuf and Nahr al-Ṣinnayn. In this case, Ibn Mas‘ūd’s estate in al-Nahrayn was identical with his estate in Saylaḥīn. In one administrative division of Iraq, the districts (*tassūj*, pl. *tasāsīj*) of Saylaḥīn, Hurmuzjird and Nistar were among the five districts of the Lower Bihqubādh. The other two were Furāt Bādaqlā and Rudhmistān.⁶⁷ In another administrative division, Saylaḥīn and Furāt Bādaqlā seem to count as one district. Besides Hurmuzjird and Nistar, we also find in this other division the districts of Kūfa and Ḥīra as part of the Lower Bihqubādh.⁶⁸ One of these two districts could equate to Rūdhmistān in the division containing five districts. The Saylaḥīn district included the estates of al-Khawarnaq and Ṭīzanābādh.⁶⁹ Al-Nu‘mān ibn al-Mundhir levied the taxes on the former, indicating that it was among the domain lands which he received from the Sassanians.⁷⁰ The latter estate was ‘Uthmān’s grant to al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays al-Kindī. It was one mile from Qādisiyya.⁷¹

During the Conquests, on the eve of the battle of Buwayb, a force led by al-Muthannā penetrated Furāt Bādaqlā (probably the first point one reached upon entering the Sawād via Qādisiyya) and advanced through the middle of the Sawād to al-Nahrayn, then to al-Khawarnaq, then to al-Buwayb, which was on the western bank of the Euphrates, where Kūfa was later built. Two other forces took the Najaf and the Qādisiyya – Jawf routes, respectively.⁷² In other words, al-Nahrayn was the next point after Furāt Bādaqlā for someone crossing from the desert into the sown. At the time of the caliph al-Walīd ibn Yazīd (r. 125/743–126/744), Furāt Bādaqlā, Ṭīzanābādh, al-Falālīj, Bābil and Sūrā were still producing high-quality wine.⁷³

65 In M.G. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, 149 and in Morony, “Continuity and change”, 26 the two places called al-Nahrayn are considered one and the same place.

66 Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 277–8.

67 Ibn Khurradādhbih, *al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, 8.

68 Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, s.v. al-Bihqubādh.

69 Ibn Khurradādhbih, *al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, 11.

70 This is confirmed by al-A‘shā’s famous verses on al-Nu‘mān’s death (*wa-tujbā ilayhi l-Saylaḥūna wa-dūnahā Ṣarīfūna fī anḥārihā wa-l-Khawarnaqu*).

71 Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, s.v. Ṭīzanābādh.

72 Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, 1: 2184.

73 Balādhurī, *Jumal min ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār and Riyāq Ziriklī, Beirut: Dār al-Fīkr, 1417/1996, 9: 160 (instead of S.wār read: Sūrā); al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. al-‘Azḡm, Damascus: Dār al-Yaqza al-‘Arabiyya, 1997–2002, 7: 509. For the fine wine of Ṭīzanābādh see also Mas‘ūdī, *Murūj*, 4: 205, n. 2511.

That al-Nahrayn is identical to Saylaḥīn is also borne out by the fact that the two place names interchange. Reportedly, the lord of Saylaḥīn (*ṣāhib al-Saylaḥīn*), Murra ibn Sharāḥīl, sent the caliph ‘Alī ibn Abī Tālib (who made Kūfa his capital in 36/657) a young non-Arab enslaved woman (*jāriya*). However, ‘Alī sent her back after he had found out that she was married. Murra bought her marriage contract from her husband for 500 *dirham* and sent her again to the caliph, who accepted the gift.⁷⁴ (Unsurprisingly, Murra often transmitted hadith on the authority of his neighbour Ibn Mas‘ūd who had died before ‘Alī ascended the throne.) Another account going back to the Kūfan Ibrāhīm al-Nakha‘ī⁷⁵ has it that Sharāḥīl ibn Murra (this is another version regarding the official’s name) was ‘Alī’s financial officer/tax collector at al-Nahrayn (*kāna ‘āmilan li-‘Alī ‘alā l-Nahrayn*).⁷⁶

Conclusions

The place name Rādhān has led us to investigate Ibn Mas‘ūd’s landed property that included both courts and estates in south-western Iraq and in Medina. Modern technology saves us time: the retrieval of evidence from thousands of primary sources takes seconds. After all, the collection of evidence is the most time-consuming phase in research.

As to the Rādhānite (al-Rādhāniyya) Jewish merchants, their name probably points to their place of origin rather than their headquarters. One could therefore argue that the Rādhān near Kūfa (which may have become a quarter of Kūfa) is not inferior to the Rādhān(ān/yn/āt) region near Baghdad as their presumed provenance. However, the choice between the two Iraqi Rādhāns will have to be determined on the basis of more evidence.

74 Ṭaḥāwī, *Sharḥ mushkil al-āthār*, ed. Shu‘ayb al-Arnāwūt, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1415/1994, 11: 178. According to ‘Abd al-Razzāq, *Muṣannaf*, 7: 281–2, Sharāḥīl paid 1,500 *dirham*. In another hadith (281), it was Shurāḥbīl ibn al-Simṭ (al-Kindī) who gave ‘Alī the married woman.

75 *EP*, s.v. al-Nakha‘ī, Ibrāhīm (G. Lecomte).

76 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 325.

ON THE BURIAL OF MARTYRS IN ISLAM

YANAGIHASHI Hiroyuki (ed.), *The Concept of Territory in Islamic Law and Thought*, London: Kegan Paul International, 2000, 37–49

Nothing in their past experience prepared the Arabs for the wide range of participation in warfare and the huge number of casualties which they suffered during the early Islamic period. With several famous exceptions, intertribal warfare (or the pre-Islamic *ayyām*) was conducted by a small number of men from each tribe and usually ended with a small number of casualties.¹ The advent of Islam brought with it major changes in this respect and many thousands of warriors sacrificed their lives or were wounded in the battlefields. This began in several particularly fierce battles during Muḥammad's lifetime and then through the *ridda* wars, the Conquests, the internecine wars (e.g. Ṣiffīn) and the continuous warfare against Byzantium. People naturally turned to the authoritative interpreters of Islam, i.e. the religious scholars, to make sense of these sanguineous events. The answer came in the form of hadiths which provided justification, edification and consolation.

Isrā'īliyyāt: the Ṣiffīn disaster was unavoidable

Muslim blood shed in internal feuds was harder to account for than that shed in the wars of expansion fought against non-Muslims. Probably addressing this problem, Caliph Mu'āwiya himself engaged in *qashaṣ*, or popular preaching of edifying stories, after the battle of Ṣiffīn. The evidence for this is included in a report purporting to describe the circumstances in which 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ received from Mu'āwiya the governorship of Egypt. (This would place the following encounter

1 Having won a victory at the battle of Bu'āth, the Aws killed many of the defeated Khazraj. But then someone allegedly shouted: "O company of the Aws, be gentle and do not destroy your brothers, because having them as neighbours is better than having foxes as neighbours"; Abū l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, Būlāq, 1285/1868, 15: 164; M. Lecker, "On Arabs of the Banū Kilāb executed together with the Jewish Banū Qurayza", *JSAl* 19 (1995), 66–72, at 66; reprinted in Lecker, *Variorum I*, no. X.

before the end of 39/659–60.²) When ‘Amr came to Mu‘āwiya, he found him preaching to the Syrians regarding the martyr’s blood (*fa-wajadahu yaquṣṣu wa-yudhakkiru ahl al-Shām fī dam al-shahīd*). ‘Amr disliked what he heard and his reaction was far from being diplomatic:

Mu‘āwiya, you have aroused my rancour [literally: you have burnt my liver] with your preaching (*qad aḥraqta kabidī bi-qaṣaṣika*). Is it your opinion that we disobeyed (*khālafnā*) ‘Alī because we were better than him? By God, no. It is nothing but this world for which we contend with each other (*natakālabu ‘alayhā*, as in a dogfight).

It is doubtful that this dialogue ever took place. However, the background information can be considered reliable: Mu‘āwiya engaged in *qaṣaṣ* which in this case consisted of political indoctrination in religious garb. We may safely assume that he conveyed his messages through religious motives taken from the Qur’ān and the *Isrā’īliyyāt*.

Themes of *Isrā’īliyyāt*, often in the form of eschatology, were popular and immediately comprehensible to the audience. For example, Ka‘b al-Aḥbār, a Yemenite Jewish convert,³ allegedly foretold the war of Ṣiffīn. The Banū Isrā’īl (or the Children of Israel), he said, fought nine times at that very place until they destroyed one another. The Arabs, Ka‘b added, would fight there the tenth battle until they slaughtered each other and hurled at each other the same stones hurled by the Banū Isrā’īl.⁴

The scale of the slaughter at Ṣiffīn was unimaginable in terms of traditional Arab warfare. An account putting the total number of dead on both sides at 70,000 also has its origins in an eschatological tradition of Ka‘b.⁵ Eschatology was supposed to teach the Muslims that Ṣiffīn was part of a scheme of world history the understanding of which was beyond human grasp. It can be said that Ka‘b al-Aḥbār used his prestige as a representative of ancient Jewish lore to provide answers to difficult theological questions.

Still in the context of the internal strife, Ka‘b answered in the affirmative the question of whether or not those killed in internal fighting were martyrs. One killed by the Ḥarūriyya,⁶ he said, has ten “lights”, eight “lights” more than “the light of

2 Ibn Sa‘d, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 4: 258; M. Lecker, “The estates of ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ in palestine: Notes on a new negev Arabic inscription”, *BSOAS* 52 (1989), 24–37, at 29.

3 *EP*, s.v. Ka‘b al-Aḥbār (M. Schmitz).

4 Nu‘aym ibn Ḥammād, *al-Fitan*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1414/1993, 31; U. Rubin, *Between Bible and Qur’ān: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image*, Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1999, 191–2; *EP*, s.v. Ṣiffīn (M. Lecker). See also Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat al-ṭalab fī ta’rīkh Ḥalab*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1408–1409/1988, 1: 281–2.

5 Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, *al-Ishrāf fī manāzil al-ashraf*, ed. Najm ‘Abd al-Rahmān Khalaf, Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 1411/1990, 271.

6 On whom see *EP*, s.v. Ḥarūrā’ (L. Vecchia Vaglieri).

the martyrs” (*nūr al-shuhadā*).⁷ This claim seeks to establish that not only were they considered martyrs,⁸ but their rank in martyrdom was much higher than that of other martyrs who died fighting against non-Muslims.

The merits of death on the way to the battlefield or on enemy territory

The death of the same Ka‘b al-Aḥbār in the early thirties of the first Islamic century was employed for edification purposes. Ka‘b enlisted (*iktataba*) in the summer expedition against Byzantium and joined it although he had fallen ill. He said: “I would rather die in Ḥarastā⁹ than in Damascus, and die in Dūma¹⁰ rather than in Ḥarastā, and thus forward in the Path of God” (*hākadhā quduman fī sabīl allāh*). At “the wide road between two mountains” (*fajj*)¹¹ of Ma‘lūlā¹² the narrator of this story, Abū Fawra Ḥudayr al-Sulamī (who was a *mawlā* of the Sulaym and lived in Ḥimṣ), asked the ailing scholar to inform him of what was to happen in the future. After some hesitation the latter reported that a man is about to be killed (Ka‘b must have been foretelling his own demise) whose blood would be a source of illumination for the people of Heaven (*yuḏī‘u damuhu li-ahl al-samā*). Ka‘b finally died in Ḥimṣ.¹³ Ka‘b’s audience was familiar with the relevant geographical realities: the aforementioned place-names were in great proximity to

7 Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, ed. ‘Abd al-Khālīq al-Afghānī, Bombay: al-Dār al-Salafiyya, 1399/1979–1403/1983, 15: 316. See another version in ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Ṣan‘ānī, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-A‘zamī, Beirut: al-Majlis al-‘Ilmī, 1390/1970–1392/1972, 10: 155: Ka‘b said: the martyr has one light and he who fights against the Ḥarūriyya [and is killed by them – M. L.] has ten.

8 Cf. E. Kohlberg, “The Development of the Imāmī Shī‘ī Doctrine of Jihad”, *ZDMG* 126 (1976), 64–86, at 69f, 73f; reprinted in idem, *Belief and Law in Imāmī Shī‘ism*, Aldershot: Variorum, 1991.

9 A village more than one parasang from Damascus on the road to Ḥimṣ; Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, s.v.

10 A village in the Ghūṭa of Damascus; Yāqūt, *al-Mushtarik waḍ‘an wa-l-muftariq suq‘an*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen: Dieterichschen Buchhandlung, 1846, 187; Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar ta‘rīkh dimashq li-Ibn ‘Asākir*, ed. Rūḥiyya al-Naḥḥās *et alii*, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1404/1984–1409/1989, 14: 128; henceforward: *TMD*, *Mukhtaṣar*.

11 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 24: 191, has erroneously: *fakhkh*.

12 Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-buldān*, s.v. Ma‘lūlā.

13 He was buried there, we are told, among olive trees; *TMD*, 12: 241–2; *TMD*, *Mukhtaṣar*, 21: 188; Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, ed. Nāyif al-‘Abbās, Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, n. d., 7: 61–2: Abū Fawra (read: Fawza) Ḥudayr al-Sulamī. For other claims concerning Ka‘b’s burial place see *EP*, s.v. Ka‘b al-Aḥbār (M. Schmitz). Another report similarly tells of a meeting between Ḥudayr al-Sulamī and Ka‘b at the *fajj* of Ma‘lūlā: Ka‘b foretold the fighting against the so-called *ahl al-ridda* (i.e. at Ṣiffīn) and the *ahl al-‘aḳūl* (i.e. the Khawārij), as well as Ḥudayr’s own injury; Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat al-ṭalab*, 5: 2140, quoting *Kitāb Ṣiffīn* by Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn Khalid ibn Ama al-Hāshimī, referred to as Ibn Ama (after his grandmother). This book should be added to the list of monographs about Ṣiffīn listed in *EP*, s.v. Ṣiffīn, 555b–56a. It must have been one of the earliest monographs on this subject since its compiler transmitted, among others, from Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179/796) and al-Walīd ibn Muslim (d. 194/810). For an entry on Ibn Ama see *TMD*, *Mukhtaṣar*, 22: 129–30; *TMD*, 52: 379–82. In his monograph Ibn Ama quotes Abū Mikhnaf (indirectly); Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Bughyat al-ṭalab*, 1: 310–11.

Damascus, which is crucial for the correct understanding of the point made by Ka'b, namely that it was meritorious to die on the way to the battlefield, and in this respect even several kilometres made a difference.

The ascetic 'Abdallāh ibn Muḥayrīz al-Jumaḥī al-Filasṭīnī, who lived in Jerusalem (and probably died between 88–99/706–17¹⁴) became seriously ill during the Byzantine summer expedition (*ṣā'ifa*; this was still on Muslim soil). Hence, he asked his son, 'Abd al-Raḥmān, to carry him to Byzantine soil and spurred him to go fast. When his son reminded him that he was ill, he said: "Son, I wish to expire on Byzantine soil". The son continued on his way until his father finally died in the Ḥims area.¹⁵ This famous ascetic – one of the only two Syrians who dared speak in public of the vices of the dreaded al-Ḥajjāj¹⁶ – wished to establish that it did matter where one died (and was buried), and that with regard to afterlife, death (and burial) on enemy soil (i.e. during a military expedition) was more praiseworthy than death on Muslim soil.

The martyr's grave as a landmark

The martyr's grave was conceived of as a landmark delineating the furthest point reached by the troops of Islam, and hence the new border of the land reclaimed by the Muslims (who considered themselves its lawful owners). The poet Abū Dhu'ayb al-Hudhalī (Khuwaylid ibn Khālid) participated in a raid against Byzantium at the time of the caliph 'Umar and was fatally wounded on the way back. He gave his nephew who stayed behind with him on enemy territory precise instructions regarding his burial. "It was said: The people of Islam infiltrated deep¹⁷ into the land of the Byzantines, hence beyond Abū Dhu'ayb's grave there was no known grave of the Muslims". There was no unanimity over the place of his death,¹⁸ but the association in the account just quoted of the martyr's grave with the territory of Islam is evident.

A variant of this concept is found with regard to the famous Companion of Muḥammad, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (Khālid ibn Zayd),¹⁹ who was killed during the second decade of Mu'āwiya's reign in a raid led by Mu'āwiya's son, Yazīd and reportedly interred near the walls of Constantinople. Abū Ayyūb is said to have

14 M. Hinds, "Sayf b. 'Umar's Sources on Arabia", in A.M. Abdadlla, S. al-Sakkar and R.T. Mortel (eds.), *Studies in the History of Arabia, I: Sources for the History of Arabia*, Riyadh: Riyadh University Press, 1399/1979, part 2, 3–16, at 10; reprinted in idem, *Studies in Early Islamic history*, J. Bacharach, L.I. Conrad and P. Crone (eds.), Princeton: Darwin Press, 1996, 143–59, at 155–6; Mizzi, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 16: 106–10.

15 *TMD*, *Mukhtaṣar*, 14: 293; *TMD*, 35: 60.

16 *Yūzhiru 'ayb al-Ḥajjāj*; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1325/1907, 6: 23.

17 *Ab 'adū l-uthra*, literally: they placed at a distance the footprints of their camels; an *uthra* is a mark made upon the inner part of a camel's foot (in order that the footprints may be traced).

18 *TMD*, *Mukhtaṣar*, 8: 92, 95; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 7: 133; *GAS*, 2: 255.

19 See *EI*², s.v. (É. Lévi-Provençal).

given Yazīd instructions regarding his burial.²⁰ One account purports to include the words with which Abū Ayyūb bid farewell to this world:

Abū Ayyūb raided the Byzantines and fell ill. At the point of dying he said: “When I die, carry me, and when you draw yourselves out in a rank against the enemy, bury me under your feet” (*idhā anā muttu fa-’ḥmilūnī fa-idhā ṣāfaftum al-’aduww fa-’dfinūnī tahta aqdāmikum*).

Abū Ayyūb added:

I shall relate to you an utterance which I heard from the Messenger of God and which I would not have related to you had I not been in the present state. I heard the Messenger of God say: “He who dies without attributing associates to God (*lā yushriku bi-’llāhi shay’an*), enters Paradise”.²¹

The transmitter (and possible creator) of this account is Abū Ḍabyān Ḥuṣayn ibn Jundab al-Kūfī al-Janbī al-Madhḥijī who died towards the end of the first Islamic century.²²

Abū Ayyūb’s death is supposed to have given the warriors renewed vigour to reach a place of burial further inside enemy territory. It may not be farfetched to compare the martyr’s grave in this context with trenches (sing. *ḥufra*) dug on the battlefield which the warriors vowed not to abandon.²³

20 *TMD, Mukhtaṣar*, 7: 336–7; *TMD*, 16: 38.

21 *TMD, Mukhtaṣar*, 7: 341–2. See also Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 484–5. Cf. the request of the dying Jacob that Joseph carry him from Egypt to Hebron: *idhā muttu fa-’ḥmilūnī fa-’dfinūnī fī maghārat jabal Ḥabrūn*; Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-mawā’iz wa-l-i’tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-akhbār*, Būlāq, 1270/1854, 2: 246.

Of the full text of the same report there are two parallel and almost identical versions. In one of them the word *fa-’ḥmilūnī* is missing and is added by the editor from parallel sources. In a variant reading, *fa-’rmūnī*, “and cast me”, replaces *fa-’dfinūnī*; *TMD*, 16: 57–8. See the reading *fa-’rmūnī* also in Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, ed. Shu’ayb al-Arnāwūṭ *et alii*, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981–1409/1988, 2: 411–12. In al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya’lāwī, Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1411/1991, 3: 728, read *fa-idhā ṣāfaftum* instead of *fa-idhā aṣfaftum*. In the other parallel version we find *fa-’ḥmilū* (*fa-’ḥmilū fa-idhā ṣāfaftum al-’aduww fa-’dfinūnī tahta aqdāmikum* etc.), which will have to be translated “then launch an attack”; *TMD*, 16: 58.

22 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 6: 514–17; *TMD*, 14: 365–73; Dhahabī, *Nubalā’*, 4: 362–3; Ibn al-’Adīm, *Bughyat al-ṭalab*, 6: 2809–17; 10: 4496–7.

23 See e.g. Ibn Qudāma, *Istībṣār*, 296 (Sālim the *mawlā* of Abū Ḥudhayfa in the battle of Yamāma. (Such tactics are ascribed to the Persian banner-carriers in the battle of Qādisiyya; *TMD, Mukhtaṣar*, 10: 57; *TMD*, 21: 470: *tahta rāya lahum qad ḥafarū lahā wa-jalasū tahtahā*); Y. Friedmann, trans., *The History of al-Ṭabari*, 12, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992, 130. They are also said to have been applied at the Fijār wars (cf. *EP*², s.v. Fīdjār [J.W. Fück]) which took place before Islam; al-Aṣma’ī, *Ishtiqāq al-asmā’*, ed. Ramaḍān ‘Abd al-Tawwāb and Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Hādī, Cairo: al-Khānjī, 1400/1980, 87: the Banū Umayya were given the nickname al-’Anābis, “the

Another variant account of Abū Ayyūb's burial similarly goes back to Abū Zabyān. The circumstances were related to him in Egypt by soldiers who returned from an expedition under the command of 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ. When Abū Ayyūb was dying, they were within sight of the enemy. He summoned the Prophet's Companions who were present, among them – 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, and enjoined them that upon his death, they should march with their cavalry and infantry and advance until they made contact with the enemy. The enemy would push them back and they would be unable to advance any farther. Having done all this, they were to dig for him a grave and bury him, make the grave level with the ground around it (*thumma sawwūhu*), and finally let the cavalry and infantry trample on it until it was even and its place unknown. Upon their return they should tell the people that the Prophet informed Abū Ayyūb that one who said *lā ilāha illā llāh* would not enter Hellfire.²⁴ Yet another account by the same Abū Zabyān has it that the dying Abū Ayyūb enjoined that he be buried near Constantinople (i.e. near its wall). We struggled against the town (*fa-nāhaḍnā l-madīna*), the account goes on, until we approached it, then we buried him under our feet.²⁵ In other words, his burial place was obtained through fighting. It could be conceived of by the troops as a Muslim foothold near the wall, in anticipation of a future conquest.

Along the same lines, the following encounter is supposed to have taken place between the dying Abū Ayyūb and the expedition commander, Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiya. The former's last request was that the latter carry his body and enter into the land of the enemy, if he finds a place where entrance was possible (*fa-'rkaḥ bī thumma sugh bī fī arḍ al-'aduww mā wajadta masāghān*). If Yazīd does not find such place, he should bury him and then return.²⁶ For the dying Abū Ayyūb, proper burial was one carried out beyond enemy lines.

Elsewhere the same idea is expressed slightly differently: Abū Ayyūb's message to his comrades, conveyed through Yazīd, was that they should carry his body to the farthest possible place (*wa-l-yanṭaliqū bī fa-l-yab'udū mā staṭā'ū*). When Yazīd reported this to the people, they yielded (*fa-'staslama l-nās*) and fulfilled Abū Ayyūb's last wish.²⁷ The troops' reported submission suggests that they were initially reluctant to execute the dangerous task and that Abū Ayyūb's last wish served as a stimulus.²⁸

lions", on the Day of Fijār because they stood fast and persevered and dug for themselves trenches (or: trenches were dug for them, *li-annahā ṣabarāt wa-ḥāfaẓat wa-ḥ(a/u)ḥ(a/i)rat laḥā l-ḥafā'ir*.

24 TMD, 16: 58–9; TMD, *Mukhtaṣar*, 7: 342; Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, 2: 412. Mujaḥid ibn Jabr (on whom see *EP*, s.v. Mudjaḥid b. Djabr al-Makkī [A. Ripplin]) reported that Yazīd ordered that the horses be led back and forth over his grave until every trace of it disappeared; Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughyat al-ṭalab*, 7: 3039.

25 TMD, 16: 62.

26 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 485; TMD, 16: 59; Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, 2: 404–5; Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, s.v. *s.w.gh*.

27 Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, 3: 485; TMD, 16: 59; Dhahabī, *Nubalā'*, 2: 405.

28 The usage of the root *b. 'd.* brings to mind the Jāhili saying about a deceased *lā tab'ud*, "may you not be alienated, or remote"; cf. Nūrī Ḥammūdī al-Qaysī, "Dīwān Mālik b. al-Rayb: ḥayātuhu

While the edifying message of these reports is clear, there are differences regarding Abū Ayyūb's burial and the shape of his grave. In contrast to the reports quoted earlier, some of the evidence mentions a grave which was for the Byzantines a source of blessing. They are said to have paid frequent visits to it and to have put it in good repair. At times of drought they used it to ask for rain.²⁹ The Arabs threatened that if Abū Ayyūb be exhumed, every church on Arab land would be destroyed (literally: "no *nāqūs* [a kind of rattle used by Eastern Christians to summon for prayer³⁰] would be struck in the lands of the Arabs"). According to the testimony of Abū Sa'īd al-Mu'ayyī and others, Yazīd told the Byzantines that Abū Ayyūb decreed this (i.e. that he be interred at the walls of their city), so that none of the warriors would be nearer to them than him. The Byzantines built over the grave a white dome and lit a lamp inside. The previously mentioned Abū Sa'īd entered the dome in 100/718–9 and upon sighting the lamp he realized that it had remained lit ever since Abū Ayyūb's death.³¹

An eschatological element is linked to the territorial one in a report on the ascetic and Qur'ān reader Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī (*al-zāhid, qāri' ahl al-Shām*³²) who died at the time of Mu'āwiya in an expedition against the Byzantines. His last requests, presented to his commander, were as follows:

Put me in charge of the Muslims who died fighting with you, and tie for me a banner of military command (*liwā'*) over them; make my grave the furthest of all graves [and the nearest] to the enemy, since I wish to come on Resurrection Day carrying their banner.³³

A rather similar idea is linked to another border territory, namely Khurāsān. The Prophet's Companion Burayda ibn al-Ḥuṣayb al-Aslamī settled in Baṣra and then moved to Marw, where he died in 63/682–3. According to his son 'Abdallāh, Burayda died in Marw and was buried in the quarter called J(a/i)ṣṣīn.³⁴ He added, shifting to the eschatological sphere:

My father said: "I heard the Messenger of God say, 'He of my Companions who dies (*māta*) in a certain land will become their commander [i.e. the commander of its people] and their light on Resurrection Day'".³⁵

wa-shi' ruhu", *Majallat Ma'had al-Makhtū'āt al-'Arabiyya* (Cairo) 15 (1969), 49–114, at 93; *Lisān al-'Arab*, s.v.: *yaqūlūna lā tab'ud wa-hum yadfinūnānī / wa-ayna makānu l-bu'di illā makāniyyā*. See on him *GAS*, 2: 401.

29 They would uncover his grave and receive rainfall; *TMD, Mukhtaṣar*, 7: 342.

30 See *El²*, s.v. (F. Buhl).

31 *TMD, Mukhtaṣar*, 7: 343; *TMD*, 16: 62.

32 *TMD, Mukhtaṣar*, 12: 55.

33 *Ibid.*, 66.

34 See Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. J(a/i)ṣṣīn: a quarter (*maḥalla*) in Marw.

35 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 4: 53–5.

The context suggests that Burayda was a martyr. The Companion al-Ḥakam ibn 'Amr al-Ghifārī was also buried in Marw. He settled in Baṣra, and later officiated as the governor of Khurāsān.³⁶ The distance between his grave and Burayda's grave was one cubit.³⁷ Al-Ḥakam had the characteristics of a martyr: at the time of Ma'mūn he was still unchanged in his grave.³⁸ Having been tortured by a special investigator sent by Mu'āwiya because of a dispute over the division of spoils, al-Ḥakam willed that he be buried in his shackles, so that he might contend with (*yukhāṣimu*) Mu'āwiya on Resurrection Day over the reasons for his fettering (namely, his torture and subsequent death).³⁹ The preservation of his body and the burial in his shackles (i.e. without ritual washing) indicate al-Ḥakam's martyr status.⁴⁰

Several reports link the two martyrs, Burayda and al-Ḥakam, to each other. According to Burayda, the Prophet addressed him and al-Ḥakam, saying: "You are the two springs (or the two sources of water, *'aynāni*) of the people of the East (*mashriq*), and through you the people of the East will be resurrected"; so they came to Marw and died there.⁴¹ Burayda's martyr status is also conveyed by the Prophet's alleged words to him, that after his death he will be "light upon the people of the East".⁴²

Burial in a lush meadow on enemy soil

A lush meadow on enemy soil was a coveted burial place. A statement to this effect is attributed to the ascetic 'Amr ibn 'Utba ibn Farqad al-Sulamī⁴³ who died a martyr's death at the time of Mu'āwiya and whose figure may have been used as a platform to convey a variety of ascetic ideas.⁴⁴ A report by 'Amr's cousin is of particular interest for us here. This was 'Amr's fantasy upon alighting in a lush meadow (*marj*):

There is nothing better now than the call of the summoner (*al-munādī*):
"O God's cavalry, ride"! A man will come out and will be the first to

36 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 2: 107.

37 Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl*, 7: 127. Indeed, J(a/i)ṣṣīn is mentioned as his burial place; for the precise location see *ibid.*, 125.

38 *Ibid.*, 126–7.

39 *Ibid.*, 126.

40 It was a clear anti-Umayyad statement. A similar position is ascribed to Ḥujr ibn 'Adī (on whom see *ET*², s.v. Ḥudjr b. 'Adī [H. Lammens]) who wished to die in his fetters and his unwashed wounds so that he meet Mu'āwiya in this state "on the main road", i.e. the one leading the Judgement Day; Ibn Abī Shayba, *Muṣannaf*, 12: 287. For the opinion that a *shahīd* should be washed see *ibid.*, 290–1.

41 *TMD*, *Mukhtaṣar*, 5: 180.

42 "O Burayda [when you get old], may your sight not be dimmed, may your sense of hearing not be gone, you are light upon the people of the East"; *ibid.*

43 On his father, 'Utba ibn Farqad, see M. Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1989, index.

44 For a cycle of reports on this venerated figure see al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb jumal min ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār and Riyād Ziriklī, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1417/1996, 13: 324–9.

tackle the enemy. He will be killed, and then his comrades will bring him and bury him in this meadow.

The fantasy was naturally fulfilled to the letter. 'Amr's father, 'Utba, who was in command of the troops, sent men to seek him, but they arrived too late. The cousin believed that 'Amr was buried where he stuck his spear in the ground (*markaz rumḥihi*, i.e. he did not budge an inch).⁴⁵ The prompt outbreak of hostilities exactly as foretold in 'Amr's fantasy indicates that he was one of those whose prayers were answered. It would seem that the lush meadow brought to 'Amr's mind images of death. There is no mention of war objectives and 'Amr's fantasy suggests a death wish. Still, his conduct was supposed to be worthy of imitation.

Resurrection from the bellies of birds and beasts of prey

Muslim troops who died on enemy territory had no known graves. The Muslim warrior and former *munāfiq*, Makhshī ibn Ḥumayyir, reportedly gave an answer to this predicament: he prayed to God that he die a martyr's death in a place unknown to anyone. Indeed, he was killed on the Day of Yamāma leaving no known trace.⁴⁶

As a rule, attempts were made to give troops proper burial even at the expense of great inconvenience. Abū Ṭalḥa (Zayd ibn Sahl) al-Anṣārī died at sea while participating in a naval expedition. After seven days his comrades found an island and buried him on it. In the meantime his corpse did not decay.⁴⁷ While the report seeks to establish the supernatural preservation of the martyr's body, at the same time it shows that Abū Ṭalḥa's fellow warriors did not dispose of his body at sea.

However, many warriors could not be given proper burial.⁴⁸ It was the task of Muslim scholars to teach the troops and their families that this was a privilege rather than a disadvantage. On seeing the body of his uncle, Ḥamza, with his abdomen ripped open and his nose and ears cut off, Muḥammad said:

Had it not been for the women's grief and the fear that this will become a *sunna* after my time, I would have left him until God resurrected him from the bellies of the beasts of prey and the birds. I shall retaliate for him by mutilating seventy men.

45 Ibid., 328.

46 *An yuqtala shahīdan haythu lā yu'lamu bihi, fa-qutila yawm al-Yamāma wa-lam yu'lam lahu athar*; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 6: 53.

47 Ibn Qudāma, *Istibṣār*, 50.

48 Cf. the verse by one of the Khawārij regarding their war against al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufra: *kam min qatīlin tanquru l-ṭayru 'aynahu / bi-Sūlāfa gharrathu l-munā wa-l-ja'ā'ilu*; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, (Anonyme arabische Chronik), ed. W. Ahlwardt, Greifswald, 1883, 11: 106.

The revelation of a Qur'anic verse prevented him from carrying out this plan of vengeance.⁴⁹

This theme is further developed in the story of a warrior in Maṣṣīṣa who did not receive a proper burial, but time and again the earth rejected his body and cast it out forcefully. After this had happened three times, an invisible voice declared that the martyr's wish, to be resurrected from the bellies of beasts of prey and the craws of birds, was granted and that he should consequently be left unburied.⁵⁰

49 Al-Qurtubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-qur'ān*³, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1387/1967, 10: 201. See also E. Kohlberg, "Medieval Muslim views on martyrdom", *Mededelingen van de Afdeling Letterkunde*, Nieuwe Reeks, Deel 60 no. 7, Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1997, 292. A Hebrew version of this chapter (with some additions) appeared under the title "Mot qdoshim ve-haqrava 'atzmit ba-islam ha-qlasi", *Pe'amim* 75 (1998), 5–26. On the subject of martyrdom see also idem, *EP*, s.v. Shahīd.

50 Al-Mu'āfā ibn Zakariyyā, *al-Jalīs al-ṣāliḥ al-kāfī wa-l-anīs al-nāṣiḥ al-shafī*, ed. Muḥammad Mursī al-Khūlī, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub, 1413/1993, 2: 455–6.

THE *FUTŪḤ AL-SHĀM* OF
 ‘ABDALLĀH B. MUḤAMMAD
 B. RABĪ‘A AL-QUDĀMĪ^{1,2,3}

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Ibn ‘Asākir’s *History of Damascus* is now available (in addition to the volumes edited so far, which only cover a small part of the voluminous book) in the form of a commercial facsimile edition. Its *Mukhtaṣar* by Ibn Manẓūr is available in a scholarly edition. Only a few years ago one had to rely on the incomplete and at times unreliable *Tahdhīb* by ‘Abd al-Qādir Badrān. This situation has now fundamentally changed. The easier access to the book will, one hopes, give new impetus to research in the areas where Ibn ‘Asākir excels, such as the conquest of Syria and Palestine.

Ibn ‘Asākir mentions al-Qudāmī’s name in the entry on ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥanbal (or ibn al-Ḥanbal), a *mawlā* of the Banū Jumaḥ who was born in Mecca. He was either an Arab – a son of a man who came to Mecca from the Yemen – or “a black (slave) of the blacks of Mecca” (*aswad min sūdān Makka*), which implies of course African descent. It was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s role in the conquest of Syria which qualified him to be included in the *History of Damascus*. Ibn ‘Asākir quotes the details from ‘Abdallāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Qudāma al-Qudāmī who in his turn quotes “his men (viz. his informants), in his book about the conquest of Shām” (*‘an rijālihi fī kitābihi lladhī ṣannaḥahu fī futūḥ al-Shām*).⁴ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān participated in the conquest of Mecca with Khālīd ibn al-Walīd. Later, Khālīd put

1 The book is not listed, among others, by Kūrķīs ‘Awwād, “Maṣādir al-futūḥāt al-‘arabiyya li-bilād al-Shām”, in M.A. Bakhit and I. ‘Abbās (eds.), *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Bilād al-Shām during the Early Islamic Period Up to 40 A.H./640 A.D.*, Amman: University of Jordan, 1987, 2: 25–64.

2 [ADD. An edition of *Ta’rīkh Dimashq* has meanwhile appeared; see *TMD*.]

3 [ADD. Cf. A. Mazor, “The *Kitāb futūḥ al-Shām* of al-Qudāmī as a case study for the transmission of traditions about the conquest of Syria”, *Der Islam* 84 (2008), 17–45; L.I. Conrad, “al-Azdī’s history of the Arab conquests in Bilād al-Shām: Some historiographical observations”, in M.‘A. Bakhīt (ed.), *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on the History of Bilād al-Shām*, 1, Amman, 1987, 28–62; *The Early Muslim Conquest of Syria: An English Translation of al-Azdī’s Futūḥ al-Shām*, trans. and annotated Hamada Hassanein and Jens Scheiner, London and New York: Routledge, 2020].

4 As we shall presently see, *Futūḥ al-Shām* was also the book’s title.

him in command of the infantry (*rajāla*) when he was fighting against Byzantine reinforcements sent to the people of Buṣrā. Khālid also sent him from the battlefield of Ajnādayn to Abū Bakr with the good tidings of the victory.⁵

In the previously mentioned pedigree of al-Qudāmī, Qudāma figures as his grandfather. However, from other passages we learn that his grandfather's name was Rabī'a. For example, Ibn 'Asākir quotes from the *Futūḥ al-Shām* of 'Abdallāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Rabī'a al-Qudāmī a passage concerning the death at Ajnādayn of 'Amr ibn al-Tufayl from the Daws (a subdivision of the Azd tribe).⁶ I.e. the Qudāma behind the *nisba* al-Qudāmī must have been his great-grandfather.

Ibn 'Asākir's entry on Umm Abān bint 'Utba ibn Rabī'a (Mu'āwiya's maternal aunt) includes a passage from al-Qudāmī's book. She participated in the conquest of Shām with her brother Abū Hāshim and her husband Abān ibn Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ ibn Umayya ibn 'Abd Shāms, who was killed in the battle of Ajnādayn. Reportedly, before his death he had spent only two nights with her.⁷

We may digress a little to examine Abān's death. According to Mūsā ibn 'Uqba, he was killed at Ajnādayn. This was also the opinion of Muṣ'ab (ibn al-Zubayr), al-Zubayr (ibn Bakkār) and most of the genealogy experts. But according to Ibn Ishāq, Abān and his brother 'Amr were killed in the battle of Yarmūk. His claim was not adopted by the other historians (or rather by their majority, *wa-lam yuṭāba 'alayhi*; as we shall see, Sayf ibn 'Umar said the same). There is yet another version preserved, together with other versions, by Ibn al-Barqī: Abān was killed at Marj al-Ṣuffar.⁸

5 Ibn Hajar, *Iṣāba*, 4: 297; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq*, Facsimile edition in 19 vols., 'Ammān: Dār al-Bashīr, n. d. (=TMD MS), 9: 924f. Ibn 'Asākir (ibid., 925) read al-Qudāmī's words in another book with of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Rabbihi. The sources just quoted tell us that 'Abd al-Rahmān was a man of a distinct political loyalty. He opposed 'Uthmān (his verses censure some illegal measures of 'Uthmān in the affairs of the state), and was jailed by the latter. He was killed at Ṣiffīn, while fighting on 'Alī's side.

6 TMD MS, 13: 487. See also Ibn Hajar, *Iṣāba*, IV, 649. (According to another version, he died in the battle of Yarmūk.)

7 Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rikh madīnat Dimashq (Tarājim al-Nisā')*, ed. Sukayna al-Shihābī, Damascus: Majma' al-Lughā al-'Arabiyya bi-Dimashq), 471. Ibn 'Asākir does not adduce al-Qudāmī's report in Abū Hāshim's entry. However, we read there that he lost an eye in the battle of Yarmūk. The entry starts in TMD MS, 19: 201f; the said report is found in ibid., 204.

8 Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *Istī'āb*, 1: 63. Concerning the Yarmūk-version, Ibn Ishāq was joined by Sayf ibn 'Umar in his *Futūḥ*; Ibn Hajar, *Iṣāba*, 1: 17; TMD MS, 2: 301. While it is true that Ibn al-Barqī records the Marj al-Ṣuffar-version, in TMD MS, 2: 300, we find that this is only one of the versions which he adduces: in fact, Ibn al-Barqī mentions Ajnādayn first (viz. he considers this to be the most trustworthy version), then he adduces Yarmūk and Marj al-Ṣuffar as secondary versions. Most unusual is the version transmitted by al-Faḍl ibn Dukayn (d. 219/834; it is probably found in his *Ta'rikh*, on which see *GAS*, I, 101): Abān died at the time of the Prophet; TMD MS, 2: 299. This claim, which deprives the Umayyad prince of any role in the conquest of Shām, should perhaps be attributed to al-Faḍl's Shī'ite tendency on which see *GAS*, loc. cit.; Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bijāwī, Cairo: 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1382/1963, 3: 350.

In addition to these versions concerning Abān's death during the conquest of Syria, there is a rather unusual one going back to Abū Ḥassān al-Ziyādī (d. ca. 243/857): Abān died in 27/648, during 'Uthmān's caliphate.⁹ One assumes that natural death is meant here. This version, which lacks the glamour of a battle-field death, is the least favourable to Abān and hence presumably the most trustworthy one. Abū Ḥassān al-Ḥasan ibn 'Uthmān al-Ziyādī, whom al-Mutawakkil appointed as qādī in 241/855, had Damascene teachers, among others. In the third/ninth century these teachers were still more knowledgeable than others concerning the Umayyad family, and he presumably received this unusual report from them.¹⁰

The previously mentioned Ibn al-Barqī was Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn 'Abdallāh ibn 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Barqī (d. 270/883). He compiled a book on the Prophet's Companions (*wa-lahu muṣannaḥ fi ma'rifat al-ṣaḥāba*).¹¹ The *nisba* al-Barqī does not mean in this case that he lived in Barqa. In fact he and his brother (see more later), both of whom were Egyptians, owed their *nisba* to the fact that their grandfather traded with Barqa. There was also another Ibn al-Barqī, namely Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad, who was the brother of the previously mentioned Aḥmad and died in 249/863. The two brothers were *mawālī* of the Banū Zuhra of Quraysh.¹²

Al-Qudāmī's *Futūḥ* (viz. *Futūḥ al-Shām*) was used by Ibn Ḥajar some five centuries ago. In his Companions dictionary Ibn Ḥajar adduces a passage from

9 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 1: 17.

10 *Tahdhīb ta'rīkh Ibn 'Asākir*, ed. 'Abd al-Qādir Efendi Badrān, Damascus: Maṭba'at Rawdat al-Shām, 1399/1979 (=TMD, *Tahdhīb*), 4: 194; Ibn Manzūr, *Mukhtaṣar ta'rīkh Dimashq li-Ibn 'Asākir*, ed. Rūḥiyya al-Naḥḥās *et alii*, Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1404/1984f. (=TMD, *Mukhtaṣar*), 6, ed. Muḥammad Muḥī' al-Ḥāfiẓ and Nizār Abāza, revised by Rūḥiyya al-Naḥḥās, 347 (*sami'a bi-Dimashq*). He was also a student of Wāqidī; TMD, *Tahdhīb*, 4: 196 (*wa-kāna min kibār aṣḥāb al-Wāqidī*).

Abū Ḥassān compiled a book entitled *al-Ta'rīkh 'alā l-sinīn*; GAS, 1: 316; cf. TMD, *Tahdhīb*, 4: 195 (*wa-lahu kitāb fi l-ta'rīkh 'alā l-sinīn*). The report on Abān's death in 27/648 is from this *Ta'rīkh*, as we learn from TMD MS, 2: 301: *wa-dhakara Abū Ḥassān al-Ḥasan ibn 'Uthmān al-Ziyādī fi ta'rīkhīhi*. Ibn 'Asākir says that this is an error: *wa-huwa waḥm*.

11 Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*³, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif, 1376/1956, 1: 569f; Dhahabī, *Siyar al-lām al-nubalā'*, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1401/1981–1409/1988, 13, ed. 'Alī Abū Zayd, revised by Shu'ayb al-Arnāwūṭ, 47 (*wa-lahu kitāb fi ma'rifat al-ṣaḥāba wa-ansābihim*). (Cf. GAS, 1: 32, where he is called Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-Barqī.) When Ibn al-Barqī is quoted in the *Iṣāba*, 4: 747, regarding a Companion's pedigree, the quotation is probably from this book.

12 Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz*, 1: 569f. Aḥmad transmitted the *Maghāzī* from the famous Ibn Hishām (Sam'ānī, s.v. al-Barqī) and his brother Muḥammad did the same; Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, Hyderabad: Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif, 1325/1907, 9: 263 (*ḥaddatha bi-Kitāb al-Maghāzī 'an 'Abd al-Malik ibn Hishām*). In both Sam'ānī and *Tahdhīb al-tahdhīb* the transmission from Ibn Hishām is reported by the same source, namely Ibn Yūnus (347/958) in his book *Ta'rīkh al-Miṣriyyīn wa-man dakhalaḥā* (the title appears in Sam'ānī). The report about the eye which Abū Hāshim lost at Yarmūk (cf. earlier, n. 7) could be from Aḥmad's Companions book; or it could be from the *Ta'rīkh* compiled by his brother Muḥammad, which he did not complete. It was Aḥmad who completed and transmitted it, with an *isnād* identical to that of his brother; Ibn Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fi ta'rīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Atā and Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Atā, Beirut: al-Ilmiyya, 1412/1992, 12: 230.

the *Futūḥ* regarding the fighting of Ṣafwān ibn al-Mu‘aṭṭal al-Sulamī during the conquest of Shām.¹³

We have few biographical details on al-Qudāmī. We know that he lived in the frontier town al-Maṣṣīṣa and that his teachers included Mālik ibn Anas and Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d. We also know that the quality of his work as a Traditionist was severely criticized.¹⁴ The fact that al-Qudāmī was of the people of al-Maṣṣīṣa¹⁵ (the people of which transmitted from him) should possibly be linked with the nature of the *futūḥ* literature. The stories of the brilliant military successes of the first decades of Islam no doubt inspired and encouraged generations of warriors. Such stories were cultivated, among other places, in military centres and frontier towns as part of the warriors’ education. In this respect one assumes that there was no fundamental difference between the *futūḥ* on the one hand and the *maghāzī* of the Prophet on the other.

Mention should be made of al-Qudāmī’s contemporary and fellow-Maṣṣīṣan Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Fazārī (d. ca. 188/804) who compiled a work entitled *Kitāb al-siyar fī l-akhbār*.¹⁶

The identity of al-Qudāmī’s teachers helps in establishing his approximate dates. Since Mālik ibn Anas died in 179/795 and Ibrāhīm ibn Sa‘d al-Zuhrī died in 182/798¹⁷ we may safely assume that al-Qudāmī lived in the second half of the second Islamic century. Among the compilers of *Futūḥ al-Shām* treatises, Abū Mikhnaf who died in 157/774¹⁸ belonged to an earlier generation, while the following ones were either al-Qudāmī’s contemporaries or were slightly younger than him: Sayf ibn ‘Umar who died in 180/796,¹⁹ Ibn al-Kalbī who died in 204/819,²⁰

13 Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 3: 442 (note that the sentence which follows the aforementioned passage, *wa-kāna dhālika sanat thamān wa-khamsīn*, is misplaced: it does not concern the aforementioned fighting but Ṣafwān’s death). On Ṣafwān see M. Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym: A Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: Institute of Asian and African Studies, 1989, 91f.

14 Sam‘ānī, *al-Ansāb*, ed. ‘Abdallāh ‘Umar al-Bārūdī, Beirut: Dār al-Jinān, 1408/1988 and Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Lubāb fī tahdhīb al-ansāb*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n. d., s.v. al-Qudāmī; Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i‘tidāl*, 2: 488.

15 Cf. on the town *EF*, s.v. (E. Honigmann).

16 In *GAS*, 1: 292 we read that he won high esteem as a historian [?] and Traditionist. This hardly conforms with the remark that his hadith included many errors; see for example Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tijāriyya al-Kubrā, 1347/1928, reprint Beirut, 1398/1978, 135 (*kāna kathīr al-ghalaṭ fī ḥadīthihi*). Cf. Abū Ishāq al-Fazārī, *Kitāb al-siyar*, ed. Fārūq Ḥamāda, Beirut: al-Risāla, 1408/1987, Introduction, 26f. Ibn al-Nadīm (*Fihrist*, 131f.) includes the author in the chapter about *akhbār al-akhbāriyyīn wa-l-nassābīn wa-aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth* and refers to the book (135) as *Kitāb al-siyar fī l-akhbār wa-l-aḥdāth*. One expects this to be similar to those of Ibn Ishāq, Abū Mikhnaf, Sayf ibn ‘Umar and others which are included in the same chapter of the *Fihrist*. However, to judge from the extant parts of Fazārī’s *Siyar*, its emphasis is on legal matters.

17 *GAS*, 1: 457f, 95.

18 *GAS*, 1: 308, 309, no. 8.

19 On whom see Ella Landau-Tasseron, “Sayf b. ‘Umar in medieval and modern scholarship”, *Der Islam* 67 (1990), 1–26.

20 *GAS*, 1: 268, 270, no. 12.

Abū Ḥudhayfa Ishāq ibn Bishr al-Bukhārī who died in 206/821,²¹ Wāqidī who died in 207/823,²² and Madā' inī (d. 228/843).²³ The *Futūḥ al-Shām* of Abū Ismā'īl Muḥammad ibn 'Abdallāh al-Azdī also belongs here since it should be dated to the late second century.²⁴

The severe criticism of al-Qudāmī's work as a Traditionist by hadith experts (more specifically, by those of them concerned with the evaluation of *rijāl*) is naturally based on their own specific criteria. These experts examined the degree in which the hadith transmitted by a certain Traditionist conformed to the existing corpus of hadith in circulation. They did not intend to pass judgement on his work as a historian (a field of human pursuit for which these experts had little respect). One must therefore take care not to transfer their statements from the field of hadith to that of history.

The *nisba* al-Qudāmī shows our author to be a descendant of an important man called Qudāma, possibly a Companion of the Prophet. One thinks of Qudāma ibn Maz'ūn of the Qurashite clan Banū Jumaḥ. This assumption is corroborated by the case of another Qudāmī, namely the Traditionist 'Abd al-Malik ibn Qudāma al-Qurashī al-Qudāmī, known to have been a descendant of Qudāma ibn Maz'ūn.²⁵

21 Cf. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, s.v. al-Qaryatāni: *wa-qāla Abū Ḥudhayfa fī futūḥ al-Shām*; *GAS*, 1: 293f. (*Kitāb al-futūḥ*).

22 *GAS*, 1: 294, 296, no. 4.

23 *EL*², s.v. al-Madā' inī, 946f (U. Sezgin). Cf. Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, 150 (*Kitāb futūḥ al-Shām ayyām Abī Bakr*, etc.).

24 L.I. Conrad, "al-Azdī's history of the Arab conquests in Bilād al-Shām: Some historiographical observations", in M.'A. Bakhit (ed.), *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on the History of Bilād al-Shām*, 1, Amman, 1987, 58f.; also *GAS*, 1: 292 (al-Azdī died in the last quarter of the second century). One expects a certain overlap between the different *futūḥ* books. For example, it seems that al-Azdī, Sayf and Abū Ḥudhayfa provide basically the same information on a Byzantine general called Jaraja (or Jarjir) who defected to the Muslims; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣāba*, 1: 533.

25 Sam'ānī and Ibn al-Athīr, *Lubāb*, s.v. al-Qudāmī. For descendants of Qudāma ibn Maz'ūn see, for example, Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'arab*, 161; Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *al-Tabayīn fī ansāb al-Qurashīyyīn*, ed. Muḥammad Nāyif al-Dulaymī, Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub & Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-'Arabiyya, 1408/1988, 446f; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir & Dār Bayrūt, 1380/1960–1388/1968, 3: 401.

Note that in certain cases a *nisba* referring to descent from a Companion of the Prophet may relate to the Companion's father, not to the Companion himself. Thus when the Andalusian author 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb is called al-Mirdāsī (*GAS*, 1: 362), this is of course with reference to his descent from the Prophet's Companion 'Abbās ibn Mirdās. The reason for using Mirdās instead of 'Abbās is obvious: had he been called after 'Abbās ibn Mirdās, his *nisba* would have been al-'Abbāsī. A similar example is that of the famous compiler of the *Sīra* Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Makhrāmī who was the *mawlā* of Qays ibn Makhrama ibn al-Muṭṭalib ibn 'Abd Manāf; Sam'ānī, s.v. al-Makhrāmī: Makhrama was used instead of Qays in order to avoid the potentially misleading *nisba* al-Qaysī.



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